



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

The Mountain Path

Vol. V

OCTOBER 1968

No. 4

SRI RAMANASRAMAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI

"Save me from the
cruel snares of fascinat-
ing women and honour
me with union with Thy-
self, Oh Arunachala!"

—*The Marital Garland
of Letters*, verse 20

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

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meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!"

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

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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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Grace in Words

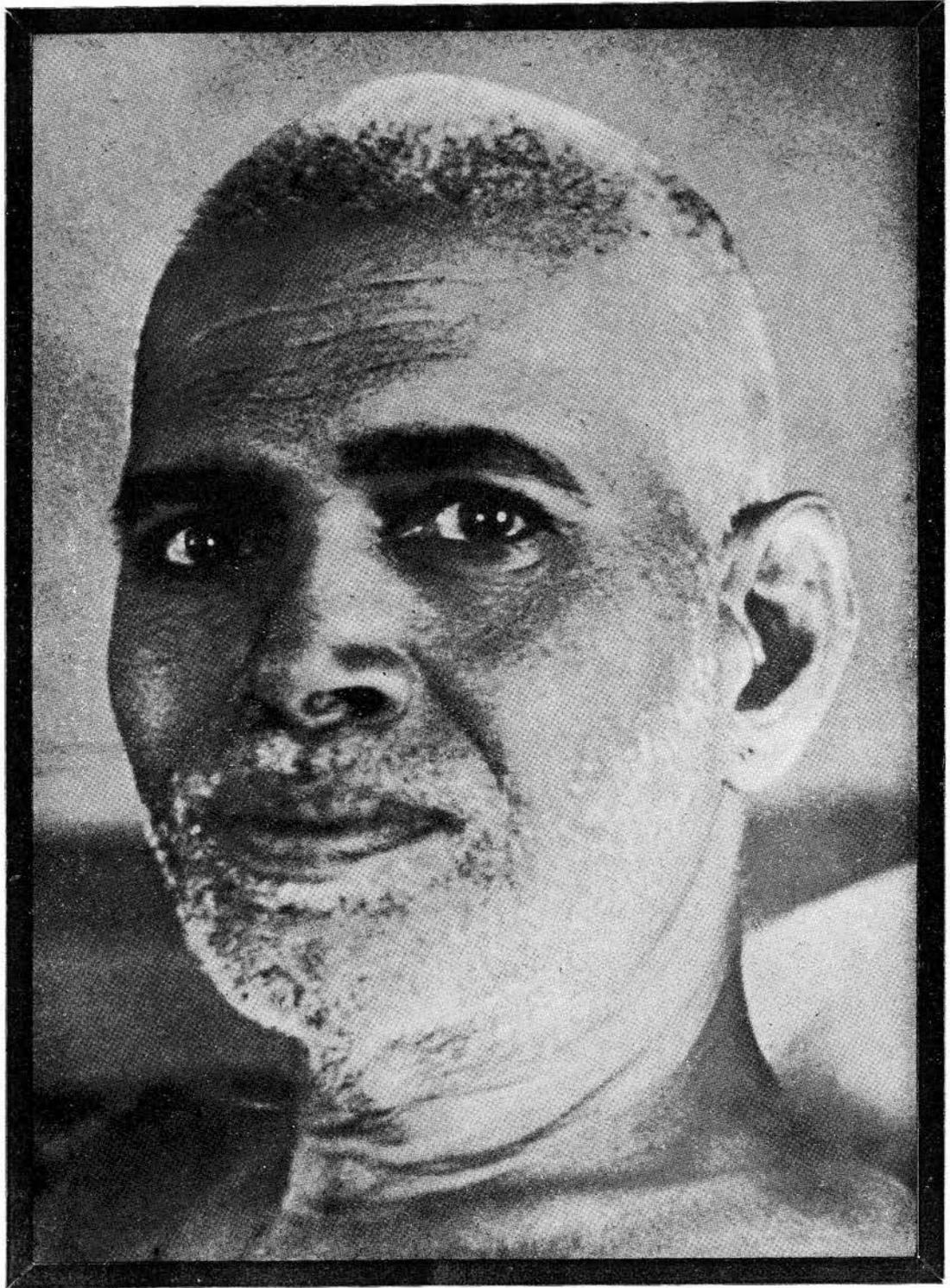
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తనుకనిన జ్ఞాన దరించు .

4. Does an ornament exist apart from the gold of which it is made? Where is the body apart from the Self? He who considers the body to be himself is an ignorant man. He who regards himself as the Self is the Enlightened One who has realised the Self.

— BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI







THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(QUARTERLY)

Editor : ARTHUR OSBORNE

Vol. V

OCTOBER, 1968

No. 4

SELF AND EGO

.....

Editorial

WITH practice you can concentrate on being, just as you can on breathing or eating. And, as with breathing or eating, it does not mean thinking about it but consciously experiencing it. A stone can be unconsciously ; a man can too, but he can also consciously be.

When you feel this sense of being, this pure I-am, you find that it does not fall into any category ; it is neither yours nor not yours, it is neither divided from other people nor united with them ; it just is. And it is pure simple consciousness. You cannot say that you are conscious of it because there is no separate you to be conscious of it. You are it and it is you. And the experience is a very blissful one, free from all worries and sorrows. All this you recollect when looking back at it, because while it lasts you do not bother about such questions. In fact, on looking back you realize that while it lasted you were either not thinking at all or just seeing, hearing, cognizing, without this encroaching upon you, without being at all disturbed by it.

You can also feel yourself an individual being separate from all others, liking some and disliking others. No practice is needed for this because it is the way people usually do feel.

The first way of being is called the 'Self' and is to be meditated upon, the second is called the 'ego' and is to be rejected. Concentration on the heart at the right side is safest according to Sri Ramana Maharshi while concentration between the eyebrows may lead to visions and strengthening of the ego.

This does not mean that there are two selves or people in you but rather two ways of experiencing your being. The first is serene and happy, the second makes you vulnerable to anger, jealousy, frustration and all manner of suffering. Religions either tell you to reject the second, the ego, (as in Christ's saying that he who gives up his life for the sake of Christ — of the Spirit, the Self — shall find it, while he who seeks to save it shall lose it) or they say

that there really isn't one (as in the Buddhist doctrine of *anatta*—no-ego. It makes no practical difference which they say, because whether there is an ego or not there seems to be and it is this seeming self that has to be rejected.

Most people in the modern world live simply as the ego, not knowing of any other possibility. How did this state come about? A very young child has no ego-sense, the psychologists say (and Christ, it will be remembered, said that one must become like a little child in order to attain heaven). According to tradition, primordial man also had not. The rise of the ego-sense was marked by the differentiation into good and evil, and this brought about the 'fall' of man from the ego-free state called 'paradise' to the ego-ridden state of man in the world of strife and frustration.

A human being comes into the world with various faculties, including the mental faculty. Very early in life this mental faculty begins to find some of the reports made by the other faculties pleasant and others unpleasant and it builds itself up into a fictitious person constantly demanding the pleasant ones and rejecting or trying to reject the unpleasant. It is this fictitious person that is called 'the mind', and this is the same as the ego. When the Maharshi or any other spiritual Master says that the mind of the Realized Man is dead it does not mean that his mental faculty is in any way impaired. If he looks at a calendar he can tell the date like any one else. It only means that the mental faculty is no longer a 'mind' acting as ruler of the other faculties and indeed of life itself, planning the future, regretting the past, hoping, fearing, exulting.

The purpose of all spiritual teaching is to guide and encourage us to seek liberation from the ego and realization of the Self. The two are the same. To say that there is no ego or that it is an illusion or that the Self already is does not in any way absolve us from this obligation, because it is precisely from the illusion of an ego fostered by the

service we render it in every selfish thought, word and deed that we have to seek liberation. It is no use saying that there is not an ego and behaving as though there is, because actions speak louder than words. It is living as though there were an ego that prevents us from realizing that there is not and attaining liberation from it.

The question may arise: "Suppose I like the ego-state why shouldn't I be left at peace in it?" The answer is that you don't like it, nobody does; and it is the ego itself (or the illusion of one) which does not leave you at peace. Solomon listed 'A servant when he ruleth' as one of the great afflictions. The mental faculty is a servant; the mind makes itself the ruler. It is insatiable. However favourable one's circumstances, it always craves more—more pleasure, more admiration, more success; and it is eternally insecure, vulnerable to sickness, bereavement, old age, destitution and ultimately, unavoidably, to death. Yet even though plagued by this ego-self, even though frustrated and insecure and driven to consider even death as an escape from it how few have the clear light and the determination to renounce it! That is the perpetual mystery.

The next question may be: "How do I know that I shall be better off, less frustrated, more content, if I do reject the ego?" That who will? Who am I? The ego asks that question and likes to imagine himself engaging in a valiant war against himself and enjoying the rewards. The ego-free state is the natural state; it is what I by nature *am*. And it is the care-free and deathless state. One feels intuitively that it is so, and if empirical evidence also were needed it can be found in the lives of the Liberated. A Sage is immersed in bliss whether the apparent circumstances of his life, as seen by an outsider, seem propitious or not. What Sage has ever complained?

But are there also positive gains, some will ask. Who for? The faculties, set free from the tyrant mind, are able to grow naturally, no longer warped or stunted, no

longer shut off from the sunlight. And the mind, the usurper, gloats at the prospect of the gains that will accrue to him as a reward for his fictitious death and asks if there are positive gains. That is one of his strongest lines of defence and counter-attack.

Then if one does decide to abjure the seeming-self for the true, the question is: how is one to do it?

A useful introduction is to remember what has been explained here about the reality of the Self and unreality of the seeming self, that is the ego. It can never be more than an introduction, being merely mental, but still it is a useful one. Sri Krishna gave it to Arjuna first before speaking about the discipline of life he was to follow.

Next comes a discipline of life. This may well be to live each day as it comes on the assumption of the unreality of the individual self. That would imply cool, efficient,

impersonal activity such as Sri Krishna enjoins in the Gita, doing what is right because it is right, not for profit or pleasure. It does not follow, however, that there must be no profit or pleasure in life. A merchant naturally sells at a profit because that is his living; a married man naturally expects pleasure from his family life; only profit and pleasure should not override duty and become the dominating motives in life.

But even a life of disinterested activity is not normally enough to dissolve the ego-sense. It usually needs to be reinforced by a stronger and more forceful campaign. This can be either surrender or enquiry. Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita enjoins surrender; Vasishtha in the Yoga Vasishtha enjoins Self-enquiry. The Maharshi said, when asked: "There are two ways, ask yourself 'Who am I?' or submit". The mind acts as though it were the ruler and owner of the faculties; it has to abdicate and surrender them and itself to pure Being or Self. Or it has to look inward and see what is the true Self or Being.

Tradition

By Arthur Osborne

Streaming back, streaming back, the long hair of the wind!
 Words spoken, songs sung, the glory-flung trail
 Of the light sweeping on!
 The sound of the Soundless loud-flapping the cloak
 Of the ages wherein the Timeless is robed!
 The echo of Silence caught by the heart
 Bursting out into song!
 In rhythmical measure the galaxies swirl
 Round Stillness eternal in dance ever new.

THE COLLABORATOR

By
ARTHUR OSBORNE

IT is surprising how often the founder or renovator of a religion has been accompanied by a collaborator or companion, often a younger relative, sometimes the 'beloved disciple', who has in some way completed his work, whether the human or esoteric or institutional or some other aspect of it. It seems, in fact, to be the regular course of events.

Let us look first at the two historical Hindu Avatars, Rama and Krishna. Rama, like Christ, left behind no book, no body of teaching. That was done by his Guru, Vasishtha, in the *Yoga Vasishtha*, one of the most sublime of scriptures. Apart from this, his life, as a pattern of dharma, was itself his gospel. The *Ramayana*, the story of his life, is a story of perfect rectitude, perfect dharma. But a pattern of dharma is woven rather in relationship than alone, and we see Rama accompanied in exile, in war and in final victory by Sita, the perfect wife, Lakshman, the perfect brother, and Hanuman, the perfect servitor. None of these lacked character or became colourless through being perfect. It is a mistaken idea that weaknesses give character. They undermine it.

Of these three it is Lakshman who fills the role we are here considering. The younger brother of Rama, he voluntarily accompanied him into exile when Rama accepted his exclusion from the throne and departed for his fourteen year sojourn in the forests. Lakshman behaved towards him throughout with unswerving loyalty and to Sita with friendliness and devotion. It is the relationship of these three as well as the perfection of Rama in himself that provides the pattern of dharma in the *Ramayana*.

Krishna also was accompanied in the earlier part of his life by his brother, this time his elder brother, Balaram. They were

carried safely into exile together as infants, thus escaping the tyrant Kamsa who wanted to destroy them. They grew up as village lads together and returned and overthrew the tyrant together. Together also they assumed leadership of the Yadava tribe and became its defenders against outside enemies. They are depicted together in the various legendary (and symbolical) exploits of childhood and youth. Naturally, Krishna is always the leader, but Balaram is not by any means a pale shadow of him. He is depicted as massive where Krishna is nimble, simple where Krishna is adroit, and an uncompromising upholder of dharma. He is said to have been given to intoxication. In the symbolism of the various religions intoxication has stood for divine ecstasy. A number of the ancient texts refer to Krishna and Balaram jointly as the Avatar.

During the latter part of Krishna's life Balaram is less to the fore and it is rather of the 'beloved disciple' Arjuna that we hear, the disciple to whom the *Bhagavad Gita* was proclaimed. Indeed, Arjuna and Krishna are spoken of in some ancient texts as Nara and Narayana incarnate on earth, Nara being archetypal man and Narayana the Lord.

Now from Hinduism let us turn to its international offspring, Buddhism. Buddha is often depicted in iconography accompanied by his younger cousin, the beloved disciple Ananda. Ananda was far from being the most advanced of the disciples; in fact he is sometimes referred to as backward. As late as the death of Buddha he went aside and wept with chagrin because he had not yet attained Realization, although a number of the other disciples had. But he was the beloved disciple and devoted personal attendant of Buddha, and he himself was conspicuous for love and compassion. It is charac-



teristic that when the women disciples wanted permission to join the Sangha and feared to approach Buddha direct lest he should refuse, it was to Ananda that they went to plead their cause ; characteristic too that his plea was successful.

The Semitic tradition is traced back to Abraham who rejected the corrupt polytheism of his community and restored a simple primitive monotheism. He was accompanied in this venture by his younger brother, Aaron. In the early part of his career, while prevailing upon Pharaoh to release the Hebrews from their slavery in Egypt, Moses was the dominating spiritual presence, Aaron his spokesman. Later, when

founding a Hebrew religious community, Aaron was at the head of the priesthood and ritual. This does not mean that Moses was the temporal and Aaron the spiritual head of the community, for if that had been so Aaron would have stood higher. In tradition and in truth the spiritual authority is above the temporal power, which is, or should be, its outer instrument. Moses was the supreme authority, both spiritual and temporal, with Aaron simply as head of the spiritual organization.

The next stage in the decline towards modernism in the Hebrew tradition was the institution of kingship politically and of the devotional type of worship that Hindus call

bhakti in religion ; and this was brought about by David and Solomon. In this case the relationship was not of brothers or cousins but father and son : and Solomon seems to have been not the collaborator but the successor of David in his work. How many of the psalms David wrote himself and how many he collected is perhaps not very important ; the important thing is that the psalms represent the 'bhakti' element in Hebrew religion and that it was David who both epitomised and established this.

Bhakti is naturally accompanied by tantra. If David introduced the Psalms Solomon brought the Proverbs ; if David projected the Temple as the devotional centre of Israel, Solomon actually built it, with its elaborate symbolism. He would seem to have introduced into Judaeism the highly technical and symbolical type of religious approach such as is known in India as Tantrism and was known in the Mediaeval West as Hermetism. And indeed, Near East traditions perpetuated in the Quran represent him as the supreme master of occult knowledge and powers, while Western traditions such as Hermetism, astrology and free masonry claim descent from him.

Just as the Quran refers to Abraham and Lot, Moses and Aaron, David and Solomon, so it does to Jesus and John, sometimes even representing them as Prophets together, while not even mentioning any of the other apostles. In Mediaeval Christendom the esoteric or mystical Church was referred to as the 'Church of St. John' in contrast to the exoteric 'Church of St. Peter'. One of the symbolical supports for this is the fact that St. John alone of the apostles was at the foot of the cross during the crucifixion and that Jesus, from the Cross, bade his mother, who was also there, regard John as her son and bade John regard her as his mother ; and it is stated that she lived thereafter in the house of John. Mary is taken to symbolise Divine Grace and John's house the Mystic Church.

But who is this John ? The cousin of Jesus became John the Baptist. He perform-

ed the necessary function of giving Jesus the initiation of baptism, while speaking of himself as the fore runner and of Jesus as one greater than himself, whose shoe he was not worthy to fasten. But then he was arrested and after some time executed by Herod for criticising that tyrant and so appears no more in the story. Then there was 'John the brother of James' who was one of the apostles. But was he the same as the 'apostle whom Jesus loved' who is mentioned in the Gospel of St. John as being present at the Last Supper and again at the foot of the Cross ? Incidentally, the name 'John' is not used in either of these cases, although tradition has it that it was he. And was this John the author of the Fourth Gospel ? And of the 'Epistles of St. John' ? And of the Book of Revelations ? Linguistic critics declare that the Fourth Gospel and the Book of Revelations show too diverse a cultural and linguistic equipment to be by the same author. Some have even held that the 'John' referred to as the head of the esoteric Church and, in the Quran, as a Prophet with Jesus is a composite character, a function rather than a person, like 'Melchisedec' in the Epistle to the Hebrews. These questions do not concern us here.

Coming next to Mohammed, his 'beloved disciple' was his nephew Ali. While still a boy, Ali was the first male to accept Islam, being preceded only by Mohammed's wife Khadija. When Mohammed had to flee from Mecca it was the still youthful Ali who took his place in bed to delay discovery of his absence. Come to maturity, Ali was given the Prophet's daughter Fatima in marriage, and all 'Syeds' or lineal descendents of Mohammed spring from this marriage. He was one of the redoubtable champions of the early Muslims in war and earned the name 'Lion of Islam'. More important, he is regarded as the repository of Islamic mysticism, and most of the Sufi initiatic orders trace their descent through him. Indeed, he has been represented as the epitome of sainthood, as Mohammed is of prophethood. The Shi'as hold that Ali ought to have been accepted as first caliph and head of Islam after the death of Mohammed and that the

caliphate should have been hereditary in his family. The Sunnis (that is the orthodox Muslims, among whom all the sufi orders are included) reject this claim, which indeed Ali himself never made, but they still regard him with peculiar veneration.

It is interesting to note that the chosen 'collaborator' of the Master is not necessarily either his most advanced disciple or his successor. In the case of Buddha, the two most advanced disciples were held to be Sariputra and Mogdalyana, both of whom predeceased him. The disciple who presided over the first Sangha after the death of Buddha was not Ananda but Maha Kasyapa. In the case of Christ, St. Peter is said to have been the architect of the Church and St. Paul was certainly the architect of the doctrine. In the case of Mohammed, the immediate successor was Abu Bakr, the first caliph. Umar, the second caliph, was the founder of the Empire. Uthman, the third caliph, drew up the official, uniform text of the Quran. Ali came only as fourth caliph and was a very unsuccessful one at that.

If this tradition of a collaborator has continued into modern times one would look for it only in one who, apart from being a saint, had the particular function of starting or restoring a spiritual current in the world; and indeed it is to be seen in the association of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Towards Ramakrishna, Vivekananda holds the combined position of Christ's two apostles St. John and St. Peter. Like St. John, he was the 'beloved disciple'. Ramakrishna was quite open about this and never concealed his partiality. Like St. Peter, he was the head of the surviving disciples and of the institution which was to perpetuate Ramakrishna's influence.

In thus speaking of Vivekananda, it seems necessary to discount the estimate on the one hand of those enthusiasts who want to make him equal to his Master, and on the other of those Western critics who quote a few of his sayings out of context in order to deny him any recognition at all. Sri Ramakrishna himself said that Vivekananda would complete his work but without being

in a state of Realization (that the treasure he had been shown would be locked up again and the Mother would give the key back to him only after he had finished his life's work).

Before considering whether Vivekananda completed Ramakrishna's work the first question is what that work was. Hinduism was at a very low ebb when he appeared. Hindus were apathetic and half ashamed of it and were inclined to fall for missionary propaganda. The West was ignorant of it and inclined to be contemptuous. But a new age of spiritual quest and understanding among groups and individuals who reject the modern materialism was dawning in East and West alike, and a reawakened spiritual current in Hinduism was an essential basis for this. Sri Ramakrishna awakened this new current by his very being. He did not need to talk about it. Much, however, still remained to be done. It was Vivekananda with his dynamic personality and passionate enthusiasm who restored self-respect to Hindus in India and made Hinduism respected in the West. It was he who thereby prepared the field in which the seeds of new spiritual life could flourish. So the not very surprising conclusion is that things happened as Sri Ramakrishna had predicted.

Again a new trend has been started by Ramana Maharshi, a path of inner quest arising in Hindu India but available to the new age type of seeker outside the orthodoxy of any religion. Does the pattern hold with him too? Has or had he a special lieutenant? And if so, who? To say, as has been done by various persons, that so and so is 'the Maharshi's Vivekananda' overlooks the fact that the pattern is always repeated with diversity; it would not be likely that there should be a similar type of helper in two successive cases. A number of people have been instrumental in spreading the Maharshi's influence — Ganapathi Muni to the more tantric type of follower, the poet Muruganar to Tamil Advaitins, Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan to the academic world, first Paul Brunton and then Arthur Osborne to the West; but none of these fill the role.

