PRELIMINARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMPARATIVE STUDIES AND RESEARCHES IN

THE SIVANANDA LITERATURE

THE FIRST OF THE THREE VOLUMES

Prepared, Edited and Presented with Detailed, Analytical and Suggestive Titles and Sub-Titles, and also with Every Chapter Prefaced by a Stimulating Introductory Argument

BY

Sri Swami Omkarananda

Sivananda

AND THE CONTENT, CHARACTERISTICS, FUNCTIONS & VALUE OF HIS LITERATURE

WHEN books have for their author, a rare Seer of the spiritual stature of Sivananda, demonstrative in the plenitude of his inner integral life and in the richness of his outer many-sided personality-expressions, a truly splendid synthesis of the dynamic Indian philosophies of Love, Wisdom, Yoga and prophetic Action, that permits the persons that approach him, find him, in the unnumbered acts of compassion he renders, a Buddha, in the ecstatic spiritual songs under the high devotional oestrus of God-possessed consciousness, he sings, a Chaitanya, in the almost unbroken flow of the highest metaphysical-cum-mystic thought he maintains, a Shankara, in the manifestations of his Mind a transcendental Vision that perceives in all the one Godhead and in everything the one Imperishable Being, the self-existent Self-delight, and yet takes upon itself the yoke of a vast erudition, a modernity of mood, a diversity of endowment, an amazing range in ability and power, for the purposes of bringing to a mankind groaning under the pressures of a hydra-headed Ignorance, bowed down by the heavy bludgeonings of the Colossus that Error is, of the Titan that the Evil the world will always be, the world that brought to a proud birth, and has readily allowed itself to be kept awake and active at much error in thought and as much mischief in action by, such outstanding works as Machiavelli's *Prince*, Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Marx's *Das Kapital*, Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, and others of their category, a message that alters its scale of values, replaces its perspectives, and arouses in it a sense of its own innate worth, the highest aspirations, a teaching that while resolving the riddles of its civilization, conveys to it a corruscation of illuminations for positive upward action and achievement, a writing that includes in the subjects it treats of, health, medicine, music, in the relation of their subservience to spiritual experiences, sees in the light of the highest truth of existence, the Divine Reality, and its realization, sociology, education, cultures, history, politics, economics, and gives them a turn here and a touch there that makes them carry the whole of human life and activity toward a far-off yet close spiritual Destiny, a guidance that inspires while imparting instruction, that brings light while purveying sweetness, pours strength while extending the gestures of kindness, and takes up an aspiring soul here and a struggling aspirant elsewhere, and offers their errant will a stability in Self-knowledge, their outgoing sense of sight the clarity of Self-vision, their life the strength of the immortal Self,—we have works which make absolutely no pretences to any literary excellences, least of all to those ascribable to a Shakespeare, a Milton, a Kalidasa, a Bana, but carry everywhere in themselves, everything of the elevating, vigorous and opulent thought-content and of the vast system of galvanizing life-values, attributable to the genius of a Vyasa, a Valmiki, and to the host of Upanishadic seers, the makers of the undying Indian spiritual civilization, works that are characterised by a naturalness, a simplicity, a fluency, a force and spiritual power, all their own, and whose value has to be assessed in terms of the number of revealing ideas they present, of the gifts they make of the many intuitive insights and profound perceptions that illuminate a Divine Presence around and within us, awaken the primal impulses of the Divinity in humanity, effectuate in the human heart a transformation, move the human will to deeds of universal beneficence, and in general, serve a cultural function and exert a decisive and formative spiritual influence.—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

FROM myths and symbols, medicine and music, to the Platonic *Ideas*, the Kantian *thing-in-itself*, and the Upanishadic *neti neti* doctrine, these monumental volumes, drawn on an encyclopaedic scale, from the vast and all-encompassing written works of the towering Sage Sivananda, and presented by a born genius characterised by unusual versatility and doubled by a first-rate mystic, the boy-sage of nineteen forties, and now barely emerging from his twenties, cover every theme of the utmost importance and value to human thought, inspiration, life, activity, and evolution.

THE SEVEN OF THE LEADING MERITS OF THE SIVANANDA LITERATURE VOLUMES

One, as an event of outstanding importance in the history of the swift-moving endeavours of the Sivananda Publication League, *two*, as a summation of the very spirit and aims of the Sivananda Literature Research Institute, *three*, as crowning the three decades of Sivananda's herculean literary labours on the grand scale in the wide fields of rapid, dynamic dissemination of spiritual knowledge, *four*, as a veritable library of stimulating thought and exalted conceptions that formulate a view and a way of life loftier and richer than any bequeathed to mankind by ancient Greece or by modern Europe, *five*, as a thesaurus of the whole of the inheritance of the Vedic and Pauranic India's spirituality breathed out afresh by the modern Sage Sivananda, [illegible] a work altogether unique and the *six*, [illegible] of its kind both for the scope of only one [illegible] voluminousness, its utility, its themes, [illegible] product of a single author and for being the [illegible] tive editor to be re- and a single interpret[illegible] rid-organisation, leased by any other w[illegible] gious, and moral, or philosophical, or re[illegible] al passeven, as abounding in inspiratio[illegible] ion, ages that call the readers to Self-realisa[illegible] illuminating excerpts from Sivananda's ol[illegible] and rare books that initiate us into the several techniques of self-unfoldment and

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[Continued from the first flap]

Divine Living, reviews from the Press that not only record in printing, for the Divine Life Society, the world-wide organization that it is, the impartial and objective opinions of its publications, and of its world-adored President and his Mission, but also suggest to the critics the nature and value of the work turned out by the integral type of Yogi, Prophet, Saint that the light-giving and knowledge-spreading Sivananda has always been, and in scholarly statements that evidence vast erudition and penetrating perceptions, and invite us to extend our learning on to the more fundamental fields of thought embracing the vital ideas and ideals that nourished, and will continue to sustain, the ever-enduring Indian civilization and culture.

SWAMI OMKARANANDA'S OTHER WORKS ON SIVANANDA AND HIS LITERATURE

1. THE STORY OF AN EMINENT YOGI (1947)
2. THE DAWN OF DIVINE LIFE (1951)
3. SHAKESPEARE ON SIVANANDA (1954)
4. SIVANANDA AND THE MODERN MAN (1954)
5. EVERYMAN'S PHILOSOPHY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA (1954)
6. STUDIES IN THE PERSONALITY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA (1957)
7. DAILY READINGS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA (1958)

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SIVANANDA LITERATURE

Covering Ethics, Psychology, Philosophy, Religion, Yoga, Vedanta, Mysticism, Medicine, Music, Art, Literature, Science, Education, Culture, Sociology, International Law, etc., etc., etc.

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BY

SWAMI OMKARANANDA

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

Far too extensive is the terrain of temporal and spiritual knowledge, and, need we feel necessitated to state, amazingly enough, co-extended is Sivananda's coverage thereon; consequently, and also for the reason that these volumes were required to be released forthwith,* we have, as would be seen, with utmost ease, by those gifted with appreciable powers of perception, or by them that don the robes of deep and vast erudition, permissive, in matters under present consideration, of competent judgment, but given in these volumes of Sivananda Literature, just a single glimpse, only one glimpse, a mere glimpse, an incomplete glimpse, as to the possible procedures by which the written works of Sivananda can be approached for the invaluable guidance they afford on a very wide range of thought and on a yet wider arena of life's problems, touched and handled for the richness of the visage they wear, the inspiration they impart, and a diversity of utility they hold out, and interpreted from the comparative standpoint, or creatively and contributively represented.

*For the Gurupurnima, *the 8th of July, 1960.*

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA,
for the Publishers.

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An explanatory note on the incompleteness of this fourth phase can be found furnished on page 450.

Presented here in these few leaves are but some random selections from an independent forthcoming paper wherein are drawn outlines of research-guidance on the question of the freedom of the will, the permanent problem of thought that has, through the centuries concerned with the controversies in the fields of philosophy, theology, ethology, sorely tried the sharpened wits of the Master Minds, and conspired to remain in the very vortex of all self-conscious life, a vital and vexing issue resolvable perhaps only in the light of pragmatic idealism and all-synthesising views the relevant sections of Sivananda Literature enjoy the prerogative of holding out.

THE ANTI-TELEOLOGICAL NATURALISTIC WELTANSCHAUUNG

NATURALISM AS A WELTANSCHAUUNG VIEWS THE WORLD-PROCESS AS EXPLICABLE SOLELY IN TERMS OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE PHYSICAL NATURE, ALL REALITY AS REDUCIBLE TO ATOMS IN MOTION, THE WORLD OF LIVING ORGANISMS AS CONVERTIBLE INTO A SET OF CAUSAL LAWS, HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS AS EPIPHENOMENAL, HUMAN REASON AS A PRODUCT OF NATURE, HUMAN SOUL AS THE MATERIAL SUBSTANCE IN ITS RAREFIED STATE, FREEDOM, PURPOSE, AND TRANSCENDENTAL DESTINY AS UNREAL IRRELEVANCIES, WILL, CHOICE, AND MORAL JUDGMENT AS INCONSEQUENTIAL AND UNSUBSTANTIAL EXCRESCENCES OF MATTER IN EXPRESSION, ENDS, VALUES AND FINAL CAUSES AS ESCHEWABLE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE INTEGRITY OF THE NATURALISTIC ATTITUDE, AND THE SPIRITUAL AS A SHEER PHOSPHERESCENCE REGULARLY ACCOMPANYING CERTAIN COMPLEX PHYSICAL PROCESSES.

In all its historical developments, from its early formulations by the Greek philosophers, the Sophists, Leucippus, Democritus, through the middle ages, the centuries of the recent past, when it found a fresh and quickening power and support in the Darwinian theory of evolution and the nebular hypothesis, and despite its latest self-modifications and claims to an indefensible neutral monism, which so change its countenance as to make it look so unlike its essential being, and as having adorned itself with some of the spoils of the central arguments of its adversaries, conceded and accepted with one hand what it had almost dogmatically denied and rejected with the other, naturalism has continued to be easily identifiable, in most of its fundamentals, with materialism on the one side, and with mechanism on the other, and currently presents many difficulties that thwart all attempts to distinguish it from positivism, and from the standpoint of a closer scrutiny, critical reason, science and metaphysics, even the strongest of its principal doctrines are highly vulnerable. It involves itself in positions at variance with facts, impossible and preposterous, by explaining the qualitative phenomena in terms of the quantitative, by accounting for the evolutionary process, without commanding for rendering it intelligible, the explanatory principle of some organising or directive agency, by resolving the conscious into the chemical, deriving the vital force from the lifeless mechanical principle, advancing a monism without accepting the reality of a duality of force that presents itself for a reconciliation, asserting the homogeneity of the inorganic, the organic, and the psychic phenomena where the datum of experience and the logic of intelligent discourse find a heterogeneity.

Anti-teleological by its very temper, in mood allied to agnosticism, positivistic in inclination, and in origins materialistic and mechanistic, naturalism, by its assumption that makes the world-process a thing of sheer mechanics, and own its ultimate source in Matter alone, rejects the notion that Nature requires as its causal factor a principle beyond itself, the idea that it is being guided by a teleological end, a transcendent purpose above the restless wheelings and whirlings of its atoms, that the universal nature is derived from itself, determined by its own character, and not dependent upon any non-material factor or entity, formulates the corollaries that it has no underlying principles demanding philosophical envisagement, no hidden forces requiring the exercise of, and manipulation by, human understanding, no deeper and intrinsic causes making it incumbent upon the seeking and inquiring intelligence a straining of its powers at discerning them, confident of resolving apparent differences in kind amongst phenomena, the inorganic and the organic, the chemical and the conscious, into differences of complexity of manifestation of the same identical elements, matter and motion, presents a thoroughly homogeneous account of the world, man and society; asserting the psychical phenomena as an extension of the corporeal process, as an epiphenomena with no real determining influence upon the physical and the environmental, claims that over the course of phenomena the spirit in man can exercise no control, treating as totally adequate for furnishing intelligible explanation of the organic life, mind, moral values, human history and institutions, eschews ends, purposes, final causes, ideals, the immaterial principles and the unique in manifestation, development and experience, advancing the argument that the ethical ideals, compulsions, activities and restraints of man can be justified solely on the natural and physical grounds, rejects all recourse to the teleological standpoint, the subjective necessity, the evolutionary demand and supernatural sanctions for affording a satisfactory justification and significance of them; regarding all the higher aspects of mental life and moral and spiritual experiences as sheer results of the ordinary operations of nature, affirms that the highest good of man is to be pursued and attained under natural conditions, by eliminating all expectation of a destiny above the terrestrial possibilities, reducing all mental processes to organic elements and conditions, and forced by the logic of this reduction to accept, a further absurd reduction of the organic to inorganic material elements, of making irrationally one the disparate manifestations, the vital Nature and the purely physical Nature, and refusing to accept for consideration everything that can be termed transcendent of experience, asserts that at no point in the process of evolution, is there involved the operative presence of any trans empirical principle, or of any teleological purpose, permits no scope for admitting the reality of anything spiritual, turns intolerant of any view of the world, man, nature, society, human activity which is not in conformity with the strictly mechanical and the materialistic, treating human behaviour as a function of environment and circumstance, and as traceable in its origins only to the physical, regards ideas and ideals as sheer products of human workmanship, evaluatory formulations of moral distinctions between the right and the wrong, the good and the bad, as affairs of the conventional, unfounded in

nature, and all values as falling within the confines and context of human character and experience, and as grounded on social utility, making reason a product of nature and circumscribing its activity narrowly to the reception of sense-impressions and associating and comparing them under the restraint of laws, deprives it of its spontaneity and creative function, admitting no knowledge apart from, and except of, phenomena, restricts man's investigational endeavour to material Nature, and refuses to grant that it can extend to anything below or beyond phenomena; turning philosophy into a pretentious attempt to penetrate the essence of things, entrenches it in a status of verbal distinctions and a function of sheer ingenious playing upon words, treating such subjects as spirit, truth, good, beauty, and God as profitless, constitutes itself into an otiose creed of a naive materialist, an ingenous atheist, a plain and uncritical realist, disinclined to admit anything lying outside the ambit of natural processes and natural sciences, feels constrained to find, negatively, no ground given it for affirming, and positively, the compulsory duty assigned to it, for denying, freedom, purpose, and transcendent destiny, dissertating that everything comes out materially, mechanically, out of what goes before it, makes needless any philosophical venture into a grasp of final causes, and the only concern assigned to us is the discovery of the causal nexus of things, not their intrinsic reasons, the dealing with the outer results, not their pre-conditions, with effects, not their grounds, with extrinsic facts not their underlying principles, their essential determining factors.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

ETHICAL FREEDOM—SIVANANDA AND SCHLEIERMACHER

SOTERIOLOGICALLY ADMITTING FREEDOM IN ETHICAL EXPERIENCE, SCHLEIERMACHER PROCEEDS TO AFFIRM THE ACTION IN MAN OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT AS THE TRUE INCENTIVE TO MORAL CONDUCT, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ETHICAL AS DERIVED FROM PERSONAL RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS AND MORAL REASON; THUS ETHICAL ACTION GROUNDED ON RELIGIOUS IMPULSES ON THE ONE HAND AND PERSONAL INSIGHT ON THE OTHER, ACQUIRES FREEDOM AS ITS ENSOULING AND DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLE

But, in the greater breadth of vision and amplitude of experience displayed in the thought of Sivananda, we are entrusted with the representation of a resounding thesis that this freedom which Schleiermacher envisages is itself a product of a preliminary obedience accorded to established authority and external laws, as a measure in the recovery of the dynamic of freedom in a disciplined and purified nature, and that authority and the laws as themselves the product of the play of freedom, of religious impulses and personal insight at their best and loftiest in prophetic minds of transcendental wisdom and consummate spiritual experience. Here, then, freedom and obedience are not contradictory and exclusive of each other, but in their initial states of their coales-

tence, mutually inclusive, and as the former gathers strength and force and works unimpeded by any obstacles, for such obstacles are swept off by the disciplines of an obedience given to laws and norms, in the boquet of external authority, and transcends all need for obedience, and reigns over the whole of individual human nature, under the self-laws of the divine Light within. Freedom is preceded by obedience, and the rules of obedience proceed from the fulfilment in the exercise of freedom in its most exalted states as revealed in the lives of those Law-givers in whom the Laws are fulfilled in Love and Love expresses itself in the laws formulated for their welfare, guidance, moral development and inner progress of such as are, by reason of their yet imperfect and common human nature, in need of aid in knowledge and in light, on matters of right and wrong, good and evil, that which is conducive to progress and that which leads to retrogression in simple goodness, a need that they would continue to experience till they cause in themselves that effective operation of the Light of their own inner Self, that never fails.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

SIVANANDA AND THE GNOSTIC FATALISM

GNOSTICISM, AS A SYNCRATISTIC CREED, IN ALL ITS PRINCIPAL SECTS SUCH AS THOSE OF BASILIDES, VALENTINUS, THE OPHITES, CARPOCRATES AND EPIPHANES, SATURNINUS, CERDO, MARCION, AND BARDESANES, ACCEPTS THE CONTRADICTIONS OF EXPERIENCE AS ULTIMATE, REGARDS THE MATERIAL WORLD AS INTRINSICALLY EVIL, FINDS MAN FORCED UNDER THE YOKE OF MECHANICAL NECESSITY BROUGHT ON BY THE PLANETARY INFLUENCE TO WHICH THE ENTIRE CREATION IS SUBJECT, DIVIDES MANKIND IN ITS NATURE INTO A TRIPLE FIXED UNALTERABLE TYPE, PNEUMATIC, PSYCHIC, AND HYLIC GROUPS, AND THUS EXPOSES ITSELF TO A DOMINATION BY FATALISM AND A COMMITTAL TO THE DENIAL OF THE REALITY OF FREE-WILL.

The primary notions of Patristic theology combine in opposition to this necessitarian and metaphysical solution presented by the Gnostic teachers and sects, to the problem of predestination, and as a measure in contradiction to this notion of evil as constitutional and organic to all nature, largely relying upon the sovereign efficacy of reason and conscience, and on the value of their terms for an interpretation of the Absolute, teach freedom as the distinctive mark of man, and scrupulously eschew all suggestions at countenancing any idea of unconditional predestination. Influenced by the Persian religious dualistic conception and under the impacts of Manichaeism, Gnosticism finds light and darkness, spirit and matter, the lower world of sense and the higher world of pure being, irreconcilable opposites, the antagonistic principles which in their forbidden intermixture in all nature and world make for all the misery and calamity, and interminglied in the nature of man make for all the evil, and measures the unhappy lot of

man by the extent to which the evil principle intermingles with his being, and tyranny of necessity to which human action is subject as a result of the influences exerted by the planetary powers, a conception traceable to the astral religion of Babylonia.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

THE KANTIAN OPPOSITION TO STATUTORY OBEDIENCE

RATIONALISTIC TENDENCIES IN ETHICS COME TO BE DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR PRIMARY FUNCTION CONSISTING IN THE RAISING OF A STOUT OPPOSITION TO TRADITION, AUTHORITY, OBEDIENCE, AND DIVORCING MORALITY FROM ITS GROUNDING ON ANCIENT CUSTOM, RELIGIOUS INJUNCTIONS, STATUTORY LAWS, AND INVESTING IT WITH A TYPE OF AUTONOMY AS WAS ACHIEVED BY CERTAIN LEADING TRENDS IN EARLY GREEK ETHICS, BY THE ENGLISH DEISTS, BY THE KANTIAN MORAL PHILOSOPHY, BY THE ETHICAL THESES OF FICHTE, HEGEL, SCHLEIERMACHER AND OTHERS.

For the formulation of the categorical imperative and the founding of morality upon the autonomy of the practical reason, the world of ethical theory will always be indebted to Kant, in so far as they afford ample stimulus for fresh inquiries, but those who approach Kant for the purpose of applying his ethical views to life, will find him unworkable, and present merely an abstract analysis of the phenomenon of conscience and make no attempt at setting forth a constructive, positive and concrete ethic. Rather, the bare rigour of his ratiocinative process on the moral themes, surrenders Kant not merely to a rejection of all efforts at rooting morality in religious authority and experience, but also to an amusing reversal of the positions of morality and religion, and force him to treat God as merely a postulate of moral consciousness. Regarding Kant's pronounced opposition to statutory obedience, Sivananda maintains that men in the mass generally obey laws and injunctions constituting external authority, persuaded by a recognition of their rightness, by the perception that they embody a light and a level of morality far higher, more luminous, and beneficial, than what they themselves can, by the exercise of their own inner moral resources and their practical reason, claim to arrive at, by a full understanding of the advantages that accrue to them from an assimilation into their lives of the excellences they carry. Sivananda would further add, that not until the individuals become capable of self-discipline under the guidance of an internal light, the light of their purified reason and lives, eager and enthusiastic in constantly elevating themselves into an attitude of universal beneficence, a mood that sees things in their broad perspective, and in their true and essential nature, can they with safety and without great loss to their own personal self-development, dispense with the need for obedience to outer commandments and injunctions, to the existing external laws. It would be too great a presumption to take men in general as so

well-developed in intelligence as to propose to themselves the right tasks for their own will, and it is always safe to recognise that the best among us, are yet dependent for moral and spiritual guidance upon the rules of those that evidence incomparably superior excellence in the expressions of their lives. Statutory laws are not mill-stones tied round our necks by threats of punishment, but mirrors into which we may look for whatever guidance they proffer for self-culture, not restraints in which we are enchained by a tyrannous, religious or other authority, but so many aids placed before our free choice, in directing the courses of our development in moral experience and achievement; and, therefore, obedience to them need not be equated with abject submission to outside rules, nor be rated as an adherence derogatory to the rational powers and personal insight of men, nor be labelled as inspired by the hope of some reward, or by the fear of punishment, nor yet as ensuing as a result of blind respect for the supposed eminence of the authority enjoining them. —SWAMI OMKARANANDA

SIVANANDA AND THE DETERMINISM OF NATURALISM

DOCTRINALLY QUITE DOGMATIC IN ITS DENIAL OF ALL EVIDENCE FOR A UNIVERSAL TELEOLOGY, FOR THE DERIVATION OF THE WORLD-PROCESS FROM A TRANSCENDENT SOURCE, AND FOR THE DEPENDENCE OF THE COSMIC MANIFESTATION IN THE UNITY, ORDER, HARMONY IT REVEALS, UPON AN UPHOLDING AND GOVERNING SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE, NATURALISM, WITH ITS CENTRAL AFFIRMATION OF THE ADEQUACY OF THE IDEA OF MATTER IN MOTION AS ACCOUNTING FOR ALL PHENOMENA AND EMBRACING THE WHOLE OF THE REALITY, IS COMMITTED TO REDUCE ALL THINGS TO MECHANICS, STRESS ITS CONCEPTS OF CAUSAL DETERMINATION AND THE LAWS OF NATURE, CARRY MECHANICAL NECESSITY ALL THROUGH EXPERIENCE AND CLAIM ITS SWAY EVEN OVER THE MOST COMPLEX WORKINGS OF NATURE, OF LIVING ORGANISMS, OF THE CREATIVE ACTIVITY OF HUMAN GENIUS, TREAT EVERYTHING AS PURPOSELESS AND DETERMINISTIC, REJECT FREEDOM AS MEANINGLESS, FREEWILL AS A DELUSION, IDEALS AS ARTEFACTS, MORAL JUDGMENTS AS CONVENTIONAL, AND IMMURE MAN IN THE MECHANICAL PRISON-HOUSE OF A DREADFUL FATALISM.

—Sivananda vigorously confutes the verbal challenge naturalism presents to the cogency of the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments, and maintains that the universe requires, for any valid explanation of the totality of its elusive facts, the acceptance of the reality of a pre-existent Reality within and ouside its processes, that all Nature is found on a closer scrutiny to be spiritual in its constitution, purposive in its essential functions, and evolutionary in its basic trends and tendencies, that human con-

sciousness not only has freedom for its essential nature, but is unique as the substantival basis of all experience and knowledge, and lies wholly outside the categories of scientific, mechanical, and naturalistic interpretation, that the ethical values, activities and restraints rest upon and are justified by, teleological and axiological grounds, and by reason of a different order of reality and awareness to which they belong, can be neither approached nor explained from the standpoint of naturalism, mechanism, materialism. Characterised by a readiness to defend its own dissertation on the whole of the realm of reality as the realm of causality, and connecting all events by the principle of the causal continuity of the temporal antecedent with the temporal consequent, naturalism cannot but entrench itself in a refusal to use any concept of end as a final principle of interpretation, contend that every little detail of the vital organism and even of the subtlest processes of the psychical phenomena is determined by the cosmical mechanism and consequently crown its arguments with the inevitable absurdities of granting no acknowledgement to what is evident to experience, of denying in theory what is obvious in fact, of subducting and excluding from the ambit of the perception of realities, human mind's power of free initiation, energizing in volition, controlling the body, influencing the environment, and man's direct awareness of the capacity his will owns, as a fundamental fact of his consciousness, of exercising an appreciable control over, or changing the conditions and courses of, phenomena. —SWAMI OMKARANANDA

SIVANANDA AND THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL NATURALISM

Naturalistic epistemology entrenches itself in a simple absurdity by restricting all our knowledge to so superficial, extrinsic and circumscribed a field as the one constituted solely by natural events and the relationships holding between them, by regarding consciousness, the percipient individual, which, as the substantival basis of all awareness, enjoys the supreme ontological status, and becomes the one presupposition of all knowledge, to which all objects appeal for their revelation and reality, in which all that we experience has its source, and by which matter itself is illuminated and made known, as a derivative, secondary and almost negligible phenomenon, by reducing the subject to a status inferior to the object by resolving mind into matter, and, thereby, surrenders itself to mistaken principles and misleading assumptions, and as a philosophical theory, cannot consider any notion of the autonomy of the spirit, the freedom of will, and the attribution to reason of its rights to spontaneous and creative function.

Not arising from spatio-temporal occasion, but being 'sui generis', itself the factor that fits up in knowledge, the temporal succession, Consciousness, Sivananda states, is seen to hold a primary and supreme importance everywhere in conscious experience, becomes the pre-condition of all knowledge-processes, plays an effective role in revealing all states of the psycho-physical organism, in directing the course of the will and in seeking to exert its light over the processes and phenomena of Nature, is acted upon by ideals which it itself may create, and through ideals and conscious energies acts upon the character of the personality, the mechanism of outer life, thereby, in that steady developmental sequence of the self, synthesising the intelligible and the mechanical worlds of Kant, free will and determinism, the internal free initiation and the external constraint, and uniting the conscious and the chemical, from the opposite side of naturalism.

Consisting of a very limited and jarring succession of fantastically superficial assumptions, naturalism, Sivananda says, limits greatly the levels of its knowledge, and so is so depleted in the type of experience vouchsafed to it, that it takes to the phenomenon of life, mind, and the values and their unique function and significance, a method invalid, and presents a view of nature and man inconclusive and misleading, and therefore, of necessity, and by the paucity of its instruments, and the narrowness of its fields, of knowledge, misses the primacy of consciousness for an adequate accounting of conation, cognition, feeling, the fact that freedom is the permanent attitude and attribute of the conscious self which, though conditioned to some extent by the outer circumstance, is caused, regulated and controlled by nothing outside, except by the values which it itself may have projected into some of the social institutions and personal codes of conduct. Conscious of the finest flowering in himself, of the highest potentialities latent in human consciousness, and inclined, under an irresistible urge to bring mankind to a knowledge of the possibilities to which it can rise, its life to a fulfilment it can attain, its activity to a purposiveness, grace, creativity, Sivananda finds in consciousness the foundation of all knowledge, the central key to the meaning of things, the 'open sesame' to the riddles of life, the delight of existence, a richness of content altogether extraordinary, and from its standpoint particularly, the position of philosophical naturalism, founded on the notion of the Uniformity of Nature which is itself, unfortunately for the naturalist, a fruit of mental activity, is weakest in its obscurantistic attempt to explain in terms of its petty equipment of mechanical concepts, the phenomen of living things endowed as they are with capacities for varied conscious self-direction, for growth, adjustment, for the exercise of choice, for the protection, preservation, and expression of self, and with such innate tendencies that seek to reach, consciously or unconsciously, some end, some purpose, some goal, and dismiss them as having come about by the accidental groupings of molecules of matter, by the chance assemblage of inorganic elements, to account for the totality of human mind distinguished as it is by unique qualities, by autonomy, inventiveness, selectiveness, powers for attaining keener sensibility, higher thought, vision, insight, intuition, by laws

derived from an understanding of physical and inorganic Nature, when even the organic and vital phenomena display in the restitution of function in animal bodies, a standing refutation of the adequacy of mechanical explanations. —SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Sivananda and Leibniz on Freedom as Inner Self-determination :

LEIBNIZ'S POSTULATE OF PRE-ESTABLISHED HARMONY

Since 'pre-established harmony' as hypothetised by Leibniz, stands for the material agreement between the phases of the soul and the organic body, the mutual correspondence between the realms of efficient causes and final causes, and proceeds from the very nature of the monads themselves as percipient, spontaneous individuals, it should not be construed as countenancing, nor be misrepresented as, predestination, determinism, fatalism, nor be asserted to be arbitrarily dependent on the will of God, as some scholars, drawn by their bias for deterministic doctrines, have been tempted to do so. A deeper understanding of the theory of pre-established harmony would present something of a case at once for the reality of free-will, the reality of mechanism, the reality of God, an exposition of the correspondence of freedom with mechanism, demanding the teleological inference to God, or furnishing from itself an argument for the existence of God, into the metaphysical soundness and strength of which we need not here, in this context, venture. For Sivananda, even as for Leibniz who reached 'the speculative position that the real world consists of an infinite host of independent monads, at countless different stages of development, whose activity is fundamentally spiritual or perceptual', that 'it is the very nature of the monad to strive after the realization of all its latent possibilities, that the forces active in mechanism may be interpreted from the standpoint of teleology', man owns freedom in the sense that in the efforts of his will, he is determined by the laws of his own inner life, by what he finds and desires as good, by the clear and true idea, is exempt from all external control, all constraint from without, and therefore, this freedom may be termed the freedom not of caprice nor of indeterminacy, but of the inner self-determination, though it is open to be designated as consisting in the causality of an immanental type ; and, speaking in terms of ethical dynamism, servitude of will results from being led away by passions which proceed from confused perceptions, and freedom would be consequent upon an overcoming of appetite by a consistent adherence to the dictates of one's own inner nature and reason. —SWAMI OMKARANANDA

SIVANANDA AND INDETERMINISM IN EPICUREAN ETHICAL SCHEMA

The very spirit of the ethico-philosophic position of Sivananda seems to suggest that when we hold a false view of man, and refuse to find the foundations of morality in his own inner nature and the evolutionary demands of the uniqueness that constitutes the Self within him, we are bound to surrender ourselves, as Epicurus surrendered himself, to

finding some fantastic foundation for moral responsibility,—Epicurus, who adopting the atomism of the crass materialistic Democritus, sought to modify its determinism, more as a measure at salvaging the freedom of man without which we can conceive of no morality, and in prudence that finds the notion of inexorable necessity subversive of man's mental peace, than to explain the physical world, by permitting chance to cause a swerve, a clinamen, in the motion of the atoms, and make them deviate from their course and move as they will, and, since they go to constitute also the phenomenon of man, they would, endowed as they are, by Epicurus, with free action, equip, in their turn, the human individual with the inner power to move and act as he wills, in making choices, determining his own fate, striving for prudence and seeking pleasure. —SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Prolegomena to the Sivananda Literature

ASPECT ONE

SIVANANDA'S ETHICAL IDEALISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONAL RELATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY AND SPIRITUAL REALIZATION

SIVANANDA AND HIS ETHICAL IDEALISM

—From the Grecian dawns, through the ages, for the much strained conceptual consciousness of the Western philosophical mind, the problem of evil has remained insoluble, the origin of sin and error unanswerable, the hurdle of a true relation of the relative human good to the absolute Good insurmountable, because it has derived no light from the deepest spiritual and metaphysical experience while yet breathing in the empirical world, which is the prerogative of the towering sages of fundamental thought and greatest saints of universal beneficence like Sivananda—Concerning the moral standard, individually different ethical systems have conceived as given by intuition, understood as determined by evolution, hedonistically stated as consisting in pleasure, eudaemonistically formulated as perfection and self-realization, axiologically advanced as value, juristically interpreted as political law, formalistically framed as rational law, biologically argued as natural law, theologically defended as divine law—Sivananda deduces his moral standard from the uniqueness of his own integral spiritual experience and veils it all by a representation of the preceptive portions of the Vedantic cultural tradition—

—Brought into the light of the life and the literature of Sivananda, ethics becomes ethics, and the essence of the ethical being consists in the pursuit of good, good howsoever envisioned and striven after or developed to whatever degree, good which in its inner law and as an end in itself, rests upon, finds its source and its culmination in, the Heart of the Divine, and it is against the very grain of the ethical spirit, quite unnatural and irrational to coerce and distort the soul of the ethical being into the pursuit of utility to which utilitarianism as an ethical theory earnestly persuades us, into the pursuit of pleasure to which Cyrenaic, Epicurean and other types of hedonism as systems of ethical thought, invite us, into the pursuit of an abstractly conceived duty, knowledge, beauty to which the rationalist, the intellectualist, the aesthetician as ethicist would delight in drawing our attention.—

Descartes, Locke and Paley have sustained the argument that the sources of morality are laid in religion; Kant and Martineau hold the view that morality leads to religion; with Sivananda, religion and morality are interdependent at the threshold of all human perfection, and as their commingled phenomenon develops further and further on, moral life becomes perfected, fulfilled and transcended in the most profound and self-maintaining religious experience and it is only at such altitudes that the human individual who is no more human but divine, stands in a realm beyond ethics, a realm that does not, in the least, lend a semblance of a resemblance to the realm of the "blond beast" raised by Nietzsche into the beyond of his "Beyond Good and Evil". No special effort of an analytical power is requisite to perceive that the Schopenhauerean pessimism is preponderantly a temperamental manifestation and not a well-thought out and firmly founded philosophical system, within whose framework is furnished a satisfactory theory of the origin, significance and final issue of evil; and, therefore, Schopenhauer is committed to identify evil with existence, and, in attempting to estimate its extent, forced to come to the conclusion that it is conterminous with all creation, and what is more worse and incredible, impute it to the supreme Will, the infinite Reality. Perhaps, an intelligence less temperamental than that of Schopenhauer's, and ripened by deepest reflection, would discern evil as a mere misreading of the moral situation, a negative value cast into the throes of a growth into good, an expression of the basic weakness of human self-centeredness, a product of fractional view and experience of life. However, as to what exactly is the standpoint of Sivananda in relation to a resolution of the problem of evil, to its sources and points of operation in human nature, the limits of its expression in the world without, its relations to the divine Reality, and how this position helps him transcend the Iranian dualism which regards it as an original and eternal Principle perpetually in conflict with the Good, acknowledge, with Augustine, no absoluteness to it, refuse, in opposition to the avowed practice of the popular occidental ethics, giving it an ultimateness, characterise it, with Moulana Rumi, as a relative phenomenon, not merely take up its case as does pessimism but analyse its causes and demarcate its limits, and so on and so forth, we shall deal with in an independent work.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

SIVANANDA'S ETHICAL IDEALISM AND ITS IMPLICATIONAL RELATIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY AND SPIRITUAL REALIZATION

1. AS AGAINST EUDAEMONISM AS COINCIDENT WITH PERFECTIONISM WHICH ERRS BY A METAPHYSICALLY DEFECTIVE CONCEPTION OF THE SELF, AND THE ECCLESIASTICAL ETHICS WHICH GLORIOUSLY RESTRICTS ITSELF MERELY TO WHAT IT ADJUDICATES AS MORALLY THE MOST EXCELLENT, SIVANANDA CONSTRUCTS IMPLICITLY A DISTINCTIVE ETHICS OF PERSONALITY-DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-REALIZATION

—The Aims of the Ethical Literature of Sivananda Are Assigned the Tasks of Inculcating in the Masses of Mankind a Moral Consciousness Which Can Be Analitically Found to Be Co-extensive With a Dynamic Spiritual Awareness Representing a Phenomenon That Becomes the Data for Building Up a Specific Type of Ethical Idealism Hitherto Unfamiliar to the Historians of World's Ethical Theories and Practices—Attempting to Make a Critical Estimate of Sivananda's "Ethical Teachings", an Able Reviewer Rings a Note, in the Columns of India's Leading Daily Newspaper, "The Hindu", That Moral "Propositions and Laws Should Not Be Genetically Derived alone, But Metaphysically Deduced from the Most Fundamental Intuition of the Oneness of God, and the Supreme Harmony of His Laws which Apply to Different Types of Individuals and Intelligences and Levels of Existence"—

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

SWAMI Sivananda's latest book deals with practical ethics, which all systems of Yoga insist, as the preliminary preparation for spiritual life. Modern moralists on the contrary do not give either guidance or the goal necessary for the realization of the absolute values of a good life. Barring a few exceptions, ethical science has been reduced to the level of a biological science of conduct, which derives its data from the instinctive social and personal moralities. It is true that human ethics may be relativistic; it is likely that it would be made to yield place to divine ethics or transcendental morality. But ethics as the science of Dharma will always play an important role. Ethically, propositions and laws should not be genetically derived alone, but metaphysically deduced from the most fundamental intuition of the oneness of God and the supreme harmony of His laws which apply to different types of individuals and intelligences and levels of existence. Man is a creature on whom devolves the responsibility or duty of acting with reason and awareness according to his own metaphysical and phenomenal nature. It is through

such obedience to the Divine Order and Existence that human evolution could be speeded up. Karma Yoga is essentially built up on the foundation of the existence of God and the universe. The growth of the concept of the sacramental character of the universe in each individual is facilitated by the practice of ethics. Sivananda gives practical guidance in the book in a simple manner.

—*The Hindu*,
Madras.

2. THE HABITUAL PREOCCUPATION OF SIVANANDA WITH THE FUNDAMENTALLY FUNDAMENTAL, SINGLE, SPIRITUAL, ALL-SYNTHESISING PRINCIPLE WITHIN THE CONSTITUTION OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS, PERVASIVE IN ALL NATURE, PROCEEDING FROM AND ORGANICALLY RELATED BACK TO, THE TRANSCENDENT DEITY, HAS HELPED HIS DYNAMIC ETHICAL SYSTEM TRANSCEND THE SCHISM IN MORAL NATURE AND EFFORT THAT ETHICAL RATIONALISM OF THE KANTIAN TYPE FOSTERS, AND PRESENT ITSELF AS THE MOST POWERFUL PHILOSOPHY OF MORAL LIFE TO WHICH GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS IS CENTRAL, AT ONCE THE GOVERNING IDEAL, THE GUIDING POWER AND THE GREAT GOAL

—Insistence Upon a Conformity of the Common Conduct to the High Ethical Ideals, Constitutes a Practice Integral to All Religions, But the Duty of Affording Strong Metaphysical Reasons and the Sanctions of a Profound Mystical Experience for the Practice of These Ideals, Has Always Devolved On Hinduism Whose Crowning Manifestation for the Age We Live in, Sivananda Is—

SELF-REALISATION, THE ULTIMATE MEANING OF ETHICS

ETHICS is right living. Ethics leads to restraint of the lower self and thereby the mind is calmed. Through the calmness of the mind discrimination dawns and one knows the Self in a short time. But all ethics have as their aim the realisation of the Self. This is the highest duty. This is the only real duty. This is the highest ethics. This is the highest Sadachara. This is the highest morality. This is the highest teaching. This is the highest penance.

One cannot attain to perfection by mere goodness and practice of virtue. He has to intensely meditate on the ideal with the help of purity acquired through virtue. Virtue and morality act as auxiliaries to meditation and final mergence of the individual in the Supreme. In Raja Yoga, Yama and Niyama act as ethics for perfection in Samyama. In Jnana Yoga, the Sadhana-chatushtaya acts as ethics for perfection in Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana. The Veda Samhitas act as ethics for perfection in the knowledge of the Upanishads. Grihasthadharma acts as ethics for perfection in Sannyasa, the wise portion of life. Ethics leads to wisdom of the Self, where all duties, diversely practised, find a final satisfactory explanation.

All duties, domestic, social and the like are only relative. The ultimate and chief duty of every human being is the attainment of Truth, God-realisation. The discharge

of all duties is, in reality, to qualify man to do this highest duty.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, p. 13.

THE BASIS OF HINDU ETHICAL CODES

The ethics of Western Philosophers is superficial. It is a mere surface ethics. But the Eastern ethics is subtle, sublime and profound. All religions teach the ethical rules such as : "Do not kill : do not injure others : Love your neighbour; etc." But they haven't given the reason. Only Hindu ethics says. "There is one All-Pervading Atman. It is the inner soul of all beings. It is hidden in all creatures. It is the common, pure consciousness. If you injure your neighbour you actually injure yourself". This is the basic metaphysical truth that underlies all Hindu Ethical Codes

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, p. 3.

COSMIC LOVE

The Gita-ideal of love is based upon the truth : *Ahamatma Gudakesa Sarvabhutasayasthitah* (I am the Self of all beings). This Truth is the very foundation of Gita Ethics; therefore, the Lord untiringly repeats it in various words and in several contexts, quite a number of times throughout the Bhagavad Gita. *Yo Mam Pasyati Sarvatra Sarvam cha Mayi Pasyati* (He who sees Me in all beings in Me); *Sarvabhutasthitam Yo Mam Bhajatyekatwamasthithah* (He who worships Me seated in all beings, rooted in Unity); *Mayi Sarvamidam Protam Sutre Maniganaa Iva* (everything is strung in Me as beads are strung on thread); *Vasudevassarvamiti* (all this is indeed Vasudeva, God; *Maya Tatamidam Sarvam* (all this is connected together by Me); *Vishtabhyaham idam Kritsanam Ekamsena Sathitho Jagat* (by a small part of Myself I pervade all these things) etc.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita, p. 61.

3. THE EVIDENCE, THE ESSENCE, THE EFFECTS OF ETHICS CONSIST PRIMARILY IN THE POSSESSION OF A DEVELOPED WILL, WELL-FORMED CHARACTER, SELF-DISCIPLINE, SELF-MASTERY WHICH STRUCTURED A COMPELLING PERSONALITY IN A CHRIST, A GANDHI, BECAME THE BASES OF THE LOFTIEST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF INDIAN SAINTS LIKE MIRA, CHAITANYA, SIVANANDA, THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE BUILDING OF THE SUBTLEST METAPHYSICAL SYSTEMS IN SANKARA AND RAMANUJA, AND WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN THE GAINING AND WIELDING BY THEM, OF A TRANSCENDENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS OVER WHICH THE DUALITY OF RIGHT AND WRONG HAS NO HOLD, FOR, TRUTH IS ITS ESSENTIAL NATURE, GOODNESS ITS CONSTITUTING SUBSTANCE, AND THE EXPRESSION OF SUPREME EXCELLENCES ITS STYLE OF LIFE

—Since the Geological Times that Formed the Himalayas, in India, Man and God Have Been Living in One Another, the Veins of the Deity are Laid in the Life-lines of the Terrestrial Realm, and Earth Itself Is Exalted into the Transcendental Essence Its throbbing Energies, Forces, Powers Conceal, Therefore, India's Philosophy Is Its Profound Religious Experience, Its Religion Its Psychology, Its Psychology

Its Ethics, Its Ethics Its Poetry, Its Poetry Its Life, and Again, Its Symbol Its Mysticism, Its Mysticism Its Ritual and Its Ritual an Idea, an Act, a Significance, a Realization, the Self-renewing Novelty of Representation, and It Is in This Light that the Ignorance of the Notorious Indologists, the Hasty Judgments of the Second-rate Orientalists, the Quick Opinion of the Foreign Observers Framed on an Inadequate and Impatient Grasp from the Isolated Instances Drawn from the Welter of the Vast Indian Humanity, from Such Strata As Least Representative of the Indian Spirit, and the Reference Given Here Below, By Which the Noble Muslim Reviewer Draws Our Attention to the Unfair Christian Criticism of the Hindu View of Life, Are to be Seen and Made Room for—

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

SWAMI Sivananda has been rendering great services to the cause of the revival of ancient Indian culture. He has published quite a number of books dealing with Hindu mysticism and spiritual Sadhana. His book, *The Ethical Teachings*, is a welcome addition to his highly instructive and inspiring books already published. The book under review has eight chapters. They deal with what is ethics, basis of ethics, morality, conduct of right life, enemies of ethics, special ethics, duties of man and ethical teachings. There is nothing very abstruse or unapproachable in these ethical instructions which Swamiji has given to us. They are couched in simple, lucid and easily intelligible language. They would prove equally benefical to a neophyte and to an advanced scholar in these days when moral values are at a discount and people are losing faith in a high standard of moral life. It is very refreshing and elevating to have a handy book on the essentials of moral values.

Swamiji has tried to dispel some of the current misconceptions about the relation of morality with spirituality. Some Christian Missionaries have unfairly criticized Hindu view of life and they allege that morality does not play an important part in the spiritual scheme of life accepted and believed by the Hindus. Swamiji has laid it in a clear unequivocal language that "morality goes hand in hand with spirituality." He says that an ethical man is more powerful than an intellectual man. He advises us to bear in mind that truth alone triumphs but not falsehood. The fundamental basis of moral senses is stated in these words. The first thing, says Swamiji, you learn from every religion is the unity of all selves. It is the only one Self which is immanent in all creatures. All human relations exist because of this unity of the Self. The basis of the unity of the Self is the universal brother-hood and universal love on which the whole structure of ethical life is based.

This book will prove of immense help to those who have faith in moral senses and wish to lead a good life. It is heartily recommended to the aspirants on the path of religious life.

—M. Hafiz Sayed, M.A., D.Litt., Phd.,
Amrit Bazar Patrika,
Calcutta.

4. THE FIRST AMONG THE MANY IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF THE SCIENCE OF ETHICS CONSISTS IN THE CONVERSION OF HUMANITY'S INTUITIVE APPREHENSION OF THE OUGHT AND THE RIGHT, INTO THE LIGHT OF A RATIONAL INSIGHT—NOT AS AN AWE-INSPIRING JURIST OF MORALITY BUT AS A FRIENDLY AND QUITE INFORMAL SCIENTIST IN ETHICS, SIVANANDA DEALS WITH SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF THE CONCEPT OF DHARMA THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO VITAL TO THE INDIAN MORAL LIFE

—Comprehending in Its Meaning and Its Dynamism, All the Sustaining Rhythms and the Notes of the Cohesive Forces in the Field of the Time-Processes, and Revealing Its Own Covert Relationship with the Timeless Reality, the Typically Indian Ethical Term, "Dharma", Has So Woven Itself Into the Texture of Indian Imagination, That for Indian Life It Not Only Connotes a Body of Ritualistic Performances But Compels an Exhaustive Expression of Inner Spiritual Nature, an Expression Which Unites the Moral Awareness and Act With the Mystical Experience and Phenomenon, and thus Exposes Itself By This Very Extraordinary Virtue to the Specially Sharpened Shafts of Alien Condemnation That India Is Deficient in Ethical Consciousness, Perhaps Barbarously Bereft of All Morals in a Very Puritanic and Prudish Twentieth-Century World—However, Writing the History of the World's Religions, Posterity Will Have the Prerogative to Record That the Docile, Ambling, Never-dying, Ever-growing Hinduism Was the Target of Bitter Attacks from Alien Religionists, Not Because Its Features Were As Primitive, Ugly, Repulsive As They Painted Them to Be, But Because Its Incomparable Magnificence in Philosophical Conception, in a Self-renewing Mystical Vitality, in Colourful Self-expression, in Never-aging Youthhood and Ever Young Energies Inspired Fierce Jealousy Even Among the Self-Confident and the Broad-Minded—

DHARMA

ETYMOLOGICALLY, Dharma means 'that which upholds this world or the people of this world, or the whole creation from microcosm to the macrocosm. It is the Eternal Divine law of the Supreme Lord. The whole creation is held together by the all-powerful Law of God. Practice of Dharma, therefore, means to recognise these laws and abide by them.

That which leads to the goal is Dharma. which leads you to the path of perfection and pristine glory is Dharma. That which makes your life divine is Dharma. That which makes you to ascend unto God-head is Dharma. That which helps you to have direct communion with the Lord is Dharma. God is the centre of Dharma. Dharma is the heart of Hindu Ethics. The principle of unity, righteousness and holiness is Dharma. It is your sole companion after death. It protects you after death, if you protect it now. If you transgress it now, your transgression will pursue even after your departure and destroy you. Therefore it is the sole refuge of humanity.

Dharma means the Achara or the regulation of life. Achara is the supreme Dharma. It is the basis of Tapas and austerity. It leads to wealth, beauty, longevity and continuity of lineage.

Dharma is given the foremost rank in the scriptures among the four Purusharthas, the grand objects of human aspirations. Though Dharma, the other three, Artha, Kama and Moksha came automatically to

you Because, through the practice of Dharma alone one can achieve his goal of life and crown himself with eternal bliss and supreme peace.

The four Vedas, the Smriti texts, the behaviour of those who have entered into their Spirit and act according to their injunctions, the conduct of holy men and satisfaction of one's own self—these are all the bases of Dharma. The only authority in the matter of Dharma is the Vedas.

That which is Dharma is verily the truth. Truthfulness, contentment, self-restraint, non-stealing, purity, control of anger, discrimination between the right and wrong, between the real and the unreal, spiritual knowledge, control of the senses come under the general Dharma or universal Dharma according to Manu.

As enumerated in Mahabharata the performance of Sraddha or offering oblations to the forefathers, religious austerity, truth, restraint of anger, loyalty to and contentment with one's own wife, purity, learning, absence of envy, knowledge of the Self and forbearance are the fundamentals of Dharma.

As detailed in Padma Purana, the six characteristics of Dharma are the bestowing of gifts to deserving persons, fixing one's thoughts on the Lord, adoration of one's parents, offering a portion of the daily meal to all creatures and giving a morsel of food to cows.

All other religions also lay stress on Dharma. Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism and Islam are all remarkably alive to its value. Plato, Socrates, Aristotle are all striking examples in the history of the West in keeping up Dharma.

Dharma includes all external deeds as well as thoughts and other mental practices which tend to elevate the character of a man. Dharma comes from the Divine and leads you also to the Divine.

Follow the Dharma with zeal and enthusiasm ! Discharge your duties well and attain the supreme and enjoy the eternal bliss !

* * *

An aspirant went to Veda Vyasa and said, "O Maha Rishi, Avatar of Vishnu, I am in a dilemma. I cannot properly comprehend the right significance of the term 'Dharma'. Some say that it is right conduct. Others say, that which leads to Nisreyasa (Moksha) and Abhyudaya (happiness) is Dharma. While some others remark 'Anything, any action that takes you to the goal is Dharma. Anything, any action that brings you down is Adharma.' Lord Krishna says, "Even sages are puzzled to understand perfectly what is Dharma ? What is Adharma ? *Gahana Karmano Gatihi.*" Mysterious is the path of action. I am bewildered. O Maha Rishi. Kindly give me a very, very easy definition of Dharma to enable me to follow Dharma in all my actions.

Maharshi Vyasa said, "Oh aspirant, hear me. I shall suggest an easy method. Remember the following sayings with great care when you do any action. 'Do as you would be done by. Do unto others, as you wish others do unto you.' You will be saved from all troubles. If you follow these wise maxims you can never give any pain unto others. Practise this in your daily life. Even if you fail one hundred times, it does not matter. Your old Samskaras, *asubha vasanas* are your real enemies. They

will come in the way as stumbling blocks. But persevere. You will succeed in the attainment of Goal."

—Swami Sivananda's *Ethical Teachings*, pp. 5-8.

5. SIVANANDA DEFINES CHEERFULNESS, RATES ITS GENUINE PHENOMENON AMONG MORAL ATTRIBUTES, ENUMERATES SOME OF ITS SERVICES IN SHAPING A MAGNETIC PERSONALITY, AND MAKES A FEW DISSERTATIVE HINTS ON ITS THERAPEUTIC, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE, VALUE AND EFFECTS

—The Argument of Sivananda Maintains That the True Dignity of Man Consists in His Capacity to Hold Permanently in Control the Moods of the Moment and Make Cheerfulness the Most Radiantly Manifest and Ever-Present Feature of Personal Nature—

CHEERFULNESS is the state or quality of being joyful, lively and of good spirits.

Cheerfulness lightens sickness and the burden of life, poverty and affliction, and gives wonderful strength and great power of endurance. A cheerful man will do more work, in the same time, will do it better, and wiil persevere in it longer than a cheerless man.

Be cheerful always. Cheerfulness is the best tonic. It gives radiant health and peace. It is a beautifier.

Cheerfulness is the offshoot of goodness. A kind and sympathetic man will be ever cheerful. Cheerfulness is health. It makes the mind serene. It bestows longevity. It strengthens the heart.

The light of a cheerful face diffuses itself. You are refreshed by the presence of a cheerful man. A cheerful man is like a sunny day. He radiates brightness on all around.

Be cheerful, sweet, happy and smiling. You will become very healthy and you will radiate health in every direction. Cheerfulness is an index of a happy mind and a pure, good heart. It is a passport and recommendation in society.

The contagion of cheer has a wonderful effect. It transforms depression into brightness, sickness into health, darkness into light. A cheery word spontaneously gives cheer to others,

Cheerfulness is joyful frame of mind. A cheerful man is full of good spirits. He is lively. He radiates joy everywhere.

Cheerfulness is a potent mental tonic. A cheerful mind strengthens the head and makes one steadfast in good conduct.

Cultivate cheerfulness. Wear a cheerful smile with a cheerful face. A cheerful man is a public benefactor. He makes others happy and cheerful. There is no friend like cheer.

Cheerfulness is health ; cheerlessness is disease. The cheerful live a long life. They are healthy, radiant and vibrant. A cheerful man creates friends quickly. He is attracted by all.

What sunshine is to flowers, cheerful, happy smiles are to humanity. Cheerfulness is a solace in solitude and distress. It lightens sickness, poverty and affliction.

Wonderful is the strength of cheerfulness. Cheerfulness is a power. A cheerful man has great power of endurance. He will do more in the same time, will do it better, will persevere in it longer, than a cheerless man.

A man whose heart is full of kindness, benevolence and sympathy will always be cheerful. Cheerfulness is a habit of the mind. Cheerfulness is fixed and permanent.

There are some persons who are born cheerful. This is due to their previous good, spiritual Samskaras or impressions. Cheerfulness is a friend to grace. It puts the heart in tune to praise God. A cheerful man can meditate for a long time.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices, pp. 35-38.

6. FEW NOTED EXPONENTS OF ETHICS SEEM TO BE DYNAMICALLY CONSCIOUS OF CONSCIENCE AS BOTH A COUNSELLOR AND CONSTITUTIVE OF CONDUCT

—Conscience : Less As a Casuist and More As a Saint, Sivananda Exercises a Reflective Intelligence and Throws Light on Its Manifestations, Traces Its Evolution, Classifies Its Types and Pleads for a Sustainment of Its Sharpness—

CONSCIENCE is a sensitive balance to weigh actions ; it is guiding voice from within. When you do a wrong action, the conscience pricks you. You experience pinpricks. It says to you in a clear, small, shrill voice : "Do not do this wrong action my friend. It will bring misery to you." A conscientious man at once ceases to act wrongly any further and becomes wise.

According to the state of his knowledge man's conscience is built up and changes from time to time with the correction of his views, in the light of further knowledge gained subsequently. The conscience of a child or a savage is entirely different from the conscience of a fully grown civilized man and even amongst civilized men knowledge varies so much that their consciences direct different lines of conduct. The conscience of a Sattvic man considerably differs from that of a Rajasic man. The conscience of a Sattvic man is very clean and very pure.

If an honest man begins to take bribes for the first time, he shudders ; for, his conscience quivers and trembles ; he feels a lot of uneasiness. But if he repeats it again several times, his conscience becomes blunt. He ceases to feel any uneasiness. If a chaste man visits for the first time, a house of ill-fame, his conscience pricks and makes him shudder. But, if he visits that house frequently, his conscience loses its sensitiveness and becomes blunt. He will not feel anything. Therefore, understanding the fact that the inner mechanism of conscience is very subtle, always try to keep it sensitive, by doing virtuous deeds only.

