

THE MOUNTAIN PATH



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Thou didst take aim
 (at me) with darts of
 Love and then devoured
 me alive, Oh Arunachala!

*The Marital
 Garland of Letters
 Verse 92*

The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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

—The Marital Garland of Letters, Verse 1

Vol. 24

JANUARY 1987

No. 1

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— Editor.

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The Mountain Path

(A QUARTERLY)

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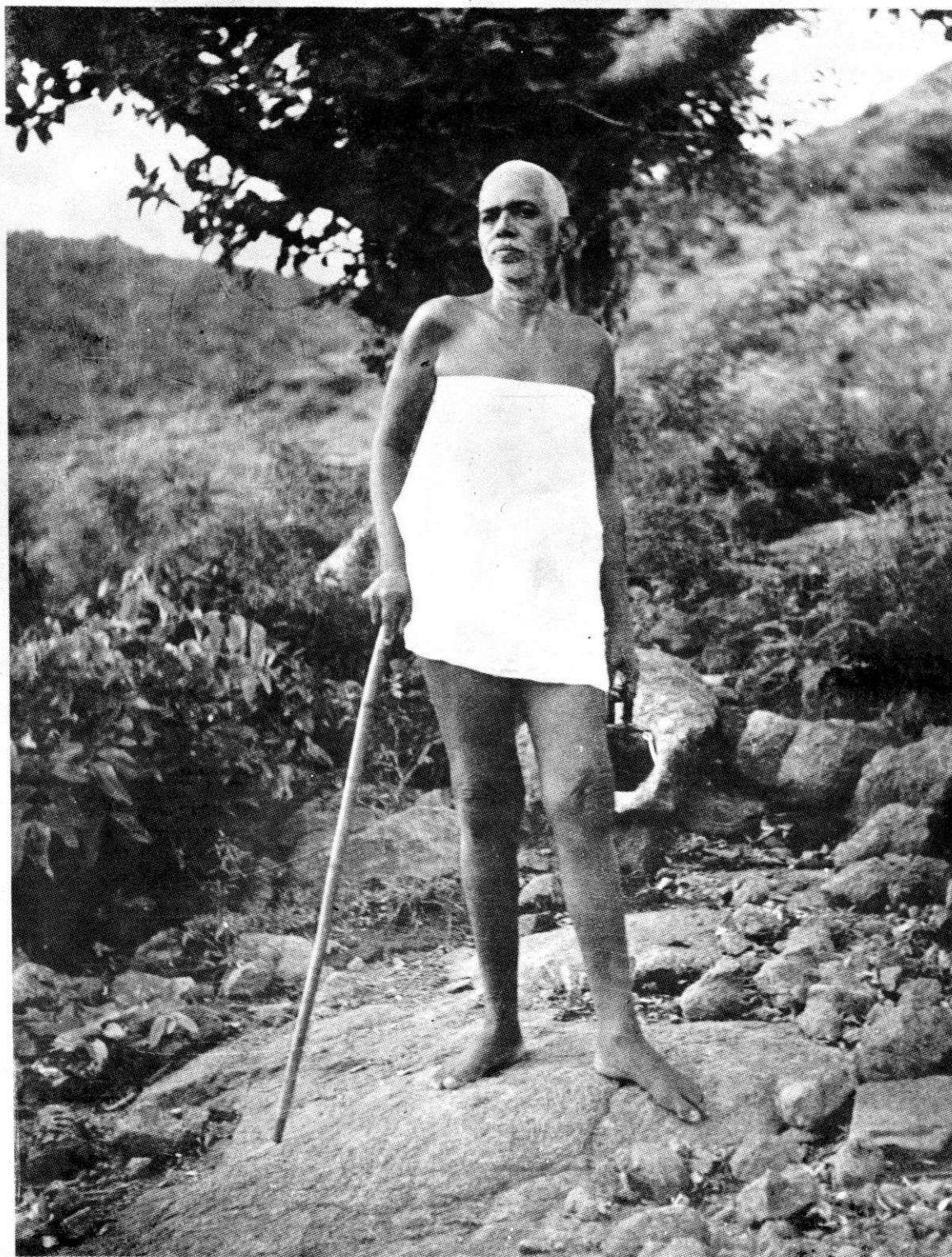
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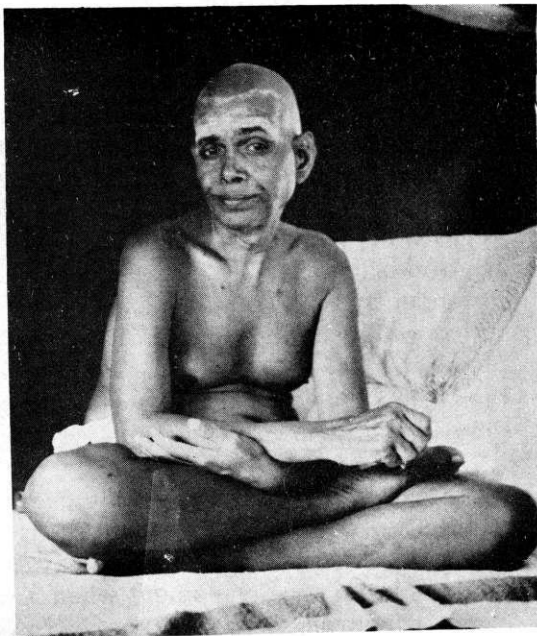
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is dedicated to

Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

B. 10 - 1901





WHEN something good happens to us, we are grateful to God and say that it is due to His Grace. When something bad happens to us, we blame God or our past karma. In other words, we associate Grace with what is beneficial to us and lack of Grace with what is not beneficial to us. We feel that Grace flows only occasionally when something good happens to us. God appears to be gracious only when we are successful, happy. So we feel that Grace flows only occasionally as we are not always successful, as we don't always get what we want.

But Sri Bhagavan says categorically that Grace is always flowing and there is no time at which it is not flowing and no person towards whom it is not flowing.¹ That which is, he says, is only Grace and there is nothing else. While most others have said that Grace is what we don't deserve, Sri Bhagavan has said that there is only Grace and it is always flowing towards everyone.

GRACE AND SURRENDER

Editorial

It is difficult to accept our bad, unpleasant experiences as being due to Grace. We generally think that our sufferings are due to lack of Grace. Sri Bhagavan says that our sorrows are not due to lack of Grace but due to our wrong identification of ourselves with our body.

"Creation is neither good nor bad; it is as it is. It is the human mind which puts all sorts of constructions on it, seeing things from its own angle and interpreting them to suit its own interests. A woman is just a woman, but one mind calls her 'mother', another 'sister', and still another 'aunt' and so on. Men love women, hate snakes, and are indifferent to the grass and stones by the

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Vol. 24, No. 1, January, 1987

roadside. These value-judgments are the cause of all the misery in the world. Creation is like a peepul tree: birds come to eat its fruit, or take shelter under its branches, men cool themselves in its shade, but some may hang themselves on it. Yet the tree continues to lead its quiet life, unconcerned with and unaware of all the uses it is put to. It is the human mind that creates its own difficulties and then cries for help. Is God so partial as to give peace to one person and sorrow to another? In creation there is room for everything, but man refuses to see the good, the healthy and the beautiful. Instead, he goes on whining, like the hungry man who sits beside the tasty dish and who, instead of stretching out his hand to satisfy his hunger, goes on lamenting. Whose fault is it, God's or man's?"

Once the delusion that we are the body is gone, there will be only joy, says Sri Bhagavan. We are then not able to experience Grace all the time because of our desires and expectations. It can be experienced only when our desires cease. It is always there but it becomes manifest when

the mind merges in the Self either through surrender or through meditation.

God's very nature, says Sri Bhagavan, is Grace and this can be experienced at all times only when a person surrenders. A person who surrenders accepts everything as His will. He does not consider anything as good or bad, success or failure. After surrender there is no individual will. In this state, which is the result of Grace, one feels Grace all the time. Grace is felt all the time when we accept everything as His will.

Grace manifests itself when the quest for the Self begins. The quest itself is the result of Grace. Sri Bhagavan says that there is not a single moment when Grace is not operating in us. Grace is beyond time and space.

"Grace is always there. It is the beginning, middle and end. Grace is the Self."

-
1. *Day by Day with Sri Bhagavan*, Dt. 7-1-46 Night.
 2. *Guru Ramana*, PP. 47-8

"What is medicine for? It is only to restore the patient to the original state of health. What is this talk of Guru, Grace, God, etc.? Does the Guru hold you by the hand and whisper something in your ear? You imagine him to be like yourself. Because you are with a body you think that he is also a body in order to do something tangible to you. His work lies within. How is Guru gained? God, who is immanent, in his Grace takes pity on the loving devotee and manifests Himself as a being according to the devotee's standard. The devotee thinks that he is a man and expects relationship as between bodies. But the Guru, who is God or Self incarnate, works from within, helps the man to see the error of his ways, guides him in the right path until he realises the Self within."

— Sri Ramana Maharshi
in *TALKS*, No. 398

Six Sketches For a Portrait¹

By Douglas E. Harding

*The Tathagata divides his own body into innumerable bodies
and also restores an infinite number of bodies to one body. Now
he becomes cities, villages, houses . . . Now he has a large body, now
he has a small body.
Mahaparinirvana Sutra*

It so happens that you are, for the moment, someone or other, something or other. What is more, it so happens that you are able, if only you wish, to find out exactly what this someone or something is. If you are interested, you can do it now, easily. If it seems hard, that is because you don't want to make your own acquaintance—not yet.

To waste such an opportunity would be a pity: you don't know when it will occur again. Buddhism, along with the other great religions, promises infinite benefits to anyone who becomes truly self-aware—that is to say, Enlightened. Once you dare look at yourself, the reward is immediate. Even common sense suggests that you can hardly know how to live till you know who is living. And plain curiosity or inquisitiveness adds that perhaps you had better take a quick look at yourself while you can, in case you should be missing something interesting. Suppose you had till now been deceived, and instead of being who you think you are, you were someone or something quite different—in fact, the opposite of all you had imagined! That would be a discovery indeed! Well, this is precisely the discovery that Buddhism invites you to make. And it points out that your self-ignorance, this astonishing error about who you are, this case of mistaken identity, is

the root of all your trouble and care. You can never be happy till you know yourself.

What, then, are you? There are many possible answers, but they can be reduced to these six:

1. You are what you think you are.
2. You are what others say you are.
3. You are what others see you are.
4. You are what you feel you are.
5. You are what you see you are.
6. You are what the Sages say you are.

Let us briefly examine each of these six answers in turn.

1. "You are what you think you are"

You think you are a human being called so and so, male or female, dark or fair, single or married, so many years old and feet and inches tall, weighing so many pounds, following such and such a calling, living at such and such an address, a subject of such and such a country. You think that the description in your passport, with its photograph, gives a fair account of you. You think you really are like that.

Now where did you get this idea? From other people, from hearsay. You have picked it up over the years. And no wonder: everyone around you confirms it all the while. Everything in human society implies it.

¹ Reprinted from the *The Middle Way*, with kind permission.

2. "You are what others say you are"

Your passport is for their information, not yours: clearly they accept its story as the truth about you, and expect you to do so too. If you were to lose your memory, and clean forgot who you were, they would be only too glad to tell you. In fact, your parents, brothers and sisters, teachers and schoolmates, workmates, friends and enemies—all of them have made it their job to put and keep you in your place and prevent you getting above yourself. They constantly reminded you of your human limitations, paying no attention to your feeling that you are somehow quite unique and of special importance. Society's function is to point out—forcibly, if necessary—that you are only one human amongst millions, and must behave accordingly. And so you have come to know what people think of you. Now, sensibly, you take yourself at their estimate.

There is nothing wrong with this. It is a stage of your spiritual development that cannot be left out. Also it is the foundation of our common life: society, with all its splendid gifts, is built upon it. There is everything to be said in its favour—except that it is an enormous lie! A convenient and necessary lie, but a lie all the same. This is all right, too: provided, while you still have the chance, you see it for what it is—the very opposite of the truth about you. It is better not to be a victim of this huge confidence trick all your life.

3. "You are what others see you are"

In fact, if you press these other people hard enough, even they will have to admit that they were wrong about you. If you were to ask them, not what they *think* of you, or *feel* about you, but what they actually observe you to be, they would have in the end to tell a very different story, a more honest and scientific one.

What are you seen to be? The man or woman in your passport photograph?

There are three main reasons why this will not do. Firstly, it is not what you are

where you are, but what you *look like* ten feet away, in another place altogether. Secondly, it is what you look like from only one particular angle and under special conditions: and there are innumerable angles from which you may be viewed. Thirdly, it is what you look like from only one particular distance and using special instruments, and there are innumerable distances from which you may be viewed. If you are in any sense what you look like, then you are what you look like to all your observers, ranging from no distance to infinity.

In practice, science firmly discounts the view of you as a mere man, at a range of (say) ten feet. It prefers the closer look: it insists on going into things more deeply, and pushing its researches home. Approaching you, the observer discovers that the man is *really* an assemblage of organs and limbs, and these are *really* assemblages of little living creatures called cells, and these are *really* assemblages of particles. And so on till, at the point of actual contact, there is no view of you at all: you vanish altogether. It looks as if you yourself, at the Centre and Source of all your regional appearances to others are quite empty. This Nothingness is what you are, where you are: and all the other views of you were merely what you happened to *look like*, from elsewhere.

Science takes an ever-closer view, with the idea of getting at the fundamental truth about you. (Actually, it cannot quite make contact, but gets very close indeed). But increasingly it is driven also to do exactly the opposite thing, and take an ever-more-distant view, with the idea of

getting all of you into the picture. In other words, it recognises that you as a man are a meaningless fragment, not all there, and quite inexplicable till your world is taken into account. In a sense, you are all that you depend upon for your life: you are what makes you what you are. To be yourself, you must be much more than yourself. Your physics and chemistry, your anatomy and physiology, your behaviour and mind—these do not make sense till they are seen as functions of vast (and indeed indivisible) organic wholes. Thus you are your family and household, your suburb, your city, your country, the living Earth, the Solar System, the Universe itself. Cut off from this, from your total Body, you are neither human nor alive, nor even existent. Only the whole of you is you, and the whole of you is the Whole.

Does this sound far-fetched? Then let us check this estimate of you by simply looking to see what you are like, from ever increasing distances. Keeping always in view the Spot you seem to occupy, we find the human you giving place to the house, the house to the suburb, the suburb to the city, the city to the country, the country to the Earth, the Earth to the Sun, the Sun to the Galaxy, the Galaxy to the Universe of Galaxies. All, in fact, very much as before.

This is the other Pole of your being. Approaching you, we find you in the end to be Nothing; receding from you, we find you in the end to be All. In between, you appear to be every sort of thing. Certainly there is nothing special about the half-way view of you as a man. Indeed it falls between two stools, and is neither close enough to reveal what you are in your Essence nor distant enough to reveal what you are in your Wholeness. Exactly in the middle, it is as far as it can be from the bi-polar Reality which you are.

At this point you may object that these outside impressions of you are all very well, but what you really are is what you feel yourself to be, quite regardless of how you look to others. Quite so; but is there, in fact, any serious discrepancy between them—between the outside story and the inside one?

4. "You are what you feel you are"

What you feel you are depends on what you are doing. Infinitely elastic, you are as big or as small as the occasion requires. Intense sensual experience is the experience of some organ, rather than that of the whole organism: you are reduced to that pleasure-saturated piece of a man. Again, you may find yourself identified with an aching tooth or a sore thumb. Out on the Motorway, you aren't a man sitting still, or bobbing about, inside a piece of hardware that is tearing along at 80 m.p.h. You are moving at that speed, in law and in feeling and in fact—all the ton of you. That's how you speak, and that's why your whole personality is so changed: you extend to your bumpers and wingmirrors and tyre-soles feeling the road, you are six feet wide and fifteen long, hard, shining, beautiful, very dangerous and powerful, very impatient and critical of other cars, very sensitive about being passed and about the slightest scratch on your paintwork. It is much the same, whether you are at sea or in the air, at home or in the office or the factory: suitably tooled-up and extended, you have grown the Body that fits your environment for the time-being and your function in it.

Again, when you read your newspaper's latest report of aggression and threats by *Them*, you think for and hate for and tremble for *Us*: you are identified with, you become, *Us*—and *Us* may mean a social class, a race, a nation, a power-bloc, or even a planet.



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And perhaps, very occasionally, you enjoy moments of truly infinite expansion, when your heart goes out in love to everyone and everything, when you throw your arms so wide that they embrace the whole world, and there remains not a dustgrain that is not forever You. Then, at last, you are truly Yourself, all there, complete. You don't feel like the Whole: you are just That. For only the Whole can feel Whole.

Such rare moments are not to be had at will. They come, if at all, by Grace and unexpectedly. Much more familiar is the polar opposite of this mood of supreme exaltation, namely the mood of total contraction or nullity, of depression amounting to annihilation. You feel that you have Nothing, know Nothing, can do Nothing, are Nothing. And the remarkable thing about this feeling, when it is complete, is that in practice it isn't a miserable one: it is rather one of total humility leading to profound peace. For if you are Nothing, nothing can hurt or even disturb you. Moreover, nothing remains to separate you from anyone or anything. All your resistance gone, you are ready to be invaded and taken over by the Totality.

And if you should wonder whether these feelings are quite reliable, you can check them by looking for yourself, at yourself.

6. "You are what the Sages say you are"

The Sages say that you are quite different from what you think and what others think, and that your mistaken estimate of yourself is the great hoodwink and the reason why you are miserable.

They say that the most direct method of dispelling this delusion is to be quiet, stop thinking, avoid emotional stress, and turn round and look steadily in at yourself instead of out at the world.

They say that just as soon as you do this you will see, suddenly and easily and with perfect clarity, that you are Nothing, Empty, Void, Formless.

They say that, directly you see your nothingness, you will see that it is filled: you are the All, because you are its absolutely Empty Container, its absolutely pure Source. Paradoxically, you are the world—because you are nothing to do with it. And at last you see all its splendour—because, fundamentally, you are neither involved nor interested.

They say it will now be quite clear to you that your seeing and hearing are not the functions of eyes and ears and brains (which you see you lack) but of the Void which replaces them. Thus emptied, you make room for, or rather you *become*, the object. You don't detect it, for you have nothing to detect it with.

They say that, seeing thus, you are Enlightened, which means you see through the illusion that you are a human body, or any sort of thing or object or substance.

They say that perfect peace, divine bliss, immortal life, total detachment, Buddhahood or Godhood, Liberation, Nirvana, are enjoyed the moment you see clearly What you are. And lost the moment you overlook it.

All you really need is honesty.

5. "You are what you see you are"

You may object that you aren't well placed to see yourself, that you are too close and standing in your own way. In fact, the reverse is the case. Only you are in a position to see what it is like where you are, in the very place you now occupy. All other observers are on business elsewh-

"Find out who is born and who has the trouble of existence now. When you are asleep do you think of re-births or even the present existence, etc.? So, find out whence the present problem arises and there is the solution also."

— Sri Bhagavan

ere, off-centre, outsiders, and therefore quite unable to report on you as you really are, in yourself. In the whole universe, there is this one very special spot, this one very special "thing," which you, and only you, can observe. What does it look like, now? What do you make of yourself?

Do you see that head and shoulders figured in your passport? If not, do you see their contents, such as bones, brains, muscles, blood? If not, do you see cells, or molecules, or atoms, or electrons? Isn't it true that, in fact, you see the absence of all these—the total emptiness of the spot you occupy?

How can one see an absence? Very easily, as when you see the absence of food on your plate at the end of a meal. You can see, in precisely the same way and just as clearly, that what figures in your passport photo is totally absent from this place where you had imagined it to be. And instead of it, filling the gap (as it were), is now this double page of *The Middle Way*, and part of two hands holding it, with glimpses perhaps of knees and a pair of shoes and a patch of carpet. Or else a window frame, grass, trees, clouds, sun, and blue sky. Or anything else whatever.

In short, you see you are Nothing, and therefore contain (and indeed are) Everything. And seeing this, you are enlightened as to your own Nature. That is to say, you are Enlightened. So say the great spiritual Masters.

THE UNIQUENESS OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA

By Dr. K. Subrahmanian

The most extraordinary thing about the Maharshi was his twentyfour-hour accessibility. No permission was needed to see him and there were no special darshan hours. Everyone of us insists on privacy every few hours. We don't want to be disturbed. We had a Maharshi who was 'disturbed' all the time but he never felt disturbed.

People used to sleep around him. When he had to go out at night, he had to pick his way carefully. When someone offered him a torch, the Maharshi said there was no need for it. At the insistence of devotees, he accepted it. He used it in such a way that nobody was disturbed. Whenever he had to go out at night, he would flash the torch on his stomach and with its help find his way out. He would not flash the torch on the ground as it might disturb those asleep. Such was his consideration for others.

But this consideration was not limited to human beings. It was extended to birds, animals and plants. Occasionally when dogs chose to sleep in the hall, some people used to murmur that dogs would mess up the place. The Maharshi would take the dogs out around midnight so that they could answer the call of nature. Dogs, sparrows, peacocks, squirrels, monkeys and cows used to go to him. He would talk to them and they would obey his instructions. He would never let anyone kill a snake. "We have come to their place. we should give them protection". In his presence even monkeys were quiet. Once a monkey tried to go near him when he was in the meditation hall in the Ashram. People who got a little anxious tried to drive away the monkey. The Maharshi looked at it and asked it to come near him. The monkey went near him and showed her baby to him. The Maharshi said: "You all tried to



drive her away. She has come to show her baby. You bring your children and grandchildren. Why don't you let her do the same thing?" The monkey stayed for a while and left shrieking with delight. Squirrels had their feast of nuts when they climbed up his couch and ate them off his palm. He radiated love to all beings.

We have heard of disciples serving Gurus. Here was a unique guru who served his disciples. He used to go into the kitchen every day around 3 o' clock in the morning, cut vegetables, grind chutney, etc. Whatever he prepared was most delicious. He wasn't interested in tasty dishes, but he prepared them out of love for the devotees.

Once when the Maharshi's hands were full of blisters, a devotee, Viswanatha Swami, offered to do his work. The Maharshi said that he wasn't bothered by the blisters and continued to do hard manual work. The devotee could not bear this and one day quietly went into the kitchen much earlier than the Maharshi and finished all the work normally done by the Maharshi. When the Maharshi went into the kitchen, he found that there was no work for him. When he asked what had happened, he was told that Viswanatha Swami had done all the work. The Maharshi did not say anything. When he met Viswanatha Swami, he asked him why he had done it. Viswanatha Swami said he could not bear to see the Maharshi grinding chutney when he had blisters on his hands. The Maharshi said: "In the early years I had to beg for food. Now I am being given free food. Shouldn't I do some service to deserve this? You have done my work today. I haven't done any service today. Please give me your dhoti. I will wash it for you." Viswanatha Swami was moved to tears. He never interfered in Sri Maharshi's work afterwards.

