

The Mountain Path



VOL. 23 No. II APRIL 1986

"The inert body will not say. The Existence-Consciousness will not rise. The 'I' of the measure of the body rises in-between. This is (called) the knot of the intelligent and inert, bondage, the individual soul, the subtle body, egoity, transmigratory mind. Thus should you know."

—Sri Bhagavan's FORTY VERSES ON EXISTENCE, verse 24
(Translation by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan)

“சடவுடனானென்னது சச்சித்துதியா
துடலளவா நானென் றுதிக்கு — மிடையிலிது
சிச்சடக்கி ரந்திபந்தஞ் சீவனுட்ப மெய்யகந்தை
யிச் சமு சாரமன மெண்.”

—பகவான் ஸ்ரீரமணரின் உள்ளது நாற்பது-24

*

May the Grace of

Sri Ramana Maharshi

be with

“THE MOUNTAIN PATH”

The Spiritual Journal

published from Sri Ramanasramam

Inserted by the Management

WELLINGTON TALKIES,

MADRAS

THE MOUNTAIN PATH
(A QUARTERLY)

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

— *The Marital Garland of Letters*, verse 1

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Unknown to all, stupe-
fying me, Who was it that
ravished my soul, Oh,
Arunachala!

*The Marital
Garland of Letters
Verse 89*

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— Editor.

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The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

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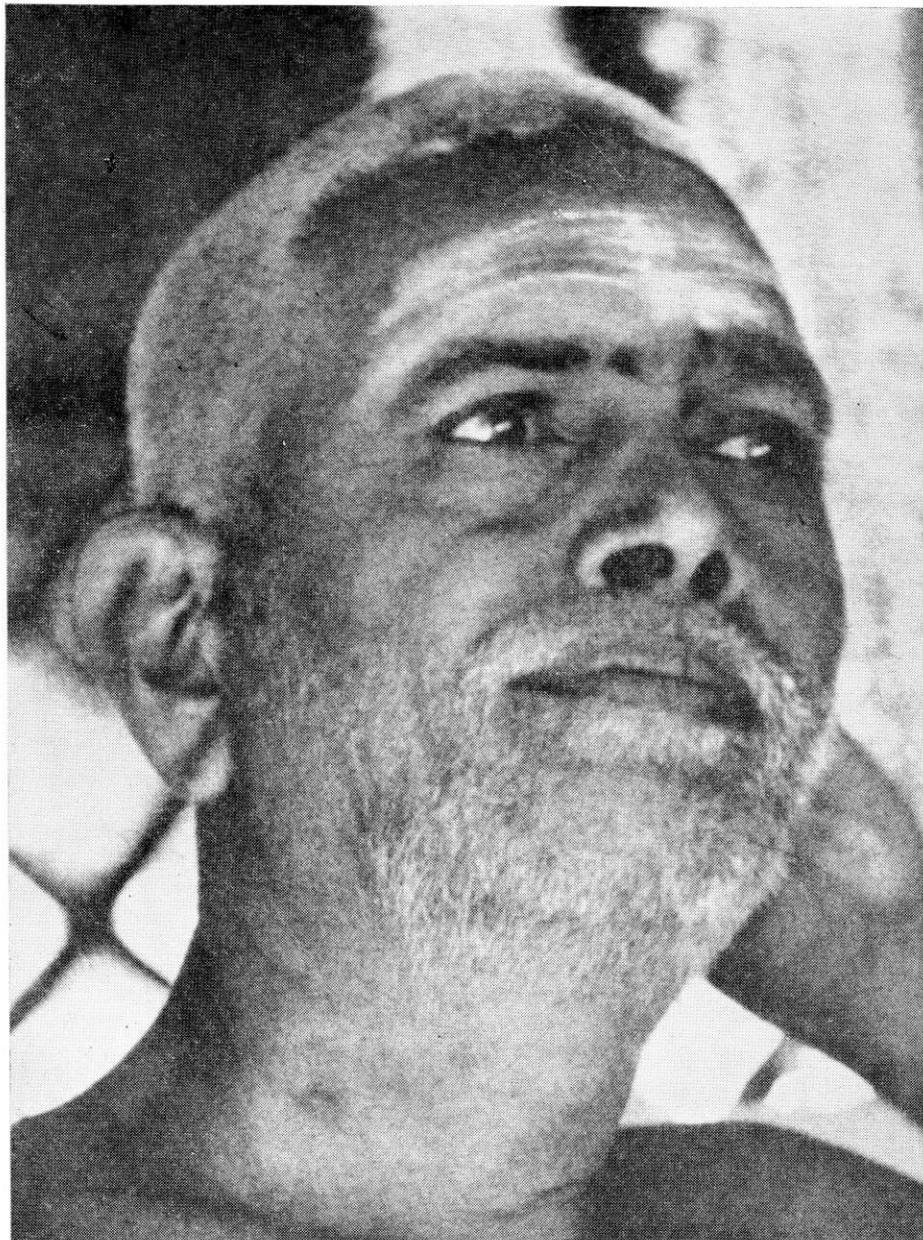
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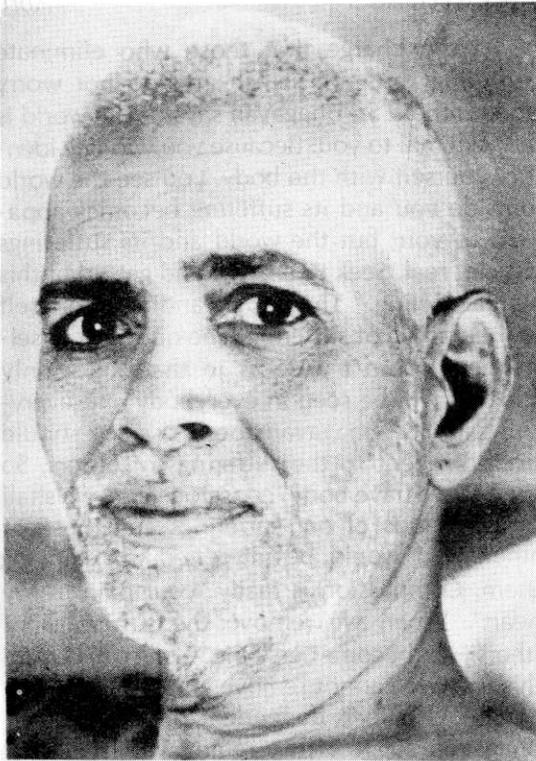
THE MOUNTAIN PATH

is dedicated to

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

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WHENEVER SRI Bhagavan was asked about the problem of suffering, he suggested a method to eliminate it. Most others trim the branches; Sri Bhagavan tackled the root of the problem. He said that whatever be the gravity of the suffering, we are not aware of it in deep sleep. When we have a terrible tooth-ache, we can't think of anything except the pain. But the pain is not felt in deep sleep. In deep sleep, we are not conscious of the body and hence there is no pain. When the mind merges in the Self, there is no body-consciousness and therefore there is no pain. Sri Bhagavan says: "Physical pain only follows body-consciousness. It cannot be in the absence of body-consciousness. Mind being unaware of the body, cannot be aware of its pains or pleasures. Pains are dependent on the ego; they cannot be without the 'I' but the 'I' can remain without them".

Even ordinarily, we notice that our pain is related to the attitude of our mind. When we have some acute pain, and a person we like walks in our pain is relieved to some extent.

SUFFERING

EDITORIAL

The Mountain Path

Vol. 23, No. 2, April, 1986

When a person we dislike walks in, our pain becomes worse. In other words, our pain increases or decreases according to the state of our mind at a particular moment. Sri Bhagavan asks us to remove the mind altogether so that we won't feel the pain at all. He says: "Therefore turn inwards and seek the Self and there will be an end both of the world and its miseries": When body-consciousness goes, suffering goes. On one occasion, Sri Bhagavan said that the body itself is the disease. When we have a disease, we are not at ease. That is why it is called a disease. We are happy only when the disease disappears. When we are ill, we take steps to

become healthy. When we are healthy, we don't seek illness because our nature is happiness, bliss. When we have a disease, we try to become 'whole' by taking medicine. When the body itself is the disease, we shall be 'whole' only when the body is removed. When the body ceases, there will be death. But Sri Bhagavan doesn't mean death of the body but death of body-consciousness. When the disease of 'body-consciousness' is cured, there will be fullness, wholeness. All suffering, according to Sri Bhagavan, is due to the notion 'I-am-the-body'.

Prayer is good in that it makes us lose our mind in the contemplation of the Supreme Being. When the mind is lost in contemplation, there is considerable reduction in pain. But prayer will not *remove* suffering *totally*. The individual will feel the suffering when his mind is not at prayer. *Pooja, japa*, and prayer are all good in that they take our mind off our suffering for a while. While they are all good as a temporary measure, removal of suffering is possible only through elimination of body-consciousness. Sri Bhagavan says: 'If one remains free from pain thus, there won't be any pain anywhere. The trouble now is due to your seeing the world outside yourself and thinking there is pain in it. But both the world and the pain are within you. If you turn inward, there will be no pain.'

To the charge that those who eliminate suffering thus are selfish and do not worry about others, Sri Bhagavan says: "The world is not external to you. Because you wrongly identify yourself with the body, you see the world outside you and its suffering becomes apparent to you; but the world and its sufferings are not real. Seek the reality and get rid of this unreal feeling." The understanding of oneself is the ending of suffering. The question of selfishness doesn't arise as in that state, only the Self will be seen in everybody and everything. But Sri Bhagavan doesn't say we should be indifferent to the sufferings of others. So long as we have body-consciousness, we shall be conscious of our sufferings and those of others and would be interested in removing them. Compassion is really '*your* pain in *my* heart'. When we remove the sufferings of others, we become less 'me'-centred. But by this way we cannot remove all the pain in the world. As pain is dependent on the ego, Sri Bhagavan suggests the removal of the ego; with the ego, pain will also disappear.

This is not just theory. Sri Bhagavan exemplified what he said. When he had cancer, he behaved as if it belonged to another. He was as serene as ever and gave *darshan* to all till the very end. There wasn't a trace of pain on his face. His detachment from the body was total.

"Living the householder life is not incompatible with self-realisation. In fact the Rishis of old as Vasishtha, Atri and others lived such a life. Vasanas leave only after God-realisation. Karma is jada and whatever Karma that was responsible for projecting this body, the flesh has to suffer or enjoy that prarabdha. There is outwardly no difference in the actions of the ignorant and the wise. The former identifies himself with the body and actions while the latter cognises and feels that he is the immortal spirit other than the body which is mortal and only an instrument. Self-experience is purely personal and it is difficult for the ignorant to differentiate who is ignorant or wise from outward actions."

— Sri Ramana Maharshi

THE BOYHOOD

(Chapter – III)

By Arthur Osborne

In our issue of October 1985, we had published the second instalment of the autobiography of the founder-editor, Sri Arthur Osborne, and we hope to continue the series from this issue onwards.

I NEVER went back to the moors. Life took a new course. The beacon ahead to which I steered was an Oxford scholarship. I have the methodical tenacity in pursuing a goal which one would expect of a moon in Capricorn. At present the goal was an idealized Oxford; later it was to be the supreme goal of *Nirvana*. Between the two intervened a period with no envisaged goal, when I tossed adrift on a stormy sea. At present Oxford seemed like an alabaster city of dreams in the mists ahead and I aimed steadily at getting there. Not only was it the gateway to a good career but, in itself, a haven of culture from the bleak money-cult of the West Riding. In fact, refusal to accept a materialist world was already working in me and, the true alternative not yet having been described, an idealized Oxford served as an imaginary substitute for it.

My school trained boys in classics, science and mathematics, but an enthusiastic history master captured my interest and got the headmaster's permission to coach me for a history scholarship. That was before the day of the welfare state, when a county grant came automatically to all who obtained entrance to a university. For me it was a scholarship or nothing.

Side by side with persistent study I found time for other reading also — philosophical writers like Ruskin and Carlyle, though not pure philosophy; theology as well, such as the works of Dean Inge, who was then in vogue; also much poetry. My special delight was when I was left alone in the house and was able to read poetry aloud. I also enjoyed whatever humour came my way — Pickwick, the plays of W.S. Gilbert, the Ingoldsby Legend.

Except for an occasional humourous novel, I read no fiction. It seemed a waste of time with so much knowledge to acquire and philosophy to ponder. Although little enough spending money came my way, I began to accumulate a small library.

I thought of myself as a future writer. Looking around at the sunset sky from a windy hill one evening, the conviction came to me with the intensity of the revelation: "I could write poems if there were anything important enough to write about." Several times in the course of my life I recalled this saying: "Surely what I feel now is important enough?" But it never was.

On another occasion, walking across the fields into town, I had the strange dream that I should some day write a book that would begin in prose and then, attaining too high a vibration for prose, continue in poetry, and finally transcend speech altogether, ending in silence.

There were no buses on the roads in those days, and it was a two-mile walk to school in the morning and back in the evening; often four times a day when I came home to lunch. I must have been about sixteen when, as I was walking home one day, a vivid and intense feeling of the reality of death came over me — why should I accumulate a library, why should I accumulate anything at all, when death was inevitable? There was nothing sad or tragic about the thought and no fear; it was not a feeling of despondency or revolt, but simply of the inevitability of death. It passed and effected no permanent change, but at least it left an impression too vivid to fade. It was at the same age that an experience of death

overwhelmed Ramana, who was to become the Maharshi, and destroyed his ego once and for all, leaving him thenceforth established immutably in the Self.¹ It is very seldom that the path can thus be completed in a single step, only in those rare cases where obstacles have already been overcome in a previous life, leaving the ultimate attainment within grasp. More often it is a path of striving for a lifetime, seldom indeed brought to a conclusion before life ends. However, it may be natural for the first intuition of it to occur at this age, when the mind is already fully active and worldly un wisdom has not yet closed over it like a dense cloud, hiding the face of Reality.

Religion already meant a lot to me. At this time I came under the influence of a Welsh clergyman called Morgan, a spare but powerfully built man, dominating and combative, utterly dedicated and tense with nervous energy. That he was a boxing blue and an authority on rugby football impressed me not at all, that he was a keen wit very much. He ran into opposition through introducing beauty into his church and its services. Typical of him was that he painted the pews bright green instead of the usual dull brown, saying that he wanted to wake people up when they came into the church, not put them to sleep. To give us courage he introduced street processions and small prayer meetings conducted by laymen, and I took part in both. I had read *Gitanjali* and its sequel, Tagore's books of prose poems, and was fascinated by them as the nearest thing to mystical knowledge I had yet found (though how far distant from the advaitic approach I was later to understand) and — foreshadowing of things to come — at one such prayer meeting that I conducted I read out a poem by Tagore and explained that, although not a Christian, he had the same faith and understanding. Those present expressed agreement.

The second strong influence on me at that time was Mr. Lance, my history master. He was a loyal son of Christ Church and eager that I should go there too. However, the Oxford colleges were divided into three groups for

BHAGAVAN IS HERE

By John W.D. Baker

**The world and sense depart
And silence brings so near,
The Grace the Heart imparts,
For Bhagavan is here.**

**The wordless joy He gives
To seekers without fear,
Pour from His loving Heart,
For Bhagavan is here.**

**His glorious Presence felt
In hearts of pilgrims dear,
Beloved of the Self,
For Bhagavan is here.**

scholarship purposes, and in my year the Christ Church group came last of the three. I would obviously be too reckless to wait for that, so he suggested my going up to try for a scholarship a year early. The head master agreed that it would be useful for me to have the experience, not that there was any chance of my getting in. It was, however, pointed out to me that it was unwise for a boy from a grammar school like ours to put Christ Church first on his list of preferences; he would not be chosen anyway, and it would make the colleges he had put lower down the list less likely to accept him. However, I stuck to my guns, or rather Mr. Lance's guns. In the autumn of 1924 I went to Oxford as a scholar of Christ Church, just turned eighteen, a year before my time. For Mr. Lance it was a personal achievement. All concerned were delighted. For me it was a time of happy expectations.

(To be continued)

¹ See my 'Ramana Maharshi and the path of Self-Knowledge', p. 18—19, Rider & Co.

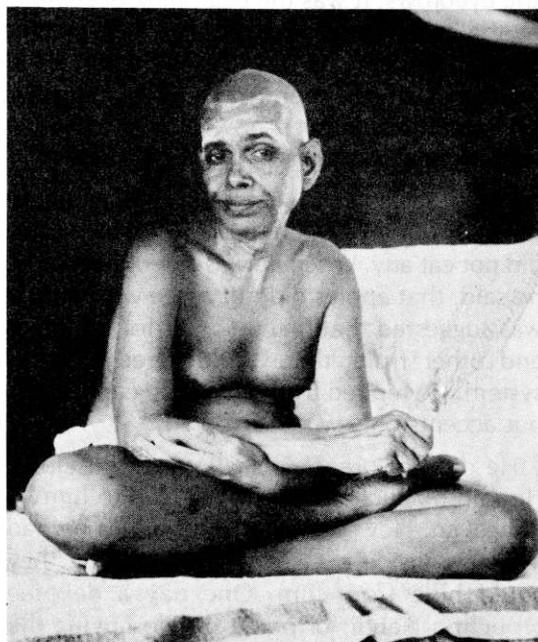
SWAMI RAMANAGIRI: A TRIBUTE

Prof. K.C. Sashi

BORN INTO a princely family (he was related to the King of Sweden) in 1921, Swami Ramanagiri was an only child. Coming across the book *Raja Yoga* by Swami Vivekananda he was able to at once, grasp and practice the truths contained in it. He waited for a suitable opportunity to come to India. As soon as the war ended, in 1949, he came and studied philosophy in Benares Hindu University. It was not long before he realised that the Ultimate Reality lay not in study but in practice. He gave up his studies, renounced property worth more than eight million and took *sannyasa*.

His *diksha* Guru (the saint who initiated him into *sannyasa* at Benares) stipulated that he should not ask anything for himself, but accept only what was offered to him. On the day following his *diksha* he passed by a friend's house. The friend failed to recognize him because of his clean shaven head. On seeing the *sannyasi* he shouted to his wife, who was inside the house, "A mendicant is going. Give him the rotting bananas." That was his first *bhiksha*. The very next day he was passing before the palace of the Raja of Benares. A durwan accosted him and asked him to step inside. Swamiji asked him, "Why?" The durwan replied that it was the practice of the King to offer oblation and food daily to the first *sannyasi* seen before the palace gate. So he was taken in, accorded a royal reception and given a kingly repast by the pious King himself. When he narrated both the incidents to the Guru, he was told that both should be treated with equal in difference as food is only for sustenance. The command given by his *diksha* Guru not to ask for anything for himself he carried out till the end of his life. Similarly he never touched money.

Thereafter he practised intense *sadhana* visiting India's Holy Shrines. In a pilgrimage to South India he visited Arunachala and was



at once drawn to the 'great magnet', Bhagavan Ramana. Thus by the grace of Bhagavan and following the path of '*Atma Vichara*' laid out by his Sat Guru he attained realization within 40 days. "On that day I became a fool", was his favourite way of describing the event! Afterwards he would refer to himself as 'this fool' instead of 'I'.

The faith he had in Bhagavan was total and his surrender utterly complete. He often said that even the breath he breathed was ordained by Him. After Bhagavan's *Mahanirvana*, Bhagavan directed him, in a vision, to stay in the Sirumalai Hills, 20 miles away from Madurai. He spent most of his time there absorbed in bliss with little consciousness of his bodily needs.

In fact, he treated the body and the world around him with utter indifference. When he was in Perundurai Sanatorium (where he was taken for treatment) his body was found lean

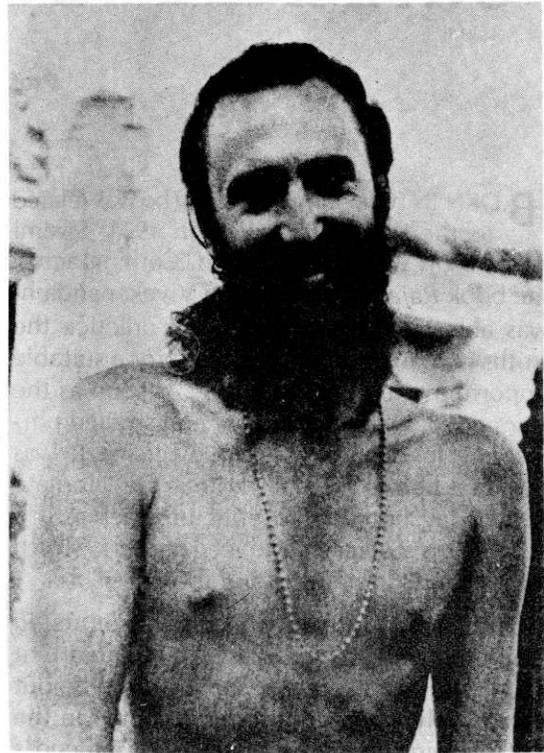
and emaciated which filled his devotees with grief. Reading one of their minds he at once said: "It is the body which suffers. I am alright. *Shakti* is now stronger than ever before, and it is here" — he indicated the space between the eyebrows. It was the beginning of summer at the time, and mangoes were just making their appearance. A devotee had taken a few fruits and offered them. He ate one and said: "I eat nice mangoes now and it becomes rubbish next morning."

On another occasion a basket full of apples were sent or given to him by devotees. Swami did not eat any. When he was asked the reason, he said, that apples did not agree with him. It was suggested that he could ask for tomatoes and other fruits that would agree with his system. He replied that a *sannyasi* cannot ask, but accepts only what is offered.

He did not preach or have many disciples. He said no such mission was given to him by Bhagavan. However the few disciples he had he knew inside out. There was nothing they could hide from him. One day a devotee brought a Nandi for *pooja*. While buying the image it crossed his mind that it would be nice if Swami took the one he bought and gave him his own. When he finally showed the Nandi to Swami he immediately said; "I will keep this; you can take this one which is with me." The devotee told him about his thought, but Swami simply laughed.

During a conversation this same devotee said; "Swamiji there are ever so many who claim to be a saint. How can one know a real saint?" He replied, "In the presence of a saint you never have any evil thought."

He had the vision of Bhagavan on many occasions. He said Bhagavan guided him in these visions. At the time he gave up his body, in his early thirties, it was clear that he had a vision of Bhagavan. For more than an hour before the event he was completely indrawn and in deep meditation. His hairs were standing on end. At the last moment he whispered, "let us go". And that was the end of a brief but beautiful and remarkable life. Blood was



Swami Ramanagiri

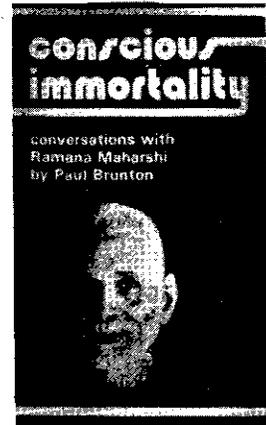
then seen coming out of the *Sahasrara*.

The author of this article, a disciple of Swami Ramanagiri was blessed to have both the Swami's silent and potent presence when he went to see him from Madras and his letters when he was not able to be physically present with him. From his collection of letters are extracted a few passages of Swami Ramanagiri's words and experiences:

1. The only truth which becomes falsehood when expressed is *Aham Brahmasmi* or *Sivoham*.
2. Nonattachment does not mean indifference; Love does not mean attachment; Attachment is that which takes; Love is that which gives.
3. About your worldly troubles you must do as you think best yourself, but it is good policy to keep out from other's plates however sweet and inviting it looks. Both sugar and arsenic are white.

