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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
Fruit shrivelled and spoilt is worthless; take and enjoy it ripe, Oh Arunachala!

—The Marital Garland of Letters, verse 61

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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

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

THE Centenary of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's birth falls on December 29, 1979, or according to the Hindu calendar, on January 2, 1980 (Ardra of Mrigasirsha). Both at his ashram in Arunachala and several other centres in India and abroad this event will be celebrated with great enthusiasm during the winter of 1979-80 and indeed throughout 1979.

Standing at the summit of human awareness, the Maharshi beckons every human being, wherever standing now, to make a straight, even if it be a steep, ascent to the ultimate Truth. One may regard him as a perfect exemplar and exponent, in the Upnishadic tradition, of jnana marga and the advaitic experience, a typical sthitaprajna, jivanmukta and tattvadarsin. Or one may equally well regard him as a modern Sage representing the confluence of Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. One may even regard him as an Existential Psychologist, the inventor of a science of Self-enquiry which meets with precision and potency the present universal need for a dynamic ontology capable of transforming individual and social man. But whether we are devotees and spiritual seekers in search of a Satguru, or earnest humanists anxious to preserve the wholeness and freedom of persons and the unity of mankind, the basic and indispensable requirement is to set down simply the authentic biographical facts concerning this most unpretentious of mortals who reminds us of our own immortal being and ultimate destiny. The question “Who am I?” admits of innumerable applications and every time and in every instance the answer it evokes demolishes the distinction between being and becoming, theory and practice, awareness and action, transcendental and empirical, sacred and secular. Bhagavan’s insistence on What Is is an uncompromising adherence to Reality which of course includes movements of mind as well as states of matter.
No myths and legends, no mysteries and miracles, should be permitted to distort the clear image of this normal, natural human being, who is the archetypal Person, because he was so utterly impersonal and egoless, or to blow it up into some grand super-human or super-natural phenomenon, remote, occult, withdrawn from common sight. To those who knew him in the body, Bhagavan's greatest gift was his supreme soulabhya, his easy accessibility and total openness. He practised equality with all mankind by his cheerful acceptance of his human status and embodied condition; he taught less by words than by his loving friendship for the lowliest of living creatures. Like the life-giving warmth of the sun or the moon's cool light, the Grace that he spread was not less glorious or less wonderful because it was so familiar and amply available to all.

A child was born in a cultured middle class family at Tiruchuzhi, about thirty miles south of Madurai (Tamil Nadu) on the night of a famous festival day of Siva, well-known as Ardra Darshan, December 29/30, 1879. And the child grew up with the name Venkatarama. There was one peculiarity about him unknown to others. He had even from early childhood some innate intuition that there was something of surpassing greatness, felt by him as Arunachala. It was not something he had heard from others. Even Arunachala as the name of a Hill, he happened to hear from someone else when he was sixteen, and he was surprised to know that there was actually a place sacred to Siva, known as Arunachala (or Tiruvannamalai) and that the Hill there was considered as a Siva Linga, a manifestation of Siva. He happened to come across a book on the Lives of the sixty-three Saivite Saints and he went through it with great interest. Then with fresh fervour he frequently visited the famous Temple of Sundareswara and Minakshi and began to pray to them for Grace Divine. There were times when he thought he was going to swoon and sat still. He came to know what it was when the experience overwhelmed him whenever he stood before the remarkable image of the dancing Siva, known as Velliambalam Nataraja, in the Minakshi Temple. This is what is commonly described as Sakti-Nipāta (Descent of Grace). Though he had never read any book on religion or philosophy, his attention was held by the thought of death and he wanted to find out what happened to one at death. He lay down and calmly imagined that his body was dead and rigor mortis had set in. But yet he found he was there as Pure Awareness, unaffected, untouched by the death of the body and the ego associated with it.

The experience was so sudden that it completely upset his normal life. He was unable to go through his lessons at school or follow the usual routine at home. Elders found his behaviour strange and his elder brother scolded him saying, 'What business has such a fellow in a home?'

That very instant the thought of Arunachala flashed across the youngster's mind and he decided: 'Yes, my home is Arunachala'. Finding from a map the location of Tiruvannamalai, he started for it leaving a short note behind saying: 'I am going in search of my father at his behest. No one need grieve over this'. He reached the place on third day as he had no clear idea of the route to be taken. He felt like one overwhelmed by sleep looking for an undisturbed corner. Straight he went to the sanctum of Arunachala within the Temple and surrendered himself at his Feet once for all, saying: 'As you bade, I have come to you. May your will be done.'

Wearing only a loin-cloth, he sat in a secluded corner of the Thousand-pillared Hall of the Temple, unaware of his body and surround-
"All Jnantis, like our Bhagavan regard the body only as a burden to be discarded. Bhagavan once quoted a Tamil stanza which said: 'Suppose you go to a firewood depot, buy a faggot of firewood and engage a cooly to carry it to your house. As you walk along with him, he will be anxiously looking forward to his destination so that he can throw off his burden and be happy and relieved. In the same way the Jnani is eager to throw off his body'. However, after explaining this he added: 'The above exposition is all right as far it goes. But strictly speaking even this is not quite accurate. The true Jnani is not even eager to shed his body. He is indifferent alike to the existence or non-existence of the body, being almost unaware of it'.

— A. Devaraja Mudaliar's My Recollections, p. 148
Bhagavan has translated into Tamil prose Sankara’s Vivekachudamani (Crest Jewel of Wisdom) and in Tamil verse his Hymn to Dakshinamurti (Siva, teaching in Silence). There are other works also by him, all of them published as The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi.

The most important, if spontaneous, achievement of Bhagavan Ramana is his steady inherence in the One Self of the Universe. And so his mere Presence was his greatest Teaching. Devotees felt attuned to the inner Self in his proximity, and understood the significance of the text: ‘The Teaching of the Guru is Silence and the disciples’ doubts are destroyed’ (gurostu mounam vyākhyānam sishyastu chhinna samsayah).

Though established in Pure Awareness Bhagavan came down to the level of the seeker approaching him and explained to him the details of the various steps. We find all these steps briefly stated in his Upadesa Sara (which he himself composed in Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu and Malayalam). Ultimately there is nothing but Pure Awareness in which all notions of bondage and freedom, ignorance and illumination, disappear. It is this trait of Bhagavan Ramana that endeared him to so many seekers from all parts of the world.

He was an exemplary karma yogi too and took part in the various activities of the Ashram, doing everything to perfection. As a devotee, he melted in love and sang the Praise of Arunachala, the Supreme Self, in his Five Hymns to Arunachala and he took into his fold the entire universe. We see within the premises of his Ashram not only the samadhi of his mother, but also those of a cow, a dog, a crow and a deer, which had been blessed by him during their last moments. Monkeys were his friends on the Hill and also at his later residence well-known as Sri Ramanasramam on the southern slope of Arunachala. Squirrels had their feast of nuts strewn all over his Hall during his midday resting time — some of them would clamber up his sofa and eat the nuts from off his palm.

Thus we see in Ramana a veritable Dakshinamurti, an Acharya Sankara with his Teaching of Pure Non-dual Awareness, a Buddha radiating compassionate love towards all beings, an exemplary karma yogi and a devotee full of non-discriminating spontaneous love towards all expressions of the One Supreme Self. From the accounts of his life, his works and the reported Talks with him published by Sri Ramanasramam, we witness the various scintillating aspects of his wonderful life with us on earth. It is the Centenary of such a glorious and universal Person that we are now celebrating in order to draw the attention of the old and the young towards this unique and yet familiar and friendly Manifestation of the Supreme Being-Awareness-Bliss which played with us for a while and is evidently spreading its benign influence over all the world.

THE JUICE

By ‘Kanji’

O Bhagavan,
Let this one be the ekta playing to distraction
The note of the i-feeling
The i-feeling shoots forth like a slender branch from the pith of the tree.

Tracing it back, we see everything flowed that way from the very beginning.
Do not cut this branch, enter its livingness drawing close into heartwood
Siva, the Lord, Supreme Whom all adore,
Us'd once His Trident in a mighty act of Grace:
That Trident-thrust He made in times of yore
Proclaims for e'er Tiruchuli a sacred place.

The ancient sanctity about Tiruchuli declared by the puranas is now confirmed in living memory by the incarnation of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi in Sri Sundara Mandiram which stands adjoining the Temple of Sri Bhuminatha.

Tiruchuli is a small town that has some local commercial importance and has grown around the ancient temple. In South India, the land of pagodas, Sri Bhuminatha's temple is not of inconsiderable importance. Of the twelve Saivite temples of India, that of Tiruchuli is reckoned as one. While Siva is worshipped as Bhuminatha, Parvati, His Consort is known here by her name Sahayamba. Historical records show that saints like Sundaramurti and Manickavachakar have visited this sacred place and extolled the spiritual merit of a pilgrimage to Tiruchuli. Periya puranam, the well-known scripture in Tamil, contains a description of this Siva Kshetra.

Of particular sanctity are the waters of the tank, known as Soola Tirtam in front of the temple. That was the place of Siva's Trident-thrust; and during the month of magha, just prior to the grand annual festival in the temple, the waters are reputed to rise step by step, day after day, till the celebrations are over, and thereafter they sink down in like manner. The remarkable part of this phenomenon is that it takes place each year whether the monsoon appears or has failed.

Towards the north-east of Sri Bhuminatha's temple is Sri Sundara Mandiram; it is a spacious but modest-looking house built by Sri Sundaram Iyer, after whom it is named. The building remains to this day substantially as he had left it, though more than sixty years have elapsed since it first sheltered the revered parents of the Maharshi.

Sri Sundaram Iyer was a self-made man of innate wisdom and strong character. He started his independent career in his twelfth year, as a village accountant clerk. Such was his keen observation of men and matters that he soon acquainted himself with the legal profession and obtained permission to practise as a pleader. By 1880 he built up a large practice, and his house was busy from morning to night with numerous clients, guests and visitors. Indeed, the house he built was so designed as to have two sets of compartments with equal accommodation; one half was occupied by the family and the other was at the disposal of the visitors or of some officer who might have come to Tiruchuli on tour or official visit. Whoever he the visitor, even

1 From Free India, October 22, 1944.
if he be a stranger, he had his board with the *Vakil Ejamān* as Sri Sundaram Iyer was familiarly known to the people. Throughout his busy life he was very ably assisted by his devout wife, Alagammal, who not only looked after her four children but also to the needs of every guest to her house with equal, maternal love. Helpful and obliging by nature to one and all, Sri Sundaram Iyer became a man of considerable influence.

A small incident in his life is worthy of mention here. On professional work Sri Sundaram Iyer had often to go to the surrounding places in the country and in those days travelling had to be done by bullock cart. The countryside was infested by robbers and no traveller could claim immunity from their molestation. But such was the awe and respect the *Vakil Ejamān* commanded that even the robbers prowling at night would let his cart go unmolested. On one occasion a Government officer of local importance would have been a victim to their high-handedness had not Sri Sundaram Iyer’s cart arrived on the spot, quite providentially at the nick of time, when the robbers took to their heels.

But alas! even before Sri Sundaram Iyer had reached the meridian of his life, he left his mortal coil. His death spread a gloom over the life of the disconsolate widow, Alagammal and her four children. Happily, however, they found good protection and help from Sri Subbier and Sri Nelliappier, the two younger brothers of the late Sundaram Iyer. At that time Sri Subbier was employed in the Sub-Registrar’s Office at Dindigul, and not long after he was transferred to Madurai, while Sri Nelliappier was practising as a pleader at Manamadurai. In due course, in order to meet the expenses of the family, the house at Tiruchuli had to be sold. From that time upto 1934 the house changed several hands, and finally, in that year, it was purchased by the Nadar community at Tiruchuli as trust property for their school.

Now in 1944, it is this house which first sheltered the great Sage as a baby and a boy, which by virtue of his birth therein has become a Temple of Worship, and which actually stands adjoining the temple of Sri Bhuminatha in Tiruchuli — it is this house that has been acquired by Sri Ramanasramam in the month of September. Protracted negotiations had to
be conducted by Sri Niranjanananda Swami, the Sarvadhikārī of Sri Ramanasramam. But for his perseverance and indefatigable zeal, the generous help and selfless services of numerous devotees, this great acquisition of Sri Sundara Mandiram might not have been possible. Sri Niranjanananda Swami, who stayed all the while at Madurai, made necessary arrangements for the installation of a large portrait of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi with those of the parents, Sri Sundaram Iyer and Alagammal.

A large gathering of devotees had already assembled from different parts of Madurai and Ramnad Districts, and some had come even from Bombay. All the devotees were at Tiruchuli by the morning of the 13th September. Prominent people of Tiruchuli arranged for the reception of the Sarvadhikārī and the devotees, and the day began with archana in Sri Bhuminatha's temple. In the evening the portraits were taken in a big procession through the main streets of Tiruchuli. As the procession passed by each house, devotees came out from their homes and offered arati and worship to the portraits. Before the procession reached Sri Sundara Mandiram, it stopped for a short while in the Mantapam, just as the temple procession with the idol of God stays in the Mantapam before returning to the temple. When the procession recommenced with the portraits, it looked as if it were a procession with the Idol of Bhuminatha Himself that proceeded and entered Sri Sundara Mandiram.

Thus took place the grand installation of the portraits of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi and the parents. Sahasranama Archana was duly performed and prasadom was also distributed. From that day onwards (13-9-'44) everyday archana is being performed and the Mandiram building is in the custody of a temple bhattar. Every arrangement facilitating devotees' pilgrimage to Tiruchuli via Madurai or Aruppukottai has already been made.

With previous intimation given in time to the President of Sri Ramanasramam, the devout pilgrim can have convenient arrangements made for his stay etc., at Tiruchuli, so that he may offer his homage to the revered memory of the parents at Sri Sundara Mandiram, the place of Sri Ramana's Incarnation.

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GURU PURNIMA (A Song)

By

Dilip Kumar Roy

O thou, my life's one Refuge,
I lean on none but thee.
Lord, in thy deep compassion,
For ever abide with me.
In the pathless alien ocean
Thou teach me how to steer
My frail boat in the tempest,
Delivered from all fear.

May thy Light redeem my starless
Despond and make me see
The radiance that sustains all
Souls everlastingly.
May thy full moon of Beauty
Shower on earth thy Grace:
So everything I vision
Reveals thy loveliness.
The Life of Sri Ramana Maharshi

PART I—(A FRAGMENT)

Introduction

Monday, the 30th December, 1879 is a memorable day in the history of India. On that day was born in a brahmin family at Tiruchuli in South India a great sage who embodied in himself great peace, rare excellence of penance, wonderful dispassion, immense compassion, flawless wisdom, pure conduct, and who is an example unto the entire human race. The inhabitants of that village could hardly realise then that in their midst was born a yogi of such great qualities who was to purify their country and adorn Mother India with immortal glory (In the Tamil — To weave the cloth of immortal renown and dress mother India with it). How could they know that a divine effulgence had manifested as a man to relieve the country of its distress and to write the name of their village and that of India in letters of gold in the history of the world? It is only then when it gave birth to this great saint that Tiruchuli attained real eminence though it had already attained some distinction having been celebrated in songs by saints Manickavasagar and Sundarar. Who is that Great Saint? It is none other than Sri Ramana Maharshi, the foremost amongst the most distinguished religious prophets of this 20th Century.

There is no occasion for the birth of Great Saints except when the country goes through great suffering. We know from religious epics that whenever a country suffers from the dominance of unrighteousness (i.e. whenever Dharma fails) Great Souls are born who uplift the country by their service. But the methods they adopted to regenerate the country were not all the same. Bhagavan Sri Rama appeared and killed the Rakshasas who were giving trouble to the rishis. Bhagavan Sri Krishna appeared, destroyed the arrogant Kings who were working against the country's good and also became a great religious teacher by giving the Bhagavad Gita to the world. Holy men like Sri Buddha and Sri Sankara proved also great heroes who wiped out their country's distress through their wonderful power, though they wielded neither the bow nor the sword. They shook off their bondage first and tried to relieve others also of their bondage.

2 This work was not completed.

(Taken from an unpublished manuscript at the Ashram).
They had the capacity to bring into the right path (the path of Dharma) those who had strayed away from it. What a hero could not achieve by the sword, they achieved by their Soul-force. The hero of our history Sri Ramana Maharshi belongs to this class. He combines in himself the peace and harmony of Sri Buddha, the logic and skill in philosophical discussion of Sri Sankara and the capacity to discover new truths of the Great Sages of yore who discovered the mantras. It is for this reason that he is regarded as a spiritual Guru or Master, hailed as a Maharshi, and adored by all. Contemporary sadhakas (participants on the spiritual path) have come to know through many proofs that this Maharshi is an avatar or incarnation of Skanda, the Greatest Religious Teacher of the world.

Mahatmas (Great Souls) differ greatly from Maharshis (Great Rishis). Mahatma literally means great figure. A great scholar, philanthropist, statesman or righteous man are all great. Their service is essential to the country and their names deserve to be adored. But they cannot redeem sinners. A Maharshi on the other hand can destroy evil (ignorance) and impart divine wisdom, can make saints out of sinners. A Mahatma's insight can only enter a human heart and examine its thoughts. The Maharshi's insight does not stop there, but removes all impurities from the heart. Each generation produces its mahatmas, but a Maharshi is born hardly once in a century.

Any man who stays even a few minutes in Sri Ramana Maharshi's presence will realise that he is a Maharshi. Though his gaze is dazzling like the rays of the Sun, his subtle smile is cool and refreshing like moonlight. His bright face bespeaks a Changeless tranquillity and proclaims he is of the nature of bliss always. In his presence, all men realise limpid peace and harmony. Occasions have not been few when many that went to him with the object of assailing him with a series of questions became silent the moment they reached him and returned after having a look at his figure, without putting any questions and with all mischievous moves of their minds subdued. Even one whose nature it is not to admit one's faults will in the Maharshi's presence open out his heart and cry within himself, "Bhagavan, I have erred. I have erred. Pray protect me". The number of those who go to him for mere Darshan of his holy figure is even greater than those who go to Him for guidance on the spiritual path. In His eyes, face and whole figure there beams and dances a brilliant, lucid, sweet and great force which attracts the eyes and also the hearts alike of dumb animals and sinners devoid of knowledge or spiritual wisdom. Though he has never invited anyone, all go to him. Though He has never assumed the role of a Guru and imparted any special instruction (upadesa) to any disciple, all see special instructions even in his ordinary talks and taking them for their guidance regard themselves as his disciples. Though he has no special partiality or sepa-
rate love for anybody, all love him. Our Maharshi, with such a curious and strange history is, thanks to our good fortune, living as the very embodiment of bliss in Tiruvannamalai, moving as a child among children, as the most excellent adult among adults and as a creature among creatures, viewing the vast creation all alike with the same equal vision.

