

# The Mountain Path



VOL. 22 No. III JULY 1985

## THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

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

— *The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1

Vol . 22

JULY 1985

No. 3

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Though thou has detached me from the world and made me cleave to Thee, Thy passion for me has not cooled, Oh, Arunachala!

— *The Marital Garland of Letters*  
Verse. 86

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## The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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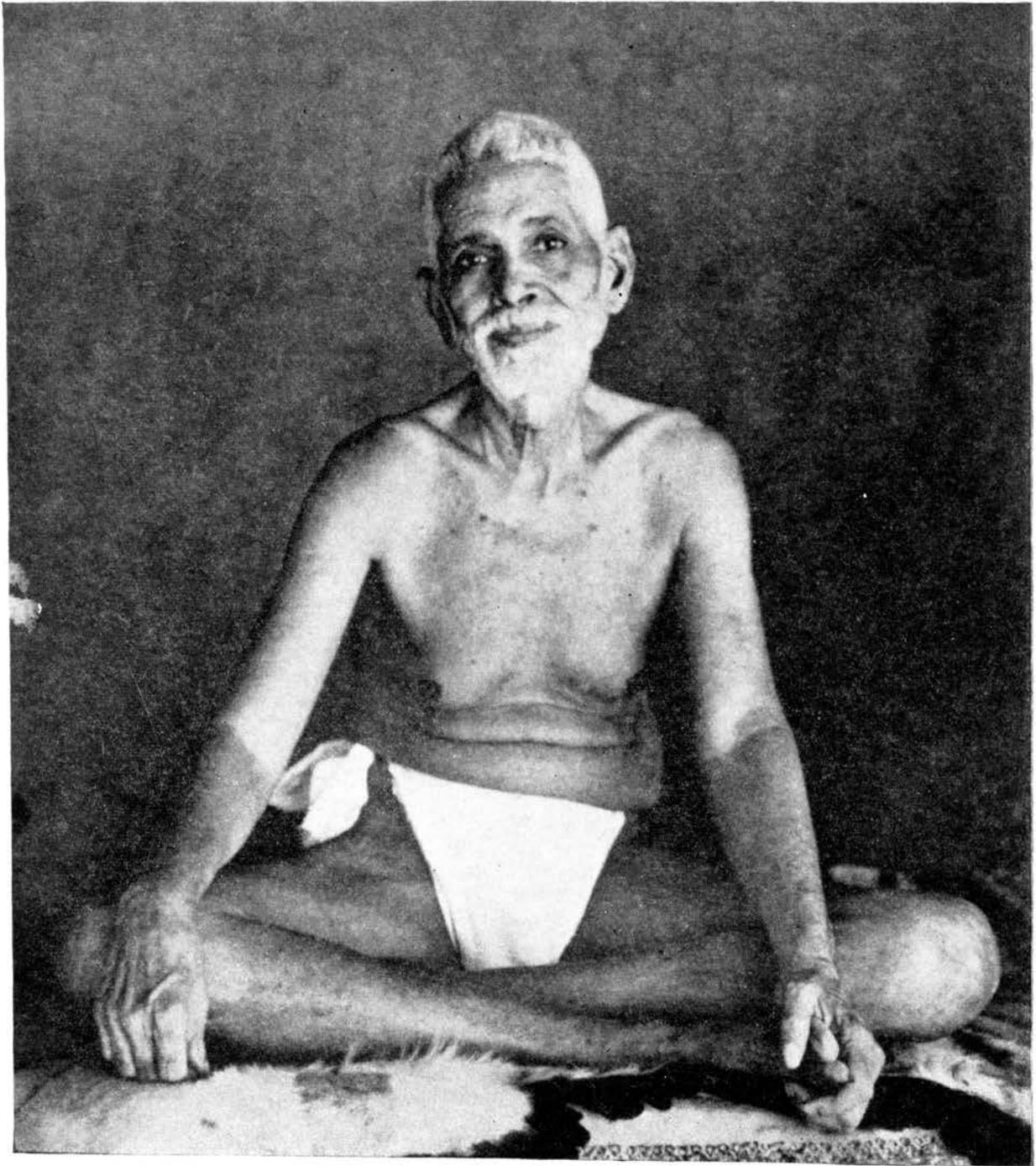
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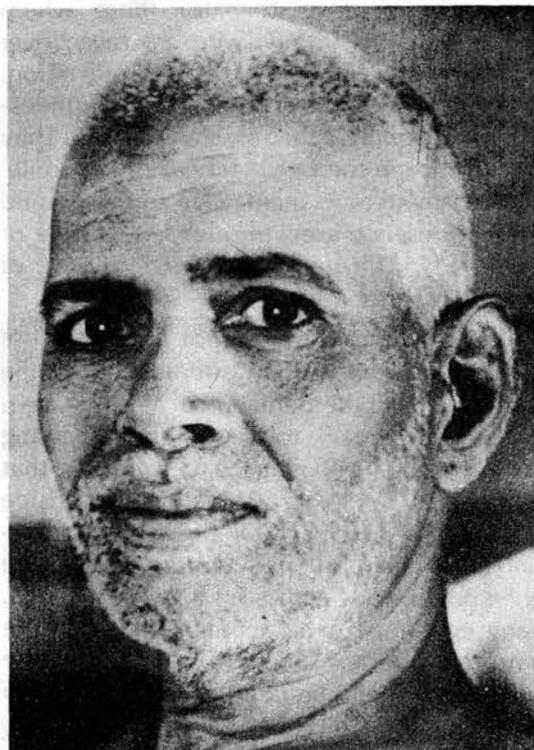
**THE MOUNTAIN PATH**

**is dedicated to**

**Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi**

04





WHY DOES Ramana enter a person's life and how? No one but He knows the answer. The experience of many is testimony for His silent, dew-like entry into a life to redeem it, to make it whole. Things would be made easy for the life giving contact, a friend would provide the fare, money would come from unexpected quarters, bosses would not only permit but even strongly suggest visiting the Maharshi and Sri Ramanasramam.<sup>1</sup> In far off Spain a book, to spark the interest, would be placed in one's hand though the why of it would not be known to the receiver of grace.<sup>2</sup> Years in India would have been wasted with no knowledge of the Master's life or teachings and then suddenly without notice every worthwhile book would come to the person's notice, making them 'the breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner' of the fortunate one.<sup>3</sup> Be it a small village in Netherlands, or a forest hermitage Ramana would step in quietly and claim 'His flock.'<sup>4</sup> Often He would literally give His shoulder, strong enough to hold the burden of the Universe, to a devotee

## THE TIGER'S PREY

EDITORIAL

By

A.R. Natarajan

**The Mountain Path**

Vol. 23, No. 3, July, 1985

in need of the help and solace.<sup>5</sup> Not a single word may be exchanged in months, but 'wonderful grace would be poured in'<sup>6</sup> through the 'incomparable grace of His steady and shining eyes'. Drug addiction would end just by the penetrating look.<sup>7</sup>

Looking at the mysterious ways of Ramana's advent into the lives of His 'marked' people one is reminded of the story of Saint Sundaramurthy, narrated by Ramana to Suri Nagamma.

<sup>1</sup> *Crumbs from His Table* — 4th Edition-P. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *The Mountain Path*-January 1981-P. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ramana Smruti* — Douglas E. Harding.

<sup>4</sup> *The Mountain Path*-January 1982-P. 121.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*-April 1978-P. 114.

<sup>6</sup> —do—

<sup>7</sup> —do— —do— P. 75.

Sundaramurthy was seated before the sacred fire all set for marriage, awaiting his bride. At this twelfth hour, the great God, Siva appeared in the guise of an old brahmin to stop the marriage and claim him as His own. Siva produced the necessary document to prove that the bridegroom was pledged, for ever, to serve Him. Sundaramurthy reviled Siva as a 'madman' only to fall headlong into devoted service when the truth of the relationship was revealed as a relationship which was not bound by time.<sup>8</sup> Hasn't Ramana Himself hinted to Chadwick that the Guru and the disciple are bound together, always, cutting through time-barriers?<sup>9</sup> Once Ramana enters a life, 'the burning sand' of the worldly life would be carpeted 'laden thick with fragrant flowers' and a 'strange gladness would fill the journey homeward', to the Heart.<sup>10</sup> Not that one would be freed from Maya's sway straightaway, but it is certain that His grip would be tight and firm, never letting one stray away altogether from the quest. One becomes Ramana's food no matter however vile, however sinful one may be. Can a prey which has fallen into a spider's web or a tiger's jaw escape?

But when? How long should one toss between the profane and the divine? To be drawn to that great force and yet to be denied the feel of its Presence, as it often happens, is a torture. Ramana's magnetic body did not go the way of all flesh in April 1950. The vivid, tangible, even physical impact continues to be felt sometimes through dreams and visions but always felt by those whom Ramana has chosen to make His for some unaccountable reason.

True, Ramana's entry into one's life cannot be in vain. But for those who are content to remain in the sidelines, for those the good and bad fruits of Karma are still tasty, the full impact of the great Presence is not yet. Their contact with eternity is all too brief. The time has not come for them to taste, in full measure, the entry of the Sad-guru in their lives.

It is a different story for those whom Ramana charms totally, who are taken over body and soul, in a no holds barred union. Such ones have no eyes except for that indescribable wonder, the Master's eyes. They cannot escape the bewitchment of His smile. Nothing matters to them, save to be His and let His Presence seep through every pore of their body. The joy of self-forgetfulness, of oneness, fills their Being.

This mood, however, is not for keeps, nor even 'till death do us part'. Imperceptibly, the bodily hunger, the demands of flesh, stage a virulent come back to the point of negating the joy of being Ramana's. It is certain that Ramana will not leave anyone by the roadside and that His succour would be there to strengthen and sustain. But in the intermediate stage when one is not steadfast in love for Ramana, many ego-traps of attachments seem to be there ready to lure one away. For, when the Sad-guru's tiger-like fangs begin to chew up one's ego, the job is never done at one stroke. It is often left incomplete to be finished at a time which He alone knows to be the best. In this half-way house when one is tossed between the sensate and the spiritual, when one is neither His nor the world's, one is inclined to pray sometimes 'Please stop being a magnet Do not take me at all or take all.'<sup>11</sup> It appears as if Ramana is aloof, withdrawn, unconcerned. Not that He is really, but the dryness, the slipping away makes one forlorn.

Sometimes then one cries out in anguish 'where have you gone my God, forsaking me?' One yearns and prays 'put out this fire, sweet, cool ocean of boundless grace, put out this fire of separation'.<sup>12</sup> One finds Ramana's 'Arunachala Padigam' replete with pleadings to the Sad-guru not to 'stop mid-way and

<sup>8</sup> *Letters from Sri Ramansramam*-P. 125-129.

<sup>9</sup> *Reminiscences of Sadhu Arunachala* — 3rd Edition Pgs. 12-13.

<sup>10</sup> Muruganar — *The Mountain Path*.

<sup>11</sup> *Sadhu Arunachala*.

<sup>12</sup> *New Song Book* — Muruganar-P. 65.

<sup>13</sup> *Arunachala Padigam*-verses 1, 2, 3 and 6.

leave the task unfinished'.<sup>13</sup> How truly reflective of the longing, the pining for the impersonal beloved who walked on earth as Ramana!

Occasionally the mood of rebellion too sets in. What else can one do except to chaff at the Master's indifference, except to fret and fume at His hide and seek? Must we be a plaything of our Master if we escape being fate's plaything? Why should He leave one to be lost in the company of the worldly? Why should we have to keep company with those who know nothing of His endless beauty? Why does He not enchant by revealing Himself in all His radiant splendour? Why does He 'like poison loath, the love that was once honey-sweet?'<sup>14</sup>

One may question thus, one may feel that He is not doing enough to take over quickly. One may curse the apparently snail-paced working of His grace. But all said and done for those who care for Him only, there can be no question of going back. Their boats have been

burnt. Inscrutable are His ways. There may be no holiday from the unfoldment of fate's merry-go-round. Fate's whiplashes may or may not be blunted. Loneliness may be one's lot. Then one has to remember that having surrendered, the right to question why has also gone. When the dark cloud of doubt and despondency grips one, then suddenly the Sad-guru is there giving His firm hand for the heart-ward journey. Having bartered His glorious state for our paltry self, He steps in almost at the very last second when one is ready to throw up one's hand in despair. Out of the blue the mighty, primal power of Ramana courses through one's vein. His tiger-like grip tightens, and one becomes, fully, His prey. Once and for all the sorrow of a divisive life centred on the ego ends. As one remains firmly rooted in the natural state which he restores, happiness brims over, within, without and everywhere.

<sup>14</sup> *Mother's lament* — Muruganar-Song book-P. 30.

### ARUNACHALA PADIGAM (Translations)

#### Verse. 1

**You it was who by your grace claimed me as your own. What would be my fate if now, you would not reveal yourself to me and I, still yearning for you, should perish in anguish in the darkness of this world? Can the lotus blossom unless it sees the sun? And you are the sun of suns. Your grace abounding swells and as a river overflows, O Love whose form is mighty Aruna Hill.**

#### Verse. 3

**Lord, I had no idea of thinking of you at all. And yet you drew me with your cord of grace and stood as if resolved to kill me. Then what fault did I, poor I, commit that you should stop midway, your task unfinished? What more is needed? Why do you thus torture me, leaving me half-dead? O Arunachala, fulfil your plan and live for ever, You alone.**

## TWO DECADES OF

### STARTING THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

It is for this reason that the contemplative way of life is the way of life for an individual who can recognize this great Truth, that wherever or however God is worshipped it is the same God because there cannot be more than one God. Whether as Hebrews we go into a temple with our hats on, or as Christians with our hats off, as Orientals with our shoes off, or as Christians with our shoes on, it must be understood that this can make no difference. What we are doing is worshipping in whatever way means dedication or sacredness to us.

— **Joel S. Goldsmith**

\*\*\*\*\*

### TIME TO CHANGE

Fond, foolish heart of mine, long have you known  
That your sure strength is Ramana alone  
And yet, forgetting him, you have your own,  
Destruction sought so far. Give up now straight,  
Now, though already late,  
Give up at one sharp wrench and utterly,  
The world and dwell on him unceasingly.

— **Sri Muruganar** — translated by **Professor K. Swaminathan**

## THE MOUNTAIN PATH

### THE SADHU'S PRAYER

Awake among sleepers,  
Mindful among the thoughtless,  
Silent amid noise,  
Still in mobility,  
At Peace between tensions,  
May I lie always at Thy Feet,  
In calm devotion.

— **Ebbana Grace Blanchard.**

\*\*\*\*\*

I have received a sample copy of your very interesting magazine and have deeply appreciated its contents, in particular the magnificent texts of Ramana Maharshi, whose 'Collected Works' have been reviewed by me in French.

— **Father Thomas Merton**

*Abbey of Gettsemani,  
Trappist, Kentucky.*

*from The Mountain Path, July, 1965*

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# A GUIDED TOUR OF HEAVEN

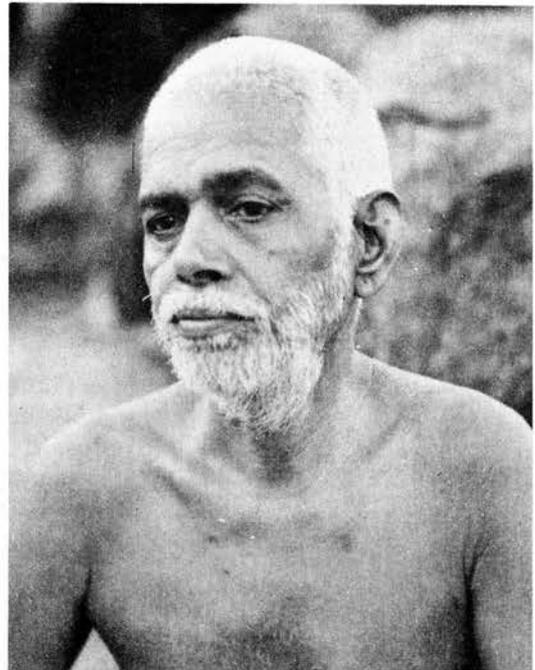
By Douglas E. Harding

IN ALL ages and lands, people have been sure there's another land altogether — one which cures and reverses all our wretchedness — and that we can get there, eventually and on certain conditions. Heaven is only one of its names.

It seems too good to be true. Is Heaven, then, a fictional wonderland like Utopia, or does it actually exist? If so, where, and how far away? By what vehicle and route, and at what cost, and when, can it be reached? What must one do to be let in, and allowed to stay? What goes on there? Are there any questions more worth asking? And, if possible, answering with certainty?

This tour has been set up to do just that. Its purpose is nothing less than to escort its members to Heaven and organize a brief exploration of the place: thus demonstrating that it is a real country with a precise location — an extraordinary and certainly blessed land, but not necessarily one that is much like our conjectures about it. To guide and encourage us we shall turn to travellers whose claims to have been there appear well-founded, and whose descriptions don't read like guesswork or fantasy. What each of us finds is of course his or her own affair, but our guides do point out what to look for.

There are five stages to our tour. First, we observe the (not too onerous) conditions of entry into Heaven. Second, we make the journey. Third, we look around, and get to know something of the topography, the people, the economics, and the government of the place, in that order. Fourth, we meet the King. Fifth, we return — if return we must — and sum up our impressions of where we've been, and what difference our excursion could make to the rest of our lives.



## 1. CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Strictly speaking, adults are not admitted. However, they are allowed in for as long as they can let go and become like little children, no matter how briefly.<sup>1</sup> In other words, for as long as they can open an innocent eye, can see what they see instead of what grown-ups tell them to see, can so humble themselves in front of what's given that they will follow it down whatever road it may lead: for in Heaven the immense barricades of social make-believe and convenient fiction are altogether dismantled.<sup>2</sup> Visitors must be open to — and ready

<sup>1</sup> To be reborn is to become children again. One must be reborn before gaining *jnana*. — Ramana Maharshi

<sup>2</sup> The ultimate Truth is so simple . . . . . But people want something elaborate and attractive and puzzling. — Ramana Maharshi.

to try out — any possibility however outlandish (Heaven is *uniquely* outlandish!), to unbend and play and experiment freely.

The Journey, including admittance to the country, is free. Yet in a sense it does have a cost. Entry depends on the visitor's undertaking to exercise some patience and respect for his new environment, and not to insist that Heaven shall without charge and immediately make available its finest treasures. (After all, this is reasonable: we know how brashly insensitive and demanding oneday excursionists can be!) But he should have little cause for complaint. The more spectacular sights are his to enjoy at once and gratis.

The most severe restriction — seemingly — is that visitors shall undergo a quite striking physical transformation. Even on a day trip, you aren't allowed to enter as that earthly body you had in the country you came from, but only as a heavenly body. However, you will find that this requirement is really the easiest one of all: your remodelling is taken care of at the frontier, so painlessly and unobtrusively that maybe you don't notice it at the time. Later on in the tour, we shall be looking to see what's happened to us, what our heavenly bodies are like.

## 2. THE JOURNEY

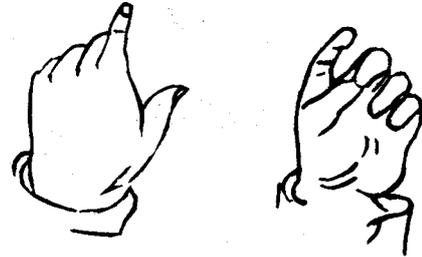
In France they have a saying: "It's the first step which counts". It settles where you will eventually find yourself. The journey to Heaven is determined even earlier, when you just *turn* in Heaven's direction. What direction, what precise compass bearing?

Point straight ahead . . . . .

(Remember: you won't get to Heaven unless, like a child, you are willing to have a go, and do what's asked instead of just reading about it.

So, point straight ahead, in the direction of this page of printing, with your finger held at eye level . . . . .

You are now indicating a definite point of the compass, the direction of some earthly country or other . . . . .



Now the land you're about to visit lies at  $180^\circ$  to that compass bearing,  $180^\circ$  to the direction of that particular earthly country . . . . . So turn your finger right round and point in the opposite direction . . . . .

And keep that finger in position a little while, as you attend carefully to the place it's now pointing at . . . . .

You may lower your hand, but from now on try not to lose sight of this place. *It is our destination*, and already you have a perfect view of it . . . . .<sup>3</sup>

## 3. THE TOUR

So far, the scene doesn't appear very heavenly! However, unfavourable first impressions are common, whatever tourist attraction you happen to be visiting. The approaches to famous beauty spots, like the suburbs of ancient cities, are frequently off-putting; nevertheless you go on. So exercise patience, and be prepared for anything. Remember what's at stake.

### (i) The topography of Heaven

#### Location

No country could be less remote than this one. You can see for yourself that it's much nearer than the furniture in the room, nearer than this page, than your hands and feet, than your breathing. In fact it's right where you are, which is exactly where our guides — dedicated seers and explorers of Heaven — are apt to locate that country: and there could hardly

<sup>3</sup> 'To look at things out there is easy; to look within is difficult!' That is absurd! It's the other way round.

be two countries, two separate places here.<sup>4</sup> No wonder the journey was so short it was all over in a moment!

#### Area

Your finger indicated a definite spot, which suggests that the area pointed to must be very small indeed. Well, please point again, to make sure . . . . .

What point, what limited region, can you now find here . . . . .?

On present evidence (which complying with the conditions of entry, is all you have to go by) can you find any point here, any locality, anything at all . . . . .? Or is there no-thing, just undifferentiated Space . . . . .? If so, look and see (you don't have to move your head) just how far this Space extends . . . . . upwards . . . . . downwards . . . . . to the right . . . . . to the left . . . . .

Is there any line enclosing this Space, any limit to it . . . . .? Isn't the place-you're-at visibly boundless — just as Heaven is reputed to be?<sup>5</sup> Again, how could there be two such infinities — this your true native land, or home ground, and Heaven itself — and both right here? Don't they have to be one and the same?

#### Climate

Returning explorers report, also, that Heaven is forever cloudless, that its air is perfectly transparent and pollution-free, that the weather here is set fair and the visibility unmeasurable. Some call it the Pure Land, others the Realm of Light, while Thomas a Kempis calls it the Country of Everlasting Clearness.<sup>6</sup> How do these attempts at description match up to the country your finger was pointing at? Only you are in a position to look and see, now.

#### Internal transport

How does the eager tourist get around, in this vastest of all countries? The answer is that he can't, and doesn't need to! There is no movement in Heaven, where (they say) all is peace and quiet stillness perfect tranquillity.

Test this at once by standing up, and — while

pointing again to this place — rotating slowly on the spot . . . . .

On present evidence, is it *you* that's spinning; or is it the *room* — the ceiling and the lights and the walls and all the rest of that world — while this world remains quite stationary . . . . .?

All right, put the room to rest, and sit down . . . . .

And remember how, when you were in a train pulling out of a station, it was the station that slid by; how, when you were very young or very drunk or in a car accident, it was the road that came up and hit you; and how, whenever you ceased overlooking the place you were looking out of, that place was invariably found to be still? They say Hell is all commotion, and Heaven is steadfast and unchanging. You can see for yourself which of these countries you have come to.<sup>8</sup>

#### Time-Zone

The tourist needs to know the time-zone of the region he's exploring, Heaven being no exception. If he thinks that midday in England is midday in Greece, he's mistaken; and if he thinks it's also midday right here in this nearest of countries, he could be even more mistaken. Well, what time is it here, just now?

Look at your watch. You are in the habit of going by what it shows. Very well then, note what time it is over there on your wrist. How-

<sup>4</sup> An ordinary Christian will not be satisfied till he is told that God is somewhere in the far-off Heavens . . . . . If told the simple truth — "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you" — he is not satisfied.

. . . . . Where is the Supreme Self or Heaven unless in you? — Ramana Maharshi

<sup>5</sup> Man considers himself limited, and there arises the trouble. The idea is wrong. He can see it for himself.

<sup>6</sup> To be full of light is the aim. Clearness like that of the unclouded sky is the characteristic of the mind expanse.

<sup>7</sup> You say you travelled here all the way from your town. Is it true? Is it not a fact that you remained as you were? — Ramana Maharshi

<sup>8</sup> I am perfect stillness.

ever, different places can mean different times, so it's possible that right here you will get a different reading.

So, while carefully observing the watch-face, very slowly bring your watch forward till it is two inches . . . . . one inch . . . . . half an inch . . . . . quarter of an inch away . . . . . till it's *no* distance away . . . . . and note the time it shows now . . . . .

With perfect accuracy *it shows no time!* Time has vanished into the Timeless Zone, the country of the Everlasting Now, Eternity itself, the realm where change and death cannot enter. In a word, Heaven. Which makes sense of Martin Buber's story about a Hasidic Master who, "in his hours of rapture, had to look at the clock in order to keep himself in this world (of time)."

#### Terrain

All our discoveries, so far, are working up to the disappointing — and perhaps very frightening — conclusion that Heaven is emptier and more barren and more uninteresting than the Empty Quarter of the Sahara.<sup>9</sup> Indeed some of our guides have a habit of calling it the Desert. You can see why.

