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PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Photograph taken on January 5, 1952, during annual celebration of Paramahansaji's birthday, SRF international headquarters, Los Angeles

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Looking at Creation With Seeing Eyes
BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Excerpts from a talk at Self-Realization Fellowship Headquarters,
Los Angeles, California, on August 17, 1939

Marvelous indeed is the Lord's universe. Within it He is working all His wonders of creation. Do not be a walking "dead man" in this world; observe, analyze, and appreciate what God and His agent, man, have wrought here. How intricate is the universal mechanism! Reflect on the way we are made, and in what orderly fashion the whole machinery of creation runs according to cosmic law.

We all see the flowers and enjoy their beauty, but who knows what is causing the flowers? Anything one uses or sees every day - be it a handkerchief, a musical instrument, a house, or a tree - he should question and ponder by what means, of what substance, it is made. Cars are taken for granted; but if you were to visit the factories in which they are produced, you would realize how complicated automobiles are. Consider too what went into making the paper for the daily news, and the intricate machinery that imprints it -no human hand could operate so fast.

And if the creation of everyday man-made objects can be so complex, how vastly more complicated the creation of plants, animals, and human beings! Ten years' study of medical science is necessary to understand the composition, function, and requirements of the seemingly simple human body. Even a casual analysis reveals much to wonder at therein; though I sometimes think God could have made a few improvements! When a plant is growing in water in a glass jar, one can see that its roots are like hairs. Through the God-given intelligent energy in the roots the plant draws from soil and water the food it requires for growth. Like an upturned plant, man similarly absorbs through his hair, electric currents helpful to the body.— * "The physical body, with roots of hair, cerebrospinal trunk, nerve branches, and boughs of hands and feet, bears a resemblance to an inverted tree.... Some yogis do not cut their hair but keep it long, to draw from the ether a greater quantity of cosmic rays. The reason for Samson's having lost his superhuman strength when his hair was shorn by Delilah may well be that he had practiced certain yogic exercises that transform one's hair into sensitive antennae to draw cosmic energy from the ether." - Paramahansa Yogananda

Is it not amazing that the sap which feeds the leaves of the plant flows upward against the pull of gravity? When the skin of the plant is removed, one can see the intricate network of tubes that channel this sap. That which carries on this process of sustenance and growth is the mystery called life. When I am in the ecstasy of God-consciousness, I behold that life in even a blade of grass. Little did I dream that I would be able to see such hidden marvels of creation! To concentrate on these marvels is to stand in awe of what the Lord has done. With calculated precision God has ordained the structural form of each living thing, and the requirements for maintaining that form in good working order. If there is any deficiency in those requirements - food, for example - plants, animals, and human beings suffer. The average person draws from his food all the various chemical elements his body needs; but there are many dietary transgressors whose meals do not contain all the required elements, or the correct balance of them. Improper nourishment is one of the main causes of all sickness in man. The effects of dietary deficiency can be seen almost immediately in a plant when some necessary chemical is omitted from its food. There are vital exchanges between man and all other living things. For eons India has had the custom of cremation and scattering the ashes of the dead. Thus man feeds Mother Earth, and Her plants in turn feed man. The reciprocity between man and trees is well known. Man inhales oxygen and exhales carbon dioxide.— * An excess of carbon dioxide is poisonous to the body. However, a small amount of carbon dioxide is retained in the blood, and is vital to life as a regulator of the bodily chemistry. (Editor's note) Trees absorb and store carbon dioxide and water, which they break down by photosynthesis to create carbohydrates (food). In the process they give off oxygen, essential to man.— "It is quite probable that our entire supply of free oxygen, one-fifth of the atmosphere, has been furnished by photosynthesis." - Encyclopaedia Britannica. Photosynthesis, being dependent on sunlight, stops at night. However, through another process called respiration, trees continuously- release carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, particularly at night when the counteracting influence of carbon-absorbing, oxygen-producing photosynthesis is not present. As night air is usually still, the heavy carbon dioxide gas settles near the ground. Thus, in part, the custom of sleeping on beds came about.

The Limitations of the Physical Senses

Science has taught us a great deal about the intricate mechanisms of our universe and about the substances of which we are all made, but there is still vast knowledge to be uncovered. We could perceive more and appreciate more if we developed the underlying powers of our sensory organs. Things we should see with our eyes we do not see; things we should hear with our ears we do not hear, because our senses are too habituated, too attached, to experiences of the limited gross physical world. Freedom from that attachment is not negation of sensory enjoyment; it permits a broadening of the God-given sensory powers to their fullest spiritual potential. On the material plane man has discovered various ways to increase his seeing power. The unaided physical eye receives only limited impressions of color. However, under ultraviolet light, drab looking pieces of rock in which certain minerals are present will show forth luminescent colors. Remove the ultraviolet light and the rocks assume their original dull hue. Many colors in the physical world, such as the blue of the sky, are really optical illusions caused by the refraction of light on various kinds of particles. Because your eyes register only a limited degree of the

creative vibration that makes up everything in creation, you do not see the subtle astral* colors, which are hidden in everything around you.— * The subtle astral universe is composed of luminous lifetronic energy. The gross atomic universe familiar to us is but a condensation of this vaster astral creation. As the astral world is the Lord's blueprint for this material universe, every physical being and object and vibration has its finer astral counterpart. Could you but see, you would be amazed at their beauty. Even the most gorgeous shades on earth appear ugly, gross and wild, in comparison to the magnificent hues of the astral world.

So neither your eyes nor your ears register everything possible. You cannot smell astral fragrances, nor perceive with your other physical senses the myriad finer forms and impressions passing through the ether. Even if St. Francis were here at this moment in his astral form, you would not be able to see and hear and touch him. Yet it is possible to advance beyond ordinary sensory limitations, for I have seen him.

Often man does not cognize even things that his senses are able to perceive. Those persons who have perceptive eyes enjoy beauty everywhere. Others act as if they had no eyes; even in a beautiful place they fail to "see" anything. When I visited Mexico and saw the "Floating Gardens" of Lake Xochimilco, their loveliness filled my heart with awareness of the Divine Artist. The gardens are now fixed "islands," the plant roots having long since become anchored to the bottom of the lake, which is extremely shallow. Another man, standing nearby, seemed equally engrossed. However, something told me he was not seeing what I was seeing, so I asked his reaction to the picturesque scene. "I was thinking of how to drain off the water and make more land," he replied. An engineer, he was seeing the lake in his own way. So we view things according to our different mentalities and moods.

Every soul is encased in a composite vibration of sensations, thoughts, feelings - all the factors that comprise a person's being, or consciousness. Each one has a different composition, a different vibration. All the things you have done since childhood are stored in tabloid form as tendencies in your brain. They make you what you are. Because we do not see this tabloid pattern, we wonder why people behave as they do. Some become suddenly elated, or inexplicably angry or moody; even they don't know why. Some are always busy criticizing or gossiping about others, when there is plenty of "housecleaning" to do in their own "home"! The invisible tabloid tendencies in the brain compel each one to behave in certain ways. They bury the soul, preventing the expression of one's true Self. How complex is man! each one a full-length novel in himself.

The Infinite Potential of Thought

Man is supposed to get something out of this life besides eating, sleeping, and working. The thinkers begin to wonder about life. They observe and question why things happen, or do not happen, in a certain way. We have a first and then a second set of teeth; why not a third? What causes this regulation? Because of man's unquestioning acceptance of many delusive thoughts of physical limitation, he allows them to control his present sphere of existence. Thinkers do not accept the inevitable; they turn their efforts toward changing it. That is the ingredient that makes progress possible.

I am thrilled when I see the great manufacturing centers, the remarkable inventions, and other exceptional human accomplishments. How much has come from the brain of man! And the brain itself is infinitely more intricate than anything it has produced.

There is a story about a certain king who showed such affectionate regard for

his prime minister that others in the court, noticing the monarch's obvious preference, were jealous. Realizing this, the king wanted to show them why the minister was his favorite. Some music sounded in the distance, and the king turned to one of his courtiers, saying, "Please find out what is going on." After some time the man returned with the information that it was a marriage procession. "Who is going to be married?" inquired the king. The courtier didn't know, so he was sent out again. Each time the man returned with a reply to the king's latest query, the sovereign would ask another question he could not answer. Finally the king called for the prime minister and asked him to go and find out what was taking place. When the minister returned, the king plied him with questions, every one of which the alert and thorough prime minister was able to answer satisfactorily.

