

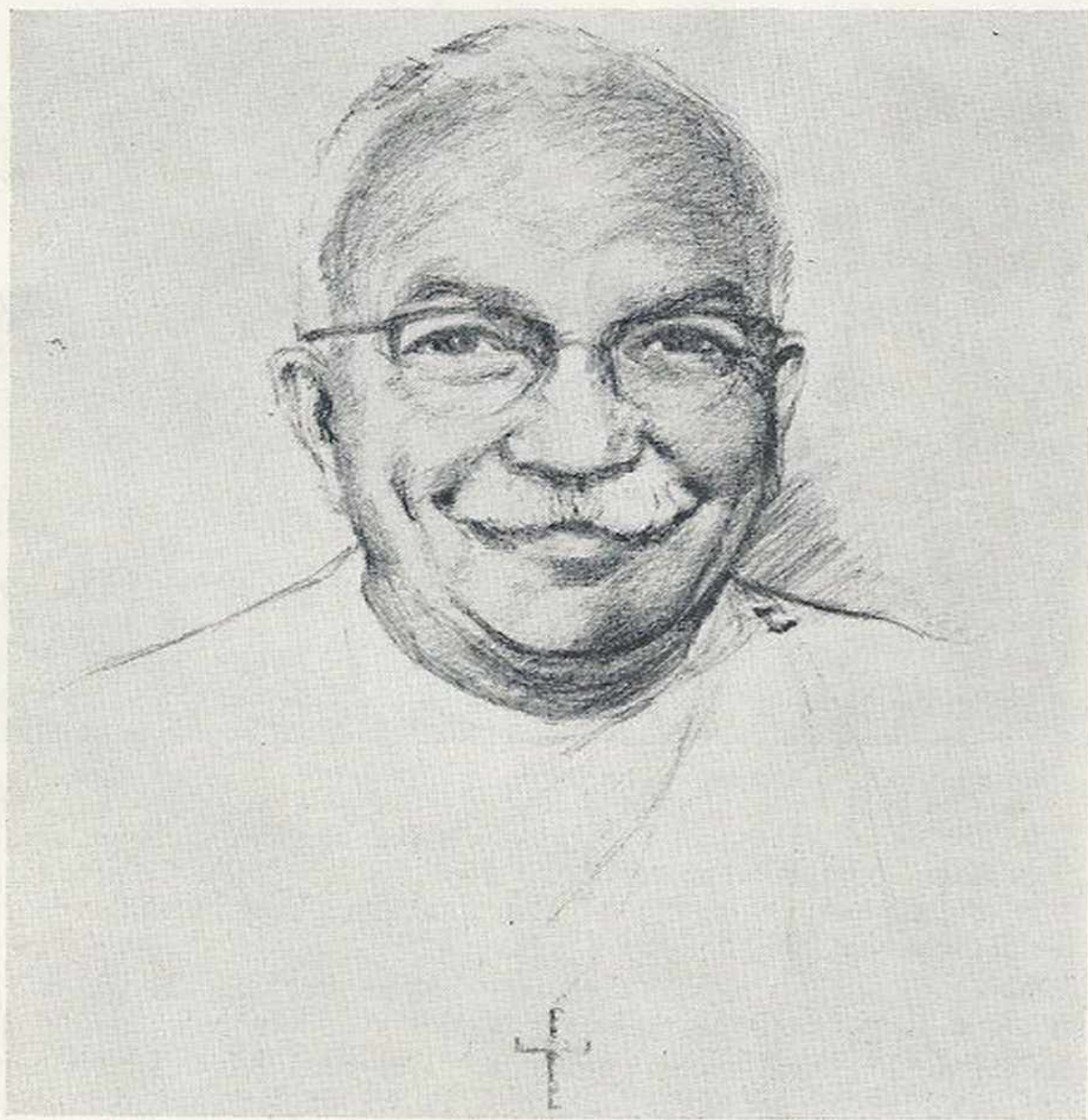
Self-Realization

MAGAZINE

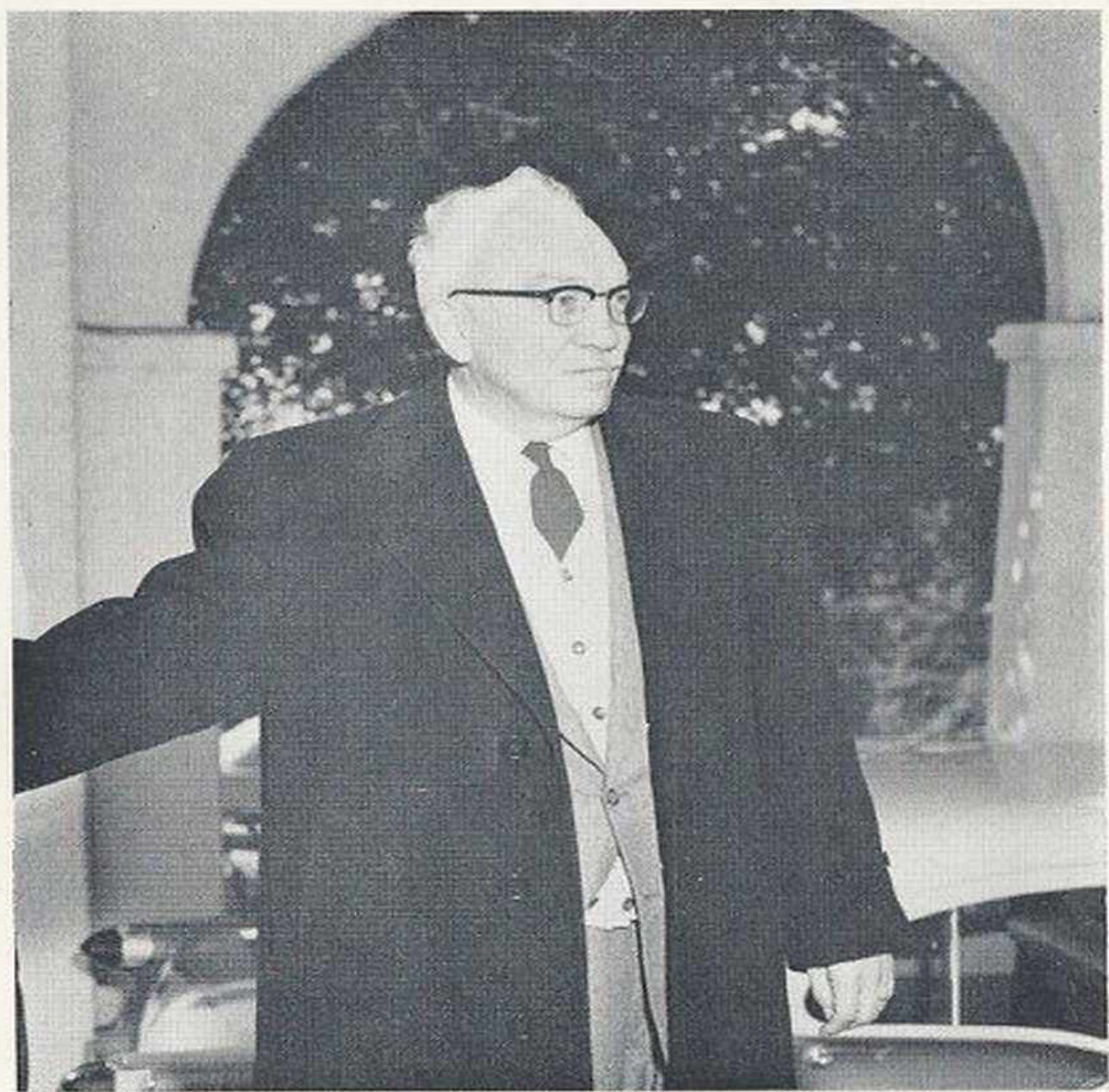


May - June 1960

25¢



DR. MINOTT W. LEWIS
Late Vice-President of Self-Realization Fellowship
1893 - 1960



DR. MINOTT W. LEWIS

The beloved vice-president of Self-Realization Fellowship died of congestive heart disease on April 13th in La Jolla, California. He was one of the first disciples of Paramahansa Yogananda, whom he met in Boston in 1920.

This photograph was taken on November 27, 1956, at SRF Mount Washington Center, Los Angeles.

In 1946 Paramahansaji presented Dr. and Mrs. Lewis with a copy of his *Autobiography of a Yogi*, in which he had inscribed:

"Through your ever-deep loyalty to God, the Gurus, *Kriya Yoga*, and to me, and your glowing service to SRF, you have secured your passport to Heaven and to the deepest recesses of my heart."

Self-Realization Magazine

FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

May - June 1960

Vol. 31, No. 5

The Life Story of Dr. M. W. Lewis	3
The Last Days of Dr. Lewis <i>By Mildred Lewis</i>	45
Eulogy at Dr. Lewis's Funeral <i>By Sister Dayamata</i>	47
Going Home (<i>poem</i>) <i>By Minott W. Lewis</i>	51
O Ring of Gold! (<i>poem</i>) <i>By Minott W. Lewis</i>	52
Tributes From Friends and SRF Centers	53

BOOKLET ABOUT DR. M. W. LEWIS



This Memorial Magazine for Dr. Lewis will be published in July 1960 in booklet form, with cardboard cover, 50¢.

In magazine form, 25¢.

© Copyright, 1960, by Self-Realization Fellowship, 3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles 65, California. Paramahansa Yogananda, founder. Sister Dayamata, president.

Second-class postage paid at Los Angeles, California.

Yearly subscriptions: \$1.50 (no additional charge for foreign postage). Issued bimonthly. Three years, \$3.00. Single copy, 25¢.

The Life Story of Dr. M. W. Lewis

Paramahansaji's Faithful Disciple for Forty Years

"As We Started, So Let Us Finish"



Forty years of faithful discipleship under a great master were climaxed by a glorious upliftment at death for the beloved vice-president of Self-Realization Fellowship, Dr. Minott White Lewis.

After a brief illness in March, Dr. Lewis entered Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla, California, on April 7th, 1960.

On the evening of April 13th, following a short nap, Doctor sat up to meditate — a practice he followed religiously every night and morning. At Doctor's bedside was his loyal wife and fellow disciple on the path, Mildred Lewis. Sitting in silence, Doctor entered Infinity amidst awe-inspiring phenomena. Mildred was blessed by perceiving the presence of Sri Yukteswar (the Guru of Paramahansaji).*

An Early Experience: a Divine Voice Speaks

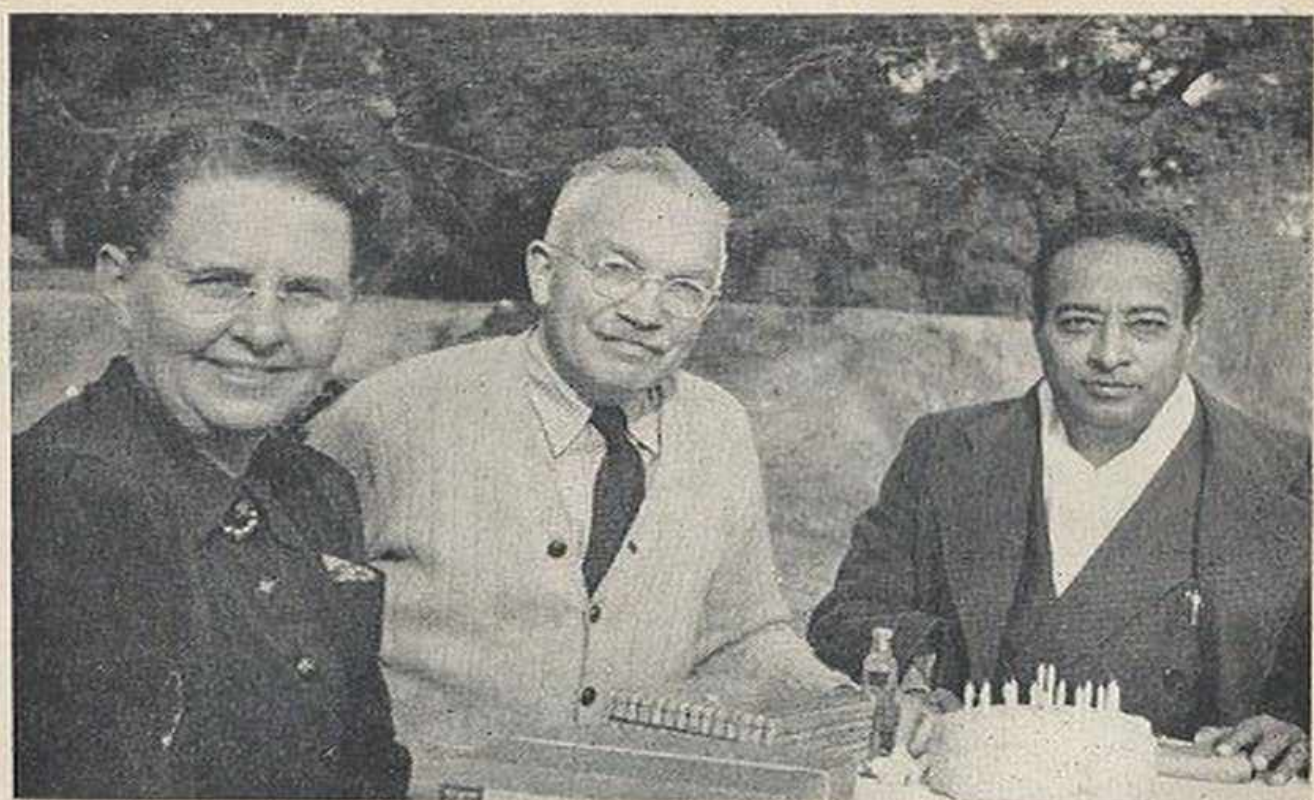
Dr. Lewis was born on March 26, 1893, in Somerville, Massachusetts, the son of Stephen H. Lewis, a building contractor, and Laura Wright Lewis. Minott had two sisters, Grace and Laura; and one brother — the late Wilbur F. Lewis, president of Winter Hill Savings and Loan Bank of Somerville, who also served two terms in the Massachusetts Legislature. The Lewis family attended the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Doctor sometimes related the following childhood experience:

"When I was quite young I had a mischievous nature and caused lots of trouble to my brother and sisters, especially the latter. I was having a grand time one day and the situation got out of hand. My mother, a woman of highly developed spiritual nature, was in her room at the end of a long hall. I was at the other end of the hall. In the midst of the teasing episode a voice came out of the ether, saying: 'Minie,† stop teasing your sisters — be a good boy and go downstairs!'

*See details in article on pp. 45-46.

†Minott was called "Minie," a nickname, by his family.



(Above) Mrs. Lewis, Doctor, and Paramahansa Yogananda on a picnic celebrating Doctor's birthday; in Cleveland National Forest near Mt. Palomar, California, March 26, 1946.