—Swami Sivananda's
Daily Readings, pp. 108-110

7. THE ENERGETIC AND EXALTED IDEALISM OF THE PRACTICAL MORAL SYSTEM OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA AS RECONSTRUCTED AND REORIENTATED BY SIVANANDA AND AS RE-ENLIVENED AND REPRESENTED IN THE EVENTS OF THE LIFE LIVED AT SIVANANDASHARM

—Duty for Duty's Sake, Duty As Worship, Duty Done in a Spirit of Dedication, With a Detachment from the Circumstances It May Involve One In, and With No Eager Expectation of Fruits, Duty Performed By a Total Self-surrender to the Divine—This Is the Central Refrain of the Immortal Strains of the Bhagavad Gita, and Herein We Discern the Sequence in the Evolution of the Ethical Character Into the Spiritual Nature, the Organic Unity That Exists Between the Moral and the Mystical, the Life of Harmony on Earth and the Life in the Divine, the Conduct of the Finite Rising Into a State Coincident With the Infinite—

ETHICS OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA :

IN this book Swami Sivananda has brought out the various teachings of the Bhagavad Gita and has offered his own illuminating comments thereon. It was on the field of one of the most devastating battles that the advice to act to learn and to be devout was tendered to Arjuna by Lord Krishna. The Sivanahda Nagar may claim to be enacting the Gita every minute. The free kitchen, the hospital, the school and the post office represent Yoga in action. The Jnan, necessary for realising the Lord, is supplied by the Forest University, where people from all over the world are welcome to learn all that is noblest in ancient Indian culture. The worship at the temples, the Kathas and Kirtans and the entire atmosphere of selfless service pervading the Sivanandanagar soon succeed in making a visitor devout. That is the teaching of the Gita. There is no conflict between one kind of Yoga and another. It is in essence the Karma Yoga that leads on to the Jnan Yoga and it is only after that the Bhakti Yoga can come in where Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to abandon all Karma. It is only after what has been stated in the preceding Sloka,—"Fix your mind on Me, become a devotee, sacrifice all and prostrate yourself before Me." Then alone does the abandoning of Karma come followed by a total surrender to the Lord. The Gita has been acclaimed as the gospel of the anarchist as much as the scripture of the devout and there is no doubt its teachings are open to diverse interpretations. Swamiji has thus rendered a distinct service by his illuminating discourses on its teachings.

—*The Searchlight,* Patna.

PURIFICATION OF SELF

An ethically disciplined, morally purified and spiritually illumined soul is the goal of Gita-ethics. To attain this, the Lord exhorts the Man to spiritualise his entire personality. Of the three qualities that combine to make the personality of Man, Satwa is nearest Perfection, Rajas is necessary evil and Tamas is inetia, lowest form of bestiality and waste of life itself. The aim of the Gita-ethics is to eradicate Tamas in Man, and by wise control of the Rajasic element to make it Satwa's handmaid and to add to the quantum of Satwa in all possible ways.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethics of the Bhagvad Gita, p.47.

8. ETHICS AS A FIELD OF SCIENTIFIC, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES, IS THE SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LABOURS OF GENERATIONS OF FIRST-RATE EUROPEAN AND BRITISH THINKERS—ETHICS AS AN ATTITUDE, AN OUTLOOK, A STYLE OF LIFE DERIVED FROM, AND RESTING UPON, MYSTICAL PERCEPTIONS INTO THE ETERNAL AND UNALTERABLE LAWS THAT GUIDE THE DESTINIES OF MAN AND THE UNIVERSE, IS THE PROUD ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE INDIAN MIND OF PREDOMINANT METAPHYSICAL REALIZATIONS

—The Intrinsic Worth of Character, the True Nature of Moral Excellence Upon which Sivananda Lays So Much of an Emphasis, Have, By Eluding the Intellectual Perception and Theory-Spinning Acumen of the Utilitarians Like Mill and Bentham, Exposed Their Doctrines That Rendered So Inestimable a Service to the Interest of Social Justice, to the Infection of a Fundamental Flaw Resulting in the Release of Forces That Did Contribute to the Impoverishment of the Higher Culture Which Alone Cements and Secures the Enduring Foundations of Material Happiness and Progress—Sivananda Treats of Sadachara, the Governance of Daily Life By Authoritative Codes of Conduct As Propaedeutic and an Indispensable Preliminary Discipline for Spiritual Experience—

IN India of today, the great emphasis has to be put on Sadachara. That aspect of ethical science which treats of the modes of conduct, moral and performance of duty, is Sadachara. Department, carriage, demeanour, conduct and behaviour are synonymous terms. The way in which rational beings should behave towards other creaturs is dealt with in the science of morals or ethics.

That act or exertion which does not do good to others, or that act for which one has to feel shame, should never be done. That act on the other hand, should be done, for which one may be lauded in society. This is a brief description of what right conduct is. To speak the truth, to practise Ahimsa, not to hurt the feelings of others in thought, word and deed ; not to speak harsh words to anyone ; not to show or speak ill of others and to see God in all beings is Sadachara.

It is by conduct that one acquires a long life, and it is by conduct that one acquires riches and property. It is a means to attain the goal of life. Without good conduct no one can achieve the goal. Good conduct brings in fame, longevity, wealth and happiness. It eventually leads to Moksha. It is couduct that begets virtue, and it is virtue that prolongs life. Conduct gives fame, long life and heaven. Conduct is the most efficacious rite of propitiating the celestials. One should show mercy to all orders of men. Virtue is singled out by conduct.

The good and virtuous are so on account of the conduct they follow. The marks again of good conduct are afforded by the deeds of those that are good or righteous. Indeed, it is by conduct that one acquires fame that depends upon great deeds both in this world and next. Forsooth, one may, by his conduct alone, conquer the three worlds. There is nothing which virtuous persons cannot obtain. A person of good deeds and good pleasant and sweet speeches has no peer. People respect that man who acts righteously and who does good acts, even if they only hear of him without actually seeing him.

The man whose conduct is improper or wicked never acquires a long life. All creatures fear such a man and are oppressed by him. If, therefore, one wishes his own advancement and prosperity, one should in this world follow the path of righteousness and conduct himself righteously. Good conduct succeeds in removing the inauspiciousness and misery of even one who is sinful. The man of conduct has ideals, principles and mottoes. He strictly follows them, removes his weakness and defects, develops good conduct and becomes a Sattwic man. He is very careful in behaving with his elders, parents, teachers, Acharyas, sisters, brothers, friends, relatives, strangers and other creatures. He attempts to know what is right and wrong, by approaching Sadhus and Mahatmas and studying scriptures very carefully and then treads with joy the path of righteousness or Dharma.

The man of right conduct always cares for the welfare of all beings. He lives in harmony with his neighbours, and all people. He never hurts the feelings of others, and never speaks lies. He practises Brahmacharya. He checks the evil tendencies of the mind and prepares himself through the practice of right conduct to attain the bliss of union with Paramatma or Self.

"Do as you would be done by. Do unto others as you wish others do unto you." This is the whole of Dharma. Attend to this carefully. You will be saved from all troubles; practise this in your daily life.

Righteousness, Truth, good works, power and prosperity—all originate from conduct. Dharma is extremely subtle, intricate and complex. Even sages are perplexed. Dharma gives wealth, satisfaction and liberation in the end. Dharma tops the list of the four Purusharthas, viz,, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma is generally termed as duty, righteousness, etc. Any action that is best calculated to bring Sreyas (Moksha) is Dharma. All that is free from any motive of injury to any beings is surely morality. For, indeed the moral precepts have been made to free the creatures from all injuries. Dharma is so called because it protects all. Indeed, morality saves all creatures. Sadachara prepares you for the Vedantic realisation of "Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma—All indeed is Brahman. There is no such thing as diversity."

—Swami Sivananda's
Moral and Spiritual Regeneration of the World,
pp. 7-9.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ANALYSIS OF THE INNER MOTIVES IN MORAL LIFE, FOR GODWARD MOVEMENT

1. The inner motive of a man forms the seed and the root of all his life's activities.

2 If an action is done with a pure motive it will purify the heart and lead to the attainment of the final Emancipation.

3. Before you perform an action, scrutinize your motives. If there be selfishness, give up that action.

4. It is the motive that counts in the performance of an action.

5. An action done with a selfish motive binds man and does not lead him Godward.

—Swami Sivananda's
Universal Moral Lessons, p. 74.

9. IN ETHICAL OPINION, THE WEAKNESS OF THE SOPHISTS, THE TRIUMPH OF SOCRATES, AND THE LAURELS OF SIVANANDA

—Voltaire would never have us proceed with our arguments unless we defined our terms; centuries before the birth of this French philosopher, writer and satirist, the dialecticians like Socrates and Plato had encountered in vain, for a definition of virtue itself, or of any of the virtues, the Sophist disputants and litigants like Prodicus and Protagoras, and branded them ignorant of virtue. It is a rule with Sivananda, to preface a definition to every virtue he describes, and hereunder he takes a departure from his customary mode and cuts new ground by providing us with novel and didactic definitions of the virtues he commends.—

1. **Temperance**:—Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. **Silence**:—Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. **Order**:—Let all your things have their places, let each part of your business have its time.

4. **Resolution**:—Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. **Frugality**:—Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i. e. waste nothing.

6. **Industry**:—Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. **Sincerity**:—Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. **Justice**:—Wrong done by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. **Moderation**:—Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. **Cleanliness**:—Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, clothes or habitation.

11. **Tranquillity**:—Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. **Chastity**:—Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. **Humility**—Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 269-270.

10. THE PERCEPTION AND THE ACTIVE PROPAGATORY PRONOUNCEMENTS CONCERNING THE CONTIGUITY AND CONTINUITY OF THE FIELDS OF ETHICS AND RELIGION CONSTITUTES A SPECIAL GIFT OF SIVANANDA TO THE WORLD OF MORAL THOUGHT

—A most erudite scholar-reviewer holds Sivananda Literature "responsible for enormous enrichment of Indian moral, religious and philosophical thought-patterns and metaphysical configurations" and determines the immense value of Sivananda's ethical 'magnum opus'—

HOW TO CULTIVATE VIRTUES AND ERADICATE VICES

THIS is a solid and substantial work which runs to five-hundred-and seventy-six

pages, and is a contribution to the Higher Thought of the world in general and of India in particular. To ethical and moral literature, it makes a material contribution. Since the dawn of reflection, since the flickering of the faint twilight of man's creation, virtues and vices have been catalogued and classified by teachers of religion and morality, ethics and metaphysics.

In the course of an important 'Introduction', the relation between ethics and morality is explained and discussed. Then, follows a list of virtues alphabetically arranged ranging between abstinence and zeal.

Part Two contains a list of vices ranging alphabetically between *Affectation* and *Worry* which have to be eradicated and eliminated by exercising will-power and self-control, self discipline and self-purification.

Part Three is specialy significant being devoted to maintenance of Brahmacharya, absolute celibacy, without which success in Yoga cannot be secured.

Part Four contains highly useful 'Practical Instructions' to those engaged in twin-pursuits of eradicating evils (negative) and cultivating virtues (positive).

Without exaggeration, this volume may be described to be an ethical and moral encyclopaedia. Sivananda literature is responsible for enormous enrichment of Indian moral, religious and philosophical thought-patterns and metaphysical configurations.

—Dr. R. Naga Raja Sharma,
M.A., Ph.D.,
The Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

11. SIVANANDA'S SCHEME OF SELF-EXAMINATION IN MORAL LIFE

—Acquainted with the Pythagorean stress upon self-examination as a measure in moral discipline, scholars in Greek ethics, would easily appreciate Sivananda's insistence on, and prescription for, the art of looking within and scrutinizing oneself. With Sivananda self-examination is not merely a measure in moral discipline, but also a key to the deepest psychological self-knowledge and a means to spiritual evolution—

Self-examination is a scrutiny or enquiry into one's own state, conduct, motives, mental and moral condition and thoughts, etc., especially with regard to one's religious feelings and duties.

Self-examination consists of self-introspection and self-analysis.

Self-examination will lead you to the Knowledge of your own nature. It will improve your heart and correct all your mistakes, defects, weaknesses and faults. It will bestow wisdom on you.

When you are alone, watch your thoughts. Examine your heart. Find out your defects and foibles.

Before retiring to bed, take stock of your thoughts, speeches and acts of the day. Find out "What evil quality have I mastered today?" "What temptations have I resisted?" "Which virtue have I developed today?" "Which Indriya have I controlled?" You will evolve quickly.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, p. 208.

12. INDIA HAS NO PHILOSOPHY OF ETHICS AS SUCH, NO SCIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGY AS SUCH, BECAUSE THEY ARE BLENDED INTO, OR RATHER IMPLIED IN, THE RICHNESS AND THE WEALTH OF ITS VISION, THOUGHT AND LIFE

—Therefore, when Sivananda Attempts to explain to, and inculcate in, the generality of mankind, the disposition of sweetness he finds himself involved in topics distinctly psychological, Yogic and of the spiritual experience. In his own inimitable way, Sivananda traces the origins, expatiates on the importance, of sweetness and indicates its relation to divine realization and its value to the public worker.—

NEED FOR BEING SWEET

REALLY sweet people are rarely found in this universe. Though sweetness is a feminine virtue, yet it is not found in the females too. Most of the females are harsh and gall-hearted though their speech appears to be sweet for the time being. A businessman, a lawyer, a doctor and a sister of ill-fame are all apparently sweet till they get money from their clients. This is not natural, lasting, beneficent, elevating sweetness. It is false glittering. It is commercial or mercenary.

A really sweet man is divine. He does not expect anything from others. His very nature is sweet. He brings joy to others by his innate sweetness.

Sweetness is born of Sattwa. It is the sweet potent divine golden residium after Rajas and Tamas have been squeezed out through protracted Yoga-sadhana. It is the concentrated quintessence of Sattwa. It is the sweet aroma that is wafted from the blossoming of the rare sweet flower of perfected soul—Siddha Purusha, adept or Arhat through long and intense Tapas, discipline, Yoga-practice and communion through mind-melting in Silence.

Sweetness must be an essential attribute of a spiritual propagandist and public worker. Without possessing this virtue, no propagandist can turn out efficient and solid work. He who wants to establish a Mutt or Ashram or spiritual institution must possess this ennobling virtue. All public workers and Ashramites must equip themselves with this divine quality.

The Rajasic Ego should melt in the crucible of Yoga. Then this golden sweetness will shine in its glory. Rajas must be churned out. Then the butter of sweetness will float on the surface of the Sattwic mind.

Be sweet in speech. Be sweet in behaviour. Be sweet in manners. Be sweet in singing Kirtan. Be sweet in lecturing. Be sweet in look. Be sweet in serving others. Be soft, gentle, courteous and polite too. This will increase your sweetness.

Develop this sweetness through service, self-restraint, Mowna, prayer, Pranayam, meditation, introspection, self-analysis, control of anger.

Sweetness is Radha Tattwa : sweetness is the stuff out of which the heart of Radha is fashioned. Truthfulness, Prem, sincerity cosmic love, Ahimsa are all modifications of sweetness. Sweetness is a rare divine blend of all these Sattwic attributes. It is millennium potency.

An argumentative, intolerant, impatient, proud, irritable, fault-finding man cannot cultivate sweetness.

May you all be endowed with this noble quality of sweetness which will enable yon to root yourself in Brahman, the embodiment of Rasa, divine bliss.

Glory to Brahman, the Sweetness of sweetness.

—*How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices*, pp. 229-230

13. ADAM SMITH AND SIVANANDA : IN RELATION TO THE CONCEPT AND THE ADVOCACY OF THE VIRTUE OF SYMPATHY—CALLOUSNESS FINDS A CONGENIAL SOIL IN THE HEART THAT LACKS OR LOSES THE CAPACITY FOR SYMPATHETIC SENSITIVENESS, AND IF THE SAINT, FOR PUPOSES OF A DEFENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMANENESS OF HUMANITY, IS HARD ON ANYTHING, HE IS HARD ONLY ON THE GRANITE HEART

—Scholars have always laboured under a tendency that permits the pre-eminence of the economist in Adam Smith, obscure the importance of the ardent ethical theorist in him. Author of "The Wealth of Nations", he is also the author of "The Theory of Moral Sentiments", a work which preceded the former furnished his name with a firm foundation for reputation, and contributed not unsubstantially to the studies in the science of ethics. In that book, Adam Smith seeks to make sympathy the fundamental fact of moral consciousness. With Sivananda, sympathy is a universal solvent and the sweetness of his statements on this altruistic quality are most eloquent in the two paragraphs cited below. To minds that are inclined to perceive or discover, or to comment upon, the possibilities or actualities of the relations in ethics, between theory and practice, it will be significant to note that Sivananda is seen, in his own life, to set no limits to his sympathies and that their power is proved by the fact that they are accompanied by acts of loving kindness which are unnumbered and as extensive as the wide world of all mankind—

A few more smiles of silent sympathy, a look of sympathy, few more tender and gentle words, a few more kind acts will pave a long way to contribute to the happiness of the suffering humanity. True sympathy is putting yourself in another's place. To ease another's headache is to forget your own. To mitigate another's grief is to alleviate or dispel your own.

Sympathy is the key that fits the lock of any heart. Sympathy is a feeling of compassion for another's suffering. It is fellow-feeling. It is the quality of being affected by the condition of another, with feelings corresponding in kind, if not in degree.

Shame on those hearts of granite that cannot melt at the sufferings of others. Open your hearts to sympathy. Sympathy prepares the mind for receiving the impressions of virtue. There can be no politeness or courtesy without sympathy. Sympathy is the universal solvent.

—Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, p. 228.

14. IN A RETROSPECTIVE MOOD, THE MIND OF POSTERITY WILL FIND ITSELF OBLIGED TO ESTIMATE THE INDEBTEDNESS OF THE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY HUMANITY, TO THE CORPUS OF SIVANANDA'S ETHICAL TEACHING FOR THE INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IT PLAYED IN THE AROUSAL, AMONG THE VAST GROUPS OF RECEPTIVE INDIVIDUALS, OF AN INCREASING SENSITIVENESS TO ETHICAL VALUES

—Like anyone of the saintly scribes of the New Testament, Sivananda experiences neither an inner constraint to take up the idea of, nor evidences the specific type of needed temperamental equipment for, constructing an imposing system of ethics, but has his interest hinge itself largely upon laying down in an aphoristic language appropriate to the dignity and the impassioned prophetic power of an inspired saint, the practical principles of moral life. But, then, an able interpreter, or gifted expounder, of the New Testament thought or of Sivananda's teaching, will find in it ample material of such moral content as is amenable to a scientific treatment and would invite the building of a perfect ethical system thereon.—

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

"ETHICAL Teachings" of Swawi Sivananda is an authoritative code of morals written in simple and understandable language for the average reader. The need for leading an ethical life in these days of rank materialism, cannot be over-emphasised: The book under review covers all aspects of our life and contains many practical suggestions for the common man. The freedom we have won will be useless without a well-regulated ordered ethical life by the largest number of our people. There is great urgency to recapture the old spiritual Gospel of our Ancients which made for concord and peace in this world. This book aims at bringing about that result.

—*The Bharata Dharma,*
Madras-14.

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

THIS work, *Ethical Teachings*, more than ever testifies to the correct idea of what Ethics is in reality. It eminently fulfils the urgent need to know 'man' with all his thoughts, desires and aspirations based on the eternal duality, good and evil. Without losing himself in intellectual lucubrations, Swami Sivananda treats the subject as specially manifest in the daily conduct of every one. The common man, the doctor, the trader, lawyer and the sage alike may find safe counsel and advice from the pen of Sivananda. Especially the present day students can gain extremely valuable instructions from the book and can clear away the ever so many doubts and difficulties that beset them from all sides.

—*The Students' Companion,*
Madras.

HOW TO CULTIVATE VIRTUES AND ERADICATE VICES :

THE book is divided into four parts. In the first the Swamiji lists in alphabetical order more than hundred virtues, describes their nature, and indicates their importance, and assesses their place in the develop-

ment of personality and suggests ways and means of cultivating them.

In the second part of the work, he draws up, on similar lines, a list of vices, explains their power and dangerous potentialities and points out the methods to overcome them.

Sivananda devotes part three to a discussion of Brahmacharya. In the fourth part he gives some practical instructions to Sadhaks. Followers of Swami Sivananda will find this book a treasure-house of advice and instruction.

—*The Sunday Times*, Madras.

15. ON GRATITUDE AND INGRATITUDE, SIVANANDA'S MORAL TREATISES SHOW SUCH SCINTILLATING PASSAGES AS ARE ANALOGOUS IN CONTENT TO THOSE OF THE SHAKESPEAREAN—THE DIFFERENTIA CONSISTS IN THE ACCENTS OF THE FORMER ON GOD IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND OF THE LATTER ON THE DYNAMIC MORAL VALUES THAT PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF THE INTRINSIC NOBILITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE SOCIAL GROUP

—A paragon of that perfect magnanimity which can find its typical and spontaneous expression only from the towering saintliness he himself represents, Sivananda seems to suggest by the written word, that moralists must discern more in a magnanimous nature even as the psychologists of human behaviour should widen their insights into those extra-ethical processes that engender the temper marked by modesty, by a noble restraint, a gracious reticence, a socially pleasing self-restraint. In action, expression and result the latter virtue is markedly individualistic, and the former is more distinctly social and cannot be manifest except as such, and what is more, on a deeper analysis, is seen to be supra-social in resources, nature and aims.—

Magnanimity is greatness of soul. It is elevation of dignity, of mind. It is that quality of mind which raises a person above all that is mean or unjust. It is generosity. It is nobility.

Magnanimity is generosity in sentiment or conduct towards others. It is exaltation above envious, cowardly vindictive or selfish motives. It is loftiness of character or action. It is large-heartedness.

Magnanimity is that elevation or dignity of soul which encounters danger and trouble with tranquillity and firmness, which raises the possessor above revenge and makes him delight in acts of benevolence, which makes him disdain injustice, and meanness and prompts him to sacrifice personal ease, interest and safety for the accomplishment of useful and noble objects.

A man of magnanimity is elevated in sentiment. He is brave and unselfi h. He scorns temptations, which is mean and base and despises earthly pomp and splendour.

Of all virtues, magnanimity is the rarest.

Mighty of heart, mighty of mind—magnanimous is indeed to be great in life.

Generosity, high-mindedness, chivalrousness, large-heartedness, nobleness of soul are synonymous with magnanimity.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices, p. 132.

Gratitude is warm and friendly feeling towards a benefactory; thankfulness.

Gratitude is a sense of appreciation of favours received, accompanied with goodwill towards the benefactor. It is an emotion or sentiment of thankfulness, kindness or goodwill to a benefactor and a a disposition to make a suitable return of benefits or services or, when no returns can be made, a desire to see the benefactor prosperous and happy.

Gratitude is a duty which ought to be paid. It is much more than a verbal expression of thanks. It is an indication of a noble nature. It is a virtue most deified. It is not only the memory of the benefit received from a good and kind man, but the homage of the heart rendered to him for his good deeds.

Gratitude is the noblest of virtues, the most capital of all duties.

Just as a river pours its waters into the ocean from which it drew its supply, so also a man of gratitude returns a benefit received from others. He looks upon his benefactor with reverence and love. If he is not able to return the benefit, he keeps it in his memory with kindness. He does not forget it during his whole life-time.

Be grateful to God, your Creator, for all the bounties He has given you. Pray to Him fervently from the bottom of your heart. Sing His glory.

Remember Him at all times. Surrender your entire being to Him, obtain His Grace and be happy for ever.

An ungrateful man is a miserable wretch in this world. His lot is pitiable, lamentable and deplorable indeed !! This world abounds with ungrateful wretches.

Be grateful. All will admire and revere you. You will reap a rich harvest of peace and immortal bliss.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices, p. 104.

16. AT TIMES, TO SOME MEASURE, SIVANANDA DERIVES HIS "MORAL TOPOGRAPHY" FROM THE ETHICAL WISDOM OF VIDURA OF MAHABHARATA, AND BREATHES INTO IT THE VISION OF THE LOFTY SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE EMBODIED IN HIS OWN LIFE AND EMBEDDED IN THE TEXT OF THE UPANISHADS

– Sivananda: His ardent moral preaching is seen commingled with luminous metaphysical revelation, and the keynote of his ethics is at once man and God and the methods of relation to each other; if moral practice purifies the drossness in human nature, the spiritual activity imports into it, in abundance, the Divine Character.—

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

SWAMI Sivananda takes his pen only to make even the path to Self-realisation as clear and attractive as a Holiday Guide-Book !! Even such a dry subject as ethics has been rendered into a simple course of self-education by the sheer magic of the Swamiji's exploring pen.

—*The Telegraph*,
London.

THIS book contains the moral teachings of Swami Sivananda the well-known sage of Rishikesh. The teacher attaches so much importance to moral excellence that he thinks it is absolutely necessary for a seeker after God through Yogic practices. Moral perfection leads to spiritual perfection. Religiously minded readers should read the book.

—*The Amrita Bazar Patrika*,
Calcutta.

There are seven chapters and each gives a veritable gold-mine of information. The book seeks to elevate one's soul mentally, morally and spiritually. The Swamiji's forceful writings which are directly addressed to every man and woman cannot fail to evoke considerable interest and enthusiasm resulting in increasing popularity for his books and writings. The various subjects contained in the book are dealt with in a most practical manner which should enable everyone to lead a moral and virtuous life and attain freedom and perfection

—*The Coimbatore Times*,
Coimbatore.

SIVANANDA SMRITI :

In the twelve chapters of *Sivananda Smriti* have been described the philosophical foundations of the Reality, morality, the four Ashrams, the four stages of life. The special ethics of life along with human weaknesses have been depicted in four subsequent chapters. The hints for overcoming these as also the way to develop virtuous living have been given in clear language and in a practical form. This Smriti differs from the old ones since it is no particular teaching or cult that is sought to be expounded. The book may well be a guide to any aspirant, whatever be his faith or religion.

—*Search Light*,
Patna.

17. GOD-INTOXICATED SIVANANDA MAKES A REPRESENTATION OF HIS OWN POPULAR METAPHYSICAL THOUGHT IN THE RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL

[An ordinance of the grand Christian apostolic wisdom reads, "Depart from evil and create Good"; the dynamic aspiration of the Indian heart articulates, "Lead us from darkness to light, from falsehood to truth"; the burden of Sivananda's song of universal instruction has always been, "Be good and do good" and of its own accord darkness will depart from you and evil will recede into a natural death or be cast into the terms of Good, as much for want of nourishment as for the increasing growth of Good. The entire life-pageant of septuagenarian Sivananda has been, in its transcendental aspects, one long and significant sermon upon the art of poising the individual consciousness in an uninterrupted experience of the illimitable Good that the Divine is, and in its temporal and empirical aspects, it has been one continued annotation upon the classic exclamation of a great Chinese Sage: "I meet good with good that good may be maintained, I meet evil with good that good may be

created". Any reading between the lines of Sivananda's ethical treatises suggests that he dissertates that evil can not only be subordinated to, but sublimated into, good, and then proceeds to present his standpoint that the absolute Good has an organic relation with the relative good, that evil has no self-existence, no surviving ground, no serviceful purpose apart from those that it has upon the soil of Ignorance, in the abeyance of Knowledge, in the absence of Good, in the limitations of man's outlook and experience in Consciousness, limitations that have no inevitable necessity in them and can therefore be easily transcended by the stress of man's own aspiration, volition and inner evolutionary progress. The fact, the sway, the tyranny of evil in the world are too overwhelming to be left unrecognised or to permit a denial: but, then, a calm survey of the incidents of life and a little thought bestowed upon the events of all types of experience, would let one into an irresistible experience of the persistent forces of Good, and rising to greet a higher vision, the fact of a higher experience, one finds that there is nothing in the essential nature of the much-maligned man, Satchidananda, that partakes of the character of error, evil, falsehood, that as good grows, evil eliminates itself, and as our analysis pursues its processes of self-elimination, we find it losing itself into the light of good, of which it was but a shadow. A philosophical perception helped Mansel, Bradley and Taylor hold the view that the distinction of good and evil is different to God from what it is to man on earth, but Sivananda maintains that such a distinction is just not there in the Eye of God, an experience of whose Nature presupposes the transcendence of the dualism of contrary phenomenon of light and shade, right and wrong, good and evil. The Bhagavad Gita assevers, "He who has attained to oneness with Godhead, casts away both sin and virtue"; and the Taittiriya Upanishad affirms, "He who has in the law of his own being, reached the bliss of Brahman is afflicted no more by the thought, "Why have I not done the good? Why have I done the evil?" and further adds that he who has come to know the bliss of Brahman exceeds the mantle of good and evil, remains unaffected by their operations which obtain neither in anything below the self-conscious organic existence nor above hierarchy of the temporary phases of human evolution. Any intimate knowledge of Sivananda's inner Nature and outer Life, will find him a living illustration of the two quotations cited above, from the Gita and the Taittiriya Upanishad, respectively.]

The universe contains two dynamic forces, *viz.*, good and evil. Good and evil are twin forces. They are twins born of the same father. They are 'Dwandwas or pairs of opposites. They have no independent existence. Evil exists to glorify good. This is its *raison-d'etre*. Evil is negative good. Evil is destructive force. Good is constructive force. There is neither absolute good nor absolute evil in this universe. Evil has no independent existence apart from good. Wherever there is evil, there is good; wherever there is good, there is evil. You cannot expect absolute good in this relative world. You can find absolute good in Brahman alone. From the viewpoint of the basic Reality which lies at the back of evil and good, evil and good dwindle into an

airy nothing. Evil and good are mental creations. Transcend good and evil and reach the abode of Supreme Peace and Immortality. For a Jnani who has knowledge of the Self, there is neither good nor evil. The "why" of the evil can only be understood when you get Atma-Jnana. Do not rack your brain now. It is a transcendental mystery. Only Brahman knows. Finite intellect that is conditioned in time, space and causation cannot find out a solution for this problem of evil. When you are fully established in your Swaroop (Atma Nishtha) evil and good vanish altogether. Do not put the cart before the horse. Transmute evil into good by changing your mental attitude or angle of vision. Out of evil, good often cometh. Destruction is necessary for regeneration, renovation and reconstruction. Will a patient with intense type of appendicular colic try to find out the ingredients of a pill, when the doctor gives him a medicine? Will he not take the pill immediately? Will a man whose cloth is on fire try to find out the "why" and "how" of the fire? Will he not run towards water for cooling himself?

Tamas is evil. Sattwa is good. Convert Tamas into Sattwa. Then evil is transmuted into good. Selfishness is evil. Selflessness is good. Lust is an evil. Brahmacharya is good. Greed is evil. Generosity, integrity, disinterestedness are good. Pride is evil Humility is good.

Out of evil good often cometh. If there is a heavy torrent of rain at the time of a harvest, people consider this as evil. But God knows what is good for His children. He has brought this rain to wash off the earth the germs, which produce severe diseases. Had it not been for this rain, there would have been a severe type of pandemic, infectious diseases which could have swept away the whole population in the twinkling of an eye. Mark here, O friends, the merciful nature of the Lord! Do not try to probe into the Divine mysteries. It will baffle your poor intellect.

Then again, what about a war? It is no doubt an evil. But good often cometh out of war. A war cannot break out without the sanction of the Lord. It is He, who goads the minds of the Minister, the King, the Dictator, the President and the Commander-in-chief to wage war. It is war that produces chivalrous warriors, fearless soldiers, undaunted and intrepid statesmen. War makes a man fearless. Fearlessness is a great qualification for a spiritual aspirant. On account of passion, there is an increase in the population. The supply of foodstuff is not sufficient to meet the demands of the people. War removes the extra population and prevents the outbreak of a severe famine. War brings down to dust the pride of a ruling power. War creates mercy, generosity and cosmic love, in the hearts of rich persons who are misers, and forces them to donate to the helpless widows, orphans and the wounded persons. The world or society must evolve through evil. Understand His mysterious ways and become wise.

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga in Daily Life, pp. 69-72.

Good and evil are relative terms. What is good for one person is evil for another. What is good at one time becomes bad at another time. What is good for one caste or order of life, is evil for another.

Good and evil are only human ways of looking at things. From the Absolute

view-point, there is no such thing as evil; everything is as it ought to be. There is neither good nor evil, from the transcendental point of view.

Evil too is negative good. Good often cometh out of evil. A heavy storm is an evil but it sweeps away germs and dust and makes the place conducive to health. Evil exists to glorify good. Good and evil are mental creations. Good and evil are the obverse and reverse sides of the same coin or thing. Evil can be transmuted into good. Then the whole world will be a paradise. For a sage there is no evil on this earth.

People expect that this world must contain good and good alone. How could this be ? There cannot be absolute good alone on this earth. Absolute good is found only in the Eternal Being. Our world is a world of opposites. It is a world set up by the three modes of nature.

If there is absolute good on this earth, people will be quite satisfied with mundane life and never attempt to live a full and vigorous life of battle against all human shortcomings and limitations.

According to Christianity, Satan is the Lord of evil. According to Zoroastrianism Angara Mainyush is the Lord of evil. Satan and Angara Mainyush work for the downfall of man. But they can be destroyed by spiritual power and meditation. Zoroaster attacked Angara Mainyush and obtained victory over him. Lord Buddha conquerd Mara through his power of Yoga. All the saints have conquered the tempting evil forces. The Devas put obstacles on the spiritual path of Yogic students. You all know how the sage Uddalaka was tempted by Satan. He subdued all temptations, through his power of meditation.

Some ignorant persons put the question : "If God is really All-powerful, why does He tolerate so much evil, then the existence of evil is due to some other agency. If such an agent exists, as can give birth to evil in spite of God, surely we have a definite limitation of God's power."

Evil in this world cannot bring limitation to God. He is above good and evil. Good and evil cannot touch Him in the least. The products of jugglery cannot affect the juggler. The defects of the eye cannot affect the sun. The poison in the mouth of the snake cannot affect the cobra. Even so, good and evil, which are the product of Maya, cannot affect in the least, the Lord God.

Evil too is a manifested aspect of the Lord. Lord Krishna says "I am the gambling of the cheat." Lord Siva is the Lord of theives, 'Taskaranam Patih.'

—Swami Sivananda's
Essays in Philosophy, pp. 15-16.

18. THE IMPACT OF ANCIENT PYTHAGOREAN ETHICAL CONCEPTIONS, THE MERITS OF PURITAN MORALITY, AND THE GREATNESS AND THE WORLD-WIDE APPLICABILITY OF SIVANANDA'S ETHICAL TEACHING

—The Pythagorean ethical conceptions as covertly occasioning the rise of the Greek ethical theory and as supplying some of the main seed-thoughts to the European religion, are characterised by a certain philosophic profundity, and an austere dignity distinguishes the Puritan tradition as a whole, but the emphasis

of its ethics falls inexorably on the depravity of man and the sovereignty of God, and consequently a rigidity and repressiveness mark the features of its moral disciplines, disciplines that make for a serious temper and the fixty of a great purity of life. Combining the specific merits of the Pythagorean and the Puritan ethics, the ethical teaching of Sivananda rests on the deepest philosophical realization and has for its key-note the innate divinity of Man and the inalienable relations of God to all humanity and to all that breathes and that does not breathe but is manifest—

THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REGENERATION OF THE WORLD :

THIS is a book written at the suggestion of the Union Minister for Planning. To Swamiji, secular state does not imply a Godless state. To him religion is not concerned with dogmas and criticism of the faiths of others. Faith in God and service to fellow beings is religion and these two principal religious tenets are essential for the building up of a moral and spiritual society. If the world is to survive the hydrogen bombs, it can only be by developing the moral and spiritual instinct in mankind. To that, every religion can contribute, but the greatest contribution has ever been and will in future continue to be of India, with its Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. There is no trace of a taint of religious seclusion in what the Swamiji advocates. If humanity is to survive and advance, a religious and spiritual outlook has to be created specially in public and social workers.

—The *Search Light*,
Patna.

Sivananda is a great religious and social power. The Swami combines religious insight and realisation with deep knowledge of the world and human life as it is lived today. Naturally, his writing has a tremendous appeal to the modern mind keen on taking a realistic view of things. His call is clear. The idea is to have a revolution in society by following the path of truth. It is so very elevating. I have found the book extremely fine. It has a world of thoughts and experiences, which we must make our own, if we want to live well.

—B. S. Mathur, M. A.,
Azad Hind, Delhi.

19. THE HISTORY OF ETHICS RECORDS SCHOOLS OF MORALISTS WHO HAVE TABULATED SCHEMES OF MORALS WITHOUT ANY TRACE OF A REFERENCE TO THE RESOURCES, THE IDEALS AND THE DEMANDS OF RELIGION, BUT SUCH SCHOOLS ARE SUBSTANCELESS MANIFESTATIONS EMANATING FROM A GREAT PAUCITY OF VISION AND FAIL TO ENDURE BEYOND THE GENERATION THAT EVOKES THEM INTO EXISTENCE—THE ILLUSION OF POSITIVISM LIES IN THE NOTION THAT MORALITY CAN SUPPLANT RELIGION

—Familiar with the Alexandrian theology, the western mind, whether theological or academic, should not find it difficult to grasp the distinctiveness of the all-determing dominance of the religious awareness over the ethical character of the ethics of Indian thought and life—

There can be no divorce of religion from morality. Morality is the basis of all religions. Morality and religion are inseparbale like heat and fire, coolness and ice, fragrance and the rose. Morality without religion is a tree without roots, a house built on sand, a stream without any spring to feed it. Personal example of morality is the best means to improve the character of a man and recover him out of his vices and ignorance.

Ethical principles ennoble life and confer final beatitude. If you are ethical then you become more powerful than an intellectual man. Ethics gives a sustaining stamina to life. A character without ethics is like a saltless dish. Ethical perfection is the criterion of religion. Spirituality, religion and ethics are synonymous terms. It is erroneous to separate them.

Moral culture prepares you for the realization of Truth. All indeed reflects God. In fact, diversity is bound by one central truth.

Unintelligent seekers blunder in attempting to reach Communion with God through meditation as soon as they take to the spiritual path, without caring a bit for the practice of fundamental virtues. Without ethics, meditation is barren and fruitless.

Straightforwardness, truthfulness, non-violence non-covetousness, absence of vanity and hypocrisy, absolute unselfishness, honesty, mercy, humility, respect and tender regard for all creatures and cosmic love, are the prerequisites to spiritual perfection.

Moral living starts through dedication to ideal principles and maxims. Moral man is he who is ever intent on removing his defects and weaknesses, who is endowed with good conduct and noble disposition. Tolerance, absence of anger, greed and lust, unprovokable patience, meticulous cosideration even for a child's sentiments, belief and pure emotion, imply real morality.

Having sacred baths daily and worshipping at the shrines regularly, study of Scriptures, etc., may no doubt, aid one's spiritual aptitude, but if you do not fulfil the aforesaid conditions, all these would in no way help you to be a moral or a religious man or ensure God-realization. Therefore, please look to the fundamentals, first and foremost.

No one is eternally bad. No one should be condemned for ever. Be not adamant on stocking to your impressions. Everyone has the potentiality to improve oneself. It is a wrong maxim that nature dies hard. In many cases it has a quick death. Within three months you will find the confirmed hypocrite changed into an apostle of sincerity. Give the other man then a chance to believe that he is really improving. You are so kind to yourself.

Let not appearance deceive you. There goes the devotee chanting the sacred name of the Lord. He sings in ecstasy and dances in rapture for an hour or two. He is vehement in asserting that all indeed is Narayana. Here is a great soul, a monist who would not stop repeating : "I am God. I am God". Profound is his learning and mighty his swordsmanship in argument. Tarry a while, friend. Watch them under three conditions : when desperately hungry, when bitterly provoked, and insulted, and when another man is pathetically distressed.

Now if they fulfil their former assertions, all hail to them, obeisance to them. Veritable gods on earth are they, and let the dust of their feet adorn our forehead. If not avoid them,

Obedience to the Laws or observance of the Commandments is expressed through good conduct. A life ethically perfect is the mark of the good soul. Man attains prosperity and fame, here and hereafter, through strict obedience to the Laws. Right conduct is the highest Law. It is the root of all austerities. That which brings common well-beings to man is the Commandment or the Law. The Law alone supports the entire world. People are sustained by the Law. That whicn secures preservation of beings is the Divine Law. It leads to eternal happiness and Immortality.

Morality is the gateway to God. He who leads a moral or virtuous life attains freedom, perfection or liberation,

Religion gives us the ultimate data upon which ethical science may be built. Man wills to obtain his objects of desires. Willing results in action. That is called conduct. The will that is expressed becomes conduct. Man has various sorts of desires. Sometimes there is conflict of desires. That desire which obtains victory is termed as Will. Conduct is behaviour. Character is the aggregate of peculiar qualities that constitute personal individuality. The inner disposition which makes the will possible is called character. External behaviour is not always a sure guide in judging the character of a man.

The first thing you learn from religion is the unity of all beings. Universal love is the expression of this Unity. The spirit alone binds all.

Universal brotherhood has its basis in the unity of all beings. All human relations exist because of this unity. All are dear because of the One God that dwells in all. If you injure another life, you but injure your own life ; and if you help another, you but help your own: There is but one Life, one God, in all beings. This is the foundation of right conduct. This is the foundation of all ethics.

Moral law is the expression of the perfection of God. It is the Voice of God in man. Morality is the basis for the realization of God or the Supreme Being.

God-realization is the ultimate meaning of ethics. Ethics is right living. Right and wrong are to be determind not by the objective consequences but by the nature of the subjective intention of the doer.

God looks to the motive of the doer.

Science has to be supplemented by ethics and religion.

Religious and moral instructions must be imparted in all schools and colleges.

A life of pure thoughts and virtuous deeds will bring you nearer to God quickly.

The practice of Truth and self-control leads to final emancipation.

Where there are kindness, humility and purity, there spirituality springs up, saintliness shines, divinity descends and Perfection manifests itself.

—Swami Sivananda's
Universal Moral Lessons,
pp. 9-15-59.

20. IN THEIR EXTENSIVE RANGE, THE ETHICAL WRITINGS OF SIVANANDA EMBRACE NOT ONLY THE ETHICS OF THE UPANISHADS, THE GITA, THE SMRITIS, THE INDIAN EPICS, BUT ALSO SOCIAL, BUSINESS, LEGAL, MEDICAL AND INTERNATIONAL ETHICS

—Sivananda : his ethics is primarily constituted of great life-values, the divine values, and should we attempt to discern the theme underlying the practical and philosophic content of his ethical teaching, we would find it to be 'Tat Twam Asi'.—

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

Ethical Teachings gives in a short compass the indispensable basic qualification for starting on the path,—a subject which is apt to be neglected. The Gita and the Upanishads make it plain that Religion, Ethics and Hygiene are not three distinct subjects, but parts of one another, so that whoever wants one must take all, and the author makes clear that it is so. The most vital thing in Hygiene, namely renunciation of wrong eating, is stressed in this book.

Not alone the members of the Divine Life Society, but all else, whose minds are set on the Goal of Life, especially those who wish to live the Life Natural, should study these books,

—*The Life Natural*,
Pudukottai.

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

Ethics is the science of conduct. It attempts to study what is good or right in human conduct. Different persons are engaged in different vocations and the question that will be uppermost in their minds will be what conduct should an individual follow. The doctor, the lawyer, the trader, the industrialist and the politician will all find some useful suggestions for their daily conduct in Sivananda's book, "Ethical Teachings."

The chapter on domestic ethics is of a special interest to ladies.

—*The Indian Nation*, Patna.

ETHICAL TEACHINGS :

The book is an authoritative codes of morals comprising the essential teachings of the Vedas,Puranas, Itihasas. For guidance on the right conduct of life in all its aspects, the book is invaluable. The charm of this book lies in the fact that it is written for the layman in easily understandable language shorn of high flown verbiage.

—*The Sunday Times*,
Madras.

21. MACHIAVELLI AND THE ADVOCATES OF HIS MAXIMS REPUDIATE ALL RELATIONS BETWEEN ETHICS AND POLITICS; HOBBES AND BAIN AND THE THINKERS GREATLY INFLUENCED BY THE FORMER, TIE ETHICS TO THE APRON-STRINGS OF POLITICS; PLATO, ARISTOTLE, SPINOZA AND HEGEL ANNEX POLITICS TO ETHICS—SIVANANDA

PRONOUNCES ANARCHY AND TRANSIENCE UPON POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, LAWS, THOUGHT AND ACTION THAT ARE NOT FOUNDED UPON, AND BUTTRESSED BY, AN ESSENTIALLY ETHICAL AWARENESS

—The Hindu temper has never known, either in theory or in practice, the Divine Right of the king, nor granted any absoluteness to the State, nor yet gave its "Church" its claims to sovereign power, to embody all the Laws, but has always been guided in its inmost motives, in the courses of its conduct, in its action and achievement, by the loving guidance, the benign wisdom, the never-erring vision of the never ceasing succession of its saints and sages. To some appreciable measure, himself as the latest determinant of this type of temper, Sivananda affirms that the "must" of the political laws proves most effectual only when the ethical "ought" inherent in the human consciousness is vigorously operative, the political aims of expediency, public utility and public good prove most fruitful only when the ethical aims of individual good and virtue are dynamically developed; the enforcement of political injunctions by threats of punishment will far from commanding obedience, encourage the experimentation in 'perfect crime', unless it ethically evokes the voluntary submission of the ethically conscious citizens, in the absence of the ethical capacity of the individual to impose upon himself laws, the externally imposed political institutions will lack power, fare ill, and in so far as that individual is concerned, fizzle out, the *raison d'etre* of the legal enactments, and distribution of civic rights by political authorities, for purposes of providing conditions for the pursuit and appropriation of what is good by the individuals and communication of it to the community, gets defeated and defelected if the individuals are morally incapable of and ill-educated for conceving and determining human good, and that since times before the birth of the Confucian political ethic in China and the Platonic in ancient Greece, the Indian tendency has laid stress upon the inseparability of moral awareness and successful administration. Hereunder, Sivananda extends his ethical teaching to international relations and finds for their harmonious development, and for world peace, much light in the Vedantic ethics.—

Nations can prosper only if they stick to the principles of international morality. Had the nations adhered to the international moral principles there would not have been any war at all.

Lust for power, dominion, and self-aggrandisement overpowers the nations and makes them lose the power of understanding and the faculty of morality. Hence they break the ethical principles.

The ethical laws which govern the relations of individuals to one another in society should also govern the relations of nations to one another. There is absolute necessity for the international morality. This dire need is keenly felt by the heads of nations after the Great War. A World Federation should be established. Then alone the international morality can be put into practice. A well-organised World Federation can prevent war among nations and ensure peace in the world.

But such an organisation will function successfully only when its members are noble men with pure and lofty ideals. They should be imbued with the spirit of tolerance co-operation and brother-hood. They must set aside narrow racial spirit and have wide universal vision. If not, the organisation will fail like the League of Nations after Great War and the U.N.O. today.

The advance of science has removed time and space. Within a few hours you can reach London and New York. Now railways, ships, aeroplanes, radio, television have made the world one. The whole world is a closely-knit unity now. The countries and nations are now interdependent. Economic prosperity or depression of one country reacts on all other countries. If one nation suffers, it brings sufferings on the other nations also, just as a diseased rheumatic knee-joint reacts on the mind and the other parts of the body also. A country or a nation cannot rise much in culture and civilisation unless other countries or nations also are raised.

Though the whole world is brought into a sort of unity, yet there is no international ethical advancement. There is not much justice, love and fair treatment among the nations. The brotherhood of man is forgotten. The law of the "survival of the fittest" which applies to the animals in the forest rules the international relations. "Might is right." Those who possess more atomic bombs are the rulers of the world. They can get more privileges in trade or commerce. They can be in possession of vast dominions. They exploit the weak, hold them in subjection. This is the cause for war and moral degeneration.

Equal privileges should be given to all nations. Every nation should have equal rights. Nothing should be the monopoly of a particular nation. No nation should have absolute sway or supremacy in anything. Sea, land, air also must be the common property of all nations, just as the sunlight, breeze and water are the common property of all. All are children of God. Hence all are brothers.

Misunderstood and mispractised Nationalism, Imperialism, Capitalism and Militarism stand in the way of the growth of international morality. Imperialism and militarism should die. Humanism, Humanitarianism and Vedantism should take their places. Then alone there will be perpetual peace in the world. The Presidents and Dictators should study Vedanta and live in the spirit of Vedanta.

Vedanta and Vedantic Ethics should become compulsory for all students in all schools and colleges of the world. It must be properly understood and put into practice by all. This alone will contribute to peace, universal love, unity, proper understanding, world-harmony and brotherhood of mankind. This alone will put an end to the manufacture of atomic bombs and nuclear weapons.

—Swami Sivananda's
Moral And Spiritual Regeneration of the World,
pp. 82-84.

22. SIVANANDA AND THE PROBLEM OF THE ETHICAL CRITERION

—The Indian moral standard by virtue of its comprehensiveness, concreteness, and coincidence with all life, with the entire cosmic manifestation, with the immanent and the transcendent Divinity, is at once supremely rationalistic, hedonistic, eudaemonistic, both subjective, and objective internal and external, individualistic and universal, empirical, transcendental, axiological and aesthetic, denotative of spontaneity and freedom, yet connotative in character of the nature of an immutable law, and consists in Self-realization as the Experience of Satchidananda, the Existence-Knowledge-Delight in one's own essential nature, in the inner being of all mankind, in the law of the cosmic process, and in the transcendental Reality. Rationalistic in tone it reaches the very foundations of all existence, touches the ground of all being, hedonistic in spirit it stops short of nothing save the only true, enduring, illimitable happiness, and is governed by the formula, "Bhumaiva sukham, na alpe sukhamasti", eudaemonistic in intent and aim, it rests not till it scales the perfection of the Infinite, superlatively altruistic and universalistic, it proceeds on the principle, "Sarva bhuta hite ratah", predominantly philosophic in theistic tone, it begins with the affirmation, "Isavasyam idam sarvam", and recognises the Truth, finds the Value, and obtains the Delight and Beauty in nothing but the Absolute.—

The inevitable relativity of morality has made it difficult to have any rigid or definite moral standard. Every one's actions and all occurrences cannot be assessed by a single fixed standard. The actions of a soldier in a battle-field cannot be judged by the same standard of morality applicable to a layman in civic life. Nor will a similar action of the self-same soldier be of the same nature if repeated at home during peacetime. Materialists and critics seek to take advantage of this seeming lack of any uniformity of moral standard and level the charge that there is no reliable moral standard at all. This is a mistake. This is due to mere superficial view without insight. Behind the variety and difference in matters of detail, there is a unity of principle underlying. There is a uniform fundamental universal moral law for all times.

This law, some stated, as the promotion of human happiness and welfare. Others put it as "The greatest good of the greatest number." Certain Westerners like Berkeley and Hume held that as moral which contributed to the pleasure of man and cancelled pain. But they modified it by saying that it was not sensuous pleasure that was meant, It was a rational and a higher type of pleasure. But they all went on the assumption of the solid reality of the World, The Seer? of the East had evolved the law upon a distinctively spiritual basis. In trying to fix a standard, you should bear in mind that ethics and morality are part of life. Therefore, they should be conducive to the attainment of the highest ultimate purpose of life. It is conclusively established that Self-realization, the attainment of the Infinite, Eternal State of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss is the *Summum-Bonum* of life. Thus in the absolute sense that which helps to attain the *Summum Bonum* confirms to the eternal ethical law. There is no ideal that is an ideal by itself finally but is subordinate to the highest ideal, Self-realization, the attainment of freedom and eternal life.

They too said that bestowal of happiness was the test of morality of an action. But

this happiness was not worldly happiness. All worldly happiness is evanescent. It is not unalloyed. It also causes a reaction of misery. True happiness is the Eternal and Infinite. *"Yo Vai Bhuma Tat Sukham"*. But this criterion is transcendental. But the vision of the ancient seers found a means of reconciling this with the life of man on the relative plane, How ? The sacrifice of all selfish interest and the dedication of life to others' good forms therefore the backbone of ethical life. Because *"Isaavasyam Idam Sarvam."* The ethical ideal was summed up in *"Sarva Bhuta Hite Rath"* The Lord declared "he is dear to Me "who *"Yomam Pasyathi Sarvathra"*.

Thus it was found that there was a happy concordance between ethical living and the highest good. Thus morality became necessary and desirable for it was the pathway to Blessedness. The rational and the sanctions of ethics are the indispensability of ethical living for the realization of the highest goal of life and the proved fact of the inevitability of retribution that descends on one who goes against the moral law. We see how this unwritten law operates everywhere in this world. Sacrifice being the keynote, we find that ideals of duty hold sway over ideals of rights. The parents sacrifice their personal comforts and pleasure for the welfare of children. The son sets aside all considerations of personal advantage in serving his parents and obeying their dictates implicity. The chaste wife dedicates her life to unostentatious, self-effacing service of her Lord. The ideal householder subordinates his selfish intent in helping all creatures disinterestedly. The Sannyasin dedicates his entire life for Vishuddha Seva. The ruler takes all the burden of protecting his subjects and exposes himself to a thousand perils on that account.

This then is the ultimate moral standard, whether directly or indirectly, any given line of conduct serves to promote the highest goal.

Now quite apart from the question of moral standard, there are certain actions which cannot be adjudged from any moral stand-point at all. There are actions that cannot be classified either as moral or immoral. Even after accepting some conventional moral standard, more or less generally applicable, these actions stand outside the sphere of recognised moral law. They are the reflex actions which are merely responses to external stimuli, actions done by children and idiots and by those whose intellects are not fully developed and those by the Sages who have merged their individual wills in the Cosmic-Will.

It has been explained how a moral agent is responsible for his actions and how his individual will should control and guide the effects of his actions on the social health and happiness. In other words the moral worth of an action consists in the free-will and choice of the agent and if that action contributes towards the social health and happiness, it is called a moral action. If the action retards or destroys the social good, then it is known as immoral. In either case it is presumed that the agent is of a fully developed intellect capable of comprehending the full consequences of his actions.

To these actions the standards of morality cannot be applied and the actions

adjudged by man. The former—by children and undeveloped or defective intellects are due to subnormal causes in that the Buddhi which is the instrument of moral perception is either not developed fully or defective from birth. Refer Code Of Manu—how the actions of children below 13 should not be questioned in the courts of justice. In the latter cases, *viz.*, in the cases of Sages, they have renounced the realization of the moral self in favour of something higher *viz.*, the realization of the Spiritual or Cosmic Self and when that merging of the Will takes place, the Cosmic Will takes up the control and guidance of the individual organism. The Cosmic Will has no preference to the social good or the opposite but guides the organism according to the residual Prarabdha Vasanas still in deposit in the subconscious mind at the time of merging of the individual Will in the Cosmic Will, Hence those actions cannot come under the moral judgment of man and they are classified as non-moral as they do no have the backing of fully developed individual will in the former kind of cases and complete absence of the individual will in the latter kind of cases. Thus when you are reading the biographies of realized Sages, you may come across several actions which do not fit into the moral standards. Undeveloped Sadhaks quote them as examples and act in a similar style. They foolishly think that they are justified morally as they have got such an action of a realized Sage. They do not for a moment consider that they still have their individual wills planning for their future. For example one man utilized some Government money in his charge to the feeding of his famished family, quoting the example of Sri Ram Das. How foolish he is! A highly developed moral man alone is competent and can assess the worth or otherwise of other's actions. An ordinary man will go wrong in many instances. A Sage alone will be impartial in his judgment.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teaching, pp. 40-44.

