

The Mountain Path

Vol. II

JANUARY 1965

No. 1

SRI RAMANASRAMAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI

"Escape this blame! Why
didst Thou then recall Thyself
to me? How can I leave Thee
now, Oh Arunachala?"

— *The Marital Garland of
Letters* — Verse 5.

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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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(A QUARTERLY)

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

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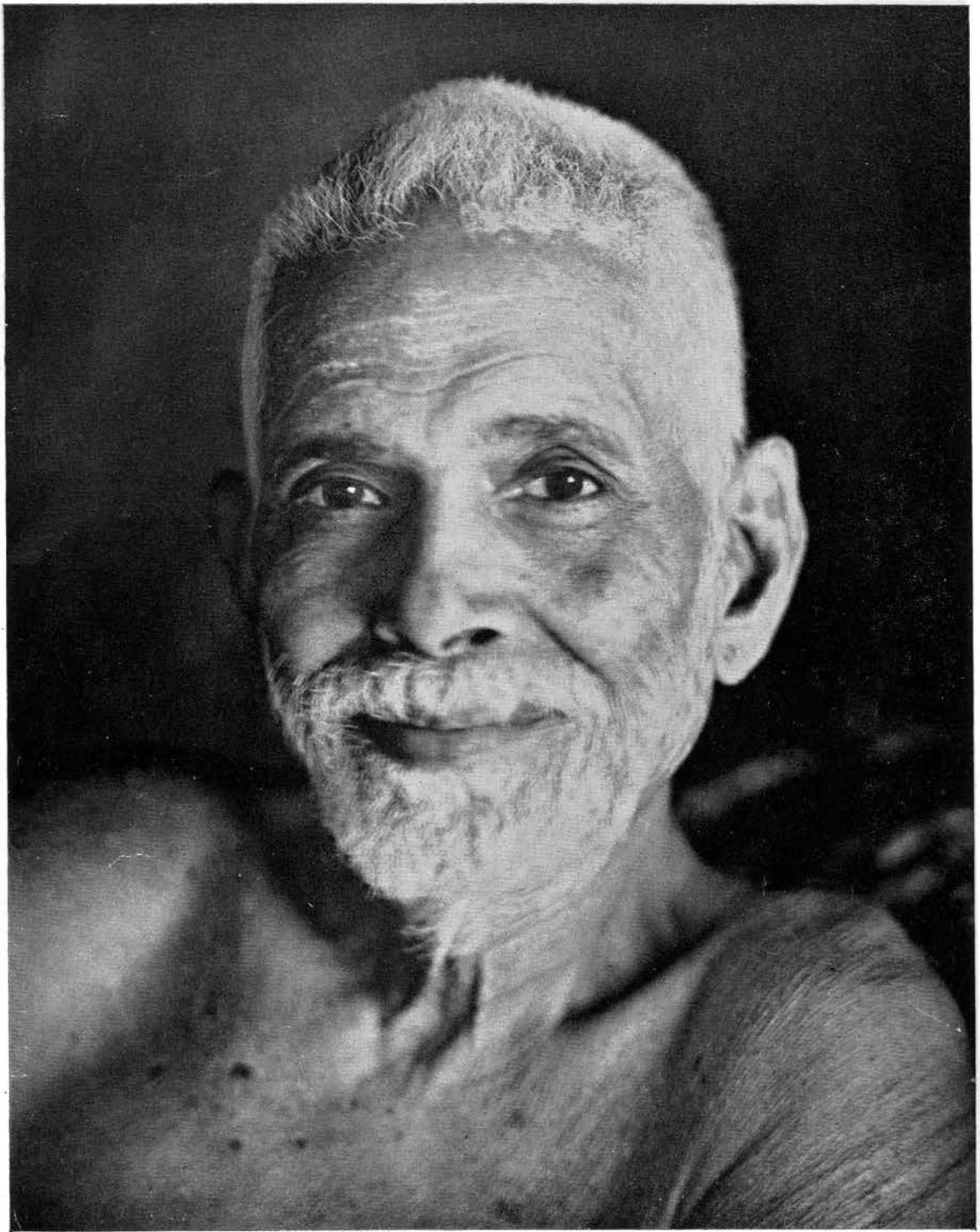
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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

Editor : ARTHUR OSBORNE

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No. 1

KARMA MARGA

[EDITORIAL]

It is not meant that one should run from house and home, from wife and children and kindred, and flee out of the world, or forsake his goods so as not to regard them ; but he must kill and make as nothing his own self-will.

— Jacob Boehme, *Mysterium Magnum*, XII. 55.

Karma marga is the path of action. It is often thought of to-day as more or less equivalent to social service and therefore the most suited path to modern times, but actually this is a misconception. As originally understood, it meant the path of ritualistic action such as austerities, sacrifice, formal worship, breath-control and incantations. In this sense it is the least, not the most suited to modern conditions. Whether aspirants seek the Goal through knowledge or devotion, few nowadays put their faith in ritualistic activity.

In its original form karma marga can prepare a man for the assault on the final peak but it cannot make that assault ; it must always fall short for the simple reason that action cannot transcend action, just as thought cannot transcend thought, just as philosophy may help a man to conceive of the Goal but can never carry him to it. This inherent limitation will be dealt with later in this issue in connection with the Maharshi's 'Instruction in Thirty Verses'.

What is spoken of as karma marga to-day is actually a fusion of karma marga with either jnana marga or bhakti marga. Both these can be followed by a recluse and often have been. They do not necessitate outer activity. However the modern tendency is to practice them in the life of the world, and this has created the type of compound path often referred to as karma marga. This tendency has been authorised by spiritual Masters and is therefore to be regarded as a legitimate adaptation to the times and not a form of degeneracy.

First the fusion with jnana marga. This was sponsored by the Maharshi himself. In ancient times Self-enquiry was a path for the world-renouncer, to be practised in silence and solitude. When the Maharshi re-adapted it to suit the conditions of our age his instruction was to practise it while continuing one's work in the world, coolly and harmoniously, without grasping or self-interest, without even the idea 'I am doing this'. "There is no principle that actions can be performed only on the basis of

the 'I-am-the-doer' idea, and therefore there is no reason to ask whether they can be performed and the duties discharged without that idea. To take a common example, an accountant working all day in his office and scrupulously attending to his duties might seem to the spectator to be shouldering all the financial responsibilities of the institution. But, knowing that he is not personally affected by the in-take or out-goings, he remains unattached and free from the 'I-am-the-doer' feeling in doing his work, while at the same time he does it perfectly well. In the same way, it is quite possible for the wise householder who earnestly seeks Liberation to discharge his duties in life (which, after all, are his destiny) without any attachment, regarding himself merely as an instrument for the purpose. Such activity is not an obstacle on the path to Knowledge, nor does Knowledge prevent a man from discharging his duties in life. Knowledge and activity are never mutually antagonistic and the realization of one does not impede the performance of the other, nor performance of one the realization of the other."¹

This is in conformity with the teaching of the Gita : "Your concern is only with action, not with its results. Do not be motivated by the fruit of action, but also do not cling to inaction."²

So also is the Maharshi's warning that you cannot find peace by mere physical renunciation, because whatever outer changes you may make in your life your mind still remains with you, and it is this that has to be subdued. "No one can remain really actionless, even for an instant, for every one is driven inevitably to action by the qualities (gunas) born of nature."³

Outer renunciation, as the Maharshi warned, is seldom advisable. When it involves

shirking of duties it is actually pernicious : "Renunciation of duties is not right. It is prompted by ignorance and is said to be tamasic."⁴ "That renunciation is regarded as pure which consists in performing duties because they ought to be performed, while renouncing attachment and the fruit of one's actions."⁵

What does this involve in practice? Not social service. People who follow this path do not go out of their way to find and relieve social injustices or cases of ignorance, poverty and disease. On the other hand, they do not cause injustice or disharmony. They help to the best of their ability such as come their way needing help. They accomplish their tasks in life, both in profession and family, as a function, a duty, a harmony, obtruding their self-will as little as possible. By being harmonious they diffuse harmony. If all lived in this way there would be no need for social service because there would be no exploitation of the weak by the strong, the poor by the rich, children by parents or women by men, and therefore no injustice to set right.

This path, as prescribed by the Maharshi, can be called the modern form of jnana marga ; but since it is performed in the life of the world and involves a life of activity it can also be called a modern form of karma marga.

The late Swami Ramdas is an outstanding example of the fusion of karma marga and bhakti marga. In his early autobiography 'In Quest of God',⁶ he tells how, while following the path, he travelled about India as a penniless sadhu, visiting ashrams and swamis, wandering through the Himalayas, living in caves, travelling ticketless on trains, bullied by railway officials and police, and all the time calling on the name of Ram⁷ and seeing Ram

¹ *The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in his own words*, p. 80-81, Rider & Co. edition, p. 98 in the Sri Ramanasramam edition.

² *Bhagavat Gita*, 11, 47.

³ *Ibid*, 111, 5.

⁴ *Ibid*, XVIII, 7.

⁵ *Ibid*, XVIII, 9.

⁶ Published by Bhavan's Book University, Chawpatty, Bombay-7.

⁷ Used as a name of God ; historically the name of the Seventh Avatara, Rama, of the *Ramayana*.

manifested in all who met him, friendly or hostile. If one sadhu gave him a drinking vessel and another stole it he would simply say: "Ram in one form gave it and in another took it away." Later, when he became a Swami and set up an ashram he would address all letters to men as 'Beloved Ram' and to women as 'Beloved Mother'.

On this path the devotee, training himself to see God manifested in all, serves God in serving all, loves God in loving all. It is not social service but divine service since whoever he serves is, for him, a form assumed by Ram. It could be called karma marga in that it is a path of action and service to be followed as well by the householder as the sadhu; it could be called bhakti marga in that it is a path of love, serving one's neighbour because by doing so one is serving God. It is a fusion of the two.

There is sanction for this attitude in other religions also. Christ sanctioned it in saying: "Inasmuch as you do it to one of the least of these you do it also to me." It would seem to be totally alien to Islam, which does not acknowledge the possibility of Divine Incarnation; and yet the Muslim is told: "Whichever way you turn there is the Face of God."⁸ In the face of each person who turns to him the bhakti sees a mask over the Face of God.

Whatever kind of karma marga may be followed, it raises the question of work or renunciation, an active or contemplative life. It is a mistake to suppose that most monks are contemplatives. In most Christian monasteries the day is divided into periods of manual labour, study, prayer and ritual worship, leaving little time for leisure and not a great deal for sleep. In a Buddhist monastery also a monk's time is usually fully occupied. Zen monasteries in particular tend to prescribe hard manual labour for the monks. The article by Marie Byles on 'Zen Training in Japan' in our issue of July 1964 shows how arduous the life can be.

A Hindu ashram is a less formal institution. Properly speaking, it is simply the colony that grows up round a guru, and therefore its character will vary with that of the guru in charge. There can, therefore, be an ashram where the discipline is rather lax and another where it is quite strict. Occupational work may or may not be demanded of the inmates. They may be required to carry on the entire maintenance of the ashram, growing crops, preparing food etc. It is not unknown for an ashram to require a recruit to surrender his entire property to it, remaining henceforth as dependent on it as a monk on his monastery. One difference is that visitors and temporary residents are usually allowed at an ashram, seldom at a monastery. They may or may not be subject to the same discipline as the regular inmates.

In its lack of formal routine Sri Ramanaashram is rather exceptional. The Maharshi himself never organized an ashram. The necessary framework was constructed around him — a meditation hall, an ashram office and bookstall, a dining hall, post office, dispensary, etc. A number of sadhus settled there and were set to work at one job or another — librarian, post-master, cook, typist, gardener — all the varied occupations necessary for running an institution. Other sadhus settled down outside the Ashram, neither working for it nor maintained by it. Married devotees built houses, establishing a colony round about; and what they did with their time was their own affair. Such sadhus and householders count as members of the Ashram insofar as they are devotees of Bhagavan and obey the Ashram rules while on its premises, but the arrangement of their lives outside is up to them, as also is their maintenance.

This rather anomalous category of devotees raises the question of renunciation. When a Christian renounces the world he normally enters a monastery. He has henceforth no property or family, but he has also no material insecurity. The monastery provides him with

⁸ Quran, II. 115.

food, clothing, shelter — all that he needs. It is much the same with a Buddhist monk, although in his case going out begging and thereby contributing to the monastery's upkeep is normally a part of his discipline of life. The monastic routine of life also shelters the monk from the mental insecurity that comes from lack of regular occupation.

The position of a Hindu sadhu or sannyasin is quite different. On renouncing property, family and caste he becomes a homeless wanderer. Nobody is responsible for his maintenance. He is expected to wander, begging his food, and to accept whatever is given. If his presence makes a strong impression, followers may gather around him and attend to his wants. If he has some skill that is valued he may accept food and shelter from an ashram in exchange for his services. In modern times it may even happen that he accepts an allowance from his former family or from some benevolent householder. But by and large it can be said that he has no material security, no routine of life and no regular occupation.

During the Maharshi's lifetime one often heard people ask his permission to renounce the world and go forth as sadhus, but I never once heard him consent. "Why do you think you are a householder? The similar thought that you are a sannyasi will haunt you even if you go forth as one. Whether you continue in the household or renounce it and go to live in the forest, your mind haunts you. The ego is the source of thought. It creates the body and world and makes you think of being a householder. If you renounce it will only substitute the thought of renunciation for that of the family and the environment of the forest for that of the household. But the mental obstacles are always there for you. They even increase greatly in the new surroundings. Change of environment is no help. The one obstacle is the mind, and this must be overcome whether in the home or in the forest. If you can do it in the forest why not in the home? So why change the environment? Your efforts can be

made even now, whatever be the environment."⁹

It is to be noticed that Bhagavan did not say: "The mental obstacles remain the same for you in the new surroundings," but: "They even increase greatly in the new surroundings." And in fact I have seen a number of pathetic cases of this. A man's professional work keeps his mind occupied on the surface while at the same time permitting an undercurrent of remembering or meditation. Bhagavan's injunction was to foster this undercurrent, to do one's work impersonally, asking oneself the while: "Who does this work? Who am I?" One illustration of this that he gave was the actor who plays his part on the stage quite well although knowing at heart that he is not the person he acts and therefore not getting elated if the playwright has allotted that person final success or dejected if he has allotted him failure or a tragic death. Another was that of the accountant, which I have already quoted.

A man's professional work may be irksome to him; it often is. He may feel regretfully how much more progress he could make if he had the whole day free for spiritual practice. But before he takes the drastic step of renouncing his life in the world let him first try for one single day occupying his mind exclusively with meditation or whatever spiritual practice he may be performing from the time he wakes in the morning until sleep can no longer be held off at night, with only short breaks for necessary meals. He will find that he cannot hold his mind persistently to the quest even for one whole day. It is only on a high level of development that the mind ceases to demand outer activity. Deprived of the irksome but relatively harmless activity of professional work it will turn instead to more injurious activities such as day-dreaming, planning, scheming or social trivialities and, as

⁹ *The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in his own Words*, p. 78, Rider & Co. edition; p. 94, Sri Ramana Ramaswami edition.

the Maharshi said, the mental obstacles will "increase greatly".

Nor can the gap be filled by reading. A certain amount of reading is helpful and in many cases necessary, especially at the beginning, but excessive reading can become a drug, dulling the mind and distracting from real spiritual effort. Once the mind is convinced of the basic truth of Identity why re-convince it over and over again? Why study techniques that one is not going to use, theories that one does not need? Sometimes something one reads may come as a useful reminder and spur one on to greater or wiser effort, but much of it is just a drug to keep the mind occupied. It may even lead to a gluttony for useless facts or pride in possession of them or to arrogance at the thought of understanding more than the writer.

Family ties may also seem irksome. It may appear that one would have a freer mind for sadhana without them. And yet in most cases they can be made a discipline for subduing egoism, which is the purpose of sadhana. Their removal all too often invites an upsurge of egoism, leaving a person free to think exclusively of himself, the impression he is making on others, his progress on the path, even his physical health and material needs.

Of course, if a sannyasin really renounces everything and has to beg and cook his food that may prove occupation enough, though not necessarily a nobler or more spiritually profitable activity than that which he has renounced. If, however, he retains sufficient means of subsistence to escape this need (as often happens nowadays) and his mind remains

without any occupation other than sadhana there is grave danger of deterioration. Sex, which he rashly supposed conquered, may rise up again; or he may fill the gap by setting up as a guide to others when he should still be concentrating on his own progress; or fall victim to some undesirable activity or come under the domination of some false guide; or he may simply sink into boredom and trivialities from which he will eventually seek escape by renouncing the quest entirely. One who has seen so many pathetic cases of renunciation leading to deterioration can only advise people very earnestly to refrain and put up with the irksome but protective outer shell of professional and family life.

Moreover, spiritual growth, like the growth of a seed, takes place in the dark. Grace sinks down into it like gentle rain. Progress may be the greatest when least visible, even when one is dejected and thinks one is falling back. To strip away from it the outer cover of routine life and try to subject it to the full daylong glare of the conscious mind may do it incalculable harm. From this point of view also it is better not to renounce.

This caution, however, does not apply to Christians or Buddhists thinking of becoming monks since, as I said above, the monastic routine of life is in most cases quite an active karma marga, whether in the original or the modern meaning of the word. For the same reason it may not apply to Hindus thinking of dedicating their lives to the Ramakrishna Mission, since this is a new departure in Hindu spiritual discipline, having more in common with Christian monastic life than with traditional Hindu sannyas.

The central theme for our *April Issue* will be **Tantra Marga** ;
for our *July Issue* **Guidance and Realization**.

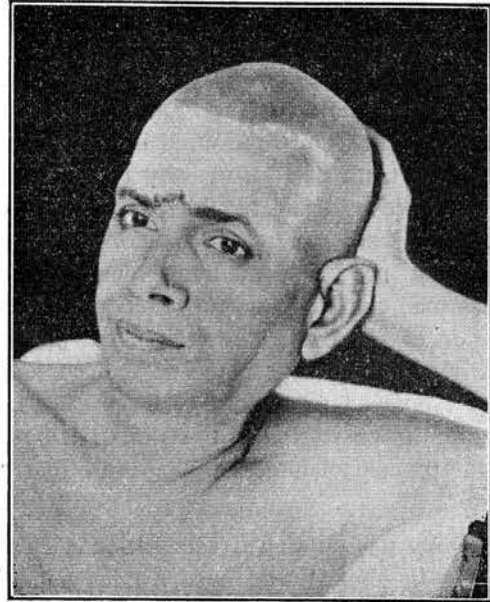
Contributions for the July Issue can still be received.

INSTRUCTION IN THIRTY VERSES

One of the Puranas, those ancient jumbles of history and myth, tells of a group of rishis who lived in the forest together, practising rites and incantations by which they acquired supernatural powers. They hoped by the same means to acquire final Liberation, but in this they were mistaken, for action can only produce action, not the cessation of action; rites can only produce powers, not the Peace of Liberation which is beyond all powers.

In order to convince them of their error, Siva appeared before them as a wandering sadhu. Together with him came Vishnu in the form of a fascinating lady. All the rishis were smitten with love for her and thereby their equilibrium was disturbed and their powers adversely affected. Moreover their wives, who were also living with them in the forest, all fell in love with the strange sadhu. Incensed at this, the rishis conjured up a wild elephant by their occult powers and sent it against Siva to destroy him, but he killed it and stripped off its skin to wear as a cloak. Next they sent a tiger and he treated it the same way, using its skin as a wrap. Realizing at last that they were up against one more powerful than themselves, they bowed down before him and besought him for instruction.

What meaning informs the exuberance of this myth? The rishis were concerned with outer manifestation, with powers and the use of them, and this corresponds to the married state; therefore they had their wives with them. Nevertheless, they were seeking God; therefore God appeared to guide them, but in a form which, on account of their obsession, they could not recognize. They fell in love rather with the beauty of nature, which was also God, though they did not recognize it. Their wives, that is their powers of expression, their shaktis, were fascinated by formal manifestation of Siva who is the Formless Spirit, but they resented this, regarding it as a threat



to their ego-expression. They even aspired to hurl their creations against the Formless but saw themselves mocked and their forms of power made limp and used as a garment. Then only they felt the power of the Spirit and bowed down, seeking guidance.

Nearly everything the Maharshi wrote was in response to some request. A disciple of his, the eminent Tamil poet Muruganar,¹ was writing this myth in Tamil verse, but on coming to the actual *upadesa* or instruction which Siva gave to the rishis, he asked Bhagavan, who was Siva Incarnate, to write it. Bhagavan thereupon wrote his *Upadesa Saram* or 'Essence of Instruction' in thirty verses, grading the methods of training from the outer to the inner, declaring speech or incantation more efficacious than action or ritual, silent repetition more than vocal, meditation more than that, and most potent of all pure abidance in the Self, undisturbed by thought.

¹ For an introduction to whom see 'The Mountain Path' of Oct. 1964, p. 244-5.

Upadesa Saram

1. Action (karma) bears fruit (in action), for so the Creator ordains. But is it God? (It cannot be for) it is not sentient.

2. The results of action pass away, and yet leave seeds that cast the agent into an ocean of action. Action (therefore) does not bring Liberation.

3. But acts performed without any attachment, in the spirit of service to God, cleanse the mind and point the way to Liberation.

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

5. One can regard this eightfold¹ universe as a manifestation of God ; and whatever worship is performed in it is excellent as the worship of God.

6. The repetition aloud of His name is better than praise. Better still is its faint murmur. But the best is repetition within the mind — and that is meditation, above referred to.

7. Better than such broken thought (meditation) is its steady and continuous flow like the flow of oil or of a perennial stream.

8. The lofty attitude 'He am I' is preferable to the attitude 'He is not me'.

9. Remaining in the Real Being, transcending all thought through intense devotion, is the very essence of Supreme *Bhakti*.

10. 'Absorption into the source' or core of Existence (or the Heart) is what the paths of karma, bhakti, yoga and jnana teach.

11. As birds are caught with nets, so by holding the breath, the mind is restrained and absorbed. This (breath-regulation) is a device for effecting absorption.

12. For mind and life-breath (*prana*), expressed in thought and action, diverge and branch out, but they spring from a single root.

13. Absorption has two forms, *laya* and *nasha*. That which is merely absorbed in *laya* revives ; if it is dead, it does not revive.

14. When the mind gets absorbed by breath-restraint, then it will 'die', (i.e. its form will perish) if fixed to a single point.

15. The great yogi whose mind is extinguished and who rests in Brahman, has no karma, as he has attained his true nature (Brahman).

16. When the mind withdraws from external objects of sense and beholds (i.e. engages in mystic introspection of) its own effulgent form, that is true wisdom.

17. When the mind unceasingly investigates its own nature, it transpires that there is no such thing as mind. This is the direct path for all.

18. The mind is merely thoughts. Of all thoughts, the thought 'I' is the root. (Therefore) the mind is only the thought 'I'.

19. 'Whence does this "I" arise?' Seek for it within ; it then vanishes. This is the pursuit of Wisdom.

20. Where the 'I' vanished, there appears an 'I-I' by itself. This is the Infinite (*Purnam*).

21. This is always the true import of the term 'I'. For we do not cease to exist even in the deepest sleep, where there is no waking 'I'.

22. The body, senses, mind, life-breath (*prana*), and ignorance (*avidya* or *sushupti*) are all insentient and not the Real. I am the Real (*Sat*). These (sheaths) I am not.

23. As there is no second being to know that which is, 'that which is' is conscious. We are that.

¹ Eightfold in that it is composed of the five elements, the sun and moon and the individual being.

24. Creatures and Creator both exist. They are One in Being. Their differences are the degrees of their knowledge and other attributes.

25. When the creature sees and knows himself without attributes, that is knowledge of the Creator, for the Creator appears as no other than the Self.

26. To know the Self is to be the Self—as there are not two separate selves. This (state) is *thanmaya nishta* (abiding as That).

27. That is real knowledge which transcends both knowledge and ignorance. There is no object to be known There.

28. When one's true nature is known, then there is Being without beginning and end ; It is unbroken Awareness-Bliss.

29. Remaining in this state of Supreme Bliss, past all thoughts of bondage and release, is abiding in the service of the Supreme.

30. The Realization of That which subsists when all trace of 'I' is gone, is good tapas. So sings Ramana the Self of all.

BE STILL

By ARTHUR OSBORNE

Thou art ? — I am ? — Why argue ? — Being is.
Keep still and be. Death will not still the mind,
Nor argument, nor hopes of after-death.
This world the battle-ground, yourself the foe
Yourself must master. Eager the mind to seek,
Yet oft astray, causing its own distress
Then crying for relief, as though some God
Barred from it jealously the Bliss it sought
But would not face.

