Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!
O Moon of Grace, with Thy (cool) rays as hands, open (within me) the ambrosial orifice and let my heart rejoice, Oh, Arunachala.

Publisher:
T. N. Venkataraman, President, Board of Trustees, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

Editor:
Mrs. Lucia Osborne
Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

Managing Editor:
V. Ganesan,
Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

Annual Subscription:
India Rs. 6. 12sh. 6d. $ 1.50

Contents

No. 1

The Mountain Path
(A A QUARTERLY)

"Arunachala ! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala ! "
— The Marital Garland of Letters, verse 1.

Vol. VIII JANUARY 1971

Page

EDITORIAL:
Sad-Guru is One 1
Lord Ramana, Come 4
— Satyamangalam Venkataramana Iyer
Ramana Sad-Guru 5
— Satyamangalam Venkataramana Iyer
Ramana Sad-Guru — Arthur Osborne 6
The Sources of Classic Chinese Thought
— Father Thomas Merton 9
The Sacred Song of Thayumanavar
— Gladys de Meuter 11
Sad-Guru is within
18
Excerpts from a Saint's Talks
— Prof. Madan Mohon Varma
Life of Saint Arunagirinathar
— Sadhu Parthasarathy 19
Awakening — Philip Pegler
20
Vallimalai Tiruppugazh Swami Centenary
Celebrations — Kalyanasundaram
23
I Am Here — Bhamini N. Munsif
24
Sri Ramana: A Pure Channel for a Higher Power — Paul Brunson
The Voyage — Harindranath Chattopadhyaya
26
"1-1" — Wei Wu Wei 27
World as Self: Its Question as Answer?
— Stephen Joss Brooks 28
The Great Game of Pretending
— Douglas E. Harding 30
Garland of Guru's Sayings (Poem) 34
Creation and Uncreated — P. Stenius 35
God, the Self-Created and Self-Maintaining Principle — Joel S. Goldsmith 36
The Illusion of Matter — Murdoch Kerby 37
CONTENTS—(Contd.)

How Bhagavan Came to Me
— Sadhu Trivenigiri Swami       38
The Snow Maiden, Uma Haimavati — 'Sunya'       40
Glory of Arunachala                  42
Arunachala — Jean Dunn             45
Yoga Vasishta Sara                  46
The Vedaparayana                    47
What We Really Are!                 48
Book Reviews                        49
Ashram Bulletin                     62
Introducing                        63
Mrs. & Mr. A. R. Narayana Rao      70
Letters to the Editor               71
The Flight — Harindranath Chattopadhyaya       76

GRACE IN WORDS: The Verses (UPADESA SARAM) in Tamil reproduced on the fly-leaf facing the frontispiece is the facsimile of Sri Bhagavan's own handwriting. The translation is a new free rendering into English by Prof. K. Swaminathan.

To Our Subscribers

1. The official year of the quarterly is from January to December.
2. SUBSCRIBERS IN INDIA should remit their annual subscription by Money Order only as far as possible and not by cheque. The words 'subscription for The Mountain Path for . . . . . . . . . year/years' should be written on the M.O coupon and the full name and address written in BLOCK LETTERS on the reverse of the coupon.

Life Subscription should be sent by cheque drawn favouring The Mountain Path and crossed.

The journal will not be sent by V.P.P.

3. FOREIGN SUBSCRIBERS can send their subscription by International Money Order, British Postal Order or by Bank cheque or draft payable in India, U.S.A. or U.K.

The subscription rates are for despatch of the journal by surface mail to all parts of the world.

If despatch by AIR MAIL is desired the following additional annual amount should be remitted:

(a) Pakistan, Ceylon Rs. 8.80 £ 1.00
(b) Aden, Kuwait, Hongkong, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines 15s 1.80
(c) U.K., France, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Monaco, Switzerland, East, South and West Africa 22s 2.70
(d) Australia, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden 30s 3.50
(e) North, Central and South America, Fiji, Hawaii, New Zealand 37s 4.50

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.

Contributions for publication should be addressed to 'The Editor, The Mountain Path, Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, Madras State'. They should be in English and typed with double spacing. Contributions not published will be returned on request.

The editor is not responsible for statements and opinions contained in signed articles.

No payment is made for contributions published. Anything herein published may be reprinted elsewhere without fee provided due acknowledgement is made and the editor is previously notified.

Contributions are accepted only on condition that they do not appear elsewhere before being published in The Mountain Path. They can be published later elsewhere but only with acknowledgement to The Mountain Path.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH is dedicated to
Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharsh
25. Seeing oneself free of all attributes
   Is to see the Lord,
   For He shines ever as the pure Self.

26. To know the Self is but to be the Self,
    For It is non-dual.
    In such knowledge
    One abides as That.

27. That is true knowledge which transcends
    Both knowledge and ignorance,
    For in pure knowledge
    Is no object to be known.

   — Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi
SAD-GURU IS ONE

[There is a strange prelude leading up to this editorial. A devotee-friend, a Bengali engineer, S. P. Mukherjee, who settled down here with his wife after Sri Bhagavan's Maha-samadhi met us one evening on our way home from the Ashram meditation hall and told us with some excitement about a vivid dream he had had the previous night. In this dream he was shown an article signed by Arthur in the all-pervading presence of Sri Bhagavan though he was not quite sure whether he saw His form or not. Its title SAD-GURU IS ONE imprinted itself on his mind; it was so distinct. He thought this was a sure indication that such an article should be written. Arthur fully agreed and next morning we sent a note asking him to put his dream down in writing which he did. Since Arthur did not manage to write the article it devolves on me to do so now as best as I can with Grace and support.]

**Editorial**

**WHO is the Sad-Guru?** Ramana Maharshi says that God, Guru and Self are one and the same. The Sad-Guru is within abiding always in the profound depths of the Self. All sadhana is meant to remove the ignorant idea that he is outside, that we are separate from the Self so that we may discover in the end first intellectually and then as living truth that the seeker himself never was anything else but that which he was seeking with so much effort. Still this seemingly unnecessary effort is a vital condition in one's sadhana till it becomes effortless. The Sad-Guru for whom there is no 'otherness' nevertheless stresses this condition, "Divine Grace is vouchsafed to him only who has striven hard and one-pointedly."

In an editorial on the spiritual Master as a factor in religious experience (Newsletter Review of the Bucke Memorial Society, Autumn 1967) the guru is referred to as a "specialized helper". Presumably the specialized helper refers to the second kind of guru mentioned in the article 'The Two Kinds of Guru' in the same Newsletter Review and in *The Mountain Path*. Such a guru has been vested with the authority and function of directing without having himself broken free.

1 July 1969 issue, p. 134.
from the illusion of the individual state. He is compared to a not perfectly clean pipeline bringing the waters of life to thirsty men, able to quench their thirst up to a point not without danger of germs and sickness.

The scriptures declare that the Enlightened who has attained Supreme Knowledge is Brahman Himself. The spiritual Master or Sad-Guru is the Enlightened and not merely a factor in religious experience but the innermost essence of all beings. To a bhakta He is the Beloved in the inmost recess of the spiritual heart. When the mind dissolved in love merges in the Beloved, the Self reveals itself as It is in Absolute Consciousness. 'The real Guru is in the heart', says Ramana Maharshi, 'the task of the outer Guru is only to turn you inward to the Guru in the heart.' The outer Guru in the form of a human psychosomatic instrument guides one back to the Self within. And this can be experienced.

Here is an extract from 'Our Quest' in preparation:

"In the early years long before I ever heard or read these words, long before the relevant books on Sri Bhagavan were written we were sitting one evening in the hall as was usual after the Vedic chantings were over. It used to be a truly wonderful hour of perfect silence 'our cares thrown among the lillies'. Sri Bhagavan calls such Silence the eternal flow of language, obstructed by words, more potent and vast than all the sastras put together. So eager were the devotees not to miss this best hour of the day that when Ashram Sarvadhikari gave an order much later for women to leave the premises before dark, one of them, a French woman sat down among the men in man's garb. She used to shave her head occasionally. Well, usually one would sit down and meditate with closed eyes but that evening I could not turn them away from Bhagavan's face so movingly beautiful, so pure and radiant it was, gripping the heart with its innocence and wisdom. Could anything, anyone be dearer, nearer? Suddenly in a moment of indescribable tenderness He was in my heart. He became my heart; whether still seated on the couch or not I do not know, but I do know that He was the very core of my being, the I AM. And so He always is but we do not always know. Later I came across such statements with a thrill of recognition that it was so, that it was true.'

In other traditions this truth is couched in different terms but it means the same. In the Siva Parannam Saint Manickavachakar prays for an unbroken state of experience adoring the feet of Him 'who is really not apart from me in my heart not even for a moment'.

The form of the Sad-Guru is a sort of decoy. Out of compassion He assumes a form and name. Sri Bhagavan says: "You imagine Him to be like yourself with a body. His work lies within. The Guru who is God or Self incarnate, who is immanent, out of Grace takes pity on the devotee and manifests Himself and guides in the right path until he realises the Self within. The Guru is both within and without so He creates conditions to drive you inwards and exerts a pull from within..."

In the verses selected by Sri Bhagavan Saint Thayumanavar says: . . . 'In order to enlighten me Grace took shape. In every respect like myself, eating and sleeping, suffering and enjoying, bearing a name and born somewhere, it appeared as the silent Guru, like a deer used to decoy another of its species.'

Enticement also comes in. In another verse Thayumanavar says that when overpowered by the infinite Expanse (Absolute Consciousness), all ours will prosper, nothing will suffer, all undertakings will succeed to perfection. Most of the troubles and suffering crop up in relation or from our relationship with 'ours' and when undertakings do not succeed. This assurance that all will be well with 'ours' etc., can be a great incentive on the relative plane and perfectly valid. As we are so is the world which is only a reflection of the inner state. When overpowered by the infinite Expanse all will be harmony without concepts of otherness.
The impact of the Sad-Guru’s manifestation varies commensurate with the state of those who approach Him. The more the heart is empty of cares, anxieties, preoccupations, in fact empty of thoughts, the more capacious the vessel to take what it can carry from the limitless sea of Grace. He has the power to lift sorrow and flood the heart with peace in Silence. There is no need to tell Him. He knows our state the Sad-Guru who is One in all hearts. For some His simple direct utterances are like rain fallen on the parched earth to make the seeds of their longing germinate in sadhana. The Sad-Guru’s Grace is like a hand extended to help one out of the water of samsara (mundane existence with all its troubles). May be the hand is extended when the seeker is almost ready or nearly out of the water but may still slip back without such support. Again it may be this final touch which results in moksha (liberation). Such cases are known. On one occasion He refused a mother’s repeated requests to bless her child by putting his hand on its head. When she left Sri Bhagavan remarked : “Does she not know that if I touched the child’s head it would get moksha?” Moksha also means physical death.

The Grace of the Sad-Guru can help a seeker to get glimpses of ultimate Reality but the seeker must also do his part. Some need more encouragement than others. After such an experience the mind may turn away from the pursuit of fleeting pleasures towards regaining this Sublime state. The Sad-Guru shows the way how to still the mind so that waves of thought cease to rise and then the experience will well up again and can steady itself.

Expounding doctrine is not the primary function of the Guru. He may do so in reply to questions. ‘Many men can utter words of wisdom, few men can practise it themselves’ (Hitopadesa). In the Kali Yuga there are many who are keen to display their knowledge. Nobody can lead further than he himself has gone nor lead to the summit when still on the path seeking or lost in his guru-enhanced ego. Their talk will be food for the mind but cannot infuse strength or transform whereas the Guru’s Silence and the very same words uttered by Him or read directly as faithfully recorded in books are potent even if not fully understood at the time. Like a seed thrown into the ground it will germinate in due course. In this light one can understand why Sri Bhagavan paid such meticulous attention and care to his words recorded in print and why he said that one has to be properly initiated for a mantra to be effective.

Sri Bhagavan gave the assurance that His guidance and contact will continue as before even after His form has vanished. How? “Grace is ever present, Grace is the Self, you are never out of its operation. All you have to do is to merge in the heart and surrender. All that is necessary is to know its existence. Earnest effort never fails.” The Sad-Guru or Grace is like an eternal spring dammed by our ignorance, predispositions, concepts etc. Sri Bhagavan says : ‘... the moment you effect subsidence or merger of the mind into its source, Grace rushes forth spouting as from a spring, from within you.’ What is needed is to realise the unreality of the obstruction by steadfast right effort as indicated by the Guru. If one turns to Him in the heart He will do His part and set one on the path leading to the realisation of the all-pervading Oneness of Being.

Ramana Sad-Guru is identified with Arunachala of which it is said in the Skanda Purana : “This is the beacon of Light (teja-linga) the origin of all the worlds, here standing as Arunachala on earth. Even when the whole earth sinks down in the waters of dissolution, this region will remain unaffected.” The Unchangeable amid change it is an everlasting spring and will never run dry. It bestows peace and well-being on all who approach it. The influence and radiance of Arunachala-Ramana spreads far and wide. All will find what they need.

He is the eternal all-sufficient Guru, the Self leading to the Self. Those who turn to
Him and follow His teaching by the enquiry ‘Who am I?’ or surrender or by any other path indicated by Him according to the aptitude of the seeker, will find Him ever present, ever watchful, ever helpful as before. Now it is easier than before. Did not Christ say: “Blessed are those who have seen and believe but more blessed are those who have not seen and believe.”

This is the age of indiscipline and unbelief. Those who reject the Guru do not reach beyond the physical form. Their own Self, the core of their being is the Sad-Guru, God or the Self so how can He be rejected?

For the Sad-Guru who is the Universal Self there is no coming or going, no change or becoming, no here or there, only the changeless HERE and NOW. Here in the heart of man who seeks Him.

“This is the age of indiscipline and unbelief. Those who reject the Guru do not reach beyond the physical form. Their own Self, the core of their being is the Sad-Guru, God or the Self so how can He be rejected?

For the Sad-Guru who is the Universal Self there is no coming or going, no change or becoming, no here or there, only the changeless HERE and NOW. Here in the heart of man who seeks Him.

“Obeisance and praise be to the Sad-Guru who for countless generations has been within me and guiding me” and then as Ramana relinquished his outer form when the inner Guru was awakened in the heart as an ever-present living Guide to hasten the removal of non-existent misery and grant ever present Moksha (Liberation) to those who seek.

2 Kaivalya Narasimhan.

Lord Ramana, Come!

By

Satyamangalam Venkataramana Iyer

[A few verses translated from a Tamil poem composed years ago by this devotee who had the Grace of Sri Bhagavan]

Dawn is rising on the Hill,
Sweet Ramana, come!
Lord Arunachala, come!

In the bush the koel sings,
Dear Master Ramana, come!
Lord of Knowledge, come!

The conch blows, the stars are dim,
Sweet Ramana, come!
Lord God of Gods, come!

The cocks crow, the birds chirp,
It is already time, come!
The night has fled, come!

Love on the summit of Knowledge,
Past pleasure, past pain, come!
Blissful Silence, come!
Hail, hail, Ramana Sad-Guru,
Royal Ramana Sad-Guru!

He whom the gods of heaven adore
Was born a babe in Tiruchuzhi
When Beauty\(^2\) did with Beauty\(^2\) blend
The formless One took human form,

Within a cave in Aruna Hill
Where Wisdom dwells He came to dwell.

He mastered maya and destroyed
The senses false alluring bonds
Devoid of karma's tricky coils.

Absorbed in Arunachala
My Guru the beloved One
He is the wish-fulfilling tree
In human form embodied Grace.

---

Gold-hued, He Lord Siva Himself
Of matted locks. He is the One
Whose Guru was none other
Than his own Absolute Self.

The elements five He pervades
Beyond the five-fold body. To such
As come for comfort to His Feet
He gives the Knowledge that ends grief.

---

\(^1\) Sri Bhagavan used occasionally to join in the singing of this song by devotees pointing out that Ramana Sad-Guru was not just the 6 feet body of his.

\(^2\) Sri Bhagavan's mother was named Alagu (Tamil for beauty) and his father Sundaram (Sanskrit for beauty).
THERE was always some mystery about the upadesa or spiritual guidance of Sri Bhagavan. He did not give diksha or initiation in the usual way of laying on hands or giving the disciple a mantra to repeat. However that did not mean that he ignored the necessity for initiation. On the contrary he explicitly stated that a mantra picked up casually would not be effective but that the user must be duly initiated into it by one with authority. It also did not mean that he was unconcerned with the guidance of aspirants. In fact that was the one thing that he was obviously concerned with. He did not approve of questions of theory asked for mental gratification, but questions of sadhana or practice he always answered fully and graciously. There was no air of indolence at the Ashram but an intense activity, one might say the activity of a spiritual factory, with the devotees engaged in sadhana and Bhagavan supervising and guiding each one with meticulous though silent care.

All knew that they were the disciples and he the Guru. In private he spoke to them as the Guru and sometimes gave instructions for their sadhana. In each case the sadhana under his guidance dated from some act or word of initiation, usually concealed. When asked whether he was a Guru and gave initiation he always avoided a direct reply. Had his reply been ‘no’ he most certainly would have said ‘no’. But had he said ‘yes’ he would immediately have been besieged by demands for initiation and he would have been driven to make a distinction between true devotees and those who visited him without submitting in their heart and seeking his guidance. And his compassionate love was too great and his wisdom too shrewd to act in a way that would lead some to think that he ranked them higher than others. Indeed, he did not, since he saw the Self in all.

When asked whether he gave initiation, Bhagavan’s most usual reply was that there are three types of initiation: by speech, by look and by silence. This left the burden of understanding upon the enquirer. It is an old tradition, the three types being symbolised by the bird, which needs to sit on its eggs in order to hatch them, the fish which needs only to look at them, and the tortoise, which needs only to think of them. Initiation by silence is most natural to the jnana-marga.

Some formalists did indeed leave and seek initiation elsewhere and Bhagavan did nothing to detain them. Those with understanding remained. He said to one of them, Major Chadwick: “If it had been necessary for you to seek a Guru elsewhere you would have gone away long ago.”

1 Reproduced from Ramana-Arunachala, p. 65. Pub.: Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.
He was the Sad-Guru, the jivan-mukta, the perfect Jnani for whom there are no others but only the Self and therefore no relationship can be postulated. He sometimes reminded his devotees that the outer Guru is only a form taken out of consideration for the disciple's ignorance and serves to turn him inward to discover the inner Guru, who is the Self.

Normally Spiritual Masters have written openly about theory but have been more reserved about the technique they prescribed, lest any should attempt it without due authorization and do themselves harm. Bhagavan, however, proclaimed the path openly in speech and writing. This innovation accords with the silent initiation that he was bringing to the world. On any who turned to him in their heart the silent initiation might descend, in whatever place they might be, and any such could learn from the books the technique to be used. Indeed, Bhagavan has sometimes reminded devotees that even the journey to Tiruvannamalai is only illusory, the real pilgrimage having to be made in the heart, and has referred them to the published accounts of the path to be followed.

This leads on to another question: whether the direct path opened by Bhagavan was for his lifetime only or is still open to those who seek. A Guru is necessary for every seeker, as Bhagavan himself has said; he added, however that the Guru need not necessarily take human form. When he said this it applied only to a very rare case, but his guidance has made what was true to him true for his devotees also. His whole work differs from the normal mode of spiritual guidance. Throughout the ages there have been parallel initiatic streams flowing to the Ocean, each within its own banks, but now, in the Kali Yuga, many have petered out in the desert or marshes or dwindled to a trickle, and it is to this state of affairs that Bhagavan has brought the reply with a life-line thrown out to all who turn to him. If the method is unusual, it is only necessary to remember that it is Bhagavan who is the doer, and then to object would be to make oneself ridiculous. It would be like the Jews who rejected Christ because he did not come in the form they expected. And if Bhagavan could dispense with the usual mode of initiation and guidance during his lifetime, why not afterwards? The conditions which called for the innovation still exist.

When asked whether a jivan mukta continues to perform any function after physical death, Bhagavan replied that in some cases it is so.

When his physical death was imminent and devotees complained that he was leaving them without guidance, he replied: “You attach too much importance to the body,” indicating thereby that his discarding it would not put an end to their guidance.

In reply to a question by Dr. Masalavala, retired Medical Officer of Bhopal State, Bhagavan replied, as recorded by Devaraja Mudaliar in Day by Day with Bhagavan: “Guru is not the physical form, so contact will continue even after the physical form of the Guru vanishes.”

Before his death he said: “They say I am dying, but I am not going away. Where could I go? I am here.” This is a simple doctrinal statement because the Jnani is universal and there is no here or there for him, no coming and going in the HERE and NOW of eternity; but it was always Bhagavan's way to make a doctrinal statement, which together with its universal truth, would answer the particular needs of the devotees. Though we may leave him in our blindness, he cannot leave us, for he is the Self.

Right up to the end Bhagavan showed a continued interest in the continued publication of the books, revising a new edition during the last few weeks of his life. And yet the very purpose of the books was to spread the knowledge of vichara, the path of Self-enquiry, and if that was to be no longer accessible there would be no further need for them.

His devotees know that he is still the Guru,
They have felt the continuance of a guidance not only as potent but as subtle and detailed as before. For those who seek to turn to him it is best to say as he did to those who questioned the heart centre of which he spoke — that it is not discussion that is needed but trial. Let them invoke his Grace and strive in the way he prescribed and they will find out for themselves whether the Grace and guidance of the Guru are forthcoming.

That desolate night when a brilliant star trailed slowly across the sky at the very moment of his leaving the body, there was neither the frantic grief nor the despair that had been expected, but instead all were assuring each other that he was still there. Each one felt in his heart the continued Presence. Those whom one had thought would need consolation were able to console others.

That whole night the body that Bhagavan had worn and discarded was exposed to the view of the devotees in the Ashram hall. There was grief and weeping, but underneath it there was a strange peace that only Bhagavan himself could have implanted.

Few had realized how beloved he was in the neighboring town of Tiruvannamalai, but all through the night vast crowds came and passed through the Ashram hall in grief and awe, to have a last darshan of the physical form of the sage. Long processions walked to and from the town singing 'Arunchala-Siva.'

In the days that followed, the strong conviction of his continued Presence bore up the devotees and held most of them together.

The silent meditation and the morning and evening chanting of the Vedas continue before the Samadhi of Bhagavan as they did in his bodily presence. Now as then, access is for all, whatever their caste or religion.

The spiritual support that comes in sitting before the Samadhi is not only as strong but as sweet and subtle as it was before the bodily presence.

To all those who turn to Bhagavan in their hearts the response is even more immediate, the support more powerful. Not only that (for that is true wherever they may be) but the spiritual revitalisation that they used to derive from a visit to Tiruvannamalai still continues, even though the beloved face is hidden.

Bhagavan always bade us seek the Inner Guru. The love that we bore to the outer Guru helped us to do so, and yet, in a way, it impeded — now he has taken up his abode in our hearts. More than ever, we have to discard our impurities in order to discover Him, the Self, the Essence of our Being; more than ever he assists us to do so.

He is the Sad-Guru who teaches in Silence. Dakshinamurthi (Arunagiri Yogi) is said to dwell on the north slope of the sacred Arunachala Hill ready to give the potent silent upadesa (teaching) to any who came, but the spot is inaccessible. Sri Ramana is Dakshinamurthi. He has made accessible the direct path that was hidden for now the Grace radiates from his abode Arunachala.

The body’s death has, perhaps, brought about one change. He always said: “Ask yourself: Who am I?” but he also said: “Submit to me and I will strike down the ego.” Now the quest of the Self in the heart and submission to Bhagavan in the heart have become the same. The fusion of Jnana and Bhakti has become more perfect.

“Who can ever find Thee? The eye of the eye art Thou, and without eyes Thou seest, Oh Arunachala.

“From my home Thou didst entice me, then stealing into my heart, didst draw me gently into Thine. Such is Thy Grace, Oh Arunachala.

“I have betrayed Thy secret workings. Be not offended! Show me Thy Grace now openly, Oh Arunachala.”

(The Marital Garland of Letters, vv. 15 and 97-98)

Jnana-yoga or Jnana = the path of knowledge
Jivan-mukta = the Enlightened (Jnani)
Kali Yuga = the dark age
Darshan = seeing a holy man or image
Samadhi = a state of complete absorption in meditation or a grave
Bhakti = the path of devotion
That there appeared much hypocrisy. It was when the six relations lost their harmony
That there was talk of filial piety and paternal affection.
It was when the country fell into chaos and confusion
That there was talk of loyalty and trustworthiness.

Those who cannot cope with the paradoxical simplicity of this archaic and mystical view of the world imagine that Lao Tzu is scorning humanity and righteousness (the foundation stones of the Confucian ethics). On the contrary, he is trying to preach a doctrine which to westerners seems fantastically subtle: that the reality of humanity and righteousness is right there in front of your nose if only you will practise them without self-conscious reflection, or self-congratulation, and without making a fuss over ethical theory. In other words, reflection and self-consciousness are what begin the vitiation of true moral activity according to Lao Tzu. As soon as one becomes aware of doing good and avoiding evil he is no longer perfectly good. Ethical rationalization makes possible that schizoid division between words and acts, between thoughts and deeds, which (as Hamlet well knew) finally reduces honest activity to complete helplessness, or else lays the way open for political or religious crooks to do all the evil they like in the name of "righteousness".

For Lao Tzu, if one were to be righteous he should first of all fly all thought of righteousness, and put out of his mind any concept of himself as an ideal "righteous man".