Though it is not possible to write in full this Maharshi's life we write this First Part from such authentic data as we have been able to get at, and venture to offer it to the expectant crowd of his admirers. There is no doubt that his future life will shine even more brilliant than his past. We propose writing it as Second Part hereafter.

CHAPTER II

Alas! the child was not born a girl

Nagaswami Aiyar of Parasara Gotram, prominent among the citizens of Tiruchuli and his partner in life Lakshmi Ammal had four sons, Venkateswara Aiyar, Sundaram Aiyar, Subbaiyar and Nelliappaiyar and a daughter named Lakshmi Ammal. The eldest son Venkatesa Aiyar bore the family responsibility for a little time after the father's death and developing dispassion and disgust for the things of the world left the village, while yet young on holy pilgrimage. Nothing further is yet known about him. Afterwards Sundaram Aiyar who managed the family affairs, married Alagammal, the daughter of Nagasundaram Aiyar of Bharadvoja Gotram living in Kilapasalai Village. The first son this couple had was Nagaswami. The second son was our Maharshi. We may say bright days dawned in Sundaram Aiyar's house from the time this brilliant being entered her womb. It seems that Alagammal developed at that time a wonderful luster which she never had before. People who had witnessed it used to talk much about it.

In this connection we find it hard to omit mentioning a certain matter. Sundaram Aiyar's sister Lakshmi Ammal died before the birth of our Maharshi, leaving an only son behind her. That child was being brought up in Sundaram Aiyar's house. While Alagammal was undergoing the special strain (the peculiar pain) due to the presence within her of the divine child, and while Mother India was eagerly looking forward to the manifestation in her of a glorious son, Sundaram Aiyar's mother Lakshmi Ammal who praying in a corner that her son Sundaram may beget a daughter who could become a bride to her (Lakshmi Ammal's) daughter's son. That daughter's son was Ramaswami. In this matter Alagammal was at one with her mother-in-law. She had other reasons for loving Ramaswami besides the fact that he was the only son left by Lakshmi (her husband's sister). Ramaswami was the son of Alagammal's paternal uncle, Krishna Aiyar by name. Alagammal eagerly expected that this pregnancy would provide the opportunity for making the young and beautiful child growing up in the family her son-in-law. But Providence which wanted to meet the desire of Mother India disappointed the ladies of the house.

The day arrived which is celebrated by all in South India, the day which is observed in all Siva temples as Ardra Darshan day. The Saiva religious books declare that people attain salvation if they have darshan of God Nataraja on that day. It comes off on the day when Star Thiruvathirai (Ardra) is the ruling star in the month of Mārgali (December-January). On the day of Maharshi's birth, though the ruling star at the time of his birth was Punarvasu the immediately preceeding star was Ardra. When the deity was re-entering the temple
after people had witnessed the night festival and were brimming with joy, our Maharshi, a festival in himself to the entire world, was born.

“A son”, “A son”, cried out voices from the confinement room. Hearing it Sundaram Aiyar rejoiced and began doling out gifts of coins, sweets etc. But Lakshmiammal regretted that her desire had been frustrated and that the child was not born a girl. Would she have grieved thus had she known that it was Subrahmanya, the son of the Goddess Sahayavalli (the goddess in Tiruchuli temple whom she had always been worshipping) that was born as a human child in their family?

An event occurred then. Among those present in the confinement room there was a blind woman. It seems she saw in that room a wondrous light. She told the grieving Lakshmiammal of this, her wonderful vision and consoled her saying “He who is born today in your house must be a divine being”. Lakshmiammal was somewhat consoled by this. Though this event created at the time much wonderment, the inner implication behind it was later on forgotten by the inmates of the house because of the fact that the child grew up and differed little from ordinary children.

We shall conclude this Chapter by giving Maharshi’s Horoscope as an appendix² to it.

### CHAPTER III

**Father to Him, Father to all**

Sundaram Aiyar called his new born child Venkataraman after his family deity of that

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² Horoscope of Sri Bhagavan.

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**SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI**

**Born at Tiruchuli near Madurai**

On 29/30-12-1879 at 1.00 A.M. (L.M.T.) & 1.17 A.M. (I.S.T.)

Long. 78°-15’ East, Lat. 9°-50’ North. Ayanamsa 9-20°-43’.

Punarvasu 3rd pāda: Balance of GURU Dasa at Birth 4 years, 1 month, 20 days.

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Punarvasu 3rd pāda: Balance of GURU Dasa at Birth 4 years, 1 month, 20 days.
name. The child was greatly beloved by all, men and women alike, in the village. In particular, all those who had no child of their own regarded him as their child and loved him accordingly. All this was due to our Maharshi's attractive power and nothing else. There is nothing strange in the Lord's son being loved by all whose innermost being is really the Lord. Among those who thus greatly loved Maharshi, Tahsildar Ganapathi Aiyar and Sub-Registrar Narayanaswami Aiyar deserve special mention. Sundaram Aiyar had another son after the birth of Ramana. He was named Nagasundaram. After Nagasundaram came a daughter Alarmelu Mangai. The children grew up happily and well under the protection of their parents.

There was a middle school at Tiruchuli. Maharshi was first educated there. Sundaram Aiyar was a Vakil (Lawyer) in the Sub-Magistrate's Court at Tiruchuli. It would not be out of place in this Chapter to mention a few of Sundaram Aiyar's praiseworthy qualities. He never got angry with anybody. Though he was very gentle by nature, children and ordinary men felt like approaching a lion when they went to him. Though a Vakil by profession he hated falsehood. Though not very rich he was very generous and kept an open house. As all those who visited Tiruchuli were usually entertained by him, two persons who started hotels in the place found their business unprofitable and so abandoned their enterprise. This is an index of his hospitable nature. In this matter Alagammal heartily co-operated with her husband. Even if guests arrived at dead of night, Alagammal gladly cooked for them and served them with food. Sundaram Aiyar loved his motherless nephew even more than his own children. His two brothers were devoted to him. All people had great regard for him. It seems even robbers had such a regard for him, not simply out of fear but out of love, that if they came across him on the roads they would show him due respect and see him off.

It seems our Maharshi used to call his father by the Telugu word 'Nāyana' and not the Tamil word 'Appa'. In their house was a relation called Lakshmana Ayyar who knew Telugu. He was very fond of our Maharshi. Though others called our Maharshi by his full name it seems Lakshmana Aiyar called him by the pet name of 'Ramana'. As that name has subsequently become the chief name of the Maharshi we can never forget its originator, viz., Lakshmana Ayyar. It is because of acquaintance with him that our Maharshi learnt to talk Telugu in his boyhood itself. Because Maharshi called his father 'Nāyana', 'Nāyana' became thenceforth Sundaram Aiyar's name. Not only did the other children in the house call him 'Nāyana', but the entire village began to call him 'Nāyana'. From this it is seen that all the people of Tiruchuli had a filial regard for Sundaram Aiyar. If Lord Skanda himself had chosen him for father it is little wonder that he attained such popular esteem!

It seems one day Nāyana started out in his cart on a trip. He leaned on one pillow and had another pillow opposite to him. The Maharshi said, "Nāyana, this pillow opposite to you may fall down." Nāyana paid no special attention to these words. But in that trip, the pillow was lost as foretold by Maharshi. When Nāyana returned to the village, he looked with wonder at his son and said "The words you uttered came literally true. Are you divine?" Though this is a small incident, it is worth noting since these words came from Nāyana who had an insight of Truth.

It seems uncle Subbier once found fault with our Maharshi on a marriage occasion. Maharshi became distressed in mind and instead of going to his mother Alagammal for comfort as all children would, it seems he went to Goddess Sahayavalli at the temple for refuge. She was his true Mother and by her Grace he secured Peace of mind at once.
The Mysterious Operation of Grace Divine
(Reminiscences)

By
Viswanatha Swami

My spiritual life began with the darsan of Sri Nrisimha Bharati Swamigal of Sringagiri at the Sankara Mutt, Dindigul. I was only a boy of six then and I did not know who he was. I happened to be in a crowd of devotees going forward to receive thirtha-prasadam from him. When my turn came, I stood there confused not knowing what to do. The Swami beckoned to me with a smile to approach him and receive the prasad and I did so. Though I had not the least idea of his identity then, I was impressed with his dignity, luster and spontaneous love. Yet, I did not think any more of it.

Years passed. Sometime in my fourteenth year I happened to be looking at the beautiful collection of Sri Sankara's Works (printed and published by the Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam) in my father's library as I had some knowledge of Sanskrit then. Finding one of the books of a different size and get up, I took it out and saw that it bore the title: Bhakhi-Sudha-tarangini (Waves of the Nectar of Devotion). As I opened the book, I found in the frontispiece the majestic and lovely figure of the Swami who gave me thirtha-prasad in my sixth year and saw that he was the famous Sri Nrisimha Bharati Swami, the Head of the Sringagiri Mutt. Though so many years had passed, the impress left on my mind was so vivid that I spontaneously recognized his identity. I went through his short biography in English at the beginning and his thrilling hymns in praise of the various aspects of Divine Splendour. I immensely enjoyed his superb devotional poetry.

A few years later, in my seventeenth year (in January, 1921), I happened to get the darsan of Bhagavan Sri Ramana at Skandasrama on the Hill Arunachala and stayed with him for a week. At my very first sight of him I felt his all-pervasiveness and was overwhelmed by that experience. He asked me to take a copy of the manuscript of Sri Ramana Gita (in Samskrit) and give it to my father saying simply: “He will understand.” And I did so. My father understood Bhagavan only after going through it, as predicted by Sri Bhagavan.

1 The water with which the images of deities are bathed during worship is collected and spoonfuls of it offered to devotees.
I returned to Bhagavan for good on the evening of the 2nd of January, 1923 and surrendered myself at His Feet. Just a fortnight before that Bhagavan had begun to stay at the present site of his Ashram with the samadhi of his mother who had been liberated by him in May, 1922 at Skandasrama. There were only two cottages then on the site, one being the living quarters and the other the kitchen.

During the course of my stay with Bhagavan, I happened to find a collection of Hymns in Praise of Ramana recorded in a big bound Note-book of the Ashram. Going through it I came across a Hymn of 108 Names of Bhagavan Ramana composed by one, Sankarananda Bharati of Uttar Kasi in the Himalayas who had stayed with Bhagavan on the Hill. Going through it I found a Name Sri Sringadri-Mathadisa bhavitah, which means, ‘One revered by the Head of the Sringagiri Mutt, and asked Bhagavan what it meant and got the reply that the reference was to Sri Nrisimha Bharati Swami of Sringagiri who had intuitive recognition of him and regard for him and used to enquire of devotees going to him from these parts: ‘How is the Bala Yogi of Tiruvannamalai? Is he well?’

The following account may be of interest here. There was a young man studying Sanskrit and sacred lore at Chidambaram. After finishing his course of studies there he went to Sringagiri to hear Vedanta explained by the famous Nrisimha Bharati Swami. The Swami condescended to teach him though he had just then intended to stop teaching and retire into solitude for meditation. The teaching began and was proceeding. Once, at the end of the day’s lesson, the Swami remarked, “We study scriptures and commentaries on them. They do not clarify one’s understanding and help one spirituality; but they are only secondary. The main thing is one’s spiritual ripeness. One who is already spiritually evolved need not go through the scriptures and commentaries on them. Such a one gets illumined in a flash without these aids. The Bala Yogi of Tiruvannamalai is an instance here.” The student had heard of the Brahmana Swami while at Chidamabaram but had thought it was all a hoax. And so he was stunned to hear such profound appreciation of him from the lips of his venerable master and resolved to go and have darshan of him ere long.

After finishing his course of studies at Sringagiri, the young man went to North India, became a sannyasin, with the name, Prajnananda, and met one, Narayana Brahmachari, at Calcutta. He had been in Tiruvannamalai and moved intimately with Bhagavan Ramana.

2It is this young man who became a sannyasin Amritananda and whose name is found at the end of Ch. XVIII of Sri Ramana Gita.
and Ganapatipeta Muni and so he gave a vivid and glowing account of both of them. Prajanananda profoundly moved by the enthusiastic description of the Maharshi and the Muni wrote a hymn in Samskrit in praise of the Maharshi. The substance of one of the verses in it is as follows:

"I bow to Sri Ramana Maharshi, who endowed with the characteristics of a Jivan-mukta, Gunatita, and Sthitaprajna delights all devotees with his glance of grace and words of Wisdom, springing forth from his innate experience of profound bliss, without the least differentiation of caste or creed — I bow to him who is an incarnation of Guha (Son of God) ever dwelling in Arunachala."

In the concluding verse of that hymn, Prajanananda prays to Bhagavan Ramana to pardon his impetuosity in daring to praise him with his meagre understanding and feeble tongue one who has been lauded by Kavyakanta Ganapatipeta Muni with his wonderful hymns — the Muni who is a rare gem born of the ocean of the line of Vasishtha, the Lion fearlessly moving about the forests of the Vedas — and to grant him his darshan soon.

Narayana Brahmachari (Amritanatha) famed for his enthusiasm got the hymn printed with taste and sent copies of it to Bhagavan. As prayed for by him, Prajanananda was able to go over to Tiruvannamalai soon after and have darshan of Bhagavan in the Virupaksha Cave and narrate to him his utter lack of understanding of Bhagavan’s spiritual status and how he came to know of it first from Sri Nrisimha Bharati Swami and later from Narayana Brahmachari. He stayed with Bhagavan for a day and when he took leave of him, Bhagavan presented him with a copy of the Tamil translation by him of Sankara’s Viveka Chudamani (The Crest-jewel of Wisdom) printed copies of which had been received just then.

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TO BE

By

Kavanaugh

To strive, and become lost in That, which permeates All!
It is to be beyond “knowledge” to be in the Knowing . . .
To loose yourself to everything to find That . . .
which is within Everything.
What is the mind but a center of Stimulus and Response!
To Respond to the Sublime you must Be in the Source!
. . . not merely “think” of IT.
the Flow is to be Contained, be Breathed to Be . . .

The writer of this account has seen in his teens the Swami Prajanananda expounding to an audience at Dindigul, in a series of talks, Sureswaracharya’s Naishkarmya Siddhi; but had not known then any of the above details regarding his contact with Sri Bhagavan. He (the writer) remembers him reciting a sloka in praise of Sri Nrisinha Bharati Swami at the beginning of his talks, which means:

"I bow for ever to the lotus feet of Sri Sat-Chidananda Sivabhinavaya Nrisimha Bharati who adorned the lofty Guru’s Throne of Sringagiri as a World-Teacher."

(to be continued)

3 Liberated from the bondage of ignorance.
4 Beyond the three guinas : sativa, rajas and tamas.
5 One who is established in Awareness Pure.
6 Transliteration of the sloka:
Sri Sat-chidananda Sivabhinavaya
Nrisimha Bharatyaravinda padga /
Sringadri-guruveda-satvaruthdih
Jagad-guruon Santatam anatfomi //
If you like we shall today visit first Ramana Maharshi’s Ashram. (Venkata) Ramana is the name, rather the personal name, which this Master received from his parents. Maharshi is the title bestowed on him much later by his admirers. The title ‘Maharshi’ deserves some explanation. Several centuries ago in ancient India the title of ‘Rishi’ was used to be given to the historical or mythological authors of the sacred scriptures, which literally means he who ‘sees’ God, who ‘sees’ the Truth, and from whom ignorance has fallen off, it has ceased to appear as reality. Maharshi or Maharshi means the great rishi, and it is under this title that the Sage to whom we are now going, is generally known.

The Ashram is situated at the foot of a sacred hill, Arunachala by name, which has always been a favourite place of the South Indian hermits. Today we still find in the innumerable caves of this hill many holy anchorites, who give themselves up to hard penance in silence and solitude, and whom the people of the neighbourhood go piously to take care of. The Maharshi has himself spent a great part of his life in some of these caves, when he was sunk in deep meditation which used to last days and weeks. Round him, as it was with Ramakrishna, disciples who were attracted by his saintliness gathered in an increasing number. Some years back these disciples finally built at the foot of the hill a large room in which they succeeded making the Maharshi consent to live, and where till now he lives.

In order to see him there is no need for any formalities: no fence encloses the ground, nor a watchman to stop you. Anyone can enter the room at any hour of the day or night, sit close to him and stay as long as one wants. Some go after a few minutes, others live there for years.

The Maharshi himself sits on a couch with stretched legs in a corner of the room. He is about sixty years old, and has the hair white and cut very short. The only cloth he wears is a kaupin, that is, a small piece of cloth around his loins. At first sight nothing distinguishes him from an ordinary man. But if you sit in the room and withdraw inwardly, you will soon perceive that there prevails in it a very special atmosphere, very different from anything you can get elsewhere.

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1 A Talk over Radio Geneva in June 1937,
People who go there with their problems and difficulties of all sorts, practical or philosophical, find peace gradually penetrating their hearts, spirits and souls, and a moment comes when the solution of their problems appear naturally to them and in the most clear and definite manner. What has the Maharshi done to help them?

This is a question to which it is very difficult to give an answer. It appears often that he is not even conscious of what is passing in the minds of his disciples. But the Hindus and many others believe that he has, as it is being said there, 'seen' God, 'seen' Truth. And the fact that he has seen Truth permits him to radiate it, or rather allow it to radiate, around him so well that those who surround him, being in this aura, see in the light of Truth the things which engage their minds. This is an explanation which evidently appears a little simple-minded and extra-scientific, but till now I have not heard another explanation given. After all, it must be remembered that India is a country which our reason cannot, or cannot yet, explain completely.

The Maharshi speaks very little. During a great part of his life he seemed to observe a vow of silence which, though being less rare in India than in Europe, in itself constitutes a hard self-discipline. From the time he began to speak again till now, he does not make too much use of it. His mother tongue is Tamil, but he speaks and writes also two other languages of Southern India: he knows English well enough to read and understand it, though he does not speak much in it.

When they ask him questions, often he does not answer at all, and the questioner even doubts if he has heard or understood at all, for not even a muscle in his face moves. Either he remains immovable in meditation, or quietly continues to do what he was doing. But more often in this case, at the end of some hours or some days, he who has put the question will get its solution in such a clear manner that he feels bewildered how he could ever ask such a naïve question. Sometimes the Maharshi also answers, but then pretty briefly, aiming at putting the questioner on the track of the answer rather than giving it to him ready-made.

Ramana Maharshi is as little prolix in writing also, as he is in speaking. He considers that all his teaching, all that he can give to the world is contained in the forty quatrains or 160 lines which he composed. Few of our Western philosophers can boast of such a laconism. These forty quatrains which have been translated in some languages and which are now in the course of being translated into French also, can be sung like all the sacred scriptures of India. Every evening in the Ashram after some ancient sacred texts being chanted, a group of disciples gather to chant them in the presence of the Maharshi, who carefully corrects faults of intonation or of chanting.

