

Self-Realization

FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



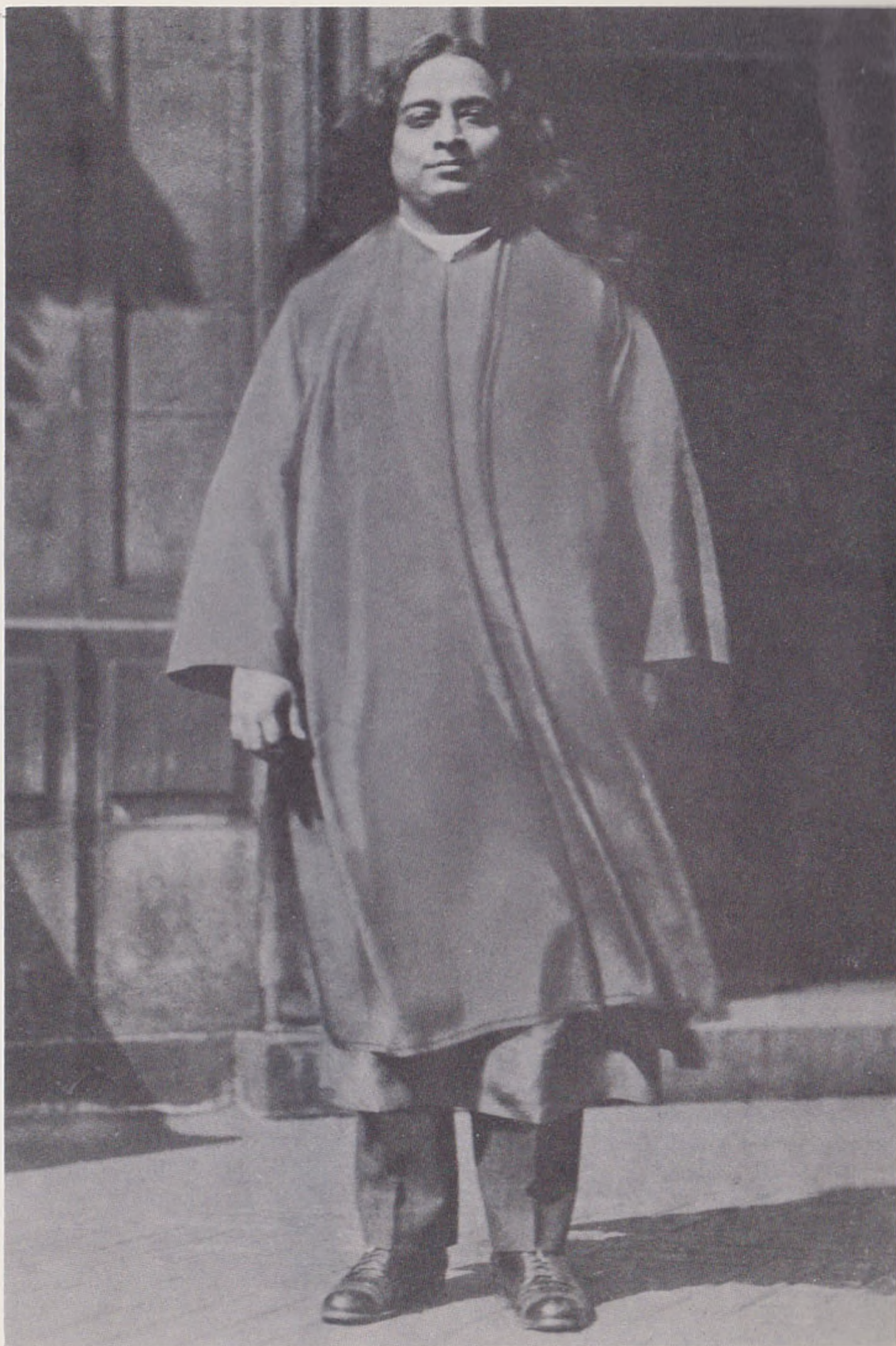
Self-Realization Fellowship

(Yogoda Satsanga Society of India)

Golden Anniversary — 1920-1970

Fall 1970

25¢



PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA, 1926

Self-Realization Magazine

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Fall 1970

Vol. 41, No. 4

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INSIDE FRONT COVER: Paramahansa Yogananda, founder of Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India), stands before Soldiers Memorial Hall, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, February 1926. He spoke to capacity audiences in the 2,500-seat auditorium during a two-week series of lectures, followed by class instruction in the SRF-YSS techniques of meditation for attaining Self-realization.

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Paramahansa Yogananda, Founder; The Reverend Mother Daya Mata, President.

Issued quarterly. The designations "Spring," "Summer," "Fall," and "Winter" correspond with the four quarters of the calendar year. Single copy, 25¢. Subscriptions: 1 year, \$1.00 (4 issues); 3 years, \$2.50 (12 issues).

Second-class postage paid at Los Angeles, California. Subscribers will please send notification of change of address one month in advance. (Post Office does not forward magazines to a new address unless subscriber arranges with P.O. for that service.)

Self-realization: Criterion of Religion

BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Extracts from talks to SRF students on August 22, 1933, in Los Angeles, and August 27, 1939, in Encinitas, California

The temple God loves most is the temple of His devotee's inner silence and peace. Whenever you enter this beautiful temple here,* leave restlessness and worries behind. If you do not let go of them, God will not be able to come to you. First establish in yourself a temple of beauty and peace; there you will find Him, on the altar of your soul.

Sometimes one feels discouraged, thinking it is too late to find God. It is never too late. The *Bhagavad-Gita* says that even in the last moment before death, if one realizes that this world is false and only Spirit is real, he will exit from here into a better world. Resolve that from this moment you will seek God through your own Self-realization.

Sooner or later each one of us will be taken away from this earth. Find out now what life is all about. The great purpose of your experiences here is to stimulate you to search out their meaning. Don't give importance to this procession of humanity. As time marches on you must eventually realize that you are a part of the great One. Make God-realization your goal. Babaji† said that even a little bit of this *dharma* — righteous action, seeking to know God — will save you from dire fears.‡ The prospect of death, or of fail-

*Golden Lotus Temple formerly at Encinitas, California. †Mahavatar Babaji, one of the line of gurus of Self-Realization Fellowship. See *Autobiography of a Yogi*, p. 323. ‡*Bhagavad-Gita*, II:40.

ure or other grievous troubles, awakens in man a great dread. When you are helpless to help yourself, when your family cannot do anything for you, when no one else can give you aid, what then is the state of your mind? Why allow yourself to be put in such a position? Find God, and anchor yourself in Him. Before anyone else was with you, who was with you? God. And when you leave this earth who will be with you? Only God. But you won't be able to know Him then unless you make friends with Him now. If you deeply seek God, you will find Him.

Everything in creation is a temptation to lure you from God. But He is more tempting than any earthly temptation. If you attain even a glimpse of Him you will realize this; and you can find Him by inner prayer and meditation, and by strong determination. Your resolutions with God must be firm; He will not come so long as your mind is roaming elsewhere. He wants to come to you but you don't let Him; you would rather seek a little sense pleasure or spend your time on books or cocktail parties. So God says, "All right, My child, play on."

If God is seeking anything, it is our love. He knocks at every heart and asks us to come unto Him, but most persons don't want to go. Yet when they get into trouble or become sick, they are quick to call for Him. He who makes friends with the Lord while he is prosperous and happy will always find God near when he needs Him. But he who procrastinates in forming that relationship will have to fight his tests alone until, through wisdom and unconditional surrender, he finds the Eternal Friend.

Out of this great mass of humanity only a few are deeply seeking God. Where are they who thought this earth was theirs two hundred years ago? All are gone — and from among them perhaps only two or three understood the truth about life and became devotees of the Lord. Nevertheless, each succeeding generation thinks this life is real! For the little while you are here you make much of this show. Don't become too involved in it. Find God! He is trying to draw us with His love. He is showing us all the miracles we could want to see — the wonders of growing things and the perfect routine in nature. He is right there behind the flowers. Seek Him out. The

scientist didn't make his discoveries by the use of blind prayer; he followed the laws of science. If you apply scientific spiritual laws with sincere devotion, God will be with you automatically. Open your eyes of devotion, for by continuous ardor plus application of spiritual law you will find Him.

Spiritual Development Must Balance Material Advancement

Different nations have specialized in different arts and sciences; India mastered the scientific art of God-realization. I have come to teach you India's spiritual science. Unless a balance is created by developing spiritual realization along with advancement of the physical sciences, individuals and nations will be lost in misery and destruction. If today's world leaders were illumined by Self-realization, and worked together, they could within a few years banish war and poverty from the earth. Only spiritual consciousness — realization of God's presence in oneself and in every other living being — can save the world. I see no chance for peace without it. Begin with yourself. There is no time to waste. It is your duty to do your part to bring God's kingdom on earth.

Many persons hesitate to seek God, imagining that life will then have to be gloomy. Not so! The unalloyed happiness I find in communing with the Lord no words can describe. Night and day I am in a state of joy. That joy is God. To know Him is to perform the funeral rites for all your sorrows. He does not require you to be stoic and morose. That is not the right concept of God, or the way to please Him. Without being happy you will not even be able to find Him. The more peaceful you are, the more you will be able to feel His presence. The happier you are, the greater will be your attunement with Him. Those who know Him are always happy, because God is joy itself.

Men try to find happiness in drink, sex, and money, but the pages of history are filled with tales of their disillusionment. The time I have spent in meditation has made my life unimaginably fruitful. The joy it has given me a thousand bottles of wine could not produce. In that joy is the conscious guidance of God's wisdom. When you are attuned with Him in this way, even though you un-

wittingly do wrong it will be righted by the Lord's omniscient direction; if you make a poor judgment it will be corrected by Him.

Wait no longer! Whoever hears this message, know that I am speaking truth. It is His voice, His power, His authority. If I were to display all the powers that God has given to me, throngs would come. But I do not seek that kind of following. Not powers, but the love of God must attract you; for only then will you change and make an effort to know Him. That is the aim of Self-Realization Fellowship.

I could not preach about God in this way if I did not know Him. In the same way you can know Him. That is why I teach Self-realization, which means you can know within your own consciousness that what I am saying is true. You don't have to believe; you can *know*. If I had a thousand mouths, I would speak through them all to convince you.

My Only Wish Is to Give You a Glimpse of God

You don't realize how much you miss God because you have never known Him. Once you do contact Him, no power on earth will be able to turn you away from Him. My only wish is to give you a glimpse of God, because having Him, no other gain is greater. Satan tempted Jesus with dominion over the whole world; but he said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Jesus had that Something which is infinitely greater. Knowing God is more satisfying than the fulfillment of any earthly desire. Every lesser wish of your heart will be taken care of when you have Him who is your greatest Treasure. This is my own true testimony. He fulfilled my every desire. I do not seek things now; they seek me. When God gives Himself to you, He will fulfill your slightest wish. It is not necessary to ask. That is the state you want. But first you have to prove that you desire the Lord Himself more than His gifts.

Out of the abundance God has given me I have kept nothing for myself. I am always free, for nothing belongs to me. I am working only for Him and for all of you. Because of this, anytime the thought of some need crosses my mind, God fulfills it. I have to take care what I mentally tell the Lord, for it is sure to materialize!

This state of satisfaction no worldly prosperity can give.

God is seeking you; you must seek Him. Follow this Self-Realization way. It will bring you to Him more quickly than any other path. I have tried all methods; and I entered this path on the basis of reason, not emotion. Through the demonstration of their own realization, the great masters of Self-Realization Fellowship have shown that by following their way you can find the Lord, you can be among the greatest of the spiritually great, just as by learning from a great scientist you can become a great scientist, if you apply yourself. Charcoal does not receive and reflect the sunlight, but the diamond does. Charcoal mentalities, full of doubts and negation and spiritual slothfulness, cannot receive God. But diamond mentalities, sincere and full of faith and perseverance, receive and reflect the wisdom of the Divine Consciousness.