He who knows glory but keeps to disgrace
Becomes the valley of the world.
Being the valley of the world
He finds contentment in constant virtue,
He returns to the uncarved block.
The cutting up of the uncarved block results in vessels,
Which in the hands of the sage become officers.
Truly, "a great cutter does not cut ..." 1

This kind of thought is definitely left of center. And there is no denying it is dangerous. The only one who can safely follow Lao Tzu is the man who is already so to speak a saint and a sage. Indeed that is the implicit assumption made by Taoism: it is a philosophy that would have worked fine in the Garden of Eden, and if Adam and Eve had stuck to the Tao there would have been little difficulty for the rest of us in doing so. But from the moment a man is immersed in confusion, and carried away by the passions and eccentricities of a bewildered and iniquitous society, he has little hope of finding himself merely by shutting his eyes and following the Tao. The Tao may be within him, but he is completely out of touch with it, just as he is out of touch with his own inmost self. Recovery of the Tao is impossible without a complete transformation, a change of heart which Christianity would call metanoia. Zen of course envisaged this problem, and studied how to arrive at satori, to the explosive rediscovery of the hidden and lost reality within us.

1 Quotations from the Tao Te Ching are taken from Sources of Chinese Tradition.

Nothing at all

Rabbi Aaron was asked what he had learnt from his teacher the Great Maggid, "Nothing at all," he said. And when they pressed him to explain what he meant by that, he added: "The nothing-at-all is what I learnt. I learnt the meaning of nothingness. I learnt that I am nothing at all and that I am notwithstanding."

— Martin Buber, Tales of the Hasidim — The Early Masters.
A pious and learned man Kediliappa Pillai was palace superintendent to the Raja of Trichinopoly, Vijaya Ranga Chokkanatha.

Blessed with one child, Chidambaram, Kediliappa Pillai prayed for another son at the shrine of Lord Thayumaneshwar, situated on the sacred hill of Saragiri. When his wish was granted, Kediliappa named his second born Thayumanavar.

The boy displayed a pious disposition at an early age, accompanying his father regularly to the Rock Temple.

Handsome and highly intelligent, Thayumanavar mastered before the age of sixteen the Puranas, Upanishads, Ithihasas and other important works in Sanskrit and Tamil.

His holiness and brilliant intellect were known to King Chokkanatha who bade him assume his father's duties as Superintendent when Kediliappa Pillai died. This Thayumanavar undertook to do only upon the insistence of the King, for his heart was set on the religious life.

At court the Pundits recognized his superior knowledge which discouraged useless argumentation and theological wrangling by advising the Pundits "to seek out the Truth".

As the youth advanced in wisdom there came upon him an ardent longing for a Perfect Teacher who would remove the clouds of ignorance from his heart and lead him to the Goal of Truth. This yearning increased within him until one day his secret prayer was answered by the arrival at the Rock Temple of the Sage Arul-Nandi Sivachariar, known as Mouna Guru, the Silent Teacher.

Thayumanavar was drawn towards the Silent Sage from whom he received initiation. So great was his love for Guru that he wished to relinquish his worldly duties and follow him, but the Sage bade him remain where he was. Firmly but gently the Master told Thayumanavar: "summa iru" — 'be still'. The words made a profound impression on the youth who obediently carried on his work at King Chokkanatha's court.

It happened that one day Thayumanavar received from his royal patron the gift of a costly shawl. Upon leaving the palace Thayumanavar came upon an old woman shivering with cold as she begged for alms. Moved by compassion the youth placed the shawl about the old woman's shoulders saying, "Mother, please accept this shawl. Your need for it is greater than mine."

When news of this reached the King he sent for Thayumanavar and demanded to know why his princely gift had been handed over to an old woman of low caste.
Thayumanavar replied: ‘O king, I behold neither old age nor caste, I saw only the image of the Universal Mother. The shawl has returned to its rightful owner.’

Pondering these words the King suffered a change of heart and became merciful to the poor and needy.

Upon the death of King Chokkanatha, Thayumanavar agreed to serve in office for a short while further, but he was forced to leave the palace in secret when the Queen became enamoured of him.

Arriving at the adjoining kingdom of Ramnad, the holy man was welcomed by its ruler who provided him with a quiet garden in which to pursue his spiritual exercises.

The state of Ramnad was in the throes of a severe drought when Thayumanavar took up his abode there. Sickness, starvation, suffering prevailed everywhere. Moved by the plight of those about him Thayumanavar raised his hands heavenwards and sent forth a hymn of praise to Lord Siva, ending with the words, ‘O clouds, pour down the life-giving rain upon the thirsty earth.’

When Thayumanavar fell silent, the patter of rain heralded the arrival of new life to stricken Ramnad. The resurgence of hope and health was accompanied by an outpouring of Grace for those whose hearts were athirst for spiritual sustenance. Seeking out the holy man in his quiet grove, they went away from his gracious presence refreshed.

When Thayumanavar’s brother learned of his whereabouts, he came to Ramnad and urged him to return to Vedarnayam, their parents’ home. There, Thayumanavar married in compliance with the wishes of his Guru. His wife died shortly after the birth of their son Kanagasabhapathi Pillai, and Thayumanavar took tender charge of the infant until he achieved maturity.

Having faithfully carried out the instructions given him by his Master, Thayumanavar yearned for his beloved Mouna Guru who had promised to initiate him into the higher Yoga where the time was ripe.

As if in answer to the loving heart-call of his devotee, the Silent Teacher arrived at Vedarnayam to complete his initiation. He then instructed Thayumanavar to take up the life of an ascetic, which his holy disciple accordingly proceeded to do, travelling from one sacred shrine to another, while the Bliss within his being found expression in inspired song.

Thayumanavar made pilgrimages to the holy places of Madurai, Chidambaram, Tiruvannamalai in South India, composing the while hymns of praise to Lord Siva as Dakshinamurti and Grace manifesting as Mouna Guru.

He settled down at Ramnad after his travels and there a group of earnest disciples gathered about him.

They sang songs of Bliss which their Master composed, sending forth the thrilling tale of heavenly love among the people. Two prominent disciples Arulayya and Kodikkarai Swami, recorded the words of their Guru, while Kanagasabhapathi Pillai took reverent care of his father’s songs and psalms which numbered over fourteen hundred.

The compositions of Thayumanavar are permeated by light and beauty, testifying to that heavenly love which teaches that both the householder’s life and that of the ascetic are to be regarded as sacred.

In the words of the Sage: ‘Dear Ones, the householder who controls his mind is indeed a Mahayogi, while the ascetic who allows himself to be enslaved by the senses remains ignorant. The detached heart considers both home-life and ascetic life as sacred.’

Thayumanavar laid great emphasis on Grace as being a Gift of the Lord, one which kindles a flame within the heart of the devotee, causing him to seek out Truth with increasing fervour and determination. The tender love which formed this Jewel of Grace could be illustrated in two ways: that of the kitten being carried by its mother, or that of the young monkey clinging to its mother. In the former case the devotee surrenders himself to the Compassionate Love of Guru, allowing the
Divine Will to take complete charge of his life.

Satsang or devotion to Saints and Sages was taught by Thayumanavar to be a safe and easy path to the goal of spiritual life, and in the songs of the Sage this is beautifully expressed in words of stirring sincerity.

The 'Wonderous Word' on which hinged Thayumanavar’s Self-Realization sparkles with unique fire among the gems of the Sage’s teachings, for it is the Secret Word heard by the inner ear when the eloquent language of the Divine Silence is at last understood—a language transcending the realms of speech and thought, conferring upon the purified heart knowledge of ‘things unutterable, dear.’

Radiating the singleness of Vision of the Maharshi, Thayumanavar taught: ‘The dualistic approach which spiritual aspirants make use of at the start, progressively leads to Perfection, and unity with the Supreme Being. The experience of the Enlightened has declared this approach to be sensible and true and in agreement with spiritual teachings. All saints accept this dualistic approach to monism.

‘If therefore I regard Thee as my True Self, surely in due course I must become THAT. Thou wilt Grace me in whatever form I worship Thee in my heart. There is no lack of paths, therefore, to realise Thee.’

When this gentle Sage died in 1742, his disciples made his works known throughout Tamilnad, teaching their Guru’s songs to those who loved Truth.

**SELECTED POEMS**

‘What is THAT which transcends all sectarianism while allowing many religions to assert: “He is ours — He is ours,” and confer and argue in unending discord?’

‘What is THAT which remains nonetheless Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute, Existence Absolute?’

‘What is THAT which although Everpresent Thought, transcends the activities of thinking and forgetting?’

‘Cognizant that these and all things are manifestations of Supreme Silence, let us adore THAT.’

‘Conflicting beliefs share in common One only God, All-Powerful Thee; According to the need of each, Thou choosest To appear with distinctness, without a difference.

As rivers run to the Sea, so do all beliefs merge Into Thee, O Sea of Great Silence.’

‘O Supreme Lord, The Bliss-state must surely ensue If Thou wouldst make me worthy to serve Thy devotees.

O Supreme Lord, Thou art the shoreless Sea of Bliss Which rises in wondrous glory in the hearts Of devotees who have entered the Silence. When, oh when, shall I tread the straight Path of sages who have transcended the twisting Way of useless dissensions and dogmatic wrangling.

‘One word, a wondrous word exists Which in Itself contains All other words; by it is purged The soul of all its stains. It is the word by Guru given. One word, immovable Goal Steadfast as a mountain-top, Towards which journeys the soul. Beside it all other words are...’
Valueless, void of aim.
Like pawns moved at random,
Moved in a purposeless game.

* * *

The grace of giving, the gain of holiness,
Heavenly wisdom, and might above all speech,
The soul's joyous home, Heaven itself,
All these O mind, lie within thy reach.
By that one word Guru spoke unto me
Be still, my mind, be still:
Upon the word by the Silent One spoken
Rest thou tranquil, restrain the Wayward will.

* * *

God alone is true wisdom
Where neither one nor twain can be;
Now am I in darkest night,
When will dawn the day for me,
When will dawn the day?

* * *

Lord of Grace, bestower of blessed Silence,
Thou art love to those that love Thee.
Lord of Grace, bestower of blessed Silence,
Thou didst enable me to know myself.
Knowing myself, the me existed no more.

* * *

I cannot worship in Thy Temple,
And before Thy symbols bow.
Or offer Thee dew-kissed blossoms,
For in the blossom's heart art Thou.
How place my palms together?
Bend my body to worship Thee?
All this is imperfect service
Since Thou, Lord, indwellest in me.
The vastness of the ether, Thou art,
The elements, the primal sound,
The four Vedas and their Goal,
The Search beyond all seeking found.
The sacred quest, its key and secret;
Of all seeing Thou art the sight,
Of all knowing Thou art the knowledge,
Of sense and sight, the inner light,
The word and its meaning,
Form of the secret, saving Call,
O source of Grace — Bliss beyond thought.
Dancing joyously in High Wisdom Hall.

* * *

Who built this dark abode for my home?
Where only flashes of truth may come,
Making of my knowledge but a small sum?
Who marked upon my brow that I should keep
This knowledge carefully hidden deep
Like a treasure within my heart? For awhile to sleep.
How was I lulled into thinking 'twould last for eye
This body which I nurture day by day,
Ignoring the soul's joy which knows no decay?
By my craving for worldly good, did they invest me?
Father, mother, how came they to be possessed by me?
The burden must on others rest.
Are all to blame? Is it the fruit of lives long gone?
Is it the fault of circumstances or my own?
Where lies the blame? The reason remains unknown.
Beyond my knowing, O Divine Bliss that fills
All places, even the lowest with unheard thrills.
Of Joy! Thou knowest my many ills.

* * *

SELECTED SONGS

'You have witnessed the crows inviting their own kind to partake in a common meal.
If this be the case among birds and in regard to simple food, with what great pleasure and warmth should we gather together the whole of humanity to partake of the supreme felicity of God-Realization, before the passing away of our physical bodies.'

* * *

'Whatever the eye beholdeth is Thou.
Whatever the hand doeth is Thy homage.
Whatever the mouth speaketh is Thy praise.
The earth, elements and all living things are manifestations of Thy Grace, O Lord!'
Which shines within me as Intelligence, Bliss, Manifested before me as the Silent Teacher and made known to me things incomunicable. The secrets He made known to me, how may I repeat them? By His art I was placed alone, with naught else beside me. He made me supremely happy, and He took me unto Himself. ‘Sever all attachments, cleave to Me within,’ He instructed me. How may I tell what I benefited by cleaving to Him? He made known to me things unutterable, dear. Long did I roam, led on by misery, until my Lord Manifested to me and made me His devoted Servant by banishing the demon of craving. As I learnt to master the senses, my love for Him increased. In ecstatic Silence He made me one with Him, And I was rendered speechless. Thus commingled, my caste became lost to me and custom I shattered. To mention it would dispel my joy. In Truth, He is no ordinary earthly lover, but my protector and God. As water overflows its banks, so tears of Ecstasy flowed from my eyes; my heart melting with Divine love, His wonderful act thrilled me. ‘Put away from thee whatever thy heart perceiveth objectively as real or unreal,’ so my Lord instructed me — and He took me unto Himself. Thou art neither the earth nor the elements. Ponder this. Thou art neither the external organs nor the innermost senses. Thou art the Intelligence which searcheth and knoweth. These words lovingly spoken by the Lord impart joy indeed!

He is love to those who love Him. My Lord is true.
Blissful is He, The Silent One — Master most gracious.
He placed His feet upon my head, whereupon my mind died. Thus did He confer Self-Knowledge.
I reflected: ‘How came birth and death to adhere to me?’
They sprouted from the delusive, perfidious Mind whose activities are thinking and forgetting.
Said He: ‘Behold all things by the Light of Grace.
Lacking in understanding I strove to see with my senses, discriminating. I beheld only darkness — blind to even myself, the seer — Why did it happen thus?
Said He: ‘Cease to identify me and thee in thy heart as two. Cease to discriminate.’
The ecstasy imparted by this best of all sayings cannot be described.
The light of Ecstasy engulfed me, and I who am less than an atom, enjoyed Pure Fullness which neither cometh nor goeth. Lo, the wonder of it!
Thoughts emerged there — thoughts dissolved there — and were rendered pure. All states have their being there. there, seer beholding no second I am. When thou hast seen the infinite glory of Sat-Chit-Ananda, everywhere, does there remain a ‘here’ or a ‘there’? Does there exist a ‘one’ or a ‘two’?
Is there a Yes or No? If thou desir’st Bliss, remain still as Pure Spirit — then wilt thou Know. Thus, instructed our Lord, the Goal of the Vedas.

SELECTED TEACHINGS
Everyone having been troubled by the appearance of the ‘I’ or individual ego, there spontaneously emerges the diversifying agency which is the universal Maya. Who
can adequately portray the consequent depth of sorrow? It manifests as the physical body, the senses both interior and exterior; as the all-pervading ether, as fire, air, earth and water; as forest, mountain, gigantic visions like hills, subtle and physical — memory, forgetfulness, and so on; rising up like waves which batter at a man, bringing with them pain and pleasure which are the fruits of his past actions, also attendant are their cures such as religions, creeds, truth-seekers and their sanctions and testimonies contained within different sciences and logically expounded — greater in number than the fine sands on the sea-shore.

Sheaf upon sheaf of unaccountable miseries spontaneously arise. How to uproot them radically, as though consuming a hill of camphor where no residue remains? To work this miracle and in order to enlighten me, Grace manifested in a shape like my own. Born somewhere, bearer of a name, eating, sleeping, experiencing enjoyment and pain. Just as a deer is used to decoy another of its kind, so Grace came as the Silent Guru. And took possession of my body, goods, my life itself — consistently eliminating all, teaching: 'You are neither the five senses, the five elements, the limbs, the mind, nor their attributes. You are not these collectively. You are not the physical shell, neither knowledge nor ignorance. You are Pristine Consciousness, unassociated, just as the crystal reflects the background to the beholder Guru is only your inherent nature revealing Truth when you are in readiness to receive it.

Should you be forced to attain Eternal Bliss-Consciousness, indwelling all, harken to my words: 'May you attain to the abode of the Pure Heart and there remain forever! May dense ignorance depart from you! May Bliss-Consciousness be yours! May you be liberated!' Thus did the Guru address me. Conferring true knowledge of the unique and natural Silence which eliminates bondage and in which there is no ego, meditation, space, time, direction, elimination, diversification, expression, association — in which there does not exist the phenomena of day and night; of beginning or end, of interior, middle, nor an aggregate of these.

Grace further reveals that, although these are all eliminated 'It' remains not as a Void, but as everlasting, natural being beyond description. 'It' does not manifest as ego, but remains the reality which engulfs ignorance as day dissolves night; absorbing unhindered all knowledge; transforming the individual into itself. Self-effulgent, It shines in Silence.

With its rising 'It' hinders the appearing of another; all else is obliterated like burning camphor which is dispensed without there remaining a flicker or glow. Beyond the sense 'It' shines; detached from the knower, knowledge or known — and yet 'It' is there. Who can speak of 'It', and to whom? When 'It' emerges, individuality is transmuted — It speaks for itself.

They say that to remain without thought is to be only 'I'. To remain fixed in that state is itself Grace. It signifies survival after the dissolution of the ego. Bliss which is the Self then manifests. There is naught else. Freedom from rebirth is attained only by those who have achieved this Bliss-state. On the single word which is powerful and unique, renounce all craving which is only latency manifesting its impurities as home, offspring and relatives. A single word prepares the way for many more. Likewise, a word cleanses all impurities. This is certain. It is evident that the master's word clears away all confusion and doubts, whereas bandying with other words is like playing chess without a chessboard. For you there is no rebirth. You have become aware that the Self has been manifested to you by words rendered progressively sweeter, like the successive segments of sugar-cane. You require no more words. Simply remain as the Infinite Bliss-Radiance of the Self, from which you are not separate.
You possess knowledge that the ephemeral body is impermanent. Only Grace is agreeable and true. Of what use has been your accumulated reading if you cannot remain fixed in Grace? Your learning is mere nonsense. You fail to realize that your learning is nonsense. Words are useless. Follow their trail and cling to their meaning. Retain a firm hold, like a monkey. You will receive knowledge that your station lies beyond night and day. Let your voice sound like a clarion then, so that all may hear.

Why do you wander about like a lost dog seeking somewhere to stay, things to own and works to perform? Come here, you have now been found. Do not fear, although your mind is still filled with ignorance. The desireless state is your home, to be rooted there is what really matters; then the whole world will seek to serve you. Ancient Sages like Sanaka were fixed in that state. Do like the elephant in rut and break away from the chains that confine you.

You have discovered that all the worlds are as the water in a mirage. Having gone to their end examine them. What is left? Is it not the mysterious Essence? Be THAT therefore and remain there. Acquire true knowledge of yourself and resolve that whatever you may be, you are THAT only. Do not go forth as something else and cease useless talk. Lay firm hold of the mind. Cease thinking. Abstain from confronting anything. Everything will resolve into the Essence; acquire knowledge of things as they truly are.

As they truly are” does not signify that you should think of them as becoming Reality. Keep the mind pure. Cast away the illusion created by the mind. In the words of the stainless sages who have renounced all, go beyond night and day, plunge into the wide Ocean of Bliss merging within it, so that benefit of speech you are overpowered by tears and quivering. Bow down and make known that the world is illusory.

When you are overwhelmed by the Infinite Expanse with neither beginning, middle nor end, there is non-dual Bliss-Realization. Because of the failure to perceive the world and the individual as the One Reality, you were told to infer the existence of the Supreme Being by whom all is created and maintained; it is difficult to understand however, that on their dissolution even the Supreme Being remains as Pure Consciousness only. Silence was therefore enjoined. All this however is in your mind; do not be anxious. Behind the mind is the seat of revelation which is Guru — there can be nothing without Grace.

Manifesting as the Lord of Silence, you showed me the Symbol of Silence, teaching that “The only Reality is the state of Stillness without thoughts of ‘I’ and ‘you’.”

In spite of this Grace, ‘I’ again manifested and grew, identified myself with the mind and strayed helpless and forlorn, self-deluded fool that I am!”

The Sacred Song of Thayumanavar, born in the Silence of unspeakable Bliss tells anew of that ageless, deathless Love which embraces all things and rejects none. In thrilling accents of truth, Thayumanavar sings rapturously:

“With anticipatory Grace He made me His own, making me live by LOVE!”

As stars, a fault of vision, as a lamp,
A mock show, dew drops or a bubble,
A dream, a lightning flash or cloud
So should one view what is conditioned.

— From the Vajrachedika Sura.
SRI MAHARSHI was concerned rather with the practical work of training aspirants than with expounding theory. The theory had importance, but only as a basis for practice. The devotees had the freedom of argument with Sri Bhagavan. There were, however, some who desired a definite statement that Sri Bhagavan was a Guru, but this he would not make. When a devotee pressed him once more for a confirmation he turned to the attendant and said humorously: 'Let him get a document from the sub-registrar and take it to the office and get the office stamp on it!' In the following conversation (taken from *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*) he implied clearly enough that he was to be regarded as the visible Guru. By Guru Bhagavan always meant Sad-Guru and that too in its highest meaning as nothing less than one who has realized his identity with the Self and abides therein constantly. It may be said by some that the doctrine of God manifested as Guru was all right for those who had the good fortune to meet Bhagavan in his lifetime, but what of those who seek a Guru now? It will be recalled that Bhagavan confirmed that the Guru need not necessarily be in human form. He himself had no human Guru. Just as, with Self-enquiry, he created a new path suitable to the conditions of the modern world, a path that can be followed without any outward forms, invisibly, while conforming to the outer conditions of modern life, so also he brought to men the possibility of silent, formless initiation, requiring no physical Guru. He often confirmed that the truest upadesa was by silence only. Ramana Sad-Guru’s silence is all-powerful even now.

--- ARTHUR OSBORNE.

Devotee: Can Sri Bhagavan help us to realise the Truth?

Bhagavan: Help is always there.

D.: Then there is no need to ask questions. I do not feel the ever-present help.

B.: Surrender and you will find it.

D.: I am always at your feet. Will Bhagavan give us some Upadesa to follow? Otherwise how can I get the help living 600 miles away?

M.: That Sadguru is within.

D.: Sadguru is necessary to guide me to understand it.

M.: That Sadguru is within.

D.: I want a visible Guru.

M.: That visible Guru says that He is within.

D.: Can I throw myself at the mercy of the Sadguru?

M.: Yes. Instructions are necessary only so long as one has not surrendered oneself.

Maharshi: The highest form of Grace is silence. It is also the highest spiritual instruction. . . . All other modes of instruction are derived from silence and are therefore secondary. Silence is the primary form. If the Guru is silent the seeker’s mind gets purified by itself.

--- ARTHUR OSBORNE.
EXCERPTS FROM A SAINT'S TALKS

Translated from Hindi by Prof. MADAN MOHAN VARMA

The Voice of Silence can only be heard in Mauna (cessation of thought), which leads to Muk Satsang (communion of the Silence).

With the disintegrating of the atom of ‘I’ the sadhaka becomes one with Yoga, Jnana and Love.

The Peace of God is a state not of the individual mind but of a mind freed of individuality.

Our true state is effortless awareness. Effort is visible only in the beginning stages of sadhana.

The ‘I’ in reality is nothing but a yearning of the wave for Mother Ocean in which is its true being. God is the Ocean, we are but waves, small or great. The Power that dwells in the giant wave or in the small wave alike is not in the wave but in the Ocean of which it is a wave. To know that is to discover the infinite in the finite and thus to realize the unity underlying all diversity.

Why do our eyes not see Eternal Beauty? Because they content themselves with the fleeting forms of beauty.

Why does not the mind find eternal rasam (bliss)? Because it contents itself with passing pleasures.

It is impossible to be detached from the world while one is attached to one’s body.

A fundamental test of one’s progress on the spiritual path is the measure of one’s desirelessness.

Self-surrender is the key to God-realization. Every man surrenders himself to some one. The difference is that the theist surrenders to the One and the materialist surrenders himself to many; the former fulfils his real want, and the latter runs after innumerable shadows of desires. Real want once fulfilled ceases to be, whereas desires arise again and again.

The last offering at the altar of Love is the surrender of ‘I’ and ‘mine’.

Let the devotee who begs for favours beg for the Bestower of favours Himself, so that he would not have to beg again and again.

Our deepest vices are those which are born of a consciousness of virtue. Any virtue which is transplanted on the ‘I’ or on which the ‘I’ is transplanted, becomes the mother of many a vice.

Right action is better than wrong action; better than right action is the feeling of non-doership.

There are two types of servers—those who flow like the Ganges in the sight of all, and those who stand motionless behind the scene like the Himalayas but secretly feed all the rivers emanating therefrom.

Men generally treat sadhana as a part of their life. The thoughtful aspirant, however, treats his life itself as sadhana.
LIFE OF SAINT ARUNAGIRINATHAR

By
SADHU PARTHASARATHY

ONE should not seek the source of holy rivers or probe into the past of great saints is the wholesome advice often given to the curious. For, the uninspiring sight of the source of a big river or the knowledge of the unsavoury past of a great saint tends to dim their real merits. Even so a traditional sanctity is attached to the source of holy rivers and the miracle of God is invoked for the transformation of one, often assumed to be a worthless sinner, into a saint.

The traditional account of Arunagirinathar’s life before his emergence as a great saint is reminiscent of this. Arunagirinathar was born in Tiruvannamalai and spent the greater part of his life there. He was the son of a dasi or courtesan by name Muthu. As he grew up to manhood, he found the company of courtesans more to his liking than leading a life of dharma. When his parents were dead, all the properties that he inherited from them were squandered to pay for his lust. He had a sister called Adi who was very fond of him notwithstanding his faults. He took advantage of her affection and before long, her money, her jewels and all her possessions were also squandered for presents to courtesans. His body rapidly lost its youth and became full of diseases. The better class of courtesans began to jeer at him and shun his company, but his lust persisted. At a time when his sister had nothing left except the clothes she wore, he asked her as usual for money. She replied, “If your lust is so irresistible, there is only my body left for your satisfaction.” These words pierced his heart to the core. He recollected in a moment all the wasted years of his life and the realisation of the utter failure to fulfil its divine purpose filled him with despair. To continue living with the memory of the past clinging to him was unbearable. He decided to put an end to his life. He climbed the Vallala Gopuram of the Arunachala temple and jumped down to dash himself to death on the stones beneath. He was saved by Lord Muruga as recorded later in more detail.

