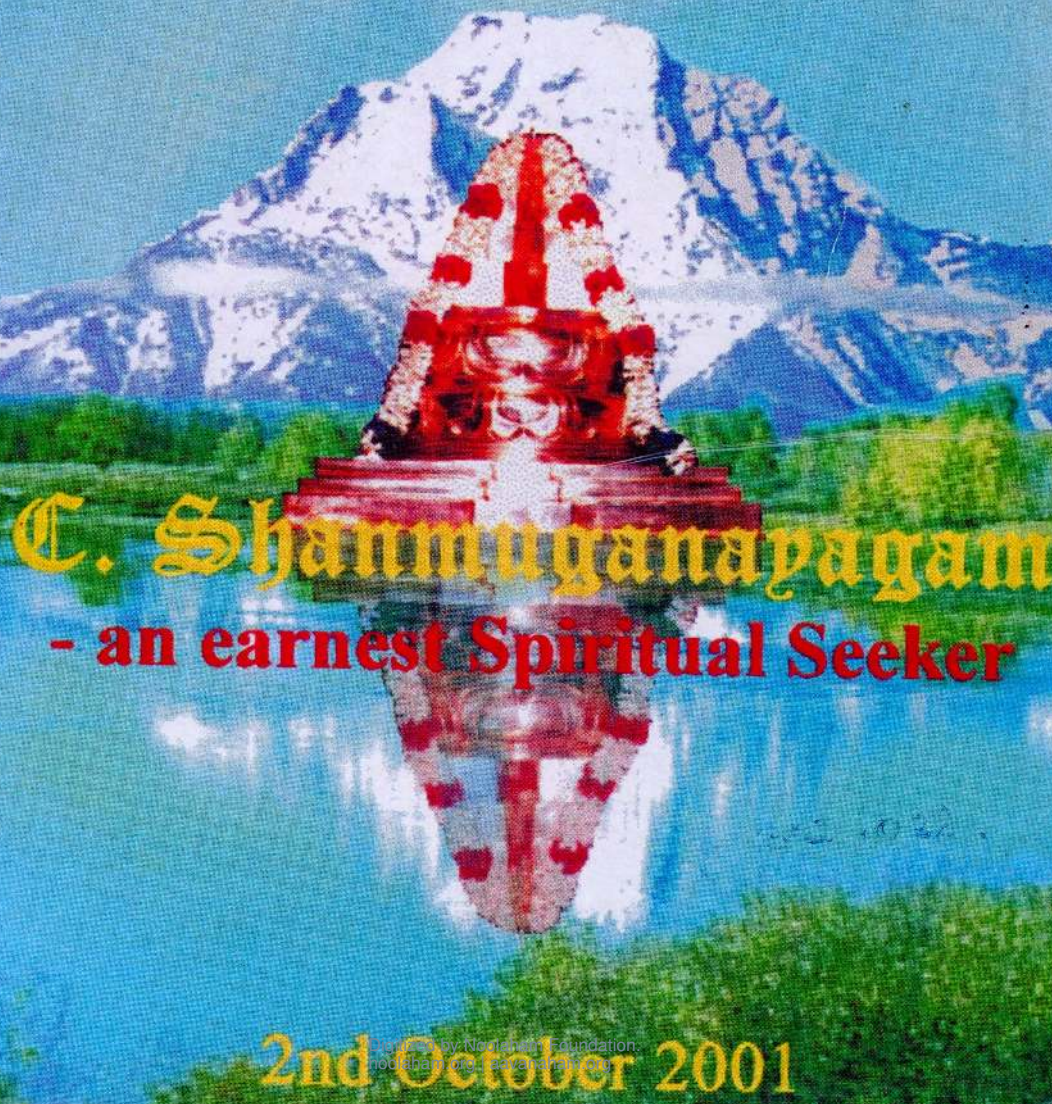


FELICITATION SOUVENIR

issued

on the occasion of the

SATHA-ABISHEKAM
OF



C. Shanmuganayagam
- an earnest Spiritual Seeker

2nd October 2001

Published by
Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission
(International)
on the occasion of the
Satha-Abishekam
of
Sri C.Shanmuganayagam
a Senior Trustee Of the Mission

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(The cover design portrays the sacred pyramid -shaped three-dimensional Mahameru, with the apex symbolizing the Universal Shakthi or Energy, which is the source of all Manifestation, set against the background of the mystical snow-capped Himalayan range, with its reflection vitalising the lower planes of existence.)

- The design is an Artistic Composition by M.M

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(The cover design portrays the sacred pyramidal-shaped three-dimensional
 Mahamandala with the open symbolizing the Universal Spiritual Energy which
 is the soul word Sri Mahamandala, set against the background of the universal
 glow, capped Mahamandala, with its reflection within the lower plane
 Mahamandala.)

- The design is an artistic composition by M. M.

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Contents

Part One **Pages** **Messages and Biographical Sketch**

1. Introduction	04
2. Sri Muthukrishna Swami's message (in Tamil)	06
3. English translation of the message	08
4. Teachings of Sri Muthukrishna Swami -on Parabhakti & Gnanam	10
5. Statement of Swami Shantanand of Rishikesh	15
6. Message from Vimala Thakar of Mt. Abu	17
7. Biographical Sketch of Shan (in English)	18
8. Vidwan Lakshmanan's Felicitations and Biographical Sketch of Shan (in Tamil)	33

Greetings and Felicitations by:

9. H.E. Gopalkrishna Gandhi, High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka.	44
10. Justice C.V. Wigneswaran, Judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka.	45
11. Hon. R.S. Wanasundara, former Judge of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka.	47
12. Hon. Lakshman Jayakody, former Minister of Cultural Affairs.	48
13. Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, of Sarvodaya Movement.	50
14. Dr. Susunaga Weeraperuma, International Author.	52
15. Stanley Jayaweera, former Ambassador to Germany.	55
16. W.H. Bodhidasa, Chairman, Krishnamurti Centre, Sri Lanka.	56

Contents (contd)

17.	V. Murugesu, Founder-Trustee, Sri Aurobindo Centre, Colombo.	58
18.	M.V. Theagarajah, former Vice Chairman T.M. Centre, Colombo.	60
19.	S. Suriyadeva of Shiva Family, Colombo.	62
20.	D. Eassuwaran, President, Chinmaya Mission, Sri Lanka.	65
21.	M. Nagarathinam, Vice-President, Vivekananda Society, Colombo.	67
22.	N.M.M. Bishrul Hafi, a Sufi Mystic.	70
23.	Swami Prakashamayananda.	73
24.	Mathuri Mody.	79
25.	Indrani Wijesekera.	81
26.	R.Ratnajothy.	84
27.	Nissanka & Sanka.	87
28.	T. Vairavanathan.	90
29.	G. Janarthanan.	92
30.	Nithiya.	96

Part Two

Supplement

(containing recent articles by Shan on Spiritual Themes)

- A. Synopsis and Extracts from several Reviews of the Book entitled '**An Experiment in Spiritual inquiry for the Youth**' containing the earlier articles on Spirituality written by C. Shanmuganayagam..... 100
- B. Full text of the Review of the book by Sri V. Ganesan, former Editor of the 'Mountain Path.' 104

Contents (contd)

<u>Articles</u>	<u>Pages</u>
1. Three votaries of Peace in Sri Lanka.	108
2. Sri Aurobindo and Indian Independence.	111
3. Sri Mata Amritananda Mayi (A saint of our times)	115
4. Sri Yogaswamigal, the Sage of Lankapuri.	119
5. What exactly is speaking the Truth? - a Philosophical essay.	122
6. Einstein's views on Homo Sapiens - a Thesis on Gnana Marga, the Wisdom Path.	126
7. Man Visible and Invisible - on Mysticism and Science.	131
8. Reminiscences at the Bar - the renouncing of a professional career.	136
9. Beyond the veil - on Life after Death.	145
10. Revelations from the realm of Glorious Light - the Astral World.	149
11. Transformation of Emperor Asoka - the Fostering of World Peace.	153

Introduction

The Committee in charge of the publication of the Felicitation Souvenir on the occasion of the 82nd Birth Anniversary of Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam decided to publish in book form a Biographical sketch of Shan and the greetings and felicitations and cameos of certain significant events in his life received by us, together with a Supplement containing some of the recent articles on spiritual themes contributed to the Press by Shan, with the following objectives in view.

- 1) We felt that an account of Shan's early life, which was of an outgoing nature, and his subsequent life of contemplation and introspection combined with his writings on philosophical and spiritual themes would serve as an inspiration and example to the youth of today.
- 2) It is a remarkable characteristic of Shan's life that he is all things to all men. His spiritual approach is an amalgam of Gnana, Bhakthi and Karma yoga, and his liberal and loving attitude towards all has resulted in his being attracted by the teachings of the saints and sages of all religions, despite their outward diversity.
- 3) The core of his spiritual quest lies in his indomitable faith in what he calls the Law of Love and the Law of Karma, namely that the Divine or Universal Energy is the Indweller of all beings and is the one permeating Intelligence controlling all Creation or Manifestation (அவனன்றி ஓர் அணுவும் அசையாது). Hence his repeated citation in his writings of the well-known dictum of the Ancient Mystical Order of Rosicrucians (AMORC), namely

'Love is the source of all energy,
the most dynamic force in the Universe
the standard of all judgement,
and the basis of all morality.'

- 4) There has already been a publication of his earlier writings in book form by the well-known publishing house Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan of Bombay, entitled 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth', which has been a challenge and a stimulus to all young spiritual seekers the world over, who are imbued with a scientific outlook, as verified by the several reviews of the book published in international journals.
- 5) The Felicitation Souvenir is a homely document of appreciation by his contemporaries, meant to be distributed free to friends and those fellow spiritual seekers, who are young in mind despite their physical age, and it is trusted that it will be a source of inspiration and joy to all concerned.

m m

Convenor,

Felicitation Souvenir Publication Committee

ஸ்ரீ முத்துகிருஷ்ண சுவாமியவர்களின் ஆசிச்செய்தி

- 'அன்பர் ஷண்முகநாயகம் ஓர் சாதனையாளர்'

அன்பர் ஷண்முகநாயகம் தன்னை ஒரு சாதகன் என்று சொல்லிக் கொள்ளும் சாதனையாளர். சீரிய தீவிர சாதகர். ஆராய்ச்சி அவர் மூச்சு. கேள்விகள் பலவற்றையும் சிந்தித்து, சக சாதகர்களுடன் விவாதித்து, ஆராய்ச்சி பல செய்து, யூகித்து, அறிவுபூர்வமாக சாதித்து, பின்னும் 'கற்றது கை மண்ணளவு கல்லாதது உலகளவு' என்ற பணிவுடன் தன்னை ஓர் தீவிர ஆர்வமுள்ள ஒரு சாதகன் என்று சொல்லிக் கொள்கின்ற ஓர் உயரிய சாதனையாளர்.

1970ம் ஆண்டு மார்ச் மாதம் அவர் முதன் முதலாக என்னிடம் தொடர்பு கொண்டார். தலையில் தொப்பி, coat suit கால்களில் socks சுடன் சதா சர்வ காலமும் தோற்றமளிக்கும் அவரை, நான் 'coat suit க்குள் ஒளிந்திருக்கும் ஓர் ஆசாமி' என்று வேடிக்கையாகக் கூறுவது வழக்கம். அவர் சாதாரண ஆசாமி இல்லை. அவரை அறிந்து கொண்டவர்கள் 'ஆ!...சாமி' என்று வியப்பர். அற்புதமான அறிவுக் களஞ்சியம். ஆங்கில மொழியில் பாண்டித்தியம் பெற்றவர். நடமாடும் நிகண்டு. ஆங்கிலத்தில் எதை எப்போது கேட்டாலும் உடனே பதிலளிக்கும் திறமை வாய்ந்தவர். எழுத்தில் நல்ல நடை.

ஆத்ம விசாரத்திற்காக என்னிடம் பல கேள்விக் கணைகளைத் தொடுப்பார். முழுமுதல் ரிஷியான அகஸ்திய மகரிஷியிலிருந்து இன்று வரை உள்ள அனைத்து ரிஷிகளின் நிலைகளைப் பற்றிக் கேட்பார். அகஸ்திய மகரிஷியிடம் உபதேசம் பெற்ற போகநாதர், கிரியா பாபாஜி போன்ற மகான்களைப் பற்றிய ஆதாரபூர்வமான விபரங்களை என்னிடம் உறுதிப்படுத்திக் கொள்வது அவரது இயல்பு. காலங்களைக் கணிப்பதில் அலாதியான ஆர்வத்தோடு ஈடுபடுவார்.

விட்ட குறை தொட்ட குறை நீங்குவதற்காக பிறவியெடுத்து, பல மகான்களைச் சந்தித்து மகானாகிக் கொண்டிருக்கின்ற ஷண்முகநாயகத்திற்கு சதாபிஷேசம் நடைபெறுகின்ற வேளையில், ஆயிரம் பிறை கண்ட அவர் அறிந்த ஆயிரமாயிரம் விஷயங்களை ஆன்மீகத்தில் நாட்டமுள்ள அனைவரும் அறிந்து கொள்வதற்கே இந்த சதாபிஷேக மலர் வெளியிடப்படுகின்றது.

குறிப்பாக இன்றைய தலைமுறையினர், அவர்களுடைய காலத்தில் வாழ்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கின்ற, உலகம் இன்னும் அறிந்து கொள்ளாத ஓர் ஆன்மீக மேதையைப் பற்றித் துளியாவது தெரிந்து கொள்ள வேண்டுமானால் அவர் எழுதியவற்றை வாசிக்க வேண்டும்.

அன்பர் ஷண்முகநாயகம் 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth' என்றொரு புத்தகம் எழுதி இந்தியாவில் வெளியிட்டிருக்கின்றார். அது மிக அருமையான அறிவுக் கருவூலமாகும். அத்தியவசியமான விஷயங்களை, படிப்பதற்கே நேரமில்லாத இன்றைய தலைமுறையினருக்கு எளிதில் புரியக்கூடிய விதத்தில், விஷயங்களின் சாரம்ஸ்த்தை உள்ளங்கை நெல்லிக்கனிபோல் தந்திருக்கின்றார். அதற்குள் புகுந்து துய்த்துணர வேண்டும். அந்தப் புத்தகம் விலை மதிப்பற்ற இரத்தினங்கள் அடங்கிய ஒரு பேழைக்குச் சமமானது. அப்பேழை பூட்டப்பட்டு சாவி தொலைந்து விட்டது என்று வைத்துக் கொள்வோம். சாவி கிடைக்கும்வரை இரத்தினப் பேழையைப் பத்திரமாக வைத்திருப்பதுதானே முறை. அதுபோல அவருடைய கருத்து நிறைந்த கட்டுரைகளை புரிந்து கொள்கின்ற புத்தி என்கிற சாவி கிடைக்கும் வரை அந்த அறிவுப் பெட்டகத்தைப் பத்திரமாகப் பாதுகாப்பதோடு படித்தும் வரவேண்டும். அவருடைய எழுத்தில் அத்தனை விஷயங்கள் புதைந்துள்ளன. அந்தச் சுவை தெரிவதற்கு, அவருடைய சில கட்டுரைகள் சதாபிஷேக மலரில் இணைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. அவரைப் பற்றித் தெரிந்து கொள்ள வேண்டுமானால் அவரைப்பற்றி எழுதியிருப்பதை வாசிப்பதைவிட அவருடைய எழுத்தை வாசிக்க வேண்டியது அவசியம். புரியாவிட்டாலும் பரவாயில்லை. மீண்டும் மீண்டும் வாசியுங்கள். ஒரு நாள் அந்த விந்தை நிகழும். எழுத்தில் உள்ளவை உள்ளத்தில் ஸ்புரிக்கும். அன்று நீங்களும் ஓர் சாதனையாளராகலாம்!

அன்புக்கு ஓர் முகம்

அறிவுக்கு ஓர் முகம்

ஆராய்ச்சிக்கு ஓர் முகம்

அடக்கத்திற்கு ஓர் முகம்

அமைதிக்கு ஓர் முகம்

அனுபவத்திற்கு ஓர் முகம்

எனத் திகழும் அன்பர் ஷண்முகநாயகம் தீர்க்காயுளுடனும் திட ஆரோக்கியத்துடனும் ஆலமரம் போல் நீடுழி வாழ்ந்து அனைவருக்கும் ஞானதானம் செய்ய வாழ்த்துகின்றேன்.

அன்பாசிகளுடன்

மதுங்கி ஆனா

ஆசிரியர் குறிப்பு: சாமுசித்தர் என்பவர் ஓதாது உணர்ந்தவர், பிற்பிறப்பில்லாதவர். ஸ்ரீ முத்துகிஷ்ண சுவாமிகளைப் பற்றி ரிஷி வாக்கியம் இவ்வாறு குறிப்பிடுகிறது. சுவாமிகள் வள்ளியூரில் ஜீவ சமாதி அடைந்தார்கள்.

‘Saamu-Siddhar’
Sri Muthukishna Swami’s Message of Blessings
concerning C. Shanmuganayagam
-‘a Seeker who has truly experienced the
accomplishment of his search’

Dear ‘Anbar’ Shanmuganayagam, though he still describes himself as a seeker, is one who has really seen fulfilment in his spiritual search. He is an earnest and experienced seeker. Spiritual research is his life-breath. He used to raise several queries concerning the spiritual path, discuss them with fellow seekers and engage in deep contemplation and research in this regard. But he always maintained with great humility that whatever knowledge one has acquired on the spiritual path resembles only a handful of sand as against the totality of sand in the whole world, which represents the spiritual knowledge that one has yet to acquire. Though he refers to himself only as an earnest spiritual seeker with an insatiable yearning for the Truth, he is truly one who has really attained the fulfilment of his search.

His very first contact with me was in March 1970, He was attired in a coat and suit and would always be wearing his socks and hat, and I used to refer to him in good humour as a Swami hiding behind a coat and suit disguise. He was not an ordinary ‘Aasaami’. Those who knew him well would exclaim “Ah!..... there goes a real Saami!”

He is a great repository of spiritual understanding. He is well versed in the English language and he is a walking encyclopaedia and could provide a ready answer on spiritual topics at any time. He is also an accomplished writer in English.

In the course of his spiritual inquiry (Athma-Vichara) he would address several queries to me, like a volley of arrows! He used to inquire from me about the spiritual positions and categories of the various Rishis ranging from the ancient primordial Rishi namely Sri Agastiyar right up to the several Rishis and sages of modern times. He also used to seek confirmation from me regarding historical facts pertaining to the bestowal of spiritual initiation by Agastiya Maharishi from time to time on several ‘Mahaans’ such as Boganatha Rishi and Kriya Babaji and others. He had a special interest in ascertaining the correct time factor relating to various spiritual events and personalities.

This Satha-Abisheka celebration souvenir for ‘Anbar’ Shanmuganayagam, who has virtually witnessed the appearance

of a thousand full moons after his 82nd birth anniversary, is being published so that all spiritually minded persons may have the opportunity to share the knowledge stored in his spiritual treasury. He has taken this birth to clear up certain residuary arrears of his past karma and having had the darshan of several sages and saints has now come to the end of his spiritual search. If the present generation is to benefit from the spiritual experience of this little known advanced sadhaka, who is well on the way to become a Mahaan, they should all read his writings.

'Anbar' Shanmuganayagam has written a book entitled an "Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth" which has been published in India. It is a treasure house of spiritual knowledge. He has presented in the book, with great lucidity, the very essence of universal spiritual knowledge in a nutshell like a nelli fruit on one's palm, so that the present generation who have no time to spare for spiritual matters can easily understand the essentials of spirituality. One should delve deep into the book and try to understand the profound truths in it.

The book is priceless. It is like a casket containing gems, the key of which has been lost. The key to the casket is buddhi and when one has developed buddhi the profound truths contained in the book will get fully revealed to the reader. In order to get a taste of his writings, a few of his philosophical articles also have been included in the Souvenir as a supplement.

Rather than reading what has been said about him in the felicitation souvenir, it would be more profitable to read his own inspired writings even if one does not fully understand them at the beginning. When one reads them over and over again, one day the truth contained in the writings will flash in one's heart and then the reader will also be blessed to realise the end of the search.

May 'Anbar' Shanmuganayagam, whose name signifies the six faces of Lord Muruga, be amply blessed so that each face depicts the Divine qualities of Love, Knowledge, Spiritual yearning, Humility, Serenity and inner Experience. May he live long like the Banyan tree and enjoy good health and bestow Gnana-Dhaanam the gift of Wisdom on all around him.

With Love and Blessings,

Muthukrishna

Editor's note: 'Saamu-Siddhar' is one who is born as a self-realized soul and is exempt from re-birth, as mentioned in the Rishi-Vakiyam pertaining to Sri Muthukrishna Swami who attained Jiva-Samadhi at Vallioor in India.

Sri Muthukrishna Swami's Teachings on Bhakthi Love is God

Compiled by C. Shanmuganayagam

The sage Thirumoolar, in his holy text of 5000 years ago, has stated that we in our ignorance are not aware of the truth that Love and God are one but when any of us happen to grow into the awareness of that truth, we shall ever abide in that truth blissfully thereafter.

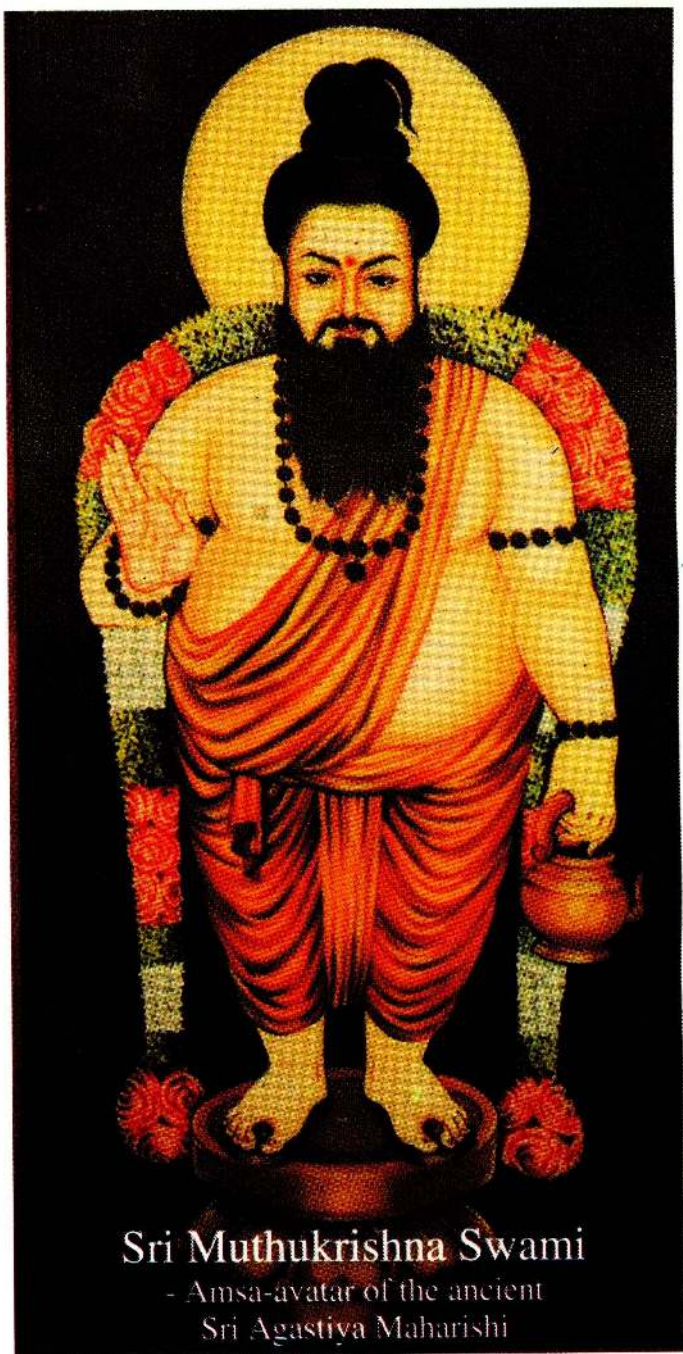
It is also significant that two of the greatest Gnanis whose ultra-rational Advaitic teachings have come down to us, namely Adi Sankaracharya and Sri Ramana, have given expression to very moving devotional songs in praise of the Divine, thus re-affirming the great truth that Parabhakthi and Gnanam are one and the same.

Equally relevant are the teachings of Sri Muthukrishna Swami, who is deemed to be an amsa-avatar of the ageless Maha-Siddhar Sri Agasthya Rishi, the foremost among the long lived ancient Rishis of India with a recorded history of over 12,000 years commencing with the first Tamil Sangam over which he presided at Then-Madurai, in the now sunken continent of Lemuria which spanned the Indian ocean from Cape Comorin to the Antarctica.

True to the all-encompassing nature of the teachings of the founders of the ancient civilizations, Sri Muthukrishna Swami's message on Bhakthi is one that applies to devotees at various levels of understanding. He says there are four stages in the practice of Bhakthi by the ordinary householder.

‘பொய் பழக்கமாகி, பழக்கம் பாவனையாகி, பாவனை மெய்யாகும்.’

(contd)



Sri Muthukrishna Swami
- Amsa-āvatara of the ancient
Sri Agastya Maharishi

FELICITATION SOUVENIR

compiled
on the occasion of
the 82nd Birth Anniversary
of

C. Shanmuganayagam

- an earnest Spiritual Seeker,
'with an insatiable yearning for the Truth'

Containing
Greetings and Messages from Friends
and fellow Spiritual Seekers

With
A Supplement
Setting out some of his recent articles
on Spiritual Themes

on
2nd October 2001
and published on 02nd October 2002

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The first stage is simply to carry out religious practices despite the lack of a proper understanding or conviction about them, in conformity with the actions of other devotees.

The second stage is where one continues to do so, as a matter of habit. The third stage, to which very many graduate, is where the religious practices gain a momentum of 'bhavana' or devotion spontaneously without one's knowledge.

The fourth stage is where any religious practice, whether it be an act of adoration or a song of joy, brings one directly into rapport with the ultimate Truth or Reality.

Devotional songs composed by Sri Agastya Rishi centuries ago do still bring tears of joy to bhaktas who listen to them today at temples or religious meetings by revealing to them the secret that the whole Universe exists within their own hearts. These songs also reveal the illusory nature of our mundane existence, where, as Shakespeare the great English poet says:

*'The great globe itself shall dissolve
And like this insubstantial pageant faded
Leave not a rack behind
We are such stuff as dreams are made on.'*

Sri Muthukrishna Swami, in his talk to devotees, emphasizes the need to go beyond 'buddhi' namely the bare intellectual and theoretical knowledge concerning Reality and get immersed in the bhakthi approach in a practical way, in order to ensure spiritual progress for the devotee.

He urges his devotees to practise 'shraddha-bhakthi,' that is, dedicated and earnest devotion to the Supreme God-head or Parasakthi
(contd)

or to a self-realized Guru who invariably reflects the Universal Consciousness, with a view to attaining Parabhakthi or Gnanam in the end.

He says that recitation of God's name or sacred mantras helps to calm the mind of the devotee, but true Bhakthi demands that the heart of the devotee should melt at the mere mention of the Divine by whatever name it may be described.

‘வள்ளிக்கணவன் பேரை வழப்போக்கன் சொன்னாலும்
உள்ளம் உருகுதடி கிளியோ’

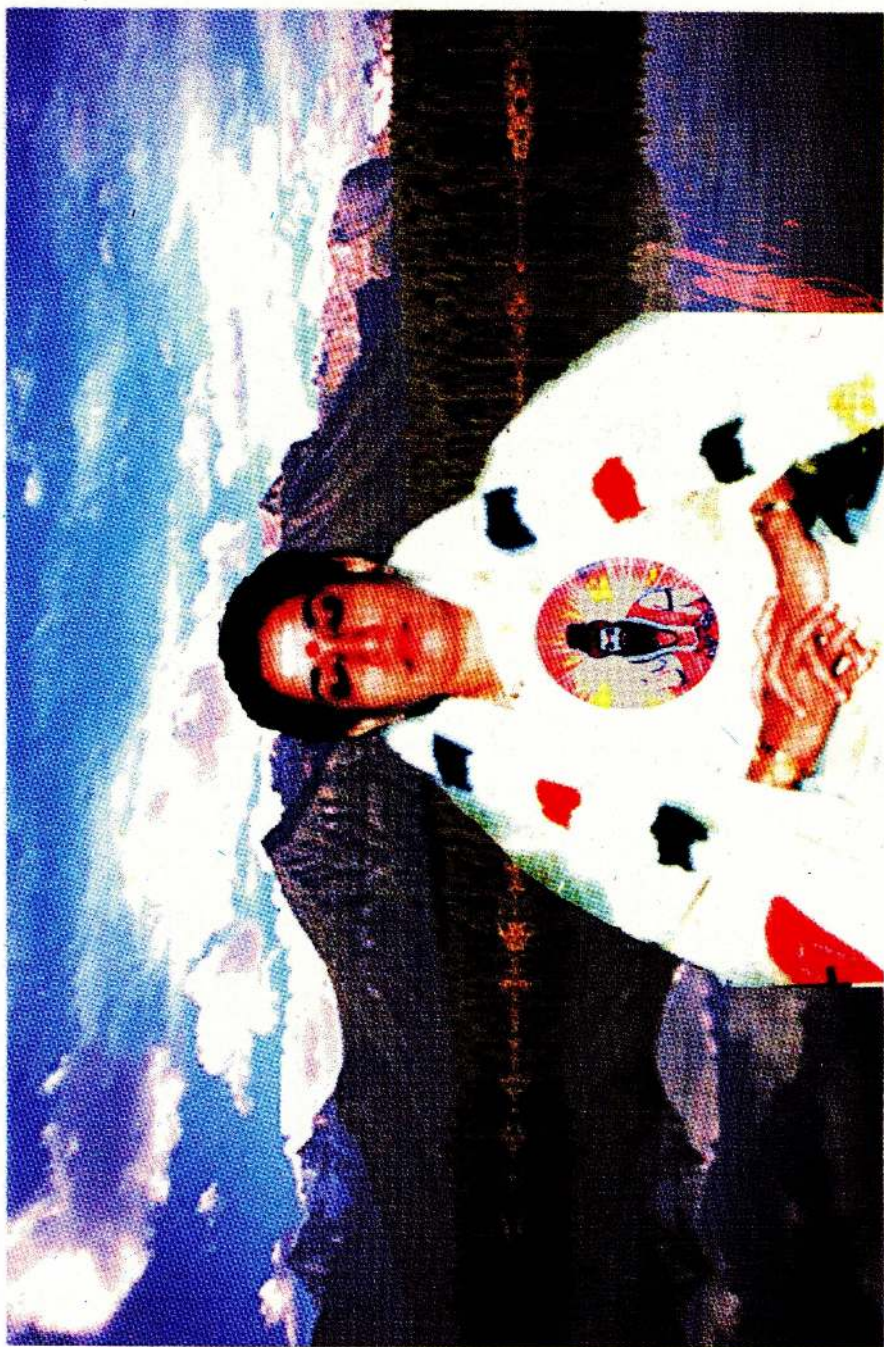
For this experience to take place, there has to be a purification of the devotee's mind by developing a sense of loving care and concern for those around him and a feeling of good-will towards all humanity, resulting from an intuitive perception of the presence of the Divine in all Creation.

*Excerpts from Sri Muthukrishna Swami's Teachings
on Love and Compassion
and how it can manifest in our daily life*

Sri Muthukrishna Swami cited verses from the Thirumanthiram of Sage Thirumoolar, revealed to humanity about 5000 years ago pertaining to Love. Compassion and Bhakthi and, in the course of three discourses **propounded the following precepts** for serious study and observance by his devotees:

அன்பும் சீவமும் கிரண்டென்பர் அறிவிலார்
அன்பே சீவமாவதை யாரும் அறிகிலார்
அன்பே சீவமாவதை யாரும் அறிந்தபின்
அன்பே சீவமாய் அமர்ந்திருந்தாரே

(contd)



Mathaji Vithamma
in full rapport with Saamu -Siddhar
Sri Muthukrishna Swami of Vallioor, India

யாவர்க்குமாம் கிறைவர்க்கொரு பச்சிலை
யாவர்க்குமாம் பசவுக்கு ஒரு வாயுறை
யாவர்க்குமாம் உண்ணும்போது ஒரு கைப்பிடி
யாவர்க்குமாம் பிறர்க்கு கின்னுரைதானே

என்பே வீறகாய் கிறைச்சி அறுத்திட்டு
பொன்போல் கனலில் பொரிய வறுப்பினும்
அன்போடு உருகி அகம் குழைவார்க்கன்றி
என்பொன்மனையே எய்த ஒண்ணாதே

Love and God are two the ignorant say
The transfiguring of Love as God none cognizes
When one has realized that Love and God are one
One ever abides in the consciousness that Love is God.

Sufficient unto all to offer one green leaf while doing worship to God
Sufficient unto all to feed a morsel to any dumb animal
Sufficient unto all to set apart a handful of rice for another while eating
Sufficient unto all to speak kindly to others whoever they be.

Even if one performs extremely severe tapas
By mortifying one's body in the raging fire
One cannot reach the Beloved Divine Effulgence
Unless one's heart melts with love and the 'I' fades away.

