

Self-Realization

MAGAZINE



Founded in 1925 by PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



SISTER DAYA HONORED IN PROCESSION, SIMLA, INDIA

Sister Daya being taken in procession through the main section of Simla, India. She is escorted on her right by Sri Hans Raj Agarwal, Registrar, Departmental Examinations, Punjab; and on her left by Sri R. C. Gupta (*white scroll in hand*), retired Undersecretary of Finance, Himachal Pradesh, and head of the Simla YSS Ashram; and Sri M. L. Ahuja, President, Simla Congress Committee.



PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Photograph taken on grounds of Self-Realization Fellowship Church,
San Diego, California, October 5, 1947. (See page 56.)

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July - August, 1959

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Three Paths to Cosmic Consciousness

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

*Excerpts from a class lecture given at SRF
Mt. Washington Center, Los Angeles, on February 9, 1934*

So long as even a little tremor of thought and mental restlessness are present, you cannot reach cosmic consciousness. The *Hong-Sau* technique* is very helpful for improving concentration. Its practice will save you from years of fruitless wandering on the subconscious plane. That is the land you want to avoid; it is full of illusory or imaginative experiences. One must reach the superconscious state to have real spiritual experiences and realizations of truth.

You may hear a lecture about sugar a hundred times but still not know the sweetness of sugar unless you have tasted it. When you practice a universal truth, even though you don't call yourself a Christian, Christ will claim you. When you live the teachings of any of the great prophets, you make truth your own; you begin to realize that truth is demonstrable and universal.

The silence of deep meditation should be practiced more in all churches. Everyone should talk less. I recall that during my hermitage training in India my guru Sri Yukteswar would lecture to us only once in a while. Most of the time we sat around him without any talking. If we even stirred he would reprove us. Meditation is the channel that puts you in touch with the Infinite Intelligence. When you commune with that Intelligence you are able to understand all the secrets of creation. A real teacher possesses more than book knowledge. In spiritual life it is necessary to learn from people who know that they know, because they have experienced, not merely read about, truth.

Concentration a Requisite for Finding God

Follow the path of truth steadfastly. Remember that out of thousands, only a few seek God; and out of those seekers, perhaps only one really knows Him. He who is persistent will realize God. So try your best to make meditation a regular experience in your life. May you never forget God and never be satisfied until you have Him! Be able to say, "Behind this finite frame I feel the Infinite." I never come to class until I know He is with me. I never teach unless I have made that complete communion. And I know that when I talk from that plane students will not forget what they have learned.

* Taught in the weekly Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) Lessons.

It is necessary to learn to concentrate. Without concentration you shall never find God. Learn how to shut out all earthly sounds. As soon as your concentration is right, God is there. He isn't hiding from you; you are hiding from Him. When with closed eyes you see any inward light, try to hold it and to feel you are inside it, one with it. That is where God is. Try to realize that you are inside that light.

The more peace you feel during concentration and the longer you concentrate, the deeper you will go in God. If the time given to reading books were spent in meditation you would have far greater advancement both mentally and spiritually. Sleep less, and give more hours to meditation; in that way you will enjoy rest that is a hundred times more refreshing than sleep.

Unless you can cut off sounds from your consciousness you are unable to reach God. That is why saints have sought the seclusion of caves and forests. Plunge into silence again and again by practicing the method of concentration that I have given you, and you will find great peace and happiness.

An Experience in Superconsciousness

I will share with you a recent experience I had in the superconscious state. I was sitting in the library here at Mt. Washington Center when suddenly my breath disappeared. My limbs became rigid and I found myself watching the process of death within my body. Breath and the power of movement had left the body—and yet I was conscious! This experience of death was not frightening, but wonderful. I saw my body and all Nature as a cosmic motion picture, created from God's light. Joyously I cried, "Lord, this whole world is nothing but a movie! There is no death!"

If you put a sealed jar of water in a tank of water, the water in the jar is separated from the water surrounding the jar; but if you remove the lid, the water in the jar and the water in the tank can mingle. Similarly, ordinary people shut God out because their consciousness is sealed in by the lid of ignorance. When that lid is removed, by right methods of meditation, one feels the peace of God inside and outside the body. As you increase the length and depth of your meditations you will find more and more peace, and an ever new joy. Whatever else you may try, it will not produce the divine consciousness that comes from meditation.

If you sink in God you will live evermore. If you sink in material desire you will suffocate. The Lord is all around us but we don't feel Him. And we cannot feel Him, within or without, until we remove the lid of ignorance and discover Him within ourselves.



Part of audience that overflowed Kalibari Hall, Simla, on April 16th to hear Sister Daya speak. (*Seated in front row*) Sri G. N. Kaul, Shahi Hakim Gyan Chand, Mrs. M. L. Ahuja; Sri Ahuja, President, Simla Congress Committee; Sri H. R. Vohra, retired District Inspector of Schools, Punjab; Sri A. Gupta, Inspector General of Police, Himachal Pradesh; and Sri R. P. Ranga, Accountant General, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. (*Second row*) Sri B. N. Maheshwari, Chief Secretary, Himachal Pradesh Administration; Mrs. H. R. Agarwal; Miss A. Nath; Sri Amar Nath, retired Foreman, Government of India Press; Sri B. K. Sharma, Principal, S.D.B. College; Bakshi Chanan Shah, retired Assistant Commissioner of Income Tax.

By grasping the following thoughts you will understand how God has given you a chance to see operating in your consciousness the same laws that govern the universe:

Space is divided into two parts or aspects. On the one hand there is nothing but God; there is no creation. This is the world of the darkless dark and the lightless light. Here God alone is. Another part of space contains creation.