A great many persons are dull-minded like the uninformed courtier. They are not necessarily stupid; just too mentally lazy to make any effort beyond obvious necessity. I can condone physical laziness (there might be a justifiable physiological cause); but there is no excuse for mental laziness! The mentally idle do not like to think, because even that seems too much work for them.

Thought is fascinating. No one will ever be able to tabulate all the tendencies and perceptions of the mind; its capacity is infinite. Yet the mind cannot think an original thought: there is not a single idea that God has not originated already in conceiving His past, present, and future creations. Therefore if you think deeply enough about a subject, the answer to any question about it will come.

You must feel as well as think; if you do not have feeling along with your thoughts, you will not always be successful in reaching the right conclusion. Feeling is an expression of intuition, the repository of all knowledge. Feeling and thought, or reason, must be balanced; only then does the divine image of God within you, the soul, manifest its full nature. Hence Yoga teaches one how to balance his powers of reason and feeling. One who does not have both equally is not a fully developed person.

In God-Consciousness Everything Becomes Beautiful

In my younger days I used to go sight-seeing, but my interest was only in temples. As my consciousness changed with the practice of meditation, I began to look at the world differently; everything seemed transformed, and interesting to me. Now I see behind all creation the Kingdom of my Father. It is enchanting beyond any dreams of this world! And sometimes I see the beauties of His Kingdom showing through the gross physical creation.

As you progress spiritually and draw closer to God, He reveals to you more and more wonders of creation. Even in the dead and ugly-looking stalks of a wheat field after the harvest, you will see

life. It played its part there, and to the ordinary eye it is gone; but with the divine eye* you will see, even in the outer desolation, the beautiful colors of dancing electrons and protons.— * The spiritual, or third eye in man; the eye of intuitive perception referred to by Jesus when he said: "When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light" (Luke 11:34).

Behind every material object is an astral blueprint of colored light. In the astral world everything is motion, everything is living; there is nothing called "dead." Even in the physical world death is not cessation of life, only a change into a different form. Life is still throbbing in the "lifeless" object. In the bones of dead animals I have beheld rich colors and vibrating light.

The Factory of Cosmic Intelligence

You see only the gross material products coming from God's hidden factory behind creation; but if you went into the factory itself, you would behold in what marvelous manner everything in this world has been brought into manifestation.

The factory behind creation is beyond imagination; the whole universe is a single thought in the mind of God! So simple, yet the galaxies are controlled by mathematics inconceivable by man. Every thing runs in perfect order. What tremendous intelligence is manifested in creation! The Infinite is working in everything. The different eddies of motion called life are controlled by that Cosmic Intelligence.

Every hundred years a billion and a half persons leave this earth, and more than that many are born. What complexities of supply and demand are created thereby! Even so, the Divine Intelligence has given ample food to take care of human needs. Man alone is responsible for lack and misery on earth. By this time we could have had a millennium - everyone healthy and supplied with all of life's necessities, living in a happy and peaceful way in a wisely controlled existence. But man's selfishness, and power in the hands of the inept, destroys such a possibility. Abraham Lincoln expressed the highest ideal of government when he said it should be "of the people, by the people, and for the people." He was a deeply spiritual man. Even so, he had to suffer because of the ignorance of a few.

This World Is a Temporal Place

It is natural to wonder where exceptional men such as Lincoln, and departed dear ones, once so tangible! have gone after death. Such questions arise in the mind, not to discourage you, but to awaken in you a realization of the temporal dream-nature of life. The Bhagavad-Gita tells us (11:69): "That which is night (of slumber) to all creatures is (luminous) wakefulness to the man of self-control. The seeming state of wakefulness of the ordinary man is perceived by a sage to be, in reality, a state of delusive sleep."

Thus most people are sleeping soundly throughout this dreamlife; only the man of realization is awake. He is not interested in the activities that engross the ordinary man who busies himself seeking wealth and sense pleasures, and wasting time in shallow social engagements. Man makes a nervous wreck of himself pursuing the fleeting attractions of this world, whereas the joy and wonder of God, which is beyond description, would give him so much more: happiness and fulfillment unending!

Only a little while you live as an individualized image in God's dream-world. You are dreaming your mortal existence; it is part of God's cosmic dream. Every day you are living in this dream of physical being. Every night, in deep sleep, it is gone. And one day, when you awaken in God - who is your real Self - the dream will be gone forever.

Seek the Lord Who Is Hiding Behind Creation

Use your time rightly, to discover the factory of the Divine behind this world. Once for an entire day I beheld in vision the infinite wonders of creation, and I prayed:

"O Father, when I was blind I found not a door that led to Thee. Thou hast healed my eyes; now I discover doors everywhere: the hearts of flowers, the voices of friendship, memories of lovely experiences. Each gust of my prayer opens a new entrance to the vast temple of Thy presence."

Be adamant, strong, and unflinching in your determination to discover the One who is hiding behind this creation. Snatch yourself away from the demands of

the world, and do not go to bed at night until you have consciously communed with God. I seldom retire before four o'clock in the morning; only during the night can I find freedom from my responsibilities and be wholly with God.

The ordinary man with his everyday responsibilities can be just as busy as the president of the United States. Busy, busy, busy! that is life's demand. You have to reserve time each day to get away from the world and be with God. Control your life, and set aside time to practice meditation for communion with Him. Then everything in this world will be a wonder to you.

As scientists made their discoveries by following certain disciplines and physical laws, so will you find God without fail when you scientifically follow spiritual laws. You are helping yourself in the highest way when you study and apply the Self-Realization Fellowship teachings.

Forget not the things I have told you. "A word to the wise - those who are spiritually awakened - is sufficient." Yet Jesus said "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37). If you receive these teachings and practice them, you will realize every truth I have told you. It is not complicated; I have given only those spiritual techniques that will enable you to perceive and commune with God. No matter how unpleasant your circumstances in this world, when you discover God you will see Him working through you and manifesting in everything, and you will be filled with His love and joy.

India's rishis remind us that health and prosperity, material accomplishments and possessions, are not lasting. Why concentrate only on goals that are perishable? What is lasting is the contact of God and the attainment of Self-realization - finding out who you are, knowing that the image of God is within you. When you have that realization, you will be a satisfied person. The scriptures of India describe one who attains this state as a siddha, "successful one." When I was teaching congregations of hundreds and thousands I was often called "successful." That did not impress me. One may be recognized by the whole world and yet be unknown to the only One whose attention matters; and he who attracts the notice

of God may be entirely unknown to the world. Which would you prefer? I wanted only the recognition of my Father. The acclaim of the world can be so intoxicating that man forgets to cultivate the all-fulfilling approbation of the Lord.

It is natural for man to yearn for the role of king on this earthly stage, but if all were kings, there could be no play. Your part, remember, is just as important as anyone else's. The point is that you must play your role according to the Divine Director's wish; when you live your part to please God you will be successful. This should be our constant prayer

"My Lord, work Thou through my hands; they were made to serve Thee and to pick flowers for Thy temple. Mine eyes were made to behold Thy presence in the flickering stars, in the eyes of soulful devotees; my feet were made to go to Thy temples everywhere to take the nectar of Thy sermons to seeking souls; my speech was made only to speak of Thee. I smell the perfume of flowers that I may think of Thy fragrant presence manifesting therein; and I taste wholesome things that I may be reminded of Thy goodness. I dedicate my thoughts, feelings, and love to Thee. All my senses are in harmony with Thy celestial orchestra of fragrance, beauty, and joy playing eternally in the symphony of the cosmos.

"Lead me from darkness to light. Lead me from hatred to love. Lead me from limitations to Thine inexhaustible power. Lead me from ignorance to wisdom. Lead me from suffering and death to everlasting life and enjoyment in Thee. Above

all, lead me from the delusion of human attachment into realization of Thy love eternal, which plays hide-and-seek with me in all forms of human love.

"Father, Mother, Friend, Beloved God, reveal Thyself unto me! Leave me in ignorance no longer. All delusion I cast from the sacred shrine of my soul. Be Thou the only King sitting on the throne of my ambitions, the only Queen in the castle of my love, the only Deity in the temple of my soul. Keep me awake in Thy consciousness, that I may pray and demand unceasingly until Thou dost open all doors into Thy home of wisdom, and therein receive me, Thy prodigal child, and entertain me with the fatted calf of immortality and eternal joy."