23. AMONG THE NOTABLE ADVOCATES OF A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMICS AND ETHICS, CARLYLE AND RUSKIN TAKE AN IMPORTANT PLACE, JOHN WESLEY RATED ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AS PRIMARILY ETHICAL AND FOR THAT VERY REASON RELIGIOUS ; ANCIENT INDIA KNEW NO CONTRADICTION BETWEEN MATERIALISM AND SPIRITUALITY AND ASSUMED THE ATTITUDE OF EQUATING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY WITH FACTORS OF ETHICAL EXCELLENCE ; SIVANANDA ENDEAVOURS TO INCULCATE IN THE MINDS OF MODERN BUSINESSMEN AND INDUSTRIALISTS A DISTINCTIVE MORAL AWARENESS TO WHICH IS CENTRAL, THE ACTIVE ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT OF HUMAN EXISTENCE THAT MAN DOES NOT BELONG TO HIMSELF ALONE BUT TO ALL MANKIND AND TO GOD WHO GOVERNS "IMMANENTLY" ALL THAT IS MANIFEST

—As a University Subject, Modern Business acquires a certain scientific dignity, demands as a condition for success, years of special study and equipment, and as a practice requires disciplined training, and wears the halo of really honourable occupation when persons concerned with it evidence an abidance

by ethical elements, are governed by no mean motives, distinguish themselves by feats of industry, and give ascendency in their personal nature to sentiments which include a concern and a care for general human welfare, happiness and progress. As the multiplicity of man's economic activity constitutes but an external corollary of the complexity of his inner motives, none may seek in vain to deny a real relation involved between economics and ethics ; it is not unknown and never a remote knowledge that the rights of exchange and distribution of property are derived from, and the rights to property are dependent upon, the moral rights of personality in the process of self-realisation, and thus implying and making a necessity, the subordination of economics to ethics ; again, the intimacy of a relationship between the science of ethics and the science of economics is observable in the attempts of human intelligence at a determining and an examining of the purposes aimed at, by the values that govern, and the ideals that regulate, the facts and processes of economic activity. Since, the hypothesis of 'the economic man' has been deservedly much discredited, though unjustifiably over-criticised, it should become quite easy to envisage that the human individual is primarily a psychological entity, a psychic being, a spiritual person, and as such, will never be able to extricate himself from the evaluations in his expressions and activity, whatever be those expressions and that activity, of good and bad, of right and wrong, of the valuable and the valueless, nor fare well by a liberation from such ethical considerations and by the consequences such a freedom burdens him with, consequences in terms of loss of peace of mind, the gnawing residual unhappiness, an impoverished personality, a sense of being totally ill-at-ease, being a factor for social discordance or for a regression in, or retardation of, general social well-being. Sivananda's ethical theses sustain the argument that real success and morality are a conjoint phenomenon, that happiness cannot endure without virtue, that material prosperity will defeat its own central objectives when divorced from ethical life and spiritual welfare.—

BUSINESS ETHICS

THERE is business ethics. A businessman also should practise ethics. Only then will he remain unaffected by sin. Only then will he prosper.

People say that one will have to tell lies in business if one wants to prosper. This is a serious mistake. Those who are strictly honest and truthful will flourish in business. People will go to them only as they are truthful in their dealings.

Falsehood first entered a cloth merchant's shop. If you enter a cloth merchant's shop, he says first, that one yard costs Rs. 8, then bargaining or higgling goes on for one or two hours. At last he comes to Rs. 1/8 per yard. This sort of business goes on in most of the business houses. Cheating and falsehood are the basic traits of a businessman. His conscience has been blunted by covetousness and dishonesty. He is misrable in this world despite his wealth and possessions and will be unhappy in the next world

also, because he is not leading a moral life. He does not know what he is exactly doing as his understanding is clouded.

Immorality does not mean sexual depravity and illegal adultery only. He who tells lies and cheats others is also leading an immoral life. He is also an immoral man in the broad sense of the term.

A manufacturer puts a spurious preparation on the market. One man mixes sand in the wheat. One businessman adulterates Ghee, flour and other foodstuffs. The carpenter uses inferior wood and charges as for the best wood. A contractos uses third-class bricks and charges for first-class bricks, etc. These are all instances of cheating.

What is this glittering prosperity in the business after all ? To eat a little delicious food, to move in a car, to become a Municipal Councillor cannot give you everlasting happiness. This is not the goal of life. This is a foolish man's idea of happiness. Quite puerile indeed ! These are all toys of ignorant children. Wise people will laugh at these things.

Earn your bread by honest means. Dishonesty and cheating will bring on you incurable diseases like cancer, tuberculosis, ulcer in the stomach, fistula, deafness, dumbness, blindness, burning in the heart and feet and deformity of limbs in your next birth. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. You will have to suffer in your next birth for every wrong deed you commit in this birth. Be careful in your thought, speech and action. Be good and do good. Understand the law of cause and effect.

Spend one-tenth of your income in charity. Charity covers multitude of sins. Do regular charity. Merely giving a few rupees in charity occasionally when you are in distress is not praiseworthy.

Take a moderate and reasonable profit. Be truthful and honest in your dealings. Do not smother and kill your conscience. Keep your conscience ever clean and pure. Do abundant charity. You can prosper in your business. You will not be tainted and corrupted by business. Goddess Lakshmi will ever dwell with you.

Do Satyanarayana Katha every full-moon day. Help social and religious instutions. Open Sanskrit schools and Ayurvedic dispensaries, hospitals, girls' schools, free primary schools. Dig wells in the villages. Construct Sankirtan Bhavans. Let your profit be well utilised in charitable purposes. You will earn great merit. You will be happy here and in the next world.

If you are ever conscious that the Lord or the Indweller is witnessing your thoughts and actions, if you really have understood the law of cause and effect, you will not dare to do any wrong deed, you will try to avoid evil action and gradually minimise your wrong deeds.

If you have really understood the Vedantic truth of oneness, you will not try to deceive others. In deceiving others you deceive yourself. In helping others you help yourself. There is only oneself in all beings. That is the only Reality.

INDUSTRIAL ETHICS

Times have changed vastly. Society is not what it was hundreds of years before. Humanity has developed newer fields that were absent in the ancient social order. There is industrialization of whole nations.

Large-scale industries and factory systems are everywhere. These factors give rise therefore for ethical rules peculiarly suited to the conditions and situations prevailing under these special conditions.

An industrialist becomes too machine-minded. He comes to regard the army of workers he employs to be so many automatons. He has no sympathy towards the labourers. This is wrong. It is his moral duty to look to their welfare in as much as their labours go to the build up of his prosperity.

Usually labour in vast large-scale industries is recruited from the domain of poverty. They are obliged to work for their very existence. The Industrialist should not take advantage of this and extract sweated labour. He must pay fair and adequate wages, afford them facilities instead of driving them to undertake strikes, demonstrations etc. Heartless exploitation of labour is a grave transgression of moral law.

Industrial relationship is based upon contract. However purely secular the sphere of industry is, yet a contract between man and man is always a sacred matter. This contract too should be viewed as such. Then alone Dharma will prevail. The worker is equally responsible for respecting this mutual contract and should give his sincere best in the interest of his employer. This relationship is not merely centred upon giving and receiving money.

The existence of jealousy, malicious rivalry and cut-throat competition is the bane of modern industry. This is Asuric and unethical. Big industrialists combine not for co-operation but to crush and destroy smaller concerns. To corner the market by superior buying power and ruin small-scale industries is unethical. Creating artificial demand through wanton destruction of valuable raw materials when the latter is sorely needed by people is deliberate flouting of ethical law. This is why grave retribution overtakes civilization based upon such pillars of Adharma.

Greed and cupidity are the causes of industrial immorality. Insatiable craving for profit drives you to a total disregard of all Dharma. It makes you quite unscrupulous. Therefore give up greed. Lust not after wealth. Know that God has given you industrial acumen, genius for organization and money power to promote the welfare of the human community. You are custodians of special talent and wealth for utilizing them for common weal first, and then increase your prosperity.

May the present-day industrialists realise their precarious drift towards Adharma and become helpers to the progress and welfare of the race ! May they stick to the laws of ethics and thus derive true happiness and peace in addition to the mere material. profit !

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, p. 98-102.

24. THE PARABLE OF TALENTS TAUGHT BY JESUS THE CHRIST HAS MANY AN ECHO IN THE MORAL LESSONS OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE AND SUCH PURITANICAL VIRTUES AS FRUGALITY, DILIGENCE AND HONESTY ARE PRESSED INTO SERVICE AS PROMOTIVE AT ONCE OF

SUCCESS IN BUSINESS-PRACTICE, OF PERSONALITY-DEVELOPMENT AND OF MORAL ADVANCEMENT

—Revolving a reflective thought over the important little details in the structures of modern economic systems, one cannot but experience a constraint to register that the tendency to divorce values from facts, separate purpose from activity, sever the gain-seeking aspect of man from the rest of his personality, grant an autonomy to the economic science, prognosticates several dangerous effects upon human life as a whole. According to Sivananda, there is no need to render Caesar's things unto Caesar, as Caesar himself may be enslaved by our subjection of his things to such purposes as Caesar himself would acknowledge as something in perfect accord with the best in his reason, as something in total consonance with the highest in his better self, and as something to which his homage is due. Mammon is Mammon only when Mammon is an end in himself, or when, required to serve purposes which are reprehensible by the conscience of mankind; the individual is freed from the tyranny of gold-itch or misuse of money, when the pursuit of wealth is governed by aims that extend beyond the monetary realm, embrace the manifold benefit of the family, of the community, of the society, directly or indirectly, of humanity, and include an interest in the realization of ideals. Sivananda's economic ideas find prosperity present no moral pitfalls, see in poverty an impediment to personality development and spiritual progress, assign to business no dubeity in ethical view, plead for a regulation of economic goals by ethical aspirations, make temporal goods instrumental in the release of the highest potentialities in human consciousness, and assert that the act of making a material gain may also mark a moral gain when such a virtue as honesty which has been accepted by the generality as at once an economic and an ethical excellence, is brought into operation. In our endeavour to discover the ever-existing relations between the Nature of the Divine and the character of man, the character of man and business, we have a great guide in the greatest living Sage Sivananda who perceives that the restricted pursuit of lucre, the obsessional worship of Mammon, the search for sensate pleasures, do not cover the whole of humanity, much less the entire field of existence, and that the search for Values, for God is undying, and as long as this persists, culture will develop itself, saints will be born, God will be adored and felt a close Reality responding to human thought and action at every turn, and moral and spiritual knowledge will disseminate itself. Sivananda's prescription of hard-work and plain life for prosperity, his maxim of "give" with its triple emphasis, his principle of surrendering one-tenth of income to charity, are but the three of the many important connections that must always subsist between ethics and economics.—

RESPECT your parents and obey
their commands;
Increase their wealth by your exertion;

Always spend one-tenth of your
income in charity;
Learn the art of business well;

that "Life is One" and not many. Apart from the petty disharmonies between one person and another, the nations of the world seem to be separated from each other and this virulent notion of division and separation is the mother of war and destruction. Deceived by the spectacular advancement of scientific knowledge modern mind in all countries and continents, has not cared to understand the fundamental meaning of life, and sought its satisfaction in a sensational floating upon the apparently attractive scum of Existence. Such has been the spirit in which science has taken its marvellous strides in progress, that it has nothing in its constitution to drive it towards a grasp of the deep and significant changes that man undergoes beneath his scalp, towards understanding the potentialities of man as a mind, as a heart, as a spirit, as a creative entity, towards directing his aspirations, towards aiding the blossoming of the noblest forces that lie buried and latent in his bosom. Redounding to the eternal credit of the genius of India, there lies the momentous fact that at the very dawn of civilizations, it has raised the deepest issues of life, questioned the limitations of human existence, ventured forth for a solution into the realms of that infinite Power that is found "feebly" interpenetrating this world of physics, physical experience, materialistic philosophy and 'sputniks', discovered that guiding, governing and sustaining Permanent Ground upon which is played the tragi-comic drama of life and the pride of men that are dressed in brief authority. If there is anything valuable in life as whole, it is the knowledge of the solution of the apparent riddle of existence, the knowledge of the essential nature and the real destiny of man, the knowledge of man's real relations to the other men, to the universe, to the Transcendence, and this knowledge is the glorious heritage of India. The men of India who are also the men of God, men who have imposed upon themselves the disciplines that lead them to Perfection, to living the good life, the ideal life, the divine life, the life in the inner Reality and for the happiness of mankind, for the solidarity of the world, have discovered the road to Success and Achievement, discerned the clues to progress and perfection, in a strict adherence to the rhythms of the universal Loves and the eternal verities that guide in accordance to the genius inherent in them, humanity as a whole and all manifestation to the final denouement in a Divine Existence.

The attitude of life which the Indians develope was based upon the nature of the End or the Goal to be attained through the instrumentality of the phenomenon of life—life which is a step, a stage, and not the end itself. This attitude ensouls the righteous law, the Dharma, and to it, the universe becomes what it intrinsically is, the Dharmakshetra; or the arena for the display and the justification of the prowess of the right action, the action whose whole spirit moves towards the realisation of the absolute Good, that is, the Nature of the infinite Being. The ideal of Dharma forms the substratum upon which is built the structure of the whole life of man who wishes to resolve the riddle of his personal life, win victory over the struggle of existence, be crowned with a strange and ethereal joy even while he is living in the environment of the world, of this imperfect earth that is the heir to change, sorrow, and death. Dharma is virtue and virtue is that which leads one to

the most perfect condition, the condition that is identical with the ultimate success constituted of the joy of life, unlimited, unfettered and unalloyed, complete beyond expression. As the highest virtue that man may practise, Ahimsa is both a negative withdrawal and a positive assertion of the 'mind'. It is refraining from doing, speaking and thinking anything which will cause pain and sorrow to any other individual, to any living being. This represents the negative aspect of the discipline of Ahimsa. Its positive aspect is brought out by an expression of universal love, love that has no partiality, love that excludes nothing, love that cares not for the effect of love ! The ideal of universal love is a spontaneous self-fulfilment in the delight of a discovery of Oneself, of the universally self-same, our own inner Consciousness in all. Until this is done, no civilization is genuine, no culture is true, nothing is perfect and lasting. In one word, it is in the light of absolute Consciousness which is undifferentiated that Ahimsa which is more a matter of spirit than an effect of a mere act, is practised.

Immediately succeeding the devotion to the principle of Ahimsa, comes the practice of the excellence of truth. To the spiritual genius, Truth is more than truth-speaking; it is God or the Absolute ; it is that which triumphs, not untruth. Again, Truth is right ; untruth is wrong ; that which elevates one and takes one nearer to God is right, that which brings one down and takes one away from God is wrong. And that God towards which our whole inner being must rise, is the indivisible unity of conscious existence, the infinity of delight and awareness. Control over passions constitutes the essence of truth ; self-denial or refraining from greedy indulgence is truth ; to permit the spiritual element in us triumph, is truth ; Truth is a life in the eternal. Untruth is change, decay and death. Love is truth; hatred is untruth ; harmony is Truth ; disharmony is untruth. There is no greater sin than hatred and battle—the pungent word and the insolent action, the arrogance and the uncharitableness, the egoistic self-assertion and vehement action of the selfish impulse. Relative truths are valid only in so far as they do not run against the grain of absolute truth which is the Eternal in the highest sense.

The third canon is the self-control which is the holding in check of the instinctive urges that try to drag the individual away from the experience of the Truth. Self-control is a universal rule unexceptionally applicable to all men and all women, at all places and at all times. It is the very key to beatitude. Indulgence in externalities, in sensuous objects, in physical pleasures is the effect of the failure of the individual to discriminate the spiritual value from the material chaff, the Truth from the untruth. Desire to have contact with and enjoy outward things is the outcome of the ignorance of the Truth that is God, the Truth that is the Infinite Existence. Self-control is the restraint of the outgoing tendencies of the senses and the mind, and centering the mind in the active participation of Truth-existence, the Universal One. This self-control, this energization of consciousness, this *Tapas*, this restraining of one's externalising, self-diffusing, energies and founding oneself upon that one Cosmic Being, is Dharma that supports the life and law of the universe, integrates the being of

A man behaves insolently with an elderly man, treats him with contempt, sneers at him and speaks disrespectful words. This is arrogance. Another man throws a book or a note-book in front of a person in anger and utters vulgar words. This is arrogance. Another person says to another man in anger, "Don't you know who I am ? I will break your jaw. I will break your skull. I will break your teeth. I will drink your blood." This is arrogance. Another man says, "I cannot be dictated by anybody. I have my own ways. Nobody can question me. I cannot dance before him. Why should I go to him ? Why should I follow his instructions ? Is he more learned than me ? Who is he, after all ? Who are you to order me ? Who are you to question me ?" This is arrogance.

Generally a thoughtless man who is not practising introspection and self-analysis says, "I have no arrogance at all; I am humble, gentle and kind." But when the test comes, he hopelessly and miserably fails a thousand and one times. Such is the force or strength of arrogance.

A Sadhaka is very good. He is very intelligent. He is a learned man. He meditates silently in a solitary room for hours together. And yet he is not free from arrogance. When a man goes against his sweet will or wish, when a man speaks ill of him and criticises him, when he is not respected, he becomes arrogant and behaves very rudely.

Arrogance assumes various forms One man may be arrogant on account of his great physical strength. He may say, "I will neck you out now. Get thee gone." Another man may be arrogant on account of his wealth, position and power. Another man may be arrogant on account of his secular learning. Another man may be arrogant owing to his scriptural erudition. Another man may be arrogant owing to his psychic Siddhis, moral virtues, spiritual progress, Sannyasihood, Mahantship, etc.

A man may renounce his wife, children, property, position, wealth, etc. He may renounce the world and live in a cave in the Himalayas for several years, practising Yoga and yet he finds it difficult to renounce arrogance. When he becomes impulsive he is over-powered by arrogance. He does not know what he is exactly doing. He repents afterwards. Impulse is a motive force to make one arrogant.

Watch your thoughts, words and actions very carefully. Know the power of words and use them cautiously. Respect all. Speak sweet and measured words. Be kind. Cultivate patience, love, humility. Enquire. Observe Mowna or the vow of silence. Again and again think, "this world is unreal. What will I gain by being arrogant ?" Think of the immense benefits of the opposite virtue, HUMILITY.

You may fail one hundred times. But again stand up and strengthen your resolve. "I have failed yesterday. I will be humble, kind and patient to-day." Gradually your will-force will develop and you will conquer arrogance, the enemy of peace, devotion and wisdom.

With all your care and vigilance arrogance will hiss and raise its hood several times daily. Raise the rod of Viveka, discrimination and sword of humility and chop its head. Arrogance is a myriad-headed monster, or Asura like the Raktabeej who

fought with Devi. He will again develop more heads. Continue the battle with more vigour, force and strength. Use combined methods, prayer, meditation, enquiry, Brahmabhyasa, self-restraint, Japa, Kirtan, Pranayama. Take recourse to the Yoga of synthesis. He will be burnt in toto and reduced to ashes.

If an arrogant man remains in a cave or in the room, there is no scope for him to eradicate this Vritti. It will lurk in his mind and harass him. An aspirant must mix with persons of different mentality and temperament and watch his thoughts, when he is ill-treated, disrespected and persecuted. If he is calm and serene and humble even under worst trying conditions, know that he has eradicated this terrible foe.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, pp. 296-300

27. ATTEMPTING TO SURVEY THE EXACT NATURE OF THE SPIRIT OF INDIAN SPIRITUAL INHERITANCE, SIVANANDA MAKES THE MOST IMPRESSIVE PRESENTMENT OF THE DEEP-LAID PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN ETHICS

—It presupposes the possession of a greater maturity in thought, experience and wisdom than the one that had gone into the making of the mind of the Western moralists, to grasp the Principle by which India has lived its way into transcendental greatness, the Principle that ethics has merely an indispensable instrumental value, is characterised by relativity, constitutes but just a grand episode in the epic of life, in the processes of unfolding the Godhead that life itself bears, can find its Ends not in its own field but in a spiritual realm, gain its higher fulfilment and continuity only in the life of a profound philosophic experience and expression, that spiritual experience is inconceivable without a preceding perfection in moral consciousness, and that moral consciousness has but the one central aim of heightening itself into spiritual experience. The greatness of the Ends it conceives, the idea it has of Man, the outlook it brings to life, the Order and the Law it perceives in the cosmic manifestation, the meaning it reads in the aspirations of the human consciousness, give India a greatness that pours an enduring power into its ethics and renders it an integral part of the bases upon which it founds its Divine Life.—

THE true greatness of Indian spiritual inheritance consists in the secret and glorious methods it has delivered to us for allaying of life's sorrows and human unhappiness and for acquiring for the circumstance of human existence the infinite peace and perfection of the Divine Being. Human grief cannot be alleviated as long as the human indivdual is immured in ignorance and strives merely for his individual pleasure and good. The genius of India has, to its immortal honour, soared above the conventional ties and the bonds of society, grasped the spiritual truth, realised it and proclaimed to the world, for the welfare of all mankind,

Be smart, be steady, be persevering,
Be diligent, be vigilant, be honest.
Waste not, squander not wealth;
Become economical and increase wealth
By safe investment and intelligent business;
Cultivate patience, endurance,
Simplicity, nobility, serenity,
Perseverance, courage,
Sincerity, truthfulness, humility,
Spirit of selfless service, sacrifice,
Cosmic love, non-injury, purity,
Straightforwardness, faith, devotion,
Compassion, generosity, equanimity,
You will succeed in every enterprise.
You will possess also inexhaustible spiritual wealth.
Become a self-made man.
There is a magazine of power within you,
You can do and undo things in this world;
Work hard, unfold your inner faculties;
And shine as a dynamic personality.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Become Rich,
pp. 3-4, 38, 8-9.

25. GUIDED BY PERSONAL PREDILECTIONS IN REFLECTIVE THOUGHT, EMINENT ETHICAL WRITERS HAVE TURNED THE RELATION BETWEEN ETHICS AND METAPHYSICS INTO A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE—SIVANANDA'S MAJOR WORKS IN MORAL INSTRUCTIONS BEAT MANY A PATH OUT OF THE IMPASSE

—Hegel and Green have sought to make ethics hinge itself upon metaphysics; Rashdall and others have held that metaphysics is founded upon ethics, and in keeping with the vigorous opposition of the idealistic tradition in metaphysics and in ethics, Moore and others have contended that ethical categories are independent of the metaphysical categories—The integral vision of Sivananda finds the interdependence and the inalienability of the two sciences, at the lower gradations of the development in human thought and perfection, and at the higher stages of inner spiritual evolution, the consummation and continuance of the latter in a life lived by the former.—

THE moral principles are not absolute in the sense that there is a state which transcends moral restrictions. But it does not mean that the moral laws can be neglected. Morality is the adherence to the inherent sense of the right which is voiced by the conscience that is not bound by selfishness and its several expressions or effects. Morality is the soul-sense, the truth-sense, which refuses to be restricted by the autocracy of the passions that disregard the universality of what is good, and which is free from the agony of imperfection. The purpose of the moral sense is to point out the way to perfection, and morality, therefore, can be judged from how far it directs the consciousness to unrestricted happiness which is not confined to one or some individuals or even to the part of the universe or merely to an aspect of existence. The wider the scope of the selfless consciousness and the joy consequent upon it, the more moral is the method with which such selflessness is practised or the act by which such selflessness is expressed. All selfish actions are immoral. What, then, is

selfish action ? It is an action which is intended to bring satisfaction to the *senses* and the *ego* of one's own individual being, without any intention to overcome the desires of the senses and the ego. In addition to those positive indulgences, immoral action includes other acts like causing harm, practising falsehood and committing theft, either in thought or word, or deed. Passion, anger, greed, pride and jealousy are immoral qualities. Even benevolence cannot justify the violation of moral rules. Morality is "a great vow which is universal, not restricted either by conditions, states, places, times, or circumstances." (*Yoga-Sutras*)

—Swami Sivananda's
Universal Moral Lessons, pp.3-4.

26. PRIDE—SIVANANDA CONSIDERS IT A CONTRADICTION OF THE VERY SPIRIT OF SPIRITUAL LIFE, REGARDS IT AS ANTAGONISTIC TO THE HARMONY OF SOCIAL LIFE, AND RATES IT A FATAL POWER THAT SPELLS DISASTER TO THE DELICATE RISE OF THE SELF IN MAN INTO COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

—As a subject for moral reflection, as an object of vigorous spiritual denunciation, as a flaw that adversely affects the power of personality, as a socially offensive phenomenon, pride has exercised the thought and the judgment of the world's very best intelligences, found classical representations in dramatic creation, of its own prominent forms, as in Milton's Satan and Goethe's Mephistopheles, is assigned by the illustrious Italian poet, Dante, the very first place among the seven sins, and defined by St. Augustine, in the environment of his own subjective cultural consciousness, as "a refusal to humble oneself before God." In pride, Pope finds the "never-failing vice of fools", Ruskin sees "the bottom of all great mistakes" and Shakespeare discovers "an angry ape" that "plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep"; and the proverbs of the world have equated the end of pride with a fall and a destruction. A greater enemy of human sense, thought, culture, and development, Sivananda finds in arrogance which he defines as pride plus a positive contempt for others, and prescribes several methods for overcoming it.—

AN arrogant man is unduly or excessively proud, as of wealth, status, learning, etc. He shows pride in the spirit of conduct. He is unwarrantably assuming, overbearing and haughty. It is that species of pride which consists in exorbitant claims of rank, dignity, estimation or power, or which exalts the worth or importance of the person to an undue degree. It is pride with contempt for others.

The Sanskrit word for arrogance is "Darpa". Arrogance is undue assumption of importance. Arrogance is claiming proudly and unduly. It is a mixture of Rajasic-Tamasic egoism, insolence, rudeness, over-bearing nature and impertinence or imprudence. It is a modification of egoism. It is Ahamkara itself. It is born of ignorance. Maya keeps up her Lila or play through the arrogance of the deluded souls.

man, and spreads before the vision of man the creative God-centred life. Adharma is selfishness and egoism of nature which leads to self-imprisonment, suffering and failure in life. Absolute righteousness means the sacrifice of the self for universal well-being, the well-being pertaining not merely to the earth but to the highest spiritual Reality, the well-being of keeping the Consciousness in its poise liberated from the distraction engendered by the darkness of ignorance, separativeness, division, limitedness. It is the opposite of "I"-ness and "mine"-ness which belong to the nature of the world of bondage.

Life on earth is not self-sufficient and hence, there is a perpetual flux of states to reach other state of superior knowledge and happiness. Life in this world and in this body is only a preparation, a step for the higher life. That which we see and hear of, is not the all ; the Real is beyond this. To reach the Real, the present life acts as a ladder, a field of activity that affords the conditions and the scope for the individual to establish its relations with the most exalted Divine Life. Wrong it is to restrict the outlook of our life to the perceptible phenomena and to judge our sense of values in relation to the objective worth of things. The grandeur and greatness of our life rests upon the measure to which we have raised ourselves into the law of the inmost life in the General, in the Supreme Being. Dealings with one another are justified only so long as they do not deviate from the eternal law of the Spiritual Nature. Neither social welfare nor national betterment is possible by mere clinging to shadows and forgetting the essential Substance. The substance of Truth does not belong to any particular person for it is the being and life of whatever that is. That which is One and Common can only be divisionless and all inclusive in a self-identical existence. This is the fullness of attainment and the culmination of all the aspirations and ideals of life.

In this integral spiritual view of life is rooted the ethical basis of social and domestic relationship. Society is the collective body of individuals determined to pierce the veils and enter the realms of the Immortal Being with the power of a unified and common aspiration and struggle to grasp the Highest. Unified we live; divided we cease to live. Human relationship is not meant to signify anything less than the attempt to live in every-day life the spiritual egoless love that is at the background of all existent beings. The love of the Self means the love of everything of the universe. The Indian genius would complete the teaching "Love thy neighbour as thyself" by adding "because thy neighbour is thy own Self." Altruistic love is the expression of the external unison of the Infinite Life that lies at the depth of the universe. If family or society or nation is understood as a means to separate one from another, however much large the scope of its inclusion of human beings may be, such a family, such a society, such a nation, cannot triumph. All relationship is expected to end in the absolute unity of existence, excluding nothing from itself. This goal of life should be borne in mind in the process of daily activities, if our actions are to be free from selfishness, at one with the universal movement of Nature. Life is a divine worship. The proper conduct of family, the administration of the country and the society is a

part of the Universal Government which looks at the entirety of beings with a strictly impartial eye. We live because God exists and our life is to be perfect and just even as God is perfect and just. We exist in God's Being; we breathe and move in Him.

The knowledge of this unity of life and the proper moral and ethical attitude required to start the process of realising it are achieved through being directly instructed by the Teacher who is truly advanced in knowledge and has attained Self-perfection. The psychology of Gurukulavasa is inseparably connected with the science of self-discipline and Self-knowledge. It is not the mechanical education of the present day that is meant by real education in the Gurukula, but the means of erasing out the propensities that cloud the awareness of the Truth and controlling the distractive nature of the psyche. Self-mastery is the effect of the protracted checking of the ego-sense and centring of it in the General God-Being which is egoless, free from the sense of individual existence. The religion, the philosophy, the code of ethical and social law of India are all universal in their character. Universality is the expression of the nature of the Reality. The highest universal science of the Truth is the Vedanta in which are blended together the different existent views of life. The Vedanta is neither a sect nor a creed, but the science of the Absolute Reality, the only life-giving science, the only solace to the intelligent mankind.

The boldest proclamation of Vedanta is that man is in essence infinitely divine, that everyone is bound to succeed earlier or later, that all are bound to recover in the Infinite Life Divine. The Ideal of the Vedanta is not merely a universal brotherhood, nor merely living a united and happy social life in the world of differentiated individuals, but the being of the Absoluted Essence of the Highest Divinity which is the Life, source and End of the Universe. The Vedanta is the master-technic of transmuting the many into the Undivided One. It means Experience Whole and existing as the birthless and the deathless Infinite. This is the greatest heritage of India, this is the greatest treasure that is India's and this is the greatest gift that India can offer to the world. This is the zenith of culture and civilization, this is the highest knowledge that man can ever attempt to acquire, this is the final fruition of the best of human aspirations.

The awe-inspiring greatness of India rest mainly upon the bed-rock of Absolute-Experience, of Truth-realization, of a poised awareness of the Infinite here on earth, in this life, in the environment of the dance and the pageantry of finitude, relativity, objectivity. As the dwelling place of the Rishis, the Sages, the Men of God-Vision. India enjoys in the estimation of the world, a unique prerogative. All the grand ideals of world's great religions that have moulded the Characters of men, the loftiest tenets of ethics and morality that have raised human beings to the magnanimous height of supreme perfection and all the sublime truths of spirituality that have made man divine and have shaped the spiritual life of nations and of the saviours of mankind, first took their origins in India, the land of those daring spiritual individuals who entered into the heart of the Absolute and proclaimed truths which have eternal value. With its spiritual horizons lit up with the deathless light of the Upanishadic wisdom.

India is essentially a land of spiritual wealth, and its history is the history of religious experience. The Goal of India is Self-realisation or the attainment of God-consciousness through the express manifestation of a spirit of renunciative detachment and through a dynamic divine knowledge. If men are but to understand the significance and the richness of this spiritual inheritance of India, and make the spirit of this heritage part and parcel of their daily awareness, they all would be veritable Gods on earth.

—Swami Sivananda's contribution published in *The Fifth Anniversary Souvenir of the Triplicane Cultural Academy.*

28. THE FOUR FUNDAMENTAL GREEK VIRTUES ARE : WISDOM, COURAGE, TEMPERANCE AND JUSTICE ; THE THREE CARDINAL CHRISTIAN VIRTUES ARE : FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY ; THE ONE AND THE ONLY VIRTUE THAT CAN EVER SUM UP THE LIFE, THE THOUGHT, THE MISSION AND THE MESSAGE OF SIVANANDA IS : LOVE

—More than wisdom, Love is an all-comprehending Virtue and spans in the extent of its pnenomenon, meaning and power, both the ethical and the spiritual thought, action, and achievement. Love is a Power for accomplishment, a Force for culture, a Sentiment that renders one, all life, an Emotion that uplifts the soul of man into a divine Awareness. Love, more than prayer, works wonders, more than alchemy, transmutes base things into rarest substances, more than intelligence, quickness talent and genius, more than logic, assigns to reason the dignity of an unerring thought, more than Law dispenses a justice that elicits ultraneously the enthusiastic approval of Man, God and all Nature. Love is the very essence of life, and Shelly is wholly right in asevering that when this power of love is dead, "man becomes the living sepulchre of himself, and what yet surives is the mere husk of what once he was." Shakespeare presents an unquestionably true psychological perception when in his "Othello" he limns, "Base men being in love have then a nobility in their natures more than is native to them." Indeed, love in its yet higher forms invests even the handicapped and the ugly with a personality and power which are magical in their effects. Within a brief compass, Sivananda touches upon several of the most important phases of the all-unifying and all-universalising Sentiment, the all-embracing Emotion, the all-comprehending Virtue, of Love.—

Love and Religious Experience

Without love there can be no religion.

Where love is, there is God.

Love is the basis of religious Life.

Divine Love has no sex. It sees all in God and God in all.

Love and Cosmic Life

Love is the creative force in the world.

From love this world is born, by love it is sustained and into love it enters.

The Power of love can transform the universe.

Love creates and unites.

Love and Human Unity

Love dissolves hatred and enmity. Love promotes understanding.

Love is the moving principle of all forms of fellowship.

There is real love only when there is true inward identification with the life of another entity.

Love is the most powerful dissolvent.

Therefore, live ye all in the one love Divine.

Love and Mora Nature

Virtue is Love.

Virtue is the unfolding of love.

Whilst love is a dual expression for non-injury, its logical fruition is in service.

The principles of love, compassion, mercy, fellowship and good will are all entwined in the term non-injury.

There is no good life but love.

Dynamic Nature of Love

Love is not a passing sentiment or a feeble emotion.

Love is strong, deep and enduring.

Love and service are inseparable.

Love expresses itself in service of humanity.

Ethics of Love

Loving and suffering go together.

To love is to suffer.

No one who really loves can escape suffering.

Benevolence to all men is love.

Divine love: Its Power

Love is life. Love is energy of existence. Love is happiness. Love is immortality. Love is Wisdom.

Love never fails. Love is success. Love is Victory. Love is eternal sunshine.

Love is a purifying element.

Love is a colossal spiritual force.

Love redeems. Love transforms. Love purifies.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Life, Vol. 19,
No. 9, pp. 207-208.

29. EXTENDING ITS RESEARCHES INTO THE DYNAMISMS OF THE PSYCHOSOMATIC PHENOMENA, THE MODERN MIND WOULD ONE DAY ESTABLISH AS A SCIENTIFIC FACT THE AS YET LITTLE-KNOWN TRUTH THAT LOVE SWEETENS SALIVA, KILLS THE GERMS IN THE SYSTEM, OXIGENATES THE BLOOD, PURIFIES THE WHOLE ORGANISM, AND MAY BE RESORTED TO AS THE CHIEF SOLVENT OF THE SEVERAL ILLS TO WHICH HUMAN INDIVIDUAL IS A HEIR—BUT, THEN, IT IS NOT WITH THE MEDICINAL VALUE AND THE THERAPEAUTIC UTILITY OF LOVE ALONE THAT SIVANANDA CONCERNS HIMSELF, BUT ALSO, LIKE SAINT PAUL THE GREAT APOSTLE, TREATS OF LOVE AS THE HIGHEST TECHNIQUE FOR SPIRITUAL REALISATION

—The purest form of Love resides in the calm, deep and wide-ranging adoration of the Divine ; the heart that loves may best behold the Divine and when love rising into an all-consuming devotion possesses the human heart, man may find himself raised to Godhead, and Godhead seen suffused into manhood. In his Essay on Love, Emerson says that the doctrine of "Love is not old, nor is it new ; if Plato, Plutarch, and Apuleius, taught it, so have Petrarch, Angelo, and Milton." True as this statement is, truer is the affirmation that the doctrine of love is eternally Self-recreating in forms each newer than the other.—

GOD is an embodiment of love. He is an ocean of love. If you wish to attain God-realisation, you must also become an embodiment of love. The only greatness lies in unselfish, pure love. There is not even a tinge of selfishness in pure love. The love of a mother is never exhausted. It never changes. It never tires. Mother's love endures for ever. Love is not getting or bargaining, but giving. Love is goodness, honour and peace and pure living.

It is the very essence of pure love to be willing to suffer for the good of others, to place its happiness in the happiness of others. Pure love strengthens and ennobles the character, gives a higher, pure motive and a nobler aim to every action of life and makes a man strong, noble and courageous.

True, pure love or divine Prem is eternal, unchanging, infinite. It takes unselfish interest in other people's welfare, in other lives than its own.

Physical love is animalism. It is passion exalted and refined. It is gross and sensual.

Love of body or skin is passion. Love of God is Prem or devotion. It is pure love. It is love for love's sake. To love any one for attaining some selfish gain is selfish love. It binds you to this earth. To love all beings with Narayanabhava as manifestations of the Lord is pure love. It is divine love. It leads to liberation. Pure love redeems, purifies the heart and transmutes you into divinity.

A husband loves his wife not for the sake of his wife, but loves her for the sake of his own self. He is selfish. He expects sensual pleasure from her. If leprosy or small-pox destroys her beauty, his love for her ceases. All loves are simply stepping stones to the love of God.

Cultivate pure love slowly in the garden of your heart through Jypa, prayer, Kirtan, faith, devotion, service of saints, humanity and all beings, meditation and company of saints, etc. Love all. Embrace all. Include all in the warm embrace of your love. Cultivate cosmic love or unreserved love.

Love your neighbour as your own self. Love God with all your heart, mind and soul.

Hatred ceases not by hatred but ceases by love. Return love for hatred. Love your enemies, love your inferiors. Love all animals. Love your Guru. Love all saints and sages.

The only Sara Vastu in this world is Prem or Love. It is eternal, infinite and undecaying. Physical love is passion (Moha) or infatuation. Universal love is only Divine love. Cosmic love and universal love are synonymous terms. God is love. Love is God. Selfishness, greed, egoism, vanity, pride, hatred, contract the heart and stand in the way of developing universal love.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 123-125.

30. INTELLECTUALISTIC IN ETHICS, SOCRATES CONCEIVES OF VIRTUE AS KNOWLEDGE; SEEKING TO IMPROVE UPON THE SOCRATIC RATIONAL INSIGHT BY INTRODUCING INTO IT A VOLITIONAL ELEMENT,

ARISTOTLE CONCEIVES OF VIRTUE AS THE RIGHT-WILLING, TH CHOICE OF THE MEAN ; SIVANANDA'S VIEW OF VIRTUE AS LOVE INCLUDES AS INTEGRAL TO ITSELF, THE SOCRATIC KNOWING, THE ARISTOTELIAN WILLING AND EXCEEDS AND CORRECTS THEM BY A GREAT COMPREHENSIVENESS

—An exclusive preoccupation with the art, the understanding, the advocacy and the achievement of the excellent in the merely cultural refinement ruled out from the Hellenic ideal of character, the element of Love, Love without which we can conceive of no Saint, think of no spiritual realization, build no genuine social harmony and human oneness, gain no deep and elemental psychic experience. Love is, for Sivananda, the supreme virtue, the main-spring of all other virtues and sums up the Nature of the Divine,the Soul of all Nature, and the Divinityof Man ; it is the highest Good as also the highest Truth and the highest Beauty that unites in itself the basic processes of the three normative sciences, ethics, logic, and aesthetics.—

APART from the knowledge of scriptures and erudition one should develop a tender heart. Austerity devoid of compassion, charity devoid of faith, spiritual Sadhana devoid of purity, a heart devoid of fellow-feeling, a life without prayer are all as fruitless as the waters of the sandy desert. Love, compassion or mercy, purity, truth, non-injury are the stepping stones to success in the path of God-realization. Satsang, contentment, dispassion and patience are the different steps that lead to the portals of the kingdom of God.

Passive goodness alone is not sufficient. Active goodness or positive goodness is very essential for one's spiritual advancement. The aspirant should be ever doing actions. Not to harm others is passive goodness. This is negative goodness. If you possess humility, obedience and a sweet tongue, you can enter into the hearts of anybody you can subdue anybody. Do your duties properly. Be firm in vows and true in speech. Possess good character. Be kind to all. Conquer wrath. Become master of self. Get rid of envy. You will attain God-realisation, soon.

Love is harmony. It prolongs life. Fear, jealousy, envy and discord shorten life. Love lightens the burden of life and makes self-sacrifice a pleasure. Love is the great-panacea for all ills that this flesh is heir to. Love your parents as much as you love God. If you cultivate love for one and all, you can have unselfish love for humanity. Love for humanity begins at home. First you love your parents, your brothers and sisters, your relatives, your neighbours, your schoolmates, your community, your country, your land and then the whole world. Thus, the small seed of love sown in the young mind of the child gradually develops into universal love. The Immortal can be attained only by performing acts of kindness continuously. Hatred, anger, jealousy are removed by continuous service with a loving heart. Lord Buddha still lives in our hearts. Why ? Because he was extremely kind, did immense service and was an embodiment of compassion. You will get more strength, more joy, more satisfaction

by doing kind acts. Your heart will be at rest when you are about to face death. You will be loved by all. Practice of compassion charitable acts, kind service purify and soften the heart, turn the heart-lotus upwards and prepare the aspirant for the reception of Divine Light.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, pp. 157.

31. RETROSPECTIVELY REFLECTING OVER ARISTOTLE'S MODEL MAN WITH HIS MAXIM OF THE GOLDEN MEAN CARLYLE'S HERO NIETZSCHE'S SUPERMAN WAGNER'S SIEGRFRIED, NEWMAN'S GENTLEMAN, KIPLING'S SUPERIOR MAN, SHAW'S SUPER-PERSON, SAMUEL ALEXANDER'S DEITY-BEARER, WE GROW KEENLY CONSCIOUS OF THE LIMITATIONS EACH OF THESE NOTIONS OF THE IDEAL MANHOOD PRESENT IN CONTRAST TO THE PATTERN OF PERFECTION PORTRAYED IN THE LIFE AND LITERATURE OF SIVANANDA, AS THE VEDA'S MYSTIC-SEER, THE UPANISHADIC SAGE, THE GITA'S STHITHAPRAJNA YOGI, AND JNANI, AND THE VAISHNAVA JIVANMUKTA

—Without reasoning like Nagarjuna, thinking like Newton, writing like Racine reporting like Sanjaya, articulating wisdom like Solomon, conversing like Narada, composing like Bach, painting like Van Dyck, Rapheal and Ravivarma Sivananda has, by virtue of the symphonic harmonies of his fully awakened Awareness, of his heart of universal compassion, and by reason of his integral realisation of the supra-ethical Essence within himself, in all mankind, in all Nature, and in the transcendent Godhead, reached the End of Evolution, scaled in his own inner Consciousness the heights of Perfection, and the most powerful personality he commands is but a sheer outer mask, an excuse for the perpetuation, by the Impersonal Personality seated within him, of the divine Mission of forming human character, quickening human personality, divinising human life, on earth, and raising as many aspiring human individuals as possible, through the disciplines of ethics, to the splendid planes of Life beyond the light and the shade, the "ought" and the "is", the good and the bad, the right and the wrong of the duality-ridden ethical realms.—

—Incontrovertibly, his traits and qualities are the attributes of a most powerful personality firmly centred in the Nature of God-Experience. There is magic in his majestic tenderness ; and the meanest of mankind merits his considerate attention, moving reverence and the delicate touch of his finest spiritual sentiment that inform with activity their 'dull' thought, instil into their entire lives a strange sense of dignity, and unnoticed leave in their efforts a mighty mission. Notable among the many gifts in his ethereal magnanimity, is the gift to lavish praise, praise in which resides a power ; and, the praise poured so indiscriminately and on those so undeserving, has become a force for re-moulding character, a something that makes the whole system feel nourished, that impels the glands to let in their juices into the blood, that quickens the powers for moral and spiritual development. There is no man on earth, who does not deserve the tonic of a little praise. There is no soul of evil altogether devoid of an element of goodness which our Sage would discern and make it the enviable object of many an appropriate paean of praise. Essentially,

man is a Divinity slowly struggling its circuitous way out of the restrictions of consciousness in the human environment, out of the heavy encumbrances of an age-old lower nature. Sin is a mistake into which an evolving intelligence inadvertently slips for the purpose of receiving a sound lesson of experience ; sinner is but a saint-in-the-making, he writes ; and, goes on to heap praise on the redeeming aspects of the character of the apparently unfortunate one, praise couched in such words that do exert on his or her mind a specific influence. An enhancer of every excellence, an admirer of every merit, a promoter of every-thing good and noble, a contributor to the cohesive forces of culture, harmony and integration, he has for everyman a word of generous praise, for every artistic piece of some intrinsic worth a written testimonial, for every expression of elevated character a high eulogy ; and there is no limit to the number of titles he awards, of the gifts he gives, of the letters of encouragement he posts. Out of every twenty letters he writes, seven are invariably commendatory, complimentary, benedictory, encomiastic : the result is, men are made conscious of the vaguest of their possibilities, of their nascent powers of goodness and greatness, of their talents and capabilities, and goaded to unfold and exercise them, to make them operative and dynamic. The thought of a Heart that loves so persuasively, so overwhelmingly, so continuously, of an admiring spiritual Guide, obliges them ; they are bound by a potent new tie of psychological affiliation and responsibility and for that very reason, cannot but exert the best of their energies and rise to the height of his praise, up to his expectations. So many personalities are formed ; so many powers of goodness developed ; so many excellent qualities latent in the inner layers of consciousness, made patent and active ; so many beauties of the Soul aided to blossom—lo, by a single Heart of highest spiritual magnanimity ! And the minds that are made strong, the hearts great, the characters virtuous, the natures excellent, love in their turn, under the constraints of noblest obligation, the Master, with moving gratitude ! What magnetic power is not hidden in a Singer, who sings of the discovered seeds of the best basic traits in individual personalities, a Chanter who not only lives by the belief that every man is an exalted creature but makes endless efforts to enliven and galvanize the noblest qualities in the amorphous units of organised human nature ? Down through the centuries, was there a far-famed saint, who did not hold fast to his own experiential doctrine that every individual is somehow his Brother, his deity deserving or rather evoking reverence, love and service ? And which intellectually conceited human heart is not secretly pleased to be praised by an overpoweringly considerate, loving and serving person of high spiritual eminence ? Or, should we doubt that the cautious cleverness of the self-withdrawing critic is but a comment on this shrewder aphoristic observation ?—"A refusal of praise is a desire to be praised twice".—La Rochefoucauld : *Maxims*, No. 152.

The human individual as a dynamic functional unit acquires personality value in the circumstances of social life. A person inspires our reverence or stimulates

our repugnance, attracts our attention or is unnoticed, derives worth or is denounced, in accordance with the personal appearance, the quality of behaviour-tendencies and emotional traits, the nature of abilities, the beneficent or adverse influence, and many situational meanings such as selflessness or selfishness, spirit of sacrifice or self-aggrandisement, he or she brings into expression and active play. In common practice, the measurements of a personality are taken in terms of the definite meaningful situations made manifest by the prominent characteristics and activities or products of the individual in question, with specific regard to the human environment. The very ascription of sainthood and divinity to Swami Sivananda, presupposes our instinctive or deliberate assessment and appreciation of his highest spiritual value to the society ; and that sainthood rated in relation to the most wholesome power of conduct and life he has been tirelessly exercising on fairly large sections of mankind, is itself the magnificent compound of a general functional phenomenon constituting his personality as a whole. The unusual degree of admiration and veneration we are individually drawn to offer at the altar of his rich and many-sided operative presence, determines the degree to which he is for us, a charming and marvellous personality. The profundity of the favourable impression he imprints on our minds, the intensity with which he affects and influences the development of our internal spiritual life, the palpableness of the modifications, in our external character, he has brought about, bring out the power of his personality. The uniqueness of his personality consists chiefly in the rarity of the qualitative nature he expresses in the pattern of his subtle relationship with us, in the splendid vitality of a spiritual persuasion he wields on us. Above all, the non-prohibitive, disarming and endearing character of his personality, is attributable to the fact that his beaming countenance is pre-eminently human in its beckoning. But, is he a merely human personality divinely perfected in its main strands ? Does not a deeper analysis disclose to us that the beauties of his unique personality-expressions, the spiritual powers of his character elements, his actions of singular value to a spiritually dormant humanity, are but so many emanations from the Godhead he has integrally realised within the field of his own consciousness ? Should we doubt that his intelligence, will, action and life are fully instinct and aflame with the multiple energies of a Divine Awareness ? What are these excellent colours and beneficent characteristics of his flexible personality but outward self-expressions of a self-revealed spiritual Power within him ? Is not his imponderable spiritual nature, a dynamic flux of various impersonal powers of knowledge, love and service, which are being constantly organised under the cohesive and ordering power of his master-sentiment to uplift and enlighten the masses of men, into an apparently permanent personality forming the necessary medium for the conveyance to mankind, in the measure possible, the light and contents of his divine consciousness ? Therefore, personality with him is not, as it has always been with the greatest personages of the world, fixed in a settled character, in its dignified, but petrified formations, in its pattern of most pleasing

traits ; it is ever changing unique systems of spiritual quality-structures erected from time to time, to meet the demands of the specific occasions, by a vigorously operative self-luminous inner Nature ; it is flexibly constructed under the directing power of a Prophetic being determined to labour for the spiritual salvation of man, out of the limitless possibilities of the light and substance of a Consciousness deeply seated in the widest of mystic experiences that belong to the unfathomed reaches of man's true being. In individuals unliberated in consciousness, personality is on the objective side, phenomenal, subject to a split, to disintegration, to regression in strength and appeal, capable of organisation or intergration or progression in its powers and influence ; it is enlivened and energised by mental brilliance or moral splendour, or greatness in some field of human thought, activity, life ; it is characterised by the pursuit of high aims and ideals, or governed by altruistic feelings or depending on an imposing appearance. But in a Master of Self-realisation, the confines of human personality are broken, and he brings into being, in reaction to different occasions, different personalities moulded by the divine Spirit within him, and through this instrumentality expresses in a seeming human way, a divine love, the nature, intentions, will of a God, the cosmic powers of Wisdom and Harmony, a divine thought, a divine feeling, a divine mission. The beneficial bustle of the busy daily life of the Master is a purposeful stir of the awakened Divine Soul. Eluding our mental-measurements, exceeding the best of our understanding, he inspires our intelligence, elevates our feelings appeals to our purified natures, and reveals himself to our spiritual vision as a divine being, who is entirely impersonal in his integral Self-experience. To sum up all, he is an impersonal personality, a transcendental individual, a universal Man, a Consciousness untyrannized by the yoke of human thought, a Presence liberated from but yet playing through the confines of a happy human form, a wholly non-personal Spirit projecting its rays through the mould of a personality. Where the manifestation of the pure Light and Nature of the realised Godhead, in the marvellous expressions of his everyday individual life is concerned, these two lines of Alfred Tennyson are peculiarly appropriate : "*Thou seemest human and divine, The highest, holiest manhood, Thou.*" Transcending man's most liberal conceptions, the Master imparts to the awareness of our aspiring being, a sense of the Infinite ; the most personal of all his life's touches are striated with the strong veins of impersonality ; in tones of individuality he presents for our experience the terms of universality ; and just where in our heightened perception we see him to be universal in life, he discloses to our spiritual sense the Touch of the Transcendent.—

For the common man, presenting a broad-view of what goes to constitute a real personality in contrast to limited popular conception of personality as a totality of sheer physical appearance, Sivananda proceeds to give a very brief sketch of personality assessed in terms of social influence exerted by an individual, show the superiority of the qualitative Genius in gnostic spiritual life, over every other type of world-renowned and socially most successful perso-

nality, imply that though literary talents and intellectual traits may acquire for Dr. Johnson of unattractive physical features, a personality, personality is distinctively, a matter of ethical excellences and personal dynamisms inspired by high ideals, and what is more, that ultimately personality itself has to be transcended and in that state, the purposes of ethical idealism which brought into being a powerful personality, come to be consummated in fulfilment, a fact to which the East that is India, has always risen in experience, whereas the West has, on account of itsalmost congenital incapacities to stretch is soul into transcendental realisations, entrenched itself in valuing and pursuing personality for personality's sake.

IN common parlance when one says that Dr. Tagore has a good personality, he means that Dr. Tagore has a strong, stalwart, tall figure, a beautiful complexion, a fine nose, sharp and lustrous eyes, broad chest, a muscular body, symmetrical limbs, curly hair and so on. That which distinguishes one man from another is personality. In reality, personality, is something more than this. It includes a man's character, intelligence, noble qualities, moral conduct, intellectual attainments, certain striking faculties, special traits or characteristics, sweet, powerful voice, etc. All these things put together constitute the personality of Mr. So and So. The sum total of all these things make up the personality of a man. Mere physical characteristics cannot make up the personality.

If one man is able to influence many people, we say that such and such a man has a magnetic personality. A full-blown *Yogi* or *Jnani* is the greatest personality in the world. He may be of a small stature. He may be ugly also. He may be clad in rags. And yet he is a mighty personality, a great *Mahatma*. People flock to him in thousands and pay homage to him. A man who has attained ethical perfection by the continued practice of right conduct or *Yama* and *Niyama* has also got a magnetic personality. He can influence millions. But he is inferior to a *Jnani* or a *Yogi* who has got full knowledge of the Self.

Dr. Samuel Johnson had an awkward figure, a pot belly and unsymmetrical limbs. But he was the greatest personality of the age. He was neither a *Yogi* nor a *Jnani*. But he had intellectual attainments. He was a great essayist. He had good command of the English language. He is famous for his bombastic style. It is called Johnsonian English. Just hear some of his lines:— "Will you be kind enough to allow my digits into your odoriferous concavity and extract therefrom some of the pulvarised atoms which ascending my nasal promontary cause a great titilation of all my olfactory nerves ?"

Rich people also have got some personality. This is due to the Money-power'. They may be licentious. Money has its own share in the manking up of the personality of man. It infuses in him a sort of colouring. The charitable nature may cover up their licentious nature and may send some fragrance abroad. People flock to him. Lord Jesus says : "Charity coverèth a multitude of sins."

Character gives a strong personality to man. People respect a man who has a good character. Moral people command respect everywhere. He who is honest, sincere,

truthful, kind and liberal-hearted always commands respect and influence at the hands of people. *Sattwic* virtues make a man divine. He who speaks truth and practises *Brahmacharya* becomes a great and dynamic personality. Even if he speaks a word there is power in it and people are magnetised. Character-building is of paramount importance if a man wants to develop his personality. *Brahmacharya* is the root of a magnetic personality. No development of a strong personality is possible without celibacy.

Personality can be developed. Practice of virtues is indispensable. One should try to be always cheerful. A morose, gloomy man cannot attract and influence people. He is an infectious parasite amidst society. He spreads gloom everywhere. A man of a jolly nature with the spirit of service, with humility and obedience can influence millions. The law of "like attracts like" operates in the physical and mental planes. A man of strong personality need not send invitations to people. Just as bees come and perch as soon as flowers blossom, so also people of lesser minds are attracted to men of strong personality of their own accord.

A powerful, sweet voice, knowledge of music, knowledge of astrology, astronomy, palmistry art, etc., add to the personality of man. One should know how to behave and adjust himself to other people. You must talk sweetly and gently. This produces a tremendous impression. You must be polite, civil courteous. You must treat others with respect and consideration. He who gives respect to others gets respect. Humility brings respect by itself. Humility is a virtue that subdues the hearts of others. A man of humility is a powerful magnet or loadstone.

You must know the ways of approaching people. You must know how to talk with them and how to behave towards them. Behaviour is most important. An arrogant, stubborn and self-willed man can never become a man of strong personality. He is disliked by all.

Apart from implicitly insisting upon the importance of possessing a personality and indicating some lines of action along which it develops to a great perfection, Sivananda has, in this article, made clear that temporary attractiveness and magnetism are lent by money, for constituting a kind of personality for the rich, that the gifts of nature, the achivements of ability, the acquisition of special skills add to the power and make for a rich and distinguishing personality, and that the Christ-like qualities resulting from an ethical self-flowering invest the personality with a rare power, impelling in its nature, compelling in its attraction, immense in its value to the society as a whole.—

Develop a joyful nature. Always keep a smiling and cheerful face. This will give you a good personality. People will like you much. Your superiors will be very much pleased. Have an amiable nature, a modest and unassuming temperament. You will succeed in your interviews with all big guns. Take down notes of what you want to speak with them in the course of the interview. Keep a small memorandum slip in your pocket. Remember the points well and talk slowly and gently. Then the man will patiently hear. Be not agitated in your talk. Do not become nervous. Be bold Pay respects with sincerity as soon as yo:

see the person. Do not stand erect like the proverbial man, who holds the gas-light in a marriage procession. Gently bow your head with feeling. The man will be immensely pleased. He will be glad to receive you with a depth of feeling and you will get success in your interview. Talk about the important points first and just review in your mind whether you have finished all the eight points you wanted to talk. In the West, people care for personality. In India people care for individuality and assert "Aham Asmi" which means "I exist." They try to destroy the personality to realise the Self.

Endeavour to possess a magnetic personality. Try to possess that strange and mysterious power, personal magnetism which charms and fascinates people. Understand the secrets of personal influence. Develop your will-power. Conserve all leaking energy. Enjoy robust, blooming health and a high standard of vigour and vitality and achieve social and financial success in every walk of life. If you can understand the amazing secrets of personal influence, you can increase the earning capacity and can have a broader and happier life.