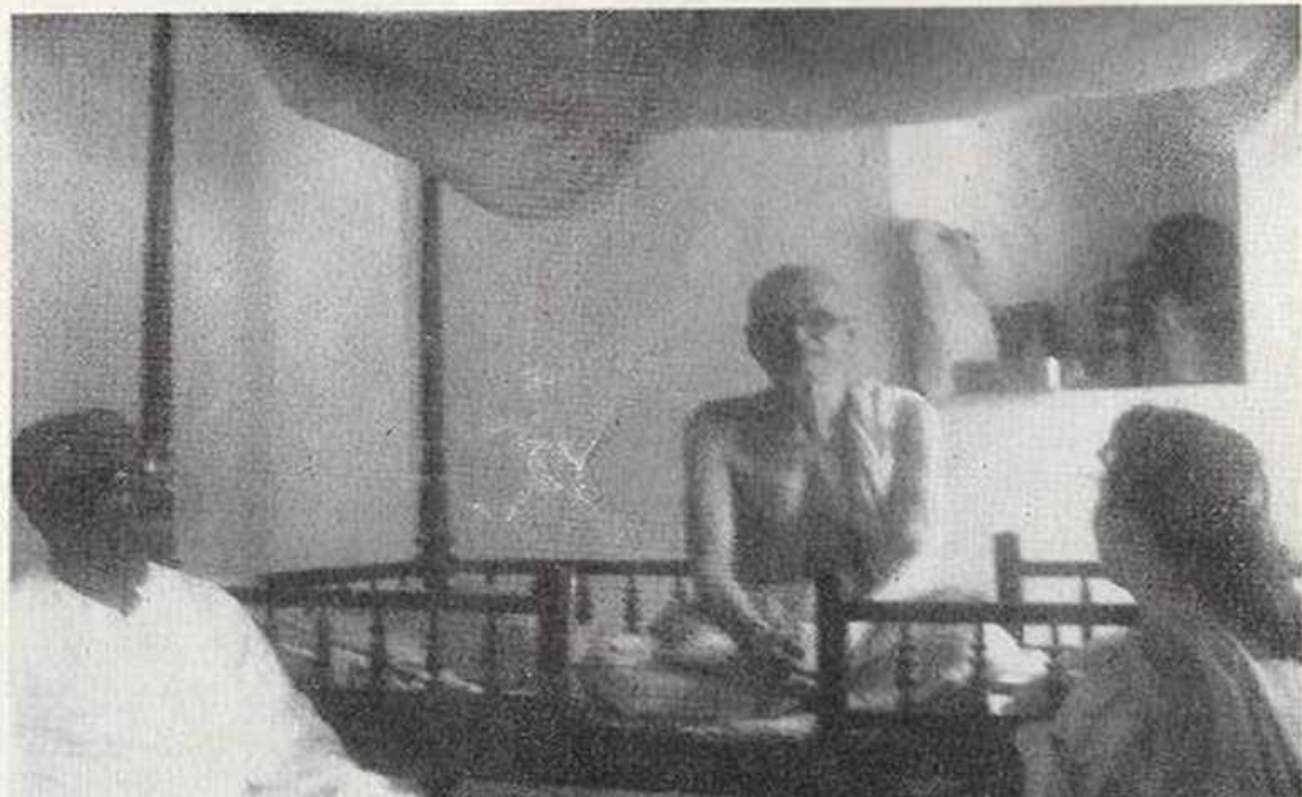
* The Invisible Source of Visible Worlds

The same thing is true of human consciousness. You have two sides to your being. One side is invisible and the other side is visible. Close your eyes and what do you see? Nothing—a dark void. Now the space where God exists is like that. God lives in the absolute consciousness beyond creation. No world or any other created thing is in His consciousness in that part of space where He reigns as the Absolute. And on the other side He beholds everything—all creation—in Himself.

In the Invisible is the factory of the universe. Einstein said that space looks very suspicious, because everything comes out of it and everything disappears into it. Where are the electrons vanishing, and where do the worlds go?

When some visible object attracts you strongly and you say, "It is marvelous," close your eyes and look within. Though you may feel nothing, see nothing, try to realize that all visible objects have come out of the Invisible. "The light shineth in darkness."* If you keep peering

* John 1:5.



His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya Bharati Krishna Tirtha with Sister Daya (*right*) and Sri Prabhas Ghosh, vice-president of YSS, at the historic Shankaracharya Math in Puri, May 1959

into the darkness you will find that great Light. Behind the darkness is the Christ-consciousness. Behind the darkness is the teeming life of other worlds.

Right behind space is Intelligence. And right behind you is God. Churn the darkness by your meditation. Don't stop until you find Him. There is so much to know! so much to see within! And the answer to every problem comes to you straight from the Infinite. The truths that you perceive within by meditation reveal the truths that science is discovering by other methods. When you close your eyes you may not see anything. But when I close my eyes I see, for example, the subtle life-currents flowing in my body.

Do Not Imagine God is Not With You

In the quietness you experience when you close your eyes, don't feel you are alone. God is with you. Why should you think He is not? The ether is filled with music that is caught by the radio — music that you would not otherwise know about. And so it is with God. He is with you every minute of your existence, yet the only way to realize this is to meditate. And those of you who do meditate should go deeper! Don't fall asleep at night until you actually feel some expression of the presence of God within you. Peer into that darkness until you discover its wondrous secrets.

There are three ways of attaining cosmic consciousness.

(1) The social way, wherein you shut "self" out and live for all. You should be loyal to your friends, and have love for all. Do you know why you were given a family? That you might expand your consciousness by living for others. In family life we learn to love and to sacrifice ourselves for others; thus we attain an expansion of consciousness. When love becomes personal it is exclusive, confined; when it becomes impersonal, it expands. Give impersonal love; be able to feel for everybody the same love that you bestow on your family, and to do for others exactly as you would do for yourself. The social way to cosmic consciousness is to love everyone in that way.

God loves all His children alike — they are all His divine family, and His love is impersonal. You should give that same kind of love to everyone. That is the divine plan. To forget it is to suffer. The whole world-attitude should change. You *are* everybody, because your true nature is omnipresence.

I enjoy giving things to others; I feel the greatest happiness in seeing their joy. When we feel for and love others, we find that all of creation responds to us. Jesus, who gave up his body as "a ransom for many,"* showed us the social way of attaining cosmic consciousness. Christlike, you too should serve all men as your Self.

* Matthew 20:28.

A ruler on his throne may say, "Ah, I am king!" but let death give one knock and he is gone. A real king is he who feels God in all forms in creation. Death shall not frighten him, because he sees it as a portal to the divine kingdom.

Cosmic Consciousness — the Happiest State

The man of cosmic consciousness is a happy man. He doesn't limit his love to a few, excluding everyone else. Make the whole world your own family. Will you remember that? That is what I feel all the time. I have no caste, no country; but all are mine. Love all men as your brothers, love all women as your sisters, and all old people as your parents. Love all human beings as your friends.

(2) The second path to cosmic consciousness is the way of discipline. Do not be a victim of immoderation. Enjoy things, but don't be attached to them. Be free. Be pleasant and self-controlled. Do not be a slave to habits, but act only according to your righteous convictions. To attain cosmic consciousness, it is necessary to possess self-control and to rise above dualities. Learn to endure all things without any excitement or disturbance of mind.

(3) Lastly is the way of meditation — the metaphysical path. If, while meditating, you are still conscious of the breath, you are tied to body awareness. To enter cosmic consciousness one must free himself from the bonds of the body through guru-given meditation methods.

Once you have found God you experience real and lasting satisfaction. Human friendships may be severed, but God will never leave you. Though everyone else forsake you, if you have Him, you have everything.



Sister Daya (*standing, seventh from right*) with members of Simla YSS Center, April 16th. At her right is Sri R. C. Gupta, leader of the Center.

Yoga Postures For Health

By B. TESNIERE, M.D., and BRAHMACHARI LELAND



SIRSHASANA—THE HEADSTAND

Present-day science is progressing so rapidly that many earlier conceptions and beliefs are being revised. The results of modern specialized scientific investigations are often surprising. For example, the physical world is no longer considered by scientists to be of a material nature, but a condensation of energy or even of thought (Sir James Jeans), or of mind stuff (Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington). "The spirit of the universe is the supreme reality," declares D. H. Andrews, professor of chemistry at Johns Hopkins University, who has recently opened a fantastic new perspective in science by recording the music of statues that "sing." And what about the process of dreaming, which has recently come within the reach of scientific instrumental exploration? Examples too numerous to mention testify to the rapid evolution of modern thinking toward a better understanding of the phenomena of life and creation.

