



Self-Realization

FOUNDED IN 1925 BY PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



CHANTING THE DIVINE NAME WITH DEVOTEES IN BOMBAY

Daya Mata (*center*), president of Self-Realization Fellowship of America and Yogoda Satsanga Society of India; Mrinalini Mata (*left*), SRF-YSS vice-president; Yogacharya Binay Narayan, secretary of Yogoda Satsanga Society; and Brahmachari Shantananda (*playing harmonium*), at public meeting on December 19, 1967, in K. C. College Auditorium, Bombay, where Daya Mata gave a talk on the teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda.



PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

In playful mood, the great master offers grapes to a pet parrot obtained while on a vacation in Mexico. Photo taken at SRF headquarters, Los Angeles, California, 1930.

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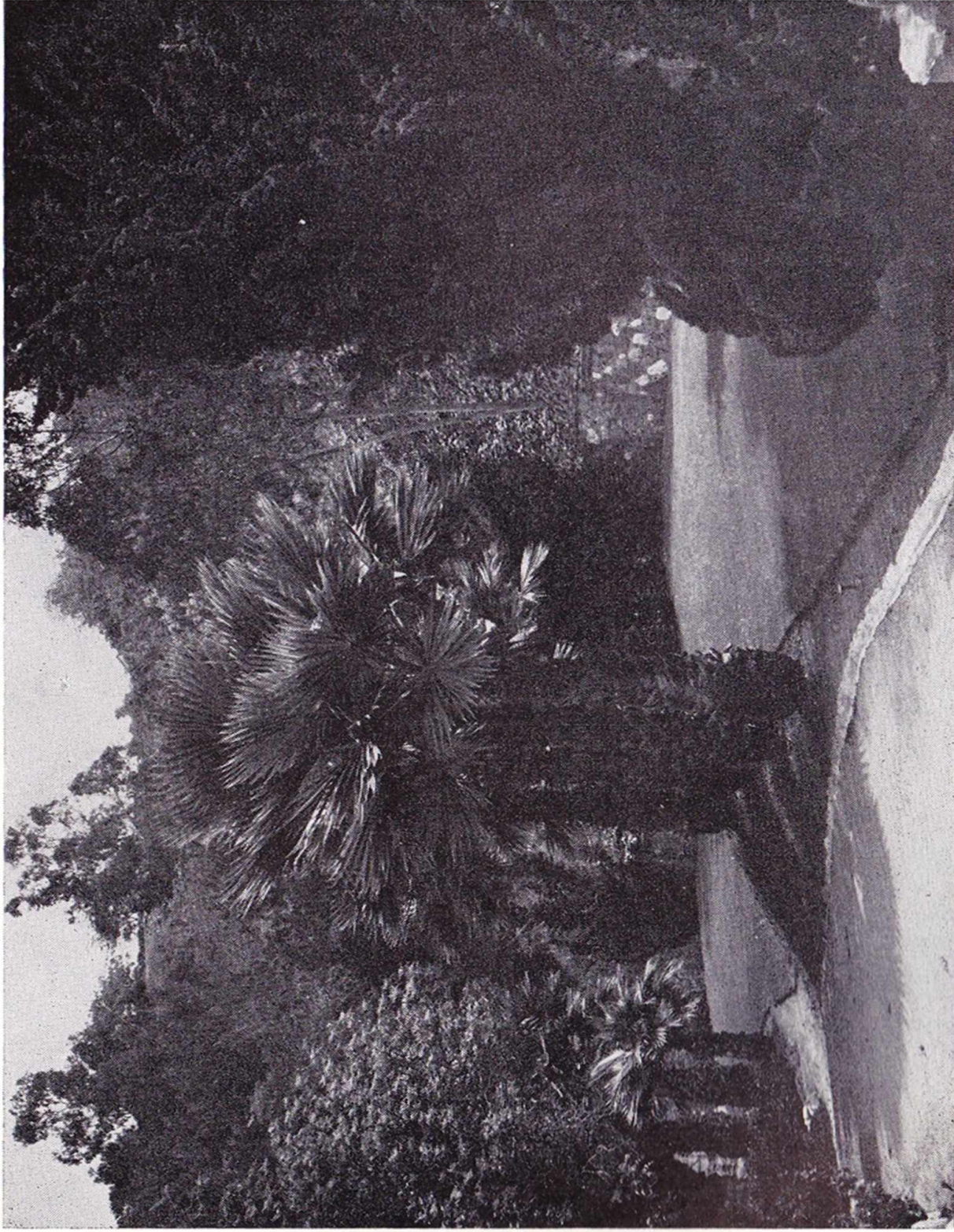
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Paramahansa Yogananda, Founder. Daya Mata, President.

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Marching palms line pathway leading to Mahatma Gandhi World Peace Memorial, SRF Lake Shrine, Pacific Palisades, California. Stone sarcophagus containing a portion of Gandhi's ashes is visible by tree at left.

Developing Dynamic Will

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



*An informal talk in chapel at Self-Realization Fellowship headquarters,
Los Angeles, California, January 11, 1949*

We are sent on earth empowered with certain physical, mental, and spiritual forces, that we may wield them and properly use them to produce certain definite results. The force that runs machinery is electricity. And this complex human machine that God has given us, a movable structure of bones covered with tender flesh and consisting of more than twenty-seven thousand billion cells, is run by *prana*, intelligent life force, moving like electricity through the wires of the nerves.

In childhood the body is more responsive to the mind; it can make the body do as it pleases. But later on, as the child develops various habits, the body and mind do not work in the same harmony as before. Although, as I have often pointed out, the material form is only a dream of God, so long as you have to use a physical body it should be under the control of your mind.

Troubles will always strike at the body, for this is a law of life; in spite of them you should keep such mental neutrality that the mind is not affected by outer conditions.

St. Francis of Assisi suffered terribly, yet he was mentally unaffected. Shortly before his death he was going blind. The doctor advised a treatment that required cauterization of the saint's face, from the eyebrows back to the ears, with a white-hot iron bar. There were no anesthetics then. The disciples present could not bear the sight, but St. Francis told the physician to proceed with the treatment. He welcomed Brother Fire with sweet words and never showed that he felt even the slightest connection between the mind and the body. The Lord wants you also to understand this truth: that within your perishable body is an immortal, inviolable soul.

It is an error to suppose that masters do not suffer at all. Jesus let his body be crucified even though he was already redeemed. He knew the relationship between mind and body; he saw them as a delusory creation in the cosmic dream of God. The body is merely a cluster of sensations. It is not easy to cut off the sensations, but you can do so by remaining constantly in the consciousness that you are a soul, one with Spirit.

In the divine consciousness you realize that you have no hands, eyes, ears, or feet, nor any need of these physical adjuncts; yet you can use and move them. What is clairaudience? Hearing through the power within. Many saints hear the voice of an angel of God guiding them. They hear not with ears but with mind. It is possible to hear, see, smell, taste, and touch with mind power alone. When the mind is almost wholly dominated by the body and its demands, as is the case with most persons, it is best to dissociate the mind from the body gradually.

Great Yogis Know the Unreality of the Body

What is the difference between an ordinary man and a superman? The ordinary man cries and gives in to suffering if he is hurt, but the yogi is established in the consciousness that he is not the body, that he is apart from it. This realization is with me all the time. Sometimes I see myself walking and I am simultaneously aware that I have no hands or feet. This is a real experience, not imagination. But it cannot become your experience unless you meditate. If you meditate with the greatest devotion, someday when you are least expecting it you will have the same experience, and you will understand what I am speaking of. God is constantly showing me this truth, that the body is unreal. He has also shown me that this body shall suffer. That physical suffering has nothing to do with my consciousness. It comes through taking on the negative karma* of others, and has no connection with misery-producing desires of self. If this body does some good to the world, fine. The masters do not care what happens to the body. They just look after it that others may be benefited.

The only time you are not conscious of the body is during sleep. Upon waking, you are immediately conscious of how well or poorly you had been sleeping; yet you were not conscious of the body while you slept. Some materialists think that we are wholly unconscious when we are asleep, but this is not true. How could we know, upon waking,

*Effects of past wrong actions.

how well or ill we slept, unless we were conscious during sleep? We can safely say that the mind can exist without the body.

What, then, are the principal powers that govern body and mind? Wisdom and will. Wisdom is the soul's intuitive, direct knowledge of truth. During warfare range finders are used to determine where to fire shells; once the range is found, the guns are fired. Wisdom is your range finder, and your will gives the firing power to accomplish your ends according to the dictates of your wisdom. You should always be guided by wisdom and by will. One without the other is dangerous. For example, if you have wisdom but not the will to follow through as wisdom dictates, it is hurtful to your well-being.

Your intelligence is not being guided by true wisdom if it fails to show you the right thing that you should do. If it doesn't supply the strength of will to carry out the behests of your soul, then that power of intelligence is not fulfilling its true purpose.

Most people are like automatons. They breakfast, go to work, eat lunch, go back to work, come home to dinner, watch TV, and go to bed; then the body machine is shut off for the night. Those who live in this way are using only mechanical will, performing most of their actions as a matter of habit, performing their duties always in a certain way. They make little or no effort to exercise their will consciously. True, they are using will power all the time in performing these habitual actions, but it is purely mechanical; it is not *dynamic* will.

We Express Will from the Moment of Birth

A human being's initial expression of will power occurs when it is born. The baby's first cry opens up the lungs and it begins to breathe. If the baby doesn't cry, it usually fails to live. Sages say that the soul doesn't like being caged in the feeble little baby body; its first experience in that form is to cry. The soul realizes that in the human form it will go through many struggles, and says, "Lord, why did you put me here again?" Many babies keep their hands folded. They are worshipping God in that way and praying, "O Spirit, release me in this life."

Will is a tremendous factor in life. It is the power by which you can reach the heights of God-realization, and by which you can go down into the deepest strata of ignorance. The cry of a newborn child is an expression of physiological will; the baby wills to remove the discomfort it feels. Most people have not risen above that state of babyhood. They immediately want to be rid of any discomfort, and when-

ever they see anything that attracts them, they cry for it. They think they have got to have it, that they can't live without it. The will thus overpowered by the senses is called physiological will — body-bound will, following the dictates of the senses.

It is terrible to use any kind of drug, for the drug enslaves the will to the body. I used to see a man who used opium. All day long he slept. It took him years to overcome his slavery. To use narcotics is one of the greatest sins against Spirit. Drink is the same. Both mean destruction of will power. The great saints have warned against drink. Under no circumstances should you let yourself be tempted, for in a short while you can be lost. Drink and drugs are sins against the soul because they paralyze the will, without which soul realization and salvation are impossible.

Many people are bound by physiological will. The very power that operates the human machine efficiently is destroyed when strong habits of sex or drink or hatred take over. And once they are established they are very difficult to conquer. Control your speech first, and you will not be sensitive to others' remarks. Once you are in the habit of showing temper whenever you are crossed, you follow that habit no matter what happens. And you will have destroyed the supreme gift of heaven — will power — by which you can work out your own salvation.

God and Heaven are Not Imposed on Us

If God and heaven were imposed on us, then we would be slaves of heaven and of God. But the Lord has given us free choice by which we can cast out evil or accept it, cast out good or accept it. The powers that God has given you by which you can make this choice are wisdom and will. So the question is to find out whether you have control over your will or not. Don't let your will be devitalized by bad habits.