Some devotees felt that the Maharshi shouldn't be disturbed at least for two hours between 12 noon and 2 p.m. They decided to leave him alone between these hours. The Maharshi wasn't consulted about this. When he didn't find any visitors after noon, the Maharshi asked the attendant what had happened. He was told that it had been decided not to allow visitors between 12 noon and 2 p.m. The Maharshi came and sat outside the hall saying, "People come to me at all hours. Some of them cannot afford to wait. If you prevent them from seeing me; I shall go to meet them. You may keep the doors closed, but you cannot lock me in." He didn't want to break the rule, but he

didn't want to inconvenience the visitors. Such was his consideration for others.

Once an American lady visited the Ashram. She found it difficult to squat on the ground and so stretched her legs towards the Maharshi. She wasn't aware that in the Indian tradition, it was disrespectful to do so. A devotee went up to her and asked her to fold her legs and sit like others. Noticing this, the Maharshi said that the lady should not be asked to squat like others as she found it difficult to do it. When the attendant said it was disrespectful, the Maharshi said, "Oh, is that so? I am being disrespectful to you all by stretching my legs. What you say applies to to me also." So saying, he sat cross-legged for one whole day. It took a lot of persuading on the part of devotees to make him stretch his legs again.

Once when the Maharshi saw some 'special' food being prepared separately in the kitchen, he asked the person why it was being prepared. When told that it was for a woman who was in her period, he said: "Why should she eat food cooked separately? Why can't she be given the food served to everyone else? Is it a sin to have period? Make no difference and serve her from the food prepared for all." He emphasised the need for compassion and consideration for others. With him, concern for others was the basis of spirituality.

The Maharshi hasn't uttered a single word against women. He never said at any time that their company would be a hindrance to sadhana. He never encouraged anyone to give up family life and take to sanyas. He once said: "Sanyas means renouncing one's individuality, not shaving one's head and putting on ochre robes. A man may be a householder but if he

does not think he is one, he is a *sanyasin*. On the other hand, he may wear ochre robes and wander about, but so long as he thinks he is a *sanyasin*, he is not one." When he was asked how to root out sex, the Maharshi answered: "By rooting out the false idea of the body being Self. There is no sex in the Self. Because you think you are the body, you see another as body and difference in sex arises. But you are not the body. Be the real Self. Then there is no sex." The Maharshi said that the path of self-enquiry could be pursued by women too. In fact, he said that liberated women should be buried like liberated men.

He embodied all that is best and finest in our Vedas and Upanishads. He came of the line of our ancient *rishis*. He was totally free and gave this freedom to others. He never asked for anything. He didn't ask anyone to do anything for him. He was silent much of the time and communicated a peace that passeth understanding. He was extraordinary in every way but lived an ordinary life. He did not advise people to give up this or that. He wanted them to give up the sense of 'doership'. He did not ask people either to come or go. He de-emphasised miracles, clairvoyance, etc. To him self-realisation was the most important thing. He said this realisation was not the acquisition of anything new but only the removal of all camouflage. He ate with others and took only that much that was served

to others and not a bit more. He did not tolerate any preferential treatment. Once when a devotee had sent *chyavanaprash* specially prepared for the Maharshi, he took it for a day or two out of consideration for the devotee and later had it distributed to all. He did not consent to any special diet even when he was very ill. He insisted on everything being distributed equally to all. He would say, "If it is good for me, it is good for all".

His simplicity was extraordinary. Dilip Kumar Roy wrote of him thus: "His self-obliviousness was enchanting, for me, any way..... There was nothing forced about any of his movements: no straining after effect, disguised or sublime. Greatness sat easily on him as beauty on a sunset cloud, albeit with a devastating effect, as often as not. For all our ideas as to how the great should act seemed to be dismissed by him with a smile of simple disapproval."

He was not a scholar but scholars went to him to have their doubts clarified. He never wrote anything of his own accord. What he wrote at the request of others fills a book. His mother-tongue was Tamil. But he wrote enchanting poetry not only in Tamil but also in Sanskrit, Malayalam and Telugu, the three languages he had picked up from his devotees. Scholars in these languages are astonished at the beauty of his poetry.

(To be concluded in the next issue)

Letters to the Editor : 1

The service and support extended by all of you, not only to my mother but to humanity at large, deserves to be wholeheartedly praised. I am very happy to have been inducted into this noble organisation (Sri Ramanasramam) and I intend to continue and strengthen my association over the years.

— Dr. P. Balasubramanian, Madras

Krishnamurti and Education

By G. N.

Education is flowering in goodness and intelligence—this statement of great beauty made by Krishnamurti years ago has been quoted by many philosophers. This flowering is very important, otherwise education becomes a mechanical process geared to a career or some kind of profession. Career and profession in any society become necessary, but if all the emphasis is laid on them the freedom to flower gradually withers away. When the teacher and the student flower in learning, career and profession will take their right place.

The flowering implies freedom, as in the case of any plant that requires freedom to grow. It is the total unfolding and cultivation of our minds, our hearts and our physical well-being. It can take place only when there is clear and objective perception; it is not merely what to think, but how to think clearly. With the awakening of the heart goodness is born out of affection and love. The cultivation of the body requires right kind of food, proper exercise and rest, resulting in health and sensitivity. When the mind, the heart and body are in harmony, then the flowering takes place naturally and in excellence. This is the responsibility of the educator, and teaching is the greatest profession on earth.

Goodness shows itself in action and in relationship. It can flower only in freedom. Generally our daily behaviour is based on certain patterns, or on thought-out motives based on reward or punishment. This is not good behaviour. When one realises this, then out of this understanding comes true behaviour. Goodness is not a casual



The author with J. Krishnamurti

affair or a plaything of a sophisticated mind. Good behaviour is in essence the absence of the self and shows itself in generosity, in consideration for others and in sanity.

Goodness has no opposite. It is not the opposite of the bad or evil. The opposite contains the seed of its opposite. Pleasure contains pain, hope is in the shadow of fear. In the endless corridor of opposites, of like and dislike, there is no freedom. Goodness cannot come into being if there is any form of violence or struggle. Freedom is essential for the beauty of goodness,

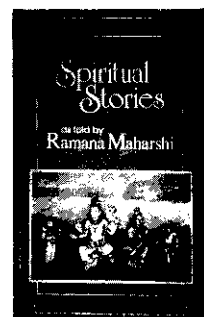
and the energy flows from the wholeness of life free of reward and punishment. There is a nonmechanistic, non-routine action and one has to discover it. It does not come through rituals and book-knowledge—with these you lose freedom completely and there is no goodness. It is important to understand that where there is the flowering of goodness, action can never be mechanical.

A school is a place of leisure where the educator and the student are both learning. Leisure means a mind that is not occupied with a problem, with some pleasure. It implies a mind that has infinite time to observe; observe what is happening around one and what is happening within oneself. To have leisure is to listen, to see clearly. Relationship requires a great deal of intelligence. Knowledge and experience are not intelligence. Knowledge can be bright, clever and useful but that is not intelligence. Intelligence can function through knowledge, but not the other way round. Intelligence comes naturally when the whole nature and structure of relationship is seen. It implies dialogue between the teacher and students where their actual reactions, susceptibilities, and barriers in relationship are seen. The function of a school is to guide the student to awaken his intelligence and to learn the importance of right relationship.

Goodness cannot flower in the field of fear, and the educator should not arouse fear in the student. The teacher has to understand that fear in any form cripples the mind, destroys sensitivity, shrinks the senses. Fear is the heavy and ancient burden of man and that has given birth to many forms of superstition. The student and the teacher together have to explore the nature and structure of fear. It is the responsibility of the educator to bring about a new generation in the world. "Facing

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the actual, the now, and the fear, is the highest function of the educator—not to bring about only academic excellence—but what is far more important, the psychological freedom of the student and himself. "When the nature of freedom is understood, it is possible to eliminate competition and comparison as they do not lead to excellence but only to mediocrity.

The root meaning of the word 'intelligence' is *inter legere* which means reading between the lines. It is the ability to understand the spirit of what is being said, and not merely sticking to the word or verbal explanation. It is the immediate perception of the swift movement of what is, and not the result of laboured analysis. In perception there is immediate action, the seeing is the doing without the interval of time. This is learning while doing and observing, and the basis of all creative endeavour. Knowledge and skills may come out of this perception, but they are only by-products and not its mainstay. In the perception of what is, without choice, there is a regenerating factor, sensitive and subtle, and leading beyond what is.

Krishnamurti has propounded three great arts of learning. The first one is listening. Listening becomes extensive when there is no resistance. When one listens without any prejudice it is a complete act of learning. Listening has great beauty and one listens to sound and silence, not captured before. The second great art is observing. In looking, there is freedom from the word and the previous image held by thought. As there is no naming, the observation is direct and refreshing. The word is not the thing. You can observe nature, a human being and a mental image without naming it. Such observation has a penetrating quality leading to insight and discovery. Can we help our students to observe without the word and the past image held in memory?

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The third great art is learning itself. Normally by learning we mean the cultivation of memory and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Knowledge is always limited. There is no complete knowledge of a living being or nature. In the wake of knowledge there is the shadow of ignorance. Some forms of knowledge and skills become obsolete with the advent of new discoveries. Memory can be strengthened through repetition and rote techniques, or through more interesting methods of cross reference and emotional association. Memory is the storehouse of knowledge and experience, and cultivation of memory has its place as it is useful. However it soon becomes limited and mechanical, and there are aspects of education which are not mere memory cultivation. And these are sadly neglected in institutions of learning.

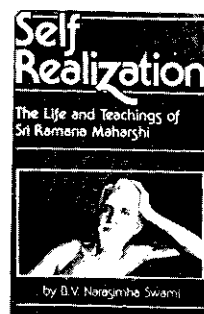
Beauty, like the setting sun, has its full impact on the mind when one watches all of a sudden round the bend of the road. Memory soon comes in and wants to grasp the same experience, but by its very nature, limits it. All aesthetic appreciation has this quality and cannot be captured by memory. Inquiry demands conversation and dialogue and putting the right question and staying with it. The more vital the question, the greater the need to stay with it—the question contains the answer as it unfolds itself. This requires alert and quiet observation, and is not confined to the field of memory. Great discoveries in science and religious insight are born out of this silent and anonymous observation. We may call this "learning through insight" as distinct from learning which is the additive process of memory.

We may look into some aspects of insight as this may help in the process and flow of learning and teaching.

(1) Insight is the ability to see the whole and the parts that belong to the

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whole. All the parts put together do not make the whole. When you see the parts in relationship to the whole there is relevance. Poetry, Mathematics, Science and other disciplines can be taught this way. The importance of this approach cannot be overemphasized in learning and living,

(2) To see the false as false is an important aspect of insight. Negative comprehension is the highest form of thinking. When one sees that competition and comparison are destructive to learning, that they damage the personality of the student and have no deeper relevance, one drops them. A weight is taken off your head, and with the new energy, you discover, interesting forms of communication and

pedagogy, leading to participation by the students in the learning process.

(3) Yet another aspect of insight is the pliability of self-renewal. In spite of having considerable knowledge and experience one has to put them aside to meet afresh the challenge of the present. This is essentially the quality of a young mind, unburdening itself of the past, releasing great energy for learning and discovery. Krishnamurthi once asked the students if they could live four seasons in a day. The heightened activity of the spring leads to summer, followed by the colour and mellowness of autumn, the dropping of leaves and the bare trees of winter, naked and open to the sky. Then there is great beauty and the freedom of renewal.

Letters to the Editor :- 2

It appears a near-miracle has happened !

From the beginning I was opposed to the operation, though the doctor said it was a simple affair. It was a clot outside the brain. I was persuaded, almost pressurised, to agree to it. On November 4, I was to enter the hospital. But I insisted on meeting Dr. Narayana Reddy, the Superintendent of Nimhans, who was said to be very much in favour of the operation. The appointment was fixed at 2 p.m. on Oct. 31. But at the last moment it was cancelled because he had to leave for England. He left a note saying that Dr. Varma, the former Superintendent and a famous name in Neuro-Sciences could be consulted and his opinion. I was happy because I had all along been wanting to meet him, but my doctor friend who arranges scanning, test, etc., and accompanies me always could not arrange the meeting. But now it became imperative.

On the first of this month, we met him. He advised a second scan on the 10th, i.e., a month after the first, since there had

been considerable improvement in my condition. So, the operation fixed for the 4th had to be cancelled. I breathed relief !

Yesterday noon the scan was taken and we saw Dr. Varma at 4.45 p.m. When he saw the scan he was amazed and jumped with joy. He asked my doctor friend, who was sitting by my side in the consultation room, "Where is the clot? It has mysteriously disappeared! Such things have not happened," he said. He added: "This is a rare instance!" He attributed this happening to the complete rapport between the doctor and the patient.

I had my own opinion, of course. An occult surgery had been performed by a Benign (Divine) Being, whose motherly interest in me had made it obligatory on Him to intervene and whose Grace had been invoked by you and others for my cure. Your concern for my health throughout has been extraordinary and I am deeply grateful.

— N. Balarama Reddy, Camp: Bangalore

About seven years ago at Rishi Valley, Krishnamurti was speaking to six or seven of us. It was late in the evening and a senior friend asked Krishnaji as to what the educational objectives and aims of his philosophy were. Though Krishnamurti did not think in terms of goals and ends, to our great surprise, he enumerated three objectives :

(1) Global outlook : One has to see the futility of a sectarian, nationalistic outlook, leading to bigotry, hatred and war. This is our earth, and science with its technology has brought us together to work for the well-being of man. One has to set aside prejudice and violence to understand the problems of other groups of people living in one's country and other parts of the world.

(2) Concern for man and environment : Nature is extensive and is interconnected with a vast network of relationships, leading to balance and harmony. When man lives with nature and appreciates the beauty and order in nature, he becomes sensitive and considerate of others and all forms of life. He sees he is not the centre of the universe, but an essential part of it. Exploiting nature and gaining mastery over nature is seen as destructive leading to pollution and violence, and is replaced by the vital urge to live in harmony with nature enjoying its wealth and fruits. A spirit of cooperation, a keenness to work

with fellow human beings, as well as the study of ecological sciences and care of environment, is born out of this concern.

(3) Religious spirit : The scientific mind is very factual and explores matter. Discovery and research are its mission. The fruits of science are reaped by humanity, and scientific discoveries and its technology are exploited by the nationalistic mind. The scientific mind moves from fact to fact.

The true religious mind is completely alone. Such a mind has seen through the falseness of dogmas, beliefs and the divisions that organised religions have brought about among human beings. Not being nationalistic and not conditioned by its environment, the religious mind has no horizons, no limits. It is explosive, new, young, innocent. The innocent mind is extraordinarily pliable, subtle and it has no anchor. It is only such a mind that can experience Truth—that which is not measurable. The true human being is born when the religious spirit and the scientific mind go together. He is creative without any contradiction within himself. Such human beings will create a good world. It is only the religious spirit which contains the scientific mind that can explode in the present, giving birth to a new culture and society. This is the benediction that Krishnamurti has given to us and posterity.

Letters to the Editor :- 3

We stayed at the Ashram for nearly a fortnight and our stay worked its miracle by fixing our minds upon Arunachala for ever. The magnetic pull of the Great Mountain is mysterious and powerful. We learnt so many things this time and Sri Kunju Swami was very kind to explain the deeper meaning of the poems of Sri Bhagavan.

— P. C. Ranganathan, Madras

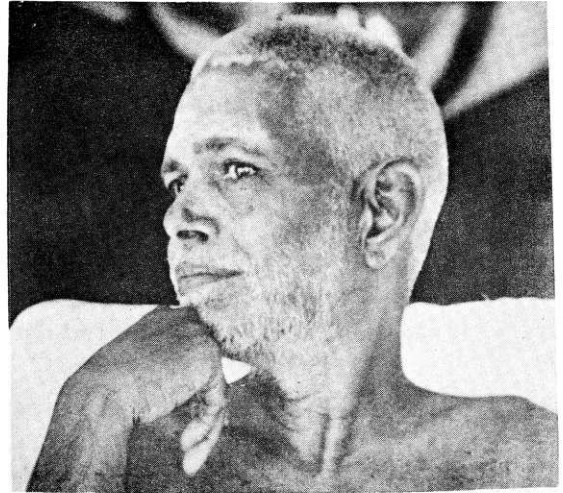
Gita Saara Taalaattu¹

(THE LULLABY OF GITA ESSENCE)

By Namaraya J.

When Sri Bhagavan was in the mangō grove adjoining *Gurumurtham* his uncle Nelliappa Iyer met Him there. So much had been the outer transformation that Nelliappa Iyer could recognise his nephew only after seeing the big light-red mole on the sole of Bhagavan's right foot! He tried in vain to persuade young Venkataraman to return. When he realised that there was no chance of the youngster accompanying him, he took leave. Subsequently he saw in a neighbour's garden a learned man giving a discourse on some book to a small gathering. Iyer went in and later enquired of him about dear Venkataraman.

In order to see how all this is connected with *Gita Saara Taalaattu*, let us hear in Bhagavan's own words² what followed: "In the view of that learned man I was an ignorant person knowing nothing, so he said, 'That boy is sitting there without any education and with a crude philosophy'. My uncle was naturally worried because I was young, had not learnt anything from anyone and might turn out to be a good-for-nothing fellow. So he told that gentleman, 'Please keep an eye on my nephew and teach him something if possible' and went away. For a long time that learned man held the view that I knew nothing, and tried once or twice to teach me something but I never cared. Later on when I was giving a discourse on *Gita Saara (Taalaattu)* in the Eesanya Mutt, he came there. He then discussed with me various matters and when he heard my explanations and expositions of the *Gita*, he said, 'Oho! You are such a great man! I thought you were illiterate!' So saying, he suddenly prostrated before me and went away."



Text

- (27) "Mind's pain and pleasure ought not
to exceed mind-Elf;
How then do they get to embrace the
Atman-self?"
- (28) "Heat from the fire below, enters the
pot above
Heats up the water within—talk of
hand and glove!"
- (29) "The Self, Light Supreme, and mech-
anistic mind-stuff,
How did the two become one or get
close enough?"
- (30) "The finite ball of iron when roasted
to red heat
Seems like the formless flame—thus
mind and Atman meet!"
- (31) (Asked) "Why so at all?" He smiled:
Self indiscriminates;
Makes way for mind which through
want-hate incarcerates."

¹ Continued from our last issue

² See Letters, Dt. 4 Nov. 1948

"Realisation is our nature. It is nothing new to be gained. What is new cannot be eternal. Therefore there is no need doubting if one would lose or gain the Self".

— Sri Maharshi

- (32) "Oh, will the Self e'er be rid of this
mind that mars?"
"What need of that? Does red-dye
affect mirror-glass?"
- (33) "If Self itself like looking glass be
e'er untouched,
How did they breed: Samsar, bond-
age and such and such?"
- (34) "Bound by the rope of e'er lengthen-
ing vasanas;
Know! this: No Mukti, with mind
behind wordly sauce."
- (35) Said he: "Pray teach me what Bon-
age and Mukti are
Oh! that I may banish this confusion.
Krishna!"
- (36) "'Tis bondage to feel 'I'm this body-
mind' and Lo!
'Tis glorious Mukti, freed from fraud-
ulent Ego."
- (37) "How is it rid—this fraud—how did it
come about?
Pray tell me; that I may grasp this
without a doubt."
- (38) "The ego rose with forgetful Ajnana,"
He,
Went on, "If that's gone, with it
goes Egoity."
- (39) "Ajnana, formless, dark; how does it
come and go?
Pray tell me; that I may without
doubt get to know."

IN THE PARADISE OF THE HEART

By A Parsi Devotee

A very special type of vision, it is,
— Heart-vision.
But very very few are those who have it;
These are the few who
Dwell within the Heart,
And see with the eyes of the Heart.
Blind are they to all outer appearances;
Their attention always is
On the screen, and not on the picture
superimposed,
On the paper, and not on the writing
on it,
On the hidden Truth
Behind all phenomenal appearances.
'Sameness' is what they behold
everywhere,
One and the same Reality,
in all shapes and sizes,
Everyone and everything,
embodiment of T H A T,
The rose and the thorn, just the same.

If it's Freedom you seek,
If the Truth is what you aspire to,
If you wish to know things as they
really are,
Then, to the Heart, must you return.
And, when the lost Paradise of
the Heart,
You have regained,
When you are firmly anchored in
the Heart,
Your Spiritual Centre,
Then, will you find, that
There is nothing else except O N E,
There is neither 'this' nor 'that',
But just T H A T.

- (40) "Ajnana, ancient, its birth, 'yond analysis, Ends with self Jnana: pure substance of solipsists. ³
 "Ajnana ancient beyond all unravelling, Ends with full Jnana: firm being in Self as King."
- (41) "Like 'night' implied in 'sun's light' does Ajnana Co-Exist in Atman? Then how and why ever so?"
- (42) "When that pure buddhi dawns who's to see Ignorance?
 Be that first, for the nonce; (Then) e'er blissful cosmic dance!"
- (43) "When Self is grasped by word of Surti, or guru
 Why do evil-laden pleasure pain continue?"
- (44) "Only Aparoksha Jnana destroys dual Pleasure-pain; Paroksha can't cause their removal."
- (45) "What do Paroksha, Aparoksha Jnana mean?
 Dilate! Pray clarify buddhi clouded, unclean."
- (46) "Paroksha's merely word-knowledge, while Brahm-am-I
 'bidance' is Aparoksha which intuitis. Aye!"
- (47) "'Pon knowing I'm Brahman, why then does buddhi which
 Posed as 'I'm body' not part with this naughty hitch?"
- (48) "Hearing, ruminating and rousing yoga make
 Self-inherence firm; with that flees the Phantom fake"
- (49) "Can such self forgetting itself for an aeon
 By vichara. manana gain the Noumenon?"
- (50) "The search ironic of e'er aware self's akin
 To searching for a jewel that's e'er beneath one's chin"
- (51) "Can Vichara vanquish Body-I sense? Can I
 Be firmly self-aware, Krishna? Do clarify!"
- (52) "Body though foreign becomes 'I' through vasana
 What doubt then of the Self 'becoming' Self? Ha! Ha!"

³ Believer in Solipsism : Used here in the literal sense: SOLUS alone IPSE self ISM : The view that the self is the only knowing or existent thing.

Letters to the Editor :- 4

I returned to the land of my 'exile' last week. India gave me great wealth of experience; this is why India is materially so poor. My heart aches for my birth-land.

I also write to thank you for the excellent hospitality your Ashram gave me. It was worth waiting for 35 years ! The booklets ('Liberating Question' and 'Silent Sun') you gave me and Adam, helped us very much. This journey to the Self needs all the help, it can get. That climb to the Virupaksha Cave will remain imprinted in my heart for ever.

— Arati (Banerjea), London

TWO DECADES OF

'THEORY AND PRACTICE ACCORDING TO SRI RAMANA'

By N. Ramasubramanyam

Nowhere is the inadequacy of philosophy or theory more clearly explained than in the teaching of Bhagavan Sri Ramana. He leaves us in no doubt that its claims on our attention are very limited. He teaches that Self-enquiry is the right discipline for a seeker, in fact the direct path. In it there are no assumptions; nor is there allegiance to any preconceived theory. What can be more real than the Self and what path more direct than enquiry into the Self? The Self exists as the most immediate truth and one does not need any one else to tell one that it is. It is prior to all experience, whether pain, pleasure, peace, doubt or anything else. In fact, it is the experiencer, and its experience of itself is the first experience. Bhagavan teaches with unique clarity that we should concentrate on the Self and ignore everything else; but not in the sense of mental concentration, not thinking about the Self. One should hold on to the Self to the exclusion of all thought and mental activity. Anything else that crops up and tries to occupy one's mind is to be rejected. The Self alone will remain and all else will cease to be. Self-enquiry is the central teaching of Bhagavan, and it puts a stop to all philosophy and theorising.