A strong personality is a very valuable asset for you. You can develop it if you will. "Where there is a will there is a way" is a maxim which is as true to-day as it was from the time of Adam. Win laurels of name and fame and attain success in life through a dynamic personality. You can do it. You must do it. You know the science now.

—Swami Sivananda's
Contribution published in the
My Magazine of India, Madras.

32. THE TREASURIES OF ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE ARE REPLETE WITH MORAL INSIGHTS AND INSTRUCTIONS AND EVERYWHERE IN THE SYSTEMS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT ETHICAL SPECULATIONS CAN BE SEEN INHERENT, BUT IT IS THE GITA WITH ITS IDEAL OF WORLD-WEAL THAT CLAIMS FROM SIVANANDA, HIMSELF THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS EXAMPLE OF LOKASANGRAHA, AN ENTIRE BOOK TO THE TREATMENT OF ITS ETERNAL AND UNIVERSALISTIC ETHICAL THOUGHT

In the presentment of ethics, Neoplatonism adopts the metaphysical standpoint; in ethical theorization, the last syllables of Clement, Bruno and Spinoza fell on the intellectual love of God , in ethical practice, Toaism and Stoicism exhibit indifferentism- this standpoint, this theorization, this practice are found in the Bhagavad Gita in their transmuted, clarified, exalted and most dynamic forms, bearing a meaning too profound not to satisfy deeply the aesthetic being, too powerful in its effect upon human mind to leave it untransformed in a measure, too decisive in the bearing on life, thought and action to be anything else than integral and universalistic in implications. The Gita views the world as a purposive moral order; and seen in a broad light, it is the same as the New-platonists conception of it as an emanation of God, and the Vedic ideas of it as a living and throbbing organism indwelt by the rhythms of

Cosmic Law ; man has to accord his will with the Laws obataining in the system of the Moral Order, abide by the Love of the Divine, and act with the awareness of the Self within himself as the Immortal. A consistent and most convincing account of the central ethical ideas of the Bhagava Gita, Sivananda presents hereunder.—

SRIMAD Bhagavad Gita is the Gospel of Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna is regarded as the Purna-Avatar of God. He was perfect in every respect. God is All-pervading; Sri Krishna's life-on-earth, too, was all-comprehensive. Study Srimad Bhagavata and the Mahabharata. You will understand what a multifaceted diamond Sri Krishna was. He was a wonderful child, divine boy, resplendent youth, dearest friend, mighty warrior, wise administrator, sweet comrade, master of displomacy, protector of the meek, death of the wicked, preserver of Dharma, clever strategist, humble servant obedient pupil, dutiful son, loving husband and Supreme Guru. These and countless others are but aspects of His Immanence as Krishna. Above all these, He is God Who, in His own transcendental nature, is the Lord of lords, the father and mother of all creation, the very Soul of all that exists. He is the substratum of all existence. He is the Reality, immortal, eternal, infinite and absolute. He is not only immortal but He is Immortality Itself.

It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that the scripture that He propounded should partake of all these great virtues that characterised His Divine Manifestation and His transcendental Nature. Bhagavad Gita is so compreshensive that everyone can draw inspiration and guidance from it, whatever his social status may be, whatever his profession and in whatever stage of spiritual evolution he may be. For, into the Bhagavad Gita the Lord has woven a beautiful and universal pattern of ethics that would appeal and apply to all. The grand edifice of the ethics of the Bhagavad Gita has been built on the Eternal Cornerstones of (1) Immortality of the Soul; (2) Immanence of God; (3) Impermanence of the World; (4) Immediacy of Liberation. Because these truths are universal, the Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita also have universal application.

Existing as He does as the very Immortal Principle in all beings, Lord Krishna proclaims with unimpeachable authority, the Immortality of the Soul. Being manifest here in this world as the very life and soul of all beings, He reveals the Immanence of God. Being the witness of the actions of Prakriti and the interplay of the Gunas, and in the perfect knowledge of the nature of this play of the Gunas, He declares that the objects of the world are evanescent, that all that is born must die, that all that is created must perish. Being the One who is conscious of the One Imperishable Indivisible Truth which is never affected by the illusory play of Prakriti in which the Jiva which is essentially one with that Supreme Being dreams that he is dumb-driven and bound, the Lord asserts that Liberation is possible here and now.

The thundering revelation of the Immortality of the Soul in the Sloka: *Ajo Nityah saswathoyam Purano Na Hanyate Hanyamane Sareere* warns man not to deceive himself by trying to ignore the Law of Karma, the Law of Rebirth, and the Law

of Retribution. The Soul within him does not die with the death of the body ; and, so long as it does not liberate itself by attaining Jnana, is bound to reap the harvest of the seeds it has sown in this birth—*Dhruvam Janma-Mritasya*. The Jiva which imagines that it is the doer of an action is bound to it by an invisible thread called attachment. The action is a rubber-ball with a long rubber-band attached to it which is given to the children to play with ; one end of the band is tied to the finger of the child and he throws the ball on the ground ; and the ball promptly rebounds to the child's hand. Similarly, every action performed by you with the idea that you are doing it, with a desire to attain a certain end, is bound to rebound on you sooner or later, in this birth or in another. Death itself is but going from one room to another; and so long as the band of attachment is not broken by the knife of non-attachment (*Asanga Shastrena Dridhena Chhitwa*) and the knot of desire born of ignorance is not loosened ; the ball of action is bound to come back. One who realises this will do no evil. It is ignorance of the immortality of the soul and the inevitable working of the law of action and reaction that make the wicked man go his evil way. The wise man dismisses the misfortunes that may befall him as the working out of the evil Karmas of a previous birth and is indifferent to them ; and he is active in cultivating goodness and in doing good, convinced, in the words of Sri Krishna, "that the doer of good never comes by evil" and that in the life to come, he will not only be free from misery and misfortune, but will get greater opportunities of progressing more rapidly towards the goal, viz,. Jnana. The doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul is, therefore, the most important corner-stone in the Gita-ethics.

The next is the revelation of the Immanence of God. God is not a cruel monarch or just a benevolent deity sitting on a golden throne in a far-away city depending for his knowledge of your actions on agents and spies. He is the Indweller of everyone. He is the witness of your thoughts. People around you watch your actions and hear your words; God watches not only your actions, but the motives that prompt them ; He hears not only your words but the whisper of your heart's intentions. It is therefore, that Lord Jesus, too, said: "thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." The doctrine of the Immanence of God exposes, too, the hypocrite who pretends to worship God in a shrine, ignoring the Lord walking bare-bodied on the road with a begging bowl in hand, who is writhing in pain, groaning under subjection, and groping in the darkness of ignorance the disguises assumed by Him to test your sincerity and to give you a chance to worship Him truly, and to attain Him here and now. Look up and see your Lord watching you through the eyes of everyone you meet, Have you got the sincerity to recognise Him ? Then you are fit to realise God and your own Immortality. He is here, near you ; and in order to bring this fact graphically before you, Sri Krishna describes Himself as the several manifestions set forth in the Vibhuti Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita.

The third—the doctrine of the impermanence of the world—is a stern warning against your setting too much store by the things of this world. The greatest treasure

you acquire is but straw ! The least that you do to the Lord immanent in all around you is the key to inexhaustible treasure. The things that you acquire are of this world which will pass away; but by the service you render to God immanent here, you are watering the plant of Immortality. Remember; the things that you possess, and the whole world ; not only this world which is but a mere speck of dust in this universe, but the universe itself; not only this but countless universes that constitute creation- are but objects of a passing dream of the Supreme Being. Grabbing them is like catching hold of a cobra mistaking it for a rope to tie round the waist as belt. Great is the misery of one, who takes the world as reality and runs after the pleasures of the world. Supreme Bliss is the prize that awaits one who, understanding the evanescence of the world, applies himself to Nama-Smaran, Japa, Kirtan, selfless service, renunciation and meditation, in short, to the self divine.

To such a one liberation is promised here and now. One who, through knowledge of the Immortality of the Soul, the Immanence of God, and the Impermanence of the world, casts off attachment to the world and the actions of Prakriti, attains Liberation here and now—*Ihaiva Tairjitassargo Yesham Samye Sthitham Manah, Nirdosham hi Samam Brahma tasmat Brahmani Te Sthithah.* Not only that; the true devotee of the Lord attains Him quite easily: *Tasyaham Sulabhah Partha Nityayuktasya Yoginah.* This doctrine of the Immediacy of Liberation, this doctrine of hope, is the great incentive to the diligent student of the Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita and is, therefore, the fourth important cornerstone of the Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethics of the Bhagavat Gita, pp. 3-8.

A TREND IN THE GITA ETHICS

"Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury forgiveness, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control; indifference to the objects of the senses, absence of egoism, perception or reflection over the evil in birth, death old age, sickness and pain, non-attachment, non-identification of of Self with son, wife, home and the rest, constant even-mindedness on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable, unswerving devotion unto Me by the Yoga of non-separation, resort to solitary places, distaste for the society of men, constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of true knowledge—this is declared to be Knowledge. and what is opposite to it is ignorance."

Study the Bhagavad Gita again and again. Repeatedly Krishna extols righteousness. The greatest Bhakta is—not one who goes on rolling the beads, with selfishness, lust, anger. and greed enshrined in his heart but—one who is endowed with all auspicious qualities, and who is devoted to the welfare of humanity. So is a Sthita-prajna or a Gunatita. Lord Krishna does not define Jnana as scriptural erudition or an intellectual appreciation of philosophic truths or the capacity and cleverness to string words together and to indulge in vain debating. He defines Jnana as the sumtotal of the best of virtues ! Read the thirteenth chapter of the Gita : you will understand this clearly.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethics of the Bhagavad Gita,
p. 11.

33. ENCOUNTERING THE TRAGIC FEATURES OF EXISTENCE AND UNABLE BY ITS PETTY SENTIMENTS AND PETTIER STANDARDS TO MEET THE IMMENSITY OF THE TERRIBLE YET APPARENT INJUSTICES IN LIFE, HUMAN EXPERIENCE IN SUCH GUISES AS AN IMPOTENT IMPATIENCE OF A SELF-SORROWING HEART, THE ARROGANCE OF AN IGNORANT SCIENTIFIC TEMPER, THE SELF-COMPLACENT CONCEPTUALITY OF AN ARM-CHAIR PHILOSOPHER, THE CONTENTED EPECURIAN, THE CONCEITED MATERIALIST COMFORTED BY A BRIEF AUTHORITY AND HAPPY WITH A FEW PRECARIOUS SENSATE PLEASURES DOLLED OUT TO HIM BY THAT GENEROUS FORTUNE WHICH FAVOURS FOOLS, DENOUNCES THE DYNAMIC WORKINGS OF THE DIVINE GRACE, QUESTIONS DIVINE JUSTICE AND REPUDIATES THE DIVINITY ITSELF—WITH AN ACUMEN ALL HIS OWN, SIVANANDA CORRECTS HASTY HUMAN JUDGMENT AND REINSTATES IN THE MIND OF MAN THE REALITY OF THE OMNIPRESENT OPERATIONS OF THE BENEVOLENT AND PROVIDENTIAL LAWS OF THE DIVINE

A PERSON in a state of horrified shock or surprise can hardly adjudge events and occurrences in their proper perspective. It is a sane and dispassionate analysis alone that will help to reveal great global events in their true colours. On such analysis it will be found that sensation of horror assailing man is only superficial and has an unmistakable vein of egoity. To start with, man has a lop-sided conception of Deity. Man stubbornly sticks to this conception. Beginning, being and ending constitute the plan of the universe. This is the Law followed by all phenomenon. The Deity is the Creator, preserver and also destroyer. Man never likes to accept the full implications of the third aspect of the Supreme Being. He is partial-viewed and always wishes to accept only that part of truth, which is convenient and palatable to him. Man applauds, commends and expresses gratitude for the creation and preservation parts of the Divine Plan, but when its logical sequence in the form of destruction is made manifest, he frantically entreats the intervention and aid of the Lord, as though this destructive process is being wrought by some third agency entirely distinct and different from the Supreme One—the One-without-a-second Man must be bold. He must gaze at Truth square in the face. He must learn to accept courageously all its aspects. The realm of justice has no place for the play of emotion.

You can save yourself from the attack of an individual or a party of external assailants; but you cannot save yourself when your actions turn against you for retribution. When the rod of punishment falls upon mankind for its own folly, no one can help it or check it, Therefore, the ancients always urge man to do good actions. If good alone had been done, good alone would come, If no harm had been done, no harm could come.

The extreme irrationality and perversion of mankind is now here and at no time so fully and forcifully apparent when he rants at God for conditions that he himself has knowingly and deliberaly brought about. Saints have shouted themselves hoars from the housetops during the past centuries, calling upon man to embrace the right and to abandon the wrong. Further, they have clearly pointed out in unmistakable terms what is right and conducive of good and

what is wrong and leading to harm. Persecution is what they have for the most part received at society's hands. Yet the saints have persisted in it and scriptures have all along been silent voices calling man to tread the path of righteousness and give at the same time a vivid picture of what the consequences of transgression would be. Are these not provisions for man's blessedness made by the spontaneous grace of the Deity ? What has mankind profited by these through successive centuries ? Upon sane thought, can anything else than what is witnessed today result from mankind's wanton neglect of God's good counsels embodied in the scripture ? Can anything else accrue to him from his flaunting of the saints, and the Seers ? Those manifestations of the Lords' compassion and love that He sent to redeem mankind, the man has disowned and even destroyed with his own acts of deliberate transgression.

Just think. Man conceives a peculiar pattern of what the Lord should be and he looks forward to the Lord's obligingly fitting into it. Then alone he would certify Him as being 'satisfactory'. If the Deity fails to fit into man's preconceived pattern, then He falls into his disfavour. We have certain notions of what constitutes mercy, grace, justice, etc., and we want these factors to manifest upon the earth-plane in just that way we would like them to be. Trying to understnd God is not like the selection of a bride that man may lay down 'such shall be her fairness', ,this the colour of her eyes', "so much her height," thus the shape of her nose, ears" "such and such the sound of her laughter", etc., etc. To try to say that divinity should act in a particular way is as unreasonable as to sit before a master-musician of the realm and before he has sung for 5 minutes to ask him to stop and change his tune and style to something more desirable and *pleasing to us.* Such attitutes arise out of the fact that we are not rooted in the faith that He is all-goodness and all Good alone proceeds from Him. There is good and bad in everything in this world, but there is always good alone in what the Lord does. He who knows the secret of God's ways is never upset by any calamity.

Real faith and love are something quite different from what man knows it to be. The love that is lost when the beloved changes his tone is no love at all. The faith that flies away at the time of a test is no faith at all. Real faith is independent. of externals. It abides undisturbed even amidst the extremest of cataclysms and calamities. Emotion, if allowed to predominate, works subtle havoc. Love and compassion for man are good. They are great. They are grand. But love of man should not be allowed to shatter your faith and belief in the Grace and all-goodness of God, who made man, Instead, let man try to sit and reflect for a while over the true import of what takes place around him. Most of his hasty judgment and wrong inferences from world events is due to his extreme narrowness of vision. He takes physical experiences alone to be weighty and of count. Gross physical violence upsets him, But in reality, mental cruelty and torture of far greater intensity than physical pain are being perpetrated on a millionfold scale throughout the land. In each society and family there are wretched dependents and sufferers who silently undergo a far more acute torment that in

countless cases leads to suicide, This only appears as an item of news in the local daily. None perceives the real pain that drove the person to seek death as an easy avenue of relief. Then; in the prisons and hospitals, countless souls are groaning from the terrible pain even at the present moment while you read this. Yet how many feel for this pain and torture ? Thus, it is the mere presence and direct perception of a public event that operate as factors to incite sorrow and sympathy. If one's vision were not narrow, one would feel like Christ or Buddha. Moreoever, numerous stray murders and assaults have been occurring daily since centuries. No one thinks of them as anything terrible. Now just because the self-same phenomenon happens to occur en-masse, the mere magnitude of numbers deludes man into a denunciation of the Lord's Justice and Goodness. Moreover, so is man's delusion that whereas such sudden outbreak of lawless and disorganised killing horrifies him, yet he takes the utmost pride in the fact of a systematic and organised warfare. He will aid it with enthusiasm. Even the most educated, intelligent and cultured of people considered it a privilege to distinguish themselves in the war Effort. They spoke with great pride and satisfaction about their son or nephew or grandson being in the R. A. F. or Eastern Command and so on. They contributed to the Viceroy's War Fund. They received congratulations with joy when their son in the Army or Navy was promoted in rank or decorated with medals. All this was done knowing full well that every action of theirs meant some shattered home in Europe or Japan, the merciless death of some civilian population, including school children perhaps in distant Europe or the Middle East. This did not deter them from their zealous co-operation in the organised preparations for killing in War. This is the strange mentality of man who does not himself know what he is thinking and what he is doing. The average citizen cheerfully bore starvation rations, nerve-racking blackouts, torturous travelling conditions, acute shortage of housing and normal amenities of life all in order to adjust himself to a human Government's plan. Whereas when the Universal Divine plan works out upon well-regulated Laws, man frets and fumes instead of trying to adjust himself to its workings. This is because man never sincerely tries to understand.

The ancient scriptures were not written for fun nor are they to be regarded as playings jnst to entertain man for a while. They embody and do seek to reveal great eternal Truths. Why are we blind to the lessons of the Puranas. The workings of the Divine Law may be mysterious, but to the discerning eye, they are clear and unmistakable. The logic of the All-Merciful is straight. Sri krishna was the Supreme Para-Brahman incarnate. He was Divinity. Even Shakti, who is but His hand-maid was able to kick mighty Krishna upon the chest and vanish into the skies. Yet the blessed parents of this Divinity incarnate, the faithful Vasudeva and Devaki had to remain 'cruelly' confined in the prison-house until after the slaying of Kamsa. Then alone they got their release by Krishna's hands. Is this not self-explanatory enough to give us an idea of how He works ? Lord Rama was Divinity incarnate ; yet, the divine Sita had to be a captive in Lanka for several years. Was it beyond Rama's power to

have got her back within a moment through His Divine Sankalpa? The Great Christ commanded Nature. He healed the sick and raised the dead. Could he not have prevented the fate upon the Cross? Should not man deeply ponder upon these significant facts presented before him for the specific purpose of giving him an insight into the working of the Divine Will?

Saints and Sages have thus ever lived and died only for universal weal. As children and messengers of the Divine, they seek to serve the Divine will and to further His Plan. With all their deep love and sympathy for man, yet their deeper insight, into the Wisdom of God make them aware of the ultimate good that apparently painful experiences lead to. They take a historical view of events and are secure in the knowledge that from the apparently painful, abundant good arises later. Were man to strive to attune himself to the Divine will rather than to wish to the contrary, he will be enabled to see light where it is but all darkness now. Should the need arise, the Lord Himself can alter completely the face of things by His All-Powerful Divine will or His Sat-Sankalpa.

Beloved Self! The door of Grace is always wide open. The realm of Grace is ever accessible to whosoever turns from deliberate evil and face Godward. Yet, man slams the door shut with his aggressive viciousness. All along he has been taking pride in deliberately doing exactly that which is opposed to Dharma. He has voluntarily discarded good and revelled in evil and yet he desires to have conditions that would accrue only from saintliness and virtue. It is to awaken him to the consciousness of this error and to make him aware of the necessity of goodness that the Divine Dispenser, in His All-Love and Mercifulness sends occassional bitter pill for sick humanity to swallow.

—Swami Sivananda's
Contribution published in one of
1947-issues of the
Vedanta Kesari, Madras.

34. IN MANU, VALMIKI, VYASA, CHANAKYA, SUKRACHARYA, BHARTRIHARI, THE FATHERS OF THE PREDOMINANTLY ACADEMIC EUROPEAN ETHICAL TEACHING HAVE HAD INDIAN PRECEDENTS, WITH THIS DIFFERENCE THAT THE INDIAN MORALISTS ARE PRIMARILY PRACTICAL AND EVIDENCE THE INHERITANCE OF A RICH TRADITION AND A RICHER INFLUENCE FROM THE YET ANCIENT SAGES, WHO INITIATED A DOUBLE MOVEMENT IN ETHICS, BY HEIGHTENING MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS INTO SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AND DERIVING AND DETERMINING THE FORMER FROM AND BY THE LATTER, AND WHO BREATHED INTO THE INDIAN LIFE, A BODY OF ETHICS AT ONCE CONVENTIONAL, CRITICAL AND CREATIVE,—

Conventional because obtaining unalterably, through the centuries, as a tradition, in the lives of the people, critical for the reason that no earnest and enthusiastic Indian ever practises the prevalent ethical principles, except reflectively, critically, questionalingly, experimentally, experientially, trying and testing the consequences, absorbing and assimilating the results, of such a practice, and crea-

tive in that each practicant adds, by the light of his own rich life, something to the significance, something to the substantiality, something to the splendour, of the excellences of the traditionally received ethicel norms which his own life depicts.—

—Sage Sivananda, the consummate modern expression, and the most gifted modern exponent, of Ancient Indian Genius, broadcasts to the world a conception of Dharma that is in total consonance with the traditional Indian idea of it as a complexus of eternal laws, sustaining, governing and integrating the essential nature of all things, the vitals of all that is, the growth and the development of all that breathes, the spiritual evolutionary oestrus in each individual psyche, Laws that include as organically interrelated to each other, [1] the Law of the Infinite as an object of rational cognition revealed in the Upanishadic wisdom, [2] the Law of the Divine as an object of devotion, described in the Aranyakas, [3] the Law of the world as the arena of such actions as are enjoined in the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, the Smritis, and [4] the Law of the Self in man as expressed in the voice of his conscience, the inner promptings put in motion by the Antaryamin, the Indwelling Deity.—

IT is moot point how far the social injunctions and rules of external conduct as declared in the Shruti and Smriti are capable of easy application in these times overridden by a rankly material civilisation all over the world. And, yet, there is not much meaning, if one, in revolt against the old, entirely ignores all spiritual values and blindly adopts a total materialist view of the values of life. There can be, and there is, a golden medium constituted of the best belonging both to the past and to the present. It is not necessary to emphasise the point that, in this really heroic and praiseworthy pursuit, the advice of the dynamic saints and sages, who have had the leisure and the training to review life in its entirety with a complete philosophical detachment from it and a dispassionate love for it, should be invited.

The ultimate aim and the meaning behind the march of all the nations is one ; and it is only on this basis of the commonness of purpose and unity of ideal that it will be possible to put an end to differences pointing to enmity and war. Dharma is not the private fancy or the property of any particular class of people. Dharma is the eternal law on which the universe rests and by which the universe is governed. The law of action and reaction, of the utter irrevocability of deeds, of birth, death and rebirth, and of the varied but systematic way in which the life of the universe is seen to work constituted the rationale of Dharma. The parents, the teachers and selfless servants of society mould the character of the people. They are the pillars of Dharma; the exemplars of truth, the forms of righteousness, which the people have to follow in obdience to the rule of the absolute unity of life. Though Dharma, as it is the way of the manifestation of the Infinite, has infinite forms, it may be defined as the force of the form of the manifestation of the Oneness of existence in the manifoldness of individual entities, who though they appear to be separated from one another, are perforce bound to the

One Being as inseparable parts, by Dharma.

EKAM SAT VIPRAH BAHUDHA VADANTI

This, then, is the meaning of Ahimsa, of Satya, of Brahmacharya, of love, of brotherhood, of everything that is noble and great, virtuous and sublime. Dharma controls the pulse of the nation, of the world, of the universe.

The well-being of a nation depends on its masters of the art of life, the forms of which were illustrated in the immortal lives and the governments of Sri Ramachandra, Yudhishtira, Vikramaditya, and similar other representatives of the eternal Dharma. Dharma is the way in which we are to direct our lives to the supreme spiritual end. Manava Dharma consists in the manifesting and the living of the inherent power and potentiality in man for reaching out to the experience of Divine Perfection. Dharma is that which leads to the bliss of Nirvana or Immortal Being. The way to it is along the consciousness of thought, speech and action which is in conformity with the manifestation of the Absolute Divinity. Divine Life is Dharma. A perfectly moral and ethical life is Dharma.

ATMAVAT SARVABHUTANI

Loving all equally as one loves one's own self is Dharma. Service of God in humanity, is Dharma; Giving in charity is Dharma. Humility, sense-control, purity of mind, wisdom and meditation on God, are the highest forms of Dharma. A strictly virtuous life, rooted in absolute justice and based on a spiritual sense of values and a spiritual outlook on life is Dharma. The mark of Dharma is Achara or good conduct. Achara is the mark of the good.

ACHARAPRABHAVO DHARMAH

From Achara is Dharma born. Dharma enhances life. Man attains prosperity and fame, here and hereafter, through the practice of Dharma. Achara is the highest Dharma. It is the root of all Tapas. That which brings well being to man is Dharma Dharma supports the world. People are upheld by Dharma. That which secures preservation of beings is Dharma. Dharma leads to eternal happiness and Immortality.

Morality is the gateway to religion. He who leads a moral or virtuous life attains freedom, perfection or Moksha. Good conduct is the root of material and spiritual prosperity. Conduct increases fame. It is good conduct which prolongs life and destroys all calamities and evils, and brings eternal happiness. It is good conduct that begets virtue. Therefore, develop good conduct.

The practice of ethics will help you to live in harmony with your neighbours, friends, your own family-members, fellow-beings and other people. It will confer on you lasting happiness and Moksha. It will purify your heart. It will keep your conscience ever clean. A moral man who follows strictly the principles of ethics will not deviate even a fraction of an inch from the path of Dharma or righteousness. Yudhishthira earned an undying reputation because of his practice of ethics. He was an embodiment of Dharma. Hence he still lives in our hearts.

The first thing you learn from religion is the unity of all selves. Eko Devah Sarva-Bhuteshu Gudhah. One Atman or Self abides in all beings. Universal love is the

expression of the unity. Universal brotherhood has its basis in the unity of the Self. All human relations exist because of this unity. Yajnavalkya said to his wife Maitreyi; "Behold, my dear; Not, indeed, for the love of the husband is the husband dear, but for the love of the self is the husband dear. And so with wife, sons, property, friends. worlds and even Devas themselves. All are dear, because the one Self is in all." If you injure another man. you injure yourself. If you help another person, you help your self.

ISHAVASYAM IDAM SARVAM

There is one life, one consciousness in all beings. This is the foundation of right conduct. This is the foundation of ethics.

Why is charity right? Because it is in conformity with the law: "Do charity". Why is stealing wrong? Because it is against the law: "Thou shalt not steal". Why is it good to help a man when he is in trouble and difficulties? Because it will refine and ennoble your character. It will instil mercy in your heart. The cultivation of the virtues will help you to realise the Supreme Self. Why is it bad to kill any being? The end is unworthy. It will corrupt your character. It will reduce you to the level of a brute.

A man may die, but his character remains. His thoughts remain. It is the character that gives real force and power to man. Character is power. Without character the attainment of knowledge is impossible. That man who has no character is practically a dead man in this world. He is ignored and despised by society. If you want success in life, if you want to influence others, if you want to progress well in the spiritual path, if you wish to have God-realization, you must possess an unblemished or spotless character. The character of a man survives or outlives him. Sri Sankara, Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster, Mohammed and other great ones of yore are remembered even now because they had wonderful character. Character is a mighty soul-force. It is like a sweet flower that wafts its fragrance far and wide. A man of noble traits and good character possesses a tremendous personality. Personality is character only. A person may be a skilful artist, a clever songster, an able poet or a great scientist; but if he has no character, he has no real position in society.

Note carefully how the Rishis of yore gave instructions to their students when they had finished their course of study. (*Satyam Vada; Dharmam Chara*). "Speak the truth. Do your duty. Do not neglect the learning and teaching of Vedas. Do not neglect the duties towards God and forefather. (*Matri-Devo Bhava; Pitri-Devo Bhava; Acharya-Devo Bhava; Athithi-Devo Bhava*) May the mother be thy God. May the father be thy God. May the preceptor be thy God. May the guest be thy God. Do such actions as are blameless and not others. Those that are superior to us, should be comforted by you with seats, etc. Give with faith. Do not give without faith. Give with joy, with modesty, with kindness."

You must be polite, civil and courteous. You must treat others with respect and consideration. "Good manners and soft words have brought many a difficult thing to pass." He who gives respect to others gets respect. Humility brings respect by itself.

Humility is a virtue that subdues the hearts of others. A man of humility is like a powerful magnet that attracts all.

Righteousness is eternal. Do not leave the path of righteousness for the sake of some material gain. A virtuous life and a clean conscience give a great deal of comfort to man while living and at the time of his death also. A holy man with piety is far superior to mighty potentates. God is much pleased with a pious man. Lord Krishna says, "Even if the most sinful worships me, with undivided heart, he too must be accounted righteous, for he has rightly resolved." There is great hope even for a cut-throat if he makes a strong determination and takes up the spiritual path. Follow Dharma and achieve Perfection. 'Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu' May God bless you all.

—From the Text of Swami Sivananda's Discourse on "My Conception of Dharma" broadcast on the 28th Sept. 50, from the Vijayawada Station of the All-India Radio.

35. UNLIKE LAO-TZE, SIVANANDA DOES NOT FIND THE WORLD AN ETHICAL DANGER, BUT SEES IN IT A FIELD THAT TRIES, TESTS, NURTURES AND HEIGHTENS THE HUMAN ETHICAL POWER, AND YET HE DOES NOT CONDESCEND TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO THE CONSIDERATIONS OF CONVENIENCE IN THE OBSERVANCE OF CELIBACY—AGAIN, CONTRARY TO THE THESES OF MANDEVILLE AND OTHERS, AND FAR MORE THAN SOCRATES AND MENCIUS, SIVANANDA INSISTS ON VIRTUE AS INTRINSIC AND NATURAL TO MAN, AND YET DOES NOT WHITTLE DOWN THE PURITY AND THE POWER OF MORAL DISCIPLINES GOVERNED BY HIGH-UPLIFTING IDEALS, NOR YET RELIEVE THE VITALS OF ETHICAL ACTIVITY OF THEIR SPIRITUAL COLOURING, MUCH LESS COUNTENANCE THE SUBSISTANCE OF ANY SOULLESS SOCIAL ETHICISM

—India's ethical conatus is at once the cause and the corollary of its spiritual oestrus, its inner evolutionary nisus: God apprehension, a life lived in the experience of the Divine Being, is a constitutional demand of the Indian mind; therefore, the Indian ethics cannot but constitute a comprehensive preparatory process that reconstitutes the whole of human nature and renders it ready for the reception of modes of life markedly divine in character and tending distinctively towards transcendental Ends. Beginning as a reply to the burning issues of life, the Indian ethics is in the nature of a direct perception of the good, the good that is absolute and incontrovertible to any nature that has exalted itself by self-refinement, by trial, by aspiration, by achievement, to the highest level of awareness and living, in the nature of the practice of what is immediately perceived, whereas the systems of Western ethics leave on us the impression of

being structures of sheer intellectual exercise and abstract thought permitting controversies, inviting polemic, provoking interminable wrangles and constantly exposed to the menace of fresh inroads into itself from the new-fangled pseudo-ethics.—

ENERGY leaks away continuously through the senses that are slaves of craving. Stop this wastage through self-restraint. Self-restraint is indispensable to all spiritual practices. To the seeker, continence does not mean the mere control of sex-impulses, but implies perfect restraint over every sense of his, meant to achieve the conquest of lust. The spirit of continence or celibacy must pervade your entire life and all actions. One must be prepared to lose life rather than commit any breach of the law of purity.

Ceaseless vigilance, strict adherence to moral discipline and constant enquiry into the great Reality will alone achieve perfect continence. Safeguard yourself against the error of foolishly imagining that you have succeeded in getting rid of lust by the mere fact of having lived a single-life for a number of years or by experiencing a little feeling of serenity or purity. Sex-energy or lust is the most deep-rooted instinct in man. Sex-energy entirely fills the mind, intellect, senses and the whole body. It is the oldest of factors that have gone into the constitution of man.

Perfect control of sex-instinct can only be achieved by the attainment of steadiness in body and mind, active introspection, strict adherence to a life of virtue, and vigilant efforts at self-reformation and self-restraint. Keeping the mind constantly engaged in something good and interesting is one of the secrets of continence.

Through the practice of continence to perfection one attains Divine Illumination. Concentration and meditation are possible only when perfection is attained in the practice of these virtues.

—Swami Sivananda's
Universal Moral Lessons,
pp. 27-28.

36. A CHARGE OF ASCETICISM MAY BE LAID AT THE DOORS OF CERTAIN FORMS OF INDIAN ETHICS AS REPRESENTED OR PRESCRIBED BY SIVANANDA, BUT THEN, WHEN, IN THE LIGHT OF THE LIVES LIVED BY THEIR PRINCIPLES, WE SURVEY CRITICALLY THE CHARACTERISTIC WESTERN HISTORICAL FORMS OF EXTREME RATIONALISM SUCH AS CYNICISM, STOICISM, MEDIAEVAL MONASTIC ASCETICISM, AND KANTIAN RIGORISM, WE FIND FULLY THE RICHNESS OF THE CONTENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXPERIENCE THE INDIAN MIND HOLDS IN ITS DISTINCTIVELY OUTER ETHICAL EXPRESSIONS AND PRACTICES

—The expansion of the psychological nature, the interminable extension of consciousness, the widening of the heart, the adherence to the moral laws that the practice of a metaphysical discipline of the perception of the one Self in all,

imposes, brings out, in bold relief, the realistic-idealistic, the pragmatic-philosophic, the actual-ideal nature of the Indian ethics as come to us through the greatest of modern Indian sages, Sivananda.—

THE one Self dwells in all. All are manifestation of the One God. By injuring another, you but injure your own self. By serving another, you serve your own self. Love all. Serve all. Hate none. Insult none. Injure none in thought, word and deed.

Non-injury is the supreme Law of life. Non-injury, of course, implies non-killing. It is development of the mental attitude in which hatred is replaced by love. Non-injury needs a harmless mind, mouth and hand, Non-injury is not merely non-killing but in its comprehensive meaning means entire abstinence from causing pain or harm whatsoever to any living creature, either by thought, word or deed. Perfection in practice of this great virtue is not possible without the perfect practice of truth and continence, and mercy, control of anger, freedom from malice and pride, restraint of senses help the practice of non-injury.

Continence or celibacy, which is, in its dynamic aspect, called purity, constitutes perfect self-control ; absence of greed, lust and anger ; equality, peace and harmony. Continence or celibacy is not mere bachelorhood. Spiritual practices require tremendous energy and nerve-power. This energy is acquired through the earnest practice of continence or conservation of vital fluid.

Warfare with the turbulent sense and the treacherous mind can be successfully carried on only with the strength and power born of perfect continence.

The vital energy is conserved and transformed into mighty spiritual energy by the practice of continence. This powerful spiritual energy feeds the intense flame of meditation practised by the aspirant. Continence aims and achieves the refinement of the physical, vital energy and its sublimation into spiritual power.

Celibacy or continence is not a matter of repression or supression, but is a positive dynamic convertive process. It is the process of controlling the sex-energy, conserving it and then diverting it into higher channels, and finally converting it into spiritual energy.

—Swami Sivananda's
Universal Moral Lessons,
pp. 26-27.

37. INSTEAD OF LOOKING AT, AND DEALING WITH, MAN, IN TERMS OF HIS HIGHEST POSSIBILITIES ILLUSTRATED IN THE LIVES OF THE INDIAN SEERS, SAGES, GOD-MEN, YOGIS, IN TERMS OF THE CHRISTIAN ETHICAL MAN, MAN MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, THE ARISTOTELIAN RATIONAL MAN, THE MODERN WESTERN WORLD, ITS EMPIRIC INTELLIGENTSIA, ITS PRETENTIOUS SCIENTIFIC TEMPER, HAVE SEEN MAN THROUGH THE LENSES OF HUXLEY'S CAVE MAN, DARWIN'S APE-MAN, PUT HIM ON

THE PROCRUSTEAN BED OF FREUD'S SEX-MAN, CUT HIM TO THE SIZE OF ANTHROPOLOGISTS' PRIMITIVE-MAN, EQUATED HIS ASPIRATIONS AND HIS PROBLEMS WITH MARX'S ECONOMIC MAN, MEASURED HIM AND HIS DEVELOPMENT AGAINST SPENCER'S SOCIAL MAN, AND AT BEST SOUGHT TO RESURRECT HIM AFTER THE PATTERN OF WELLS'S "NEW MOON-MAN"—WHY THEN WOULD NOT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN BE A WORLD OF ERROR, EVIL, SORROW, DESPAIR AND DISASTER ?—

—Can worm's eye-view of existence and sheep's sense of life, relieved by startling technological and scientific adventures, pave the way for peace and prosperity after which everyone strives, constructive labour and progress to which the abilities of each of us are to be conditioned, creative joy in living a life to which all of us aspire ? Not until we abandon all the erroneous, partial, misleading notions of man, and his possibilities, his aspirations, his tendencies, his motives, and embrace a new scale of values, a new system of ideals, a new vision of life, can we allay human agony, bring in general human welfare, resolve the riddles modern mind has burdened all men with, restore to man the light that is his, and raise a race of decent men, men capable of creative morals, sane views, constructive labour, a dignified poise of life..... !—

VIRTUES MANIFEST IN HIGHER STAGES OF YOGA

DEVELOPMENT of virtues helps considerably in the attainment of calmness of Chitta. This is an effective method for destroying the evil Vrittis. Maitri, Karuna, Mudita, Upekshanam, Sukha-Dukha, Punya-Apunya Vishayanam Bhavana Tatchitta Prasadanam : "Friendship, mercy, gladness and indifference being thought of in regard to subjects, happy, unhappy, good and evil respectively, purify the Chitta." These qualities destroy hatred, jealousy, anger, etc. Any virtue can be cultivated in the heart, just as roses are planted in the garden. If you begin to practise charity, your covetousness will vanish. The development of humility will destroy self-conceit. Titiksha, tolerance, patience, perseverance, a quality of vital will, self-reliance, all are necessary for Sadhaks. You can conquer the whole world through love, humility and kindness. Nobility, benevolence, universal love and subtle intellect are four important qualities found in a man, who has reached the higher stages in Yoga. Such a man will be a centre of attraction for thousands just as the sweet music of the flute is attractive to the cows.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, p.521.

38. A WELL-CONSIDERED THOUGHT, POISED OVER THE REFLECTING, ASSESSING, ASSOCIATIVE THOUGHT, PERSUADES PAUL CARUS DESIGNATE JESUS THE CHRIST AS THE COPERNICUS OF ETHICS, AND THE

SCHOLARS IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION WILL ALWAYS FIND CHRISTIANITY PREDOMINANTLY AN ETHICAL RELIGION THAT HAS, THROUGH THE MANY CENTURIES, POURED INTO VAST SECTIONS OF MANKIND, FRESH MORAL ENTHUSIASM AND AN EVER-NEW MORAL POWER--OVER MANY A MILLENIUM, THE HINDU MORAL CONSCIENCE IS SYMBOLIZED IN, AND KEPT CONSTANTLY INSPIRED BY, SUCH ILLUSTRIOUS INSTANCES AS RAMA, THE PARAGON OF THE VERY BEST IN TRUE MANHOOD, SITA, THE CRYSTALLIZATION OF THE HIGHEST EXCELLENCES OF WOMANHOOD, HANUMAN, THE EMBODIMENT OF LOYALTY, SELFLESSNESS, SERVICE, BUDDHA, THE INCARNATE COMPASSION, HARISHCHANDRA, THE GREATEST TRUTH-SPEAKER KNOWN TO HISTORY, AND A HOST OF OTHERS WHOSE NAMES ARE BYWORDS IN EVERY HINDU HOUSEHOLD

—The apologists and the champions of humanist ethics play the platitudinarians in attacking the system of traditional Christian morality as cultivating a constant sense of guilt, as continually harping upon the persistance of Adam's original sin in the human constitution, as insisting upon the inherent malignity of man, and as crusading, in puritanical tones, and with uncompromising prejudice, against pleasure and desire ; but, then, the charges cannot be justly laid at the true spirit of the Christian ethics as upon the shoulders of the priesthood that shares in common with the new humanist ethicists, the general human tendency to distort, pervert, exploit, and what is more, one cannot establish, or defend ably the weaknesses, or advance effectively the merits, of humanist ethics, sheerly by listing the limitations of the customary Christian ethics, and it will always demand a wider breadth of thought and need a greater power of discerning than those which the cultural philistines like the humanists and the positivists command, to see the beauties of the Christian ethics. And, when all is said and done, Christ remains Christ, and Comte is Comte : the one lives in the lives of the millions, shapes silently their high destiny, will never cease to rise to a fresh power, with the subsidance of every blast in the oscillations of human thought, whereas the other intrudes on the mind of mankind, panders to its lower interests, stages the justice for its crass needs, pleases a few by constituting humanity into a Deity, restricts humanity's possibilities to humanity at i s commonality, lays down courses of conduct, not in accord with what man ought to be, but in conformity with, and for adjusting a few details to, what he already is, thus defeating the very sense, meaning, purpose of ethics as a normative science and a discipline, is applauded and disappears into the limbo of the thousand "quack-teachers" of the world and "isms" which humanity has passed by through the centuries of its much checkered and battered history.—

—To make Ethics for mankind, it requires the genius of a Jesus the Christ and not the Genius of a Comte, nor yet that of the tenth-rate this-worldly talents of the high-spirited humanists. None may Ethicise for man, or moralise for mankind or yet redeem a Soul, save he who wears the stature that embodies Innocence and Guilelessness, incarnates Love and Grace, and transcends all moral laws, to span in itself the whole of the Divine Law.—

LIVING MONUMENTS OF THE DIVINE LAW

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness ; for they shall be filled. The significance is perfectly clear. But an implication is worth noting. Righteousness which is God's Will is omnipresent. God's Grace is ever ready to fill man's heart, and make him subserve His Will, thus exalting himself. But it is the egoistic self-willed man who denies Its entry into his heart. To obtain His Grace, to let His Will be done through your being, to let His Righteousness permeate your personality, is, therefore, much easier than you imagine. You have to hunger after it ; you have to yearn for it. You have to evince a keen desire to become divine. You have to aspire to lead a righteous life. You have to pray to Him to fill you with Grace. This aspiration, this prayer, opens the inner gate to the chamber of your soul and it is at once flooded with His Grace. Truly blessed are they that are thus filled. For, filled with His Righteousness, they will live and move about as living monuments, of the Divine Law, thus inspiring others, too, to exalt themselves and transform the very earth into paradise.

MERCY : A DIVINE VIRTUE

Blessed are the merciful ; for they shall obtain mercy. God is all-mercy. The life-giving warmth of the sun, the life-sustaining purity of fresh air, the sparkling water which quenches your thirst and makes life possible, the good earth that yields nourishing food, besides, providing you with a place to dwell—these constantly remind you that God is all-mercy. In order that you might evolve, He has given you a human birth and placed you in circumstances best suited to your temperament and calculated to accelerate your progress towards perfection. He gives you opportunities galore to exercise the divine qualities that are latent in you, so that you can become perfect, even as His is Perfect. The beggar at your door, the orphan on the road ; the naked, the unlettered, the hungry and the diseased children of God—they are there to provide you chances to exercise the divine mercy in you. Open your eyes and serve them. Clothe the naked ; educate the unlettered ; feed the hungry and heal the diseased ones. Thus would you grow in mercy. For, God is all-mercy. When you are merciful, you will obtain His Mercy. When you have His Mercy, you are blessed indeed : and you are a blessing to mankind, for, everyone who comes in contact with you will witness the miracle of His Mercy, healing, consoling, enlightening everyone and filling the world with the light of wisdom, peace and bliss.

THE VISION OF GOD

Blessed are the pure at heart : for they shall see God. You do not have to travel

to distant lands to see God. You do not have to wait till you shed this human body and ascend to a heaven in order to see God. Here and now you can see Him. And, there is only one condition prerequisite—purity of heart. The heart should be washed of all impurities—lust, anger, greed, egoism, and a host of other evils that have made your heart their home.

God is seated in your heart. But the veil of impurity hides Him from your vision. All that you have to do is to remove this veil, cast off this impurity from your heart. And, you will behold Him here and now in all His Glory and in all His Splendour.

Blessed are they that thus have a vision of God. For they shall radiate His Blessings to the whole world.

—Swami Sivananda's
Life and Teachings of Lord Jesus, 29-31.

39. THE TOTAL INDIFFERENCE CONCEIVED BY THE CONFUCIAN ETHICS TO PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS INVESTS CONFUCIUS, FOR THE WORLDLY-MINDED REALISTS, WITH THE DIGNITY APPROPRIATE TO A DOUBLY PRACTICAL MORALIST, BUT TAKES AWAY FROM HIS TEACHING A SELF-SUBSISTING VITALITY, A RICH INHERENT SUGGESTIVENESS, THE DYNAMIC OF A CREATIVE RELIGIOUS FAITH, THE FOUNDATIONS UNSHAKABLE, THE VISION THAT SUSTAINS THE MORALS TAUGHT, THE MORALIST WHO TEACHES, AND THOSE THAT ABIDE BY THEM—EVEN WHERE MENCIUS DIRECTS AN EXERCISE OF HIS UNUSUAL INTELLECTUAL GIFTS AT DERIVING, BY WAY OF FURNISHING GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR, THE CARDINAL CONFUCIAN VIRTUES, FROM THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN FEELINGS OF COMPASSION SHAME, REVERENCE, RIGHT AND WRONG, WE FIND NO FIRM FOOTING OFFERED TO THE ETHICS OF CONFUCIUS

—The ethical maxims of Taoism are marked by an elevating power that ensues from the metaphysical depth of the mystic strain the mind of Lao-tze is constituted to sound,—and concerning the kind of profound experience that is typically his own, Lao-tze is seen sharing very liberally with the real inner Sivananda, and will always wear the visage of an Indian sage than look the Chinese super-moralist that he is.—

WHAT was Confucius' idea of virtue ? His word for it was *'Jen'*. The proper understanding of his ethical doctrine chiefly depends on the implications of 'Jen'. There is no single English equivalent of 'Jen' in all its shades of meaning. The essence of all his teachings may be summed up under this one word "Jen". The nearest equivalent to this difficult word is "social virtue". All those virtues which help to maintain social harmony and peace like benevolence, chirity, magnanimity, sincerity, respectfulness, altruism, diligence, loving kindness, goodness are included in 'Jen'.

One of the disciples asked, "O venerable Master! Please tell me what constitutes social virtue". Confucius replied, "Loving others". Another disciple asked, "Master, is there any one maxim which should be acted upon throughout one's own life?" He replied, "Do not do to others what you do not wish them to do to you." A chief disciple of Confucius said, "The single principle that ran throughout the teachings of my Master is loyalty to oneself and charity to one's neighbour."

Confucius laid great stress on the cultivation of character, purity of heart and conduct. He exhorted the people to develop a good character first, which is a priceless jewel. Confucius said, "A virtuous man has three awes :—(1) awe for Heaven's decree, (2) awe for great men, (3) awe for saints' words. When worshipping God, one must feel as if He were visibly present".

The various sayings of Confucius presented the attributes of the superior man. Confucius asked his disciples to admire the superior man, to emulate him. He said that every human being cherishes the aspiration to become a superior man, superior to his fellows, superior to his own past and present self.

Purpose : the superior man learns in order to attain to the utmost of his principles. *Poise* : the superior man in his thought does not go out of his place. *Self-sufficiency* : what the superior man seeks is in himself, and what the ordinary man seeks, is in others. *Earnestness* : the superior man in everything puts forth his utmost endeavours. *Thoroughness* : the superior man bends his attention to what is radical. That being established all practical courses naturally grow up. *Sincerity :* Is it not his sincerity which distinguishes a superior man ?

Truthfulness : What the superior man requires is that in what he says there may be nothing inaccurate. *Purity of thought and action* : The superior man must be watchful over himself when alone. *Love of truth* : the superior man is anxious lest he should not get truth, he is not anxious lest poverty comes upon him. *Rectitude :* the superior man thinks of virtue, the ordinary man thinks of comfort. *Prudence* : the superior man wishes to be slow in his words and earnest in his conduct. Composure : the superior man may indeed have to endure want, but the ordinary man when in want gives way to unbounded license. *Fearlessness* : the superior man has neither anxiety nor fear. *Ease and dignity* : the superior man has dignified ease without pride, the ordinary man has pride without dignified ease. *Firmness* : looked at from a distance the superior man appears stern, when approached, he is mild, when he is heard to speak, his language is firm and decided. *Capacity* : the superior man cannot be known in little matters, but may be entrusted with great concerns. *Openess* : the faults of the superior man are like the sun and the moon. He has his faults and all men see them. He changes again and all men look up to him.

Benevolence : the superior man seeks to develop the admirable qualities of men and does not seek to develop their evil qualities. The ordinary man does the opposite. *Broadmindedness :* the superior man honours talents and virtue and bears with all. He praises the good and pities the incompetent.

Moderation : the superior man conforms with the path of the middle course. *Reserve power* : that wherein the superior man cannot be equalled is simply this, his work which other men cannot see.

The way to become a superior man is to set one's affections on what is right, to love learning, which is the source of knowledge and virtue, with which nothing else can be compared. When righteousness is pursued with sincerity and a mind free from self-deception, the heart becomes rectified.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions, pp. 145-146 ; 143-144.

THE MORAL WISDOM OF LAO-TZE

Taoism inculcates the highest ethics, pure living and discipline of mind and body. Emancipation is attained through self-conquest, through the realisation of Tao.

Accumulate virtue and store up merit. Treat all with gentleness and love. Be loyal. Be dutiful. Be respectful to your elders and kind to your juniors. Do not injure even the little insects. grass or trees. There is no greater sin than yielding to desire ; no greater misery than discontentment ; no greater calamity than the propensity to acquire. Abandon your scheming ; put away your gains ; theives and robbers will not exist. Hold fast to that which will endure. Show thyself simple, preserve thyself pure, thine own keep small, thy desires poor. He who overcomes others is strong, but he who overcomes himself is mighty.

There are three precious things. The first is gentleness ; the second is frugality and the third is humility. Be gentle, you can be bold. Be frugal, you can be liberal. Be humble, you can be a leader among men.

When the aspirant is serene and tranquil. his wisdom becomes complete. When his wisdom becomes complete, the light of intelligence grows around him. When the light of intelligence grows around him, he is one with the Tao. This is true forgetfulness, a forgetting which does not forget, a forgetting of what cannot be forgotten. That which cannot be forgotten is the true Tao.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions,
p. 157, 158, 159.

40. INDIAN ETHICS AS DETAILED IN THE DHARMASHASTRAS AND THE SMRITIS COMES UNDER THE CATEGORY OF THE JURAL, PROVIDES MANY PARALLELS TO, AND FURNISHES MANY CONTRASTS WITH, THE CHRISTIAN AND THE KANTIAN LEGALISTIC THEORY OF ETHICS, AND AS SPECIFIED IN THE SYSTEMS OF THE UPANISHADIC AND VEDANTIC THOUGHT CAN BE CLASSED AS TELEOLOGICAL, AND BECAUSE THE REAL INDIA IS ESSENTIALLY UPANISHADIC AND VEDANTIC IN SPIRIT, ACTION AND LIFE, INDIAN ETHICS CARRIES ELEMENTS OF RESEMBLANCE TO THE MOST EXALTED FORMS OF GREEK TELEOLOGICAL THEORIES IN ETHICS—BUT THE SIGNIFICANT FACT ABOUT THE INDIAN ETHICS, UNKNOWN TO WESTERN FORMS OF ETHICAL THINKING IS

THAT SINCE THE JURIST ETHICS EMBODIES, PERHAPS TOO RIGIDLY, THE REVELATIONS OF THE ORDER IN THE COSMIC SYSTEM, THE LAWS OF MENTAL, VITAL AND GENERAL HUMAN NATURE, IT SUBSERVES, STRENGTHENS, FURTHERS THE PURPOSES OF TELEOLOGICAL ETHICS

—The exalted moral nature as the pervasive feature of the Indian mind becomes obvious when we find proffered to us, even in such medical treatises as the Charaka Samhita, such political works like Kautilya's Artha-Shastra, rich ethical teaching, and note that even the literary flourish of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, incomparably more than that of Shakespeare, luxuriates far more in moral lessons than in the splendid splash of evocative fancy and aesthetic pleasure for which the classical Sanskrit literature must remain renowned.—

—Almost in the accents of Abelard, Sivananda contends that not in the act, but in the intention of the agent, not in the deed; but in the spirit in which it is done, that we have to look for the wrongness or the rightness of an act, extends the meaning of sin to stand for all that is contrary to right, and formulates the necessary distinction between the subjectively moral and the objectively moral acts.—

TO speak the truth, to practise Ahimsa, not to hurt the feelings of others in thought, word and deed; not to speak harsh words to any one ; not to show any anger towards anybody ; not to abuse others or speak ill of others and to see God in all beings is Sadachara. If you abuse anyone, if you hurt the feelings of others, really you are abusing yourself and hurting the feelings of God only. Himsa is a deadly enemy of Bhakti and Jnana. It separates and divides. It stands in the way of realising unity or oneness of the Self.

That act or exertion which does not do good to others, or that act for which one has to feel shame ; should never be done. That act, on the other hand, should be done, for which one may be lauded in society. This is a brief description of what right conduct is.

Lord Manu says in his Smriti, "Achara (good conduct) is the highest Dharma, declared by the Smriti and the Sruti. Therefore, let the twice-born that knoweth the Self ever diligently engage therein. Thus beholding the path of Dharma issue from Ahara, the sages embrace Achara as the root of all Tapas."

Righteousness, Truth, good works, power and prosperity all originate from conduct. You will find in Mahabharata "The mark of Dharma is Achara (good conduct), Achara is the mark of good. Higher than all teachings is Achara. From Achara Dharma is born, Dharma enhances the life. By Achara man attains life ; by Achara he attains prosperity, and by Achara he attains fair name, here and hereafter. He who is the friend of all beings, he who is intent on the welfare of all with act, thought and speech—he only knoweth Dharma !"

Dharma is extremely subtle (Ati Sukshma), intricate and complex. Even sages are perplexed. Dharma gives wealth, satisfaction and liberation in the end. Dharma tops the list of the four Purusharthas viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma is generally termed as "Duty", Righteous-

ness" etc. Any action that is best calculated to bring Sreya (Moksha) is Dharma. That which brings well-being to human beings is Dharma.

All that is free from any motive of injury to any being is surely morality. For indeed the moral precepts have been made to free the creatures from all injuries. Dharma is so called because it protects all. Indeed morality saves all creatures.

—With Coleridge, Sivananda advances the principle that happiness depends upon virtue and that both tend towards a final conjunction, and goes further than Coleridge, as far as the scientists of the Cosmic Laws in relation to human destinies, in sustaining the argument that not only happiness but health, long-life, prosperity, welfare depend on, and ultimately coincide with Virtue.—

CONDUCT is the root of prosperity. Conduct increases fame. It is conduct which prolongs life. It is conduct which destroys all calamities and evils. Conduct has been said to be superior to all the branches of knowledge. Knowledge is power; but character is better power. It is by conduct that one acquires a long life, and it is by conduct that one acquires riches and prosperity. It is a means to attain the goal of the life. Without good conduct no one can achieve the goal. Good conduct brings in fame, longevity, wealth and happiness. It eventually leads to Moksha. It is conduct that begets virtue, and it is virtue that prolongs the life. Conduct gives fame, long life and heaven. Conduct is the most efficacious rite of propitiating the celestials. The self-created Brahman Himself has said, "That one should show mercy to all orders of men".

Virtue is singled out by conduct. The good and virtuous are so, on account of the conduct they follow. The marks again of good conduct are afforded by the deeds of those that are good or righteous. Indeed, it is by conduct that one acquires fame that depends upon great deeds both in this world and next. Forsooth, one may, by his conduct alone, conquer the three worlds. There is nothing which virtuous persons cannot obtain. A person of good deeds and good pleasant and sweet speeches has no peer. People have great regard for that man who acts righteously and who does good acts even if they only hear of him without actually seeing him.

The man whose conduct is improper or wicked never acquires long life. All creatures fear such a man and are oppressed by him. If, therefore, one wishes his own advancement and prosperity, one should in this world, follow the path of righteousness and conduct himself righteously. Good conduct succeeds in removing the inauspiciousness and misery of even one who is sinful.

The man of right conduct has ideals, principles and mottos. He strictly follows them, removes his weaknesses and defects, develops good conduct and becomes a Sattwic man. He is very careful in behaving with his elders, parents, teachers, Acharyas, sisters, brothers, friends, relatives, strangers and other creatures. He attempts to know what is right and what is wrong, by approaching Sadhus and Mahatmas and studying scriptures very carefully; and then treads with joy the path of righteousness or Dharma.