It Is Necessary to Understand the Meaning of Religion

To most persons religion is a matter of family tradition or social benefit or moral habit. They have no conception of the importance of religion. When I asked one man what religion he followed, he replied: "Nothing in particular. I change churches according to convenience."

Those who are not seeking God as the paramount necessity of life do not understand the meaning of religion. Why do all people seek money? Because they are conditioned to the thought that money is essential to supply the things they need for their well-being. They don't have to be told this; they simply know it. Why then do most people not understand the necessity of knowing God? Because they lack imagination and discrimination. Very early in life I saw that certain questions could never be answered by human beings. For example, when my mother died and when other loved ones began to be taken away from me, I rebelled inwardly against it; but no one could give me an explanation that satisfied me. I decided I had to find the answer myself, through my own effort. "I am not going to accept this blindly," I vowed. "I am going to find the answer from Him who is the Maker of this universe." I sought directly from God the understanding of life's mysteries that I could not find in the

teachings in the churches and temples. If religion could not explain to me why some persons are born poor and some rich, some blind and some healthy, how could it convince me of the justice of God? The masters of India, by attaining God-realization, found the answers to life's riddles.

There are many kinds of religionists in the world, and each religion has its own cross-section of this diversity. There are those whose approach to religion is wholly emotional. When their feelings are played upon too much they become hysterical with religion. But in an extreme display of emotion one loses touch with God. Emotionally excitable types want "pep" in religion; when you lecture from the intellectual plane they fall asleep. It is too dull, they say. But playing upon others' emotions is not giving them Truth, or God; it is simply juggling with their minds.

The intellectual religionist delights in hearing about various theological or philosophical concepts, flattering himself that he is on a higher rung of divine understanding than the emotional religionist. But intellectual stimulation, also, is only another kind of "drug," a different form of mental juggling that does not give the seeker what he really needs, any more than does over-stirring the emotions.

Religionists who cling blindly to dogma will often parrot what they do not really understand or have not realized. When you ask them questions, they quote scriptures and tenets like spiritual vic-trolas. It is useless to reason with them because they are so sure they know it all.

True Religion Satisfies the Demands of Your Soul

Dogmatic religionists are convinced that if you do not believe in a certain way you are doomed. Science does not teach you in that way; it proves its points. And true religion satisfies the demands of your soul, not by words but by proof. I wanted never to be so dogmatic that I would stop using my reason and common sense. When I met my guru, Sri Yukteswar, he said: "Many teachers will tell you to believe; then they put out your eyes of reason and instruct you to follow only their logic. But I want you to keep your eyes of reason open; in addition I will open in you another eye, the eye of wis-

dom.”* Sri Yukteswarji gave me a teaching whose truth I could realize for myself. That is why I followed this path. No one can shake me from it.

The liberalist is the other extreme of the dogmatist. He follows everything! In the belief that he is being broadminded he says, “All spiritual paths are good; therefore I will not bind myself to any one of them.” While respecting all, it is better to adhere to one path than to be a religious butterfly, flitting everywhere. Avoid both false liberality and blind dogmatism. Cling dogmatically only to wisdom, and you will find God.

Every effort one makes for God will be noticed by Him. However, if one doesn’t follow a proven scientific way to God, his progress is comparable to riding in an old bullock cart. Sincere seekers will receive some realization, no matter what path they follow; but with only blind belief and mechanical prayers it could take them incarnations to reach the Lord.

Whatever Religion You Choose, Give It a Good Test

Seek until you find the path most suited to the spiritual inclination of your heart and mind, and then be steadfast. Whatever you take up, give it a good test. In the same way give the Self-Realization teachings a chance. Jewelers can tell a good gem from a fake, and the genuine spiritual teacher can differentiate between sincere and idle seekers. There are some who take the SRF Lessons but do not study or practice them. Ask them what the teaching is about, and they reply vaguely, “Oh, it is grand!” If you ask what they have learned, they go on about what a good teaching it is, “but I haven’t practiced it.” Those who practice shall know the blessings of this path.

Seekers should be taught to find God first. To concentrate on money or health as primary objectives in following a religion is to become sidetracked. True, it is through God that one receives every-

*The eye of intuition, or divine wisdom. This omniscient spiritual eye becomes visible within the central part of the forehead during deep meditation. “When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light. . . . Take heed, therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness” (*Luke 11:34-35*).

thing else; but he who seeks other things first will feel the bonds of limitations. A qualified spiritual teacher knows and loves the Lord; his supreme interest is in God. One teacher tried to persuade me to accept his spiritual guidance with the promise that I would have a great many followers. His offer did not attract me, because I wanted God alone. Great teachers will always seek to interest you in knowing the Lord. They will not take you up a blind alley.

Without God-communion, the lifeblood of religion is missing. Church is not the place for dances, movies, and frequent social gatherings. These divert people from God. One can find sufficient worldly entertainment in town. Go to church for one reason: communion with God. Divine communion is the criterion of religion. That is what my guru taught me, and that is why I have followed him unconditionally and wholeheartedly. As a result of his teaching I am enjoying that sacred communion with the Lord every moment of my existence. That is what religion must be.

If I tell you of a wonderful fruit I have found, and describe it to you in detail every day for a year without ever giving you a taste of it, you won't be satisfied. Hearing about truth cannot relieve the soul's hunger; if you are content to hear truth without making any effort to know God, it has falsely satisfied you. You must hunger so deeply for God that you will seek Him out in earnest. The purpose of religious lectures and sermons is to awaken in you that irresistible soul-longing for Him.

Realizing God Requires Self-Disciplinary Effort

Once in a while I meet someone in whom I see a little bit of real devotion for the Lord. But God-realization is so much greater than that! The God-knowing devotee sometimes sees the whole world filled with His light — a wonderful experience. But it can't come to you in one minute. Realizing God requires long perseverance in the practice of those methods that lead to Self-realization.

The desire for happiness is the strongest desire of all. True and lasting happiness is found in God. When you discover Him, a great joy will come over you, a joy you will find nowhere else. Sri Yukteswarji said to me: "When your joy in meditation and communion

becomes greater than any other joy, you have found God. If the whole world were given to you, you would not know what to do with it; you would only feel burdened, worrying about everything. Study the lives of princes and men of the world; see how they were vexed." We are like puppets in the hands of destiny; but the man who is one with the Light of the world, who has nothing and yet has everything, is a happy man. He who is one with God is not afraid of anything, even annihilation of the body. Jesus said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (*John 2:19*).

The church has become a beggar. Ironically, money is needed in the development of all good works, including those performed by the church. The dollar itself has no brains; it can serve both good and evil schemes. To seek money to spread God's work is righteous action. Money thus used is doing good. And the more one sacrifices for God's work, the greater will be his reward.

All Churches Should Be Hives of God-Communion

Every church does good, and for that I love them all. They will truly fulfill their high calling when they become places of God-communion. They should be like hives, filled with the honey of God-realization. Unless this truth becomes more manifest in religion, you will see that the church as such will gradually disappear. Religion will be practiced in secluded spots out-of-doors, where God can come to those few devoted souls who really want to know Him. This has happened in India. Some of her temples have become mere gathering places for pigeons and people, and not so much places of meditation for divine communion. Real seekers in India gather under the trees to meditate on God. More and more this will happen in churches everywhere. The dissatisfaction of real truth seekers with dogmatism, and the emptiness of organization without individual Self-realization, will force a great world change in the concept of religion.

Scientific Methods Needed to Follow the First Commandment

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself" (*Luke 10:27*). These two commandments

sum up the whole purpose of religion. If you sincerely love God you will do only what is based upon truth. Your love will not allow you to err against Him. Bring in the light, and darkness will vanish as though it had never been. Bring in love of God and the darkness of ignorance flies away. The science of yoga explains the truth behind the first commandment, and gives definite scientific techniques that enable the devotee to attain the divine communion necessary in order to love God so completely. Behind each part of these commandments is a deep metaphysical truth:

"Love the Lord. . . with all thy heart": It is God who has given you the power to love your family and friends. Why should you not use that power to love Him as you love your dearest ones on earth? You should be able to say: "My Lord, I love You as the father loves the child, as the lover loves the beloved, as the friend loves the friend, as the master loves the servant. I love You with the strength of all human loves, for Thou art my Father, my Friend, my Master, my Beloved." When you truly love God with all your heart, you feel that love for Him day and night.

As I was leaving home to seek God I was inwardly torn by the conflict of loyalties. My father had done everything for me, and the whole family was crying over my imminent departure, but the love of God was stronger and I was able to overcome the limitations of familial love.

Many human beings say "I love you" one day and reject you the next. That is not love. One whose heart is filled with the love of God cannot willfully hurt anyone. When you love God without reservation, He fills your heart with His unconditional love for all. That love no human tongue can describe.

". . . and with all thy soul": You cannot fulfill this part of the commandment unless you know your soul. You know it in an unconscious way each night, for in deep sleep you are aware only of existing; you have no consciousness of being either man or woman. You are soul. You can consciously know your soul — your true self — by meditation. And when you know yourself as soul you will have discovered the presence of God within you. The moon's reflection cannot be seen clearly in ruffled water, but when the water's surface is

calm a perfect reflection of the moon appears. So with the mind; when it is calm you see clearly reflected the moonèd face of the soul. As souls we are reflections of God. When by meditation techniques we withdraw restless thoughts from the lake of the mind, we behold our soul, a perfect reflection of Spirit, and realize that the soul and God are One.

"... and with all thy strength": This aspect of the commandment is highly scientific. It means withdrawing all your strength — your energies and consciousness — into their source, which is God. Yoga teaches you how to control your life energies and transmute them from body-consciousness into God-consciousness.

"... and with all thy mind": When you are praying to God your attention and concentration should be wholly on Him. You should not be thinking about your Sunday dinner or your work or any other worries and desires. The Lord knows your thoughts. When I pray to God my mind stays riveted on Him. If you develop that calm intensity of concentration you will find that a time comes when no matter what else you are doing, days and nights pass with your mind inwardly absorbed in God.

You Must Know Your Self to Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

"... and thy neighbour as thyself": The ordinary man is incapable of loving others in this way. Self-centered in the consciousness of "I, me, and mine," he has not yet discovered the omnipresent God who resides in him and in all other beings. To me there is no difference between one person and another; I behold all as soul-reflections of the one God. I can't think of anyone as a stranger, for I know that we are all part of the One Spirit. When you experience the true meaning of religion, which is to know God, you will realize that He is your Self, and that He exists equally and impartially in all beings. Then you will be able to love others as your own Self.

Truth alone should be the binding force of the church. Truth I have brought to you through Self-Realization Fellowship. This work is spreading because of the wisdom and blessings of the God-realized masters behind it. All over the country I have seen wonderful students who are held to the SRF path for one reason: Self-

realization. My only plan is to hold people by their own Self-realization. That is the only way I wish to hold them. If there are hundreds in my classes, all right; if there are empty seats, it is all right. I never wish for anything. I would rather have a few real souls than hundreds without sincerity. The great purpose behind this movement is to give people their own Self-realization. When people will realize that it is their duty and privilege to know God, then a new era will come on earth. Scriptures, sermons, and lectures eventually cease to satisfy the seeker who truly longs to feel the presence of God; but when he *realizes* truth, he knows life as it should be.

Practice the truth you hear and read about, so that it is not just an idea but a conviction born of experience. If reading books on theology satisfies your desire for God, you have not grasped the purpose of religion. Do not settle for intellectual satisfaction about truth. Convert truth into experience, and you will know God through your own Self-realization.