-Thirumoolar

Sri Muthukrishna Swami diagnosed the absence of love and compassion generally in our lives as due to various obstacles and conditionings that have arisen in our mental outlook and suggested the following practical ways and means of surmounting these obstacles in our daily life:

(contd)

- (1) **By talking kindly to others**, as enjoined by Thirumoolar, remembering that kindness should be both in thought and word.
- (2) **By placing oneself in the position of the other person** one is dealing with and endeavouring to understand the situation and mental outlook of such person, without necessarily accepting his point of view.
- (3) **By thinking of others instead of oneself**: namely by serving others without thought of recompense and feeling happy at the happiness of others, instead of being concerned with one's own interest most of the time or indulging in self-pity.
- (4) **By adjusting and accommodating with others**, namely where there is a conflict of interest by yielding the benefit of the situation to others, instead of expecting others to allow us the benefit.
- (5) **By the avoidance of justification**, inwardly in our mind or outwardly to others, of our conduct or attitude, even when we know it to be wrong; namely by readily acknowledging our mistakes and making amends.
- (6) **By constantly feeling grateful to the Divine** for what we are, for the food, clothing and shelter that we enjoy, for this complex body of ours continuing to work in harmony and good health despite our maltreating it in so many ways.
- (7) **By listening to the Guru's teachings with a completely open and silent mind**, with the 'I' feeling in abeyance, with no thought of one's name, one's designation or one's status or achievements, as only the Guru's grace can effectively eliminate one's ego for good and permeate one's being with Divine love.

Swami Shantanand's statement about Shan
- made on 27th May 2002, to a Satsang group in Colombo.

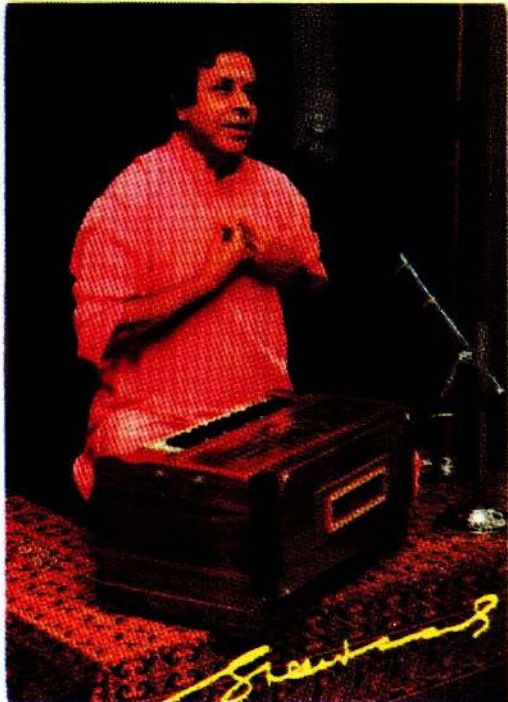
"A soul goes through the stages of evolution - birth after birth for thousands of years. And seated there is the wisdom of 5000 years of evolution. People are thinking of bringing out a special felicitation publication for Shan and interested persons have made requests to me through e-mail etc on several occasions to write something about Shan - some message of blessings. They see Shan as an 82 year old man, entering the Sathabishekam stage of life. But what they do not see and do not realize is the important fact that a 5000 year old wisdom is condensed in this body, you call Shan. I see that. So what can I say or write about this 5000 year old ancient wisdom?

This body Shan, containing the wisdom of 5000 years, has gone through the Brahmacharya stage of questioning, investigating, experimenting and seeking the Reality, the Truth. It's endeavour was hard and sincere. Then it entered the Grahastham stage with a beautiful divine union with Valli - sublimating all his sensual and sexual energies. One complemented the other and it was the union of two hearts.

Now this body Shan, has gracefully stepped into the Vaanaprastham stage. It has begun it's journey to get stabilized with the ancient wisdom. It has also begun to put pen to paper - giving us a taste of its wisdom. Because of his legal training, he has developed a facile and expressive way of writing. Even I am using that body - Shan - to write or comment about our dance dramas. You could see and feel the freshness, the ethereal beauty in his comments, in his writings. So I am learning from him too. What can I say or write about Shan - this 5000 year old condensed wisdom? So I remain silent. (contd)

Another couple of years or so, we will be deprived even of this body! Then what do we say? - that Shan is no more? But the wisdom is imperishable. So what do you write about? The perishable body or the imperishable wisdom? They go on asking me, 'ஏதாவது ஒரு வாழ்த்து எழுதுங்கோ.' Now tell me, what can I write or say from out of my brain about this ancient wisdom that is 5000 years old? So I keep quiet. And I am myself waiting for an inspiration from my heart."

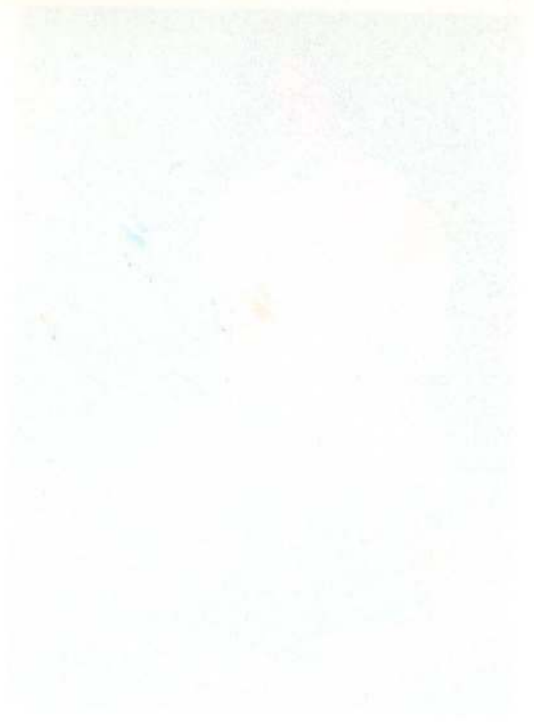
*Editor, Felicitation Souvenir
as reported by Niya Shivam*



'In the Chambers of my heart
A Shrine I have for thee
Come oh Lord, Come oh Light,
Come Thou dwell in Me
- Swami Shantanand

SHAN & Valli
with
Swami Shantanand





VIMALA THAKAR

SHIVKUTI, MOUNT ABU
RAJASTHAN 307501
PHONE -02974-38434 FAX-38596

My dear Shannaji,

It was a sheer delight to receive your short and sweet letter of 9th Sept. Your statement will be published in the next issue of the Invincible. It is such a joy, to see a few Friends from Sri Lanka with us in Mt. Abu. Dear Madhuriben has not changed a bit than what I had seen her fifteen to twenty years back.

Dear Brother, dear Valliji, and Yourself, have been a source of deep friendship, strength and inspiration to the students of J. Krishnamurti. **Both of you have showered sacred affection on Vimala and helped her cause immensely.** By Grace of Life, you are still there, guiding and helping dear Nithiya in so many ways. I have read your book very carefully, some years ago. The unconditional receptivity and willingness to learn are really remarkable in your life.

For a person who has spent a life of constant travelling and speaking for over fifty years, Vimala is keeping physically reasonably well.

With deep love and profound respects,

Vimala Thakar

**A Biographical Sketch
of Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam
compiled by his friends, on the occasion
of his 82nd Birth Anniversary**

A few friends of Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam recently called on him and interviewed him, in order to obtain **some basic facts about his life, particularly about his multi-faceted religious activities and his significant writings on philosophical and spiritual themes**, in connection with the preparation of a felicitation souvenir by his friends on the occasion of his 82nd birth anniversary. We set out herein a brief statement of the facts, as gathered by us, while he was reminiscing about past events.

Shan, as he was known to most of his friends and contemporaries, and Shan Iyah, as affectionately called by a younger generation of youths who came under his liberal but unobtrusive guidance, was born in a conservative fashion at his parents home at Maha Walavu, Kopay, Jaffna in Sri Lanka, (and not in a hospital as is the custom today), on 2nd October 1919, which happened to be the 50th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (which may well be one reason why he is a staunch Gandhi-ite and pacifist in his outlook!)

He told us that in his school days, though he was a boxer representing his College at the All Ceylon Schools Boxing tournament (or rather because of his boxing, where one learns to receive blows with absolute tranquility) **he realized early in life that to get angry with anyone was futile and more hurtful to oneself psychologically than to the person with whom one got angry**, and hence he took the plain common sense decision not to hurt oneself by allowing the emotion of anger to invade one's mind. He said it is as simple as that!

(contd)

His father the late Gate Mudaliyar N. Canaganayagam, was a strict disciplinarian at home, and meticulous in his public work. He was Mayor of Kandy in 1942, having been elected by a pan - Sinhala Municipal Council during an era when ethnic conflict, still less ethnic differentiation, was completely absent in the minds of the people and there was peace and prosperity in the country. His grand-father was the late Adigar A. Naganathar of Kopay, a retired Banker and centenarian of simple habits who lived up to the ripe old age of 103 years. Shan said that, according to the tradition of those times, his mother Nagarathina Ammal got married at 12 years of age and he was born when she was 13 years old and her fifth and last child was born when she was 22 years old. She had a tranquil and peaceful temperament, he recalls, which he probably inherited. His father, however, was 26 years old and quite mature when he got married to his mother.

His brothers and sisters, all younger to him, are Prof. C. Suriyakumaran, former Asia Director, UNEP, in the United Nations service, Mr. C. Sankarakumaran, Banker and member of the Provincial Public Service Commission, Kandy, Sethupillai, wife of the late Mr.C.Balasingham of the Ceylon Civil Service and the late Lankanayaky, wife of the late Mr.D. Senathirajah, Govt. Valuer in Sri Lanka and later in Zambia. His brothers-in-law were the late Mr.S. Ambalavaner, Tax Consultant, and the late Mr.S.Kathiravelupillai, M.P. for Kopay.

Shan married Valli, daughter of Mr. S. Sivasubramaniam, Proctor of Hultsdorf and a well-known writer and protagonist of peace and harmony in the country, on Independence day on 4th February 1949 after a period of pre-emptive romantic courtship, despite the possibility of it turning out to be an arranged marriage between two

(contd)

second cousins by virtue of an understanding among elders. Shan, who has written widely about re-birth and the law of karma, says his courtship may have been a carry-over from a previous birth relationship with Valli. **Their wedding took place at the Munieswaram temple near Chilaw as a very simple and private ceremony and they proceeded to Kataragama temple immediately thereafter, walking part of the way to Kataragama,** as it was not directly accessible by car at that time, **to consecrate their house-holder's life to the service of the needy and the devotees of all religions,** as they were both religiously inclined though in different ways. She was dynamic and compassionate in her outlook, while Shan tended to be detached and meditative in his approach. Nevertheless there was complete understanding and an abiding affection between them during their 49 years of married life. She passed away in April 1998 after a brief illness having lived a full life of dedicated service to one's fellow beings.

Shan and Valli had no children of their own, but it happened that they adopted or were guardians of as many as 21 minor children from among their relations as well as from families of friends, whom they themselves personally maintained or in some cases acted as their guardians and administered their assets.

Shan recalls his educational career as a child passing through several schools, commencing with the Arumuga Navalar Children's Tamil school at Kopay, then the English Kindergarten class at St. John's College, Chundikuli, Jaffna, followed by a few month's stint at the Nazareth Convent at Nuwara Eliya where his father was working as Guarantee Shroff of the National Bank of India Ltd, Nuwara Eliya Branch, at that time, then at the Girls High School, Katukelle, Kandy in 1925, and shortly thereafter at St. Scholasticas

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Girls School, Hill Street, Kandy, before being admitted to the primary classes of the boys' school at St. Anthony's College, in Kandy, to which city his father got transferred from N' Eliya as Bank Shroff. Shan continued there from 1927 to 1937 and joined the Ceylon University College in Colombo after passing the Cambridge Junior Examination with Honours and the London Matriculation examination in the First Division and also the London Inter-Arts examination from St. Anthony's College at Kandy. Thereafter he passed the B.A. History (Honours) examination of the London University from Colombo in 1941 and joined the Law College at Hultsdorf and was enrolled as an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Ceylon in August 1946. He has now completed 55 years at the Bar.

During his College days at Kandy he recalls being a member of the Senior Cadet Corps and attending the Annual Cadet camps at Diyatalawa on two occasions and being promoted to the rank of Company Sergeant-Major for all the platoons in the Kandy District and also competing in a gruelling 5 mile marathon run over the hills and dales of Diyatalawa. He also won a medal at an oratorical contest held for candidates from all the schools in the Kandy District, by rendering Abraham Lincoln's famous Gettysburg speech with gusto!

At the University College in Colombo he was a popular speaker at the 'Varsity Union meetings and as Secretary of the Union once personally met Mr.S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike at his Hultsdorf residence and invited him to participate in a Union debate. On another occasion Shan presided at a University student's Hall dinner, at which Sir Baron Jayatilaka, the Head of the Cabinet, and Susantha De Fonseka, Deputy Speaker, and Fr. Peter Pillai, the brilliant academic of his times, were the principal guests and the House was in peals of laughter at the subtle witticisms in the president's speech that were directed against the establishment in true 'Varsity style.

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He also participated in all the games at the 'Varsity-football, rugger, hockey, athletics etc, though not at the level of being awarded colours, and was particularly adept at gymnastics, roller-skating, tap-dancing and stunt riding on motor cycles etc. He was a popular rag leader at the 'Varsity during an era (between 1937 & 1940) when rags were pure fun and entertainment and had not descended to that level of depravity which it acquired in later years.

Shan recalled nostalgically the names of a few octogenarian friends of his, some of whom are still living today, and who were his colleagues at the University College, Colombo, during the period 1937 to 1941 - Mr.P.A. Jayawardena, member of the 'Varsity Union Committee along with him, later Chartered Accountant, Income Tax Assessor and Chief Accountant, Lake House etc., Mr.M.B. Ratnayake, fellow member of the 'Varsity Curia Historica Society, presently committee member of the J. Krishnamurti Centre, and Sam Wijesinha, later Secretary-General of Parliament. Sam's brother-in-law Mr. Esmond Wickremasinghe, now deceased, father of Prime Minister Ranil, was a colleague and close friend of his, said Shan. So was Mr. Douglas Amarasekera, a brilliant scholar and versatile artist, who was later Professor of Mathematics, and Ven. Bhikku Walpola Rahula Thero the well - known Buddhist scholar and author.

Before he entered the legal profession, both during his law-student days and earlier, Shan had the rare privilege and **benefit of meeting and listening to the cultured orations of eminent Indian scholars and national leaders**, such as Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, later President of India, and Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri, described as the silver-tongued orator of the British Empire, in the nineteen thirties, Sri C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, Dewan of Travancore, Sri T.M. Krishnasamy Iyer, Chief Justice of Travancore, known as 'Thirupuhazh Mani' on

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account of the religious 'pada-yatras' that he undertook, and Sri.Lakshmanasamy Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University in the nineteen forties, and Sri C. Rajagopalachari, former Governor-General of India, in 1961 after his retirement.

He also met and corresponded with Kulapati K.M. Munshi in Bombay in 1968, and Sri Ajit Patwardhan, the well-known freedom fighter, in the 1980's during his period of retirement at Adyar in Madras. He had also occasion to meet Swami Ranganathananda, the world - renowned cultural ambassador of India, who is presently the Head of the Ramakrishna Mission in Calcutta, on his first visit to Ceylon in the 'fifties and personally recorded, as an active volunteer of the Ramakrishna Mission, Colombo, the full series of the profound religious talks delivered by him and sent copies of the recordings to the Indian centres as well.

When he entered the legal profession, Shan applied himself to the practice of the law with enthusiasm and diligence at the beginning, confining himself to the more congenial work in the Appeal Court where he had to present an argument on a given brief and not get involved in the rough and tumble of cross-examining witnesses etc. as in the original Court. He had the benefit of appearing with and learning from the experience of such stalwarts at the Bar as F.A. Hayley K.C., R.L. Pereira K.C. H. V. Perera Q.C, the most brilliant Advocate of his time, E.F.N. Gratien Q.C., N.E. Weera sooriya Q.C., S.J. V. Chelvanayagam Q.C., S. Nadesan Q.C and several other eminent lawyers of that era. But later he got disillusioned with the inner satisfaction that one derives from the interpretation or manipulation of man-made law, which struck him as mere quibbling with words, and **gave up legal practice about the year 1976 and moved on to the field of research in regard to a much higher law namely the** (contd)

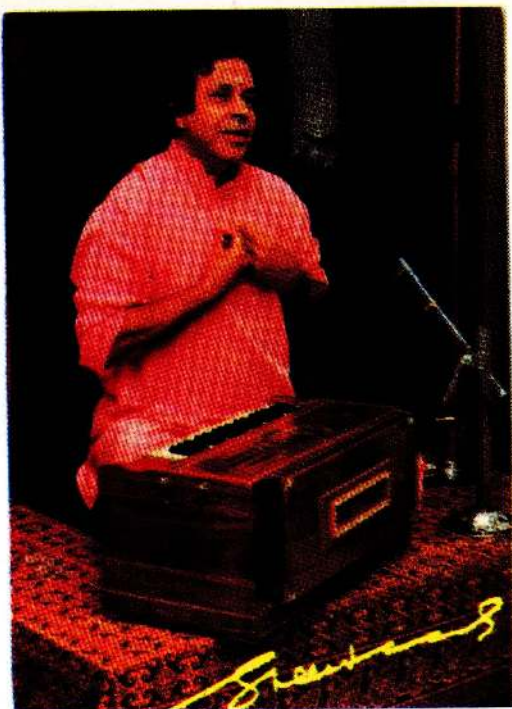
inexorable law of Karma ordained by the Cosmic Intelligence and other spiritual laws, emerging from the discovery of Love as the source of all energy, the most dynamic force in the Universe, the standard of all judgement, and the basis of all morality, as so succinctly described by the Ancient Mystical Order of Rosicrucians (AMORC).

He also mentioned that during the period that he was involved **in the practice of the law he observed strict ethical values** and on certain occasions actually returned fees that had been paid to him by his clients if they exceeded a self-imposed standard of fees that he had set for himself as reasonable and proper, despite other lawyers charging very much higher fees from their clients. He also encouraged clients generally to settle their disputes out of court rather than engage in prolonged and costly litigation, though the latter option would have benefited himself and the other lawyers concerned. In this connection it might be relevant to mention that he had also declined to accept any patrimonial inheritance of property from his father, in order to be able to mediate with detachment and fairness in any family dispute that might arise among his siblings in regard to the details of their inheritances.

Shan mentioned that even in regard to monies earned by him he always felt that he was only a Trustee of such monies to be spent equitably for the benefit of all, and not the exclusive owner of his earnings.

Despite his physical activities of an outgoing nature, and his initial interest in the legal profession, it was at the 'Varsity that he developed a contemplative streak in his character. Bernard Shaw's profound philosophical witticisms in the prefaces to his plays captured his imagination and **delving into the scientific expositions**

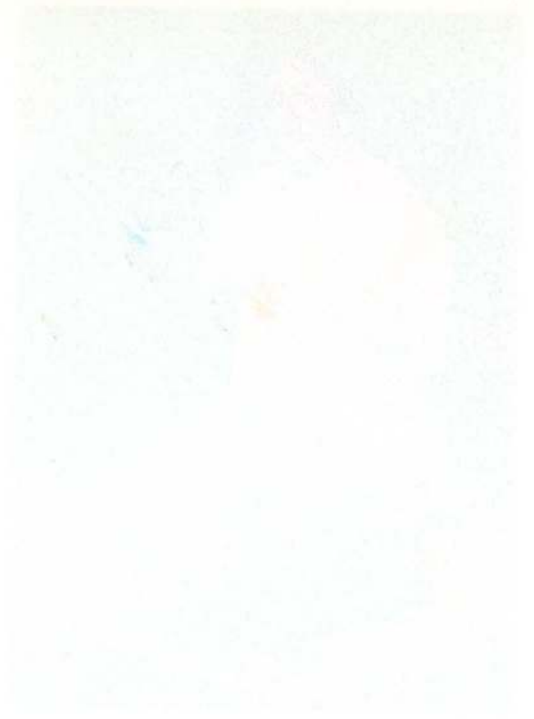
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'In the Chambers of my heart
A Shrine I have for thee
Come oh Lord, Come oh Light,
Come Thou dwell in Me
- Swami Shantanand

SHAN & Valli
with
Swami Shantanand





of the facts relating to one's after-life and the vast occult world contained in the writings of the Theosophists **became a passion with him. He was wondering how naive and self-deluded all his fellow students at the 'Varsity were**, being interested only in gathering knowledge on mundane subjects, to equip themselves for a professional career.

Shan continued his reminiscing. He said that the child-hood propensity for creating a dream world of heroes, ranging from the dashing cow-boy of the films or a world heavy-weight boxing champion or the dare-devil motor cyclist looping the loop inside the globe of death, **now developed into an intense admiration and reverence for the spiritually advanced Mahatmas and self-realized beings on this earth**, who stood out like giants in a world of Lilliputians. **To him all worldly celebrities appeared to be like small children, immature and ignorant of the eternal verities of life.** He said that **thereafter he became, not God-intoxicated, but Mahaan-intoxicated, and started a long journey of seeking the Satsangh of saints and sages both in Sri Lanka and in India.**

Shan recalled at this stage that **there was a double romance in his life**, in that when he surrendered his heart to Valli, his wife to be, he simultaneously experienced the first vestiges of the surrender of his ego to the Divine. Valli's ever-caring and compassionate disposition, which prompted him to write several love-poems about her, effected **a palpable spiritual transformation in him**, whereby his earlier self-centred outlook on life disappeared completely **and he became sensitive to the joys and sorrows of people around him.** Some of his love poems were remarkably philosophical in content.

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In the nineteen forties, he had the good fortune to meet and receive the blessings of Sri Ramana Maharishi, Sri Jiddu Krishnamurti, Paramacharya of Kanchi, Yogaswamigal of Jaffna and Elijah Grey, an advanced Rosicrucian initiate from the Samoan Royal family. In the fifties he had the Satsangh of Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, Swami Ramdas of Kanhangad, Omkara Swami of Jnanodaya Alayam, Madras, and Guru Bawa, an advanced Sufi mystic of Sri Lanka. In the sixties he had met and had darshan of the Mother of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondichery and of Sri Sathya Sai Baba in Bombay at the World conference and at Puttaparthi, and became **one of the founder members of the Sri Sathya Sai movement in Sri Lanka in 1965.**

Shortly afterwards in the seventies he met in Sri Lanka Swami Shantanand of Rishikesh and Vimala Thakar of Mount Abu and Mahesh Yogi of the T.M. movement and **was a pioneer in organizing the spreading of each of their spiritual teachings in Sri Lanka,** through three different independent spiritual organizations called the **Shiva Family, Friends of Vimala Group and the T.M. centre,** by acting as the convenor for these organizations.

He has been a **founder-member of the J. Krishnamurti Centre in Sri Lanka** since 1949 along with Dr. E.W. Adikaram, having had his first interview with Krishnaji in Madras in 1947. He was **also a founder-member of the Sri Aurobindo Circle in Sri Lanka** in 1961 and of a larger organization called the Sri Aurobindo Society in 1975 along with Mr. V. Murugesu. In the late eighties **he introduced Prof. Mulay of the Agnihotra spiritual movement in Pune, India,** to the Ministry of Hindu Religious Affairs **in Sri Lanka** and helped to organize an Island-wide campaign for the performance by numerous devotees of the brief sunrise and sunset Agnihotra healing fire ceremony, which causes a wide magnetic

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column of Pranic energy to develop around the fire, similar to the Agnihotra ceremony performed by the hut-dwellers in Bhopal, India, which rendered them miraculously immune to the poisonous fumes that killed hundreds of people in that area. He was also **a founder-member of the organizing Committee**, along with Mr. Thiruvengadam, Manager, Indian Overseas Bank, Colombo, that arranged **for the initial lecture tours of Swami- Chinmayananda in Sri Lanka**, before the establishment of the Chinmaya Mission in Sri Lanka.

Shan remarked somewhat humorously that in the early years of his spiritual quest he used to put forward innumerable questions for clarification whenever he met any Sages or Saints, so much so that Swami Ramdas once hailed him as he entered a discussion group, as 'Here comes the Question mark'. Shan states that now, after years of some sort of spiritual development, it would be appropriate to describe him as an 'Exclamation mark', as he is wonder-struck at everything that he sees in Nature, with its intricate kaleidoscopic unfolding of Life.

Shan said that it was in 1970 that he had the first direct contact with an invisible Sage, namely Sri Muthukrishna Swami who attained Jiva-samadhi at Vallioor in South India at the age of 179 years. He said that thereafter he was able to contact and receive valuable spiritual messages from a galaxy of disembodied Sages and Saints in the Higher worlds through the courtesy of Sri Muthukrishna Swami and of Mataji Vithagam, who is in constant rapport with the Swami and has been gifted with the rare faculty of being a channel for high Celestial Beings and well-known Mahatmas of a previous era, who are now residing in the sixth Higher Plane of existence called Tapoloka. He said that confirmation of these spiritual truths was obtained by him from a

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Kapila Rishi -Vakkiyam that became available to him in India in 1972 and also on a reading of her unique horoscope, which indicates an unusually high standard of spiritual attainment. It was revealed in the Rishi Vakkiyam, among other things, that Sri Muthukrishna Swami, whose spiritual messages are channelled through Mataji Vithagam, is an amsa-avatar of the ancient Sri Agastiya Mahamuni, that Mathaji Vithagam is the recipient of the 'Poorna' blessings of Sri Agastiya Mahamuni by virtue of sustained devotion in several past lives, and that Shan and Valli happend to be her parents in a previous incarnation. That might well explain their functioning as foster - parents and guardians of Mataji Vithagam in this life since 1970. Shan also mentioned that he got acquainted with Sri K. Manickavasagam Pillai, the father of Mataji Vithagam and the founder of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission, as early as in the year 1950 when the latter called on him to seek legal advice in Colombo, and thereafter there developed a very close friendship between them as fellow spiritual seekers or rather as long lost brothers, probably of many previous births. He said that his eldest son Sri Muthukrishnan also has a deep spiritual bent of mind.

Shan further stated that he had witnessed on several occasions the functioning of 'Ema' **siddhi** (ஏமாசித்தி) in Mathaji Vithamma's body while she was in a state of semi-trance, when both living as well as disembodied saints had occupied her physical body, by way of temporary transmigration, to bestow their blessings on her and on other devotees. He said he has reliably learnt that she also has **the capacity, while fully conscious and in rapport with Sri Muthukrishna Swami, to experience very clearly the holy presence, in luminous bindu form, of numerous saints and sages and also celestials, whenever she conducts an elaborate pooja**

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Mathaji Vithamma
with her
Foster - Parent
& Guardian, SHAN

SHAN
after the
82nd Birthday
Kumbabishekam.

- with
Baby Shyamala



with homam etc in any place. Likewise, she is able to advise devotees regarding their ailments and other life problems, based on her clairvoyant perception of their karmic background pertaining to their previous incarnations. Shan also said that on rare occasions she had acted as a channel for the manifesting of Ambal Herself namely Maha Tripurasundari, as experienced and vouched for by Vidvan Lakshmanan, the President of the All India Council of Astrological Science of India. Likewise, Shan recalled Sri Aurobindo stating that he had experienced and vouched for, Mira the Mother of the Pondichery Ashram being a channel for the triple Divine Shakthis.

Shan finally mentioned that once he had established a singularly unique conversational contact from March 1970 onwards with the sage Sri Muthukrishna Swami, a Trikala Gnani and the amsa - avatar of the ageless Sri Agastiya Mahamuni, the guru of all gurus, who has functioned as the premier Rishi and the architect of world civilizations, during the past 12,000 years of recorded history since the Ramayana period, both in India and in the now sunken continent of Lemuria which extended from Cape Comorion to the Antarctica, he felt no need thereafter to go in search of other saints and sages to imbibe the Ancient Wisdom. Shan however continued to act as founder-member or convenor of several religious organizations formed in Sri Lanka to spread the teachings of some of the visiting spiritual teachers of that era.

In 1971 when Swami Shantanand of Rishikesh arrived in Sri Lanka for the first time and was known as 'Mod-Swami' because of his modern outlook and attire and his attracting the youth to attend his inspiring bhajans which were often held in public parks

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in picnic style, Shan inquired from Sri Muthukrishna Swami about this new 'Mod-Swami' in town who looked like Rajesh Khanna the film star. Sri Muthukrishna Swami replied that, despite his outward appearance, this so-called 'Mod Swami' was really a saint at heart and was worthy of all reverence and respect as a Divinely blessed Spiritual Teacher. Shan thereafter actively organized all public meetings for him in Colombo and the outstations, whenever Swami Shantanand visited Sri Lanka.

Shan also stated that he inquired from Sri Muthukrishna Swami about another international Spiritual Teacher, Vimala Thakar of Mount Abu, who arrived in Sri Lanka in February 1971 and whose public meetings were organized by Shan, and he was told that she was a worthy spiritual awakener in the category of Swami Vivekananda and would be able to inspire her followers greatly on the path to liberation.

Another fact that Sri Muthukrishna Swami has disclosed, as mentioned by Shan, is as follows. It is reported that Leadbeater the well-known mystic of the Theosophical Society, when he saw the aura of young Jiddu Krishnamurti, perceived clairvoyantly the potential of great spiritual development in the youth in later years. Likewise Swamiji has stated that **one of his dedicated devotees** whose aura he had seen, though not disclosing any signs of special spiritual development now, **would later blossom out as an advanced spiritual initiate** entrusted with the carrying forward of Swamiji's work and bearing a name indicative of his bountiful heart.

Shan has written several articles to the Press from time to time on spiritual topics of perennial interest with remarkable depth of

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understanding and lucidity of presentation. The subjects dealt with include Inquiry into the Self, Meditation in its various forms, Scientific Investigation into Life after Death, the Law of Karma the Eternal Cosmic Law, 'Why Creation', the Illusion of Time and Space, the state of Enlightenment, Love as the most dynamic force in the Universe etc. **Some of these articles had been compiled into a book and published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan of Bombay in 1998. It is entitled 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth'** and is a challenge and an inspiration to all young seekers who are imbued with a scientific outlook. It has been reviewed very favourably and **recommended for reading by young seekers all around the world by several leading scholars and journals** such as 'Bhavans Journal', the 'Vision', 'Vedanta Kesari' and by the former editor of 'The Mountain Path'. The publishers have distributed over 300 complimentary copies of the book to various University libraries in India, for the benefit of the students, Recent articles sent to the Press, however, have not been compiled into book form. yet. They are being included as a supplement to this Felicitation Souvenir.

One of the reviews, namely in the 'Vedanta Kesari', states that the 'the book is a scientific analysis of the spiritual world, based on the author's personal contacts with many enlightened souls. The book is remarkable, insightful and unusually illuminative. It is sure to fan the flame of inquiry in an earnest seeker, so that he becomes a light unto himself.'

At the conclusion of the interview Shan recalled the famous lines of Wordsworth in his 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality' namely 'Trailing clouds of glory we come from God who is our home. Heaven lies about us in our infancy...." and said that **every human being has spontaneous ecstatic glimpses of Immortality at some time**

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or other in his life, but that we tend to dismiss them as hallucinations and lose the benefit of these experiences. In his own life, he recalled an experience, when he was about seven years old, where for hours together he felt as though he was the sole centre of Reality or Pure Consciousness and that all others around him including his parents were unreal and illusory.

Shan further remarked that **according to the teachings of all the Sages, Reality is to be found in the space or interval between two thoughts and even an ordinary individual can have a glimpse of it in the depths of one's being, in a state of Pure Awareness, bereft of thought**, during certain relaxed and silent moments of the mind. Such glimpses, Shan said, transpire when suddenly one happens to view a magnificent breath-taking scene from a mountain top and momentarily one's thought process comes to a grinding halt, or even when in a moment of inspiration one 'sees a world in a grain of sand and Heaven in a wild flower' as so beautifully expressed by William Blake the mystical poet. Shan talked enthusiastically about how these glimpses occur and that **there is a welling up of joy from the heart, when one communes with Nature** in a receptive mood and becomes one with the tender trembling bo- leaves as they dance and sway in the wind or with the care - free birds that soar joyously into the clear - blue sky.

m.m.

Convenor

Felicitation souvenir publication Committee

அருள் திரு. சண்முகநாயகம்!

உயர்திரு சி. சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள் என்னுடைய உள்ளத்தில் மாபெருந்தத்துவ ஞானியாக, ஒரு மகாத்மாவாகத் திகழ்கிறார் என்பதைப் பரிபூரணமான பக்தி லயத்துடன் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

ஏறத்தாழ நான்கு ஆண்டுகளாகத்தான் இந்த மாபெரும் ஞானியுடன் பேசவும் பழகவும் அன்னாரின் உள்ளத்தில் ஒரு நல்லிடத்தைப் பெறவும் வாய்ப்புப் பெற்றிருந்தாலும் கூட, நீண்ட காலம் என்னுடன் நீக்கமற நிறைந்த ஒருவராக முதல் சந்திப்பிலேயே என் உள்ளத்தில் ஓர் அறிவொளியைப் பரப்பியவர்.

ஏராளமாக ஆன்மிகச் சாதனைகளைச் செய்திருக்கும் அவரின் வாழ்க்கை வரலாற்றினைக் கேட்டறிந்தபோது 'ஆகா, எப்போப்பட்ட மகாத்மாவை இன்று நான் சந்திக்கிறேன்' என்று முதல் சந்திப்பிலேயே ஒரு புதிய மலர்ச்சி என்னுள் எழக்கண்டேன்.