The man of right conduct always cares for the welfare of all beings. He lives in harmony with his neighbours and all people. He never hurts the feelings of others, and never speaks lies. He practises Brahmacharya. He checks the evil tendencies of the mind and prepares himself through the practice of right conduct to attain the bliss of union with Paramatma or Self.

Metaphysics rests on Morality, Morality rests on Metaphysics. Morality has Vedanta as its basis. The Upanishad says, "Thy neighbour in Truth is thy very Self and what separates you from him is mere illusion." Sadachara is the basis for the realisation of Atmic unity or oneness of life or Adwaitic feeling of oneness everywhere. Ethical culture prepares you for the Vedantic realisation of "Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma—All indeed is Brahman. There is no such thing as diversity."

A man who has attained ethical perfection by the continued practice of Right Conduct or Yama and Niyama, has got a magnetic personality. He can influence millions. Character gives a strong personality to man. People respect a man, who has good character. Moral people command respects everywhere. He who is honest, sincere, truthful, kind and liberal-hearted always commands respect and influence at the hands of all people. Sattwic virtues make a man divine. He who speaks truth and practises Brahmacharya becomes a great dynamic personality. Even if he speaks a word there is power in it and people are magnetised. Character-buildings is of paramount importance, if a man wants to develop in personality. No development of a strong personality is possible without celibacy.

Dear friends : Do your duties in a satisfactory manner in accordance with Sadachara. Apply yourselves diligently to all kinds of your daily duties. Consult the Sadacharis and Mahatmas whenever you are in doubt. Build up your character. This will give you success in life. Struggle hard daily to remove old evil habits. Establish daily virtuous, healthy habits. Character will help you to attain the goal of life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, pp. 189-196.

41. BERGSON, BEARING THE APPELLATION OF BEING THE DAVID DESTINED TO SLAY THE GOLIATH OF MATERIALISM, ROSE TO ONE OF THE FINEST PHILOSOPHICAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOST COMMONPLACE, AS ALSO THE MOST CONSISTENTLY UNNOTICED AND IGNORED, FACT OF THE TWO SOURCES AND TYPES OF MORALITY—THE LOWER, PARTICULAR, SOCIAL, RELATIVE, CLOSED, STATIC, IMPERFECT MORALITY AND THE HIGHER, SPECIAL, UNIVERSAL, ABSOLUTE, OPEN, DYNAMIC, PERFECT MORALITY GIVEN BY MORAL GENIUSES, BY THE CREATIVE EFFORT OF EXCEPTIONAL MEN, BY THE VITAL IMPULSE ITSELF, BY ASPIRATION, ENLIGHTENMENT AND A PLUNGE INTO THE VERY STREAM OF LIFE, BY THE MYSTIC'S INTUITION OF

UNITY AND LOVE FOR ALL HUMANITY, BY THE SAGES OF GREECE, THE PROPHETS OF ISARAEL, THE ARHATS OF BUDDHISM, THE SAINTS OF CHRISTIANITY

Understood in terms of this Bergsonean fundamental antithesis between the static and the dynamic morality, we find the age-old, closed, conventional Indian moral code being continually overwhelmed, over-ridden, exceeded, by the open, dynamic and creative morality of the never-ending succession of the Indian saints, mystics and spiritual geniuses among whom may be numbered Ramananda of the Gangetic India, Guru Nanak of Punjab and Sind, Jnana Sambhandar and Thayumanavar of Tamil country, Vemana of Andhra Pradesh, Chaitanya of Bengal, Samartha Ramdas and Tukaram of Maratha country, Kabir and Tulsidas of Uttar Pradesh —

RAMANANDA

SRI Ramananda, the great pioneer of Bhakti movement in Hindustan was fifth in apostolic succession to Sri Ramanuja a disciple of Yamunamuni, the exponent of Vishishtadwaita philosophy or qualified monism. He was born at Prayag or the modern Allahabad in 1299 A.D., and attained Mahasamadhi in 1410 A.D.

Ramananda had a very large heart. He admitted disciples of every caste. He was endowed with precocious intelligence. He was sent to Banaras for his education. He became a true disciple of Sri Raghavananda, a prominent teacher of Vaishnava school of Ramanuja. Raghavananda belonged to the orthodox school of Vaishnavism. But Ramananda was very catholic and liberal. He was above caste-prejudices and Brahmin-superiority. He embraced all, who were devotees of Lord Hari. He recognized the equality of all men. He opened the gates of Heaven to every caste, creed and colour. He taught everybody, everywhere. He had a severe controversy with his Guru Raghavananda, and had to leave him on account of his lack of Vaishnava orthodoxy. Ramananda said, "Let no one ask a man's caste or with whom he eats. If a man had devotion for Lord Vishnu, he becomes Vishnu's own."

Ramananda admitted all high and low alike into his Sat-sang. Among his twelve disciples, there were Brahmins, Mussalman weaver a Rajput, a Jat, a barber, a cobbler and two women. They are: Kabir the weaver, Raidas the cobbler, Pipa the Rajput King, Dhanna the Jat, Sena the Barbar, Narhariyananda, Sursurananda, Sukhananda Bhavananda, Anantananda, and Padmavati the two lady disciples.

His disciples laid great emphasis on two great principles, viz., that perfect devotion consists in perfect love towards God and that all servants of God are brothers.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lives of Saints, Vol. II,
pp. 61-62.

GURU NANAK

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh religion, was born in 1469, in the village of Talwandi on the bank of Ravi, in Punjab. He was called the 'prophet of the Punjab

and Sind'. He was born of Mehta Kalu and Tripta. From his very childhood he had a contemplative mind and pious nature. He used to spend his time in meditation and spiritual practices. His father tried his level best to turn his mind towards the worldly objects. He put him in looking after the cultivation of the land. But Nanak was not interested in this. He used to spend his time in meditation even in the fields. When he was asked for the reason of his idleness, he replied, "I am not idle, but I am guarding my own field. My body is a field. The mind is the ploughman. Righteousness is cultivation. Modesty is the water for its irrigation. I have sown it with the seed of the sacred name of the Lord." His father was very much disappointed, but again through various ways he tried to turn his mind towards the worldly objects. But he utterly failed to do so.

Nanak was married with Sulakhani, daughter of Mula, a resident of Batala in Gurudaspur district. He had two children. But these ties did not in any way bind him or stop his spiritual pursuits. Nanak was appointed as the in-charge of the storehouse of the Nawab of Sultanpur. There he discharged his duties very well. He spent a small portion of his money for his own maintenance and distributed the rest in charity.

Nanak gave up his service and distributed all his wealth to the poor and become a Fakir. He lived in solitude and practised severe austerities and intense meditation. He sang inspired songs. They are all collected and preserved in the Adi Granth,--the sacred book of the Sikhs.

Nanak as a Mystic, a Moralist and the Founder of a Great Faith

Nanak became a public preacher at the age of 34. His first disciple was Mardana. His preaching produced a deep impression on the mids of the public. He led a Parivrajak life for some time. He had great influence over Babar, who had very great regard for Nanak. Nanak went to Mecca, Medina, Ceylon, Burma, Turky, Arabia, Baghdad, Kabul, Kandahar and Siam, preaching his mission all throughout. He enjoined all people to live righteously and with brotherly love and hospitality. He preached and taught: "Do Namasmaran. Love God. Be devoted to one God. Serve your fellow beings. God is all in all. Pray. Praise Him always. Attain the bliss of union with Him." He tried his level best to unite the Hindus and Muslims.

Nanak : His Ethical Gospel of Brotherhood and Love

He performed many miracles in Mecca, Hassan Abdal and other places. He was a reformer. He carried the message of peace and love for everybody. He was very catholic in his views. He has no distinction of caste, creed or sex.

The beautiful composition of mystic poems uttered by Nanak is continued in Japji. They are the morning prayers of the Sikhs. The Sohila contains the evening prayers. Therein, he has clearly indicated the various ways for realising God and thrown much light on the various intricate problems of life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lives of Saints, Vol. II,
pp. 209-211.

42. THE ETHOS OF THE RIGVEDIC RISHIS WAS RAISED BY THE SPONTANEOUS AND CONJOINT OPERATIONS OF PHRONESIS AND GNOSIS, BY THE TWO DYNAMICALLY CONCEIVED KINETIC POWERS, KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE, THE POWER OF SELF-EXPANSION AND THE FORCE OF SELF-LIMITATION, VIDYA AND AVIDYA, AND IS IN ITS NATURE DISTINCTIVELY DIANOETIC—SINCE THE RISHIS SAW IN TRUTH THE ULTIMATE REALITY AND FOUND GOODNESS, VALUE, AND BEAUTY AS ITS ATTRIBUTES, THEY EMPHASISED TRUTH MORE THAN THE GOOD OF THE TELEOLOGICAL THEORIES, THE VALUE OF THE AXIOLOGICAL ETHICS, THE OBLIGATORINESS OF THE DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS, THE BEAUTY OF THE ETHICAL AESTHETICISM

—As Sivananda is pre-eminently a moral and spiritual disciplinarian, his voluminous work, "How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vices", from which the excerpt given below is drawn, is as the very title indicates, a work of applied moral thought, divested of all the glamour and the glory one would associate with casuistry and philosophical quibbling, a book of practical ethics as against psychological ethics, which would necessitate an investigation into the mental and emotional phenomena for tracing the sources of the morally right and wrong as manifest in the sense of obligation man experiences, in the capacity for judgment he wields, in the freedom he enjoys, in the ability to formulate and puruse ideals that is his, a treatise packed with techniques for self-conquest, self-perfection and Self-realization, with principles of moral action that differ from the tenets presented by the many forms of the merely theoretical ethics, such as the theological voluntarism, private eudemonism, universalistic hedonism, refined utilitarianism, social idealism, perfectionism, rationalism, biologism. Being a schema of integral practice, a system of synthetic technique, a structure of all-inclusive moral awareness, the ethics of Sivananda covers, as organically belonging to itself, the best elements in all the differing ethical schools, and corrects at once the theological voluntarism, rationalism, hedonism, utilitarianism, perfectionism, by tracing the relations of the will of God with the dictates of pure reason, by pointing to the perfection and the happiness of the individual and the community as ensuing from exercising the ethical will and excellences, in accordance with the Divine Will, and with the internal rational guidance, and by presenting a true idea of the Self and of the nature of perfection.

THE Absolute is perfectly scientific, logical, symmetrical, balanced, systematic, rational! It is not irregular and haphazard. It is not a supra-natural mystery, but the natural fact of life. The infinite and indivisible nature of existence is not a wonder; it is the actual condition of being even as brilliance is of fire, liquidity of water, weight of lead. It is the highest Perfection of Eternal, Immortal, Real Life.

Everything that changes itself is untruth. Hence Truth is infinite. Truth alone endures, while everything else perishes. Everyone, right from Brahma down to a blade of grass, moves towards Truth, some consciously, some unconsciously. They differ only in the degree of consciousness or to the extent of mental purification or subtlety of condition. Every leaf that flies in the air, every breath that flows from us, in other words, every act of universal life, is a step taken nearer the Truth; for, Truth is the eternal Home of all beings. Into it they all enter and find permanent satisfaction and peace. It is Truth that triumphs over falsehood, not falsehood over Truth, whatever the apparent and immediate experience may be.

Truth constitutes the essence of the Vedas. Control over passions constitutes the essence of truth. Self-denial or refraining from the worldly enjoyments forms the essence of self-control. These attributes are always present in a virtuous man.

Truth is one eternal Brahman. Truth is the one undecaying Penance. Truth is the one undecaying Swarupa. Truth is the one undecaying Veda. The fruits attached to truth have been described as the highest. From truth originate righteousness and self-control. Everything depends upon truth. Truth is the origin of creatures. Truth is their progeny. It is by truth that the world moves. It is by truth that the sun gives heat. It is by truth that the fire burns. It is on truth that Heaven rests. Truth is sacrifice, penance, Vedas, the verses of Sama, Mantra and Saraswati.

Truth is knowledge. Truth is the ordinance. Truth is observance of vows and fasts. Truth is the prime syllable, Om. There is truth where righteousness is. Everything multiplies through truth. Truth is righteousness. Righteousness is light and light is bliss. Ahimsa, Brahmacharya, purity, justice, harmony, forgiveness, peace are forms of truth. Truth is duty. Truth is Yoga. Truth is a great sacrifice. Everything depends upon truth.

Impartiality, self-control, modesty, endurance, goodness, renunciation, meditation, dignity, fortitude, compassion and abstention from injury are the various forms of truth. Truth is immutable, eternal, and unchangeable. It is won through Yoga. It is won through practices, which do not oppose any of the other virtues. You will gain universal goodwill by continual devotion to Truth.

The quality by which an esteemed and good man puts up with both what is agreeable and disagreeable is forgiveness. You can cultivate this by the practice of Truthfulness. You should always practise forgiveness. You should ever be devoted to Truth. The wise man who can renounce joy, fear and anger can develop fortitude.

Abstention from injury to all creatures in thought, word and deed, and kindness are the permanent duties of the good. All the above virtues, though seemingly different, have but one and the same form, namely, Truth. All these hold up Truth and strengthen it. It is impossible to exhaust the merits of Truth. That is the reason why the Brahmanas and the gods speak highly of Truth.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 242-244.

—Energism as a term owes its origin to Aristotle, and as an ethical theory is Paulsen's revival of the Greek position that controverts and corrects the hedonistic aim of ethical action, and poises itself upon a plea for continued and efficient exercise of one's normal capacities which in itself constitutes completeness or the right action, or comprehends all that self-realization can connote: the defects of this limited conception of completeness or rightness or self-realization, are too obvious to any critical reflection to necessitate our attention, and all that is apposite in this context is to remind ourselves that for Sivananda the aim and function of ethics consists primarily in seeking to express qualities natural to the inmost and essential nature of man, to manifest a character that is characteristic of the Christ, the Godhead seated in the psychic heart of every man.—

Sivananda continues his earnest insistence on an abidance by Truth which is at once the Norm of Indian ethics, the Value of Indian philosophy and the Aim of Indian religion.

ONCE upon a time Truth and all religious observances including a thousand virtues were weighed on a scale. When both were weighed that scale on which Truth was, proved weightier. Harischandra practised Truth. He adhered to Truth at the risk of his life, and attained immortality and eternal bliss and undying fame. He still lives in our hearts.

Truth always exists in a pure and unmixed state. Truth is always a duty with the good. Truth is eternal duty. Truth is the greatest refuge of all. Hence respectfully bow to Truth. Brahman is Truth. You can attain Truth only by practising Truth. Therefore, practise Truth.

Srutis emphatically declare "Satyam Vada: speak truth. Satyameva Jayate Naanrutam — Truth alone triumphs but not falsehood." God is Truth and Truth must be realised by speaking the Truth. A truthful man is absolutely free from worries and anxieties. He has a calm mind He is respected by society. If you observe speaking truth for twelve years, you will get Vak-Siddhi. Then whatever you speak will come to pass. There will be power in your speech. You can then influence thousands.

Always be bold, be plain; never have the shyness of a nerveless man. Follow the straight road. Serve others to a small definite extent that you are capable of. Do not imagine too much of yourself. Always be plain. Love the neighbour and give him only proper advice or no advice at all. Do not misguide him. Do not give false hopes. Do not say, "I shall try; I shall let you know in a day or two; I shall see what I can do in the matter". Such indefinite words do not cost you anything, they cost your neighbour all the world, because he has wasted much of his time in depending upon you and particularly lost by ill-guided advice, the most important period of his life, when probably he cannot afford to mend his faults. "Art is long and time", is short is the old saying. Time should never be killed. A man of untruth definitely kills his time, as also the time of others. Once you feel for yourself you have misguided him, you think for yourself and you will realise that you have definitely swerved from the right path, and this pricks you for a very long time.

Therefore, stick to the path of truth at all costs. Truth has a lustre of its own It shines for itself and sheds light on others. When you stick to it as your only religion, you will be liked by all around you. You cannot afford to harm any one by simply adhering to the path of truth. Nay you

will be respected, you will be feared, you will have a peaceful and a blissful heaven around you. There is no kingdom wider in space, there is no bliss more blissful, there is no enjoyment more intense, there is no pleasure more worth this life than the straight road of truth. In the long run there is a world of love between yourself and your colleagues in whatever walk of life they may be, there is a world of smile all around you, for you have no burden to carry, no sense of past thoughts and you are absolutely free.

For a man treading the right path, everything can be approached with absolute boldness, with free will, and with smiling pleasure ; because he releases all his thoughts and he does not attach any importance to the self as distinct from the other. To him service alone counts ; he is calm and serene with what little he does and he has always a bold and a sure step before him. There is no ego in him. He loses himself in his love for others. Service, service and service alone is his ideal. The result of service does not come into the picture at all ; for he does not imagine any kind of result nor does he entertain any room for idle imaginations. 'Karmanyeva Adhikarasthe ma Phaleshu Kadachana' is the end and aim of his life. He is not hampered by negative results. The whole world is an indifferent drama, before him. He is never moved at all. He simply witnesses the drama and passes away most serenely. Such a silent career is the most successful career in any era of life. May the Almighty bless us in treading the path of truth and Ahimsa.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 244-252.

43. CARRYING A NEOPLATONIC ETHICAL CANON A FEW STEPS FORWARD, LOGICALLY AND LIBERALLY, SIVANANDA SEEKS, IN AN ETHICAL INTEREST AND FOR FORGING A SPIRITUAL DESTINY, TO INCULCATE SIMPLICITY OF LIFE RATHER THAN A MORTIFICATION OF FLESH, AND ENJOINS AN ABSORPTION IN THINGS DIVINE DESPITE THE SEDUCTIONS AND OBSCURATIONS OF SENSE, RATHER THAN A SCRUPULOUS CONCERN WITH THE NEGATIVE PROCESS OF ABSCISSION OF MOTIVES AND DESIRES

—Almost as a modern version casketing rich moral thought relevant to the needs of the times we live in, of the spirit of such Smritis as those of Manu, Angirasa, Brihaspati, Yajnavalkya, the Sivananda Smriti is bound to engage the interest of the thinking men in the field of comparative moral philosophy, and illuminate the austere ethical dignity and the moral sensitivity and sublimity of the Indian Mind.—

NOT nakedness, not plaited or matted hair, nor sitting motionless on Padma or Siddha Asan, nor living on neem-leaves, potatoes or buttermilk, or milk and fruits, not moving about without clothing in winter, not living in a solitary cave in the Himalayas, would make one, who has not developed moral and divine virtues, Daivee-Sampat, a Yogi, or a Sage, or a devotee, or a saint or a perfect man.

Neither be a stoic nor an epicurean. Do not torture your physical body and senses, nor should you become a slave of them. Surgeons have always their instruments and knives ready for operation. Even so, have your ethical and spiritual principles ready for the understanding of divine truths, for the practice of divine virtues.

—*Sivananda Smriti*, pp. 41-42.

Purity and simplicity are the two wings with which man soars high to the Kingdom of God. Simplicity is Nature's first step and the last of arts. There is majesty in simplicity. In dress, in food, in character, in manners, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity. Be simple like a child. Goodness and simplicity are indissolubly united.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, p. 218.

44. DOUBT ONE CANNOT THAT THE MAJOR TRENDS OF SIVANANDA'S SIX IMPORTANT ETHICAL WORKS ARE, TO SOME EXTENT, DETERMINED BY SUCH LEADING AND GUIDING ETHICAL MANUALS OF ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL INDIA, AS VIDURA NITI, CHANAKYA NITI-DARPANA, SUKRA NITI, MANDAKINI NITISARA, BHARTRIHARI NITISHATAKAM

—Through the recent centuries, generations of Occidental spiritual philistines have rendered the whole of European and Western ethics, philosophy and psychology into a wasteful jabber, a structure of precious mental energy misspent, and have raised a colossal monument to the learned Ignorance of the lands of the setting sun. In all the three important fields, ethics, philosophy and psychology, they have, in the name of "reason", "reality", "society", attempted in vain, to read the truths and laws of morals, soul, and mind from without, within, have mistaken instrumental cause for the intrinsic, the processes for the central power in them, the outer details for the organic unity, the external circumstance for the internal substance, experiments with the non-essentials for a direct perception of the essentials, inferences from and ratiocination upon the inadequate outer evidence for the acts and products of infallible knowledge derived from the total evidence and immediate knowing.—

LASCIVIOUSNESS in a Gandharva, anger in a serpent, timidity in a deer, hunger in a vulture, ferocity in a tiger, gentleness in a cow, cunningness in a jackal, are most dominant. Each possesses only one vicious quality, but man is a complex animal. He possesses countless evil traits. It is difficult to describe him. He is a great compound of so many evil qualities. Passion, egoism, jealousy, pride, hatred are very deep-rooted. If you cut the branches of a tree, again after some time they grow. Even so, these Vrittis are suppressed or thinned out for some time; they manifest again after some time. They should be completely rooted out by strenuous efforts, Vichara, enquiry, discrimination, and meditation.

Pride, self-sufficiency, arrogance, self-assertive Rajasic nature, irritability, curiosity about the affairs of other people, hypocrisy,

are all obstacles in meditation. Subtle forms of these evil Vrittis lurk in the mind. They operate as oceanic under currents. Under the pressure of Yoga and meditation various sorts of dirts in the mind come out, just as dirt of a room that is shut up for six months comes out when you carefully sweep. Aspirants should introspect and watch their minds. They should remove them one by one, by applying suitable, effective methods. Pride is inveterate. Its branches ramify in all directions in the regions of the Rajasic mind. Again and again it manifests, although the wave subsides temporarily for some time.

To be jealous is mean, to be selfish is ignoble, to be compassionate is divine, to be patient, and enduring is manly, to be contented and happy is wise, to be serene is glorious, to be dispassionate is praiseworthy and to be equanimous is laudable. Therefore, eradicate jealousy, selfishness and cultivate the divine virtues. You will soon attain Godhead.

A man, who has no life of introspection, whose mind is of out-going tendencies, Bahirmukha-Vritti, cannot find out his own mistakes. Self-conceit acts as a veil and blurs the mental vision. If an aspirant wants to grow, he must admit his defects if they are pointed out. He must try his level best to eradicate them and must thank the man, who points out his defects. Then only can he grow in spirituality.

Be on the alert. Be vigilant. Be bold. Be cheerful. Be pure. Be kind. Be humble. Be patient. Do not miss the ideal. Keep the vision of your goal clear before your eyes. Live every moment to realise the ideal in life. Correct your mistakes. Realise the Self through direct intuitive experience.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, pp. 133-137.

45. ECKHART'S ETHICS AS ALSO THE ETHICS OF ST. AUGUSTINE, ST. THOMAS, BRUNO, SPINOZA INVEST MORALITY WITH THE EXALTED MISSION OF EFFECTING A MYSTIC IDEAL, THE BRINGING OF THE SOUL BACK TO AN IDENTITY WITH THE DIVINE—SIVANANDA STANDS IN THEIR CAMP, SCINTILLATING AN IRRADIATING THOUGHT ALL HIS OWN

GOD is infinite Knowledge, infinite Energy, infinite Joy, infinite Peace. Know Him and be free. God is wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. Know Him and be free.

According to the Saivite School, self-existence, pure essence, intuitive knowledge, omniscience, freedom from evil, graciousness, omnipotence, infinite bliss, are the eight qualities of God.

According to Jain School, the eight qualities of God are: infinite knowledge, infinite vision, infinite energy, infinite delight, indescribability, beginninglessness, agelessness, and deathlessness.

According to the Vaishnava School, the six attributes of God are: Jnana or wisdom, Vairagya or dispassion, Sri or wealth, Keerti or fame, Aiswarya or Siddhis and Dharma or Virtue.

The Lord is sweeter than sweetness, lovelier than loveliness. He is the Father of

Love. Know Him in essence, through self-surrender, self-restraint and meditation and be blissful and free for ever.

Virtue, wisdom and goodness are linked hand in hand. Human hearts are firmly united to each other by their influence. Therefore, be virtuous, be wise, be good, do good.

The Name of God is "Good" : shorten it ; it becomes God. A Hindu has one thousand names of God (Sahasranama). A Mohammadan has 99 names. God's Names are infinite. He is nameless, too. He is an incomprehensible indefinable Being. To define Him is to deny Him. God is a shoreless, surfaceless ocean of absolute and pure Consciousness. Meditate, float and swim in this ocean of Consciousness-bliss.

—*Sivananda Smriti*, pp. 46-48.

46. LAIRD DIVIDES VIRTUES INTO THREE CLASSES : THE VIRTUES OF THE RIGHTEOUS QUALITY, OF THE REQUISITE QUALITY, AND OF THE GENEROUS QUALITY ; SOME HAVE CLASSIFIED VIRTUES INTO THREE DIFFERENT GROUPS : SELF-REGARDING, OTHER-REGARDING AND IDEAL-REGARDING WHICH INCLUDES THE AESTHETIC AND THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES ; OTHERS HAVE DISCERNED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MORAL VIRTUES AND SPECIAL VIRTUES ; HUME MAINTAINED AND LATER DROPPED AS MERELY VERBAL THE DIVISION OF VIRTUES INTO NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL ; IN ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS WE FIND FORMULATED DIANOETIC VIRTUES AS DISTINCT FROM MORAL VIRTUES WHICH THOMAS AQUINAS PARTITIONS, ON A FUNCTIONAL FOUNDATION, INTO THE ACTION-REGULATING AND PASSION-REGULATING, AND DEMARCATES FROM THE ETHICAL THE REALM OF VIRTUES KNOWN AS THE SUPERNATURAL COVERING THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES OF THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

—Sivananda's standpoint is that though certain virtues bear specifically and apparently almost exclusively upon one's own self, the distinction between the individual good and the social good becomes unwarranted, and since the ideal-regarding virtues are seen to result in the good of the individual self, the differentiation of them from the self-regarding must be rated quite arbitrary, and the only grounds afforded for such a classification are not any pre-existent strata in, but merely the different phases of a single whole that the moral life is, that Hume's distinction between the natural and the artificial virtues was inspired by a certain misconception and could have lasted and been satisfactory as long as that misconception persisted, that though, theoretically viewed, the differentiation of the dianoetic virtues from moral virtues serves a helpful purpose, in practical life their interdependence becomes a necessity, that the

goal of apprehending the rational principles aimed at by dianoetic virtues is best attained only as a result of an adherence to, and an expression of, moral excellences, as a reward of a rational control and complete sublimation of the appetitive life.—

"BE good and do good." The whole ethics and right conduct are contained in this. If you practise this, you will soon attain God-realisation. A good man always lives with God. He lives in God. He has a divinity within him. A good man who does good actions, attains fame and longevity.

A good deed is never lost. It purifies the heart and leads to the descent of divine light and the dawn of divine grace. He who sows courtesy reaps friendship. He who plants kindness, reaps love.

Goodness is love in action. Goodness is the greatest virtue. Every good deed is a grain of seed for immortality or eternal life.

Do all the good you can in all the ways you can, to all people you can, in every place you can, at all the times you can, with all the zeal, strength, love and heart and interest you can, as long as ever you can.

Return good for evil. It is the sign of a real man. Love begets love, hatred begets hatred. Doing good and bringing happiness to others bring goodness and happiness to you. Good is the conquest over evil. It is not the absence of evil. Goodness makes life a blessing. Goodness will bring sure success and prosperity in life. To do good is human. To be good is divine.

Little self-denial, honest service, little words of cheer, encouragement, sympathy and kindness, little acts of kindness, little virtuous deeds, little silent victories over temptations—these will pave a long way to the attainment of eternal bliss, perennial joy, everlasting peace and immortality.

Nations and peoples do not obey the laws of goodness. Therefore, the present world is beset with evils of various sorts. Promote the welfare of the whole world. Work for the solidarity of the world.

The law of cause and effect is inexorable and unrelenting. You reap a harvest of suffering, poverty, pain and sorrow, because you have sown the seeds of evil in the past. You reap a harvest of plenty and bliss, owing to your sowing the seeds of good. Try to understand this law. You will then begin to sow only seeds of good

Entertain good, sublime, divine thoughts Shut your mind from evil thoughts just as you shut your doors against the approach of enemies, thieves and dacoits. Always perform good actions. Evil cannot enter your mind now. Cultivate good habits. Goodness of nature is an inclination. Without goodness man is a brute or a vermin. He is a mischievous, wretched, despicable thing on this earth. He is a burden on this earth. Even a little good thinking and a little doing good are highly beneficent. It will lead to eternal bliss. Then, why not try a little good thinking and good doing?

New, healthy, strong, virtuous, habits replace old, morbid, abnormal, vicious habits. Yoga aims at changing the old habits. Habits of a worldly nature can be changed into divine virtuous habits through selfless service with the spirit of renunciation, devotion, prayer and Vichara. Development of

other virtues such as friendship, mercy and the practice of the three Tapas (austerity) mentioned in the seventeenth chapter of the Gita will pave the way for the moulding of character.

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is the spirit, practice or art of receiving and entertaining strangers and guests without reward and with kindness and consideration. A hospitable man is generous and bountiful.

Hospitality is Atithi Yajna. It is one of the five Yajnas or daily sacrifices, which are to be practised by the householders. Hospitable people are rare in this world. All shut their doors and feed their stomachs with avidity, cupidity and stupidity. Hospitality is a direct passport to heaven or higher blissful regions. If rich people are hospitable, the woes of this world will be lightened.

HUMILITY

Humility is the highest of all virtues. 'Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth' (St. Mathew, Chap.V—51). You can destroy your egoism by developing this one virtue alone. You can influence the whole world. You will become a magnet to attract many persons. All the lives will be drawn towards you. Humility must be genuine. Feigned humility is hypocrisy. It cannot stand. God helps you, only when you feel utterly humble. Therefore, develop this virtue to a considerable degree. Become an embodiment of humility. Become humility personified.

There is no virtue greater than humility. Through this one virtue alone you can get salvation. Humility destroys egoism, brings Sama-bhava, Atma-vasya, peace of mind, good sleep and rest, Atma Bhava or Narayanaya Bhava in all beings and eventually Self realisation or Vishnu Padam.

—Swami Sivananda's
How To Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 521; 97-99; 111; 112.

47. FROM THE PERFECTIONS OF THE INFINITE PERSON, SRI RAMANUJACHARYA DERIVES HIS SYSTEM OF HUMAN DUTIES AND HUMAN EXCELLENCES; SIVANANDA ASSEVERATES THAT VIRTUES, BE THEY OF THE CADRE OF POLITICAL VIRTUES IN WHICH PLOTINUS FINDS A PREPARATORY UTILITY, OR OF THE CATEGORY OF MILITARY VIRTUES COMMENDED BY SPENCER AND JAMES, OR THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS, OR THE IDEALISTIC VIRTUES OF THE GREEK EPICURUS, ARE THE EMANATIONS OF THE ABSOLUTE GODHEAD,—

These two world-teachers, Ramanuja and Sivananda, who have brought into the welter of the material realms something of the Fragrance and the Sweetness of the Divine, employ an insight illimitable in its penetrating power, infallible in its judgment, an insight that reveals not only the initial conjunction but also the ultimate oneness of the human excellences and the divine attributes and

that corrects man's petty outer and dubious calculations and regard for external consequences, to the development of the Sattwic Nature, to the unfoldment of inner spiritual character to which goodness is central, universal beneficence natural, creative activity and achievement common,—

An insight which by deducing moral laws and principles, and deriving their validity, their rational warrant, their compelling power, from the summum bonum of existence that the Godhead is, shifts the crux of moral life from the limitation-ridden special faculties in the human mind and nature, to a perpetual awareness of the operative presence of the ultimate divine Principle in all life, and thus affords the best solution to the inherent riddles of the Moral Sense School, the Aesthetic Sense Theory, the phenomenological ethics of Scheler and Hartmann, and the other forms and versions of intuitionism such as the dogmatic, the perceptual, the philosophical or the critical or the intellectual which includes the axiological and the utilitarian.—

EVERYONE who longs to transcend misery and obtain joy and happiness in life should sincerely strive to entirely eradicate all vices and carefully cultivate the important virtues. To do this, the best method does not always lie in directly struggling and straining with the vices in an attempt to stamp them out of existence. They prove very obstinate. A very effective way of rooting out evil qualities is to supplant them by ennobling virtues.

Virtues are the emanations of the fragrance of the Divine, the Indwelling Truth, that resides in the heart of man. It is the manifest expression, on the plane of human relationship, of the Divinity that is enshrined in the heart of humanity. Purity, Patience, Humility, Self-sacrifice, Self-reliance, Fearlessness, Kindness, Compassion, Love, Sincerity, Self-control, Restraint and Generosity are cardinal virtues, which if assiduously cultivated transport man from the morass of misery and ignorance to the paradise of pure Joy and Bliss. They fill this worldly life with heavenly happiness.

The opposites of these elevating elements in man, their contradictory qualities, are vices. They are as it were the projections of the petty 'self', the lower ego-bound personality, in man. Vice degenerates and confers pure joy and supreme happiness.

The cultivation of virtues is the important thing necessary, if one would attain to happiness. This then is the main concern of those, that seek to end misery and obtain joy. 'As a man thinketh so doth he become'. This is the greatest psychological and spiritual law. On the basis of this law, the sure way to change one's nature, annihilate vices and grow in virtue is to regularly meditate upon those qualities, which he wishes to acquire. A man grows into the likeliness of those qualities upon which he constantly meditates. An important point to be noted is that in addition to meditation you must also actively exercise these virtues. Qualities like charity, forgiveness, kindness, forbearance, etc., which a person manifests particularly in his relationship with others, have

to be practised if they are to develop. They are of an objective type appearing mainly in our dealings with beings outside ourselves and thrive and grow in strength by constant exercise and active application in daily life. The noble quality of forgiveness, for instance, is possible of development only when one moves in the midst of many people, some bad, some actually malicious and wicked, clashes with opposing natures and temperaments and suffers at the hands of the thoughtless and the wicked. Renunciation and isolation fail to give scope for the blossoming of such objective virtues. Therefore, the concrete foundation of all spiritual life and Yoga is the cultivation of fundamental virtues and progressive moral and ethical development.

It is evident that the recluse in retreat and the Sannyasin in seclusion may well learn a useful point or two from the Nishkama Karma Yogi and the humble Svayam Sevak. No doubt through the method of meditation, one may develop several virtues of a subjective type, subjective in that they centre round and concern the Sadhak's own immediate personality. Through constant contemplation subjectively one may acquire non-attachment to one's body, and an imperviousness to environment or a victory over the Rajasic urge to wander aimlessly, etc. Restraint and self-denial, too, could be acquired to some degree.

On the other hand, it is only through selfless activity, service, that one can acquire the precious gems of purity, patience and humility. Humility especially comes through service alone. In this connection it is of great profit to remember one point of immense practical value, viz., of all virtues, humility forms the basis. It is only when a man is humble and feels that there is much that he does not possess and has to acquire that there arises in him the eager desire to grow into those noble qualities, he is deficient in. Here begins his systematic endeavour and attempt to acquire and possess them. The proud and arrogant man has little scope for growth, because he feels he knows everything. There is that self-sufficiency in his pride, which leads him to think that there remains nothing for him to strive for and to acquire. Thus it is that humility is the fruitful source of all virtues and that everything that is kind and good naturally grows from it. Generosity and kindness, too, are the outcome of active contact with the suppliant and the needy, the helpless, the wretched and the distressed. Herein lies the unique distinctive quality of Niskama Karma, works reverently done as worship of the Almighty. Moreover, certain traits exist in man in a dual aspect, latent and manifest. For example, the latent quality of purity is manifest as chastity in actual life. Fearlessness becomes manifest as positive courage, when a sudden crisis calls it forth, when a dangerous emergency arises. A habitual state of self-restraint manifests itself as deliberate acts of self-control in the face of actual temptations. So far as complete and balanced development of both the aspects is concerned, Karma Yoga becomes indispensable.

Again, subjective virtues developed by a life of seclusion and isolation to attain to fullness and perfection, should be actively exercised. One must not rest satisfied with merely the elimination of evil, with being virtuous in a negative way. There must be a positive passion for putting into practice

the good in us for the enhancement of the joy and welfare of all creatures. Then alone will these virtues justify themselves ; they become, as it were, full-blossomed-flowers, ripe fruits. They will then expand in their breadth and from the individual circle gradually extend to all humanity, then to the whole universe and finally become all-embracing and cosmic.

Development and progress, if they are to extend thus into infinity, must be dynamic. On the path of moral and spiritual unfoldment, in our quest of happiness a life of quiescence carries with it the danger of stagnation setting in at some stage or other. This is the reason why many fail to reach ethical perfection even after years of seclusion and meditation. Selfless activity and loving service should, therefore, never be underestimated or neglected.

Finally one would do well to bear in mind an important point. It has been seen how humility forms the fundamental basis of all good. To the virtues that are acquired with great toil and patient effort, it is humility, again, that acts as the sustainer and vigilant preserver. Humility is the shield and armour against the arch-enemy of the aspirant—moral and spiritual pride. For having progressed considerably in the path of virtue the virtuous man will unconsciously fall a prey to vanity. An insidious feeling of self-approbation will creep in unnoticed. This will later manifest itself in the form of a sort of indulgent attitude to, and a lofty contempt for, those who are not following a similar life. Such subtle moral and spiritual vanity is more potent for harm than ordinary pride. A constant humility kept alive by ceaseless exercise of it in service is the only sure armour against this foe. It effectively protects the striving seeker in his quest after true abiding happiness. He who effaces his little "self" through a life of motiveless, humble and loving service with Narayana Bhav or Brahma Bhav obtains a unique happiness and bliss. Who can gauge the exquisite joy that he experiences ? Therefore, cultivate noble virtues !

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 505-510.

48. THE QUANTITATIVE CYRENAIC HEDONISM PROPOUNDED IN ANCIENT GREECE BY ARISTIPPUS, HAS BEEN OUTDONE IN ITS UNBLUSHING GROSSNESS AND BLATANT EGO-CENTRICITY, BY THE CHARVAKA HEDONISM IN INDIAN ETHICAL THOUGHT BUT THEN THE LATTER CLAIMED ALL TOO BRIEF EXISTENCE AND DISAPPEARED ONLY TO SUBSIST NOWHERE SAVE AS AN ISSUE OF INTEREST IN ACADEMIC ETHICAL CONTROVERSIES, AND THUS LEFT INDIA IN ITS LENGTH AND BREADTH PREDOMINANTLY A LAND OF INTENSIVE MORAL PREOCCUPATION AND SPIRITUAL PURSUITS—DIFFERENT FROM THE RAMIFICATIONS OF WESTERN ETHICAL HEDONISM IS THE TRANSCENDENTAL HEDONISM OF PLATO, SHANKARA AND SIVANANDA TO WHICH EMPIRICAL PLEASURE IS PARTIAL AND IMPERFECT AND THE

TRUE ETHICAL AND PHILOSOPHIC END OF LIFE CONSISTS IN THE CONSUMMATE EXPERIENCE OF THE INFINITE SELF-DELIGHT WITHIN

—Sivananda : his vigorous statements on the indispensability of a strict adherence to scriptural injunctions, by the laity, and his thesis that moral weakness impairs the perceptive powers, the capacity to determine the morally right and do acts of ethical merits.—

I SHALL try to explain the terms 'right' and 'wrong.' Rishi Kanada, the author of the Vaiseshika Philosophy, says in the opening Sutra : "That which brings Nisreya and Abhyudaya (supreme bliss and exaltation) is Dharma. That which elevates you and brings you nearer to God is right. That which brings you down and takes you away from God is wrong. That which is done in strict accordance with the injunctions of the Sastras is right ; and that which is done against the injunctions of the Sastras is wrong. This is one way of defining these terms. To work in accordance with the Divine Will is right ; to work in opposition to the Divine Will is wrong.

It is very difficult for the man in the street to find out what exactly the Divine Will is in certain actions. That is the reason why wise sages declare that people should resort for consultation to Sastras and learned Pundits and persons, who have had Realisation. A pure man who has done Nishkama Karma Yoga for several years and who has been doing worship of Ishwara for a long time can readily find out the Divine Will when he wants to do certain actions. He can hear the inner, shrill, small voice. Ordinary people should not attempt to hear this Divine Voice, Voice of the Silence. They may mistake the voice of the impure mind for the Voice of God. The lower instinctive mind will delude them.

That work which gives elevation, joy and peace to the mind is right ; that which brings depression, pain and restlessness to the mind is wrong. This is an easy way to find out right and wrong. But selfishness clouds understanding. Therefore, if a man has got even a tinge of selfishness, he cannot distinguish what is right from what is wrong. A very pure, subtle, sharp intellect is needed for this purpose. xvii-30,31,32, the Gita describes as follows the nature of the Sattwic, the Rajasic and the Tamasic "That which knoweth energy and abstinence, what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation, that Reason is pure, O Partha. That by which one understandeth right and wrong and also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, that Reason, O Partha, is passionate. That which, wrapped in darkness, thinketh wrong to be right, and seeth all things inverted, that Reason, O Partha, is of darkness."

Various other definitions have been given by wise men to help students in the path of righteousness. In the Bible it is said : "Do unto others as you would be done by." This is a very good maxim. The whole gist of Sadachara or right conduct is here. If one practises this very carefully he will not commit any wrong act. "Ahimasa Paramo Dharmah—Non-injuring in thought, word and deed is the highest of all virtues." If one is well established in Ahimsa in thought, word and deed, he can never do any wrong

action. That is the reason why Patanjali Maharshi has given Ahimsa great prominence in his Raja Yoga Philosophy. Ahimsa comes first in the practice of Yama or self-restraint. To give pleasure to others is right ; to spread misery and pain to others is wrong. One can follow this in his daily conduct towards others and can evolve in his spiritual path. Do not perform any act that brings you shame and fear. You will be quite safe if you follow this rule. Stick to any rule that appeals to your reason and conscience and follow it with faith and attention. You will have a clear conscience and peaceful mind. You will evolve and reach the abode of eternal happiness.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues,
pp. 512-515.

49. THE DOCTRINE OF THE AUTONOMY OF ETHICS AND THE FINAL PURPOSES OF EUDAEMONISM WHICH SEEK TO MAKE ETHICS SELF-SUFFICIENT AND A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT DISCIPLINE, AND THE NATURALISTIC AND OTHER COGNATE ETHICAL SCHOOLS WHICH ATTEMPT TO CONSTITUTE ETHICS INTO A NATURAL SCIENCE, GO TO DEMONSTRATE THE TWO CENTRAL ERRORS WITHIN THE FRAME-WORK OF WESTERN ETHICAL THEORIZATION, EMERGING AS MUCH FROM A FAILURE TO GRASP THE ORIGINS, THE NATURE AND THE DESTINY OF THE ETHICAL IMPULSE, AS FROM THE PAUCITY OF VISION AND EXPERIENCE THAT CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO PRESENT ANY VIEW OF MAN EXCEPT THE ERRONEOUS

—The Indian standpoint assumed by Sivananda, makes it evident both by its theoretical presuppositions and in its practices, that ethics is constitutionally incapable of independence, and always does and must subserve the central spiritual, or the metaphysical, or the mystical, Ideal, and that being an organic, live and flexible phenomenon, ethics precludes any interpretation of itself in terms of rigid scientific principles, combats attempts to derive its principles from natural sciences, and militates against all efforts to constitute it into a science. Since it is a vivid experience of the grand, autonomous Nature of the inner Reality as the self-sufficient, self-luminous, eternal and infinite Principle that alone can help us enact fully in life, such virtues as are implicit in the injunctions of Jesus the Christ, like "resist not evil", and of Plato's moral enjoinment that "it is better to suffer than to do wrong", and as no self-effacement is truly and completely possible save by an overwhelming realization of the independence and infinite worth of the inner divine Self, Indian ethics veers round the Metaphysical Principle, obtains its theoretical background and its principles of action, from the nature and the demands of that Principle and its transcendental Purpose, and in turn becomes a body of disciplines indispensable for the furtherance of the realization of that transcendental Purpose.—

NOW I shall talk to you on another point. I have already pointed out in the beginning of this chapter that "right" and "wrong" are relative terms. They vary according to

time, special circumstances, Varna and Ashrama. Morality is a changing and relative term. That passionate man who molests his legally married wife frequently to gratify his passion is more immoral than a man who visits the house of his sister of ill-fame once in six months That man who dwells constantly on immoral thoughts is the most immoral man. Do you clearly note the subtle difference now? To kill an enemy is right for a Kshatriya-king. A Brahmin or a Sannyasin should not kill anybody even for protecting himself during the times of danger. They should practise strict forbearance and forgiveness. To speak an untruth to save the life of a Mahatma or one's Guru, who has been unjustly charged with a crime, is right. Untruth has become a truth in this particular case. To speak a truth which brings harm to many is untruth only. To kill a dacoit who murders wayfarers daily is Ahimsa only. Himsa becomes Ahimsa under certain circumstances.

There are special Dharmas during critical, dangerous circumstances. They are called Apat Dharma. Rishi Viswamitra took forbidden meat from a Chandala when there was a severe famine and offered this in his sacrifice to the Devas. Ushasthi, a learned sage, when he took the Ucchishta beans from the hands of an elephant-driver was suffering from acute hunger and when he was not able to get food from any one. Performance of one's own duties brings happiness, quick evolution and freedom.

Different were the Dharmas of man in Satya Yuga; different in Treta and Dvapara; different, again, are the Dharmas of men in Kali Yuga. The Dharma changes according to the change in the cycles.

That which helps you in your spiritual evolution is right; that obstructs and hinders your spiritual evolution is wrong. That which leads to unity of self is right; that which leads to separation is wrong. That which is in accordance with the injunctions of the holy scriptures is right; that which is not in accordance with the sacred lore is wrong. To work in accordance with the Divine Will is right; to work in disharmony with the Divine Will is wrong. To do good to others, to serve and help others, to give joy to others is right; to give pain to others, to injure others is wrong.

Forgiveness or Kshama befits an ascetic or Sannyasi who leads the life of Nivritti Marga or renunciation, It cannot befit a ruler. . The ruler may forgive one who has injured him, but he cannot forgive one who has done great harm to the public.

Do not do to another what is not good for yourself. Do not do any act which injures another and makes you feel ashamed. Do as you would be done by. Do unto others as you wish others do unto you. This is the secret of Dharma. This is the secret of the essence of Karma Yoga. This will lead you to the attainment of eternal bliss.

By doing wrong actions you taint your character. By doing virtuous actions you develop a noble character. Without character man falls down to the level of a brute. A man of character is honoured, trusted and adored everywhere. Therefore, develop a good character when you are young. Learn how to eradicate vice and how to cultivate virtues in the garden of your heart. Vices and evil habits are the weeds. Virtues are priceless fruits and flowers. Learn the Yogic method of

"Pratipaksha bhavana" or cultivation of the opposites. Purity, celibacy, forgiveness, generosity, humility, selflessness are the opposites of uncleanliness, lust, anger, greed, pride and selfishness. Become a skilful Yogic gardener. Plant good flower plants in the garden of your heart and enthrone the Lord in the centre of the heart-garden, and meditate on Him. You will enjoy eternal bliss and immortality.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, p. 515.

—'Rita' or the Right and the Truth and 'Satyasya Satyam' or the Real of the reals, form the foundational notions of the Indian ethics which is closely related to, or rather intimately bound up with, the philosophy of Self-knowledge, God-vision and God-realization, than with any of the social, or natural, or even mental, sciences, deals with a complexus of graded higher values of life, carries a cathartic and purifying purpose and mission, and has for its method not any autonomous internal faculty, nor any ratiocinative or inferential process, nor a technique of comparison and criticism, but the revelations of the Veda, the intuitions of the saints and sages, the experiences of the mystics and the founders of faiths, the insights of the philosophic and religious geniuses.—Hereunder, Sivananda persists in making a case for a resort to the 'Srutis' and the 'Smritis', and to the customary morality, for ethical guidance, where sheer human ingenuity and the trial-and-error method yield no dividends, and on points of doubt and indecision.—

The scriptures alone can tell us what is Dharma and what is Adharma, what is holy and what is unholy. Our knowledge of what is duty and the contrary of duty depends entirely on Sastras, because these are Atindriya, i.e., beyond sense-perception, and there is in the case of right and wrong an entire want of binding rules as to place, time and occasion. What in one place, at one time, on one occasion, is performed as a right action is a wrong action in another place, at another time, on another occasion. Therefore, no one can know without the aid of scriptures what is right and what is wrong.

For instance, an objection may be raised that the sacrificial works such as the Jyotishtoma sacrifice and the like, where animals are killed, are unholy. Therefore, their result may cause the sacrificer to be actually born as a corn or a plant as penalty for his cruel action. Such objection is groundless, because the killing of animals in sacrifice causes no demerit as it is sanctioned by the scriptures. The sacrifices are not impure or sinful, because the scriptures declare them to be meritorious. No doubt the scriptures say that one must not cause injury to any being (Na himsyat sarva-bhootani, let not any animal be injured or killed.) That is the general rule. 'Let him offer an animal sacred to Agnihoma' is an exception. General rule and exception have different spheres of application. They have different scopes, settled by usage, and so there is no conflict between them.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues, p. 516.

Sivananda and the Jewish Ethics

50. JEWISH ETHICS, EXTENDING BEYOND THE CENTRAL CONTENT OF THE MOSAIC CODE EMBRACING THE APOCRYPHA, AND EMBELLISHED BY THE EXEGETIC AND INTERPRETATIVE RABBINICAL LITERATURE, CONSTITUTES CONSCIENCE INTO THE MOTIVE POWER AND THE ULTIMATE ARBITER FOR THE MORAL RECTITUDE OR UPRIGHTNESS OF MAN, ESTEEMS IT A JUDGE AND THE FINAL ETHICAL CRITERION, ELEVATES IT OVER THE PURELY LEGAL PRESCRIPTIONS, DERIVES ITS POWER FROM A TRUE CONCEPTION OF THE RELATION BETWEEN MAN AND GOD, FINDS ITS SEAT IN THE HEART, EQUATES IT WITH THE PERFECT PURITY THE HEART LEAVENED BY LOVE AND LIFTED ABOVE LAW, OR AS LAW ITSELF, CAN ACQUIRE, ACCORDS IT AN AUTONOMY, SEES IN IT NO OTHER MOTIVE THAN THAT OF SELF-SANCTIFICATION AND ASSIGNS TO ITS ACTS THE ROLE OF HALLOWING ALL LIFE.

—Like Sivananda, Jewish ethics assigns a pre-eminent role to conscience, in moral life and awareness, but unlike Sivananda it neither traces its intimate and organic relations with the infinite divine Consciousness, nor lays down the methods for consciously elevating and dissolving it in a transcendental spiritual experience.—

—The awovedly anti-henotheistic and fixationally monotheistic Judaism of ethical ardency and didactic strains, must enliven itself in any emotionally rich and responsive estimation as as emphatically a Religion of Conscience, a creed of soul-searching for soul resting in God, a creed of personal conduct in the world and among men, attuned to the imitation of the ways of God, a creed cast into the crucible of transforming and enlightening repentance for a return to the Power of the Godhead, as it is the Religion of the Synagogue with its Torah embodying the Law, the revelations received by Moses on Mount Sinai, the Pentateuch or the first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, the second and the last of which contain one each of the two obtaining versions of the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments, the Abrahamic religion with its ancient mysticism breathed into the Muse of the Psalms, the Judean religion with its long line of Patriarchs, Prophets and Rabbis, embracing Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hillel, Akiba and others, the Hebrew religion with the poetry and pageantry of its festivals like Purim, Passover, Pentecost, its symbol concerning the suggestive seven-branched candelabra, its belief in the advent of the Messianic Age when all the nations "shall beat their swords into ploughshares", when the hope it inspires in mankind for brotherhood, justice, love, truth, freedom, will be realised, and when the high destiny it invests the historical process with, is attained, a religion which bears in its bosom such words of its prophets like Micah that are, as Huxley stated, as perfect as an expression of religion as the sculpture of Praxiteles perfectly represents art, the words which run thus, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly with

thy God ?", the religion of the Scribes and the Pharsaic Rabbis, with its culture and civilization that unroll the fundamental sanctities of human life and the blessed ways of living that seek to make of the table an altar, the home a house of God, the market-place an expression of justice, and that engendered the well-known epigram on Jews as the worshippers of the beauty of Holiness as contradistinguished from the Hellenic adoration of the Holiness of beauty, with its wide—eyed and inspiring Talmud covering the two great works, the Palestinian and Babylonian recensions, abrogating by the wisdom of its felicitous thought, the distinction between the secular and the religious, the profane and the sacred, and fusing all life into one divine sacrament, anulling by the lessons of its parables and the cadences of its poetry, the barriers between the holiness of the home and the sanctities of the synagogue, attempting by the flights of its philosophic fancy, to effect a harmonization of the daily round with the higher calls of spiritual moments, and portray vividly the Presence of God in human life, with the great latitude of its philosophic speculation in the definition of its central religious concept concerning the unity of Godhead, the oneness of God, covered by the Platonist Solomon ibn Gabirol, the Aristotelian Maimonides, the mystically inclined metaphysical Benedict Spinoza, and with several other of its inspiring features which we associate with the typical Semitic heritage as embedded in the Hebrew literature and in the practices found in the simple life of every God-fearing Israelite.—

—Taburnacled, for the luminous, reflective, associative, constructive intelligence, are some illuminating hints in Sivananda Literature on Judaism as as much a Religion of Conscience and Conduct, as a Religion of the Scribes and the Synagogues.—

ONE hour of repentance and good actions in this world is more than all the life of the world to come. An hour of bliss in the world to come is more than all the life of this world.

The best preacher is the heart ; the best teacher is time ; the best book is the world ; the best friend is God.

He that gives should never remember ; he that receives should never forget. He gives little who gives much with a frown ; he gives much who gives a little with a smile.

A man is never impoverished by alms-giving. A rich man carries his God in his pocket ; a poor man in his heart. The best trading is with God.

In three things a man's character is recognised—in the wine cup, in his purse, and in his anger. Be first in greeting every man. Give answer with patience. That man is a hero who can make a friend of a foe.

Be strong as a leopard, and swift as an eagle, fleet-footed as a gazelle, and brave as a lion—to do the will of thy Father who is in the heaven. Look not at the picture, but at that which is in it.

More flesh, more worms ; more wealth, more care ; more women, more witchcraft ;

more maid-servants, more lewdness ; more men-servants, more thieving ; more Torah, more life ; more assiduity, more wisdom ; more counsel, more understanding ; more charity, more peace.

Weigh thy words in a balance and make a door and bar for thy mouth. The value of words uttered with the lips is determined by the devotion of the heart.

The blindness of the heart is indeed blindness, and the loud voice of prayer is of no avail. The body is the scabbard of the soul. Life is but a loan to man ; death is the creditor who will one day claim it. Loving kindness is greater than law, and the charities of life are more than all ceremonies.

—Swami Sivananda's
World Parliament of Religions Commemoration Volume,
pp. 378-379.

THE Jewish saints have spoken much about the efficacy and power of repentance and prayer, particularly prayer with tears because there is no gate which tears cannot penetrate. The end and aim of all wisdom is repentance. Happy is the man who repents. The gates of repentance never close. Repentance prolonges a man's life. The tears of true repentance are not shed in vain. Even the most righteous shall not attain to so high a place in heaven as the truly repentant. Even an hour spent in repentance with a contrite heart in this world is preferable to a whole life in the world to come. Repent one day sincerely with a contrite heart before you die. After repentance you should not repeat the same wicked act.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions, p, 56.