The truth of the traditional account is contradicted by Arunagiri’s reference to himself in his compositions. In some of his songs he refers to his father, mother and wife and other relatives (T — 392, 413). One may contrast this with the story of Satyakama in the Upanishads. When Satyakama approached Maharshi Gautama praying to be taken as his 

1 righteousess.
disciple, Gautama asked the question, "What is your (father's) gotra?" Satyakama truthfully replied, "Before coming here, I asked my mother the same question. She said in reply 'While young and wandering as a housemaid here and there, I begot you. How then can I know. You are Satyakama, I am Jabala. So, you are Satyakama Jabala.' The Guru said, "You told the truth, so you are a real brahmin. I will initiate you."

There is another account partly based on old inscriptions, partly on contemporary literary works and the rest on guess work. The real objection to the acceptance of this account does not hinge upon the caste of Arunagiri but on the fact that no mention is made of his Tiruppugazh and of his great devotion to Lord Muruga in Saluva Abhyudayam. In the account given by Rajanatha, the dates and certain other facts seem to agree, but it is difficult to ignore the omission of Tiruppugazh and his devotion to Lord Muruga by Arunagiri without which his life would have had no claim to greatness. One is therefore led to conclude that Arunagirinathar cannot be identified with any certainty with any known historical person of the time. The exact date of birth of Arunagiri is not known, but from incidental evidences appearing in Arunagiri's own compositions and by relating them to certain known data found in inscriptions and in contemporary records, a fairly accurate assessment of the years in which he lived can be made.

Arunagirinathar's Early Life

If a correct assessment of Arunagirinathar's personality in his early years is made from his own compositions, the following facts emerge. Arunagirinathar was the traditional type of a devout Hindu. Lord Muruga was the family God of his ancestors (T — 358 and 1127). His learning especially of spiritual literature must have been acquired in his early years and it was both vast and deep. In the Tamil language he excelled in expression and learning. In his compositions he exhibited familiarity with the best known Tamil works such as Tevaram, Punnair Tirumurari or Savam, Divya Prabodharni, Sangam literature, Kural, Kaarikai, Ula, Eevel, Kalambakam, Korai, Sindh, Malaal, Bhuroni, Duthu and Koneswara. He could also write in Tamil extempore poetry and this talent he used before his transformation for writing eulogies of rich men to obtain presents of money from them (T — 146 & 494). His compositions abound in the use of Sanskrit words and they also show that he was familiar with Itihasas, Puranas and also to some extent with works like the Gita and Upanishads. His Archana on Lord Muruga mostly in Sanskrit (T — 100 & 101) is sufficient proof of his familiarity with that language. Unless he was born in a family whose traditions were such that every young male member received the highest cultural and religious education from his early years, it would not have been possible for Arunagirinathar to acquire the vast learning that he exhibited. That he was leading a dissolute life for some years after he attained to manhood he confesses in many of his poems. Some have put forward the theory that the references to a life of lust in his poems should not be taken literally, but should be treated as advice for the benefit of others. This appears too far-fetched to be acceptable to reason. On the other hand, to conclude as some have done, that he was a totally depraved person, lost not only to all sense of decency, but even to a sense of right and wrong and devoid of any devotion to God, is to paint an equally false picture of him. We have to take into consideration the moral standards of the time in which he lived. The conventional religious life of the Hindu and his lapses from conventional morality were not considered incompatible with each other. In Arunagirinathar's days, sex relationship with professional women within limits was treated as human weakness only
and was not looked down as moral depravity. To Arunagirinathar however, the lure of sex had become almost an obsession or morbidity. But his life of debauchery could not have lasted very long. It proved to be a costly indulgence and he was soon reduced to a life of penury and became very dejected (T—494, 850). In song (T—392) he speaks with poignant emotion about his despicable state, “Ridiculed and jeered at by wife, by the people of the town, by the public women of the place; my father and my relations being disgusted by my conduct, everyone scolding me or indulging in loose talks about me, and being treated as a despicable person by the very people whom I had loved, my mind became confused and full of gloom. I thought within myself, ‘Is it for this that I obtained this human body which is a treasure indeed?’” The first sign of God’s grace and compassion came to Arunagiri after a Mahatma spoke to him and advised him to meditate on the six-faced God Shanmuga as his Ishta-Devata (T—1006). He attempted to spend some hours in meditation facing the image of Muruga installed in the gopurams (towers), but his will, weakened by his immoral life, lacked the strength to persist in the attempt. The crisis in his life came to a climax. He decided to commit suicide and give up his body at the feet of Lord Muruga by jumping to death from the high tower of the gopuram dedicated to the Lord, the Six-faced God. At the critical moment Lord Muruga appeared standing on a dancing peacock, halted him midway and took possession of him (thaduthu atkondan) (T—394, 509, 113).

Here one must pause for a moment. Was Arunagirinathar’s decision to end his life born of mere disgust and frustration — a simple attempt at suicide in order to put an end to suffering which can no longer be endured? In the Sastras it is said that the state of the mind of a person at the last moment when life is about to depart from the body is very important from the point of view of his rebirth. If one were to utter the name of Narayana or Siva with concentration at the moment of death, one is assured of Moksha or release from rebirth. Arunagirinathar had realised in utter despair that nothing was left for him but to surrender mind and body to the Lord.

Oh mind of mine
Trust not the body
That infernal machine
Turning out pleasure and pain,
Brahma who sits on the lotus
Created it to bind the mind.

Oh mind of mine
Free thyself from fear
To seek him; endeavour
Patiently and steadily,
Let us go to Him
Show our love and surrender.

Oh mind of mine
It’s good you decided to surrender.
See Him on his peacock Vahana
He has now taken charge of you.
Doubt not, there is no Greater State.
Dwell on his Holy Names
Always, Mainda! Kumara! (T.—330)

A Kshatria warrior of old, goes to the battlefield with the assurance that if he were to die there, he would attain moksha. Similarly, a great Bhakta is prepared to sacrifice his life for the sake of God in the belief that the sacrifice will be accepted and he will attain liberation. Lord Muruga came to the rescue of his devotee who was in the act of jumping to his death, halted him midway and saved him not only from death but accepted him as dear to Him. This resulted in a complete transformation of his nature.

Kinkini thith theme, thith thith
The anklets on the dancing feet jingled,
A sound that to other sounds
Closed by hearing.

1 one’s chosen deity.
The Kadamba garland that He wore
Suffused me with its cloying fragrance
And my breath was held.
His moon-like countenance and tender smile
Caused such cheer and ecstasy
That my mind was lost.

For a moment He looked at me,
A cool liquid light poured out
From His long eyes.
It filled my heart tasting like nectar
And I was lost to Him for ever. (T — 16)

Arunagirinathar’s transformation thereafter was very rapid. As Omar said, “God is the subtle alchemist who in a trice life’s leaden metal into gold transmutes.”

His body shed all its diseases (T — 568) and his mind was immersed increasingly in Lord Muruga. This happened in the great temple in Tiruvannamalai. “You have taken me to a state beyond description” says Arunagirinathar (K. Alan, 10). Lord Muruga accepted his surrender at His feet and bestowed on him the mudrās of Vel and peacock in order that he may qualify to sing Thiruppugazh (T — 850). He got Pranava Upadesa at Chidambaram (T — 162).

6 marks impressed on the body.
6 initiation into the mantra Om.
K. Alan. = Kandar Alanjara, a work of Arunagirinathar

(To be continued)

Awakening

By
Philip Pegler

The gate has now closed on a glow of golden light,
A radiance of soft, vibrant bliss
Enfolding in the depths of gentle delight,
A deep, still deeper peace
Opening the doors of Being.

Lo! He enters. That One, whose absence
Oft brings overwhelming pain of separation,
Bitter tears of yearning,
And then sweetness of divine consolation.
Lo! He comes. Bhagavan ever my-Love
Enter dear Friend.
Be sealed in the shrine of the heart
Forever.

If not forever today
Yet some day!
ANOTHER saint deeply devoted to Lord Muruga (Lord Subramania) was Sri Vallimalai Sacchitananda Swami, also known as Sri Tiruppugazh Swami, whose birth centenary was celebrated at Sri Vaishnavi Shrine (Sri Sadhu Parthasarathy's Ashram) near Madras, on November 25 of this year. Sri Vallimalai Swami made it his life mission to sing and spread Tiruppugazh, the famous devotional songs of Saint Arunagirinathar, with such fervour and beauty of rendering that they are known and sung today all over India. Sri Bhagavan said once of Tiruppugazh that these songs sung with real devotion "bring tears to one's eyes"!

Sri Vallimalai Swami was born in Poonachi in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. His parents were orthodox Brahmins. His father passed away when Ardhanari, which was his name in secular life, was five years old. He was brought up by an uncle and since he did not evince much interest in studying, his uncle apprenticed him to the head cook in the palace of the Maharaja of Mysore and there he became not only an expert in the culinary art but also an athlete and wrestler. He was married twice, the second time when he was sixteen; while attending the marriage of a relative, just prior to the ceremony the intended bridegroom suffered an attack of epilepsy and so Ardhanari was prevailed upon to take his place!

In 1908, he went to Palani where he was cured from excruciating, longstanding stomach trouble. Once while he heard, during a festival, a devadasi (temple dancer) sing with so much spiritual fervour that he went into ecstasy and had a preglimpse of realization which changed his life. When he learnt that the song in question was Tiruppugazh of Saint Arunagirinathar he resolved to learn Tamil and thereby Tiruppugazh. This he did within a few months, although almost illiterate to begin with!

On his way back from a pilgrimage he visited Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai where he also met Sri Seshadri Swami. On first beholding Sri Maharshi on the Hill of Arunachala he had another ecstatic experience and saw in Him only the Lord of Palani (Lord Muruga). He stayed there for over two months and spent most of his time singing Tiruppugazh in front of Sri Bhagavan who made corrections whenever necessary.
Later he took sannyasa and went on another pilgrimage wandering about the Himalayas. He returned to Arunachala but after staying ten days up the Hill with Sri Bhagavan, he was directed by Him to go down. Puzzled and worried he obeyed the command and on the way met Sri Seshadri Swami who became his guru. He directed him to go to the Hill of Vallimalai and settle there and to adopt Tiruppugazh as his mahamantra (great all-sufficient mantra) without any further need for external pujas.

At Vallimalai he settled in a natural cave and practised intense sadhana. The propagation of Tiruppugazh became his mission in life and he did this so successfully that these sacred chantings were resumed throughout Tamil Nadu. The songs were arranged by him in suitable sequences to conform to various rites and adopted in all important shrines of Lord Muruga. At this time the Swami had a vision of Goddess Valli (the consort of Lord Muruga) or Pongi, in the form of a very young girl who enthralled him with her song from Tiruppugazh. He seemed to have developed yogic powers by then, which he used only to help others. A number of miracles are attributed to him in connection with feeding the poor also. On another occasion it seems that Lord Muruga appeared to him in the form of a beggar who quoted an appropriate Tiruppugazh illustrative of the effacement of ‘1’ and ‘mine’ as the surest way to Liberation.

The Swami passed away on the 25th November, 1950 and was buried in the cave which was his dwelling. Before giving up his body the Swami entrusted the responsibility of worshiping Valli or Pongi to his staunch devotee, Sri S. Parthasarathy (now Sadhu Parthasarathy) who installed the image of the Devi in a small temple built on his estate at Tirumullaivayal, near Madras, which is visited by many devotees even today.

I am here

By
Bhamini N. Munsif

Oh Ramana!
You say “I am here!”
So why should I fear?
The world is but a dream
You say to those in its stream.

Years have passed since You left.
This physical form for ever is gone
But something, something in my heart is prone
To feel You blissfully by change unleft.
Though away, away You seem to be
The happiest moments I pass with Thee
The body, the mind far away from me
For a moment I’m with Thee, with Thee
all One.
FORTY years have passed since I walked into his abode and saw the Maharshi half-reclining, half-sitting on a tigerskin-covered couch. After such a long period most memories of the past become somewhat fuded, if they do not lose their existence altogether. But I can truthfully declare that, in his case, nothing of the kind has happened. On the contrary, his face, expression, figure and surroundings are as vivid now as they were then. What is even more important to me is that — at least during my daily periods of meditation — the feeling of his radiant presence is as actual and as immediate today as it was on that first day.

So powerful an impression could not have been made, nor continued through the numerous vicissitudes of an incarnation which has taken me around the world, if the Maharshi had been an ordinary yogi — much less an ordinary man. I have met dozens of yogis, in their Eastern and Western varieties, and many exceptional persons. Whatever status is assigned to him by his followers, or whatever indifference is shown to him by others, my own position is independent and unbiased. It is based upon our private talks in those early days when such things were still possible, before fame brought crowds; upon observations of and conversations with, those who were around him; upon his historical record; and finally upon my own personal experiences, whatever they are worth.

Upon all this evidence one fact is incontrovertibly clear — that he was a pure channel for a Higher Power.

This capacity of his to put his own self-consciousness aside and to let himself be suffused by this Power, is not to be confounded with what is commonly called, in the West, spiritualistic mediumship. For no spirit of a departed person ever spoke through him; on the contrary, the silence which fell upon us at such times was both extraordinary and exquisite. No physical phenomena of an occult kind was ever witnessed then; nothing at all happened outwardly. But those who were not steeped too far in materialism to recognise what was happening within him and within themselves at the time, or those who were not congealed too stiffly in suspicion or criticism to be passive and sensitive intuitively, felt a distinct and strange change in the mental atmosphere. It was uplifting and inspiring; for the time being it pushed them out of their little selves, even if only partially.

This change came every day, and mostly during the evening periods when the Maharshi fell into a deep contemplation. No one dar-
ed to speak then and all conversations were brought to an end. A grave sacredness permeated the entire scene and evoked homage, reverence, even awe. But before the sun’s departure brought about this remarkable transformation, and for most of the day, the Maharshi behaved, ate and spoke like a perfectly normal human being.

That there was some kind of a participation in a worldless divine play during those evening — each to the extent of his own response — was the feeling with which some of us arose when it all ended. That the Maharshi was the principal actor was true enough on the visible plane. But there was something more...

In his own teachings Sri Ramana Maharshi often quoted, whether in association or confirmation, the writings of the first Acharya Shankara, who lived more than a thousand years ago. He considered them unquestionably authoritative. He even translated some of them from one Indian language to another.

In the temple of Chingleput I interviewed His Holiness the Shankara Acharya of Kanyakottai Peetam, a linear successor of the first Guru. When the meeting was concluded but before I left, I took the chance to ask a personal question. A disciple of the Maharshi had come to me and wanted to take me to his Guru. None of those I asked could tell me anything about him, nor had even heard of him. I was undecided whether to make the journey or not.

His Holiness immediately urged me to go, and promised satisfaction. He is still alive and still active in the religious world of Southern India.

Sometimes, as I looked at the figure of Ramana Maharshi on the couch, I wondered if he would ever come to England. If so, how would he be dressed, how would he behave in those teeming London streets, how eat, live and work? But he was uninterested in travelling and so he never came, not in the physical body; what did come was his spirit and mind, which have awakened sufficient interest among the English.

Again and again he gave us this teaching, that the real Maharshi was not the body which people saw; it was the inner being. Those who never made the journey to India during his lifetime may take comfort in this thought; that it is possible to invoke his presence wherever they are, and to feel its reality in the heart.

The Voyage

A weariness hath crept into mine oar,
The ruddy day is deepening round my sail;
Black storm-clouds in my heavens brood
no more,
No more the thunder-crack, the ravaging gale.
My lonely boat is resting on the deep
Laden with the dream of coming dawn

Under its keel the waters lie like sleep
Their restless and dishevelled waves withdrawn.
O Mystery of peace! no sense of stir,
No foolish haste, nor need for hollow speech;
All suddenly the anxious traveller
Seems to have reached some shore beyond
his reach.

By
Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

1971
THE VOYAGE
THE Maharshi is recorded as having said, "Who does not know it? You say 'I'; and nevertheless you say that you do not know the 'I'. Can anyone be ignorant of himself? Is it not comically impossible... In the case of this 'I', always present unavoidable, how could you be ignorant of it?"

To whoever in-sees the meaning of this it appears to be a sublimely simple and obvious statement, whereas to whoever does not, and however clever he may be, it cannot make sense. Reasoning by mind divided into subject and object, no matter how brilliant the reasoner, he must know that subject could never see or know itself as an object, any more than an eye can see itself, than hearing can hear hearing, or looking can see looking. Yet to undivided mind, directly apperceiving, short-circuiting relative reasoning, the meaning is immediately evident, as it was to the Maharshi.

Let us consider this problem in another context, for instance in Buddhism. There is a famous statement which points out that the Buddha taught for 49 years, but that no word was ever spoken by Gautama the Buddha. To-day we could say that Napoleon fought many battles, and that Shakespeare wrote many plays, but that no battle was ever fought by a Napoleon nor was any play ever written by a Shakespeare.

As in the Vedantist case, to anyone totally identified with a conceptual object (a body-mind), reasoning relatively, the statement seems to be incomprehensible, yet it is in fact such a profound and revelatory statement that it might be said that whoever cannot see its truth cannot have reached the threshold of understanding.

In both cases, however, the explanation may be evident. Relative reasoning, by mind divided into subject and object, creates a conceptual universe, a vast structure of images in mind, entirely based on relativity, conceptually extended in space-time, and spurious like any dream or hallucination, sleeping or waking. Such is our world of 'living' and 'dying' as pseudo-individual entities. Directly, immediately in-seeing, undivided mind needs no concepts in order to understand, for then cognition is absolute and not relative, so that what relatively appears to be nonsense, absolutely may be apperceived to be truth, and what absolutely is truth may appear relatively to be nonsense.

Relatively, in bondage to divided mind, no identified individual could possibly know what he is as 'I', since in order to do so he would
have to see himself as an object — and what
he is cannot have any objective quality what­
ever, but the moment he is free from such
identification he remains what he is, and all
that he is, which is represented by the cipher
‘I’. He is pure noumenality, timeless and
spaceless, in which all phenomenality inheres
and to which it is transcendent.

The moment I think that I am ‘this’ or
‘that’ — I am ‘me’ and bound. There has
never been a ‘one’ — present or absent —
so how could there be an ‘other’?

World as Self: Its Question as Answer?

Someone gave me a key and said it was the
key to THE CITY
I asked what city?
City asked what key?
Key asked what me?

Other words away golden key!
Only I can be this way . . .
The only purpose for myself is Self
is my answer
and
my answer is a fisherman who says
‘if you scrape your boat in the winter
it will move faster all summer’
then disappears in His net.

My answer is a kite flyer who lets go of
the gong my heart soaring free of its life
line self thread
so that the silence that lives in me
can be lived.

My answer is a pattern, the weaver and
the woven
and something else,
when the magic three will know it is One
will believe in One
will become the ONE
then past and future will be the Present
we will be nothing and around us
in our mirror we will see only the Self
power spinning in every changing relation,
mandalas looking at themselves
white dwarfs moving to a point.

In a Hurry

The Rabbi of Berdichev saw a man hurrying along the street, looking neither
right nor left. “Why are you rushing so?” he asked him.
“I am after my livelihood,” the man replied.
“And how do you know,” continued the Rabbi, “that your livelihood is
running on before you, so that you have to rush after it? Perhaps it is behind
you, and all you need do to encounter it is to stand still — but you are running
away from it!”

— MARTIN BUBER, Tales of the Hasidim — The Early Masters.
THE GREAT GAME OF PRETENDING

By DOUGLAS E. HARDING

Maharshi: There is no greater absurdity than this — that we seek to gain the Reality that we are. ... It is ridiculous. A day will dawn when you yourself will laugh at your past efforts. What will be on that day is also here and now.

Disciple: So it's a great game of pretending?

Maharshi: Yes.

It is an odd and very significant fact that, ever since man became fully human, he has queried his humanness and asked himself who he really is. And the more mature and self-aware he becomes the more insistently the question comes up. Why this curious doubt, this seemingly inescapable obsession, this universal problem about his identity?

On the face of it, no such problem exists; or, if it exists, it's no more than a semantic muddle. How could a man fail to be a man? If I'm not the person described in my passport, who on earth could I be? What alternatives offer themselves? Well, obviously, if I am a thing at all, I am a man, and not a beetle or a stone or a plant or a star or an atom. In practice, accordingly, there are only two serious alternatives: either I am this man-thing or no-thing. Or (to put the alternatives rather more traditionally) either I am in reality the human being I appear to others to be, or else I am not a human being, or any kind of being or thing whatever, but that undifferentiated Being or No-thing which has variously been called the Void, Clarity, the One Light, the Self, Brahman-Atman, Spirit, Reality, Consciousness, the Kingdom of Heaven, and so on — however you name it, it's as non-human as it's possible to be. Such is my two-way choice, for I can find no credible third possibility. Certainly there is no vagueness about it: the contrast is as sharp as it is immense. On the one hand I'm offered a small, local, mortal, faulty, boxed-in thing, a minute and brief fragment of the world; while on the other I'm offered the unlimited, changeless, qualityless, perfect Source and Container and Essence of the world, with the world itself thrown in for good measure. More briefly, shall I be a part or the Whole? Am I to be in the universe or is the universe to be in me? This is no trivial matter. It's bound to make all the difference in the world to me which of these two I choose, which of them I elect to be, or rather discover myself to be; and to put off for another day this crucial decision would be irresponsible and absurd, even suicidal. Of all the many varieties of madness this surely is the maddest — refusing or neglecting to go into and
settle this clear-cut question of who I am — especially now the question has been plainly put to me, and the alternatives have been reduced to two, thus making the issue quite definite.

Nor can I delegate my responsibility. The issue is one which I have to settle for myself, since no-one else is in a position to say how it is with me right here. Others lack inside information; I have it because I am it, I coincide with myself. I am the sole and final authority on what it's like being this first person singular, present tense. Therefore I have to put aside all I've read and been told, and just look, as if for the first time in all honesty and simplicity, at myself for myself. Encouraging me to do just this are the great sages. Is it hard for me to see who I am? Maharshi replies: "It would be absurd if to look at outside things were easy and to look within were difficult. It's the other way round." Is it then difficult for me to realise what I see? Maharshi replies: "You are it. All that's necessary is to drop the thought 'I haven't realised.'" And what is the nature of this realisation? Maharshi replies: "The absurdity is to think that one is this or that. 'I am' alone is, not 'I am so and so'. When existence is unqualified it is right, when it is particularised it is wrong. That is the whole truth." "Having any form or shape is the trouble: just be yourself: just be." "The thought 'I am a man' is unnatural. 'I am' is natural. Why do you qualify it with 'a man'?" To an enquirer who points out that the Bible teaches that man is born in sin, Maharshi gives a drastic answer indeed: "The man is sin!"

It isn't nearly enough to think, or even to feel, that one isn't this particular man, or any man, or any thing at all. On the contrary, it's thinking which is our trouble, this conceptual fog we work up to hide what is simply given; and anyway what we think today we are quite likely to deny tomorrow. Our task is to stop thinking just long enough to look at who's looking. As for feeling, it varies like English weather: we can rarely have it how and when we want it, and even then it's notoriously deceptive. No, neither thinking nor feeling is reliable or conclusive. Only seeing is believing. That's why the seers are called seers and not thinkers or feelers: they insist that the truth of who-one-is shines forth brilliantly of itself and needs no assistance from the thinking and feeling mind: the Self is self-luminous, as clearly visible as a gooseberry in the palm of one's hand. Thus Maharshi again: "See the seer within." "The Supreme is hearsay but the individual experiences himself directly. You can make use only of direct experience, therefore see who you are." "Leave off all this verbiage! Be as you are. See who you are and remain as the Self, free from birth, going, coming and returning." It is seeing which convinces, and which (unlike thought and feeling) can be had at will. What is to be seen is ever pre-
sent, and ever able to inspect itself. At no time is it impossible, or even difficult, to see who one is — provided one wants to.

The trouble is that the first person has become so used to — so terribly good at — putting on this act of third person and playing the part of being a man that it is very hard to ‘come off it’ and become perfectly sincere and natural again. The game starts very early in life. The small child soon starts impressing upon his central Formlessness — which is quite neutral, fluid like molten wax — features which aren’t his at all but belong out there to his companions. One of the main reasons is that he fears being odd, being excluded from the club. Thus the two little girls who were brought up by wolves near Midnapore were persuaded they were wolves and behaved just like the other members of the pack, just as (conversely) animal pets reared solely by humans become members of the family and have little time for their own species. In A. A. Milne’s poem, Christopher Robin has four chairs in his nursery: in the first, he is an explorer; in the second, a great big roaring lion; in the third, a ship at sea; and in the fourth, just for fun, a human being:

Whenever I sit in a high chair
For breakfast or dinner or tea,
I try to pretend that it’s my chair
And that I am a baby of three.