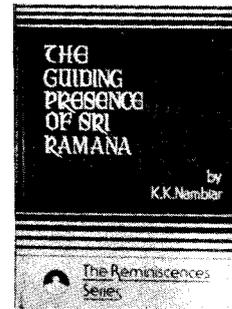
But in case you should suppose — or fondly hope! — that this barrenness is a subjective delusion of yours and not a scientific and easily verifiable fact, why not get a friend to take a series of photos of you, at diminishing distances, till he comes right up to the place where you are? His last picture is likely to bear out your findings here.

#### A land of contrasts

However, don't despair, for they say that whatever's true of this place, its opposite is true also. (If we can find anything that *doesn't* contradict itself, why it's unlikely we are in Heaven!) For example, having seen how empty is the Heaven where you are, you can also see how *full* it is — how packed with the present scene — with this page and these hands, the surrounding furniture and walls, the world out-

<sup>9</sup> It is like gazing into vacancy. — Ramana Maharshi

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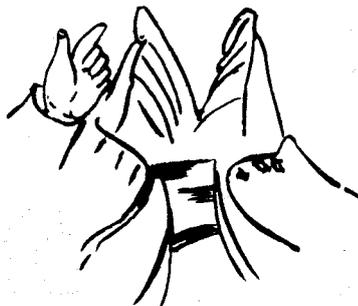
side the window. Observe also how impossible it is to *separate* this Space you're looking-out-of from what you're looking-at, from its current contents.<sup>10</sup> Are you now presented with this page *plus* the space it occupies, as two entities, or are they not one and the same? It's because Heaven is so aloof from and unlike other lands, that it *is* them: this paradox, beloved of our seer-guides, isn't for understanding but for seeing, now.<sup>11</sup>

And so, looking back at our findings so far — at our perception of Heaven as free from all forms and limitations, as perfectly clear and still and timeless — we have now to add that it is also the opposite of all this; that it is none other than all the energy and time and motion, all the beings and their attributes and their histories, which it holds. Including, of course people . . . . .

(ii) The people

We have only to look around to see that the country we have come to is well populated — with, presumably, those heavenly bodies that alone (according to our conditions of entry) are admitted. In appearance and at a distance they look no different from those we are used to. But in reality (we're assured) they are very different.

How can we test this? Well, here in Heaven there is a certain body that isn't a mere distant appearance, but one that you can get right up to and right into, to see what it *really* is. That



unique body — and handy sample of the rest — is your own body as you actually experience it now — Look down at those feet and legs . . . . .

at that trunk . . . . . ending in that fuzzy neckline . . . . . And notice what's above that neckline, on present evidence . . . . . One of the delights of Heaven (our guides are agreed) is that you are no longer *in* the body. It's a report that you can now confirm, by looking to see that indeed you are not *in* those legs . . . . . not *in* that trunk . . . . . not *in* those hands . . . . . (If you were, you would surely find it dark, sticky, complicated, and very claustrophobic in there! Aren't those limbs and that trunk, with their aches and thrills, *in you* — you who are at large . . . . .<sup>12</sup>

Here in Heaven however (according to some of our guides), though you are no longer *in* the body, you still *have* a body of sorts — a "resurrection" one. \* This report also you can confirm — as true *now*, this side of your grave. ‡ You can see what this body is like — decapitated, protean, coming-and-going, but still recognizably yours. And you can *feel* what it's like — an immense world of sensations, all the richer for not being shut up in any physical container.

Nevertheless here in Heaven (many reputable guides insist) you no longer bodily in any sense, no longer a separate individual, but pure Spirit and One with all Heaven's population. And for the third time you can confirm their report, simply by turning your attention

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\* "I believe in . . . . the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." From *The Apostles' Creed* — what they meant by this is a matter for endless debate: what we can see for ourselves is not.

‡ "Don't think the resurrection is an illusion . . . . It is more fitting to say that the world is an illusion . . . . . It is the revelation of what is . . . . . Why not consider yourself as risen already?" So writes the 2nd-century author of *A Treatise on Resurrection*, echoing St. Paul, e.g., *Colossians*, 3,3.

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<sup>10</sup> So long as you consider yourself as the body, you see the world as external to you.

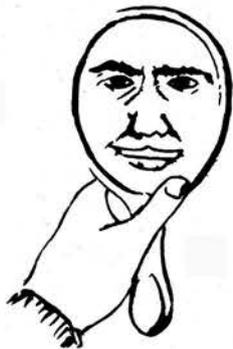
<sup>11</sup> Turn your vision inward and then the whole world will be full of Supreme Spirit.

<sup>12</sup> The universe is only Brahman. — Ramana Maharshi

around 180° once more, and looking in at what you're looking out of — at this undifferentiated Space which has no connections with any one individual, and has room for all individuals.<sup>13</sup>

We tourists certainly are beginning to enter into the life — paradoxical through and through — of this new country and to realize just how different it is from that of the country we came from. People in Heaven (and that now includes you and me) are heavenly people. And their relationship to one another is heavenly too, as we're about to see.

Please get face-to-face with someone or other, right now. (To put it off could mean missing the point altogether.) Maybe there's a friend around who will join you for the experiment. If not, you will find in your mirror one who will do very well indeed.



Get face-to-face with him or her, two to three feet away . . . . . and look steadily at those features — not specially at the eyes . . . . . and see what you see, instead of what language and so-called common sense tell you to see . . . . . Is this, in your present experience, a symmetrical, face-to-face relationship . . . . . ? Or is it asymmetrical, a face-there-to-no-face-here "relationship" . . . . . ? In fact, not a relationship at all, but an assimi-

lation or oneing — because you have nothing where you are to keep that one out with . . . . . ?

Here in Heaven, the simple and beautiful truth is on show: the truth that really there are no eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations no head-on collisions, no defences against invasion, no rejection of anyone whatever. Here alone you can see how you are built open, built for loving . . . . . Here alone you can say truly to that friend: "I am you — and twice over! First, and looking out, *I have your appearance*. Second, and looking in, *I am your Reality*. this Space which is aware of itself as your inside story and that of all creatures. This is *real intimacy*, at last!"

Which isn't to say that you now *feel* more warmly towards that friend. Feelings of love are lovely, but they are conditional, they come and go, and aren't always to hand when invited. But their true foundation, which is the clear perception that you are nothing and all things, that you must vanish in his or her favour — giving your very life for "enemy" no less than "friend" — this is unconditional, is always available whatever your mood, is perfectly steady. It is your ever-present reminder that to be in Heaven is to see and go along with what's so, to conform to your real nature — which is to love un sentimentally, undemandingly, and for good.

\* The second half of our tour of Heaven — to appear in our next issue — will include a look at its unique economics and government, an interview with its King, and finally some reflections on the likely practical effect of our discoveries.

<sup>13</sup> Pure consciousness, wholly unrelated to the physical body and transcending the mind, is a matter of direct experience. — Ramana Maharshi.

**"Consciousness is always Self-consciousness. If you are conscious of anything you are essentially conscious of yourself. Unself-conscious existence is a contradiction in terms. It is no existence at all. It is merely attributed existence, whereas true Existence, and Sat, is not an attribute, it is the Substance itself. It is the *Vastu*."**

— SRI MAHARASHI

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## BE AS YOU ARE \*

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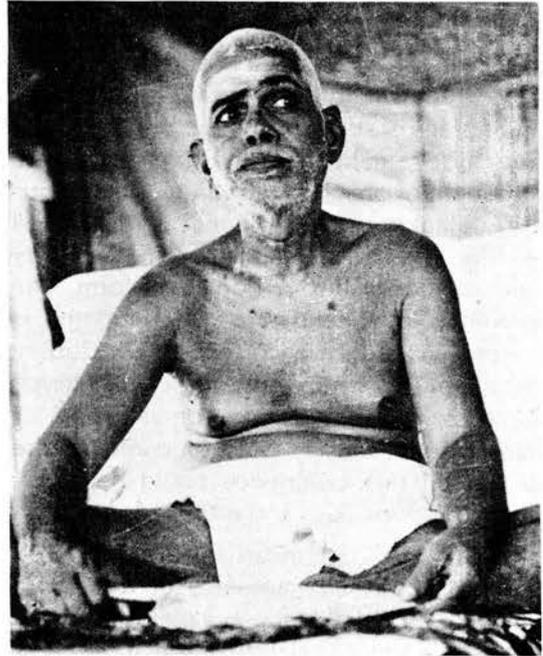
**Q:** On enquiry into the origin of thoughts there is a perception of 'I'. But it does not satisfy me.

**A:** Quite right. The perception of 'I' is associated with a form, may be the body. There should be nothing associated with the pure Self. The Self is the unassociated pure reality, in whose light the body and ego shine. On stilling all thoughts the pure consciousness remains over.

Just on waking from sleep and before becoming aware of the world there is that pure 'I'. Hold onto it without sleeping or allowing thoughts to possess you. If that is held firm it does not matter even if the world is seen. The seer remains unaffected by the phenomena. <sup>5</sup>

What is the ego? Enquire. The body is insentient and cannot say 'I'. The Self is pure consciousness and non-dual. It cannot say 'I'. No one says 'I' in sleep. What is the ego then? It is something intermediate between the inert body and the Self. It has no *locus standi*. If sought for, it vanishes like a ghost. At night a man may imagine that there is a ghost by his side because of the play of shadows. If he looks closely he discovers that the ghost is not really there, and what he imagined to be a ghost was merely a tree or a post. If he does not look closely the ghost may terrify him. All that is required is to look closely and the ghost vanishes. The ghost was never there. So also with the ego. It is an intangible link between the body and pure consciousness. It is not real. So long as one does not look closely at it, it continues to give trouble. But when one looks for it, it is found not to exist. <sup>6</sup>

**Q:** If I try to make the 'Who am I?' enquiry, I fall into sleep. What should I do?



**A:** Persist in your enquiry throughout your waking hours. That would be quite enough. If you keep on making the enquiry till you fall asleep, the enquiry will go on during sleep also. Take up the enquiry again as soon as you wake up. <sup>7</sup>

**Q:** How can I get peace? I do not seem to obtain it through *vichara*.

**A:** Peace is your natural state. It is the mind that obstructs the natural state. If you do not experience peace it means that your *vichara* has been made only in the mind. Investigate what the mind is and it will disappear. There is no such thing as mind apart from thought.

4. *A Search in Secret India*, (B & I edition 1980), pp. 156, 157.

5. *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, (1978), pp. 161-162

6. *Ibid*, p. 57 1.

7. *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, (1977), p. 73

\* Continued from last issue.

Nevertheless, because of the emergence of thought, you surmise something from which it starts and term that the mind. When you probe to see what it is, you find there is really no such thing as mind. When the mind has thus vanished, you realise eternal peace.<sup>8</sup>

**Q:** When I am engaged in enquiry as to the source from which the 'I' springs, I arrive at a certain stage of stillness of mind beyond which I find myself unable to proceed further. I have no thought of any kind and there is an emptiness, a blankness. A mild light pervades and I feel that it is myself bodiless. I have neither cognition nor vision of body and form. The experience lasts nearly half an hour and is pleasing. Would I be correct in concluding that all that was necessary to secure eternal happiness, that is freedom or salvation or whatever one calls it, was to continue the practice till this experience could be maintained for hours, days and months together?

**A:** This does not mean salvation. Such a condition is termed *manolaya* or temporary stillness of thought. *Manolaya* means concentration, temporarily arresting the movement of thoughts. As soon as this concentration ceases, thoughts, old and new, rush in as usual, and even though this temporary lulling of mind should last a thousand years it will never lead to total destruction of thought, which is what is called liberation from birth and death. The practitioner must therefore be ever on the alert and enquire within as to who has this experience, who realises its pleasantness. Without this enquiry he will go into a long trance or deep sleep (*yoga nidra*). Due to the absence of a proper guide at this stage of spiritual practice many have been deluded and fallen a prey to a false sense of liberation and only a few have managed to reach the goal safely.

*Sadhakas* (seekers) rarely understand the difference between this temporary stilling of the mind (*manolaya*) and permanent destruction of thoughts (*manonasa*). In *manolaya* there is temporary subsidence of thought-waves, and though this temporary period may

even last for a thousand years, thoughts, which are thus temporarily stilled, rise up as soon as the *manolaya* ceases. One must therefore watch one's spiritual progress carefully. One must not allow oneself to be overtaken by such spells of stillness of thought. The moment one experiences this, one must revive consciousness and enquire within as to who experiences the stillness. While not allowing any thoughts to intrude, one must not, at the same time, be overtaken by this deep sleep (*yoga nidra*) or self-hypnotism. Though this is a sign of progress towards the goal, yet it is also the point where the divergence between the road to liberation and *yoga nidra* takes place. The easy way, the direct way, the shortest cut to salvation is the enquiry method. By such enquiry you will drive the thought-force deeper till it reaches its source and merges therein. It is then that you will have the response from within and find that you rest there, destroying all thoughts once and for all.<sup>9</sup>

**Q:** In turning the mind inwards, are we still not employing the mind?

**A:** Of course we are employing the mind. It is well known and admitted that only with the help of the mind can the mind be killed. But instead of setting about saying there is a mind, and I want to kill it, you begin to seek the source of the mind, and you find that the mind does not exist at all. The mind turned outwards results in thoughts and objects. Turned inwards, it becomes itself the Self.<sup>10</sup>

**Q:** Even so, I do not understand. 'I', you say, is the wrong 'I' now. How to eliminate the wrong 'I'?

**A:** You need not eliminate the wrong 'I'. How can 'I' eliminate itself? All you need to do is find out its origin and abide there. Your efforts can extend only thus far. Then the beyond will take care of itself. You are helpless there. No effort can reach it.<sup>11</sup>

8. *Maharshi's Gospel*, (1979), p. 43

9. *Crumbs from his Tale*, (1981), pp. 25-27

10. *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, (1977), p. 31

11. *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, (1978), p. 163

**Q:** How long can the mind stay or be kept in the Heart?

**A:** The period extends by practice.

**Q:** What happens at the end of the period?

**A:** The mind returns to the present normal state. Unity in the Heart is replaced by variety of perceived phenomena. This is called the outgoing mind. The Heart-going mind is called the resting mind. <sup>12</sup>

When one daily practises more and more in this manner, the mind will become extremely pure due to the removal of its defects and the practice will become so easy that the purified mind will plunge into the Heart as soon as the enquiry is commenced. <sup>13</sup>

**Q:** How can I tell if I am making progress with my enquiry?

**A:** The degree of the absence of thoughts is the measure of your progress towards Self-realisation. But Self-realisation itself does not admit of progress, it is ever the same. The Self remains always in realisation. The obstacles are thoughts. Progress is measured by the degree of removal of obstacles to understanding that the Self is always realised. So thoughts must be checked by seeking to whom they arise. So you go to their source where they do not arise. <sup>14</sup>

**Q:** Should I go on asking 'Who am I?' without answering? Who asks whom? Which *bhavana* (attitude) should be in the mind at the time of enquiry? What is 'I', the Self or the ego?

**A:** In the enquiry 'Who am I?', 'I' is the ego. The question really means, 'What is the source or origin of this ego?' You need not have any *bhavana* in the mind. All that is required is that you must give up the *bhavana* that you are the body, of such and such a description, with such and such a name etc. There is no need to have a *bhavana* about your real nature. It exists as it always does. It is real and no *bhavana*. <sup>15</sup>

**Q:** But is it not funny that the 'I' should be searching for the 'I'? Does not the enquiry

'Who am I?' turn out in the end to be an empty formula? Or, am I to put the question to myself endlessly, repeating it like some *mantra*?

**A:** Self-enquiry is certainly not an empty formula, and it is more than the repetition of any *mantra*. If the enquiry 'Who am I?' were a mere mental questioning, it would not be of much value. The very purpose of self-enquiry is to focus the entire mind at its source. It is not therefore a case of one 'I' searching for another 'I'. Much less is self-enquiry an empty formula, for it involves an intense activity of the whole mind to keep it steadily poised in pure Self-awareness. <sup>16</sup>

**Q:** Is it enough if I spend some time in the mornings and some time in the evenings for this *atma-vichara*? Or should I do it always, even when I am writing or walking?

**A:** What is your real nature? Is it writing, walking or being? The one unalterable reality is being. Until you realise that state of pure being you should pursue the enquiry. If you are established in it there will be no further worry.

No one will enquire into the source of thoughts unless thoughts arise. So long as you think 'I am walking' or 'I am writing', enquire who does it. <sup>17</sup>

**Q:** If I go on rejecting thoughts can I call it *vichara*?

**A:** It may be a stepping stone. But real *vichara* begins when you cling to yourself and are already off the mental movement, the thought waves.

12. *Ibid*, p. 27

13. *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, unpublished translation by Sadhu Om, v. 399

14. *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, (1978), pp. 582-583

15. *Day by Day with Bhagavan*, (1977), pp. 75-76

16. *Maharshi's Gospel*, (1979), p. 50

17. *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, (1978), p. 550

**Q:** The *vichara* is not intellectual?

**A:** No it is *antara vichara*, inner quest.<sup>18</sup> Holding the mind and investigating it is advised for a beginner. But what is mind after all? It is a projection of the Self. See for whom it appears and where it rises. The 'I' — thought will be found to be the root cause. Go deeper. The 'I' — thought disappears and there is an infinitely expanded 'I'-consciousness.<sup>19</sup>

**Q:** I asked Mother in Sri Aurobindo Ashram the following question: 'I keep my mind blank without thoughts arising so that God might show himself in his true being. But I do not perceive anything'. The reply was to this effect: 'The attitude is right. The power will come down from above. It is a direct experience'. Should I do anything further?

**A:** Be what you are. There is nothing to come down or become manifest. All that is necessary is to lose the ego. That which is always there. Even now you are that. You are not apart from it. The blank is seen by you. You are there to see the blank. What do you wait for? The thought 'I have not seen', the expectation to see and the desire of getting something, are all the workings of the ego. You have fallen into the snares of the ego. The ego says all these and not you. Be yourself and nothing more!

Once born you reach something. If you reach it you return also. Therefore leave off all this verbiage. Be as you are. See who you are and remain as the Self, free from birth, going, coming and returning.<sup>20</sup>

Your duty is to be and not to be this or that. 'I am that I am' sums up the whole truth. The method is summed up in the words 'Be still'. What does stillness mean? It means destroy yourself. Because any form or shape is the cause of trouble. Give up the notion that 'I am so and so'.<sup>21</sup> All that is required to realise the Self is to be still. What can be easier than that?<sup>22</sup>

The truth of oneself alone is worthy to be scrutinized and known. Taking it as the target of one's attention, one should keenly know it

## DO NOT ABANDON ME, SRI RAMANA

By Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan

**Out of innumerable devotees  
Will You not choose me  
Sri Ramana,  
As Arunachala chose You?  
The Hill of Pure Awareness  
Took You over with tenderness,  
And built for You an Ashram  
So that our minds can turn to You,  
There where You remain for ever more,  
As in your devotees Heart.  
You sang hymns in Arunachala's praise  
Erasing the ego without trace.  
You caught me in your net of grace  
Where at your feet, I am content.  
Trample on me, dance on my head,  
Until this 'I' of mine is dead,  
And I am Pure I-Am-ness in the Heart.  
Don't abandon me, consume me  
When You alone remain  
And shine as shadowless light  
My loss becomes my gain.**

in the Heart. This knowledge of oneself will be revealed to the consciousness which is silent, clear and free from the activity of the agitated and suffering mind. Know that the consciousness which always shines in the Heart as the formless Self 'I', and which is known by one's being still without thinking about anything as existent or non-existent, alone is the perfect reality.<sup>23</sup>

18. *Sat Darshana Bhashya*, (1975), p. ix

19. *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, (1978), p. 470

20. *Ibid*, pp. 151-152

21. *Ibid*, p. 333

22. *Maharshi's Gospel*, (1979), p. 35

23. *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, unpublished translation by Sadhu Om, vv. 433, 1232.

## MUNIFICENT RAMANA

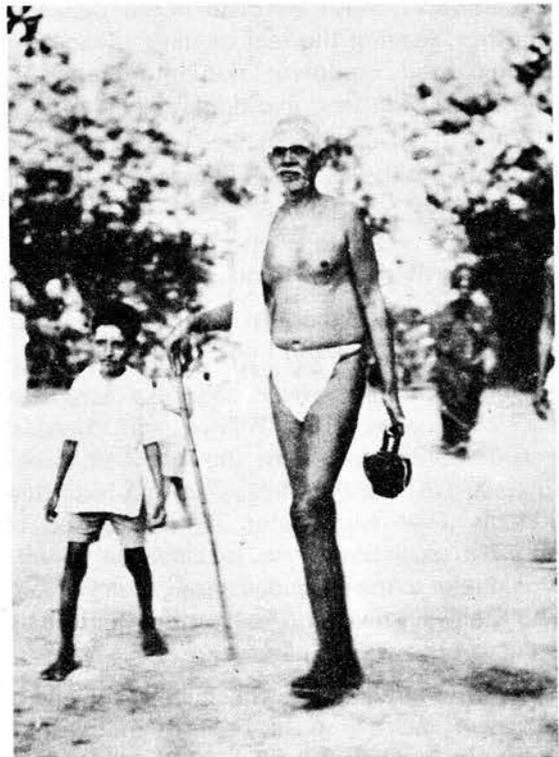
*I am happy to record another instalment of anecdotes about our Master.*

— V.G.

IN MY teenage, when studying in College, I had to go to Madurai quite often. I used to stay in Professor N.R. Krishnamurthy Aiyer's house. Though ever active with college work, he was totally absorbed, I observed, in the thought of Sri Bhagavan. In fact, during earlier visits to his house when his father, N.S. Ranganatha Aiyer, Bhagavan's classmate, was alive both father and son would be talking aloud far into the night on Bhagavan and His glory!

Now Sri N.R. Krishnamurthy Aiyer, in his old age, stays at Tiruvannamalai itself with his second son, Sri K.V. Ramanan, a Chartered Accountant and a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan. He gave us all great joy by coming and spending a month in the Ashram guest house, along with his wife. During his stay I had the opportunity of having closer contacts with him. His book: *Essence of Ribhu Gita* was released on April 17, on Bhagavan's *Aradhana* day.

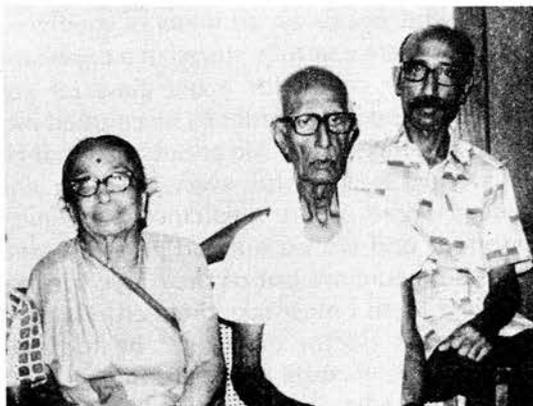
During one such delightful sessions with him, I put him a specific question: 'What has



Bhagavan taught you?' Professor N.R. Krishnamurthy Aiyer writes:

"I observed the personal habits of Sri Bhagavan and tried to follow His example.

One noticed in Bhagavan's daily life, personal cleanliness, tidiness of dress, habitual wearing of *vibhuti* and *kumkum* on the forehead; equal sharing of all enjoyments with those around one; strict adherence to a time schedule; doing useful work however 'low' it be; work once taken up never be left unfinished; the pursuit of perfection in every action; strict economy of time, material and money; incessant activity except while sleeping or res-



(r to l) K.V. Ramanan, Professor N.R. Krishnamurthy Aiyer, Smt. Krishnamurthy Aiyer.

ting after a spell of hard work; never considering oneself superior to others; speaking the truth always, or strict silence if the expression of a truth would hurt or lower the reputation of others; perfect self-help, never asking another to do a piece of work which can be done by oneself; taking full responsibility for failure, if any, without shifting the blame on others; accepting success and failure with equanimity; never to disturb the peace of another; leaving the leaf or plate clean after eating food; complete non-interference in the affairs of others; avoiding worry about the future.

These are the lessons Sri Ramana taught by example to His devotees. We should try to follow the example of the Maharshi with all the strength of body, mind and spirit.

Of what the Maharshi taught in the realm of spirit words fail and I dare not write."

\*\*\*\*\*

Bhagavan has written *Upadesa Saram* in four languages. The Telugu and Sanskrit versions are in couplets, the Tamil in three-line stanzas, but the Malayalam has four-line stanzas. Even Muruganar, if he had doubts about a particular verse in *Upadesa Saram*, would refer to the expanded Malayalam version. The Malayalam version has another feature as pointed out by Kunju Swami:

"Spiritual treatises usually have at the end a *phalasaruti* describing the benefits that would accrue by reading the treatise. Bhagavan has avoided giving *phalasarutis* to any of His works, though He has translated such *phalasarutis* into Tamil from the Sanskrit original, like *Dakshina-murti Stotra*.<sup>1</sup> But, in Malayalam *Upadesa Saram*, He has added two verses after the thirty by way of *phalasaruti*. It was at the request of Balakrishna Swami, a Malayali devotee, that Bhagavan added these verses:

When I entered the Hall, Bhagavan showed them to me. There the refrain was, 'Let us play the *kummi*, and clap our hands, *Oh Girls!*' I remarked whether *kummi* was for women folk alone. Bhagavan kept quiet. Next day when Muruganar entered the Hall, Bhagavan told him, 'I have changed the word 'girls' into

'devotees', since he (Kunju Swami) raised an objection'. Then turning to me He said: 'Are you now satisfied?' The Malayalam *Upadesa Saram* conclude each verse with the refrain: 'Let us play the *kummi* and clap our hands, *Oh devotees* (എൻപർക്കൾ) Bhagavan was an ocean of Grace!"