Sivananda and the Buddhistic Ethics

51. INSPIRED LARGELY BY THE IMPACT OF THE UPANISHADIC ETHICS, BUDDHIST MORALITY DERIVES THE FOUNDATIONS OF MORAL LIFE IMMEDIATELY FROM THE UNIVERSAL TRUTHS, AND IN THE HANDS OF THE GENIUS OF ITS GENTLE FOUNDER UNDERGOES A TRANSFORMATION WHICH HEIGHTENS TO AN EXTRAORDINARY DEGREE ITS NOBILITY ONLY BY IMPOVERISHING IT IN ITS MYSTIC DEPTHS, WHICH IT COULD HAVE AVOIDED ONLY BY THE AN ADOPTION OF A METAPHYSICALLY THEOCENTRIC ATTITUDE, AND ITS AUTONOMOUS CHARACTER THAT DISTINGUISHES IT FROM THE THEISTIC SYSTEMS DID INDEED RAISE ITS DIGNITY GREATLY, BUT ADMINISTERED TO IT A TREMENDOUS DEFEAT YET TO BE ADMITTED BY THE EXPONENTS OF BUDDHIST THOUGHT

—Brought into being primarily as an organon for extirpation of pain and sorrow, the cardinal tenets of the Buddhist Ethics resemble in their close connexion with spiritual exercises, those of the Vedantic Ethics, come to bear a comparison in

their practical aspects with those of the Yoga ethics, and by their intellectualistic character furnish parallels to the Greek and the Upanishadic ethics, and where they acquire by providing a fundamental contrast to the legal and socialistic aspects of the Brahmanic morality, a striking grandeur, they lose a sustaining and vitalising substance. In the light of our comparative studies and researches in Sivananda Literature, we shall set forth in detail our standpoint and views on Buddhist Ethics, representesive of the System of Sivananda's ethical teaching.—

—Sivananda singles out some of the outstanding merits of Buddhism and presents a few gems from the mosaic of Buddhist ethics.—

MANY Rishis and Prophets have preached the doctrine of love and Ahimsa, but there has never been in the entire history of the world's ethical thought a greater affirmation of the principle of Ahimsa and Love than has been done by Lord Buddha. No one has disseminated so widely the doctrine of Ahimsa and Universal Love as Lord Buddha. No one has practised these two fundamental virtues of love and Ahimsa as Buddha. No one has possessed such a tender, kind and merciful heart as Buddha. Hence he is enshrined even now in the hearts of millions of people. His heart throbbed severely and melted when he saw a little suffering in an ant or a worm or a dog. He gave up his body as food for a hungry ferocious animal in his previous birth. Several acts of kindness done in several births made him a Buddha in his last birth.

Buddha was the greatest benevolent man or humanitarian which the world has ever produced. He is one without a second. Benevolence and humanitarianism are the key-notes of all religious movements of the world. But the benevolence and humanitarian spirit and work of Lord Buddha stand unrivalled in the religious history of the world. His is the noblest and grandest humanism that has ever existed. The great invulnerable edifice of humanitarianism built by Lord Buddha on the rock foundation of Ahimsa and cosmic love is indeed his crowning glory.

Twenty-five centuries have elapsed since Lord Buddha was born in this country and yet the truth of his great message is felt even more today than it was during his lifetime. In Buddhism we have religion, philosophy, ethics and psychology, all combined into one comprehensive system of thought with the direct and practical purpose of meeting the deep needs and aspirations of human nature, a philosophy applicable to every aspect of our complicated individual and social life.

Buddha did not erect any monuments or temples. He did not conquer any country. He did not subjugate any people. But he had erected a magnificent, permanent temple in the hearts of men. He made conquest over the souls of men. He made cultural conquest. Therefore he still lives in the hearts of hundreds of millions of men.

Religious persecution is unknown to Buddhism. Not a single drop of blood has ever been shed in the name of Buddhism. Buddhism has spread by the spirit of strong

grace. History of Buddhism does not relate any great wars as having been waged or countries vanquished in its name. It has always adopted peaceful ways of disseminating its teachings. Tolerance and serenity charactarise the Buddhistic faith.

He who is desirous of attaining Nirvana or Buddhahood must stand on the foundation of the four Iddhipadas, viz., intense yearning to attain Nirvana, cultivation of noble thought, the energy to do meritorious deeds and investigation of the methods adopted, and develop the five psychic organs, viz., faith, power of recollection, strenuous indomitable energy, concentration of good, sublime thoughts and supreme wisdom. He must also develop the seven attributes of Supreme wisdom, viz., psychical attentiveness, analysis of the Skhandhas, seats of consciousness, the Law of cause and effect, etc. He must destroy the fetters, viz., ignorance of the Law of desire for sensual enjoyment in the heavens, etc., and remove the hindrances, viz., desire for sexual enjoyment, hatred, anger, sleepiness, laziness, doubt, tossing of mind and restlessness. Armed with these, he must tread the eightfold noble path. Only then will he be able to attain Nirvana.

Hurt no one by word or deed; live restrained under the law, be moderate in eating, dwell in solitude, practise meditation—this is the teaching of Buddha or the awakened.

If anything is to be done, let a man do it, let him attack it vigorously. A careless pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, it will not come near unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gathers it little by little.

The perfume of virtue is more excellent than the scent of Sandal, Jassamine and Lily. Meagre is the scent that comes from Sandal and Jassamine. The perfume of those who are endowed with virtue rises up to the highest Heaven.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions, p. 64, 65, 74, 75.

Sivananda and the International Ethics

52. THOUGH THE PRE-GREEK CIVILIZED WORLD BEARS VARIED TESTIMONY AND TRACE TO THE BARE RUDIMENTS OF WHAT MAY BE CONSTRUED AS APPROXIMATING TO INTERNATIONALISM AS WE NOW CONCEIVE, INTERNATIONALISM AS A SPECIFIC INTELLECTUAL SENTIMENT TOOK ITS INDEFINITE INITIAL STEPS FROM THE IDEALISTIC STAGES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND AS AN ALL-IMPORTANT AND DEFINITE ACTIVITY CONSTITUTES THE DISTINCTIVE EXPRESSION OF THE LIBERAL CONTEMPORARY WORLD TENDENCIES, AND WE NEED TO NOTE THAT THE INCREASING INTERNATIONAL

INTERCOURSE, TENSIONS, AFFAIRS AND PROBLEMS, RENDER HIGHLY INCUMBENT UPON OBSERVERS AND THE NATIONS TO CREATE A COMMON WORLD CONSCIENCE, WORLD CONSCIOUSNESS, AND CAUSE AND RAISE A POWERFUL WORLD MORALITY

—The reasons for low international morality are far more than what can be listed as the recurring reign of the survival of the fittest in international relations, the persisting types of diseased nationalism, the absence of active units that could form world-conscience, a weak world public opinion, the political and cultural backwardness of some nations, the inadqeuacy of the techniques developed and used by the UNO for the settlement of acute international disputes, and in the cultural field, for a rapid raising of the cultural consciousness and psychological oneness among nations and mankind, Sivananda does indeed, in this context, afford the concerned ample light and inspiration, specifically on the possible modes of setting into operation around the world, powerful moral factors that pave for and ensure high international morality.—

—With the German philosopher Kant, Sivananda insists on the formation of a federation of free nations as an indispensable condition of perpetual peace.—

THE ethical laws which govern the relations of individuals to one another in society should also govern the relations of nations to one another. There is absolute necessity for the international morality. This dire need is keenly felt by the heads of nations after the Great War. A World Federation should be established. Then alone the international morality can be put into practice. A well-organised World Federation can prevent war among nations and ensure peace in the world. But such an organisation will function successfully only when its members are noble men governed by pure and lofty ideals. They should be imbued with the spirit of tolerance, co-operation and brotherhood. They must set aside narrow racial spirit and have a wide universal vision. If not, the organisation will fail like the League of Nations after the Great War and the U.N.O. today.

Just as there is social ethics for the society, there is international ethics for the nations of the world for maintaining peace. Nations can prosper only if they stick to the principles of international morality. Had the nations adhered to the international moral principles there would not have been any war at all. Lust for power, dominion and self-aggrandisement overpowers the nations and makes them lose the power of understanding and the faculty of moral awareness and action. Hence they break the ethical principles.

The advance of science has removed the barriers of time and space. Within a few hours you can reach London and New York. Now railways, ships, aeroplanes, radio, television have made the world one. The whole world is a closely-knit unit now. The countries and nations are now interdependent. Economic prosperity or depression of one

country reacts on all other countries. If one nation suffers it brings sufferings on the other nations also, just as a diseased rheumatic knee-joint reacts on the mind and the other parts of the body also. A country or a nation cannot rise much in culture and civilization unless other countries or nations also are raised.

Though the whole world is brought into a sort of unity, yet there is no international ethical advancement. There is not much justice, love and fair treatment among the nations. The brotherhood of man is forgotten. The law of the "survival of the fittest" which applies to the animals in the forests rules the international relations. "Might is right". Those who possess more atomic bombs are the rulers of the world. They can get more privileges in trade or commerce. They can be in possession of vast dominions. They exploit the weak, hold them in subjection. This is the cause for war and moral degeneration.

Equal privileges should be given to all nations. Every nation should have equal rights. Nothing should be the monopoly of a particular nation. No nation should have absolute sway or supremacy in anything. Sea, land, air also must be the common property of all nations, just as the sunlight, breeze and water are the common property of all. All are children of God. Hence all are brothers.

Misunderstood and mispractised Nationalism, Imperialism, Capitalism, and Militarism stand in the way of the growth of international morality. Imperialism and militarism should be totally eliminated from the fair face of the earth. Humanism, Humanitarianism and Vedantism should take their places. Then alone there will be perpetual peace in the world. The Presidents and Dictators should come to India, study Vedanta and live in the spirit of Vedanta.

Vedanta and Vedantic Ethics should become compulsory for all students in all schools and colleges of the world. It must be properly understood and put into practice by all. This alone will contribute to peace, universal love, unity, proper understanding, world-harmony and brotherhood of mankind.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ethical Teachings, pp. 102-104.

Sivananda and the Theosophical Ethics

53. BY THE AUTHORITY OF AN EXCLUSIVE RECOURSE TO ITS OWN ACQUIRED RESOURCES, WE FIND OURSELVES DRAWN INTO A CIRCUMSTANCE EXERTING ON US A CONSTRAINT TO CONSTRUCT, FOR THE CRYSTALLISED CONTEMPORARY, AND ORGANISATIONALLY EMBODIED THEOSOPHY, A DEFINABLE SYSTEM OF ETHICS, SINCE IT IS DOCTRINALLY BEREFT OF THE CONTENT OF A POSITIVE MORAL CODE,

conceptually stands nebulous on the subject, historically left with nothing save a theoretical background and with no supreme moral instance as originating its vital power, and no commanding religious Power of towering proportions, sanctioning its

thought, inspiring its life, sustaining its aspirations, and practically, deflected in its anticipated primary purpose of a pursuit of a rich and exalted spiritual life and experience and all the high and aureate moral disciplines it involves, by a successful engrossment in investing its teaching with a fascination derivable from an embodiment in itself of the elements of exotericism, a dignity ensuant upon the articulation of archaic thought, an appeal of brilliance emanating from the interpretational meaning poured into ancient allegories, by a preoccupation with the details of the phenomena of the occult and with the publication of a plethora of literature on the nature of the supernatural, the topography of the other worlds, the greatness of the invisible helpers, the profound import of the secret doctrines, and a host of cognate subjects covert and hidden in character, by its attempts to instruct man in the mysteries of the cosmic evolution and of the principles and bodies within his own constitution, and by its efforts to tutor him in the wisdom of the ages as unearthed, understood and dealt with by the theosophist, which is less and less of a real wisdom not so much because theosophy itself has no opulent life vitally to breathe it out with its own breath, but because it is picked, chosen and garnered by the narrow predilections, aims and methods of the theosophical Mind whose claims to a splendid and vast synthesis of world's ancient essential knowledge cannot conceal from the critic the actuality of its limited operative interests.—

Conceding to the contention of what has grown into a common knowledge that the theosophist is required to live by the spirit of love and pattern his daily conduct after the best examples of the Divine will in evolution furnished by the examples of the Buddha and the christ, and that his Ethics are constituted of the purest teachings of the world's noblest saints prophets, and founders of Religions, we find much in the theosophical Ethics that should come close to the Ethics of Sivananda—in an independent publication we propose to present a paper devoted to an enumeration of the results as emerging from the comparative studies conducted in the reconstructed Ethics of theosophy and those of Sivananda.—

Sivananda's tribute to the moral attributes and the moral valour of Annie Besant, the great architect of Theosophical Society and Movement in India

IN Dr. Annie Besant we have a unique example of an idealist who for all her lofty idealism was at the same time intensely practical. She was a rare type of a practical idealist. This was because she strove hard to mould her entire life on the lines of the Superman envisaged by Lord Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Action without attachment, heedlessness to success or failure and a perfect concurrence between thought, speech and action —these were the distinctive features of her exceptionally active life. She possessed extraordinary virtue, namely moral courage which made her unflinchingly do that which she was convinced to be the Right, the Good. Her inner convictions she actively carried into every moment of her life. Thus she was the dynamic embodiment

of her cherished beliefs and principles. This was due to her moral Heroism which admirable quality it is that makes all the difference between ineffective armchair philosophising and a powerful, irresistible live idealism. Mahatma Gandhi himself once declared, "Cultivate the great qualities of Dr. Besant. She is one of the greatest orators of the world because she speaks what she believes and acts according to what she speaks. She has the courage of her convictions and always puts her words into action. Imitate her unflinching determination and simplicity of life."

—Swami Sivananda's
Saints and Sages, pp. 154-155.

Sivananda and the Ancient Ethical Intellectualism

54. THE EARLIEST AND THE MOST PROMINENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHICAL INTELLECTUALISM, SOCRATES, WHOM, HIS SUPERLATIVELY DISTINGUISHED DISCIPLE, PLATO, CREDITED BY SUGGESTION WITH THE ENJOYMENT OF MYSTIC EXPERIENCES, AND THE ORACLE PRONOUNCED THE WISEST MAN IN GREECE, COULD NOT, FOR ALL HIS EQUIPMENT IN INSPIRATION, AND GUIDANCE FROM THE DAIMON, RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO TYPIFY IN HIMSELF THE ATHENEAN DEVOTION TO REASON,—

and advanced a moral doctrine which implicitly affirms the adequacy of knowledge in itself for the determination of will and action, and proceeds to requisition the services of the right and rational insight as the sole requisite for the practice of virtue. The thesis contained in the dictum, "Knowledge is virtue", commands an all encompassing and all determining centrality in Socratic ethics: Knowledge or the high-uplifted intellectual insight becomes, axiologically, coincident with the highest good, metaphorically, the one medicine that brings relief to all the maladies of life, methodologically, the light in which are viewed and resolved all the human problems, volutionally, a possession that ensures the performance of right action, scientifically that which uncovers the rational or intellectual foundations of human conduct, and as a moral theory, the one criterion for the decision of all moral issues, the one standard which at once determines and judges the moral nature and expression.—

—Whether it be for Sivananda as the Vedantin or for the Sage of the Perclean age, Socrates, who for the first time in the history of Western moral thought, presented a truly spiritual view of conduct and knowledge,—ethics has for its chief argument and formidable dissertation, ignorance as evil, error as sin, knowledge as virtue, wisdom as goodness. A failure it was to seize on the true significance of the Socratic conception of knowledge as distinguished from what passes for knowledge, the common opinion from that which is but a matter of theoretical thought, an affair of the intelligence as the modern mind has it, knowledge as resident in the soul, as not acquired but assisted into birth by mid-wife men like Socrates himself, as the very essence and energy of the soul, latent in all, but patent and self-manifest in the philosophers, in the good men, a knowledge which is incapable of voluntarily willing evil, or choosing the wrong, to which any tendency to erroneous acts is alien, from which the trend towards the

right action, is inalienable, which is involuntarily conditioned to the highest good, the expression of the virtuous, that mislead the analytical intelligence of Aristotle into the boldness of correcting the Socratic standpoint represented by Plato, by adding to it as expressive only of the intellectual aspect, a volutional element, into an artificial differentiation of knowledge from will, the rational part from the volutional which are found as an integral phenomenon in the wise man, in the good man, but are divided in the common man, for whom Plato has a different code of ethics. The Stoics laboured with Aristotle under an identical weakness in standpoint and contended that the will is not altogether determined by knowledge, as if this were true in the light of the meaning that Socrates assigns to knowledge or as if it were not too patent a truth recognised by Socrates himself, in the case of the generality, - a weakness which, on the awe and authority the name of Aristotle exerts, kept generations of moral theorists, perpetuating it, and gone on formulating confutations where just a deeper thought and a better grasp of Socratic standpoint would for ever find the Socratic dictum quite invulnerable. A keener analysis of the Socratic ethical approach would show that the Socratic ethical intellectualism is truly, and therefore, deserves the designation of being, an ethical super-intellectualism, an ethical supra-rationalism concerned with a pre-existent synthesis, the ever existent integrality in the wise man, the good man, of reason and inspiration, of knowledge and virtue.—

—Among the Platonic Dialogues, Socrates dreams, in **Charmides,** *of the reign of knowledge ; obeys, in* **Crito**, *reason alone and values only the good life ; considers, in* **Philebeus**, *wisdom as the good. A discriminating Master in the knowledge of the Dialogues of Plato, Sivananda isolates the moral teaching of Socrates, and throws luminous light on the illustriousness of Socrates' exalted life in knowledge and, therefore, in virtue. Through the long corridors of twenty centuries, the voices on Socrates' plainness of dress, frugality of living, independence of mind, eloquence of wisdom have grown in volume and still ring fresh in our ears, only to form before our vision the picture of a figure that personifies in itself the proverbial virtue of simple living and high thinking, much commended by Sivananda Literature.—*

SOCRATES made knowledge and virtue his special spheres of study. Knowledge according to Socrates is the basis of all virtue. Knowledge is "moral insight". Socrates was really one of the greatest educationists of the world. Virtue may have aspects, but essentially all virtue is one.

On account of his sterling nobility of character, Socrates had attracted about him some of the best and ablest young men as his disciples, in whom the spirit of the master blazed into the flame of excellence and purity.

Socrates was fired with the sincere desire of providing a more rational and reasonably practical basis for truth and morality. He held with the Sophists in general, that the proper study of philosophy was man. In holding all virtues to flow from moral insight, Socrates very closely resembles those great figures in the history of Indian thought, who put 'Dharma' first in life and who regard virtue as synonymous with 'Dharma'.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy.

Prolegomena to the Sivananda Literature

ASPECT TWO

SIVANÀNDA AND THE AESTHETIC, AXIOLOGICAL, ASCETIC, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF PLATO'S THEORY OF ETHICS

SIVANANDA AND PLATO'S METAPHYSICAL ETHICS

—Theoretically in Plato, and practically in Sivananda, morality, metaphysics, and mysticism nobly conspire to form a confluence and flow by the literary genius and the dialogue of the former, and the life and teaching of the latter, as a single river of transcendent ethic—

—Among the Greek ethical systems, the philosophical morality of Plato, as against even his own psychological ethics and codes of civic conduct, stands supreme by virtue of the vision it embodies, the disciplines it adumbrates, the loftiness of the thought it mirrors, and the stature to which the soul that contemplates and seeks to live by it rises.—

—Plato and Sivananda—What are they as philosophers?—Taking a wide perspective of the distinctive philosophic genius that each has the Providential gift to evidence, we would be drawn to state that they are at once axiological, ontological, social, political, moral, spiritual philosophers,—with this difference between them, that the latter is richer in the opulent and high-rising inner experience, where the former seeks to score a success by the rhythms of the variegated thought spun out as much from his own genius, as from his vast inheritance of the Socratic doctrine of ethical universals, the elements of Pythagorean mysticism, the Heraclitean theory of eternal flux, and so on, he utters in the spoken and written word.—Striking a liberal view, which while being comprehensive has yet a conscientious regard for details, we may feel constrained to affirm that the ethics, whether of Sivananda or of Plato, is at once rationalistic, aesthetic, metaphysical, psychological, ascetic, mystic, eudaemonistic.—

—Whitehead rendered captive a rare discernment when seeking to assess in reflective thought the greatness of Plato, by the attempt he perhaps made to grant himself an insight into the influences underlying, the factors that furnish a background to, or inspired a new trend of thought in, or that afforded or yielded a suggestion for, the phenomena, processes and development of the whole of Western philosophical thought when he proclaimed that "the European philosophical tradition cosists of a series of footnotes to Plato", and as if it were to compliment and carry two steps further and crown the compliment Whitehead made to Plato, we can without the fear of encountering any difficulty advance the assumption in this manner, that we cannot easily conceive without Plato the whole of European civilization and culture as they have been since the birth of his thought, through the centuries. We would have a yet poor opinion of the contemporary Westerner, but for the existence of Plato, in ancient times. At the very beginning of the great history of philosophy in the West, Plato stands, a towering figure, a Hercules, a Titan, a Cyclopes, difficult to be gazed on fully by any human vision, and himself gazing down on the decades of centuries, picking up the liliputean of a philosopher here and one there, that dot the canvas of the ages of philosophic thought, right up to the times of Hegel, and breathing into them giant proportions, and thereafter dismayed to perceive a barren stretch of land, with none who could be called a philosopher, much less one as he himself understood, but yet growing strong in his conviction that the barren stretch before him has a limit, the wheel would turn full, and again he would be up and doing at making philosophers bigger than what the rights of their birth had made them, and their equipment and endeavour could make them. But, then, Plato was other things besides a philosopher par excellence, and so in this barren stretch we find him emerge here in the thought-content of the Christian Fathers, there in the Platonist Emerson, and so on and so forth.—The extraordinary sublimity of his philosophy, the unsullied purity of his morality, and the utmost lucidity of his views on the Divine Being,—raise Plato in our estimation, and have left his impact upon hundreds of years of mankind's philosophic vision, moral pursuits, and spiritual aspirations.—

SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Sivananda and Plato's Ethical Aestheticism

1. ONTOLOGICAL AND MORAL CONSIDERATIONS COME TO DOMINATE PLATONIC AESTHETICS, AND BEAUTY BECOMES RESIDENT IN ORDER AND ITS METAPHYSICAL ELEMENTS, IN HARMONY, SYMMETRY, PROPORTION, AND REGARDED FROM THE ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE ASSUMES AN IDENTITY WITH THE IDEA OF THE ETERNAL AND ABSOLUTE GOOD

—Rooted in moral consciousness, the richly endowed but largely sublimated, artistic temper of the sensitive Plato permits nothing aesthetic unless it bears an ethical connotation, wears a practical visage, and executes a normative function ; therefore, the Platonic thought is perforce characterised by a total absence of any true, constructive, positive aesthetics except it be in relation to, or as emanating from, or as subserving, his ethical notions, principles and enunciations, or where it does not prove ethically dangerous either remotely or immediately ; and, since the very wheels of his metaphysics, his whole philosophy, run on his concept of the Good, which is, from the standpoint of ethics the highest moral Value, his aesthetic value conceived in its absoluteness is coincident with it. No timeless and universal Mind like Plato's can conceivably condescend to be anything less in thought than synthetic, integral, and all-encompassing : as a corollary, then, it follows, in Plato as in Sivananda, metaphysics is ethics, ethics is aesthetics, aesthetics is mysticism, and mysticism is life, and life is a whole in essence, in exercise, in effects and in the ends towards which it tends, and the whole "per se" partakes of, or participates in, the divine order of the absolute Good, the absolute Beauty, the absolute Truth. And, then, unlike Plato, Sivananda does not subordinate in Beauty, Truth and Knowledge to Good, an evaluation possible only for a philosophic consciousness labouring more under speculation and proceeding by the dictates of theory, than for an essentially mystical perception and experience impelled onward by the pressures of the overwhelming influxes of the Divine Being, but finds them co-eval, co-existent, and indistinguishable and inalienable one from the other : Truth is Knowledge, Knowledge is Beauty, Beauty is Value, Value is the Good, the Good is the Delight.—

—Plato would evaluate art only in terms of its influence on character, recommend its practice with a view to moral improvement, prize the

atmosphere of beauty it creates when it succeeds in instilling noble and true ideas into the approaching minds, and effectively use the grace it may manifest as an aid to the contemplation of the invisible world of absolute beauty he had intuitively perceived, but could not, in the absence of a dynamic conception of it, of a deeper and sustained mystical perception of it, or of the hypothesis of an evolving consciousness, relate it logically and organically with the world of everyday human experience. In accordance with the rules of Plato, the artist is not permitted an abuse of the powers of his talents, must have the good for the models of his imitation, rivet his eye upon the harmony of proportion, reveal 'simplicity', seal his work with self-consistency, aim at no benefit to himself, and have for the sources of his strength self-discipline, and for the sources of his inspiration, love. That aesthetic experience, or expression, or exercise, must mirror moral good, and impart an impetus to the individual's spiritual progress is the import of the message delivered by the Sivananda Literature.—

—Moral life, stamped with a sense of struggle, and characterised by a discord between the ideal and the actual, may not be readily designated aesthetic, but then, each step of success gained in self-mastery, in self-possession, in self-control, and in self-advancement, is so much of harmony introduced into, and so much of a beauty added to, life as a whole; and therefore, and thus, constitutes an encouragement and a sanction to the theory of the coalescence of the aesthetic and the ethical values. And, the confusion of aesthetic with ethics can exist only for such analytical minds that make sharp and unwarranted distinctions in the superficial phenomena, and miss the very fundamental rhythms of life. Morality and beauty are assigned a common aim, the realization of a principle mutually shared....Order, Harmony, Beauty: and viewing from what we may call ethical aestheticism, character may be considered as the beauty of virtue, and vice the deformity of the soul, goodness as the harmony of all the elements of the soul, evil as the disease of the inner being, The moral individual makes music in conduct, if the musician does it in sound, the artist in line and form, the wise man in the wisdom of living. The love of the good, the love of the beautiful, the love of the true, the love of wisdom....are but the expressions of one single Power, and reveals an indentity in effect and in realisation. For Sivananda, the good man is beauty realised in the expression of the moral possibilities of human nature, manifested in the realisation of the supra-moral potentialities of the spiritual nature of the self within; for this very reason, we find in the life and literature of Sivananda, morality consummated, fulfilled, and continued wholly different in principle and in form, in the spiritual experience and living. For Plato, beauty, order, and harmony are enthroned in a supra-sensual universe; for Sivananda, beauty is at once transcedental and immanent, and it is this

difference that credits the latter with a superiority born of a tremendous inner integral mystic experience which finds Beauty wherever its eye rolls, as much in the fleeting shadows of a changing, passing world, as in the staticity of the eternal and transcendent Absolute, poised above all relativity of experience.—

THE good is God alone. He is the cause of being. He is the cause of becoming. He is like the sun in the realm of the ideas. He is the cause of existence, because, existence is for the realisation of the Good,—for the realization of God. God is the master-idea. God is supreme in the region of "noumena". He is the highest object of knowledge. All knowledge is nothing if it does not lead up to God. It is not easy to know God. Yet He is the author of all Beauty and all Truth. "Beauty is Truth and Truth Beauty" cried Keats in the frenzied moment of his poetic experience. "God is the source of all beauty", declared Plato majestically from the heights of philosophy. It was spiritual expediency that made Plato say that the Good is the source of the Beautiful, and that the Beautiful is an idea. In essence it amounts to the beatific vision of God as the Beautiful. The Beautiful is an aspect of the Good. It is an aspect of God.

Accordingly the Beautiful of Plato is the beautiful *per se*. It is 'pure', unmixed and uncorrupted. It has no origin. It has no termination. It is eternal. It is without change, growth or decay. It is ever the Self-same. As beautiful by itself, it shines in opposition to the objects of beauty and in contradistinction to the so-called beautiful bodies, beautiful arts, and sciences. The beautiful individuals may in one respect be beautiful and in another not. They may at one time appear to be beautiful and at another not. They may appear to be beautiful to some and to others even ugly. But that is not so with respect to the *idea* of the beautiful. It is the Absolute Beauty, altogether by itself, All beautiful things 'participate' in it in the usual way. The absolutely Beautiful is Beyond the conception, knowledge, and imagination of man. It can also not be represented. (Why ? Because that is Sat-Chid-Ananda Brahma).

—Swami Sivananda's,
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 58-59.

Sivananda and the Platonic Axiological Ethicism

2. THE ULTIMATE ETHICAL IDEAL, THE IDEA OF THE GOOD, APPREHENDED ONLY BY THE IMMATERIAL SOUL CONSTITUTES KNOWLEDGE, AS IRRADIANT IN THE SOUL AND HARMONISING ITS VARIED ELEMENTS, STRUCTURES TRUE VIRTUE, AND AS SHIMMERING THROUGH THE SHADOWY SHOWS OF THE SENSIBLE WORLD AND THE LUMINOUS EXPRESSIONS OF THE VIRTUOUS SOUL, IMPRESSES ITSELF UPON THE EXPERIENCING BEING AND THE OBSERVING EYE, AS BEAUTY.—

—Given over to give an absorbing devotion to the immutable realities and eternal essences, Plato, grown massive in experience, and apparelled in the dignity of age, of the power of long exercised thought, of the gift of literary expression, breathed out gently a breath of ideals and ideas that strove to be a philosophical system, more theoretical and less practical, of an ardent moral striving after higher values. Pursuing this line of reflective thought, we would find the Platonic ethics assume an axiological significance by revealing a trend of endeavour after the realization of the highest Values, and metaphysically too, Plato is axiological in aim and purport, by reason of the conception he gained of the Absolute as the Good, and by that very achievement, invested the ultimate metaphysical category logically demanded, with the advantage of an all-comprehending axiological dimension.—

—Coextensive with being, the Platonic Idea of the supreme Good, symbolises Reality as Value, rather raises Value above Being, significantly stands for the ultimate theological Value when to it are predicated the attributes of the highest God, or when equated with the Creator delineated in "Timeaus", becomes the basic aesthetic Value when as in the "Symposium" it claims its prerogative to be represented under the aspect of Beauty, evokes an evaluation of itself as the transcendental moral value, in so far as it spells, as an expression in itself, a fully ethical connotation, and may be regarded as an intrinsic and absolute eudeamonistic value when deemed as "the end and aim of our being", the splendid destination set for the human aspiration.—

IN his "Laws" Plato redrafted the scheme of the state. It purported to be less ideal, more practicable and second best. Instead of wisdom, mathematical insight was deemed sufficient. Marriage and private property were conceded.

In the Platonic Republic, the ideal state of Platonic Utopia.—art and education have special standards to conform to. Art, to be permissible in the state, must capture a glimpse of the good. It must be "the imitation of the Good." It should elevate the human soul to be in contemplative communion with God. It should inspire humanity to realise the ideal of virtue. Only strictly censored and duly approved philosophical dramas and myths may go to the public. Religious lyrics in eulogy of the gods and of noble men may be allowed. Art imitating the the phenomenal world must be kept away. Such art mingles good and bad. This is not desirable. With Plato the Beautiful is only an aspect of the Good. The Beauriful shines through the lovely objects as the light of the Good.

According to Plato, the goal of education ought to be the intuition of the ideas. Perfect establishment in Samadhi ought to be arrived at. But this must come last as it is practicable in the final stages of maturity. Accordingly education must be graded. There must be at every stage a thorough-going process of sifting and elimination. Those only who are fit and promising must be allowed to proceed to the next higher stage. Others must be absorbed,

according to ability, in the work of the state. Only the highest and best qualified philosophers possessing wisdom, shall fill the highest offices. In his own way, Plato never lost touch with the practical requirements of life. Plato's scheme of education is an interesting study.

The Republic must provide education to the children of rulers and warriors. It obviously implies the advantage of heredity. From the 1st to the 2nd year care of the body shall be provided for. Narration of myths will last from the third year to the sixth. Gymnastics from seven to the age of ten. Reading and writing will be taught from ten to thirteen. Poetry and music from sixteen to eighteen. Military Training will be intensively given from eighteen to twenty. This completes the first stage of education. At this stage, the pupils shall be sifted. Those who are brave but not inclined to the study of the sciences will be drafted on to the army. Others will pursue a higher study of the sciences up to the age of thirty. Higher study means the interrelated and systematic study of the sciences in respect of their generalities or advanced theories, principles, laws and practices. During this period the talent for dialectics shall be discerned. At thirty, on the completion of the second stage, another sifting shall come. The most promising and brilliant scholars with outstanding aptitude for further studies shall continue. Others will be made to fill public offices. From thirty to thirty-five dialectics shall be studied and mastered. By dialectics Plato means practical and theoretical philosophical discipline leading on to wisdom.

After fifty, they shall spend most of their time in philosophical meditation. Whatever time they can spare from meditation, they will usefully devote to the superintendence of entire government.

The object of the Republic, according to Plato is to secure the greatest happiness of one and all. By happiness he means, the possession of the Good or the realisation of God. This is made possible by thoroughly imbibing moral beauty and all-round goodness. That is culture and true civilisation. Man must mould himself into the image of God. This is virtually the same thing as Vedantic formula : "Aham Brahmaasmi" or I am Brahman (by virtue of thinking, feeling, speaking and doing good,—nothing but good,--every moment of my life).

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 67-70.

MANY-SIDED ETHICS FROM MYSTIC SIVANANDA AND FROM PLATO OF MULTIPLE GENIUS

Gifted with genius, governed by a Titanic fire, born into a poetic temper, artistic by nature, a passionate worshipper of the Wisdom that is Socrates, an ardent lover of Beauty that is the Good, a mystic by education and discipline, a stoic by experience and choice, and a philosopher only by the pressures of circumstance and professional leanings, Plato defines, like Sivananda, Love as the hunger of the human soul for divine Beauty, and defines Beauty as Wisdom, as Virtue, as honour and courage, as justice and faith, and above all, as truth that leads us directly to God.

Sivananda and the Platonic Ethical Asceticism

3. THE TEMPERAMENT OF RENUNCIATION IN THE PLATONIC PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT FASHIONS AN ASCETIC NOTION OF THE WORLD WE PERCEIVE AS A PASSING SHOW, THE BODY WE INHABIT AS A PRISON-HOUSE, THE SENSES WE EMPLOY AS ALIEN TO THE SOUL WITHIN, THE MATTER WE FEEL AS A DEAD WEIGHT UPON THE IMMATERIAL BEING, EVERYTHING ABOUT US AS A VANITY, AND VEERS ROUND THE POINT OF INSISTENCE UPON A WISE DETACHMENT FROM THE PHANTASMAGORIC WORLD OF DELUSIVE APPEARANCES, AND ON OUR SUBORDINATING, SUBDUING, AND CASTING OUT THE IRRATIONAL ELEMENTS FROM THE SOUL, AND, THEREFORE, WE ENCOUNTER A SPLENDID ASCETIC IDEAL OF LIFE, AS IT EMERGES FROM THE ETHICS OF PLATO—

—Among the Fathers of the Christian Church, Ambross, Saint Augustine, John Damascene and Anselm of Centerbury, would find for the times contemporaneous with Dr. Einstein and Sri Ramana, in Sivananda, a most illustrious and world-renowned Sage as their successor, if in no particular, at least in the pre-eminent esteem, he, like them, accords to the brilliant pabulum Platonism has the privilege to bear.—

—Unlike his independent disciple, Aristotle, Plato commanded temperamentally, or was constitutionally capacitated to exercise, a vast and integral Mind, that permitted him to touch, transform and assimilate into his splendid philosophic scheme such a diverse host of the Socratic, the Protagorean, the Pythagorean, the Eleatic, the Heraclitean, elements,—and thus is he greater than Pythagoras, greater than Heraclitus, greater than any ancient Greek philosopher, and greater too than any modern or contemporary Western philosopher,—an instance unexampled as a towering philosopher, unparalleled as a great and many-sided thinker, non-periel as the best illustration, in his own life, of the wisdom of virtue and the virtue of wisdom he sought to inculcate into the minds of the elite and the generality, rationally, intuitively, persuasively, through his encyclopaedic philosophical literature. A reflection by association and an integrating thought exercised in and over the moral content in Platonic philosophy, imposes upon us the assumption that Plato desired that his ethics should be at once an ethical rationalism, intuitionism, axiology, philosophy, theology, but could not so systematize it into one composite theory, because of a fundamental deficiency, and a central conflict between reason and intuition, in his wide-ranging thought.—

THE heart of Platonic philosophy is his idealism. It is his theory of *ideas*. It is this. The world, as we perceive it, is full of objects. Our intellectual grasp of an object is through a mental representation of it. Now all the objects perceived in the world are conditional in their existence. They are limited by time, space and change. The

perceived objects, as such in the physical world are imperfect. However, despite all imperfection of an object, its most essential characteristics are put together in the concept. But the concept does not stand for the imperfect object alone. It also denotes the idea of the object. The concept, as such, is a reconciliation of the object and its idea. It is Janus-faced : it looks both ways at once. It stands mid-way between the physical object and its idea. The concept has a double content : it has two objects : the physical and the ideal ; the thing and its idea.

But what is the idea corresponding to the object ? At the very outset, it must be very clearly understood that by 'idea' Plato does not understand a piece of intellection. By idea we understand a thought, an intellectual image, a mental event. But in the Platonic sense it does not mean this truncated intellection. Because that part of it is well included in the concept.

By Idea, Plato means an ontological being. It means a metaphysical reality. The idea is the archetypal essence, in all its perfection, corresponding to the imperfect physical object. The idea is the most perfect realisation of the concept shorn of its materiality. All the ideal (non-material) contents of the concept have reached their fulfilment in the idea. The idea is the archetypal essence of the object and the concept. It is, at once, the origin and ultimate end of the object. The physical object is a travesty of the idea. It is a mere caricature. It is a mere shadow, a very imperfect and distorted image, moving to its ideal by trying its originality. As a material entity it never succeeds in re-capturing to recover its original perfection. in spite of all its evolutionary struggle. It can, from the logic of its case, never do so because it is a faulty projection of the idea. The faulty projection is, perhaps, due to the very nature of the means and media and stuff of projection. Their nature is all-round imperfection : it is seriously limited and handicapped on all sides. Thus physical manifestation or projectivity is numerically synonymous with imperfection and faultiness. That is why the given reality,—the world of appearances, the phenomena, ever remains inferior to the reality of the idea. Though ontologically and logically the idea is the object of the concept, it is by no means the essence immanent in the various similar individual objects". It is never the highest common factor of similar material manifestations. The idea is the perfection of the essence in that multiple—projectivity. It is ethically and aesthetically perfect in its kind. It is unique. It is immutable. It exists independently of anything else. It eternally exists by itself. It is timeless and spaceless. Faulty projection of the physical object perishes in time. But the phenomenon of projectivity does not in any way affect the idea. The idea is the ultimate reality of the individual.

Now the more you think of the particularities of the individuals, the more stress you lay on the concept. The more you conceptualise your meditation, the more you individualise the idea. If you imagine the whole world in terms of conceptual existence, you will find a whole world of ideas existing as the replica of the phenomenal world. In other words, the physical world of objects is a projection of the perfect 'ideal' world of ideas. There are as many ideas as there can be concepts. As such,

Plato's theory of ideas is a form of Pluralism.

But the more you think of the generalities of the individuals the less stress you lay on the concept. The more you deconceptualise your meditation, the less you individualise the idea. It is conceivable to regard all the individuals, in the abstract, as participating the same essence if the formal distinctions of time, space, light and colour are ignored. Imagine with respect to the ideas, for a moment, that they are without materiality, without the deficiency or imperfection of the individual, without the limitations of time and space, they instantly become homogeneous. They must then exist in ideal unity. Since the ideas, as has been said before, are real and objective, the ideal unitary ground of their existence, must be the sole Reality. This sole Reality is the Platonic Idea. It, is therefore, clear that the ideas are of a piece with the Platonic idea. As such, the Platonic theory is a form of Monism. The relation between Platonic Monism and Pluralism is of symmetrical transitivity.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 46-49.

Sivananda and the Platonic Ethical Rationalism

4. CONVERSANT WITH THE CONTENT OF THE IDEA OF GOOD, RATIONAL COGNITION, IN PLATONIC ETHICS, COMES TO OWN ABSOLUTE WORTH, CARRIES THE INNATE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE LOVE FOR KNOWLEDGE, COMMANDS A SOVEREIGN ROLE IN THE SUBDUAL OF THE RECALCITRANT ELEMENTS OF THE APPETITIVE SELF, AND HAS FOR ITS STATUS AN IMMORTALITY IN THE SOUL, ALL ITS OWN, AND A SUPREMACY AS THE ORGANON FOR THE COMPREHENSION OF, AND FOR A COMMUNION WITH THE GOOD, ABSOLUTE AND ETERNAL

—Since the rampart of reason forms the best bulwark against the illusions of passions and sense, Plato proceeds to appeal to reason, in the treatment of the practical moral problems, distinguishes it from discursive reason, and as wisdom is its chief attribute, he assigns to it the task of a noble governing, and the exercising of forethought on behalf of, the entire soul whose highest constituent and immortal part it is, and by that very reason capacitated naturally to grasp the nature of reality, of the world of Forms. The Republic of Plato construes wisdom as the greatest virtue, the rationally developed soul as the good soul; and his Philebus rates the pleasures of the intellect as the best of pleasures ; nothing can yield happiness, to a superlative degree, except a rational cognition of, and an intuitive communion with, the supreme Good.—

—Plato proceeds on the supposition that the moral ends are noetically determinable, that the good must be rationally knowable, and makes the idea of the good, of the true virtue, the final object of rational insight, and dictated by the nature of his own exalted genius, he has altogether a different conception of reason, of dialectic. "Dialectic" connotes for the mind of Plato, the model of ultimately valid thought ; it

is stated to be the crown of philosophic education ; it refuses to fall into the mantle that would make it merely a method of deductive mathematics, and contends for its own dignity as the science of first principles which dispenses with hypotheses and constitutes in its own right the clearest and the ultimate form of knowledge, knowledge of all Values, of all Virtues, of all Forms, of all reality whether of the corporeal or of the incorporeal, of the sensible or the supersensible, with this difference that the former would be nothing more than a shadow, and the latter nothing less than the self-subsistent eternal substance. So predominant is the rationalistic strain in the Platonic ethics that the Good itself is referred to as the Light of Reason which guides the stars in their courses and the affairs of man in the turmoil of life, the Universal Reason, the final cause of every event and change ; the road to Virtue is reason ; man himself is essentially a rational individual ; and the entire universe is but basically a rational universe, a single teleological and spiritual system with the supreme Good as its centreum tsand circ ance, its core and content.—

PLATO'S philosophy is not merely bold conjecture or interesting gossip. It is strictly the intuitional reality. The method he gives is a hundred per cent practical. As has been indicated above his problem was his own master. He solved that problem through the method that he had personally learnt from the master. Plato meditated upon his master after his glorious martyrdom. Naturally the physical and material aspects of the master were dropped off. Under the concept, he went on concentrating and meditating upon the ideal aspect of his master. Because Plato had lived up to the ideals of purity in thought, word and deed, his evolutional energy had not leaked out. Instead of leaking (as it does in the case of worldly-minded people), it had gone on conserving and transmuting, through creative evolution, into intuition with the rapidity of his meditation on his master. Eventually, he contacted his master in the supra-mental regions. By further meditating upon his master devoid of individual particularities, he caught the vision of the Platonic Idea. The Platonic Idea, in its universal, absolute aspect, is Brahman, or the God-head. He had the vision of his Guru first. Then he had the vision of God or Brahman in his Guru. Afterwards the relation between the two was established. It is the relation of one-ness, a special type of symmetrical transitivity, like vortices in the fire, or an iceberg in the ocean. One-ness and distinction are both there.

Plato prescribed the method of Saguna meditation in order to capture the vision of the ideas. Later on, in order to get at Platonic Idea,—the universal, absolute, One Reality,—he prescribed the well-known "Asti-Bhaati-Priya" method of Nirguna meditation. Plato's method is a transition from Saguna to Nirguna. It is a composite method. It is very efficacious and extraordinarily rapid.

Plato's Vedanta may be characterised as one of the particular kinds of Advaita Vedanta. But it would be well to take it as a class by itself since it incorporates many of the features of several of the Advaitic types. In so far as Plato regards the individuals as images, it partakes of the character of Abhasa Vada. In as much as it reconciles unity with plurality it partakes of Vishishtadvaita and Bhedabheda. In so far as Plato regards the idea as archetypal, he gives to the Platonic Idea the same character as the author of Brahma Sutras does. According to the Brahma-Sutras,

Brahman is that whence the world has come. Plato says conversely that Brahman or the Platonic Idea is that in which the world eternally abides.

It should conscientiously be borne in mind that here no attempt has been made to interpret Plato in terms of Indian philosophy. Nor again has any literal parallel been noticed. What has been attempted is this. An honest effort has been made with selfless disinterestedness to make the real and practical significance of Platonic philosophy intelligible to the Western readers. Indian Philosophy has been quoted to bear out Plato with the least shadow of doubt in the success of the practice of Platonic philosophy. These are the methods which have brought Brahmic Self-realisation to innumerable individuals.

When Plato makes the idea also the object of the concept, he moves towards the position of Patanjali in respect of epistemological analysis. Plato's working of the concept is altogether different from the classical controversy that raged between noumenalism and conceptualism. In Plato's concept the noumenal and phenomenal occur side by side. In an unspecified way, it is also suggestive of the way in which the idea participates in the phenomenal object. Had Plato defined it precisely, would have been easy enough to put him in one of the Advaitic schools of Vedanta. But in the concept the idea as well as the corresponding object occurs in homogeneous mental modification. The metal stuff of which different modifications take place according to the ideas and their corresponding objects is the same in its unmodified form. Whether it is ultimately material or non-material is not the question. In Indian philosophy, in accordance with definition of 'Chitta' etc., it is material in the sense that *per se* it is not the auto-dynamic Self. The interesting fact remains that underlying the concept is a mental modification. From the homogeneous nature of the basic stuff of all modifications, the Platonic vision of the ideas, continuous within the ultimately homogeneous Platonic Idea, was naturally the next step ahead that could be taken in intuition alone.

According to Plato these ideas are transcendental. They cannot be perceived by any sense whatever. They are "accessible only to the contemplative view of the reason." This means that they are accessible in meditation alone, on the plane of intuition, i,e., Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

The eternal existence of ideas in a world far "beyond the vault of heaven" according to Plato is the very content of the Philosophy of Mukti or Release in Indian Philosophy. According to Indian philosophy released souls have eternal existence either as individuals participating in the glory and function of God or as the impersonal Brahman or God-head. Eternal existence is is of various kinds. Up to the theory of ideas, that is, to the extent of plurality, Plato was perilously near the Sankhya position with regard to the final existence of the released souls. But just then he took a very bold step forward in his process of realisation. He entered the realm of Nirvikalpa Samadhi where plurality vanishes into Absolute One-ness.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 52-55.

Sivananda and the Platonic Ethical Mysticism

5. PRESSING INTO SERVICE THE IMAGERY OF HUMAN LOVE, PLATO PRESENTS A DESCRIPTION OF THE ETHICAL END AS CONSISTING IN THE SOUL'S MARRIAGE WITH HER IDEAL, THE BEATIFIC VISION OBTAINED OF THE REALM OF THE DIVINE REALITIES AS A RESULT OF A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CONSTRAINTS OF BODILY LIFE, THE RE-UNION OF THE SOUL WITH ITS OWN DIVINE ORIGINS RESULTANT UPON A FLIGHT FROM THE DEBASING WORLD OF SENSE INTO THE SUPERSENSUOUS WORLD OF ETERNALLY SELF-IDENTICAL AND ABSOLUTELY UNCHANGEABLE FORMS, AN ASSIMILATION INTO GOD

—Relevant to the context we create here, the view that Plato unveils in the Phaedo, the Theatetus, and the Gorgias, constitutes an eloquent plea, though articulated inaudibly and with much refinement, for a relinquishment of the mundane world in order the true vocation of the soul may be pursued unshackled for the possession of the vision of supreme Good, the Knowledge which is identical with true virtue, something perfect and self sufficient, something the obtainment of which renders all other things superfluous, and adds everything enduring, unchanging, eternal. The philosopher is required to reach the supersensible kingdom of Ideas by a prolonged contemplation upon it, by conducting an inquiry into its true nature, by an expurgation of the soul of the influences of defilment its association with the corporeal frame exposes itself to.—

—Intent on immediate inner spiritual experience, and on living a life aglow with the incandescence of the highest Values, every lover of God, every seeker after Truth, would perforce conceive a personal liking, confess an ardent admiration, for, and claim, in consciousness, an affinity with, the Life and Thought not only of Sivananda but of Plato when Plato presents himself as more Oriental than Plotinus, a Christian before Christ, beqeaths a tradition in which piety predominates and scepticism tends to disappear, becomes a Pythagoras in preaching personal immortality of the soul, a theist in the enunciation of the theological principles of permanent value by investing the impersonal Idea of Good with the attributes of supreme God, and by presenting such pronouncements on God which make Him the measure of the universe, the force that foshions all that is, in accord with the eternal essences and immutable forms, the Providence that presides over the well-being of mankind, incapable of being cajoled by rites of prayer, or moved by sacrifice, to abrogate an injustice done, and when he conceives of man's greatest happiness as consisting in the contemplation of the highest Ideas, and particularly when he lays down rational and mystic lines of procedure

for raising, purifying and ennobling earthly loves into the Love of the Divine. A touch and a turn upward given to the Platonic Idea of the Good, would easily make of Plato one of the most profound ancient philosophers of mystical importance.—

ALL objects owe their being to God (the idea of the Good). That objects can be known is again due to God. It is because of God that mind has the power to cognise. Things exist because of God's grace. He judges that it is better for them to exist than not to exist. Thus it is that Plato so winningly persuades every one to meditate upon God, to love and worship Him and to seek after Him in every possible way.

In his old age, it is said that Plato tried to relate numbers to ideas. At any rate, for purposes of practical analysis in its preliminary stages, he was making the Sankhya effort of positing in the realm of plurality ultimately two elements. From a mixture of these two all other elements and the whole world would seem to be formed. This has successfully been done in the Sankhya system of Indian philosophy where everything comes from Purusha and Prakriti.

Plato's Physics : The world is corporeal. It is the object of sensuous perception. So it is not eternal. It has a beginning in time. It is created. With the begining of the world also began time. Of all the created things, the world is the most beautiful. It is the Master-artist's masterpiece. It is patterned after the most excellent model. The model is the eternal world of ideas.

Matter existed from eternity. But it lay in a neutral state. It had no quality. It was a shapeless mass without life or significance. It did not possess even the semblance of reality. Whatever change it may have undergone and whatever snapes it may have assumed were incongruous, ugly and irrational. But when God touched it, sprang into "a thing of beauty". God made this world to serve "the ends of good". In creating the world, God took the spiritupl step first : He created the soul of the world. This He did by combining two elements, mutually opposed. One was immutable and indivisible. The other was mutable and divisible. A composition of these two resulted in a third substanee. This third substance was intermediate to the two elements. He compounded these three into one whole and diffused it through space in "harmonious proportions". He, then, joined the soul to its world body. Thus the Divine touch brought cosmos out of chaos. The order in cosmos is due to the mathematical design in its very texture. The cubiform elements produced the earth. The pyramid-form elements produced fire. Intermediate to these two, icosahedral elements caused water. The octahedral elements produced air. The universe is like a dodecahedron.

The Demiurgus distributed the world-soul in the body in specific manner. He distributed the indivisible and immutable element of the world soul in the direction of the celestial equator. The divisible and mutable element he put in the direction of of the ecliptic.

The human soul resembles the world soul. The divine part of the human soul

has its seat in the head. It is indivisible. It is the instrument of rational knowledge. It is reason or intellect. The other element is the instrument of perception through the senses. Mental representation is made possible through its instrumentality. It is seated in the breast. The human soul seated in the head has also conjoined to it two other souls : the courageous soul and the appetitive soul. It is not clear whether these two joint-souls are perishable or immortal like the soul and seated in the head. At any rate, in life these two souls serve the purposes of two horses which are driven by the soul seated in the head. The appetitive soul seeks after sensual pleasures. Even the plants have it as do some of the animals have courage.

THE EAST AND THE WEST IN INTUITIVE THOUGHT

A critical assessment of Plato's physics brings out striking points of interest. At the very outset is may be asked as to how it can be said that then world is patterned after the most perfect model. At best, it is a deliverance from the intuitive insight of Plato. This is strikingly like the intuitional deliverance of the Indian seers of the Upanishads. Time according to Plato is, it would seem, relative to the world only. It is created. It has no absolute status. Perhaps, it is a necessary accident of the world. Probably Plato took only the subjective view of time. Of course it is subjective to the world-soul.

The existence of matter as amorphous and chaotic, reminds one of the position of Prakriti as primally lifeless in Indian philosophy or of the state of the three Gunas in equilibrium. Plato's reading of teleological significance or the design for the good is like the OM vibrations in Primaeval Prakriti when creation started. OM is the mystic symbol for the Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman. Plato's idea of the world-soul corresponds to the Hindu notion of Hiranyagarbha or the Sutratman. The two elements are verily Purusha and Prakriti. The third comes very close to Maya. The body of the world-soul is the notion of the Virat. The mathematical form of the world shows that plato believed God's mind to be mathematical. The relation between man and the world on the spiritual side according to Plato is that which exists between the microcosm and the macrocosm:—'Pinde Brahmande', according to the Hindu notion. His constitution of the soul as made up of four souls performing different functions is very much like Eastern conception of the soul as made up of four subtle sheaths encased one within another. The cognitive soul seated in the head corresponds with the Knowledge-sheath or Vijnana-maya Kosha. The perceiving and the representing soul corresponds with the mind-sheath or Manomaya Kosha. The courageous soul is the vital sheath or Pranamaya Kosha and the appeti-soul is the affective-sheath "Anandamaya Kosha".

These resemblance cannot be regarded as purely accidental. They cannot be explained as due to wholesale borrowings from Hindu philosophy. They convince that Plato had risen to the high planes of intuitive insight where East and West, North and South, Greece and India become one.

In fairness to Plato and his philosophy it must be said that nobody who has not first fully established himself in intuition

(Samadhi) should venture to criticise Plato. The man of mere intellect however high his academical eminence may be, is not quali fied at all to sit in judgement of values upon Plato. If he does so, he regards the cause of truth and human ennoblement instead of advancing it.

In support of this may be quoted two passages from Mr. Russel's History of Western Philosophy : "The soul is like an eye when resting upon that on which truth and being shine, the soul perceives and understands and is radiant with intelligence; but when turned towards the twilight of becoming and perishing then he has opinion only and goes blinking about, and is first of one opinion and then of another, and seems to have no intelligence—Now what imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower is what I would have you term the idea of good, and this you will deem to be the cause ofs cience." (vide p. 146) The last sentence in this passage is almost the best paraphrase of the famous formula of mystic meditation for Self-realisation : "Sat-Chid-Ekam-Brahma."

"The soul, when using the body as an instument of perception, that is to say, when using the sense of sight or hearing or some other sense (for the meaning of perceiving through the body is perceiving through the senses ..... is then dragged by the body into the region of the changeable, and wanders and is confused; the world spins round her, and she is like a drunkard, when she touches change .... But when returning into herself she reflects, tnen she passes into the other world, the region of purity, and eternity and immortality, and unchangeableness, which are her kindred, and with them she ever lives, when she is by herself, and is not let or hindered, then she ceases from her erring ways, and being in communion with the unchanging is unchanging. "And this state of the soul is called wisdom." (vide p. 162).

—Swami Sivananda's,
Studies in Western Philosophy.

Sivananda and the Platonic Ethical Perfectionism

6. ISOLATING CERTAIN IMPORTANT ELEMENTS FROM PLATONIC ETHICS, WE MAY ALSO DESIGNATE PLATO'S ETHICAL THEORY AS PERFECTIONISM IN AS MUCH AS IT HAS FOR ITS AIM THE COMPLETE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUL, THE PERFECTION OF THE WHOLE OF THE BEING, THE TRUE HAPPINESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL, ATTAINED BY THE SOUL'S HABITUATION TO A COMMUNION WITH THE IDEAL WORLD, BY A SUCCESSFUL CONTEMPLATION OF THE IMMATERIAL ESSENCES, BY THE POSSESSION OF THE DIVINE AND ETERNAL GOOD

—The transcendent source of all reality and the intelligibility of all that is, the Idea of Good, commands a position metaphysically prior to the Creator, the Artificer, or *demiourgos*, teleologically, has all the Forms, the unchanging cosmic realities, the standards and patterns, subordinate to it, and uncovers its manifestation in the goodness of man, its social form in Justice, its individual expression in Wisdom, its aesthetic prefigurement in Beauty.—

—The real and enduring world of absolute Value, the Form of the Good, which unifies, systematises and organises all other Forms, considered ontologically, furnishes the foundations for the material phenomena composed of fleeting shadows, ephemeral and transitory objects, epistemo logically, presents itself as "that which imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower", cosmologically, it is the supreme principle of explanation, the principle that rules and brings all that is manifest to fruition, aesthetically, the embodiment of eternal and absolute Beauty, and idealistically considered, the culmination of the ideal and intelligible world, the highest Form,the greatest of the Archetypes, turning the whole hierarchy of Ideas aglow with supernal incandescence and exerting on all of them, the influence that causes them incline to, or participate in, itself.—

—"Be kind, be brave, be sweet"—becomes the persistent strain in the ethical teaching of Sivananda, and in it we easily discern the admirable synthesis of the spirit of the ethics of Jesus the Christ consisting in the principle of kindness, of Nietzsche casketed in the bravery of the strong, and of Plato embodied in the effective harmony of all the elements of the individnal soul.—

PLEASURE is not the *summum bonum* of the highest good of life. Knowledge alone too is not the *summum bonum*. According to Plato to be as good as God Himself, is the *summum bonum*. In his thought, word, deed, emotion and action man should be absolutely good. He should be good without any condition limitation, or reservation. Thus man should rise up to the likeness of God in the greatest possible measure. This, being man's sole duty, the virtue of the human soul lies in its fitness for performing its duty. The soul has parts. Each part has a faculty. Each faculty achieves the good in its own way. That is, each faculty cultivates a particular virtue. Virtue, thus, is a system of particular virtues.