(Below) Skoal! Dr. Lewis and Master hold out teacups in a toast to their many years of divine friendship.

"That voice was heard clearly not only by me but by two others: the maid on the lower floor and my mother in her room at the end of the upstairs hall. When I called down to the maid: 'Did you hear that voice, Margaret?' she said that she had. My mother, speaking from her distant room, also said: 'I heard the voice.'

"Some thirty years later Paramahansa Yogananda walked through that upper hall and saw a spiritual light flash at the exact spot where the voice of God had spoken to me so many years before."

Graduation from College and Entry into Dental Practice

Minott graduated from high school in West Somerville in 1911, and enrolled in the Dentistry School of Tufts College (later Tufts University) in Boston. He received his D.M.D. (Doctor of Dental Medicine) degree in 1914, and entered dental practice. During 1915 and 1916 Dr. Lewis also served as an instructor of clinical dentistry at Tufts College.

In 1916 Dr. Lewis married Mildred M. Wentworth of Dover, New Hampshire. Her family were members of the Congregationalist Church. In addition to Mrs. Lewis's long and selfless cooperation with Doctor in spreading the SRF message, she has engaged in many civic activities. During the Second World War years she served as a volunteer worker in Boston at the Children's Hospital and with the Red Cross Motor Corps.

The Lewises had two children: J. Bradford Lewis, now vice-president of Belz Industries, Mineola, New York; and Brenda (Mrs. Charles Cook), who entered the SRF work at the Encinitas Colony in 1946.

"You Should Meet Swami Yogananda"

Dr. Lewis's wife, Mildred, met Paramahansa Yogananda before Doctor did. Master arrived in America in September 1920. He had been invited to Boston by the American Unitarian Association as the Indian delegate to an International Congress of Religious Liberals. After addressing the Congress on October 6th, he accepted numerous invitations to speak before churches and philosophical groups.

It was during this period that Mrs. Lewis attended a lecture given by a leader of the Rosicrucian Order, and was invited to remain after the meeting so that the leader could introduce her to "a gentleman from India." Thus Mildred met Swami Yogananda, as he was then known. A few pleasantries were exchanged; and Mrs. Lewis returned home, eager to tell Doctor about the Hindu with long black hair curling over his shoulders, wearing an orange robe and a turban. Dr. Lewis asked her many questions. A few days later he hurried

home from his office to tell Mrs. Lewis that on the street he had passed by the swami. Many people in town were eager to know more about this mysterious person from India.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Alice Hasey (later Sister Yogmata), a longtime friend of Dr. Lewis, had met Swami Yogananda at the West Somerville Unitarian Church, where he had been a guest of the pastor. She invited Swamiji to her home to meet a group of friends who were interested in metaphysics. Soon after, Mrs. Hasey talked with Dr. Lewis. "You should meet Swami Yogananda," she said.

An appointment was made for Christmas Eve at Unity House, where Master had a room. When Doctor left his home to keep this engagement he thought he would be gone just a short time. He would be back soon, he told Mildred, to decorate the Christmas tree.



Paramahansa Yogananda (*center*) with Yogoda students, Chelsea, Massachusetts, 1921. Mrs. Lewis and Doctor are second and third from left. The second woman from right is Mrs. Alice Hasey (Sister Yogmata), who fulfilled Sri Yukteswar's "strawberry prophecy" (*Autobiography of a Yogi*, chapter 21). This is probably the first picture taken in America of a group of Yogoda (SRF) students.

On his way to Unity House, Doctor recalled parental warnings against being deceived or misled by charlatans who pose as religious teachers; his frame of mind was skeptical.

Yoganandaji received Dr. Lewis warmly. Placing a tigerskin on the floor, Swamiji asked Doctor to sit cross-legged on it. Swamiji sat down opposite him. The young dentist had many spiritual questions on his mind, and Swamiji gave him satisfying answers.

Many years later, Doctor said of this occasion, "I was 'from Missouri,' and I had to be shown. Worse than that, I was from New England, and I had to *know!*"

On that Christmas Eve in 1920 he said to Swamiji:

"The Bible tells us: 'The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.'* Can you explain this?"

"I think so," Swamiji replied.

Doctor was still doubtful. "I have asked many persons," he said, "but no one seems to know the meaning."

"Can the blind lead the blind?" Swamiji replied. "Both would fall into the same ditch of error."

"Can you show me these things?" Doctor demanded.

"I think so," Master reiterated.

"Then, for Heaven's sake, please show me!" Doctor exclaimed.

A Transforming Experience on Christmas Eve

Swamiji then showed Doctor the light of the spiritual eye and of the thousand-petaled lotus in the brain. Looking directly into Doctor's eyes, Swamiji asked:

"Will you always love me as I love you?"

Doctor replied in the affirmative.

Then Swamiji said, "Your sins are forgiven and I take charge of your life." He added, "I want you to promise that you will never avoid me." Doctor promised.

Of this pact between guru and disciple Doctor said later, "Many times it was very difficult, for the discipline of a guru is not easy; but it is always for your highest good, guiding you to the abode of Light."

After showing Dr. Lewis how to see the light of the spiritual eye, and giving him other spiritual instruction, Swamiji asked him if he thought other Americans would be interested in these teachings.

"Yes, I do," Doctor replied.

*Matthew 6:22.



Dr. Lewis holding David Saver, whom
Doctor christened on April 18, 1954, at
SRF Church, San Diego



Dr. Lewis presiding at Sunday service,
SRF Church, San Diego, California,
February 7, 1960

"Then," Swamiji said, "after you practice what I have taught you, if these techniques of meditation appeal to you and benefit you, will you help others to know about them?"

"I certainly will," said Doctor.

"I Knew Some Great Good Would Come from Paramahansa Yogananda"

Telling of this incident many years later, at the dedication of the SRF World Brotherhood Colony in Encinitas, Doctor said:

"That is why, friends, I have been interested in SRF, and that is why I have tried to help; because I knew that some good, some great good, would come from Paramahansa Yogananda. America has given me much, and I am thankful for it; but there is one thing America did not give me, and that is the spiritual realization and understanding I received from India; they came to me from Paramahansa Yogananda."

It was two o'clock on that Christmas morning in 1920 when Doctor returned home from his appointment with Swamiji. Mrs. Lewis had been understandably alarmed by his long absence; but when she saw his face, she realized that the meeting of her husband with Yoganandaji had been a transforming experience.

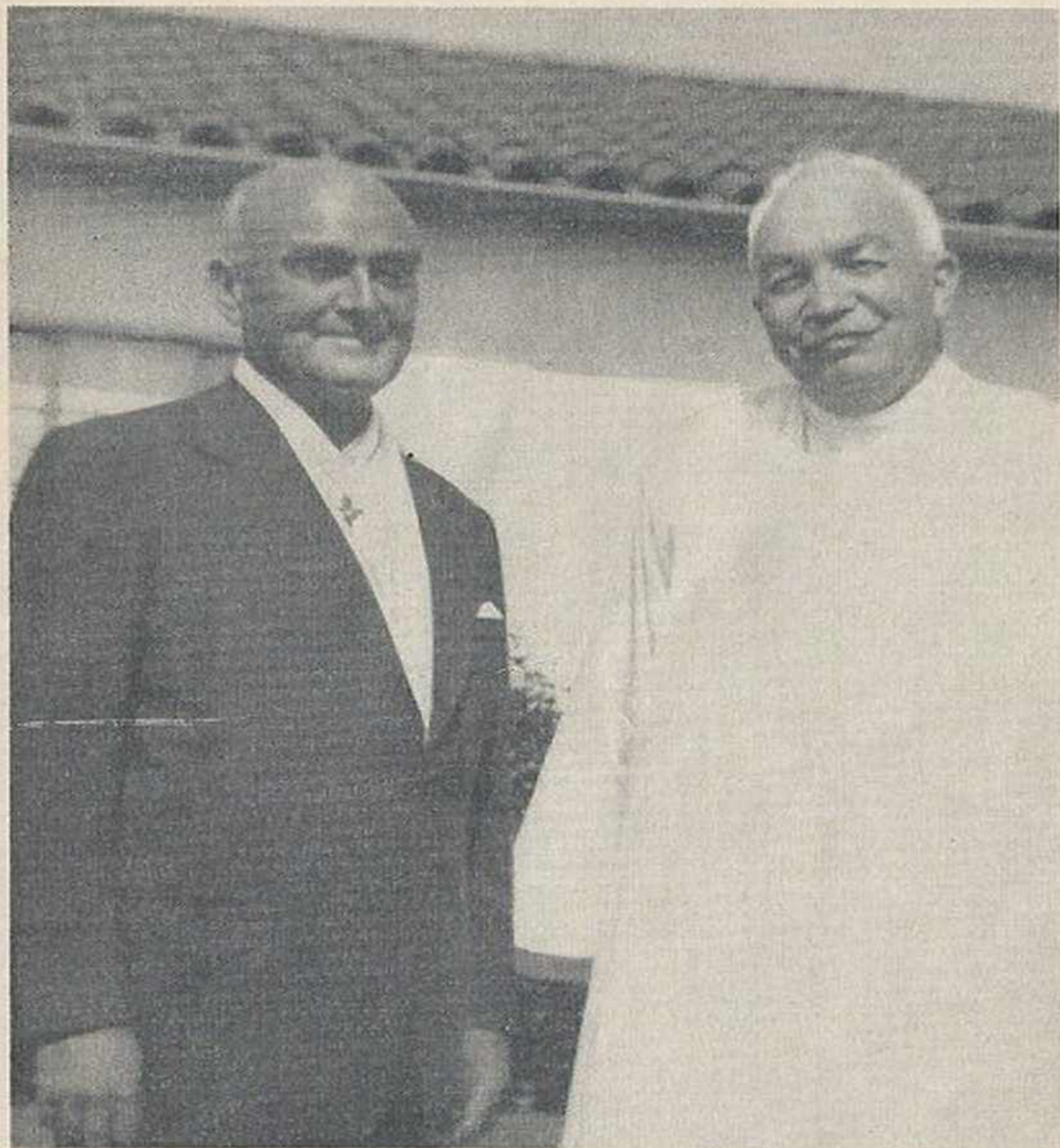
Doctor had promised to decorate the family Christmas tree; instead, his Guru had illuminated for him the inner spinal Christmas tree. Often afterward, when telling of this divine awakening, Doctor said, "It was my first real Christmas!"

A Meditation Group Started in Boston

With the help of Doctor and of Sister Yogmata, Master started a meditation group. He gave many lectures. But, as he wryly related in later years, "Just a few people would come. Sister and I used to sit and talk about how this teaching would spread all over the country. 'Many big places will materialize!' I would say. Dr. Lewis would exclaim, 'But when?'"

Doctor and Sister Yogmata gave generously whenever help was needed. In addition to sponsoring his lectures, they also gave financial aid when Swamiji undertook the building of a little hermitage at Hardy's Pond, near Waltham, Mass., in 1922. Here the Boston group of Yogoda students enjoyed many happy hours of meditation with Master.

Doctor told brother disciples of an incident when he came to know in a divine way of Master's need for financial assistance.



RAJASI JANAKANANDA AND DR. M. W. LEWIS

Rajasi Janakananda (James J. Lynn), second president of Self-Realization Fellowship, and Dr. M. W. Lewis, vice-president, outside the SRF Hermitage, Encinitas, 1952. Like Rajasi, Dr. Lewis greatly helped SRF by generous donations.

In a speech in Encinitas on Jan. 8, 1938, Paramahansa Yogananda said: "Men can carry on successfully in business life and yet find time to meditate and think of God. Mr. Lynn and Dr. Lewis have developed greatly in the spiritual path, while performing their worldly duties."

"I had started one day from my home, where Swamiji was staying at the time, and had not gone far when suddenly I felt I must go back and give him some financial aid. This was just as clear to me as if an audible voice had said, 'Turn around and go back and help.' I felt through intuition that Lahiri Mahasaya and Sri Yukteswarji were both asking me to do something; and so strong was the feeling, I turned right around, went back, and gave him the assistance he required. When I did, his eyes filled with tears, because he knew that God had responded to his needs, and that the Divine Voice had silently spoken to me."

Yoganandaji Demonstrates his Loving Omnipresence

The following story illustrates how a true guru, through his omnipresent divine consciousness, is aware of every need of his disciple and is able to render instant aid.

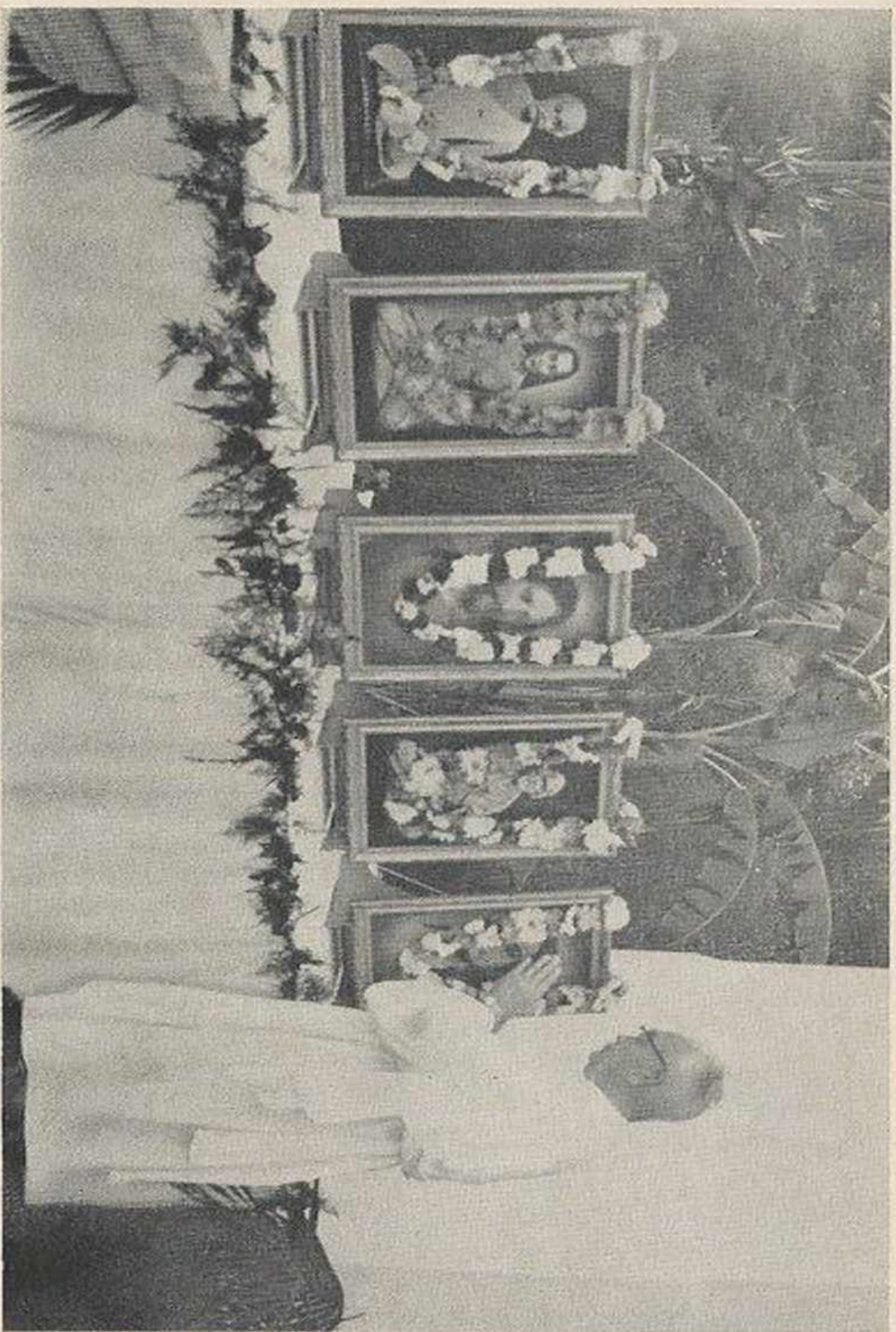
One Sunday in July 1921, Doctor and Mrs. Lewis drove with their children to the summer home of Dr. Lewis's parents in South Duxbury, Mass. It was a very warm, humid day; early in the afternoon dark clouds began to gather.