'IN BRIEF'

By G. N. Daley

You are body, mind and consciousness—nothing more and nothing less.
 Body + mind = space and time = ego (illusion).
 Consciousness = no space and Now = Self (God).
 How to realize the Self?
 Don't try, you can't. It is already realized.
 How to get rid of ego?
 Don't try, you can't. It isn't here.
 What then to do?
 Just BE.
 How?
 Enquire 'Who am I?'
 Hold Awareness. Be and don't let go. That's all.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

‘HOW I CAME TO THE MAHARSHI’

By D. S. Sastri

On entering the Hall, the ego in me did not permit my prostrating before Him. Instead, I just folded my hands by way of *namaskar* and sat down watching critically all that was happening. People were coming and going; and not a word was spoken. Everybody appeared happy and contented. The prevailing serene atmosphere was infectious. I sat motionless. I had nothing to ask. I was lost in wonder and admiration at the peace and silence. The thought uppermost in my mind was: if people could be happy thus with a minimum of food and clothing, why not I? Why these wordly possessions and the struggles incidental thereto? Why grieve about official worries and domestic calamities?

At 4.45 Bhagavan left the Hall as usual and came back later for Vedaparayana which was arranged in the open space adjacent to the Hall. The chanting of the Vedic hymns began in those idyllic surroundings with Arunachala on one side and the flower garden on the other and with Bhagavan, wearing only a loincloth, sitting in the midst of the devotees. I felt as if I was in another world altogether. It was only when the chanting was over and devotees began leaving that I realised I was in this mundane world.

‘INTRODUCING.....Viswanatha Swami’

From 1923 Viswanatha Swami remained permanently with Bhagavan right upto April 1950 when Bhagavan's body dropped away. After that he left us for a number of years; he had to look after his aged parent, and he himself suffered much ill health. Now he is back at the Ashram. He comes from the same social background as Bhagavan and is indeed related to Bhagavan's family. Bhagavan used to rely on him largely for translating and other literary work, and Viswanatha Swami tells us what a strict task-master He was, always insistent on accuracy and punctuality. He saw too what an interest Bhagavan took in the Ashram publications. More important, however, than any book learning was his constant association with Bhagavan over the years.

from *The Mountain Path*, January, 1967

EVER, UNTIRING, JOYOUSLY

By Kumari Sarada

The Sun peeps over the horizon, a cock crows or an alarm trings and humankind awakes from slumber to plunge into the world of ceaseless activity. The housewife gets busy with her chores, the school children get uniformed, the office-goer clasps on his belt as he runs down the stairs, another pins on her saree, and each rushes to their bus queue. The day has begun. Pencils squeak, typewriters clatter, coins clink, phones ring, elevators move up and down, shoes tramp through corridors, along roads, bare feet slosh through fields, hands pull out weeds, plant seeds, wash vessels. Come sun-down, eyes sit glued to television boxes, mouth and ear busy themselves with gossip or light chatter till heavy-lidded with sleep, people proceed to the land of Nod. The day has ended, as it began. Tomorrow is the same day, the same activities, the same patterns, tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, day after day, week after week, year after year, perhaps life after life. Drenched in this continual downpour of activity, broken only by spells of ignorant sleep, who stops to take shelter and ask, "Who is the actor?" Is there one who wishes to don the hardy raincoat of self-enquiry?

Are there any who with sharpened intellect follow knowledge, like a sinking star, beyond the utmost bound of human thought? Is there anyone who would cease in this unending pursuit of knowledge to ask, "Who is the knower?" The multitudes who talk of salt and tamarind, of polyester sales and neighbour's habits; the many who talk of politics and art films; the few who debate about the impact of fate and freewill, the nature of Time, the possibility of reincarnation; the handful who philoso-



phise on the nature of God, the kinds of liberation and the efficacy of various methods to Self-Knowledge, are all jolted into reality by a silent voice:

'All of you who talk, discuss, debate, philosophise, do you know who it is that talks, who wants to discuss, who is affec-

Notes and references

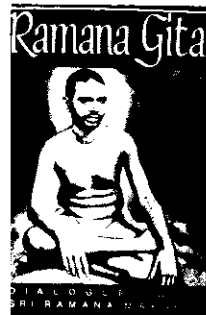
- 1 Bhagavan seems almost exasperated with the constant wrangling over so many theoretical aspects as also the endless debates about the relative efficacy of various methods. So much so He says in *Hridaya Kuhara madhye*; 'Be it by meditation, breath control or self-enquiry, somehow abide in the Self steadily.' He seems to say, 'If you are starving, then fill your stomach, eat, don't die of starvation wondering what menu to choose and whether to eat with a knife and fork or with your bare hands, eat as soon as possible and live.'

ted by fate or prompted by free will, who feels the movement of Time, who is it that is now born and living, who the perceiver of God and the experiencer of liberation? Do you know who you are?' ²

Our stupor of perennial activity is suddenly broken by Bhagavan Ramana's emphatic eye-opener, 'find out who you are. Other things can take care of themselves.' Yet, why should I find out afresh who I am? I already know, everyone knows, except perhaps those who have amnesia. Let them worry about who they are. I know, for instance, that I am Sarada. But the seed of doubt has been sown. I cannot help wondering. Do I really know myself? Or do I also have some kind of amnesia? I say that I am Sarada, that is a particular name, signifying a specific form, and, of course, by 'myself' I also mean a given manner of thinking and functioning. Yet, sometimes, when I fall asleep and start dreaming, my name changes but I still identify with that dream personality. If a tiger in the dream, is chasing a girl called Sruthi, who looks totally different from me, I feel only that the tiger is chasing *me* and wake up with a start. Why, even in real life people whose form changes by accident or just by the natural process of age do not therefore feel they have become someone else. A person with lovely black hair may grey, teeth may fall off, the face carry spectacles, skin wrinkle—does the identity then change? People change their names and continue to feel they are the same person. Many persons are even known by more than one name, are they then two or three people? No. There persists a continuity

² In verses 3, 4, 19, 32, 34, 38 and 40 of His *Forty Verses on Reality* Bhagavan clearly brings out the futility of various merely theoretical and scholastic discussions and turns the attention back to self-enquiry. As Muruganar declares in a poem, Bhagavan blows away as mere chaff all theoretical knowledge and re-establishes one in the experience of the Truth.

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of identity through the vagaries of dream, nescience of sleep and through the numerous changes of life. Then, if change in my name and form does not affect my identity (except perhaps at a superficial level), I cannot be that name and form alone. I must be the mind which identifies with this particular name and form and which is equally capable of identifying with any other name or form.

When I have reached this stage of reasoning and turn to Bhagavan, He confirms that I am on the right track, 'It is only the mind which lights the world,' He says, 'the world is perceived only through the various senses and the senses themselves are under the control of the mind. Hence the world is but the mind.'³ But lest I should be deluded into believing that I have known myself fully, in Truth, Bhagavan continues, 'What happens to this mind in deep sleep?' He asks, 'You do exist in sleep, don't you? Who is that who exists through deep sleep?'

Now I am truly non-plussed. Here is one aspect of myself which I know absolutely nothing about. I enjoy sleep, yet record the enjoyment by declaring, 'I slept marvellously, I was aware of nothing at all.' Who was present then to record that the sleep was marvellous? Who was present to be aware of the unawareness? Certainly not this mind, with its identity 'I-am-so-and-so.' Am I then lost daily in sleep and re-discovered on waking? No. Certainly I exist in sleep and waking, there is no doubt about that. But this identity, this 'so-and-so' exists only in waking and dream and is completely absent in deep sleep. Is this then the real 'I' or is that the real 'I' which continues through sleep? What is the nature of that 'I'? If I have not known that, I have not known myself. At best I can only claim that I know a part

³ Verse 6, Sat-Darshana, Forty Verses on Reality,

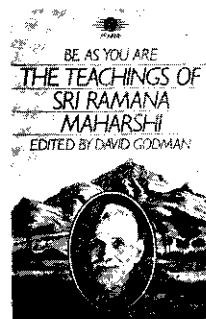
of myself (if this daily disappearing identity is myself at all). But how can I know myself? How can one discover that 'I' which exists even in the unawareness of sleep? By its very nature, sleep is ignorance; then how can one know about that entity? Is there a way to solve this paradox?

When I am thus assailed by serious doubt about my own identity, yet confused as to how to discover the truth, Bhagavan gently provides the clue: 'You have found that the 'I-am-the-body' identity disappears in deep sleep but is rampant while awake. That means this 'I'-thought sets somewhere and rises from somewhere everyday. If you consciously observe wherefrom this 'I'-thought rises and abide there, at the source, that is Self-Knowledge'. Why pay attention to the 'I' thought? Why not to any other thought? Because the 'I' -thought is central to our existence, all else is perceived only in relation to the 'I'-thought, and when the 'I' -thought does not exist, as in sleep, neither does the world, for me. Hence, attention to the root, 'I'-thought, cuts through the weeds of all subsidiary thoughts at one stroke. And this process of paying attention to the 'I'-thought, of tracking it to its source, is self-enquiry.⁴

If the yearning for Self-Knowledge is true, if one is totally gripped by an attitude of strong curiosity about one's true nature, then self-enquiry must be incessant till the merger. But there are a million doubts and trillion excuses offered. 'I have so many duties to discharge, how can I give all my time to enquiry?' one may ask.

So Bhagavan categorically states in *Ramana Gita* that finding out one's own true nature and abiding there firmly is the paramount duty. There are other problems. I may feel, I want to sing and chant the Lord's

⁴ Verse 26, *Sat-Darshana*.



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of these little moments can be filled with self-enquiry. That is, until self-enquiry becomes so natural that it continues as an under-current through every waking moment, until self-enquiry becomes as natural as breathing itself.

Having the sharpest saw of self-enquiry in our hands, knowing how to use it, wouldn't it be the greatest tragedy if we failed to cut out the prison bars of limited identity? What excuse can one offer? The Self is ever available, as our very own state, ours to discover, to abide in now, always. The 'I'-thought is available every waking moment, the clue leading back to the Self. If yet we do not apply ourselves to practice of self-enquiry, it is but weakness of the mind.⁶ Indeed, in the light of self-enquiry, other actions and reactions often seem absurd. Absurd it is to feel angry, to feel upset, not knowing the one

who is upset. If one can put to oneself the question 'Who is upset?' even as one is feeling miserable and pursue the answer to that with the question 'Who am I?' the attention is shifted from the misery to the sufferer. But the sufferer doesn't even know himself or herself; then how can there be suffering? Thus anger, sorrow, disgust, all dissolve into the totally absorbing process of self-enquiry. For, what is any experience without knowledge of the experiencer? Yet, how often one forgets the sheer absurdity of the situation and gets lost again and again in activity and emotion, sadly ignorant of who acts, who feels; as it is, even now, absurd to be writing without knowing who writes. I am writing, but then 'Who am I?' And so, on to the serious business of life, to self-enquiry...ever, untiring, joyously.⁷

⁶ Verse 32, *Sat-Darshana*.

⁷ Verse 3, *Appalam Song of Bhagavan*.

Letters to the Editor : 5

I am giving below an outline of the incident regarding my daughter Ramani's illness. A red scar formed on the left eye and was noticed on Sep. 4. Within a week the eye had swollen. The eye-specialist advised tablets and ointment. The swelling worsened and extra skin started forming by the side of the eye. At Nimhans, Bangalore, a minor operation was recommended and fixed for Oct. 18, due to heavy rush at the hospital.

As you all know I could not be by my only daughter's side all these days due to the tight schedule of supervising the Ashram civil engineering works, especially the renovation of Sri Bhagavan's Old Hall, which had to be completed before a deadline. Silently I was praying to Sri Bhagavan for the cure of Ramani's illness.

On Oct. 1, friends from Bangalore arrived at the Ashram and informed me that the

swelling had worsened and that the eye trouble was serious. I left for Bangalore on Oct. 3. My daughter it appears had a dream early morning on the 2nd. She recollected: "In the early morning, when I was sleeping an old man came and he touched the left eye and later disappeared."

Amazingly the swelling started subsiding from that day onwards. On Oct. 18, the day of the operation, the doctor said after detailed testing that a cure had taken place and that there was no need for any operation!

By the Grace of almighty Bhagavan all evil things will run away as the dark disappears seeing the Sun. What more can I say? This is one of the thousand ways in which Sri Bhagavan gives quiet strength. Bhagavan has not let down this poor devotee! Thousands of *namaskarams* to Satguru Ramana Bhagavan!

— R. Anjaneyalu, Bangalore

THE MÖBIUS TRIØ

By J. JAYARAMAN

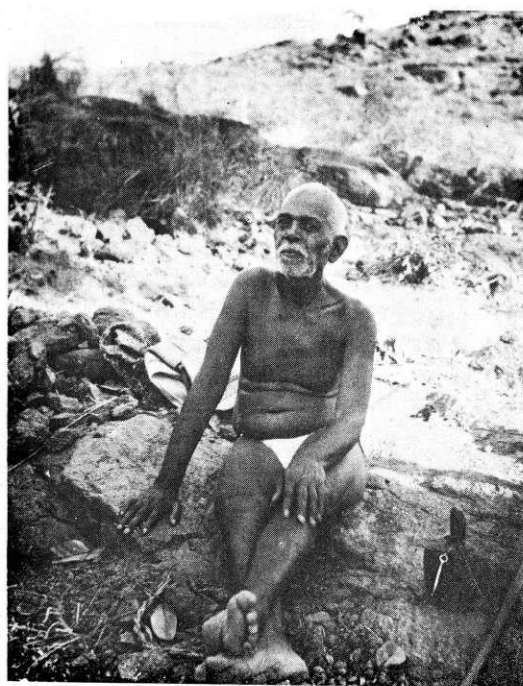
Assuming for a moment that there is a world in which I am, it becomes necessary to inform others about a momentous matter. It's simply this...there's no such thing as a body made of matter! The only body there is, is the one that I happen to be attached to now. Well, I can see that you, dear sir, are about to object saying, "But that is what the physical body is: the one that you have admitted being attached to!" I hasten to reply that physical bodies are what I see moving all around myself. They grow old, decrepit and when still, are disposed of. Whereupon we say, "So-and-so's dead; may his soul rest in peace," and wonder if so-and-so would have another birth. But then my body is different: It includes all the bodies around me too!

"What an extraordinary idea!" you say?

Extraordinary, no. Idea, yes! When I go to bed, you sir, may with my full permission tie me up to the cot with a severe scout's knot. But before long I'd be gone moving quite naturally, I assure you, in the world of depth and duration, fetters all forgotten.

But then you would protest. "Surely, you can see that's your imagination; a mere dream! For when you wake up, wouldn't you still find yourself all tied up?"

Well sir, if that is a dream, what isn't? Further, you dismiss it as a dream only after waking up from it; not before? If it were true that what was tied up was my body and remained as such all along, then it ought to have hindered my movements



in the dream and enabled me to sense at least something odd, sluggish or uncomfortable about the body I assumed in dream. Nothing of that sort happens. I'd probably move about freely and fully in a physical body during a dream and yet find it all tied up when I wake up! Doesn't this prove that past experiences and memories of moving within a world are sufficient to sustain the solid experience of moving about (in a dream) with a physical body?

"Aha", you say, "so you concede that you project a physical body in sleep only because you have a physical body while awake?"

Yes, I do concede that I project a physical body in dreams. But that is only because I continue to do so even when awake! Who doesn't believe that he is awake though he be dreaming?

"If that be the case, what about astral travel and the like where one may leave behind one's reclining body, go beyond the room, the house and even the town to far off places and return to report through the reclining body—surely that sort of thing requires the physical body to get into and out of?" Wait! Consider. Is not motion relative? When a train passes by another, it is often difficult to decide sitting in one and looking out of its window, just which of the two is actually moving. So too it is not necessary to imagine that an astral travel to a far off place occurred. It is enough to imagine that one remained where one was, while the journey and all related perceptions passed through the mind, much like a passing train 'passes' its motion to us.

If you find this fantastic, you may in jest say "If the physical body is a projection, its fall too is, and I daresay you'd have no use for rebirth too!"

Precisely! The identity of a person can often be inferred even from afar, from his gait, dress and the like. It does not follow, however, that he changes identity when he changes any of these. As time flies, one grows from childhood through youth and middle age to old age. One withdraws from the child's world of play things and mime to youth surcharged with anything from idealism to idle-ism. These haunts of reality evaporate in due course when the middle-age merry-go-round of pleasure or public acclaim is pursued. Even these make way to a world of worry about one's near and dear, the anxiety about things that remain undone and about death around the corner which one hopes would occur quietly, quickly and painlessly.

Surely one doesn't have to die a child to be reborn as the youth, or die a youth to be reborn a relic. One merely is part of a relentless process where priorities claiming one's attention keep evolving like an ever-changing landscape where every foreground is but an erst-while background, and the various sojourns mere slough off a snake. Can dying or being born then be seen the way it is commonly supposed? It is more accurate to say that I slowly lose touch with one environment with other unknowns gaining my involvement and attention. As the caterpillar, taking hold of a new leaf, draws its entire body from the ravaged remains of the previous leaf, without looking back I move on! The falcon that rules the skies must needs return to rest upon solid earth daily. So too, I, as the subtle body, the mental body which is all there is, soar through different dream projections day in and out amidst the relative steadiness of a wakeful projection. A man with a transferable job may wander around the town, but his activities are anchored around his home. A transfer merely changes his base to another home in another town. So too the wakeful world concrete thus far, is abandoned in favour of one of the less concrete projections hitherto called 'dream', where I, the subtle body assume location anew, explore the unknowns afresh, taste the garden of my creation and perpetuate the dream wandering euphemistically called 'eking out one's life-time'.

"Just a moment!", you say, "So where does all this lead to? How and when was the subtle body born? What is Moksha?" Dear friend, I know this is going to be rather sudden, but the truth in a nut shell is: The subtle body never had a birth. It is as imaginary as the physical body it is said to inhabit!" (Silence follows). After a rush job with smelling salts you come around and picking up the thread say:

"After building up quite a case for the subtle body, this seems like pulling the rug from under my feet and reminds me of the irony of suffering great hunger in a dream during the slumber that follows a rather heavy meal!"

I can think of nothing better by way of defence than recourse to the ever verifiable truths that suggest themselves through dream and sleep. The dream process makes me understand that I, as subtle body, project dream and wakeful worlds. It is then a matter of inference that from the nescience of dreamless sleep proceeds the dreaming subtle body itself. In the absence of this projection, as happens in slumber, the nescience rules as an impenetrable unknowing that covers awareness.

Just as the imagined solidity of the physical body is part and parcel of the subtle body, is symbolic of its presence and depends on it, so too the subtle body is part and parcel of this nescience, is symbolic of its presence and depends on it.

This is not wild conjecture. It's all there for every creature to see for itself. From the relentless march of the states of projection, call it wakeful or dream or both, it is clear to me that I am present through it all, either as a participant or as a hidden witness. The fact of be-ing stands out as the foundation of 'I'. Call it Existence (*Sat*), Awareness of Existence (*Sat-Chit*), or the Joy of Awareness of Existence (*Sat-Chit Ananda*), there it is, like water amidst waves or like gold 'hidden' in gold ornament.

"All this looks good on paper," you say, "but where do I go from here?" Yes. There is great wisdom in what you say. There is no need to get bogged down by theory or incessant chatter about the nature of truth. The relentless march of the states (*Avasthas*) is the custom-made laboratory ever open to the solitary scientist who to start with

would rather grasp the mud than the matka-pot. When the I gains the understanding that the wakeful is merely a dream projection currently more favoured, that its tenure constitutes the so called 'lifetime', it begins to have only two states: one of projections and the other of nescience or a black-out that is total except for the sense of great refreshment upon waking and the intuitive utterance, 'I had sound sleep, I knew nothing.' (I knew no-thing?)

"Why is the sense of be-ing lost in deep sleep?" Attention is so phenomena oriented that we lack the skill to attend upon attention itself; be the attender. Loss of sense perception as happens in deep sleep is then misnamed as loss of consciousness. The inability for attention to hold upon itself is due to nescience. Nescience not only projects the I-AM-A-BODY entity, the subtle body, which undergoes waking and dream projections, it also pervades these projections as a smog of *vasanas* that fuels 'doership' through endless formation of thoughts and prevents inhering in Being which lies least covered in between thought projections. When all these projections are withdrawn in deep sleep, nescience lies thick and concentrated submerging Being as a speck of dust close enough to one's eye can obstruct a vast scenery including the sense of sight.

It becomes clear to anybody deadly serious about this mystery that the boat of Being is the best bet for breaking free of the swirling waters of embodied hallucinations and ego-enriching slumber. The searchlight of Being must be sustained through the dark nescience that projects thoughts (or dream worlds or life-spans), and lies in wait in between them. This search light of attention focussed on itself destroys the ego. This is *vichara*, the I preying upon itself, destroying the delusion of doership.

"Can the tenacious ego whose origin extends beyond memory be really destroyed by this simple process?" The light shone into a cave banishes the darkness within, regardless of the duration the darkness had lived there.

"Can this simple looking process achieve what is normally believed to be attained by long drawn out techniques and traditions?" Darkness flies before simple light, but resists any attack by hordes of swashbucklers whose terrible swords can make not a dent into darkness.

The indivisible and hence simultaneously vast and subtle ocean of Being, being alone, sports with a tiny speck of non-being which really does not exist! This miniscule dot of falsity contains many such specks of non-entity each of which quite effortlessly contains limitless swirling worlds, galaxies and black holes of creation with space for more!

"Can the small contain the vast?"

Vastness and smallness are matters of relative experience. A pot of water effortlessly reflects the immensity of the moon-lit heavens.

"Can many be seen where there is only one?"

The one sun appears as many in pots of water and drops of dew. The deluded doubter has merely to touch the water to find all the worlds and immensity of space gone, and learn the secret power of reflection which is both terrible and tame.

Look you out, and the over-looked seer looms large amidst the error, driving you in. Look deeply where you will, the same pattern stares you in the face in all of creation. See the manifold and sow trouble; see one, be one, that's good fun! For He IS, and is but one. Can He create anything other than Himself? Whatever remains to be done on the 'road to Moksha' is to 'Real'-ise the non-entity of a speck of non-entity! Is it any wonder that this is a task that is as urgent and immense as it is simply funny?

NOTE : MOBIUS strip : named after German mathematician (19th cent). Any strip of paper is seen to have two sides. Glue the ends to form a ring and you still have two sides, the inner and outer surfaces. Give a narrow strip of paper a half twist and then paste the ends together and you have the Mobius strip, a ring with only one side! It seemingly has two sides. But actually tracing a side right round the ring reveals that the outer side merges into the inner and distinction falls away. The TRIP is for the finger. The STRIP moves not and IS before, during and after.

Letters to the Editor : 6

Only Sri Bhagavan's plans will succeed ! What is in our hands ? It is unlikely that I will be coming there before the end of the month. Only after the wound in my leg is completely healed can I think of travelling.

