



THE MOUNTAIN PATH

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

Vol. 12, No. III, July 1975

"Let me dive into the true Self, wherein merge only the pure in mind and speech, Oh Arunachala!"

—*The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 47

Publisher :

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

*

Editorial Board :

Sri Viswanatha Swami
Sri Ronald Rose
Prof. K. Swaminathan
Sri M. C. Subramanian
Sri Ramamani
Sri T. P. Ramachandra Aiyer

*

Managing Editor :

V. Ganeshan,
Sri Ramanasramam,
Tiruvannamalai.

*

Annual Subscription :

INDIA	Rs. 6
FOREIGN	£ 0.75 \$ 2.00

Life Subscription :

Rs. 125	£ 12.50 \$ 30
---------	--------------------

Single Copy :

Rs. 1.75	£ 0.20 \$ 0.45
----------	---------------------



THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

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

—*The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1

Vol. 12

JULY 1975

No. III

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL :

	Page
The Mother — Viswanatha Swami	129
The Carp — (Poem) — Charles G. Reeder	132
Sri Bhagavan's Teaching — The Literary Testimony — Arthur Osborne	133
Transformation — (Poem)	135
— Lama Anagarika Govinda	135
Uniqueness of Bhagavan	136
— Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan	136
The Call of Arunachala — (Poem)	140
— Saniel Bonder	140
What of us, after He went ?	141
— Wolter A. Keers	141
The Dakshinamurti Stotra of Sri Sankara	145
— N. Subramanyam	145
Mahayoga : The Direct Path of Self-Enquiry	148
— Mabakrishna	148
The Sublimity of Art — Prof. R. Sadasiva Aiyer	150
The Miraculous and Supernatural	152
— Marie B. Byles	152
Hindu Iconology — 3 — Lord Nataraja	154
Bhagavan Ramana, the Lord of Love and Compassion — Jagannath Chattopadhyaya	156
Four Devotees of Ramana	158
— Viswanatha Swami	158
The Sage's Body — Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy	162
Introduction to Mystical Reading	163
— E. M. Abrahams	163
Mystic Experience — Evelyn Underhill	166
— (Sel. by Madhan Mohan Varma)	166
How I Came to the Maharshi — H. R. Chadha	167
Garland of Guru's Sayings — Sri Muruganar	169
Seeing and Saying — paul rePS	170
Does any "Thing" Exist — Wei Wu Wei	172
Stories from Yoga Vasishtha — V : The Story of Gadhi — Tr. by M. C. Subramanian	173
The Pain of Purification — Philip Pegler	176
All in Thou and Thine — Cornelia Bagarotti	177
Glory of Arunachala — Arunachala Mahatmyam — Tr. by M. C. Subramanian	178

CONTENTS -- (Contd.)

Page

Descent of Grace — (Poem)	180
— <i>Dilip Kumar Roy</i>	180
Book Reviews	181
Ashram Bulletin	189
Introducing . . . Sri M. C. Ekanatha Row	196
Sri Ramanasramam — Life Members	198
The Mountain Path — Life Subscribers	199
Letters to the Editor <i>(replies by Lucia Osborne)</i>	201

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

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

— *Editor.*

To Our Subscribers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AIR-MAIL SURCHARGE

	£	\$
I. Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Pakistan, Ceylon ..	0.75	2.00
II. Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, West Germany, Italy, Greece, Japan, Netherlands, East and South Africa, Egypt, France, Great Britain, Sweden ..	1.50	4.00
III. North, Central and South America, Canada, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii	2.00	5.00

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

The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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

●

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

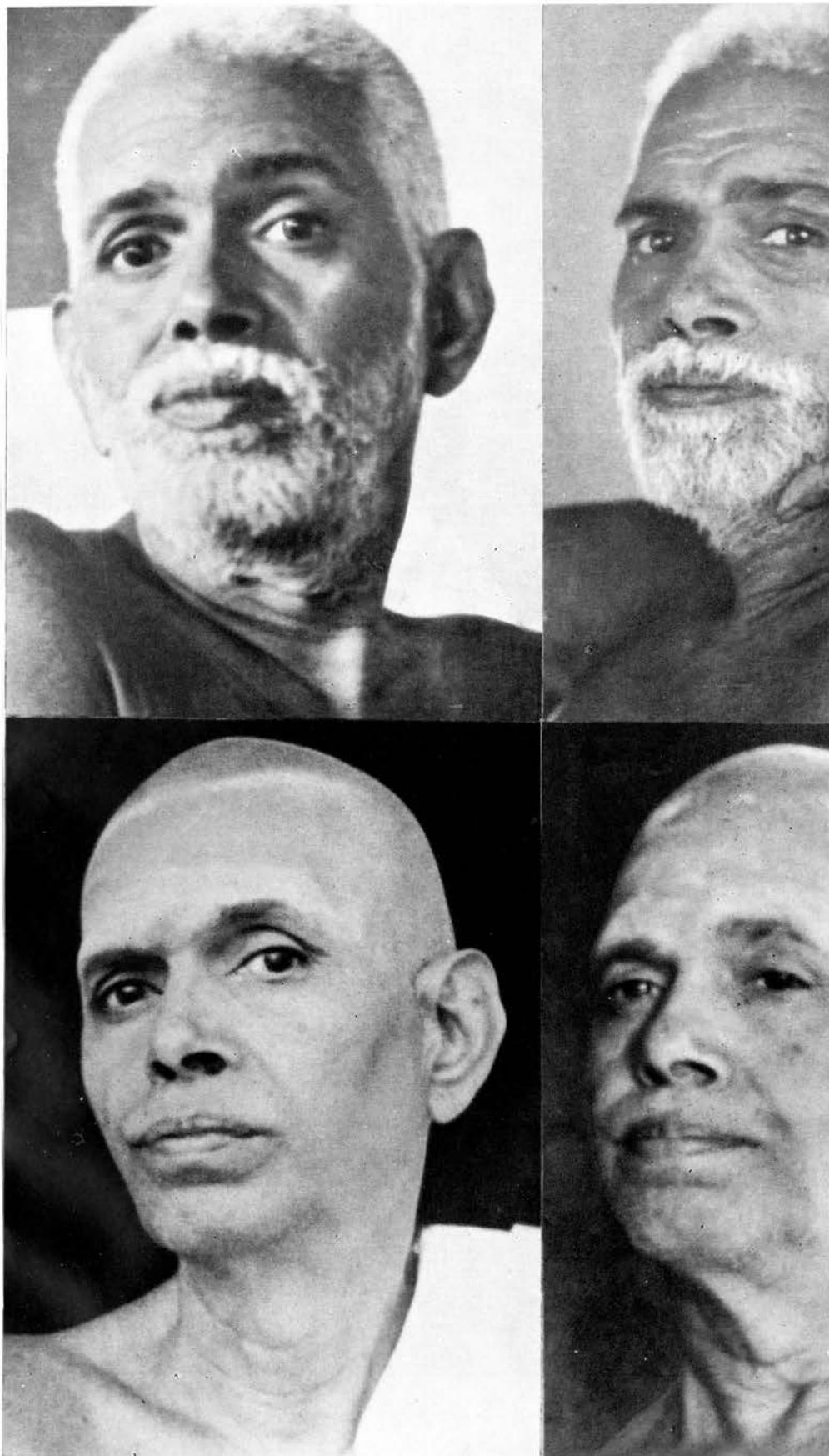
●

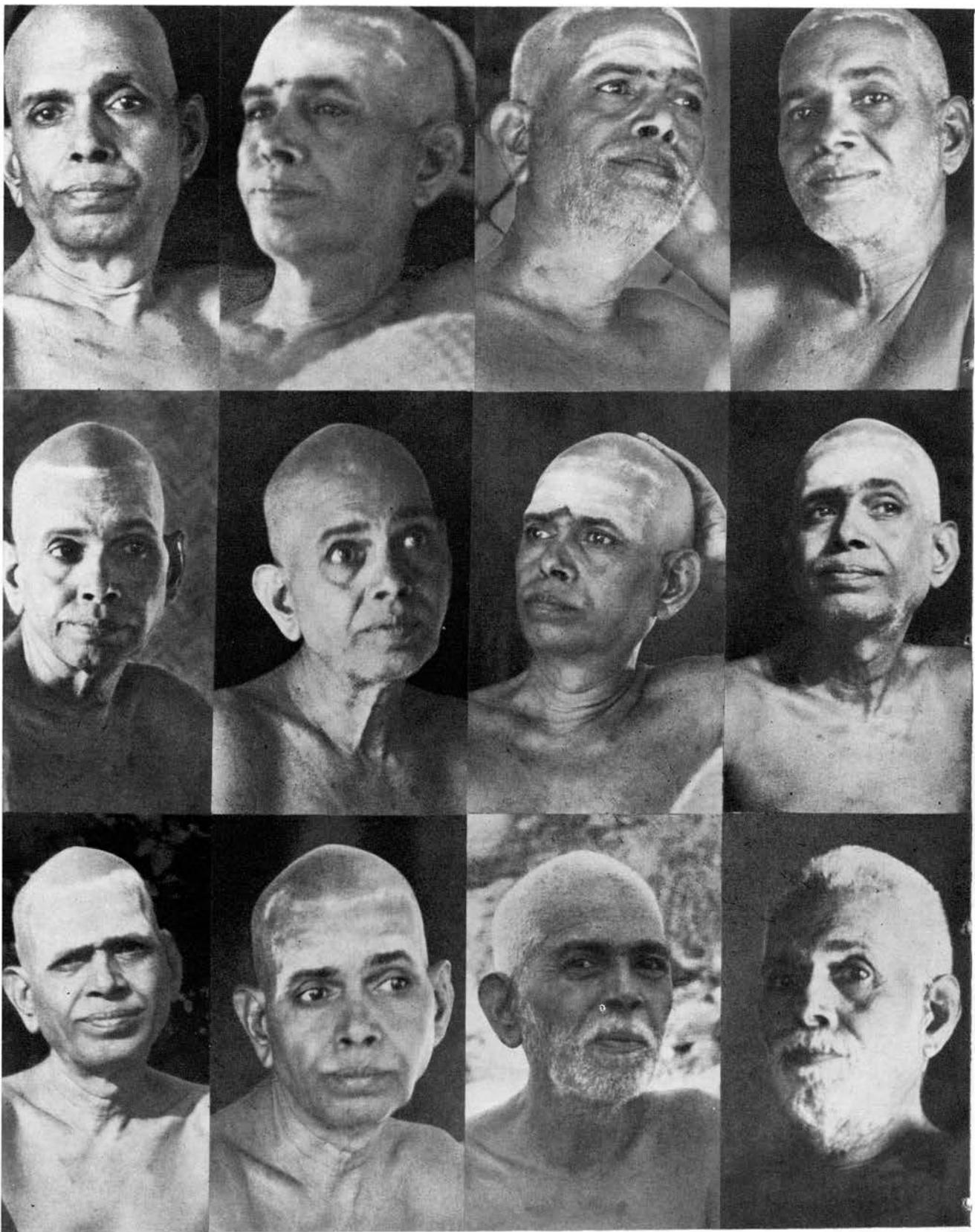
No payment is made for contributions published. Anything herein published may be reprinted elsewhere without fee provided due acknowledgement is made and the editor is previously notified.

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

●

THE MOUNTAIN PATH
is dedicated to
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi





The Mountain Path

Vol. 12. No. III, July 1975

EDITORIAL

By Viswanatha Swami

THE MOTHER

FORMED and nourished by the mother in her womb one is born of her and sustained by her as well. And so the first and foremost god one has to adore is one's mother. In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* after emphasising *satya*, *dharma* and study of scriptures, the Master asks the student taking leave of him, to adore the mother first and foremost ; and then only come father, teacher and others. So long as we consider ourselves embodied, we look upon another as mother. But, on reflection, we see that mind is man and that from which the mind springs forth, by which it is sustained and where it finds its rest every day is the Mother. Even so we do not comprehend who the Mother is. This is the idea conveyed by the invocatory verse of the Commentary on *Devi Bhāgavata* :

“Who dwells in the intellect as its inmost core, but whom the intellect does not apprehend at all as She is not a percept, whose body is the intellect and who moves and inspires the intellect, I bow to her the constant glow of the Heart, the crest-jewel of all scriptures.”

This reminds us of Sankara's verse in his *Vivekachudāmani* : “This self-luminous Witness of all shines for ever in the sheath of *Vijnāna* (intellect). With your attention intent upon that which is distinct from all false appearance, experience it as your very Self by means of unfettered absolute awareness.”

Again, the very first invocatory verse of *Devi Bhagavata*, in *gayatri* metre, runs as follows : “We meditate upon the Supreme Awareness of all, the source of all knowledge who illumines our intellect.”

Defining Uma, the Mother of the Universe, at the beginning of his *Umāsaḥasram*, Ganapati Muni says : “She is, in reality, the all-pervading *tapas-sakti* of her Lord, the Ultimate Reality.” This is what Bhagavan Ramana also says at the end of his *Upadesa Sara* : “The constant glow of the Self, devoid of the ego, is the greatest *tapas*.” In the Vedas she is described as *tapasa jvalantee*, glowing with *tapas*. Again, we find in another hymn in praise of the Mother : “This Supreme Power, self-effulgent Durga glowing with *tapas*, in whomsoever She shines forth, he is liberated from all limitation here and now.”

Sankara, the greatest exponent of Advaita, has composed many remarkable hymns in praise of the Mother, one of which is *Tripura-Sundari Vedapādastava*. *Sundari* generally means a beautiful lady but the term is defined as Pure Awareness in *Tantra*¹, and *Tripura-Sundari* means the most captivating Awareness, illuminating all the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. The fourth foot of each verse in this hymn is a text chosen from the Vedas which shows the great

¹ *suddhā prajnā sundari uktā* (*Uma-Sahasram*).

Sankara's love and regard for the Vedas. Here are some verses translated from that Hymn :

" What a pity, people ruining themselves falling into the abyss of misery, not knowing Maheswari, the Supreme Power, the Self of all ! "

" Listen to me, my friend, I tell you with certainty, She who is known as *cbit-Sakti*, the Power of Supreme Awareness, She is the final goal and ultimate State of liberation.

" The *sādhaka* (aspirant) should understand that his system itself is Sri Chakra and the Atman the Mother.

" For one who understands your true nature as the non-dual inner Reality there is no such thing as the manifold, nothing other than Pure Awareness Bliss.

" For one who has achieved the vision that everything is the Self and remains as that by deep meditation on your Feet, there is no more taint of karma.

" O Daughter of the Lofty Mountain, He who has his heart-knot severed by your grace understands that the universe is nothing but the Self and so is not at all distracted by it.

" You are yourself the cause and effect, all movement and knowledge. There is nothing apart from you. You are the Ground, the only Reality."

Such is the concept of the Mother in our tradition. She, of her Grace, appears in a most fascinating form amidst the world of names and forms and leads on the devotee to her transcendental Reality. In the *Kenopani-shad*, it is stated that Indra, of all the gods, had the first darsan of that most beautiful and effulgent form of the Mother, who is known as Uma Haimavati, and that she revealed to him the ultimate Reality, Brahman. It is worth noting here that the word *Umā*² is made up of the three sounds of *Pranava* : *A*, *U* and *M*. The only difference is that *AUM* ends with *M* in silence and *Umā* is endless expansion. One (Brahman) is subtler than the subtlest and the other (its *Sakti*) is vaster than the vastest. He who knows this profound secret will no more be confused or confounded by anything.

There is another interpretation of *Umā*. *U* is Siva, *Sat*, Being and *Ma* his Awareness (*Cbit*). In fact, they are indivisible and that is why the *Thousand Names of Lalita* end with the Name, " She Who is the Unity of Siva and Sakti " — *Sivasaktyaikyaruṇini*.

Seers of old have had *darsan* of the Mother's divine Form. In more recent times, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who had seen the Divine Mother moved with her as with an earthly mother. To him, all women were manifestations of the Divine Mother. He has said : " I see the same Divine Mother in cultured and chaste women as well as in courtesans." Not only that, the Mother Herself has taken all the forms in manifestation and a devotee bows to everything as such.³ Sankara in his *Hymn to Dakshinamurti* and Ramana in his *Upadesa Sara* have referred to this eight-fold manifestation of the Supreme (earth, water, fire, air and ether, Sun, Moon and the totality of all living beings). Such a sublime Vision of the world manifestation itself is exalted worship of the Divine.

In an arresting passage in *Umāśahasram*, the seer-poet sings of his spiritual experiences and his vision of the divine form of the Mother as well : " At *mulādhāra*⁴ you are the effulgence of blazing Fire ; up the spine you are the warmth of strong, deep ecstasy ; from the *sabhrāra* you are the ever-dripping nectar of *Ananda* and at the *ājna chakra* (between the brows) you are the magnificent brilliance of lightning.

" If you descend to the Heart here, you look upon everything as shadow and if you ascend to the thousand-petaled lotus (*sabhrāra*), O Darling of the Mountain, you describe the world as an ocean of nectar.

² Bhaskararaya, in his famous commentary on the *Lalitasahasranama*, quotes here a verse which says : " He who meditates on the two-syllabled *mantra*, *UMA*, day and night, will not be born again in *samsara*."

³ " Devi herself is all forms : the whole universe is nothing but Devi. So I bow to Her the Supreme Power who has manifested herself in endless forms." (*Devi Bhāgavata*).

⁴ Base of the spine.

"With beautiful eyes resembling the petals of a lotus and with a face aglow with a pellucid smile there stands before my inner vision the consort of Siva⁵ as the climax of my good fortune.

"She is the Fruition of Siva's merits, She is the treasure-house of the prowess of spiritual adepts, She is the perfect boat taking her devotees to the other shore of the ocean of misery, to infinite blessedness, my Mother, the Daughter of the lofty Mountain."

Acharya Sankara not only expounded the truth of the ultimate non-dual Reality by means of his commentaries and original works on Vedanta, but he has also established centres in the four corners of India for the propagation of the worship of Sri Chakra and all the main aspects of Saguna Brahman and for the study and teaching of sacred lore. Once again the same thing has happened at Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, during Bhagavan's life-time itself and with the approval of Bhagavan.

Sri Chakra represents everything in manifestation, the various powers operating in the macrocosm and microcosm and the indivisible Siva-Sakti at its core. And *Sri Vidya*,⁶ the Heart of Mother-worship, is made up of fifteen syllables in its original form. It has been variously interpreted in *Varivasya Rahasya* (of Bhāskararāya) and other works. But the best interpretation, in the light of Vedanta, as approved of and taught by Ganapati Muni is as follows :

"O Sakti of Para Brahman ! Efface your manifestation as the ego in me. Make that felicity of yours, that draws into it even the Supreme, bloom within me and lead me on to the experience of the universe as the Self." For the *Three-hundred Names of Lalita* the fifteen letters of *Sri Vidya* constitute the base. Every twenty Names of that *stotra* begin with one of the fifteen letters in succession thus forming the three hundred Names. As such, the Names are looked upon as *mantras*. The term *Lalita* signifies loveliness, gentleness and playfulness.

All aspects of the Mother, beginning with her charm of form, the description of her

abode of Grace, the deities functioning in *Sri Chakra*, her fight with the forces of darkness and its spiritual significance, her *Mantra*-form, an account of the yogic centres in the individual, her formless aspect propounded by Vedanta, the core of the *Jñāna-mārga*, her Form as the universe, all these are found delicately woven in *Sri Lalitasahasranama Stotram*, a poem of surpassing beauty, sweetness and grace. This holy Poem is to be chanted with devotion and understanding, appreciated, absorbed and integrated in one's life during the course of one's spiritual maturity. That is why the chanting of this *stotram* has been prescribed as a daily spiritual observance for all devotees of the Mother.

The *bijākshara* (root-sound) of Lalita is *Hreem* and it occurs thrice in the *Sri Vidya* of fifteen letters at the end of each of its three parts. *Hreem*, first of all, stands for the glow of the Heart. The letters *b*, *r*, *ee* and *m* constituting it indicate her being the witnessing Awareness of the three states of waking, dream and deep-sleep and her transcendental aspect as the Great Silence. They denote *Sat*, *Chit*, *Ananda* and transcendence as well. *Hreem* is the *Pranava* of the Mother, though there are other *bijāksharas* also like *Im*, *Kleem*, *Sreem*, *Kreem*, *Hoom* expressing her various aspects. The *japa* of the *bijākshara*, *Hreem* alone will bring about the fulfilment of all human aspiration and the spontaneous glow of Pure Awareness known as the Heart.

There is another method of worship of the Mother as Durga, the roots of which are found in the Vedas, especially in the *mantra* :

Tām agnivarnām tapasā jvalanteem,
vairōchaneem karma phaleshu
jushtām
Durgām Deveem Saranamaham prapadye,
Sutarasi tarase namah

One takes refuge with Durga Devi, self-luminous, blazing with *tapas*; she fulfils every aspiration and takes her devotees to the Haven of infinite blessedness. Her *mantra* is of nine letters. She in her essence is Being-Awareness-

⁵ The vanquisher of Kama (Cupid).

⁶ *Mantras* of the Mother and Her aspects are known as *Vidyās*.

Bliss. Of her endless manifestations, three are outstanding, Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati (Mahā-Kāli, Mahā-Lakshmi and Mahā-Saraswati). Her supreme valour which vanquishes and annihilates all forces of darkness on the path of spiritual aspirants is described in symbolic language in the famous *Durgā Saptasati*. Durga means one who is beyond the reach of the instruments of knowledge. She is the protector of her devotees from all harm, fulfiller of their legitimate needs and aspirations and granter of final salvation where all sense of differentiation disappears.

There are also the Ten *Mahāvidyās* (Prominent Aspects) of the Mother, known as Kāli, Tārā, Bhuvanesvari, Sundari, Bhairavi, Chinnamastā, Dhumāvatī, Bāgalāmukhi, Mātangi and Kamalātmika, described in detail with their *mantras* and methods of worship in the *Tantras*. Ganapati Muni also has dealt with them in one of his great works, *Mahavidya Sutram*, throwing further light on that interesting theme. One may recall here the ten discourses on this subject delivered by Ganapati Muni on ten evenings at Tiruvannamalai in the early years of this century. It is a fact, hardly credible and little known, that Seshadri Swami, a spiritual adept, always on the move

and unconventional in behaviour, presided over all the ten meetings evincing thus his great regard for the scholar-*tapasvin* and poet.

A man of discernment would never be confused by the changing panorama, because it is the same sky of Awareness which harbours the seer and the seen. Not only that, but he may also enjoy the effort and achievement, as indicated by Bhagavan Ramana in his selection from *Yoga Vasishta*.⁷ One is advised there to go through all experiences of life ever-established in the one Awareness underlying all. And that is the significance of the term Mother.

⁷ Verses 26, 27 of the *Supplement to the Forty Verses*.

"Having understood the various states and always holding firmly at heart to the supreme state which is above them and free from delusion play your part in the world (as on a stage), O hero! Having realized in the Heart that which underlies all appearances, never forget it. Then play your (allotted) part in the world, O hero, acting as though attached to it.

"With simulated zeal and joy, excitement and hatred, initiative and effort play your part in the world without attachment, O hero. Having obtained release from all kinds of bondage, having gained equanimity in all situations and performing outward actions according to your part, O hero, play your part as you like in the world."

The Carp

By Charles G. Reeder

Obliquely striking
like a blind carp
at the underside
of the bright pond
where awareness
the silver spring,
releases itself
into the sky.

Sri Bhagavan's Teaching— The Literary Testimony

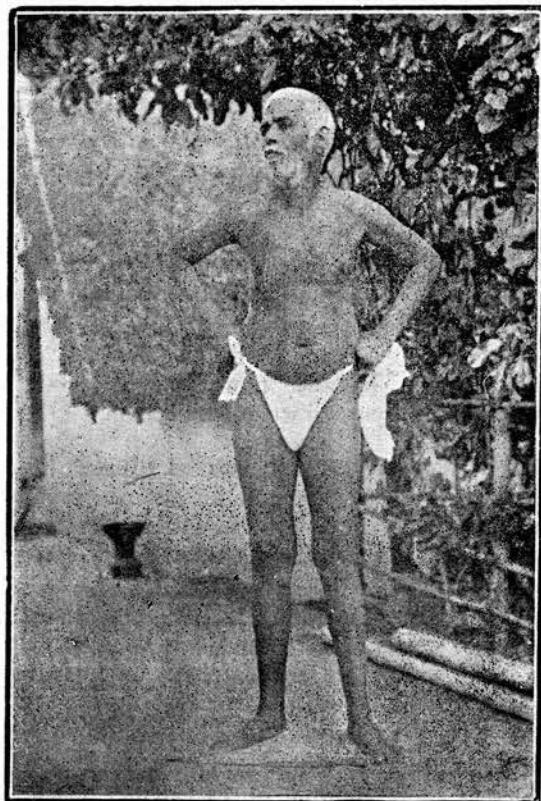
By

Arthur Osborne

IT is natural to an age like ours, where the mind seems more than the Spirit, to judge the influence of a Teacher by the written records he leaves ; but this yard-stick does not always measure true. We have no writings of the Buddha. Christ wrote nothing. When Lao-Tsu declared his lifework finished and rode away to the west, he also had written nothing. The Warden of the Pass of Han Kow, through which he had to ride, begged to set down his teaching, so he stayed at the gateway to the town and wrote the *Tao Te Ching*, which became the Scripture of Taoism. It is an amusing reflection that had he not done so modern scholars would not have failed to dispute his existence and represent him as a fictitious person.

In the case of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi there are published works and something should be known about them, while remembering that they are not the real legacy. He taught in silence and continues to do so from his shrine at Tiruvannamalai and in the hearts of those who turn to him. When asked once why he did not go about preaching the Truth to the people at large, he replied :

" How do you know I am not doing so ? Does preaching consist in mounting a platform and haranguing the people around ? Preaching is simple communication of Knowledge, and it can really be done in silence only. What do you think of a man who listens to a sermon for an hour and goes away without having been impressed by it so as to change his life ? Compare him with another who sits in a holy presence and goes away after some time with his outlook on life totally changed. Which is better ; to preach loudly



without effect or to sit silently, sending out inner Force ? Again, how does speech arise ? There is pure Knowledge, whence arises the ego, which in turn gives rise to thought, and thought to the spoken word. So the word is the great-grandson of the original Source. If the word can produce effect, judge for yourself how much more powerful must be preaching through silence." All that is said here about preaching obviously applies equally to writing.

Silent teaching is indeed natural to the *Jnana-marga* where theory is at a minimum,

being reduced to the one all-absorbing statement of Advaita : that there is only the Self.

Teaching by silence did not mean that Sri Bhagavan was unwilling to explain to those who asked. He always answered doctrinal questions fully and a certain number of his answers have been noted down and published by the Ashram. Outstanding among such records are the two diaries : *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* by Swami Ramanananda Saraswati and *Day by Day with Bhagavan* by Devaraja Mudaliar. Also a compilation of sayings arranged according to subject has now been published under the title, *The Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi in his own Words*. Only it must be remembered that these verbal explanations were not the real teaching ; they were the preliminary explanations which are easy to understand but whose understanding does not in itself enlighten the heart. The real work is the awakening of Self-awareness in the heart, and this was and is made possible by the powerful yet subtle action of the silent Grace of Bhagavan.

Since his real teaching was by silence Sri Bhagavan very seldom made any doctrinal statement except in answer to a question. For the same reason he very seldom wrote anything. Most of the books published as his are mere records of question and answer noted down at the time and subsequently published, but always with his approval. The only prose exposition actually written by Sri Bhagavan is *Self-Enquiry*, which was set down for the instruction of an early devotee. It is not altogether representative of Bhagavan's teaching, since it describes also yogic and other techniques which he did not enjoin. 'Who Am I ?' is more representative, in fact is a beautiful, clear epitome of Bhagavan's teaching. This has been edited into a continuous exposition from answers given by Bhagavan to the questions of another early devotee. The only reason for the writing of these two expositions was that Bhagavan was observing silence at that time and therefore gave his explanations in writing.

These books, in their English form, do not record the exact words of Sri Bhagavan, but

they do record exactly his teaching. Those that were written by him were written in Tamil, and the compilations also recorded answers mostly given in Tamil, even though some of the questions were put in English, and the diaries kept in English. Although Sri Bhagavan understood English, he gave all but very short replies through an interpreter, listening carefully the while and pulling him up at the slightest mis-translation. So far as concerns accuracy of meaning there is the further guarantee that all the books published during his lifetime were revised by Sri Bhagavan with meticulous care before going to print.

Bhagavan's replies and explanations were given in a matter-of-fact tone, often with laughter, and in vivid, picturesque language, although the translations may not always capture this. On the whole he deprecated theoretical discussion ; he wanted his listeners to practise, not to theorise.

There are a few small verse books also. The *Thirty Verses* on the ways of approach to Realization were written by Bhagavan in Tamil on the request of the poet Muruganar as *upadesa* given by Siva to the Rishis. Later Bhagavan himself translated it into Sanskrit and this Sanskrit version is chanted daily with the Vedas at the Ashram, as it was in Bhagavan's life-time ; that is to say it is treated as a scripture.

The *Forty Verses*, with a supplement of a second forty, come the nearest to being a connected doctrinal exposition. They were compiled by Bhagavan over a period of months, also on the request of Muruganar. Not all are of Bhagavan's own composition ; some of the verses in the Supplement, he took from old Sanskrit slokas which he put in Tamil verse. They are as concise as they are profound and on each verse commentaries have been written.