With the Maharshi also, let us first raise the question what was the nature of his work. He was not establishing a new religion for a whole community but a path of inner quest for seekers; therefore no organization of society was needed. It was a path to be followed by each one in his own heart; therefore no institution was needed. But it was and is centred at his Ashram at Tiruvannamalai, and therefore some organization, some 'temporal power' was required. This was built up (and here the traditional pattern becomes evident) by his younger brother, the Sarvadhikari. The temporal power was kept quite separate from the spiritual; and the wisdom of that is now apparent. Had the two been combined, the Maharshi's Ashram would have become unable to function when he was no longer

physically present to direct it; but since he had made it run independently during his lifetime it could continue to do when his bodily presence was removed. Before leaving the body he allowed a will to be drawn up in his name stating that his Ashram was to remain a spiritual centre and to continue to be run by the Sarvadhikari and the latter's descendents. This shows that he did appreciate the need for it.

The answer to the question is, therefore, that the Maharshi also did have a collaborator but only in the domain of 'temporal power'. In the work which it was his function on earth to perform this domain had no very great importance; but it was also not completely without importance or he would not have established it and made provision for its perpetuation.

Ripeness

By Bharatananda

THE burning regret which many, probably, share with me, is that full advantage was not taken of those happy and precious days, when He was with us physically also — eating — talking — laughing — teaching, welcoming all. Reality was there — in abundance and for the taking, but we enclosed ourselves in timidity, false humility, in self-depreciation and false excuses. We took a cupful when the ocean was at our feet.

Now He is still with us, but no longer so easily accessible. To find Him again we must overcome the very obstacles which prevented us from seeing Him as He was and going with Him where He wanted to take us. It was Tamas and Rajas — fear and desire that stood in the way — the desire for the plea-

sure of the past and fear of austere responsibilities of a higher state of being. It was the same old story — the threshold of maturity of mind and heart which most of us refuse to cross. 'Ripeness is all', — and now ripeness is the condition of finding Him again.

We ripen when we refuse to drift, when striving ceaselessly becomes a way of life, when dispassion born of insight becomes spontaneous. We are ripening fast when the search '*Who am I?*' becomes the only thing that matters, when we become a mere torch and the flame all-important. We cannot accelerate that ripening — but we can remove the obstacles of fear and greed, indolence and fancy, prejudice and pride which retard it. He is there and waiting — timelessly. It is we who keep him waiting.

SOPHIA'S THREE SUITORS

By

DOUGLAS E. HARDING

THERE once lived a princess called Sophia who was not only charming and incomparably beautiful, but also (true to her name) the very perfection of wisdom. One day, three suitors arrived at her palace — a bold knight, a love-struck poet and a rude swineherd.

First, the knight was admitted to her presence.

"How many dragons have you killed recently?" inquired the princess.

"Practically none, dear lady," he admitted. "But my sword and armour are of the finest steel, and for love of you I am going to search out and slay every dragon in this land. I realize the immensity of such a task; for these monsters hide in the depths of the sea and in dark and tortuous caves, and will have to be tracked down one by one and enticed into the open air, where I shall easily finish them off. But even if it takes me all the rest of my life, I vow to accomplish this quest, and so at last become worthy of you. All I ask, before setting out, is your favour and your blessing."

"Indeed you have them, brave knight!" exclaimed the princess. "Your determination and courage are beyond praise, and those terrible dragons certainly have to be dealt with."

So the knight rode away, his armour flashing in the sunlight.

*

Next, the poet was shown in, and began humbly to plead his suit.

"All I can offer, dear princess, is my adoration and the poor songs it inspires. I only hope that one day my devotion to you — expressed, perhaps, in some great composition worthy of its subject — will win your heart. Meanwhile, I beg to be allowed to remain here. I promise not to take advantage of this boon, and come too near you."

"Dear poet," replied the princess, tenderly, "I value your devotion more than I can say, and it is true that no-one wins me who is cold and half-hearted. I shall give orders that you are allocated a pleasant room in the palace."

*

As soon as the poet had gone to his new quarters, the swineherd was admitted, by extremely reluctant officials, to the royal presence. He was an uncouth young man, illiterate, ragged, and still smelling of the pigsty.

"I want you and nothing else, and I want you now," he blurted out.

"But this is outrageous!" cried the princess. "The brave knight and the devoted poet dedicate their whole lives to deserving me one day, and here are you, a malodorous rustic, demanding me instantly, as if I were your birthright, yours for the asking!"

"Why so you are," replied the swineherd, unabashed. "Besides, genuine love is impatient. Your knight is in love with chivalry and dragon-hunting, and that's why he's happy to wait for you indefinitely. Your poet is in love with love and his own love-poems, and that's why he promises to keep at a respectful distance. The truth is that both are frightened of you. But I'm not frightened, and claim you right away."

"I *insist* that the dragons are dealt with," cried the princess, stamping her foot. "Though you may not be frightened of me, it seems you cannot face them."

"To the knight who faces them out there, they look terrifying, and are in fact practically invulnerable; that's the way he likes his dragons. But when I take them in the rear from here, they are mere pussycats. Now I have come to live with you, all these

monsters will be our household pets — though it may take years to domesticate them all.”

“For a swineherd you are quite intelligent,” said the princess. “But I still require the wholehearted devotion that the poet offers, even if his good manners are beyond you.”

“The only devotion I offer is union, our total identity. Already we are one, and your infinite perfections are more than enough for both of us.”

“Ah well,” sighed the princess, “I appear to have no alternative. Marry me now, rude swineherd, and deserve me later.”

“As my true self, as you, heart of my heart, how could I deserve myself? And as my false self, as that evil-smelling rustic, how could I deserve anything at all, even if I killed a million dragons?”

“All the same,” replied the princess, smiling, “there is room for much improvement. Indeed I notice it has begun already. Even that horrid smell has gone.”

Gap of Eternity

By N. R. Rajagopalaiyer

The aim of Self-enquiry is for the mind to remain quiescent in the waking state, for stillness is the sole requisite.

With vocal silence and mental quiescence a completely indrawn mind seeks the source of the ‘I’.

The aim of vichara or enquiry is annihilation of the ego-mind. The essential is determination to seek the source of the ego-mind. If, when a mantra is repeated, one keenly watches wherefrom the sound emanates the mind will get absorbed there and that is tapas, says Ramana.

When the mind does not think at all, being completely devoid of vasanas, there dawns the state of mindlessness which is the great Peace.

When thoughts occur at split second intervals this minute gap is one’s natural or primal state.

If the mind is kept fully concentrated on the quest for its source it is unable to wander and thus remains fixed in the heart.

The enquiry ‘Who am I?’ is not an empty formula; it is more than the repetition of any mantra. Its very purpose is to focus the entire mind at its source and it involves an intense activity of the entire mind to keep it steadily poised in pure Self-awareness, says Ramana.

The quest is indicated by the two expressions: ‘Who am I?’ and ‘Whence am I?’ ‘Who am I?’ connotes the search for one’s own reality; ‘Whence am I?’ connotes the search for the origin of the I-thought. Both are the same search.

Mind is the cause of bondage and freedom alike.

THE RAMA LEGEND

By
C. N. PATEL

Prof. C. N. Patel of the Gujarat Educational Service is a devoted student of Shakespeare, Valmiki and Gandhi and an able writer alike in English, Sanskrit and Gujarati.

THE Rama legend has exercised a spell over the imagination of all Hindus which cannot be explained merely by reference to the moral ideals exemplified by it. The epics and the Puranas tell of other heroes devoted to truth and service of parents. These inspire admiration, not love and reverence, as Rama has done over the centuries. What is the secret? What has the Hindu imagination made of Valmiki's narrative?

Every legend which exercises a shaping influence on a whole civilization and culture must have answered some deep psychological or ethical need of the race that can be understood only by reference to the stage which it had reached in its inner and outward growth and to the circumstances which conditioned its struggle for existence in the age when the legend took form. The Rama legend probably had as its background the bitter and prolonged struggle between the Aryan and non-Aryan races in semi-historical India. But it is plain that the character of Rama came to inspire the reverence that it did not because of his success against the Rakshasas but because that success was believed to have been achieved through a power of more than human significance, and the conception of that power embodied in Rama represented a stage in the spiritual growth of the race.

This power was something in Rama which gave him the strength and fitness to use, with perfect mastery, the divine weapons bestowed on him by Vishvamitra and other sages. This something manifests itself in Rama's phenomenal capacity to inspire love and devotion. Valmiki has by no means

presented his hero as a character of unblemished perfection. There are a few moments of weakness in his life, and the honest poet has not glossed over them. But he seems to have been struck by the magnetic effect of Rama's character on all, far and near, and the narrative derives its unity from the progressive revelation of this power till the hero is surrounded with a divine halo and the reader is not surprised when, after the battle in Lanka, Rama is revealed to be an avatar of Vishnu.

At first, this power of inspiring love is presented as a purely human quality. The Ayodhya Kanda opens with a description of Rama's character which prepares the reader for the eagerness with which Dasharatha's decision to instal Rama as Prince Regent is acclaimed by the court, the people and the Emperor's feudatories. However, when Rama is banished, we are not a little surprised by the outburst of grief which convulses Ayodhya. We know that the young prince was the delight of Dasharatha's heart, but mere fatherly love cannot account for the shock which paralyses his being at the thought of separation from Rama. The intensity of his love for Rama betokens some extraordinary quality in Rama himself. This impression strengthens into an irresistible conviction as we watch the spontaneous demonstration of the people's love for Rama. Sumitra, Lakshmana's mother, seems to have no thought for the impending separation from her son; she is more concerned with Rama's safety and comfort in the forest, and exhorts her son to serve his elder brother faithfully, regarding him as Dasharatha and Sita as herself. The ladies of the court, too, are no less attached

to Rama than Sumitra. But above all, it is the description of the people of Ayodhya, men and women and children, running after Rama's chariot in uncontrollable grief, which overwhelms the reader with a sense of the power of attraction which Rama's character possessed. "He was dear to the people as though he was their very life in visible form"—this is how the poet had described Rama in the opening canto of Ayodhya Kanda, and we now see that he had not exaggerated.

In the forest, the ascetics show themselves under the spell of Rama in a different way. They have heard of him and of his banishment, and are eagerly awaiting his arrival at their Ashrama. They greet him with a depth of respect which seems to surprise Rama himself. He is a Kshatriya Prince and these forest-dwellers are dedicated sadhakas, but they receive him as one deserving no less honour than a Brahmin or rishi of eminent merit. All of them who meet Rama, including Atri and Agastya, eminent personages in the ascetic world, seem to be conscious of a presence of unaccountable greatness.

So far, Rama has moved in the human world and the poet's art has generally kept itself within the bounds of ordinary rational probability. But now, the poet brings his hero into contact with the sub-human creation. The magic of art with which he does this without a trace of incongruity is rivalled only by Shakespeare among the poets of the world. The first of these characters whom we meet is Jatayu, the vulture-king, enfeebled and pathetic but dignified, who makes a hopeless bid to save Sita from the hands of Ravana. The courage with which he opposes and fights Ravana reveals the power of Rama's character in its effect on non-human creatures. The supernatural quality of this power becomes more evident as we follow the hero to the monkey-world. The poet has endowed the denizens of this world with a self-consistent and entirely plausible character, semi-human and semi-animal, and bound them to Rama in devotion and reverence which cast an irresistible

spell over the reader's imagination. The relationship with Sugriva, the monkey-prince, seldom warms into more than friendship, with a loyalty and gratitude on the part of Sugriva. But Hanuman and, to a lesser extent, Angada and the *Vānar* host offer to Rama nothing less than religious devotion and worship of the heart. Even Vali, Sugriva's elder brother whom Rama kills, acknowledges Rama's beneficent power. Among the Rakshasas, Maricha and Vibhishana recognize it openly, and the latter, regardless of the odium of being branded a traitor, seeks Rama's protection. Ravana, too, seems to feel in the secret depth of his heart the evil of the course on which he has embarked, and it is through sheer pride of will that he persists in it. The cumulative effect of all these suggestions of a magnetic power is irresistible. No reader who enters into the spirit and atmosphere of the epic can doubt for a moment Valmiki's intention in depicting Rama's character; this power of inspiring love and devotion cannot be accounted for in purely human terms.

Tradition has sought to explain this power by regarding Rama as a partial avatar of Vishnu (*maryāda Purushottama*), partial because Rama himself was not conscious of his divinity. Vishnu sustains the universe by the power of dharma, by that power which holds every living being to its function in the scheme of things. For the ordinary human being, dharma is a matter of obeying the injunctions of the Shastras, the rules of moral and social conduct which he or she accepts on the basis of external authority. But in the final analysis man obeys external authority, that of a leader, a book or a tradition, because in the depth of his heart he feels that it is right to do so. This inner sense, obscure and undeveloped in most of us, is the essence of dharma. Hindu tradition calls it the *antarātman*, the indwelling Godhead. This *antarātman* is not an external authority to be obeyed willingly or unwillingly, but the voice of the Divine Presence in us, as distinct from the Nature-bound ego-self. Dharma is spontaneous or willing submission of the ego-self to this *antarātman*. Rama, it is believed, embodied

dharma in its perfection. The *antarātman* in him rules his actions so completely that every decision he took was marked by an inner serenity. In worshipping him, the Hindus worship the Divine Presence in every human heart which points for each individual the way of righteousness. This Presence is no task-master ; the *sattvic* ego-self recognizes in it the *suhridam sarvabhutanam* (Lover of all beings) of the Gita (Ch. V, 29) to which one can and should surrender oneself in love and adoration. The significance of Rama-*bhakti* consists in the recognition that one's duty is a light to guide, not a rod to check.

The aim of this *bhakti* is to seek, not dissolution of the ego-self, but its transformation, so that it functions as the willing servant of Rama, of the Divine Presence in our hearts. When the ego-self is, even partially, so transformed, it discovers a new meaning in human relationship. The bonds

of family and friendship and social obligations are not disregarded as unreal, but are accepted as the means which bind one ego-self to another through a mutual recognition of the Divine Presence in all. Human relationship is thus invested with a sense of sacredness. The chivalric tradition in Europe sought to transform the emotional bond between man and woman ; among the Hindus, Rama-*bhakti* has been the means of idealizing all family and social relationship and making them a source of inner contentment which never fails in all the vicissitudes of life. Mahatma Gandhi strove to extend the scope of the self-transformation brought about by the worship of Rama, so that our modern, humanitarian sensibility should become as much a religious emotion as family ties are to most Hindus. Whether his dream will come true depends on whether Rama-*bhakti* is still a living force among the Hindus.

His Direct Deep Method

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By K. R. R. Sastry

The Maharshi never got lost within the cobwebs of words. When a Parsi doctor asked "As Atma is devoid of name or form, should it be meditated upon with *Jnana Atheetha Bhakti*, Bhakti which is superior to *Jnana* ?"

Bhagavan replied. "If you say that you should meditate does not that imply *Dwaita* (Dualism) ? It implies one who meditates and that on which he meditates ; *Atma* however is nameless, and formless, just a witness ; the eye is one's own self. That eye is everywhere. Only one eye. Then what is there to meditate upon ? Who is it that meditates ? It is the eye which is everywhere which is called "*Asthi*, *Bhakti* and *priyam* or *Sat-Chit-Ananda* or by many other names. The names are many but *the thing is only one*".

THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES OF ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

By
I. JESUDASAN, S.J.

THE tiny but immense volume of the *Spiritual Exercises*, as Pope Pius XII qualified it, belongs to that class of books (like the *Imitation of Christ*) which have exerted a great conquering influence and have changed a million lives. According to St. Francis de Sales, the internal conversions it has effected are far more numerous than the letters in its text.

There have been such spiritual exercises both before and since the time of St. Ignatius, and he had learnt from the spiritual wisdom of the past. But the Ignatian Exercises, which are indeed a school of holiness and a lifetime's programme of asceticism, are very methodically concentrated in a retreat of definite duration. Originally meant to be made in thirty days, they may, if necessary, be condensed to eight or ten days. Prayer, divine light and inspiration of the interior Teacher and the visible director's guidance go to make the exercises bear their full fruit. Prayer is the medium in which all the exercises are made. Indeed the exercises themselves are a prayer. Docility to the interior Teacher (the Holy Spirit) and the exterior teacher (the director of the retreat or the Exercises) is a necessary pre-condition. The purpose of the Spiritual Exercises being conquest of self, finding God's will as to the state of life one should choose (also called Election), or the right ordering of one's life, the Saint expects one to enter upon the exercises with an open mind and a generous will ready to carry out God's behests and not with any foregone decisions arrived at through inordinate attachments. In the Saint's own words, "Under the name of Spiritual Exercises is understood every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and



St. Ignatius

of other spiritual operations, as shall hereafter be declared: for as to go for a walk, to take a journey, and to run, are bodily exercises, so in like manner, all methods of praying and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate affections, and, after it has rid itself of them, to seek and to find the divine will in the ordering of one's life with a view to the salvation of one's soul, are called Spiritual Exercises."

The canon ball which struck the gallant defender of the Pampeluna fortress marks the first step towards these Exercises. An indirect and hardly conscious preparation for it had gone on all through his convalescence, his reading the lives of Christ and the saints, his leaving the Loyola castle, his confession and a night's vigil at Montserrat, and his life of prayer and penance in the Manresa cave. From these there came not the book of the Exercises, not even the idea of writing

it, but a kind of diary full of disconnected jottings meant for personal use. The book was not written until the extraordinary illumination in 1522 on the bank of the Cordon, in the fifth month of his stay at Manresa. In that illumination, St. Ignatius saw the full substance and structure of the Exercises. From the rank of a clumsy and ignorant novice, he passed to the status of a master. Soon he made the exercises thus conceived, the first in a long series of exercitants to come, and afterwards made a first draft of them in writing for his own use. Later, however, recognizing their usefulness to others, he revised the original draft. And from that day to this, the Spiritual Exercises has undergone more than 4,500 editions in scores of different languages. Scarcely any other ascetical work has enjoyed such wide diffusion in modern times.

A landmark in the spiritual Odyssey of St. Ignatius, the "Spiritual Exercises" (the germs of the Society are discernible in it) is for all Jesuits too, the God-given instrument of their own and their neighbours' spiritual formation. Every Jesuit makes them in their full length of a month twice in his life-time, and returns to them once every year, for a period of eight to ten days, in order to gain afresh his spiritual vision, vigour and determination. The sanctity attained by the Jesuit saints is one mapped out by the Spiritual Exercises. Nearly 1,000,000 people make the Exercises annually (their number is ever on the increase) and draw immense spiritual profit from them. And whoever applies himself to their directives, will find in these Exercises a safe and sure introduction to the authentic life of prayer.

Meant as a manual for directors of retreats, the "Spiritual Exercises" owes its effectiveness not to its literary elegance, nor to the force of its language, nor even solely to the fact that it conveys a felt human experience, but to the fact that it is a work of divine grace which intimately touches and concerns and pictures the actual or possible drama or history of every human soul in its ascent to perfection.

Every seeker in the spiritual life feels the need for a teacher. And the director of the retreat is there to propose the points, guide the exercitant in discerning the movements of the good and the evil spirits, and not to substitute the interior Teacher, nor to interpose between him and the exercitant. Even in proposing the points for meditation, he is to be brief in his explanation, so that the exercitant may himself find something that makes the meditated points a little clearer or more deeply felt (whether this happens through his own reasoning or through the enlightenment of his understanding by divine grace), "for it is not abundance of knowledge that fills and satisfies the soul, but to feel and taste matters interiorly."

St. Ignatius in the Exercises lays out the drama of the soul into four stages or weeks each with a fruit proper to it. The first one opens with a key consideration called Principle and Foundation. Since man is created to praise, reverence and serve God, and thereby to save his soul, and the other things on the face of the earth are meant to help him attain this purpose, he ought to use them only in so far as they serve this purpose, and abstain from them in so far as they hinder it. And such conduct in the use of creatures requires that we be detached from them. This is the doctrine which underlies the whole Exercises, and this the foundation on which the superstructure of the Ignatian spirituality is built. Deep down under the seeming simplicity of its rugged words, there lies a wealth of meaning which only a serious and prayerful meditation can fathom and unearth.

The opening exercise lays the fundamental principle of right order. But the next two exercises of the first week show how the disorder of sin entered into creation together with its consequences: death, hell etc. Having considered sin in others, the exercitant turns to the foulness and malice of his own sins. Others have been punished eternally for fewer sins, while he is still spared and preserved in the way of salvation by Christ hanging on the cross. Full of confusion, sorrow, tears and gratitude, the exercitant

asks himself: What have I done for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ? What am I going to do for Christ?

The exercitant being purified at the confessional, and nourished at the sacred table, St. Ignatius helps him preserve the fruits of the purgative way, by counselling him penance, the different methods of prayer, and a daily made general and particular examination of conscience and warning him of the possible avenues of temptation at this stage.

Certain answers suggest themselves to the exercitant asking himself what he is going to do for Christ. Is he sincere? Will he now put them into practice? The test comes in the meditation on the Kingdom of Christ presented in the allegory of an ideal king inviting his subjects to conquer every foe and the whole world itself, by labouring with him by day and watching with him by night, and thus to follow him in victory. Every reasonable man will enlist himself for such a cause, seeing that the king's enemies are his own enemies. But a gratefully chivalrous and magnanimous man like St. Ignatius must distinguish himself by making offerings of greater worth and moment to imitate Christ in bearing all injuries and all reproach and all poverty as well actual as spiritual, if the Divine Majesty is pleased to receive him to such a state of life.