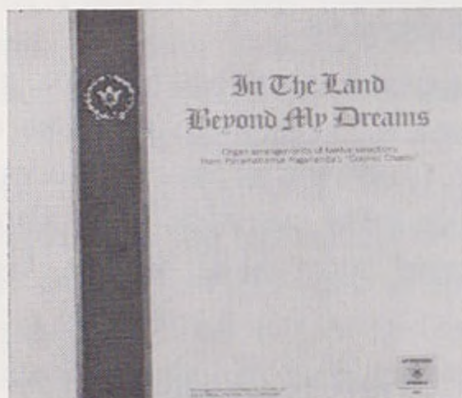
Practice Truth — Meditate — for God-Communion

What is needed is spiritual experience. Only divine communion can remove the great boredom that exists when one is not following the spiritual path scientifically. What is necessary in order to have that spiritual experience? The habit of daily meditation. God is *realizable*. You can know Him *now*, through meditation. Then without any question, without any doubt, without a speck of mental reservation you can say: "I am with God." Why not? He is your own.

The time has come for man to know truth for himself. That which I am giving to you is self-realizable. Those who practice the Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons know their value. To others they may appear to be just another course of study, to be added to their philosophical library. With every new spiritual instruction I received from Sri Yukteswarji he said, "You must *know* this truth." And I did. In the beginning of my spiritual search in India I had steadfastly refused to join any society because I didn't find in them demonstrable truth. But when I found my guru and this path of Self-Realization, and saw through my own experience that it worked, I gave my life to this cause.

Two New Recordings

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of Self-Realization Fellowship



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SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India)



Following is a brief history of Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India), founded by Paramahansa Yogananda. A more detailed presentation is given in the beautifully illustrated booklet (see page 18) published by SRF this year in commemoration of the SRF-YSS Golden Anniversary.

God watches over His world and His children, and when they are in spiritual need He sends help to them through the channels of prophets and enlightened souls. Such a role was laid upon Paramahansa Yogananda in this twentieth century.

Sri Yogananda was born in Gorakhpur, India, in 1893. The world mission for which he was ordained began formally in 1917 with the founding of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India. It started with a small boys' school in Dihika, India. The ideals of the school were based on fulfilling the spiritual as well as the intellectual needs of young boys. Within a year the fast-growing institution was transferred to a twenty-five acre estate in Ranchi, Bihar, donated by the Maharaja of Kasimbazar. In 1920 Sri Yogananda received an invitation to attend, as the delegate from India, an International Congress of Religious Liberals in Boston, Massachusetts.

His coming to America began a new epoch in Yoganandaji's life: a mission for which he was well prepared. He had been chosen and blessed by a line of exalted masters of contemporary times: Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, and Swami Sri Yukteswar

Giri.* For more than ten years he received the spiritual training and strict discipline of his guru Sri Yukteswar, whose peerless wisdom molded Sri Yogananda's life into a living example of Vedic† truth and the highest ideals of India's culture. Yoganandaji's divine work was to reveal the complete harmony and basic oneness of original Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ and original Yoga as taught by Bhagavan Krishna; and to teach definite yoga methods for attaining Self-realization, knowledge of the Self as soul, and realization of its ultimate oneness with Spirit.

Sri Yogananda's maiden speech in America, "The Science of Religion" was a success. Numerous invitations to speak and to conduct classes kept him occupied for many months following the Congress. In 1924 Yoganandaji embarked on a cross-continental tour, lecturing to tens of thousands in major cities throughout the United States. In 1925 Sri Yogananda founded an international headquarters in Los Angeles, California, for his growing work — whose name (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India) he translated for the West as Self-Realization Fellowship. His lectures, stenographically recorded, were compiled into lessons and mailed weekly to students throughout the world. In the following decade Yoganandaji spoke before numerous audiences, was received by president Calvin Coolidge at the White House, wrote and published several books on the SRF-YSS teachings, inaugurated the publication of a quarterly magazine, and founded a monastic order for the training of renunciant disciples in the SRF-YSS spiritual precepts.

In 1935 Sri Yogananda, at the behest of his guru Sri Yukteswar, returned to India for a year-long visit in the ancient beloved land of his birth. While in India Yoganandaji received from his guru India's highest spiritual title, *Paramahansa*.‡ He lectured extensively and devoted time to his boys' school in Ranchi, and to the other

* The lives of these spiritually enlightened gurus are narrated in *Autobiography of a Yogi*, by Paramahansa Yogananda.

† That is, from the *Vedas*, ancient scriptures of the Hindus. The *Vedas* are said to possess *nityatva*, "timeless finality."

‡ Lit., *parama*, highest; *hansa*, swan. The white swan is mythologically represented as the vehicle or mount of Brahma the Creator. The sacred *hansa*, said to have the power of extracting only milk from a mixture of milk and water, is thus a symbol of spiritual discrimination.

activities of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India. Today YSS disseminates Paramahansaji's teachings throughout India and surrounding countries, and guides and administers in those areas YSS centers, welfare activities, and twenty-one flourishing educational institutions, including two colleges.

In late 1936 Paramahansa Yogananda returned to America. During the remaining years of his life he continued to work ceaselessly and tirelessly to spread the message of God through his writings (such as *Autobiography of a Yogi*, published in fourteen languages and now in its tenth American edition), and the founding of SRF-YSS temples, ashrams, and meditation centers.

1970 is the Golden Anniversary of Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India). SRF-YSS exists solely to perpetuate the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda, which have now spread to all corners of the globe. This organization is an extension of his life, a life that was destined to bear testimony to the truth that God can be known through one's own direct realization.

Paramahansa Yogananda entered *mahasamadhi* (a yogi's final conscious exit from the body) on March 7, 1952. Though Paramahansa Yogananda is the last in the line of SRF-YSS gurus, each succeeding SRF-YSS president is revered not only as the spiritual head of the organization, but as Paramahansaji's spiritual representative. This position was held by Rajarsi Janakananda from 1952 until his death in 1955. He was succeeded by The Reverend Mother Daya Mata, a disciple of Sri Yogananda since 1931.

"The one central purpose of Self-Realization Fellowship," said Paramahansa Yogananda, "is to teach the individual man the way to personal contact with God. . . . It is His voice that is speaking through me. If only one person responds and finds his freedom in Spirit, my task is done. The salvation of one life is worth more than the conversion of thousands. . . . You shall march on in all lands and bring peace on earth. For peace cannot be established by rules, cannons, and swords, but by *Kriya Yoga*,* which establishes the contact of the soul with God in a way that has never before been given."

*The highest meditation technique of the *Raja Yoga* science taught by Self-Realization Fellowship.

Golden Anniversary Booklet



- Paramahansa Yogananda's reminiscences of his early years in America
- Pictorial history of the growth of Self-Realization Fellowship — 115 photographs (45 of Paramahansa Yogananda)
- 8 pages of color photographs of SRF ashrams and temples
- "A Scripture of Love," by Paramahansa Yogananda

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Two large panoramic photographs (black and white, 8" x 30") of Self-Realization Fellowship members and directors at the 1970 Golden Anniversary Convocation may be purchased from SRF headquarters.



Photograph taken during opening program (*see inside back cover of this issue*) — No. 1229-1, \$4.00 ppd.

Photograph taken during banquet at concluding program (*see foldout in this issue*) — No. 1229-2, \$4.00 ppd.



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Early Years With Paramahansa Yogananda

*Extracts from a letter written by Mr. Theodore Beck
to Sri Daya Mata on March 7, 1969*

My dear Reverend Mother:

It was a Sunday afternoon in late October 1920 in Boston. A stranger approached me on the street. He introduced himself as Mr. Auclair, and told me he had seen me before at many metaphysical gatherings. Mr. Auclair explained that he had been looking for the right kind of spiritual teacher and hoped that I could give him some suggestions. "Well," I answered, "I am in the same boat! I too have been seeking a satisfactory teacher, and have not yet succeeded."

Mr. Auclair then asked me if I knew anything about Swami Yogananda, the Hindu delegate from India to the International Congress of Religious Liberals then convening in Boston. He remarked that possibly the man was just another "snake charmer."

"Until we have some proof," I replied, "I would not pass judgment. In my way of thinking, India would not send an inferior person to this convention to represent such a large spiritual nation. When Swami Vivekananda visited the United States in 1896, he proved to be a man of high spiritual knowledge, and I think we can expect the same of Swami Yogananda. Tonight he will give his first public lecture, and I am going to attend it."

The lecture was to be given at 30 Huntington Avenue, in Jordan Hall, a meeting place that accommodates two hundred and twenty-five persons. I seated myself in the back. When seven o'clock came, the ochre-robed Swami Yogananda entered the room, took his place on the rostrum, and greeted the audience. He introduced himself as a man who had come to fulfill a mission: to guide others in a comparative study of Christian and Hindu religion and to show their correlation. "The Christian Bible says to seek the truth and the truth will make you free," he said, "and the Hindu scriptures declare that realization gives proof of truth, and that truth alone will deliver you from the bondage of ignorance."

"My intention," the Swami went on, "is to start private classes for those who are eager to learn more about the scriptures and the process of spiritual training. For that purpose I have rented a room in this building for seven o'clock on Wednesday evening. The first class will be free. After that there will be a nominal fee of one or two dollars a month, depending on the number of students, to cover the expense of advertisements and rent. For myself I expect nothing. During the first half-hour of each class I will interpret the Hindu scriptures; the second half-hour will be devoted to the Christian Bible. We will then compare the two and have a period during which I will answer questions from the students."

When the public lecture was over, Swami Yogananda stood near the door as the people were leaving. Some stopped to ask him questions. When the time came for me to pass by him, I bowed. Perhaps one of his assistants had mentioned my name to the Swami, for he said to me, "Mr. Beck, you are welcome to come to the Wednesday class." I answered that I would be there.

About fifty or sixty persons came to the class. It was announced that future classes would be held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ward B. Hasey in West Somerville. Being in the suburbs, the location was not convenient for the Boston public. The first class in West Somerville, by my recollection, was attended chiefly by curiosity seekers and self-appointed spiritual authorities. There were possibly only four sincere seekers of divine knowledge: Dr. M. W. Lewis and his wife Mildred, Mr. Auclair, Mrs. Alice T. Hasey, to whom Swamiji later gave the name of Sister Yogmata, and myself. The classes in West Somerville were continued for about one year, and the number of members grew to not more than twenty.

The following year the classes were held in Boston at Jordan Hall, where Swamiji also lectured on Sundays, and class attendance began to increase. However, on one occasion the entire audience consisted of two persons: I was one and the other was Mr. Auclair.* This is how it came about.

I had been out on strike with other construction company workers for seventeen weeks, staying in a camp where I had been

* Mr. Auclair passed away in 1923.

offered shelter by a man for whom I had done a favor some months before. I had had only enough money to carry me for two or three months, but I missed not a one of Swamiji's classes. The topic of each Sunday lecture or weekday class was advertised in the newspapers. The subject that week was an interesting one, but I didn't have the railroad and bus fare to take me to the hall in Boston.

That day I was out digging for clams when a man came along looking for some. I sold him what I had collected and then had enough money for trainfare to Boston. My "customer" offered to drive me to the railroad station so that I could reach the city on time. I arrived with three hours to spare, and walked to Jordan Hall to save carfare. I reached the classroom quite early, about two hours ahead of the lecture. It was hot and muggy, and on the horizon I noticed a streak of dark clouds. About one hour later I thought I heard distant thunder; an electrical storm was drawing near. Mr. Auclair arrived, and because of the oncoming storm we wondered if the lecture might be canceled. Finally the downpour began, and no others showed up for the class. Swamiji arrived at seven o'clock sharp, and when he noticed that we two were the only ones present, he said: "The faithful have come. Even if there is only one student left, I will preach!"

He picked up the *Bhagavad-Gita* and, looking at me, he said: "I can teach you this book in three years. In that time, through intellect and perception, you can understand the fundamentals of its teachings. Or I can teach you this book in twelve years. In that time, if you follow religious training, you will have many proofs of the truth. Or I can teach you this book in one hundred years; and what I would teach you then, *That* I have experienced and realized."

The storm grew intense. I glanced through the windows; there were no lights to be seen. The whole of Boston was without electricity. Swamiji began the prayer that always preceded the meetings. Usually it lasted an average of two minutes; but this night Swamiji continued to pray silently for a long time. I had my eyes closed, but after a while I opened them. There was a glow in the room and it was growing stronger. I looked at the Master. His facial features

had disappeared in a shining light of extremely intense colors, which lit up the whole room. Then the electric lights came on. The sacred experience was over.