"That only is Knowledge in which there is no knowing or not knowing. To know is not true Knowledge. The Self is Knowledge, for It shines with nothing else to know or to make known. It is not a negation."

However, a commentary on such a verse might well become the sort of arid philosophising that Bhagavan deprecated.

Since Bhagavan spoke always of Knowledge and Self-enquiry when asked about the Goal or the way, few except those who approached him personally realized what a powerful support devotion was in his teaching. As the verse quoted above shows, knowledge in the ordinary sense of a link between knower and known is not Knowledge as he meant it. That knowledge is being the self-effulgent Self. And the approach to it is through love as well as Self-enquiry. Self-enquiry is the mind's attempt to turn inwards, and it is love that draws it inwards. Knowledge of one by another and love of one by another are alike incomplete, but in their perfection Love and Knowledge are the same. Love for Bhagavan and Self-enquiry are the two ropes pulling the mind of his devotee back towards the Self.

The bhakti element of love and devotion is more prominent in the *Five Hymns to Sri*

Arunachala, especially in the first and longest of them, the *Marital Garland of Letters*, which has already been referred to. It is the great emotional support of the devotees, the supreme song of Divine Union where Love and Knowledge are fused as one.

"In my unloving self Thou didst create a passion for Thee, therefore forsake me not, Arunachala!" — Verse 60.

Apart from the books mentioned above, Bhagavan wrote a few short poems, some of them even humorous, as when, in parody of a poet's complaint against the stomach, he makes the stomach complain against the ego for overloading it and giving it no rest. He also wrote a few translations in prose and verse, mainly from Sri Sankara. And it should be mentioned as a sign of the high advaitic orthodoxy of his teaching that it coincides with that of Sankara.

His writings and translations have now been gathered together and published in a single volume as *The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi*.

Transformation

By Lama Anagarika Govinda

From the ocean arise
 the forms of wandering clouds,
Filling with life and shape
 the emptiness of space.
From the primordial source
 the forms of beings arise,
Filling with joy and sorrow
 the emptiness of the world.
The rivers unite the waters
 of wandering clouds,
The ocean unites the rivers'
 unresting floods.
The saint unites the changing
 forms of existence,
Unites and transcends the beings'
 sorrow and joy.

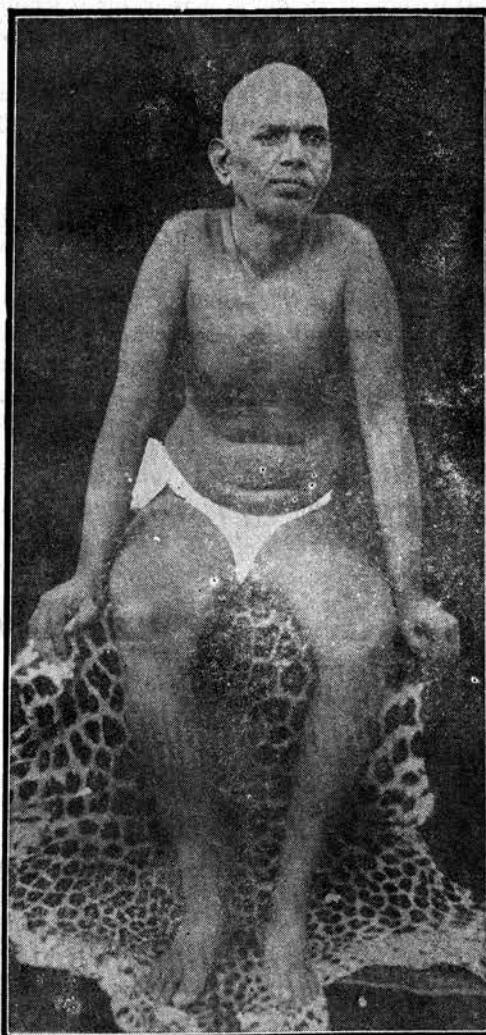
Uniqueness of Bhagavan¹

By

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan

BHAGAVAN was unique. He was unique in that He was not unique. What struck even a casual visitor to the Ashrama was Bhagavan's naturalness. He did not impress any one as if he were non-natural, even supra-natural. There was no affectation at all in Sri Ramana. Let me illustrate what I mean. In South India sadhus refer to themselves, while speaking, in the third person. They would say 'this was walking' or 'this wants to go there' while referring to themselves. They would not use the first person singular 'I'. But Bhagavan quite naturally used to say 'I go', 'I walk', 'I sit' and so on. One who has the experience of the plenary illumination constantly, naturally, has no use for such affectations. And always he used to behave in the most natural manner. There was nothing which would make others think that there was some unnaturalness about Bhagavan. But yet once in his presence there was no need for prompting from outside. One would be convinced in one's own heart that one was in the presence of the non-dual reality. Now, this was an experience that almost everyone had in the presence of Bhagavan.

He was an open book for all at all times. He did not make any distinction between what is private and what is public. So far as Bhagavan was concerned, there was no privacy. In those days, devotees used to be with Him in the small meditation hall all day and night. We used to sleep in the same hall where we used to sit during daytime. And He was a silent witness to all that happened around Him. Any one could walk in at any time. He was easily accessible not only to humans but also to animals. Squirrels used to play with him. The cow Lakshmi used to walk in at her own pleasure. The monkeys used to come into the Ashram without any let or hindrance. Bhagavan remarked about a trespassing cow : "Who is to be taken to



task? If you had no fence and the cow walked in through your garden, who was responsible for this, you or the cow?"

Bhagavan's love and grace knew no limits. In his presence there was no high and no low. All were the same. There was no distinction

¹ Based on a talk at Ramana Kendra, Delhi.

profusely. We had this need satisfied in the *avatara* of Sri Ramana. He did not move out of the limits of Arunachala. He did not talk profusely or read extensively. Day in and day out, most of the time, he was in silence. People used to come with long lists of perplexing questions formulated in their minds ; some of them, lest they might forget, used to write out those questions. But what happened ? When they came and sat before Bhagavan they forgot all about those questions. I happened to be present when Paul Brunton came. P. B. had seen other saints in India. He had written out the questions which he wanted to ask. He sat there for a long time without opening his mouth. The friend who had come with him had to prompt him. It was only then that he read out his questions. This was not an isolated instance. This was the daily experience. The questioning mind was silenced in His presence.

And what is the quantum of his "writings" ? But they are so potent that even a single line could transform the lives of people. Here, we have a middle course between silence and speech. Silently but surely the influence of Bhagavan is felt. No one could have thought some years ago that the influence would be felt so strongly in the capital of our country. But this is what is now happening all over the world. In Europe and America there are seekers, who when they get even a glimpse of Bhagavan's teachings feel that they have turned a new leaf in their lives.

What is, again, significant in Bhagavan's teaching is that it involves no mystification. There is nothing by way of creed. It is an open book of wisdom from which one could draw according to one's capacity. There is no narrowness or parochialism of any sort in the Master's teachings.

All the teachings of all the sages are put in a capsule form in this single *sloka*, *Hridayakuhara-madhye* which says that in the cave of the heart *Brahman* shines. He made known to *sadbakas* the *bārdavidya*. He was the one who discovered that the spiritual heart is the Self itself. The *bridaya* is the non-dual spiritual Self. There is no one who does not have the notion of 'I', the experience of 'I'. The 'I' is

manifest in the region of the heart. When a person refers to himself he points to the right side of the chest. The 'I' shines in the heart ; the Self is manifest in the cave of the heart. This manifestation of the Self in the form of 'I' is direct, immediate to every one. It does not require any belief, or faith or creed. One need not read Sastra to realise it. One realises it every moment. And the Upanisads tell us that in deep sleep one goes into it. Thus, one cannot deny oneself however much one might try. In a famous verse Sankara says : You can deny everything else, you cannot deny yourself. The Self is the very nature of the one who denies. It is this 'I' which is immediately, directly experienced in the region of the heart by every one ; but this Self is not realised to be the non-dual *Brahman* on account of ignorance.

There is no 'real'-ising the Self. Because the Self is real, you cannot realise or make it real. What is to be done is to unrealise the unreal. We imagine that this world is real, while in fact it is not. Today the scientists are approaching Vedanta through science. Nuclear physics tells us that even in the hardest piece of matter there is no hardness. If you can accept the evidence of the physicist that what you regard as a concrete piece of matter is not concrete after all, then from a higher level is there anything which is unintelligible or impossible in the proclamation of the Sage that the entire world is *Maya* ? *Maya* does not mean that there is no reality. In fact, the Self is the real and the world is only an appearance. And so, Bhagavan tells us that this *Abam-sphurana*, the 'I'-manifestation, is a pointer that, if we are judicious enough to discern the truth, we shall realise the identity of the Self with *Brahman*. This is what we have to experience. Self-realisation is no more than this. It is losing the individuality in the non-dual Reality. How is one to gain this ? What is the way ? *Hrdi visa*. Enter into the heart. Use the mind ; but there is a stage where you have to transcend the mind and be what you are always. You can throw off your body ; it is difficult to throw off your mind. It is with you all the time you are empirically conscious. You have to make use of it. It is in *jāgrat* that you have to perform the *sādhana*,

not in deep sleep. We have to work this out during our conscious moments, moments of wakefulness. And what functions in wakefulness is the mind which is to be made use of. Enter into the heart with your mind. The direct road is Self-Enquiry. It is by Self-enquiry that you have to reach the heart. But if that becomes impossible for the moment, then adopt the technique of surrender. If even for this your mind is not ready, practise *pranayama*. You begin at the physical, vital level. Bhagavan says in the *Upadesa-saram* that the source of both the vital principle and the mind is the same. By controlling the vital principle you can control the mind. Begin then with the practice of regulating the breath.

You will find the mind settling down through the practice of *pranayama*, and then you will be ready for the right royal road. Very often people consider *jnana-yoga* to consist in intellectual analysis. This is not so. It

is not intellectual speculation. Up to a point the mind can go ; but there it stops. Bhagavan has taught a simple mode by which one goes beyond mind. What is that mode ? The 'I-thought' is the first of all thoughts. All other thoughts arise after the I-thought. Only later on 'this', 'that' and 'the other' arise in your mind. Trace the source of the I-thought and the practice will reveal to you that the I-thought arises from the Self. Because we may not have either the competence or the time to go through the Sastras and discover the path ourselves, this technique is taught to us as it can be pursued by one and all at any time. This certainly is not an easy path. We must not delude ourselves by imagining that it is easy. It requires preparation, constant practice ; it requires all the other *sādhanas*. But along with those *sadhanas* the enquiry can be practised. And if the Grace of the Guru is there, we will be helped on this road faster than we may imagine.

To Muruganar

By Charles G. Reeder

The one who lived by the peepul tree,
whose sky unfolded from the leaves
as the wind rode through,
whose starveling buffalo-mother
grazed for her yearling
in the dusty yard,
who sat on the little stone porch
held only by an old, ragged dhoti,
his mind kiting beyond the worlds,
and calmly smiled when this dhoti
was beaten on the washing stone,
has climbed the Red Hill, and his
white wrapping cloth he gently
unfurled into a cloud.

The Call of Arunachala

By
Saniel Bonder

The call of Arunachala
is no call of destiny ;
it is the silent beckoning
of destiny's End.
There is nothing to be found
beyond its rugged slopes,
nothing to be sought.
After one arrives
at Arunachala,
destiny goes begging
in the streets, wearing
the torn and fading orange
rags of clouds whose sun
has set. After one arrives
at Arunachala,
never again to depart,
destiny lies down
to die, its face as
gaunt, its eyes as bleak
as those of the moon
at dawn. Like a
wrongly summoned genie
whose master has escaped,
it has nothing to do,
nowhere to go, no one
to turn or to turn to.
Its power is unavailing.

Its spell is shattered.
Scavenge as it will,
there is no one left
to prey on ; death will
be its last and bitter
morsel. Thus it is
no wonder that destiny
quivers in fright at
the gate of the Heart
when first one hears
the call of Arunachala.
What jailer would
respond differently,
having found the
Invincible One
Himself within
the walls ? Even his keys
are now useless. The Liberator
is indeed the prisoner himself,
unmasked. For Arunachala
is everywhere present ; It
beckons only to Itself.
Phantoms like destiny beat
wings of mist in vain
upon Its rocks ; for
the call of Arunachala
is the call of destiny's End.



What of us, after He went?¹

By

Wolter A. Keers

MOST of us here have at one time or another had the immense good fortune to meet a living Master, and to receive his *darshan*. Several of us have met Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi when his body was still with us ; some went to other masters, but the problem most of us have in common now is : Now that my Master is no longer here as a talking, visible being, I am lost ; and there seems to be no one who can enlighten me.

How did this occur ?

I may tell you immediately that I myself suffered the same experience. When I was overwhelmed by Bhagavan's all-pervading look, my whole world changed. Who was I— I then thought— ever to have imagined myself as a person sufficiently important to have problems . . . me . . . ! Now, the thing seemed solved once and forever.

But after Bhagavan left the physical body, gradually my old problems returned, and three or six months later, I felt desperately in need, once again, of someone who would show me where I went off the rails.

I feel that, basically, all of us here have made the same mistake. We have tried to return to the Experience that was (and no doubt still is) Bhagavan, without realising that the one who wants to get back to that Experience is precisely the one that makes the Experience impossible. In other words : if I, personality or ego, try to get back to impersonality, I am trying to find dry water or square circles. Impersonality, *Atma*, is the absence of the seeker. The presence of the Ultimate Experience, we saw as our Master, was at the same time the absence of the seeker . . . of the troubled and agonized ego.

But, when the Master's presence or his words no longer corrected us, we started to



seek happiness and peace for the ego or personality, instead of realizing that *ānanda* is the absence of ego or personality.

How may we overcome this difficulty ?

It is not too difficult, but it takes time. As we are all Europeans here today, I shall employ terminology to which we are used.

It is extremely important to see that our whole life is one gigantic projection. We don't see ourselves as we are or the rest of the world, as it is, but we see everything in the coloured interpretation of our ego-ism, i.e. of our defences. When we are sad, the entire world seems sad, and when we are happy, the entire world seems happy. In other words, we don't see the world, but we see our own standpoint projected left, right and centre.

¹ Based on an evening talk the author had with his friends.

As long as all kinds of fears are crowding the mind, I hate people whose presence reminds me of those fears, and I love people whose presence does not, so that the fears lie dormant, and I enjoy peace of mind.

But peace of mind is no peace at all — it is a mere absence of acute pain, but it is a sleepy kind of state. Peace, real peace or *moksha*, is absence of mind, and not at all a mind lulled into cosiness . . . nor is it what we call absent-mindedness in our daily speech.

I don't know if you were aware of the fact that I have just been quoting Ramana Maharshi, although not quite literally. He said : A sage or an enlightened being is a person without a mind.

In saying so, Bhagavan was in perfect accord with what all authentic Masters have been saying throughout the centuries, even before Sankara. But we cannot hear it often enough, as this little phrase contains the key to the problem we are discussing today.

Moksha is living without a mind — in other words without the slightest trace of a feeling that 'I am the thinker and the doer' and even without a trace of the feeling "I am not the thinker and not the doer". *Moksha* is the total disappearance of even the last trace of the feeling that I am somebody, positive or negative.

Is this not the key we have lost?

Most of us, instead of seeing through the fact that ego and personality are illusions, have gone in the opposite direction, and have started to polish them up to exercise them and make them purer. That is a foolish thing to do, because a golden chain binds us just as much as an iron chain, and I would rather throw away an iron chain than a beautiful golden one !

When you have an old chair in your house and you decide to get rid of it, are you going to paint it or wax it the moment before throwing it away ? Or try to teach it to talk ?

Let us try and see what Bhagavan and all authentic Masters mean when they tell us that freedom is 'being without mind'.

The baby and the sage have a lot in common. The main difference is that the baby grows into a state of ignorance as years pass by, whereas the sage is for ever free from all states (all states are states of ignorance !)

Even so, the baby is open awareness. In this open awareness appear such things as a feeling of emptiness here (in the stomach), and some pleasant or unpleasant sounds there (from the wall). Years later he will call the first thing 'hunger', the second thing 'the radio'. The baby does not know such words, and he has no idea that what he will later call 'hunger' is inside himself, and what he will later call 'the radio' is outside himself. In fact, he has not yet learnt to regard the body as himself. But when he grows up, he learns from his parents' reactions and later, when he learns to speak, from their words, that he is the mass of muscles, nerves and sense-organs, that one housed within his skin.

When the Master shows the disciple what he is and what he is not (*Tatwāpadesa*), the disciple is led in the opposite direction. Instead of learning that he is a body, a sweet or a naughty child, clothes, a character, activities of the body ("I walk, I swim" for instance), activities of the five sense-organs ("I see, I hear", etc.), intellect, memory, all kinds of social roles (I am a pupil, I am the son or daughter of . . .), and so on he now begins to review these situations in the light the Master has awakened in him, and gradually discovers, ever more deeply, that the Master's teachings are in perfect accord with truth : he is not all the things he was told he was. How can you be a large number of things in the first place — knowing fully well that you are one. How could you possibly be that ever-changing complicated image in your head that you call "my personality" ? How could you possibly be something that comes and goes within your supposed self ?

You are ever-present, the body comes and goes (in a dream you have a different body — in fact you may dream that you are a lion or an elephant) ; and in deep sleep there is no body to be seen at all ! But you, as presence, are there before the body shows itself in the morning, and after it disappears ; before the

awareness of clothes and of all kinds of properties arises, and afterwards. And you were also there, during their appearance as their silent observer, as their witness, whether you like it or not — you cannot help it, for that is what you are.

That is what we really are, at all times and everywhere : silent, witnessing presence. Before the eye as-it-were of this witnessing consciousness, all the rest comes and goes. I am that which remains without the slightest effort, just as wetness (remains) with water all the time and without the slightest effort on the part of water.

But we find ourselves in the absurd position of water which thinks that it is something else — let us say : a tree or perhaps steel or fire. A question then arises : What should water do to become wetness again, during the period of its ignorance when it thought it was steel or a tree ?

Of course ! The answer is not difficult : there is nothing the water has to do to become wetness again : it has never ceased to be wetness. But during a certain period of ignorance and illusion it was wetness-plus-the-idea-of-being-steel (or a tree, or fire).

In other words, the only thing that has to be done, is to get rid of the idea that we are something other than a witness — something, other than this conscious, witnessing Presence that-we-are, even when we foolishly think that we are Mr A or Mrs B.

This is precisely what Bhagavan and many other great Masters said in different words when they declared : Freedom, *moksha*, is living without a mind.

How ?

A mind is something personal. We talk about an opinion "in my mind", or we say that somebody must have been out of his mind.

Mind, in other words, is something we project upon the timeless conscious Presence that we really are. Mind is a trick, by which this Presence-Consciousness appears to be Mr A or Mrs B — a trick which suggests that instead of witness, there are ever so many

different things, and, worst of all, that we are these things (a walker, a swimmer, a thinker, a looker, a listener, a pupil, a neighbour, etc.), whereas, in fact, a child can see that in truth we are merely the silent witnessing presence, to which all these other things, states, are added from time to time, just as moving images are "added" to the still screen in the cinema.

In other words : To me, the silent, conscious, open, awareness-presence, are added waking-and-dream-states, landscapes, the feeling that I am a man or a woman, thoughts called memories, the idea that once I was five years old, the idea that next holiday I shall be in France, the feeling that there, a little lower, there is a feeling of hunger, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

We can, of course, begin straightaway by "un-I-ing" quite a lot of these things. A feeling called hunger need not at all be made into an ego as when we say that we are hungry or *I* am hungry. This arm moves just as well without the projection of an *I* into it in order to make it move.

But the most important thing to see very clearly is that there is no 'I' who is a doer, and no 'I' who is an experiencer.

Mind — or the idea or the feeling that there is such a thing (in my head for instance) — will disappear only when it is clearly seen that the little chap I project into my head and whom I call a 'thinker' is itself nothing but a thought or a feeling. There is no little fellow installed in my head.

Most important it is to see that there is nobody inside me, corresponding to characteristics. The personality is simply a complicated image, introduced after I started to believe that I am a body. I then start projecting 'bodies' also into my head and into my heart. They are a pure illusion. But we have learned to live with this illusion.

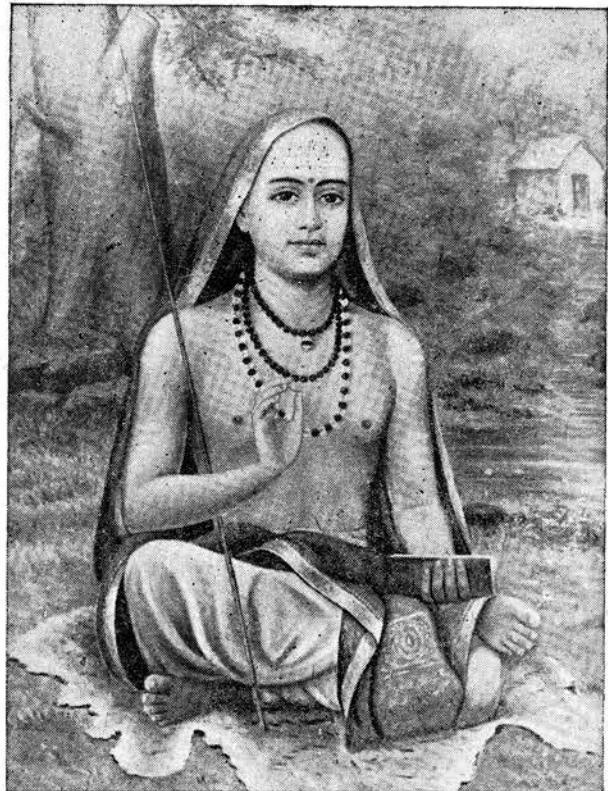
A friend of mine who is a psychiatrist, pointed out recently how most people maintain a kind of dialogue with themselves, all day long, as if one part of themselves could converse with another part of themselves.

The Dakshinamurti Stotra of Sri Sankara

By
N. Subramanyam

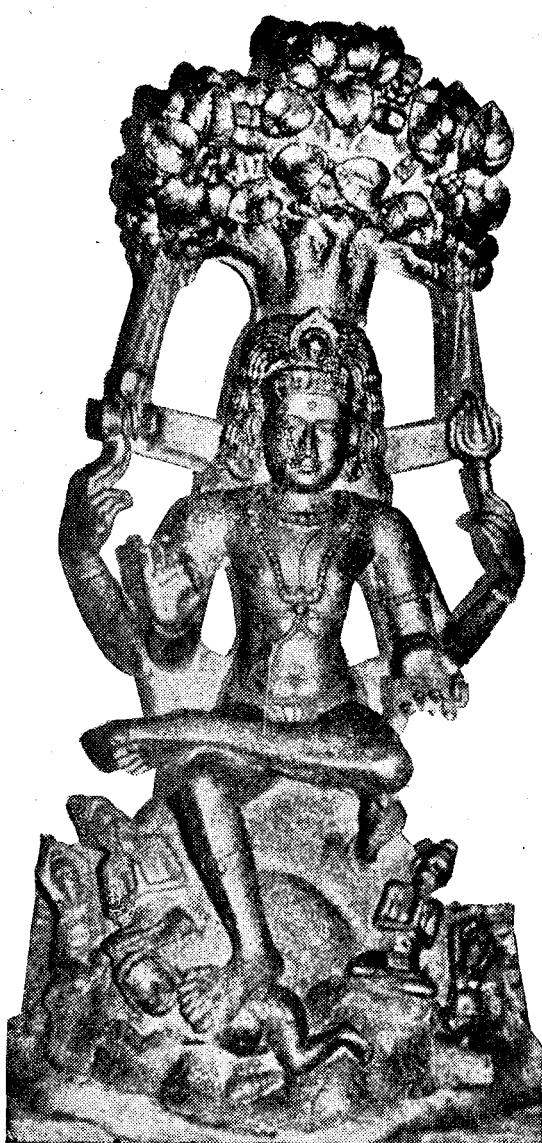
"A question and an answer occur only in the dual field ; in the non-dual there is neither question nor answer". — Panchadasi. II. 39.

THE source of this stotra seems to be the *Dakshinamurti Upanishad* (Krishna Yajur Veda) where some Maharsis, Sounaka and others assembled under a banyan tree proceeded to Markandeya and asked him the secret of his eternal life and uninterrupted happiness. Markandeya replied that it was knowledge of Siva Tattva ; the Upanishad proceeds to explain this esoteric knowledge from various angles, culminating in the Nirvana of a supreme knower of Brahman. Philosophy in the Upanishads, as Prof. N. A. Nikam says, arises as a question and lives as a dialogue. The Gita also follows the same pattern. The wisdom that makes an Upanishad is primarily in the question. He that asks a question seems ignorant, but it is an ignorance that is aware of itself and hence the starting point of knowledge. A good questioner and a good question are essential for a dialogue. "May we have a questioner like you, Nachiketas", says Yama in the *Katha Upanishad*. In the *Prasna Upanishad*, the Guru, Pippalada, even stops the disciples from questioning him straightforwardly ; but tells them to live with him for a year and then question him (if need be). And it is not always the disciple that asks the question. Like Socrates, Uddalaka, the Guru in the *Chāndogya Upanishad* asks Svetaketu, the son-disciple, a question to expose the latter's ignorance of his ignorance. But here in Sankara's stotra it is remarkable that there are no questions and therefore no answers. Yet, Sankara, being none other than the silent Guru Dakshināmurti, abandons his silence out of supreme solicitude and expounds the significance of his *mouna vyākhyā*, in ten verses.



Sri Sankaracharya

While admiring the Guru's '*mouna vyākhyā*' let us not overlook the equally important fact of the disciples' asking no question. The state of nishta visualised here is a profound one. The Guru and the sishyas are immersed in the *Brāhma Sthiti*, where there is neither a question nor an answer — '*Advaya Para Bhāvanā*' as Narayana Guru calls it in his *Atmōpadesa Satakam*, 72. (Ref. *Panchadasi*. II. 39 quoted above). This feature is



stressed in the invocatory verses ; but meanings are sometimes missed while chanting them mechanically. The nature of the disciples is elaborately described in the invocatory verses. The *antevaasis* (disciples) were *Varsishthaab* (advanced in age), *Rishiganaab* (seers), *Chinna-samsayaab* (free from doubts), *Brahma Nishtaab* (established in Brahman), *Muni Janaab* (tapasvins) and *Vriddhaab* (mature). The disciples were mature in knowledge and experience, seers themselves, free

from doubts i.e. free from duality (Ref. *Sankara Bhāṣya*—Gita V. 25), were in *Brahma Nirvanam*, were observing the discipline of silence and were advanced in age as well. No wonder they had no questions to ask. It is immaterial whether they became *chinna-samsayaab* (free from all doubts) before or after they met the Guru ; the point is that they had no questions. In the Upanishads philosophy is a dialectic movement towards Truth. But here the situation is entirely different. The Upanishads have been left far behind and Wisdom shines as *Svayam Jyoobi*. The distinction between the Guru and the Sishyas is only nominal, brought in as a methodological device for purposes of Upasana or prayer.

Talking about 'silence', a paradox indeed ! But then, *avidya* and *vidya*, bondage and freedom, run between paradox and tautology. Life starts as a paradox — the ever-free appearing bound as it were — ; and freedom lies in a tautology — the everfree seeming to be freed as it were. The *Māndukya Karika*, 11.32 emphasizes this — in reality there is nothing like bondage or freedom. The *Atma-anātma* link is a paradox and to say that Atma 'is', predicated existence of Atma, which had never ceased to be, is a tautology. Socrates, a philosopher of Being, was, it is said, 'afraid' to say "it is". We are in the same situation. Caught between paradox and tautology, the best solution seems to be 'silence'. The Self questions about itself, being always present as answer. The *Kena Upanishad* says, "sight reaches it not, nor speech nor the mind ; we know not nor can we discern how one should teach that ; for it is other than the known and beyond the unknown ; so have we heard from men of old who have declared that to our understanding."

And so we are led to the Tamil — *Summa iru sollara* [Be still without a word]. This may also mean — *Summa irusol ara* [in stillness, without dual talk]. Nachiketas' apparently simple question — 'some say it is ; some say it is not ; what is the truth about it' — underlines this dual talk and it took Yama a whole Upanishad to answer him. In Brahma Vidya the dialectic is not of mere opposites.

It is not 'either this or that', nor is it 'neither this nor that', nor a mere 'both'; it transcends all predication and so 'silence' alone can express it adequately. Ramana Maharshi was fully alive to this all-embracing silence. It is said that he even lost the power of speech for some time; and later when he did talk out of sheer grace, it was only in answer to an earnest enquiry; his speaking was a *Yajna*, a sacrifice.

This raises the question of the necessity of Sastras and Gurus. Being is freedom; to 'be' is to be free. So, mōksha, being swatath-śiddha (inherent) — how does it become a value, a 'sādhya' to be 'attained'. The fact is that man has yet to know what he really is. He has yet to overcome his fundamental 'ignorance', avidyā or māyā, the power of the Absolute that veils and distorts the true nature of reality and the true nature of man. This requires all the Sāstrās and all the Gurus and all the efforts.