Soul Whispers

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

O Christ,

Thy trial on the Cross

Was an immortal victory

Of humility over force,

Of soul over flesh.

May thine ineffable example

Hearten us to bear bravely

Our lesser crosses.

O All-Pervading Spirit,

The breeze of Thine inspiration

Has banished all clouds;

The firmament of my mind is clear.

With purified eyes

I behold everywhere only Thee.

I know now

That I am a lion of cosmic power.

Bleating no more,

I shake the error forest

With reverberations

Of Thine almighty voice.

In divine freedom

I bound through the jungle

Of earthly delusions,

Devouring the little creatures

Of vexing worries and timidities,

And the wild hyenas of disbelief.

O Guru,

Thou didst lift me

Out of the land of bewilderment

Into the paradise of peace.

My slumber of sorrow is ended,

And I am awake in joy.

O Immortal Teacher,

I bow to thee

As the speaking voice of silent God.

I bow to thee

As the divine door

Leading to the temple of salvation.

Man's Expanding Horizons

BY SRI DAYA MATA

Extracts from a talk on May 18, 1963,

in the SRF Ashram, Encinitas, California

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Man is ever striving to expand the scope of life. He is exploring the unknown, and reaching farther and farther into the Infinite, in a material way, through his flights around the earth and into outer space, and by plumbing the depths of the oceans. He is developing his mind through applied science and the invention of such remarkable machines as the computer. Every day new vistas are opened, and he is forced to expand his mental horizon to keep pace with his own achievements. How much more is required of man's brain today than in the time of our grandfathers!

Man's spiritual nature is also undergoing a transformation through expansion. He is probing more deeply into that Mystery which some call God, or Allah, or yet other reverential names - the one divine, cosmic, intelligent, all-loving, all-joyful Being who is our creator and sustainer. Religious experience, not mere belief, is the demand of today's seekers.

This trend further convinces me of the very special part Paramahansa Yogananda's work of Self-Realization Fellowship has to play, not only in the West, but all over the globe. I see this confirmed by tremendous worldwide interest in Paramahansa's Autobiography of a Yogi and in the SRF Lessons. Followers of Self-Realization have an important role in this work and in the world. Their supreme responsibility is to become living examples of truth, for their own salvation, and for the enlightenment of others. Do not be discouraged if at times you feel you are standing still rather than progressing on the path. Make greater effort! You have but one duty, which Paramahansa constantly stressed when he was with us: improve yourself by finding your Self. Though our churches be filled with millions, if there is no qualitative spiritual growth within those followers, such an organization would not touch the heart of our Guru. He had no interest in large followings unless they were crowds of really God-seeking souls. His greatest interest, his only interest, in each human being who came to him, was to help that devotee to realize consciously the divine link between his soul and God. The link is already there; the role of a true guru is to help the devotee to become consciously aware of his oneness with God, the creator of his soul and of this universe.

When I think of these sublime principles, I become intoxicated with enthusiasm for Guru's work, and even more so with enthusiasm to be drunk with the divine consciousness of God night and day. He is the only reality, the one thing that is unchanging and everlasting in this world.

If you please the whole world, so that everyone is at your feet, what then? If you have all the riches the world can offer, what then? Everything we pursue externally leads eventually to satiation, and after satiety comes boredom. The only experience that gives complete fulfillment, complete contentment, that can never satiate or bore us, is communion with the ever-new, ever-joyous Lord.

The peoples of the world are feeling the need for God and will turn to Him. The more tormented the world is, the more we realize we cannot do without Him! I remember the period around 1939-41, when the world was beginning to echo increasingly with sounds of hatred and war. My inner torment at that time was great. I can think of nothing more senselessly painful than war - I used to suffer as if all its wounds were within myself. Anyone who is sensitive, who has sympathy or compassion for others, feels this way. Whenever we would drive with Gururji between our Encinitas ashram and Mount Washington, and see those young boys in military service lined by the side of the road asking for rides, all I could think was, "Each of you is someone's child." One day Paramahansa

looked around and saw the pain in my face. He read my mind. The car was not full, so he said: "Stop a minute." There were two boys, just young lads, by the side of the road, and he said: "Do you want to ride with us?" I can never forget how sweet Guru was to them. A simple act, but it eased my anguish.

During this period of war Paramahansaji said: "It seems as if the world is going backward, as if it will destroy itself by hate. But know this for certain: the world is on the upward trend, constantly evolving, constantly improving."

White stands out against a black background. In the same way, goodness shows up most prominently against a background of evil; the light of God shines brighter against a background of great darkness. Was this not also true during the time of Christ? The Bhagavad-Gita declares that when the world is filled with the darkness of ignorance, the Divine sends one of His saints to earth to show man the way to uplift his consciousness and restore righteousness.

Self-Realization teaches respect and love for all religions, all races, all peoples, for God is One and there ought to be unity among His children in the consciousness of Him. It is not so much what we believe about God that will give us individual Self-realization and ultimately world unity, but rather what we experience of God. Whether we are clothed in a black, brown, yellow, red, or white body is of absolutely no interest to God. He wants only to see how we, whom He made in His image, will respond to Him in His variously colored forms. Can't you see there is no difference? that the skin color, the race, the religion does not alter the divine soul-image of God within each man?

We have to struggle to break down prejudices which narrow the mind and consciousness and cause the Divine in us to weep. Even so, we can blame part of our shortsightedness on God. We can say to Him, "Lord, it is You who have dropped this thought of division into the minds of men, for they could not have thought it unless You first conceived it. Man is no more than a part of Your dream of creation." Everything is of God; in the highest sense, even the evil force is His tool. Evil, or maya, is the cosmic delusion whose shadows, like a motion picture film, transform the creative light of God into countless individualized forms. Without maya there would be no creation. In this metaphysical sense, evil is any form of darkness that hides or distorts the ever-perfect light of God's presence that is omnipresent in creation.

What is the reason for creation? As Paramahansaji taught, it is the Lord's lila or divine play. Do not give it so much importance. Do not become so absorbed in His lila that you forget Him who created the play, who is its very Substance.

If you close one eye and hold a penny very close to the other eye, you cannot see the world beyond: you become blinded by that little object. If you move the penny away from your open eye, you see how vast the world is. So it is with God. When you are too closely identified with the world, you become blinded by it, and cannot see Him. Overwhelmed by anxiety, worry, fear, insecurity, and uncertainty, you cannot begin to imagine that God exists.

It is only when you push the "penny" of this world away from you that you see the vastness of God within and beyond creation. Only then do you behold the world in its true perspective. You have to keep that which is most important - God - directly in your line of vision. When He is first, everything else will fall into proper focus.

For that reason Christ said: "Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you." * This message Paramahansaji stressed again and again to all. Each human being feels in his heart the need for something. We need God; we need to hold onto something changeless which will give us strength to cope with the particular problems, trials, and experiences we attract to ourselves.

Never blame anyone else for what happens to you. Blame yourself; but don't punish yourself, for that is wrong. And never indulge in self-pity; that also is wrong. Always remember this: You are the child of God, and meditation is the way by which you can realize you are His.

Meditation is the constant affirmation of what we are. When we sit to meditate, we are affirming again and again: "I am the soul, one with God." When you practice the SRF methods of meditation you are striving to remember your real nature. Like anything else, the more you practice meditation and the more proficient you become, the more you will gain from it; the more you will remember and express your divine heritage. The importance and value of meditation lie in its inviolable promise of this ultimate realization.

It is not enough to go to church; it is not enough to hear the wonderful sermons given in Self-Realization temples. Sermons are good; it is important to attend them. If you are able, you should attend services regularly. But in addition there must be daily practice of the Presence of God, daily communion with Him in deep meditation, daily taking of your problems to Him.

I don't know how the world lives without such communion with God. It may well happen that the world will be so beaten down that it will be forced to think of God. But even that will be good, because ultimately it makes no difference how we are brought to our knees before the Lord, so long as we are before Him.