In the particular field of bodily health, the ancient yoga pose analyzed in this article, *Sirshasana*, the Headstand,* offers an excellent subject for analysis in the modern scientific way.

Though practiced since time immemorial in the East (Janaka, a famous Indian king who lived more than 5000 years ago, was a practitioner of the pose), the inverted pose has come to be regarded in the Western world as "anti-natural." This idea originated as early as the thirteenth century in Europe, and in 1774 the Royal Humane Society prohibited "inversion" as a method of resuscitation.† At the time it was customary, and quite effective, to stand the victim on his head in order to get rid of water and froth in the lungs. The prohibition of this practice, however, was not unanimously accepted by medical authorities. Professor A. de Haen of Vienna University had just published in 1772 an important experimental work on the resuscitation of drowned dogs, in which he strongly advocated the inversion method. Nevertheless, prohibition of

* *Sirsha* means "head" in Sanskrit. The pose is also called *Sirasana* (*Sira* also meaning "head" in Sanskrit) or *Adhomukhatana*, literally, the Face-Down Pose. Other Sanskrit names for the pose will be given in the text.

† *Transactions of the Royal Humane Society* (1774-1794), London. The Society was founded in 1774 and was patterned after the first Society of this kind in the world—the Society for Recovery of Drowned Persons, which was organized in 1767 in Amsterdam.

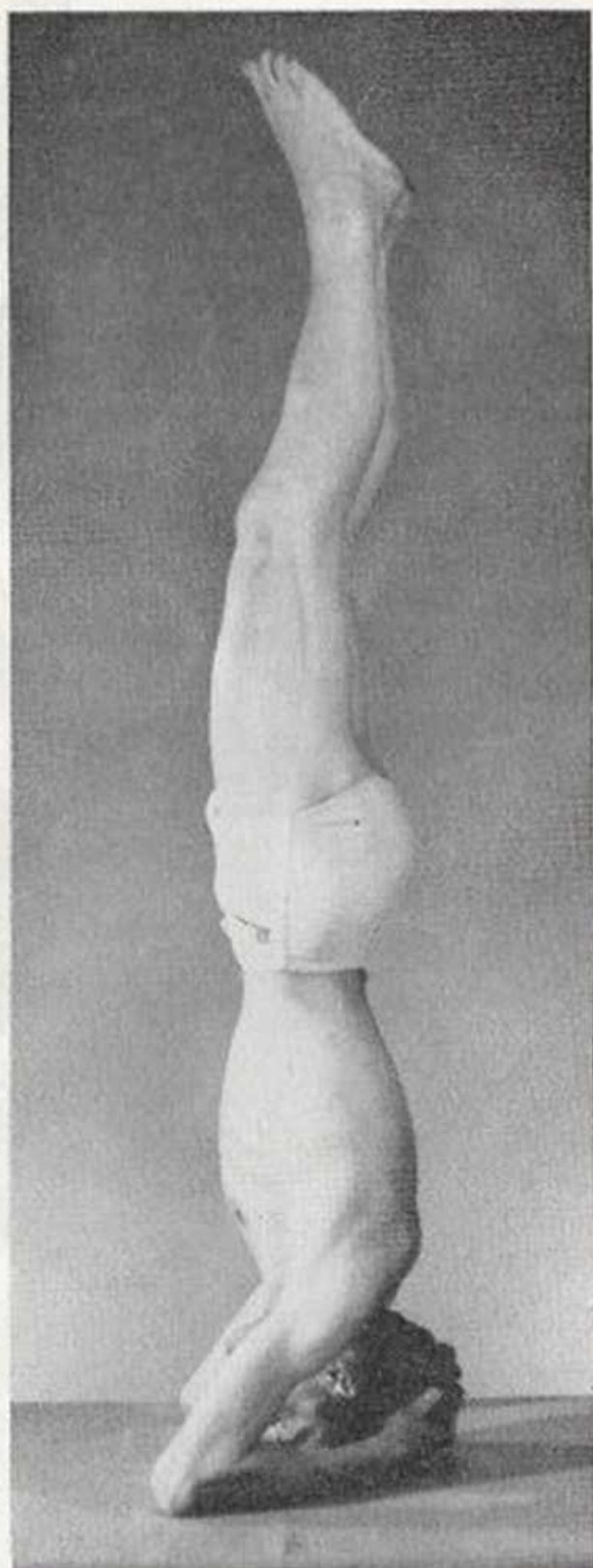
inversion spread over the United Kingdom, Europe, and the United States, concomitantly with the rapid growth of Humane Societies throughout the world.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, when the ancient Eastern science of Yoga became better known in the Western world, the public noticed the fact that inverted poses are used by yogis. It was natural to conclude that the practice of Yoga calls for standing on one's head. Many people thought that Yoga is only for those who are or want to be "different."

Yet the inverted position for resuscitation has never been given up by medical science. One of its best defenders was Dr. L. Prochownik, who in 1894 published such an impressive article that now a suspension method which bears his name is currently practiced for resuscitation of the newborn. Many other physicians and physiologists have expounded the great value of the head-down poses; we shall mention here only Dr. A. Tindal of Glasgow, who in 1945 reported his own effective method of inversion for resuscitating the drowned.

Limitations to the Practice

The main objection offered by the Royal Humane Society of London for prohibiting inversion was that its practice "increases the stagnation of blood in the head." This argument is oftentimes given nowadays in the West in regard to the Headstand. It is thought that the shifting of blood headward during



SIRSHASANA — HEADSTAND

the performance of *Sirshasana* may cause the rupture of a blood vessel in the brain, and thus lead to a stroke and paralysis. The objection, however, cannot be backed up either by the age-old experience of Eastern yogis or by modern Western scientific findings. Experimentation on animals shows that cerebral hemorrhages occur only when the gravitational force exerted headward exceeds five times that produced by the Headstand (Armstrong and Heim*). It is true that when the gravity pressure exceeds three times that met in *Sirshasana*, nosebleeds or small skin or eye (conjunctival) hemorrhages may occur in man (Von Diringshofen), but this condition of gravitational stress — sometimes experienced during fighting or acrobatic flight — is never realized in the Headstand. On the contrary, an ample margin of security is offered to the normal individual who wishes to practice the pose.

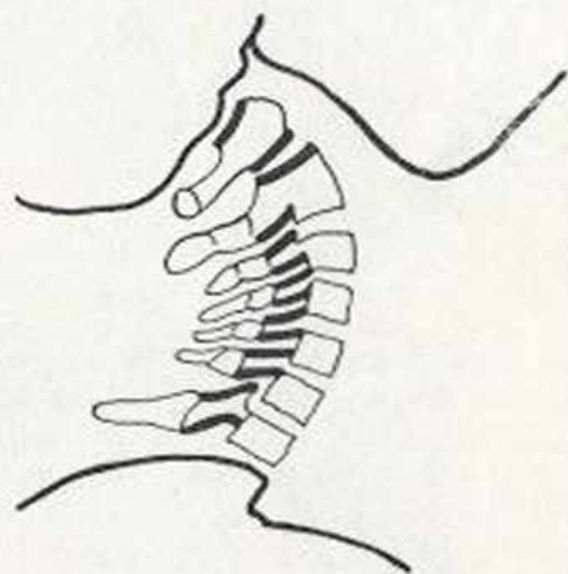
In cases of circulatory troubles, however, the argument is valid; any person who suffers from high blood pressure (over 150 mm. of mercury in young adults, and over 170 mm. of mercury in older persons); capillary resistance below normal; compression of the veins above the heart (veins of the superior *vena cava* system); heart diseases and lung diseases that impair the proper functioning of the heart; or eye troubles such as glaucoma, tendency to detachment of the retina, or weak eye capillaries, should not perform the Headstand.