The name of the Guru here, Dakshināmurti, carries many meanings. The Guru facing south implies Lord Siva seated in the Himalayas facing the rest of Bhāratavarsha lying to the south. The *Dakshinamurti Upanishad* gives some profound meanings. The Dakshina Mukha is Paramatma ever ready to give by

kevala mounavyākhyanam, Kaivalyam as a *Daksbiña*, as due to the devotee. (Mantra 4). He is Semushi — Supreme wisdom called Dakshina or Siva, ever displaying the wisdom — *Jyōti* of Brahman (Mantra 31).

Thus the picture presented here is a unique one where the disciples have no questions to ask and therefore the Guru has nothing to answer. Both are adoring the wonderful Absolute in silence — Santi, Nirviti: in *ananya bhāva*. Moreover the Guru is here relieved of a possible error. He may have, out of compassion, given an answer if the disciples had asked some questions. It is said: "measure not with words the immeasurable, nor sink the string of thoughts into the fathomless. Who asks doth err; who answers errs" Narayana Guru in his *Ātmōpadesa Satakam*, 97, says that chit-ghana Intelligence-solid is Akhandam having neither internal divisions nor an external boundary, and is of the nature of an ocean of silence and immortal bliss. It runs in Malayālam — *Akhandamām Chitgbanam, Mounaghanāmrutābdhi ābum*.

Such is the picture presented in the *Dakshinamurti Stotra*. One has to dive deep into the silence that binds the disciples who do not question and the Guru who does not answer, to find the Absolute.

The Perfect Question

By Wei Wu Wei

What Question?

WHO AM I?

Who is asking?

I am.

Is not that also the PERFECT ANSWER.

Mahayoga: The Direct Path of Self-Enquiry¹

By

Mahakrishna

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA opened to modern humanity, the Eternal and Direct Path of Self-Inquiry. This Path has been presented by the Master in a new form, appropriate to the conditions of our age.

The aim of the Direct Path is to aid the seeker conquer the powerful illusion of the profane ego and to abide as Perfect Being.

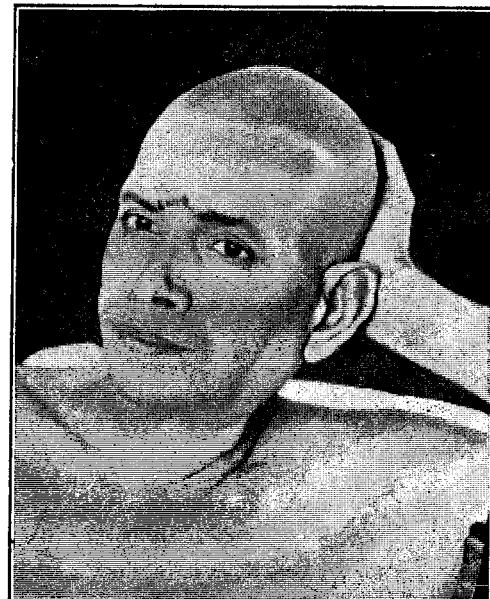
The Master's teaching cannot be labelled philosophy, for it does not embrace any speculation as to the nature of the Supreme Being. We should consider it as the fundamental base for the practice of the Way of Self-Realization.

Sri Ramana used a simple, everyday language in order to bring his teaching within the understanding of all earnest seekers.

The instruction is to this effect : We should constantly ask ourselves, 'what is my real being' ? I am not this physical body, always changing, nor am I these thoughts that come and pass through the mind, leaving me untouched. All my life I have had thoughts, emotions, and aspirations ; all of them have passed away and I remain the same. Then in reality, *Who Am I?*

This self-questioning is far from being an enigma. Bhagavan taught that we should meditate on the Heart the Center of Universal Consciousness. He insisted that this Center is that which we really are, the Supreme.

Every path requires two things of the seeker : purity of life and right effort. The Direct Path of Self-Inquiry was indicated by Bhagavan both as a pure and dispassionate way of life as a technique of meditation. "If anything should offend or please you," said Ramana, "ask who was offended or pleased".



Thus, through the technique of Self-Inquiry, the illusion of the "I" as actor is dissipated and it becomes possible to participate in day to day life without being affected by it, without attachment to it, and free from all distraction.

We find in practice that we cannot act at one moment as if we were the Supreme Being, and at another, the profane ego.

The consciousness of Being, even vaguely apprehended, always weakens egoism. Egoism, which expresses itself as vanity, envy, and desire, shows that the knowledge of Being is still in the mental plane. Thus we see the Eternal Path of Self-Inquiry clarifies and combines all paths.

Mahāyoga, the Eternal Path of Self-Inquiry, used to be followed exclusively by recluses.

¹ Part of a book under print.

Bhagavan made it a path to be trodden by all, according to the conditions of our time. He tells us, "No one need give up normal life." Renunciation would be meaningless if it consisted in exchanging the thought, "I am a householder," for the thought, "I am a recluse". For, what is necessary is to abandon altogether the thought, "I am the doer" and get normally established, in Pure Being."

This state of non-attachment is obtained by the practice of Mohāyoga, whether one is living in a quiet mountain retreat or in a busy city.

The external discipline the Path needs is constant vigilance. There is no need for any code of conduct, for it promptly dissolves the element of egoism in the seeker's actions and reactions.

The Grace of Bhagavan Ramana is complete . . . it does not exclude devotional practice, though he spoke very little about it.

He said, "There are two ways one may follow : either surrender yourself, or ask yourself. "*Who Am I?*" Even more explicitly, he told us, "Surrender your heart to me, and I shall annihilate your ego."

This does not mean just one more path, because devotion to Master clarifies for one the Direct Path. He has taught that the True Master is in the Heart of all and when the mind seeks Him, He responds immediately.

Bhagavan further affirmed.

"The External Master pushes the mind inwards, and the Master Within pulls it to Himself."

Bhagavan who is Grace itself flings open the path of knowledge to those who open their hearts to him.

Eventually, one finds that the External Master and the Internal Master are one and the same. Ramana himself has told us, "The Master is one, and the Path becomes very simple when the apparent duality is removed. Surrender is everything."

The Master said :

"Be still and Bhagavan will do the rest."

So the way is through surrender to the Supreme.

The direct Path of Self-Inquiry makes the mind submissive and humble. Only when the mind is thus calmed, the Absolute, the Internal Master within all of us shines forth.

All the techniques of Self-Liberation demand constant will-power, and after some practice, we begin to notice the fruit of our work. But this does not mean that we have attained Liberation.

Bhagavan has warned us that the ego which has forgotten the Supreme Being, even when it begins to perceive this Being, has not yet reached integration, that is, Self-Realization, due to tendencies long-accumulated lingering within the mind. And the ego always attaches itself to the body forgetting that it, in reality, is the Supreme Being. All obstacles on the path will be automatically removed and erased forever by means of constant inherence to the Self. Mahāyoga, the Direct Path is merging oneself at one's own source, without indulging in thoughts proceeding from the ego.

If, with the mind controlled and introverted, one questions "*Who am I?*", with a spirit of self-surrender the Universal Consciousness will reveal itself as Pure Awareness. Though the revelation is as "*I*" it is no longer the profane ego, but the Absolute Self itself.

The Direct Path of Self-Inquiry awakens spontaneous Love. Whoever opens his heart to Bhagavan and follows the path of Self-Inquiry taught by him is sure to feel the sweetness and strength of his Grace. He will never be abandoned, but the disciple on his part, should sincerely and earnestly follow the path taught by the Master.

Bhagavan's verbal instructions are only preliminary explanations. The real task begins when we take to practising it with unshakable faith in the silent Grace of Bhagavan.

THE SUBLIMITY OF ART

By

Prof. R. Sadasiva Aiyer

THREE are sculptured figures and features radiant with a beauty not of this world. One could never gaze long enough at the ineffable sublimity and grace alive in some Nataraja images. The *Prajnāpāramita* at Borobudor in Java has a grandeur beyond words. A similar majesty and layer beneath layer of meanings speak from the face and figure of Mahavishnu recumbent on the Serpent of Eternity in some of our temples. There are Chinese paintings with a profound spiritual quality. The great Cathedral builders of the Middle Ages, like the *Sthapatis* of our temples, spent a good few days in spiritual and moral discipline before laying the foundation-stone. Henry Brookes Adams, in his *The Virgin of Chartres*, gives an extract from a letter written by the abbot of a town in Normandy to the monks of Tilbury Abbey in England. It tells us of the deep piety of the people of Chartres and other towns who aided in the construction of the Cathedral at Chartres :

"The faithful of our diocese and neighbouring regions in their associations of workmen admit in their company no one unless he has been to Confession and has renounced enmities and revenges and reconciled himself with his enemies. That done, they elect a chief, under whose directions they conduct their wagons in silence and humility." The letter tells us how men and women of high rank and wealth "bent their proud and haughty necks to the harness" of heavily laden carts with building materials and workers' needs and provisions.

When a singer with a ravishing voice plays with the twenty-two notes (*swarās*) like a wizard — the notes linked to a refrain glorifying God, we are rocked in a sea of bliss, and then, the world and our little self cease

to exist to the rapt consciousness. Listening to church music of the highest order we have the same experience. But when the heavenly strains cease we are brought down to dull earth with its recurring cares and worries.

In India, down the centuries, there have been schools of dance cultivated and performed as an integral part of worship.

Poetry, and occasionally even prose, of a profound spiritual character, often the product of high creative imagination, constitute a large theme, and we can only glance in passing at some instances. Verses that came unbidden to a seer like Bhagavan Ramana in response to devotees' request or spontaneously from inner compulsion are rather rare. Who would dare to estimate their value? In Sadhana, devotional poetry and hymns have an indisputable place according to the aspirant's level and temperament; and they have the widest appeal.

Shakespeare was so steeped in the Geneva Version of the Bible that his outlook and vision underwent a "sea-change" and we have to bear this in mind to get to the heart of some of his tragedies and comedies. In them, his deep spirituality and compassion speaks to the listening ear, while the very voice of our Vedanta is heard in Prospero's words at the close of *The Tempest*, his last play. A word must be said about Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. No Character in any novel comes within near range of the moral and spiritual grandeur of Jean Valjean whose story it is.

There have been poets in the West who have experienced moments of absolute oneness with

the Supreme Being. Emily Bronte describes the mystic union beyond the gulf of anguish :

"Then dawns the Invisible,
the Unseen its truth reveals ;
My outward sense is gone,
my inward essence feels —
Its wings are almost free,
its home, its harbour found ;
Measuring the gulf, it stoops
and dares the final bound."

Often she speaks symbolically, and less often directly. Tennyson, as we see from his *Ancient Sage* and his letter to B. P. Blood, frequently from his boyhood passed into supreme trance, on repeating his own name a few times.

India's unparalleled epics, The *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* have, over the last two thousand years and more, influenced the spiritual and moral ethos of men and women. They rightly deem Sri Ramachandra, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman and Bharata as non-pareils of Dharma, compassion and devotion, while Hanuman is the sovereign type and ideal of the *bhakta*. Valmiki's art and mellifluous verse cast a magnetic spell on us.

The *Mahābhārata* cannot be mentioned without its being compared to the ocean and to an upsoaring mountain range, in respect of

the structural vastness and complexity of its characters. It has the supreme scripture of the *Bhagavad Gita* as its very core. If, in the dire hour of distress, Draupadi's harrowing cry to the Lord of Dwāraka for succour tugs at our heart-strings, the Lord's instantaneous response comes as a thrilling assurance of His saving hand to every pious soul in dark moments.

There is hardly a Vaishnava saint in South India whose fervour of devotion does not stem from the *Bhāgavata*; while Mira Bai in the North is not a solitary example. The incidents and episodes in it have a deep symbolic meaning. The thirty odd verses of Gajendra's prayer is the most philosophical of the many hymns with which it is studded like gems. In the *Bhāgavata*, the stories of saints like Prahlāda, Dhruva, Sudāma and others form a Milky Way.

The *Yoga Vāsistha*, from which Bhagavan Ramana often drew his illustrations, contains the quintessence of the highest Advaitic mysticism exemplified by stories like that of Chudāla, which in their pictorial and narrative art reveal creative genius of a rare order.

In contemplating the sublimity of Art which is beyond words the mind loses itself in the Eternal.

Ignorance conceals the pre-existent Knowledge just as water plants cover over the surface of a pond. Clear away the plants and you have the water. You don't have to create it; it is there already. Or take another example — a cataract grows on the eye and prevents a man from seeing; remove the cataract and he sees. Ignorance is the cataract . . . *Jnana* (Knowledge) is not something to be attained, it is eternal and self-existent. On the other hand, ignorance has a cause and an end. The root of it is the idea that the devotee is a separate being from God. Remove this and what remains is *Jnana*.

— *Sai Baba of Shirdi*

The Miraculous and Supernatural

By

Marie B. Byles

TELEVISION once showed a picture of a man lying on his back on a bed of nails with two planks across him and a tractor or some-such thing being driven over him on the two planks; at one time a wheel slipped off the plank and went over his body. As he stood up the interviewer asked him how he did it and how he felt. He said that he put his faith in the Almighty God and that he felt okay. Another film showed a man chewing up wine-glasses and saying he enjoyed eating them.

I cannot vouch personally for these two happenings. But it does seem that such strange and seemingly impossible things do occur with certain unusually gifted people, and that science is beginning to take notice of them and sometimes to give scientific explanations.

There are also the strange workings of astrology and psycho kinesis — as when a tensed hand is held over a compass and swings the needle in the opposite direction, and extra-sensory perceptions — as when the details of the sinking of s.s. *Titanic* were perceived thousands of miles away at the same time that it happened. And most envied of all are the miracles of healing both physical and mental. There have always been many of such healers. One of the best known is Agnes Sanford who wrote the well known *Healing Light*. And a less known mental-healer was the American Buddhist monk, Sumangalo, who unexpectedly found he had suddenly acquired the ability to cure mental disorders. Among these apparent miracle-workers we must place those gifted preachers who have the power to convert people from delinquency and drug addiction.

Let us then admit that these super-normal happenings are factual, and also that science is becoming increasingly interested, so that

we may well expect a widening of our knowledge.

The question we need to consider is whether it will make any difference to our social well-being if there are people trained to eat glass or even to cure people of drug addiction and delinquency. No supernormal talent in itself implies simple goodness and compassion which alone can bring about more harmonious relations between man and man and nature. True, some religious books assume the goodness of the healer and other miracle-workers, and assume that no one can be a saint unless he performs miracles. But are miracles any different from other supernormal happenings? Does what you call it make any difference? Those who now walk on fire for the edification of tourists, admit that it does not mean the same for them as it did when they performed the same act for the glory of God. But the fact remains that they outwardly achieve the same result as when they did do it for the glory of God. Those who examine these supernormal happenings from the scientific angle assume that the moral goodness of the doer has nothing to do with the matter.

And indeed why should we think that goodness or badness in the doer is important? After all the world is composed of and founded upon pairs of opposites. Therefore we cannot have white magic without black magic too, any more than we can have a positive without a negative. It is therefore obvious that a person who performs, say, a miracle of healing is not necessarily a good man or woman. For this reason it may or may not be inspiring to read about miracles or other abnormal happenings, which appear to be supernatural.

The supernormal happenings depend upon the natural talent of the individual who per-

forms it. It is not of any importance. The only thing that matters is whether it springs from love and compassion which alone can draw us above the pairs of opposites. To read of those who performed no miracles, but who did achieve this love and compassion is far more likely to be helpful and inspiring to ordinary people like ourselves.

Foremost among such ordinary people of whose thoughts we have a written record is the saintly Stoic emperor of Rome in the second century, Marcus Aurelius, who kept a record of his meditations. And that simple record has been the inspiration of millions all over the world. And yet he had no outstanding talents. He had only simple goodness and kindness springing from compassionate love and understanding of the oneness of all creation.

And another such was the simple Carmelite monk, Brother Lawrence of the 17th century, who performed no miracles except what the Buddha would call the only real miracle, that of a transformed life. He accomplished this merely by turning his mind to God and doing nothing but for the love of God. His whole being radiated serenity and love, and without any intellectual explanations his example transformed the lives of many.

Of course we must all use the talents we have been given and do the work that falls to our lot — being the emperor of a mighty empire, a cook in a monstery-kitchen, performer of miracles or healer of the sick. None is superior or inferior, and talents do not count. The way to compassion and enlightenment is the same for all. We cannot and should

not want to acquire supernatural talents we do not already possess, nor scientific knowledge beyond our normal capacity, nor even an inclination to harness these supernatural happenings or miracles. There are always specialists dealing with their particular fields. But we each have a built-in computer, as it were, which collects what is necessary for each of us according to our talents, if only we will let it work freely unimpeded by our predilections. One of the best ways of letting it work freely is to repeat in thought or if possible, in a whisper, what the Hindus would call a mantra, suited to one's individuality. Brother Lawrence's practice of the presence of God is a perfect example, for he would do nothing except for the love of God. By this means our whole being tends to get tuned-in with Cosmic laws and the harmony of the universe, whether we know them clearly or not.

Thus our individual talents get utilized by the internal computer and directed as migratory birds and fishes are. Then whatever talent, whether to perform operations without anaesthetics like the Philippine healers, or merely to wash dishes, our work will be well done.

Therefore let us read and learn whatever is helpful, but let us not be bewildered by or crave for supernormal powers. Let us be content with the Inner Light that has been given to us, remembering that the greatest of Masters like Buddha, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana have decried the craving for and display of supernormal powers as utterly detrimental to one's spiritual enlightenment.

Only the truly intelligent understand this principle of the identity of all things. They do not view things as apprehended by themselves, subjectively ; but transfer themselves into the position of the things viewed. And viewing them thus they are able to comprehend them, nay, to master them ; — and he who can master them is near. So it is that to place oneself in subjective relation with externals, without consciousness of their objectivity — this is TAO.

— Chuang-tse

Hindu Iconology—3

LORD NATARAJA

LIFE is a dance on the world-stage and we are all participants in the game. The dance-drama goes on and on in an unending cycle of birth and death. At some stage we wonder what it all means, or, rather feel tired out and wish that it comes to an end.

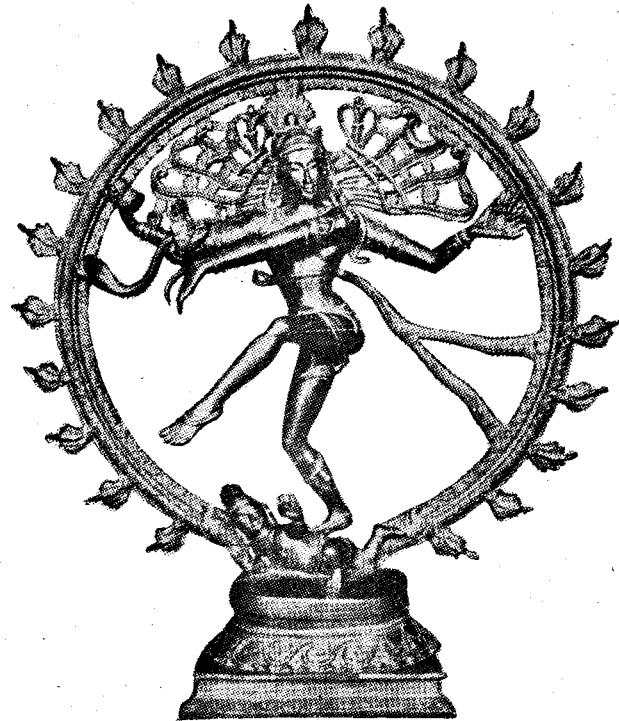
We are not free agents in the sense that we cannot know the game ourselves without aid and much less end it. The appeal to the author of this eternal movement, the Lord, is natural. This is best expressed in the following prayer : "O Natesa,¹ are you yourself dancing or dancing me dressed in the five elements ? You yourself dance . . . Enough of this illusion. I am also like you. I am of your nature. May I be (one) with you !"

The image of Nataraja is a perfect answer to this prayer. Siva appears as Nataraja or the Lord of Dance to teach the meaning of the world or life or our existence. And the Nataraja Shrine is an integral part of temples of Siva in South India. In the north, the image appears elsewhere, possibly in the facade to the temple.

Dance as a medium of expression is significant and unsurpassed. What cannot be conveyed through other means can be done adequately through this medium. In a relative sense the various parts of the human body such as the head, neck, hands, palms, fingers, hips, waist, legs and eyes can, by proper positioning and co-ordinated movements convey worlds of meaning. In particular the expression in the eye is a powerful means of communication.

Siva through compassion and grace appears as Nataraja and teaches the Truth by His Divine Dance.

Now for the details of the four-armed image of Nataraja : the drum is held in one hand and a pan of fire in another. The outstretched palm on one hand faces the onlooker straight in the face. And (the forepart of)



Lord Nataraja

another hand points to the left (upraised foot). The right foot is firmly placed on the back of a dwarf or demon, *Apasmāra*.

What do these signify ? Basically the drum represents creation. Creation means sound with its further implications. Having been created, the *Jiva* (individual soul) struggles in *samsara*. And this is due to ignorance or forgetfulness. This (ignorance) is symbolised by the dwarf below. In the struggle of *samsara* the *jiva* feels helpless. So the Lord assures protection (from fear) signified by the open palm. The *jiva* has to be helped to proper awareness by Divine Grace and he on his part has to surrender himself to the Divine.

¹ Another name for Nataraja.

This is the significance of the hand pointing to the left foot. The fire in the left hand carries the assurance that the egoistic tendencies and *karma* of the *jīva* will be burnt out. The destruction of ignorance is signified by the subjugation of the demon.

The flowing locks of Nataraja partly gathered into a bun or crown on top and otherwise let loose on either side add to His beauty. The long strands of hair are further beautified by the Ganga, the crescent moon, peacock feathers and flowers. Serpents and a human skull also adorn the locks. The three strands of *yajnōpavita*, the sacred thread, adorn the chest and *vibuti*, sacred ash, is smeared all over the body. Ganga signifies purity and the universal element of water. The moon symbolises beauty as well as growth. The skull with its expression of laughter is a telling commentary on the evanescence of life. Serpents denote the element of air.

The artistic bend of the legs, the symmetric position of the arms, the beauty of the crescent moon, the slight backward tilt of the head and the *tripundra* mark (three lines of sacred ash) on the forehead along with the third eye create a picture of utmost beauty. The whole image is a perfect aesthetic representation of beauty, poise and grace.

To crown it all there is the beaming smile on the face as the mark of Bliss elucidating that the Divine is by its very nature *Satyam* (Truth), *Sivam* (Auspiciousness) and *Sundaram* (Beauty or Grace).

The Dance of Nataraja is at once an act of Sport, an outcome of Bliss and the means of teaching the Truth. It brings out the five-fold activity of the Lord, namely, creation, preservation, destruction, veiling and unveiling the Truth.

Nataraja's Dance is particularly associated with certain sacred spots. The most important and the most famous of these is Chidambaram. Nataraja dances here in the golden hall of the immaculate heart. The *sanctum sanctorum* has a canopy of gold. It is also the hall of (empty) space (void or ether). The great sages Patanjali and Vyāghrapāda

were granted the vision of the Lord's Dance at Chidambaram.

The peculiarity at Chidambaram is that Nataraja is represented there as Pure Space or Awareness (at the *sanctum*). A series of metallic chains of varying length hang from above in a particular manner. The periphery or perimeter of these objects reveal in pure space the outline or contour of Nataraja's Form. There is of course the *vigraha* (image) also which is a picture of Pure Beauty.

Aldous Huxley's interpretation² of the concept of Nataraja is worth quoting : . . . Dancing in all the worlds at once. In all the worlds. And first of all in the world of matter. Look at the great round halo, fringed with the symbol of fire within which the god is dancing. It stands for Nature, for the world of mass-energy. Within it Siva, Nataraja dances the dance of endless becoming and passing away. It is His *lila*, cosmic play. His toys are galaxies, his playground is infinite space and between finger and finger every interval is a thousand million light years. Siva, Nataraja fills the universe, is the universe ; . . . follow the boundless stretch of those arms and the wild hair infinitely flying. Nataraja at play among the stars and atoms. But also, at play within every sentient creature, every child and man and woman. Play for play's sake. But how the playground is conscious, the dance-floor is capable of suffering . . . He dances because he dances, and the dancing is his *maha sukha*, his infinite and eternal bliss . . . The right foot is planted squarely on a horrible little creature . . . the embodiment of ignorance, the manifestation of greedy, possessive selfhood. Stamp on him, break his back ! And that is precisely what Nataraja is doing. But notice that it is not at this trampling right foot that he points his finger : it is at the left foot . . . That lifted foot, that dancing defiance of the force of gravity, it is the symbol of release, of *moksha*, of liberation. . . . Nataraja dances . . . in the world finally of Suchness, of Mind, of the Clear Light."

Nataraja dances for ever in the Heart of everyone as Consciousness and Bliss.

² from *Island*.

Bhagavan Ramana, the Lord of Love and Compassion

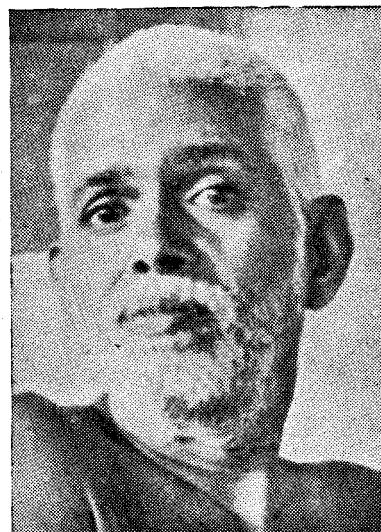
By

Jagannath Chattopadhyaya

TO many of us who have not had the good fortune to come in contact with Bhagavan Ramana while he was alive, his name conjures up before our mind's eye an austere and wise sage established in the profound peace and Silence of *Sabaja Samadhi*. To him even his body was a superfluous adjunct. As a *jivan-mukta* he did not advocate elaborate methods of *sadhana*. The pivot on which his entire teaching rests is the intense search for the source of the ego involved in the body, senses, mind and intellect. By means of this search one finds that the ego is but an accretion totally false and activated by the reflected light of the Self. And so the ego disappears together with all its adjuncts and in its place the real Self shines forth spontaneously. Bhagavan has said that we are ever the Self and so the only thing we have to do is the eradication of the ego by means of persistent and continued inner search for its source.

Though Bhagavan Ramana was thus an uncompromising rationalist and a perfect *Jnani*, he was full of love and compassion for all living beings. Here we are reminded of such a personification of unbounded love and compassion that appeared on earth in the person of Lord Buddha, the Blessed One. The following incidents in the life of Bhagavan Ramana will bring out clearly the operation of his remarkable grace on those who approached him in distress.

Swami Siddheswarananda has pointed out in his article in the *Golden Jubilee Souvenir* (of the Advent of Ramana at Arunachala) what a tender and melting heart Bhagavan had. He says that Bhagavan read for him a few lines from a Hymn of the Tamil Saint, Manikyavachakar and as he went on with it, he was choked with a very subtle emotion of *bhakti* and tears trickled from his eyes and



his face shone with divine radiance. This is all the more remarkable as Bhagavan is well-known for his rock-like inner stability. That he had a heart which melted in love was evident even before he left home. As he stood before Nataraja and the 63 Saints in the beautiful Temple of Sundareswara at Madurai he used to be over-powered by waves of *bhakti*. We learn from *Chaitanya Charitamrita* that Lord Gouranga (better known as Sri Krishna Chaitanya) underwent such an experience shedding tears of ecstasy on having a direct vision of Lord Jagannatha, as he stood near the Garuda Stambha (in the Puri temple) utterly oblivious of the world outside.

Bhagavan Ramana generally asked devotees who approached him not to think much about the sorrows and sufferings of the world as there was an almighty Power looking after all. So he advised them to turn the mind inward and engage themselves in one-pointed Self-enquiry. Yet in a few cases his compassionate nature asserted itself and he has alleviated the

sufferings of persons in distress even as Jesus did. There are cases which look like miracles, but they are nothing but the spontaneous operation of his grace. Here are a few such cases.

M. V. Ramaswami Iyer was a P.W.D. Supervisor who was a chronic dyspeptic for many years. He could neither digest solid food nor sleep at night. No treatment was successful in giving him relief. He became pessimistic losing all hope of recovery. At that juncture he came to know of Bhagavan Ramana and he went up to the Virupaksha Cave to have his *darshan*. The moment he saw him, he was convinced that he was a *Maha Purusha* endowed with divine powers. He fell at his feet and, getting up, addressed him : "Swami, Jesus and other great souls came to this world to redeem sinners. Is there no hope for me ?" Flashed forth from Bhagavan the reply in English : "There is hope. Yes, there is hope." As Iyer informed Bhagavan of his ailments, something strange happened. He felt a very soothing cool sensation spreading all over his system and the unhealthy heat which had been torturing him disappeared in a trice. He immediately felt restored to health. Soon after, a lady devotee came there to give Bhagavan and his devotees a rich *bbiksha* (feast). What happened then is recorded by M. V. Ramaswamy Iyer in his diary as follows : "As a dyspeptic unable to digest solid food, I was then living on *kanji* (gruel) alone. And so I declined the request of devotees to join them in the feast. But when Bhagavan himself asked me to join him assuring me that nothing wrong would happen, I yielded with pleasure. I took a full meal of rich food after many years. True to Bhagavan's words, I digested the food all right and had sound sleep that night. I regretted that I had not known of this miracle-man earlier and become his bond-slave for ever."