Therefore never bemoan what happens to you. Never feel defeated by any circumstance of your life. Strive always to think, "Lord, I have faith that no trial or experience comes to me without your permission. I know I have within me, through Your blessing, the strength to cope with anything that comes." Even when your task seems superhuman, remember that the Divine is just stretching the rubber band of your consciousness, that it might expand further. With this attitude of faith and surrender, one learns to pass through this world with one sustaining thought, "You, Lord -You, You, You." The devotee feels so much a part of God that he relates every experience to God. Whether he is involved in world affairs, busy in his office, or showing love for husband, wife, or children, he realizes it is all God - from God and for God.

When one has that sacred attitude wherein he strives to see God in his relationship with husband, wife, children, brothers and sisters, and knows that in each relationship it is possible to behold another facet of God's nature, he begins to find that he lives, moves, and has his being in the one Divine Beloved.

Such is the purpose of life, the goal of every human being. By clinging to the consciousness of God as we pass through all the experiences life brings, we once again behold ourselves, and everyone around us, as part of the Infinite Whole.

Then freedom is ours.

A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

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

BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Chapter XV III, Stanza 29

O `Dhananjaya,*

I will explain

Separately and exhaustively

The threefold distinctions

Of intelligence and courage

According to the gunas.

Please (listen).

* A name for Arjuna, meaning "Conqueror of mundane and heavenly riches." Himself a mighty ruler, Arjuna is said to have traveled heaven and earth, demanding and taking possession of the wealth of kings, which he distributed for the benefit of all people.

All knowledge, all action, all agents appear differently according to the differences of the three qualities, as already described in preceding stanzas. Lord Krishna is now preparing to delineate, in stanzas 30 to 35, the various expressions of intelligence and fortitude under the influence of the three gunas.

The devotee in a high state of realization beholds the good sattwa quality as uplifting, the activating rajas quality as tending toward the middle path, and the dark tamas quality as degrading. He understands how the intelligence and fortitude in man manifest variously under the influence of these three qualities. He knows that when intelligence and fortitude are properly developed, becoming imbued with the good sattwa quality, man finds everything in the world under his control. When the intelligence is perfect and the courage is strong, the consciousness rises above all mental frailties and manifests the calm state of the soul, and ultimately realizes the unity of that perfect soul with Spirit.

Chapter XVIII, Stanza 30

O Partha,

That intellect is sattwic

Which cognizes the paths

Of desireful action and renunciation,

Undutiful and dutiful actions,

(The causes that create)

Apprehension and fearlessness,

Bondage and salvation.

Lord Krishna is explaining to Arjuna that pure sattwic discrimination reveals to the devotee the bondage that exists in blindly pursuing the path of worldly activity, and the liberation inherent in following the path of renunciation.

The worldly man who performs material duties, not to please God, but to satisfy his physical ego, is filled with apprehensions, chiefly of failure and death.

The renunciant knows the world is run by his Father, God, and fearlessly and lovingly works to please Him alone. A yogi of pure discrimination therefore chooses the path of renunciation, of acting only for God, in preference to following blindly the hazardous path of desireful activity for the satisfaction of the physical ego.

The pure sattwic intelligence of such a yogi is ever conscious of dutiful actions as distinguished from undutiful actions; and of evil actions that create bondage and fear as distinguished from meditative actions that bring liberation and destroy all fear.

The worldly man does not analyze the divine purpose of his existence; with befogged mind he goes on desultorily, living to please the shortsighted body-bound ego. Thus he encounters continuous fears, and places himself in bondage through his reincarnation making activities. On the other hand, the pure intellect of the man of discrimination leads him on the path of inner renunciation and of dutiful noble and meditative actions to the eternal fearless state of liberation.

Even if by dexterous actions a warring man such as Genghis Khan became master of the world, he would not be free from the fear of disease and approaching death. It is only by working for God, renouncing all covetousness for impermanent worldly objects, and by communing with God, that a soul can find the eternally safe Shelter which is proof against all bombs of suffering and death.

Chatter XVIII, Stanza 31

O Partha,
That intellect is rajasic
Whose understanding
Is fearfully distorted
About the characteristics
Of religiousness (dharma)
And irreligiousness (adharma),
And about what is duty
And what is not duty.

The man whose intellect is identified with the unthinking performance of rajasic activities, and who therefore does not distinguish between God-reminding religious duties and materially absorbing irreligious activities, becomes mentally confused. Such a beclouded mentality loses the ability to know righteousness from unrighteousness, and thus follows the path that leads away from God and true happiness. Blindly performing actions without discriminating between soul-freeing meditative acts and matter-entangling, sinful acts of sense-slavery, the ordinary gross materialist constantly stumbles into the pit of worries and disillusionment.

The Bhagavad-Gita warns against unthinking performance of actions under the influence of the unseeing automaton of the rajasic intelligence. Lacking clarity of vision, the rajasic intelligence is full of distrust and doubt as it travels the path of life.

Chapter XVIII, Stanza 32]

O Partha,
That intellect is termed tamasic which,
Being enveloped in gloom,
Considers irreligion as religion,
And looks upon all things
In a perverted way.

A great many individuals do not even follow the regular organized path of material life led by the conscientious businessman of rajasic (active) temperament, indulging instead in extremes of evil conduct. These abnormal persons are led by a tamasic intelligence, which increases mental darkness and its resultant misery. Such extremists consider an immoderately materialistic, irreligious way of life as their religion. As they see nothing unvirtuous in their behavior, evil ways become second nature to them. They indulge in overeating, oversexuality, and excesses in all harmful habits. Leading an unnatural existence, they have perverted opinions and modes of living, and are irresponsible in their whole manner of thinking, willing, and behaving, toward themselves and others.

Tamasic beings are unpredictable in demeanor, using their deluded intelligence to work much harm to themselves and others. Because of their deliberate performance of evil actions, they are worse than wild animals whose vicious actions are due only to their nature, which is governed by instinct rather than reason.

To SRF Members, Students, and Friends

Self-Realization Fellowship deeply appreciates your letters, telegrams, and telephone calls expressing concern for our welfare following the earthquake in Los Angeles on February 9th. We are grateful to report that no injuries were sustained by any of the residents at SRF international headquarters and branch ashrams in southern California. There was some damage to the headquarters administration building atop Mt. Washington, but nothing serious of a structural nature. Repairs are already under way. A more detailed account will be given in an SRF Voluntary League Report. We were able to continue our services to you without interruption and with only minor delay.

Please join us in prayer for those who were less fortunate.

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

The Guru-Disciple Relationship

BY MRINALINI MATA

Extracts from a class lecture given during the

SRF-YSS Golden Anniversary Convocation, July 7, 1970

G

od sent us into this world to play a divine drama. As individualized images of the Lord Himself, our lives have a singular purpose: to learn; and through learning, to grow; and through continual growth, to express ultimately our true nature and return to our original state of oneness with God.

When we begin our earthly adventure as infant souls, we first gain knowledge through trial-and-error experiences. We perform an action, and if it yields good results, we repeat that action. But when a specific act causes us pain, we strive thereafter to avoid it.

Next, we learn to profit by the example of others. We observe the behavior of our family, friends, and the people in our community, and benefit from analysis of their mistakes and successes.

Our experiences lead us ever onward, seeking deeper understanding of our earthly life until a time comes to each one of us when we begin an earnest search for Truth. The man whose consciousness has evolved to this point asks himself: "What is life?" "What am I?" "Whence have I come?" And the Lord responds to such a seeker by drawing him to a teacher or to religious and philosophical books that satisfy, this initial thirst for understanding. As he imbibes from the knowledge of others, his understanding unfolds and his spiritual growth is quickened. He approaches a little nearer to Truth, or God.

Finally even this knowledge becomes inadequate. He begins to yearn for a personal realization of Truth. The soul within him prompts him to think: "Surely this world is not my home! Surely I am not solely this physical body; it can only be a temporary cage. There must be something more to this life than my senses now perceive, something that exists beyond the grave. I have read about Truth; I have heard about Truth. Now I must know!"

To answer the anguished cry of His child, the compassionate Lord sends an enlightened teacher, one who has realized the Self and knows the Self to be Spirit- a true guru. The life of such a one is an unhindered expression of the Divine.

Definition of a True Guru

Swami Shankara— India's greatest philosopher; Reorganizer of India's ancient Swami Order (in the ninth century), Swami Shankara was a rare combination of saint, scholar, and man of action.— described the guru in this way: "There is no known comparison in the three worlds for a true guru. If the philosophers' stone be assumed as truly such, it can only turn iron into gold, not into another philosophers' stone. The venerated teacher, on the other hand, creates equality with himself in the disciple who takes refuge at his feet. The guru is therefore peerless - nay, transcendental."