Another objection commonly offered in the West in regard to the performance of the Headstand is that the vertebrae of the neck are not strong enough to support the weight of the whole body in the topsy-turvy position; that they are far less strong than the anklebone in the foot, which, although very small, supports the weight of the whole body, including the head. Clinical experience, however, shows that the vertebrae of the neck may be very resistant to compression. When the spinal column is submitted to vertical pressure exerted in the head-to-foot direction — for example, in an automobile accident in which a back-seat passenger hits the top of the car with his head — it is not usually the cervical vertebrae that are crushed but rather the dorso-lumbar vertebrae. Pressures can be exerted on the spinal column in two ways (Jefferson): (1) through the spongy and thus fragile vertebral bodies in front of the spinal cord, and (2) through the two columns of the vertebral joints in back of the spinal cord; however, these columns, being made of compact bone, are very resistant to compression. In normal sitting position, a back-seat passenger has his neck slightly flexed backward; in an accident creating a vertical impact, as when the head hits the car top, his neck usually transmits unaffected the pressures through its two resistant columns of vertebral joints; while his back, usually slumped against the upholstery, is flexed forward, so that the vertebrae have to transmit

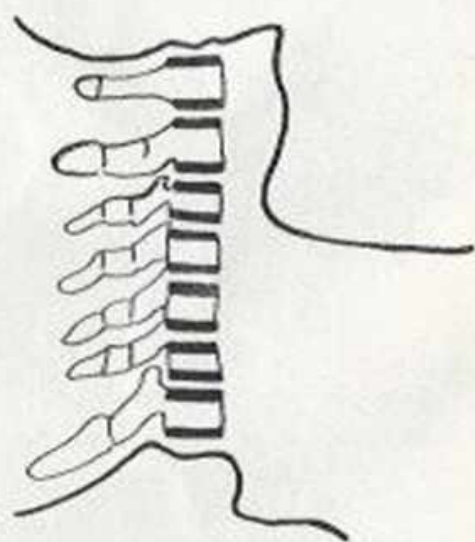
* Names in parentheses used in this article are those of eminent medical authorities.

the pressures through their fragile bodies and thus are usually crushed at the dorso-lumbar hinge (Wallace). Should the neck be flexed forward, or at least straightened up, as happens for example during shallow-water diving, then the cervical vertebrae, usually the fifth or sixth, would be fractured (Roberts).

These clinical facts have a very practical bearing on *Sirshasana*. Of the two positions of the neck that are usually described for the practice of the Headstand, namely (1) the straight-neck position (top of the head touching the ground) and (2) the backward-bent neck (hairline touching the ground), the latter position is much safer, as it shifts the body weight in the neck region from the fragile vertebral bodies to the resistant columns of the vertebral articular processes. X rays taken of the neck



Backward-bent neck position. Forces are transmitted through the two resistant posterior columns of the vertebral articular processes (heavy lines).



Straight-neck position. Forces are transmitted through the fragile column of the vertebral bodies (heavy lines).

(Adapted from Jefferson and Morris)

during the practice of *Sirshasana* confirm this view, and demonstrate that the neck vertebrae are more firmly imbedded in one another — thus affording more resistance to displacement — in the bent position of the neck than in its straight position.

Sirshasana, therefore, should never be practiced when the vertebrae or their surrounding ligaments and muscles are not in perfect condition. People who are overweight or who have bone fragility in general, especially porous bones (osteoporosis, a frequent affection in older people), should not perform the Headstand.

There is a third point concerning the practice of the pose during any ill-health condition which, although rarely stressed, is of importance. Since in the Headstand the blood is shifted from the lower part of the body to the upper part, and impregnates more fully the tissues and organs above the heart (the brain in particular), one should be careful that only healthy blood is given in extra amount to the brain. When the blood contains much carbon dioxide, as for example when one has remained for several hours in a closed room, *Sirshasana* should not be practiced. But if the blood is abundantly oxygenated, as after a few deep breaths, the practice of the pose is beneficial and particularly refreshing for the brain functions.

Likewise, when the blood is infected, as during general infectious diseases, or systemic infection of the heart and veins, or focal infection of the lungs or the teeth, the Headstand should not be practiced, because of the possibility of infecting the brain tissues and of formation of a brain abscess. This restriction, however, is unnecessary when a treatment against infection is instituted concomitantly with the practice of the pose. Two infectious diseases of the lungs (bronchiectasis and lung abscess) respond remarkably to "postural drainage" in a head-down position combined with anti-infectious therapy. But when the infection is so near the head that it can reach the brain tissue directly, such as in infectious diseases of the ear (otitis), or of the nasal sinuses (sinusitis), or of the face or skull, the Headstand should not be practiced.

To sum up these limitations from a pathological standpoint: persons who suffer from the cardiovascular, infectious, and eye diseases mentioned — especially pulmonary heart troubles — should never practice the Headstand or any other inverted posture. Overweight persons or those with neck-bone troubles should not practice *Sirshasana* but may perform other topsy-turvy poses such as, for example, *Viparita Karani*, the Dorsalstand,* and *Sarvangasana*, the Shoulderstand.†

From a physiological standpoint, the Headstand calls for the observance of the usual restrictions of asana practice. One should always wait two to three hours after a meal before practicing the Headstand. After violent exercise, one should not perform the pose until the body has calmed down, although he may practice *Viparita Karani*, the Dorsalstand. Women should abstain from the pose during their menstrual periods. Children and older people can do the pose; the Headstand will do them much good, and they usually like it; but, with children, one should first check that the anterior fontanelle in the skull is completely closed (normally it is closed by the time they are three years of age) and, with

* *Self-Realization Magazine*, January 1958.

† *Self-Realization Magazine*, July and November 1953.

older people, that their blood pressure is not above normal, that they have no tendency to glaucoma, that their bones are not porous, and especially that they have no pulmonary heart diseases.

Technique of Sirshasana

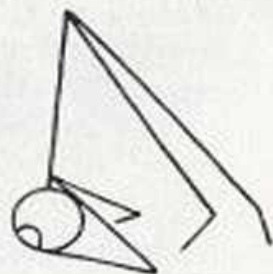
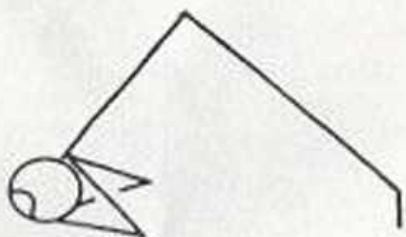
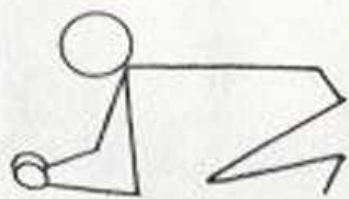
The technique of *Sirshasana* proper comprises the following steps:

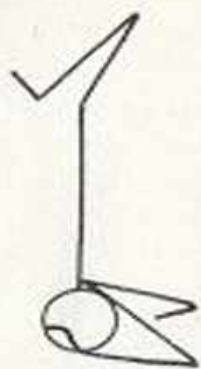
(1) Kneel, interlace the fingers, place the hands and elbows firmly on the floor. The position of the forearms is approximately a right angle.