Nevertheless, Doctor, his father, and his brother decided to go for a sail. Their skiff was rather light, but they confidently set off from shore in a brisk breeze. When they were about two miles out, the cloudiness in the sky deepened. An ominous calm settled over the sea.

Doctor and his brother lowered the sail and started to row for shore. They were not able to row for long, however, because a great wind started up, tossing the boat around like a chip of wood. Hail pelted down. The two brothers immediately led their father into the cockpit of the boat; it took all their strength to pull the canvas cover over him and to crawl under it themselves. Soon the sea was a boiling mass of foam; lightning flashed, and thunder boomed about them.

"When in Trouble, Look in the Aum"

"I remember thinking, 'This is the end,' " Doctor related afterward, "and I wondered what it would be like. Then I thought of my wife and two little children, and I thought of Yoganandaji — of how I had just started with him, and things had seemed so bright; and now they were to be cut off. I remember feeling in my heart a deep desire for his help, and then his words came to me. He had once said, 'Remember, Doctor, if ever you are in trouble, look in the *Aum* (the vibratory light of God, which can be seen inwardly at the point between the eyebrows). If you look there and see His light and feel His presence, no harm can come.'



Dr. Lewis making gesture of *pranam* (literally, "complete bowing down") before pictures of the five Self-Realization Fellowship Gurus, during closing benediction at 1957 Convocation garden party, SRF Lake Shrine, Pacific Palisades, Los Angeles, California

The Light of God Dissolves the Danger

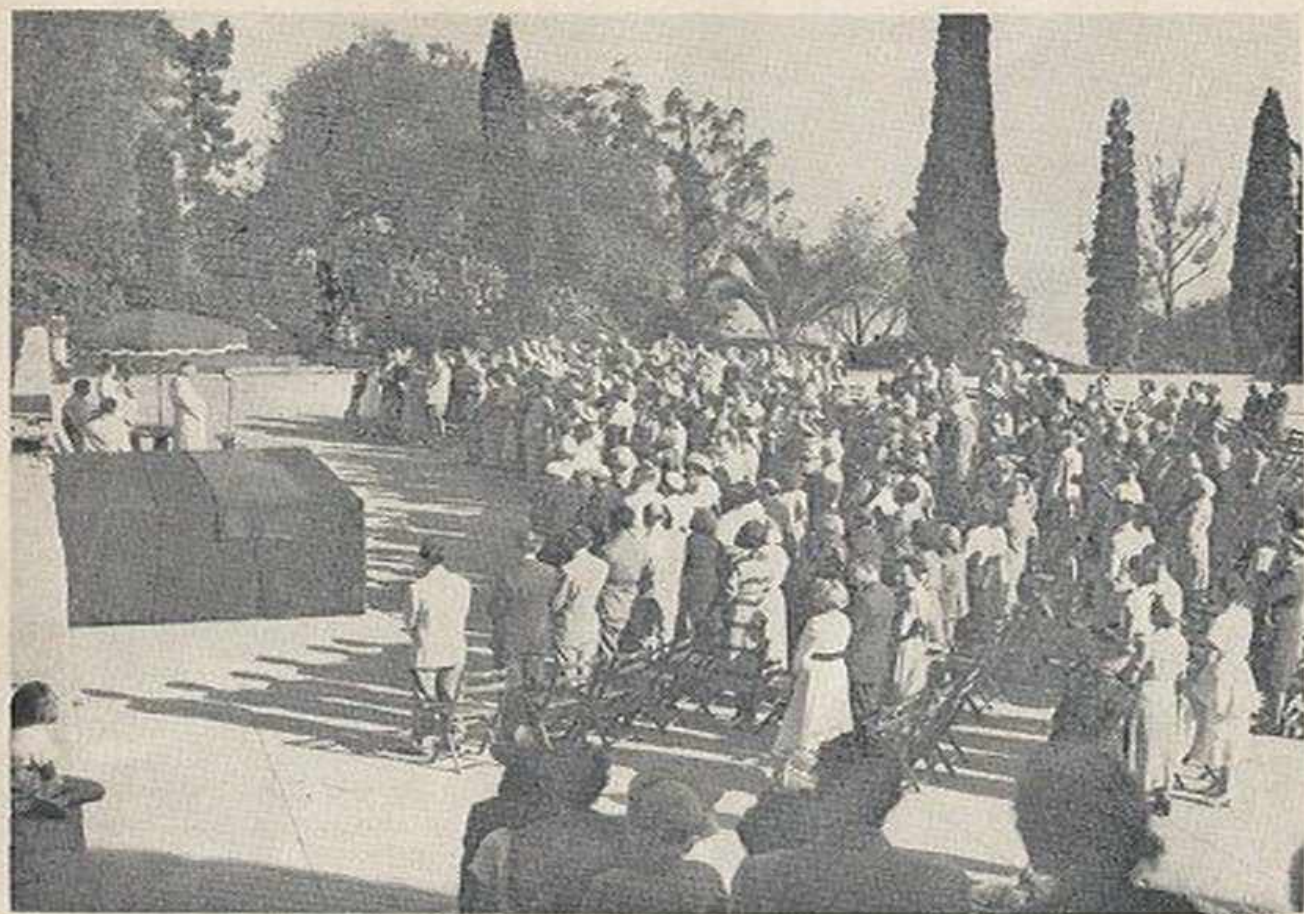
"I looked through the spiritual eye in the forehead, and that light came — a great light — as I lay there in the bottom of the boat. And with its radiance came such an assurance, I didn't care what happened; because I knew nothing could touch me, I knew that God had responded through my Guru."

The storm abated and the three men looked out from under the canvas covering, scanning the shore in the hope that someone would come for them. At last they spied a boat headed in their direction. They were soon towed ashore — exhausted but safe. Their families, who had been waiting for them on the beach, cried with joy to see them alive.

"Late in the afternoon we started home," Doctor recounted, "and arrived there about eleven o'clock that night. Just as I came in the door the telephone rang. Swamiji's voice said to me, 'Aha, Doctor! you came near getting wet, didn't you?'"



Theodore Lukits and Lucille Greathouse Lukits with Dr. Lewis, who had just conducted their wedding ceremony; Encinitas SRF Hermitage, December 21, 1952. Mrs. Lukits painted the beautiful portrait of Paramahansaji now displayed in SRF Church, Hollywood.



Dr. Lewis (*on dais at left*) and SRF students at 1951 Convocation garden party, Mount Washington Center, Los Angeles

"Well, delusion is pretty strong, and I replied casually. But again he said, 'You came near getting wet.'

"Then I answered, 'Yes, how did you know?'

"He wouldn't say anything more; but some time later, when I was talking with Sister Yogmata about this episode, she told me that Master had been at her home in West Somerville on the afternoon of the storm. He was reading a passage about the sea by Emerson. Suddenly he threw the book down and began pacing back and forth.

"'Sister,' he said, 'Doctor is in trouble. He is in real trouble.'

"This happened at precisely the hour at which we were caught in the storm at sea.

"I told Master about what Sister Yogmata had said. 'Is it so, sir?' I asked. Swamiji just quietly dropped his head and smiled a little and nodded, 'Yes.'"

Close Calculations of Time and Tide

There were other adventures. In April 1921 Dr. and Mrs. Lewis drove Yoganandaji and a small party of students to a little island resort off the coast of Massachusetts. The plan was to stay there for a week. On the first day the weather was very cold, and sleet was falling. The temperature remained cool, although the weather did improve, and on some days there was sunshine. On one such day Swamiji asked Doctor to go for a walk on the beach toward a breakwater that ran out some distance into the bay. When they reached their destination, the tide was far out; the high rocks were dry.

"Let us meditate here," Swamiji said. They seated themselves cross-legged on the rocks, and Dr. Lewis thought it would be wonderful to meditate there in the sunshine.

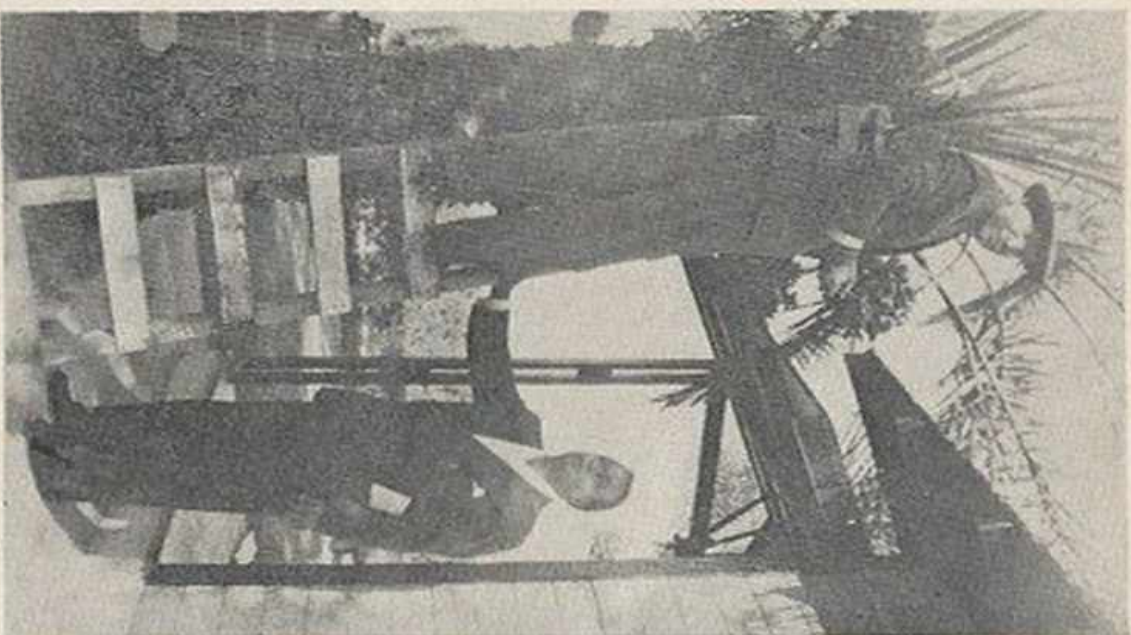
Swamiji was soon deep within, but Doctor was battling the forces without. The rocks were hard, the sun bright, the air brisk. He saw the great calmness of Swamiji, and thought, "If Master can do it, I can do it." Time sped on and, after tremendous effort ("probably on Master's part as well as mine," Doctor said), the disciple felt great tranquillity. More time passed, and occasionally Doctor would look carefully about to see how close the tidewater was coming. Watching its inevitable approach, Doctor frequently affirmed: "If he can stay, I can stay."

A Secret Blessing from the Trial on the Rocks

Five hours passed. Master opened his eyes just as a great wave was about to splash over them. "Doctor, Doctor!" Swamiji exclaimed. "Let's get out of here!" Guru and disciple departed with speed. Later Doctor said, "That test of sitting with Master for five hours on the rocks while the tide was rising removed from me forever all feelings of restlessness during long periods of meditation."

Yoganandaji continued to spread his message in Boston. Among the first students in his Yogoda classes were Dr. and Mrs. Lewis, Sister Yogmata, Doctor's sister Laura W. Elliott, Raymond Elliott, George Carpenter, Mr. Au Claire, Mrs. Alta Walker, Miss May Murray, and Mr. Amos Jones, all of West Somerville; Mr. Gerard, his mother, Mr. Beck, Dr. Perrin, a professor at Boston University; and Mrs. Jessie Southwick, head of the Emerson School of Oratory, all of Boston; and Mrs. Sargent of the Sargent School of Physical Education in Cambridge.

Dr. Lewis assumed the leadership of the Boston Yogoda (SRF) Center when Master went to New York City in late 1923. Swamiji's first lecture in New York, at Town Hall, aroused immense interest. He accepted an invitation from the management of the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York to be its guest.



Dr. Lewis with a bouquet of freshly plucked dates for his guru Paramahansa Yoganandaji (*right*); Phoenix, Arizona, November 1948



Dr. Lewis and Sri Prabhas Chandra Ghosh, vice-president of Yogoda Sat-Sanga Society, India; during welcoming ceremonies at SRF headquarters, Los Angeles, April 14, 1954



Dr. M. W. Lewis and Sister Dayamata at a reception on June 27, 1955, SRF India Hall, Los Angeles

During the years that Doctor conducted the Boston Center it was necessary for him to drive from his home in Arlington, Massachusetts, to Boston. Often he would be pressed for time.

A Divine Force Saves Lives of Doctor and Two Other Students

On one evening his sister, Mrs. Laura Elliott, and Sister Yogmata were with him. It was a winter night, and the road was covered with ice and snow. They approached a narrow bridge on a slight rise in the roadway. Traveling rather fast as they reached the level of the bridge, they saw before them a car that had skidded sideways on the ice, blocking their way. The bridge was so narrow, there was no room to pass on either side of the disabled car. A crash seemed inevitable.

The thought flashed through Doctor's mind: "Why should this happen? We are going to our Yogoda meeting."

At that instant a great force seemed to take hold of the car, stopping it just before it reached the obstructing vehicle. Doctor said it was as if a giant had reached down his hand and held back the automobile.

Sister Yogmata and Mrs. Elliott were momentarily speechless; they knew that in that moment they had been protected by God. Sister Yogmata spoke first. "Doctor, did you feel that great force?"

