



Self-Realization

MAGAZINE

Founded in 1925 by PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



STUDENTS FROM MEXICO AT SRF HEADQUARTERS

Sri Daya Mata, president of SRF (*extreme right*), with Yogacharya Cuaron, leader of Mexico City SRF Center (*right, standing*), and a group of SRF students from Mexico, July 8th. The guests were in Los Angeles to attend the annual SRF Summer Classes and *Kriya Yoga* Initiation.

Healing of Body, Mind, and Soul

July - August 1962

25¢

Self-Realization Magazine

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Vol. 33, No. 6

Solving the Mystery of the Body	3
<i>By Paramahansa Yogananda</i>	
Yoga Postures for Health	11
<i>By B. Tesnière, M.D.</i>	
Give Us a True Conception of Brotherhood	16
<i>By Paramahansa Yogananda</i>	
In Search of the Supreme	17
<i>By Mahatma Gandhi</i>	
SRF Views on Astrology	23
Soul Whispers	25
<i>By Paramahansa Yogananda</i>	
News of SRF Centers	26
Book Review	31
<i>Reincarnation</i>	
Letters From SRF Students	45
Directory of SRF-YSS Centers	: 52

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Second-class postage paid at Los Angeles, California.

Issued bimonthly. Single copy, 25¢. Subscriptions: one year, \$1.50; two years, \$2.50; three years, \$3.00. No additional charge for foreign postage.

Subscribers will please send notification of a change of address one month in advance. (Post Office does not forward magazines to a new address unless subscriber arranges with P.O. for that service.)



SRF SUMMER CLASSES 1962

(Above) SRF students at convening of first class in the annual summer series at SRF India Hall, Hollywood, California, July 3, 1962.

(Below) Students hear welcoming address by Sri Daya Mata, president of Self-Realization Fellowship (*center, on platform*), in India Hall.

Solving the Mystery of the Body

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



The four factors of mind, breath, vital essence, and body are intimately interrelated. When any one of the four factors is disturbed, the other three are also automatically disturbed.

The devotee, therefore, who aspires to develop steadily in spirituality must calm the mind by the practice of concentration, must keep the breath quiet by proper breathing exercises, must preserve the vital essence by sexual control and by seeking only the company of good persons, and must free the body from restlessness and aimless motions.

After deep meditation a man finds the ego reasserting itself by disturbing the calm rhythms of the breath. The soul then tries to revive the devotee's intuitive consciousness by sounding a series of astral vibrations. In meditation the return of the soul to its kingdom requires it to pass from awareness of flesh to awareness of astral existence. That is, the way of the soul from the body to superconsciousness lies through an intermediate world — man's astral or vital-electrical system. The physical body is woven with tissues of flesh; the astral body is woven with filaments of electrical life force.

The circulation of the blood, the pumping of the heart, and the movement of breathing in the physical body all give rise to various sounds. These vibrations are heard when man's attention is concentrated on the inside of the body. By meditation, man passes beyond the physical sounds of matter (the droning sounds of circulation, the thump of the heart) and begins to hear various vibratory sounds of the astral vital forces (sounds like the blowing of conch shells; or round, full, rolling vibrations).

In the battle between the ego's pull toward the body and the soul's movement toward the astral world, the devotee is conscious of the roaring sound of the breath when he becomes identified with the body, but hears astral bells and the music of the spheres when he passes through the astral kingdom. The gross vibrations are heard when man is still on the plane of body consciousness. The astral vibrations are not heard until man reaches the inner astral plane.

Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether Elements

The earth element (*sahadeva*) is represented in man's coccygeal center in the spine. The devotee concentrating on this plexus hears the *Aum* or cosmic vibration in a peculiar sound like the drone of a honey-mad bee. The devotee then wonders doubtfully whether this drone is a bodily vibration or an astral sound. This state of concentration is therefore called *sabitarka sampragyata samadhi*, "the doubt-ridden state of inner absorption." This center is the abode of the mind in its very first stage of meditation.

The water element (*nakulah*) is manifested in the sacral plexus. The devotee concentrating on this center is lifted beyond the doubting state of mind to a surer, more discriminating state; he listens to a higher sound, that of the astral flute. This state is called *sabichara sampragyata samadhi*, or the "intellectual, reason-guided state of inner absorption."

The fire element (*manipura*) is expressed in the lumbar plexus. The devotee concentrating on this center hears the astral harp. Owing to the dissolution of the doubting mental state and of the discriminating intellectual state, he now attains the state of perceptive Self-realization and of inner absorption in Bliss, or *sananda sampragyata samadhi*.

The air, or the life-force, element (*akashakash*) appears in the dorsal plexus. The devotee concentrating on this center hears a deep, long-drawn-out astral bell — a "symbol of God." The mental, the intellectual, and the perceptive states of mind are now all dissolved — the devotee has arrived at an intuitive state of Bliss, *sasmita sampragyata samadhi*, in which, however, some ego consciousness yet remains.

The ether element (*mannikash*) is manifested in the cervical center of the spine. The devotee concentrating at this plexus hears the eternity controlling, infinitely spreading cosmic sound — a vibration like the mighty roar of an ocean. In this state, the four preceding states — mental, intellectual, perceptive, and egoistic — have been dissolved, giving rise to a more expanded, a deeper, state of divine joyousness, the intuitive perception called *asampragyata samadhi*.

Although the lower states of human consciousness are now extinct, *asampragyata samadhi* is not unconsciousness but a state in which man is at home in all space, fully embracing Omnipresence.

The state of *panchajanyam hrishiksha* is a mingling of the var-



Paramahansa Yogananda's study in Self-Realization Fellowship Hermitage, Encinitas, California. Lights hidden by molding near ceiling give indirect illumination. The room is now a shrine.

ious sounds of the five plexuses. This symphony is heard in the Christ Consciousness center — located in the forehead between the eyebrows and in the medullary plexus. Here the devotee enjoys a greater *sabikalpa samadhi*, union with God.

When the devotee reaches the highest cerebral plexus, he consciously attains the supreme or final state — *nirbikalpa samadhi*.

A layman, reading these explanations, may wonder what it is all about! A devotee, however, knows that by the *practice* of yoga these astral sounds may be distinctly heard. Yoga is indeed a *science*, perfectly organized by the ancient sages of India.

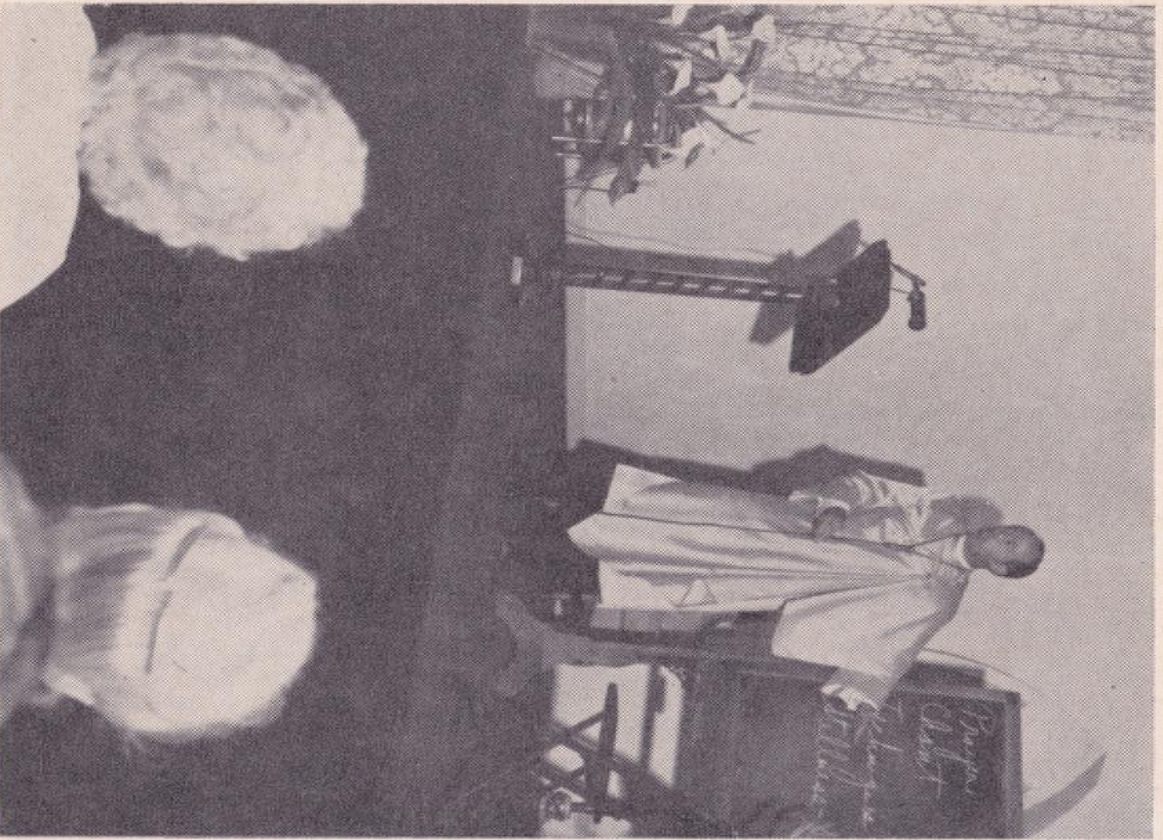
The Universe is a Play of Lights and Shadows

An Australian bushman who sees a talking motion picture for the first time might easily believe the activities to be those of living men and women. One way to convince him that the talking picture is nothing but a play of electric vibrations is to take him near the screen and there let him touch the shadowy pictures to discover their unreal nature. Another way to convince him that the talking pictures are nothing but electrical vibrations, a play of lights and shadows, is to show him how the torrent of electric light emanating from the little opening in the operating room is carrying within its beam the power to project on the screen a series of realistic pictures.

To a materialist, the whole world — its complications of solids, liquids, fire, gases, and so forth — seems to be composed of real material substances. But the advanced yogi, from the depths of Self-realization, is able to say: "This universe is only shadows of life thrown on the screen of space."

The world consists of dream pictures reflected in our conscious and subconscious mental chambers. Just as the flood of electric light going out of the booth is seen to be like a transparent searchlight free from any inherent pictures, so God, from His booth in the center of eternity, is emanating a spherical bundle of rays, invisible searchlights, which produce on the screen of space an endless variety of apparently real pictures.