Till in the end,
All battles fought, all earthly loves abjured,
Dawn in the East, there is no other way
But to be still. In stillness then to find
The giants all were windmills, all the strife
Self-made, unreal ; even he that strove
A fancied being, as when that good knight
Woke from delirium and with a loud cry
Rendered his soul to God.¹

Mind, then, or soul ?
Break free from subtle words. Only be still,
Lay down the mind, submit, and Being then
Is Bliss, Bliss Consciousness : and That you are.

¹ It is noteworthy that he did not cease to be Don Quixote but realized that he never was Don Quixote.

PATHS TO SELF-REALIZATION

By DR. B. V. RADHAKRISHNAN

Among the four Hindu Purusharthas or goals in life — dharma, artha, kama and moksha (righteousness, prosperity, pleasure and Liberation) — the last is regarded as supreme. All systems of Hindu thought except the Charvaka believe in the final emancipation of man from samsara or incarnation. This final release is variously designated Moksha, Nirvana, Kaivalya or Apavarga. In order to attain it there are the various paths of karma, bhakti, yoga and jnana. Sri Ramana grades them according to their efficacy in his *Upadesa Saram*, quoted in this issue.

Sri Ramana is the embodiment of Advaita Vedanta. He was not an academic philosopher and did not like expounding theory, but he had the wisdom that comes from direct experience of Reality.

Liberation or Mukti, he taught, is becoming One with Brahman; or rather, since the identity of the atma with Brahman has always subsisted and has only been hidden by illusion, it is awakening to consciousness of identity with the Supreme Self.

This identity is existent from eternity, though hidden from our view. "That which is real in the absolute sense, highest of all, eternal, all penetrating like the ether, exempt from all change, all sufficing, undivided, whose nature it is to be its own light, in which neither good nor evil, nor effect, nor past, present or future has any place, that formless is called Liberation."¹ It is not a coming into being of what did not formerly exist, for whatever comes into being must also have an end and is therefore ephemeral. Mukti is thus not an achievement or attainment but only cessation of the process of

becoming. It is not abolition of one's self but realization of its infinity and absoluteness by the expansion and illumination of consciousness. It is not to be relegated to a future time or located in a place called Svarga or Brahma Loka or any other name. It just is.

Sri Ramana often reminded us that Mukti is not anything new to be attained. But is our real nature. "There is no realizing the Self. The Self is always realized."² Only knowledge of it is obstructed, and this obstruction we call ignorance. "To enquire 'Who am I that am in bondage?' and to know one's real nature is alone Liberation."³ In the Self there is neither bondage nor Liberation. The egoless state is the only reality.

Like all the sages and saints of India, he affirmed that this can be realized through the Grace of the Guru. But that implies that the Guru is not another individual external to us but is the Self manifested. So long as we identify ourselves with the body we take the Guru to be another bodily individual external to us. But really we are not the body, nor is he. We are the Self and he is also. Realization means converting this theoretical understanding into direct knowledge. Even though we mistake the body for the Guru, he himself makes no such mistake. He appears outwardly only to guide us. This is what Sri Ramana meant when he said that Self, God and Guru are the same. Therefore he could make the tremendous statement that "He who has earned the Grace of the Guru will undoubtedly be saved and never forsaken, just as the prey that

¹ *Vedanta Sūtras* with Sāṅkara's commentary, 1-1-4.

² *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, p. 490. Sri Ramanasramam.

³ *Who Am I?*, p. 46-47. (*Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*, Rider & Co.)

has fallen into the jaws of the tiger will never be allowed to escape."⁴

Who, then, is the Guru? It is clear that in the high sense in which Sri Ramana uses the term it can only be the perfect Sage who is in uninterrupted conscious Identity with the Universal Self. "The Guru is one who at all times abides in the profound depths of the Self. He never sees any difference between himself and others and is quite free from the idea that he is the Enlightened or the Liberated one while those around him are in bondage or the darkness of ignorance. His self-possession can never be shaken under any circumstances and he is never perturbed."⁵

Such a one is called a Jivan-Mukta, Liberated while living. "A jivanmukta is one who is free from any sense of the reality of external objects, only seeming to have such a sense. . . . His mind is wholly merged in Brahman and enjoying eternal bliss. He is free from duality. Though awake he is free from the qualities of the waking state. The absence of the idea of 'I' and 'mine' even while in this body, which follows like a shadow, is a characteristic of the jivanmukta. He does not dwell on the enjoyments of the past, takes no thought for the future and looks with indifference on the present. He is unruffled by pain or pleasure and is free from the bondage of transmigration."⁶

Can a jivanmukta be subject to ignorance? It is traditionally agreed that he can. This is likened to a dark shadow on a white canvas — it cannot produce any effect on him. His continued bodily existence is compared to a potter's wheel moving round for a while after producing the pot. Sri Ramana used to compare it to an electric fan revolving a few times even after the current is turned off. *Ajnana-lesa* or ignorance is the continued momentum

of the wheel; it produces no further karma for the liberated. What appears to be activity in him is only akarma, that is inaction or unattached action.⁷

Some have said that complete Liberation can be attained only after destruction of the body, but that is not accepted by those who know. Sri Ramana has definitely asserted that "There is no difference (between a jivanmukti and a videha-mukti). For those who ask it is said that a Realized Man with a body is a jivanmukta and that he attains videhamukti when he sheds the body, but this difference exists only for the onlooker, not for him. His state is the same before shedding the body and after."⁸

Is he, then, still bound by karma? Sri Ramana gave us the perfect answer when he said that the body may be but he is not, since he no longer identifies himself with the body. "The truth is that the Realized Man has transcended all destiny and is bound neither by the body nor by its destiny."⁹

Now let us turn from consideration of the Goal to the path. Sri Ramana explained that karma or action can never lead to Liberation.¹⁰ However, action performed without attachment and in a spirit of service to God can point the way to Liberation and purify the mind, thus enabling it to take a more efficacious path.¹¹ Physical acts of worship and ritual, vocal action such as incantations and purely mental action such as meditation are helpful, and in this order, each more so than the preceding.¹²

Similar was his verdict on breath-control, also a form of action. "The practice of breath-control is merely helpful in subduing the mind but cannot bring about its final extinction."¹³

⁷ *Bhagavad Gita*, IV, 20.

⁸ *Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in his own words*, p. 192, edited by Arthur Osborne, Rider & Co.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹⁰ *Upadesa Saram* (printed in this issue), v. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, v. 3.

¹² *Ibid.*, v. 4.

¹³ *Who am I?*, p. 43.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁵ *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge* by Arthur Osborne, p. 140. Rider & Co.

⁶ Shankaracharya's *Viveka Chudamani*, vv. 429-436.

In fact he taught that breath-control is not an independent technique but only an approach towards mind-control. "Breath-control is a help in controlling the mind and is advised for such as find they cannot control the mind without some such aid. For those who can control the mind and concentrate it is not necessary. It can be used at the beginning until one is able to control the mind but then it should be given up."¹⁴ "The mind subsides by the practice of breath-control, but such subsidence lasts only as long as the control of breath and vital forces continues; and when they are released the mind also gets released and immediately, becoming externalized, it continues to wander through the force of its subtle tendencies."¹⁵

Coming now to the path of bhakti, Sri Ramana said that remaining in the Real Being, transcending all thoughts through intense devotion, is the very essence of supreme bhakti. He explained that true bhakti means surrendering the ego so completely that nothing remains of it, and this comes to the same as discovering by Self-enquiry that there is no ego. "There are only two ways," he often said; "Ask yourself 'Who am I?' or surrender."

The most direct path to Self-realization, he explained, is Self-enquiry. It leads directly to Self-realization by removing the obstacles which make one think that the Self is not already realized. "Even though the mind sub-

sides by other means, that is only apparently so; it will rise again."¹⁶

On occasion Sri Ramana sanctioned all methods, although grading their efficacy, as already explained. He also said that the final state of Self-realization is the same by whatever path or through whatever religion it has been approached. However, the most efficacious way is Self-enquiry. "The only path of karma, bhakti yoga and jnana is to enquire who it is who has the karma, vibhakti (lack of devotion), viyoga (separation) and ajnana (ignorance). Through this investigation the ego disappears and the state of abidance in the Self in which none of these negative qualities ever existed remains as the Truth."¹⁷ Just as milk is uniformly white though drawn from cows of different colours, so also realization is uniform for all persons of whatever denomination.¹⁸

In fact all ways are good provided they lead to the merging of the ego in the Self. What the devotee calls surrender the Advaitin calls knowledge. Both alike are trying to take the ego back to its source and make it merge there.¹⁹ One sacrifices the ego on the altar of love, the other discovers that it does not exist and never did; both arrive at the same ultimate point of its non-existence.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁷ *Supplementary Forty Verses*, v. 14 (*Collected Works*).

¹⁸ *Atma Satshatkara*, v. 42 (*Collected Works*).

¹⁹ *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, vol. 11, p. 35. By Devaraja Mudaliar, Sri Ramanaśramam.

¹⁴ *The Teachings*, p. 146.

¹⁵ *Who am I?*, p. 42.

BEYOND ACTION

The Godhead is absolute Stillness and Rest, free from all activity and inaccessible to human thought, yet alive through and through, a tremendous Energy pouring itself out into the created world and drawing that world back into itself.

— RUYSBROECK.

HOW I CAME TO THE MAHARSHI

V

By SWAMI RAMDAS

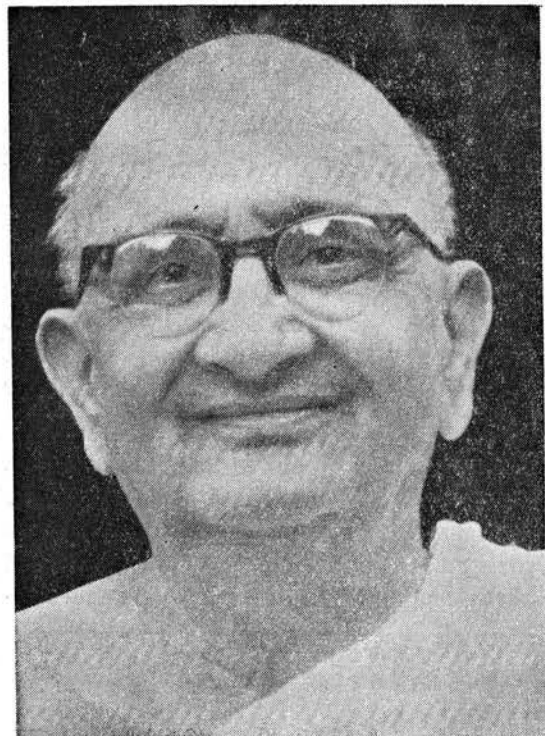
In his early autobiography, *In Quest of God*, (published by Anandashram, Kanhangad) Swami Ramdas (for an article on whom see our issue of Jan. 1964) describes how he attained the Divine Vision through the Grace of the Maharshi. Years later he told this story to Dilip Kumar Roy who reproduced it in his latest book, *The Flute Calls Still* (published by Indira Niloy, Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona, and reviewed in our issue of Oct. 1964). Since some parts of the story are more detailed in one account and some in the other, we have here combined them. We are grateful to both ashrams for permission to quote from their publications.

"Papa," I said, "would you mind telling us about your final Realization which they call 'Vishvarupa Darshan'?"

He readily acquiesced and gave a long description of his burning aspiration and yearning which had led him to Arunachala Hill, hallowed by the tapas of the peerless saint Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi. I can give here only the gist of his long narration. . . .

One day the kind Sadhuras took Ramdas for the darshan of a famous saint of the place named Sri Ramana Maharshi. His Ashram was at the foot of Arunachala. It was a thatched shed. Both the visitors entered the ashram and, meeting the saint, fell prostrate at his holy feet. It was really a blessed place where that great man lived. He was young but there was on his face a calmness and in his large eyes a passionless look of tenderness which cast a spell of peace and joy on all those who came to him. Ramdas was informed that the saint knew English, so he addressed him thus: "Maharaj, here stands before thee a humble slave. Have pity on him. His only prayer to thee is to give him thy blessing."

The Maharshi turned his beautiful eyes towards Ramdas and looked intently for a few minutes into his eyes as though he was pouring into Ramdas his blessing through those orbs, then shook his head to say he had blessed. A thrill of inexpressible joy coursed



through the frame of Ramdas, his whole body quivering like a leaf in the breeze. . . .

Now at the prompting of Ram, Ramdas desired to remain in solitude for some time . . . The sadhuras was ever ready to fulfil his wishes. Losing no time, he took Ramdas up the mountain behind the great temple. Climbing high up he showed him many caves. Of

these, one small cave was selected for Ramdas, which he occupied next day. In this cave he lived for nearly a month in deep meditation of Ram. This was the first time he was taken by Ram into solitude for his bhajan. Now he felt most blissful sensations since he could hold undisturbed communion with Ram. He was actually rolling in a sea of indescribable happiness. To fix the mind on that fountain of bliss, Ram, means to experience pure joy ... He went on taking the Name in an ecstasy of longing when, lo, suddenly his Lord Rama ... appeared before him and danced and danced ...

"Did you see him with closed eyes or open?" I interjected.

"With open eyes, as Ramdas is seeing you," Papa answered. "But it was not this momentary vision that Ramdas's heart craved. For he knew that a vision like this was unlikely to last and so, when the Lord would vanish, Ramdas would revert to his darkness. Therefore he prayed for the great darshan, the Vision of visions, which comes to stay for ever so there is no more parting, namely the Vishvarupa Darshan, longing to see Rama always in everything; that is nothing less would satisfy Ramdas."

Papa paused and then resumed with a beatific smile: "And it came one morning apocalyptically — when, lo, the entire landscape changed: All was Rama, nothing but Rama — wherever Ramdas looked! Everything was ensouled by Rama — vivid, marvellous, rapturous — the trees, the shrubs, the ants, the cows, the cats, the dogs — even inanimate things pulsated with the marvellous presence of the one Rama. And Ramdas danced in joy, like a boy who, when given a lovely present, can't help breaking out into a dance. And so it was with Ramdas: he danced with

joy and rushed at a tree in front, which he embraced because it was not a tree but Rama Himself! A man was passing by. Ramdas ran towards him and embraced him, calling out: 'Rama, O Rama!' The man got scared and bolted. But Ramdas gave him chase and dragged him back to his cave. The man noted that Ramdas had not a tooth in his head and so felt a little reassured: at least the looney would not be able to bite him!" He laughed out and we swelled the chorus.

"And then?" I asked, after the laughter had subsided.

"The bliss and joy came to be permanent, like a torrent rushing downhill till it finds a placid level of limpid purling stream. This experience is called sahaja samadhi, in which you can never be cut off from the consciousness of being at one with the One who has become all, in which you feel you are one with all because you have perceived that all is He, the One-without-a-second."

* * * *

Finally we end with a comment made by Swami Ramdas in '*Vision*', the monthly journal published by Anandashram, about forty years later.

Ramdas went to Ramana Maharshi in a state of complete obliviousness of the world. He felt thrills of ecstasy in his presence. The Maharshi made the awakening permanent in Ramdas.

Some people told Ramdas: "You went to Maharshi and you got illumination. Give us illumination like that." Ramdas said, "You must come to Ramdas in the same spirit and in the same state as he went to Maharshi. Then you will also get it. Where was his heart? How intense was his longing? What was the world to him at that time? If you come in that state it is all right."

TRANSCENDENCE OF KARMA

By PROF. K. SUBRAHMANYAM

All worthwhile acts of man are acts of integration. The scientist goes on fitting fact with fact and is satisfied only if they cohere so as to yield "laws" of increasing comprehensiveness. If he encounters difficulties in this process, he re-examines his "facts" and recasts his "laws" till at last he succeeds. The painter sets his highest value on "composition" and indeed artists of all kinds principally seek unity of impression, such achieved unity being called "beauty," not conformity to any preconceived notions of prettiness inducing pleasant feelings in the beholder. How else shall we explain the lofty appeal of tragedy and of all those works of art in which the predominant effect is overwhelmingly the dark and forbidding? Integration of all one's inward resources so as to result in a chosen settled pattern of conduct, not allowing casual impulses and random desires to distract one, is character. But ideals of character differ; the Athenian ideal of character was one thing and the Spartan was another. Therefore, though character (that is, morals) enters into the inner region of human personality, it is not the final integration. For the quality of the moral ideal itself needs to be judged by us, ourselves standing outside it.

The crowning integration, then, must be such a one as our ancient sages and seers have described: an integer which the human intelligence accepts with its last distinctive act and into which it is blissfully absorbed, with no residue left to "experience" that state, let alone to judge it. The completeness of the integration, its homogeneity without subject or object, pure awareness, must testify to its own genuineness. Even the supreme satisfaction of this state, they say, is felt only when one has lapsed from it and looks back on it self-

consciously as a memory (Paingala Upanishad iii-2). It is futile for the sceptic to raise the question whether such a state is possible; for this state is not available for examination, there being nothing outside it to examine it. It is enough for us that personages hailed as holy in all faiths, ages and lands, testify to it as having been entered into by them and they have proclaimed it to be the goal of our being, the basic Reality, the consummation of Intelligence and unsurpassable Bliss. Samadhi is the name given to that state in Vedanta, but Sri Ramakrishna has defined samadhi itself as yoga in its perfection.

Yoga in its perfection, then, in this state of Ultimate Integrity, realised Reality. It is evident that it cannot be "produced" or "caused" by any process or agency; for to one who has ever known that state, there is nothing which is not a mind-obstructed shadow, a mind-obscured distortion, a feeble peripheral appearance — apparition — of the light of the one Real. The Upanishad is clear on this "He sprang from nothing and nothing sprang from him" (Katha Upanishad I ii. 18). All objects diverge from it. The Effulgence fills the firmament. The rays are only the mind's feeble way of receiving it. But, "effulgence" and "rays" are only metaphorical speech. The Supreme Truth is not the light of the bodily eye, but the very principle of intelligence. The feeblest light at the remotest point of the ray still carries Life in it, and, therefore, all rays not only diverge, but also converge, leading back towards It and into It. But, going or coming, the ray is only an appearance within the Light, not Its author.

It is evident also that there cannot be many "Yogas". If there were, we should still continue to feel the need for the true Yoga beyond

them, the one Yoga from which the "Yogas" radiate and diverge. The artificially induced trance and state of oblivion popularly called "Yoga" is deprecated by the great Gaudapada himself in his *Karika* (iii. 42). Bhagavan in his thirty verses (v. 18) discommends it. It is to entertain a poor notion of the Highest to believe that we can arrive at it by a mere psychic know-how. We can cultivate acuity of vision but still cannot see till the sun dawns, which happens independently of our efforts. That is why the Katha Upanishad declares that It reveals Itself to him whom It chooses (I. ii. 23). Similarly jnana (quest for the highest illumination), bhakti (devout and fervent surrender to the Divine) and karma (selfless activity) have given their names to three yogas. But these three paths lead in the direction of the one Yoga. In the last resort such jnana, bhakti and karma as we can gather, generate or perform have to be surrendered and left behind. Pursuit of them in earnestness and humility renders us less and less ineligible to receive the highest gift. But finally it is always the receipt of a gift, never the assertion of a claim or even the earning of a reward.

Knowledge of this is a source of reassurance to those whom a deep consideration of the Law of Karma by itself reduces to despair. The most liberal interpretation of the law is that every act one performs, besides producing its effect on the outer world and earning the due consequence for the doer, produces certain inward results. Our deeds form in our inner nature certain tendencies and inclinations, patterns of thought-feeling and behaviour, which our thinkers on Karma call *vasanas* and *samskaras*. They constitute lines of least resistance along which our energies flow thereafter. *Vasanas* and *samskaras* once formed, therefore, tend to consolidate themselves and gain a strangle-hold on us. When we think that it is we that act at the present moment, it is really our *vasanas* that are acting. We are prisoners to our own past in this life and in earlier ones. The Law of Karma seems to be

a prison-house whose walls inexorably rise higher and higher.

Some "scientifically-minded" persons have called this law the moral counter-part of the laws of cause and effect and of conservation of energy which obtain in the material sphere. But there is a vital difference: in the inward life of man a fact is modified merely by his becoming aware of it. If I realise that I am in an irritable mood, I am on my guard against it. I take my stand on a place which is above the mood of the moment. Attention is alertness; it is *sraddha*. Even as I begin to be aware of the Law of Karma I become more attentive to my *vasanas*. They do not have the same free play as before, because they are being watched. Besides, in this state of awakened attention I observe that my individuality does not have the same precise and well-guarded frontiers as I once thought it had. Influences enter into me from all around. If only I attend I can recognize them and be selective in admitting them. Receptivity to them is not controlled entirely by the *vasanas* from my individual past. As owners of radio-sets know, there are certain transmitting stations so powerful that an inherent feebleness in the receiver can be overcome. The Upanishadic sages, the Buddha and Sankara and indeed the influences generated by the *karmas* of all the good men who have ever lived are still vibrating in the air (in no 'occult' sense) and are passed over by us as parts of a medley of noises only because one does not isolate their voices and tune in a little more carefully. There is a cosmic radiation in the spiritual world, pervasive and irresistible, as there is in the physical. Sri Ramakrishna said that the wind of God's grace is always blowing, but to be impelled by it we have to hoist sail. Bhagavan has said that the great enemy of our soul is our inattention, "inattention is death itself" (p. 337 *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*). Sydney Spencer (p. 168, *Mysticism in World Religion*) quotes Plotinus as saying that God is a conductor round whom a choir is gathered. They have only to attend to him to sing

well. But the attention of some wanders and the singing suffers.

The Law of Karma is not like other laws ; the laws of matter operate on the physical plane ; the laws of biology on the vital plane ; the psychological laws on the mental plane. These are only horizontal laws, so to speak, each operating at its own particular level. But the Law of Karma is also a vertical law. We cultivate attention and ascend in awareness. Our receptivity improves and with it selectivity. So, as we rise in the scale of attentiveness, we become increasingly eligible to receive the visitations of Grace, the divine power that is only waiting to flow in. The Law of Karma is found to be not a brute force constricting us, but a volatile essence whose fragrance improves in delicacy as it becomes rarefied. At the higher level our sufferings yield us sweetness of nature ; our humiliations, humility ; our sins, compassion for all sinners.

There is even more help and hope ; even as our vasanas are being flushed out by the holy energies that flow in if only we will let them in, there gushes up from the depths of our own being a copious spring that joins the first. We are not helpless against the vasanas accumulated through the past. Their hard encrustations can be magically dissolved by the combined floods from above and below. In this resulting state of clean nudity we gain a sense of well-being, of being at last our own healthy selves. This is the state of our own "norm" or "sahaja" ; and therefore was the second stream said to spring from our own depths. Plato says that the accession of the higher wisdom is a "recollection". The Chandogya Upanishad describes the condition of the seeker of Brahman as that of a man blindfolded and abducted and left in a strange land, who can find no rest till he finds his way back to his own homeland. The Kenopanishad (IV. 5) says that there is a constant stream of recollection, a steady set of mind, a congruency of volitions deep down in ourselves towards the Highest. Our vasanas loosen their

hold on us as we listen with attentive ears to the call of our home. Attending to it, we effortlessly shed our karmas. Finally, arriving, we are masters of our Karmas. "Attending to the Self includes attending to the work" says Bhagavan (*Talks*, p. 328) — "Yoga is skill in action," says the Gita (II. 50).

Our difficulties arise because we try to correct our past karmas with karmas which we deem to be "good". Says Bhagavan, "The more you rectify your Karma, the more it accumulates" (*Talks*, p. 569). Similarly, self-dependent moral effort, self-control, is one part of the mind trying to control another ; it only sets up a tension. "If one seeks to control the mind it amounts to mind controlling the mind, just like a thief turning out as a policeman to catch the thief" (*Talks*, p. 59). One cannot really take one's feet off the ground unless one has secured a hold on something higher. The Bhagavad Gita says (II. 59) that merely to abstain from sensual experiences by an effort of the will does not help. Only "when the Supreme is seen" does one obtain release from the senses and the mind. Attention, an ascending awareness, a growing love of the Highest, alone can produce true release. "What can repression accomplish?" asks the Gita (III. 33). There are no good karmas to cure bad karmas. Even an act of renunciation is only one more karma, if yoga, integration at the highest point, has not preceded it. (the Gita V. 6).

All activity is congenial to the ego. Its bustle protects one from realising the crude, raw state of one's inner life. The child in the cradle flings its limbs about to proclaim that it is alive and it cries if there is no one to notice it. The activities of the adult, although more purposive and sustained are similarly motivated. He wants to assert himself and get people, many or few, to notice him. For this purpose, he accumulates and expends money, knowledge, "good" impulses and deeds. So, Bhagavan said compendiously (*Talks*, p. 673) "Activity is the destruction of one's inner

happiness." All this lays up a store of karma, generates vasanās and attracts (as lawyers say) the Law of Karma. But, all the same, Sri Krishna, even after having said "far inferior is mere action to Buddhi Yoga" (II. 49), urged Arjuna to fight. This contradiction was admitted by the teacher himself and he declared that "the way of karma is hard to understand" (IV-17).