Wisdom is the virtue of the cognitive part of the soul. Wisdom is the knowledge of the good. Valour is the virtue of the courageous part. Valour is the preservation of "discriminative discernment" under all conditions. Legitimately what is to be feared and what is not to be feared must ever be correctly clear to discretion. That is valour. Temperance, moderation or self-discipline and self-direction are the virtues of appetitive part of the soul. Justice is the universal or co-ordinative virtue. It secures the due performance of duty by each part of the soul. Justice becomes piety in the aspect of man's proper orientation to the gods. An important mode of wisdom is philosophical love. It means the marriage of two souls for jointly attaining philosophical knowledge through combined endeavour. Virtue or absolute goodness is the beauty of the soul. It is the soul's health. It should be sought for and desired for its own sake. "Virtue for virtue's sake" should be the motto of life,

not virtue for the sake of any material gains or pains. If is much better to suffer injustice than to do it.

It is the state that can secure the highest ethical good. The state is nothing but the individual on a vast scale. The highest mission of the state is the universalisation and democratisation of virute. It lies in training up the citizens to realise the ideal of virtue. The total mass of citizens is the body of the state. The various classes of citizens are the limbs of the body-politic. If the state is so constituted as to function after the ideal, then the particular virtues of the soul will be seen practically embodied in the principal classes. Plato divides his ideal body-politic into three classes. These correspond to the three parts of the soul. They are the rulers, the guardians or warriors and the labourers and tradesmen. Wisdom is the virtue which the rulers practise,—in effect, ought to practise. Valour is the virtue of the warriors. Self-restraint and willing obedience is the virtue of the labourers and tradesmen.

Plato's state is a very high type of spiritual socialist state. The rulers and the warriors must live and work selflessly. Their work or duty is to secure the realisation of the good. In the performance of their duty they must be humble in spirit. They must serve all. They must love all without personal attachment. They must commune with all in such a way that they should form in the strictest sense one family without marriage and without private property. But how can this ideal be realised ?

The condition-of the realisation of this ideal is this. Philosophers,-men of wisdom,-should be the rulers. At least, the rulers should imbibe the proper practice of philosophy. They should rule in accordance with wisdom.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 65-67.

Sivananda and the Platonic Moral Theology

7. THE IDEALISTIC REQUIREMENTS OF PLATONIC ETHICAL DOCTRINES RECEIVE SIVANANDA'S GENEROUS TRIBUTE BUT BY THE VERY SPIRIT IN WHICH IT IS PAID, THEY UNDERGO A TRANSFORMATION THAT POURS INTO THEM THE VITALITY THAT CAN EMERGE ONLY FROM A PROLONGED PRACTICE OF THE VIRTUES THEY SEEK TO INCULCATE, AND WHAT IS CHARACTERISTIC OF SIVANANDA AS A COROLLARY OF THIS TRAIT THAT HE ENJOYS, BUT THAT HE SHOULD REFUSE TO REFER TO ANY OF THE DEFICIENCIES WITH WHICH THE PLATONIC SYSTEM OF ETHICS IS INFESTED, MUCH LESS HINT AT THE PROBLEMS PLATO RAISES ONLY TO ALLOW THEM REMAIN UNRESOLVED.—

—A concurrence of opinion, Plato and Sivananda share in the view that the human soul, in its essence, as partaking of the nature of the ideal world of the Divine, evidences a natural orientation towards the divine Good, and we may here experience a peculiar noetic delight in the perception that to the trends in

ethical theories and inquiries, both the Platonic idealistic thought and Sivananda's scheme of moral philosophy, make a notable contribution consisting mainly in the stress they have sought to lay to a pre-eminent degree, upon the importance of an ethically adequate conception of the divine nature, for the formation of the moral character of the human soul.—

—Identified with the Idea of the Good, and conceived of as perfect Goodness indicative of nothing in itself that would yield even remotely a trace of the unethical in character, or throwing up any sign that would show, in its dealings with men, any other aim or purpose than that which is calculated to result in their own true good, or yet suggestive in its governance of everything in the world, the Hand of anything except that of a wise and beneficent Providence, an inexorably just and perfect Being, God in the Platonic thought, by the very perfect goodness that distinguishes his nature, forms the highest ethical end, into which is assimilated the human soul. But, then, what an extraordinary difference characterises the conception of God, a conception at once profound, comprehensive, many-sided, dynamic, and uncompromisingly supreme, Sivananda presents—a difference all the more pronounced when we bear in mind particularly the point that Plato assigns to God a position metaphysically subordinate to the Idea of the Good ?—

THE greatness of Plato has been, through the ages, universally recognised. He is the father of Idealism. His influence is perceptible in every form of idealism that subsequently inspired the European philosophers. No doubt the Europeans regard idealism with a sense of poetic wonder and magic beauty, but they attach little factual value to it. Idealism is regarded as a sort of mental gymnastics, a sort of intellectual jugglery, a dreamy accomplishment of lyrical imagination, a cultural amusement. Some scientifically-minded critics regard idealism as a kind of morbidity, a kind of mental aberration, a type of romantic madness.

With unknown philosophers of the Himalayas, philosophy is a real, going concern. It is living, practical truth. They are not philosophers, students and masters because they bear the imprimatur of professional academies and universities. Philosophy is not an investiture. It is not a Bazaar commodity which can be the subject of transaction by means of degrees and diplomas. Philosophy is musk-perfume within. It is rose-bloom without. It is not a character. It is the total self-transformed and sublimated.

At any rate, it is neither difficult to understand Plato nor to practise this Idealism. Plato's problem was to understand the nature and character of his realised master, who had died a martyr's death. Plato had faithfully imbibed the Socratic discipline. He had the vision of perfection before his eyes. And he had himself moved onward from phenomenal imperfection. In philosophically analysing

the concept with regard to its double significance, Plato was clearly chatting out the limits and purposes of language. To characterise the Real through language is impossible. It is only possible to symbolise it. To capture the phenomenal too within the web of language is not exactly possible. It is only possible to circulate workable knowledge of them. But it is possible to pass from the physical to the ideal through the cancept. In other words, it is possible to rise through the intellect from the sensuous to the transcendental. The great Sankaracharya also stressed the same thing when he indicated that the intellect can lead one to the door of intuition. Plato thought the concept to be the entrance. In specialised sense the great author Maharshi Patanjali also said of the monosyllable concept 'OM' in his Yoga Darshan. According to him, God can be realised by repeatedly thinking of the ideal content of OM while repeating OM. But Plato did not stop at the concept.

He laid down the two great stages in meditation. These stages are the landmarks in the evolution and perfection of intuition. In Hindu philosophy they are called Savikalpa Samadhi and Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Plurality is limited to the utmost bounds of Savikalpa Samadhi. Unity is the content of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The natural transition is from Savikalpa Samadhi to Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This is the upward movement. Out of Samadhi, the physical world of objects is a very imperfect projection. It appears to be a shadow, an unreality, a mockery.

Plato's philosophy is, therefore, the Vedanta of Greece, of Europe, of the entire West. His world of plurality,—of ideas,—is the sum total of the experiences in Savikalpa Samadhi, It is the vision of the beings in Satyaloka and Brahmaloka. There individuals are perfect. They have ideal existence. It is of a piece with the Absolute Brahman. In the unwritten chronicle of the world in time and space, these beings had their physical existences too. But these were limited and imperfect.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 49-52.

Sivananda & the Bases of Platonic Thought

8. THE GROUNDS ON WHICH THE TWO PHILOSOPHERS WITHHOLD DISAGREEMENT, AND THE POINTS THAT ELICIT THEIR MUTUAL ENTRANCE INTO AGREEMENT

—In his conviction concerning the Reality as eternal and timeless, that there is nothing permanent in the sensible world, that knowledge is never derivable from senses but attained by the intellect and that the true knowledge concerns itself with the super-sensible world, and is infallible, in the distinction he drew between Reality and appearance and upon which he rested the many-chambered mansion of his philosophical thought, in his axiological approach to metaphysical categories

and teleological account of the phenomenal universe, in his insistance upon a transcendence of sense-perception and an acquaintance with, by a direct intuition of, the intelligible essences, in the lofty disdain he expressed for sensuous knowledge, in the high regard he has for the contemplation of the immutable Ideas, in the theory he formulates of remeniscence implicating for its thought-content the import of the Orphic doctrine of transmigration, in his permanent preoccupation with the ethical problems, in the domination of his thought by the Idea, and the attributes, of the Good, in his marked religious trend, in his ardent commendation of otherworldliness, in his urgings for the deliberate and assiduous exercise of the moral virtues in human relationships, in his assertion that the good of the soul consists in the real and ultimate goodness, Plato reveals several remarkable resemblances to the thought presented by Sivananda, and endears himself to the Indian mind.—

—Plato, Socrates and Sivananda are at one with each other in the greatest message they have delivered to mankind for any kind of reformation, social or political, moral or spiritual, the message that the most urgent and difficult of all reforms was that to be undertaken within man himself, a reform that should ultimately extend to all mankind.—

PLATO has given the exact process by which the knowledge of the ideas comes to be had. According to him the soul makes an "upward journey" to "the super-celestial region." This is an exact Yogic truth. A stage is reached in meditation when the astral body of man frees itself from the trammels of the physical sheath and makes a sojourn of all the spheres of inconceivable beauty and excellence. If people today could conceive of it as a possibility they would give up all adventures of the earthly type. The adventures of the soul are a million times more interesting than any that science can dream of in pursuit of beauty, power and knowledge. All earthly beauty pales into insignificance before the beauty of the higher regions. The soul's power and knowledge expand to infinity. To continue to exist on the earth and to function in and through the human body becomes a thing much degrading and below one's dignity. Yet you do it for the sake of the pleasurable duty of raising others too to the same heights and of making peace and harmony reign on earth.

The teachings of Pythagoras also were esoteric. The Pythagoreans believed that in different cosmic periods the same persons were born. This was a partial glimpse of the truth about the souls that have not obtained Mukti or release. This is again a subject of intuition in the first stage of Savikalpa Samadhi. What is the character of the existence of the souls? What is their relation to the ultimate Reality? These questions were not answered by the Pythagoreans. Of course, when they said that bodily encasement on earth is a punishment for the soul, they meant to say that individual existence is full of imperfections. With Parmenides, the question was simply this: what is the ultimate Reality? Having risen to the heights of Samadhi, he

answered it like Vasishtha in terms of the single unqualified existence of the Absolute. He denied all phenomenal existence with the Godly prerogative of the fully realised philosopher. But really it was Plato who related Pythagorean esotericism with the realisation of Parmenides. Heaving experienced truth upon his pulses, Plato gave a rationalistic explanation too in so far as it lies within the power of reason to explain intuitional truth. His dialectics is precisely this.

The ideas can be realised by the Vedantic method of intuiting them. They can be intellectually cognised by means of the Dialectical method. This is accomplished by first looking at them from the higher plane of the universal and from the lower plane of the particular. On the lower plane of the particular you get important clues from the given individuals. Of course, as has been said before, the concept is the focal point of both on the plane of the intellect. Thus Plato's philosophy is all-inclusive. It includes logic, physics, metaphysics, psychology, ethics, intuition, methods and processes. In a way it includes epistemology and axiology too. Plato did not stop short with this.

If your intellect cannot grasp the Platonic philosophy, will your destiny become impoverished? Will you never be able to realise yourself? No—Plato seems to say with a smile. The path of faith and worship is open to you. The mythical method was a practical necessity for the masses and Plato geve a mythical represention of some of the most important 'ideas'. The ideas of the good is the God Demiurgus. He is the architect of the world. He "shapes" all things for good.

Plato was a great teacher. The problem of inculcating the idea of God, and of creating the atmosphere of purity and virtue for the successful instruction and practical benefit of the children and the intellectually backward masses is not solved by dialectics. Idol-worship and temple-decoration are great devices despite the theistic iconoclast fanaticism. Perhaps, Plato's followers invested the ideas with reason, life and movement. This may be a consequence of the mythical method.

Individuals are "imitations" of the ideas. Even their phenomenal and relative existence is in a sense "participation" in the eternity of the ideas. Even as the individuals are related to one another, also are the concepts and even so are the ideas. Considered in their plural aspect, the ideas have the same hierarchical relationships as exist among the concepts. The highest idea is the idea of good.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 55-58.

SIVANANDA AND PLATO—THE TRAITS OF THE TRULY GREAT MINDS

Plato combined in himself an uncompromising and unrelaxing rationalism with an unconcealed interest in oracles and demons, the urge towards an integration in thought with the turns of analytical tendency, the mystical inclinations with spiritual views, the conservative moods with a socialistic standpoint, a devout and solemn attitude towards religion with a classical rigorousness in asceticism and ethicism.

Sivananda and the Metaphysics of Platonic Morality

9. WHEREAS THE GIGANTIC STRUCTURE OF THE HEGELIAN PHILOSOPHIC SYSTEM STANDS UPON THE PEDESTAL OF THE PRINCIPLE OF IDENTITY OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS, THE IMPOSING PLATONIC PHILOSOPHY FINDS ITSELF ACCORDED THE APPROPRIATE DIGNITY, BY BEING MOUNTED ON THE CONCEPTION OF THE COINCIDENCE OF MORALS AND METAPHYSICS

—Emphasising the super-personal as the sole reality and insisting on the inner light as the source of illumination, and on truth as given intuitively to the mind, Neo-platonists made of Platonism predominantly a philosophy of revelation. In this context specifically, with greater relief, Platonic idealism presents even more parallels than those already discovered, to Indian thought, thus encouraging in certain enthusiasts the attempt to trace the Indian influence on Plato, either directly, or indirectly, through the inheritance he gained from Pythagoras and others, and inspiring in some Indian scholars, a pride that needs to be discouraged in so far as it is born of an inadequate acquaintance with the true dignity, the real depth, and the superlative greatness of Indian thought as revealed to us by a closer scrutiny of it, as also, of a certain vague underlying inferiority-complex which can exist only on grounds most unjustifiable, and any pandering to the demands of such a subsistance, by any type of ticklishness can only entrench it in self-perpetuation. The weaknesses Plato exhibited in his covert unwillingness to discard the dead bones of reason, in his covert devotion and ostensible pre-occupation with beauty, social ideals and mathematical relations, are altogether foreign to, and incompatible with, the Indian spirit, which preserves all these, paradoxically, only by rating God or the ultimate metaphysical category, as the First and the Final Value. Since the Indian understanding of the Idea of Good and of the implications of the theory of the Ideas, is richer than what Plato himself, permitted by the limitations of his cultural inheritance and by the grandeur of his own rare genius, could have understood, and would have had us understand, the Indian mind is prone to find a complete consonance of central Platonic philosophy with that of India, where Plato is but affording sheer parallels with much that cannot be made, or much that can be made, to come close and align one with the other. Instead of directing a criticism against Plato that he does not show the ethical or intellectual significance of the theory of Ideas or of universals and particulars, we can quietly make meaningful the whole problem of the theory of Ideas Plato offers, and resolve it, by making the whole troupe of Ideas stand for the attributes of the "Anantakotikalamurti", the infinite and eternal Divine Being.—

—Since from our standpoint we can easily raise a pyramid of polemic on the cardinal points of Platonic philosophy, we shall here assume the soundness of the central trend of Platonic thought and proceed to interpret him, untroubled by the

inherent weaknesses to which the very soul of Plato was a victim as much by reason of his constitutional difficulty in gaining a success at raising his logic higher, as a consequence of his timidity to pursue further his wide-eyed intuitions. Again, the amorphousness of thought, or the vagueness and the contradictions wherever found, in Platonic philosophy, serve as an advantage added to Plato, and heighten his popularity and widen the extent of his influence, by permitting the approaching minds take from his philosophy whatever they seek to take for supporting, with the seal and sanctity of a great and readily acceptable authority, their own pet views.—

TO this day, Plato has, unquestionably influenced Western life, culture and civilization directly as well as through the work of his disciple, Aristotle. But Plato is far above the Alpine heights of intellectual excellence. Plato's philosophy cannot be intellectualised. Like the sages of India, he had tasted the nectar of Samadhi. The intellectual mysteries and puzzles of "Ishwara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat" had become tangible hard facts, of his inner perception. This is as clear as broad daylight from the most lucid of all his passages: "There is one kind of being ("Ishwara") which is always the same, uncreated and indestructible, never receiving anything into itself from without, nor itself going out to any other, but invisible and imperceptible by any sense, and of which the contemplation isgranted to intelligence only. (By intelligence Plato means Samadhi or intuition). And there is another nature of the same name with it; and like to it (the "Virat"), perceived by sense, created; always in motion, becoming in place and again vanishing out of place, which is apprehended by opinion and sense. And there is a third nature ("Hiranyagarbha"), which is space, and is eternal, and admits not of destruction, and provides a home for all created things, and is apprehended without the help of sense, by a kind of spurious reason, and is hardly real, which we, beholding as in a dream, say of all existence that it must of necessity be in some place and occupy a space, but that what is neither in heaven nor on earth has no existence." (p. 168).

The parable of the cave is the truth about the phenomenal world and the presumptuousness of the intellect. According to Plato all men are shut up in a dark cave. In the distance behind them a fire is burning. Before them is a wall. What men see are simply the kaledeiscopic shadows cast upon the wall. One out of millions of such men endeavours to come out of the cave. He sees the bright sun. He knows the Truth. He knows the Reality. But yet he is not a philosopher. He becomes a philosopher only when he returns to the cave and delivers to the cave-men the message of light and Truth. He works hard, despite hardest odds, to persuade men to resolve and sincerely to endeavour to get out of the gloom of the cave. It is a beautiful statement of truth. The fire is the spark of life. The wall is the tridimensional world of matter. Material bodies and objects are the shadows cast upon the wall. The shadows are the projections of the soul or the subtle body. We know not our souls. We cannot turn round to see the fire of life. We do not see anything but physical objects in the world. On the top there is a hole. In mystic parlance,

among the Hindu philosophers, it is called the "Brahmarandhra" or the gateway to Brahman. Those who manage to peep out of it see the eternal sun of Truth, bright and blazing. The faint glimmer within the cave is the intellect. The blazing sunshine outside the cave is intuition. How can we taste of its blessings if we do not try to wriggle out of the cave ? Plato's European critics are these cave-men. Plato tried, like the true philosopher, to realise the ideal of his master: the Platonic Socrates or of himself: the Socratic Plato. Both were indebted to Parmenides. Plato says of him that he was a "reverend and awful figure... There was a sort of depth in him that was altogether noble". Says Plato he is "one being whom I respect above all." In the parable of the cave, Plato also reduced the world to a dream, a play of shadows. To all those who have once basked in the sunshine of the Self the world of shadows becomes a practical nullity. Nobody knew better than Plato the difficulties of the philosopher and the irresponsible attitude of the people towards the true redeemer. In the words of Mr. Bertrand Russell, Plato says, "But he (the philosopher who has seen the sun) will have difficulty in persuading them, because, coming out of the sunlight, he will see shadows less clearly than they do, and will seem to them stupider than before his escape". None but he who is fully established in "Sahaja-Samadhi" can put truth so exactly and simply.

According to Plato only "those who see the absolute and eternal and immutable may be said to know, and not to have opinion only." So philosophy, for Plato is a kind of vision, the vision of truth. It is not purely intellect. The intellect derives its vitality from life. Life is a mere event in the vast panorama of existence. It has little importance to the witness self. It is from this high Upanishadic standpoint that Plato says: "How can he who has magnificence of mind and is the spectator of all time and existence think much of human life ?"

The only significance that life had to Plato was the grand opportunity it gives for Self-realisation. He had seen it in all its aspects of successful endeavour in the life of his master. More strikingly he had seen it in the death of Socrates. The message of immortality that Lord Sri Krishna piped into his soul in the moment of death continued ringing in the ears of Plato. "Listen, then, Socrates to us who have brought you up. Think not of life and children first, and of justice afterwards, but of justice first, that you may be justified before the princes of the world below. For neither will you nor any that belong to you be happier or holier or justier in this life, or happier in another, if you do as Crito bids. (Crito had hatched a conspiracy to effect the escape of Socrates from prison by breaking it open should Socrates agree to be a party to the conspiracy.) Now you depart in innocence, a sufferer and not a doer of evil, a victim, not of the laws, but of men. But if you go forth, returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking the covenants and agreements which you have made with us, and wronging those whom you ought least of all wrong, that is to say, yourself, your friends, your country, and us, we shall be angry with you while you live, and our brethren, the laws in the world below, will

receive you as an enemy; for they will know that you have done your best to destroy us. This voice, Socrates says, "I seem to hear humming in my ears like the sound of the flute in the ears of the mystic". Thus Socrates laid down his life because his Self-realisation was complete. It follows from this that even if colossal failure in mundane life be one's lot, one should not end it by self-attempt. "There is a doctrine whispered in secret that man is a prisoner who has no right to open the door and run away, this is a great mystery which I (Socrates) do not quite understand.....There may be reason in saying that a man should wait and not take his own life until God summons him, as He is now summoning me (Socrates)". Plato knew the reason and the mystery. Tragedy is the school of life. It alone teaches the lesson that man ought to learn first. Life is meant solely for Self-realisation and for nothing short of it. The Upanishadic sage Yajnavalkya has put it in final and immortal words of remarkable force and lucidity. Wealth, wife, power and health are not valuable in themselves. They are valuable only in as much as they can help a man to attain Self-realisation or the knowledge of the Absolute.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 70-74.

Sivananda and the Platonic Psychological Ethicism

10. THE PSYCHOLOGY PLATO CONSTRUCTS COMMANDS FOR ITS CHIEF DETERMINANTS ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS; HIS TRIPARTITE DIVISION OF THE SOUL IS DIRECTLY DICTATED TO HIM BY HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE MORAL NATURE OF THE DISTINCTIVE FUNCTIONS EACH OF THEM SEEKS TO EXECUTE, AND EVEN IN THE END IT AIMS AT, HIS PSYCHOLOGY IS TYPICALLY ETHICAL IN THAT IT HAS FOR ITS ULTIMATE GOAL THE INTEGRATION AND HARMONISATION OF THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE HUMAN PSYCHE, THE FORMATION OF THE ENLIGHTENED SOULS OF THE WORLD, THE BLESSED BENEFACTORS OF ALL MANKIND

—The ethical supremacy of reason comes to be adversely affected by the hindrances offered by the presence and riotous activity of the impulses, the desires, the appetites, and the extent of its own suzerainty reason regains would be determined by the extent to which it succeeds in establishing a mastery over their resistances, by availing itself of the ready alliance and assistance afforded to it by the spirited portion or element of the soul, the executor of its behests, and the enforcer upon the vast and concupiscent portion of the psychic entity, its orders.—

—After its period of incarceration in the coporeal frame, the soul suffers no cessation of existence, since it continues to contain in itself the element of kinship with the eternal essences of the ideal world, the element that is the Reason, the

ruling and sovereign portion of the soul, that as an immaterial agent subsisting in the body, during its term of imprisonment therein, as a nature superior to everything in, and of, the physical being, aids the soul apprehend the First Principles, look upward to the basic Ideas of Nature, evidences the highest type of thought which dispenses with the need for the creation of hypotheses for the acquisition of knowledge, and expresses its excellence of wisdom appropriate to the rarety and dignity its essential nature wears, and it is this consideration of the nature of the soul combined with the other consideration that this fact constitutes no proof of soul's inaccessibility to the earthly influences, much less a proof against its possible deterioration attributable to an arrest of the performance of its higher psychic and rational functions brought on by the development of such tendencies as are highly detrimental to its spiritual sensitivity and bound to undo its loftiest aspirations, thereby rendering its material bonds, stronger,—that persuaded Plato present a psychology which separates the soul into a higher rational, and a lower, irrational part, and because the latter necessitates a further separation, thus yielding a tripartite division of the soul, the first of which being the highest part has for its corresponding virtue, Wisdom, the second, the spirited element, the owner of the trait of righteous indignation, has for its appropriate excellence the virtue of courage, the third, the lowest element functions in appetites, acquisitiveness, desires, increases the incrustation of bodily cares and interests and by that reason renders the recalling of the truths innately held in the soul, almost insuperably difficult, but can be brought under control by the operative excellence of temperance,—

WITHOUT knowledge nobody can attain to heaven. By heaven Plato must have meant "Mukti". His position in this respect is quite like Shankara's. "Rite Jnanam Na Muktih": there is no salvation or final release from the thraldom of bodily existence without knowledge of the Self. According to Plato the true philosopher alone goes to heaven on his death. Others become ghosts or animals or insects according to individual character. Says Plato: "No one who has not studied philosophy and who is not entirely pure at the time of his departure is allowed to enter the company of the gods, but lover of knowledge only". Philosophers eschew the lusts of the flesh precisely for this reason. They are not afraid of poverty or social strictures. They know "that the soul was simply fastened or glued to the body until philosophy received her, she could only view real existence through the bars of a prison, not in and through herself...and by reason of lust had become the principal accomplice in her own captivity." The philosopher too well knows as others too well ignore that "each pleasure and pain is a sort of nail which nails and rivets the soul to the body, until she becomes like the body, and believes that to be true which the body affirms to be true." It shows that Plato had perfectly clear idea of the law of Karma also.

Having given the method of meditating upon the real, and having laid down the golden rule of life namely doing good all-round, Plato gives the method of securing freedom from the bonds of flesh. It is the

same method of "Pratyahara" which the Indian mystics practise. It means the entire withdrawal of consciousness from the body. Plato learnt it from Socrates. Meditation is best, says Socrates, when the mind is integrated into itself. It is, then, not even in the least distracted by sight of sound, pleasure or pain. It bids goodbye to the body and soars up to the True Being. That is why and how the philosopher holds the body beneath his contempt. The necessity of practising Pratyahara while meditating is elaborated in crystal clear terms by the great Greek philosopher. According to him, the mere need of food for the body, makes it the source of constant trouble and mischief. It hinders our quest of the Truth, or Reality because it gets sick and slack. It gets infatuated with worldly love. It gets intoxicated with passions and lusts. It becomes unnerved by vain fears. It becomes a duper of foolish fancies. It exhausts all its energies in unending fooleries and frivolities. It renders us altogether incapable of right thinking. This is exactly what Lord Sri Krishna says more systematically in the second chapter of the Gita :

Dhyayato Vishayan pumsah
Sangasteshu Upajayate
Sangat Sanjayate Kamah
Kamat Krodhobhijayate
Krodhad Bhavati Sammohah
Sammohat Smritivibhramah
Smritibhramshad Buddhihnasho
Bhuddhinashat Pranashyati.

"Thinking of the worldly objects engenders attachment to them. Attachment generates the desire to obtain them. Desire causes anger due to impatience in getting them. Anger brings on delusion. Delusion destroys discrimination (in the pursuit of the goal). Indiscrimination ruins".

Maharshi Patanjali also enumerates the same obstacles to Yoga in his famous and widely-practised Yoga-Sutras. The Greek philosopher goes on to ask the cause of wars and factious mischiefs. It is all due to the pampering of the body and the will to gratify its lusts. Thus we have no time to give to pilosophy. Even when we try, the body intrudes and seduces them away with its mischievous demands. Experience has proved to us that true knowledge of anything cannot be acquired by us without forgetting the boby .....Having thus got rid of the frivolities of body-consciousness, we shall be pure and commune with the Pure. We shall, then ourselves behold the clear light everywhere. It is the light of Truth .. Only the true philosophers seek to rise above the body in order to secure the release of the soul.

Accordingly only wisdom is value because of its intrinsic excellence. Everything else must be valued in terms of wisdom. How Yajnavalkya-like is the sense of values of the Socratic Plato, or Platonic Socrates !

The influence of Sparta had idealised valour in war and manly strength. Plato wanted to make virtue of necessity. He wanted to spiritualize (or philosophize) the Greek society without giving it convulsive shocks. Women were to be regarded as equal with men. To eradicate "private possessive emotions" or "Moha" resulting from family-attachment, be allowed eugenical marriage and state parentage for all. According to the prevailing conditions, the Platonic course was then the only way of encouraging "Brahmacharya" or purity

He believed in a classification of men. Men are of gold if they possess wisdom. They are of silver if they follow the wise and try to develop wisdom. The common man of people is of brass and iron because of slavery to the passions of the body. His conception of justice was practical. It was the law of the conscience. Everybody must do his duty and not be a busy body or meddlesome. Gold and silver were forbidden by him. Wealth and poverty could not exist according to his socialistic plan.

The clear truth is that one must have treasured up purity and innocence all through one's life and spent his entire youth in the pursuit of wisdom in the rare company of a fully realised saint, in order to be able to understand Plato. Then alone will the vision beatific arise before the spiritual eye of the aspirant. In the "Symposium" in connection with his philosophy of aesthetics, Plato explicitly says: "And at last the vision is revealed to him of a single science which is the science of beauty everywhere". The realisation will have come home to him that "the beauty in one object is the same as the beauty in another,"—or beauty in the Self. Light shall spring up in the soul like "flame from a fire." All the great philosophers of the West, dead or alive, have been powerfully influenced by Plato. Plato lives and shall live in the hearts of great masters of the world.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies in Western Philosophy,
pp. 75-78.

Ethical Paramountcy of Love in Sivananda's Moral System

11. EXALTED ABOVE ALL SLOBBERY AND MAWKISH SENTIMENTALITY OF THE ORDINARY LOVE, THE REALLY SUBLIMATED AND SPIRITUAL LOVE FORMS THE ONE GREAT SOURCE AND SUBSTANCE OF EVERY CONCEIVABLE VIRTUE IN ITS PRISTINE EMINENCE, AND RESPECTS NEITHER PELF, NOR POWER, NOR YET BEAUTY IN PERSON, BUT RATHER PERCEIVES, HOLDS IN ITS EXERCISES, FOR TRANSFORMATION INTO THE TERMS OF THE TRANSCENDENCE, INCLUDES IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF ITS BOUNTY, GOODNESS WHEREVER MANIFEST, THE SOUL OF GOODNESS EVEN IN THINGS EVIL, MOVES BY FEATS OF SELF-SACRIFICE, GROWS BY SELF-GIVING, AND HAS ITS GLOWING RADIANCE AND CHIEF DELIGHT IN THE UNLIMITED DIMENSIONS TO WHICH IT SEEKS TO EXPAND

—Though unlettered, the man of genuine love is incapable of unethical conduct and derives from love a depth of wisdom, such a keenness of intelligence and such a brightness of nature as would bear favourable comparison with those in the blithe spirits of the best of the illiterate saints, and not unoften excells both

in its force and in its impact, by an intelligence, native to it, characteristic of it, all its own, the formal cultivated intelligence as expressed by the varied type of western talented minds with which the power of character is rarely associated.—

—Love as devotion, as an adoration, as the all-inclusive attribute of the Divine, as universal in its sweep and transcendental in proportions, power, and delight, is the constant demonstration of the Indian life, and occupies the position as the central theme in the ethical literature of Sivananda.—

SIVANANDA ON THE DYNAMICS OF SPIRITUAL LOVE

POSITIVE all-embracing Love which Ahimsa means, a Compassion that is extended to all existences and creation, forms the life-lood at once of the profoudest morality and of the highest spirituality : viewed from the sociological point of view, it forms the highest morality ; and judged from individual standpoint, it means the dynamic intense spirituality. Even a feigning practice of Ahimsa by contemporary humanity would make world-wars, social injustice and self-aggrandizement impossible, and convert this world into a happier and peaceful place to live in.

SIVANANDA ON THE SETTLED LATENCIES OF LOVE

LOVE begets love. Love does not re : content with merely loving, but flows out in acts of service. Love is blissful only when it freely gives itself. Love must be revealed in service; otherwise love has no value or love is no love. Love cheerfully sacrifices, love willingly suffers. Such a love illumines and blesses life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Daily Readings, (Compiled by Swami Omkarananda) p. 187, 297.

The Varied Dignity Love Dons in Platonic Ethics

12. INDIAN LIFE REALISED IN LOVE A GREATNESS THAT ENTITLED IT THROUGH THE AGES, TO THE HOMAGE DUE ONLY TO THE DIVINITY, AND DERIVED FROM IT A POWER THAT ACCOUNTS FOR THE ASTOUNDING VITALITY AND VIGOUR OF THE CULTURAL SPIRIT THAT CONSTITUTES THE TEXTURE AND THE VITALS OF ALL THAT WE KNOW AS REAL INDIA—PLATO'S VIEWS ON LOVE, ITS PSYCHOLOGY, THE GRADATIONS OF ITS DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION, FIND IN THE SPIRITUALISTIC INTERPRETATIONS OF SWEDENBERG A FULLER STATEMENT AND RECEIVE THEIR WHOLLY METAPHYSICAL AND PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE LITERATURE OF SIVANANDA

—Plato touches on Love, in the "Symposium", as the giver of virtue, as the master of all arts and the source of peace, as leading up to absolute beauty, differentiates the love derived from the heavenly Aphrodite from the love drawn

from the earthly Aphrodite, and treats of other important aspects of love in such other dialogues as the Phaedrus, the Phaedo, the Laws, the Lysis.—

—Encomiums may be gently laid at the altars of Plato, the most celebrated philosopher of ancient Greece, where he succeeds in entraping in the alluring snares of his speculation, several of the higher phases of Love, particularly, when his Socrates is taught by Diotima, the prophetess of Mantineia, that there is another phase of philosophy and that is love, "the same want in the human soul which is satisfied in the vulgar by the procreation of children may become the highest aspiration of intellectual desire," and where he affirms that "there is a higher region in which love is not only felt, but satisfied, in the perfect beauty of eternal knowledge, beginning with the beauty of earthly things, and at last reaching a beauty in which all existence is seen to be harmonious and one", that "the limited affection is enlarged, to behold the ideal of all things". But, then, let us turn from the Greek thought to the Indian life, the Indian life because there is no Indian thought except as absorbed in, or emerging only from, the living experience of India, the profound and rich India, profound and rich because experience is its synonym and its insignia.—

—The mystical elevations obtained for India's inner experience, raise Indian notions of love to the highest altitudes yet to be reached anywhere in the world, and the commonest of its terms for it refuse to degrade its meaning to anything less than divine love, devotion, worship, a spiritual affection large enough to include in itself all life, include it as sacred, as one with itself, as worthy of the greatest reverence and as deserving a sacrifice that may be required to rise to any, or almost impossible, level. The love, current at the lowest levels of human relationship is rated the most paltry vestige of the Love eternally throbbing in the bosom of the Infinite, the Infinite spread in all manifestations, shot through each little detail of the cosmic system. A spiritual power ensouls the emotion of love wherever expressed, and in the quality it reveals is seen seated something celestial, something which has nothing on earth analogous to or identical with its nature ; and the sublimation of all forms of love, through a hundred spiritual methods, into the unlimited and ultimate divine love, seems to be the peculiar province of the Indian disciplines and life. As a manifestation of the very nature of the Soul, the emotion of love is the greatest avenue in human constitution for the transformation of animal nature, for the transcendence of the inferior modes of human consciousness, and for the realization of the infinite Divinity indwelling in the law of all beings. The primary aspiration of India has always been to turn the glow of love in the human heart into a flame of universal love which brings in tremendous results, yields everlasting moral and spiritual benefits to all mankind.—

SIVANANDA ON THE LAWS AND THE LOVE OF GOD

GOD loves you even when you turn away from Him. How much more shall He love you, if you turn to Him again with faith and devotion! Very great is His love, greater than the greatest Himalayas, deeper than the deepest ocean. The laws of God are in your breath, blood, and eyes; in the outer world, they are in the air water, earth and planets. Listen to the words of God in the flowing breath; tune yourself to the rhythm of the pulse-beats and the heart throbs. A life lived in accordance with the Laws of God is indeed the blessed life of greatness and universality.

SIVANANDA ON THE THERAPEAUTIC VALUE OF LOVE AND OTHER VIRTUES

PURE love produces peace of mind, harmonious functioning of the bodily organs, increases the blood qualitatively, and turns the mind towards God. Renuciation removes a host of ailments, such as dyspepsia, rheumatism, diabetes, diseases of liver and intestines and blood-pressure, strengthens the heart, brain and nerves. Truth strengthens the heart and mind, brings mental peace, happiness, inner calmness, spiritual strength and fearlessnes.

SIVANANDA ON THE CULTURE OF LOVE

LOVE grows wildly in the ignorant man's heart. There is the luscious fruit of love in a corner of the heart; but the entire heart is strewn with thorns of hatred, jealousy, and so many other vicious qualities that the charm of love is marred. There are the bushes of lust, anger and greed which hide within them the wildest animals. Love lies hidden far beneath and far beyond reach. It is as good as non-existent. But in the case of a true devotee of the Lord, this love has been cultured, and the garden of his heart is cleared of the thorns of vicious qualities, of the bushes of lust, anger and greed. Love of God, which is the sweetest of fragrances wafts from such a heart.

SIVANANDA ON THE USES OF DEVOTION

DEVOTION is the essential condition of Brahma Vidya. It is the sweetness of life that softens the heart; and removes jealousy, hatred, lust, anger, egoism, pride, arrogance. When one develops all-embracing and all-inclusive love, the petty life of hurry, worry, excitement and competition seems to him as nothing, when compared to the everlasting life of eternal sunshine and bliss in the soul within.

SIVANANDA ON DEVOTION AS A RITUAL, A DISCIPLINE, A MEDITATION

FASTING and observing vigil throughout the day and night on special religious occasions like Sivaratri, the aspirant, the devotee, gives himself up to the grace of the Lord and has his body, speech and mind offered to Him. There is nothing of man left in him; he has surrendered his personality to Siva, in the form of devout service. This divine worship is a ritual for the body, a discipline for speech and a meditation for the mind. With these as unfailing aids, the soul traverses beyond itself and seeks to gain ingress to the haven of peace and bliss.

—Swami Sivananda's
Daily Readings, pp. 315, 50, 298-299.

Sivananda as a Stately Pattern of Supra-ethical Perfection:—

The Platonic Socrates as the Pre-Christian Pattern of Paganic Moral Perfection

13. THE INDIA OF GOD-INTOXICATED MEN, OF INEBRIATE MEN RENDERED INSENSATE BY THE ECSTATIC ABSORPTION IN THE DELIGHT OF THE DIVINE, PROUDLY YET UNOBTRUSIVELY ENJOYS THE PRIVILEGE OF PRESENTING FOR THIS CENTURY THAT IS BENT ON SPANNING OUT BY MOMENTS OF INCREDIBLE RAPIDITY IN SUCCESSION, THE NUMBERED DAYS AND THE PETTY PACE OF OUR EASILY MEASURABLE AND MORE EASILY EFFACEABLE LIVES, THE EXAMPLE OF SIVANANDA EACH EXPRESSION OF WHICH IS THE VERY QUINTESSENCE OF LOVE PURE AND SIMPLE, IN WHICH MORALITY OBTAINS ITS CONSUMMATION BY RIPENING ITSELF INTO DEEPEST MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE, AND TO WHICH AN ATTRIBUTION OF MORAL EXCELLENCE, HOWEVER SUPREME, IS BUT AN IMPUDENT AND VAIN ATTEMPT MADE TO GILD GOLD

—From India to the Greece of the ancient dawns, is an easy passage jump, a welcome jump, a traditional jump, a congenial jump, a spontaneous jump; therefore, a glance in thought, upon the pre Christian Greek world, and the post Christian western world, exclusively in the light of the context explicit here, surrenders to us the statement that until the rise of the new ideal of the supreme moral excellence in the Person of Jesus the Christ, the instance of Socrates continued to exert its wholesome influence as a pattern of moral perfection. Leaving this at that, by an attempt in discernment made to discover the basic traits that distinghish the Indian mind, we find that the Indian interest would always insist on an instance such as is of Sivananda, in which morality finds itself raised, and fused into the mystical heights of all-inclusive, all-transforming, and all-delightful Love. In this phenomenon, then, consists the one splendid circumstance of the real greatness, strength, virtue of Indian thought and life, though by virtue of this very merit, it may expose itself to the charge of being unethical, or to the attack administered to it, by an alien critic, hostile in intent, ignorant everywhere in the paradable knowledge he professes to own, concerning it, an attack that has for its argument the absence of moral content both in Indian life and thought. Polemic dogs the footsteps of the arrogance of ignorance, of the half-learned; insight, perception, discernment, creative thought, integrating idea, a luminous thought above a luminous thought, visit the genius, and it is with the latter that our primary concern is.—

—The ultimate ideal of ethical humanity, Sivananda finds in the men of meditation; the model son of the spiritual soil of India, is a person of transcendental virtues ; and no Indian however mean would willingly choose an object for esteem, reverence and almost adoration anyone less than a supra moral individual who would exert on him the impact of an irresistible personality and an influence so compelling and wholesome that the very idea of keeping oneself away from it, would be deemed a great loss in terms of the peace of mind, the joy of existence, Self knowledge and God-knowledge. Bearing on these themes, let us draw hereunder, Sivananda's thought from a compilation, under the title "Daily Readings", from his Literature, we have earlier made despite a number of difficulties in which a work of its kind and its value generally involves us.—

Sivananda on the men of Meditation as the Ultimate Ideal of Ethical Humanity

THE Mahatma who meditates in a solitary cave in the Himalayas helps the world more through his spiritual vibrations than the Sadhu who preaches on the platform. Just as sound vibrations travel in the ethereal space, so also the spiritual vibrations of meditator travel a long distance and bring peace and strength to thousands. When the meditator becomes mindless, he pervades and permeates the whole world. Ignorant people bring a false charge that the Sadhus, who meditate in caves are selfish. Just as the sweet fragrance of jasmine pervades the air, so also his spiritual aura becomes infiltrated into the minds of others. People draw from him joy; peace, and strength, and experience an elevation of mind by mere contact with him.

The Influence and Aura of the Developed Mind of the Supra-Moral Individual

Mark the influence of a highly developed mind over a less developed mind ! It is not possible to describe what it is like to be in the presence of a Master or a developed adept. To sit in his presence, though he hardly speaks a word, is to feel a thrilling sensation so much as to feel new inspirations touching one mentally. Mind has got aura (mental aura or psychic aura). Aura is Tejas, brilliance or halo that emanates from the mind. The aura of those who have developed their minds is extremely effulgent. It can travel long distance and affect in a beneficial manner a large number of persons who come under its influence. The spiritual aura is more powerful than either the psychic or Pranic aura.

Sivananda on the Indian Man of Transcendental Virtue

A growing Yogi or an aspirant who meditates regularly has a magnetic and charming personality. Those who come in contact with him are much influenced by his sweet voice, powerful speech, lustrous eyes, brilliant complexion, strong healthy body, good behaviour, virtuous qualities, and Divine Nature. People derive joy, peace and strength from him. They are inspired by his speech and get elevation of mind by mere contact with him.

Sivananda on the Greatness of the Gurus

As the human consciousness is entwined with anima instincts and drives, as man is

liable to be confused and deluded by experiences of the surface consciousness propelling the impetuous worldly will and riotous emotions, the aid of a higher power of knowledge is solicited. This power of knowledge is embodied in the Masters, the Gurus, whom the Sadhaka approaches for help. A glance, a touch, a word from them suffices to lift the soul of the aspirant; and their compassion towards the disciples is proverbial: it is unbounded, a veritable mass of love and wisdom.

—Swami Sivananda's
Daily Readings, pp. 86-87; 267, 367.

The Higher Eudaemonism in Sivananda's Ethics

14. COMPARABLE IN HARMONY TO THE MUSICAL LIFE, IS THE GOOD LIFE, THE LIFE OF THE INTEGRATED NATURE, THE LIFE RAISED FROM A MERE MANIFOLD OF UNGOVERNED SENSIBILITY TO THE UNITY OF A RATIONALLY ORDERED SYSTEM—IN THIS WE LEND AN EAR TO THE EUDAEMONISTIC STRAIN IN PLATONIC ETHICS, AND NOTE THAT AFTER PLATO, ARISTOTLE, BUTLER, HEGEL, GREEN, BRADLEY, BOSANQUET ARE AMONG THE LEADING PERFECTIONISTS, EACH OF WHOM, OF COURSE, RETAINS THE INDIVIDUALITY OF HIS OWN CADENCE

—As to what exactly is the nature of the perfectionism of Sivananda, and wherein precisely does it excel its precedent forms, we leave it to the wits of the reader who has already been made, in no small measure, to acquaint himself with the true spirit and the trends of Sivananda's ethics.—The integration of nature and the achievement of happiness considered by Plato as the summum bonum *of existence, are themselves treated merely as a means, by Sivananda's transcendent ethics, for the purpose of reaching at a yet higher end.—*

—The domination of the Platonic philosophy, by the Idea of the Good as it is in itself, and as connected organically with Wisdom and Justice, casts upon the whole of Platonic ethical thought a super-fine moral attraction. The preponderance of ethical views in Platonic philosophical system can be unhesitatingly attributed to the teaching of the most remarkable Athenean sage, Socrates, that has sought to pervade it; but, then, reasons we have many to maintain that this is itself accountable by the other fact that Plato, whose life is characterised by high moral ardency and furnishes the best instance of, and comment on, the implicated disciplines of the philosophy he formulated, did himself permit such a pervasion on account of the spell for superlative moral themes, life and action, under which his choice, his intellectual leanings, his personal nature, and the whole trend of his inner soul, laboured.—

THERE is no greater gain than contentment. A man who is fully endowed with this important virtue is the richest man in all the three worlds. The peace that he enjoys cannot be adequately described in words. He is a mighty emperor on this earth. Tayumana Swami, the reputed sage of Southern India sings: "Even the

richest man in this world who is equal to Kubera, who possesses Chintamani, Kamadhenu and Kalpataru, desires to have domain overseas. He tries to practise alchemy to have more wealth. That man who is living up to 150 years tries to prolong his longevity by taking Rasayanas and Siddha Kalpas. He who possesses one hundred crores of rupees tries his level best to make it two hundred crores of rupees. The mind grasps one thing and leaves it the next moment and tries to grasp another. Man moves restlessly in this world and says: 'This is mine. That is mine. I will try to possess that also'. O restless mind ! Do not drag me in these impure desires and sensual objects. I know your ways pretty well. Keep quiet. O Supreme Being! Give me a desireless pure mind. Let my mind be ever fixed in the Truth. Let me be mindless. Let me rest in the Satchidananda Swaroop. O All full Bliss ! O Radiant Bliss that permeates and pervades all these names and forms". Contentment is one of the important items in the Niyamas of the Raja Yoga philosophy. Gita also says: "Be contented with whatever you get by chance and apply yourself to meditation with a dispassionate mind". Socrates speaks very highly of this virtue.

Although people know that contentment is a virtue that gives peace of mind, yet they do not try to develop this virtue. Why ? Because they have lost the power of discrimination and the power of Atmic enquiry or Vichara Shakti on account of passion and greed. Greed is the Chief Officer of Passion. Wherever there is greed, there is passion and wherever there is passion there is greed almost invariably. The understanding gets clouded, the intellect gets perverted and the memory gets confused by passion and greed. Therefore people find it difficult to develop this virtue, contentment.

Contentment can never make you idle. It is a Sattwic virtue that propels man towards God. It gives strength of mind and peace. It checks unnecessary and selfish exertions. It opens the inner eye of man and moves his mind towards divine contemplation. It turns his energy in the inner, Sattwic channels. It transmutes the gross energy viz., greed that is forcing man towards selfish exertions into spiritual energy, Ojas. That man who is contented is full of Sattwa. He is more energetic now. He is inward. He has an inner life in the Atman. He is always peaceful. He turns out more work calmly and with one-pointed mind. All the dissipated rays of the mind are collected now.

It is on the strength of contentment that the sages and Rishis of yore, the Fakirs and Bhikshus move about in the world in a carefree manner by living on Bhiksha. It is contentment that gives strength to an aspirant to walk in the path of Self-Realisation and emboldens him to march fearlessly in the rugged and thorny path of spirituality. It is contentment that makes an aspirant look upon the worthless, perishable things of this world as dung, poison, straw or dust. Contentment develops Vairagya, discrimination and Vichara.

Mira had perfect contentment. She never cared for the paltry things of the world. She lived on Bhiksha though she was a Rani of Chitore. She lived on bread that came by begging and took it to the banks of the Jumna and was quite satisfied with this meagre food and plain water

which served as drink. What gave her strength ? It was contentment. Contentment opens the doors of Moksha and the realms of eternal bliss and sunshine. Contentment is a divine virtue. He who has perfect contentment brings balance of mind and perfect poise.

Pattinattu Swami, a very great sage of Southern India was a very greedy man in his earlier life. He was very rich too. Yet he wanted to hoard up wealth. Lord Siva took the form of a small boy and presented a bundle of needles which had no eyes with a chit inside which contained the message: "What is the earthly use of the treasure of this world? Even this broken needle will not follow you when you die". This opened the eyes of the greedy merchant and infused Vairagya and contentment. He abandoned his home, wealth, wife and everything and lived upon alms, developed perfect contentment and realised his Self.

Contentment is Bliss. Contentment is nectar. Contentment gives immortality and infinite peace. Therefore develop this virtue. Lead a happy life. Rest in everlasting peace, Have a mental image of this virtue. Repeat mentally "OM CONTENTMENT". The mental habit of contentment will develop. Live in God who is Nityatripti or supreme satisfaction or contentment.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues
pp. 48-49.

Sivananda on the Triple Category of Moral Individuality in the Terms of the Sankhya Psychology

15. THROUGH EFFORTLESS INVESTIGATIONS CARRIED ON, AND ULTIMATE ANALYSES AND SYNTHESES MADE, BY AN ALL-COMPREHENDING INTUITIVE INTELLIGENCE, THE COLLECTIVITY OF THE UPANISHADIC GENIUSES OBTAINED A NUMBER OF GRADED INSIGHTS INTO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURE OF HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS AS MANIFEST IN TYPICAL MORAL QUALITIES, AS EXPRESSED IN ITS BASIC TRAITS AND TENDENCIES, AND ELABORATED THEM FOR THE PURPOSE OF INDIVIDUAL ETHICAL PERFECTION AS A PREREQUISITE FOR SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT—IN THE UPANISHADS CONSTITUTED OF HIS OWN ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS, SIVANANDA, THE SAGE AND THE SEER, FREELY DRAWS FROM HIS ANCIENT FORBEARS

—The composite nature of man has for its constituents, parts or ingredients of a qualitative character, the predominance or the development of the one over the other determines the type of man one is, and the man in whose nature the disposition for thought and wisdom, the temper for philosophic contemplation, the rule of intellect, takes the full ascendency over the other elements, and forces into them a blending of their energies, a harmony of their interplay, a

balance of their claims, an order in their activities, is the right man, the good man, the mature, the well developed, the well-organised man, the most noble and the gracious being. The study of the human individual conducted from this Platonic standpoint, and in this Platonic manner, which stands less advantageously anagolous to the Indian position and method, implicates a theory of conduct and creates a specific field called the psychology of ethics; therefore, we find, the theory of conduct, the one important aspect of Platonic ethics enunciates, discloses the closest connexion with his psychology, and where we were persuaded to characterise his ethics, and refer to it, as psychological ethicism, we were guided by our understanding of the way in which his psychological views inextricably weave themselves into the tapestry of his exposition of the character of virtue.—

If any one of the three qualities, Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas, increases or predominates, it overpowers the other two qualities. If Sattwa prevails in the Antahkarana, Rajas and Tamas are suppressed; if Rajas predominates, Sattwa and Tamas are overpowered; if Tamas preponderates, Rajas and Sattwa are overpowered. If Sattwa increases all the Daivi-Sampat, divine qualities such as mercy, fearlessness, truthfulness, peace, harmony, religious tendencies, yearning for liberation and cheerfulness manifest. If Rajas increases, the three Vasanas, viz., Loka-Vasana (desire for name and fame), Deha Vasana (of body), Shastra-Vasana (of book lore), greed, outgoing energy, and restlessness will creep in. If Tamas increases, Asura-Sampat, i.e., devilish qualities, such as arrogance, conceit, hypocrisy, harshness, carelessness, laziness, sleep and delusion will develop.

Vasanas are of two kinds, viz, Subha Vasana and Asubha or Malina or impure Vasana. Desire to do virtuous actions, Japa, meditation, study of religious books, etc., is Subha Vasana. A desire to go to cinema, to hurt others is impure Vasana. Impure Vasanas should be destroyed by the increase of Subha Vasanas and Subha Vasanas also should be given up in the end. A Vasana is a subtle desire. It gains strength by repetition of sensual enjoyments. It is in the form of a subtle Samskara in the Chitta. It is a subtle state of the Chitta. The real Swaroopa of mind is Sattwa only. Rajas and Tamas join Sattwa accidentally in the middle. They can be removed by Sadhana or purificatory practices such as Tapas, selfless service, Dama, Sama, Japa, worship, etc. If you develop the Daivi Sampat or divine qualities, Rajas and Tamas will perish. Then the mind will melt in the subtle invisible homogeneous Brahman (Akhandakarasa Brahman) It will mix with Brahman now, just as milk mixes with milk, water with water, oil with oil. Nirvikalpa Samadhi will result.

You experience disharmony and discord when Rajas or passion and Tamas or inertia prevail in the mind. Annihilate Tamas by increasing Rajas and destroy Rajas by increasing Sattwa. There will be harmony and concord when Sattva prevails in the mind. Go beyond Sattva and hear the celestial music of the soul—music that you never heard before. It is the music of the

meeting of the soul with Soul. It is the wonderful music that transcends all Ragas and Raginis. It is unstruck music of the Infinite—that celestial melody which helps the aspirant to merge himself in Brahman. It is the music of Om or Pranava Dhwani. It is transcendental Anahata sound. It is the divine music of Krishna's flute. It is silence itself. Drown yourself in the bliss of the inner music of the Soul. Its melody and sweetness are beyond description. You should experience it yourself.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ten Upanishads, pp. 217-218;
Essence of Yoga, pp. 117-118.

The Ascendancy of the Psychical in the Platonic Type of Moral Personality

16. THE NATURE OF THE INWARDNESS AND THE PRIMACY OF THE PSYCHICAL ENTITY IN THE ETHICAL INDIVIDUAL OF PLATONIC CONCEPTION—NO LOSS CAN BE MORE LAMENTABLE THAN THE LOSS OF THE SOUL, AND NOTHING LESS THAN ENLIGHTENMENT ALONE CAN ENLIVEN IT; IN PROPER INSTRUCTION LIES ITS PROPER NOURISHMENT; ITS ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES IN DEVELOPMENT FORM A DIRECT RESULT OF ITS INSEPARABILITY FROM THE UNIVERSAL SOUL, WISE AND GOOD; IT IS THE SOURCE AND THE CENTRE OF SELF-AWARENESS AND ALL-AWARENESS, MAKING MAN A RATIONAL AND DIVINE INDIVIDUAL WHO, BY VIRTUE OF HIS OWN EXERTIONS, GAINS THE KNOWLEDGE FOR THE DISTINCTION OF THE GOOD FROM THE EVIL

—Moral in objective, and in the very character of the processes leading towards its obtainment, the Platonic psychology, sounds its concluding note on the necessity of striking a felicitous balance between the various substances of the soul; and reason, to whose philosophical disposition and intellectual nature, the virtue of wisdom is a native characteristic, is both the source of, and the means by which is revealed, this balance, this harmony that is the Justice. Hence, the mission of the good man consists in effectuating a development in his rational cognition, and taking its aid for the establishment of a control over the rebellious forces of the desires, for the liberation of the intellectual faculty from all the disturbances caused by the earthly and irrational elements of the psyche. Such a wise man, the well-regulated man, with reason for the ruler of his entire psychological organism, would rise above sense-perception and strive unhindered for a more direct intuition of the world of Ideas, the intelligible essences.—

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE THEO-CENTRIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE EXEMPLAR OF THE ETHICS OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA IN THE REORIENTATION BY SWAMI SIVANANDA

FIND out what a man's conception of God is and what, according to him it has relation to that God: you will understand his nature, his character and characteristics. If money be his God, greed will be his nature and grabbing his characteristic. If Power be his God, egoism will be his nature and arrogance his characteristic. If Pleasure be his God, lust will be his nature and sensuousness his characteristic. They will have much in common, too. Truth will be conspicuous by its absence, and anger by its presence. Compassion has not *come* into their heart which is filled only with *passion.*

On the other hand, they who worship and adore the Supreme Truth as their God, will be the abode of virtues, the embodiments of Truth, Love and Purity ; the exemplars of Compassion, the living images of Peace, Humility, Unity and Divinity.