In 1922 Swamiji established an ashram at Hardy's Pond, nine miles west of Boston, near Waltham, Massachusetts. Although situated in beautiful natural surroundings, ideal for meditation, the ashram was too far away from Boston, with the result that only the few students who had cars could go there. While visiting this ashram I personally witnessed the following incident.

An old woman, crippled with rheumatism, begged the Master to help her. He took her to the shrine and asked her to pray in her own way. He offered his prayers also. After a few minutes, he asked her how she felt. She started to reach for her crutches to test the effect of the prayer. The Master told her that she did not need the crutches. She got up and walked without any help. Her swollen hands were in good enough condition for her to peel the potatoes for our lunch shortly afterward.

Swamiji later sold the Waltham ashram, and in 1924 left the east coast to travel across the country giving lectures throughout the United States. When he returned to Boston in 1928,* he told us: "I have found a place in Los Angeles, on Mount Washington. The moment I saw it, I felt it was our home." †

The classes in Boston grew in size, but we knew we were going to lose him. He could no longer belong to our little meditation group only; he had to establish the headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship where he had been divinely guided to do so, where he could best serve all. We had to adjust ourselves to the fact that our Master would soon leave Boston for his new quarters in California.

He gave one more public lecture, at Symphony Hall, which holds twenty-five hundred persons. All the standing room was filled as well. During a demonstration of the power of will, he amazed

* Sri Yogananda made a triumphal return to Boston in 1928. He was welcomed by Governor Alvan Fuller at the State House. He spoke to a capacity audience in Symphony Hall, held two weeks of classes, lectured at a score of clubs and organizations, addressed students at Harvard University, and spoke over radio stations WNAC, WBZ, and WLOE. † See *Autobiography of a Yogi* p. 205.



Paramahansa Yogananda and Yogoda (SRF) class students, Boston, Massachusetts, October 1928

us by moving his arm back and forth so rapidly that we could see only a blur.

Toward the end of his lecture, a woman from the audience made her way to the speaker's platform and asked permission to address the audience. As nearly as I can recall, she said: "Friends, there are a number of persons present here who will testify that what I am about to say is the truth. I was paralyzed, confined to bed, for over ten years. All the lower parts of my body were useless. After one prayer with this great man, I walked from my bed, without using a crutch or a cane. Today you saw me come up on this platform unaided."

And now I come to the sad part. After the last gathering, our divine Master asked me to follow him to California. How much I wanted to do so! But I said: "Before you came to Boston, I met a man whose health was so poor, he had no strength; he could speak only a few words at a time. I took pity on him and provided the services of my own medical doctor, besides paying all his other expenses. Three years have passed and still he is unable to earn a living. I cannot desert this man."

Thus it happened that I declined the invitation of my Master to follow him. It was the worst mistake I ever made. I had said to Swamiji, hopefully, "When I am free I will try to be with you in California." But it never came to pass.

In conclusion I ask you to accept this yellow card bearing a little Christmas message, given to me by Swami Yogananda. It has been with me nearly half a century, and since my time is nearly up,* it needs a new home. It is spiritually as well as historically significant, for it was handled by my Master's holy fingers.

May I never again make such an error as when I denied myself that opportunity to be with my great Gurudeva. As his divine representative, Sri Daya Mata, I beg you, offer a prayer for me. Allow me to be your humble devotee.

TED BECK

Brookline, Massachusetts

*Mr. Beck passed away on August 16, 1969, just five months after writing the foregoing letter to Sri Daya Mata. (*Editor's Note*)

Books by Paramahansa Yogananda

Autobiography of a Yogi. 10th edition, 514 pages, \$5.00

Spiritual Diary. An inspiring quotation for each day. Ample space for entering personal reflections. Introduction by Sri Daya Mata. Blue vinyl cover, gold lettering, \$2.00.

Whispers from Eternity. Heartfelt prayers that convey to man an infinite hope. 1959 edition. Cloth, 266 pages, \$2.50.

The Science of Religion. Happiness as the goal of all religions. Cloth, 101 pages, \$1.50. (*Spanish edition, paper, \$1.50.*)

Sayings of Yogananda. (Formerly "The Master Said.") Inspiring counsel of Yogananda to his disciples. 1968 edition, cloth, 126 pp., \$2.50. (*Icelandic, \$6.00; Spanish, paper, \$1.50.*)

Cosmic Chants. Devotional songs, arranged for piano. 1963 edition, plastic binding; 106 pp. 9 pp. Indian art prints, \$2.50.

Metaphysical Meditations. Daily thoughts for divine peace. 115 pages, cloth, \$1.25. (*Spanish edition, paper, 75¢; German edition, heavy paper, \$2.00.*)

Scientific Healing Affirmations. For awakening the inner powers that free man from the consciousness of sickness. Paper, 76 pp., 75¢. (*Spanish edition, paper, 75¢.*)

How You Can Talk With God. The way by which man can commune with his Heavenly Father. Paper, 25¢.

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SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90065

The SRF-YSS Golden

"A Melody of

"Teach us to chant in harmony the countless expressions of our supreme devotion. In Thy temple of earth, in a chorus of many-accented voices, we are singing only to Thee.

"O Divine Mother, lift us on Thy lap of universal love. Break Thy vow of silence and sing to us the heart-melting melody of human brotherhood."

PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

Anniversary Convocation

Human Brotherhood"

Paramahansa Yogananda's soul-inspiring words describe the feeling that pervaded the Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India) 50th-year celebration held from July 6th through July 12th in Los Angeles.

From as far away as South Africa, India, and Europe the SRF members came; from New Zealand, Australia, and Japan; from Central and South America; from Mexico, Canada, and nearly all the United States they came, with but one thought: *to be with others who seek God as the supreme Goal of life.*

It was this single force — a real desire to know our Creator — which drew so many devoted souls together. Who kindled such a blaze of divine yearning in the hearts of so many? A true world teacher, Paramahansa Yogananda. His life exemplified his God-realization; hence his spiritual magnetism, his divine love, his teachings continue to draw truth-

seekers from around the world.

Paramahansaji's mission was to teach the underlying unity of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the New Testament. His unique contribution was to restate for the modern world the original teachings of Jesus Christ and Bhagavan Krishna, and to teach the liberating techniques of *Kriya Yoga* to the spiritually hungry masses. It was a fitting testimony to the success of Paramahansaji's world mission that such a throng of SRF members traveled great distances, many undergoing great personal sacrifice to be here for the Golden Anniversary of the establishment of his work in the West. Thirty-two countries were represented at this Convocation.



Last photograph of Paramahansa Yogananda, taken minutes before his *mahasamadhi* on the night of March 7, 1952, in the Music Room of the Biltmore Hotel (*right*). Madame Sen, wife of the Ambassador of India, *pronams* respectfully as the great teacher rises to speak of his beloved God and India.

SRF Convocation Held In Biltmore Hotel

The site for many of the Convocation events, classes, *satsangas*, meditations, and services was the famed Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. This is the place where the Guru lived for several months when he first came to California

to lecture and teach in 1924-25. The Biltmore is situated diagonally across Olive Street from The Philharmonic Auditorium, where thousands thronged nightly to hear him speak, and thousands more had to be turned





away. It was here, on March 7, 1952, that the Guru made his last public appearance, in the Biltmore Music Room, at a banquet in honor of the Ambassador of India. After concluding his speech, Paramahansa Yoganan-

da entered *mahasamadhi*, a yogi's final, conscious exit from the body. During Convocation week a photograph of the Guru, taken an hour before that awe-filled moment, marked the spot where Paramahansaji had left this



world. For many, the high points of the Convocation week were the frequent meditations held in the Music Room.

Sri Daya Mata Opens 50th Anniversary Convocation



Photo of Sri Yogananda in Biltmore Hotel Music Room, at place where he entered *mahasamadhi* Mar. 7, 1952

A prayer for world brotherhood was offered by The Reverend Mother Daya Mata, president of SRF-YSS, at the opening program in the spacious Biltmore Bowl on July 6th. She spoke to a rapt audience that came from many walks of life, from different religious backgrounds; and from many races. All were followers of the universal teachings of SRF—not through blind belief, but through the testing of the SRF teachings in their daily lives.

During the opening address Sri Daya Mata stressed the SRF



ideals of right thinking and right action, and of setting aside regular periods every day — no matter what the demands of life — in order to practice the universal techniques of *Kriya Yoga* meditation. By communing with God, which becomes possible with the aid of these techniques, “The thousands of SRF Kriya Yogis scattered like shining jewels over the earth. . .” * are helping mankind. True brotherhood can come only by man’s consciously realizing the oneness of his individual life with the Infinite Life, hence with all that lives. As each meditating yogi lifts his own level of consciousness he is also raising the world consciousness.

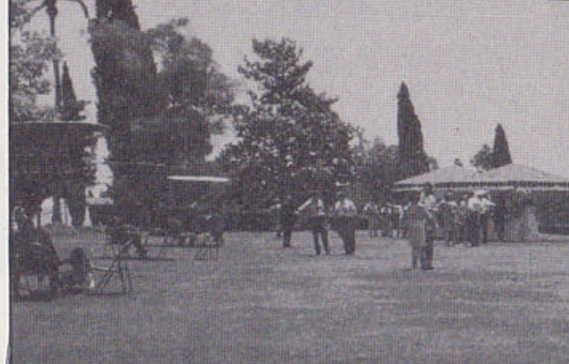
* *Autobiography of a Yogi*, p. 496.

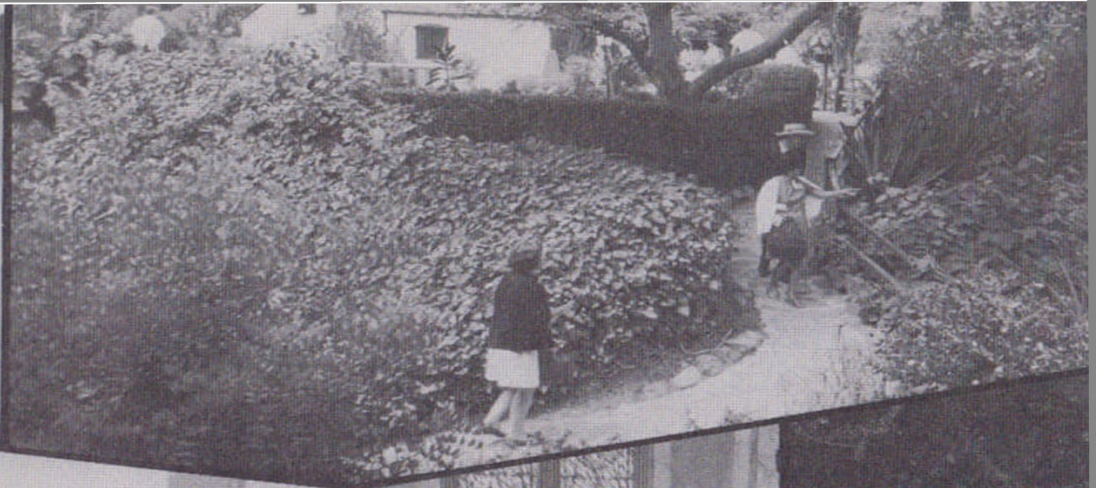
The welcoming program was followed by a period of fellowship, during which an attractive vegetarian buffet supper was served in the Biltmore Ballroom, and members could also attend, in the Galleria, a showing of special SRF Convocation film exhibits. One exhibit depicted the history of SRF-YSS and another consisted of a recording by Sri Daya Mata of Paramahansaji’s “Prayer for the Disciples,” illustrated with photo slides of the Guru; his personal Bible and *Gita* were also on view here. A large poster showed the worldwide activities of the SRF Voluntary League, which is supported by contributions from SRF friends and members.