After physiological will comes habit-bound will. Your will automatically enters this second phase unless it is guided by wisdom. Sometimes we see a good man's son in whom truth and good habits are lacking. Certainly the son had every opportunity to learn to be good. Yet the moment he started using his own will, he got into all kinds of mischief. Why? Because good had been forced upon him; his will was controlled by certain mechanical habits, rather than by soul wisdom, true understanding.

If you ask thieves and habitual drinkers if they like their way of life, they usually say "No." They thought when they started their wrong

actions that they would be happy. They never realized that the effects would be hurtful to them. For this reason I deeply feel for people who have done wrong. I cry for them. "But for the grace of God, there go I." Evil is a sort of opiate. That is why we should have places where men who have gone wrong can learn how to live and how to think. Jail is not a suitable place of reform. Such persons need to mix with superior men who can help them.

You Alone are Master of Your Will

All around you are thieves of circumstances, trying to steal your vitality of will; but no one can take away your will but yourself. The child wants his own way. When he grows up, unless his will has been curbed and guided by wisdom, he finds that he is a slave to desires. Are you not doing things today that you know you ought not to do, and which you know will bring you unhappiness later on? Overstimulation of the senses devitalizes the will, so do not create an unnatural craving for anything. Suppose you like a certain food very much. Your will power should be such that you can do without it henceforth.

It is impossible to say what you like and what you don't like. If you analyze yourself you will see that in the matter of likes and dislikes we are all crazy. We don't know why we like certain things and don't like others. What you like through the influence of your wisdom and what you like as a result of your physiological habits are two different things. I can make myself like a thing and the next minute I can make myself repelled by it.

To be guided by wisdom is to be king of the world. The wise man tries first to determine if he is right; then he acts. But if he says "yes" and then finds out he was wrong, he immediately says "no." Never use your will power to be stubborn. You talk with some people for an hour and they seemingly agree with you and then they turn around and say "no." They don't want to give up their own way. That is not will power, but slavery to the ego. You can see such slaves all around you. They think they are free, but their will is chained; they perform actions mechanically, guided by good or by evil habits. But when you can say, "I stay away from evil because evil works against my happiness," or "I am good, not because I am forced to be, but because good leads to my own happiness" — that is wisdom. Such was my Master's training. One thing we should always remember: If will is guided by wisdom, it will produce something constructive in our life.

When Jesus said to the Heavenly Father, "Thy will be done,"* it was not because he lacked will power, but because he wanted his will to be guided by God's. When the Divine Will intimated, "Give up the body," Jesus had to use a great deal of will power to conquer the weakness of the flesh. Human will has become divine will, completely attuned to Spirit, when, even though it is necessary to give up the body, one is able to do so willingly, as Christ did. A body-bound slave would have said, "They are trying to crucify me; I must try to save myself." If Jesus had done that, he would not have been the Christ who lives in our hearts today.

Man progresses from the physiological will of infancy to the unthinking will of childhood. That is when you are used to obeying your mother, doing whatever she tells you to do. After unthinking will comes blind will; you get away from the mother's will and begin to feel your own will power. This comes in youth. You test your own will and begin to use it to get what you set your heart on.

As a child I wanted a bicycle and I got it. Then I wanted a horse, but I didn't get it. A long time after, though, I did receive it. Every desire that I have had has been satisfied by the Lord. Everything I have wished for has come to me. That was His blessing.

I was always careful that my will was right before I tried to carry it out. It is good to be stubborn in good things, but never otherwise. When you are wrong, you should correct yourself. If you don't use your will for wrong things, and thus blind yourself to good, then you progress from blind will to thinking will.

My eldest sister Roma used love to guide me after Mother died, when I was only eleven years old, and so grief-stricken! Others tried to use force, but Roma won me by love. Even when I was obstinately saying to her, "Go away, go away," I found myself drawing toward her.

The nature of a saint is tender like a flower but stronger than thunder when he makes up his mind about something good, because his will is guided by wisdom. It was not the easiest thing to convince Master when I felt I had a better idea, but as soon as he saw that I offered a different angle he would say, "You are right. Let us do it that way." But when I was wrong, he couldn't be moved.

Thinking will is the most marvelous instrument you can imagine. Are you governed by thinking will, or by blind will, or by physiological

**Matthew 6:10.*

will? Thinking will is the way toward wisdom. You get a notion in your mind that you must go to the movies. That is physiological will. And when you say, "Well, it doesn't matter; I will go some other time," that is thinking will.

If you feel hunger, eat. If you are not hungry, refrain from taking food. Don't eat just because of habit. When I don't wish to eat, nobody can make me do so. That is thinking will — will that is not guided by habit. If you don't want to smoke, you should not smoke. The hardest habit to control is that of harsh speech. Speaking unkindly to others paralyzes your will. Never be cranky. Whenever you get angry you make your face ugly. Be so loving and kind that everyone who meets you says of you, "I would like to see that person again." I quit anger when I was a little child. But I often discipline with strong words those understanding ones whom God has sent me for training. To those who don't understand I never say anything.

See how wonderful will power is. After you have developed thinking will you begin to reason, "I must produce something worthwhile with this power," and you take up one thing at a time and try to accomplish it. You revolve that will around a problem of health, or of finances, or of controlling a habit, or to know God.

The Cat and the Sparrow

Everything in life tempts you away from God. In the beginning most devotees fall down, because they don't use their divine will; they put off meditation. Day after day, week after week, they put it off. You know you want to love God, you know you ought to get busy making the effort now, and still you procrastinate. I remember a period in my childhood when I lost a long time in this manner. I was already meditating every day, and I had resolved to meditate much longer each day. But I kept putting it off until suddenly I realized a whole year had gone by. Then I remembered the story about the cat and the sparrow.

The cat caught a sparrow but the sparrow was wise. He reminded the cat that it was proper to clean his face and lick his paws first, in preparation for the sparrow-meal. This made sense to the cat, so he let the sparrow go and took his time washing himself. In the meantime the sparrow flew away to a high branch. The cat said, "You can come down now. I am ready for my dinner." But the sparrow replied, "Too bad; I am now at the top of the tree." So the cat resolved: "Henceforth I will eat my sparrow first and then wash myself."

First things must come first. When you awaken in the morning, meditate. If you don't, the whole world will crowd in to claim you and you will forget God. I find myself so strongly established in the habit that even if I lie down, I am meditating. I can't sleep the ordinary way. This habit of meditation, of being with God, has come first.

In Your Will Power Lies the Image of God

Will power means freedom. Will power means heaven. If you don't permit your will to be weakened by the attractions of the world, you will reach your divine goal. But most of you have allowed your will to be sapped by bad habits — many of you indulge in them every day — smoking, drinking, angry speech. You think you can't do without these things. But there was a time when you didn't know what smoke was, or what drink was, or what anger was. You have given up your freedom, by acquiring these habits. Must you remain a slave to them? How can you find God unless you free your will by eliminating these worldly habits and by willing to meditate instead?

No matter what happens to your body, meditate. Never go to sleep at night until you have communed with God. Your body will remind you that you have worked hard and need rest, but the more you ignore its demands and concentrate on the Lord, the more you will burn with joyous life, like a globe afire. Then you will know that you are not the body. In your will power lies the image of God. That image has been desecrated because you have made a slave of your mind. When I left India to come to America Master said, "Forget you were born among Hindus, and don't adopt all the ways of the Americans . . . Be your true self, a child of God." By following his wise advice I have kept my will free. If the whole world stood against me and I saw that I was right and others were wrong, I would not change my mind.

Use Will to Seek God First; He Will then Direct Your Path

Choose a good, wholesome, constructive goal and then determine that you are going to achieve it. No matter how many times you fail, keep on trying. No matter what happens, if you can say, "The earth may be shattered, but I will keep on doing the best I can," then you will succeed. You will be using dynamic will. That will is what makes one man rich and another man strong and another man a saint.

It is not Jesus and a few others who alone know God. If you make the right kind of effort, *you* will find God. What is the value of using

dynamic will today to be a great doctor, or a businessman, when tomorrow you may die? That is why Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God."* Use your will to know God first, and He will then direct your path in life.

You are using dynamic will when you are day and night whispering within, "Lord, Lord, Lord," with the deepest desire to find Him. It is better to use your will to seek God than for anything else. I am so happy that He blessed me with the divine will power that my Guru Sri Yukteswar awakened in me. Before I met Master I was exercising that will power right and left in useless things. But even then, whenever I started something, I employed dynamic will to complete it.

I remember the first time I used dynamic will to bring about a desired end. My friend Tulsi Bose and I were just little boys then. "Tulsi," I said, "we are going to feed five hundred people."

"But we haven't a cent!" Tulsi exclaimed. I quickly rejoined, "We are going to do it just the same. And I think the money is going to come through you."

"That is impossible!" Tulsi scoffed. An intuitive conviction prompted me to say: "Don't offend your mother in any way. Do whatever she asks you to do."

One day later Tulsi came running and told me this story. "I was bathing and Mother called me. I was going to say, 'Don't bother me now while I am bathing,' but instead I asked her what she wanted. She told me to go and see my aunt who lived nearby. I said, 'All right.'"

"When I went to see my aunt, the first thing she said to me was, 'Who is this crazy boy you are mixing with? Have you lost your mind? What is this I hear about your feeding five hundred people?' I was angry with her. 'I must leave now,' I replied stiffly, and started to go. But she stopped me, saying, 'Your friend may be crazy but his idea is good. Here are twenty rupees.'"

Tulsi had nearly fainted with surprise. He ran to me at once to tell me the news. When we went to buy the rice and other things, the people of the village had already heard of our plan, and added more food. In the end we fed two thousand people! The same divinely charged will power also brought about our first library, Saraswat Library in Calcutta.