"I did, Sister," Dr. Lewis replied. "We could never have stopped otherwise."

Boston Students Welcome Master on his Return in 1928

In 1924 Swamiji left New York on a cross-country trip. In 1925 he acquired the Mount Washington Center in Los Angeles and made it the headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship. He continued his speaking tours, and made a triumphal return to Boston in 1928. When he arrived on September 19th he was welcomed by Governor Alvan Fuller at the State House. A capacity audience of 2500 greeted him enthusiastically at his opening lecture in Symphony Hall. On the welcoming committee with Dr. and Mrs. Lewis were many prominent Bostonians; noted musicians entertained. In addition to two weeks of classes, Swamiji gave lectures at a score of Boston clubs and philanthropic organizations, and spoke over radio stations WNAC, WBZ, and WLOE. On November 11th he addressed students at Harvard University. An account in *East-West Magazine* states that his lecture at Harvard Union Club "was received with deafening applause and sustained cheering."



Paramahansa Yogananda (*standing in center aisle*), Dr. Lewis (*see arrows*), and members of Yogoda Class held in Boston, 1928

Master and Doctor Meet in Chicago at World's Fair

In 1933 Yoganandaji was invited to speak before the World Fellowship of Faiths at the Chicago World's Fair. He took with him a small party of disciples from the Mt. Washington Center in Los Angeles. Doctor Lewis traveled from Boston to Chicago to be with Swamiji on this important occasion. Here Doctor met for the first time Miss Faye Wright, Swamiji's disciple since 1931; now Sister Dayamata, president of SRF.

In 1935 Yoganandaji left for India, at the behest of his Guru Swamiji Sri Yukteswar. That year Sri Yukteswar conferred upon Master the title of *Paramahansa*, the highest spiritual title of India.

Master returned to the United States late in 1936, and on January 3, 1937, a Yogoda Convocation Banquet was held in Mount Washington Center, Los Angeles. Dr. Lewis attended the festive affair and gave a brief address. He said:

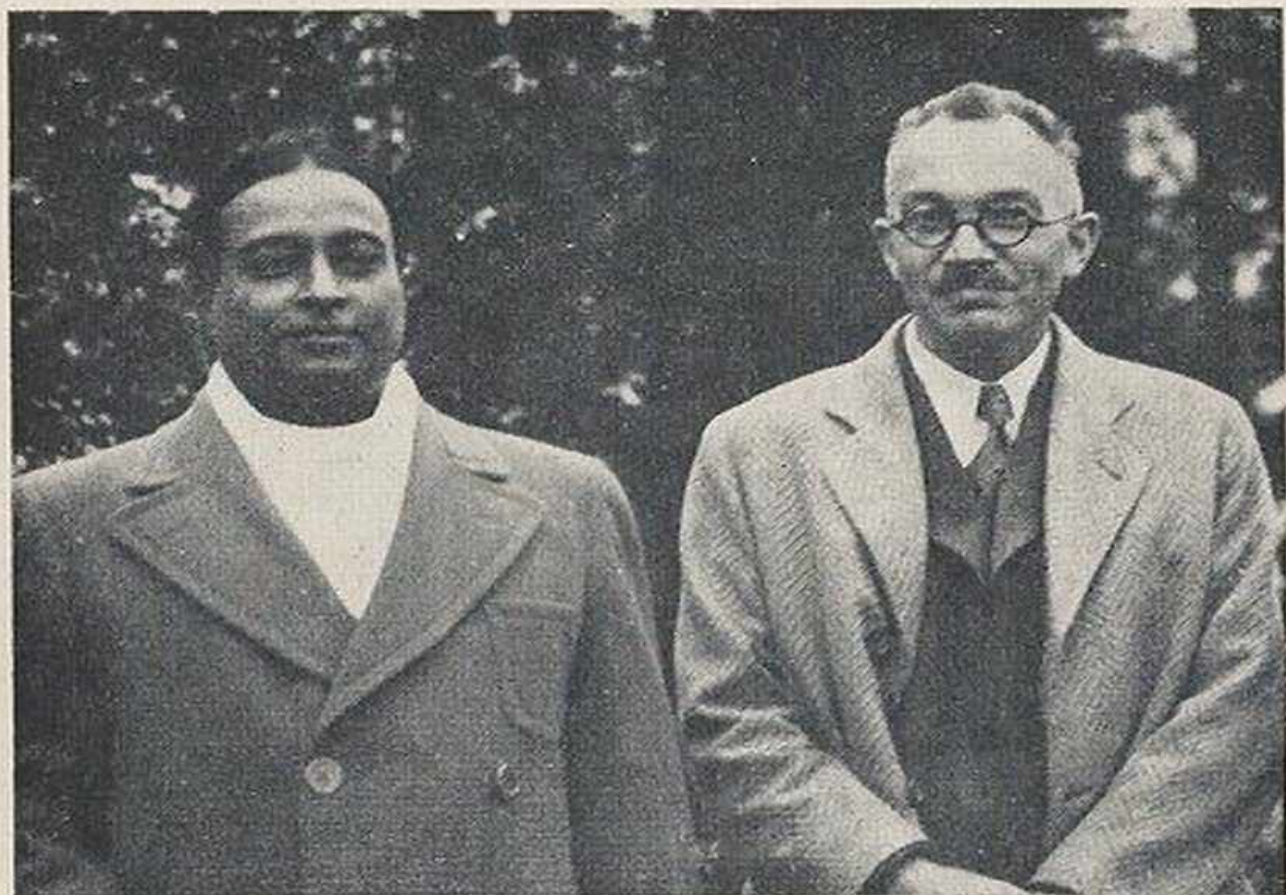
"I am very happy to be here with Swamiji, and to bring to you the greetings of Boston. Words cannot express my feeling. I shall have to let my heart speak in its own language. In wishing you all the happiest of new years in 1937, I think the greatest wish I can give you is that you will have deep spiritual realization and that you will find God in your meditation. Dive deep in the ocean of Spirit, and if you don't find Him at the first dive, plunge deeper. As Swamiji says, find fault with your diving. I might add a humble suggestion: When you dive, mentally take Swamiji's hand. He knows where the pearls of wisdom are. He knows the Spirit. He can show you God."

The Boston Center continued to thrive. Weekly meetings were held in the homes of two different Yogoda students. On March 1, 1937, the Boston group had as guest speaker Dr. A. K. Mukerji of India, a disciple of Bhupen Sanyal Mahasaya (one of the few living disciples of Lahiri Mahasaya).

Boston Center Holds Annual Yogoda Festival

In June of the same year the Boston group held its annual Yogoda Festival—a traditional Indian ceremony initiated by Swamiji at the home of Sister Yogmata in 1920 and carried on loyally by the Boston Yogoda students. The secretary wrote the following report to Mt. Washington Center:

"As each laid his tribute of a flower upon the altar, kneeling to breathe a prayer, the room *was* Light, and *Aum* was upon and through each. . . . Dr. Lewis was divinely inspired—in his prayers, in the vibration of his tone—moving us to recognition of the Master's holy presence."



Paramahansa Yogananda and Dr. Lewis at the World's Fair in Chicago, October 1933, where Master addressed a meeting of the World Fellowship of Faiths

Dr. Lewis traveled to Los Angeles to be present for the Second Convocation of SRF teachers and students, held in December 1937. When he was called upon to speak, Dr. Lewis's words sprang from a well of love for Master. He said:

The Divine Relationship Between Master and Disciple

"I chose the subject, 'My Guru,' because that theme is nearest and dearest to me. All spiritual realization that I have or hope to have I owe to him, my Guru, Paramahansa Yogananda. When I first sat at his feet, back in 1920, my heart was filled with honest doubt. But when he taught me and I saw the compassion in his eyes, I was overwhelmed. Something sprang up within me that had been sleeping, something that I had forgotten; and it has been present with me ever since. Ordinary human ties and friendships pale in the light of that divine relationship between master and disciple.

"Many times I came to Paramahansaji with my troubles, but I could not disturb his calmness. I remember that I said to him on one

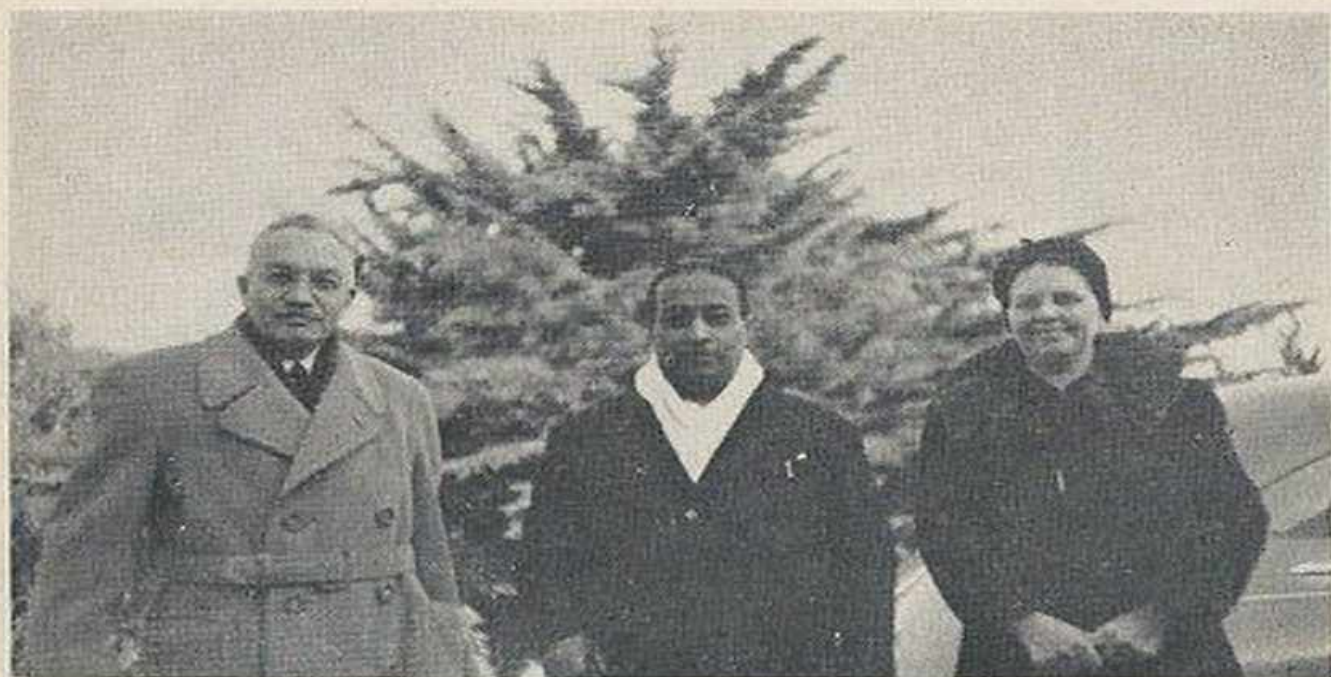
of these occasions, 'How is it you are able to have such courage and conviction?' He replied, 'Doctor, remember: the same Father who protects me, protects you. He is our common Father.' That thought has been a source of inspiration as I have plodded along the path."

In an article that appeared in the April 1937 issue of our magazine, Doctor Lewis wrote the following about his Guru:

"As we sat together on the tigerskin rug enjoying God's presence, and I looked into his face, I saw no show of consciousness of superior ability. He might well have expressed it; for to be able, by such great calmness and realization, to help another to feel the Divine Consciousness is no mean accomplishment. But instead there was present an expression of humbleness, love, and supreme satisfaction that another of God's children was able, like himself, to enjoy the presence and bliss of the Lord, our common Father. Such humility has been and always will be a deep inspiration to me. To my mind, it is a characteristic of true greatness."



(Upper right) Dr. and Mrs. Lewis (*garlanded*) and their daughter Brenda (*wearing pearl necklace*). The Encinitas SRF Colony residents shown here had lovingly arranged this India-style welcome for Dr. and Mrs. Lewis upon their return to Encinitas from a trip to Boston, November 27, 1956.



Dr. and Mrs. M. W. Lewis with Paramahansa Yogananda, outside SRF Hermitage, Encinitas, California, 1939

Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Make Yearly Cross-Country Trips

The Lewises became regular cross-country travelers, making two trips every year—one in the summer and one in the Christmas-holiday period.

On January 2, 1938, Dr. Lewis was present in Encinitas, California, for the formal opening of the Golden Lotus Temple. Paramahansaji had to conduct two services, as there was not even standing room for the hundreds that assembled for the first scheduled ceremony. In all, 3000 persons attended the dedication.

In 1941 Mrs. Elizabeth Backus of La Jolla, California, the Lewises, and several other devoted students donated to Mt. Washington Center a melodious Robert Morton pipe organ. It was played for the first time at an SRF banquet in July by the noted organist, Mr. Karl Krebs of Santa Barbara, California.

Master Praises the Work of Dr. Lewis at the Boston Center

Late in 1941 Paramahansaji visited the Boston Center again. He wrote the following account of his visit for the April 1942 issue of our magazine:

"It was a great pleasure to me to see the wonderful work carried on by Dr. M. W. Lewis in Boston.

"My wish to stay in a pleasant Boston apartment was fulfilled, thanks to Dr. and Mrs. Lewis. I had a delightful time. After I came to Boston in 1920, I lived in a single room without bath, and that is why I had a desire to stay in a modern apartment in Boston.

"I am very grateful also for the handsome gift of a new Dodge car through the kindness of Dr. and Mrs. Lewis, Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe Elliott (the latter is Doctor's sister), and a few Philadelphia students. A great need for another car at the Mt. Washington Center in Los Angeles has thus been fulfilled."

Doctor and Master Bereft of Their Fathers in 1942

Master's father died in July 1942, and in the same year Doctor's father passed away. Paramahansaji, in keeping with Hindu custom, composed a poem in honor of "Grandpa Lewis," which appeared in the October 1942 issue of our magazine. It read, in part:

"We grieve for our losing you,
But gladden for your freedom true
From old age's limitations
And fleshly lamentations.
Your children's love,
And your most spiritual son, Minott's,
 meditation treasure
Saved in vault of karma above,
Have helped you beyond measure. . . .