சமரச சன்மார்க்கத்திலும் மத மார்க்கங்களிலும் வேதவேதாந்த விசாரங்களிலும் ஆன்மீகச் சிந்தனைகளிலும் அவர் தம்முடைய வாழ்க்கையின் பெரும்பாலான பகுதியை ஈடுபடுத்தி, அரும்பெரும் ஞான போதனைகளை மக்களுக்கு வழங்கியுள்ளார் என்பது நிதர்சனமான உண்மை.

என்னுடைய ஆன்மீகப் பயணத்தில் அவதார புருஷர்களையும், அவதார மங்கையர்கள் சிலரையும், அவர்களுக்கெல்லாம் அப்பாற்பட்டு, தனிச் சக்தியாக என் உள்ளே ஒளி வீசுகின்ற சுவாமி வித்தக விநாயக வடிவு அம்மா அவர்களையும் சந்திக்கும் அற்புதமான வாய்ப்புக்களைப் பெற்றுள்ள நான், மகான் சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்களையும் சந்திக்கக் கிடைத்ததை நான் பெற்ற பெரும்பேறாகக் கருதுகிறேன்.

(தொடர்ச்சி)

அவரின் நண்பர்கள், அவரின் ஞான போதனைகளைக் கேட்டுத் தெளிவு கொண்ட சீடர்கள், ஆகியோரெல்லாம் அவரால் பெற்ற நற்பயன்கள் கணக்கிலடங்காதவை ஆகும் என்பதை அவர் வரலாற்றிலிருந்து நான் அறிகிறேன்.

மகாத்மா காந்தி பிறந்த அதே மாதம் அதே தேதி, ஆனால் மகாத்மா காந்தியின் ஐம்பதாவது வயதில் நம்முடைய மகாத்மா சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள் தோற்றம் தந்திருக்கிறார்.

இது எப்பேர்ப்பட்ட பொருத்தம் என்பதை நான் எண்ணிப்பார்க்கும் போது என் உள்ளத்தில் ஆன்மீகப் பிணைப்பின் பரிமாணம் பற்றிய உணர்வு பொங்கிக் பெருகிறது.

மகாத்மா காந்தி தம்முடைய சத்திய சோதனை என்கிற நூலில் உள்ளம் சிலிர்க்கும்படியாக எப்படிச் சம்பவங்களையும் அனுபவங்களையும் வழங்கி, நம்மை ஆழ்ந்த சிந்தனையில் மிதக்க விட்டாரோ, அவ்வாறு தனது வாழ்க்கை வரலாற்றை நம்முடைய மகாத்மா சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள் முழு நூலாக வழங்கவில்லை என்றாலும், அவரின் வேதவேதாந்த விளக்கங்கள், அங்கங்கே இலைமறை காய்போல் வெளிவந்துள்ள சம்பவங்கள், மற்றும் அவருடன் நெருங்கிப் பழகிய ஆன்றோர்கள், சான்றோர்கள் ஆகியோரின் விளக்கங்கள் ஆகியவை எல்லாம் என் உள்ளத்திலே பசுமையாக ஒளிர்கின்றன.

இனிய சொற்களால் ஏனைய உள்ளங்களில் தெளிவூட்ட வேண்டும் என்பதையும், யாருடைய மனத்தையும் சினங்கொண்டு புண்படுத்தக் கூடாது என்பதையும் பள்ளிப் பருவத்திலிருந்தே தம்முடைய மூலக்கொள்கைகளாகக் கொண்டவர் மகான் சண்முகநாயகம் என்பது நான் பலரும் சொல்லக்கேட்டு அறிந்த உண்மை.

கண்டி மாநகரின் மேயராக விளங்கியவர் இவர் தந்தை.

(தொடர்ச்சி)

அவருடைய தந்தையின் தந்தை 103 ஆண்டுகள் வாழ்ந்த பெரியவர் ஆவார்.

அன்னையும் அரும்பெரும் பண்புகளின் திலகமாகத் திகழ்ந்தவர். பெரிய குடும்பம், உன்னதமான பாரம்பரியம் என்று சொல்ல வேண்டும். மனைவியின் திருநாமம் வள்ளி. நாட்டின் அமைதிக்காக அரும் பெரும் பணிகள் ஆற்றிய ஒரு தியாகியின் குமாரி ஆவார்.

1919-ல் பிறந்த இவர் இப்போது 83 - ஆவது வயதில் நடை போட்டுக் கொண்டிருக்கின்றார்.

சில ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பு மனைவியைப் பிரிந்த இவர், தனித்து வாழ்கிறார். ஆனால் இவரைச் சுற்றி ஏராளமான மெய்யன்பர்கள் இருக்கிறார்கள்.

முக்கியமாக நான் வழிபடுகின்ற சுவாமி வித்தக விநாயக வடிவு அம்மா அவர்கள் இவரைக் கண்ணை இமை காப்பது போல் காத்து வருகிறார் என்று சொல்ல வேண்டும்.

இளம் பருவத்தில் வீரதீர பராக்கிரமங்கள் நிறைந்த சாதனைகள் செய்து, பின்னர் ஞான யோகியாகவும், கர்மயோகியாகவும் திகழத் தொடங்கி, சுவாமி வித்தக விநாயக வடிவு அம்மா அவர்களின் தந்தையார் திரு. மாணிக்கவாசகம் அவர்களின் உற்ற துணையாக அமைந்து சுவாமி அம்மா அவர்களை, சுவாமி வித்தகம் என்று அழைத்துப் போற்றி வழிபடுகின்ற உயர்ந்த உள்ளுணர்வை 1970- லிருந்து அடையப் பெற்றவர் நம்முடைய மகான் சண்முக நாயகம் அவர்கள்.

49 ஆண்டுகள் இல்லற வாழ்வு கண்ட திரு. நாயகம் அவர்கள் தியான வேள்வியில் தம்மை அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொண்ட காலம் அதிகம் ஆகும்.

(தொடர்ச்சி)

மனைவி வள்ளியம்மையோ அனைத்திற்கும் தம்மை ஈடுகொடுத்துக் கொண்டு தன்னுடைய கொள்கைகளிலும் கோட்பாடுகளிலும் இணைத்துக் கொண்டு வாழ்ந்து மேலும் கணவனின் ஒவ்வொரு புனிதச் செயலிலும் பங்கு கொண்டு அறம் வளர்க்கும் நாயகியாகத் திகழ்ந்தார் என்று நான் அறிகின்றபோது மகாத்மா காந்தியையும் கஸ்தூரிபா காந்தி அவர்களையும் தான் நினைவு கொள்கிறேன்.

திரு. சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்களை ஷண் என்று அவரது நண்பர்கள் அழைப்பார்கள். முந்திய தலைமுறையினர் ஷண் என்றும், பிந்திய தலைமுறையினர் ஷண் ஐயா என்றும் அழைப்பார்களாம்.

நான் ஷண் ஐயா அவர்களின் சமகாலத்தவன். ஆகையினால் திரு ஷண் என்றே அவரை அழைக்க உரிமை பெற்றுள்ளதாகக் கருதுகிறேன்.

திரு. ஷண் அவர்கள் ஆரம்பத்தில் கண்டியைச் சார்ந்த கல்லூரியிலும் கொழும்பில் இருந்து கொண்டு பிறகு லண்டன் பல்கலைக்கழகத்திலும் பின்னர் சட்டக்கல்லூரியிலும் தேர்வு பெற்று கொழும்பு உயர் நீதிமன்றத்தில் ஐம்பத்தைந்து ஆண்டுகள் தொடர்ந்து சிறப்பு மிகு வழக்கறிஞராகப் பிரகாசிக்கின்ற வாய்ப்பைப் பெற்றுள்ளார் என்பது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது.

அவருடைய கல்லூரிப் பருவம் கல்லூரி மாணவர்களுக்கு எடுத்துக் காட்டான பல சம்பவங்களைக் கொண்டது என்பதை நான் அவரது வரலாற்றுக் குறிப்பிலிருந்து அறிகிறேன்.

மகாத்மாக்களின் வாழ்க்கையிலே எந்தப் பருவமாகட்டும் தனிச் சிறப்புடன் சிறந்து விளங்குவதில் ஆச்சரியத்திற்கு இடமேது!

கொழும்பில், பல்கலைக்கழகக் கல்லூரியில் நம் சண்முகநாயகம்

(தொடர்ச்சி)

அவர்களுக்குப் பேச்சுத்திறமை காரணமாகவும் ஆய்வுத்திறன் காரணமாகவும் மற்றும் ஆழ்ந்த கருத்துக்களின் சுரங்கமாக அவர் திகழ்ந்ததன் காரணமாகவும் எத்தனைப் பாராட்டுக் கிடைத்துள்ளன என்பதற்கு அளவேயில்லை.

அவரின் வரலாற்றுச் செய்திகளைக் கவனிக்கும்போது, வாழ்நாளில் ஒவ்வொரு நேரத்திலும் பயனுள்ள பணிகளிலேயே ஈடுபட்டு, மற்றையோருக்கு அரிதான காரியங்களை எளிதாகச் செய்வதில் தன்னிகரற்றுத் திகழ்ந்து வந்திருக்கிறார் என்பது தெள்ளத் தெளிவாக உணர முடிகிறது.

அந்தக் காலத்தில் அவருடன் பழகுகின்ற வாய்ப்புக் கிடைக்கவில்லையே என்று கூட நான் அந்தத் தாகத்தினால் பெருமூச்சுவிடுவதுண்டு.

வாழ்க்கையில் அவர் பல தலைவர்களைச் சந்தித்திருக்கின்றார். பல பேரறிஞர்களுடன் நெருங்கிப் பழகியிருக்கிறார். பல சாதுக்களையும், மகான்களையும், தத்துவதரிசிகளையும், சன்மார்க்க போதகர்களையும், அவதார புருஷர்களையும் சந்தித்திருக்கின்றார் என்பதை நான் கேட்டறியும்போது 'ஆகா, திரு சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள் ஒரு பல்துறைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் என்பதையும் பல துறைகளிலும் அவருடைய திறமை பிரகாசித்து வந்திருக்கிறது' என்பதையும் அறிகிறேன்.

டாக்டர் சர்வபள்ளி ராதாகிருஷ்ணன், ரைட் ஹானரபுள் ஸ்ரீநிவாச சாஸ்திரி, திருவாங்கூர் திவான் சி.பி. ராமசாமி ஐயர், திருவாங்கூர் உயர் நீதிமன்ற நீதிபதி திருப்புகழ்மணி கிருஷ்ணசுவாமி ஐயர், சென்னை பல்கலைக்கழக வைஸ்சான்சலர் லட்சுமணசாமி முதலியார், முன்னாள் இந்திய கவர்னர் ஜெனரல் சி ராஜகோபாலசாரியார் ஆகியோரையெல்லாம் சந்தித்து அளவளாவிருக்கிறார்.

(தொடர்ச்சி)

வழக்கறிஞராகத் திகழ்ந்த காலத்திலே மிக உயர்ந்த வழக்கறிஞர்களுடன் இணைந்து அவர்களில் ஒருவராக இருந்து தானும் சிறப்பான பணிகளை ஆற்றிய அந்தத் திறமைக்கு நிகராக எதையும் சொல்ல இயலாது.

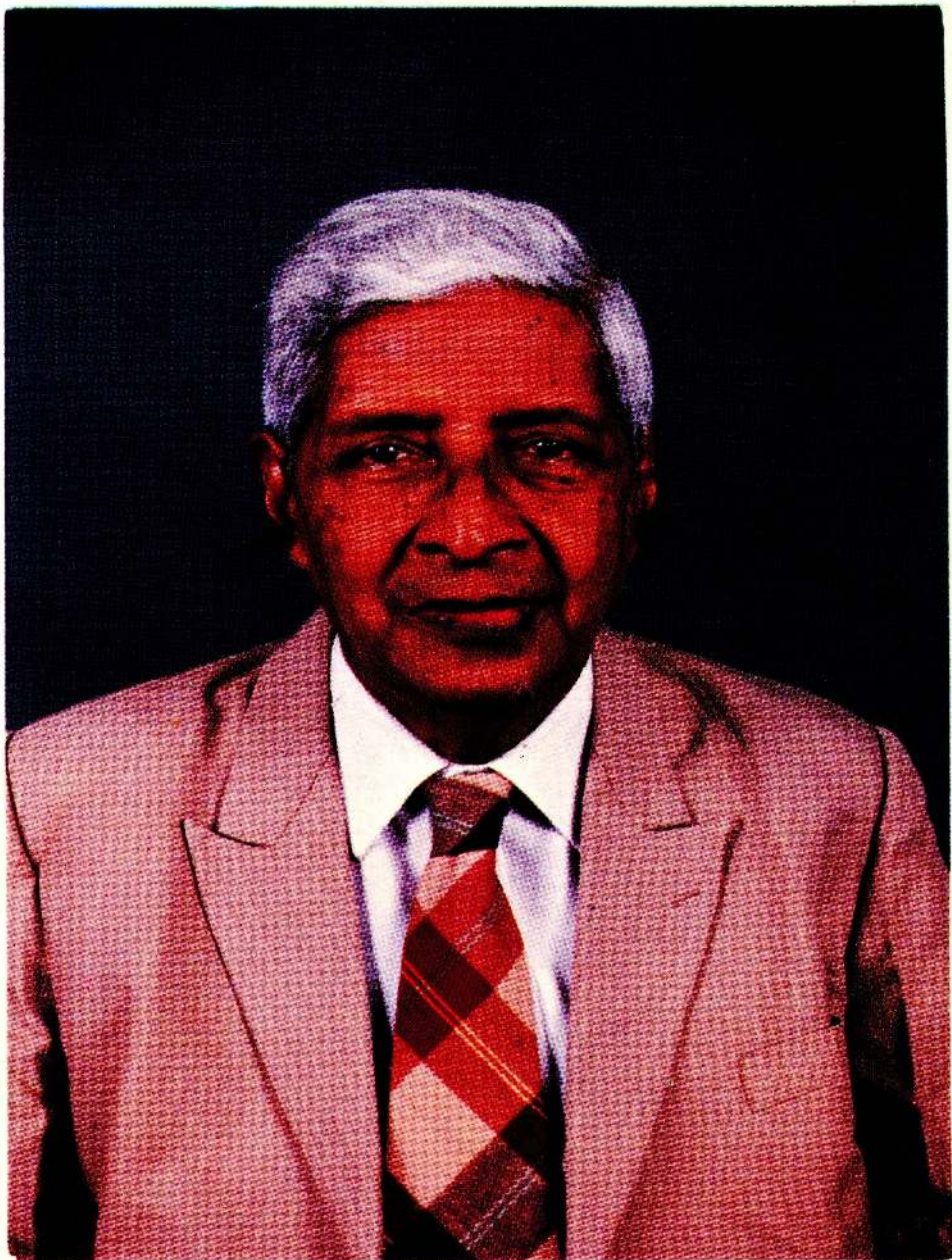
ஆனால் இவ்வளவு சிறப்புக்களை வழக்கறிஞர் துறையில் பெற்றும் கூட அதில் அவருக்கு நாட்டம் செல்லவில்லை. மனிதனால் உருவாக்கப்பட்ட சட்டத்தின் அடிப்படையில் வாதிப் பதை விட இறைவனால் உருவாக்கப்பட்ட ஆன்மீக நன்னெறிச் சட்டங்களை ஆய்ந்து பல தத்துவங்களைக் கண்டறிந்து உலகத்துக்கே நீதி வழங்குகின்ற அந்தப் பொறுப்பில் அவரது நாட்டம் திரும்பியது விசேடமானதொரு திருப்பமாகும்.

வழக்கறிஞராக இருந்த காலத்திலும் கூடப் பலரிடம் தமக்குச் சேர வேண்டிய கட்டணத்தை வாங்காமல் திருப்பிக் கொடுக்கக்கூடிய மனப்பான்மையைப் பெற்றவர் அவர்.

கட்சிக்காரர்களுக்காக வழக்கு மன்றத்திற்குப் போய் வாதம் பண்ணுகிற நிலையை உண்டு பண்ணாமல் வழக்குமன்றத்துக்கு வெளியிலேயே பேசித் தீர்க்கின்ற ஓர் உன்னதமான பணியை மேற்கொண்டவர் ஆவர்.

இப்படி ஒவ்வொரு நிலையிலும் அவருக்கென்றே ஒரு தனிக் கோட்பாடு உண்டு. உலகியல் விஷயங்களிலும் சரி, ஆன்மீக விஷயங்களிலும் சரி, அவருடைய அணுகுமுறைக்கு ஒரு தனித்துவம் ஏற்பட்டது என்று சொன்னால் அது மிகையாகாது.

உலகியல் வாழ்வுக்கு அப்பாற்பட்டு, பன்மடங்கு மேலான தெய்வீக ஞானப் பெருவெளியில் தம்முடைய பயணத்தைத் தொடங்க வேண்டுமென்கிற ஆர்வம் அவருடைய மத்திய வயதிலேயே அவரிடம் உருவாகலாயிற்று. (தொடர்ச்சி)



Portrait of
C. Shanmuganayagam
on his 82 nd Birth Anniversary
Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.
noolaham.org | aavanaham.org

சாதுக்களின் சத்சங்கத்திலும் சன்மார்க்க நெறிகளிலும் தன்னை முழுநேர ஆய்வாளராகவும் தொண்டராகவும் அர்ப்பணித்துக் கொள்ளலானார்.

30 வயதை ஒட்டிய காலத்திலேயே ரமண மகரிஷி, ஜித்து கிருஷ்ணமூர்த்தி, காஞ்சி பரமாச்சாரியார், யாழ்ப்பாண யோக சுவாமிகள், மற்றும் ரிஷிகேஷ சிவானந்தா, காஞ்சங்காடு சுவாமி பப்பாராம்தாஸ், ஞானானந்த ஆலயம் ஓங்கார சுவாமி, குரு பாபா முதலிய வர்களுடன் தம்முடைய ஆன்மீகத் தொடர்புகளை வலுப்படுத்திக் கொண்டார்.

50 வயதை ஒட்டிய காலகட்டத்தில் பாண்டிச்சேரி அரவிந்த ஆசிரமம் சென்று ஆன்மீக விசாரம் செய்யலானார்.

சத்தியசாயி பாபாவைப் பம்பாயிலும், புட்டபர்த்தியிலும் சந்தித்தார். மேலும் இந்தக் காலகட்டத்தில் ரிஷிகேஷ சுவாமி சாந்தானந்த், விமலா தக்கர், மகரிஷி யோகி முதலியோர்களைச் சந்தித்து, ஸ்ரீலங்காவில் சில அரிய சத்சங்கங்களை, ஆன்மீக நிலையங்களை, தியான அரங்கங்களை உருவாக்கினார் நம்முடைய மகாத்மா சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள்.

1970 - வரையிலும் அவரின் வாழ்க்கையில் ஏற்பட்ட ஆன்மீக அனுபவங்கள் ஏராளம் என்று சொன்னாலும், அதன் பிறகு கடந்த முப்பத்தோரு ஆண்டுகளாக அவரின் வாழ்க்கைச் சக்கரம் சுவாமி வித்தக விநாயக வடிவு அம்மா அவர்களைச் சுற்றியே சுழன்று வரலாயிற்று என்று சொல்வது மிகப் பொருந்தும்.

அவரே சொல்லுகிறார் “1940 முதல் 1970 வரை மகாத்மாக்கள் எங்கெங்கே இருக்கிறார்கள் என்று நான் தேடித்தேடி அலைந்திருக்கிறேன். சில சமயங்களில் நூற்றுக்கணக்கான மைல்கள் வனவனாந்திரங்கள், மற்றும் காடு மலைகளில் எல்லாம் ஆன்மீகத் தாகத்தோடு

(தொடர்ச்சி)

சுற்றி அந்தக்கடும் முயற்சியின் பயனாக என் லட்சியத்தில் நிறைவு கண்டிருக்கிறேன். அதன் பிறகு கடந்த முப்பது ஆண்டுகளாக நான் பெற்ற பேறுகளும் அனுபவங்களும் விசேடமானவை, தனித் தன்மை வாய்ந்தவை.

“1970 - ஆண்டளவில் ஸ்ரீ ரிஷிகேஷ் சுவாமி சாந்தானந்தா அவர்களையும் மவுண்ட் அபு என்கிற இடத்தைச் சேர்ந்த விமலா தாக்கரையும் தரிசித்து, அவர்களின் ஞான சக்திகளைப் பரப்புகின்ற மையம் ஒன்றை ஸ்ரீலங்காவில் இயக்கியும் வந்திருக்கிறேன்.

“ஸ்ரீ மகேஷ் யோகியின் தத்துவங்களைப் பரப்புகின்ற அமைப்பையும் உருவாக்கியிருக்கிறேன்.

“இவற்றையெல்லாம் கடந்து, 1970 - க்கு மேல் ஏற்பட்ட திருப்பம் இருக்கிறதே, அதுதான் அபூர்வமான திருப்பம், பெற்ற கரிய பேறு என்று நான் கருதி வருகின்ற திருப்பம். அது தான் அருபமான மகான் ஸ்ரீ முத்துக்கிருஷ்ண சுவாமி அவர்களைத் தொடர்ந்து தரிசிக்கின்ற வாய்ப்பை எனக்கு அளித்த திருப்பம்” என்று அவர் தன்னுடைய வாழ்க்கைச் சரித்திரத்தில் கூறியுள்ள குறிப்புக்களை நான் இங்கே குறிப்பிடுவதில் பேரானந்தம் அடைகிறேன்.

கடந்த 32 ஆண்டுகளாக மகாத்மா ஸ்ரீ சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள் முத்துக்கிருஷ்ண சுவாமிகளை மாதாஜி வித்தகம் அவர்களின் ரூபத்தில் தரிசித்து வருகிறார். விண்ணுலகில் நம் ஊனக் கண்களுக்குப் புலப்படாத வண்ணம் வாழ்ந்து வரும் எண்ணற்ற மகான்களின் மாபெரும் ஆன்மீகச் செய்திகளை மாதாஜி வித்தகம் மூலம் நான் பெற்றிருக்கிறேன். முத்துக்கிருஷ்ண சுவாமிகள் அம்சமாகிய மாதாஜி வித்தகம் அவர்கள் விண்ணுலகில் இருக்கும் மகான்களுடன், நினைக்கும் போதெல்லாம் அளவளாவுகின்ற ஆற்றலைப் பெற்றவர்கள் என்பதை நான் நன்கு அறிவேன். (தொடர்ச்சி)

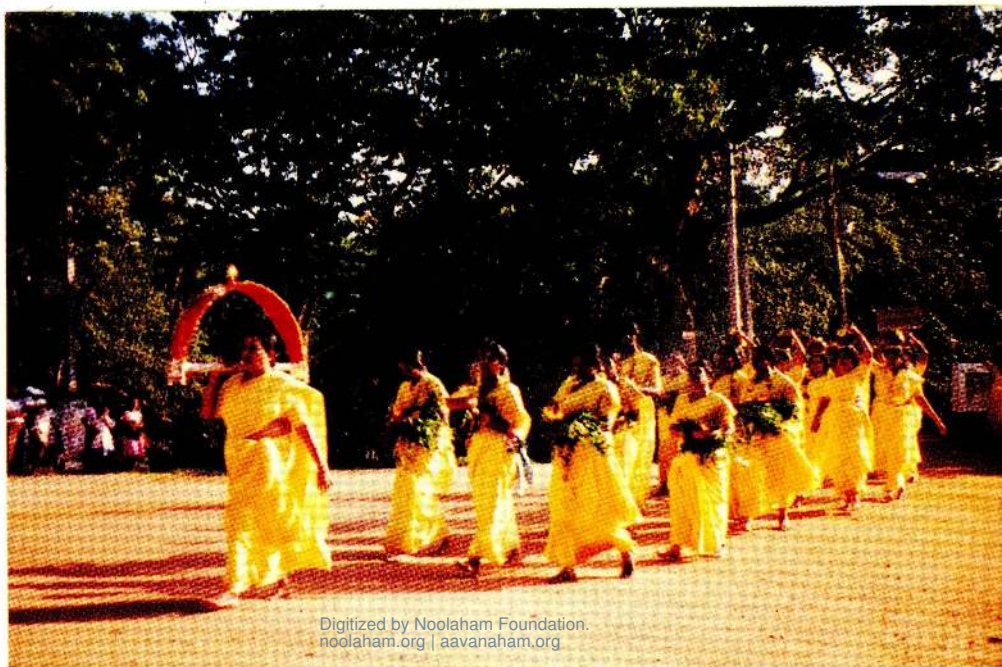


Mathaji Vithamma at head of the Kavadi Procession at Kataragama of devotees of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission from Colombo, Madras, Coimbatore & Tirunelveli



Some of the devotees of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission who celebrated the Kantha - Sashti at Kataragama in November 2000: Vidwan Lakshmanan, President of the All- India Council of Astrological Sciences, and his wife Mathaji Vithamma, Mr. T.R.K.Jayasinghe (Retd. A.S.P) and his wife Rupa, and Muthukrishna Akshayan, Secretary of the Mission

Shan in wheel -chair
 drawing inspiration
 under the Bo-tree
 behind the sanctum-sanctorum
 of the Kataragama main temple,
 along with M. Muthukrishnan
 who writes the scripts
 and Kannan the 'Golden voice'
 who provides the songs
 for the popular
 'Periyapuranam' productions
 of the Sri MKS Mission
 (below)
 Mathaji Vithamma with Kavadi
 leading a procession of
 Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission
 devotees from Sri Lanka and India
 carrying Thee - Chatties and Palkudams
 at Kataragama in Nov. 2000



அதாவது, தபோ லோகத்தில் வாழ்ந்து வருகின்ற மகான் களோடு பேசவும், அளவளாவவும் கருத்துக்களைப் பரிமாறிக் கொள்ளவும் அரும்பெரும் சக்தி மாதாஜிக்கு உண்டு என்று கூறுகிறார் சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள்.

“மாதாஜி சுவாமி வித்தகம் அவர்களின் அதிசய சக்தி பற்றியும், அம்சாவதாரச் சிறப்புக்கள் பற்றியும் கபில ரிஷி வாக்கிய ஒலைச்சுவடி ஒன்று அக்காலத்தில் தன்முன் வாசிக்கப்பட்டது என்றும் அதன்படி மாதாஜி வித்தகம் மூலம் பேசுவது ஸ்ரீமுத்துக்கிருஷ்ண சுவாமி என்றும், முத்துக்கிருஷ்ணசுவாமி அவர்களின் ஜீவ சமாதி தென்னிந்தியாவில் வள்ளியூரில் உள்ளது” என்றும் உறுதிப்பட உரைக்கிறார் மகாத்மா சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள்.

“பல ஜன்மங்களாக நிலவி வந்த நெருங்கிய குரு சிஷ்ய உறவின் காரணமாகவே முத்துக்கிருஷ்ணசுவாமி அவர்களின் அம்சமாக மாதாஜி வித்தகம் அவர்கள் அருள் வெளிப்பாடு அடையப் பெற்றார் என்றும் கபிலர் ஏட்டின் மூலம் தாம் அறிந்ததாகக் கூறுகிறார்” மகாத்மா சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்கள்

“முன்னொரு பிறப்பில் ஸ்ரீ சண்முகம் அவர்களும் திருமதி வள்ளி அவர்களும் மாதாஜி வித்தகம் அவர்களுக்குப் பெற்றோர்களாக இருந்திருக்கிறார்கள் என்றும் கூட கபில வாக்கியத்தில் கூறப்பட்டிருக்கிறது என்று தெரிவித்திருக்கிறார் திரு. ஷண் அவர்கள்

1950 - முத்துக்கிருஷ்ணசுவாமி மிஷனுக்கு பிற்கால ஸ்தாபகராக விளங்கிய மாணிக்கவாசகம் அவர்களுக்கு சட்ட ரீதியில் ஆலோசகராகத் தாம் இருந்ததாகவும் குறிப்பிடுகிறார் திரு. ஷண் அவர்கள்.

இதுவரையிலும் பாற்கடலிலிருந்து சில திவலைகளை மட்டும் ஏந்தினாற்போல் ஸ்ரீ சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்களின் வாழ்க்கைச்

(தொடர்ச்சி)

சரித்திரத்தின் ஒரு சில குறிப்புக்களை மட்டும் நான் அறிந்த அளவில் சொன்னேன்.

ஸ்ரீ சண்முகநாயகம் அவர்களின் ஆங்கிலப் பேச்சுத்திறன் மகத்தானது. அவர் எந்த விஷயத்தையும் சிந்திப்பதே ஆங்கிலத்தில் தான். பதப் பிரயோகங்கள் அற்புதமாக இருக்கும். இன்னாரின் அற்புதமான கருத்துப் பெட்டகமாக உள்ள நூல் ஒன்றை 1998 - ல் பாரதீய வித்யா பவன் வெளியிட்டுள்ளது.

மிகவும் பாராட்டுக்குரிய புத்தகம் இது. பல பத்திரிகைகளுடன் பலரும் பாராட்டும் நிலை உருவாகியிருக்கிறது.

இளைய சந்ததியினருக்கு இவருடைய அறிவுரைகள் அடங்கிய இந்த நூல் மாபெரும் வழிகாட்டி என்று சொல்லலாம்.

ஆத்மாக்களை ஒன்ற வைக்கின்ற புனிதமான தத்துவங்கள் அனைத்தையும் இந்த நூலில் மகான் சண்முகம் அவர்கள் பொறித்திருக்கிறார் என்று சொல்ல வேண்டும்.

என்னுடைய குறுகிய காலப் பழக்கத்தின் அனுபவத்தில் இவருடைய அளப்பரிய ஆற்றலை வர்ணிப்பதற்குப் போதுமான வார்த்தைகள் கிடைக்கவில்லையென்று சொல்ல எண்ணுகிறேன்.

வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்கின்ற இந்த ஞான வள்ளல், சுவாமி வித்தம்மா அவர்களின் அற்புதமான சக்திகளையெல்லாம் அறிந்த ஞான யோகி என்று சொல்லி இந்த ஞானயோகியின் சதாபிஷேகம் நிறைவுற்று மேலும் பல்லாண்டுகள் ஆன்மீகப்பணி ஆற்றிக் கொண்டு வரவேண்டும் என்றும், ஞான வழிச் சிந்தனையில் ஈடுபட விரும்பு கின்ற ஆர்வமுடைய அத்தனை மக்களுக்கும் தத்துவ ஞான போதனைகளை மேலும் மேலும் இவர் வழங்கி வரவேண்டும் என்றும், அதற்கு இறைச் சக்தி அருளவேண்டும் என்றும் அவதார நங்கையர்

(தொடர்ச்சி)



Mathaji Vithamma seated at the foot of the sacred Pothai Hill, with
Sri Muthukrishna Swami's blessings.

(an Artist's impression)

திலகமாகிய சுவாமி வித்தக விநாயக வடிவு அம்மா அவர்கள் தாம் ஆற்றி வருகின்ற பல விசேடமான சாதனைகளை ஆதியிலிருந்து கண்ட இந்த ஞானப் பெருமகனார், காலகாலத்திற்கும் நிதர்சன சாட்சி பூதமாகத் திகழவேண்டும் என்றும், சுவாமி வித்தம்மா அவர்களையே நான் பிரார்த்திக்கின்றேன்.

- வித்வான் வே. லட்சுமணன்.

Vidwan V. Lakshmanan

President All - India

Council of Astrological Sciences

Chennai - India.



SHAN says:

**‘Glimpses of the Divine are utterly natural
to any earnest seeker’**

There was a seven year’s span, verily, a golden span, when Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi and Ramana Maharshi, sons of Mother India’s Spiritual energy, were contemporaries on Bharat’s fortunate soil. These were the last seven years of Sri Ramakrishna and the first seven years of Ramana Maharshi.

For someone to share a birthday with one of those five, Gandhi, to have had a darsana of two of them, Aurobindo and Ramana, and to have proceeded thereafter to have known Jiddu Krishnamurti, the Paramacharya of Kanchi, Sri Yogaswami of Jaffna and Sri Satya Sai Baba, is to have received an extraordinary measure of Divine Grace.

C. Shanmuganayagam has stepped into that blessed rainbow’s arc as naturally as a little bird would.

Shan belongs only partly and lightly on our plane of terrestrial existence. In his true being he belongs to the realm of the Universal Spirit. **What is remarkable is that he seems to regard his unique ‘connectedness’ with the Divine, as something utterly natural and available to anyone that may seek it and deserve it.** There is not the slightest trace of even an acknowledgment of, let alone pride about, his enjoying that rare felicity. But that, I suppose, runs in the family. Shan’s younger brother, the wise and gentle C. Sankarakumaran is gifted similarly.

If only their invaluable gift of goodness and Grace could multiply among our generation, and with the same egolessness!

May Shan have more years of health, happiness and fond remembrance in the fragrant blessing of the *Gurus* he has known and which he shares with others so generously.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi
High Commissioner for India
in Sri Lanka

10 March 2001

Thoughts
on C. Shanmuganayagam
by Hon.C.V. Wigneswaran
Judge of the Supreme Court

16/9/2001

If it is possible for the same individual to relate to one's self as father, brother & son, Shan has been all three to me.