What in a few words is the teaching of the Maharshi? He has this remarkable quality of professing that he brings absolutely nothing new in his teaching. All that can be said of Truth, all that can be taught have already been 'seen' by the rishis of old, and are found in the ancient scriptures of the Vedas and Upanishads. What then is the role of the teacher or the Guru? It is to remake personally the path which was made and marked by the ancient rishis, to prove that this path leads to the goal, and then to lead the disciples, not after the faith of the old dusty books, but after experience acquired by him personally.

Moreover, as I told you last Monday, this is a great principle in the spiritual preparation in India. One cannot teach except that of which one has the direct personal experience. Fundamentally there is nothing astonishing in this. We know that books can be written and lectures and conferences be given on towns
and countries of which the writers and speakers have heard, have read descriptions and seen photographs. But how much more interesting, more precise, more useful the books and lectures which are written and spoken by a man who has actually visited those countries? This consideration which appears obvious to us in the case of material journeys appears much more so to the Hindus in the spiritual sphere. Those alone can speak with authority who have the spiritual experience themselves.

But the Hindu philosophy recognises several paths leading to the complete union with the Divine, to the end and aim of spiritual life, which the Hindus call Realisation. It can be reached by reason, by love, by sacrifice, by dispassionate work, by psychical discipline etc. (the great yogas: jnana, philosophy; karma, work; bhakti, love; and yoga.) The Maharshi chose the path of reason or knowledge or philosophy, or what is called in Sanskrit, jnana.

I cannot explain to you in detail here the method, already classical, followed and taught by the Maharshi. Briefly, it essentially consists of arriving by intellectual effort and by an intense and well-directed mind towards understanding our true nature, the nature of our true 'I'. The aspirant must have a clear idea of the fact that his true 'I' cannot be his physical body, it cannot be intelligence, nor the will nor the feeling, and thus by successive eliminations he will, little by little, succeed in attributing reality to none but the soul, and in identifying himself with none but the soul. Then comes the supreme stage, that of complete union with the Divine, that which made Jesus to say 'My Father and I are one.'

From this explanation the path will appear easy to you, but when one wants actually to tread it with the whole of one's being, not merely with one's imagination, it will be found frightfully hard. They tell us, for example, of the Maharshi that at a certain period of his life, he went into meditation sitting with his back to a wall, and that he remained in that position so long and in a meditation so deep that ants ate a piece of his back without his taking any notice of it. Even today we see the marks of it. This and many other similar stories make us irresistibly think of the Christian mystics of the Middle Ages, who, in their desperate search after union with God, ceased to take interest in any other thing and particularly in themselves.

Today the Maharshi, freed from the notion of his being the body or mind, uses the one or the other with a complete detachment, in the same way as we use a spoon or a fork. He no more speaks with any emphasis on the first person.

In the atmosphere of this ashram, where life is patriarchal, where the Maharshi eats with his disciples, where everybody is free in his seeking in a great unity of inspiration, one gets the impression of being transported thousands of years back to the time of the Upanishads and feeling the profound historical unity of all Indian culture.

Among the people who surround the Master are professors, peasants, engineers, monks and advocates. There are Hindus and Westerners, men, women and children, even animals. Stories are told about the relation of the Maharshi with the animals which are absolutely unlikely, and which yet seem to be authentic. Since four years the favourite cow of the Maharshi is said to be giving birth to a calf often on the birthday of its master. But unfortunately I have no time today to tell you other marvellous stories about the Maharshi and his ashram. . . .
ON April 14th thousands of people in India and devotees all over the world were in mourning. Their Guru Sri Ramana Maharshi had entered Maha Samadhi and they could never have the joy of sitting again in his physical presence. Although it is the tradition in India to discount death and look upon it as a welcome release from the trammels of the flesh, that is in the case of ordinary mortals, in the case of the Guru the feeling cannot be quite the same. He was the sheet anchor to whom we had become accustomed to cling; without his physical body we feel that our moorings have suddenly broken loose and that we are drifting alone on the troublesome sea of the world.

When Bhagavan passed away, the behaviour of the devotees with very few exceptions was calm and even cheerful. He would never leave us, we told each other. Had he not himself said: ‘You think I am going to die, I shall be more alive than ever.’ But still in spite of our cheerfulness, in spite of our implicit belief in what he had said, there was a gap. The Ashram did not seem quite the same. All the memories of his twenty-eight years’ association with it were undoubtedly there, but we missed the benign smile, the understanding response to our enquiry. In future we must understand that this must now be contacted within, which made it a question of faith and of our own response. It was not nearly so easy, for this demanded personal surrender and patience. No, it wasn’t the same.

But whether in his physical frame or not Bhagavan was and remained the Sad-Guru to hundreds of thousands of people. Some of these were fortunate to have lived with him for a time; some to have visited him; the rest only to have heard of him. But it was the same for all of them, they all loved him, all felt that they were his children and that he had an especial regard for each of them individually. For were they not his disciples?

Here it may be objected that Bhagavan himself had said that he had no disciples, so how can I possibly say that he was the universal Guru? When questioned on this very subject Bhagavan explained that though from the Jnani’s point of view all were equal so that he could admit of no such relationship as Guru and disciple, all being a manifestation of the One Self, from the point of view of the

\[1\] A talk given over All India Radio, sometime in 1950.
person in the bondage of individual limitation such a relationship undoubtedly did exist. It was, as it stood, up to them. They must realize this relationship in themselves, they must be able to see the Guru as the pure manifestation of the Self. And in the case of Ramana Maharshi that necessity was realized by so many thousands, which alone proved his supremacy and the fact that he was indeed entitled to be called the Sad-Guru.

It must be remembered that only a limited number of people visited Bhagavan because of his philosophy or because they intended to carry out a serious sadhana under his personal direction. They came to him as the Supreme Sat (Existence) Itself in the flesh, something tangible and visible which was not merely an abstraction. Philosophy and japa were all very well for sadhus but let us leave that to them, was the attitude. Here is something that we can worship, that calls out all the best in our nature, whose very presence gives us comfort and solves immediate problems. We think of him frequently when we are away from him and leave the rest to him. He will look after us.

But it was not only the sophisticated and elders who looked on him as their Guru. Children had a special love for him, and in fact treated him as their private property. Thirty years ago when Bhagavan was living in one of the caves on the side of the Hill an English Police Officer came to see him and specially remarked on this fact. He said that children of all ages would climb the Hill in the scorching midday sun just to sit for a while in his presence.

The greatness of his teaching was not the intellectual depths he probed, doubtless he had a brain of the first magnitude, but every word came from his personal experience, it was not just logical conclusions valid in the realm of language, it was fact and needed no study of books or intellectual attainment for its achievement. All could attain to it if they would only follow his instructions and practice assiduously for a while.

So many people have tried to make out that the path of Advaita is a complete denial of the world. He never taught any such thing. He would point out its impermanence and the temporary aspect of its reality, but would always say that the world was undoubtedly there for all of us and its problems could not be evaded but had to be faced. It was the way of facing these, the different point of focus, that he tried to impress on us. The realized person saw the world with the rest of us, but he saw it as appearance or, as we might say, limitation of Reality. Change the focus and look on Reality itself and then the
all-engrossing appearance of the world would cease to hold a position of supreme importance any longer. It would still be there doubtless, but there as the play of light and shade on a summer landscape, a fact for the beholder, but only a fact of appearance.

His great calm and his wonderful silence caused him to be more and more associated in people’s minds with the Hill Arunachala he loved so much. His long stay of fifty-four years in Tiruvannamalai by its side was itself a feat of immovable solidity. That he loved the Hill dearly is known to all. Did he not write five beautiful hymns in its praise while still a young man? He used to say that Kailas was undoubtedly the abode of Lord Siva but that the Hill was Lord Siva Himself. And for thousands of us he himself was the Hill. Even on the hottest days of the year he would go walking on it several times a day without any covering, when most of us could not even bear to put our feet on the ground. He carried out this practice regularly for years and only ceased near the end when his health began to fail.

Do you remember the five verses he wrote in its praise? I can think of no more suitable ending to my short talk than to read them to you:

**FIVE STANZAS TO SRI ARUNACHALA**

*By Sri Bhagavan*

Ocean of Nectar, full of Grace, engulfing the universe in Thy Splendour! O Arunachala, the Supreme Itself! be Thou the Sun and open the lotus of my heart in Bliss!

Oh Arunachala! In Thee the picture of the universe is formed, has its stay, and is dissolved; this is the sublime Truth. Thou art the Inner Self, Who dancest in the Heart as ‘I’. ‘Heart’ is Thy name, Oh Lord!

**TO FIND**

*By Kavana*

Where do you find the measure of Being.
In the apple, orange, pear or tree;
In the word, the song, the art or thee.
The choice is radically diverse, you know;
Though, taken in itself,
Isn’t it the measure in itself!
To walk, to run, to dance,
To Be ........
Around the world the people say :
This is the way, the way to be.
But, isn’t it Chance, the way to be!
You know Effort, you know the child.
You know the mean, you know the mild.
You know Power, you know the End; but,
Do you know the “I” in Everything!

He who turns inward with untroubled mind to search where the consciousness of ‘I’ arises, realizes the Self, and rests in Thee, O Arunachala! like a river when it joins the ocean.

Abandoning the outer world, with mind and breath controlled, to meditate on Thee within, the Yogi sees Thy Light, Oh Arunachala! and finds his delight in Thee.

He who dedicates his mind to Thee and, seeing Thee, always beholds the universe as Thy figure, he who at all times glorifies Thee and loves Thee as none other than the Self, he is the master without rival, being one with Thee, Oh Arunachala! and lost in Thy Bliss.
“My Beloved Bhagavan”

By Swami Ramdas

What shall I say of Him who towers high,
A veritable Everest of spiritual glory —
A resplendent sun who sheds light on all
He is our soul, our life and sole refuge
The sage par-excellence dwells on the
Sacred Hill
Arunachala — the abode of holy ones —
the Rishis
His compassionate eyes pour forth nectar
on all He sees
Drowning us in a sea of joy and ecstasy
Our lives are aflame with divine wisdom
At a moment’s touch of His world-redeeming
feet,
He is God Himself who walked on earth.
His grace and delight enter our hearts
Transforming us into His beauteous image.
He belongs to the dizzy heights:
Still He stands firm on the earth of ours
To redeem and save those who behold
His face reflected in the mirror
Of His toe-nails which glow with celestial
radiance,
The care-worn go to Him and become
Free and cheerful like children at play
The earnest aspirants approach Him
To return deeply permeated with knowledge
eternal;
Verily, to be in His presence is to know
All that exists is Himself—His grandiose
being and form,
His unfailing power of love is most potent.
How He draws me to Him is a mystery.
O! Lord! like a rudderless boat adrift
On that vast ocean of the world I wandered
Hither and thither seeking in darkness
The supreme light and goal that liberates life
From galling bondage and depthless sorrow.

Lo! Thy grace drew me to Thy feet
And I came to Thee a vagrant and a beggar
Thy very sight was burning with the
all-consuming fire of the world,
The instant my head touched Thy holy feet
The fever of my soul left me for ever
I felt lightness and freedom and peace
Then Thine eyes, redolent with Thy
Infinite Grace
Tenderly looked on me and I was thrilled,
I stood before Thee—a figure of pure bliss
Fully bathed in Thy divine halo
Now, I am Thy child—free and happy
My face is suffused with smiles drawn
from Thee
My life is entirely enlightened
With Thy Love, Knowledge and Power,
Thou art my Mother, Master and Friend,
my only Beloved
All glory to Thee! All glory to Thee!

January
Important Events in Maharshi’s Life

1879 December 30 — Monday — corresponding to 16, Margazhi of Tamil year, Pramadi — Star Punarvasu — Ardra Darshan Day — Born at 1 a.m. at Tiruchuzhi (‘Sri Sundara Mandiram’).

1891 Moves to Dindigul, after completing Elementary education at Tiruchuzhi.

1892 February 18: Death of father, Sundaram Iyer. Moves to Madurai. Study at Scott’s Middle School and American Mission High School.

1895 November 1: hears of ‘Arunachala’ mentioned to him by an elderly relative.

1896 (about middle of July): ‘Death Experience’ at Madurai ending in complete and permanent Realisation of the Self (‘Sri Ramana Mandiram’).

August 29 — Saturday: leaves Madurai for Arunachala — September 1 — Tuesday: arrives in Arunachala — Stays in the Temple premises within the Thousand-pillared Hall, beneath the Ilupai Tree, in Pathala Linga (underground cellar), sometimes in the Gopuram.

1897 Moves to Gurunurtham in the outskirts of the town (early in the year).

Stays in the shrine and in the adjoining Mango Grove (a year and a half).

1898 May: Uncle Nelliappa Iyer visits Bhagavan at Mango Grove.

September: Moves to Pavala Kunru.

December: Mother Alagammad visits Bhagavan at Pavala Kunru.

1899 February: Moves to the Hill, Arunachala. Stays in various caves up the Hill, but mostly in Virupaksha Cave, using Mango Tree Cave as summer residence.

1901 Answers to questions asked by Sivaprakasam Pillai (“Who am I?”)

1902 Replies to questions put by Gambhiram Seshayya at Virupaksha Cave: (Self-Enquiry).

1905 Moves to Pachalamman Koil for six months during the plague epidemic — returns to the Hill.
1907 November 18: Momentous meeting between Bhagavan and Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni. Bhagavan imparts upadesa to Muni.

1908 (January to March): Stays at Pachaiamman Keil (with Ganapati Muni and others) and again goes back to Virupaksha Cave.

Translates into Tamil prose Adi Sankara’s Viveka Chudamani and Drik Drisya Viveka.

1911 November: F. H. Humphreys, the first Westerner, meets Bhagavan.

1912 Second death experience at Tortoise Rock in the presence of Vasudeva Sastry and others.

1914 Offers prayers (songs) to Arunachala for Mother’s recovery from illness.

1915 The Song of the Poppadum written for the sake of mother. The following were also written during Virupaksha days:

Arunachala Aksharamana Malai, Arunachala Padikam, Arunachala Ashtakam, Translation of Devika Lottara, Translation of Adi Sankara’s Hymn to Dakshinamurti, Guru Stuti and Hastamalaka Sotra.

1916 Moves to Skandashram.
1917  Composes *Arunachala Panchatnam* in Sanskrit.
Mother settles at Skandashram. *Sri Ramana Gita* in Sanskrit written by Ganapati Muni.

1922  May 19, Friday: Mother's Maha Samadhi.
Middle of December: moves to the present site of Sri Ramanasramam.

1927  Composes *Upadesa Sara* in Tamil, Telugu, Sanskrit and Malayalam.
April 24: Composes *Atma Vidya* (Self Knowledge).

1928  Composes *Ulladu Narpadu* (Forty Verses on Reality) in Tamil and Malayalam (Sat Darshanam).

1930  *Sat Darshanam* in Sanskrit (translated from Tamil by Ganapati Muni).

1933  Translates into Tamil the *Agama: Sarvajnana Stharam — Atma Sakshatkara*.

1936  Translates into Malayalam *Sri Ramana Gita*.

1939  September 1, Thursday: Foundation laid by Bhagavan for the Mathrubhuteswara Temple.

1940  Selects 42 verses from *The Bhagavat Gita* (now entitled *The Song Celestial*) and translates them into Tamil and Malayalam.

1946  September 1: Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Bhagavan's arrival in Arunachala.


1949  June 18: Cow Lakshmi attains *Nirvana*.
Translates into Tamil *Atma Bodha* of Adi Sankara.

1949  March 17: Thursday — *Kumbhabhishekam* of Mathrubhuteswara Temple in the presence of Bhagavan.

1950  April 14, Friday: *Brahma Nirvana* of Bhagavan at 8-47 p.m. At that moment a shooting star, vividly luminous, coming from the South (the present *Nirvana Room*) and moving slowly northward across the sky and disappearing behind the peak of Arunachala was observed by many in various parts of India.
Sri Ramana and His Message to Modern Man

By
Dr. C. G. Jung

SRI RAMANA is a true son of the Indian earth. He is genuine and, in addition to that, something quite phenomenal. In India he is the whitest spot in a white space.

What we find in the life and teachings of Sri Ramana is the purest of India; with its breath of world-liberated and liberating humanity, it is a chant of millenniums. This melody is built up on a single, great motif, which, in a thousand colorful reflexes, rejuvenates itself within the Indian spirit, and the latest incarnation of which is Sri Ramana Maharshi himself.

The identification of the Self with God will strike the European as shocking. It is a specifically oriental Realization, as expressed in Sri Ramana's utterances. Psychology cannot contribute anything further to it, except the remark that it lies far beyond its scope to propose such a thing. However, it is clear to the Indian that the Self as spiritual Source is not different from God; and in so far as man abides in his Self, he is not only contained in God but is God Himself. Sri Ramana is quite clear in this respect.

The Goal of Eastern practices is the same as that of Western Mysticism: the focus is shifted from the 'I' to the Self, from Man to God. This means that the 'I' disappears in the Self, and Man in God. A similar effort is described in the *exercitia spiritualia*, in which the 'personal property', the 'I' is subjugated to the highest possible degree to the possessorship of Christ. Sri Ramakrishna adopted the same position in regard to the Self; only with him the dilemma between the 'I' and the Self comes a little more closely to the foreground. Sri Ramana declares unmistakably that the real purpose of spiritual practice is the dissolution of the 'I'. Ramakrishna, however, shows a somewhat hesitating attitude in this respect. Though he says "As long as the I-sense lasts, so long are true Knowledge (Jnana) and Liberation (Mukti), impossible", yet he must acknowledge the fatal nature of *ahankara*. He says "How very few can obtain this Union (Samadhi) and free themselves from this 'I'? It is very rarely possible. Talk as much as you want, isolate yourself continuously, still this 'I' will always return to you. Cut down the poplar tree today, and you will find tomorrow it forms new shoots. When you ultimately find that this 'I' cannot be destroyed, let it..."
remain as 'I' the servant'. In relation to this concession, Sri Ramana is certainly the more radical.

The changing relations between these two quantities, the 'I' and the Self, represent a field of experience which the introspective consciousness of the East has explored to a degree almost unattainable by the Western human being. The philosophy of the East, which is so very different from ours, represents to us highly valuable present, which, however, we "must obtain in order to possess". Sri Ramana's words once again sum up the principal things which the Spirit of India has accumulated during thousands of years in contemplation of the Inner Self; and the individual life and work of the Maharshi exemplifies once more the innermost striving of the Indian people to find the liberating original Source. I say "once more", because India stands before the fatal step of becoming a State, and with that to enter the community of nations, the leading principles of which have everything on their programme except just the 'solitude' and the peace of the soul.