Paramahansa Yogananda, guru-founder of SRF, said: "The guru is the awakened God awakening the sleeping God in the disciple. Through sympathy and deep vision, a true guru sees the

Lord Himself suffering in the physically, mentally, and spiritually poor. That is why he feels it his joyous duty to assist them. He tries to feed the hungry God in the destitute, to stir the sleeping God in the ignorant, to love the unconscious God in the enemy, and to rouse the half-awake God in the yearning devotee. By a gentle touch of love he arouses instantaneously the almost fully-awake God in the advanced seeker. A guru is, among all men, the best of givers. Like the Lord Himself, his generosity knows no bounds."

Paramahansa Yogananda thus described the infinite understanding, the infinite love, the omnipresent, all-embracing consciousness of a true guru. Those chelas (disciples) privileged to know Paramahansaji saw these attributes perfectly manifested in him.

The Guru-Disciple Relationship

This God-created universe runs by orderly cosmic law, and the guru-disciple relationship is rooted in that law. It is divinely ordained that he who seeks God shall be introduced to Him through a true guru. When a devotee sincerely desires to know God, his guru comes. Only one who knows God can promise the disciple: "I will introduce you to Him." A true guru has already found his way to God; therefore he can say to the chela, "Take my hand. I will show you the way."

The guru-disciple relationship encompasses the disciplines and principles of right action which the disciple must follow to prepare himself to know God. When the disciple, with the guru's help, perfects himself, the divine law is fulfilled, and the guru introduces him to God.

Loyalty to the Guru and His Teachings

The first principle of the covenant between guru and chela is loyalty.

Ego, the consciousness and self-assertion of the little "I," is the one thing that keeps us from God. Banish the ego, and in that moment one realizes he is, ever has been, and ever will be one with God. The ego is a cloud of delusion surrounding the soul, veiling and diffusing its pure consciousness with endless misconceptions about the nature of oneself and of the world. One effect of the ego delusion is fickleness. As the Truth-seeker begins to manifest his divine soul qualities, he banishes this unreliable tendency of human nature and becomes a loyal and understanding person.

Loyalty to the guru is one of the most important steps of discipleship. Most human beings have not perfected the quality of loyalty even toward their own flesh and blood, or husband, wife, or friend. That is why the concept of loyalty to the guru is not fully understood. To be a true disciple, the chela must be loyal to the guru sent by God: he must abide faithfully and one-pointedly by his guru's teachings.

Loyalty is not narrowness. The heart that is loyal to God and His representative

is magnanimous, understanding, and compassionate toward all beings. Remaining centered in one-pointed unconditional loyalty to his own guru and his teachings, such a devotee beholds in correct perspective all other manifestations of Truth, according them due appreciation and respect.

Paramahansaji spoke on this subject many times. He said: "Many persons worry about becoming narrow-minded before they have learned to be balanced.

Superficial seekers, in their wish to appear broad-minded, indiscriminately absorb differing ideas without first distilling the essence of truth within them by realization. The result is a spiritually weak, diluted consciousness.

Though I regard lovingly all true religious paths and all true spiritual teachers, you see that I am one-pointedly loyal to my own.

"All true religions lead to God," he said. "Seek until you find the spiritual teaching which draws and fully satisfies your own heart; and once having found it, let nothing touch your loyalty again. Give that path your full attention.

Put your entire consciousness upon it, and you will find the results you are seeking."

When speaking about loyalty, Gurudeva Paramahansaji sometimes made the following comparison: "If you have a disease, you go to a doctor and he gives you medicine to cure your ailment. You take the medicine home and use it according to the doctor's instructions. When your friends come to visit you and learn the nature of your illness, each one is likely to exclaim: 'Oh, I know all about that disease! You must certainly try such-and-such remedy. Should ten persons give you ten different remedies, and you try them all, your chances for cure are doubtful. The same principle underlies the importance of loyalty to the guru's instruction. Do not mix spiritual remedies."

Divine loyalty means gathering together one's scattered attention, affection, and effort, and concentrating them one-pointedly on the spiritual goal. The loyal disciple travels swiftly along the path to God. Paramahansaji expressed the guru's role in this way: "I can help you more if you are not diluting your forces. Attunement with the guru comes through one hundred percent loyalty to him and his associates and activities; through willing obedience to his counsel (whether verbal or written instruction) ; through visualizing him in the spiritual eye; and through unconditional devotion.... In the souls of those who are in tune with him, the guru can establish a temple of God." Only through loyalty is one able to concentrate his efforts effectively upon the pursuit of God. The loyal disciple's consciousness becomes magnetized by divine love, and is drawn irresistibly to God.

Obedience Develops Discrimination

Obedience or surrender to the guidance of the guru is another basic tenet of the guru-disciple relationship. Why this divine imperative? Man must learn obedience to a higher wisdom in order to overcome the stumbling-block of ego and its self-made delusions. Through countless incarnations - from the time we were the most ignorant of mankind—the ego has had its way. It has dictated our behavior, our views, our likes and dislikes, through emotions and sense attachments. The ego enslaves the will and binds the consciousness to the limited human form. Undulating moods, waves of emotion, ever-changing likes and dislikes constantly buffet man's consciousness with one kind of feeling or another. What he likes particularly today may strike him differently tomorrow, and he goes after something else. This vacillating state of consciousness renders man blind to the perception of Truth.

A primary requisite of a chela's discipleship is the ability to bend his undisciplined and whimsical will in obedience to the guru's wisdom - to

surrender his ego-centered will to the divinely attuned will of the guru. The disciple who does so breaks the powerful grip of the limiting ego. When Paramahansaji entered the ashram of Swami Sri Yukteswar as a disciple, his guru almost at once made the following request: "Allow me to discipline you; for freedom of will does not consist in doing things according to the dictates of prenatal or postnatal habits or of mental whims, but in acting according to the suggestions of wisdom and free choice. If you tune your will with mine, you will find freedom."

How does the disciple attune his will to the guru's? Each spiritual path has its own prescriptive and proscriptive rules. Sadhana is the Indian term for this spiritual discipline: the "do's and don'ts" defined by the guru as necessary to the chela's search for God. By following these instructions sincerely and to the best of his ability, and by constant effort to please the guru through right behavior, the disciple demolishes every ego-erected barrier between his will and the will of the guru as expressed through his wise precepts.

In obedience to the guru the disciple finds his will gradually freed from enslaving egoistic desires, habits, and moods. And the mind, once so restless and fickle, ceases to be diffused and develops the ability to concentrate. As it becomes correctly focused, the disciple's mental vision begins to clear. Veil after veil of misunderstanding and confusion lift. The errors of countless actions that once seemed right, but led only to suffering, are suddenly bared in a dazzling perspective of truth. The disciple then knows what is right, what is true: he is able to discriminate between good and evil. Paramahansaji taught that discriminative behavior is doing the thing we ought to do when we ought to do it.

In order to succeed on the spiritual path, the devotee of God must develop discrimination; otherwise his instincts, moods, habits, and past emotional tendencies - gathered through incarnations - will continue to mislead him. Until the disciple's discrimination is fully developed, obedience and surrender to the guidance of the guru are the chela's only hope of salvation. It is the guru's discrimination that saves him. The Bhagavad-Gita (IV:36) teaches that the raft of wisdom will carry even the greatest among sinners across the sea of delusion. Through following the sadhana prescribed by the guru, the disciple builds his own lifesaving raft of wisdom.

The disciple's obedience must be sincere and wholehearted. To give lip-devotion to the guru and continue to behave according to the dictates of the ego's bad habits is folly. He alone is the loser who cheats in his efforts on the spiritual path.

Gurudeva gave those chelas who requested his discipline this simple counsel: "Pray always to please God and guru in every way." These words sum up the whole of sadhana. Yet to carry it out is not a simple matter. To please God and guru requires more than passive love and appreciation of God, guru, and the path. Even coming from the heart, this prayer is not in itself enough to please God or guru. Paramahansaji often told us that he didn't like to hear people exclaim, "Praise God! Praise God!" as though the Lord were some pampered lady who loves flattery. "That does not please God," he would say. "God is weeping for us, and for all His children who are lost and suffering in the darkness of delusion." God and guru want for us only our highest good: freedom from this world of bewildering inconstancies - health and disease, pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow -and safe harbor in the ever-new joy of the changeless Spirit. Therefore the way to please God and guru is by right behavior, by which we enable Them to grant us salvation. Consistently right behavior, in turn, is

possible only when one practices obedience and surrender to God through His channel, the guru.