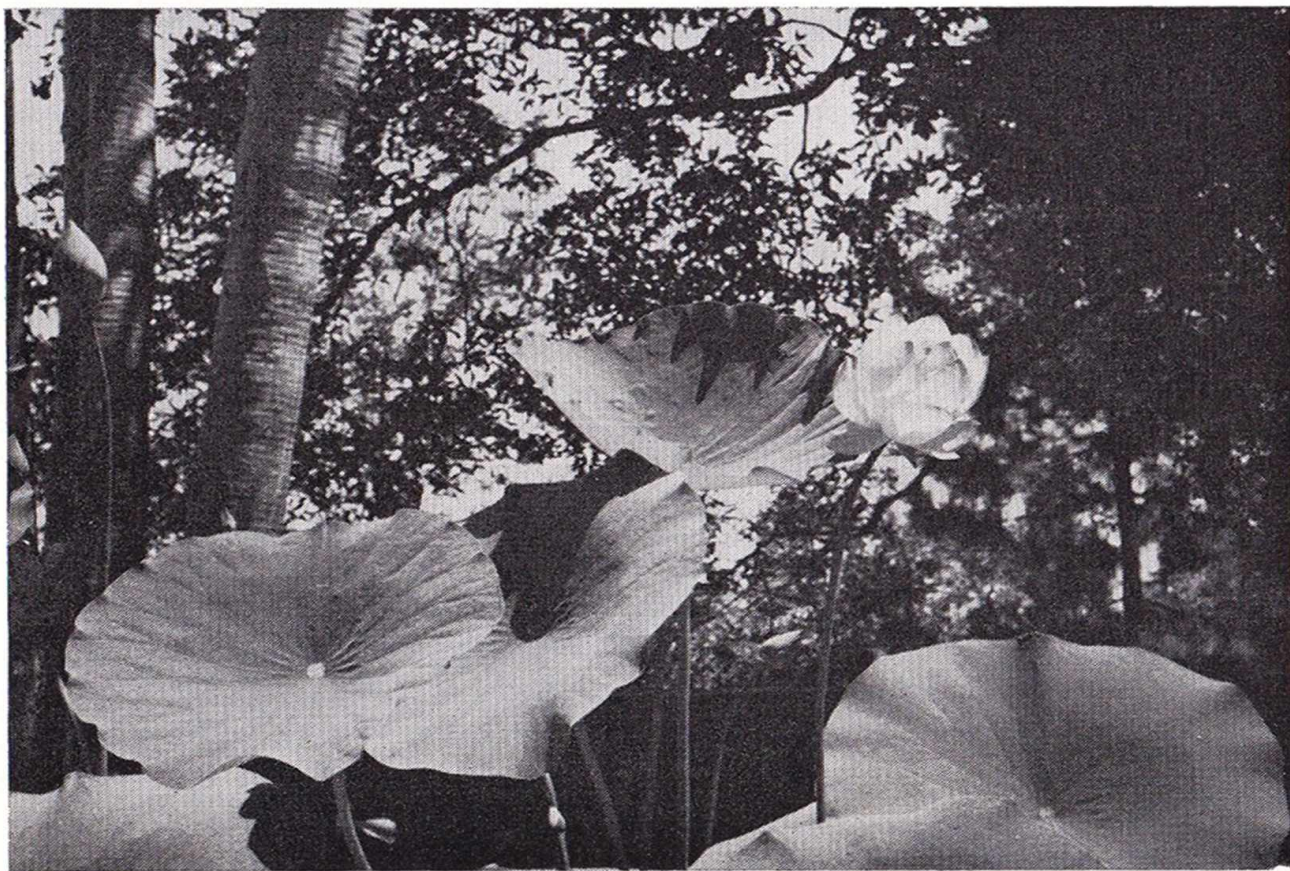
When you make up your mind to do good things you will accomplish them. But you must have dynamic will power to follow through.

**Matthew 6:33.*

No matter what the circumstances are, if you go on trying, God will create the means by which your will shall find its proper reward. That is the truth Jesus referred to when he said: "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall . . . say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done."* If you continuously use your will power no matter what reverses come, it will produce success and health and power to help people, and above all, it will produce communion with God.

That is the kind of will power you must develop — the will power that will run the ocean dry if necessary in order to accomplish what is good. The greatest will should be used to meditate. The Lord wants us to discover our divine will and use it to find Him. Develop that dynamic will. It is not profound words that will give you emancipation but your own efforts through meditation.

**Matthew 21:21.*



Lotus in bloom, SRF headquarters, Los Angeles, California

Glory of the Divine Name

By SRI JAYADAYAL GOYANDKA



The glory of the Divine Name is endless. Any description of it will fall short of what it really is. An adequate description of it is not at all possible. Goswami Tulsidas has gone to the length of saying:

“I have no words to depict the glory of the Name: not even Sri Rama can adequately glorify it.”

A striver on the path of spirituality should investigate as to why, notwithstanding such glory of the Divine Name, sometimes no appreciable change is perceived in the life of those practicing *Japa* (repetition of the Divine Name) and their vices are not eradicated and they are not completely reformed.

Reflection would reveal that lack of faith and reverence with regard to the glory of the Divine Name is responsible for such a state of affairs. If one has faith and reverence with regard to the glory of the Divine Name, the thought and recollection of worldly circumstances, occurrences, and objects, agreeable or otherwise, at the time of *Japa* can no longer come in the way of one's *Japa*. And the lack of love, enthusiasm, and interest in the thought, contemplation, and repetition of the Name can no longer persist when one comes to have full faith and reverence with regard to the glory of the Divine Name.

When love, enthusiasm, and interest with regard to the Lord grow, the thought of His Name and Its import can continue as a matter of course without any exertion even though one may be performing one's duties. Just as owing to lack of reverence and love many idle thoughts, i.e., thoughts of the world, crowd the mind particularly at the time of doing *Nama-Japa*, they can be eliminated when reverence and love for the Lord appear.

A striver should consider what a great blunder it is to fritter away the priceless moments of his human life in pursuing the thought of a work which is not to be done at the moment, and for which there is neither any occasion nor any need. The striver cannot be said to have put faith in the glory of the Divine Name or in that of His disposition and nature, of which he has heard and read in the scriptures, or which

again he speaks of himself. This thought should intensify his reverence, enthusiasm and love from more to more.

A man who recognizes the glory of the Divine Name cannot devote It to the purpose of security, preserving, and multiplying worldly objects; for no sane person would part with a jewel in exchange for a few shells. Hence it should be concluded that he who takes to the repetition and remembrance of the Divine Name from an interested motive is not fully cognizant of Its glory. That is why a change which should take place in his life is not forthcoming.

Love for the Divine Name is sure to appear in the heart of a striver who has developed faith and reverence with regard to it. The thought of an object loved by us cannot but be spontaneous and there is no doubt that a striver who lovingly thinks of and remembers the Name and Its import can easily attain his goal. Hence a striver should have unflinching faith in the glory of the Divine Name.

The function of the senses, mind, intellect, etc. of a striver becomes free from likes and dislikes when he comes to have faith and reverence with regard to the glory of the Divine Name and the Lord's disposition. Then remembrance of the Lord's Name together with Its import becomes natural with him during relaxation as well as during work. But so long as a man remains entangled in sense delights his faith remains scattered in the world instead of being concentrated on God. Hence he cannot attain unshakable peace.

A striver should not take delight even in the transcendent peace that follows from the remembrance of the Name; for if he takes delight in that peace the constancy of his remembrance of the Name cannot abide. Since his mind begins to take delight in that peace his remembrance becomes slack. The growth of love too is arrested. Hence the spontaneity of his act of remembrance ceases.

Duties too should be efficiently performed in a disinterested spirit for the gratification of the Lord as a work of the Lord, throwing one's full energy into them. At the end of a work done in this spirit the sweet remembrance of the beloved Name and the divinity denoted by It comes to him as a matter of course and without any exertion whatsoever.

Attachment to a work and to its fruit is the greatest stumbling block in the way of spiritual discipline. Such attachment disappears when one does a work in the aforesaid spirit and lovingly remembers the name and the form of the Lord.

No striver on the path of spirituality can become a lover of God, a yogi, or a *jnani* (illuminated soul) so long as he is covetous of joy proceeding from the gratification of desires. The special reason why strivers are seen deprived of yoga (union with God through absorption of mind), Self-knowledge, and God-love at the present day is that they pursue *Nama-Japa* and other courses of spiritual discipline for the gratification of their desire rather than in a disinterested spirit. Therefore, remaining free from likes and dislikes, one should earnestly devote oneself to a particular course of spiritual discipline with faith and with the exclusive motive of developing God-love.

A yearning for God-love is fostered only by giving up other desires; therefore it is most essential to fall back upon the mercy of God for eradicating desire.

Worldly joy can be had even in other states of existence, e.g., in the form of a bird or a beast; hence it cannot be the end of human life endowed with discretion. The latter has been secured by grace of God for attaining God-love alone through His thought and remembrance. The greatness and glory of God, wherever it is found depicted in our holy books, should be taken to be the glory of the Name alone; for the Name and the Substance denoted by It are the same. Whatever is stated with reference to the Lord is expressed through speech in the form of His Name. Om, Rama, Krishna, Hari, God, Paramatma (the Supreme Spirit), Bhagavan, and so on are some of His endless names. That is why Goswami Tulsidas says:

"The name and the object named, though similar in significance, are allied as master and servant one to the other. (That is to say, even though there is complete identity between God and His Name, the former closely follows the latter even as a servant follows his master. The Lord appears in person at the very mention of His Name.)" (*First half of Sri Ramacharita-manasa I, xx, 1*).

Identifying the Name with the Substance denoted by It, the *Mandukya Upanishad* says that the syllable Om itself comprises the integral imperishable Paramatma (the Supreme Spirit). This entire visible universe consisting of Matter and Spirit is His own amplification or projection. The gross and the subtle creation which sprang from and has since disappeared into It, that which is seen at the present moment, as also that which is yet to come, all that is Om or the transcendent Brahma or the Supreme Spirit. Nay, even that which lies beyond the past, the present, and the future is also Om. In other words, the Supreme Spirit does not merely consist of the causal, subtle, and gross

forms of creation and of the transcendent Brahma manifest in the form of its soul and substratum, but It lies even beyond that. Therefore the aspect of the transcendent Brahma or the Supreme Spirit which is manifest, as well as all that lies beyond that, constitutes the integral Brahma.

The idea is that those who recognize the transcendent Brahma as only endowed with a form or only formless or altogether attributeless and do not recognize It as endowed with benign attributes such as omniscience, the quality of being all-supporting, the universal cause, all-controlling, all bliss, all consciousness, etc. recognize only a particular aspect of the Supreme Spirit as the Supreme Spirit. The integral Brahma or the Supreme Spirit is both with and without form and is also beyond both. The whole universe is the same as the Supreme Spirit and the latter is also entirely distinct from it. It is devoid of all attributes, undifferentiated too, and is also endowed with all excellences. Recognition of Its totality consists only in recognizing this truth.

In the form of the fifth question in the *Prasnopanishad*, Sage Satyakama inquires about the glory of the syllable Om, one of the innumerable names of God. Identifying the name of God with God Himself, the eminent sage Pippalada says that the word Om is not other than the transcendent Brahma or the Supreme Spirit denoted by it. Hence this syllable itself is the transcendent Brahma and this alone constitutes the lower Brahma in the form of Its cosmic body, emanated from the said transcendent Brahma. Hence, falling back upon this Om and taking to Its repetition, remembrance, and thought, a wise striver attains his desired object through It.

Then in order to inculcate the esoteric Truth that a striver should take to the remembrance and thought of the Divine Name in a disinterested spirit with a view only to the realization of the transcendent Brahma, the supreme controller of all, the sage tells us in subsequent passages that worship of Brahma from an interested motive is rewarded with the attainment of excellent enjoyments in this world as well as in heaven, while realization of the transcendent Brahma or the Supreme Spirit follows from Its disinterested worship.

In the *Kathopanishad*, Yama (the god of retribution) too glorifies the Divine Name and declares the transcendent Brahma, the Supreme Person, to be the highest goal. Yama speaks of the syllable Om denoting It as symbolically the same as the transcendent Brahma. He says, "I tell you in a nutshell the supreme Truth relating to God, the Supreme

Person, which all the *Vedas* unfold in diverse ways and by means of different Vedic texts; nay, which alone is the supreme and ultimate goal of all spiritual practices, and to realize which strivers practice continence with devotion. That Truth is the one syllable Om."

"This imperishable *Pranava* (the syllable Om) Itself is the undifferentiated Brahma and this alone is the qualified aspect of Brahma. In other words Om is the Name of the qualified aspect of Brahma as well as of the transcendent Brahma. Hence, realizing this truth, a striver can attain any aspect of the Godhead sought to be attained by him.