The difficulty can be resolved if we pay as much attention to the pattern of the developing situations and ideas in the Gita as to the ideas themselves. It is to understand the whole scripture wrongly if we take it that Arjuna suddenly grew faint-hearted from sentimentality and Sri Krishna taught him to act from a sense of duty, even if the action was harsh and stern. At the beginning, Arjuna's earlier decision to fight, which brought him to the battle-field, is only in abeyance, not annulled. At the very end (XVIII. 59) Sri Krishna says "If, indulging in self-will, thou thinkest 'I will not fight', vain is this thy resolve. Nature will compel thee". But Arjuna is in a divided state of mind. It is not a case of "split personality" for it is not sub-conscious impulses and desires that divide him. It is a condition of unintegrated ideals. To fight for the right is a Kshatriya's nature and duty and it is in acknowledgement of this that Arjuna has entered Kurukshetra. Kindliness to all, renunciation of worldly desires and the superiority of a serene life of contemplation are also widely accepted Hindu ideals. In a crisis, a flaw, even in one's most carefully compacted system of ideals, shows up. This is what has happened to Arjuna. He has yet to integrate himself, find his inward stability. So Sri Krishna, from the Second Chapter onwards, undertakes to teach him the highest point at which a man can be integrated, the only lasting integration. The Colophon states that the scripture teaches knowledge of Brahman and the science of integration; that it is "Brahmavidya" and "Yoga sastra". Sri Krishna's efforts are all directed to giving Arjuna the stability that results from the attaining of illumination. A

stitha prajna, which is what Sri Krishna wants to make of Arjuna, is not a mere man of firm will, a stoic. He is one who cannot falter or waver because he has found the true light to lead him. The long discourse on metaphysics and spiritual life that fills the largest part of the Gita would be a gratuitous excursion into thought and speculation if the main purpose was to make Arjuna fight. "I have taught you the highest wisdom" is how Sri Krishna concludes. Correspondingly, Arjuna's final assurance to Sri Krishna is that he has gained recollection, recollectedness (*Smriti*); that he has gathered himself together at his being's centre. To help each one of us do this is indeed the purpose of the author of the Gita.

What then is the purpose of action (symbolised by Arjuna entering the battle) in the scheme of life? It is that we need the call of action to become fully awake. Ordinarily different sides of our nature assert themselves at different times and some of them long remain ignored or suppressed. But when decisive action is called for, particularly in a crisis, all of them together press themselves on our attention and we energetically search to find the point where they meet. The mere philosopher stakes nothing on his conclusions and has little incentive for earnestness. The urgency of action invests thinking with zeal. The usual contrast between a life of actions and a life of contemplation is unreal. It is as if a general should ask himself "Shall I fight the battle or win the victory"? Without his battle where is his victory to come from? That is why Sri Krishna repeatedly exhorts Arjuna not to be a lover of inaction (II. 47, XIV, 22).

The more earnest the seeker and the better endowed he is, the less satisfied is he with a merely empirical compromise between principles and forces bearing on a situation. Such compromises in the past have not stood the test of a life of action. What he seeks is not some sort of integration within himself but integration at the highest level, with Truth. This is Yoga and Yoga is a transcendent state. On this point, there is no ambiguity in the

Gita or in the Upanishads. All the elements of the physical universe (earth, water, fire, air, ether) and all the constituents of individuality (mind, understanding and the ego-sense) form the region of the relative (*apara*). The supreme state is the transcendent (*para*). It is above the moral levels (the *gunas*) ; it is independent of all the created universe of the past, present and future. Between these two, the *para* and the *apara*, is the impassable barrier of *maya*. We cannot pierce it ; we can only leap over it by the strength of the power called intuition and directly intuit the Supreme. This intuition is *vijnana*, the direct awareness of Reality, the created Universe alone being accessible to *jnana*, knowledge. Chapter VII of the Gita states every single point of this truth with clarity and with emphasis. Karma Yoga, therefore, cannot mean the performing of such acts or the performing of acts in such manner that they induct us into yoga. It means the manner in which the *yukta*, the person who has already established himself in intuition, performs his duties and engages in action. This is not merely a distinction of theoretical import. It is of the greatest practical significance. It is one thing for a man to grow into a *yukta*, to enter the spiritual life and let it blossom into noble enthusiasms and good deeds ; it is quite another for the unregenerate prodigal to go about scattering good deeds, founding institutions and championing causes. Such activities are nourishing fodder for the insidious egotism lurking in us, which avidly absorbs them into itself. The corruption of the best is the worst. Patriots have a way of finding that the quick regeneration of the country demands their dictatorship ; champions of religion easily turn into fanatics ; philanthropists discard all squeamishness about the manner of recruiting support for their various causes, each one for his own.

But is not the Transcendent also the Immanent ? It is ; but the Immanent Divine is likely to be passed over as a mere desirable ingredient of certain worldly objects or an admirable quality belonging to certain worldly activities,

if we do not grow to be increasingly aware of the Transcendent in Itself. The prophets and divine incarnations alone are securely beyond the danger. Whole chapters of the Gita rapturously proclaim the Immanent God, revealing Himself as the informing principle in all objects and the urge in all life towards a higher state of being. The Svetasvatara Upanishad recognizes God in "the deep-blue butterfly, the green parrot with red eyes, the storm-cloud with the lightning in its womb, the seasons and the seas". Energy and vitality are sought by the sages themselves. The Rishi begins the Kena Upanishad with an invocatory prayer for vigour of limbs, strength of organs and energy of senses and concludes by saying "Indeed all is Brahman of the Upanishads." In the Mundaka Upanishad, one who has attained is said to delight in the soul, to sport in the soul and to be a creative agent, *Kriyavan*. No form of wordly energy fails to find lodgement in Brahman, says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (IV-iii 19-32). Activity is not looked down upon. We are asked to cultivate every mode of awareness as an avenue to the Eternal (Kena Upanishad II. 4). Bhagavan has told us that devotion to ideals, including devotion to "humanity in general, ethical laws or even the idea of beauty" is *bhakti*, God-ward yearning (*Talks*, P. 31).

Some of us contrast serenity of soul, to its own advantage, with the turmoil of mind which an active life involves. Others contrast a life of service to humanity, to its own advantage, with vapid and futile religiosity. Both these antitheses are unwarranted. Indeed, in Vedanta, there can be no unresolvable antithesis at all. *Sat* and *asat* themselves are antonyms only at the verbal level. *Sat*, the *Real* which is within all appearance whatever, cannot be limited by an *asat*, the unreal, existing independently of it. Sri Sankara compares the unreal to the reeds which conceal the stream (the *Real*), but are nourished by the stream and are, therefore, a testimony to it. Bhagavan declares (*Forty Verses* v. 13) that the falsity which obscures the *Real* is itself

a falsity. He has said repeatedly in his *Talks* that, in the last resort, Maya, illusion and non-self are to be resolved into the Real. Our karma, "activities," are not outside this truth. The manner of resolving them is described in the Fourth Chapter of the Gita in the elaborately sustained simile of vedic ritual-sacrifice, a *yajna*. To feed what is comparatively lower into some higher principle is *yajna*. Thus, for example, the objects of the senses being fed into the fire of the senses produces art. In this manner, our whole life can be made into a *yajna*. All *yajna* is activity, work, and all work culminates in *jnana*, the higher awareness (Gita IV-32-33). This fire of *jnana* reduces all karma to ashes (IV-37), that is, it leaves no residue of *vasanas* and no commitment to involvement in further karma.

Escape from the Law of Karma, therefore, is not through any meticulous excellence of

the activity itself. First the fire must have been lit into which it is to be fed, the fire of spiritual life. Engagement in action, to begin with, wakes us to an awareness of our inner inadequacy, of our instability. Thus is first experienced the "felt absence" of something in ourselves. Thus the fire is lit, the dawning of the Spirit, the beginning of yoga. All our actions are then fed into this fire and are reduced to ashes, the Spirit shining alone. Spiritual life begins and culminates in Spirit. The spirit is the whole of the *yajna*, what prompts us to the sacrifice, the culmination of the sacrifice and all the elements of it. "The act of offering is God, the oblation is God. By God is it offered into the fire of God. God is that which is to be attained by him who realises God in his works (karma)" (Gita IV. 24). This is karma yoga in its completeness and perfection.

THE TWO WINDOWS

By A. RAO

Two windows are there : one looks on to space,
The other on the world, both blurred by thought
Of I and mine. This stopped ; now not a trace
Through that first window still was seen of ought,
And none to see, no seeker and no sought.

And yet no blankness this,
But unimagined bliss,

Its gateway not through terror but through Grace.

"The world and dissolution, day and night,
Both are eternally." "All things join hand
In cosmic dance," all things now seen aright :
The gnarled and sombre northern pine-trees stand,
And star-shaped jasmine of this sun-baked land ;

Through the breached ego-wall

Pure love flows out to all,

Even a stray dog draws love as a child might.

Is and Is not both at once are true,

"Although to sight they seem to alternate."

Life, death, pass over, but they are not you ;

Fate fashions life, while you, immaculate,

Remain unchanged beyond life, death and fate.

You feel love outward flow

Towards others, while you know

All otherness a dream, the Truth not-two.

THE SEQUENCE OF THE UPANISHADS

By SHAMBHU BHAT

There is a purpose or system in the sequence of the 108 major upanishads laid down in the Muktika Upanishad. It is not generally recognized by modern scholars because it accords neither with the sections of the Vedas to which the various upanishads belong nor with their chronological order. For instance, the first listed, the Ishavasya, belongs to the Yajur Veda, the second, the Kena, to the Sama, the third, the Katha, again to the Yajur, while the fourth and fifth, the Prasna and Mundaka, both belong to the Atharvana. Or, to take the question of chronology, the Brihadaranyaka, which is considered to be the oldest of all, is placed tenth on the list. Nevertheless there is meaning in the sequence and I wish to indicate it briefly here.

Indeed, it should be obvious that their belonging to different Vedas and different periods does not prevent a continuity of purpose running through them, as traditionally arranged, any more than the difference in age and provenance of the stones in a necklace prevents it from having a composite, harmonious beauty.

According to the Muktika Upanishad (and this is generally accepted by scholars), there are in all 1180 upanishads, one for each branch of the four Vedas : that is 21 for the Rig Veda, 109 for the Yajur, 1000 for the Sama and 50 for the Atharvana. Out of these, however, only 108 are listed in the Muktika as being the essence of the upanishads. This list also is generally accepted, though not its sequence. The further division by the Muktika of these 108 into ten more important and 98 less important is also generally accepted. It has indeed been greatly strengthened by the fact that Shankara chose these ten to write commentaries on.

No upanishad except the Muktika mentions any other by name. The Muktika, in giving a list of the 108, places itself last, and we may surmise that it was the latest written from its being able to give the list at all. Furthermore, it defines the purpose in studying the upanishads in the words of Sri Rama to his disciple Maruti as being to escape from the miseries of earthly life and attain Mukti.

Students would be well advised to study the Muktika first as an introduction to the others and then to go through them one by one in the order there laid down. What is not explained in one is clarified in the following. True, all of them deal with Brahman and samsara in a general way, but each has a different approach. Students who confine themselves to puzzling over individual mantras in each separate upanishad are like the traveler who can't see the wood for trees ; they should also read them through as a continuous whole in the prescribed order.

The Mandukya, the 6th, is the real nucleus. The first five are meant to prepare the mind of the seeker and to build up a proper background for it. The first floor of the edifice is started with the seventh, the Taittiriya, and roofed with the tenth, the Brihadaranyaka. Then the 11th to 32nd complete the second storey of the edifice. The remainder complete the entire building and the garden in which it stands.

To be more precise : the Ishavasya, the first of all, welcomes the student on his own level. It says in effect, as a loving mother might to her son, " Your troubles are of your own making. Everything in the entire universe is pervaded and controlled by the Lord (Isha). Of course you have a right to a full span of life and should try to safeguard your

right, but do give up greed. Be content with what comes to you and what the Lord gives you and don't try to grab what is given to others. Grabbing only increases your troubles. Greed is at the root of them. Naturally, if you grab you will have to suffer"...and so on. It then proceeds to explain how all-embracing is the power of the Lord and how we cannot escape if we transgress the rules. No other upanishad gives this initial and essential advice.

The seeker's interest is thus awakened and in the second upanishad, the Kena, he asks: "Who is this Lord? Is it due to Him that we breathe, think, talk and live? Do the sun, moon and stars rise and set due to Him? Is it He who makes the wind blow and the fire burn?" "Yes, of course," he is told.

While in the Isha the Lord is referred to impersonally as That (Tat), the term 'Brahma' (That Great) is now introduced. Further, the seeker is recommended to learn the Vedas and Upanishads, these words being brought in for the first time. He is assured that if he lives light, without grasping, not only will he himself be happy but all around will esteem him (*samvānchhanti*). It is emphasised that renunciation of greed and knowledge of the Lord are to be achieved here and now, in this lifetime. If they are not, a great opportunity will have been lost. So the seeker is brought to ask to be taught the upanishads.

This is followed by the Katha with its interesting story of death and what comes after, in order to impress upon the seeker that not even by death can he escape the repercussions of his misdeeds in this life. He is told that the only escape from his troubles is by seeking the Lord and behaving in a way that will please Him. To reap the fruit of right conduct, he is told, is better than possessing all the world's wealth. What is right should be chosen in preference to what is pleasing. So he should follow the injunctions of the Vedas sincerely and give his full attention to what follows.

Having dealt with the seeker as an individual, the Upanishads now digress in the Prasna to a consideration of the universe, its origin and development, emergence and dissolution. The Sage explains to his six disciples, who seem to symbolise the six seasons, how the cycle moves. Significantly, he asks them to stay in his ashram for a full year, the annual cycle. The seeker is here made aware of his place in the cosmic cycle, of his birth and development and the inevitability of his living in the world and coming to terms with his environment.

The Mundaka then follows, explaining the sole effective source of knowledge and the distinction between *vidya* and *avidya*, knowledge and ignorance. It points out the practical means of attaining the goal. In this upanishad is explained how the boundless multiplicity of the world springs from a single basis, the universal *Suvarnam* or 'golden dust' which, by its endless permutations and combinations, produces the world of appearances and qualities, including life and motivation. This upanishad cautions the seeker that it is only by the Grace of the Lord that we can hope to find Him and escape falling into materialism.

And now the Mandukya, the great sixth, which, though short, explains effectively how both the macrocosm and microcosm emerge from the single basic essence and are dissolved again into it. It shows the seeker how unreal his own worldly pleasures and pains are and how they disappear when he realizes the Infinite in himself.

Just as the thread of a single unfolding purpose has been traced briefly through the first six upanishads read in the traditional order, so the earnest seeker will find it continuing through those that follow. Let him therefore study them as one continuous whole, remembering that the purpose of the entire sequence is to lead him "from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, from death to Immortality."

THE TRUE KARMA YOGI

By Dr. T. N. KRISHNASWAMI

Karma yoga is the doctrine of right activity and teaches us how to work without identifying ourselves with the worker. To the worldling such identification is the only motive for action. He always identifies himself with the doer. Karma yoga is the technique of inner development which helps a man to remain alert amidst the entangling and hypnotising influence of life. It prevents him from being absorbed by the apparent aims of life. It teaches him that it is not in reality he who acts but a power passing through him. The Maharshi said : "Doer-ship pertains to the body ; but you are not the body, so you are not the doer. Man is moved by another Power but he thinks he moves himself. He should make no effort either to work or to renounce work. Such effort is itself bondage." Whether to work or not is not left to a man's choice ; it rests with a higher Power.

Karma yoga is based on the truth that attending to the inner Self involves also attending to one's outer duties. Non-attachment is the basic principle, but this does not mean indifference. It means a conscious separation or aloofness from external life. It means not being stirred by desires (which are always of the ego) but letting true nature act freely through one. Acting under the spur of desire is a form of slavery and never brings peace. The karma yogi acts with the same zest as the ignorant person whose incentive is the fruit of his actions, but his motive is different. He asks nothing for himself, seeks nothing, but yet is active in life. He realizes that he is just an actor playing his role in life. He acts freely in whatever walk of life he may be placed. He does not fall asleep and mistake the part he is playing in the drama for himself. He does not let his role play him. He does not use life's events for gratification of

desires or moan over frustrations, both of which are manifestations of the ego, but practises non-identification. This frees him from the prison of the ego.

He is no longer a mass of habits, nor is he weighed down by duties to be discharged. He does not believe in the reality of himself as an individual. He has shaken off the delusion of an individual self and therewith the resultant delusion that this non-existent individual decides and acts. Everything happens as impersonally as dust arises with the wind. He knows that life is not explicable by itself. This theoretical understanding helps him to subdue his ego in practice. In whatever activity he may be engaged he constantly rejects the impulses which make up the ego until it becomes as powerless as the moon in the daylight sky.

He works on himself by refusing to be led by the impulses of the ego which insists on an out-going life. He knows that he is Spirit and that the ego is the cause of perplexity, making him identify himself with the activities of the body. The Maharshi says : "A man should not give up worldly activities but should give up desiring things for himself." And "The motto should be : active life, selfless actions and continuous awareness of 'I'. The mind that is aware of 'I' may well attend to work of any kind. Such a mind is well protected. He who engages in the activities of life with the conviction 'I am the Self, I am not the body' is a karma yogi." A man should make no plans, for God Who has sent us here has His own plans and they alone will work. Does a karma yogi seek Liberation ? No ; how can there be liberation for one who was never bound ?

The karma yogi finds himself in the midst of an alien world. Life to him is as insubstantial as a dream. The guiding principle

of his life is that it shall not be made to subserve his I-concept. Any other service he will gladly do. He will not work with or for the ego. He is a co-worker with the higher Power. He works neither for himself nor mankind but as a willing tool in the hands of God. His work may therefore be termed worship or sacrifice. But how is he to find this higher Power or to know its will?

It is enthroned in his own mind. He feels it in his consciousness. It is by constant contact with it that he derives life and light. For the ignorant worldling it is veiled by pre-occupation with the ego's desires and fears (and all desires and fears are of the ego). Nothing has to be achieved to make it available; only the cloud of egoism that obscured it has to be cleared away.

The karma yogi recognizes the work that has to be done and is ready to do it as an act of worship. Thus he turns whatever work he does into divine service. The Maharshi says: "Haven't men achieved great things in this impersonal way?" Their achievements are in the world but they live in God.

Throughout his activity the karma yogi keeps in view the indivisible totality underlying all actions of all actors. His ego does not dictate his actions, but they are not for that reason limp or feeble. They may even be terrible and monstrous in the eyes of worldlings, for destruction also may be a necessary undertaking. "Yoga is skill in action" no matter what that action may be. The karma yogi responds to actions and situations spontaneously because his personal will is dead. It is the personal will that insists on the fruits of one's actions. The karma yogi is moved by a Divine Will which is Universal Harmony.

It is not necessary for the karma yogi to deny himself proper clothes, good food and satisfactory living conditions. Asceticism is

undertaken as a means of war against the ego, but without understanding it leads nowhere and may even be seized upon by the ego; and if there is understanding asceticism is not necessary. The Gita rejects it. King Janaka in all his glory is an example it gives of the karma yogi. Either a king or a beggar may be a karma yogi, but it is not easy for either. The Maharshi says: "Will power should mean the power to meet success or failure with equanimity." It should be used to destroy self-will. Inner detachment with outer activity, being "in the world but not of it" is the motto of the karma yogi.

The actor and his actions both issue simultaneously from one Source-Substance. The actions do not spring from the apparent actor. He is just as much not-self as they are. The Maharshi often explained that the mind can attend to outer activity at the same time as to the 'I' or Self. This is dhyana, and it is only the activity of one who is immersed in dhyana that can properly be called karma yoga. The actor and his activity and the emotions which give rise to his activity—love and hate, fear and desire—are all phenomena passing like a film on the screen of the Self. Bhagavan said: "Let the body accomplish the work for which it came. The work allotted to it will be extracted from it. Every one must take his allotted share and play his role in the life-drama." Karma yoga is the calm detached state where the Self is an observer of the activities of the pseudo-subject who is the apparent actor. This right view fully and securely held is termed Liberation or Enlightenment. The karma yogi striving towards this final consummation is ever on his guard against his deadly enemy the ego whom he may have to detect and expel in many various masks. When finally and securely attained the absence of ego is itself the presence of God, for God is no-ego and no-ego is God.

What we call a shadow, is, in fact, a shadow of a shadow.

— WEI WU WEI.

EQUALMINDEDNESS IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

By P. C. GOYAL

The Bhagavad Gita lays great stress on equalmindedness, exhorting us to look with the same eye on all, whether wise or foolish, high or low, friend or enemy, honest or dishonest. "The wise look alike upon a learned and righteous Brahmin, a cow, an elephant and a dog, and even the eater of a dog." (V. 18). And again: "He is esteemed who observes the same equanimity towards the benevolent, friends, foes, the impartial, neutrals, those of ill-will, relatives, the righteous and the unrighteous." (VI, 9).

What is the meaning of this for one who is living in the world, as distinct from a sadhu who has renounced the world? How can he put it into practice in his daily life of work, play and rest? Actually, it would be quite wrong to suppose that this precept is meant only for the sadhu. It is even more necessary for the householder.

The real meaning is that I should have equal regard for all other human beings, nay for all living creatures, that I should be free from prejudice, malice or contempt towards some or undue favour towards others. It does not mean observing similar conduct or behaviour towards all others but seeing the same Spirit of God pervading all life as an invisible unity within multifarious diversities. On that basis my external behaviour will vary according to the needs of times and circumstances and not be capricious or dictated by love or enmity, fear or favour.

Suppose, for instance, the organizers of a meeting give the chair and platform to the president and distinguished guests, while the audience sit on the floor below and a few fools or miscreants who try to disturb the meeting are ejected from the hall: have they violated the principle laid down in the Gita?

Not unless their behaviour is dictated by personal affection for the president and malice towards the miscreants. On the contrary, if they should choose a fool or miscreant for president on the plea that no distinction should be made between the wise and foolish they would be falsely interpreting the principle, and they would thus defeat the very object of the meeting.

I may be careless of my possessions when dealing with a person who is known to be honest but must take precautions with one who is dishonest. I may speak appreciatively to the former and harshly to the latter if the occasion so demands. But if the two of them are drowning in the river I shall see God in both and rescue them both without discrimination.

Suppose a mother has two sons and two daughters, all four of different ages. They will have different needs as regards clothing, food and education. It would be quite foolish of her to treat them all alike in these respects. She will be following the Gita principle correctly if she regards them with like affection and does what she can for the welfare of each one of them, giving them different things according to their different needs. She will only violate it if she discriminates mentally between them, treating the needs of one as less important than those of another.

This Gita precept is, then, a very sound rule of conduct in a world of outer variety masking inner unity. Even if I wanted to, it would be unwise and in some cases impossible to ignore physical differences and avoid making distinctions in my treatment of others. For instance, I can't treat and feed my cow in the same way as my dog. I can't behave in the same way towards my mother, my wife and my daughter.

And in the case of a householder social as well as physical differences have to be observed in matters of conduct. I can't behave to my employer in the same way as to my office clerk.

Even my own body provides me with an excellent analogy for understanding the principle of equalmindedness. I don't use my mouth, hands and feet in the same way but discriminate between them. Indeed, I have to bestow

different kinds and degrees of attention on the different parts of my body. Nevertheless, I regard them all equally as mine, feel their various pains and comforts alike and have the same amount of concern for the entire body. The feeling of 'mineness' pervades every part of my body so long as I am alive though each part is used for a different purpose and treated in a different way.

THE ATMOSPHERE FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

*From a monthly newsletter to parents by Eileen Bowden,
a member of Joel Goldsmith's 'Infinite Way' groups.*

There are right conditions, right climate, right atmosphere for all growing things and though children cannot be correctly classified as "things" they are not an exception to this natural law.

In the home this condition, this ground for growing, is prepared by the parents or in some cases one parent who is taking this responsibility. This ground consists of definite aids, suggestions and corrections administered to the child through the first formative years. With parents who have not developed any sense of feeling for the religious side of life, this "growing ground" consists mainly in instilling good social behaviour into their child and a measure of obedience to parental control and community laws and customs. This is not enough for parents in The Infinite Way because as we have developed a meditative, prayerful way of living, our perception deepens, our values change and we are eager to give our children the best. This best starts from the within. Character, love, loyalty and trust are developed and social conformities fall into their natural places as offshoots of what the child truly is.