The Eastern nations are threatened by a quick disintegration of their spiritual goods, and what comes into their place cannot always be considered to belong to the best of the Western mind. Therefore one may look upon Sages like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ramana as modern prophets. They not only remind us of the thousands of years' old spiritual culture of India, but also directly embody it. Their life and teachings form an impressive warning not to forget the demand of the soul in all the new things of Western civilization and their materialistic-technical and commercial concerns of the world. The breathless impulse to obtain and possess in the political, social and intellectual fields, which is rummaging the apparent, unappeasable passion in the soul of the Westerner, is also spreading continuously in the East and threatens to bear consequences not yet to be overlooked. Not only in India but also in China, much has already been lost in which once the life of the soul lived and flourished. The externalization-culture of the West can truly clear away many evils, the destruction of which seems to be very desirable and advantageous. But, as experience has shown, this progress is bought too dearly with a loss of spiritual culture. It is undoubtedly more comfortable to dwell in a well-ordered and hygienically furnished house, but that does not answer the question as to who is the dweller in this house, and whether his soul enjoys a similar state of order and purity, that is, like that of the house serving for external life. Once man is set to the pursuit of external things, he is never satisfied, as experience shows, with the mere necessities of life, but always strives after more and more, which, true to his prejudices, he always seeks in external things. He forgets entirely that in spite of all external success inwardly he remains the same, and therefore complains of his poverty when he owns only one motor-car instead of two like others around him. Certainly, the external life of man can bear many improvements and beautifications, but they lose their significance to the extent to which the inner man cannot keep up with them. The provision with all "necessities" is, without doubt, a source of happiness which is not to be under-estimated. But above and beyond it, the man raises his claim, which cannot be satisfied by any external goods; and the less this voice is heard in the hunt for 'the wonderful things' of this world the more the inner
man becomes a source of inexplicable bad luck and ununderstandable unhappiness in the midst of conditions of life from which one would expect something quite different. The externalization leads to an incurable suffering, because nobody can understand how one could suffer because of one's own nature. Nobody is surprised at his own insatiability, but looks upon it as his birthright; he does not realize that the one-sidedness of the diet of his soul ultimately leads to the most serious disturbances of balance. It is this which forms the illness of the Westerner, and he does not rest till he has infected the whole world with his greedy restlessness.

The Wisdom and Mysticism of the East have, therefore, a very great deal to tell us, provided they speak in their own inimitable speech. They should remind us of what we possess in our own culture of similar things and have already been forgotten, and direct our attention to that which we put aside as unimportant, namely the destiny of our inner man. The life and teachings of Sri Ramana are not only important for the Indian but also for the Westerner. Not only do they form a record of great human interest, but also a warning message to a humanity which threatens to lose itself in the chaos of its unconsciousness and lack of self-control.

THE ETERNAL PRESENT

"The timeless in you is aware of life's timelessness".

"Yesterday is today's memory and tomorrow is today's dream".

— Kahlil Gibran in The Prophet.

Unless one organizes the past and the future the conception of time does not arise. The past is a play of the memory and the future is a process of thinking. Time is therefore a product of the mind. According to Sri Ramana: "Time is only an idea. Time is only a concept of the mind". If one practices Bhagavan's advice to BE STILL and attains the thought-free state one abides in the Present, which is the state of blissful Existence. This is the experience of a Jnani who has realised the Self and who lives in the timeless, the eternal Now. As space exists only in relation to time, he is formless. The devotee who asked Bhagavan, 'who are you', saw an empty space where he had seen Bhagavan a moment earlier. The body in which he appears to us is only a part of the illusion in which we are all wallowing. The sage does not feel his body and death does not affect him. So the ailing Sri Ramana said to the devotees at his beside: "Where can I go? I am always here".

1 Quotations are from The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran and from the Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi.
1979

Bhagavan Sri Ramana: Sustainer of Spiritual Reality

By
Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

I
THE LIVING REALITY

It is somewhat surprising that many students of religion assume that the religious seers, the true representatives of religious genius, belong wholly to the past and we to-day have to live on the memory of the past. If religion is a living truth, if it has any vitality, it must be capable of producing men who from time to time bear witness to the truth and confirm and correct from their own experience the religious tradition. When the springs of experience dry up, our love for religion is a mere affection, our faith a belief and our behaviour a habit with no reality behind it. In the Indian religious tradition religion has meant not an imaginative or intellectual apprehension of Reality but its embodiment in regenerated living. Religion should energise our consciousness, transform our character and make us new men. The truly religious are those who have solid hold of the unseen Reality in which we ordinary men merely believe. They are not freaks proclaiming the reality of spirit, which is esoteric and intense. They tell us that they have a direct knowledge of the Real of which we have indirect or inferential knowledge. For them God is an Abiding Fact, a Living Presence, and in the consciousness of this fact their whole existence is transformed. These artists of the inner life are of different types. Some are full of poetry and music; others are vigorous men, of action; still others are solitary souls. Despite these differences they walk the same road, speak the same language of the soul and belong to the same family.

The Indian tradition has been kept alive by seers who were born in every age and incarnated the great ideal. We have such God-engrossed souls even to-day. It is our good fortune that we have with us to-day a living embodiment of God-centred life, a perfect image of the life divine in the mirror of human existence. Sri Ramana Maharshi is not a
scholar; he has no erudition, but he has wisdom that comes from direct experience of Reality, the wisdom we acquire through the discipline, not of intellect but of one's nature, through chastity, poverty and obedience. The possession of this wisdom yields the fruits of spirit, love and purity, courage and humility, courtesy and holiness.

II

HIS SPONTANEOUS REALISATION

Sri Ramana was born on the 30th December, 1879, with a latent disposition to religion. He was no good at studies because his heart was elsewhere. His reading of Periapuranam with its account of the selfless devotion of bhaktas made a deep impression on his devout nature. The change which took him away from worldly pursuits is thus described in his own words: "It was six weeks before I left Madura for good that the great change in my life took place. It was so sudden. One day I sat up alone on the first floor of my uncle's house. I was in my usual good health. But a sudden and unmistakable fear of death seized me. I felt I was going to die, and at once set about thinking what I should do. I did not care to consult anyone, be he a doctor, elder or friend. I felt I had to solve the problem myself then and there. The shock of the fear of death made me at once introspective or introverted; I said to myself mentally, i.e., without uttering the words, 'Now death is come, what does it mean, Who is it that is dying. This body dies'. I at once dramatized the situation. I extended my limbs and held them rigid, as though rigor-mortis (death-stiffening) had set in. I imitated a corpse to lend an air of reality to my further investigation. I held my breath and kept my mouth closed, pressing the lips tightly together, so that no sound could escape. 'Well then', said I to myself. 'This body is dead. It will be carried stiff to the crematory and there burnt and reduced to ashes. But with the death of my body am “I” dead? Is the body “I”? This body is silent and inert. But I am still aware of the full force of my personality and even of the sound of “I” within myself, as apart from the body. So “I” am a Spirit.

All this was not a feat of intellectual gymnastics, but came as a flash before me vividly as living TRUTH, something which I perceived immediately, without any argument almost. ‘I’ was something very real, the only real thing in that state, and all the conscious activity that was connected with my body was centred on that. The ‘I’ or myself was holding the focus of attention with a powerful fascination. Fear of death vanished at once and for ever. The absorption in the Self has continued from that moment right up to now." 1

Growing absorption in spiritual matters made Sri Ramana indifferent to his studies. When rebuked, he left his home on Saturday, the 29th of August, 1896, leaving a note behind. "I have in search of my Father, according to His command, started from this place. On a virtuous enterprise indeed has this embarked. Therefore, for this act none need grieve nor to trace this out need money be spent." 1 Thus under a sense of Divine Command he left Madura, and, after some trouble, reached Tiruvannamalai on the 1st of September.

When he visited the temple he fell into a trance. In such conditions a sense of oneness with the Ultimate Reality is produced. Sri Ramana renounced the world and became an Avadhuta which is a compound word of four letters A-va-dhu-ta. The first stands for Aksharartha or imperishability; the second for Varenya or the summit of perfection; the third for the destruction of the bonds which implicate us in the temporal process, and the last for the realisation of the truths conveyed by the great passage, "That art thou". To attain such a condition of harmonising consciousness has been the aim of religious men.

1 from Self Realisation, an Ashram publication.
If we lose ourselves in the hopes and desires, in the fears and cravings, which wax and wane with the accidents of the outer world, if we yield to the chance allurements of time and space, we will lose our soul. Doubt which comes to us from outside is insignificant as compared with the doubt that corrodes from within. The true evil is not death of the body, but the failure of one's nature, the death of faith in the Ultimate Reality.

III

SPIRITUAL VALUE OF THE SAGE’S PRESENCE

In this thought, Sri Ramana adopts the metaphysical position of Advaita Vedanta. He speaks to us of the Divine which is the pure subject from which all objectivity is excluded. The “I” is different from the “me”. The Self is not the body which perishes, not the senses which suffer the same fate as the body, not life, mind or intellect. It is the pure Spectator, the Sakshin, which is the same in all. We get to realise it not by metaphysical theorising but by spiritual discipline. Reality impinges on the unreality of life and to discover reality, absolute concentration and consecration are essential. We have to still our desires, steady our impulses, tread the ethical path. We cannot see so long as our vision is engrossed in outer forms, but those who turn their gaze inwards behold it. No one can see properly so long as he remains divided and disintegrated in his consciousness. We must become inwardly whole and free. We cannot acquire this wholeness or integrity if we do not root out our selfish impulses. We cannot know truly or act rightly so long as we are too afraid, too indolent or too self-centred. To see the Real and not merely the things of the world, the eye must be inverted. God is within us. Not comfort but control is happiness. “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself”, says Jesus. Dedication to God means denial of the ego. We must empty the self in the abyss of God. This process is helped by the practice of unselfish service (Nishkama Karma), devotion (Bhakti), mind-control (Yoga), and inquiry (Vichara). Inquiry into self, religious worship, ethical service are means to this realisation. The end of all worship, puja, japa, dhyana, is communion with God. With increasing intensity in our devotion, the distance between the human and the Divine diminishes. Indian thought believes in four stages of God-realisation—salokya, where God and the worshipper dwell in the same world, samipya, where the devotee is near the Divine, sarupya, where the devotee assimilates more and more the forms and attributes of the Divine, and sayujya, where the devotee is united to the Divine.

When one discovers the Divine within oneself, one must discover it also in the outer world of men and things. While the heights within are revealed to those who strenuously exclude all that lies without, the process of seeing all in the fulness of the Divine is more arduous. God is both eternal silence and perpetual activity, the unmoved witness and the ground

CONVERSATIONS—2

By Darlene Delisi

A seeker, Sri Kunju Swami said, should know three things and be very clear about them: (i) The seeker should know what exactly his aim is, viz., the Goal; (ii) Once convinced of the goal, he should seek the Guru and receive the teachings from him and get himself absorbed in it diligently; and (iii) He should then constantly engage himself in self-analysis whether he is following the teachings as imparted to him by the Guru, and if so, where exactly he stands, i.e., whether he is progressing or not. Constant vigilance is very essential for the progress of a seeker.

1. Gathered by the writer while talking to Sri Kunju Swami.
of all—that is, the metaphysical Absolute and the personal Lord. The Divine reveals itself anew in all life and existence. Nothing on earth is excluded from the Divine Consciousness. The Divine is the life which gives birth to us all and is farther than our farthest thought. Sri Ramana dwells not only in a world of pure subjectivity but has also a sense of the Infinite that is in all. As he has eliminated his selfish ego he becomes the Voice of the whole, the Conscience of all that is. As he has no selfish desires and no sense of agency, he enters into the world-movement and carries out the functions expected of him by that Universal Spirit. Honour and dishonour, praise and blame, do not move him. Actions are not subject to the necessity of nature but are centred in the freedom of the Divine.

It is a false assumption to hold that the spiritually strong have no patience with human weakness. They are not insensitive to human sorrow. The rishis are revealers of Reality, which is all-bliss. They do not keep their discoveries to themselves. They have a social significance. By getting into their company, we, ordinary people, realise the actuality of the world of spirit and catch something of their fire. The great of spirit are ministering angels who assist, protect and help those who are in need. Association with the holy people produces detachment from fruits of action. Such detachment leads to desirelessness; from desirelessness arises stability of mind; Liberation in life is then achieved. The Upanishad asks the aspirant for spiritual life to approach a teacher versed in scripture, steady in his realisation of the Supreme. The teacher shows the path. His very presence radiates peace and joy. He refashions the souls of those who look to him for help. With keen psychological insight he understands the needs of those who approach him and satisfies them. Like all saints, he has the foundation in God; his surface is intertwined with everything that exists. He loves all beings as he loves himself and cannot rest until everyone mirrors the Divine in his life.

The saints are the sustainers of society. Philo remarks: "Households, cities, countries and nations have enjoyed great happiness, when a single individual has taken heed of the good and beautiful. Such men not only liberate themselves; they fill those they meet with a free mind". The true sages possess the inner joy and peace which are independent of outer circumstances. Their happiness is not dependent on outer things. They have passed beyond the forms of social life. Their renunciation is spontaneous and does not involve any idea of sacrifice. They work for the fulfilment of the Divine in the world for the good of all beings, for the fulfilment of the Purpose. They are one in consciousness and action with the Divine.

To suggest that the spiritual souls are expected to abstain from action in the world is incorrect. The opportunities which the world offers are to be used for self-development. Life is a game where we should act our parts. We are all cast for different roles, and our business is to play them in the right spirit. We may lose the game but we should not mind it. It is the play that matters and not the score we make.

IV

REALITY TO BE SOUGHT

If the world is to be saved, it can only be by the intrusion of another world into it, a world of higher truth and greater reality than that which is now submerged by the overwhelming discords and sufferings of the present time. Our failure to develop contact with this world of Reality is the cause of our malady. Men like SRI RAMANA recall us to that larger dimension of Reality to which we really belong, though we are generally unaware of it.
IT is happy news that the birth centenary of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi is to be celebrated in January, 1980.

To the ageless — we attribute an age; The nameless — we hailed as Ramana; The formless — we saw in human form.

He taught us to realise the ultimate Being behind form and name. It follows that Sri Ramana is not the physical frame only.

An actor after playing his part resumes his natural self and normal behaviour, Sri Ramana after attaining Self-realisation remains in his natural state, one with the Self.

Though still encased in human form his individuality vanished in his seventeenth year, when he enacted the drama of death for himself and ceased to live a life of his own.

He left home as a perfect Jnani for the redemption of humanity at large. It was not a casual or chance happening, but a divine movement accurately planned and well-executed.

The only way to know the “Self” is to be the “Self”. Sri Ramana has become the “Self”. Such exalted souls, free from the fear of being reborn, become all-knowing and pass beyond grief and delusion.

An Avatar (incarnation) is just a manifestation of the “Self” (Brahman). But sages like Ramana having become one with the Self are verily the Self. Failing to understand the state of perfect abidance in the Self and the contentment of such a sage, common people see only the physical appearance unaware that the sage is unshakably established in Pure Consciousness.

Acharya Sankara says in his Upadesa Sahasri: “Liberation is neither union with Brahman nor separation from Prakriti. As union and separation are transitory, liberation is not the individual reaching Brahman or Brahman coming to him. The Self, the Reality Absolute — One’s own nature is never absent. It is uncaused. The Self itself is Liberation.”

The universal dimension of Sri Maharshi’s Grace not only encompassed people of all kinds and classes but also animals and birds. His compassion knows no limit. The same Self pulsates through every object in the world. This we felt in his presence.
JOYOUS INDIFFERENCE

"His life was a play upon the surface, peace and joy in its depths. It was uneventful, mainly restricted from the point of view of outer stimuli. We who live by the richness of sensation, can hardly hope to understand such self-sufficiency in Being. He had truly no possessions. The Ashram grew around him, for people who could not tear themselves away from the Master, made here a cluster of homes and buildings. But he was not merely detached, he was joyously indifferent. It was the paradox of passionate dispassion. He lived with Spartan simplicity, which is not so difficult as people sometimes imagine, particularly in a tropical climate. But he had no resentment towards luxuries, which, for a Spartan, is difficult indeed. He had very little of moral censure or judgment. He was most patient with human weaknesses. Actually he resembled Spinoza in thinking of them, rather, as 'inadequate ideas' the inability to hold on to Godhead, which is our birthright, being the source and mother of such evils. But he himself lived a life of effortless purity."

— M. Anantanarayanan in The Quintessence of Wisdom, pp. 11-12

As witnessed by us, Sri Ramana was not the doer of any actions. Unattached to the body, he remained a silent spectator. He was like a lamp in the light of which various actions take place, without the light itself taking any part.

According to Adi Sankara: "The true Guru is one who knows the spirit of Scriptures, he is sinless, unsenned by desires and best among the knowers of Brahman; who has found his peace in Brahman, is calm like fire that has consumed its fuel, who is a boundless ocean of compassion and a friend of all who humbly approach him." All these marks of a Sat-Guru, we have seen in Sri Ramana,
A burning candle only can light another candle — likewise an illumined person alone can illumine others.

As the Vedic scholars chanted sonorously the daily recitation and it swelled in rhythm, Sri Ramana used, to sit in silence like a statue. At the end of this recitation there comes the reference to Amrtatva (state of Immortality). We directly witnessed this state in the gleaming eyes and divine form of the Sage.

Sri Maharshi used to join the chorus when hymns describing his own glory were sung during pre-dawn hours. It was a thrilling experience to see him sing his own praise without the least suggestion of a separate individuality. Who else but a perfect Jnani could act with such detachment?

People stood dumbfounded at the severity of his last ailment accompanied by the blissful glow on his face. Luminous Pure Consciousness was at play, while the body suffered agony.

When primary stars appear on the firmament they are not alone, but surrounded by other stars. Likewise the Maharshi was surrounded by luminaries such as Kavya Kanta Ganapati Muni, Muruganar, Chadwick, the Osbornes, to name a few.

Paul Brunton says: “Again and again he gave us the teaching that the real Maharshi was not the body which people saw; it was the inner being. Those who never made the journey to India during his life time may take comfort in this thought; that it is possible to invoke his presence wherever they are and to feel its Reality in the Heart”.

This brings to our mind the assurance of Bhagavan: “Where can I go?” There is no-where for him to go, as He is omnipresent.

He is ever-present with us. Remembrance of him releases the inexhaustible fountain of his Grace.

Glory to the Lotus Feet of Sri Ramana!

SILENCE

Bhagavan Ramana says “Silence is unceasing eloquence” — eternal eloquence. “Silence is a perennial flow of language; it is interrupted by speaking.” Silence is the language of a realised person. Tayumanavar refers to Mouna as THE ONE WORD. This is Pranava — OM — the sound with no beginning or end, which is experienced in the heart.

Bhagavan describes Silence as the most effective language because “what one fails to know by conversation extending to several years can be known in a trice in silence”. Explaining significance of Dakshinamurti, Bhagavan pointed out that silence is the true and perfect upadesa, which is understood only by the most advanced seekers of Truth. As Truth is beyond words, only SILENCE can describe it — “Word Knowledge is but a shadow of Wordless Knowledge”. Sri Ramana points out that speech is the great-grandson of the original source, the silence of Awareness. “If words can produce an effect, how much more powerful should the preaching through SILENCE be”.