The case of Echammal, a lady devotee, is poignant and at the same time interesting. She had lost her husband and two children in quick succession. Disconsolate, she went on a pilgrimage visiting holy places and sadhus.

It did not bring about the desired result. After a futile search for peace, she happened to hear of Bhagavan Ramana and wended her steps to Virupaksha Cave on Arunachala with the intuitive feeling that she was after all nearing the goal of her search for peace. Transfixed she stood before Bhagavan and deep peace took possession of her, completely freeing her from prolonged depression of spirits. Then and there she dedicated herself to the service of Bhagavan and remained with him right up to her end. Though she had one or two more shocks afterwards, she was able to withstand them easily with Bhagavan's never-failing grace.

Bhagavan's love and compassion for mute animals — cows, dogs, monkeys and squirrels — are well-known. But very few know that he risked his own life to save a lamb and relieve the grief of its owner, a shepherd boy. We find this recorded as follows, by Sri Munagala Venkataramayya¹ in his *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* a magnificent compilation not to be missed by those interested in Bhagavan.

"During the period of his stay in the Virupaksha Cave, he and one Mudaliar Swami were walking together behind Skandasram on the Hill. A shepherd boy was found there weeping bitterly. Asked by Bhagavan what the matter was he replied that one of his lambs had fallen deep down a cleft in the rock before them. Bhagavan descended into it at once, took up the lamb over his shoulders and brought it up and delivered it to the shepherd boy. The boy was delighted. Mudaliar Swami calls it an unbelievably remarkable feat."

Bhagavan Ramana's life is replete with such incidents, most of them unrecorded. His heart was always brimming with love and sympathy for all living beings. No wonder that Eleanor Pauline Noye calls him *The Lord of Love and Compassion* !

¹ Known as Swami Ramanananda Saraswati after his *sannyasa*. I had the privilege of meeting him during my first visit to Sri Ramanasramam in 1962.

Four Devotees of Ramana

By

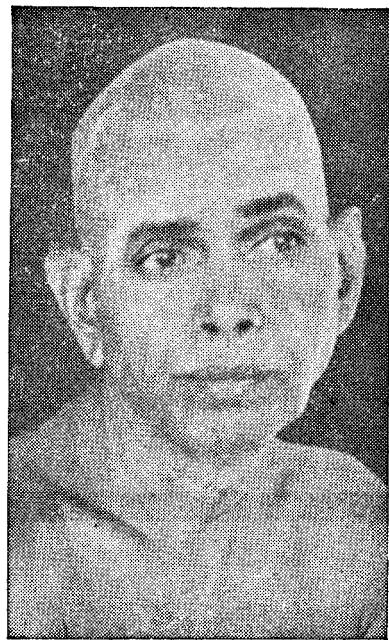
Visvanatha Swami

WHEN a remarkable embodiment of Light appears on earth it is usually accompanied by some others of varied talents announcing the advent of that Light, singing its glory and interpreting it to the world. So was it in the case of Bhagavan Ramana. One of the earliest to come under his influence was *Satyamangalam Venkataramana* who announced to the world the appearance of the Master through his immortal *Five Hymns in Praise of Ramana*. Though there is nothing further we know of this great devotee, there is internal evidence in those hymns full of devotional fervour of the unique operation of Ramana's grace upon him.

" Ramana is Sun, Moon and the stars revolving,
 Ramana is the gem-like light within all life
 Ramana is the God aswing on the Wheel of Revelations
 Ramana is the blissful Lord of the World of Jnana.
 " In a second he frees our mind of all thought
 And keeps it steady
 At the Feet of Siva, crescent-crested
 He struck my cheek with his glance of Grace
 Saying, ' Of what use are empty words
 Look here, Venkataramana, have the direct Vision
 Of the Self Supreme here and now '."

* * *

Next comes *Sivaprakasam Pillai* (of Chidambaram) who has given the world Bhagavan's teaching in a nutshell, in his *Who Am I?* the very first record of it. It is noteworthy that Bhagavan Ramana, then known as *Brahmana Swami*, was only 21 when he vouchsafed answers to Sri Pillai's questions constituting the text of this slender treatise



covering the whole range of essential spiritual knowledge.

Sivaprakasam Pillai was a well-balanced and sober man full of devotion, humility and understanding. He has sung in Tamil Bhagavan's life, his experiences with Bhagavan and in praise of him. These works are known as *Sri Ramana Charita Abaval*, *Anugraha Abaval* and *Sri Ramanapādamālai*.¹ There are some other works also by him, mainly devotional outpourings from the heart of an earnest spiritual aspirant.

* * *

Though *Muruganar* came to Bhagavan more than twenty years after Sivaprakasam Pillai, he holds a unique place not only as a dedi-

¹ An English translation of this song appeared in our April, 1972 issue, p. 89.

cated devotee but also as a poet of outstanding merit. He was a very good Tamil scholar and has served the cause of Tamil as a member of the Tamil Lexicon staff and as a teacher of Tamil. He was noted for his rectitude and even saintly nature. As a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi, he has sung in praise of him and his movement for national liberation and regeneration. Though married, he parted from his wife after making some arrangement for her upkeep. He was destined to see the fulfilment of his life's purpose by completely surrendering himself to Bhagavan Ramana, his Guru and God.

He came to Bhagavan first in September 1923 with a hymn praying for his Grace. Therein he has said : "You have now come to bless poor me even as Siva appeared to bless the great Manikyavachakar at Tiruperundurai". He decided to stay permanently with Bhagavan and composed hundreds of hymns on the lines of the *Tiruvāchakam* of Manikyavachakar, a singer-saint for whom he had the highest regard.

It was at the request and prayer of Muruganar that Bhagavan wrote his *Upadesa Sāram* (Quintessence of Teaching), *Ulladu Nārapadu* (Forty Verses on Reality) and the song on *Ātma-Vidya* (Self-Knowledge). Muruganar became spiritually mellow by virtue of his devotion and Bhagavan's grace. His *Ramana Sannidhi Murai* is a devotional work of great variety and of classic quality. And he has versified Bhagavan's teachings and given it the name, *Guru Vāchaka Kovai*. A translation of this work has been appearing in *The Mountain Path*, under the title 'Garland of Guru's Sayings'. Muruganar has sung about the grace of the Master and his own experience in his *Ramanānubuti* (Ramana-Experience). His was a life completely dedicated to Bhagavan and many have profited by their association with him. He spent the last years of his life within the premises of Sri Ramanasramam. Absorbed by Bhagavan on August 28, 1973, he is resting at the foot of Arunachala serving as an example for devotees of Bhagavan Ramana.

* * *

We are now coming to *Ganapati Muni*, the most striking figure of tapas and varied talents in the galaxy of Ramana-devotees. It was he who announced to the world the advent of the Master through his Hymn of 21 Verses² (*Ramana-Ekavimsati*) giving him the name Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. Here is a brief life-sketch of that great man loved and adored by all devotees of the Master.

Ganapati Muni was born in November 1878 (about a year before Bhagavan) in a village Kalavarayi near Bobbili in the Vizag District of Andhra Pradesh in a middle class Brahmin family, well-educated and cultured. Glimpses of his future brilliance were witnessed even when he was very young. He had mastered the whole range of Sanskrit literature and grammar, the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Mantra Sastras, Tantras, Astrology and Ayurveda (medicine) — even in his teens. He had been initiated into some Mantras including *Sivapanchakshari* and *Sri Vidya* and he had resolved to dedicate his life to tapas in order to redeem his motherland and restore her ancient glory.

Though married very early, he left home for tapas in his nineteenth year³ and engaged himself in rigorous tapas on the other bank of the Ganga at Vārānasi, at Tryambakam (near Nasik) at the source of the Godavari and in other places. In the midst of his pilgrimage of tapas, he happened to visit Navadvipa (Nadiad), a famous centre of Samskrit learning in Bengal and had the title *Kāvya Kanta*⁴ conferred on him by a body of veteran scholars in appreciation of his profound knowledge of various branches of learning and his gift of extemporization.

After this short holiday from his main pursuit in life he returned to it with added zeal

² This, with added verses, became the *Forty Verses in Praise of Ramana*, arranged by Bhagavan himself and recited at his Shrine of Grace at the beginning of the morning Vedic-chant.

³ Later, he lived with his wife, Visalakshi, and had a son and a daughter by her; later still, the wife became the companion in tapas of her renowned husband and a co-devotee of Bhagavan Ramana.

⁴ *Kāvya Kanta* literally means one who has poetry in his throat; it signified extempore versification of excellent quality.

and finished the japa of one crore of *Sivapāṇākshari* at Kancheepuram. There he came to know of Arunāchala as an ancient and reputed sacred place of Siva, where the Hill itself was looked upon as a special manifestation of Siva, a Siva Linga. He wended his steps to Tituvannamalai and pursued his tapas with his usual vigour and concentration. As part of his tapas, he composed Hara-Sahasram, a thousand verses on Siva and read it to an assembly of devotees and scholars gathered near the big Bull (Nandi) in the temple of Arunachaleswara.

After this, by chance, he met Bhagavan, who was then known as *Brahmana Swami*, somewhere on the Hill and recognized in him at once a spiritual adept (*siddha-purusha*) of the highest order. Yet he waited for an inner urge before accepting him as his Master. This came to him irresistibly in November 1907, when the great Beacon Festival of Arunachaleswara was going on. On the afternoon of the eighth day of the festival he went up to the Virupāksha Cave. Finding the *Brahmana Swami* seated there all alone, he fell at his feet accepting him as his Master and asked him about the real nature of tapas, as he felt that he had not understood it, despite his great learning and spiritual efforts. The Swami, after looking at him in silence for some time, told him that by constant search for the source of the root-thought 'I', the mind would get absorbed there, that the spontaneous glow of pure awareness there was real *tapas* and that one could achieve the experience by watching the source of the inner sound-vibration of any mantra. It was not a mere intellectual statement; it gave Ganapati Muni the vivid experience of which the Master was himself the living exemplar. And the great scholar greeted his Master by the name, Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, by which he is now known all over the world. In a verse composed many years after, Ganapati Muni has confirmed this fact of his sudden illumination at the feet of his Master : "I bow to the lotus-feet of my Guru, Ramana Maharshi, who revealed to me the Divine, resplendent beyond the veil of nescience."

Thanking the Mother of the Universe for blessing him with such a Master he wrote a

thousand verses in praise of Her known as *Umā Sahasram*. The last two hundred verses of this collection of hymns were dictated by the Muni in quick succession to five or six amanuenses in the presence of his Master in the Mango-tree Cave on Arunāchala within a few hours at night. Bhagavan who was seated there with closed eyes felt that he himself was dictating the verses and told him so as soon as it was finished. The Muni felt and expressed his gratitude to his Master for thus enabling him to finish that work at the appointed time, for it had been fixed to be read before an audience the following day. Bhagavan has, on several occasions, praised it as a remarkably unique feat, impossible for any one else. *Umā Sahasram* is considered to be the *magnum opus* of the Muni for the wide range of subjects covered therein, its devotional fervour and poetic excellence. Ganapati Muni has composed two more collections of hymns in praise of the Mother known as *Indrāni Sapta-sati* (700) and *Prachanda-chandi Trisati* (300). These magnificent poems are replete with secrets of the Vedas, Tantras and spiritual experiences of the Muni himself, systematically arranged.

Bhagavan Ramana's Teachings have been incorporated by the Muni in a small treatise of three hundred verses divided into eighteen chapters known as *Ramana Gita*. It is mainly a work of practical guidance on the spiritual path, throwing light on abstruse points such as the Heart and the severance of the heart-knot, and enriched by brilliant verses in praise of the Master as well. It was at his request that Bhagavan wrote in Samskrit the five gem-like stanzas in praise of Arunachala, known as *Arunāchala Pancha Ratnam*. Besides writing a lucid commentary in Samskrit on Bhagavan's *Upadesa Sara*, he has rendered into delightful Samskrit verse Bhagavan's *Forty Verses on Existence (Ulladu Narpadu)* giving it the name, *Sat-Darsanam*.

There are many more works given to the world by this remarkable genius. In his *Visvamimāmsa* he has discussed all important topics of religion, Vedic and Upanishadic, and thrown light on them. In his *Mahāvidya Sutram* we find a very clear analysis of the ten im-

portant aspects of the Divine Mother in the light of Vedic revelations. He has written a work on *Raja Yoga* known as *Rajayogasara Sutram* and also works on astrology and Āyurveda. There is an unfinished novel also by him, *Pūrṇa*, unique in its style and subject matter in the whole range of Samskrit literature. *Bharata-Rahasyam* is his research work on *Mahābhārata* and *Samrājya-Nibandhanam* envisages his idea of the constitution appropriate to India, with all its details.

He was a staunch follower of the Vedic tradition and has clarified Vedic concepts of Agni, Ganapati, Indra, Vayu, Surya and Vishnu in his *Gita-Māla*. There are two hymns in it in praise of the Mother, the *Ambika* and *Renuka Gitams*, one in praise of the Master and another describing in brief various paths of yoga. He has initiated many in Vedic and Tāntric Mantras and has expatiated on the truths underlying the Vedas and Tantras. Collecting the Names of Indra from the whole of Rig-Veda he composed a Hymn of 108 verses containing a thousand names depicting the various aspects and attributes of Indra. The remarkable thing about it is that there is not even a word other than the Names, nor even an expletive to meet the exigencies of metre in it and that every hundred ends at the end of a verse and not in the middle as often found in other Litanies of Thousand Names.

He was, like his Master Ramana, very friendly and helpful to every one who approached him, unmindful of their shortcomings or lack of intellectual or spiritual qualifications. This generous trait in both of them bound to their feet for ever all those who came in contact with them.

The one memorable thing about Ganapati Muni is that he was ever glowing with *tapas* and that he had a remarkable experience of the rising of *Kundalini*⁵ from *Mulādhāra*, culminating in the opening of a way out through the crown of his head establishing thus a perennial contact with cosmic *Prāna*. This is what is known as *Kapālabheda* in yoga,

experienced by some yogis during their last moments but very rarely while alive. The two well-known channels of spiritual experience are the one connecting the Heart and *Sabasrāra* and the other connecting the *Mulādhāra* and *Sabasrāra*. Ramana and Ganapati are Masters of these two paths and both of them got their experiences by pure grace and grace alone in a flash ; and their coming together is significant of the ultimate unity of these two seemingly different paths. Ganapati is the Lord of *Mulādhāra*, the Lord of *Siddhi* (accomplishment) and *Buddhi* (all-knowing acumen of intellect) and Ramana is the Lord of the Heart of Pure Awareness, comprising all. The ever-vibrant static and dynamic aspects of spiritual unfoldment are represented by these two great Masters, who are revered, therefore, as the very embodiments of Ganapati and Subrahmanya, the two sons of Siva.

One word more. It is not as if Ganapati Muni's aspiration for the redemption of his motherland has not seen fulfilment. The fact is that Bhagavan Ramana made him stick on to his *tapas* with complete self-surrender, for such tapas would, by its inherent power, bring about the goal desired and there was no need for the *sadbaka* engaging himself in any external activity ; suitable instruments would appear on the scene and fulfil the divine plan. One who keeps for ever in tune with the Divine Will, by that actionless Action alone, will be doing the greatest good for all.

Ganapati Muni passed away at Kharagpur on July 25, 1936. When the telegram came, Bhagavan held it in his hand and said : "A shock. *Nāyana*⁶ has passed away !" Again, he said : "Has he ?" indicating that he was ever with him. And again with tears rolling down and a wave of his hand, he exclaimed : "Where are we going to see the like of him !"

⁵ This experience came to him unsought, by sheer divine grace, as he was proceeding to Tiruvannamalai to stay at the Feet of his Master early in 1922, and the next one during his stay there.

⁶ This is the name by which Ganapati Muni was familiarly known and addressed by Bhagavan and others.

THE SAGE'S BODY

By
Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy

In this article Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy (who is no more) gives an account of his experiences as the 'official photographer' of the Ashram. As confirmed by Sri Bhagavan himself therein the Divine assumes a visible, physical form out of Grace to give solace and guidance to devotees. The importance of Sri Bhagavan's pictures to us is therefore obvious. As a mark of respect to the remarkable services of this devotee who did the work of photographing Sri Bhagavan as a labour of love we have brought out a special frontispiece this time containing pictures taken by him. An obituary note on him appears elsewhere in this issue.

OWING to my busy life in Madras I could usually spend only a day or a part of a day at Tiruvannamalai when I went there. I always took my camera with me and I used to spend the whole time with the Maharshi and take as many photos of him as I could. I was afraid he would get annoyed at my persistence, but he never did. I have photographed him walking, sitting, eating, wiping his feet. I have caught him smiling and laughing, speaking and silent, and also in *samādhi*. Once he was going up the Hill when it started to rain and he was offered a home-made palm-leaf umbrella and I snapped him using it. I took another picture of him using an ordinary umbrella and smiling broadly as he did so.

Sometimes I used to wonder if it was not ridiculous of me to pay so much attention to photography when his teaching was that "I am not the body". Was I not chasing the shadow and even trying to perpetuate it? At the time I paid very little attention to his teaching. I was attracted only by the beauty and grace of his person. It gave me immense pleasure to take pictures of him. He was more important than his teaching.

Later, when he was no longer bodily with us, I turned to his teaching; and then I found



Dr. T. N. K. with Bhagavan

that the Grace of his Presence had prepared me for it. I had been attracted to him as a child is to its mother, without knowing why, and I had derived sustenance from him as a child does from its mother. I was glad afterwards that I had enjoyed his Presence so fully when he was bodily with us. The following little incident shows how he himself approved of people worshipping the physical form assumed by the Divine.

One day I was walking on Arunachala with the Maharshi when he stopped and picked up a small stone from the path and held it out to me saying : "Someone from abroad has written asking for a stone from the most sacred part of the Hill. He does not know that the whole Hill is sacred. It is Siva Himself. Just as we identify ourselves with a body, so Siva has chosen to identify Himself with the Hill. Arunachala is pure Awareness in the form of a hill. It is out of compassion to those who seek Him that He has chosen to reveal Himself in the form of a hill visible to the eye. The seeker will obtain guidance and solace by staying near this Hill."

Introduction to Mystical Reading

By

E. M. Abrahams

"The Mystics are the pioneers of the spiritual world, and we have no right to deny validity to their discoveries, merely because we lack the opportunity or the courage necessary to those who would prosecute such explorations for themselves".¹

— Evelyn Underhill.

THE self-validating certainty of direct awareness", says Aldous Huxley, "cannot in the very nature of things be achieved except by those equipped with the 'astrolabe' of God's Mysteries'. If one is not oneself a sage or Saint, the best thing one can do, in the field of metaphysics, it to study the works of those who were and, who, because they had modified their merely human mode of being, were capable of a more than merely human kind and amount of knowledge".² Huxley called mysticism the only method yet discovered for "the radical and permanent transformation of personality".

In view of the nature of the subject, one is apt to ask, "why should I read books on Mysticism?" "Can reading make me a Mystic?" It is not easy to answer these questions. But a quotation from Joel Goldsmith's article, "Starting the contemplative Life" will be helpful.

"The question is not one of attaining at first that degree of illumination which would set one up as a spiritual teacher, but how to attain sufficient illumination or enlightenment to be able to free oneself from the discords and inharmonies of human living and build up within oneself a spiritual consciousness that would not only lift one above the world's troubles, family troubles or community troubles—but enable one to live one's normal human, family, business or professional life and yet be inspired, fed and supported by an inner experience or inner contact".⁴

In spite of the tremendous power of mysticism to change personality, most psychologists have almost wholly left mysticism out of their studies ; remarks about mysticism, if made at all, are apt to be disparaging. What we are concerned with is the question : "What leads one to study a subject like mysticism?" Often a single sentence one comes across in the course of reading is enough to spark off one's interest. At other times it is an article or a complete book. In my case it was a book: *The Perennial Philosophy* by Aldous Huxley. Huxley preaches "non-attachment" as the means to union with the spiritual reality underlying the phenomenal world. "Good is what makes for unity.... Evil is the accentuation of division, pride, hatred, anger—the essentially evil sentiments — because they are all intensifications of separateness."

For the reader willing to grapple with first sources, there could not be more fertile ground than this anthology with comments.

So many books have been written by mystics and on mysticism that it would be well nigh impossible to even compile a bibliography of such books, leave alone reading them. This is due to the vastness of the subject as well as the limitations imposed by ignorance and the inaccessibility of relevant books. As a lay reader I, therefore, made an arbitrary choice. I chose *One Hundred Poems of Kabir* and *Thought and Vision*. Such books, read at one sitting, are opt to satiate the appetite. They should be sampled and savoured, not wolfed. Miss Underhill has written a masterly introduction to the book. "In these poems", she says, "a wide range of mystical emotion is brought into play : from the loftiest abstrac-

¹ *Mysticism*, p. 4.

² An old instrument for taking altitudes.

³ *The Perennial Philosophy*, pp. 5-6.

⁴ *The Mountain Path*, July 1965, pp. 172-76.

tions, the most other-worldly passion for the Infinite, to the most intimate and personal realization of God, expressed in homely metaphors and religious symbols drawn indifferently from — Hindu and Mohomadan belief. It is impossible to say of their author that he was Brahman or Sufi, vedantist or Vaishnavite. Kabir belongs to the very small band of mystics who have achieved that which we might call the synthetic vision of God.”⁵ Listen :

“ Oh, how may I ever express that secret world ?
 Oh, how can I say He is not like this,
 and He is like that ?
 If I say that He is within me, the universe
 is ashamed ;
 If I say that He is without me, it is falsehood,
 He makes the inner and the other worlds to
 be indivisibly one .
 The conscious and the unconscious, both are
 His footstools.
 He is neither manifest nor hidden,
 He is neither revealed nor unrevealed ;
 There are no words to tell that which He
 is ”.⁶

From Kabir to Rumi, Attar, Ansari and the other Sufis was just one step. All of them have left behind delectable poetry. Arberry, Edwin Arnold, E. G. Brown, Sir William Jones, R. A. Nicholson have produced admirable translations.

Listen to Arberry’s translation of Rumi’s “Descent” :

“ I made a far journey
 Earth’s fair cities to view
 But like to love’s city
 City none I know

 How I would tell
 How thither thou mayst come :
 But ah, my pen is broken and I am dumb ”.⁷

Unless one is inclined to make a deep study of Persian Mysticism, it would be better to restrict oneself to anthologies. A very fine anthology, published in Everyman’s Library, includes translations of Persian poetry by Arberry (the editor), Sir Edwin Arnold, Fitz-

gerald, Sir William Jones, Alleyne Nicholson and other scholars.

Next I chose Evelyn Underhill’s two books, *Practical Mysticism* (A little Book for Normal People), *Mysticism* (A Study in the Nature and Development of man’s spiritual consciousness), F. C. Happold’s *Mysticism* (A study and an Anthology) and *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* by Gershom Scholem.

These books are easily available and they make easy reading. Although Miss Underhill is scholarly enough to satisfy the most erudite, she is also refreshingly practical and lucid. She writes for the average man and shows him how mysticism helps to solve his problems, how it harmonises with the duties and ideals of his active life.⁸

“ What this book will do for you is to cleanse the doors of perception, so that everything will appear to you as it is Infinite swept of its cobwebs, prejudice, cowardice and sloth.”

Happold’s *Mysticism* forms a good companion volume to Miss Underhill’s *Practical Mysticism*. The first 120 pages are devoted to a study of Mysticism. The next 250 pages contain an anthology of, *inter alia*, The Upanishads, the Gita, Plato, Dante, Eckhart, Ruysbroek, William Law, St. John of the Cross, and Julian of Norwich.

The Anthology omits the rich vein of Jewish mysticism. Those interested in Jewish mysticism should read *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, by Gershom G. Scholem (Schocken Books, New York). It concentrates upon the idea of the living God who manifests himself in acts of creation.

The achievements of Scholem in the sphere of Jewish thought and scholarship are unique. He has reclaimed a derelict area and tried to apply to it the strict standards of historical research. To him we owe the restoration of the Kabbalah to its rightful place in history

⁵ One Hundred Poems of Kabir, p. VIII/IX.

⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

⁷ The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and other Persian Poems, Edited by A. J. Arberry (Everymans, pp. 49-50).

⁸ Practical Mysticism, p. xi.

and religion, both within the realm of Jewish studies and mysticism in general.

"The mystical approach does not come naturally to anyone schooled in a *monotheistic* creed. It is, on the other hand, the very stuff and substance of the religions that have grown up in India".⁹

Jewish mysticism then has to be studied in the light of the definition given by Prof. Scholem, "It is well-known", he says, "that the autobiographies of great mystics, who have tried to give an account of their inner experience in a direct and personal manner, are the glory of mystical literature The Kabbalists, however, are no friends of mystical autobiography..... They glory in objective description and are deeply averse to letting their own personalities intrude into the picture . . . It is obvious that the absence of the autobiographical element is a serious obstacle to any psychological understanding of Jewish Mysticism ",¹⁰

The Second difference he emphasises is that "Kabbalism is distinguished by an attitude towards language which is quite unusually positive. Speech reaches God because it comes from God ".¹¹

Unlike other scholars, Prof. Scholem studies mysticism in its historical context. In fact, religion and mysticism have a meaning only when they are viewed in the proper historical perspective. "Thus the exodus from Egypt", he says, "the fundamental event of our history, cannot according to the mystic, have come to pass once only, and in one place ; it must correspond to an event which takes place in ourselves, an exodus from an inner Egypt in which we are slaves. Only thus conceived does the Exodus cease to be an object of learning and acquire the dignity of immediate religious experience. In the same way, it will be remembered, the doctrine of "Christ in us" acquired so great an importance for the mystics of Christianity that the historical Jesus of Nazareth was quite often relegated to the background."¹² "One final observation should be made" writes the Professor, "on the general character of Kabbalism as distinct from other non-Jewish forms of Mysticism. Both histo-

rically and metaphysically it is a masculine doctrine made for men by men. The long history of Jewish mysticism shows no trace of feminine influence."¹³

For a comparative study I went to Zaehner's books, *Mysticism, Sacred and Profane* and *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*.

For those interested in the study of mysticism, Zaehner's two books are a 'must', for he is hard-headed in a field where fuzziness is endemic. He rejects the lax definition of mysticism as a "constant and unvarying phenomenon of the universal yearning of the human spirit for personal communion with God."

W. T. Stace's *Mysticism and Philosophy* is known for its bold and precise presentation of the more strictly philosophical questions raised by the subject of mysticism. Few books have been more successful in this regard. Stace is a very lucid writer. He has done the subject of mysticism a very great service by raising sharply the more distinctly philosophical questions it presents. However, all may not agree with the author's solutions.

Aldous Huxley's advice should be borne in mind :

"There have been published, in recent years, vast numbers of books dealing with meditation and contemplation, yoga and mystical experience, higher consciousness and knowledge of Reality. Many of these books were written by people with excellent intentions, but lamentably ignorant of the history and science of mysticism, and lacking any genuine spiritual experience. In other cases the authors did not even have good intentions, but were concerned not in the least with the knowledge of God, but with the exploitation of certain yogic and mystical practices for the purpose of getting wealth, success and physical well-being. Such books, whether merely silly, ill-informed and 'phoney', or downright bad and pernicious, should be avoided at all cost."

⁹ *The Teachings of the Mystics*, p. 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 15/16.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 19/20.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

MYSTIC EXPERIENCE

The following are quotations from Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism*, selected by **MADAN MOHAN VARMA**.

MYSTICISM is the innate tendency of the human spirit towards complete harmony with the transcendental order."

"Mysticism, in its pure form, is the science of the ultimate, the science of the union with the Absolute . . . The mystic is the person who attains this union, not the person who talks about it. Not to *know about*, but to BE, is the mark of the real initiate."

"God is designated one to suit our comprehension, not to describe his character. His character is capable of *division*. *He himself is not . . .*"

"To say that God is Infinite is to say that He may be apprehended and described in an infinity of ways. The Circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere, may be apprehended from every angle with a certainty of being found."

"The true mystic, so often taunted with 'a denial of the world', does but deny the narrow and artificial world of self : and finds in exchange the secrets of that mighty universe which he shares with Nature and with God . . . Life now whispers to his life, all things are his intimates, and respond to his fraternal sympathy."

"The essence of the mystic life consists in the remaking of personality : its entrance with conscious relation with the Absolute."

"If God gives to a man all the gifts which the saints possess, and all that He is able to give, but without giving Himself, the craving desire of the spirit would remain hungry and unsatisfied."

"The Unitive Life, though so often lived in the world, is never of it. It belongs to another plane of being . . . and hence eludes the measuring powers of humanity. We, from the valley, can only catch a glimpse of the true life of these elect spirits, transfigured upon the mountain. They are far away, breathing another air ; we cannot reach them. Yet it is impossible to overestimate their importance to the race. They are ambassadors to the Absolute. They vindicate humanity's claim to the possible and permanent attainment of Reality ; bear witness to the practical qualities of the transcendental life."

"Awakening, Discipline, Enlightenment, Self-surrender and Union are the essential phases . . ."

"We are, one and all, the kindred of the mystics . . . They are our brethren, the giants, the heroes of our race. . . . Their attainment is the earnest money of our eternal life."

We ought not to question whence It comes : there is no whence, no coming or going in place : It either appears or does not appear. We must not run after It, but we must fit ourselves for the vision and then wait tranquilly for it as the eye waits on the rising of the sun which in its own time appears above the horizon and gives itself to our sight.