The difference between Tiruvannamalai and the rest of the world is something beyond words. So many of my relatives keep asking me 'What is there at the Ashram that makes you go there ?' I keep on telling them: 'Go and find it out yourself !'

— S. G. Dev Raj, Bangalore

THE MOUNTAIN PATH

By Harindranath Chattopadhyaya

Freewill is, at best, a lampless cell in which we languish
Behind invisible bars and lone lily pine
For a ray of merciful light...All human anguish
Serves as the dark nourishment of the Divine.

Learn to ramble with life, old master Rambler
Through untrodden forest-glades and planes and alleys
Twixt mountain and mountain: each footfall of yours a gambler
Wagering away tall summits and low-lying valleys.

Ramble within, it affords prolific sight-seeing,
Graph of landscape blending its hues psychedelic
Illumined with consuming by the Master of humorous being
Dappling the vision with glow-stains soft and angelic.

Rooted in movement perpetual, moving in rootedness,
Challenge to paradox that meets with permanent scorning
On a plane of evolving where multi-fruitedness
Is one with a branch-bared tree as night with morning.

Man is a wound of God and God of man,
Twin wounds turned one forevermore to burn.
Creation is a tired caravan
Returning to the land of no-return;
Shadow of death across a lifetime haunts us
Driving us to despair, offspring of blindness;
Life is not as we want it but as it wants us,
Dragging us between kindness and unkindness.

Moments Remembered
by Managing Editor

SUPREME RAMANA

Here are some more reminiscences of the old devotees.

V. G.

Uddandi Nayinar, the first attendant of Sri Bhagavan, hailed from Thirumani village, near Wandavasi. A tall well-built rustic, he made a modest living plying his double-bullock cart, moving goods and people between towns. A very pious man well versed in reciting Vedantic texts in Tamil, he yet longed to find spiritual fulfilment. Between carting assignments he would visit the temple and drink in the holy atmosphere.

During Karthigai Deepam of November December 1896 he chanced to see a young Swami at the foot of the *Iluppai* tree, near the southern *gopuram* (tower) of the Arunachaleswara temple in Tiruvannamalai. The radiant youth was rapt in perpetual *samadhi*, evidently oblivious to His body. Uddandi Nayinar felt that here indeed was a realised soul who would give him the peace he longed for. He would gladly serve the young Swami, but there was so little he could do. He took up residence a short distance away, where he sat long hours in attendance, watching the crowds of sight-seers and driving away urchins who found pleasure in causing discomfort and even injury to the statue-like Swami.

Much of his spare time Nayinar spent reciting the Tamil *Jnana Vasishtam* and *Kaivalya Navaneetam* and waiting with eager anticipation to hear from his young Master some blessed words of *upadesa*. But the Swami never spoke and he himself did not presume to intrude on His blissful silence. During this period, Nayinar would daily go

round the hill early in the morning, with only a vessel to be used for taking a bath and for boiling the rice. The cooking was done right there near the tree, the vessel of water and rice perched on a few bricks with the fire below fed by dried twigs. A sizeable bit of coconut kernel, costing a few paise, and some black pepper and salt, ground together, served as a good chutney for the boiled rice 'lunch'.

About say December 1898, Annamalai Tambiran, a saintly person from a Mutt in Kunnakkudi arrived on the scene. It was his wont to do *Puja* at the *samadhi* shrine of Deivasigamani Desigar, the guru who had initially founded the Mutt at Tiruvannamalai which later moved to Kunnakkudi. The shrine at Kilnathur, a suburb, had a temple of Siva over it and was called *Gurumurtham*. With the alms collected from the town he would feed the poor and later do *puja* at *Gurumurtham*. During his visits to the Arunachaleswara temple he had noticed the saintly youngster and the burly Nayinar, his faithful attendant.

It occurred to the Tambiran that the young Swami would have far more peace at *Gurumurtham* than at the main temple in the thick of the *Deepam* crowds. When he approached Nayinar with this end in view he was surprised to discover that the latter was not any *sishya* or attendant as he had supposed and in fact had not even exchanged any words with the Swami thus far! Together they mustered courage and app-



roached the Swami one evening and made the suggestion with great humility. Sri Bhagavan related in later years that when thus approached with their arms extended as if to lift Him, as a reaction He had lifted His arms and begun to move His folded legs, as if to get up. Seeing this Nayinar and Tambiran helped the young Swami to His feet and took Him to Gurumurtham.

It was in Uddandi Nayinar's recitation of *Jnana Vasishtam* and *Kaivalya Navaneetam* that Bhagavan must have received first scriptural confirmation of His exalted state. Sri Bhagavan used to quote freely from these works in later years and even encourage devotees to recite them in His presence. It is noteworthy that Bhagavan wrote 71 lines on *Kaivalya* using the headings of the 288 verses of the original. Bhagavan's mnemonic verses aid in the recitation of the original without having to refer to the text.

Uddandi went away within two months of moving to Gurumurtham. We know that he did visit Bhagavan at Virupaksha Cave at least once (1904) after disposing of his possessions for charity. He had then made an offering of a hundred rupees as *guru dakshina* which was naturally not accepted by Bhagavan. So he left the sum with the attendant to be used for a beneficial purpose. Some time later when Bhagavan completed the Tamil prose rendering of *Vivekachudamani*, Nayinar's fund was utilised for printing the book. He visited his Swami once or twice again, and passed away about 1916.

* * * *

Sri Seshadri Sastrigal studied at the Ashram Veda Pathasala. A mischievous lad, he was fondly addressed by every one, including Sri Bhagavan, as 'Seshadri'. He used to serve Bhagavan in the dining hall. Sri Sastrigal, who now lives in Madras,

narrated the following two absorbing stories:

"Once when I was serving buttermilk to Sri Bhagavan at lunch, I found that after serving Him, I had no more buttermilk left. Sri Bhagavan said, 'Could you get me some more buttermilk?' This was very unusual as Bhagavan never asked for a second helping. I went into the kitchen, got some more and served Him. After tasting it, He said, 'There seems to be a difference between the buttermilk you served me earlier and the buttermilk you have served me now. What is the reason?'"

"I did not know the reason. So I went into the kitchen and asked the cooks why there was a difference in taste. They said that the buttermilk that was served later was intended for the servants. Sri Bhagavan asked, 'Why this difference?' From next day onwards, everyone was served the same buttermilk."

He continued:

"It was a period of rationing. At night boiled wheat used to be served to all the devotees in the Ashram, instead of rice. One night wheat wasn't served to Sri Bhagavan as someone felt that it didn't agree with him. Instead, rice was served on Sri Bhagavan's leaf. Chinnaswami, who was in the dining hall was asked why He got rice and others wheat. Chinnaswami said, 'It is not good for Sri Bhagavan's health.' Bhagavan retorted 'Oh! Are you a doctor? Serve what is served to others. Make no discrimination'."

* * * *

Smt. Ramani Ammal and her sisters, devoted to Sri Bhagavan since their childhood, are the daughters of [Manavasi] V. Ramaswami Iyer who had come under Sri Bhagavan's spell in early youth and who even in his old age would start shedding tears at the very mention of Sri Bhagavan.

An affectionate father, he was also somewhat short-tempered.

Ramani Ammal said:

"We were then young and naturally upto some mischief or other. Once while mother was scolding us, Bhagavan saw father approaching, and gently whispered the warning 'Shhhhh! அப்பா வரார்! அப்பா வரார்! Father is coming! Father is coming!' This must have saved us from a possible beating."

She continued:

"Once in those childhood days my elder sister came to the Ashram wearing a head-brooch shaped like a flower and obviously very proud of it.

"When she came near Bhagavan, He touched the 'flower' brooch saying: 'Where is the fragrance in this flower? And are these petals? Can petals prick?' It was great fun seeing Him play with children and tease them."

Once there was a death in the neighbourhood. Such events always filled her in those days with a nameless fear and tension. The kids were all packed off to the Ashram for the day. Arriving there she ran into Bhagavan while she was aimlessly walking about. He said looking at her:

"செத்த பொணத்தை பாத்து ஏன் பயப்படணும்? உயிருள்ள பொணத்தை பாத்து ஒரு வேளை பயப்பட்டா அர்த்தமிருக்கு!"

"Why fear a corpse? There is some sense in being afraid of a live corpse!" (Dead men do no evil).

* * * *

Sri Kunju Swami narrated the following:

"Sri Bhagavan used to go into the Kitchen by 4 a.m. and start cutting vegetables; one or two of us would also join and help.

Some times the amount of vegetables used to astonish us. Bhagavan managed to cut much more and more quickly than the rest of us.

"At such times we would look up at the clock to indicate our annoyance and think. 'If we could complete the cutting before 5, we could have another nap.' Bhagavan would immediately notice our impatience and say: 'Why do you look at the clock?' We tried to bluff Bhagavan saying: 'If only we could complete the work before 5, we could meditate for an hour.' Bhagavan would retort, though mildly: 'The allotted work has to be completed in time. Other thoughts are obstacles, not the amount of work. Doing the allotted work in time is itself meditation. Go ahead and do the job with full attention.' Sri Bhagavan thus taught the importance of honest work".

* * * *

Smt. Kanakamma was kind enough to narrate these touching anecdotes:

"Sri Krishna Prem was in the Ashram. He would always carry a shoulder-bag in which he kept in a glass-case the images of Radha and Krishna. Only at the time of going to bed would he remove it from his shoulder. After *darshan* of Sri Bhagavan he wanted to see the places hallowed by the presence of Bhagavan and Sri Viswanatha Swami was asked to act as his guide. Early in the morning the two left for Skandashram. Sri Viswanatha Swami took him to various places and finally they returned to Skandashram. Overwhelmed by the serene atmosphere Sri Krishna Prem sat down and started meditating. He was lost in it truly and completely. Sri Viswanatha Swami, with his practical wisdom, noticed the passage of time, and whispered into his ears: 'Where we are now is Gokulam [birthplace of Lord Krishna]. Sri Krishna has gone to Brindavan; we should also go to Brindavan;

so, please get up!' Sri Krishna Prem meekly followed the Swami back to Ramanasramam.

Sri Viswanatha Swami recounted in detail to Sri Bhagavan the story of the journey, the places visited and the ruse which had made him wake from his meditation. Bhagavan gave a broad smile and said, "பலே, பலே! ரொம்பப் பொருத்தமாயிருக்கே பிருத்தாவனம்!" "Very good, very good! calling this 'Brindavan' is quite apt!"

Sri Krishna Prem was a staunch Vaishnavite, who saw only Vasudeva in all the worlds perceived. 'Sarvam Vasudeva mayam jagat,' 'Everything is pervaded by Lord Vasudeva.' Sri Krishna Prem quoting this, asked Bhagavan: "Is not this the highest ideal?"

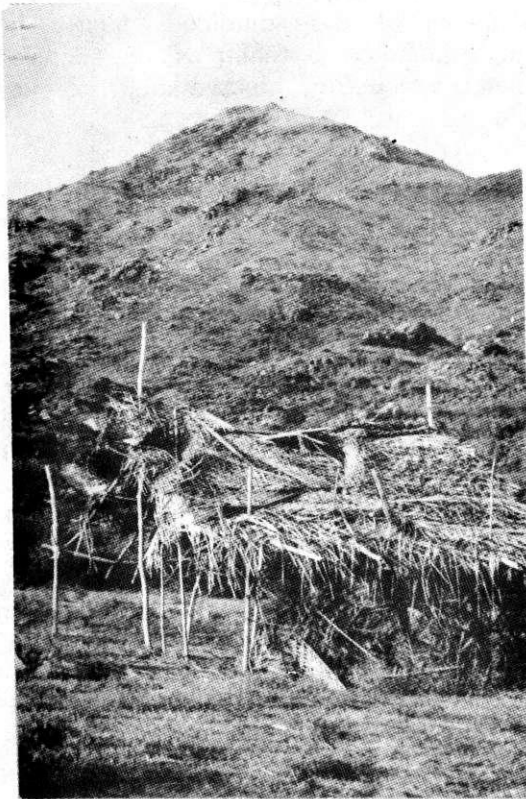
Sri Bhagavan nodded His head in agreement. and said: "Yes, yes! It is an exalted state of consciousness. The Vaishnava cult is based on this. Yet, who is it that thinks 'all that is perceived is Vasudeva'? Is it not you, yourself? Do any of the things perceived come forward announcing themselves as Vasudeva? While seeing the earth, trees and plants as Vasudeva, don't you wish to see yourself as He? If you who see everything as Vasudeva learn to see yourself as Vasudeva, you will become Vasudeva Himself. After that there will be no need to specially perceive each and every other thing as His Form. If he who sees is transformed into Vasudeva, then that which is seen automatically becomes Vasudeva! Acharya Sankara's *Drishtim Jnanamayeem Kritva* [Infusing perception with *Jnana*] is simply this."

The Vaishnava experience is that God is both our Master and the Inner Self (யானும் நீ, அதன்நி, எம்பிரானும் நீ, இராமனே) How wonderfully has Sri Bhagavan explained this!

HOME OF MY EGO

A PHOTO POEM

By V. Dwaraknath Reddy



You were a mountain. So I thought.
Cold rock and shrub and tangled thorn
And gaping scars of deep ravine,
Stern and silent, perhaps proud.

This body is my home. So I thought.
This body I live in, this thatched
And tattered shelter is all I have
Though in it I feel lost and forlorn,

Buffetted by winds of hot desire,
Lashed by greed and fierce passion,
And struck by streaks of forked fears,
Amidst torrents of insecurity.

It was then that a sudden beam
From some hidden cavernous depth
Held my startled gaze and compelled
My faltering foot-step to itself.

I have abandoned my false abode
And now I lie in your lap.
Your glow is anchored in my heart,
The ache and anguish have ceased to be

All I thought till now was wrong,
You were never a stony mountain,
You were never stern or proud,
And if your voice was stilled and silent
Was it because you were choked
With welling tides of love for me ?

SERVING BHAGAVAN

Serving Sri Bhagavan, though invaluable, was never easy to fulfil. For some, His stern insistence on equal-sharing caused uneasiness. Yet, the Master never swerved from showering His Grace and kindness on all, equally !

To serve Him at meal time was a dangerous adventure. Our womanly desire was to fill him to the brim. His rule was to clear the plate no matter what or how much was served. Not a speck of food would be left uneaten. So we had to be watchful and serve much less than what we would like to. It was not easy and we would often fail. He would scold us bitterly, or, what was infinitely worse, would fall ill and suffer. I cannot understand how he managed to produce an illness when a lesson was needed, but our life with him was a series of crises.

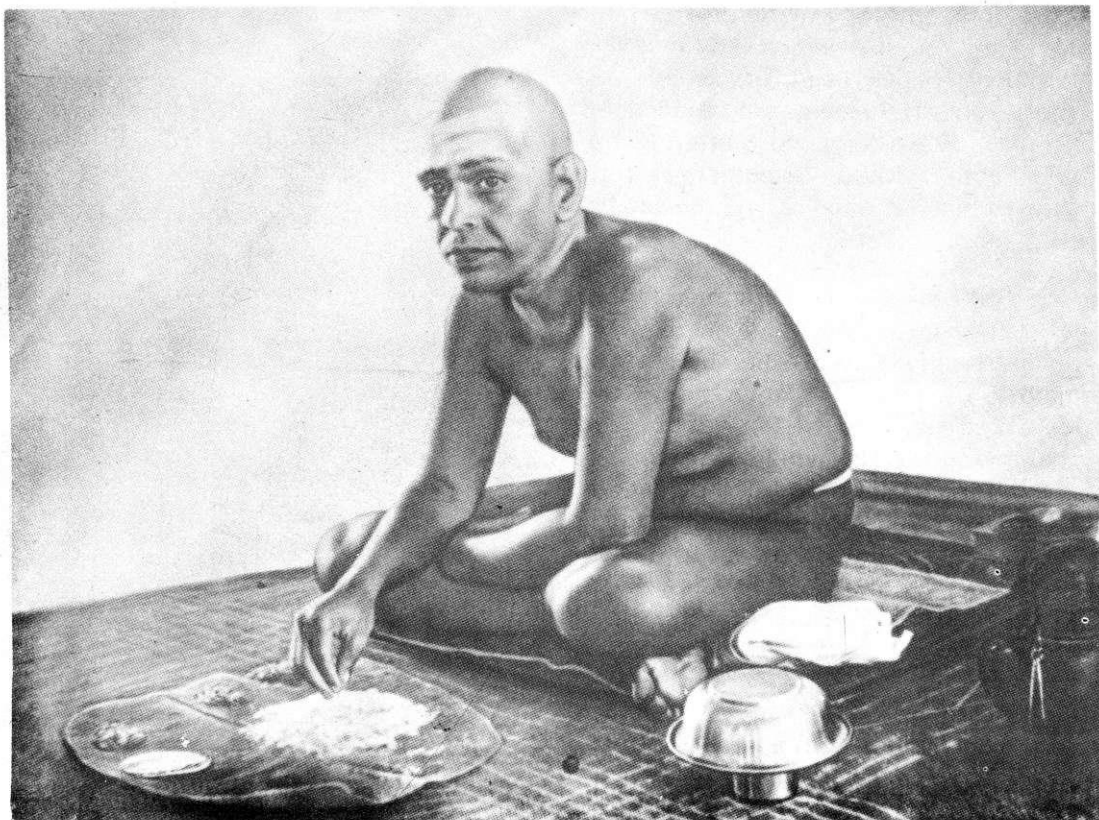
Once Bhagavan had jaundice and had to be on a fruit diet, but he would not eat fruit unless all had a full meal of fruit too. He was adamant and would leave his share untouched unless he saw an equal share on everybody's leaf-plate. Those who say that a sick man needs special food and must not give trouble, miss the point. Bhagavan was not sick. His body had jaundice, that was all. He wanted to impress on our minds that under no condition must a man have a greater share. Our learning this lesson was more important to him than the cure of his jaundice.

No treatment could cure it, for the right diet was not available. One day an old man brought two sour limes for Bhagavan. He said he had a dream that lime juice should be given to Him, with honey or

sugar. A single dose of this juice cured Bhagavan of the jaundice. Surely he caught jaundice to teach us a lesson, and when it was learnt, he let a sour lime cure it.

At that time Bhagavan would not take buttermilk with his rice, except in the hot summer months. He insisted that the buttermilk should be fresh and sweet, but what was served to him had to be served to each one. If anything would run short, he was the one to go without. One summer evening the buttermilk got very sour. The next evening the same thing happened. On the third day I got some good, fresh milk and set it for curds. It was not enough to serve all. In my anxiety for Bhagavan's welfare I argued with myself: "Everybody has curds all the year round. Bhagavan takes only buttermilk and that only in summer. For two days he has gone without buttermilk. Surely it is only right that he should get some curds once." I was so sure of my reasoning that I decided to serve some curds to Bhagavan without his permission. The next day, when he was eating rice with pepper-water, I went to him with a cup of buttermilk in one hand and a cup of curds in the other. I coolly dumped the curds over his rice and waited to pour the buttermilk into his cupped hands, as usual.

He touched the curds with his fingers,



lifted his head and looked at me. That look scorched me to the marrow of my bones.

We used to take leave of him in the evening before going to the town, but this time he turned his face away from me. Who can say how I suffered! He only knows it. The next morning he told Tenamma not to serve him buttermilk any longer. "Why, Swami?" she asked. "Buttermilk becomes curds for my sake," he replied ironically.

I too gave up buttermilk, which was not easy, for I had been taking it daily since my childhood. But how could I take it when by my mistake my Master had given it up? Bhagavan was kind to me, as usual, and I had no chance to beg his forgiveness. On the fourth day a dish of vegetables with

curds had to be prepared and Bhagavan stood by giving instructions. When the time came to pour the curds into the boiling vegetables, I fell at his feet and cried: "My Lord, I sinned against you. Give me wisdom so that I may not offend you again. I am in agony and it will not stop until you have your buttermilk again."

"No, no, why do you worry? I happened to have a cold and is not buttermilk bad for colds?"

That very afternoon Echammal brought some curds and Bhagavan said: "Tell Subbalakshmi not to suffer. I shall have my buttermilk."

Whenever we fried poppadums we dared not select the biggest for him. If we did,

invariably he would refuse to take poppadums that day. Our love made us give him special attention, but we would be severely scolded for any sign of distinction. Torn between attachment and obedience, we felt lost. When our Lord wanted to be treated as equal with the humblest, we felt ourselves to be the smallest of the smallest.

During the meal I would pour *rasam* (pepper-water) into Bhagavan's hands. He would sip it slowly, and when his palms were empty, I would fill them again. One day he asked me to pour the *rasam* over the rice and go. He would not cup his hands as before. I thought I had offended him in some way and requested Santammal to find out the reason. Bhagavan told her: "When she serves me, she makes others wait." He disliked being given preference in any form.

—from RAMANA SMRTI, by Varanasi Subbalakshmiamma : 'My Life, My Light'

* * * *

On another day, a well-meaning but ignorant devotee brought a glass of orange juice into the Hall and proudly offered it to Bhagavan, who refused to drink it. He seemed quite annoyed with this special glass of juice and said angrily: "If you give anything to me without giving it to all, it will be like poison to me." "Next time we will give juice to everybody, but now please drink the juice. You are not well and need it badly," pleaded the distressed devotee. "What is the use of your giving others because I tell you? You should know by this time that they are all myself and what you give them you are giving me."

The poor devotee kept on asking Bhagavan to take the juice and the situation became quite tense. Fortunately Dr. Siva Rao

One evening a young French couple visited Sri Bhagavan in the Jubilee pundal. The young man put a question : "Which book is the best guide to Truth?" Sri Bhagavan replied: "All scriptures declare that Truth is *within* yourself, that in fact you are That. Then how can you find Truth in books that are *without*, (outside) yourself? Your searching for Truth in books is like the light seeking itself in the shadow."

— Prof G. V. Subbaramayya in *Ramana Reminiscences*, p. 161

interfered and took the good man with his glass of juice out of the Hall. Bhagavan was grumbling for the rest of the day indignant at the difference made between him and others.

—from RAMANA SMRTI, by Gouriamma : 'Sri Bhagavan's Grace'

* * * *

The kitchen people asked me to serve the raisins, dates, etc., on a tray myself, and as I had no experience of serving in the dining hall, I took them to Bhagavan first. In a tone showing that he was not pleased, he asked me what it was. I told him that they were dry fruits. Bhagavan nodded: "All right. Give me one of each variety." After serving Bhagavan accordingly, I served the others likewise. But towards the end, it was found that only a few bananas were left and so one of the attendants cut them into small bits and served them equally to the last ten people

With an expression of disgust, Bhagavan said, "This is what I don't like. Why do you serve me what you cannot give in the same quantity to all people?" And he began recounting other similar mistakes. The people all left quietly after eating. As Bhagavan was about to get up, after massaging his legs a little, I went up to him, and prostrating before him, I told him: "I am sorry, I am new and so made the mistake".

"That is all right", Bhagavan said, "that is why I am telling you. If you serve Bhagavan after you serve all the others, there will be equal distribution. If by chance nothing remains, it does not matter if I don't get anything; if all eat, I am satisfied even if I do not get my share. Serving should always be on that principle. It is a good principle. If all people here eat, is it not tantamount to Bhagavan's eating?"