The *phalasarutis* in Malayalam:

സന്തോഷമോഴുപദേശ സാരം കൊണ്ടു  
സന്നിഷ്ഠനായ് കമ്മി കൊട്ടു കൊട്ടു!  
സന്താപശാന്തിയും സന്തതാനന്ദവും  
സന്ധിക്കുമില്ലിതിൽ ശങ്കയൊട്ടും!!  
ഒട്ടുമേ കഷ്ടങ്ങളൊട്ടാകെ വിട്ടിടാൻ  
ഉപദേശസാരത്തെ കൊണ്ടുകൂടി!  
കൊട്ടുവിനമ്പർകളെല്ലാവരും കമ്മി  
കൊട്ടുവിനാനന്ദം കിട്ടുവാനായ്!!

Here is the English translation of the above by K.K. Nambiar.

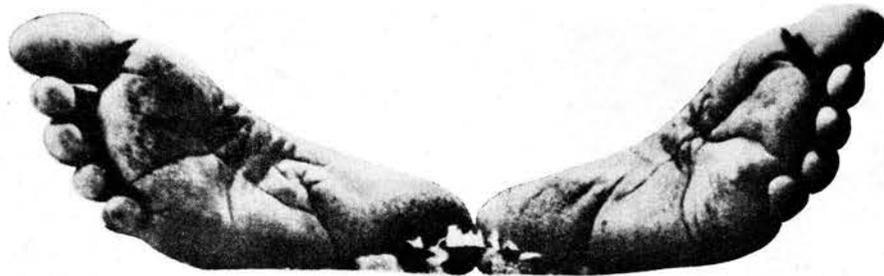
"Being well established (in Self-abidance), joyfully sing this *Upadesa Saram*, clapping hands in *kummi* dance. Freedom from all misery and eternal bliss will be attained: there is no doubt about this."

"O Devotees! So that misery may leave completely without afflicting you and so that bliss may be obtained, all of you clap and dance *kummi* along with this *Upadesa Saram*."

\*\*\*\*\*

Mrs. Roda Maclver narrated to me a strange but moving incident. "Worried about Bhagavan's health, in His last days, devotees would send Bhagavan all kinds of medicines and these were carefully stored in a cupboard. One day He called for a big glass jar and ordered all the little bottles to be emptied into the jar and mixed well. He announced that He would take a spoonful every morning and evening. Some of the medicines were quite poisonous and we were afraid, 'People send me these medicines out of their love for me. To please them I must take them all'! argued Bhagavan. A doctor came and he too was terrified. The mixture was fantastic — allopathy, ayurvedic, homeopathy, herbs, bio-

<sup>1</sup> see our April '84 issue, p. 95.



The Holy Feet of Sri Bhagavan.

chemicals, ashes, powders, poisons — a lethal brew! Bhagavan was adamant. But when we invoked His own rule and demanded a spoonful for each of us, He relented and gave up the idea of drinking the stuff!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Sri Kunju Swami narrated the following interesting anecdote:

"During Bhagavan's day, serious seekers stayed in adjoining *Palakottu* — B.V. Narasimha Swami, Paul Brunton, Yogi Ramiah, Muruganar, Munagala Venkataramaiah, S.S. Cohen and others. Once a German was staying there doing strenuous *sadhana*. He was keen on meeting Bhagavan during His noon walk in *Palakottu*. It is not known to many that Bhagavan used to give personal instructions and practical help to some seekers on various occasions, outside Old Hall. This serious German was one among them."

This is how Kunju Swami came to know of how Bhagavan had helped him. "One day, the postman was banging at this German's cottage, on the steel door, for a long time making enough noise to disturb us all living in neighbouring huts. We joined the postman in knocking at the door, till it was time for Bhagavan to take His noon walk round *Palakottu*. Bhagavan enquired why we were all at the entrance of the German's cottage. We told him that there was a telegram (cable) for the German and that we could not succeed in making him hear all this loud noise. Bhagavan laughed and said: 'I am the culprit! He once complained to me that he was keen on having long, deep meditation and that noises around

disturbed him. I got some bees-wax (தேன் மெருகு) and mixed it with cotton and made ear-plugs for him. These are totally sound-proof!' Being the time for him to meet Bhagavan the German came out removing his ear-plugs. He was, naturally, surprised to see a crowd at his cottage, along with Bhagavan!

Ever since we also made such ear-plugs made of bees-wax and serious devotees find this a great aid for undisturbed meditation!"

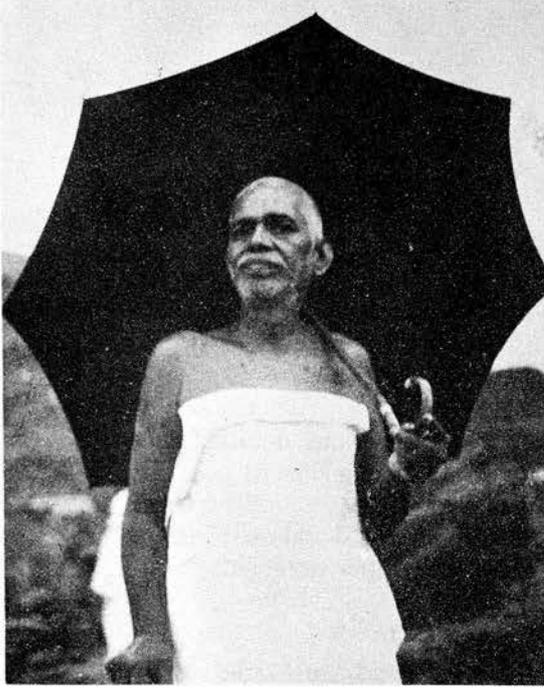
\*\*\*\*\*

There is a great *Veena*-player, Kameswari Ammal, a lady popular in music circles. She used to practise music as *sadhana* and would play before Bhagavan whenever she came to the Ashram. Once after giving a very good recital, which

**What you were really unaware of in deep sleep is your bodily existence. You are confounding this bodily awareness with the true Awareness of the Self which is eternal. *Prajnana*, which is the source of 'I-am'-ness, ever subsists unaffected by the three transitory states of the mind, thus enabling you to retain your identity unimpaired. *Prajnana* is also beyond the three states, because it can subsist without them and in spite of them.**

— Sri Bhagavan





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

"Later, when He was no longer bodily with us, I turned to His teachings; and then I found that the Grace of His Presence had prepared me for it. I had been attracted to Him as a child is to its mother, without knowing why, and I had derived sustenance from Him as a child does from its mother. I was glad afterwards that I had enjoyed His Presence so fully when He was bodily with us!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Sri Rengaswamy Iyengar; better known as 'Iyengar Swami of Kumbakonam', was a very staunch devotee of Bhagavan; his devotion so intense that he would not utter the name of his Master: 'Ramana'. Even while reciting the hymns, like *Ramana Stuthi Panchakam* wherever the word 'Ramana' came he would keep silent on that word but fluently proceed with the rest of the stanza. For instance, reciting *Aksharamanamalai*, v. 90: " "ரமணனென்று உரைத்தேன்" he would begin it only as "..... என்று உரைத்தேன்" ('You being 'Ramana' I said all this', he would say: 'You being ..... I said all this!'). Knowing his intense *bhakti* for Sat Guru Ramana not even people around him would utter the word 'Ramana' in his proximity! Once, in the Old Hall, a very popular man inadvertently addressed Bhagavan as 'Ramana'. Iyengar Swami spontaneously slapped him on the cheek! Later, coming to know of the *eka bhakti* of Iyengar Swami, instead of getting angry this gentleman appreciated Iyengar Swami heartily!

**Spirit:** "By what means is ignorance to be destroyed? How is the means acquired? What leads to such means?"

**Prince:** "Investigation cuts at the root of ignorance. Dispassion develops investigation. Disgust of the pleasures of life generates dispassion towards them."

**Spirit:** "What is investigation, dispassion or disgust in pleasures?"

**Prince:** "Investigation is analysis conducted within oneself, discriminating the non-self from the Self, stimulated by a stern, strong and sincere desire to realise the Self. Dispassion is non-attachment to surroundings. This results if the misery consequent on attachment is kept in mind."

— from *Tripura Rahasya*



## GARLAND OF

By Sri Muruganar

Translated from Tamil by  
Professor K. Swaminathan

50

To seers established in Awareness  
Pure, the basis of all knowledge,  
All these worlds are but the Self  
And hence as such are real. How  
Can the ignorant understand  
The True Being behind them all?

53

This world which seems to be a sea  
Of sorrow is transformed into  
An ocean filled with bliss transcendent  
If one's defective vision is  
Corrected and one sees it fresh  
With the clear eye of true Awareness  
As the form of the Supreme.

54

Still, waveless Being-Awareness-Bliss  
Alone is what the true seer sees  
And is. Since seer and sight are one  
It follows surely that this world  
Is also Being-Awareness-Bliss.

55

The nature of this mind-created  
World, now seen in dream-light dim,  
Is truly known only in that  
Bright Being-Awareness which transcends  
The mind's illusions.

56

Fond, foolish mind, deluded daily  
By dreams woven out of your own stuff,  
If but you knew your own true strength,  
Say, could this world exist outside  
The one Being-Awareness-Bliss?

57

The void world, variegated, vast  
Sprang from one sole, eternal Bliss,  
As from one egg the multi-coloured  
Peacock. See this Truth, abiding  
As the Self alone.

58

Those who have sought and gained the  
Of true Awareness do not see goal  
This world as variegated forms.  
The whole world filled with crowds of  
objects  
Is for them but the gracious play  
Of one sole Sakti, one sole power,  
The power of pure Awareness.

59

The perfect jnani who is free  
From the inveterate body-bound ego  
And now abides as true Awareness  
Perceives this world as but Awareness  
Bright, his own sole Being. It is  
An error then to view the world  
As something other than Awareness.

## GURU'S SAYINGS

60

With mind turned inward, drown the world  
In the great void, dispel illusion.  
Beholding then the void as void,  
Destroy the void by drowning it  
In the deep ocean of Self-Awareness.

61

If you abide at heart established  
As Being-Awareness, which shines also  
As this world, then this world becomes  
One with your Self, its frightening, false  
Duality having disappeared.

62

He who sees this phenomenal world  
As all Awareness, Self-awareness,  
This sage indeed enjoys with all  
Five senses fully his own Self.

66

Siva eternal, peace serene,  
Perfect, common to all alike,  
Is the one sole Reality.  
The evils in the world are concepts  
Formed by the false, scattered knowledge  
Of the divided mind..

67

The worlds have no being apart  
From Awareness which is but the Self.  
It is nescience dense and dark  
Which makes the body-bound ego see  
The world of names and forms as alien.

69

The world perceived by the poor *jiva*  
Lapsed from its own Being true,  
Buried in darkness, and believing  
That it is but the body, alas,  
This world thus seen is non-existent;  
Yes, it is indeed unreal.

70

The goings-on of the empirical world,  
True-seeming and beguiling in the mind's  
Borrowed light, are nothing but illusions  
In the bright light of pure Awareness.

77

What does one gain, you well may ask,  
By giving up the wealth immense  
Of worldly pleasure and seeking only  
Mere Awareness?  
The benefit of true Awareness  
Is the unbroken prevalence  
Of peace within the heart, the bliss  
Of one's own natural being.

79

Fond, foolish people may find joy  
In pleasure at the moment. Soon  
It palls and leaves but pain behind.

80

*Jivas* suffer in the hot dry  
Desert of the world, the dream  
Born out of whirling *vasanas* old.  
Shady refuge from the triple  
Fire of desire raging here,  
They find beneath the spreading  
*Bodhi* tree, *turiya*, Self-Awareness.

84

All that the mind perceives once lay  
Buried within the heart. Know well  
That names and forms are an old tale  
Retold, old latent *vasanas* now  
Becoming manifest.

88

Consider well. A thought it is  
That from itself creates a snake-form  
Sustains it, fears it and at last,  
When full light comes, destroys it.

(The snake, the world of names and forms, seen in dim light is recognized as the rope in the full light of self-enquiry. The ego that sees names and forms and the world seen by it are both conceptual).

89

Seed, sprout and plant in sequence coming  
Seem to be the same. And yet  
The effect seems to destroy and so  
Replace the cause. The contradiction  
'Twixt one and many, change and sameness,  
Is but the mind's conception.

90

The Self is all true Being-Awareness.  
The world perceived as other is  
But a perverse misunderstanding.  
The rope itself being the seer,  
Awareness, would it see some being  
Other than itself, some snake?

91

Did the Self lapse from its own wholeness  
As Being, you ask, "How else did this  
World come to be?" It came from  
ignorance False. The Self can never suffer  
Any change at any time.

96

From true Being, infinite Awareness,  
The *jiva* cannot as an 'I',  
A separate self, arise.  
It is only from a separate flame  
Conceptually cut off that sparks  
Can fly and fill the universe.

(124-125)

(Give up the thought that this vile body  
Is you. Think that you are eternal  
Bliss. To seek the Self while cherishing  
The perishable body is  
Clutching a crocodile as though  
It were a raft to cross a river.

— Bhagavan

(169-170)

(The madcaps who forget that they  
Themselves are by Great Shakti moved,  
And busily gather thaumaturgic  
Powers, are like the cripple who claimed,  
"If some one would but lift me up,  
I would scatter these foes, I would!")

— Bhagavan

(171-172)

(The power supreme sustains the world.  
The ego false that claims to do so  
Is like the gargoyle that pretends  
To carry the temple tower on its head.  
Whose fault is it if a passenger  
In a huge, big train carries his baggage  
On his own head and suffers pain,  
Instead of putting it down?)

— Bhagavan

# SWAMI SURESHANANDA

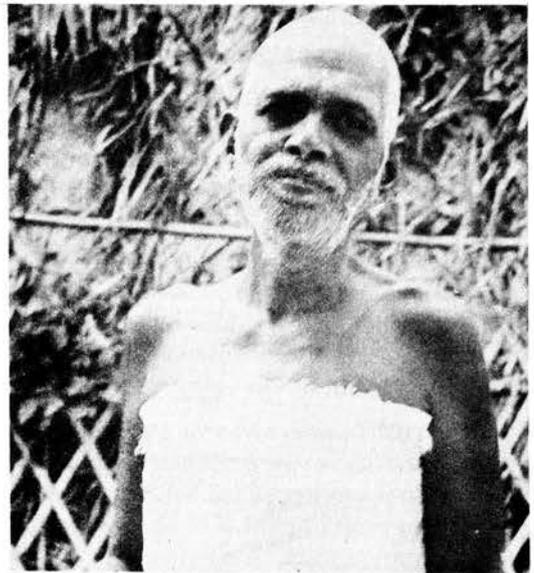
*As devotees love to read the reminiscences of the earlier devotees of Bhagavan in the pages of **The Mountain Path**, Swami Sureshanandaji, the founder of Vijnana Ramaneeya Ashram, Palghat was requested by Kunju Swami and the Ashram authorities for his reminiscences. But Swamiji, who avoided publicity and would not even pose for a photograph, declined to write.*

*The following account of Swamiji's experiences in the Holy presence of Bhagavan is taken from a Malayalam book-let written by Swamiji.*

IT WAS in July 1947 that Swamiji had the good fortune of having the Holy Darshan of Bhagavan Maharshi. In his *purva ashrama* Swamiji was an advocate practising in Palghat. The turning point in his life occurred as the result of a vision of Jagadambika. He gave up his lucrative profession and went on a pilgrimage and reached Anandasramam of Swami Ramdas. There Swamiji received the guidance — "You have seen Swami. One more remains to be seen — that is at Tiruvannamalai — Sri Ramana Maharshi", said the manager of the Ashram. These words created an indelible impression and he came to Tiruvannamalai. The moment he beheld the holy face of Bhagavan, his mind felt an indescribable peace. This terminated the long search for a real Guru. Swamiji had wanted to clear certain doubts but the power of that divine place was overwhelming and he could not utter a syllable.

Before long, a solemn and steady voice broke the silence: Sri Bhagavan spoke for five minutes.

All the doubts that had troubled Swamiji's mind for a long time were cleared. On the third day something strange took place. Swamiji was sitting at the door-step as the Hall was fully crowded. At the instance of Bhagavan, the secretary asked Swamiji to occupy the front row. Swamiji was intently looking at Bhagavan. All of a sudden Bhagavan's form became invisible. Swamiji



became unaware of his surroundings and remained in this state for several hours.

The following morning, Swamiji composed a poem in Malayalam and placed it at the feet of Bhagavan. Bhagavan went through it and had it read out in the hall. It ran:

"For more than a year this soul has been  
yearning  
to find thy Holy Feet,  
And at last by Thine own Grace has  
found them.  
A thousand prostrations at Thy Holy Feet,  
Whose power reveals all the universe".

Swamiji spent a few days more in the presence of Bhagavan. Upon parting, he placed a poem in Malayalam at the feet of Bhagavan :

Visiting various centres of pilgrimage,  
Reached at last the foot of Tiruvannamalai.  
This indeed is the Holiest region  
For here dwells the eternal Bhagavan  
Embodying Being, Awareness and Bliss.  
Let this Holy Light lead me on the path  
to Truth

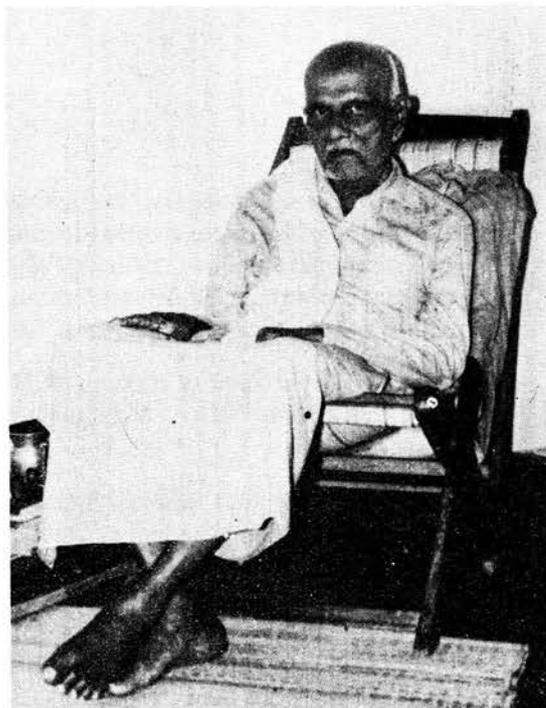
And end the evil of Birth and Death.

Though Swamiji wished to stay on in Ramanasramam unexpected events called him away from Tiruvannamalai immediately. He consoled himself thinking that this too was the will of Bhagavan whether afar or near, the current of Bhagavan's grace continued.

Swamiji, in Palghat, studied the teachings of Bhagavan and translated some of His works into Malayalam. One day in the early morning as he sat in meditation the verse in Bhagavan's *Upadesa Saram* — *Jagada Isadhi Yukta Sevanam Ashta Murthi Bhr Deva Pujanam* and a collection of books appeared in a vision. This led Swamiji to collect a few books on religion and philosophy and the Vijnana Ramaneyya Ashram library came into being.

Not long afterwards Swamiji was again able to spend a few days in the presence of Bhagavan. Swamiji then wanted to place before Bhagavan his Malayalam versification of Kavyakantha's *Ramana Chattvarimsat*. When he felt a little nervous, in a deep and tranquil voice Bhagavan said "you may sit down and read". It took half an hour. Bhagavan patiently listened and asked — "did you not translate the *vandana sloka*?" Swamiji informed Bhagavan that his copy did not contain it. Immediately Bhagavan asked some one to take the book from the revolving shelf, and showed the particular verse to him. Swamiji was wonderstruck to see the verse written in Bhagavan's own handwriting in beautiful Malayalam script. Swamiji went to the guest house, transcribed the verse and entrusted it to the secretary.

Swamiji was at Ramanasramam during Bhagavan's *Mahasamadhi* and received some



Swami Sureshananda

of the sacred ashes from Bhagavan's *samadhi*, and placed them in a silver urn beneath the shrine in the sanctum sanctorum of Swamiji's Palghat Ashram, 'Vijnana Ramaneyya Ashram'. Many *sanyasis* and savants have visited this Ashram and enjoyed Swamiji's hospitality.

Swamiji loved books and was prepared to undertake any hardship for the development of the Ashram library. He wanted the Sanskrit section of the library to become a Research Centre. The opening of the branch was performed by Sri R. Ramachandran Nair, I.A.S. Swamiji was able to collect single-handedly, more than three thousand books on philosophy, Vedanta and literature in various languages.

Swamiji also conducted classes in *Bhagavad Gita*, the teachings of Ramana Maharshi, and the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji used to say that the key to the real meaning of *Bhagavad Gita* was to be found in Bhagavan's *Upadesa Saram*.

Swamiji has translated into Malayalam almost all of Bhagavan's works. These trans-



Vijnana Ramaneeya Ashram, Palghat.

lations are extremely simple and lucid. The versions of *Upadesa Saram*, *Satdarsanam*, *Gita-saram* and *Arunachala Pancharatnam* have already been published. In addition, he wrote a Malayalam commentary on *Yoga Vasishtha Sara* the English translation of which was serialised in *The Mountain Path* and later published in book-form by Sri Ramanasramam.

It was Swamiji's desire that Vijnana Ramaneeya Ashram, which was started in the name of Guru Bhagavan Ramana, should merge with Sri Ramanasramam. Accordingly, during the Centenary Celebration of Bhagavan's *Jayanthi*, the Ashram authorities were kind enough to effect the affiliation.

Swamiji had no other thought except Bhagavan Ramana. Swamiji was partially paralysed due to a severe stroke thirteen years

ago. At the mere mention of Bhagavan's name tears would trickle from his lustrous eyes. His child-like simplicity, his compassion and tenderness towards one and all, his unassuming personality, his vivid memory and clarity of thinking, his staunch adherence to Absolute non-duality, evoked the admiration of everybody. On *Karthika* Day, the 20th November 1983, at 8.00 p.m. Swamiji entered *Mahasamadhi* and merged in the light of Arunachala.

The Ramana *bhaktas* of Vijnana Ramaneeya Ashram are devotedly carrying on Swamiji's varied work in the name of Bhagavan. May this Ashram, which was Swamiji's life-work, continue to function in Palghat as a memorial to Sri Ramana Maharshi and help the propagation of His teachings.

சிந்தனை ரமணர்க்காக்கி முருகனார்  
செந்தமிழின்பத் தமிழ்வேடம் வாரீர்

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# Pure Consciousness and World Building

By Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan and I.E. Prince

## MODERN SCIENCE

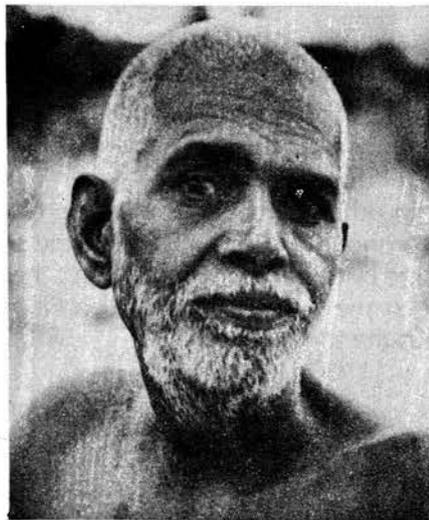
PHYSICAL EVENTS are arranged according to modern science in a four-dimensional manifold called space-time. This manifold is an improvement on the older manifold of "things" arranged in varying spatial patterns at varying times; and this, in turn, was an improvement upon the manifold resulting from assuming an accurate correspondence between percepts and "things".<sup>1</sup>

Modern science continues to say that a vast assemblage of atoms (composed of electrons, quarks, gluons etc.) are undergoing continuous quantum transformations. In the course of these transformations they radiate energy, which, when it comes in contact with the human body, has various effects, some of which are called "perceptions".

The world of modern science contains more than the world of percepts, and in some respects contains more than the world of common sense. Both common sense and science supplement by the assumption that "things" do not cease to exist when unperceived, and by the further assumption that things not perceived can be inferred. These hardly need any explanation. For instance, your sitting room furniture does not cease to exist when you do not look at it and the sun does not cease to shine when you close your eyes.<sup>2</sup>

## FIELD

When energy emitted by matter as a result of quantum transitions travels, without further quantum transitions, to a given part of a human body, it sets up a train of quantum transitions which ultimately reach the brain. It follows that if two trains of radiant energy, falling on the same point of the body, cause different percepts, there must be differences in the two trains, and therefore in the quantum transitions that give rise to them. The region in which



these varied energy transitions go on (including the energy transitions that make up the human being) is the *Field*. Conscious energy pulsates in the Field.

"Unbroken 'I-I' is the ocean infinite; the ego, 'I'-thought remains only a bubble on it and is called individual soul. The bubble too is water; when it bursts it only mixes in the ocean, when it remains a bubble it is still a part of the ocean".<sup>3</sup>

"Know Me (Pure Consciousness) as the knower of the fields, O Arjuna! The knowledge of the field and its knower, I regard as true Knowledge" (Gita 13.2).