"This Om is the foremost of all aids and is the final aid to the realization of the transcendent Brahma or Supreme Spirit. There is no aid higher than this. In other words, falling back upon the highest Name of the Supreme Spirit is the best and unfailing means of realizing It. The striver who, having grasped this esoteric truth, entirely depends on It undoubtedly attains the boon of God-realization."

Identifying in this way the Name of the Lord with the Lord Himself, the Name has been glorified in the *Upanishad*. Declaring *Japa* of the Divine Name as supreme, the Lord says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

"Among sacrificial performances I am the sacrifice consisting of *Japa*."

And identifying the Name with the Substance denoted by It, the glory of uttering the said Name with the Lord in mind has been stated in the *Gita* as follows:

"He who leaves the body and departs uttering the one imperishable Brahma, Om, and dwelling in Me in My absolute aspect reaches the supreme goal." (*VIII, 13*).

"Arjuna, whosoever always constantly thinks of Me with undivided mind, to that yogi ever absorbed in Me I am easily attainable." (*VIII, 14*).

Glorifying the Name, the *Gita* further says:

"Om, Tat, and Sat — this has been declared to be the threefold appellation of the Absolute, who is all Truth, Consciousness, and Bliss. By that the Brahmans and the *Vedas* as well as sacrifices were evolved at the cosmic dawn." (*XVII, 23*).

"Therefore, acts of sacrifice, charity, and austerity as enjoined by sacred precepts are always commenced by noble souls given to the repetition of Vedic chants with utterance of the Divine Name Om." (*XVII, 24*).

While glorifying the Divine Name, the *Yoga-Sutras* too declare Om to be the appellation of God (*I, 27*) and advise us to repeat this Name and dwell on the Substance denoted by It (*I, 28*).

The impediments discussed at length in the next two aphorisms automatically yield to *Japa* of the Divine Name and His remembrance.

Nay, they further lead to the realization of the true nature of the Inner Self (the Seer) and to the attainment of the state of final beatitude (*Kaivalya*). Hence these practices are an exceedingly easy means of attaining the state of *Nirbija Samadhi* (complete and final absorption in the Self).

The truth relating to both the attributeless and formless Brahma and the Divinity endowed with attributes and form is brought home to us with the help of the Divine Name alone; hence the glory of the Name is infinite.

Lovingly remembering and thinking of the Lord after falling back upon His Name, a striver can become one with Him; hence there is no difference between the Name and the Substance denoted by It.

When a man whose mind has been purified by repeating and dwelling on the Name and contemplating on His reality begins to see unity everywhere, he no longer wishes harm to anyone nor does any harm come through him to anyone. He who does not wish harm to anyone is pleased to see those who are happier than he. He is never swayed by jealousy or hatred and is naturally filled with compassion to see those in distress. He never feels proud of any virtue. In this way infinite is the glory of the Name; whatever is said about It falls short of the reality.

A striver should never feel despondent at the thought of his weakness and shortcomings. Reposing full faith in the glory of the Lord and throwing oneself on His mercy one should pray to Him in a piteous mood. By His grace one can be rid of all one's shortcomings, and speedily develop love for Him and realize Him.

That is why, while imparting instruction to Nachiketa in the *Kathopanishad*, the god Yama prays to the Lord Himself as follows:

"O Supreme Spirit, pray bestow on me the capacity to know full well the knack of performing sacrifices and other noble acts in a disinterested spirit, and to win Your pleasure by performing them as a behest from You, as also to become worthy of knowing and realizing You, the supremely imperishable transcendent Brahma, the Supreme Person, who are a secure haven for otherworldly men desirous of reaching beyond the ocean of mundane existence." (*I, iii, 2*).

By entreating God in the holy text quoted above to bestow on him the capacity to know Him, Yama purports to say that prayer is the best and easiest means of knowing and attaining the transcendent Brahma, the Supreme Person.

A striver should never pray to God for worldly happiness. Prayer should be addressed to Him only for blessing him with exclusive love for Himself, for blessing him with His sight and for doing away with the deficiency in his spiritual endeavor. So long as a man is proud of his capacity, an inner prayer in a spirit of self-surrender does not emanate from him. When the deficiency in his spiritual endeavor becomes unbearable to him and when he comes fully to realize the need of getting rid of that deficiency, the striver should throw himself at the mercy of the Lord and wail piteously before Him like a child and should not rest in peace till his need is satisfied.

When a child seeks an object which it cannot get by its own effort and which at the same time it would not go without, it burst into wails, relying on the strength and goodwill of its parents, who have to grant its desire unless it is harmful to the child. The same is the case with the striver. The Lord is much more compassionate than parents and others, and is omnipotent. As such He does accede to the prayer of His beloved and loving devotee: there is no doubt about it.

A striver on the path of spirituality should under no circumstance lose his patience and feel despondent. He should depend on God under all circumstances and should have firm faith that the Lord will surely meet his need. With this faith he should ever keep burning, nay, brighten more and more the flame of his yearning for God-love and for meeting the Lord in person and should continue to pray to Him, recognizing himself to be altogether helpless.

Goswami Tulsidas has prayed to the Lord through a number of songs forming part of his *Binaya-Patrika* (a letter of supplications). One of those songs containing a disinterested prayer may be translated as follows:

"This is my prayer to you, my Lord, Sri Rama (the Hero of the Raghus): pray, dispel the dullness of my mind in the shape of hope, faith and reliance fastened on others. I do not seek a good destiny (in the other world) nor wealth of any kind, not even the affluence of Kubera (the god of riches), nor mystic powers or extensive fame. I only pray that my motiveless love for the feet of Lord Sri Rama should grow from more to more every day. Let my irregular deeds of the past forcibly take me wherever they may. Pray do not give up your loving solicitude for me there, even for a moment, any more than a female turtle would give up the thought of her eggs wherever she may be. Let all the affection, reliance, and affinity of this body, wherever they may be fastened, be focused on the Lord alone."

(Continued on page 35)

Soul Whispers

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

+

To meet Thee I am rushing forward on a river of ardor made of crystal tears of my cravings for Thee. Wilt Thou channel the boisterous waters, that they be not lost in a desert of disappointment? Wilt Thou see that my mad flood of devotion follows the right course, straight to Thee?

+

We are petals of Thy manifestation; Thou art the Whole Flower — All Life and All Loveliness. Permeate our souls with the fragrance of Thy presence.

+

O Eternal Tranquillity! whenever I am in a rageful place Thou before me a chastening mirror in which to see myself made ugly by passion. Let me not appear disfigured before others, my face wrath-wrecked.

+

Divine Mother, be Thou the only flame in our hearts, banishing all darkness within us. In our tears of love for Thee, wash away our love for material possessions. In the bliss of our communion with Thee, destroy forever all sorrows. In the mirror of Thy divinity may we behold ourselves as perfect.

+

Incense breezes bear to me Thy perfume of bliss. On an altar stone of sacredness plays Thy fountain of joy. With palm cups uplifted in craving, I catch and drink Thy solacing waters; and realize I need thirst no more.

With Daya Mata in India



Transcription of several tape-recorded messages from Mrinalini Mata, SRF-YSS vice-president, who accompanied the SRF president on her recent speaking tour and visits to many YSS Centers in India

November 1967, Ranchi. I am speaking to you from my room in Ranchi. Looking through my window I see in a small enclosure outside some beautiful fantail pigeons and very young peacocks. Bright shafts of color are just beginning to appear on the necks of the peacocks, and their tail feathers have only started to come in.

I am surrounded by stacks of folders containing business papers which must yet be sorted, and many matters therein taken care of, within the next few hours before we catch our train for Kanpur. Daya Ma will visit YSS Groups there and in Bareilly, Chandigarh, and Delhi on this first speaking tour.

We arrived in Calcutta on November 4th and were met at Dum Dum airport by a throng of enthusiastic devotees, so eager to welcome Daya Ma back to India. We were soon laden with garlands, especially Ma, so that I had to remove them as rapidly as they were added; otherwise she couldn't have seen over them.

Four days were spent in our Dakshineswar Ashram near Calcutta, and during that time Daya Ma gave *Kriya Yoga* initiation and held *satsangas* two or three times a day. Wonderful devotees are being attracted to Paramahansa Yogananda's work increasingly; from the very start they come and sit so quietly to listen to Daya Ma's words about his teachings, and to meditate.

Several New Schools Opened at YSS Ranchi

On November 8th we left by train at eight p.m. for Ranchi, arriving early in the morning. The welcome we received was truly overwhelming. An *arati* (waving of lights) ceremony was performed to show the devotees' respect and love for Daya Ma as our Guru's representative and as the spiritual leader of SRF-YSS.

There has been such tremendous progress in the six years since my last visit that had I come alone I would have thought I had entered

the wrong compound! Several new schools have been started. We visited them on November 11th. Five hundred boys from one of the schools stood at attention to sing the Indian national anthem for Daya Mata; then one by one they filed past, each offering her a flower as a token of respect and devotion. Neither Ma nor I could keep back tears of joy, beholding the spirit of these boys and seeing how this school that Master himself started is developing so rapidly now in the way he had always envisioned.

On the morning of the 14th we visited some of the classes being conducted in the Maha Vidyalaya, the new YSS boys' college affiliated with Ranchi University. In the afternoon a *yajna* (obligatory offering) ceremony was performed. This is an impressive fire rite in which *mantras* (potent vibratory chants) are offered to the Deity for the welfare of the world.

Later that afternoon some of the boys of the Vidyalaya gave a demonstration of *asanas* (yoga postures) for Daya Ma. I was unable to attend, as I had to take care of some urgent mail, but she told me afterward how accomplished these young boys are in their practice of *Hatha Yoga*.

In the evening, the Kanya Vidyalaya (girls' school) gave a dramatic program by way of welcome to Ma. They acted out some plays by Rabindranath Tagore, and gave recitations. Their little makeshift stage had a curtain that was pulled back and forth on a string; as you can imagine, by the time this had been done several times the string was collapsing and the curtain had to be moved back and forth by hand. These adorable children put their heart and soul into their parts. One performance in particular afforded everyone great amusement. Up to a certain age, little girls in India wear a simple frock very similar to the style worn in the United States. One child who recited for us was dressed for this occasion in a sari, and it was obvious she was not used to it. All the while she was reciting a perfectly serious poem, she kept tugging at her sari as though she feared she would lose it; grabbing it at the waist where it was tucked in, she would give it a big heave upward, until everyone was roaring with laughter. The child herself remained completely composed, and unperturbedly finished her recitation without the slightest hesitation or faltering.

On the morning of the 17th we went to the home of a YSS member in Ranchi, and many persons from the neighborhood gathered there for *satsanga* with Daya Ma. In the afternoon we had our first break in the constant round of activities since our arrival, and we went to Dasong

Falls. I took my big folder of work with me and caught up on many letters and other business matters, while Daya Ma did some writing and meditated. A few devotees had come along, but they sat quietly and meditated, or took turns holding an umbrella over Ma to shade her from the bright sun. They cooked food for the picnic lunch, which we ate from banana leaves on the ground. The food cooked outdoors tasted so delicious!