Respect and Humility Before God's Representative

On the altars in Self-Realization Fellowship temples are placed images of Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Krishna, our paramgurus Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, and Sri Yukteswar; and our guru Paramahansa Yogananda. Thus we accord reverence and devotion to them as the instruments of God in bringing the teachings of Self-Realization Fellowship into the world. Respect in its highest form is reverence, another important aspect of the divine law that guides man to God-realization through the guru-disciple relationship.

How little respect for God or man is shown by human beings today! Many among our troubled youth are losing respect for the wisdom of years, for the social order, and, as a consequence, for themselves. When self-respect goes, decadence sets in. True respect, for oneself and others, arises out of understanding one's divine origin. He who knows himself as the Self, an individualized spark from the flame of Spirit, knows also that every other human being is likewise an expression of Spirit. In joy and awe he bows to the One in all.

By cultivating respect for the guru as God's agent, and for one's fellow beings as images of God, the devotee helps himself to grow spiritually. From a respectful attitude toward the guru comes receptivity to God through guru, and from receptivity comes understanding of what is right and noble, which leads to reverence for God and guru. When one is finally able, within one's heart as well as physically, to bow down to Something other than the ego, a transformation takes place within; one develops humility. The ego is like a stout, impenetrable prison wall around the soul, man's true nature; the only force that can shatter this wall is humility.

You who have read Autobiography of a Yogi will recall that when Lahiri Mahasaya saw the Mahavatar Babaji washing the feet of an ordinary sadhu at the Kumbha Mela, he was astonished. "Guruji!" he exclaimed, "what are you doing here?" "I am washing the feet of this renunciant," Babaji replied, "and then I shall clean his cooking utensils. I am learning the greatest of virtues, pleasing to God above all others - humility."

Humility is the wisdom that acknowledges One who is greater than ourselves. Most human beings worship the ego-self. But as the disciple bows instead to the ideal of a greater Self, and to the guru as the instrument of the Divine whose aid he seeks in realizing that Self, he gains the humility necessary to tear down the imprisoning wall of ego, and feels within him an ever-expanding divine consciousness welling up from that greater Self.

The humble man is a truly peaceful man, a truly joyous man. He is unruffled by the fickleness of human behavior and human love. He is not hurt by the inconstancy of human companionship or the transitory nature of position and security in this world. All thoughts of self-gain and self-worship diminish and fade in the humble man. The scriptures say: "When this 'I' shall die, then will I know who am I." When the ego goes, the soul - that image of God sleeping within - is able at last to awaken and express itself. The devotee then manifests in his life all the divine soul-qualities, and is freed forever from the ignorance of maya, the world delusion imposed upon all creatures who play in God's drama of creation.

So remember: respect gives rise to reverence; and humility follows. As the devotee develops these qualities, he begins to race toward the Goal of his spiritual quest.

The Quality of Faith

The guru-disciple relationship perfects in the chela the quality of faith. The world in which we live is founded on relativity, hence it is unstable. We know not from day to day whether our bodies are going to be well or beset by disease. We know not whether our loved ones, with us today, will be with us tomorrow or taken from this earth. We know not whether the peace we enjoy today will be shattered by war tomorrow. This unknowing creates in man great insecurity. That is why there exists today so much mental illness, and so much restlessness. It is also the reason man clings blindly to material possessions. He wants higher position, greater name and fame, more money. He wants a larger house, more clothing, a new car. All of these things, he believes, bring security in a world fearful and uncertain. He grasps at mere objects and makes them his gods. True faith is born of experience of truth and reality, a direct knowledge and certainty of the divine forces sustaining all creation. Man is insecure because he has no such faith. Jesus Christ said: "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you (Matthew 17:20).

We do not begin to express faith in our lives because it is hard for us even to believe in "things unseen." The fact is, man cannot have faith unless and until he experiences something in his life which will not fail him. The guru-disciple relationship leads one to this assurance. The disciple discovers in the guru the one who represents Divinity: the guru lives by divine principles; he demonstrates the spirit of God in his life; he is an embodiment of "things unseen."

The guru is also a manifestation of unconditional divine love. He is one who, no matter what we do, never changes in his love for us. This love, we realize, can be trusted. And as we see it demonstrated day after day, year after year, our faith in the guru's love grows. We realize God has sent to us one who will watch over us moment by moment, day by day, life after life -one who will never lose sight of us. This is the guru, our faith in whom flows through recognition of his unity with the ever-constant, changeless Spirit.

The guru-disciple relationship calls for complete faith on the part of the disciple. The guru says to the chela, "My child, if you want to know God, if you want the power to go back to Him, you must develop faith in That which you cannot see, which you cannot at this moment touch, That which cannot be known by sensory perception. You must have faith in that One who is unseen, for He is the only Reality behind all that now appears so real to your limited human senses."

To help the disciple to cultivate faith, the guru says: "Follow me; blindly, if need be." Ego impairs our vision, but the guru's sight is flawless. His eyes of wisdom are always open. To him there is no difference between yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In his divine perception past, present, and future are all the same. Paramahansaaji often said, "In God's consciousness there is no time, no space; everything is happening in the eternal now. Man sees only a tiny link in the chain of eternity, yet he thinks he knows it all." The guru, who is one with God, and whose consciousness has been stripped of the delusion that clouds the ordinary human mind, beholds eternity. He sees the present state of the disciple, he sees what the chela is striving to become, the struggles he already has passed through during many incarnations, and the obstacles that lie ahead. The guru alone can say, "This is the way to God." Even though the disciple has to follow blindly, his path is safe and sure.

From the very beginning of one's sadhana, one must listen and follow with faith, even when some aspect of the guru's teaching is not fully understood. Gurudeva

would occasionally remark, when a disciple started reasoning with him about some instruction he had given: "I don't have time for your logic. Just do what I said." In the beginning, this often seemed unreasonable to the chela. But those who obeyed without questioning saw the rewards of this kind of training. Follow the teaching of the guru, because he sees, he knows.

He will inwardly guide you through your attentive and willing action in carrying out his precepts. Trust in the guru enables him to nurture the omnipotent power of faith in his disciple.

By having in the guru one who can give us security in God, one whose hand we can take with assurance that we will be guided safely through the darkness of maya, we begin to develop the faith necessary to know God.

(To be continued in the next issue)

EASTER MESSAGE

By Paramahansa Yogananda

Jesus performed the miracle of resurrection, not to glorify a little material residence of flesh, but to show mankind what can be done by tuning in with the Christ Intelligence. He had resurrected his consciousness from identification with the limited human body to identification with the Universal Intelligence in all space: he realized that he was all forces and substances, not just a small physical being called Jesus.

The Christ Consciousness within you has long remained hidden, crucified by your indifference. Awaken the universal Christ by daily, deep meditation, and resurrect yourself from the tomb of ignorance. Rising above body consciousness, lift your spirit from the domain of matter into the vastness of silence within your own soul temple, and commune with the risen Christ.

Jesus was resurrected not only on Easter morn; he reanimates himself in the dawn of each soul's awakening. Let this resurrection of the Christ in you be your Easter awakening.

Announcing the SRF Summer Class Series in the Biltmore Hotel,

Los Angeles,

JULY 11 - 18, 1971

The teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda will be given during a week of comprehensive classes, lectures, and satsangas; group meditations and time for spiritual fellowship are also scheduled. Bringing the eventful week to an inspiring close will be the sacred Kriya Yoga Initiation, at Mount Washington Mother Center, for eligible students of the SRF Lessons.

SRF members, students, and friends around the world are requested to indicate their interest by writing at once for a complete program of events and registration information.

Two public lectures, on July 9 and 10, will be held prior to the class series.

Plan now to participate in this week of spiritual instruction and fellowship during your summer vacation.

SRF-YSS Mourns Passing of Tara Mata

Self-Realization Fellowship mourns the death of Tara Mata, loyal and steadfast disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda, member of the SRF Board of Directors, and editor-in-chief of Self-Realization Fellowship publications. She passed away on January 18, 1971.