Twenty years my senior to the month, as a respected neighbour in Hultsdorp and a senior in the profession, when he arranged my marriage to Indra, he was my father & Valli Akka my mother. When Shan and I together listened, discussed, discerned and imbibed the words of J. Krishnamurti, Vimala Thakar, Swami Shantanand and a host of other religious dignitaries, we were not mere colleagues, we were brothers afflicted with affection. When Shan fusses over me even now, calling for my 'opinions' on many matters probably respectful of the office I hold, he makes me feel as big as his father.

But Shan is a colossus.

Who among us could claim to have introduced to the Sri Lankan general public as many worthy men and women of high spiritual stature and calibre as Shan? Who among us could exude patience, calmness and love even in dire circumstances? Who among us could sagaciously recognize humour and wit even in the midst of a controversial human drama? **Who among us could delineate self-imposed ethical norms and stick to them in profession and life alike? Who among us could equally feel at home among spiritual seekers whether they be bound on the Gnana Marg, Bakthi Marg, Karma Marg or Yoga Marg?** Who among us could never utter harsh words against another human being except identifying all his shortcomings as weaknesses? Who among us would

(contd)

simply drop a lucrative professional career after 30 years, merely because it did not grant any inner satisfaction any more?

In the presence of Shan you feel you are everybody and yet nobody. He makes you feel so important as an individual human being. But one gleams at the same time that Shan is watching you and the others around him from the top of a mountain completely detached. He is bilocal. But the vertiginous heights have not tainted him. He is very much with you.

All the physical disabilities that belaboured Shan at different times never did in any way erase his characteristic impishness, his humour, his wit nor his ability to look at life dispassionately and disinterestedly though with full attention and devotion to the matters at hand.

May God keep Shan at hand with all his faculties in excellent trim at least until he reaches his grandfather's age of 103 years! His long life would enrich ours and make them worthwhile.

Many many happy returns of the 2nd of October, Shan!

May Gold bless you always at all times!

Justice C.V. Wigneswaran
11A, Stanmore Crescent,
Colombo-07.

Wigne

C. SHANMUGANAYAGAM

- a shining example to the Youth of today

My relatives in Kandy had the closest association with members of Shan's family who are resident there, and Shan and I were colleagues and friends in the legal profession for several years in Colombo. Latterly I accepted judicial office and Shan gave up a promising legal career, where he could have become a leader of the Appeal Court Bar like Mr. S.J.V Chelvanayagam QC, or Mr. C. Ranganathan Q.C, and instead embarked on a life of spiritual enquiry.

In recent years Shan wrote a book entitled 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth', which I enjoyed reading. It is very informative and interesting and should whet one's appetite for turning to these mysteries, but about the approach to the youth I do not know. They are a confused lot, I cannot blame them. The elders are actually to be blamed for misleading everybody and leading the world towards a competitive, consumer oriented and stark material ideal. No wonder there is no stability in society. Let us hope that in disillusion and despair the youth will turn to nobler things.

Shan is a shining example of hearing the spiritual call - Krishna's flute - early in life, and he was strong enough to extricate himself from some of the strong worldly bonds.

His book indicates how fortunate he has been to undergo a variety of spiritual experiences. He must be one of the few persons who had personal contact with the spiritual 'Greats' of our times. On the eternal questions of Suffering, God, the Ego, Karma etc, I believe realization and the necessary knowledge would come to an individual when he progresses in his spiritual life. With an ever expanding vision, contradictions and ignorance would be progressively dispelled. I do not know how much meditation Shan practises, but there is a wholeness and catholicity in his views which is refreshing. He is prepared not only to give a hearing to the other religions but even to hold with them on many occasions. This is a rare trait.

R.S. Wanasundera

(Retd. Judge of the Supreme Court)
52/4A, Madinnagoda Road, Rajagiriya.



**Message of Good Wishes from
Mr. Lakshman Jayakody,
former Minister of Cultural & Religious Affairs,
to Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam on his 82nd Birth Anniversary**

I have known Shan and his late wife Valli for over forty years. They were very close friends of my aunt Phoebe namely Mrs. Edmund Rodrigo. Valli was one of the founder-members of the All Ceylon Handicrafts Association of which Mrs. Rodrigo was the Patron. Shan and Valli helped my aunt to establish a pilot textile screen printing unit called Flower Textiles at my aunt's residence and conduct it as a free training centre for village craftsmen. I used to meet Shan & Valli frequently at my aunt's residence and enjoy their company.

Prior to this period, when Mr. Edmund Rodrigo was Government Agent of Jaffna, Shan's very conservative parents and his grandfather Adigar Naganather whose residence was at Maha Walavu in Kopay, Jaffna, were close friends of Mr. & Mrs. Edmund Rodrigo. Later I came to know Shan's brother-in-law the late Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai M.P. for Kopay, a Parliamentarian of great integrity and competence. He and his brother the late Mr. S. Ambalavaner, the well known Tax Consultant, were two persons whose friendship I valued very much.

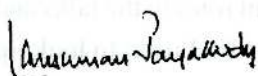
I am aware that Shan and Valli got married at the ancient Munieswaram Hindu temple at Chilaw and proceeded direct to Kataragama in the South to obtain the blessings of Lord Skanda. Shan was very keen that all Sri Lankans, while united in their own cultural activities should stand together as one Nation.

During the period that I functioned as Minister of Cultural &
(contd)

Religious Affairs a group was formed to study the subject of various forms of Hinduism that existed in Sri Lanka, and I recollected that it was Shan who contributed in large measure to our ascertaining the various facets of Hinduism that were relevant to the study of comparative religion and to the universality of the Kataragama Shrine. **Shan did not speak much, but was very popular amongst gatherings for his choice of words, and the lucidity of expression** that was characteristic of our leaders at the Bar like Mr. H.V. Perera Q.C., Mr. E.F.N. Gratien Q.C., & Mr. Normi Weerasooria Q.C.

Shan had given me earlier a copy of a book written by him entitled 'An Experiment in Spritual Inquiry for the Youth', which had been published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. I find that it has been reviewed very favourably in several journals in India, one of which, the Vedanta Kesari states as follows: 'It is a scientific analysis of the Spiritual world, based on the author's personal contacts and interviews with many enlightened souls. **The book is remarkable, insightful and unusually illuminative.** The book is sure to fan the flame of inquiry in an earnest seeker, so that he becomes a light unto himself.'

Today Shan completes the age of 82 years on 2nd October 2001, which happens to be Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, and I being a Buddhist wish that, with the help of the Triple Gem, he will face the years to come with the strength derived from his simple life style. I wish him many more years of sound health and prosperity, so that he may continue to be of service to all his fellow beings.



Lashman Jayakody



“ගමන් ගම් යමින් සැමවිට සේවය කරමු”

An
Approved
Charity

Lanka Jatika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya (Inc.)

President: Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, Gen. Secy: C.R. Ekanayake, Treasurer: B.A.D. Gunasinghe

“Dhamsak Mandiraya”, 98, Rawatawatte Road, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka -

Telephone: 647159, 655255 Fax: 94-1647054, 646512 - TELEX: 22837

SARVA CE CABLES: SARVODAYA MORATUWA, SRI LANKA.

C.SHANMUGANAYAGAM

**-With his deep understanding of life,
greatly influenced our lives during our youth**

Among the few personalities who influenced my youth, to gain composure and conduct Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam stands out most eminently. Thin and tall always with a contented smile and a serene face, with his neck always covered with a shawl, Shan Aiya as we used to call him, influenced our lives very much in those most important days of youth. So, I am delighted to write these words of felicitation on his 82nd birthday anniversary.

I came to know him through two sources, one through a very dear friend late D. Ariyananda Abeyesekera and **Shan's father-in-law Mr. S. Sivasubramaniam, a saintly lawyer and peace protagonist who always inspired me with his words of encouragement.** His wife Valli was a dear sister to us in our social work as well as when I regularly visited their home in Hultsdorp.

When late Shri Jiddu Krishnamurthi the saint and philosopher visited Sri Lanka in mid 1950s both Shan and Ariyananda played important roles in the talks and discussions he held, none of which I missed. So, **I used to look up to Mr. Shanmuganayagam as an**

(contd)

elder brother who was a model to be followed. Depth of his understanding of life and reality was evident in all the soft-spoken words that struck the deepest parts of our heart. His association with all the known saints of his time and deep respect for all with his smile made him stand firm on his spiritual feet amidst all the trials and tribulations our society has passed through.

Being born on 2nd October 1919, which happened to be the 50th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Shan Aiya followed the same path of non-violence and peace that Gandhiji carved out for us. Shan's 'Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth' is like a guidebook for all young people living today in a world of greed, injustice and strife. In that treatise the lucid explanations he had given to basic topics like athma, meditation, life and death, law of karma, time and space and enlightenment are the real departments of knowledge humanity requires today, if it is to find a wisdom that we need to survive as a species on this planet along with other forms of life including a healthy life support system. May Mr. Shanmuganayagam have good health and long life to inspire our society for many years to come.

Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne

President

Lanka Jathika Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya (INC)

Moratuwa

Sri Lanka.

Ariyaratne
5/11/2001

Note: Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne has been a close associate of Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan of the Bhoodan movement in India and has been conferred in 1996 by the Govt. of India the prestigious 'Mahatma Gandhi Peace Prize' deemed to be the Nobel Peace Prize of Asia. He is also the recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for community leadership conferred by the Govt. of Philippines in 1969.

Editor, Felicitation Souvenir

Dr.Susunaga WEERAPERUMA

‘Villa Claudia’

338, Chemin du Colombier

83450 LES ARCS SUR ARGENS

FRANCE

October 13 2001

Thoughts on my 50 year friendship

with SHAN

-by Dr. Susunaga Weeraperuma

I am very glad to know that admirers of C. Shanmuganayagam are planning to publish a collection of articles in honour of him. I regard it as a great privilege to be invited to write about Shan. We have been closely associated for nearly 50 years. During this long period he has been a very faithful and affectionate friend.

Shan's heart overflows with bhakti. He loves not only his friends but also total strangers. His devotional nature is such that he is willing to help anyone in need in whatever way possible. One can help others in many ways, not least by uttering a kind word or by offering guidance and advice. His wife Valli told me of several instances when clients failed to pay Shan his fees for legal services rendered, but Shan accepted these situations with surprising equanimity. The black-coated legal fraternity at Hultsdorp are apparently unaware that the frail and unassuming Attorney in their midst is none other than a genuine Karma yogi!

In 1957 Shan and I were both members of the Krishnamurti Reception Committee. Shan was one of those who worked very

(contd)

hard to organise the series of talks by Krishnamurti in Colombo. We used to spend a lot of time with Krishnaji, who was residing near Jawatte Road. Valli and Shan showered gifts on Krishnaji. Krishnaji was very fond of Shan. Once when bare-headed Shan was taking leave of him, Krishnaji suddenly said: 'Sir don't forget your hat.' Those days Shan's attire was not complete unless he wore a shawl and a felt hat. He was particularly sensitive to draughts of cold air. After Shan had gone, Krishnamurti turned to his secretary Madhavachari and said: 'What an interesting character! Why does he need a hat indoors?' 'I suppose,' said Madhavachari, poking fun at Krishnaji, 'he wears a western hat as he is a disciple of a westernised guru called Krishnamurti! It is only an outward symbol. It is like the Sikhs who wear turbans. They believe their heads have to be protected as the heads no longer belong to them but to God.'

All the great qualities of a genuine Hindu mind and heart are epitomised by Shan who adores the saints and philosophers of every religion. Buddhist, Christian, Islamic and Jewish concepts and beliefs are not alien to Shan's mind. From every well he draws water. He draws his spiritual sustenance from every source. It is this catholicity of outlook that has enabled him to sit at the feet of many a saintly personality - Ramana Maharshi, Swami Ramdas, Swami Sivananda, Saint Yogaswami, Sri Maya Mayee and the like. He particularly adores Saint Bernadette of Lourdes.

Many years ago Shan gave me a graphic description of his visit to Tiruvannamalai when he was a young man. On that occasion he had questioned Ramana Maharshi about awareness. A few years ago when I was working in Australia, I wrote to Shan that, unbeknown to him, his interview has actually been recorded in a book.

(contd)

Great was Shan's surprise when he read the following excerpt from

Day by Day with Bhagavan:

11-1-46 Afternoon

A young man from Colombo asked Bhagavan, '**J. Krishnamurti teaches the method of effortless and choiceless awareness as distinct from that of deliberate concentration. Would Sri Bhagavan be pleased to explain how best to practise meditation and what form the object of meditation should take?**'

Bhagavan: '**Effortless and choiceless awareness is our real nature. If we can attain it or be in that state, it is all right. But one cannot reach it without effort, the effort of deliberate meditation. All the age-long vasanas carry the mind outward and turn it to external objects. All such thoughts have to be given up and the mind turned inward. For that, effort is necessary for most people. Of course everybody, every book says 'Be quiet or still'. But it is not easy. That is why all this effort is necessary. Even if we find one who has at once achieved the mouna or Supreme state indicated by 'Be quiet or still', you may take it that the effort necessary has already been finished in a previous life. So that, effortless and choiceless awareness is reached only after deliberate meditation. That meditation can take any form which appeals to you best. See what helps you to keep away all other thoughts and adopt that method for your meditation.'**

On this special occasion I take the opportunity to wish Shan not only a very long life but also Spiritual Liberation in this very life..

S. Venkatesan

October 13 2001

C. Shanmuganayagam

A non-conformist friend with whom I share

A Fellowship in Madness!

From as far back as I can remember, the biggest problem my mind has grappled with is 'How does one live in this mad world'? Put differently, is it possible to adjust to society, as we know it, and yet keep one's sanity?

I have heard that the only way out was 'to live in the world, but yet not be of it'. Easier said than done, I thought to myself. For my part, I considered that the only way out was to retire to a jungle hermitage or some similar spot and commune with the trees, the birds and the animals. This was till I met Shan, as he is affectionately known to us.

I first met Shan in the early sixties when our mutual interest in the teachings of Jiddu Krishnamurthi brought us together. His constant companions were his hat, which he always carried on his head and the muffler, which he always wore round his neck. **He confronted the world's madding crowd with his own madness as an uncompromising loner. The only difference being that in his madness of non-conformity with the social values of our times I saw sanity and I took to him at once as being a man who, while living in this world, was not of it. The mad world considered him mad for giving up a lucrative legal practice and pre-occupying himself with a serious search for the Truth,** freed from the stranglehold of tradition and superstition. But any day I prefer Shan's madness to that of the world. **So we established 'a partnership in madness'** and have endeavoured to live in the world without subscribing to its shallow values.

So on his 82nd birthday, my prayer is that this ever smiling, ever patient, ever obliging, non-conformist, gentle, Shan will continue to be with us for many more years demonstrating that it is possible to be in the world without being part of it. **This country surely needs many more Shans.**

Stanley Jayaweera

Stanley Jayaweera
former Ambassador to Germany
617/2, Nawala Road, Rajagiriya.

KRISHNAMURTI CENTRE, SRI LANKA Inc.

(Incorporated by Act of Parliament, No. 70 of 1981)
A Government Approved Charity for Income Tax Exemption
(Vide Gazette No. 182 dated 26.2.1982)
(Founder Chairman - Dr.E.W. ADIKARAM)

310, High Level Road,
Colombo 6. (Sri Lanka)
02nd October 2001.
.....

C. Shanmuganayagam Felicitations message on his 82nd Birth Anniversary

I have pleasure in responding to the request of the Committee in charge of the publication of a Felicitations souvenir on the occasion of the 82nd birth anniversary of Mr.C. Shanmuganayagam to contribute a felicitations message about him. He is a long-standing friend of mine and a **founder-member of the J. Krishnamurti Centre of Sri Lanka**, and I wish to set down my thoughts and the information available to me in this connection as follows.

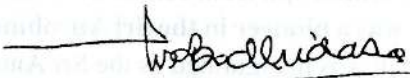
Shan, as he was affectionally called by his friends during the past 50 years or so, is a lawyer by profession but had given up his practice of the law during the prime of his life and adopted a life of spiritual seeking and had met several saints and sages in Sri Lanka and India. I gather from a Sri Ramanashram publication that 'a young man from Colombo', now identified as **Shan, met Sri Ramana Maharishi in January 1946 and placed a question for his elucidation based on J. Krishnamurti's teaching about 'choiceless effortless passive Awareness.'** It is further reported in the publication that Sri Ramana replied inter alia that 'effortless and choiceless Awareness is our Real nature.'

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I understand that Shan went by plane from Colombo and had a personal interview with Krishnaji at his Sterling Road, residence in Madras in 1947 regarding one's spiritual quest, and became a staunch follower of Krishnaji's teachings. He was later invited by Dr. E. W. Adikaram, the chief organizer, to be **a member of the Reception committee when Krishnaji visited Ceylon in 1949, 1957 & 1980** and to be a founder-member of the J. Krishnamurti Centre in Sri Lanka when it was incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1981.

Shan and his wife Valli were in attendance on Krishnaji during these three visits, and on occasions drove him in their car to the lecture Hall and back. In 1980 Shan was personally in charge of the accommodation and transport arrangements for those guests who had arrived with Krishnaji, namely Ajit and Pama Patwardhan, Krishnaji's nephew Narayanan and Dr. Pachure and several others.

Shan has also contributed articles to the local Press on **Krishnamurti's life and teachings as a world Teacher**, and some of them have been included in Shan's book entitled 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth' published by the well-known Indian publishing house, 'Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan' of Bombay. He has also portrayed in the book Dr. E. W. Adikaram's close association and friendship with Krishnaji for 55 years, since the time he attended Krishnaji's epoch-making speech at Ommen in Holland in 1929, when **Krishnaji dissolved the Order of the Star of the East and went forth into the world as a lone Awakener of humanity.**



W. H. Bodhidasa
Chairman

Krishnamurti Centre, Sri Lanka Inc.

SRI AUROBINDO CENTRE (SRI LANKA)

22, Dr. E.A. Cooray Mawatha, Colombo-06

MR. C. SHANMUGANAYAGAM

- 'Shan' as I knew him-

May the blessings of the Divine be with Shan on his 82rd birthday and continue to grace his life for many more years to come. The occasion cannot be allowed to pass without even a brief reference being made to some aspect of his life which occupied the foremost place.

In verse 68 of Chapter XVIII of the Bhagavad Gita it says: 'He who teaches this Supreme Secret to my devotees, showing the highest devotion to me, shall doubtless come to me.' The **'Supreme Secret'** is the knowledge of God and that is what Shan has sought to do during his life with all those with whom he came in contact. He aspired for the Higher Life and sought the company of the enlightened ones and transmitted what he gathered and gained to his contemporaries.

I first came to know Shan when he practiced as an Advocate at Hultsdorf as the son-in-law of Mr. S. Sivasubramaniam, a respected and well-known Proctor of the Supreme Court to which branch of the profession I too belonged. After some years I observed that Shan gradually moved away from the practice of the profession and got involved in religious and spiritual living, seeking the company of saints, spiritual teachers and enlightened men. He became a seeker after Eternal knowledge.

Like the honey-sucker bird he extracted the spiritual honey from every religious tradition he came in contact with and so enriched his inner life. He became a spiritual honey-bee. Name any Hindu spiritual centre in Sri Lanka and Shan will be in it. He was a pioneer in the Sri Aurobindo movement in Sri Lanka which was inaugurated as the Sri Aurobindo Circle. He served as the Joint Secretary of the Sri Aurobindo Society of Sri Lanka which took the place of the Sri Aurobindo Circle. With the events

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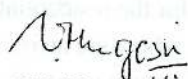
of 1983 the work of the Society abated and Shan continued his work of spiritual research and practice through other organisations and traditions and he lent support and gave his guidance to all such movements while he continued to gain in spiritual knowledge. He wrote a book entitled, 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth', which was published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, a well-known publishing house of Bombay of books of culture, religion and spirituality. He has contributed numerous articles to the papers on religious and spiritual subjects.

When Sri M.P. Pandit of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, India, visited Sri Lanka for the first time he recorded the memory of his visit in his Service Letter dated 18th February 1977 and in that he had this to say of Shan and his amiable wife Valli, who accompanied Panditji, along with others, on a tour out of Colombo: '.....'Shan' (Sri Shanmuganayagam) highly knowledgeable, his interests ranging from J. Krishnamurti to Pak Subuh, Valli his ebullient wife, whose lively commentary on the follies of men and the wisdom of things kept us rollicking with laughter.' (Sat-Sang-Volume III by M.P. Pandit) **Shan and Valli were close to my family and it gives me a singular joy to contribute a tribute to this compilation presenting facets of his life.**

Shan had very human feelings for others and helped whenever he could. When his brother-in-law Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai died leaving his widow and children of school-going ages he with his late wife Valli stepped in to fill the gap and saw to the completion of their schooling careers and fitting them in life. He looked not to receive anything in return. He helped and encouraged his wife in her ventures and showed her much affection particularly during the time she took ill. **His spirituality flowed not only from his head but also from his heart** and it can be said, in the words of William Penn, that to Shan 'Religion is nothing else but love to God and Man.'

VM-Shan doc/Others

2-10-2001


V. Murugesu

Senior Partner of
the Law Firm of 'Murugesu & Neelakandan,'
Founder - Trustee, Sri Aurobindo Centre, Colombo.

A Memento
of Mr.C. Shanmuganayagam's contribution to
The Transcendental Meditation movement in Sri Lanka
-compiled on his 82nd Birthday

The Transcendental Meditation centre in Sri Lanka owes a great debt of gratitude to Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam and Mr. T. P. Kesavan, a Senior Chartered Accountant, for the ground work and continued support they gave to the establishment of the TM movement in Sri Lanka. Firstly, they were instrumental in Maharishi Mahesh Yogi assigning Mr. David Weiner, a teacher of TM, to introduce the concept of Transcendental Meditation and its teaching technique to Sri Lankan audiences.

Mr. Shanmuganayagam functioned originally as Convenor and later as the General Secretary of the Lanka TM movement and played a very effective role in the organization of public lectures, held at various locations in Sri Lanka to make known the benefits of total relaxation and the elimination of mental stress and the spiritual progress that would accrue to a Transcendental Meditation practitioner. He also organized a place for the TM centre where Maharishi's video tapes were shown explaining the various spiritual and other benefits of TM. It has been demonstrated by scientific experiments, that 20 minutes of TM meditation produces a deeper relaxation of the nervous system and a recuperation of one's health than 5 hours of deep sleep. It also enhances one's efficiency and stamina in every walk of life.

At this centre, initially Mr. Weiner inducted those in the TM movement who wanted to become TM meditators. As the number of people wanting to learn and practise TM increased, a TM teacher-training course was commenced and Mr. Shanmuganayagam's contribution in arranging the venue for the residential course as well as arrangements for the foreign teachers who were arriving for the course was immense. The conducting of this course went off very smoothly and effectively.

Following this, for the final conferring of TM teachers awards to
(contd)

those who followed the course and completed it, His Holiness Maharishi Mahesh Yogi graced the occasion in April 1975. **Handling Maharishi's visit to Sri Lanka involved many matters** to be arranged such as, press interviews, public lectures, visits of foreign nationals to meet Maharishi, accommodation for Maharishi, protocol arrangements etc. **Mr. Shanmuganayagam, in his own calm and collected manner**, using the personal influence he had with various organisations and Government officials, took upon himself the task of making these arrangements and performed it admirably.

In the early stages, Mr. Shanmuganayagam took over the functions of the Treasurer as well, and was in charge of foreign funds received from abroad, for subsidizing the activities of the TM centre in Sri Lanka and for the payment of emoluments to teachers of TM who were trained locally.

Until 1980, a period of six years, he actively participated and made his contribution and presence felt in the TM movement activities. **During these six years the TM movement recorded fantastic growth and received recognition** and the TM practitioners included school children, prison inmates, factory workers, professionals and men and women of all walks of life.

In 1980, because of his commitments to other organizations Mr. Shanmuganayagam relinquished his post as General Secretary of the TM movement and handed over the management of the Centre to Mr. M. Rajendra, the senior trained teacher of TM at that time, who was appointed 'National Leader' for Sri Lanka by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

It is a remarkable trait in Mr. Shanmuganayagam that whatever religious organization he sponsors or participates in, he puts his heart and soul into the work and inspires the other participants also to develop a spirit of deep dedication to the cause.


M. V. Theagarajah

Deputy Chairman
Browns Group of Companies, Sri Lanka
(A concerned TM meditator)

Hari Om

**My Experiences with Uncle C. Shanmuganayagam
- In the Shiva Family religious group.**

I have known Uncle Shanmuganayagam during the last 28 years and I consider myself privileged to be called upon by the compilers of his felicitation issue to write this article on his 83rd birthday. He was born on 2nd October 1919, which coincided with the 50th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. Uncle Shanmuganayagam, a lawyer by profession, is a pacifist by nature and a man of simple living (vegetarian & teetotaler). He is blessed to have been born on the 50th birth anniversary of the great Mahatma.

My first encounter with Uncle Shan, as he is affectionately called by all, goes back to 1973 at the late Dr.C. Kathirgamanathan's residence at Flower Road on a Sunday morning, where Shiva Family members were assembling to have morning Thrayambagam. It was also my first attendance at Thrayambagam. I later came to know his identity as the devotee in charge of the Colombo Shiva Family affairs since Swami Shantanand's first visit to Sri Lanka in 1971.

On Swamiji's various visits to Sri Lanka, Uncle Shan arranged either the Saraswathie Hall at Bambalapitiya or the Ramakrishna Hall at Wellawatte for his popular public satsang meetings, during the early years of his spiritual ministration, when he used to visit several outstation towns also and hold satsang meetings in large school auditoriums for the benefit of the youth. In later years, however, Swamiji confined his spiritual ministration to a small group of serious-minded devotees, who would be vitally interested in their spiritual development, namely the members of the Shiva Family Group.

In February 1978 Divinity called upon me to work closer with Uncle Shan when Swami Shantanand entrusted me, as a Civil engineer,

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with the task of getting the necessary drawings ready for the construction of a Prayer Hall on the terrace of Arjan's house at Elibank Road, Bambalapitiya. Uncle Shan was constantly at me with calls, and in a very soft spoken voice, giving the concept and parameters for the Prayer Hall, while Valli Aunty, his wife who was more dynamic, was giving several verbal punches on & off over the telephone to get things to move fast! There was a period of only three months from the time of conception of the idea to construct a hall and for its completion, before the Kantha Sasti festival, when several visitors from abroad were expected. Uncle had a great task ahead, and when questioned about the availability of funds, material & work force his reply was his usual cute smile. It was amazing how things moved very fast & he completed the work ahead of time. My experience with him demonstrated the age-old philosophy "Do less but accomplish more." On many occasions I had observed that he had only to express a faint idea of what had to be done and the manifestation of the idea came effortlessly. **Uncle Shan is always in harmony with Nature and with all those around him and naturally Divine Grace is showered upon him. He commands respect but never demands anything.**

During the Kantha-Sahti festival of 1978 there were many devotees from Malaysia, Singapore & India. Many programs were organized including a Kaavady from Manicka Vinayagar temple. Wellawatta to Murugan temple, Slave Island, a distance of four miles in the early hours of the morning at five. The sky was very clear and bright. It is still fresh in my memory, however, that when we passed the Buddhist Vihara at Beira Lake, divinity blessed us with a passing light shower of rain.

Over 150 devotees also took Kaavady at Kataragama on the last day after travelling in three buses from Colombo, which uncle Shan had meticulously arranged. His Holiness Swami Shantanand participated in all the activities and conferred his final blessings on all the devotees, while standing in the midst of the flowing waters of the sacred river Menik Ganga at Kataragama.

Swamiji made a significant remark, at a later talk to the devotees,
(contd)

that when he was invited by the Kapurala, namely the officiating priest at the main Kataragama temple, to come forward into the ante-room immediately next to the sanctum sanctorum, he declined to do so, as he was able to experience the invisible presence of several Mahatmas in the ante-room in their subtle bindhu forms.

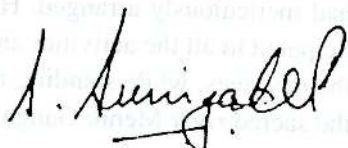
In 1979 uncle. Shan organized and was personally in charge of a delegation of about 65 Shiva Family members that travelled from Colombo to Coimbatore to attend the Kantha-Sashti festival that was conducted there by Swami Shantanand, ending up with a Kaavady pada-yatra to the famous Maruthamalai temple on the hill.

Uncle Shan always functioned behind the scenes with love for all and gave encouragement to the other devotees to be in the forefront in the carrying out of Shiva Family activities. He truly believes in and practises the three wholesome attributes of the universal reality: Live and let others live: Know & let others know: Be happy and let others be happy.

In recent years, however, Mr. V.Kailasapillai has undertaken the task of looking after the administration of Shiva Family affairs in Sri Lanka, with acceptance by all concerned.

Uncle Shan is still active, writing articles on spiritual topics with a scientific approach, which are published from time to time in various journals & dailies. His dear wife, Aunty Valli, who was a tower of strength to him. shed her mortal body in April 1998. He is now living under the spiritual and physical care of Mataji Vithagam the Head of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission.

My wife joins me in wishing him good health, long life and continued service to humanity through his various publications.



S. Suriyadeva.

Felicitation Message
from Mr. D. Eassuwaren
President, Chinmaya Mission, Sri Lanka

19th February 2002.

Having known Mr. Shanmuganayagam as a great exponent of Saiva Sidhantham, the Geeta and the Upanishads, who am I to put down even a few words on the great man's life? My hand trembles. My heart beat quickens. My mind has gone blank. Can an ant truly understand and describe an elephant?

I feel this not just because of his age and experience. It is because of his role as a guiding light to the truth seekers of Sri Lanka that he is fondly referred to as Iyah - Sir. **It is his life as a living exponent of all that he believes in that inspires such respect.**

From the first time I met him, his demeanour told me all I needed to know about this **wonderful man - eyes filled with love, clear and soft voice and a simple half smile.** As I saw more and more examples of his steady and silent work around me, I further realized his role as a teacher and exponent of Vedic knowledge to us all. The consequences of his work are great, **Aiyah was one of the founder members of the committee which organized Swami Chinmayananda's first Geeta lectures in Colombo. This need to spread knowledge is so great that he has personally recorded and distributed many of the lectures delivered by the great Swamis who have visited us in Sri Lanka.**

A great example of how his life reflects his beliefs was personally witnessed by me a few days after the passing away of his beloved wife. To talk of, and to offer support during the bereavement

(contd)

of others is easy. I was only able to meet Iyah a few days after his wife had passed away, and **his conduct again strengthened my faith and attempted practice of Vedanta. Iyah's emotions were tempered by his oceans of knowledge, and his detachment from the idea of death was an example to all on how the teachings of the Geeta and other great works can and should be practiced.**

Shanmuganayagam Iyah is a man who lives by his beliefs, such men are rare. His soft and radiant qualities and his role as a teacher, endear him to all of us. I would like to thank him for the great influence his life and words have brought about in me.

On the occasion of his 83rd Birthday, I prostrate at his feet and seek the blessings of a guru to his disciple.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke ending in a small dot.

D. Eassuwaren

President (Chinmaya Mission, Sri Lanka)

Hony. Consul for the Republic of Mauritius

Cordial Greetings to
Sri C. Shanmuganayagam, Attorney - at - Law
on his 82nd Birthday

It gives me great pleasure to wish 'Many Happy Returns and Many More Years' to a great friend and benefactor Sri C. Shanmuganayagam, senior Attorney-at-Law, who is called Shan by his close friends, on his 82nd birthday. On this occasion I could not help but recall **pleasant memories of my long association with Shan.** Although I had heard of his father the late Gate Mudaliyar Canaganayagam who later became the Mayor of Kandy and his grandfather the late Adigar Naganathar with whom my uncle and former Mayor of Nuwara Eliya the late Jeyam Kanagaratnam lived and worked in the Bank together, I came to know Shan in 1944 through my good friend and my batchmate at the Colombo University the late Kopay M.P. Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai. Shan had become an Advocate at that time.

During my long association with Shan I noticed that despite his high background he was very humble kind and soft-spoken. So much so that whenever I was in difficulty I sought Shan's advice and assistance which came readily with an open heart. Very early he gave up his lucrative Court of Appeal practice and took up the task of **peeping into the Karmic and Cosmic Laws in all earnest.**

It was said that the Poet Milton lost his eye sight by peeping into Heaven but Shan on the other hand did advance in spiritual enlightenment. So much so that all the branches in Sri Lanka of the ashrams or religious movements of the Indian sages had Shan as their secretary or convenor. **There was not a single ashram's branch where**

(contd)

Shan has not played his important role whether it was Sri Sathya Sai Baba's, Sri Aurobindo's, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's, Ramakrishna's, Sri J. Krishnamurti's or Sri Muthu krishna's. Finally he found in Mataji Vithakam a spiritual channel to contact the Mahans and Celestials of the Higher World and thereupon gather more knowledge of the unknown world. I too am fortunate to have come to know Mataji Vithakam through Shan, since I am also in the same spiritual field.

I deem it necessary to say a few words about his better half the late Valli, daughter of the late Mr. S. Sivasubramaniam who was a senior lawyer, politician, and religious leader, and the former Secretary of the Tamil Congress, and Secretary of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society and President of the Vivekananda Society, Colombo. She was more dynamic and was capable of running the home and looking after a number of Textile Printing businesses while Shan was engrossed in his spiritual adventures.