By
‘Non-Entity’
Who Are You, Ramana Bhagavan?

When devotees or visitors ask you any question, you ask them in turn: "Who is asking that question?" If they reply "I", you ask them to find out who that "I" is.

Not comprehending your reply, some of them keep quiet out of reverence for your words. Some, benefiting by your profound teaching, do sadhana and find the answer to the question: 'Who Am I?' Having done some sadhana and made some progress on the path, they go to you again to steady themselves on the path.

You ask us to know our real nature. But who are you in reality? If that question is put to you, you do not vouchsafe a reply. Not only that — you ask 'Who is it that puts the question?' If one replies, 'It is I', you say, 'find out who that 'I' is'. After that the conversation cannot proceed. Still I continue to ask: "Who then in reality are you?" Before this I never asked you who you are; nor did you tell me. But it strikes me as if I am beginning to understand just a little who you are. Ganapati Muni sang of you: 'Great Divine Light hidden under this cloak of a human form'. Without your Grace, how can anyone see the brilliant light hidden behind this human form?"

You have given utterance to Songs Divine. You have extracted the essence of the Gita and given it to the world. You are maintaining cows. You are attracting bhaktas. Could it be that you are Lord Sri Krishna?

As a boy you left your native village Tiruchuli and reached Arunachala. Immediately you appeared before Lord Arunachaleswara and told Him: 'Father, at your bidding I have come'. So, there can be no doubt that you are Skanda. That is why Sri Ganapati Muni proclaimed to the world that you are Kumara Swami (Lord Muruga) and as such adored you in his Forty Verses in Praise of Sri Ramana.

In your Aksharamanamalai (Marital Garland of Letters), you sing that you have fallen in love with Lord Arunachaleswara and that you have married Him by throwing round His neck a garland of imperishable flowers. You have shared His body. You have merged yourself in Him. You say He has swallowed you up. So, you have become the World Mother, one with Arunachala Siva.

When I wonder who you are in reality, many such ideas come crowding into my mind.

1 Translated from Telugu.
I have watched you closely at that auspicious hour when you sit on this sofa and listen to the Vedic chants by the brahmins and the Tamil devotional songs sung by bhaktas. Your face then turns to the south and you are still like stone. The form of Sri Dakshinamurti fills my mind. It is the very image of Siva facing south (dakshina) with head inclined to the right (dakshina) as if it were looking at the heart-centre. I have seen you now at last. I feel assured that you are Dakshinamurti. Tell me the truth; are you not Dakshinamurti?

For, have you not said that silence is much more potent than speech? Are you not helping bhaktas towards moksha through mouna? Do not those who go to you to clear their doubts derive greater happiness and peace from your silence than what they could from any replies to their questions? Therefore who can say that Dakshinamurti who through silence proclaims the Ultimate Truth and you who grant peace to seekers through this same silence only, are not one and the same?

Shall I speak of something else? There is your sofa and by its side the censer with glowing embers in it. The smoke of the dasangam (incense) issuing from the fire and mingling with your grace envelops your bhaktas. Then, I notice what you do. You turn your hands to the censer as if you were warming them, and hold them thus for a while. Those hands said something I failed at first to understand. After some time I understood. The hands which you, sitting there, stretch out, as if to warm yourself, are in fact abhaya hastas (hands assuring protection from fear) extended towards your bhaktas. Is that abhaya (protection) only for those who are seated there or is it for all the world? You have taken a human form to help humanity. Your abhaya hasta is meant for all mankind.

Why do I say this? Who can imagine, O Bhagavan, how many hearts you are entering through what narrow crevices, and cleansing them; how many heavy stones you are lifting and throwing away from there; and how much dross you are melting away from the crude ore and leaving only gold? Who knows how many hearts once parched up deserts are being made fertile and fruitful by your grace?
Shall I say another thing? Why should I hide it from you? You have yourself given me the proof. It never occurred to me, when first I saw you, that you yourself were Agastyeswara. Then I saw you slowly changing into Agastyeswara, small in stature, narrow waist, and smiling face, all these I saw.

That vision gave me joy ineffable. I felt that you were Agastyeswara himself. You alone know whether it is so or not. Sri Rama Varma Apan Thampuran has declared that your history is not the life story of an individual, but the glory of the Infinite Self. You are the inner Self of all beings. That is you are Kshetrajna (Knower of the Field).

Today you have made the foot of Arunia Hill your abode and are dealing out immortality to all by teaching them Hridaya Vidya (Sacred Lore of the Heart).

I have asked and asked: “Who in truth are you?” Many answers have I elicited and none is final or complete. You alone know who you are in truth. If I call you Krishna or Dakshinamurti or Agastya — all these names are only terms of praise.

Further, you ask me to know Who I Am. If I go on questioning myself in this manner, it seems this river “I” merges in the ocean “You”. May your Grace draw this ‘I’ and make it merge in YOU.

SALUTATIONS

By

J. Jayaraman

Cities inside mirrors owe
Their presence to Sight
And surely not
To cities without.

For,
Knowing the one, the blind yet
Perceive not the other,
Likewise all this —
A chorus of the Quintet
Existent but by awareness.

To whom the universe,
Like this same city
Seen in the mirror
Self-contained
Appearing-within-as-if-apart
Dream in sleep, to Him
Who thus in one breath
Resolved all this
To exist by the Self

To Him, the pure scientist,
Who thus revealed, reaching down
When confronted
To the root,
Salutations to Him
Guru Arunachala Sri Ramana-murti.
Garland of Guru’s Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR
Translated from Tamil by Professor K. Swaminathan

709
Instead of wandering about
Proclaiming “I am God!” abide
As the Supreme. For such abidance
In the Self, not loud, repeated noise,
Puts an end to sorrow.

710
For curing a dire malady
One must consume, not merely name,
The medicine. Even so, the bonds
Of birth won’t snap by merely muttering
“I am Siva!” and so on.

711
Failing to penetrate the truth
That God is the holy dwelling-place
Of both the jiva and the world.
We constrict and shut him up
For worship in a man-made temple.

712
When the true Being, the Heart itself,
Emerges and spreads out as rays
Of awareness, countless are its names.
Of these the first is I.

713
With this first Name of I, as its
True meaning and substance, shines
Eternal Being. Since I as being
Shine, I AM too is the Name supreme.

714
Of all the many thousand Names divine
None is so true, so beautiful, so apt
As this I AM for God abiding
In the heart transcending thought.

715
All things perceived by those Self-oriented
Thunder with the powerful voice of silence
In the egoless heart’s firmament
The Lord’s own Name of I, I, I.

716
If turning inward, saying ‘I’,
One meditates unceasingly
On this name I, it will take one
To the ultimate source of the ‘I’ illusive
Seemingly born of the worthless body.

717
The word ‘I’ as one says it seems
To mean at first the body-based ego.
But this appears and disappears.
Looked deeper, its correct import
Is seen to be the Self which is
The ego’s ground and source.

718
Who is the perfect bhakta?
It is the hero who by ART
(The word for being peaceful, still)
Merges THOU (mere empty word)
Deep into THAT awareness, Siva
Eternal, who lights up the little self.

719
Who is the perfect bhakta?
It is the hero who destroys
The ego false by merging
The ‘I’-thought like a water-bubble
In the unfathomable ocean,
The infinite peace of Being.
Those with minds matured by bhakti
Relishing, drinking in its sweetness,
Deem bhakti supreme, the nectar
Ever-fresh, as its own reward.

Mukti is but the silence following
The aggressive ego's end.
Careless breaking of this silence
Is fall from bhakti. True Siva-bhakti
Is in the Self to one the mind
Entire, and be the Self alone.

Bhakti supreme and jnana shine,
When scanned, as in their essence one.
Saying that one of these is but
A means to the other is due
To understanding neither.

Even those who know may sometimes
honour
This saying and may seem to prefer
One or other of these two paths.
This is in order to prevent
Some seeker halfway on one path
From giving it up and choosing
the other.

When one adopting self-enquiry
Reaches the journey's end and gains
Samadhi's bliss, it is solely due
To the grace of God, one's inmost Self,
Life of one's life.

Unless the Self, the God within,
By power of Grace pulls in the mind,
Who has the strength through his own
effort
To stop the rogue-mind's outward drift,
And merge it in the Heart, and so
Gain peace?

Without the Guru's grace one cannot
Win the grace of God with eightfold form.
And this God's grace comes neither from
Learning nor from aught else, but through
Devotion and devotion only.

Whether or no God's grace abundant
Sustains you, entertain no doubt.
That you, avid for freedom from bondage,
Have started self-enquiry, this
Is proof enough of grace.

God's grace supreme and the grand quest
"Who am I?" leading to abidance
In the Heart will work together,
As mutual aids, to tell the truth,
And bring one to the state of oneness
With the Self supreme.

This world-dream, this maya, will not end
Unless the Self within speaks out.
The inquiry
"Who is the dreamer of this dream?"
Is prayer addressed to Him to speak
And wake us up.

It is said that steady meditation
Of one's own Being is supreme
Devotion to all-transcending God,
Because, though spoken of as two,
They are both in substance one.

The way of knowledge and the way of love
Are interwoven close. Don't try to tear
Asunder these inseparables.
But lead your life holding them both
Together in the Heart.

(13) Meditation on the Self
Is supreme devotion to the Lord
Since He abides as this our very Self.
VISITOR: Could you explain the phenomenon of Sri Ramana Maharshi, who apparently attained enlightenment quite spontaneously, without doing anything for it?

Editor: I cannot explain anything at all, neither Sri Bhagavan, nor myself, nor yourself. Things are as they are. There is nothing to be explained. The only thing that is possible is to point out why you don’t seem to know what you are.

Of course, one or two things are very obvious. When 17-year old Venkataraman was seized by panic, and felt that he was going to die, he could have rushed to the doctor, and asked for a tranquilizer. That is what most of us might have done. But, even at that age, he was so unusually mature, that he accepted his panic, and surrendered without running away. Which means that he was a boy of great courage.

Instead, he went into it, lay down on the floor, and surrendered to what seemed the inevitable: “I am going to die. What is really happening?”

In other words, he spontaneously withdrew from his personality, and adopted the witness-position.

What is perhaps very important to see, is that, in reacting this way, he gave up every desire to continue in time and space.

And finally, as you said, illumination came, without his doing anything for it. Of course, this is inevitable. Realisation only comes when we stop doing things — when we forget the projected ‘doer’ in us, and remain as the witness of everything that appears and disappears. Not only that; he adopted the "witness point of view" at the most critical of all moments: when the panic that lies at the root of the personality surged up in him.

Of this whole story, this is perhaps the most amazing aspect. For this panic, so common amongst people who practise concentration, Zen-meditation and other disciplines, is so fundamental that only one in a million can accept it. Normally, we need the presence of the Guru, to overcome this acute fear. Apparently this was not so in his case.

These are tangible aspects: The surrender to the inevitable, without the desire to change...

1 From a recorded interview with the writer who is the editor of Yoga Advaita, Amsterdam.
or avert it; the adopting of the witness-position, and the absence of desire to continue in time. The last one is perhaps the clearest. Everyone of us can use this to check his own position: Do I desire to last, to continue? Do I feel that there is still a lot to be done, to be enjoyed? Do I hope for something?

Hope is one of the subtlest of escapes. I hope that if I do my sadhana in the proper manner, I shall realize in three or five years... If that is my attitude, it implies that I allot another three or five years to my ignorance — to my personality or ego, and this makes it virtually impossible to see that I am the ultimate reality even now. Hope implies the desire to continue in time; it implies that I accept the belief that I am a projected personality, an image, that is living through the years. Hope, in other words, soon becomes an obstacle, an excuse.

What I am must always be here and now, and there is nothing to be hoped for in the distance. If what I am is not here, now, this implies that it is not really 'I', for what I am can never be separated from me, as heat cannot be separated from fire, or form from vision.

So this remarkable boy did not hope for the best, trusting that all might end well, and that he might after all be able to have dinner that night. He did not try to escape, not for one moment. He lay on the floor, and made himself completely defenseless, allowing death to do its job.

That is the attitude that truth or freedom or God or whatever you like to call it, cannot resist. Total acceptance without any desire to change something, not even total extinction — this attitude can only lead to one thing: to complete freedom, which is called self-realisation. If the last and the deepest fear is so totally accepted that you surrender to whatever may happen, nothing else can keep you back. No ego can blackmail you, nothing else can frighten you, for nothing else is more frightening than death.

This total surrender and the absence of the wish to continue in time, are something worth looking at.

We all have the desire for what in our circle is known as self-realisation. But let us be clear about this: the one who desires it is the personality. What we are, has no need of, and no use for, desires. So the personality or ego desires self-realisation. But the personality cannot know what these words mean! The personality or whatever goes by that name, appears on the level of images, thoughts, feelings, concepts. And on that level, freedom becomes an idea, a concept. But as a matter of fact, freedom has absolutely nothing in common with any concept whatsoever.

So from the point of view of the images, freedom or the Self is something completely unknown — in other words: the Self is something, the existence of which cannot even be suspected by the mind. It is the totally new, the totally unexpected. That is why what is called self-realisation is the death of the old.

Visitor: But is it not possible to take note of things, as their witness, without accepting them? Do not things like murder and violence remain unacceptable under all circumstances?

Editor: By acceptance, I mean the readiness to look at something. Some time ago, a lady came here with certain domestic problems. She said: “I have done what you proposed, and observed all that happened. But it has not helped me much, and I may confess that I observe everything with a certain amount of disgust!”

This, of course, is not what is meant by acceptance and observation. She had projected an observer into her thoughts and feelings. But what she should have observed, were precisely those personal, quite intimate
movements within her psyche, like the disgust she mentioned.

Acceptance does not mean approval or disapproval. It only means the acceptance of facts. The acceptance of the fact that there is murder, that there is violence, quite independently of our liking and disliking.

But observing things at a distance does not help much. What is to be observed is what happens within us, quite intimately: our fear, our desires, our irritation, jealousy—in short, all that is felt as conflicting with harmony. The subtle defense patterns of a projected 'I', when observed, turn out to be phenomena on the objective side. We can watch them, just as we watch a film. In the beginning we shall be tempted to jump into the train, and run along with them. But gradually, we can watch them without getting involved in them. A friend of mine compared this observation with a fashion show: You sit in an easy chair, and see the parade of the ladies, the models, as they show one dress after the other. But you do not jump onto the stage with a pair of scissors to change the dresses on show! You just watch—that is all.

If we want to formulate quite exactly what this acceptance is, we may say that it means that we allow anything that wells up from within, to show itself clearly, and without our interference or judgement, in the awareness that we are. Very often, this is quite easy: Without effort we can allow a fatigue in the body to show itself, or an ache; then we proceed and take note of small irritations when someone does something disagreeable to us: It becomes more difficult only when we are held back by fear and shame. In such circumstances we tend to suppress certain memories and certain feelings. So we have to see that whatever foolish things we may have done, at the time it was as good as we were able to do it; the ultimate motive, even for fear, is the search for love and happiness. When that is seen clearly, we are ready to forgive ourselves, and accept our shame and fear, allowing it to unfold itself before the inner eye of the awareness that we are.

When we reject certain feelings and memories, we create an ego that feels it must protect itself. But when we allow things to happen as they will, there is no ego: there is only awareness in which feelings rise and set, in which thoughts come and go. We are then the witnessing aspect of the ultimate reality. There, at that precise no-spot, at that precise no-moment lies the gate, so to say, between dream and illusion on the one hand, and what is known as the Self, on the other. What we are, the Self, is beyond bondage and liberation.

Visitor: It is said that when the goal is reached, all paths meet there. But in the case of Sri Ramana Maharshi, one does not find a trace of other paths. Later on you could not possibly say if he was primarily a perfect Jnani or a perfect Bhakta, wisdom itself or love itself. He obviously was both at the same time. But in this story, there is no trace yet of anything like bhakti.

Editor: Don’t be misled by holes in the story. This self-realisation could never have occurred, had this miraculous boy not had a
heart full of love. If he had not loved his body, he could have never let it go. Had he not loved his psyche, he could have never dropped it.

Visitor: Loved his body? That is an amazing statement...! There are sages who say that the body is nothing but a bag of dirt.

Editor: I do not believe it. Of course, there have been great people who would enter states of mind, samadhi's, in which they would say things that, in their particular context, were perfectly true, but that are blatant nonsense in a different context. You are probably thinking of Sri Ramakrishna, who said things of that kind. But it must be seen that, in this radiant state in which he said them, it merely meant: "You, the Supreme, are all that is worth living for, anything else is dirt before Thee". It must never be taken as a literal truth, that should be taken as guidance in the context for instance of the Jnana Marga.

Any sage — although as a matter of fact there is only one sage — is love itself. As the world is nothing but our own perception, it is always seen on the level where we think we are. To a paranoiac the world is a dangerous conspiracy. To the sage, the world is radiance only, a dance of light and love, if you like to express the inexpressible that way. So to the sage, the body is as marvellous as a leaf of grass or the sun or the Vedas or the smile on a child’s face. All he sees is light, be it in the form of a human being, a body, or in any other form.

As long as we do not accept and love the body, not as a source of pleasure, but for its own sake; for the miracle that it is, we can not drop it. There is freedom only when all is seen as light, and not as long as part of the things we call 'I' are considered as dirt. When you look clearly, you will find that there is no such thing as dirt.

As long as you consider part of yourself as lousy, you can never love anyone completely. If you give yourself to someone, you give him a bag full of dirt...so you do not give yourself. You cover the presumed dirt with shame and walls of defense, and you don't even wish to be reminded of it yourself. So by that attitude, all your relations are tainted and strained. Who wants a bag of bones — not even God.

So it is the greatest of surprises when someone meets his Guru, and discovers, gradually, that the Guru knows all about his presumed dirt, and yet loves him completely. There is a marvellous story on this theme in Alpert's book Be Here Now. Alpert suddenly discovers that his Guru knows all his thoughts and feelings, including the so-called bad ones. Then he wishes that the earth would open under his feet, and swallow him, filled to the brim with shame. Then, after a while, he looks at his Guru, from the corners of his eye, and what does he see? The Guru looks at him, radiant, blazing with love. Then Alpert breaks down and melts away in tears.

And that is what must happen to all of us, in some way or the other. When everything that we egoistically consider as unacceptable is seen in the light of love, all problems melt, and love alone remains. Acceptable and unacceptable are whims of the ego, and the ego is merely a way of looking at things. In reality there is no such thing as an ego.