Once the exercitant thus pledges himself to follow Christ closely, the mysteries of Christ's hidden and public life unfold themselves before him and he begins to walk the illuminative way. Throughout this week, the special grace to ask is "an interior knowledge of our Lord in order that I may love him better and follow him more closely." Moreover in considering the life of Christ from the second to the fourth week, contemplation replaces meditation. In the meditation the discursive intellect sets the will in motion, while in contemplation, from a simple vision we pass to affective prayer. The deeper aim in introducing these contemplations on the sacred humanity of Christ is its efficacy of transforming us better than all our efforts to acquire virtue

and root out vice. For, as Bishop Hedley puts it, "Laden with our weakness and imperfection, we gaze upon Jesus, and they begin to melt away and disappear. . . . There is in the contemplation of the Sacred Humanity a certain power of transforming our hearts into the likeness of Christ itself."¹ And the Christ whom St. Ignatius presents in these contemplations is not a mere model from the past to conform to, but the living Captain and Leader who labours, toils and fights in us, His Church, till His and our enemy within is utterly destroyed and His Mystical Body, the Church, reaches its fullest stature.²

Before coming to the election of a state of life which is central to the Exercises, or the reform of life as the case may be, St. Ignatius again introduces three very important exercises. The first of them is what is called the Two Standards—that of Christ and Satan. Its purpose is not to choose between the two. That fundamental option has already been made at baptism. But here and now as the exercitant is engaged in the serious work of election, he is sure to be moved by opposing spirits. The purpose of this exercise then is to warn him of, and thereby to arm him against the stratagem of subtle deceit—snares and chains—of the arrogant infernal chieftain and his minions who seek to bring souls unbounded pride and consequently perdition through the lust for riches and love of the vain honours of the world. It is also meant at the same time, to imbue the exercitant with the life-giving knowledge of the meek Jesus Christ and His strategy of poverty, humiliations and humility, and the grace to follow Him.

The way in which the Holy Spirit and evil spirit act on a person in the illuminative way is also arrow-marked with admirable expert precision, in the notes on the discernment of spirits. The evil one disguises himself as an angel of light and strives to draw men from the greater to the less

¹ Longridge: *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, p. 252.

² *The Mountain Path*, January 1967, pp. 19-20.

good and then finally to evil. He would ensnare men through easy and apparent goods and bind them with the chains of the really and openly sinful. And in order to cloud their vision from his malicious purpose, he casts doubts, confusion and sadness. The Spirit of Christ, on the contrary, dispels the mist, radiates and works amidst light and certitude, joy and serenity. "By their fruits you shall know them."

The second exercise depicts three types or classes of men who are inordinately attached to the fortune they have acquired, but want to rid themselves of the attachment and save their souls. The first type stops short of action and remains in mere wishful thinking. The second class has recourse to all but the one means necessary. The third category do get rid of the disorderly attachment by disposing themselves to do God's will and earnestly seeking to find that divine will. What class does the exercitant belong to? St. Ignatius puts him in the presence of God our Lord, and asks him to pray for light to find that which is to the greater glory of God and for Strength to choose it.

The third and last exercise treats of three modes of humility, better called three degrees of love. The first is so to submit oneself to God that neither for life nor every earthly honour and possession, not even under the greatest stress of temptation, does one think even for a moment, of disobeying the divine command in a grave and serious matter, thereby risking salvation. The second implies so great a detachment from riches and poverty, honour and dishonour, health and sickness, a long life and a short one etc. etc., provided God's glory and one's salvation are equally attainable by both, that not for the whole world, not even for life itself would one enter into deliberation about disobeying God's will even in small matters. Here is already high spiritual perfection. But in order that this may be the better and the more surely attained, St. Ignatius proposes a third and higher one still which includes and transcends the first two grades, and consists in so great a love of Christ that even if God's glory and the soul's salvation

are equally attainable by both, still in order the more actually to imitate and resemble Christ, "I desire and choose poverty with Christ poor, rather than riches; reproaches with Christ laden therewith, rather than honours; and I desire to be accounted worthless and a fool for Christ, Who was first held to be such, rather than wise and prudent in this world."

The highest point of the "Spiritual Exercises" has been reached. All inordinate attachments being removed, the exercitant is disposed to make the election with an open mind and a generous heart. In guiding the exercitant to make the actual election, St. Ignatius gives him certain preliminary instructions regarding it. Since all election must be conducive to the ultimate and envisaged in the Principle and Foundation, it can only be made from among good things and things that are not sinful. He also points out how a wrongly made election may be amended, be it mutable or immutable. (Priesthood and matrimony would be instances of immutable election). The election is made easy when there is a direct call from God as in the case of St. Matthew and St. Paul. Failing this rare direct vocation one has to find it by discerning the experiences of consolation and desolation whenever he gives thought to this subject. In the absence of these, one has to make up one's mind by the free and tranquil use of one's faculties.

If this is his case, the exercitant must first recall his ultimate end, propose to himself the matter of the election, implore light and strength from above, tabulate the pros and cons of both sides of the election from every possible aspect, choose the side on which reason (not mere inclination predominates, commend the decision to God and invoke His blessing and confirmation upon it.

Another method of actual election is to consider what the exercitant would advise to a stranger in identical circumstances; or to consider how the exercitant would be affected towards this choice at the moment of his death or on the day of judgement.

and accordingly to make his choice. The same rules will hold good also for the reform of an already chosen state of life. St. Ignatius closes the chapter on election with one last sound and tried principle of the spiritual life: "Let each one reflect that he will make progress in all spiritual matters, just so far as he shall have divested himself of self-love, self-will and self-interest."

Alongside of the election, the contemplations on the life of Christ are continued; for, some aspect of His life may most strongly appeal to us; and a surer and more reliable clue to one's state of life and its reform often lies in that direction. For, as Longridge says, "Vocation is in truth nothing else but a vision of Jesus. If once we see Him, the beauty of the vision is so great, so compelling, that we must desire to follow Him and be made like to Him in that which we see in Him. We could not have a true vision of Him and not desire to be made like to Him. Our lower nature may indeed shrink from the vision and all that it involves. For the natural heart the vision of Jesus has no beauty that we should desire it. But if God has illuminated our minds by His Holy Spirit, and touched our hearts with the unction of His grace, then we cannot help desiring, in our higher selves, to follow where the vision calls us, however awful and mysterious it may appear."³

In all the four preceding principal exercises, the retreatant prayed insistently to be admitted under the banner of the cross in bearing all injuries, all reproaches and all poverty. Now in the third week that prayer is granted: the vision of all that Christ suffers for him confirms his resolution and the chosen state of life. In the mysteries of this week, starting with the agony in the garden and ending with Christ's death and burial, the one grace to ask is sorrow with Christ in sorrow, a broken heart with Christ heart-broken, tears and interior pain for the great pain that Christ has suffered for me, and the strength and courage to do and suffer great things for Christ.

United with Christ in His sufferings, the exercitant then follows Him in the joy of

His risen life. The prayer peculiar to the fourth week is a petition for immense disinterested joy and gladness at the happiness and great glory of Christ, our Lord. Assured of his own resurrection by Christ's, and reassured by His comforting words that it was necessary that He should suffer and so enter into His glory, the disciple is confirmed in the conviction that the sufferings of this world are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. At this conviction, his resolution and election receive a fresh confirmation. One with Christ in His suffering and resurrection, the exercitant has reached the unitive way of perfect love.

All the fore-going exercises have led up to this love. And now, when the exercitant is about to finish the retreat and return to normal activity or the newly chosen state of life, St. Ignatius gives him as the way-fare one last exercise on how to abide in this love. It is entitled *Contemplation for Obtaining Love*. Prefacing the contemplation with two introductory remarks, namely that true love manifests itself in deeds rather than in words, and that these deeds often take the form of mutual gift of what each one has, St. Ignatius asks the exercitant to review all the graces and benefits he has received from God, — creation, redemption and other gifts. God and the exercitant take the places of (become) the lover and the beloved. God's love being considered, the motive of gratitude and return-love prompts the exercitant to make a like gift. (This is the pattern which runs through the entire Exercises, and therefore this contemplation is a fine summing up of the whole retreat). But he finds that he has nothing which he has not received from God. Still, knowing that God is pleased to permit it, he makes an offering of himself, saying, "Take, O Lord, and receive, all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will, all I have and possess. Thou hast given all this to me; to Thee, O Lord, I restore it: all is Thine, dispose of it entirely according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, for this is enough for me."

³ Longridge; *Op. cit.* p. 235.

Going a step further, St. Ignatius shows that God does not merely give the gifts, but gives Himself with them, and works in them for our good. The practical implication is clear. We must rise from the gift to the giver, from the less perfect to the Most Perfect and must give and spend ourselves in doing His will, for His sake, for His honour and glory. This is the meaning of the "Take, O Lord and receive" which he asks the exercitant to repeat with love and sincerity at every point. This was also implied in all the key meditations and colloquies. But now they become clearer from this vantage point. The exercitant is now prepared to live out the Exercises, to live a life of love, to turn everything into an act of love.

We have so far looked at the "Spiritual Exercises" in the broad outlines of its structure. A word on the general method followed in it throughout would not be out of place. Before every exercise or meditation, the retreatant has to prepare or hear the points for that meditation. Then recollecting himself in the presence of God, he prostrates himself on the ground, and, rising up at once, he offers up the whole exercise for the praise and glory of His Divine Majesty and begins the meditation. To check and avoid the wandering and distraction of mind, and fix it on the subject of the meditation, and serve as a point of departure and return, St. Ignatius localises it in a particular scene called composition of place. After this prelude and a petition for the fruit of the meditation (which will vary with the subject and the disposition of the exercitant), the meditation strictly so called begins. Here the discursive part is meant to illumine the will, since without this light of reason, the ardour and natural impulse of the will would lack depth and permanence. And, though the will plays its effective role throughout each exercise, St. Ignatius would have the exercitant collect the fruit of the meditation in a final colloquy or intimate talk with God the Father, Christ our Lord the Holy Spirit or the saints, according to the context. The exercitant may accordingly speak as a friend to his friend, a son to his

parent, a spouse to his beloved, a criminal to his judge etc. etc. At the end the exercitant must review for a quarter of an hour how he has made the meditation, what fruit he has gathered from it, and, if he has failed, the reason for the failure so that he may amend in the next meditation.

There are five such exercises every day, of more than an hour's duration. Naturally the exercitant will feel tired as the day advances. In order not to overtax his nerves therefore St. Ignatius changes the meditations into repetitions, "applications of the senses", and contemplations. In the repetitions, the exercitant is to return only to that part of the meditation or contemplation where he experienced special light and joy or repulsion, because these are signs that God wants to teach him something through them. The difference between contemplation and "application of the senses" lies in this that while we see and hear in contemplation, all the internal senses come into play in the other method. But whatever form the repetition may take, its primary aim is to obtain the desired result more surely and make it sink deeper into our being. It is for the same objective that external aids ("additions") peculiar to each week are provided. Also, St. Ignatius makes provision to prolong or shorten the weeks according as the exercitant draws their fruit slower or faster.

The contemplations which St. Ignatius asks us to make in the Exercises are different from mystical contemplations. The former are acquired, the latter infused. To be sure, St. Ignatius was indeed a mystic. He had had the mystical experiences. Many of those who knew him well have testified how for hours on end he used to remain ecstatically rapt in contemplation. But the Saint himself, like the humble man he was, destroyed all his notes on these experiences, knowing as he did that this ineffable mystical union with God is a gift from above, and not one to be humanly acquired or communicated.

To review it briefly once again, the "Spiritual Exercises" is constructed with

organic unity or architectonic quality. It communicates a profoundly un-and-other-worldly wisdom which has invariably an ethical bearing or relation to practical life. It is an intense methodical ascetical training and a masterful combination of idealism and realism in which action flows from and is illumined by supernatural principles, thus making the exercitant, together with St. Ignatius, a contemplative in action. St. Ignatius's many aids to prayer and examination of conscience, known as preludes and additions, and the varied repetitions of the contemplations bespeak his insight into human psychism. His analysis of the causes of consolation and desolation in prayer, his guidelines for alms-giving, scruples, penances and thinking with the Church and the "discernment of spirits" come from a long and deeply felt personal experience. But above all, it is a work suffered with love and leading to the heights of divine love.

But all that I have said is only meant to give the unacquainted reader some idea of the book, however inadequate, and not as a substitute for it. The best way to come to appreciate the Spiritual Exercises is to make them or at least to read the book prayer-

fully and with humility. Those advanced in the inner life will be able to recognize its spiritual depth and soundness without the help of any commentary. But novices in the spiritual life like me will be helped by an annotated edition. Such may be advised to consult one or more of the following books. In India, copies of the "Spiritual Exercises" may be obtained from Anand Press, Anand, (Gujerat), or from St. Paul Publications, Allahabad 2. A standard annotated Indian edition by Ambruzzi is available at St. Aloysius College, Mangalore. "Ignatian Insights" by Rev. H. Cathalem, S.J., (Kuangchi Press, Taiwan) may be readily had in the Far East. The well-known commentaries of Fr. Rickaby (Burns and Oates London), the Protestant Longridge (A. R. Norway & Co. Ltd., London), the Spaniard Iparraguirre (A Key to the Study of the Spiritual Exercises, Little Flower Press, Calcutta), and the Italian Ambruzzi (A Companion to the Spiritual Exercises, Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland) may be suggested to Western readers. Any Jesuit priest will be able to supply a longer list of bibliography, or even to lend a copy of the Exercises and commentary, or better still, to give the Exercises.

The Lord is One without a second. With his divine power he rules over all the worlds. Within man he dwells, and within all other beings. He projects the universe, maintains it, and withdraws it into himself.

— *Svetasvatara Upanishad.*

HIGHLIGHTS FOR JANUARY

COMPARATIVE RELIGION AS A COURSE OF STUDY by Arthur Osborne

H. T. HAMBLIN by G. H. Gedge

THE DIVINE PRISM by Gladys De Meuter

THE SKANDA PURANA by Shambu Bhat

THE SEARCH FOR THE TRUE SELF

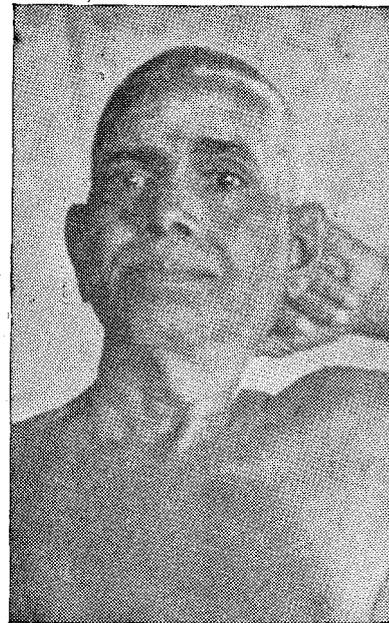
By
MAX HOPPE

Mr. Max Hoppe (Brother Dhammapala), is the head of Altbuddhistische Gemeinde, 8919, Utting, a.A., West Germany. Many students of Buddhism and Vedanta and also a few devotees of Sri Bhagavan in West Germany have found in this monastery a peaceful retreat. Mr. Max Hoppe also is an enthusiastic Agent for our journal in that area.

IN suffering we are left to ourselves. No one can relieve us of our sorrows, our pain, our sleeplessness. They demand our own reaction. They either drive us into bitterness, making us slaves of our emotional disposition and our physical state, or they help us towards understanding, thereby opening for us the gate to real happiness according to the words of Master Eckhart: "Suffering is the fastest steed carrying us towards perfection."

Suffering which becomes fertile because it leads to transforming understanding, that is understanding of suffering as it is regarded in the Doctrine of the Buddha, in an inspired manner is characterized by Hans Much in the words: "The propelling force will be realized by the resistance, — primal eternal being by the suffering of impermanence. The suffering of impermanence is the reminder that we are imperishable."

In his book *In Dir ist das Licht* (The Light is within You) K. O. Schmidt places before us the life and the teachings of 49 great religious geniuses in their peculiar and illuminating aspects. Also the greatest saint in recent times, Sri Ramana Maharshi (1879-1950), is getting a hearing. In his account K. O. Schmidt says: "The word of the Greek philosopher Thales 'Gnothi seauton' — 'Know thyself' — which stood over the entrance to the Apollon Temple at Delphi, has been increased in depth and substance by the surpassing demand of the Maharshi 'Know THINE SELF'. For, whereas the reminder of the philosopher aims at the cognition of the conditions and lines of conduct, inclinations, weaknesses and



defects, strengths and limits of the I, the demand of the mystic aims at the transcendent, true or divine Self, in whose radiance the transitory 'I' vanishes — and with it all questioning, all uncertainty and misery.

"Whoever desires to penetrate the marvel of Godhead, will easily draw his wisdom — from within himself", proclaims to us Master Eckhart; and Jakob Bohme says: "Where do you want to search for God? In the depth above the stars? There you will not find him. Look for him in your heart, in the centre of your being: there you will find him!" For this exploring of the Self, Atma-vichara, Sri Ramana Maharshi provides a clear starting point by the ques-

tions "Who am I? What am I? Where am I?", questions emanating from the present existence demanding decisions.

Arthur Osborne, the well known scholar of Sri Ramana Maharshi, says in this connection: "This summons for Self investigation is a practical method of training and has nothing in common with the psychological introspection. It is something far deeper. It is not a question of impulses and motives but the questioning after the Sēlf which is at the bottom of same."

In the book of K.O. Schmidt mentioned above, it is said: "The SELF — that is the innermost core of our substance, the Higher SELF, Emerson's 'Over-Soul', is the divine spark within us. And the search for it begins by eliminating all that which it is not and by the constant question 'Who am I?' it leads finally to the I-Am: to the SELF. Looking at it from the right angle this search is nothing but the fulfilment of Christ's demand: 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Justice and all else shall be added unto you.' This Kingdom of God is within us, it is the luminous kingdom of the divine Self or the 'Christ within us' as Christian mystics call it."

After these words we are directed to the great message of the Buddha with its powerful conclusion:

"What I see arising and perishing and in consequence of this transitoriness bringing me suffering, that cannot be my Self. Now I see all that may be recognized on and around myself arising and perishing and thereby bringing me suffering. Therefore nothing that can be recognized is my true Self."

Already Heraclitus of Ephesus realized "All is flowing" and he illustrated universal transitoriness by the words: "Into the same rivers we step in and step out, it is ourselves and it is not." One of his scholars no longer dared to express this constant and rapid change of all happening in words but only in the end snapped his fingers symbolically. There were always many who saw

the illusionary nature and the unsubstantiality of all phenomena and many a man may be touched by what I once read on a gravestone: "The world goes on in her doings, the people come and go — as though you never had been, as though nothing ever happened."

The more wise have always recognized that literally everything vanished as we deem to hold it in our hands, that for this very reason everything to whichever I may be attached does not represent a substantial I or Self. When we see things in their isolation nothing remains of eternal value. Therefore, at all times those with deeper insight have spoken of a state of disaster, of a vale of tears. The Buddha, the Fully Awakened One, however, has also seen the other side of reality. In the meditations leading to awakening all depends on our clearly viewing these transitory factors as not our SELF, as not the true SELF. The Fully Awakened One clearly and plainly says this in Samyutta-Nikaya, a scripture of the old Pali-Canon: "That which is transitory is painful; what is painful is an-atta (not the Atta; not the SELF); an-atta stands for: 'That does not belong to me, that am I not, that is not my Self'."

Whoever meditates with this in mind experiences within himself more and more the realization of an unshakable and unassailable, whereby all is dropped as unessential which in truth does not belong to him at all. The Buddha word becomes an innermost experience: "The Tathagata (the Accomplished One within ourselves) is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable like the great ocean." And this makes us wide and free; love and loving kindness develop as we go on the Buddha way, a deep feeling of sympathy is awakened and joy arises when we also see around us joy in mind. The happiness of this experience is always and again emphasized in the Suttas: "This doctrine makes happy in the beginning, makes happy in the middle and makes happy in the end."

In this attitude everything on our life path arranges itself in a manner precisely suited

for us. This gives us right equanimity, however just here keeping us far away from dull indifference. Thus there results for us a confidence founded on cognition, a confidence which gives us constant joy on the way.

An adequate simile is given by George Grimm who he says: "Just as the spraying drops of the raging waterfall are changing quick as lightning, whereas the rainbow the bearer of which they are, remains fixed in immovable calmness, wholly untouched by this restless changing, together with the sun itself, the reflection of which is the rainbow: so also the components of our personality, nay our innumerable personalities as a whole strung one to another as the Sam-sara (circulation of re-births), are changing without pause, whereas the I thought, — the bearer of which they are — as the reflection of our transcendent SELF and also this transcendent SELF remain wholly untouched by this constant change in eternal presence, no matter how many eyes of ours may be closed by death; it (the SELF) looks on the

world, the arising and perishing of the worlds, itself untouched thereby."

The An-atta view really understood from within, the experience that the transitory, frail and thus ultimately always painful attributions making up our personality, are not the SELF, is made clear by the words of George Grimm in his *Buddhistische Meditationen* (Buddhist Meditations):

"The heap of the personality processes is only a stream which is flowing past us, however unable to carry ourselves away, rather we are immovably in the present, so that the now with its paltriness ever and ever will be our lot, for an endless time, no matter how many eyes of ours death may close, and there is no end to this agony unless our thirsting will for the possession of a personality is eliminated, that is unless we cease being what we are and become what we are not. The good and wise who look through this and whose will, therefore, is more and more extinguished, come nearer to blissfulness all the time, whereas it always remains remote for the fool."