— Plotinus

How I Came to the Maharshi

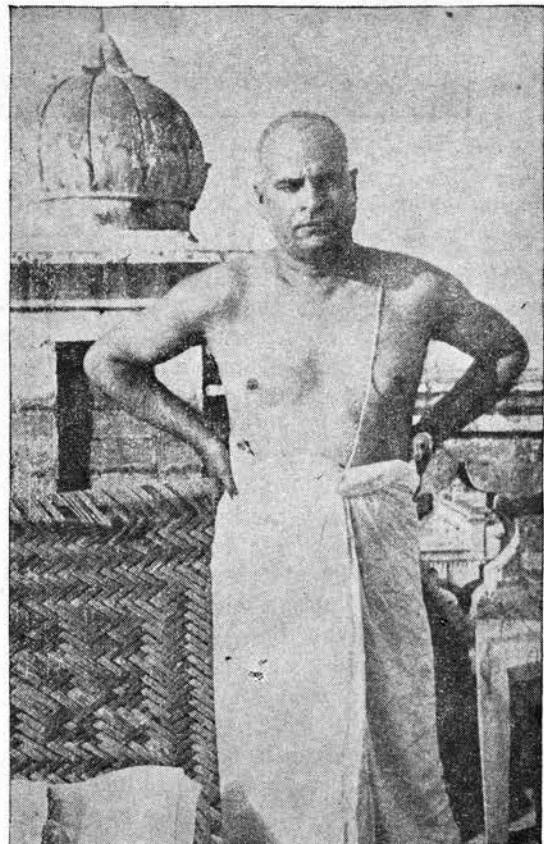
By

H. R. Chadha

The author became our first subscriber in peculiar circumstances. When The Mountain Path was still a project and we had not publicly announced our plans, he had a dream in which Sri Bhagavan appeared to him with some magazines. Taking this to mean that there was an Ashram magazine he wrote to the Ashram President asking to be enrolled as a subscriber. This was confirmation that Sri Bhagavan's band was guiding The Mountain Path. Sri Chadha is an active member of Ramana Kendra, Calcutta.

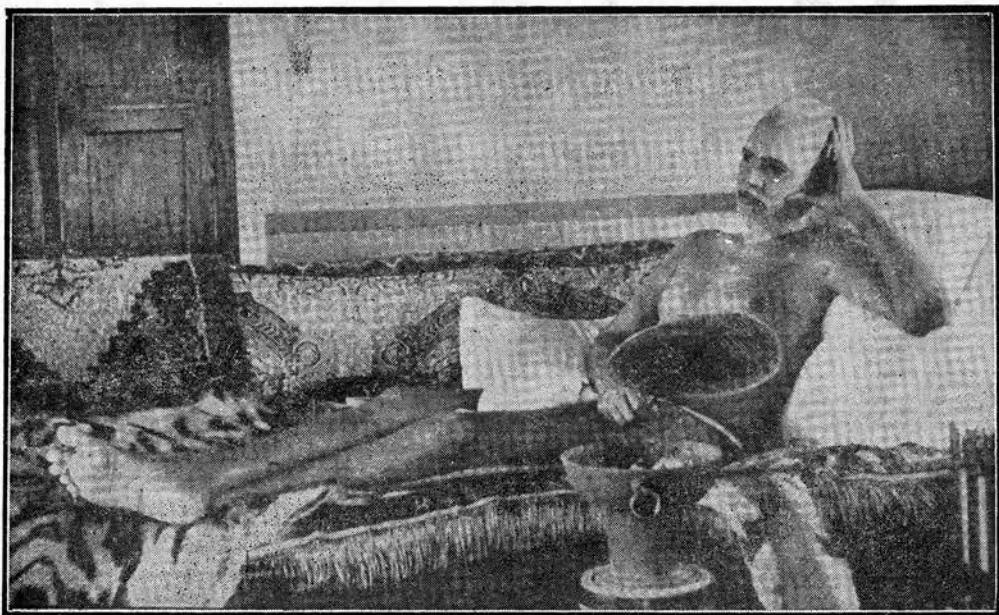
MY father was running a sport-goods concern with several branches in North-West India such as Sialkot, Rawalpindi, etc. (now in Pakistan) and some branches in Uttar Pradesh. He was a hard worker. My mother was very pious and when I was hardly six months old a *sannyasi* who came for *bbiksha* told her that I would be a very rich man in due course. I left (Sialkot) college in 1919 and the parting advice of my principal was : "You are the son of a businessman. So remember, if a customer comes to you for a coat and if you do not sell him a pair of trousers as well, you are no salesman". After father's demise in 1928 I had to take an active part in business and go on several tours. Though married and blessed with children all of them died between 1923 and 1939. The last child foretold his death and particularly after his death I was very much struck with grief. Some years passed on in such a sorrowful mood.

It was the year 1943. In my search for peace I surrendered myself to Sri Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh. I requested his permission for staying in his ashram for the rest of my life but he would not give it. He said : "You will have to go back ; you are destined to earn *lakhs of Rupees* and spend them". But I persisted in my entreaties saying that I had suffered enough in the world and that I had no other alternative than to renounce. Just then there was a telegram asking me to go over to Lahore immediately.



Sri H. R. Chadha

Swamiji also perused the telegram and remarked with a hearty laugh : "You did not obey me. But you will obey this paper". I went to Lahore and reaching Madras even-



tually, opened a canteen there. This did fetch me lakhs of rupees !

Meanwhile Swami Sivananda also wrote to me advising me that I should visit Sri Ramana Maharshi. Learning of Maharshi's greatness from Paul Brunton's book and my neighbour also, I decided to go to Tiruvannamalai. I went straight to Sri Bhagavan in the Hall which was just full. I was rewarded by his graceful smile and it looked as though he was waiting for me ! It was a delicate moment since there was no room for sitting and to keep standing also looked odd. Maharshi looked at me and without speaking anything outwardly conveyed this to me : "The driver and guard of a train are far apart. But they move at the same speed and are connected throughout. You can sit in *that* corner and you will be connected with the guard !" I obeyed this command and I felt his Grace vividly.

One morning I went up to the Maharshi with a doubt in my mind but said nothing. I

was curious about the state of the soul after death. He had a book brought out from his shelf by Sri Sivananda, one of his attendants. On opening the book I found that my doubt was cleared by the contents of that (page). I do not exactly remember the title of the book:

I repeated my visit ; it was an elevating experience beyond description. One day I was commanded by Sri Bhagavan inwardly to leave the Ashram immediately. I did so and returned to my headquarters to find that the army chief was on a surprise visit to our camp. My absence would have landed me in a difficult situation !

I have now the opportunity to talk of His glory and hear other devotees at the *Ramana Kendra*, Calcutta. There cannot be a greater solace and blessing at this stage of my life.

Maharshi has blessed me in so many ways that I cannot be sufficiently grateful to him ; nor can I describe his greatness adequately !

Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR

*(Translated from Tamil by
Prof. K. Swaminathan)*

440.

Nought but awareness is the universe ;
Nought but awareness is all life ;
Nought but awareness is transcendent grace ;
To understand it is the goal supreme.

441.

Look with what utter unconcern
The serpent in the ant-hill puts away
Its slough. Our obligation is
The like removal of the five-fold sheath
Illusive, burning, clinging to us fast.

442.

In full enjoyment of the silent bliss
Flowing from the grace
Of the Lord of Wisdom, Lord of Self,
Casting off the five-fold sheath that brings
Attachment is the *jiva*'s liberation.

443.

Since even in the absence of this world
A bodiless awareness is our being,
Release from all the sheaths, from form
and ego,
Is restoration to our natural Self.

444.

As the false dream ends when we wake up,
The Ego dies when the Sun, the true I rises,
Ego's destruction by strong Self-enquiry,
Is what is known as Self-attainment.

445.

Though one may seem lost in this false
world.
The ending of both 'I' and 'mine'
In the clarity of true awareness
Void of every sense perception
Brings abidance in the bliss
Of being That.

446.

The primal truth clings to the heart's deep
core
And can be seen by strong, keen search
alone,
Those who with a pestle's broad round end
Probe for that target hardly gain it.

447.

Since in His still presence concepts do not
rise,
Since all three persons are only concepts,
And since second and third rise only after
the first,
The Self is the origin of all three persons.

448.

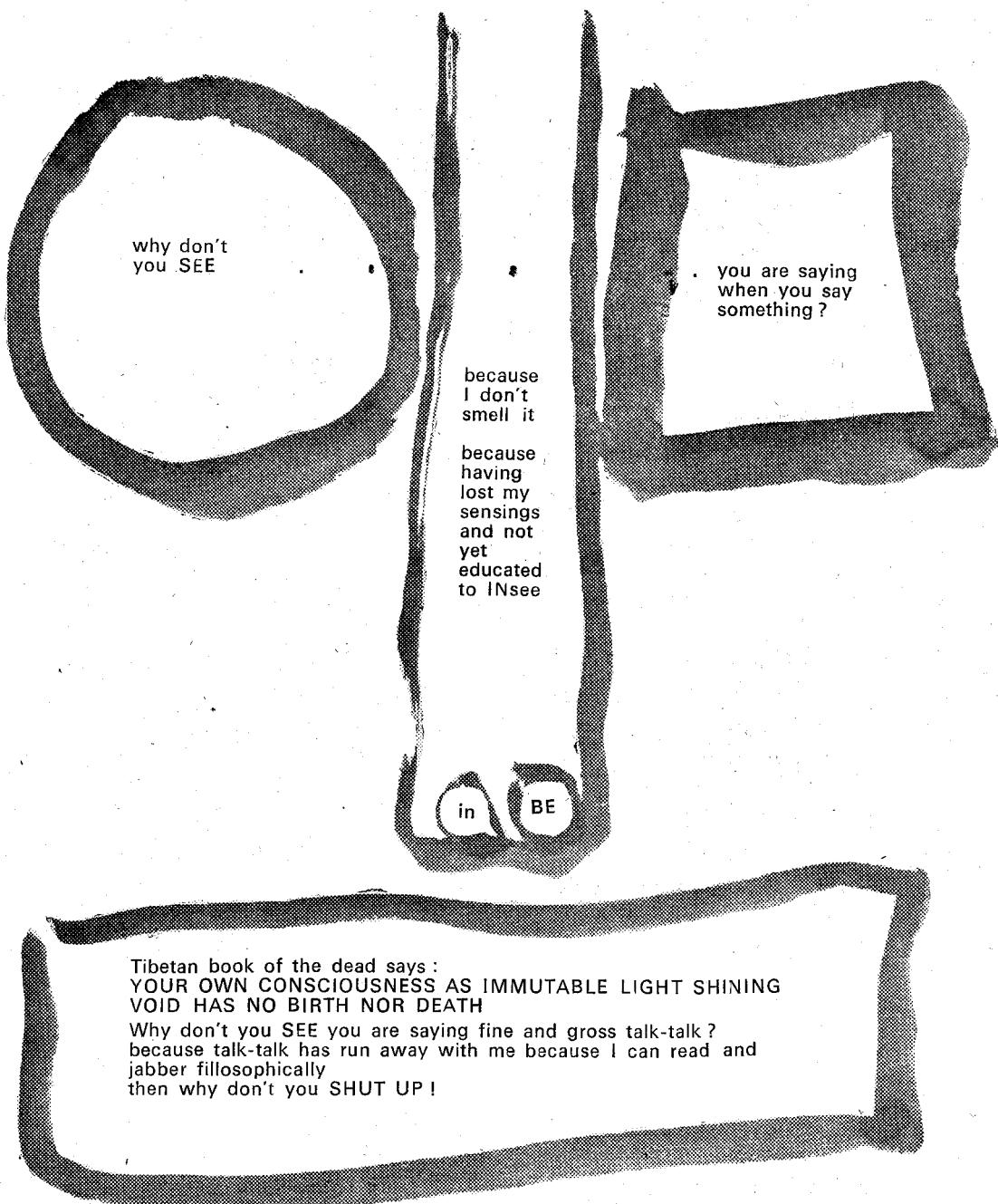
What in the body rises as 'I' is mind.
Enquiring where this 'I'-thought was before
Its rising here, it sinks in the heart.
Hence from the heart the mind arises.

449.

In the absence of thought there is no *jiva*,
God or world. As in every thought
The 'I'-thought is the starting point,
Whence this thought springs, that is the
Heart.

SEEING and SAYING

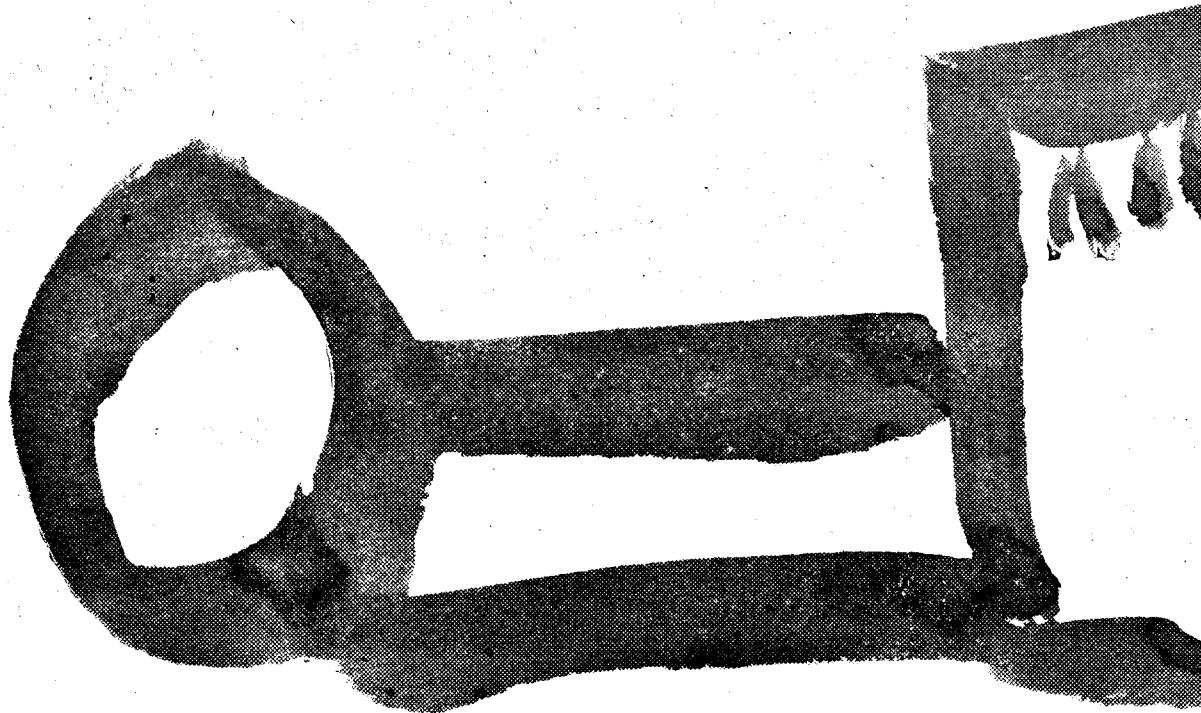
By
paul rePS



171

WORDS VISUALLY
UNDRESSING

by paul rePS



IN deep sleep
DEEP WAKING

1975

July

Does any 'Thing' Exist

By
Wei Wu Wei

To 'Exist' (*existere*) means to *stand outside*.
Which implies to be the 'object' of a 'subject'.
Every phenomenon is obliged to do this by 'appearing'.

But it is not necessary to assume that it has any further meaning.
Nor is there any apparent reason to suppose that any object
factually does any thing : is it not 'others' who suffer the
appearance ? Casting the blame upon the victim — the object which
appears to 'others' — is irrational.

As objects we are inflicted on our neighbours who, thereby,
become our relative subjects by perceiving us.

The theory that 'we' have objective reality therefore is far
indeed from having been satisfactorily established.

Does any concept 'exist'? Does any concept 'stand outside'?
'God' is a concept : the 'existence' of concepts is only in mind.
Therefore they only 'in-sist'.

Has 'insistence' less value than 'existence'? Or greater value?
All knowledge is conceptual? Only 'I' am not conceptual.
Therefore only I can be said to 'stand inside'. For I conceive,
but I cannot be conceived.

I alone am Subject — and I can never be an object.

THE OTHER WORLDS

Someone enquired of Bhagavan : "People talk of Vaikunta, Kailasa, Indraloka, Chandraloka, etc. Do they really exist?" Bhagavan replied : "Certainly. You can rest assured that they all exist. There also a Swami like me will be found seated, and disciples like this will also be seated around. They will ask something and he will say something in reply. Everything will be more or less like this. What of that? If one sees Chandraloka, he will ask for Indraloka, and after Indraloka, Vaikunta and after Vaikunta, Kailasa, and then this and that, and the mind goes on wandering. Where is *shanti*? If *shanti* is required, the one correct method of securing it is by self-enquiry and through self-enquiry self-realisation is possible. If one realises the Self, one can see all these worlds within one's self. The source of everything is one's own self, and if one realises the Self, one will not find anything different from the Self. Then this doubt will not arise. There may or may not be a Vaikunta or a Kailasa but it is a fact that you are here, isn't it? How are you here? Where are you? After you know about these things, you can think of all these worlds."

— *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam*, p. 46

The Story of Gadhi

*Translated from Sanskrit by
M. C. Subramanian*

VASISHTHA said : O Rama ! This illusion called *samsara* is never-ending. It can be brought to an end only by self-control. I shall tell you a story to illustrate its extraordinary power. Listen carefully.

In the kingdom of Kosala there was a brahmin named Gadhi. He once left his home and went into a forest to practise austerities. Finding a lake of fresh-blown lotuses he entered into it and standing in neck-deep water, practised austerities. At the end of eight months Vishnu appeared before him and said : "O Brahmin ! Come out of the water. Your faultless austerities have borne fruit. Ask for any boon you like." Gadhi said : "Lord ! I wish to understand the real nature of the mysterious maya called *samsara*." Vishnu said : "You shall now see my maya. After seeing it overcome it if you can". Having said this Vishnu disappeared.

After this vision Gadhi came out of the water and was very happy that he had seen the Lord of the worlds. He spent some more days in that forest engaged in austerities prescribed for a Brahmin. One day he went to the lake to take his morning bath. After completing the rituals preceding the bath he stepped into the water and took a dip. That very moment he forgot the mantra he was muttering and was unable to meditate as usual. There was a complete change of the scene. To his great sorrow he found himself lying dead in his own house surrounded by his relatives. His wife was sitting at his feet and his mother was caressing his chin with profound sorrow. Next he saw his body taken to the cremation ground littered with the remains of corpses and burnt to ashes in a blazing fire.

Then to his extreme anguish he saw himself lying in distress in the womb of a woman belonging to the low caste of *svapachas* (dog-eaters) living among the *Hunas* (another low caste : *Huns*) on the out-skirts of a village. In due course he found himself born as a dark-complexioned baby of a *svapacha*. He passed his childhood in his house and was the darling of the family. He then grew into a boy and reached the age of sixteen. He was of big stature with broad shoulders and dark as a thick cloud. A young woman of his caste who felt attracted by him clung to him as a creeper to a tree. Her breasts he thought were soft like bunches of flowers and her hands like fresh and tender leaves. He dallied with her among the bowers of the forest, slept with her in the mountain caves, sat with her in leafy arbours, dwelt with her in thickets and begot by her issues to continue his line. He who was thus married and prosperous soon found himself losing his youth. He then built for himself a small hut of leaves at some distance from the others and lived in it like a hermit. He saw himself grow old and feeble and his sons growing up. Then he saw his entire family being snatched away by death. He was grief-stricken and his face became swollen with constant weeping.

He then left that country and wandered about plunged in grief and anxiety. In the course of his wanderings he came to the capital of the kingdom of the Keeras. He walked along the King's highway which looked like a road leading to heaven (*svarga*) and was full of high-born men and women. He saw a bejewelled gateway before him and a glorious elephant big as a mountain moving about hither and thither in search of a successor to the deceased King. As he looked at it,

it encircled him with its beautiful trunk and lifted him on to its back with great reverence. He looked like the Sun over the Meru mountain. As soon as he was seated on the elephant drums sounded on all sides and the sky was filled with shouts of people who hailed him saying "Victory to the King". Beautiful ladies then took him into the palace and dressed him like a king. All the people paid their homage to him.

Thus the *svapacha* (i.e. Gadhi) obtained the kingdom of the Keeras. His lotus feet were massaged by the soft hands of the fair-ladies of that kingdom. Very soon he extended his royal power throughout the land and his orders were obeyed everywhere. He restored order in the kingdom and, with the aid of his ministers, administered the country very well. He came to be known as King Galava.

Surrounded by beautiful damsels, venerated by his ministers, respected by all the nobles, sitting beneath the royal umbrella and fanned with the royal fly-whisks, he ruled the kingdom of Keera for eight years. Then one day he went out of the palace casually, ordinarily dressed without his royal insignia. He soon came upon a camp of *svapachas*, who were playing on stringed musical instruments. One of them, an old man with red eyes, got up and approached him and addressed him familiarly as Katanja. He said : "O Katanja, my kinsman, where do you live now ? I have, by good fortune, seen you, my old relative ; where in the forest were you living till now ?"

When the old man spoke these words Galava made a gesture indicating displeasure. But his wives and some of his subjects, who were at their windows, saw everything. When they came to know that their king was a *svapacha* they were extremely distressed. When he re-entered the crowded inner apartments of the palace in distress, his ministers, the citizens and ladies would neither go near him nor touch him. They regarded him as a dead body. He felt lonely in the midst of his people.

Soon the citizens began to speak among themselves. They said : "We have been

polluted by coming into contact with this *svapacha* for a long time. We cannot regain our purity even with great penance. Let us therefore jump into the fire and destroy ourselves." And they lit fires on all sides and jumped into them along with all their relatives. The king who had become virtuous as a result of living with virtuous people was overwhelmed by grief. He thought : "I am responsible for this calamity which has fallen upon this kingdom. Why should I live any longer ? I shall also die." Deciding so Galava threw himself into the fire like a moth without the least regret.

Just then Gadhi felt the heat of the fire and came out of his dream. It took him only a couple of moments to free himself from the delusion. He then said to himself : "Who am I ? What do I see ? What did I do ?" Pondering over his unbelievably wonderful experience he came out of the water and came to this conclusion : "I see the minds of all embodied beings wander about like this amidst innumerable illusions like mad tigers in a dense forest."

Gadhi continued to live in his ashram. Then one day a dear friend of his came to see him. Highly pleased, he offered him flowers and placed fruits and delicious food before him. After completing their evening prayers the two friends lay down and told each other stories of spiritual significance. In the midst of their talk, Gadhi asked his friend : "O Brahmin ! Why are you so emaciated and weak ?" The friend replied : "In the northern part of this earth there is a great and famous kingdom called Keera. I spent a month there lately honoured by the people of the city. In the course of my talks with them, one of them told me as follows : 'O Brahmin ! A *svapacha* reigned over here for eight years. When at last he was found out he promptly jumped into a fire. Two hundred brahmins also jumped into the fire'. When I heard that I left that kingdom. I bathed at Prayaga and underwent austerities. After breaking my fast at the end of my third *Chāndrāyana* (a form of penance involving regulated fasting) I have directly come here. That is why I am weak and emaciated."

When Gadhi heard this from the brahmin he was filled with amazement. He thought : "My experience coincides with this. I shall, therefore, myself go and find out the truth of this story." So he left his Ashram and after passing through many kingdoms, reached at last the country of the Hunas. It was exactly like his illusion. On the exact spot he found his own hut surrounded by the objects he remembered so well. He then recollect all his former life as a *svapacha*.

Shaking his head in wonder and pondering over the Lord's mysteries he left the country of the Hunas and arrived at the kingdom of the Keeras. There he saw the places in the city where he had lived and undergone his strange experiences. He also heard from the people the same story and said to himself : "This great illusion has been caused by Lord Vishnu. I now understand its significance."

Reflecting thus Gadhi left that kingdom and entered a cave in the mountains. He spent there a year and a half engaging himself in austeries to propitiate Vishnu, taking only a few sips of water daily to keep himself alive. At the end of that period Vishnu appeared before him and said : "O Best of Brahmins ! You have now experienced the nature of my great *Maya*. Why are you practising austeries again in the midst of these mountains ?" On hearing these words Gadhi got up and offered the Lord water and flowers. He circumambulated him reverently with all his limbs touching the ground (i.e. rolling). Then like a chataka bird imploring the clouds, he said to Vishnu : "Lord ! Thou hast shown me the nature of Thy imponderable *Maya*, but I have not understood its mystery. How did the illusion become real ?"

Vishnu answered : "O Brahmin ! The whole of creation appears within the mind and there is nothing as outside. This is the experience of all in dreams and hallucinations. If the mind in which all the worlds are contained projects forth a *svapacha*, is it something to be surprised at ? Just as you had on account of your delusion, the idea that you were a *svapacha*, so also you had an idea that you were seeing the guest arrive on account of your hallucination. Similarly you had the ideas 'I shall get up and go. I have reached

the Huna country, this is the house in which Katanja lived, I have now arrived at the city of the Keeras, I have been told, I have seen the reign of the *svapacha* king even after my hallucination.' When there was the idea that you were a *svapacha* in your mind all the Hunas happened to entertain a similar idea in their mind. It was like the fall of the fruit of a palmyrah tree which sometimes coincides with the perching of a crow on the tree. The ways of the mind are inscrutable. This *svapacha* of the Huna country named Katanja came into existence by sheer imagination. Similarly he went, under the compulsion of fate, to foreign countries, became the King of Keera and jumped into the fire. An idea then arose in your mind and that idea gave you the experience of Katanja. One who does not know the real Self is engrossed in mental imagination such as 'He is this person, I am this body, That is mine'. The wise man thinks, 'I am the one Reality behind everything manifested. He does not therefore suffer. O Brahmin ! This *Maya* called samsara never comes to an end. It comes to an end only through self-enquiry. The wise man does not entertain false notions of distinctions among objects. Therefore he does not suffer from the effects of delusion. The delusion of the mind cannot be overcome unless one is keenly alert and wise. The mind is the nave of the wheel of *Maya*. If it is quiescent there will be no trouble at all. You may now get up and continue your meditation for ten years in the mountain glades. You will then gain perfect wisdom.'

After blessing Gadhi thus Vishnu disappeared. Gadhi developed perfect non-attachment through his power of discrimination. He practised perfect concentration with a mind totally detached from concepts for ten years and thereby gained self-knowledge. Perfectly understanding his real nature, he felt happy, free from all distraction, fear and grief. He became entirely indifferent to all worldly attractions. He became fully liberated even while alive. He attained the supreme state of absolute peace. His mind became perfect like the full moon.

(To be continued)

The Pain of Purification

By

Philip Pegler

FROM the ultimate Vedantic standpoint of non-duality there can be no discussion of this subject. At the Centre, Truth is realised to be all that is there ; the problem of purification and the pain that goes with it only arise when we are away from this centre of Being and wandering in shadows of duality. We must be purified of a false sense of separation from the Self — that is the only task before us.

It sounds simple, but a merely intellectual grasp of the subject is obviously not sufficient and can be misleading. It must be remembered that Sri Bhagavan always graciously descended to the level of the questioner's understanding to clarify his doubts before leading him according to his receptivity back to the fundamentals. The advice given was a vital expression of Truth to be put into practice. Mere book-learning, looking to the word alone and not to its spirit, was frowned upon. The Master recognised all viewpoints as relatively valid, and so must we.

Yet, even in the absence of experiential knowledge, intellectual clarity is helpful to put things in proper perspective — at least the problem can be clearly understood.

So then, in Reality each one of us is a perfect expression of Life. Life is certainly in no need of purification, but overlying our divine essence as it were, are multiple human layers constituting the ignorant personality. This is the dross of which the soul must be purged. We are told the individual is a fictitious entity when viewed apart from the Self, although it is real in so far as it expresses its true nature as the Self. The trouble is we are stubbornly identified with the layers of the not-self and have forgotten the central Light, forever shining within. Bhagavan has repeatedly pointed out that Truth has not to be

gained anew — only we must give up the false sense of identification with the body (that is with our thoughts and feelings) for the Self to be perceived. Easily said, but actually it is an extremely arduous task to sever attachment to the personality image, which we have long and dearly cherished.

It is selfishness which has to die at the cost of its own struggle and pain. But that is the tremendous price to be paid for eternal freedom — there is no easy way. What is most required is a basic reorientation of attitude in which one seeks to give rather than take — to put joy into life instead of extracting every drop of self-centred satisfaction from it. We usually approach everything in terms of our own benefit at the expense of others. That is our fundamental malaise ! Yet there is another way ; remember the famous prayer of St. Francis of Assisi :

“ Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is sadness, joy,
Where there is darkness, light..... ”

Thus we open our heart to allow the Truth to flow. So we pass from the theory of purification to practice — from idealism to realism. Steadfast practice alone can translate speculation into living truth. It is the actual inner transformation that counts — not empty talk about it. And when it comes to the crux Sri Bhagavan himself was uncompromising. He compassionately viewed the problems of sadhana from the standpoint of struggling devotees. The following dialogues from *Talks with Ramana Maharshi* well illustrate this.

1. *Devotee* : "Other thoughts arise more forcibly when we attempt meditation!"