So give up the superstition that there are dark patches in you, where there is no love. Every dark patch is a defense, and every defense has initially been built to defend the fragile little loving heart in the child that you were. So the building of defenses was a work of love, to protect love. But now, as an adult, you can understand that you really are an inexhaustible source of "living water". You have so much that you do not need to be afraid to be abused. There will never be a shortage of love — not really because you have so much, but because you are it. And what you are can never be taken away from you.
**THE ANNIHILATION**

*Sadhaks (seekers) rarely understand the difference between this temporary stilling of the mind (manolaya) and permanent destruction of thoughts (manonasa). In manolaya there is temporary subsidence of thought-waves, and, though this temporary period may last even for a thousand years, thoughts, which are thus temporarily stilled, rise up as soon as the manolaya ceases. One must, therefore, watch one's spiritual progress carefully. One must not allow oneself to be overtaken by such spells of stillness of thought: this is the moment one experiences this stillness. While not allowing any thoughts to intrude, he must not, at the same time, be overtaken by this deep sleep (yoga nidra) or self-hypnotism. Though this is a sign of progress towards the goal, yet it is also the point where the divergence between the road to salvation and yoga nidra takes place. The easy way, the direct way, the shortest cut to salvation is the Enquiry method. By such enquiry, you will drive the thought force deeper till it reaches its source and merges therein. It is then that you will have the response from within and find that you rest there, destroying all thoughts, once and for all."

— Sri Bhagavan, in *Crumbs from His Table*, pp. 26-27

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**Visitor:** You have often said that by 'love' you do not mean a feeling?

**Editor:** No. It may be useful to apply some demystification here. When you love or when you are happy, what happens?

The event that we call "I am happy" consists of two parts. The one is the basic part, that you are happiness itself, freedom itself, beyond feeling, but usually you are so fascinated by thoughts and I-feelings and other objects that appear and disappear, that you do not feel the harmony that you are. The moment you see yourself as an object, an ego, there is tension in the body. But what happens when you say "I love", or "I am happy", is that for a moment all identification goes. As a result, all tension goes, and heaps of energy are liberated in your body. That is the feeling-part of the event: the glowing in your chest, and so on. Usually we see that as love, but in fact the feeling is only a symptom of what love really is — an effect, a result of dropping silly ideas about yourself. Of course, every idea about yourself is a silly idea. It is just as absurd to think that you are good as believing you are bad. You are no notion, no opinion, not something acceptable and not something unacceptable. But in order to go beyond appearances, we must begin by accepting. Real acceptance, beyond opinions of good and bad, is merely allowing things to appear in their complete nakedness in the light of awareness, without any interference and judgement on our part. The moment we take up this position, we spontaneously live the witnessing aspect of the absolute Reality. And when, gradually, our bag empties itself, and fears and desires, allowed to finish the little dance that we interrupted when we refused to see the unpleasant, die into the awareness that we are, finally only awareness remains. It is not something to be searched, attained. We are it, even now. The only thing a sadhana should achieve, is to rid us of the idea and the feeling that we are something else than this. When this idea has gone, suddenly we stumble as it were on awareness, or awareness seems to slide or even to explode into us. We have absolutely nothing to do, for this ultimate non-event to happen. When freedom is made possible, it occurs.

It is made possible by accepting what we think we are, looking closely, and dropping it again. When we see that we have never been what we thought we were, all ideas leave us, and what remains is what we are. It is as simple as that. But this silent watching, this
deep listening to what we believed to be, must be done very intimately and very carefully.

We meet people every day, who know, superficially, what is wrong in their life, but this does not help. Recently an alcoholic came here to talk about his problem. He said: “I know why I drink — it is because my mother never loved me”. Yet, he remained a drunkard. He did not look into the depth of his own statement. Only when he was made to see and to feel again, how he was a very sad child, weeping in his bed at night, completely alone, did he realise the depth of his misery. And when then he was made to see that this sad child was really quite harmless, quite open, defenseless and trusting when it was pushed away and remained unloved by his mother, could he see that he was still this open and trusting child, behind the walls that once protected him against unfeeling surroundings. And only then could he see that this child was and is an inexhaustible source of life and love and energy, and that there was nothing to be protected, because no one could take away what he was and still is. When this was seen very clearly, he did not have to keep his walls upright and nourish his fear for not being loved. The fear of not being able to find love outside dropped away when he realized that he himself was the source of all love, and that his own defenses were the only thing that prevented him from living this love as the one fundamental experience that is life. From that moment on he was no longer in need of alcohol.

We are all like this man. We all use drugs, in the hope that they will either procure us the warmth that we seek, or prevent us from having yet another disappointment. Some of us hunt for sex as a drug, others for intellectual brilliance, yet others build up an image as the big understanding counsellor, and so on. All this is needed to fill the vacuum of our unloving self.

The moment the fact dawns on us that we are what we are looking for, the search for love outside diminishes and finally drops away. The one drug that all drugs have in common is the ego, this ultimate defense that apparently separates us from the love that we are. But this ego has no reality whatsoever. It is nothing but a way of looking, a superstition. When you look for it and try to find it, you find that there is no such thing, except in your imagination.

Fortunately, it is the nature of the false, the superstition, that it disappears when we see through it. So we do not have to chase away the ego or fight it. We merely have to accept it, allow it to show itself in all its nakedness, and then we soon discover that it has no reality whatsoever. That is all that is needed. The moment this pattern of thinking is discovered and seen through, it disappears.

What remains is freedom itself. Not a free ego, but freedom from the illusion that there is an ego.

For most of us, the final stage is that we live for some time in the feeling that life goes on without an ego. We were so used to its presence, that we now live for some time as its absence. Until this becomes so natural, that we forget all about it. First we were bound by the belief in an ego, now we are still bound by its absence. This is the last object that tells us we are limited after all. When this absence is also seen as an object that we identify ourselves with, it can dissolve itself into the presence that we are. Only this is freedom — the freedom, the radiance from which the world creates itself from moment to moment, and that remains as radiance itself when there is no world present.

Deep sleep — the absence of name and form — then turns out to be light itself, that has nothing in common with the black absence of memory that we believed it was.
DEEM myself most fortunate to have met Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. For this, I remain grateful to my late parents, Dr. M. Anantanarayana Rao and Smt. M. Rama Bai of Madras, both of whom were great devotees of Sri Bhagavan.

It so happened that in the year 1932, my parents came to Tiruvannamalai and had their first darshan of Sri Bhagavan. The first impression on my father was so great that he decided to settle down at this holy place near the Ashram (after retirement from service) so that they could have daily darshan of Bhagavan and be of service to the Ashram. So, he built his own house near the Ashram in 1940.

In 1939, I went also to his place in the town and stayed with him for a few days. During this period I had the first darshan of Sri Bhagavan. As is the custom amongst us when visiting a holy person, I took with me a coconut and a few bananas as my humble offerings and entered the Hall where a number of devotees were seated, some of them with closed eyes in meditation and a few others singing some devotional songs before Sri Bhagavan, who was seated on in a couch corner. I placed the offering I had brought on a desk in front of him and stood before Him with folded hands.

Sri Bhagavan who normally sits deeply absorbed with half-closed eyes, suddenly lifted his head and gazed at me. His sparkling look of Grace pierced through my being and I felt a sort of current passing through me. I could not stand face to face with Sri Bhagavan for a long time and so I turned my eyes and sat there. I was told that Sri Bhagavan normally does not particularly look at devotees coming to the Hall daily, but He raises His head and gives a glance of Grace to any new-comer. Even though I sat amongst the crowd, He
was occasionally turning His gaze on me and I felt uplifted.

After my father settled down near the Ashram I began visiting the Ashram quite frequently till Maharshi attained His Mahanirvana in 1950 and my father too sold away his house.

Sri Bhagavan was very fond of children. My little daughter who was only 5 years old in 1946 used to freely approach Sri Bhagavan. She used to go right inside the wooden enclosure, catch hold of Sri Bhagavan’s staff and lead Him up to the foot of the Hill, every day at 11 O’clock. This was her daily service to Sri Bhagavan, for which she would sometimes receive a couple of bananas as prasad from Him!

My last visit to the Ashram during Bhagavan’s life-time was in 1949, when he had a malignant tumour on his left arm. My father was present near Sri Bhagavan’s bedside when he shook off the body on the evening of April 14, 1950.

It was only after my retirement from service in 1972 that I visited the Ashram — after a gap of nearly 23 years. As I felt the spiritual Presence of Sri Bhagavan in the precincts of the Ashram, I visited it in 1947 and again in 1976. And then, I felt an urge to settle down here. By Sri Bhagavan’s Grace I could get a very comfortable accommodation in Ramana Nagar, near the Ashram and both my wife and I have happily and peacefully settled down in the uplifting Presence of Sri Bhagavan.

SALUTATIONS

Humble salutations to the Great Master of all ages! Oh Ramana!

Salutations to that Reality which inheres as the Self in all, from which all creations are projected, in which they have their being and into which they are finally dissolved!

Salutations to that Intelligence which inheres as the Self in all, from which the knower, knowledge and the known, the seer, sight and the seen, the doer, cause and deed, are manifested!

Salutations to that Supreme Bliss which inheres as the Self in all, which constitutes the life of all and from whose unfathomable depths happiness is sprayed as fine particles in Heaven and on Earth.

Salutations to that Pure Being who always illumines the minds of true devotees and who graciously assumes the shapes of men and mountains, only to reveal the Perfection of Silence.

Salutations to that One who appears as Arunachala, giving birth in turn to Ramana!

Salutations to that Silent Master who, to insure His continued presence on earth, created that certain Valley of Peace, Turiya, resting between the three peaks, Jagrat, Svapna and Sushupti, existing as their support and foundation equally beneath all three, the home and seat of Ramana in this world.
IT gave me immense joy to take a group of earnest seekers and introduce them to one of the oldest living devotees of Sri Bhagavan, Sri Sadhu Natanananda. He is a great scholar in Tamil and is totally dedicated to Sri Bhagavan. All his writings, in verse and prose, are on His life and teachings. His guiding help to seekers is inestimable. I reproduce hereunder a gist of his informal talk on that day.

(1) There are three things that a seeker has to think of: (i) to have a *lakshya* (aim in life); (ii) to strive towards attaining it; and (iii) actually attain it. The third is very difficult, except for sages like Sri Bhagavan. It is not possible for all. But the first is possible for all — every one can have a *lakshya*. Unfortunately most seekers stop there. A seeker should know that the second is the most important. One has to strive (towards the chosen *lakshya*) all the time, relentlessly.

(2) Till one has attained and is firmly established in IT, continuous and strenuous effort is necessary. Guidance will come automatically for one who sincerely strives.

(3) Of all the paths, *Jnana Marga* (Path of Knowledge) appears the most difficult one. But, for one following this path the greatest advantage is that effort made in this path however limited it may be, will definitely prove fruitful.

(4) The spiritual aspirant flies with the two wings of *viveka* and *vairāgya*. With one wing alone one cannot fly. To be aware of one's *vasanas* (limitations) is *viveka* and to get rid of them by constant enquiry 'to whom are the limitations (*vasanas*)', is *vairāgya*. Thus *viveka*-re-inforced by *vairāgya* alone can lead one on to the Truth. Watchful effort, with total dedication ('attention') is essential.

(5) With other *sadhanas*, like the devotional approach, one can progress steadily and take another birth to a better life. But, why postpone the realisation? When one knows fully that even this body is not one's and that in fact one has not taken a body at all, where is the question of next birth. To whom?
(6) Having come to Sri Bhagavan one must make it sure that this is the last birth, so long as one identifies oneself with the body.

(7) The Path of *Vichara* is not for all. It is definitely the most difficult one, since there is no room for any sort of compromise in it. One has to strive hard and constantly too. To deserve to be a follower of Ramana’s path one should have the fundamental discrimination that one is not the body.

(8) If one swerves from *atma vichara*, one gets engrossed in *loka vichara*. *Atma vichara* needs strenuous effort and the moment one swerves from it one gets drowned in *loka vichara*. It is like this: to have light alone one has to make the effort of lighting a lamp — to have darkness no effort is necessary! The absence of light is darkness.

(9) To have come to Sri Bhagavan is proof enough that one is positively going to end the cycle of births and deaths in this life itself.

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**CONVERSATIONS—3**

The uniqueness of Sri Bhagavan in emphasising all the traditional teachings was stressed by Sri Kunju Swami thus:

“Though traditionally it is stated that worship, *japa*, *dhyana*, samadhi are the ascending order of spiritual evolution, and Bhagavan also has confirmed it in *Upadesa Samuccaya*, v. 4: “Worship, incantation and meditation are performed respectively with the body, the voice and the mind and are of value in this ascending order”, the total emphasis Bhagavan gave to each one of these individually is complete. Sri Bhagavan stressed:

**Worship:** Treating the universe as a manifestation of God, offer worship. Such worship takes you directly to the Goal (God, Self).

**Japa:** Japa to be done continuously inwardly like the flow of oil, as a perennial stream: to be in that *dhara* (one movement, to the exclusion of all objective existence) is nothing short of abiding in the Self.

**Dhyana:** It means ‘absorption into the Source’. It is the Final Peace too.

**Tapas:** The Realization of That (Ultimate Truth) which subsists when all trace of ‘I’ is gone, is good *tapas*.

**Samadhi:** Here the ‘mind withdraws from external objects of sense and beholds (i.e., merges in) its own effulgent form’. The ‘I’ vanishes and an ‘I’*-I’* appears by itself. This is the Infinite (*Purnam*).

**Bhakti:** ‘Remaining in the Real Being, transcending all thought through intense devotion is... supreme bhakti.’

**Jnana:** ‘Whence does the ‘I’ arise?’ Seek for it within; and it vanishes. This is the pursuit of Wisdom (*Jnana*). The body, senses, mind, *prana* and ignorance are all insentient and not the Real. I AM is the Real (*Sat*). As there is no second being to know that which is, ‘that which is’ is consciousness. We are THAT. To know the Self is TO BE the SELF. It is unbroken Awareness-Bliss.

Thus Bhagavan stressed that not only these have an ascending order of development, but each by itself individually would directly lead one to the Reality. Bhagavan’s emphasis that each could be by itself the final step, is unique and not found in traditional texts.”

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*1. Gathered by the writer while talking to Sri Kunju Swami.*
It was Swami Rajesvarananda who introduced his humble younger "brother" to the Sage of Arunachala. Describing the impact on this eighteen year-old youth Dr. Mahadevan writes: "To meet a sage and become acquainted with him is not an ordinary occurrence. As I recall those three days I spent basking in the sunshine of Shri Ramana's Glorious Presence I have no words to express the benefit derived from that experience. To sit before him was itself a deep spiritual education." From then on the Swami took the new devotee regularly to the Maharshi. Mahadevan says it was a "unique experience to sit in the presence of the Maharshi and look at his radiant eyes." While looking at him the mind becomes stilled. One had the fore-taste of that pristine state of which the Upanishad speaks "when the knot of the heart is cut and all doubts are dispelled." Later, as Professor he was to write numerous books explaining in countless ways — and thus sharing with the world — what had become also his own personal experience.

Born in 1911, Dr. Mahadevan had the distinct fortune of coming under the influence of great saints and sages very early in life. Karma which had cruelly robbed him of both his parents in childhood had made up for it by providing for him intense spiritual education from the beginning. A kindly aunt took him one day to a silent saint, whose unspoken blessings perhaps brought the small child under the care of Swami Rajeswarananda who saw him through his education in the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home.
One day Swami Sivananda, the direct disciple of Ramakrishna, came to inspect the Ramakrishna Mission in Madras. He was accompanied by Swami Apurvananda who noticed something special about one of the small boys sitting at the shrine and pointed out the child to his Master. Swami Sivananda responded by personally initiating the boy in the shrine itself. Thus the hallowed influence of Sri Ramakrishna was transmitted through his great disciple to the little boy.

It was in the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home that this great modern exponent of Advaita came across Sankara and his teachings. Soon he was to meet the most beautiful descendent in the line of Sankara Acharyas: His Holiness Sri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati, of the Kanchi Kamakoti Pitha. What good fortune, so early in life! The spell of the Maharshi and the Acharya of Kanchi.

The visits to the Maharshi continued. And the college-student Mahadevan learnt from his own experience how “what one might succeed in attaining after a prolonged course of yogic discipline one got with perfect ease and effortlessly in the proximity of the Maharshi.” Governed by the common sense so characteristic of Sankara’s illustrious followers, he also discovered that “the impress of spirituality once gained was never lost.”

Passing through college and University with flying colours and travelling in U.S.A. and Mexico as a distinguished representative of India’s spirituality, he always cited Ramana Maharshi as his guiding light and as the one sage in modern India who actually lived what he taught, pure Advaita Vedanta.

When he returned to India after a lecture tour in the States in 1948-49, he had the unique opportunity of relating his experience and impressions to the devotees in the very presence of the Master.

The Professor feels that “those who have had the good fortune of associating with his (Maharshi’s) embodied form have a duty to ourselves, which is to meditate on him and his teachings and share with others the precious legacy we have received from him.”

This “sacred duty” is faithfully fulfilled by the revered Professor through various publications about his beloved Master, through lucid and uplifting talks, and through seraphic silence.

Professor Emeritus and former Director of the Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy of Madras University, Dr. Mahadevan deems it his proudest privilege to have learnt and taught the advaita embodied by Bhagavan Ramana.
BOOK REVIEWS

Sri Ramana Maharshi's "Forty Verses on Reality"


The mark of scriptural text is that it is a Revelation of Reality by one who has directly perceived it. Though couched in words, it reveals in all its depth and clarity the perception of the seer. When a religion is founded on such a treatise, though it is also the fruit of such spiritual revelation, it is used by those who accept it to support orthodox tenets. Then the religion produces an offshoot, retaining the spirit and rejecting the dross and restrictive rituals. Buddhism has its Zen, Islam its Sufism and Hinduism its Advaita.

The advent of sages serves the purpose of reconstructing and renewing the religions and their offshoots and projecting Reality 'As It Is' and as experienced by themselves authentically through their lives and words. These words of sages and seers, though of universal validity, are fully utilised only by seekers all the world over, from generation to generation.

One such marvellous and authentic revelation of Truth 'As It Is' is Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's Forty Verses on Reality (Ulladu Narpadu) rendered into Sanskrit by Kavyakantha as Sat Darshan. The first two verses which form the Invocation contain the essence of Sri Maharshi's teachings in a nutshell: Jnana and Bjaakti: Awareness is the sole Reality and refuge at the Feet of the Lord is to share His immortal being and so transcend death.

The one supreme teaching of all scriptures and sages and saints of all times is the injunction: 'Know Thyself' (atmanam viddhi) — Sri Maharshi, having truly known the Self through His own unique experience of Self transcending 'death', has given in these forty verses the various steps to attain the Goal. Thus He has given us a direct intellectual approach to the Truth through the path of Vichara (Enquiry). The path of Vichara is here elucidated in its minute details and from many angles so as to satisfy the modern mind.

Sri Maharshi deals with metaphysical topics like the world, the soul, God, true knowledge, bondage, freewill, karma and liberation.