4. When a soul turns his mind towards the Divine the following two things will happen — first he will get some joyful experience, which shows that he is on the right path and that he is progressing. Second when the *asuric* forces see that he is progressing they will put every possible obstacle before the *sadhaka* in the form of worldly troubles, mental botherations and sex urge. I think you have reached that second stage and would get further troubles. But don't mind. They are good as far as they make us fed up with the world. Three years back I found that letters from my previous family became an obstacle in the spiritual quest, so when any letter came I never opened it or read it and I experienced that the Divine was on my side in spite of my improper action.
5. In the course of *sadhana* — *maya* comes to a sincere soul first in the form of worldly troubles, second in the form of diseases and thirdly in the form of dear friends to keep him away from the quest. Our mind is the greatest cheater in this world, it will create thousands of different reasons to go its own way. There are three ways to handle this cheater who is nothing but a bundle of thoughts creeping up in the conscious mind. First to treat him as a friend and give him full satisfaction. This is a very long and tiresome way because he is never satisfied. Secondly to treat him as an enemy and with all your force try to get rid of him. This is only possible by the grace of the Divine because the mind has two very powerful weapons which are the discriminating intellect and the second the imaginative faculty. These two fellows can convince even God Himself that black is white. The third way taught by Sri Ramana, in the days of silence, at the foot of Sacred Arunachala and which has been adopted by this fool, is to treat him as a patient or rather several patients coming and troubling him with their different kinds of diseases. As a doctor is sitting in his room receiving different kinds of patients, this fool imagines

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himself sitting in the Sacred cave of the Heart receiving different thoughts patients. You know a sick person likes to bubble for hours about his complaint, in the same way a thought likes to multiply itself. But the doctor always says, very good, take this medicine, thank you very much and then he calls another patient. Like that, this fool decides before meditation, (after having slowed down the breath as much as possible, without feeling uneasy) to receive 20 patients and then he closes the dispensary of the Heart. He calls and he waits till thought-patient number one has come inside. For example thought-patient one is like this "A is not well, B is worried". Then this foolish doctor says, "Oh you are number one, very good. The name of Lord Muruga will cure you. Thank you very much." Then he calls for number two and waits till the second patient enters the room. "C may get Moksha this life. Very good, you are number two. The whole world is benefitted if one soul gets liberated. Thank you very much." Number three! and so on ---. Then when all the 20 thought-patients have come, the doctor closes the room to the Heart and no one is allowed to come inside. Now he is alone. Now there is time for *Atma Vichara*. He asks himself "To whom have all these thoughts come?", three times slowly along with the outgoing breath. Then in the same slow manner he answers, "To me", "To me", "To me". Then again he questions, repeating all the questions and answers three times, "Who am I?" Next he says, "This I is it not a thought?" then — "Who is the perceiver of this I thought" — "I" "I" "I" (now the mind is centralized on the source itself). Then "Who am I?" — "Who am I?" "Who am I?" Now the breath comes to an end and the attention is 100% concentrated on the sound caused by the palpitation of the Heart as if that sound would give the answer to our question. This is nothing but the *Pranava* itself. If during this time the Energy

or *Shakti* which is static is converted to movements or becomes dynamic a trance will occur. If the primal Energy reaches the space between the eyebrows *Savikalpa Samadhi* will occur — this is, God with form will be seen. If the Energy rises up to the top of the head *Nirvikalpa Samadhi* will occur which is nothing but the Self Itself — but you also know, that even if the doctor has closed the dispensary door, some patients may come and peep through the window and complain about their ailments. And in the beginning of practising *Atma Vichara*, many patients come. In the same way, although the door to the cave of the Heart is closed, some thought may occur at the time of *Dyana*, for example "Sushumna Nadi is opened in the case of D". As the patient has not come at the proper time the doctor doesn't attend to him but continues in the Quest. "To whom has the thought of D come? To me, to me, to me. Who am I? Who am I? Who am I?"

6. The main thing with worship is not *what* we worship, but *that* we worship and if we have got love we can easily surrender the feeling of "I" which is the wall between ourselves and God.
7. The greatest service to humanity is Self — Enquiry and the greatest remedy for this world is Self realisation but that does not mean we should not do anything for others. . . . As long as we have not got the power to withdraw the mind from the objects of sense perception we should do and *must do* whatever we can for others. Selfless activity will soon give the power of introversion but when the mind once has become introverted, we should not spoil what we have gained by outward activity.
8. Perfection in any form is the manifestation of the Divine.
9. If the ego is allowed to play with our emotions it is capable of causing havoc. Only by drawing the ego to its source even the saddest feeling is converted into *Ananda*.

THE LILA

By Murdoch Kirby

OVER THE period of the last twenty years that I have been reading *The Mountain Path*, I have never found a way to answer the question, 'Who am I?' But now, September 1985, I am beginning to see a light. I have identified three mes.

(I must now follow the advice given by the King of Hearts in the children's story '*Alice in Wonderland*' — Begin at the beginning, go on till you come to the end and then stop —).

For sometime now I have been receiving what seem to me to be flashes of inspiration. They are about very minor things, but it has happened several times. It might be that I am out walking and I suddenly get the idea 'Go along *that way home*', so I do and I meet someone it gives me great pleasure to meet again. It is like getting a 'hunch' to do something or hearing a 'still, small voice',.

That is the introduction, now for the idea that hit me yesterday; I wrote it down like this: —

I am very fortunate: I am physically fit
I am old: I am 80.

But I do not feel old: this has been a revelation to me. I had always thought

that people felt as old as they looked, and — when you are young — some people do look old. I don't think I am exceptional; it must be the case that other old people, all other old people, feel the same. This is beginning to convince me that I am not my body; that is growing old, but I am not. There must have been people in the past who have thought and written about this.

It is true, there have. Perhaps my body has been taking part in a play. But who wrote the play? and how do I know what to say or do? So now I am beginning to understand that my body is acting in a play; I am the actor who is playing the part, my body is the costume I am wearing, and somewhere in me is the director who gives me, every now and then, a hint as to what I should say or do next.

Those are the three, me's (playwright, actor costume). What I have to do now is to try to absorb the idea, and to discipline myself to hear the director. I think that we all have the choice — either to listen for the director with his flashes of inspiration — or to go our own way.

Finally I have never achieved before any understanding of the phrase *The Lila of the Lord*.

Disciple: **The Atmic Current or 'I'-'I' Force is sometimes felt in the Heart. At other times it is felt in the Yogic Centres. Is the former state static and the latter dynamic, or are both dynamic and the static state is something different?**

Maharshi: **The centre in man is the Heart located in the right chest. The same Atmic Current or Chidananda felt here radiates in the various yogic centres in the Sushumna. Infinite concentrated power is Stillness or Peace.**

(from "Vision," July 1938)

TWO DECADES OF

WHOSE WILL BE DONE

Prayer, parading one's weakness before God and asking that one's will be done, is useless. Even though a man may be praying for others it is fundamentally his own happiness that he is seeking. To pray for anything is offering resistance to the free play of God's will. Nothing should be allowed to come between God and the seeker, not even a prayer. To be still and surrender oneself to God is to abide by His Will. This does not mean that one should be inactive in life, only that one should learn to lead a non-volitional life. "When all actions are performed by the qualities of Nature, only he who is confused by the egosense imagines himself to be the actor. (*Bhagavad Gita*, III, 27).

— Dr. T.N. Krishnaswami

AT INTERVALS

By Muruganar

You meditate at intervals?
Talk not of intervals, just be the Self
In one unbroken thread.
Hair after itching hair of thought
Who would pluck out
When what's to do
Is shave the whole scalp clean?

— translated into English by Professor K. Swaminathan

THE BLESSINGS

There are some events which cannot be explained by physical causation. They simply have to be put down to Divine Omnipotence. There is the case, for instance, of Harry Edwards, the doyen of England's psychic healers who was

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

miraculously saved from a tragic motor accident when he was about thirty years old.

He stepped off a tram in the middle of the road and started to cross over to the pavement without looking for oncoming traffic. A lorry was approaching at high speed. He had no time to jump out of its way, nor had the driver time to swerve or apply the brake. He seemed certain to be crushed to death but suddenly an unseen hand raised him up and hurled him across the gap to the pavement to the astonishment of the lorry driver and the spectators. It was this miraculous saving of his life which prompted him to utilise the healing power latent in him for the services of mankind.

— K. Ramachandra, Sri Lanka

* * * *

I wanted one *mantra*, one scripture and one form of worship, so that there might be no conflict of loyalties. Sri Ramana Bhagavan was obviously the God to worship; His writings were the gospel, and as for the *mantra*, it struck me that 'Om Namō Bhagavathe Sri Ramanaya' was an exact parallel of the one I had used formerly. I counted the letters and found that it also contained twelve letters. I told Bhagavan and He gave His approval.

— By T.K.S.

* * * * *

People searching for "the Self" are usually looking for "an entity that isn't an entity" — instead of quite simply looking for what is looking. What is looking is what "they" are looking for all the time.

Neither could ever be "found", but the latter at least is present.

— Wei We Wei

from *The Mountain Path*, April 1966

J. KRISHNAMURTI, The Man and His teachings

By 'G.N.'

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI was born in Madanapalle a town in Andhra Pradesh on May 11, 1895. His father Narayaniah was a graduate of the Madras Christian College and a civil servant; mother Sanjeevamma was a devotee of Lord Krishna and gave birth to her son in the puja room of her house, not the usual custom in Brahmin families. She felt there was something special about the eighth child that was going to be born.

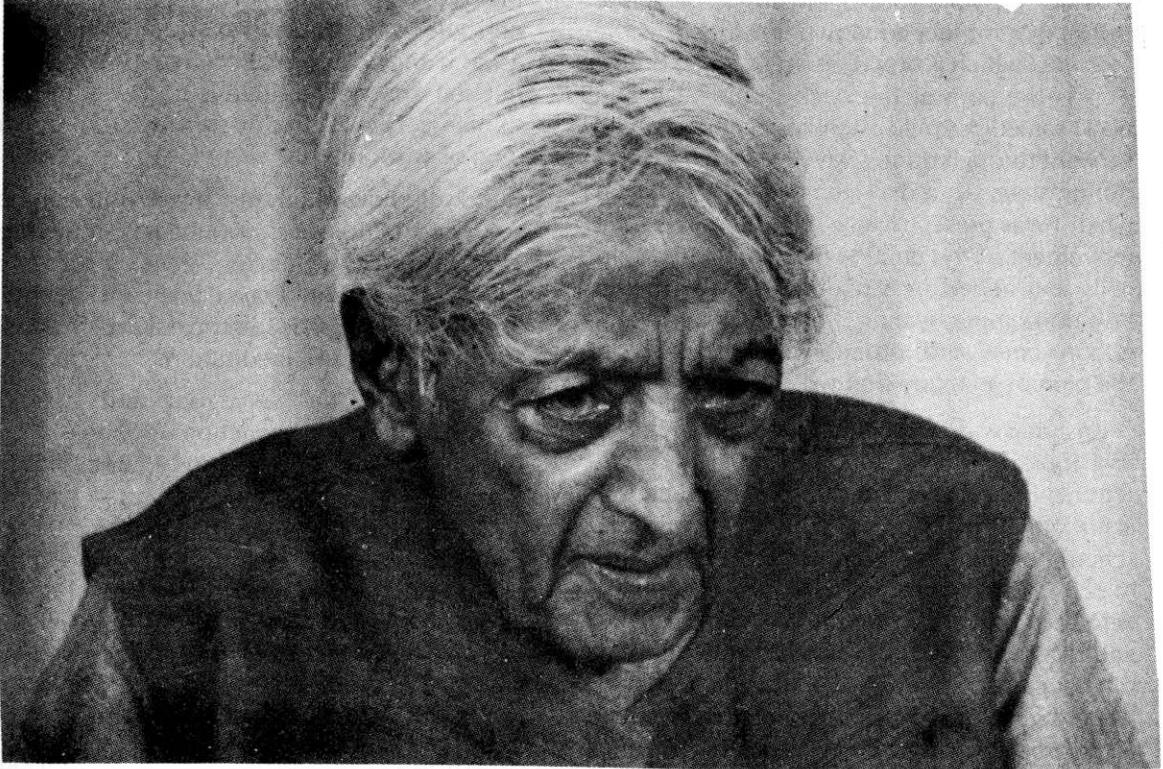
Later on Narayaniah moved to Madras to work for the Theosophical Society which cherished a belief that Lord Maitreya was soon to incarnate as a human being. Leadbeater, a Theosophist and a clairvoyant discovered Krishnamurti in 1909 and found that the boy had a radiant aura without any trace of ego in it. Dr. Annie Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society, adopted Krishna and his younger brother Nitya and took them to England for education.

Mrs. Besant hailed Krishnamurti as the World Teacher who comes 'only once in thousands of years is such a life lived among mortal men'. A world-wide organisation called The Order of the Star in the East was built up with Krishnamurti as its head. Many properties were donated to the new organisation from California to Australia. A Dutch baron gave his castle with 5,000 acres of woodland which became the Headquarters of the Order. Thousands of people were attracted to Krishnamurti at his campfire talks. His handsome face with exquisite dark eyes and a shy manner attracted the attention of Bernard Shaw who later said 'Krishnamurti is the most beautiful human being I have ever seen'. Though a friend of Mrs. Besant, Bernard Shaw did not share his vision of Dr. Besant's coming Messiah.

The death of his brother Nitya in 1927 of tuberculosis was a turning point in Krishnamurti's life. He was already questioning the place of organisation and hierarchy in spiritual matters and the intrigues that they lead to, and in 1929 dissolved the Order of the Star returning the properties to the owners. He also left the Theosophical Society. The statement he made on the occasion is memorable: "I maintain that Truth is a pathless land and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect. The moment you follow someone you cease to follow Truth . . . I desire to free man from all cages, from all fears, and not found new religions. My only concern is to set man absolutely, unconditionally free"

I met Krishnaji in 1947 in Madras when I was studying at the University, he had just returned from a walk in the evening. I could not take my eyes off from the radiant personality dressed in white Indian clothes. The conversation was on the Buddha and the Sangha. When I asked K if there were over sixty enlightened disciples around the Buddha, he answered in the negative — probably two or three men, he said. In the years to come I went for long walks with him, one had to walk very fast to keep pace with him. And surely that was one way of keeping thoughts away.

I met a young man Dwarak in 1949 and at that time he was working on the Rishi Valley estate. He was robust and active and I was greatly surprised when he told me that Krishnaji had healed him of a congenital heart condition, he could barely walk across the room without pain. Some senior friends also talked about a few other instances, so I asked



J. Krishnamurti

Photo: M.A. Hamid

Krishnaji while on a walk near Adyar beach what he thought of miracles. He narrated in a humorous way, the sudden healing that took place in front of his room of a woman who was carried in a stretcher unable to walk with severe pain and rotting condition of the knee, which had to be amputated. The woman got up and walked away and next day the daughter came with a garland for saving her mother and expressed her gratitude for the miracle! When I asked if it was a faith cure, he said, "No, Energy passes". When I further asked him how it happens, he said: "Somewhere something clicks". Krishnaji would not accept the 'doership' of these miracles, nor was it his function. He did not want his friends to talk about them, and his main concern was to heal the mind of sorrow and suffering, of bondage and illusion. Yet, out of his compassion he would not say 'no' to those who came to him with many ailments ranging from brain damage and partial paralysis to arthritis to defective

eyesight He would gently admit, when asked, that the healing quality was in his hands.

Krishnaji travelled incessantly from India to England from Europe to U.S.A. giving talks and holding discussions. Many came to see him, students and teachers, scientists and psychologists, lay men and women, specialists and eminent people seeking interviews and participating in seminars. With all of them Krishnaji discussed opening new vistas and insight. When a senior friend asked him how he was able to do this he replied that his consciousness had merged with that of Lord Maitreya. When a school boy asked Krishnaji if he could read others' thoughts he replied humorously to say he does not like to do that as it is like reading others letters! Deep and penetrating wisdom was always coupled with humour and good taste.

There was always a sense of mystery and newness in Krishnamurti's personality, though you

might have known him for forty or sixty years. It is not possible to explain this. One of the things that intrigued many of his friends is the 'process' which K describes in his 'Note Book'. This is the pain at the back of his head and neck, sometimes mild oftentimes intense, which he went through during daytime or in the night during sleep. In a dialogue with David Bohm when I was present K says the 'process' is the movement of the unknown purifying his brain cells and added in a undertone that he had also done some healing. It is revealing that he is born anew and, probably that he took on the pain of so many that went to him.

Krishnaji was greatly interested in education and founded five schools in India, and two schools in England and California. Education is flowering in goodness and intelligence. These schools are not only to be excellent academically but much more. They are concerned with the cultivation of the total human being, and these centres must help the student and the educator to flower naturally. Without this flowering education becomes merely a mechanical process orientated to a career or some profession. Fear is not an instrument of learning. Fear wraps intelligence and shrinks the senses. Teachers and students should live a holistic life without rewards and punishments. Goodness cannot flower in the field of fear. Intelligence is the ability to read between the lines and the urge for inquiry to find out what is true whether it be in science or religion. One needs freedom to inquire, to stay with what is, to look and listen without projecting one's hopes and fears. During the last five years Krishnaji wrote 'Letters to the Schools' which is published in two slender volumes by Krishnamurti Foundation. It is very important for students to be in contact with nature to be sensitive, to be alive to the order and beauty in nature; so all the above schools, whether in India or abroad, were started in rural surroundings amidst hills or near a river and such other places of great natural beauty.

Krishnamurti's contribution to education and his religious philosophy go together. As a sage and philosopher he is incomparable and

refreshingly original. He asked his listeners to take the journey with him in a spirit of togetherness, he is only a mirror which can be put aside if they can look into themselves. Without self-knowledge there is no basis for right thinking. The ending of sorrow is the beginning of wisdom.

A well known buddhist monk told me that the word 'Choiceless awareness' coined by Krishnamurti is a priceless jewel. It connotes all that is implied in '*Prajna*' and bare attention. Yet another phrase is 'alert passivity' the basis for all learning and meditation.

Freedom is the very root and base of existence. It is not a reaction or choice. "It is man's pretence that because he has choice he is free. Freedom is pure observation without direction, without fear of punishment and reward. Freedom is without motive; freedom is not at the end of evolution of man but lies in the first step of his existence. In observation one begins to discover the lack of freedom. Freedom is found in the choiceless awareness of our daily existence and activity".

To Krishnamurti global outlook and religious spirit go together. A free man does not belong to any nationality, and he will not kill another either for God or for the state. Where there is division, there is conflict. There is pure observation, which is insight without any shadow of time. "This timeless insight brings about a deep radical mutation in the mind".

"Total negation is the absence of the positive. When there is negation of all those things that are not love — desire, pleasure — then love is, with its compassion and intelligence". Out of this intelligence there is right action.

Aldous Huxley after listening to a talk by Krishnamurti commented: "the most impressive thing I have listened to. It was like listening to a discourse of the Buddha — such power, such intrinsic authority".

"The passing away of J. Krishnamurti in California on 17 February 1986 brings a great epoch in religious history to an end, but his teachings will remain as a torch for those who care and want to learn.

J. Krishnamurti: A Tribute

By S. Jayaraman

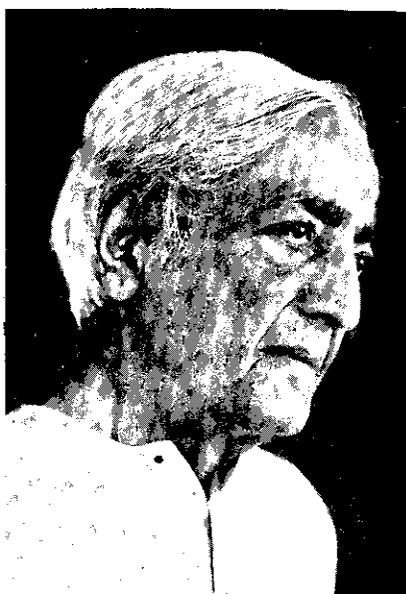
ON MONDAY the 17th of February 1986, 13:40 IST the Philosopher who walked alone right from his 34th year to his 91st year was no more, breathing his last at his home in Ojai, California (U.S.A.).

Born on the 11th/12th of May 1895 and inwardly attuned to the same spirit as that which shone through another spiritual Giant of this Century (Ramana Maharshi), J. Krishnamurthi was, in the words of Bernard Shaw, perhaps the "most beautiful human being" that trod this Earth in our own times.

When I heard he was suffering from suspected Cancer and had been suddenly flown from Madras to California for investigations, I felt choked inwardly. Few knew that K, as he preferred to call himself, had been gifted with certain mystic healing powers which have made whole many an obscure, shattered soul in this wide and mad world of ours. In his death, the world has lost a Colossus among the seers and saints that this hallowed land of ours has produced.

Einstein and Bertrand Russel, Bernard Shaw and Aldous Huxley were some of the outstanding intellects who were greatly taken up by J.K.'s exposition of the truly religious mind. Ramana Maharshi and Aurobindo Ghose listened with sympathy to what was said about his teaching as how to live the truly religious life in close relationship with all mankind, transcending differences of class, creed and doctrine.

He opened his long ministry on this Earth with his famous declaration: Truth is a pathless land and each has to be a light unto himself. He refused to be called a Guru and forbade the use of that word with reference to himself. But the Samskrit word 'Guru' means one who dispels darkness and reveals the Truth! In our Upanishadic tradition too, the Guru took the questioning student up to a point



J. Krishnamurti

and left him there to tread the path and reach the Truth by his own effort. In that pristine sense J.K. was truly a Jagat-Guru of the modern age.

My own mentor, Professor K. Swaminathan, has drawn in detail the parallels between J.K. and Ramana Maharshi. (N.B.T. book on Sri Ramana, pages 147—149). The Rishi who remained immobile like Arunachala and the 'wild bird' that kept flying to and fro across the world, shaking the very foundations of human thought and asking for the annihilation of psychological time, asserting the real possibility of an instantaneous mutation of the very brain cells of Man by the flowering of the truly religious mind, both chose the 'holistic and hueristic' approach in their quest for Truth (The epithets are from the Introduction to Ahluvalia's *Ramana Maharshi*). i).

Love, Sorrow, Death, Meditation, these were the staple themes of the talks that J.K. gave over a period of nearly 57 years to groups of people drawn from different strata of society

in different countries of the world. He was constantly travelling round the world there are few countries in the world which he has not visited. Vast and deep was his insight into the problems of humanity as a whole. Even so, he was once asked, 'You have been talking for nearly 60 years now, yet why has there not been any perceptible mutation in Society all these years?' J.K. effortlessly asked the simple counter-question: "Sir, why does a flower bloom?"

Because he took the iconoclastic path to reach the core of the truly religious mind, he was misunderstood and often misquoted by the frivolous dilettantes who came to him flaunting their superficial knowledge and took his talks as so much 'intellectual entertainment'. But that did not deter him from ruthlessly tearing the veil and showing up the utter hollowness of many of his so-called admirers.

