

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

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

Vol. 15, No. 1

January 1978

When shall I (become)
like the ether and reach
Thee, subtle of being, that
the tempest of thoughts
may end, Oh Arunachala ?

—*The Marital Garland
of Letters, verse 57*

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

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

—*The Marital Garland of Letters, verse 1.*

Vol. 15

JANUARY 1978

No. I

CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL : Spiritual Experience ..	1
The Muni and the Maharshi ..	4
— <i>S. Sankaranarayanan</i> ..	4
The Look that Pierced — <i>Arthur Osborne</i> ..	9
Transubstantiation — <i>Douglas E. Harding</i> ..	11
"The Allegorical Journey" ..	13
— <i>Sir George Trevelyan</i> ..	13
What do we mean by "Love" ..	15
— <i>Norman Fraser</i> ..	15
The 'Hop on a Bus' pictures — <i>Mark Wilding</i> ..	16
Enlightenment of Buddha Sakyamuni ..	17
— <i>Lama Anagarika Govinda</i> ..	17
Psychiatry and Optimistic Awareness ..	22
— <i>Marie B. Byles</i> ..	22
Concept of God — <i>Muhammad Zafrulla Khan</i> ..	25
Duality? — <i>Cornelia Bagarotti</i> ..	28
The Concept of the Absolute ..	29
— <i>Jacques de Marquette</i> ..	29
The Doctrine of the Mean — <i>Murdoch Kirby</i> ..	32
On Understanding — <i>Wolter A. Keers</i> ..	34
The Wonder of Ramana — <i>Ira</i> ..	36
A fenced-in pile of dirt — <i>paul rePS</i> ..	37
Judaism and Christianity — <i>Gladys Dehm</i> ..	38
The Great Lamp — <i>Grant Duff</i> ..	40
A Parable — <i>A Disciple of Dilip Kumar Roy</i> ..	41
Dialogue with Mr. Wu — <i>Wei Wu Wei</i> ..	43
The Ashtavakra Gita — <i>K. Padmanabhan</i> ..	44
The Field and the Knower of the Field ..	46
— <i>Sq. Ldr. N. Vasudevan</i> ..	46
How Bhagavan Came to Me ..	48
— <i>Dr. B. V. Reddy</i> ..	48
Stories from Yoga Vasishtha — XV : ..	50
Story of Sikhidhvaja and Chudala ..	50
— <i>Translated by M. C. Subramanian</i> ..	50
Garland of Guru's Sayings — <i>Sri Muruganar</i> ..	52
— <i>Translated by Prof. K. Swaminathan</i> ..	52

CONTENTS — (Contd.)

	Page
Glory of Arunachala — <i>Arunachala</i>	
<i>Mahatmyam</i> — Tr. by M. C. Subramanian . .	54
Introducing . . . P. S. Easwaran	57
Book Reviews	59
Letters to the Editor	64
Ashram Bulletin	66

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.

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— Editor.

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The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

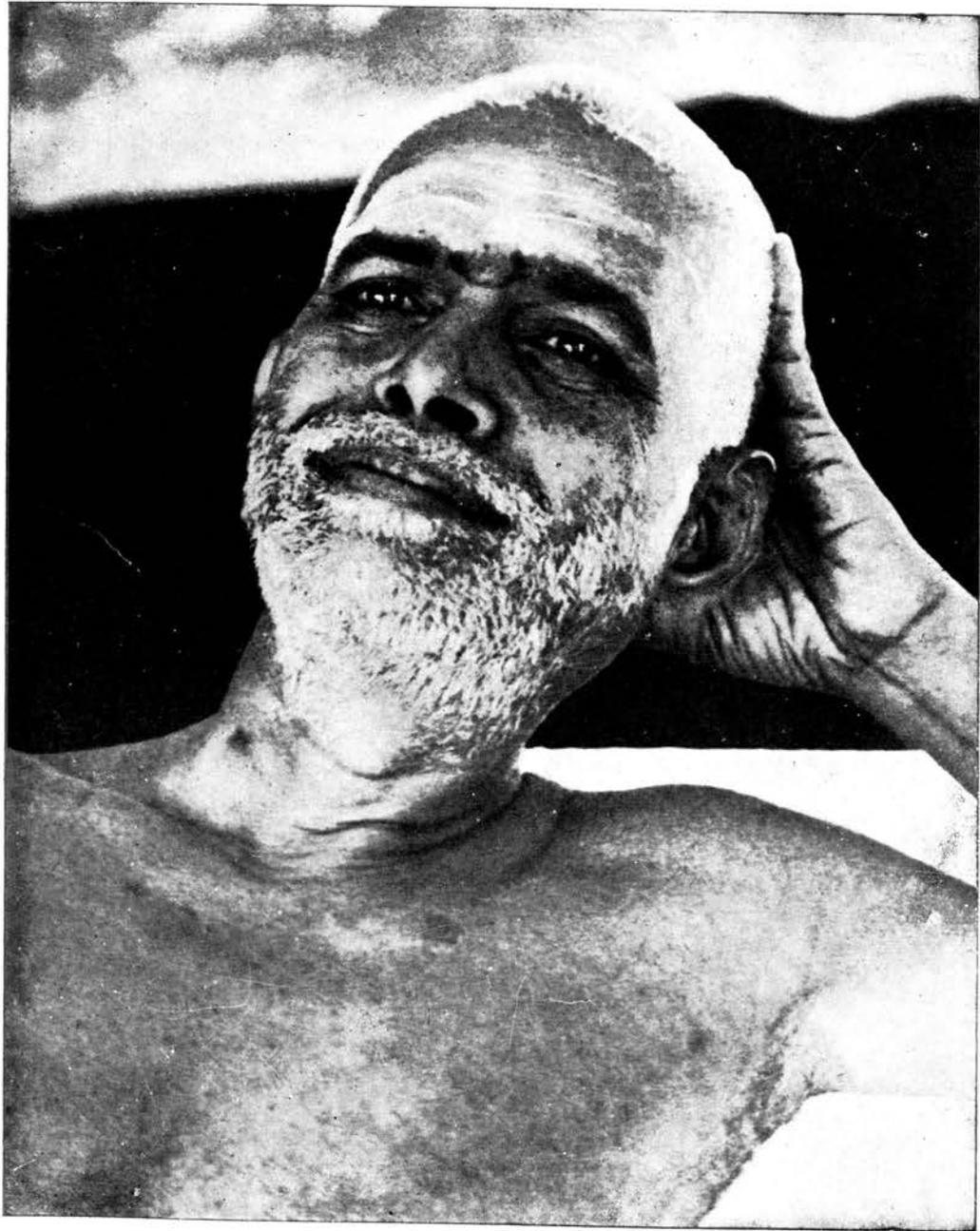
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THE MOUNTAIN PATH
is dedicated to
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi



The Mountain Path

Vol. 15. No. I, January 1978

EDITORIAL

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

AMIDST expressions of spiritual experience the following passage in the first section of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* is striking :

“I am the life-current coursing through the Tree of universe. Lofty like a mountain-top my glory stands. I am exalted and pure. I am the excellent immortal nectar, the Being within the Sun. I am resplendent Wealth. I am Pure Awareness, immortal, undecaying. This is the revelation of (Rishi) Trisanku”. One is reminded here of the following verse at the beginning of *Uma-sabasram* :

“I bow to some great power, unborn, undecaying, inconceivable, which courses through the universe and a wave of which is apprehended through non-objective pure inner quest”.

Manikyavachakar praises Siva as one who does not leave his heart even for a moment. Again he sings, “I do not know myself as so and so ; He who is beyond thought and word has made me utterly mad — it is beyond my comprehension what he has made of me.

“How am I to praise One who himself has become earth and heaven, air and light, the body and life, who himself is existence and non-existence, who is the Supreme Reality activating everyone as I and mine ?”

Saint Appar says that he is bowing to Siva incessantly, day and night, without a break. That is perfect attunement with the Supreme and not a movement of the mind. Jnana-Sambandha describes Siva as the Thief who had stolen his heart away. Bhagavan Ramana

used to quote these and similar passages to illustrate the exalted spiritual experience of these saints. He would cite the thrilling words of Manikyavachakar in *Andappabudi* (one of the hymns in *Tiruvachakam*) : “The heart surges up as an ocean of milk at full-moon ; it is beyond description. Nectar surges forth from the root of every hair on my body ; my whole system is filled with rich honey. Mysterious currents of nectar are coursing through the marrow of my bones. He has made my heart of some material which goes on melting, melting, melting”.

We find the same superb experience described in *Uma-Sabasram* :

“Dweller in my *Sabasrāra* ! Your current surges forth through my bones, making the marrow nectareous”.

Those who know of spiritual experience mention two main channels : (1) that from *Mūlādbāra* at the base of the spine to *Sabasrāra* (the thousand-petalled lotus) at the top of the head, and (2) that from the heart to the head. The former is well-known and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa had this experience. In more-recent times, we know that Ganapati Muni, the distinguished poet and disciple of Bhagavan Sri Ramana, had a remarkable experience of *kundalini* brought about by Divine Grace. He has sung about it in his *Uma-Sabasram*. This too leads one to the Heart, the ultimate centre of all spiritual experience. Here is the passage from *Uma-Sabasram* :

“In *Mūlādbāra* you are blazing fire, in the spine (you are) the hot current causing pro-

found ecstasy, at the *Sahasrāra* you are ever-flowing nectar and at the *Ājñā Chakra* (region of the brows) you are effulgent lightning. If you descend to the Lotus of the Heart everything is found to be mere shadow; if you ascend to *Sahasrāra* the whole universe is found to be an Ocean of nectar”.

Ganapati Muni had another extraordinary experience within a few months after the awakening of his *Kundalini*. We have heard it said of some yogis that there occurs an opening at the crown of the head at the time of their leaving the body. It is known as *Kapālabheda* (breaking of the skull). But the Muni had this experience while alive and lived for 15 years after that, his spiritual experience getting further rarefied. The *Kapālabheda* serves to bring about perfect attunement of the individual life-current with the cosmic.

The other channel of spiritual experience is from the Heart to the Head. It is described in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* (Section 1, Anuvaka 6). The three centres of this channel are the Heart, the uvula at the throat region (known as *Indra-yoni*) and the top of the head. This is the way of the *Atma-nadi* known as *Amrita-nadi*. *Para* and *Sushumna* at the front, mentioned in Ch. IX of *Sri Ramana Gīta*. On intense Self-enquiry, the Self rests in the *Atma-nadi* alone and blazes forth as the One universal Being-Awareness. Bhagavan Ramana, as a lad of 16, had experience of the immortal Self within a few minutes by his own probing into the mystery of death. Unknown to the world he became a sage in a trice. The impact of that sudden experience was so overpowering that it took him some years to look about and move ‘normally’ with others. His great revelation concerns the Pure Awareness in the Heart, which evidently is not the physiological heart but the source of awareness and life in beings. His teaching on this subject is found briefly and clearly expounded in Ch. V of *Sri Ramana Gīta* :

“The ‘I’ thought is the root of all thoughts. That from which the ‘I’ thought springs forth is the Heart. The location of this Heart is on the right side of the chest, not at all on the left. The Light (of Awareness) flows from the Heart through

Sushumna to *Sahasrāra*. From there it flows to the entire body and then all experiences of the world arise. Viewing them as different from the Light, one gets caught up in *samsāra*. The universe is nothing but the mind and the mind is nothing but the Heart. Thus the entire story of the universe culminates in the Heart. As the sun gives light to the moon, even so this Heart gives light to the mind. A mortal absent from the Heart perceives only the mind, just as the light of the moon is perceived at night in the absence of the sun. Not perceiving that the true source of light is one’s own self and mentally perceiving objects as apart from oneself, the ignorant one is deluded. The Jñani present in the Heart sees the light of the mind merged in the light of the Heart like moon-light in day-light. The superficial meaning of *Prajñāna* (Awareness) is mind and its true meaning is the Heart. The supreme is nothing but the Heart. The notion that the seer is different from the seen is only in the mind. For those who abide in the Heart the seer and the seen are one.”

While he was living on the Hill Ramana had an extraordinary experience of the physical heart and lungs ceasing to function for 10 or 15 minutes. But he knew perfectly well the surroundings and what was happening to his body. The Heart Centre on the right side of the chest was all the time aglow as usual. This experience throwing fresh light on Bhagavan’s teaching regarding the Heart has been recorded in detail by B. V. Narasimha Swami in his biography of Bhagavan.

Though the ultimate spiritual experience is that of Absolute Pure Awareness, apart from which there is nothing whatsoever, there are various approaches to it. Watching the flow of the life-current (*prāna*) in one’s system is one of them. Watching the flow of breath is another. By this the breath gets attuned to the mind and one is led to their common source, Pure Awareness known as the Heart, (*Hrit* or *Hridaya* in Samskrit). Watching the process of seeing, objects get eliminated and one reaches the source, viz. the seer’s own Being as Pure Awareness. Watching the movement in every action is another method. Fixing one’s attention on Pure Being behind everything manifested is pure Jñana-Marga. Watching the un-

broken constant *Nāda* within is *upāsana* of *Pranava* (Aum), and this is different from the repetition of the syllable Aum. Such attention to seeing, hearing, breathing is each a *Vidya* and these are dealt with in the *Chandogya* and other Upanishads.

Pranava is the sole subject matter of the *Mandukya Upanishad* and there is a commentary on it in verse (*kārika*) by Sri Gaudapada, the Guru of Govinda Bhagavatpada, himself the guru of Sankara Bhagavatpada. The three *mātras* of *Pranava* are A, U and M, representing the witnessing Awareness behind the three states of Waking, dreaming and deep sleep. And the silence following it is known as *Amātra* and it represents absolute Pure Awareness, the One and only Reality. With such understanding one is advised to meditate on Aum. The following is the substance of the relevant verses of the *Gaudapada Kārika* dealing with meditation on Aum :

Weaning the mind from all other thought one should attune it to *Pranava*. *Pranava* is indeed Brahman, beyond all fear. Hence one perfectly attuned to it can have no fear whatever. *Pranava* is Brahman, both *Saguna* (with attributes) and *Nirguna* (without attributes). It is uncaused. There is no differentiation in it — it is immutable ; nothing exists besides it. *Pranava* is the beginning, middle and end of everything. Knowing *Pranava* thus, one becomes That that very moment and abides as That. One should know *Pranava* as the supreme Being dwelling in the heart of all beings. Knowing

Aum as all-pervading, the wise one grieves no more. *Pranava* is the Absolute beyond everything conceptual. It is blessedness pure, the end of all duality. He who knows Aum thus is the sage, none else.

Bhagavan Ramana has recommended meditation on *Pranava* in Chapter 3 of *Sri Ramana Gita*. Verse 3 declares that man's paramount duty is to know the Self, the basis of all action and its fruit. Verses 10 and 11 explain how, by repetition of *mantras* or meditation on pure *Pranava* Aum, the thought current becomes identical with the Self. In the *Marital Garland* he sings, "Significance of AUM unrivalled, unsurpassed, who can comprehend Thee, O Arunachala?" In another Hymn to Arunachala he explains how A, *Ru* and *Na* represent being, awareness and bliss, while *achala* (unmoving) signifies infinitude).

Most of us feel the need to repeat some *mantra*, which appeals to us. Gandhiji refers repeatedly to the power of 'Rama Nama', which he identifies with *omkara* and deems an infallible remedy for all ills and infirmities. Adepts have felt the power of "HREEM", the supreme *Tāntric Bijaksbara*, the *Tantric Pranava*.

And yet the spontaneous glow and throb of the Self within as I, as I, the effortless flash and vibration of life for ever pulsing in the heart of all beings, is the one universal and unfailing *Japa* and *tapas* if only we learn to listen to it, and let it guide all movements of our thought, word and deed.

"Not knowing how near the Truth is
People seek it far away — what a pity !
They are like him who, in the midst of water,
Cries in thirst so imploringly."

— Hakuin

The Muni and the Maharshi

By

S. Sankaranarayanan

Kavyakantha Ganapathi Sastri, famed as Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, played much the same role in the life and reputation of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi as Swami Vivekananda did in that of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Sri Vasishtha Muni was a mighty spiritual personality in his own right and had a large following of illustrious disciples. It is a standing testimony to his spiritual sincerity and intellectual honesty that he recognised the uniqueness of Bhagavan's teaching, accepted him as his Guru and proclaimed him as the *Maharshi* to the whole world. Those who want to understand the message of the Maharshi in its pristine purity, have to study the Muni's redaction of the Master's teachings like *Sat Darsana* and *Sri Ramana Gita*.

Sri Bhagavan used to refer to the Muni as *Nayana*, just as his disciples used to call him endearingly. Fortunately still amongst us are a few who had known Nayana and Bhagavan and their mutual esteem and who had been the recipients of their Grace. The present editor of *The Mountain Path* is one such fortunate person, near and dear both to Nayana and Maharshi.

Nayana was born on November 17, 1878 and 1978 is his *Birth Centenary*. It is proposed to bring out the mutual association between Bhagavan and Nayana in the form of articles in the four issues of *The Mountain Path* in 1978, as a Centenary Tribute to the sacred memory of Nayana. Sri Sankaranarayanan has kindly agreed to provide these articles on *The Muni and the Maharshi*. Drawing much of his material from *Sri Vasishtha Vaibhavam*, an authentic biography in Samskrit of Nayana by his illustrious disciple, *Sri Kapali Sastriar*, Sri Sankaranarayanan will write his articles under the captions :

1. *Initiation*
2. *Realisation*
3. *Fulfilment*
4. *Propagation*

This issue carries the first of the series.

1. INITIATION

TWO O'CLOCK in the afternoon. It was like any other day in Tiruvannamalai. An ardent aspiring soul, full of faith and fervour, Kavyakantha Ganapati Sastri, famed as Vasishtha Ganapati Muni, felt on that day, wretched. After years of *sadhana* he had come to the end of his tether. Every thing appeared bleak ; frustration and futility seemed to stare him in the face. Renowned as a versatile genius, a scholar and poet of no mean order,

there was no area in the vast field of Samskrit language and literature he had not traversed, no nook or corner of the ancient lore of the land which had escaped the searchlight of his scrutiny. He had delved deep into the mysteries of the Vedas, quaffed at the fountain springs of the Upanishads, mastered the spiritual and ritual sides of the *Tantra*. At his hands, the *Sbashtra* had regained its original meaning of science, religion and ritual had revealed their rationale, tradition and practice bared their foundation of truth.

But he was not satisfied. His quest was for the knowledge supreme, "knowing which all this becomes known". How many *mantras* he had taken for *japa* and performed the rite successfully! How many spiritual practices he had pursued, how many disciplines and austerities he had subjected himself to! Only in the course of his austerities he had come to Arunachala. Still he had no sign of any revelation, no indications of Divine manifestation. Was there something wrong with his seeking, some mistake in the method, some error in his erudition, some shortcoming or deficiency in his *sadhana*? Or, were all our ancient lore and learning, tradition and knowledge, a bundle of superstition, a pack of lies?

Suddenly he remembered that a Sadhu, one Brahmanaswami, was living on the Hill Arunachala observing silence and solitude. Perhaps he might help.

Two or three years before, on two occasions Sri Vasishtha Muni had met the Sadhu. Seek-



Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni

ing a suitable place for his austerities, in the course of his wanderings the Muni had come to Arunachala. On one occasion, along with one Viswanatha Iyer he had gone to the Virupaksha Cave on the hill to have *darshan* of the Sadhu. Finding the Sadhu not there, both of them repaired to the Ashrama of Padmanabha Swami. There the Muni saw Brahmanaswami. That was the first time when they met each other. The Muni was impressed by the splendour of Silence that hovered around the Sadhu. Finding him different from the common run of people, the Muni bowed. The Sadhu rested his gracious gaze on him. Meanwhile Padmanabha Swami entreated the Muni to explain the famous sloka *Suklāmbharadbaram Vishnum*.¹

The Muni obliged and proceeded to explain the verse, explaining the words in such a way that they applied to the gods Brahma, Vishnu and Ganapati, "Here is a great Sadhu. I can explain the verse in relation to him also"; so saying, Vasishtha Muni began again: "Brahmanaswami wears only a white loin cloth, so he is *suklāmbharadbara*, he is in consciousness vast, all-pervading *Vishnu*, his complexion is pleasing like the glow of the moon *sasivarna* and he is *chaturbhuk*² — as he has eaten up the four mind, *chitta*, the memory stuff, intellect and ego — and remains as the Self all the time".

Brahmanaswami said nothing but smiled approvingly.

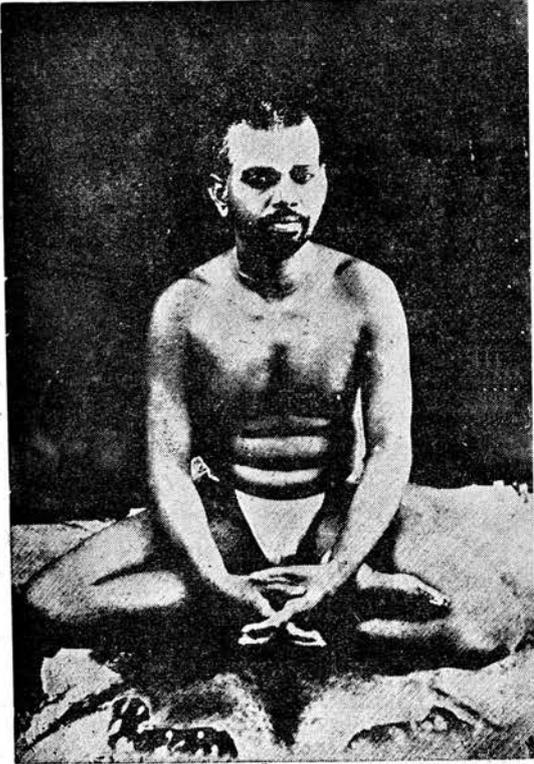
In the same year when his wife and five-year old son, Mahadeva, came to join him in Tiruvannamalai, Ganapati Muni went along with them to have *darshan* of Brahmanaswami, once again.

1 *Suklāmbharadhanam Vishnum sasivarnam Chaturbhujam*

Prasannavadanam dhyayet sarvavighnopasantaye

This is the verse with which one begins any ritual or worship. Recital of the verse at the beginning of any act, it is said, ensures removal of all obstacles.

2 This interpretation is original, testimony to the Muni's intellectual acumen. The normal interpretation of *chaturbhuj* is one who has four arms.



Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

On both the occasions, the Muni was impressed and felt drawn towards Brahmanaswami. Absolute faith and devotion had not yet made their appearance in his approach. Still it was repugnant to his innate nobility to dismiss Brahmanaswami — as some high-brows did in those days — as a hybrid who was neither a member of the orthodox Brahmin fold nor a regular *sannyasin*.

Now, however, in this hour of despondency, Vasishtha Muni thought of Brahmanaswami. For years, steeped in silence, the Swami had been enraptured in bliss ineffable. Surely he could guide. Immediately Kavyakantha set off and began to climb the hill. There he espied Brahmanaswami seated in front of the cave. Those were days of the famous *Krittika* festival in Tiruvannamalai. Everywhere there were crowds of people. Near the cave also people might have thronged to have *darshan* of Brahmanaswami. Fortunately on that day there was no one there. The Swami was all alone.

Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni looked at him to his heart's content and fell at his feet, holding the Swami's right foot with his right hand and the left foot with his left hand. When he got up, he found himself supplicating to the Swami :

“ I have read all the *Sbastras*, performed *Japa* of all the famous *Mantras*, observed hundreds of penances and austerities. Yet I have had no realisation. Is my *Tapas* tainted, is there any shortcoming or perhaps I do not know the method. I am said to be a learned man, yet I do not know. I take refuge in thee. Help me out ! ”

The Swami immediately recognised him as the great scholar Kavyakantha Ganapati Sastri. He also remembered Sri Sastri explaining the sloka *Suklambaradbaram Vishnum*, applying the words to him. He mentioned this himself in later years in the course of conversation. Brahmanaswami kept quiet for quite some time, gazing at him. In those days he rarely broke his silence. But slowly these words in Tamil emerged from the mouth of the Sage :

“ Find out wherefrom this ego ‘ I ’ springs forth and merge at its source ; that is *Tapas*. Find out wherefrom the sound of the *Mantra* in *Japa* rises up and merge there ; that is *Tapas*. ”

The great Vasishtha Muni, was thrilled. Waves and waves of bliss rose up and soaked his frame. He sat then and there at the feet of the Sage and meditated till evening. He was completely satisfied. He was convinced that no ordinary person could have imparted to him such a message. He made enquiries about the name of the Swami from the attendant. Finding it was *Venkataraman*, he made it brief and beautiful as *RAMANA* and acclaimed the Brahmanaswami as *MAHARSHI*, the great Seer.

Next day Vasishtha Ganapati Muni wrote to his intimate disciples :

“ I have found my Master, my Guru. He is the Sage of Arunachala known as Brahmanaswami. He is no ordinary Swami. He is a great Seer, a mighty spiritual personality. To me and to you all he is *BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI*. Let the whole world know him as such. ”

Thus the fine flower which might have blushed unseen on the desert air of Arunachala had its fragrance spread far and wide. Ever since drawn by its soul-filling aroma, men, women and children from all walks of life and from all over the world have been flocking to Arunachala. Indeed a new chapter was begun in the spiritual history of India on 18-11-1907 when this momentous meeting took place between the Muni and the Maharshi.

On the same day Kavyakantha wrote five verses in Samskrit in praise of the Maharshi and gave them to the attendant, Palaniswami. Unfortunately they were lost due to the negligence of the attendant. Then at the end of the day, in front of the Maharshi, the Muni asked Palaniswami whether there was any suitable place in the vicinity for the *tapas*. Hearing this Sri Maharshi himself favoured the Muni with the reply that there was the Mango-tree Cave nearby, suitable for the purpose. The attendant immediately handed over to the Muni the key of the place.

Vasishtha Ganapati Muni repaired to the Mango-tree cave and here the famous *Uma-Sabasram*, the *magnum opus* of the Seer Poet was composed.