Classes and Pilgrimages Were Featured Activities

The week's activities included classes on the SRF philosophy and teachings. They were given in English, French, Spanish, and German. Classes were also held for SRF Center and Meditation Group Leaders, and for Sunday School teachers. Daily group meditations were held throughout the week.

Conducted pilgrimage tours were made via chartered buses to SRF Mother Center on Mt. Washington, SRF Colony in Encinitas, SRF Lake Shrine, SRF Hollywood Temple, and to the crypt, in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, of the beloved Guru-Founder, Paramahansa Yogananda. The pilgrims were greeted by members of the SRF monastic order and guided through the various buildings and grounds. Sacred mementos were given at various points during the pilgrimages, and on several occasions Sri Daya Mata and members of the SRF-YSS Board of Directors met with the visiting SRF students.





Kriya Yoga Initiation -- Spiritual Highlight of Convocation

The sacred *Kriya Yoga* Initiation was given by The Reverend Mother Daya Mata to eligible SRF students on Saturday evening, July 11th. *Kriya Yoga* — an ancient technique of *Raja Yoga* which stills the sensory tumult of body-consciousness and permits man to achieve an ever-increasing awareness of God — is described in the *Bhagavad-Gita* by Lord Krishna and was known to Jesus Christ and his disciples as evidenced by passages in "The Revelation of St. John" in the Bible. Initiation into the soul-science of *Kriya Yoga* signifies acceptance by the initiate of the guru-disciple relationship, and the unconditional pledge of the guru to guide and guard the *chela* (disciple) until he achieves union with God.

Each of the revered gurus of Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India) — Jesus Christ, Bhagavan Krishna, Mahavatar Babaji, Lahiri Mahasaya, Swami Sri Yukteswar, and Paramahansa Yoga-

nanda — by his sublime teaching and divine instrumentality, contributes to the fulfillment of the Self-Realization Fellowship mission of bringing to all mankind a practical spiritual science of God-realization.

Jesus Christ

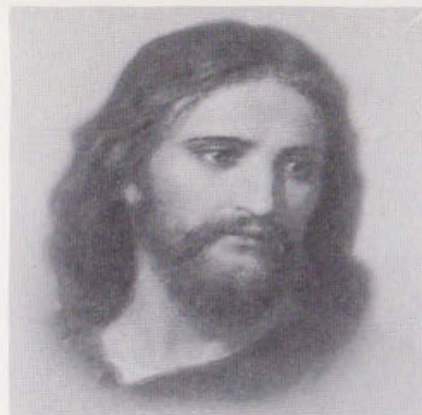
"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" — an achievement possible only with a technique such as *Kriya Yoga*.

Bhagavan Krishna

"Even a little practice of this *dharama* (religious rite or righteous action) will save you from great fear (*mahato bhayat*) — the colossal sufferings inherent in the repeated cycles of birth and death."

Mahavatar Babaji

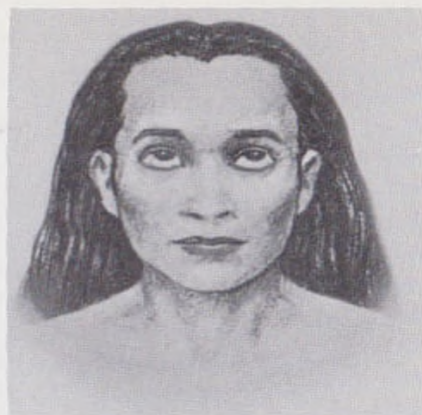
"*Kriya Yoga*, the scientific technique of God-realization, will ultimately spread in all lands,



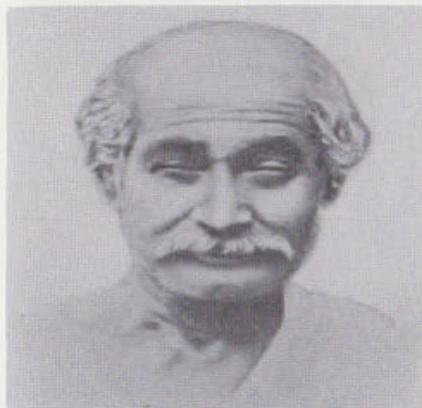
Jesus Christ



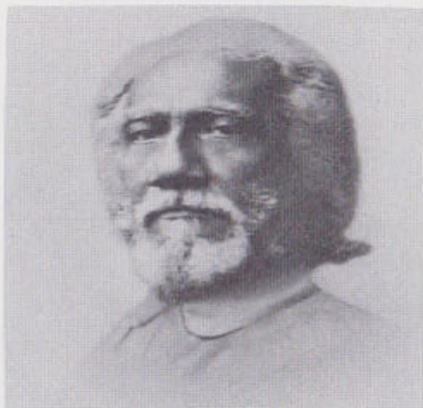
Bhagavan Krishna



Mahavatar Babaji



Lahiri Mahasaya



Swami Sri Yukteswar



Paramahansa Yogananda

and aid in harmonizing the nations through man's personal, transcendental perception of the Infinite Father."

Lahiri Mahasaya

"Meditate unceasingly, that you quickly behold yourself as the Infinite Essence, free from every form of misery. Cease being a prisoner of the body; using the secret key of *Kriya*, learn to escape into Spirit."

Swami Sri Yukteswar

"After the mind is cleared by *Kriya Yoga* of sensory obstacles, meditation furnishes a twofold proof of God. Ever-new joy is

evidence of His existence, convincing to our very atoms. Also, in meditation one finds His instant guidance, His adequate response to every difficulty."

Paramahansa Yogananda

"*Kriya*, controlling the mind *directly* through the life force, is the easiest, most effective, and most scientific avenue of approach to the Infinite.... The blessed role of *Kriya Yoga* in East and West has hardly more than just begun. May all men come to know that there exists a definite, scientific technique of Self-realization for the overcoming of all human misery!"



Banquet in Biltmore Bowl

Climax of the week was the festive closing banquet held in the Biltmore Bowl on July 12th. Overlooking the scene was a large garlanded portrait of Paramahansa Yogananda. Seated below the Guru's picture, at the center of the head table, was Sri Daya Mata; with her were members of the SRF-YSS Board of

Directors, senior SRF ministers, and special guests, including Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Weaver. As master of ceremonies, Mr. Weaver delighted all present with his gentle wit. In a more serious vein he spoke also on the profound benefits and inspiration of Self-Realization Fellowship teachings in his personal life.



Concludes Week of Convocation

Following the banquet, The Reverend Mother greeted each guest individually; as they filed by, some could not hold back tears of appreciation as they thanked her for the inspiration of the past week. Several hours passed before Sri Daya Mata had bidden farewell to the last of the individuals and groups representing the various countries and SRF Centers around the world.

Strongly present throughout the seven days of the Convocation was the deep, sincere, intense spirit of these devotees from all parts of the world, united in one common seeking of God through their chosen path in



Following the banquet, Sri Daya Mata greeted each of the attending SRF devotees and members of their families



With The Reverend Mother Daya Mata at Convocation banquet (l. Bro. Bhaktananda, Bro. Mokshananda, Mrs. Dennis Weaver, Bro. Pre Mr. Dennis Weaver, Mrinalini Mata, Durga Mata, Ananda Mata, S



Self-Realization Fellowship. Their singleness of purpose attracted the Presence of God and Guru. The receptivity of those deeply seeking souls formed a great chalice into which poured profound blessings. Even members of the Biltmore staff commented on the uniqueness of the atmosphere during the Convocation. One executive remarked, "Your people have turned this

hotel into a cathedral!"

Rajarsi Janakananda, second SRF-YSS president, once said: "Paramahansa Yogananda was sent to this world to help mankind understand how to live in fellowship with God and thereby in human brotherhood and true happiness. Divine fellowship is necessary before men can know true brotherhood and its natural sequel — peace on earth."

to r.): Bro. Achalananda, Bro. Dharmananda, Yogacharya Oliver Black, mamoy, Bro. Anandamoy, Yogacharya Binay Narayan, Sri Daya Mata, raddha Mata, Mrs. M. W. Lewis, Sahaja Mata, Uma Mata, Meera Mata



"SELF-REALIZATION MARKS 50th ANNIVERSARY Today, eighteen years after [Paramahansa Yogananda's] death, Self-Realization Fellowship is worldwide, and is as respected in India as in this country, in Europe as in Africa, in Australia as in Latin America. . . . This week [SRF] will celebrate its golden anniversary, a week-long convocation under the guidance of its president, Daya Mata. . . . Daya Mata speaks about God, and a union with Him, with quiet fervor. . . . 'Our goal is not quantity, not many members, but to best serve our members in their development of a real personal relationship with God. . . . Everything develops by law. There must be devotion plus meditation, and we think that meditation is going to come more and more into the churches of the West. . . .' SRF members will come from many foreign countries and almost every state in the nation to attend the golden anniversary convocation."

"Los Angeles Times," July 5, 1970

"PEACE, BROTHERHOOD DOMINANT THEMES of Self-Realization Meet. . . . In 1926 Swami Yogananda drew such crowds of Angelenos to his lectures at the Philharmonic Auditorium, the papers of the day referred to the mob scenes as 'comparable to the New York subway at rush hour' Growing in popularity here in the twenties and thirties, Self-Realization Fellowship, the movement founded in 1920 by the Swami expanded into a worldwide organization. . . . That there is a rebirth of mass interest in the teaching of Yoga has been apparent this week here in Los Angeles where . . . delegates have packed available facilities for a week-long [SRF] Golden Anniversary Convocation. . . . By teaching people how to bring peace into their lives, SRF hopes to help bring about a greater harmony and understanding among all nations of the world — thus creating a true brotherhood of man."

"Los Angeles Herald-Examiner," July 11, 1970

"GOLDEN CELEBRATION SET. . . . Self-Realization Fellowship is celebrating its Golden Anniversary. . . . During its 50 years in America SRF has strived to demonstrate a fundamental truth: underlying the great religions of the world, there are eternal and universal principles. These form the foundation on which may be built true brotherhood of man. . . . The week-long convocation is to be held in the spacious conference and banquet halls at the Biltmore Daya Mata, president of SRF-YSS, will offer a prayer for the brotherhood of man during the welcoming program Monday."

"The Register," July 4, 1970

The Spiritual Goals of SRF-YSS

BY SRI DAYA MATA



*Highlights from an address given during closing program
of SRF-YSS Golden Anniversary Convocation*

Since I first set eyes on my guru, Paramahansa Yogananda, almost forty years ago, it has been my joy to lay my heart, my mind, my soul, my hands and feet, at the feet of God; hoping that somehow He might use this life I have given to Him. The soul satisfaction that has filled these years is as though I am constantly drinking from the fountain of Love Divine. I can take no credit for this; it is the Guru's blessing, a blessing he bestows on all of us in the same way, if we but prepare ourselves to receive it.

I ask you all to pray for me and give me your good will and blessings, as I continue with you in serving this great cause of Self-Realization Fellowship, Yogoda Satsanga Society of India.

On this SRF Fiftieth Anniversary I want to express the gratitude, the appreciation, that is due: first, to all of you who have come here for this joyous occasion; to all of the faithful followers of Self-Realization Fellowship around the world; all the members who attend the meetings of our Centers and Meditation Groups in many countries; all of you members who faithfully attend the churches founded here by our blessed guru, and especially those who serve the temples in an active way, providing enthusiasm and material

help as well as moral and spiritual support. I know that Gurudeva is with us tonight, and that he thanks and blesses you for all of the loyal support and practical assistance you have given and will continue to give to Self-Realization Fellowship.

Then I wish to thank all of the disciples who live in the SRF-YSS ashrams for the selfless service they have rendered in caring for this work these many, many years since our guru first came to this country. What a pillar of strength they have been, to me and to the Board, in our efforts to fulfill all of Paramahansaji's wishes for the welfare of Self-Realization Fellowship and its members.

I express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the members of the Board for their invaluable aid and loyalty, especially during the difficult times experienced by this Society. When there has been a need for unity and understanding, they have been unfailing.