(2) Bend forward and put the forehead at the hairline or just a little bit above the hairline (whichever is found to be more comfortable and felt to be more secure) on a soft pad or folded blanket. Rest the back of the head against the palms and interlaced fingers. Then lift the knees from the floor.

(3) Pushing with the legs, move the trunk until it reaches the vertical position of balance. Movements 1, 2, and 3 are easy to perform.

(4) Now comes the delicate part, which consists in maintaining one's balance while elevating the legs to the vertical position: slowly raise the legs from the floor until they are folded against the abdomen. Carefully balance the body in this position by tensing the biceps and the muscles of the forearms and hands.





(5) When balance is reached in position 4, gradually unfold the legs until they are vertical.

Stay in the pose for one minute, with normal breathing, concentrating the attention on the point between the eyebrows (the origin of soul perceptions).

Now gradually lower the legs to the starting position. Rest the forehead on the interlaced hands for several seconds, and then assume *Savasana*, the Relaxation Pose,* for at least one minute, or until heartbeats and breath have returned to normal. The longer one stays in the Relaxation Pose after the Headstand, trying to concentrate on the refreshing effects of the pose upon the upper part of the body, the better the results.

Keypoints and Hints for Success

(1) Be sure that the legs and especially the spine are kept straight; and that the toes are kept together and pointed upward.

(2) If breathing through the nostrils is not easy in the pose, it is because of the accumulation of venous blood in the upper part of the body and particularly in the mucous membrane of the nasal cavity (Wilkins *et al.*). In this case, breathing may be facilitated by pushing in and out with the abdomen rather than the rib cage. Only if this method does not work satisfactorily should one change from inhaling through the nostrils to breathing in through the mouth.

Airplane pilots face the same type of difficulty, although in a far more pronounced way, during outside loops or turns in gravitational flying, when their blood is forced headward with tremendous force. The pilots remedy this inconvenience by tightly shutting their lips, leaving only a small passage for the inhalation of air. This method, known as the suction maneuver or Müller maneuver, need not be practiced in the Headstand, wherein the gravity pull is three or even four times less than in gravitational flying; nor should it be practiced because, besides the disadvantage of oral breathing, it counteracts too much the effects of the Headstand on blood circulation, effects that are precisely what is sought in performing the pose.

(3) Beginners should do the pose only once a day, for one minute, preferably early in the morning, after a few deep respirations, since it

* *Self-Realization Magazine*, July 1958.

makes the mind sharp for beginning the day. After some weeks of daily practice of the pose, one may retain it for five minutes. If one should perspire before the five minutes are reached, he should immediately stop, as perspiration denotes the limit of one's bodily tolerance of the pose. In such case, one may instead perform the pose twice a day, upon wakening and before retiring, for two or three minutes each time.

(4) If the pose brings out "poisons" in the upper part of the body (some persons complain that practice of *Sirshasana* develops pimples in this region), discard the pose completely until the situation has cleared up. It is helpful at such times to practice instead any of the spinal asanas, since they all stimulate the organs of excretion (kidneys and liver). The drinking of a glass of milk after each performance of the pose is advocated by yogis in order to counteract biologically the effects of gravity on the bodily "poisons" dislodged by long practice of the pose.

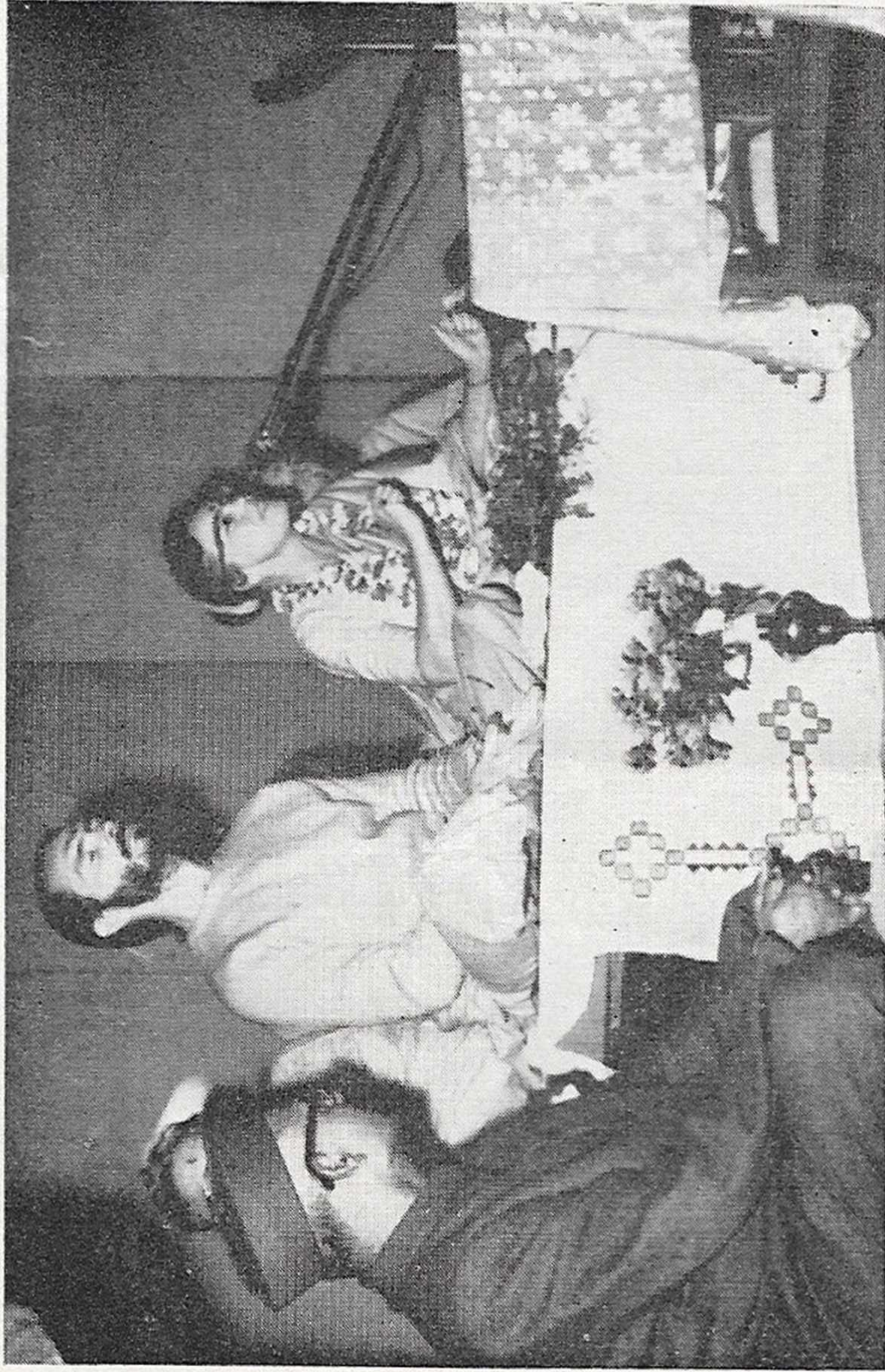
(5) If the pose is done in the early morning, it should be performed only after evacuation of the bladder and bowels. Matutinal sluggishness of the bowels may be counteracted by the powerful stimulation of a few rounds of *Uddiyana Bandha*, the Stomach Exercise.*