On the other hand like Shan she was kind hearted, magnanimous and spiritually inclined. I am sure that her Athma is resting at the feet of Lord Muruga to whom she was devoted.

Coming back to Shan, he is a prolific writer as well. He was not satisfied with merely imbibing the celestial knowledge, his kindness to humanity propelled him to impart the said knowledge to mankind at large. As a result he wrote a book under the name and title of 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth' which was published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan of Bombay. Thereby Shan became an internationally reputed author of spiritual and celestial literature.

Lastly I shall be failing in my gratitude if I do not mention some of

(contd)

my personal experiences of Shan's kind - heartedness. **He became one with his friends and shared their worries and happiness.** During the 1983 riots I lost my office and when Shan came to know about it, he readily offered the front room of his house to me to run my office. Again in 1986 when I got a heart attack and could not climb the stairs of my rented premises, Shan immediately came to my rescue and accommodated me in his house.

Now Shan has renounced everything and has become a full-time spiritual worker of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission in Sri Lanka. God has paved the way for him as there is nothing he has to be attached to. May the Almighty shower His Grace and Blessings on him for health and longevity. I invoke the Almighty God, as I always prayed to the Nirguna Brahman who has no name or form for the last 55 years, by the grace of my Guru Sri Yoga Swamigal.

‘Om That Sat.’

M. Nagarathinam

M.Nagarathinam

2/10/2001

Attorney-at-Law, J.P.U.M.

Commentary
On C. Shanmuganayagam

By N.M.M. Bishrul Hafi J.P.
(a Sufi Mystic)

An octogenarian of repute, a giver of ready succour to the needy, a rare light embedded in a conglomeration of ever hovering human misery and pain, is my time honoured friend of rare acquisitions, Shan Aiyah as most young ones call him. A man of rare accomplishments who needs no sorting to be singled out exclusively for the noble and the golden qualities he is endowed with. I venture to make a few observations he so very richly merits for special mention on his 82nd birthday.

May you thrive and flourish for over a hundred years of useful service to humanity is my fervent prayer.

Destiny burst asunder to establish the aristocratic family of that elite doyen Adigar A. Naganathar of Kopay who established a record of sojourning for 103 years on mortal soil. Shan Aiyah's venerated father, whom I met once, impressed me as being a sprightly young man by his agile gait. A resplendent personality who was a Kandy Mayor, who defied class or clan in his prestigious appointment. A Gate Mudaliyar of repute, a perfect gentleman and man of affairs who was held in high esteem throughout his life. Shan Aiyah is a worthy product of his star spangled progenitors.

Shan's clarion call to sanity, decency and decorum was well and truly directed to right a wrong to its proper perspective and in this noble endeavour, he outshone every other worldly wedded man. All he did was goaded by the higher calling he always remained

(contd)

imbued with, and in that respect, his labour of love and amity enshrouded his every effort, whereby, he revelled to espouse the cause of the down-trodden, meek and mild. The effusions of his combustible heart stood as a lone monument smiling at grief.

Ameliorating the heavily burdened heaving sighs of a battered heart was his first concern irrespective of class, clime or kind. He doled out concrete advice to redeem the erring individual of his drosses. His heart fluttered in pain at the sight of injustice and his mind was rendered bereft of mirth or glee until adequate amelioration was fully attendant.

The deep and abiding assessments and his considered opinions and meaningful adjudications on spiritual problems, always blossomed out in full fruition on a clear and concise summing up, which covered every aspect of the spiritual tangle. Unravelling spiritual posers was mere child's play to him and he was the custodian of knowledge in all its abundancy. He easily sorted out delicious dishes of rare flavour which was a clear bafflement to the ordinary mind. Indeed he was blessed with deep understanding and a vast knowledge of men and matters and more than all, a clear and unsoiled heart. It is my candid opinion that it is difficult to find another today who can exercise such patience as he can under even very trying circumstances.

He is the convenor of the Thinker's Forum - Meditation Group, which is his brain-child, doing so much to put all seekers of Truth firmly on the spiritual path.

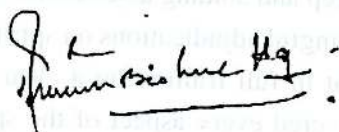
Thus, I have written so much in praise of him which factor will prove, he is so worthy of all encomiums I have showered on him.. I have been actively occupied in the field of spiritualism for over 50

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years and talk with full authority to call a spade a spade and nothing less.

In my association with him for almost 50 years, I have always found the glitter and glamour of hidden truths efflorescing out of him. His dedication to the subject of seeking Truth has indeed galloped into the open, unbridling every barrier of falsehood attached to the search.

May the Nourisher of all that is beautiful, which is a joy for ever, bless him with long life, even out-beating his ancestor's 103 life span. May Allah spare him many more years of useful service to humanity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N.M.M. Bishrull Hafi', with a horizontal line underneath.

N.M.M. Bishrull Hafi
Kadaiamottai, Madurankuli
13/9/01

32, Rajasinghe Road,
Colombo-06

2-10-2001

C. Shanmuganayagam-the Philosopher Friend

It gives me great joy to contribute my mite to the souvenir that is being published felicitating my good friend Shan on his 82nd birthday, at the request of the publication committee. Devout parents of whatever faith they may be, delight in giving the name of God or saints or some divine aspect or quality, to their new born child.

How auspicious is the name Shanmuganayagam for my friend, who displayed various talents in various spheres on different occasions since his young days.

It was in 1937 that we first met, being inmates of the Aquinas Hall, one of the University hostels where mostly University students were accommodated. Shan was active and of a contemplative nature. I was of a silent, devotional and shy disposition. Yet I was aware of his helpful nature.

In later years I used to see him often at Hultsdorf and we recognized each other as fellow lawyers. I saw him also at Krishnaji's lectures at the Town Hall. Krishnaji stormed the public with his forthright enlightening talks. Shan was one of the prime movers in organizing Krishnaji's talks. **My friendship with Shan developed largely because of our involvement in Satsang, which brought us close to each other.**

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The year 1945 is a memorable year in my life. A great devotee of Lord Muruga, retired Chief Justice Sri T.M. Krishnasamy Iyer, well-known as 'Thiruppugalmani' accompanied by other devotees arrived in Sri Lanka on a pilgrimage to the sacred shrine of Kathirgamam and then visited other sacred places including Jaffna. The paraphernalia of a Chief Justice was replaced by that of an orthodox Brahmin devotee of the Lord. A young Sadhu Murugadas (now well-known as Pithukuli Murugadas) was accompanying him on the harmonium, when the former was singing the soul-stirring Thiruppugal songs and other compositions and expatiating on them. Soon after Murugadasji in rapturous vein was chanting the divine names of God and other songs and exhorting the gathering to repeat the hallowed names. **They were to me veritable manna from the Heavens. Shan too was there with me at the Satsang meeting of Thiruppugalmani held at the Vivekananda Society Hall in Colombo,** and he was recording the entire proceedings on his Philips tape-recorder. That same year a group of us from the Satsang organized and led by Murugadasji travelled to the sacred Bharat-India. It was the very first pilgrimage to India for me and most of us, and indeed it was most blessed. For not only did we worship at many holy shrines, some blessed by the visits of saints who had ex-tempore extolled the temples by their fervent compositions, but also our spiritual leader Murugadasji sang bhajans with great devotion.

But the climax of our pilgrimage was darsan and Satsang of saints. Our stay at the most holy Anandashram followed by our stay at the most holy Ramanashram beggars description. It was during the grand, most sacred festival of Thiruvembavai when the whole city was agog in December that we arrived at Tiruvannamalai and reached Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi's ashram. Crowds were flowing in for Bhagavan's Jayanthi.

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On return from this first pilgrimage to India, I was frequenting the sacred temples and ashrams in Sri Lanka. The next year too we went on a second pilgrimage to India experiencing the divine aroma. When in Colombo I would contact Shan. One fine day I was delighted to read in a newspaper that Shan's marriage with Valli had taken place. How auspicious was their consecration of their wedded life to be an ideal couple, made at Kathirgamam. As Shan states he tended to be detached and meditative. Valli, the bride had both the qualities of Valli and Deivayanai, dynamic and compassionate.

On reading the announcement I went to convey my heartiest felicitation to the bride and bridegroom. I was received with great warmth and treated to a hearty meal. Hospitality is the keynote of a householder's life. Many Swamis and devotees have enjoyed their hospitality. I have enjoyed this in abundance at their 'Jasmine Cottage' home. Those were halcyon days.

Whenever I returned to Colombo I would contact Shan and visit Hultsdorf for other reasons than I did earlier. It was to enjoy Satsang. Valliamma would have already arranged a room with all amenities. Once I was taken ill. Shan took me to a renowned Ayurvedic physician. Along with medicine, God's divine names, the care of Valli, the ministering angel, I was cured. Valliamma was ably assisted by a bevy of young mothers attending to their duties in the famous humanitarian service founded by Valli, the Jasmine Textiles establishment. Divine music would be playing; the lawyer's office would be also functioning.

Shan introduced me to various saints and spiritual groups. He introduced me to the Subud group. I was also introduced to Swami Shantanandaji Maharaj and the Shiva Family whose programmes I

(contd)

attended whenever possible. He introduced me to the Gurdjieff and Ouspensky circle and other spiritual groups, for all of which I am grateful. It was a great joy to have darshan of Sri Omkara Swami Maharaj of Jnanodaya Alayam of Madras. I am grateful to Shan, for I had to accompany the saint to various towns and listen to his uplifting chants and talks. I had also the wonderful darshan of the great Sufi saint Bishrul Hafi, in whose presence the aroma of jasmine emanates. It was a delight to listen to his words of wisdom. It was Shan again who introduced me to this saint.

It gave me great joy when Shan introduced me to Sri Muthukrishna Swamiji whom I invoke in my prayers. It was in 1980 or so. The satsangs and programs of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami organization in Sri Lanka and India and the soul-stirring instructions and messages of Swamiji issuing forth from Mataji Vithagam, have delighted me and I seek their satsang both in Sri Lanka and India.

When I returned to Sri Lanka in 1987 after five years of elevating spiritual pilgrimage in India, what a wonderful joy it was to meet Shan and Valli, who took me to the retreat at Kandy to be conducted by Mother Vimala Thakar, a unique saint. It was my first darshan of her and a profound experience. I had come on a private visit for a month. I recall the celestial song of the great poet Saint Manickavasagar. He sings that only by the Grace of the Lord can one worship his feet. Enriched by the satsang and darshan of Mother Vimala Thakar, I returned to India.

Again after the lapse of thirteen years I returned to Sri Lanka last year. It was a great joy to meet Shan, although I felt deeply the absence of Valliamma. Now I have been introduced to the monthly meetings of Mother Nithiya's, where Mother Vimala Thakar's tapes

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are played, meditated upon and discussed. It is of great service to those participating.

Shan has been generous not only to me but also has readily helped some of my friends. A Sri Lanka Swami resident in an Ashram in India wanted his sannyasa name entered in his new passport. By Lord's and Guru's grace, Shan had this done. A true friend is rare. Some who claim to be my friends act a la Brutus when their help is required.

Shan has his special attire in everyday walk of life. He wears a felt hat and a muffler around his neck; of course due to reasons of health. In early life his vehicle was a motor cycle. Later on he was driving a van transporting devotees for Satsang meetings. He was writing on spiritual themes and continuing with this selfless service. His book 'An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth' is capable of transporting devotees to great heights in the spiritual realm.

There is a saying that children not only imbibe the hereditary qualities or traits of their parents but also of grand-parents. May he live for 103 years like his illustrious grand-father, Adigar Naganather.

I humbly invoke the Vedic Prayer for Shan to live for one hundred years in perfect health, active in every limb to continue his selfless divine service.

OM SHANTHI ! SHANTHI ! SHANTHI !

Swami Prakashamayanda

Swami Prakashamayanda
(of Divine Life Society)

A Note about the writer:

Swami Prakashamayananda was known as R. Sivanandasothy in the early years of his life, when he passed out as a lawyer and practised law for a short time. He was later known as Jothi Swami for several years, clad in white attire, after he gave up his legal practice. He received mantra initiation from Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh in 1952 and also special spiritual initiation into sannyasa from Yogaswamigal of Jaffna. In 1990 he was initiated into the holy monastic order of Jagadguru Adi Sankaracharya by Swami Chidananda, the Head of the Sivananda Ashram at Rishikesh and was given the name Prakashamayananda.

He has had the blessings of Saints of this century and of past centuries by frequenting the birth places and samadhis of great saints of the past of the Hindu tradition and of other religions. During the years 1968 to 1976 he accompanied Swami Tilak Maharaj, a venerable monk, on a world tour, singing bhajans and Nama-Sankirtan and inspiring audiences in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Fiji Islands, Tonga, Samoa, Hawaii, U.S.A, Canada and Central and South America.

During the period 1994 to 2000 he did a second tour by himself, as Swami Prakashamayananda, on the invitation of devotees and friends, singing bhajans and talking to interested audiences in English and Spanish where necessary, and spreading the message of Hinduism in Canada, U.S.A, Central and South America, France, Italy and England, before returning to Sri Lanka. He is now 82 years old, silver-haired, but yet a robust singer of bhajans.

By Lord's and Guru's Grace he left for Malaysia, on 27th January 2002 on a spiritual tour at the invitation of an aged brother disciple of Saint Yogaswamigal, and he says he would be travelling to Singapore and perhaps other countries too, according to the Guru upadesa namely, எப்பவோ முடிந்த காரியம் - 'Everything has been decided long ago.'

- Editor of Felicitation Souvenir-

Mathuri Mody

310, George R de Silva Mawatha,
Colombo-03.

2-10-2001.

Felicitatation Message
on Shan's 82nd Birth Anniversary

SHAN'S
Long-standing friendship with
Kirti & Mathuri Mody

My impression of Shan when I first saw him, along with his idiosyncrasies in his attire, was one of amusement. He was wearing a felt hat and was having a muffler round his neck on a hot day in Colombo Gradually, Kirti, my husband, and I kept meeting Shan and his wife Valli at many religious gatherings and we became quite friendly. We started admiring their ways and their right attitude. Kirti & I drew more and more closer to them by virtue of their loving kindness. Kirti had a sedate temperament like Shan, and Valli was full of activity like me. Shan would inform us about Sri Muthukrishna Swami, Shiva Family, Vimala Thakar and about the programs of these and other spiritual groups. I remember going to the Grandpass Prayer Hall many years ago to participate in the Muthukrishna Swami Mission functions there.

They were such a lovable couple that we liked to retain our association with them, and we felt that in the case of any group where Shan was actively involved, it will definitely be a sincere and dedicated organisation, because of his being a part of it. He is a pillar of many such spiritual organisations that attracted genuine people to join these groups and be helped in their spiritual progress.

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Shan knew Kirti's father, C.B. Mody, also quite well and he related to me once how several decades ago in 1967 he obtained the free use of our Kamala Mody Hall in Kotahena to hold the first preliminary Sathya Sai meeting in Colombo, before the formation of the Colombo Samithi, where two devotees of Baba arrived in Sri Lanka from Puttaparti and did a screening of Baba's 16 MM films to a packed house, with holy ash manifesting profusely on a framed picture of Baba placed in the Hall.

Humble as he is, digesting the teachings of many spiritual masters, **Shan has developed a deep understanding of life and clarity of perception.** For me, I see him, in his day to day life, living that truth. I always wait eagerly to find out what he has to say to the queries of inquirers in our group. **He would reply effortlessly, holistically and convincingly, because he is living that truth.** Indeed we are very fortunate to have him with us. Simple, humble, unassuming, always ready to respond to any spiritual inquiry with modesty. I just adore him. When he speaks in response to a query, he endeavours to convey to the listener the strong possibility of any earnest seeker experiencing a glimpse of the enlightened state of choiceless awareness, and he does this through an effortless and simplified presentation of the theme under discussion.

Ullody

Mathuri Mody

Chairperson

C. B. Mody Social Welfare Trust.

PANINI WIJSEKERA

15/1, Guildford Crescent,

Colombo-7

Telephone: 695031

C. Shanmuganayagam
-82nd Birth Anniversary

A Tribute to Uncle Shan
By Indrani Wijsekera

Uncle Shan together with Aunty Valli had shared a friendship, which is light-hearted and simultaneously steeped in mutual understanding, respect and great affection with myself and my family. The pivotal force is undoubtedly, our Guru Mataji Vithagam.

The most significant aspect of his character is love and humility and respect for all persons, great or small. This is more clearly evinced when he is the presence of our Guru.

Aunty Valli and he have been more than parents to her, and yet I have not seen such sincere and deep respect and love for her, as flows from him. At all times it is love, and more love. It seems gushing from his very soul, from his very being.

I think of Uncle Shan when I remember these words:

‘A life of wisdom leads to a life of love, a life of love leads to a life of understanding, sharing and serving. That is what is called Gnana, Bhakti, Karma, and when you attain that, it is called Saraswathie’s Grace.’

Together we have shared many experiences and exchanged anecdotes, be it our admiration for Princess Diana, or stories from his past. One such is his meeting with Panrimalai Swami, who gave him

(contd)

an apple to share with Auntie Valli so that they may be blessed with many children. However he left it at his brother-in-law's place, when he visited him, and he unwittingly cut it into small pieces and gave it to his children, before Shan and Valli could eat it! 'So it misfired,' says Uncle Shan. He is still a devoted 'parent' to lots of nieces and nephews!

To us Uncle Shan and Auntie Valli are soul mates, inseparable in life as in death.

His tributes to her, set out below, speak for themselves and give an insight into the depth of the love that is within him:-

Kopay 15-1-43

Serene be thy soul amidst the storm and stress
that rages through our lives

Wakeful be thy mind against selfish designs,
unjust stratagems and counsels dire

Eager thy heart to do unto others what
thou wouldst others do unto thee

Easeful and soothing be the tender words
that flow from thy kindly lips

Thankful be thyself for the boundless suffering
that thou hast so graciously been spared.

Valiant and brave be thy spirit

against life's cruel tricks and peevish taunts,

Affable and tolerant be thy heart towards the weak,
and the low, whom fortune hath not favoured.

Look not upon wealth and eminence

as thy lawful prize and thyself as the elect of God.

Loving and kind be thy heart ever and anon,

be it man or beast or friend or foe and

Iswara will bless thee when thy soul

throbs no longer and thy victory is won. - (SHAN) (contd)

Words of another poem addressed to Valli by Shan
during his courtship:

- Kopay 1943.

'A soft murmur comes through the rustling leaves
of the mango, the olive, the neem and the 'panai.'
The gentle zephyrs waft lightly over the tree tops
and deftly kiss the blossoms that dance in the breeze.
The 'kuyil' chants its piping love-call
The parrot decked in its gorgeous plumes
flies with joyous shrieks to seek its mate
All Nature sings SWEET VALLI'S praise,
and bids her joy wherever she may be.'


Indrani Wijesekera

Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam
A Rare Human Being

My first acquaintance with Mr. Shanmuganayagam was in the year 1949 when J. Krishnamurti visited Sri Lanka to give talks and to hold discussions.

Shan, as he was affectionately called by all of us, was one of the few who were responsible for Krishnaji's visit. But it was after the year 1957, after Krishnaji's subsequent visit that I came very close to Shan when Shan initiated a dialogue group to discuss and ponder on Krishnaji's teachings. The discussions were held at H.P. Sriwardhana's house in Nugegoda. H.P. Sriwardhana was the then secretary of the Krishnamurti centre Colombo. The discussions were held every Saturday in the evening. Shan took great interest to see that these discussions were held. Shan picked up some of us who had no transport and dropped us back after the discussions. Mostly the discussions went on till about 10 P.M.

Shan is a gentle-person and took interest in everyone. These discussion meetings never ceased. Even now after about 40 to 45 years these gatherings still continue. The venues changed. Also during the discussions Shan remains almost silent till the end. Sometimes these discussions turn to heated arguments. But Shan remains silent laughing. He watches how the ego works in persons. At the end when we all become quiet Shan speaks. He sums up. What he says comes from the depth and every one remains calm and we leave with deep thought.

Here I am reminded of what Krishnaji says. "You understand something completely when you are quiet. Out of silence, there is
(contd)

understanding not out of your chattering.” Also now it is not on - K-Agenda’. We say Nameless, Timeless, Formless. True to this the discussion group now discusses to discover whether “I” exists and who and what is “I”.

Also when I think of Shan, I am reminded of what Krishnaji says. “So one begins to discover one self the nature of the religious mind. One may have a family; but that family is in relation to the whole and not separate, it has to be looked after, cared for-.” For Shan all are one family. This is seen in his actions.

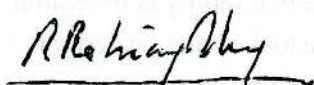
He seems to be always aware. Awareness as “K” says “To be aware is to watch your bodily activity, the way you walk, the way you sit, the movements of your hands. It is to hear the word you use, to observe all your thoughts, all your emotions, all your reactions.” When one is truly aware. It is not he who is aware. The awareness is. The “I” is not there to say I am aware. When one moves with Shan, one finds he is always in that state.

Shan was blessed with a wife Valli who was herself a person of infinite compassion. She also cared for others. They kept nothing for themselves.

Reference their whole-heartedness, I would like to mention a personal experience. It was in the year 1983, after the riots, which followed with looting. I was affected. I left my job and went to my home town in the north. There a few of us floated a limited company and wanted to start a mechanized Bakery. Each of the members was to subscribe Rs. 25,000/=. I did not have that money. When Valli came to know about this, she immediately provided Rs. 10,000/= without my asking, and they said I need not repay.

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This bakery never materialized. They never asked me for the money, although I said I would return the same. Any how I returned this after many years, just a year before Valli's death in 1998. Like this incident, they have helped many who were in need, of which I am aware.



R. Ratnajothy

(Retd. Technical Officer

State Enginnering Corporation, Sri Lanka.)

Apt # 1110,

445 Richmond Road,

Ottawa Ontario,

K2A 3W6, Canada.

**Felicitation
of C. Shanmuganayagam
on his 82nd Birth Anniversary**

SHAN

By

Nissanka & Sanka

We have been known to Shan from our birth - In Shan's Eternal philosophy, one need not shake hands to be introduced to another - nor need one speak to another -it is the language of Silence that knows and speaks. Shan, having seen us both from infancy, has known us always, in his inimitable silent way. Having thus introduced Shan, we would elaborate and state that Shan's most powerful line of communication with his fellow beings was and is, his Gentle Smile. It would be the same smile even if one were to upbraid or even hurt him!-it is a tolerant, understanding and all forgiving smile. It is a smile he inherited from his dear mother described by Sanka as 'the guardian angel of their three ancestral homes in Jaffna, Nuwara Eliya and Kandy.' Mother was a devout Hindu, with no pretence of philosophical learning, but dedicated to the home, the hearth and the family. Shan built up on this solid foundation with his early interest in philosophy and above all in the teachings, examples and lives of all Prophets, Gurus and Founders of all Religions. This search for the Truth began in his early University days and has been a golden thread that has run through his entire life.

Jiddu Krishnamurti was first invited and introduced to Ceylon/Sri Lanka in the late forties by Shan and a few of his associates. Sri Krishnamurti's first talk at the Colombo Town Hall, young and handsome as he was, seated in a Lotus Posture on a spotless white cloth spread on the dais, was to say the least, **electrifying**. Everytime he

(contd)

came thereafter, Shan received him and gave us the benefit of his Darshan and talks till as late as 1980 when Jiddu Krishnamurti, with greying hair as he was 30 years older than on his first visit, nevertheless sat erect and dignified as ever before and rendered his last talk to us in immaculate language and diction in the John de Silva Memorial Hall in Colombo.

Shan perhaps is one of the few Ceylonese, who had the golden opportunity of meeting and interviewing the Mouna Guru, Bhagavan Ramana Maharishi of Tiruvannamalai. This happened when he was a Law student, also in the early forties. Years later, Shan and Valli gave Sanka a birthday present, on his 50th birthday, by accompanying him to the Ashram of the Sage of Arunachala and thus setting Sanka on the Golden Path of finding the answer to Ramana's compelling question 'Who am I?' Shan next introduced Sanka to Brian Cook, an advanced Vedantin of whom Sanka says, 'Brian was Shan's Alter Ego, who had between them found the answer to Ramana's question.' Sanka's good luck was thus two-fold.

To Nissanka Shan gave the gift of his experiences with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Shan and his brother-in-law Balasingham, the latter who was Nissanka's guru in the prestigious Ceylon Civil Service, first introduced Sai Baba to Ceylon/Sri Lanka, by jointly with Dr. Nallainathan and others founding the initial Samithi of the Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Organisation in Ceylon which has taken deep root in Sri Lanka among all communities, races and religions, preaching the universality of all religions and the harmonious practice of all religions, side by side with one another in a spirit of love and tolerance.

Shan has always kept in touch with Buddhist Prelates of learning, Christian Theologians, Muslim dignitaries alike and valued their

(contd)

guidance and exchange of views. Shan's search for Truth was therefore for the Universal Truth and not merely the Truth behind a particular religion. In this he had many friends some of whom were close to us too, such as Godwin Samararatne of Nilambe Meditation Centre and Brian Cook of the Peradeniya Campus, both of whom are of fond memory now.

Shan was our Mentor, Friend, Philosopher and Guide in many ways and catered to our spiritual thirst. His dear wife Valli (whose recent loss we mourn), like a good Hindu wife catered to our material hunger for the delicious Thosai, Iddly, Vadai and sweetmeats, which she prepared for all who called at their very hospitable home.

Shan is for us a Treasure and we pray that Almighty will grant him many more years of good health to guide not only us and our children, but all friends who choose to seek his love and affection.

Nissanka.

Nissanka Wijeyeratne
12/21, Circular Road,
Hantana,
Kandy

Sankaran

C. Sankarakumaran
'Sankara Sthan'
46, Hill Street,
Kandy

Sri C. Shanmuganayagam
our gentle guide
in our quest for Shanthi

I joined the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission group some years ago on the suggestion of my brother-in-law late Justice V. Siva Supramaniam, who was a close devotee of Sri Muthukrishna Swami since 1970. I, who had been brought up in the tradition of Banking Law and corporate governance looked around for an organisational structure in the Mission group. There was none-Sri Muthukrishna Swami was guiding us directly through Mathaji Vithamma. Of course the first tottering steps along the spiritual path led to many doubts about my ability to continue the journey. So instead of trespassing on Vithamma's time, as she was attending to devotees in Sri Lanka, India and elsewhere almost 24 hours of the day, I looked around the devotees and saw two familiar faces, uncle Shan and aunty Valli. Uncle Shan was no longer the bustling lawyer I had seen in Hultsdorf in the nineteen fifties. In his place, there was a detached, serene, gentle devotee wearing the ever familiar headgear, and observing with an enigmatic smile all that went on around him. The positive side was that here were the pater-familias and mater-familias of the group. Everyone, including myself, approached him for guidance and advice - particularly the soft answer that turneth away wrath. This was always given with a smile and the helping hand was always extended referring to Hindu literature, observation and personal experience.


As for Indra, my wife, and myself we have on numerous occasions metaphorically sat at uncle Shan's feet always asking and never once have we been turned away for lack of time or patience. In fact the ready response is followed by a call late at night,

(contd)

where he has further addressed our problem and narrates a previous similar/identical experience and the course of action which led to an acceptable ending. Sometimes even on the following day he calls and chats with us, as part of the healing touch.

Uncle Shan, we wish to thank you, on the occasion of your 82nd birth anniversary, for helping us in our quest for shanti and we will never forget, the simple exhortation 'Seek refuge in the Eternal Light shining through the ageless Guru of Gurus'. We believe you enjoy helping others,- so may many more seek your guidance and thereby receive Swamiji's blessing in its plenitude.

**2, Horton Terrace,
Colombo-07
2nd October 2001**


T. Vairavanathan
Director, Bank of Ceylon

Thoughts
on my experiences with
Mr. C. Shanmuganayagam
- during a Crisis period

Shan Iyah, as fondly addressed by his close associates, is one in a million, and many others will readily endorse my statement. He is more a mystic than an ordinary person.

I wish to refer to an incident that took place in July 1983, when I and my family, who were residing temporarily with Shan Iyah and our beloved Valli Amma, his wife, **shared an interesting experience with them in coping with the rioters** that had surged into the garden where Shan Iyah's 'Jasmine Cottage' premises and adjoining houses were situated at Hultsdorf. Valli Amma vigorously evacuated several women and young persons through the rear gate and virtually ordered me and my family members also to leave the premises immediately along with the others through the rear gate, to save them from being attacked or hurt by the crowd. We complied with her order out of love and respect for her. Having seen us safely out of the premises, she went back and stood by Shan Iyah, as he was talking in a calm and collected manner with the leaders of the crowd, who were armed with knives and poles etc, and were shouting and threatening to break into the houses and plunder the articles inside. Since Valli Amma was not wearing any gold jewellery, the thugs dealt two or three blows on Shan Iyah's back with a wooden pole and asked him where they had hidden the jewellery. Unperturbed by the initial blows Shan Iyah continued talking to them. (He remarked later to us while recounting the unusual events of that day, that **at that time he was able to appreciate and understand the**

(contd)

noble example of Mahatma Gandhi in deciding stoically to bear the blows that were inflicted on him when he performed his first satyagraha in South Africa).

Shan Iyah then noticed one of the thugs behind him raising a pole to hit him on his head, and strangely enough a fellow thug standing by his side caught his upraised hand and said 'No' and stopped him from delivering the blow on Shan Iyah's head. **It was Divine grace operating in the midst of all the chaos**, and that too through the agency of one of the thugs himself. There is a beautiful song by Thayumanavar, the great Hindu saint, who is an embodiment of Parabakthi and Jnanam, beginning with the words, 'Avananri Or Anuvum Asaiyathu' endorsing the great truths set out in the 'Sri Rudram' which among other things states that **it is the Lord Himself who manifests as a leader among the robbers.**

Shan Iyah finally told the thugs that they could go upstairs and freely take away whatever they wanted including his library of law books, and any jewellery in the house, but requested them not to use their knives against any of the occupants. Thereupon they smashed the front door open and rushed into the building and began looting and tying up various articles including electrical goods into bundles to be taken away. Shortly afterwards a solitary Inspector of Police with a loaded pistol got down from his jeep and came into the garden, in response to a telephone call that Shan Iyah had made much earlier, and Shan Iyah requested him not to shoot at any of the rioters or attempt to arrest them but to persuade them to leave the premises. The Inspector acted accordingly and went upstairs and patted the leaders on the back saying 'That's enough for the present' and led them out, each with a large bundle of loot in his hand!

(contd)

An interesting incident took place afterwards, when a curfew was imposed and the main road was being patrolled by the Army. One of the thugs had left an extra bundle of loot behind in the garden as they withdrew from the premises and came back after the curfew was imposed to take charge of it. He was hesitating to take it out of the front gate as the Army personnel were patrolling the road. Shan Iyah who was standing alone in the garden after evacuating all the other occupants to neighbouring houses in the adjoining lane, helped the thug by guiding him to the rear gate and advising him to take his bundle out into the lane and avoid getting arrested by the Army men who were stationed on the main road in front.

Shan Iyah met us immediately afterwards and told us that **he felt quite happy helping the thug to take away the bundle which he felt was his hard earned property after the looting! That was Shan Iyah, the mystic, who was full of empathy for a thief who had looted his own house! It sounds like the story of the Bishop's candle-sticks**, where the Bishop ran behind the thief to hand over to him the second silver candlestick out of a pair, which the thief had failed to steal, and thereby make him contented and happy.

Shan Iyah is really blessed to have spent thirty years of the earlier part of his life from 1940 to 1970 benefitting from the sat-sangh he had of several living saints and sages in India and Sri Lanka and over thirty years of the latter part of his life from 1970 to date in 'upavasa' with the invisible Mahatma Sri Muthukrishna Swami manifesting through Mataji Vithagam, to whom Shan Iyah and Valli Amma have been adoptive parents and guardians for 3 decades.

(contd)

My family too have been fortunate to have received the blessings of Sri Muthukrishna Swami for the past several years, as members of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission. A remarkable coincidence in our close family relationship with Shan Iyah is that my mother and Shan Iyah's mother have been blessed by the Divine to bear the same name 'Nagarathina Ammal.'



G. Janarthanan
Former General Manager,
Jafferjee & Sons Ltd.

2nd October 2001

Colombo.

C. Shanmuganayagam

Impressions of a Colleague

My Anna - Shan

One has learnt many valuable life-long lessons from Anna. The beauty is, he lives his understanding in his daily life-in the most simple way. One of the things that I really admire is his art of first praising and then silencing the most vociferous arguments. He would listen patiently on any subject with an accommodating smile. He would allow the other person to say whatever he wants to say - it could be utter nonsense too! All Anna would go on saying in between is, 'That is so. You are right! You have a point there!'. Anna would say this so convincingly that the other person fails to realise that Anna is breaking his defensive attitude and sailing along with him initially. It baffles and silences the other person. It makes his mind receptive to what Anna has to present to him later, as an alternative proposition and not as a contradiction of what he had said.

Then slowly and gently but firmly Anna would put forward his view, which could be totally opposed to the other person's utterances. It's like the snake charmer, charming and pacifying the restless snake by his melodious flute music! **I have never seen Anna opposing or confronting another person. He has his own charming way of 'going round' the person. He calls it 'empathy',** placing oneself in the other person's position. It is an art by itself, worth observing!!