Tara Mata met Paramahansa Yogananda in 1924 in San Francisco, California. She became a renunciant of the Self-Realization Order the following year. During her lifetime of selfless dedication to her Guru and the SRF work, she served for a number of years as vice-president of Self-Realization Fellowship, and was a

pillar of strength and wisdom in organizational affairs. In addition, she was instrumental in the publication of Paramahansaji's writings, outstanding among them Autobiography of a Yogi; and in presenting the message of Self-Realization Fellowship to the West. A memorial service presided over by The Reverend Mother Daya Mata was held at SRF international headquarters on January 21, 1971. A tribute, incorporating many extracts from Sri Daya Mata's eulogy, will be published in the next issue of Self-Realization.

SRF Yoga Classes

Brother Bhaktananda teaching Yoga class, SRF India Hall, Hollywood

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oga - an effective, scientific exploration of the soul possibilities inherent in man's being - is drawing widespread interest, not only in the West, but throughout the world. The ancient soul-science of meditation has for millenniums laid before man a nonsectarian pathway to knowledge of the Infinite and of man's place in finite creation. In a time of disharmony between man and nature, and man and man, persons of all ages, creeds, and nationalities are finding in the simple, step-by-step methods of Yoga a means of at-onement with the universal Life. The ancient art of meditation teaches man how to commune with God, the Source of being, the Cosmic Intelligence immanent in creation. Attunement with the Lord of heaven and earth leads one to harmonious integration of body, mind, and soul with the natural laws of creation and opens the door to understanding of his true nature as a child of God.

Self-Realization Fellowship is presently holding yoga classes in India Hall, Hollywood. The series of classes in the basic SRF teachings and techniques of meditation is being given by Bro. Bhaktananda and Bro. Dharmananda, SRF ministers. The classes began on January 16, 1971, and are continuing on successive Saturday evenings through March 16, 1971. This series is part of a program of periodic classes in the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda that will be held regularly in SRF India Hall during this year.

SRF Temple, Fullerton.

High school and college students living in the Fullerton area are taking advantage of a special series of classes relating Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings and the science of Yoga to their generation. Students discuss with SRF ministers Bro. Achalananda and Bro. Dharmananda their viewpoints and problems of adjustment in the world today. The classes are being held on the second Tuesday of each month.

Other SRF classes planned for 1971 include public lectures and classes in Anaheim and Fullerton, California, beginning April 16th; the annual SRF Summer Classes in Los Angeles, scheduled for the week of July 11th through 18th; Brothers Dharmananda (left) and Achalananda with high school and college students, Self-Realization Fellowship Temple, Fullerton

SRF Lectures and Classes Scheduled for 1971

A series of public lectures and classes will be conducted by Bro. Anandamoy, in Dallas, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; and Miami, Florida; a tour by Brother Mokshananda of SRF Centers in Chicago, Ill.; Cleveland, Ohio; Boston, Mass.; New York City; Philadelphia, Pa.; Washington, D.C.; and Toronto and Montreal, Canada; and a tour by Bros. Bhaktananda and Abhedananda of SRF European Centers in England, Holland, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain.

(See schedule page)

interviews for members and students, and meet with Center leaders:

ENGLAND

Birmingham - Aug. 28, 29 London - Sept. 2, 3, 4, 5

NETHERLANDS

The Hague - Sept. 9, 10, 11, 12

GERMANY

Berlin - Sept. 14, 15, 16 Niirnberg - Sept. 18, 19, 21 Munich - Sept. 23, 24, 25, 26

Geneva - Sept. 28, 29, 30 ITALY

Milan - Oct. 2, 3, 5 Rome - Oct. 9, 10, 12 SPAIN

Madrid- Oct. 15, 16, 17, 18 FRANCE

Paris - Oct. 22, 23, 24

Paramahansa Yogananda's Schools in India

"I clearly saw the arid results of ordinary instruction, aimed at the development of body and intellect only. Moral and spiritual values, without whose appreciation no man can approach happiness, were yet lacking in the formal curriculum. I determined to found a school where young boys could develop to the full stature of manhood."—Paramahansa Yogananda,

Yogacharya Swami Shyamananda (circled), General Secretary of Yogoda Satsanga Shilpa Kala Bharati students of the Yogoda Satsanga Kanya Vidyalaya, Ranchi

Sewing instruction given in the Yogoda Satsanga Shilpa Kala Bharati

Children of the YSS Balkrishnalaya play with educational toys under supervision of instructors

Instructors and music class of the Yogoda Sangeet Kala Bharati. Instruments shown are tamburas, fourstringed gourd-like instruments which produce "drone" tones to accompany singing; harmonium, hand-operated reed organ; and tabla, drums.

A new science wing and two outdoor class rooms of the Yogoda Satsanga schools in Ranchi

In 1918 Paramahansa Yogananda founded Yogoda Satsanga Vidyalaya in Ranchi, India. The curriculum, patterned after the ideals of the rishis, whose forest ashrams had been the seat of learning in ancient India, offered training in spiritual and moral values. During its first year the prospering young school distinguished itself scholastically and in competitive sports. Applications for admission poured in from all parts of India; many had to be refused because requests exceeded the school's capacity.

Today, in 1971, the original Yogoda Satsanga Vidyalaya has expanded into eight educational institutions in Ranchi; and YSS schools and colleges have been built in six other localities in India, some of them in remote villages. In Ranchi the YSS educational center consists of a primary school for children under six years of age (Yogoda Satsanga Balkrishnalaya) ; girls' junior and senior high

schools (Yogoda Satsanga Kanya Vidyalaya) ; semi-residential grammar, junior and senior high schools for boys (Yogoda Satsanga Vidyalaya) ; a college, including a homeopathic medical college (Yogoda Satsanga Mahavidyalaya and Yogoda Satsanga Homeopathic Mahavidyalaya) ; and music and arts schools (Yogoda Sangeet Kala Bharati and Yogoda Shilpa Kala Bharati). Other Yogoda Satsanga primary, junior and senior high schools, and colleges are located in Anandapur, Ejmalichak, Ghatal, Lakhanpur, Palpara, and Suraikehet-Bitholi.

More than five thousand students attend Yogoda Satsanga schools. In state-controlled examinations, testing their knowledge in all subjects, Yogoda students have achieved brilliant results. Studies are supplemented with training in agriculture and gardening, drama, debate, and devotional singing. In sports, Yogoda students have distinguished themselves in competition. Spiritual ideals are taught and practiced. Initiation into the meditation techniques taught by Paramahansa Yogananda is given to qualified students. Yoga exercises for the body and prayer are included in the daily school activities.

Yogoda Satsanga schools are growing rapidly as a result of public response to the balanced curriculum offered for development of body, mind, and spiritual qualities. Graduates are well equipped to take a responsible, constructive place in society; their understanding and experience founded upon the solid rock of spiritual unfoldment.

SRF Print Shop Moved to New Location

For several years the print shop at Self - Realization Fellowship international headquarters has been filled to capacity with printing presses and other heavy equipment used in publication work. Stocks of Autobiography of a Yogi, Metaphysical Meditations, Scientific Healing Affirmations, and Cosmic Chants, expected to last through 1971, are nearly exhausted. Rush preparations for new printings are already under way. Increasing interest in Paramahansa Yogananda's books, the SRF Lessons, and SRF literature and periodicals has necessitated purchase of additional publishing equipment. To house new machinery and to make room for more personnel and the constant turnover of large amounts of printing supplies, Self-Realization Fellowship purchased a larger building located a short distance from Mother Center. The move to the new SRF publications building was made in November 1970. The vacated facility at Mother Center is being remodeled into offices for the use of SRF monks.

Seven-ton Heidelberg printing press being moved from the Mother Center to new Self-Realization Fellowship publications building, November 1970.

New equipment purchased and installed in the SRF print shop includes a Didde-Glaser "Gatherall" a collator with related equipment providing for in-line collating, stitching, folding, and trimming. Other new equipment: for mail preparation, a Bell & Howell Phillipsburg inserter for stuffing envelopes with letters and literature; two large light tables for stripping negatives onto flats and checking printed pages for position and squareness; a Kreonite temperature-controlled sink and Kreonite dot-etching table for photomechanical work; an Opti color-separation camera for preparing negatives-both halftone and line-for black-and-white and color printing; and two MacBeth densitometers : a transmission type used for checking color negatives and a reflection type used for checking color printing.