The yogi, peering with closed eyes into the dark invisibility, finally finds there six booths — the coccygeal, sacral, lumbar, dorsal, cervical, and Christ centers; situated in the spinal column and in the point between the eyebrows. By concentrating on the six centers he hears successively the music of the bumblebee, the flute, the harp,



Brother Bhaktananda (*left*) and Brother Mokshananda, who expounded Self-Realization Fellowship teachings during Summer Classes in July at SRF India Center, Hollywood, California

the gong bell, the sea roar, and then a symphony of all astral sounds. These emanations from the six centers represent the vibrations of the various elements in Nature.

Just as a flood of electric light thrown on a screen makes a peculiar noise that is caused by electrical vibration, so the astral spinal centers emanate different musical sounds as they send out in space various currents that cause man's awareness of the true-to-sight, true-to-touch, true-to-hearing, true-to-smell, and true-to-taste pictures of the physical cosmos.

The picture of man's body is produced by six vibrations — an earth current in the coccyx, a water vibration in the sacral center, a fire vibration in the lumbar center, an air vibration in the dorsal center, an ether vibration in the cervical center, and a consciousness-and-life vibration in the medulla oblongata and in the Christ center.

The Work of the Six Creative Currents

The life current in the coccyx is the force responsible for the solidifying of the primal life force into atoms of flesh; as it operates, this center emanates the sound of a buzzing bee.

The sacral center sustains the atoms of all watery substances in the body; its work emits the musical sound of a flute.

The lumbar center maintains the astral glow and the electrical heat of the body — activities that are performed to the accompaniment of beautiful harp sounds.

The dorsal center enables the oxygen and the air elements in the body to combine with the physical cells; its work gives forth the sound of a gong bell.

The cervical plexus maintains the etheric background in the body, tuning it to all spatial vibrations. The cervical center reverberates with a cosmic vibration like the booming ocean.

The Christ center, in the medulla and in the spot between the eyebrows, is the dynamo of consciousness, of life force, and of the vibratory element-matrices. This high center continuously recharges with life and consciousness all the earthy, watery, fiery, airy, and etheric elements of the body.

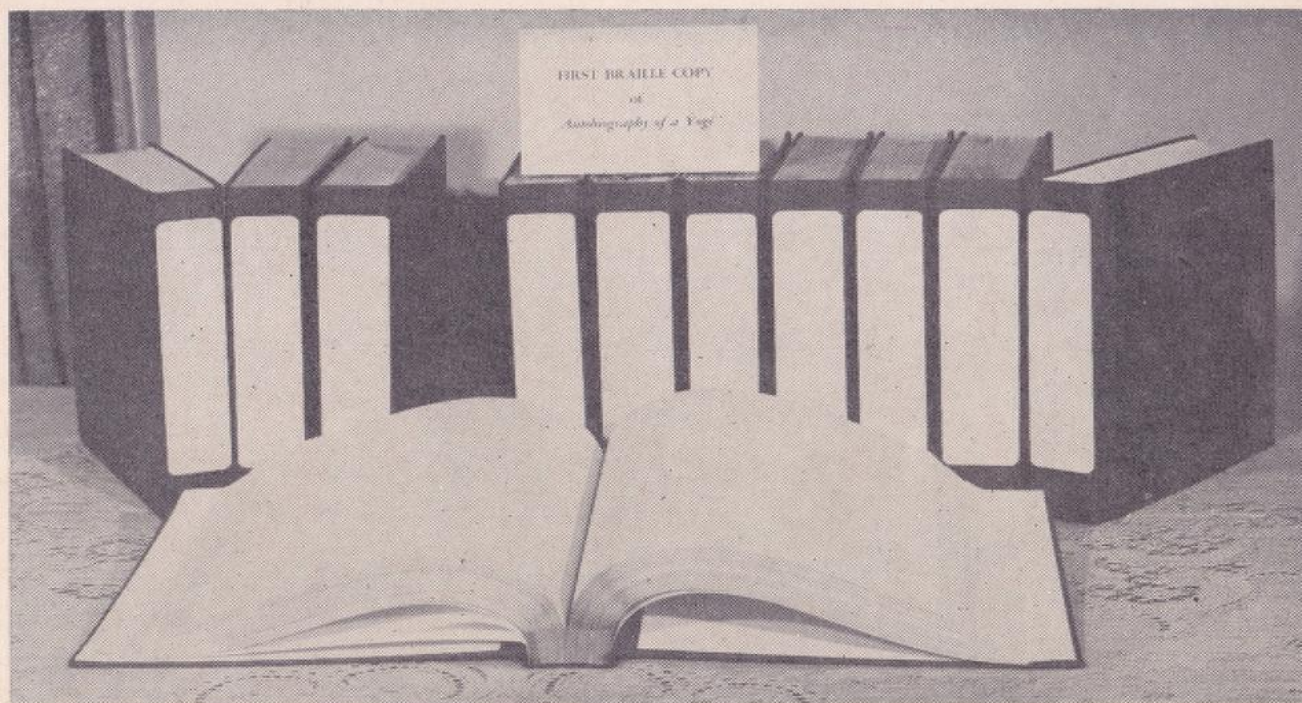
In other words, the body is not at all what it appears to be! Man's form is a complicated result of the combination of six currents that emanate from six astral plexuses.

The spiritual aspirant, eager to solve the mystery of the body, understands it only when his attention is placed on the six inner booths, which, throwing out six currents, are responsible for producing the picture of the body. By knowledge of these six currents and by years of meditation the yogi learns to know the physical form not as a solid mass but as a manifestation of etheric lights.

The Etheric Basis of the Body

The operator in the booth knows that the talking pictures are unreal—mere combinations of light and sound that assume, for the unthinking audience, a specious air of reality.

A yogi, similarly, viewing the inner operating booths of the six centers, knows the body to be an etheric combination of various currents—a form that the eyes of ignorant worldly men behold as a



"AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI" IN BRAILLE

These eleven volumes bound in sturdy buckram constitute the first Braille copy of Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi*. It was given to SRF by Mr. and Mrs. John E. Roberts. SRF recently presented it to the Braille Institute, from which it is now available for home use by blind persons anywhere in the U.S.A. Persons interested in borrowing the book should write directly to Braille Institute of America, Inc., 741 North Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles 29, California.

solid substance. A yogi who rightly understands the etheric basis of the physical cells is able to materialize or dematerialize his body at will.

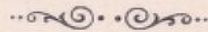
The psychological battle between the sense-bound mind and the soulful power of discrimination gives rise to various vibrations. The worldly man whose attention is matter-bound hears the noises of the external world. The spiritual devotee, listening within, first hears only the gross sounds of the blood circulation and so on, ready to bring him back to matter. As his attention deepens he hears the astral music of the bumblebee, flute, harp, gong bell, sea roar, and symphony. Following those sounds, he learns to locate the centers. Locating the centers, he actually sees them. This achievement ordinarily requires years of meditation. Finally, viewing the centers, the yogi has solved the mystery of the body; he knows it as a manipulatable form of light vibrations.



Building at entrance to grounds of SRF Hermitage in Encinitas, California, contains two garages, an office, and an upstairs five-room apartment

Yoga Postures for Health

By B. TESNIÈRE, M.D.



SASANGASANA — THE HARE POSE

Sasangasana is a very simple yoga posture, little known in the West. Its name derives from three Sanskrit words: *sasa*, *anga*, *asana*, which mean respectively "hare," "body," "pose." The curve of the spine in *Sasangasana* resembles that formed by the saddle, loin, and rump of a crouching hare.

Sasangasana belongs to a class of yoga postures that bend the spine forward. Of this series the Hare Pose is the easiest to perform. It is related to two other yoga asanas: *Halasana*, the Plow Pose, which has been described in a previous issue, and *Karnapidhasana*, the Ear-Closing Pose (*Fig. 1*).

The principle of *Sasangasana* is to exert pressure specifically on the section of the spine that lies between the shoulder blades. *Halasana* and *Karnapidhasana* are very effective in this respect, but *Sasangasana* is even more so.

Sasangasana may be performed by anyone. Its practice is most beneficial in the afternoon or evening. This is particularly true for persons who sit bent forward at their work for long periods during the day, because the pose stimulates the blood circulation in the over-worked dorsal region of the spine.

Technique of Sasangasana

Sasangasana is accomplished in four simple steps (*Fig. 2*):

(1) Kneel with the knees together and the feet together, resting the buttocks on the heels — *Vajrasana* or Diamond Pose.

(2) Grasp the heels with the hands.

(3) Bend forward so as to place the top of the head on the floor, the forehead touching the knees. This forward movement elevates the buttocks.

(4) Push the trunk forward as far as possible. Remain in that pose for a short time, then reassume *Vajrasana*.

Rules for Correct Practice

Timing: Stay 10 seconds in *Sasangasana*, then remain 10 seconds in *Vajrasana*; this is one cycle. Repeat the cycle 5 times. End with *Savasana*, the Relaxation Pose.

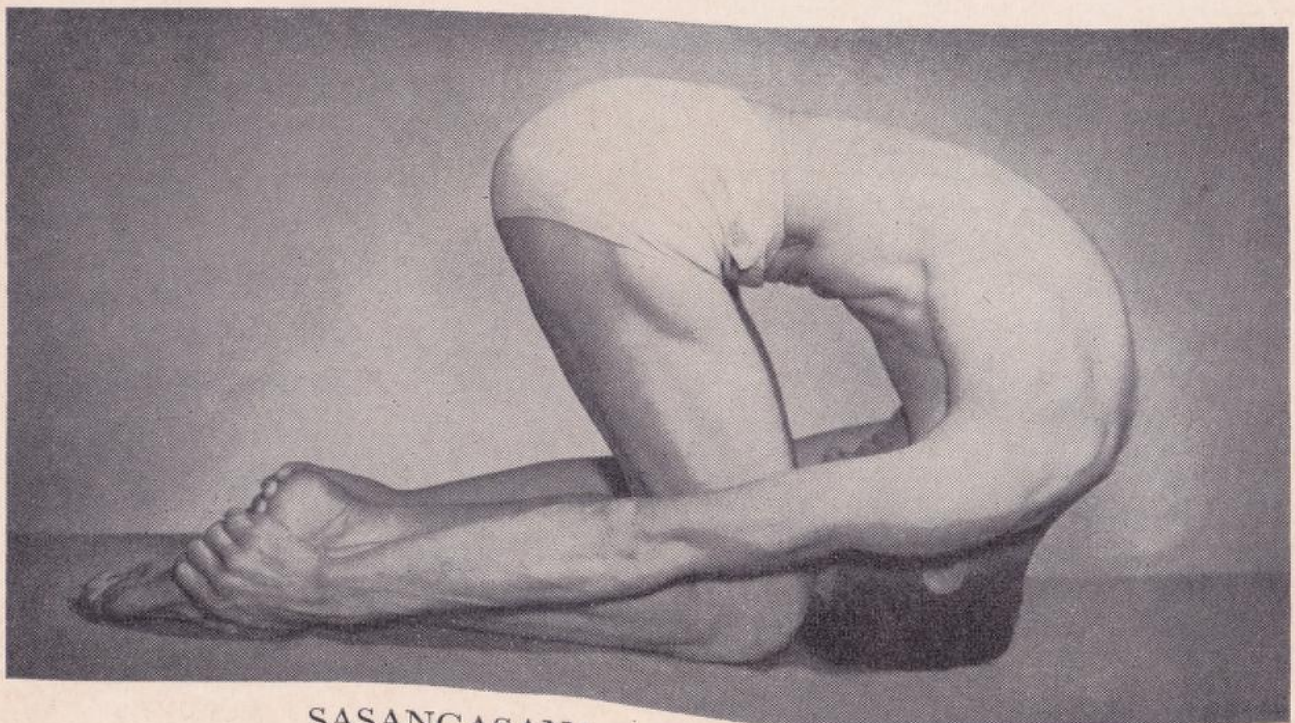
After proficiency has been gained, one may adopt another rhythm: hold the pose for one minute and then relax for at least the same length of time in *Savasana*. In this alternate method there is no intermediary sitting in *Vajrasana*.