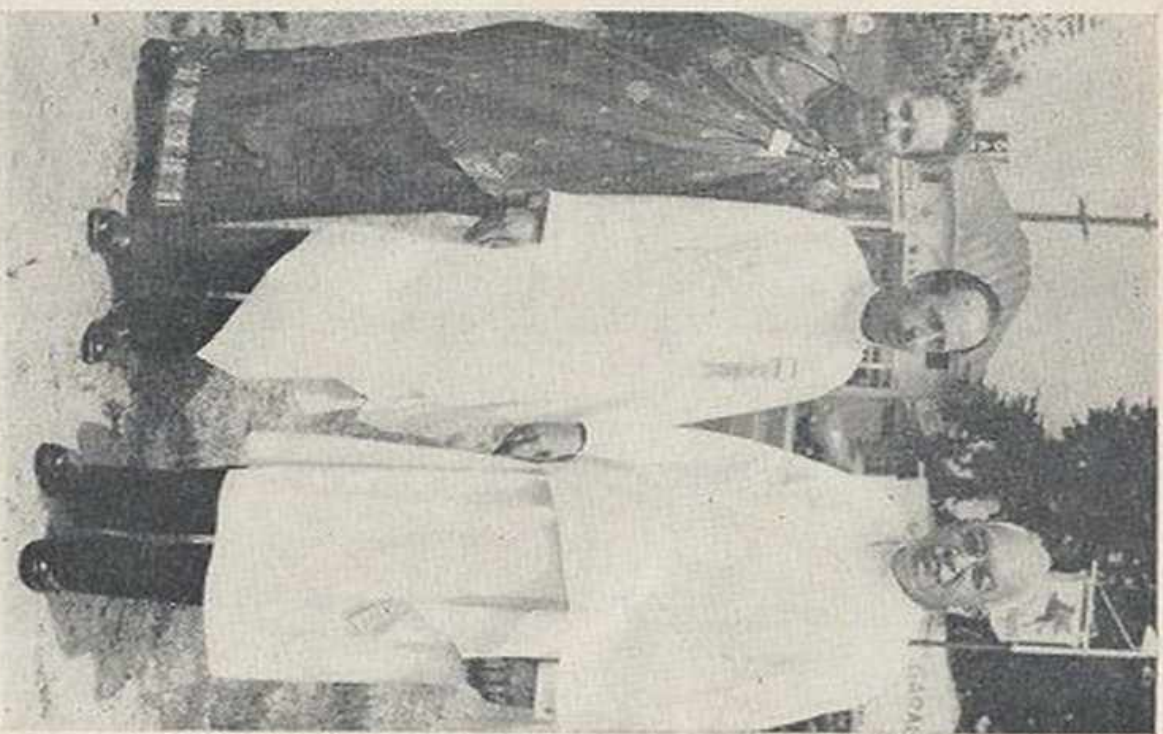
I searched your soul and name. . .
And I was glad to see
You basking in His grace
For your heart's quality."

Some years ago, while walking on the beach at San Clemente with the Guru and several disciples, Doctor said to Master: "Here we are all so happy together, and then someday we shall have to part."

Paramahansaji replied: "What do you mean? We'll know each other better on the other side."

One by One, the "Big Places" Foretold are Materialized

On Sunday, August 30, 1942, Dr. Lewis was again in Los Angeles, to attend the dedication services at the new SRF Church in Hollywood. Dr. and Mrs. Lewis had helped most generously in the acquisition of the Church site. At the dedication ceremonies Doctor played on the new pipe organ the ancient Sanskrit temple song, *Brahmanandam* or "Hymn to Spirit." His rendition of this beautiful melody



Mrs. Lewis, Brother Bhaktananda, and Doctor on grounds of SRF World Brotherhood Colony, Encinitas, California, where they welcomed Self-Realization students on pilgrimage during the 1953 SRF Convocation



Dr. Lewis chats with three-year-old Eileen Hall — the youngest yogini residing in the Self-Realization Fellowship Encinitas Colony; at SRF Cafe, Encinitas, California, May 1955

Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Become Residents of SRF Colony, Encinitas

In September 1945 Dr. and Mrs. Lewis left Boston for California to reside in the Encinitas SRF Colony. Later Doctor said:

"I left Boston and my profession of thirty-five years, on what my patients thought was an extended leave of absence. Many of them continued to write me asking when I was coming back. I began to feel uncertain of my course. 'Should I remain permanently in Encinitas?' I asked Master. 'Yes,' he replied, 'the Lord wants it. You are performing a greater work in Encinitas.' From that moment I knew everything was all right; I felt no further restlessness. God had spoken to me through the Guru."

In addition to his spiritual duties in Encinitas, in 1946 Dr. Lewis took over the supervision of activities at the papaya grove then being operated by SRF.

In 1946 Dr. Lewis was made a member of the Board of Directors of Self-Realization Fellowship Church, Inc. In that year he also became the third vice-president of SRF. (In 1952 he was elected first vice-president, and held that office until his death.)

SRF members from San Diego and Encinitas regularly attended the Thursday evening services Dr. Lewis conducted at the Encinitas Hermitage. Master, as always, was appreciative. Speaking before a great throng at the formal dedication of the Golden Lotus Towers at SRF World Brotherhood Colony in Encinitas on February 20, 1948, Paramahansaji said:

"Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Have Led Exemplary Lives"

"On Thursday nights you should come to meditate in the Hermitage with Dr. Lewis, who is a very wonderful, spiritual man. In his company you will feel great happiness. . . . He and his wife, during the twenty-eight years that I have known them, have led exemplary lives. Doctor's presence itself will be of great help to you. Dr. and Mrs. Lewis were among my first friends in Boston. Those who have been our friends in need we remember always.

"I have never forgotten those early days. Dr. Lewis has steadfastly followed this path with great zeal. So be sure to come on Thursday nights to hear him. He gives not only words but the Spirit behind the words."

Two days later, on February 22nd, Paramahansaji presided at the dedication of yet another "big place" — the SRF Chapel in Long Beach. Dr. and Mrs. Lewis generously helped SRF to purchase this handsome Normandy-style property overlooking the Pacific Ocean.



(From left) Sister Yogmata of Boston, one of the first Yogoda students in America; Paramahansa Yogananda, Dr. and Mrs. Lewis; at SRF Mount Washington Center, Los Angeles, California

Seven hundred guests assembled at a garden party held on July 31, 1949, in Beverly Hills in honor of Paramahansa Yogananda. Dr. Lewis and other speakers told of their experiences with Master.

"I met Paramahansa Yogananda nearly thirty years ago," Doctor said. "At that time he asked me if I thought Americans would be receptive to these teachings. 'Yes,' I replied, 'because there are many people like me, who are searching and searching for God, yet cannot find Him.'

"Paramahansaji has given us a practical way to know God and the eternal truths. If we merely talk and theorize about Him, what good is it? If we know God through personal experience, though, it is the greatest thing in life."

The Lewises made an enjoyable three-week visit to Boston in October 1949, during which time Doctor conducted three meetings of the Boston SRF Center.*

*Doctor's son, J. Bradford Lewis, conducted meetings at the Boston SRF Center from 1949 to 1954, when he left Boston to live near Mineola, New York.

In the spring of 1950 Dr. Lewis began conducting Sunday services at the Self-Realization Fellowship Church in San Diego, alternating with Dr. Lloyd Kennell.* In one of his sermons there, "Can Thought Change Matter?", Doctor related the following experience with Paramahansa Yogananda.

"The following personal experience shows that a strong mind can prevent even the formation in another person's mind of a pattern that would cause an undesirable change in matter. One day several years ago Paramahansaji and I had just arrived at Mt. Washington Center in his automobile. He left the car and went on ahead. As I was getting out, the car door was accidentally shut on three of my fingers, up to the second joints. The fingers were flattened to the actual shape of the doorjamb; the physical pain was excruciating. There was also great mental pain; for I was sure the accident meant hospitalization, which would prevent my returning next day to Boston as planned.

Doctor Again Experiences Master's Healing Power

"The Master, who was by this time inside the building, was immediately informed of my mishap. From that instant a wall seemed to be placed between my consciousness and the injured hand. When I momentarily passed mentally through that wall, I felt the injury extremely; so I was perfectly willing to remain behind the wall! There was a little fear in my mind that someone would come in contact with my hand, so I held it across my chest inside my coat; and that was all I did. That evening a party of us were to attend a performance at the Hollywood Bowl; so complete was the Master's healing care, I was able to go along with the group.

"The next day I had breakfast and dinner with the Master, but he paid no attention to my trouble. I was satisfied to leave it that way, and say nothing. That evening I left by train for the East, still without referring to the injury; that wall around my consciousness was still there. The following morning at breakfast I had courage enough to look at my hand. The fingers were normal in shape and size. All that remained of the injury was a little blue discoloration on two fingers; there was no discomfort. This was an instance of almost instantaneous healing of matter. The Master's strong mind, contacting God's power, had prevented the pattern of injury from being accepted by my mind. Thus I was saved from much difficulty and pain. Mind coupled with God's consciousness and power can do anything. It has created our bodies; therefore it can change our bodies."

*Lloyd Kennell, M.D., met Paramahansa Yogananda in 1933. From 1943, when the San Diego SRF Church was founded, until 1956 Dr. Kennell regularly conducted inspiring services at this Church. He passed away in 1957.



PARAMAHANSAJI AND THREE BELOVED DISCIPLES

Rajasi Janakananda (J. J. Lynn), Master, Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, and Dr. Lewis; SRF Mt. Washington Center, Los Angeles, California, Christmas Day, 1946

"I Never Missed in My Practice of Kriya Yoga"

Dr. Lewis was master of ceremonies at the SRF Convocation held in Los Angeles in August 1951. On that occasion he said:

"Paramahansaji showed me the great light of God, and told me: 'If you cling to this path and regularly meditate, this vision will be your own always.' And so I followed his advice. I never missed in my practice of *Kriya Yoga*. Gradually the light of God came in. What I received, I received from the Master. He lifted me from the uncertainty of delusion into the light of Reality. When that experience comes it changes the heart. Then we feel the real brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God.

"Mrs. Lewis had a coronary thrombosis. Through the grace of God working through the Master, she was completely healed. Many who know her can assure you of that.

"Self-Realization teachings give you the realization of the infinite Light from whence all things come. Do your *Kriya* regularly. You will realize the allness of God, and in His omnipresence nothing inharmonious can touch you. As the Master often says, 'You can stand unshaken amid the crash of breaking worlds.'"

At a *Kriya Yoga* initiation on August 25, 1951, during the SRF Convocation, Master announced that Dr. Lewis and several other disciples might henceforth use the title *Yogacharya* (teacher of yoga).

With Master on His Last Birthday, in Los Angeles

On Master's birthday, January 5, 1952, Yoganandaji and Dr. Lewis exchanged the banter about their respective ages that had become traditional on these occasions. (Both were born in 1893.) Doctor hinted that he was going to reveal Master's age, and Yoganandaji feigned consternation. Then Master said:

"I see by the single candle on my cake that my age is one — my age is infinite. It is wonderful to have only one candle!" Childlike, he added, "Shall I blow it out now?"

Doctor teasingly replied, "If you can, yes!" Master smiled and said: "I still have a little strength of breath. I must take care I don't blow the cake away!"

Doctor then read to the assemblage some of the telegrams of congratulation that had poured in from SRF Centers and students all over the world.

On January 11th Yoganandaji traveled to Encinitas. He arranged a special dinner in the Hermitage, to which he invited Rajasi, the Lewises, and a few other disciples. It was Paramahansaji's last visit to the Encinitas SRF Colony, founded by him in 1937.



Dr. M. W. Lewis, vice-president of Self-Realization Fellowship; and Sister Dayamata, president, at Encinitas Hermitage, April 1955

Then Master departed for the SRF desert retreat in Twentynine Palms, California. Doctor and Mrs. Lewis visited him there. In the quietude of the desert, Master and Doctor had their last long talk. Paramahansaji said:

"Remember the good times we had in the beginning? As we started, so let us finish. Life is just a dream. Where is your father? Where is my father? They are gone; but the love that we felt in the beginning is the same. We'll be apart a little, then together again."

The Peerless Guru Enters Mahasamadhi

Paramahansaji returned to Los Angeles on March 1, 1952. Three days later he entertained at Mt. Washington Center the Ambassador of India, Mr. Binay Ranjan Sen, and Mme. Sen. The Lewises were present.

On the night of March 7th, at a banquet held at the Biltmore Hotel in honor of the Ambassador, the peerless Guru entered *mahasamadhi* (a great yogi's final conscious exit from the body).

The Lewises, after receiving the devastating news, hastened from Encinitas to Los Angeles, arriving in the small hours of the morning to join the other grieving disciples.

Rajasi Janakananda (James J. Lynn), the new president of SRF-YSS, and Dr. Lewis conducted the partly Vedic, partly Christian ascension ceremonies for Master on March 11th at Mt. Washington Center. Ambassador Sen and Consul General M. R. Ahuja attended the funeral. "Death has no victory in him," Mr. Sen said.

Faithfully Carrying On the SRF Work

The SRF India Center, another of the "big places," celebrated its first anniversary on April 7, 1952. Rajasi and Dr. Lewis took leading parts in the festive proceedings. In July of the same year Doctor assisted Rajasi in conducting services and classes at the Convocation.

In accordance with Master's wish that after his passing the monks and the nuns of the monastic Self-Realization Order conduct separate Christmas meditations, SRF monks convened on December 23rd at the Encinitas SRF Hermitage, with Rajasi and Dr. Lewis presiding; and SRF nuns meditated at Mount Washington Center with Sister Dayamata.

In a sermon at the SRF Church in San Diego in 1952, Doctor told the following story — one that illustrates the Lord's willingness to fulfill a devotee's desires.

"This was demonstrated to me once," Dr. Lewis said, "when I was first with Paramahansaji, and meditating a great deal. I used to sit in meditation trying to understand how the energy is withdrawn



Dr. Lewis, Br. Arne, Sri Jagadguru the Shankaracharya of Puri, India, and his aide C. M. Trivedi; during the Shankaracharya's first visit to Self-Realization Fellowship Colony, Encinitas, February, 1958



The Ambassador of India, B. R. Sen (*right*) and the Consul General of India, M. R. Ahuja, with Doctor Lewis at Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters, Los Angeles, March 4, 1952

from the body, how the sense perceptions are withdrawn, and how to leave the body consciousness and get into the realm of spiritual things, into superconsciousness. I knew how in theory, and I was able to feel I was not the body consciousness; but I had not experienced the withdrawing of the energy from the involuntary nerves. Then one day when I was meditating deeply, I felt my body become as cold as ice, with perspiration all over it. I was fully conscious. Something prompted me to feel the top of my head. It was almost as hot as a stove. This showed me beyond a doubt that the top of the head is the place where the energy leaves the body and merges in the surrounding Cosmic Energy. Now I could have read about that all my life without actually knowing it. But God answered my desire to know by giving me that experience, so I could realize the truth and not just theorize about it. The Lord truly does answer us if we make the effort and give our devotion to Him. . . .

"If we can understand that God speaks to us in these various ways, indirectly and directly, it should not be difficult for us to comprehend that we can sometimes hear Him speak in a voice audible to our physical ears; and even in words, as He spoke to me when I was a little boy. In God's consciousness are all the senses — sight, touch, hearing, and the others; everything is in His divine consciousness, not in the physical body. The sense of hearing is not in the ear; it is in the divine consciousness of God, which projected the body. The same is true of sight, touch, taste, and smell. God can produce, through the Holy Ghost Vibration, any manifestation, any sound, perceptible to our outward consciousness.