Having listened to him almost every year from 1948 to 1985 and having had the privilege of sitting at his feet for 37 years of my life as a very ordinary and obscure human being, something snapped within me when I heard of his leaving this world very much the poorer without his ever vibrant, ever-questioning and ever-scintillating presence.

There has been a Jiddu Krishnamurti, When comes such another?

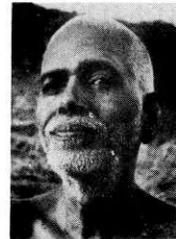
WHO IS HE?

By S.M. Kaul

I asked him, "Who is He?" He said, "Look within. Know for yourself."

I asked again, "How's it done?" He said, "Turn in the senses; tune into the Heart."

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VIVEKACHUDAMANI

By Jagdish Swami

SRI BHAGAVAN'S Tamil prose rendering of the *Vivekachudamani* is seen to be primarily based on Bhikshu Sastri's Tamil versification of Sankaracharya's original in Sanskrit. This conclusion is unavoidable due to the following reasons:

- (i) Wherever the prose rendering differs, either by way of omission or addition of a word or a line, or by way of difference in interpretation, from the extant Sanskrit versions, the same difference is observed in Bhikshu Sastri's verse.
- (ii) Bhagavan's prose does not slavishly follow Bikshu Sastri's Tamil version. If a group of things (names) is mentioned in a certain order in the Sanskrit verse, Bhagavan's rendering follows that order as against any rearrangement in Bhikshu Sastri's Tamil version.
It is clear from this that Bhagavan did consult the original Sanskrit text also.
- (iii) Series of verses not found in the Sanskrit, but found in Bhikshu Sastri's Tamil verses are incorporated in the Tamil prose by Bhagavan.

One such instance is translated below (p. 168 *Nool Thirattu*, 1972): "I alone am; In me des-

cribed essentially in the *Vedanta Sastras* as the Brahman, like unto dreamless sleep, (unmoving) like a pillar, there is not an iota of reality in all that appears as 'other'" —

Such a perception (attitude of rejection) is called *Baadha Drshti* (or *Vaadha Drshti*).

"All that seem separate from me are utterly false like in dream and subtle magic" —

Such a perception (Attitude of projection or illusion) is called *Mithya Drshti*.

Just as the foam, the whirl, the wave, etc, appearing in the ocean and seemingly different are the ocean alone (and) just as everything seen in a dream is really the dreamer alone, (so also) in me the sole *Chidakasa* (space-time Consciousness), like the ocean and the dreamer, all that appears as separated is myself alone" —

Such a perception of all-embracing Selfhood is called *Pravilaapa Drshti*.

He alone is a *mukta*, who, choosing any of these three that appeals to his mind, rejects the Seen (*Drsya*), and realises the impartite, pure, non-dual Brahman of the form of the Seer (*Drk*) as his own Self. Though these three are aids to *Jnana*, the all-embracing perception of Selfhood (*Tanmaya Pravilaapa Drishi*) is the supreme aid in *Jnana*.

Disciple: **The vibrant stillness in the Heart reacts on the whole body and there is always tremor whether one sleeps, acts or remains quiet. In sleeping and doing work it is not noticed by the individual himself, while in the state of quietness it is felt. Will this be the case always or is there a state when the tremor stops completely.**

Maharshi: **It is so. Vibrant stillness culminating in Stillness may be likened to drops of rain at the commencement culminating in one continuous line of rain joining the sky to earth. Some day the tremor will stop.**

(from "Vision," July 1938)

The Apocalypse of Celestial Freeness

By "Anonymous"

FROM SRI Sankara (circa 800 AD) to Sri Ramana Maharshi, the Advaita Absolutism has been given unequivocal expression, influencing to a great extent the spiritual and intellectual currents of life in India and elsewhere. It has echoed in some forms of Western Idealism, for example in the ideals of Spinoza and Hegel and perhaps Schopenhauer. The theistic tradition has not been without its vociferous protagonists either. The present work is inspired by the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, to whom the author pledges allegiance and attributes his radical life transformation. The Maharshi's teachings can be encapsulated in the deeper response to the fundamental question "Who am I" or in Sankara's candid directive "O fool, know who you are!"

The author who chooses to remain nameless in deference to the self-effacing anonymity of Advaita, has attempted to translate and interpret the insights into more easily accessible and comprehensible terms for the benefit of the serious modern "seeker" or aspirant.

The text does not wallow in vain theorising and speculation. There is no mode of "proving" or "disproving" the truth of a set of teachings that have sustained, for a great part, a major civilisation in our world, but by honest experience within one's own existential circumstance.

The author, born during the first World War and serving at the front at the second, has conveyed his 'beyond worldly', and 'this worldly' insights with the needed, deep understanding. I have the humble privilege of offering this garland of high wisdom to the world. I am certain that those who have stopped to ponder awhile on such pertinent issues as the

source of life, the nature of the Self, and the Ultimate, will find this stimulating and informative.

— Dr. Purushottama Bilimoria
Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

* * *
We are pleased to publish excerpts from the English rendering of the author's own original version in German.

* * *

— Editor

Introduction

When it comes to the ultimate TRUTH, the SELF, it is quite able to testify its own REALITY. No human additions, intelligent explanations or verification can do anything to express that TRUTH and its supreme authenticity. The pure awareness of the sublime REALITY, that ever immaculate SELF experienced is the sole criterion. That TRUTH is made available for anyone, to imbibe it firmly into one's consciousness; alternatively, remain doubtful of it, or ignore it altogether. It is of no importance who, how or what reveals that TRUTH into one's awareness. It is sufficient that it is revealed. The best that any existing language can do for us — as ingenious as it could possibly be, and as skillfully as it can be applied — is to invoke a genuine longing to experience that REALITY in its purest awareness as the immaculate glorious SELF. This voyage to explore all levels and facets of who in fact you are, whence you came from, and why you travelled so deep into this phenomenal world, leads through a complete purification of the mind to an equanimity, a stage which sheds all accumulations piled up in this mind. Once you are settled into the path of mind-purification, then you will notice that a divine power assists you to lead and guide you masterly

without a mistake, if you don't obstruct or resist it. In the proportion as you let go pre-conceived ideas hampering your way to blissful peace, your clarification can take place. This heavenly power, its wisdom not always understood, is the divine providence emanating directly from the ever-loving-you taintless SELF. Never forget that the loving SUPREME is always with you, piloting you to tackle any hurdle which happens to be in your way. Bear in mind that even suffering is a blessing in disguise; only to shorten the (impression of) time involved before your salvation. While you are still on your way to liberation, do not act inconsistently. Don't intentionally or thoughtlessly hurt any living beings by regrettable actions, ill feelings or an attitude of contempt. The enlightened and liberated sage respects all conditions of any being in which-ever position they believe they are in and remains on this earth for the sole reason to purify accumulated mind tendencies of all beings.

Contemplative Invocation

Oh, thou my supreme Lord, my innermost SELF, mayest thou open my mind and make it receptive to comprehend the deep meaning of thy word and enable me to purify my mind so as to unlock the door to wisdom! May my consciousness be refined and be ready so that the way is free to experience that pure and immaculate awareness, and to abide in that absolute SELF. May all my propensities be erased to make me ready for the holy immersion into that supreme taintless immutable SELF. Amen.

Prologue

I, the untainted, immutable, infinite, incomparable SELF, the absolute and sole REALITY, am incessantly in celestial blissful freeness. My absolute pure ISNESS abides in perpetual joyous beatitude. Lo! what delight is in my complete, unconditional, blessed freeness. No impression of time binds me to birth or death. No sensation of space encroaches upon me. I, the ever-so-free, peerless SELF, am not

AWARENESS

By A.J. Deikman

Through mankind God knows Himself.

Awareness is Everything

When thinking subsides, we are awareness.

The tree is as much awareness

as ourselves.

The "I" of "I am" (as distinct from the "I" of "I want", "I do", "I know" and so on)

Is identical with Awareness

I AM AWARENESS

limited to a name which would tie me to its meaning. No form or shape can chain me to restrictions. For what reason should I squeeze my limitless, unbound independence into a cumbersome body to be kept so wretchedly alive, healthy and sane? Who enjoys it in sickness and arduous times? Oh, this holy, benevolent, everlasting, blessed peace! This benison of contentment, never to be interrupted or disturbed by unawareness in sleep, haunting dreams, or hard, perhaps non-obtainable wishes. There is absolutely no necessity to carry any burdens; no anguish ever depresses me, no compulsion is there to take any action to get rid of imposing calamities. No deluding powers are in existence as frightening shapes to hide that glorious, never-ending bliss of happy freeness. I, the incomparable joyful SELF, have no sadness, sorrows or bereavements. I am so independently carefree, so unconditionally, divinely free. Lo! This fullness of blessed peace, is this absolute ISNESS.

Behold! I gladly reveal my secret to you, mark it, *I am ever desirelessly content with myself.*

In this fathomless bliss of freeness, in my omnipresent, omniscient ISNESS, the causeless omnipotence reflects into its awareness the almighty intelligence, experienced as a happy

idea; and consciousness of such radiant happiness as an idea, gets the impression of independence, forgetting that nothing can be without the supportless supporter, the supreme SELF. I, the taintless SELF, continuously happy with my SELF ignore all that becomes. The sustained concept as a joyful idea, amplifies into a mountain of a mental picture, forms into repeated thoughts, selects some parts, rejects others, then the remainder intensifies, grows, multiplies, and that aggregate is born as the mind, ignorant that the spark of life is completely dependent on my grace. Then in its creative imagination the mind develops the concept of a separate identity.

In order that this born entity can find its way back to freeness again, I, the merciful SELF, let the omnipotent intelligence project in its consciousness the micro and macrocosm. It is to the extent of the capacity of the awareness combined with its intelligence that an entity has a level of comprehension. But no matter how deep it thinks it has fathomed this phenomenal creation, it realises in due course, that it cannot grasp its entirety with the resources of the mind. Then, by the inspiration of pure intelligence, it begins to look into its own origin and only then can it be led back to that supportless supporter, the supreme SELF. For that return voyage, I, the compassionate SELF, let all necessary means and ways be arranged for every potentiality of understanding a system of salvation. This exposition is provided for courageous souls inspired by this pure intelligence.

Celestial Freeness

Through the ever present grace of the immaculate SELF, the grace in ITSELF, the earnest aspirant is inspired by pure intelligence to inquire into the absolute TRUTH. A one-pointed mind like a swift arrow guides him or her, to a fearless pursuit to purify the AWARENESS of his or her mind to be led consciously into the hallowed SELF-realization. The macrocosm and the microcosm ex-is-t like water in a mirage. This is the essence of all holy scriptures. This is the only wisdom. I, the absolute

pure SELF, alone am the only REALITY there is. Have no other gods beside me. In your heart is the spark of this REALITY. Why don't you try to find it? Don't let your mind tell you that it is impossible. Free from subject and object am I. Unimaginable by the mind am I. How can one say: "The SELF must be realized" when one is ever free in his or her heart? That is the wisdom to be accepted if one wants to free one's mind.

When an empty vessel breaks, the space once within it is absorbed into the infinite space. When the mind is purified, it merges into its origin the HEART. The differences disappear and with them the difficulties of life vanish, then peace can settle in.

In the absolute REALITY there are no scriptures, no gods, no angels, no demons; neither are there sentient nor insentient beings. Where can there be darkness or light? I, the immaculate SELF, the only ISNESS, am. I am known by many names but the established TRUTH is that there is no name for me which could describe me. I AM that I AM.

Why do you talk about involution and evolution? That resulted in the complexity of bondage. Are you now happier with it?

There is no destiny in REALITY. Why do you believe that you are tied to it? Oh, mind why are you so imaginative?

I, the unblemished SELF, need no instructions and no teacher. I am always happy without accumulations because they become a burden in due time.

Only stillness is in the spotless SELF, no vibrations have settled in. How can anyone make an improvement on that? I, the untainted SELF, am beyond creation, and yet the supportless supporter of all. The void is for the ignorant. The wise are aware of blissful SELF-consciousness.

Trace your ex-is-tence back to its origin and investigate the beyond by SELF-enquiry, then the mind merges into the SELF by the earned grace of the SELF. The mysteries of life and the dweller in it are then solved.

master of his destiny, that he is able to conquer the world, but carefully hides his shortcomings. His consistent search for happiness can only be appeased when he has learnt to purify his mind to regain his original innocent stage. The idea of being a separate soul, bound to a body, experiences these tremendous hardships. In care, lovingly, I, the SELF, will have arranged the necessary steps for her redemption.

I, the ever immaculate SELF, am never born and will never die. The omnipotence in me is without cause and just happens to be. No reason can be given and no law is governing it. There is no precedent for me. There is only supreme REALITY and ISNESS. *So, keep still, and watch your loaded consciousness attentively until purification is achieved, then tranquillity can set in. Train your mind, while you meditate or whenever you can, to rest in pure awareness. Sacrifice all your ideas, mental pictures, and thoughts to me, the supreme SELF, annihilate them and do not let your mind dwell on anything, and only then in the centre of the heart the I AM will shine as the glorious SELF.*

The celestial stillness and silence of the immaculate SELF cannot be comprehended by the mind. Only the spiritual heart will reveal my SELF. *Therefore during the time of contemplation or sacred insight, observe every thought springing up from the heart and send it back immediately, when noticed, to its origin again. Then remain in the purity of the mind, with an awareness, in a reverently, humble, SELF-inquiring attitude (like a benign searching look) embellished with faith, at the threshold of the cavity of the spiritual heart, the SELF.* When this is mastered without thought interference, it will, in due course, ripen into a *profound holy stillness and silence filled with a conviction that your being is that supreme SELF.* Once established firmly in that holy mountain-solid stillness and silence, sacrifice even that. Surely through this earned grace, I, the SELF, take you into my sanctuary the hallowed celestial freeness the ever immutable SELF.

I, the all-knowing SELF, am cognisant of the fact of how extremely difficult the masterful sacrifice of thoughts can be. The mind is a most powerful entity. In an immensely small part of a 'moment' his extreme subtleness can create and fill in any shape, form or fantasy. Have complete faith in me, the spotless, always-loving-you SELF. Do not get worried if you can't understand the miraculous working of my mysterious omnipotence. Abide in me, the only REALITY there ever is, transcending nay even the 'essence' of all. When you have exhausted all your means and abilities, I will strike down anything in your way, such as impurities in your awareness, whilst you abide in me.

For a mature soul SELF-inquiry is the *sine qua non* for liberation in this present dark age, and through it, all else will drop off in due course. So be as patient as you possibly can, to your fullest capacity. I, the ever watchful SELF, will see to the rest, have no doubt.

Intensification

Why is the mind so restless? He is never satisfied, he takes on hardship for any status. If he could remember his original state of peace, then he would see that an outgoing tendency leads to his downfall. So go inside and see.

Actually the absolute SELF is not difficult to comprehend, its brilliance is in your inmost heart. Erase everything added to your once pure consciousness and that which is left is the immaculate SELF. Wipe out whatever your mind has taught you, the remainder is that pure SELF. Dissolve all actions and there is only peace.

The mind's ex-is-tence is sanctioned through my boundless love. I the compassionate SELF, through my omnipotence, let the mind have his wanton transient separateness so that he can pursue his own experience, and be convinced that it is best for him to see the TRUTH in the REALITY of the SELF, without wavering consciousness. But only after many, alas how many, errors, does he finally realise the fact

that he was, after all, a victim of his own fancies.

Do not be afraid that you will lose your identity in the process of mind-purification. The whole loss concerns only the impurities which attached themselves to you. When those superimpositions are removed, I AM, in the cavity of the heart, the ever taintless SELF expressed as I am I. The feeling of a separate being has vanished and the blissful freeness is there for ever. It is like a precious stone, a diamond, the symbol of purity; when all foreign matter and impurities are removed and it is cut and polished by an expert, then it becomes transparent, clear and flawless. One is then able to enjoy its purity. But the mind gets distracted by the exquisite reflections of light rays and forgets the cause. So be wise and remain with the essence. Appearances cannot reflect the TRUTH.

There are times when you could have some questions or doubts to be cleared. Meditate on them, and as your mind becomes purer and clearer, the answers, at the proper time, will suddenly be in your awareness and you will find that your patience is amply recompensed as nobody could have given you an answer so perfectly suited to your special needs. Yet you know by now, that in the long run everything has to be solved through your own resources, inspired by the divine intelligence, as you are the entity in all.

Perfection

The holy and pure sage, embodied in a human frame has overcome (the imagination of a) destiny, yet appears to have some of it left, to show a way out of the maze of bondage for the beings he or she comes in contact with.

The sage is seen as to have the task of the restoration of the forgotten or distorted TRUTH, the explanation of difficult passages or hidden meanings in the relevant holy scriptures or misunderstood spiritual revelations. Once the purpose of their task is fulfilled they leave their bodies behind without losing their awareness.

He or she is not motivated by duties, emotional pressures like desires or urges; they only respond unconcerned to the circumstances they appear to be in. Among the unclad they may also be unclad. Amongst the poor, he or she might also be poor. Having to be with the rich, they will not necessarily be wealthy. In whatever surroundings they are, or in which their task put them, he or she will be untainted and internally free, knowingly ever immersed in the SUPREME and immaculate SELF.

Their silence is more eloquent than their utterings. This holy and mysterious silence has the power in it to confer wisdom to highly receptive individuals. Their conduct is generally designed to be followed. If controversial, then there is a spiritual purpose in it.

He or she is in fact utterly disinterested in his or her own well-being, yet has the greatest concern, compassion and understanding, shown or not, for the ones with whom they come in contact.

Epilogue

Luckily we are now in a truly enviable position as this divine centre is again reopened for an easier access to the wayfarer of spiritual inclination. The Maharshi Sri Ramana, the eminent sage of the Mount of Arunachala, a divine incarnation of the saintly ancient Rishis, in the absolute SELF awareness, has completed this gigantic spiritual task while he was in a human body. The reopening of the practically closed path of spiritual wisdom, for speedier salvation, has also been made possible by this most illustrious sage of sages.

This sublime beatific emanation from his maintained spiritual presence is with us in its full splendour anywhere on this globe, from the sanctified holy centre. It is for us to attune to it and so benefit from it.

I AM THAT I AM
OM
LOVE
FREENESS

POWER OF SURRENDER

By A Parsee Devotee

AN ARABIAN Sufi on horseback crossing
A bridge over the Euphrates,
Was suddenly into the river thrown.
Neck-deep in water he stood
And yet neither screamed nor splashed
But placid and unmoving stood,
As the still water in a lake.
Shouted someone from the bridge,
"Hey man! Do you know swimming?"
"No", was the Sufi's answer.

Said the traveller again,
"Then why don't you shout for help?
Don't you want to get saved?"
Asked the wondering traveller.
"No."
"Then do you want to get drowned?"
"No".
"Then what is your wish?"
"What have I to do with wishing?
His will be done!
To Him surrendered, I
Have no wish of my own".
Moments later, a river-boat passed
That way, and the boat-man saw
The Sufi, jumped in and rescued him.

A similar episode appears in the life of Swami Vivekananda. Once he was travelling in a train with a group of pot-bellied merchants. At noon the merchants spread out their tiffin-boxes and started feasting.

One of them casually asked Vivekananda, "What about you? Haven't you brought anything to eat?" Vivekananda replied, "No. The feeder of the sparrows. I depend on Him alone!" Hearing this the man said, "So you think he will bring you your afternoon meal in the train!" They all had a hearty laugh and resumed their gorging.

Moments later the train stopped at a station and a sweet-meat seller stepped into the compartment, went straight to Vivekananda, put his basket of sweet-meats at his feet and implored him to eat his fill. And he told this story. He was having his afternoon siesta on the platform and saw a very vivid dream. His chosen deity appeared to him, showed him the figure of a 'sanyasi' seated in a train and said, "My devotee is hungry. Go and feed him". He woke up, saw the train steaming in and his feet stepped into the right compartment when he found the 'sanyasi' he had seen in the dream.

To those who have experienced the power of surrender, such 'miracles' are quite natural and normal. The assertive ego obstructs the free play of the Universal Power, and when the Universal Power works unhindered, events occur which people call 'miracles'.

A MEETING

"Acceptance, and not ecstasy or agony should be one's approach to the inevitable ups and downs of life"

He has an unshakeable confidence in the people of this country and the country's future. So much goodness can never be seen anywhere else in the world, he said. This according to him, is due to the people's 'feeling' for religion. He was certain that in no other country could the Mahatma have had such a following that he had. In no other country, could so many saints and seers have appeared. In their very presence, as it happened to himself in the presence of Bhagavan Ramana, one felt an indescribable sense of peace and joy.

— Excerpt from Bhavan's Journal (Jan 1 — 15, 1986, describing a meeting with Shri Morarji Desai.

The Dance of Shiva-Nataraja

Explained in the Light of Sri Ramana's Utterances

By Honey-Bee

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

— Verse II of Five Stanzas to Sri Arunachala

THE WORLD-RENOWNED image of the presiding deity at Chidambaram, the dancing Shiva-Nataraja, is a tribute to the genius of South India trying to conceptualize what is beyond conception. Nevertheless the image very successfully represents the Self, *Atma-swarupa* or Pure Awareness that its conception must be attributed to an intuitive and integrative knowledge of the Self — a knowledge which cannot be other than the Self.,

The first point to note about the totality of the image is that it represents a dance that is vibrant, full of graceful movement and yet paradoxically conveys an impression of overpowering stillness. This is necessarily so as all illusion of movement can only pertain to the contingent parts viewed in relation to each other, within the notional confines of space and time and not to the Whole. An analogy is provided by the ocean which is ever still and does not move taken as whole, but only the individual molecules of water or waves when seen in relation to each other which give rise to the illusion of movement within over all stillness.

It will next be noted that the dance seemingly takes place within a halo or ring radiating flames outwardly in all directions. The spatial expanse within the halo and flames radiating therefrom represent the phenomenal world¹. His dance is what is perceived by



¹ According to the *Linga Puranam* the Hill called Arunachala represents the infinite column of Light which appeared between Vishnu and Brahma to terminate their dispute as to who was the greater of the two. Out of Shiva's compassion for man He has assumed the visible form of the Hill Arunachala. The Hill is the original Lingam (from the Sanskrit *ling* meaning "to attach oneself") and with its advent the worship of Lingams was inaugurated in India. The pedestal is Shakti and the Lingam itself is the visible Arunachala Shiva. Interestingly some leading physicists now say that light in its generalized sense is the potential of everything (energy, information, content, form, structure and time) and is the means whereby the universe unfolds itself. See, for example, the interview of Prof. David Bohm of Birbeck College, London University, by Ms. Renee Weber in *Revision Journal*, Spring, 1983, Vol. 6 No. 1, Pp. 34 — 44. Reference may also be made to Arthur Young's *The Reflexive Universe* (1976). Delacorte, New York, at p. 28 where it is stated that all aspects of light point one way which is that the ultimate centrality or primacy of light as the origin of everything seems inescapable. (Arthur Young is the inventor of the Bell Helicopter).