Breathing: Exhale before bending forward; hold the breath while in the pose; then inhale upon resuming the upright position. If you cannot hold the breath comfortably for 10 seconds, do not force yourself to do so; instead, hold the breath for 5 seconds only, and relax for only 5 seconds in the subsequent Diamond Pose.

When proficiency has been attained one may continue normal breathing while holding the pose.

Object of concentration: One's attention should be directed to the spinal region between the shoulder blades or to the area in the forehead between the eyebrows.

Keypoints for correct practice: Keep the forehead against the knees; keep the arms straight; make an accentuated curve with the back by arching it as much as possible.



SASANGASANA — THE HARE POSE

Variations of the Hare Pose

There are very few variations of, or postures similar to, the Hare Pose. Of these the following three should be mentioned:

(1) One modification consists in cupping the hands on the knees, and placing the head on the floor 12 inches in front of the knees (*Fig. 3b*). This is easier to perform than *Sasangasana* proper and may therefore be used to advantage by beginners. However, as the pull on the spine is far less marked and consequently far less effective than in the regular pose, one should practice *Sasangasana* proper as soon as possible.

(2) The *namaz* prostration made by Moslems as a part of their daily worship is somewhat related to the Hare Pose. In both cases the feet and shanks are on the ground, the buttocks raised, the trunk is bent forward, and the head touches the ground. The differences are in the orientation of the head and the position of the upper limbs: in the *namaz* pose the forehead (not the top of the head) touches the ground, the arms are bent at the elbow, and the hands are placed flat on the ground by each side of the forehead (*Fig. 3c*).

Although these two postures are assumed for different reasons — *Sasangasana* for its physiological value, the *namaz* position as an ex-

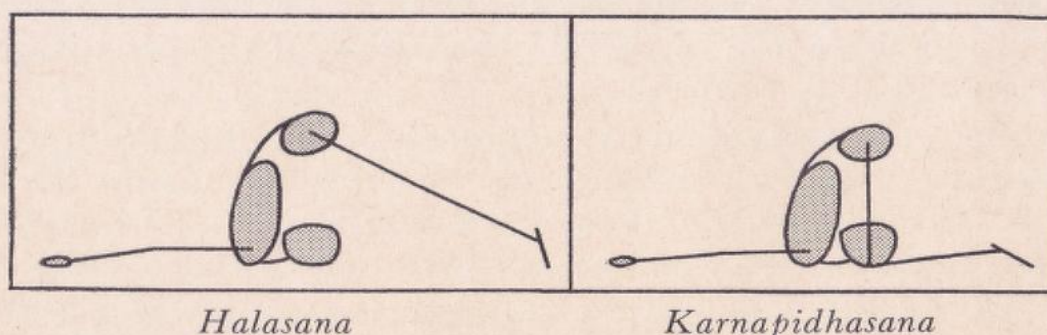


FIG. 1 — POSES RELATED TO SASANGASANA

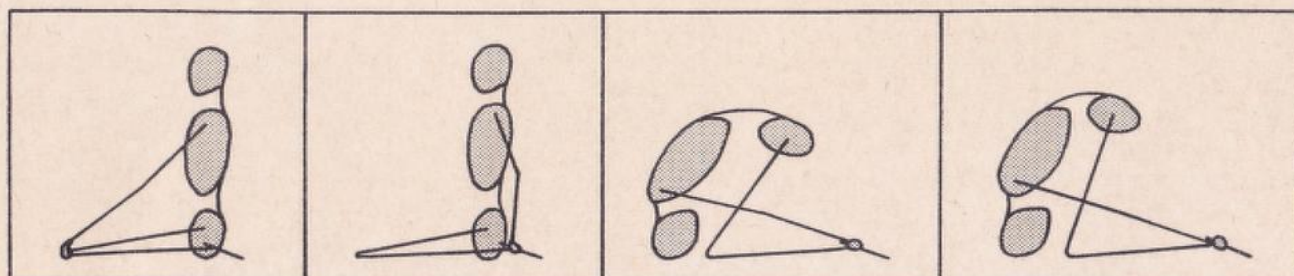


FIG. 2 — HOW TO PERFORM SASANGASANA

pression of worship—both poses have several points in common; hence the *namaz* position gives some physiological benefit and *Sasangasana* may have some spiritual value.

Persons suffering from stomach or abdominal pains may instinctively assume the *namaz* position or a similar posture in an effort to lessen the pain. Two French doctors, Messimy and Isidor, noted that a hospital patient with cancer of the pancreas, an intensely painful disease, adopted the *namaz* pose and gained some relief. Reviewing medical literature on the subject, they found other instances in which persons with this ailment had been benefited by assuming *namaz* or a similar pose.

On the spiritual side, it is possible that placing the head against the ground (Latin *humus*) is in some way related to development of the quality of humility (Latin *humilitas*, from *humus*).

(3) The knee-chest position, well known in medical practice, is different from the yogic Knee-to-the-Chest Pose (*Pavanamuktasana*) described in a previous issue, but bears some resemblance to *Sasangasana*. In both the Hare Pose and the knee-chest position the feet, shanks, and knees, as well as the upper part of the body, touch the floor; and the buttocks are raised. The differences are that in the knee-chest position the thighs are brought perpendicular to the ground so as to raise the hips as high as possible; the chest rests on the floor (*Fig. 3d*); and the curve of the lumbar region of the back is concave (in *Sasangasana* it is convex).

The knee-chest position is commonly prescribed by physicians to relieve temporarily all pressure of the inner organs on the pelvic floor. It is “exceedingly useful in preventing retrodisplacement of the uterus” when performed for one or two minutes twice daily during the first two or three months after labor (Crossen and Crossen).

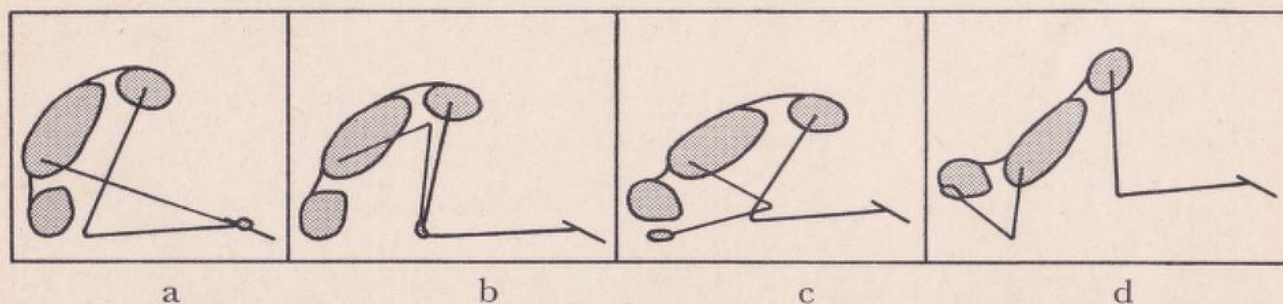


FIG. 3 — SASANGASANA AND SIMILAR POSES

(a) *Sasangasana*, (b) *Sasangasana* variation, (c) *Namaz*, (d) Knee-Chest



A group of SRF students in the Publications Building at SRF headquarters, July 7th, during the SRF Summer Class program.

In upper photo the visitors inspect the composing section, where type is set and made up into forms for printing; in lower photo they view a sewing machine in the bindery section.

The physiology and benefits of *Sasangasana* will be described in the next article.

REFERENCES

Crossen, H. S. and Crossen, R. J., *Diseases of Women*, St. Louis, 1944, p. 245.
 Messimy and Isidor, *Annales d'Anatomie Pathologique*, 1935, 12, 213-15.

Other asanas mentioned in this article have been fully described and illustrated in *Self-Realization Magazine*, as follows:

Halasana, The Plow Pose, September 1958.

Pavanamuktasana, The Knee-to-the-Chest Pose, May 1959.

Savasana, The Relaxation Pose, July 1958.

Vajrasana, The Diamond Pose, July 1957.

Give Us a True Conception of Brotherhood

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Divine Mother, give us a new, true conception of brotherhood. May we forsake wars and heal the wounds of all nations with the salve of Christ-love and the lasting balm of sympathetic understanding.

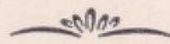
Cosmic Mother, awaken in us Thine impartial love for all; bless us that we be free from the sway of greed and delusion. Inspire us to build a new world — one in which famine, disease, and ignorance will be only memories of a dismal past.

Creative Mother, arouse us to knowledge of Thy plan, when Thou didst form the cosmos and people it with rational creatures. Let us be ashamed to act like savage animals — devoid of reason, settling differences only by might. Help us to solve all problems not by jungle logic but by reason and unfaltering trust in Thee.

O Mother of All, teach us to call each man by his rightful name of Brother.

In Search of the Supreme

By MAHATMA GANDHI



In my early youth I was taught to repeat what in Hindu scriptures are known as the thousand names of God. But these thousand names are by no means exhaustive. We believe, and I think it is the truth, that God has as many names as there are creatures and, therefore, we also say that God is nameless; and since God has many forms we also consider Him formless; and since He speaks to us through many tongues we consider Him to be speechless, and so on. When I came to study Islam I found that Islam too has many names for God.

I would repeat with those who say God is Love, God is Love. But deep down in me I used to think that though God may be Love, God is Truth, above all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, I have come to the conclusion that, for myself, God is Truth. But two years ago I went a step further and said that Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements, viz., that God is Truth and Truth is God.