(6) To assume *Sirshasana* is simple; to maintain one's balance in the pose is harder. The feeling of equilibrium in the topsy-turvy position has to be developed. Some persons progress much faster than others in this respect. To practice alone against a wall, or in a large empty room, or to perform the pose with the help of a friend—these are various ways to improve one's balance. When one has achieved some proficiency, he may try to perform the pose with closed eyes, which further develops the sense of equilibrium. When one practices the pose alone in the middle of a large room, he should remember that there is an entirely safe maneuver for falling backward. As soon as he feels that he is losing his balance backward, he should immediately bend his head against his chest. In this way, he will harmlessly roll on his spine (the bending of the neck resulting automatically in the bending of the rest of the spine; this is the "duck your head" reflex described by Rudolph Magnus), instead of hurting himself by falling flat on the floor.

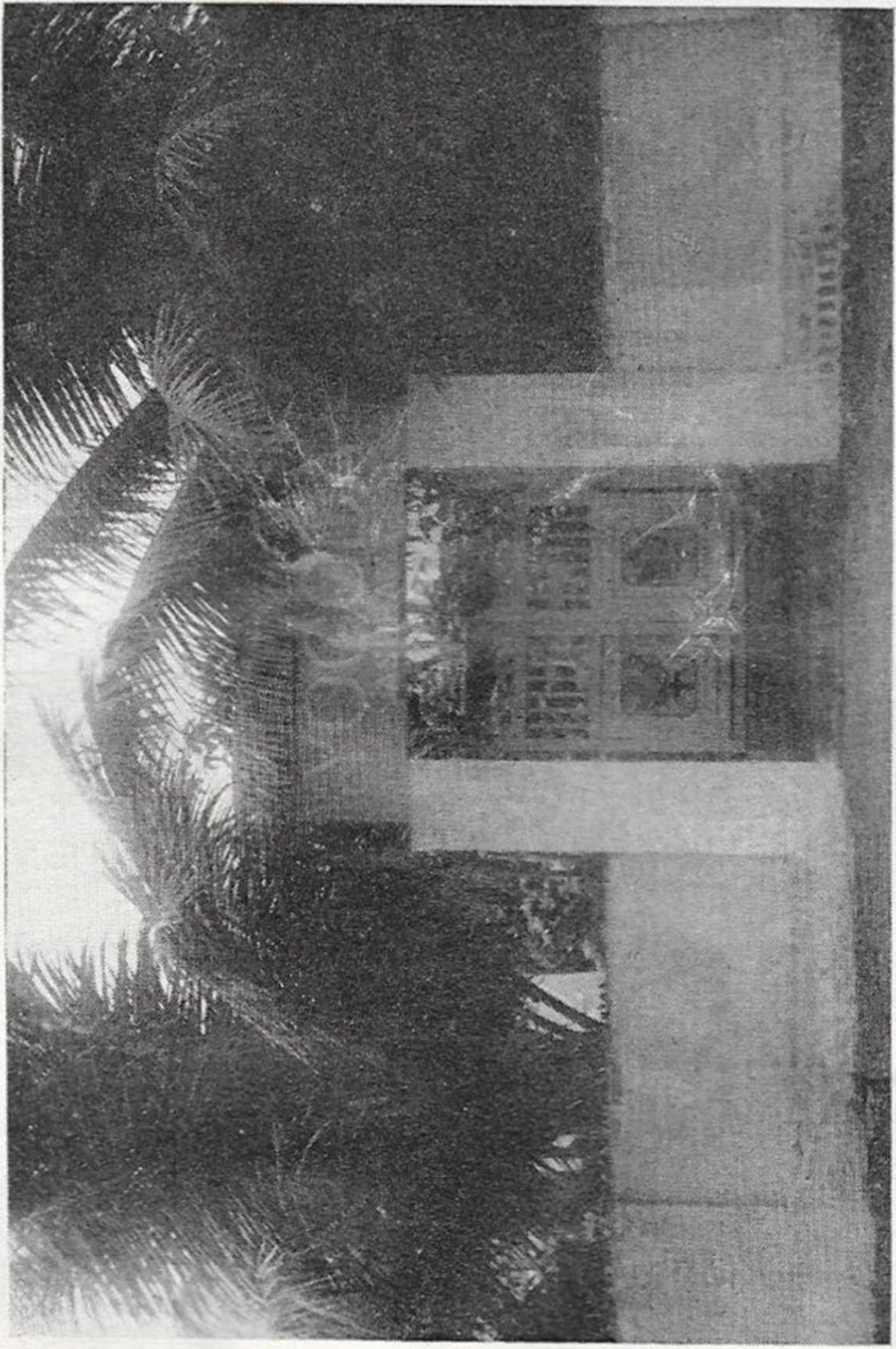
(7) Get into and out of the Headstand very slowly. Smooth practice deepens the benefits of the pose, while fast, jerky moves impair its efficacy.

(To be continued. Several variations of Sirshasana, as well as the physiological effects of the pose, will be taken up in the next issue.)

* *Self-Realization Magazine*, January 1957.



Sister Daya addressing gathering at Kalibari Hall, Simla, April 16th. On her right on dais is Brother Kriyananda. Seated on floor (*lower left*) is Sri R. C. Gupta, retired Undersecretary of Finance and Medicine, Himachal Pradesh, and leader of Simla YSS Center.



Entrance gate to Yogoda Ashram, Puri, founded by Swami Sri Yukteswar,
guru of Paramahansa Yogananda.

A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE *BHAGAVAD-GITA*

(India's greatest scripture, a part of the "Mahabharata" epic)

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Chapter XII, Stanza 10

Literal Translation

If, again, thou art not able to practice (yoga), be thou diligent in performing actions in the thought of Me. Even by engaging in activities on My behalf thou shalt attain supreme divine success.

Spiritual Interpretation

If a devotee fails in yoga practice but continues to perform meditative activities and the outer work of physically, mentally, and spiritually helping others just to please God, in time he will feel the perception of Him who is ever conscious of the struggling devotee's efforts.

If the seeker is habitually restless and materially active, unable to practice yoga meditation effectively, then he should cultivate faith and devotion to God, and perform in His Name all physical, mental, and spiritual actions.

The Bible tells us: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* By performance of right actions with

* *Hebrews 11:1.*

faith in the Lord, a devotee will ultimately find, through perceptible response from Him, proof of His unseen presence.

Even if the seeker is discouraged by lack of tangible results, with blind conviction he should keep on meditating on *Aum*, out of awe and love for God.