## I-PULSE

"In Thee, O Hill of Pure Consciousness, the picture of the Universe is formed, has its stay, and is dissolved, this is the sublime truth.

<sup>12</sup> *Human Knowledge: Its Scope and Limits* by Bertrand Russell.

<sup>3</sup> *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*. P. 104.

Thou art the inner Self who pulses in the Heart as 'I'.<sup>4</sup>

So the I-pulse rises from the Heart (the centre of Pure Conscious Energy in man)" as the primary datum of one's experience".<sup>5</sup>

This I-pulse is modulated by the accumulated tendencies (vasanas) and becomes the I-thought.

It is only after the rise or origin of the 'I'-thought that innumerable other thoughts arise. In other words, only after the first personal pronoun, 'I', has arisen, do the second and third personal pronouns, ('you', 'he' etc.) occur to the mind; and they cannot subsist without the former".<sup>6</sup>

#### SUBJECTIVE PASTNESS

Referred to the subjective I-thought, "events" in the field including the body thought and the mind are arranged in the past order subjectively. First, the I-pulse rises from Pure Consciousness. This is the "real now". This is modulated by accumulated tendencies (vasanas) and becomes the I-thought. The I-thought gives rise to the mind or to the ego and forms the basis of the "subjective now" or what we acknowledge as the 'now'. The body and the senses come next in order.

"What I maintain is that we can witness or observe what goes on in our heads, and that we cannot witness or observe anything else at all . . . that starry heaven that we know in visual sensation is inside us. The external starry heaven that we believe is inferred".<sup>7</sup>

Take for instance the sun. It takes approximately eight minutes for the rays of light from the sun to reach us. In relation to our subjective 'I'-thought (not the 'I-pulse' which is unmodulated and is one with Pure Consciousness), we see the sun which existed eight minutes ago. If the sun explodes 'now' (i.e. the 'subjective now') the rays of light which emanated from the sun will continue to come to us for another eight minutes and we will continue to see the sun (although it is no

#### THE ENIGMA

By Dr. Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

So, thus and thus our life goes on and on,  
While seeing it is brief we cannot see!  
We hardly think of moments  
that are gone,  
We hardly care for her moments  
yet to be.  
At every step we mock at the sublime,  
In quest of pleasure paying  
the price of pain.  
We are pathetic hostages of time  
Tortured and bled again and yet again!  
The Plan beyond our plans defies  
our guess  
And baffles utterly our consciousness:  
From the beginning to the very end —  
It is already set and will not bend.  
The moon despite its whiteness  
bears a stigma:  
God! what is this enigma?

more there) for another eight minutes. This is also the case with the stars, quasars, pulsars, etc. which exist in several light years in subjective pastness.

The "I" (i.e. the I-thought) is first created and then the world. The riddle of the creation of the world is thus solved if you solve the creation of the "I" (i.e. 'I-thought').<sup>8</sup>

"There is nothing whatever that is higher than 'I' (i.e. the I-pulse which rises from Pure Consciousness), O Arjuna all that is here is strung on me (i.e. the 'I' thought) as rows of gems on a string (i.e. subjective pastness).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Five Hymns to Sri Arunachala.*

<sup>5</sup> *Maharshi's Gospel.* P. 90.

<sup>6</sup> *Who Am I?*

<sup>7</sup> *My Philosophic Development* by Bertrand Russell.

<sup>8</sup> *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi.* P. 524.

<sup>9</sup> *Gita,* chapter 7, v. 6.

Thus the 'I-pulse' (which is the self-intelligence of Pure Conscious Energy) gives rise to the 'I-thought' which gives rise to the World of forms and names in subjective pastness.

#### WORLD BUILDING

"After the rise of the I-thought, there is the false identification of the 'I' (i.e. the I-thought) with the body, the senses, the mind etc. The 'I' (gross I) is wrongly associated with them and the true 'I' (i.e. the I-pulse rising from Pure Consciousness) is lost sight of . . . ." says Sri Ramana Maharshi.<sup>10</sup> This results in the firm concretisation of the world rooted in 'I-thought'. The imaging of the world goes on unabated due to the continued processing of the accumulated tendencies (vasanas) memory and sense-inputs referenced to and ranged about the 'I-thought'. This is world-building and Indian Philosophy has a special name for it, Maya.

The story does not end there. The mind established in 'I-thought' due to continued and sustained association with "objects" begins to call them "mine". One treats "objects" as my 'car' my 'house', my 'wife', my 'children', my 'money' etc. thus drifting into "mine-ness". That is not the end of the drift either. One marks out one's own "enclosure" and strives to enrich it in competition with the Joneses. One has no end to one's desires. Competition, dislike, hatred, strife, war, destruction, disease and death follow. One suffers continually in the so-called Maya or "hyper-mineness".

#### SELF REALISATION

Deeply involved in "hyper-Mineness" or Maya one suffers acutely and becomes very

unhappy. One earnestly seeks a way for deliverance.

Initially of course a drifting and weak mind has to be trained to hold on to a good thought. The Bhagavad Gita says: Sanaissana-iruparamet (the mind must gradually be brought to a standstill): Atmasamstham manahkrtva (making the mind inhere in the Self): Abhyasa vairagyabhyam (by practice and dispassion).

Gradually the mind becomes stronger to stand the onslaught of Maya or "hyper-mineness".

Finally one realises:

"In the interior of the cavity of the Heart, the one Supreme Being is ever glowing with the self-conscious I-pulse. To realise HIM enter the heart with one-pointed mind, by quest within, or diving deep, or control of breath and abide with the Pure Consciousness."<sup>11</sup>

For the Self-realised, the source of the world order is Pure Consciousness and is referenced to the pure I-pulse. Here the world-order collapses like a house of cards.

"For the ignorant; the world-order is concretised with reference to the I-thought. He who dedicates his mind to Thee, and seeing Thee, always beholds the universe as Thy figure, he who at all times glorifies Thee and loves Thee as none other than the Self, he is peerless being one with Thee, O Pure Consciousness, and unified in Thee as bliss".<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*. P. 265.

<sup>11</sup> Translated from Stanza 2: Ch II *Ramana Gita*.

<sup>12</sup> *Five Hymns to Sri Arunachala*.

**"All our life is based on thought which is measurable. It measures God, it measures its relationship with another through the image. It tries to improve itself according to what it thinks it should be. So unnecessarily we live in a world of measurement, and with that world we want to enter into a world in which there is no measurement at all. Meditation is the seeing of what is and going beyond it — seeing the measure and going beyond the measure."**

— J. Krishnamurthi, from *The Awakening of Intelligence* p. 450

# My Reminiscences of Sri Ramana Bhagavan

By K.R.K. Murty

**Sri K.R.K. Murty** first came to Sri Bhagavan in 1937 and afterwards became a regular visitor to the Ashram. During the period 1951 to 1953 he wrote his reminiscences of Sri Bhagavan in a number of articles which were published in **Arul**, a Tamil magazine dedicated to Sri Bhagavan and published by Sri Janaki Matha, a saintly devotee about whom we published an article in our January 1966 issue, pp. 105-8. Afterwards Sri Murty translated his articles into English and they were published in **The Call Divine**, an English magazine dedicated to Sri Bhagavan and published from Bombay. These articles were later gathered together and published by the author in 1970 in a book entitled **Sri Ramana Bhagavan**. The following are some interesting extracts selected from that book.

IT GIVES great pleasure to any devotee to think of the few precious moments he had the privilege of spending in the holy presence of Sri Ramana Bhagavan. Recapitulation of one's experiences at the feet of Sri Bhagavan and His brief utterances never fail to elevate one to higher planes.

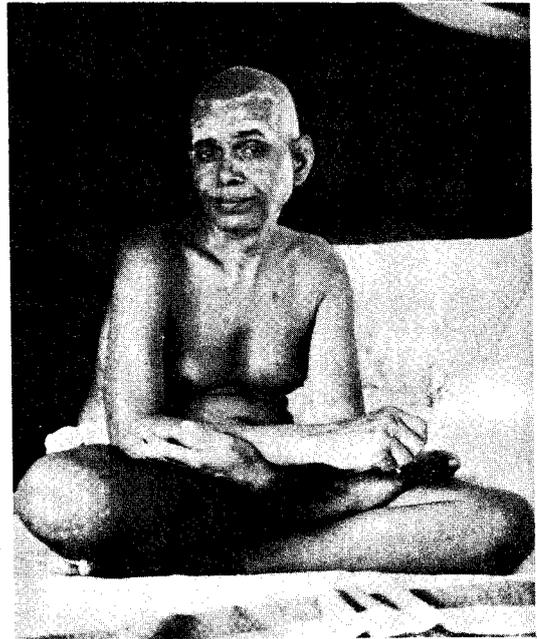
Sri Bhagavan was once going through an English daily in his usual routine way, and at one place He read aloud a sensational report regarding a new invention. He smiled and after a pause gently remarked, "One may acquire any number of powers, but without realising the truth (*yathartha*) one cannot acquire peace of mind".

Someone asked, "What is *yathartha*?"

"That which exists always", was Sri Bhagavan's immediate reply. But after a pause He noticed that some earnest devotees were anxious to grasp the full significance of His reply, so He graciously explained as follows:

"Peace is our nature (*swabhava*). Just like a person who keeps many things in his room and complains that there is no space there, we complain that there is no peace. Is not space obtained automatically when all the things are removed?"<sup>1</sup>

Sri Bhagavan never used to lecture to any



audience voluntarily, but when questions were asked He would reply in His own characteristic way. His explanations were always very brief and to the point, so many ears would be waiting eagerly to hear His unforgettable

<sup>1</sup> A similar conversation is recorded in *Day by Day*, pp. 110-111 (31-1-46). (Ed.)

words directly. If anyone failed to catch one or two words, they would feel it to be an irreparable loss.

One day Sri Bhagavan was enthusiastically explaining about some interesting matter, and everyone in the hall was attentively following Him. But all of a sudden one of His attendants proceeded straight to the radio-set which was kept in the hall, and without looking this side or that he mercilessly switched on the loud-speaker, which drowned the voice of Sri Bhagavan and filled the hall with unnecessary sounds. The person who thus stood between us and Sri Bhagavan may find some excuse to justify his act, but to us it appeared as though some evil spirit had suddenly taken possession of him and made him act like a *rakshasa*.

Sri Bhagavan became silent and we thought we had lost the opportunity of hearing Him. Since we could not raise our voice against anyone in His holy presence, we had to keep quiet cursing our misfortune. But after some time the radio was switched off and the normal silence prevailed, whereupon to our delightful surprise Sri Bhagavan resumed the thread of what He had been saying.

This unexpected act of Sri Bhagavan filled my eyes with tears. He could have asked His own attendant not to switch on the radio for some time. Even a look in that direction would have been sufficient. But instead He waited patiently until the attendant of his own accord switched it off. Sri Bhagavan did not want to wound the feelings of His attendant or to give him any order, so He adjusted His own activity to suit the whims of one who was not clever enough to realise that he should not interrupt the speech of Bhagavan. Such was Sri Bhagavan's way of doing things.

On one important occasion arrangements had been made for feeding the poor in the Ashram. When the meal-time was approaching and people were rushing into the dining-hall, someone in authority happened to shout that *sadhus* should not be allowed to enter. Accordingly some poor *sadhus* were sent out to

some other place. When all the seating arrangements were completed, the kitchen-staff wanted to begin serving. But the chief guest, Sri Bhagavan, was not to be found anywhere. People began to search for Him in all directions, and finally one party noticed that He was sitting under a shady tree at some distance from the Ashram. They requested Him to come to the Ashram for meals, but He replied, "You did not want *sadhus* to remain there. Since I am also a *sadhu*, I left the place as desired by you".

Sri Bhagavan identified Himself with the lowest and never wanted any special privileges for Himself. He used to rectify wrong-doers not by showing anger or dissatisfaction but by self-denial or self-punishment.

If someone in the Ashram were to behave in an unjust manner, Sri Bhagavan used to know about it even though no one had informed Him, and He would then deny Himself something without saying anything to anyone. All the people concerned would therefore gather together to find out why He had given up that particular thing, and since no one was bold enough to face Him and ask Him the real cause, they used to examine their own conduct and behaviour and discover the cause that might have caused displeasure to Him. They would then approach Him, prostrate before Him, beg His pardon and promise to be more careful in future. This was Sri Bhagavan's way of rectifying those who had done some wrong.

One day Sri Bhagavan started towards Arunachala for His usual walk. On the way there were some steps, and while climbing them His leg slipped and was injured. Some devotees noticed this, and on examining the steps they found them to be uneven. Immediately some masons were called, and they started work even before Sri Bhagavan returned to the spot. On His return He noticed that they were cutting off some portions of the steps, whereupon He asked, "Why are you cutting the steps? They did nothing. It is only this leg that is at fault. Why don't you cut off the leg?"

The Ashram was developing a garden and some inmates used to put forth their best efforts to secure valuable plants and nurse them. Some of the inmates also used to take interest in the *gosala* and in looking after the cows. One day some cows seized an opportunity to enter the garden and graze upon the inviting plants. The workers noticed this only when it was too late, and they were very angry with the cows. The incident created so much stir in the Ashram that it reached the ears of Sri Bhagavan, who smiled and said, "Why should the cows be blamed? Do they know that they should not graze in certain places? If the garden were properly fenced the cows would not have entered".

Sri Bhagavan sees the other side of things, which normal people fail to notice.

\*\*\*\*

Once when there was a discussion about foods such as onions, drumsticks and carrots, which orthodox people avoid, Sri Bhagavan remarked that they may do good to the body but not to the mind. They may purify the blood and benefit the body, but they rouse passions and are not helpful for purification of the mind.

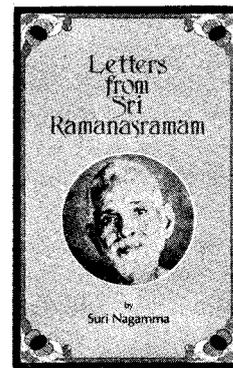
Giving up for life certain fruits, nuts or other foods which are dear to one, is a practice which is prevalent among religious people when they are going on pilgrimage to holy places. One day Sri Bhagavan noticed a devotee avoiding a mango on this ground, and He remarked that a better form of renunciation or *tyaga* would be to accept whatever one happens to get and not to crave for what is not available.

Sri Bhagavan once said that one may avoid things which do not agree with one's constitution and that one may take necessary quantities of suitable food, but that maintenance of the body and health should not occupy much of our attention since that is not our chief pursuit.

Once when someone was saying that no sensations were being felt near his hip for some time, Sri Bhagavan quickly remarked



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"How nice it would be if the whole body became like that! We would be unaware of the body itself".

\*\*\*\*

One day the following conversation took place between Sri Bhagavan and a devotee.

**Devotee :** It is said, 'By the Grace of a *Sadguru* the highest state is reached in a moment' (*kshanena labhyate brahma sadguro ravalokanath*). Is this true?

**Bhagavan:** Yes, if the disciple is in a ripe state (*pakva sthiti*). Ignorance (*ajnana*) will be removed only by the look (*avalokana*) of the *Sadguru*.

**D.:** Is Grace (*kripa*) given to one in proportion to one's merit (*patratha*)?

**B.:** If the vessel (*patra*) is small, the Grace one gets will be small. If the vessel is big, the Grace will be proportionately more.

**D.** If the vessel is found to be small, how to make it big?

**B.** The water in all vessels is same. (After a pause) There is no question of more Grace or less Grace for a *saranagata*, a person who surrenders.

**D.** What is meant by surrender or *saranagathi*?

**B.** When one surrenders, there will be no sense of doership (*kartritva-bhava*) in one. There will be a sense of indifference (*udasina-bhava*) and one will not feel any anxiety about actions or their results. One will not commence any work for one's sake, and one will become a *sarva arambha parityagi* (a person who has renounced all undertakings)<sup>2</sup>. One will have no ego. The feeling of 'I' (*aham-bhava*) will vanish neither by *jnana marga* or by *sarangati*.

**D.** In books it is stated that Bhagavan is an ocean of mercy. Is it a fact?

**B.** Ocean? The ocean has a limit or boundary. But the Grace of Bhagavan has no such thing. It is limitless. It knows no bounds.

\*\*\*\*

The following are some remarks made by Sri Bhagavan on various occasions:

"If you are quiet, you do the greatest service. One who is always quiet in Self-abidance (*atma-nishtha*) is doing greater service to the *Guru* than one who does some service physically."

"If one wants to commit suicide, even a small implement or knife is sufficient, but for murdering others bigger weapons are required. Similarly, for oneself one or two words are sufficient, but to convince others books and books are to be written."

"This Ashram is a place where people should stay to improve themselves and not to criticise or remark about others. In the beginning people come here with the best of intentions to secure the Grace of the Swami. But after sometime they begin to comment, 'This is not all right, that is not all right', and engage themselves in somekind of activity and run after power and position. They do not come and draw inspiration from the Swami, and forget, as it were, what they have come here for."

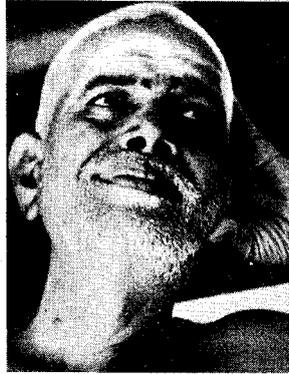
"It is always safer to use valueless and ordinary things, because then no one will care to cast a greedy eye upon them."

"One who does work without feeling the sense of doership escapes misery and unhappiness."

<sup>2</sup> See *Bhagavad Gita* 14.25 and *Bhagavad Gita Saram* v. 37. (Ed.)

**If the mind becomes introverted through enquiry into the Source of *Aham-vritti*, the *vasanas* become extinct, and in the absence of the reflecting medium the phenomenon of reflection, namely, the mind, also disappears being absorbed into the Light of the one Reality, the Heart. That is the sum and substance of all that an aspirant need know."**

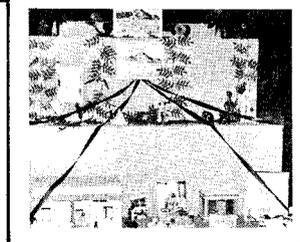
— SRI BHAGAVAN



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# THE EXPERIENCE OF IMMORTALITY

By Ramesh Balsekar

The following extract has been taken from **The Experience of Immortality**<sup>1</sup>, a commentary on the **Amritanubhava** of Jnaneshwar in the light of the teachings of Nisargadatta Maharaj. The author was one of the principal translators at Maharaj's house and he has already published a well-received book on Maharaj's teachings. The following verses and the accompanying commentary have been taken from the third chapter of the work and their main theme is that 'the knowledge that is relative to ignorance is not the final knowledge or the truth' (p. 73).

16. Therefore, just as 'ignorance' is the cause of the bondage, so also is
17. its inter-related opposite, 'knowledge'. It is not only I who say it. I have authority for this statement from Lord Shiva who says as much in the Shiva-sutra, called *Jnanam Bandhah*, and also from Lord Vishnu who says so in the *Bhagavad Gita*.
18. However, it is not to be accepted only because the venerable Lord Shiva and Vishnu say so, but because it is so as a matter of
19. definite experience and apperception. Would it not be ridiculous that 'THAT' which is knowledge itself, its very essence and embodiment, should depend on any other knowledge to establish itself? It would be like the sun to have to depend on something else for its light!
20. If by the knowledge 'I am That' an individual considers himself liberated, it clearly shows that he has still not apperceived his true nature which is the fullness of knowledge itself. If a lamp should expect light from another lamp, surely it means that it has forgotten its own nature.

This set of verses, seemingly simple enough, goes to the very root of the matter. Here the sage conveys the most important truth. As



Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Nisargadatta Maharaj used to put it so succinctly — with a certain amount of impishness combined with a great deal of compassion — the conceptual 'individual' is truly inseparable from his real nature, like sugar and sweetness: 'The individual must realize that to know His "self", there can be no other self than the self which he himself is'. Maharaj used to say that the pronoun 'I' as pure subjectivity (not the insignificant 'me' which identifies itself with a phenomenal object) is what the Absolute is. The individual, with his split-mind, considering himself a pseudo-subject of all other objects, cannot cognize his own 'whole-ness' because the wholeness is pure subjectivity,

<sup>1</sup> *The Experience of Immortality* by Ramesh S. Balsekar. Published by Chetana, 34, Rampurt Row, Bombay 400 023. Price Rs. 120.

and the individual wants to cognize it as an object!

And this is what Jnaneshwar conveys to us in this set of verses. Awareness is no 'thing' to be cognized by means of any kind of knowledge; awareness does not need to cognize itself, and indeed any attempt to do so would be an obstacle. Any intermediate process like 'so aham' (I am That) as an intermediate step could only be a concept — it would be like taking the help of a lamp to see the sun. Any kind of knowledge is necessarily conceptual in the framework of space-time, whereas awareness and apperception of 'what is' is not a matter of knowledge. Indeed it is only when the split mind is absent that awareness and apperception can be present. It is only when conceptualizing ceases and the split mind heals itself into wholeness that apperception comes in. Apperception is noumenal, but any thought or ideas thereon can only be phenomenal.

21. **Is it possible to find oneself by going from place to place?**
22. **After such a wandering over a long period, if one does find that one was seeking only oneself when there was no need for any seeking, would there be any joy on finding oneself?**
23. **Similarly, the self which is knowledge itself, after a long search for knowledge, successfully declares, 'I am that'. Is this not a case of the self binding itself with such knowledge?**

In these verses the sage points out that instead of directly apperceiving our true nature — the infinite, intemporal Absolute — we go about seeking and searching from place to place, undertaking all kinds of physical and mental disciplines. The search is undertaken by what is a mere appearance with which the self has identified itself, and it is only when this fact is realized that the apperception occurs — in the absence of any individual — that what the seeker has been seeking is the seeker himself.

## SUNYA

By Frederick Beck

**nothing is  
nothing ever was  
nothing will it ever be  
and when it becomes something  
(so it seems)  
still it is nothing**

In other words, the real crux of the problem (Nisargadatta Maharaj used to call it a great joke or a great hoax) is the fact that the individual who thinks he is enlightened is as much in bondage as another who thinks he is ignorant and in bondage. This is because 'that' which thinks that it is in bondage, and 'that' which thinks it is enlightened are both identified conceptually with a phenomenal object. The supposed problem, therefore, relates not to any condition of bondage or freedom, but to the identification with a supposed separate entity with supposed autonomy.

Any seeking presupposes that the sought is something different from the seeker. But the 'self' and the 'other' (the very basis of duality, of temporal manifestation as the subject-object) are both empty concepts. One cannot be without the other, and it is only in the ABSENCE of BOTH that conceptualization ceases, and so does the seeking cease — because the seeker is the sought. The very concept of, and the desire for, liberation means turning away from the basic fact that that-which-we-are has always been free. The desire for liberation — or knowledge that would bring about liberation — cannot be disassociated from the concept of the separate 'me', and therefore the desire for knowledge can itself be the bondage. When the 'me' concept is abandoned, what remains is the that-which-we-are, which has always been free.

To put the matter in another way, there can be no see-er of truth. There can only be seeing, which itself is the Truth.

# THE PATH TO ABSOLUTE TRUTH

By Hans Heimer

**A**BSOLUTE TRUTH is always true, whatever the circumstances, i.e. whatever the place or time. If it were otherwise, it could not be absolute truth.

It follows that absolute truth is present here and now. If it were not present, it would not be absolute truth.

If it is present, and we don't recognise it, then the fault must be ours, must be in our method of perception, our method of looking for it.

So the first thing we have to learn is how to look, to observe, to perceive. The technique for doing this is called 'meditation'.

We know at a practical level that clear thinking is not possible in the presence of strong emotion, conflict or turmoil. Therefore meditation, initially at any rate, has to be carried out in calmness, peace, without physical or mental distraction.

The technique then consists in putting the body at rest (sitting, not lying as this leads to sleep) in peaceful surroundings, and calmly observing.

Calmly observing means taking an interest in the arising of sensations and thoughts without trying to censor or disapprove. It means adopting the attitude of a keen but dispassionate observer. At the same time it requires a refusal to allow the thoughts to develop into 'strings' or sequences which lead to the abandonment of the detached observer attitude. Whenever this stringing happens, it is necessary to return to the observer attitude by the thought: "my interest is in the arising and source, whence is the arising and source of these thoughts".

The stringing of thoughts to sensations or thoughts is called "attachment". The refusal to engage in this process is called "detach-

ment". After practising detachment for some time, thoughts will cease to arise as long as detachment is practised.

From personal experience the insight is achieved that sensations and thoughts (emotions are also considered as thoughts):

- (a) Succeed each other rapidly but are never simultaneous.
- (b) Come from a common source which is supremely intimate.
- (c) They are real, in the sense that they undoubtedly occur.
- (d) Are temporary and constantly changing.

This insight is the result of indubitable experience.