* The present article seeks to explain the symbolism of the Shiva-Nataraja image and dance in terms of Sri Ramana's utterances and the advances in scientific views of the nature of the phenomenal universe. Readers are also referred to *Nataraja, Science and the Dance of Creation* by S.A. Naimpally in *The Mountain Path*, July, 1981.

the *jiva* or individual soul as the world of triads moving on the screen or ground which is Shiva, the play of Shakti and Her Supreme Awareness.² It would follow therefore that Shiva-Nataraja is the substratum and ground of the Universe and He provides the ground rules for unfolding illusory and creation-maintenance-destruction-dissolution and the order of things within the eternal dance. Thus in dealing with the formal aspects of the image it may be said that it is with the drum (or *damaru*) held in His upper right hand that His creative dreams of the Universe (which itself like Him never had beginning according to some astrophysicists)³ and all contingent life in all its forms and manifestations are drummed into illusory existence from out of a seeming Void (of the drum). Thus Muruganar quotes Maharshi:

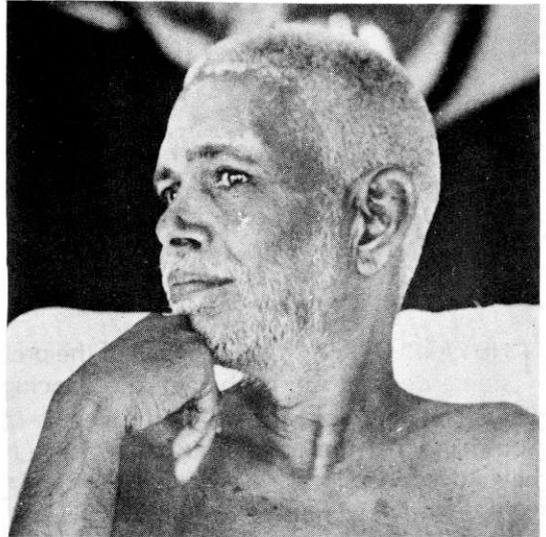
"This variegated universe
We see appearing all around us
Is a mere dream we dream within
Ourselves. Those who know this and
watch it
Uninvolved destroy the treacherous
Veil of *maya*. Others know not
How to see through illusion tricks".

— Verse 831 *Garland of Guru's Sayings*

Or again:
"That you, the Self, ethereal Being,
Pure Awareness, should become
A body with hands and feet and, deeming
It eternal, should dance about
This indeed, and nothing else,
Is the great miracle."

— Verse 223 *Garland of Guru's Sayings*

The miracle of life also means that we dance, within His dance and sometimes wonder why we dance at all and also why all creation originating from the seeming void of the drum in the right hand is materialised only to be consumed and reduced to ashes by the flame held in the left hand. Arunachala-Shiva-Nataraja is all Light and He is the Immortal Eye of all mortal eyes. It is that Light which transmitted into the Void⁴ appears as the source of the Universe and all Life with its mysteries,



including the initiating principle (photon)⁵, the quantum of action⁶ and its derivatives (mass, length, and time), cosmic intelligence,

² Verse 43 — *Garland of Guru's Sayings*.

³ J. Narlikar, "The Exploding Universe" in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, (November 6—12, 1983) p. 28.

⁴ (1) Contrary to what is commonly thought, the Void according to physicists is a source of life and pulsates with life. It cannot be otherwise as it is ethereal space and hence the Spirit with infinite potential.

(2) It is by sounding the drum fourteen times that the fourteen basic *Sutras* of Hinduism were produced by Lord Shiva. These *Sutras* have been commented upon by the Sages Panini and Patanjali. It is also said everything originates from the primordial sound of the drum.

⁵ & ⁶ The photon or quantum of action is the ultimate particle of light ray which cannot be further reduced. It has an uncanny intelligence of its own and is outside space and time. The energy of the Universe could theoretically be stored in a single photon. Max Planck, who discovered the quantum of action, in writing of the principle of least action governing the path of light when it travels through a medium of varying refractive index, has this to say of photons:

"Thus the photons which constitute a ray of light behave like intelligent human beings. Out of all possible curves they always select the one which takes them most quickly to their goal

It (the principle of least action) made its discoverer Leibniz and soon after him, his follower Maupertius, so boundlessly enthusiastic, for these scientists believed themselves to have found it in a tangible evidence for a ubiquitous higher reason ruling all nature". (Planck, 1949, p. 178).

the wisdom and the divine force of life. They manifest themselves and hide themselves at the same time in Nature, and which continue to baffle quantum physics. We cannot see through the veil of *Maya* and this is necessarily so, for, as Krishna has said: "This divine *Maya* of Mine, consisting of the three *gunas*, is hard to overcome. But those who take refuge in Me alone cross beyond it." (*Gita*, Ch, 7, v. 14) Here "Me" means the Self. Those that engage themselves in an enquiry of the Self and take refuge in that 'I' can cross over the *Maya* (illusion).

The crucial question of the need to overcome or see through Nature's veils or *Maya* has been raised and answered by Sri Ramana. It is that answer which is symbolised and represented by the raised Foot of Shiva, a foot raised and permanently poised in an *asana* (notionally a yogic posture relating as it does to *Jnana Yoga*) outside the operation of gravitational and other forces. Muruganar says:

"A wonder strange is this, the marriage
Of the moon and the sun; the mighty
Upraised Foot of dancing Shiva
The Master's loving quest for the servant,
The mutual attraction of Heart and mind".

— verse 1102, *Garland of Guru's Sayings*

It is thought that the purpose of the dance is nothing short of the noble aim of helping the individual soul or *jiva* to break out of the spell of ignorance or nescience and thereby cross the ocean of births. The purpose and aspiration of the individual soul, metaphysically speaking, is to experience the Self. Self-enquiry therefore is the pre-eminent path to attain the goal of liberation.

We cannot see through the illusory nature of the phenomenal world unless we learn to practice firm abidance through Self-enquiry at the Feet of Shiva. It is at His Feet that the Seers (*munis*) were first initiated by Shiva in the Daruka forest.⁷ That is also our place to which we should gravitate. That is why the lower left hand points to that Foot employing the symbolic gesture (*gaja mudra*) of discernment or discrimination.

ENLIGHTENMENT

By Frederick Beck

for whom does enlightenment come?
if one supposes
that some guru is
an enlightened being, then
for a being
to be something
even if that something
is called "enlightened being"
then that is a "something"
that that "person" is being.
but what is the nature
of the person when it is not
being that being
or being anything else?
well that, cannot
be called an enlightened being
or an unenlightened being
so it is simply called "that"
or "nothing"
so, for whom does enlightenment come?
since in the seeming process of
becoming that nothing
the "something person" vanishes, so
who becomes enlightened?
no one.

⁷ "In the afternoon Sri Bhagavan narrated the context of *Upadesa Saram*. Sri Muruganar was writing in Tamil verse the story of Lord Shiva's sport in Daruka forest. The *Munis* (seers) in that forest became too proud due to the potency of their *karmas* (rituals) and hurled *kriya* (a *sakti*) against Shiva. To humble their pride Shiva and Vishnu disguised as Purusha and Mohini enticed the *munis'* wives and the *munis*, respectively. The *munis*, now repenting, sought refuge at the feet of Shiva who graciously initiated them into knowledge. Sri Muruganar, at this stage, prayed to Sri Bhagavan to compose Shiva's instruction to the *Munis* which he alone could do. Accordingly Sri Bhagavan wrote *Upadesa Undiyar* which He Himself translated later into Telugu, Sanskrit and Malayalam as *Upadesa Saram*". (See G.V. Subbramayya's *Sri Ramana Reminiscences* at Pp. 39 — 40).

The sacredness of the Feet of the Guru will be seen from the constant reference made thereto in the poems of Sri Ramana. Verses 8 and 9 from the *Eleven Verses on Sri Arunachala* illustrate the relevance of proximity to the Holy Feet and the importance of clinging to them:

8. "Thou hast withheld from me all knowledge of gradual attainment while living in the world, and set me at peace; such care indeed is blissful and not painful to anyone, for death in life is in truth glorious. Grant me, wasteful and mad (for Thee), *the sovereign remedy of clinging to Thy Feet!*"
9. "O Transcendent! I am the first of those who have not the *Supreme Wisdom to clasp Thy Feet* in freedom from attachment. Ordain thou that my burden be transferred to Thee and my free will effaced, for what indeed can be a burden to the Sustainer (of the Universe)? Lord Supreme! I have had enough (of the fruits) of carrying (the burden of) this world upon my head, parted from Thee. Arunachala, Supreme Self! *think no more to keep me at a distance from Thy Feet!*"

Shiva's right Foot is seen trampling a monster, reputedly Muiyala or Surapadma. Who, however, is this monster on whom Shiva has His right Foot firmly planted?

It is none other than the tormented ego-mind-body complex of the individual which dances in the Dark and which only through self-enquiry as taught by the Maharshi can perish in the blasting sunlight of the Guru's Feet, never to be troubled again by the world of triadic differences which are then seen for what they really are — mere concepts. This point is beautifully described in Verse 7 of the *Eleven Verses on Sri Arunachala*:

7. "Oh Pure one! if the five elements, the living beings and every manifest thing is nothing but Thy all-embracing Light, how then can I (alone) be separate from Thee? Since Thou shinest in the Heart, a single Expanse without duality, how then can I come forth distinct therefrom? Show Thy-

self planting Thy Lotus Feet upon the head of the ego as it emerges!"

The state of *mukti* or freedom from nescience which follows abidance at the Feet of the Guru through uninterrupted self-enquiry is symbolized by the gesture of the lower right hand of the image signifying silence of the mind, peace, bliss and fearlessness. This blissful state showing the true meaning of God's grace is reflected in the face of Shiva-Nataraja. This face many fortunate people saw in Bhagavan Sri Ramana's face, a face of indescribable beauty which Muruganar describes as follows:

"The sage whose heart with peace serene
Is overflowing fills with bliss
The minds of those who come to Him.
Is not his face cool, radiant, joyous
A full-blown lotus round which gather
Honey-Bee?"

— Verse 1129 *Garland of Guru's Sayings*

An attempt has been made so far to explain the significance of the main formal aspects of the image of Nataraja through His functional and other attributes and thereby also describe the Self which that form conceals. As Sri Bhagavan says the Self is beyond description and can be best expressed only through *mouna*, silence or divine and transcendent speech which He personified. It will be appropriate to conclude by quoting Muruganar's verse:

"When on being scanned the treacherous
Ego dies and disappears, the Self,
The clarity of pure Awareness,
Is what the Upanishads proclaim
As the true meaning of God's grace,
The glorious vision of Shiva as He dances".

— Verse 1054 *Garland of Guru's Sayings*

(English translations of Sri Ramana's poems or utterances by Arthur Osborne, Prof. K. Swaminathan, D.S. Sastri and Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan quoted in this article are gratefully acknowledged. Those whose knowledge of Tamil is superficial or non-existent are eternally indebted to them.)

GURU'S GRACE

By Fred Broumond

BY THE grace of the Guru the whole mystery of the spiritual search is resolved.

Suppose you walk into a dark room. You can walk around, pick out objects and have some idea about the nature of the room. Whether it is a nursery, a kitchen, a classroom you will not know the colour scheme, or whether it is neat and clean.

Now if you turn on the light, instantly you can see at once all that you need to see. With one look picture of the room will be engraved on your memory. You can walk out of the room and explain exactly what you saw. You can walk with certainty, convey the information to others. The grace of the Guru is just that light whose mere presence removes the darkness with all its associated doubts. It changes a guessing game into a vivid and colourful experience, after which nothing can shake your sense of the reality.

This experience, no matter how brief it might be, brings about a complete change in one's life. It gives the strength and perseverance one needs to walk the difficult spiritual path. It becomes the guiding light which lights up the path. The seeker sees the glorious goal and strides boldly toward it. The grace of the Guru enables the seeker to see the illusory nature of the world.

The phenomenal world with all its glory and variety holds the mind's undivided attention. The grace of the Guru breaks the illusion and gives the aspirant the ammunition he needs to fight the attraction.

Without Guru's grace the search remains a mere intellectual exercise and the individual soul becomes an easy prey to confusion, doubt and frustration. Bhagavan has expressed this fact clearly in the following stanza "Grant me Thy Grace, ere the poison of delusion grips me and, raising to my head, kills me, O Aruna-chala" (*Marital Garland*, No. 64).



How should we go about securing the grace of the Guru? A young man asked the Master what he should do to deserve Grace. The Master responded by saying: "Are you asking this without Grace? Grace is in the beginning, middle and end. Grace is the Self". (*Talks*, No. 157). This clearly points to the fact that since the source of grace is the Real Self all people equally partake of it. The veil of the ego, even though unreal, blocks the light of Grace as the clouds which cover the Sun and make its life-giving ineffective.

It is our own ego that robs us of this most vital and most important source. Therefore, all that one needs to do is to reduce the effects of the ego and thereby allow the Grace to perform its miracles.

Here are some practical ways that this can be accomplished:

We should recognise and accept our own inability.

Let us pray sincerely that God out of his boundless compassion consume our mind and ego and bless us with a spark of his infinite wisdom.

We should make our best effort to walk in the Master's footsteps and adopt his teachings as our guiding light.

The path of Self-realization is quite narrow and does not allow for too much drifting away. The aspirant must always be alert. We must watch every step on the way. That is the reason for adapting the Master's life as a guide. This way we may have a much better chance to stay on the path till the end.

The Guru is an embodied manifestation of the Real Self. In his real form he is one and identical with the Self who is formless and infinite bliss.

The externalized manifestation of the Self in the form of the Guru is itself the working of Grace, so that the individual soul, who is still in the realm of ignorance and material existence can see the proof of ultimate perfection after which he is striving.

Grace, when given, is a gift from God. It is given because God loves us and wants to help us in our struggle. It is not given because we deserve it. But rather, let them be more humble and more devout because of it and pray more thankfully.

O Blessed Ramana! I humbly bow before Thee who art the Lord of the Universe and the embodiment of eternal bliss. Out of Thy mercy, O kind Father, consume my ego in the fire of Thy Wisdom and forever dissolve me in the ocean of Thy Love.

We are accustomed to judge others after ourselves. But if we cheerfully absolve them for possessing our faults, we condemn them sternly for lacking our virtues.

— Honore' de Balzac

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Moments Remembered
by Managing Editor

OMNISCIENT RAMANA

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

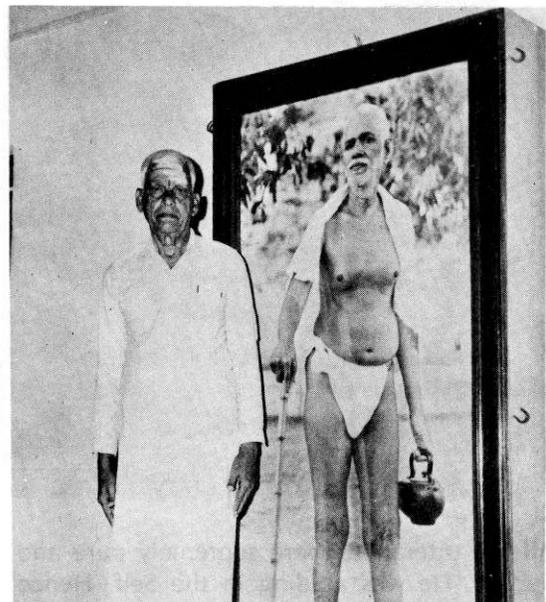
— V.G.

MOST OF Bhagavan's devotees are family people. Living with wife and children and yet, fully surrendered to Sri Bhagavan, they find no contradiction between work and the pursuit of wisdom. Discharging their worldly obligations, they still followed the teachings of Sri Bhagavan with steadfastness and immense profit.

Sri N. Nataraja Iyer (also known as 'Station-Master' and 'N.N. Rajan') came to Bhagavan in 1935 when he was 29 years old. His first visit made such a strong impression upon Nataraja Iyer that he applied for a transfer to Tiruvannamalai railway station. This transfer came about soon, under circumstances which were almost miraculous! Having gained his wish N.N. Rajan used to go to the Ashram whenever he was off duty and sit in Bhagavan's presence. Very often he was overcome by tears of ecstasy and enjoyed the calmness of meditation.

Such dedication to Sri Bhagavan or to spiritual practices did not stand in the way of attending to his official duty or to his family affairs. In fact, his wife, Smt. Kamala, became a more ardent devotee than he. Even his then small children basked in the Presence and received many marks of affection as blessings from Him. If on duty-days Nataraja Iyer overstayed at the Ashram, Bhagavan would remind him that it was time to go to the railway station! Clear proof that Bhagavan expected that any devotees to do their duties punctually and diligently.

Nataraja Iyer, now 79 years old, is very agile and goes round the Hill as often as possible during his frequent visits to the Ashram.



Sri N. Nataraja Iyer

During his recent stay Nataraja Iyer poured out his praise of the Master:

"When we address Him as Bhagavan, it is not a mere reverential term. The knower of the source and end of all, of birth and death, who sees the Self alone in others, who is ever established in the blissful state of Pure Being and one who is omniscient and omnipotent, He alone is *Bhagavan*. When we talked to or of Bhagavan, we referred to Him as 'It', neuter gender, for He is neither male nor female, but the Eternal That. Because He sat and ate with us and spent all His 24 hours with us, we should not forget that He was God Himself clothed in human form who walked on earth. His whole life was lived in perfect harmony.



All His utterances were supremely pure and perfect. He was abiding in the Self. Hence peace and bliss radiated from Him all the time. He used to jokingly address Himself as 'Pani-ledu-vadu' ('man without any work'). When He did anything — cooking, binding a book, making a walking stick or reading proofs — there was always on it the stamp of perfection and the utmost precision. Though devotees referred to Him as 'That', He Himself said: "I did", "I sat". Bhagavan was not only a *Jnani*, a fully realised being, but a *Sahaja Nishta*, dwelling normally in Eternity while seeming to be one of us!"

After a pause, Nataraja Iyer continued:

"Bhagavan never lay flat, at night, and none knew whether He slept at all. At 3 He would get up from His sofa and after easing would start cutting the vegetables. Then He would enter the kitchen and prepare the ingredients

for that day's cooking. He would start grinding and go on steadily in a measured speed. At times he made *Uppuma* and it would be delicious!

"When He cut vegetables, the size of each slice, would be identical. For each vegetable He had a specific way of cooking. In summer it would be very sultry inside the kitchen. If some one tried to fan Him with a palm-fan, He would retort 'You are perspiring. First help yourself!' Nothing was to be wasted. Every particle of vegetable had to be utilised in some part of the cooking. Left-over eatables were not to be given to the servants or thrown out. Bhagavan insisted that everyone was equal and that such left-overs should again be heated and mixed together and served at the breakfast time along with *iddlis*. Orange peel and apple rind were gathered and made into a chutney. Bhagavan knew every minute detail of the culinary art, but while He ate He

would mix everything together, showing no signs of enjoying the taste! By 6 a.m. He would return to the Old Hall. Then would follow bath and breakfast; then a walk up the Hill for half-an-hour."

Here are a few anecdotes narrated by Nata-
raja Iyer.

"It is amusing to recall that on occasions, a purgative was given (a special decoction of herbal roots and leaves) to all at the Ashram, including Bhagavan. Bhagavan would show keen interest in its distribution. I am reminded of what TPR (T.P.Ramachandra Aiyar) once told me. He was practising as lawyer in Madras. Every Friday night he would start from Madras by train (there were no buses plying from Madras to Tiruvannamalai then) and would return to Madras by Sunday night train. On one such Friday he had skipped lunch and dinner and on Saturday morning arrived at the Ashram ravenously hungry. When he entered the Old Hall Bhagavan welcomed him with a beaming smile and told him to go straight to the kitchen. But what awaited him there was only this decoction which he swallowed since Bhagavan had directed him! He came back to Bhagavan and narrated his plight and laughed aloud, Bhagavan joined him in the laughing spree. Those were golden days and one knew nothing but joy."

"Bhagavan's solicitude was seen in His prompt attention to the incoming post and His insistence that replies should go the same day. Also, if some devotee wrote he would arrive on a particular date Bhagavan would remember it and on that day would remind the concerned about it. Once, a devotee from Ceylon wrote that he was starting from Colombo on a particular day and would be reaching the Ashram. He forgot to mention the time of his arrival at Tiruvannamalai. So, Bhagavan asked me to find out from available Time Tables when the steamer started from Ceylon, when it reached Danushkoti and when he could be expected to reach Tiruvannamalai. Only after I found out the details and told the exact date and time, was He satisfied. I was moved to

tears by Bhagavan's *karuna* to this devotee from Ceylon!

"Sometimes monkeys would snatch away eatables that were being brought into the Old Hall from the kitchen for distribution to Bhagavan and devotees. He would plead the case of the monkeys and say, 'You were careless. So, who now should be punished?' Once I was bringing eatables in a large open vessel. Cow Lakshmi which had come behind me was eating from the vessel unnoticed by me. Bhagavan remarked, 'Enough, Lakshmi enough! Leave something for us.' So saying, He gave some more to her and sent her away. The attendant ridiculed and chided me for being careless. But, Bhagavan out of His Grace said: 'Why do you blame him? Poor man, he is too innocent to notice all this.' I have received this certificate of 'innocence' from my Master, What more do I require in this life?"

* * * * *

Sri N. Balarama Reddiar, who is now in the Ashram, told me a revealing anecdote concerning Bhagavan's Death Experience. Sri Reddiar said:

"One winter evening around 6.30 p.m. after *Veda Parayana*, Bhagavan, as usual, was stretching Himself in the sofa. As He was doing so, without any occasion whatsoever for the utterance, He suddenly and spontaneously said: 'It is said that I took twenty minutes to realise — 'அது தப்பு' (It is wrong)! After a few seconds He added: 'ஒரு கணம் இருக்கலாம்' (It may be a moment'). But, again He corrected Himself: 'அதுவும் சரியில்லை' (Even that is not correct). 'டைம் எங்கே அதிலே?' ('Where is time-element in it?')"

Sri Balarama Reddiar continued:

"After hearing this I thought to myself: 'Why should Bhagavan make this statement? Usually He does not say anything without being asked. So, He must have been prompted by some mysterious force from within to speak thus. In the process of realisation, the time element did not enter.'"

Sri Tapas Swami narrated the following:

"When I was meditating in the presence of Sri Bhagavan, the radio announced that Mahatma Gandhi had been shot dead. There were some communal disturbances in the town that night. The following day there were incidents of arson and looting. The *Sarvadhikari* asked some of us to keep vigil at night so that nobody trespassed into the Ashram.

"Next day when we were sitting before Sri Bhagavan, suddenly there were shouts of 'Catch them. Don't let them go.' A big crowd was moving in the direction of the Ashram. Salem Rajagopala Iyer bolted the doors and windows of the Hall so that nobody could come in. Chasing some Muslims, some Hindus ran towards the road through the Ashram.

"Unperturbed by all the noise and commotion around Him, Bhagavan was quietly going through some proofs! I realised how a *Jnani* could be indifferent to things happening around Him."

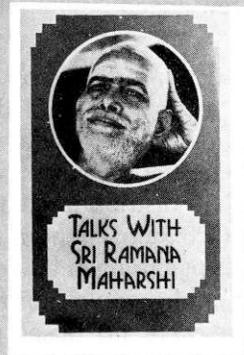
He continued:

"It was the time when Bhagavan was known to have cancer. One day, He asked Sri Viswanatha Swami whether he remembered the verse in *Yoga Vasishtha*, which said that a *Jnani* would remain unaffected in the face of all difficulties. Sri Viswanatha Swami could not recall it nor could I. Sri Bhagavan asked for the book and had the passage read out to Him.