This growing ground then provides its own climate which is love, fellowship, understanding and cooperation. A child feeling the security of this ground at home is always sent off to school "in quietness and confidence." The parent can start with the child at a very early age, sharing with it the parent's source of strength, well-being and love and eventually it can accept this same source for itself.

To illustrate this we are taught "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3. And again as the Master teaches: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. Certainly, you continue to teach your children the proper code of human conduct but remember that the most important part of parenthood is maintaining the spiritual atmosphere which the children absorb.

As the child begins to meditate for himself and the parent can begin to talk to him (at the 7-8-9-year-old levels) he can be shown how implanted within him are all the attributes needed for his success in life.

THE ARTIST AS SADHAKA

By JOHN SPIERS

The author, whose name rhymes with Shakespeare's, not with church spires, hails from Scotland but has made India his home for more than thirty years past. A disciple of Nataraja Guru, who is himself a disciple of the great Malayali reformer-saint Narayana Guru, Mr. Spiers is the founder-director of Narayana Gurukula at Kaggalipura, south of Bangalore and the founder-editor of the monthly 'Values', published from Kaggalipura and already in its ninth year, through which he untiringly upholds true spiritual values. We are grateful to him for taking time off from his exacting occupations to write this article for 'The Mountain Path'.

The Values that human beings hold dear are all for the sake of the Self. This is the verdict of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (II. iv. 1-5) stated in that wonderful dialogue between the Guru Yajnavalkya and his dear wife-disciple Maitreyi. And what applies to marital love also applies to art. All art is for the sake of the Self. The Self being *Brahman* or the Absolute, there cannot be art for its own sake, unless the "its" here is equated with the Absolute Self.

What people really mean when they talk of art for art's sake, is that art should not be for the sake of some unworthy end, should not be for some commercial tycoon who wants a picture to sell his cigarettes, nor should it be for a theological establishment who want to instil the fear of hell, nor should it be for encouraging the patriotic egotism of the nation-state. Art is degraded when it abandons the Self and forgets its proper aim. Like all human beings, the artist is seeking Self-knowledge. The only true art is in Self-expression, the endeavour of the Self to understand itself through all media.

Many attempts have been made to image the wonder-mystery of the Absolute (*Brahman*). We have the image of the Great Mathematician, or the Great Architect of the Universe, the former by the physicist Jean and the latter by the Freemasons. Narayana Guru likened the universe to the work of a Great Artist, a living painting. Putting all these images together we reach the same central Source. The

notion is further augmented by the twin chapters in the middle of the *Bhagavad Gita*, those called Unitive Contemplation as Royal Science and a Crowning Secret (*Raja-vidya Raja-guhya Yoga*) and Unitive Recognition of Absolute Values (*Vibhuti-yoga*). One chapter deals with *jnana* or pure unqualified wisdom, and the other with *vijnana* or wisdom expressed or applied. And, as the first verse of these chapters states, both must be taken together when we want to be free from whatever is evil or inauspicious.

Sri Ramana Maharshi used the analogy of the movie. If the forgotten white screen is the *jnana* aspect, and the projected picture the *vijnana* aspect, the wisdom here is remembering the entire scheme, the total situation, screen, picture, light and the enjoyment, and seeing it all as the production of the Self, in which the Self is screen and film and all. And this can be understood at the cosmological end of Nature, or ontologically or psychologically as the individual's own movie show. In any case all aspects brought together result in the high art called Yoga.

The Self will not brook duality. All is unity for the Self. To see duality, to see one-sidedly, to see the picture and not the screen, to see the screen and ignore the picture, leads to distortions, exaggerations and suffering at one or other pole of the single Self. The sensual or *vijnana* side can be over-emphasized, as also the austere *jnana* side. On one side the *bon viveur*, on the other side the ascetic. Both

have really lost the way, which is at neither end, nor in the middle, but by apprehending both sides together. This is Yoga and neither Caliban nor Savonarola can be said to have been lovers of art !

For the artist, his own projected world, his private dream, is at once his glory and his danger as a seeker of reality and Self-understanding. He must become more than a dreaming artist. He must become a wide-awake philosopher. The artist is on the same beam as the philosopher, but the philosopher (again in its original meaning) is ahead of him because he is disciplined. This discipline is to discover the supreme Order called "Beauty" if you like, but not necessarily the same as that beautiful which is counterpart of the ugly. As Plato describes the process in the *Theatetus*, the Guru's task, in the words of Socrates, is to be a midwife to the art-children born of the artist, and (with what travail to the artist) to destroy the unworthy. What spiritual courage is implied here !

For the artist, as for all wisdom-seekers, there are two paths, one leading to further bondage and cyclic restraint (*samsara*) and the other to freedom. Kant, in an early work, *Beobachtungen ueber das Gefuehl des Schoenen und Erhabenen* (trans. by John T. Goldthwait, Univ. of California, 1960, as *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*) describes these two paths from the point of view of the artist :

"Tall oaks and lonely shadows in a sacred grove are sublime ; flower beds, low hedges and trees trimmed in figures are beautiful. Night is sublime, day is beautiful. Temperaments that possess a feeling for the sublime are drawn gradually, by the quiet stillness of a summer evening as the shimmering light of the stars breaks through the brown shadows of night and the lonely moon rises into view, into high feelings of friendship, of disdain for the world, of eternity. The shining day stimulates busy fervour and a feeling of gaiety. The sublime moves, the beautiful charms . . . The

sublime must always be great ; the beautiful can also be small. The sublime must be simple, the beautiful can be adorned and ornamented, a great height is just as sublime as a great depth, except that the latter is accompanied with the sensation of shuddering, the former with one of wonder. Hence the latter can be the terrifying sublime, and the former the noble."

Instances can be multiplied of this broad division of the two paths. The one is the sacred peace of Arunachala and the other the entertainments of the social world of Tiruvannamalai. The sublime heights, and the horizontal though perhaps charming life of the town. On the vertical side the music of the Tamil Alvars and on the horizontal the National Anthem. Or the numinous eternal image of the Yogi of Mohenjodaro's seal, and the statues of public heroes and politicians. Or the Taoist paintings of the classical Tang and Sung periods of China and the paintings of today which glorify the Peking regime. Or the great tragedies of master dramatists like Euripides and Kalidasa and Shakespeare, and the romantic comedies of the cinema.

Sublime art, then, takes us out of the relative world into the eternal, and we finally arrive at the greatest art of all. This is the transformation of the individual from a condition of enslavement to a condition of emancipation. Every artistic device can be used with skill to this end. This is the supreme art of a Buddha, a Jesus, a Sankara, a Maharshi or any of the grand Gurus of humanity anywhere. Their records are there in many languages, of how this is to be done, and they speak with amazing concordance.

But just here trouble arises, for very few artists are by nature philosophers as well. And yet, if they are not to lead themselves astray (not to speak of their admirers), philosophers they must learn to be. Artists have the germ of absolutism in their own character, by nature. That is why they are fit to be knowers of the Absolute. But invariably they are in a state

of revolt, wild and uncontrollable, opposed to all authority. For them to reach the terminus of spiritual seeking, they must harness their daemon in the service of the quest for enlightenment.

Not all artists are fortunate enough to find a spiritual guide. Euripides was the friend and pupil of Socrates. Tagore reached for the *Upanishads*. The philosophic or sublime cream of the artists on the whole is very little. Only ten per cent of Wordsworth is of this order, like *Tintern Abbey* or the *Intimations*. William Blake, so absolutist a revisionist of Christian thought, got lost in a barbaric mythology of his own. Millions of paintings are preserved in the museums of Europe and USA and the modern turnover is as profuse as in literature. Yet how much of it would stand the test of a Socratic midwife? Most is junk, which misleads.

For this reason, Plato in the *Republic* was right in cracking down on the danger to mankind of the unphilosophic poet or artist. Art can be delightfully attractive, but of what use if it is not true? Music can stir people to war just as easily as it can raise the spirit to contemplation and invoke the sense of the holy. Uncontrolled, art is a menace to wisdom. However unpalatable to the artistic temperament this may be, the artist must be subordinate to wisdom teaching and to the Guru. Nobody knew this better than Plato himself, literary genius and also a pupil of the "midwife" Socrates.

But why pick out the artist at all for special treatment? It is because he is one of the three types who by grace of natural temperament, can be led more easily toward Self-realization. Plotinus mentions this in the *Enneads* (I. iii. 1), and places the artist between the born lover and the born philosopher. About the artist, Plotinus says :

"He must be shown that what ravished him was . . . not some one shape of beauty but the All-Beauty, the Absolute Beauty; and the truths of philosophy must be implanted in him

to lead him to faith in that which, all unknowing, he holds within himself."

The artist and the philosopher are not opposed, as is the case with the man of action and the contemplative. They belong to the same grade. And following Plotinus, we may add to art and philosophy what is called love, adoration or devotion, that principle known in India as *bhakti*, and defined by Sankara as "seeking after one's own proper nature" or "inquiry into the true principles of one's own Self" (*Vivekachudamani* 31-32).

Benedetto Croce makes the daring statement that art and language cannot be separated. Creation begins with expression and all expression is linguistic. With the uttering of the Word, *Sabda*, wisdom and the universe itself bursts into being as the Panini doctrine of *sphota* declares. The Absolute and the Word are the same. "In the beginning was the Word (*Logos*), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," as the opening verse of the Gospel of St. John puts it.

It follows that philosophic expression, as revealed by a Guru or wisdom teacher, must be the highest art. The world's best known philosophical text-book is also a *Gita* or song. The *Bhagavad Gita* itself in referring to *Brahma-vidya* says so :

"Sung by *rishis* in many ways, severally and distinctly in (different) metres, and also in the aphoristic words of the *Brahma-sutras* replete with reasonings and positively determined." (xiii. 4)

Sage after sage, all over the world, from the Ch'an Patriarchs of ancient China to the Sufis of Persia, have ecstatically sung the praises of the Absolute. In India from the days of the anonymous *rishis* of the *Upanishads* down through the sages to Sri Ramana Maharshi and Narayana Guru, both of South India, we have glorious contemplative songs about philosophy and the ultimate joy of liberation.

On this grand theme, whose illustration is endless, let us conclude with the song of one

of the Persian poet-sages, Jami, from his *Tuhfatu'l-Abrar*, where he describes the end of the pilgrimage of the artist :

“Beware ! say not ‘He is All-beautiful,
And we His lovers.’ Thou art but the glass,
And He the Face confronting it, which casts
Its image on the mirror. He alone
Is manifest, and thou in truth art hid.
Pure Love, like Beauty, coming but from
Him,

Reveals itself in thee. If steadfastly
Thou canst regard, thou wilt at length
perceive

He is the mirror also—He alike
The Treasure and the Casket. ‘I’ and
‘Thou’

Have here no place, and are but phantasies
Vain and unreal. Silence ! for this tale
Is endless, and no eloquence hath power
To speak of Him. ‘Tis best for us to love,
And suffer silently, being as naught.”

ESOTERIC ASPECTS OF ISLAM

By DR. K. M. P. MOHAMED CASSIM

Islam as a religion or philosophy belongs to humanity. Man cannot be considered as a bundle of psychological complexes or as a biological entity, as the mystery of man is his inter-relation with the divine principle which is eternal and transcendental. Islamic philosophy emphasises the importance of mental purification and the spiritual integration of man so as to function in the universe in tune with the Infinite. Man's progress lies in the direction of attaining that state of blessedness which is divine in essence.

It is to be noted that in accordance with *ma'rifa*—the esoteric aspect of Islamic Philosophy :—

(1) The concept of belief demands not mere verbal declaration the existence of Reality, but inner intensive awareness of the oneness with the Supreme through direct realization.

(2) Prayer should not be conceived as an act of worship in a mechanical way, but an attitude of devotion which elevates one to the height of contemplation in which exalted state the ego is negated in absorption in the Supreme.

(3) The correct understanding of Fasting implies the close self-observation of the mind in a detached manner without getting involved in any form of temptation.

(4) The right attitude of Charity is not only the feeling of compassion in helping the poor on a material level, but also the spontaneity of a pure heart which radiates the light of wisdom and serenity for the spiritual upliftment of mankind.

(5) The significance of Pilgrimage consists in the sacredness of keeping the mind detached from worldly affairs for the attainment of spiritual liberation.

It is what I am that is seeing,
And I have ten-thousand eyes.

— WEI WU WEI.

THE POET SAINT TULSIDAS¹

By T. KRISHNAJI

The keynote of Hindu religious life is the concept of dharma or righteous conduct. The word has no exact equivalent in English. Dharma may be defined as spiritual life expressed in socio-ethical conduct. It is the bedrock and support of human life. The two great Hindu epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, inculcate dharmic life by precept and example. Yudhisthira in the Mahabharata is a great exemplar of dharma; but Sri Rama in the Ramayana is its very personification. His story was chronicled by Valmiki, the great poet-sage, and he has been worshipped throughout India ever since. Various poet-saints rendered Valmiki's Sanskrit Ramayana into the regional languages, and it was Tulsidas who did into Hindi.



Tulsidas was born about 1583 in a Brahmin family of Rajpur. He was orphaned at an early age and went to Benares to prosecute his studies. Before he reached his sixteenth year he had mastered all the Sanskrit scriptures.

On completion of his studies he was married. He loved his wife, Ratnavali, so passionately that he could not brook separation from her even for a few days. Once she went on a visit to her parents who lived on the opposite bank of the Jumna and, unable to endure her absence, he plunged into the river, then swollen with the rains, and swam across. He presented himself, dripping and exhausted, before her and told her of the danger he had faced to come to her. Far from being pleased, Ratnavali rebuked him sharply: "Aren't you ashamed to run after me like this? Such attachment to this perishable body of mine is misplaced. Life's misery would end for you if only you had such love and yearning for Sri Ram." Then occurred one of those sudden transformations one finds in the lives of saints. Her words opened his eyes and in a sudden access of Divine Love he turned and walked out of the house, going forth as a homeless wanderer in search of God.

Tulsidas went on pilgrimage to one after another of the great shrines of India before returning to Benares. In course of time he became famous as a poet and saint. His lyric and didactic poems have been collected in volumes known as 'Vinaya Patrika', 'Dohavali' and 'Kavitavali'. Many of his songs are still commonly sung throughout the Hindi-speaking parts of India to-day. But it is on his 'Ramayana' that his fame mainly rests. He composed this in the space of 31 months at Ayodhya, the traditional town of Sri Rama, about 1692.

Being himself a poet and saint, Tulsidas, like the other great renderers of the Ramayana into regional languages, did not merely translate Valmiki but departed freely from him when so inclined. Valmiki depicts Rama as an ideal man, but still a man. Although his work

¹ Referred to also as Tulsi, Tulasi, Tulasidas and Tulasidasa.

is known as the 'Ramayana', he himself refers to it as *Sitāyāh Charitam Mama*, 'The Chronicles of Sita'. But Tulsidas portrays Rama as a Divine Being and calls his work *Raghunātha Gāthā*, 'The Story of Raghunath'.² The Christian mystic Jacob Boehme has said: "God must become Man, there must be a birth of the light of God in the soul, in order that the soul may live its highest." Tulsī's Ramayana shows that God-Man on earth and inspires the reader outwardly to devotion to Him, inwardly to development of the Divine in his own heart.

It is said that all who die at Benares obtain Liberation, having received initiation into the *Tārakā* Mantra from Lord Siva. In Tulsī's Ramayana it is the Lord Siva Himself who tells the story to His spouse Parvati.

Poetically it is a work of the highest art. The poet shows rare skill in merging Sanskrit words into Hindi, while the prefatory Sanskrit verses at the head of each chapter show his mastery of the classical language. The poetic rhythms and vivid turns of phrase thrill the reader. It is as great a work of art as of devotion. Millions of copies have been sold and it would be hard to find a home in the U.P. without one. It ranks among the greatest works in the literature of the world.

Tulsidas was one of the pioneers of the invocation of the Divine Name as a means of sadhana. Indeed, he says in one place that, whereas Sabari obtained Liberation at the hands of Rama, many sinners have found it by merely

calling on the name of Rama. Although he was not a philosopher, this was an important contribution to Hindu religious practice. Dr. Ranade, a recent renowned mystic and philosopher,³ writes that: "His remarkable exposition of the relation between such fundamental conceptions as Nāma, Rūpa, Saguna and Dhyāna mark him out as a thinker of a very high order. He says that Name and Form are only attributes of God, and that may be regarded as Tulasidas's contribution to Indian philosophic thought."⁴

The reputation of Tulsidas as a poet-saint spread. Divine Grace flowed on him and many miracles are reported in his life, including the revival of a dead person. When he went to Mathura, the traditional town of Lord Krishna, the latter appeared before him in the form of Rama.

There was a galaxy of saints, poets and statesmen in his time, by whom he was highly esteemed. Surdas, the blind poet-saint, Nabhaji who wrote 'Bhakta Vijaya', Nandadas, another poet-saint, the great Advaitic scholar Madhusudan Saraswati, were some of his friends. The Emperor Akbar and his ministers, Mansingh and Birbal, were great admirers of his. The spot where he lived in Benares is known as Tulsighat. He lived to the great age of 90, when he left his body at the junction of the rivers Asi and Ganga, leaving to posterity his immortal Ramayana and a wealth of devotional lyrics still commonly sung by millions of devout Hindus.

² A name for Rama, meaning 'Lord of the race of Raghus'.

³ For an account of whose life and achievements see the Book Review section of our issue of January 1964.

⁴ Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, p. 13.

We are miserable unless the sun is shining, but if the sun were shining within we should not even notice whether the feeble phenomenal sun was shining or not.

— WEI WU WEI.

THE MODERN REVIVAL OF SPIRITUAL HEALING

By GILBERT HENRY GEDGE

Mr. Gedge is no more a theorist but has been known for the past fifteen years as one of the leading practisers of spiritual healing in England. We are deeply grateful to him for finding time to write this article for us.

What do we mean by the term "Spiritual Healing"? I think the best way to answer that question is to relate one or two actual instances. For example, a man suffering from what had been diagnosed as "slipped disc" walked into the room of one who was described as a spiritual healer and asked for help. He said he did not know much about what the healer did, but his sister was sure the healer could help him. The patient was told to lie on his face on a divan, the healer placed his hands on the patient's back and, after audibly surrendering himself and the patient to Jesus Christ, called on Christ to do His perfect work in the patient. Some five minutes later the patient got up free from pain and feeling perfectly well, and remained so for over two years. He then had a slight relapse but was treated again by the same healer and again the trouble vanished, this time apparently permanently.

Another example, this time of what is known as "absent treatment". A girl of five years with an unfortunate home life had just started school when she suddenly developed attacks of bad temper, screaming and severe depression, and tearing out her hair. After psychiatric and hospital treatment she rapidly got worse and lost the use of her legs. The trouble was thought to be either a tumour on the brain or disintegration of the nerves, and she was given two years to live. The child was sent home and a friend of the family asked the spiritual healer mentioned above for help. He placed the child's name on his prayer list and the next day there was already a marked improvement. This continued, and three weeks later she walked unaided across the room. Within

three months the child was able to run about and the fits of temper had practically ceased. Today that girl is happily married with a child of her own. In this case the healer never saw the patient; the work, was done entirely by faith and prayer.

These two cases just cited are typical of the two main methods employed in what is correctly described as spiritual healing. Unfortunately this term is also often used to describe healing work done by spiritualists, who usually claim to be guided by the spirits of those who have passed on, and whose work could thus be more correctly described as psychic. The most notable exponent of this method at present is Harry Edwards, who undoubtedly has produced many remarkable results. He claims to work under the guidance of Lister and Pasteur, and specifically states that others can learn to work similarly under the guidance of other discarnate minds, whom he calls spirit operators.

The birth of the spiritualist movement about the middle of the last century coincided with the beginning of what is now known as the Christian Science Church. Its founder, Mary Baker Eddy, taught that God is omnipresent Divine Mind, and in her book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures", she says that all is Spirit and "matter is an error of statement". She goes on to say that matter is a "mortal illusion", and that we lose the consciousness of matter as we approach Spirit and Truth (pp. 273-282). Thus Christian Scientists deny the reality of the flesh, of sickness and disease, and affirm the all-ness

of God and His perfection. They go on to claim that by so doing they can bring that perfection into manifestation in the physical realm.

There is no doubt that both the Spiritualists and the Christian Scientists have produced some remarkable results, and whatever we may think of their respective methods we have to admit that they both played a significant part in compelling the world to recognise that there are unseen forces on which man can call for healing of both mind and body. The orthodox churches eventually found themselves compelled to consider their own position in regard to healing.

For centuries the church had been concerned almost solely with the welfare of man's soul; but now the world began to ask why the church was not fulfilling the behest of Jesus to heal the sick, cast out devils, and do the greater works He promised that His followers should do. In the early years of the Christian church spiritual healing, or what is now known as Divine healing, was practised by its adherents as a vital part of their religion. They believed that Jesus Christ by His victory over death was still available to them in all His mighty power, and that they could call upon His power by faith, by belief in His inevitable response to their call for help. As the Church became wealthy and powerful after being made the state religion of Rome, however, the capacity to call on Divine power for healing declined, and in consequence healing ceased to be regarded as part of the Church's ministry. Through the centuries there were a few individuals who practised Divine healing—healing in the name and through the power of Jesus Christ—but they were exceptions. Men like George Fox and John Wesley who had a living faith in the presence of God as an available all-loving Power have appeared from time to time, and their very presence has spread healing, but the world took scant notice of them.

Men's minds are being rapidly awakened to the realisation of forces beyond the physical

realm which has previously been the limit of the majority of mankind's horizon. New teachers have arisen whose main theme has been the development of the consciousness of the immanence of God, the consciousness of the presence of God within man, and the realisation of the power with which that consciousness endows man. We are now waking up again to the fact that not only does man's thought affect his body for good or ill, according to the nature of his thoughts, but also that we are gods in the making and can call upon and use Divine powers to an extent that modern man has not previously dreamed of.

This has necessarily involved a new conception of the nature of prayer. Even the churches are now realising that a beseeching prayer to an outside God is by no means the most effective method of praying. Instead, God is realised as an all-pervading, all-loving, ever available Power which responds to man's faith in It and in Its responsiveness. Men are looking again at the words of Jesus Christ: "Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore . . . what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe, that ye receive them, and ye shall have them". (Mark 11. 22-24). Many people are now proving these words—though few have yet risen to the height of casting a mountain into the sea! Many, however, are now able to cast out sickness and disease in varying degrees by their growing faith, and I see no reason why we should not expect greater triumphs in the future.

But, such progress and the development of the necessary faith requires regular spiritual practice—practice in realising the presence of God within us, and in the use of the power of our own thought, word and faith. Though mankind as a whole is still largely engrossed in the demands of the flesh and the material

world, we here on this earth are actually at school to learn to develop and manifest our divinity, and the essential part of that training lies in becoming increasingly conscious of one-ness with the Divine Omnipresence. There is no substitute for this practice, but if persevered with it will bring us into the realisation of the Divine Christ at the centre of our being. All over the world there are signs of the unfolding of the Christ consciousness and the healing works that follow from that consciousness. In recent years we have had remarkable demonstrations of that in our midst. Men like Brother Mandus, Oral Roberts, George Jeffries, women like Rebecca Beard, Agnes Sanford and Elsie Salmon—all have done great work to bring to millions of people the realisation that the power of Christ is just as available today as ever and can be called upon and used by dedicated souls. They have proved that the works of Christ can be done and still are being done today. They have reminded us that ours is the responsibility for increasing those works by stepping out boldly on our faith and attempting to do the things Jesus Christ said His follower should do. If we begin we shall find that Divine Power is aiding us.

The more enlightened members of the churches, both clergy and laity, our becoming newly aware of this responsibility, and in comparatively recent years there has been an increase in organisations for the study and practice of spiritual or Divine healing. Notable among these are the Guild of Health and the Guild of St. Raphael, both of which attempt to bring clergy and doctors together in healing work. Such organisations have their uses; but no organisation can of itself claim or demonstrate that it has healing power. Healing is not a matter of organisation; true healing can come only from conscious awareness of one-ness with God and dedication to God's purpose. That purpose is always directed to the more perfect expression of life on every plane of being. So often when speaking of healing we tend to confine its significance to

the body. But man is more than body. He is mind and spirit also — and God's purpose embraces all three phases of man's being. We are now realising more and more that the body is more often than not the reflection of the state of mind and soul. We are learning that wrong thoughts and emotions need to be replaced by thoughts and emotions attuned to the omnipresence of God if the body is to express wholeness. Though sudden and dramatic healing of the body is often obtained through spiritual means, such healing is seldom permanent unless accompanied by real change in the soul of the sufferer. That change may be simply a realisation of Divine forgiveness, a new comprehension of Ineffable Love, a new awareness of the all-ness of God, or a new realisation of the presence of Christ within and of one-ness with Him. These are the ultimate ends of Divine healing, and if there is no evidence of any of them then the healing is not Divine, even though the body be temporarily healed.