Sri S. S. Cohen, one of the oldest living devotees of Sri Bhagavan and one who had spent a number of years at the feet of Sri Maharshi is well known as the author of Guru Ramana, Reflections on Talks and other works. His keen intellect and critical acumen and intense devotion are reflected in his translation (from the Tamil original) and in the commentary. We notice also the play of humour at times ('Samsa/ra' means going round on the wheel of birth and death. In India the wife is significantly also called samsara', p. 28).

The illuminating 'Synopsis' sums up the substance of the Forty Verses in short, cryptic sentences. As he himself puts it in the Preface: "For all that the seekers (sadhaks) need and want is to understand the spirit of Bhagavan's utterances and apply it to their spiritual practice (sadhana)."

Though the price of the book may be considered high for the Indian reader, the Publishers deserve congratulation on the excellent and elegant get-up.


It is generally agreed that Vedanta represents the highest point reached by Indian speculative thought and that its clearest exponent is Sankara. It is a pity, however, that the study of the classics of this school is confined to a section of the priestly class and to philosophy students in universities. Any effort to bring these works in an attractive form to the general public is to be welcomed.

The Volume under review is a precious collection, as it reproduces in the beautiful calligraphy of K. N. Iyengar the ten stanzas of Dakshinamurti
Stotra, together with the Manavollasa, the scintillating commentary on the Stotra by Sureswaracharya in 367 mellifluous verses, and the Pranava Varita of the same great disciple, expounding the significance of the mystic syllable AUM. Appended also is the Dakshinamurti Upanishad. All the four texts are accompanied by competent and careful English renderings by Alladi Mahadeva Santry, who also contributes a most valuable and scholarly introduction reviewing the history of Hindu philosophical thought.

All the works are of unquestioned authority. The Dakshinamurti Stotra itself is beyond praise as a combination of great poetry and true philosophy. Sri Bhagavan's regard for it is shown by his own beautiful translation of it into Tamil, Sri Sureswaracharya's treatment of the subject is most charming and will make a direct appeal to the uninitiated who may find Sankara too stiff. The disciple as it were takes the reader by the hand and gently leads him step by step up to the level where total knowing is transformed into total being, shadow merges in the substance which is light, and only light remains.

The present edition is the third, the earlier ones published in 1899 and 1920 having gone out of print long ago. The publishers have done an excellent job and the book is as pleasant to handle as it is profitable to study.

J. P. UNIYAL


Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, whose firm devotion and profound scholarship are well known and whose treatise Ramana Maharshi and the Philosophy of Existence has been published by Sri Ramanasramam, has rendered another outstanding service, especially to non-Tamil readers, by bringing out this very useful work containing the Tamil text Akshara-manasamalai and the Sanskrit text of Arunachala-pancharatnam transliterated in Roman script, together with faithful translations of the two hymns and very elaborate commentaries on them. The book also carries a reprint of the article The Sage of Arunachala, written at the request of Arthur Osborne, and originally published on the Sunday preceding Bhagavan's Maha Nirvana. With the colour reproduction of a painting of the Hill on the cover-page and the sketch of the Mountain by Bhagavan on the back-cover the book is well produced and deserves all praise both for its contents and sumptuous get-up.


Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy, father of the more famous Ananda Coomaraswamy, was a master of many languages and an ardent lover of Tamil as the authentic voice of Saiva devotion. The 18th century saint-poet Tayumanavar was the most eloquent exponent of the transcendental experience where Vedanta and Siddhanta meet. Sir Mutu's translation of 150 poems of Tayumanavar (about one fourth of the poet's total output) was printed over a 100 years ago but was never published as Sir Mutu died before completing the Notes which were to accompany the English translation. The present edition by Shri S. Durai Raja Singam, who has done so much to keep alive the memory of A.K.C., the scholar-colossus, should be welcomed as a work at once of scholarship and piety and as an honour done to two 'kindred souls', the inspired poet and the faithful translator. Considering that so much of Tayumanavar's appeal is due to his sustained verbal melody and his audacious mixture of sonorous Sanskrit and simple spoken Tamil, one can easily understand why only "some", not the whole, of the beauty of the original has been captured by the English renderings. For those who do not know Tamil and yet desire to have an idea of the range and depth of the poet's thought, Sir Mutu's work can now even be strongly recommended.


Mr. Gabrielson regards all things perceived by the senses or the mind — all objects, events, images, sound — as symbols of some inner reality which can never be fully expressed. His real theme is "the mystery of meaning", the relation between things and what they symbolize. His "interpretations" are determined attempts to unravel this mystery by looking through and behind and beyond the beautiful and well known but vaguely understood words of Fitzgerald. Whether or no the old Persian tent-maker and mathematician meant all that Gabrielson finds in the dear familiar quatrains of Fitzgerald, the reader gains from the commentary a vivid sense of layers of significance and will surely go back to his favourite stanzas with a more enquiring mind. They say that poetry, like fragrance, defies analysis. The danger is that such laboured hermeneutics might destroy the symbols they try to explain.

K. S.

Concentration of the mind, says the author, is indispensable not only for spiritual purposes but equally for efficiency in material life. Most people are not aware of their inability to concentrate till they try to do so. They usually wander from thought to thought with uncaring abandon. It appears they have a phrase in Latin America for those who are unable to control their minds and for ever wander from one thought to another: men of "five hundred thoughts" at one time (p. 16).

Drawing upon his long and vast experience in matters occult and spiritual, both in the East and the West, Mouni Sadhu points out how the normal mind is inimical to man and averse to any attempt to control it. But the mind needs to be controlled in its wayward movements and brought into a focus. Only when the faculties of the mind are all brought together and held in one place, fixed on one theme, is it possible for the mind to become aware of a new consciousness. Meditation in the yogic sense can be meaningfully undertaken only after a minimum success is achieved in the art of concentration.

In the course of presenting an elaborate, imaginative course of exercises to learn this art of growing concentration, the author makes several valuable observations and points out how the tapasya of the heart — moral purification, catharsis of emotions etc. — has been practised in the West, how the mists have faced difficulties and temptations (material and occult) and how their techniques of breath-control and utilisation of specific charged words correspond to the Eastern modes of Pranayama and Mantra sadhana. It is not only the bad vasanas, he writes, that obstruct concentration, the good ones too prove inconvenient! Valuable also is his warning that the astral or odic coat of protection that one weaves around oneself at the beginning of such exercises, should be consciously dissolved after the sitting and not left to itself. "Do not forget to destroy your odic armour when no longer needed, simply by reversing the process. If you allow the odic cloak to fade itself, your will-power may lose full control of its components, which may develop the tendency to dissolve immediately after you have formed them into a shell. Also, intruders will learn to pass through the decaying odic shell" (p. 115).

Mouni Sadhu considers Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi as the greatest of the Teachers of Vichara Marga and quotes from his utterances profusely. It will be recalled that his work, In the days of Great Peace, with the Maharshi as its central theme, is one of the most powerful spiritual documents written in the present century. The chapters on occult powers, siddhis, are most rationally argued and things are put in their right place in the larger context of the adventure of the Infinite.

Even for those who may find the exercises developed in these pages rather tedious and too mental, there is much here that can be of help in improving the quality of one's life and elevating the consciousness Godward.


Translated by an American poet, Lucien Stryk, and a Japanese scholar, Takashi Ikemoto, these poems span over 1500 years of Zen poetry. Grouped under Chinese Poems, Poems of Japanese Zen Masters, Japanese Haiku and selections from the contemporary Japanese Master, Shinkichi Takahashi, these English renderings carry the original flavour and provide excellent themes for meditation. Included in the volume are some striking illustrations from Zen artists Dr. Suzuki, the historian of Zen, remarks how the Zen poets and artists "tend to use the fewest words or strokes of brush" to record the state of consciousness when feeling reaches its highest pitch and passes into silence. Many of the poems in this collection exemplify this truth.

"There are several ways of reading Zen verses; the reader may approach it with satori as an object, or for critical appreciation, or simply for pleasure; in this respect one probably should not be too rigorous" (Takashi Ikemoto). We could read them for all these. Read Bunan, a Japanese master:

When you're both alive and dead,
Thoroughly dead to yourself.
How superb
The smallest pleasure!

Or, one from Shinkichi Takahashi, the contemporary Japanese teacher:

A stone relief I never tire of:
life-sized Buddha, broken nose,
hair spiralling, eyes serene moons,
chipped mudra-fingers at the breast,
legs crossed in lotus. Under each arm
around the halo, angels among flowers,
a red line streams — warm blood,
on either side, beasts, open-mouthed,
on guard. He turns the treasure wheel.
Three thousand years since Buddha
found the morning star — now
sun itself is blinded by his light.
THE MOUNTAIN PATH

Daito of the 13th century speaks in different tones:

To slice through Buddha, Patriarchs,
I grip my polished sword;
One glance at my mastery.
The void bites its tasks!

Every way turns into a limitation at some stage.
So calls Gassan, (1275-1365):

Why be discipline's slave
Snapping the golden chain,
Step boldly towards the sunset!

And last, a superb example of spiritual mysticism:

Coming, I clench my hands,
Going, spread them wide.
Once through the barrier,
A lotus stem will
Drag an elephant!

(Sekishitsu-Soei — A Chinese Master),


A constructive book by one who has something to say by virtue of a capital spiritual experience he has had. He recognises that there can be, and there are, several approaches to the Divine Reality. He gives an aerial survey of the main paths evolved in the long history of man and points out the limitations of earth when pursued exclusively. He bases himself on a fundamental principle of the Swami Narayan Panth — of which he is an exponent, albeit as a leader of a breakaway group more in consonance with the Time-spirit of the age — that the ultimate Divinity is beyond kshara, the mutable and the akshara, the immutable; it is the transcendent Person, the Purushottama who exceeds all that is manifest and is unmanifest. But He is not somewhere THERE alone; he is also here in the heart of creatures. To find this Reality within oneself is the purpose of every awakened man.

Dadubhai gives a detailed account of the traditions of the chakras as centres of consciousness in the subtle body; the way in which the seekers are asked to awaken these centres, open the lotuses; the meaning of awakening the Kundalini, the dormant energy at the base of the spine. He examines the physiological implications of these concepts and the practical effects that man experiences when this subtle nervous organism is dynamised. He underlines the dangers, especially in the realm of sex, desires, passions. The chapters on Mantra, Yantra and cosmic evolution are lucid in their exposition. He is convincing in his assessment of the partial perfection that is achieved by the traditional yogas, delivering only the self of man out of bondage leaving the rest of his being, his several faculties e.g., mind, life, body etc., unredeemed. Besides, the individual liberation leaves the larger cosmic problem unsolved.

To avoid these pitfalls and inadequacies, he expounds the Purushottama Yoga or Swaroop Yoga which aims at linking man with his innate Divinity turned towards manifestation. It is indispensable in this path to be accepted by a Guru who embodies the authentic tradition freshly inaugurated by Lord Swaminarayan in the last century. There is "a spiritual hierarchy of the original spiritual disciplic succession" in this gnostiic tradition which alone can initiate the seeker in the practice of the divya viprada mantra and lead him to his total perfection, make him a unit that can multiply itself in a society that may grow in his mould.

The writer informs us in this book that the Yogic Divine Society (of which he is a leading light) conducts spiritual sadhana camps through its tantric group which is open to all Truth seekers. The motto of this group is to have: "Dattatreya's vision of perceiving only good and beautiful things in others, Prahlad's devotion, Mira's love ecstasy and Hanuman's loyal and selfless service towards God."


As a systematic study of the writings and speeches of J. Krishnamurti with a view to presenting a cogent philosophy of his thought, this volume is a welcome addition to the growing Krishnamurtiana. Sri Rohit Mehta rightly remarks in his Foreword: 'Krishnamurti would repudiate any attempt to place his teachings under the term Philosophy. But after all one has to use some word to describe his approach to life, and surely philosophy comes nearest to what he has been trying to convey.'

The author does well to give an analytical account of the life of J. K. stage by stage: 1895 (year of his birth) — 1909, early childhood: 1909-1920, period of association with the Theosophical society: 1921-1929, flowering of the genius, culmination of self-discovery: 1929 Dissolution of the Order of the Star and dissociation with the Theosophical and other organisations and the aftermath: succeeding years devoted to the communication of his message to the world.

J. K. is considered as an enigma by many. He decries Teachers and Gurus, but he himself is one, whether he admits it or not; he warns against 'conditioning' but his wholesale condemnations of insti-
"Holding on to the Supreme State is Samadhi. When it is with effort due to mental disturbances, it is Savikalpa, when these disturbances are absent, it is Nirvikalpa. Remaining permanently in the primal state without effort is Sahaja. Like Nirvikalpa, there is an internal as well as an external Savikalpa, depending on whether the disturbing thoughts are from outside or from inside."

—Sri Bhagavan in GURU RAMANA

Progress never goes in a straight line. It is like a spiral (Swami Turiyananda (p. 163))

When one is in deep sleep, he should not be awakened with a violent push all of a sudden. That may produce a damaging reaction in the system. The senses take a little time to conduct themselves with the body. (p. 188)

But there is much in those pages that needs further editing. There are a number of observations which are partial truths or misleading as they stand. The Publishers have been obliged to insert corrective footnotes in many places. Besides, there are many repetitions e.g. re. the Swam’s coming back to earth in case Thakur chooses to come back; mental hospital inmate having doubts about the sanity of all except himself etc. etc.

There are references to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, but it is clear that the Swami understood neither the personality nor the teaching of the Sage. Speaking of the question of the heart being on the right side or the left, he observes: ‘When the Kundalini rises, it goes up through the heart, straight up; it does not turn to right or left. So the heart should be in the middle.’ (p. 41). The truth of the matter is that the physiological heart is on the left, the spiritual heart on the right. The Kundalini has nothing to do with the heart: it goes up through the chest region which is loosely called the heart centre.

We do hope the publishers will subject this book to a thorough editorial scrutiny and keep only those portions that befit a senior monk like Swami Atulananda.

M. P. PANDIT.
"Bhagavan: ‘My’ implies the ‘I’, which owns the senses. You take your existence for granted, at the same time ask others to prove it to you. Similarly you admit the certainty of your senses, which see others, whilst denying all certainty. You see how you contradict yourself. The fact is that there are no others; there is no such a person as ‘you’. Each man, although addressed as ‘you’, styles himself as ‘I’. Even the confirmation you demand from others comes only from the ‘I’. ‘You’ and ‘they’ occur only to the ‘I’, without which they are meaningless.”

— Guru Ramana, p. 37
the Angelic world, the physical world and the natural world. It took six days to bring the cosmos into existence. The problem of Evil is explained by positing that it began with creation and is rooted in the first division from the Unchanging and Eternal. The very momentum of creation impels this Evil which however is a mere force and form without any specific ordered direction. But this Evil is inherently good. The author also discusses Fate, both general and specific or individual. The universe, it is said, unfolds itself in a great cosmic cycle and its purpose is to reunify the separated image of God at the end of time.

The exposition of these principles is mystical and without a good knowledge of the Kabbalistic terminology, it is very difficult to understand the arguments. The 22 illustrative plates help us to understand the text more adequately. This learned and instructive book opens and ends with the dictum: "God's place is the world but the world is not God's place".

Prof. S. Rajagopala Sastri.


Materialism of the nineteenth century was severely criticised by H. P. Blavatsky and it is gratifying to note that science is no longer based on the philosophy of Herbert Spencer and T. H. Huxley. It was not Blavatsky's intention to deprecate the achievements of modern science. Her concern was rather to contrast the philosophical science of antiquity with the fruit of investigation pursued in the anti-metaphysical temper of men, who were opponents to the dogmas of organised religion as much as or more than they were seekers of impartial truth.

The centenary of the Theosophical Movement naturally presented a unique occasion to assess theosophical research and studies in science in relation to yoga and theosophy. A seminar was held at the centenary international convention of the T.S. when papers were presented pointing out how modern science is fulfilling the concepts of universal brotherhood that the theosophical movement has always maintained to be basic for the future happiness of mankind. Twenty authors drawn from various disciplines have contributed to this book which brings about a synthesis between physics and metaphysics, philosophy and psychic research, modern science and ancient wisdom. Another aspect of this seminar is the clear enunciation and positive statement that intelligence is primal in the universe, which is what science 100 years ago denied and Madame Blavatsky affirmed.

KĀLI AND KRISHNA

By Dilip Kumar Roy

Can one who yearns to be havened at thy feet, Resign when myrmidons of Death assail?

Can he who, Mother, lives but thee to meet Grope waylost and even as an orphan wail?

Can one, in tears, appeal to thee in vain And sink in dark despond's abyssmal pain?

He to whom, Mother, thou com'st, in grace, to sing:
"In thy soul's temple from now on I'll abide, Hark, as I answer thee He chants, the King:
'I too, will with Her for ever in thee reside"'

Thou playest in countless lilts, Mother divine! Through tears and laughter of beauty and sunshine!

May I be vowed to install thee in my heart Now thou, at last, reveal'st to me the Truth That thou and He are one — only depart Nevermore, O great Queen of might and ruth.

May I be dedicated to Him and thee: The God and Goddess, everlastingly.

Many questions are posed today by science and technology affecting our lives in outer space as well as the biosphere and the immediate environment. The contributors to this volume have taken pains to answer most of them in the light of the fundamental principles and eternal values for which Theosophy stands.


Even as the Sufi mystic exclaimed: "The lamps are different", Parrinder's thesis is to explode the fallacy that "all religions are the same". He emphasises the diversity of religions and proves that God has not left himself without a witness in every part of the world. In these days tormented by the four heresies of Darwinism, Freudism, Frazerism and Marxism, the world is hungry for the things of the soul. This manual comes in handy for all those interested to know in a nutshell something about Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism.

This little book contains the outpourings of a man of contemplation who lives in constant communion with Nature amid the lovely hills of Karnataka. Meditation is a much abused word, as thought has made it a complicated affair. But it is simple, yet subtle, being penetration into the unknown, delving into the very heart of the immeasurable. These pages give the earnest soul a deep sense of peace. As the introduction rightly points out: “This little forest flower that has bloomed unknown is full of Franciscan grace. The presence of enlightened men like him is a continual benediction on humanity. May his wisdom guide our footsteps in the troubled times of our age.”


Peace is the basic theme of Prof. Delp’s book, but quite unlike the title, his article of faith is based on strength, courage and power. This is an unusual book, as there is no central theme to support its basic structure. What one gets here is a series of surprising essays rather than an orderly treatise on the topic of peace. Hence it can be read anywhere, as each piece stands by itself independently. Underlying the whole book is a sense of compassion, a breath of harmony, the light everlasting, the law of love eternal.

It may seem absurd to talk of peace and the gentle way in this nuclear age. But the author has complete confidence, as he affirms that those following the gentle way have all eternity before them. The important thing is to start and is to strike the note of optimism along with Browning:

“One who never turned his back, 
Never doubted clouds would break, 
Held we fall to rise, 
Are baffled to fight better; 
Sleep to wake.”