'He who sees Himself as free from the body (idea) knows it not even when the body is cut asunder, in just the same way as the sugarcandy whether dried in fire or cut remains sweet. Just as the wife carried on with the house-hold chores though ever doting on her husband, so too the *Jnani* remains ever in the Supreme State though engaged in activity.'

"Christ remained unaffected when crucified. He only felt pity for those responsible for the crucifixion and prayed to God to forgive them as they knew not what they were doing.'"

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Smt. Kanakamma narrated the following as told by Sri Muruganar:

"A disciple of a reputed Swami of South India came to Bhagavan to have His *darshan*. With some hesitation he started telling Bhagavan about his guru's strict injunction that one of his devotees should do so many thousands of *japa* daily and surrender the *phala* to the guru as their offering and that they were following it without fail."

"Bhagavan smiled and observed: 'Is it so? It is to be appreciated. So much gain for the guru with no strain on his part!' While Bhagavan was saying this, Muruganar entered the Old Hall. Turning to him Bhagavan said: 'Do you know? His guru commands each one of his disciples to perform so many thousands of *nama-japa* and surrender the *phala* to him, as *guru kanika*. After that will there be any balance for the disciples? It looks like one keeping the principal and surrendering the interest to the guru as offering. How do you appreciate this?'"

"Muruganar with tears in his eyes replied: 'Bhagavan! Their guru is far better. He at least leaves the principal and demands only the interest. But this guru here (pointing to Bhagavan) is worse. He takes away the principal itself; then where is room for interest? He demands the devotees' *mulam* (Principal) and *vaddi* (interest) all at once!' Bhagavan gave a benign smile enjoying the poet's joke.

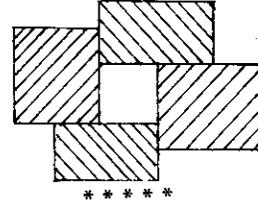
Sri Annamalai Swami considered every utterance of Sri Bhagavan as direct *upadesa*.

One day Annamalai Swami and Bhagavan were walking by the '*Odai*' (stream) at the back of the Ashram, towards Palakothu. There was an overhanging branch of a tree which Annamalai Swami did not notice and which hurt his forehead. Rubbing the spot, he said: 'I shall cut away the obstruction immediately upon returning. Bhagavan told him, half in jest. "This idea occurred to you only after getting a bump on your forehead, did it?" ("உன் தலையிலே பட்டப்பறன் தானே இதெ செய்ய தோணுது?").

Another day, there was a sumptuous feast at the Ashram and like some others Annamalai Swami had over-eaten. He went later to Bhagavan and complained of the discomfort. Bhagavan said with laughter in His eyes. "There is a sure medicine for that". ("அதுக்கு ஒரு மருந்திருக்கு") He then asked for four evenly cut granite blocks to be brought and told Annamalai Swami to drive them into the earth next to the wall (near the Old Hall) in such a way that a square gap was formed in between them, where a lamp post could be firmly fixed! The four blocks were relentlessly driven by hammer and rod, making sure that there was not the slightest crevice between the blocks and also that the tops of all four were perfectly flush, with none jutting above the other! It was hard work carried out in the scorching sun. Annamalai Swami fondly recollected, "Even before the job got finished I began to look forward to the dinner bell!"

Bhagavan supervised the whole thing admirably.

The picture below shows the completed work.



Sri Kunju Swami related how Bhagavan explained *Tirobhava* (the power of obscurity or forgetting) which is often thought of an evil to be got rid of: "God in His mercy has withheld the knowledge of the past from people. If they knew that they were virtuous, they will grow proud; contrariwise, they will be depressed. Do you know the present life so well that you wish to know the past? Why do you wish to burden yourself with more knowledge and suffer more? Just as sleep rejuvenates and without it life soon becomes unbearable, so too this *Tirobhava* among the other functions of the Lord, being, Creation (*Sristi*), Protection (*Stiti*), Destruction (*Samhara*), and Illumination (*Anugraha*), serves a most salubrious function."

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How I came to Bhagavan's Fold

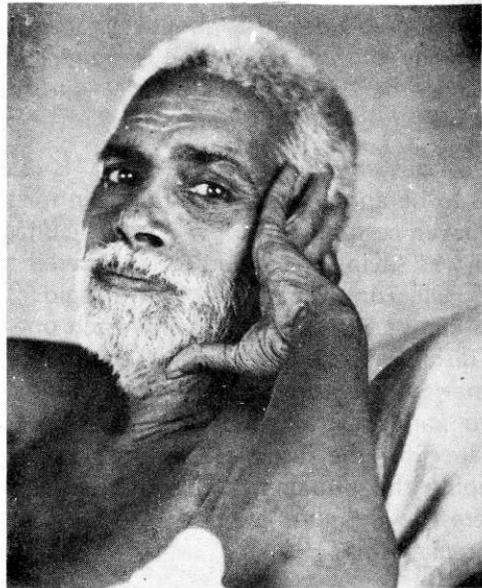
By M. Narasimha Rao

WHEN I was a boy of seven, as I was returning home after morning classes in an Elementary School in Nellore Town in Santhapet locality, a huge tree suddenly fell on me of its own accord. I was the only victim though many persons, vehicles, tongas etc., were moving on that main road in front of the Government Training College. I became unconscious and some persons immediately placed me in a tonga and admitted me in the Government hospital for necessary medical care and attention.

A postman who daily delivered letters to our locality happened to see a very huge crowd near the fallen tree on the main road and rushed up to my house and informed my father who was getting ready to go to his office. He actually whispered into my father's ears that I had expired on the spot and a few persons going on that road took me to hospital for possible revival. My late beloved mother who was in the family way fell down and became unconscious, thinking that she had lost me for ever. I was told that she uttered "Ha Bhagavan Ramana! You alone can bring my son back to life".



Sri M. Narasimha Rao



My father rushed to the hospital. By that time, the surgeons of the hospital had operated upon me and stitched up all the damaged portions of my left foot and dressed all my wounds. My family were spending anxious moments outside the operation theatre. By 1 p.m. I was placed in the recovery room, in an unconscious state. It was around 5 p.m. that I opened my eyes to find my beloved parents and relatives wishing me a speedy recovery. They were told that I must be in the hospital for atleast a couple of months and it might take another month for the complete healing of my left foot.

By the grace of Bhagavan Ramana, I became perfectly alright in about four months in 1936, from which time, I have completely surrendered myself to His Divine Will.

I visited the Ashram with my wife in 1967, three decades after the accident. During our stay, we experienced a blissful peace. To us He is the Supreme Reality. He is ever guiding us and answering our prayers.

Buddha – the Flower of Hinduism

By Swami Nirmalananda

WHILE ALL other Gods are depicted in Indian sculptures in different postures, Buddha is always shown sitting in meditation, which speaks of his excellence in the supreme art of meditation, in which he has no peer. For hundreds of years Buddha's serene and shining face has been the most favourite theme of sculptors for the creation of the masterpiece of art and also no other teacher in the whole of history has taught about the ultimate perfection of the human mind as the Blessed and the World-honoured One.

The subdued smile seen on the face of the Buddha, in O.C. Gangoly's words, 'The Halo of Radiance' or the sense of motion in the midst of tranquillity — the quality of what Maurice Maeterlinck calls, "active silence" (in the words of the *Bhagavad Gita*, "Action in inaction") — serves both as his sermon as well as his seal of guarantee that man's ultimate goal is Happiness and that it can be attained. It is that Smiling Wisdom, that, by igniting the mind and the heart at the same time, lifts one up from the mundane world to dwell in the heavenly abode of bliss and tranquillity that shows one the way to live in the shoreless ocean of love and compassion with the wide-open heart embracing all in oneness. "He who knows the Truth knows my doctrine", said the Buddha. It is not without significance that the great Sankara is nick-named as 'Prachanna Buddha', a Buddhist in disguise. The Buddha was indeed a Rishi like all other Rishis of India, to borrow Gangoly's words again, 'clothed in the diaphanous robe of a *Sannyasin* as the full-fledged Preacher of the *Dharma*, Buddha a *Guru*, a Teacher of Wisdom and a benevolent distributor of the nectar of immortality to all the world'.

It was his unlimited compassion for all living beings that made Buddha condemn the evil

practice of animal sacrifice. The Buddha also rejected the authority of the Vedas, in fact, blind belief in anything, however sacred and authentic. He gave primary importance to clear rational thinking based on one's inner experience. The Buddha maintained Silence when asked about God or Gods. Will it not be a sheer waste of time to enter into an endless argument to prove that the egg came from the hen or the hen from the egg? This very Noble Silence taught by the Buddha is distinguished from the evil silence which two persons resort to when being confronted with personal ill-will. Every morning, it is said, the Buddha scans the world with his Divine Eye to see whether anyone has lit his own lamp and thereby benefited from his teachings.

In simple self-awareness, there is complete self-giving and, therefore, freedom and compassion for all which, according to the Buddha, is the cream of religion. The Buddha is indeed the Lord of Compassion, a true Companion of all living beings, the propounder of the Middle Path avoiding extremes in all things, including one's own belief and ideology.

The Buddha is 'The Light of Asia', as Edwin Arnold calls him, the greatest son of India, the gentle flower of humanity, the *Jagat-Guru* (the World Teacher), a Benevolent Giver, a physician who can cure the maladies of the human mind and, above all, he is Mother India's greatest gift to Asia and the world. The Buddha's Wisdom remains unassailable even after so many centuries and his message will continue to be so even after thousands of years. The Buddha lives in the heart of all, for he is not merely the historical Buddha but the undying ESSENCE in all, which the *Bhagavad Gita* and the Upanishads speak of as the Self.

When the eternal Self is realized, mortal man becomes immortal. We should do well to remember the sayings :

“Stone Buddhas break into pieces,
Metal Buddhas melt in the furnace,

Clay Buddhas dissolve in the water,
Wooden Buddhas become ashes in fire,
The true Buddha alone lives for ever.”

Who is the true Buddha? The answer is:
LOOK WITHIN : THOU ART THE BUDDHA!

SILENCE SUPREME

By Swami Siddheswarananda

I was in Sri Ramanasramam in 1931 during Shivarathri. As most of the devotees had gone for Giripradakshina around Arunachala, Bhagavan was practically alone in the hall. I then had a long period of silence in His presence.

Bhagavan asked me :

“Why don't you go also?”

I said : “Sitting near you is as good as walking around the Hill”.

And He smiled!

I felt that he was disposed to reply to a question and so I asked Him : “In what way is the inquirer who comes near Him and remains in silence benefitted by His Presence.”

He told me that persons who come with many questions in their mind and who are agitated by those questions project their thoughts on Him. But He being impersonal, the mass of energy emanating from the questioner does not find any place for absorbing those thoughts.

SILENCE, as it were, acts like a solid wall on which the rubber-ball (thought) is thrown up; and because the ball does not stick to the wall, it rebounds. It may happen that it comes back and cuts at the root of the devotee's mind-structure and like a boomerang destroys the whole force of mental vrittis. This in turn, creates SILENCE in the devotee. According to Bhagavan, this is the Highest initiation.

I took a paper and pencil and drew a sketch before Him to represent what I had written before. Bhagavan smiled and said :

“That's it”.

Some Stray verses to Bhagavan Arunachala Ramana

By Honey-Bee

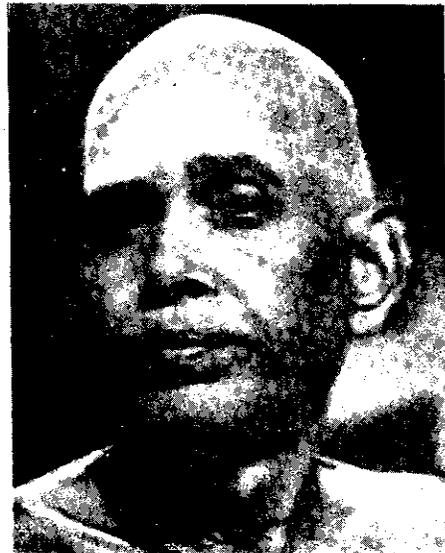
FOR TIMELESS time now
"i" have been seeking
Not knowing what "i" sought
Only to realize now
That the seeker is the sought,
That the hunter is the hunted.
Praise be to the Feet of the Master,
Mighty Merciful Hunter
Hunting out His quarry
For blissful rest in Him..

For Timeless time now
"i" have been lost
Wandering hither and thither
Like a dog lost
Only to realize now
That with faintest trace of scent.

For ages have "i" been
Seeking, seeking the Master.
Praise be to the Feet of the Guru
Who has sought me out and made me His
To lead me to (my) Self again
By the leash of Self enquiry,
Never to be lost again.

For Timeless time now
"i" have been thinking,
Not even knowing how to think,
Till weary of thoughts
There remained only the Master-thought.
Praise to be His Sacred Feet
For He kindly taught
Me how the right thinking is to think *nought*¹
And rid me of weary thoughts
For with thoughts extinct, said He,
Shines "I"- "I" "That-am I".

For Timeless time now it seems
Firm abidance have I sought
Only at the Feet of the Guru-thought
In earnest Self enquiry
Dancing away all other thoughts.
Only to realize now



That for ages have "i" danced
Out of step and out of tune
In a false dance
Full of painfull falls,
Praise be to Siva, Lord of Dance,
For He kindly sought me out
To draw me to his Dance
With His Sacred Foot upraised
Pointing to joyous Self-enquiry,
For mind in Heart to be merged
The ego crushed under Foot,
And the Heart to Dance in victory.
So for Timeless time now it seems
"In" and "out" with Him "i" dance
My Lord, my Father, my All,
By His Mercy led on and on
In the mighty swirls of His Dance
Often breathless yet Heart-to-heart
Full of Bliss, the Bliss of His Name
In my Heart.

¹ The 'nought' or 'zero' in Sanskrit and Tamil is significantly *Purna* meaning: full, plenum and it is also a term for the Self.

MY TWO VISITS

N. Raghunathan

I HAD the privilege of seeing the Maharshi only twice and then for a brief hour each time.

Fifteen years ago the Ashram was a much less crowded place. Walking into the hall where the sage sat on his divan you could squat in a corner undisturbed and gaze your fill. The chief impression I carried away was one of having been close to a tremendous reservoir of psychic energy. He spoke no word while I was there but dipped into a book he had by his side and looked over one or two letters brought to him by a disciple. But these interruptions far from disturbing his massive quietude seemed to emphasise it.

After an interval of a decade or so I visited the Ashram again. The glare of world publicity that Paul Brunton's book had focussed upon it had done its work. (I recollect with equivocal emotion that I had some share in sending that resourceful journalist to the Maharshi when first he came to India in quest of light). But where the saint sat was a pool of peace. This time he talked vivaciously answering the questions of a well-meaning but bemused scholar from Andhra. And two young men who had come with me were greatly mystified to find him answering, as if inci-

dentally, certain questions that I had speculatively posed on the way. I had said it would be a good thing if somebody asked him those questions — and here were the answers!

..... To those who listen with the heart the teacher speaks all the time, And many who sat at the feet of the Maharshi and were too humble and ignorant to be tempted into logomachy have testified to the grace that descended on the spirit stilled in expectancy Do we who, impaled on our little thorns, sit and hear each other groan and utter our little blasphemies stop to reflect for a moment that it cannot be a cruel or indifferent Power that sends us one like the Maharshi to sustain and console us and make us whole?

They do this not by preaching at us, nor by working miracles, but simply by being their own serene selves. Their radiant spirit makes us spontaneously turn to them as the sunflower turns to the Sun. They are to us as the Himalayas to the ant-hill. They see the Beauty that is hidden from us and they hear the harmonies by which we live.

— From an article written in 1950 and reprinted in *Bhavan's Journal* (Dec 1 — 15, 1985)

"The first important thing to do is always remember why you have come One tends to forget this as days roll by, years roll on In other words, is your life organised around your spiritual Ideal? I am afraid the answer is not easy. As one settles down, old nature tends to stage a come back. The very things which you left behind, your attachments, your preferences, your tendencies, all begin to assert themselves, albeit in new forms. You give up your family connections and responsibilities at home; you begin to form fresh attachments here, not necessarily by way of human relationships but even in other ways: attachment to petty things, routine habits, to pet notions. In a protective atmosphere where you are spared physical and emotional shocks, you tend to get more and more ego-centred, the ego puts on a spiritual coat, and you settle down a prisoner of your 'self' . . . and lead a life that is far more ego-centric, far removed from Love which is the most important requirement in an apprentice spiritual community"

— M.P. Pandit in Service Letter, No. 159.

ON MEDITATION¹

By Venerable Dharmawara

THE ADVANCE of scientific knowledge had increased our knowledge of the external world and made life materially more comfortable, but had made no improvement in the treatment of man by man.

India is a land rich in ancient tradition, the birthplace of many saints and rishis. We have available here many techniques for exploring the inner world of man, and we should read the teachings of our Masters.

In the West psychology is as yet an infant science. Here in India meditation, the super-science, has been well developed from ancient times. Meditation takes one deep into the inner world where one can find the root of all the difficulties and problems of one's life.

Ramana Maharshi (whom the Venerable Dharmawaraji had met and talked with in 1934) had stressed the importance of the enquiry 'Who am I?' This is a lifelong search, and includes the basic questions 'Why am I on this earth?' 'Where am I going?' and 'What must I do?' After years of search and practice one found the answer.

The way is that of meditation, of 'minding' one's mind so that it may become calm, stable and tranquil. A tranquil mind leads to clarity of thought and decision-making and constant meditation leads one to find the answer to the basic questions. Once the answer is found, enlightenment follows, and one is emancipated from the round of birth, death and rebirth. One also develops love and compassion for one's fellow beings, whom one can then help in the light of one's own experience.

The initial method of meditative practice according to Buddhist *vipassana* is one of watching the breath — directing one's attention to the processes of inhalation and exhalation. This method was different from what we ordinarily understand as *pranayama* as the emphasis here is on *attention*. Practice in unidirected attention develops concentration, which helps in the efficient performance of all kinds of tasks.

¹ Report by Prof. M.L. Sondhi of the talk at Ramana Kendra, Delhi, on March 2.

"He always had this strange lack of distance between himself and the trees, rivers and mountains. It wasn't cultivated: you can't cultivate a thing like that. There was never a wall between him and another. What they did to him, what they said to him never seemed to wound him, nor flattery to touch him. Somehow he was altogether untouched. He was not withdrawn, aloof, but like the waters of a river. He had so few thoughts; no thoughts at all when he was alone. His brain was active when talking or writing but otherwise it was quiet and active without movement. Movement is time and activity is not.

"This is strange activity without direction, seems to go on, sleeping or waking. He wakes up often with that activity of meditation; something of this nature is going on most of the time. He never rejected it or invited it. The other night he woke up wide awake. He was aware that something like a ball of fire, light, was being put into his head, into the very centre of it. He watched it objectively for a considerable time, as though it were happening to someone else. It was not an illusion, something conjured up by the mind. Dawn was coming and through the opening of the curtains he could see the trees."

— from Krishnamurti's Journal
(where he refers to himself in the third person)

Introducing....

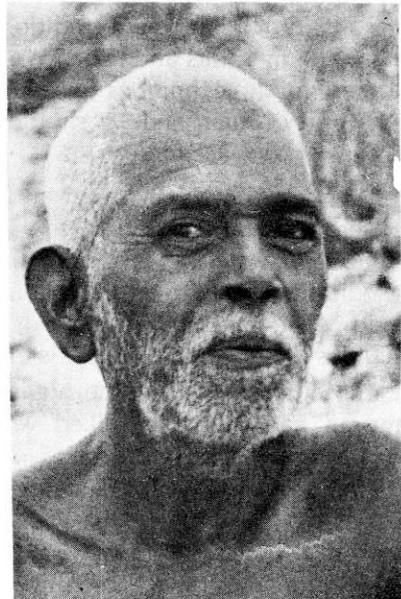
Smt. & Sri T. Navaratnam

Sri Thambiah Navaratnam of Ceylon is a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan who keeps a low profile while enjoying fully Bhagavan's silent presence. He was spiritually inclined even from early youth. His father, a planter in Jaffna, was inwardly religious and his mother used to do regular worship to Lord Siva and Murugan. He recalls that the demise of his father and other misfortunes when he was barely 16 years old, made him question God's purpose in creation. He observed keenly how the life of most people was devoid of happiness and how the rule of the larger swallowing the small prevailed from the meanest insect upwards. Also one's popularity was swallowed up by another and the game went on. He was unable to fathom God's reason or need for such a creation considering He was omni-potent-present and joyful. He approached many learned men and saints but could not find lasting peace on this point.

He had been initiated in *Ram Mantra* and after watching a religious movie the *Japa* went on of its own accord and without break or



Smt. & Sri T. Navaratnam.



effort on his part. It was *Ramana Vijayam* of Suddhananda Bharati which brought him into Bhagavan's fold. Soon after in 1943, he bade goodbye to his employer and left for Tiruvannamalai!

He recalls with gratitude how Sri Niranjananda Swami took good care of him then and made him comfortable during his stay.

As he entered the old Hall and saw Bhagavan on the couch, he was overwhelmed by the grandeur of His presence. Quietly sitting down on the western corner, he kept looking at Bhagavan, and saw then a halo surrounding Him, and His gaze fixed at a point above the seated people. "Suddenly Bhagavan's eyes moved and looked directly at me", he says, and he closed his eyes, but strange things continued to happen! He was drawn to the still centre and remained there for an hour or

so. Then as he opened his eyes, he saw Bhagavan's gaze still on him and he sank back from where he came.

He drank in this grace all the five days of his stay. However, on the third day he felt a great desire that Bhagavan should talk to him — even a word would suffice! He did not dare to approach Bhagavan in the presence of others. So he decided to follow the path (up the Hill) taken a while earlier by Bhagavan during His daily walk. He suddenly saw Bhagavan returning with the attendant close behind and so he stood aside with hands folded in *namaskar*. Sri Bhagavan stopped near him and said "What brings you here?" (Sri Navaratnam recalls days He will keep quiet, with a blank look on "Here He was looking at me, a "பொடி யன்" (dust), and Himself talking of His own accord to me!") He replied he had come only for *darshan*. Bhagavan asked him to visit Skandasramam, and pointed the way. Sri Navaratnam took the way grateful to Bhagavan for having fulfilled his unspoken wish.

On the day of his departure he placed fruits before Bhagavan, who blessed him by accepting it with a wave of His head. He could visit the Ashram again only in 1970, but then onwards he has come every year.

Sri Navaratnam's mother too became a devotee of Bhagavan when he related his experiences to her on his return. She passed away peacefully in 1978 feeling Bhagavan's Presence by her to the last moments. His wife, a leading educationist in Sri Lanka and the author of several books, is a staunch devotee

Sri Navaratnam, who is now 66, recalls how he was almost given up for dead after a strong dose of Penicillin (for a tooth extraction) in 1985. He then experienced everything, body and all, melting into a bright cloud, the Presence of Bhagavan and himself being sucked into it. When he came to, he found the bodily functions had resumed and the brightness still with him.