As an earnest student of life and truth, one could clear all doubts and share views with Anna, in all simplicity. And with every communion, he would gently give a push to dive deep within. "Anna, that person's words and behaviour hurt me, but on contemplation

(contd)

on who is the entity who got hurt within, the feeling of reaction, negativity dropped off effortlessly” I would say. Anna would listen to me and after a pause he would say in all seriousness, **“Nithiya, why not take one step further? Instead of, ‘to be aware’ of the hurt feeling, why get hurt at all? Contemplate on that.”**

He continued: ‘You don’t take hurt when a madman on the road rails at you. You know he is mad and his remarks go over you like water on a duck’s back. As Vimalaji rightly said, most persons (except for saints or small children) are either neurotic or psychotic or lunatic. So why commit the folly of taking hurt at any of their remarks?’

One loves him deeply for his silent firmness, not to be bound by any ‘organised’ religions, traditions, culture, social customs or idiosyncrasies. The beauty is, outwardly it ‘seems’ as if he is bound by them, but inwardly he is a free soul, not bound by anything. This unique trait of his was amply demonstrated many times, when Nithiya faced many traumatic challenges in life. His views and actions were clear and firm. No compromises. He stood by me like a silent rock-not even Valli Acca could move him from his stand, where Nithiya was concerned.

Every challenge one faced in life, Anna would gently and lovingly but in all seriousness point out the unique opportunity of using the very same challenge as a diving board to dive deep within oneself. ‘Nithiya, let all the drama take place around you. At times they are beyond human mathematics and logic. **So silently watch the drama, relax and enjoy it, while being rooted in the Self within.** You can do it. That’s why I am telling you,’ he would say

(contd)

with his charming smile, always encouraging me. One day it was nearly 10.30 p.m. The phone rang. 'Nithiya, hope you have not gone to sleep. Even so, sleep and listen with your inner ear to what I have to say,' Anna said and immediately plunged into the subject. 'In a theatre, the light is focussed on the screen. The projector works, and you see the film. Just before the film begins, the doors and windows are shut, and thick, dark curtains are drawn. Now, one could see the film clearly and one gets absorbed into it. Slowly the curtains are pushed aside, doors and windows are opened, and sunlight floods the theatre. The projector keeps working and the light remains focussed. But what happens now? The film on the screen has become very faint, almost blurred. You lose interest. You watch it, because the film is on, but your total attention is not there anymore!' Anna said.

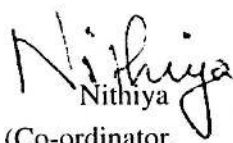
Before I could say anything Anna continued, 'So is life. Like the film it goes on. You cannot stop it. But if the veils of ignorance are pushed aside and the inner doors and windows are fully opened and **the sunlight of Pure Awareness starts functioning, then the life drama becomes a blurred film**, into which you do not plunge, but relax and allow it to run its course. You are a mere on-looker. Nothing affects you. You shot the film. So you go through it - but don't shoot another film, based on reaction. Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharishi too had said so.'

'So Nithiya, life is a game. Play it. Work out your karma silently. Don't create new karma by your reactions. Don't shoot another film'-Anna laughed. We had discussed the previous day about life being a dream and how to get out of the dream world. Like a small child, I had bombarded him with so many questions. As a loving father he responded now.

(contd)

That's my Anna - ever patient, ever gentle, humorous to the core, ever loving and ever pushing Nithiya deep down within. It's my punniyam to have him as my Anna. It's a well-known fact in Thimbiri House that if Anna is on the phone for a long time, who is on the other side - none else than Nithiya!

May the Divine bless my Anna with good health and long life, so that we could learn and derive joy from the spiritual wisdom that falls from his lips.


Nithiya

(Co-ordinator,

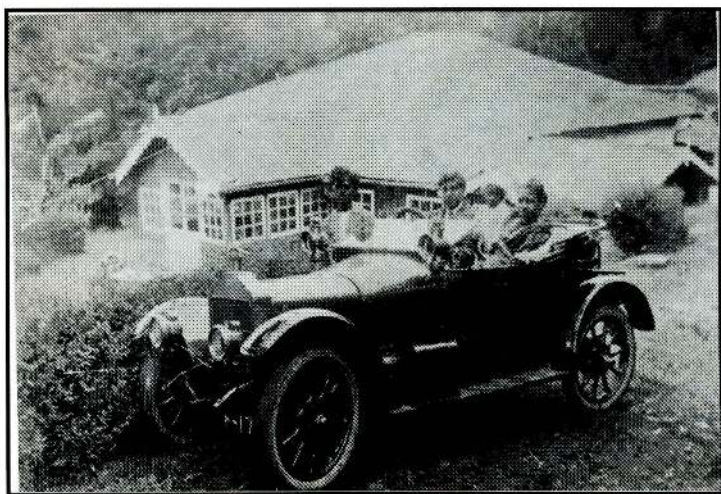
Thinker's Forum-Meditation Group)

That's my Anna - ever patient, ever gentle, ever true to the core,
ever loving and ever giving. Nothing else I know. It's my
prayer to be as true as my Anna. It's a well-known fact in
Thailand that Anna is the person who is always there for
you in the darkest of times.

My Anna, I love you. I love you for the way you are, for the way
you are, for the way you are, for the way you are. I love you
for the way you are, for the way you are, for the way you are.

Anna

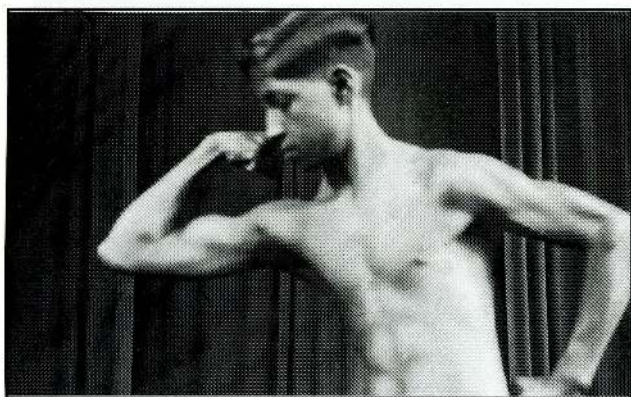
The Anna Foundation



SHAN with his parents in a Rover car
when he was one yaer old in 1920
at Nuwara Eliya.



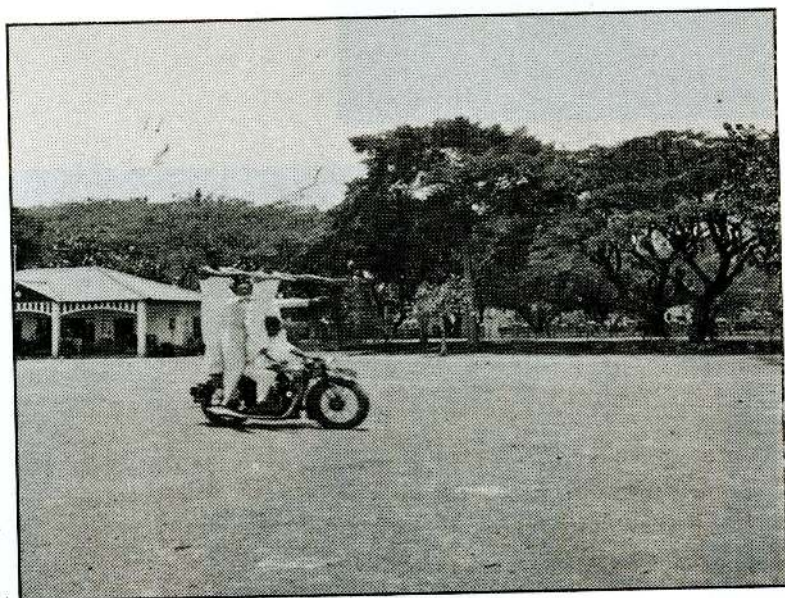
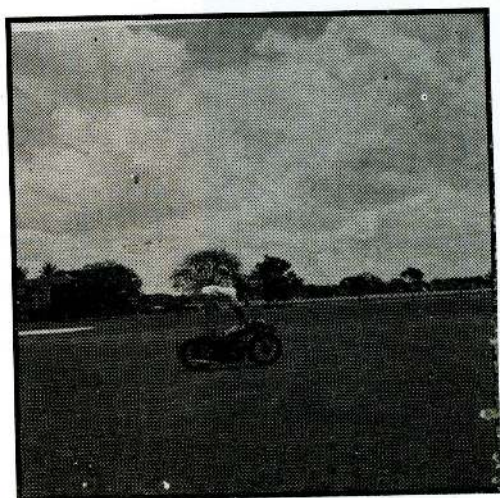
Shan's Mother
Nagarathina Ammal



SHAN
-Keeping fit,
during his
Inter-College
Boxing
Tournament
Period.



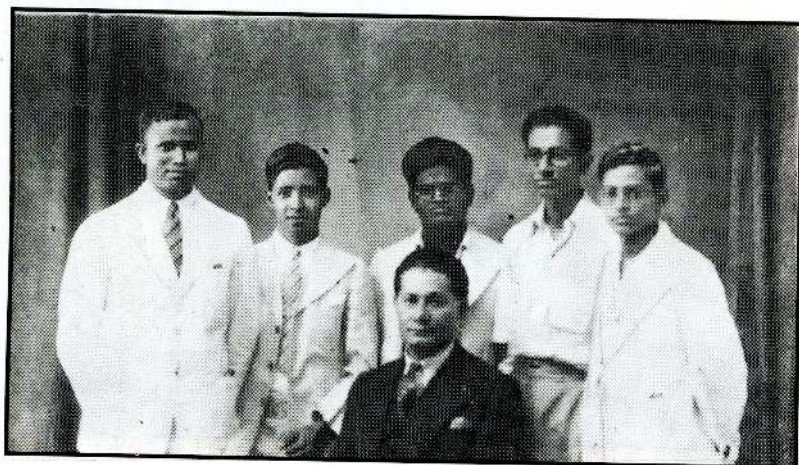
SHAN
as Senior Cadet
Company
Sergeant Major.



SHAN stunt-riding on his motor-cycle
-with his friends helping to form a pyramid



Elijah Grey
an advanced Rosicrucian
Initiate from a Samoan
Royal Family, on a
visit to Ceylon in 1943 .



(Seated) : Elijah Grey , (Standing - L. to R) Navaratnam, Deputy Registrar, Supreme Court,
SIHAN, C . Balasingham C.C.S, Thiagarajah
and C.Suriyakumaran (Later U.N.service)



J. Krishnamurti on his arrival in Ceylon
at the Ratmalana Airport for Talks in January 1957.
(L to R) H.P. Siriwardena, Krishnaji, Mrs. Iriyagolle, Kewal Motwani
W.H. Bodhidasa, J.P. Gunawardena, Shan,
D.A. Abeyasekera, I.M.R.A. Iriyagolle, Minister of Education (with grey hair).



Krishnaji's visit to Sri Lanka in 1980
 (Seated): (Centre) Krishnaji, Dr.E.W.Adikaram, Mr.& Mrs.Bodhidasa,
 Standing : (Centre) Shan & Valli (Extreme Right) M.Muthukrishnan



J.Krishnamurti in Sri Lanka in 1980
 - (Lto R) : Mrs. Bodhidasa, Shan (partly covered), Valli,
 Krishnaji and Krishnaji



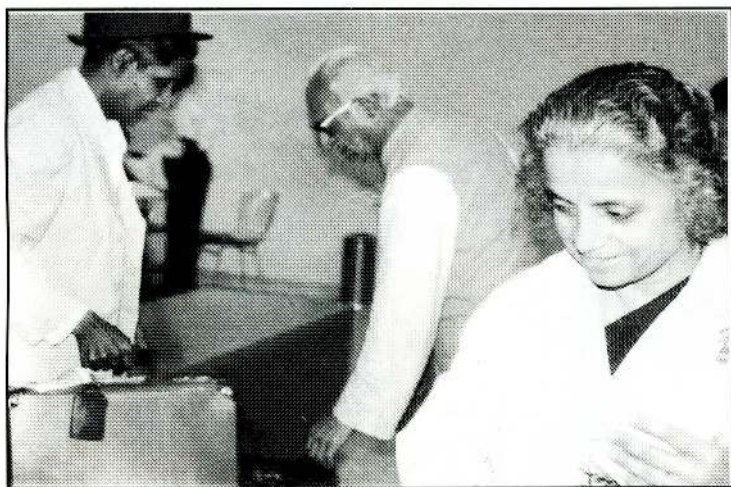
Vimalaji being received at the Colombo airport
on her first visit to Sri Lanka in 1971
(Lto R) : SHAN, Dr.U.G.Gunawardena, Sunandao ben
her Secretary, Vimalaji and D.A.Abeysekera



Vimalaji on her third visit to Sri Lanka in 1975 being received by
(Lto R) : Nithiya, Mrs. Strong, Vimalaji, Shan, Kusala Abeyawardena M.P.,
Navarendran and Chandra Jayawardena (rear view)



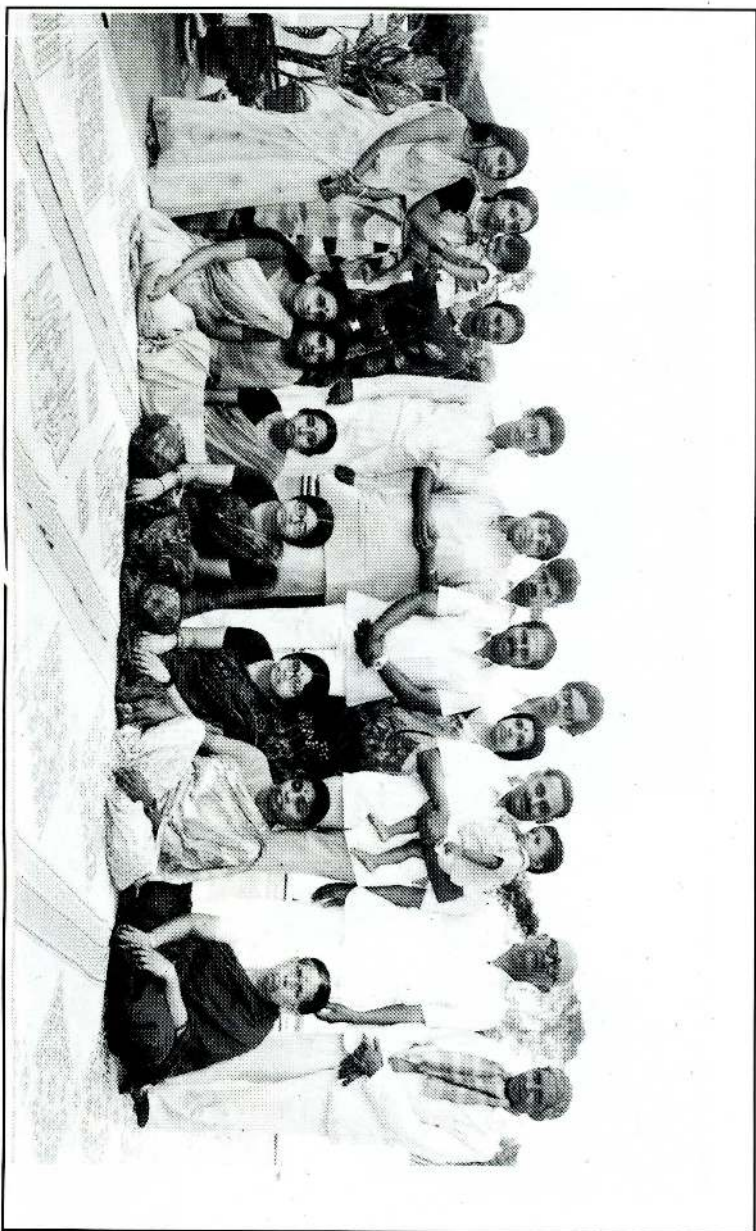
Swami Shantanand being received at the Colombo Airport
circa 1974 by Shan and other devotees:
(LtoR) : Shan , Sanka, AVRA Proprietor, Narayanadas, Swamiji, Valliappa Chettiar
Shanmuganatha Iyer, Kanaga Kandiah , Mrs. Strong, Pappu Hathiramani



SHAN receiving
Vimalaji at the Colombo Airport in 1973

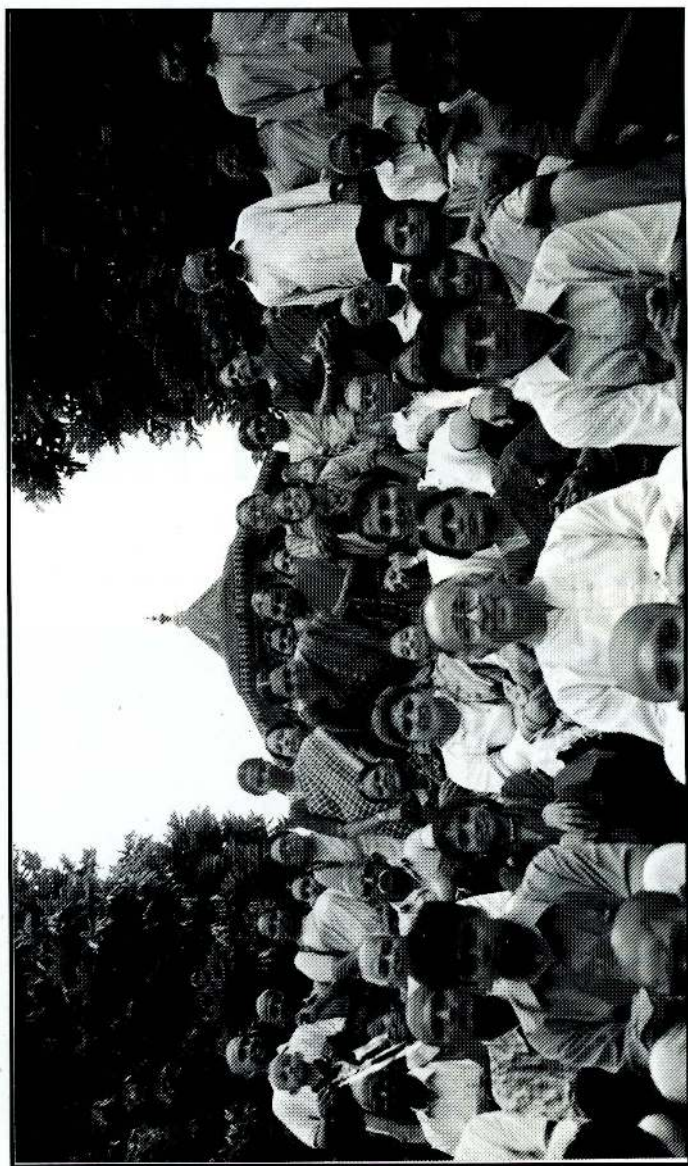


Vimalaji at Kandy
on her last visit to Sri Lanka in Jan'y 1987
(Seated on either side of Vimalaji) Valli, Rajoo, Chandra Jayawardena, Umila her Secretary & Husena Jafferjee
(Standing L to R) Ratnakara, Jothi Swami, P.A. Jayawardena,
Sankarakumarani, Ranganathan, Arjan, SHAN, Barbara Pennington, Godwin Samararatna,
Mathuri Mody, Sivagnanam et al



Shan & Valli and Mr & Mrs. K.Manickavasagam Pillai and Family photographed with Swami Shantlanaad of Rishikesh at Colombo on 17 th December 1978.

(L to R Seated) : .Malthaji Vithamma, Gowri, Vallaba, Suriya, Komathi, Valli, Loganayaki.
 (L to R Standing): .karpagam, Janaki & hild Letchu, Mahesary, Muthukrishnan, Swarniji, Rajah,
 Mandhiram, Ganpatiy, Anandhi, Nellaiappan & child Maani, K.Manickavasagam Pillai, Shan



Group Photograph
of Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission members
from Madras, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli, India
on pilgrimage to Kataragama in Dec. 2000,
with Mathaji Vithamma in the Centre



Mathaji Vithamma joining some members of the Sri MKS Mission at dinner. (L to R) Shaila, Srinithi, Manonmani Amma, Gowri Jeyakumar, Lakshmi Janarthanan, Padma, Shyamala Baby, Mathaji



Some members of the Mission at dinner (L to R) Ramesh, Arun, Dr. Ragu, Kamran, Manotharan, Dr. Sritharan.



SHAN at Kataragama
in wheel-chair with Kavadi,
Near the spot where Maha Avatar
Kriya Babaji meditated for
6 months in 211 A.D.

(Below)

SHAN with M.Muthukrishnan
-a true 'son' of his, says Shan.





Mathaji Vithamma
at Kataragama in Nov. 2000
carrying Baby Shyamala
(the mascot)
surrounded by (L to R)
Gokul, Sankar, Bharani,
Shyama Baskaran,
Lakshmi Amma,
Sarada, Vallaba.



Mathaji Vithamma against the back -drop of the
Seven Hills at Kataragama with other Mission members
(L to R) Vallaba, Vidya, P.M. Shyamugan, Poona Gayatri , Lakshmi Amma,
V.Ramakrishnan, Arun and wife, and Jo-Jo



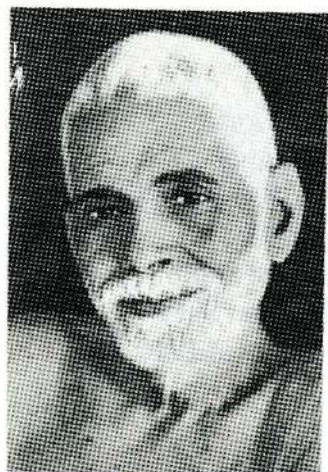
**Mathaji Vithamma presiding over a Prayer Meeting
of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission**



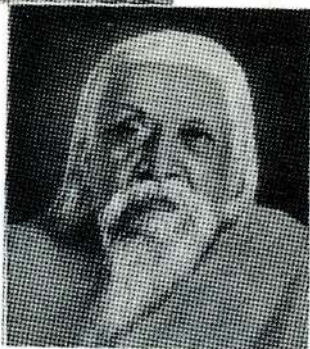
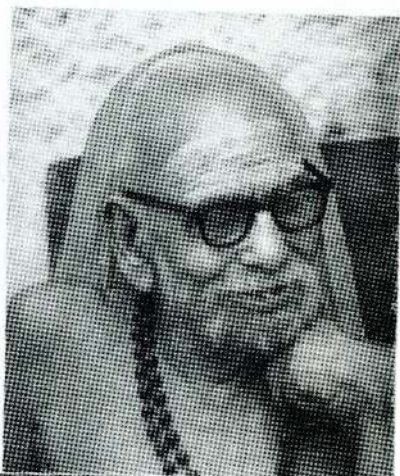
Mrs. Usha Kasturi
of Coimbatore flown and
transported to Kataragama
in a stretcher and wheel -chair
for healing, under Mathaji Vithamma's
personal instructions,
after sustaining multiple
fractures of both hands and
legs in an accident.



Some of the friends who attended Shan's Kumbabishekam
 (Foreground L to R) Monohari, Sulakshana, Malar Kandasamy, Nithiya, Dr. Sriharan,
 Rear L to R : Rajeswari, Anirithi, Vinala, Manommani Amma, Lakshmi Aunty,
 Mrs. Kumarasingham, Thillainagaky, Indra.



Top
(Left)
Sri Ramana Maharishi
of Tiruvannamalai
(Right)
Sri
Chandrasekarendra
Saraswathi
of
Kanchi
Kamakoti Peetam



Sri Aurobindo and the Mother of
the Pondicherry Ashram



Down
(Left)
Sri Yogaswamigal
of Jaffna
(Right)
Swami Ramdas
of Kanhangad
(Photo autographed
for Shan by Swami)



Some of the fully enlightened Spiritual Seers of the 20th century
whose personal blessings Shan was extremely fortunate to receive.



(Right)

Venerable

Balangoda Ananda Maithreya
Mahanayake Thera
of Sri Lanka

- a spiritually advanced
and most compassionate

Buddhist prelate, whom Shan
has met and revered for several years.



(Left)

H.H. Guru Bawa Muhaiyadeen
Sufi Mystic,

- Well over 100 years of age,
resided in Jaffna and then in Colombo
with Dr. Ajward Macan Markar,

Prof. of Medicine,
and finally at Philadelphia in U.S.A.

- Bestowed his special blessings
on Shan & Valli since 1960.



Sri Omkara Swami
of Jnanodaya Alayam, Madras
(described as 'the Blissful Saint' by
Maha Avatar Kriya Babaji)
on his visit to Ceylon in 1957
at the invitation of Shan

The 1800 year old
Maha Avatar Kriya Babaji
of Gowri-Sankar Peetam
near Badrinath, Himalayas
(Meditated at Kataragama for 6 months
about 211 A. D.
under the guidance of Boganatha Rishi
and received final initiation from
Agastya Mahamuni
after 48 days of penance at Courtalam
in South India in the same year
before settling down in the Himalayas)





Ananda Mayi Ma, the blissful saint of Bengal, who has been a source of deep inspiration to several world-renowned spiritual teachers such as Paramahansa Yogananda, Swami Shantanand of Rishikesh and Vimala Thakar of Mount Abu.

SUPPLEMENT
to
FELICITATION SOUVENIR

incorporating recent articles
on Spiritual Themes

By
C. Shanmuganayagam

SUPPLEMENT

FELICITATION SOUVENIR

on Special Themes

1911

G. Subramanyam

The Book entitled
‘An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth’
by C. Shanmuganayagam
is a Challenge and an Inspiration
to all young seekers
imbued with a scientific outlook.

Synopsis

The author has dealt with the following topics of perennial interest with remarkable depth of understanding and lucidity of presentation:

- 1) Self-Inquiry or Atma Vichara based on the great liberating question ‘Who Am I.’
- 2) Meditation in its various forms leading to Pure Awareness and the effortless and thought-less state of inner Silence.
- 3) Scientific Investigation of Life after Death, based on direct observation by qualified researchers, setting out in detail the joyous interim life on various subtle planes of existence such as the astral, mental and causal planes, pending re-incarnation in the physical plane again.
- 4) The Law of Karma, the eternal Cosmic Law, based on the principle of ‘reap as you sow,’ which supersedes all other man-made laws with its inexorable applicability to every human being, whether he be saint or sinner, or king or commoner, or rich or poor, characterized however by a baffling time-lag that deludes all humanity.
- 5) The perennial dilemma of ‘Why Creation with all this suffering’ which is gone into and faced squarely by looking at it from our own developed higher level of consciousness. The illusion of Time and Space and the apparent objectivity of the universe is demonstrated in a unique manner, with the help of observations from everyday life rather than from

(contd)

abstract philosophical concepts.

- 6) Finally the subject of full Enlightenment as experienced by the Sages, with a significant distinction drawn between the transcendent inner state of being of the Sage and his outward human personality traits, which are governed by his prarabda karma.

In the Appendix and Epilogue are published essays by the author on three eminent spiritual personalities, namely J. Krishnamurti, who has been hailed as a World Teacher, Kriya Babaji, the 1800 year old Maha Avatar of the Himalayas, and Sri Agastya Mahamuni, the ageless Guru of Gurus, and also a review by the author of the remarkable spiritual experiences and teachings of Peace Pilgrim, the unique lady saint of America who walked alone across the length and breadth of U.S.A and Canada covering 25,000 miles on a holy pilgrimage for Peace, relying entirely on Providence for her daily sustenance and shelter.

In a fitting introduction to the book the author says 'It is hoped that the readers will take a cue from the contents of the book and themselves embark on an enthralling journey of Self- inquiry, replete with all its adventure, joy and wonder.'

Extracts from Reviews

'Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan of Bombay has rendered a great service to the world by publishing this fascinating book on 'Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth' by C. Shanmugayagam of Sri Lanka, which has the supreme virtue of being an excellent compendium of thought-provoking writings on the ageless wisdom, based on the author's personal contact with numerous sages and siddhas of the 20th century and the resultant elucidation of their teachings.'

(contd)

- Extract from the review published in Bhavan's Journal, India, of 15-9-2000 by Dr. Susunaga Weeraperuma, D.Litt, M.Sc. Econ. (Lond.) author of several books on Religion and Spirituality, now residing in France.

“This book ‘An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth’ has valuable insights for people of all faiths. It is a timely book and deserves to be read and re-read even by adults. It is more than an experiment in spiritual inquiry. It is a guide to happiness through the presentation of the Truth discerned by the great religious leaders of all times. I hope this book reaches all the libraries not only of our country but also abroad.” - Extract from a review by Dr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne - former Sri Lankan Minister for Education and Ambassador to Russia.

‘The author has had the immense good fortune of having personally met a large number of the whole galaxy of saints and sages of this century who have graced the land of India and Sri Lanka, including the well-known sage Sri Ramana Maharishi. He has presented the essence of their teachings in clear and concise language in this book on ‘Spiritual Inquiry’ which will be of real value to young seekers all around the world’ - Dr. Karan Singh of Kashmir, India, former Union Minister and Ambassador to U.S.A.

‘Modern young men and women are very much concerned about pursuing their studies in science, medicine and engineering, with the sole purpose of securing lucrative jobs. There is nothing wrong about it, but they will also do well to take a dip into this very interesting book on ‘Spiritual Inquiry’ by an author who has sat at the feet of Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas and several other sages and saints. They will then come to know that there is something much higher

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than the life they wish to lead-a life that never comes to an end.....replete with all its adventure, joy and wonder. - Extract from the review by Prof. A. Ranganna, published in the 'Vision' of June 2000 the monthly magazine of Swami Ramdas' Anandashram at Kanhangad, India.

“Sri C. Shanmuganayagam, the author of the book ‘An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth’ has met an array of great sages and saints of the last century and received their gracious blessings in person..... He has however studiously stuck to scientific rationality, which sparkles as an admirable trait in him. His quest for Truth is insatiable, indeed! He succinctly vindicates in the book Sri Ramana Maharishi’s teaching, namely ‘Who am I,’ which is not a theory or dogma or even a technique but a direct plunge into Truth, where the experiencing mind itself is ‘swallowed alive’ as Sri Ramana himself puts it.... The author deserves the gratitude of all spiritually minded people, all the world over for having focussed the crux of the book to help the youth.”- Extract from a review by Sri V. Ganesan, former Editor of the ‘Mountain Path’ of Sri Ramana sramam, Tiruvannamalai, S. India.

“The author of this book ‘An Experiment in Spiritual Inquiry for the Youth’ has done a commendable work in providing a true guide and path-finder for the young spiritual seekers. It is a scientific analysis of the spiritual world, based on the author’s personal contacts and interviews with many enlightened souls....The book is remarkable, insightful and unusually illuminative. The author has had the rare privilege of meeting great saints like Sri Ramana Maharishi.....The book is sure to fan the flame of inquiry in an earnest seeker, so that he becomes a light unto himself.” - Extract from the review by Swami Muktidananda published in the Vedanta Kesari of Feb. 2001, the monthly journal of the Ramakrishna Order.

A Review

'AN EXPERIMENT IN SPIRITUAL INQUIRY FOR THE YOUTH'

By C. Shanmuganayagam. Pub. : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,

Kulapati Munshi Marg, Mumbai - 400 007, India (1998).

pp. 124. Price: Rs. 90/-.

The opening of the book augurs auspiciously with the glorious statement of Lord Buddha: 'May all beings be well and happy.'

Bhagavan Ramana declared: 'Happiness is one's real nature.'

Thus, Sages and saints, all through the centuries, bless humanity, unreservedly too, by focusing its attention on the truth that happiness is not only the Final Goal of us all, but also that which is experienced moment by moment, by every living being. When one instantly, experientially, totally becomes aware of the core of one's True Being (*Sat*) the very consciousness of it (*Chit*), lands one in perennial Bliss (*Ananda*). *Satchidananda* is therefore not only the highest code on Spiritual Revelation, but also the simplest, easiest, direct experience of every one of us, every moment. The beauty of Spiritual Truth is that it blossoms into Fullness, instantly and simultaneously, both as theory and in practice. This important truthful facet of life has been well brought out in the book under review.

Sri C. Shanmuganayagam, the author, deserves the praise by and gratitude of all spiritual minded people, all the world over, for having focused the crux of the book to help, vitally, the youth. Most rationally he has taken into account the verified scientific conclusions while highlighting the '*darshanas*' (direct perceptions) of our ancient *rishis*, when dealing with the concept of Supreme Truth. Sri Shanmuganayagam has every right to do so, for

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he has not only dedicated his life for spiritual study (by giving up his lawyer profession), but also personally meeting with an array of great sages of the last century. He has then received the gracious blessings of these saints, in person. While not himself derailing into emotional and sentimental beliefs, **he has studiously stuck to scientific rationality, which sparkles as an admirable trait in the author.**

His quest for Truth is unsatiable, indeed! Therefore, the course of the book lays emphasis on Rudyard Kipling's 'Six teachers', who taught him the secret of life. They are: 'Where', 'When', 'What', 'How', 'Why' and 'Who.' The six posers are: 'Where am I,' 'What am I,' 'How am I,' 'Why am I so,' 'When did it all begin' and 'Who am I.' However, with convincing authority he upholds the sixth teacher 'Who,' into which all the other five posers are merged as the finality in 'arriving' at the Truth. Sri Ramana Maharshi's central teaching of 'Who am I?' is the key to unlock the treasure trove of Truth that lies within the Heart of every one. The author succinctly vindicates that Self-enquiry through the quest 'Who am I?' is the direct path leading to the threshold of Supreme Truth. **'Who am I?' is not a theory, nor a dogma or not even a technique but a direct experiential landing into Truth!**

In all other methods, the experiencing mind is left behind to bear the result of the practice, whereas in **'Who am I?' Self-enquiry, the experiencing mind too is "swallowed alive,"** as Sri Ramana Maharshi put it powerfully. Like the camphor when burnt not leaving a residue! Thus, **'Who am I?' Self-enquiry is not an intellectual process but an all-consuming Love Finality:**

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“Love is the source of all energy,
The most dynamic force in the universe,
The standard of all judgment,
And the basis of all morality.”