I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after Truth which began nearly fifty years ago. I then found that the nearest approach to Truth was through love. But I also found that love has many meanings, and that human love in the sense of passion could become a degrading thing. I found too that love in the sense of *ahimsa* (nonviolence) has a limited number of votaries in the world. But I never found a double meaning in connection with truth; not even atheists demur to the necessity for or power of truth. . . .

What then is truth? A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you. How, then, you ask, do different people think of different and contrary truths? Well, seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that the evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another, and hence those who have made experiments in truth have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to be observed. Just as in conducting scientific experiments there is

first an indispensable scientific course of instruction, in the same way strict preliminary discipline is necessary to qualify a person to make experiments in the spiritual realm. Everyone should, therefore, realize his limitations before he speaks of his inner voice. Therefore I have the belief based upon experience, that those who would make individual search after truth as God, must take several vows, as for instance the vow of speaking truth and the vow of *brahmacharya* (purity, self-discipline)

Those who have made these experiments know that it is not proper for every man to claim to hear the voice of conscience. It is because everybody is claiming the right of conscience without having gone through any discipline whatsoever that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All that I in true humility can present to you is that truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of truth you must reduce yourself to a zero.

* * *

To me God is truth and love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness, God is the source of light and life; and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist. For in His boundless love God permits the atheist to live. He is the searcher of hearts. He transcends speech and reason. He knows us and our hearts better than we do ourselves. He does not take us at our word, for He knows that we often do not mean it. He is a personal God to those who need His personal presence. He is embodied to those who need His touch. He is the purest essence. He simply *is* to those who have faith. He is all things to all men. He is in us and yet above and beyond us. . . .

He cannot cease to be because hideous immoralities or inhuman brutalities are committed in His name. He is long suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible. He is the most exacting Personage in the world and in the world to come. He metes out the same measure to us that we mete out to our neighbors — men and brutes. With Him ignorance is no excuse. And withal He is ever forgiving, for He always gives us the chance to repent.

He is the greatest democrat the world knows, for He leaves us unfettered to make our own choice between evil and good. He is the greatest tyrant ever known, for He often dashes the cup from our lips and under cover of free will leaves us a margin so wholly inade-



Out-of-state SRF students who attended the annual SRF Summer Classes in Los Angeles were photographed near a bust of Paramahansa Yogananda (*under cross in arched niche*). These students came from Arizona, Colorado, Oregon, Montana, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Rhode Island; and from Mexico, Canada, England, France, and Italy.

quate as to provide only mirth for Himself at our expense. Therefore it is that Hinduism calls it all His sport — *Lila*, or calls it all an illusion — *Maya*. We are *not*, He alone *is*. And if we will *be*, we must eternally sing His praise and do His will. Let us but dance to the tune of His *bansi*, lute, and all would be well.

* * *

I have defined *brahmacharya* as that correct way of life which leads to Brahma, *i.e.*, God. Straightaway the question arises: "What or who is God?" If man knew the answer, it would enable him to find the path that leads to Him.

God is not a person. To state that He descends to earth every now and again in the form of a human being is a partial truth which merely signifies that such a person lives near to God. Inasmuch as God is omnipresent, He dwells within every human being; and all persons, therefore, may be said to be incarnations of Him. . . .

The truth is that God is the force, the essence of life. He is pure and undefiled consciousness. He is eternal. And yet, strangely

enough, all persons are not able to derive benefit from or shelter in the all-pervading living Presence.

Electricity is a powerful force. Not all can benefit from it. It can be produced only by following certain laws. It is a lifeless force. Man can utilize it if he labors hard enough to acquire knowledge of its laws.

The living force which we call God can similarly be found if we know and follow His law leading to the discovery of Him in us. But it is self-evident that to find out God's law requires far harder labor. The law may, in one word, be termed *brahmacharya* (self-control). The straight way to cultivate *brahmacharya* is *Ramanama* (constant inner repetition of God's name).

* * *

When we know that God Himself is the mystery of mysteries, why should anything that He does perplex us? If He acted as *we* would have Him do, we would not be His creatures and He our Creator. The impenetrable darkness that surrounds us is not a curse but a blessing. He has given us power to see only the step in front of us, and it should be enough if heavenly light reveals that step to us. We can then sing with Newman, "One step enough for me."

And we may be sure from our past experience that the next step will always be in view. In other words, the impenetrable darkness is nothing so impenetrable as we may imagine. But it seems impenetrable when, in our impatience, we want to look beyond that one step. And since God is love, we can say definitely that even the physical catastrophes He sends now and then must be blessings in disguise. But they can be so only to those who regard them as a warning for introspection and self-purification.

* * *

No man has ever been able to describe God fully. God alone is omniscient. Man in the flesh is essentially imperfect. He may be described as being made in the image of God but he is far from being God. God is invisible, beyond the reach of the human eye. All that we can do, therefore, is to try to understand the words and actions of those whom we regard as men of God.

* * *

To say that God permits evil in this world may not be pleasing to the ear. But if He is held responsible for the good, it follows that He has to be responsible for the evil too. Perhaps the root cause of



Sun-dappled front entrance of Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters, Los Angeles, California, viewed through arches of portico. The large aluminum door-pulls are engraved with initials SRF and YSS (Self-Realization Fellowship and Yogoda Satsanga Society).

the perplexity arises from a lack of real understanding of what God is. God is not a person. He transcends description. He is the Law-maker, the Law, and the Executor. No human being can well arrogate these powers to himself. If he did, he would be looked upon as an unadulterated dictator. They become only Him whom we worship as God.

* * *

The world will live in peace only when the individuals composing it make up their minds to do so. No one can deny the possibility or say when that will come to pass. Such questions are an idle waste of time. To a good man, the whole world is good. By following this golden rule a man can live in peace under all circumstances.

* * *

I believe God to be creative as well as noncreative. This is the result of acceptance of the doctrine of the manyness of reality. From the platform of the Jains I prove the noncreative aspect of God and from that of Ramanuja the creative aspect. As a matter of fact we are all thinking of the Unthinkable, describing the Indescribable, seeking to know the Unknown, and that is why our speech falters, is inadequate and often even contradictory. That is why the *Vedas* describe Brahman as "not this," "not this." But if He or It is not this, He or It *is*. If we exist, if our parents and their parents have existed, then it is proper to believe in the Parent of the whole creation. If He is not, we are nowhere. And that is why all of us call *one* God differently as Paramatma, Ishwara, Shiva, Vishnu, Rama, Allah, Khuda, Dada, Ormazd, Jehovah, God, and an infinite variety of other names. He is *one* and yet many. He is smaller than an atom, and bigger than the Himalayas. He is contained even in a drop of the ocean, and yet not even the seven seas can compass Him. Reason is powerless to know Him. He is beyond the reach or grasp of reason.

But I need not labor the point. Faith is essential in this matter. My logic can make and unmake innumerable hypotheses. An atheist might floor me in a debate. But my faith runs so very much faster than my reason that I can challenge the whole world and say: "God is, was, and ever shall be."

But those who want to deny His existence are at liberty to do so. He is merciful and compassionate. He is not an earthly king needing an army to make us accept His sway. He allows us freedom, and

(Continued on page 37)

SRF Views on Astrology



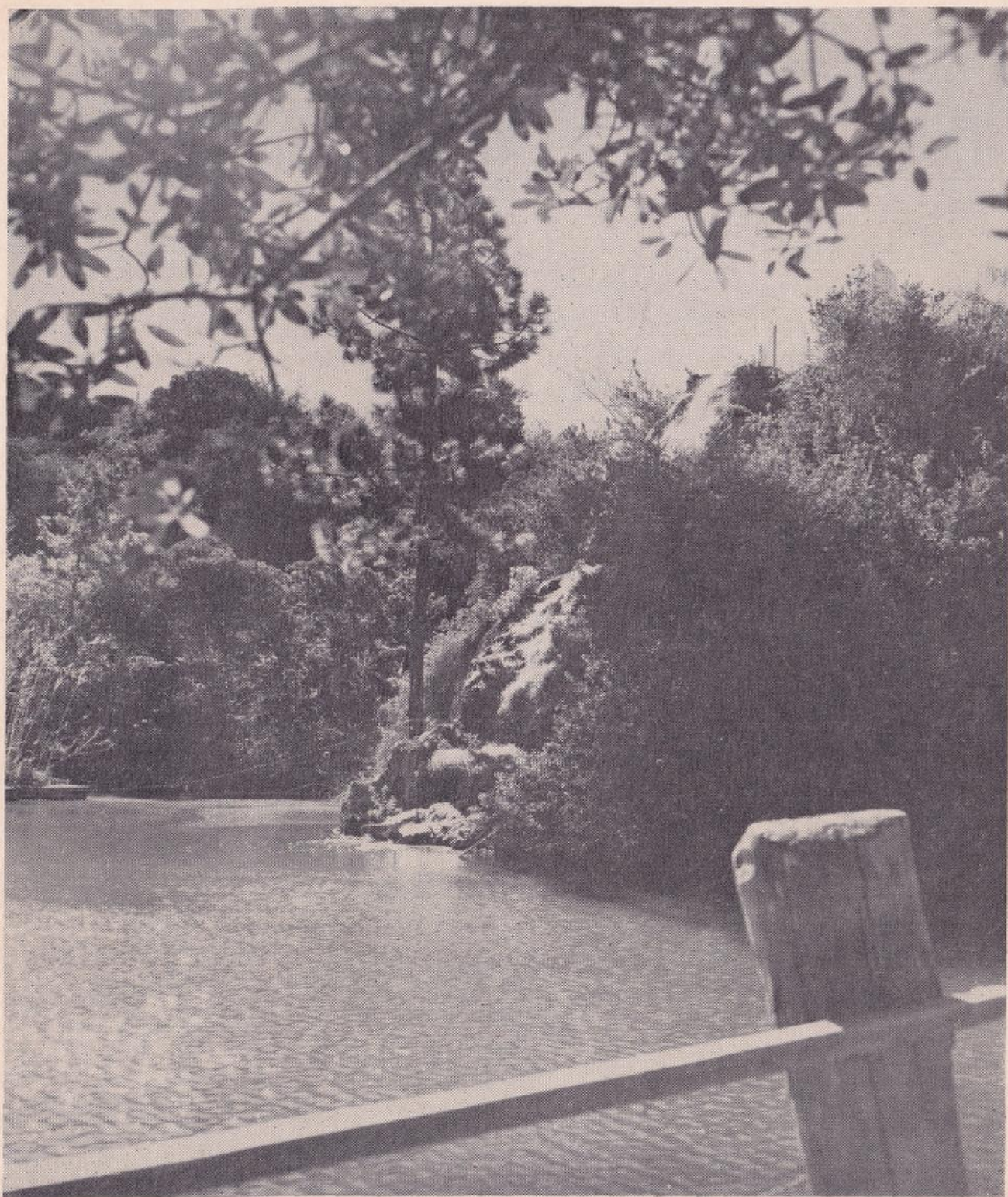
Astrology is a true science, though only an intuitive and spiritually developed person can rightly interpret a horoscope. Self-Realization Fellowship teaches that all things in the heavens and on the earth are interrelated; the whole cosmos is one unified structure. But SRF does not teach astrology. Our guru Paramahansa Yogananda pointed out that the highest science is meditation on God — the One who created the stars and planets and who gave them their characteristic influences.