One who discontinues his meditations and ceases the performance of good activities finds that his mind returns to the sphere of matter, its habitual resting place. But the man who, with unabated zeal, tries to please God by meditation and good activities will ultimately find Him.

The best cure for restlessness is to try continuously to be peaceful regardless of success or failure. Strong, die-hard bad habits of restlessness can be destroyed by the gradual formation of the good habit of attaining restfulness by meditation.

I knew two extremely ignorant students, in my high school days in Calcutta. Owing to their inability to grasp the class lessons they were subjected to daily ridicule from the teachers. One of the students "couldn't take it": he quit school and remained uneducated. The other student, no matter what insults he suffered, kept on trying. Everybody was astounded when at the end of the year he passed creditably his final examinations.

Similarly, the *Bhagavad-Gita* here advises the most restless devotee, one without good karma, to meditate incessantly for God-realization, for thus he will ultimately succeed in attaining it.

If a student practices the SRF techniques even without hearing the cosmic sound of *Aum*—which most students are able to perceive during meditation—in time he will be spiritually rewarded.

Chapter XII, Stanza 11

Literal Translation

If thou art not able to do even this, then remain concentrated on and sheltered in Me. Keep trying to know thyself; relinquish the fruits of all actions.

Spiritual Interpretation

If a devotee, owing to materialistic tendencies and mental perversity, is unable to perform material and meditative actions just to please God, he should develop faith in Him and perform all actions without concentrating on their fruits.

A materialistic man, not knowing God, is unable to perform actions with all thoughts centered on Him. But, just by cultivating a simple faith in God and by trying unselfishly to perform good deeds and meditative

actions without concentrating on their results, that devotee in time will grow in spirituality; his mind and heart will ultimately be purified.

A mind freed from the likes and dislikes that are born of selfish activities is able to manifest the soul qualities. When a restless person assiduously performs meditative actions without concentrating on their results he can meditate better; he will not be disturbed and distracted by a craving for rewards. Even without the desire to please God, he who keeps on thinking about Him during all good activities will ultimately find Him.

Here the devotee might wonder: "How can I think of God without knowing Him?" Just as a person who keeps on squeezing olives and pressing mustard seeds in time will extract the hidden oil, so the devotee to whom God is not perceptible in the beginning will find Him by the "pressure" of loyal devotion and the unselfish performance of good actions. Some day the merciful Omniscience, feeling the constancy of the devotee's goodness, will flow into and permeate every fiber of his being.

If the seeker continues to practice the Self-Realization Fellowship techniques in spite of extreme restlessness he will be able eventually to hear the cosmic *Aum* sound of God. If he keeps on listening to the cosmic sound with devotion, without concentrating on results, in time he will feel the blessed Spirit behind it, and thus rise above good and evil karma. In the flame of blessedness all seeds of karma and of the changeable consciousness of matter will be burnt forever.