If we now extend the field of observation to the dream and deep sleep state, it becomes clear that this insight applies here too. To this must be added the fact that in the deep sleep state there are no thoughts and sensations and that this must also occur in the waking state in the intervals between thoughts and sensations. This interval is not normally observed, because no thoughts or sensations exist; it can be experienced in the change of state from sleeping to waking and during deep meditation. This insight then leads to the conclusion that sensation and thought are two manifestations of one source and that source is also present in the intervals between the two and in dreamless sleep. That source is therefore the universal ground and essence of all phenomena.

Every object or thing, from the smallest to the largest, from the electron to the universe and including our own bodies, consists of sensations. (The proof of this is that if we lose a sense, e.g. sight, then all objects alter accor-

dingly). These objects or things are therefore none other than forms or manifestations of the one source.

Similarly thought, including the concepts of space, time and causality is a form or manifestation of the same source.

Habitually we allow the thought to arise that I am the body, or mind and that the objects of sensations outside our body are not I, not self. This process or group of thoughts is called the I-thought or ego or "id-entification" or "embodiment of the I". It is a habit which commences from childhood when our parents implant the idea that our body is our self, into our minds. This implanting is called "conditioning". This conditioning continues all our life. Frequently when a sensation or thought arises, it is followed by another thought which claims the previous sensation or thought as I or mine. For example, a momentary sensation of pain is quickly followed by the thought "I was in pain". Or a thought of anger is quickly followed by the thought "I am angry". This is conditioning or attachment. The ego was not present when the former sensation or thought occurred, yet it claims it as its own. Insight reveals that the ego is just another thought in the sequence of thoughts and sensations, neither more 'I' nor less 'I' than any other.

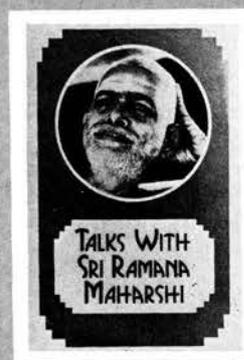
This basic process of duality, of splitting the one into two, into I and not-I, into observer and observed, subject and object etc, is the fundamental error which prevents us from seeing the truth and which impedes our observation.

Correct observation therefore leads to the absolute truth, which is always already present, here and now.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Heimer's method of meditation is very different from Bhagavan's method of Self Enquiry. Note sections 11 and 12 of *Who am I*, where we are told not to pursue any thought, but to ask to whom it occurred.

— Ed.

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# HOW I CAME TO BHAGAVAN RAMANA

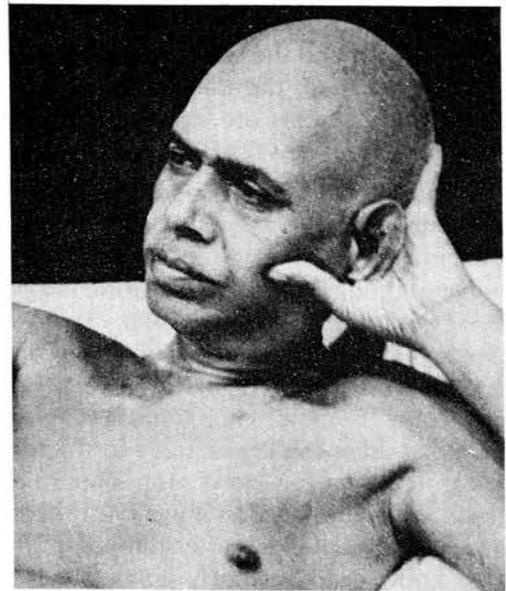
By B.V.L.N. Raju

I HAIL from Jinnuru, a village in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh and belong to a peasant community. During 1954, I accompanied my maternal grand mother in a pilgrimage to the Northern part of the country.

In 1957 I had a dream one night. An old man with a staff in his hand, raised me from the bed and kissed me hard on my cheeks. I was perplexed. I pleaded with him to leave me alone. The stranger paid no heed to my words. I had a feeling that he was invading my life. I was seized with fear and tried hard to wriggle out of his grip. While he was holding me in his embrace, my pillow fell on to the floor. He lifted it off the ground, adjusted it on my bed and gently laid me back on the cot. He looked at me compassionately and left me, as a doctor would leave a patient.

For six months I was struggling to know who this stranger could be. One day while reading *The Hindu* in our village Library, I saw an advertisement of *The Great Man of India* by Madras Book Publishing House. Going through the list of these great men, I felt a thrill when I read the seventh name as "Sri Ramana Maharshi". I felt here was the man who would draw me to the cave of my heart. I got the book on Sri Ramana Maharshi through post from the Madras Company. The book contained his portrait also and I recognised the person who had appeared before me in my dream six months earlier.

The divine person, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, lived in 'Arunachala' in Tamilnadu and was revered all over the world. His phy-



sical life ended on 14th April 1950, in his seventieth year.

He had no personal life of His own. His life was but the splendour of the Self. Equality was His life breath. Many blessed people achieved fulfilment in their lives by the mere *darshan* of the Maharshi. He was like a blazing sun in the spiritual firmament of India. The Chanting of His name is auspicious. He is the *Mahatma* of all *Mahatmas*.

I paid my first visit to Sri Ramanasramam in January, 1959. I have dedicated my life from then on till now to His service. It was not my choice that He came into my life. He took me into His fold and blessed me!

**Ere there was a garden and wine and grape in the world  
Our soul was intoxicated with immortal wine.  
In the Baghdad of Eternity we  
proudly were proclaiming, "I am God".**

— Jalalud-din-Rumi from *Diwan*

# ONE WORLD

By "One"

IT IS morning, and slowly the mountain moves to make way for the sun. Its light embraces the river and the waters slowly pass by, becoming the field, the trees, the sky. It is a new day. The waters are not the waters of yesterday. It is all new.

The sound of all things suddenly becomes alive. One looks up to see a pair of giant eagles in pursuit of a white gull. There is action and time disappears. The world is alive. Many crows gather together and chase the eagles around and around the blue sky until the white gull is free of his attackers. Now crows come from all directions and group together to drive the eagles back to the hills. One can feel that the crows are saying to the eagles, "Go away, we don't want you here." They seem to be looking after the other birds and to know exactly what's going on. Now the eagles have gone and things are continuing as before the attack. The white gull has forgotten all about his ordeal and has become the river. He does not appear to even think that the eagles might return and have him for lunch.

It is a new moment. Suddenly from behind, some small stones and clay hit the earth close by. One looks around and sees a family of monkeys sitting along the bank. We look at each other and one tells me that they have come down to drink, that the forests are dry. One by one they come and kiss the river and the water willingly gives itself. Large stones come rolling down the bank now, and one has to move quickly to avoid them. Then with a splash and deep-sounding OM they become the river.

Something is happening inside oneself that is too much to express. One has felt many changes over the years, but is it possible for such a disturbance to take place inside that makes past changes seem to be no change at

all? Just a circle game, a trick of the mind. Everything has been washed away. All sorrow, all pain, along with the things one enjoyed and thought previously, have gone. All desires, ambitions, goals and motives have gone. There is no searching, no confusion, no wanting, no opinion, no beliefs, no hope. In fact, there is no separate me anymore wanting or judging anything. And all this has happened through no effort, no desire, no motive to be anything but what one is now.

For years, one was searching and wanting. One thought it was thought, experience and knowledge in which one found peace. So many things were built and destroyed, with the importance on the more. Different places, people, work and situations, but all this was blinding. One was not looking at the present.

"Now living" is in the present; it is this moment, a fresh, living thing. Every day is a new day. But what happens when a man wakes in the morning, and he is full of yesterday or tomorrow? The past is a dead thing; it is an image, like tomorrow. So then we have this image which collides head on with the real, the present. This is where the conflict arises. We can see all of this very clearly look at it without it being grabbed and analysed by the mind, which is the old. The old kills the new. Everything one has been taught and has done, good and bad experience, are all in the past.

The past is dead. To rid oneself of the ego is the same as dying to the past. We hear the words and that's all they are to most of us — the image. We are told that the mind must be quiet, fresh, innocent, clear and pure to obtain peace. How can a mind be fresh and new if it is always busy remembering, gathering facts and figures, wanting, comparing, hoping. Surely this peace or awareness we have at birth. It is a natural thing we all had before

we were told anything, or saw the world, or had any experiences:

It is there within. The holy books all say to look within, but we are told to look in the holy book. So, in fact, all outward searching would appear completely useless. All that's needed is to look at what is now, without the authority of yesterdays. Then one will find that he is the world and that all the battles and hate in this world exist in oneself. The inner is the outer. We alone are responsible. We make war every day by our actions. We are destroying the world and ourselves by dividing ourselves and that's what makes for war. It would appear that to demonstrate against war is a useless waste of energy. If one looks around and realises that one is going to be atomed off the face of the planet, one is full of fear. Does love come through fear? One does not want the bomb, but one wants everything to remain the same. That's what put the bomb there in the first place.

Surely when the awareness is total, the action is also. Ban the bomb, save the whale, plant a tree; all these so-called separate groups are fighting the same problem — greed. The world needs love and you are the world. We must never divide them.

When action is only in the present, there will never be a tomorrow with its image. How can one fear tomorrow when it is not known? But maybe it is for a lot of people, because they cling to the past, to the old, and this will not bring about anything new. We have to look at the present totally. Our physical needs are food, clothes and shelter. There is enough for everybody on the planet but now thousands die of hunger every week. Why is this? Is it Reagan's fault, or the Russians? Or what? It's our fault, because we want more. It's wanting more that's the root of the problem, the only problem. If we look closely that's all the action needed. If one understands that he is the world, and that to change ourselves is to change the world, then we wash away the divisions, the war, the envy and greed which is our past conditioning, past ego.

Die to the past, so that every morning you become new and innocent, and look at what is. Man is the whole — we are the sun, moon, stars, whatever else we want. We are everything and it's here now, in the present, a moving thing. But as soon as we separate it into the past or the 'I' we have destroyed it and spend our time living with words and images of a better world tomorrow. More division, more conflict.

One has just this instant learned much — the birds care for each other, protect each other, always in the present. When the eagles came down to the valley and attacked the gull the crows came at once, without a plan of action, and fought the eagles. The seeing was the call to action and that was the only moment. Energy filled their bodies and they were living only for the moment, the present. The gull sat on the water and continued on his way and the crows looked around. It was a new moment, another river, without trace of that which was before. The gull flew off up the valley following the path that the eagles took shortly before. And he did not seem to be on a special lookout for them — he seemed to have forgotten all about his brush with death.

One has also learnt something about words. A feeling to describe to you, my brother, what is going on inside oneself. One cannot put it into words. It can never be told to anyone because words break everything up, until in the end all we have left is the words. Silence is when thought is not, when nobody is looking. Silence is present, it cannot be expressed in words, but it is there. And from this silent heart, silent mind, comes something natural which was all there was, and comes without effort, without the mind. It comes by letting go of the separate self with all its knowledge and experience, good and bad. Then there is only what is now, and this would appear to create much energy, because it's not going all places at once.

To the east, the dazzling sun steadily rises, throwing its heat onto the vast plains that appear with its light. Solitary coconut trees stand tall and naked except for a cluster of giant leaves right on top which dance gently in the early breeze. A small village is there, with its rows of thatched houses. Some buffalo lie nearby. People appear with huge water pots balanced on their heads. They walk proudly as they make their way to the well. If the heavens permit they shall have water today.

Life is a gift which is given to us. A mystery to be enjoyed, not a problem to be solved. Life and death are not separate. To live is to die. Mind will say, 'this is a valley', 'this is a hill'. But really it is one. Nothing is good, nothing is bad. Inward duality ceases, no divisions, so no conflict. Our ignorance causes us much suffering. Love is understanding. Love is when you are not. God is truth; truth is God. Truth will strip you naked — you will lose much. It will take away all that is false. You will find your original face — the one you were born with. Pick up a mirror and look. We are many faces, always changing.

Love is being ourselves. But, you see, this is so simple and therefore very difficult for our clever minds. Why is this? Go deep and maybe you will see it. It is because not one child is accepted as he or she is. He is told don't do this, do that. His whole being is divided and confused by society, because society lives on divisions. As we are, we are no good. So we always feel that we have to become somebody else. Destroy ourselves, be better, have more, etc. Escape from ourselves. The foundations are very deep, and it could be the root cause of all of our pain. To love is to be yourself. How can we love anybody else, if we don't like ourself? Society has separated us, but inside you and me and Mr. Jones there is one consciousness, therefore not separate. We are one.

How blissful life is. Truth destroys the false. Then there is no separate 'I'. This is the great illusion. Can you see yourself in the other?

Can you treat the other as you treat yourself? Love is when you are not — then there is only love. And you know something else? — love has no tomorrow. Neither does love break hearts. How can love hurt? If it does, then it is not love at all, so what's everybody singing about?

Namasté. Stop, look, listen, without thought. That silence is golden, untouched by the hands of man. Virgin ground where nobody has walked before. In that silence love is, prayer is, meditation is. You are it, respect and enjoy it.

We have jumped into the ocean of understanding and it is much bigger than us. One can dive deep, but when you surface you find nobody there. You become part of the ocean, a wave amongst waves. Individuality drowns in the ocean of understanding. And then you see that it never really existed anyway. The wave was always a part of the ocean. It just thought that it moved about on its own. So the birth of the wave is also the death of the wave. Do you understand? Can you feel the freshness of it all? Life is different now. We can feel something inside that's bigger than both of us. The truth can never be wrapped up and labelled. Like the ocean it's a living thing, ever flowing, fresh and beyond measure. These days are filled with learning.

Life is unknown, free from the known. For many years we staggered around blindly. Life was sorrow and confusion. The world is full of it. We may have been a success in the outer world (decent jobs, etc.), but deep down we have all suffered and still do. We have to break the chain. Try something completely new. We have done many things so we know what not to do. It is possible as a fact, to live in this world without sorrow and conflict. We have to look into the inner world — go deep down and find the cause.

If you listen to your heart you will be a 'failure' in this world. You will give. You will trust. You will lose the ambition to be somebody else. You will not compete. In fact, you will be of no use to society. You will become

an outsider, a solitary person. You will see that attachment will not be there. You will lose very much in this outer world. You will undergo a death. You will cling to nothing. You will realise, in fact, that which most people don't realise until the moment of death. Death takes all the things that we have gathered, doesn't it? It kills the ego. You will realise what life is. You will know that which does not die. You will see that you are not this body, separate and lonely, wanting and not wanting. You will come across a jewel. A lotus in the mud. And then you won't run around crying for this or for that, because you will see how perfect everything is. He who loses all, gains all. It would appear that this world is upside down. The richest are the poorest, and the poorest are the richest. To know yourself is to know the world. To live in the peaceful world, we have to rid ourselves of duality. There is no other way. We have to be prepared to die to all we know. The real jewel is inside

yourself. Please do not be deceived. All that is precious is inside you. Worldly success, power and money only show you more just how empty you are. The wealthy man is lonely and mad. His life has been a business deal. The mind ruled and the heart was left to suffocate. Then death comes and takes all. Life is not a bus going up and down the same old road. Life is a stream that arises in the mountains and rushes towards the sea.

We are going to have to stop writing now. These are some pieces of a story without beginning and without end. Thoughts come and go. Just sit by a river and watch them flow by. Too many words have been written, and as long as you are reading this you are not aware of what is around you now, so I will finish. Please, my friend, look for the false that's been written, and, maybe, we will discover the truth together.

Don't look back. OM.

My dear Ganesan,

I wish to thank you for publishing our photograph and for all your attention during our remarkable visit to the Ashram.

We are now graced by the active leadership of Naar Vasudevan who is able to convey the practical aspects of practical sadhana, through having sat at Bhagavan's feet.

We have been blessed by Bhagavan's Grace to have been given a beautiful studio in St. John's Wood (through Mrs. B. Mills an old devotee of Ramana) for our monthly satsangs (the second in each month) and the group grows.

This letter is to keep you in touch and to report Naar's active leadership which is worth mentioning in future issues. I am still in the contact number London 435 — 0151.

Our thanks, and ever yours in Bhagavan's grace,

**Alan Jacob**  
**2, Boade's Mews.**  
**Flash Walk,**  
**Hampstead, NW 3 1DB,**  
**London**

**AN APPEAL****“MOUNTAIN PATH FUND”**

With hesitation we bring to the notice of our readers an *urgent need* of ours.

For the past few years *The Mountain Path* is working at a loss which is steadily increasing due to the high cost of paper, printing charges and heavy postal charges. We are keen that the excellent quality maintained by us should continue.

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Sri Ramanasramam,  
Tiruvannamalai-606 603.  
October 1, 1983.

V. Ganesan,  
Managing Editor,  
THE MOUNTAIN PATH

# IN MEMORIAM: SRI SADHU OM

By Prof. K. Swaminathan

SRI SADHU Om Swami shed his mortal body and merged in the Light Eternal of Arunachala-Siva-Ramana on March 17th. On March 24th the Kendra placed on record its grateful appreciation of his vast and varied services in spreading Sri Bhagavan's teachings. On May 3rd his friends and admirers in Tiruvannamalai performed his *mandala-abhisheka-puja*. This evening we in Delhi are having a special programme to honour his memory, when lady-devotees will sing some of his compositions on Sri Bhagavan.

Sri Sadhu Om was a great scholar, poet and composer, besides being an authoritative exponent of Sri Bhagavan's philosophy. The fact that the Poet-Saint Sri Muruganar entrusted the editing of his work to none other than Sri Sadhu Om is a standing tribute to his erudition.

Sri Sadhu Om was closely associated with Sri Muruganar from the year 1945. He immersed himself fully in the divine sweetness of Sri Muruganar's poetic out-pourings, and he was responsible for copying and preserving most of his verses. Sri Sadhu Om's own natural poetic gifts were fully developed by his intimate association with both Sri Bhagavan and Sri Muruganar.

Sri Muruganar himself emphatically stated, "If any of my verses are to be printed at any time by anyone, they should be published only if Sri Sadhu Om is entrusted with editing them and with seeing that they are printed without any errors". When the third edition of *Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai* and the second edition of *Guru Vachaka Kovai* were published by Sri Ramanasramam during the last years of Muruganar's life, they were edited and proof-



Sri Sadhu Om

corrected only by Sri Sadhu Om. No wonder Sri Muruganar entrusted all his manuscripts to the sole care of Sri Sadhu Om.

Sri Sadhu Om's emotional monumental work of editing Sri Muruganar's *Guru Vachaka Kovai* and writing a lucid commentary upon it (*urai nool*) has been widely acclaimed by scholars. We at the Ramana Kendra, New Delhi, feel orphaned at his passing away, for he was closely associated with us in the publication of Sri Muruganar's works. He was actually in the midst of editing with scholarly thoroughness Sri Muruganar's *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* in nine volumes. Only four volumes have been published so far, though at the time of his sad and sudden demise Sri Sadhu Om had already done most of the work of editing the remaining five volumes.

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from a talk given by Professor K. Swaminathan on May 5th at Ramana Kendra, New Delhi.

A prolific writer, both in prose and poetry Sri Sadhu Om was also a master of music and his lyrics freely lend themselves to be set to music. No wonder that his countless songs on Sri Bhagavan are so immensely popular.

Sri Sadhu Om was aged only 63. Till his last day he was living a very busy and active life, doing *Giri-pradakshina* with ritualistic regularity (as he did even on March 14th), writing, editing, composing, singing, proof-reading, letter-writing and answering the questions of earnest aspirants who regarded him as their sole spiritual guide on the Path of Sri Ramana. With the staunch devotion to Sri Bhagavan, his clear and correct understanding of Sri Bhagavan's teachings, his deep and comprehensive mastery of Tamil, his great capacity for clear exposition in speech and writing, and his own profound spiritual experience, Sri Sadhu Om helped his pupils, among whom I proudly counted myself, whenever they came across any difficulty, linguistic or doctrinal, in the writings of Sri Bhagavan or Sri Muruganar. For many years I depended upon him, as I used to depend upon Sri Muruganar or Sri Viswanatha Swami, and now I don't know where to turn for light when my poor mind fails to penetrate the obscurity of some inspired utterance of Sri Muruganar.

My own loss is great and personal. But his innumerable songs and poems and his lucid and elaborate expositions in simple English and readable Tamil of Sri Bhagavan's teachings, the paths of Self-enquiry and self-surrender, make up for us a precious and permanent possession to cherish with care and to use with gratitude. His published works include the profound and comprehensive treatise *The Path of Sri Ramana* (in both English and Tamil) together with other books in Tamil such as *Sadhanai Saram*, *Sri Ramana Gitam* and his commentaries upon *Upadesa Undiyar* and *Guru Vachaka Kovai*.

We, the friends and followers of Sri Sadhu Om, are fully aware of our responsibility for

**What I desire  
is it's absence  
I need no bondage  
nor liberation.  
for liberation includes  
the absence of desire  
for liberation.**

By **Frederick Beck**

\*  
**THE JOURNEY**

By **S.M. Kaul**

**What is life if not remembering,  
What is death if not forgetting  
The Being whence we all emerge,  
Whereto returning we converge,  
The eternal Light that knows no setting?**

completing his work of editing Sri Muruganar's *Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham* (though of course any number of us cannot replace Sri Sadhu Om in the rare combination of learning and devotion which he brought to this task) and for printing and publishing the vast collection of his own poems and prose-writings which he left in manuscript form as his legacy to the ever-increasing circle of Sri Bhagavan's devotees all over the world.

For me it was the greatest shock of my life when I heard the news of the sudden and unexpected demise of Sri Sadhu Om, and two months have not lessened my sense of loss and bewilderment. It is a deprivation hard to bear, and it is a new world, strange and suddenly dark to which we now have to readjust ourselves. But for him death makes no difference. The mortal goes, but what was and is immortal in him is still abides.

When the Master calls, the servant goes. Now Sri Sadhu Om is wholly one with Sri Bhagavan, the luminous shadow merged in the Light!

# OBEISANCE TO SRI SADHU OM

By V. Ganesan



Swami Ramananda performing puja to the samadhi of Sri Sadhu Om on the Mandalabhishekam day (3.5.1985).

**E** KAGRA-BHAKTI, one-pointed devotion to Sri Bhagavan, was the current underlying the entire life of Sri Sadhu Om. He was fortunate that on the very first day he came to Sri Bhagavan in 1945, an intimate friendship was forged between himself and Sri Muruganar, the fountain-head of *Ramana-bhakti*. A poet at heart and a consummate master of the Tamil language, Sadhu Om dedicated his talents to the service of his *Satguru* alone. His devotion to Sri Bhagavan found varied and abundant expression in the thousands of heart-melting Tamil songs which flowed from his heart.

The salient feature of his teaching was the emphasis which he always placed upon one following Sri Bhagavan's path of Self-enquiry. He used to encourage all Tamil-knowing devotees to study the works of the Master in the original Tamil rather than depending upon translations. *Sri Ramana Nool Tirattu* (The Tamil Collected Works) was his Bible!

For him every verse composed by Sri Bhagavan was a *mantra*, and hence he would encourage even foreigners to learn and recite His works, especially *Sri Arunachala Stuti Panchakam*, for which he had the greatest admiration. His lucid commentaries of many of Bhagavan's works help one to have a deeper understanding of His teachings.

The last activity he did before losing his normal waking consciousness was to go round Holy Arunachala. He held *Giri-pradakshina* at be of great spiritual efficacy and advised people to go round this 'Hill of Grace' at every opportunity. He himself did *Giri pradakshina* regularly twice or thrice a week till his end. Mr. Michael James, who lived with him, does this daily for the past eight years.

Sri Sadhu Om's association with the Ashram was close and active, though for over 20 years he was living independently in a house near the Ashram. In this respect he was just like Muruganar, Natanananda and Kunju Swami, who



Sri Sadhu Om's Tamil Book *Ramana Vazhi*, a combined and revised volume was released on the *Mandalabhishekam* day. V. Ganesan hands over the first copy to Sri Kunju Swamikal. (left) Sri Michael James.

also lived outside the Ashram yet helped the Ashram in every possible way. While he was living in the Ashram from 1955 to 1960, he worked hard and efficiently in the bookstall and dispensary. In the later years, in spite of his weak eye-sight, he continued to take great pains to read, edit and correct the proofs of many Ashram publications. Like Sri Muruganar, he was very particular that Ashram publications should be totally free from errors.

I cannot but recount here how he helped me in understanding, and following Bhagavan's teaching of *Atma-vichara*. I also know that, like me, a number of other devotees have been initiated by Sadhu Om into the 'wonder-world of Sri Ramana's *Atma-vichara*'!

I pay my obeisance to this *Ramana-bhakta*, now a precious gem adorning the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Ramana!

**"In order to arrive at having pleasure in everything,  
Desire to have pleasure in nothing.  
In order to arrive at possessing everything,  
Desire to possess nothing.  
In order to arrive at being everything,  
Desire to be nothing.  
In order to arrive at knowing everything,  
Desire to know nothing.**

**St. John of the Cross**  
from *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, 1:13

# Sri Sadhu Om: An Exemplary Devotee

By Michael James

WHEN GOD incarnates Himself on earth in the form of the *Sadguru*, He does not come alone. He brings with Him highly mature souls, in answer to whose prayers He gives His true teachings to the world, and through whom He afterwards expounds and makes clear those teachings, using their mind, speech and body as His pure instruments to instruct the world, both through words and example. Though such devotees come for the benefit of the world, their attention is never turned towards the world but is ever turned towards God, who shines outside as the *Sadguru* and within as Self. Among such rare, exemplary and pure devotees whom Sri Ramana Bhagavan, the *Loka Maha Guru*, brought with Him to the world is surely to be counted the late Swami Sri Sadhu Om.