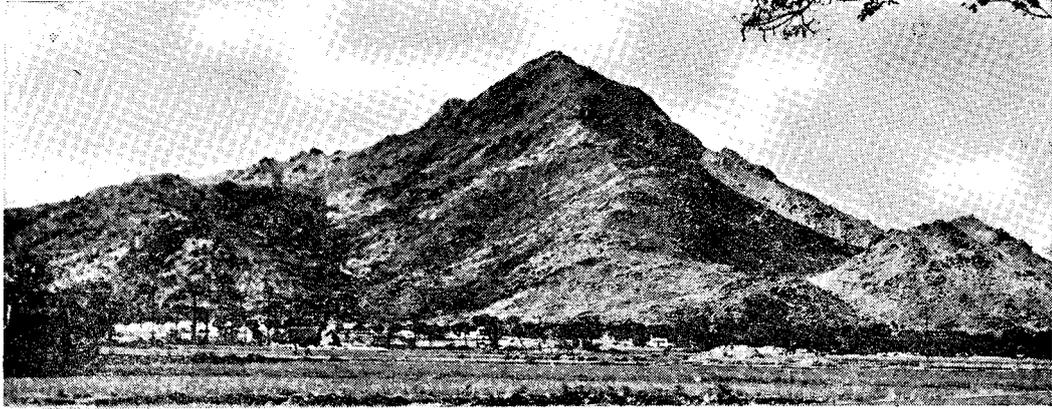
No Name

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By V. Venkataraman

I was once gazing at the historic letter which Bhagavan left for his elder brother on leaving home and renouncing the world. Seeing this, he asked me what I found significant about it. I replied, the fact that it was left unsigned. He asked why that impressed me and I said because it showed that the ego had dropped away and there was no one left to sign it.

"Yes," he said, "but there was nothing deliberate or conscious about it. Simply that the ego did not rise up to sign it."



THE GLORY OF ARUNACHALA

By T. K. S.

In our issues of April and July 1964 we published two articles by the late T. K. Sundaresa Iyer (whose obituary is contained in our issue of April 1965) on the Secrets and the Mythology of Arunachala. These further notes of his on the Glory of Arunachala we have since discovered in the Ashram archives.

THE Lord enshrined in the great temple at Tiruvannamalai is known by the name of Arunachaleswara in Sanskrit. The Tamil is Annamalaiyar.

His Shakti, the Mother Uma, enshrined in the temple, is known as Apeetakucha Nayaki. The Tamil name is Unnamulai Ammai.

The Lord has in truth no name or form, but out of compassion He embodies Himself so that devotees may perceive Him.

The Tamil land is indeed fortunate in being studded with sacred shrines of the embodied Lord. Tiruvannamalai is supreme among them. In modern parlance this is the name given to the town and Arunachala to the mountain, but they are the same. It is said that in the Kritha Yuga (the first or golden age) the mountain was of fire, in Treta Yuga (the silver age) of emerald, in Dwapara Yuga (the copper age) of gold, and now in Kali Yuga (the dark age) it is of earth and rock. Throughout the ages many siddhas have lived on and around this Hill. Many have attained siddhi (powers or Perfection) through walking round it. Invisible siddhas are constantly walking round it.

The Lord Himself, with his consort Uma, goes round twice a year, at Kartikai and Sivaratri. At the points marking the eight directions of space there are lingas and tirtas (tanks of water), each one sacred.

The poet-saints Jnanasambanda and Vageesa, two of the foremost sponsors of the cult of Siva, came here and sang the praises of Arunachala and Uma. Five of their *padhikams* are to be found in the Tevaram. The famous *Embavai* of the poet-saint Manikavachakar was also composed at Arunachala. It was here that the great Arunagirinadar enjoyed his wonderful experience of Atma and with his *Tirupugal* songs spread the fame of the Lord as Subrahmanyam.

Arunachala draws to himself those established in Jnana. That is his glorious reputation. In accordance with this, many are the great saints and poets and sages who have been drawn here, culminating in Ramana Maharshi. Many are those who have rejected all intermediary places and all stages on the Path to merge in Arunachala, the Primal Being. The very thought of them uplifts our mind in the glorious presence of Arunachala.

THE MARATHI POET-SAINTS

By

Prof. S. R. SHARMA

Prof. S. R. Sharma is retired Professor of History from Fergusson College, Poona. He is a widely known exponent both of the history and mysticism of Maharashtra. Apart from history, he has written, *Focus on Tukaram from a Fresh Angle*, *Teachings of Jnanadeva* and *Wisdom Beyond Reason*.

THERE was a resplendent galaxy of poet-saints in Maharashtra from the 13th to the 17th Century, from Jnandev (1275-'96) down to Tukaram (1608-'90). Altogether this was a time of great national vitality, covering the Maratha struggle for independence of the Moghul Empire and its final achievement under Shivaji. On the whole, however, the poet-saints showed no concern with such matters.

They were a strong, rugged, outspoken dynasty drawn from all social classes. Jnandev was a Brahmin, but there were also Namdev, a tailor; Gora, a potter; Savanta, a gardener; Chokha, a sweeper; and Tukaram, a tradesman. There were women too among them: Jnandev's sister Muktabai, Namdev's servant Jani, Chokha's wife Soyara. Their outstanding quality is a beautiful fusing of bhakti with jnana. They worshipped and merged into Oneness with the God they worshipped. This is especially prominent in Tukaram. He declares, for instance,

"When I meditate on the Lord of Pandhari the body becomes transformed together with the mind. Where is there room for speech then? My I-ness is become Hari.¹ With the

mind merging in Divine Consciousness all creation looks divine. Tuka says: 'How shall I put it? All at once I become lost in God-consciousness.'

And again,

"The glory of the bhaktas is known only to themselves. It is hard for others to understand. In order to increase the happiness of love in this world they display duality without actually dividing. This is understood only by those who have experienced Unity through Faith."

Jnandev, with his sister Muktabai and his two brothers, all four of them poet-saints, had an unhappy childhood.

Their father, after taking sannyas, returned to married life, and on that account the orthodox Brahmins ostracised the whole family. They were orphaned young and their genius blazed forth while still in their teens.



Jnandev

¹ Vishnu (God).

Jnandev, the greatest of them, is better known as Jnaneshwara, the 'Lord of Wisdom'. His great work, the *Jnaneshwari* is a monumental verse commentary on the Bhagavad Gita. Apart from this there are also his *Abhangas* or devotional lyrics and his *Anubhavāmrita* or 'Elixir of Experience'. Having himself attained this elixir, he says,

"The distinction between liberated, aspirant and bound subsists only so long as this Elixir of Experience is unknown to one. The enjoyer and the enjoyed, the seer and the seen, are merged in the non-dual, which is indivisible. The devotee has become God, the Goal has become God, the Goal has become the path; this indeed is solitude in the universe."²

This magnificent achievement was completed by the age of 22, when he declared that his life's work was finished and ceremoniously entered into samadhi in a specially prepared crypt, having given instructions that it was to be bricked up. This was in the village of Alandi in Poona district. There is a beautiful atmosphere of sanctity and serenity there. It contains a tree under which an unending chain of recitation of the *Jnaneshwari* has gone on till the present day. Jnaneshwara has remained a perennial fount of inspiration for Maharashtra. He was at once the foundation and the crown of this amazing dynasty.

* * * *

Namdev, who arose next, described the three brothers as manifestations of Para-Brahman and spoke of them as shining suns. He himself was primarily a bhakta and ecstatic. In his youth he had been a thief and murderer, until one day, hearing a young mother explain to her fatherless child that they had to live in penury because his father had been killed, he realized with sudden horror that it was he who was the killer, and with a violent revulsion of feeling rushed to the nearby temple to take his own life. He was prevented, however, and he devoted the rest of his life to penance and worship. His ecstatic praise of the Divine Name, with the Maharshi's comments on it, is quoted in *The Mountain Path* of October 1964, pp. 236-7. He wrote in Hindi as well as Marathi (two sister lan-

guages both derived from Sanskrit, as are most of those of North India), and it is interesting to note that some of his Hindi songs are included in the Granth Sahib, the scripture of the Sikhs, which their founder, Guru Nanak, partly wrote and partly compiled.



Namdev

While he was still a simple devotee of God in the form of Vithoba it was Jnaneshwara's sister Muktabai who awoke him to deeper understanding. When he met her she admonished him :

What if you have become a devotee of the Lord ?

The Inner Refuge is beyond your ken ;
Never have you turned your gaze Spiritward !
What use is your godly talk till then ?

Your Self you have never found ;
I-ness has you in its iron grip.

Yet, unmindful of your own failure,
You question us about our roots.

² Quoted in *The Mountain Path*, Vol. III, No. 2 p. 199, in a review of my book *Teachings of Jnanadeva*.

She also wrote for him :

All form is forever permeated with formlessness,
Shape it has none, but enveloped in Maya
The devotee does with form endow
The all-pervading Boundless That within.

Such was the celestial group of which one, the sweeper Chokha, proclaimed :

'God neither has form nor is without form.'

Another, the servant-girl Janabai, felt that she 'ate God, drank God, slept on God and carried on all her activities with God.'

Namdev died in 1350. He desired his ashes to be buried under the doorstep to the main entrance of the temple of Vitobha at Pandharpur³ so that all devotees who went there might bless him with their holy feet.

* * * *

The next great saint of this galaxy was Eknath (1533-'99). He taught that bhakti and jnana are like flower and fruit, incon-

Jnaneshwari. His copious and varied compositions (including folk-songs called 'Bharudas') have enriched Marathi literature with their unique quality.

Eknath had a contemporary, Father Stephens, an English Jesuit from Oxford, living in Goa, who composed a *Christa Purana* in Marathi distinctly reminiscent of Eknath's *Bhagavata*.

There are many sayings that bring out the pure advaitic understanding of Eknath. "My body is Pandhari"³ he says, "and Atma is Vitthala⁴ therein." And again: "When I bathe in the river the water is liquid Consciousness!"

He was famed for his never-ending patience as well as for his tolerance and compassion. He was carrying holy water for his worship but gave it to a thirsty donkey. On the anniversary of his ancestors he called an untouchable for food and gave him the consecrated dishes prepared for the Brahmins.

* * * *

The next great figure in this dynasty, Tukaram, (1608-'50) was a peasant trader by profession but ranks as the crown of Maratha sainthood after Jnaneshwara. The woman poet Bahinabai speaks of him as the steeple or pinnacle of the edifice whose foundation Jnaneshwara had laid. Rameshwar, a contemporary disciple, declared that "in jnana, bhakti and vairagya (dispassion) there was no one to match Tukaram." Even to-day his songs sway our emotions as they did his contemporaries.

The secret lies in the rustic simplicity and utter frankness on self-revelation in his songs together with their profound understanding and ardent devotion. He had not an easy life. He could not get up any interest in trade, with the result that he and his family often went hungry, and his wife developed into a scold, as well she might. The local Brahmins declared that, being of low caste, he had no right to compose poems and ordered him to throw them into the river flowing through the town. Obediently



Eknath

ceivable in separation. He carried on the tradition of Jnaneshwar and Namdev. The text of the Jnaneshwari had become corrupted, so he re-edited it, and his recension has remained current to the present day. He was both scholar and poet, and his verse exposition of Chapter XI of the Bhagavata is as illuminating and as popular as the

³ Pandhari or Pandharpur, a place of pilgrimage in Maharashtra.

⁴ God.

he did so, but the waters washed them ashore undamaged. Abashed by this, his critics allowed them to be kept.



Tukaram

He rose above body-consciousness while still in the body. In a well known poem he declares : "I witnessed with my own eyes my bodily death. That was indeed a unique sacrament!" He started (like his prototype Namdev) as an ordinary devotee of God as Vitthala but attained transcendent experience "I went to see God and there stood transfigured into God," he says.

He is one of those rare saints who have disappeared bodily at the end of life. Since there was no body to entomb there is no shrine to him to which pilgrims can repair. Instead they go to the spot on the river bank where his poems were washed ashore. There is a beautiful atmosphere there.

* * * *

Apart from this fraternity of saints centred around Pandharpur, there were two other contemporaries of Tukaram who were eminent Marathi poet-saints. One of them was a Muslim faqir, Sheikh Muhammed, whose tomb at Ahmednagar became a place of pilgrimage for Muslims and Hindus alike. The other was Samartha Ramdas, the powerful inspirer of Shivaji, whose shrine is at Sajjangad in Satara District.

Sheikh Muhammed is chiefly remembered today for his *Yoga-Sangrama*, a long allegory in songs describing the spiritual struggle as a 'battle of yoga'. He confesses : "I do not know refined speech. Cultured pandits may laugh at my uncouth expression. But look into the core and understand my soul." Like Kabir he understood the basic unanimity of the religions and he could have said with Kabir : "Ram and Rahim, Ishwar and Allah, are all the same." He regarded all sadhus as the same and as not other than the Absolute, whatever their external forms or religions. "The peel of the jackfruit is rough and prickly but the pulp inside is sweet. The shell of the coconut is hard and rough, but the milk and kernel inside are delicious." He also said : "There is no difference between Paramatma and saint. They are essentially the same although they appear different." Tukaram said in almost the same words :



Samartha Ramdas

"All saints are the same. They appear different only in externals, just as milk is all the same though it comes from cows of different colour."

Samartha Ramdas also said the same: "Sadhus look different, but, merged in Self, they are all manifestations of the One Real." What distinguished him from the Pandharpur group of saints was that, unlike them, he was interested in the national life also. He became the Guru of Shivaji and inspired the freedom struggle against Aurangzebe. His *Das-Bodha* is a Marathi classic of rare merit. Though composed in the *ovi* metre, it has the terseness and forthrightness of vigorous prose. Its pragmatism is impregnated with the highest spiritual values. It inculcates Vedanta in the practical terms of work-a-day life. Its code of enlightened conduct covers all social classes and applies to both ruler and ruled.

The message and mission of Ramdas were summed up in the meaningful phrase 'Maharashtra-Dharma'. His work contained that mixture of realism and intuition which are so characteristic of Maharashtra through the ages. In fact, his *Das-Bodha* with Tukaram's *Gatha* or Book of Songs and the *Jnaneshwari* can be looked upon as the 'Triple Veda' of Maharashtra down to this day. Their appeal is both to the head and heart. They are couched in a form which some might consider more like rhythmical prose than verse. But they are all alike embodiments of *Satyam-Sivam-Sundaram*—'Truth, Purity, Beauty'. The Truth must be experienced, and these had experienced it and could indicate it for others to experience.

Liberation from what?

By WEI WU WEI

It is commonly imagined that we are now 'bound' and may be 'liberated' by 'enlightenment', remaining as ourselves but mysteriously 'freed' and 'illuminated'.

But we are constantly told by the Masters that it is not so, that there is nothing attainable by 'us' etc. etc. Apparently this is not adequately explained for it is still generally supposed that 'we' as such can just wake up to find that 'we' are free. So this must be nonsense — and the statements denying it cannot have been understood.

The 'do-er' suffers *karma* (the effect whose cause is volitional 'action') because he 'thinks' that 'he' is the do-er. When he understands that 'he' is not, that there is no do-er, nor any deed done, but only a phenomenal do-ing, he is said to be free, 'liberated' from 'his' supposed bondage.

But the bondage is only a 'supposed' bondage because 'he' as such was never there to be 'bound'. 'His' liberation is not

liberation from any thing whatsoever other than from the idea of himself — is not liberation from 'responsibility' for instance — but only from the supposition that he existed to *have* 'responsibility'.

'Liberated', he is then no longer present as 'himself' to think himself 'bound'!

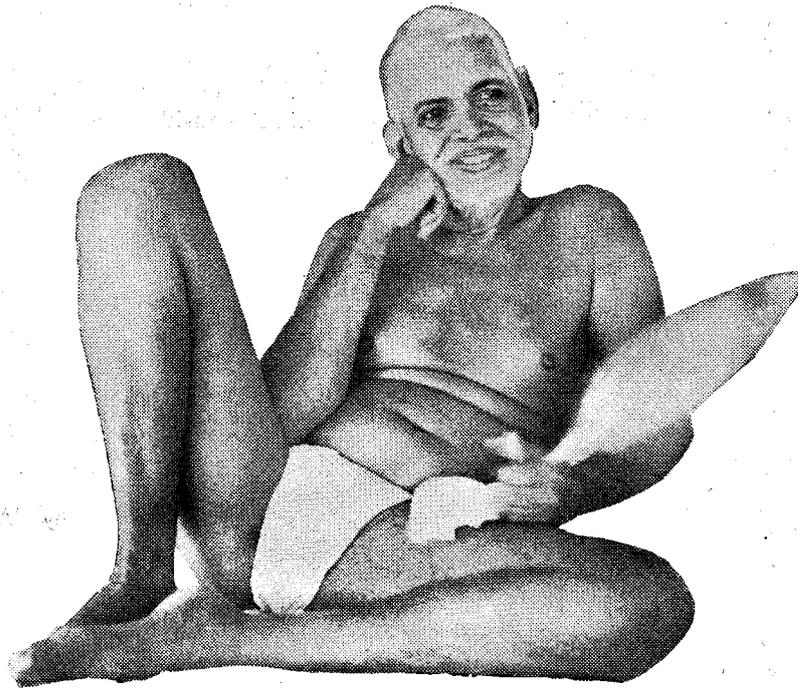
'He' remains as an appearance in mind as long as 'his' apparent life is being lived in space-time, but as such 'he' is entirely dreamed or 'lived' — which is bound by *karma* — as long as that condition appears to subsist.

'Liberation' is only *liberation from the notion of 'himself'* as an autonomous individual factually existing in a veritable space-time universe.

This is why both the Maharshi (in the last three of the "Forty Verses") and the Ch'an masters of Buddhism insist that 'liberation' is liberation from the idea of 'liberation', i.e. of there being anybody to be liberated.

KNOWING AND BEING

By
G. L. N.



THE worldly man seeing the world thinks, "I see so many things. What are they composed of and what is their origin?" His conception of the origin is the primal unitary state of matter from which the diverse worldly things have evolved. It stops there. He is not concerned with the entity (i.e. Self) who is seeing the world and making its research. But for the Jnani who is well-established in Self, there is consciousness of worldly existence because he exists.

In the above we have come across the terms, existence and consciousness which latter is the same as awareness or knowledge. Bhagavan Ramana's works, *Upadesa Saram* and *Ulladu Nārpadu* deal extensively with them. Sri Bhagavan teaches that existence and knowledge are one and the

same. Existence and knowledge are abstract terms and attributes of the existing thing. He says the existing thing is knowledge.

At the outset, Bhagavan eschews the idea of Soonya, that is void, or non-existence. Void is always void. Void cannot breed anything. Because we see the world, there cannot be non-existence. No one denies his own existence, even during sleep. Above all, even to advocate non-existence, there must be awareness of it. So there is awareness or knowledge and not non-existence.

We say a table exists, only when we are aware or when we know that it is there. We can predicate existence, only when we have knowledge of it. But knowledge has to exist first before existence of anything

can be predicated. That is, its existence is dependent on knowledge. So knowledge is one only.

What is the existing thing which is one? Who is it that is making this query? It is 'I'. Though there may be many bodies everyone says 'I'. The personality to which the expression 'I' refers, the Self in each individual body cannot be many, as may first appear. The experience of everyone is of one self only and no one denies his existence even during sleep. There can not be many existing selves. The existing Self is only one. Also, the existing thing which is knowledge is one. So, the existing thing which is knowledge is Self. Self is knowledge.

What is knowledge? We are conversant with only worldly knowledge pertaining to the objects of the world. It is relative. When I say I know Rama, it means I was ignorant of him previously. Relative knowledge and relative ignorance always coexist. Further relative knowledge is not continuous. It is absent in sleep. The world and knowledge (relative) of the world rise and set together.

Real knowledge (Self) is the basis for the above relative knowledge and relative ignorance. The joint rising and setting of the

world and worldly knowledge, the passing of the three states of Jagrat (waking), Swapna (dream) and Sushupti (sleep) take place in the arena of Self. This is going on eternally in Self which, being one, is naturally eternal and infinite. Self is the eternal knower or seer of this world drama.

It may be asked why this world drama is taking place in Self. Self, we have seen, is knowledge. The inseparable components of knowledge are knower, knowing and the known. Unless these three exist, knowledge cannot be attributed to Self. Since Self is one the three also must be one. Because Self is knowledge there are these three aspects. In worldly parlance, the knower is the ego in the body, knowing is relative, when related to worldly objects and absolute when abiding in self, and the known is the world. Really all these are one, the Self. In the experience of the Jnani established in the Self, there is no diversity but unity of experience, of Self only in all.

But our experience is diverse. Why is it so? It is due only to ignorance of the reality and nature of the Self and our false identification with the body. The works of Sri Bhagavan, *Who am I?* and others deal with how to overcome this ignorance to realize and be the Self.

Inaction

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By G. N. Daley

Inaction is not inactivity. Thinking, feeling and doing are only inaction when there is no attachment to thinking, feeling and doing. If there is attachment this is time: In action (non-attachment) is NOW. Inaction is BEING. Those are the facts, the choice is yours to die or live in time or to BE AND LIVE NOW.

THE YAKSHA PRASNA (concluded)

From THE MAHABHARATA

(Based largely on the annotated translation of K. Balasubramania Iyer published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.)

Yaksha

82. What is the characteristic of tapas ?
 83. What is known as *dama* (self-control) ?
 84. What is said to be the greatest patience ?
 85. What is honoured as modesty ?