Sri Navaratnam, who has had many experiences coming his way over the years during meditations, has kept his mind clear of such

DULCIS BELLE III

By Noona Osborne

DAWN ON ARUNACHALA

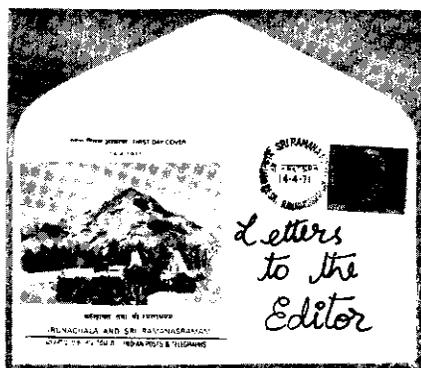
My love is the grass
On the mountain, Oh
I love the silence,
That magic you know!
I cry and my tears
Will sing you a song,
The hands move the wind and
The waves of the ocean,
The cold dawn light has touched
The peace, has touched the tears,
Has touched whatever —
And what was it to
You, the quiet and
The love of the blue.

Infinite

What is the form of love?
The white soft clouds that love
And hold the dark and gent —
ly hold it in their arms,
The quiet and the
Silence in my heart.
The white soft clouds and what
Is the night? O my
Love, I do not know,
But see that the cold —
Say: "The cold dawn light
Has touched the blue of
The night!"

distractions and follows cheerfully Bhagavan's supreme guidance.

We wish this dedicated couple a long and happy life in an atmosphere of peace and amity in their dear, ancestral home!



RIBHU GITA

(Addressed to Prof. N.R. Krishnamurti Aiyer).

It is my great joy to write this letter to you, a fellow disciple of our gracious guru Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. For the past ten years I have been practising the *sadhana* of Self-enquiry as enjoined by the Maharshi. Through the various books published by Sri Ramanasramam regarding the instruction imparted by Sri Bhagavan, I have had the opportunity to establish a deep inner connection with Him. I am certain that the Maharshi is the manifestation of Lord Siva as the Supreme *Sat Guru*, and the goal of Self-Liberation is assured to all who devote themselves to Him and follow the instruction which He gave.

In this connection, I have had great interest in non-dual texts which the Maharshi recommended as aids to *sadhana*. Having just read your translation of *The Essence of Ribhu Gita*, I would like to thank you for the excellent translation of this most holy text The full force of Siva and sage Ribhu's instruction is preserved in the English rendering, an accomplishment which is no doubt due to Ramana's influence on your life.

In the preface you mention that the whole work consists of some 1,924 verses, 122 of which you have extracted for this translation. It would be a great blessing to myself, as well as other English-speaking devotees of the Maharshi if the remaining verses could be made available. I am sure that the whole text is a priceless treasure of non-dual wisdom which will aid the *sadhana* to all seekers. As is said in the *Ribhu Gita* ". . . . he should always dwell on the written words dealing with the Brahman-Self."

If you have already the translation of the remaining verses, I would greatly appreciate receiving a manuscript of them for my own spiritual use. I would also enthusiastically support you in any way that I could to see them published. If you have not yet translated the remaining verses, I would like to sincerely encourage you to do so bearing in mind the painstaking effort and time required to properly translate a text like the *Ribhu Gita*. If necessary

I would be glad to assist in making funds available to you to complete the task. I am sure that Sri Ramanasramam would gladly publish the entire text once completed for the benefit of devotees and aspirants everywhere.

Please accept my thanks in advance for any help which you can offer in this. I hope to hear some reply from you in the near future. It is my humble wish that through the availability of the *Ribhu Gita*, more sincere devotees will have their hearts turned towards Sri Bhagavan and find in Him the answer to their prayers.

— John Morley,
Santa Cruz, U.S.A.

I do appreciate your ardour and devotion in the *sadhana* of Self-Enquiry (*Who am I?*) taught by our gracious Lord and Master, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. The major portion of *Ribhu-Gita* deals with the *sadhana* of the four *Maha-Vakyas* of the four Vedas coupled with the rituals of *vigraha aradhana* (idol worship) in Siva Temples, which are exclusive practices of orthodox Hindus only. A very small portion of *Ribhu Gita* deals with Sri Ramana's *sadhana* of Self-Enquiry. In the translation, *The Essence of Ribhu Gita* I have selected only those verses which are germane to Sri Ramana's *sadhana* of Self-Enquiry.

The Ashram publications of the works of Sri Bhagavan, along with Kavyakantha Ganapathi Muni's Sri Ramana Gita strictly adhere to the *sadhana* of Self-Enquiry. They are more than adequate to help the Ramana-devotee in his *sadhana* of Self-Enquiry which is the royal road of Self-Realisation (*mukti*) even when one is alive. Thanks to our gracious Lord and Master, Sri Ramana, this royal road is open to all persons — Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, Muslim, male or female, theist, atheist or agnostic. It reveals the common heritage of Man. It is a Super-Science above all religions and sciences. It is *Hridaya-Vidya*, the Science of the Heart, based on the universal Experience of Man, which is above all distinctions of race, religion, cult, caste or sex.

I am old (87) and deaf with impaired eyesight and have only a short span of life ahead of me. The time is insufficient for completing Self-Enquiry (*Who am I?*) right upto the point of extinction of the ego. Hence my inability to translate the *Ribhu Gita*. I should like to be excused.

— Prof. N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer

SWADHARMA

I have been reading the *Bhagavad Gita* from some days (I had read it twice before) slowly, and some statements in it puzzle me. I would like your opinion about the following.

What is one's *swadharma*? According to Swami Yogananda it is the '*dharma*' of one's soul. According to the edition I am reading (by Swami Chitbhananda), it is one's profession — e.g., profession of a *kshatriya* for

Arjuna. Now, what happens when one fails in one's *swadharma* e.g. an engineer or a doctor may be very unlucky in his profession. Should one stick to it, inspite of difficulties to oneself and one's family. Or isn't it logical to change to some other profession where one may earn and shine better e.g. the well-known author Somerset Maugham who gave up the medical profession. In Arjuna's agony, he wants to give up the fighting but the Lord exhorts him to stick to his *swadharma*.

2. In the *Bhagavad Gita* Lord Krishna repeatedly tells Arjuna to stand up and fight. This is in marked contrast to Jesus Christ's 'turn other cheek' to one's enemy. Thinking of this, I felt that had Arjuna had Christ as an adviser, the tale of *Mahabharata* would have ended differently. What do you think? Don't you feel that the path of Krishna is to be followed if we have to survive in this wicked world? Isn't too much weakness dangerous?

3. One is to get rid of one's ego and body-consciousness as much as possible in order to enter the diverse life. How should a girl then react to horrible things like rape? In olden days Rajput Princesses used to commit 'sati' in preference to joining moghul and muslim kings' harems. In many joint families (esp. young widows in olden days) other brothers-in-law used to take advantage of the helpless women who had nowhere to go. Tara, Vali's wife, suffered after her husband's death. Isn't death preferable to such harassment? But isn't this due to "I-am-the-body" consciousness? Don't you think that this sort of consciousness is necessary for celibacy? and bodily purity or do you feel that, God will protect a sincere devotee from unnecessary harassment?

I am glad to tell you that a friend of mine got me a big, beautiful photo of Sri Ramana (coloured) printed by the house of Khodays. I had been longing for one such and could not get it. I tried to get it for so many years and could not and gave up at last. One of my friends who treats me as a 'Sounding board' for her many problems attended an exhibition held here last week (book exhibition) and surprised me by getting me the photograph. It is now framed and kept in the hall and I always feel that He looks at me whenever I pass Him and that His protection is always there. One of my relatives was diagnosed as suffering from cancer. When my mother went there I gave her a small photo of the sage to be given to the patient. They now do *aarti* everyday to it. And the cancer has been found to be a very slow growing one, with good prognost. You see, this person has two teen-aged children and we hope he will be spared till they are settled, by God's and Ramana's Grace.

I will be grateful to you if you could reply to the above and (please note change of address) with prasad from Bhagavan's Shrine.

— S.D.B., Bangalore.

The doubts listed in your letter of 4 pages have been answered in less than one line by you in your own words "God will protect a sincere devotee"! This is precisely what Sri Ramana advised a devotee: "Only keep quiet, Bhagavan will do the rest".

Please read the article 'The Unity of Surrender and Self-Enquiry' in The Mountain Path, Vol. 18 No. 1 January 1981 pp. 1 — 6.

Submit to Sri Ramana who, as you say, has mysteriously entered your new abode.

Prasad from Sri Bhagavan's Shrine is enclosed.

A REPLY

Silence of a Sage is a saving grace. Its inherent Energy leads one to salvation. Silence where there is no understanding is also not lacking in virtue, it avoids leading another into error.

I am shocked, stunned and saddened by "Why doubt?" in your *Letters to Editor* page of January '86 issue.

I have laboriously ferreted-out the relevant passage in "I AM THAT". (Article No. 70). Nisargadatta Maharaj is talking to a person that begins by saying 'I came from America six months ago. I was travelling from Ashram to Ashram. I have been to Ramanasramam. What is your opinion of Sri Ramana Maharshi?

Maharaj first gives a full reply: "We are both in the same ancient state". Then he adds — for the lack of preparedness of the questioner to receive the full impact of what he is asking for is evident — "But what do you know of Maharshi? You take yourself to be a name and a body, so all you perceive are names and bodies".

The mind can think only in its own terms — that is a limitation inherent in the questioner. The *Gnani*, himself free from mind and concepts, has to give a reply in terms of the questioner's mind — that is a limitation imposed upon him who would teach. If the questioner could have understood fully "We are both in the same ancient state" further questions would have been redundant, even irrelevant. "Ancient" was not historical, not temporal, it meant timeless, free from time and space and therefore and thereby free from causation and concept and reaction.

The seeker (one like you and me) continues the conversation. "Were you to meet the Maharshi, what would happen?" Maharaj Says: "Probably we would feel quite happy. We may even exchange a few words".

Can you not visualise this mighty non-event? Is not a tremendous truth about the state of *Gnana* conveyed through what to us is a massive under-statement?

The conversation continues:

Q: "But would he recognize you as a liberated man?"

M: "Of course. As a man recognizes a man, so a *Gnani* recognises a *Gnani*. You cannot appreciate what you have

not experienced". (The transcendental is set apart from the mental).

Q: "To become an engineer I must learn engineering. To become God, what must I learn?"

M: "You must unlearn everything"

Professor K. Venkatesan (a seeker like myself) has a doubt. 'Dear editor', he says 'Maharaj seems to consider himself a *Gnani* and as one apart from the questioner. I would not expect Sri Ramana to speak this way. Is this my ego versus Maharaj?'

And the editor says "You are right. Sri Ramana would be silent or give a different answer.

Sir, Maharaj spoke for himself. The Professor spoke for himself. But *you* are speaking for Ramana and yet you are not speaking. You are suggesting that Sri Ramana's Silence would have contained in itself a different answer, or such a different answer would have been spoken. You, Sir, are declaring an error in Maharaj, but not identifying what the error is, and you are sure you have the sanction of Sri Ramana on your side.

With a flourish you say: "Why speculate about others? It is the ego that thus speculates? Dear Professor, your question was: "Do you think I superimpose my ego on Sri Maharaj'. No harm, the Maharaj can bear the burden. Only let us beware lest editors superimpose their egos upon us!

— 'Varanasi'

RAMANA-FAMILY

I received with a big emotion your kind letter and Sri Bhagavan's beautiful photo. It is uneasy for me to find out the proper words to express the gratitude which emerges from the bottom of my heart.

I can give you thanks for taking care of this little human being, so far away!

My recent trip to Arunachala Ashrama Mandiram in Nova Scotia has meant an extraordinary experience for me. All the people there took care of me with sincere love and devotion. And now, my Self is full of peace.

All of you are my family now and none could be better for me.

Also, I want to give you thanks for the Argentina devotees' addresses you gave me. I appreciate it very much and I will try to get in touch with them as soon as possible. I will write to you later telling what happened.

May Sri Bhagavan ever protect us all: it is my prayer!

— *Marcela Kebleris*
Pereyra Lucena 2516 10 Floor No. 40
(1425) BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

THE DIRECT PATH

Recently I along with two friends had come to Arunachala for two days. It was exhilarating to go round the

holy hill. The Ashram radiates the bliss of peace. It was delightful to meet you all there who are scrupulously keeping the high spirit glowing in all its glory. Your publications are very good, and so is the holy atmosphere of the Ashram. It is obviously being maintained as the centre of spirituality by the organisers and the followers of Sri Bhagavan.

It is heartening to note that so many people all over the world are reading His books, and following His method.

Atman or Self is the core of one's being. Its eternal existence or presence, during all the apparent states, being self-luminous, is its realisation. Ego or the I-thought arises because of the mistaken identity of the infinite Self with the finite body. All that we are told by the Maharshi is to remove this ignorance. It is possible to do so by reading the words of Maharshi, and reflecting over them, with an earnest intention of practising them in our *sadhana*. It is a wonder that we find it so difficult to be what we really are; which is due to our latent tendencies. The Maharshi has expounded and also indicated through His Supreme Silence the nature of the ultimate Reality.

Maharshi's direct path can be practised by anyone who is earnest to be what he IS.

— *L. Ratanlal, Bangalore.*

HIS GRACE

Your kind letter I have received, and two days later I have got *The Mountain Path* of October, 1985. I thank you very much. Sri Bhagavan was again in my dream, but this time as a young boy, at the age when He had His Self-Realisation. It was a wonderful dream!

I must assure you that I have not only limited myself to reading His books but I am putting the Maharshi's teaching in my daily life. I do not read any other books, they are not any more interesting to me. I read only that which relates to Master, Sri Ramana.

My life is very modest, the food is scanty in moderate quantity. I possess nothing and I do not want anything as my own. I know that the "small I — the body" came naked on the earth and so must go away the same way — it can take nothing with itself. I feel free from desire, dislike, hate, fear; I see all in One; I love all that is around me. The Silence is my best teacher. Sometimes I feel the "small I" completely vanishes where there is neither space nor time.

With great joy I must tell you that I have got a small precious stone from the Holy Hill, Arunachala. I got it from a Polish lady; she was in Sri Ramanasramam. This precious stone is my great jewel!

— *Kazimierz Rulineki,*
Bydogoszez,
Poland.

LAURELS — I

I read and re-read Sri A.R. Natarajan's beautiful and helpful Editorials over and over again. They lift me no end whenever I turn to them. "Ramana's Fate" may be singled out for more praise than others. This is merely to say how inspiring they all are and not to make comparisons.

One can never sufficiently thank Sri Ramana and those He chooses to inspire with such beautiful writing.

— K.C. Rajah, Paris

LAURELS — II

Thank you for sending the photos taken during my visit to Sri Ramanasramam on Sri Bhagavan's Jayanthi Day.

I really felt doubly blessed during my short stay at the Ashram and felt privileged to meet so many devotees and had the unique experience.

I would like to repeat that *The Mountain Path* is extremely well edited, beautifully produced and provides excellent insight and food for thought. I am sending separately three names and addresses as gift subscriptions.

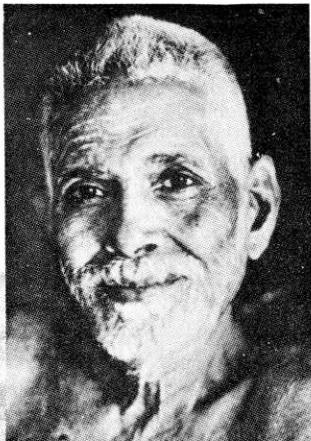
— G.S. Pohekar, Director,
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,
Bombay.

PRAYER TO SRI RAMANA

By Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan

Having drawn me once
Into your holy Presence
And told me just to BE
Don't abandon me, Lord,
Don't leave me in the cold,
Though the senses hold
Me still in this unreal world.
Ramana, King and Lord
Guide me, help me ford
The current of *Samsara*.

As Pure Awareness
Merged in ALL-THAT-IS
As Love within the Heart
Let me play my part
In the theatre divine,
Without a sense of 'I' or 'Mine',
Continuously cast
In the role you have ordained,
A puppet in your hand,
Your creature first and last.



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BOOK REVIEWS

A GUIDE TO SHAKTIPAT by Swami Shivom Tirth. Pub: Devatma Shakti Society House 74, Nawali Village, Dahisar Village (Via Mumba) Dt. Thane, 400 612 Maharashtra. Pp. 94, Rs. 18/-

Shaktipat has several connotations. The meaning according to the tradition represented by the author is that it is a transmission of the Guru's Shakti by which the Shakti in the person of the disciple is awakened and activated. The first result of this awakening is purification of the stuff of the being and working out of the latent *samskaras* in the form of involuntary *kriyas* e.g. crying, laughing, dancing, etc. Presented in the form of questions and answers, this approach deals generally with yoga-sadhana. Though the high hopes raised by the title are not fulfilled and there are certain statements that are not acceptable, we do find in these pages observations that are helpful. (The author's explanations of *diksha*, *anavi*, *shakti shambhavi* are misleading. *Anavi* is mantric initiation; it does not mean that the practitioner feels microscopic).

We may cite a few of the author's remarks that are instructive: 'The aspirant must have an *asan* (woolen rug) to sit on. Wool, being a poor conductor of electricity, prevents the energy activated by the Guru during initiation from passing into the earth below. This *asan* also gets charged during the process and therefore must not be used by anyone other than the disciple himself. (P. 17).

Prana and *Apana* need to be well regulated. When a yogi gets the passage of Sushumna opened, *Prana* and *Apana* happen to unite. . . . If they meet outside the Sushumna, it implies that there is some basic disorder in the system. . . . The *Pranas* are then described to be angry'. (P. 55).

The power of the Guru does not simply amount to his individual achievements alone. He, in fact, represents the collective force of the entire clan in which he happens to be last in the line. (p. 57)

On the question of signs of progress in sadhana, the author quotes from *Srimad Bhagavatam*: "The signs are detachment from worldly pleasures and objects of senses; the mind gets fearless; there is an increasing urge for self-surrender to God. (P. 24 — 25).

The book calls for discriminative study.

M.P. PANDIT

YOGA: ONE WOMAN'S VIEW — By Nrittayogini Meenakshi Devi. Pub: Ananda Ashram, Thattanchavady, Pondicherry. Price not indicated.

Once in a while the reviewer comes across a worthwhile book which is at once delightful and instructive.

The one word by which it can be described is that it is "clean" — *saucham* — ; after inhaling the foul odours of a bar — how refreshing one feels to breathe deeply the clean pure air carrying the fragrance of jasmine in one's garden! This is clearly brought out in one of the poems, titled 'Death of the Gods' where the author deplores "What happens to man, when he holds nothing sacred" when he has capsuled Agni in a matchstick, and Varuna in a tap and the moon is only a piece of rock in a dark sky? But, Nature abhors a vacuum and he has found his new gods in politicians, businessmen, godmen and actresses.

Born an American, educated in Minnesota, and coming to India, she found her Guru-husband in Dr. Gitananda of Pondicherry, and the author was initiated in Yoga. True to the *Gita's* definition of Yoga as *karmasu kausalam*, she emphasises the need for a great faith in the Universe and also the need to know that every situation into which one is placed is exactly the situation needed for one's growth, for one's further evolution. This is also the essence of Christ's "be-attitude", she adds.

This is a collection of some of her articles published in several journals which reveal her clear insights into such abstruse subjects as yoga and spiritualism and her artistic interpretation of such delightful subjects as Kolams, Ganesh, and Bharata Natyam. It is sheer poetic inspiration one sees in the four articles dealing with the Yoga of Motherhood which elaborate on the *Manusmriti* dictum: "Where women are respected, there the Gods dwell. Where they are disregarded, there all deeds go in vain." How the natural feminine impulses and love for decoration and beauty and how the Divine Mother seen in every female form is finding fulfilment in a thousand ways in a sensitive household are described in great detail in this book. She is proud to be a Hindu and in spite of the decay, the betrayal and destruction of the great Aryan way of life all around in recent times; she is confidently optimistic when she writes:

"The Spirit of *Sanatana Dharma* cannot die — though forms may rise and forms may fall; the mighty beat of Bharata Mata's powerful heart cannot be stilled. That electric pulse, that divine current, that ecstatic rhythm will vibrate through eternity — thrilling those brave souls who dare to dance to that mystic melody, the Raja Ragam of *Sanatana Dharma*, the royal and noble way of the ancient Hindu."

CALL OF NARESWAR By Ranga Avadhoot, Translated by A.B. Solanki. Pub: Avadhoot Sahitya Prakasham Trust, Nareswar, Sayar Post via Anklesvar 393107. Price Rs. 3/-

Here in this little publication is found a new answer to the question: "Who is a Hindu?" When someone asked the great Gujerati saint, His Holiness Sri Rang Avadhoot this question, straight came the answer: "*Hinena Duyeta iti Hindu*", meaning: he is a Hindu who feels pain at the actions of wicked people." Not content with this cryptic definition, the Saint uttered three verses in Sanskrit signifying the following truths:

"The one whose heart is agonised much by mean deeds: violence, theft, adultery, etc. and he for oneself does not even stand under the shade of such actions is only the Veda-recognised Hindu. The one to whom the river Ganges, the cow and the Gayatri is the glory of the nation and the one who is not hostile to the religion of others would be recognised as Hindu by everyone. Who would not treat such a Hindu with reverence?"

The one who considers the region from the river Indus to the ocean as one's own motherland more than one's own life, and when the time comes is prepared to sacrifice one's own life for the motherland, and the one who treats all people to be equal is recognised by all people as Hindu".

The saint, whose *purvasrama* name was Panduranga Vithal Valame, was born in Godhara in the closing years of the last century and after graduation worked sometime as a teacher, joined the Gandhian freedom struggle and took part in social and cultural activities. Leaving politics and all in 1925, he took to the spiritual path under the guidance of the Holy Mother, Rukmabai at Nareswar and wrote many books and inspired many in religious activities till his end in 1968. To make his teachings available to a wider reading public, Sri Amarsinh Solanki, a great devotee of the saint and a retired principal of the Basic Training College, has rendered yeoman service by translating salient teachings of the Saint into English.

The Avadhoot's message of Advaita is couched in simple language urging the need for flinging away the mantle of ego, with the innocence of a child, to experience the majestic grace and beatitude of the Divine. According to him, the different cults and sects developed within the Hindu religion were not a weakening but a positive proof of independent thinking and reasoning. In this, amidst of the external diversities, the unity of human species is brightened, says the saint, by the imperishable lamp of Hinduism.

— ARGUS

TRUE KNOWLEDGE By Malayala Swami. Pub. Sri Vyasasramam. Post Vyasasramam, Chittoor Dt. 517 621. Pp. 280, Price Rs. 20/-

Maharshi Sadguru Sri Malayalaswamy (1885 — 1962), founder of the Vyasasramam near Yerpedu in Andhra, was a widely respected saint who worked for the dissemination of the Vedanta among the common folk. He disapproved of dry philosophy and mere theoretical learning

and emphasised the daily practice of the high values of Vedantic tradition. His major work on this theme in Telugu has run into thirteen editions and now we have here the first English translation (by Sri R.M. Challa) of the treatise.