In the practice of Divine healing what is known as the laying on of hands is widely used. In this practice the healer sincerely believes that through the contact of his hands with the patient the spiritual power upon which he calls is focussed in a more direct and more effective way for the healing work to be done. Jesus used this method Himself and obviously intended His followers should do so. But, it would seem that often something deeper and more significant than mere physical healing occurs through the laying on of hands. Often there is a dramatic change in the recipient's soul. But for that to happen there must be real consecration and sincerity on the part of both healer and recipient in a desire to realise one-ness with God and receive His blessings. Future developments in Divine healing will depend ultimately on man's complete realisation of that one-ness. That is not a matter of practising a particular technique, however. It begins with getting rid of the little human self and letting the Divine Self manifest in and through us. Whether the ministration of hea-

ling is through the laying on of hands, realisation, affirmative prayer or intercession, really effective results will come only if the ministrant is completely surrendered and dedicated to Christ. That is not merely a mental process ; it must include the whole man and must emanate from the heart.

Certainly some healing results from purely mental action, which metaphysicians would attribute to the fact that this is primarily a

universe of Mind. But such healing action does not extend to the soul and spiritual realms of man's being, though it may sometimes appear to do so. Eventually, however, a change of heart must be brought about which cannot be done by purely mental means. Only as we find one-ness with the Eternal Heart of Love within our own heart will the Eternal Life manifest in all its perfection, beauty and glory on all planes of being.

PERMISSION WITHHELD

By RAMAKRISHNA G. KULKARNI

I had a great desire for a fully realized Guru and was in search of one, when by chance (really by the guidance of Bhagavan) I came upon a Gujarati book by one Madhavanand of Baroda in which he spoke highly of his visit to Sri Ramanashram. I therefore wrote to the Sarvadhikari of the Ashram expressing my desire to have darshan of Bhagavan. I received a favourable reply and accordingly left for the Ashram. This was in 1944. I stayed there for five days. During the first two days I was annoyed to find all the worst vasanas (latent tendencies) in me coming to the surface. I therefore prayed to Bhagavan to wipe out my sins and initiate me as his disciple, not being aware as yet that he had already done so and that my heart was being purified by the powerful current of his Grace. I appreciated this only on the third day, when peace began to flood my heart. There was such a surging of peace that on the fifth morning I stood before Bhagavan, prostrated, and expressed my feeling of complete peacefulness. Thereupon Bhagavan raised his hand over my head and blessed me. After that I

returned home. Through his Grace, awareness of the Self has continued since then and my sadhana is proceeding.

I had his darshan again a few years later, on the occasion of consecrating the Matrubhuteshwar Temple at the Ashram.

In the year 1956, six years after Bhagavan had left the body, I decided to renounce home life and live as a sadhu at some lonely place on the banks of the Ganges. While searching for a suitable place I wrote to the Ashram about it and, through the inspiration of Bhagavan, received a reply that I should pay a visit there before deciding to settle down elsewhere. Accordingly I went again to Sri Ramanashram. Arrived there, I sat in meditation before Bhagavan's samadhi (shrine) during the night. While doing so I experienced a voice from Bhagavan telling me that it was not yet time for me to renounce the world. I had therefore to cancel my plans for doing so and to return home. Since then I have been eagerly awaiting a message from Bhagavan that the time has come for my renunciation.

THE SPIRITUAL TRADITION OF PRESBYTERIANISM

By REV. JOHANSEN BERG

In our issue of January 1964 Father Lazarus, writing on 'The Spiritual Tradition of the Greek Orthodox Church', described Gandhi's statement that "The message of Jesus is contained in the Sermon on the Mount, unadulterated and taken as a whole" as a popular heresy. "The Sermon on the Mount," he said, "is not the Gospel that the early Church taught... the original Gospel was not a sermon and not just the Beatitudes. It was thrilling news, glad tidings of great joy for all peoples of the world." The impression given is not that he meant to belittle the Sermon on the Mount but to protest against belittling Christianity by confining it to the ethical part of Christ's message.

The following article by a Presbyterian minister asserts that "Mahatma Gandhi was quite right to see in the Sermon on the Mount a summary of the teaching of Jesus," but adds the qualifying words: "regarding practical action." It continues with the further qualification: "This is not to be confused with the message of salvation..." The difference, therefore, between this viewpoint and that of Father Lazarus seems to be mainly one of emphasis.

A recent article in this magazine on the spiritual traditions within one particular denomination might have given rise to the question what is the spiritual tradition, if any, in the Presbyterian Church. To speak of spirituality is to speak of the essence of Christianity and so to speak of it in relation to one particular branch is in a sense to narrow the issue falsely, since much is common tradition; but provided we remember that it may be worth while to think of the special stress that any part of Christendom has made.

The Presbyterian Church has a rich heritage of teaching. John Calvin is noted for the comprehensiveness of the system of theology he propounded, and he was very much aware of the need for right beliefs. Like the other Reformers, he sought the truth as expressed in Holy Scripture. His tradition of careful teaching was continued in all the Reformed Churches and we see the importance in Scotland, in England, in France and other places of the catechism as a method of teaching. The primary standard of faith in Presbyterian churches is still Holy Scripture and the necessity of teaching it is as central as ever. We find ourselves, therefore, still making the great affirmations that God has revealed Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that in Jesus Christ we

find our God and Saviour; that his life on earth, beginning with the miraculous birth from the Virgin Mary, found its climax in his sacrificial death on the cross, by which we are redeemed, and by his glorious resurrection which speaks to us of the hope of eternal life. We recognize that Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit has been fulfilled and that Jesus founded the Holy Catholic Church, the body of all those who believe in Him in sincerity and truth.

The Presbyterian Church has always guarded this scriptural truth but it has also stressed that right belief bears fruit in right action. To believe without action casts doubt on the sincerity of the belief. Certainly this is so in the case of belief in Christ, for he taught that faith is not only a set of beliefs but also a way of life. Mahatma Gandhi was quite right to see in the Sermon on the Mount a summary of the teaching of Jesus regarding practical action. This is not to be confused with the message of salvation, which is the astounding and reassuring news that our salvation does not depend on the sum of what we achieve in this life but rather it is the free gift of God. Our salvation has already been earned for us on the Cross of Calvary, in the suffering of the perfect man, true God, Jesus Christ; our good actions are a response to that wonderful love.

How can we who have received so much not desire greatly to do something ourselves? Perhaps it was one of the greatest puzzles that Gandhi had to work out, that men and women who acknowledged such a wonderful Person as our Lord could be so indifferent to need themselves. He did well to challenge their sincerity, for Jesus made clear that he wished his followers to behave as he did. We must never judge Jesus by their failures.

Right beliefs must therefore go hand in hand with right actions. A firm faith results in joyful service. These are parts of the life of spirituality. The Bible makes it clear that all the followers of Jesus Christ are called to be saints—holy men—spiritual men. St. Paul in his Letter to the Ephesians (ch. 11, v. 19) puts it: "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints and members of the household of God", and he goes on to speak of them as "a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." It can never be suggested that there are grades within Christianity and that some must aim for a higher righteousness; all must aim for no less than sainthood. Each is called to the spiritual life and each must be in some measure a mystic—a man who seeks to know God directly, to speak with Him face to face. Here is the secret of right belief and right action. Few men can be truly fired at second hand. It is one thing to be told of a Saviour, but much more wonderful to meet him. All the books written about wonderful personalities in history go only so far in conveying the reality of the personalities to those who did not have the good fortune to meet them. With Jesus it is different. He is not a dead hero but a living Lord. We can and do meet him in the present and have confirmed for ourselves all that the disciples taught and wrote.¹ Here is the confirmation of our beliefs and the mainspring of our actions. Right beliefs and right actions spring from a true experience.

The secret of John Calvin was not his clear, systematic brain or his teaching ability but his experience of spiritual reality. It is this that gives depth to his teaching on Holy Communion, which for him is not only a remembrance of the greatest sacrifice ever made, not only a sign of the greatest act of love, not only a common meal to express our own thanks and self-offering to God, but also a true feeding upon the body and blood of Jesus Christ, a real communion with our Saviour. For Presbyterians, spirituality has often found most deep expression in this Holy Communion. Some of the accounts of the old Scottish Communion speak of the tremendous sense of mystery and the real sharing in things divine. Whatever may keep Christians apart, here is an experience so deep, so meaningful, so mysterious and so wonderful that it gives all who share it a unity that nothing at all can break.

Spirituality often finds its expression in solitude and silence because the wonder of God's presence is such that one merely wants to rest in it. Words and actions become superfluous. But we must reckon with the call of God. Here we find most appropriate some words of Richard Baxter, a 17th Century Christian who might well claim to belong to the Reformed tradition but who preferred no other label than 'Christian'. He writes in his 'Autobiography': "I am more and more pleased with a solitary life; and though in a way of self-denial I could submit to the most public life for the service of God when he requireth it, and would not be unprofitable that I might be private, yet I must confess it is much more pleasing to myself to be retired from the world and have very little to do with men and to converse with God and conscience and good books." There is indeed a rhythm in life. We retire into solitude that we may speak and listen to God; but then he gives us his commands and we often have to go into the world to act. Here is the reason why some of the greatest saints and mystics of the Church have been men of action—St. Paul, St. Ninian, St. Francis, St. Richard Baxter, St. John

¹ The author, as a Christian minister, expresses the view in which he has been trained, that this is true only of Christ. — EDITOR.

Bunyan, St. David Livingstone, St. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Mother Maria, St. Kagawa — belonging to all ages and all traditions, but to the one Jesus Christ.

For Presbyterians these things stand together in a religion that is essentially simple. Right beliefs — drawn from Holy Scripture and having their source in experience. Our belief in the Trinity and the Virgin Birth and in the Holy Spirit as proceeding from Father and Son — all this is important, but far more vital than intellectual assent is a true experience of union with Christ. We worship God in simplicity; no need for elaborate ceremonial though we do not necessarily object to such. Jesus Christ lived a simple life and we can worship him in simplicity provided we worship him in sincerity. All stand before God equal; there is no gradation of people and priests, or within the ministry. Since Christ died for all, distinctions are needless unless they are distinctions of gifts, our specialisation within the work of the kingdom. All are equally children of God and to each is given a task — different perhaps but not higher or lower. The simplicity of worship reflects in simplicity of action. Worship is,

after all, not simply prayers in a church building. Worship is also expressed in service. In the teaching of Jesus this means that where there is need we seek to meet it. That is the only condition — need. Who or why does not concern us. And the experience that underlies it is simple too — meeting a person, Jesus Christ. We find that his promises are sure and that his power is available to his followers. The age of miracles is not past; as Jesus healed in times past, so now where there is the prayer of faith our Lord hears and responds. That is why the most wonderful cures happen even in our day.

Who would not be willing to give themselves to such a Lord and Saviour? An experience of him gives the deepest joy and in his service we find peace. Here is true spirituality — the peace and joy of the experience of Christ and the service of people. That we claim as Presbyterians, but it is the possession of all Christians. Indeed, the hope for the unity of Christendom and for peace and joy for the world rest solely on this — meeting with Jesus Christ.

PRADAKSHINA

By DR. K. B. PISPATI

We were a party of about 15 and it was a full moon night, so some one suggested that we should walk round Arunachala in what is called Giri-Pradakshina. As the party included the Maharaja of Dharampur and the princesses and other ladies, some of whom had never walked such a distance, I was a bit worried and arranged for several horse-carts to follow us round so as to give a lift to any one who got tired.

It was a wonderful walk. We all kept together and sang devotional songs by and to Bhagavan as we went along the moonlit road. Most of us had decided to go barefoot, as one is supposed to, but it was a wonderful walk in spite of that and we got home earlier than we expected. It was unforgettable. I was expecting to have to treat blisters and aching legs next day, but strangely enough there were no complaints and every one seemed hale and hearty. I never thought that these ladies who seldom walked farther than from bedroom to bathroom would do the eight to nine mile walk without any trouble. To my mind it was like a miracle.

“RENDER UNTO CAESAR THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR’S”

By SAGITTARIUS

Christianity as taught by Christ was a world-renouncing religion. His followers were given no code of civil or criminal law to govern their life in the world. They were not told to build on earth a ‘*Daru’s Salam*’ or a ‘City of God’ as the Muslim were later on. Indeed, ‘The Prince of this world’ was an appellation of the devil, while Christ said specifically that His Kingdom was not of this world. That was what infuriated the Jews: that one should come claiming to be the Messiah and yet not restore the Kingdom of David or given them domination over the Gentiles.

Christ’s followers were to live inoffensively in the world, not resisting evil, rendering its dues to the foreign, pagan state that governed them — and all that was essential to God. Mary, who sat listening to the Master, was praised above Martha who attended to the practical job of providing for him. The young man who wished to go further than mere obedience to the law was told to give his property away and become a religious mendicant. There is no record of any of Christ’s immediate followers getting married after joining him; they followed him around as celibate mendicants. It was not the sort of religion that organizes man’s life in the world or attempts to sanctify the world but the sort that turns him away from the world to the quest of his own salvation. “And seek ye not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Under the circumstances then existing, this otherworldliness was an advantage to the early

Christians. Had they attempted to found a Christian State on earth they would have come up against the full might of the Roman Empire. They were persecuted as it was for being ‘atheists’, but only sporadically; nothing to what would have happened if they had been considered rebels as well. Owing to their indifference to the social and political life of the pagan world around them, they were able to infiltrate it silently, appeasing the spiritual hunger that always assails men in a materialistic world; until in the end they became too numerous and powerful to be ignored and the walls of Jericho fell: the Empire succumbed to them.

The acceptance of Christianity by the Roman Empire, the fiction that a whole people could be Christian, was enough to swamp the primitive ardour of any religion. It blurred the distinction between Christian and non-Christian, blunted the keen edge of opting for Christ. Because, of course, it was a fiction. A whole people may be taught to believe that certain historical events occurred in the past or even to accept certain doctrinal beliefs as to what will happen to them after death, but that is not what Christianity had meant to Christ’s early followers. It had meant rejecting this world for Christ’s sake and being prepared to suffer imprisonment, torture or death in order to be able to say with St. Paul: “I live, yet not I but Christ in me.”

Who now was to check that a profession of Christianity implied more than half-measures, when it no longer involved any danger or sacrifice? Indeed, ordination might now be an avenue to position or power. It is no accident that in the same century that Christianity was accepted by the world, the world began to be rejected by Christians, going out into the desert as hermits or banding together as monks.

This change faced Christianity with a new problem. Once whole countries began to be considered Christian and not merely those individuals who had chosen Christianity of their own volition in preference to 'this world', it became necessary to take responsibility for the entire organization of life — government, justice, business, education, everything. The natural thing to do was to accept and sanctify the law of the land insofar as it was not incompatible with Christ's teaching. If the spread of Christianity had been eastwards to China there is little doubt that it would have accepted Confucianism as its legal and social basis. If it had spread through a number of independent countries it might have accepted a different law in each. In the early centuries of our era, however, the lands through which Christianity spread and which were to become 'Christendom' were to an overwhelming extent provinces of the Roman Empire. Rome already had an international legal code overriding the local customary law of its various provinces, and this was naturally taken over by the Church to become, with appropriate emendations, the canon law of Christendom.

The Church thus transformed Christianity from a world-renouncing to a world-sanctifying religion. The ideal of renunciation still continued, but this now meant withdrawal from the nominally Christian world into a monastery or hermitage. The world was no longer a non-Christian state to be shunned. On the contrary, the Church strove to organize it as a Christian Commonwealth, an earthly reflection of Christ's Kingdom, educating its children in a Christian way, sponsoring and censoring its law and literature, sanctifying its regulation of marriage and inheritance, business and property.

It would not be fair to condemn the Church for this or to represent it as a betrayal of Christ's teaching, because once whole peoples were declared Christian by their governments there was really no alternative. It is enough to consider the only two theoretical alternatives to see that neither of them was in fact possible.

One would have been a legalised anarchy : to say to every thief and adulteress, "Go and sin no more", and have no enforcement of law, no government. If men of goodwill, the spiritual leaders of the community had thus refused to accept responsibility for law and order either men of ill-will would have seized it or others would have brought chaos in its place. The other apparent alternative would have been to abstain from all interference with law and government, leaving it to the secular power and making a complete cleavage between religious and secular life. But a religious community could not do that. Once organised Christianity had accepted responsibility for men's conscience and conduct it could not restrict this to private life and exclude the whole domain of law and government, literature and education, and the organization of society.

At the end of the Middle Ages, however, the Renaissance-Reformation movement was a revolt against the Church's religious organization of Christendom. It took some centuries to run its course, breaking down bit by bit the opposition that a change of course in history always encounters ; but by now it has been completed. Christianity as a complete way of life has been rejected by the world and has once more become an option for individuals. Scarcely a trace remains of the Christian organization of what was once 'Christendom'. Children are no longer educated to a Christian life and faith. Philosophy is secular and mainly irreligious. A science of secular morals and ethics has been evolved. When a man gets entangled in his character he consults a psychologist not a priest. Neither government nor finance charts its course by Christian regulations. Marriage and divorce have become civil contracts. It is not the Church that has withdrawn from the world but the world that has withdrawn from the Church.

In fact, the situation has come round full circle to what it was in the early days, when Christians were a dedicated few living in an alien un-Christian world. Whether they live in

a country where Christianity is frowned upon and persecuted, as was the early Church, or where it is merely ignored, in either case they are outsiders to the world, in it but not of it. But that does not mean that they have to denounce it openly or to rebel against it. There is no need for movements or crusades. So long as they dissociate themselves from its un-Christian actions and policies that is all Christ demanded of them. They can conform outwardly, obey the laws, render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, while inwardly rejecting the whole unspiritual set-up and rendering all that is essential to God.

One characteristic of the Early Church was

the small number of Christians ; another was the tremendous spiritual power that informed them and radiated out from them. Now again those one can call Christians are world-re-nouncers, world-rejecters, and in some at least there is a strong and luminous sincerity. Now again it has become unnecessary to reject the world physically by going into a monastery because the mere fact of opting for Christ is itself a rejection. Is it too much to hope that to-day again Christians will make themselves felt by sheer spiritual radiance in the inert, lethargic world of materialism which they renounce inwardly while conforming outwardly to its ways ?

HEARTBREAK

By EBBANA GRACE BLANCHARD

"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

Almost unnoticed, one by one,
Our early candle-hopes
Shatter in Life's cold breath.
We do not care a shrug ;
There are plenty left.

There are NOT !

We draw remainders cosy close.
Our circle shrinks.

As lights depart, fears stealthily increase :
Cupping cold hands around the last bright
flame
We cherish it against invading dark.

A guest—its gone—
We are alone,
And black.

We fall, defeated,
Eyes "put out" by shock :

'Tis only then,
Lying as dead across the feet of Life,
The glimmering square of window can be
seen :
Stars beyond stars lead outward, infinite.

We are not caged by bars of candle-bones ;
The Way is not begun, but we are FREE
To rise and follow where the stars stretch out
Beyond the bound of sense, of hope or
thought ;
Where only Love can reach
With straining finger-tips and sobbing
breath—
When lo ! a Strong Right Hand
Encompasses our wrist with pierced grasp
Drawing us upward to the Heart of Love.

ACCESS TO INFINITY

By JOEL S. GOLDSMITH*

Let us take the unfoldment of the Source, divine Consciousness, infinite Consciousness as being the consciousness of the men and women of the past, present, and future—going back 6,000 years and looking ahead 6,000 years to all the men and women who will appear on the surface of the earth. Then remember that the infinite Consciousness of all the spiritual lights, inventors, composers, and writers, is that same Consciousness which has appeared on earth, will appear on earth, and which is available to us on earth here and now. Remember that we, through our individual consciousness, have access to the infinite Consciousness and that this includes not only spiritual wisdom, but all the wisdom of the ages—commercial, economic, artistic.

If you go back to the wisdom of Egypt 2,000 years B.C. and read of the discoveries in mathematics and science, and the principles of navigation, you will have to ask yourself, "Whence came this?" You will then learn that these men, living in bare rooms or monastic cell, with a very limited amount of writing material, brought forth through their hours and weeks and months and years of inner searching principles from which were derived the laws for the road building, the palaces, temples and pyramids which now exist in Egypt, India, China, Cambodia and South America. Whence came this wisdom? *Out of the consciousness of men who had access to the infinite Consciousness.* This means nothing unless it leads you to books or to other experiences that will send your mind all over the world searching out the great discoveries in science, invention, art, or music, and cause you

to pause and ponder: "Whence come? Whence come?"

The consciousness of individual man is absolutely infinite, and you can sit down individually, enter your consciousness, and bring forth infinity. Then you can look around you and see what you have not acquired, or what you acquired and then lost, and laugh as if they were but grains of dust in comparison to the infinity to which you have access. It is not necessary that you go anywhere, or meet "miracle people", or have your fortune told: all you need do is turn within. Those who do this are going to make startling discoveries, and so I caution you: Do not discuss it with anyone. There is no easier way to lose it, because no one will believe you except those who have been there before you.

Due to the almost world-wide spread of The Infinite Way during this short time, we are receiving requests for the story of my life. Why? Because people think they will discover "the secret" in it. Yes, I could tell them when and where I was born and where I went to school, but they would then say: "That does not account for the miracle of The Infinite Way." Of course not! Imagine what would happen if I tried to tell it. Why? Because, as many have recognized, The Infinite Way is constituted of the wisdom of the East and the West and the Near East. It is all there. Where did I get it, since I had no access to books or schools through which I could discover it? I received it from the original Source of the wisdom of the East and the West and the Near East.

Behind every individual who has ever received a spiritual Truth, or an invention, or music, or art, there is one infinite Consciousness which is its Source. And when you tap

* For a note on this series of articles by Joel Goldsmith see our issue of October 1964. Note that the next article in the series will appear not in April but July — EDITOR.

That, you tap all of the branches that have gone out from the Source. My conscious oneness with God constitutes my oneness with all spiritual being and idea, and this cannot be limited to time, space, or place. Do you not see that all of this can take place only through introspection, cogitation, contemplation, meditation—anything that takes the attention away from the outside world and draws it back to that centre within your Self—to let “the imprisoned splendour” escape?

An activity of Grace leads you to this kingdom, this realm of Consciousness within you, and then an activity of Grace starts the flow. Enter the sanctuary, close the door of the five physical senses, and listen to Me :

Seek Me, Infinite divine Being, and “I will make you fishers of men.”¹ Jesus will not do it, nor will Joel do it, but I will—this I that is the I of your inner Being. I will make you fishers of men. I will lead you in a Way. I will go before you. I will prepare mansions for you. “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”²

Do you not see that you are led back to the realm of the I, and that this I is the manna—the bread, the meat, the wine and the water that flows by the same divine Grace which populates the earth with men, animals, vegetables and minerals, and which creates each and every thing unto a purpose?

The way in which this works is a mystery to us and, because it sometimes appears in such natural ways, we do not realize that it was actually prompted by a divine Grace.

Do you not see that we of ourselves cannot know these things, unless into our consciousness pour these ideas which became inventions? Individuals had to go within themselves to find these secrets. They were not in books; they had to be discovered within. The real *consciousness* of man is infinite and, the moment

you stop limiting it to your education and your environment, infinity can flow. When all of this is revealed it makes an interesting philosophy, but it only becomes a way of life when an individual adopts it into his experience and determines to have specific periods day and night until meditation is an automatic process that continues even while asleep. Great revelations are given during sleep when the human mind is still.

If you keep this principle secret and sacred among those who hear it or read it, and if you practise it conscientiously, such miracles will take place in your life as you yourself could not believe possible. The reason is this : if you think of it in terms of God's Grace you will see how infinite it can be. You will see that it is not limited to you ; it is limited only to God's Grace and your receptivity. Then by your example, by your light, the world would seek that Light. And it would find It, because this is a universal Truth. Therefore, the demonstration of infinity in your experience is measured by the extent to which you practice a principle of this nature—never revealing it, never speaking of it, and never trying to teach it until you are so consciously one with it that It is already flowing.

One could become very popular teaching this principle to individuals, and allowing them to believe through ignorance that it was for their benefit and that it would do great things for them. But that would be misleading, because God's Grace cannot be limited to an individual. This passage is therefore given to us : “The vine consumeth not its own grapes.” In other words we are the vine through which this message comes. It blesses us, but its major blessing is that others are led to us, and then it becomes a universal Truth which blesses the entire universe.

Eventually this causes a disruption in your life, when as a businessman you find less time for your business, or when as a housewife you find less time for your home, and more and more you discover that you are being drawn

¹ Matthew 4 : 19.

² Hebrews 13 : 5.

into a universal scheme of things. The Master says, and I am not speaking of a man but of the Spirit of God within you: "Come and follow Me and I will make you fishers of men," and It pulls you out of your little fishing job into an activity that enables this Grace you have discovered to bless the world. "I will make you fishers of men."