Each of the twelve astrological (zodiacal) signs has a good side and a bad side. The qualities of each sign can be used or misused. Each sign has distinctive virtues and faults. However, it is not an astrological sign that determines one's character, it is one's stage of spiritual advancement. A good man will make the best of whatever sign he happens to be born under. A man who is low in spiritual evolution will make the worst of even an auspicious zodiacal endowment.

Every man has been or will be born many times under each of the astrological signs, so one should feel impersonal about the matter. As one becomes more universal in outlook the less his particular zodiacal sun-sign affects, restricts, and defines him.

God made the heavens and the earth and God made the soul of man. The soul is not subject to any limitation or condition of the phenomenal worlds. The wise man strives for knowledge not primarily of creation but of the Creator.

Many students of astrology tend to become fanatical about it and to miss the point of the spiritual path — the search for God alone. If we strive to do His will we shall be in tune with the Infinite. That goal is far better and more spiritually rewarding than to seek to analyze ourselves and others astrologically.



PEACEFUL COVE AT SRF LAKE SHRINE

One of the lovely spots at Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine in Pacific Palisades, California. A waterfall (*center*) splashes down into the two-acre lake. Near the top of the waterfall is a secluded meditation nook that contains a life-size statue of Christ.

Soul Whispers

By Paramahansa Yogananda



2. O Boundless Being, Transcendent Treasure! teach us to seek the highest goal — realization of Thee.



Father, help us to develop our powers of discrimination. May we be not satisfied with fulfillments of earthly hopes, essentially ego-tainted and limited.



The countless forms in Nature are expressions of Thy versatile genius — originals from Thy ceaselessly vibrating fingers. May we see in all creation Thine inimitable handiwork.



Inspire me to enter the infinitudes of divine love. O Universal Spirit, I would invisibly embrace as my own all animate and seemingly inanimate forms in creation. May I perceive even in stones, built of Thy secret atoms, the pulsing of Thine insuppressible life.

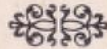


L. Thou art walking through my feet, wielding my arms of activity, throbbing in my heart, flowing through my breath, and weaving thoughts in my brain. It is Thy meteoric will that courses daily through the skies of my human will.



Teach me to break the shameful cords of lethargy. May I blaze my way tirelessly through the wilderness of limitations into the Fair New Land.

News of SRF Centers



Los Angeles, California

Brother Mokshananda and Brahmachari Harold of the Mother Center visited SRF groups in central California and western Nevada from May 31st to June 5th. They conducted devotional services and review classes in the principles and techniques of Self-Realization Fellowship teachings. Meetings were held in Santa Cruz, Los Gatos, San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland, Citrus Heights (near Sacramento), and Reno.

Members of the local groups sponsored the visit of the two SRF monks, which provided an opportunity to enlarge on important points of the SRF teachings and, best of all, to strengthen by group meditation the bonds of spiritual fellowship.

SRF Convocation in 1965

With all phases of the SRF work continually expanding, it has become impractical to plan a Convocation as frequently as every three years. SRF therefore announces that a Convocation will take place only once in every five years. The next Convocation will be held in Los Angeles in the summer of 1965 — the 45th anniversary of the founding of Self-Realization Fellowship in America.

The Summer Classes in Los Angeles, which are attended by students from many parts of the United States and from other countries, will continue to be held annually.

Pacific Palisades, California

On Saturday, July 14th, forty-eight members of the Church of Religious Science, Beverly Hills, spent the day in silence and meditation at Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine. The guests brought their own picnic lunch.

Paramahansa Yogananda, founder of SRF, often expressed the hope that more and more people would come to the Lake Shrine not only to enjoy its natural beauty but to cultivate perceptions of Truth by meditating and by keeping silence in these peaceful surroundings.



SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP STUDENTS ON
GROUNDS OF INDIA CENTER, HOLLYWOOD

After an evening program, July 2nd, of welcome to Self-Realization Fellowship students who came from many states and several foreign lands to attend the annual Summer Classes, the visitors gathered near SRF Book House (*octagonal building in lower photo*) to enjoy fellowship and refreshments.

New York, New York

Series of SRF Classes and Kriya Initiations in Oct.-Nov.

Public lectures, special classes, and *Kriya Yoga* initiations will be conducted in New York City from October 17th to November 5th by Brother Anandamoy of Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters.

The regular Friday night meetings of the New York SRF Center at Hotel Wentworth will be temporarily interrupted; no meetings will be held there on October 19th, October 26th, and November 2nd. Instead, SRF Lessons students are invited to attend classes and meditations conducted by Brother Anandamoy at 8 p.m. on October 19th and 26th and, if eligible, *Kriya Yoga* initiation at 6 p.m. on November 2nd. These meetings will be held at Carnegie International Center, United Nations Plaza, 46th Street. (Special registration is required to attend the *Kriya Yoga* initiation on November 2nd.)

For complete information please write SRF Class Registrar, 3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles 65, California.

Boston, Massachusetts

Brother Anandamoy of the Mother Center will give a public lecture and meditation service in Boston on Thursday, November 8th, at 8 p.m. The following evening he will conduct a class and meditation solely for SRF students. On Saturday, November 10th, at 6 p.m., Brother Anandamoy will give *Kriya Yoga* initiation to eligible SRF students in the New England area.

All meetings will be held at 44 Gerry's Landing, Cambridge. For information write to Miss Anne Forbes at that address, or telephone University 4-2727.

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A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE *BHAGAVAD - GITA*

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

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Chapter XIV, Stanza 8

O Bharata (Arjuna)! know that tamas arises from ignorance, deluding all embodied beings. It binds them by misconception, idleness, and slumber.

Tamas is the quality in Nature that causes misery of all kinds. The *tamasik* man is full of wrong ideas. He is careless and indolent. He indulges in oversleeping, shunning the partially uplifting *rajasik* actions and the most uplifting *sattvik* actions. Like an animal, he is conscious chiefly of the body.

A man of activity is better off because he establishes some identification with the mental sphere. A man of goodness is in a still better state because he is in touch with soul perceptions.

Chapter XIV, Stanza 9

Sattva attaches one to happiness; rajas to activity; and tamas, by eclipsing the power of discrimination, to miscomprehension.

Any action performed under the influence of these triple qualities, with attachment, causes rebirth-making bondage. A person whose

actions are good is usually attached to happiness. A man engaged in worldly activities is generally attached to those works. An ignorant man is uncomprehending and steeped in misconceptions.

The majority of mankind stays in the sphere of worldly activities, which they perform with attachment. This sphere, however, is the clearing house and the testing ground of life. The worldly person who performs activities even with attachment remains alert in the mental realm, far above the low plane of sloth and bewilderment. He has a chance to rise to the good *sattvik* state, as he learns to perform his activities for God and hence without personal attachment.

How the Man of Activity may Progress Spiritually

Many persons conscientiously fulfill their proper worldly duties. Although beset with restlessness and worries, still they learn to act in an increasingly better or *sattvik* way and to perform activities in a happy frame of mind, yet not free from egotism. Then they begin to exercise discrimination and to act only to please God, thus finding true joy and liberation.

Men living in the middle sphere of activity find their mental trend is leading them upward, even though a great many remain entangled for a long time in this clearing house and testing place, egotistically performing good actions. The fortunate few, however, escape quickly from the *rajasik* realm; remembering the image of God within them, they progress rapidly and find emancipation.

Comparatively speaking, only a few very stupid persons misuse their powers of discrimination to the extent that they are willing to stoop down to the third and worst sphere, that of evil. Such men misuse divine free choice, refusing to perform normal constructive activities. Thus they descend in evolution, cultivating the *tamasik* habits of sensuality, laziness, pride, oversleeping, and Godless living. Constant inner and outer indolence and indulgence in oversleeping — seeking the uncreative and oblivious state of existence — leads one to the animalistic plane.

The Purpose of Life is to Go Back to God

The purpose of life is to go back to God, not to slide down the ladder of evolution to animality. The seeker for liberation should avoid excess in all modes of conduct, and should perform all worldly duties without attachment — maintaining himself and his family, and observing his divine duties for liberating himself and others.

BOOK REVIEWS

REINCARNATION: An East-West Anthology. Compiled and edited by Joseph Head and S. L. Cranston. 342 pp., cloth, 1961, \$6.50. Order from publisher: The Julian Press, Inc., 80 E. 11th St., New York 3.

This book does not purport to make a case for the concept of reincarnation; rather it is a conveniently arranged compilation of views on the subject. These are taken from the scriptures of the world and from the writings of religious teachers and Western thinkers from ancient times to the present. Two sections of the book contain ideas of scientists and psychologists in particular.

Even readers who have already embraced the theory of metempsychosis as the most reasonable explanation of the mystery surrounding birth and death may be astonished at the formidable weight of opinion in this direction. In the face of so much evidence of belief in reincarnation by great thinkers of all times, persons who take a negative view at the outset of their reading may find themselves duplicating the experience of Rev. William R. Alger: after deep study of the subject, which at first he considered "a plausible delusion, unworthy of credence," he concluded his research by "heartily endorsing and advocating reincarnation."

Truth seekers will be grateful for this book, bringing together as it does a wide assortment of opinions and information from many sources and from many ages of man—a research that could not easily be undertaken by the average student. Some extracts from the book follow:

Christ and His Apostles spoke and writ as the condition of the persons, with whom they dealt, administered occasion. . . . Therefore doubtless there were many noble theories which they could have made the world acquainted with. . . . Few speculative truths are delivered in Scripture but such as were called forth by the controversies of those times; and Pre-existence was none of them, it being the constant opinion of the Jews, as appears by that question, "Master, was it for this man's sin or his father's that he was born blind?" . . . And the author of the Book of Wisdom, who certainly was a Jew, probably Philo, plainly supposeth the same doctrine in that speech,

“For I was a witty child and had a good spirit, wherefore . . . being good, I came into a body undefiled”

Every soul brings a kind of sense with it into the world, whereby it tastes and relisheth what is suitable to its peculiar temper What can we conclude but that the soul itself is the immediate subject of all this variety and that it came prejudiced and prepossessed into this body with some implicit notions that it had learnt in another?