Bhagavan : "Yes. All kinds of thoughts arise in meditation. It is but right. What lies latent in you is brought out. Unless they rise up, how can they be destroyed? They therefore rise up spontaneously in order to be extinguished in due course, thus strengthening the mind." (P. 269)

2. *D.* "How can the rebellious mind be brought under control?"

Bhagavan : "Either seek its source so that it may disappear, or surrender that it may be struck down."

D. "But the mind slips away from our control."

Bhagavan : "Be it so. Do not think of it. When you recollect yourself bring it back and turn it inward. That is enough. No one succeeds without effort. Mind-control is not one's birthright. The successful few owe their success to their perseverance."

Perhaps the most concise and vivid summing up of the subject can be found in a conversa-

tion Paul Brunton had with the Master. The conversation is recorded in *A Search in Secret India* as Brunton tells of his unforgettable visit to the jungle hermitage.

"But Maharshi, this path is full of difficulties and I am so conscious of my own weakness," I pleaded.

"This is the surest way to handicap oneself", he answers unmoved, 'this burdening of the mind with the fear of failure and the thought on one's failings."

"Yet, if it is true?" I persisted.

"It is not true. The greatest error of a man is to think that he is weak by nature, evil by nature. Every man is divine and strong in his real nature. What are weak and evil are his habits, his desires and thoughts — but not himself."

"His words come as an invigorating tonic. They refresh and inspire me. From another man's lips, from some lesser and feeble soul, I would refuse to accept them at such worth and would persist in refuting them. But an inward monitor assures me that the Sage speaks out of the depth of a great and authentic spiritual experience....."

All is Thou and Thine

By Cornelia Bagarotti

Hold me, My Lord, in your Love
May my being be in Yours
May all I meet or see
Breathe forth your Love Divine
Till I no longer say
Me nor Mine
But find all Being THINE.
In weal and woe serene
May I accept with peace
All that may come to me.
Free of fear, free of hate

Free of death, free of self
Forever in harmony.
In your beauty and grace
Your love and peace
May your light shine
Through every word and deed
Illumine every thought
Uphold each act
My heart, your heart,
All one, Oh Lord.

Glory of Arunachala

Arunachala Mahatmyam

Translated from Tamil by
M. C. Subramanian

PART II

CHAPTER VIII

CREATION DESCRIBED

NANDIKESVARA said : O Markandeya ! You have thrown upon me a great burden asking me to describe the glory of Arunachala. Nevertheless I shall do so. You are a man of discrimination and that is why you are interested in it. A man who does not know the greatness of Arunachala is but a brute. But even if one knows it, how can one describe it fully. The legend of the Lord of Sonāchala is the glory of Sambhu. That by itself brings good fortune to him who hears it. Although one might be very intelligent, how can one listen to that wonderful account and remember it fully ? Now remember the life-lila of the Enemy of Kāma (Siva). My mind is now dancing with supreme bliss. The extremely wonderful account of Siva overwhelms my mind and I am unable to describe it fully yet, listen.

In the beginning, at the commencement of the age of Devas (*Devakalpa*) Mahesvara the immutable Lord thought of creating the entire world by His will. He made Brahma create it and Vishnu sustain it. The three-eyed God brought forth Brahma from his right side and Vishnu from his left. He endowed Brahma with the quality of *rajas* and Vishnu with *sattva* and entrusted to them the task of creation and sustenance of the universe respectively.

Brahma created out of his mind ten noble sons, the first of whom was Marichi, and out of his thumb Daksha Prajapati and made them carry on the task of creation further. Then

he created Brahmins out of his face, Kshatriyas out of his two shoulders, Vaisyas out of his two thighs and Sudras out of his feet. From Kasyapa, the son of Marichi, were born the Suras, the Asuras, the Marut-ganas, the vultures (eagles), the Gandharvas and the Apsaras. Human beings are the progeny of Manu. To Atri were born Rishis, Brahmins and Kshatriyas. Yakshās and Rākshasas were born to Pulaha and Pulastya — Udatya and Brihaspati to the Muni Angiras and Agni to Bhrigu ; Chyavana and other rishis who are the sons of Bhrigu, Vasishta and other Maharshis also were born. Their progeny flourishes to this day.

Thus, the world was filled with the progeny of Brahma. As a result of this, after some time, he forgot Maheswara. Vishnu espoused goddess Kamala, daughter of Bhrigu. He incarnated on earth as a fish and others, and forgot Isvara, his origin. Thus Brahma and Vishnu considering themselves independent, became proud and arrogant that there was none superior to them.

PART II

CHAPTER IX

DISPUTE BETWEEN BRAHMA AND VISHNU

Nandikesvara continued :

A dispute, however, arose between Brahma and Vishnu each of whom thought himself the Supreme Lord. Brahma, the creator of the world, who, on account of the excess of *rajas* in him became bluish in complexion, turned to Vishnu and said : " You ! Vishnu ! Why are you under the delusion that you are greater

than me who am the creator of the world and the grandfather? You seem to be deluded by your pride at having killed Madhu and Kaitabha who came out of you and thereby become the slayer of Asuras. My two arms are even now tired with the exertion of creating everything including you. You are (floating) on the sea of perspiration from my body produced by that act. Moreover, what other abode have you except the banian tree created by me? As there happened to be a serpent in the ocean created by me and you happened to cling to it and a lotus happened to rise over you, it became my seat. As you are full of *tamas* (darkness) how can there be any *sattva* (light) at all in you? Do you realize that you are dull by nature on account of your (prolonged) sleep? Janardana! How can the three worlds under my control be said to be protected by you hiding, as you do, yourself in the sea for fear of Asuras and are (always) sleeping? The four Vedas have come out of my four mouths. Sarasvati who is pure consciousness is my spouse. The three worlds of moving and stationary beings were created by me. They are sustained by Indra and other Devatas who are but my sons and grandsons. Can any one be superior to me, the Creator and Lord of all the worlds?"

When Brahma uttered, in a fit of anger and jealousy, these cruel words, Narayana replied smilingly: "Brahma! Do not in anger shout in vain. Remember that you came out of the lotus which sprang up from my navel. If I had not woke up from my yogic sleep and slain Madhu and Kaitabha you would have lost your life long ago at their hands. Of my own accord, with the object of killing Somaka and other Daityas and saving the Vedas and dharma I took many incarnations. Therefore consider who except myself is the source and mover of all creation? Those who are full of *rajas* cannot discern anything clearly. You are full of *rajas*. What do you know? Goddess Lakshmi who dwells in the lotus is my spouse. These three worlds come into existence at a glance of her eyes. How can these elements, time and the ego of the Self, appear in the three worlds without me, the substratum of all? The Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, Dik-

palakas and Manus are all myself. Know that the three *vyabrtis* and the Vedas are my manifestations. The power of creation pertains to me. How can you be superior to me who am the sole Lord of the three worlds, or even equal to me?"

Steeped in ignorance Brahma and Vishnu shouted at each other thus and a terrible fight ensued between them. The Sun and Moon did not rise and set, the stars and planets became extinct, the wind did not stir, fire did not burn, the sky, the earth and the quarters lost their hue, the seas dried up, the mountains crumbled, the crops, plants and trees withered, living beings suffered. Days, weeks, fortnights, months, seasons and years were not regular; days and nights did not appear alternately. Indra and the other Devas, the protectors of the quarters, Marichi and other Maharshis and all others thought that the end of the world (*Kalpāntam*) had come. On account of this great calamity all living beings were put to great distress. The Lord of all beings thereupon saw that darkness had overpowered the universe. As he was himself the universe he wished to save it himself. He saw through his inner vision the cause of the delusion that had overcome Brahma and Vishnu. He said to Himself: "Both of them have forgotten me, the Lord, the bestower of everything good and in their arrogance, each is considering himself the Lord. Both of them are deluded. Ah! How wonderful is the power of delusion! These two, Brahma and Vishnu, although they knew me well, have come to this plight. Persons who have lost their sight are enveloped by the darkness of ignorance and do not see even what is just before them. In deep delusion these two have erred. I should no more be indifferent towards them."

Pitying the contenders, the spontaneously compassionate Lord Mahesa decided to rid them of their delusion. Unbounded indeed is the compassion of the wearer of the crescent moon! It is his very nature. It glows impartially, blessing all the three worlds. It is found even in the midst of the ocean of great delusion. Both, Brahma and Vishnu, became perceptibly free from delusion on account of it.

(To be continued)

Descent of Grace

By
Dilip Kumar Roy

(Once in 1944 the author suffered from extreme depression. He prayed intensely and fell asleep. On waking up he had a marvellous experience of peace. This poem was written as a sequel to this experience in Bengali and translated by the author himself, later.)

Veiled by your maya, in secret, you
 create, Lord, your own offerings :
How you repeal our thorny woods
 with flowers—none knows, O King of kings
In grim and lonely deserts your
 sweet fragrance we may not perceive,
But you do visit with your peace
 of stars to bless our hearts at eve,
Making your beauty's laughter bloom
 in this our sad war-weary land
Of strifes, din and disharmonies :
 your ways, Lord, who can understand ?

We sully with our fool passions' murk
 the rain you pour from your heavenly home ;
You paint your pictures of Love's play
 when we sleep in abysmal gloom.
So we hark not to the Elysium
 your Flute invites us all to hail,
But your great bounteous sleepless sun
 illumines still our dismal vale !
I wake a thrill : no phantom this,
 but your gleam-garden of fadeless Rose,
You foster, Friend, everlasting,
 with what divine seeds — no one knows !

Beloved, whenever disconsolate,
 to you, the Nebulous, I pray,
Answers your Flute : "Behold, I am
 so close to you — not far away !"
But blind, I grope for you in vain
 and cry in tears : "How can it be ?"
Then, lo, your miracle touch I feel
 in an overwhelming ecstasy
What a rapturous experience is
 accorded to me by your Grace :
The thorns are gone ! I'm only kissed
 by roses of your tenderness !

BOOK REVIEWS

NATARAJA IN ART, THOUGHT AND LITERATURE: By C. Sivaramamurti. Pub.: National Museum. (Distributors: Publications Division, New Delhi). Pages: 417 + xxxvi. Crown folio. Price: Rs. 230.

Nataraja — The Dancing Siva — is a complex and yet uniquely moving theme that has stirred the Hindu imagination more profoundly and more pervasively than any other motif, whether from history or from mythology. It has been the means of unleashing such a mighty torrent of artistic energy century after century that it appeals with equal force to layman and scholar alike. Rightly does Ananda Coomaraswami ask: "Before an image of Nataraja what difference does literacy make?" And yet here we have Dr. Sivaramamurti's massive masterpiece which the Prime Minister in her foreword justly calls "a monument to Indian scholarship", and goes on to suggest might also prove "a definitive work on the subject". But who can exhaust all the ramifications and significances of this theme, when the flame of fire, which Siva holds in one hand, is an endless dancer indeed, and when Vishnu, the all-pervader held in another hand of Siva, is himself the *jagat* in and on which he dances, himself the container as well as the thing contained?

Buffeting the heavens with his whirling locks Siva has been dancing, one may take it, ever since the first stirrings of creation — creation in fact being only part of the great god's footwork. Who can say precisely when the Hindus first became aware that they were watching the performance, at what point of time the Suras and Asuras, the Adityas and Maruts, Gandharvas and Kinnaras, the Lokas and the very elements, first stood still, entranced by the spectacle? Certain it is that already a good many centuries before the Buddha, the initial sense of wonder evoked in the Hindus by the rhythms and patterns unfolded by the great cosmic routine —

the rolling of the clouds, the clapping of thunder, the play of sunlight on snowy peaks, the singing of the wind in the trees, the flowering and fading of vegetation, — had crystallized into a well-defined aesthetic emotion, manifesting itself in fully developed dance forms with elaborate vocabularies and symbolisms. There is evidence to show that by the sixth century B.C., dance had become — as it has since remained — the life and soul of Indian artistic expression, conditioning, frequently moulding, our poetry and epigraphy, painting and sculpture. The result, especially in sculpture, was that in translating the beatific vision into plastic form, the Hindu sculptors imparted movement to even bronze and stone. A cursory comparison with the sculpture of classical Greece — the only other culture of antiquity still surviving in stone — will make the point clear.

Dr. Sivaramamurti, the eminent archaeologist and Sanskrit scholar, has devoted a lifetime of study to this vast, dynamic, compulsive motif. A descendent of Appayya Dikshita, the famous sixteenth-century poet and devotee, Dr. Sivaramamurti has been fascinated by the Nataraja theme ever since his student days. "How would Nataraja

have been depicted in the times of Patanjali or of the Pallavas?" he used to wonder even as an undergraduate, and visualizing with his mind's eye representations of the dancing Lord executed in the artistic style of the period in question, he would then reduce the idea to pen-and-ink drawings with suitable elucidating texts in Brahmi or Pallava Granth script of the eight century A.D.

In the present work, the result of two years of concentrated labour, Dr. Sivaramamurti has tried to measure the immeasurable, namely, the degree of the impact that the Nataraja idea had on Hindu creative impulse in its manifestations in poetry, epigraphy, painting, sculpture, architecture and devotional liturgy. He has taken in his sweep the



Nataraja

entire historical period, beginning from the time of Buddha, and every geographical region in which, at any period of time, Hindu influence could be traced. The mass of documented evidence that he thus brings to bear on the subject is simply staggering. The illustrations alone run up to the dizzying figure of 418 — 23 coloured prints, 374 monochromes and 21 line drawings, many of the last being the hand-work of the author himself.

Dr. Sivaramamurti's treatment of the subject matter is for the most part discursive and descriptive rather than analytical. What he does is to take you by the hand and lead you through a vast Nataraja museum, with innumerable corridors and rooms, each named after a historical period, such as the Gupta, Vakataka, Early Bhanja, Vishnukundin, Early Pallava, and so on, down to the Chandel and Haihaya, and then, as you rapturously gaze at a piece, such as, for example, the early Chola Nataraja from Okkur, he elaborates with unflagging gusto its iconographic signification, pointing out that it is the normal Bhujangatrasita pose, with the four hands holding *damaru*, *abhaya*, *dandahasta* and fire, being held on the palm itself but in a small vessel, the hand in its turn being not in *ardhachandra* but held in the normal way, with the fingers showing. Thus you go on and on and on through a forest of stone, bronze and paint, each individual piece a hymn sung to the Lord of Dance. The wealth of statuary reproduced and discussed represents the work done on the theme not only in India but beyond its borders, in Indonesia, Bali, Cambodia, Champa, Thailand, Central Asia, Nepal and Ceylon. By the time you are finished, you have witnessed the great *Tāndava*, performed to the accompaniment of all the drums beating together, in all its seven different modes, with its inexhaustible repertoire of *rechakas*, *karanas* and *angaharas*, and the *dance macabre* of Chāmunda, Bhairavi, Kāli and the Bhutaganas. And you find that the experience has transformed you, leaving you limp, and aware of your own insignificance except as a beat of the cosmic dance of Siva, the *Kalāntaka*, the Annihilator of Time.

But, as Dr. Sivaramamurti reminds us, the appeal of the Nataraja theme is not confined to plastic arts, alone. It has been as rich a source of inspiration to our poets and dramatists who too provide for the author and the reader an equally imposing array of illuminating and enjoyable passages including stanzas of rare poetical beauty from Kālidasa, Nandikesvara, Kalhana, Kshemendra, Utprekshavallabha, Bāna, Mammata, Sōmadeva, Bhavabhuti, Shudraka, Sri Harsha, Udayana, Bhartrihari, and Vidyākara.

Then there are hymns, as also dedications of temples in inscriptions, not only from India but also from Cambodia and Champa and Thailand, all composed in the choicest classical Sanskrit.

The book being about the Lord of Dance, it goes into great detail in expounding the theory of dance as an art form, as it has evolved since the time of Patanjali, Vyāghrapāda and Bharata, and in explaining its vocabulary and symbolism, the author traces the roots of this mode of artistic expression to Vedic and epic times.

All in all, Dr. Sivaramamurti has succeeded in making his great work as comprehensive and authentic as any one individual could have hoped to do and the book will prove a storehouse of all the now available information an interested reader would like to have on the theme of Nataraja as treated by Asia's artists, philosophers and poets.

PROF. K. SWAMINATHAN.

THE MYSTICAL 'I': By Joel S. Goldsmith.
Pub. : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House,
Museum Street, London. Pp. 145. Price :
£ 1.40 (in U.K.).

Joel S. Goldsmith, a great world mystic, American by birth, is one of those rare souls who have appeared from time to time to convey to mankind the divine message of the presence of God and to bring light and truth to them. In his books Joel quotes freely from the Bible key passages the real import of which he conveys with great spiritual insight and facility. In *The Mystical 'I'* the author quotes from *Revelation* (3:20).

"Behold I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and I will sup with him, and he with me."

and poses the questions. 'Who is this "I" standing at the door?' and 'At what door is this "I" standing?'. The whole book is an outpouring from within of the answers to these questions.

I cannot do better than quote freely from his books and leave it to the reader to judge for himself what gems the book contains and the Truth it reveals :

"I am the bread of life . . . I am the way, the truth and the life . . . I am the resurrection and the life . . . I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly."

The 'I' that is standing at the door of your Consciousness and knocking is the 'I' that has

come so that you might have the life more abundant.

When you acknowledge that the 'I' in the midst of you is mighty, you are not speaking of a man or of any person — you are speaking of the 'I'. That 'I' has been with you 'before Abraham was' awaiting your recognition and your acknowledgement.

'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?' Know ye not that the name of God is 'I' or 'I AM' and that you are the temple of God only when you have admitted 'I' into your Consciousness and held it there secretly, sacredly, gently, peacefully, so that at any moment you can close your eyes and just remember 'I'? This 'I' is life eternal and is mighty and by yielding to it, we let His Will be done.

The abiding place of God is within you. 'Be still, and know that I am God.' It does not say that Joel or Mary is God. It always says 'I'. 'My peace I give unto you.' 'My' peace, you will feel abundantly, permanently, joyously, a peace that passeth understanding.

What, therefore, necessary for us is to unveil this 'I' in our Consciousness to realise the divine selfhood in all of us, I AM THAT I AM. The ideal way for this unveiling is not to voice such statements as 'I am God' or 'I am the son of God' but just say 'I' and think of what it means. In time when the listening ear is developed, Joel assures us, we shall hear the voice say, 'I in the midst of you is God.' When we hear this, we make contact with our Source. If one merely repeats the words, one is just saying them out of the mind or the intellect and when they come out of that mind or intellect, they are not true. It is only as they come forth from the Spirit of God Itself in you that they are Truth.

Once the 'I' is realised, the body has the same relationship to one that one's automobile has. It is an instrument for one's use but one is not in it, for 'I' is Consciousness, Infinite Consciousness and It is Omnipresent. If 'I' and the Father are one, then I am as Omnipresent as God. Otherwise there are two: one infinite and one finite. But if 'I' and the Father are one, I am Omnipresent.

The moment one has established contact with his Source by this realisation, one abides in God and God meets one's needs.

The author says that Karmic Law, the Law of as-yo-sow-so-shall-ye-reap is set in motion, whenever human sentiment hits up against the spiritual reality of the 'I' that I am. The moment we think a

wrong thought or do a wrong deed, this hits up against our own inner spiritual integrity and bounces back at us. The moment we withdraw the personal sense of self that loves, hates or fears and we become beholders we stand in the presence of the Spirit, the very 'I' that is within us. This absolves us from all the previous mistakes and penalties thereof.

The true form of prayer is when you bring an empty barrel and enter into absolute silence so that in that silence, the voice of God may thunder.

There is a rhythm in the Universe, it is governed and fulfilled by the Spirit of God and as we attain the silence within us we realise that out of this silence flow all the forms (i.e. creation) necessary for our individual experience.

Illumination dissolves all material ties and binds man together with the golden chains of spiritual understanding and releases divine impersonal love. The illumined walk without fear — by Grace.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee . . . I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

This 'I' is immortal, birthless and deathless.

It is easy to see that what the author reveals from his experience has universal application and coincides in many ways with what Bhagavan Ramana or Sankara has said on Self Realisation or attaining Godhead which is our true Goal.

This book and other books of Joel Goldsmith are a must for those on the spiritual quest.

K. SIVARAJ

UNWORLDLY WISE : AS THE OWL REMARKED TO THE RABBIT : By O. O. O. Pub.: Hong-kong University Press, Hongkong. Pp. 76. Price : HK \$ 27.

Wei Wu Wei seems to have been resurrected in O. O. O. in the shape of the owl and rabbit who now say it as before: noumenality, conceptuality, absent presence and all.

"When I apperceive — 'you' perceive, for I alone AM."

"Whatever is seen, is I who am looking."

"Whatever is perceived, is I who am apperceiving."

"Whatever is conceived is I who am apprehending" said the wise owl to the rabbit.

All is actual but not factual, like the content of our own relative 'lives' says Wei Wu Wei who doubts his own existence (in the Introduction). Who is the doubter? asks Sri Ramana Maharshi. Find out and there will be no doubt.

Readers and admirers of Wei Wu Wei are sure to recognize themselves, as Wei Wu Wei hopes, and benefit by what these brief sketches and dialogues reveal.

The illustrations are excellent and enhance the value of the book.

SHAKINAH

KRISHNA IN THE TRADITIONAL PAINTING OF BENGAL : By Bholanath Bhattacharya. Pub. : Kamal Banerjee, 74, Ballygunge Gardens, Calcutta-19. Pp. 59. Price : Rs. 35.

This monograph has for its special theme the Krishna cult in India most prominent in Bengal and its special place in the traditional painting of Bengal known as *pat*. This lively folk art has been so far sadly neglected and one should welcome any attempt at its revival. The author of this monograph seems to have spared no pains in studying this unexplored field of art by getting in touch with the patuas and local rural artists in search of the best examples of their artistic creations of great skill and spontaneity. They throw some light on the social history of Bengal as reflected in folk art. A synopsis of the topics dealt with is included with a special note on the Kalighat school of folk art.

The illustrations reproduced in this monograph from the author's own collection are excellent examples of artistic creation of great innate skill and purity.

TIBETAN ART OF HEALING : By Theodore Burang. Translated by Susan Macintosh. Pub. : Watkins, London. Pp. 117. Price :

The author who studied intensively with Tibetan practitioners their art of healing has some significant and revealing things to say. In Western medicine short term cures and the removal of pathological changes or outward symptoms of disease are valued most. It concerns itself primarily with removing the effects of disease not its cause. Modern medicine with all its tremendous strides in surgery is highly specialised in closed compartments as if a man was an aggregate and not an integrated being. The cure or often suppression of one disease by a specialist sometimes brings another graver one in its wake again dealt with by another specialist and so on.

The author who studied the Tibetan language over the years in order to acquaint himself thoroughly with the extensive Tibetan medical literature finds that its philosophy and curative methods transport one into a realm of macrocosmic and microcosmic interrelations on a spiritual foundation derived partly from ancient Indian philosophy. Its indisputable

success in curing disease cannot be overlooked and deserves closer analysis and study particularly so since modern medicine has started to gravitate towards the idea maintained also by classical Greek medicine that many diseases have their roots in a disturbance of the psyche.

The author demonstrates and explains that practical co-operation based on an open-minded approach by practitioners of both systems might be of benefit to suffering humanity. This would demand a change of heart and thought so that the foundations could be laid of a new healing art without any specific labels.

L. O.

BEYOND THE GODS : By John Blofeld. Pub. : George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. Pp. 161. Price : £ 3-50.

The writings of John Blofeld are always engagingly frank, full of good humour and spiritually purposeful. For clarity and transparency of language he has few equals in modern times. The present book keeps up the tradition of noted English Buddhist scholars and seekers.

In this brilliant survey of the teachings of Confucius, the Way of Tao, the Yoga of the Buddhist paths (including the Zen) as they are practised in China (pre-Mao) and in parts of Tibet, the author draws upon his own experiences during the last quarter of a century and presents a large panorama of spiritual experience at varied levels of human consciousness. He notes the civilising influence that Confucius had had on the Chinese character, especially in the social aspect. Speaking of Tao, he underlines the importance given to spontaneity of experience by the Teachers of the Way which aims at union with the Void through communion with Nature ; he refers to the 'internal alchemy' practised by some 'to create within themselves the embryo of a spirit-body into which they could pass at death'. He narrates interesting bits of conversations he had with exponents of the Tao. One of them refers to the *consciousness* in rocks : 'Those who know them intimately recognize that they have not only consciousness but moods — gloomy and menacing one day, relaxed and smiling another.'

The most rewarding chapters, however, are those on Meditation in the different traditions of Buddhism. The first point to be noted is that here meditation is not something done at a special hour in a lotus pose but a practice that 'can be performed standing, walking, sitting or lying.' There are many kinds of meditation. At one place the writer narrates the three types of meditation that are prac-

tised : 'first, samādhi, achieved by resting the mind on a single object which presently vanishes amidst the ecstasy of objectless awareness; second, penetration of the voidness of opposites and thus of the voidness of the self; third, contemplation of the arising and passing away of thoughts in the mind.'

Passages on the different techniques of meditation, combinations with devotion, scriptural knowledge, *Koans*, *Mantra*, *Yantra* etc., are worth deep study. The reader will not fail to be struck by the close correspondence between the technique of the Self-enquiry (*Who am I?*) and the Ch'an style meditation (P. 121).

A book to be read over and over again.

THE SACRED WRITINGS OF THE SIKHS :
Unesco Series. Pub.: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. Price: £ 1.50.

This is a representative anthology of the hymns of the Sikh Gurus translated into English by competent hands. The bulk of the hymns are from the *Adi Granth*, the main Scripture of the Sikhs. This *Granth*, as is well known, is invested with the authority of the Guru. It is largely the work of Guru Arjan, the fifth of the Ten Gurus. It contains not only the writings of the first four Gurus but also some from Hindu and Muslim saints in conformity with the wide vision of the Sikh Faith.

As Dr. Radhakrishnan observes, for the Sikh Gurus, "God is not an abstraction but an actuality. He is Truth, formless *nirguna*, absolute, eternal, infinite, beyond human comprehension. He is yet revealed through creation and through grace to anyone who seeks Him through devotion. He is given to us as Presence in worship."

This tradition seeks to steer clear of the excesses of Hindu ritualism and those of the older fanaticism of the cult of Islam. It lays stress on the personal experience of the Divine Presence and Compassion. Karma, Rebirth, Yoga come in the scheme which does not countenance renunciation of the world.

The second part of the volume contains selections from the *Dasam Granth*, Hymns of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs. The dignity and directness of the original utterances have been successfully retained in their English renderings.

AN INTRODUCTION TO TANTRIC BUDDHISM :
By Shashi Bhushan Gupta. Pub.: Shambala Publications, Berkeley, California, U.S.A. Pp. 212. Price: \$ 3.95.

Reprinted after nearly twenty years, this book gives a good deal of information and guidance on the sub-

ject of the Tantra as developed among the Buddhists. A large number of texts in Mahayana Buddhism have been consulted and the study traces the growth of the theological aspect of the school keeping an eye on developments in other contemporary areas of Religion. A chapter is devoted to the philosophical contents of the Buddhist Tantras. But the most valuable sections of the book are those that deal with theory and practice of the Esoteric Yoga of these Tantras.

Dr. Gupta makes a comparative study of the system of Chakras and plexuses in the Buddhist and the Hindu Tantras and points out the differences. It is instructive to follow him in his exposition of the sexo-yogic practice of some of the lines of evolution developed in these Tantra schools and note how at every step there is an unequivocal emphasis on the direction of the Bodhicitta upwards, how one must first develop a God-consciousness before one can walk the path of a God and also how the *sukha*, happiness, joy, aimed at by the seers of these texts is far away from the factual pleasure of the senses.

The explanation of the Four Mudras, Four Moments, Four kinds of Ananda and their correlation are satisfying. Many terms like Bodhicitta, Bodhisattva, the three *Kāyas* (Bodies) which have a special connotation in this literature have been analysed and explained in depth.

MUDRA : By Chogyam Trungpa. Pub.: Shambala Publications, Berkeley, Calif., U.S.A. Pp. 105. \$ 2.95.

An engaging book of poems and translations from Tibetan originals taking the reader straight to the heart of the Way of the Buddha — its philosophy and its practice. The teaching is 'self-secret' i.e., it yields its meaning only to him who is ready for it. For others it is mere words. The true *sādhana*, the author underlines, does not lie in speculation of the mind or in observing set rules for meditation and prayer, in following systems. 'Keep yourself to yourself', live in 'nowness' without getting attached to the flow of life in its several aspects.

Jigme Lingpa has certain pertinent things to say in his 'Innermost Essence'. "The Maha Ati, which is beyond conceptions and transcends both grasping and letting go, is the essence of transcendental insight. This is the unchanging state of non-meditation in which there is awareness but no clinging."

This is the injunction: Find an accomplished Guru with whom you have a good karmic link. "The Teacher must be a holder of the Thought Lineage Transmission." Meditation is no theory. It

is not even experience. Detach yourself from experience too ; do not analyse it. "Meditation consists of seeing whatever arises in the mind and simply remaining in the state of nonness. Continuing in this state after meditation is known as the 'post-meditation experience'." The state of non-meditation is equally important ; this "is born in the heart when one no longer discriminates between meditation and non-meditation and one is no longer tempted to change or prolong the state of meditation. There is all-pervading joy, free from all doubts."