In the moment you prove that the infinite Consciousness of this universe is *your* individual consciousness, and that you have access to the Consciousness which is, which ever has been and ever shall be—you are called out as a fisher of men to be a light unto the world. Light does not go out looking for places in which to shine. As the sun stays fast in the heavens, a light shines and lets the rest of the world come to It. And so as we in some measure become the Light, we hold what we have received sacredly and secretly until the world starts to come to our doorway for It. We may travel the world, not on a "save the

world" basis, but only because the world has invited us.

The secret of the spiritual life is to know that you have access to Infinity through your own consciousness, to go within sufficiently often to let the flow appear, to let the imprisoned splendour escape—and then to be careful not to personalize It and think you have become "good" or that you have become "spiritual". Remember you have become an instrument or transparency for an infinite, universal Grace. You choke it and shut it off immediately if you personalize It, but you can increase the flow by realizing It as an infinite Grace flowing universally. Like the tree that is showing forth God's Grace, this does not glorify *us*. It lets us stand still and show forth God's glory. Anything else is catering to the ego, and the ego must die as completely as the tree that cannot say "I" and think it is something of itself. And so it is that this reconciles us to God, and thereby fulfills us.

SUICIDE NO CURE

*From a record left by Alan Chadwick **

I once asked Bhagavan about suicide. I had been cycling round Arunachala and on meeting a bus the thought occurred to me: "Why shouldn't I concentrate on the Self and, so doing, throw myself in front of the bus so as to attain Moksha?" I told Bhagavan when I got back but he said it would not work. Even though I tried to concentrate on the Self, thoughts would spring up involuntarily as I fell; the mind would become very active and owing to the thoughts life would continue and I should take another body.

* For whom see our 'Ashram Bulletin' of January 1964.

VARIETIES OF BUDDHISM IN THE WEST

By FRANCIS ALLEN

The writer of these words is not a Buddhist. He does not call himself Buddhist or Christian or Hindu, nor is he the devotee of any one Guru. He does not label himself.

He does not label himself because it is unBuddhist to set a label to any *Nāma-Rūpa*. Any 'Name-Form' with such a label attached to it would be egoistic. And Buddhism teaches that egoism is mankind's most hideous disease.

If one calls oneself "a Buddhist" one lets oneself in for all the erroneous, not to say fantastic, ideas which other people may associate with "Buddhism". Moreover, it is possible to become attached even to a label. And Buddhism teaches that attachment constitutes a major symptom of egoism.

Misrepresentation and attachment are two dangers of which Occidental Buddhists have to beware. In Buddhist countries of Asia, where the majority of people are nominal or traditional Buddhists, such problems do not occur. In the West the acceptance of Buddha Dharma calls for a personal reappraisal of one's motives.

However, some so-called Western Buddhists are individuals with only a temporary intellectual addiction for Buddhist literature, people with a bias against Christian monopoly, people disillusioned with Western standards. The bloody Karma of the Christian Church is Buddhism's most potent missionary.

Nevertheless, a thoughtful examination of Western life is altogether more helpful than the sheep-like acceptance of materialistic conformity, of blind belief that the personal possession of advertised assets (a faster car, a bigger house, a newer television set) is the aim and end-all of life.

Thus Buddhism in the West has come to serve the important purpose of enabling a tiny

minority of Europeans and Americans to become aware of themselves and aware of the false values of modern advertised utopias. The few who survive the shock of orientating themselves away from the emptiness of utilitarian life make "good" Buddhists.

Of course this does not mean that Western Buddhists cannot enjoy modern comforts. It does mean that they are not overcome with exasperation when a car of their own is not available, or hopelessly miserable should the TV set cease to function. For the great majority of Westerners are fast adding a fear of silence to that of being alone.

These pitiful frames of mind, fostered by conditions among increasing populations in modern welfare States (the so-called "affluent societies"), can be alleviated by the practise of daily meditation, ranging from simple breath control to sustained contemplation. Such exercises appeal to a limited number of European lay Buddhists, although the original motive in some cases was the faulty one of wishing to cultivate super-normal powers.

The Buddhists of the Western world fall into four main categories : (1) followers of (Japanese) Zen ; (2) adherents of (Sinhalese-Burman-Thai) Theravada ; (3) devotees of (Tibetan) ritualistic Buddhism ; (4) advocates of a Neo-Buddhism adapted to modern Western style.

The majority find Zen the most helpful. This is because it contains the original Indian Mahayana tempered by lengthy sojourns in China and then in Japan : it retains a potency better suited to the climates of America and Europe than any other School of Buddhism. Much of its appeal derives from its mystical aspect, retained from the pristine Teaching.

Quite otherwise is Theravada, which makes its appeal to one's powers of reasoning. Theravada serves as an excellent foundation upon which to build an understanding of Buddhist philosophy. But such understanding is not at all the same as wisdom. And Theravada lacks, because it has lost, the mystical interpretation of the Teaching.

Tibetan Buddhism appeals largely to those preoccupied with occultism. As for those originals, the 'Neo-Buddhists': each is his own guru, attempting to proselytize in ways that are remarkably unBuddhist; but some of them are well organized and untroubled by tradition, and any mass acceptance of Buddhism in Europe would be likely to be Neo-Buddhist.

People who have known, or know of, Sri Ramana Maharshi, will agree that Realization of Truth, which is Nirvana, can never be attained by the reasoning mind alone. For as soon as one stops to rationalize, It escapes one's grasp. It IS—until one begins to think about it. Lord Buddha imparted to His Arhat companions the knack of sustained Liberation; but the modern would-be follower of the Buddha has a herculean task finding his way through the jungle trees of Buddhist literature before he sees the light.

One can lose oneself for years in such a forest. Fortunate indeed is he who meets with the Guru who teaches him the priceless enquiry "Who am I?".

SERVICE

Translated by PROF. K. SWAMINATHAN

*From the SANNIDHI MURAI (Tamil) of Muruganar **

Your Grace it was I stumbled to your feet,
 Your love that raised me up and made me yours,
 Chosen to serve, though not for service meet,
 Untutored save by Grace that from you pours.
 I too have seen all creatures live and move
 Not of themselves but Self, all living prove
 That I am nothing and can nothing do;
 So all my duties I have cast on you.

* For an introduction to whom see our issue of October 1964, p. 244.

THE FOCAL POINT

By WEI WU WEI

We mistake the functional centre of the phenomenal aspect of our noumenality for a "self". It has no more autonomy than a heart, a physical organ, no more volitional potentialities, and no more self-consciousness; yet we attribute to it the sentience which represents what noumenally we are.

A psyche-soma, phenomenal as it is, must have a functional centre, without which it could not be what is seen as a "sentient being". Such centre must be psychic, just as the heart is somatic. The five senses, interpreted by the sixth, depend on this centre for their manifestation as perception and cognition; all functioning, instinctive or rational, is directed therefrom, and it is logical, therefore, that this centre should be considered as the subjective element of the objectivised phenomenon. So, phenomenally, it appears, but itself this "subject" is an object, so that never could it be what we are, but only a part of the phenomenal set-up of the discriminated and separate phenomenon which we think that we are. Never could it be autonomous, never could it exercise volition, never could it be what we conceive as "us".

Moreover our sentience is essentially noumenal, and we are mistaking the switch-board for the power-station, the reservoir for the source, an electronic computer for a mind: *the functional centre of a sentient being is purely cybernetic.*

The identification which gives rise to a supposed "entity" that then and thereby thinks that it is in bondage, is identification of what noumenally we are, of our natural noumenality, with the functional "organ" in the psyche-soma which becomes thereby a supposed "self" or "ego" with relative, if not

full, autonomy and volition. We do not even care to remember that only a small fraction of our physical movements, of our organic functioning responds in any way to the initiatives of our personalised wishes.

How does this situation arise? It arises as a result of the splitting of mind, called "dualism," whereby the phenomenal aspect of noumenality—that is pure impersonal phenomenality—divides into negative and positive, and there appear "objects" which require a "subject," and "others" require a "self", each totally dependent on its counterpart for its apparent existence.

But mind, though apparently split in the process of phenomenalisation, remains whole as noumenon, and only in the becoming apparent, or in order to become apparent, is it obliged to divide into an apparent see-er and an apparent seen, a cogniser and a thing cognised, which nevertheless can never be different, never two, for though in appearing it divides yet in its substratum it remains whole.

All phenomenality, therefore, is objective, that is appearance in mind, and its appearance is dependent on its division into a see-er or cogniser and what is seen or cognised, that is which becomes apparent to an observer whose existence is only apparent in order that appearance may appear. It follows that in all this phenomenality there is no "ens" anywhere, for neither the apparent cogniser nor the apparently cognised is an entity in its own right, i.e. having a nature of its own, autonomy or volition.

It follows also that the substratum of "sentience" whereby all this manifestation is cognised, called *prajñā* in Sanskrit, is an immediate expression of noumenality. Utterly impersonal, as devoid of "ens" as are phe-

nomena, "it" is nevertheless, and "it" must necessarily be, what we are, and *all that we are*. In conceptualising "it" as *prajñā*, "it" is conceptualising "itself", via the familiar dualistic process of splitting into conceptualiser and concept or cogniser and cognised, so that in seeking for what we are—that for which we are seeking is the seeker: the seeker is the sought and the sought is the seeker, and that—as Padma Sambhava told us in plain words — *is* what we are.

There is no entity involved anywhere, and space-time is only a conceptual framework which accompanies events in order that events may have the necessary extension whereby they may appear to occur.

Objectively there is total negation, for the Negative Way alone abolishes the factuality of all phenomena and the existence of entity as such, but if a positive representation is to be attempted these are the elements out of which the image seems to be composed.

THAT WHICH IS

By G. L. N.

Atma cannot be perceived by the mind or expressed in words. The intellect, which is an instrument of Atma, can never be it. That would be like saying, as Bhagavan put it, that the cinema screen is in the picture. Sri Bhagavan, an embodiment of that very Atma, has made understanding easy.

The title 'Forty Verses on Reality' chosen by Sri Bhagavan is itself instructive. The terms Being, Consciousness, Bliss connote aspects of That Which Is. After peeling off super-imposed layers, what remains is Brahman, and that is Reality.

Is there also non-existence? Bhagavan said no. "It is not a void." (*Forty Verses on Reality*, v. 12). No one denies his own existence. Every one says 'I am.' Since we see the world also, we must conceive of unitary being with the power of becoming many.

Sleep also cannot be a void. It is a state where the world is absent but the experimenter of it is present. If he were not, he could not recollect having slept. Reality cannot become void, nor can void become reality or create existence.

Existence alone exists. Pure existence is the essence of every existent being and is eternal, since there is no non-existence. It never ceases to exist. The same being continues in all the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

What is existence? There is no other knowledge to know it, because in order to know the knower must first exist. "Can there be knowledge other than existent being?" (*Forty Verses*, 1st invocatory verse). Therefore existent being or Reality alone is knowledge. (See also *Upadesa Sara* or *Thirty Verses*, v. 23).

That which exists as Knowledge is One without a second, for if there were two or more Infinities each would exclude the others. Knowledge is the one subject on which the concept of others depends. So basic existence is only One and that One is Knowledge or Consciousness and there is no other.

What is this being which is Consciousness? What can it be but the one who asks? The questioner says 'I' or 'my self.' Who is this 'I' or 'Self'? Are there a number of selves or is there only one?

By 'I' every one means his self. Every one refers to himself as a single entity, and the experience of every one is of himself as one. Before the word 'I' is uttered there is silence. The sound 'I' emanates from this silent source. Every individual is in this pristine state of silence until he enunciates the word 'I'. This Silence is One. All are One in Silence. The uttered individual selves of all are one Self, so pure Consciousness is Self, the Self of all.

A WORLD-SANCTIFYING RELIGION

By ABDULLAH QUTBUDDIN

In 'Buddhism and Christianity in the Light of Hinduism' Arthur Osborne points out a very important alternative in the attitude of religion to the world: it can either regard the world as hostile and renounce it, or it can regard it as a book of symbols flung abroad by God, manifesting His power and beauty, and seek to harmonize and sanctify it. The former is the attitude of Buddhism and Christianity as enunciated by their founders; the latter is that of Judaism and Islam.

Christ told the rich young man to give his property away to the poor and become a wandering mendicant. His followers were to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's", to pay taxes to an alien, irreligious government and obey its laws. He disappointed the Jews by refusing to lead a revolt against this alien government. His kingdom, he declared, was not of this world. As in every world-renouncing religion, celibacy was prized above marriage. St. Paul sanctioned marriage only as a concession to human weakness. It was much the same in Buddhism. Buddha did not endorse the caste system, but neither did he denounce it. Whole-hearted seekers would in any case renounce the world, of which caste was a part, to become monks and celibates, so what did it matter?

The Qur'an, on the other hand, is full of references to the earth and the marvels of it, to mountains and seas, the sun and rain, day and night, beasts and birds, as God's creation and as signs for those who can understand. Nothing of His mercies is to be rejected. Neither monasticism nor celibacy is acceptable. The whole of God's creation is to be accepted, understood, enjoyed, but with purity, without egoism; and thus it will also be sanctified.

Therefore Islam had, from the start, far more need for social, legal and political organization than Christianity or Buddhism. If the

world is to be renounced in any case, why trouble to organize it? Let Caesar do that and pay him his dues, but leave the men of God free to follow their path of renunciation and seek the kingdom which is not of this world. Such could not be the attitude of Islam. Since the world was to be accepted and sanctified, all its relationships must be regulated; and this necessitated a network of civil and criminal law governing domestic, economic, professional and other departments of life.

The word 'Muslim' can be used in two senses. In one sense it can signify any one in any religion who submits to God, as, for instance, Abraham, who lived long before Mohammad, is referred to in the Qur'an as a Muslim. In this sense it would correspond in Hindu terminology to 'bhakta', one who follows the path of devotion and submission. Normally, however, it is used in the more technical sense of one who accepts and follows the specific religion established by Mohammad with all its religious, moral, social and legal obligations. In this sense it is a complete fusion of bhakti marga and karma marga.

This explains why the early Islamic Empire was so largely due to conquest, why in fact the Prophet and his immediate successors felt the need to challenge and conquer their neighbours. It was not simply a question of intolerance—no one could outdo the early Christians in intolerance once they had the power to persecute—the persecution of the Monophysites and other heretics among them, Charlemagne's slaughter of the pagan Saxons, etc. But Christians, having at first no framework of karma marga to their religion, could quietly infiltrate a pagan world, paying their dues to Caesar and regarding their religion as something private between themselves and God. Muslims could not. In order to live an Islamic life as prescribed for them in their Holy

Book, it was necessary to belong to an Islamic community governed by Islamic law ; and for this they had to be the rulers. They might tolerate non-Muslims within the community (and they did more often than the Christians, though a good deal less than their modern apologists are apt to imply) but the community had to be shaped by Islamic law and tradition administered by Muslim rulers and jurists.

This is important to-day because it accounts for the dilemma with which Muslims are faced in the modern world. It explains why almost every modern book on Islam devotes so much space to the question of adaptation to modernism, while books on Buddhism and Christianity pass lightly over the subject or find it unnecessary to raise it. The modern world is no more alien or hostile to religion than was the Roman government of Palestine in the time of Christ. Christians, renouncing the unsuccessful Mediaeval attempt to create a Christian social order and make Christianity a world-sanctifying religion, can therefore revert to the attitude of Christ's day, rendering unto Caesar the outer organization of life and making their religion a private and personal matter. So can Buddhists. But not Muslims.

A Muslim who honestly believes that the modern organization of social and economic life is superior to the Islamic and that an Islamic state could and should adopt some Western code of law in place of the shari'at has in effect ceased to be a Muslim, just as a Communist who really prefers the capitalist organization of society has ceased to be a Communist. A Muslim marooned in a modern community, like a Communist in a capitalist society, may have to put up with a social order that he disapproves of, but only reluctantly and with the intention of overthrowing it if it ever becomes possible. Until and unless he does so he cannot lead a fully Islamic life.

If that is the position of the individual Muslim, what of the Islamic state buffeted by the

economic and cultural winds of modernism—an economic system based on the payment of interest, a non-religious educational system, a democratic political system, basing law on the will of the people, not the word of God, a social system based on equality of the sexes? I do not claim to be able to provide a quick or easy answer to a question that is agitating all Islamic governments and writers to-day, but I do insist that it is not a question of detail, of how many concessions have to be made and what sort, but of principle : whether the Islamic order of life is still held by Muslims to be the best attainable, indeed whether it is still at all viable. If not then the position should be boldly faced and it should be admitted openly that that particular amalgam of bhakti marga and karma marga which was instituted by the Prophet Mohammad has served its purpose and no longer meets the needs of mankind. The answer cannot be a compromise because Islam is based on the Qur'an as firmly as Christianity is on Christ, and the Qur'an expressly denounces those who accept some parts of it and reject others. For those who accept it, it pronounces on questions of law and social behaviour as well as of faith and worship. It lays down, for instance, the procedure for divorce. It says at what age a child shall be weaned. It prescribes cutting off the hand as the punishment for theft. It forbids taking interest on loans. And it insists that it is to be accepted as a whole.

It is still possible to be a Muslim in the vaguer sense of pure bhakti marga, of one who submits to the Divine Will ; it is still possible to follow a spiritual path, however uncongenial outer conditions may be ; but is it still possible either for an individual or a state to follow the Islamic way of life, sincerely believing it to be the best possible and championing it as such? This is the question with which Muslims are to-day faced. It can be answered with a 'yes' or a 'no', but it should not be evaded.

ONLY ONE SELF

By NAGAMMA¹

11th. Sept., 1947.

Yesterday a Swami came and sat in the hall. He seemed anxious to speak to Bhagavan but hesitant. After some time he approached him and said: "Swami, it is said that Atma is all-pervading. Does that mean that it is in a dead body also?"

"Oho! So that is what you want to know?" Bhagavan rejoined. "And did the question occur to the dead body or to you?"

"To me," he said.

"When you are asleep do you question whether you exist or not?" Bhagavan continued. "It is only after you wake up that you say you exist. In the dream-state also Atma exists. Really there is no such thing as a dead or living body. What does not move we call dead, and what has movement we call living. In dreams you see any number of bodies, living and dead, but they have no existence when you wake up. In the same way this whole world, animate and inanimate, is non-existent. Death means the dissolution of the ego and rebirth, the birth of the ego. There are births and deaths, but they are of the ego, not of you. You exist whether the sense of ego is there or not. You are its source but are not that sense. Mukti (Liberation) means finding the origin of these births and deaths and destroying the very roots of the ego-sense. That is Mukti. It means dying with full awareness. If one dies thus one is

born again immediately at the same place with full knowledge of the Self, known as 'Aham Aham' (I-I). One who is born thus has no more doubts.

A young European who came here four or five days back asked Bhagavan a number of questions after the chanting of the Vedas yesterday evening. He had already packed to leave. Bhagavan, as usual, countered with the questions: "Who are you? Who is asking questions?"

Finally the young man asked Bhagavan which verse of the Gita he liked most, and Bhagavan replied that he liked them all. When he still persisted in asking which was the most important, Bhagavan told him Book X, verse 20, which runs: "I am the Self, Oh Gudakesha, seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning and the middle and the end of all beings."

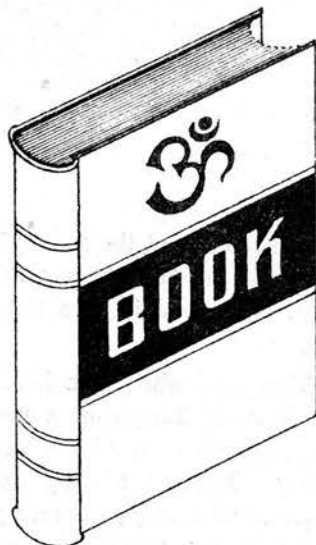
The questioner was pleased and, on taking leave said: "Swami, this unreal self is obliged to travel owing to the exigencies of work. I pray that you may be pleased to recommend that this unreal self may be merged in the real Self."

Smiling, Bhagavan replied: "Such a recommendation might be necessary only if there were a number of different selves—one to ask for a recommendation, one to recommend and one to hear the recommendation. But there are not so many selves. There is only one Self. Everything is in the one Self, so who am I to address and who would listen?"

¹ For a note on Nagamma and her letters see our issue of January 1964.

That which is self is other : that which is other is self,
And this which I am is neither self nor other.

— WEI WU WEI.



REVIEWS

KRISHNAVATARA. Vol. I, The Magic Flute, pp. 242, price Rs. 10, and Vol. II, The Wrath of an Emperor, pp. 435, price Rs. 15. (Both volumes published by Bhavan's Book University, Chowpatty, Bombay-7.)

Indologists have disputed the date and even the existence of Krishna, and particularly the identity of the Krishna of the *itihasas* with the enunciator of the doctrine of the *Bhagavad Gita*. K. M. Munshi has taken up the stupendous task of vindicating that identity in a fictional biography closely based on the records, of which the first two volumes have already appeared. In general he gives a naturalistic interpretation to the miraculous exploits, showing how they could well have won a supernatural repute even in Krishna's lifetime. He does, however, credit Krishna with the very rarely used power of spiritual healing. The escapades with the Gopis are assigned to boyhood, an actual love affair being envisaged only with Radha just before Krishna leaves his idyllic home at Brindavan to meet his destiny at the royal court of Mathura by challenging the tyrant Kamsa.

Rare literary ability is required to depict a saintly hero without making him either goody-goody or inhuman. K. M. Munshi has already evinced this ability in 'Bhagawan Parashuram', his previous fic-

tional biography of the Sixth Avatara; he now shows no less skill in reconstructing the life of the Eighth. Gracious and widely loved, although with many bitter and jealous enemies, Krishna is shown above all as the inflexible champion of dharma, prepared at any moment to stake his life on its defence and on the destruction of *adharma*. Nevertheless, this is still not the Krishna who could say: "I am the origin of the whole universe and that into which it dissolves,"¹ or "Even those who worship other gods and have faith really worship Me, though they do not know it."²

The world of the ancient Aryans is well depicted. It is not romanticised. We are shown a rough, violent world with plenty of ambition and jealousy in it, plenty of *adharma*; but through it all runs the belief in dharma and the desire to see it vindicated. One can feel that Dr. Munshi writes from his heart, and indeed no one has done more than him in this modern age of *adharma* to champion the pure values of Hindu dharma.

SERMONS IN STORMS. By Krishnanand. (pp. 186, obtainable free on request from the author at Shanti Ashram, Bhadran, via Anand, Gujerat.)

There can be few words on a title-page which so discourage readers as 'sermons'. Swami Krishnanand has unnecessarily handicapped his book in this way, since it is not sermons at all but a collection of varied and colourful episodes met with during his wanderings about India. Depicting noble souls and corrupt, compassionate and brutal, they are enlivened by shrewd observation and a vivid sense of humour. With remarkable impersonality the

CORRECTION

In our October issue the name of R. F. Rose was put by mistake after the review of 'Last Days of the Buddha' whereas it should have been put after 'Mysticism in World Religion' since that also was by him.

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, VII. 6.

² *Ibid.*, IX, 23.

Swami can tell a tale against himself—for instance how, as a young sadhu, he went to spend the night reciting his mantra in a cave, but on finding that it contained a python was so terrified that he could neither concentrate on his mantra nor rise and flee. Or again when he was offered a sweet by a leper and (as most of us would do) declined it until the leper quoted to him a Sanskrit text meaning: "You have not yet overcome the fear of infection; how then can you make any progress on the path?"

The book contains fascinating sidelights on Indian life and religion and makes lively reading.

MIRACLES DO STILL HAPPEN: By Dilip Kumar Roy. (Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona-5, and Popular Book Depot, Bombay-7, pp. 404, Price Rs. 9.50.)

In fictional guise Dilip Kumar Roy represents himself and his foremost disciple Indira Devi in America vindicating the miraculous to an American girl who, though not actually sceptical, is doubtful. His style is emotional, sensitive, discursive, allowing of unlimited discussion. He describes the power of Divine Grace breaking through the hard shell of rationalism and sometimes breaching the physical moulds in a way that can only be called miraculous. Despite the mask of fiction he guarantees that none of the episodes he thus narrates are fictional; all are based on what he or reliable friends of his have witnessed or experienced. However it is not supernatural events in themselves that interest him; he definitely distinguishes between the spiritual and the occult, rejecting the latter. His real theme is the outpouring of Divine Grace with or without physical manifestations. He shows how much more potent this is than any argument in washing away scepticism.

EXPERIENCES OF A PILGRIM SOUL: By Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati. (Yoga Samaj, pp. 474, Rs. 5.50.)

Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati's autobiography is largely concerned with the saints and yogis he has met. He seems to have been very fortunate in this respect, beginning with the saintly uncle who confirmed his inclination to renunciation when he was still a schoolboy. He seems also to have been uncommonly impressionable. When he was a young man some missionary friends and employers almost persuaded him to choose Christianity. Then, meeting with Sufis, he followed an Islamic path for some time. After this the influence of Tilak, Gandhi and others made a nationalist of him. Then he came to Tiruvannamalai and felt the power and bliss that flowed from the Maharshi. That did not prevent him, however, from going on to Pondicherry where he fell under the spell of Sri Aurobindo and the

Mother. Here he settled down and stayed for 25 years, maintaining silence but writing many books.

He left and became vocal in 1950, shortly before the death of Sri Aurobindo. Now began a triumphal phase when he felt that he had achieved what he had been seeking. He visited various ashrams and was received with honour, especially at that of Swami Sivananda at Rishikesh. Then he made himself an apostle of Meher Baba and was accepted as such. He made triumphal tours throughout India and in other countries of the world, addressing many public meetings. Returning to India, he founded the Yoga Samaj in Madras and became the editor of 'The Call Divine'.

ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA, A Biographical Sketch: By Bhikshu Sangharakshita. (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Pp. 98, Price not stated.)

The life of Anagarika Dharmapala, now appearing in its fourth edition, is a study of a missionary by a missionary. Its hero certainly lived a strenuous and dedicated life, but one wonders whether the author has ever asked himself how much of the appreciation shown for him would be merited also by the Christian missionaries he so detests, or how many of the strictures he passes on them might apply also to his hero. On one thing at least both categories of missionary agree: that is in deprecating Hinduism and indeed all creeds but their own.

ARTHUR OSBORNE.

THE GULISTAN OR ROSE-GARDEN OF SA'DI:

Translated by Edward Rehatsek. Edited with a Preface by W. G. Archer, Introduction by G. M. Wickens. (Allen and Unwin, Pp. 265, Price 42 s.)

Sa'di's Gulistan is one of those rare books which, like Chaucer's Prologue, hold up a mirror to the times. Its brief stories and anecdotes bring vividly before us the urbane world of 13th Century Persia, with its culture and vices and the unpredictability of kingly rule. They remain delightful in this translation, although the fragments of verse that must have given them point and sparkle in the original are here barely distinguishable from prose.

Sa'di is a humanist. His voice throughout is for upright but prudent living. However it is revealing to see that certain vices are so prevalent in his world as scarcely to be considered such by him. For instance, though alcohol is forbidden in the Qur'an, he describes drunkenness as a normal event, without censure. And, as in Ancient Greece, homosexual love affairs seem to be taken for granted and considered too normal to need an apology.

A. QUTBUDDIN.

Ananda Mayi Ma

MOTHER AS REVEALED TO ME, translated from the Bengali *Matri Darshan* of Bhaiji, Pp. 230, Price Rs. 4.)

MATRI VANI, A Selection from the Sayings of Sri Ananda Mayi Ma, recorded by Gurupriya Debi, Pp. 167, Price Rs. 1.50.

WORDS OF SRI ANANDA MAYI MA, Translated and compiled by Atmananda, Pp. 242, Price Rs. 5.)

The late Jyotish Chandra Ray, familiarly known as 'Bhaiji' was one of the earliest devotees of the woman saint Ananda Mayi Ma who is now famous throughout India and has many followers in the West also. He 'discovered' or recognized her as a young woman living in Dacca and proclaimed her Ananda Mayi Ma, 'The Joy-Permeated Mother', an incarnation of the Divine Shakti. As he himself says in his fascinating introductory chapter, it is not a biography that he has written but only some account of his direct experience of the Mother's unique being and marvellous powers. Even so it contains an interesting narration of her early years—married at the age of about twelve to a noble Brahmin youth who later became a sannyasin and her disciple. It describes various strange phenomena and powers that manifested in her life from an early age, her rather unusual states of samadhi and the symbolical playful roles she enacted.

There are stories also of miracles occurring around her: among them his own vision of "a dazzling flood of heavenly light shining forth from her face" on several occasions. She also appeared to him in her subtle body when he was living at a distance. There are cases of people receiving initiation from her in the dream-state; many cases also of people receiving relief from sickness or in their professional life or other ways.

All who have been fortunate enough to see Ma Ananda Mayi would whole-heartedly echo the account of her "genial and sweet appearance, her uncommon patience and endurance, her spirit of sacrifice and

simplicity, her ever joyful, humorous ways of dealing with men, women and children, her love for all men irrespective of caste, creed, community and nationality, her absolute freedom from pleasure, pain and the like; . . . no conflict in her, no urge to action or inaction disturbs the serenity of her will. . . she is completely steeped in the light of the Supreme. . ."

The author also mentions the Mother's insistence on purity of heart and mind and her teaching of concentration and one-pointed aspiration to find the One Universal Being. He quotes her saying: "Life and religion are one. . . In all human activities let there be a live contact with the Divine and you will not have to leave off anything. Your work will then be done well and you will be on the right track to find the Master."

Unfortunately the author died many years back and the book has not been brought up to date. That is a task that some other devotee of the Mother should undertake.

Ma does not give discourses, nor does she belong to the category of learned scholars or philosophers; in fact she is almost uneducated. However, the other two books under review give an account of her teachings culled from occasional utterances and answers to questions. *Matri Vani* is a selection from her sayings made by that old and respected

devotee Sri Gurupriya Debi. *Words of Sri Ananda Mayi Ma* is a selection from the diaries meticulously maintained by Brahmachari Kamal Bhattacharji, another dedicated disciple. Both have been translated from the Bengali by Atmananda, an Austrian lady devotee.

The following are characteristic examples of her teaching:—

By doing service heart and mind are purified. Doing work for its own sake is karma yoga. As long as a desire to distinguish oneself is lurking it is karma bhoga.

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

Company of saints, sages and seekers after truth is incumbent on man. Association of this kind will help to awaken his interest in the Real.



It is necessary to try to dedicate to the Supreme every single action of one's daily life.

Silent incantation should be engaged in at all times. One should not waste breath uselessly.

Either melt the sense of separation by devotion or burn it by knowledge (jnana). For what is it that melts or burns? Only that which by its nature can be melted or burnt: namely the idea that something other than your Self exists. What will happen then? You come to know your Self.

By virtue of the Guru's power everything becomes possible.

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

So long as one remains enslaved by time there will be birth and death... In reality there is nothing but the One Moment all along.

The above extracts from Ma's teachings amply reveal the greatness and universality of her spiritual being. Though outwardly her followers are mainly seen engaged in devotional rites and rituals, followers of jnana marga will find true Jnana there. It is the experience of aspirants of all paths that her grace is freely given to all alike. Above all, the purity, love and joy radiating out from her make her one whose very presence among mankind is purifying.

How much she has essentially in common with Bhagavan, his devotees can observe. In fact, "The Sat-Guru is One" as he said once to the humble writer of these lines.

MADAN MOHAN VARMA.

HINDU POLYTHEISM: By Alain Danielou.
(Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. Pp. 537,
Price 60 s.)

Hindu Polytheism is a magnificent work remarkable both for the matter and the manner of approach to the subject. M. Danielou brings to bear on this much-misunderstood subject a rare understanding and soul-perception that take both the writer and the reader straight into the heart of the Hindu Pantheon. He begins on the right note: to the Hindu, "The whole of Nature is but a symbol of a higher reality". All life is the projection of the Reality that is Divine and there is a close relation between the several aspects of the Reality in manifestation, on its own level, and the corresponding aspects of the creation put forth. The ancients conceived and experienced the Divine in its different formulations for purposes of manifestation, the Gods who are not only cosmic functionaries but also active powers in the individual life-scheme of man. The author of this book gives the background of this family of Gods, drawing upon the Vedas, the Upanishads and

other old texts; he then proceeds to deal with the significance, details of form, characteristic paraphernalia etc., of each major God, e.g., Vishnu, Shiva, Brahma, etc. A separate section is devoted to the institution of Shakti worship and a very satisfying account is given of the Ten Maha Vidyas. The writer has taken great pains to authenticate every detail he has mentioned, though one would wish more discrimination had been exercised in the selection of material, especially from contemporary writers.

M. Danielou is keenly aware of the deeper truth of spiritual and psychological significance that runs through the whole system of Indian Religion in its various lines of expression. For instance, his explanation of the Mantra and the Yantra: "Name and form are for man the two essential aspects of manifestation, form being the direct expression of an idea in the Creator's mind and name the parallel process of the manifestation of the same idea through the human mind... The basic energies of the universe, which are the deities, can be approached through a mental creative process, that is, through words or through the perception of created forms. Deities are therefore represented in terms of both words and forms. In these two fields there are different degrees of abstraction. We can represent a deity through the description of its characteristics, its picture in words, or through symbolic elements of sound, that is, thought-form (*mantra*) or magic words, which correspond to its nature, though they may seem to us otherwise meaningless. Similarly we can picture a deity in an image portraying a number of symbolic attributes, or we can represent it through a diagram, a geometrical abstraction. These abstract or magic diagrams are known as *yantras*." (332). Also, "Mantras and yantras are therefore the abstract symbols, *mudra* (gesture) and *svara* (musical notes) are the subtle representations, and image and myth are the gross representations of the principles known as deities." (333). The author is at his best in the sections on Mantra, Yantra and Rituals. His exposition is rational to the core and one breathes in these pages the fresh air of the Spirit. His remarks on the principles underlying the Forms of Images, *murtis*, are worth noting (p. 364). On the subject of Incarnations he writes: "Among the Hindus the appearances of deities among men are not believed to be primarily historical facts, although they may centre round the story of a particular historical figure. Divine manifestations are the outward expressions of cosmic laws. The very characteristics of divinity are permanence and universality. Whatever divine manifestation may be envisaged it must take place at all times and on all

planes, in every aspect of the physical and the subtle world, in every microcosm as in the macrocosm. In each universe, for each cycle or subcycle, the same 'incarnations' of divinity take place." (p. 365).

The 33 beautiful art-plates of Indian sculpture and the appendix containing the Sanskrit texts quoted in the work add to the value of this publication. This is indeed a superb production worthy of the profound nature of the subject and also of the mature wisdom of the author.

M. P. PANDIT.

SANATANA DHARMA : By Swami Bharati Krishna Tirtha. (Bhavan's Book University, Bombay-7, Pp. 210, Rs. 2.50.)

The late incumbent of the Govardhana Peetha of Puri, who attained Mahasamadhi as recently as 1960, had travelled widely throughout India and abroad. The Honorary General Secretary of the 'World Reconstruction Association' founded by him deposited with the publishers verbatim reports of the discourses he gave during his extensive tours. It is from these that the present book has been edited.

It begins by defining 'Sanatana Dharma' with philological exhaustiveness as the religion founded by the Eternal, the religion which is itself eternal, and the religion which rewards with eternal life all who follow it. But throughout the book the term is used in its current popular sense for the school of Hinduism which is opposed to all reform even in social matters. The Swami is a doughty champion of all things Hindu, including all practices prevalent in Hindu society.

He is also convinced that Arjuna conquered Mexico because among the ancient Mexicans there was reference to an ambidextrous archer (p. 32). Similarly, he finds the name 'Adam' related to the Sanskrit word *adhi*, 'first'. It was Milton who patriotically proclaimed that when the Almighty wanted to impart an idea to mankind He first divulged it to His Englishmen. The Swami's patriotism is no whit inferior: "India holds the same position in the world as the heart does in the body... In shape also both India and the heart are pear-like." (p. 194).

As regards Advaita, of which the Shankaracharyas of various Peethas are the authentic exponents, the Swami expounds it thus: "There is an underlying unity among all these things that are the limbs of the same tree... the universe is so called because it is uni-, that is only one. That is Advaita. That is the monotheism that we have, the monism that we have." (p. 186). Is it?

OUR DUTY : By Swami Chandrasekhara Bharati. (Bhavan's Book University, Bombay-7, Re. 1.) Price 42 s.)

This little book is a compilation from the talks and teachings of the late incumbent of the Sarada Peetha of the Sringeri Advaita Math. In the very first extract the Swami represents religion as 'Sanatana Dharma', the law inherent in the universe, conformity with which naturally makes for spiritual health and violation of which for a state of morbidity. The whole book is a consistent exposition of this attitude. The Dharma is independent of any founder and all codified doctrines are its halting dialects. All spiritual disciplines have the twofold purpose of aiding the aspirant in the progressive purification of his consciousness and of furthering his quest for the Self-subsistent One. He deprecates theorising and discussion. Considering the remoteness of the final realization from our present station, "it is mere waste of precious time and energy to probe into the ultimate Reality which can be realized or to quarrel about the experience of the aspirant who has realized it." (p. 28). What he commends is the practice of the constant presence of a Personal God as an unfailing companion. He urges constant ethical striving as the only convincing evidence of spiritual earnestness.

SUBLIME BIOGRAPHIES, TAMIL MYSTICISM : By Prof. K. R. R. Sastry. (The author, 29, Dwaraka Colony, Madras-4, Pp. 72, Re. 1.)

Prof. Sastry here reproduces in book form the substance of some lectures he delivered at the Besant Memorial Library in Allahabad in 1948. "Because the term 'Mysticism' may drive away readers," he tells us in his Preface, "they are presented as 'Sublime Biographies'."

But why should the term 'Mysticism' drive away readers? Critical intellects of the highest order have been reverent students of mysticism and a vast body of literature has grown up around this mode of consciousness, deemed the highest. On the other hand the complaint may be legitimately made that not only is no definition or description of the mystic state offered but that none can even be inferred from the book.

Many of those mentioned are legendary figures. And a few lines containing such statements as that Agastya's name is mentioned in inscriptions at (sic) Siam and Cambodia or that "Agastya prophesied to Adi Sankara's mother that his (sic) great son would pass away at (sic) 32nd year" do not constitute a sublime biography.

Maharshi Ramana occupies seven pages, the largest number allotted to any mystic in the book, but even this chapter is neither consecutive biography nor coherent exposition.

PROF. K. SUBRAHMANYAM.

PRATYABHIJNAHRDAYAM : Sanskrit Text edited with English Translation and Notes by Jaideva Singh. (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-6, Pp. 170, Price Rs. 10.)

The Saiva system of religion is considered by the editor of this book the most ancient faith in the world, going back to the calcolithic age or even earlier. At present we seem to have only three branches of it : the Saiva Siddhanta of the South, the Vira-Saiva of Deccan-Karnataka and the Saiva cult of Kashmir. Rajanaka Ksemaraja gave a succinct account of the philosophy of this last in his tenth century work *Pratyabhijnahrdyam*. Sri Jaideva Singh has done good work in editing this in a thoroughly up-to-date manner with a learned introduction, translation and notes.

In the introduction he gives an analysis of the twenty sutras forming the basis of the text, thus enabling the reader to grasp the main principles of this system. The notes are exhaustive and give the necessary information without being profuse. They are followed by a glossary of technical terms defining almost every word used in the text. The learned editor has done his work thoroughly.

In a work of this kind one might, however, expect the introduction to give a comparative estimate of the three schools and evaluate their philosophical importance, and this the editor has not done. He has narrowed down the scope of the introduction to a mere exposition and summary of the text.

The Pratyabhijna system teaches the Advaitic doctrine that the jiva (individual soul) is none other than Siva Himself and should be reminded of this and made to recognize it.

No student of Kashmir Saivism should miss studying this book.

The get-up is good and one hopes that when a new edition is called for the serious mistakes listed in the 'Errata' will not find a place in it.

PROF. S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

LAO TZU/TAO TE CHING : Translated by D. C. Lau, edited by E. V. Rieu. (Penguin: Indian Agents, Orient Longmans. Pp. 192. Price 3s. 6d.)

"By doing nothing you keep out of trouble." Such is a characteristic theme of the Lao Tzu book, an anthology, some form of which existed by the

beginning of the third century B.C. at the latest (p. 174). So far as this is its message the Chinese temperament has evidently changed radically. Less remarkable only than the I Ching, the Tao Te Ching has remained the most popular of all the ancient books of China.

Prof. Lau's introduction is nothing if not informative. Sociologically he ascribes great wisdom to the Tao Te Ching. "... in the nature of the universe, it is the submissive that survives and triumphs in the end," he reminds us (pp. 45/6). "Once this intuition is gained, further observation is unnecessary and serves only to confuse." Hence (but with a deeper than sociological meaning) :

"Without stirring abroad
One can know the whole world.
Without looking out of the window
One can see the way of heaven.
The further one goes
The less one knows." (XLVII).

This, of course, refers to Tao as the Way. Consider also XIII : "The reason I have great trouble is that I have a body. When I no longer have a body what trouble have I?"

The sociological interpretation is only the outer side of the Tao Te Ching. Dr. Lau gives us nothing else, nothing identified as mystical or esoteric. Does 'tao' stand for the way as well as the Goal? Insofar as it is the name of the Unnameable, 'Tao' is equivalent to OM. In some passages 'Tao' evidently stands for the Self. It is unfortunate, therefore, that this translation fails to distinguish between 'it' and 'It' (meaning Tao) by spelling the latter with a capital letter.

In addition to this, terms in the Chinese text are sometimes used in two senses, the ordinary and the Taoist. And the student of comparative religion should be warned that this ancient Tao philosophy is very different from the modern so-called 'Taoist religion'. The editor makes no mention of this sad degeneration.

Characteristically the original author(s) lamented (twice, in LXX and LXXIII) that : "My words are very easy to understand and very easy to put into practice, yet no one in the world can understand them or put them into practice."

HEALTH, RADIATION AND HEALING : By M. Ash. (Darton, Longman & Todd, Price 18s.)

The beginning of Dr. Ash's book, dealing with rock and soil radiations, reminded me strongly of the vital force that the Holy Hill of Arunachala emits.

Then he writes (P. 123): "The concept I prefer is that our body is within the mind rather than the mind within the body. According to this concept...the manifestation of mind appears as an energy field arranged in a series of shell-like patterns around the body with which it is associated." This put me in mind of the Hindu doctrine of 'sheaths' to which Prof. K. Subrahmanyam alludes in his article 'Beyond Psychology' in the July 1964 issue of *The Mountain Path*.

"My realization of the power of the mind in healing," states the doctor (p. 128), "came after my experience of the therapeutic value of focusing the eye on the site of injury." Reading this I looked up at the photograph of Bhagavan beside me and thought of the power and beauty of his gaze.

Dr. Ash describes how he treats patients from a distance of many miles by radiating thoughts of benevolence and compassion. He was not always successful, he admits, but his failures were outnumbered by his many successes.

Thus aspects of the ancient wisdom contained in Hindu holy books are being confirmed by modern Western research. Dr. Ash concludes (p. 140): "In my view it is quite wrong to dismiss these healings as miraculous...It is my belief that nothing has occurred...that is not in accordance with natural laws, and that it is our present state of ignorance that prevents us from taking advantage of such laws."

F. ALLEN.

THE APPRENTICE SAINT: By Louise Collis. (Michael Joseph, Pp. 259, Price 30s.)

Margery Kempe was a holy terror. Convinced of divine visitations, she shrieked, roared, sobbed, and collapsed, especially during church services. Encouraged by God in visions, she publicly and constantly proclaimed his approval of her and his curse on her detractors. All levity and lewdness she rebuked. Drawn strongly to holy chastity, she at last persuaded her husband, John Kempe, to agree to it after reluctantly bearing him fourteen children. In her boisterous, colourful 15th Century world she made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Rome; and the company she travelled with tried one device after another to shake her off or at least to bind her to silence during meals. But every time she triumphed and turned up again, preaching, exhorting. Again and again she was arrested and tried for heresy in England (it was the time when the Lollards were considered dangerous), but always she emerged unscathed. A perfect dynamo of a woman. Sincere ecstatic she undoubtedly was, and she had her believers if she had also her detractors.

But, there is no sign of higher or mystic understanding in her visions and harangues.

Illiterate although of a prosperous merchant family, Margery dictated her turbulent memoirs to a priestly scribe in old age. She aspired to enter the hall of fame under the category of saint but succeeded under that of literature. However, after a brief period of fame the book disappeared from view and was recovered only in 1935. The present biography written around it gives a fine picture of 15th Century life and of an extraordinary woman.

Her book is obtainable in the original, but any one tempted to buy it should be warned that the language and spelling are much farther from modern English than in most 14th or 15th Century books, such as Chaucer or the 'Cloud of Unknowing'.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT ACCORDING TO VEDANTA: By Swami Prabhavananda. (Allen and Unwin, Pp. 110, Price 16s.)

In a review of the 'Vedanta Press' edition of this book which appeared in *The Mountain Path* of July 1964 I remarked, that the author did not go very deep into Christ's teaching. The longer version of the book now to hand completely removes this failing. Particularly illuminating is the exposition of the doctrine of the Avatara. Altogether, it is a book that goes far beyond theorising and is luminous with indubitable spiritual understanding.

SAGITTARIUS.

HELMUTH VON GLASENAPP, INTERPRETER OF INDIAN THOUGHT: By Wilfried Noelle, with a preface by Dr. Zakir Hussain. (Max Mueller Bhavan Publications, South Asian Studies, edited by Dr. Heimo Rau, New Delhi, Pp. 108, Price not stated.)

Our congratulations go to the Directors of the Max Mueller Bhavan for placing before the Indian public this outstanding contribution on the life and work of one of the greatest interpreters of India to the western world. Prof. Glasenapp approached the religion, philosophy, literature and art of India with respect and devotion as a seeker of spiritual treasures. As our Vice-President said in his preface, he was a guru to his students, young and old who gathered round him to listen to his lectures at the Universities of Koenigsberg and Tuebingen where he set a great example to his colleagues working in the field of Indian studies. His approach in this connection is unique for to him India, both in her outer life and her inner world, is eternal and immortal. He urged his students to understand this and proceed with their work in this spirit. If there

is a new enthusiasm and interest for Indian studies to-day, among both scholars and the general public we can say without fear that the credit should go to pioneers like Prof. Glasenapp and his esteemed contemporary Prof. Heinrich Zimmer who put their life and soul into the work of interpreting Indian culture and quenching the thirst of those who sought such a source.

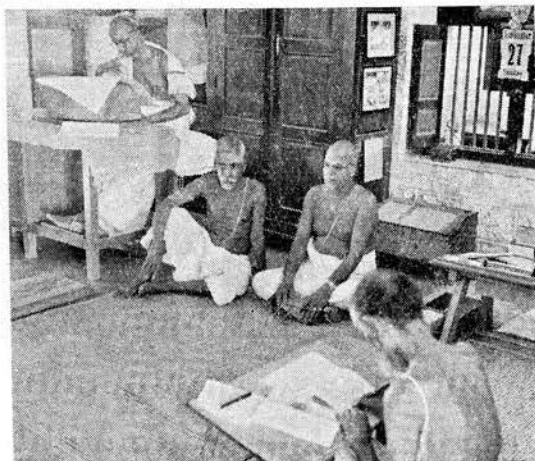
Wilfried Noelle, who had the privilege of sitting at the feet of this great professor, must be congratulated on placing this monograph before the public. We can recommend it to all who are interested to come into contact with efforts made in the western world towards understanding the Indian world in all its perspectives.

DR. V. N. SHARMA.

JOURNAL

KALVATH SHAN (meaning 'Abode of Meditation') is a new quarterly published from Range Estate, Wattala, Hunupitiya, Ceylon, edited by Fuard Uduman, with Dr. Md. Cassim and Upali Samarasekera as associate editors. Its purpose or programme is very similar to that of *The Mountain Path* with the difference, however, that it starts from a mainly Islamic basis. The English is good and the get-up attractive. Particularly pleasing are the quotations from Sufi saints. We extend to it our sincere good wishes. May it prosper and expand.

However, its price is considerably higher—Rs. 4 per single copy, Rs. 15 annually.



This photograph taken by the Polish visitor Florian Staszewski shows how austere is life and work in the Ashram office. It should be said that people do not normally sit in meditation there. They are usually engaged in work or conference.

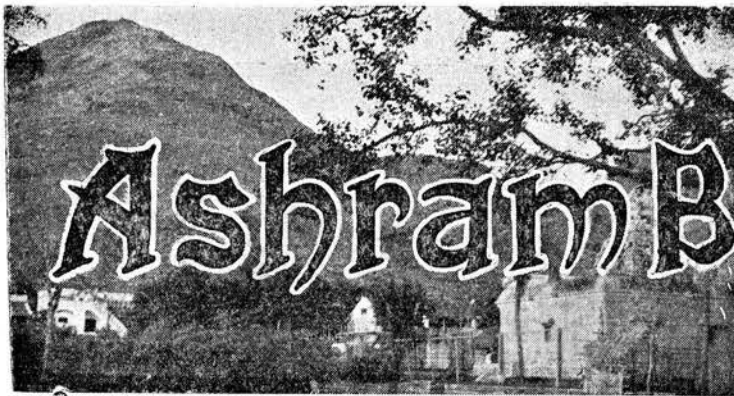
SOUVENIR

The Sai Baba Mission of Coimbatore has brought out an excellent 1964 Souvenir Volume. Many leading Sai bhaktas have contributed articles. A wide catholicity is shown by the inclusion of articles on other Spiritual Masters also and on various aspects of Hinduism. The Souvenir is well illustrated, most impressive being the beautiful and little known photograph of Sai Baba on the cover. It is mostly in English but there is a Tamil section also.