In the other chairs, apparently, it was quite easy being a lion or a ship: it was pretending to be human that was difficult! At the age of three or less, Christopher Robin is at least as likely to be a lion pretending he’s a little boy as a little boy pretending he’s a lion. But the game of pretending to be a boy, of feigning humanity, soon takes precedence, if only because it’s the one his parents insist on playing with him. “Now be a good boy,” they say. And all too soon he becomes, if not a good boy, at least a boy. He learns to see himself through their eyes and to pretend to be what they expect him to be. And of course this suits his book too, for it progressively conceals the fact that he, as the unique first person, is totally different from all those third persons out there. This wandering from his true station in order to become a thing, a human being, is inevitable; it is his passport into human society, and eagerly he grasps it. But the price of socialism is high and rising all the while. As life goes on, he gets better and better at pretending to be what others see him as, more and more self-deceived and self-alienated, more and more particularised, more and more narrowed down from his first general Being to being a very special person indeed. To start with, he just is; then he is a little boy with a name; then he is a distinctive person — going outside himself he views himself as tall or short, fair or dark, handsome or homely. And then, growing up to manhood, he further reduces to a social type and job-holder, a role-player, a specialist, and perhaps in the end little more than an elaborate actor. Take, for instance, the waiter in a French café, so well described by Sartre. His movements are a little too precise and rapid, his interest in the customers’ requirements a little too solicitous, his movements rather jerky and mechanical, the balance of his tray unnecessarily precarious. “All his behaviour seems to us a game… He is playing, he is amusing himself. But what is he playing? We need not watch long before we can explain it: he is playing at being a waiter in a café.”

Sartre’s waiter isn’t an unusually false or affected person: in fact, his special trouble isn’t that he’s pretending but that the pretence isn’t quite clever enough — it doesn’t convince. But it does serve to point and underline the absurdity all ‘normal’ civilised adults live by — the absurdity of seeing oneself only as others see one (or rather, as one hopes or fears they do) and refusing to see oneself as one sees oneself, right here and now. Any straying from one’s home here, to view one’s appearance out there and identify only with that, is to deny the central Reality, to be false to one’s intrinsic Nature, and — in a word — to be unreal. Even if I don’t regard myself
as just a waiter (or butcher or baker or candlestick-maker or whatever), even if I do sometimes think of myself as 'a man for a' that', still I'm making myself out to be what I certainly am not here, in the place where there never has been a man and never will be. The result may not be so painful or ridiculous to others, but it is immeasurably damaging to me, because it is making believe that I am the exact opposite of what I am. It is imagining myself to be a thing, a solid lump, a body, right here — which is impossible. Indeed it is, in Maharshi's uncompromising language, fatal. "The person soaked in I-am-the-body idea is the greatest sinner and a suicide." And how do we get such an idea? We view ourselves as the body by going outside and looking at ourselves from out there. "The body identity is due to wandering of the mind. . . Seek your Source, merge in the Self and remain all alone."

The true disciple does what he's advised to do, and looks for himself at himself without prejudice. He minds his own business, which is his own Reality situated precisely where he is, now — perfectly obvious and perfectly accessible to him and to no outsider. And what does he find? Well, I can't answer for anybody else. What it's like being you is your affair and not for me to tell you. What I have to do is see how it is here, just now. And I swear I can find here no-thing whatever, no solid object at the mid-point of my universe, no flesh-and-blood house or box here in which I'm shut up, but only this marvellous Emptiness or Absence or Light or Clarity or Openness. And this Wide-openness, so far from being mere vacancy, is at this moment visibly full to the brim with the clouds and trees and flowers outside my window, and the chairs and tables and carpet in this room, and these legs and this arm and hand and pen and paper on which these words are now forming themselves. Insofar as I am at all, I am at large in this familiar scene, replete with this assembly of coloured and moving shapes that is now presenting itself: all these are in me, are me.

What I am here for, the purpose of my life, is to stop the great game of pretending, just look, and be Myself. Nothing could be simpler, or more urgent.

In a monastery near the border of Tibet I found a portrait of myself. Someone in saffron told me that it was called the Wheel of Life, the round of existence, but it was myself painted crude and clear: the pig, the lion, the snake, the cock, all animals, angels, demons, titans, gods and men, all heaven and hell, all pleasures and pains, all that went to make me and all as it were, within the round of myself, within the wall, exactly as I had found it. All that I could be was within the enclosure of myself, all that I could do would only turn the Wheel around and around. There was no way out, I would go on, now up, now down, never ceasing, never changing. The mechanism was perfect.

The Wheel of Life is the objectivisation of the delusion in the mind of man.

— BEN SHEMIN (a modern writer).
GARLAND OF GURU’S SAYINGS

154. What is the body
But the malady original,
Mother of all other maladies?
To labour hard for body’s permanence
Is wasting water on the desert sands
Or welcoming and cherishing,
Not dreading, a disease.

155. Loving the ego venomous, though false,
That source of every dire disease,
Fools for their bodies’ preservation
Perform untiring tapas,
As if consuming medicines
To aggravate an ailment.

156. Instead of resting in consummate mouna
Secured through tapas pure,
To strive to stabilize the body
Is insipissate folly,
Like longing and struggling hard
To pile up poverty.

157. O hero stern persisting in your tapas
Do the world’s praise and worship,
Its eager prayers for your favours,
Please your heart?
Know that these are maya’s golden baits
Spread to entice you.

158. Some are through former deeds born fortunate
And naturally disdain the pleasures
Of this world and the next.
It is to these
That true Awareness comes with ease.

159. Forsake me not, my friend Detachment,
Ever let me call you mine:
For you destroy the densest darkness,
The darkness of desires,
Kindling the flame of knowledge.

160. Friendship even with a fiend
One may not end. And you, my friend
Detachment, ever you ward off
Evil from me and keep me bound
To enduring Truth. Such is your virtue.
Estrangement from you would be worse
Than all the world’s hostility.

161. Whatever notion may arise,
Not to let it live or grow,
But to turn it
That very instant, firm and stern
Back to its source and merge it there,
This is robust, intense Detachment.

162. From the mind’s fortress held by foes
Issue innumerable memories;
With the wonder weapon of Self-enquiry
Slay each thought as it comes out
Into the open, till at last
You have retrieved
The citadel of your own Heart.

163. Awareness clear and pure is nothing but
Seeing the world perceived as nothing
Other than the perceiver.
Mind indrawn and planted in the heart,
Deeming this world as a mere seeming
And rejection of it is detachment.

164. Men of old in wonder stared
At lifelike pictures which revealed
Angry or alluring gods,
But such riotous colours cause much harm.
True beauty is the clear, serene
Calmness of inner purity.
CREATION AND UNCREATED

By

P. STENIUS

As long as man lives in time and multiplicity he conceives everything according to these values and as long as he is identified with an externalised mind everything seems to be external and material, including his own being.

We cannot imagine infinity or timelessness, but we are also not content to think of a limited universe. The limitation of the universe corresponds to the limitation of the mind. The ultimate conclusion is how insufficient reason is to solve the fundamental problems which rise in the same mind.

The solution of the fundamental problems cannot be within the range of discursive and analytical thought. Science operates within this sphere of the limited mind, as questions, interpretations and conclusions are made with the same mind or reason. Even the highest scientific achievements, such as for instance the conclusions of Einstein or Jeans, who conceive the universe as energy or idea, is a thought itself. The borderline of thought is that everything is thought. But behind thought is something more, which cannot be reached by reason or objective experiments as one has to dissolve thought itself which is impossible with thought. Who is the one who thinks?

When problems arise — even so called world problems — they do so for the individual, first and last. Man is bound to the life of the senses and tries to find solutions in the same realm. He is chained to the transient realm of time and multiplicity, differentiation, wrong identification and above all desires and their aftermath of pleasure and pain. Every quality has its counterpart in this world and no value is lasting.

This is the slavery of man — his 'eternal damnation' — so long as he moves in this direction being bound by the world of the senses under the sway of birth and death, groping in ignorance and never finding perfect happiness everyone consciously or unconsciously is longing for. Only when one realises one's true state of Being can one escape time and death. Because to live in time is to be bound by it — death. "If you do not transcend time, how can you escape the grip of death?" asks Sri Ananda Mayee Ma. But she adds: "He who seeks God will find Him and for him who has found God death will die."

Some people will argue against this 'seeking' saying that we are already there and since God is omnipotent man can do nothing on his own to remove the veil hiding his real state or rather to realise that there never was even a veil so real and blinding at present. One should lead an ethical life and be watchful in a detached sort of way and Truth will reveal itself in the end.

This kind of reasoning is an example of the confusion arising from different angles of insight, using an argument from one level of approach and not applying it to the status quo. This is a sort of escapism. We may understand the problem from the final point of view but is that enough? If in ordinary life we plan and make effort for limited objects there is no reason — except perhaps the inherent inertia and sheer laziness — to refrain from making effort when it comes to the spiritual life. We have to start from where we are. Ultimately the Eternal cannot be attained by any effort or activity in itself, as it is beyond all notion and creation although giving rise to them. But man himself has created this veil of ignorance and limitation and thereby gone astray, consequently he himself has to undo this darkness hiding that Eternal Spirit within himself. That lost Freedom can
be regained but great effort in some form or other, is needed to reach the effortless state of Perfection. “Divine Grace is essential for Realization. .. But such Grace is vouch­safed only to him who is a true devotee or yogin, who has striven hard and unceasingly on the path towards freedom” says Sri Ramana Maharshi.

GOD, the Self-Created and Self-Maintaining Principle

There is a story about a professor who was working on a project in connection with hydrogen. He was addressing a group of scientists and physicists on some new phase of the experiment, and he began by saying that he knew that there were some of them who still believed in God. “But I must tell you that for you to understand this experiment and the higher experiments in nuclear fission, you must understand that there is no God. And not only must you understand it, but you must believe it. I am not telling you this from a religious standpoint; I am speaking to you from the standpoint of what I have proved in the laboratory. There is no God and you can drop all that nonsense here and now. I have proved that everything that exists in this world is formed of hydrogen. Everything there is, is a form of hydrogen, hydrogen in some form, shape or manner, hydrogen and nothing but hydrogen. There is nothing existent that is not composed of hydrogen."

One of the scientists looked up and said to him, “But Professor, where does the hydrogen come from?”

“Oh,” he said, “that is self-created and self-sustained.”

And this man commented, “I thought that was God.”

At that the professor stood stock-still and said, “You are right. Whatever name you give it, it is self-manifested, self-sustained, and self-created; it is the Infinite.” And he himself was convinced.

There is God, if by God we mean that which created itself, that which sustains itself unto eternity. And the truth is that everything that exists is a form of God, a form of a self-created, self-maintained Substance by any name that we want to give it.

If that professor could understand that there is a self-created and a self-maintained Substance, he must have understood also that the substance of all form must be eternal, immortal and governed by that same self-creating, self-created and self-maintaining Principle or Substance. Surely we should be able to go as far as this learned man and agree with that. We must recognise that the organs and functions of the body, the food we eat, the air we breathe, or the rain that falls or the snow or the wind is of the self-created and self-maintained Substance and Activity which he called hydrogen, but which we call God. And because of that there is no evil in any one of those things.

This brings us to the highest law of mysticism; there is only one Power in this universe, all good, and there is nothing evil. We can make anything evil in our experience by thinking it so. But that does not mean that it is of itself evil. On the contrary, if we can posit a principle of a self-created and self-maintaining and infinite Substance, then we must logically go the next step and say that it is the only Substance.
The illusion of matter

By Murdoch Kerby

There is space. It is everywhere. It can transfer energy, such as light and heat, across millions and thousands of millions of miles. I will represent it as parallel lines.

**Fig. 1**

The energy is transferred as waves. In fact all matter can be represented as waves, though at other times it can be represented as protons, electrons and neutrons. I will now represent some matter as waves in space.

**Fig. 2**

It is a table. It is matter which can be examined as protons, electrons and neutrons. We are also protons, electrons and neutrons and the table is solid to us. If the waves were to return to the state of energy then the solid form of matter would disappear or in other words if Figure 2 was stretched so that all the waves were straightened out where would the solid table be then? Or the Earth, or you or me?

Space at rest is Space.
Space in action is Matter.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa in one of his sayings had it that:
Shakti (Divine energy) in action is Maya.
Shakti in Potency is Brahman.
WHEN I was in Tiruchendur in 1932 it came to my mind that I should regard all women as my mother or Valli if I was intent on leading a spiritual life. One evening, I went to the Shrine of Sri Subramanya and stood for half an hour before the Moolavar (main deity) and the following words flashed into my consciousness:— "Here I am a God who does not talk. Go to Tiruvannamalai; Maharishi is a God who talks." This was how Maharshi's Grace manifested itself to me. I had not even seen Maharshi then.

In Dec. 1932, I wrote to Ramanasramam and got the reply conveying Bhagavan's upadesa that the body is the result of prarabdha (accumulated karma) and the joys and sorrows relating to it are inevitable and they can be borne easily if we put the burden on God.

In 1933, one day, Vakil Sri Vaikuntam Venkatarama Iyer suddenly spoke to me about Maharshi and gave me a copy of Ramana Vijayam in Tamil. I read it and when I came to the part when his mother was crying before him to urge him to return home I was choked with tears.

Then my mother made the following inspired utterance. "Malaiappan calls you; go to Him. This path will result in the salvation of twenty-seven generations of your family. This is the upadesa (teaching) of Mother Truth. Go along this path. Any obstacle you meet, regard as Maya (illusion). You will soon be liberated." So saying, I was given upadesa of Mohavakyam and Karana-Panchaksharam (vedic truth of Brahman).

In Feb.'33 I wrote to the Ashram again and got a prompt reply. Bhagavan’s upadesa given in it was as follows:— "Satvic food will keep the mind clear and help meditation. This is the experience of sadhaks. Eat to appease hunger and not to satisfy taste or craving; this will in due course lead to the control of the senses. Then continued and concentrated meditation will result in annihilation of desires.

"It is the Atman that activates the mind and breath. Watching the breath will result in kevola kumbakam (stopping of breath). Control of breath will lead to temporary control of the mind and vice versa. Intense and constant japa (repetition of a sacred syllable) will lead to ajapa (non-repetition). Sound being subtler than form, japa is preferable to murthi’s dhaya or worship. AHAM BRAHMASMI (I am Brahman) is the best. To those who seek the source of the ‘I’ no other mantra or upasana (meditation) is needed."

Within a month after the receipt of this, I proceeded to Ramanasramam to stay there...
permanently. One day I decided to spend the nights for one mandala in the presence of Bhagavan. On the 15th day I had a dream:—

The attendant Madhavan had an epileptic attack and grasped suddenly my hand. I cried for help to Bhagavan who pulled away Madhavan's hand, and gave me milk to drink. When I woke up I still had the taste of the milk in my mouth; I felt I had drunk the 'milk of wisdom.' From then onward my mind turned inwards.

One morning while cutting vegetables, I wanted to do girl pradakshinam (circumambulation of the Hill) and asked Bhagavan's permission. Devotees nearby made signs pleading to Bhagavan not to let me go. Bhagavan said, "Is pradakshina a sankalpa (intention)? Let him go." I said, "No. I decided last night to go with somebody. That is all." Bhagavan, "Oh! You already made the sankalpa. Sankalpa leads to samsara. Fulfil the sankalpa. You need not cut vegetables." I took it as an upadesa (teaching) not to make sankalpas thereafter.

Another morning when I was cutting vegetables with Bhagavan, he said: "Sundaram! Take this hurricane light and pick up the mangoes that have fallen from the tree." I said "Yes", but continued cutting up the vegetables. Bhagavan said, "Sundaram! Attend to what I said first. It is from me that everything rises. Attend to it first." I took this as an adesh and upadesha to make the enquiry "Who am I?" My friends also felt so.

One day the attendant Madhavan was binding a book. A devotee wanted a book from the library. Bhagavan asked Madhavan to get it saying, "You do my work; I will do your work." And Bhagavan took the book and went on with the binding while Madhavan got the library book. A devotee interpreted this as follows: "My work means looking after the needs which arise in the minds of devotees for anything from Bhagavan. Your work is to get liberation which is not possible without Bhagavan's Grace and help." Bhagavan heard this comment and said "Hum! Hum! That is what it is!"

Once when meditating in the presence of Bhagavan, the mind persisted in wandering. I couldn't control it. So I gave up meditation and opened my eyes. Bhagavan at once sat up and said, "Oh! You abandon it thinking it is the swabhava (habit) of the mind to wander. Whatever we practise becomes the swabhava. If control is practised persistently that will become the swabhava." Yet another upadesa for me!

It is natural to an age like ours to judge the influence of a Teacher by the written records he leaves; but this yardstick does not always measure true. We have no writings of the Buddha. Christ wrote nothing. When Lao-Tsu declared his life-work finished and rode away to the west, he also had written nothing. The warden of the Pass of Han Kow, through which he had to ride, begged him to set down his teaching, so he stayed at the gateway to the town and wrote the Tao Te King, which became the scripture of Taoism.

In the case of Ramana Maharshi there are published works but his essential teaching was in silence which continues now as before in the hearts of those who turn to Him.

— Arthur Osborne.
ALREADY in ancient times when the Himalayas came into being, they were the abode of Gods. Then as now, Siva, the King of Kings and destroyer of ignorance, was here with his kindred, radiating calm benediction and stilled in Sahaja Samadhi; and the children of men recognised and worshipped him then, just as the fellow-pilgrims of today are aware of the truth of Siva's reality, when once they have had the darshan of their Self in the grandeur, the vastness and the unsullied purity of Sri Himalaya.

Once upon a time — aeons ago, the Lord Siva was, as usual, in a state of pure contemplation, and his crystal clarity reflected all the actualities in the phenomenal world. He saw through mere facts and forms to the reality within all things, beyond veils and prisons and delusive bondage. He liberated the pure Life-flow by his dynamic Silence.

Among the Queens of the Himalayas was the lovely daughter of the Snow, who lived and served the King of Kings, but who also loved herself and subtly wanted the admiration and the attention of her Lord. Each day she brought him delicious fruit and nectar and a warm sunlike smile.

But the King of Kings heeded not. He saw her no more than the golden eagles and the fleeting cloudlets in the blue and green valley below: for Pure Love knows no degree.

One day, in her desire to be noticed and wanted, and loved as giver, the queen dressed her regal beauty in all the wondrous, softly-changing hues, which she had gathered from the valleys and mountains around, and from the gem-coloured and sun-suffused Himalayan dawns and sun-sets. In order to attract her Lord and to "do him good", she decked her exquisite form with pearls and diadems of marvellous rare gems, and with beads even more colourful than those worn by the hill-women here today.

Her rubies and diamonds, emeralds and sapphires radiated like a clear dawn over Kinching-junga and thus, in entrancing loveliness, exquisitely tender and innocent-looking, she disguised her subtle, unconscious guile, and her terrible feminine will to give and to get, in a smile which was reflected far into India and Tibet and all over Nepal.

Confident of her power, and sure of victory, the royal daughter of the Snow approached the King of Kings carrying sun-kissed apples and other luscious fruit from the valleys. And she called in a voice, sweeter than heard melodies, "My Lord Siva! Behold, I Serve!"

As Siva was aroused from his profound, Himalayan contemplation, the roof of the earth quaked, then cracked, while avalanches of snow rushed from his hair into the blue valley and swelled the silvery streams.

At first the King of Kings stared unseeingly at the apples of rare knowledge and at the lovely, but gem-bedecked and vain daughter of Sri Himalaya. He was only her Essence, her Reality, the mani-jewel within; but slowly he emerged into the vision of forms and of mere facts, and in duality-consciousness discerned the charm of the queen; and he also saw that she was not naked, not simple, not Real.

And behind her stood the winged King of Love, lifting a huge bow of bees and pointing an arrow of rubies directly at Siva's royal heart.

The Queen also felt the little God and, in the triumph and ecstasy of her approaching victory, she drew nearer to serve her King; when suddenly, as Siva looked into the eyes of the Love-God, there was a tremendous crash, and lo! the bow and arrow and all
the Queen’s finery flew into millions of fragments and were scattered over all the Himalayas.

And Siva awoke from the Maya to pure awareness, and he no longer saw that royal daughter of the Snow, except as pure essence. Again he merged into Sahaja Samadhi and real life-play while the erstwhile so alluring Queen turned ashen-grey in desolation and despair.

All seemed lost, all her guile, her giving and her gaud were of no avail, and she sobbed so profusely that the seven rivers overflowed their brims, and the Lotus-lake Manasarovar — (clear sea of unraffled calm) became slightly choppy and salt.

But the daughter of the Snow realised her falseness, her cloying egoism, and how her truth, (in the greed and stress of her emotion), had become elastic, blinkered and blurred.

For a while she hugged her hurt and her feminine truth and she nourished her lie by ego-pity. But all was not lost : Siva had focussed the virgin-soul within the bedecked form Royalty, and it awoke into conscious awareness, like the sleeping beauty in all of us may awake at the glance of the Eternal.

The contrite Queen was really brave and she decided : "I will make a good death and be born again worthy of serving the King of Kings in true simplicity and in naked beauty. Unnoticed I may serve him in a love which shall know no trying, no want and no fear. I shall always be near my Lord, clear enough to see Him — everywhere.

"I shall radiate the pure Love, which knows no degree and needs no reciprocity or reward. I shall be my Self, Natural in simple dignity."

So it happened beautifully : the Queen died into life and became the Snow Maiden, Uma-Haimavati, whose Silence is radiant Sunyata. Like Sri Omanandaji she sings softly in Himalayan rhythm :

Lo ! Thy vast Self we name but do not know,
And in the naming break the mystic spell.
O Siva ! If the Silence is thy Hymn,
Teach us to sing it well.

The blue-necked Siva, destroyer of ignorance, is ever in Himalayan contemplation, dancing his cosmic rhythm of transmutation and change of forms ; and "the form of the Shakti is all Ananda." Mutely radiates the Love which knows neither fear nor degree ; and the children of man pick up the fragments of an arrow and of all the scattered finery of the Himalayan Queen who now shines the freerer in purity and joyous grace as the Snow Maiden, Uma-Haimavati.

Sri Himalaya still has grandeur, vastness and a richness of delicate gem-colours, which make Siva’s realm a noble crown of our worldly consciousness. His snowy ranges frame our vast panorama in translucent purity, and Uma-Haimavati smiles in gorgeous sun-sets and in heavenly dawns.

But the little Love-God still plays his impish tricks, though he has been invisible here in Himalayas ever since Lord Siva looked into his eyes with a love that was purer than his own.

Sri Bhagavan : Time is only an idea. There is only Reality. Whatever you think it is, it appears to be. If you call it time, it is time. If you call it existence, it is existence, and so on. After calling it time, you divide it into days and nights, months, years, hours, minutes, etc. Time is immaterial for the path of knowledge. But some of these rules and disciplines are good for beginners.

— Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi
PARVATI ARRIVES AT KANCHI TO DO PENANCE FOR GETTING RID OF THE SIN OF COVERING SIVA’S EYES

SANAKA addressed Brahma thus: O Bhagavan! Having obtained the Grace of Siva through your kindness who are the Guru of the world, it has been possible for me to hear the glory of Arunadri (Arunachala). It is wonderful. It destroys all sins. Who else worshipped Sonadri (Arunachalam), the bestower of boons? The beginningless and endless Siva himself stands as the Sona Hill for granting you the fruit of your penance. One obtains Liberation even by saying ‘Sonadri’ once. All desires are fulfilled (when one stands) before it. All sins are destroyed. That name is the nectar which flows from the sound ‘Siva’. That is itself the worship of Siva, the story of Siva. On hearing this the Grandfather (Brahma), the Lord of the celestial beings, saluted the Lord of Arunachala, the embodiment of compassion and resumed his narrative.

Child! Hear the ancient story how in former days Goddess Parvati sought shelter with the Lord of Arunachala and gained peace. Once upon a time on Mt. Kailas, the mountain of delight, the great Lord Siva and Goddess Parvati were there sitting on a resplendent throne. That place was filled with the scent of fine flowers and incense. Bees swarmed and hummed among the hanging clusters of flowers. Skanda’s mounts — peacocks — spread out their feathers dancing. Elephants were there and the mount of Parvati — the lion. Hosts of Apsaras (celestial damsels) sang and danced; the Protectors of the Quarters stood in front in an attitude of worship; sages sang the hymns of the Rig, the Yajus and the Sama Vedas; Bramharishis, Devas, Siddhas, Rajarishis, Ganas of various kinds smeared with the sacred ashes and holy devotees of Siva wearing beads of rudraksha stood around; the veena (a stringed musical instrument), the venu (the flute), the mridangam (a small drum) and other auspicious musical instruments sent forth their music; the bells rang their sound mixed with the chanting of the divine Vedas. Lord Siva, the
ocean of mercy, had assumed a pure, resplendent, auspicious and divine form to bless his devotees.

After granting the boons desired by Devas, Rishis and other hosts of devotees and dismissing them Lord Siva rejoiced in the company of Goddess Uma (Parvati) on bejewelled mantapas, in quadrangles and lovely ponds, on their banks, on tops of mountains and in pleasant groves. A cool and refreshing breeze from the Ganga, suffused with the scent of blooming lotuses, blew gently. The great God pleased Goddess Uma who was beautiful as goddess Rati and full of auspicious qualities and noble traits. In a joyous mood the goddess who thought that her Lord's attention was entirely centred on her slipped playfully behind him and in sport covering fondly the three eyes of Sambhu, the Lord of the World, with her two hands resembling lotus petals asked merrily, ‘Who is it?’

As soon as the three eyes (the Moon, the Sun and Fire) were covered, a dismal darkness spread over the universe for millions of years because half a trice for Siva is aeons for us. The darkness produced by the playfulness of the Goddess proved to be the cause of the destruction of the worlds for in the dense darkness no activities were possible and consequently the beings perished without giving birth to new generations. The Devas became inactive and the Vedas could not be chanted. Seeing this state of affairs, the ever glorious Siddhas wondered at the untimely dissolution of the universe and by their yogic powers found out what had happened, but still could not understand why even the Lord allowed such a state to continue. By this unforeseen darkness matters went out of hand and what was to become of the tapas of those who by their merits and austerities had acquired empires and births as Devas etc.? They could not enjoy the fruits of their tapas. No sacrifices could be performed nor worship of the gods either.