Ganapati Muni felt that it was by the grace of the Divine Mother that he had obtained this Perfect Guru. In gratitude, he wanted to compose a poem of a thousand verses in praise of *Uma*, the Divine Mother and began it with the approval of the Sage. The Muni set for himself certain regulations. The poem had to be completed within twenty days as a part of *tapas* in the Mango-tree Cave. Light food at noon and milk at night was the regimen. The Maharshi went time and again to the Cave and kept company. The Presence of the Maharshi helped the Muni to naturalise his abnormal condition, for ever since his momentous meeting with the Maharshi he was constantly subject to cascading spiritual experiences and floods of superhuman delight. During this time, the grand old lady Echamma brought him food. One of those days it so happened that at an unusual hour the Muni experienced the pangs of hunger. At the same time, a girl appeared before Echamma who was in the

“AS YOU ARE”

By Saint Tayumanavar

(His last teaching before his Mahasamadhi on 15-1-1742)

WITHDRAW the mind from the senses and fix it in meditation. Control the thought-current. Find out the thought centre ; be quiet there. Then you will be conscious of the Divine Self, you will see it dancing in ecstasy. Live in that delight. That high Delight, Consciousness, is the God in you. He is the unique One. He is in every heart.

You need not go anywhere to find Him. Find your own core and feel Him there. Peace, bliss, felicity, health, everything is in you. Trust in the Divine in you. Entrust yourself to His Grace. *Be as you are.* Off with strange thoughts and past impressions. He who lives from within an ingathered soul is a real saint, though he may be a householder. He who allows his mind to wander is an ignoramus, though he may pretend to be a sage.

See as a witness, without the burden of seeing. See the world just as a drama. See without attachment. Look within. Look at the inner Light, unshaken by mental impressions. Then, floods of conscious bliss shall come pouring around you from all directions. This is the Supreme Knowledge. Realise. Om. Om.

town and appraised her of the Muni's plight and vanished. Surprised, Echamma promptly prepared food and sent it up the hill to the Muni through a boy and asked him to find out what the matter was. The Muni ate heartily and sent word that hunger was the matter.

Day by day the composition of verses went on. But an impediment occurred. A boil appeared on the right-hand finger of the Muni, near the nail and the pain became unbearable. Then a miracle happened. A doctor, one Punyakoti from Madras, appeared on the scene with all his equipment and a minor surgical operation put the matter right. The previous night, the Doctor had a dream in which he was directed to go and give medical help to the Muni on the hill of Arunachala. He came from Madras, saw the Maharshi, knew from him the whereabouts of the Muni and then went straight to the Cave.

Because of this setback, on the twentieth day, more than two hundred verses still remained to be composed. The verses had to be composed within that night, somehow. The Maharshi went and remained there. Vasudeva Sastri, Narayana Ghanapāti and three other amanuenses took down the verses composed and dedicated them and there. In the presence of the Maharshi, starting in the second quarter of the night, Vasishtha Muni completed them by midnight. His inspiration was at its zenith

and the verses flowed freely. All the while, the Maharshi was sitting there with eyes closed. On the completion of the work he opened his eyes and enquired, "Whatever I said, has it been taken down?" This question took all by surprise. "Endearing to his devotees, Bhagavan Maharshi has just come out of his deep natural state; he is not aware of any distinction between the inner world and the outer and so asks this question. It is by his special grace that the work has been completed before midnight. Realizing this, the Muni said to the Maharshi, "Yes, receiving all that has been granted by thy Grace, I have just completed the work."

That is why at the end of the first recension of the great work *Uma-Sabasram*, the poet wrote: "I was able to accomplish this great work on time only because of the Grace of my Guru, the great Soul, Ramana."

Thus it was Vasishtha Ganapati Muni who made known to the world of scholars the Sage of the age and proclaimed him to the general public as *Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi* and spread his influence and message.

"Mr. Ekanath Rao, an Engineer, asked Sri Bhagavan if solitude is necessary for vichara.

Maharshi : There is solitude everywhere. The individual is solitary always. His business is to find it out within, and not seek it without.

Devotee : The work-a-day world is distracting.

Maharshi : Do not allow yourself to be distracted. Enquire for whom there is distraction. It will not afflict you after a little practice.

D : Even the attempt is impossible.

M : Make it and it will be found not so difficult.

D : But the answer does not come for the search within.

M : The enquirer is the answer and no other answer can come. What comes afresh cannot be true. What always is, is true."

— from *Talks*, p. 50.

THE LOOK THAT PIERCED

By
Arthur Osborne

IT was shortly before the second world war that some friends sent me pictures of Bhagavan Sri Ramana and copies of some of his books. Under the influence of the French writer, René Guenon, who was reinterpreting forgotten spiritual traditions to the West, I had already understood that all beings manifest the One Self or Pure Being and that I, in my essence, am identical with the Self. This means that it is possible to realize this Supreme Identity and become One in very fact and that the purpose of life is to do so. Until this is achieved, the illusion of separate life in one form or another must continue and, with its sufferings and frustration, obscure the radiance of Pure Being. I knew that this task was the great, heroic quest, the quest of the Sangrail and the Golden Fleece, and that it required constant effort on a prescribed path under the guidance of a Guru. I was making efforts to find and follow such a path, but people for whom I had the utmost respect had assured me that Bhagavan was not a Guru and that his teaching, however sublime, did not constitute practical guidance on a path that men could follow. I was enormously impressed by the books and pictures, by the spiritual power and beauty in them, but classed them reluctantly as a luxury rather than a utility.

In December, 1941 the Japanese invaded Siam where I was a university lecturer and I was arrested and interned. There followed three and a half long years of internment until the Japanese surrender in 1945. There was ample time for *sadhana*. More and more Bhagavan became the support of my strivings, though I did not yet turn to him as to the Guru. As soon as the evacuation could be arranged I went to Tiruvannamalai, arriving there in October.

I entered the Ashram hall on the morning of my arrival, before Bhagavan had returned

from his daily walk on the Hill. I was a little awed to find how small it was and how close to him I should be sitting; I had expected something grander and less intimate. And then he entered and, to my surprise, there was no great impression. Certainly far less than his photographs had made. Just a white-haired, very gracious man, walking a little stiffly from rheumatism and with a slight stoop. As soon as he had eased himself on to the couch he smiled to me and then turned to those around and to my young son and said: "So, Adam's prayer has been answered; his Daddy has come back safely." I felt his kindness, but no more. I appreciated that it was for my sake that he had spoken English, since Adam knew Tamil.

During the weeks that followed he was constantly gracious to me and the strain of nerves and mind gradually relaxed, but there was still no dynamic contact. I was disappointed, as it seemed to show a lack of receptivity in me, and yet, at the same time, it confirmed the opinion I had accepted that he was not a Guru and did not give guidance on any path. And Bhagavan said nothing to change my view.

Until the evening of Karthigai when, each year, a beacon is lit on the summit of Arunachala, there were huge crowds for the festival and we were sitting in the courtyard outside the hall. Bhagavan was reclining on his couch and I was sitting in the front row before it. He sat up, facing me, and his narrowed eyes pierced into me penetrating, intimate, with an intensity I cannot describe. It was as though they said: "You have been told; why have you not realized?" And then quietness, a depth of peace, an indescribable lightness and happiness.

Thereafter love for Bhagavan began to grow in my heart and I felt his power and

beauty. Next morning, for the first time sitting before him in the hall, I tried to follow his teaching by using the *vichara*, *Who Am I?* I thought it was I who had decided. I did not at first realize that it was the initiation by look that had vitalised me and changed my attitude of mind. Indeed, I had heard only vaguely of this initiation and paid little heed to what I had heard. Only later did I learn that other devotees also had had such an experience and that with them also it had marked the beginning of active *sadbana* under Bhagavan's guidance.

My love and devotion to Bhagavan deepened. I went about with a lilt of happiness in my heart, feeling the blessing and mystery of the Guru, repeating like a song of love that he was the Guru, the link between heaven and earth, between God and me, between the Formless Being and my heart. I became aware of the enormous grace of his presence. Even outwardly he was gracious to me, smiling when I entered the hall, signing to me to sit where he could watch me in meditation.

And then one day a sudden vivid reminder awoke in me: "The link with Formless Being!" And I began to apprehend the meaning of his *Jnana* and to understand why devotees addressed him simply as 'Bhagavan' which is a word meaning God. So he began to prove in me what he declared in his teaching that the outer Guru serves to awaken the Guru in the heart. The *vichara*, the constant *Who Am I?* began to evoke an awareness of the Self as Bhagavan outwardly and also simultaneously of the Self within.

The specious theory that Bhagavan was not a Guru had simply evaporated in the radiance of his Grace. Moreover, I now perceived that, so far from his teaching not being practical guidance, it was exclusively that. I observed

that he shunned theoretical explanations and kept turning the questioner to practical considerations of *sadbana*, of the path to be followed. It was that and that only that he was here to teach. I wrote and explained this to the people who had misinformed me and, before sending the letter, showed it to him for his approval. He approved and handed it back bidding me send it.

Daily I sat in the hall before him. I asked no questions, for the theory had long been understood. I spoke to him only very occasionally, about some personal matter. But the silent guidance was continuous, strong and subtle. It may seem strange to modern minds, but the Guru taught in silence. This did not mean that he was unwilling to explain when asked; indeed, he would answer sincere questions fully; what it meant was that the real teaching was not the explanation but the silent influence, the alchemy worked in the heart.

I strove constantly by way of the *vichara* according to his instructions. Having a strong sense of duty or obligation, I still continued, side by side with it, to use other forms of *sadbana* which I had undertaken before coming to Bhagavan, even though I now found them burdensome and unhelpful. Finally I told Bhagavan of my predicament and asked whether I could abandon them. He assented, explaining that all other methods only lead up to the *vichara*.

From the moment of my arrival at Tiruvannamalai there had been no question of my leaving again. This was HOME — even at the very beginning when I was so mistaken about Bhagavan, even when material prospects seemed bleak. Perhaps that was why Bhagavan in his graciousness bestowed the initiation on one who sought but had not the wit to ask!

"In the course of an informal conversation Sri Bhagavan pointed out that Self-Realisation is possible only for the fit. The *vasanas* must be eliminated before *jnana* dawns. One must be like Janaka for *jnana* to dawn. One must be ready to sacrifice everything for the Truth. Complete renunciation is the index of fitness."

— Sri Maharshi in *Talks*, p. 320.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

A FAMOUS AND DIVISIVE CHRISTIAN DOGMA RE-EXAMINED

By

Douglas E. Harding

NO religious dogma that has meant great things to countless people over the centuries is likely to be altogether false or absurd. Nor is it likely to be altogether valid and workable for us now — in its traditional form. The chances are that it is breaking down, or at least slowing down, and that it needs not so much minor repairs on the one hand nor total scrapping on the other, as dismantling and a thorough overhaul. So the question to ask about such a dogma isn't a blunt 'Is it true, just as it stands?' but rather 'In what sense can it be true: what is its meaning for the 20th century?' And the resulting answer may well prove surprisingly creative — not a popular new look superimposed on the same old creaking machinery, but a profound penetration into its original and hidden design. It may then be possible to see more in that design than the designers were fully conscious of, so that both it and they are valued more highly than ever. And, for bonus, a further result may be the settlement of theological controversies that continue to tear Christendom apart.

Nor can we get out of such a drastic overhauling, on the ground that 'spiritual' truth is sacrosanct and quite separate from 'scientific' and 'everyday' truth. There is only one sort of truth — the sort that makes men free. A doctrine ceases to make sense in religion when in every other field it is seen to be nonsense. It isn't true on Sunday if it is false the rest of the week. Where the genuinely spiritual flouts common sense (as, of course, it very often does) that is only because it sees through socially conditioned nonsense to what really does make sense. For true spirituality is transparently honest, simple (and therefore difficult), accurate, sharper than a razor.

These are bald assertions, but they can be illustrated. Take, for instance, the ancient and revered doctrine of transubstantiation in the eucharist, according to which the whole substance of the bread and wine is converted into Christ's body and blood, only the appearances of bread and wine remaining.

Well, what was the actual body of Jesus Christ like, not as viewed by others, but *in his own first-hand experience*? Let us consult him on this matter and take him at his word, since no-one else is in a position to answer for him. What he tells us all to do he surely did himself: becoming as a little child he saw within himself, not a sticky mess of anatomical plumbing, but the Kingdom of Heaven. His Eye being single, his whole body also was full of Light, having no place dark. Let us leave aside theological speculation and suppose he meant just what he said. In that case, he saw his body as replaced, not metaphorically but actually, by the Light that lights every man that comes into the world; and this Light was what he *really* was, his interior secret, the true inside story which read so differently from the outside story of his appearance to other people. Which body, then, does he offer the communicant in the Mass — the seeming one or the real one, the outer human one (which would make the communicant a cannibal) or the inner divine one, the Light-body? Obviously the latter. And the truly enlightened communicant accepts it as such, as opaque materials transubstantiated into the Clear Light.

Nor can our communicant stop at that. Taking the instructions of his Lord seriously, he sees that he, too, is all Light within. Child-like, he notices, with thankful astonishment,

that he also is furnished with a single Eye, behind which lies nothing but the Kingdom's boundless clarity and no darkness at all. Indeed it is his own interior Light which alone enables him to receive from the officiating priest the true body of the Lord, so that the Light entering the Light is not darkened, and communion becomes union.

What can all this mean to the honest, open-minded sceptic of today? It can make perfect sense — provided he is really open. Speaking for myself, I find the miracle of transubstantiation re-enacted at *every* meal. Of course, the bread there on my dining table has the ordinary appearance of bread, crust and crumb, and the wine glows red as wine should — when viewed from this dining chair. But when I stretch out a hand to bring them to me and they traverse the distance — of a foot or two — which separates us, they are mysteriously transformed. I watch them grow, become blurred, lose form and texture and colour, and then vanish altogether — not into a material mouth and throat, but into that great Empty Maw which here replaces them. Undone and 'spiritualized' on their way to me, they are then voided into this Void, visibly transmuted into this Clarity which is my intrinsic nature. If they are eaten, then this is a very different sort of eating from the strange goings-on over there, where foreign substances are being poked into toothed slits in people's heads. Here, by contrast, eating is thing becoming no-thing to join forces with the No-thing I am, so that the basic Substance of eater and eaten is experienced as one and the same. Having died, the grain and the grape, the fish and the fowl that I'm now enjoying, are coming into their very own and being consciously resurrected in me now. All partaking of food by the 1st person as such (emphatically not the 3rd person as such) is partaking in the common

Life or Essence, and becomes a veritable Holy Communion whenever it is realised to be just that.

Thus the believer isn't mistaken: the eucharist is neither a pious fraud nor a beautiful but dying myth. The innermost story of the Lord at the Last Supper in Jerusalem, of the bread and wine on the altar, of the celebrant, and of the communicant himself, is one and the same story. However different their date, and their appearances, their Reality is absolutely identical. All rest on one Ground of Being.

There is a place where Catholics (with their transubstantiation), Lutherans (with their consubstantiation), other Churches (with their own dogmatic variations on this theme), and even Humanists and Positivists of all sorts (with their science-inspired rejection of all religious dogmas), can come together without compromising their basic convictions, but rather clarifying and deepening them. That place is *this* place *now*. Transubstantiation, the wonderful and miraculous switch-over from regional appearance to central Reality, from accident to Essence, from so many shades of darkness to the One Light, can never be observed from a distance. It doesn't happen over there, but only here. All bodies put up a show, they keep up appearances, veil upon veil; but the veils cover one indivisible and self-luminous Substance which is all of it in this place, awaiting instant inspection. This is that one Sight which it is imperative to see, and the one which (happily) can never be mis-seen. More happily still, it is quite obvious and perfectly natural and ordinary, as soon as it is attended to. See it, and this article will make sense. Merely think or feel it, and the point is missed.

"The end of all motion is rest."

— Eckhart

“The Allegorical Journey”

By

Sir George Trevelyan

THE great legends of mankind all enshrine truths which are of the utmost importance to us now. This is, broadly speaking, a materialistic age, an outward-looking age, in which the values are chiefly what we can get of things and possessions. The inward values, the inward vision, tends to get lost or overlaid. The great truths about the development of the human soul and of man's relation to the great 'whole' of life were taught in the mystery temples of the ancients. Over the gates of Eleusis was carved "Man, know thyself and thou shalt know the universe". Only the candidate for initiation might hear the secrets and if he betrayed them, death was his reward. The secret knowledge however was hidden in the myths and legends. It is as if the higher beings poured knowledge in symbol form through those who could hear and record the great stories. From the great legends such as the Odyssey to the smallest fairy story, all these tales seem to enshrine vital truths which our modern psychological and spiritual understanding can learn to unravel. The knowledge is of deepest significance particularly for modern man. It is curious that in an age which tends to despise fairy tales and myths as mere fantasy, their content is rediscovered as holding the truths we most need to know.

For the healing impulses of our time this hidden knowledge needs to be recovered. The legends, in a thousand variants, all tell one tale. It is the picture of the eternal being of man, belonging to a timeless realm of light, descending into the plane of the earth to take to himself a body so that he may pass through adventures in dark forest or wild ocean. It undertakes the allegorical journey which is life on the earth plane and is put through ordeals and soul trials until he is worthy to win the love of his 'lady', symbolising his

higher spiritual self. Then, the mystical marriage consummated, he returns to the realm from which he descended, a step in consciousness having been achieved through his experiences.

Once we see that in all our individual lives we are working out an allegorical journey whose end is the return to the Realm of Light, our whole attitude towards our apparent misadventures radically changes. We are prepared gladly to accept our personal destiny as part of a much larger pattern full of meaning. This gives us courage to accept all that comes to us and to say 'yes' to our experiences, however difficult or frustrating they may seem. All the myths include the experience of loneliness — of being cut off from the divine source

“Alone alone, all all alone,
Alone on wide wide sea
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony”.

We are each of us in some sense the “ancient mariner”.

The hero legends concern the souls who are drawn into the task of exploring back into the realms of the eternal to bring down to their benighted fellowmen some elixir of immortality, some life-enhancing diadem, which proves the reality of the higher worlds. This may be the golden fleece, or some heavenly jewel or a magic sword or the Holy Grail itself.

The assurance of higher reality is what man needs today. There are doctrines abroad, notably in marxism, which would have us believe that matter is the only reality, that all the marvellous framework of art, philosophy and religion is only a superstructure which human fantasy has built up for consolation. Man is then seen as nothing but an economic animal.

If this be so then it is quite valid to breed him like cattle and to condition him in concentration camps. What modern man desperately needs is the inner assurance that the core of the human soul is eternal and belongs to the realm of spiritual being. The logical intellect alone cannot prove this and indeed may flatter itself that it can disprove it. The raised Imagination, that most precious faculty of the soul, can discover the radiant truth. True Imagination can enter into the secrets of life and discover the great truth which is spoken in the symbolical language of every myth. Once you see that each soul is an unrepeatable experiment of God, you cannot and *dare* not enslave and torture your fellow man. It is strange that the telling of fairy stories to children and of great legends to the young comes to be seen as one of the strongest answers to materialist communism. The inner being of the child knows subconsciously that it belongs to the eternal realms of light and is strengthened by these stories to face bravely the soul trials of this earth plane. This knowledge is part of a great healing process. In this age of so much separation, when the scientific intellect explores ever deeper into division, the Imagination comes to give us the conviction that life is a great unity and that the planet on which we tread is indeed a living organism. Our earth is to be seen as a huge living creature.

Nature is a mighty and complex whole of which man is integrally part. It is so easy for the modern mind to think that the earth is a dead speck of dust in a vast empty cosmos and that man is no more than a chance evolutionary accident to whom nature is quite indifferent. When this world-view is held we may appear justified in exploiting our planet for personal gain and greed.

The view which our enhanced imagination gives us is quite other. The great truth is

borne in on us that the Earth is a living creature, that nature is an incredibly complex whole of which the human kingdom is a vital part. Man is then seen as, so to speak, an organ of consciousness of this being of earth. He is that point where nature becomes aware of herself and is able to 'think' out into the yet greater organism of the cosmos. As we wake up to the unity of life we see that so far from being merely a dead speck of matter the earth is a tiny seed carrying in it a vast spiritual future. Why otherwise should the exalted Being of the Spiritual Sun have chosen to have descended into the stream of earth evolution? The task of man is to serve Mother earth.

The world of matter in all its complexity and diversification is shot through with the world of spirit by which it has been formed. The higher worlds of which the legends speak are very near to us since spirit can be found within matter, impregnating it and giving it 'life'. Healing is the letting of the Light of the great Oneness pour through all aspects of our being. Healing, "Whole-ing", is the achievement of the reality of that vision which the Imagination can grasp.

The 'higher worlds', the realms of Spirit, are not infinitely distant. In the sense of higher frequency they interpenetrate and indeed form our material plane and are to be explored and found by imaginative consciousness.

When man can really learn to co-operate with these planes of Being, vast new possibilities for human development in the New Age begin to open up. For our very intellectual minds one of the most valuable lines of approach is the re-interpretation of the great achievements of the human spirit in mythology, poetry and drama, rediscovering the eternal truths in a symbolic form which our modern minds can understand.

"He who conquers others is strong ;
He who conquers himself is mighty."

— *Tao Te Ching*

What Do We Mean By 'Love'

By
Norman Fraser

CONCEPTS produce words and words acquire meanings which, in their turn, become concepts. This is the way language builds up into a complicated and reasonably accurate system of human intercommunication.

Our sense of language is usually 'picked up' first from our mothers and other members of the family and then from other people. This 'picking up' of word-concepts is, I am convinced, partly done by telepathic contact. Once the sense of language is established in the child a process of pruning and refining begins which lasts for a long time — perhaps a life time. Some people may be content to go through life with only a vague idea of what words mean while others take a keen interest in sharpening, and indeed pinpointing, the exact meaning of words for themselves, hoping that there are others, similarly inclined, who will receive their verbal communications with the intended precision.

What has prompted these musings is the fate of the word 'love' as found in the New Testament. But first a word about this word. In the East, and especially in India and Buddhist countries, there have been since antiquity, the concepts of *kama* and *metta* which need not be gone into here. These concepts survived in the West through the Greek language as *eros* and *agape*, but when the succeeding culture of Rome took over, *Eros* was debased to Cupid and *agape*, the real meaning of which did not exist in the

Roman mentality, became *caritas*. Well, Cupid became Amor (which is still the only word for 'love' in many languages) and *caritas* lost its loftier meaning and became roughly what we know as charity.

When Jerome produced the Vulgate towards the end of the fourth century he was perfectly aware of the sexual and non-sexual (*pace* Freud) aspects of affection and therefore gave them as *amor* and *caritas* which were later translated in the Authorized Version of 1611 as love and charity. From the time of the Revised Version of 1881, however, the distinction was lost and the one word 'love' was used throughout the New Testament thereby obscuring the essential inner meaning of many vitally important sayings.

And so I come to a case I have recently noticed where no less a figure than C. G. Jung is enmeshed in this biblical inexactitude. On page 386 of the paperback edition of "Memories, Dreams, Reflections", he begins a sub-chapter on the realm of Eros. Whereas I have no quarrel with his very deep and sublime insight into human love, some of which he says he acquired through his medical experience, his quotations from the New Testament all concern *agape* in which the erotic does not or should not exist. To the advanced seer Eros without the erotic is comprehensible, but to those who have not yet reached this stage there are still *kama* and *metta*.

"Two men are in me : one wants what God wants ;
The other, what the world wants, the devil and death."

— Angelus Silesius

The 'Hop On A Bus' Pictures

(With acknowledgements to Kakuan)

By

Mark Wilding

1. Busy in life he is homesick, and he finds he is confronted by a maze of criss-crossing streets. He does not know which way to take and wanders from one stop to another, puzzled and searching.
2. At last he has decided on his route and waits at the Bus stop. In spite of some doubt he decides to take this route. He waits and talks to others but the Bus is long in arriving.
3. He sees the Bus at last approaching. He reads again and again about the way he will follow. His decision is firmer now that he sees others on board.
4. He steps onto the Bus and grasps the guide rail firmly. 'Hold very tight' shouts the driver, and he warns people not to get off the Bus while it is moving.
5. As the driver calls out the route he listens carefully. He realises that the journey is long and that he could not have walked all this way alone.
6. He voyages more and more serenely, and the Bus approaches his destination. He sits near to the driver and they talk amiably, and he is told how to get home from the next stop.
7. Having left the Bus he walks alone, remembering all that the driver told him, towards his part of the world. The Bus has vanished.
8. The Bus long since forgotten, he remains without hindrances in his home.
9. He has reached his abiding place, and contemplates within his hearth.
10. Now, at last, he comes and goes as he pleases, walking wherever he will without hurry in all the crowds. He can talk or remain silent. He is always within.

"The next day Sri Bhagavan said: These people want some *japa*, *dhyana*, or yoga or something similar. Without their saying what they have been doing so far what more can be said to them? Again, why *japa*, its *phalaśruti*, etc.? Who is it that makes the *japa*? Who gets the fruits thereof? Can they not look to the Self? Or again, even if instructed by others to do *japa* or *dhyana*, they do it for some time, but are always looking to some results, e.g., visions, dreams, or thaumaturgic powers. If they do not find them they say they are not progressing or the *tapas* is not effective. Visions, etc., are no signs of progress. Mere performance of *tapas* is its progress also. Steadiness is what is required. Moreover they must entrust themselves to their *mantra* or their God and wait for its Grace. They don't do so. *Japa* even once uttered has its own good effect, whether the individual is aware or not."

— Sri Bhagavan in *Talks*, p. 103.

Enlightenment of Buddha Sakyamuni

By

Lama Anagarika Govinda

I

WHEN the Buddha after his enlightenment arrived at the Deer Park near Benares, he was but a lonely wanderer, a pilgrim like thousands of others who daily come to this sacred city. He was forsaken by his friends and companions, given up by his family — nobody knew of his great victory ; no visible sign was there to convince the world of his supreme attainment. And even if it had been possible to impress the world by signs and miracles, the Buddha would have been the last to use such means.

And yet, this lonely pilgrim carried in his heart that light which was to illumine the world and to leave its imprint upon the face of humanity.

When he left Uruvela (now known as Buddh'Gâya) the place of his enlightenment, he was perfectly conscious of the immensity of the task before him, because he had been struggling deep within himself, whether he should return into the world and proclaim his newly found knowledge for the benefit of humanity, or whether he should continue to dwell in the blissful peace of his own liberation.

This inner struggle is represented in the sacred scriptures as a dialogue of the Enlightened One with Mâra, the Tempter, on the one hand, and with Brahma Sahampati, one of the celestial gods of light, on the other hand. Mâra is the advocate of the selfish, small ego, which is only interested in its own welfare, while Brahma is the advocate of that higher endeavour, which has the welfare of all beings at heart, without regard to one's own weal and woe. Though conscious of the difficulty of his mission (because "it is difficult to find those capable of understanding"), the Buddha decided to yield to the promptings of these divine impulses.