To say that all this variety proceeds primarily from the mere temper of our bodies is methinks a very poor and unsatisfying account. For those that are the most like in the temper, air, and complexion of their bodies, are yet of a vastly differing genius What then can we conjecture is the cause of all this diversity, but that we had taken a great delight and pleasure in some things like and analogous unto these in a former condition? — *Joseph Glanvill (1636-1680), in “Lux Orientalis.”*

The argument [for reincarnation] from analogy is especially strong. It is natural to argue from the universal spectacle of incarnated life that this is the eternal scheme everywhere, the variety of souls finding in the variety of worlds an everlasting series of adventures in appropriate organisms . . .

It must be confessed that of all the thoughtful and refined forms of the belief in a future life none has had so extensive and prolonged prevalence as this. It has the vote of the majority, having for ages on ages been held by half the human race with an intensity of conviction almost without a parallel. Indeed, the most striking fact at first sight about the doctrine of the repeated incarnations of the soul . . . is the constant reappearance of the faith in all parts of the world, and its permanent hold on certain great nations . . .

It is not propounded with the slightest dogmatic animus. It is advanced solely as an illustration of what may possibly be true, as suggested by the general evidence of the phenomena of history and the facts of experience. The thoughts embodied in it are so wonderful, the method of it so rational, the region of contemplation into which it lifts the mind is so grand, the prospects it opens are of such universal reach and import, that the study of it brings us into full sympathy with the sublime scope of the idea of immortality, and of a cosmopolitan vindication of providence uncovered to every eye. It takes us out of the littleness of petty themes and selfish affairs, and makes it easier for us to believe in the vastest hopes mankind has ever known. — *William R. Alger (1822-1905), in “A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life.”*

The soul of the true philosopher . . . abstains as much as possible from pleasures and desires, griefs and fears . . . because each pleasure and pain, having a nail, as it were, nails the soul to the body, and fastens it to it, and

Books by Paramahansa Yogananda

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI. 8th ed., 514 pp., \$4.00. In English, French, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Dutch, Arabic, German, Swedish, Icelandic, Bengali, and Japanese editions.

WHISPERS FROM ETERNITY. Answered prayers that convey to man an infinite hope. 1959 ed. Cloth, 266 pp., \$3.00.

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causes it to become corporeal, deeming those things to be true whatever the body asserts to be so. For, in consequence of its forming the same opinions with the body, and delighting in the same things . . . it can never pass into Hades in a pure state, but must ever depart polluted by the body, and so quickly falls into another body . . . and consequently is deprived of all association with that which is divine, and pure, and uniform. — *Plato* (427-347 B.C.), in "*Phaedo*."

There is no death of anything save in appearance. That which passes over from essence to nature seems to be birth, and what passes over from nature to essence seems to be death. Nothing really is originated, and nothing ever perishes; but only now comes into sight and now vanishes. It appears by reason of the density of matter, and disappears by reason of the tenuity of essence. But it is always the same, differing only in motion and condition. — *Appolonius of Tyana* (first century A.D.), in "*Epistle to Valerius*."

[*Philostratus*, in his "*Life of Appolonius of Tyana*," reports the following conversation between Appolonius and Iarchas, a wise man of Kashmir, India, to whom Appolonius traveled to be instructed in the higher philosophy. Iarchas explained that his own soul had once been in the body of a king, while Appolonius told him that he had once been an Egyptian pilot of a ship.]

"And you must not be surprised at my transformation from one Indian to another; for here is one" and he [Iarchas] pointed to a stripling of about twenty years of age — "who in natural aptitude for philosophy excels everyone . . . yet, in spite of all these advantages, he detests philosophy."

"What, then," said Appolonius, "Iarchas, is the matter with the youth? For it is a terrible thing to tell me, if one so well adapted by nature to the pursuit refuses to embrace philosophy, and has no love for learning. . . ."

"The truth is this stripling was once Palamedes of Troy, and he found his bitterest enemies in Odysseus and Homer; for the one laid an ambush against him of people by whom he was stoned to death, while the other denied him any place in his Epic; and because neither the wisdom with which he was endowed was of any use to him nor did he meet with any praise from Homer . . . he has conceived an aversion to philosophy, and deplores his ill-luck. And he is Palamedes, for indeed he can write without having learned his letters."

I have convinced myself, and I hold — in view of the rapid movement of the soul, its vivid memory of the past and its prophetic knowledge of the

(Continued on page 47)

Comments on "Autobiography of a Yogi"



"The Infinite Love incarnated on earth and we mortals called it Paramahansa Yogananda. Although I did not have the joy of knowing him when he walked this earth, he is ever near me. I am certain that if all men read his *Autobiography* and felt his presence even for a moment, there would be peace on earth." — A.D., Rome, Italy.

"The most fascinating book I have ever come across." — A.L.N., New York, N.Y.

"Thank you so much for the complimentary copy of *Autobiography of a Yogi*. This book has long been a favorite of mine, and I am looking forward to sharing my enjoyment of it with my more serious-minded senior students." — R.L.E., High School Librarian, Ottawa, Canada.

"I never tire of reading *Autobiography of a Yogi* over and over. It's my bedside book." — J.M., London, England.

"Since reading *Autobiography of a Yogi* I seem to be spiritually magnetized. It awakens in me a divine tenderness and devotion that I hadn't known existed. I have just completed reading it for the eighth time." — E.G.H., Chicago, Illinois.

"I have read *Autobiography of a Yogi* through twice. It is a splendid book, and very much needed to give the West an insight into divine facts." — J.D., S.Burnaby, B.C., Canada.

"When I was a little girl of ten years I read *Autobiography of a Yogi* with great wonder. It made a deep impression on me. Every time one reads this book he finds something new, something written just for him, for his particular situation." — J.S., Wiesbaden, Germany.

"The most beautiful book I've ever read." — H.M.B., El Cajon, California.

"Reading *Autobiography of a Yogi* moved me tremendously. It was as though a spiritual magnet had been placed in my hands. The deep sincerity of our beloved Yogananda's soul-searching and his earnest quest for God went to my heart and inspired me. Before I came across this book my most fervent prayer was to have a divine

teacher in whom I could put my faith — one who would lead me and set me on a regular path toward attainment of the Divine. What words can I choose to express my gratitude at being fortunate enough to have come upon this sacred Path?” — *H.J., Matawan, New Jersey.*

“Along with countless others I am writing to tell you how wonderful I have found *Autobiography of a Yogi*. I first read it last December and since then I have reread it three times. Some books grow dull after the first few chapters, but this is a true classic that grows more intriguing and inspiring each time it’s read.” — *S.S., Detroit, Michigan.*

“I have read the second Italian edition of *Autobiography of a Yogi* with deep joy. The last chapter is full of the spiritual magnetism of our Guru Yogananda, who has given in it the essence of his high teaching.” — *L.B., Torino, Italy.*

“My association with Self-Realization Fellowship is a cherished privilege. It has been like finding a treasure. The Divine Father spoke to me through *Autobiography of a Yogi*. I believe that the major events in our lives are not accidents but an unfolding of one’s karma. This being so, I feel that the privilege of receiving the SRF techniques is a gift from God in response to my soulful yearning for Him.” — *V.T., Houston, Texas.*

“I joined SRF as a direct result of reading *Autobiography of a Yogi*. What I have gained from my association with SRF is an immense thing in many ways. It has given me the steadfast hope that I do indeed stand at the threshold of spiritual fulfillment in my present lifetime, without having to wait until the death of the physical body, which is, after all, only a material husk. . . . I am inspired by the incomparable life of the master, Paramahansa Yogananda, and his scintillating mind. By his life he has given adequate proof that we are, in fact, images of a living God and need not experience or continue to experience limitations of any kind. . . . By faithfully following SRF teachings there is definite hope of our becoming vessels of the infinite God.” — *R.G.A., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.*

“A book to read again and again. I’m thankful to the author Paramahansa Yogananda for everything that he has given me: a greater depth of understanding, more contentment, and spiritual riches.” — *J.I.V-W., N.D., The Hague, Holland.*

(Continued from page 22)

yet His compassion commands obedience to His will. But if any one of us disdains to bow to His will, He says: "So be it. My sun will shine no less for thee, My clouds will rain no less for thee. I need not force thee to accept My sway." Of such a God let the ignorant dispute the existence. I am one of the millions of wise men who believe in Him and am never tired of bowing to Him and singing His glory.

* * *

No search is possible without some workable assumptions. If we grant nothing, we find nothing. Ever since its commencement, the world — the wise and the foolish included — has proceeded on the assumption that if we are, God is; and that if God is not, we are not. And since belief in God is coexistent with humankind, the existence of God is treated as a fact more definite than is the fact that the sun exists.

This living faith has solved the largest number of puzzles of life. It has alleviated our misery. It sustains us in life, it is our one solace



Brother Anandamoy (*left*) explains technique of one of the SRF Recharging Exercises while Brahmachari Melvin demonstrates it in Summer Class

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in death. The very search for Truth becomes interesting, worth while, because of this belief. But search for Truth is search for God. Truth is God. God is, because Truth is. We embark upon the search because we believe that there is Truth and that It can be found by diligent search and meticulous observance of the well-known and well-tried rules of the search. There is no record in history of the failure of such search. Even the atheists who have pretended to disbelieve in God have believed in Truth. The trick they have performed is that of giving God another name. His names are legion. Truth is the crown of them all.

* * *

What is true of God is true, though in a lesser degree, of the "assumption of the truth of some fundamental moralities." As a matter of fact, the truth of moralities is implied in the belief in God or Truth. Departure from these moralities has landed the truants in endless misery. Difficulty of practice should not be confused with disbelief.

A Himalayan expedition has its prescribed conditions of success. Difficulty of fulfilling the conditions does not make the search impossible. It only adds interest and zest to the search. Well, this expedition in search of God or Truth is infinitely more important than numberless Himalayan expeditions and, therefore, much more interesting. If we have no zest for it, it is because of the weakness of our faith.

What we see with our physical eyes has become more real to us than the only Reality. We know that appearances are deceptive. And yet we treat trivialities as realities. To see the trivialities as such is half the battle won. It constitutes more than half the search after Truth or God. Unless we disengage ourselves from trivialities, we have not even the leisure for the great search; or is it to be reserved only for our leisure hours?