They the ever glorious Siddhas saluted Sambhu with devotion and prayed to him: Salutations to Sambhu the origin of the universe and the Supreme Immanent Being. The power (sakti) which is not apart from you sportfully creates, sustains and dissolves the universe. She (Sakti) is half of you. Siva and Sakti together constitute a single form. The Great God is One. There is nothing different from you. An untimely deluge has now overtaken the worlds on account of the Goddess’s sport. But your compassion is spontaneous. May it reveal itself now for the well-being of the universe. In the course of half a trice that your splendour was withdrawn the world has been destroyed for us for millions of years. Therefore, O Sadasiva (Eternal Siva)! Kala (Time)! Embodiment of Compassion! Be merciful and pray stop this sport!

In response to this prayer of devotees and Siddhas, Siva the embodiment of compassion said: ‘Gowri! Leave my eyes alone.’ Immediately the Goddess removed the obstruction to the Moon, Sun and Fire in the form of the eyes of Hara. Light pervaded the worlds. On asking the Siddhas who stood in an attitude of worship ‘How much time has elapsed?’ they said ‘Half a second for you and millions of years for us.’ On hearing this the Lord who is an ocean of compassion turned with a smile to his beloved and graciously spoke some words on dharma and artha. ‘Foolish One! You have acted thoughtlessly in this manner! It is not proper that you who are the Mother of the world should do anything to dissolve it. At the appointed time only I am the One to do it. You have by your folly produced an untimely deluge (i.e. end of the worlds). How can you, the embodiment of love, perform acts which cause pain to your creation? You who are compassion itself should not even for sport do anything to hurt others.’

On hearing Sambhu say this, Uma (Parvati) stricken with remorse prayed to know what to do in expiation of this fault of hers. At this Lord Siva was pleased with the repentence and devotion of the goddess and said: ‘What
penance can be prescribed for you leaving me out? Besides you follow the path of dharma. 
Srutis (Vedas), Smritis (scriptures based on the Vedas), karnas (rituals), kalpas (code of virtues), various branches of learning, the Devas, etc. are all your forms. You who are the embodiment of my power and who desire to recreate the world are not different from myself.

Therefore I shall prescribe a penance for you in accordance with prevailing practice. On scrutiny of the Srutis and Smritis it is seen that dharma is of six kinds. The woman who is discarded by those belonging to her should not be protected by her husband. I cannot remain without you even for a moment. Being the universal Self, I shall myself go through the austerities. Let the entire world become sacred by the glory of your penance. People will be relieved of all troubles by contact with your lotus feet, by seeing you the performer of austerities, by association with you which is so sanctifying. May you perform meritorious acts for the growth of the karmabhoomi (earth which is said to be the place most suited for performing religious rites). People will acquire firm faith in dharma by seeing your method of doing penance. There is no doubt about it. Your grace will make the earth realize its goal which is the maintenance of dharma, Goddess!
The timeless Vedas declare you to be the All.

'The city known as Kancheepuri is heaven on earth. A little penance done there yields boundless results. Even Devas, saints and others desire to live there. There flows the holy river, the Kampa which washes away the sins of all the people in its vicinity. At that place there is a divine mango tree which is always shady and full of leaves and fruit. Homas (fire offerings), japas (repetition of sacred names), and the least good action performed under its shade yield boundless merit. 'May the many groups of celestial beings headed by Vishnu surround and worship you. I shall also remain there in the lotus of your heart in my formless state as the Absolute Pure Being. Therefore you need not suffer the pangs of separation from me.'

On hearing this the Goddess with her companions proceeded at once to the banks of the Kampa to do penance. There she saw the pure and holy waters of the Kampa worshipped by hosts of sages and a magnificent mango tree full of fruit and flowers among which koels sang and sported. She wondered at all this and meditating on the Great Lord again prayed to him. Her body tortured by the fire of separation from her lord immediately became emaciated as if she had already done penance. Turning to Vijaya, who stood near her, Goddess Gowri, stricken with the grief of separation and uncontrollable sorrow spoke thus: 'Those who perform austerities with the object of worshipping Siva directly seek this sin-destroying mango tree and always live here. This well-known and fruitful Ekamra (lit. mango tree which bears one fruit) increases my pain of separation. How am I to bear this separation from Siva when I am tormented in this manner? The sure remedy for this must be to remember and concentrate in the heart on the wearer of the crescent moon.'

(To be continued)
My very first glimpse of Arunachala brought peace. The impatience which had driven me for the past week simply disappeared and everything was just as it should be. It was as if I were coming home after a long and weary journey. The mind slowed down, the body relaxed and peace poured into me.

My first glimpse of Ramanasramam was not really seeing with the eyes, more like seeing with the heart. To me, it is beautiful beyond all description. I doubt if I could describe what the grounds and buildings look like. Such an experience is best left without attempts at description.

A devotee met me at the office, I only learned how to pronounce his name just before leaving, he was very helpful. He took me and the people who drove me there to the dining hall for coffee and then showed them round the Ashram while I 'discovered' the Meditation Hall.

After leaving my luggage in the guest house I returned to the Meditation Hall until the bell rang for dinner.

My two weeks went by much too fast, each day so complete and perfect that time did not exist — until one morning I awoke to the fact that there were only 4 days left of this perfection and then the time became an enemy. I almost ruined the next few days by my grief at the thought of leaving. However, the peace of Arunachala deepened inside with the assurance that it does not matter . . . peace and happiness are my natural state, regardless of time or place.

But now the ego finds this difficult to remember though and often grief returns . . . so I close my eyes and am again sitting in the Meditation Hall in the quiet early morning hours, soon the bell rings for the milk offering at Bhagavan's Samadhi and I join the others there . . . then the bell rings for breakfast and we go into the dining hall and sit quietly, wrapped in Bhagavan's Presence . . . After breakfast, back to the Meditation Hall, (it has a magnetic effect). Now the devotees are busy, picking flowers in the garden to make garlands for the Samadhi and to adorn Bhagavan's pictures. The guest house faces Arunachala and just looking at Arunachala is an experience indescribable. The Hill is radiant with peace, fullness, joy. It is alive!

At other times I walk around the Hill in the moonlight and the awe-inspiring silence of Arunachala speaks to the heart. There is something about that Hill!

Bhagavan is present in a special way in every spot of His Ashram, and in some inexplicable way, is also the Arunachala Hill. So when the longing comes to return, the assurance comes that I am there. When, in weakness, I plead with Bhagavan to please bring me back soon, qualified by a weak, "If it be Thy Will", He is here immediately and soon the realization comes that true surrender is complete surrender.

Bhagavan's Grace and love have been poured upon this miserable creature — always He is there and the heart is not big enough for Him. The ego is such a cramped little thing what can it do with such love but ask to be consumed?
1. If you separate yourself from the body and abide at ease in Consciousness you will become one (the sole Reality), everything else appearing (insignificant) like grass.

2. After knowing that by which you know this (world) turn the mind inward and then you will see clearly (realize) the effulgence of the Self.

3. O Raghava, that by which you recognize sound, taste, form and smell know that as your Self, the Supreme Brahman, the Lord of lords.

4. O Raghava, that in which beings vibrate, that which creates them, know that Self to be your real Self.

5. After rejecting, through reasoning, all that can be known as 'non-truth' what remains as pure Consciousness — regard as your real Self.

6. Knowledge is not separate from you and that which is known is not separate from knowledge. Hence there is nothing other than the Self, nothing separate (from it).

7. 'All that Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Indra and others always do is done by me the embodiment of Consciousness' — think in this manner.

8. 'I am the whole universe. I am the undecaying Supreme Self. There is neither past nor future apart from me' — reflect in this manner.

9. 'Everything is the One Brahman, pure Consciousness, the Self of all, indivisible and immutable' — reflect in this manner.

10. 'There is neither I nor any other thing. Only Brahman exists always full of bliss everywhere.' Meditate on this calmly.

11. The sense of perceiver and perceived is common to all embodied beings, but the Yogi worships the One Self.

1 Continued from our July 1970 issue.
Prostrations to the Originator of the Universe and the Remover of life’s sorrows.
Prostrations to the destroyer of sins and the Lord of beings.
Prostrations to the blue-throated one and the white-throated (ash-smeared) one.
Prostrations to the one with the matted locks and the one with the fully shaved head.
Prostrations to the thousand-eyed one and the one with the hundred bows.
Prostrations to the dweller on the mountains and the one who is in the form of the all-pervading Vishnu.
Prostrations to the one in the form of the rain clouds and the one who bears arrows.
Prostrations to the short one and one who is in the form of a dwarf.
Prostrations to the one of gigantic stature and the one who is the repository of virtues.
Prostrations to the ancient one and the one who is renowned.
Prostrations to the primordial one and the foremost one.
Prostrations to the omnipresent one and the fast moving one.
Prostrations to the dweller in the swift streams and the dweller in the floods.
Prostrations to the dweller in the waves and the dweller in still waters.
Prostrations to the dweller in brooks and the dweller on islands.
Prostrations to one who is the elder and one who is the younger.
Prostrations to the first born (Hiranyakagrabha) and the last born (the world-destroying fire).
Prostrations to the middle-aged one and the youthful one.
Prostrations to the one who is born from the hind portion (of animals) and the one who appears as the roots of trees.
Prostrations to the one born as human beings and the one born as other beings.
Prostrations to the one born in the world of Yama (the god of death) and the one born in the heavenly world (swarga).
Prostrations to the dweller in the field of crops and the dweller on the threshing floor.
Prostrations to the one who is praised by the Vedas and the one who is the end of the Vedas.

What We Really Are!

We give here below the fundamental tenets of an ancient Chinese Meditation Sect — CH'AN TSUNG — from The Path to Sudden Attainment.

1. Phenomena of any kind whatever exist only in what—for want of a better term—is called the mind.

2. The mind is synonymous with the ultimate reality underlying the appearances of phenomena. This ultimate reality is no other than the Bodhi-mind, or mind of the Buddha. We are therefore identical with the Buddhas in their highest aspect as the supreme and universal Body of the Law (Dharmakaya).

3. Thus there is no such thing as attaining the state of Buddhahood: we have but to understand what we really are.

4. It follows that it is useless to look outwards to the Buddhas for Enlightenment. We must look into our own minds and try to discern their true nature. If we are able to perceive this, we perceive the nature of the Buddhas and of the universe, for they are all one.

5. Since all phenomena exist only in the mind, it follows that distinctions between this and that, including distinctions between 'I' and 'you', are false, except in a relative sense, because my mind and your mind are identical with the universal mind.

6. Ultimate reality is something entirely beyond description, and cannot be thought of in terms of existence and non-existence. For convenience sake it has been identified with mind, but in fact even mind is a relative term and cannot be said to have any absolute existence.

7. We should, therefore, try to visualise everything as mind and then rid ourselves of even that concept. In this way we shall approach an understanding of the nature of ultimate reality.

John Blofeld, will be familiar to many readers of this review through his previous books on China (The City of Lingering Splendour), Thailand (People of the Sun), and his own spiritual autobiography (The Wheel of Life), in which latter he describes his first contact with Tibetan Buddhism after many years of almost exclusive Ch'an studies, resulting in his scholarly translation of Huang Po and Hui Hai.

With the present book he has stepped into a new realm of spiritual exploration, in which he was engaged during the last ten years and which continues to hold his attention. It may appear a far cry from the strictly anti-imaginative, anti-ritualistic, anti-traditional Ch'an (or Zen) to the highly imaginative, ritual-performing and tradition-conscious practices of the Vajrayana. And yet, if we follow the author's spiritual career through the above-mentioned books, a very significant fact is revealed, namely, that in spite of different methods, there is more in common between Zen and certain aspects of Tantrism than generally imagined. In Blofeld's words: "Despite enormous external differences, the Vajrayana is essentially close to Zen" (p. 31). In methods they may be poles apart, but in essence they reveal a common ground: both are concerned more with direct experience than with theory, more concerned with practice than with dogma; and both are convinced that sādhana must include all aspects of life and cannot be regarded as an escape from the world, but rather as a process of transformation of our awareness, by which this very world is experienced as an exponent of a higher reality.

Just as Zen, the Tantric method of meditation is not concerned with metaphysical speculations, but with intuitive awareness and realization, which passes beyond intellectual understanding or verbal formulation. But while Zen tries to by-pass the intellect by either ignoring it or by leading it ad absurdum through self-defeating koans, Tantric sādhana proceed in a different way to overcome conceptual thought. Knowing that no amount of force can suppress this flow of continual thought-activity, that on the contrary, any attempt to stop it will result in intensifying it, the Tantras have found that the only way to overcome conceptual thinking consists in replacing it with the direct experience of visualization, which makes use of the creative power of consciousness: imagination. However, this power is creative only when it is guided or directed by a higher principle, an idea or an inherent law — otherwise it results in a wild and chaotic growth of nebulous and unrelated dream-like phantasies which, like a cancer, lead to a dissolution rather than an enrichment of the mind. Both the artist and the scientist use, what we may call 'guided imagination'. But while the former is guided by the laws of harmony and aesthetic sensibilities, as well as by the nature of the medium in which he expresses himself, — the latter is guided by the laws of nature or their abstract formulations in logic and mathematics.

While imaginative visualization and any form of inner vision are banned in Zen-practice and disregarded as "makyo" (lit. "the devil's world"), Tantric sādhana makes use of it — though within a strict system of archetypal symbols, which do not allow the sādhaka to indulge in private phantasies or mere hallucinations (i.e. phenomena unrelated to any form of psychic or external reality).

"For many people who, not being spiritual giants, conscientiously practice Zen or some other austere form of mysticism over the years without notable results, meditation becomes more of a burden than a joy" (p. 31). It is here that Tantric methods can bring relief through their vast armoury of psychological devices in form of sublime rituals, consciousness-transforming symbols and mantric sounds, which "will awaken a deep response and lead to the achievement of results that eluded them before. The point is not that the Vajrayana is superior to Zen: no one intimately acquainted with Zen could doubt the excellence of its methods: what is more doubtful is the ability of most of us to employ them successfully." (p. 31).
"The Vajrayana caters to people who find it easier to use symbols and concepts as the very weapons with which to do away with concepts, instead of trying to banish them from the first." (p. 43). According to the author, experience and that of other Zen followers (of Eastern as well as Western origin), "relatively few people using the direct approach manage to get beyond the elementary stage of merely deciding for the task a little while." (p. 217)

The reason for this seems to be, that whenever meditation becomes too much of an effort or compulsion, due to a sense of duty or drive, the mind is not willing to go beyond the routine and routine, the most important element of meditation is missing, namely that of joyful inspiration (priti) which, according to the ancient Buddhist tradition, is the central factor and the driving force in the process of meditation. Instead of being driven to the point of despair by an insoluble koan, the Tantric adept visualizes the transcendent beauty and radiance of his supreme aim and aspiration, embued in the inwardly perceived and contemplated images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, representing all those divine faculties which are dormant in his own innermost being and which only need to be awakened, activated and made present, in order to be transformed into living reality.

The author, as a practising Buddhist takes great care to introduce the reader into the symbols and visualizations of the Vajrayana, which to him is "one of the loveliest flowers of man's spiritual achievements," as he says in his Foreword. Though he expects that the day will come, in which Tibetan Lamas have sufficiently mastered European languages to give an authentic account of their traditional teachings, he believes that in the meantime Western followers of the Vajrayana should try to clear up the grotesque misunderstandings about Tantric Buddhism, to which the traditional secrecy has given rise. This is indeed an urgent matter, not only because of the misinterpretation and misuse of the Tantras by uninformed and irresponsible people, but also because there is a danger that the younger generation of Tibetan Lamas (who have never known Tibet as it was before the Chinese invasion, or who left at an early age), even if they master European languages, will have been so much alienated from their original tradition that they are apt to succumb to Western influences (both morally and spiritually) and that they are no more able to interpret genuinely the Tibetan standpoint. This is not a theoretical assumption, but is borne out by facts, so that even the Dalai Lama seems to be doubtful about the value of sending young Lamas to Western countries. On the other hand, those who remain true to their tradition, are not in a position to explain it in terms of Western mentality or psychology, with the result that Tibetan Buddhism appears to the Westerner as a kind of primitive demonology or at the best as a form of idealized polytheism.

All the more important it is that Westerners, who have been in contact with Tibetan tradition for many years, should try to represent it conscientiously and clearly, thus offering the religious feelings and convictions of those, from whom they acquired their knowledge. That this has been done by the present author, constitutes the main value of this book. In contrast to merely learned tomes by Tibetologists, who remain aloof from their subject in the hope of greater 'objectivity', Blofeld shows the Vajrayana from the point of view of a devotee — yet without surrendering his common-sense or clarity of thought. He is convinced that even non-Buddhists might find it fruitful to adopt some of the Tantric techniques to their spiritual life. For this reason he is not content merely to discuss the background and theory of the Vajrayana, but gives equal space to its practice, beginning with the Refuges and the different forms of worship and ritual, leading up finally to the actual sadhanas and their visualizations. However he warns the reader "that the rituals are never practised in the hope of winning divine favour", but that "they are subtle aids to apprehension which derive their power from the mystical correspondence of the outer forms with hidden psychic forces and with the special states of mind that result." (p. 121).

The book is illustrated with a number of useful photographs and diagrams. The frontispiece is a beautiful line-drawing of Vairocana (in Sambhoga-kaya), though entitled "Vajrasattva Buddha". In certain sadhanas Vajrasattva takes the central place in the mandala, i.e., the place of Vairocana, with whom he is identified in that case. Nevertheless, as long as the emblems of Vairocana (lion-throne and dharma-cakra) are displayed, Vairocana's name should be associated with it. Vajrasattva can also take the place of Akshobhya in the east of the mandala, in which case he is called Vajrasattva-Akshobhya, because he takes the iconographical form of Akshobhya.

In this connection I also wish to point out the discrepancy between diagram 3B which shows the correct position of the five Dhyani-Buddhas (or Lokas, as the author prefers, though this title applies indiscriminately to all Buddhas, whether human or transcendental, i.e., experienceable only in meditation [dhyana]) and the paralleled diagrams 3A, 3C and 3D, in which the vertical axis represents "south" at the bottom and "north" on top, as if we were dealing with a geographical map, whereas
all Tibetan mandalas, as shown correctly in diagram 3B, have the "east" at the bottom and the "west" on top, while "south" and "north" are to the left and the right respectively. Without knowing this, no Tibetan mandala can be correctly read and understood. This as well as the spellings of some Sanskrit words should be rectified in a new edition which, we hope, will soon become necessary, as the book deserves to be read by all who are seriously interested in the wisdom and the practice of the Vajrayana. "The Tibetans," as the author says at the end of his book, "furnish an example of an entire nation bent on developing their inner resources to an extent comparable with Western man's mastery of his environment. How pleasant the world would be if all human beings were taught to concentrate their destructive energies on rooting out the ego and if they took wisdom and compassion as the only guiding forces of their lives."

A FIRST ZEN READER, compiled and translated by Trevor Leggett. Pub.: Charles E. Tuttle Company; Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, Japan, 1960. 236 pages, 20 plates. Price: $3.75 (U.S.A.). This book, which is modestly called "A First Zen Reader," contains such a wealth of profound wisdom, practical hints, inspiring poetry, literary and historical information, lively anecdotes and dialogues and charming illustrations, that it is difficult to put this book down, before one has read it from cover to cover. Though it has been said that Zen cannot be defined or explained, that it is neither a philosophy nor a religious doctrine, one thing emerges very clearly from this delightful book, namely that Zen is a attitude towards life, nay, a mode of life, which has its root in a deep reverence for the common origin of all things and the profound inter-relationship of all forms of life, mirrored in the simplest object and the lowliest being. It is a reverence which springs from the very heart of man as a natural expression of his fundamental oneness with the eternal source that sustains and gives meaning to every moment of our conscious existence and activity. "The great acti­vity is when the world and self become one, when all things and self are seen to have the same source. From that state of realization the light is again shone to where he stands. Then every mo­ment of his being, every step with his foot, spiritual­izes what he meets. He makes spiritual use of every event and thing. Before and after his foot­fall, the breath of holiness is born." (From the Commentary by Amakuki Sessan to Hakuin's "Song of Meditation"; p. 185).

Thus meditation (zazen) should not be motivated by the ambition to attain kenjitsu, insight into our true nature, or satori, a flash of illumination, in the shortest possible time — an attitude that often leads to frantic efforts and almost hysterical emo­tional outbursts which threaten not so much to annihilate the ego as the sanity of the meditator — but that "zazen is sitting with the Buddha seal manifest on body, speech and mind, and this zazen is the Buddha action." (p. 29).
end in itself: a dwelling in the spirit of Buddhist
hood, irrespective of whether we attain to its full
realization or not,—which after all is depending
on our maturity, and which can be forced as little
as the opening of a bud and its transformation into
a full-blown flower. In the Rinzai Zen greater
emphasis is laid upon the practice of koans, which
are meditated upon one after another, and "stages
of satori" are attained, koan by koan, like mount­
ing the rungs of a ladder." In this view, "it is
only after the point of realization that Buddhism
comes into existence." (p. 29). Both methods
have their advantages, and it must be left to the
reader to form his own opinion. To whatever side
he may feel drawn, he will not put this book out
of his hands without having been greatly enriched
and without a feeling of gratitude to the trans­lating and compiler of these texts, in which ancient
and modern masters of Zen speak to us with a beauty
and directness which is only equaled by the
examples of Zen art and calligraphy that enliven
this book.

MEDITATION IN ACTION: By Choegyam
74 pages. Price: 15. The Venerable Trungpa Rinpoche has already made a name for himself with his autobiography, in which he gave a graphic account of his life and education in Tibet and his adventurous flight to India when his country was invaded by the hordes of Chinese Communists. After a few years' stay in India, he migrated to England, and in 1967 he founded the Samye Ling Tibetan Centre in Scotland, named after the first Tibetan monastery, which was built by Guru Padmasambhava in the 8th century A.D. This book is a selection from talks which Trungpa Rinpoche gave in this Centre and which were recorded on tape. They retain the freshness and spontaneity of the spoken word and give many valuable hints to students and practitioners of medi­tation, though they do not contain any descriptions or indications of actual practices (sadhana) or Tibetan methods or personal experiences, which would justify the title "Meditation in Action." In fact, only one chapter has been dedicated to medi­tation proper, the others being devoted to more
general subjects, like "The Life and Example of the Buddha", "Transmission", "Generosity", "Patience", "Wisdom", etc. If, however, one has got over this initial disappointment, one begins to enjoy these talks as what they probably were intend­ed to be: a lucid and easily understandable intro­duction into the meaning of meditation and the preconditions for its practice.

From this point of view the reader will feel
richly rewarded by many excellent thoughts and
observations and by the charming personality of the
author which shines through the pages of this book.
Speaking about concentration, he makes a very
relevant remark, which is particularly important for
Westerners, who are apt to make concentration into
a "tour de force", thus defeating the very purpose
of meditation: "If one tries very hard to concen­trate, then one needs the thought that is concen­trating on the subject and also something which
makes that accelerate further. Thus there are two
processes involved and the second process is a kind
of watchman, which makes sure that you are doing
it propely. That part of it must be taken away,
otherwise one ends up being more self-conscious
and merely aware that one is concentrating, rather
than actually being in a state of concentration. This
becomes a vicious circle. Therefore one cannot
develop concentration alone, without taking away
the centralised watchfulness, trying to be careful—which is Ego." (p. 63). This is the typical
"double-bind" of forced concentration. But the
"samatha", which is here given as the Buddhist
equivalent for "concentration", is not at all mis­leading as our author assumes, because samatha is basically that element of tranquility which in its
highest degree is represented by the term "sambhāri", the state of complete unification or absorption. If we are absorbed in a subject, a thought or an
experience, there is no trace of compulsion or ego­centric will-power involved in this process or state
of mind, which results in vipassana, profound in­
sight, intuitive awareness. While intellectual
knowledge is produced by discursive thought, deduc­tion and logical operations, vipassana is the out­come of a process of integration of subject and object. This applies also to the "awareness of breathing" (anānata), one of the basic exercises of Buddhist meditation, which — in contrast to the usual technique of pranayama,— does not try to
"control" breathing, by interfering with its, rhythm
or forcing one will upon it (as this is the case in
Hathayoga [hatha = violence, force]), but consci­ously enters into the natural rhythm of breath, thus
raising it to the level of a conscious experience and
profound significance. As Trungpa Rinpoche puts it: "The awareness is simply kept on the verge of
the movement of breath; it just follows quite natu­rally and one is not trying particularly to bind the
mind of breathing." (p. 63). The same applies to
our thoughts: "One should not try to suppress
thoughts in meditation, but one should just try to
see the transitory nature, the transient nature of
thoughts. One should not become involved in
them, nor reject them, but simply observe them and

January
BOOK REVIEWS

1971


This is a most unsophisticated like physics or mathematics or any other form of intellectual knowledge. We, therefore, can only agree with the author, when he ends his book with the words : "...as far as the details of meditation are concerned, I don't think it helps to generalise. Since the techniques depend on the need of the person, they can only be discussed individually: one cannot conduct a class on meditation practice."

Meditation has much in common with love: it cannot be forced, nor can it be taught or explained, but it can be experienced and cultivated, and it can be stimulated by those who have realized it and are able to convey something of the beauty and harmony, of the peace and happiness they have gained. Meditation may not have any conceptual object — yet it is a state of, as well as a means towards, the experience of happiness, supreme bliss (mahasukha, ananda) and liberation. Just as love consists in being drawn towards that which is beautiful and lovable, in the same way meditation is spontaneously engendered by being drawn towards something that inspires us and lifts us beyond the narrow confines of our egocentric consciousness. A Guru’s task, therefore, is not merely to ‘teach’, but to inspire, and this inspiration is based on personal relationship between Guru and Chela, culminating in the act of initiation or final transmission of the spirit, in which a particular sadhana is to be practiced. This transmission, which is in the nature of inspiration, serves to awaken the dormant faculties of the Chela’s mind and to open his spiritual eye, so that whatever sadhana he may choose to follow, will become his own spontaneous way.

LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA


The author, born in Germany in 1862 was an exile in Holland from 1933 till his death. This book consists of excerpts from his writings published in English translation with the permission of the International Constantin Brunner Institute, the Hague, Holland. The editor believes that in Brunner’s philosophy there is work of major import for the history of thought and for the cultural development of mankind.

The editor says that present day philosophy has been by and large a disappointment of contemporaneous man in his quest for truth and in his search for a deeper meaning of life. Pragmatism, positivism, logical analysis and existentialism have not met this requirement. Nor has scholastic metaphysics for which, Brunner says, “the great question as to the factuality of the Absolute exists and the great reply based on factuality is never obtained.” This is so because, he finds “metaphysics remains outside in the sphere of the ideatum” (system of ideas concerned with relative reality), “and with this, at best it gets as far as the unknown God and the known bombast about him.” (p. 361).

The author has very significant things to say about the attempt of metaphysicians to prove the existence of God: “The Absolute is not capable of any proof,” he says. “He thinks all the ‘proofs’ for the existence of God have this presupposition that God is a thing: for proofs exist only for things in the world of things; so with the disappearing faith in God as a thing the proofs for his existence lose every force. He finds people becoming quite silent

Mother Krishnabai dictated her life story to an ashramite knowing Konkani and Kannada and it was Swami Ramdas himself who translated it into English as a labour of love. It was his last literary work. What the book lacks in literary merit and structure is amply made up by the outpourings of utter sincerity and simplicity touching a chord in the hearts of earnest spiritual seekers. The book should prove of great help to such aspirants.

SHAKMANI
nowadays about all proofs for the existence of God. (p. 362). He confidently affirms: Absolute truth one cannot have but only be. (p. 363). To take the idea of God out of the incomprehensibility of absolute thought and make it a subject of cognitive knowledge, can lead only to unhappy results. The author says ironically: "God is comprehensible and we have comprehended him and of this he has died." (p. 374).

The author's new contribution to philosophical thinking consists in his theory of three faculties which are, according to him: (i) Practical Understanding in which thinking embraces the entire reality of our world of things or relative reality; (ii) The Spirit the thinking of which is concerned with the truth of our essence, or absolute reality; (iii) Analogy—the fictitious thinking of an absolute reality which however is not true reality; which is superstitious thought. (Pp. 27-28).

The author finds that the faculty of understanding yields the complete truth of relative reality, or of things; the faculty of spiritual thought yields the complete absolute truth, which, surely, is not the truth concerning any absolute things; the faculty of superstitious thought yields nothing but the perfect untruth: it consists precisely in the belief that things are absolute, knowingly or unknowingly. Thinking has two enemies, the illogical, and the unreal, or the wrong thought process and the initially wrong, fictitious thought content. (p. 29).

The author comes to the conclusion: "Without a doubt, the Absolute Thought within us is the absolute." He turns to Indian philosophy and says: "The Atman and Brahma(n) of Hindu philosophy is also the same as our Absolute Thought—that which thinks all ideata, but never enters into any such ideatum—the true Self, thinking itself, which rises right through the empirical ego out of the depths of consciousness." He quotes Sandilya as saying: "Small as a grain of rice . . . this spirit dwells within my Self; he is . . . vaster than the heavens, vaster than the ether, vaster than this earth, vaster than all beings; he is the self of the breath, he is my Self (atman). I shall unite with this Atman when I go hence. Who has this, truly, has no doubts." He refers to the more austere philosophical language of the Upanishads in which Brahma(n) is described as "neither large nor small, his name being No no" (net net — Reviewer). The wise man of the Upanishads, by not speaking in reply to a question about Brahm, indicates that "This Atman is silence." According to Brunner: "the Buddhist dissolution in Nirvana is entering into Brahma or Atman." (p. 359).

The ultimate in philosophy is mystical," says Brunner. He points out how our egoism (aham- karma) can be eliminated. "Our 'I' is redeemed when it no longer is an 'I' but an 'I-Self' thinking from the relativity on the fundament of the absolute. . . . Every spiritual man is such an 'I-Self'". (p. 360). These spiritual men express the irresistible figuratively. This figurative expression, Brunner says, is sensed by the spiritual and not by the superstitious who, sensing nothing but what is externally thing-like, do not perceive at all 'the ensconced immensity of the Spirit in it'. Hence his warning in the words of Goethe: "Tell no one but the wise." (p. 366).

This is a challenging book, but the challenge is supported by profound constructive thought. It should be widely read, particularly in our country where the traditional insistence on a spiritual approach to the Absolute will find welcome support from the rethinking of an eminent modern philosopher who is strongly opposed to different modes of incorrect reasoning.

In addition to religion and metaphysics Brunner has applied his theories of faculties to science, psychology, pneumatology and Moralism (as distinguished from ethics). There is ample evidence of "a new inquiry" in each case.

We congratulate all who are responsible for the preservation of Constantin Brunner's writings, and the production of the book under review. We hope the expectation of a complete English translation of his works will be fulfilled.

PROF. A. C. Bose


In this closely argued and heavily documented work on the philosophy of education, Dr. Denton, who has already written much and sensibly on Albert Camus, pleads for the restoration of "soul" to the overdeveloped and overvigorous "body" of education. What is widely deplored as the generation-gap, and the alienation from their human selves of both students and teachers can be traced to the absence of "elan, spontaneity, vitality, compassion, warmth, and concern" in our educational methods and organization. The only remedy is to decide quickly and manage somehow to shift from "categorical thinking with its steno-language to ordinary experience with its existential language". Steno-language may be exact, precise, factual, public, verifiable, but it can only speak of institutions, methods and constructions like ideas and internal combustion engines; it is helpless before the living process called education. Existential language...
is more than conceptual or written language and uses body modes, pictorial modes, acoustic modes. Mental categories are not prior to or more important than existential happenings. Life is much larger than logic. In the "advanced" countries of the world, Psychology, Philosophy and Education have in the "solemn folly of scholarship" eliminated all reverence to the pre-conceptual, subjective aspects of ordinary experience. The adjective has almost eaten up the substantive. The one-eyed giant has turned self-destructive.

Though Canna was driven to atheistic humanism by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Students are not objects to be manipulated, but subjects to be lived with as they develop into responsible selfhood. Education is in a sense a moral enterprise. The end should be the development of "lucid", that is, moral individuals. A system which, being imprisoned in the past or intellectually committed to some "future futility", sacrifices the present moment is "anti-life" and can survive only by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Though Canna was driven to atheistic humanism by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Students are not objects to be manipulated, but subjects to be lived with as they develop into responsible selfhood. Education is in a sense a moral enterprise. The end should be the development of "lucid", that is, moral individuals. A system which, being imprisoned in the past or intellectually committed to some "future futility", sacrifices the present moment is "anti-life" and can survive only by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Though Canna was driven to atheistic humanism by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Students are not objects to be manipulated, but subjects to be lived with as they develop into responsible selfhood. Education is in a sense a moral enterprise. The end should be the development of "lucid", that is, moral individuals. A system which, being imprisoned in the past or intellectually committed to some "future futility", sacrifices the present moment is "anti-life" and can survive only by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Students are not objects to be manipulated, but subjects to be lived with as they develop into responsible selfhood. Education is in a sense a moral enterprise. The end should be the development of "lucid", that is, moral individuals. A system which, being imprisoned in the past or intellectually committed to some "future futility", sacrifices the present moment is "anti-life" and can survive only by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Students are not objects to be manipulated, but subjects to be lived with as they develop into responsible selfhood. Education is in a sense a moral enterprise. The end should be the development of "lucid", that is, moral individuals. A system which, being imprisoned in the past or intellectually committed to some "future futility", sacrifices the present moment is "anti-life" and can survive only by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.

Students are not objects to be manipulated, but subjects to be lived with as they develop into responsible selfhood. Education is in a sense a moral enterprise. The end should be the development of "lucid", that is, moral individuals. A system which, being imprisoned in the past or intellectually committed to some "future futility", sacrifices the present moment is "anti-life" and can survive only by the impossibility of religious belief, he is nevertheless a humanist who cannot divorce feeling from knowledge. According to Canna constructions (categories, laws, first principles), however legitimate, are not more real or valuable than their human constructors. "Their heart within me I can feel and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch and I judge likewise that it exists. There ends all my knowledge and the rest is construction." The feeling of absurdity precedes the notion of absurdity and is therefore the original and essential component of knowledge. As Wei Wu Wei would say, the human predicament is absurd because "I am. I am not. I laugh." Ideas are but constructions and have no reality status and yet the modern West mistakes knowledge of ideas for the whole of human knowledge.
that underlines all creation, in all ages, and the way or ways in which man realises his oneness with that Reality. Realised, because it cannot be known by the intellect. He who thinks it known, really knows not of it and he who thinks it not known, is in the know of it.

How is It to be realised? And where? In the forest, away from the restless life-activity of the world? And what is the result of realising this Truth? Disappearance into the Beyond? Dr. Mehta raises these and other pertinent questions in his exposition of the main themes in the major Upanishads — from the Isha to the Svetasvatara — and answers them with a view to appealing to the modern mind which is steeped in the lice of the world-situation today and does not know which way to turn. The author observes: "Paul Tillich, an outstanding thinker and philosopher of our times says that modern man has lost one dimension of existence — and that is the dimension of Depth. He must regain that lost dimension if he is to know what real happiness is. It is with this dimension of depth that mysticism is primarily concerned. . . . Depth reveals itself — but only to a mind that has come to a stillness. The great Upanishadic philosophy is fundamentally concerned with the revelation of depth."

In the course of a brilliant introduction, the writer underlines the unique character of the Upanishads as living vehicles of enlightenment, recording the transmission of a great Tradition from the Teacher to the disciple, keeping always the ear close to mother-Nature, allowing full freedom to the questing mind of the novice to experiment and verify for itself the truth of the doctrines placed before it. The exposition follows no set school of interpretation; the one note that runs throughout is the affirmation of the value of human life and the necessity of achievement and the efficacy of Devotion in the path. Devotion fills the mind, life becomes worthwhile — from the Veda to the Svetasvatara — and answers every question Dr. Mahadevan draws attention to this truth of the matter.

In the first Hymn to Dakshinamurti, the Divine is addressed as the Guru, Teacher, without whose Grace and intervention no liberation is possible. It contains the essence of the Advaïta inasmuch as it emphasises the reality of the One Self in the midst of the multiplicity of forms. Dr. Mahadevan takes care to see that the reader does not miss any point of relevance in the Itihasa. While on the symbology of the pose of Dakshinamurti he notes that the hand mudra, the symbol of pure consciousness. In this pose, the thumb and the index finger of the right hand are joined at their tips while the other three fingers stand apart. The significance of this pose is that there is identity in the midst of apparent diversity."

The second Hymn to the Guru underlines the truth that not all learning, not all material prosperity, is enough to help the seeker to achieve his object in sadhana. Devotion and loyalty to the Guru are indispensable. The Bhaja Govindam of 31 verses is preceded by a traditional account of the origin of the poem. "Acharya Shankara, it is said, was walking along a street in Varanasi, one day, accompanied by his disciples. He heard the sound of grammatical rules being recited by an old scholar. Taking pity on the scholar, he went up to him and advised him not to waste his time on grammar but to turn his mind to God in worship and adoration. The Hymn to Govinda was composed on this occasion." Here too the futility of all worldly pursuits — including those of literary scholarship — is exposed and man is called to resort to the feet of the Guru who alone can show the path and lead him to the Immortal Self. The Sivananda Lahari, Hymn to Shiva, in a century of verses lauds the Godhead in his aspect of auspiciousness, benevolence. It is popularly thought that Shiva is only a destroyer, Rudra the terrible of the Veda. But, as the editor points out, this belief is baseless. Rudra is also the supreme healer, Tryambaka the Saviour.

It is interesting to note that Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi has made a selection of ten verses from the poem bringing out the quintessence of the work. Analysing these ten verses Dr. Mahadevan sums up: "A definition of devotion is given with apt analogies. Devotion is constant contemplation of God. When Devotion fills the mind, life becomes worth-while and fruitful. There is no point in being devoted to what is little in the face of the object of true devotion in the Infinite Reality, God. Logic cannot be a substitute for devotion. Skill in the art of argumentation will not yield happiness. It will only..."
The idea of body and soul as two separate substances, which are somehow united in man, as pronounced by Descartes, has long been under attack. It was referred to by Gilbert Ryle as the theory of "the ghost in the machine". Materialists have generally been disposed to dismiss the soul as no more real than a 'ghost' and to reduce man to a body accidental garment of the soul, which can be discarded at death, or as a mere appearance without a soul or spirit and consider the body as either an accidental garment of the soul, which can be discarded at death, or as a mere appearance without any ultimate reality. But there has always been a deeper tradition, which considers man as essentially neither body nor soul, but as a whole, in which two principles, matter and spirit, meet in an organic unity. Dr. Zurcher shows how this conception of human nature was developed first by Aristotle and then by St. Thomas Aquinas in the Middle Ages, and how it corresponds most closely to the conception of man which is to be found in the Bible.

Dr. Zurcher develops this theory in the light of modern thought and shows how the soul must be considered not as a static but as a dynamic reality. In man the two principles of matter and spirit unite in such a way that through his self-consciousness he becomes capable of organising his bodily life and directing it towards its goal. The end of man is not therefore the separation of soul from body, but the gradual spiritualisation of matter, so that the body becomes a 'spiritual body' totally under the control of the spirit. This state is not something which is given, but something which has to be acquired; man has continually to create himself. Dr. Zurcher does not develop this idea, as fully as one might have hoped, but his essay is stimulating and suggests a comparison with the corresponding Indian conception of the relation of soul and body.


devotion is devotion to God. Devotion does not consist in mere external offering of flowers, etc., to God; it is the heart-gift that is true devotion. One may be a devotee in any stage of life; if one surrenders oneself to God, He is ready but take this all the burdens. The end of devotion is moksa. Devotion to God removes the darkness of ignorance by shedding the light of wisdom."

M. P. Pandit.


The sub-title of this book is 'The interplay between the Upanishads and Catholic theology,' and it marks one of the first attempts to express Christian doctrine in terms of Indian thought. Though Christianity was originally expressed in terms of Hebrew thought in the New Testament, it very soon took on the language and thought-forms of the Graeco-Roman world, and Catholic theology has been expressed ever since in terms of Greek philosophy (using words like substance, essence, nature, person etc.). But there is a strong feeling in India to-day that Chris-
tian theology should speak in Indian terms. Dr. Smart is a professor at Lancaster University in England and these lectures were given in Delhi in 1964. Dr. Smart studies the Indian approach to God through yoga or meditation on the one hand, and through devotion or bhakti on the other. He sees some forms of religion like Therosvada Buddhism as dominated by dhyana to the exclusion of bhakti, and others like certain forms of Protestantism dominated by bhakti to the exclusion of dhyana. But other systems of religion like Catholicism and Orthodoxy in Christianity, and the theism of Ramanuja and Madhva in Hinduism, as well as Mahayana Buddhism embrace both dhyana and bhakti. I think that Dr. Smart overestimates the value of the doctrine of Ramanuja and fails to realise the full depth of the advaita of Sankara, but his is a serious attempt to place these different values of religion side by side and to evaluate their relationship. It is in this kind of confrontation that a genuine dialogue between religions can develop, which will do justice to the insight of each religious tradition, and at the same time elucidate that ultimate unity in which we may believe all religions can unite.

Father Bede Griffiths

SCHOPENHAUER AND BUDDHISM: By Bhikkhu Nananjivaka.

SURVIVAL AND KARMA: by K. N. Jayatilleke.

Both from Buddhist Publications Society, Kandy, Ceylon. Prices not indicated.

These two Wheel Publications formulate in clear and authentic terms the Buddhist conception of the Noble Truth of Suffering and its ultimate solution by suggesting the possibility of a way out of suffering. Both Schopenhauer and Buddhism have unfortunately been associated in the public mind with the theory of pessimism, inspiring a mood of pensive melancholy "of Celeberras and blackest midnight born.

In Stygian caves forlorn."

Bhikkhu Nananjivaka ably proves that not only is this typical objection unjust and misleading but that it is shallow and vulgar as well. Schopenhauer’s views are of particular interest in the study of Buddhism as, in spite of his allegedly profound pessimistic view of life which makes him say that "the brevity of life, which is so constantly lamented, may be the best quality it possesses", he seeks to prove that our true nature is indestructible and this is done with the help of a philosophical system which, as he himself had confessed, "could not have arisen before the rays of the Upasnishads, of Plato and Kant had converged in my mind".

It may be noted that Schopenhauer got his Doctrate for his thesis based on a critical revision of the theory of categories in Kant’s philosophy. His contention was that Kant’s conception of the whole problem of causality was too strongly influenced by the typically European, Aristotelian and Scholastic tradition and that he was unable to renounce the idea of a "first cause" but still felt tempted to consider it in connection with the ideas of God, of the immortality of the soul and of the freedom of the will as necessarily innate in the very nature of human Reason.

By apt quotations and comparisons the historical orientation of Indian concepts in Schopenhauer’s philosophy is brought out in clear terms. While the Upashishads had exerted a great influence on the shaping of his philosophical thoughts in his earlier stages, the Buddhist philosophy had a marked influence throughout the later elaboration of his system of philosophy, and this little book is remarkable for marking the transition of his philosophy from a predominantly Vedantic to a prevalently Buddhistic orientation.

The second book on Karma is a series of talks by Professor Jayatilleke of the University of Ceylon examining in detail the Buddhist view of survival. Not only have the major problems involved in presenting the case for survival, rebirth and Karma been examined but several suggestions also are given regarding evidences of rebirth, such as the experimental and the spontaneous, by drawing appropriate references from the philosophies of McDougall, Rhine and Ian Stevenson.

Many of the misconceptions prevailing about Buddhist views on survival are cleared by Prof. Jayatilleke who makes a careful study of the authentic early texts of Buddhism. Wading through the wild jungle growth of the various concepts on this subject it is conclusively proved that the Buddha had unambiguously affirmed (i) the continuity without identity of individuality due to the operation of casual factors, (ii) the doctrine of anatta, which denied the existence of a physical, mental, psycho-physical or independent entity within or related to the psycho-physical aspects of personality; and (ii) that he rejected mere metaphysical speculation about prior or future lives which did not result in the verification of facts about them.

ARGUS


The late Dr. R. D. Ranade, known to students of Indian Philosophy as the author of Constructive Survey of Upashishadic Philosophy had collected elaborate materials with a view to write a book with the title mentioned above. But unfortunately
he did not live long enough to accomplish this task. Realizing the uselessness of the data that he had left behind, Srinati Sitabai Ranade entrusted the work of writing the book to a committee of scholars. The book under review is the outcome of their labour of love.

The aim of the book, as the title itself indicates, is to show that speculative thought which started in this country as early as the days of the Rg Veda and which ran a richly diversified course, found its logical fulfillment in the system of philosophy known as the Vedanta and especially that particular branch of it called Advaita Vedanta.

With this end in view Dr. Ranade undertakes an elaborate and impartial examination of the solutions offered by different schools of thought such as Buddhism, Jainism, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Yoga and Mimamsa to the central problems of philosophy and, after exposing their deficiencies, points out that the most satisfactory solution is to be found in Advaita Vedanta. This examination is done in ten chapters. The Cosmological problem, the Metaphysical problem, the problem of Logic, the Epistemological problem, the problem of God, the relation of God to the world, Causality and appearance, the problem of the Self, the Ethical problem — these are dealt with in nine chapters and the last discusses the nature of summum bonum according to Nyaya, Samkhya, Mimamsa and finally Advaita Vedanta.

The notes that Dr. Ranade had left behind and which formed the basis for the preparation of the book are published in full at the end. A very useful index brings up the rear.

Dr. Ranade, being an original thinker, has taken his own line in regard to the interpretation of certain other passages and sutras of the Vedanta Sutra. A few examples may be given : Antaradhitkaranam in Vedanta Sutra, I. ii. 13-17 is taken both by Sankara and Ramana in as referring to the "Person in the Eye" mentioned in Chandogya IV, xv. 1. But the author for his own reasons takes it as referring to anyatavatam as mentioned in Taittiriya II. 5. Brahmadhitkaranam in Vedanta Sutra I. iv. 5 is taken by Sankara to refer to Chandogya VIII. iii. 1 and 2. But the author thinks it more appropriately refers to sa eko brahma-nam ananda" in Taittiriya II. 8.

As regards the interpretation of certain sutras also the author differs from Sankara and other commentators. Interpreting Vedanta Sutra III. iv. 1 the author takes the word "atut" to mean "something higher" and asks "what higher ideal than self-knowledge can there be if knowing Brahman is being Brahman? Why the word atut is wrong is also in the only Purusharthi." He further adds that the Chandogya passage which Sankara quotes, "He who knows Brahman overcomes sorrow" is inconsistent with the view that self-realization alone constitutes the summum bonum. The word "atut" does not mean "something higher," but only "from." The sutra is "purushartho atut sabdjdadi badarayana." It means "Badarayana thinks that liberation is from (the knowledge of the Self presented in the upanishads) because the vedic texts declare so." Nor is it proper to say that the Chandogya passage is inconsistent. Overcoming sorrow is not to be taken as a further end to be achieved by self-knowledge. It is only another name for self-knowledge.

In Sutras IV. iv. 5 and 6 there is reference to the views of Jaimini and Audulomin regarding the condition of the released soul. Their reconciliation is given in the next sutra. According to Sankara the reconciliation is in terms of higher and lower knowledge. Cit or consciousness is the essential nature of the released soul while ananda and eiswarya, since they are based on duality, are to be ascribed to the same soul at a lower level. But our author wants Sankara to apply the same rule to both Cit and ananda. If ananda is to be related to the lower level, there is no reason to make an exception in the case of cit. If this is done Sankara would have over-reached himself. This is perhaps what the author means by the expression "out-sankering Sankara" which occurs on page 175.

In another place (p. 80) he writes : "In this way we should help Sankara out of the ditch." It is not clear from the context what is the ditch into which Sankara had fallen and from which our author proposes to pull him out.

The two scholars, Dr. V. H. Dale and Prof. B. R. Kulkarani, who wrote out the chapters, have tried their best to be faithful to Dr. Ranade. Their task was a difficult one. The notes, though fairly full, still required to be expanded, explained, and put into shape. Several connecting links had to be supplied. The skeleton had to be clothed in flesh, bone and muscle. They have done their best though some gaps are noticeable. One could also wish that the language was a little more terse and precise.

On the whole, the book is a valuable addition to the literature bearing on Indian Philosophy in general and Vedanta in particular.


The Bhagavad Gita is universally acclaimed as the most satisfactory solution is to be found in Advaita Vedanta. This examination is done in ten chapters. The Cosmological problem, the Metaphysical problem, the problem of Logic, the Epistemological problem, the problem of God, the relation of God to the world, Causality and appearance, the problem of the Self, the Ethical problem — these are dealt with in nine chapters and the last discusses the nature of summum bonum according to Nyaya, Samkhya, Mimamsa and finally Advaita Vedanta. The notes that Dr. Ranade had left behind and which formed the basis for the preparation of the book are published in full at the end. A very useful index brings up the rear.

Dr. Ranade, being an original thinker, has taken his own line in regard to the interpretation of certain other passages and sutras of the Vedanta Sutra. A few examples may be given : Antaradhitkaranam in Vedanta Sutra, I. ii. 13-17 is taken both by Sankara and Ramana in as referring to the "Person in the Eye" mentioned in Chandogya IV, xv. 1. But the author for his own reasons takes it as referring to anyatavatam as mentioned in Taittiriya II. 5. Brahmadhitkaranam in Vedanta Sutra I. iv. 5 is taken by Sankara to refer to Chandogya VIII. iii. 1 and 2. But the author thinks it more appropriately refers to 'sa eko brahma-nam ananda' in Taittiriya II. 8.

As regards the interpretation of certain sutras also the author differs from Sankara and other commentators. Interpreting Vedanta Sutra III. iv. 1 the author takes the word 'atut' to mean 'something higher' and asks 'what higher ideal than self-knowledge can there be if knowing Brahman is being Brahman? Why the word atut is wrong is also in the only Purusharthi." He further adds that the Chandogya passage which Sankara quotes, 'He who knows Brahman overcomes sorrow' is inconsistent with the view that self-realization alone constitutes the summum bonum. The word 'atut' does not mean 'something higher,' but only 'from.' The sutra is "purushartho atut sabdjdadi badarayana." It means "Badarayana thinks that liberation is from (the knowledge of the Self presented in the upanishads) because the vedic texts declare so." Nor is it proper to say that the Chandogya passage is inconsistent. Overcoming sorrow is not to be taken as a further end to be achieved by self-knowledge. It is only another name for self-knowledge.

In Sutras IV. iv. 5 and 6 there is reference to the views of Jaimini and Audulomin regarding the condition of the released soul. Their reconciliation is given in the next sutra. According to Sankara the reconciliation is in terms of higher and lower knowledge. Cit or consciousness is the essential nature of the released soul while ananda and eiswarya, since they are based on duality, are to be ascribed to the same soul at a lower level. But our author wants Sankara to apply the same rule to both Cit and ananda. If ananda is to be related to the lower level, there is no reason to make an exception in the case of cit. If this is done Sankara would have over-reached himself. This is perhaps what the author means by the expression 'out-sankering Sankara' which occurs on page 175.

In another place (p. 80) he writes : "In this way we should help Sankara out of the ditch." It is not clear from the context what is the ditch into which Sankara had fallen and from which our author proposes to pull him out.