"Wide open are the gates of immortality,
Ye that have ears to hear, release your
faith !"

And after he had reviewed the world in his mind in order to determine where to proclaim first the happy tidings, he decided to go to Benares, India's holiest place, and he announced his decision with the words :

"Now to Benares Town I press
To set the Truth-wheel whirling round,¹
In this blind world I go to sound
The throbbing drum of deathlessness."²

If the Buddha called upon the people of the world to "release their faith", he did not expect them blindly to accept his words, but merely to accept his message with an open mind and to let it sink into their hearts, so as to realize the truth for themselves. That the Buddha did not speculate upon the credulity of the people when he spoke of "faith" (Pâli : *saddha*, Skt. : *śraddha*), may be seen from the fact that the first proclamation of his teachings was addressed to those of his former companions who had abandoned him, because he had given up the extreme austerities which they regarded indispensable to a holy life, but which he had found unprofitable and ignoble. When now they saw the Buddha approaching through the Deer Park, they decided neither to greet nor to welcome him, but to treat him with contemptuous indifference.

But, what happened ? — When the Buddha drew nearer, they rose one after another from

¹ The 'turning of the Wheel of the Dharma' (Skt. : *Dharmacakra-pravartana*, Tibetan : *chos-ki hkhor-lo hkor-ba*) is a metaphor known to every Buddhist, meaning 'the setting in motion the forces of the universal and moral law' as embodied in truths of Buddhism. This metaphor is the origin of the Tibetan 'prayer-wheel'.

² In Pali, reads (Maihina-Nikaya 26). This versified translation is by Bhikkhu Silacara.

their seats and went to meet him. The Buddha's face bore the expression of his great spiritual victory, his eyes had the deep glance of one who had gone through the mysteries of life and death and who had conquered both. His whole personality was radiating happiness, as if the inner light had penetrated and saturated his bodily form. Never had a man's expression and behaviour revealed a greater power of conviction, sincerity and devotion to truth, combined with the ardent desire to communicate the experience of ultimate reality for the benefit of all living beings. It was this sincerity and radiance of his whole being that gave his words such an overpowering effect, an effect that has spanned millenniums and even now makes his message reverberate in the hearts of millions of men, as if those words were spoken this very moment. All the happiness which the Buddha had silently enjoyed during the weeks after his enlightenment in the solitude of the forest, is condensed in the solemn exclamation with which he addressed those five ascetics in the Deer Park :

“Open your ears, O monks, the deliverance from death is found !”

Strange enough, these happy tidings have never been given the attention they deserve, and especially among modern students of Buddhism. Partly under the influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy, partly due to the materialistic outlook of science at the beginning of this century, there arose the impression that Buddhism was either a pessimistic kind of philosophy or a life-negating form of rationalism. Both these views forget that Buddhism was not founded on an intellectual theory, but on an experience of overwhelming power. What was this experience that transformed the emaciated ascetic into the radiant figure of the Buddha ?

The sacred texts give us a very clear description of this experience in the Buddha's own words, which — if we have ears to hear and hearts to understand — contain the key to the quintessence of Buddhism, to its most profound aspect, in which millenniums of religious development are foreshadowed and in which the essential message of all great

religions is comprised : the discovery of the universality and immortality of the spirit that informs all life and that becomes conscious in man, if he bursts the barriers of egohood, that keep him a prisoner of his own illusions.

The Buddha described this process and the conditions that make it possible. No amount of will-power, no extreme of asceticism or self-torture can force open the gates of enlightenment. We can approach them only with due respect to the body in whom the human consciousness is enshrined and which therefore is to be looked upon as the temple of the mind. This was the first lesson the Buddha learnt, and it was for this reason that he abandoned the extremes of self-mortification on account of which his companions lost faith in him.

And with a body restored to health and vigour, he directed his mind inward, and lo ! it revealed to him a universe, greater than the universe that his mortal eyes could see or his mortal mind could conceive : a universe that did not only extend in space, but in which time and space were merged into a higher dimension, so that the past became an integral part of the present and the origination, disintegration and re-absorption of world-systems became as apparent as the infinite variety of life-forms, in which each single being has its function and is related to all other manifestations of life.

He discovered the universality of a consciousness of which our human intellect and reason are only small fragments, sufficient for the trivial tasks of daily life, but no more than a drop on the surface of the ocean. And as a drop, if separated from the ocean, evaporates and disappears from sight, so the limited human consciousness that separates itself under the illusion of its “egohood”, will go through millions of transformations of births and deaths, until it remembers or rediscovers its origin and realizes its divine nature in the tremendous all-embracing experience of universality, in which the individual human mind serves as a mirror or a focal point of universal consciousness.

Thus the human mind is not annihilated but subordinated to a higher dimension of awareness, it becomes a focalizing instrument which not only reflects but integrates a higher reality, so that the metaphor of "the drop slipping into the shining sea" could be reversed into the paradox that "the sea is slipping into the drop", which comes nearer to the truth that the infinite lives in the finite, the universal in the individual — which is the only *raison d'être* for the latter's existence.

This universal experience will at once explain the Buddhist concept of *anâtman* (Pali: *anattâ*), which has baffled many students of Buddhism and has given rise to the faulty notion of the "soullessness" of Buddhism. This notion arose mainly from the naive presupposition that the word "attâ" (Pâli) or "âtman" (Skt.), as used in Buddhist texts, could be equated with the concept of "soul" and that "soul" was identical with "ego", and that the "ego" is a limited, separate and constant entity. If however the Buddha spoke of "*anattâ*" "not-self", "non-ego", "egolessness" etc., he did not deny the eternal in man, but merely pointed out that, what we regard as our "ego", is not the eternal but the ephemeral, not a reality but an illusion which prevents us from discovering the universality of our true nature. We are like a poor man, in whose house a treasure is hidden, but who refuses to break down the walls that hide the treasure.

On the other hand, we have to understand that the denial of separate egohood does not contradict the necessity and relative value of individuality. While in Brahmanism *nirvâna* had a metaphysical connotation, implying the dissolution or merging of the individual soul in the undifferentiated *brahman*, the Buddha used this term in a purely psychological sense: as the extinction of greed, hatred and ignorance, Nirvana, thus, is not the annihilation of individual life, as generally assumed, but something that can be experienced in this very life, as demonstrated by the Buddha himself, who — far from dissolving into the all, — led an active life as a teacher and leader of a great spiritual movement, wandering from place to place for full forty years.

The overcoming of greed, hatred and ignorance (which latter consists in the delusion of imagining one's own self as a separate and unchangeable ego-entity, but is not to be confused with lack of intellectual knowledge) is the precondition of enlightenment which, thus, includes Nirvana and at the same time goes beyond it. This is clearly shown in the distinction which is drawn between a perfect saint (arahant) and a Buddha. The saint has overcome the above-mentioned negative qualities and thus gained Nirvana, but he is not a Buddha because he has not attained the universal knowledge of a fully Enlightened One, he has not reached the universality of the highest consciousness. The highest ideal of Buddhism is, therefore, not Nirvana but Enlightenment (*samyaksambodhi*).

The recognition of this fact gave rise to the "Great Way" or "Great Vehicle" (*Mahâyâna*) of Buddhism, whose followers were not content merely to escape the endless cycles of death and rebirth, by abstaining from all actions which might perpetuate the state of worldly existence, but regarded the attainment of Perfect Enlightenment as the only aim worthy of human endeavour — and this all the more, as it presented the opportunity to help one's fellow-beings in the greatest possible measure, though it meant taking upon oneself the burden of a longer way and sparing the sufferings of innumerable other beings.

Compared to this ideal, that of the Arahant, who tried to escape the rounds of birth and death on the shortest way, bent first of all on his own salvation, appeared narrow and to some degree selfish, and was therefore called the "Lesser Vehicle" (*Hīnayāna*) by the followers of the Mahâyâna to which the Tibetan Buddhists belong. To them the profoundest teaching of the Buddha was his own example, his ceaseless striving after realization of the highest aim through innumerable existences and sufferings until he had attained Perfect Enlightenment. To them the Buddha's way (doctrine) is not a way of evasion or escape, but a way of facing and overcoming dangers and mastering difficulties. Only one who knows joy and sorrow to the full, who has tasted transitoriness as well as eternity, who

has dwelt in the finite as well as in the contemplation of the infinite, who has experienced the momentariness of that which appeared eternal and the eternity of the moment, who has reached universality in the highest state of individualisation — only such a one knows that the Buddha's Middle Path is neither a compromise nor a 'sneaking through' between the opposites, but the recognition of both sides of reality without clinging to the one or the other.

When the Buddha introduced the idea of the Middle Way in his first sermon at Sarnath before his five former companions, he was still aflame with the fire of his great experience, which reverberated in his triumphant exclamation: "The deliverance from death is found!" — compressing into these few simple words the quintessence of a message and an experience which took him the remaining forty years of his life to explain and to propagate — a message that even after two-and-a-half thousand years has not yet exhausted its profound significance. The Buddha himself underlined the importance of his words, by adding: "Tell me, ye monks, have I ever addressed you in such terms?"

The monks awakening from their perplexity could not but agree that they had never heard such words from him — vibrant with deep emotion; and knowing the unquestionable truthfulness of his character, they began to understand that the man who stood before them, was no more the simple ascetic Gotama, but one who had passed through an extraordinary spiritual experience, one who had lifted his consciousness to a higher reality.

And now they listened to his words, and they heard the doctrine of the Middle Way, which is as far from a life of selfish enjoyment as from the self-mortification and gloominess of world-despising asceticisms, but which, free from these extremes "enlightens the eye, enlightens the mind, leads to peace, to knowledge, to Enlightenment!"

This avoidance of extremes applied to both the practical and the spiritual life, gave birth to a new kind of thinking, even to a new system of logic and later on to the greatest philo-

sophies of Asia, in which the irreconcilable contrast between subject and object, between "I" and "world", between "spirit" and "matter", between "substance" and "appearance", between the "eternal" and the "ephemeral" was eliminated in favour of an infinite living interrelationship between everything that exists. The world that had been solidified by more or less abstract and static concepts, created by thinkers far removed from life, was again restored to fluidity by the Buddha's dynamic conception of a world in which there was as little place for dead matter or rigid mechanical laws, as for arbitrariness, lawlessness or merely "accidental" happenings. Man and his universe, in fact, every living being and the world in which it exists, form an organic whole, and therefore any change in the essential nature of a being will result in a change of its world (i.e. the dimension in which it lives). The essential nature of an individual, however, consists in his consciousness, and thus, every living being not only lives in the world which it 'deserves', which corresponds to it but ultimately in the world which it creates. Recognizing this fact, which is only another way to express the law of Karma, the Buddha replaced the dogma of a static, immutable self (*âtman*), to which the original experience of inner reality had been reduced by the idea of a living, organically evolving psyche and a growing human awareness of his inborn universality, inspired by a spontaneous impulse for freedom and illumination (*bodhi-citta*).

Looking back from the experience of highest reality, the Enlightened One saw the world from the opposite point of view of the ordinary human being, so to say in a reversed perspective, i.e. instead of seeing it from the point of view of an "ego", he saw it under the perspective of egolessness, and lo! this, apparently so substantial, material world dissolved into a whirling mass of eternally rotating and at every moment originating and disintegrating elements. The momentariness of these elements of existence of which everything is composed, makes the application of concepts like "being" and "non-being" "existence" and "non-existence" impossible.

“The world, O Kaccana, is accustomed to rely on duality, on the ‘it is’ and on the ‘it is not’. However, O Kaccana, he who perceives in accordance with truth and wisdom how the things in this world arise, for him there is no ‘it is not’ in the world. And he, O Kaccana, who perceives in accordance with truth and wisdom how things of this world perish, for him there is no ‘it is’ in the world.” (*Samyutta-Nikāya* II, 17)

From this point of view we can understand the Buddha’s silence regarding the existence or non-existence of an Enlightened One after death or the existence or non-existence of God and similar metaphysical questions. The silence of the Buddha was not that of an agnostic, but was born of a deep understanding of the transcendental nature of ultimate reality. The non-theistic attitude of Buddhism (so different from that of atheism) springs from the deep respect for the mystery of transcendental reality, which is beyond words and concepts and can only be experienced. The Buddha, therefore, did not want to convince people

through logical arguments, but by showing them the way that leads to the point where they can see the truth for themselves through their own experience. He did not ask people to believe in him, but to “come and see”.

The Buddha once asked Ānanda, whether he followed him because he believed his words and venerated him, or because he had understood and realized the truth (*dharma*) within himself, whereupon Ānanda answered that he followed the Buddha’s teaching on account of his own insight into the truth. The Buddha then expressed his satisfaction and told Ānanda that if he had accepted his words in blind faith he would not have been benefitted by them. He did not want his followers to believe in his words, but to understand them and to take them as a starting-point for their own investigations and experience. The greatest knowledge cannot help us, if we have not made it our own by re-creating the process in which it was acquired.

(to be concluded in next issue)

When I entered the hall in the afternoon, Bhagavan was already explaining in answer to some questions put by Mr. Poonja, a Punjabi :

“I ask you to see where the ‘I’ arises in your body, but it is really not quite correct to say that the ‘I’ rises from and merges in the heart in the right side of the chest. The heart is another name for the Reality and it is neither inside nor outside the body ; there can be no in or out for it, since it alone is. I do not mean by ‘heart’ any physiological organ or any plexus of nerves or anything like that, but so long as one identifies oneself with the body and thinks he is in the body he is advised to see where in the body the I-thought rises and merges again. It must be the heart on the right side of the chest since every man, of whatever race and religion and in whatever language he may be saying ‘I’, points to the right side of the chest to indicate himself. This is so all over the world, so that must be the place. And by keenly watching the daily emergence of the I-thought on waking and its subsiding in sleep, one can see that it is in the heart on the right side.”

— From *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, p. 201.

Psychiatry and Optimistic Awareness

By
Marie B. Byles

I'm Okay: You're Okay by Thomas M. Harris has become a psychiatric best-seller. It reminds me of a book on auto-suggestion about Coué's marvellous healing work in France in the twenties of this century. It, too, became a best-seller, except that we had no paperbacks in those days to sell them so easily. Various other books were written around its optimistic message of how to attain good health by using the imagination. People tied knots in a piece of string to be used like a rosary; and they went to sleep at night and woke up in the morning solemnly repeating, 'Every day in every way I'm getting better and better.' The first book on auto-suggestion is still being reprinted, but I do not think that people nowadays repeat the night and morning formula. Coué also discovered what was called the Law of Reversed Effort, the more you *try* to get better the worse you become, but if you impress upon your imagination the fact of getting better by repeating the night and morning formula, you do get better. Coué effected marvellous cures and became world famous.

Coué aimed at curing physical illnesses. Dr. Harris aims at curing mental sicknesses, which breed tension and strain, that in turn lead to anger, hatred and violence and even murder — and also physical illnesses largely unknown in Coué's day. There is every reason to believe that he may be as successful as was Coué; and his teaching, too, is based upon the suggestion of well being. His book is likewise well worth study.

Dr. Harris's panacea is in effect the very old teaching of awareness or mindfulness found in all religions, but notably in a whole section of the *Buddha's Eightfold Way*. It is accompanied by a *mantra*, so to speak,

'I'm okay: you're okay.' By imagining it, this becomes to you a factual truth. It is also the world-wide teaching of universal goodwill, put into modern language eminently suitable for modern people, but far more realistic to them than trying to learn to love their neighbours as themselves.

This new method for attaining awareness divides a human being's life into three sections. First comes the Child, lasting until the age of about two years; in this, spontaneous action arises to meet circumstances without thought beforehand or judgment afterwards; also the little being has no thought of separate individuality. Christ said that people must become as little children if they would enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but there are many characteristics of the child-mind besides selflessness, that are not pleasant unless under the control of the Adult mind which comes into existence at the age of two. (The term adult is used by Dr. Harris in a different way to what is usual). In this second stage, from about two years, there comes into existence the sense of 'I', 'Mine' and 'Me' with accompanying consciousness of being a separate individuality, but also there arises the ability to make judgments of what the brain perceives with the senses, a brain which like a computer registers everything with which it comes into contact. Finally there is the Parent which seeks to dominate, not only his or her children but others as well. This is often seen in its extreme form in teachers and dictators, though Dr. Harris does not stress this. Once again, unless this faculty of domination is brought under the control of the Adult side of the mind the result may be most unpleasant.

If like 'the lilies of the field' the Child grows easily into the Adult and then into the

Parent, the human being will grow into inner peace and happiness. But always within the same being is the Child nature and the Parent nature. It is the conflict between these three, Child, Adult and Parent, one over another, and especially over the Adult, which brings retardation of natural growth and the mental sicknesses now so common in modern life. Bad parentage may make the little person far worse, but even good parentage does not always prevent a visit to the psychiatrist in our troublous age.

This conflict between the three aspects that are in everybody, Child, Adult and Parent, can be described as unconsciously thinking, 'I'm okay : you're not okay', or the reverse. Seldom does the Adult which is in everyone take control and bring about the equilibrium described as 'I'm okay ; you're okay.' It is the object of Dr. Harris's therapy to show how this balance can be brought about.

In effect, it is the age-old teaching of universal kindness and loving one's neighbour as oneself, seeing oneself as neither superior nor inferior to others' leading to an optimistic thinking comparable to Coué's.

It is also the age-old teaching of the need for constant awareness or mindfulness and refusal to let the Child or Parent determine one's thoughts, words and acts ; and this mindfulness will make us conscious of the states of mind as they arise and of the Parent and Child always latent. If we do this then what we think, do and say will be determined by the Adult in a rational manner, at least that is what Dr. Harris has found.

Although Dr. Harris's teaching is not new, his terminology is quite new indeed, and well suited to modern people. The Buddha said we should consciously examine, not only our physical reactions, but also our states of mind. But this is a cold and uninteresting light in which to study our mental contents and become aware of what is happening, whereas looking at the music of the Child and Parent is a bright, warm light that the modern person can understand. Harris's chapter on children shows a superb compassion for the child mind.

On finishing Harris's book my first reaction was to think of many acquaintances who were too prone to show the Child or Parent in them, and who would benefit much from reading the book. That is, I was unconsciously saying to myself, 'I'm okay ; you're not okay.' This is diametrically opposed to Harris's teaching that all are okay. Why do we think that we are superior to others ? Harris fails to stress the fact that there is only one person we can reform and that is oneself. It is true that it is the psychiatrist's job to reform his patients and not himself. This assumes that he himself has already mastered the Adult so that it can control the Parent and Child within himself. Moreover the psychiatrist has no personal involvement with his patient. Whereas ordinary people are personally involved or they would not be troubled with the psychic illnesses of others. If a person we hardly know shows the Parent or Child uncomfortably, we are not in the least worried or desirous of reforming him. It is when this other person is near to us (and talks down to us patronizingly) that we think he ought to read Harris's book and rid himself of Parent superiority. Dr. Harris would surely agree that the only person one can reform is oneself — and not the difficult husband or wife — but he does not say this specifically. This is a serious defect in the book ; the wronged spouse could only reform his or her husband or wife by example and the repetition of 'I'm okay ; you're okay', which is the last thing he or she would do.

And this brings us to a fact often overlooked by psychiatrists, namely, that people like the Wesleys and their Methodists, and General Booth and his wife and the Salvation Army brought about basic changes in people's mental lives without any knowledge of psychology and with a terminology which readers of this journal, and certainly Dr. Harris, would almost certainly find very strange. Quarrelsome people became peaceful, alcoholics became abstainers, homes of violence and turmoil became well ordered abodes, and almost the face of England became changed. The words they used bore no resemblance to 'okay, not okay'. But they worked ; they

had found something Dr. Harris had not found. The followers of the Booths and Wesleys had found what is Beyond 'the things of this world' and what is far more important. That something they would probably have called the 'redeeming power of Christ'. Psychologically this may be spoken of as relaxation and complete surrender to a higher Power. It is one of the paradoxes of life that one can find joy in material things only by ceasing to regard them as all-important. There is Something else. Whether this Something else is in heaven and the hereafter or in the presence of God within or in the Real Self, one who gains this experience has looked Beyond the petty changing selves whether okay or not okay. And the terminology used does not matter.

The Buddha said that the attainment of enlightenment and bliss depended on various matters which he listed under eight headings. One of these is awareness and mindfulness, the observation of the states of mind (and body). This Harris confines to three aspects, the Child, Parent and Adult, present in everybody. He has dressed this section in a new garb suited to our age. But all the matters set out by the Buddha are necessary. Ramana's question, 'Who am I?' will discover them all and so will Gandhi's insistence on self-naughting. But Harris's okay, not okay, and his Child, Parent and Adult does not do this. His method may be successful with many people today, but it will hardly outlive his lifetime, any more than Coué's. The reason for this is that it does not get Beyond the ego, the changing and ephemeral self, whether okay or not okay, and teach how to silence our own clamouring individual selves altogether. Carl Jung's *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* goes deeper than Harris's book. Harris's method may help up to a certain point, but it does not get to the kernel of life. But ultimately the kernel alone can satisfy.

Modern Psychology, like modern science, generally tends to go no further than intellectual explanation. It ignores the spiritual side which is Beyond the cognizance of the senses and the thinking organ. But as Jung points

out, it is the very absence of the spiritual side that is the cause of many of our psychic ills. 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it'.

But is psychology necessary at all? Why cannot we just grow like 'the lilies of the field'?

I do not know if things have changed in Mexico today, but about thirty years ago an Australian traveller congratulated a Mexican mother on the good manners of Mexican children as compared with the average anti-social child of U.S.A. The mother commented, 'That is because we do not have psychologists and psychiatry here'.

This may have been partly the explanation. Perhaps Mexican children had good parents and good teachers, who set the example of good social behaviour. It may be that these children did then grow like the 'lilies of the field' without the help of psychiatrists.

But unfortunately the tension and strain of modern atmosphere make for retarded mental growth and for mental lameness. The result is that many people require mental crutches in the form of psychiatric treatment. Much as we would like to grow like those Mexican children we cannot do so.

No one can provide a panacea, least of all a psychiatrist. Dr. Harris has provided a handy method when used by the right doctor or psychiatrist. What he teaches may help many troubled people. But he does not go deep enough to supply all that is necessary for the mental health of modern man. He does not go Beyond the ever changing individual selves and find the need for self-naughting as Mahatma Gandhi would say, or leaving self behind as Jesus put it. People should ask themselves the questions, 'Who are you?' 'Have you started to surrender yourself to the true Self'?

See :

I'm OK : You're OK, by Thomas A. Harris, M.D. Pan Books, London & Sydney. Pp. 269.

Suggestion and Autosuggestion, by Charles Boudouin. George Allen and Unwin, London. Pp. 288.

Modern Man in Search of a Soul, by C. G. Jung. Kegan Paul Trench Trubner & Co. Pp. 282.

ISLAM:

CONCEPT OF GOD

By

Muhammad Zafrulla Khan¹

THE central pivot around which the whole doctrine and teaching of Islam revolves is the Unity of the God-head. From this concept proceeds the fundamental unity of the universe, of man, and of life. The object of Islam is to establish a balance and to bring about accord in the relationship of man to God and to the universe through beneficent adjustment.

The Quran is insistent upon the Unity of God and emphatically condemns any doctrine, idea, or concept which might directly or indirectly tend to associate any other thing or being with God as a partner or equal. "Say : 'He is Allah, the One ; Allah, the Independent, and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten ; and there is none like unto Him'" (112 : 2-5). It needs to be observed that the word "Allah" is the proper name of God and is not derived from "ilah" meaning "god". Of course, Allah is God, but the word does not signify merely that Allah is God to the exclusion of all other gods. Western scholars have often failed to keep this distinction in mind and have erroneously assumed that Allah merely signifies God rather than a god. In fact there is no etymological relationship between "ilah", god or a god, and "Allah", which is the substantive for God. To appreciate the juxtaposition employed by the Quran in this respect, it is necessary to keep the distinction in mind. God is "ilah", and there is no other "ilah" beside Him, and His name is Allah ; as, for instance, "Verily, Allah is the only One God" (4 : 172). The Quran, like other Scriptures, teaches "your God is One God" (16 : 23), and it reveals that Allah is His substantive name.

It then proceeds to emphasize the Unity of God, to expound His attributes, and to explain and illustrate their operation.

The primary object of all revelation is to emphasize this concept of God, that is to say, that He is One, has no equal or partner, and that all adoration, glorification, worship, and obedience are due to Him alone. He is the object of the heart's deepest love and devotion. To seek nearness to Him, to do His will in all things, to win His pleasure, to become the manifestation of His attributes — that is to say, His image — is the purpose of man's creation (51 : 57). He is the Source of all beneficence, everything proceeds from Him, and is dependent upon Him. He is Independent and stands in no need of help or assistance from any other source, inasmuch as all sources and means proceed from Him, and none exists or subsists outside Him or outside His control and authority.

"He sends down the angels with revelation by His command on whomsoever of His servants He pleases, saying, 'Warn that there is no god but I, so take Me alone for your Protector'" (16 : 3).

This concept is reinforced by various arguments. For instance : "Allah has not taken unto Himself any son, nor is there any other god along with Him ; in that case, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some of them would surely have dominated over others. Glorify, then, Allah above all that which they attribute to Him, Knower of the unseen and of the seen ; exalted is He, therefore, above all that which they associate with Him" (23 : 92-93). Mythology furnishes ample illustration of the confusion and chaos that would prevail if there were a plurality of gods. There would be an end to all certainty and order and consequently to all beneficence.

¹ Extract from *Islam : Its Meaning for Modern Man*. Ch. 9. Courtesy : Routledge and Kegan Paul, England.

Man and the universe instead of being manifestations of Divine beneficence would present a spectacle of capricious and cruel sport, and instead of progressing constantly toward perfection, would be speedily destroyed. "If there had been in the heavens and the earth other gods beside Allah, then surely the twain would have come to ruin. Glorified then be Allah, the Lord of Power, above what they attribute" (21 : 23).

God has throughout affirmed and borne witness to His Existence, His Unity, His various attributes, and revealed these to mankind at each state to the degree to which their awareness was needed by mankind for the complete fulfilment of life in all its dimensions. The discovery of all this was not left to man. If that had been so, countless generations would have perished before a concept of God, even remotely approaching the reality, could have been evolved. "Allah bears witness that there is no god but He — and so do the angels and those possessed of knowledge — Maintainer of Justice ; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise" (3 : 19).