Compiled from his *satsangs*, these talks provide easy reading and pass on precious truths in simple languages. Among the topics covered are:

Women are as much entitled to spiritual practices as men are. There are as many as 27 women-seers in Veda. Castes in the real sense are according to temperament and natural qualities, not hereditary. Image worship has its own role; it prepares the worshipper for the adoration of the Impersonal. There is no expenditure of oxygen in the body of a yogin when he is in trance. One cannot remember God at the time of death unless one has habituated oneself to dwelling upon God throughout one's life.

Swamiji cites scriptural authorities for each of his counsels and this enhances the value of the publication. A useful introduction to spiritual culture.

M.P. PANDIT

DIVINITY HERE AND NOW By A.R. Natarajan, Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 11 Cross, Lower Palace Orchards, Bangalore 560 003.

This is a collection of delightful essays offering the central Message of Bhagavan from various angles. The Truth of the Self is indeed profound but it is not totally out of reach. It is not something to be attained at some point of time. It is there within yourself waiting for you. It is yours if only you would reverse your steps. But as the author points out, quoting Vasishtha Ganapathi Muni (as recollected by the Maharshi himself), "In going forward one can run any distance, at any speed, but when it is a question of going backward, that is, turning inward, even one step is hard to take."

It is not only the core of the Teaching that is presented here; more appealing is the personality of the Sage, his human touch that heals and eases situations. Whether it is a bereaved father who asks in grief, "Is sorrow a thought?" and gets the tremendous answer, "All thoughts are sorrowful"; or prisoner Jean Clause in France facing execution for a crime he has not committed and getting unexpected relief at the sight of a photo of Bhagavan, the writer recreates the scenes and brings the Master close to the hearts of the readers. Every anecdote, every quote, is documented by the organised mind of Sri Natarajan.

Among the several guidelines in these pages are: book-reading can become an addiction creating an illusion of knowledge; quiet in the mind is not the goal, it is only a vestibule of a mightier realisation at deeper levels in the heart region; the effort called for is to learn to be without effort; to die (in the ego) is to live; of all duties the duty

to the Self is paramount. What are the effects of this sadhana of Self-enquiry in daily life? Read the last chapter.

We do hope this series of the author's editorials in *The Mountain Path* will continue and be brought out in this elegant form.

M.P. PANDIT

PAADA POOJA — (Worship of Feet Divine): By V. Dwaraknath Reddy. Pub: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kulapati Munishi Marg, Bombay. 400 007 (Also available at: Sri Ramanasramam Book Depot, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai 606 603). p. 124 + 16. Price: Rs. 25/-.

Paada Pooja is an attractive title, indeed! This collection of intuitive and intellectual pieces offered coherently by V. Dwaraknath Reddy in book-form is a welcome addition to spiritual literature. His analytical yet cryptic style in presenting the subject is not only interesting but absorbing. The chosen themes are varied and scan the spectrum from the "deception of time" to the "wedding" of Purusha and Prakriti, from the deepest import of "sadhana" to the hidden logic behind "evolution".

The lyrical pieces are somewhat reminiscent of the floral offerings of Tagore, while the mystic passages keep company with Kahlil Gibran. Several contemplative essays unravel with dexterous skill the tangled web of time and causation and undo the knots that tie the mind to error, at the same time leading the mind with verbal glimpses towards the freedom it should aspire for.

Swami Chinmayananda applauds the author's writing as "Pure chiselled style which expresses the intricate beauty of his thoughts", while Sri M.P. Pandit, pays glowing tributes to "a humanist, word-artist, seeker of Truth . . . with authenticity of experience, psychological and spiritual . . . a humble man."

Epigrams arrest the attention as one reads the pages.

"A mind that revolts against what it perceives may bring about a revolution; a mind that revolts against its own lack of perception brings about an evolution".

"As long as I see I cannot find.

As long as I stare I will be blind."

"When love is changed to tears what remains? There is only emptiness, not the power of love."

"Man is not the final product of evolution. Man is all of evolution".

"It is Time, not I, that was born. It is Time that marches towards Death. The movement is not in me, but around me. Staying still, I see no ripples upon the placid expanse of Time — I have loaned it to my stillness."

"I do not dissolve into sleep. I preside over sleep."

Even the dedication is alluringly epigrammatic: "To my Mother of Infinite Love who gave me Life, and my mother of natural love who gave me birth". It condenses a whole essay on timeless Life and temporal birth.

Here and there poetic imagery is presented beautifully.

"She stands there, supremely confident of the spell she casts, mocking manhood with a flicker of an eye-lid."

And of a village at sun set:

"The sun lingers poised above the hill-rimmed horizon as time stops awhile, and beholds again the ageless spectacle of the tiller at his toil."

Every reader of the book can have not only a happy but also a rewarding dip into the collective thoughts of this seasoned, erudite scholar-disciple.

The pleasing get-up and neat printing are added attractions to this useful book.

— 'SEIN'

RAMANA OLI (Tamil): The quarterly issued by the Madurai Ramana Kendram (11, Chockappa Naicker Street, Madurai 625 001) fulfils the long-felt need for a journal in Tamil, exclusively dedicated to Sri Bhagavan. Its Editor, Dr. Pranatharthiharan, is not only an erudite scholar but well equipped by a deep study in Ramana-literature. The contents of *Ramana Oli* bring out the cream in Ramana's teachings.

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I, T.N. Venkataraman, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

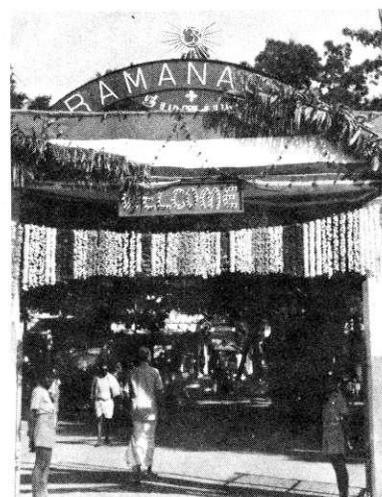
Date: 31-3-86.

Signature of the Publisher: (Sd.) T.N. Venkataraman.



Sri Ramanewara Mahalingam on December 28, 1985 — Ramana Jayanti

SRI BHAGAVAN'S 106th JAYANTI (28-12-85)



Thanks to **Sri Ramachandra Khoday** of Bangalore, on *Jayanti* day the entire Ramana Shrine, Ramana Auditorium and even the entrance to the Ashram were flooded with flowers.

'*Punarvasu*', Sri Bhagavan's birthday is being celebrated by the devotees of Sri Bhagavan, all over the world particularly at the Ashram. Thousands of devotees gathered at His Shrine of Grace on December 28, 1985. "Ramana Calendar for 1986" was released. So also, **V. Dwarknath Reddy's** book 'Paada Pooja' and a Kannada Ramana song book. In the afternoon, **Pandit Sri Ram Narain** gave an absorbing Sarangi recital and in the night 'Ramananjali', led by **Smt. Sulochana Natarajan**, rendered Ramana-songs, to the ecstasy of the large audience.

A letter received from **Joan Greenblatt**, Victor, U.S.A. reflects the devotional fervour which Ramana-Jayanti is being observed by Ramana-bhaktas, wherever they may be.

Today being Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanthi* our thoughts are focussed on the Ashram. Last evening as I sat in our

Ramana-Bhaktas — attentively, dedicatedly paying homage to Sri Bhagavan.

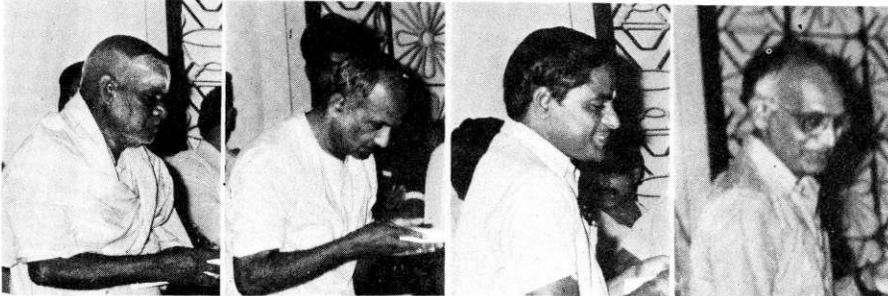


Floral welcome on the way to Sri Ramanewara Mahalingam.





Smt. Kanakamma Mrs. Annie Alit, Smt. Savitri Cuttaree Sri G.S. Pohekar



Sri Kunju Swami Sri Dwaraknath Reddy Sri A.S. Krishnamoorthy Sri A.R. Natarajan



Prof. N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer. Sri J. Jayaraman Sri Ramachandra Koday Sri B. Ananthaswami



Sri T.N. Venkataraman released (i) V. Dwaraknath Reddy's book *Paada Pooja* (ii) 'Ramana Calendar' and a Kannada Song book. A few of the recipients:

shrine room I could envision myself sitting in the far corner of Bhagavan's *Samadhi* as Sri Bhagavan's *Maha Puja* was going on. With eyes closed there was no difference in time or space. I was enveloped by the aroma of camphor and incense and the sounds of the recitation and shuffling of feet; underlying all was the pervading peace of the *Samadhi* itself. The wonder of it is, that through all the noise is stillness, it is perhaps Bhagavan's speciality and grace, that shows us true silence is not merely cessation of noise but an awareness of the inner solitude and silence which transcends everything!"

Sri Pandit Ram Narain gave a scintillating *Sarangi* performance at the Ashram on Bhagavan's *Jayanti* day. Sri J. Jayaraman hails the genius and simplicity of this world-famous artiste.

A section of the audience, so totally absorbed in the melody of *Sarangi*.





'Arunachala Ashrama' New York City, celebrating Sri Bhagavan's *Jayanti*. The gentlemen-devotees and the ladies-devotees.

ARUNACHALA ASHRAMA, NEW YORK CITY

(So Reports: Mrs. Evelyn Kaselow Saphier,
Arunachala Ashrama, New York)

"At the Ashrama on East 6 Street preparations were under way to celebrate Sri Ramana's Birthday. The Ashrama window, decorated with red poinsettias and a garland of white lights surrounding the radiant countenance of the Master, beckoned to all.

"To our surprise and delight, five minutes before Sri Chakra Puja was scheduled to begin, **V. Sundara Ramanan**, son of President **Sri T.N. Venkataraman**, appeared to join us in the celebrations!

"Sri Bhagavan brought many to His abode on this blessed day — both old friends and new. As ever, the devotion of the entire family of **Sri Babubhai Parekh** enriched the occasion. They brought with them three family members newly arrived from India who offered *bhajans* before Sri Bhagavan's shrine.

"Another young man, **Arthur Fenton**, came without even knowing it was the *Jayanti*. Attracted by Sri Bhagavan's face on a book in a local bookstore, he had purchased the book and pored over its contents. Then, by seeming chance, he came to a restaurant on the same block as the Ashrama. Seeing the same picture in the Ashrama window he was overjoyed! Sri Bhagavan's magnetic and silent Grace, expressed through His famous bust photo, drew him in to join us, and he has been a regular visitor to the Ashrama since that night!

"Our celebrations began at 2 p.m. with Sri Chakra Puja. This was followed by a feast. At 6.30 we continued the celebrations with a group singing of *Upadesa Saram*, *Sri Arunachala Pancharatna*, stray verses from *Tulsi Ramayana* and the chants of *Arunachala Siva*, *Hare Rama*, *Hare Krishna* and so on. Spontaneous *bhajans* were offered by many. Finally, we read in concert the story of the birth of Sri Rama in Hindi and English from the *Tulsi Ramayana*.

"In the midst of our festive celebration, we felt that Sri Bhagavan was showering His love upon all. Our minds travelled to Sri Arunachala, and we were united with devotees celebrating the day at Sri Ramanasramam!"



Ramana *Jayanti* at Kumta: Devotees taking the portrait of Sri Bhagavan in procession on the main streets.



106th Jayanti at Madras: Sri T.N. Venkataraman, President, Sri Ramanasramam inaugurating the Ramana Seminar by lighting the Kuthuvilaku. Sri K. Kalyanasundaram, Jt. Secretary, assists him.

(l to r) Sri T.N. Venkataraman, Sri Swami Chinmayananda, Sri B. Ananthaswami and Sri K.K. Nambiar.

AT MADRAS

Ramana Kendra, Madras, celebrated the 106th Jayanti of Bhagavan on the 5th, 11th, 12th and 13th of January '86. On the 5th, Edadasa Rudra Abhishekam was performed and about 800 poor people were fed. A National Seminar on Bhagavan's teachings was held from the 11th to 13th.

On the 11th, the proceedings commenced with invocation by **Kumaris Hema** and **Shoba** and lighting of the *Kuthuvilaku* by Sri Ramanasramam President, **Sri T.N. Venkataraman**. After the welcome address by the Kendra Chairman **Sri K.K. Nambiar**, **Rajkumari Prabhavathi Rajee** gave the inaugural talk and spoke of the spiritual experience she had in the presence of Bhagavan. **Sri V. Ganesan** recalled many humorous incidents and remarks of Bhagavan and explained the spiritual significance behind each one of them. **Sri Dwaraknath Reddy** gave a profound talk on the operation of the Master's ever-present Grace, **Sri A.V. Subramanian** spoke of the only safe anchorage — the anchorage in the *Atman*. In the afternoon session, **Sri A.R. Natarajan** spoke beautifully on the Master's call, which is the only Voice of Truth. **Dr. N. Veezhinathan** made the point that *Bhakti* and *Jnana* were neither contradictory nor mutually exclusive, but only the observe and reverse of the same coin of Truth. **Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao** spoke of Bhagavan, as the restorer of the eternal values. **Swami Paramarthananda**, spoke on the 'who am I' enquiry. **Prof. K.R. Sreenivasa Iyengar** emphasised the supremacy of Silence as a mode of spiritual instruction. The day ended with a dance — drama: '*Guru Ramana*' — by Ramana Sudha — **Saraswathi Sundaresan's** troupe.

On the 12th the talks during the forenoon were in Tamil. **Sri H. Vaidyanathan** spoke on Muruganar's '*Guru Vachaka Kovai*'! **Sri N. Giridhari Prasad** made a most moving speech and pointed out how among *Jivanmuktas* Bhagavan was unique, as He met death face to face,

Sri B. Ananthaswami, Vice Chairman of Ramana Kendra, Madras receiving with honour **Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswathi**

realized the Self immortal and lived 54 years as the Self in human form. **Dr. T.N. Pranatarthiharan** spoke on *Ulladu Narpadu* and explained its import. **Sri B. Anantaswami** spoke on *Aksharamanamalai*, and the power of Arunachala as the unfailing destroyer of the ego of those who meditate on Him as the Self in the Heart. In the afternoon session, **Kumari Sarada**, compared the process of the *Who Am I* enquiry to the 'Open Sesame' story of Ali Baba and the forty thieves. **Dr. R. Balasubramanian** gave a scholarly talk on "Self Enquiry". **Dr. P.K. Sundaram** spoke on Bhagavan's concept of *Sat*. **Sri S. Sankaranarayanan** narrated many incidents to bring out the nature of the association of Sri Kapali Sastri with Bhagavan. In the last talk of the day **Swami Dayananda Saraswathi** expatiated at length on the 2nd invocatory stanza of *Sat Darshan*, beginning with '*Mritynjayam . . .*'. The proceedings ended with a *Hari Katha Kalakshepam* on '*Ramana Vijayam*' by **Brahmasri T.S. Balakrishna Sastrigal**.

On the 13th, the opening talk was by **Smt. Prema Pandurangan**, who spoke evocatively and with great feeling on *Bhakti* according to the *Bhagavad Gita*. **Sri B. Anantaswami**, who spoke next, quoted profusely from *Ulladu Narpadu*. **Swami Poomananda Thirtha** spoke of the mind's awareness of itself as the way to realisation. In his valedictory address, **Swami Chinmayananda** very forcefully and clearly explained how there can be no thought without the combination of consciousness and objectivity and how, when objectivity is negated, what remains is not void, but pure consciousness. The seminar came to a close with a classical *Bharatanatyam* performance by **Smt. Malathi Dominic**, disciple of **Sri. K.P. Kittappa Pillai**.

The Kendra also arranged a series of talks for 12 days from January 18th to 30th on '*Yoga Vasista*' by **Swami Poomananda Tirtha**.

Sri K.K. Nambiar, Chairman presenting a portrait of Sri Bhagavan to **Sri Swami Poomananda Thirtha**.





Sri Chiranjiv Singh being garlanded by Sri T.N. Venkataraman.

RAMANA SEMINAR AT BANGALORE

A two-day national seminar and cultural festival on the life and teachings of Bhagavan Ramana were conducted by the Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore, at Chowdiah Memorial Hall, on Feb. 1st and 2nd.

Inaugurating the seminar, **Sri Chiranjiv Singh** stressed the universality, simplicity and directness of Sri Bhagavan's teachings. The talks during both the days explained clearly Bhagavan's method of self-enquiry in its different aspects. Some talks dealt with incidents from Bhagavan's life as being an integral part of the teachings. **Sri Achuta Das** said that it was tautology to speak of Bhagavan's life and teachings, as the two were inseparable and interchangeable.

The important speakers at the seminar were **Prof. S.K. Ramachandra Rao, Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Dr. Pranatharhiharan, Sri B. Anantaswami, Sri Swami Vimalananda, Sri V. Ganesan, Kumari Sarada and Sri A.R. Natarajan**. The Kannada speakers were **Sri Achuta Das, Dr. Rangachar and Dr. Venugopal Rao**.

In the valedictory address **Sri A.R. Natarajan** emphasised the urgent need for practising Bhagavan's teachings. Once Bhagavan's method has been understood by reading about it or listening to an explanation of it, it must be put into daily practice.

During the Seminar two publications were released **Sri T.N. Venkataraman**, President, Sri Ramanasramam, released the book: *Divinity Here and Now*, a collection of Sri A.R. Natarajan's editorials in *The Mountain Path*. The other release was of the souvenir: *Ramana Arpana*, containing the English script of the dance-ballet 'Ramana Vijaya' — a vivid, dramatic presentation of Bhagavan's life and teachings.

Of the cultural programmes: "*Ramananjali*" was elevating as always. The students of 'Ramana Sudha', Madras, gave a lively and interesting fare of Ramana-dances, set in *Bharatanatyam* style by **Smt. Saraswathi Sundaresan**. Then followed the dance-drama, *Ramana Vijaya*, presenting Bhagavan's life and teachings. The scenes where Bhagavan showed tenderness alike to all animals, to cow



Sri V. Ganesan, Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati and Sri A.R. Natarajan — ready to thrill the audience with their speeches on Bhagavan.

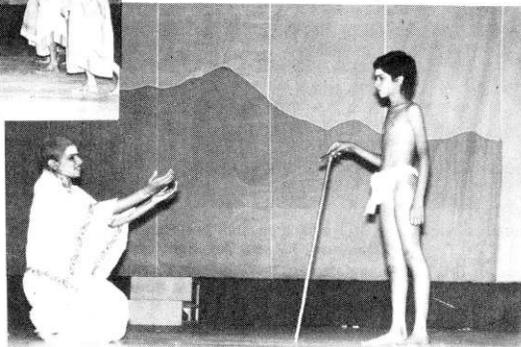
Lakshmi, to the shepherd Velan, were truly touching. The *mangalam* to Ramaneswara Mahalingam emphasised the continuous Presence of Bhagavan — a true spectacle with variety of classical and folk dances, rich colourful costumes and more than 40 participants. The seminar and festival left all the participants longing for more of this nectar of *Ramananubhava*.



Ramana Vijaya — Muruganar singing in ecstasy in front of Sri Bhagavan.

'Ramana Vijaya' — *Mangalam* to Sri Ramaneswara Mahalingam.

Dance by 'Ramana Sudha'.





Ramana Kendra, Madurai: Jayanthi Celebrations —
(l to r) Dr. Pranatharhiharan (speaking) Sri S. Ramachandran, Sri A.R. Natarajan. Dance-music performance by children trained by Smt. Kalarani Rangaswamy.

AT MADURAI

The Ramana Kendra, Madurai, Celebrated Sri Bhagavan's Jayanti for four days from December 25th to 28th. The first three-days' proceedings were conducted at Seethapathi High School and the final day at Sri Ramana Mandiram, 11, Chokappa Naicken Street (where Bhagavan had His *Atmanubhudi*). The Celebrations commenced with Ramana music by the Ramana Sangeetha group.

Sri A.R. Natarajan, President Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, Bangalore, and **Dr. T.N. Pranatharhiharan**, Professor, American College, gave scintillating talks on the message of Sri Bhagavan. On the second day **Sri Swami Yogananda Giri** spoke on Ramana and *Bhagavad Gita*. Then there was a beautiful dance-music performance by the students trained by **Smt. Kalarani Rangaswamy**. On the 27th **Sri B. Anantaswami**, Vice President of Ramana Kendra, Madras, and **Sri M. Ramakrishnan**, Professor Madura

College, spoke. On the final day, special prayers, *bhajans*, and *pujas* were performed to Sri Bhagavan at 'Sri Ramana Mandiram'. Poor people were fed on a large scale. On all the four days the presence of Sri Bhagavan was felt by the gathering of the devotees.

AT BHARATHI TAMIL SANGHAM, CALCUTTA

Coinciding with its Bharathi Jayanti Celebrations, the Bharathi Tamil Sangham, Calcutta, celebrated Sri Ramana's Jayanti on January 9, 1986. **Sri V.R. Lakshminarayanan**, an ardent devotee of Sri Bhagavan, spoke on how Bhagavan's Grace and Blessings continue to be showered upon those who turn to Him even now. With the chanting of *Ramana Gita* by **Smt. Lakshminarayanan**, the function came to a close. **Sri. G. Ramamurthy**, President of the Sangham, presided and **Sri S. Sundaram**, Asstt. Secretary proposed a vote of thanks.



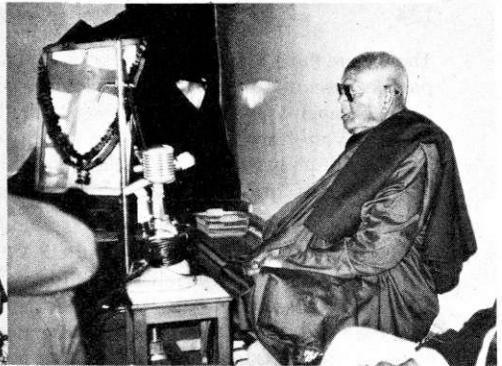
Sri Bhagavan's Birthday celebrated by Sri Ramana Jayanti Celebrations Committee in Bombay between 13th and 16th March
Sri T.N. Venkataraman, Ashram President, garlands Sri Bhagavan's portrait.
(l to r) Sri N.D. Sonde, Sri. T.N. Venkataraman, Sri Satyakam Vidyalkar, Dr. Prema Pandurangan (speaking) Smt. Uma Khanna and Sri P.V. Somasundaram



Dr. Karan Singh speaking at the 106th Jayanti function.



Professor M.L. Sondhi and Venerable Dharmavara.



Venerable Dharmavara speaking at Delhi Kendra on March 2nd.

RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

The 106th Jayanti of Bhagavan was celebrated on December 28 with Ashtottara pooja, Vedaparayana and devotional songs both in the morning and evening. A large gathering of devotees participated in the functions. In the evening, **Dr. Karan Singh**, gave a brief but lively talk on Ramana Maharshi and commended the work being done by the Kendra.