The two scholars, Dr. V. H. Dale and Prof. B. R. Kulkarani, who wrote out the chapters, have tried their best to be faithful to Dr. Ranade. Their task was a difficult one. The notes, though fairly full, still required to be expanded, explained, and put into shape. Several connecting links had to be supplied. The skeleton had to be clothed in flesh, bone and muscle. They have done their best though some gaps are noticeable. One could also wish that the language was a little more terse and precise.

On the whole, the book is a valuable addition to the literature bearing on Indian Philosophy in general and Vedanta in particular.
whole of mankind. The passing of so many centu-
ries has not rendered any of its essential tenets
obsolete. Though twentyfive centuries have passed
by since it was delivered, its relevance to the condi-
tions that prevail today is even more pronounced
than ever before. By reason of the eternal verities
which it expounds in simple and clear language, it
has become the gospel of mankind. Treatises ex-
posing its teachings are numerous. Fresh books
continue to be published and one never feels that
they are superfluous.

The present book by H. V. Divatia was published
in 1951 as the second in Bhavan's Book University
series. Four editions of the book have been sold
out and to meet the continuing needs of the public,
the fifth edition has come out. No further proof
of the popularity of the book is needed.

In ten small chapters the author very ably dis-
cusses all the essential teachings of the Gita.
Certain preliminary questions and the author's
approach to the study are dealt with in chapters
two and three. The next six chapters are occupied
with setting forth the teachings of the Gita under suitable
heads like Psychology, Epistemology, Cosmology,
Metaphysics, Ethics and Religion. The ninth chapter
shows that the findings of modern science are lend-
ing increasing support to the teachings of the Gita.
The last chapter explains very clearly that the
practical application of the teachings of the Gita
is for every shade of religious and philosophical
thought on the principle of adhikari bheda.

It is a handy volume which can be easily gone
through in a few sittings. The author has an
engaging way of presenting the ideas and the inter-
est of the author never flags. It is a very useful
addition to the vast literature on the Gita.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS UNIQUE MESS-
AGE, by Swami Ghanananda, with a Foreword
by Arnold Toynbee. Pub.: The Ramakrishna
Rs. 10/-. In thirteen brief chapters the author gives
an authenticated account of Sri Ramakrishna’s spiritual
struggles which culminated in his enlightenment.

How like a scientist he proceeded to verify the truth
of his illumination by treading other non-Hindu
paths and how by the process of what is known as
‘consonence of inductions’ he was satisfied with the
essential soundness of the enlightenment which he
had attained — all this is set forth in detail in
chapter twelve and thirteen. The harmony of religions
that he was able to teach as a consequence of his unique
illumination is expounded in the next three chap-
ters. Chapter eleven gives his message in his own
words. The practical application of the discovery
made by him to the solution of the problems con-
fronting thinkers of today is elaborated in chapters
twelve and thirteen.

The presentation is lucid and simple. When
occasions arise the author explains relevant aspects
of the vedanta system of philosophy which form the
background of Sri Ramakrishna’s experiences. His
exposition of the various interpretations placed by
different schools on the Mahavakya Tat Tvam Aham,
given in section three of chapter eight, deserves spe-
cial mention.

As the avowed object of the author is to present
Sri Ramakrishna’s message as something ‘unique’
in human history, it is no matter for surprise that
he makes certain claims on behalf of the Sage of
Dakshineswar which should not be too critically
examined. Two or three instances may be given
of such untenable claims. In page 124 we read :
“The greatness of Sri Ramakrishna can be realised
from the fact that he went to the root of the whole
problem in his reconciliation of the different systems
of philosophy by pointing out the validity of the
different kind of experiences which form their
authority and encouraging everyone to progress
along the path that suited him best.” We have only
to point out that long ago Sri Sankara found a
place for every shade of religious and philosophical
thought on the principle of adhikari bheda. In the
same page the author claims that the credit of
reconciling the four yogas, Karma, Bhakti, Jnana
and Dhyana, belongs to Sri Ramakrishna alone.
We have only to point out that long ago Sri
Krishna effected the reconciliation of the four yogas
in the Gita. It is needful to multiply examples.
In spite of such overstatements the book is very
readable.

HAPPINESS AND IMMORTALITY : By P. J.
Saher. Pub.: George Allen and Unwin. Price :
40s.

THE REAL WORLD : By Martin Waeg. Pub. :

Mr. Saher, who is already familiar to our readers
by his book Eastern Wisdom and Western Thought
(reviewed in these pages earlier), has chosen in
this publication to give the essence of George
Grimm’s investigations into the secrets of Buddhism.
Even as in the earlier book, the author has taken
great pains to prove the underlying unitary philo-
sophy permeating eastern and western concepts.
Here effort is made to prove that the Buddha’s teach-
ings are not at variance with the maintenance of
Indian philosophy. After all, it has to be remem-
hored that the Buddha belongs to the mainstream of Indian thought and naturally he was trying to pin-point the cardinal problems of Self in contradistinction to the ego.

Mr. Salter has not given yet another book on comparative religion but offered to the present day world of conflict and tensions, a practical guide to Buddhism, which alone can help to master human suffering and harness its latent powers. If science explores outer space the secret wisdom of ancient Asia detailed in this book helps one to explore the inner space of the human psyche, thus enabling the earnest aspirant to recognize within himself a new freedom to work out his own destiny by the discovery of a sure criterion for determining the real 'I' or higher Self. The yoga of knowing the Self offers an opportunity to get clear insight into reality which, in short is, in the author's opinion, Happiness and Immortality. To quote him:

"We must draw internal values in order to live out the values of life: the vital values cannot be had except by giving up at least a little of our time to silently waiting for them in meditation. This means that the life in which ethical exertion is balanced by spiritual insight must be a life in which action alternates with contemplation."

To quite a different genre belongs Wank's book describing the real world which is not merely the deliverance of the mind in Buddhist parlance but an immersion of it in personal, political and international relations, which, according to the author, is reality itself, the field on which power plays its games. The style of writing adopted is not only exhilarating but surprising for the general reader, as he catches here a tone and a technique that moves from the rigour of Einsteinian thought to the flambouyance of McLuhan, the passion of Nietzsche, the insight of Camus and the radical despair of Sartre. One is reminded here of Madame Nathalie Sarraute's conception of literature as a mirror of life and her emphasis on sensations and the capacity to express them to the exclusion of almost everything else.

Complex thoughts, speculations and enquiries are jumbled up together and written in a style which is apparently so lucid but on closer scrutiny, it is unenigmatic as well and, as Maxwell Geisman observes in the introduction, the study offers a third and profound level too at once just and true as the reflections, at once acerbic and provoking, express in varied ways man's central need for power and his craze for social hierarchy. Although the book is short, it is difficult to say whether it is sweet or sour but, definitely it is deadly in its accuracy. The purpose of the book has very well been outlined by the author himself when he states:

"My work has the same purpose as Machiavelli's The Prince. Only I wish to instruct the public, not the princes."

BUDDHIST ETHICS, ESSENCE OF BUDDHISM:
This book fills a gap as the subject matter of it has received rather cursory treatment at the hands of writers on Buddhism so far. It is particularly appropriate in this age of indiscipline and rejection of ethical values. The author, an erudite and well-known Buddhist scholar — monk of long-standing — has undertaken considerable research and presents clearly his theme: the historical background of Buddhism, the life of the Buddha, the significance of the refruges, of the Buddhist 'Trinity'; the groups of precepts, the traditional rules of training etc. and finally the most important aspect of ethics in their relation to the ultimate goal, Nirvana. His statements are enhanced with quotations translated from the original texts.

While pointing out that ethics represent the first stage in the Buddhist way of life the author also stresses the significance of practising these virtues resulting in a better understanding and a mental vision that would lead a man to the quest for a higher life truly worthy of his attention. The 'roads to power' are so called for they are forming by way of preparation the roads to power constituting the fruition of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering. Buddhist ethics emphasise the importance of vigilance or the cultivation of an investigating mind starting from the commonplace of going about one's duties. Ultimately it should end in the short-cut of self-enquiry.

The book is very informative and of special appeal both to the scholar and spiritual seeker.

L. O.

PERIODICALS

YOGA LIFE: Monthly journal of Ananda Ashrama, Box 82, Pondicherry-1. Annual Subscription: Rs. 10 inland; $ 6 or £ 3 foreign.
This magazine is particularly informative on yogic exercises, yogic therapy, pranayama, diet, etc. It aims at unification of body, emotions, mind and spirit. A number of articles are by Sri Swami Gitananda who personally trains at his Ashram those who enrol themselves for a course on yogic therapy.

SAMAYA JOTHI: Monthly journal of Sivananda TDBovara, Madurai-6. Annual Subscription: Rs. 5 inland; Rs. 10 outside India. A bilingual journal in Tamil and English, dedicated to Sri Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh.
A GREAT FESTIVAL OBSERVED AT ARUNACHALA

THE Kartikai Deepam Day was observed as usual at the Ashram on Friday, Dec. 11, with great devotional fervour by the devotees of Sri Bhagavan from here and abroad. Along with Ashram inmates all assembled in the vicinity of Sri Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace affording a full view of the Holy Beacon on top of Arunachala Hill.

At 6 p.m. the Holy Deepam was lit on top of the Hill and simultaneously amidst Vedic chants, it was lit in front of Sri Bhagavan's portrait installed for the occasion. Old devotees of Sri Bhagavan recited the Akshara Mana Malai — The Marital 'Garland of Letters, Arunachala Sthuthi Panchakam and Siva-puranam. After these chantings prasad was distributed. Thereafter the Ashramites, as usual, went round the Hill (giripradakshina), chanting 'Arunachala Shiva, Arunachala Shiva'.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DEEPAM

The Kartikai Deepam — well-known as the Holy Beacon on the Hill — on top of Arunachala that dominates the entire region of Tiruvannamalai has been a source of inspiration and interest to mankind over the ages. The Puranas expound the significance of the event and of its origin as follows:

Lord Brahma and Lord Vishnu (representing the aspects of Creation and Protection) swayed by egoism had a controversy as to which of them was...
greater. Then Lord Shiva, out of compassionate Grace, willed to reveal the Truth by destroying their ego and stood between them as a dazzling column of fire, which engulfed the entire universe in its shining red effulgence. Hence the names of the Hill — Arunachalam, Sonagiri, etc. (Aruna and Sona, meaning red; and giri, Hill). Both of them were asked to find the top or bottom of this Hill of fire and the one who succeeded in doing so would win the contest. Immediately Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma, assuming respectively the forms of a boar and a swan, began to search for the bottom and top of this huge column of fire. After an endless and fruitless search both of them realising their folly began to pray to the Lord Shiva in utter humility. Thereupon Lord Shiva appeared before them in the form of a Linga and exclaimed:

"A jyothi or a flame will be made visible on every kirthigai day of the Karthigai month on top of this Linga — Arunachala — and all those who witness it shall free themselves from bondage of births and deaths and thereby attain My Feet."

Since that time every year on the kirthika day of the Karthigai month at Tiruvannamalai a jyothi is lit on the Holy Hill of Arunachala and a festival observed by the inhabitants and pilgrims who come in their thousands. To have darshan of this Holy Beacon is considered most auspicious. The entire region of Tiruvannamalai is Lord Shiva's Form. Therefore meditating on Lord Arunachala with a pure and calm mind and clean body, one should circumambulate the Hill of the Holy Beacon on the said day after the Deepam darshan. Especially sacred is this function to the devotees of Sri Bhagavan for he took a very keen interest in the observance of this festival, symbolising victory of Light over the darkness of ignorance!

NEW TRUSTEES APPOINTED

The term of office of the Second Board of Trustees under the scheme of management expired by the end of 1969. The Government of Tamil Nadu and the Hereditary Trustee, Sri T. N. Venkataratnam, thereupon made their respective nominations of fresh non-hereditary trustees to the new board and by G.O. No. MS. 3582 of 19-11-1970, the following have been appointed non-hereditary trustees.
under clause (1) of the scheme in force, for a period of three years, on and from 1-12-1970:

1. Thiru T. S. Badrachalam Pillai, Mandi, Tiruvannamalai
2. Thiru P. S. N. Thirthagiri Chettiar, Merchant, Tiruvannamalai
3. Thiru G. Lakshminarasimha Rao, B.A., B.L., 57, Athihottu Agharaham, Nellore, A.P.
4. Thiru P. S. Vaikuntavasa Gounder, Ranganathapuram, Vanur P.O., South Arcot District.

The new Board entered on the duties of their office, making declaration under clause (2) of the scheme, on Dec. 15.

By a resolution of the Board, the outgoing trustees were thanked for their co-operation and work during their tenure of office.

**NAVARATHRI CELEBRATIONS**

Decorated Idol of Yogambiga

The Navarathri celebrations and pujas were, as usual, performed in a festive mood at the Ashram. They commenced on Oct. 1, the day following Mahalaya Amavasya and lasted for ten days. On the first and concluding days of the festival the Idol of Goddess Yogambiga was carried in procession with Vedic chants, around the Mathrubutheswara shrine and Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi Shrine, through the Ramana Auditorium, before temporary installation and reinstatement. During all the nine days of the pujas Laksharchana was performed with recitation of Sri Lalita Sahasranama, and reading of Devi Mahatmyam. On all the days Mahanyasa Japa and abhishekam were performed at the shrines of Mathrubutheswara and of Sri Bhagavan. The various alankaras (decorations) on the nine respective nights to the Idol of Goddess Yogambiga were impressively done by Ashram Archakas. Ashramites and many devotees from outside also joined in the celebrations. The functions came to a successful conclusion on the Vijayadasami Day.

**AN APPEAL FROM RAMANA KENDRA**

The Union Ministry of Health, Works, Housing & Urban Development have allotted to the Kendra a quarter-acre site in a central locality off Lodi Road. The terms of the allotment stipulate that the buildings should be completed within two years.

The President of the Kendra, Shri Morarji Desai, has issued an appeal inviting prompt and generous contributions for enabling the Kendra to put up within the stipulated period a meditation room, a library and lecture hall, a seva samiti centre and office-rooms. Donations made to the Kendra will be exempt from Income-tax under Section 88/80G of the Income-tax Act, 1961 in the hands of the donors.

Cheques and drafts may be drawn in favour of Ramana Kendra, Delhi and sent to the Secretary, M-9 NETAJI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-23.

**PILGRIMS**

Signor E. Santo Potess, a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan, is a renowned Professor of Electricity at the University of Valley, Cali, South America and the author of a number of books on the subject used as text books at the universities in his country. He was at this Ashram in 1969 (for a reference to whom please see our Jan. 1969 issue, Ashram Bulletin, p. 67). He writes:

“When I arrived at the Ashram for the first time in 1968 I felt an upsurge of uncontrollable and unexplainable emotion caused may be by the great desire to come here and the difficulties of realising this visit. A few days later this gave way to a feeling of calm and inner peace. An atmosphere
of serenity pervades Arunachala. I felt this was Home and was really happy.

"Things have changed for me two years after my first visit. This time coming here was not beset with difficulties. My desire to come was as great as ever and so was my faith that it will materialize. Now I know that deep down in my heart there has always been love, faith and glad surrender to Sri Bhagavan. With these feelings something that weighed heavily on my mind and troubled it has also disappeared.

"I feel a sense of Sri Bhagavan's Omnipresence and though I would like Arunachala to be always my home on the physical plane also I am sure now that I will not feel any real sense of separation when my duties force me to return to my country. Now I have the certainty that He is in my heart, that He is with me for ever wherever I may be.

"Pramans to the Great Master who so generously dispenses His Grace !

"Very noticeable is also the spirit of devotion and service among the devotees of Sri Ramanasramam. This, I think, is another form of sadhana. My gratitude and my love goes out to every one of these dedicated people, my elder brothers in Sri Bhagavan.

"Now I have a favour to ask of all of you; to join me in my prayers to Sri Bhagavan to grant me a new visit, this time with my wife. Thank you."

Sri Surya Prakash and Sri Swami Arjandas Naraindas (both referred to in our issue of October 1966, Ashram Bulletin, p. 379) were again at the Ashram for a stay of ten days in Sept. 70. On his return from the Ashram, Sri Swami Arjandas Naraindas has the following to say to our readers:

"During my stay in the Ashram last time, in 1966 — I had a most joyous experience of Peace, Bliss and Felicity in the very depth of my being, which experience lasted for almost the entire period of my stay of 22 days. This was something inexplicable even to myself because I did not work for it — it came of its own accord; and secondly because it was absolutely a new experience for me — I had never felt it before in such intensity and depth. I knew it was Sri Bhagavan's Grace, mysteriously working, which vouchsafed such grace.

"On my return from the Ashram, unfortunately, the above experience did not stay permanently with me, though Bhagavan, in His infinite Grace, gave me a taste of it off and on.

"So, naturally, I came back to the Ashram this time with an expectant heart, hoping and praying that Sri Bhagavan will simply shower His Grace upon me and not only give me the old experience but also keep me stabilized in that state.

"But, strange as it may seem, nothing of the sort happened. On the contrary, for the first few days, my mind was restless and most distracted, leaving me in a state of utter unhappiness bordering on misery. I could not understand it. I even felt like running away from the Ashram. Then I remembered Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa's exhortation that you can force your demands on God — adopting even rajasic and tamasic attitudes, if necessary.

"So I repaired to the Old Meditation Hall and sitting in Sri Bhagavan's presence, I called out to him in a most challenging mood: 'I have not come to pray to you in the attitude of a helpless suppliant. I have a right over you. I have come to demand my inheritance (are you not my Father ?). You will have to pay out and show your Grace to me. If you do not listen to me now, I shall not hesitate to proclaim to all and sundry that you just sit there like a heartless statue, quite oblivious to the wees of your devotees not heeding their entreaties for succour and help. So, you better act quick or your reputation is mud.' I went on and on in this vein, perhaps using stronger language which may not stand the light of print.

"And lo! the miracle happened! All of a sudden, the onslaught of my words ceased, my thoughts stopped completely and I was submerged in a Sea of Stillness, Joy and Peace. My mind had ceased playing tricks on me. All glory to our beloved Sri Bhagavan !"
boy feeling the all-pervading presence of the Master. When we wanted him to put down in writing his experiences he flatly refused saying that he had come to the Master's abode to destroy his ego and not to exhibit or strengthen it. However, on his arrival at the Ashram what he told the Managing Editor is worthwhile reproducing. Sri Aga said: "This Ashram is my 'Home' and hence I have a birthright to come and stay here. But spiritually I am fit only to worship the door-mat outside the Hall, not even fit to enter it. Sri Bhagavan is my all." His spontaneous friendliness and youthful demeanour will be remembered by the inmates of the Ashram.

Prof. K. Swaminathan, the Editor-in-Chief of The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, and Secretary of the Ramana Kendra, New Delhi, with Mrs. Swaminathan, their daughter and son-in-law, Mrs. & Mr. Suryanandam, arrived in the Ashram on Sept. 29, after a long absence. We were happy to have them in our midst. They spent a profitable time at Sri Bhagavan's abode renewing also associations with old devotees at the Ashram, Sri Muruganar, our Editor Mrs. Osborne, Sri T. P. Ramachandra Aiyer and others. Prof. Swaminathan showed great interest in the progress of the Ashram and its journal, The Mountain Path, meeting those concerned with its running. They left after a few days.

Sri A. R. Natvaran of New Delhi, who has been very helpful to the Ashram in general and to The Mountain Path, in particular, and who is a staunch devotee of our Master, Sri Bhagavan, spent a few days at the Ashram in the middle of October. He spent these days quietly in meditation, apart from meeting old devotees at the Ashram, which he considers his spiritual 'home'!

Dr. S. K. Chatterjee from Uitterpara, West Bengal, came to know of Sri Maharshi only in 1966. He visits the Ashram every year. He was here for a week in the third week of December. He writes: "I would like to express the feeling of exhilaration and great tranquillity which prevails at the abode of Sri Bhagavan. One feels His gracious Presence and Guidance almost tangibly. To conclude, I beg to record with all pleasure my gratitude to the Ashram which deserves to be congratulated for the way the visitors are looked after; as well as for the Ashram quarterly journal, The Mountain Path, which bids fair to be the most outstanding spiritual magazine written in English."

Sri Ramesh Chandra Amin of Baroda, a life member of the Ashram as well as to The Mountain Path, and a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan, paid a visit with his friends and spent a week here in the month of December. He has the following to communicate: "I am happy to visit the Ashram with my friends for the second time. The Ashram and the surrounding area is vibrating with Sri Bhagavan's Presence even now. The Ashram seems to be managed with great care and the President deserves to be congratulated for taking special care in maintaining its tradition."

On December 25, we had a visit from Sri Jai deval Dalmit and Smt. Dalmit, New Delhi, and Sri Mahara Gouraveshwar Parashaddhatu Gosvami of Brindavan, Mathura. In the evening the party of over fifty devotees led by Sri Goswami performed bhajan with great fervour in the Ramana Auditorium, in front of Sri Bhagavan's Shrine of Grace; the function was highly appreciated and was well attended by the residents of Ramana Nagar.

There were also, as usual, a number of visitors from overseas countries, as also from India, as shown below:

O. F. Corrigan (Ireland)
Peter Viconik (England)
Michael Levin (U.S.A.)
Monty Fisher (U.S.A.)
Philip Pegler (England)
Christopher Pegler (England)
John Lindsay-Eipe (Italy)
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert (Ceylon)
Umakant (Nadia, Africa)
Mr. & Mrs. William Joan Zukowski (U.S.A.)
John Paterson (U.S.A.)
Wendel Graham Field (U.S.A.)
Soanne Bouter (U.S.A.)
Richard Murphy (U.S.A.)
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Donal Bridgel (U.S.A.)
T. Navaratnam and S. Vikramanitha (Ceylon)
Bhikkhu Upawi (Ceylon)
Peter Freeman (Australia)
Dr. & Mrs. Brauman (Belgium)
Sarah Farrand (England)
Frederick Godfrey (France)
Eric Hochheimer (Holland)
James M. Collette (U.S.A.)
Lt. Col. Dr. James Robinson (England)
William James Mauer (U.S.A.)
William Frans Johan (Holland)
Robert L. Lee (New Zealand)
Obituary

Mrs. Rajammal Neelakantan

Devotees of Sri Bhagavan received with regret the sad news of Mrs. Rajammal's demise on Sept. 28, after a protracted illness. As with all Sri Bhagavan's bhaktas she had a peaceful end! She was the eldest daughter of the late M. V. Ramaswami Iyer, a doyen among the old devotees of Sri Bhagavan. Already as a girl of seven she had the good fortune of coming to Sri Bhagavan in 1908. Her father who was then a public servant at Tiruvannamalai approached Sri Bhagavan on the Hill and implored Him: "Swami, Jesus and other great souls came into the World to redeem sinners. Is there no hope for me?" Moved by this intense appeal Sri Bhagavan declared, for all mankind as it were, "There is hope. YES. There is hope." Since then father and daughter were almost daily visitors and Rajammal gained Sri Bhagavan's Grace and was treated like a pet. In later years Ramaswami Iyer's family and the younger generation became equally devoted to Sri Bhagavan.

Like the rest of her family Rajammal was very talented in music and in fine arts (her paintings of Goddess Varalakshmi adorn the puja rooms of countless homes even today). She used to sing her father's and her own many devotional poems in praise of Sri Bhagavan composed from time to time whenever she felt inspired. She was also interested and active in social welfare. She left behind two sons and a daughter, also staunch devotees of Sri Bhagavan.

May she rest in eternal peace at Sri Bhagavan's Lotus Feet!

V. Tyagaraja Iyer

The sad news of the sudden demise of Tyagaraja Iyer on Sunday, Oct. 11, in Madras, at the age of 74, was received at the Ashram with deep regret. A leading advocate of the Madras Bar, who functioned as the Official Assignee of Madras and rose to the position of High Court Judge, Tyagaraja
Iyer was a great bhakta of Sri Bhagavan and was of great assistance to the Ashram in its development and progress by his advice and direction on many occasions. He has left three sons behind.

We convey our sincere condolences to the bereaved family.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH LIBRARY

New Additions

**Essence of the Upanishads** by M. P. Pandit; Drit Publishers, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry-2. (Rs. 10/-)

**Vedanta : Delight of Being** by Prof. N. A. Nikes; Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras. (Rs. 15/-)

**The Concept of the Vyavaharika in Advaita Vedanta** by T. P. Ramachandran; Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras. (Rs. 12.50)

**Sri Mad Bhagavata (Condensed)** by S. S. Cohen; Chandravati Publications Trust, 175, Rasappa Chetty St., Madras-3. (Rs. 5/-)

**How to Know God : The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali** Translated, with a new commentary by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood; Vedanta Press, Hollywood, California. ($2.50)


**Roja Yoga : Study of Mind by Swami Sotirmayaji**; Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math, 24 Panchla Road, Jorapukur, Calcutta-3. (Rs. 5/-)

**Stories of Vikramaditya : Bharatsha Vidyat Bhavan, Chowpatty; Bombay-7. (Rs. 2.50)**


**Talks on the Gita by Acharya Vinoba Bhave**; Sarva Seva Sangh Prakashan, Rajghat, Varanasi-1. (Rs. 3/-)

**Women Saints of Tamilnad** by M. Arunachalam; Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chowpatty, Bombay-7. (Rs. 2.50)

**The Art of Life in the Bhagavad Gita** by R. D. Ranade; Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. (Rs. 15/-).