Though he was one of the foremost devotees of Sri Bhagavan, during his own lifetime Sri Sadhu Om remained little known to the world, except perhaps to a small circle of sincere Ramana-*bhaktas*. A man of many gifts and talents — indeed a versatile genius — he nevertheless chose to live and pass away from the world without the least stain of name and fame. To say that he was a poet of surpassing excellence, a talented musician, a melodious and sweet-voiced singer, a lucid prose-writer, a brilliant philosopher, a faithful exponent of Sri Bhagavan's teachings, a man of deep, one-pointed devotion, clear spiritual insight and perfect humility, is to describe but a few of his many gifts and virtues. But none of these qualities, either outward or inward, ever deterred him in the least from whole-heartedly following the principal precept taught and exemplified by Bhagavan Sri Ramana, namely that we should deny ourself by giving no im-



Sri Sadhu Om

portance to our own individual entity, and should thus completely erase the ego.

It was this self-effacing attitude of Sri Sadhu Om which was responsible for his remaining unknown even to many devotees of Sri Bhagavan. A few years ago when a friend wanted to write and publish an article about Sri Sadhu Om, he objected humbly, explaining that he preferred to remain unknown to the world and pointing out to verse 623 of *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, in which Sri Bhagavan says:

“Because it brings one under the great evil of yielding to *pramada* (forgetfulness of Self), through which one is made to think that one is the worthless and mean body, while in fact one is the supreme *Brahman*, fame (or praise) is to be rejected with great contempt and is not at all to be aspired for by wise people”.

Those who have had the good fortune of knowing Sri Sadhu Om personally will understand how typical this response is of his unas-

suming and retiring nature. Many friends have under different circumstances received similar replies from him. For instance, when someone wrote from Australia asking Sri Sadhu Om to send a photograph of himself, he replied, "Sri Bhagavan being the Guru common to yourself and myself, His name and form alone are to be glorified and adored; my photo is therefore immaterial". On another occasion, when a sincere Ramana-*bhakta* wrote from America inviting Sri Sadhu Om to "come to the West and guide us", he replied, "Since He who has guided me to His home is the Father, Lord and inmost Self of one and all, does He not know best how to guide home earnest seekers, wherever they may be? Why then should an ego rise with the thought 'I should guide these people?' If an 'I' were thus to rise, would not such a conceited action be casting a shame upon the Grace on the non-dual Lord Ramana?"

Only from those who thus deny their ego so entirely can we learn and properly understand the unique path of egolessness revealed to the world by Sri Bhagavan. Only by such pure and humble souls who thus strictly follow Sri Bhagavan's radical and highly refined teachings can the world be truly benefited. As Sri Bhagavan says in *Who am I?*, "To the extent to which we behave humbly, to that extent will good result". We can do real service to the world only by turning our attention away from it and towards Self, thereby preventing even the least rising of the ego. To live thus without the rising of 'I' is the true path taught and exemplified by Sri Bhagavan, and this alone was the way followed and lived by Sri Sadhu Om!

Sri Bhagavan has shown only two paths for the salvation of mankind, namely Self-enquiry and self-surrender, and both these paths find rich and happy expression in the thousands of Tamil songs and verses composed by Sri Sadhu Om. On reading his verses, we find that they are filled not only with fervent and one-pointed devotion to Sri Bhagavan, but also that His teachings are deftly and beau-

tifully woven into them, thus transforming even prayers and praises into profound works of *jnana* and thereby helping us to understand the oneness of *jnana* and *bhakti*. Many of the songs of Sri Sadhu Om have been chosen by individual Ramana-*bhaktas* for daily recitation, because earnest seekers find in his verses an ample expression of their own love for Sri Bhagavan and all of their own longing for His Grace. Two books of his songs, *Sri Ramana Gitam* and *Sri Ramana Varnangal*, have been published by the Ashram, and a number of his other verses have been published by individual devotees in small books and pamphlets. However, many of his verses yet remain unpublished and are known only to a few devotees, for he was always indifferent to the publication of his works. Whatever he sang, he sang only for Sri Bhagavan, so unless the initiative was taken by others, his writings remained unknown to the world. In one of the prefatory verses of *Sri Ramana Sahasram* (a thousand verses in *venba* metre praying for *Jnana*, a work which may perhaps be called his poetical *magnum opus*), he writes, "These *venbas* are not for print, approval or appreciation of loving friends. These are my words of love, the lover's appeal to the Beloved, the Lord of my heart, made with great inner yearning, and hence it is not proper for others to overhear them".

It is, nevertheless, the experience of those who have been blessed with having close and intimate contact with him that, more than all his poems and other writings, it is Sri Sadhu Om's exemplary way of living that truly teaches us how to follow the path of Sri Ramana. In this present day, when so many multifarious ideas are being propagated in the name of spirituality and when seekers are found to be straying in great confusion from one *guru* to another, believing that the *Sat-sanga* of a so-called 'living *guru*' is necessary, many devotees of Sri Bhagavan have received great inspiration and encouragement from Sri Sadhu Om's chaste and one-pointed love for Sri Bhagavan and from his unshakable conviction that Sri Bhagavan is ever with us, guiding and sustaining us from within.

"Sri Bhagavan's help and guidance is never lacking or insufficient", Sri Sadhu Om often used to assure people, "indeed, His Grace is the sole existing reality in this false world. There can never be any need for any devotee of Sri Bhagavan to go to any other God or *Guru*. No intermediary is necessary between Him and us. Of His own accord, He directly contacts the heart of each devotee who comes to Him, without the need for any intercession from others. To obtain His *Sat-sanga*, we have but to think of Him, pray to Him, read His teachings, reflect on them and practise them. Such mental contact with the *Sadguru* is the best *Sat-sanga*. And if at all we want *Sat-sanga* with His physical form, He is and ever will be standing here in the form of Arunachala. In His works Sri Bhagavan has revealed that Arunachala is Himself, and He has said that just as we identify our bodies as 'I', so Lord Siva, the Supreme Reality, who is none other than Sri Bhagavan, has chosen to identify this Hill as 'I' in order to guide us and give us solace. Arunachala is the foremost physical embodiment of the reality or *Sat*, so there is no better form of outward *Sat-sanga* than to live in Tiruvannamalai and to do Arunachala-*pradakshina*."

Sri Sadhu Om truly stood as a peerless example of perfect *Guru-bhakti*. Though there were some people who wished to take him as their *Guru*, he always steadfastly refused to accept for himself the position of *Guru*. He often used to point to the shining example of Sri Muruganar, who was the foremost disciple of Sri Bhagavan yet who never accepted for himself the position of *Guru* even after Sri Bhagavan had left the body. Sri Sadhu Om used to say that one of the important signs of a true disciple Sri Bhagavan is that he will never accept for himself the position of *Guru* but will always encourage all devotees to take Sri Bhagavan alone as their *Guru*. Occasionally people used to ask Sri Sadhu Om whether it is not necessary for an aspirant to have a living *Guru*, but he always replied, "The *Guru* alone is living, we are all dead. If by the term 'living *Guru*' you mean a *Guru* whose body is living,



Sri Sadhu Om

then such a living *Guru* will one day become a dead *Guru*. What is the use of such a *Guru* who will not be living for ever? But if you take Sri Bhagavan alone as your *Guru*, then you will have an ever-living *Guru*, because Sri Bhagavan is the ever-existing Self shining in the hearts of all people."

However, although Sri Sadhu Om thus denied the need for a "Living *guru*" he always emphasised the need for us to accept one particular name and form as our *Guru*. Only a very few rare souls such as Sri Bhagavan and Lord Buddha have attained Self-knowledge without a *Guru* in name and form. For the majority of spiritual aspirants, a *Guru* in name and form is absolutely essential, though that name and form need not be the name and form of a person whose body is now living. Of all the names and forms, assured Sri Sadhu Om, the ideal one for us all to accept as our *Guru* is that of Sri Bhagavan, who will ever live and shine as an unequalled and unsurpassed manifestation of Divine Grace.

In spite of his genius as a poet, musician and philosopher, which could easily have earned him quick fame and popularity if he had so desired, Sri Sadhu Om always lived in such a simple and humble fashion that anyone would naturally take him to be only an ordinary devotee. He truly hid his greatness in a most perfect fashion. However, those of us who were blessed with the rare fortune of

associating with him closely, found in him an ocean of abundant love and kindness. For each one of us, whether young or old, adult or child, educated or uneducated, he had some special love, and he moved with each of us at our own level. With a child he was a child, with a philosopher he was a philosopher, with a devotee he was a devotee, and with a worker he was a worker. And all this was without the least pretence or acting. He naturally fitted into whatever role came to him. He never assumed any air of superiority, and he never liked to be treated with any special regard or reverence. He moved with everyone just like a friend, a brother or an equal, and he did so so skilfully that all in turn treated him as their equal. Though many of us inwardly knew his greatness, somehow he always managed to make us overlook his greatness and treat him as an ordinary friend.

Thus, by his simplicity, Sri Sadhu Om made it clear that he did not want people to place him on any sort of pedestal. Even with regard to his poetry, he never liked to claim any credit for himself, for he did not feel any sense of doership in composing his verses. Sometimes, like a child rejoicing with wonder over a toy given to it by its mother, Sri Sadhu Om would innocently wonder at his own poetry, feeling that it was not his own but something given to him by Sri Bhagavan. When people used to praise his poems and songs, he would sometimes say with child-like simplicity, "When I see these verses, I myself wonder whether I could really have composed them. Truly it can only be Bhagavan and not I who has given such verses."

Hence, Sri Sadhu Om's simple, selfless and open way of living, his warm, cheerful and loving nature, his patience and forbearance, his readiness at any time to do any work that came to him, no matter how small or insignificant it might appear to be, his strong sense of Sri Bhagavan's protection and guidance, his fearless way of always standing by the truth, his indifference to praise and blame, his staunch adherence to Sri Bhagavan's tea-

chings his attitude of complete surrender to and dependence upon Sri Bhagavan, whom he adored as his Mother, Father, God, *Guru* and sole Lord and Protector, and above all, his total denial of his own individuality, made him an altogether exemplary disciple of his great Master, and has helped many sincere aspirants to understand more clearly the glory of an egoless life and the correct and practical way of following Sri Bhagavan's path in our day-to-day lives.

The intimate friendship which existed between Sri Muruganar and Sri Sadhu Om is well known. On the very first day that Sri Sadhu Om came to Sri Bhagavan in 1945, Sri Bhagavan sent him to meet Sri Muruganar and to show him his song *Kuyilodu Kooral*, which had spontaneously surged forth from his heart while he was travelling by train from Tanjore to Tiruvannamalai. The close literary association which was thus forged by Sri Bhagavan between these two pure devotees proved in time to be most fruitful. Through his association with Sri Muruganar, Sri Sadhu Om was able to learn many subtle points about classical Tamil grammar and prosody, to gain a deep insight into the terse and cryptic style of Tamil used by Sri Bhagavan in His works, and also to perfect his own innate but untrained poetic genius. In return, Sri Sadhu Om did singular service to Sri Muruganar in helping him to finalise his verses and to preserve them for posterity. As Sri Muruganar used to say "One for *tapas*, two for Tamil" (*tavattuku oruvar, tamizhukku iruvar*), because such refined literary work can be done perfectly only when two equally accomplished poets assist each other. Because of his tireless and willing labour, his thorough knowledge of Sri Muruganar's style and subject, his own literary skill and profound and practical understanding of Sri Bhagavan's teachings, Sri Sadhu Om alone could render real assistance to Sri Muruganar in all his literary work. Knowing this, Sri Muruganar once said during his last days, "If Sadhu Om is not entrusted with full responsibility for preserving and editing all my unpublished verses, then it will be better

to bundle all of them together and offer them into the *Deepam*-fire on top of Arunachala or drown them into the Bay of Bengal".

Another old devotee with whom Sri Sadhu Om had a very intimate and long-standing friendship was Sri Natanananda Swami. Indeed, Sri Muruganar, Sri Natanananda and Sri Sadhu Om formed a trio of accomplished Tamil poets wholly dedicated to Sri Bhagavan and His teachings. Though Sri Natanananda was a very senior disciple of Sri Bhagavan, having first come to Him in the year, 1918, and though he was many years older than Sri Sadhu Om, he recognized the true greatness of Sri Sadhu Om and often expressed his profound love and admiration for him. Sri Natanananda has sung more than 70 verses on Sri Sadhu Om's life and works, and in some of these he has declared openly his high spiritual attainment. For instance, in a poem entitled *Nenjakak Kanni* (A Poem Addressed to the Heart), Sri Natanananda has dedicated twenty-six verses to Sri Sadhu Om, in which he sings:

போதுமெனும் பெற்றிமையால்  
பூமாவிற் சந்ததமுஞ்  
சாதுமும் சித்தோப சாந்தியுற்றான்  
நெஞ்சகமே.

"O heart, due to the quality of contentment, Sadhu Om has for ever attained perfect tranquility of mind in *Bhuma* (the state of *Brahman*)".

தானன்றி யாருண்டென் சற்பாவத்  
தின்னவன் போற்  
றேனுண்ட வண்டிற் றினைப்பரிது  
நெஞ்சகமே.

"O heart, it is very rare to revel like him (Sadhu Om) in the *sat-bhava* 'Who is there other than oneself?' just like a bee which has drunk honey."

In other verses Sri Natanananda sings of the melting love and selfless service of Sri Sadhu Om, who had (in the words of verse 101 of *Sri Arunachala Aksharamanamalai*) truly melted as love in Sri Arunachalaramana, the form of love, as ice melts in water. For instance, in the first three verses of *Sadhu Patikam*, Sri Natanananda sings:

"The life of Sadhu Om is a good example of one of the true affirmations which all the Vedas declare in unison, namely that for those elevated souls who take pleasure in caring for the welfare of others rather than for their own welfare, even the world of the gods is a mere trifle."

"Love is Siva; the nature of love is rendering blissful help to the helpless", say the Sages. The close associates of the true devotee Sadhu Om can clearly understand this truth from his life."

"Knowing that renunciation and service are like a flower and its fragrance, the perfect *Guru* Bhagavan Ramana was the embodiment of service, giving joy even to cows and dogs. Sadhu Om reminds everyone of the greatness of Bhagavan by following that same path."<sup>1</sup>

In many of his verses Sri Sadhu Om has prayed to Sri Bhagavan to keep him unknown to the world and to protect him from the great peril of name and fame. Throughout most of Sri Sadhu Om's life Sri Bhagavan fulfilled this prayer of his, though during the last few years more and more devotees came to know of the greatness of Sri Sadhu Om and gradually more and more of his writings came to be published in the form of books or in the form of articles which (at my pressing request) he allowed to be published in *The Mountain Path*. Hence, when an awareness of his greatness was thus beginning to spread among the world-wide family of Sri Bhagavan's devotees, it was perhaps appropriate and in keeping with his prayer that Sri Bhagavan should at this time choose to withdraw from our midst the physical presence of Sri Sadhu Om.

The end of Sri Sadhu Om's bodily life came in a most sudden and unexpected fashion. On the evening of Thursday 14th March, which was the first of the Tamil month *Panguni*, he did *Ciri-pradakshina*, and after returning

<sup>1</sup> The Tamil original of these verses are printed on p. xii of Sri Sadhu Om's Tamil commentary *Upadesa Undiyar Vilakkavurai*.

home he took food and went to bed as usual. During the night he had a cerebral haemorrhage, and when we found him early next morning he was partially paralysed and unable to speak. On the advice of the local doctor we rushed him to Jipmer hospital in Pondicherry, but by midnight of Friday the doctors there told us that the haemorrhage was very severe and that there was no possibility of treating it in anyway. Since Sri Sadhu Om's wish was to shed the body only in Tiruvannamalai, on Saturday morning we brought him back here and laid him on a bed in the hall of my house in the view of the Holy Hill Arunachala. By the next morning, Sunday 17th March, it was clear that his breathing was slowly and gently subsiding, so all the friends and devotees who had gathered from far and near assembled around his bed and began to chant *Sri Arunachala Aksharamanamalai*. At 9.05 a.m., while we were all singing the final refrain "Arunachala Siva, Arunachala Siva", our beloved Swamiji peacefully breathed his last and was absorbed for ever in absolute union with his Divine Father and *Sadguru*, Bhagavan Sri Arunachalaramana.

We had known for some years that Sri Sadhu Om was suffering from high B.P. (blood pressure), but he was never interested in taking any treatment for it. He used to say in his usual cheerful fashion, "B.P. means Bhagavan's Protection, so why should we take treatment for it?" On a number of occasions friends urged him to take some treatment, but whatever treatment was tried did not agree with him and made him feel too weak to attend to his normal work, so he would soon discontinue it. Once, about a month before his end, he said to me, "Really this B.P. is the best of all the diseases and the easiest way to leave the body. One minute we will be there, and the next minute we will be gone. It will be no trouble either to us or to others". So he cast off the burden of his physical body in just the manner he had wished, like a coolie throwing down his burden after reaching his destination or like a person throwing away his leaf after taking his food.

### FULLNESS

By Frederick Beck

there is no doubt  
that i who see  
see nothing else  
but only me

In retrospect we could see that he had been giving us many hints in recent years that his end was approaching, but few of us had taken his hints seriously. For instance, at the time of *Sivaratri* in 1983, some friends were talking about a certain boy and one of them casually mentioned, "He is now studying in plus two", whereupon Sri Sadhu Om smiled and said, "And I am in minus two". And on many occasions during the last few years he used to say, "I already have my bags packed and am ready to go". But I for one was never able to take such hints very seriously, and I used to dismiss them just as general reminders of the transitoriness and uncertainty of our life in this world. To me Sri Sadhu Om was so full of life and joy that I was never able to imagine that he could leave us so soon.

Though the sudden disappearance of his physical presence was a great shock at the time, after three months I have gradually come to understand that he has not really left us. Only the physical body has gone, but the great ocean of love and clear knowledge which manifested itself through that body will ever be with us, shining as inseparably one with Sri Bhagavan.

Sri Sadhu Om has left behind him a great legacy of spiritual writings both in poetry and in prose. The bulk of it yet remains to be published and translated, but in due time his writings will come to be treasured as an invaluable part of the vast spiritual heritage which Bhagavan Sri Ramana has bestowed upon the world. Thus, Sri Sadhu Om's exemplary way of life and his precious writings will live for ever in the hearts of devotees of Sri Bhagavan.

# Introducing....

## Srimati Brahadambal

Visitors to the Ashram will notice a short lady inside the Matrubhuteswara Temple, busy cleaning *puja* utensils for worship at the shrine of Sri Bhagavan, and murmuring some verse in praise of Bhagavan from Muruganar's *Ramana Sannidhimurai*! She is Brahadambal, a pious lady, who first came for Bhagavan's *darshan* as far back as 1929; and ever since been a 'servant' of His.

Her first experience in the Presence of Bhagavan was revealing. Having been widowed at a very young age, she had studied Vedantic texts quite well. So, having learnt by heart nearly 400 Sanskrit verses from *Vivekachudamani*, she entered the Hall of Bhagavan to recite them in front of Him. But strangely enough, such was the power of His Presence that she could not recollect even one verse from *Vivekachudamani*! Bhagavan gave her a glance of Grace and she was stilled into an ecstatic silence. This was indeed a memorable experience. When the time came for her to



Smt. Brahadambal



leave Bhagavan, she was deeply disturbed. But Bhagavan told her: "Why do you worry? Where are you going? Why do you think that that place is different from this? Think of Bhagavan as being there also and everything will be alright". She returned to Ramanathapuram, the native place of Muruganar, who was instrumental in her coming to Bhagavan.

Once, while sitting in the Hall, she started to chant the Sanskrit verses of Sankara's *Dakshinamurti Stotra*, but after she completed the first verse Bhagavan interrupted her and asked someone else in the Hall to read out the first verse of the Tamil version (by Bhagavan). In this manner, each of the eleven Sanskrit verses was chanted by her and the corresponding Tamil verse read out. Such incidents are

recalled by the old lady with pleasure and pride.

Though she often visited the Ashram, it was only after His *Mahanirvana* that she came to Arunachala to settle permanently.

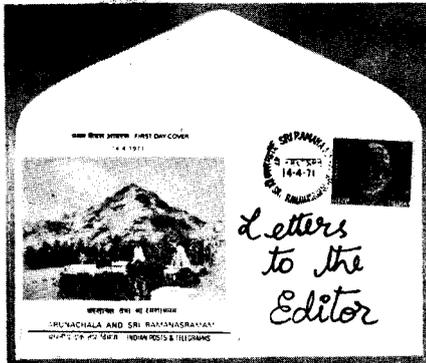
She chose to serve Muruganar who was then living opposite to the Ashram. During this period she studied deeply Muruganar's two great works, *Ramana Sannidhimurai* and *Guruvachaka Kovai*. Muruganar would jot down his intuitional outpourings on bits of

paper and Brahadambal would copy them out in a notebook. Posterity owes a deep debt of gratitude to this noble lady for her daily supply of food to the poet-saint during his last years and for carefully preserving his precious outpourings on Bhagavan and His teachings.

Admirers of Muruganar will find in this simple devotee a mine of information about him. She continues to serve in the Ashram and delights listeners by her recollections of Bhagavan and Muruganar!

#### FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

<b>GURU POORNIMA</b> (Vysasa Puja)	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>2. 7.1985</b>
KRISHNA JAYANTHI (GOKULASTAMI)	Saturday	7.9.1985
DAY OF BHAGAVAN'S ADVENT TO ARUNACHALA	Sunday	1.9.1985
VINAYAKA CHATHURTHI	Wednesday	18.9.1985
NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (Commences on)	Tuesday	15.10.1985
SARASWATHI PUJA	Tuesday	22.10.1985
VIJAYADASAMI	Wednesday	23.10.1985
DEEPAVALI	Monday	11.11.1985
SKANDASASHTI	Sunday	17.11.1985
<b>KARTHIGAI FESTIVAL</b> (Commences on)	Sunday	17.11.1985
<b>KARTHIGAI DEEPAM</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>26.11.1985</b>
<b>SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>28.12.1985</b>
PONGAL	Tuesday	14.1.1986
CHINNA SWAMIGAL ARADHANA	Saturday	25.1.1986
<b>MAHA SIVARATHRI</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>8.3.1986</b>
TELUGU NEW YEAR DAY	Thursday	10.4.1986
TAMIL NEW YEAR DAY	Monday	14.4.1986



### THEORY AND PRACTICE

Sri Raghu Kul Tilak, Roorkee, seeks clarifications on certain points.

#### Question No.1

Does the Sage who, in his life-time on physical plane attained the highest state of perfection and complete merger in the Universal Self, retain identity eventhough being ONE with the Absolute Eternal Being, after the sage leaves his physical existence in the world? If he retains His own IDENTITY as a separate entity, though identical with the ONE Universal ATMAN, then if we remember Him, if we meditate on Him, if we pray to Him, then He would respond to us, lead us, listen to our prayer. If He, as separate identity does not exist and it is only the *One Universal Self* alone then even if we pray to the Sage as being present in our heart, if we meditate on Him in our heart, then indirectly, we pray and we meditate on the *ONE UNIVERSAL FORMLESS ATTRIBUTLESS NON-DUAL SELF!* So then where is the importance of the Sage and His so-called continued guidance? Is it not then an illusion or falsehood?

*Who puts the question ? Certainly an individual. Now Bhagavan has stated again and again that the 'individual' is the ego, a phantom which is dissolved on Realisation of the Self. Take the word of the Master literally and work steadily on your Realisation; do not waste your time in useless discussions. Everybody has to find the answer by his/her own experience. There is no alternative.*

*However there is Bhagavan's word on His deathbed: 'They say, I am dying. But where can I go? I am here.'*

*How can He 'be here', when there is no individual left after Realization?*

*Reality is no picture in black/white, no/yes ('Thinking is not your real Nature!' Bhagavan) Truth is. If you want Truth, ask for it. You will get It, though It might show you the Face of Silence: No questions, no answers any more.*

*You want the so-called 'continued guidance' by the sage? Ask for it. You will get it, even if your clever psychology will call it 'projection'. Why care for names? They are only names, not the fact. Your Love and Devotion are a spiritual Power, testified by so many devotees of Bhagavan, to whom He appeared in dream or waking, changing threatening conditions, granting ardent desires . . . . . Here you deal with Powers instead of thoughts — in case your faith in the Sage is undiluted and unshaken by the impostor ego.*

*We do not know all the secrets of the Nature of Man and his World, not even the secret of electricity — though we know very well how to use it. We have had the model of the Sages like Bhagavan with us, and their teaching. You want the Truth of the One without a second? Alright. But then do not theorize; do not apply the mind on it, but realize! Because Truth is in the reach of your grip, but beyond mind.*

— Editor

#### Question No. 2

In the book REVELATION by K. Lakshmana Sarma (Who) Verse 85, page 45:

*"Meditate always on the TRUTH, that is without a second but never (seek to) apply the teaching of non-duality to actions in the worldly life; my son, meditate on this TRUTH as covering all the Universe, but never do so in respect of the GURU".*

I am not yet clear about this. It appears that meditation on the GURU i.e. HIS TRUE NATURE may equally be beneficial.