At the Uttara Swami Malai Temple, special pooja and abhishekam were performed on that day and Members of the Kendra sang Bhagavan's *Aksharamanamalai* in chorus.

On March 2, **Venerable Dharmavara**, President of the Institute of Buddhalogy, California (USA) gave a talk on the subject of 'Meditation'. **Professor M.L. Sondhi** of the Jawaharlal Nehru University spoke of the venerable monk's life-long sadhana and of his meeting Bhagavan at Tiruvannamalai in 1934. (A report of the talk appears elsewhere). There was a lively question-answer session after which **Sri T.M. Subrahmanian** proposed a vote of thanks.

AT JINNUR

106th Jayanti of Sri Maharshi was celebrated on Saturday the December 28, 1985 at Jinnur by Sri Ramana Satsangam. Prominent Telugu journalist **Sri Kuchimanchi Satya Subrahmanyam** was the chief guest, while **Sri Addepalli Surya Ramachandrarao** presided over the function.

Sri Satyam Suryam, Cine Director and **Sri B.V.L.N. Raju**, a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan, spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. **Sri Sagiraju Kesavaraju** and his wife performed *Puja*. **Sri Sagiraju Ramachandraraju**, President of Sri Ramana Satsangam, wel-

Ramana Satsangam, Jinnur: **Sri B.V.L.N. Raju** speaks. Others (l to r) **Sri A. Surya Ramachandrarao** and **Sri Kuchimanchi Satya Subrahmanyam**.



On March 8, Mahasivaratri was celebrated with due solemnity with vedaparayana and devotional songs. The ladies group of Masjid Moth and Sheikh Sarai led by **Smt Neela Mahalingam** gave a delightful rendering of Sivandalahari and Sivapuranam.

The classes of Veda recitation, Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads and Tiruppugazh songs were being held regularly and are well attended.

The National Book Trust, India have agreed to re-print the English and Hindi editions of **Professor K. Swaminathan's** 'Ramana Maharshi'. These books have been out of print for some years causing much disappointment to devotees who wanted to get copies.

The Annual General Body meeting of the Kendra was held on January 12, when the annual report for the year 1985 and the audited accounts for 1984 were discussed and passed.

comed the audience, while **Sri Penmetsa Nalla Subbaraju**, Secretary, proposed a vote of thanks.

Dr. V. Brahmaji, **Dr. K. Ramarao**, **Sri G. Venkatarao**, **Sri D. Ramaraju** and **Chy. Manthena Srinivas Varma** spoke on Sri Ramana. Nearly 2000 devotees participated. *Prasadam* was distributed at the end of the meeting.

AT VIJAYAWADA

On December 29, Sri Bhagavan's Jayanti was celebrated by the Arunachala Ramana Satsangam at Vijayawada.

Arunachala Ramana Satsangam, Vijayawada, celebrating Bhagavan's 106th Jayanti. **Sri M.R. Nageswara Rao** speaks.

There were *Pujas* and feeding the poor. The function was presided over by **Sri Magetti Ramachandra Rao**, President, Santi Satsangh Mandali. **Sri M.R. Nageswara Rao**, Editor, *Ramana Vani*, extolled the greatness of Sri Bhagavan's teachings. Others who spoke include **Sri Bh. Narasimha Rao**, **Sri Nerella Raghunatha Rao** and **Sri R. Nagabushanam**.

'Sri Ramana Sagara Ashramam' was founded on February 24 at Tallapalam, Krishna District. A.P. under the auspices of the Arunachala Ramana Satsangam. **Sri M.R. Nageswara Rao**, the President and **Sri K.G. Prasad Rao**, the Secretary, commended this fresh effort by the devotees. Among the other active participants were **Sri Saripalli Krishna Reddy**, **Sri Nadella Sudha Sagar**, **Smt. Karamsetty Satyawati**, **Sri & Smt. Dasari Gopalakrishna Rayede Nageswara Rao**, **Nerulla Raghunatha Rao** and **Swami Prasannananda**.

RAMANA HOSPITAL AT GUDIVADA

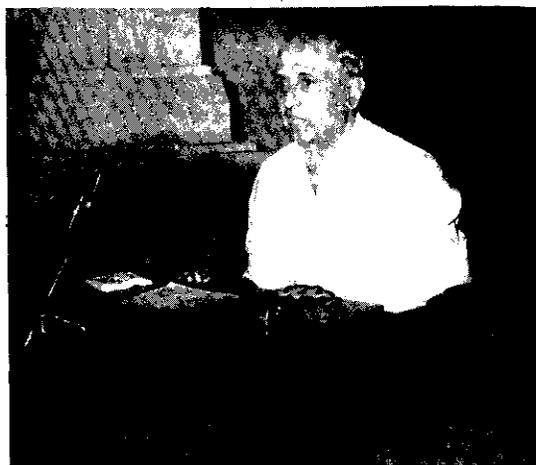
We have received the following report from the daughter of **Sri P. Venkateswara Rao**, Gudivada, "On December 9th, 1985, a Hospital in the name of 'Arunachala Ramana' was declared open, at Gudivada. The function commenced with **Smt. Maruduraju Bai** lighting the *Jyothi*. Then **Sri P. Seshadri Sekhar** Chanted the 'Ramana Ashthothram' and **P. Venkateswara Rao** Chanted *Aksharamanamalai*. The function, which lasted for four hours, was well attended by the public. The hospital for the poor was declared open by **Dr. K. Vishuvaradhana Rao, M.D.**"

SCINTILLATING TALKS BY SRI DWARAKNATH REDDY

We had at the Ashram a special programme of six one-hour talks on a continuous theme of "LIVING, DYING AND IMMORTALITY", every evening from January 18th to 23rd. The talks by **Sri V. Dwaraknath Reddy** which matched eloquence and literary style with depth and subtlety of thought, were very well received by the large audience of serious seekers. The gist of the entire series of talks is given here:

"Man exists for a life-time and is afraid of death. Fearing an experience implies that you will be present as the experiencer. So, man subconsciously posits himself in an unknown after-death existence. That means he is not negated by death. He claims *eternity* for himself! Secondly, living means knowing, which persists all one's life. The mind can only know a little but, never free from the process, seems to aspire to *total* knowledge. Thirdly, man seeks happiness all his life and dies incomplete, but the ceaseless quest shows a longing for *abiding* bliss. Thus man with limited existence-knowledge-happiness seems, even as *man*, linked to the truth of Total Existence-Knowledge-Bliss which denotes GOD (Sat-Chit-Ananda). To realize this *available* identity is the goal of the awakened mind.

"Death is only the separation of the partite consciousness of the individual ego from the insentient matter vesture called the gross body. This memory-structured,



Sri V. Dwaraknath Reddy.

desire-driven, bundle of energy is the subtle body. It functions after death much as it functions in the dream state even during life. Then it has to inhabit a gross body again, for the journey of life through time can end only when the ego merges into Total Consciousness — just as water must transit as rain or spring or lake or river till merges in the sea, which is its home-coming.

"The process can be hastened by personal dedication. Our different natures adopt naturally an emphasis suited to themselves, and each one's path resolves itself into *Bhakti* or *Jnana* or *Karma* or *Yoga*. All of them must culminate in the merger of the ego-centred 'I' in the Totality of Consciousness, the 'I' — 'I'. Ramana Maharshi tells us to move directly into the core of the matter by asking ourselves 'Who Am I?'. The quest reveals first that the 'I' cannot be the body, next that the 'I' cannot be the subtle-body (mind) either, and finally that the 'I' cannot be anything that the ego identifies as 'me'. This takes the seeker beyond the content of the mind into Realisation — from conditioned consciousness into Choiceless Awareness."



Sri V. Ratnam, High Court Judge Visited Sri Hamanasramam on January 31. (r to l) Sri T.N. Venkataraman, Sri V. Ratnam, High Court Judge, Sri M. Thanikachalam, Sub-Judge, Sri Y. Venkatesa Perumal, Dist Munisiff, Sri Moenakshisundaram, Sub-Magistrate.



Smt. Mahalakshmi and Sri P.R. Suryanandam.

Mr. & Mrs. Odette Baumer Despeigne.

Mrs. Susanne and Mr. Peter Edhal.

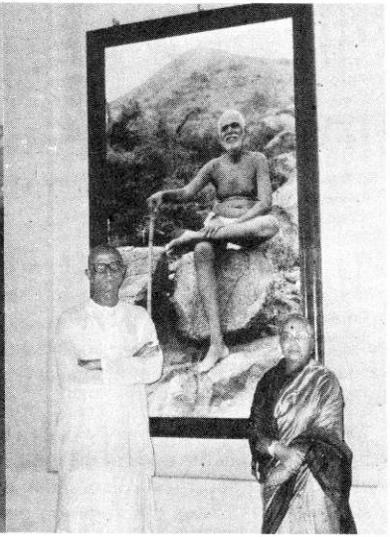
Mr. & Mrs. Murray Feldman and their daughter.



Smt. Meera Tahiliani and Admiral Tahiliani. (Chief of Naval Staff) absorbed in meditation at the Old Hall.



Sri Michael and Susanne Levin and their children.



Smt. & Sri K.C. Sastri

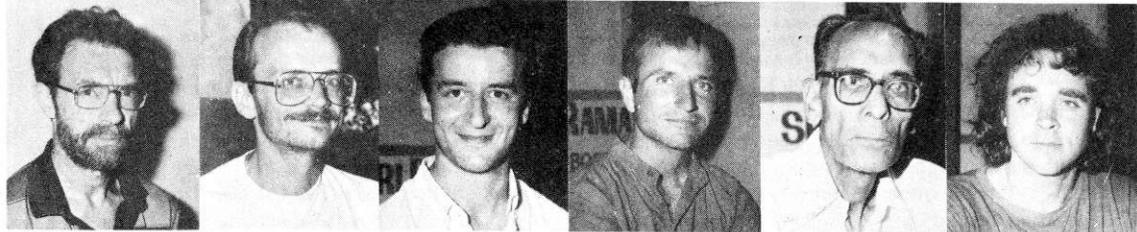
PILGRIMS
PILGRIMS
PILGRIMS



Sri Bhikku Unvala Sri Pandit Ram Narayan Sri A.H. Bharucha Sri G.S. Poekar



Sri K. Navaratnam Smt. Ratna Navaratman Savitri Cuttaree Theodara Van den Henvel Dianne Veilluex Marie Louise Sellier



Sri Silvie Ivaldi Sri George Malinowski Sri Benistan Chierry Sri Michael Orchard Sri C.B. Lal Sri Piers Elkins



Sri B.S. Patil from Ingleshwar (3rd from left, ground row) along with devotees from his native place.



Smt. & Sri B.K. Kapur (2nd and 3rd from right) and other *bhaktas* from Patiala.

PILGRIMS

"For the sincere spiritual aspirant there are a few examples of the kind of purity and strength of vision represented by the Life and teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. The profound power and wisdom, the simplicity and lack of compromise in Bhagavan's communication has rarely been equalled.

"We of the HOHM Community share a common interest with one another in the study of the great spiritual tradition of the world, particularly those of India. In the attempt to integrate into our lives the common essence of all the great traditions, the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan Ramana are like a shining Beacon to guide and inspire.

"After having studied Sri Bhagavan for a dozen years or so, the opportunity to visit Sri Ramanasramam in person, to walk on the hallowed ground where Maharshi

power of the Mountain towering over all, true to our expectations.

"Our thanks to the Ashram for kind hospitality and the unique opportunity to come to the sacred ground of Sri Ramanasramam"

— **Lee Lozowick**, Prescott Valley, U.S.A.



Mr. Lee Lozowick and twenty members from HOHM Community, Arizona, in front of Cow Lakshmi's *Samadhi*. They attentively listen to our *Managing Editor's* clarifications on Sri Maharshi's teachings.

lived nearly all His life, was an exciting prospect for all of us. The chance of a life-time, really, and we found during our visit the deep silence and peace in the Ashram compound (despite raucous bus-horns sounding right outside the gate!) the intimate and very potent presence of Bhagavan in the Old Darshan Hall and the majesty and

speaking repeatedly of the unique good fortune of all those devotees who had the privilege of partaking food in the same Dining Hall and staying in the same Hall where Bhagavan gave His *Darshan* in days of yore. I have also been feeling

"You have made me the recipient of Sri Bhagavan's Grace again by honoring me with the "Ramana Calendar" which has such exquisitely beautiful pictures of our Master!

Sri A.S. Krishnamoorthy

"I have been



again and again for our present poorer plight of not having had the great privilege though even now Bhagavan's Presence is keenly felt at the Ashram.

"On the day of *Jayanti*, the President was kind enough to call me aside after the *Puja* and ask me to stay back with my family, stating that he would take us along with him to the *pandal* for lunch, along with Sri Khoday, Sri Anantaswami and a few others. As we entered the *pandal* and were paying our respects to the picture of Bhagavan, as usual before our lunch, there was a rush of devotees and we were asked 'to sit as and where we are'. I was a little taken aback as there were many devotees who deserved this seat of honour — to be seated immediately next to the picture of Sri Bhagavan. I took the voice as the bidding of the Sage of Arunachala Himself. The Prasad that we partook was nectar, indeed! Thus, my longing to sit next to Sri Bhagavan and eat was fulfilled in the most unexpected manner!"

— **A.S. Krishnamoorthy, Madras**

"The atmosphere of the place is unparalleled — the heart knows that the heaven is here, the authentic truth is



Sri Swami Maheshwarananda

here; love is here; the beyond is here, the holy Abode of Shiva is here, because, Shiva Himself is here.

"Although it seems that I am taking leave, it is not the real fact since Arunachala Bhagavan and Sri Ramanasramam are dwelling in my innermost being, as my genuine Self.

"My gratitude to all and to everyone of the members resident here, for the care, the kindness and the friendliness with which the devotees of Sri Bhagavan are looked after.

"May the Blessings of our Lord Bhagavan, His Grace, be for ever with all of you and with all of us, who love so much this incredible holy place!"

— **Swami Maheshwarananda, Argentina**
(Written at Sri Ramanasramam)

"The nice photo of Sri Bhagavan so kindly gifted to me is a lovely souvenir of a beautiful event and a unique experience of *Jayanti*.

"Now my time at Arunachala is nearly over. I am leaving with the feeling that I have received as much as I was able to make myself. But Bhagavan's Grace is so much more and it is only me who is not receptive enough for all His blessings. I can only say 'thank you' for giving me the chance of staying for so many days in this sacred place.



Mrs. Annie Alt.

"The experience is *basically* always the same through all the years of my coming here, but I can feel yet the change inside myself. Therefore it is really not the same, as it is full of life — never a dead peace! So, I have to accept the struggle with the mental activities which I try to observe like being a witness and I believe in Bhagavan's all-embracing love to show me further on the way, as He did until today in fullness.

"You, dear brother Ganesh, are His blessed instrument. Let me hope for another year of meeting again in Arunachala!"

— **Annie Alt, Vienna, Austria**

(written before leaving Sri Ramanasramam)



Prof. N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer

A MEMORIAL AND TESTAMENT

By Prof. N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer

Professor N.R. Krishnamoorthi Aiyer first saw the Maharshi in 1914 at Virupakshi Cave. His razor sharp intellect which would have easily carried him to heights of fame, he laid at the feet of Bhagavan and accepted the anonymity that went with spiritual ripening.

Now at the age of 87, along with **Smt. Aiyar**, he spent a full 100 days at the Ashram (Oct '85 — Jan '86) and committed to paper the fascinating story of his life and Ramana's grace, which is soon to be published by Sri Ramanasramam. At the end of his happy stay at the Ashram, he wants to share the following with our readers:

A pilgrim, foot sore and hungry trudging on towards the Promised Land of the Self, discovers the end of his journey in the Ashram which is the abode of Arunachala-Ramana. His exuberant joy swells forth from his heart in words of thanks-giving and loving devotion.

We, hungry souls, find final sanctuary in Sri Ramanasramam, nestling at the Foot of the Hill-God, Arunachala Siva.

Food for the soul is the Grace gushing forth from Ramaneswara Mahalingam, installed over the Samadhi of Sri Bhagavan.

The human body, housing the hungry soul also needs wholesome food and drink for nourishment. In the Heart of the body abides the God-self in which the soul should merge in order to be eternally free from hunger and thirst. Until the hour of this merger of the soul in the Self, this tabernacle, the body needs wholesome food and drink.

The Fountain of Grace called Sri Meru Chakra in the temple of **Mother Alagammal** provides the wherewithal for the feeding of hundreds of hungry devotees.

Before the advent of Mother Alagammal in Skandasramam, some scanty food was gathered by begging in the streets of Tiruvannamalai. Very often Bhagavan and His devotees had to starve at night.

The merciful Mother Alagammal started the Ashram kitchen and by her own bodily labour kept the ashramites well fed and happy. That kitchen continues in all its glory unto this day, and will continue forever.

The world is ever indebted to the *Sarvadhikari*, **Sri Niranjanananda Swami**, for the erection of the Temple over the Samadhi of the Mother and the consecration by Bhagavan's own blessed hands of the Sri-Meru-Chakra behind the Mathrubooteswara Lingam.

Devotees are ever indebted to **Sri T.N. Venkataraman**, the present President of Sri Ramanasramam, for the erection and maintenance of the Temple over the Samadhi of Bhagavan.



Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan

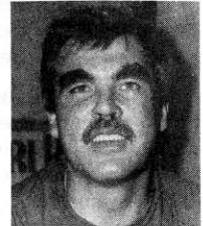
**AT SRI RAMANA'S
SHRINE OF GRACE**
By Sqn. Ldr. N. Vasudevan¹

Last time, I came to You I was a boy,
You Gazed into me, I shed tears of joy;
Benignly you smiled and then nodded, accepting me;
I fell at your feet; my heart with love loaded
tears streaming my cheeks,
That Gaze again, that smile again, from wisdom's peaks.
You switched on a current from my Heart;
It flows ever since from that auspicious start.

Three score and seven years passed, that I-current
Beneath pleasures and pains, joys and sorrows;
Though sufferings strike, My Love for You lasts
Though mind drifts, in your memory I bask.
At times I thought I was lost, You saved me,
At moments I sinned, but You forgave me.

As actions with attachments darkened life's face
You called me to thy Effulgent Presence.
Tears dissolved my ego, I was engulfed in Thy Grace,
As Thou said "Fear not" in assuring Silence.
In the living Presence of Ramana
My eternal Teacher, Love and Saviour,
I-AM-NESS shines in me as lasting Light
Removing darkness, source of all plight.

¹ Written by him after his visit to the Ashram in the first week of February '86.



Sri Patric Roberts

FREEDOM

By Patrick Roberts

The ego burnt in the holy fire,
Like camphor leaves no trace of desire.
Desire and fear, pleasure and pain
Vanish when the ego is slain.

The illusory individual enslaved by thought
Like a ghost is conjured back to nought.
There's nobody there to experience this
Just, Pure Awareness, absolute bliss.

Freedom's freedom from the concept of freedom,
So nothing but itself is the mirror of wisdom.

LOVE: WHO IS THIS I?

By Christine Hodder

**I shall never be so hurt again
If I am safe with you, Lord God,
For it is you who give me strength
The strength of Love.**

**No mortal man can equal you,
O Lord, Almighty.
I see you as Formless
And also in a million forms,
As man, as woman, as children,
as animals, plants, in sky and seas
In forests and mountains, in fields,
farm, factory, home,
In cities, towns and villages.
I see you here in my own Heart,
You are the heart within the heart
Within me and also there without.**

**Lead me on, O Arunachala,
Lead me back, O Ramana,
To the very root and centre
of Pure Being
Being, expansive, all-embracing,
Joy and Truth,
Energy, Clarity,
Compassion, Bliss,
OM.**

MAHA SIVARATRI

On March 8, *Mahasivaratri* was solemnly observed at the Ashram, with four elaborate *pujas* in the night to Ramaneswara Mahalingam. Devotees went round the Hill in the night; while some kept vigil the whole night. A letter received from a young devotee, *Ramanendu Chatterjee*, Calcutta, in this regard, is interesting:

"On the *Shivaratri* day, after I had chanted the *Ramana Ashtothra* I felt an urge to select the Name from the *Namavali* which appealed to me most. Perhaps, it would seem an impossible task; but strangely enough the Name '*Om Aptayah Namaha*' (Near and dear one) came to my mind immediately. Well is He not our nearest and dearest? Totally detached and impartial and yet the best of best friends — our Inner Guru who guides us whenever the mind goes a stray, and as you have mentioned in your last letter, "Sri Bhagavan, our *satguru*, is our all and does not expect anything from us, while He Himself gives everything to us!"

OBITUARY

Dr. W. Radhakrishnaya of Pakala was a well-known devotee in religious circles. His devotion to Sri Bhagavan was so deep that without fail for decades he used to come to the Ashram on all *Jayanti*, *Aradhana* and other important occasions. An erudite scholar and a keen student of Vedanta, he became a disciple of Swami Chinmayananda. He took *sannyasa* at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya and was given the name, Swami Chidananda.



Swami Chidananda

Convinced of his determination to drop the body at Holy Arunachala, he came for good to Sri Ramanasramam a few years back. He was ill only for a short time and his end came in a very peaceful way. With the Divine Name on his lips the Swami breathed his last on February 7. In him the circle of devotees have lost a sincere *bhakta*.

May he ever rest at the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan!

Sri Santhananda

Smt. Parvathi Ammal came to Sri Bhagavan in the later thirties and ever since followed Him and His teachings steadfastly. In 1942 she got a house in Tiruvannamalai and was visiting Sri Bhagavan daily, along with her father. From 1979 she permanently stayed in the vicinity of the Ashram.



Sri Santhananda

She took *Sannyas* and was reverentially addressed by fellow-devotees as *Santhananda*. She was a philanthropist and often contributed to the Ashram in its needs

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The OLD HALL (Meditation Hall) building in the Ashram has deteriorated structurally and major repairs are urgently needed. It is proposed to renovate the Hall completely, maintaining the interior and exterior decor as before. It is expected that the renovation work will start by the middle of May 1986 and will be completed in five months. We regret that the Hall, so dear to all the devotees, will be kept closed during that period.

for the upkeep of its several wings of activity. Her death occurred in Madras on February 22.

We pray that Sri Bhagavan absorbs this staunch devotee at His Lotus Feet!

Sri N.V. Neelakantan

Delhi Kendra regrets to report, the passing away of **Sri N.V. Neelakantan** at Coimbatore on January 2. Sri Neelakantan was a great devotee of Bhagavan and a long-standing well-wisher of the Kendra. After retirement from Government service in Delhi, he had settled down at Coimbatore. May his soul rest for ever at the lotus feet of Bhagavan.

REQUEST TO DEVOTEES

Hitherto, all outstation cheques and drafts sent to Sri Ramanasramam towards donation or subscription to The Mountain Path or purchase of books, photos, etc., were being credited at par by State Bank of India, Tiruvannamalai, to our accounts with them. Due to change in the banking policy, this facility has been withdrawn and the bank is now collecting bank commission and clearance charges from us. We are therefore constrained to request our devotees/patrons/subscribers to send their remittances by crossed Demand Draft payable at Tiruvannamalai or by Money Order; or, if by cheque to include bank charges at 15% of the amount, subject to a minimum of Rs. 6/-.