On the evening of November 22nd we entrained for Kanpur, arriving there at eight o'clock on the night of the 23rd. During our stay of several days we visited the most beautiful Hindu temple I have ever seen. It is built of marble, with exquisite images of the deities on small altars. All around on the walls are beautiful plaques, inlaid with stones of different colors, depicting the lives of Krishna, Rama, and other divine personages sacred to the Indian people. How we would have liked to stay and meditate long there! But our schedule is very heavy, and we could spend only a few moments. Even in that short time we could feel that the vibration of this temple was very deep and very spiritual.

We Visit Yoganandaji's Boyhood Home in Bareilly

On the 27th of November we motored to Bareilly, where Master lived for a time during his childhood. It was in the family home in Bareilly that he and his father received the news of Master's mother's death in Calcutta. We had never before known where the house was, but while we were in Bareilly, at one of the *satsangas* a devotee came who is an uncle of Dwarka Prasad, Master's childhood friend in Bareilly, and he took us to the place. As commonly happens to old buildings in India because of the extreme moisture and heat, the house is now a ruins. We nevertheless felt a great blessing in having seen and paid our respects at this place where our blessed Master lived for a time when he was a little boy.

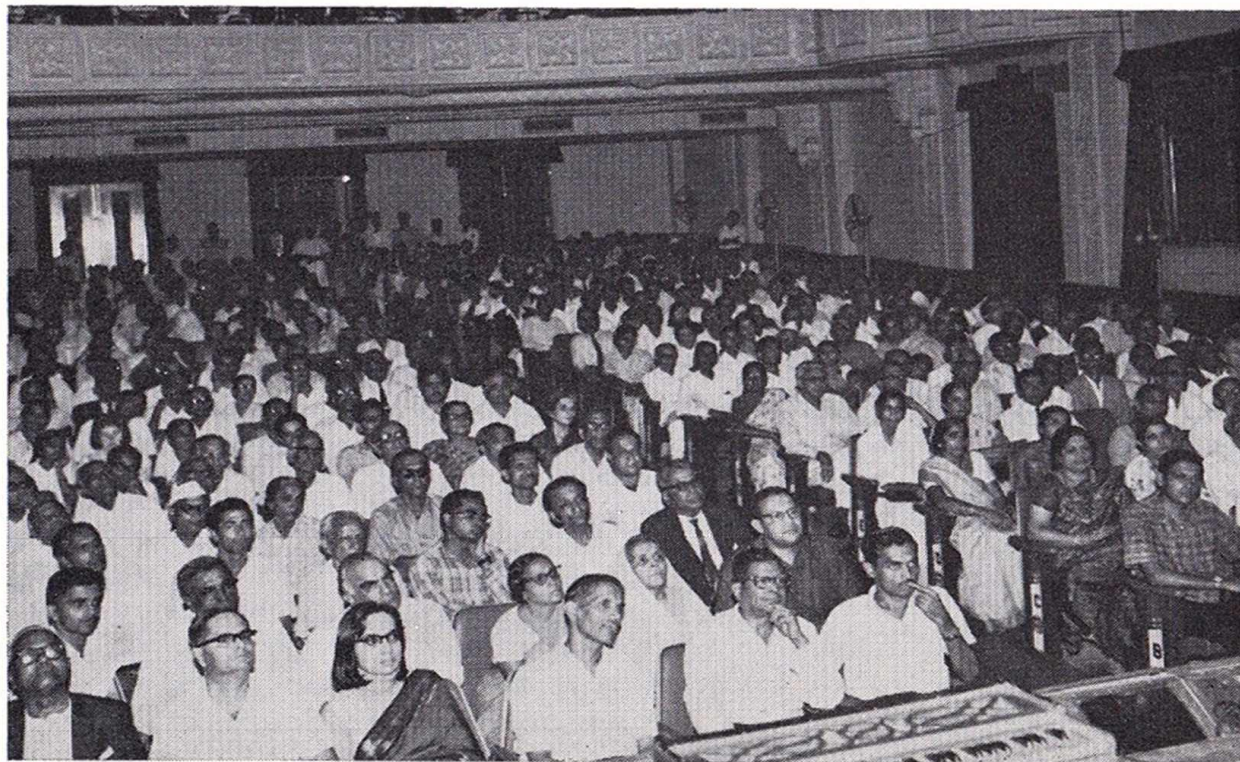
On November 30th we drove to Chandigarh, where we spent several days, then on to Kurukshetra on December 4th. Now we are in Delhi for a week. We shall then go to Bombay for a week, thence to Madras and Bangalore, returning to Ranchi in January.

January 1, 1968, Nandi Hills. This is the afternoon of New Year's Day, and I am recording this message to you from South India, from a high plateau five thousand feet above sea level. It is called Nandi Hills and is about forty miles outside Bangalore. After a schedule of unceasing travel, speaking, *satsangas*, interviews, and initiations, we are here

for a few days' rest, our first since arriving in India two months ago. We are very grateful for these days. Although there are many tourists about, it is a quiet area, and from all sides there is an unobstructed view of the plains below. YSS devotees come in the evening for *satsanga* with Ma. But most of the daytime we are free to rest and refresh body and soul. There is a Shiva temple on the hill nearby, and I have gone there each day and meditated long. I am told it was built in about the eleventh century. It is small, and constructed of exceptionally thick stone, with a stone floor inside. There is a main part of the temple which is dedicated to Lord Shiva, and some distance away a tiny room dedicated to Goddess Parvati, Shiva's Consort. It is to this small area I go for meditation, because it is quieter and fewer people come.

An Example of India's Respect for Devotees of God

The priest of the temple has been very kind, allowing me to stay and meditate two, three, and four hours at a time. While I was meditating there last time, someone had come into that part to perform *puja* (ceremonial worship). When I finished my meditation, I found that



Audience at Daya Mata's lecture in K. C. College Auditorium in Bombay, India, December 19, 1967 (see front cover)

this devotee, who had already departed, had left some *proshad* (food offered to the temple deity and thereby considered blessed) in front of the spot where I was meditating. I realized he had left the *proshad* (in this case, some fruits) for me. It was such a sweet gesture. And as I was leaving the temple, the priest came running and, taking some special flowers off the Shiva statue, he handed them to me. This act, and that of the unknown devotee who left the *proshad* for me, exemplifies the respect with which devotion to God is regarded here in India; and this is what makes our spiritual motherland so great, so enduring through the eons.

Whereas in Delhi the climate was extremely dry and cold, quite penetrating, at our next stop, Bombay, the weather was just as extremely hot and humid. One's skin is dripping wet all the time. Our days continue full, and after Bombay we go to Poona and thence to Bangalore, a thirty-hour ride on the train.

A Christmas Holiday Without the "Trimmings"

On the morning of December 24th Daya Ma gave *Kriya* initiation and late in the afternoon we went to a lake area about fifteen miles outside of town, where devotees had arranged for us to stay for a few days in a government rest house. It is a beautiful location. We meditated and had long walks on a path that goes around the bay. Every evening I sat outside under the stars, meditating. There was a big tree with a little platform underneath it, a perfect place for meditation. As we were beyond the bright lights of the city, the stars were as brilliant as they appear at our desert retreat in California. It seemed there was scarcely a black spot in the heavens.

We had not anticipated being away from Ranchi at Christmas, but it was decided that we might as well go ahead and finish the speaking tour rather than return to Ranchi and then have to come away again to travel. As a consequence, we didn't have any of our Christmas preparations with us. Fortunately, Christmas is really in the heart. Some of the monks had sent Ma some little flat cardboard Christmas-tree cutouts in which they had tucked messages. I cut and pasted together four of these cutouts to create a very small three-dimensional "Christmas tree" for our room.

Several devotees had accompanied us to this area, and Daya Ma spent time with them each day in *satsanga* and meditation. In leisure moments we all enjoyed watching the many monkeys here — so entertaining! A little baby one was apparently testing his swinging arms, for

he would go about two feet away from his mother, swing from branch to branch, and then dash back and cling to her, seemingly seeking her protection and approval for his great feat.

On Christmas Day we listened to tape-recorded messages sent by the monks in America. Wonderful it was to hear the voices of Master's devotees in far-off Los Angeles. The tape with the nuns' messages had not yet arrived. We didn't get it till we returned to Bangalore on the 26th; then we found that it is a large tape and cannot be played on the recorder we have with us; so we are jealously guarding it till our return to Ranchi and look forward to a glorious time listening to it there.

Last night being New Year's Eve, we meditated the old year out and the new one in, as we do in our American ashrams. May the New Year be a truly happy and spiritually prosperous one for you all.

January 11, 1968, Madras. Wherever we have traveled in India our hearts have been deeply touched by the way that little children of our Indian members have learned some of Master's chants in English. The two small children of our hosts here in Madras have done this, and we want to share with you a sample of the sweet devotion we have found among these tiny ones here who are being raised according to Master's teachings and ideals [voices of children are heard chanting "Who Is in my Temple?" and, accompanied on harmonium by Daya Mata, "Listen to my Heart Song"].

The electricity has just gone off. As I now have to run the tape recorder on battery, this is the end for tonight. I have yet to do all packing, as Daya Ma and I will be returning to Ranchi in two days by plane; other members of our party are going back to Calcutta by train tomorrow morning, and all of our excess luggage has to go with them.

We See the Legendary Kites of Tirukalukundram

February 2, 1968, Madras. Recapping somewhat, on January 5th we celebrated Master's birthday with devotees in Bangalore, and on the 6th departed for Madras. On January 8th we visited the temples at Mahabalipuram, about forty-five miles south of Madras. The temple of Tirukalukundram is on a hill, and one must climb, barefooted, the more than four hundred steps leading up to it. Each day, from about 11:00 a.m., devotees begin to gather here to await the arrival of two kites, large hawklike birds which, according to legend, have been coming to the temple daily at noon for centuries, to take water and *proshad* offered them by the priest. It is said that they have been coming, and

will continue to come, throughout the *Kali Yuga* of the Universal Cycle, which started in 3102 B.C., and which embraces a span of 430,000 years.

The birds are believed to be two brothers who were ardent devotees of Lord Shiva. They undertook severe penances in hope of emancipation from rebirth; Shiva was pleased, but thought their wishes premature. The two brothers became insistent, and Shiva, annoyed, transformed them into kites and said that they would have to remain in that form and do penance for thousands of years before they could attain salvation.

We stood among the throng of pilgrims and waited silently for the kites to appear. Then we saw, high in the sky, two birds circling the area. However, only one came down — exactly at 12:00 — and the priest left the enclosure in which the pilgrims stood and went over to the birds' landing spot with his offering. The one bird alighted and walked up to the priest, took just a little sip of water and a little bit of the rice that was held out for him, and flew off.

We then went into the temple, which is devoted to Shiva, and had *puja* and a brief meditation, after which we rejoined the other devotees in our party, who had waited with Daya Ma at another point several miles away.

A Warm Welcome on Return to YSS Ashram in Ranchi

After giving *diksha* early in the morning on January 14th, Daya Ma and I emplaned for Calcutta, where we remained for some days with YSS devotees. We arrived here in Ranchi on January 25th. It is so sweet whenever Ma returns to Ranchi after being away for a time. All the school boys line the road and throw little blossoms in her path as she enters the ashram gates. And there is the ancient ceremonial custom of blowing the conch and of bestowing garlands. How Master's spirit seems to permeate the hearts and souls of the devotees, of the very buildings and grounds of this blessed ashram.