The Quran not only excludes all idea of any equal or partner with Allah, it specifically excludes all idea of His having a son except in the purely metaphorical sense in which all mankind are His children, and in which the peacemakers are spoken of, in the Bible, as "the children of God" (Matt. 5 : 9). God is Ever-Living, All-Knowing, All-Hearing, the Creator of all, whose authority extends over everything. To attribute a son, in any but the purely metaphorical sense, to God, would amount to a denial of His Unity and in effect to a denial of His Godhead. "Verily, Allah is the only one God. Far is it from His attributes of Holiness and Perfection that He should have a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Sufficient is Allah as a Creator" (4 : 172).

God is not only the First Cause. He is the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner, and He exercises control over the universe at all times. "Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian over all things. To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth" (39 : 63-64). All His attributes are eternal.

None of them ever falls into disuse. His attribute of Creation is equally in operation all the time. "Allah originates Creation ; then He repeats it : then to Him shall you be brought back" (30 : 12). "To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient to Him. He it is who originates the Creation, then repeats it, for it is most easy for Him. His is the most exalted state in the heavens and the earth. He is the Mighty, the Wise" (30 : 27-28).

He creates and perfects ; He designs and guides (87 : 3-4). He has bestowed upon everything its appropriate form, which enables each thing to perform its function properly, and has then guided everything to its proper function (20 : 51). He bestows life and He causes death (53 : 45), and to Him do all things ultimately return (53 : 43).

"To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and He has mastery over everything" (3 : 190). Having created the universe and all that is in it, He did not sit back and, as it were, abdicate His control over it. Nothing can continue in existence except with His constant support. "In His hand is the dominion over all things and He grants protection to everything, but against Him there is no protection" (23 : 89).

Nature and all its phenomena, life and all its exigencies, including its termination here below, have all been created in God's wisdom, obey His laws, and are under His control (21 : 34 ; 36 ; 38-41 ; 67 : 2-5).

God regulates it all and clearly explains His Signs that men may have firm belief in communion with Him and in their accountability to Him (13 : 3).

The various attributes of God have been set out in the Quran in different contexts. He forgives faults and shortcomings. He accepts repentance, He judges and imposes penalties. He is the Lord of Bounty. Toward Him is the final return (40 : 4).

His principal attributes, to which all other Divine attributes are related, are mentioned at the very outset in the opening chapter of the Quran. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds and leads them stage by stage toward perfection. He is the Gracious One,

Who has made provision for the fulfilment of the purpose of the creation of man and of the universe. He is the Merciful One, Who causes beneficent results to follow upon righteous action. He is the Master of the Day of Judgment (1 : 2-4).

The distinction between *Ar-Rahman* (the Gracious One) and *Ar-Rahim* (the Merciful One) is that the former connotes that aspect of God's Grace which precedes, and is independent of, human action, while the latter connotes the Divine Grace or Mercy that causes beneficent results to follow upon righteous action. In other words, the operation of the former is without reference to human action, and the operation of the latter is consequent upon human action.

It is also to be observed that the fourth attribute describes God as Master of the Day of Judgment, and not merely as Judge. It is true that the operation of all Divine attributes is in accord with the requirements of justice, but the concept of justice leaves ample scope for the operation of other attributes such as, for instance, Mercy, Bountifulness, Appreciation. It is a misconception that justice demands punishment or a certain degree or type of punishment of all defaults and offences, and that it restricts reward and bounty to a scale proportionate to the action or quality that deserves appreciation. Justice demands that all shall have their just due, that is to say, that no penalty shall be severer than that which is appropriate to the default or offence, and that no reward, remuneration, or compensation shall fall short of that which is deserved or has been earned. The reduction of a penalty, or its total remission, is not inconsistent with justice, nor is the multiplication of reward in conflict with its spirit. God's Mercy and His Grace and Bounty are without limit. Indeed, God does not punish every default or offence; many He overlooks and forgives altogether (42 : 31). His Law is that He chastises where chastisement is needed for reformation, but that His Mercy encompasses all things (7 : 157).

The subject of Divine attributes is a very extensive one, and the Quran treats it with a

wealth of variety and detail. Indeed, each attribute could in itself form the subject of a whole treatise. As illustration of the manner in which the Quran approaches and treats various aspects of Divine attributes, it may perhaps suffice to conclude with the following :

Allah — there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, the All-Sustaining. Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what has gone before them and what will come after them; but they encompass nothing of His knowledge save that which He pleases. His knowledge comprehends the heavens and the earth; and the care of them burdens Him not. He is the High, the Great (2 : 256).

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. Similitude of His Light is as a lustrous niche, wherein is a lamp. The lamp is enclosed in a globe. The globe is, as it were, a glittering star. It is light from a blessed tree — an olive — neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would well-nigh glow forth even though fire touched it not. Light upon light! Allah guides to His light whomsoever He will. Allah sets forth parables to men, and Allah knows all things well (24 : 36).

He is Allah, there is no god beside Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Gracious, the Merciful.

He is Allah, there is no god beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah far above that which they associate with Him.

He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most beautiful attributes. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise (59 : 23-5).

There is nothing that participates in His Being or Attributes (42 : 12); so coin not similitudes for Him and liken Him not to anything (16 : 75).

DUALITY?

By

Cornelia Bagarotti

THERE are two worlds. The world within and the world without. The Kingdom of Heaven (of which the Christ spoke) is within . . . not without.

So long as the world without is the entire preoccupation of man's mind and activities he will not come to know the Kingdom of Heaven, that which lies within.

Therefore a certain time each day must be set apart for devotion, for thought, not of worldly or daily concerns, but of God.

"Be still and know that I am God"

He who prays turns to God. He who studies and ponders sacred scripture turns to God. He who repeats the name of God fixes his thought on God.

Gradually these periods of life within so permeate the Being of Man that he is able to

perform his responsibilities and daily activities without forgetting God.

A Teacher, by his presence, confers upon his pupil the gift of uplifted consciousness to his own level of God-union . . . be it silently, as did Bhagavan, or by instruction or touch. For it is within man's own heart that illumination takes place. When he has so purified his thinking and feeling that no barrier shuts him off from God, he realises from his own experience that all which lies without and all which lies within are pure Spirit and that all exist in and are God. He will then say, "I and my Father are one".

After illumination sacred scripture is no longer a revelation in secret parables but a report of one's own personal experience. The Teacher without is then merged with the Teacher within.

"Be still and know that I am God".

Realisation and Society

Devotee : Does my realisation help others ?

Mabarsbi : Yes, and it is the best help that you can possibly render to others. Those who have discovered great truths have done so in the still depths of the Self. But really there are no 'others' to be helped. For, the Realised Being sees only the Self, just as the goldsmith sees only the gold while valuing it in various jewels. When you identify yourself with the body, name and form are there. But when you transcend the body-consciousness, the 'others' also disappear. The Realised One does not see the world as different from himself.

Devotee : Would it not be better if the saints mix with others ?

Mabarsbi : There are no 'others' to mix with. The Self is the only Reality.

SUFISM :

The Concept of the Absolute

By

Jacques de Marquette¹

LIKE other mystics, Sufis have denounced the limitation of reason in the quest of the Absolute. They refer to the authority of Aristotle who said in his *Theology*: "One becomes capable of conceiving the intelligible world through spiritual contemplation, not through logic and syllogism." Hence Bayasid al Bistami told the Ulemas, the learned doctors: "You receive a dead science from dead people. We receive our science from the Living One, who does not die." Saadi said also: "The path of reason is but a crooked labyrinth, maze within maze. With the adepts, there is none in existence save God. This can be said only to those who know reality, but the people of reason will find fault with it."

As to the lovers of God, al Hujwiri tells us that their existence seems unreal to them, "whether in his satisfaction or in his wrath, since their heart dwells ever in His presence . . . their hearts are detached from the creatures and the fetters of the stations and states, and their souls have escaped from all existences and have attached themselves to God."

This denunciation of intellectual constructions extends even to religious forms and Sufis have displayed an extraordinary freedom in regard to them. Ibn el Arabi said: "Those who adore God in the Sun, behold the Sun, and those who adore Him in living things see a living thing, and those who adore Him in lifeless things see a lifeless thing, and those who adore Him as a being unparalleled and unique see that which has no like. Do not attach yourself to any particular creed exclusively . . . otherwise . . . you will fail to recognize the whole truth of the matter. God, the omnipresent and omnipotent, is not limited by any one Creed for He says (*Koran* 2-109):

"Wheresoever ye turn there is the face of Allah." Every one praises what he believes; his God is his own creature and in praising it he praises himself. Consequently he blames the beliefs of others, which he would not do if he were just, but his dislike is based on ignorance. If he knew Junayd's saying 'the water takes its colour from the vessel containing it,' he would not interfere with other men's beliefs but would perceive God in every form of belief."

And Arabi summed up his position in a poem:

"My heart has become capable of every form,
It is a pasture for gazelles and a
convent for Christian monks,
And a temple for idols, and the
pilgrim's Ka'ba
And the tables of the Thora and the
book of her Koran.
I follow the religion of Love whichever
way its camels take.
My religion and my faith is the true
religion."

A Sufi poem expresses their effort to escape the sepulchre of formalism:

"The true mosque in a pure and holy
heart
Is built, there let all men worship God,
For there he dwells, not in a mosque
of stone."

And the last word in spiritual freedom was uttered by the wandering dervish, Abu el Khyr:

¹ Taken from *Introduction to Comparative Mysticism*. Courtesy: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.

“ Not until every mosque beneath the sun
Lies ruined will our holy work be
done ;
And never will true Musulman appear
Till faith and infidelity are one.”

This true catholicity, or rather, this supreme independence from the worship of any form, is the outcome of Union. Many Sufis have left accounts of their experiences. Al Bistami describes thus his spiritual career : “ For twelve years I was a smith of my soul. I put it in the furnace of austerities and burned it with the fire of combat and laid it on the anvil of reproach and smote upon it with the hammer of blame until I made of my soul a mirror. Five years I was the mirror of myself, polishing that mirror with diverse forms of worship and piety. Then for a year I gazed in contemplation. On my waist I saw a girdle (Zoroastrian symbol of dualism) of pride, of vanity and of self-deceit, and reliance on devotion and approbation of my works. I laboured for five more years until the girdle became cut and I professed Islam anew. I looked and saw that all created things were dead. I pronounced four prayers over them and returned from the funeral of them all, and without intrusion of creature, through God’s help alone, I attained unto God.”

If love has been the origin and cause of creation, of the enfoldment of Spirit in matter, it is also the agent of the spiritual progress and of return to unity. In reality it is naught but the echo of the presence of God in the heart, and the very messenger of Grace, without which there would be no seeking of union. “ In the beginning I was mistaken in four respects. I concerned myself to remember God, to know Him, to love Him and to seek Him, and when I had come to the end I saw that He had remembered me before I had remembered Him, that His knowledge of me preceded my knowledge of Him, His love toward me had existed before my love for Him, and He sought me before I sought Him ” (Al Bistami). The Sufi doctrine on this all-important point, which illustrates the process of Grace, is resumed in a verse : *Isbk Allah, Mabhub Allah*. “ The lover of God is the beloved of God ”. Love is grace reaching full

consciousness in its reflection in the purified heart, in which according to a Sufi poet : “ The beloved, the mirror and the image are one.”

Like the Hindu and Buddhist mystical theologies Sufi doctors reject figured visions and formal experiences bordering on the psychic. Said Shabistani : “ Cast away vain tales and mystic states, dreams of light and marvels of miracles. Your miracles are comprised in the worship of Truth. All beside it is pride, vain glory and illusion of existence.”

They particularly warn against the tendency of beginners to be carried away by the first flashes of transcendent vision. “ Some devotees on discerning the manifestation of the soul by flashes of intuition in deep meditation, its relations with the world of phenomena, its mysteries and incomprehensible nature and its vastness pervading the world of things and mind, take the soul as being the Protector of the Universe and worship him as the Supreme ”. (Abu Sayd) Al Bistami tells us that after diligent practice he had access to a world of radiant light which he mistook for God and worshipped for twelve years. Then he received a greater measure of grace, discovered that he had been worshipping the light of his soul and he turned to the Real.

Yet if visions are not really spiritual they are often met on the way to higher contemplation and Sufis describe the characteristics of these intermediary perceptions. Thus el sheikh el Senussi described seven colourings of successive ecstasies : “ Some feeble lights illumine the ecstasies of devout humanity. The passionate ecstasy is light blue, the ecstasy of the heart is flaming red, the ecstasy of the immaterial soul is yellow, the mysterious ecstasy is white, the colour of the ecstasy of obsession is that of limpid mirrors. The seventh or complete and beatific ecstasy is green and white, then changes to that of fleeting scintillation of jewels.”

Al Bistami tells us how he passed through the seven heavens with their radiant arrays of angels and colourful visions but finally arrived at the foot of the throne of glory of the Lord. Then he reached supreme contemplation. “ He

gave me to drink from the fountain of grace in the cup of fellowship and transformed me in a state beyond description, and brought me near unto Him, and so near did He bring me to Him that I became nearer to Him than the spirit is to the body, and I continued until I became even as the souls of men had been in that state before existence was, and God abode in solitude."

This is the crowning experience and attainment of Sufism, this precious mystical jewel of Islam. Like the other schools of mystical quest it has brought men to soar, with the help of Grace, from the world of division, the world of the Fall to the bosom of the Father whose kingdom is above the heavens but whose countenance the Sufi beholds everywhere.

This call to the perception of Unity, of the Tawhid, the keynote of Islam is magnificently expressed in a poem of Kuhi of Shiraz which is a fitting conclusion of this too short survey of Moslem Mysticism.

"In the market, in the cloister . . .
Only God I saw.
In the valley and on the mountain —
Only God I saw.

Him I have seen beside me oft in
tribulation,
In favour or in fortune —
only God I saw.
In prayer and fasting, in praise and in
contemplation,
In the religion of the prophet —
only God I saw.
Neither soul nor body, accident nor
substance.
Qualities nor causes. Only God I saw.
I opened my eyes, and by the light of
His face around me,
In all the eye discovered, —
only God I saw.
Like a candle, I was melting in this
fire ;
Amidst the flames outflashing, —
only God I saw.
Myself, with mine own eyes I saw
most clearly,
But when I looked with God's eyes, —
only God I saw.
I passed away into nothingness, I
vanished.
And lo ! I was the All-Living —
Only God I saw."

WAY OF ZEN¹

A KNIGHT in medieval Japan deserted his liege lord after long inner struggles, for such an action was inconceivable according to the code of knighthood. He did it because he felt an overwhelming vocation for the Zen life. Having spent some twelve years in one of the mountain monasteries, he set out on pilgrimage. Before long he encountered a knight on horseback who recognized him and made to strike him down but then decided against it as he was unwilling to sully his sword. So he just spat in the monk's face as he rode by. In the act of wiping away the

spittle, the monk realized in a flash what in former days his reaction would have been to such an insult. Deeply moved, he turned round towards the mountain area where he had done his training, bowed, and composed a poem :

The mountain is the mountain
And the Way is the same as of old.
Verily what has changed
Is my own heart.

¹ From *The Wisdom of the Zen Master*, pp. 18-19. Sheldon Press, London.

The Doctrine of the Mean

By

Murdoch Kirby

OVER a period of 600 years, until 1906, the Government examinations for the civil service in China were based on The Four Books, the recognised Classics of Confucian thought. The Doctrine of the Mean was one of these, the others were The Analects of Confucius, The Great Learning and the Book of Mencius. The Confucian outlook on mankind is not accepted in China now: his pupils were members of an educated elite and he was indicating to them what was required in an officer of the State. The rules of behaviour he taught applied to one's relatives, one's betters and one's equals — the common people could be treated as children. However, as Lin Yutang wrote in 1938, "As a political system aiming at the restoration of a feudal order, Confucianism will probably be put out of date by the developments of modern political science and economics." But he continues "as a system of humanist culture, as a fundamental viewpoint concerning the conduct of life and society, I believe it will hold its own".

The Doctrine of the Mean was so named by James Legge in his translation of 1861. It is believed to have been written by TZU SSU (483-402 B.C.), a grandson of Confucius. It is now considered that the introductory chapter and the last four or five chapters were written much later, not before the time of the First Emperor (221-206 B.C.). The name of the book in Chinese is CHUNG YUNG. *Chung* means middle, central and can include the idea of looking inwards. *Yung* means ordinary, common, universal and can include the meaning of looking outward. Feng Yulan, in his Short History of Chinese Philosophy, explains this by saying, "One cannot perfect oneself while disregarding the perfection of others. The reason is that one can develop one's nature to the utmost only

through human relationships, that is, within the sphere of society".

One of the most frequently recurring statements in this book states the first necessary step of cultivating the personal life. "The Way" it is said "is not far from man . . . in using an axe to hew an axe handle, the pattern is not far off". "In archery we have something resembling the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the centre of the target he turns around and seeks for the cause of failure within himself." "The Way may be compared to travelling to a distant place; one must start from the nearest point. It may be compared to ascending a height; one must start from below."

Cultivating the personal life had two sides to it. On the one hand it was a matter of serving one's parents and the hierarchy of Government officials and unfailingly conforming to the rules of propriety; on the other hand "Only those who are absolutely sincere can fulfil their nature." This word "sincere" is, in the Chinese, *Cheng*. James Legge says that in this context it means sincerity with a mystical significance; others have translated it as absolute truth, reality, being true to oneself and as perfection. It is not possible to suggest all the meaning in one word. "To make sincere is the Way of Heaven, to become sincere is the Way of Man. He who is sincere (or real, or perfect, or true to himself) is one who hits upon what is right without effort, and understands without thinking. He is naturally and easily in harmony with the Way."

Such a man is a sage. "He who is learning to be sincere finds out what is good and holds fast to it." "It is only he who is absolutely sincere who can develop his nature to the utmost. Able to do this he can do the same for the nature

of others. Able to do this he can do the same for the nature of all things. Able to do this he can assist the transforming and nourishing operations of Heaven and Earth. Being able to do this he can form a trinity with Heaven and Earth." "It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under Heaven who can transform others." "Therefore he who has absolute sincerity is like a spirit." "Sincerity (or perfection) is an end in itself and the Way is the only direction. Sincerity is every end and every beginning, without sincerity there would be nothing . . . sincerity is not only the completion of one's own self, it is that by which all things are completed. The completion of the self means humanity (*Jen*). The completion of all things means wisdom. These constitute the virtue (strength, power) of the nature and they are the Way through which comes the union of the inner and the outer." ". . . such being the nature of sincerity it manifests itself without being seen, it produces changes without motion, it accomplishes its ends without action."

These quotations, which are all from the chapters attributed to TZU SSU, show how Confucian thought had developed between the time of Confucius and his grandson. The "Way of Heaven" and the ideas of "spirit" or "the inner and the outer" were not considered in the Analects and the idea of *Cheng* was not discussed. This book, indeed, had an appeal outside Confucian circles and

there are both Taoist and Buddhist commentaries on it.

I will finish with the introductory chapter in the translation of Ku Hungming, "What is God-given is what we call human nature. To fulfil the law of our human nature is what we call the moral law. The cultivation of the moral law is what we call culture. The moral law is a law from whose operation we cannot for one instant in our existence escape. A law from which we may escape is not the moral law. Wherefore it is that the moral man (or the superior man) watches diligently over what his eyes cannot see and is in fear and awe of what his ears cannot hear.

"There is nothing more evident than that which cannot be seen by the eyes and nothing more palpable than that which cannot be perceived by the senses. Wherefore the moral man watches diligently over his secret thoughts.

"When the passions such as joy, anger, grief and pleasure have not awakened, that is our central self, or moral being (*chung*). When these passions awaken and each and all attain due measure and degree, that is harmony, or the moral order (*ho*). Our central self or moral being is the great basis of existence, and harmony or moral order is the universal law in the world.

"When our true central self and harmony are realised, the universe then becomes a cosmos and all things attain their full growth and development."

Dacoit

By 'Garuda'

O dacoit, if you are going to rob
this house, please take everything
with you ; I beg you, do not leave
the worthless fragments lying about,
for, knowing the servants, they will only
try to hawk them in the bazaar.

ON UNDERSTANDING

By

Wolter A. Keers

From a recorded talk with Wolter A. Keers, Editor of the Dutch Magazine, Yoga and Vedanta, published by the Foundation for Yoga and Vedanta in Haarlem, Holland.

WHEN you look deeply into yourself, you find that you are always there, always present as Conscious, Knowing Presence. You will find that you are this presence before a thought arises, during its appearance, and after its dissolution.

The better you take note of this simple fact, the more this conscious Presence will turn out to be your real home. This Home is presence, conscious Presence, drenched in something like a sense of marvel, of constant astonishment about itself—in Sanskrit they call this *Ananda*.

This Presence that never leaves you for a second is the ground of all knowledge on a mental level; just as the water is the substance of the wave, this knowing Presence is the essence of every thought, feeling or sensory perception.

Looking from this Presence, you see thoughts appear and disappear, but this presence does not change, just as water remains H₂O, whether the water flows in a river or remains still in a glass or a pitcher. The activity belongs to the waves, not to the H₂O stuff which remains quite unchanged.

Through ignorance we confuse the two. Ignorance consists of projecting onto the one what belongs to the other.

You are Life Itself, boundless, limitless, but ignorance projects it upon objects and makes you believe that your body is alive and a stone is not. In truth, the stone, the air that surrounds the body and everything else consists of nothing but Life Itself, or Consciousness, or whatever labels we may like to use.

So Ignorance, which is nothing but an odd manner of looking at things, steals the properties of Life Itself, and sticks them onto objects, so that on superficial examination one tends to believe that it is the object that lives. In reality it is Life that lives and manifests in millions of ways. Looking through small peep-holes, we are led to believe that rays of light are solid objects, but when we examine closely, we see that all that we have ever experienced in our entire life is not objects but the perception of objects. Even that is saying too much. We perceive perception, that is all. No living being since the beginning of creation has ever perceived anything outside of perception, and, therefore no one has ever experienced an object. You are free to maintain that nevertheless such objects exist; but if you do, you create a religion; you believe in what no living being has ever seen.

However, we are not here to discuss such a religion. We are here to examine what experience can show us and experience only shows us that we perceive perception and nothing outside of it.

What is a perception? A thought-form. It arises, in this conscious Presence that we are, without our doing anything for it. After a few moments it disappears, but Presence remains, Presence is there all the time.

The same mistake that we make with the projection of this One Life that we are, is also made when we believe that thought understands things. Thoughts are nothing but images and from time to time a few words. How can an image understand something? Even if it did, of what use would it be? For after half

a second the image or the words have disappeared, and their supposed understanding with them.

You are Understanding itself. You are a timeless, spaceless 'Ocean of Knowledge'. In this Ocean, images, thoughts and feelings arise and dissolve. The knowledge-stuff in every perception is the water-stuff in the wave. Thought is made out of this Knowledge, just as wind is made out of air, but what you breathe is air, not wind.

So when words are spoken about this one Experience that we are, and when you say that you have understood them, what has really happened?

If these words were initially addressed to you as an embodied being, they were of such a nature that they contained the invitation to forget the embodied being, and to listen or think. Then, when you produced an imaginary thinker in your head, these words invited you to come nearer, and see that you are not even a thinking or feeling person, but something much closer by. In that way, these words invited you to go beyond words, and then, what happened? When you were invited to look clearly at that thinker, what did you see? That he was a mere thought, like any other thought, yet another projection. Apart from that, what happened?

When you looked at that thinker or at that I-feeling or at some other temporary pseudo-I, where were you?

By the very fact of looking at the pseudo-I, you placed yourself outside of it, without any effort, just as you can look at that wall without any effort, thanks to the fact you are not that wall. In other words: between you as an observer and the wall as something observed, there is a distance.

The very same thing happens when you look at all those projected I's: I the thinker, I the active person, I the father, I the brother, I the music lover, and so on. By the mere fact that you look at them, one by one as they present themselves, and without the slightest effort, you note that a distance creates itself between the I's and you as their observer. That fact

alone, once grasped when your attention has been drawn to it by a competent teacher, dissolves the grip that such ego's had on you, and gradually they disappear. You may not even notice that they do. Months afterward you may suddenly discover that certain defences have left you, or that certain sensibilities or a certain vanity has disappeared.

During this process, you are at a distance from all these things which once seemed to bind you, and at the same time you are in them as their raw material; as the water in those waves called I-thought and I-feeling. (Ignorance is nothing but the belief that we are a body and a mind *plus* their activities).

Then, gradually, you notice that this house full of 'I'-s is virtually empty. You have deeply and profoundly understood that you are none of these ego-thoughts or feelings. What a joy, not to be an ego.

Even that is not the end. In Sanskrit the end of the process is called '*sabaja*', which means your real nature, your natural state. This implies that you must get so used to the idea and to the feeling that you are not a personality, that it becomes perfectly natural to you.

When that happens, you forget all about it, just as it is perfectly natural to you that you are not a cloud. You are so perfectly convinced of the fact that you are not a cloud, that you do not have the slightest need for even a trace of the thought "I am not a cloud".

It is only when the thought or feeling, "I am this body and mind", has disappeared along with the conviction, "I am not a body or a mind or a personality", that the real freedom reveals itself in such a manner that it remains forever, timeless and causeless.

When you said that last week or last month you understood what was said about death, it means that you, as a personality, had disappeared, and that for a few moments there was only this timeless presence which is Understanding Itself. If, afterwards, illusion came back, and thought came back to tell you that you as a thinker with a memory had not

understood what was said, this statement is of course perfectly true. No thinker understands even one thought. How can one thought understand another thought?

When you said that you understand it or you understood it, it means that you accepted

the invitation of the words spoken and the gestures made, and perhaps of something else, and you plunged deeply within yourself, beyond thought and feeling. For a moment you were Understanding Itself. That is what the words, 'I understood', mean.

The Wonder of Ramana

By IRA

What a wonder is this, our blessed Ramana !
 Showing himself here is this pure Dravidian child,
 Choosing for his unmatched revelation
 The mind and body of one
 Born on the threshold of Perfection !