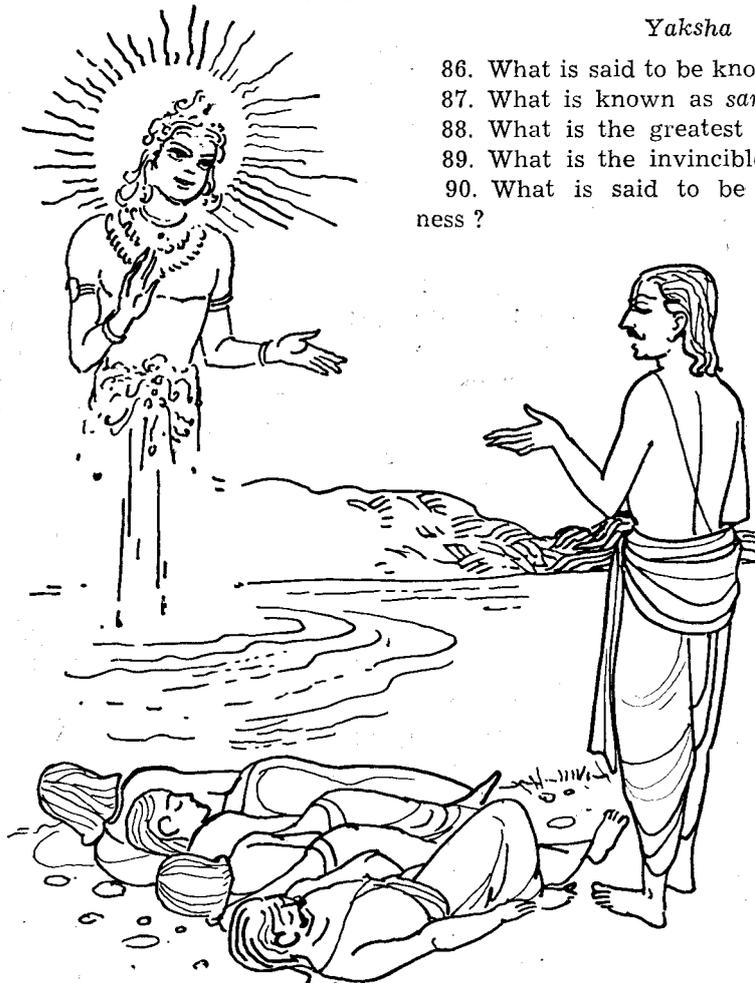
Yudhishtira

82. Following one's own dharma is tapas.
 83. Mind control is self-control.
 84. Putting up with the pairs of opposites is the greatest patience.
 85. Shunning improper conduct is modesty.

Sri Krishna twice insists in the Gita on the importance of following one's own dharma, even though that of another seems preferable.

Yaksha

86. What is said to be knowledge, O King ?
 87. What is known as *sama* ?
 88. What is the greatest compassion ?
 89. What is the invincible foe of man ?
 90. What is said to be straightforwardness ?



91. What is the incurable disease ?
 92. Who can be called a good person ?
 93. Who can be called a bad person ?

Yudhishtira

86. Knowledge is understanding the meaning of things.
 87. *Sama* is peace of mind.
 88. The greatest compassion is to desire the happiness of all.
 89. Anger is man's invincible foe.
 90. Straightforwardness is equal-mindedness towards all.
 91. Avarice is the incurable disease.
 92. One who seeks the good of all may be called good.
 93. And one who has no compassion may be called bad.

Yaksha

94. What, O King, is meant by delusion ?
 95. What is pride ?
 96. What can be called indolence ?
 97. What is known as misery ?

Yudhishtira

94. Ignorance of dharma is delusion.
 95. Thinking highly of oneself is pride.
 96. Neglecting one's dharma is indolence.
 97. Spiritual ignorance (ajnana) is misery.

Yaksha

98. What is the steadfastness (sthairya) spoken of by Sages ?
 99. What is meant by courage (dhairya) ?
 100. What is known as the best ablution (snana) ?
 101. What is meant by charity (dana) ?

Yudhishtira

98. Adherence to one's own dharma is steadfastness.
 99. Control of the senses is courage.
 100. Getting rid of the impurities of the mind is the best ablution.
 101. Extending protection to all is charity.

With regard to this last answer, it is to be remembered that Yudhishtira was a Kshatriya whose special dharma was protection of the oppressed.

Yaksha

102. Who is to be considered a learned man (pandita) ?
 103. Who can be called an atheist ?
 104. Who is a fool ?
 105. What is desire (kama) ?
 106. What is envy ?

Yudhishtira

102. One who knows dharma can be considered learned.
 103. } An atheist is a fool.
 104. }
 105. Desire is the cause of rebirth.
 106. Envy is heart-burning.

It will be seen that Yudhishtira makes the second and third questions answer each other. One is reminded of the Biblical saying: "The fool hath said in his heart, 'there is no God'." Actually the Sanskrit word nastika (atheist) means rather one who does not believe in a non-material world.

The word translated here as 'rebirth' is sam-sara. It is only as long as there is craving for something that one can be drawn back to some form of rebirth.

Yaksha

107. What is said to be the ego-sense ?
 108. What is called conceit ?
 109. What is known as the greatest destiny ?
 110. What is meant by slander ?

Yudhishtira

107. The ego-sense is complete ignorance.
 108. Parading one's dharma is conceit.
 109. The highest destiny comes from giving (dana).
 110. Slander is speaking ill of others.

Ahankara, the ego-sense, means believing oneself to be a separate individual being and is defined as maha ajnana or avidya, the supreme ignorance.

Yaksha

111. Dharma, artha (prosperity) and kama (desires or pleasure) are mutually antagonistic (and yet are all legitimate goals in life). How can they co-exist when they are contrary by nature ?

Yudhishtira

111. When one's wife is in accord with dharma the three can co-exist.

Yaksha

112. Oh Lord of the Bharatas, who goes to everlasting hell? Answer quickly!

Yudhishtira

112. One who voluntarily invites a poor Brahmin and then refuses him charity goes to everlasting hell. One who imputes falsehood to the Vedas, the Dharmasastras, the Brahmins, the gods, and the rites performed for the ancestors goes to everlasting hell. One who is wealthy but refuses charity and stints himself out of avarice goes to everlasting hell.

Yaksha

113. Oh King, how does one become a Brahmin? Is it by birth or conduct or study of the Vedas, or hearing or reflecting on truth? Answer clearly.

Yudhishtira

113. Listen, venerable Yaksha! it is not birth or study or Vedic learning which makes one a Brahmin. It is quite definitely one's conduct which does. Every one should be careful about his conduct and especially a Brahmin. One whose conduct remains unsullied is not a loser, but one who gives up good conduct perishes with it. Gurus and disciples who merely study the scriptures are to be regarded as fools. Only a man of good conduct is really wise. Even one who has studied the four Vedas is to be regarded as lower than a Shudra if his conduct is bad. Only he who regularly performs the fire sacrifice and controls his senses can be called a Brahmin.

Yaksha

114. What does he gain who speaks courteously?

115. What does he gain who acts circumspectly?

116. What does he gain who makes many friends?

117. What does he gain who is devoted to dharma?

Yudhishtira

114. He who speaks courteously is liked by all.

115. He who acts circumspectly achieves success.

116. He who has many friends lives happily.

117. He who is devoted to dharma attains life's goal.

Yaksha

118. Who rejoices?

119. What is most surprising?

120. What is the path?

121. What is the news?

Answer these four questions of mine and your dead relatives will return to life.

Yudhishtira

118. Oh dweller among the waters! he who cooks vegetables in his own house every five or six days, is free from debt and does not have to go out (to work) is happy.

119. Day after day people depart to the abode of death, yet those who remain never envisage their own death. What can be more surprising than this?

120. Logic is inconclusive; the scriptures are divergent; there is no Sage whose opinion is final; the truth of dharma lies hidden; therefore the only way is to follow the path of the great.

121. In the cauldron of this illusory world time cooks beings with sun and moon and night and day as fire and fuel and with the months and seasons for ladle. This is the news.

The answer to question 120 recalls that to question 77: it is no use laying down that one path is right and others wrong; that on which one can find enlightened guidance is the one to follow.

Yaksha

122. You have rightly answered all my questions, Oh Conqueror of the Foe, but tell me now who is it that possesses all wealth?

Yudhishtira

122. As long as one's repute fills heaven and earth one is called a man. He to whom things pleasant and unpleasant, grief and joy, past and future are alike, he it is that possesses all wealth.

This recalls the answer to question 84 and Sri Krishna's saying in the Gita: "Only men of right conduct, whose sins have come to an end, are free from the delusion of the polarities and worship me, steadfast in their vows." (VII, 28).

(THE END)

Contacting the Eternal

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By Cornelia Bagarotti

UNKNOWN and unseen, woven in all things, lies the eternal. It was this that spoke through the Christ, that permeated the words of the Buddha, that inspired the teachings of all the world's great spiritual teachers. From whence came this wisdom and how is it to be found?

If man but knew it this eternal source of the Divine which we call God resides in each human heart. Each human being is a form of God, a divine expression of the Creator. No two are alike and each is sent to earth with a gift all his own. Some come bearing the gift of service, some of creative genius, some of scientific ability, some of healing. As St. Paul said in his sermon on "The Gifts of God" they are many and varied. Hidden in the heart of the most humble being lies his particular gift which is his expression of the Divine. He may never know it yet he will carry it with him doing in his daily acts of little kindness or help his part to express love on earth.

The real difference between a Christ or Buddha and an ordinary man is that the former knew of their constant and eternal union with the Divine while others are unawakened to real nature.

Light pours through a prism and separates into the tones of the rainbow. Thus God

pours into humanity and separates into the various gifts hidden in each human heart, which are manifestations not differences. To find the good in another is to discover God in him. To develop the Love and purity in oneself is to release God consciously within oneself. To serve one's fellowman is to contact God and to commune with the eternal in which all that is reveals itself as an unbroken, everlasting whole.

As a builder sends one man to cut the beams, another to lay the bricks, a third to place the pipes, a fourth to instal the wiring, a fifth to pour the cement, a sixth to raise the walls, so God emanates his Divinity in various forms on earth. Each speaks for Him, each works for Him according to his gift and no one is complete in himself and no one can do the task of his neighbor.

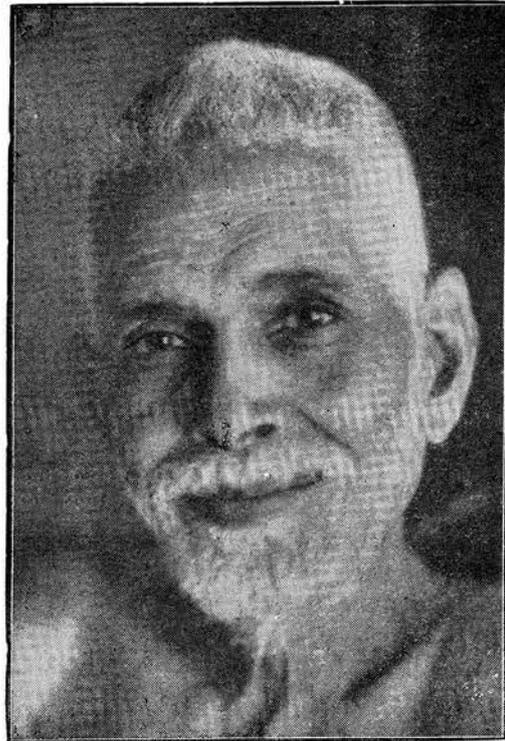
Deepest reverence fills the heart of the illumined soul as he sees God in all. Love pours into him, gratitude, humility, acceptance, selflessness and those who meet him find in him the reflection of the eternal. Such a one illumines others and has become at one with his creator. Sri Ramana Maharshi was such a one. Some call such men incarnations of God, others channels of God. Whatever they may be called they show other men how to contact the eternal which lies in every human heart.

HOW I CAME TO BHAGAVAN

By
S. S. COHEN¹

TO write on *How I came to Bhagavan* one has to be somewhat autobiographical, a venture which many a sadhaka feels hesitant to undertake. In the first instance one has to take special care to be objective. Secondly 'coming' to Bhagavan, in some cases, is the result of much soul stirring, which is too intimate to be spoken about. I said "in some cases" because many people do "come" with some material expectation, which has very little of the soul in it, that His Grace might grant them the fulfilment of their hearts' desire, and when that *does* take place they get trapped and remain His devotees for life. It is interesting to observe how the very trials and tribulations which constantly dog men's heels in life become the cause of their redemption in the presence of a great Master.

But my case was different: it was the result of a twenty-year-long quest for the Guru, a quest which was sparked by what then appeared a mere accident. I was only eighteen when a strange book fell in my hands. I call it strange, because in a country—Turkish Mesopotamia and now the Republic of Iraq—to which very few books had access (in 1914), this book appeared to be a phenomenon. It was *Esoteric Buddhism* by A. P. Sinnet, which I first took for a book on magic. I devoured it and was captured by it; the very sound of its oriental terms—*Kamaloka*, *lingasharira*, *devachan*, *anupadhaka* and what not—had the effect of abracadabra, of a soothing incantation on me, and haunted me for many weeks. What is worse, it gave a fresh play to my adolescent imagination. I fancied that the Theosophical Masters were living behind walls of fire in a mysterious land called Tibet, shedding their benign rays on the whole of mankind, guiding and protecting it in a multitude of ways, and that none had access to them but their own "Initiates",

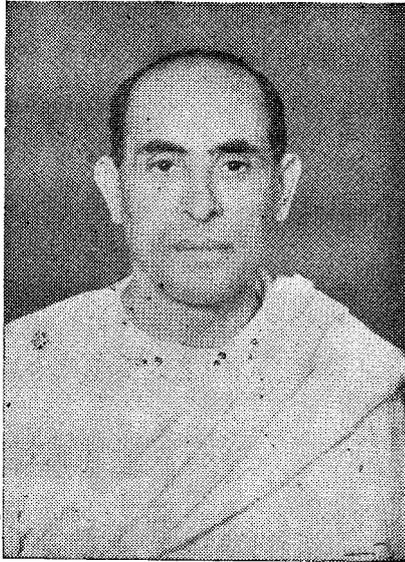


who live in the world disguised as ordinary men. I vowed in my heart that if I met one of them I would give up the world and follow him. But fancy apart, this book opened up a vista of life for me for now and for evermore.

The long duration, the devastation and the universal suffering caused by the first world war effaced much of this romantic picture from my mind till ten years later I found myself in India nursing a friend who had made a fortune on the stock exchange and had lost it overnight for ever. He was in danger of losing his life or reason. I racked my brain to find something with which to console him, when, lo, *Esoteric Buddhism* buoyed up from the

¹ Introduced in our issue of April, 1967, p. 173.

depths of my memory. It acted like a charm on him: he revived but without his money. Yet he felt compensated for his loss by the wealth of knowledge that this Theosophical creed placed at his disposal. In a few days he became a registered F.T.S. (Fellow of the Theosophical Society), brimming with enthusiasm at the prospect of developing clairvoyance, clairaudience, and all the known *siddhis* through the help of the "Elder Brothers".



S. S. Cohen

I joined later, wound up my affairs in Bombay, and went to live in the International Headquarters of the Society in Madras. My studies slowly led me to the Vedantic literature which I found to be the most congenial to my way of thinking. The short aphorisms—the 2nd and 3rd—of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras* completed my total conversion. When I read that suppression of thinking will cause the seer to abide in himself, I felt at last I was face to face with the Truth, the one and only Truth. Neither science nor philosophy had so far succeeded in finding this Truth, and their confusion

increases with the increase in scientific discoveries. When science used to shout that there is no effect without a cause, its recent discovery of ceaseless appearance from nowhere of a *gas* consisting of hydrogen atoms in interstellar space, which was supposed to be empty, at the rate of $100 \times 1,000,000$ tons per second to form new galaxies, made the scientists throw up their hands and cry that they are as far from truth as ever.

As for Religion, whilst it demands absolute faith, it is unable to support its claims to truth by unequivocally pointing out the way to it, or presenting its most devout ministers as having direct knowledge of it. Instead it wraps itself up in sacrosanct dogmas and moral precepts which make the Reality appear so vague and so remote that the soul of the seeker, who yearns for immediate experience, remains dissatisfied and hungry for it. Vedanta seemed to me to offer the greatest possibilities in that direction. My only need was then the guidance of one who himself had that experience and thus could with authority and competence lead to it. For five years, five long years I waited in Madras, but not a word, not a whisper did I hear of Bhagavan, who lived a stone's throw, as it were, from me. Another five years had to pass ere this information was vouchsafed to me, when an old friend, without knowing what she was doing, posted me a copy of *Search in Secret India*, which brought me post haste from 1000 miles farther away from Madras to Ramanashram in February 1936. What happened then and later I have recorded elsewhere.² Suffice it to say here that, having come, having felt the power and beauty of his Presence, having experienced the guidance that radiated from him, I knew that the search for a path and a guide was now ended. It was up to me now to follow it.

² *Guru Ramana* by the author, published by Sri Ramanasramam.

SRI RAMANA-YOGA-SADHANA

By
Prof. N. R. KRISHNAMURTI AIYER

TOTAL absorption of the ego in the Self is realization. Ego is consciousness which has identified itself with the body, and, "I-am-the-body" is the experience thereof. The ego sees the world of souls and unanimate objects, gets involved in them, experiences varying degrees of pleasure and pain, suffers from hopes and fears, and, in the extremities of anguish and despair, appeals to God for succour with varying degrees of success in proportion to its devotion to that Supreme Power. Dreamless deep sleep which is free from thoughts of body, soul, world and God, is impregnated with joy of peace which may be clearly recollected after waking. The joy lasts for the duration of the blotting out of the ego and its activities, during deep sleep and is remembered after waking.

Sri Ramana declares that the blissful peace enjoyed in deep dreamless sleep is our essential nature, and that it can be consciously experienced while one is awake, if strenuous effort be made to root out the ego by self-enquiry "Who am I?". When the inner search for "I" is made, all thoughts disappear, and the ego may get merged not in its true state of Bliss but only in a state of torpor (*laya*) which is akin to sleep, only to emerge again into a dream or wakeful state with all the previous thoughts of body and world. By repeated enquiry "Who am I?" this can be checked. The ego's thought-generating faculty and also its tendency to slip into *laya*, and its identification with the body are progressively weakened. After long and strenuous practice of self-enquiry the ego with its associated thoughts gets eliminated and only the effortless experience of pure Being-Awareness-Bliss remains. This is Self-Realization. It is a most intimate experience, free from trace of thought, beyond expression, charged with all power and



bliss as evidenced in Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. It is this living experience that has exalted Ramana into a Sad-Guru.

Ramana-Sad-Guru is potent and alive in His Samadhi or Shrine at Sri Ramanasramam. He abides as a powerful force in the hearts of His devotees. If we invoke His Grace as Sad-Guru with all love and humility, our effort at Self-enquiry is powerfully helped towards success. Not all the precious books of philosophy written from the remotest periods of history till now, not all the intricate and subtle feats of intellectual acrobatics of great scholars recorded in

them, can take the place of the Sad-Guru evidenced in Sri Ramana. Whole tons of literature emanating from such paper philosophers may be squeezed dry, and one may not get the tiniest drop of spiritual experience for all the trouble. The one essential condition for Self-Realization is the hard effort of stilling the vagrant mind with the indispensable help of the Sad-Guru by our heart's devotion.

What then must sincere sadhakas do? As children we shall approach Sad-Guru-Ramana. Let us sit still before His Samadhi. If we are not fortunate enough to command the funds, leisure, and the convenience to go to His Ashram at Tiruvannamalai, let us sit still in the quiet of our chamber with Sri Bhagavan's picture before us. Let us still our minds by the enquiry "Who am I?" whenever we find a period of respite from our daily avocations.

In one of his compositions, Sri Bhagavan declares that if activity of the body, speech and mind are consciously reduced to zero (as in deep sleep it is *unconsciously*) the Self shines forth in all its glory; for this, He hastens to add that the Grace of the Supreme God (Arunachala) embodied in the Sad-Guru is necessary and must be sedulously invoked by the Sadhaka.

So, with earnest prayer to Sad-Guru-Ramana let us try to "be still", to kill all emerging thoughts by the enquiry "Who am I?", to dwell on His spoken words, and try to eliminate the various *vasanas*,¹ *deha-vasana*, *loka-vasana* and *sastra-vasana*, while limiting ourselves to the essential activities of our avocations in life. By the grace of the Sad-Guru we shall find that Self-Realization is not impossible to achieve even in this lifetime.

For this Guru-Bhakti is the essential condition. In the immortal words of the great religious teacher Sri Shankara-Bhagavat-Pada,

"Of what use, of what use, of what use, O of what use (is all this sadhana and all its achievements) if the mind is not bound in devotion to the Lotus-Feet of the Sad-Guru, if the mind does not ever abide in the Spoken Word of the Sad-Guru!"

— (From Sri Shankara's *Guruashtakam*).

¹ *Deha-vasana* — Tendency to thoughts regarding the body.

Loka-vasana — Tendency to thoughts regarding the world.

Sastra-vasana — Tendency to thoughts regarding booklore leading to endless intellectual discussion.

A traveller in a cart has fallen asleep. The bullocks move, stand still or are unyoked during the journey. He does not know these events but finds himself in a different place after he wakes up. He has been blissfully ignorant of the occurrences on the way, but the journey has been finished. Similarly with the Self of a person. The ever-wakeful Self is compared to the traveller asleep in the cart. The waking state is the moving of the bulls; Samadhi is their standing still (because Samadhi means *Jagrat-sushupti*, that is to say, the person is aware but not concerned in the action: the bulls are yoked but do not move); sleep is the unyoking of the bulls for there is complete stopping of activity corresponding to the relief of the bulls from the yoke.

— BHAGAVAN.

THE PURANAS

By

MADGUNI SHAMBU BHAT

THE Puranas form a compendium of Sanskrit literature — call it 'scripture' if you will — enshrining traditional Aryan culture in colourful and vigorous poetry where spiritual and ethical teaching, symbolism and even history combine. Western scholars of an earlier century, puzzled by this type of literature, of which the symbolism was beyond them and the history often appeared dubious, were apt to dismiss them with the lofty scorn then held for literature in which rationalism was transcended. Through the centuries they have been widely popular in India, though with the present waning of tradition they are fast losing their hold.

The word 'Purana' means 'ancient' and may be taken to imply that they are ancient traditional compilations. There are eighteen major ones as listed in the Devi Bhagavatam, ranging in length from 9,000 to 81,000 two-line stanzas, and eighteen minor ones, not all of which are still extant. Their style is exceedingly varied, ranging from the conversational to the narrative, from the narrative to the spiritual. They are said to have been composed by the great Veda Vyasa who compiled the Vedas and wrote the Mahabharata and the Brahma Sutras. This implies that they were part of the vast reorganization of tradition which was carried out in the epic age.