Waiting for us here after our tour was a whole storeroom, it seemed, full of boxes of Christmas goodies and other things sent by all of you in America. Brahmachari Joseph and I spent an entire afternoon and evening just unpacking boxes and sorting things out. We shall be enjoying Christmas from now until we leave India! Our time here is flying by so quickly, and there is so much we want yet to accomplish. The month of March will be extremely busy, with additional activities in connection with the celebration of our Golden Jubilee — 50th anniversary of the founding of Master's school in Ranchi. Jai Guru!

Books by Paramahansa Yogananda



Autobiography of a Yogi. 9th edition, 514 pages, \$4.00

Whispers from Eternity. Heartfelt prayers that convey to man an infinite hope. 1959 edition. Cloth, 266 pages, \$2.50. (*Spanish edition, 1962; cloth, \$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, \$2.50; 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, 60¢; German edition, heavy paper, \$1.75.*)

Scientific Healing Affirmations. For awakening the inner powers that free man from the consciousness of sickness. Paper, 76 pp., 75¢. (*Spanish edition, paper, 50¢.*)

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

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A SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

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

By PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA



Chapter XVIII, Stanza 1

Arjuna said:

O Hrishikesh, O Mighty-Armed, O Slayer of (the demon) Keshi [epithets of Sri Krishna]! I desire to know the true meaning of sannyasa (renunciation) and also of tyaga (relinquishment).

In the eighteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* we will find a concise discussion of the subjects mentioned in the preceding seventeen chapters.

When the devotee becomes restless during meditation he calls on God as the Conqueror of the Senses, the Destroyer of Ignorance, and the Master of all outer and inner forces. The seeker appeals to the Lord in order to remove his restlessness due to the slavery of sensations and the senses. At this stage the yogi wonders how he can renounce all objects of soul distraction. It is therefore natural for a devotee like Arjuna to wish to understand clearly the difference between the two forms of renunciation.

Chapter XVIII, Stanza 2

The Blessed Lord said:

Sages have called "sannyasa" the renunciation of all actions done with desire. The wise declare that "tyaga" is the renunciation of the fruits of activities.

Sannyasa-renunciation signifies the abandonment of actions that are tinged with the desire to obtain their fruits. Tyaga-renunciation means the relinquishment of the fruits of all actions.

In order to understand the God-given definitions of these two forms of renunciation further explanations through illustrations are necessary.

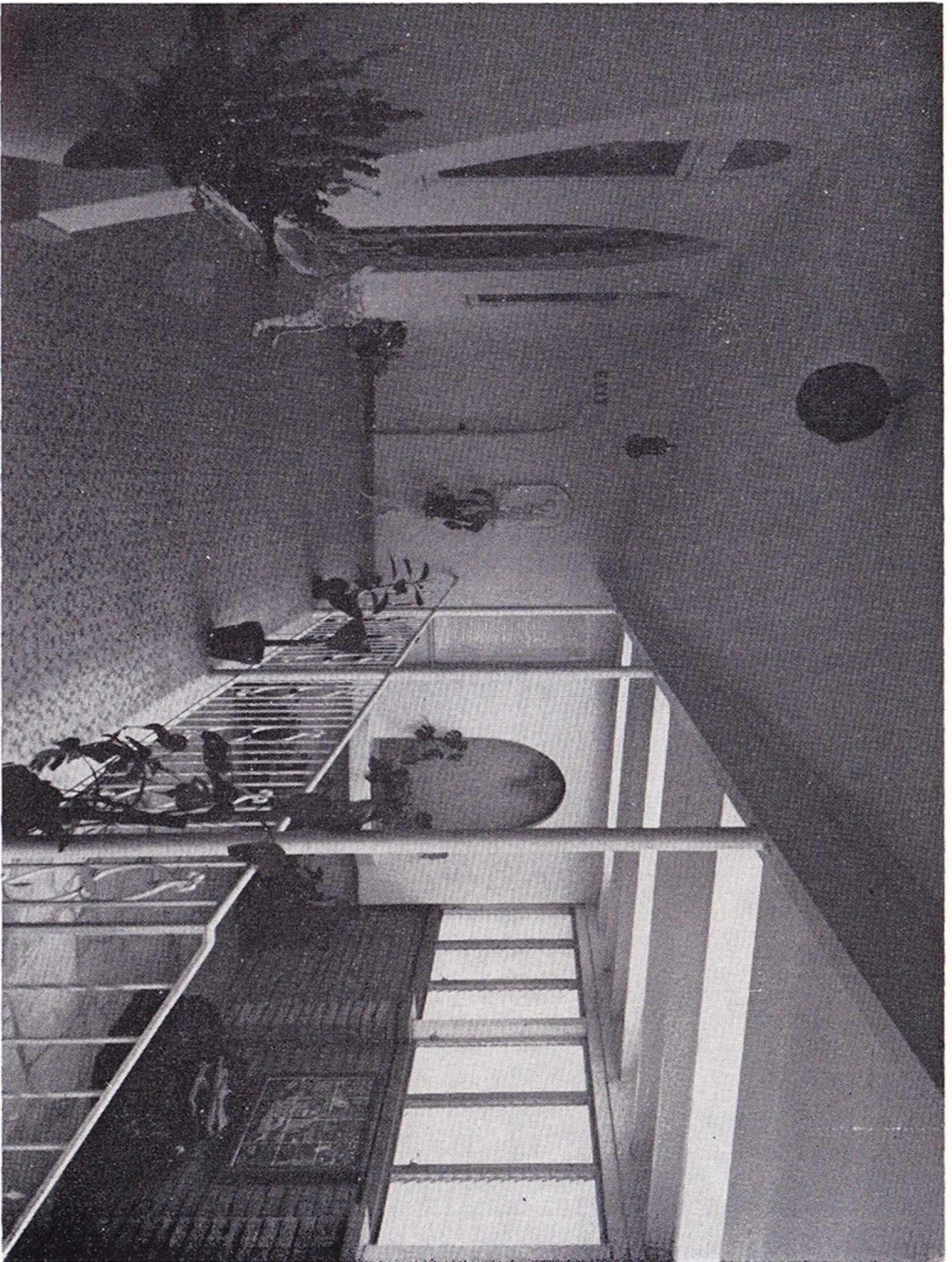
It has been said in the sixth chapter, stanza one, of the *Gita* that a person who performs dutiful good actions to help mankind, and meditative actions to find God, without desiring to obtain the fruits of these divine actions to satisfy the ego but to please God, is a sannyasi (renunciant). He is a sannyasi because he renounces the desire for the fruits of his actions, and he is also a yogi because he helps others and himself spiritually; for God wishes that all His children should return to His abode, after finishing their roles on the dream stage of life.

In the sixth chapter it is distinctly mentioned that he who does not perform dutiful actions is not a yogi; and that renunciation of the fruits of all actions is followed for the sake of finding God, in preference to getting entangled with worldly ambitions. Therefore, renouncing material goals to find God is the same as Yoga, which emphasizes performing meditative actions to become united to the Lord and thus please Him. Therefore a true yogi is a sannyasi, and a true sannyasi is a yogi.

In the present second stanza of the eighteenth chapter it is explained that sannyasa signifies the renunciation of mental activities involved in concentrating on the fruits of good actions during their performance. In other words, when a sannyasi feeds the poor, mentally concentrating on the benefits of his actions, he is not a sannyasi. When a sannyasi performs meditative actions for the selfish joy of his ego, he ceases to be a sannyasi.

The true sannyasi should meditate, thinking of the Blessed Lord alone, loving Him unconditionally, without thinking of the rewards and advantages derived from God-communion. Therefore sannyasa involves performance of good actions and meditative actions, without concentrating on their fruits. When the ego concentrates on the fruits of actions it becomes entangled in the reincarnation-making law of karma.

God is above good and evil, and hence is above the law that governs good and evil human actions. Hence man, in order to get away from this law of action must act divinely and become one with God. The Lord has created this universe as His emanation and not as a matter of necessity for His existence.



Patio garden, Self-Realization Fellowship Church, Hollywood, California (*see back cover*)

If God had to evolve through the creation of a universe He would be imperfect. But He has no desire for anything, nor has He desire for fruits of actions; for He has everything within Himself. Man being made in His image should act like God in order to free himself from his identification with body and matter.

Therefore the *Bhagavad-Gita* advises the subtle performance of good actions and meditative actions in a state of conscious ecstasy to please God alone. Such a sannyasi will behold the Lord and not his ego as the Doer of all physical, mental, and spiritual actions. Those men who perform good actions and meditative actions by concentrating on obtaining the fruits of their actions for the body-identified ego become entangled in its limitations and remain matter-bound.

The sannyasi who performs all actions to please God begins to feel all cosmic activities going on in the Divine Intelligence. But the person who is identified with the ego and its desire for fruits of actions is confined in the perception of material activity going on around him without the consciousness of the Omnipresent Intelligence.

The above is a conclusive answer to the question in the devotee's mind as to how he can work without the desire for fruits of action and why he should not perform even good actions with desire for their fruits.



Reception for Daya Mata at YSS Ashram, Ranchi, India, Nov. 9, 1967

Letters from SRF Students



"I am indeed grateful for the teachings of the Self-Realization Fellowship. A marked change has taken place in my life; I have a new purpose in living each day to the best of my ability. Through meditation I have been enlightened as to how to overcome obstacles in my life, and on one occasion a physical healing took place." — *I.C., Washington, D.C.*

"After more than a quarter century of study and seeking, I am grateful for the day that I started my Self-Realization Lessons. I especially like the directness of the instructions, which are precise and to the point, devoid of long-drawn-out theories and speculations." — *S.S., Osprey, Florida.*

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"In general, my life has completely changed since I began SRF Lessons in May. Literally, my life has 'smoothed out,' and my personality has changed much for the better. I was an unhappy, tense woman, completely at the mercy of emotion; I live now in a happy, calm, tranquil state of mind." — *P.K., Huntington Beach, California.*

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Comments on "Autobiography of a Yogi"

"My husband was deeply impressed, enlightened, and fascinated by the book. He is still reading it over and over, and told me that he thought he had 'found his way.' However, when he related some of the psychic, mysterious, and phenomenal experiences described in the book, I was more than apprehensive. He finally convinced me that I should read it myself. I went to it with scepticism, since I belong to the group of people who do not easily believe in the 'unseen,' the 'unheard,' and the 'unproven.' But on reading the book I gradually changed my mind, since I was not asked to believe blindly but was given precise and logical explanations of the so-called 'mysteries of life.'" — C.K., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

"*Autobiography of a Yogi* is one of the most astounding books I've ever read. I'm anxious to share it with friends." — J.B., Salt Lake City, Utah.

"This morning I met a man in the library who happened to be not only its director but an authority on metaphysics as well. He began talking to me as if he knew I was searching for something. He told me to read Paramahansa Yogananda's book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*. Up to this time I had not given Yoga a thought because I supposed it was 'way out' and used for physical rather than spiritual benefit. After reading halfway through the book, I was greatly impressed that it spoke of just what I wanted: peace of mind with true spiritual union with God." — R.D., Wyckoff, New Jersey.