Hearing, in Master's Presence, the Astral Bee-Sound

"Sometimes such a sound is audible not only to our own ears but to the ears of others. On one such occasion, when some of the disciples were with Master at the Encinitas hermitage, we heard the

CAPTION FOR OPPOSITE PAGE

Paramahansa Yogananda (*center*) and group at a reception in July 1950 at SRF Hermitage, Encinitas, for Dr. N. N. Das (*at left, holding flowers*), Calcutta University professor and a director of Yogoda Sat-Sanga Society, India. (*Standing*) Dr. Antonia Brico, symphony orchestra conductor; Dr. M. W. Lewis, Mr. Lee Naify, Brother Bhaktananda, Sister Dayamata, and Sister Mataji.

Among those seated on floor are Sri Kriyananda (*with beard*) and Brother Anandamoy (*left foreground*).



Reception at Encinitas Hermitage for Dr. N. N. Das (see opposite page)



Dr. M. Lewis (*second from right*) and Mrs. Lewis (*fifth from left*) among the guests of honor at a banquet for Mr. G. L. Mehta, Ambassador of India; Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, October 24, 1953

“Jesus told his disciples that although he would not be with them, still he would leave them the Comforter, and that in the Comforter they would find answers to all their questions. Paramahansaji, like Jesus, has left us the comfort of the Holy Ghost, the great light of the Cosmic Intelligent Vibration spread all through creation. He is one with it. He gave us the ways and means to merge ourselves in it. From its light we have been created. In that light we are sustained. And into that light we shall finally melt again.

“It is true that the divine light seems to be hidden. But if you persevere in meditation as the Master has taught, there is a great surprise in store for you. God will come. That light of God can be known by us because Master came as a special divine dispensation to show all people, regardless of race or creed, how they can be one with that light. Through *Kriya* Master has given us the power to know that great light, to realize it as a living reality.

“We must get rid of the ego, that the light of God which was manifest in the Master can flow freely into us. When God comes in, you realize that He alone is the Doer. Then you can truly help people, because you will have realization. The Holy Ghost goes from you to them, and that is something real. Words will be unnecessary. Keep on. Meditate deeply. Then that light of the Master will be with you

to such an extent that nothing else will matter to you. 'If God be for us, who can be against us?*' God is with us. The Master is with us. All is well."

When SRF India Center celebrated its third anniversary in 1954, Doctor was again on hand to deliver a brief address, and to inspire the congregation with selections on the organ. Indeed, he was a spiritual "fixture" at all SRF annual celebrations; he will be sorely missed in August at the 1960 Triennial Convocation in Los Angeles.

Doctor Lewis Presided at Many SRF Functions

The year 1954 was an unusually busy one for the Lewises. SRF-YSS representatives from India, including Master's cousin, Sri Prabhas Chandra Ghosh, vice-president of YSS in India, came to America for a two months' stay. On April 14th Sister Dayamata, Dr. Lewis, and a large group of other SRF devotees welcomed the honored guests at Mt. Washington Center with elaborate India-style ceremonies. The following day the Indians visited Rajasi and the Lewises at the Encinitas Colony. The guests made trips to near-by points of interest where Paramahansaji had liked to go, such as the San Diego Zoo and the Mount Palomar Observatory. The Lewises accompanied the Indians on several picnics.

**Romans 8:31.*



Dr. Lewis (left) greets Sri Prabhas Ghosh, vice-president of Yogoda Sat-Sanga Society of India, after Encinitas SRF Colony residents had showered the honored guest with rose petals, April 15, 1954

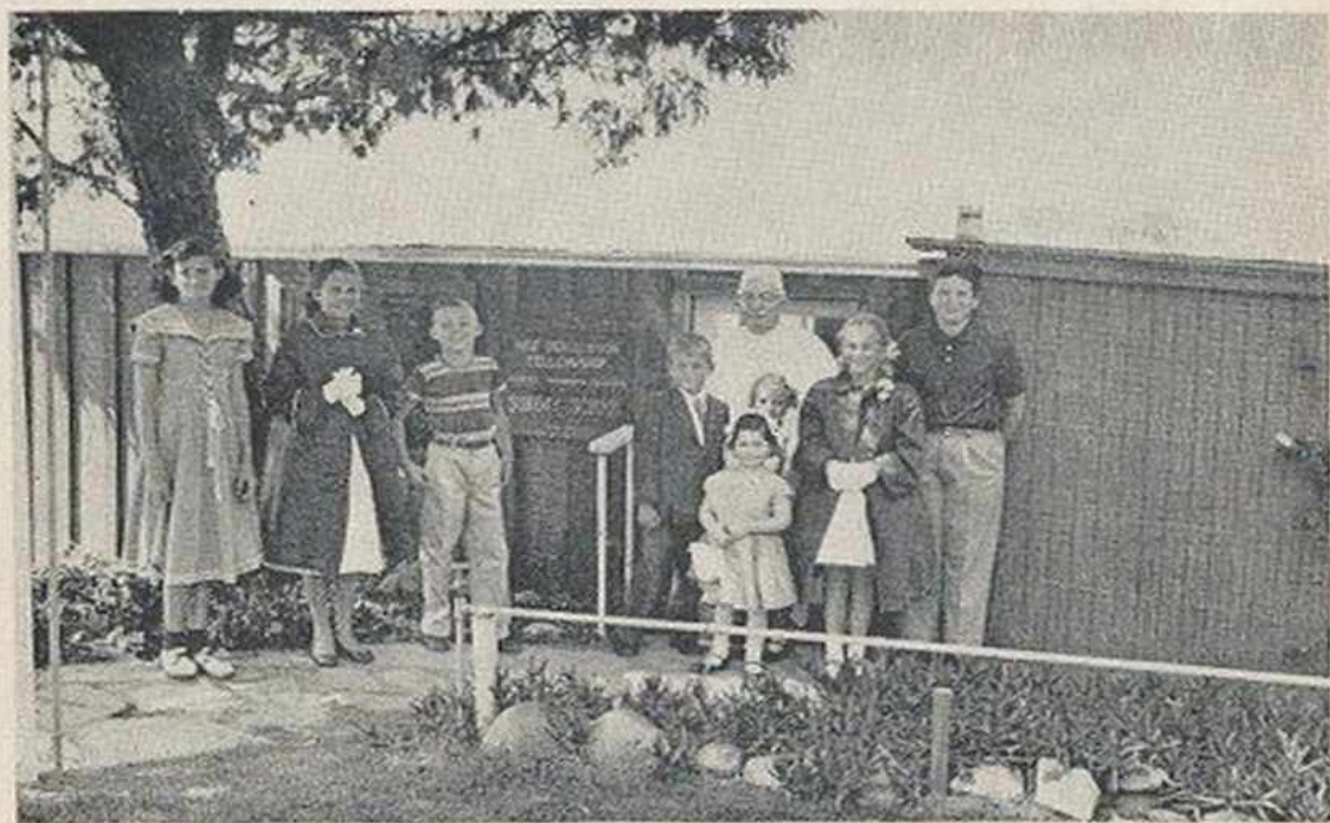
In August there were classes and ceremonies to conduct during the 1954 SRF Convocation. Doctor inaugurated the Rose Ceremony at these Convocations, a rite that Master had taught the students during the early days in Boston. At that time it was celebrated annually, on the day of the summer solstice, as the Yogoda Festival.

In December Doctor assumed joyous Christmastime duties, when he presided at the monks' Christmas meditation and banquet at the Encinitas Colony.

On February 20, 1955, Rajasi Janakananda passed on. The funeral rites were held three days later at the Church of the Recessional, Forest Lawn Memorial-Park, Glendale. After a eulogy delivered by Sister Dayamata, Dr. Lewis spoke.

"Rajasi Janakananda lived engrossed in the light and love of the Infinite Father," Doctor said, "an illumination bestowed on him through the channel of our beloved master Paramahansa Yogananda. Only with the language of our hearts may we pay fitting tribute to Rajasi. And that language is the unconditional divine love we feel for him."

Two years earlier Dr. Lewis had started at Hollywood SRF Church a Friday-evening class for SRF monks. In 1955 another class was added on Friday evenings, for SRF men and women lay disciples



Dr. Lewis with children of the Self-Realization Fellowship Sunday School, San Diego, California, 1956



Dr. Lewis (*fourth from left*) and SRF students at a birthday memorial service for Paramahansa Yogananda, Jan. 5, 1960, in Encinitas SRF Hermitage. Mrs. Lewis (*in white*) stands near Master's photo.

of the Los Angeles area; this group met immediately after the monks' class. The lay disciples' two-hour meeting included meditation and chanting. Doctor often played the organ to accompany the group singing. He presided over these two Friday-evening gatherings uninterruptedly until a month before his passing.

Dr. Lewis made a recording for SRF of an organ rendition of Tagore's song, "Thou Art My Life."

As Paramahansaji had predicted, the SRF work continued to grow with the passing years. In 1957 SRF held its largest Convocation up to that time. At the garden party on August 11th Dr. Lewis led the invocation. "I was just thinking," he remarked in conclusion, "of a garden party held by our beloved Master in Lexington, Massachusetts, in June 1921. Lexington, you know, is the place where the shot was fired that was 'heard round the world.' And so I was thinking that Master's establishing SRF in 1920 was a spiritual 'shot' that is being heard round the world, too. Today there are six hundred of us assembled here. There were only thirty-five or forty of us at that Lexington garden party; but I remember with what love and protection he looked at us then. And I know he looks down on us now with that same love and care."

In 1958 His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya Sri Jagadguru Bharati Krishna Tirtha of the thousand-year-old Gowardhan Math in Puri, India, paid a three months' visit to America under the sponsorship of Self-Realization Fellowship. It was the first time in the history of the Swami Order that a Shankaracharya visited the West. His Holiness spent some weeks at Mt. Washington Center. On many occasions he talked on spiritual subjects with Sister Dayamata and other SRF residents. He also traveled to Encinitas, where he stayed for a short time, and enjoyed meeting the Lewises and other SRF Colony members. After he had returned to India, Sri Shankaracharya said:

"I found in Self-Realization Fellowship the highest spirituality, service, and love. Not only do their representatives preach these principles, but they live according to them."

Doctor Valiantly Carried a Heavy Schedule to the End

Dr. Lewis performed his SRF duties with unchanging enthusiasm. To the end of his days he kept a heavy schedule of classes and services, traveling back and forth each week between his home in Encinitas and the churches in San Diego and Hollywood. He was also frequently called upon, in his capacity as vice-president, to preside at various ceremonies and to represent SRF at important public gatherings.

His administrative duties in connection with the SRF Colony in Encinitas, and various special assignments he undertook at the request of the SRF Board of Directors, were considerable. He gave generously of his time to SRF students who sought his counsel concerning the teachings. The strain showed physically, and his fellow disciples expressed their loving concern for his welfare. But the spiritual enthusiasm that had kept him "in harness" all these years enabled him to fulfill his great desire to be "faithful unto death."*

An Exit in the True Yogic Tradition

Greatest of all, Doctor remained faithful to his search for ever higher heights of God-realization through *Kriya Yoga*. The following words of Paramahansa Yogananda, which describe what happens at death, should inspire others to follow the example of Dr. Lewis as a *Kriya Yogi*. Master said:

"When a person dies, as the life force in the body goes up through the spine and out through the thousand-rayed lotus in the top of the head to merge in the Cosmic Life Force, it enlivens all

*"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." — *Revelation 2:10*.



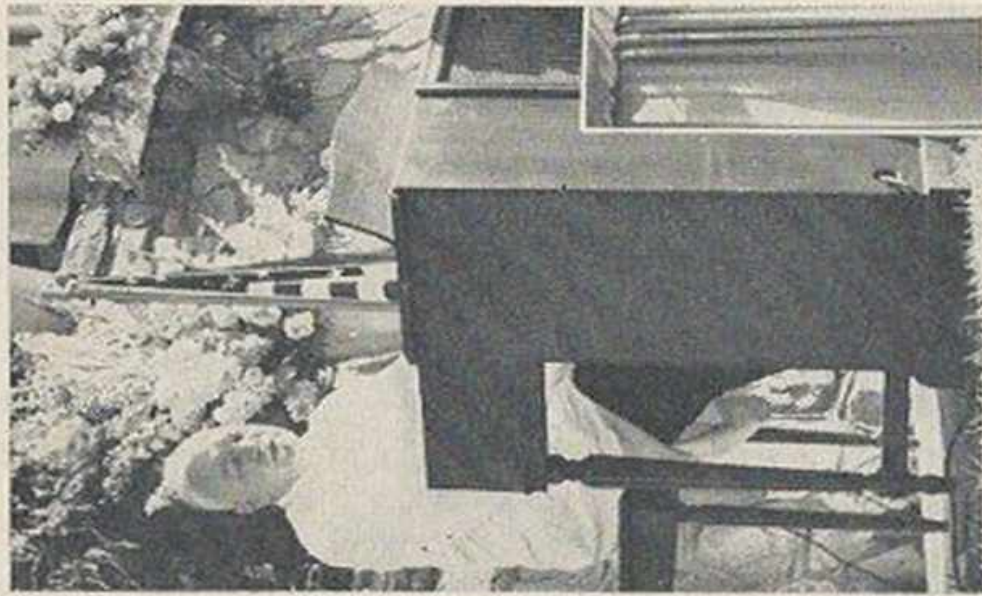
Sri Kriyananda and Dr. Lewis at close of a *Kriya Yoga* Initiation conducted by them on Nov. 17, 1955, in chapel at Mount Washington Center, Los Angeles, California.

(On May 9, 1960, the Board of Directors elected Sri Kriyananda as the new vice-president of SRF.)

the little films of past experiences that are stored in the subconscious mind, and you see your whole life spread before you. If you have made God your own during this life, there will be no break in continuity of consciousness as you go out of the body. If you have lived a materialistic life, you will have to review it all painfully; but if you have developed your soul consciousness, you will slip through death into the great light of God; and the subconscious revelation of all you have done during this life will neither affect nor disturb you. You will realize that your life was only a part in a play, that you are and ever have been one with God."