The chapter on the Way of the Buddha is notable for the clarity with which the Nine *Yānās*, stages or vehicles, of the Path are analysed.

The book is full of practical hints to the seeker of the Transcendent.

LINGA PURANA : Pub. : Motilal Banarsi das, Delhi-7. 2 Vols. Price : Rs. 50 each.

Translated by a board of scholars, this Saiva Purana has two parts, the first part having 108 chapters and the second, 55. In all there are 9,185 verses and the work fulfils all the requirements of a Purāna. The topics dealt with are, among others, the evolution of the Linga, traditions of the Linga cult, modes of worshipping the Linga, principles of its ritual, illustrative myths, legends and anecdotes, geography of the earth with seven continents, the planets and their movements, genealogies of solar and lunar dynasties, accounts of the Asura kings, the glory of the Linga, the concept and esoteric significance of the Linga, modes of *vratas*, the Pāshupata Yoga for the union of the jiva and Siva.

Among the interesting statements made in the course of the exposition, is the one on the five-syllabled *mantra*. "The OM is the single-syllabled Mantra. The all-pervading Siva is stationed in it. The five syllables (*Namas-Sivaya*) constitute his body. He is stationed in the six-syllabled subtle *mantra* in the form of the 'expressed and the expression'. Siva *Vācya* (the expressed) since he is comprehensible. The *Mantra* in his *vācaka* (expression)."

One whole chapter is devoted to the Tryambaka Mantra. "The word Tryambaka is interpreted thus. He is the lord of the three worlds, three gunas, three Vedas, three Devas, the three castes. He is expressed by the three syllables A U M. He is the lord of the three effulgences viz., the moon, sun and fire. Umā, Ambā and Mahādeva constitute the trio. So he is the lord of the three. *Sugandhi* : the splendid fragrance of a tree in full

bloom is wafted to a great distance. Similarly is the fragrance unto all other Devas. His fragrance is wafted in this world and in the firmament when the wind blows. By the grace of this Rita let me be released from the bondage of actions and reactions as well as the fetters of death. Let me be released from the glitter of worldly existence. Just as the ripe cucumber fruit gets released from its stalk when the season arrives, so also the devotee gets released from bondage and death, when the time for liberation comes by the grace of this mantra, non-different from Siva Himself."

These two volumes are a must for all useful libraries.

INVITATION TO INDIAN PHILOSOPHY :
By Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan. Pub. : Arnold-Heinemann Publishers, New Delhi-16. Pp. 426.
Price: Rs. 50.

Indian philosophy, points out Dr. Mahadevan, is not a view of life ; it is a way of life. He analyses the special features of the growth of philosophy in India and the precise features in which it differs from the movement of philosophy in the West. Philosophy with Indian Seers and thinkers is closely related to practice and growth of consciousness ; it is not intellectual speculation on the nature of Reality.

After giving an introductory account of the nature of the theme of the book, the author surveys the development of thought and spiritual experience in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Gita. Then follow the doctrines of the Chārvāka, Jainism and Buddhism — which are considered as heterodox, not because they do not swear by God but due to their non-allegiance to the authority. He next takes up the orthodox systems : Nyāya, Vaisesika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mimāmsa, Vedānta. In the Vedānta again, he studies the Advaita, Visistādvaita, and Dvaita. Saivism (northern and southern) comes in for separate treatment. An appendix on the leading trends in contemporary Indian Philosophy brings the work to a close.

While on the living traditions, the author writes : "In Sri Ramana Maharshi, we had a contemporary Jivanmukta, a living commentary on the most sublime texts of the Vedānta. The simple and direct method of self-enquiry that he taught attracted aspirants from both the East and the West. Though not schooled in metaphysics, he became, by virtue of his realization, the inspirer of the highest type of metaphysical inquiry in many."

The increasing concern of philosophy in India with social problems and the growing influence

exercised by saints in the elevation of the general consciousness Godward, are noted with approval.

A delightful presentation. Scholarship sits light on Dr. Mahādevan.

M. P. PANDIT.

I AM THAT: By Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. Pub.: M/s. Chetana Ltd., 34, Rampart Row, Bombay-400 001. Pp. xv + 430. Price : Rs. 40.

Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj is regarded as the living representative of the spiritual hierarchy known as the *Navanath Sampradaya* which traces its origin to Lord Dattatreya. This remarkable book recording his dialogues with seekers is a spiritual guide of immense value. The translator of these talks is Maurice Frydman, an old devotee of Sri Bhagavan whose simplicity and sincerity are well known.

The questions are generally by Westerners who are conditioned strongly to think in purely Western traditions. They are obsessed with the evils of the world and want to do something about it. The sage's replies to them are apt, enlightening and strictly from the standpoint of the Absolute.

Maharaj's teaching that one is not the mind or the physical body and that therefore one has no problems in reality is the essence of *jnana marga*, the path of knowledge.

In passages such as the following Truth is explained in the best traditions of Advaita : "What matters is that I am neither the body nor the mind. I am" (p. 211). "Reality is not an event. . . . It is not to be prepared for and anticipated. . . . Grasp the central point that reality is not an event and does not happen and whatever happens, whatever comes and goes, is not reality." (p. 215)

Not many books present pure Advaita but this one does. We are heavily indebted to Nisargadatta Maharaj for his authentic exposition of the Truth.

M. C. SUBRAMANIAN

THE PROBLEM OF UNIVERSALS IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: By Raja Ram Dravid, Banaras Hindu University. Pub.: Motilal Banarsi das, Delhi, Patna, Varanasi. (Foreword by T. R. V. Murthy.) Pp. 473. Price : Rs. 45.

Dr. Dravid is Reader in the Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, Banaras Hindu University and the book under review is a very valuable contribution on the problem of the universals in Indian Philosophy. Though the scope of the book as the title indicates is confined to Indian Philosophy, the author has given a fairly full account of universals as taught by European philosophers from Plato to

Moore. One would wish that the viewpoint of idealistic thinkers like Bradley and Bosanquet was also included here. The first eleven chapters are devoted to an exhaustive and critical discussion of the views of the Naiyayikas, the Mimamsakas and the Bauddhas and the Jainas. The advaita view of universals is mainly based on Citsukha and Madhusudana Sarasvati and his commentator Brahmananda. The author has also given a careful and critical account of the doctrine of import of words with which the theories of universals are closely related and his treatment of the views of Bhartrihari and the theory of Apōha Vāda of the Buddhist is very lucid and comprehensive. The sledge-hammer criticisms of Kumarila Bhatta on the Apōha Vāda and the reply by Santarakṣita and Kamalasila are well discussed. The book on the whole is a tribute to the patience and scholarship of the author and though as he himself recognises in his Introduction that several modern writers have discussed some aspects of this theme, credit should go to him for organising the available material in a logical and intelligible manner. The author has to be congratulated for this scholarly and substantial contribution to the enrichment of an important but abstruse problem.

MODERN LOGIC : ITS RELEVANCE TO PHILOSOPHY : Edited by Daya Krishna, D. C. Mathur and A. P. Rao. Pub. : Impex India, 2/18, Ansari Road, Delhi-6. Pp. 197. Price : Rs. 25.

This book consists of fourteen papers and two appendices on modern logic as mathematical logic and its relevance to philosophy, presented by philosophers and mathematicians. The extravagant technicality of mathematical logic and its claim that no significant thinking is possible without its aid is the theme, directly or indirectly discussed in these papers. Some deal with the question straight, though strictly not relevant to the central theme, while others discuss it indirectly by focussing our attention on some specific implications. The papers on "Logic of Quantum Mechanics", "The Theory of Probability", "Knowing That One Knows", and a few other papers, though profound do not seem to touch the core of the problem which is the title of the book. Dr. G. C. Pande probably expresses the crux of this relationship by stating that "the problem of reconciling the necessity of mathematical knowledge with its applicability to the real world is only a special case of the inherent paradox of knowledge which is at once direct and indirect — a revelation of the real as well as an interpretation and construction of the world." Dr. Mathur is emphatic that life is larger than formal logic and

that philosophy keeps close to life. Dr. Sen, however, in his paper argues that there are several points of contact between logical theories and philosophical issues, and concludes that logic and philosophy are continuous and united.

One has probably no right to expect from a Seminar any definite and precise conclusion on the problem specified. The several papers argue their own point of view and illustrate the diversity of views possible on all philosophical and even mathematical problems.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

SRI RAMANUJA ON THE UPANISHADS: By Prof. S. S. Raghavachar. Published by Prof. M. Rangacharya Memorial Trust, Triplicane, Madras-5. Price : Rs. 10.

This book, based on the lectures delivered by Prof. Raghavachar, fulfils a long-felt need as it discounts the popular impression that Sri Ramanuja's philosophy of *visishtādvaita* derives more from the *Gita* and the *Brahma Sutras* than from the *Upanishads*, which form the bedrock of Indian spiritual thought. In addition to the fact that the great Ācharya did not write separate commentaries on the principal *Upanishads*, as Sri Sankara had done before him, Rangañāmānuja, who came several centuries after him, wrote several commentaries on the *Upanishads* to expound the philosophy of *visishtādvaita* : which has only strengthened the false belief that the Ācharya as a *bhashyakara* had failed to interpret the *Upanishads*.

The author has taken pains to bring together for the first time all that Sri Ramanuja has said in various contexts on important basic texts in fifteen *Upanishads*, including the principal ten, which have remained comparatively unknown. What is made now available is fairly impressive in volume sufficient enough to prove that in the Ācharya's works one can find an *Upanishad-bhāshya* also. According to him, the Ultimate Spirit holds all things within Itself and abides in all things ; and the *Upanishad*-teaching stands summed up in the supreme synthesis in the concept of Nārāyana.

OUTLINES OF JAINISM: By S. Gopalan. Pub. : Wiley Eastern Private Ltd., J-43/A, South Extension 1, New Delhi-110 049. Price : Rs. 12.

"Peace" is the one word that sums up the atmosphere of Jainism, peace between man and man, peace between man and animal, peace everywhere and in all things, a perfect brotherhood of all that lives. Much older than Buddhism, although by the Western eye it is considered as its offshoot, the roots of Jainism take one to fabulous antiquity. Vardhamana, styled Mahāvira, the contemporary of Gautama

Buddha, was only the last in a series of prophets, for tradition records twenty-three of them having preceded him. Jainism seems to be the only heretical creed that has survived to the present day out of the many that were preached in opposition to the Vedic tenets. Here it may resemble Buddhism, but it differs from the Gautama's teachings in its recognition of permanent entities like self and matter. Its influence, quite unlike that of Buddhism, is confined to India ; and one of the reasons for its insularity might be that its primary aim is the perfection of the soul rather than the interpretation of the universe : for as the *Sarva Darsana Sangraha* remarks, *asrava* and *samvara* constitute the whole of Jain teachings, the rest being only their amplification.

Dr. Gopalan has offered in this book something more than the mere "statement of facts" about the Jaina tradition, by placing Jainism as an integral aspect of the Indian tradition. Born out of the lectures he gave to the course on Jainism in the Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy in the University of Madras since 1969, the work is comprehensive by its detailed discussions about Jain epistemology, psychology, metaphysics and ethics. That in spite of its antiquity, Jainism is still a vital organic movement and is testified by the Anuvrata organisation inaugurated by Acharya Tulasi in 1940 which forms the concluding chapter of this eminently readable book. "One can affirm confidently that not only the new offshoot but the main tree itself can still serve as a panacea for the present day ills by the proper application of the essential Jain philosophy of the five vows and also by its approach to the whole problem of peace and unity by suggesting that the immense potentialities that each individual has for promoting social unity can be actualised by developing inner harmony and regulated spiritual evolution."

ARGUS

A PILGRIM'S GUIDE TO PLANET EARTH (with Introduction by Alan Watts) : Pub. : Spiritual Community Publications, P.O. Box 1080, San Rafael, Calif. 94902, U.S.A. Pp. 288. Price : \$ 4.50.

The religious-minded traveller can consult this book for brief and useful information on shrines, temples, monasteries and meditation centres spread throughout the world. An attempt has also been made within a brief compass to bring out characteristic religious attitudes in different countries.

The most useful part of the book consists in guiding pilgrims in practical matters of travelling.

The title of the book gives the wrong impression of interspace travellers from other planets.

RAMAMANI

ASHRAM BULLETIN

Jillellamudi Mother visits the Ashram

Anasuya Amma, familiarly known as 'The Mother of Jillellamudi' visited the Ashram on April 13. Sri Emberumanar Chettiar, Proprietor of M/s. Hoe & Co., Madras, brought Amma to the Ashram in deference to her wish. Sri Chettiar made all the arrangements for the trip and himself drove the car all the way from Madras.



Ashram President receives the Jillellamudi AMMA

THE 'Mother' who lives in Jillellamudi, near Bapatla, in Andhra Pradesh, has a good number of followers.

She identifies herself with the Universal Mother as may be seen from the following :

"Question : Who are you ?

Mother : I am the Mother.

Q. : Whose Mother are you ?

A : I am the Mother of all.

Q. : When did you attain perfection ?

A : I am not anything new which I was not earlier. I am ever the same. If there is a change, it is in your understanding of me."

She does not advocate any hard or rigorous practices (*sadhanas*) for her followers. A few of her sayings are given below :

"Where is the question of a good way to the *Atman* ? When everything you see is That, where is the question of a way ? . . . any way is good. There is no fixed path to liberation.

"Feel happy over what takes place, don't worry over what does not happen.

"Spiritual states are not attained ; they come about — not only for human beings but also for all creatures."

Free boarding and lodging for visitors are provided at her abode. A temple is under construction. A Sanskrit school is functioning. 'The Mother' is accessible to all devotees, practically at all hours.

The prayers of devotees have been answered by her. Instances are many : barren women have been blessed with children. Many who were sick have been healed. Personal problems of many have been solved. Some have had spiritual experiences. With all the feeling of the devotees that the 'Mother' is behind all this, she herself denies that she 'does' anything.

She was received at the Ashram entrance personally by Sri T. N. Venkataraman, the Ashram President, and conducted all round. There was quite a good gathering. And 'Mother' in keeping with her usual practice applied 'tilak' with affection on the President and dozens of devotees.

It was a pleasant half-an-hour with a spiritual leader who impressed all by her motherly affection and simplicity.

***CELEBRATION OF the 25th ARADHANA
OF SRI BHAGAVAN***

AT THE ASHRAM

THE 25th *Aradhana* or anniversary of Sri Bhagavan's *Maha Nirvana* was celebrated at the Ashram on May 8, in the midst of a large gathering of devotees from all over India, as well as abroad.

As usual hymns on and by Sri Bhagavan were sung in the early hours before his shrine. After the brief morning (milk-offering) *puja* to Sri Bhagavan and breakfast there was special Vedic chanting, in which the *Mahanarayananopanishad* was included, in addition to the *Taittirya Upanishad*, usually done. *Ekadasa Rudra Mahanyasa* was also performed. The Ramaneswara Mahalingam was specially decorated for the occasion. After elaborate *abhisheka* and *Sahasranama Puja*, *aarti* was done at about 11-30, which was witnessed by a large crowd with great devotion. Guests were treated to the usual special lunch and there was feeding of the poor on a large scale. As usual, the atmosphere was vibrant with the hallowed Presence and Grace of Sri Bhagavan.

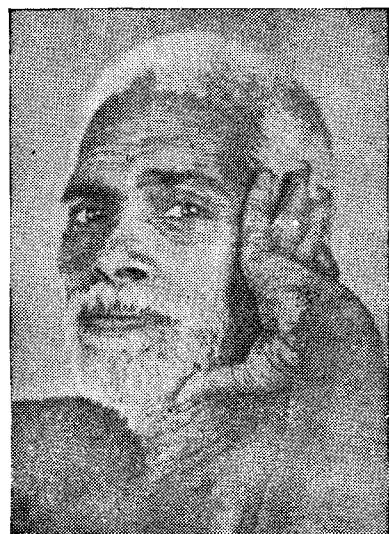
AT CALCUTTA

Sri Ramana Kendra celebrated the *Aradhana* of Bhagavan Ramana on May 25, at Sankara Hall, Calcutta.

Prof. Tripurari Chakrabarty, the chief speaker, quoting profusely from the *Upanishads*, explained the concept of *Tat Tvam Asi* (That Thou Art). Pointing out that the advent of Sri Ramana like that of Sri Sankara and Sri Ramakrishna fulfilled the promise of Lord Krishna in the *Gita* that He would reincarnate for the protection of *dharma*, he traced the essence of Sri Bhagavan's teaching to the *Maha Vakya*: "Aham Brahmasmi." Sri H. R. Chadha gave an interesting talk, recalling his experiences in the presence of Sri Bhagavan. Everyone felt that there was a subtle atmosphere of Grace all through the function.

AT DELHI

As part of the celebrations, Sri Swami Dayananda of the Chinmaya Mission gave two lucid discourses on Sri Bhagavan's teachings which he described as the most direct, simple and right royal road to Truth. At the *satsangh* on May 8, *puja* and *pārāyanā* were followed by Muruganar's songs by a group of ladies led by Smt. Visalam Sivaramakrishnan.



AT RAMANA MANDIRAM, MADURAI

Sri Bhagavan's 25th *Aradhana* was celebrated with *Vedaparayana* and *Sahasranama Archana* in the morning of May 8. Food was served to poor at noon. In the evening the function began with the usual weekly Thursday *Satsang* at about 6-30. Devotees who had come from Ramana Kendra, New Delhi, sang songs on Bhagavan. After that Sri Swami Yoganandagiri, Vice-President, Brahmajnana Mutt, gave a discourse on Bhagavan. He likened Bhagavan to Suka Brahman and also spoke on the teachings of Bhagavan. The celebration concluded with *aarti* to the large picture of Bhagavan.

MAHA PUJA (MOTHER'S DAY)

June 3 was Mother's Day, the day on which Sri Bhagavan liberated his mother from *samsara* for ever. This was duly celebrated at the Ashram. We have also received a report on the celebration from the Ramana Kendra, Delhi. In this connection we publish below a letter from Kavyakanta to Sri Bhagavan written from Sirsi (North Karnataka), dated June 6, 1931 :

"Lord, Who has assumed the Form of a man for the World-Play, Accept our respects from here on the holy day of the Blessed Mother's worship.

"We bow to Soundaryamba,¹ consort of Sundara, who brought you forth, the Lord, endowed with all the rare traits of the great incarnations for the welfare of the world, for the annihilation of the forces of ignorance, for the elimination of perverse polemics and for the revelation of Truth-Reality, as Kausalya, Devaki, Renuka, Maya Devi and Mary brought forth (respectively) Sri Rama, the Protector of the Munis, Sri Krishna, the teacher of Yoga-Vidya, Parasurama, the life-long celebate Preceptor, Sakya Muni (Buddha) who gave refuge to all beings and the Son of Man (Christ) who chose to bear the weight of all devotees' sins on himself. We bow to Matrubhuteswara installed and presiding over her Samadhi and to the devotees of Bhagavan conducting the worship at the *Sanctum*."

ARTHUR OSBORNE'S DAY

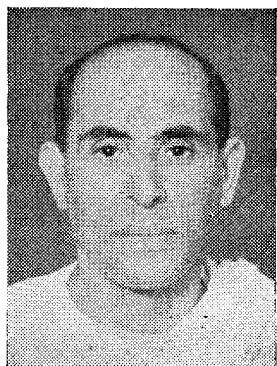
The anniversary of Arthur Osborne's leaving this earthly scene on May 8, 1970, was celebrated this year at Ramana Nagar as usual at his Samadhi covered with flowers and garlands offered by his admirers. Ashramites, old devotees and visitors gathered around it to render homage to his memory in silence and prayers and by chanting devotional hymns, foremost of which was the *Five Hymns to Arunachala*. It was a moving and solemn hour pervaded by Sri Ramana Maharshi's Presence which most of us felt. This year it so happened that both Sri Ramana Maharshi's and Arthur Osborne's anniversaries fell and were celebrated on the same day, May 8. A *biksha* was arranged by the Ashram on this occasion.

Sri S. S. COHEN

Sri S. S. Cohen, a staunch devotee of over thirty years' standing, has been visiting the Ashram periodically but he has now returned to Tiruvannamalai for good and lives near the Ashram. We are glad that he is willing to spend some time with seekers who go to him for help or discussion on spiritual matters.

He is the author of *Guru Ramana, Reflections on Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* and *Srimad Bhagavatam* (a condensation of the original).

The presence of such an old devotee is an encouraging feature and we wish we have his company for long.



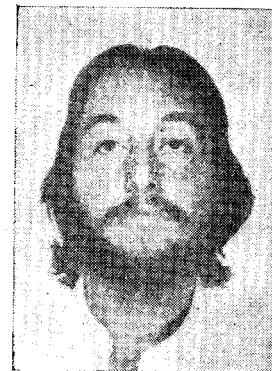
Sri S. S. Cohen

PILGRIMS

In summer we have usually less number of visitors and this year also it was so. But, there are some staunch devotees who do not mind inconveniences, like difficulties of travel, shortage of water, electricity; and they did visit the Ashram. Here is a short account of a few such devotees:

Mr. Zbigniew Buday (London), a sculptor of Polish-Rumanian parentage, came to Arunachala this year to spend two memorable months. After many peregrinations in search of spirituality he came across a book about Sri Ramana Maharshi's teaching and felt immediately that he had found his *guru*. Coming here fulfilled all his expectations. He writes :

"Staying at Sri Ramanasramam is a rewarding experience. There presence of Mr. Zbigniew Buday Ramana-Arunachala is a Spiritual Fount incomparable. As the Teachings of Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi steadily spread the Ashram becomes a spiritual centre for an ever-increasing number of devotees. Just in showing benevolence to all devotees the Ashram is doing the greatest service. — Z. Buday."



Sri K. Sivaraj, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Shipping, Government of India, visited the Ashram in the first week of June, accompanied by his wife, *Srimati Vimala* and sons, *Shyam Sundar* and *Krishna*. He was happy to meditate in the Old Hall and feel the presence and Grace of Sri Bhagavan. He was also happy to witness the *Sri Chakra Puja*. He availed himself of the opportunity to meet and talk with old devotees, such as *Viswanatha Swami*, *Krishna Bhikshu*, *Kunju Swami*, *Mrs. Osborne* and *S. S. Cohen*.

He spent some time at Skandashram and Virtupaksha Cave. He went for *giri pradakshinam*; and also visited Gurumurtam and Gautama Ashram, places connected with Bhagavan.

¹ This is the Samskrit equivalent of Bhagavan's mother's name in Tamil, Alagammal, *Alagu* means 'beauty', 'gracefulness'.

He writes : "Thanks to the kind attention of the President and all others in the Ashram, our visit turned out to be one of fulfilment and internal renewal for us. We have made a number of friends and carry very happy memories of our visit. May the Ashram grow from strength to strength and be of service to one and all from India and other countries of the world who are interested in the quest of the Self."

Sri Sivaraj is a very active member of the *Ramana Kendra*, Delhi. He has been helpful to the institution in many ways and is responsible for several improvements including the construction of the new building of the Kendra.

We were indeed happy to receive Sri Sivaraj and family and hope they will be able to come often.

* * * *

We were also happy to receive two other active members of the Delhi Kendra, *Sri V. Mahalingam* and *Srimati Mahalingam*. Sri Mahalingam is highly devoted to Sri Bhagavan and ably looks after the puja routine at the Kendra. Srimati Mahalingam is a good singer and gives an excellent rendering of Muruganar's songs in particular. We were happy to listen to her singing at the Ashram.

* * * *

We had, at the end of June, the pleasure of having in our midst *Prof. B. V. Raman* (the famous astrologer and editor of *The Astrological Magazine*, Bangalore) on a brief visit. He was accompanied by *Mrs. Rajeswari Raman*, who is an active enthusiastic propagator of Yoga among ladies in India and several countries in the West. Prof. Raman came here on his way to and back from Tirunallar, in Tanjore Dt., where there is the only temple for *Sani* (Saturn) in India.

* * * *

Sri T. F. Lorgus (Caixa Postal — 1946, Porto Alegre, R. G. do Sul, Brazil, South America), our journal's agent in South America, and a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan, paid his homage to his Master, accompanied by two of his friends interested in Sri Bhagavan. His visit enabled us to have a closer contact with him.

* * * *

Mr. Douglas L. Powell, a young earnest devotee from Perth, Western Australia, stayed in the Ashram for a fortnight in May and continues to keep in touch with the Ashram. He became a *Life Member* of the Ashram and *Life Subscriber* to our journal.

* * * *

Sri H. K. Budhdeo, London, spent three days at the Ashram. He evinced deep interest in meeting the old devotees of Sri Bhagavan residing now in the Ashram.

* * * *

Dr. Suhasini, grand-daughter of A. Devaraja Mudaliar, who got married recently, visited the Ashram with her husband, *Dr. T. Gunasagaran* and parents and went round the holy Arunachala. They all spent a day here with great devotional fervour. All the members of Mudaliar's family adore Bhagavan as their only God and Saviour. We wish this young couple and all of them peace and prosperity !

* * * *

Sri K. G. Krishnaswamy (of Binny & Co.) who was in Bangalore and has been transferred to Madras now, spent four useful days at the Ashram. He went round the Hill along with other devotees on the Aradhana Day. He himself said with great pleasure that his stay this time was really rewarding.

* * * *

Prof. T. F. Bidari, Reader in Philosophy, Government College, Nipani, Karnataka, who is a frequent visitor, spent five days at the abode of our Master, along with his family.

* * * *

Prof. G. V. Kulkarni of Kolhapur, the co-translator of *The Bhagavad Gita* together with Arthur Osborne (serialised in our journal) visited the Ashram in June and spent a week, together with his wife and daughter. His deep devotion to Sri Bhagavan and his dedicated service to the Ashram evoke emulation.

* * * *

Dr. B. K. Kalia of the Kurukshetra University, Punjab, though a staunch devotee of Bhagavan for a long time, could come to His Ashram only now. He spent a few fruitful days at the Ashram. He visited the holy places hallowed by the stay of our Master, in and around Arunachala ; he also went round the Hill. He is very keen upon spreading the teaching of the Maharshi all over the world.

* * * *

Smt. Patricia Freitas of Honolulu, U.S.A., is an earnest devotee of Sri Bhagavan and has been a sincere seeker ever since she heard of Sri Bhagavan and took Him as her Master. She has visited the Ashram several times ; she came here this year in May and stayed for two months. Though she wanted to continue her stay for some months more,

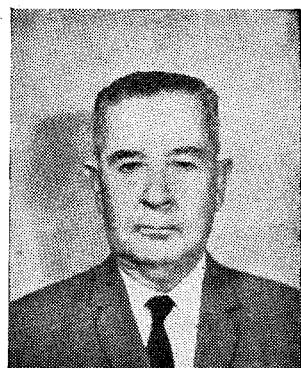
she had to return home to her professional work. She said, before leaving : "It was by His Grace that I was able to come here now and I can not express in words the spiritual help I have derived from Bhagavan !"

* * *

Miss Zarine Dadachanji from Bombay has been coming here every year for at least one month for the past few years. Her professional work does not allow her to extend her stay which she would have loved to do if possible. Every minute spent here is precious to her and she certainly makes full use of the time for her sadhana. This year she came against greater odds than usual and spent the whole of June in the radiance of Arunachala.

* * *

Dr. E. Santo Potess from Cali, Colombia, is a staunch devotee and he visited the Ashram for the third time, in April 1975, along with his grandson. Dr. Potess is happy about the grandson's interest in spiritual matters and brought him along at his request.



Dr. E. Santo Potess

transformation which cannot be described in words. This visit has given me more peace and satisfaction than the previous ones and I hope to come again. There is no way of thinking or adoring the Master adequately. He has in his firm grip souls who thirst for truth and light. Once we are captured by him no power can wean us back to the world of corruption."

* * *

OBITUARY

DR. E. SANTO POTESS

Since sending the above matter to the press, we feel very much distressed to have to write an obituary of the same dear old friend, *Dr. E. Santo Potess*. He most probably had a premonition that this was his last visit! Shortly after his return to

his native city, he had brain concussion after a fall, and it proved fatal. He was a rare soul and his devotion to Sri Bhagavan was amazing!

* * * *

Dr. T. N. KRISHNASWAMY

It is with deep regret that we report the demise of *Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy*, more popularly known as 'T.N.K.' on April 2, 1975 at his residence in Madras. He had symptoms of heart-block for a year and the end when it came was sudden; he passed away very peacefully.

A staunch devotee since 1930, T. N. K. has contributed in several ways to the cause of the Ashram and his services will be remembered for ever. First of all comes his contribution as a photographer. Not many photographers were available in 1930, and therefore his work as the 'official photographer' of the Ashram was valuable. And not less important, was his work of high quality in a technical sense. Many pictures of Sri Bhagavan with which devotees are familiar were taken by him with the willing participation of Sri Bhagavan himself. Two typical examples can be cited. One is the picture of Sri Bhagavan in the *Padmasana* pose (a large coloured picture of which now adorns the new Ashram office, right above the seat of the President). Another is the picture in which he appears with his hands on his hips and his face in semi-profile. Sri Bhagavan posed quite willingly for these two early pictures, thousands of copies of which (particularly the *Padmasana* pose) have either been sold or distributed free by the Ashram. Most of the pictures that have appeared as frontispieces in *The Mountain Path* or been published in other columns, were taken by this devotee. (See the frontispiece of this issue, specially brought out in his memory).