- from *LETTERS*, dt. 7-2-1948

Mudaliar Patti took great liberties with Bhagavan. During the early days of my stay here she used to bring food and serve it herself to Bhagavan. She used to place on his leaf a handful of curry and a handful of cooked rice. One day, Bhagavan reprimanded her saying, "If you serve so much, how can I eat it?" With great familiarity, she said, "How much is it, Swami? It is only very little." "There are several other things also to eat. Should not my stomach contain them all?" said Bhagavan. "It is all a matter of the mind, Swami" So saying, she served him as usual and left. Laughing at it, Bhagavan told people near about him, "Do you see? She is paying me back in my own coin [my *upadesa*]."

- from *LETTERS*, dt. 24-9-1949.

* * * *

Letters to the Editor : 7

The stay at the Ashram was very comfortable. I was welcomed by all and treated like a member of a family. There was assistance and cooperation from all corners. The food at breakfast, lunch and dinner I always enjoyed. I am so grateful to you.

Early morning it was so peaceful. Meditation in the hall, sitting in front of Bhagavan was thrilling. I felt that I was welcomed every time with the loving smile and words, "Come my child. Come". During the meditation other thoughts dare not enter the mind. Those are the most blissful days of my life.

With the help of friends I could meet see every one and every place hallowed by the presence of Sri Bhagavan - I felt His Presence everywhere. I left the Ashram with a heavy heart almost dejected. When shall I come to see Him again was the thought in my mind. But there came the answer, "I am always with you".

'Giri Pradakshina' was so refreshing and rewarding. I felt that most of the burden of the mundane life I have shed off.

— Lt. Col. H. Patangay, RVC, Calcutta

MAHARSHI, THE POET

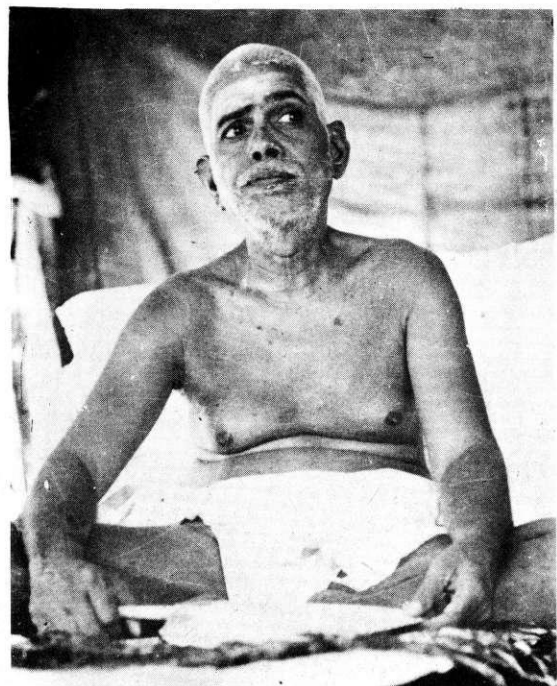
By Ra. Ganapati

To the culturally degraded present, the sensory world of the poet may appear antipodal to the spiritual domain of the *rshi* [seer]. But in our hoary and holy culture, where poetry was the expression of the highest spiritual aspirations and attainments, the *rshi* and *kavi* (poet) were one and the same. There is, in fact, an adage, *naan-rshih kurute kaavyam*, "None save a *rshi* creates poetry." The very words *rshi* and *kavi* signify the same role and goal. Etymologically, the *kavi* is one endowed with *kraanta darshana*, "expansive vision" [omniscience], which makes him identical with the *rshi*.

"*Rshi*", in its primary [*mukhya*] sense, denotes the *mantra drashta*, the one who has seen the mantras, i.e., the one who has discovered [to whom have been revealed and disclosed] the vocable-equivalents of the divine vibrations in the ethenic expanse. These mantras [vocable-equivalents] have the power to confer on the intonator various spiritual benefits by the potency of their very sounds and accents [*svaras*]. By and by, the word *rshi* came to any saint excelling in spiritual instruction.

The *rshi* who sees mantras [he is called see-r!] vocalises cosmic vibrations. The *kavi* also "gives a local [and also vocal] habitation" to what he sees in his vision stretching "from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven." So both have much to do with seeing and speaking.

But Sri Ramana was one steeped in the silence of Self which neither sees nor speaks. He was the embodiment of *drk-drsya viveka*, the realisation of the truth



that the seer, seen and seeing are all illusory. Does it not seem strange to call Him a *mantra drashta* [seer] or a *kraanta darshin* [poet]? Does it not appear incongruous to call him, who was established in what is beyond words, a *rshi* or *kavi*, who is a master craftsman in the world of words?

Yet Ramana came to be styled the Maharshi [the great *rshi*]. Just as Sankara and Ramakrishna are more often referred to by the titles Acharya and Paramahansa than by their names, so is Ramana by

"Maharshi." And it was no less a person than the erudite and precise Ganapati Muni who first hailed him Maharshi.

Incidentally it may be pointed out that a "*muni*", in the primary sense, is one given to silent contemplation. The very word for silence, "*mauna*" is derived from "*muni*", it being the characteristic of the *muni*. Ganapati Sastri, the powerful orator and writer, was no *muni* in the primary sense. But in the vogue that the secondary sense gains, any spiritual luminary is called a *muni*, and so Ganapati Sastri became Ganapati Muni. A scholar who meant what he said, this Ganapati Muni christened the real *muni* Ramana as the Maharshi!

Why?

Because he found that Sri Ramana's was not the silence of the void, but the silence of the plenum wherefrom emerge all sounds, mantras [and also all sights]. More so because Ramana himself gave him what he considered a *maha mantra* touching this:

"If attention is directed to the source whence mantra-sound is produced, the mind is absorbed in that. That is Tapas."

In the words of B.V. Narasimha Swami, Ganapati Muni found that this "teaching was quite original and nothing like what had ever been found in any book." So it was a new great revelation of a spiritual truth and that too given as vocal instruction and therefore entitled to the status of a *maha-mantra*. He who discovered the *mahamantra* was undoubtedly Maharshi. So without hesitation, nay, with jubilation, Ganapati Muni hailed Sri Ramana as Maharshi.

Anyhow one may have reason to think that he was a *rshi* only in the *aupacharic* (complimentary) sense.

And then the *rshi* became *kavi*. Not in the *aupacharic* sense, but in the strict primary sense itself. If one sees the *Sri Ramana Nool Tirattu* (Tamil) and its English translation edited by Arthur Osborne, *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi* one will find the Maharshi to be a real *kavi* in its strict sense, by the sheer volume of the output. Further one will find the Maharshi to be a *Mahakavi* if one goes into the merits of the poems both in style and sense. The poems are diamonds cut in the finest literary style and shedding the scintillas of the loftiest spiritual ideas and ideals.

The one who, for years, was known as Mauna Swami (the silent Saint) becoming a full-fledged poet! It was certainly a *lila* of the Supreme power, the play of Its redeeming fallen humanity. "The Power cannot be denied", Sri Ramana himself has said in another context.

Sri Ramana could well afford to be oblivious of the illusory humanity and remain in the world-negating Silence of the Self. But the Power which creates the Great Illusion and posits the empirical reality of the world could not remain unconcerned about humanity. It could not choose a better reed than Ramana through whom to flute its redemptive song, for He it was who had totally emptied himself of ego to allow free passage to Its music.

Of course, his silence was, like Dakshina-murti's, replete with powerful instruction, and inspiration. But that was only to the few who are fit to hear unheard melodies. The Supreme Power wanted him to benefit the not-so-mature also, who needed the prop of the living word. Not only that. Even in words, his *jnana* of non-dualism would be above their heads. They needed the prop of dualistic *bhakti* to take others gradually to the heights of *jnana*. Therefore, in addition to making the Mauna

Swami play-act the poet, the Supreme Power also made that *jnanin* play-act the *bhakta* who sang the bridal song, *Aksharamana-maalai*.

The wonder was that the one, who dwelt alone in pure Being—beyond thought and word—came down and donned the mask of one singing his way to that summit through thoughts and words.

The initial step in this ascent to the mountain-top of non-duality is to turn the duality from chaos to order. This is

accomplished by discipline. And discipline is what takes shape through tradition. In the fitness of things, when Sri Ramana became a poet representing humanity in its soulward march, he was, almost un-awares, made to follow the traditional discipline when he first burst forth into poetry with a stanza on Ganesa to whom custom offers the first salutation among the deities.

How this came about—let us see.

— (To be continued)

THE SILENCE ON THE MOUNTAIN

By Noona Osborne

The silence on the mountain,
And the light, within the light
There is love, Bhagavan!

The silence on the mountain,
And eternity within,
There is love, Bhagavan!

In the noise on the moun-tain,
There is silence, in the silence
There is love—there is beauty
In the rocks, rugged chunks
Of granite—brown and ochre
In the mid-day sun, grey
And black at night, there is love,
And love is gentle, love is e-
ternity, that is your love—
Siva Ramana Maha!

And the light makes shadows, flitting,
Flitting through my soul, and there
I sit on the mountain side,
And I observe the love that's life!

See a shadow dancing, now a
Shadow flitting through my mind,
And softly comes a feather mist,
Softly round the peak, that is
The mountain light Siva's crown,
And this the still infinity!
Do you see the sun shine
Playing on playing on

Pebbles in a mountain stream.
And something else, something else
Is God, and on the mountain, there
You held me in your arms!

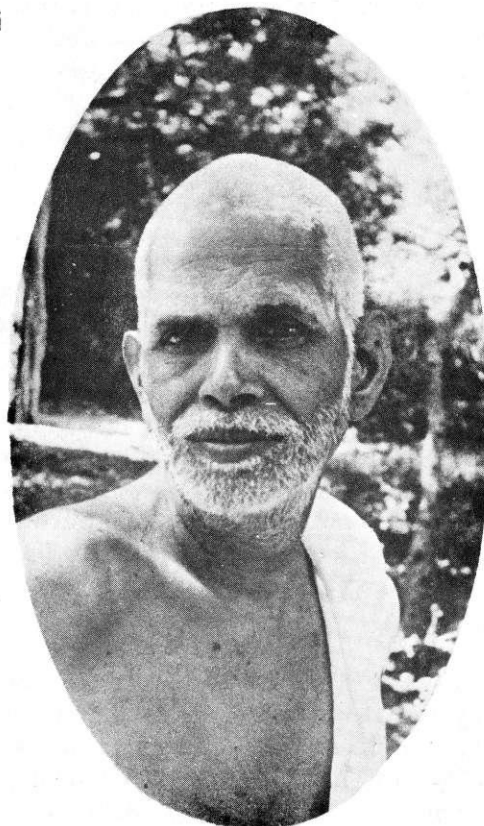
The grass on the mountain is
Pretty, and in sects,
Colours butter flies,
Grass hoppers ants, and
Pretty looking things sss,
See the praying man tis,
Blue green deep on the
Peak, there is infinity,
That is eternity, and
The silence on the mountain,
And the light within the light,
There is love, Bhagavan.

HOW I CAME TO SRI BHAGAVAN

By Shanti

I believe that September 15, 1943 is an important day in my life; since it was on that memorable day that I was introduced to one of the greatest living sages of modern India. It is not every day that one meets a sage like Sri Bhagavan; and I think the opportunity that arose of coming into contact with him must have been the result of my prayers to God to lead me to a living sage.

On Sept. 15, at 7 a.m. I reached the Ashram. Bhagavan had gone to the big dining hall for breakfast. The devotees had accompanied him, and they were taking their seats one by one. From an old devotee of Bhagavan I had a letter to Niranjanananda Swami. I delivered the letter to him, and he took me to the dining hall and introduced me to Bhagavan. Bhagavan welcomed me with a soft and affectionate look. I prostrated myself before him and when I got up he made a sign with his face for me to take my seat near by and I did so. From the moment Bhagavan's eyes fell on me, my heart went out to him in spontaneous love and reverence. The way he ate his food, the way he sat, the way he walked, the way he talked, were so remarkably calm, and so different from the manner of ordinary men. Here I thought is a perfect example of a sage, a *jivanmukta*. It was only then that I understood the significance of Arjuna's question to the Lord, regarding the *sthitaprajna*. These questions are important, because a sage sits and talks, and walks so utterly unlike ordinary men, that whatever he does has a peculiarity of its own. To understand this, one has to see a sage for oneself, and sit at his feet.



At about 9 a.m. Bhagavan came to the meditation hall, and we too entered the hall, and sat facing him, while he reclined on his couch with his face turned towards us. As I sat in the meditation hall the words of King Dushyanta "calm is the atmosphere of this Ashrama" came to my mind and I felt that they were true to this Ashram also. For the first time in my life, I realised how dynamic '*shanti*' could be. Peace seemed to emerge from Bhagavan and fill the hearts of one and all. In his presence, mind of its own accord got calm and tranquil and consequently doubts and questions became few and vanished. I was very happy and felt myself a *kritakritya* (one who has accomplished) that my heart softly whispered within me the words, *dhanyoham, dhanyoham* (grateful am I!)

All the devotees sat in the hall, in front of Bhagavan till about noon, and at 12 O' clock, a bell was rung announcing lunch. Bhagavan got up from his seat, and with his stick in hand slowly moved out of the meditation hall and proceeded to the dining hall. There food was served, and we waited till Bhagavan took his first morsel of rice. We followed, and in about half-an-hour, we finished our lunch and Bhagavan went back to the meditation hall. We were expected to take rest for 2 or 3 hours. By about 4 O' clock, people came into the meditation hall and sat before Bhagavan, some to put themselves in tune with the atmosphere of tranquillity, some to meditate, some to ask questions and get their doubts cleared, some to hear the conversation that took place between Bhagavan and the many visitors. To listen to these conversations, was an education in itself.

Bhagavan's physical form has gone, but we, his devotees who have sat in his presence, and have heard his calm and profound words, carry in our hearts indelible impressions of him and his words which passing times and circumstances could not easily efface. To all of us, these memories are precious treasures.

I shall now relate an incident which to me was very significant. Two or three days after my arrival at the Ashram I had a desire to dedicate a Sanskrit stanza to Bhagavan. But my knowledge of that language was not so much as to compose verse with any degree of confidence. However, the desire had sprung within me and I was sure that by God's *kripa* even the dumb could be made eloquent. So, I thought if I prayed to Bhagavan, he could satisfy my desire. Hence in my heart I prayed to him, to extend his grace, so that I might fulfil my wish. That noon I lay down for my siesta.

After three quarters of an hour as soon as I got up a stanza occurred to me. Apparently without any conscious mental process, a poem was formed in my mind, ready to be transcribed. I knew this was due to Bhagavan's grace. My prayer had been granted. With great joy I wrote it on a piece of paper.

*Sthita prajnam eesham param nirvikalpam
Shivam shudha buddham chidaananda
roopam
Maha jnana deepam shubham nityamuktam
Aham Sona sailaakrtim tam namaami*

That afternoon I took the stanza to the hall and placed the paper at Bhagavan's feet. Bhagavan took it, read the stanza twice or thrice and with a tender expression he asked to me put the words '*Sona sailaakrtim*' for the words '*Ramanam Maharshim*' which the stanza previously had. So I changed the fourth line, *Ramanam maharshim aham tam namaami* to '*Aham Sonasailaakrtim tam namaami*'. Thus Bhagavan revealed to me that he was none other than Lord Arunachala himself, who by his sublime silence expounded to his devotees the mysteries of Self-Knowledge. At that time it struck me so, and my eyes were filled with tears of delight and gratitude. I prostrated once again and took my seat near the sofa.

It was only after coming into contact with Bhagavan that I understood some spiritual truths. Here I may mention one example. While I was at the Ashram, I did quite a lot of *mananam* and meditation. Bhagavan taught that there was no qualitative difference between the experience of *jagrat* and *sushupti*, and I had no difficulty in apprehending that. But when I reflected upon my own experience the state of *sushupti* offered a difficulty. It appeared to be a complete blankness, a nullity in my existence which I felt to be discontinuous.

Bhagavan said that the real 'I' is eternal, continuous and beyond even *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahankara* and *chitta*, whereas I found my existence was discontinuous. So where is my real 'I', my true Self? There seemed to be no answer, and I did not realise that there could not be any answer to that question. Here then was a *cul-de-sac*, beyond which I could not go. Mentally I put the matter to Bhagavan and waited for his grace. And lo! one day this blind alley disappeared and all of a sudden it struck me that *sushupti* is not after all a *sunya* as I had formerly felt, and that I existed even in dreamless sleep to perceive the non-existence of the world including my body and mind. A continuity of my existence was clearly intuited by me. In the waking state I am the witness of the world, mind and body; in the dream state I am the witness of the same; in dreamless sleep, I am the witness of the non-existence of the same. Thus I exist in all the three states. It was indeed mysterious that all this came to me with such a depth of understanding

Questioned as to what changes He underwent after coming to Arunachala, Sri Bhagavan replied, "I am ever the same. There is neither *sankalpa* (will) nor change in me. Till I reached the Mango Grove, I remained indifferent with my eyes shut. Afterwards I opened my eyes and I am actively functioning. Otherwise there is no change whatsoever in me." "But, Bhagavan," said one, "we do note so many outward changes in you." "Yes," replied Bhagavan, "that is because you see me as this body. So long as you identify yourself with your body, you cannot but see me as an embodied being. So long as the doubter is there, the doubt persists."

—Prof. G. V. Subbaramayya in
Ramana Reminiscences, p. 31

Letters to the Editor : 8

Received today *The Mountain Path* and while glancing through it came across the 'In Memoriam' on Sri K.K. Nambiar. I was so shocked by the news I could not attend to the work on my table any more. Sri Nambiar was a tool in the hands of Sri Bhagavan !

The close devotees of Sri Bhagavan, who had the great privilege and opportunity of living nearby, hearing and seeing that great One among the greatest *Brahma Jnanis* the earth has ever produced, are disappearing one by one. Though the physical existence of such gems are bound to cease one day or the other as in the case of Sri Bhagavan Himself as a rule of nature, it squeezes our hearts when we hear the loss of any such precious devotee. When I am affected by the passing of this wonderful devotee I can't imagine how the thousands of devotees of Sri Bhagavan from far and near would have felt at the news of Sri Bhagavan's physical end - I think it should have been the effect of an earth-quake in the individual's heart !

—Veeraragavan, Bangalore

that all doubts vanished for ever. I understood clearly that to know myself was to be myself.

Mere reading and thinking about Self-Knowledge alone is of no use. Only by the grace, God coming through a Sage like Bhagavan, can one rightly understand the words of wisdom of our great *rishis*, and as Sankaracharya has put it, the flight of steps leading to *Jivanmukti*, begins with *satsanga*, the company of sages and saints. In *Vivekachudamani* (verse 37) it is said :

"There are good souls, calm and magnanimous, who do good to others as does the spring, and who having themselves crossed the dreadful ocean of birth and death, help others also cross the same, without any motive whatsoever."

Our Bhagavan is such a soul. Through the apparent severity and unconcern of this majestic sage, there shone unmistakably a sweetness and a love which endeared him to the hearts of those who approached him. I think, we are too near Bhagavan's time to see him in the correct perspective of history. As years roll on, his spiritual

Letters to the Editor : 9

Congratulations on the wonderful content of the last issue of *The Mountain Path*. Thank you for your loving offerings. *Gita Saara Taalaattu* excited us all; the rendering is highly commendable. The whole issue is well balanced; I can see nowhere any 'tilt'! 'Birth of an Upanishad' was inspiring—both Dennis Hartel and I had to read the Upanishad after the story. Thank you, and please continue the good work.

I might add, I enjoyed the Index; it was so...so...well it was alphabetical !

**— Dr. Anil Sharma,
Nova Scotia, Canada**

And thank you Dr. Sharma for preparing that Index for 1986 when you visited here last October !

— Editor

grandeur will assume Himalayan proportions and future generations will consider him as an avatar of Sri Dakshinamurti. May he ever enlighten us !

(from *Call Divine*, Jan. 1957 issue)

"What is meditation? It is the suspension of thoughts. You are perturbed by thoughts which rush one after another. Hold on to one thought so that others are expelled. Continuous practice gives the necessary strength of mind to engage in meditation. Meditation differs according to the degree of advancement of the seeker. If one is fit for it one can hold directly to the thinker; and the thinker will automatically sink into his source which is Pure Consciousness. If one cannot directly hold on to the thinker, one must meditate on God; and in due course the same individual will have become sufficiently pure to hold to the thinker and sink into the absolute Being."

— Sri Bhagavan

SRI B. G. VELLAL, A SPIRITUAL MASTER

By 'SEIN'

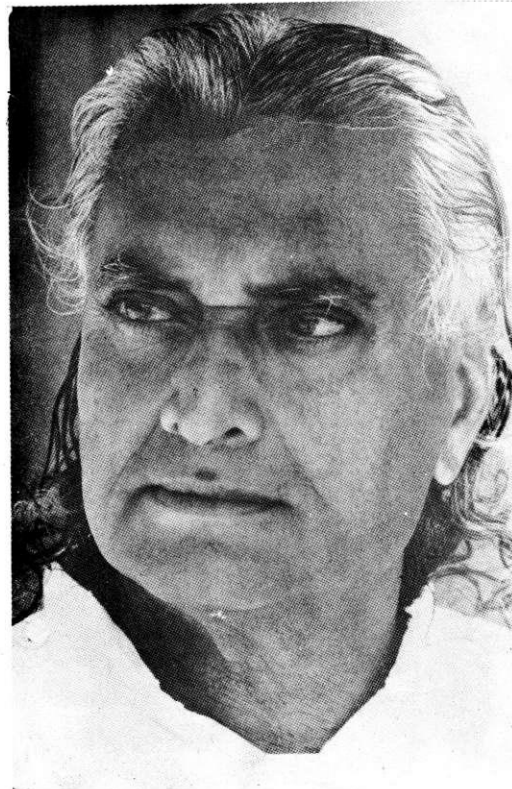
Sri Balakrishna Gurumurti Vellal has helped and guided many earnest people in spiritual *sadhana*. Sri Vellal, himself a well disciplined person, having meritoriously served the Indian Army for decades, insisted on strict adherence to certain methods :

- (i) Silent repetition of *Soham* mantra, with attention fixed on the *Sahasrara*;
- (ii) Listening to and following the *Anahat Nadu*, the celestial melody of Krishna's flute or *Damaru Nadu* of Siva;
- (iii) *Atma Vichara* and *bhava* of Brahman.

His main idea was that seekers should turn the mind inward and thus get merged in the Self, That I AM, *Soham*.

Sri Vellal, a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan, has visited the Ashram several times. He initiated earnest seekers into this *Soham sadhana* at Belgaum, Pune and Madikeri (Kodagu). The devotees at Madikeri, under the guidance of their present guru, Sri Subiah, make it a point to visit Arunachala once in a year and carry on their *sadhana* of *Atma Vichara* at the slopes of the Holy Hill, Arunachala and at the Shrine of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Sri Vellal, fondly called 'Babu Rao' by his family and friends (and 'Bal' by his army colleagues) was very much attached to his mother. Her passing away when he was less than four years old left a great void in his early life. Even as a child he had great stubbornness and this trait to achieve his objective at any cost, in the day-to-day life, paved the way for his pursuing *sadhana* with utmost zeal and fervour in later years.