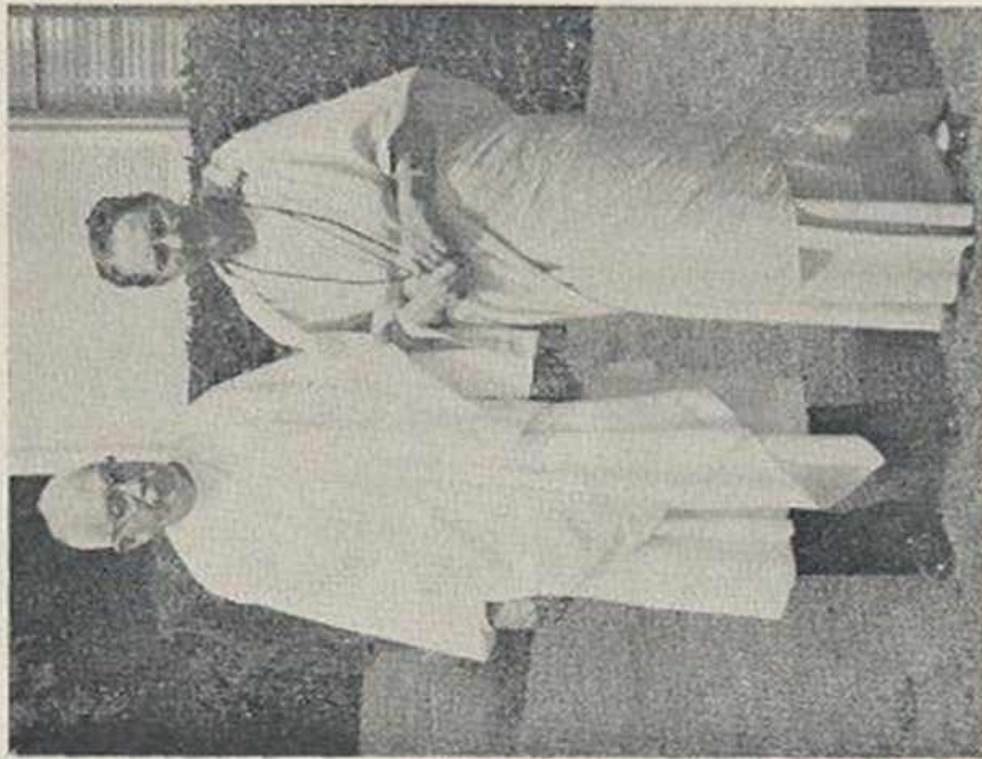
Doctor Lewis made his exit in the true yogic tradition, demonstrating with his last breath what devotion to God, Guru, and *Kriya Yoga* can do for loyal followers of the SRF path.

Dear Doctor, your fellow disciples can well believe Master's beautiful words to you: that the candles you lighted in your Father's house while you were here will light your way hereafter.



PLAYING THE ORGAN

Dr. Lewis, a talented musician, performing at 1954 Convocation, SRF Lake Shrine, Los Angeles



DR. AND MRS. LEWIS

On grounds of the Hermitage, August 1958, when SRF students from Mexico and South America visited Encinitas

The Last Days of Doctor Lewis

By MILDRED LEWIS

On Sunday, March 20, 1960, Dr. Lewis held his last service at the SRF Church in Hollywood; and his last Sunday-night meditation service at the SRF Retreat Chapel in Encinitas. The following day, in his apartment in the Hermitage, Doctor kept many appointments with SRF students. Though Doctor never spoke of his illness to others, our daughter Brenda and I noticed that he seemed very tired. On Tuesday morning he and I motored to our desert retreat in Borrego Springs, where he could have a restful change.

While there, he seemed different: an outward sparkle and enthusiasm were gone. An atmosphere of remoteness surrounded him.

On Thursday, March 24th, we returned to Encinitas. That afternoon Dr. Lewis saw his physician, who had been treating Doctor for heart trouble. The physician ordered two weeks of complete rest.

Dr. Lewis, however, had several engagements that he felt constrained to keep. After supper that day he held his last Thursday-evening class at the Hermitage. The following day he conducted the funeral rites for an SRF student. On Sunday, March 27th, he spoke at the SRF Church in San Diego. The following Sunday, April 3rd, he gave his last sermon at the San Diego church. It was his last public appearance.

It was not easy for Doctor to rest; his temperament was too active. Often we would urge him to heed his physician's instructions. "Remember," Brenda would tell him, "you can get along without us, but we can't get along without you." With a sweet smile Doctor would say soothingly: "I understand."

As his condition was not improving, on April 7th his physician ordered him to enter Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla for a rest and medical tests. Doctor had a lovely room there — private, quiet, overlooking the ocean. Each day Brenda would visit him in the mornings; then I would go in the afternoons and stay with him until the closing hour for visitors.

His first three days in the hospital were hard on him, because of the tests. On Monday, however, he seemed greatly improved. The following day he said he felt well enough to return home.

When Brenda returned home from the hospital on Wednesday, April 13th, she seemed distressed. (Later she told me that during the

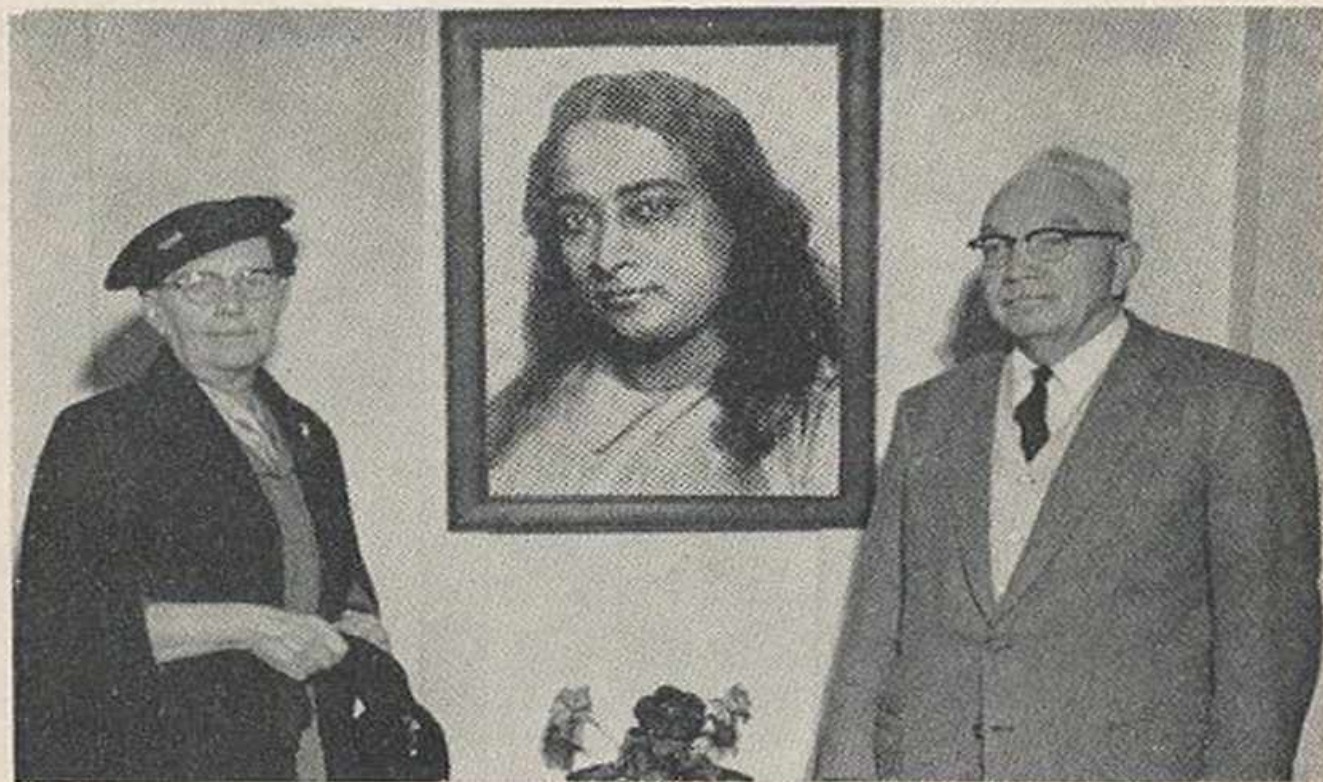
morning visit her father, though loving as always, appeared distant and withdrawn.)

I went immediately to the hospital and found Doctor resting comfortably. That day we had such a pleasant time together! After his supper, which he enjoyed, he sat in a chair for thirteen minutes and then returned to bed. At seven p.m. he said he would take a nap. He slept very peacefully until seven-thirty, when he awakened and remarked, "I want to sit up straight." I arranged the pillows at his back as he assumed the lotus pose for his usual evening meditation. His hands were upturned, his eyes closed. I sat beside him, thinking that I too would meditate.

I was aroused in two or three minutes by a tremendous sound. It resembled the suction sound of a huge pump, or the breath sound of a giant *Kriya*. With the sound came a great flash of spiritual white light, whose brilliance might be compared to that given forth by a million electric-light bulbs.

Doctor's blue eyes opened; piercing flashes of blue light came from them. Then they were locked at the Christ Center in the forehead. His head lowered somewhat, but his body remained erect. For an instant, the face of Swami Sri Yukteswarji appeared, enveloping Doctor's face. Then all was over.

How many times I have thanked God, the Great Ones, and beloved Master that I was privileged to witness such a glorious passing!



Mrs. Lewis and Doctor at Mt. Washington Center, Nov. 27, 1956

Eulogy at Dr. Lewis's Funeral



Sister Dayamata, president of Self-Realization Fellowship of America and Yogoda Sat-Sanga Society of India, conducted the final rites for Dr. Lewis on April 18, 1960, at Church of the Recessional, Forest Lawn Memorial-Park, Glendale, California.

Five hundred mourners attended the service. The body of Doctor Lewis was interred at Forest Lawn near the "Court of David."

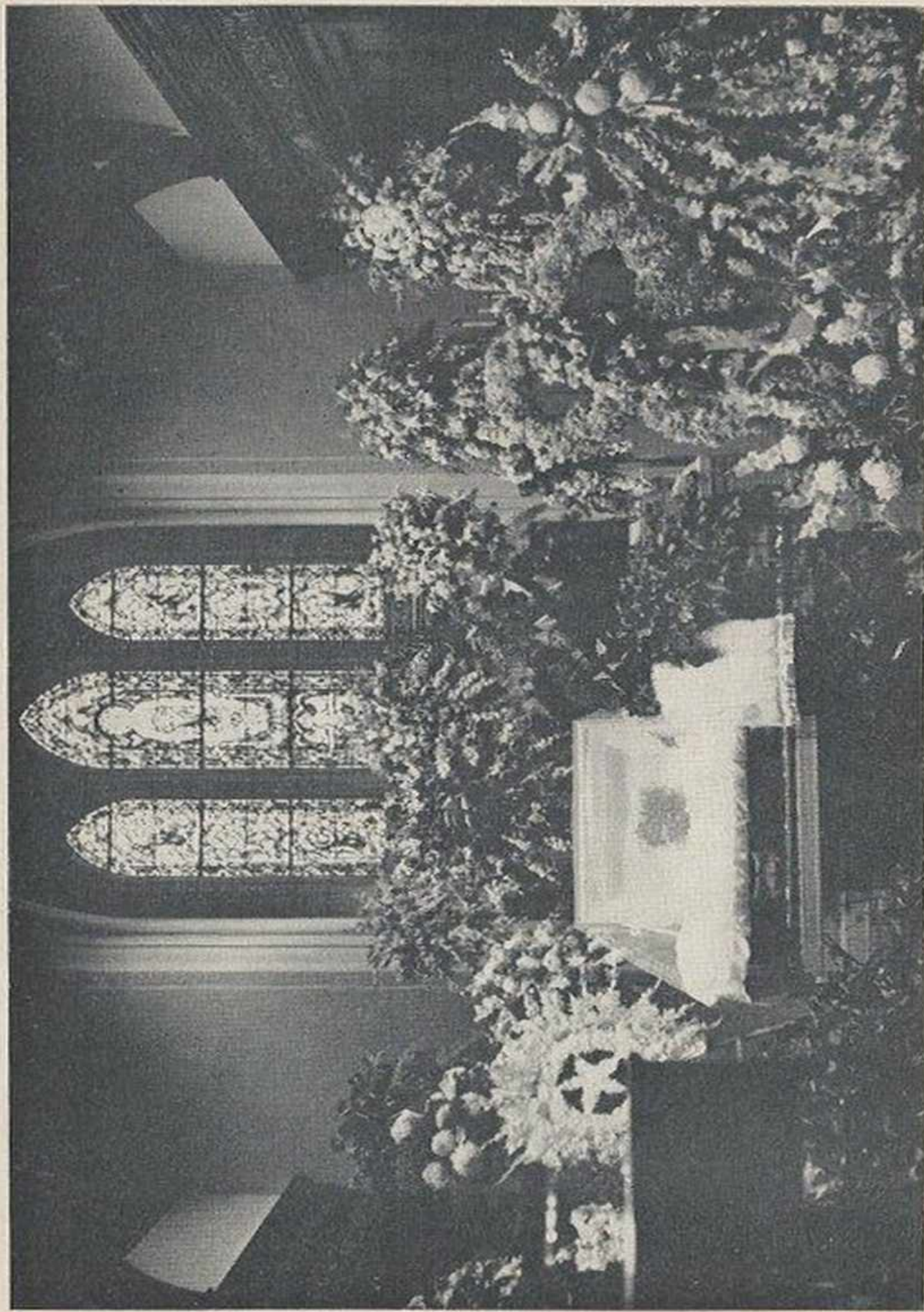
Parts of Sister Dayamata's speech follow.

It is with sad hearts that we meet here today to pay homage to our beloved Doctor Lewis. We of the monastic Self-Realization Order have lost a devoted and faithful brother disciple of our Guru, Paramahansa Yogananda; and all members of Self-Realization Fellowship have lost a dear friend and counselor. We cannot but grieve over our personal loss; yet we rejoice for him in his reunion with our blessed Master.

Dr. Lewis met Paramahansaji in Boston on Christmas Eve, 1920, shortly after Master had arrived in this country to speak as the delegate from India at an International Congress of Religious Liberals. You all have doubtless heard some of the stirring tales of those early years — years when Master was struggling to spread his divine mission; years during which Doctor and Mildred, his wife, gave generous assistance to the young monk from India; years in which they shared together many dreams for the future of the work.

Dr. Lewis was one of the first disciples of Paramahansaji in this country. It was in Boston that Master established his first Meditation Center. Later, in 1923, when Master went to New York, he left Dr. Lewis in charge of that Center.

Years passed, during which Doctor and Master kept in touch regularly. Paramahansaji established the Mt. Washington Center in Los Angeles in 1925, and from time to time guru and disciple met — either when Master returned to Boston, in the course of his lecture engagements, or when Dr. and Mrs. Lewis visited Guruji's ashrams in southern California.



Flowers sent by loving SRF students from many parts of the world surround casket of Dr. Lewis at funeral service, April 18th, Church of the Recessional, Forest Lawn Memorial-Park, Glendale, Calif.