"As I read the beautiful books of Paramahansa Yogananda, this great saint radiates joy to me from every page. He fills my heart with a boundless love for my Heavenly Father who waits only for me to ask Him to come to me." — G.F., Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

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"I have just read Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi*. I loved him and his book from start to finish." — J.W., Lansing, Michigan.

(Continued from page 19)

In the song translated as above Goswami Tulsidas does not seek even final beatitude but asks only the boon of exclusive and unalloyed love for the Lord. Hence a striver should pray to the Lord with faith and reverence in a completely disinterested spirit.

Prahlada was a thoroughly disinterested devotee of the Lord. Even when confronted with calamities of various kinds, he never prayed to the Lord for warding them off or for any worldly or otherworldly delights nor did he find fault with those who proved instrumental in bringing those calamities, much less harbor any ill will against them or take it into his head to inflict retribution on them for the injuries. He never got angry with those who behaved antagonistically toward him nor did he feel himself wronged by them. On the other hand he continued to visualize the grace of the Lord in every occurrence.

The sons of his teacher invoked a malevolent female fiery spirit named Kritya to make short work of Prahlada. Unable even to hurt Prahlada, who stood armored by the grace of the Lord, the frustrated spirit killed the teacher's sons. Prahlada thereupon only entreated the Lord to restore them to life. He said:

"O Lord who are solicited by your devotees, who are all-pervading as well as manifest in the form of the universe, nay, who are the Creator of the universe, pray protect these Brahmans from the fire produced by their own charms. Inasmuch as the all-pervading Lord Vishnu, the Preceptor of the universe, alone is present in all created beings, let all these family priests (of my father Hiranyakasipu, the demon king) come to life again. Since I perceive the immortal Lord Vishnu alone even in those ranging on the side of the enemy, recognizing Him as I do to be all-pervading, let these family priests of my father come back to life. Since I have been even-minded even toward those who came to kill me, nay, by whom poison was administered and fire set to me, the elephants guarding the quarters by whom I was trampled and the serpents by whom I was bitten, treating them as my friends, and have never nursed a grudge against them, let these priests of the demons come back to life by virtue of the truth." (*Vishnu-Purana I, xviii, 39-43*).
→

"I have been deeply affected by the breadth and scope of Paramahansa Yogananda's autobiography and his other writings. I have also had the opportunity to know several SRF members and have been impressed and in tune with them. I would like to join these people, and request acceptance for the weekly SRF instructions." — *T.P., Saratoga, Florida.*

The Brahmins returned to life as soon as Prahlada touched them with these words on his lips.

Besides this, when after the death of Hiranyakasipu the Lord was pleased to call upon Prahlada to seek a boon from Him, Prahlada sought the following: "Pray uproot the desire, if any, lurking in my mind to ask for a boon."

In the *Srimad Bhagavata* he says to the Lord:

"If you are inclined to confer on me, O Lord, boons sought after by me, O Jewel among the bestowers of boons, I solicit from you this boon alone — that no more desires may ever sprout in my heart. With the very appearance of desire the *Indriyas* (the senses of perception as well as the organs of action), the mind, the vital energy, the body, righteousness, firmness, understanding, modesty, wealth, glory, memory, and truthfulness disappear. On the other hand, when a man gets rid of the desires rooted in the heart, then alone, O lotus-eyed One, he becomes qualified for attaining the divine state."

In the *Vishnu-Purana* we read the following prayer uttered by Prahlada:

"In whichever of the thousands of wombs I take birth, let my devotion to You ever remain unswerving, O immortal Lord! Let not that increasing love which the ignorant have for the pleasures of sense leave my heart as I constantly remember You." (*I, xx, 18-19*).

Apart from this, while glorifying the disinterested spirit in relation to prayer, Prahlada says in the *Srimad Bhagavata*:

"Therefore I do not covet those blessings, sought for by embodied beings — long life, wealth, glory, and sensuous pleasures, including those enjoyed by Brahma (the Creator) — not even mystic powers, created by You in the form of the mighty Kala (Time-Spirit), knowing as I do their real worth. Only be pleased to place me by the side of Your servants. How unsubstantial are the enjoyments of the world, which are only pleasant to hear of and are of the nature of a mirage (tantalizing in character); and on the other hand how frail is this body, the hotbed of all kinds of diseases! (It is absurd to think of enjoying such pleasures through such a body.) Though knowing this, people do not feel disgusted with them, busy as they are quenching the fire of desire with drops of honey (in the shape of trivial and momentary pleasures), so difficult to procure." (*VII, ix, 24-25*).

Nay, Prahlada also implores the Lord to rid of infatuation and turn into devotees the common *Jivas* (embodied souls) who remain addicted to the pleasures of sense, keeping away from devotion to His feet, seized as they are with infatuation. Says he:

"Perceiving (all) these foolish creatures fallen thus in consequence of their own evil actions into the river of metempsychosis and exceedingly afraid

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of birth, death, and suffering proceeding from one another, and making friendship with the bodies of their own people and enmity with the bodies of others, (pray) protect them this very day (by ferrying them across), feeling compassion for them, O Lord (ever) staying on the other side (of that river)!" (*Ibid.*, VII, ix, 41).

Nay, while giving advice to the demon boys too, Prahlada in conclusion says to them in the *Vishnu-Purana*:

"I insistently tell you, O demon boys, never feel gratified with the fleeting enjoyments of this unsubstantial world. Look upon all with an equal eye, for in even-mindedness lies the means of propitiating Vishnu, the immortal Lord. If He is pleased, what is there which cannot be attained in this world? What is to be gained through religious merit, worldly prosperity, and gratification of the senses, trivial as they are? From the immortal tree of Brahma the Infinite, if fully resorted to, you will undoubtedly obtain a precious fruit (in the shape of final beatitude)." (*I*, xvii, 90-91).

Therefore, taking note of the conduct of Prahlada, a striver should pray to the Lord with faith and reverence, not for the cessation of worldly suffering and the attainment of worldly joys, but for being blessed with His sight and for the boon of Love, as well as for putting an end to his own shortcomings in the field of spiritual discipline. The Lord is supremely compassionate and omnipotent. He undoubtedly listens to the piteous entreaties of his loving devotee endowed with faith and reverence, and serves his best interests. The striver should have consummate faith even though he may not feel the Lord's presence. He should not entertain any doubt in his mind. He should, on the other hand, visualize His all-benign grace in every situation and occurrence.

Sage Maitreya tells Vidura in the *Srimad Bhagavata* that disinterested devotees of the Lord do not ask for themselves anything other than service of the Lord. He says:

"Devotees like you, who take delight in the dust of the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krishna, the Bestower of Liberation, and whose mind remains sated with whatever is got without any effort, seek nothing for themselves beyond the privilege of serving Him." (*IV*, ix, 36).

The *Swetasvataropanishad* says:

"May that celebrated Lord endow me with a noble mind — the Lord who, though one and devoid of form in His formless aspect, assumes numerous forms at the dawn of creation for some mysterious purpose in conjunction with His diverse potencies, and into whom the entire creation disappears at the end — in other words, who for no purpose of His own evolves, preserves,

and dissolves this multiformed universe for the good of the *Jivas* (embodied souls) according to their past deeds." (IV, 1).

"May that Lord Siva endow us with a noble mind — Siva, who is the Source and Promoter of all the gods (headed by Indra), nay, who is the supreme Ruler of the universe and is possessed of infinite wisdom (in the shape of omniscience), who saw Brahma (born of a golden egg) seeing the light (out of the egg), in other words who is the forebear even of Brahma — so as to enable us to proceed towards You and realize You. (A noble mind is that which sets the face of a *Jiva* toward God, the embodiment of supreme Bliss.)." (*Ibid.*, IV, 12).

"May that one Lord establish us in His transcendent Brahma aspect, which is the supreme resort of all. The Lord who is beyond all thought, who has in a natural way veiled Himself behind endless evolutes born of His own divine energy, even as a spider gets entwined of itself by a cobweb produced by itself, screens Himself behind it, so that others cannot perceive Him." (*Ibid.*, VI, 10).

An easy way of realizing God is to throw oneself on His mercy, depending on Him in every wise. Therefore, revolving the following idea in his mind, a striver should seek the protection of the Lord:

"Seeking liberation (from the trammels of worldly existence) I fly for protection to that supreme and all-powerful Lord who at the beginning of creation evolves Brahma (out of the lotus sprung from His navel) and imparts to him the knowledge of the *Vedas* and who (in order to reveal His true nature to His devotees) manifests pure wisdom in their heart." (*Ibid.*, VI, 18).

In the *Isavasyopanishad* we read the following prayer:

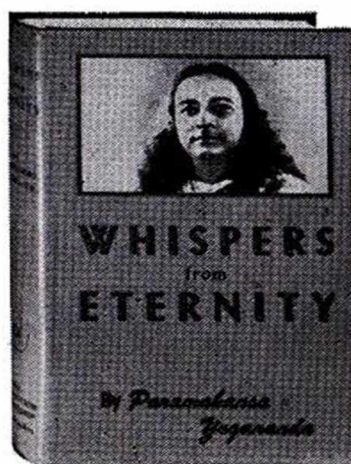
"O Supreme Spirit, let these senses, the vital airs, etc. of mine be dissolved into their respective causes and let this physical body too be reduced to ashes. Let me not have any attachment for these. O Lord Vishnu appearing in the form of sacrificial performances, pray bestow Your thought on me and on my actions. Thought of by You, I and all my actions will become purified. Then I shall surely earn the privilege of serving Your feet. O Lord appearing in the form of fire, pray lead me to the presence of Your feet along an easy path. You know all my good and bad deeds — I cannot reach You by virtue of these actions. Be pleased to accept me as Your own by Yourself. Pray get rid of all my sins which stand in the way of Your realization. I offer repeated salutations to You."

The foregoing prayer as it stands finds place in the *Rigveda* too. In this way prayer to God has been enjoined at many places in the *Vedas* as well as in the *Upanishads*. Grasping the inwardness of these prayers, strivers should lovingly pray to the Lord in a piteous mood with reverence and faith. — From "*Kalyana-Kalpataru*," Gorakhpur, India.