And then my mind travels back over the years, and I bow mentally to all those faithful and dear ones who are not with us today.

I remember him who was so beloved by Paramahansaji, Rajarsi Janakananda. He and Gurudeva used to stroll together like two divine children, up and down the shoreline in Encinitas, talking, not about worldly things, but about God, and always drinking deeply together of God's unconditional love. Theirs was indeed a soul friendship: that of guru and disciple, the perfect relationship wherein there is no demand on one another, but rather a free giving, a free exchange between hearts, minds, and souls. To Rajarsi Janakananda, my deepest reverence and love.

Beloved Sri Gyanamata was the source of great inspiration to whom we used to go as young disciples to pour out our troubles when our blessed guru wasn't available. She gave us endlessly, tirelessly, of her time, her wisdom, and her compassion and understanding. And I am eternally grateful to her. I know that all of you who knew her, or who have been inspired by the example of her life, feel the same gratitude.

And I think back to him who was among the first to meet and follow Paramahansaji in this country, our dear Doctor Lewis. We express tonight our appreciation for the inspiring role he played in carrying on Guru's work through his tireless service in the various

SRF churches here. To him we pay our loving respects.

We well remember another of Paramahansaji's devoted disciples, Yogacharya Cuaron of Mexico City. Faithfully he came every year to greet our guru and to spend a little time with him. He tried in every way to dedicate his life to God and to build up Gurudeva's work. He gave up his life serving Self-Realization Fellowship in Mexico and South America.

Let us pay our respects to another devotee whom Guruji loved very much, the gentle Doctor Lloyd Kennell. We shall not forget his many years of faithful service in the San Diego temple.

As I look back in time I see in my mind's eye all of these faithful, loving, good-hearted and dear disciples of our great guru. Though no longer on this earth plane, they are with us in spirit.

It would be unfitting not to mention our dearly beloved Tara Mata, who was not able to be with us tonight. She first met Paramahansaji in 1924; and when she came to Mount Washington in 1936, Paramahansaji told me this about her: "There is no one else, except my guru, with whom I have found greater joy in discussing *jnana*, the wisdom aspect of God." To our dear Tara Mata I offer my deepest love and respects.

Many of Guruji's beloved ones have gone on to that better world; and we too are only playing our parts for a time. One day there will be others sitting at these tables. Daya Mata is only a symbol. She sits for a time in a chair that is honored; she is humbly grateful to have been asked to serve in this position. She knows full well that she can do nothing of herself, but that if God chooses, and if her heart remains true, and if she strives to follow in the footsteps of our guru, Paramahansa Yogananda, perhaps, in some way, she can serve God and man through this blessed work.

I want again to pay tribute to all of you who have come from far and near to celebrate this Fiftieth Anniversary. I would like to mention those countries that you represent here tonight: Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, British West Indies, Netherlands, Antilles, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile, Argentina, Norway, England, Holland, Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland, Italy,

Spain, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, India; and Hawaii, Alaska, and nearly all of these United States of America.

We are a part of the beginning of a great spiritual rebirth, or resurrection, that will encompass the world. I often read some of the notes that I took when Gurudeva talked to us disciples. In 1936 he said that there will come a time when this great message from India will sweep the world, because it contains those immortal truths which are the very foundation of life and of all religions. To spread this spiritually liberating teaching is the purpose of Self-Realization Fellowship, the mission assigned to Paramahansa Yogananda by Mahavatar Babaji. Let us review briefly the "Self-Realization Fellowship Aims and Ideals."

To disseminate among the nations a knowledge of definite scientific techniques for attaining direct personal experience of God. The very first and foremost principle of Self-Realization Fellowship is to disseminate a definite science through the practice of which the followers of all religions may commune with God, and know by their own direct spiritual experience — not merely through the words of a scripture or great teacher — that God is.

Gurudeva used to say to us: "I can tell you what a jackfruit tastes like, I can describe it, take it apart and examine it and tell you its various ingredients, as a scientist would do; but though I went on telling you about it for thousands of years, still you would not know the flavor of jackfruit. But if I give you a little part of that jackfruit to eat, you will say in an instant, 'Ah, yes! Now I know.' "

The same example applies to our relationship with God. The endless words, endless discourses, endless writings about God are not, in themselves, enough. Blessed are those who listen, and read, and heed those words. But above and beyond that, the message of Paramahansa Yogananda is that we must *taste* Truth. We must know God through direct personal experience.

To reveal the complete harmony and basic oneness of original Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ and original Yoga as taught by Bhagavan Krishna; and to show that these principles of truth

are the common scientific foundation of all true religions. In the name of religion, how many wars have been fought down through the ages! Truth is one, because God is one, though men may ascribe to Him various names. The mission of Paramahansa Yogananda is to show that there is one common highway to God, the route which followers of all religions must take if they would reach Self-realization, God-realization. It is outlined in the next Aim.

To point out the one divine highway to which all paths of true religious beliefs eventually lead: the highway of daily, scientific devotional meditation on God. Thirty years ago Gururji said, "The day will come when the churches and the temples and the mosques will be empty." It is not the fault of religion, but rather the fault of its followers. So long as man will be content to go into an edifice merely to listen to a few words of truth and feel a little inspiration, and then go back to his home and continue the way of his ordinary God-forgetful nature — expressing, as before, the same moods, selfishness, nervousness, tensions, fears, and sensuality — of what value is his religion? The mission of Self-Realization is to encourage every man to establish within his heart a sacred temple for God alone, wherein he will in deep meditation commune daily with the Lord Himself.

To demonstrate the superiority of mind over body, of soul over mind. We seek to demonstrate that man is not bound by this tiny, fleshly cage. Jesus said, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for the body, what ye shall put on" (*Matthew 6:25*). Do not pay too much attention to this physical form. Depend more upon the power of the mind and the power of God that is within the soul. We are not physical beings; indeed we are not even mental beings, though we operate through a mind and a physical body. We are the soul, an individualized expression of the Infinite Spirit. That is our real nature. The purpose of demonstrating this ideal is to tear ourselves free from all physical and hidden mental fetters that bind the soul to the flesh and to moods and leave us without peace.

To liberate man from his threefold suffering: physical disease, mental inharmonies, and spiritual ignorance. Only God-realization can free man permanently from all suffering. Right action — in

body, mind, and soul — balanced by right meditation is the formula for attaining that threefold freedom.

To promote spiritual understanding between East and West, and to advocate the exchange of their finest distinctive features. Though this world is divided into East and West, God is showing mankind today that he can no longer live confined by the narrow boundaries of his own nation. Our guru said, "God made the earth, and man made confining countries and their fancy-frozen boundaries."* God is showing us that selfish boundaries must no longer exist. But they cannot be destroyed by bombs and brute force. There is only one true way to dissolve those boundaries; you here are demonstrating that today. Boundaries disappear in united love for God as the Father of all. He must be the one common ideal, the one common goal, of all mankind. As we begin to recognize Him more as the one Source and Sustainer of life, fetters of prejudices fall away. We begin to see that those whom we thought were so different from us are just the same as we are. I have gone around this world four times now, and I have visited most of the major countries; in the people of each nation I see the same sweet sincerity, the same goals and needs, the same interests. Self-Realization must be the flagbearer of the message of divine brotherhood. When you go back to your homes, let this be your ideal. Let prejudices melt away. Receive all in that spirit of brotherhood, which is the true reflection of God in you.

To harmonize science and religion through realizing that nature and its laws originated in the Divine Mind: the unique First Cause. There is no such thing as a difference between science and religion. Eventually both will arrive at the same conclusion: there is only one Cause. The material scientists are constantly striving to find the reason for this creation. Some deny the existence of God. But even an atheist, when facing some great trial in his life, will cry out involuntarily, "Oh, my God, my God!" Unconsciously he is clinging to the Eternal Principle that gives a sense of continuity to life. An Eter-

*Paramahansaji was quoting this and other lines from his poem, "My India," in his speech at the Biltmore Hotel on the night of March 7, 1952, just before he entered *mahasamadhi*.

nal Principle is guiding life; there are no "accidents." We are all here at this time because we were destined to be here now; and as surely as the sun and moon and stars travel through space at their own prescribed rate of speed and time, the life of each one of us is guided and protected by that great and lawful principle, God. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without [the sight of] your Father" (*Matthew 10:29*).

To encourage "*plain living and high thinking*," and to spread a spirit of brotherhood among all peoples by teaching the eternal basis of their unity: kinship with God. Seeking God and renouncing what Paramahansaji used to call "unnecessary necessities" does not mean embracing poverty. He used to say, "I don't like the word 'poverty'; it has a negative connotation. I believe instead in plain living. *Simplicity* is my ideal." Simplicity in heart, simplicity in speech, simplicity in possessions; purity that comes from an uncomplicated life and an uncomplicated mind; purity that comes from a direct and personal relationship with God, wherein you realize, "Lord, I have laid myself at Your feet. I am content with whatever You give me and whatever You do with me."

High thinking means to keep our minds always on that lofty level where at any given moment our consciousness can turn instantly to God. The mind should be kept always free from gossip, negation — anything that drags the consciousness into nervousness and restlessness. The mind that is filled with the thought of God is tranquil, and sees clearly into human nature and experience.

To overcome evil by good, sorrow by joy, cruelty by kindness, and ignorance by wisdom. We cannot drive away darkness by beating it with a stick; it will vanish only when we bring in the light. Similarly the light of positive qualities and actions, and of Self-realization, alone can dispel the dark negative forces in this world.

What thrills me tonight is to see so much joy in you. When I first came to the ashram I had the notion that seeking God was such a serious matter that there would be no time for laughter. But Guruji said to me, "Always be bright and cheerful in this life, for that is your soul nature. You must be so happy in this world that you will never know sorrow, because sorrow is not a reality. Only God is real;

and He is joy. Seeking God means the end of all sorrow." I have never forgotten those words. And so, when I see devotees with faces smiling brightly, and see the sweet and cheerful way in which they can laugh with one another, it fills my heart with joy, because I see we are following Guru's ideal.

To serve mankind as one's larger Self. The ideal of Self-Realizationists is to strive to live more in the thought of doing good to others, and less in the thought of "I, me, and mine." See how much joy you who have served this Convocation have found in making this a happy and spiritually rewarding occasion for so many beloved members and friends from different parts of the world. You have helped to create this divine fellowship by the selfless way in which you have served them, forgetting your own weariness at times, and the little problems and stresses that are a part of carrying on such a large Convocation. You have indeed expressed this ideal of serving mankind as one's larger Self. I pray that everyone here will embrace this selfless ideal, for it is in serving others that we learn to see and to feel and to behold God in all.

This Fiftieth Anniversary is an occasion all of us will long remember. You will go back to your homes and you will often recall the sweet divine fellowship we have enjoyed. You are taking with you something of our hearts; and I believe that you are leaving here with us something of your own hearts — a mutual exchange. We have forged a bond of spiritual friendship, a divine relationship that will long endure; as we nourish it, it will become ever stronger, a great magnetic force that will draw many others to this sacred path of Self-Realization Fellowship.

In conclusion, let me read these words of our guru: "My body shall pass, but my work shall go on, and my spirit shall live on. Even when I am taken away, I shall work with you all for the deliverance of the world with the message of God. Prepare yourselves for the glory of God. Charge yourself with the flame of Spirit. If God were to say to me today: *Come home!* without a backward glance I would leave all my obligations here — organization, buildings, plans, people — and hasten to obey Him. Running the world is His responsibility. *He* is the Doer, not you or I."

SRF Golden Anniversary

Convocation Talks

During the SRF Golden Anniversary Convocation, classes and *satsangas* were conducted by The Reverend Mother Daya Mata, president of Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India); Mrinalini Mata, SRF vice-president; Yogacharya Binay Narayan, general secretary of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India and member of the SRF Board of Directors; Durga Mata, secretary of the SRF Board; and ministers of the Self-Realization Order. The following are excerpts from some of their talks, and from that of the master of ceremonies at the banquet which brought to a close the week of Convocation activities.