All action is based on choice: so the study of choice is the key for practical understanding of all life. The power to choose is life itself. Donald Tyrell rightly stresses that our mental health is subject to our own choices, and not determined by glandular activities, thus freeing us from the danger of fatalism. This is an important book as it releases us from the prison house of depression and fear that our feelings and emotions have such deep roots that they cannot come within the ambit of our decision-making.

Dr. Tyrell, who is an expert in abnormal psychology, stresses that the proper aim of existence is not the achievement of liberation from pain and frustration but rather the search for meaning in those limits which our very nature imposes on us. These limits can be overcome not only in managing what falls within our understanding and control, but also in accepting responsibility for the unknown and uncontrollable events in our life. By giving dramatic examples in the form of tape-recorded excerpts from actual group therapy sessions, the author substantiates the subtitle of the book, namely, “the theory and practice of self-determination.”

Healing takes place by recognising that the complex of values, goals and behaviour causing our pains is the result of a series of choices. If so, it is obvious then that pains and frustrations can be altered by new choices. This is an invaluable book not only to the psychologist but to the layman as well.

ARGUS.

CORRIGENDUM

In the article Jnana Sadhana of Goraknath published on pages 233 to 235 of our October 1978 issue, the word “manonasa” appearing in some places of the text is not correct and is to be substituted by “manolaya”.

For clarification, it may be stated that in manolaya, which is experienced during the practice of Self-enquiry and nirvikalpa samadhi, the mind along with its vasanas dissolves in the Self to result in the thought-creating activities of the vasanas becoming extinct (or extinguished) for the time being. However, when the mind comes out of the Self on rising from Self-enquiry or samadhi, the activities are resumed. When with constant practice of samadhi the vasanas are totally destroyed, the mind gets permanently merged in the Self and does not come out to result in what is called manonasa.

The article is concerned only with the practice of manolaya which leads ultimately to manonasa, which is another name for Self-realisation.
ASHRAM BULLETIN

FESTIVAL TO THE DIVINE MOTHER: NAVARATRI CELEBRATIONS AT THE ASHRAM

The Navaratri Festival was celebrated at the Ashram from October 3 to 11, 1978, as colourfully as ever, in the midst of enthusiastic devotees.

Mother Yogambika was decorated on all the nine days, with special decorations every night.

It may not be superfluous to explain the spiritual significance of this festival in honour of the Mother Divine. The nine days are conveniently divided into three parts; and the three aspects of the Divine Mother, viz., Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati, are successively adored. Durga stands for Sakti, Lakshmi for Prosperity and Saraswati Learning, Skill and Knowledge. On the first three nights, thus, the Mother is worshipped as the manifestation of Power and Valour; on the second three nights, She is worshipped as the embodiment of Prosperity, Plenty and Joy, and the last three nights are entirely devoted to Learning, Knowledge and Wisdom.

The decorations to Mother Yogambika are appropriately varied to fit into the pattern mentioned above. This year, special vahanas (mounts) were made to order through a Sthapathi, residing in Tiruvannamalai.

Navaratri celebrations, however, express not merely grand spectacles and festive joy, but also intense devotion and prayer, and chanting of Devi Mahatmyam. Durga Saptasati (700) is the sacred work containing the details of the worship of the Mother. Therefore, apart from the daily parayana of Durga Saptasati, a Laksharchana of Lalita Sahasranama took place in the inner sanctum of Sri Chakra in the shrine during this period.

Navaratri is celebrated throughout India during autumn. Interestingly enough, this is the one festival during which the weather is pleasant in every part of India!
Smt. Indira Gandhi Pays Homage at The Samadhi of Sri Maharshi

The former Prime Minister of India, Smt. Indira Gandhi, is well-known for her spiritual bent of mind and her devotion to the living-saint, Sri Ma Ananda Mayee.

After her election campaign in Chickamagalur, she wished to spend a quiet hour in meditation at the shrine of Sri Ramana Maharshi and to go round Arunachala (do giripadakshina).

On Monday the 6th November she arrived from Bangalore with her private secretary, Smt. Nirmala Deshpande. Though her visit had been kept a secret, a large crowd had gathered to have a glimpse of her. After a few minutes in the Auditorium, she went to the Old Hall and sat in deep meditation for a long while. Then she went to the dining hall and took lunch, which she ate with relish as 'Sri Bhagavan's prasad'.

Smt. Indira Gandhi is seated next to where Sri Maharshi used to sit. After her lunch she said with joy she had 'the prasad of Sri Bhagavan'.

Our Managing Editor is narrating to her interesting incidents in Bhagavan's life and about the Ashram.

Smt. Indira Gandhi in front of Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi Shrine. (Inset) She is seen receiving puja prasad after aarti to Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi.

After two hours in the Ashram she went round the holy Hill Arunachala. She remarked: 'I have visited many Ashrams and meditated there. Here, at Sri Ramanasramam, I had lost hold of the world and myself and was one with the Eternal Silence and Peace. It has given me great peace and quietude.'

Due to the absence of the Ashram President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman, our Managing Editor, V. Ganesan, took Smt. Gandhi round the Ashram.
introduced to her the old devotees like Sri S. S. Cohen and Sri Viswanatha Swami and Trustees Sri S. S. V. S. Muthiah Chettiar and Sri Krishnamoorthi, the Tahsildar.

Smt. Indira Gandhi wrote in the Ashram Visitor's Book:

"My visit was much too brief, yet long enough to sense the atmosphere of utter peace and harmony."

PILGRIMS

The spiritual aura of Arunachala and the simple and direct teaching of Sri Maharshi continue to draw pilgrim-seekers from all parts of the world, both those who have seen the Maharshi in the body and others. It is always a joy to meet such earnest seekers dedicating themselves to sadhana at the Ashram.

A recent addition to the Ramana-family is the Australian lady-devotee, Doris Williamson. Her devotion to Sri Bhagavan is such that she has had a house built for herself inside the Morvi Compound. She spends most of her time in meditation and in the company of old devotees of Sri Bhagavan.

She has agreed to share the following with fellow-pilgrims:

"In 1973, I first visited India and knew that I was approaching the end of the long Search; it was not until early in 1975 that a friend brought me to Tiruvannamalai and I realised the search was ended.

"At the foot, the Lotus Foot, of beautiful Arunachala, is Sri Ramanasramam, and Siva Himself, as Dakshinamurti, pervades all as a Living Presence. Now the Ashram is my HOME a dream come true — and the Ashram people are my family: a kind, wise and inspiring family indeed. My humble gratitude to Bhagavan is inexpressible.

"The body may return periodically to its residence in Australia, but the heart will remain in India, in Arunachala's Heart — Sri Ramanasramam."

— Doris Williamson, Mosman, Australia.

Mr. Timothy Stork of England spent a few weeks at the Ashram and would like to share the following with fellow-devotees:

"I first heard of Ramana Maharshi from the members of a Meditation Group which I had joined in London. This group, several years previously, had forged close links with the late Saravanamuthu, a disciple of Bhagavan. It was with some interest therefore that they received the news that I was planning to go to India and hoped to spend a week or two at Sri Ramanasramam. The plan ultimately came to fruition and I was able to stay at the Ashram for what I am sure will be one of the most memorable months of my life.

"I arrived at the Ashram after a hot and tiring journey from Pondicherry and was courteously welcomed and accommodated in a comfortable room. During the next four weeks I experienced the hospitality and kindness for which the Ashram is renowned.

"My first impression of the Ashram was that of a haven of peace and tranquillity — that view remained unchanged throughout my stay. I think the most outstanding memory I will retain will be that of discovering Skandashram for the first time at a sunset!"


The late Melle Jeanne Guerineau, one of the earnest devotees of Sri Bhagavan, brought with her four years ago another devotee. She is Mme. Edith Deri. Mme. Deri lives in Paris and some of our devotees who have visited her apartment could feel the presence of Sri Bhagavan in it. She has been amidst us during Deepam for two weeks.

She writes:

"This is my second visit to the Ashram. The first took place in 1974. Even that first visit came about, I am sure, by the Grace of my Guru, Sri Ramana Maharshi, in answer to a prayer for inner contact and longing that has been there between Him, Arunachala and myself, through reading, meditation and discussions with other seekers."
“That first visit fulfilled all my expectations of wonder and inner peace. The reception extended to me at that time by the management has been full of affectionate solicitude for my well-being. This time also the same close, friendly and helpful attitude is shown to me day after day.

“This continued Grace of the Maharshi, allowing me to come again, to be able to bow down to His Holy Shrine and the Hill, fills me with the most profound gratitude. Whatever words can express are contained in these lines. The riches, benefits and blessings belonging to the realm of the spiritual, I shall just take back with me, without being able to share it fully with others.

“May the blessings of Sri Bhagavan continue to envelop those who earnestly seek it in their hearts!”

— MME. EDITH DÉRI,
Paris, France.

Sri Suresh Khanna of Ahmedabad was able to come again after a lapse of three years, with his family. His wife, Kavita, and daughters, Cima and Chabby, were very happy to bring the new arrival, Akash (aged one year). Akash was enrolled as a LIFE MEMBER of the Ashram; being the youngest on the list! They spent ten days (Nov. 4 to 13) at the Ashram and when the time came for departure all of them felt really sad.

Before leaving, the young girls expressed their happiness in these words:

“Coming to Ashram one can’t help feeling the blissful heavenly abode of Sri Ramana Bhagavan. Goodwill and happiness seem to permeate the whole atmosphere and seem to envelop

Akash: the youngest Life Member of the Ashram!

Khanna Family: (l to r) our Managing Editor, Suresh Khanna — with son, Akash, Kavita, Chabby and Cima.
In commemoration of the episode of Lord Siva (Pure Awareness) quelling the pride of Brahma (buddhi) and Vishnu (ahankara) by Himself appearing before them as a huge column of Fire, every year a big cauldron of ghee and camphor is lit on the summit of Arunachala on Deepam Day. It is also the holy day when seekers are blessed by the Lord reminding them of His Presence in their hearts as the Light of Pure Awareness.

This year the holy festival was celebrated at Tiruvannamalai from 3rd to 12th December, 1978, the last day being the Deepam Day. Pilgrims from all over the world flocked to Arunachala and went round the Holy Hill, chanting ‘Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva’. At the Ashram, as usual, a light was lit at the same time when the Deepam was lit on top of the Hill. Devotees sang Sri Bhagavan’s Hymns in Praise of Arunachala.

"Everything is so meticulous and clean here. Flowers of all colours bloom in the Ashram garden and they adorn Lord Ramana’s Samadhi. The chanting at His shrine both morning and evening is so melodious. The total setting of the Ashram, with coconut trees and the celestial Linga trees, birds, peacocks and monkeys, makes it something unique. This time we were lucky to see the beautiful sight of the mist and the rainbow across Divine Arunachala.

“We were very happy to climb right up to the top of Arunachala Hill. We were thrilled and this experience of intense joy will never leave our memory. We all went round the Hill also, in the company of our parents and Ganeshan Uncle. Ganeshan Uncle is full of stories about Bhagavan, which he narrated while we were doing giripradakshina. Now, we await the time anxiously when we will be able to take our little brother, Akash, to the top of Arunachala, for he is not two years yet.”

— Cima Khanna (13 years)
Chabby Khanna (9 years)

DEEPAM ON ARUNACHALA

RAMANA KENDRA, NEW DELHI

Ramana Kendra, New Delhi had a busy schedule of talks, discourses and devotional music. during the quarter. All the functions were well attended.

Brahmachari Vivek Chaitanya of Chinmaya Mission gave talks in Hindi from 13th to 23rd October, both in the morning and in the evening. At the morning sessions, he gave a lucid exposition of Bhagavan’s Upadesa Sara. The evening sessions were devoted to Chapter 3 of Bhagavad Gita.

Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha of Narayanasrama Tapovanam, Trichur, whose discourses at the Kendra have always drawn large audiences, gave another illuminating series of talks in English on Mundakopanishad from 1st to 7th November.

Sri C. N. Sastry of Dharwar, an ardent devotee of Bhagavan, gave on 6th October a soul-stirring recital of devotional music.

On October 24 Sri N, Subramaniam (ANNA) of Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, gave a talk on tapas in the Ramayana; and on November 12 Brahmasri Singara Subramania Sastrigal gave a talk in Tamil on Bhagavan.

Sri Inder Deo, of Fiji Islands, who is closely associated with the social welfare activities in Karnataka of Sri Sadguru Sai Sankar Trust, gave on October 29 a very interesting talk in English, illustrated with colour slides, on “Service to the poor”. Sri O. P. Tyagi, M.P., presided.

The Birth Centenary of Kavyakanta Vasishtha Ganapatimuni was celebrated at a public meeting held on No. 26. Dr. (Smt.) Sarojini Mahishi, M.P., presided. Dr. Raja Ramanna spoke on the convergence of modern physics and advaita vedanta and recalled his early association with Paul Brunton and V. Subramania Iyer. Dr. C. R. Swaminathan spoke at length on the poet’s magnum opus, Uma Sahasram. Sat Darsan was recited and Ramana Chaturvarmisar was sung by a group of ladies. Sri K. C. Subbiah proposed the vote of thanks. Professor Swaminathan said that the celebration was the inaugural function of Sri Bhagavan’s own Centenary in 1979-80.
BIRTH CENTENARY OF KAVYAKANTA GANAPATI MUNI

MADRAS

Ramana Kendra, Madras, celebrated the birth Centenary of Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni on Sunday, November 19. After puja and Veda Parayana, Sri K. K. Nambiar, Chairman of the Kendra, in his welcome address, described Ganapati Muni as a prodigy in the various branches of Sanskrit learning and a great tapasvin who found what he sought for in the Brahmana Swami of Arunachala whom he announced to the world as Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. He gave to the world Sri Ramana Gita, the essence of Ramana’s teachings in mellifluous Sanskrit poetry along with thrilling verses in praise of his Master. He has rendered into Sanskrit verse his Master’s Forty Verses on Existence as Sat Darshan.

Sri S. Sankaranarayanan, the main speaker, hailed Ganapati Muni as the Vivekananda of Bhagavan Ramana and explained at length the relation between the Maharshi and the Muni, quoting from Kapali Sastri’s biography in Sanskrit known as Vasishta Vaishnavam.

With recitations of the Muni’s Hymns and a Veena recital by Smt. Rajeswari Padmanabhan the meeting concluded.

At a public meeting held on December 3 at Srinivasa Sastry Hall, Mylapore, Madras, Sri Prabhudas Patwari, Governor of Madras, presided. The following publications were released:

- Biography of Nayana (English)
- Herambopasthanam (Sanskrit and English)
- Nayana’s Letters to Bagavan Ramana Maharshi (Sanskrit).

Among the speakers were Sri J. G. K. Murty, Sri T. Rama Prasad Rao (Chief Justice), Sri B. V. S. S. Mani, Sri R. V. G. K. Ranga Rao (Raja of Bobbili), Sri S. Sankaranarayanan and Dr. G. Sriramamurthy.

A vote of thanks by Sri B. Madhavan brought the proceedings to a close.

ANAKAPALLE

At Anakapalle, Andhra Pradesh, the Birth Centenary of Kavyakanta Vasistha Ganapati Muni was celebrated on the 17th, 18th and 19th November, by the Kavyakantha Centenary Committee, of which Sri Tenneti Viswanatham was the President and Dr. G. Sriramamurthy was the Secretary. The elaborate programme included a performance “The Muni in Music” by Kumari M. Savitri on the 17th, a public meeting on the 18th at which Dr. Prasadrayakulapati and Sri A. Appanna Sastry were the principal speakers and Smt. Vasanta and Party gave a dance recital; and a series of meetings on the 19th consisting of a Symposium on the Poet’s Life and Works, a Sanskrit Kavi Sammelan and a public meeting at which Dr. S. V. Yoga Rao, Sri Y. Padmanabha Swamy, Sri A. Lakshminarayana and Sri Rambhatla Lakshminarayana were the speakers.

BOMBAY

The Ramana Jayanti Celebration Committee, Bombay, coming to know that Sri M. P. Pandit of Sri Aurobindo Ashram was in city, arranged for a meeting to celebrate the Centenary of Kavyakanta Ganapati Muni on November 24, at Gita Mandir Hall of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chowpatty. Sri R. T. Vyas of the Bhavan’s Postgraduate Studies in Sanskrit, presided.

Sri M. P. Pandit gave a lucid talk on ‘Vasishta Ganapati Muni and Bhagavan Ramana’, drawing freely from the life and works of these two spiritual luminaries.

The meeting was well attended by earnest devotees.
Release of
“RAMANANJALI”
Pre-recorded Cassettes

Devotees of Sri Bhagavan will be happy to
know that songs from Sri Bhagavan's Five
Hymns to Arunachala and Sri Muruganar's
Ramana Snanidhi Murali and other songs on
Sri Bhagavan recorded on cassettes, will be

The India Book House, Bombay, have
arranged this programme in their pre-recorded
series: Bhakti Sudha.

The songs have been rendered with great
feeling by Smt. Sulochana Natarajan and a
group of Ramana-bhaktas at the Prabhat
Sound System's Studio at Bangalore.
Sri Dikshit of India Book House, who gave
valuable advice, Sri B. R. Srinivasan (Chinna)
who directed the orchestra enthusiastically
and efficiently, Sri Jagannath (Jaggu) who
balanced and recorded the programme with
technical perfection, Sri H. K. Narayana's
rich voice and the care of the instrumentalists,
contributed greatly to the excellence of the
cassette.

Our thanks are specially due to Sri H. G.
Mirehandani, Managing Director of the India
Book House, who took particular and contin-
uous interest.

We also thank Sarvarthi A. Chatterjee, Shiva-
ram and Kamath of India Book House, for
their active support.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

For the CENTENARY YEARS of
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, it is
proposed that practically all the articles
in The Mountain Path during the years
1979 and 1980 will be on or about Sri
Bhagavan. We request devotees to con-
tribute articles in 1500 to 2000 words or
less on Sri Bhagavan and His Teachings
and their reminiscences of the Master.

OBITUARY

Sri P. S. EASWARAN

It is with a heavy heart that we announce to
our readers the passing away on Dec. 5, 1978 after
a short illness of one of the staunch devotees of
Sri Bhagavan, Sri P. S. Easwaran. He was
introduced to our readers in our January, 1978 issue, p. 57.
His end was sudden
but it was peaceful.

He was the Sec-
retary of Prema
Sangha which was
started by Ramana-
das Dr. Padmanab-
han, even in the
days of Sri Bha-
gavan. He was till
his end the Secretary
of the Ramana Ken-
dra, Madras. A very
active devotee he has
never spared any effort to spread the teaching of
Sri Bhagavan and to help the devotees of Sri Bhagavan.
We have lost in him a gem of a devotee.

We convey our heart-felt condolences to the
members of his family.

May he ever rest in Eternal Peace at the Feet of
his chosen Master and God, Bhagavan Ramana!