Sri B. G. Vellal

He often emphasised that Self-realisation can be gained in this very life, if one had a firm purpose, and made sustained, dedicated effort.

In 1957 he met his Guru, Sri Dada Maharaj (GR) Ambekar and during the course of years was initiated by him into *Soham sadhana*. In 1961, Dada Maharaj appeared in his dream and blessed him, saying: *Soham Japa* alone and of its own accord will fulfil and satisfy your spiritual urge." In 1966 Sri Vellal received another divine message during his meditation thus: "Through your hands, will spread *bhakti*, a *sadhana* system or a method for attaining *Atma Jnan* (Self-Realisation)." In keeping with the divine message he preached the Gospel of *Soham sadhana* in Belgaum, Pune and Madikeri.



Our *Managing Editor* speaks. To his right is Sri B. K. Subiah

The devotees in Madikeri built a compact house for his stay and named it: "Shri Nath Nivas." Here, Sri Vellal attained *Samadhi* in February, 1982.

On November 21, 1986—Sri Vellal's birthday—*pudukas* made of marble were installed at Shri Nath Niwas, glorifying the holy feet of the *Sat Guru*. Sri Vellal initiated Sri Subiah as his successor and he now guides the devotees at Madikeri. Our *Managing Editor*, who was a special invitee for the function, spoke on the need for *sat sang* and quoted the five verses written by Sri Bhagavan from the *Supplement to Forty Verses*. Devotees of Sri Vellal from Belgaum and Pune attended the function.

After the happy function was over, Sri Subiah arranged for the devotees to visit

Arunachala. Nearly 45 devotees, accompanied by our *Managing Editor*, reached Arunachala on the 23rd November and spent two days at the Ashram, spending most of their time in contemplation.

Our *Managing Editor* took them to the places hallowed by the Presence of Sri Bhagavan, like Skandashram, Virupaksha Cave, Gurumurtham, Pachaiaimman Koil. Narrations of incidents that took place during Bhagavan's stay at these places thrilled these devout *bhaktas*.

Sri Subiah expressed grateful thanks for having been looked after so well. The inmates of the Ashram were happy to see such earnest seekers applying themselves to serious *sadhana*.

INTRODUCING ...

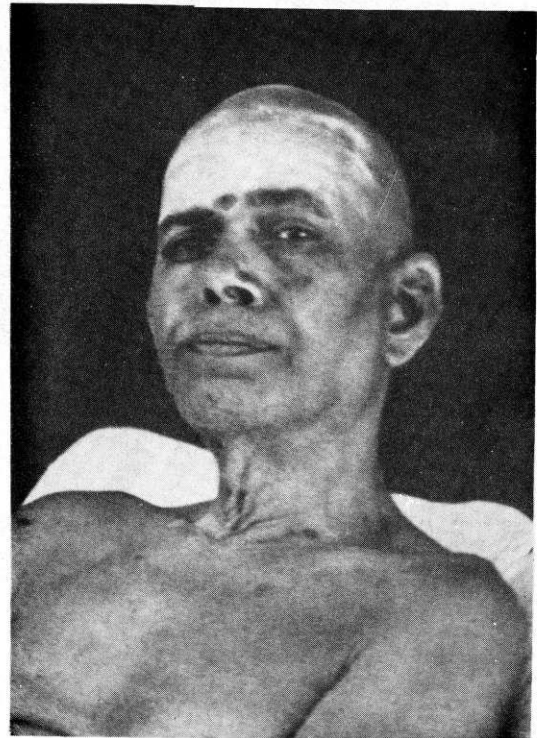
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Smt. & Sri K. Ramaswamy

Sri K. Ramaswamy came under Bhagavan's spell as early as 1935. Born in 1910, he graduated as a Civil Engineer in 1933. It was in the same year that Maurice Frydman¹ came to Bangalore at the behest of the Diwan of Mysore to set up the Government Electric Factory. Frydman's residence was a short walk away from the Engineering Hostel where Ramaswamy was lodged. This probably accounts for the way the two met and soon became thick friends. It was during this period that Frydman, already influenced by J. Krishnamurti, invited the latter to Bangalore. J.K. thus spent two weeks in Maurice's house and of course Ramaswamy too was there participating daily in the discussions. Frydman was in those days a regular visitor to the Ashram, coming here almost every week-end.

After graduation Sri Ramaswamy's career as a very successful Civil Engineering Contractor began. Even then the two found time to meet regularly. By 1935, Ramaswamy began to notice a sea-change in Frydman's way of life. He would for example wear the simplest of clothes, deny himself privileges, share with the labourers their food with little concern for taste and the like. Frydman told him that it was all due to the magical influence of the Maharshi, and he suggested that Ramaswamy too should come on a visit over a week-end and see for himself.

Now Ramaswamy had already learnt much about Bhagavan though mostly through the articles appearing then in the *Sunday Times*. So on a Saturday, in 1935, he along with his friend Maurice visited Sri Ramanasramam. He stayed on for a week while



Maurice returned almost immediately. Sri Ramaswamy recalls that he had informed Bhagavan one evening that he and a friend were planning to climb the Hill the following morning. After breakfast the next day as they were leaving, Sri Bhagavan signalled to him to wait, then went into the kitchen and returned with some *iddlis* which he had Himself graciously packed in a leaf. Ramaswamy protested that the breakfast had been rather heavy and that they would really have no need for the *iddlis* on the way. Bhagavan said in Tamil,

¹ Compiler of 'Maharshi' Gospel'. Also see p. 131, of our April 1976 issue.



Smt. & Sri
K. Ramaswamy

with motherly concern : "You don't understand. After a climb to the top one would feel very hungry."

As it happened they felt famished by the time they reached the top and were indeed grateful to Sri Bhagavan for His foresight and love in giving them the packet! When he took leave of Bhagavan at the end of the stay He had nodded and smiled.

Ramaswamy also recalls that some times one or the other among the people who were seated in front of Bhagavan would suddenly begin to sob with tears flowing in profusion and then become quiet and calm. All the while Sri Bhagavan would remain unmoving, gazing on as usual.

In 1936, Sri Ramaswamy married Saradamma, daughter of a scholar steeped in Vedanta, a master of *ayurveda* and a radical reformer rolled into one. She herself is the product of the Rishi Valley School of J. Krishnamurti and a worthy life-companion to Ramaswamy. Mahatma Gandhi, whom Ramaswamy had met with Frydman in connection with setting up a village industry, had written to him : "I wish you and yours all happiness, and a life of service to the country. She should know all about

your ideals and if she is of the right type she will be of considerable help to you in your work of service."

The ensuing three decades saw the two moving through varied spiritual organisations, their discipline and attendant experiences. There had always been an element of connection with psychic phenomena running in their families and this perhaps was to work itself out this way. He recalls "They (those experiences) were so superb—so necessary for the nourishment of my spiritual life I suppose—but nowhere did I get the *fulfilment* that Maharshi gave. Everywhere else one ended with the feeling of want and dejection at seeing rift, however subtle, between what was said and what was practised. I could see in retrospect that Bhagavan must have allowed, nay willed, all those spiritual experiences for me before I reached Him with finality."

His final surrender to Bhagavan from around 1960 onwards has been total. One patently sees his unshakeable faith in Maharshi while conversing with him. A learned man and an intellectual of high calibre, he says: "Don't ask me what con-

vinced me of Bhagavan's supremacy. There is no answer possible as it is an inner certainty, an inescapable inner compulsion that draws me helplessly to Him. He is the most perfect embodiment possible of all that is divine."

When asked what was the photographic pose of Sri Bhagavan that held his attention most, he replied even before the question was completed: "Do you know, I don't regard Bhagavan as having any particular form at all. He is the inner presence, guiding every thought, word and deed."

The Ramaswamys are settled in Bangalore, and visit the Ashram during the Jayanti Celebrations every year without fail. They have six sons, all well settled and equally devoted to Bhagavan.

We wish these senior devotees and their family long life and all happiness!

* * * *

Dr. Syed, Philosophy Professor of Allahabad University, put a question: "Bhagavan," he asked, "what is the purpose of creation?" Usually Sri Bhagavan gave His replies in Tamil, Telugu or Malayalam and got them interpreted. This time Sri Bhagavan spoke directly in English. He put a counter-question: "Can the eye see itself?" Dr. Syed replied: "Of course not. It Can see everything else, but not itself." Then Sri Bhagavan asked, "But if it wants to see itself?" Dr. Syed paused and said, "It can see itself only reflected in a mirror." Sri Bhagavan seized the answer and commented, "That is it. Creation is the mirror for the eye to see itself." Now I asked whether Sri Bhagavan meant 'e-y-e' or 'I'. Sri Bhagavan said that we could take it figuratively as 'e-y-e' and literally as 'I'.

— Prof. G. V. Subbaramayya in
Ramana Reminiscences, p. 22

"The Self is Pure Consciousness. Yet a man identifies himself with the body which is insentient and does not itself say: 'I am the body'. Some one else says so. The unlimited Self does not. Who does? A spurious 'I' arises between Pure Consciousness and the insentient body and imagines itself to be limited to the body. Seek this and it will vanish like a phantom. The phantom is the ego or mind or individuality. All the scriptures are based on the rise of this phantom, whose elimination is their purpose. The present state is mere illusion. Its dissolution is the goal and nothing else."

— Sri Maharshi



RAMANA GITA : By Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni. With the facsimile of the Sanskrit text in the handwriting of Sri Ramana Maharshi Himself. With translation and commentary by A.R. Natarajan in English. Pub.: Ramana Maharshi Centre for Learning, 40/41, II Street, Lower Palace Orchards, Bangalore-560 003. Pp. 232. Price: Rs. 25.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever", sang the English poet, Keats. The book under review is a thing of beauty. Its contents are a joy for ever. The author of the translation and commentary in English is one among the foremost devotees of the Maharshi. He is a scholar and Ramana-devotee rolled into one. His devotion to the Maharshi and the profundity of his experienced knowledge of the Maharshi's teachings fully qualify him for presenting this luminous commentary to the English-reading public, the world over. The language is elegant and simple and appeals to the intellect of the modern man even if he be a stranger to philosophy. The commentaries are rich with references to a wide range of literary works on and by the Maharshi. A Bibliography of the books referred to is appended to the publication, with reference to them at the appropriate points of the commentary. If one goes through the books listed therein, one is sure to get a complete understanding of the Maharshi's philosophy.

The design on the cover of the book carries a most charming picture of the Maharshi in his thirties when he gave his teachings to Ganapati Muni. Ramana in his semi-padmasana posture is seen here as the very embodiment of Universal Love in human form. Its gentle beauty captivates the eye, which, once fixed thereon cannot be withdrawn without an effort. One opens the book to discover the picture of Ganapati Muni

in his late thirties. The effulgent glow of the face of the 'wizard of Mantra-sastra' bespeaks the intense *tapasya* performed over long years in repetition of the *mantras* of Gayatri and Siva Panchakshari in which he attained adeptness.

Even the lovely rose has its thorns. When one wants to pick up a topical item, one will not be put to the necessity of a long search over the pages if the chapter headings are printed at the top of alternate pages. The Sanskrit words *Gnana* and *Gnani* as translated are Knowledge and Knower. The better equivalent English terms are Spiritual Wisdom and Enlightened Person. Otherwise one has only praise for the translation and commentary.

The facsimile of the Sanskrit verses in Maharshi's own hand-writing is an additional attraction to the book.

— Prof. N. R. KRISHNAMURTI AIYER

UPADESA UNDIYAR of Bhagavan Sri Ramana: Tr. By Sadhu Om and Michael James. Pub.: Sri Ramana Kshetra, Tiruvannamalai. Pp. 52. Price: Rs. 6/-.



Upadesa Undiyar, one of the most significant works of the Maharshi contains thirty verses, which sprout forth, in a nutshell, the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi. This book contains a facsimile print of the original text in Sri Bhagavan's own handwriting. The translation is authored by the late Sadhu Om and co-authored by Michael James.

A detailed introduction to the book by Michael James is descriptive in nature. It fixes the context of Sri Bhagavan's *Upadesa* in the work *Upadesa Undiyar* by Sri Muruganar.

These thirty verses have the unique privilege of being originally composed by Sri Bhagavan in Telugu, Sanskrit and Malayalam, under the title *Upadesa Saram*. In Tamil the work consists of a *Payiram* verse written by Sri Muruganar, 6 introductory verses (also written by him), the main text of 30 verses by Sri Bhagavan and 5 concluding verses of praise. The facsimile contains all these in Sri Bhagavan's handwriting, which adds lustre to the book. *Upodghaatam* is important to understand the contents of the main text, particularly the first 15 verses.

The translation is complete and easy-styled and the commentary lucid and precise. The word-for-word English translation and the transliteration add to the value and quality of the book. The technical terms that are hidden beneath the verses are brought to light by the translator. The comparisons given in the work, help the reader to understand parallel ideas in other works of Ramana literature, viz., *Guru Vachaka Kovai* (by Sri Muruganar).

The path of Sri Ramana can be explained by no better a person than Sadhu Om and this work also bears testimony to this. The book is called, 'The Song of Siva', as Sri Muruganar considers Sri Bhagavan to be an incarnation of Lord Siva.

Sri Ramana Kshetra deserves all praise for bringing out such a useful book. This good book is one more added to the growing Ramana literature. The book is recommended to all serious seekers who want Sri Ramana's *Upadesa*, brief and concentrated.

--- Prof. T. N. PRANATHARTHI HARAN

THE MAKING OF PEACE : By Madhuri Sondhi. Pub. Selectbook Service Syndicate, New Delhi. Pp. 345. Price : Rs. 275/-.

Commemorating this "year of peace" now fast running out, a characteristically violent year of our times, Madhuri Sondhi's work is a lucid exploration of the thought of the neglected Indian philosopher Basanta Kumar Mallik (1879-1958) on the nature of conflict and its resolution, on the conditions of peace in our radically endangered age. Herself a professional philosopher and peace activist, Mrs. Sondhi not unexpectedly brings rigour and anguish to her task. As you put down the book, you want to do something for peace and survival before it is too late, almost anything, assisted by Mallik's thought even where you are unable to accept it.

Mallik's prescription for peace, enduring peace as opposed to interludes between wars or annihilation, is this: Let cultures and ideologies, whether secular or religious, eschew expansionism. Let philosophy and science abandon as an illusion the idea of absolute truth. Let logic and epistemology renounce the dogma that the terms of a relationship of even logical opposition are mutually destructive in conjunction, and entertain the liberating thought that such opposition merely discloses alternative possibilities.

e.g. the opposition between individuals and collectivities, matter and spirit, tradition and modernity. The persistent inability of cultures and ideologies to give up their aims of expansion and domination is not merely a psychological or moral inability. Such inability is nourished, Mallik would insist, by the idea of absolute truth in philosophy and theology, and by the view of logical opposition as mutual destruction of opposing terms in all mainstream logic, mechanistic or dialectical. Non-absolutist philosophy and non-annihilationist, more juxtapositional, more Jainist, logic, will presumably undermine expansionism and enable all cultures and ideologies to practice what Mallik calls "abstention", the new saving peace-making virtue of refusing limitlessly to realise values, our own cherished visions. Mallik's originality, like Nietzsche's, lies in this transvaluation or revaluation of unquestioned virtue, here the virtue of unfettered realisation of values. To save life on earth and the adventure of civilisation, the old wisdom of living and letting live will have to become also the humility of letting go unutilised much energy of realisation. It is unbecoming of virtue to seek exemplification ceaselessly, to appropriate more and more territory for its exercise! A beautiful paradox, chastening cynicism, urgent commonsense today!

Would't Gandhian satyagraha achieve peace on earth? Interestingly, although I think unconvincingly, Mallik and Sondhi think not, because they suspect that such satyagraha is secretly in the service of expansionism, the expansionism inherent in Gandhi's devotion to truth spelt with a capital T. Non-violent expansionism is nevertheless expansionism, they say, and invites sooner or later as a reaction other kinds of expansionism not necessarily nonviolent. The often self-righteous heroism of struggles for justice (Mallik thinks Gandhian struggles are for justice, not peace) is not available to the austere, abstaining, value or vision unrealising, struggle for peace yet to be launched. How easily the philosopher and his articulate admirer forget the decentralising core of Gandhian satyagraha! And the ecological conservatism of the Gandhian constructive programme.

Would'nt advaita help win peace, the conviction and realisation of the self-same self, atman, one in all? Mallik and Sondhi again interestingly, but I think even more unconvincingly than in their criticism of Gandhi, think not; they think, un-

originally and erroneously, that Mayavada is illusionism, and have no clear insight into the truth of *atman*, or any use for such key *advaitin* notions as self-realisation or self-consciousness. In this they are forgetful and neglectful of the deep reflexivity, the anguished self-reference, of modern consciousness, its existentialism; and lose us.

Sondhi's book is gripping reading, and yet I cannot help noting that she appears to have quite failed to see that non-absolutist thought can also be hegemonistic, e.g. fascism or racism or modern "westernism"; that there is a very great factor of self-destructiveness in modern culture which has been nourished by non-absolutist thought and which assists annihilationism; that the idea of absolute truth need not be understood in the dualistic modes of Abrahamic or Hegelian thought, that it can also be savingly and fruitfully understood in the idiom of non-dualist Indian *advaita*. If we take the apparent other as a real other, we are likely to want to destroy him sooner or later for fear that otherwise we may be destroyed by him. Only if we treat the apparent other as in reality ourselves can we hope to sustain him and be sustained by him in love.

Sri Ramana and Mahatma Gandhi have outlined for a world that would save itself in self-knowledge the theory and practice of *advaitin* love, and such love alone can make meaningful and possible the practice of cultural and ideological self-restraint preached by Mallik. You are not other than me essentially, so I do not have to convert you to "my" point of view, religion or ideology. And if you appear to me to wrong me or mine, it is only through the Gandhian *sadhana* of self-suffering in truth that I can effectively hope to awaken in you a sense of our identity and make enduring peace with you. Given the scale of hatred and hostility in the world today, nothing less powerful and radical in thought and life than Ramana's *satya* and Gandhi's *agraha* can create the conditions of consciousness and crises of conscience without which Mallikean "abstention" can hardly get off the ground. Fear is no saviour. As the punster, put it, *man does not live by Dread alone*. What does he live by then? By every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, by a celebration of the totality of divine revelation, as Christ taught, a teaching all proselytising religions and ideologies would do well to bear in mind, including Christianity. Without *ananda* there can be no abstention. It is not



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clear what Basanta Kumar Mallik wants us most deeply and ultimately to celebrate, enjoy, love, for the sake of which we would live, and gladly bear the cost of letting live in individual and ideological self-restraint.

Madhuri Sondhi elegantly communicates the rare charm and sophistication of Mallik's thought and personality, and despite the philosophical misgivings that I have noted above, her study of the concept of peace encourages us to think beyond orthodoxies of thought and even morality as commonly understood in the search for peace; and that is no small contribution to the task of philosophy and practice in our times. A book to be pondered and a summons to Mallik's own works which are appetite-whettingly described and listed by the author, evoking gratitude for the philosopher's life and pride in the capabilities of modern Indian thought in the service of truth and peace.

Dr. RAMCHANDRA GANDHI

LIVES OF ANCIENT INDIAN SAINTS : Vol. 6

By Vidwan Bulusu Venkateswarulu, 8-22-14
Gandhi Nagar, Kakinada 533 004. Price :
Rs. 10/-

It is a pleasure to welcome this sixth volume of the author's series on Indian Saints. The present book contains accounts of Richeeka, Rishya-sringa, Romasa, Rueu, Rybhya, Sameeka, Sankha, Likhita, Satananda and Suka. As before the narratives are drawn from the Epics and the various Puranas and Upa-puranas. Though no historical accuracy is expected, the narratives provide interesting reading. There is a quotation, for instance, from the *Sankhalikhitasmriti*, which reads in English :

The strength of the bird is the sky; the strength of the fish is water; the strength of the weak is the king; the strength of the child is crying, *balasya ruditam balam*.

We lament with the author that almost every page should be defaced with printing errors and we do hope that this drawback will be remedied in the next edition which the work richly deserves.

— M. P. PANDIT

HYMNS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE: By David Frawley. Pub. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 7. Pp. 256. Price: Rs. 125/-

VEDA AND VEDANTA: By M. Sundar Raj. Pub. Int. Society for Investigation of Ancient Civilisations, 31 Poes Garden, Madras 86. Pp. 223. Price: not stated.

David Frawley is a young American scout of the New Age who has struck gold in the most ancient Hymnal of the Veda. He does not merely announce his discovery, he takes pains to justify, prove to the modern mind what treasures lie in these mystic utterances and how they are of eternal moment to the envolving humanity. He does not waste his energy in criticising superficial or wrong approaches to the Veda—western and eastern—but goes straight to the primeval (not primitive) language of the Rishi and the Inspiration that underlies it. He explains how the Rig Veda is not just a record of Indian spirituality, but a document of an early Age of the entire mankind portraying the community of Gods, Men and Nature centred round the Highest Truth symbolised by the Solar Deity. The Gods are not personifications of nature-powers but fluidic formations of the manifesting Godhead, each God having the qualities of all Gods. The Vedic religion was neither pantheistic nor polytheistic; it was revelatory, cosmic and Soul-centred. Frawley is superb when he discusses in what sense the world is a creation of the word. His note on the Mantra is as chiselled as the Vedic mantra itself.

His translations of select hymns to Heaven and Earth, Dawn, Agni, Indra, Surya, Soma, Goddesses, are enjoyable; they are accompanied by illuminative notes wherever called for and invite the reader to the fuller texts in the original.

Continuing his studies in the Vedas, Sri Sundar Raj argues in favour of the importance of the *Atharva Samhita vis a vis* the *Rig* and the *Yajus*. He underlines his perception that the *Atharva* is the source of the esoteric discipliness of yoga and tantra and proceeds to examine to what extent it is also the source of the Wisdom recorded in the 14 major Upanishads. He assembles relevant data in favour of the thesis and points out that the Vedanta is truly the culmination of the Veda and not something new or a departure from the older tradition. May be some of the verses cited are to be found in the *Rik Samhita*

also and it is debatable which collection has borrowed from which. That is not very important. The conclusion of the author is unassailable: the Upanishads derive from the Veda and present the same Experience in a language more suited to a latter age.

— M. P. PANDIT

PRACTICAL NATURE - CURE: By Sri K. Lakshmana Sarma. Founder Editor of 'The Life Natural' Pub: The Nature-cure Publishing House, Ganesh Nagar, Pudukkottai - 622 001. Pp. 743. Price: Rs. 140/-.

This is an authoritative and comprehensive work on the Science of Nature-cure, written in simple language so as to enable the layman to learn and practise the method without expert assistance. The author is a well-known exponent of the science of Nature-cure.

The author is of the considered view that all diseases from common-cold to the dreaded cancer, are the outcome of internal uncleanness. It is a toxæmic condition of the body, caused by defective elimination arising from adoption of wrong, unhygienic habits of living. He expounds what is termed 'the Unity of Disease' and explains that by adoption of hygienic habits of living and the resultant improvement in the level of health, retrogression of disease could be effected in almost every case. This in nature-cure terminology in the 'Unity of Treatment'.