The Reverend Mother Daya Mata

Opening Address, July 6th

Beloved ones, in the name of Self-Realization Fellowship, members of the Board, and all others who serve in these ashrams founded by Paramahansa Yogananda, it is truly a joy to greet so many of you from different parts of this great world.

It is fitting on this occasion to reflect upon the one whose love has drawn us together — our guru, Paramahansa Yogananda. You will hear throughout the week discourses on his teachings and the sacred scientific techniques of concentration and meditation he gave to us. But let us this afternoon dwell a little upon the life of our guru — that divine one who planted seeds of yearning for God which have taken deep root in hundreds of thousands of souls.

Paramahansaji often said, "I prefer a soul to a crowd, but I love crowds of souls!" Wherever I go, I too am constantly looking here and there for those who are deeply and earnestly seeking God. If it be His will I want to come again and again into this world to plant seeds of longing for God in the hearts of all who have become

heart-sick, weary, and discouraged from the trials and disappointments of this finite world.

A short time ago I wrote these words about Paramahansa Yogananda: "The prescription for universal unity that Paramahansa Yogananda left for mankind is much needed today, when nation is set against nation, brother pitted against brother; when all of humanity seems to have lost sight of the eternal goals that have been espoused since time immemorial by the world's great religions — Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism. Paramahansa once expressed his ideal in these words:

" 'When I was an infant, and then as a young boy, Divine Mother was my goal; when I was on the steamer coming to America for the first time, She was my goal; when I was in America spreading the message of Self-Realization, She was my goal; when I returned to India, She was my goal; wherever I have gone and whatever I have done, She has been my only goal. All places of worship are Her temples, all nations are Her lands, all white, brown, red, yellow, and black bodies are the dwelling places of Her children for a time. I feel and see my beloved Mother everywhere, in everyone.'

"Gurudeva taught us the Way not only by his words and divine example, but by giving to us the scientific SRF methods of meditation. It is for us to apply these methods that we may realize the Self within and thereby realize the Self in all.

"This year we celebrate the Golden Anniversary of Self Realization Fellowship, fifty years devoted to the ideal that the highest duty of man, and his inherent birthright, is to realize God — his Father, Mother, Friend, Creator. In that realization lies the unity of mankind, the peace so eagerly sought, the fulfillment that has been ever elusive. We have the blessing of the Way because there was a God-realized soul who loved mankind deeply enough to devote his life in unexcelled dedication to this ideal. Him we honor on this occasion, our revered Sat-Guru, Paramahansa Yogananda."

Just a few hours before Guruji left his body, we were walking together down the hall of Mt. Washington and he said these words, very calmly: "Do you know, it is just a matter of hours and I will

be gone from this world." It was almost as if his heart was filled with joy, and certainly a great peace; and yet also a tinge of sorrow.

My eyes brimming, I said, "But Master, what will we do without you? You are the diamond in the ring of Self-Realization Fellowship."

And with tears in his eyes he said, with such humility, "Remember this: when I have left this world, only love can take my place."

It is that ingredient which is so sadly missing in this world of ours today. We all want love but we forget that in order to get love we must learn first to be givers, not takers. Guruji gave and gave, unconditionally, from his heart. It is in that spirit — love for God, and for God in all — that we have come together today.

Mrinalini Mata

Class, "The Guru-Disciple Relationship," July 7th

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. A true guru knows God; only such a one can promise the disciple: "I will introduce you to Him." He 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 gives to the disciple unconditional divine love. Often we saw this demonstrated in the life of our guru, Paramahansa Yogananda. He had an infinite capacity to love, beyond ordinary human comprehension. We were blessed to glimpse, reflected in the blessed guru's eyes, the pure divine love of God. It sometimes evoked an overwhelming feeling; every cell in the body seemed to be vibrating as though it would surely burst with that divine love.

Gurudev expressed this love to all, even to those who behaved meanly toward him. No great one was ever without enemies. Jesus was crucified by those who misunderstood him. Gurudev never

spoke an unkind word or harbored an unkind thought against anyone, no matter how others treated him. His love was infinite, unconditional, even when the disciple erred. I remember the many ways in which Paramahansaji did more than the guru's share in trying to help those who came to him. Sometimes the disciple was receptive; sometimes not. On many occasions we saw Gurudev weep for an unreceptive disciple. He would say: "I tried to help him, but he would not understand. He could have saved himself from the misery that is going to befall him; but he refused to listen." Gurudev truly suffered for such *chelas*.

Guru's love never diminished. To a disciple who resisted his counsel he would say, "I never change toward you; but I cannot help you when you shut me out." Once the guru-disciple relationship is formed, the guru continues to bestow his changeless love on the disciple throughout incarnations. He never ceases to feel that divine love, that eternal responsibility, for his *chela*.

Brother Mokshananda

Class, "The Hong-Sau Technique of Concentration," *
July 8th

Concentration is the ability to place the attention on one object at a time. The mind of the ordinary man does not remain centered very long on any one thing. From morning till night multitudinous thoughts flow through it in a constant stream. Rarely does he gain that power of concentration whereby his mind is fixed on even a series of related thoughts, much less any one thought. God is One, and to follow the path of yoga is to bring the mind to the point where our attention is fixed on the One, on Him who is the sole Reality, the Essence of our beings.

The trouble with every human being is that he is subject to *maya*, delusion. *Maya* is the cosmic disturbance of the universe that keeps man's consciousness chopped into waves of sensation and feeling, unaware of the calm ocean of Spirit beneath. A great yogi,

*An SRF meditation technique taught in the *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons*.

Patanjali,* defined yoga as the neutralization of *chitta*, the waves of thought and emotion that ceaselessly arise and subside in man's consciousness. If man were to neutralize the waves of thought, the waves of breath and emotion, and calm the storm of fluctuating moods, desires, and restless thoughts blowing on the lake of his consciousness, he could see the One. The goal of yoga, then, is union with the One; and union comes through concentration.

By practice of the SRF techniques of meditation we gain the power to concentrate, which is an essential step on the spiritual path. Whether one follows the path of *bhakti* yoga, union with God through devotion; or *karma* yoga, righteous action to please God; or *jnana* yoga, realization of God through discrimination; or *raja* yoga, which teaches meditation techniques and includes all the other paths in a balanced synthesis, the SRF *Hong-Sau* Technique of Concentration will help him to achieve his goal. It is indispensable, this power of concentration. And *Hong-Sau* is one of the greatest methods of learning to concentrate, of learning to focus the mind on God.

Durga Mata

Satsanga, "The Art of Chanting," July 9th

One of the methods taught by Paramahansa Yogananda for realizing God is chanting. When you chant, he used to tell us, you should repeat the words over and over again until they become spiritualized — that is, until every word you are singing to God becomes your own experience, your own realization.

Paramahansaji's chants are tremendously inspiring. They take one's concentration deep within where the mind becomes inwardly absorbed in God-communion. Chanting is a wonderful method to help us interiorize the mind: it helps to settle the muddy sediment of restlessness and psychological debris, thereby enabling the devotee to clearly perceive Truth, or God. During deep chanting one *feels* the meaning of the words he is singing, and their meaning is deeply

*The foremost ancient exponent of Yoga. Patanjali's date is unknown, though many scholars assign him to the second century B.C.

impressed on his mind. So when you chant, do so with feeling, and you will perceive what our Gurudeva realized when he chanted to the Lord.

Mukti Mata

Satsanga, "The Importance of Making God Your Own,"
July 9th

This fiftieth anniversary is a truly important occasion; it represents a milestone in the spread of Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings throughout the world. I know you all feel, as we in the SRF ashrams do, that it is a great privilege to have been drawn to this path. There is no greater blessing in this world than to find someone like our guru, one who knows God and who has the understanding and the power to lead us to the blessed shores of divine fulfillment. When I first saw Paramahansaji, many years ago, I realized one thing: he knew God. And I knew that I wanted that same knowledge he had, no matter how long it took me to acquire it. We must all realize it takes a great deal of effort, dedication, and determination to know God.

This week you have heard our beloved president, The Reverend Mother Daya Mata; our vice-president, Mrinalini Mata; Yogacharya Binay Narayan from our headquarters in India, and our other ministers speak about Paramahansaji and these sacred teachings of Self-Realization. And you have learned much to apply in your own daily lives. What is important is that you take home with you what you have learned and make it your own.

As you faithfully and devotedly practice Paramahansaji's teachings, you will without fail reap the fruits of your efforts. But you must do your part. You cannot think: "Well, tomorrow I shall do this, and tomorrow I shall do that," because "tomorrow," as we all know, never comes. Paramahansaji says:

"Find God first. Those who come to SRF, not attracted merely by lectures and books but seeking inner spiritual help, shall receive what they seek from God. I want them to know that whether they

come now while I am in the body, or afterwards, the power of God shall flow into them just the same and shall be the cause of their salvation. . . . Continually practice the techniques. If you start each day with enthusiasm, you will reach the end."

Brother Anandamoy

Class, "The Art of Loving God," July 10th

If we want to succeed on the spiritual path, we have to consider all aspects of our nature. Jesus said that the greatest commandment that has been given is: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." That commandment, handed down by Moses, contains within it the essence of yoga. Moses, as well as Jesus, was a great yogi.

Loving God with all one's strength means control of the life forces, which are usually distributed throughout the body and absorbed in physical and mental functions. These life forces have to be withdrawn in meditation and concentrated in the spiritual centers of the spine and brain where God is perceived. Loving God with all one's mind is perfect concentration on Him — the attention is not restlessly moving from one object to another, but is directed solely toward God.

The other aspect of this commandment, the feeling aspect, is very important. It too has to come under one's conscious control. Then we are complete. What we want — the goal of life — is union with God, *samadhi*. In *Autobiography of a Yogi* Paramahansaji explains that *samadhi* literally means "to direct together" — to direct *all* the forces together toward God; and through this application of the law of concentration and magnetism, gradually to merge into the infinite Divine Consciousness. Whether one follows Hinduism, or practices Yoga, or adheres to Christianity, or Judaism, or any other true religion, an essential precept of those teachings is the directing of all one's forces together for realizing God.

A combination of scientific meditation and devotion takes one

most quickly to God. I remember Paramahansaji's saying to me: "Remember this: *Kriya Yoga* plus devotion cannot fail." And by *Kriya Yoga* he meant the basic SRF techniques and way of life in addition to the actual *Kriya* technique. These constitute the scientific application of God's laws for attaining Self-realization.

But in the practice of meditation we must never forget that devotion is of supreme importance, for devotion — love directed toward God — goes beyond law. Paramahansa Yogananda said this about devotion: "Since God is not bound by His cosmic laws, devotion is also necessary to summon His attention. The devotional call, if sincere, deep, and continuous, and if supplemented by genuine efforts at deep meditation, will bring the divine response. Devotional demand is greater than law, for it touches the heart of God. It makes Him answer His naughty and good children alike. Law is based upon mathematical precision — justice weighed according to the principle of cause and effect. Devotion is based upon claiming God as your own true love. For are we not His children, made by Him in His own likeness? Law is exacting in its demand, while love presupposes God's mercy and thereby attracts His response whether or not the full measure of the law has been met. God can never hide from the devotee who exercises devotion, love, and the law of concentration and meditation when giving Him a soul call."

Brother Achalananda

Class, "The SRF Way of Life," July 11th

It is not possible to compartmentalize our spiritual life. We cannot say: "This moment I will think of God, this hour I will spend in meditation, this day I will go to church — and the rest of the time I will do whatever I wish." The spiritual side cannot be separated thus from day-to-day life as a whole.

Our behavior should not be contradictory to our spiritual goals because *everything* we do affects our state of consciousness. Our every action and thought takes us either toward light, God, or pulls us deeper into the darkness of *maya*, ignorance of God. So our

entire mode of living influences the progress we make on the spiritual path.