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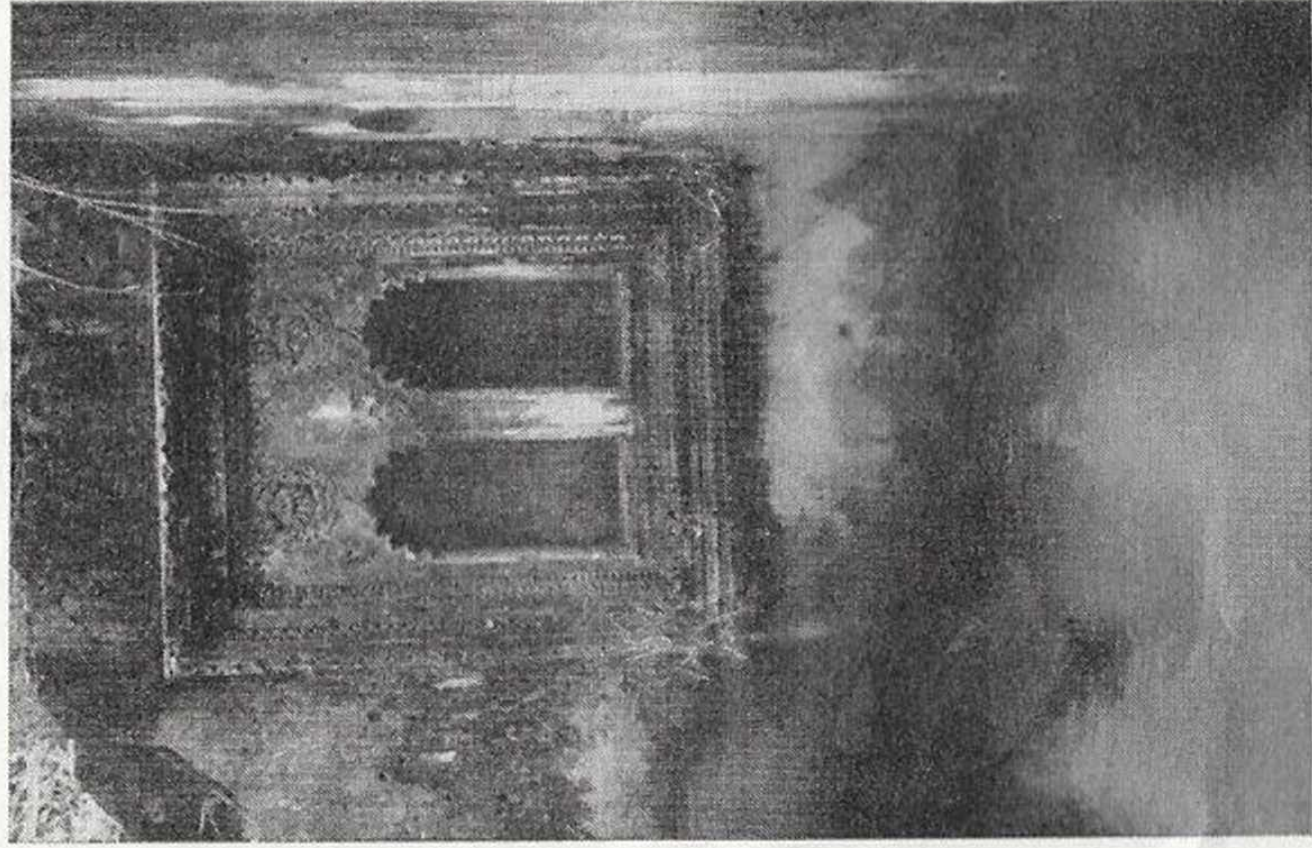
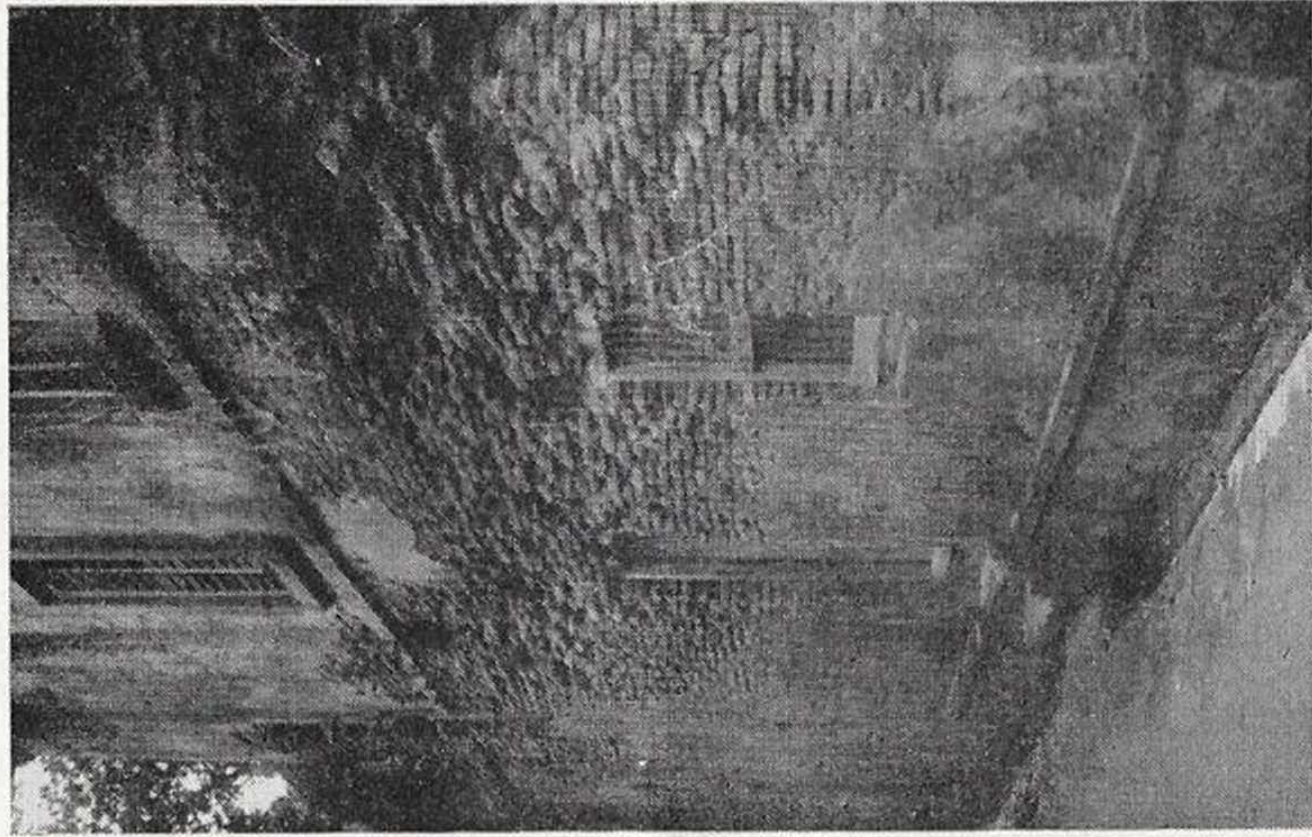
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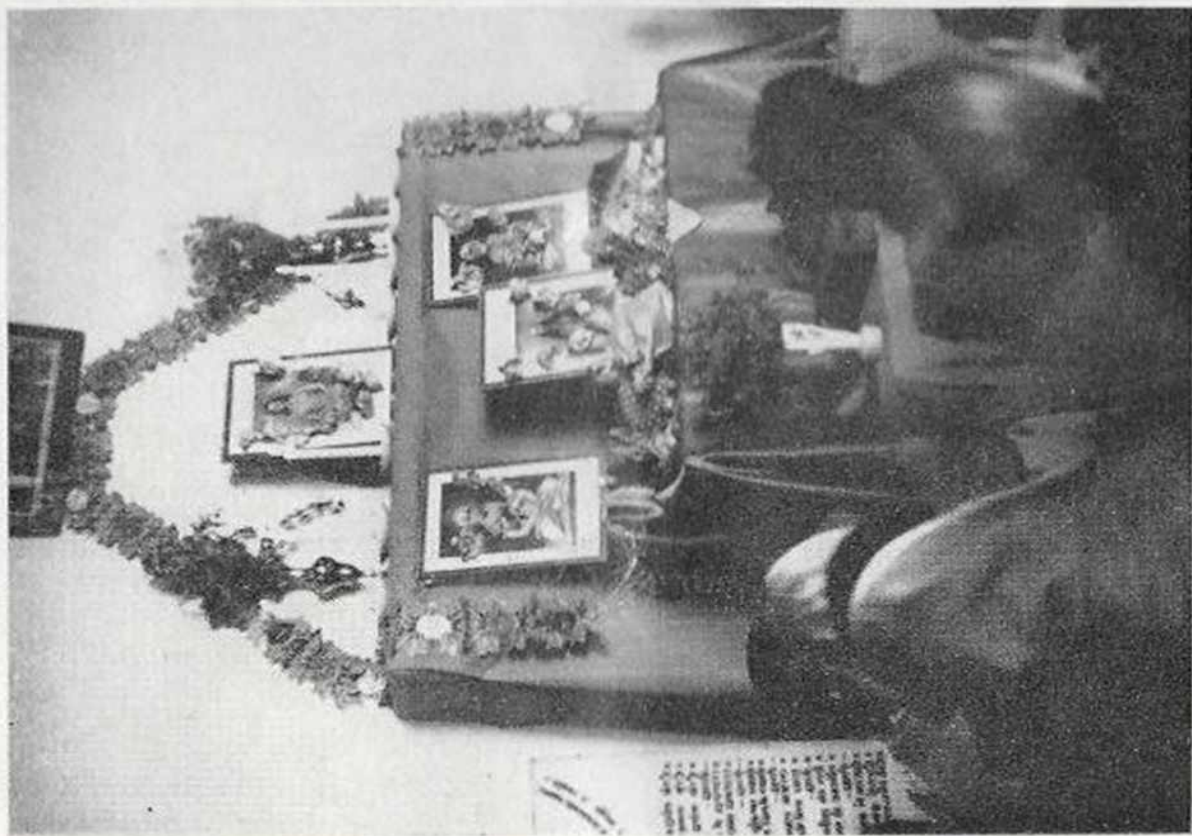
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Sisters Vijoya and Sraddha with (left to right) Brothers Bhaktananda, Anandamoy, Bimalananda, and Brahmachari Leland, at entrance to monks' new refectory, SRF Mt. Washington Center, Los Angeles. Sister Sraddha conducted the dedication ceremony on May 9th.



(Left) Photo taken in 1959 of building that was formerly the Serampore ashram of Swami Sri Yukteswar. (Right) Decorative wall niches in second-floor room.



(Left) Altar at Simla Yogoda Ashram, decorated for reception for Sister Daya, April 14th. (Right) Sister Daya en route to reception in her honor at Yogoda Ashram, Simla.



Marble shrine over crypt of Swami Sri Yukteswar (guru of Paramahansa Yogananda) in Puri, India, viewed from roof of YSS Ashram. At center of ornamental planting in foreground is the Sanskrit symbol for *Aum*.



Yogoda Sat-Sanga (SRF) Ashram, Baranagar (near Calcutta), headquarters of Sister Daya, YSS-SRF president, during her stay in India. (*Above*) front and side of building reflected in large tank (pond) on the three-acre garden property. Opposite side of building is shown below.