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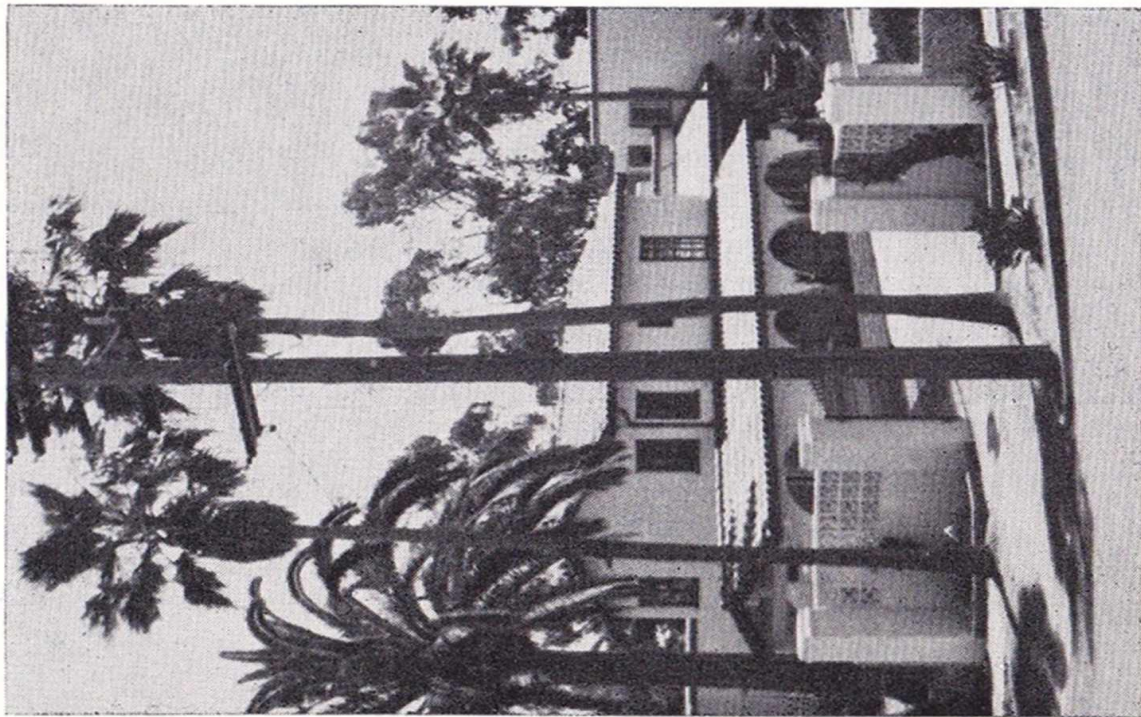
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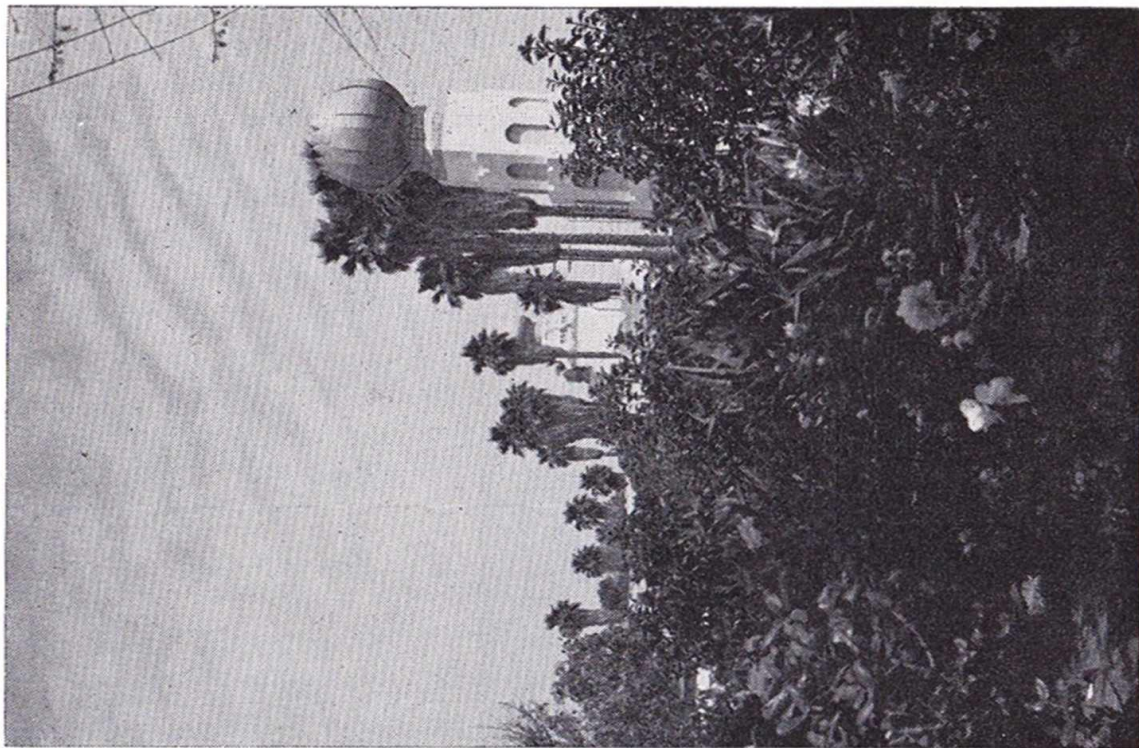
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LAKSHMANPUR — Yogoda Branch Ashram (separate high schools and hostels for boys and girls), P.O. Lakshmanpur, District Purulia.

RANGAMATI — Yogoda Meditation Group Center.

Midnapur District

DONGABHANGA — Yogoda Branch Center, P.O. Narayanchak.

EJMALICHAK — Yogoda Branch Center (multipurpose school), P.O. Raichak.

GHATAL — Yogoda Branch Center, Sri Yukteswar Vidyapith (Junior High School), P.O. Ghatal.

HANDOL — Yogoda Branch Center, P.O. Tilantpara.

JASORAJPUR — Yogoda Branch Center.

KALIDAN — Yogoda Branch Center, Sri Yukteswar Smriti Mandir and Library, P.O. Gobardhanpur.

PALPARA — Yogoda Branch Center, YSS Brahmacharya Vidyalaya (multipurpose school — separate schools and hostels for boys and girls), P.O. Palpara.

PINDRUI — Yogoda Branch Center, P.O. Pindrui.

SITIBINDA — Yogoda Branch Center, P.O. Gobardhanpur.

YSS Gurudham Centers

SERAMPORE — YSS Gurudham, Chatra, District Hooghly.

KADAMTALA — YSS Gurudham, 166, Bellilios Rd., Kadamtala, Howrah.

DEBRA — YSS Gurudham, P.O. Debra, District Midnapur.

LACHIPORE — YSS Gurudham, P.O. Harinagar, Midnapur.

BOOKS BY YOGANANDA FOR THE BLIND

“Autobiography of a Yogi” and “Whispers from Eternity”



Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* is available for home reading by blind persons in the U.S.A. from the Braille Institute of America, Inc., 741 North Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90029.

A Braille copy of the *Autobiography*, and also a voice reading of it (on eight tapes), may be borrowed by blind persons in the U.S.A. from the Theosophical Book Association for the Blind, Inc., Route 2, Box 5-A (Krotona), Ojai, California 93023.

A Braille copy of Paramahansa Yogananda's *Autobiography*, and of his *Whispers from Eternity* is available from the New York Public Library, 20 West 53rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.

Blind persons who wish to borrow the *Autobiography* or *Whispers* should make their request direct to one of the institutions listed above.

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Young SRF students of high spiritual ideals and harmonious temperament who are single and free of worldly commitments, and who would like an active, purposeful life in an SRF spiritual community, are invited to send for a free descriptive booklet, *Give Me thy Heart*. It outlines the history, aims, ideals, and rules of the Self-Realization Order, the monastic branch of Self-Realization Fellowship, and lists the requirements for entrance into an SRF ashram.

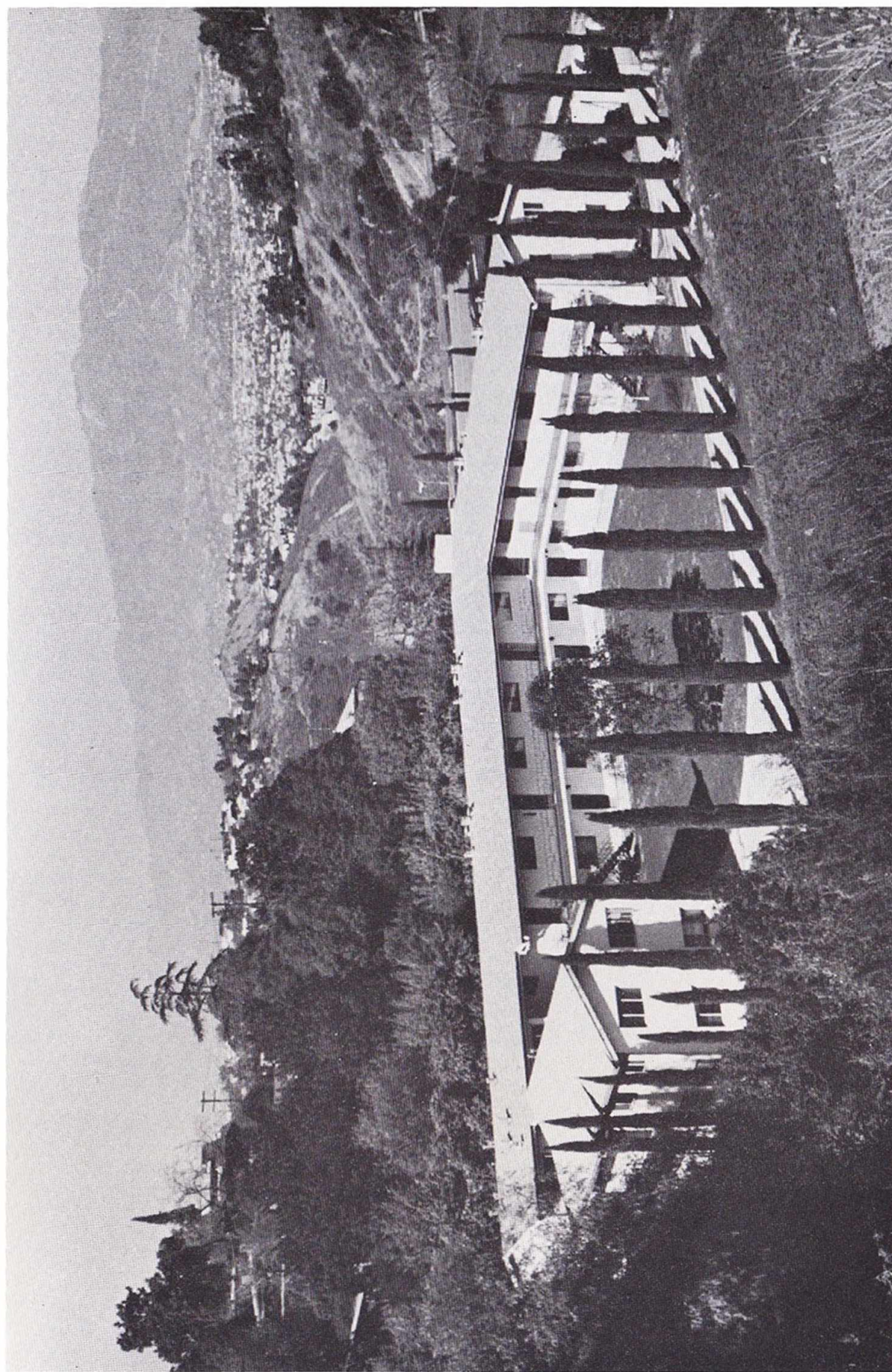
The pioneering movement founded by the great master Paramahansa Yogananda offers a variety of opportunities to apply present skills and to learn new ones in the highest type of service: for God alone. Most important, life in an SRF ashram provides ample periods for meditation and offers priceless spiritual training that hastens the divine progress of those who are receptive and devoted.

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SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

Personnel Department

3880 San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90065



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The U-shaped complex accommodates 36 monks and includes refectory and offices.



TOWER GATEWAY TO SRF CHURCH, HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

Dedicated by Paramahansa Yogananda in 1942, this attractive temple is now part of a large SRF colony with several residential and other buildings. These include a Book House where SRF literature and the writings of Yogananda are available, and India Center, with dining facilities and a lecture hall for classes in SRF teachings.