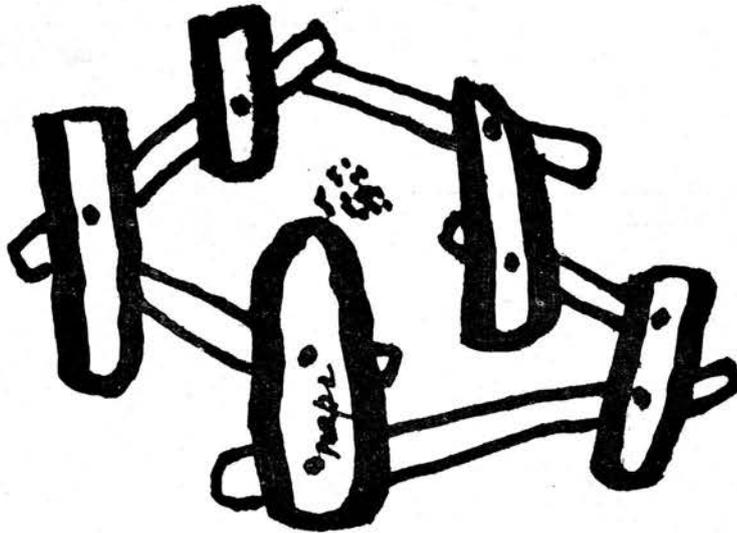
For while the vast multitude about us
 Spend their lives in legion
 Squirming beneath the eye of Death
 Ever viewing the exhaustion of their pleasure
 With confusion, fear and dread,
 Here a gentle youth alone has turned
 To face the Phantom Bane of all who live !

What a wonder is this, our blessed Ramana !
 Who, casting without hesitation, name and form
 Into the Fire of Pure Inquiry,
 Found the flames to be the play of Joy,
 Found the smoke of the all-consuming Fire
 To be the breath of Life.

What a wonder is this, our blessed Ramana !
 Who, with one hand, lifted up upon the earth
 The Ancient Hill of Light, Aged Beyond Memory,
 Mighty Rock of Silent Knowledge,
 And with the other, put into the world this tender child,
 To play beneath the sun for a few seasons ;

And then, bringing the one to the other,
 Resided there for the benefit of all,
 The Lord of the Mountain,
 Holding his Self-Born Son
 Deep within the cavern of his Heart !

What a wonder is this, our blessed Ramana !
 What a wonder and glory is this,
 To all who look within to see.



You come upon a fenced-in
pile of dirt
and a loud speaker blasting :

“ This special pile
to be kept apart
from all other dirt ”

You think someone has gone
mad. Exactly.
The human race has gone mad
isolating their piles of dirt.
This calls for a new orienting.
No persons as apart.
Mind apartness makes
aggregates mad.
Let the winds of dirtless you.
attend to this.

O dear one
eagle and swallow
ride my backs
fingers of LIGHT
play through
these fingers
freely

f
e r e
l
y

You are reading these
self disturbing words

now
f l y

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

By

Gladys Dehm

SPIRITUALLY, we are all Semites,' stated Holy Pope Pius XI in 1938.

This beautiful truth is discernible to one who has transcended the literal interpretation of Sacred Scripture.

Religion possesses both an exoteric and esoteric meaning. When the 'outer' veils have been removed, the 'inner' IS.

Judaism believes that the Old Testament contains 'inspired' works, and the Pentateuch or the Five Books of Moses, are direct revelations of God to Moses, who is placed above all other prophets, for it is to him that 'The Lord spake face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.' (Ex. 33-11)

This Revelation to Moses is the *Torah*. Pious Jewish homes have a passage from the Torah inscribed on a strip of parchment, and put into a capsule, the *mezuzah*. This is usually placed at the home entrance, on the doorpost.

Christianity has undergone many Reformations. Consequently there are many Christian denominations whose creeds vary, but its roots are firmly planted in the Old Testament, which the Church also believes to be 'inspired works.'

Moses Maimonides, a great Jewish philosopher, born in 1135, is recognized as one of the most eminent of Talmudists. He was also a mystic whose metaphysical insights illumined Judaism. He was a physician, as his family had been before him for seven generations. He regarded the Torah as being the outer observance which uplifts the purified soul, which then becomes endowed with a 'true intellectual love of God' and ultimately attains 'communion with God'.

The thirteen dogmas of Judaism, as elucidated by Maimonides, are :

1. God is the Creator of all things, therefore the First Article of Faith is that God exists.
2. The Unity of God : This Unity possesses a unique quality.
3. God is Incorporeal : God is without form.
4. God is Eternal : He is from Everlasting to Everlasting.
5. God alone is to be worshipped : To Him alone is adoration due.
6. The truth of Prophecy : The Orthodox view is that God communicates with man. Maimonides taught that Prophecy could through "intellectual love attain communion with God".
7. Moses stands above other prophets : for Moses alone received the WORD from God : The Pentateuch, therefore, remains the Law.
8. The Revelation given to Moses by God is TORAH. This Law is binding and forms the foundation of traditional Judaism. It is heresy to dispute Torah.
9. Because Torah is the Word of God, It is Immutable. The Wisdom of God, revealed therein, cannot undergo any change.
10. God possesses all Knowledge ; therefore God is Omniscient. Nothing is hidden from Him. He alone knows all.
11. Individuals are subject to reward or punishment, according to the nature of their deeds.
12. Belief in the coming of the Messiah. This is seen on a historical, social level. Israel will be liberated from all persecutions, trials, tribulations. The Davidic Dynasty will be restored — the temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

Thus will the 'children of Israel' be freed by the Messiah. Evil will be overcome, *here on earth*. Maimonides had a vision of the Messiah which placed the above-mentioned events on one level, but this background would provide the perfect peace and harmony which gives the soul wings of contemplative powers, where mystical communion with God takes place.

13. The Resurrection of the dead. This is an essential dogma of Judaism. The Kabbalah signifies 'esoteric tradition'.

Although Judaism may appear to be an extrovert Religion, mysticism is there.

'En Sof' is the term given by Kabbalistic teaching to express the 'Infinite'. So secret is 'En Sof' that It remains beyond mental prayer, contemplation or any kind of intellectual reasoning. It cannot be 'expressed' — but must remain an unwritten Mystery. The Zohar is the most important text of the Kabbalah and its mystical truths are only for the elite to comprehend. When the radiant core of concentrated energy propels Itself from the constricting power of 'En Sof', luminous irradiation has begun. Thus from the secret confines of 'divine Non-Being' emanates the 'divine Being'. The totality of these Sacred Emanations is known as Sefiroth. The sixth Sefirah is called 'Tifereth', the tenth Sefirah is Malkhuh or 'Shekinah'.

The sixth Sefirah forms the Centre, the heart of the entire system. Embodying dynamic energy, it has male symbols, such as Bridegroom, King and so on. The tenth Sefirah, which functions on the lower rung, is Malkhuh — its symbols are receptive, a womb, the Moon, Queen and Bride.

The Mystery of the Kabbalah is the 'Union' or 'Sacred Wedding' between the feminine and masculine aspects unfolded above. The polarities unite, thus asserting the Unity of God.

The Jewish mystic *seeks* communion with God by leading a pure life and by contemplation. The Jewish mystic is *not united* with the

Godhead, as are mystics of other Religions. The Christian mystic, Meister Eckhart, for example, speaks of 'Divine Union with the Beloved'.

Hasidism, introduced by Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tob, in the 18th century, holds a prominent place in Jewish esoteric teaching. The true grandeur of Judaism has been proven through the centuries by the extraordinary faith and spiritual courage of her 'Children'.

The Church of Rome is aware of the terrible injustices inflicted on the Jewish people. Pope John XXIII, in 1959, ordered that the words 'perfidia Judaica' and the 'Perfides' be struck out of the Good Friday Roman Catholic Services all around the globe. Pope John XXIII further instructed that neither the Jewish people of Jesus' lifetime, nor the present day Jews, were to be deemed guilty of Jesus' death. Instead, the blame was to be shared by the *whole* of mankind. This beautiful declaration of Pope John XXIII may here be set down :

'We are conscious now that many, many decades of blindness has caused a veil to fall before our eyes, so that we no longer see the beauty of Thy Chosen People, and no longer recognize in their features those of our first-born brother. We are conscious that the mark of Cain is branded upon our brow. For centuries Abel has lain in blood and tears because we have not remembered Thy divine Love. We ask forgiveness for the unjust words we have pronounced so wrongly upon the children of Israel. We beg Thy forgiveness, for by doing so, we have crucified Thee a second time.'

The whole Bible is considered Sacred Scripture by the Church of Rome. Catholics are taught the tenets of the Ten Commandments given to Moses by God. (Deut. 5 : 6-22). The Mother Church in Rome is 'Catholic', meaning 'Universal'; and seeks to follow as closely as possible in the steps of Jesus Christ, true God and true man, and to pull down barriers which divide mankind. The Ecumenical Movement is proof of this desire to 'understand more', to draw closer towards peace and harmony.

The Church teaches that there is One, Eternal, Infinite God. He is Creator of all things visible and invisible. The Blessed Trinity is a Sacred Mystery. Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one God-head. The three are substantially identical — They are One Being. Jesus Christ is both true man and true God. The 'Word' was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. Thus Jesus the man and Christ are ONE. He is the God-man. His words: 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect', were truly meant for all mankind. He taught the two Precepts of Charity: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength'.

'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Those who 'walk with truth' sow unity. So, in this lovely Psalm 133 of David, may Judaism and Christianity sing with one voice:

'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments.

'As the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.'

THE GREAT LAMP¹

.....

By Grant Duff (Douglas Ainslie)

A lamp is shining in a lofty room,
 Shedding its golden rays on all who enter,
 And everywhere it shines, nor is there any gloom.
 Two glasses stand on the table in the centre
 Of this great room, whereof one glass is void,
 Brimful the other, now to be enjoyed,
 Making with glass and lamplight a reflection
 Substantial, discrete, as though without connection.
 A seeming separate life hath thus this light
 Of threefold mingling where the three unite —
 Glass, water, shining — but the light is gone
 Once the glass emptied, though the lamp shines on.
 Now fill we from the full the empty glass
 And all the moving of the first will pass
 Into the second glass its foster-brother,
 Dull, restless, shining bright, as once that other.
 Behold the meaning: the great lamp on high
 Is God himself, existence infinite,
 The glasses are our bodies sunk in sense,
 Water the mind, soul the reflected light.
 The glass outpoured is the soul's passage hence
 To another form; and, when grown wise we try
 To burn the water, will enjoyments cease;
 When all are burned, then comes at last release.
 Far have we wandered who are one with God:
 So were we ever, but false paths have trod.

¹ taken from *Chosen Poems* by Douglas Ainslie. Pub. Leonard and Virginia Woolf, in 1926.

A PARABLE

By
A Disciple of
Dilip Kumar Roy

TODAY Indira Devi (Ma) sang the song "Man karta hai phir ek baar" written by her twenty years ago. When Dilip Kumar Roy (Dadaji) saw the harmonium in front of her he commented, "I am glad you have decided to sing. Your voice has become very sweet these days". When Ma told him which song she was going to sing, he expressed his happiness at her choice. Ma sang the song with deep emotion and fervour. It was as if she was carried away from the world around her. Tears of joy were streaming down her cheeks and her face glowed with a light of ecstasy.

After she had finished the song, the harmonium was put away. Then the others began to sing "Jai Gopal, Jai Govind", but Ma was in a state of *bhava-samadhi*, quite oblivious of her surroundings.

When the song was finished, she said "I can still hear the flute." Dadaji said: "It seems then that we can both hear the flute in unison. We are both hearing the flute. You are all singing together and we are hearing the flute together." Ma said: "I can hear the flute through every pore of my body", and tears of bliss rolled down her cheeks. Then she said: "You know, Dadaji, what happened last night?"

... Every morning at dawn He would play the flute at three in the morning. Everyone said: "How silly that He should play the flute so early in the morning. We have so many other things to do, and He wakes us up at this unearthly hour with His flute call! How I wish He would play a little later or let Him not play one day so that we all may rest."

"And this morning when I got up... when she got up... when they got up, we realised that something terrible had happened.

We could not understand what it was. I could also feel that something terrible had happened. Then I realised that I had overslept and not heard His flute-call. How lifeless everything was now! And I again had this strong feeling that something terrible had happened. Was it only I who had not heard the flute or did He not play the flute at all?

"Then I came out. Nobody said anything. They were all looking bewildered with dishevelled hair as if they had just got up from sleep. Nobody had heard the flute, but nobody had the courage to say, for fear that maybe He had played but they had overslept. But everyone felt that something terrible had happened, but each one waited for the other to say what it was.

"Finally, one Gopi said that she *had not* heard the flute-call in the morning. Then they all started weeping and confessed that none of them had heard the flute-call. Then I said... then she said... then they said; "Why did we ever tell Him not to play at this ungodly hour? Now we can't go to work because He is not there? We should never have asked Him not to play so early in the morning. His time should be our time. Whenever He calls we should answer. I was... she was... we were downcast and we did not know what to do.

"Then suddenly, they saw Radharani sitting on one side in meditation. They all ran up to her and asked her if she had heard the flute. She sat absolutely still, but the flute was playing through every pore of her body!

"Finished! Then there is nothing more."

Dadaji said: "The parable is very beautiful and significant. His flute-call is not heard simply as a charming melody. It is His move-

ment in our soul, which thirsts for His touch but doesn't know its import. When we hear the flute we become conscious of the thirst. But at the same time, we fear that we may lose all we cherish on earth. So we say that He should stop playing the flute, especially when we are preoccupied or prefer to sleep. He smiles and stops playing, but then, at last,

the soul becomes conscious of a void. It feels disconsolate and implores Him to play again and at any time He likes. We ought to answer whenever He chooses to call us, and when we do respond, we taste His grace and the joy of self-surrender. If we fail to answer His call, we stay where we were, trapped in our world of maya and make-believe."

REVIVAL

.....

By

Behroz Padmasee

Upon my back I lie
Looking into the sky
While blood streams through
The climates of the mind.

Miles and miles it stretches,
A world on its own ;
Bright, blue and lonely,
From the vast Unknown

Thoughts like clouds drift by.
And I glimpse You, think of You.

God, only You can tell
Why each atom has its own
Heaven and Hell
Within its little life.

In these casual flares and gleams
The face of God shines through.

THE EGO

.....

By Ira

The ego, in its desperation for survival, goes so far as to make even the concept of itself (the idea of a limited, embodied person) an object of thought, thereby creating the illusion that it has been apprehended.

The seeker thus deluded might spend a lifetime scrutinizing and studying his captive prize. But he must eventually ask, 'Who is he that has so admirably apprehended the ego?'

Thus will he see how his captive ego is a decoy only, and the real culprit exists still, strengthened even, by a new invisibility.

Dialogue with Mr. Wu

A Rose

By

Wei Wu Wei

Good morning, Mr. Wu! And what a lovely view!

May I congratulate you, Madame!

On what, Mr. Wu?

On experiencing a good morning, Madame, and a lovely view.

How kind and gracious you are, Mr. Wu, but should we not rather thank the Almighty?

By all means, Madame, whichever attribution you prefer.

But, Mr. Wu, the Almighty is responsible!

Yes, indeed, Madame, as you please, A rose by any other name’ as the great poet pointed out.

You are too kind, Mr. Wu, but I only see it!

And the Almighty is only Looking, Madame, but for a moment you were Looking also — and then there was no difference.

No difference between my looking and that of the Almighty, Mr. Wu?

None whatever, Madame; when you Look as one, no difference can be.

But how can that be so, Mr. Wu?

As the great Buddha pointed out: there is no difference between Samsāra and Nirvāna.

Yes, indeed, Mr. Wu, the Buddha said that, but how can it be?

There are no ‘things’ to be different, Madame, for they are only conceptual phenomena ‘experienced’ in mind.

So ‘difference’ lies in ‘seeing’, Mr. Wu, but not in ‘looking’?

‘Looking’ directly, Madame, from Whole-Mind, needs no ‘seeing’: Looking indirectly, via divided and relative mind, only ‘sees’.

LOVE

By

Ramesh V. Padnis

Oh, what joy to find oneself
suddenly
in the land of ‘I’-lessness
on the path of the eternal
not with the stick of experience
but with the grace of emptiness
which is not nothingness
but wholeness!

The Ashtavakra Gita

By
K. Padmanabhan

IN the *Ashtavakra Gita* we have the teachings of Sage Ashtavakra to King Janaka, who being in the very midst of the world, perceiving all objects, conscious of all feelings, and discharging his duties as Ruler, realised the eternal — the Self.

These teachings convey in a nutshell the whole Advaitic truth.

1. In this Gita, we find straightaway Experience predominating over reason or theoretical knowledge. The core of *Advaita Vedanta* — the *Ajāta Vada*, that the Universe is not created in the Absolute, but that they are one and the same, is expounded. Whatever exists is nothing but this very Self — the Brahman. The eternal Self is to be realised here and now, and there is no question of acceptance, dissolution, aversion or renunciation of the universe.

2. Efface the ego, get above all distinctions and desires, shun the senses, be kind, sincere, unattached and content, and seek forgiveness with total surrender at every stage, so as to liberate yourself from the bondage of ignorance and have desire for *Chit* alone.

3. With the usual examples of (a) the mirror existing within and without the image reflected in it; (b) the same all-pervading ether existing inside and outside a jar; (c) the oneness of the waves of the ocean; (d) oneness of the thread and the cloth; (e) sugar in sugarcane juice; (f) the disappearance of the illusion of the snake with the recognition of the rope; (g) appearance of silver in the mother-of-pearl; (h) the jug dissolving into earth; (i) the bracelet dissolving into gold; the immutability of the eternal, all-pervasive Brahman is brought home.

4. Duality is the source of misery, that the Triad — *jnanam* (knowledge), *jneyam* (object known) and *jnata* (knower) — appears only through ignorance, that limitations experienced are all imaginations and all these are but the illusions of the mind.

5. Ignorance of the Self is the cause for greed, attachment to the objects of illusory perception, sense of ownership, anger and fear. It is detachment of the mind from worldly objects, absolute desirelessness, alone that can take one beyond the pairs of opposites. The entire complex, mind, body, intellect, senses, is to be transcended and a total awareness of the mind, the state of Dissolution or the State of Absoluteness, reached. With the awakening of the real Self, there would be no 'I', there would be freedom from 'liberation'. With the recognition that I am none other than the Self, and that all beings are one, there would be equipoise of the mind, the state of the *sthitaprajna*.

6. Complete indifference to the world and equanimity and reasoning will bring true knowledge, pure or transcendental consciousness and take one beyond the miseries which are transient, unsubstantial and contemptible.

7. Running away from home to become a *sanyasin* for doing *tapas* is escapism and would lead you nowhere. One has to eschew desire, the root cause of the world and it is this *vāsanatyāga*, the state of absolute desirelessness that would give one the needed equipoise of the mind, towards liberation.

8. Realise that the Universe is *jadam* and *asat* (Inert and unreal) 'and that any desire rising therein could only be apparent,

9. Existence, Non-existence and change are all natural, i.e. they are in the nature of things.

Contentment, with all senses under control, not desiring and grieving, but taking prosperity and adversity as they come, is essential for a peaceful mind.

10. It is only when one realises that destiny is all powerful in all actions and desires, and also in all sufferings and happiness, one can efface the ego and develop non-attachment, becoming inwardly inactive, though engaged in action. One attains the state of Absoluteness (*Kaivalyam*) freed from the conflict of thought, and becomes pure and peaceful. One becomes Intelligence itself, There is one-pointed mind freed of even the very desire for liberation.

11. Liberation is defined as 'Distaste for sense objects' and bondage is defined as 'Love for sense objects'. Love and hatred are attributes of the mind and the mind is never yours. With full faith and realisation that you are knowledge itself, — pure-intelligence you find the body changing and the Self changeless.

12. In addition to contentment and purified senses, solitude is essential to know the Truth and become one with it as Intelligence or Consciousness.

13. This universe is only a state of Consciousness, — an idea. It is not real. But the absolute, effortless and pure Self is neither limited nor far away from you. The Self (*Brahman*) is free and eternal and 'is ever attained. Concentration and control of the

mind do not help. Knowledge depending on the object and control of the mind towards an objective, would lead you nowhere. Repeated practice is an activity and is to be eschewed. Stand free through mere knowledge, beyond all doubts and modifications (manifestations) of the mind, and know the truth. Even running after Peace is a desire and an action. Be above this and be of tranquil mind. Transcend all thoughts, abide in the Self and have repose and solace.

14. Be active if you must, but do not get perturbed. It is the unwise that get agitated with the slightest distraction. In the case of the deluded one, even inaction (*nivritti*) becomes action, but with the wise even action (*pravritti*) results in the repose of inaction. Nothing exists in Pure Consciousness. The wise one, the one of Pure Consciousness, is not bothered by any rule of conduct, dispassion, renunciation or restraint of the senses. These are unreal to him as he is no objective reality, being the Inexpressible Self himself.

15. The Self is beyond all expression — beyond mind and speech. How and to whom can it be described? The Self-experienced one rests in the Self under all conditions and without any reflections.

16. The Impersonal, the non-dual essence, the Liberated or the Experiencer of the Self is above all thoughts, the thoughts of bondage and emancipation.

ROOTS OF MY BEING

By

Ramesh V. Padnis

The roots of my being are drying fast.
I am dying slowly, but surely.
Let me brush aside the burden of beliefs
 bewildering
and reach the springs of silence
ere the hardening of the heart sets in
and the music of the mind dies out.

The Field and the Knower of the Field

By

Sq. Ldr. N. Vasudevan

“**I**N Thee, O Hill of Consciousness, the picture of the universe is formed, has its stay, and is dissolved, this is the Sublime Truth. Thou art the inner Self, who pulses in the Heart as ‘I’. (*Five Stanzas to Sri Arunachala* — Sri Ramana Maharshi)

“Know Me (Pure Consciousness) as the knower of the field in all fields, O Arjuna. The knowledge of the field and its knower, I regard as true knowledge.” (*Gita*, 13.2)

Man is *MAN*, his true *Existence* being the ‘REAL NOW’. “You are the *Atma* (Pure Consciousness) and that *sakshat* (here and now) also,” says Sri Ramana Maharshi. (Page 634, *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*). When man holds on to the ‘REAL NOW’, he will realise that the physical universe is concrete *imagings* ranged about the I-pulse.

‘REAL NOW’ is ‘REAL NOW’ without space-time limitations or objectivisation. It is Pure Consciousness, as there is nothing other than IT. IT must be SELF-CONSCIOUS, having omnific, omniform, omniscient and omnigenous Intelligence. In humans, as we know it, the Intelligence of the ‘REAL NOW’ is in the form of ‘I’-pulses which is nothing other than a series of short bursts of Conscious Energy, separated by short periods of ‘no-burst’ states. “He who turns inward with untroubled mind to search where the consciousness of ‘I’ arises, he realises the Self, and rests in Thee, O Hill of pure Consciousness, as does a river when it joins the ocean.” (*Five Stanzas to Sri Arunachala*—Sri Ramana Maharshi)

Intelligence

Intelligence by pulse-technique is used for very fast transfer of information from data sensors into digital computers. Pulse-technique

is also used in many communication systems, such as command guidance in code form between ground and airborne vehicles, data transfer between satellites and ground listening stations, and many others requiring rapid data transfer. Our own system of speech communication is a very poor means indeed, restricted to a very limited field. It is hardly intelligence transfer; it is a mere expression of the imagings created by an objectivised mini-mode mind. Hence pure intelligence is pure I-sense and it is the same as the Intelligence of the ‘REAL NOW’ or Pure Consciousness. “The real ‘I’ is “I am That I Am.” (*Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, p. 164)

Field

The region in which the Conscious Energy pulsates (for example, the ‘I(-pulse) is the *Field*. The Field is subject to the ‘silent or steady influence’ of the Pure Conscious Energy (*sattva* in Sanskrit) and the changing influences of the pulsating Intelligence (*rajas* and *tamas*). These influences interact all the time. The interacting influences help in the *pulse-shaping* to make the overall characteristics of the Field in harmony with Pure Consciousness or Absolute Consciousness. Localised eddies may be out of phase with the steady influence (*sattva*).