They are by nature popular literature, intended for those for whom the Vedas were too abstruse, and therefore there was never any ban on their being read by social strata to whom the Vedas were closed. Perhaps for this reason they have not received anything like the same veneration as the Vedas. For understanding certain of them the reader needs a natural understanding of symbolism, which is a thing that cannot be learnt from books. Three concepts which

are fundamental to them are those of time, space and energy. Let us first consider the measurement of time. Nowhere has it been carried to greater dimensions of the vast and the minute.

The kala chakra or time cycle is considered unending, whirling round through alternate phases of srishti and pralaya or creation and dissolution which invite comparison with modern astronomical conceptions. At the other extreme the smallest unit, known as the lava, is described as half the winking of an eye. This is followed by prahara, equal to three hours, the day and night, and then the bright and dark fortnights (counted incidentally from full moon to no moon and no moon to full moon not, as might be expected, from half moon to half moon). Then there are three seasons in the year (hot, wet and cold) and twelve solar months. There are four yugas and beyond them the mahayuga, the manvantaras and finally the kalpa extending from one cosmic dissolution to the next.

The spatial, or, more properly, cosmic, scheme postulates the sishumara chakra or cosmic sphere with the pole star and the seven stars that revolve around it, the sun and moon and planets and the other stars. Like the cosmological concepts of other religions, it postulates seven higher and seven lower worlds which are not in fact spatial or territorial but refer to higher and lower states of being through which one can pass. Nevertheless the sense of magnitude is so developed that there are said to be millions of worlds in space.

These vast concepts of cyclic time and space are accompanied by the concept of illimitable energy, power or shakti. The fact that this was personified should not bind us to its reality. According to the view-

point it is spoken of in a personalised or an impersonal way.

Basically it is held that in order to rank as a Purana a work must contain the five features of: *sarga*, *pratisarga*, *vamsa*, *manvantara* and *vamsanucharita*. So let us see what these are.

Sarga: description and explanation of the spontaneous working of the three fundamental forces, that is: creation, preservation and destruction, expressed in rajas (activity), sattva (purity) and tamas (darkness) respectively and personified as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva with their Shaktis or consorts Sarasvati, Lakshmi and Parvati (or Kali).^{1, 2}

Pratisarga: symbolical stories of the birth of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara (or Siva) who conduct the dance or game of manifestation through the powers mentioned above.

Vamsa: accounts of the various avatars or divine incarnations of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara who become actors in the world play.

Manvantara: accounts of the time factor from a single second to the end of the world.

Vamsanucharita: accounts of the kings and dynasties on the human stage.

The necessity for these five ingredients implies that there is a considerable amount of repetition in the Puranas. However even

the repetition is not haphazard but is based on a definite intellectual plan to provide each type of reader with the sort of presentation most likely to appeal to him. Mankind are divided into the three basic types of sattvic, rajasic and tamasic and these are further subdivided according to the temperamental preponderance of the six human tendencies of: kama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (grasping), moha (delusion, infatuation), mada (impulsiveness) and matsarya (envy, jealousy). These vary endlessly in their proportions but they give eighteen Puranas.

Many have complained that the Puranas are confused. It is because they themselves are vague as to the purpose of the Puranas and what they propose to supply. Their main purpose is not to provide a historical record. They may do this incidentally, but their purpose is much more sublime, in fact nothing less than the one true purpose of providing spiritual teaching. Only they do this in such a way as to make it attractive to the reader. The stories — some historical, some symbolical, some both — are dressed up in poetry of a high order and interspersed with ethical and spiritual instruction. They thus appealed through the ages to many whom pure doctrine left cold.

¹ Siva as tamas represents a profounder possibility not connected with physical darkness or mental inertia but with the hidden truth of the Unmanifest.

² Equivalent three aspects are represented in Western astrology by the three modes: cardinal, mutable and fixed, respectively.

This I am

.....

By L. P. Yandell

One who knows himself as 'me' looks about and sees what is wrong.
 One who is less 'me' sees more that is right.
 One who knows himself as THIS both sees what is
 and is the seeing.

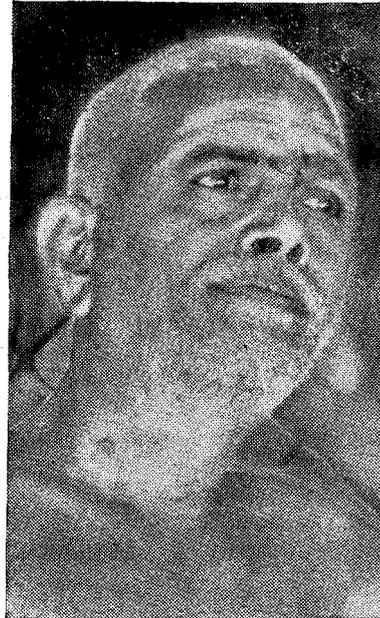
IS IT NOT DIVINE LOVE?

By
R. NARAYANA IYER¹

AT first it was not thirst for Self-Realization or spiritual development that impelled me and drew me to Sri Bhagavan. In fact there was a background of scepticism and incredulity. The first impression was more or less a mental conviction, some thing like that which we have towards a deity in a temple symbolised by an idol. It gave me no spiritual insight. "Somehow or other he appears to have discovered some truth, perhaps like Buddha under the Bodhi tree", I thought. But I loved him and longed to be in his company as much as possible. I felt a rapturous delight in hearing him talk. I was in the prime of youth, recently married and placed in a respectable Government job and I was happy and satisfied with life as it was. I was in no need of the solace of religion or spirituality. Yet I could not leave him and the first impression of his beaming face, sweet smile and endearing talk always danced before my eyes drawing me from my usual routine and pursuits. I arranged with the Doctor who first took me to Sri Bhagavan to pay monthly visits to the Ashram of three days, namely the penultimate Saturday, Sunday and a day's casual leave out of the fifteen days available to me in a year.²

This arrangement worked for a few years. Then this doctor friend, who was so free and familiar in the Ashram as to move about and to conduct himself as a regular inmate, doing work in the kitchen and elsewhere, introduced me also to the same privilege and the opportunities it gave to be in close contact with Sri Bhagavan, who presided over and participated in all kinds of kitchen work with the proficiency and ease of an expert—a regular Nala in the culinary art!

Well, I seemed caught in a net! The more I was with him, the more I wanted to be with him. But I was shortly transferred



to Arni, another town within the same radius of thirty miles. Here I missed the company of the doctor friend. Losing all delight in all other things I turned the monthly visits to the Ashram to weekly ones, coupling Sundays with other holidays. And I was always welcome to the Ashram.

I used to translate from Tamil to English Sri Bhagavan's replies to letters received by him. On one occasion, when Bhagavan was talking very fast, I asked him to wait a little and took up a paper and pencil to write down what he was saying. Upon this he said: "Well, well, you write what you are able to. If I begin to dictate they would want to print it. There will be no end to it." Like an ass carrying a load of camphor I had no idea of all that I wrote or listened to.

¹ Introduced to our readers in Jan. '68 issue, p. 83.

² See his article on *How he came to Bhagavan* in our April '68 issue, p. 142.

By this time I had made friends with the attendants, Sri Madhavaswami, Sri Satyanandaswami, Sri Krishnaswami, Sri Rangaswami and others, and they did not protest when I gradually introduced personal services to Sri Bhagavan, such as massaging his legs, fomentations, etc. For there were occasions when his muscles became rigid or painful. His physical work like cutting vegetables and directing the work of the kitchen was generally confined to the early hours of the morning when only the residents were present. After 5 a.m. during the *Vedapāraayanam* or when visitors came from the outside, he would be on his couch in the hall sitting there or just reclining like a statue cut in alabaster or like one posing for a painter or sculptor. Sitting and sitting like this all day made his muscles hard and inflexible and required some massage. Thus by slow degrees a sort of familiarity and intimacy grew up between me and Bhagavan.

During one of my visits I stayed outside the hall for about half an hour and when I entered the hall Sri Bhagavan remarked: "What is this? You are not at all to be seen." Although it was I that chose to render personal service he seemed to have assumed the role of a master with complete control over my programme and to decide what I should do and how I should spend my time. Anything out of the way, like a stroll into the town, etc., was done only after seeking his permission. Although I had not bargained for this surrender of freedom, I yielded to him as there was such love, love unmistakable.

One morning at about 5 I prostrated before Bhagavan and took leave of him. There had been some function like Jayanti or Mahapuja the previous day and all were tired and asleep. Sri Bhagavan said: "Wait" and went into the kitchen. I followed. He searched and found nothing to give me. He then put his hand inside a pot and found some almonds. He immediately lit the fire, put a pan on it, fried the almonds in ghee and gave them to me. Though I protested he gave me a big packet of them and asked me to eat them on my

way and to give some to the children at home! Is this not divine love?

Sometimes when I came and prostrated before him an attendant would run up and fetch me a packet of some rare dish of groundnuts or something special served during the midday meal. I would be told by the attendant that Bhagavan wanted "a little of it to be kept for Narayana Iyer who would be coming in the evening." Oh! What have I done to deserve such kindness and attention? Tears trickle down my cheeks as I write this at such a distance of time.

Once I asked Bhagavan: "Bhagavan, you left your home in Madurai where your relatives had been treating you with love and kindness and spending money upon your education. You misappropriated their money for your train fare to Tiruvannamalai. You sneaked your way to the Railway station so as not to be noticed by any one. You posed yourself as a pilgrim who had lost his kit. Then you saw at Tirukoilur the Holy Hill and burst into a wave of sobbing. Was all this straightforward and proper?" Sri Bhagavan was silent for a while and then replied: "This can be explained. It is said in the Kural: 'Even falsehood is akin to truth when it is unblemished good and harms none'". This shows the freedom I enjoyed with Bhagavan.

I once told Bhagavan: "I have been here for many years. People meditate and get into samadhi. I close my eyes for a minute and the mind travels round the world ten times and so many long-forgotten things come up." Upon this Bhagavan said: "Why do you concern yourself about others? They may meditate or sleep and snore. Look to yourself. Whenever the mind goes astray bring it back to the quest. There is a verse in the Bhagavad Gita which says: 'To whatever side the restless, unsteady mind wanders away one should check it and bring it back controlled to the Self'." But I was not satisfied and Sri Bhagavan said: "The child, who was woke up and given its milk after it had gone to sleep,

says to its mother the next morning : 'Mother, you never gave me milk last night.' Even so You had your fill." His analogy and assurance was convincing and consoling. I cannot even imagine what I would have been but for my contact with Sri Bhagavan. Countless have been the incidents which gripped my heart in bonds of ecstatic love to Him. The contact and impact that I have had with Bhagavan have been such as to

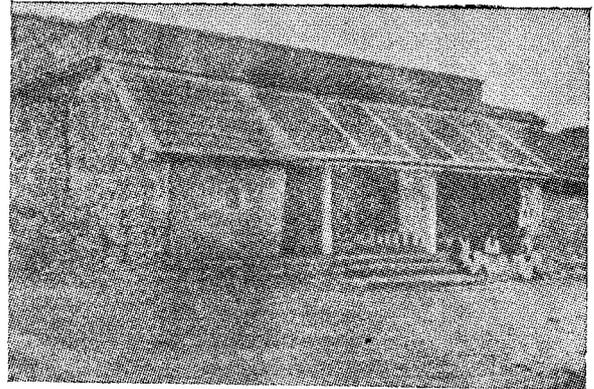
make me feel that knowingly or unknowingly I must have done something in the course of my lives to deserve this unique blessing.

The lamp has been lit and 'not all the darkness of the world can extinguish the light of the burning candle.' The contact and impact will and must lead me to the right goal, the 'Be all and End all of human birth'.

Birth Place

By
T. P. R.

It was the command of Sri Bhagavan that I should go to Tiruchuzhi and see the house where Bhagavan was born. Then it was in some one else's possession. Sri Bhagavan gave me all minute details about Tiruchuzhi and what places I should see : the temple, the tower on which he played, the mantapa, the school, the tank. He particularly instructed me to meet some very old people there who would still remember him. Bhagavan also wanted to know whether pujas in the temple there continued to be performed with prasadams and other offerings on the customary scale. I had an unique experience of visiting these places and noting down all details required by Sri Bhagavan. On my return, when I gave my report in writing, Bhagavan took enormous interest in reading it aloud to devotees in the Hall. In the last para of that report I had made an appeal to Sri Chinna-swami¹ that his duty would not be complete if that house did not come into the possession of the Ashram and that it should be renovated and kept as a pilgrim centre for all Ramana-bhaktas. Sri N. R. Krishnamurthi Iyer was of great help to me in all these undertakings.



Sundara Mandiram

Thereafter Sri Chinna-swami took a lot of interest and the house² was eventually bought and now it is in the possession of the Ashram. For the purchase of the house and in a few other matters connected with it, I took very active part, for I came to know that Bhagavan was very much interested.

¹Sri Niranjanananda Swami, brother of Sri Bhagavan and the then *Sarvadhikari*.

²The house was named by Sri Bhagavan as *Sundara Mandiram*.

REMINDERS

By

Prof. G. V. SUBBARAMAYYA¹

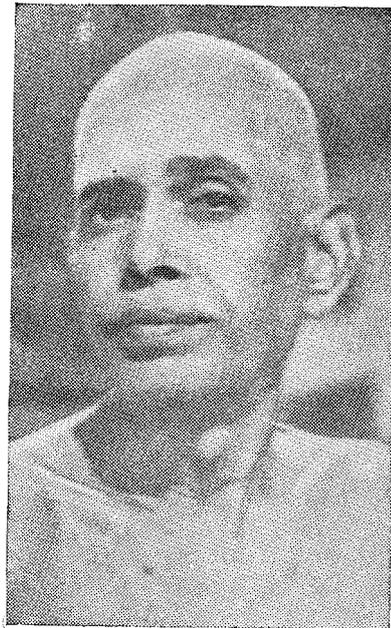
LET me recall some indications by Bhagavan that will help to keep the aspirant on the right path, safe from pitfalls. Such reminders are necessary lest, with the passage of time, the clarity of his teaching gets blurred.

The final aim and purpose of all sadhana — fasts, prayers, pilgrimages, penances, etc. — is, he reminded us, to annihilate the ego through perfect control of the mind and thereby to realize the true Self. This should be always borne in mind lest the aspirant get too attached to his technique and mistake it for the purpose when it is only the means. Any sadhana is only a road to reach the destination and never a residence.

The practice of Self-enquiry is the direct method since it directly tackles the mind, but it does not exclude other practices which may suit the particular aspirant owing to his samskaras or predispositions due to prarabda or previous destiny. All sadhanas lead to the same goal.

When we speak of Self-realization it is to be remembered that the Self is not some wonder which will drop down from the heavens before our gaze. It is not anything outside us or anything perceptible to the mind or senses. It is the real I or Self that every one of us is in fact. So Self-realization is only being what we are. This comes about on transcending the dualities (good and bad) and triads (knowledge-knower-known), when the unreal accretions of the mind disperse.

Self-enquiry is not a catechism or a mental process of question and answer. The question 'Who am I?' is not intended to provoke an answer such as 'I am this' or 'I am that' but is only a means to still the mind. When a thought arises one is not to pursue it but to ask oneself to whom it



occurs. The answer is 'to me', and this provokes the further question, 'Who am I?' With this the first thought disappears.

The mind is nothing but a bundle of thoughts that incessantly arise. If the above process is repeated every time a thought arises all thoughts vanish and the mind dwells solely on the basic I-thought. With sufficient practice it gets rid of its thought content and becomes transformed into the real 'I' or true Self which shines continuously of its own accord. The aspirant's effort terminates in complete stilling of the mind. What follows is automatic like the sun's shining after the clouds have passed.

Since the real Self is the repository of all power, as of everything else, the aspirant,

¹ Introduced in our issue of July '68, P. 235.

in his quest for the Self, may or may not acquire powers or siddhi. This is dependent on his prarabda or self-made destiny. In a realized Man these occur unsought and manifest themselves naturally. For an aspirant to seek them or make use of them deliberately is harmful; it is likely to strengthen his ego and thereby hamper his spiritual progress. The right attitude for him is to remain indifferent whether they come or not and concentrate on Self-realization.

There is no contradiction between so-called 'worldly' life and spiritual practice. We can remain in society, practising any trade or profession, and at the same time remember all along what we really are. We should not identify ourselves with our body, senses or mind but remember that we are the all-pervading Spirit.

Either we surrender to the Supreme Spirit, Self or God, by whatever name we may call It, or go on enquiring what we

really are until we realize our identity with It. Not only are professional work and spiritual effort not contradictory but the latter helps to perfect the former and even makes it a means of self-purification, which is a pre-requisite of Self-realization.

In conclusion, let us never forget the greatness and glory of Sri Bhagavan. At the age of seventeen He attained Self-realization by spontaneous effort, with no instruction and no outer Guru. The remainder of his life was only a 'leela' or 'play' in which the Supreme manifested its Grace by radiating his Glory and diffusing Peace and Bliss around that 'mighty Impersonality', as the poet Harindranath Chattopadhyaya once called Bhagavan (when some one else had been called a 'mighty personality'). The term 'Bhagavan' is sometimes used as a honorific title for holy personages but Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi is Bhagavan in the fullest sense of the word. Glory to Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi!

Devotee : Janaka was a jnani and still he ruled his dominions. Does not action require activity of the mind? What is the rationale of the working of a jnani's mind?

Maharshi : You say, 'Janaka was a jnani and yet active, etc.' Does Janaka ask the question? The question is in your mind only. The jnani is not aware of anything besides the Self. He has no doubts of the kind.

Devotee : Probably it is like a dream. Just as we speak of our dreams, so they think of their actions.

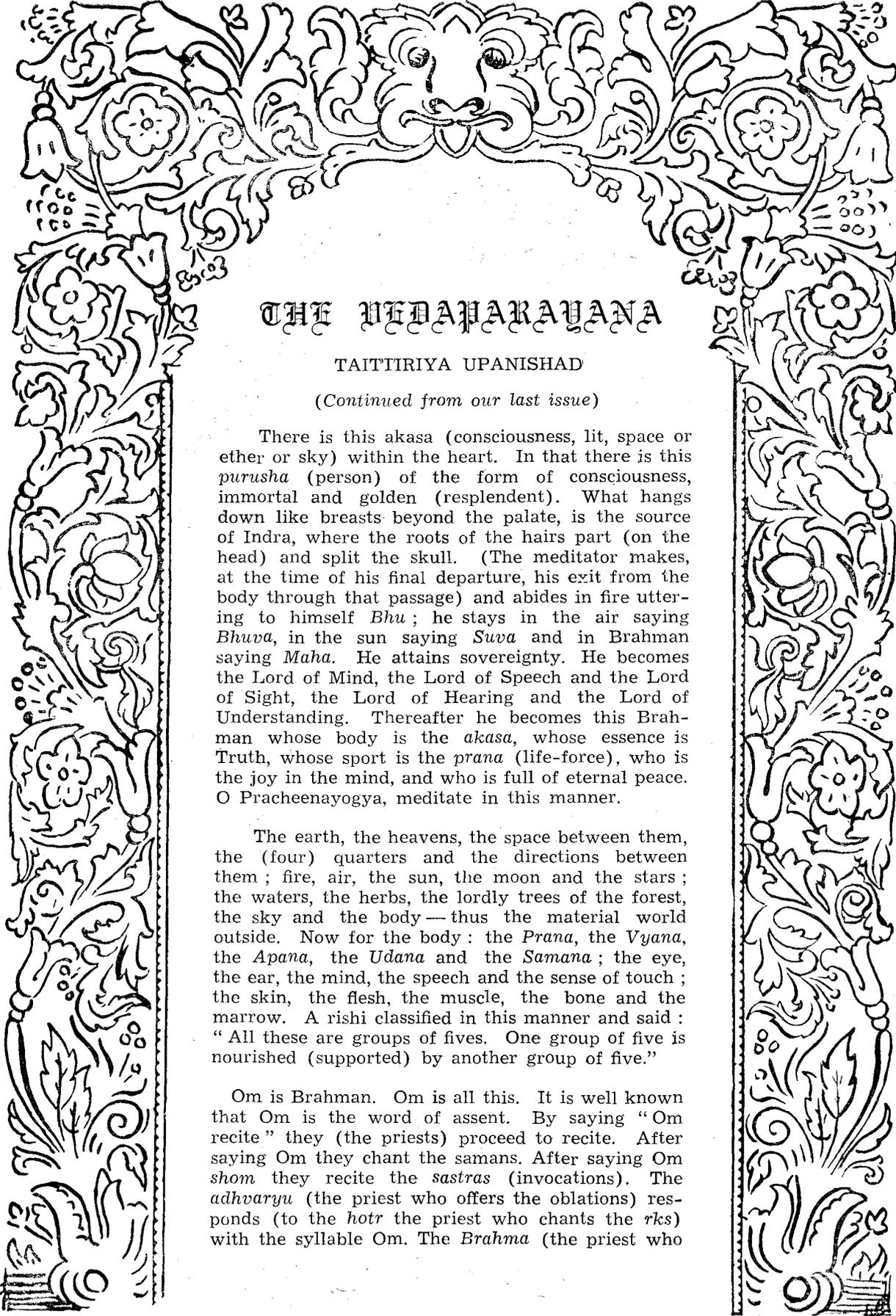
Maharshi : Even the dream, etc., is in your mind. This explanation too is in your mind only.

Devotee : Yes, I see. All is Ramana-Maya — made up of the Self.

Maharshi : If so, there will be no duality and no talk.

Devotee : A man, on realising the Self, can help the world more effectively. Is it not so?

Maharshi : If the world be apart from the Self, yes.