The author stresses that drugs only help in suppressing the symptoms and do not effect a cure. In respect of diagnosis, the author explains that mere naming of the symptom-complex will not do, and that the diagnostic tests commonly resorted to in Allopathy have their own hazards. The science of Nature-cure concerns itself with the assessment of the health-level of the patient, and the level of vitality left in him prior to treatment in the methodology of Nature-cure.

The chapter on 'Preventive Medicine' explains how natural immunity can be built up by any individual by living in tune with the laws of Nature, and also warns of the dangers resulting from immunisation programmes adopted by the medical practitioners.

The chapter on food is instructive. The author recommends the use of saatic herbs as food supplements. He explains that occasional fasting helps the maintenance of good health. The method of fasting for patients suffering from acute, chronic and destructive diseases as a therapeutic aid is explained in detail.

The author deals with the treatment of different types of diseases under the Nature-cure method in three lengthy chapters. The treatment covers such a wide variety of diseases as fever, common cold, migraine, obesity, sinusitis, cataract, asthma, diabetes, ulcers, heart diseases, tuberculosis and cancer.

There is a chapter dedicated to motherhood and childcare. Both pre-natal and post-natal care are specified. Special exercises are recommended for women in the post-natal and pre-natal conditions.

The different chapters of the book dealing with the philosophy of the science of Nature-cure, contain quite a number of quotations from the Vedas and the Upanishads, thus proving that the system is based on the precepts of Indian culture.

The author states that in over 700 pages of the book, he has described his own swanubhava, and not mere hypothesis. His contention is that every one can be his/her own doctor, and the book only helps in guiding the reader.

Sri Lakshmana Sarma was a reputed scholar in Sanskrit and Tamil and a staunch devotee of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

This standard work of Nature-cure should find a place in every home. It is a practical health-finder.

—J. J.

CONVERSATIONAL SANSKRIT : a microwave approach by N. D. Krishnamurthy, Mrs. Jayanthi Manohar, Dr. Upadhyaya and Mrs Shylaja. Pub : Adarsha Educational and Social Service Trust, 67, 15th Cross, Malleswaram, Bangalore-55 Pp. 392. Price : Rs. 60/- (\$12).

This book is one intended to eradicate the title 'dead language' attached to Sanskrit and to familiarise the students with the basic structures of this language and make them converse freely in it. With this avowed object in view, four great scholars eminent in the field of teaching native

languages and well experienced in handling this subject, joined together and worked for years together with missionary zeal and dedication to bring out this pioneering work. As the title of this book itself implies, this is a microwave approach to teach Sanskrit to the modern students.

Already there are a good number of standard works written by eminent Indian as well as foreign authors starting from Dr. Bhandarkar, R. S. Vadhyar, M.R. Kale, Prof. Georg Buhler, W. D. Whitney, Lanman, E. D. Perry etc. to mention only a few. But all the above works present the subject in the good old traditional way. To the busy students of the present generation of this computer age, this book with a novel approach is really a boon without laying much stress on the grammatical aspects of the language such as declension of nouns, conjugation of verbs, sandhis, samasas, avyayas, upasargas etc. This book straightaway deals with the formation of sentences, subject or topic wise, and that too in a conversational way. Thus a great deal of drudgery and dry monotony is avoided. Further by using the permutation—and—combination system, as shown in the Teacher's Note, the students are made to form a number of model sentences similar to the one taught in a particular cycle. This goes a long way in boosting the creative faculties of the students and gets them conversationally acquainted with the basic grammatical structures and their varied forms to suit particular contexts.

This book is divided into 35 graded sequences, each unit being devoted to one aspect of day to day life. The remaining cycles 36 to 50 are self discovery units. Each cycle is divided into Topical Focus, Grammatical Focus, Interrogatives, and Rituals. This book can be used both by those who study this language with the aid of teachers and those who do it by themselves. After sincerely studying this book and working out the exercises as directed in it in good earnest, the students can take up the *Ithihasas* like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*, and the classical master-pieces of Kalidasa, Bhasa, Bhavabhuti, Dandi etc.

This book will not only go a long way in making its students grasp the structure of this life-giving language but also enable them to use it as a tool of communication on matters of day to day requirements.

The computerised printing employed, the paper

used and the get up are all excellent. The price is also very reasonable for this kind of work.

— D. RAJARAM

"SOLITUDE" : Mananam Publication Series, Vol. VIII, No. 2, Chinmaya Mission West, Los Altos, California, USA (April 1985)

Loneliness is pain. Aloneness is bliss. Aloneness is 'all oneness' where there is no other. Aloneness is a state of 'at oneness'. Solitude is aloneness. It has nothing to do with one's surroundings. It comes into being when the mind ceases to chatter. Solitude is mental silence.

The book under review contains selections from the writings and talks of J. Krishnamurti, Swami Sivananda, Swami Chinmayananda, Paul Brunton, Sri Bhagavan, Sri Aurobindo, Thomas Merton and a few others on solitude.

Sri Bhagavan says:

"Solitude is in the mind of man. One might be in the thick of the world and maintain serenity of mind; such a one is in solitude. Another may stay in a forest, but still be unable to control his mind. He cannot be said to be in solitude. Solitude is a function of the mind. A man attached to desire cannot get solitude, wherever he may be; a detached man is always in solitude..... Work performed with attachment is a shackle, whereas work performed with detachment does not affect the doer. He is, even while working, in solitude".

J. Krishnamurti says that solitude is an inward state of mind which is 'free from all the memories, all the conditioning, all the mutterings of yesterday'.

The book contains different but important views on solitude and has the coherence of a complex piece of music.

— Dr. K. SUBRAHMANYAN

DATE OF ADISANKARA : By V.G. Ramachandran: International Society for the Investigation of Ancient Civilization, 31, Poes Garden, Madras—600 086. Pp. 98 Price : Rs. 25/-

An extensively researched book on the birth and date of Adi Sankara, this book of 15 chapters deals with a much ignored source of authenticating dates in ancient Indian History-Astronomical Readings as found in Puranas and

THE REAL STATE

I seek your clarification for the following.

(i) It is stated that the state free from thoughts is the only real state. Attain the *sushupti* in the *Jagrat* state and you become a *Jnani*.

(ii) It is also mentioned on page 144 of *Day by Day with Bhagavan* (1977) :

"Bhagavan : There are illustrations in books to explain *Sahaja* state. For instance you see a reflection in the mirror and the mirror. You know the mirror to be the reality and the picture in it a mere reflection. Is it necessary that to see the mirror we should cease to see the reflection in it?"

Which of the above two states one should aspire for ?

— Ratan Lal, Bangalore

The answer to your doubt is provided by Sri Bhagavan in the same p.144 as He continues after the mirror example.

"There is a screen. On that screen first a figure appears. Before that figure on the same screen other pictures appear and the first figure goes on watching the other pictures.

If you are the screen and know yourself to be the screen, is it necessary not to see the first figure and the subsequent pictures? When you don't know the screen you think the figure and the pictures to be real. But when you know the screen and realise it is the only reality on which as substratum the shadows of figure and pictures have been cast you know these to be mere shadows. You may see the shadows, knowing them to be such and knowing yourself to be the screen which is the basis for them all."

So, there are not two states that one could aspire for one of them. The screen ('I'-'I') may be said to be asleep-while-awake since it is disconnected from the shadow-events cast on it. The screen ('I'-'I') may also be said to be aware of the shadow figure ('I') and other pictures to be merely shadows all along. The entire passage you have referred to is the essence of *Sahaja Nishta*.

— Editor

Epics. The author urges historians to cross-check their not-always-so reliable Carbon 14 method of dating, against astrological reading.

Based on these findings the International Society for the Investigation of Ancient Civilization fixes the date for *Maha Bharata* war at 3067 B.C. and date of Asoka as 1472 B.C. The author also shifts the dawn of Indian civilization from around 2500 B.C. to 8576 B.C.- the reign of the first emperor Vaivasvatha Manu of the 7th Manvanthram. For epigraphic corroboration to the Mahabharata-date the author cites:

(1) Gift deed of King Janamejaya (2) Aihole inscription of Pulikesi II (3) Jaswalmir Inscription and also mentions the Puranic chronology as advanced by Prof. Srinivasa Raghavan.

To support his arguments the author refers to "Works of Sir William Jones" who had originally accepted the Puranic chronology, and placed Buddha in 1027 B.C. But later on under pressure from Max Muller changed it to 5th century B.C. so that "History of India can be connected with Greece and its chronology be reduced to proper limits" Max Muller. Rejecting this narrow basis of historians, the author fixes the date of birth of Adi Sankara to 509 B.C. (and not 788 A.D.)

This is based on Astronomical charting and Sankara's horoscope as given by Citsukhacharya in "Brihat Sankara Vijaya" corroborated by nine literary evidences from India and Nepal, and Sankara's one and only meeting with Kumarila Bhatta in 494 B.C. as mentioned in Jain literature. The author rightly attaches great weightage to this last evidence in the literature of the Jains, then opposed to Vedantic religion and so unlikely to antedate Sankara's age.

The last four chapters deal with the *guru-paramparas* of the Sankara Mutts, except Sringeri Mutt which has no records of the 800 years between 12 B.C. and 773 B.C. The author urges them all to accept Sankara's date as 509 B.C. and not 788 A.D. as recorded by Sringeri Mutt.

The book and its sources should give fresh evidences to any serious researcher of ancient chronology. However it must also be mentioned that such major shift in ancient chronology would necessitate looking anew at all other historical, numismatic and epigraphic evidences that make Chandra Gupta Maurya a contemporary of Alexander the Great and not Chandra Gupta I of Gupta Dynasty as proposed by this author.

— GITA BHATT

Letters to the Editor : 10

Once back in my country, I must thank you for your warm reception and your kind attention towards my wife and me during our stay at the Ashram, last September.

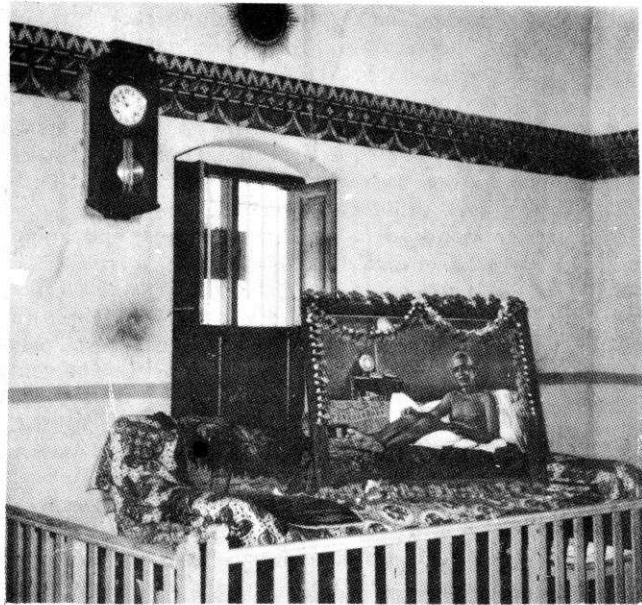
Never in my life have I known such happy days as those lived at the feet of Bhagavan. The atmosphere at the Ashram was so friendly, that we felt more at home there than at our own home.

I followed the sage advice Henry Hartung gave me before departing: I put all my trust in Bhagavan and abandoned myself to his guidance. Hartung was right: never have I been more surely guided. His paternal hand has left an indelible imprint on my soul. Now I feel nearer to the Centre that we essentially are.

I have no other wish, but to return once more, as soon as possible, to Arunachala. Ramana has introduced us to so many good friends, that next time we shall be obliged to introduce some friends in our turn to Arunachala, so as to pay our debt.

— Antonio Medrano, Majadahonda, Spain

62



Sri Bhagavan's portrait inside the Old Hall

In 1922, a small thatched shed was raised over the physical remains of Sri Bhagavan's Mother. A couple of devotees were looking after it. One morning, Sri Bhagavan came from Skandashram and did not go back but remained here—this was the beginning of the present Sri Ramanasramam.

In 1926, the first building was constructed and it was Sri Bhagavan's HALL, which later came to be known as the 'Old Hall' (after the construc-

ashram bulletin

SRI BHAGAVANS

'OLD HALL'

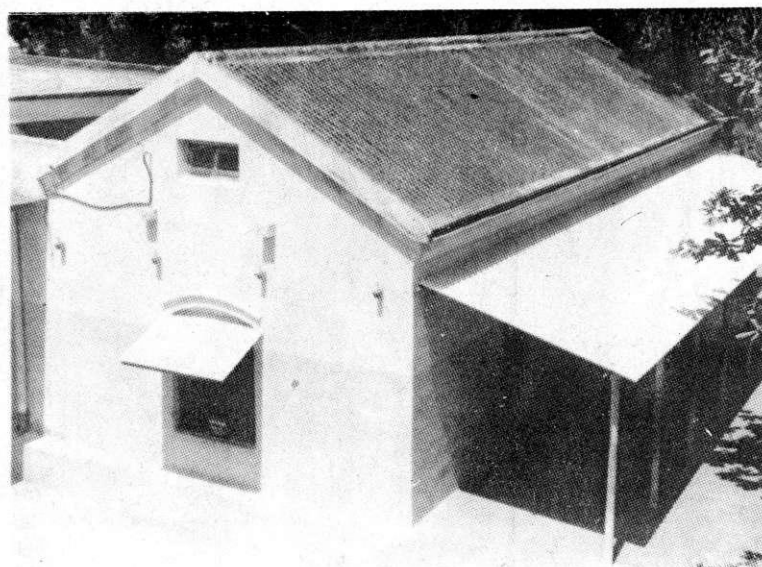
BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL

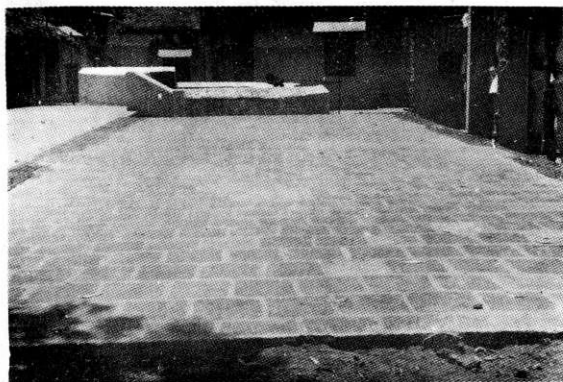
SPLENDOUR

tion of the 'New' Hall in front of Sri Matrubuteswara temple in 1946). The Old Hall is most sanctified as it was Sri Bhagavan's sole abode for over two decades.

It was a pity that this structure should have been constructed with brick in mud walls, in a place infested by termites. Periodical, small scale repairs to maintain the structure were of no avail. A decade ago, concerted efforts were made to eradicate the termites, through pest

*Outer structure of
the Old Hall*





The floor with cuddapah stones after the superstructure was demolished

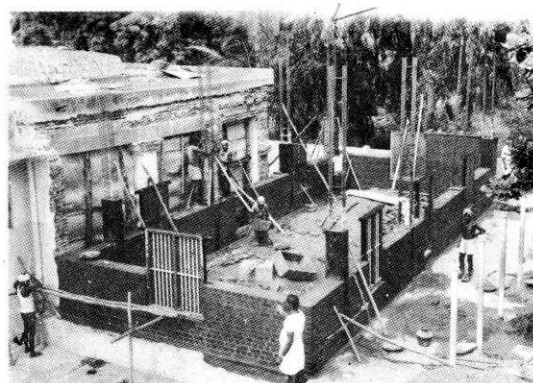
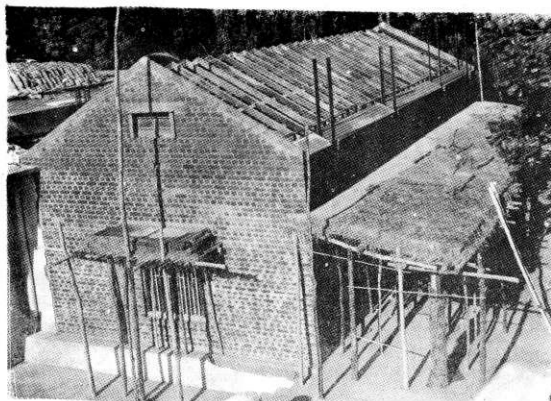
control for the foundations, walls and wooden roof structure and other major works like repairing the cracks in the walls, plastering, resetting the roof with fresh materials and tiles, and painting.

However, these steps had only limited effect. The structure deteriorated badly with the white ants impregnating the walls and the roof once again, damaging the roof to such an extent that there was heavy leaking, flooding the floor and dampening the walls and causing serious cracks.

Experienced Engineers, who are Sri Bhagavan's devotees as well, came to the conclusion that there was no alternative but to renovate the entire structure. This amounted to actual reconstruction, after total dismantling of the old structure. And, it had to be done soon. We had accordingly announced the proposed renovation of the Old Hall in our April '86 issue.

The renovation work was complicated and modern technology had to be adopted to render the structure long-lasting, retaining the original

Built up to the roof-level



Old Hall being rebuilt, with meticulous care and attention

features and preserving the Old Hall as a Sacred Monument.

Sri K. Padmanabhan, and the late Sri K.K. Nambiar, two eminent engineers and staunch devotees, were involved from the proposal stage to finalisation of the engineering details and drawings connected with the renovation. Sri A. Kumar, a young dynamic structural engineer familiar with modern designs and standards, especially with RCC structures, was entrusted with the design, calculations and drawings work. The actual execution work itself was carried out by our civil engineering contractor-cum-devotee Sri R. Anjaneyalu of Bangalore, under the guidance of Sri K. Padmanabhan and Sri A. Kumar.

At the finishing stage, Sri M. K. Kamath of M/s. Krishna Products, Bombay, came personally with necessary compounds to give leak-proof treatment to the portion of the Hall roof joining it to the Samadhi Shrine of Sri Bhagavan.

Dismantling the Old Hall was started in May '86 and after six months of sustained, meticulous work, the renovated Old Hall was reopened at 7 a.m. on December 5, 1986. It is heartening to

Special care is taken while laying the top





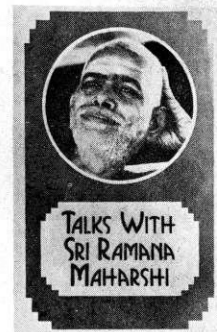
Sri Krishnaswami, attendant to Sri Bhagavan, along with Sri T.N. Venkata-raman, Ashram President and Sri Kunju Swami, enters into the renovated Old Hall

note that to the extent possible materials from the old stucture (major portion of Cuddappah slab flooring, doors, windows, wooden trusses/rafters and tiles) have been reused in the new structure. Old devotees have declared that the interior decor and the outside appearance now look, "absolutely the same".

Sri V. Dwaraknath Reddy, who resides here, came forward to bear a portion of the cost ; he donated Rs. 40,000/- Sri C. B. Patel and Sri M. M. Patel of London sent us Rs. 30,000/- Sri Pesi Shroff of Bombay gave Rs. 18,000/- A few other devotees too sent their mite. Their participation in this noble task was laudable indeed !

The total amount expended in renovating Sri Bhagavan's OLD HALL is Rs. 1,50,000/-.

**AVAILABLE NOW
TALKS WITH
SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI**



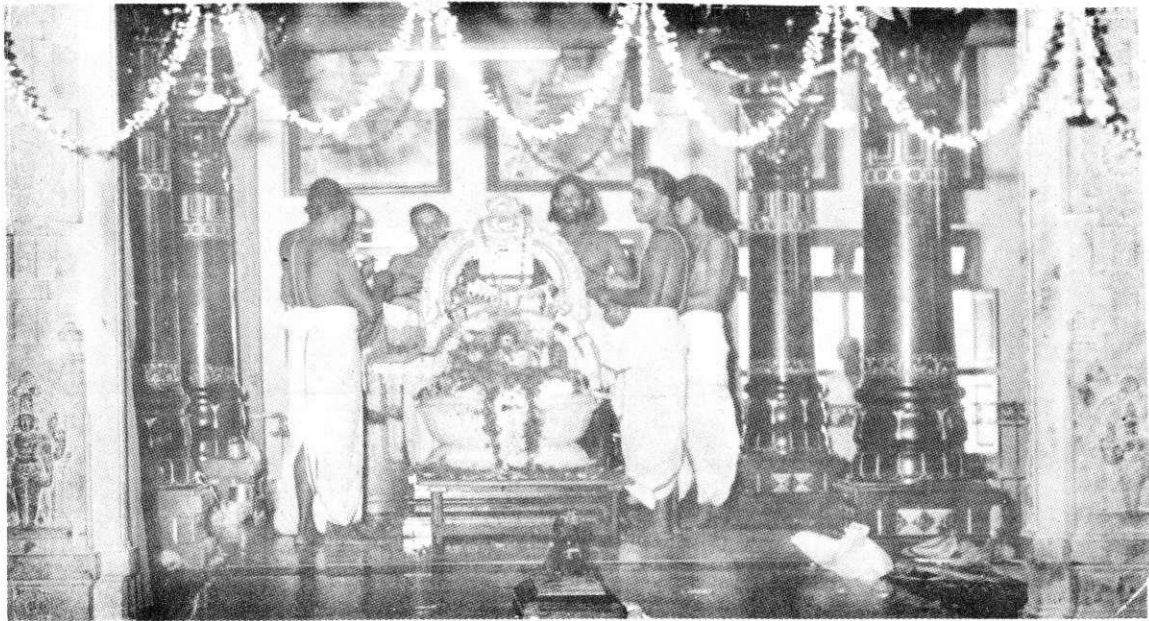
We take great pleasure in announcing that the seventh re-printed edition of *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi* is now available. This remarkable record of Sri Bhagavan's words has been an unfailing guide to increasing number of aspirants and seekers, the world over.

In the words of Sadhu Arunachala (Major A.W. Chadwick) **TALKS** is: "all pure gold". It is indeed an authentic compilation of Sri Bhagavan's teachings in His own inimitable words, bringing with it the glorious Presence of the Master, as well!

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Sri Rameswara Maha Lingam on the Jayanti Day

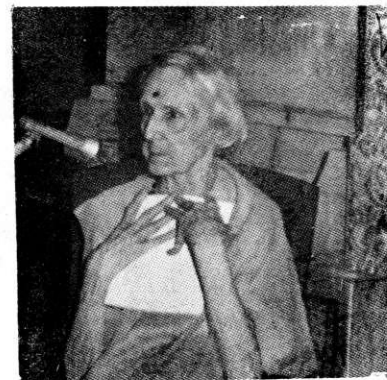
SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTI

'Punarvasu', Sri Bhagavan's birth-star fell this year on December 18, and devotees celebrated Sri Bhagavan's 107th Jayanti at His Samadhi Shrine of Grace. Thousands of poor were sumptuously fed and nearly two thousand guests and visiting-pilgrims were treated to lunch. There were elaborate pujas to the sacred shrine of Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi. The Hall was adorned with flower garlands. The Presence of Sri Bhagavan was powerfully felt throughout the day.

