



*Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those
who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!*

The Mountain Path

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SRI RAMANASRAMAM, TIRUVANNAMALAI

Sri Janakibai Mata, the God-intoxicated devotee of Sri Ramana Bhagavan, I was happy to be there and to meet them all and also revered Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan and to listen to his beautiful speech in Tamil. The entire Kumbhabhishekam ceremony conducted by a select group of a large number of learned Vedapathis and Shastries with meticulous care according to strict Vedic ritual was most befittingly conducted and it was a great success. My warmest congratulations to the Trustees of the Ashram for raising this worthy memorial over the Divine resting place of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. His Presence and Power indeed radiate from this vibrant Shrine."

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August, 15

The Arunagirinathar Festival, perpetuating the memory of the illustrious mystic-poet of the Tamil country, Sri Arunagirinathar, was conducted on August 14, 15 and 16. Thousands of bhaktas assembled in the town and it resounded with kirtans and bhajans. Many bhajana parties paid homage to Sri Rameswara Maha Lingam and did bhajan almost throughout the day on August, 15. It was a soul-stirring festival indeed!

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A Big Well

The small well inside the Ashram has its own story to tell, for with the touch of Sri Bhagavan the spring in it was born! The Ashram now makes use of its water exclusively for puja purposes. Though the Ashram has its water supply granted by the local municipality, it felt a need for a big well and the trustees ventured on digging one. The well has been successfully dug and to our surprise there was no rock found while digging, which is a rare event in this area, and water was struck at the expected level and in plenty. A proper overhead tank and a motor have to be erected soon.

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Visitors

During the later years of Sri Ramana Maharshi's life on earth, one of the prominent families here were the Shroffs, Parsis from Bombay with three children, two girls and a boy. The parents are no longer living, but it was a pleasant surprise to receive a visit from the son,

D. P. Shroff, now a married man and a prosperous industrialist—still more so to find him an enthusiastic devotee of Bhagavan. He has also become a Life Subscriber to *The Mountain Path*.

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We received a visit from Prof. Bishop, Professor of Philosophy at Washington State University, and found him deeply interested not only in Bhagavan's teaching but in Hindu doctrine generally.

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Mrs. deLancey Kapleau, whose husband has become famous as the author of 'The Three

Pillars of Zen', paid us a second visit recently and writes:

Seven years ago, I am ashamed to say, I did not really know why I was making the pradakshina of Arunachala. I knew only that I very much wanted to — in fact that I had to. And so I did. In the light of this rational vagueness, it came as a great surprise to me



Mrs. Kapleau

then, that Mrs. Osborne should be so certain in her assurances that I would return one day. But return I did, this past summer in July, not with my husband this time, but with our almost 7 year-old daughter, Ramana, en route to a family vacation in Crete.

The ashram was back to its normal peaceful self after the extensive dedication ceremonies of the permanent samadhi of Bhagavan, and we had ten days of contentment and joy

with Mr. and Mrs. Osborne in their home, from which, by the way, one has a superb view of Arunachala. Ramana busied herself with all the available animal life, from the Osbornes' cows, dogs and kitten, to the ashram's monkeys which



Ramana

she was perpetually stalking to feed, its peacocks, and Arunachala's goat herds which stepped so elegantly across the mountain, and finally the cool night's frogs and baby lizards, the crowning acquaintance being the black elephant from the temple of Arunachala which she was allowed to mount.

For her mother, the several years of Zen training in Japan had made possible a real rapport with the Hill, which was not really awake at the time of the first visit. To go purposefully to Arunachala is to make a pilgrimage. Pilgrimages are not just the most comfortable excursions in the world. And so to step into the uncanny silence of the meditation hall after the 5-hour rattling bus ride from Madras, is truly an experience. It is often empty. It is silent because there is no talking there even with people gathered. But this is the least reason for its silence. It is only its outer garment so to say. Its true silence is a dynamic stillness which speaks to one's deepest parts with a precision and succinctness not possible in the language of

words. This same still-dynamism can be felt like a surging echo on the hill, and sensed like a consuming fire in the inner nature of the hard rock upon which one treads. When one steps into Skandashram it seems to hover there in an invisible cloud of concentration. It is no less so in Virupakshi cave. In fact it is no exaggeration to say that it takes one up like a palpable being. Prostrating and seating oneself one does not so much meditate, as let the dynamic-stillness take one out of one's self into the intenseness and simplicity of only "being". Timeless, one sits in all-time. Spaceless, one knows oneself as the centre.... the Centre. To be able to move, even once in one's lifetime, within the ambience of such spiritual concentration, to sit within the perimeter of the Grace of the Guru is a gift without price. Even now as I write these words I can again feel the intense silence.

The pradakshina I made alone one evening, taking leave at the meditation hall, as was the custom during Bhagavan's life, at 6:30 p.m.,

RAMANA CENTRE, NEW YORK CITY



FROM L TO R.

Front Sitting—Mr. Isaac Sutel, Mr. Robert Hanlon, Yogamaya, Mrs. Jeanne Marie Marly, Don, Mrs. Eva B. Blake, Bhaskar, Michael Good and Mrs. Helena Schleiniger.

Standing behind—Mrs. Lee Good, Mrs. Louis Guha, Mrs. Gloria Rananda and her husband Joe Leslie Rananda and Bhagawat.

after the sun's heat had subsided. It is a strange countryside. At times quite uncanny and almost allegorical. The golden light of the sinking sun brings out a special luminosity from the green gorse which covers the undulating sides of most of the mountain. The country itself partakes of a special silence not possible except far away from city life. Much of the road is a beautiful rose-red which glows wonderfully in the setting sun. I walked slowly, resting briefly in the prescribed spots, until I finally came, in full darkness to the great temple of Sri Arunachala in the village of Tiruvannamalai. Here I slumped, very tired indeed, to the stone temple courtyard after dipping my feet in the huge stone tank. It was past 10:30 when Mrs. Osborne heard the dogs welcome me back, and after a cold bath we had a late supper together, and talked most of the rest of the night about the Mountain, and some of her singular experiences in her years living at its foot—a fitting climax to the day.

The following morning when I awakened, the inner meaning of the pradakshina and why I had made it a second time was no longer the least bit vague to me—on the contrary, it was crystal clear.

I am inexpressibly grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Osborne for their invitation to stay with them, for their gentle hospitality and lively companionship, not the least of which were the hours of invaluable conversation. I am not less grateful to my husband, who, while unable to accompany us, alone made it possible.

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To Arunachala

In our last issue we published a poem called 'To Arunachala' which J. J. de Reede discovered unsigned among the papers of the late Dr. Mees (Sadhu Ekarasa). On publication it was recognised as being by our occasional contributor 'Unnamulai'. Actually, our editor himself had seen it years back but forgotten about it.

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