**The Thambraparni Padayatra** by Sadhu Ramananda; Sri Vaishnavi Shrine, Madras-62. (Rs. 1/-)

**Meditation in Action** by Chogyam Trungpa; Shambhala Publications, 2010 Seventh St., Berkeley, California. ($3.95)

**The Secret of the Golden Flower** translated and explained by Richard Wilhelm; George Allen & Unwin Ltd. (Rs. 5/-)

**The Life of Milarepa** by Lobzang Jivake; John Murray, London. (Rs. 5/-)

**Happiness and Immortality** by P. J. Saher; George Allen & Unwin, Ruskin House, Museum St., London. (£ 2.00, U.K. only)

**A Physician’s Living Thoughts** by Carl Thonebe, M.D. ($4.95)
1971

**HIS ETERNAL EXISTENCE**

*Man in Ferment* by Neil Wesson. ($5.95)
*Beyond Individuality* by Clinton R. Meek ($5.95)
*The Language of Ordinary Experience* by David E. Denton. ($5.00)
*Instead of a Biography* by Gustav E. Mueller. ($5.95)
*The Real World* by Martin Wank. ($4.95)
*Published by Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th St., New York, New York 10016, U.S.A.*

**Buddhist Ethics: Essence of Buddhism** by H. Saddhatissa: George Allen and Unwin, Ruskin House, Museum St., London. (55 s.)
*Sequel to the Mysteries of God in the Universe* by H. S. Spencer and others: H. P. Vaswani, 1 Rajlal, 795/3 Padmanjri Park, Poona 2. (Rs. 10)
*The Way or Power* by Nicholas Roderey: Philosophical Library, New York. ($5.6)

---

**His Eternal Existence**

He is and there is with Him no before or after, nor above nor below, nor far nor near, nor union nor division, nor how nor where nor place. He is now as He was, He is the One without oneness and the Single without singleness.

He is the very existence of the first and the very existence of the Last, and the very existence of the Outward and the very existence of the Inward. So that there is no first nor last nor outward nor inward except Him, without those becoming Him or His becoming them. He is not in a thing nor a thing in Him, whether entering in or proceeding forth. It is necessary that you know Him after this fashion, not by learning nor by intellect nor by understanding, nor by imagination, nor by sense, nor by the outward eye nor by the inward eye, nor by perception. By Himself He sees Himself and by Himself He knows Himself.

His veil, that is, phenomenal existence, is but the concealment of His existence in His oneness, without any attribute.

There is no other and there is no existence for any other than He.

He whom you think to be other than God, he is not other than God, but you do not know Him and do not understand that you are seeing Him. He is still Ruler as well as ruled, and Creator as well as created. He is now as He was, as to His creative power and as to His sovereignty, not requiring a creature nor a subject.

In His oneness there is no difference between what is recent and what is original; the recent is the result of His manifestation of Himself and the original is the result of His remaining within Himself.

There is no existence save His existence.

—**Ibn 'Arabi** from *Kitab Al-Ajwibah*

(M. Smith's translation)
Sri A. R. Narayana Rao and Mrs. Narayana Rao are old and well-known devotees of Sri Bhagavan since 1940. Sri Narayana Rao's work as Superintendent Engineer at Mettur Dam often took him to Tiruvannamalai in those days and in the course of his visits he used to drop in at the Ashram and have darshan of Sri Bhagavan. But he did not feel any special satisfaction or benefit from these visits. Later when he was transferred to Madras he found that his friend Sri D. S. Sastri (refer to his article How I Came to the Maharshi in January, 1967 issue, p. 55) was going frequently to the Ashram deriving considerable peace of mind. He learnt from him that one has to approach Sri Bhagavan with humility and earnestness in order to feel His Grace. Thereupon Sri Narayana Rao went again to the Ashram, this time not in the course of official duties but with the sole object of seeking Sri Bhagavan's Grace. His wife accompanied him. This was in the beginning of 1949.

After spending the first few days in silent prayer and meditation Sri Narayana Rao and his wife met Sri Bhagavan one day alone by chance. They prostrated before him and sought his blessings. Sri Bhagavan looked at them in silence and a feeling of peace and happiness flooded their hearts. They stayed on for a few more days in the Ashram enjoying this peace and serenity and then went back to Madras confident that they had been taken up by Sri Bhagavan and His Grace would sustain them. Thereafter they were drawn again and again to the Ashram and the spiritual uplift from some extraordinary experiences which they attributed to Sri Bhagavan's Grace strengthened their faith in Him.

During the last days of Sri Bhagavan both of them stayed at the Ashram for a fortnight absorbed in prayer and meditation. Sri Narayana Rao was very helpful to the Ashram in numerous ways at this critical time. Since the Mahasamadhi of Sri Bhagavan in 1950 he and his wife have been visiting the Ashram on all important occasions like Jayanthi and Aradhana of Sri Bhagavan often accompanied by their family and grandchildren all of whom have been brought up as devotees of Sri Bhagavan.
Puja to Sri Bhagavan is being performed regularly in their house in Madras on the first Thursday of every month well attended by their relatives and friends. They have also built a temple dedicated to God under His aspect of Anantapadmanabha at Gandhinagar in Madras after Sri Narayana Rao retired from service in 1958.

He was also very helpful to our Managing Editor in a practical way with his valuable advice and guidance.
HIS CONTINUED PRESENCE

During my brief (seven-day) visit to the Ashram I found true peace and inner Silence and a certain experience of the continuing presence of Sri Bhagavan. Long may your magazine thrive and help the spiritual aspirant.

J. HEARN

Many visitors experience the certainty of Ramana-Arunachala's Presence and guidance here. He is all-pervasive and not limited to this place; but on a relative plane the nearer the Source the stronger the vibrations and support.

ONLY 'I' IS GOD

Joel Goldsmith says in the January 1970 issue of The Mountain Path: "There may ever be those on earth who may duplicate the work of the Master, and show forth God's all-ness in its completeness. We do not know of its ever having been done... The higher a person goes in spiritual awareness the further he retires from the human scene." And then again on page 33... "Jesus, who was probably the last of the Masters on earth to reveal the 'I'..." I take strong exception to these statements... I would like to know your comments about this in your next issue of The Mountain Path.

Dr. D. C. MEHROTRA,
Neyveli.

Joel Goldsmith writes from the standpoint of a Christian. Even so he modified his views later strongly influenced by Sri Bhagavan's teaching and was on his way here when he suddenly died in London. He also says in the same article: "Not only Christ Jesus but all the great spiritual lights of the ages reveal that the only 'I' is God; and that God as individual Being is living its life as you and me. The correct sense of 'I' will eliminate every problem from the face of the earth."

In some cases spiritual masters retire from the human scene. A sage or jnani benefits the whole of humanity by his Silence, by just Being.

I AM GOD

Kindly enlighten me as to Ramana Maharshi's testimony of Jesus Christ. I will be highly thankful to you for the same.

RAJARATNAM,
Hyderabad.

Ramana Maharshi gave the true significance of Christianity, designating:

The Cross is the body. When the ego is crucified and it perishes, what survives is the Absolute Being (God), "I and my Father are One" and this glorious survival is called resurrection. He also said that the whole of Vedanta is contained in the Biblical saying: "Be still and know that I am God."

ON THE SPIRITUAL HEART

One contributor under the pseudonym 'Alcie' has made a statement that he had the experience of the spiritual heart on the right side... My doubt is how the spiritual heart which contains the whole universe can be felt as physical heart-beats...
THE MOUNTAIN PATH

II

I am hoping that you will be good enough to help me by clarifying a few points concerning the spiritual practice taught by Ramana Maharshi.

Firstly, exactly what did Ramana mean by meditation upon the spiritual heart on the right side? Was this to be a separate practice from the vichara? And if so was the practitioner to use imagery in concentrating on the heart? Is one supposed to feel 'I' as emanating from the heart during meditation? has the heart meditation to be of equal importance and intensity as the vichara?

Also I have heard that if one is doing vichara and seeking Ramana's Grace there is the practice of meditating upon the spiritual eye between the eyebrows with the incantation "Om Ramana Om". . .

Is this correct?

And lastly, if one can try the difficult process of clarifying Aman vichara with words, what I would like to know is should the practitioner of vichara have a feeling for the 'I' at the end of the enquiry 'Who am I?'. I ask this since constant repetition of the enquiry can sometimes make 'Who am I?' more of a mantra than a question. And also when Ramana instructs us to keep our attention on where the 'I-thought' is coming from, what exactly does he mean? Should one concentrate on the sound 'I' when thinking of 'I' or upon the mind as a whole?

Anything you can tell me that may clarify the above will be deeply appreciated.

With my best wishes for continued success.

FRED ACKERMAN.

III

I shall feel grateful if you let me know the significance of concentrating in sadhana on the right side of the chest resulting in a feeling of vibration. If an individual can vacate his mind of all thoughts is be still required to pursue the enquiry 'Who am I?'. Is it not sufficient while keeping one's mind free from thoughts introverted to keep it fixed on the right side of the chest. Kindly do reply as I am sure you can.

B. C. SHARMA.

This reply refers to the three preceding letters which have common points.

Meditation on the spiritual heart on the right side means concentrating or listening to it fully attentive. Its vibration or heart beats will manifest with time. A place is assigned to it as a focusing point and it is as real as we are real to ourselves though it cannot be said to have any location in or out since it is all-pervasive. In the Vedas the heart is used to denote the place whence the notion 'I' springs. Sri Bhagavan said that when one seeks the Self one-pointedly the Heart will play its part automatically. It is the seat of realisation and cannot be said to be either in or out. As a preliminary one can clarify the vichara intellectually. You cannot say you are your name, your body, your mind, your brain etc. etc.; 'yours' whose? You are not what it yours or your possessions. 'Who Am I?' then. The enquiry should not be repeated like a mantra. Having turned inwards with this quest one's whole being is in a state of intuitive alertness and vigilance. The intensity can mount to the point that it becomes a matter of utmost urgency. The same applies to the tyranny of thoughts to intercepting them. Whence and how do thoughts arise? There is no answer in so many words to these enquiries. No answer the mind can give will be right. No suggestive replies are to be given nor imagery or concepts used. If persevered the answer will come of its own and when it does there will be no room for doubt. While intuitively alert it may be helpful to concentrate or listen to the spiritual heart. When thoughts arise then the vichara comes in and again just this intuitive alertness and vigilance having asked the question. One is not supposed to imagine or feel the 'I' as emanating from somewhere nor does one concentrate on sound or mind or think anything, not even 'I'. When waves of thought cease to rise the Self will reveal itself as It is even if at first only in a glimpse of a split second of Eternity and then sadhana. to still the mind begins in real earnest for an earnest seeker.

Ramana Maharshi never asked anyone to meditate on the spiritual eye between the eyebrows. He actually warned against it saying that it may lead to manifestation of lights and visions and that the safest place is the spiritual heart. The mind wants variety even in sadhana. Apart from the vichara or meditation on the spiritual heart or both fused, chanting the name of God or Ramana can help concentration particularly when it is done with great devotion. Then it becomes the Beloved. The greater the yearning the more the response. It comes with practice.

If the mind can be kept free from thoughts nothing else is needed. But in such a state doubts do not arise. Perhaps there is still the thought that there are no thoughts. This also must go. Enquiry and (or) concentration on the spiritual heart lead to cessation of thought.
VISHISTADVAITA AND SPHURANA

The late Sri Osborne gave simple answers to tough questions and had in the readers' eyes assumed the symbol of a valid genuine interpreter of Sri Bhagavan's teaching. 'The dewdrop slips into the shining sea.'

Replies are requested to the following questions:

Someone raised a question as to what is Vishistadvaita and Sphurana. Kindly throw some light.

How does a tree appear to a jnani? As a super-imposition on the Self or something else?

Which past annuals are available and what is their cost?

S. L. THATHU,
Simla.

Vishistadvaita is a modified form of non-duality or qualified monism whose protagonists think that individuality is necessary to experience Bliss and it should not be lost. Actually the loss of individuality according to Advaita pertains only to limitations and conditioning. In Realisation everything is gained. One could say that the limited troublesome individuality becomes limitless, all-pervasive individuality in the inherent state of perfect harmony and Bliss. There is only one consciousness 'I AM'.

As a result of a sudden emotion like fear or shock the mind gets introverted and one-pointed and a sort of vibration-awareness is felt in the heart center, the more so the more the mind had become attenuated through previous sadhana. In this light one can understand why in Zen practice a roshi administers a sudden shock like hitting a disciple with a stick or throwing him into water at the right moment when the mind is ready to break through in sudden enlightenment. Sri Bhagavan says also that sphurana is the fore-taste of realisation. In a state of such introversion the mind is merged in the heart so there is no differentiation between subject and object.

For a jnani everything is the Self, so a tree will be seen by him as a manifestation or form of the Self. 'Brahman sleeps in the stone.'

The following annuals of The Mountain Path are available:

- Each volume inclusive of postage in India: Rs. 10/- or Foreign: £ 1-5-0 or $ 3-00.

REMEMBER HIM IN THE HEART

Please be kind enough to answer the queries as noted below and please give me the names of all the books by Arthur Osborne.

I frequently remember the name of God, and Gandhi said that Ram Nam is a cure for all diseases but to my utter surprise the voices, the whistling, hissing sounds in my ear have not ceased. What should be done if a person is incontinent (bladder) and wants to utter God's Name all day. It is not possible for me because I cannot change my clothes so frequently. I hope you will give me your advice in the cases requested above.

Dr. T. P. GUPTA,
Rangoon.

AN INDESCRIBABLE VIBRATION

Sri Arthur Osborne reflected indeed the radiance of his Master through his wonderful writings. Please explain to me at length through your invaluable journal what sphurana is. Is it a feeling of peace or vibration within?

From my boyhood I have in my head a 'hum' which resembles the sound of a fast rotating dynamo. All these years I was under the impression that everybody has this as a matter of course until very recently it was pointed out to me as sphurana. I am told to hold on to this 'hum' in meditation and without the mind slipping from it, when it will lead me to the Self. Is it so? A doubt assails me. That is if the mind meditates on this 'hum' will it not amount to the mind getting extroverted?

I shall also be thankful if you will kindly explain what Sri Bhagavan meant when replying to a devotee that the subject and object proceed from sphurana?

SIVAPRAGASAM,
Manipay, Ceylon.

See the reply above with reference to sphurana. It is an inindescribable vibration in the heart centre rather than a 'hum' felt in the head. When hearing the humming sound ask yourself who hears; or try to hear in it 'AUM' which is the substratum of all sound. Practice whichever is easier for you or both. When meditating it is more advisable not to concentrate on anything audible or conceptual. Meditation leads to freedom from all concepts or thoughts. There is also the dualistic approach to monism recognised by sages for those for whom the most direct path is too difficult.

EDITOR.
vented from doing so because of your disability then you can simply remember God's name in your heart in silence. He is always there whatever the state of your body. Moreover the impurities you speak of aren't they in your body even when there is continence? So there is not so much difference after all. One can always remember God's name under any circumstances. You do not exist apart from God. Ritual is good for some and will lead to the path of jnana, bhakti or surrender. Nothing happens by accident. Perhaps you are ready to turn inwards and your disability may help you to do so.

The substratum of all sound is AUM. You could penetrate to it and hear it in the whistling, hissing sounds in your ear they may cease to be a disturbance. As a doctor you know that such sounds are usually due to high blood-pressure. Sri Bhagavan recommended a sattvic diet. It should reduce both pressure and sound and is a help in sadhana.

This is piecemeal concern with disease. Ramana Maharshi says that the whole body is a troublesome overgrowth and a disease. Identification with it hides our real inherent state of bliss and harmony. Why not turn your attention to transcending the limitations of the body by following the path indicated by the Guru?

The books of Arthur Osborne are as follows:

The Teachings of Ramana Maharshi in His Own Words, (Rider & Co., London & Sri Ramanasramam).
Buddhism and Christianity in the Light of Hinduism, (Hutchinson Group, London).
The Question of Progress, (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay).
The Incredible Sai Baba and The Rhythm of History, (Orient Longmans, New Delhi).

KO'HAM

I want to tell you how especially helpful I found the piece called 'Enquire' in the January issue of The Mountain Path as I have felt that any form of words sort of gets in the way, but to urge oneself to 'know thus' works better. . . . What would be the Samskrit for 'Who am I'? . . . With very sincere thanks for the whole of The Mountain Path.

BARBARA BIRCH
Edinburgh.

Sri Bhagavan called Silence the most eloquent speech obstructed by words. Ko’ham (ko-aham) is in the Samskrit for 'Who am I? Language is of little importance in Self-enquiry: it is an almost wordless inner quest, an urge to find 'Who I am' really.

EDITOR.

CONCEPT OF GOD, A LIMITATION?

In January 1970 issue, page 45, Wei Wu Wei says: "If you create mental concepts of God such mental concepts must inevitably prevent you from apperceiving what God is." If you think this saying needs an explanation for thousands of aspirants like me be pleased to explain it. I wonder if one could proceed without some sort of mental conception of God.

GANMEGAR
Gwalior.

You will concede that God is without limitations of any kind or He would not be God. Whatever concept you create of God becomes a limitation. Reality transcends all concepts including that of God. It is beyond expression. When a devotee asked Sri Bhagavan to show him His real form, the couch on which He was seated became empty. After a month or so the devotee mustered enough courage to ask for an explanation and the reply was: "You asked to see my real form, you saw its disappearance. I am formless."

Many find it easier to start with a mental concept of God and with time transcend it. This dualistic approach to the Oneness of Being is valid and recognised by sages.

EDITOR.

SPIRITUAL HEALING: ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Mrs. A. Pigott quotes in her article about her visit to Tiruvannamalai: "Talking about it one day, I asked Ramana Maharshi if we could use spiritual power for healing. He remarked: Yes, if you think it worthwhile" but added it required a great deal of force which might be used more profitably in other directions. I am puzzled by the underlined words. Surely the healing of mind and body is worthwhile. Or is there some other significance which I have missed? . . . I would wel-
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1971

RUSHE MC MATHER, Victoria, Australia.

I am very interested in healing by prayer and the laying on of hands. I am a member of a little group which is devoted to this form of healing and we are able to help many sufferers both in mind and body.

RUNIS Mc MATHIER,
Victoria, Australia.

What Sri Bhagavan meant was that all our troubles come from identification with the body. The body itself is a superimposition and disease. He said. If instead of paying piecemeal attention to its ills we go to the root of the trouble, trying to realise our true state which transcends the body, all will be well. On the other hand the body is used as a vehicle in sadhana, so it should be kept in a reasonable good state without giving it undue importance. Sri Bhagavan envisaged this aspect also when advising sadhakas to adopt a sattvic diet, good both for body and mind. The Bhagavad Gita advises moderation in taking care of the body needs the same as the middle way of Buddhism.

If you practise spiritual healing as selfless service (nishkama karma) it purifies the mind and is also an indirect path in sadhana. Joel Goldsmith says that it is the consciousness of the Oneness of all life that does the healing. If spiritual regeneration is the primary object of healing the rest will also follow.

ARThUR OSBORNE NUMBER: APPLIcATIONS

I

We send you these few lines in order to express our appreciation of the truly outstanding number (October, 1970) of The Mountain Path, which we recently received and are still reading with profound interest. It is indeed a memorable number which will not easily be forgotten.

These admirable articles emphasize that the notion that there could be anything to be born or to die but what appears to be born and to die would be quite unworthy of disciples or Sri Bhagavan. Also like many others, I am sure, we are delighted to know so much more about dear Arthur, and see how widely his great qualities were appreciated.

Wishing you the continued success, which we are sure will be yours, in the arduous task which you have so bravely undertaken, and in which you can count on the cooperation of so many friends.

TERENCE & NATASHA GRAY,
Monte Carlo.

II

We received The Mountain Path two days ago and I have been reading and re-reading the Editorial. It is a deeply thought-out symposium on death... I did not expect to read such an editorial after Sri Osborne who was absolutely unique... In fact I felt while reading his editorials and his replies to letters that he was Bhagavan's voice — clear transparent writing without the least intrusion of the personal element... Your lives have been so close and complementary... We are happy and confident in the future of The Mountain Path. Sri Osborne lives in you and both of you in Sri Bhagavan.

SUNDARI KRISHNASWAMI,
Mysore.

III

... Let this be an expression of the warmest gratitude for the writings of the late Arthur Osborne : The editorials, the poems and the answers to letters, have given, are giving and will continue to give help that is quite immeasurable. Like Ramana, Arthur Osborne has not left us. He has nowhere to go.

Will you please convey to Mrs. Osborne a very loving welcome as the new lady editor and assure her that we in seeming far away New Zealand have absolute confidence in her and complete faith in the guiding hand of Ramana Maharshi. I would like to close with a quotation from Milton.

'Nothing is here for tears
Nothing to wait
Nothing but well and fair.'

ORIOA GUMMER, REMUERA,
Auckland.

IV

Mr. Osborne's greatness lay in being so much like his Master — direct, with austere reasoning lit by the inner light. His works because of the absence in them of empty sentimentalism and verbosity completed the Maharshi's teachings by making these acceptable to men and women of this age and of all countries.

MONICA BOSE,
Bombay.
Thankfulness too deep for words and joy flood my being as I re-read these letters in the special issue witnessing to the light the saint — departed in body — kindle in countless hearts here and in far lands. It is all His will, His Grace.

The editorial mantle has fallen on the right shoulders.

R. S. AYAR.

May I congratulate you on the apt choice of the dark colour of the front cover and the selection of Mr. Osborne’s portrait in the October issue. . . . Whenever I look at the portrait I am touched by the serenity, calm and detachment of a realised being. His steady eyes seem to reflect the radiance of Sri Ramana, his Guru.

I like the editorial on Death and would like, if you permit me, to translate it in Gujarati for our Quarterly. . . . May God give you strength to carry on. . . .

J. B. AMIN,
Nairobi, Kenya.

Anything from The Mountain Path can be reproduced with due acknowledgement, and with prior intimation to the Editor.

The scope of this column does not permit to publish all the messages of heartwarming good-will, encouragement and very kind thoughts on the wings of which The Mountain Path will continue to carry its message with Grace, Guidance and Support. Thank you.

There were also a number of queries about ‘Our Quest’. For the present the pressure of work does not allow to get on with it, but it will be finished as soon as possible.

R. S. AYAR.

Mr. Osborne undoubtedly lives in our hearts. How I wish he also physically lived with us and with those yet quite young to know his worth. “Thus this most Secret Knowledge has been taught by Me, O sinless one. On knowing this a man becomes wise, Oh Bharata, and all his duties are accomplished” (B. Gita, Ch. XV, v. 20). Without prejudice of any kind I wonder if there is not one other man in England who could lend himself to continue Mr. Osborne’s work at least for another decade’s flight on The Mountain Path. . . .

K. G. RATHNAM,
Bombay.

There is such a possibility which may materialise at the right time. Meanwhile the present Editor is an instrument filling a gap. Let us keep in mind that The Mountain Path is Sri Bhagavan’s concern.

EDITOR.

The Flight

By Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

My soul is as a bird that takes a dip
In the cool sweet waters of your Grace
All suddenly from choking dark it slips
Through your one look, into a holy place.
Where nought can cast a shadow, naught
death
Dare enter with its idle coloured lures:
Before your presence lo, breath after breath,
My soul, in one high steady flight, endures.
O sky of mercy! do not let my flight
Grow weary, do let not my wings grow tired.
Draw me eternally into the light
For which I have through myriad births aspired.
Buddhism has been the most important popular religion in China, for it brought to the masses a definite message of salvation; but it has not influenced Chinese thought as much as primitive Taoism or, especially Confucianism. As Buddhism is a relatively late arrival we shall not be concerned with it in this essay. It does not belong to the classic creative period of Chinese philosophy.

The greatest, most universal, most 'catholic' and most influential school of Chinese thought is the Ju school, founded by Kung Tzu, or Master Kung, whose name was Latinized by early missionaries as Confucius. We shall call him Kung Tzu, and if we have occasion to refer to his greatest disciple, known to the West as Mencius, we shall call him by his Chinese name: Meng Tzu. Since Lao Tzu, the mystic and father of Taoism, evidently did not interest the early Jesuits, he never became Laotius. Nevertheless his fascinating work, the Tao Te Ching (The Way and its Power) has perhaps been more often translated than any other Chinese classic.

Kung Tzu and Lao Tzu lived in the 6th century B.C. (though in the case of Lao Tzu no date and no biographical fact can ever be taken as certain). This made them contemporaries with Gautama Buddha in India, Pythagoras in Greece and, in Israel, the prophets of the exile like Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah. The 'classic period' of early Chinese thought extended down through the so-called 'period of the warring states' until the third century and the establishment of a unified China. This unification of China was to a great extent the work of the 'Legalists' who brought the great period of Chinese thought to a close and, perhaps, did more than anyone else to create a society that would guarantee the formalization and even the ossification of classic thought for centuries to come. At any rate, by the third century the really great development of Chinese philosophy ceased, and what followed was to be little more than scholastic elaboration or sporadic mystical revolt.

Kung wrote nothing himself, and did not consider himself an originator but rather as a defender of the unwritten traditions of the archaic past. Indeed when we look at prehistoric China through the eyes of Kung Tzu, and consider the book of primitive Odes collected by him, we are astonished at the depth and sophistication of the culture which he sought to preserve in its highest and most perfect form through ages which, he thought, would probably be ages of decadence.

Lao Tzu evidently shared Kung Tzu's reverence for the past, but he went back even further into the archaic world and was suspicious of any systematization or social order as 'artificial'. In his mind, government, politics and even ethical systems, no matter how good they might be in themselves, were a perversion of man's natural simplicity. They made men competitive, self-centred, aggressive, and ultimately this led him into obsession with delusive ideas about himself. From these delusions came hatreds, schisms, factions, wars and the destruction of society. Lao Tzu's ideal of society was the small primitive state consisting of nothing more than a few villages, inhabited by simple, self-forgetful men in complete harmony with the hidden, ineffable Tao.

It was when the Great Tao declined
That there appeared humanity and righteousness.
It was when knowledge and intelligence arose