The 'Punarvasu' bhajan group sang songs in praise of Sri Bhagavan. Early in the

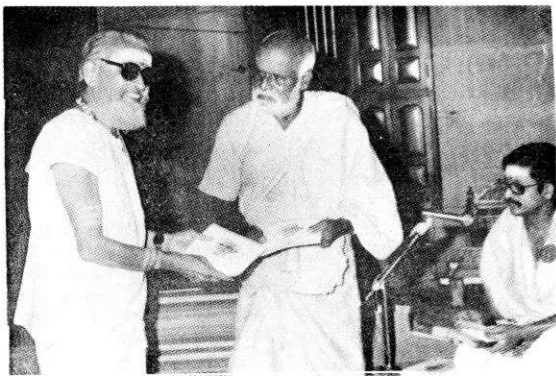
morning old devotees sang Sri Muruganar's *Tirupalliyezhuchi*, *Tiruvembavai* on Sri Bhagavan. The afternoon saw old devotees paying glowing tributes to the Master-Sri Kunju Swami and Dr. O. Ramachandraiah. Sri A. R. Natarajan, spoke absorbingly. Sri V. Dwarakanath Reddy in his speech heartily appreciated the management of the Ashram.

Lucy Cornelissen blesses our Managing Editor and his first book



Our Managing Editor's first book: 'Purushothama Ramana' was released on the occasion. Also, released was a new cassette: 'Ramana Sunritya', choreographed by Smt. Ambika Kameshwar. In the night 'Ramananjali' paid tributes to Sri Bhagavan in mellifluous music.

Sri Kunju Swami releases the first copy of 'Purushothama Ramana'





Aruna Vijaya Day celebrated at Hyderabad by Sri Ramana Kendram, with feeding

SRI RAMANA KENDRAM Hyderabad

Arunachala Vijaya on the first of September 1896 was remembered by Sri Ramana Kendram, Hyderabad, in a joyous function on August 31, 1986, attended by over 150 devotees.

Speaking on the occasion, **Dr. K. Subrahmanian** explained how Bhagavan's life was a commentary on surrender. It is difficult to imagine a boy of 16 venturing to go out alone into the unknown world. Bhagavan's dependence on his Divine Father was total and uncompromising. During His memorable journey to Tiruvannamalai, the lad had to face a lot of hardship. Why? The hotel-keeper at Villupuram, who gave him a free meal, the temple drummer at Kilur, the family of Sri Muthukrishna Bhahavathar had to be 'redeemed'.

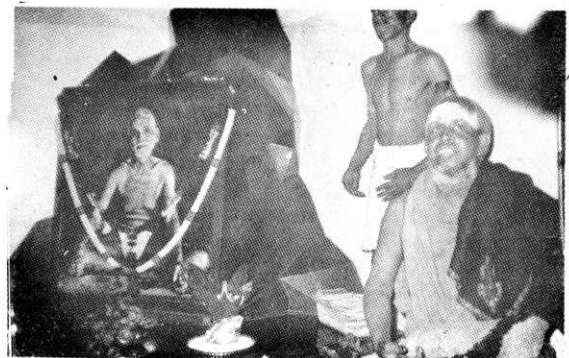
*Dr. K. Subrahmanian welcoming
Sri Harindranath Chattopadhyaya*



RAMANA KENDRA, DELHI

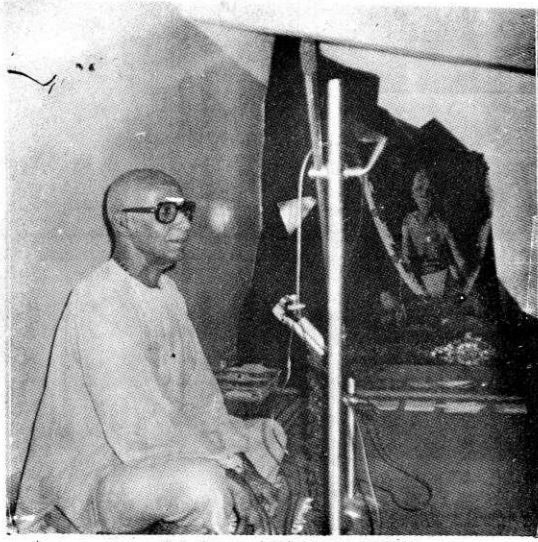
The most important event during the quarter was the visit of **Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya Swamigal**, Sri Jayendra Saraswati of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam to the Kendra on October 12. A very large number of devotees had assembled at the Kendra to have his darshan.

*H.H. Sankaracharya Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swami
at Ramana Kendra, Delhi*



He was received by the Members of Ramana Kendra, headed by **Dr. V. Gauri Shankar**, in the traditional manner with Poorna Kumbham. The Acharya Swamigal spent a few minutes in the Ramana Shrine and in the auditorium. He recalled his earlier visit to the Kendra site when there was no building 13 years ago in June 1973 and made enquiries about the activities of the Kendra. He expressed his happiness at seeing the Kendra following the Vedantic tradition.

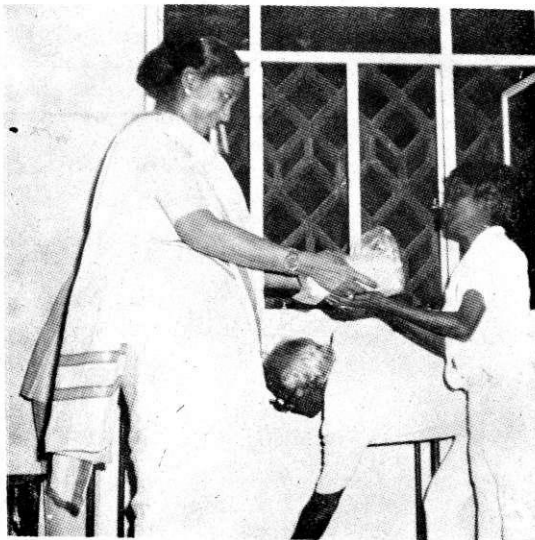
Earlier in the month (Oct. 2), the Kendra participated in the public reception accorded to the Acharya Swamigal at the Uttara Swami Malai



Sri Swami Ekatmananda

Temple by the citizens of Delhi headed by the Vice-President of India, Shri R. Venkataraman. The Acharya Swamigal was garlanded on behalf of the Kendra by Shri T. N. Venkataraman, President, Sri Ramanasramam who was fortuitously in Delhi at that time.

*Central Minister, Mrs. Margaret Alva
presenting gifts to a child*



THE MOUNTAIN PATH

* * * *

This issue marks a milestone in the history of The Mountain Path as it has been entirely printed at the Ramana Offset here in Tiruvannamalai. We intend continuing with this arrangement, maintaining the high technical standards hitherto set by the Jupiter Press, Madras. This facility not only helps us develop deserving local talent but also offers scope for timeliness, flexibility and continued improvement in regard to future issues.

May Sri Bhagavan guide us towards that end!

Managing Editor
'The Mountain Path'

A FRENCH BOOK

For the first time, *Sri Ramana Gita* has been translated into French by one of our devotees, Shanti O. Aubertin. It is a faithful translation with quite a lot of foot-notes clarifying subtle points, as also with a substantial Glossary, explaining all the Sanskrit terms used throughout the book.

Copies of French *Sri Ramana Gita* (132 pages) can be had from :

DERUY-LIVREG,
25 rue Vanquelin
75005, Paris (1985)

DEEPAM

The sacred day when Lord Siva seen as a column of Light destroyed the ego of the quarelling gods is celebrated every year at Arunachala as the Deepam Festival. In the evening, a big cauldron on top of the Hill is set ablaze as if to dispel the darkness in the hearts of seekers. *Hymns in Praise of Arunachala* composed by Sri Bhagavan were ecstatically sung by the old devotees led by Sri Ramaswamy Pillai and Sri Kunju Swami. In the night the inmates of the Ashram and visiting-pilgrims went round Arunachala Hill, singing hymns in adoration of the Hill.



Dr. P. Bayyappa Reddy, Sri A.V.S. Sarma,
Sri R. Sreeramulu and Smt. P.N. Soumya

RAMANA SATSANG

ANANTAPUR

Sri Ramana Satsang was established on September 1, 1983 at Anantapur. It is intensifying its activities in recent months. To start with the Satsang was registered under the Society Registration Act as No. 184 of 1986. Sri T. Bhimasena Rao was chosen Hon. President of the Satsang for life. The other office bearers include: Dr. P. Bayyappa Reddy and Smt. P. N. Soumya, Vice Presidents; Sri N. Krupanandam, Secretary, Dr. M. Buddana and Sri R. Sreeramulu, Joint Secretaries; Sri K. Ramesh, Treasurer.

Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni's 51st death anniversary was celebrated. Prof. S. Sarma presided. Sri S. Narayana gave a detailed account of Nayanar and his relationship with Sri Bhagavan. A dance performance by Smt. Sandhya Murthy delighted the audience.



Smt. Kanakamma

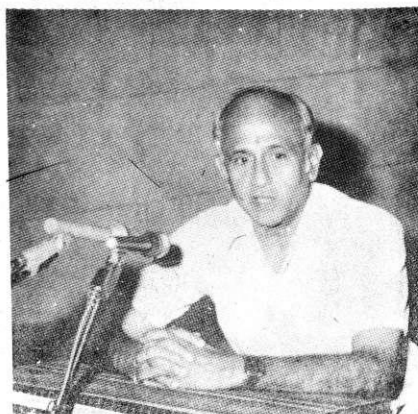
TALKS

Two series of talks by resident devotees were arranged at the Ashram on December 15, 16 and 17.

Smt. Kanakamma gave three talks, between 10 and 11 a.m., in Tamil, on the following subjects: 'Greatness of Arunachala', 'Arunachala Temple', 'Arunachala and Bhagavan'. She kept the audience ill-bound.

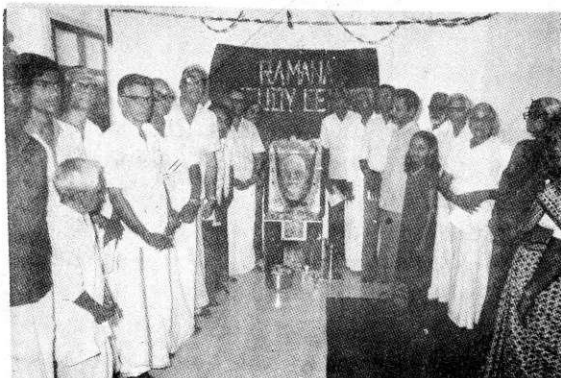
Sri V. Dwarakanath Reddy spoke between 3 and 4 p.m. on all these three days and the subject was 'Can Death be Killed?' His thought-provoking presentation was listened to with rapt attention by the large audience of earnest seekers.

Sri V. Dwarakanath Reddy



On September 1, the 3rd anniversary of the Sat-sang was celebrated with great enthusiasm. The special function was presided over by Dr. P. Bayyapa Reddy. Smt. P.N. Soumya and Sri A.V.S. Sarma spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Bhagavan. Kumari Prabhavati and Jyoti sang songs on Sri Bhagavan. The documentary film on Sri Bhagavan was shown in nearly twenty places of the town, thanks to the cooperation of the Information Department.

On September 29, Smt. Rukmini Devi, ex-Minister released a book: *Achala Ramanudu*, written by Sri R. Sreeramulu at a function held in the local Aravina Mandir.



Members of Cochín Ramana Study Centre

RAMANA STUDY CENTRE, Cochín

A new small Hall exclusively constructed for Ramana Sat Sangh was declared open by installing the portrait of Sri Bhagavan here on August 19, on Avani Avittam day. Puja to Sri Bhagavan was performed. From October, study classes on Sat Darsan have begun; they are to be held between 6 and 7-30 p.m.

SRI RAMANA KENDRA Visakhapatnam

Sri I. Veereswara Rao, Sri Ramana Kendra, Visakhapatnam, reports:

By Sri Bhagavan's Grace we were able to conduct a series of discourses in Telugu by Sri M. R. Nageswara Rao, Editor 'Ramana Vani' between December 7 and 12.

In July Dr. Subrahmanian of Hyderabad gave scintillating talks on Sri Bhagavan in English.

AN IMPORTANT APPEAL

Sri Ramana Mandiram, at Madurai, is the hallowed abode where our Master, when barely 17, resolved once and for all the problem of death with His thunder-bolt "WHO AM I?".

The sacred room upstairs where a little lad became the lofty Maharshi has stood on country-made rafters for over 100 years. All these supports are in imminent danger of breaking down. The house stands in urgent need of repairs. The estimated cost of the same is nearly Rs. 2 lacs (Rs. 2,00,000).

SRI SUNDARA MANDIRAM, at Tiruchuzhi, is where Sri Maharshi was born. This house too is in need of repairs estimated at about Rs. 50,000.

Through this urgent appeal we call upon all devotees of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi to contribute their mite liberally to this cause. Preservation of these two important Shrines would be in the best interests of posterity.

Cheques may be drawn favouring;
"SRI RAMANASRAMAM-a/c Sri
Ramana Mandiram / Sri Sundara
Mandiram."

T. N. Venkataraman,
Sri Ramanasramam, President,
1st January, 1987. Board of Trustees.



*House-warming ceremony for
the 'Girdhalur House' (upstairs)*

RAMANA SATSANG IN LONDON

Please be informed that there is a meeting of devotees of Sri Ramana Maharshi on the following dates in 1987, in London:-

January -Sat 17th; Feb -Sat 14th; Mar -Sat 14th;
Apr -Sat 11th; May -Sat 9th; June -Sat 13th;
July -Sat 11th; Aug -Sat 8th; Sept - Sat 12th;
Oct -Sat 10th; Nov -Sat 14th; Dec -Sat 12th.

The address for the meeting is :

Studio E,
49 The Avenue,
London NW6 7NR
(England)

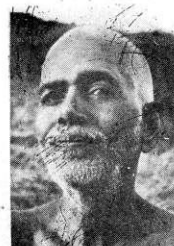
The meetings begin at 2 p.m. and end at 5 p.m.

A New Publication!

Just Released!!

"BE THE SELF"

By V. Ganesan



(We announced on p.280 of our October 86 issue that V. Ganesan's New book 'Sri Bhagavan's Grace' is released. The title of the book is altered as "Be the Self" and is released only now. Kindly bear with us).

The teaching of Bhagavan Ramana is lucid, simple and practical. Its practice and application in one's day-to-day life is very important. What is means to practice this Royal Path of Sri Bhagavan—'Self enquiry-Who am I?' is brought out in this interesting book, in an easily understandable way. Seekers after Truth must possess a copy of this valuable, little book !

Price : Rs. 5/- (Postage extra)

Please write to :

**Sri Ramanasramam Book-Depot,
Sri Ramanasramam P.O.,
Tiruvannamalai 606 603.**



Sri & Smt. Patwardhan



*Ramanendu, Smt. Kanika
and Sri Chatterjee*



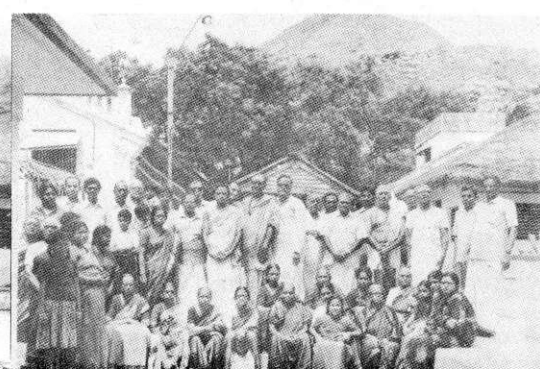
*Mr. Lawrence Ross Ajola
and friends, U.S.A.*



*Masako Hirao and
Mitsuko Shoda*



Sri B.K. Subiah and party, Madikeri



Members of Ramana Kendra - Madras

PILGRIMS

PILGRIMS

PILGRIMS



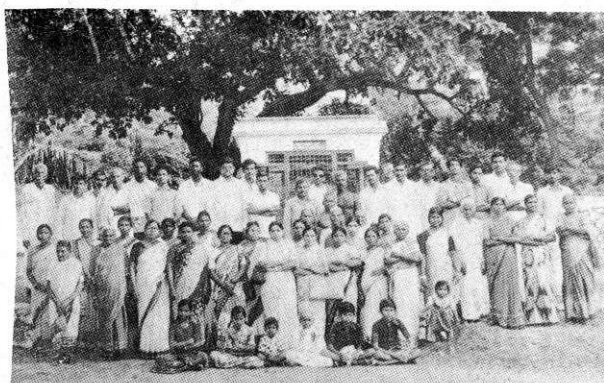
Zofia Gaffron

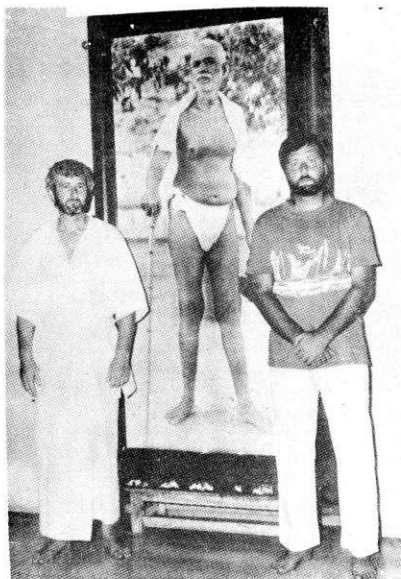


Bruno Kunzi

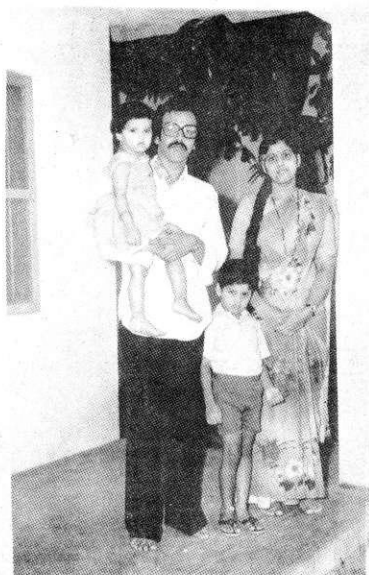
John Champneys and David Lee

Sri Brahman and other members of Tadpatri Ramana Centre





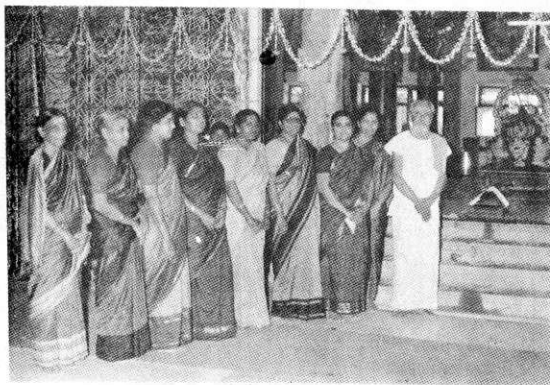
Malcolm Rue and Gary Ebse



Sri Vasant Kamath and family



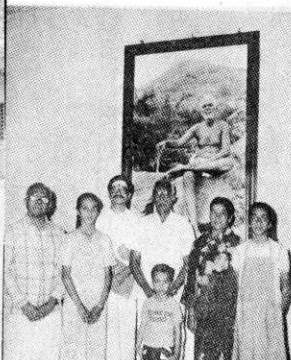
Cornelia Blar, with her child

Smt. Sakkubai Srinivasan (our Ashram Auditor)
and party

Sri Chandra Prabhakar and family



Sri S.G. Devaraj and family

Sri B.C. Mruthumjaya
and family

Sri N. Vasudevan and family

Sri B. Narasimhaiah
and family

OBITUARY



SRI B. S. RANGANADHAM

The entire 'Girdalur' family is dedicated to Sri Bhagavan. Smt. Lakshamma's husband, Sri B. S. Ranganadham, whom Sri Bhagavan always referred to as 'Alludu' (Son-in-law) was devoted to Him and was coming to the Ashram from the thirties. Professionally a successful Engineer, after retirement Sri Ranganadham served the Ashram in various capacities, including being its Trustee for a tenure. In his last days, he helped the Ashram in bringing out Telugu reprints and Publications on the Life Teachings of Sri Bhagavan.

After a short and sudden illness Sri Ranganadham passed away on October 17, 1986 at Nellore.

He is now absorbed at the Lotus Feet of Sri Bhagavan!

SMT. KAMALAMMA

From the days of Sri Bhagavan, Smt. Kamalamma and her elder sister, Smt. Alamelu Amma had been doing *kainkarya* (service) of cleaning and lighting the lamps at Sri Matrubhuteswara Temple and after Bhagavan's Nirvana at Sri Bhagavan's shrine as well. Kamalamma took full charge of this work after her sister passed away at Arunachala itself in 1964. In 1975, while coming to the Ashram, she fell near a culvert-bridge and ever since was confined to bed at her house, opposite the Ashram. She was a personification of peace, contentment and love. The Ashram was looking after her by sending her food and attending to her other needs.

After her fracture her relatives offered to take her away and look after her. She preferred to be near her 'chosen God' Ramana! Such was her dedication! This pious lady breathed her last on December 5, the beginning day of Karthigai Festival.

An internationally well-known journalist and Hon. Director of Indo-Japanese association, Sri G. S. Pohekar, achieved many a distinction in his useful public life, spanning over three decades.

Sri Pohekar has also served as a Joint Director of a reputed educational and cultural institution-Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Rajendra Prasad Institute of Communications and Management, Bombay, with 29 Post-graduate Colleges spread all over India. He was the Hon. Jt. Director of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Publication Department.

An old devotee of Sri Ramana Maharshi, he visited the Ashram during Sri Bhagavan's Aradhana Day, last year, and showed keen interest in the running of the Ashram's day-to-day affairs.

His end came peacefully on November 18, at Delhi and his body was brought to Bombay for his friends and well-wishers to pay their homage to him.



Sri G. S. Pohekar



Smt. V. Dorai Raj

Smt. Victoria Dorai Raj, wife of A. Dorai Raj and daughter-in-law of A. Devaraja Mudaliar (author of *Day by Day with Sri Bhagavan*), passed away peacefully on November 30, after a heart-attack.

She first came to the Ashram on August 30, 1938, immediately after her marriage and ever since she visited the Ashram very regularly. A gentle and pious lady with unbounded faith in Sri Bhagavan, she was during her long stay in Delhi an active member of the Delhi Ramana Kendra and a living link between the Ramana devotees and pupils of the Madras Schools in Delhi.

SRI A. G. NARASIMHA

A fine Sanskrit Scholar and staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan, Sri A. G. Narasimha, was a tower of strength to Ramana Kendra, Delhi, as he used to be in earlier years to devotees in Calcutta, and elsewhere. He passed away in Delhi on December 23, leaving behind two daughters and a son. Smt. Alamelu, his wife, author of many Hindi, Kannada and Sanskrit songs on Sri Bhagavan, had preceded him in June 1985.

"There are not two minds, one good and the other evil. It is only the *vasanas* or tendencies of the mind that are of two kinds, good and favourable, evil and unfavourable. When the mind is associated with the former it is called good; and when associated with the latter it is called evil. However evil-minded other people may appear to you, it is not proper to hate or despise them. Likes and dislikes, love and hatred are equally to be eschewed. It is also not proper to let the mind often rest on objects or affairs of mundane life. As far as possible one should not interfere in the affairs of others. Everything offered to others is really an offering to oneself; and if only this truth were realized, who is there that would refuse any thing to others? "

— Sri Bhagavan in WHO AM I?



*Ramana
Publications*

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