Seekers after Truth will be delighted to go through the important other topics too so deftly dealt with by the author. They include: ‘Why Creation?’ ‘Scientific Investigation of Life after Death?’ ‘Joyous Life pattern of the Astral Plane,’ ‘Why this suffering,?’ ‘Law of Karma,’ ‘Time, Space and Causation,’ ‘Enlightenment and the Cessation of all Karmic ties.’ In elucidating the salient points to bring out the essence of these vital topics, Sri Shanmuganayagam again and again quotes very aptly in support words of Wisdom of saints, whose list is long: Sri Ramana Maharshi, J. Krishnamurti, Shankaracharya of Kanchi, Swami Ramdas, Swami Sivananda, Omkara Swami, Sri Aurobindo, Paramahansa Yogananda, Nisargadatta Maharaj, Yoga Swamigal, Muthukrishna Swamigal, Guru Bawa, Mayee Ma, Siva Bala Yogi, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi, Vimala Thakar and Swami Shantananda.

Though the inner-title page proclaims the book as “being a compilation of a series of popular essays on Spiritual Inquiry or *Atma Vichara* contributed to the Press by the author, incorporating a stimulating Question and Answer dialogue with the readers,” its very prestigious publication by the reputed publishers “Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan” asserts that this is a text book on cultivating the Spiritual Truth, through the enquiry method, invaluable for the youth’s correct understanding and royal progress in the Life Divine.

I fully concur with Prof. T. Nadaraja (Chancellor, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka) when he wholeheartedly commends Sri Shanmuganayagam: “The author has skillfully compressed a wealth of
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information relating to a wide range of spiritual knowledge and experiences into his book, which is a boon to any reader who is keen to comprehend the essence of the teachings of our Sages and Siddhas of the 20th Century, in a nutshell.”

The Appendix and the Epilogue of the book give very absorbing reading. The Index is a welcome addition helping the reader at all needed stages.

Every spiritual seeker who aspires to have Happiness perennial should possess this precious compendium on Truth! I heartily congratulate the author on achieving a stupendous task; and, I offer too my obeisance to him.

- V. Ganesan
former Editor of
‘The Mountain Path’
Sri Ramanasramam
Tiruvannamalai.

“Ananda Ramana”

October 12, 2000

Three Exemplary Votaries of Peace
in Sri Lanka

- Dr. E.W. Adikaram, Ven. Ananda Maithriya Thera
and S. Sivasubramaniam

With the dawn of the third millennium of the Christian era, which has been hailed by Nostradamus the famous French seer and mystic of the 16th century as the harbinger of the Aquarian age which is destined to usher in 'a thousand years of peace on earth', it is meet that we remember some of our own votaries of peace in Sri Lanka who fostered mutual good-will and harmony among the various communities in our county during the better part of the 20th century.

Dr. E. W. Adikaram the well-known Buddhist scholar, vegetarian and pacifist and founder-president of the J. Krishnamurti Centre in Sri Lanka and the saintly monk the Venerable Mahanayake Ananda Maithriya Thera of Balangoda were two outstanding men of peace and liberal outlook in the public life of our country, whom the world considered as two veritable flowers of Buddhism in our midst.

So was the late Mr. S. Sivasubramaniam, the well-known soft-spoken senior lawyer of Hultsdorf who was a prolific writer to the Press on the subject of political reconciliation and harmony among all the communities in Sri Lanka. He was a personal friend of most of the political leaders of his time, including Hon.D.S. Senanayake and some of the succeeding Prime Ministers, and also of the senior members of the Bench and the Bar and other leading personalities of all communities like Mr.T.B. Jayah, Dr. M.C.M. Kaleel, Justice M.T.Akbar, Mr.K. Balasingham, the well-known social reformer and legislator and Sir Waitilingam Duraisamy, the veteran Speaker of

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the State Council and several others. **His wise and sober counsel on the contentious issues of the day were given heed to by most of the moderate elements in society at that time.**

He was a keen student and follower of the Indian freedom movement at that time under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and the cultural renaissance in India under the guidance of Sri Rabindranath Tagore. He used to correspond on important occasions with Sri Jawaharlal Nehru and Sri Rajagopalachari and other Indian leaders involved in the freedom struggle.

He was a founder-member and office-bearer of the India-Ceylon Friendship Society, as it was called then, and was a close friend of Mr. M. S. Aney the Indian High Commissioner in Ceylon during the early years of our Independence.

His was a sobering influence on the politics of his time and on one occasion in 1976 he organized a multi-ethnic conference and seminar at Kandy under the chairmanship of Metropolitan Rt. Rev. Lakdasa de Mel where all the political parties in Sri Lanka were represented and agreed proposals for the settlement of the communal issues at that time were submitted to the Government. But like all other earlier agreements and pacts of that period they were not implemented.

In the political field he advocated the adoption of a scheme of governance more on the lines of the Executive Committee system of the Donoughmore era with a proportionate sharing of power by the minorities at the centre rather than at the periphery. He was for an integrated form of government where all communities would enjoy equal rights in every part of the country. In fact he organized the formation of an association called the National Integration Society, which

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functioned for some years in order to disseminate these ideas. In this matter he had the support of Ven. Heenatiyana Dhammaloka and other liberal-minded members of the Buddhist clergy.

He was an indefatigable religious worker, and as Secretary of the Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society, with Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan as its President, he used to travel frequently to Mannar to supervise the restoration work and the conduct of regular poojas and festivals at this ancient Hindu Temple built several centuries ago. He was also the President of the Vivekananda Society, Colombo, which was one of the earliest institutions to be founded in Asia after Swami. Vivekananda's return to India via Ceylon after attending the famous Parliament of Religions in America along with Anagarika Dhammapala.

He was born in 1899 and was a nephew of Mr. A Mailvaganam J.P.U.M., a respected senior citizen of Kopay and of Adigar A. Naganathar C.B.E. of 'Maha Walavu', Kopay, Jaffna, and practised as a lawyer at Hultsdorf from 1922 to 1985 and passed away at the age of 86 years. His hospitality was phenomenal and his residence at Hultsdorf was second home to many persons arriving in Colombo from the outstations or from abroad on political or public work for the betterment of society. He was a person of great integrity in his professional and public life and these high ethical standards were duly maintained by his two sons the late Mr. S. Ambalavaner, the well-known Tax consultant and Fiscal adviser, and the late Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai. M.P. for Kopay who was a popular Parliamentarian and author of a political treatise entitled 'Co-existence, not Confrontation.'

C. Shanmuganayagam

Sri Aurobindo and Indian Independence

by C. Shanmuganayagam

(Life-member, India-Sri Lanka Society

former Joint-Secretary, Sri Aurobindo

Society of Sri Lanka)

'Freedom at Midnight' for Mother India while the rest of the world was asleep was the stirring slogan with which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru ushered in the Independence of India fifty three years ago as the clock chimed the midnight hour on August 15, 1947. We are celebrating the 53rd anniversary of India's Independence in this millennium year 2000.

It is a remarkable coincidence that **the date for the grant of Independence to India was refixed by Lord Mountbatten for August 15, 1947 the birth-date of Sri Aurobindo**, the sage of Pondichery, after an initial decision to have it in July of that year. There were probably occult reasons for the change, of which Lord Mountbatten may have become intuitively aware.

India's Independence date was pre-ordained

The writer of this article recalls an episode that an associate of his in the field of spiritual research in the early years, the late Dr. A. Kanakarathnam, Principal of the Ceylon Ayurvedic College, related to him. Dr. Kanakarathnam was a keen follower of Sri Aurobindo's teachings and used to visit the Pondichery Ashram almost regularly every year in the 'forties to have the Darshan of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on August 15, the birthday of the Sage. On his visit to the Ashram in August 1946, while he was proceeding towards the Darshan chamber, he saw a writing on the wall (literally on a banner hanging on the wall) the words: 'On this day next year India will become free.'

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He said he had a vivid recollection of the experience, which might well have been a vision that he was vouchsafed by the Mother who was an adept at spiritual and psychic materializations. She was reported to have materialized a layer of snow on the hot sand dunes of the Sahara desert in response to a request, in her early days before she joined the Sri Aurobindo ashram. Dr. Kanakaratnam himself was psychically sensitive and had similar significant experiences during his pilgrimage on foot to Kataragama in the early years.

He also mentioned to the writer that, as a student of Indian politics at that time he could not believe that this prediction would come true, as the British government was then not contemplating the dissolution of the British Empire. As everyone learnt later, the turn of events thereafter was sudden and unexpected with Prime Minister Atlee and Lord Mountbatten racing against time to complete the hand-over of India and Pakistan to their political heirs.

Sri Aurobindo himself had stated in his writings in the 1920's after he gave up his editorship of the firebrand journal '*Bande Mataram*' where he had advocated a sustained political struggle for the freedom of India, that he had a spiritual vision that Mother India would become free some decades later and that his task thereafter was to follow the path of peace and usher in this freedom that has already been destined by the higher powers.

Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo were opposed to Partition

It is significant to note that both Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo were against the partitioning of India and the Mahatma at one stage offered the premiership of a united India to Mr. Jinnah in preference to partitioning. Sri Aurobindo too, it is learnt, communicated with

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Jawaharlal Nehru advising against the partition, as he would have foreseen psychically the holocaust that arose from the partitioning that was to cost a million lives. But his advice was not accepted by Nehru, on the ground of impracticality. It would appear that Sri Aurobindo responded sadly by mentioning to some of his aides that, if partition occurs there will nevertheless be a re-unification of Mother India in the 21st century leading to a still larger confederation of States both in the East and the West and finally to the formation of a World Government.

Sri Aurobindo's role as a world statesman

Sri Aurobindo's role in world politics, apart from being an enlightened Sage, is epitomized in the famous words addressed to Court by C. R. Das, the brilliant lawyer who defended Sri Aurobindo in the treason lawsuit filed against him by the British government in his early days of political agitation and in which he was acquitted: 'My appeal to you is this, that long after this controversy will be hushed in silence**Long after he (the accused) is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism, and the lover of humanity...His words will be echoed and re-echoed, not only in India but across distant seas and lands.**'

It is also reported that **Sri Aurobindo was in a deep spiritual mood while the case was being conducted and had the Universal vision of beholding Lord Krishna functioning in each of the roles in the Court drama, as the Judge, the prosecutor and the witnesses.**

The writer of this article had the good fortune to meet the Mother of the Ashram at Pondichery in the year 1961 and receive

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her personal blessings at that time.

India and Sri Lanka as harbingers of Peace

May the 53rd year of Independence of India to be followed closely by the 53rd year of our own Independence of Sri Lanka six months hence, bring peace and harmony and reconciliation to all the people of this erstwhile Island Paradise.

It is a happy augury that on the occasion of the celebration of Indian Independence this year, we have in our midst, as **the incoming High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka, Gopalkrishna Gandhi, the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi**. It is trusted that his stewardship in Sri Lanka will usher in an era of peace and non-violence and cordiality in the South Asian region.

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi - an ever compassionate saint of our times

by. C. Shanmuganayagam

Life Member, India - Sri Lanka Society

We have just witnessed in September, the month when nature sheds its autumnal leaves, the passing away in India, the land of sages and saints, one of the greatest *karmayogis* of India since Mahatma Gandhi, namely the universally acclaimed 'Saint of the gutters' and a child of God, the 87 year old revered Mother Teresa.

It is significant that about four decades ago in the month of September 1953, there was born at Allapad in Kerala, South India, a smiling, child-saint among the fisherfolk, on the western shore of the village of Parayakadavu, adjoining the sparkling waters of the Arabian Sea. The humble clan of fisherfolk in the village trace their ancestry as far back as the eminent sage Parasara Maharshi who married the fishermaid Sathyawathi, and brought forth into the world Sri Veda Vyasa, the renowned codifier of the Vedas.

This smiling child-saint was named Sudhamani by her parents and later came to be known as Sri Mata Amritanandamayi. She was born on September 27, 1953 on Karthigai day in full awareness but appeared to undergo and face stoically several torments inflicted on her during her childhood by her ignorant elders, including her own parents.

However, at the age of 21 years she outwardly manifested God-realization and at 22 years began to initiate seekers of truth into spiritual life. By the age of 27 years she had established the spiritual headquarters of her International Mission in the house of her

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Sri Mata Amritanandamayi

birth. Five years later there were nearly 20 branch ashrams throughout India and abroad. At the age of 33 years she made her first world tour including cities in America and Europe and embraced the entire world with her love and compassion of undescrivable dimensions. She described her realization of her oneness with the Divine when she was yet in her 'teens in the following words: "Smiling, the Divine Mother became an effulgence and merged in me. My mind blossomed and the events of millions of years gone by, rose up within me. Thenceforth seeing nothing as apart from my own Self, a single unity, I gave up the notion that there can be true happiness apart from the Self." After the passing away of Sri Anandamayi of Benares and Sri Mayamayi of Kanyakumari, Sri Mata Amritanandamayi is about the only living woman-saint in India who is widely accessible to the public. Her compassion for the poor and the suffering is truly boundless. Even at the dead of night when a forlorn devotee calls at her ashram for solace and the ashramites turn the person away saying that the Mother should not be disturbed at that hour, she rebukes the ashramites for their conduct and herself invites the devotee to her room and consoles and blesses the person concerned, with great affection. **She is a great healer of minds and bodies and healing takes place automatically when she blesses her devotees.**

Even incurable diseases some times yield to her healing touch when she deliberately wills to effect a cure. On one occasion, it is reported, a leper with suppurating wounds who was not even accommodated in public transport vehicles, went to the ashram to seek her blessings and was turned away by the ashramites. On seeing this incident from a distance Mother immediately called the leper in, made him sit by her side, and applied her tongue to all the

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wounds on his body, without any feeling of revulsion, and had him bathed thereafter with sanctified water, and he was miraculously cured of the disease immediately.

In regard to her healing work Mataji says, “The sick people coming here might have been carrying their diseases for the last 10 or 15 years undergoing different kinds of treatments and still not finding any cure. If Mother accepts that, she will have to suffer only ten or fifteen minutes and those poor people will be saved from any more suffering....Mahatmas suffer in order to teach us Tyaga(sacrifice)”

As a fully-enlightened saint Sri Amritanandamayi is merged with the universal consciousness. And though the path that she teaches is that of Parabhakti very often **her pronouncements are those of a fully-fledged Gnani**. She once addressed her ashramites as follows: “Children, always remember that once Mother says something, it should not be taken lightly. It is the Supreme that makes her speak. Whatever she says must come to pass either in the near or in the distant future, because her words are not her own but are that of the Lord...” **Whatever is seen (as the world) is the projection of the mind. When there is no mind there is no world..** “**Only this moment exists and should be experienced. Meditation is the technique of knowing how to be in the present moment without the thought of the past or the future.**”

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi speaks about the quality of the ‘presence’ of a perfect Master. She says, “**A true Master is verily the presence of Divine Consciousness (in our midst). In his presence everything just happens without any effort on his part as he is egoless.** The sun shines - and by its mere existence everything in nature just happens. It is the same with the perfect Master.

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The power of the sun is a minuscule fraction of the entire cosmic energy. The perfect Master however, is poornam (the Whole). He is the infinite Consciousness in human form. Whatever is needed for human evolution happens automatically in his presence."

She says that the Master's presence can easily melt our rock-like egos and create a wonderful flow of universal love and compassion - provided we have the right attitude and a clear appreciation in our minds of the uniqueness and immensity of the Master's presence.

Mataji's compassion extends even to the vegetable kingdom like Sakuntala of old, and on one occasion she brought to life a young withering tree in the ashram compound which was virtually dead, by personally caressing it and coaxing it lovingly to bring out new shoots.

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi is likely to visit Sri Lanka in the near future on the invitation of devotees and it could be a blessed day for this Island paradise and an augury of peace and harmony in the country when the Divine Consciousness in her decides to set foot on our troubled land.

‘Siva Yogaswamigal - Experiences of Devotees’

Compiled by Dr. Vimala Krishnapillai

Book Review

By C. Shanmuganayagam

Convenor, Thinkers Forum

Meditation Group

One of the foremost Sages of Asia in the 20th century was Yogaswamigal of Jaffna in Sri Lanka who attained Mahasamadhi in 1964. His guru called Chellappa Swami, the crazy one, and his guru's guru, the beggar-saint Kadaichami formed a contemporary triumvirate of gurus, similar to the spiritual triumvirate that enriched the Kriya Yoga heritage of Bengal in the guru-seeshya relationship of Lahiri Mahasaya, Yukteswar and Paramahansa Yogananda.

Yogaswamigal was a Gnani, Siddha and Zen Master all rolled into one. His four Mahavakiyas ‘All is Truth,’ ‘Evil exists not,’ ‘We know nothing,’ ‘Everything has already been pre-ordained’ - and his spiritual injunction ‘Just be’ or ‘Summa Iru,’ constitute the core of Advaita philosophy. The faculty of clairvoyance, telepathy and bilocation that he had mastered marks him out as an outstanding Siddha. His cryptic statements and oft times harsh language used by him to test his devotees remind one of the Zen Masters of the Far East, whose koans are meant to bring one's wandering thoughts to a grinding halt and awaken one's inner Awareness of the Self.

He is reported to have visited Sri Ramana Maharshi, the great Sage of Tiruvannamalai in the nineteen thirties and his cryptic comment about the visit was: ‘We simply went; We had no expectation.

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We sat there for about an hour; He did not speak at all; He is really a great hero.'

The book on Yogaswamigal entitled 'Experiences of devotees' contains articles mostly in Tamil, with an article by Sivaya Subramuniya Swami of Hawaii, a disciple of Yogaswamigal, in English, and has been competently compiled and edited by Dr. Vimala Krishnapillai, a Lecturer in Education at the University of Colombo. It is a boon to students of Yogaswamigal's life and teachings.

Eminent scholars like Dr. H.W. Tambiah, the well-known jurist and retired Judge of the Supreme Court, and Dr. T.P. Meenakshisundaram, Professor of Tamil at the Annamalai University, have contributed articles to the book setting out their spiritual experiences with Yogaswamigal. Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan who was Professor of Philosophy at the Madras University for several decades was one of those who visited Yogaswamigal at his Jaffna Ashram.

Swami Asangananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Calcutta, had also occasion to visit Yogaswamigal in Jaffna and had recorded his impressions of the visit. Mrs. Ratna Navaratnam, Director of Education, was a well-known devotee of Yogaswamigal and had published a valuable collection of Swami's spiritual utterances. Mrs. Chelvam Kalyanasundaram who conducts a Thirumanthiram Spiritual Centre is another devotee who had recorded her experiences about Yogaswamigal in scintillating verse.

It is also reported that Lord Soulbury's son and Justice M.T. Akbar were close disciples of Yogaswamigal, and so were several Sinhalese devotees like Ananda Perera, Advocate, Tikiribanda

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Dissanayake, Secretary of the London Buddhist Vihare and Dr. Susunaga Weeraperuma, the author of several books on spiritual topics. M. Nagarathinam, a senior Attorney-at-Law and Vice-President of the Vivekananda Society, Colombo, has given an intimate account of his psychic experiences with Yogaswamigal over a period of several years.

It is significant that **Sivaya Subramuniya Swami of Hawaii** has recently published a book entitled **'Lemurian Scrolls'** where he states that **his guru Yogaswamigal had initiated him into Yoga** when he met him in Jaffna and **opened his 'third eye', whereby he was enabled to carry out research into the occult worlds by reading the 'Akasic' records** like Madame Blavatsky, the Co-Founder of the Theosophical Society, and discover that human beings migrated to the planet Earth about four million years ago from the Pleiades in outer space in their subtle bodies and clothed themselves with physical forms here.

The writer of this review had the good fortune to meet Yogaswamigal on several occasions in the fifties and receive his blessings. On one occasion he approvingly encouraged the writer to keep burning that flame of spiritual inquiry that Jiddu Krishnamurti's teachings had kindled in him at that time.

What exactly is speaking the truth?

by C. Shanmuganayagam

(Some reflections, arising from the impeachment of President Clinton for perjury in respect of which he was finally acquitted by an absolute majority of the American Senate after a year-long rambling public debate.)

‘What is Truth, asked jesting Pilate and would not stay for an answer’ thus wrote Sir Francis Bacon the famous Rosicrucian philosopher of the 17th century in his treatise called ‘Essay on Truth.’ It is a remarkable formulation of the intellectual dilemma that all of us are in. The Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, had good reason to raise the question and yet not await an answer.

Truth, spelt with a capital T, meaning the unknown Reality still eludes the human mind, which is caught up in a spiral of illusions, with the ego consciousness as the master illusion.

But the concept of ‘truth’ spelt with a simple ‘t’ is what the human mind has invented to describe what the mind has observed objectively in the physical world and recorded in its memory. The sophisticated mind of a so-called civilised human being observes physical phenomena through the tinted glass of its own mental conditioning, as J.Krishnamurti, the well-known modern philosopher would have it, or as modified by the ‘vasanas’ or tendencies in the mind brought forward from previous incarnations, as the occultists would say. An aborigine, however, is more likely to observe what is, as it really is, without much distortion. So would a small child be experiencing with clarity the resplendent beauty of the world around it, until its innocence gradually fades away and the shades of the prison house

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begin to close upon the growing youth, as so elegantly expressed by the poet Wordsworth in his 'Intimations on Immortality.'

There is also the discovery of modern scientists that one cannot obtain a true static picture of what one is observing, whether it be through a microscope or a telescope or even through the naked eye, because the object of observation is in a state of flux and constantly changing and also changes instantly as a result of the energy issuing forth from the observer's eye.

So what we normally describe as observing a fact or event (which is but a consecutive series of facts strung together in the mind, like a series of still pictures in a cinematic film creating the illusion of movement), is the recording of a conditioned or modified or illusory impression of what is observed and not a real or true impression. So actually we are recording illusory or 'false' impressions in our memory and not the actual 'truth' of the situation.

Hence it would appear that to call upon one to speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth would be a futile exercise, as one can reproduce from memory (subject to the normal lapses of memory that occurs in every human being) at best only the illusory and 'false' impressions that have been recorded there, even if one is honest and frank about the endeavour to retrieve these impressions from one's memory.

So speaking the truth is a euphemism for uttering a 'lie' or expressing at best a partial truth, as in the case of the story of the ten blind men touching an elephant and each describing the part he has touched and experienced as the totality of the elephant. To speak the truth, one must first be able to see the truth in its wholeness.

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Another form of the distortion of the observed fact or event that takes place in a conditioned mind is, where one observes and describes a deliberate killing of several persons by one person on a battlefield as an act of patriotism that merits the award of a Victoria Cross for gallantry, while the killing of one person, even under severe provocation, as in the case of a rapist, is described by a witness as wilful murder.

Even in cases where by dispassionate observation one can ascertain the truth of a situation, as in the case of a doctor who is attending to a terminal case of cancer, it would be medically inadvisable for him to tell the truth to the patient and cause a mental shock to him by saying that the disease would take its toll within the next two months, though he might tell the truth to his House officer. The doctor would normally tell a 'white lie' to the patient that he would recover very soon, in order to give him peace of mind, out of love and concern for the patient's welfare.

On the question of one's private life too, one would be justified in the interest of public welfare to tell 'white lies' to any inquirer to avoid unnecessary embarrassment to all parties concerned, where one's actions do not amount to criminal offence or misconduct.

'White lies' again are the order of the day in dealing with children's questions about the facts of life and child birth etc., as telling the stark truth in such a situation would be damaging to their immature minds.

Another matter for consideration is the fundamental right of every person to choose to be silent, just as much as he has the fundamental right to freedom of speech, provided such freedom does

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not cause harm or injury to his fellow beings. Compelling a person to speak the so called truth, under physical torture or under oath, may well turn out to be, on many occasions, acts of duress in violation of one's fundamental human rights.

From whatever point of view this question of speaking the truth is looked at, it is clear that we, as social human beings, do not and cannot really speak the truth in our relationships with one another. What we communicate to one another is a gradation of 'lies' and falsehoods, ranging from involuntarily distorted impressions embedded in our minds, to deliberately distorted 'white lies' that we utter out of love and compassion for our fellow beings. 'Speaking the truth' as envisaged by our religious leaders and legislators has been a casualty in our social life and our law courts from time immemorial.

It is said that to a liberated Sage or Mahatma any utterance that helps the spiritual upliftment of a person or society at a given stage of development is deemed to be the truth and that which retards their spiritual unfoldment at that stage is deemed to be false, irrespective of whether the utterance is factual or not. Right and wrong are feeble concepts of the finite human mind. The Law of Karma rights all 'wrongs' by its automatic neutralising action and does square up all our accounts in the end with perfect precision. Universal Love and compassion is the only measure known to all enlightened beings, as depicted in the famous dictum of the Ancient Mystical Order of Rosicrucians (AMORC):

*'Love is the source of all Energy,
The most dynamic force in the Universe
The standard of all judgement
And the basis of all morality'*

Einstein's views on 'Homo Sapiens'

by C. Shanmuganayagam

The greatest scientist of the 20th century, Albert Einstein in propounding his famous Theory of Relativity involving the concept of a four dimensional space-time continuum, had referred to the universe of galaxies and quasars as extending to infinity.

In addition to being a genius in the field of science, Einstein was a great philosopher and mystic, and was fully aware of the limitations of the human mind like Socrates of old, who had stated that 'to know that we do not know' (and cannot ever know Reality through the human mind) 'is the acme of intelligence.'

Einstein on human stupidity

Einstein, with his deep understanding of life and its spiritual import, once paid a left-handed compliment to 'Homo Sapiens', the so-called intelligent species to which the modern human being belongs. Seeing the utter folly and self-destructive activities in which modern man is steeped, he lamented that 'human stupidity is as infinite as the Universe.'

A similar lament is attributed to Adi Sankaracharya, the well-known propounder of the ancient wisdom known as Advaita Vedanta who lived several centuries ago. He is reported to have bemoaned the fact that human beings are immersed in self-centred activities to such an extent that they cannot see the intrinsic futility and self-contradiction involved in their actions. He described their mental outlook as that of a 'Sathakodi Moodaa,' namely one whose madness has multiplied a million fold.

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Thus every human being, in leading his worldly life, is inevitably caught up in this colossal madness or stupidity or folly or ignorance. Now the real question is what is it that we are ignorant of? What is the basic data or knowledge that we lack which, if gained, will cure us of this madness or stupidity?

Ignorance veils the adult mind

We pride ourselves that we are intelligent, that we belong to the species of 'Homo Sapiens' namely the evolved man who is wise. When we attain adulthood, we feel we are mature both in body and mind and are the masters of all we survey. The truth, however, is that when we grow out of childhood into adulthood we are really growing out of the innocence of the child into the progressively veiling ignorance of the adult.

Wordsworth, the famous Lake poet beautifully describes the unsullied purity of the child's mind, looking out into the world in a state of pure Awareness, as:

*"Trailing clouds of glory do we come from God who is our home,
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!*

Shades of the prison house begin to close

Upon the growing boy

But he beholds the Light and whence it flows

He sees it in his joy.....

At length the Man perceives it die away

And fade into the light of common day."

What is this colossal ignorance that befuddles all of us and renders our actions foolish and futile in the long run? The adult's view of the objective world is short-sighted and superficial and he does not see

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the world as it really is. He does not have an in-depth view of the one life, the one energy, that suffuses the entire universe.

Common sense reveals to us that all our physical organs are necessarily part of one single organism, namely our physical body, and we never think of knocking out our teeth with a hammer if they happen to bite our tongue by accident, as it sometimes happens, for the simple reason that one life-stream or pranic energy pervades the entire human body. Thus it is clear that all the parts constituting the human body have to sustain one another at all costs or they would all perish together.

Like wise the reality is that each human being is necessarily a minute cell in one coherent living organism called humanity and cannot ignore or defy other human beings in the pursuit of his own individual happiness.

Science discovers the oneness of Life

Modern science too has now discovered, as stated by Fritzof Capra the eminent scientist in his book 'Tao of Physics,' that "the whole Universe is a dynamic web of inseparable energy patterns." It is one single web of Energy that pervades the Universe.

As the mystic poet William Blake expresses it:

'To see a world in a grain of sand,
And heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour'
**is the key to the understanding of the all
pervading oneness of life in the universe.**

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It is this ignorance of the fact of the oneness of life, which renders us an inseparable part of humanity, that we have to overcome, if we are to rid ourselves of this stupendous folly of self destructive activities in which we are engaged.

As J. Krishnamurti, the modern philosopher, says if we see the false as false, that is, if we see clearly the folly or falsity of our actions, with a sense of urgency, then Truth reveals itself to us and there is an immediate transformation in our psyche.

Discrimination or Life-experience

It is said that discrimination and life experience are the twin alternatives that make for spiritual progress. If we are able to discriminate and see the false as false and drop it, then transformation takes place. Failing this, life experience in the form of sudden adversity or hard knocks in life confront us and compel us to realize the futility of our actions. It is similar to one comprehending through discrimination and observation the danger of touching a high tension electric wire and keeping aloof or foolishly laying hands on it and getting an electric shock and thereafter acquiring wisdom in this regard through personal experience.

The law of karma operates as a great blessing in our lives. When an effect, arising from an earlier unknown cause overtakes us suddenly, that life-experience acts as a great transforming factor and helps us to listen to the inner voice of discrimination more attentively and to perceive the folly of our self-centred activities.

There is also another factor, which helps us in our transformation. No human being with self-respect, whether he be an intellectual or a simpleton, wants to be branded as a fool or one engaged in futile activity.

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Everyone thinks he is wise, till he is shown to be otherwise by circumstances. We pile up information in our brain cells and acquire academic degrees and mistake it for true knowledge. There is, however, an inherent urge in man to know the truth about himself and about the universe. So that if we understand clearly the working of the Law of Karma and the oneness of the universe and are convinced that we are acting foolishly in striving for our own individual gains at the expense of the common good of humanity, then our inner transformation will take place immediately, for the simple reason that we have seen the folly of our ways and do not want to perpetuate it.

Love and Compassion

The Law of karma is inexorably intertwined with the law of Universal Love and right understanding or wisdom, as taught by Buddha and the sages of yore, automatically gives rise to compassion and the flow of the healing waters of Universal Love from our hearts, in which all conflicts, arising from ignorance of our real nature, whether they be inter- personal or inter-national, will get resolved.

‘Love is the source of all energy and the most dynamic force in the universe’ says the motto of the Ancient Mystical Order of Rosicrucians, and this has been vouched for by the messages of all the saints and seers down the ages.

‘May all beings be well and happy’ is the sacred benediction of the Buddha. This is fully endorsed by Sri Harilal Poonjaji, an enlightened disciple of Sri Ramana Maharishi, when he says: “Sit quiet in your house and send a message of peace from within the heart in silence, to all beings in this world. This will work better than all the statements of the world premiers.”

Man visible and invisible

The resplendent aura that manifests around sacred shrines and sages

by C. Shanmuganayagam

It is an indisputable fact that despite the pre-occupations of all human beings with the problem of their daily lives, there is an inherent urge in man to know the truth about himself and about the universe. The ultimate and absolute truth about oneself, namely, one's innermost Self, will, on deep Self-inquiry on the Gnana or Wisdom path, reveal itself as the One Transcendental Non-dual Reality that cannot be comprehended by the finite human mind. But in the penultimate stage of the inquiry, where the state of duality or relative truth would necessarily persist, there are two significant types of spiritual endeavour that one can embark on, namely: the Bhakthi path, where one's devotional fervour is directed towards various aspects of the Divine namely, the One universal source of all manifestation, or the Karma yoga path, where out of great compassion, one renders selfless service to one's fellow beings considering them as embodiments of the Divine.

In both these types of spiritual endeavour, prayers, mantras, devotional songs, rites and rituals constitute the hall-mark of a devotee; and the vast majority of people are interested only in these religious activities which provide a meaning and fulfillment to their lives. Self-inquiry is a far cry for them at present.

The mysteries of ancient religions

We shall therefore examine the spiritual and occult significance of some of these religious activities. All the ancient religions of the world, apart from their philosophical content, have had a set of Mysteries involving ceremonial worship of the Divine with devotional

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ardour. Judaism, Christianity, Rosicrucianism, Free-Masonry, Hinduism, Mahayana Buddhism, Sufism, and the earlier Babylonian, Greek and Egyptian religions have all evolved their own system of ceremonial worship of the Divine.

In examining the matter from a scientific point of view, one finds that apart from the experience of self-realized Sages, several trained occultists of great integrity in the field of Theosophical research as well as in Kriya Yoga practice, such as Bishop C. W. Leadbeater, Dr. Annie Besant, C. Jinarajadasa and Paramahansa Yogananda, whose chakras or psychic centres have been fully awakened, under the guidance of great Mahatmas, have vouched for the spiritual efficacy of the religious rites and forms of worship set out above. They have also described in detail the results of their research carried out by them in their subtle bodies in the astral and mental planes of consciousness.