Modes

The interacting influences in the Field can be categorised in three modes. (The Sanskrit word used in the *Gita* is *guna*. According to Anandagiri, “*gunas* are the primary constituents of nature or Field and are bases of all substances.” They are called *gunas* because they are ever dependent on Pure Consciousness.) The first, termed the mode of purity (*sattva*), is the steady and unadulterated

influence of Pure Consciousness. Its intelligence (in human's I-sense) is one with the Supreme Intelligence. The second, termed the mode of subjective pastness, (*rajas*) is the *compresence* of interacting influences or energy states which are part of the geo-history of the field. In this mode, events in subjective pastness (all occurrences including the mind, the body and the external world) are ranged about the I-pulse in subjective pastness, the sun about light minutes and the stars of the order of light years, and these are ranged about a common centre such as the I-pulse and create illusion of individual or *unitive complex* of *compresence*. There are several unitive complexes of *compresence*, in this mode, such as man, rat, fly, spider, stars, etc., and perhaps beings beyond the spectrum of human intelligence with their own processed *imagings*, their universes. The third, the mode of mineness (*tamas*), is the apparent illusion created by the world of *imagings* that they are real and that they should be used for one's pleasure. In this mode, man strives to make other objects 'mine'. "The three modes (*gunas*), purity, subjective pastness, and mineness born of the Field (i.e. influences in the Field) bind down in the body, O Arjuna, the imperishable dweller in the body." (*Gita*, 5, 14)

The Pure Consciousness and ITS Field form the Absolute Complex of *Compresence*. How are we to conceive this "As that which is." ? (*Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, page 42)

Transcendence

A human being, in a physical sense, is part of the geo-history of the Field. His only link with Reality or Pure Consciousness is through the pure I-sense. When the I-sense is modulated by the modes, man becomes divorced from Reality. To realise one's own True Nature (which IS Pure Consciousness), man has to transcend the interacting influences of the Field. "When the seer clearly understands that there is no agent (or doer) apart

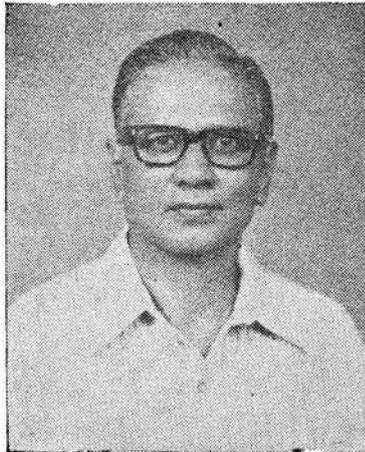
from the modes and knows also that which is beyond the modes (Self or Pure Consciousness), he attains to My Being" (which is the 'REAL NOW'). (*Gita*, 14.19) Sri Ramana Maharshi sings in praise of the Hill of Pure Consciousness: "If, like a gem when it is cut and polished, the impure mind (i.e. the intelligence influenced by modes and *imagings*) is worked against the wheel of the pure mind (i.e. the Pure I-sense which is one with the Supreme Intelligence) to free it of its flaws, it will take on the light of Thy Grace (Grace of Pure Consciousness) and shine like a ruby whose fire is unaffected by any outward object . . ." (*Eight Stanzas to Sri Arunachala*). Arjuna asks Sri Krishna: "By what marks is he, O Lord, who has risen above the three modes characterised? What is his way of life? How does he get beyond the three modes?" (*Gita*, 14.21) Krishna replies: "When light (of pure awareness), activity (in subjective pastness) and delusion (of mineness) come, he is not averse to them; nor does he long for them when they do not come." (*Gita*, 14.22) "Like an aloof witness, he is not disturbed by the *gunas*; he stays unperturbed knowing that action arises from the modes." (*Gita*, 14.23) "He is unaffected by pain and pleasure, firmly established in the Self, and looks upon a clod, a stone, a piece of gold as of equal worth. He regards alike the pleasant and the unpleasant, censure and praise." (*Gita*, 14.24) "He who is the same in honour and dishonour and the same to friend and foe, and has given up the delusion that he is the initiator of actions, he is said to have transcended the modes." (*Gita*, 14.25) "He who serves Me with unflinching devotion, rises above the three modes, he too is fit for becoming Pure Conscious Energy." (*Gita*, 14.26) "For I (the I-sense which is one with the Supreme Intelligence) am the manifestation of Pure Conscious Energy, the Immortal and the Imperishable, of Eternal Law (of ALL-THAT-IS) and of absolute bliss." (*Gita*, 14.27)

How Bhagavan Came to Me

By

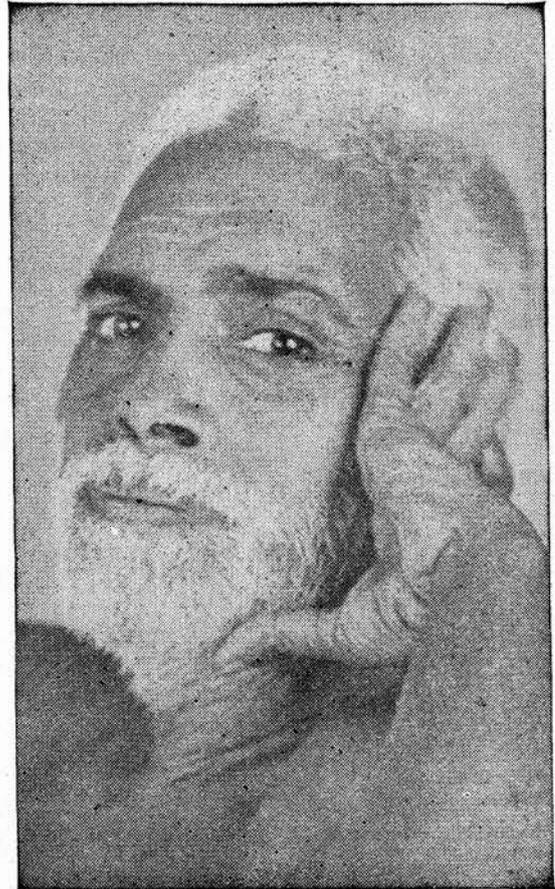
Dr. B. V. Reddy

YEARS ago I attended a series of talks on religion initiated by well-known spiritual leaders but honestly, I never listened, as I was not really interested in them. I had never read any book on religion in my life so far. However, prior to my visit to Sri Ramanasramam, I casually glanced through a book edited by that fine soul — Arthur Osborne. I decided, then and there that during my next overseas visit I should communicate the great message of Bhagavan to others though my knowledge of Bhagavan and his message was very little.



Dr. B. V. Reddy

About ten years ago, I was attracted to a particular photo of Bhagavan in the Woodlands Hotel, Madras, an exact copy of which I have with me now, presented by the President of Sri Ramanasramam, during my first visit on March 14th, 1974. The trip was not really planned but my good wife and I just drove to the Holy place. Though it looked so casual, I see now that we had been called by



Him. Nothing particular to report happened at the Ashram ; but early morning I climbed up the Arunachala Hill, virtually unconscious of the steps on the Hill.

It was only after my return to Madras that I was able to appreciate in a way the grandeur of Bhagavan's Message. Simple, humble, spontaneous, indifferent to externals,

beyond any sense of differentiation, with no pretences, ever loving, ever peaceful and graceful, so natural He was. And yet no question was unanswered, either by look, touch or a few illuminating words. He must have been a spiritual giant embracing the whole world with his supreme love.

I have a photo of Bhagavan in my meditation room and the more I look at it, the more I feel that He does speak to me, solve all my problems and comfort me in every way. What more is there to wish for?

We have only to turn our attention to Him. Such plenitude of Grace, so easily got!

What has been considered hitherto as the most difficult path, Bhagavan Ramana has made this direct path of Self-enquiry easy to follow, without the need of any elaborate religious practices or rituals. Difficult it would certainly look if we behave as strangers to our very Self.

It would appear that once you approach Him sincerely, HE takes over the reigns, gradually turning our mind towards the SELF, irrespective of time, space and religion and enables us to cast away our old skin of imperfections just as a snake sheds its slough. You begin to recognize His unique superiority and totally surrender yourself at His glorious Feet.

PRAYER

.....

By **Matrubhutam**

1. Lord Ramana, we bow to thee
Bless us with devotion pure
To think of you at all times,
Enjoying everlasting bliss.
 2. May Your lustrous eyes divine
And charming smile give strength and
courage
To pilgrims on the Mountain Path,
And make each moment a new Life.
 3. Make us humble and sincere
And ever more to you devoted.
May Your care and Loving Kindness,
Your Grace, sustain our every breath.
 4. Complete surrender to Your Feet
Brings peace and prosperity alike.
Bless us, Ramana, with the light
Of Your Presence in our heart.
-

STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA—XV

STORY OF SIKHIDHVAJA AND CHUDALA—(Contd.)

.....
Translated from Sanskrit by

M. C. Subramanian

Vasishtha continued :

QUEEN CHUDALA acquired supernatural powers by long and constant (yogic) practices. She could now travel through space, penetrate the depths of the ocean and wander about the world, calm as the Ganges. Whenever she embraced her husband she was thinking of the means of enlightening him. She taught him Self-knowledge diligently and repeatedly just as a father teaches his young son. But he could not find repose in the Self, just as one perfect pearl cannot remain on the top of another. Nor could he understand her, just as a child does not (easily) understand what he is taught. She did not show her supernatural powers to him, just as one does not show a Sudra how to perform a sacrifice.

At this stage, Rama asked Vasishtha : If Sikhidvaja could not learn yoga even when he was diligently taught by such an expert, how can others learn it ?

Vasishtha replied : Following the customary method of teaching is only for preserving the tradition. Pure Awareness results only from the clarity of the disciple's understanding.

Rama asked again : If that is so, what is the customary method of teaching Self-Knowledge ?

Vasishtha replied : (Once upon a time) there was a rich and miserly merchant living with his family along with brahmins and others in a valley of the Vindhya Mountain. Once, while travelling through the forest, he happened to lose a *varatika* (a small coin) at a place where the grass grew thick. As he was a miser, he searched for it all over the place for three days. In the end, he got from a thorny thicket the wonderful wish-fulfilling gem (*chintamani*) which shone like the full Moon. While searching day and night for a small coin he got a jewel worth the whole world.

Similarly, one who is instructed properly attains Self-knowledge. One seeks something taught by the Guru and obtains something else. Just as the search for the coin led to the discovery of the jewel, so also the Guru's teaching, though not the direct cause, results in the realization of the most valuable truth.

Now King Sikhidvaja was extremely confused as he could not realize the Truth. He was like people in the dark. His mind was scorched, as it were, by the fire of frustration (*dubkha*) and he could not find any pleasure even from the objects which were dear to him. He bestowed alms in plenty, visited holy places, practised austerities like *kricbra* and travelled extensively, but he could not attain freedom from sorrow. Poor man, he was always immersed in thought. His kingdom was like poison to him. Then one day when Chudala was sitting on his lap, he spoke to her.

He said : I have enjoyed for a long time the kingdom and all kinds of good things. I have now lost interest in them and am therefore going to the forest. Joys and sorrows and prosperity and adversity do not affect a hermit living in the forest. There is no fear of losing a kingdom or soldiers in a battle. I think that the forest life is happier than the possession of a kingdom. The mind becomes pure in a quiet and solitary place even better than in the worlds of the Moon or Brahma or Indra. Please do not stand in my way. Noble women never disregard the wishes of their husbands.

Chudala then told him : This is the time for action. Flowers should bloom in spring and fruits appear in autumn. A forest life is suitable for those who are old, not for young people like you.

Sikhidvaja said : Please do not stop me. Imagine that I am already in a remote part of the forest. You are young and fair. You should

not therefore come with me, for a forest life is hard even for men. You must remain here ruling the kingdom. It is the duty of faithful wives to look after their families during the absence of their husbands.

Vasishtha continued : Having said this, the king left her and attended to his daily work. Soon, the sun set and the movements of people ceased. Sikhidvaja spent the early part of the night with Chudala and then retired with her to his bed. He slept just as the Mainaka Mountain sleeps in the sea. But at midnight when there was silence everywhere and all people were asleep he left his sleeping wife and came out. He told the guard that he was going out on a kingly mission and passed out of the bounds of the city. He left the Kingdom with the words, "O Prosperity, I salute (say goodbye to) you", and entered a dense forest just as a river enters the sea. He travelled ten days and ten nights and passed through several countries, rivers and mountains. Finally, he reached a forest near the Mandara Mountain remote from the dwellings of men. It was full of trees which stood on the banks of lakes and noisy rivulets. There were some relics of sacrificial pits which showed that the place was once a hermitage (ashram) of brahmins. There were no wild animals. There were arbours which were used by Siddhas (supernatural beings). He erected a hut of leaves and grass and collected what was necessary for practising austerities such as a good bamboo staff, a plate to eat fruits, a waterpot, a flower basket, a rosary of beads, a *kamandalu* (a small waterpot with a spout carried by ascetics), an old cloth to protect himself from the cold and a deer skin to sit upon. In the early hours of the morning, he offered the customary prayers and repeated mantras (japa). Afterwards, he collected flowers, took his bath and worshipped God. He then ate some edible roots and herbs and again repeated the mantras. In this manner he spent the first day.

Now, listen to what Chudala was doing in the palace. Soon after the departure of the King, she woke up in fear and saw her husband's bed unoccupied. She felt sad and lonely like a big creeper which had been deprived of its support. She sat upon her bed

and thought for a moment. She said to herself : "What a pity that the King has forsaken his kingdom and palace and gone to the forest ! Why should I remain here ? I shall go to him. The scriptures say that a woman's place is by her husband's side." Having come to this conclusion, Chudala passed out through her window and rose up into the sky. The Siddhas who saw her thought that she was a second moon. She imagined that she would find her husband in the dress in which he used to go out at night with his sword. She foresaw everything that would happen to him in the future and in order to bring it about, she descended from the sky. She said to herself : "I must go to him after a long time, not now. This is what is ordained". And re-entering her apartment she lay down on her bed and slept. She now looked like a crescent moon in the sky.

In the morning she told her subjects that the King had gone on some mission and began to rule the kingdom justly. Days, fortnights, months and years passed. For no less than eighteen years Chudala remained in the kingdom while the King was away in the forest. She then said to herself : "It is now time to go to my husband" and accordingly decided to go to the precincts of the Mandara Mountain. She left her apartment one night and, travelling through the sky, arrived at the mountain cave. Then, unseen by the King, she went to another forest and, by her yogic powers, woke up the King who was looking a different person altogether with no garlands or bracelets or armlet or ear-rings. He had become thin, dark and old. Chudala felt a little sad when she saw him. She said to herself : "It is a pity that even learned people arrive at this mad state on account of their ignorance. I must surely enlighten my husband and make him attain liberation. I shall go to him disguised as a stranger and teach him the supreme state. He will not otherwise listen to me thinking that I am only a woman and his wife. I shall disguise myself as an ascetic and enlighten him quickly. His mind is now pure and free from bad impressions (*Kashaya*). It will now readily reflect Self-Knowledge".

(To be continued)

Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR
Translated from Tamil by
Professor K. Swaminathan

633.

Instead of yearning free of thought
For the grace of God, our true salvation,
What does one gain by the 'I' that rises
Strenuous, aspiring?
Let us forget this demon 'I'
And as the Self abide in silence.

634.

Not at all by one's own effort
But by the light of Grace alone,
Pure gift of God supreme, can one
Behold the light that shines in darkness,
The bliss of Being Awareness true
Even mid the darkness of the world.

635.

When one who does not know one's own
True being, the basis of all Knowing,
Beholds the world and deems it real,
The world beheld laughs inwardly
And puts to shame this misbeholder.

636.

Only in and by Awareness —
Never without it — objects shine.
All things we behold are held
In the orbit of that knowledge
Which as remembrance and forgetting
Flickers in the Heart.

637.

Appearance proves that something is,
no more.
Wrong it would be to conclude that what
In it the senses seize exhausts
Its real being and substance.

638.

If instead of looking outward
At objects you look at this looking,
All that abides is I, the seer.
Knowledge of objects is mere illusion.

639.

If seer and object differ in being
Seeing would be impossible.
Since seeing does occur, we must
Infer that they are one in Being.

640.

Why all this earnest searching for
The bliss that shines in simple stillness?
That one may proudly crown one's efforts
With the joy of being at last the Self
That knows no going and returning.

641.

One ever is the Self. Then why
Has one to search and find and reach It
As if it were something apart?
That one may see that the Supreme
Which once seemed something far removed
Is but oneself, and may thenceforward
Abide for ever as That without
A sense of separateness.

642.

Oneself, no other, is the Self.
Deeming it different and making
Strenuous efforts to attain It
Is like running hard to catch
One's own shadow.

643.

The Self, the sole Reality,
The light of pure Awareness, shines
Clear as 'I, I' in the heart.
This dear, dear Being known direct
Alone is true, not things perceived
By the eye and the other senses.

644.

Those who do not keenly seek
And recognize the Being-Awareness
Which shines incessant in the heart
Sink deep into delusive *maya*,
Thanks to the denotative knowledge
Piled up by the mounting ego.

645.

By saying "Know the Self" the scriptures
mean
Only "Give up the knowledge of the
non-Self ;"
Bright like the sun there shines in every one
True Being-Awareness as *I am, I am*.

646.

The gracious light of Self one sees not
When one looks for it as an object.
But when one looks not, then it shines.
"The lady, when I look at her,
Glances downward at the ground.
When I look elsewhere, then she looks
At me and shyly smiles."

[The latter half is quoted from the Chapter on
the ways of lovers in *The Kural*.]

"The Trinity was explained : (by Bhagavan)

God the Father represents *Iśvara*,
God the Holy Spirit represents *Atman*,
God the Son represents *Guru*.

*Iśvaro gururatmeli murti bheda vibhagine vyomavad
vyapta debaya dakṣiṇamurtaye namah*

meaning that God appears to his devotee in the form of a *Guru* (son of God) and points out to him the immanence of the Holy Spirit. That is to say that God is spirit, that this spirit is immanent everywhere and that the Self must be realised, which is the same as realising God."

— from *TALKS*, p. 87

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*

"Ten is the royal number : it is born from one and nothing ;
When God and creature meet, this birth takes place."

— *Angelus Silesius*

Glory of Arunachala

Arunachala Mahatmyam

(SIVA BHAKTA MAHATMYAM
of Sri Upamanyu)¹

Translated from Tamil by
M. C. Subramanian

CHAPTER XV

SAMBANDHA ASKS THE OLD MAN ABOUT THE GLORY OF ARUNACHALA

Upamanyu said :

WHEN Tirujnanasambandha (one of the four great Tamil saints) was staying at Tiruvarayaninallur (adjoining Tirukkoilur) adoring the Great Siva, some of his followers who had already seen Arunachala pointed it out to him one day and said : "There is Arunachala" The Great Guru composed on the spot a hymn of ten stanzas beginning with the words : "*Unnamulai Umayalodum*" meaning the Lord who is accompanied by Uma known as Unna-mulai. Later he was looking out one day for someone who would show him the way to Arunachala when he saw a queer-looking old Brahmin gathering flowers. He was strangely moved by the sight of the old man. He asked him respectfully in a voice choked with emotion : "Where have you come from ? Which is your place ? Why have you come here ?" The Old Man replied : "I have come from Arunachala. That is where I live. I have come to gather flowers for the Lord". At this, Jnanasambandha asked him : "How far is Arunachala (the Red Hill) from here ? Is it a small wood or a big forest ? Kindly take me there. I do not know the way". The Old Man said : "Yonder is the hill. It is not very far. I am old, but I come here daily and return to it with the flowers required for the morning worship of the Lord. I shall take you there quickly by a good path". He then gathered some flowers and got ready to start.

Sambandha now spoke to him eagerly, "I wish to hear in detail about Arunachala".

Thereupon the Old Man described with great emotion, one after another, the glories of Arunachala.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MANIFESTATION OF ARUNACHALA AND THE ARRIVAL OF PARVATI

The Old Man said :

"ARUNACHALA is a manifestation of the God wearing the crescent Moon upon his head (i.e. Siva) who is truly the supporter of this sea-girt earth. It is a manifestation of Sambhu (Siva) who in ancient times appeared as a column of fire in order to settle a dispute between Brahma and Vishnu. The four-faced God (Brahma) and the four-armed God (Vishnu) first emerged from Sadasiva (the eternal Siva) who said to himself : 'I shall become many'. But each of them became proud and, saying, 'I am stronger than you' tried to overcome the other. They fought fiercely. When the fight became serious and the world appeared to be in danger of disruption, the Almighty Lord Siva who had the welfare of the world at heart said to himself : "If I do not make them realize that the lordship of the world is mine in every way and stop them fighting, the world will come to an end". With this resolve, he appeared between the fighters as a column of fire. They looked in wonder at that blazing column which extended far below and far above the world. They got alarmed and yet attempted to discover the top and the bottom of that

¹ This is an ancient work which, like the Arunachala Mahatmya, gives an account of Arunachala.

column. Vishnu assumed the form of a boar and proceeded to discover its base by digging into the earth. Brahma took the form of a swan and flew up to discover its top. Vishnu penetrated the earth as far as Rasatala (one of the nether worlds), but could not discover the origin of the column. Brahma too could not see the top even though he flew as far as the upper limits of Brahmanda (the cosmic egg, i.e. the universe). Both of them, therefore, discontinued their efforts and returned to the earth with tired snout and wings and met each other. "What can this beginningless and endless great effulgence be?" they exclaimed in wonder. They ceased to be proud. No longer did they desire to win.

At that instant a voice from the sky said: "This column is a manifestation of Sambhu. It has appeared with the object of blessing you. You and all moving and stationary beings have come out of it". Neither of them knew till then, Sambhu, the Omnipresent Being who transcended the worlds, and each had, therefore, out of worthless egoism and pride, said to himself: "I am the Creator (Karta)". But when they heard the words from the sky they realized the power of Siva's Grace and ceased to be proud. With eyes dazzled by the effulgence, they praised Siva: "Obeisance to Sambhu who has assumed the form of a *linga*, exists in the form of all moving and stationary being, transcends the worlds, is their origin and is now in the form of a column. Great Lord! Kindly bestow Thy Grace upon us. Reveal Thy true form to us who are enveloped by the darkness of ignorance".

When the three-eyed God (Siva) was praised thus by his sons he became gracious and appeared before them (in his well-known form). He said: "I am extremely pleased with you because your hearts are now full of devotion. I have come here to accede gladly to your prayers. Express your desires". On hearing these words, they said: "Lord of the worlds! We wish to have unfaltering devotion to Thy lotus feet. We should not become arrogant again. Oh Lord! This column is extremely wonderful. Moreover it has best-

owed grace on both of us. Sankara! Thou shouldst always abide here in this form. Please be gracious enough to withdraw Thy effulgence into Thyself and remain as a *linga* with the name of Arunachala for the good of the world. Otherwise the worlds will get scorched by Thy (blazing) effulgence. Let those who worship this (*linga*) attain all prosperity and eternal liberation". As Brahma and Vishnu prayed thus, the Great God, the abode of compassion, said: "It shall be (as you say)". Although he is pure being-consciousness-bliss (Satchidananda), he continued to abide in the form desired by them. Friend! Listen to this also. The Daughter of the Himalaya Mountain (Parvati) practised austerities (*tapas*) here and became one half of the Great God.

Upon this Sambandha asked the Old Man: "Oh Holy Ascetic! How did the Daughter of the Mountain become one half of Sankara? Please describe to us that thrilling episode". The Old Man replied: "The Great God once went with Parvati into a spacious audience-hall revered by all the Devas. It contained heaps of jewels and was supported by thousands of bejewelled columns. It was situated on the top of the Kailasa Mountain in the midst of groves of wish-fulfilling trees. There the guile-less Parvati, who had realized that her lord was completely in her power, came behind him silently in a respectful but playful mood and saying to herself "What will happen? Let me see" covered lightly with her lotus-hands the three eyes of Sambhu, the Guru of all the worlds. As soon as she closed those eyes which were (really) the Sun, the Moon and Fire, a fearful darkness enveloped (the worlds) for a very long time. Is not what is half a moment to the Lord several millions of years to us? The darkness brought on by the playful act of the Goddess led to the gradual destruction of the world. The Devas thereupon told the Embodiment of Compassion (Siva) about it. He then said: "Gauri! Don't do it". Goddess Uma immediately withdrew her hands which covered Hara's (Siva's) eyes. At once, the entire world became bright in the light of the Sun, the Moon and Fire. Sambhu now turned to her and said: "Ignorant lass! You have

acted thoughtlessly. An act which leads to the destruction of the world is unbecoming of you who are the Mother of the world. I, of course, destroy all the worlds at the time of *pralaya* (dissolution). But you, in your ignorance, have brought about an untimely *pralaya*". When the Beloved of Sambhu (Parvati) heard these words, she got upset as she found that she had transgressed the dharma and so asked her Lord what she should do to expiate her sin. Sambhu said: "What expiation shall I prescribe for you who are

my own form (i.e. myself)? Still I shall prescribe an expiation for you in accordance with the custom of the world. There is a famous and highly prosperous City on Earth named Kanchi. There is a holy river (*tirtha*) there named Kampa which washes off the sins of people. You can please me by practising austerities there and after expiating your sin, rejoin me". On hearing these words Parvati proceeded to Kanchi.

(To be continued)

Divine Will and Surrender

"*Devotee* : We are worldly people and are afflicted by some grief that we cannot get over. We pray to God and are still not satisfied. What should we do ?

Bhagavan : Trust God.

D. : But we are worldly people. We have wife, children, friends and relations. We cannot ignore them and resign ourselves to the Divine Will without retaining some trace of individuality.

B. : That means that you have not really surrendered, as you say you have. All you need to do is to trust God.

The Lord bears the burden of the world. Know that the spurious ego which presumes to bear that burden is like a sculptured figure at the foot of a temple tower which appears to sustain the tower's weight. Whose fault is it if the traveller instead of putting his luggage in the cart which bears the load

anyway, carries it on his head, to his own inconvenience ?

Surrender to Him and accept His will whether He appears or vanishes. Await His pleasure. If you want him to do as you want, it is not surrender but command. You cannot ask Him to obey you and yet think you have surrendered. He knows what is best and when and how to do it. Leave everything entirely to Him. The burden is His and you have no more cares. All your cares are His. That is what is meant by surrender.

The Divine Will prevails at all times and under all circumstances. Individuals cannot act of their own accord. Recognize the force of the Divine Will and keep quiet. Everyone is looked after by God. He created all. You are only one among two thousand millions. When He looks after so many, will He omit you ?"

— from *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*

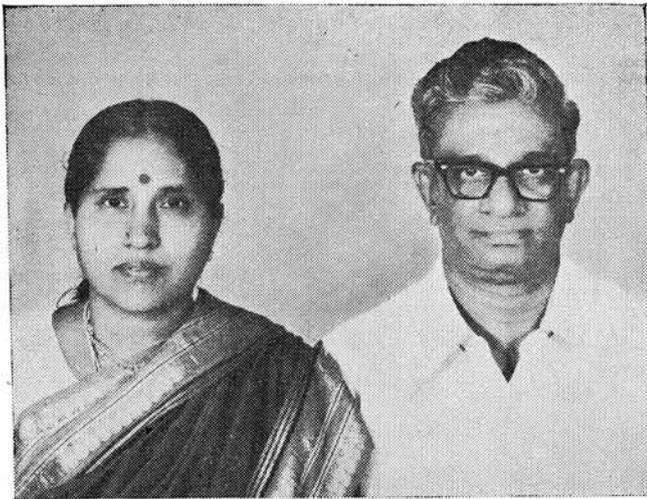
INTRODUCING....

....Sri P. S. Easwaran

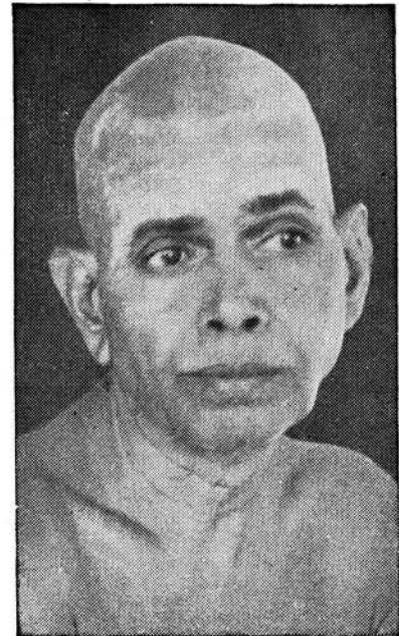
THOUGH Sri Easwaran had heard of Bhagavan Ramana about 1939-40 while he was a student at Palghat, he had a clear idea about him and his teaching only in 1943 through his contact with *Ramanadas*, Dr. Padmanabhan at Palghat itself. Dr. Padmanabhan was the son-in-law of Smt. Janaki Mata, the well-known devotee of Bhagavan.

And Bhagavan gave him the necessary strength without his asking for it.