It is good to develop a routine of spiritual discipline, which will help us to make a greater spiritual effort. Routine comes from the French word "route," and it means literally "that which is broken down or beaten down." If we beat down the grass, the weeds, the bushes, we make a path, a way on which it is easy for us to travel toward our destination. And that is exactly what a spiritual routine does; it creates for us a path and makes it easier for us to follow in that way.

Our true goal in life is God. If we constantly strive to remember that goal, and always keep it before us through regular spiritual effort, we will be saved many troublesome detours from the path. It is when we forget our goal and relax our self-discipline that subtle delusions creep in and begin to push us off the path — into a swamp, up a mountainside. Perhaps only weeks later, even years later! we suddenly ask ourselves: "What am I doing here? I have completely lost sight of where I wanted to go." And then, hopefully, we get back on the path again; we return to the helpful guidance of our spiritual routine. So we have to remember to follow the set path, to adhere to our spiritual routine. That is the only way to succeed, the only way to make definite spiritual progress in this life.

Mr. Dennis Weaver, Master of Ceremonies

Talk at Banquet, July 12th

When I was asked to be Master of Ceremonies at this 50th Anniversary Convocation banquet, I was also asked if I would say something about how Self-Realization Fellowship has affected my life. Our relationship with God on this path is, of course, very personal, a one-to-one relationship. And so it is difficult to put into words what is in one's heart.

The greatest blessing I have received from SRF is that somehow, through the grace of God, I have been drawn to a true master, a true guru, one who can reveal to me the Divine Presence within

me. The love of God is essential to our happiness, and the guru is the link between us and the Heavenly Father. The guru is "the voice of silent God." He comes on earth for but one purpose: to show us, God's children, the way home to Him. It is spiritual law that we cannot get back to God — to that state of bliss-consciousness, that love we are all looking for — without the guru. So the relationship with the guru is vital. Everything else falls into place after that divine relationship is established.

We should follow the guru with loyalty, with sincerity, with devotion, and most of all, with full surrender. We must make God and guru — because they are really one — the polestar of our lives.

Paramahansa Yogananda came to teach us a living truth, something we can utilize in our day-to-day activities; something that is for the living *now*, not the hereafter. That truth is how to realize the presence of God within us. His love, His peace, His joy, His bliss, are right within each of us. This is what makes us all His children, rays of His infinite presence. This is what links us together and makes us one. Discovering His presence within, discovering the love of God, is the most fulfilling, most rewarding, most satisfying experience possible. Paramahansa Yogananda came to show us that God is present here and now, and that His presence can be realized. He has shown us that God is knowable, that He is approachable, that we can unite ourselves, our consciousness, with Him.

If we can realize this truth, then everything else comes into proper perspective. The world is rough; it is a world of duality, of pleasure and pain consciousness. But if we can hang on to the love of God, and if we can dip into His consciousness morning and night in meditation, and feel His peace and joy, and be in the company of His devotees, then we have a protection around us that takes the sting out of worldly experiences. The world loses its power to hurt us. And that is what is so beautiful about following the teachings of Self-Realization Fellowship.

It is also important to remember that God is the Doer. We must establish this truth in our consciousness. God is the Doer, and if we can harmonize our will and our actions to please Him, to serve His children, without a thought of personal gain, then we can go through

this world in a joyful, nonattached way. Life becomes rosier and blooms a little better for us.

Paramahansa Yogananda has said that the most important appointment in our lives is with God, in meditation, morning and night. Meditate, meditate! God is not hiding from us; we are hiding from Him. Our guru gave us the ways and the means to establish our relationship with God. We must utilize those techniques he left with us. If you go to the guru and to God in meditation with sincerity in your heart, with love, devotion, and full surrender, you will find the all-forgiving, most beautiful God.

Yogacharya Binay Narayan

Talk at Banquet, July 12th

It is such a joy to be amongst you all, dearest ones of God and Guru. I greet you all in the name of India, Mother of religions, and in the name of devotees of our guru all over India.

Paramahansa Yogananda said: "My India, my America, my world." Gurudeva has built in the West such a spirit of divine love and understanding that when I come here to America I don't feel I am outside India. When he said: "My India, my America," he chose two representative countries; one on this side of the globe, one on the other, with the whole world in between.

All of you who have gathered for this Golden Anniversary of Self-Realization Fellowship in America, remember that this closing event is not the end of it, but the beginning of the other half of the first century of this work. You be the pioneers, the torchbearers, the emissaries of all the wonderful feelings and sweet thoughts we have shared this week that can serve to bring all people together. Such unity is possible only when there is expansion of understanding and consciousness. So, from this Convocation, where people of so many countries have gathered together with overwhelmingly united thought and feeling, take this message of spiritual love and unity and inspire all; draw them to God!

This is the time when the world needs your spiritual pioneer-

ing efforts. Guru's spirit is pervading everywhere. Though he has left the body, he is not gone. He is in tune with God; his spirit is omnipresent, as God is omnipresent. If we make but a little effort, his blessings shower on us all the time. So, dear ones, you in turn must be pioneers for him. You have much work to do for God and Guru. Proclaim these glad tidings that have filled your hearts during this past week and at this hour.

How wonderful it is to see so many souls united in God! In this world, very few can agree and get along with each other. And here you are so many of one mind, one heart. Caste, creed, geographical boundaries have not separated you. You are all united in one thought of God and Guru. I bow to you all, because in Their omnipresence They are in each one of you.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

"I am grateful to you for granting me some insight into this fascinating world."

—*Thomas Mann, Nobel Prizeman*

"Engrossing, inspiring. A literarity!"

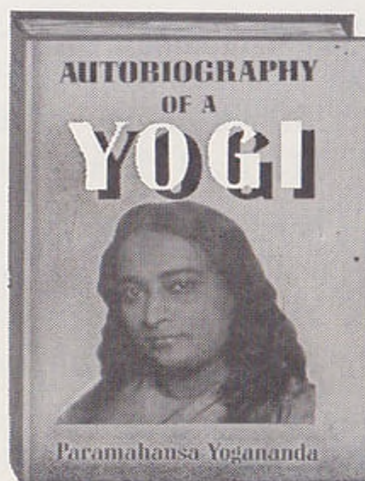
—*Grandy's Syndicated Book Reviews*

514 pp., 32 pp. photos. Foreword by
W. Y. Evans-Wentz, M.A., D.Litt., D.Sc.

Translated into French, Dutch, German, Italian, Spanish, Icelandic, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Bengali, Gujarati, Arabic, and Japanese.

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Two Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments Have Associations with Early SRF/YSS History

On July 2, 1969, the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board declared the Biltmore Hotel and the Philharmonic Auditorium historic-cultural monuments. They are located on land that once was a part of the original four square leagues owned by the Pueblo Indians of Los Angeles. Both buildings have had a long, colorful past.

The eight-story Philharmonic Auditorium, built in 1905, was the first such building in Los Angeles to have a balcony without supporting pillars. Its place in the city's cultural past is irrevocably linked with that of the world famous Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, which in 1969 celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

The 1500-room Biltmore Hotel was opened on October 1, 1923. Construction of the main lobby reflects characteristics of the cathedrals at Burgos and Seville. The ceilings and walls were painted by the Italian artist, Giovanni Battista Smeraldi. The excellence of his masterpieces "enables the Biltmore to possess an elegance found only in the palaces and public buildings of Italy, Spain, and France."

From the window of his room in the Biltmore Hotel Paramahansa Yogananda was able to watch, in 1925, the crowds gathering for his lecture in the Philharmonic Auditorium, throngs that exceeded its capacity of three thousand persons by as many thousand more. He had then remarked, "Babaji * said it would be like this."

Through the preservation of these two sites, generations to come will be able to see the place in Los Angeles where Paramahansa Yogananda first stayed, and where on March 7, 1952, he entered the final *samadhi*, after addressing an assemblage in the Biltmore Music Room honoring the Ambassador of India; and the auditorium where he first lectured when he came to this great western city in 1925 to found the international headquarters of Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society).

* Literally, "Revered Father." A *Mahavatar* ("divine incarnation"), Babaji is one of the line of gurus behind Self-Realization Fellowship (Yogoda Satsanga Society of India).

Letters from SRF Students

SRF GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY CONVOCATION

"It is never difficult to be nice to nice people, and we at the Biltmore certainly enjoyed having had the privilege of serving you and your members."

General Manager, Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles

"The atmosphere of brotherhood and love has stayed with us. The Convocation served to remind us that there are many, many devotees all over the world who follow Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings, and with whom we feel united in heart and spirit." — *Y.M., M.U., Tecamachalco, Mexico.*

"Only God and the Gurus, who can look into our hearts, know how much I thank you for everything you have done for us during this 50th Anniversary Convocation in such a loving way. A wonder of perfection! We visited the ashrams founded by Paramahansa Yogananda and saw the places where he lived, worked, and meditated. His presence, his love, and his peace are there — a priceless treasure to carry back with us in our hearts." — *G.S., Venezuela.*

"It is with utmost humility that I attempt to thank all of you for the prodigious effort that made possible our Golden Anniversary Convocation. Its memories will be with me forever. The central theme, the prevailing mood, was joy. In a hotel that had magically become a temple, a mighty hymn of praise, of thanksgiving — an unspeakable joy poured through every area. I awoke thrilling with joy, I walked in joy, I fell asleep in joy." — *W.M., Beaver, Oregon.*

"My mind is full of superlatives, and my heart sings over and over, 'What a joyous, spiritually deepening and glorious affair it was!' because the spirit of Paramahansa Yogananda was there. We all felt it.

"I give, as my profession, workshops throughout the USA and Canada. I have given them to as few as one hundred persons and to as many as eleven thousand, over periods of a weekend up to five days. I must have given at least a hundred over the last four years, and I confess that never before this SRF Convocation have I seen a congress so well organized, in which the personnel were so cooperative and respectful. Nor have I anywhere else seen such respectful and well-mannered attendees. The group spirit was almost euphoric. We were spiritually

alive, because of the divine sustenance we were receiving, and also because those who served us so well exemplified the training of their teacher Paramahansa Yogananda. Nowhere else have I met such a unified group." — *J.S.T., Los Angeles, California.*

"The days were full of bliss. . . . I shall never forget the opening program when the members of all countries greeted each other. We were united in the spirit and love of our Guru — a feeling of unity which demonstrated that all nations can live together in peace and harmony." — *L.H., Hamburg, Germany.*

"The Golden Anniversary Convocation was the most enjoyable week of my forty-six years, a wonderful, warm, inspirational experience." — *L.A., West Chester, Pennsylvania.*

"Had I experienced the joy and beauty of that Convocation week as a young person, I could have had no goal in life but to serve and love God. Thanks to Paramahansaji and all of you through whom he works, I found that three hours of meditation was just a taste and a tantalizer. Since our hundreds of voices rang out together in chanting — reaching for, pleading with, praising our Divine Beloved — my mind night and day sings, 'Devotee knows how sweet You are.' Each of you has given something of Paramahansaji's spirit to each of us, and we thank you from the depth of our souls." — *N.S., Marion, Iowa.*

"The Convocation was a majestic manifestation of Paramahansaji's teachings about brotherhood. Being members of one big family is not an empty phrase but a living reality! All those who had come from so many different countries experienced it. We were one — when worshiping God during meditation, when listening to the lectures, when making pilgrimages to the ashrams he founded." — *H.O., Rotterdam, Holland.*



Because this issue of *Self-Realization* is a special publication commemorating the Golden Anniversary of Self-Realization Fellowship, the Directory of SRF Centers, Churches, and Meditation Groups has been omitted. It will appear as usual in the forthcoming Winter issue.

The annual Index of *Self-Realization*, which normally appears in the Fall issue, will be published this year in the Winter number.

OUTSIDE BACK COVER: Aerial view of Self-Realization Fellowship international headquarters atop Mt. Washington. Nearby cities, Glendale and Pasadena, and foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains are in background.



Opening night of the SRF 50th Anniversary Convocation, July 6th. On platform, SRF board members and ministers.