THE UDDHARAVANA

TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD

(Continued from our last issue)

There is this akasa (consciousness, lit, space or ether or sky) within the heart. In that there is this *purusha* (person) of the form of consciousness, immortal and golden (resplendent). What hangs down like breasts beyond the palate, is the source of Indra, where the roots of the hairs part (on the head) and split the skull. (The meditator makes, at the time of his final departure, his exit from the body through that passage) and abides in fire uttering to himself *Bhu*; he stays in the air saying *Bhuva*, in the sun saying *Suva* and in Brahman saying *Maha*. He attains sovereignty. He becomes the Lord of Mind, the Lord of Speech and the Lord of Sight, the Lord of Hearing and the Lord of Understanding. Thereafter he becomes this Brahman whose body is the *akasa*, whose essence is Truth, whose sport is the *prana* (life-force), who is the joy in the mind, and who is full of eternal peace. O Pracheenayogya, meditate in this manner.

The earth, the heavens, the space between them, the (four) quarters and the directions between them; fire, air, the sun, the moon and the stars; the waters, the herbs, the lordly trees of the forest, the sky and the body—thus the material world outside. Now for the body: the *Prana*, the *Vyana*, the *Apana*, the *Udana* and the *Samana*; the eye, the ear, the mind, the speech and the sense of touch; the skin, the flesh, the muscle, the bone and the marrow. A rishi classified in this manner and said: "All these are groups of fives. One group of five is nourished (supported) by another group of five."

Om is Brahman. Om is all this. It is well known that Om is the word of assent. By saying "Om recite" they (the priests) proceed to recite. After saying Om they chant the samans. After saying Om *shom* they recite the *sastras* (invocations). The *adhvaryu* (the priest who offers the oblations) responds (to the *hotr* the priest who chants the *rk*s) with the syllable Om. The *Brahma* (the priest who

watches over the entire sacrifice) initiates (the sacrifice) by saying Om. By saying Om assent is given for the performance of the *Agnihotra* (a form of fire sacrifice). A *Brahmana*, before reciting "Let me truly attain Brahman", says Om. He truly attains Brahman.

(The following discipline is necessary) :— (Abiding by) the eternal law (*rtam*) and studying and teaching the scriptures ; (abiding by) truth and studying and teaching the scriptures ; austerities (*tapas*) and studying and teaching the scriptures ; control of the senses and studying and teaching the scriptures ; control of the mind and studying and teaching the scriptures ; tending the sacrificial fires and studying and teaching the scriptures ; offerings in the fire (*agnihotra*) and studying and teaching the scriptures ; entertaining guests and studying and teaching the scriptures ; social welfare and studying and teaching the scriptures ; setting up a family and studying and teaching the scriptures ; procreation and studying and teaching the scriptures ; ensuring the birth of grandchildren and studying and teaching the scriptures. Rathithara of the truthful words said that truth (was the most important discipline). Paurushishti, established in *tapas* said that *tapas* (is what is essential). Naka belonging to the lineage of Mudgala said that studying and teaching the scriptures alone (is necessary). That alone is *tapas*. That alone is *tapas*.

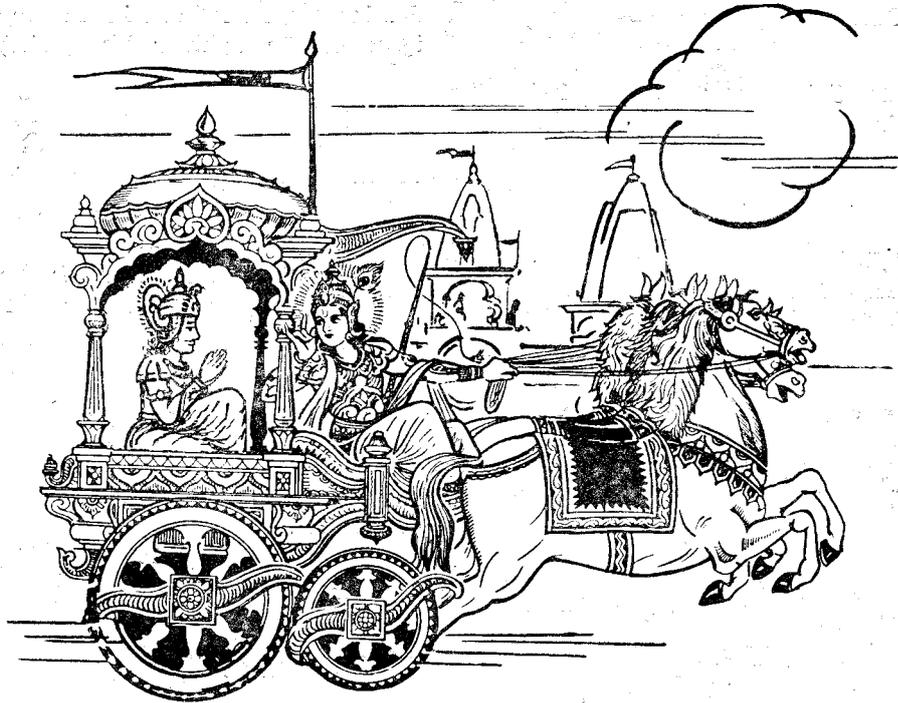
"I am the power which makes the tree (of samsara) grow. (My) glory is (high) like the top of a mountain. I am the extremely pure, immortal being as he is seen in the sun. I am the wealth of lustre. Endowed with good intellect I am imperishable and changeless". This is what Trishanku said after he became enlightened.

After teaching the Vedas the Acharya (the teacher) impresses upon the pupil thus : Speak the truth. Follow the dharma. Do not be careless about the study of the scriptures. Give the Acharya the fee that will please him. See that the line of your race is not broken. Do not be careless about truth. Do not be careless about dharma.

Do not be careless about your welfare. Do not be careless about your prosperity. Do not be careless about studying and teaching the scripture. Do not be careless about your duties to the gods and the spirits of your forefathers. Let your mother be a god(dess) to you. Let your father be a god to you. Let your Acharya be a god to you. Let your guest be a god to you. Acts which are irreproachable are to be performed, not others. The virtues found in us are to be practised by you, not others. Those Brahmanas who are superior to us are to be honoured by you with a seat. (Gifts must be) offered with reverence. (They should not be) offered without reverence. (They should be) offered generously. (They should be) offered with modesty. (They should be) offered with a sense of fear. (They should be) offered with sympathy. If you should have any doubts regarding your course of action or conduct, you should follow the Brahmanas who are on the spot, who are able to judge carefully, who are experienced, independent, not harsh and lovers of dharma. Just as they act in such circumstances you must also act. And now in the matter of those who are falsely accused (of some crime) you should follow the Brahmanas who are on the spot, who are able to judge carefully, who are experienced, independent, not harsh and lovers of dharma. Just as they act towards them (the accused) you must also act towards them. This is the Vedic injunction. This is the instruction. This is the upanishad (secret) of the Vedas. Thus must one guide one's life. This is the only way of guiding one's life.

May Mitra be propitious to us. May Varuna be propitious to us. May Aryman be propitious to us. May Indra and Brihaspati be propitious to us. I bow down before Brahman. O Vayu, I bow down before Thee. Thou alone art the manifest Brahman. I have proclaimed Thee the manifest Brahman. I have proclaimed Thee the law. I have proclaimed thee the Truth. That has protected me. That has protected the Guru. That has protected me. That has protected the Guru.

Om Peace ! Peace ! Peace !



The Bhagavad Gita

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Translated by
Prof. G. V. KULKARNI and ARTHUR OSBORNE

1

Sri Bhagavan said :

Again I shall declare to you, the Supreme, highest and best wisdom, realizing which all the sages have attained hence the highest perfection.

2

Having attained this wisdom those who became one with Me, are not born at the time of creation nor are they afflicted at the time of dissolution.

3

The great Prakriti is My womb. Into that I cast My seed. Thence are all creatures born, O Bharata.

4

Of all the forms that are born from whatever wombs, Prakriti is the great Womb — (The Mother) and I am the Father, who cast the seed, O Son of Kunti.

5

Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the qualities that are born from Prakriti. They bind the

imperishable spirit to the body, O Mighty-armed One.

6

Of these, Sattva, on account of its purity, is illuminating and flawless. It binds (the embodied spirit) through attachment to happiness and knowledge, O sinless one.

7

Know Rajas to be of the nature of passion, born of desire and attachment. It binds, O son of Kunti, the embodied spirit by attachment to action (and its fruit).

8

Know that Tamas, which deludes all beings, is born of ignorance; it binds (the embodied beings) by error, sloth, sleep and the like), O Bharata.

9

Sattva leads (a man) to happiness, O Bharata; Rajas to action; while Tamas, veiling wisdom, urges (him) to error.

10

Sattva prevails overcoming Rajas and Tamas, O Bharata; and Rajas prevails overpowering Sattva and Tamas, and Tamas prevails suppressing Sattva and Rajas.

11

When in the body with all its gates (viz., the senses) there springs forth light and wisdom, one should know that Sattva has prevailed.

12

Greed, activity, undertaking of actions (with a selfish motive), restlessness and desire are born when Rajas prevails, O Best of the Bharata.

13

When Tamas predominates darkness, inactivity, error and illusion come forth, O delighter of the Kurus.

14

When a person is dissolved (i.e. dies) with Sattva predominating, he reaches the pure worlds of the highest wisdom.

15

When he is dissolved with Rajas overpowering, he is born among those attached

to action; dissolved when Tamas predominating, he is born in the wombs of the ignorant (i.e. animals, birds, etc.)

16

They say that the fruit of Sattvic action is Sattvic and pure. The fruit of the Rajasic action, however, is sorrow: Ignorance is the result of tamasic action.

17

Wisdom springs from Sattva; greed, indeed, from Rajas, and from Tamas arise error, delusion and ignorance.

18

Those who abide in Sattva go higher (i.e. to the higher world); those of Rajasic nature stay in the middle (world); those of Tamasic nature, in the lowest quality, go to the lowest.

19

When the seer clearly sees that there is no agent (or doer) apart from the qualities and knows (Me) beyond the qualities, he attains to My Being. (This is known as 'Viveka' — which leads to wisdom).

20

An embodied being, having transcended these three qualities arising from the body, becomes free from birth, death, old age and sorrow and attains Immortality.

(One has to transcend the Sattva also, as it creates egoism of a subtle nature and binds the person).

21

Arjuna said:

What are the marks of One who has transcended these three qualities, O Lord? How does he behave? And how does he transcend them?

22

Sri Bhagavan replied:

When Light, activity and delusion (or ignorance) come, O son of Pandu, he is not averse to them, nor does he desire them, when they do not come.

23

Like an aloof witness, he is not disturbed by the gunas (qualities); he stays firm, does not waver, considering that action proceeds from the gunas.

24

He is the same in pain and pleasure, self-poised, of equal value are to him clod of earth, stone and gold ; the pleasant and unpleasant, censure or praise he regards alike.

25

The same in honour and dishonour towards friends and foes ; he who abandons the initiative in all undertakings — is called one beyond qualities.

26

And he who serves Me with love and undeviating devotion, completely transcends the qualities and merges in Brahman.

27

For, I am the abode of Brahman, that is immortal, and imperishable, of Dharma that is perennial, and utter bliss.

Here ends the Fourteenth Chapter entitled : "*The Yoga of Division of the Three Qualities*".

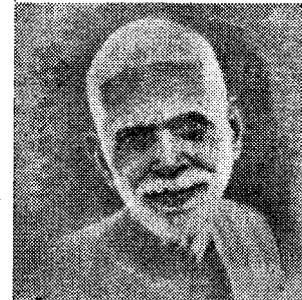
Garland of Guru's Sayings

Translated by Prof. K. SWAMINATHAN
from the Tamil of Sri MURUGANAR

71. The world's ways do not touch the sun.
The properties of earth, water, fire
and air
Do not touch the ether,
Even so, our doings, it is certain,
Do not affect the Lord
Untouched by mind.

72. Inward in the Heart inquiring
"Who am I?" the seeker vanishes
And only Siva shines.
The avid beholder having disappeared.
'Tis madness to contend
The world-appearance has reality.

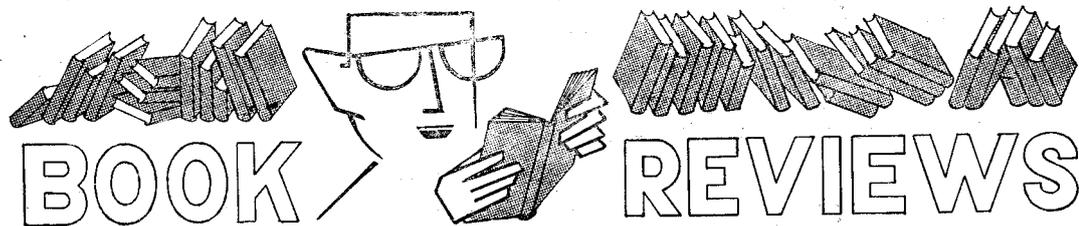
73. When in this wise both I and world
are gone
Siva's bright awareness shines alone.
This flawless Truth of One without
a second,
By whom or how can It be known
or reckoned?



74. If world or I were real like the Lord
His wholeness would be flawed.
Unless we grant the Lord could be
divided
Nought else can claim reality.

75. While thus Reality is One,
All schools concede at first
Three prime entities,¹
For otherwise the mind discursive
Would not begin the quest at all.

¹ God, soul and world.



REALISATION OF ONENESS: The Practice of Spiritual Healing By Joel Goldsmith. Ed. by Lorraine Sinkler. George Allen & Unwin Pp. 209. Price: 25sh. in U.K.

Joel Goldsmith is too well known as a writer on spiritual healing to need introduction.

Realization of Oneness is another book on the practice of spiritual healing in the spirit of advaita from the Christian point of view, with its emphasis also on devotion, on consecration to our neighbours' needs, in giving and serving which purifies the mind. At the same time Joel Goldsmith expresses purely advaitic concepts: God and man are one. The nature of man, then, is the nature of God expressed individually. "I and my Father are one". His eternal life is the life of our being. If we know our true nature we know the nature of God, the perfect Self. This brings one to Sri Ramana Maharshi's *vichara*, the Self-Enquiry "Who am I?"

If the cause of the prevailing chaos is to be removed, the world must awaken spiritually to the understanding of the real nature of God, the Self. This view is shared by many outstanding philosophers of our time such as Prof. S. Radhakrishnan in one of his latest books "Religion in a Changing World".

The secret of the Infinite Way is revealed in the realization of God's nature which is pure Consciousness and also the consciousness of every man in its limited aspect. Meditation reveals by degrees our true state and leads ultimately to enlightenment.

Spiritual healing has its foundation in God who is forever harmonious being. All human ills are a sort of hypnotism brought about by the hypnotism that we are separate beings from God. Healing comes through practising the Presence of God through a realization of "the principles of impersonalization and nothingization". All the evils of this world are nothing but pictures in the mind and when we know this they begin to dissolve.

This book is a condensed form of the essence of the Infinite Way practice with what seem unavoidable condensed repetitions. Its unique healing principles have proved extraordinarily successful by all accounts.

LUCIA OSBORNE.

THE PATH OF FREEDOM (Vimuttimagga): By Arhant Upatissa; Translated from the Chinese by the Rev. N. R. M. Ehara, Soma Thera and Kheminda Thera. Available from Dr. D. Roland D. Weerasuria, Balcombe House, Balcombe Place, Colombo-8. Pp. 362. Price: Rs. 8.00.

The Path of Freedom — Vimuttimagga — in its original Pali text by Upatissa, has not survived the vicissitudes of time and the translation into English has been made from a 6th Century Chinese translation by Soma Thera. After his death it was gone through, completed and made ready for publication by Kheminda Thera as a work of love.

Soma Thera came from a catholic background and his unanswered questions or rather the quest for truth led him to the Buddhahamma. He became such an outstanding scholar and monk that he was held in highest regard by those who knew him for his qualities of mind and heart and was mentioned to the Faculty of Eastern Religions at Oxford as eminently qualified by way of knowledge to fill the vacant chair of Eastern Religions. He was an indefatigable worker with many translations and outstanding works on Buddhist lore to his credit. He finished the translation of the present very elaborate work in hardly four months in spite of ill-health and died shortly afterwards of overwork.

Vimuttimagga is a work of great merit. Its author was called 'Great Light'. It has inspired men of ancient and present times by his practical approach and instruction in the path of freedom. It is less concerned with the exegesis and scholarly expositions of the Buddhist teaching as in the Visuddimagga which is more academic.

Both cover more or less the same ground. The *Vimuttimaggā* gives the impression of being written from the heart with great urgency (according to the translator).

It describes the path of freedom, training, removal of impurities, characteristics and benefits of virtue, impediments and, what is of help, mindfulness of respiration, concentration, supernormal powers caused by mind and various miscellaneous teachings with similes.

These expositions are very elaborate and at the same time cryptic.

Those who are interested in following this path will be greatly inspired by this translation which is appearing in English for the first time.

SHAKINAH.

HINDUISM THROUGH THE AGES: By Prof. D. S. Sarma, 3rd edition, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. Pp. 300. Price: Rs. 2.50.

Devotees and admirers of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi were no doubt disappointed at the scant treatment which was meted out to him by Professor Sarma in the first two editions of his excellent book on the progress of Hinduism through the ages. This defect has now been rectified in the present edition by the insertion of an entire chapter on the Maharshi. This chapter, though brief, contains the essentials of the Maharshi's teachings. Of particular interest is the question put by the author to the Maharshi and his spirited reply in regard to the *sadhana* followed by him before his enlightenment. Of equal interest is the statement that for eleven centuries after Shankara no great teacher had laid such emphasis on the path of knowledge as the Maharshi. The references given in the footnotes to this chapter do not indicate the editions of the books referred to and seem to be incorrect in some cases.

The remaining chapters of the book are only reproductions of those found in the earlier editions. They are of great value for those who are interested in making a critical and historical study of Hinduism, especially its features like *bhakti* and *tantrism* which are now so predominant among the masses. The major part of the book is devoted to the present Hindu renaissance and the important part played in it by institutions and individuals like the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ram Mohun Roy, Keshub Chandra Sen, Maharshi Debendranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Sri Ramana Maharshi and Dr. Radhakrishnan. One cannot

think of a better guide book to the religious and spiritual movements of the last two hundred years in India. The book is written throughout in a simple and attractive style. There is no index but there are several detailed tabular statements in an appendix which show the various periods and movements and their distinguishing features.

M. C. SUBRAMANIAN.

SIXTY YEARS OF BUDDHISM IN ENGLAND: By Christmas Humphreys, Buddhist Society, London. Pp. 84. Price: 18 sh.

This souvenir of the Diamond Jubilee of Buddhism in England is an interesting record of the first sixty years of the English Buddhist Society. It begins with the story of the first Society (1907-1926), goes on to the story of the present Society, and ends with a survey of Buddhism today.

From the start, the Society was faced with two problems: first, how to satisfy those who wished to study Buddhism objectively and whose main interest was its religious literature; second, how to help those who wanted to practise Buddhism as a way of life. Much was done to cater for these needs by more and more translations of the scriptures of the various schools, and by the books and visits of Dr. Suzuki from 1927 onwards. It is perhaps difficult for us today to imagine the impact which the newly introduced Mahayana School made in the West. For the first time in history, Western man was made aware of the wide range of Buddhist metaphysics, and in Zen particularly he found a practice with a strong appeal.

The attempts to introduce Buddhism into England at the turn of the century make a story of courage and tenacity in the face of obstacles both within and without. From that pioneer work the present Society has grown, and coped with its own difficulties and dangers. Throughout, it has received much help and encouragement from Eastern Buddhists. Visits have been exchanged which have further helped to strengthen ties.

In the present survey the author raises some of the many problems facing Buddhists today. How can the many-sided challenge which a fast-changing world presents be met creatively but without compromising principle? With that question posed, the author leaves his readers confronting the future.

No one is better fitted to record the achievements of the first sixty years of the English

Society than Christmas Humphreys, its Founding President since 1926, and to whose guidance and inspiration it owes so much.

MARTHA VAUGHAN

RAMANA MANJARI — an illustrated Souvenir produced in aid of the Building Fund of Ramana Kendra, Delhi. Price Rs. 3 (Copies can be had from Sri Ramanasramam).

This Souvenir containing authoritative articles, extracts and pictures has turned out to be a brief but beautiful anthology of Ramana literature, put together by a committee consisting of

Dr. K. M. Munshi, Prof. K. Swaminathan and others. Among the contributors are Kakasaheb Kalelkar, Morarji Desai, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Mr. Arthur Osborne, Justice M. Ananthanarayanan, Prof. D. S. Sarma, Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. The fresh translation of Bhagavan's *Upadesa Sara* has a clarity and directness of appeal which adds to the value of the collection. As the contents are precious and the cause is worthy, the *Manjari* will, it is hoped, find wide support among devotees and others interested in the spread of the philosophy of Sri Bhagavan.

'SEIN'

The Infinite

As rivers flow into the sea and in doing so lose name and form, even so the wise man, freed from name and form, attains the Supreme Being, the Self-luminous, the infinite.

— *Mundaka Upanishad.*

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A true translation from English to Tamil, of the famous TALKS WITH SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI. Sri R. Viswanathan, a long-standing devotee of Sri Bhagavan and an erudite scholar, has successfully brought out the spirit of the original into the translated version of that great treatise.

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TIRUVANNAMALAI, SOUTH INDIA



..... to the EDITOR

CONCENTRATION

I received two of the journals for the months of January and April 1968 and I can say with confidence that they are very interesting as well as illuminating for the peace of mind and perfect realization. I must write and say a few words that the *Mountain Path* is very lucky to have a well read, painstaking and highly religious and advanced soul like you, as an Editor of the journal.

It will be a personal favour to me, if you can help and guide me to solve my difficulty as I cannot concentrate and meditate for awakening those higher states of consciousness due to the fleeting thoughts and emotions which from time to time float through my mind. I am a staunch follower of Zoroastrian religion and say my daily prayers very regularly since my childhood with all my heart and soul as my humble thanksgiving to the Almighty God. Being a novice I would most sincerely and earnestly request you to make me understand and teach the most difficult art of concentration and meditation by sending me printed or typed lectures, literatures or pamphlets on this subject. I would most willingly buy those old journals of *Mountain Path* containing articles on the above-mentioned subject. Your suggestion for a particular book or books will be highly appreciated.