*Mediate on the Truth — but live your worldly life according to the lines conducive to a spiritual path, as they are laid down in all ethical systems; Yama and Niyama in Yoga, the Five Precepts in Buddhism, and Ten Commandments in Christianity.*

*Learn to discriminate between mind-acrobatics, which are utterly useless for your inner life on the one side, and on the other the few simple precepts for your so-called worldly life, which will guide you quietly but straightaway into Truth — where all questions find their answers without you bothering.*

— Editor

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### HAPPY REACTIONS — 1

Apropos of Sri Hans Heimer's letter to the editor, the only "shortcoming" of Bhagavan's teaching is our reluctance or delay in following His most simple and direct teaching namely "Who sees shortcomings?" Bhagavan cannot do this for us except when we turn to Him in

Love. Power of Bhagavan is realised by our persistence in *Vichara*. Truth does not bend. Falsehood ends if we persist. When the going gets tough there is no greater destroyer of troubles and sorrows than remembering Hara or doing *Vichara*.

T.S. Vaidyanathan  
Kirkland, U.S.Ā.

#### HAPPY REACTIONS — 2

Thank you with all my heart for the *vibhuti Prasadam*. It means so much to me. The very morning of the day your kind message arrived I had been crying because it is nearly *eighteen* years since I was there in the Ashram which seems to me like *Satyaloka* from so far away.

Thank you too for the continous excellent quality of articles in *The Mountain Path*. I have them bound into volumes. It is a great boon for people like me to be able to have a journal coming regularly from there.

Cynthia Gopalakrishnan,  
Seattle, U.S.Ā.

#### HAPPY REACTIONS — 3

I have just read the April issue of *The Mountain Path*. The article *Lovely Ramana'* brings vivid reminiscences of Bhagavan from devotees still fortunately amongst us.

I was fascinated to see the picture of Sri Varalakshmi Devi by Rajam. While the picture held my attention, I was delighted that Bhagavan Himself had suggested printing and distribution of the beautiful picture of the Goddess amongst the households. Could you please let me have a copy of the picture?

— Rajan Ramakrishna, Calcutta.

*A copy of the picture of Sri Varalakshmi Devi is being sent to you. We have placed it at the Samadhi shrine of Bhagavan; thus it carries with it His Grace.*

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#### SADHU OM

Received the April issue of *The Mountain Path*.

Obituary section made me weep at heart to learn that Sadhu Om is now absorbed in Arunachala. Though not close to him Ramana-devotees know his great *bhakti* for the Master.

#### TO SADHU OM — a poor tribute

How could you go —  
Leaving us like this?

You came to Bhagavan  
As a youth, imploring:  
"Consign me not to birth again, I Pray!"

He fulfilled your wish.  
You have merged in Arunachala, —  
For ever as a river in the sea.

What about us?  
We miss your guiding light,  
Your words so sweet  
That led us swiftly, swiftly to His Feet.

— A Parsi devotee  
D.J. Buxey  
Bombay.

My only meeting with him took place on the evening of Bhagavan's *Jayanthi* celebration in December of 1983. I knew of the esteem with which many devotees looked upon him yet I deliberately tried to keep away from him because I did not want to go to him merely because many devotees respected him greatly.

He was seated in Ramana Auditorium, very close to me and I occasionally looked at him as if to appraise him. He mentioned the words "Janaki Mata" to someone in the hall in connection with their bhajan group or some such thing. I instantly quoted from *Day by Day with Bhagavan* where it is stated that Janaki Mata (Sadhu Om was then known as Natarajan and was the editor of ARUL magazine) obtained an affirmative answer from Bhagavan to the question whether *prarabdha* can be wiped out by devotion to Bhagavan. The actual reply given by Bhagavan was to the effect that "It will be so if they have the faith."

To my quoting that reply Sadhu Om serenely replied that with proper effort it is possible.

I then explained to him how a few days ago I was searching a book entitled "Lakshmi Ashtothram" in West Mambalam, Madras and how I saw Bhagavan's picture in the book *Path of Ramana — Part — II* (by Sadhu Om) and instantly purchased it giving up all thought of buying the other book. To this Sadhu Om asked me whether I had read the chapter on *Bhakti*. I replied in the negative

because I never had the opportunity to read even a page of the book.

Sadhu Om was pleased to quote the common Tamil saying, "Fruit slipped and fell into milk". Later I found out that he actually mentioned "Lakshmi Ashtotram" by name in the chapter on *Bhakti*, though in disparaging terms when compared to Path of Ramana.

After explaining the incident to someone sitting nearby he asked me whether I had read an article on "Power of Arunachala" which appeared, perhaps, in *The Mountain Path*, sometime in 1982. I had not read this either. Michael James was nearby and the conversation then turned to another article of his.

Though not close to Sadhu Om his departure is a loss to me. I feel worse because during my recent stay in Sri Ramanasramam it was not given to me to know of his departure. Thoughts about him came to me but I assumed he had gone out of town for some business.

T.S. Vaidyanathan.  
Redmond, U.S.A.

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#### MANDUKYA UPANISHAD AND SRI RAMANA

I enjoyed reading the article on *Mandukya Upanishad* by V. Ganesan. It is the simplest of the Upanishads and yet the most formidable. You say that the Vedas chart out an external order, while the Upanishads (Vedanta) concern themselves with internal space. After reading Max Muller and others (who did great service to *Bharat* by showing to the world the diamond in the dung heap of human thought) I too had a clear demarcation in respect of Vedas and Upanishads. One was at best the poetic outpouring on the many faces of nature by a simple minded, peace loving people. The other was the product of the highest speculation of thought and most daring

approach to enquiry. One was *Karma Kanda* and the other *Jnana*. One was primitive, the other an evolution.

But I must confess, that even a *non-scholarly* reading or listening of the Vedic *samhitas* convinced me overwhelmingly that there is nothing external or internal in them. They are the ecstatic utterances of seers without individuality, on the One Being experienced as the essence of every *perception* external or internal. They are hence the voice proceeding from the Being itself!

Words denoting objects like "Butter", "Fire", "Chariot", "Horse", "Wheel", "Arrow", "Rain", "Thunder", "Clouds", are repeatedly, consistently and unabashedly used in association with words denoting psychic states like "man" "buddhi", "ecstasy", "evil tendencies", "tenderness and light in existence"

There is no *guru-sishya* attitude in Vedic *Samhita* at all. There is no perception of duality. It is like Bhagavan's view of Himself!

The Upanishads are, through, and through the *sishya* approaching the *guru*. They were the necessary reaction in an earlier age (of decadence!), when people become deaf to the innumerable psychological hints *throughout* the Vedas, and clung instead to the material symbol. The Upanishads themselves point to the problem of the times e.g. *Isavasya* on the fate of people who wrongly worship the symbol.

In our age, from our utter depths of scientific, systematic ignorance, the Upanishad itself seems like a lofty summit *reached* by an "evolving" Vedic people. Whereas it is a system of "guide books" actually, for a people who had *slipped* away from the Being they were then forced to see (The Lord's *Lila!*).

J. Jayaraman, Madras

*The child rejoices in its innocence; the sage points the way to regain the lost purity of Being.*

#### NOTICE

**Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, has no connection whatever with and wishes publicly to disassociate itself from Mr. Franklin Jones *alias* Bubba Free John, *alias* Da Free John, or his Dawn Horse Press or the Johannine Daist Community or any other organization working for this person who claims to be a "disciple" of Sri Ramana Maharshi.**

**Sri Ramana Maharshi unequivocally stated that He had no "disciples" and He appointed no "guru" to spread His teachings.**

**The quarterly *The Mountain Path* and the books published by Sri Ramanasramam are the only authentic and authoritative vehicles of His teachings.**

T.N. Venkataraman  
President, Sri Ramanasramam.



## BOOK REVIEWS

UPADESA SARAM. Translation and commentary by A.R. Natarajan. Pub. The Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 40/41, Second Cross, Lower Palace Orchards, Bangalore-560 003. Pp. 63. Price Rs. 7.50.

THE RAMANA WAY, IN SEARCH OF SELF. By Kumari Sarada. Pub. The Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 40/41, Second Cross, Lower Palace Orchards, Bangalore, 560 003. Pp. 34. Price Rs. 3.

THE SILENT SUN. By V. Ganesan, Kumari Sarada and A.R. Natarajan. Pub. Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, 606 603. Pp. 22. Price Rs. 2.

THE ESSENCE OF THE RIBHU GITA. Translated by Prof. N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer. Pub. Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, 606 603. Pp. 30. Price Rs. 5.

Though the central teaching of Bhagavan is brief and pointed, many issues arise as one starts following his instructions. Sri Natarajan dwells upon some of these in the course of his lucid commentary on the thirty verses of *Upadesa Saram*. What is *tapas*? What is knowledge? Is the bliss of the Self obtained in some post-mortem state? "The bliss is not at some future date. It is while in the human body, now itself, . . . it is one's natural state, a state which has been screened by constant movement of the mind away from the Heart."

Kumari Sarada's editorials in *Ramana*, collected in the booklet *The Ramana Way*, present the teaching and the need for practising it in a colloquial language. Speaking of the fundamental question of grace vs. effort, she writes: "Bhagavan explains that grace and self-enquiry interact. The very attitude of enquiry is a result of grace, of the magnetic pull of the Self. And self-enquiry, in turn, reopens the floodgates of grace".

Sri Natarajan points out in *The Silent Sun* how the Maharshi's is not a subjective way but a discipline that has dynamic consequences in daily life: "The result of this concentration would show itself in peace of mind, in power to deal with troubles, in power all round." In the same booklet Sri Ganesan underlines Bhagavan's distinction between the vedantic *sushupti* and the *jagrat sushupti* in which activity takes place automatically, in perfect order.

The Maharshi used to recommend recital of the *Ribhu Gita* as an aid to *sadhana*. Prof. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer gives in his *Essence of the Ribhu Gita* his English renderings of 122 verses from the text with suitable captions. The book induces the right mood for self-enquiry.

Elegantly produced, these slender publications serve as

delightful companions to the aspirant as well as to the *sadhaka*.

— M.P. PANDIT

SAIVA SIDDHANTA THEOLOGY, A CONTEXT FOR HINDU-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE. By Rohan A. Dunuwila. Pub. Motilal Banarsidass, Bunglow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 7. Pp. 231. Price Rs. 100.

This is an extremely erudite and scholarly work. The author, who comes from Sri Lanka but has done his studies mainly in America, has made a thorough study of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy from original sources, relating it to other systems of Saiva philosophy such as Kashmir Saivism and Vira Saivism. He traces the history of Saiva Siddhanta both in its Sanskrit and Tamil texts and then concentrates on the theology of Aghorasiva, whose exposition of the philosophy of *bhoja*, known as the illumination of the categories, he translates. Finally, and most interestingly, he compares the Saiva Siddhanta doctrine with Christian doctrine as expounded in Catholic theology.

The problem throughout turns on the question of the relation of the absolute or transcendent to the phenomenal world. On the one side there is the pure *advaita* doctrine which denies any ultimate reality to the phenomenal world; on the other hand, there is the dualistic philosophy which maintains that God and the world are eternally different. Between these two extremes most of the Saiva philosophies hold to what has been called 'identity in difference'. It is in the exploration of the subtle differences in these various forms of Saiva philosophy that this book is mainly concerned.

A further elaboration leads on to a discussion of the relation of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy to Catholic orthodoxy. Here I think that the author has relied too much on a rather limited form of Catholic orthodoxy as expounded by the Spanish Jesuit Suarez with its conception of creation *ex nihilo*, and has neglected the much deeper view found in Eckhart and the earlier Greek tradition; that is, the whole world is contained eternally in the *Logos*, the Word of God, and comes forth in space and time from this eternal existence in God. This would bring Christian theology much nearer to the traditional Indian understanding of the relation of the absolute to the phenomenal world. However, he does bring out an extremely interesting point of resemblance in the conception of unity in duality found in both Saivism and Christianity. In Saivism it takes the form of the concept of *Siva* and *Sakti* as the principles of ultimate reality and in Christianity in the concept of the

Trinity, in which, as he quotes St Anselm, 'there is in the supreme unity a certain wondrous plurality that is both ineffable and inevitable'. This is the point where a really interesting debate can take place between Hindu and Christian theology.

By way of criticism one must remark that though his translation of Hindu concepts and names into English is very scholarly, it is often very strange. It is odd, for instance, to find the Pasupatas called the pastoralists and the Kapalikas the Skullmen. Also to translate *Pasu* in the basic categories of Saiva Siddhanta as 'the Beast' is surely fantastic. It is certainly not easy to find a fitting translation, but Sivarman, in his classic *Saivism in Philosophical Perspective* calls it simply the self.

— FATHER BEDE GRIFFITHS

VALLABHACARYA ON THE LOVE GAMES OF KRŠNA.

By James D. Reddington. Pub. Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 7. Pp. 491. Price Rs. 140.

Here we have an attempt at a sympathetic understanding and explanation of the central place assigned to the occurrence of Kṛṣṇa's love-games in the religious text of the *Bhagavatapurana* by the school of Vallabhacarya. The relevant Sanskrit text (X Book, Ch. 26-32) has been given in the appendix along with Vallabha's commentary. The main part of the work is the author's English translation of this entire portion, and it has been done very carefully and efficiently.

What is even more substantial is the scholarly study of the key tenets of Vallabha's doctrine of devotion as gleaned from the text presented here; this forms the introduction. It emerges that Vallabha's principal concern in justifying the love games was aesthetic. The full-blown theory of *rasa-bhava* in *Alankarasastra*, with its corollary of *sringara* as systemised in *Kamasastra*, was synthesised with the Upanishadic dictum of *raso vai sah* to yield a working theistic theory in which one of the major purposes of an avatar is to enable eligible devotees (like cowherdesses) to experience divine delight or the bliss of communion. What might appear as rank sensuality in an ordinary person is transformed into a divine *lila*. The emotional frenzy and intensity of love on the part of the women is but a replica of their total self-surrender to the divine; it is as much spiritual as physical. This eligibility on their part is described as *sarvatmābhava*. Thus Kṛṣṇa, the avatar, typifies the archetypal cosmic lover.

This is indeed a new dimension of theological study which should be of interest to all who are interested in the *bhakti* cults of medieval India.

— Dr. K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

VEDIC VRTRA. By Ajoy Kumar Lahiri. Pub. Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 7. Pp. 226. Price. Rs. 150.

Vedic mythology is one of those subjects which has exercised the minds of some of the most outstanding Indologists for over a century and a half. But the gods seem to have received greater attention than the demons, whose arch leader is styled Vrtra. This present monograph is designed to remedy this deficiency.

The research methodology perfected by the German philological school has been followed meticulously in this research study, which teems with textual citations from the different strata of Vedic texts and scholarly English translations. The story that unfolds in the course of this comprehensive study is that the demonisation of Vrtra was the work of the Vedic Aryans. The semantic study of the root *vr* demonstrates that it had the sense of obscuring as well as succouring. The Avesta retains the latter while the *Veda* chooses the former. The primary evil wrought by Vrtra is the obstruction of waters and the prevention of vegetative life. Indra, the heroic god, destroys him with his weapon *vajra* and releases the life-giving forces.

This study attempts a comparison of this legend or myth with the parallel ones in Babylonian and Sumerian mythology and shows how ideas evolved in the course of culture-contacts, shedding some features and developing new ones. In later Vedic literature, Vrtra becomes a symbol of ritualistic impurity too.

This study has no place for the insightful observations of Sri Aurobindo on the light of the *Veda*, or of any traditional Indian scholar. A greater regard could have been shown for the spiritual truths enshrined in the *Veda*, and more attention might have been paid to the Indian exegetical traditions, all of which have been excluded from the study. The whole presentation is extremely scholarly and it will only be of interest to specialists.

— Dr. K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

THE GITAGOVINDA OF JAYADEVA. Edited and translated by Barbara Stoller Miller. Pub. Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 7. Pp. 225. Price Rs. 40.

This is an Indian edition of the book first published in the Indian Series of UNESCO's Translation Collection in 1977. It is an attempt at a definitive critical edition of the *Gitagovinda* text on the basis of published texts and some new manuscripts. The verses which, in the opinion of the editor, are later interpolations have been given in the appendix, along with a translation. The text in this edition does not contain variant readings, but it is in *Devanagari* script, which will be helpful to many Indian readers.

The *Gitagovinda* is unique in its popularity over all the regions of the Indian subcontinent, and it is usually performed in temples to the accompaniment of music and dance. Its lyrical intensity as a poem and sweet

diction are perhaps matchless in Sanskrit literature. The present editor has shown an intensive research ability by thoroughly documenting a vast body of material relating to the textual variants as well as to the socio-cultural and literary problems. It bids fair to remain a valuable work of reference for students of Indian culture.

The translation is designed for the general reader and for the most part it is racy and elegant. But to the Indian reader it often appears queer since the spirit is missed even when the letter is there. The first three verses are enough to illustrate the point. The words *prati + adhvakunjadrumam calitayoh* in the first verse mean 'moving towards the tree in the wayside bower' rather than 'passing trees in thickets on the way'. *Rahahkelayah* are 'sports in a secluded spot' and not 'secret passions'! In the second verse Jayadeva is depicted as 'a wandering king of bards' when all that the original states is that he was a king of bards at the feet of goddess Padmavati. Worse still is the translation 'was obsessed in his heart by rhythms of the goddess of speech' for *Vagdevata-carana-citrita-citta-sadma*. It should have been 'whose mind's mansion has been painted by the steps of the goddess of learning (who loves to walk there)'. And does 'Sri Vasudeva' convey to any Indian the sense 'when Krishna loved Sri'? It just means Lord Krishna. Moving on to the third verse *sringarottara-satpremeya* is rendered as 'erotic mood and sacred truth'. There is nothing sacred in Govardhana's work (of which this is a description) as everyone knows. *Satpremeya* is just a 'good subject' excelling in love (*sringarottara*). The reviewer is therefore not quite convinced of the accuracy of the translation, or of its felicitousness. Notwithstanding this deficiency, the introductory research on the antiquity of the Radha theme in Sanskrit and Prakrit poetry deserves unqualified praise.

— Dr. K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

SHAMANS MYSTICS AND DOCTORS, A PSYCHOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO INDIA AND ITS HEALING TRADITIONS. By Sudhir Kakar. Pub. Mandala Books, Unwin Paperbacks, 40 Museum Street, London WC 1, England. Pp. 306. Price £ 3.95.

The practice of traditional forms of Indian medicine (Ayurveda, Siddha etc.) is currently undergoing a minor revival, despite the claims from many allopaths that it should all be consigned to the dustbin of history. Most Indians are still treated in traditional ways by village healers and their techniques and theories are now being seriously investigated by allopathic researchers, many of whom are coming to the conclusion that the bio-medical paradigm which dominates western medicine is not only defective, but is also, in many cases, positively harmful. These defects are particularly apparent in the field of severe psychiatric disorders; it is widely recognised that the chemical therapies and the institutionalisation programmes which dominate western thinking on

the subject are rarely more than palliatives which provide temporary relief but fail to penetrate to the root of the problem.

It is against this background that Sudhir Kakar, an Indian doctor trained in the western psychiatric tradition, set out to investigate the alternative forms of mental healing available in India. His survey was wide-ranging and generally sympathetic. He investigated a Muslim *pir*, a Tibetan lama, a tantric swami, some shamans and exorcists, an ayurvedic doctor who specialises in mental disorders and two well-known gurus, Nirmala Devi and the Maharaj of the Radha Soami Satsang. While he frankly admits that some of the theories and practices he encountered seemed, by western standards, bizarre or illogical, he was broad-minded enough to evaluate the various practitioners by the results they achieved rather than by their theories on the nature of mental illness. He was particularly impressed with the Muslim *pir* and the ayurvedic doctor, the former because his methods of dream analysis had affinities with western analytic techniques, and the latter because of the astonishingly good rapport he had with his patients.

Most traditional Indian therapies work on the assumption that mental disorders primarily occur because the patient has been possessed by a spirit. This goes against the grain of Dr. Kakar's western training, and he goes to great lengths to explain away all apparent cases of spirit possession by giving alternative explanations derived from Freudian psychology. He also has reservations about the value of surrendering to a Guru in order to relieve oneself of mental problems. He seems to regard such devotees as escapists who voluntarily turn themselves into mindless zombies in order to escape from the harsh realities of everyday life.

The rest of the book is intelligently written and free from the anti-religious bias that seems to affect his judgement of Gurus. The author never quite escapes from his Freudian background, but he is sufficiently objective to realise that virtually all the systems he investigates provide psychological benefits for the communities in which they operate.

— D.G.

THE SHORTEST JOURNEY. By Phillipa Pullar. Pub. Mandala Books Unwin Paperbacks, 40, Museum Street, London WC 1, England. Pp. 262. Price £ 3.95.

Many people have come to India to write books about its saints and gurus but few have been encumbered by as many handicaps and delusions as Phillipa Pullar. After a lifetime of debauched and dissipated living (which she frankly admits to in a long autobiographical introduction), she came to India in the hope of finding some spiritual answers to the problems besetting her. Prior to her visit she had been heavily influenced by the writings of Paul

Brunton and Paramahansa Yogananda, and she arrived in India fully expecting to meet dozens of yogis with miraculous powers, one of whom would turn out to be her Guru. The climax of this fantasy was scheduled to be the first meeting with her eventual Guru. He would instantly recognise her as the disciple he had been waiting for for so many years, utter something like 'You have come at last, I have been waiting for you', initiate her into some secret mystical tradition, and generally solve all her problems for her.

Her travelling companion for this odyssey was a mentally disturbed hedonist (who later ended up in a mental hospital) whose idea of a pilgrimage was to smoke as much dope as possible, to eat as much as possible and generally to behave in a thoroughly obnoxious manner whenever he was taken to saints or swamis he didn't approve of. With such a background, with such expectations, and with such a companion, it was hardly surprising that the would-be pilgrimage lurched from one misadventure to another. Although the enterprise was doomed from the start, the author's account of it is consistently entertaining and at times even hilarious. When she finally realised (after three trips to India) that she was being led astray not only by Indian *sadhus* but also by her own fantasies of the spiritual life, she was honest enough to write an account that mocked not only the worst aspects of the Indian spiritual scene, but also her own delusions and misunderstandings. She has a particularly good eye for the absurd: the spiritual quacks and charlatans who infest India, the devotees who flock to them, the pretentious and self-seeking aspirations of many spiritual seekers in India — all are beautifully drawn and mercilessly exposed for the shams that they really are.

Like one of her heroes (Paul Brunton) she eventually ended up in Tiruvannamalai. The account of her stay is interesting and at times amusing, but it is also full of factual errors. She persistently misnames or misspells the names of at least half the people she met there, she gets the nationality of one devotee wrong and attributes the Arunachala legends to a non-existent purana called the *Skanana Purana*. If this is indicative of the book as a whole it probably means that there is one factual error per page.

— D.C.

THE EXPERIENCE OF NO-SELF, A CONTEMPLATIVE JOURNEY. By Bernadette Roberts. Pub. Shambhala, 1920 13th Street, P.O. Box 271, Boulder, Colorado, USA. Pp. 204. Price \$ 8.95.

'One of the most significant spiritual books of our day. One of the best books on this subject (Christian mysticism) since St John of the Cross. An amazing book . . .'. This quote by a Roman Catholic abbot is to be found on

the back cover of this book and its superlatives are likely to be endorsed by a large number of people who take the trouble to go through the text. It is a remarkable first-hand account of how an American woman (a former Catholic nun who now lives in California with her family) went through the final stages of her *sadhana*, from an experience of oneness with God and His creation (the traditional end of Christian contemplation) to the final and irreversible state of pure subjectivity in which there is no self and no personal God, only That Which Is. Although her practice was deeply-rooted in the Christian tradition, her descriptions of this final stage echo the conclusions of generations of eastern sages:

'That which remains when there is no self is what Is. There is no multiplicity of existences; only what Is has existence, an existence that can expand Itself into an infinite variety of forms that constitute the movement and manifested aspect of itself.

'Though what Is is the act, movement and changing of all forms — and is form itself — it is, at the same time, the unchanging unknowable aspect of all form. Thus, that which Is continually observes the coming and going — the changing and movement — of its own form or acts, without participating in any essential change itself.

. . . there can be no separation between knowing, acting, existing, or between any aspect of itself, because that which acts, that which it acts on and the act itself are one without division. It never goes outside itself to know itself because the unmanifested, the manifesting and the manifested are One.'

Her insistence that the individual self must disappear completely (rather than be merged with or joined to God) in order to be aware of the fullness of what Is puts her outside the pale of orthodox Christianity. Her account reminds one of the later sermons of Meister Eckhart (who was himself condemned by the church for his heretical views), and it is perhaps significant that he is the only other Christian mystic that she feels any affinity with.

The elegance and lucidity of her style matches the profundity of her experience. It is one of the most literate and incisive accounts of the process and consequences of Self-realisation that I have ever come across. I feel sure that it is destined to become a classic text on mysticism.

— D.C.

THE CREATIVE VISION OF THE EARLY UPANISHADS. By David Frawley. Distributed by Motilal Banarsidas, Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 7. Pp. 387. Price not given.