Occult research and the third eye

They have been able to see with their awakened 'third eye' the brilliant pulsating colour bands of the aura surrounding great Mahatmas as well as the sacred shrines of all great religions. It is said that in the case of most village temples or churches a beautiful blue dome can be seen soaring above the sanctum-sanctorum or spire of the church, as a reflection of the devotional thoughts and aspirations of the simple-minded village-folk assembled there.

According to Mahayana Buddhism, on every Wesak day a majestic figure of Lord Buddha appears on a plateau in the Himalayan range with a resplendent aura fanning out like a rainbow in the sky and hundreds of pilgrims and initiates trek to that area to have 'dharsan' of this holy presence.

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C. Jinarajadasa, who was the only Ceylonese to be world president of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, had told the writer of this article when he met him in the nineteen forties, that in view of the psychic training that he had undergone under the guidance of the Masters, he was able to switch his consciousness in a matter of seconds from a perception of the physical world to that of the astral world, with all its alluring colours, and brilliant auras, and switch back again at will. Paramahansa Yogananda also was able to do likewise, as disclosed by him in his talks to his disciples at Encinitas.

There was also one Elijah Grey a tall handsome Samoan prince and an advanced initiate in the Rosicrucian Order, whom the writer met in the forties in Colombo. He was an adept at conscious astral projection and was able to describe the resplendent beauty of the astral world and its phenomena which was hidden from our eyes.

The spiritual vibrations at Kataragama

Marshall Govindan, a Westerner who had a rigorous training in the Kriya yoga technique of meditation under the direct guidance of the 1800 year old Kriya Babaji of the Himalayas, had given the following account of his psychic experiences when he visited Kataragama in recent years: 'As I approached the Kataragama temple I was overwhelmed by the vibrations of peace and beatitude emanating from it... The spiritual vibrations of this forest rivalled those of the Himalayas.' He described his experience when he witnessed a temple car festival in Sri Lanka carrying the sanctified idol of Ambikai the Divine Mother as follows: 'At one point I went into a deep trance with my gaze transfixed on Her (the idol) in the distance. I was unable to move for nearly a half hour, as waves of bliss poured out of Her and passed through me.'

It is said that idols in temples become a live channel for Divine grace as a result of three vibrational factors, namely, the devotional fervour

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of the worshippers, the effect of the sacred mantras recited by the dedicated priests of the temple and in several instances the sanctity of the samadhi of a saint interred near the sanctum sanctorum of the temple. It is a strange and welcome coincidence that the samadhi at the well known Hindu Nallur Kandasamy Kovil at Jaffna is that of a Sufi saint. Likewise the late Guru Bawa, whose premier disciple was the late Dr. Ajward Macan Markar, Professor of Medicine, was a Sufi mystic and also a great devotee of Lord Muruga, the Deity at Kataragama, who is venerated alike by Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims.

Scientific testing of the Aura

Modern scientific advancement has provided us with the astounding discovery of the Kilrian camera which can capture the subtle vibrations of the astral dimension. An experiment in this connection was once carried out by Swami Shantanand of Malaysia on one of his trips to U.S.A., when he was invited by his hosts there to place his hand under a Kilrian camera. In the beginning it recorded a luminous glow around the impression of his palm and later there appeared a sudden burst of brilliant golden rays shooting out from the palm. When he was asked the reason for this change in the pattern of the rays, he said he was mentally reciting the well-known Maha Mrytunjaya mantra at that time.

Sri Sivaya Subramania Swami of Hawai, a Westerner who became a disciple of the well-known Yogaswamigal of Jaffna had his 'third eye' awakened by him, and has recently published a record of his psychic and spiritual experiences entitled 'The Lemurian Scrolls.' One of the discoveries that he made in regard to occult phenomena was that a scroll of paper or ola leaf with a message inscribed on it, when placed inside a 'Homa' fire, turns to ashes on the physical plane and manifests fully in the subtle astral plane with the message distinctly visible to one's astral sight. (contd)

He has stated further that he has been able to read the Akhasic records in the astral world and discover several secrets relating to the history of mankind covering several millennia, similar to the studies done by the Theosophist researchers like Leadbeater concerning astral phenomena and the tracing of the past lives of many of the great spiritual leaders of our time.

The presence of invisible Mahatmas in our midst

Sri Muthukrishna Swami, who is deemed to be an Amsa-avatar of the ancient Sri Agastya Maharishi, has stated recently in the course of many of his talks, following the elaborate pooja and Homam ceremony and singing of bhajans conducted by him, that several saints and sages (invisible to our sight) invariably frequent the auditorium where the pooja is held in their subtle luminous forms, to participate in the ceremony and confer blessings on all those assembled there.

It might be relevant to recall in this connection a unique experience had by Vidwan Lakshmanan, the well-known Vice-President of the All-India Council of Astrological Sciences and one who has had vast experience in the conduct of Yagams or 'Homa' religious ceremonies in Himalayan shrines on innumerable occasions. When he recently met Mataji the present spiritual head of the Sri Muthukrishna Swami Mission in Colombo, being psychically sensitive, he went into a trance and had a Cosmic Viswarupa dharsan characterised by intense joy and bliss, which others beside him were naturally unable to see or experience - as recorded by him at length in his 'Bala Jothidam' publication.

As Shakespeare so aptly describes: 'There are more things in Heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

Reminiscences at the Bar since 50 years ago

-Values then and now

By C.Shanmuganayagam

Attorney at- Law.

Having been entrolled at the Bar as a budding pleader of justifiable causes, during the spacious times of pre-independence Ceylon fifty years ago in August 1946. before Justice E.A.L.Wijewardena (later Sir Arthur Wijewardena) the writer of these reminiscences was privileged to sit at the feet of ,or in legal parlance devil in the chambers of, some of the distinguished legal luminaries of that era .

These reminiscences emanated from a suggestion given by some of the writer's erstwhile colleagues, to place on record the high standards maintained by most of the lawyers of that period.

Noble profession

The medical profession, which involves healing of both mind and body, is per se a noble profession provided the practitioners adhere to the terms of the Hippocratic oath. But the legal profession, lends itself in practice to considerable deviation from the noble ideals set by our forebears, by reason of the law's delays and the financial burden imposed on litigants by the levying of high fees for appearances as well as non-appearances or token appearances on dates when cases are postponed -not to speak of the recent news items regarding the large scale falsifying of documents at the provincial land registries with the help of Government officers and lawyers.

Arbitration decisions by village elders of panchayat gatherings or mediation boards are often more successful in meting out timely

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justice and fairplay to aggrieved parties than the courts of law with their sophisticated procedures.

However some of the eminent lawyers of the nineteen forties and the subsequent two decades were noted for their adherence to the high ethical standards of the profession. F.A. Hayley, Kings Counsel, under whom the writer was functioning as a full-time junior for sometime in 1947, once walked out in the middle of a case, with the permission of the presiding Judge, in the District Court of Colombo and returned his fee, as it became evident as the case proceeded, that the instructions given to him by his client at the consultation in his chambers before the hearing of the case, were palpably false.

Legal luminaries

The writer had the good fortune to appear in several cases in the 'fifties as Junior to the eminent Queens Counsel H.V. Perera, in the Appeal Court and in one case as the sole Counsel opposed to him. He was undoubtedly the most brilliant Advocate that the Ceylon Bar had produced this century. He would almost always argue a matter commencing from first principles and build up an irrefutable case and then call for any case law that would support his argument from his Juniors and cite them in Court. He virtually created case law, in that his arguments were often embodied in toto in the judgments of the Supreme Court delivered during his primacy at the Bar.

On one occasion the Chief Justice at that time, Sir Alan Rose, mentioned to a third party that it was a 'liberal education' to listen to H.V., when he was developing his argument in Court from one premise to another in logical sequence supported by a fund of broad legal principles and a wealth of worldly wisdom.

As a leading light of the Bar H.V. was generous to his Juniors as well as to Counsel opposed to him in Court. The writer recalls a case

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where H. V. appeared for the appellants with Dr. H. W. Thambiah, the eminent jurist (and now retired Supreme Court Judge) and the writer as his Juniors and Dr. Colvin R. De. Silva appeared for the respondents in a civil appeal case involving promissory notes signed under duress and duly hypothecated by mortgage bonds. All of us were a little surprised to see Colvin, the great criminal lawyer, accepting a brief in a civil appeal matter. The appeal was argued at length and Colvin, though new to this field, made out a strong case for the respondents and the appeal was dismissed. When the court adjourned after the hearing, H. V. promptly stepped up and personally congratulated Colvin for his brilliant grasp of the nuances of a civil appeal. The case subsequently went up in appeal to the Privy Council in England and Colvin's arguments were upheld there too.

Another instance where H. V. appreciated the competence of a Junior was when the writer and Felix Dias Bandaranaike appeared as his two Juniors in an appeal case, and at the end of the first day's hearing Felix gave him a short note suggesting a different line of argument to ensure our winning the appeal. On the next day H. V. - acknowledged the value of Felix's suggestion and readily adopted his line of argument and succeeded in the appeal. Felix had legal acumen in his veins, his father and grandfather having been judges of the Supreme Court, but he deviated into politics and lost the opportunity to adorn the Bar.

S. Nadesan Q.C. was another brilliant lawyer, who invariably grasped the single vital issue in a case and drove it home in his submission to Court with great tenacity and won his case, while the opposing counsel was endeavouring to touch on all the issues involved in the case, resulting in a diffused presentation.

It was a remarkable fact, however, that both H. V. and Nadesan,

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two eminent Queen's Counsel with incisive minds, were unable to understand what J. Krishnamurti, the world-famous thinker and spiritual revolutionary, was endeavouring to convey in his talks. The writer, along with Dr.E.W. Adikaram, the well-known Buddhist scholar and votary of ahimsa, had invited H.V.to a talk of J.Krishnamurti at the Colombo Town Hall in 1956 with the expectation that he would greatly appreciate the thought process of another great thinker. But,H.V.'s reaction to the talk was otherwise. He said that the talk was cryptic and was very confusing and the reasoning was anything but logical.

The underlying fact is that Krishnamurti's talks are akin to those of a Zen Buddhist master who presents paradoxical statements called 'koans' to his listeners, which are calculated to bring the thought process functioning through the mind to a grinding halt and give rise to pure awareness without the consciousness dwelling on any object.

Some of the other stalwarts of the Bar with whom the writer had the privilege to appear as Junior in the appeal Court and benefitted from their court-craft were R.L.Pereira K.C., the lion of the Criminal Bar, in one or two of his rare Appeal Court appearances. E.F.N.Gratien K.C. whose personality both as a towering ruggerite as well as a lawyer of eminence was equally imposing, N.E.Weerasooriya K.C. the short mild-mannered tactician who had the rare capacity to cope with the multitude of cases listed for mentioning or argument on the same day, N.Nadarajah K.C. who had the most prestigious private library of law books at that time. L.A.Rajapakse Q.C. with his ultra simplified presentation of cases, and in later years the unruffled H.W.Jayawardena Q.C. who was virtually pitted against H.V. in the Appeal Court in most cases.

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There was also S.J.V.Chelvanayakam Q.C. and C.Thiagalingam Q.C with whom the writer often appeared as Junior both in the District Court as well as in the Appeal Court and learnt a great deal about the alternate virtues of tact and diplomacy or the aggressive approach as a pleader in the court. One of the most efficient lawyers for lucid drafting and settling of pleadings and transparency in advocacy was S.J.V.,and the best chance a client had for wading through or succeeding in a weak case was with the indomitable Thiag, who never gave up fighting his client's case to the last.

On the subject of drafting pleadings, the writer was fortunate to have worked with the leading land lawyer at that time W.H.Perera, brother of the famous politician E. W.Perera, whose drafting and presentation in complicated land cases was precise,logical and comprehensive. C.Ranganathan Q.C. an appellate court lawyer and M.Tiruchelvam Q.C. who was earlier in the Attorney-General's Department were two senior lawyers to be emulated for their thoroughness and conscientious dedication to their work, and the writer benefited by working with them in their chambers.

The writer has appeared with G.E.Chitty Q.C.as senior in several civil cases as well as in one or two criminal ones. He was the one criminal lawyer who could cross-examine a witness in the suavest of tones and still elicit all the relevant facts for his case. Of course ,the unique style of G.G.Ponnambalam (Snr) in the cross-examination of witnesses in criminal cases was awesome, brilliant and on occasions resulted in the witness collapsing in the box. He was an orator par excellence whether it be in Parliament, when he was pitted against stalwarts like S.W.R.D., Colvin R. De. Silva, R.S.S. Gunawardener or E.A. P. Wijeratne, or when addressing a jury whom he virtually mesmerized by his brilliant presentation and mastery of

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the language. Once Colvin walked into Court leisurely and sat down, while G.G. was on his feet, and told us who were seated at the Bar table, that he had dropped in to see G.G. in action!

Among the writer's fellow practitioners in the Appeal Court in the 'fifties was S. Sharvananda, who later held the office of Chief Justice for some years. His forte was the possession of an extensive compilation of case law annotations which he had studiously collected and often shared with his fellow lawyers. The value of association and comradeship with several other young contemporaries practising in the Appeal Court is not being elaborated for want of space.

Mention however must be made of two brilliant lawyers at that time, who later shone in the academic field, namely T. Nadarajah, Professor of Law in Colombo and later University Chancellor and Christie Weeramantry, Professor of Law at Monash University in Australia and now an international jurist of repute.

Dealing with Judges of varying temperaments is part of the skill in advocacy one had to cultivate. Supreme Court Judges of the early days like Justices L.M.D. De. Silva, who subsequently sat on the Privy Council bench in England, M.C. Sansoni, T.S. Fernando and V. Siva Supramaniam had a stable judicial outlook and always gave a patient hearing to counsel. Justice H.N.G. Fernando, though he had never practised at the Bar earlier and was appointed from the Legal Draftsman's Department, had a brilliant grasp of the law and would often interrupt to put searching questions to clarify the issues, even when eminent counsel like H.V. Perera Q.C. was addressing Court. Justice R.F. Dias had a penchant for interrupting counsel and presenting the arguments himself for or against the appellant.

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N.K.Choksy Q.C. (Snr) the veteran Theosophist in whose chambers the writer had the privilege of working quite often, once mentioned to Justice R.F. Dias in Court while arguing a weak case that his client's fate was entirely in the hands of Your Lordship and sat down, and thereafter the counsel for the other side had a tough time meeting the arguments put forward from the Bench.

There was once an interesting episode when the three Lingam brothers, all lawyers, appeared in the same Court in three different capacities and created history and melodrama as well. Justice C. Nagalingam was presiding in Court No. 3 of the Supreme Court, now occupied by the new Law Library, and the two counsel arguing an appeal case before him were the seasoned lawyer C. Thiagalingam Q.C. and his well-known elder brother ex-Prof.C. Sundaralingam who was however a neophyte at the Bar. Several other lawyers including the writer were at the Bar table and happened to watch the proceedings. As expected, both counsel started a tirade against each other on personal grounds and the presiding Judge had to call them to order on more than one occasion and direct them to strictly adhere to the presentation of the merits of the case.

Law's delays

On the subject of reducing the inordinate delays involved in litigation, the late S. Ambalavaner, the well-known lawyer cum Tax consultant and Fiscal policy advisor gave a lead by arranging and making his spacious chambers available for the settlement of commercial disputes by arbitration, in which several retired Judges of the Supreme Court acceptable to the litigants acted as arbitrators and the litigants were represented often by President's Counsel and the final awards were made without delay. If this lead could be followed up by other interested parties, it would constitute a very salutary achievement in our legal system.

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A higher law

On the question of the uncertainties of litigation, it is worth recalling the conversation that a client had with P. Navaratnarajah Q.C. the leading District Court civil lawyer at that time and an unrelenting fighter, when he asked him what chances he had of winning the case that he had just entrusted to him. Nava said that the best person to answer that question was the client's astrologer and not his lawyer. He told him that quite often what he thought was a very strong case for his client did not result in a favourable verdict, despite all the skill and thoroughness he had brought to bear on it in presenting the case. He said that there is another law which over-rides the law dispensed in the Courts, namely the law of Karma.

The writer too, after about 30 years of active practice at the Bar, virtually shifted his attention and efforts to the study of this other over-riding Cosmic and spiritual law which governs the life of every one of us-namely the law of the boomerang of the Australian aborigines or the law of 'reap as you sow' set out in the Bible or for that matter the common scientific law that posits that every action has an equal and opposite reaction.

Cosmic law

Scientific experiments carried out by Theosophists, Rosicrucians and other recognised groups dealing with occult science have established the validity of the law of Karmic reaction extending over several life-spans, as illustrated in the research recordings entitled 'Lives of Alcyone.' The late Sumitha Dahanayake, President's Counsel, who subsequently practised in Galle, was in his early years associated with the writer in Colombo in probing into the tenets of Rosicrucianism and other research studies in occult science. In the forties he hosted in his home in Colombo for some months a tall, handsome Samoan prince who was an advanced member of the Rosicrucian order.

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On the other hand the recorded experiences of some of our saints of modern times like Paramahansa Yogananda and Swami Ramdas of Kanhangad have established that, in a state of expanded consciousness, they have experienced and shared the physical injury and pain inflicted on another person or even an animal with whom they are in rapport for the moment, thus demonstrating that we are all inseparable parts of one vast global organism. If we hurt another we automatically hurt ourselves on the rebound sooner or later, as a matter of inner self-propulsion.

The law of Karma and the law of Universal love or Maithri are interlocked and inexorable. Nature has provided that the violation of the latter law automatically gives rise to the operation of the law of Karma as the night follows the day. But it is the time lag, often a long-term delay, that intervenes between the cause and the effect that beguiles us and prevents our superficial layer of consciousness in which we normally function from perceiving the inexorability of the law of Karma.

The well-known sage and philosopher J. Krishnamurti was once questioned, while addressing a Western audience, as to the possible spiritual advancement and fortunate position of the people in India who believed in the law of Karma.

Krishnamurti's reply was (a) that the mass of people in India only professed their traditional belief in the theory of the law of Karma without understanding its full implications and were steeped in ignorance like the rest of humanity the world over, and (b) that if any set of people perceived in depth the implications of the law of Karma they would all become angels overnight!

Book Review

Beyond the Veil

A press statement discloses that the Department of Social Services has undertaken to promote the sale of a few remaining copies of the book entitled 'Beyond the Veil,' as the entire sale proceeds have been donated by the publisher to a charity fund for the benefit of the blind. All K.V.G. de Silva bookshops continue to sell this book for the benefit of the said charity.

'Beyond the Veil' is a local publication of an illuminating series of authentic conversations with the dead through the mediumship of Aloma, a Sri Lankan psychic, who has given her time free for this task of bringing solace and peace to hundreds of bereaved persons in our midst at a time of national crisis.

It is a genuine presentation of the facts of life in the invisible dimension of the astral world, in the manner of Sri Paramahansa Yogananda's description of astral phenomena, as set out in his world-famous publication 'The Autobiography of a Yogi.' It also accords with the findings of the scientific investigation into the occult worlds done by qualified researchers in Theosophy.

I have had occasion to read the book as well as some of the supplementary transcripts of the tape recording of these conversations carried out after the book had gone into print, which might well be included in a second popular edition of the book.

Kenneth, a qualified professional and a music lover who had spent a good part of his happy married life of 35 years abroad, died of a heart attack in 1986 and now communicates with his wife Ranee

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and gives her valuable spiritual instructions born of his own experiences in the astral dimension or world of light, as he calls it. Kenneth was an out-going and amiable personality full of empathy for others during his earthly life, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, and now presents an intelligent common man's point of view from the other side, with a plea for restoration of sanity in our lives, devoid of the traditional distortions generally prevalent in all religious propaganda pertaining to the so-called states of hell and heaven.

Kenneth says: 'There is no such thing as death-it is just a transition. It is really life after life, continuous life! Eternal life! Death closes one door and opens the door of eternal life. One does not realise the greatness of death till one experiences it; and when one experiences it, there is no one to tell except through communications and visions and dreams!.....These spheres are absolutely alive, with vibrancy of life, love, affection, kindness, compassion and helpfulness.....But if you do not ask (namely by way of sincere thought) then we are not in a position to help.

Kenneth has stated that there are gurus and guides in the astral plane also who do help them to progress further on the spiritual path. He says 'Lord Budha, Jesus Christ, Prophet Mohammed and all saints of yore have spoken great words of wisdom and repeatedly these words of wisdom have been said over and over again. But who follows, understands, realises the actuality of the wisdom given by these great souls? Very, very few. That is why the world is in such a chaotic state of distress, distrust and despair.'

Ranee interjects a remark: 'It is a pity that no one appears to solve these problems on earth.'

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Kanneth explains: 'It is not easy because those who can solve it (impliedly the gurus or wise men) are never asked and those who are asked (the politicians) can never solve it! For they do not seek the vision of the divine for help. The highly educated are not highly spiritual.

Kenneth states that he is not saying anything new but only putting across the 'wisdom of the ages.' One significant contribution that this book has made to the scientific investigation into life in the astral is the confirmation given by Kenneth on several occasions regarding the remarkable beneficial effect that is experienced by those disembodied persons in the astral plane who are weighed down by their karmic burdens, when a dhaane or pinkama or requiem mass or pitru-pooja is done on the earth plane with sincerity of thought in the name of the deceased person.

Kenneth's counselling is based on a deep philosophical understanding of life and of the inevitable nexus between the law of karma and the law of love. When asked by Ranee as to why one's karma cannot be worked out fully in the current earthly span of life, he said: 'Actually when we take birth it is (done) in the speed of light. There is no such thing as time in these spheres. On earth this time dimension calls for a lot of explanation. But we (functioning) in the speed of light realize that what we do now is forever. The good we do now is forever, and in that eternal now, we are happy with the good that we have done in that now.

He continues: 'Believe it or not, if you think good all the thoughts you've thought unrighteously get wiped off. It is like water clearing off soiled cloth. Most people do not know this, I wish they do! That is why we emphasize charity, generosity, kindness, goodness, love,

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affection, good thoughts, balance, etc. - because in that position of right mindness, right speech, right action, as the Buddha propounded, you wipe out all that was not right, and then when you send thoughts of 'maithri' to all, it makes others happy.'

He states further: 'We can see this very clearly from where we are, that no one is sending thoughts of maithri as much as they should to others, because they do not realize the greatness of that law. No one is telling them to do so. So I suggest if ever it is possible, there can be a program on the T.V. or radio for people to attune themselves to a higher plane of consciousness. When the karmas cannot be worked out like that on the earth plane or in these spheres, one is propelled into birth again whether you like it or not.'

Since Kenneth has been emphasising the value of the ancient wisdom, it might be appropriate to conclude this review with a citation from the Ancient Mystical Order of Rosicrucians (AMORC) regarding the all-pervasive power of universal love.

'Love is the source of all energy
The most dynamic force in the universe
The standard of all judgement
and the basis of all morality'

C. Shanmuganayagam

-(Convenor, Thinkers' Forum Meditation Group)

Revelations from the 'realm of glorious light'

'Life after Life - Death is not the End'

-Book Review

The above-styled book printed and published in Sri Lanka and released to the public recently is a sequel to the earlier popular publication entitled '*Beyond the Veil*' which hit the headlines in late 1993. It is a continuation of the illuminating series of authentic conversations that Rancee the author had with her late husband Kenneth, an amiable and cultured personality who was full of empathy for others during his earthly life.

Kenneth states, through the gifted but self-effacing medium Aloma, that he is by no means 'dead' but much more alive in the astral world or 'sphere of light' as he calls it, where he dwells now, than he ever was on the earth's sphere, and so are all others who have passed over to that realm of glorious light.

There they purify their thoughts and engage in missions of mercy to uplift the few persons who are in the shadow-land (or lower Astral plane), with the help of spiritual guides and gurus who are there and progress from sphere to sphere of higher and brighter light (namely various occult planes of existence or many mansions) till they reach the Eternal Light, which one may call God, says Kenneth.

They have bodies resembling their earth bodies but they are translucent and they travel by mere exercise of thought at the speed of light. Most spirits on this side, says Kenneth, look very young. When they
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are in the eternal spheres of love and light, they are transformed into youthfulness (even though they may have passed over in old age.)

Here we are always obliging and extremely kind and loving, says Kenneth. We are forever trusting, flexible, accommodating, loving, caring and sharing. This is the philosophy of being in the light sphere.

We are aware that everything on earth is registered in the Akasic records - every thought, every word, every deed, and there can be a replay of the Akasic records, if it is necessary. Also we can see very many steps ahead, says Kenneth, but we are not in a position to give of this knowledge. We can see from where we are 'that the world is full of negative forces. We can make the people on earth be aware of what we are aware.

Their actions after that belong to them. Only prayer and loving kindness can bring about the betterment of mankind. That is why we emphasize charity, generosity, kindness, goodness, love, affection, good thoughts, balance etc.

Whether it is Lord Buddha or Christ or Mohamed or Krishna, it is all the same, states Kenneth. They wanted all to live in brotherliness, in love, in maithri, in kindness and tolerance. He also quotes with conviction the well-known prayer from the Upanishads of the Hindus namely, 'Lead me from darkness to Light, from the unreal to the Real, from untruth to the Truth, from death to Immortality,' as an aspiration of man to attain Reality.

He says, everybody has to realise the Reality, whatever the time, whether it is one hundred births or one birth. Within each and everyone of us the atmic principle is blissful. But to find it, he says, we

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have to make the inward journey by doing charity, giving merit and extending love and compassion externally first, thereby gaining internal peace.

The excerpts culled from the casual homely conversations that transpired between Kenneth and Ranee give an insight into the vibrancy and loftiness of the new life, that one is born into in the subtle invisible realms, soon after the so called 'death' experience.

The details presented by Kenneth are on all fours with the findings of the scientific investigation into the occult worlds carried out by qualified researchers in the field of Theosophy.

They also accord with the description of the higher Astral plane given by eminent Yogis such as Sri Paramahansa Yogananda and Sri Yukteswar, the linear disciples of the 1800 year old Maha Yogi Sri Kriya Babaji of the Himalayas.

One significant contribution that this book and the connected earlier transcripts have made to the scientific investigation of life in the astral plane is the confirmation given by Kenneth on several occasions regarding the remarkable beneficial effects that have been experienced by those disembodied persons in the lower astral plane or shadow-land as he calls it, who are weighed down by their karmic burdens, when a dhaane or pinkama or requiem mass or pitru-pooja is done on the earth plane with sincerity of thought in the name of the departed person. It is remarkable that Kenneth, a Christian since birth, working with a team having a mixed religious background, (Aloma the medium being a devout Roman Catholic and Ranee his wife being a good Buddhist hailing from a well-known Kandyan family), had brought to bear a highly advanced spiritual approach,

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based on an understanding of the ultimate Reality, to the presentation of his ennobling message of love and charity from beyond the veil to ignorant and wayward humanity.

The department of Social Services has sponsored the promotion and sale of the book, as the entire sale proceeds have been donated by the publisher for the benefit of a registered charity for the blind and visually handicapped.

It is significant that this book has won recognition in the field of scientific studies in Sri Lanka, as two eminent scholars at the Colombo University D.S. Ranawake, senior lecturer in Education Psychology and S. Sandrasegaram, Head of the Department of Social Sciences, have volunteered to translate this book into Sinhala and Tamil respectively, with the assistance of Ven. Yatiyana Vimalabudhi Thero and Mr. V. Karunanithi, another senior lecturer at the University

The book is sold at the Social Services Department, 98, D.S. Senanayake Mawatha, Colombo-08 and 'Berefoot,' 704, Galle Road, Colombo-3.

C. Shanmuganayagam

(Convenor, Thinkers' Forum Meditation Group)

On the Spiritual Transformation of Emperor Asoka

- and the promotion of peace among mankind

(A Historic Dance Drama)

The Sinhalese and Hindu New Year holidays, which fell on April 13 and 14 apart from the normal festivities, were celebrated this year 2001 in an unusually inspiring manner by the presentation of **a mega classic dance drama** at the BMICH auditorium in Colombo, **on the spiritual transformation of the great Emperor Asoka of India entitled 'Buddham Saranam Gachchami'** and his spreading of the four noble Truths and the noble eight-fold path of Buddhism throughout his vast Indian empire, and thence to Sri Lanka, the future repository of Buddhism, through his children Mahinda and Sangamitta.

The presentation was by the Temple of Fine Arts International of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, under the guidance of its spiritual head Swami Shantanand of Rishikesh, who has founded similar Fine Arts centres in India, Singapore and Australia for the promotion of spirituality on a holistic basis through prayer, service, music and dance.

The first scene of the play shows Emperor Asoka holding a durbar at his palace in 261 BC with several vassal kings offering tributes to him. A notable absentee was the king of Kalinga who had refused to surrender the sovereignty of his kingdom to Emperor Asoka. Infuriated at this defiance of his might, Asoka impelled by his overweening lust for power, declares war on Kalinga Raja, a peaceful and cultured ruler of his nation state. A massive battle ensues which is depicted on the stage very realistically, first by shadow effects on

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a semi-transparent screen and then by hand to hand encounter of the warring armies wielding swords on the open stage, resulting in the floor being strewn with 'corpses' of the dead on both sides, with swords sticking out of their fallen bodies.

Futility of war

At this stage **Emperor Asoka who had wiped out the Kalinga army, surveys the horrible scene** from a small mound in a dejected mood, and he is informed by his army chief that over 100,000 soldiers of Kalinga Raja had been killed and over 150,000 wounded. Asoka asked how many of his own soldiers were killed and he was told that 200,000 of his soldiers were killed and 100,000 wounded. He was filled with despair and remorse when he discovered the enormity of his crime in declaring war on the peaceful state of Kalinga and the consequent devastation caused by him to his own army as well, including his kith and kin. It was a pyrrhic victory, in which **the victor lost more soldiers on the battle-field than the loser and which revealed the utter futility of war.**

It is a remarkable coincidence, worthy of being taken to heart by all peace-loving people, **that in the second World war of 1939 to 1945, the Allied powers who were victorious lost more soldiers than the Axis powers who were defeated.** The Allies, however had no option in this case but to wage war and eliminate Hitler, the maniacal tyrant who had caused over five million innocent Jews to be massacred in cold blood.

There is a world of difference between sacrificing one's own life Christ-like for the welfare of humanity as a true stayagrahi or even valiantly opposing and fighting Asuric forces with Churchillian grit and determination and wantonly killing and subjugating other human beings for the sake of self-aggrandisement and lust for power or political leadership.

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A study of the casualty figures of the second world war reveals that Britain, France, Poland and U.S.A had one million two hundred thousand soldiers dead and Russia, which bore the brunt of the war, had seven million five hundred thousand dead, and China two million two hundred thousand dead, whereas among the Axis powers Germany lost only three million five hundred thousand soldiers as dead, its European partners Austria, Hungary, Romania and Italy lost nine hundred thousand as dead and Japan only one million two hundred thousand as dead. **The Allies had a total of 10,900,000 soldiers dead and the Axis powers had a total of only 5,600,000 soldiers dead.** The list of wounded soldiers shows a similar trend but the discrepancy was less. It is reported that about 9 million soldiers among the Allied powers and about 8 million soldiers among the Axis powers, most of whom were from Germany, were wounded.

As Kalinga Raja muses philosophically on the stage, there is perhaps a high purpose on the karmic level in all these inexplicable happenings taking place around us down the ages. His queen also gives expression to another great truth that perhaps if Emperor Asoka had been blessed early in life with a love for music and dance and the Fine Arts his heart would have been softened and he would not have wantonly declared war on the Kalinga state.

The choreographing of the drama was so subtly done that Vidisha, the wife of Emperor Asoka, is shown as arriving late for the durbar held by Asoka, after visiting a Buddhist Chaithya, where she had offered prayers. On Asoka asking her what she prayed for, she sings a beautiful song couched in words that plead for the bestowal of blessings on her Lord and master Asoka, for material success on the one hand and for spiritual transformation and abstinence from violence on the other hand.

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Dharmasoka - a transformed ruler

Later Vidisha, on finding that Asoka was continuing with his pursuit of violence ending with the final devastation of the state of Kalinga, decided to live in separation from Asoka and became a Buddhist bikkuni and sent her children Mahinda and Sangamitta to Asoka to be brought up by him. **In 250 B.C. Dharmasoka, now a transformed ruler upholding righteousness and ahimsa, sends his grown-up children with a bo-sapling to Sri Lanka to establish Buddhism there in its most pristine form.**

The play ends with an inspiring dance scene with the solemn chanting of 'Buddham Saranam Gachaami' reverberating throughout the auditorium, and cut-outs of the standing Buddha, the Saranath temple, the dagoba at Anuradhapura, the Dharma Chakra representing the wheel of Eternity and the famous Asokan pillar mounted with the lion motif, being prominently displayed on the stage.

All in all, it was a magnificent Dance drama depicting a highly spiritual theme, enacted on a mega-scale that surpassed the efforts of even the great dramatist and producer Manohar of all-India fame.

On the last day of the performance, three Buddhist monks who were in the audience went up to the stage at the end of the play and blessed the artists, who responded by offering their prostrations to these revered members of the Sangha.

C. Shanmuganayagam