Dr. T. N. Krishnaswamy

As a doctor he made himself available to devotees and inmates. Of course he attended on Sri Bhagavan himself whenever called upon to do so.

Above all he was a source of strength to the Ashram administration. He shouldered many responsibilities and helped the Ashram in all possible ways. He was also a Trustee for some years. T.N.K. was well-read generally and had made a deep study of Sri Bhagavan's works and had his own stature as a steady *sadhaka*. *Yoga Vasishtha* was his most favourite book.

His constant support to the cause of *The Mountain Path* and the practical help he rendered have also to be gratefully acknowledged. The decision to run the journal as a quarterly (instead of as an annual) was also taken at his instance.

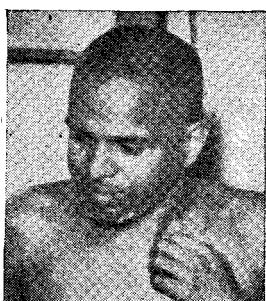
We convey our condolences to his two sons, Sri Natarajan and Dr. Ramana Kumar.

May he rest in eternal peace at the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan !

SRI AVADHUTENDRA SARASWATI SWAMIJI

His Holiness Sri Avadhutendra Saraswati Swamiji expired suddenly due to a heart attack on June 11 in Hyderabad. His body was brought to Vijayawada and immersed in the holy waters of the Krishna River there. His Holiness was very well-known all over India for his propagation of *Bhagavan Nama Sankirtana* and his heartfelt and masterly rendering of the same for more than 40 years.

He was a great devotee of Sri Bhagavan Ramana and had frequently been visiting Sri Ramanasramam over the past 5 or 6 years. Last year he spent 5 months here, went round Arunachala for 80 days and rolled around the Hill once (*anga pradakshina*). He concluded his stay here with a 7-day non-stop singing of 'Arunachala Siva' accompanied by more than 300 of his devotees and a one-day non-stop *bhajan* at the Ashram (see October 1974 issue, p. 242). It was unique and very thrilling for all the residents of Tiruvannamalai and the Ashramites. We are very much pained to learn of his sudden demise but feel consoled that he is resting for ever at the Feet of Arunachala !

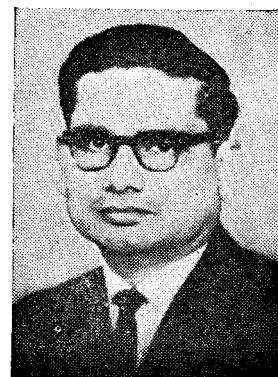


H.H. Sri Avadhutendra Saraswati Swamiji for more than 40 years.

SRI J. SRINIVASAN

We regret to report the too premature passing away of *Sri J. Srinivasan*, Chartered Accountant, Bangalore. He was the Auditor of our Ashram accounts since 1964, rendering valuable service as a labour of love, amidst a very busy life.

He was connected with numerous important institutions in various capacities and was a Director of a Bank. He was well-known for his active social service as well.



Above all, he was a sincere devotee of Sri Bhagavan. We pray that his soul may rest in peace at the Feet of the Lord !

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

New Additions

Invitation to Indian Philosophy : By T. M. P. Mahadevan. Pub. : Arnold-Heinemann Publishers (India) Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi-110 016. (Rs. 50).

The Paramahansa of Pawas : By D. K. Pande. Pub. : B. M. Paranjape, Secretary, Swami Sarowarpananda Seva Mandal, Pawas, Ratnagiri. (Rs. 12).

Beyond the Gods : By John Blofeld. Pub. : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. (£ 3.50 in U.K. only).

Saccidananda A Christian Approach to Advaitic Experience : By Abhishiktananda. Pub. : I.S.P.C.K. — L.P.H., P.B. 1585, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-110 006. (Rs. 20).

Unworldly Wise : By O. O. O. Pub. : Hongkong University Press, 94, Bonham Road, Hong Kong. (HK \$ 27).

Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs : Translated by Dr. Trilochan Singh & Others. Pub. : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. (£ 1.50 in U.K.).

Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology : Vol. 5 & Vol. 6.

The Linga Purana (2 Volumes) : Edited by Prof. J. L. Shastri. Pub. : Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi-7. (Rs. 50 each).

Philosophy of the Third World : By Heydar Reghaby. Pub. : D.Q. University Berkeley Distribution Center, P.O. Box 4507, Berkeley, California-94704, U.S.A. (\$ 2.50).

Dialogues on the Future of Man : By Frederick Patka. Pub. : Philosophical Library Inc., 15, East 40 Street, New York, N.Y. 10016, U.S.A. (\$ 10).

Fundamental Relationships and Their Logical Formulations : By Frederick S. Johnston, Jr. Pub : Philosophical Library Inc., U.S.A. (\$ 6).

Introduction to Saint Gregory Palamas : By George C. Papademetriou. Pub. : Philosophical Library Inc., U.S.A. (\$ 5).

Studies in East-West Philosophy : By G. Srinivasan. Pub. : Arnold-Heinemann Publishers (India) Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi-110016. (Rs. 25).

A Pilgrimage Guide to Planet Earth (Introduction by Alan Watts) : Pub. : Spiritual Community Publications, P.B. 1080, Dept. P.G., San Rafael, California-94902, U.S.A. (\$ 4.50).

Yoga Wisdom of the Upanishads : By Swami Jyotir Mayananda. Pub. : International Yoga Society, 6111 S.W. 74th Avenue, Miami, Florida-33143, U.S.A. (\$ 6.99).

The Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali : By Anthony Elenjimittam. Pub. : Better Yourself Books, 28-B, Chatham Lines, Allahabad-211 002. (Rs. 7).

KRISHNA in the traditional painting of Bengal : By Bholanath Bhattacharya. Pub. : Kamal Banerjee, 74, Ballygunge Gardens, Calcutta-19. (Rs. 35).

Tibetan Art of Healing : By Theodore Burang. Translated by Susan Macintosh. Pub. : Watkins, London.

Asana. Pranayama, Mudra, Bandha : By Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Pub. : The Bihar School of Yoga, Monghyr, Bihar. (Price not quoted).

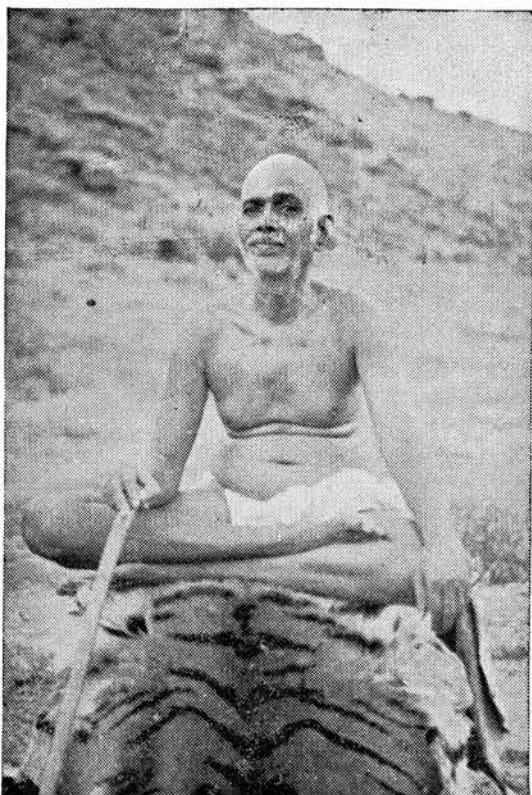
From Shore to Shore — Yoga : A collection of lectures given by Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Publishers : As above.

FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

GURU POORNIMA (Vyasa Puja)	Wednesday	23- 7-1975
KRISHNA JAYANTHI (Gokulashtami)	Friday	29- 8-1975
NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (Commences on)	Monday	6-10-1975
SARASWATHI PUJA	Monday	13-10-1975
VIJAYADASAMI	Tuesday	14-10-1975
DEEPAVALI	Sunday	2-11-1975
SKANDA SHASHTI	Sunday	9-11-1975
KARTHIGAI DEEPAM	Wednesday	19-11-1975
SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI	Saturday	20-12-1975
PONGAL	Thursday	15- 1-1976
CHINNASWAMI ARADHANA	Friday	16- 1-1976
MAHA SIVARATHRI	Saturday	28- 2-1976
SRI VIDYA HAVAN	Friday	19- 3-1976
TELUGU NEW YEAR DAY	Wednesday	31- 3-1976
TAMIL NEW YEAR DAY	Tuesday	13- 4-1976

INTRODUCING....

..... Sri M. C. Ekanatha Row

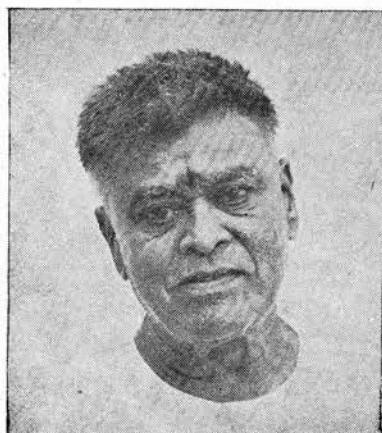


Sri M. C. Ekanatha Row is a well-known devotee. His father Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Row was a popular figure in Madras connected as he was with various religious, social and philanthropic activities.

Sri Ekanatha Row was a supervisor of Industries of the Madras Government and has been visiting the Ashram since 1933. The Ashram, whenever it needed anything, would write to him (particularly while he was at Madras) and he would with enthusiasm comply with the request. When he was at Vellore, he used to bring vegetables every week-end in liberal quantities to prepare *aviyal*, an Ashram speciality. Besides his general help and keen interest in Ashram affairs, his services have been available in specific jobs such as supervision of the

Veda Patasala (after the demise of Major Chadwick) and general assistance to the resident doctor at the Dispensary. Also in the early years during water-scarcity he helped in water exploration attempts (by digging a bore-well).

Having lost his wife early in life he brought up his sons himself without assistance, managing even the cooking. From his early years he had a liking for the company of sadhus. In fact, when on official tours he used to stay not at the official inspection bungalow but in a nearby mutt or religious institution. Such was his liking for sadhus! His father had the privilege of coming into contact with Swami Vivekananda and of receiving Sri Narayana Guru in his house. Sri Nataraja Guru and others had also paid him visits. At his invitation sadhus of the Ashram also used to stay with him. While he was at Cuddalore water-scarcity was experienced at Tiruvannamalai, so he took Sri Kunju Swami and others to his place and made their stay there comfortable.



Sri M. C. Ekanatha Row

He came to Sri Bhagavan on the sage advice of Sri Munagala Venkataramiah (Sri Ramanananda Saraswati, author of *Talks*). He had then lost his wife and in that moment of grief, sought the grace

of the Master. His experience is best described in his own words :

'I bowed to Sri Bhagavan and told him of my forlorn condition. He said nothing about it, but only mentioned the visit of my parents years earlier. I stayed at the Ashram for the night and had *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan again, early next morning. He asked me if I had slept well and I replied in the affirmative. He then asked if I felt grief then but I said nothing. Sri Bhagavan then explained that grief is absent during sleep and comes up only when one wakes up. That is to say, grief is experienced only along with body-consciousness. As long as one identifies oneself with the body there will be some trouble or other. 'Find out if you are the body', he said. 'Enquire

Who am I?' With this *upadesa* of Sri Bhagavan my sorrow melted away."

Sri Row was a resident of the Ashram for a continuous period of more than ten years. He used to attract the attention of other devotees by his active habits and lively conversation.

He now lives in Guntur with his son, devoting his time to *sadhana* and constantly recalls happy days spent in Sri Bhagavan's proximity. He clearly sees that the Presence of Sri Bhagavan is unlimited by space and time and therefore he feels no difference whether he stays at the Ashram or outside.

We wish this great devotee many more years of a life of devotion to his Master !

MY LIFE AT SRI RAMANASRAMAM

By SURI NAGAMMA

Devotees of Sri Bhagavan and others who have read and admired *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* by the same author, will surely like to read of the background and life of the lady who lived in the Ashram for long years and completely surrendered herself to the Master.

Crown 8vo : 160 pp.

Price : Rs. 4.00 (postage EXTRA)

£ 0.50 or US \$ 1.25 (postage FREE)

Please write to :

SRI RAMANASRAMAM BOOK DEPOT,
SRI RAMANASRAMAM P.O.,
TIRUVANNAMALAI-606 603, S. India.

Sri Ramanasramam

Life Members—Indian

ADDITIONS SINCE JULY 1974

Ganesh Vinayak Kale, Bombay
 H. Yogish, Madras
 R. Nanjunda Rao, Bangalore
 Bherumal Hotchand, Madras
 P. R. P. Verma, Calcutta
 M. D. Venkataramanayya, Kavali
 Pydimarri Satyanarayananamurty, Kakinada
 Shyamlal K. Punshi, Amaravathi
 Chinni Venkata Seshaiah, Atmakur
 Lt. Col. Harbans Lall, Nizamabad
 K. Narayanaswamy, Bangalore
 Dr. K. Viswanadhan, Warangal
 L. B. Ahuja, Rourkela
 H. K. S. Rao, New Delhi
 D. Viswanatha Mallya, Cochin
 Dr. R. Suryanarayanan, Dharmapuri
 Peteti Subbarathnamma, Nellore
 N. Lingamma, Tumkur
 Veena Mukundrao Kulkarni, Poona
 K. Viswanathan, Kalambur
 V. Pattabhiramayya, Secunderabad
 Bhagatram, New Delhi
 N. Vasudevan, Madras
 T. S. Ganesh, Bombay
 C. S. Mahimtura, Bombay
 K. B. Govinda Rao, Calicut
 Akshayalingam Pillai, Tiruvannamalai
 Jitendranath Johari, Dhanbad
 K. S. M. Muthuswami Pillai, Trichy
 Pestonji Pirojsha Ichhaporia, Bombay
 Prof. B. R. Seshachar, Bangalore
 Dr. M. D. Naik, Kumta
 G. G. Bhat Kshetrapal, Kumta
 K. P. Bhat Handigon, Kumta
 M. Puranmal Agarwal, Hyderabad
 G. R. Khedkar, Gwalior
 Dr. Nakul Chandra Patra, Midnapore
 R. Rama Rao, Visakhapatnam
 Padmanabha Pande, Kullada
 H. P. Panday, Bombay
 P. A. Thiruvengadam, Bangalore
 Mrs. Umabai Paranjpe, Nagpur
 G. N. Nagaraja Rao, Bangalore
 A. Kannuswamy, Tiruchy
 M. Nagarajan, Madras
 V. K. Rajabather, Chingleput.
 T. Periasami Gounder, Coimbatore
 Dr. G. Venkatachalam, Tuticorin
 Smt. Anusuya Subramanian, Bangalore
 Narhari Lal T. Pandya, Ahmedabad
 Sanjivrao S. Murdeshwar, Bombay
 Mr. Rajam Viswanathan, Calcutta
 P. Rukmani Ammal, Tanjore
 J. Baba Varaprasad, Madanapalle
 Romesh Nath Khanna, Calcutta
 N. Krishnan, Bombay
 Ghemarbhaji Jesinghbhai, Baroda
 K. Seshappa Chetty, Madanapalle
 M. N. Swaminathan, Madras
 Miss Ambika Natarajan, New Delhi
 B. R. S. V. Gopalji, Bangalore
 S. Vaidyanathan, Trichy
 Laljibhai D. Hindocha, Pondicherry
 Miss M. C. Vedavalli, Bangalore
 Dilip L. Hindocha, Pondicherry
 K. Bala Subramaniam, Tippirajapuram
 Dr. Kamoo Patel, Pondicherry
 Manubhai M. Dave, Pondicherry
 Dr. R. S. K. Murthy, Bellary
 A. Venkatesan, Chingleput
 Bharat G. Babur, Bombay
 P. S. Akshaya Raman, Villupuram
 Girdarlal Ghanshamdas, Secunderabad
 K. Ramaswamy, Secunderabad
 N. Nataraja Iyer, Madras
 S. V. S. R. Anjaneyulu, Waltair
 Pratap Gunvantrai Desai, Bombay
 V. C. Naidu, Madras
 M. V. Lakshmaiah Chetty, Madras
 S. Padmanabhan, Villupuram
 G. V. Patankar, Bombay
 Mrs. S. Ganga Bai, Cochin
 M. V. Rao, Thana
 P. Achari, Bangalore
 Bhamidipalli Sitaramamurty, Narasapur
 Vivekananda R. Manjeshwar, Poona
 S. K. Narayana Rao, Srirangapatnam
 V. Krishnamurti, Salem
 Smt. A. Ramammal, Tiruvannamalai

V. R. Kothandaraman, Bombay
 Smt. Shakuntala Manay, Bangalore
 R. V. Krishnaswamy Reddy, Cheyyar
 Ramabai Mukundrao Kulkarni, Miraj
 Sadananda, Bangalore

Mudunuri Surparaju, Undi
 K. Ammann, Vijayawada
 K. S. R. Appa Rao, Eluru
 S. Subramaniam, Gauhati
 V. Satyanarayana, Yellamanchili

Sri Ramanasramam

Life Members—Foreign

G. Guffroy (Sr.), The Netherlands
 Courtney Robinson, England
 Mr. & Mrs. David C. McClelland, U.S.A.
 C. Vijayendran, England
 Mrs. T. Ramanathan, Malaysia
 Vaclav Cech, Czechoslovakia
 Miss Noella Clavel, Canada
 H. K. Budhdeo, England
 E. R. W. Hart, Australia
 Donald McNeil, U.S.A.

Robert Moore, Australia
 Mrs. Marie Moore, Australia
 Richard Osorio, U.S.A.
 C. Saravanamuthu, London
 Dr. Leslie Dominits, U.S.A.
 Erika Roschmann, West Germany
 Julian Arias, U.S.A.
 Ripudaman Singh-Yadav, London
 Dr. E. Santo Potess, South America
 Douglas L. Powell, West Australia
 Mrs. Isabel Bellamy, Australia

The Mountain Path

Life Subscribers—Indian

M/s. Amzel Private Ltd., Poona
 G. S. Vaidyanathan, Madras
 S. V. Lathia, Bombay
 Shyamalal K. Punshi, Amaravati
 N. Vasudevan, Madras
 K. P. Ramachandran, Bangalore
 Dr. Dwarka Nath Muthu, Srinagar
 Panna Lal, Haryana
 T. N. Chaturvedi, New Delhi
 V. N. Sekhri, New Delhi
 R. C. Bharadwaj, New Delhi
 R. Ramamoorthy, Neyveli
 Y. N. Gupta, Gorakhpur
 Dr. K. Subramanian, Shillong
 G. C. Naidu, Madras

R. L. Marwaha, Gurgaon
 Ajai Rishidev Shastri, Nasik
 Miss Zarine K. Dadachanji, Bombay
 Miss Mehroo F. Screwwalla, Bombay
 H. R. S. Rao, Dhanbad
 Smt. Santi Vaman Rao, Hyderabad
 Bhagwan J. Kotak, Bombay
 Jagpal Singh Chaudhri, Chandigarh
 P. P. Thampi, Trivandrum
 Krishna B. Kotak, Lonavala
 Mrs. Sulochana Swaminadhan, Madras
 P. G. Nagarajan, Madras
 Chinni Venkata Seshaiah, Atmakur
 Mrs. L. J. Lalvani, Bombay

The Mountain Path

Life Subscribers—Foreign

Sarah Eichorn, California, U.S.A.
 Marilyn Harnden, New York
 C. Vijayendran, U.K.
 Richard Osorio, U.S.A.
 Dr. Pavel Krvka, Czechoslovakia
 Edward Witt, U.S.A.
 Vaclav Cech, Czechoslovakia
 Asram Vidya, Italy
 E. R. W. Hart, Australia
 Mrs. Savitri Cuttaree, Sweden
 Kandasamy, Singapore
 L. Gopalakrishna, Singapore

N. Wijayaharan, Zambia
 Paul and Beate Zemp, Switzerland
 Erika Roschmann, West Germany
 Satya Ananda, U.S.A.
 Kristal Forestwarren, U.S.A.
 Arunachala Ashrama, Nova Scotia
 Lahiri Das, U.S.A.
 Larry L. Bloom, U.S.A.
 Dr. E. Santo Potess, South America
 George N. Ledvina, U.S.A.
 Douglas L. Powell, West Australia
 J. Nenumal D, Indonesia

AN APPEAL

to become Life Members & Life Subscribers

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

For

SRI RAMANASRAMAM

Rs. 100 in India ; and
 £ 12.50 or US \$ 30 Foreign

For

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

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

Cheques to be sent to :

The President,

SRI RAMANASRAMAM

SRI RAMANASRAMAM P.O.,

TIRUVANNAMALAI 606603, S. India

Letters to the Editor

Replies by Lucia Osborne

TECHNIQUE OF SELF-ENQUIRY

I have started to practise Self-enquiry. . . . I shall feel highly obliged if you will kindly enlighten me on the following points relating to actual practice :

1. The method advised by a friend is sitting in silence one should ask the question, when any thought arises one should ask 'to whom it occurs'. The answer would emerge 'to me'. Thereupon enquire 'Who am I?' within the mind.

As I have understood, the enquiry here pertains to the ego or false 'I' which ultimately would be found non-existent. Kindly clarify this point that the enquiry pertains to the false 'I' and not to the true 'Self' which will manifest itself.

In reality the method in practice becomes the process of watching so that when any thought arises one should resume the enquiry 'Who am I?'. Kindly confirm that this is correct.

2. In one place I read the instruction given is to focuss the entire mind on the spiritual heart on the right side during the enquiry. In another place I read the important thing is the investigation of the 'I' and not concentration on the heart centre.

What is to be done in actual practice ? Where is mind to be directed during enquiry ?

3. In some places the advice is given to find out from where thoughts arise or seek the source of the ego or 'I'-thought from which all other thoughts arise.

How is this to be done in actual practice ? How to trace the source ?

4. My friend tells me of a slight variation in practice from those described in the books, viz., to keep the idea in the subconscious that you are *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, the Self to which no thoughts can occur. So when any thought arises ask 'Who am I?' keeping this idea of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* in the subconscious and it (thought) will disappear.

Is this recommended by Sri Bhagavan ?

I read in the *Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in His Own Words* that the mind is to be kept constantly turned within and to abide in the Self alone is *Atma-Vichara* (Self-enquiry).

Does this amount to the same thing as to keep the idea of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* in the subconscious mind and then resume the enquiry when any thought arises or simply concentrate on the 'Self' and reject all thoughts when they arise as being alien to the 'Self' ?

Kindly excuse the trouble. Though the books have explained the method I feel some difficulties in actual practice and hence I am seeking your kind personal advice for which I shall remain highly obliged.

H. D. VASWANI, Bombay.

1. Self-enquiry pertains to the ego insofar as it is the individual self which enquires 'Who Am I?' but its aim is to break out of its finitude to Infinity. The one-pointed question dispels all other thoughts so that the mind becomes quiescent and the SELF which ever exists veiled by thoughts will shine forth in still mind. The false 'I' functions only through the reflected light of the true 'I - I'.

2. It is quite correct to say that the method in practice becomes the process of watching and the enquiry should be resumed when any thought arises. When the urge to know becomes all-consuming it is a wordless questing alertness.

3. Some devotees find it easier to concentrate on the spiritual heart on the right side as a focussing point till it becomes all-embracing, others use Self-enquiry as explained above. The mind need not be directed anywhere. Its nature is to wander and Self-enquiry brings it back to the Source.

*4. The enquiry 'Who am I?' or seeking the source of the 'I'-thought from which all other thoughts arise leads to the same. The practice varies according to the aptitude of the seeker. The variation in practice suggested by your friend is not consistent. The idea that you are *Sat-Chit-Ananda* or the true Self is also a thought so long as it is only an idea, so how can no thought occur while holding on to this idea and how can you pursue the enquiry when a thought does arise? All this is still in the realm of thought and effort. Bhagavan did not recommend keeping or holding on to any ideas in order to still the mind. On the path of bhakti Bhagavan advises to take all-absorbing interest in one thing only, God or mantra, to the exclusion of everything else till gradually the mind melts with*

love and merges in it. In the beginning stages concentration aims at keeping away other thoughts which can and do occur. To keep the mind turned within is also Self-enquiry without words. The urge to know and vigilance is another aspect of Self-enquiry. The various modes of Self-enquiry are lucidly explained in the exposition *Nān Yār?* or 'Who Am I?' by Bhagavan. It should be read and re-read and practised till all becomes clear.

* * * *

RAMANA-PUJA

. . . Uppermost in my mind are questions regarding our regular Ramana-puja (*arati*). . . . We offer light, incense, cloth and fanning (soul-individuality, mind, body and devotion) and receive in return light, incense, kumkum and vibhuti. Do you know if these or any other are elements of any recognised *Saiva-arati* and in what order of service? Can you tell me if Sri Ramana put on vibhuti and kumkum in any set order? . . .

M. B., U.S.A.

The order of service of your Ramana-puja is all right. Camphor should be lit at the end on a small tray and waved around the picture clock-wise. I suppose you mean that by 'fanning'. Sri Ramana put vibhuti first on forehead then kumkum between his eye-brows, as usual, when they were brought to him after the puja.

All the pujas are contained in remembering Bhagavan in the heart as constantly as possible.

* * * *

A REQUEST TO READERS

Bhagavan teaches like all true ancient masters that all is One, there are no others that there is only the Self. If so where is that Self, who is conscious of it while I am struggling in *samsara*, struggling with my thoughts and delusion? If I alone am, where is the Self while I am conscious only of my finitude?

A DEVOTEE

Replies invited from those interested.

BUDDHIST WISDOM BOOKS

The Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra

Paperback Edition

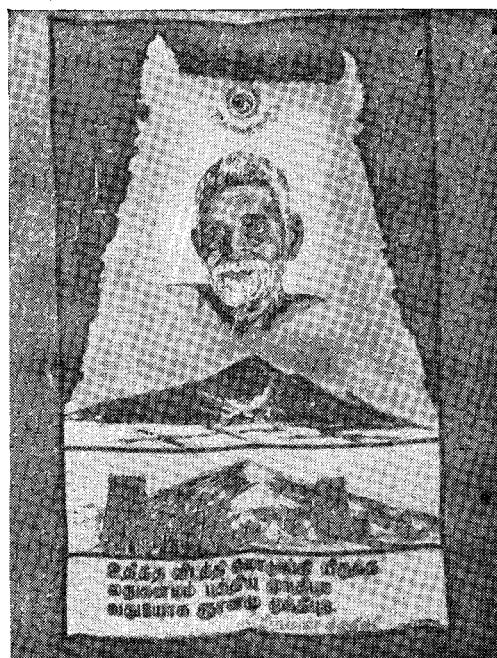
Translated and explained by EDWARD CONZE

Of the forty-two books devoted to the 'Perfection of Wisdom' the Diamond and the Heart Sutras have for centuries been considered the holiest. Written over two thousand years ago, dozens of translations have been attempted, but the famous Buddhist scholar, Edward Conze, who has studied the Prajnaparamita for more than thirty years, is the first translator to explain the Sutras in a manner intelligible to both readers in the East and the West. *Buddhist Wisdom Books* is now available in paperback for the first time.

£ 1.95

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.,

Park Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Herts. HP2 4TE. England.



DOOR CURTAIN

(Handspun and Handwoven)

Size : 45" x 75"

Sri Bhagavan's Bust picture
on yellow ground in centre
against a background of blue:
border in green or grey.

Printed message in English also available :

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

PRICE: (in India) : Rs. 15/- + Rs. 2.75 (Postage)

Overseas: £ 2/- or \$ 5/- (Postage by sea mail FREE)

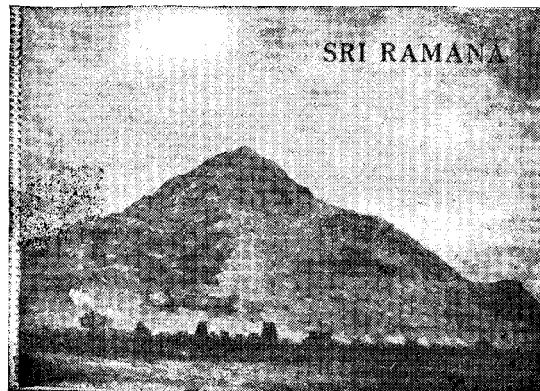
Please write to:

SRI RAMANASRAMAM BOOK DEPOT

SRI RAMANASRAMAM, P.O.,

TIRUVANNAMALAI-606603, South India

SRI RAMANA
*Coloured
Photo Album*



We are now happy to inform devotees that the Coloured Photo Album of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi announced in our issue of April, 1974 is ready. Spirally bound with each plate pasted on hand-made paper, any picture of Sri Bhagavan can be taken out for framing. Some of the famous sayings of Sri Maharshi are printed on the fly-leaf of each picture.

Extraordinary rise in price of paper, block-making, printing, etc., has made each copy cost the Ashram Rs. 25/-, at which it is being specially offered. Only a few copies have been printed.

PRICE :

In India: Rs. 25/- + Postage & Registration Rs. 3/- (Rs. 28/-)

Foreign : £ 3/- or \$ 7.50, inclusive of postage

(value should be sent in advance: no V.P.P. and no discount)

Please write to:

SRI RAMANASRAMAM BOOK DEPOT

SRI RAMANASRAMAM, P.O.,

TIRUVANNAMALAI - 606603, South India