The author, a self-educated Sanskrit scholar from America, has been engaged for some time in ascertaining the esoteric meaning of ancient Indian texts, particularly,

the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads*. As a result of the intensity of his aspiration and discipline of mind he has developed a fine scholarly intellect, along with an acute intuitive faculty which opens itself to these texts and brings out many hidden and surprising meanings. Fortunately, he knows that he has to justify his intuitive perceptions and conclusions in terms of the rational intellect if he is to convince the rational mind of the day of the validity of his procedure; the present work is an earnest attempt in this direction.

He explains: "Its (the book's) concern is with the older, more symbolic and neglected portions of the *Upanishads*, aiming at their original poetic and creative vision. It is a movement towards a new re-evaluation of the *Upanishads* in the light of the earlier *Veda* and its vast and creative spiritual vision, as directed to a new, and creative spiritual age for mankind that is struggling to emerge now . . . It is to point us back to that sunlight of direct perception, the unconditioned life, the creative reality of the *Brahman*."

Frawley rightly looks upon the older *Upanishads* as an enlarged exposition of the *Vedic* wisdom, but phrased in a language more suited to the later age. He shows how these early *Upanishads* preserve the older *Vedic* symbolism, continue the earlier practices and preserve the idea of the unity of creation. Like the *Vedic* hymns they also speak of several *mayas*. He examines the concepts of sacrifice, *prana* and the solar myth in these texts, and pays particular attention to the importance of the Word, the *Brahman*. Whether one agrees with every statement of his or not, he must be read with respect. The direction he takes is the right one. The impulse is creative.

— M.P. PANDIT

THE MOTHER OF SWEET BLISS. By. Balagopal. Pub. Mata Amritanandamayi Mission, (Vallickavu) Kuzhithura,

Quilon District, 690 542, Kerala. Pp. 84. Price Rs. 15.

This is the first substantial account in English of the life and teachings of a young Guru called Mata Amritanandamayi. Her story is a remarkable one by any standards. As a child she was obsessed with the thought of Krishna, and as she grew up her devotion to him was so great that on many occasions he appeared to take her over completely. While she was still in her early teens people began to be attracted to her, partly because of the miraculous events that were constantly happening in her vicinity, and partly because of the palpable spiritual radiance that people felt in her presence. She attracted many local devotees at this time, but her own spiritual *sadhana* had not yet been completed. This period of her life continued for some time and it only finally ended when she realised the Self shortly after witnessing a vision of the Divine Mother. In the years that have passed since then she has been devoting herself full-time to the welfare of her devotees.

The regime at her ashram is strict — eight hours of compulsory meditation every day for all inmates — and the living conditions appear to be extremely spartan, but even so, a significant number of people have settled there and accepted her as their Guru. Her teachings are simple and homely, and she uses everyday analogies to clarify and illustrate her ideas. Her pronouncements about the nature of reality are *advaitic*, and while she generally advises her devotees to follow the path of devotion and surrender, she also gives out useful and authoritative advice on other spiritual paths.

The author's style is a little over-devotional at times, but he has succeeded in capturing the essence of his Guru. If it is properly distributed this book is likely to attract many more devotees to her ashram.

— D.G.

**It is necessary to try to dedicate to the Supreme every single action of one's daily life. From the moment one wakes in the morning until one falls asleep at night one should endeavour to sustain the attitude of mind. By so doing one will gradually come to feel: How can I offer Him greed, anger and other undesirable qualities of this kind? To Him who is so infinitely dear to me — who is my very own? Does one give which is bad to one's nearest and dearest? As one continues to reflect in this way one finally becomes incapable of doing anything bad or undesirable. Then, when at His Lotus-feet one has sacrificed without reserve whatever small power one possesses, so that there is nothing left that one may call one's own, do you know what He does at that fortunate moment? Out of your littleness He makes you perfect, whole, and then nothing remains to be desired or achieved. The moment your self-dedication becomes complete, at that very instant occurs the revelation of the indivisible, unbroken Perfection which is ever revealed by the Self.**

— Sri Anandamayi Ma

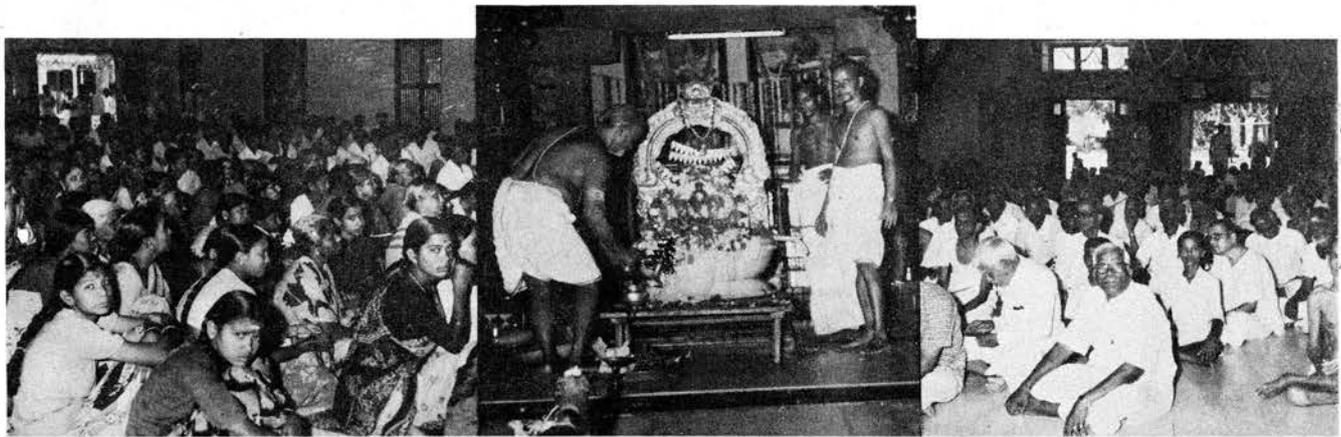
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# ashram Bulletin



PRAYERFUL HOMAGE  
OFFERED TO  
SAT-GURU RAMANA

35th Brahma Nirvana Celebrations  
(17-4-85)



Devotees prayerfully witnessing the Aarti to Sri Ramaneswara Mahalingam.



Thanks to Sri Ramechandra Khoday flower garlands adorned the entrance to Ashram, every shrine and the Ramana Auditorium

### RELEASE OF BOOKS

#### LETTERS FROM SRI RAMANASRAMAM



(r to l) Sri T.N. Venkataraman, President, Sri Ramanasramam gives the book to A.S. Krishnamurthi, Prof. N.R. Krishnamurthi Aiyer, V. Dwaraknath Reddy, B. Ananthaswami, Ramachandra Khoday, Smt. Sulochana Natarajan and Kunju Swamy.

#### ESSENCE OF RIBHU GITHA



(r to l) Presented to J. Jayaraman, K. Natesan, N.N. Rajan, G.A. Nadkarni, .Murthy Swami and Saraswathi Sundaresan

#### THE SILENT SUN

(r to l) Presented to:  
S.R.Y. Ramakrishna Prasad, T.S. Vaidyanathan,  
K.G. Krishnaswamy, and Michael James.



#### IN SEARCH OF SELF

(r to l) Presented to:  
Dr. O. Ramachandralah, S.B. Mukherjee, Jagdish Swami, K. Venkataraman, Kumari Sandhya, Kumari Sarada, Smt. Ramani Subramanian and Kanaka Ammal.



—PILGRIM TOUR—



Members of Sri Ramana Kenaram, Hyderabad: V. Ganesan spent a week in their midst sharing with them the glory of Bhagavan Ramana.



Devotees of Sri Ramana Seva Sangam, Kumta avidly listening to our Managing Editor who narrated scintillating anecdotes on Sri Bhagavan.



Our Managing Editor is fond of sharing with fellow-devotees his understanding of Bhagavan's teaching and visiting-pilgrims make it a point to talk to him, at least once, during their stay at the Ashram. At the insistence of Ramana-bhaktas he now undertakes tours of Ramana Centres and gives talks on the life and teaching of our Master. His talks are homely and dwell mainly on the human side of Bhagavan's life, illustrated by anecdotes of day-to-day happenings in the life of our Master. He has a rich collection of reminiscences of old devotees.

He was in Hyderabad in the midst of Ramana-bhaktas between December 21st and 31st. At Hyderabad he stayed with Dr. Subrahmanian. Recently he toured Kumta and Mercara, staying with Dr. Masurkar and Dr. M.D. Naik at Kumta with Sri Sublah and Sri C.V. Shankar at Mercara.

He says: "I have made it a point to visit not only the Kendras but also the homes of devotees and share with them their devotion to Sri Bhagavan. Merely giving a talk to a big audience is not enough. Ramana should enter the home and stay firm in the heart of each member of the family."



These earnest seekers at Madikeri (Mercara) are serious in pursuing Bhagavan's Atma Vichara under the guidance of their teacher, Sri Sublah (in set)

## AT KOLHAPUR

*Bhagavan Ramana Satsang Mandal and Sri Krishna Swadhyaya Mandal* celebrated the 35th Nirvana Day of Sri Bhagavan on April 13th and 17th, with enthusiasm and devotion.

On Saturday, 13th April, 1985, at 5.30 p.m. after meditation and prayers, devotees expressed their experiences of the recent pilgrimage to Sri Ramanasramam, on the occasion of the Ramana *Jayanthi* Celebrations in January '85. The participants were **Sri Savita Parijata, Smt. Rege, Smt. Bhagawan, Smt. Namjoshi, Sri. Govind V. Kulkarni, Sri R.G. Kulkarni, Sri S.G. Kulkarni and Sri G.S. Kulkarni. Sri G.V. Kulkarni** made concluding remarks.

On 17th April, at 8.00 a.m. there was *pooja* and *abhisheka*. In the evening the devotees listened to the Ramana Music of various cassettes. **Smt. Manoramabai Kulkarni** and **Smt. Ambuja Sontakke** gave their impressions of their visit to the Ashram. This was followed by a serious discussion on the relationship between practical life and *sadhana* as taught by the Maharshi **Sri Sudhir Kulkarni, Sri Rajabhau Kulkarni, Sri Bhagawan** and others participated. The function concluded with *arthi* and *prasad*. This celebration was memorable and inspiring one for the devotees in Kolhapur. Bhagavan's blissful Presence was felt, throughout!

## AT DELHI

Bhagavan's *Mahanirvana* Day was observed with due solemnity, with *vedaparayana* and devotional songs, on April 14 and on April 17, the actual *thiti*. Mother's Day was observed on June 9.

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At a well attended function got up on April 13, Hon'ble **Smt. Maragatham Chandrasekhar**, Minister for Social and Women's Welfare released the fourth volume in the *Ramana Jnana Bodham* series entitled, ANUBHAVA VILAKKAM — II. **Professor K. Swaminathan** paid rich tributes to Sri Muruganar, and also to Sri Sadhu Om Swamigal, who had been editing the volumes. The Minister released the book by presenting a copy to **Dr. K. Arumugham**, of the University of Delhi. In her speech, the Minister complimented the Kendra on the work it was doing by way of cultural, educational and social service. **Kumari Bhuvanewari** of DTEA school, Lodi Estate, spoke on the finer points of the book, *Anubhava Vilakkam — II*. **Dr. Arumugham**, in his scholarly speech, gave interesting comments on *Ramana Jnana Bodham*.

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The members of the Kendra unanimously passed a resolution expressing their sorrow at the untimely passing away of Sri Sadhu Om Swamigal at a meeting held on March 24 and conveyed their condolences to Sri Arunachala Ramana Nilayam and Sri Ramanasramam.

Consequent upon the passing away of Sri Sadhu Om Swamigal, who had been single-handedly doing the editorial work connected with the publication of *Ramana*



Hon'ble Smt. Maragatham Chandrasekar, Central Minister for Social and Women's Welfare, releasing *Anubhava Vilakkam — II* (Tamil) by giving the copy to Dr. K. Arumugam.

*Jnana Bodham*, an Editorial Board consisting of the following scholars was set up for continuing and completing the work.

- (1) **Sri H. Vaidyanathan**
- (2) **Sri N.T. Ganesa Bhaskaran**
- (3) **Dr. K. Subramaniam** (Madras)
- (4) **Professor K. Swaminathan**

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In pursuance of the scheme for popularising Ramana Songs, there were two Ramana Music Programmes — one on March 24 in which the children of the DTEA school, Lodi Estate, trained by **Smt. Sulochana Natarajan** participated, and the other on March 31, by the Ladies Group of Sheikh Sarai and Masjid Moth led by **Smt. Neela Mahalingam**.

A special programme in memory of late Sri Sadhu Om Swamigal was held on May 5 when songs composed by him on Sri Ramana were sung by the lady members of the Kendra.

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Classes on Bhagavan's *Sat Darshan* by **Sri K.C. Subbaiah** were inaugurated on April 24 and are conducted regularly on Wednesdays.

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The discourses 'Who am I?' and *bhajans* in Hindi by **Revered Chota Ma** of Aparna Trust, Madhuban, were held on March 20, April 17 and May 22.

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**Sri T.N. Venkataraman**, President, Sri Ramanasramam visited the Kendra in March-April during his pilgrimage to Vaishnodevi.

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**Sri K. Sivaraj**, President of Sri Ramana Kendra, Ahmedabad and **Sri S.N. Tripathi** from Lucknow spoke at the Sunday *satsangs* during their visit to Delhi in March-April.

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On May 12, there was a delightful *Tirupugazh bhajan* by **Sri S. Mani** and **Sri S. Thiagarajan** of Neyveli.

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The daily distribution of *prasad* to poor children was continued.



Sri Ramana Maharshi Centre, Bombay celebrated the 105th *Jayanthi* of Sri Bhagavan on 23rd March, 1985. Dr. K. Subramanian's outpouring on Bhagavan Ramana thrilled the audience. (l to r) P.V. Somasundaram, Dr. K. Subrahmanian, G.S. Pohekar, Justice P.S. Shah and Smt. Uma Khanna.

#### AT BOMBAY

Sri Bhagavan's 105th *Jayanthi* was celebrated on March 23, 1985 by *Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi Centre*, Bombay. The function was well attended.

**Dr. K. Subrahmanian** spoke for an hour on the unique ness of Sri Bhagavan and the appreciative audience listened with pin-drop silence. **Justice P.S. Shah**, who presided, paid rich tributes to the Maharshi and said that He taught the human mind to view aright and overcome the world which is in constant fear and conflict between different communities and nations. **Smt. Uma Khanna**, welcomed Justice Shah, Dr. K. Subrahmanian and the *Ramana-bhaktas*.

#### A NEW RAMANA CENTRE

**Sri Karamsettygaru Rao** gives us the happy news of his having formed on 28.2.85 'Arunachala Ramana Sat Sangam' at 9-6-32, Syed Gulab streed, Vijayawada. He reports:

"**Sri M.R. Nageswara Rao**, Editor, *Ramana Vani*, Gudi-vada, inaugurated the 'Arunachala Ramana Sat Sangam' at my residence. We also celebrated Sri Bhagavan's

*Jayanthi* on that day. **Sri Garbe Satyanarayana Gupta** presided over the function.

We also celebrated Sri Bhagavan's 35th *Aradhana* on April 27th and 28th. A book in Telugu: *Sri Ramana Nirvana Leela* was released by **Sri M.R. Nageswara Rao**. Every Sunday we have *Ramana Sat Sanga* between 5.00 and 6.30 p.m., when in addition to the devotional programme we sell *Ramana-books*."



105th *Ramana Jayanthi* at VIJAYAWADA: (l to r) Smt. K. Satyawati, K.G. Prasad Rao, Garre Satyanarayana Gupta, M.R. Nageswara Rao.



Sri Ramana Kendra, Jinnuru, celebrated the 35th *Aradhana* on 5.6.85 (l to r) P. Subba Raju, M. Appaji, Bh. V.L. Narasimha Raju, M.R. Nageswara Rao.

Lady devotees enthusiastically participating.

#### Opening of Ramana Shrine at Jinnur

"Sri Ramana Kendra" at Jinnur, A.P. will be declared open on 1st September 1985, the sacred day Ramana Bhagavan arrived at Arunachala. The devotees of Sri Bhagavan are cordially invited to participate in the function.

Sri Ramana Kendra,  
JINNUR 534 265



(i) Sri Ilayaraja with Sri Kunju Swami, (ii) Sri Ilayaraja is totally absorbed in front of Sri Bhagavan's *Samadhi*. Next to the Ashram President (extreme left) is Dr. D. Subbarayan. Sri Ilayaraja arranged for an elaborate *puja* at the Shrine of Bhagavan on June 3, his birthday, when he distributed clothes to all *sadhus*, inmates and other members of the Ashram, as well.



In memory of his devoted mother, Bangamma, Sri Bh. Janardhana Raju (extreme left) presented on April 18, a cow to the *Goshala* of the Ashram. Next to him is his father Sri Bh. Narayana Raju.



**AMBIKA WEDS KAMESHWAR**

**Kumari Ambika**, the second daughter of **Sri A.R. Natarajan** and **Smt. Sulochana Natarajan**, is really talented in music, dancing and choreography, in addition to her academic brilliance. Her devotion to Sri Bhagavan is well-rooted even at this young age.

She is married to **Sri Kameshwar**, son of **Sri Gaurishanker**, who is himself a great *bhakta* of Bhagavan. The marriage, as the per the wedding couple's prayer and wish, took place at the Ashram, in front of Sri Bhagavan's *Samadhi*, on June 9.

Relatives, friends and Ramana-*bhaktas* attended the happy function in large numbers and blessed the young Couple — Kameshwar — Ambika — a very happy married life of dedication, devotion and prosperity!



**WELCOME**

**V. Subramanian**, the third son of T.N. Venkataraman, Ashram President, has resigned his lucrative job in Bombay and has come for good to Ashram. His intention purely is to serve Sri Bhagavan and help the Ashram in its management wing. He has taken up work at the Ashram Office on the auspicious day of Sri Bhagavan's *Brahma Nirvana*, April 17, 1985.

We welcome him with cheers and warmth!

**"It is not enough that one thinks of God while doing karma (service, or worship), but one must continually and unceasingly think of Him. Then only will the mind become pure."**

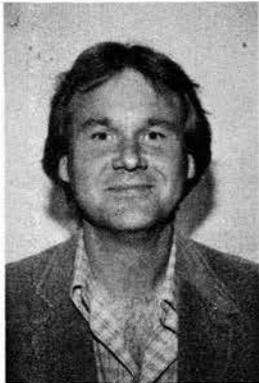
— Sri Bhagavan



**Sri B.K. Subiah** of Madikeri (Mecara) brought nearly 40 devotees to have Bhagavan's *darshan*. They are seen enjoying the serenity of Skandashram.

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# PILGRIM



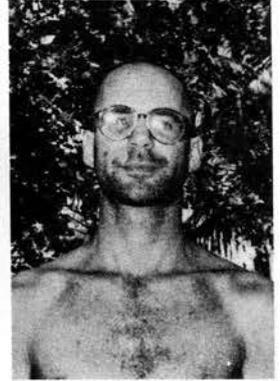
M. Vietnieks

Andreas Schlegel



Anna Maria

Robert Dodds



Br. Anitha Chaitanya

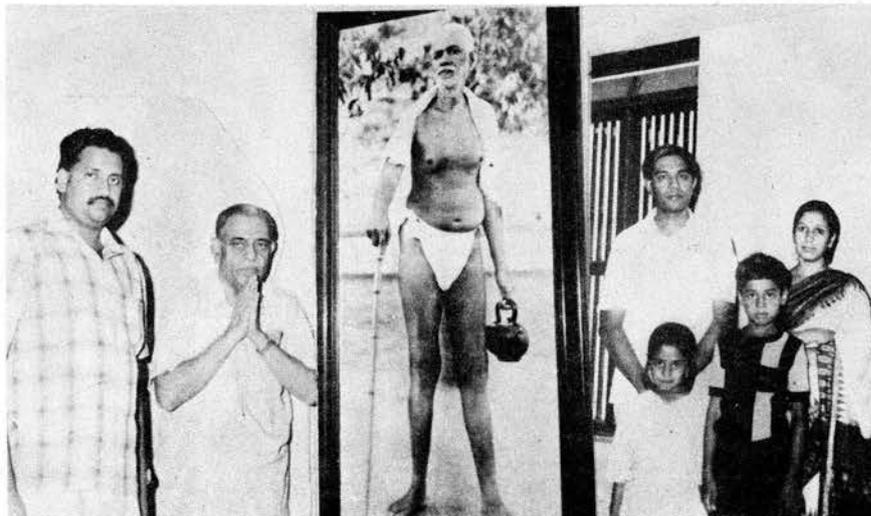


Parikh Hiralen Nandalel



Br. Krishna

Kamal Grover





A.V. Ramanoh, Smt. Ramanish, A.V.S. Sridhar and  
A.V.S. Ramesh.



Prof. Bidari, Smt. Poonimadevi, Yogesh and Pravin.



Smt. Savithri, V.N. Sabhavil and R.G. Prasad.

#### ARTHUR OSBORNE DAY

On May 8th, Arthur Osborne Day was solemnly observed at his *samadhi*, situated within the precincts of his house, with the chanting of Bhagavan's *Five Hymns of Arunachala*.

#### ARUNACHALA SHIVA

By Smt. S.S. Pattani

Arunachala Shiva, Arunachala Shiva,  
Holy Father of Sadguru Ramana,  
Once you appeared as a column of light  
And still stand here, a wondrous sight.

To see your twin feet Vishnu dived  
Deep, deep below. To see your head  
Great Brahma soared aloft. And both  
Gave up the search in sheer despair.

Unbeginning and unending,  
Transcending space and time, O Mountain  
Bright, you condescend to dwell.  
As Heart within the human heart.

And the heart-lotus blossoms fair  
With light of love and bliss divine.  
O Hill of light, love, bliss, you are  
The Centre of the universe

Out of compassion for mankind  
You summoned to Your side the Son  
And have through Him revealed to us  
The mystery of Being-Awareness-Bliss.

As the Sun shining in the sky  
Enriches and illumines the earth,  
You, Shiva-Ramana, shower on us  
The light of love, the love of light.

## OBITUARY

## SRI JILLELAMUDI AMMA

The holy mother **Sri Anusuya Devi**, fondly addressed by everyone as AMMA, a Spiritual Light guiding earnest seekers flocking to her Ashram from all over the world, dropped her physical frame on June 14.



Sri Anusuya Devi

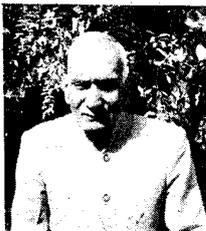
Her teachings sprouted from her own inner experiences and as such, devotees, which included many scholars, found in them depths of great absorption. Not only her teachings were simple and deep, but they were conveyed by her in a very homely way, the characteristics of a beloved mother.

The Light has merged in to the Light!

We offer our prayers to Sri AMMA.

## Dr. SIDDHESWAR NATH

"My Master makes every one 'like Himself'; since, for



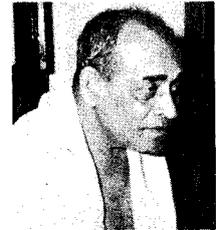
Dr. Siddheswar Nath

Him there is no other than the One Self that He is", said **Dr. S.Nath**. What words of wisdom! This glorious Ramana-*bhakta* has attained the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan on June 16 at Varanasi. He was ailing for the past few years. Neither serious illness nor unfavourable worldly circumstances deterred him from having constant contact with his Master. His devotion to Bhagavan Ramana was so unique and perfect that he breathed his last with the Name of the Master on his lips. In his passing

away Ramana-*bhaktas* have lost one of the most precious gems of a devotee. Dr. Nath is thus absorbed only in Bhagavan who was Dr. Nath's sole Refuge!

## Sri N.B.K. NAMBIAR

One of the staunchest devotees who came under the direct influence of Sri Bhagavan was **Sri N.B.K. Nambiar**. He had spent years in the proximity of Bhagavan and thus imbibed His teachings direct from the holy lips of the Master. After the *Maha Nirvana* of Bhagavan he spent long spells of stay at the Ashram, year after year. When asked he used to reason it out by saying: "Sri Bhagavan fills the Ashram with His Presence!" This pious *bhakta* passed away peacefully at Mayyil, Kerala State, on June 10. He is thus absorbed at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan Ramana!



Sri N.B.K. Nambiar

## Smt. BANGARAMMA

**Smt. Bangaramma**, devout wife of Sri Bh. Nararana Rajaguru, settled down at the house opposite to the Ashram and was totally devoted to Sri Bhagavan. Daily she used to go round the *Samadhi* of Sri Bhagavan many number of times. She went to her native place to her son for medical check up. There, this pious lady passed away on March 4, 1985. May her soul rest in peace at the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan!



Smt. Bangaramma

## A REQUEST

Ashram is urgently in need of the services of a Civil Engineer/Overseer who can be in charge of construction activities. Ashram invites suitable retired technical personnel who are also spiritually inclined to come forward to undertake this noble service in an honorary capacity. Ashram will provide convenient board and lodging facilities, as available. Interested volunteers may kindly write to:

The President,  
Sri Ramanasramam,  
Tiruvannamalai 606 603.