Creating new print-shop facilities and consolidating monks' offices at Mother Center enables Self-Realization Fellowship to take another step forward in expanding its services in disseminating the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda.

View of press room in the new SRF publications building. Intertype composing,

photo-mechanical work, mail preparation, and stock control are in adjoining rooms. The building also has offices and warehouse facilities.

Didde-Glaser "Gatherall" in operation, new SRF publications building

Swami Shyamananda Returns to India

Yogacharya Swami Shyamananda (Yogacharya Binay Narayan), member of the Self-Realization Fellowship Board of Directors and General Secretary of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India, left Mother Center on November 21, 1970, for Calcutta India. Swami Shyamananda had been residing at SRF international headquarters since June when he came to Los Angeles to participate as one of the principal speakers in the SRF/YSS 50th Anniversary Convocation.

Returning to India by air on the Pacific Ocean route, Swamiji stopped briefly in Honolulu, Tokyo, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and Rangoon to meet with SRF members and students. On November 29th he arrived in Calcutta, where he was warmly greeted by hundreds of YSS devotees. Since his return to India Swami Shyamananda has been deeply engaged in the administrative duties of guiding and expanding Paramahansa Yogananda's work there.

Comments on Autobiography of a Yogi

"For some time I have felt an inexplicable desire to read the Autobiography of a Yogi. I kept 'finding' the book as I went about my duties as town librarian, and wished I had time to read it. "After I studied nursing and began my new career, I still thought about the book; then finally I took it home. Still it took a long time to 'get started.' Then one evening I began reading. I couldn't put the book down! I read constantly until I had finished. I can surely agree with all the sparkling commentaries on the jacket flaps! In these troubled times it is refreshing to read Paramahansaji's words of hope for the future." - N.B., Homer, Nebraska. "Autobiography of a Yogi is magnificent, one of the most enjoyable books I have ever read." - B.S., New York, N.Y.

"The life story of the Master Paramahansa Yogananda has inspired me greatly. He is certainly an 'incarnation of love.' During this time of confusion over Viet Nam and the trials of youth, the Master's words come as an offering of light." - R.O., Stanton, California.

"Nothing else has aroused my interest and absorbed my thoughts so completely for a long time." -A.E., New York, N.Y.

"I had the privilege of reading Autobiography of a Yogi by Paramahansa Yogananda, and life has become greatly enriched by this experience. His words have not only comforted me but have changed my concepts of life." - K.M., Baltimore, Maryland.

"After reading Paramahansa Yogananda's Autobiography of a Yogi, I would like to subscribe to Self-Realization Magazine and to learn more about his inspiring philosophy. I find myself going back to this compelling book again and again, and each time I become more convinced of its true value." - S.P., Palos Verdes Peninsula, California.

READERS' COMMENTS ON OTHER SRF BOOKS

"I have been searching for the Truth for years, and knew I had found it when I read Paramahansa Yogananda's Autobiography of a Yogi. Later I purchased two more of his books, The Master Said and Whispers from Eternity. And just recently I found Scientific Healing Affirmations and Metaphysical Meditations. I needn't

tell you the wonderful help I receive each time they are read." - M.K., Kansas City, Missouri.

"Thank you for sending me the publication on the occasion of the Golden

Anniversary of Self-Realization Fellowship. Every page of it brings back precious memories. What a great man Swamiji [Paramahansa Yogananda] was!" - B. R. Sen, Calcutta, India."

* In 1952, during a visit to Los Angeles while Ambassador of India to the U.S., His Excellency Mr. Sen called at SRF headquarters to meet Paramahansa Yogananda. A few days later, at a banquet on March 7th in Mr. Sen's honor, Paramahansaji, gave an inspiring talk on India's role as world peacemaker. The great yogi then smilingly entered mahasamadhi. A few minutes later, the Ambassador spoke in moving tribute to Paramahansa Yogananda.

Letters from SRF Students

"The tremendous benefit, the joy I'm beginning to feel in myself is hardly explainable. Just the thought that through the guidance of the Self-Realization Lessons one can experience Absolute joy is enough to cause a person to work like a beaver for spiritual unfoldment.

"I am eternally thankful to Paramahansa Yogananda and to Self-Realization Fellowship for making all of this possible, not only for myself, but for so many others who seek Truth." - T.C., Philadelphia, Pa.

"My husband and I have received only three lessons thus far, yet we feel we have already tasted the fruits of divine blessings." - K.G., Richmond, Indiana.

"The possibilities from study and practice of Self-Realization Lessons are endless. They are so rich in information, I believe I shall never finish learning from them." - R.C., Sussex, England.

"I never lose interest in the Lessons, the amount of information in each one is so great. I look forward to receiving each new one." - F.E., Long Beach, California.

"Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings in the SRF Lessons are great truths about life, expressed simply. His admonitions in all departments of living are comforting, and his techniques so reliable that laymen like myself have experienced the truths in them even after a few practices." - I.E., Calabar, Nigeria.

"Indeed it is a blessing to receive the wonderful Lessons that Paramahansa Yogananda left for those who love and follow his teachings. Such joy and pleasure is in each one. I shall be sorry when I receive them no more." - V.F., Palm Springs, California.

"My health has been greatly benefited in these last three months. The results of the Energization Exercises have been excellent, almost too good to be true. I feel more vital in body and mind than I have for years." - T.D., Seattle, Washington.

"At work, where I do hand-decorating at a high rate of speed, I find that if I stop now and then and do a few of the Energization Exercises, the tension is relaxed. My neck used to become so tightened up, and I felt such sharp pains from it, that I had to take tranquilizers. Now I find I can relieve the situation almost completely by the SRF exercises alone. In fact, because of my practicing the SRF meditation studies as well, I no longer get so tense." -- D.P., Redondo Beach, California..

"Last spring I wrote to you about the illness of my husband and asked that the SRF Prayer Council pray for him. I am so deeply grateful to all of you. He was able to work again and returned to the teaching profession which he dearly loves. He continues to gain in health and happiness." -- J.S., Mission, Kansas.

"Some time ago I wrote to you about my grandson, who needed a heart operation. After two months of waiting, the final tests were made and now the operation will not be necessary. The symptoms disappeared during this time. We are so

grateful for this healing, we cannot express it in words. Thanks to all those who have prayed." -- A.H., Mexico D.F., Mexico.

"I must tell you how much benefit my daughter has received from your prayers. She has now fully recovered from her illness, and her newborn son is a lovely healthy baby. She felt as though she were being spiritually helped, and she had no fear. Once again I send my grateful thanks for all your help." - R.M., Maidstone, England.

Self-Realization Fellowship Encinitas Retreat

"My heart is full and words cannot express the peace and joy that have been with me since my recent weekend at SRF Retreat." -J.V, San Gabriel, California.

"My retreat with you was very specially blessed." - I.S., Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

"Each visit at your Retreat has a touch of the sublime about it, whether one goes there in personal need, in joyous gratitude, or just somewhere in between. My recent stay there will always remain a beautiful Christmas memory." - G.T., San Diego, California.

Self-Realization Fellowship Retreat

Open throughout the year to SRF members and friends. Retreats of one to fourteen days may be arranged. In addition, planned weekend retreats are offered for men on the first week

end of each month, for women on the third weekend, and for married couples on the fifth weekend (when one occurs). These special retreats include classes in the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda. Students of the weekly SRF Lessons may also receive personal instruction in the SRF techniques of meditation, including (for those eligible) Kriya Yoga. Ample time is allowed for rest and relaxation in the peaceful seaside environment of the Retreat, which is located in the Encinitas SRF Colony by the Pacific Ocean. Send for descriptive leaflet.

SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP RETREAT

P O. Box 758, Encinitas, Calif. 92024 * Phone (714)

Sri Daya Mata Christmas 1970

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA, 1949 Photograph taken as Paramahansa Yogananda greeted members during a Self-Realization Fellowship convocation in Los Angeles, California, July 31, 1949

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WRITINGS BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Is God a Father or a Mother?

Bhagavad-Gita (Ch. XVIII: 33-35)

The Divine Sculptor

WISDOM OF SAINTS AND SAGES

A Time for Prayer, a Time for Surrender By SRI DAYA MATA

Tara Mata—A Loving Tribute

The Guru-Disciple Relationship (Conclusion) By MRINALINI MATA