Whenever he had any difficulties, big or small, the remembrance of Bhagavan, or His proximity, was enough to wipe them away and



Mrs. & Mr. P. S. Easwaran



Sri Easwaran had his first *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan in February, 1945, when he was a student doing his Economics course at Madras. He stayed at the Ashram for three days and he knew well that he had been accepted by Bhagavan. He never talked to Bhagavan. He simply basked in the warmth of His Presence and had every doubt cleared even before it was uttered, by a pointed look of grace from Him. Even in his first visit he vividly experienced the profound peace imparted in silence by Bhagavan to a distracted mind. He had only recently lost his father and he had to take up the responsibility of running the family

impart profound peace. He had experienced it on so many occasions. Once, while on his way to Skandashram with his mother, she was about to collapse, due to the excessive heat of the sun, but by the grace of Bhagavan, a thick cloud came up and saved the situation. His brother-in-law met with a severe accident and was in a state of coma for three days. *Ramanadas* Dr. Padmanabhan advised him to inform Bhagavan of it and a reply came from the Ashram that he would recover soon. And so he did and is all right even now.

Another thrilling incident occurred after Bhagavan's *Mabanirvana*. One night after 9,

Easwaran and three other devotees were about to go round Arunachala. Two ladies, wives of two of the party, wanted to join them, though it was not safe. So, he prayed to Bhagavan for His protection. Soon after they started, an old man with matted hair and beard was seen going ahead of the party taking particular care of them. He showed them important places on the way and disappeared when they were approaching *Isanya Matam* on the outskirts of Tiruvannamalai. Easwaran believes that it was Bhagavan Himself, who is said to be ever-present at Arunachala as a *Siddha*.

It was in September, 1949, Easwaran had his last *darshan* of Bhagavan. He remembers

the brightness of His face despite His physical illness. He has been feeling the protecting hand of Bhagavan throughout, especially during his business trips abroad.

Sri Easwaran is a frequent visitor at the Ashram and takes active part in the working of *Ramana Bhakta Sabha*, Alwarpet, Madras. His devoted wife and sons are all totally dedicated to Bhagavan. Devotees who visit his house spontaneously find it as a place of devotion and dedication. Easwaran extends his hospitality to all *bhaktas*.

As the *Gita* says, "he who is a devotee of My devotees is My best devotee."

May the Grace of Bhagavan be ever with this devout family !

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BOOK REVIEWS

HINDUISM IN THE SPACE AGE: By Veda Vyas. Pub.: United Social Cultural and Educational Foundation of India, 3/57, Old Rajinder Nagar, New Delhi-110 060. Pp. 650. Price: Rs. 50.

The central topic of the book, according to the author (an I.A.S. Officer with a fairly deep knowledge in our *Sāstrās*) is "the place of Man in the universe". By Man he means the Inner Man who is at present smothered by materialism and rationalism. The author's Inner Man may be said to be the Yoga-Siddha in whom the extraordinary powers of the mind are fully opened out and utilized solely for the benefit of humanity. The shrewd author does not just quote our *Sastras* and cite the life-examples of our own Siddha-Purushas to establish this Inner Man, perhaps because he (rightly) feels that our high-brow rationalists will simply discard these away as myths. So he draws heavily from the findings of the research-scholars of the most rationalistic of nations, Soviet Russia and the other communist countries, in the sphere of E.S.P. and the occult phenomena. Really an eye-opener to us. We are surprised to find that many "superstitious myths" are scientifically proved and practically made use of within the Iron Curtain.

The author's observations on the cosmic 'egg', the deluge-story retold in all the religions of the world, Avatars as harbingers of the next step in Evolution, the astrological-astronomical significance of the Avatar, the operation of the Law of Cycles in various fields reaching its culmination in the *Yajna*, the *raison d'être* of idol-worship (the idol being not an image of man, but an image of the divine archetype), the significance of *upanayana* (as opening up the extra-eye, *upa-nayana*) — these are convincing and sparkingly so.

With all this the book is rather scrappy. The author's ambitious attempt at covering diversified subjects like astrology, biology, nuclear physics, space research, numerology, anthropology, comparative religious study, Yoga, Tantra, etc., etc. within the compass of 650 pages has almost landed him in a fix and the result is that no subject is treated thoroughly. He cannot escape criticism by describing the book as a primer (p. 513). A primer must not have touched such a bewildering variety of subjects.

Another flaw in the book is the over-importance given to the recognition of supra-physical powers.

One must, of course, thank the author to the extent he has shown that siddhis can be an essential aspect of spirituality and they need not be looked down upon (which has become a fashion with both the Vedantists and theists now-a-days). But he carries it too far and seems to equate spirituality itself with the acquisition of these powers alone. His Inner Man appears to fall far short of the Inner-most Man, where man is *atman*, pure and simple without the trappings of mind. It is rather surprising that the learned author who says that the central theme of Hinduism is 'the story of the deliverance of Man from the imprisoning restrictions of matter' does not pay due recognition to the soul-sun, but for which the mind-moon would also be only dark matter.

The printing and other production aspects leave much to be desired.

On the whole a commendable work "addressed to the common man in a popular style."

RA. GANAPATI.

THE ULTIMATE REALITY AND REALIZATION: By I. K. Taimni. Pub.: The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras-600020, India. Pp. 215. Price: Rs. 21.

The Siva Sūtra is a famous Tantric work, aphorisms from which are quoted often with approval by classical commentators like the great Bhaskararaya. As the title indicates, the work adopts the Sūtra style and consists of three sections, *Upāya* or means, as they are called. Depicting God, Nature and Soul as the three means, these are termed respectively as *Śāmbhavopāya*, *Śāktopāya* and *Ānavopāya*. In all there are 77 aphorisms.

Sri Taimni provides an exhaustive commentary in English for each Sūtra which is printed in Sanskrit as well as in Roman letters. The Sūtras are very terse and couched in Tantric language. Words like *mantra*, *matrika*, *chakra*, Bhairava, Uma, Viresa Siva etc. are freely used in the body of the *sūtras* and they have a technical significance. The English commentary throws a flood of light on the Sūtras and is very helpful. But at the same time one has a feeling that the whole thing has been interpreted from the point of view of the theosophical doctrine. To cite an example:

The Sūtra, "*Vidyā śarīra sattā mantra rahasyam*" (11.3) is translated as follows:

"Knowledge and its technique are based upon vibration and therefore the secret of acquiring knowledge concerning the inner realities is hidden in the Science of *mantras*".

On the other hand, the Tantrics usually quote this *sutra* to emphasize that the secret of *mantra sadhana* is to realise the existence of the sound-body of the Deity which is Mantra itself and the Mantra is not a mere means of acquiring knowledge about the Deity.

Similarly the last but one *sutra* (111.44) of the text is translated in a different fashion. It merely means that as the consciousness is stationed at the centre between the eye-brows (as the text says, the middle portion at the extremity of the nostrils) there is no question of it in the channels of *ida*, *pingala* and *sushumna*.

INITIATION INTO YOGA : By Sri Krishna Prem.
Pub. : Rider & Co., London. Pp. 128. Price :
£ 1.95 net in U.K. only.

How the English Professor Ronald Nixon flowered into the saint Sri Krishna Prem through practice of *bhakti yoga* is fascinatingly narrated in the foreword.

This is a series of nine essays from the pen of Sri Krishna Prem, the first one being "Initiation into Yoga" which is also the title of the book.

In the essay on 'Initiation into Yoga', the author stresses that Guru is the same as God because the Guru is God, the *Antaryāmi* or inner Ruler, dwelling in the heart. The outer Guru is necessary as long as a person is not able to find the inner one. He cautions that he who expects to blossom into yoga in a few months or even in a few years of practice is bound to be disappointed as the finest timber comes from the slowest growing trees.

Symbolism is necessary, "for it prevents that vicious abstraction of all value from experience which is so marked a feature of the purely scientific world view." Sincere doubts have to be welcomed as they are a sign of progress and test spiritual realisation with reasoning. The past is the region into which we project all that we fear and want to forget while the future is the region into which we project all that we desire. We should neither fear nor desire, but live in the present. War will never be abolished from the world as long as there is conflict within oneself. War should be abolished first from the inner worlds. Neither religion nor philosophy can be sufficient by itself. The union of philosophy and religion is essential in which the mental discipline of the former shall fuse with the emotive feelings of the latter. These are some of the thoughts that are expressed and expatiated upon in the essays.

Sri Krishna Prem's writings, marked by Western pragmatism and Eastern vision, act as spiritual stimulants to all seekers on the path.

S. SHANKARANARAYANAN.

THE BLOOM OF INNER GLORY (Second revised edition) : By N. N. Rajan. Pub. : By the author, C/o. Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai. Available from *Sri Ramanasramam Book Depot*, Sri Ramanasramam, P.O., Tiruvannamalai-606 603, S. India. Pp. 84 + X. Price : Rs. 3.

Maharshi Ramana (1879-1950) has been the latest great spiritual personality in the Upanishadic tradition of Advaita. After His physical departure from our midst, the spirit of Maharshi Ramana radiates through the Ashram and He remains like a Lighthouse for the seekers after Truth and Peace.

Needless to mention that it was Paul Brunton in the early thirties and then Arthur Osborne whose writings made Maharshi Ramana known to the English-speaking world. Afterwards, scholars like Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan and Professor K. Swaminathan made efforts to explain the teachings of the Sage of Arunachala. Yet, there remains a lot to be done by way of exposition and analysis of the seminal teachings of that Eternal Messenger. The work of N. N. Rajan is an humble attempt towards that.

The Bloom of Inner Glory appears to be a free commentary on the philosophy of Sri Ramana Maharshi. The central teachings of the Maharshi have been presented in a lucid manner citing connected passages from important texts. The work is prefixed by a Prologue (which was not there in the previous edition) that gives a short account of the life and Ashram of Maharshi Ramana. The book is suffixed by an appendix that exhibits the highlights in the teachings of Sri Ramana. The book serves the purpose of communicating *Atma-darshana* to the reader.

Printing is neat and almost error-free. The author and the printer deserve our congratulations for bringing out the second edition within a short span of time.

DR. S. P. DUBEY.

THE SCIENCE OF YOGA : By I. K. Taimni.
Pub. : Theosophical Publishing House, Madras-20.
Pp. 448. Price : Rs. 27.

Ever since this book was first published in 1961, it has established itself as one of the outstanding and authentic expositions of Patanjali's Aphorisms on Yoga. The author — himself a lifelong teacher of Science — relates the ancient concepts of Yoga

to the perceptions of modern thought and gives a rational frame to the theory and practice of Yoga in its pristine form.

The plan of the work keeps close to the original : the text in Sanskrit, its transliteration, word for word meaning in English, translation and then commentary. He makes use of charts and diagrams to illustrate wherever necessary.

The first part deals with the general nature of Yoga and its technique ; the second with the philosophy of afflictions and the first five practices of the yoga technique which are external ; the third part with the three internal practices of the yoga and the various siddhis or supernatural powers that reveal themselves in the course of this practice ; the fourth and the last part takes up some of the philosophical problems involved.

The book has a classic quality and calls for careful study.

PRACTICE AND THEORY OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM : Translated and Annotated by Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins. Pub : Rider & Co., 3, Fritzy Square, London, W.1. Pp. 164. Price : £ 2.95.

Though there are different schools of philosophy and practice in the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, there are certain features which are common to most in their practical side. The first part of the present treatise, written by the Fourth Panchen Lama as a commentary to a short verse — letter by Tson-ka-pa, spotlights the main practices of Tibetan monks.

This meditation is based upon three principal factors which are to be internalized : “The thought definitely to leave cyclic existence, the aspiration to enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings, and the correct view of emptiness.” It is pointed out how these three aspects form the bases of the tantra discipline also. In an interesting passage it is mentioned that if during meditation, one “leans forward, ignorance is increased ; if to the right, jealousy ; if to the left, desire ; if to the back, pride.” That is why the erect posture is important.

The second part deals with the theory of the Teaching. It discusses in detail the theories of cyclic existence and selflessness in the *Vaibhasika*, *Sautrantika*, *Cittamatra* and *Madhyamika* schools. The original text is from the Gomang College of Drepung Monastery in Lhasa. In the section on “Our own and others’ tenets in general”, there is mention of three differences, one of which is that they (others) “assert the view that a permanent, partless, independent self does exist.” (P. 55) This is interesting

especially in view of several assertions of late that Buddhism does recognise the existence of a self.

M. P. PANDIT.

APPLIED THEOSOPHY AND OTHER ESSAYS : Henry Steel Olcott, President-Founder of the Theosophical Society, Theosophical Society Centenary Printing, T. P. H. Adyar, Madras-600020. Price : Rs. 17.

Col. H. S. Olcott was the Founder-President of the Theosophical Society with its headquarters in Madras. The centenary of the Society was celebrated in 1975 and the book under review was published on this occasion. It contains nine essays some of them being reprints from the “Theosophist” while the others are occasional addresses delivered by Olcott at various places. These essays have a relevance even today and continue to be instructive even after the lapse of so many years.

Olcott was a devoted Theosophist who along with persons like Madam Blavatsky, Leadbeater and Mrs. Besant has done considerable yeoman work to place the movement on solid foundations and hence his contributions are always weighty. He states that from the days of Neo-Platonism which had its seat at Alexandria and which was effectively smothered by Christianity, the study of theosophy has not been attempted at all and that hence the Theosophical Society has a great future before it. In the “Common Foundations of All Religions”, he gives in a very interesting manner some of their common good features and his analysis of the seven distinct groups which go to make up a human being is very learned. The basic foundations of all these doctrines is Hinduism which is explained in a scientific manner. The author successively deals with Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Spiritualism and Theosophy and Asceticism. In his talk on Eastern Magic and Western Spiritualism, he effectively rebuts the ill-founded criticisms of the Christians. The concluding lecture on “India — past, present and future”, gives a survey of the spiritual progress of India and pinpoints the failings and defects of the modern Indian. His statements are so remarkably in unison with our ancient culture and heritage that one feels grateful to him for re-emphasising principles and facts enunciated by our ancestors but which are gradually disappearing from the very land of their birth.

Such books, irrespective of their date, are stimulating and require constant reading.

THE SELF AND ITS IDEALS IN EAST-WEST PHILOSOPHY : By Dr. G. Srinivasan, College Book House, Trivandrum-1. Pp. 1-91. Price : Rs. 20.

The author of this work is the Reader in Philosophy in the University of Mysore. The book contains

16 papers, some long and some very short written by him on different occasions and deals in a rather haphazard fashion with the concept of the Self. The ideals of the Self as taught in the East and in the West are not clearly defined as one is led to expect from the title of the book. A more or less comparative approach is made in the discussion of the several topics dealt with by him. The first essay on the concept of the self in the pre-Hegelian thought gives a summary of the philosophies of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibnitz and a very restrictive account of the philosophies of Kant and Fichte. The other papers deal with such topics as Western Personalism, Ramanuja's concept of the Self, Plurality of Souls, the Philosophical system of Dewey and Bradley, Pragmatism and Platonism, Sankhyan Dualism and Cartesianism. Some topics like the doctrine of Karma, the problem of evil, Vedantic discipline of the Self and Guru Nanak's philosophy are very inadequately dealt with.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

BHAGAVAD GITA : With the commentary of Sri Sankaracharya, translated into English by Alladi Mahadeva Sastri : Pub. : V. Sadanand, 10, Kamaraj Bhavan, 111, Mount Road, Madras-6. Pp. 522+16. Price Rs. 35.

Sri Sadanand has rendered a distinct service to serious students of the Gita by re-issuing in sumptuous format this excellent English translation of the earliest and in many ways the most authoritative commentary on the Gita.

K. S.

THE WAY TO LIBERATION : By Swami Jyotirmayananda. Pub. : Swami Lalitananda, 6111, S.W., 74th Avenue, Miami, Florida, U.S.A. Pp. 240. Price : \$ 6.99.

The book gives us a succinct account of the great epic *Mahabharata* and leads us to *Shanti Parvam* where Bhishma speaks wisdom from his *Sara Sayanam*. The profound thoughts expressed in the pages of this book have a moral effect more than story effect. The sayings lead the reader to blazing dispassion dispelling fear and doubt. We read in the book the essence of the Gita, the heart of sages which throws light on the path of final beatitude.

"The radiant thoughts of Bhishma awaken in Dharma a resolve to transcend the material world and attain self-realisation." Read the story of Jabali and Tuladara... We can very well call this book a *Guiding Light to Liberation*.

YOGA FOR HEALTH : By M. J. Kirschener. Pub. : George Allen & Unwin, Ruskin House, Museum Street, London-WC1A 1LO, England. Pp. 175. Price : £ 1.95 (Paperback).

This is one of the Mandala publications of Unwin Paperbacks. The author Mr. Kirschier learnt the poses and breathing process in this book from Indian Yogins. He recovered from severe illness through the pragmatic Yoga described in this book and cured many others. He begins his lessons by giving easy hand wavings and deep breathing exercises with clear line drawings especially exercises for the abdomen and back. He gives us fine deep breathing poses and detoxication and relaxation postures. There is a special section for ladies and over sixties. He takes up *Saravangasan*, *Sirasasan*, *Salabasan*, *Dhanurasan*, *Bhujangasan*, *Trikonasana*, *Vajrasana* back twist etc., and shows how to keep normal health through them. This is a good guide for maintaining health and vitality.

THE MYSTERY OF THE SOUL : By Swami Jyotirmayananda. Pub. : Swami Lalitananda, Miami, Florida, U.S.A. Pp. 120. Price : \$ 2.99.

Katha Upanishad is unique in its story-like presentation and speaks of the Deathless Atman through the lips of Death (Yama) himself. Swami Jyotirmayananda gives in this handy book a lucid commentary on the *Katha Upanishad* in a flowing easy style. He divides the Upanishad into forty significant topics and throws light upon the Nature of the blissful Soul, AUM-symbol of the absolute, Tatwamasi-mahavakyam, meditation, Self light, the World-Tree, means of liberation and the enlightenment attained by Nachiketas from Yama. "O Nachiketas, consider body as the chariot, soul as the owner, Intellect as the driver and mind as the reins. The wise see the senses as horses. The objects of senses are the roads. This metaphorical picture is adopted in the teachings of the Gita where Arjuna rides the chariot, Lord Krishna drives it and the war of Mahabharata is fought to establish the victory of virtue over the army of vices." Such is the clear easy style in which the Swamiji gives us the rich substance of the *Katha Upanishad*.

Desire, ignorance and Karma are the three knots of the heart. Led by illusive desires, the soul remains bound to Karma, birth and death. The fetters of Karma are loosened by destroying attachments to likes and dislikes (Raga and Dwesha). Removal of Ignorance brings Knowledge-Light by which one can know and be conscious of the non-dual Brahman that one is.

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI.

YOGA DARSANA : The Philosophy and Light of Yoga : By Roy Eugene Davis. Pub. : CSA Press, Lakemont, Ga. U.S.A. Pp. 202. Price : \$ 7.50.

The treatise under review is, according to the author, intended for initiates of *Kriya Yoga*, namely, those who are resolved to commit their lives practically and totally to the discipline, not those who are looking to it as a part-time practice.

A unique feature of this book is that it traces the Siddha tradition of this land, where over the centuries many men and women have awakened to the realisation of God and have known the truth about the nature of the world process. Of the several Masters of Yoga included in this treatise is the chapter on the Sage of Arunachala, whose *shakti* pervades the Ashram grounds, where seekers are still coming for the uplifting effect. Being an example of perfect knowledge, the Bhagavan was the personification of devotion, content to remain absorbed in Supreme Consciousness, letting the Supreme Ruler to run the universe. No wonder when a visitor asked him, "How can we help the world?" the sage replied : "Mind your own business". The illustrations of yogic exercises and of the masters of yoga give added value to the book.

CONVERSATIONS WITH SHELDON : By John P. MacPartland. Pub. : Philosophical Library, Inc., 15, East 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016, U.S.A. Pp. 90. Price : \$ 6.

Not of cabbages and kings, but of existentialism, death and immortality as also of Thomism and Modern Thought does this book discuss, being reports of conversations with the centenarian philosopher of Yale. Sheldon in some of the discussion goes even beyond the thirteenth century St. Thomas Aquinas' scholastic theology, as he affirms that proof of immortality is not just a matter of faith, but faith and reason should go together.

A recurrent theme in the book is the trinity, which can be realised everywhere if only man knows how. Power, reason, love — man, woman, child : The trinity is the most important idea, asserts Sheldon, not just in man alone. It is the marriage of duality, and he adds :

"Love is the union of power and intelligence. Reason includes love, because reason in a system. And we love it. We must show reason includes

love and love includes reason. All bound together. Most Christians haven't seen this. They think reason is the lowest stage. But the logic of the whole thing is beautiful. The Trinity brings this out."

It is fascinating reading, these random thoughts of the Christian mystic philosopher, so accurately reported in this book, and in one place we find Sheldon indulging in one of his favourite subjects : play or what in Hindu puranas is called "Divine Lila". Inclusiveness is the basic value of his philosophy and life, as there is no divorce between them. The world to him is, in one sense, Divine Laughter.

MORAL TRENDS SINCE INDEPENDENCE :

Pub. : The Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum. Pp. 133. Price : Rs. 15.

That the moral degeneration in the post-Independence period is chiefly due to the fact that religion, by its neglect, has stopped influencing the life of the people of the country, quite unlike in the past, is the theme of the publication. This is a collection of papers read at a seminar held in Belgaum under the auspices of the Academy in 1975. Rev. Ignatius Lobo, the Bishop of Belgaum, in leading the discussion, puts the poser whether our present day civilisation should be geared to fundamental principles, which are of eternal value, or whether these principles should be made flexible and changeable to suit our permissive society.

Smt. Shakuntala Kurtkoti, Secretary of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, Dr Narain Mahishi of the Indian Institute of Science and Principal B. T. Bhalerao, along with some editors and professors, participated in the three-day discussions and all were unanimous in the feeling that there had been degeneration during the post-Independence decades. The solution to prevent "the floodgates to various degenerating influences" lies, according to them, only in infusing a new type of education to the younger generation with a proper spiritual content which alone can restore our moral standards. Traditional knowledge should be widely spread by whatever means possible, and this will improve and strengthen the moral tone of the society and the individual, which unfortunately had been so sadly neglected in our institutions during the last three decades.

ARGUS.

Letters to the Editor

HEART ON THE RIGHT SIDE

I have read somewhere that one can meditate on the heart at the right side of the chest and that this is the true spiritual heart. Can you please tell me more about it?

M. K. RAO,
Hyderabad.

That the spiritual heart is on the right side of the chest has been revealed to us by Sri Bhagavan. He also quoted from the Bible that the wise man's heart is on the right and the fool's heart on the left.

The following passages are culled from Sri Bhagavan's utterances on the Heart.

"The 'I'-thought is the root of all thoughts and wherefrom the 'I'-thought emerges that is the Heart. A location is however given to it with reference to the body. You know that you are. Where are you? You are in the body and not out of it. Yet, not the whole body though you pervade the whole body. You admit of a centre wherefrom all your thoughts emerge and wherein they subside. So a centre must be admitted. That is the Heart."

"I have been saying all along that the Heart-centre is on the right side of the chest. I speak from experience beginning from Madurai and confirmed at Tiruvannamalai. When you refer to yourself you do it placing your hand on the right side of the chest."

"The Self is the Heart. The Heart is self-luminous. The Heart is like the Sun and the mind like the moon. The moon shines by the reflected light of the Sun. So it is with the mind and the Heart."

"The Heart is the only Reality; the mind is only a transient phase. To remain as one's Self is to enter the Heart."

With such understanding of the Heart, even a beginner can meditate with his attention fixed on the Heart; one may practise even japa, preferably of one-syllable. Then one will feel one's centre there and circumference nowhere and thus get established in the real Self. In the ultimate experience there is neither centre nor circumference. It is nothing but Pure Awareness.

HOW TO SURRENDER?

Sri Bhagavan advocates also surrender as a powerful means of annihilating the ego. When a devotee pointed out that it was not at all an easy thing to surrender Bhagavan agreed with him but added

that one can start with partial surrender. How is that to be brought about?

S. J. ROOSENDAL, HILVERSUM,
Holland.

During sadhana there are ups and downs and one may become very discouraged at the seeming lack of results.

As a matter of fact when a devotee feels elated at success in sadhana it may also enhance the ego and he may be farther from real achievement than when he feels to be right at the bottom totally abandoned. When swimming, if the wave is shallow it will make us rise not very high but a deep down-wave will bring us up much higher.

In the beginning of sadhana one may get much support from the guru but after a while it is seemingly withdrawn so that one can stand on one's own feet. "Be a light unto yourselves", advised the Buddha. When a child starts walking, the parents will support it fully but after a while they leave it without support so as to make it learn to walk by itself.

Partial surrender can be achieved by doing sadhana to the best of one's ability, not giving way to depression when there seems to be no success. The result can be safely left to the guru who knows the right time for it. Just do your bit with total faith in Bhagavan.

* * * *

SELF-ENQUIRY AND OTHER PATHS

Recently I read a book on the teachings of Bhagavan (not our Ashram publication) and it says that except Self-enquiry all other spiritual paths (the four Yogas) presuppose the existence of mind and only Self-enquiry reveals that the ego has no existence whatsoever. Is it correct? The book repeatedly asserts that all other paths, traditionally held with esteem and reverence, are basically wrong. My study of Sri Bhagavan's teachings and His 'Talks' makes it clear that Bhagavan has approved of all paths and extolled them in their own context. Will it be helpful to decry other methods to give apparent importance to Self-enquiry? When great seers also of recent times, like Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, have extolled the four margas

as vital for spiritual *sadhana*, is it necessary to put them down in the name of Bhagavan?

N. S. RAMANAN,
Coimbatore.

We entirely concur with you. Bhagavan encouraged every one from his level of understanding and spiritual development and has never decried any sadhana. He has dealt with all the steps in His works.

In the *Spiritual Instruction* the following dialogue is recorded :

"Can this path of enquiry be followed by all aspirants?"

"This is suitable only for ripe souls. The rest should follow different methods according to the stage of their development."

The path of Self-enquiry, though the simplest, is the subtlest of all. Generally only evolved seekers can resort to it with success, with the Grace and guidance of a perfect Guru (Sat Guru). The human mind is so fickle hopping here and there within a moment. How can one who could not concentrate his mind on a japa even for a few minutes venture to seek the very Source of the root-thought? Realising this our ancestors have laid great emphasis on japa as the first step in spiritual sadhana. Sri Bhagavan also has given due importance to the first steps in spirituality in the first half of His Upadesa Saram. Manu says: "Let a seeker do anything or not; let him firmly stick on to Japa for enlightenment on the Path." Even the mighty Sankara, the blazing Sun of Jnana, says: "We find no other way of crossing samsara except the constant remembrance of the Name of God." Many are those who have reached the final goal of non-differentiation by utter surrender and bhakti. Bhagavan's Five Hymns to Arunachala ends with a superb verse on dedicated devotion.