I would like to read to you now a poem written to Dr. Lewis by Master in Phoenix, Arizona, on February 7, 1930:

"What I feel about our friendship I spontaneously write:

"God, I care not for riches
Nor for fame or pomp;
But give me true friends!
Even just one, if it be he
Through whom I may behold Thee
And whom I may trust and enjoy without,
As Thine image,
E'er reflected in the mirror of my love.
A friend is he who feels my direst needs as his own,
Who feels for me as he would feel for himself.
Ah, wavelets of true friendship, heaven-born,
Merge in Thy one ocean of vast Love!
In the sea of friendship
The meandering lost and prodigal souls
Come back to their own one home."

I remember my own first meeting with Dr. Lewis in 1933 in Chicago. I had gone there, along with other disciples, to attend the World Fellowship of Faiths lectures at the World's Fair, where Paramahansaji was to speak. I recall the instantaneous recognition that passed between Dr. Lewis and me, as memories buried in the heap of previous lives flooded our consciousness.

I have dear recollections of those wonderful, carefree days in the late 1940's, after Dr. and Mrs. Lewis had come to live in Encinitas. How sweet were those days when we sat around Master, listening to him expound the truths that show the basic unity of all great religions! At times Doctor and I would hold lively philosophical discussions—for example, on the question of whether or not suffering is necessary for salvation. The blessed Guru's eyes would twinkle as he encouraged us to continue, while he himself remained withdrawn.

Memories crowd in, too, of the weekly picnics with Gurudeva in the near-by mountain quiet, ending with a deep session of meditation and a quiet drive homeward. Memories, memories! of so many wonderful experiences shared with our beloved brother disciple Dr. Lewis.

After the passing of our second president, Rajasi Janakananda, Dr. Lewis assumed the directorship of our colony in Encinitas and there continued his ministry, speaking regularly also in our Hollywood and San Diego churches. In all these places he had an earnest and devoted following.

Upon my return from India late in 1959 I noted the seeming weariness of our revered Doctor. I reminded him, as I had on earlier occasions, that he should relinquish some of his duties. He replied, "Yes, yes, I will think about it." But his heart and mind had long been dedicated to tireless service, and he continued his selfless activity. He had but one wish — to live constantly in the consciousness of his divine Guru and his supreme God, and to impart something of that spiritual ardor to those who came to him. His sudden passing was a great shock to all of us, and my heart is sorely grieved over our loss.

The end was wreathed in divine glory. Doctor had entered Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla a few days before, merely for a rest and a check-up. Only the day before his death, Mildred, his beloved wife, had written me to say that he was much improved; and we all felt greatly encouraged. He seemed even better on the day of his passing, she tells us. Mildred was alone with him at his bedside that evening. He took a little supper, and then fell into a light sleep.

When he awoke he sat up and arranged his body in the lotus posture for meditation. Sitting cross-legged on the bed, his eyes upturned toward the Christ Center in the forehead, Doctor became enveloped in an aura of profound peace. Suddenly, Mildred tells us, the whole room became radiant; Sri Yukteswarji's face appeared. Doctor's eyes were like two pools of dazzling blue light. With a look of majesty and power, he was gone.

Thus passed Doctor — a beloved brother disciple, a faithful servant and friend of our great Master. By his example Doctor inspired many men and women to seek the Divine. We cannot forget him — the sweet simplicity of his life, his untiring spirit of service,



(From left) Mrs. Lewis and Doctor, Paramahansa Yogananda, Sisters Dayamata and Mataji; picnicking in Cleveland National Forest, southern California, on Doctor Lewis's birthday, March 26, 1946

and his great love for God and Guru. May he inspire each one of us to use the term of life yet allotted to us to strive ever more earnestly, devoutly, with humility and love in our hearts, to seek and serve the Beloved of the Universe, to whom all SRF members have dedicated their lives — whether as renunciants in our ashrams or as householder-yogis in the world.

In conclusion I will read to you a soul-stirring extract from a letter written to Dr. Lewis by Master in New York, dated November 23, 1923:

“Be not afraid, child of the Eternal Lightning! March on with unperturbed, steady steps, elbowing your way through a million dark-nesses. Why, what is the body? what is this passing show? They are soon gone; but the candles that you are lighting and burning in your Father’s house will show you your path here and hereafter.”

GOING HOME

By Minott W. Lewis



Creeping inward, creeping upward,
Diving deep within, we find
Treasures lasting and uplifting;
Best of all, that Peace sublime.

Many lives we've spent in serving
Senses, passions, and mind's whim,
And have missed our own true being —
Oneness with the God within.

Let us therefore give this one life
To the fight for higher gain;
With the hope, when life stops ebbing,
That the task was not in vain.

O Great God above in heaven!
Hear our cry, we pray, tonight;
Keep us steadfast in Thy wisdom,
Keep us always in Thy light.

O RING OF GOLD!

By *Minott W. Lewis*



There comes a time in each one's life
When he must turn e'er left or right.
Two roads diverge. Stop! Take your choice.
One leads to Darkness, one to Light.

Matter, grand display will play,
To lure you to her endless ray.
Be not misled, her path to try:
"Whoe'er treads here can never die."

Eternal Life will still be lost,
For thou hast yet to pay the cost.
Go, look within; still Matter's din;
Perfect thyself whilst search for Him.

With fullest love for Him begin
With all thy heart, thy will, and limb;
And soon thou'lt find the strangest Spy —
Not "I", but I, for "I" hath died.

In breathless silence back you'll creep
With none to guide save great *Om's* beat.
Within that *Om*, thine age-long Friend
Whose guidance will be till the end.

O ring of gold! within, a nameless hue;
O door of heaven! by which we all pass through
Into that realm, God's kingdom bright —
Eternal Bliss, Immortal Light.

Tributes From Friends and SRF Centers



"I have precious memories of my brother disciple, Dr. Lewis. He shone as a *Kriya Yogi* on earth, and is now a greater light in heaven." — *Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, leader, SRF Center, Detroit, Michigan.*

"Many of us had the privilege and great blessing of knowing Dr. Lewis and of hearing his sermons in Encinitas, San Diego, and Hollywood; and of attending his classes at Convocations. All of us who knew him loved him." — *Yogacharya J. M. Cuaron, leader, SRF Center, Mexico City, Mexico.*

"We at Yogoda Math mourn the passing of beloved Dr. Lewis. I cherish memories of his kindness and hospitality in Encinitas. We held a loving memorial service for him on April 18th." — *Sri Prabhā Chandra Ghosh, vice-president, Yogoda Sat-Sanga Society, India.*

"We in New Zealand had not the pleasure of meeting Dr. Lewis, but from the record of his activities and from his articles in the magazine we have come to hold him in very high regard. We are happy in the knowledge that he has graduated to a higher calling in the service he loved so well. Customarily, we talk of 'loss,' yet one does feel that these passings strengthen the chain of spiritual-supply lines extending through to the highest center. We joy in all we have been taught by the beloved Master and his disciples, and find that experience in God Consciousness in which we feel the continuing presence of all our beloved Brethren. This gives us a sense of a still more strengthened link cementing a great and grand infinite family in love and understanding. God blesses the passing of Dr. Lewis, and we welcome yet another established Light beckoning us on to Reality." — *SRF Center, Auckland, New Zealand.*

"We know of Doctor Lewis's life of purity and his dedication to the highest ideals of SRF. No doubt his noble heart will ever be sending vibrations of loving helpfulness from the invisible planes to all those who look to Self-Realization Fellowship for aid, guidance, comforting, and salvation. Our meditation this evening will be conducted for the peace of his soul." — *SRF Center, Caracas, Venezuela.*

"Though one should understand all phenomena in the way our Heavenly Father expects of us, nevertheless it is sad to hear of the death of Dr. Lewis — one who was so close to Master. After Paramahansaji's passing, Dr. Lewis wrote me a very kind little note. I shall keep it always. Whenever I hear of any of Master's disciples passing over, I always imagine Paramahansaji's meeting him or her, and making himself perfectly recognizable. I pray ever that I too shall have just that experience." — *Secretary, SRF Center, London, England.*

"News of Dr. Lewis's death has been received with great sorrow. We are all bereaved." — *SRF Center, Takoradi, Ghana, Africa.*

"One of the very first disciples of Paramahansaji in the United States has joined his Master and the saintly souls of Sister Gyana-mata and Rajasi Janakananda. Though the loss of Dr. Lewis is deeply felt by all, it divinely inspires us to greater effort towards fulfillment of our sacred pledge to our blessed Guru." — *SRF Center, Sydney, Australia.*

"We sorrow because of the earth-exit of that great soul, Dr. M. W. Lewis. Those of us who had the great privilege of meeting him and receiving his guidance specially feel that a living example of our Guru's teachings has been outwardly lost for the organization. However, he can now shed on us more light from higher planes; in that sense, everyone has gained a lot." — *SRF Center, Cali, Colombia.*

"I know the Board will miss Dr. Lewis, as it could always rely on him to carry out his responsibilities. Thousands of people will miss him. His tolerant, kindly understanding was a powerful magnet." — *D. B. T., Eastbourne, England.*

"One more 'rare flower in God's garden,' may Dr. Lewis feel our gratitude returning to him as a continual blessing." — *T. K., Germany.*

"Doctor will always live in my heart as a great example of Master's teachings and as a true friend. I know that there are many who feel as I do and who, like myself, have benefited spiritually by knowing him." — *D. R., Niantic, Conn.*

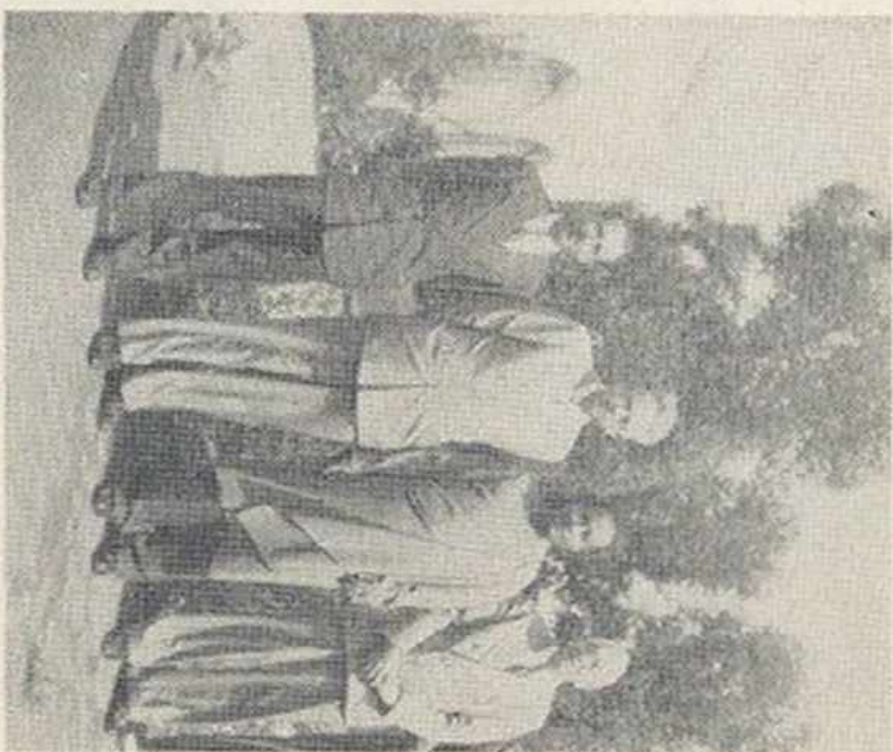
"Doctor's unswerving loyalty to God and his Guru was indeed exemplary. His great example lit a flame of devotion to God in the hearts of many of Master Yogananda's disciples." — *A. L., Los Angeles, California.*

"We know that dear Doctor will have a beautiful well-deserved 'mansion' in the Father's kingdom. He was one of the saintliest men I ever met, a wonderful soul with a single eye, strong in his belief and yet so gentle." — *A. S., Rancho Santa Fe, Calif.*



AT KRIYA INITIATION

(From left) Dr. Lewis, Paramahansa Yogananda, Rajasi Janakananda, Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, and Brother Bhaktananda at *Kriya Yoga* Initiation ceremony during 1951 Convocation, Mt. Washington Center.



MASTER AND THREE MINISTERS

(From left) Bro. Bhaktananda, Dr. Lloyd Kennell, Yoganandaji, and Dr. Lewis; on grounds of SRF Church, San Diego, 1947. The hilltop San Diego Church, dedicated in 1943, overlooks the Pacific Ocean.

"Surely if he had been able to dictate the exact manner of his passing it would have been just as it was — a swift escape while mind and soul were attuned to their Source. Heaped on this victory was that immense offering of love, almost tangible, whereby hundreds who attended the funeral services returned to his soul a part of what he had freely given to them." — *V. S., Los Angeles, Calif.*

"Life is short; eternity is long. Dr. Lewis knew this when, many years ago, he exchanged the desire of material things for the spiritual ones that last." — *C. M., New York, N. Y.*

"I am deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Lewis. I have lost a great, dear friend! He helped me during all these years by his every word. His love, goodness, and humility can be an example to all of us." — *R. A., Rome, Italy.*

"I shall always pray I may have the courage, faith, and loyalty that Doctor had. It is through devotees like him that we newer ones gain strength." — *M. B., Los Angeles, Calif.*

"What a time he and Master must be having! I never think of them apart." — *Y. B., Encinitas, Calif.*

"I am sad that dear Dr. Lewis has passed away; on the other hand I am glad that he is now helping me from a higher sphere. He has made me rich with his articles that appeared in the magazines, especially with 'What is the Holy Ghost?' How often have I read and reread this wonderful article!" — *H. N., Geneva, Switzerland.*

"The service at Forest Lawn was full of love and devotion for Doctor, who was the instrument for so many to know God. He was a true religious teacher." — *L. W. E., South Duxbury, Mass.*

"A wonderfully kind, tolerant, understanding, sympathetic, reliable, and highly evolved soul — Dr. Lewis." — *D. T., England.*

"I thank God and Guru for the privilege of knowing Dr. Lewis. I talked with him many times; he would always see me, if but for a minute. I owe him a deep debt. In his presence I have been healed of headaches, colds, and mental miseries. He was my friend, a true lover of God." — *J. O. N., Bellflower, Calif.*

SRF CONVOCATION, AUGUST 1-7, 1960

For information, please write to Self-Realization Fellowship
3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles 65, California



LAST PHOTOGRAPH OF DR. LEWIS

This picture of Doctor, smiling yet introspective, was taken by an SRF student on February 7, 1960, at Self-Realization Church, San Diego, California



Dr. M. W. Lewis (*center*), late vice-president of Self-Realization Fellowship, at an informal discussion session with monks of the Self-Realization Order; in lounge of SRF Retreat, Encinitas, California, Christmas Eve, 1957