* * *

God is good not in the same sense as X is good. X is comparatively good. He is more good than evil, but God is wholly good. There is no evil in Him. God made man in His own image. Unfortunately for us man has fashioned Him in his own. This arrogation has landed mankind in a sea of troubles. God is the Supreme Alchemist. In His presence all iron and dross turn into pure gold. Similarly does all evil turn into good.

Again, God lives but not as we live. His creatures live but to die. But God is Life. Therefore, goodness and all it connotes is not a mere attribute. Goodness is God. Goodness conceived as apart from

Him is a lifeless thing and exists only whilst it is a paying policy. So are all morals. If they are to live in us they must be considered and cultivated in their relation to God. We try to become good because we want to reach and realize God. All the dry ethics of the world may turn to dust because apart from God they are lifeless. Coming from God, they come with life in them. They become part of us and ennoble us.

* * *

It may be that what we mistake as sorrows, injustices, and the like are in truth not such. If we could solve all the mysteries of the universe, we would be co-equals with God. Every drop of the ocean shares its glory but is not the ocean. Realizing our littleness during this tiny span of life, we close every morning prayer with the recitation of a verse which means: "Misery so-called is no misery nor riches real riches. Forgetting God is the true misery, remembering God is the true riches."

* * *

So long as we believe that all is from God, we have no cause for perturbation. The only condition is that whatever we do, we should do it with God as Witness. It is He who makes the world go, and we reap only the consequences of our own actions. Therefore, ours is but to obey His law and then be indifferent as to the result.

* * *

Truth is not a mere attribute of God, but He is That. He is nothing if He is not That. Truth in Sanskrit means *Sat*. *Sat* means *Is*. Therefore Truth is implied in *Is*. God is, nothing else is. Therefore the more truthful we are, the nearer we are to God. We *are* only to the extent that we are truthful.

* * *

Never own a defeat in a sacred cause; and make up your minds henceforth that you *will* be pure and that you *will* find a response from God. But God never answers the prayers of the arrogant or the prayers of those who bargain with Him.

A Tamil saying has always remained in my memory and it means, God is the help of the helpless. If you would ask Him to help you, you would go to Him in all your nakedness, approach Him without reservations, also without fear or doubts as to how He can help a fallen being like you. He who has helped millions who have approached Him, is He going to desert you? He makes no exceptions

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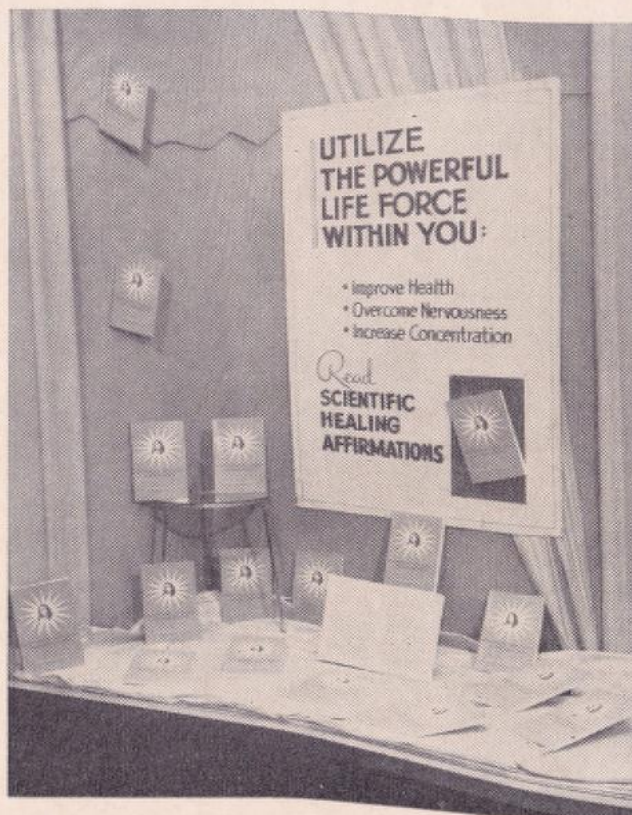
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whatsoever and you will find that every one of your prayers will be answered. The prayer of even the most impure will be answered. I am telling this out of my personal experience, I have gone through the purgatory. Seek first the kingdom of God and everything else will be added unto you.

* * *

I did not know that I would have to come to Simla this time. If we have faith in God we simply do not care to know beforehand how He may dispose of us. It is enough for us to hold ourselves perfectly in readiness for whatever happens. We are not allowed to know what tomorrow has in store for us, and our best conceived plans have a knack very often of going awry. The highest wisdom, therefore, is never to worry about the future but to resign ourselves entirely to His will.

* * *

God never fails His devotees in the hour of trial. The condition is that there must be a living faith in and the uttermost reliance on Him. The test of faith is that having done our duty we must be prepared to welcome whatever He may send — joy as well as sorrow, good luck as well as bad. . . .

A man of prayer may in the first place be spared mishaps by the ever merciful Providence, but if mishaps do come he will not bewail his fate but will bear it with undisturbed peace of mind and joyous resignation to His will.

* * *

It is God's covenant that whoever goes to Him in weakness and helplessness, him He will make strong. "When I am weak, then I am strong." As the poet Surdas has sung, Rama is the strength of the weak. This strength is not to be obtained by taking up arms or by similar means. It is to be had by throwing oneself on His name. Rama is but a synonym of God. You may say God or Allah or whatever other name you like, but the moment you trust naught but Him, you are strong, all disappointment disappears.

* * *

A hymn alludes to the story of an elephant who was in the jaws of a crocodile and who had been all but drowned. Only the tip of his trunk was left above water when he invoked God's name and was saved. No doubt it is an allegory, but it conceals a truth. Over and over again in my life I have found it. Even in darkest night, when

there seems no helper and no comfort in the wide wide world, His name inspires me with strength and puts all doubts and despair to flight. The sky may be overcast today with clouds, but a fervent prayer to Him is enough to dispel them. It is because of prayer that I have known no disappointment. . . . Let us pray that He will cleanse our hearts of pettinesses, meannesses, and deceit; then He will surely answer our prayers.

* * *

It is as clear to me as daylight that life and death are but phases of the same thing, the reverse and obverse of the same coin. In fact tribulation and death seem to me to present a phase far richer than happiness or life. What is life worth without trials and tribulation which are the salt of life? The history of mankind would have been a blank sheet without these individuals. What is the *Ramayana* but a record of the trials, privations, and penances of Rama and Sita? The life of Rama, after the recovery of Sita, full of happiness as it was, does not occupy even a hundredth part of the epic. I want you all to treasure death and suffering more than life, and to appreciate their cleansing and purifying character.

* * *

There is a divine purpose behind every physical calamity. That science will one day be able to tell us beforehand when earthquakes will occur, as it tells us today of eclipses, is quite possible. It will be

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another triumph of the human mind. But such triumphs even indefinitely multiplied can bring about no purification of self, without which nothing else is of any value.

The call to prayer is a definite yearning of the soul. Prayer is a sign of repentance, a desire to become better, purer. A man of prayer regards what are known as physical calamities as divine chastisement. . . .

It is the universal experience that every calamity brings a sensible man down on his knees. He thinks that it is God's answer to his sins and that he must henceforth behave better. His sins have left him hopelessly weak, and in his weakness he cries out to God for help. Thus have millions of human beings used their personal calamities for self-improvement. Nations have been known to invoke the assistance of God when calamities have overtaken them. They have abased themselves before God and appointed days of humiliation, prayer, and purification. . . .

True prayer is not a prelude to inaction. It is a spur to ceaseless, selfless action. Purification is never for the selfishly idle, it accrues only to the selflessly industrious.

—From *"In Search of the Supreme,"* a compilation by V. B. Kher of Mahatma Gandhi's writings (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 14, India; paper, 1961, \$1.50 postpaid).



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“How blessed are all who have felt the inner direction to follow SRF teachings sincerely and devotedly, and how wonderful it is to realize that we have a Guru for all eternity when we take the *Kriya* pledge of love and loyalty. I can't explain it in words because there are none, but something happens to one who is sincere in this endeavor: he has a sense of coming home, a safe and secure feeling about God and the universe of which he is a part. It is like longing for peace and love, then suddenly a door opens and lo! there is all you ever wished for.” — *J.M.F., Los Angeles, California.*

“From regular practice of the SRF exercises, I find my health improved: I feel years younger, have considerably more endurance, more command of my movements, more grace and speed in getting around, less consciousness of age. I eat lightly of vegetables and fruits and a little whole-wheat bread, do not require much food, keep my weight down to where it belongs. Mentally I have improved so much that it is very noticeable in my work at the office. I am faster at it; I have an expanded view of all the operations, and a preview of conditions about to arise. Situations that once would have been irksome and irritating now bother me not at all. I work for God, and I know the Masters are right there to help me. Spiritually I have grown too. The period of meditation after *Kriya* is becoming more delightful every day; my happiness increases with each practice.” — *B.S., San Jose, California.*

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how much more I comprehend the profundities and spiritual properties in all men. I can never express my heart's gratitude and my soul's great rejoicing that even in my ignorance I have seen much light. How truly humble I feel that I was made aware of the Master, and how many times he has helped me open up vast areas of my threefold nature." — *M.F., Los Angeles, California.*

"I have obtained more control over myself, I am more tolerant toward others, I am less irritable and not aroused to anger as easily as I used to be. I work all day with a clear brain and do not feel tired when I leave the office (I am an accountant by profession) and do not have the headaches that I used to suffer before starting with Yoga." — *J.F., Mexico, D.F.*

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"Last fall I wrote of a cataract in my left eye, which had long handicapped me in reading and writing. This eye has improved remarkably in the last two months; in fact, my sight is better than it has ever been. I believe that the blessing stems from your loving prayers and also, I feel sure, from the direct influence of Yoganandaji." — *T.I., Osaka, Japan.*

(Continued from page 34)

future, its many accomplishments, its vast range of knowledge, its numerous discoveries — that a nature embracing such varied gifts cannot itself be mortal. And since the soul is always in motion and yet has no external source of motion, for it is self-moved, I conclude that it will also have no end to its motion, because it is not likely ever to abandon itself. . . .

It is again a strong proof of men's knowing most things before birth, that when mere children they grasp innumerable facts with such speed as to show that they are not then taking them in for the first time, but remembering and recalling them. — *Cicero, "On Old Age."*

Even the best men are not, when they die, in such a state of intellectual and moral perfection as would fit them to enter heaven immediately. . . . This is generally recognized, and one of two alternatives is commonly adopted to meet it. The first is that some tremendous improvement — an improvement out of all proportion to any which can ever be observed in life — takes place at the moment of death. . . . The other and more probable alternative is that the process of gradual improvement can go on in each of us after the death of our present bodies. . . .