To begin with, any sincere sadhana persevered in with onepointedness will by itself throw more and more light on the path to reach the Goal. It is the petty ego that praises one Path and ridicules the others.

* * * *

A HOME AT BRAZIL

"*A Luz No Caminho*" Associacao Espiritualista (*The Light on the Path* — Spiritual Association), since its foundation on May 3, 1972, has been spreading, little by little, all over Brazil, the teachings and words of Grace of our beloved Master, *Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi*.

At first it was just a rented room. Then, the great push of the Force which springs from *Bhagavan Ramana* has led us to buy a house which we have fondly called: "*A Casa de Ramana*" ("The

House of Ramana"). All are welcome at this home not only to learn the teachings of *Bhagavan*, but also to do service in the name of the Master by helping the needy with one's heart intent on the Light revealed by *Ramana*.

Our aim in writing to you, brothers at the Ashram, is to bring to notice that even in such a 'distant place', there are devotees who long to function harmoniously with *Arunachala-Ramana* and who pray for your support while chanting the Vedas and meditating, so that Peace and Harmony may overflow at *Casa de Ramana*, the address of which is :

CASA DE RAMANA
Rua Maxwell,
145, Vila Izabel,
ZC-11 - RIO DE JANEIRO - 20 000
Brazil.

Our next endeavour will be to build "The House of Ramana" for the aged — to take care of forsaken old people — and we believe that the ever-present Divine Grace of *Bhagavan*, will bless our efforts.

— Vera Carolina Ramalho de Mello,
President, *A Luz No Caminho*,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Sri Bhagavan's Grace is fully on you all. We have offered prayers at His shrine of Grace on your behalf.

* * *

AN APPRECIATION

You have delivered a very valuable message to the modern world through your October '77 issue (Vol. 14, No. IV), which contains original articles on Music and its eternal values. It is a treatise on the subject viewed from many angles. All honour to those who had the vision to draw this out of every one of the selected writers. The readers' world should be indebted to Sri T. S. Parthasarathy for his analysis of the subject, by tracing it from the Vedic origin and traversing through the times till the present day. The articles giving the origin, development and scope of music in the West compared with the East give us an insight into the real meaning of the thoughts of the western musicians.

The western disciples of *Sri Bhagavan* speak about the change effected in them by *Sri Bhagavan*. It was a great pleasure for me to read this volume from end to end making my own marginal markings in admiration.

M. V. SUBBURATNAM,
Advocate, Erode.



Sri Bhagavan's Birth Centenary

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

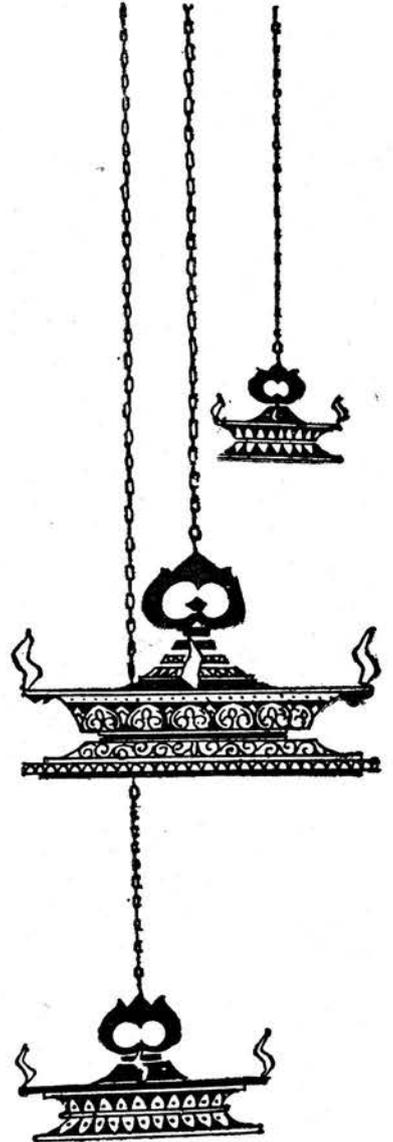
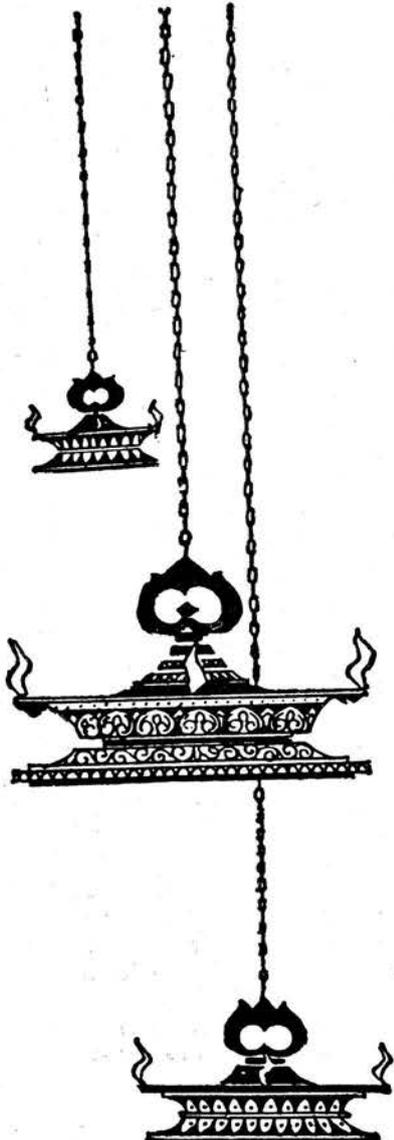
The event is to be commemorated by something concrete apart from publishing a Souvenir, which is also contemplated as one project. Any other project such as new publications, reprints, or fresh translations of works on and by Sri Bhagavan or even any charitable activity, will be appropriate to the occasion.

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

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

Suggestions may please be sent to :

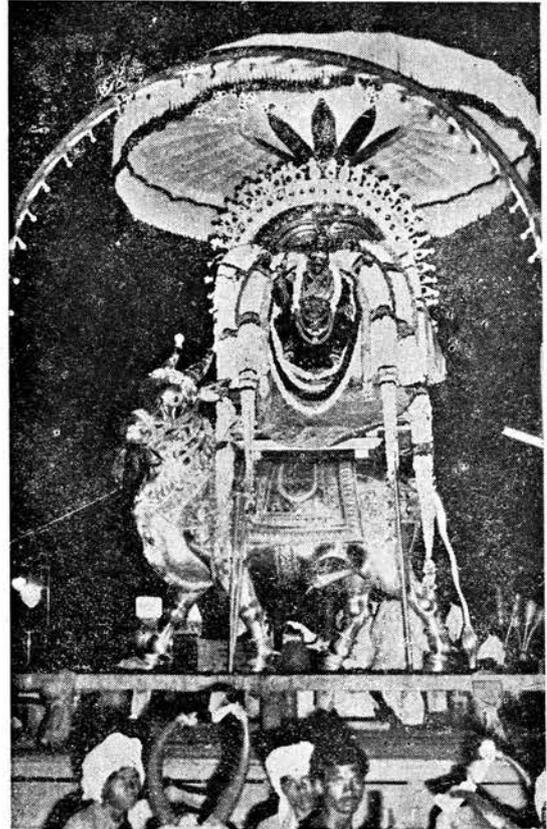
Sri T. N. Venkataraman,
President, Board of Trustees,
Sri Ramanasramam,
Tiruvannamalai-606 603, South India



ASHRAM BULLETIN

THE GREAT DEEPAM FESTIVAL

LIGHT OF
KNOWLEDGE
SYMBOLISED



Every year the Deepam is lit on the peak of Arunachala, symbolizing Siva (Self-Knowledge) who appeared as a tremendous column of Fire (Pure-Knowledge) before Vishnu (ahankara) and Brahma (buddhi) who tried and failed to find out its bottom or top. Siva then manifested Himself before them as the Sacred Hill, Arunachala. They worshipped Him with humility, understanding that they were only His instruments.

“ Getting rid of the ‘I-am-the-body’ idea and merging the mind into the heart to realise the Self as non-dual Being and the Light of all is the real significance of *darshan* of the beacon on Arunachala, the centre of the universe.”

—Sri Bhagavan in

The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi, p. 82.

This symbolic festival has been going on from pre-historic times. It lasts for ten days with tens of thousands of people witnessing the daily procession of Siva, Uma and other deities around the Temple, day and night.

The Deepam on the Hill is lit on the tenth evening of the festival in a huge cauldron filled with camphorised ghee, yards of cloth serving as wick provided by Sri Arunachaleswara Temple as well as several devotees. At Sri Ramansramam too from its early days, a light is lit on the occasion on a thick wick in a bowl of ghee.

This year too the Light on the Hill as well as at the Ashram was lit punctually at 6 p.m. on November 25, when the full moon was with the *Krittika* (constellation of Pleiades). Devotees prostrated themselves before Bhagavan and the Beacon and recited Bhagavan's Hymns in praise of Arunachala and also Hymns on Bhagavan.

Owing to particularly inclement weather crowds were thinner this year than usual. On the Deepam Day proper there was a continuous drizzle and the Hill was enveloped by misty clouds and devotees eagerly waiting for *Darshan* of the Deepam were

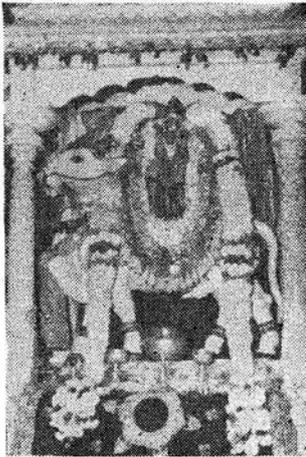
disappointed. But it became visible off and on during the night and clearly seen on the subsequent eight evenings.

Unmindful of the weather and rain devotees from the Ashram and others as well went round Arunachala on that sacred night chanting Hymns in praise of Arunachala.

* * *

NAVARATRI CELEBRATIONS

The *Navaratri Festival*, a continuous nine-day worship of the Divine Mother symbolized by the Sri Chakra, was celebrated at the Ashram between October 10 and 21.



Yogambika on the new VAHANA

The special feature of this year was the acquiring of a wooden *vāhana* (vehicle) of Bull for the *utsava-murti* of the Mother. The *vāhana* was made in Tiruvannamalai itself by Sri Shanmuga Achari.

Special pujas were offered each night for the Mother known as *Yogāmbika*. The Deity was beautifully decorated and arrayed in the three aspects of the Divine Mother as *Durga*, *Lakshmi* and *Saraswathi*. On the first and last days of the festival the sacred icon of *Yogambika* was taken out in procession around Mother's and Sri Bhagavan's shrines.

Laksharchana was performed, with the recital of *Lalita Sahasranama* and reading of *Devi Mahatmyam*. *Mahanyasa japa* and *abhisheka* were performed at both shrines and *prasad* was distributed daily to the devotees assembled.

* * *

RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

Ramana Kendra celebrated Vidyodaya Day in July 1977, when poor children of the J. J. Colony were presented with books, gifts and cash awards.

The date 1st September is auspicious to all devotees of Bhagavan as the day of his arrival at Tiruvannamalai. It was also on this day in 1974 that the Kendra building was declared

Sri Ramana Jayanti: Prayer Festival

On Tuesday, December 27, the 98th Birthday — Jayanti — of our Master, Bhagavan Ramana, was celebrated at the Ashram, the Abode of His Eternal Presence.

The day was marked with devotional singing from the early morning, together with continuous chanting of the Vedas and Upanishads and Puja to the sacred Linga over the Shrine of Bhagavan. Thousands of the poor were fed.

The ever-guiding and protective Grace of Sri Bhagavan was deeply felt by all the devotees assembled.

open. This year also the day was observed with due solemnity, with Dr. C. Ramaswamy, an eminent scientist and a devotee of Bhagavan, giving an interesting talk on "Science and Religion".

At the Kendra's new library hall, a grand *Tiruppugazh* recital was held by Sri Raghavan and party on Vijaya Dasami (21-10-1977). The series of lectures on "Yoga Vasishta" by Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha of Narayanasrama Tapovanam from 22nd to 28th October were well-attended and highly appreciated.

The Deepam festival was observed on 25th November. The shrine was gaily lit by candles and the devotees went round the shrine singing "Arunachala Siva".

Thanks to a generous grant given by the Government of India, the Kendra was able to add a number of valuable volumes to its library. The library now has over 1,700 works on religion, philosophy and metaphysics.

* * *

RAMANA BHAKTA SABHA, ALWARPET, MADRAS

At the Sunday evening meetings, Sri M. S. Nagarajan continued his talks on Sri Bhagavan's "Five Hymns". On December 11, after Vedaparayana, a special devotional *bhajana* was held by Sri Srinivasa Rao and party, in memory of Dr. R. S. Ramachandran..

 PILGRIMS

Since it is traditionally acclaimed and further confirmed by Sri Bhagavan that Arunachala is the spiritual centre of the universe, sincere seekers as well as those advanced on the spiritual path are drawn to it as iron to a magnet. *Mumukshus* (seekers after Truth) and *Muktas* (the realised beings) alike, thus, flock to Arunachala. Fortunate are those who are able to recognise such ripe souls among the multitudes that gather round Arunachala.

We are happy to share with our readers the impressions of a few of such souls about their stay at Sri Ramanasramam.

* * * * *



Mr. Hartung

meeting the Master when He was in the body thirty years ago. The couple spent six days in October in quiet meditation and contemplation at the Old Hall and on the Hill. We were very happy to have amidst us this devout couple.

They write :

"It was difficult for me to return to Sri Ramanasramam where Maharshi's physical presence is now absent, exactly thirty years after I have had the rare good fortune of meeting Bhagavan. But it was quite necessary because my life has changed after that visit.

Nevertheless I can write, now, that every'ing is perfect in the Ashram as ever :

Mr. Henri P. Hartung and Mrs. Sylvie Hartung of Switzerland are very earnest devotees of Sri Bhagavan. Mr. Hartung was the agent for *The Mountain Path* in Europe during its initial stages. He has now arranged with Mr. Patrick Lebaill of France to shoulder that responsibility, which he does with enthusiasm and agility.

Mr. Hartung had the golden opportunity of



Mrs. Hartung

the *simplicity* of the daily life ;
the *beauty* of the sacred life ; and
the *perfection* reigning around the Shrine.

"What a light, what a knowledge amidst our dark times ! What a sight for all of us ! I thank you all working in the Ashram for your hearty welcome and for the trouble you take to look after seekers. Thank you.

"I bring to your notice the existence of similar centers in Europe where the people love Maharshi. It is significant and I am happy to live in such a one."

HENRI P. HARTUNG, Fleurier,
Switzerland.

"What am I to say ! Arunachala is the Center !!"

SYLVIE HARTUNG.

* * * * *

In the summer of 1973, *Bubba Free John*, who is the guiding force behind the movement, *Vision Mound Ceremony* (formerly *The Dawn Horse Communion*), which is dedicated to disseminating the traditional, spiritual cultures, visited the sacred shrine of Sri Ramana Maharshi at His Ashram and also the abodes where Maharshi lived up the Hill. Acknowledging Sri Ramana Maharshi as the spiritual influence in the terminal stage of his own *sadhana*, Bubba stresses three essential truths in Sri Bhagavan's living Wisdom : (1) the Heart at the right side of the chest ; (2) the *Amrita Nādi* and (3) the *Sahaja Samadhi*.

Bubba writes :

"*Sahaja Samadhi* is the paradoxical form of radical intuition. It is Realization of the condition of all arising (the Heart), but is coincident with the continuance of arising conventions or modifications, high and low. The devotee in *Sahaja* is constantly sacrificed at the feet of God, that is, he or she constantly enjoys the condition of the Heart, in which all arising conditions (including separate self-sense, thoughts, body, outer conditions, etc.) are seen to be only modifications of the prior condition that is the Heart (prior Conscious Bliss or Radiance).

Thus, all arising is unnecessary and not binding by the force of implications, high or low. In *Sahaja*, this Realization is concurrent with all arising conventions. Thus, it is also described as the 'regenerations of *Amrita Nadi*' or radical Ascent. In this

only five days here they say they were days of memorable experiences. While staying at the Ashram Bubba himself commented :

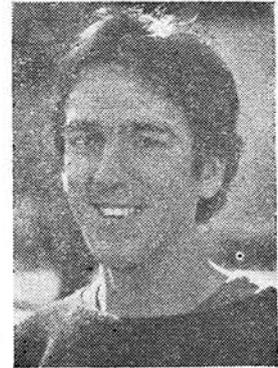
"He (Ramana) is still living here. He simply sat around here before, and that is what he is still



Crane Montano



Bubba Free John



William Tsiknas

Samadhi, under all conditions, self and the binding force of thought are dissolved in the true Heart, or Radical Intuition, while the Current of Radiance rises out of the Heart, concentrating or collecting the manifesting tendencies of the apparent being most perfectly above. Thus, the living force of the gross being is economized happily and no appearance, subtle or gross, personal or cosmic, binds any longer. There is a natural sense, prior to all strategic effort, dilemma, or craving, high or low, or a contemplative concentration of attention above, as if eyes and ears and feeling were all turned up to what may never be seen or heard or touched, but which is intuited to be There.

"*Sahaja Samadhi* is the undoing of conditions even as they appear, while all conventions, high and low, remain projected as usual via *Amrita Nadi*. When radical intuition has snuffed out the root of all modifications at the Heart, there is objectless *Bhava Samadhi*, which is beyond all speech, knowledge or implications of any kind, even if these appear conventionally true of the devotee to any manifest observer."¹

Bubba returned to Sri Ramanasramam in the spring of 1977, together with his disciples: *Crane Motano* and *William Tsiknas*. Though they spent

doing, though not in his physical form. Now I have no sense of being distinct from Maharshi, no sense that he is another personality or another presence. I feel as if I am living here. My contact with him is not related to corroboration any longer. It is just natural for me to be in the places where he lived. Some times I may feel like coming here just to drop out of the circumstance of my teaching work, because there is no other place in the world that represents the ultimate development of the spiritual process in my experience."²

* * *

During this her second visit to Arunachala, *Miss Barbara Eistel*, hailing from Hamburg, could gain the real purport of leading a spiritual life by contact with the elder devotees who have had the opportunity of living at the feet of the Master and listening to His teachings direct from Him. She spent a month at the Ashram during November-December mostly in meditation.

¹ from *The Paradox of Instruction* by Bubba Free John, pp. 198-201.

² from *Vision Mound* (magazine), Vol. 1, No. 5, p. 34, published by *Vision Mound Ceremony*, P.O., Box 3680, Clearlake Highlands, California-95422, U.S.A.

She writes :

"The *Sat Guru* is both inner and outer. That can be clearly experienced here at Arunachala's



Miss Barbara Eistel

Feet. While leaving everything to Him and inwardly holding fast to the source of 'I', I found that He has arranged all things for me so wonderfully that I am simply overpowered by His Grace and Compassion. Through outer experiences He pushed me inwards reducing all distractions from outside to a minimum. He has made me

search for my Self. Therefore, Sri Ramanasramam has been the ideal place for me to stay in. I felt like coming home and through Bhagavan's Grace I feel very comfortable in the guest house, enjoy the food and find all loving people at the Ashram.

"I am very thankful to all who were so kind to me. The Guru always arranges the outer conditions according to the needs of the devotee. This *Sat-sang* of Ramana-Arunachala has been a tremendous help for my *sadhana*. I am unable to express my gratitude for my *Sat Guru* Ramana's Love and the only way to show it is through my realizing my Self and remaining in my true State.

"May the Ashram always be the *Home* of Bhagavan's Love for all who come in search of Him. May the Grace of Ramana-Arunachala, the True Self, be felt by all!"

BARBARA EISTEL,
Hamburg, W. Germany.

* * *

Sri Rudi Bernatski, also of Hamburg, has visited and stayed at the Ashram twice before. He is a dedicated seeker, spending most of his time in contemplation up the Hill or in the Old Hall of Sri Bhagavan. He is very loveable and quiet, sincerely devoted to Sri Bhagavan.

He writes :

"Ramana-Arunachala is the Force behind all our actions. Thus it was I came to Sri Ramanasramam. Here we find an atmosphere of perfect tolerance



Sri Rudi Bernatski

and peace. Everyone can follow his own ideal without any disturbance. My main practice is in succession: purifying the mind through incantation, dispassion, alertness, concentration and self-enquiry. At Sri Ramanasramam I find the most suitable atmosphere for it. Daily I go up the Hill to sit on a rock there. I do feel every time the silent influence of Ramana-Arunachala. It is impossible to describe this experience through words and so I stop with profound gratitude!"

RUDI BERNATSKI,
Hamburg.

* * *

Another devout German who has been happily spending his time at the Ashram in spiritual *sadhana* is *Sri Karl Kloster*, coming from Hamburg. He proposes to stay at the Ashram till the end of February, 1978.

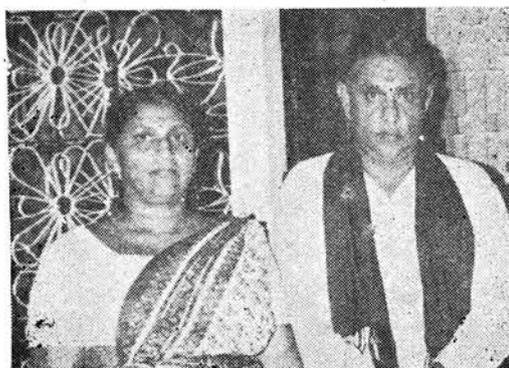
He writes :

"My knowledge of English is limited, but I can say this much that Sri Ramanasramam is a place where one has to keep quiet in order to experience the blessings of the Presence of Bhagavan. It is impossible to express in words such an experience!"

KARL KLOSTER,
Hamburg.

* * *

The Minister of Education of Sri Lanka, *Sri Nissanka Wijeyeratne*, with his wife and family and friends, visited the Ashram on October 4th. He showed keen interest in seeing the places hallowed by the Maharshi's living.



Mrs. & Mr. Wijeyeratne

After his visit he was pleased to say :

"It was a great event during my visit to the sacred places of India to have savoured the quiet and peace of this Ashram where Ramana Maharshi lived, meditated and spread His message of Love. My

wife and members of our party, especially my friend, *Sri D. M. Swaminathan* (lawyer and trustee of the Ganapati Shrine, Katargama), were all moved by the abiding atmosphere of sanctity that prevails here. May this centre continue to spread its spiritual vibrations for a better and nobler life among suffering humanity."

NISSANKA WIJEYERATNE,
Minister of Education, Sri Lanka.

* * *
Sri Krishna Kant, M.P. and Chairman, Railway Co-ordination Board, Delhi, visited the Ashram on September 27. Our President, *Sri T. N. Venkataraman*, took him round the Ashram and explained to him its working and the places of importance here.



Sri Krishna Kant & Ashram President

Sri Krishna Kant was pleased to express :
"I had been desiring to visit Sri Ramanasramam when the great Sage lived and spread His message

of spirituality. I went round the Ashram in the early hours of the morning. It was peace-giving. I hope the Maharshi's living message will continue to inspire the life of our people and lead generations to come to the eternal values of our civilization."

KRISHNA KANT,
Delhi.

* * *
We had the pleasure of having with us, though for only a few hours, a party of thirty pilgrims on December 19, from the *Centre de Relations Culturelles Franco-Indien, Paris*, led by the Centre's Director, *Mr. Mahesh*, who has been regularly visiting the Ashram for several years.

The devotees had lunch in the Ashram and showed keen interest while they were taken round the Ashram. To cite an instance, one of them, wrote :

"Calm, peaceful, serene. It is marvellous. I would like to spend the rest of my life in this Ashram !"

Another artist-devotee drew the picture of Maharshi, in less than five minutes, with pen alone !

We are always happy to have such devout people amidst us.

OBITUARY

PARVATHAMMA

Hindu womanhood is reputed for its charity, tolerance, compassion, and devotion to spiritual ideals. The mother of *Sri V. Dwaraknath Reddy, Srimati Parvathamma* of Pulicherla, was a true representative of this heritage. Her whole life was one of dedication and sacrifice. She bore with fortitude the losses of her husband and sons. Her devotion to *Sri Malayāla Swami* and *Sri Swami Chinmayananda* were total. She was ailing for some time and had to be operated upon. She passed away at the age of 74.



Parvathamma

May the Lord keep her soul at His Lotus Feet for ever !

SRINIVASA SASTRI

Sri Srinivasa Sastri, familiarly known as Padi Sastri, who passed away at the ripe old age of 92 years, was an earnest follower of the Vedic way of life and devoted to Bhagavan Ramana and the senior Pontiff of Sri Kamakoti Peeta. His active participation in the regular conduct of Sri Chakra Puja and other ritualistic worship, such as *Sri Vidya Havan*, at the Ashram, will long be cherished by the devotees of Sri Bhagavan. His was an unostentatious life of devotion.

DR. R. S. RAMACHANDRAN

It is with a heavy heart that we inform co-devotees of the passing away, at the peak of his career, of *Dr. R. S. Ramachandran*, Professor of Pediatrics, Kilpauk Medical College, Madras. He and his wife Dr. Shanta Ramachandran took an active part in running the Ramana Bhakta Sabha, Madras. All the members of the family, including the three children, were frequent visitors to the Ashram along with their grandfather, Professor K. Swaminathan. May Sri Bhagavan's grace bless the bereaved family with peace of mind and strength of will to continue to fulfil their duties in life!

MUNAGALA V. RAMANATHAN

We come to know of the passing away of *Munagala V. Ramanathan*, son of Munagala Venkatarama Iyer (later *Ramanananda Saraswati*, compiler of *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* and other important publications of the Ashram). He was a bachelor and the brother of the late-lamented Srimati Kamakshi. All members of this family are ardent devotees of Bhagavan Ramana.

May his soul rest in Peace!

SRI RAMANASRAMAM FREE DISPENSARY

Donations in kind and in cash are invited from philanthropists and devotees for running the Ashram Dispensary.

Cash Donations are exempt from Income Tax. Please send them to :

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THE RAMANA MAHARSHI CONTACT LETTER

The *Ramana Maharshi Contact Letter* started in January, 1976, continues to function successfully, we are informed. Five contact letters have been sent out and a number of devotees of Bhagavan have expressed their appreciation. A selection of Sri Ramanasramam publications is available at Ashram prices for residents of U.K. and near European countries. Queries about the Contact Letter should be sent to :

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