INDIA

By THALIA GAGE

INDIA rises like a fountain
Within me.
From the triangle of Auranachala
It rises in showers of fire
To Mt. Kailas,
Holy and submitted.
Above my being.
India rises like a fountain
Within me,
Feeding my soul.



Ashram Bulletin

ONE YEAR OLD

So high is infant mortality among periodicals that a journal's first anniversary may be said to be its most important. *The Mountain Path* is crossing this difficult milestone with flying colours. Indeed, surprised by its own success, it has found itself under the necessity of reprinting its first two issues, which had sold beyond expectation. In the service of our great Master and by his Grace, we count on a future development as favourable as that already past.

* * *

Bound Copies

We are bringing out bound copies of the four 1964 issues in a single volume. This will be available, postage free. India Rs. 6.00 ; Foreign 12 sh. or \$ 1.80

* * *

Planned Issues

Readers will have observed that each issue of *The Mountain Path* is woven around some central theme—that of last July on the need for effort, of October on jnana and bhakti, of the present issue on karma-marga. Our April issue will be mainly concerned with Tantrism and July with questions of Guidance and Realization.

* * *

Missing Mail

A considerable amount of foreign mail was destroyed in a conflagration in Bombay on Oct. 26th. Any one who wrote to us about that time and has not received an acknowledgment is advised to write again. Also any one who was expecting a communication from us posted about that date and has not received it should inform us.

* * *

NAVARATHRI

The ten-day festival of the Shakti or Divine Energy fell this year on Oct. 6th to 15th. The Shakti is worshipped in three forms, as Kali, the Spouse of Siva and aspect of tamas, Lakshmi, the Spouse of Vishnu and aspect of sattva, and Saraswati, the Spouse of Brahma and aspect of rajas. (Tamas, in this use of the word, is, of course, not



Golden Bull — Karthigai Festival

darkness in the sense of ignorance or denial but in the sense of the Divine Darkness in which all forms are merged). The temple at our Ashram is built over the shrine of Bhagavan's mother. During these ten days the deity is taken out of the shrine and exhibited and is arrayed as each of the three Goddesses in turn, indicating that all three are one.

* * *

KARTHIGAI DEEPAM

The Karthigai ten-day festival was held from Nov. 11 to 19. This is peculiar to Tiruvannamalai and crowds flocked into the town from all around. The gods are taken in procession, each day with different decorations and vahanas, some of them very colourful and picturesque. The festival culminates on the final day, the day of Deepam (Beacon), when at sunset a beacon is lit on the summit of Arunachala. It is a moment of great enthusiasm and rejoicing. An account of its symbolism and mythology is given in the articles on Arunachala by T. K. S. in our issues of April and July 1964.



Huge RATHA (Car) — Karthigai Festival

The beacon is entirely fed by ghee (clarified butter) brought in donation to the Tiruvannamalai Temple authorities who take it up to the summit where a large metal cauldron stands on a flat outcrop of stone. It usually burns two or three days and nights.

This year Nov. 19th was a cloudy, rainy day; nevertheless the clouds were high at sunset and the beacon was clearly visible. Later in the evening many devotees and visitors walked round the hill, most of them barefoot, some in small groups and some silent and alone, some singing Bhagavan's *Marital Garland of Letters* with its refrain *Arunachala-Siva*, of which a translation is published in our issue of Oct. 1964.

PERCEIVING THE PRESENCE

This episode by Ethel Merston is particularly interesting since it shows how a Divine Presence can be translated into two quite different forms by the senses of two simultaneous beholders.

It was the annual day of Saint Arunagirinathar,* August 15, 1964. Bhajan parties were to come from all over the Province in bus-loads to chant at the great Temple of Tiruvannamalai and at Sri Ramanashram.

I, who love good bhajans, was feeling very sad that I could not get to the ashram to hear them and was lamenting the fact to my friend Vasanti who had come from Madras for a few hours' visit a day or so before the event. "Don't worry," she said, "Krishna Iyer, my friend, is the leader of one of the parties and I will ask him to come and chant to you with his group in your room." That seemed too good to be possible.

Yet three days later, in the kindness of their hearts, they came, and up here in my eyrie amongst the tree tops, with the sacred Hill towering in the background, the little group of bhajan singers sang their hymns of praise, Krishna Iyer and others losing themselves in ecstasy.

Suddenly, as the chanting grew in intensity, I became aware of the whole room lit up with a glowing golden light; all was alive, pulsating in golden waves filling every cranny up to the very top of the high-pitched roof. The whole room was transfigured, the whole atmosphere so thrilling that I felt overwhelmed by the goodness of God; and by Him indeed. Soon afterwards the bhajan came to an end. They had been chanting for over an hour. Almost immediately Krishna Iyer said, "Do you

* For mention of which see our *Ashram Bulletin* of October 1964.

know the wonderful thing that happened just now? As we were singing, I saw Bhagavan walk across the terrace and come into the room. Leaning on his stick and rubbing his chin and face with his other hand, he stood there smiling at us all. And then, after a little while, looking at each of us, he turned and walked out across the terrace again and disappeared."

And this was just when I had seen the room illumined and felt that great joy. The room had indeed been blest, and the Bhajan party, too, for their compassion on the sick devotee.

FROM VENEZUELA

Among our many visitors during this period, Shanti Devi (Olga Mago) was notable as being the first from Venezuela. She writes: "Some years ago in Venezuela I read a book in which the author describes an interview with the Maharshi. The description of Bhagavan left a vivid impression on my mind and, wanting to know more about him, I ordered a few books from the Ashram, which I read with great interest.



Olga Mago

At that time the possibility of visiting this Ashram seemed remote. Shortly after an Indian Guru, a Swami, visited Venezuela on a world lecture tour. One day he asked me whether I would like to visit India. Although it did not seem feasible, I replied: 'I think I should', to which he heartily agreed. He gave me much encouragement and suggested that I should visit Sri Ramanashram. Henceforth all obstacles to my trip were removed in a way that seemed truly miraculous. He said: 'The Lord Siva will take care of you.' My hesitation was removed and I undertook the trip with full confidence in the Lord's protection.

I can truly say that my coming to Tiruvannamalai has been one of my best experiences since undertaking my pilgrimage almost two years ago.

There is something unique and hard to express in this holy place, something indefinable and subtle in the atmosphere. In the Old Meditation Hall I have felt Bhagavan's presence. His compassionate glance touches my heart and tears flow involuntarily. While meditating on the Hill the world seems to recede and there is only a deep Peace."



Kitty

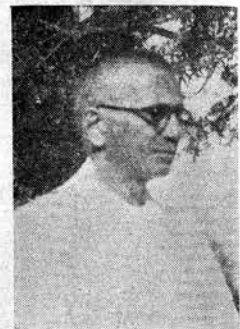
RETURN

Mrs. Douglas, who was brought up here and is known to the older devotees as 'Kitty' came back from England for a brief visit. It made a strong impression on her and she is planning to come for a longer stay next month.

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. K. Shiva Rao first came to Sri Ramanashram in the early thirties. He fell under the spell of Bhagavan and, deciding to devote the rest of his life to sadhana, gave up a thriving and lucrative practice to become the Ashram doctor. He also founded and equipped the Ashram dispensary.

After Bhagavan left the body in 1950, Dr. Shiva Rao went to stay for some time at Anandashram. Later, however, he came back here, where he settled for the rest of his life. He died on October 6th, 1964, at the age of 79 after only a single day's illness.



Dr. Shiva Rao

Dr. Shiva Rao had over seven thousand rupees savings at the time of his death, the whole of which he left as an endowment to the Ashram dispensary.

NOTE ON "IDENTITY"

Each "other" becomes (or is) a "self" to itself, and each "self" becomes (or is) an "other" to another "self". That is what "individuals" are.

— WEI WU WEI.

INTRODUCING . . .

Since this issue is devoted to karma marga, we have chosen two householder devotees to introduce this time.

DR. T. N. KRISHNASWAMI was known in Bhagavan's lifetime as a great bhakta. He was captivated by the resplendent beauty of Bhagavan and



Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami

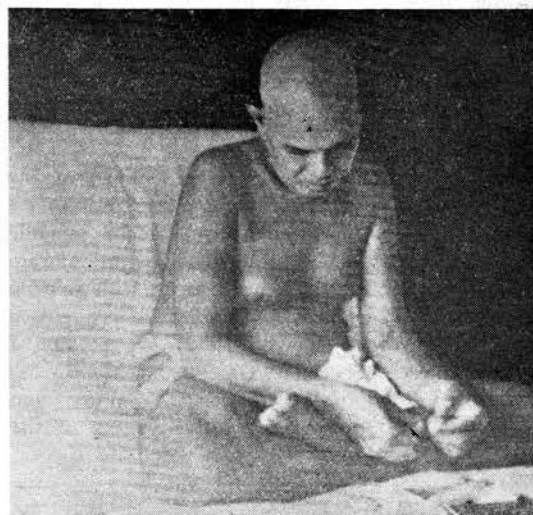
when he left his busy medical practice in Madras to come here for a few days or a few hours he used to bring his camera and take photographs. Indeed it is mainly due to him that the Ashram has a large and varied collection of photos of Bhagavan. In recognition of this the Sarvadhikari appointed him official Ashram photographer. Some of his collection he has had enlarged to life size on canvas and painted over in oils or water colour. One such is the picture shown in our issue of April 1964 that is kept on the couch where Bhagavan used to sit in the Old Hall.

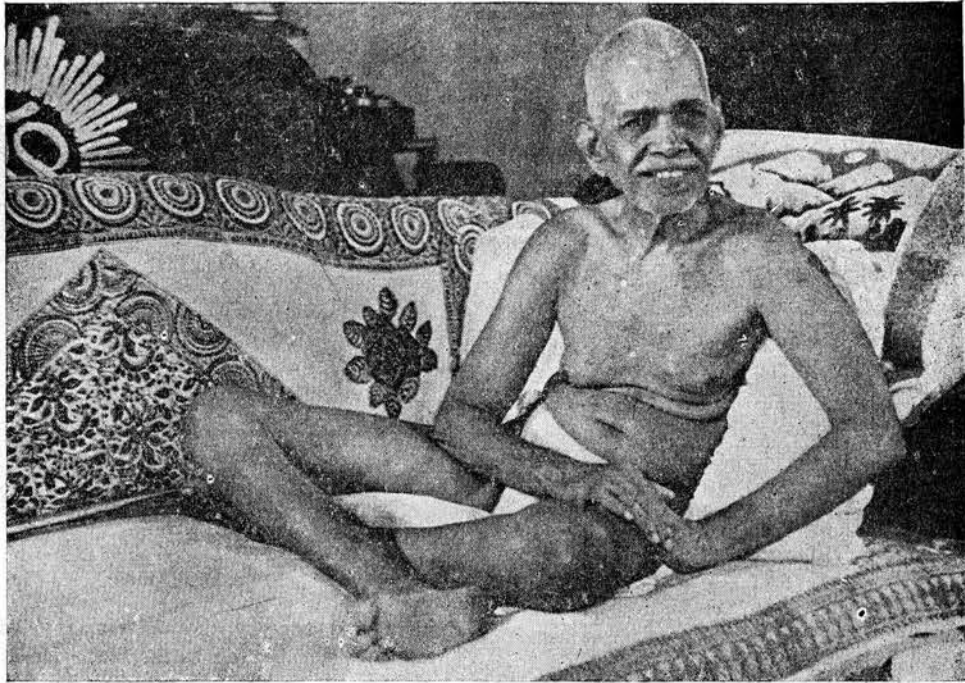
When Bhagavan left the body Dr. Krishnaswami called a meeting of devotees at his house in Madras to pledge continued loyalty to the Ashram and its administration and to offer what help they could in the difficult times ahead. He was a member of the provisional Ashram Committee that was then set up and that continued up to January 1964 when, as mentioned in our Ashram Bulletin of April 1964, it was replaced by a Board of Trustees on a scheme laid down by the Government. According to this, two members were to be nominated by the Ashram



President and two by the Government, with the Ashram President himself as the fifth. Dr. Krishnaswami was one of the two members nominated by the Ashram President.

Bereft of the physical presence of Bhagavan, Dr. Krishnaswami turned seriously to the study of doctrine and amassed wide learning. This was vivified by profound understanding. Indeed, many who had known him only as a bhakta were surprised by the mastery of doctrine shown in his article 'Outside the Scriptures' in our inaugural issue and again by his short note on 'Jnana and Bhakti' in that of October 1964.





MRS. FIROZA TALEYARKHAN is of a prominent Parsi family of Bombay. In the days of British India she moved in the highest society, knowing maharajas and viceroys personally. She had, however, an urge for a more meaningful life and this inclined her to seek out more than one swami and guru. She met Gandhi and was strongly drawn to him and to his work. The real turning point came, however, when she came to Tiruvannamalai. She was completely overwhelmed by Bhagavan. Withdrawing from the society life she had previously led, she built a small house here and settled down. It is a practical illustration of Bhagavan's true catholicity that she never felt any need to change from her Zoroastrian faith to Hinduism and he never urged her to.

Mrs. Taleyarkhan has always been an active and energetic force in Ashram affairs. Especially in the troubled times following Bhagavan's maha samadhi she was a staunch and loyal defender of the Ashram and its President and had much to do with rallying the support of devotees. Those days are passed now, but the President still finds her loyalty a strong support. She, like Dr. Krishnaswami, was a member of the original Ashram Committee, and she is the other one of the two members of the

present Board of Trustees appointed by the Ashram President.



Mrs. Taleyarkhan

It is largely due to her influence that so many Parsis have been drawn to Bhagavan and so many members of the former princely families of India.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Krishnamurthi surely needs no defence from me. I have never met nor heard him. Yet I do think it only fair for you to know that someone understands him quite differently, even to desecrating in his words some self-illuminating gleams.

LE ROY A. BORN,
New York.

* * *

I do want to thank you for your July editorial. Krishnamurti has troubled me for years. By a strange coincidence I was again reading 'First and Last Freedom' when your magazine came. I had always thought I just wasn't intelligent enough—I became so confused.

CLARICE CAVANAGH,
Palm Desert, California.

* * *

I didn't feel that Miss Byles was very open-minded, nor did she seem to put herself in the places where she could learn most. The shouts and sticks of a Zen monastery are alarming only to the most outside of outsiders. The monks and lay disciples know and love their teacher.

GARY SYNDER, San Francisco, California.

* * *

The Mountain Path is splendid. It seems far superior to any similar magazine and is an indication of the depth and degree of spiritual consciousness behind it. I am continuing to tell people about it and trust it flourishes, as well as all your other work.

I appreciated the article on Zen in the July issue. I feel that Zen as it is practised is far from the Spirit.

ANN KUYS, Avon Lakes, Ohio.

* * *

May I say how very glad I am that I have found your publication. It is a source of great interest and joy to pilgrims on the Path, ever searching and seeking that Light which shall bring inner peace and certainty of our eternal destiny.

I appreciate very much the sentiments expressed in the beautiful poem 'The Few' in the January issue. *The Mountain Path* is truly a beacon light to the 'awakened soul'. May it long continue to be an inspiration and help to all who truly seek.

MISS E. OVEREND, Bradford, England.

* * *

Thank you for *The Mountain Path* No. 4, which I have just received. I feel that there is a lot of deep reading and thinking on every page and as usual I will do it slowly to make the pleasure last.

I wonder if we could have more articles like 'The Secrets of Arunachala' and 'The Mythology of Arunachala' by T. K. S.? For me they throw light on many things I have not yet understood.

ARUNA, Paris.

* * *

(To the Managing Editor).... Now let me speak to you about that extraordinary article on Sai Baba. How fascinating it was to learn of the existence of this holy man whose personality and mode of living differed so greatly from Bhágavan's but whose teaching was in essence so close. The quotations from them included in the article had a tremendous impact upon me. "Look at me whole-heartedly and I in turn will look at you whole-heartedly." "Just remember that the Guru's tortoise-like loving glance brings happiness." "Have faith and confidence in your Guru. Believe fully that the Guru is the sole actor or doer." What words could better

describe what actually takes place between Bhagavan and a devotee !

MRS. HAZEL STAFFORD, Paris.

* * *

The greatness of the Chinese saint appealed to me very much. What penance and perseverance and will power ! My little practice of meditation is nowhere compared to him.

Being a Tamilian, I already knew of Arunachala (Annamalai), but how the Maharshi's poem shows its greatness ! Another Tamil poet has written that those who pray to Annamalai will get rid of all their karma.

R. AMURTHANANTHA,
Colombo, Ceylon.

* * *

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Editor and members of the staff as well as all those who contribute towards creating such an interesting magazine. I find the articles very helpful, though some are beyond my capacity to understand as yet.

The photograph of Sri Ramana Maharshi is quite remarkable, giving off a spiritual quality as if his presence was actually with one.*

MRS. ALLAN WYLLIE,
Victoria, B.C., Canada.

* It is—Editor.

* * *

The October number of *The Mountain Path* is extraordinarily good. *The Marital Garland of Letters* is one of the most moving things I have ever read : almost every word finds an echo in my heart. But when I go on to the 'Forty Verses' I begin to ask questions ! Yet I now that there is deep truth in it.

FR. GRIFFITHS,
Kurimala Ashram, Kerala.

* * *

One night I had a dream in which Sri Ramana appeared and showed me what I believe was his radiant Life. He appeared before a screen of brilliant Light. The Light was not stationary, however ; it appeared to pulsate with the very life of Life ! And all that time he was smiling, the smile that has already won so many hearts and will continue to win many more in the days to come. Throughout the dream not a word was said on either side.*

I write this in the hope that others may benefit from it, and also because I would like to know

what others who are more qualified to judge think of it.

THONG YIN YEOW,
Kedah, Malaysia.

All will think that it was a sign of Grace.

— Editor.

* * *

I dreamed that the Maharshi said to me that twenty years ago he might have known something about psychology. The dream lasted no longer than this. It seems to me that the point might have been not to be too concerned with psychological speculation or questions but to concentrate on the real business.

JOHN CAREY,
Napa, California.

A good interpretation—that psychology is something you should have outgrown. Psychology studies the qualities of the ego, whereas Self-enquiry challenges its very existence. As Bhagavan says in 'Who am I?', it would be foolish to examine the rubbish that you sweep up in order to throw away.

— Editor.

* * *

Dilip Kumar Roy's article 'How I came to the Maharshi' made fascinating reading. I was reminded of Somerset Maugham's description of his visit to the Maharshi in his book 'Points of View' published under the caption 'The Saint'. Here, telling us what he felt in the presence of the great saint, he says : "You felt that something strange was taking place that made you inclined to hold your breath." Dilip Kumar Roy, speaking about his feelings in the Maharshi's presence, also uses the word 'strange' when he tells us about "... my heart aheave with a strange exaltation."

B. G. R. KRISHNAMA, Secunderabad.

* * *

"The really sensible thing, therefore," Sagittarius says, "would be to stop writing articles and comparing religions and get down to the practical work of killing it (the ego), no matter by what marga or through what religion." May I add that the really super-sensible thing would be to communicate with others and take them also along with us.

S. GANESAN, Madras.

That is what THE MOUNTAIN PATH is trying to do !

— Editor.

* * *

How I wish you could give us all a good translation of the Bhagavad Gita in serial form in *The Mountain Path* and then publish it when completed. That would be doing two jobs in one, and what a lasting blessing you would confer on a needy world! *

And please can you publish some instructions on using the Buddhist rosary of 108 beads.**

MISS EBBANA GRACE BLANCHARD,
Shrewsbury,

* We are considering taking up serialised translations beginning with the Gita.

** We plan to publish an article on the use and symbolism of the rosary in various religions, probably in April 1966.

—Editor.

Thank you for the excellent first year of *The Mountain Path*. Each of the issues has been better than its predecessor and it has an honoured place in many lives I am sure.

Here in England a few of Bhagavan's devotees have set aside 10 p.m. on Thursday nights to meditate together. We cannot meet in form but space is no obstacle to true meeting and we would welcome any others as yet unknown to join us at that time.

W. J. DALTON, Sale, Cheshire.

An excellent scheme, but let those who join in remember the divergencies of clock time. For instance, 10 p.m. in England means 3-30 next morning in India—Editor.

I felt I must write to thank you all at Sri Ramanashram for the pleasure that the first year's issues of *The Mountain Path* have given me and those to whom I have shown them. Each issue surpasses the last. The copies are worth their weight in gold, especially in the spreading of Bhagavan's teachings.

Do you think that some subscribers would wish to place their names on a list for writing to each other?

RONALD HODGES,
P.O. Box 3492, Nairobi, Kenya.

Any readers who would like their names on such a list please write in and say so. It seems a good idea for people with interest and understanding to be linked up throughout the world—Editor.

I find the magazine by far the most outstanding in its field. I wish to congratulate Mr. Osborne for his superb work as editor: the quality of the articles is most superior; the book reviews are a delight, fair, precise and valuable; the Ashram Bulletin is a very happy feature which brings Sri Ramanashram as a living presence into the home. May Bhagavan continue to bless your efforts.

M. MC BRIDE PANTON,
St. Petersburg, Florida.

We read the October issue of *The Mountain Path* full of appreciation for the understanding and knowledge many of the articles contain and feeling that it opened new doors for us. As soon as we are settled we would like to subscribe to this excellent magazine.

ILSE and GERD LEDERMANN, Rozelle,
N.S.W., Australia.

I would like to receive copies of *The Mountain Path* for life and I enclose a money order for £10. I offer gratitude hourly to the Maharshi for his love, and the news from the Ashram would give me great joy. Since prayers have been offered on my behalf at Arunachala I have received a great deal of love from friends and I am exceedingly grateful.

I offer love and prayers also to the Madonna of the Christian Church and to Jesus with great benefit. I offer prayer to the Madonna and Jesus on behalf of those who seek realization through the grace of the Maharshi... May the blessings of God fall upon all those who offer devotion to the Maharshi, and I send my love to all these people.

PEGGY CREME PILLING, London.

I would just like to congratulate you on the excellence of your magazine *The Mountain Path*. Each number grows better and I have been instrumental in introducing it to several friends who are appreciating it as much as I. The fact that it comes direct from the Ashram carries its own special blessings. Long may it continue.

DORIS GOTT, London.

Thank you very much for the space you allow for questions and your wonderfully helpful answers. This correspondence tends to bring with it a sense of togetherness on what J. Wispelwey describes as the road that can be "lonesome at times"; for indeed many of us would have chosen very diffe-

rent members of our household and quite a different environment, but it is good to be fully convinced that our station is appointed by the wisdom of the Eternal.

Is there an answer as to why the body of Sri Ramana was so sorely afflicted in his illness? 'The Infinite Way' (Joel Goldsmith) teaches that "there is only one reason why healings do not come through: there is a barrier or lack of receptivity." I am puzzled because it seemed as though in Pure Consciousness the cells of the body were glorified (perhaps the state of Yogananda's body is an example) and that a disease could not affect them unless perhaps it is absorbed from another person.

VIROA GUMMER, Auckland, New Zealand.

The suffering of spiritual Masters—Christ, Ramakrishna, Milarepa, as well as Ramana Maharshi—is a difficult question. From one point of view the answer may be that they take on themselves the evil karma of their followers: "He that taketh on himself the sins of the world."

Even apart from that, the attitude of the Maharshi towards sickness is different from that of Joel Goldsmith. It is that birth and death, growth and decay, health and sickness, creation and dissolution are equally phases of the process of nature and it would be illogical to want one phase without the other. The spiritual man accepts what comes, decay no less than growth, sickness no less than health. Therefore he did not encourage his followers to engage in spiritual healing. When asked about his illness he said: "The body itself is a disease." This meant that the entire process of nature, both growth and decay, has to be transcended. This is a more profound and ultimate viewpoint, but the other also is legitimate and can therefore be effective, as many healers and healed have found. This question will be dealt with in a later issue of The Mountain Path. It is enough to ask here whether there was any individual being in the form of the Maharshi who could desire health rather than sickness or want to change the course of nature.—Editor.

"He is enlightened" or "he is not enlightened": What difference could there be? In either case he is still there.

"Emptiness is *not being there* to be empty!

That also is the meaning of "poverty".

—WEI WU WEI.

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