The doctrine of pre-existence does not compel us to deny all influence on a man's character of the characters of his ancestors. . . . But there is no impossibility in supposing that the characteristics in which we resemble the ancestors of our bodies may be to some degree characteristics of our previous lives. . . . A man whose nature had certain characteristics when he was about to be reborn, would be reborn in a body descended from ancestors of a similar character. . . . It would be the character of the ancestors. . . . and its similarity to his character, which determined the fact that he was reborn in that body rather than another. The shape of the head does not determine the shape of the hat, but it does determine the selection of this particular hat for this particular head. . . .

A man who dies after acquiring knowledge — and all men acquire some — might enter his new life, deprived indeed of his knowledge, but not deprived of the increased strength and delicacy of mind which he had gained in acquiring the knowledge. And, if so, he will be wiser in the second life because of what has happened in the first. . . .

We miss much here by our own folly, much by unfavorable circumstances. Above all, we miss much because so many good things are incompatible. We cannot spend our youth both in the study and in the saddle. We cannot gain the benefit both of unbroken health and of bodily weakness, both of riches and of poverty, both of comradeship and of isolation, both of defiance and of obedience. We cannot learn the lessons alike of Galahad and of Tristram and of Caradoc. And yet they are all so good to learn. Would



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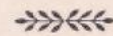
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it not be worth much to be able to hope that what we missed in one life might come to us in another? And would it not be worth much to be able to hope that we might have a chance to succeed hereafter in the tasks which we failed in here? — *John M. Ellis McTaggart (1866-1925)*, in "*Some Dogmas of Religion.*"

Look nature through; 'tis revolution all,
All change; no death. Day follows night, and night
The dying day; stars rise and set, and set and rise.
Earth takes the example. All to reflowerish fades
As in a wheel; all sinks to reascend;
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

* * *

Seems it strange that thou shouldst live forever?
Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?
This is a miracle; and that no more.
— *Edward Young (1683-1765)*, in "*Night Thoughts.*"

In the Hindu view, spirit no more depends on the body it inhabits than body depends on the clothes it wears or the house it lives in. When we outgrow a suit or find our house too cramped we exchange these for roomier ones that offer our bodies freer play. Souls do the same. . . .

This process by which an individual *jiva* passes through a sequence of bodies is known as reincarnation or transmigration of the soul — in Sanskrit *samsara*. . . . On the subhuman level the passage is through a series of increasingly complex bodies until at last a human one is attained. Up to this point the soul's growth is virtually automatic. It is as if the soul were growing as steadily and normally as a plant and receiving at each successive embodiment a body which, being more complex, provides the needed largess for its new attainments.

With the soul's graduation into a human body this automatic, escalator mode of ascent comes to an end. Its assignment to this exalted habitation is evidence that the soul has reached self-consciousness, and with this estate come freedom, responsibility, and effort.

The mechanism that ties these new acquisitions together is the law of *karma*. . . . *Karma* means, roughly, the moral law of cause and effect. . . . Every physical event, we are inclined to believe, has its cause, and every cause will have its determinate effects. India extends this concept of universal causation to include man's moral and spiritual life as well. . . . The present condition of each individual's interior life — how happy he is, how confused or serene, how much he can see — is an exact product of what he has wanted and got in the past; and equally, his present thoughts and deci-

sions are determining his future states. Each act he directs upon the world has its equal and opposite reaction on himself. Each thought and deed delivers an unseen chisel blow toward the sculpturing of his destiny.

This idea of *karma* and the completely moral universe it implies . . . commits the Hindu who understands it to complete personal responsibility Most persons are unwilling to admit this. They prefer, as the psychologists would say, to project — to locate the source of their difficulties outside themselves. . . . This, say the Hindus, is simply immature. — *Professor Huston Smith, in "The Religions of Man."*

For beings a human birth is hard to win, then manhood and holiness, then excellence in the path of wise law; hardest of all to win is wisdom. Discernment between Self and not-Self, true judgment, nearness to the Self of the Eternal and Freedom are not gained without a myriad of right acts in a hundred births. . . .

The food-formed vesture is this body, which comes into being through food, which lives by food, which perishes without food. It is formed of cuticle, skin, flesh, blood, bone, water; this is not worthy to be the Self, eternally pure. The Self was before birth or death, and now is; how can it be born for the moment, fleeting, unstable of nature, not unified, inert, beheld like a jar? For the Self is the witness of all changes of form. The body has hands and feet, not the Self; though bodiless, yet because it is the Life, because its power is indestructible, it is controller, not controlled.

Since the Self is witness of the body, its character, its acts, its states, therefore the Self must be of other nature than the body. A mass of wretchedness, clad in flesh, full of impurity and evil, how can this body be the knower? The Self is of other nature. Of this compound of skin, flesh, fat, bone, and water, the man of deluded mind thinks, "This is I"; but he who is possessed of judgment knows that his true Self is of other character, its nature transcendental. . . . Therefore, O thou of mind deluded, put away the thought that this body is the Self . . . discern the universal Self, the Eternal, changeless, and enjoy supreme peace. . . .

Putting off the body is not Freedom, any more than putting away one's staff and waterpot; but getting free from the knots of unwisdom in the heart — that is Freedom, in very deed. . . . Like the loss of a leaf, or a flower, or a fruit, is the loss of the body, or powers, or vital breath, or mind; but the Self itself, ever one's own, formed of bliss, is like the tree and stands. . . . Indestructible, verily, is the Self . . . it is not destroyed when all its changing vestures are destroyed. . . .

The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of embodied existence, help those who try to do the same thing, without personal motives. — *Shankaracharya, Vedantic philosopher, in "The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom."*

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SIMLA — YSS Ashram, Woodfield. Sun. 10:30 a.m. (regular service; free library and medical service). Thurs. 6 p.m. (meditation). Telephone 2374.

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Orissa

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CELEBES — YSS Makassar, Djalan Pasar Ikan No. 3. Sun. 9:30 a.m.



SRF MEDITATION COUNSELORS

The following persons may assist other Self-Realizationists in the practice of SRF techniques and in the understanding of basic meditation principles as taught by Paramahansa Yogananda.

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HOLLYWOOD — Bro. Anandamoy, Sister Meera, Brother Bimalananda, Bro. Mokshananda, SRF Church of All Religions, 4860 Sunset Blvd. Telephone NORmandy 1-8006 or CAPitol 5-2471.

PACIFIC PALISADES — Br. Arne. SRF Lake Shrine, 17190 Sunset Blvd. Tel. GLadstone 4-4114.

LONG BEACH — Br. Harold, SRF Chapel, 430 E. Ocean Blvd. Tel. Los Angeles, CAPitol 5-2471.

EAGLE ROCK — Mr. Eugene Ben-
vau. Tel. CLinton 4-1020.

ENCINITAS — Brother Bhaktananda, Brother Sarolananda. SRF World Brotherhood Colony, P.O. Box 758. Telephone PLateau 3-2888.

SAN DIEGO — Brother Bhaktananda, 3072 First Avenue. Tel. Encinitas, PLateau 3-2888.

OAKLAND — Mrs. Kamala Silva. Tel. THornwall 3-4407.

Michigan

DETROIT — Mr. J. Oliver Black (*Yogacharya*), 18094 Parkside Ave., Detroit 21.

New Jersey

EAST BRUNSWICK — Mr. A. E. Bardwell, 62 Jensen St. Telephone CL. 7-6638.

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VANCOUVER — Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Davis, 807-809 Thurlow St., Vancouver 5. Telephone MU. 3-4940.

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MEXICO, D.F. — Mr. Jose M. Cuaron (*Yogacharya*), Apartado 1680. Telephone 24-22-31.

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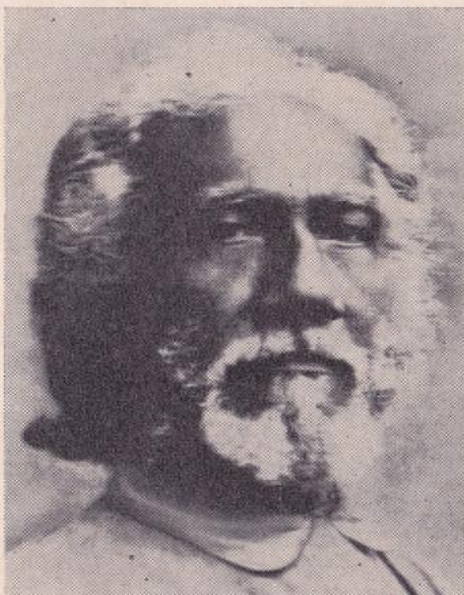
SYDNEY — Mrs. Augusta Claude, 19 Addison Ave., Roseville. Telephone JA. 3757; Mr. Constantine Tenukest, 32 Carabella St., Kirribilli. Telephone XB. 3140.

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AUCKLAND — Mr. Reginald Howan, C.P.O. Box 904. Tel. 44-710.

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RANCHI — Write to Yogoda Math, Yogoda Satsanga Society, Ranchi, Bihar (YSS India headquarters), for information about YSS meditation centers in India.



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SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP, Los Angeles 65, Calif.



Southern wing of Self-Realization Fellowship Hermitage, Encinitas, California, overlooking Pacific Ocean. The 23-acre estate was presented in 1936 to Paramahansa Yogananda by his great disciple, Rajasi Janakananda. Shown are drawing room (*extreme left*), Paramahansaji's study (*next to drawing room*), Rajasi's study and bedroom, and porch for sunbathing.



Recent air photo of buildings and 13-acre grounds of SRF Mother Center. The serpentine curves of Mt. Washington Drive (*foreground*) bound a large section of the estate, intersecting with San Rafael Avenue (*shown diagonally at lower left*); the latter serves as western boundary. San Rafael Avenue also intersects with Rome Drive (*extreme left*).

Ashram and refectory for SRF monks occupy large area at corner of San Rafael Avenue and Rome Drive. Main building (*near center*) is the residence of women renunciants and contains the chief offices of SRF. Large square white structure with skylights (*at left of main building*) is SRF Publications Building. Four smaller residential and utility structures between main building and San Rafael Avenue are partially obscured by trees. At right and in front of main building, next to driveway, are an office building and, farther right, a small dwelling.

Large white square between main building and Mt. Washington Drive is a cemented area used for group games. The two black squares below it are shields on greenhouse roofs. A spacious lawn extends between game court and San Rafael Avenue; at right of court are terraced gardens.