DR. K. S. CHOKSI,
Bhavanagar.

It is a good thing to practise one's religion regularly and from the heart. During sadhana fleeting thoughts and emotions float through the mind and rise to the surface so that what is hidden can be dealt with either through the vichara asking yourself "To whom is this thought or emotion?" which leads to the question "Who am I?" or simply by not paying attention to such thoughts and emotions. They will cease to

cloud your mind in due course of their own accord. One can also watch the in-going and out-going breaths without any counting or pranayama, simply passively watch them till they become calm and even. All sadhana aims at stilling the mind.

EDITOR.

ART AS SADHANA ?

I shall be happy if you can answer my questions.

(1) In some books I have read that the arts like drawing, sculpture, painting are a sadhana (with some appropriate rules). But I have never found a great master (except for Plotinus, cf. John Spiers's article "The artist as sadhaka" in the *Mountain Path* of January 1965) or a serious spiritual tradition which teaches this. Is Sri Maharshi known to have stated anything about this sort of sadhana? If you know some great teacher or a spiritual tradition which teaches these special arts as a sadhana can you give me some indications about them?

(2) In your book 'Ramana Maharshi', chapter XIV, p. 178 (introduction) I have noticed that it speaks of 'end of ages'. What do you mean by this?

(3) About 'Ahimsa': It is the duty (dharma) of the sannyasin and Sri Maharshi taught this to devotees who lived with Him. But Sri Maharshi said also that 'Self-Enquiry' and 'bhakti-marga' must be followed in active life. The Grihastha (householder) has the duty to fight and kill, if necessary, the people who menace the religion, the nation, the family or him. So what is to be done if he follows the path of Self-Enquiry taught by the Maharshi? Must he resist or not? What is his duty?

ANONYMOUS, Paris.

(1) Sri Ramana Maharshi has never spoken about art as sadhana. If action whether art or anything else is performed selflessly to the best of our ability without caring for the fruit or result (nishkama karma) it becomes sadhana and serves to purify the mind.

(2) At the end of a yuga or a cycle of civilization comes dissolution (pralaya) followed again by a new cycle and golden age.

(3) Everyone should follow his own dharma or duty. The dharma of a sanyasin is not to resist evil while that of a householder is to protect those dependant on him. Following the path of Self-enquiry does not stand in the way of performing what is of right one's duty, which naturally varies with the performer.

EDITOR,

MEDITATION ON HEART

It appears that Bhagavan Ramana had advised an aspirant to meditate on the 'heart' which is the coolest place since the sadhaka was getting headaches.

It is not clear to me if one can meditate without using the head or the thinking power at all. In that case the headache is bound to occur when one starts focusing the mind or as you had formerly remarked that meditation is more a feeling than concentrating on any place inside the body or even outside. Such cryptic advice needs elaborate explanation for weak minds to grasp exactly the practical technique. As you so wonderfully explain in the Reader's columns I should be happy to know a detailed practical

foolproof method of such a type of cool meditation which does not result in any headache or other kinds of physical disturbance.

My own experience shows that the whole physical structure undergoes a transformation as the body gets charged with vibrations. I hope you will make this clear for novices of my type.

Finally as Goudapada is said to have stated to his disciple when he complained of headache 'why boy, there is no head, where is your headache?'

S. ALWAR,
Bombay.

If meditation causes headaches the best thing is to concentrate on the heart, not the physical organ but the spiritual heart at the right side of the chest. With practice one can hear even the heartbeats there. One can and should meditate without actively thinking. Thoughts will come to cloud the mind. Just watch them passively without paying much attention to them. They will vanish in due course of their own accord. You can also watch your breathing without thinking of anything, or counting; just be a witness of your breathing and it will become calm and even and help the headaches also.

The more one meditates without straining the more one experiences a feeling of lightness of the body. I presume you mean that when writing about the vibrations and transformation of the body.

Gaudapada meant by his remark that the body itself is an illusion or superimposition.

EDITOR,

Just Published!

Just Published!!

DAY BY DAY WITH BHAGAVAN

From the **Diary** of Sri A. Devaraja Mudaliar, one of the old and staunch devotees - a recording of the enchanting talks by **Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi**, covering the years 1945 - 1946. Combined Volume - originally printed as Vols. I & II.

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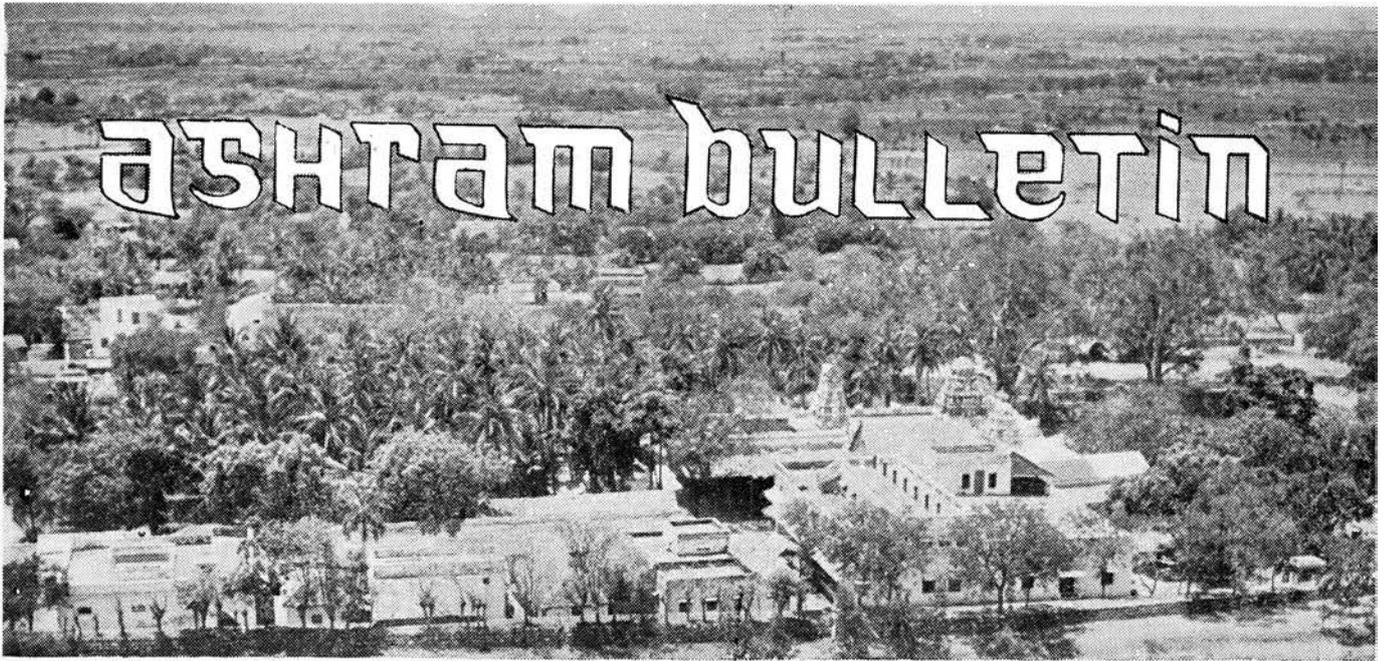
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ASHRAM BULLETIN



“RAMANA MANJARI”—SOUVENIR RELEASED

A HAPPY FUNCTION AT THE CAPITAL

AT A special function held on Saturday, the 14th September, 1968, at Vinayak Mandir, New Delhi, Shri Morarji Desai, President of the Ramana Kendra, Delhi, released *RAMANA MANJARI*,¹ a souvenir produced in aid of the building fund of the Kendra.

presented by Shri A. R. Natarajan, to the Kendra on behalf of Sri Ramanasramam.



Shri Morarji Desai, is seen absorbed in the contents of the souvenir, RAMANA MANJARI, which he released on the 14th Sept. '68.

A striking coloured photograph of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, 30"×40" size, was formally



Shri Morarji Desai, Deputy Prime Minister of India, addresses the Ramana-bhaktas. Prof. K. Swaminathan, Dr. C. Ramaswamy (standing) Shri M. L. Sondhi, and others listen with rapt attention.

Shri Morarji Desai recalled his visit to Sri Bhagavan in 1935 and the unique peace and ananda he had in His presence and talked of the need for the practice of His teachings.

¹ A review of the Souvenir appears in the *Book Reviews* column of this issue.

The function was well attended and the programme included chanting of Upanishad, *Upadesa Saram*, *Arunachala Siva* and silent meditation.

Prof. K. Swaminathan, Secretary of the Ramana Kendra, Delhi, presented a report on the Kendra's activities.

Dr. C. Ramaswamy thanked Shri Morarji Desai and Shri M. L. Sondhi and others for their sustained help to the Kendra.

* * *

SAINT'S DAY AT DELHI

Arunagirinathar Day was celebrated on 16th August in the Vinayak Mandir Hall, Sarojini nagar. Many ladies took part in the choric singing and the function was a great success.

* * *

ARADHANA AT SANKARA VIHAR

Sri Ramana Aradhana was observed in a solemn manner by the devotees in Sankara Vihar, Madras 23, on Thursday, the 25th April 1968. The function started with the recitation of Bhagavan's *Aksharamanamalai* and *Dakshinamurti Stotram*. This was followed by a discourse by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan on *Hastamalakiyam* of Sri Hastamalaka, one of the direct disciples of Sri Sankara. Sri Sankara himself has written a commentary on these 12 verses of *Hastamalakiyam*. Bhagavan Ramana has rendered this work into Tamil verses with an introductory verse of his own.

After explaining briefly in English the import of the original work for the benefit of some members of the audience who were not conversant with Tamil, Dr. Mahadevan elucidated the poem of Bhagavan in Tamil, bringing out the essence of Advaita philosophy, viz., 'I am the ever-luminous Reality', *nityopalabधि-svarupoham atma*, the refrain with which every verse in the *Hastamalakiyam* ends.

After puja and pushpanjali the function came to a close.

SRI RAMANA SAT SANGH

The Sat Sanghs continue to be held and are attended by the inmates and non-resident devotees regularly. They are now held on four days. On Sundays and Thursdays Sri Sadhu Om reads and explains a few verses from Sri Bhagavan's *Nool Thirattu* (*The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*) in Tamil from the beginning. On Tuesdays and Saturdays Suri Nagamma reads some of the letters which she wrote from Sri Ramanasramam during Sri Bhagavan's time. Although these letters (the well-known, *Lekhalu*) have been published in the original Telugu, only some of them have been translated into English and printed till now. She now reads, for the benefit of those who cannot read Telugu (those letters which have not yet been published in English translation¹) and explains them in Tamil. Being narratives of an eye-witness they are of absorbing interest to all devotees of Sri Bhagavan who feel as if they are actually in His presence and seeing Him and hearing Him talk.

* * *

EDITOR'S VISIT TO UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. Arthur Osborne, our Editor, along with Mrs. Osborne, has gone to England for two or three months, after a lapse of over twenty^e five years, to meet his old mother and daughters' and also for change to recoup his rather indifferent health. Before proceeding to England they spent a few days in Madrid, Spain, with our friend and Sri Bhagavan's devotee, Mrs. Regina Sendras.

Mrs. Osborne writes from London: "In Madrid there was a gathering of Spanish devotees of Sri Bhagavan to meet A. O. and thank him for the work of spreading Sri Bhagavan's teachings. The Spanish translation of *Ramana*

¹The Second volume of *Letters from Sri Ramanasramam* is expected to be printed in 1969 along with the first volume, now out of stock, perhaps as a combined volume.



Arathi (waving of light) is being performed to the beautiful portrait of Sri Bhagavan, presented to the Kendra by the Ashram.

Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge is so popular that it is already exhausted and it has to be reprinted. A.O.'s family is very happy to see him again. He feels better in this climate but misses very much Tiruvannamalai."

* * *

VISITORS AND PILGRIMS

Of the numerous aspirants who visited the Ashram in the first half of the year all have left with the exception of *Horst Rutkowski* from West Germany who continues to practise his sadhana in a most inconspicuous manner. There were a number of visitors, as usual, from foreign countries¹ but with the exception of one or two they stayed only for very short periods.

* * *

Dr. Karl Pfauter, Consul General for West Germany in Madras, paid a visit to the Ashram in August. He has long been interested in Sri Bhagavan's teachings and showed much interest in seeing the places associated with Him.

* * *

*Sri D. S. Sastri*² an old and well-known devotee, came with his family to celebrate his seventy-first birthday at the Ashram. Special pujas were conducted on the occasion.

* * *

Mrs. Barbara Rose, hailing from U.S.A., was in Madras in 1961 and stayed for more than a year. Although she was so near to the Ashram she did not hear anything about Sri Bhagavan. It was when she was teaching Yoga in Holland later on that she heard of Him. She immediately felt that He was her Guru. She was trying to come to India ever since but could do so only recently. She and her husband were posted to Kathmandu for some work connected with Peace Corps. She then availed herself of

¹ Jean Deloche — France
 Jeannine Deloche — France
 Francis Deloche — France
 Christopher Richard Pegler — U.K.
 Gregory W. Hkamper — U.S.A.
 Tima Newman — U.S.A.
 Ritama Willem Evero — Netherlands
 Jean Claude Marolle — France
 Dominique Noblanc — France
 Bernard Dufournet — France
 Bogenachneider — Germany
 Antonie Kaitenheim — Germany
 George Hobart — U.S.A.
 Eric Allen Bryant — U.S.A.
 Gerald Davis — U.S.A.

² His article on *How he came to the Maharshi* was published on page 55 of January, 1967 issue.

the ten days of leave to fly south and visit the important places connected with Sri Bhagavan in Tiruvannamalai. She spent most of her time in contemplation. She said: "His teachings! Each time you go back to it, it says more to you and some other idea comes suddenly alive. There's so much in it and it helps to keep things in neat order in the mind, ready to be taken out and used when needed." She wants to come again with her husband.

* * *

Mr. Roger Henninger, from France, visited the Ashram a few months back but stayed only for a couple of days. However, he strongly felt the presence of Sri Bhagavan and His guidance. He has come again with the object of spending four months at the Ashram.

* * *

Sri K. S. Varadan (Asst. Dy. Director General of Drugs, Calcutta), who is a staunch theosophist and devotee of Sri Bhagavan, fulfilled his long cherished wish to visit the abode of Sri Bhagavan, in August, by bringing his family to spend a couple of days at the Ashram. The Old Hall attracted him most and he spent quiet hours there meditating. His wife and son were also very much impressed by the serene spiritual atmosphere of the Ashram. Sri Varadan is an enthusiastic supporter of *The Mountain Path* and helps the journal in all possible ways. This visit of his to the Ashram has impressed him so much that he now avows to be back here at no longer distance. We extend to him, as always, a warm welcome!

* * *

TRUSTEES' VISIT TO TIRUCHUZH

The President, Sri T. N. Venkataraman and the Trustees, Sri B. S. Ranganadham and Sri K. Padmanabhan, visited Tiruchuzhi and Madurai between the 11th and 14th August. They were accompanied and ably assisted by Sri R. Srirama Iyer. They inspected the Ashram lands in Chennilakudi village, near Tiruchuzhi, which were inherited from Sri Bhagavan's ancestors, with a view to examine the possibilities of reclaiming some of the area for wet cultivation.

The *Sundara Mandiram*, at Tiruchuzhi, the birthplace of Sri Maharshi, and the *Ramana Mandiram* at Madurai, where Bhagavan had his first death experience (both these places are regarded as pilgrim centres by Ramana-bhaktas) were also inspected and proposals for certain improvements were formulated.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

New Additions

- Ever Beyond the Much Talked of Subconscious* by "Alone".
- Readings in Indian History, Politics and Philosophy* Ed. K. Satchidanandamurty.
- Complete Concordance* by Alexander Cruden.
- In the Tracks of Buddhism*, Frithjof Schuon.
- My Spiritual Experiences* by Mohan Singh.
- Reminiscences* by Krishnanand.
- Pashu Puraan* by Hattiangadi.
- Journeys in Belief* Ed. Bernard Dixon.
- Shikshapatri* by Sahajanand Swami.
- Realisation of Oneness* by Joel S. Goldsmith.
- The Path of Freedom (Vimuttimaggā)* Tr. N. R. M. Ehara, Soma Thera and Kheminda Thera.
- Hinduism Through the Ages* by D. S. Sarma.
- All Unto the Mind* (Manache Sloka of Swami Ramdas) Tr. K. R. Kulkarni.
- Amritanubhava of Sri Jnaneshwara* Tr. K. R. Kulkarni.
- Organised Religion* by Hiram Elfenbeim.
- The Philosophy of Pancharatra* by Dr. S. R. Bhatt.
- Sixty Years of Buddhism in England* by Christmas Humphreys.
- The Encounter of Man and Nature* by Sayyed Hossein Nasr.
- Zoroaster's Influence on Greek Thought* by Ruhi Afnan.
- Sequel to the Mysteries of God in the Universe* by H. S. Spencer and others.
- The Zen Teaching of Huang Po on The Transmission of Mind* translated by John Blofeld.
- Selected Sayings from the Perfection of Wisdom*, chosen, arranged and translated from the Prajnaparamita by Edward Conze.

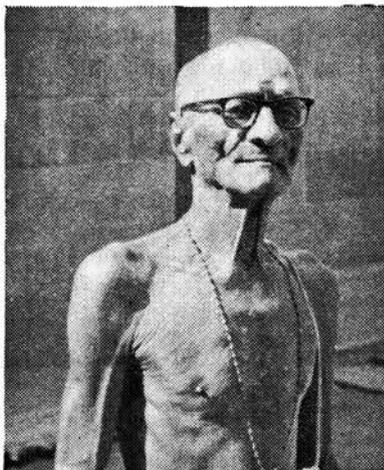
FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

NAVARATHRI FESTIVAL (commences on)	..	Monday	23- 9-1968
SARASWATHI POOJA	.. ..	Monday	30- 9-1968
VIJAYADASAMI	.. ..	Tuesday	1-10-1968
DEEPAVALI	.. ..	Monday	21-10-1968
SKANDASHASHTI	.. ..	Sunday	27-10-1968
KARTHIGAI FESTIVAL (commences on)	.. ..	Sunday	24-11-1968
KARTHIGAI DEEPAM	.. ..	Tuesday	3-12-1968
JAYANTHI OF SRI MAHARSHI (89th Birthday)	.. ..	Saturday	4- 1-1969
PONGAL	.. ..	Tuesday	14- 1-1969
CHINNASWAMI ARADHANA	.. ..	Sunday	2- 2-1969
MAHA SIVARATHRI	.. ..	Saturday	15- 2-1969
TELUGU NEW YEAR DAY	.. ..	Wednesday	19- 3-1969
SRI VIDYA HAVAN	.. ..	Friday	21- 3-1969
TAMIL NEW YEAR DAY	.. ..	Sunday	13- 4-1969
ARADHANA OF SRI MAHARSHI (19th Anniversary)	.. ..	Monday	14- 4-1969

INTRODUCING.....

SRI RAMANAPĀDĀNANDA

IN his *purvasrama*, Sri Ramanapadananda was V. S. Kuppuswami Ayyangar. Born in 1889, he had made and lost several fortunes in business and had travelled widely all over India before he met Sri Bhagavan and Seshadriswami in January 1928 and felt drawn to spiritual life. It was two years later, in February 1930, that B. V. Narasimha Swami and others, observing the Sri Vaishnava's delighted contemplation of the Guru's feet, conferred on him his present and highly cherished name of Ramanapadananda.



Sri Ramanapadananda

Not long after, his devotion to Bhagavan took concrete shape as steady service to the poet Muruganar, whose inspired and scholarly utterances he has not only brought out in a long series of perfectly produced volumes, but has further popularized through repeated propaganda tours of Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia and various parts of India. Wherever he found the response encouraging, as for example in Nagarathar centres, Sri Padananda organized the systematic and continuous recital of Muruganar's *magnum opus*, the *Ramana Sannidhi Murai*.

• A phenomenon as remarkable as it is praiseworthy is the total absence of misprint, wrong



spacing or broken type in any one of the many volumes of Tamil poetry brought out by this ardent admirer. This absolute flawlessness was the result of the publisher's close co-operation with Muruganar himself and of his success in enlisting the help of scholars like V. S. Chendralvaraya Pillai and K. V. Jagannathan in the formidable task of taking these complex compositions through the press. No wonder Muruganar makes a specific reference by name to this admirer in stanza 5 of *Ramana Vibhavam*, one of the poet's most highly elaborated songs.

From 1964 onwards, Sri Padananda, his mighty efforts and wide wanderings over, has settled down in Ramanasramam, where he finds and spreads joy by joining in the daily *parayana* of Tamil poems.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS both Indian and Overseas

Our quarterly journal was inaugurated in 1964 with the willing co-operation of several honorary workers, and considering that its aim is to disseminate Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi's message, along with other genuine spiritual teachings, we fixed the subscription rates at the minimum possible, viz., (original rate) Indian — Rs. 5.00 ; Foreign — Sterling £ 0-10-0 or U.S. \$ 1.50.

Being a quarterly, our journal cannot claim the special postal concessions available to monthly journals and periodicals issued at more frequent intervals.

Since 1964, there has been a steady rise in the cost of paper, materials and printing charges ; and the postal charges have been steeply increased twice. The devaluation of the British Pound, soon following the devaluation of the Indian Rupee has further added to our costs. We are, therefore, unwillingly compelled to REVISE the subscription rates, as follows : effective from January 1969 for renewals and new enrolments :

<i>Annual</i> :	INLAND :	Rs. 6.00 ;	FOREIGN :	Sterling £ 0-12-6 or U.S. \$ 1.50
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(4) Australia, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden	30 sh.	3.60
(5) North, Central and South America, Hawaii, Fiji, New Zealand	37 sh.	4.50

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