The moment man turns his gaze within and understands God as He is in Truth, as the One Self that pervades everything, as One Common Link in all beings (*Mayaa Tatamidam Sarvam)*, at that very moment he will become the embodiment of all the divine virtues that have been stressed again and again in the Gita.

Iswarah Sarvabhutanam Hriddeserjuna Tishthati
Bhramayan Sarvabhutani Yantrarudhani Mayayaa

God dwells in your heart. He dwells in the hearts of all beings. Think of it for a moment. How would you behave if you realised this ? You would at once understand that it is useless to deceive yourself or others. You would know that this Supreme Lie Detector lying hidden in your own heart knows even your thoughts ! He knows the falsehood before it is uttered. He has recorded the evil action before it proceeds through your limbs.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

THE DEVELOPMENT BY PLATO, OF THE SOCRATIC ETHICAL STUDY, ALONG DISTINCTIVELY SPIRITUAL LINES

Starting from the Socratic standpoint on the acquisition of virtue through knowledge, Plato, by way of an investigation of the conditions upon which such an acquisition rests, proceeds by elbowing the ethical problem into the environment of metaphysical considerations, and seeks to resolve it in the light of a comprehensive world-wiew, and since true knowledge can never be had in the phenomenal world of sense-perception, but has to be obtained by a contact with the supreme entities of the world of Reality, the ideal world of the Good, with which existence is identified, and God equated, it becomes the life-long task of the philosopher to endeavour after it, by the arduous path of an inquiry into the nature of the absolute virtue, by turning aside from the sensible world and seeking a shelter solely in the Divine. —*Swami Omkarananda*

The First Phase

CHAPTER ONE

THE WISDOM, THE HEART AND THE VOICE OF SIVANANDA

SIVANANDA AND THE DYNAMISMS OF HIS DIVINE LIFE AND WORK

A splendid Divine Life is at a spontaneous play in Sivananda ; a constant, extensive, inclusive, intensive, internal vision brought to being and activity by his supreme experience of the One and Manifold Divinity, of God in himself, here, there, everywhere, in all, and always, and of God as that transcendent Otherness, Tat, initiates, orders, governs and guides to a fulfilment, each little detail in the patterns of his daily life ; in substance, forms and results the potent and enlightening works, acts, and expressions, of his mind of intuitive potencies, of his heart throbbing with cosmic feelings, of his will of divine energies, are so entirely spiritual ; and, being spiritual, they effectuate in the natures and soul of men, noblest and mighty purposes and ends, and formulate in action for a mankind oppressed by scientific, vital, aesthetic temper and pursuits, the most radiant scale of spiritual values that must build here on earth a dynamic life in the idyllic processes of our own inner spiritual consciousness. Dynamic, all-absorbing, all-achieving God-Consciousness is the Heart and Soul of Sivananda ; every book of living knowledge emanating from this Heart, is the Wisdom of Sivananda ; every utterance, every expression, every formulation of this Wisdom is the Voice of Sivananda. In other words he is the Heart he is ; his Heart is his Wisdom ; his Wisdom is his Voice.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE WISDOM, THE HEART AND THE VOICE OF SIVANANDA

1. ELEMENTS OF EXCELLENCE AND PERMANENT VALUE IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

WISDOM IN HUMOUR :

THE volume under notice which is numbered thirteen of *Electric Illumination Series* contains Swami Sivananda's humorous and witty observations, remarks, stories and tales, which go a great way to illustrate and clarify abstract and abstruse Vedantic truths and Yogic doctrines and phenomena. It is observed that the volume owes its birth to a suggestion made by Dr. F. Spiegelberg, of California, and it is hoped that people attracted in the first instance by wit and humour may in due course learn philosophical doctrines presented side by side. As examples, attention may be drawn to *Spiritual Shaving* at page 158 and *Chandrabhaga and Monkey* at page 161.

THE volume opens with four essays on Swami Sivananda by Dewan Bahadur K.S. Ramaswami Sastriyar, in the course of which the talented author has laid his finger unerringly on what constitute elements of permanent value in Sivananda's Message to mankind in these days of pinchbeck philosophers and pseudo-prophets who are roaming about in both the hemispheres creating unparalleled intellectual confusion and moral chaos. As I have had occasion to observe elsewhere, there is nothing secret, nothing hidden, and nothing esoteric about the teachings of Sivananda. They are all re-statements of the teachings of ancient Acharyas in a manner calculated to make a ready appeal to modern minds saturated with so-called modern notions. Here is precisely where Swami Sivananda excels, and very deservedly too.

—Dr. R. Nagaraja Sharma,
M.A., Ph.D,, D.Litt.,
Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

2. SIVANANDA, THE CROWN OF INDIAN CULTURE

THE TREASURE OF TEACHINGS :

THIS book embodies short and pithy observations of the Saint couched in his own inimitable style and is a veritable storehouse of his philosophical teachings on different aspects of religion and life. Hinduism, the cradle of Indian culture and the wisdom of Vedanta are two of the illuminating chapters. Special stress is laid on unselfish love as the only way to God-realisation. Highly appealing is the plea for leading a divine life. The Swamiji's description of God as the Supreme Reality will find general acceptance,

—*Search Light*,
Patna.

3. THE MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. PHILOSOPHY is the expression of the inner urge to know the Atman.

2. Philosophy aims at the knowledge and the realisation of what really IS.

3. Philosophy is, to the Westerner, conceptual ; and to the Easterner, factual. Indian philosophy begins at the point where Western philosophy ends.

4. Metaphysics is the study of super-sensuous Reality which is beyond sensuous, physical phenomenon.

5. Philosophy is the rational section of religion; religion is philosophy made popular and lived out. Philosophy ascertains the nature and the attributes of the individual and the Supreme Soul. It tries to explain the reality behind appearances.

6. The aim of philosophy is right living and Self-realisation. Philosophy enables one to live the divine life, a life of wisdom, free from imperfections.

7. Philosophy is the way, not simply of explaining what ought to be, but of directly experiencing that which eternally exists. It is the great art of perfect life, where the supreme life, which is identical with Existence, is realised.

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of Sivananda,
pp. 2-3.

4. A MASTER-PIECE OF SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

VOICE OF THE HIMALAYAS :

THIS is an inspiring book on various aspects of spiritual life, Sadhana and the divine goal. Swamiji is a man of science. The book is systematically written and well-arranged. The sentences are short and pithy and the truth contained in them appeals directly to the heart and the head. Swamiji has a style of his own for expounding complex spiritual, ethical and humanitarian problems in simple words and phrases. "Faith is belief in the unknown. Faith makes the weak strong and the timid brave. Faith heals, faith creates, faith works wonders, faith moves mountains. Faith is the search-light for God-finding. Life is a dreary waste when it loses its faith." This book of 364 pages is full of such soul-stirring sentences on different spiritual topics and sub-topics scientifically arranged. It is a master-piece of spiritual counsel and guidance. This unique philosophical publication is placed by the author at the service of mankind because God is enshrined in man.

—N. K. B.,
Hitavada,
Nagpur.

5. PRINCIPLES OF INNER MENTAL DISCIPLINE

1. YOGIC discipline sets free the hidden forces in man and disentangles the individual from the shackles of Samsara. Yoga reveals the wonders of the mind and the

Spirit. It is a conscious and sustained attempt towards Self-perfection.

2. True greatness of man lies in the silent conquest of mind. If you control your mind, you are a conqueror of the whole world.

3. Detach the sense-organs from objects and rest them in their respective centres. This is Self-control.

4. Do not allow the mind to react to external stimuli. This is mental poise.

5. All sorts of loose thoughts of diverse kinds come and go in the mental factory. If you want rapid progress in the spiritual path, watch every thought.

6. A vacant mind is ever distressed. It is devil's workshop. Be thoughtful. Keep guard over your mind. Watch every impulse and thought. Spiritualise or sublimate your instincts. Purify and control the emotions.

7. Generate daily new divine vibrations or thought-waves in your mind. Make your thought pure, strong, sublime and definite. You will gain immense spiritual strength and peace.

8. Sub-conscious life is more powerful than your ordinary life of objective consciousness. Through the practice of Yoga you can modify, control and influence the sub-conscious depths.

9. Take one evil trait. Meditate on its opposite virtue every morning. Practise it during the day. The evil quality will vanish soon.

10. Self-analysis and inspiration are needed to know the internal distractions. Introspection purifies the mind quickly.

11. The tricks of the mind are most subtle. Only constant Vichar will keep you alert and safe. Through introspection, analysis, discrimination, vigilance, enquiry and prayer you can understand the tricks and jugglery of the mind and escape from its deceptions.

12. Wherever the mind goes, see the One Lord there. Then the mind will easily come under your control. Constant Japa and prayer will calm the mind and fill it with peace and bliss.

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of the Himalayas,
pp. 115-118.

6. SIVANANDA'S POETIC RHYTHM AND SPIRITUAL WISDOM

WAVES OF BLISS :

"WAVES of Bliss" is a collection of poems by the great Swami. One can easily get the glimpses of the varied knowledge of the author both in poetic rhythm and in dealing with subjects which need even a technical study and which a saint is seldom supposed to know.

The range of subjects is usually spiritual but subjects as "Meet Dr. Patwardhan" have also been versified. It appears that the author could even think in poetry.

Poetry is, as some think, a better medium for bringing home to many in an easier and attractive way the truths of the other world and in this the author has got an unequalled success.

—*The Fire*,
Kanpur.

7. INTUITION AND SIVANANDA'S CORRECTIVE TO WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

1. INNER realisation or illumination transcends all philosophy. It is one's own experience or spiritual Anubhava. The immediate knowledge through intuition or spiritual Anubhava unites the individual soul with the Supreme Soul.

2. Without developing intuition, the intellectual man remains imperfect. Intellect has not the power that would help it to enter the inner chamber of Truth. Real cultural advance is not along the intellectual side, but along the intuitional side.

3. Through intuition alone you can get the vision of the Real or the Brahman. Thought cannot reveal Truth or the Absolute. The scientific attempts to prove the Infinite are futile. The only scientific method here is the intuition. The solution of the problem of religious philosophy and science is the development of intuition. Without the philosophy of intuition, the philosophy of the West is bound to remain imperfect.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Voice of Himalayas,
pp. 123-124.

8. EXALTED IDEALS IN HUMOROUS UTTERANCES

WISDOM IN HUMOUR :

SWAMI Sivananda is the author of a good number of books on practical Hinduism and the founder of a popular religious movement. Some of his books have already been rendered into French, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu and Kanarese. His books have succeeded to a considerable extent in popularising our philosophy and religion among the reading public throughout India. The book under review owes its origin to the hearty appreciation of Dr. Frederick Spiegelberg, Professor of Stanford University, California, who paid a visit to the learned author in 1949 and spent a few days with him. Hearing several humorous compositions written and read out by the author, the American Professor was charmed and observed, "Swamiji ! This is just the thing wanted by the people today. They would love the humour and would unconsciously learn the lesson. The impression made by such teaching would be profound and lasting." In this book, about a hundred witty and humorous utterances of the author are recorded. Indeed they are very interesting and instructive.

—Swami Jagadeeswarananda,
Modern Review, Calcutta.

9. INTELLECTUAL TYPES FROM SIVANANDA STAND-POINT

MANY have a 3 inches intellect
What is this 3 inches intellect ?

Man is swayed by three inches tongue,
He lives to please this 3 inches tongue ;

Such a man has a 3 inches intellect.
There is nothing for him beyond eating
There is nothing for him beyond sense-pleasure.
Others have five feet intellect :
They think of this body alone,
Its comforts, needs and other things.
They live for attaining these objects.
Some others think of three lives—
Past, present and future ;
Discrimination has just dawned in them.
Some think of the one, pure, Atman,
Which is beyond the 3 Gunas and senses
These are the wisest among men.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Wisdom In Humour, pp. 108.

10. SIX STAGES OF SURRENDER

1. *Anukulya-Sankalpa*—when the human will is emptied of egotism, and attuned to God with a readiness to be used by Him in the service of His creatures.

2. *Pratikulya-varjana*—when the soul deliberately turns away from and renounces whatever is repugnant to God—true Sannyasa.

3. *Mahavisvasa*—or a firm faith in God's redeeming Grace.

4. *Karpanya*—the inability to follow any other.

5. *Goptritvavarana*—when the soul seeks as its only hope the kindness of God.

6. *Atmanikshepa*—when the soul gives itself wholly to Him.

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of the Himalayas, pp. 94.

11. MYSTIC SIVANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY IN HUMOUR

WISDOM SPARKS :

IN this well-produced volume we have the words of Swami Sivananda uttered by him, at different times, on different occasions. They are inspiring, amusing, delightful, and, above all, profound. They reveal the human side of the Swami. These sparks are intended to kindle the understanding and discrimination of his devotees. The publication of these, will undoubtedly help the instruction in spiritual life, through sly bantering and witty apothegms. The contents provide varied fare. The Swami in the first chapter entitled 'Invocation' includes the salutation to the Lord, Peace-prayer, salutation to the Sun, Mother Earth, Mother India and the Hindu Cradle Song. The last is set to music so to speak. The second chapter deals with the mysteries of Vedanta, the third throws light on Yoga, whereas the fourth gives simple instructions for spiritual life. This contains some of the wittiest pieces. The fifth chapter begins with Lakshmi-Parvati Samvad, which shows that Hari and Hara are identical. The chapter 'Philosophy in Humour' shows the Swami at his best. The sixth chapter is devoted to the praises of the glories of KRISHNA. The seventh deals with all aspects of Hindu culture. The eighth gives instructions on how to be healthy and live long. The

ninth gives general instructions on philosophy, whereas the next chapter deals with Upanishadic wisdom. The other chapters are entitled Yoga-Vedantic Garland, Philosophy of Numbers, Hail Heroes, and the last chapter closes with poems on the Supreme Abode. It is indeed an excellent production, and ought to sustain the interest of everyone who reads it.

—K. C. Varadachari, M.A., Ph.D.,
Hindu,
Madras.

12. UNIVERSALITY OF DISCONTENTMENT

THE Sessions Judge is very discontented,
He thirsts to become a High Court Judge;
The Minister is also discontented,
He longs to become the Premier;
A Millionaire is discontented;
He yearns to become a multi-millionaire;
The husband is discontented,
His wife is black and thin.
He wants to marry another wife with
good complexion ;
The wife is discontented.
She wants to divorce and marry a rich,
young husband.
A lean man is discontented.
He wants to put on fat and gulps
cod-liver oil;
A fat man is discontented,
He wants to reduce his fat and take
anti-fat pills.
No man is contented in this world,
Real, eternal, satisfaction comes only
Through attainment of the All-full
Atman.
Therefore, realise this Self-contained,
Paripoorna, Self.

—Swami Sivananda's
Wisdom In Humour, pp. 25–26.

13. SPONTANEITY OF SIVANANDA'S EVOCATIVE EXPRESSION

HEART OF SIVANANDA :

IN this book are collected the outpourings of the heart of Sri Sivananda. The sayings and writings which are collected here are divided into eighteen chapters dealing with a guide to right living, practical spiritual life, self-culture, mysteries of the human mind, way to happiness, etc. The Sage's sayings, as is well-known, are clear, forceful and evocative of the desired results.

—V.A.K.,
Bhavan's Journal,
Bombay.

14. SIVANANDA'S METHODS FOR ACQUISITION OF WISDOM

1. EXAMINE yourself. Practise self-analysis, introspection and cogitation. You will grow in wisdom.

2. He who has understanding, who is unmindful of the lures of the senses, who is ever pure, reaches the goal quickly.

3. Vainly you wander O man ! To what purpose are you running to Banaras and Vrindavan. Search within your heart.

4. The greatest weakness is doubt. The greatest fault is vacillation.

5. Faith can work wonders. Have unswerving faith. Everything depends on faith.

6. Difficulties exist only to make you strong by overcoming them. Face them boldly.

7. Constant vigilance, eternal vigilance, is needed in the spiritual struggle in Yoga Sadhana.

8. Have faith in the Lord, His grace and Name. Do your best and leave the rest to Him.

9. The knots of ignorance are formed by the force of Vasanas. Their unravelling is a preliminary condition of the attainment of blissful release.

10. Just as one finds out lost cattle by their foot-prints, so also one finds this All by the foot-prints of spiritual values.

11. You must have Samatva of mind, means of purpose, of temper, of attitude, in your everyday life, to achieve perfection.

12. The conceptions "This is beautiful, this is not ; this is good, this is bad" form the seed of the series of your misery.

13. Self-purification is in the control of the senses.

—*Heart of Sivananda,*
pp. 39-40.

15. SIVANANDA, A TRIUMPHANT WORLD-TEACHER

HEART OF SIVANANDA :

THIS book contains the outpourings of a Divine heart filled with infinite love for mankind. As one peruses the book, he finds it difficult to escape the author's engrossing love for all and he is quietly and unperceptibly led into the path leading to divine living. After describing the goal of life, hints are given on right living leading to a spiritual life. Self-culture and Karma Yoga lead to real peace and happiness. It is the privilege of India to teach the world how to live a Divine Life and there is no doubt Swami Sivananda has been the greatest success in this direction.

—*Search Light.*
Patna.

16. SIVANANDA'S CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD-WELFARE

VOICE OF THE HIMALAYAS :

VOICE of the Himalayas contains instructions to the aspiring Sadhak, by His Holiness. Dealing with various subjects which will be useful for progress on the path of his Sadhana, this book contains important instructions for Sadhaks. As usual with the Swami, the instructions are given in pithy sentences or aphorisms which are easily intelligible and which stick to the memory. The book is divided into five

parts and deals with all matters which are of spiritual importance, such as 'Man's duty on Earth', the 'Supreme Goal'; the various paths to Realisation such as Bhakti Yoga, Jnana and Service, the universality of religion and the need for an ethical or divine life.

The book really gives utterance to the life-giving wisdom of the Vedas and the Upanishads and is a great contribution to the welfare and upliftment of the world.

—*Federated India,*
Madras.

17. GRADATION IN THE LIFE DIVINE

1. BE simple. An indescribable joy and strength accompany the simplicity of life. Simple life is divine life.

2. Divine life is not an easy-going life. It is to be led in an exemplary way. Service and dedication are two great principles of divine life.

3. Divine life is the religion of good and lofty life. Be pure in thought, word and deed. Meditate on God. This is divine life.

4. To remember God at all times, to serve humanity, to love all, is the best kind of life. This is divine life.

5. Cultivate endurance. Possess perfect calmness. Go into silence for sometime everyday. Pray and gather strength in silence.

6. The foundation of divine life is celibacy and self-discipline. The summit of divine life is the love of God and the wisdom of the Self.

—*Heart of Sivananda,*
p. 24, 29.

18. WESTERN BELIEF AND SIVANANDA'S THESIS

SOME Western philosophers believe that there cannot be any absolutely motiveless action. This is an error. They have no idea of the state of a Jeevanmukta or liberated sage, who has annihilated in toto all desires, cravings, egoism and who is one with the Absolute. They judge the sages also from their own viewpoint or level of consciousness. They have no intuitional knowledge or direct spiritual experience. Hence they have erred here too sadly.

O new aspirants! Plunge yourselves in selfless service and purify your heart. Though you cannot attain in the beginning that absolutely motiveless state, plod on, persist, persevere. Let there be some tinge of motive. Scrutinise your actions and motives through introspection and self-analysis. Become a second grade or a third grade Karma Yogi like the second grade pleader in the realm of Law. The more your heart is purified through selfless service, the more motiveless you will become. A day will come and that day is not far off, when all

your actions will be absolutely motiveless.

It is quite true that only a Jivanmukta can do absolutely motiveless actions. But a sincere Sadhak also can make an approach to the level of a sage.

—Swami Sivananda's
Wisdom Nectar, pp. 81-82

19. ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL EXCITEMENT IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SPIRITUAL LESSONS :

TO the strictly Occidental mind, this is a most surprising work and appears as an usual and extremely interesting mixture of religious faith, modern psychology and hygiene, and ancient spiritual practice such as "Asanas" which are not so much exercises as postures. It is partly a reproduction of articles which appeared in *My Magazine of India*. The publisher points out that the author "represents the voice of the most enlightened and up-to-date Hinduism, recognising that there is Truth in all religions and that there are common factors underlying all moral teachings," and adds, "This book might also, therefore, do its mite towards a better mutual understanding between various religionists." It is chiefly with this latter thought in mind that we urge those who realise the wisdom of comparing widely varied points of view not to miss the excellent opportunity of perusing such a simply worded work dealing with a most interesting aspect of Hinduism. Superficially, the book contains statements which bring exclamations of amazement from Western lips. There are seemingly precipitous descents from the sublime to the very commonplace, and things which we regard as holding premier places in our Occidental lives are unhesitatingly swept aside.

The book is so interesting as to hold one's attention as thoroughly as the most exciting modern novel; but, unlike the novel however, this work is a masterpiece of knowledge and wisdom in its own way. Many of its injunctions are familiar items in our own books of hygienic and semi-religious type and may well be followed with profit even by the Westerner, although some of the instructions contained therein would require a very strong-willed person indeed to carry out, so much of one's daily life is demanded for sacrifice. Some of its phrases which are noteworthy and typical of the idea behind the publication, is, "All religions are different ways for attaining God. The essentials are the same in all religions. Non-essentials only differ."

—*Around the World*,
London.

20. A GALAXY OF GREAT SAINTS WHO REALISED GOD THROUGH JAPA

240. ROGUE Ratnakar became Sage Valmiki by repeating "Mara-Mara" (the inverted form of RAMA) as advised by Sage Narada.

241. Tukaram, the Maharashtra Saint had direct Darshan of Lord Krishna several times by repeating simply, "Vittal-Vittal" (another name for Lord Krishna) the name of the Deity at Pandharpur.

242. Dhruva, that wonderful boy of devotion, repeated "Om Namo Bhagawate Vasudevaya", the 12 Akshara Mantra of Lord Krishna, and had His Darshan.

243. Prahlada uttered "Narayana—Narayana", and saw Hari face to face.

244. Ram Das, the spiritual preceptor of our late Shivaji, repeated thirteen crores of times Rama Mantra "Sri Ram, Jayaram, Jaya Jaya Ram" while standing in water in the Godavari close by its banks near Takli village. He became a great saint.

—Swami Sivananda's
Spiritual Lessons, pp. 46-47.

21. SIVANANDA, AN INSPIRING LIGHT AMID HUMAN DESPONDENCY

WISDOM SPARKS :

IN this publication of convincing assertions of the highest in philosophy and religion is reflected the grandeur of the thoughts and emotions of the super-soul seeking to lead the ordinary individual constituting the vast majority of the human race, along the eternal and immortal path of wisdom, life and perennial bliss. A study of the book will enable all to seek in the little seeds of thought, the most wondrous achievements and perfection which lie before every individual if he or she would but care to grasp it. The fact that the thoughts belong to one who has transcended all rational standards by a long process of intense Sadhana in diverse forms, invests them with unique value and importance when human skill and ingenuity are harnessed to kill and destroy the need for a 'Bout turn' presents as the inescapable alternative whereby humanity may be saved, to fulfil itself along the right and ultimate purpose; in other words, the Divine in man has to be re-discovered. The book under review like many others of the Swamiji, is surely calculated to apply the brake to the downward avalanche and present the great question 'whither ?'. In commending such a rare publication to every individual, we feel particular pleasure and satisfaction in the contemplation that even amidst the gloom and despondency all round, the future is assured for those who must perforce change their ideals and outlook after being confronted by the vacuity involved in the present drift. "Wisdom Sparks" exercises the highest and noblest task of providing everyone with what they really need in the place of what they mostly possess.

—*Champion*,
Calicut.

22. THE SCIENCE OF LITTLE THINGS

LITTLE drops of water
Make the mighty ocean,
Little grains of sand
Make this beautiful land.

Little moments
Make the mighty ages.
Little pies and farthings
Make millions and crores.
Little mistakes,
Little unkind acts,
Little evil thoughts
Will make you a devil.
Little words of love,
Little acts of kindness,
Little good thoughts,
Will make you a saint.
—Swami Sivanaada's,
Wisdom Sparks, p. 51.

23. CONTROLLED MIND : A SOURCE OF HAPPINESS

A multi-millionaire is not happy
A king or a Raja is not happy
A Prime Minister is not happy
A Doctor or a Barrister is not happy
A Pundit or a scientist is not happy
A businessman or a banker is not happy
A Judge or a Professor is not happy
An Engineer or a Commissioner is not happy
Indra or Varuna is not happy
Who is happy, then ?
He who has controlled his mind is happy.
—Swami Sivananda's,
Wisdom Sparks, p. 35.

24. MAYA, THE MODERNITY OF ITS MEANING IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

A Man is very lean
But he always thinks, "When can I become fatty ?"
He tries all sorts of methods
He drinks plenty of ghee
He swallows tons of butter
He gulps maunds of Cod-liver oil
He rubs all sorts of oil on his cheek and body
He shampoos and massages.
He approaches many Sadhus
And takes all sorts of Bhutis and herbs.
But he still remains in the same condition.
This is MAYA.
A Man is very very fatty
But he always thinks, "When can I become lean ?"
He also tries all sorts of medicines
But he remains in the same state.
He cannot give up his ghee
This is MAYA.
A doctor thinks, "A Judge is more happy"
A Judge thinks, "A Professor is more happy"
A Professor thinks, "A Businessman is more happy"
A Businessman thinks, "A Raja is more happy"
None is really happy in this world.
This is MAYA.
A knower of Brahman alone is really happy.
A Man has really nothing
But he thinks he is a rich man
A man is really a fool
But he thinks he is a wise man.
A Woman is really ugly

But she thinks she is very beautiful.
A Man has not a grain of devotion
But he thinks he is a great devotee.
Maya is an illusory power of the Lord.
Obtain the grace of the Lord
Through self-surrender and devotion
You can easily conquer Maya.
Maya intoxicates, veils
And clouds the understanding
She hides the real
And makes the unreal
Appear as real.
She is a cunning woman
She is very crafty and diplomatic.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Wisdom Sparks,
pp. 117-118.

25. SPLENDOUR OF SIVANANDA'S SIMPLE GREATNESS

TREASURES OF TEACHINGS :

HERE is a wealth of advice, steeped in experience, which will, if truly followed, lead to infinite joy in the world. Swami Sivananda has so many things to say and says them so effectively that one has simply to try and follow him.

There might be an apparent over-dose of spirituality ; but that dose we need urgently at the moment when we are planning for a future India, fully free and prosperous. At no other time we needed religion so intensely as we need it today. Only true religion will heal up the wounds occasioned by political manoeuvering of today. Think of the great message :—

"The salt of life is selfless service. The bread of life is universal love. The water of life is purity. The sweetness of life is devotion. The fragrance of life is generosity. The pivot of life is meditation. The goal of life is Self-realisation."

Look at the way in which the great Swami has communicated his message. What simplicity, what concreteness and what intensity of truth behind all that he says !

—Prof. B.S. Mathur,
Malabar Herald,
Malabar.

26. THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF SAINTLINESS

1st May, 1944.

BELOVED Ram,

The beginning of saintliness is killing of egoism. The end of saintliness is Eternal Life. The key to saintliness is Brahmacharya.

The light of saintliness is universal love. The garb of saintliness is virtue. The mark of saintliness is equal vision.

The road to saintliness is regular meditation. The foundation of saintliness is Yama Niyama.

—Sivananda,
Treasure of Teachings, p. 67.

27. THE GOOD AND THE NOT-GOOD

1st June, 1944.

BELOVED Selves,

To be child-like is good ; but to be childish is not good. To do simple Tapas is good ; but to spoil the health by mortification is not good.

To be devotional is good; but to be emotional is not good. To have Vairagya is good, but to expose the body to cold wind is not good.

To have a strong will is good ; but to be self-willed is not good. To stick to one's ideal is good ; but to be obstinate is not good. To be courageous is good ; but to expose oneself to danger is not good.

—Sivananda,
Treasure of Teachings, p. 12.

28. MANY-SIDED SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

SPIRITUAL LESSONS :

THIS is a handy little book in clear type for the seeker after Truth, prepared to discipline himself for its reception, with not enough Sanskrit terminology to daunt the fearless beginner for whom this is a guide-book. In the nine sections of this work, the author condenses a great deal of information, and the instructions for meditation, prayer, control of anger, and dietetic discipline. A little glossary in an appendix is a help to perusal of the book.

—A. A. Morton,
Occult Review,
London, S. W. 7.

SPIRITUAL LESSONS :

THIS is an enlarged edition. The Swami presents the voice of enlightend Hinduism recognising that there is Truth in all religions and that there are many common factors underlying all moral teachings.

—*Indian Literary Review*,
Bombay.

29. GLIMPSES OF THE VEDANTIC WISDOM

59. TURN the mind inward by Vairagya, practice of Sama, Dama and Pratyahar. Enquire Who am I ? Destroy the little illusory 'I' by Vichar, analysis and investigation. Close the ears, eyes and mouth. Slowly stop the breath. Think of the Infinite Sat-Chit-Ananda, big 'I'. You can rest now in your own Swaroop. This is Sahajavastha. This is Adwita Brahma Nishta, or Adwaita Avasthanaroopa Samadhi. Practise, feel and have Aparoksha spiritual Anubhava.

60. Be established in Brahmic feeling and consciousness. Brahman Satyam, Brahman (God) is real. Jagat Mitya. The world

is unreal. Have these two ideas well-grounded in your minds.

61. You are neither the body that is composed of the five elements and that is persihable, nor the Indriyas nor the limiting adjuncts—Upadhis. You are unattached (Asanga), non-doer (Akarta), non-enjoyer (Abhokta), witness of everything (Sakshi). Hammer the mind constantly on these ideas. This is the gist of Vedanta. This is Adwaita in a nutshell.

62. OM Vyapak ! OM Infinity ! OM Eternity ! OM Immortality ! Associate these ideas when you repeat OM. When you chant OM, feel these. When a man feels unity, can grief or sorrow affect him ?

64. You are hypontised by the mind and Maya. By vigilant efforts you will have to de-hypnotise yourself. Under hypnotism you identify yourself with the body, wife, children, house, etc. Consantly feel you are Atma. Deny the body and the world. This process will de-hypnotise you. You will be established in your Swaroop, Brahman.

65. Remember "SOHAM". Remember "OM". Constantly feel you are all-pervading Atma. Negate or deny the body. Remove Avidya. Know Thyself and be free.

66. Lord Krishna eulogises Jnana Yoga in Gita Chap. II—49, and Chap. VII—17 and 18. *"Durena hyavaram Karma Buddhi Yoga Dhananjaya* ! Far lower than Yoga of Discrimination, is action." *"Tesham Jnani Nityayukta Ekabhaktih Vishishyate.* The wise constantly harmonised worshipping the One, is the best." *Jnani Twatmaiva Me Matam.* "I hold the wise as Myself."

68-69. Brahman is neither Jada nor Chaitanya, neither Saguna nor Nirguna, neither Dwaita nor Adwaita, neither Ek (one) nor Anek (Many). It is Dwaitadwaita Vivarjita. It is mere Kevalasti. It is not an abstraction. It is not a negative concept. It is not a black. It is not void. It is *Nitya Tripti, Param Sukha, Akhand Ananda, Param Shanti.* It is *Pariroorna.*

70. A stick, a spoon, a tumbler, a fan, a piece of stone have all got their Antar-Atma (Inner Self) or Upadhita Chaitanya or intelligence associated with the Upadhi. By forgetting the illusory names and forms (Nama-Roopa), you will have to see the Inner Self.

71. The Swaroopa of bondage (Bandha) constitutes subtle deires. The Swaroopa of Moksha is Nirvasanic state.

72. The teacher explains at first to the disciple the method of *Nisheda.* He says, "This world is Asta, Jada, Dukha (unreal, insentient and full of miseries)." Then he says, *"Sarvam Kalvidam Brahma."*—All is Brahman only. He gives this instruction through the method of Vidhi. If he imparts this method of Vidhi in the beginning, the student will be puzzled extremely. He will ask the teacher, "How can an ass, dog, etc., be Brahman ?"

73. The world is not different from Atma. He who meditates on Atma in a cave does purify and help the world. Ignorant social workers cannot understand this point as their brains are conjested with Karma Samskaras. He who works in the world unselfishly with Atma Bhav and Atma Drishti will eventually reach Atma. Fools only fight as to whether Pravritti or Nivritti is superior.

74. He who does Manan of Atma or Brahman is called a Muni. The Jiva or the individual soul comes down to the physical

plane after the expiry of his term of enjoyment in heaven or *Swarga*, through the rain, remains hidden in a subtle form in the grains, enters the sperm of the father along with the food and stays there for a couple of months. Then he lives for 10 months in the womb of his mother. Semen is Ahuti or an oblation. Read the Panchagni Vidya in Chandogya Upanishad. You will nicely understand this point.

76. You can feel oneness mentally through feeling (Bhavana Adwaitam). Physically it is impossible to have Adwaitam in Vyavahar (Kriya Adwaitam) to a considerable extent. Only a Paramahamsa Sannyasin or one who lives in a cave or who moves about quite unconcerned in the world can practise "Kriya Adwaitam." A Jnani can hardly have "Kriya Adwaitam."

77. When the Jiva drowns himself in Brahman by annihilating this little false "I", real Mahapralaya comes in.

78. There is no world for a Jnani who has *Samyag Drishti*. He sees Atma everywhere.

79. Even if a Vedantin who does *Ahamgra Upasana* (meditating on "Aham Brahma Asmi" idea) fails to have Self-realisation in this life, he will go to Brahmaloka only. He will never enter Swarga.

80. Ahamkar-Tyaga (renunciation of this false little "I") constitutes renunciation of all, Sarva-Tyaga.

83. Externally, a Jnani will have no particular signs. It is his internal Nischaya that the world is unreal and Brahman alone is real, and the Bhavana "I am Brahman" that really differentiates a Jnani from an Ajnani.

84. If you can renounce this little false "I", you will enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi then and there. On account of Ahamkar (egoism), Vasanas and Sankalpas emanate. Come out of this cage of flesh like a bold lion, by tearing out the Vasanas.

85. Existence, birth, growth, modification, decay and death are the six modifications (Shad Vikara) which affect the Jiva. Atma is free from these modifications, Nirvikara.

86. Birth, death, hunger, thirst, exhiliration, and depression are the six waves which affect the Jiva (Shad Urumis).

88. A Jnani knows fully well that he is eating a sweet, bitter or a salted thing. He will not have any Asakti just as the worldlings have ; that is the difference.

89. A Sannayasin or a man of pure Nivritti, should do Pranava Japa, Dhyana and study of Vedantic Literature in rotation. If he gets tired after Japa of OM, he must take recourse to study. When study is over, he can sit for meditation. These three should come in a circle. Then he will not feel the monotony or disgust. He should train the mind in these three practices. Then the mind will not wander. Development will come quickly.

91. Develop or increase the thoughts of Brahman (God). This is termed Sajateeya Vritti Pravaha in Vedanta. Renounce the thoughts of the world, body and objects. This is termed Vijateeya Vritti Tiraskar.

92. Shaktas take the world as Chaitanya. Vedantins take the world as Jada, Mithya. Scientists take it as a mass of electrons. Vaiseshikas take it as a mass of Paramanus

(atoms). Vijnanavadins take the world as a mere idea. Some take it as mere appearance. Some deny the world (Gaudapada). A Jnani says: "It is all Brahman—Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma." A devotee of Lord Krishna says: "All is Krishna." Everybody is right from his view-point (Drishti). Each has got his own categories or Tattwas.

93. The direct royal road to Moksha is Jnana Yoga. Bhakti Yoga and Raja Yoga are means to Jnana. Bhakti and Raja Yogas are rather circutous and zigzag. Even a Raja Yogi will have to take up Jnana Vichar to attain Highest Goal or Higher Knowledge.

94. Brahman or Pure Consciousness is real. World is unreal. World is a dream or Indra Jalam. You are Brahman, when ignorance vanishes. Even if you are a poor clerk, even if you have nothing to eat, even if you suffer from any serious, protracted ailment, assert boldly: I am Brahman, *Aham Brahma Asmi*. Never move an inch from this strong determination. Hammer the mind constantly on these ideas.

112. As soon as real disgust for worldly enjoyment manifests itself, three questions naturally arise in the aspirant's mind. They are (1) Who am I? (2) What is this world? (3) What is God or Brahman?

113. Brahman (Sat-Chit-Ananda) is Nivritti Rupa. It is Sannyasa Rupa. The whole teaching of Gita is Absolute Nivritti.

114. A proper understanding is only possible when all works are absolutely given up and if one lives in absolute seclusion for some years.

116. Though there are many theories in Vedanta as Drishti-Srishti Veda, Srishti-Drishri Vada Vivarta Vada, Abhasa Vada, Avacheda Vada, Eka Jiva Vada, etc., you will have to take up that theory that suits you best, that makes your mind rest on the Inner Self. Different theories suit different minds.

117. The terms Sarva-Vyapi, Adhishtan (Substratum) "Aham Brahma Asmi" are all Kalpanic (mental imaginations). They are only needed to satisfy the aspirants. From the view-point of Swaroopa, there is no Sarvavyapak.

—Swami Sivananda's
Spiritual Lessons, pp. 12-20.

30. SIVANANDA, THE HOPE AND THE JOY OF ALL MANKIND

SPIRITUAL LESSONS:

AS the title suggests, you have spiritual food in plenty in these lessons which previously appeared, from time to time, in *My Magazine of India*. I have found the Swami an unfailing source of hope and illumination. The Swami has a fascinatingly simple style of communicating his thoughts, ideals and experiences. I find *Spiritual Lessons* elevating and compelling. Here is a prescription for the realisation of the Self and as such of God in us,—a way to Divine peace and joy.

"Penetrate more deeply into the kingdom of Truth. Aspire to realise the truth. Sacrifice your all for Truth. Live for Truth. Speak the Truth. Truth is life and power. Truth is existence. Truth is knowledge. Truth is Bliss. Truth is silence. Truth is peace. Truth is light. Truth is love. Live

to penetrate more deeply into the realms of Truth, eternal sunshine and perennial joy."

This is the message, all-powerful and glorifying. An ordinary mortal might find the massage rather difficult to fulfil. But that is the ideal and we have to act up to it if we are keen on our lasting redemption. The Swami is speaking from the depths of his experience, and his language is such as to communicate his message forcefully and convincingly. An earnest seeker after Truth will find ample stimulation in these spiritual lessons.

—Prof. B.S. Mathur,
National Front.

31. INTUITIVE SAGE SIVANANDA AND THE WORDS OF HIS SPIRITUAL REALISATION

VOICE OF THE HIMALAYAS :

ONE more sumptuous volume of writings of Sri Swami Sivananda has found publication. This volume contains 105 pages of introductory appreciative matter at the beginning and 50 pages at the end, sandwiched between which we have 300 odd pages of Swami Sivananda's aphorisms dealing with a call to bliss, God-realisation through love, spiritual life and world peace. The wide range of these subjects dealt with is obviously intended to cover all Adhikaris who are at all stages of the spiritual journey. They are direct and have the quality of suggestive meditations and courses of *Sadhana* conducive to the growth of the spiritual. Of course, a seeker will find help if he develops at least the initial faith that all instructions come from the Divine at the moment of need. In fact it must be a common enough experience that words and sentences sometimes become vivid expressions or flashes of inspiration, at unsual moments, those moments when the Divine initiates, the evolution in an individual. Such acts of grace are perfect examples of the abiding presence. But such acts are not single which have to be just bottled up for future use. Their use is limited but they urge one on the path of ascent to God-experience and freedom that is the promise of such enjoyment of God.

—*The Hindu,*
Madras.

32. TWO LEADING FEATURES OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

WISDOM IN HUMOUR :

THIS book contains among other things four essays on Swami Sivananda by Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastry and the teachings of Swami Sivananda on the truths of Yoga and Vedanta in the form of humorous blank verse. It is impossible to combine interest and spiritual benefit better than what has been done in this book.

—*Federated India,*
Madras.

WISDOM HUMOUR :

THERE is a good deal of shrewd wisdom in this book, and when the mind is compared to a cat that is praised for its quietness until rats are let loose in the room, when it show its true nature, or where the materialist looking for happiness in outer things is compared to an old woman who has lost something in her house but is searching for it outside because her house is dark and outside there is moonlight.

—*Indian Express*,
Madras.

33. SIVANANDA DRAWS LESSONS FROM THE LAW OF KARMA

ALL the phenomena of Nature
Are governed by the One Law—
The Law of causation,—
The Law of Karma.
It is that Law that keeps up
The inner harmony
And logical order
Of the whole universe.
It includes
Both cause and effect.
The seed has its cause in tree.
And the seed itself becomes
The cause of the tree.
The cause is found in the effect.
And the effect is in the cause.
Any action is bound to react
With equal force and effect.
If you do good to others,
You really help yourself,
Virtuous action brings
Joy and happiness.
Love thy neighbours,
Do good to others,
Do as you wish to be done by.
You will attain the Supreme.

—Swami Sivananda's
Wisdom Sparks, pp. 108–109.

34. SIVANANDA, A KEEN DISCERNER OF MEN AND MATTERS

WISDOM IN HUMOUR :

THESE are a few humorous poems written in blank verse to explain the author's point of view in Vedanta, Yoga, philosophy and religion. Swami Sivananda is a keen discerner of men and things besides being a saint and seer. Describing pseudo-patriots, he says : "A man puts on a Gandhi cap and wears thick Khaddar. He bawls out : Mahatma Gandhi-Ki-Jai. He thinks he is a great patriot. He does not possess any good qualities that make up a real patriot.'

Swamiji points out that advocates when they appear before a munsif or Magistrate or a High Cort Judge utter, 'Your Worship', 'Your Honour' and 'My Lord' respectively, but they never address these terms to the Lord who dwells in the chamber of their heart. If they do so, they will become 'hungerless and deathless'.

His poems on 'Vedantic Bomb', 'Vedantic Gazette', and 'Vedantic Passport' are interesting to read.

—N.R.,
Leader, Allahabad.

35. SCINTILLATIONS OF SIVANANDA'S WISDOM

WISDOM NECTAR :

THIS is a collection of pithy and witty epigrams that have fallen from the lips of of Swami Sivananda in his discourses to his disciples and they are very sage sayings indeed. They are sparks of wisdom or in the words of one of the titles of a chapter "priceless pearls from the ocean of wisdom."

Swami Sivananda who was originally a physician and went to Malaya to heal the bodies of men, returned to India and settled down in Rishikesh, Himalayas, became a Sannyasi.

—*Bharat Jyoti,*
Bombay.

36. COSMIC LOVE AND DEVOTION TO THE DIVINE

1. Love is the immediate way to Truth or the Kingdom of God or the vast domain of perennial peace and joy. Love is a mysterious divine glue that unites the hearts of all. Life without love is valueless. A life without love, faith, devotion is a dreary waste and real death.

2. Love is the greatest power of all powers. Love is a Divine Force. It is the only greatest power on earth. Love unites, redeems, and saves. It is absolutely free from selfishness. It never bargains nor expects anything. It flows spontaneously from a pure heart like the Ganges. It always gives and never takes anything.

3. There is no virtue higher than love; there is no treasure higher than love; there is no knowledge higher than love; there is no religion higher than love. Love is Truth and love is God Himself. Wherever there is love there is peace and wherever there is peace, there is love.

4. The only basis of true and lasting unity of all humanity is the religion of heart. The religion of heart is the religion of love. One can conquer this world even if he has a ray of pure love which is absolurely free from even a tinge of selfishness. Love is a divine magical healing balm of very high potency.

5. Love works no ill to his neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the Law. It is love alone that can conquer really the heart of a man. He who is endowed with pure love is the real emperor of the three worlds.

—*Sayings of Swami Sivanada,*
pp. 15-15.

37. SIVANANDA : HIS METHODS, HIS ACHIEVEMENTS, HIS GREATNESS

LIGHT DIVINE :

Sri Swami Sivananda, judged by his ideals, methods and achievements, is more than an individual; he is greater than an institution. He may be likened to a gorgeous river like the Ganges in floods, sweeping everything before it in a continuous process of endless purification. The

Swamiji has touched the hearts of millions of spiritual aspirants of the East and the West. Among the most effective means employed for this godly mission is Swamij's profilic writings on an amazing variety of spiritual subjects suited to aspirants of different stages, temperaments and stages in life.

Light Divine, the great book, under reference, contains a succinct dissertation on topics like God or Brahman, Guides on the Path, Discrimination, Psychology, Nishkama Karma, Bhakti Marga, Niyama, Dhyana, etc. Every one of these subjects is dealt with in a manner so simple and practical that even a neophyte will find them greatly useful and elevating. A few sketches on the life of the Swamiji have been appended as also reviews of a few of Swamiji's books, the thirteenth annual report of the Divine Life Society, etc. The book is indispensable for all aspirants on the spiritual path.

—*Champion*,
Calicut.

38. INDIAN TECHNIQUES OF SEX-SUBLIMATION

A Vedantin diverts his mind through the assertion :
"I am all-purity, I am sexless Atma, Om Om Om."
A Bhakta diverts his mind through Japa,
Kirtan, Service of Guru, Service in the Temple,
Study of Bhagavata, Ramayana, etc.
A Karma Yogi diverts the mind through selfless service.
He keeps his mind ever occupied
In some kind of useful service or other.
A Hatha Yogi converts the sex-energy
Through Asanas, Bandhas, Mudras and Pranayama.
A Raja Yogi diverts the sex-energy
Through Kriya Yoga and Dharana
And Pratipaksha Bhavana method.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Light Divine, pp. 113-114.

39. SIVANANDA'S DEFINITIONS OF TAPAS

That which purifes the impure mind is Tapas,
That which regenerates the lower animal nature
And generates divine nature is Tapas.
That which cleanses the mind
And destroys lust, anger, greed, etc., is Tapas.
That which produces Brahma Tejas
And destroys Asuric or diabolical nature is Tapas
That which destroys Tamas and Rajas
And increases Sattwa is Tapas.
That which steadies the mind,
And fixes it on the Eternal is Tapas.
That which arrests the outgoing tendencies,
Extroversion or Bahirmukha Vritti,
And produces introversion or Antarmukha Vritti is Tapas.
That which destroys Vasans, egoism, Raga-Dwesha,

And generates dispassion, discrimination and meditation is Tapas.
Tapas is spiritual discipline, Yogabhyasa or Brahmabhyasa, Brahma Chintan, worship, Sadhana and meditation.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Light Divine, pp. 128-129.

40. SIVANANDA'S VOICE OF INTENSE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

TELEGRAPHIC TEACHINGS :

ARE you so busy, you never have time to read a real book, and do you make this business an excuse ? Then there is here something for you. Sri Swami Sivananda has put the profoundest teaching of the Vedanta into telegrams. You cannot say you are so pressed for time that you cannot read a telegram !

This little book is made of actual telegrams sent by the Teacher to all kinds of people, from Pandit Nehru and President Eisenhower to unnamed disciples. The electrons in the copper wires have never before carried such message. And all have been sent because the telegraph was installed at Sivananda Nagar Post Office in 1956. The first message along the wire was to the Director of Posts and Telegraphs at New Delhi, and ran : "By your grace, Sivananda Nagar has direct telegraph facilities. Greatful thanks. In the Satchidananda a telegraphic vibration arose. It was OM. It set Nature in motion. World was created. Chant OM. Meditate on OM. Merge in OM. Realise Satchidananda Atma. Enjoy perennial peace, immortal bliss. God bless you with health, long life, peace, prosperity and Kaivalya Moksha."

The items are well-arranged in six groups under the headings : Secret of Sadhana ; Essence of Yoga ; Light of Truth ; Essence of Vedanta ; Cream of Divine Life ; and Pearls of Wisdom.

What an arrow of truth is the telegram to Countess Mountbatten : "The thought you hold will materialise in your life. If you are courageous, cheerful, compassionate, tolerant and kind, these qualities will manifest in your physical life. God bless you and Lord Mountbatten."

No one can peruse this booklet without feeling the spiritual experience and intensity behind the framing of these highly concentrated messages. As for example, "This body is a bubble. It is like lightning. This world is a play for two days. It lasts today. It continues tomorrow. No more. No more. Awake. Awake. Seek the Eternal Rest in thy Satchidananda Atma."

—C. Nelson Steward,
East and West, Cornwall, England

41. GOD AS LIFE, GUIDE AND GOAL

Revered Catchpool,
New Delhi.

GOD is the only Reality. God is the designer and architect of the world. God is your sheet-anchor. God is the sustainer of the world. God is immanent and transcendent. God is the way, the source, the goal, the Truth and the life. Take refuge in God and His Name. God bless you.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Telegraphic Teachings, pp. 103.

42. SIVANANDA'S POSITIVE CONCEPTION OF MOKSHA

C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar,
Vice-Chancellor,
Banaras Hindu University.

MOKSHA is *summum bonum* of life, freedom from birth and death. It is not annihilation of self but of the little 'I'. It is obtained through Knowledge of the Self through direct intuitive experience. Cut asunder the veil of ignorance by meditation on Brahman. You will shine in your pristine purity and divine glory. Your superhuman achievements have earned immortal glory for you. God bless you with health, long life, Self-realization.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Telegraphic Teachings, pp. 27.

43. A SYMPOSIUM OF SIVANANDA'S INSPIRING SAYINGS

WISDOM OF SIVA :

THIS is a symposium of light-giving sayings and teachings of Swami Sivananda. It contains choice and pithy instructions and sayings of deep wisdom and great practical value. Besides, it also gives a number of pen-portraits of Swamiji written by a great number of his devotees abroad and at home.

—*Organiser*,
Delhi.

WISDOM OF SIVA :

A symposium of the sayings and teachings of Swami Sivananda, this book will prove a guide to aspirants who can turn to it for help whenever they find themselves at the cross-roads in their march through life.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

44. BHAVA AS THE BASIS OF RASA

1. BHAVA is the main basis of Rasa. Bhava is a mental state. Bhava is a higher divine emotion.

2. A Bhakti-yogi through the intensity of heart's love and emotion adores the divine as a child, as a father, a mother, a friend, a master, or the beloved.

3. According to the Vaishnavas of Sri Chaitanya school of Bengal the Bhakta must develop the same feeling towards God as a female lover has towards her beloved (Madhurya Bhav). This feeling proceeds from the inner delight of the soul and is natural.

4. When Rati deepens and intensifies, it is called Sthayi Bhava. The essence of Bhava is pure Sattva. Bhava ushers in Prem. When Rati or Bhava in its advanced stage, softens the mind remarkably, when it is deepened in intensity, when the lover is very closely attached to Lord Krishna, it is called Prem.

5. So long as one is liable to come under the influence of lust, there is no hope of

cultivating the Gopi Bhava or Madhurya Bhava.

6. Arjuna, Uddhava, Sanjaya, Sridama and Sudama had Sakhya Bhava with the Lord.

7. From the sprout of love (Prem) spring Rati and Bhava.

8. The highest pitch or acme or consummation of Bhava is Mahabhava.

9. The best devotees of Madhurya-rasa are the Gopis or cowherdmaids of Vraja. But the Madhurya Rasa reached its climax in Sri Radha who was an embodiment of Maha-bhav.

10. Sthayi Bhava is the mainstay of Rasa. When Rati (attachment begotten of Bhakti Sadhana) for Lord Krishna is deepened and intensified, it is called Prem or the Sthayi Bhava, permanent form of Bhakti Rasa.

11. The relish of permanent joy that characterises the divine ecstatic state is called Rasa. Upanishads describe Brahman as Rasa. *Raso Vai Sah Rasam Hyeva Ayam Labdhwa Anandi Bhavati.*

12. Rati, according to the natural inclination of Bhaktas, is of five kinds, viz., (a) Santa-rati, (b) Dasya-rati (c) Sakhya-rati (d) Vatsalya-rati and (e) Madhurya-rati. They bless the different kinds of Bhakta and captivate Krishna.

13. In the Santa Rasa, Rati advances to the stage of Prem ; in the Dasya Bhava to Rag ; Sakhya and Vatsalya to Anurag.

14. Just as the qualities of ether, air, fire and water are found in earth, so also all sentiments are found in their aggregation in the Madhurya Rasa, the culmination of Bbakti.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Wisdom of Siva pp. 85-87.

45. ECSTATIC SIVANANDA SHARES HIS JOY

WISDOM IN HUMOUR :

IN this volume, besides sharing with the seeker his knowledge, Swamiji shares his joy too. One can learn the abstract truths of Yoga and Vedanta, this easy way.

The wisdom is laid out in unique form of blank verse, in this book. It contains a special message to India—that of unity and spirituality—unity without which she will be ineffectual and spirituality without which she will be useless to the world. India was great when she was free, united and spiritual. When she became disunited, she lost both her freedom and spirituality.

Swami Sivananda preaches the Yoga of synthesis and the need to pass on from creed, ritual and mythology to the realisation of God in our hearts and to the service of humanity.

—*Careers and Courses,*
New Delhi.

46. REMOVE THE DIRT FROM THE MIND-RADIO

A new Radio is fixed.
All its parts are quite all right.
But the message is not received.
This is due to a particle of dirt in it.

If the dirt is removed,
All the messages and songs will be heard distinctly.
Even so, on the big radio of the mind.
If there is dirt or bad character or evil quality,
It cannot express true joy, bliss, love.
The spirit of self-sacrifice, the aroma of truth.
Remove the dirt of evil traits.
Fill the mind with divine virtues ;
You will shine with Brahmic aura.
You will shed the light of Self-illumination.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Wisdom In Humour, pp. 100.

47. SPIRITUAL WISDOM AS THE FOUNDATION OF HUMAN HAPPINESS

TREASURE OF TEACHINGS :

SPIRITUALITY is a desideratum of the modern world and thanks to these publishers for filling up the lacuna in the modern world by such publications as this. It is sure to help many eager men and women in their path towards peace and progress. The book is divided into eighteen chapters each of which has a catching title and the central theme of them all is wisdom of the Spirit and the fulfilment of happiness as expounded by Swami Sivananda of Himalayas.

—*Wednesday Review*,
Tiruchirapalli.

48. THE SUPER-CONSCIOUS STATE

MR. Williams,

Samadhi is super-conscious state. The state of Samadhi is beyond description. There is no means or language to give expression to it.

Even in worldly experience you cannot express the taste of apple to one who has not tasted it, and the nature of the colour to a blind man.

The state is all bliss, joy and peace. This much only can be said. You will have to realise or feel this yourself through intuitive experience.

May you attain this state.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Treasure of Teachings, pp. 34.

49. THE THREE-FOLD AIM OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

WISDOM OF SIVA :

THIS is a volume published in commemoration of the 65th birthday celebrations of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, Founder of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University which is working in collaboration with the Divine Life Society and other institutions. They all have for their aim the physical well-being, mental illumination and spiritual elevation of mankind at large and, as such, their message has a very special value.

The opening part of the book contains pen-portraits of Swamiji by well-known men and women from all over the world. They indicate the great popularity of Swamiji's teachings and are a glowing tribute to his life-long work and service all devoted to the betterment of mankind.

The rest of the book is divided into two parts. Here are given numerous thoughts and things, under different subjects, which appeal unfailingly both to the mind and the spirit. Those who have read *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius or *Teachings of Epictetus* will find in *Wisdom of Siva* something new to ponder over, and meditate upon, every conceivable subject and for every occasion. It is a precious book for developing self-culture and self-discipline and is truly dedicated to the seekers of Truth, to everyone, everywhere.

—*India International*,
Bombay 14.

50. THE IDEALS THAT GOVERN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

TELEGRAPHIC TEACHINGS :

THIS book contains 183 telegrams set out by Swami Sivananda on the occasion of the opening of the telegraph booking at the Sivananda Nagar Post Office.

These telegrams addressed to various personages in India including the President, the First Lady in India, the Prime Minister, Governors, and his disciples in India, and abroad, breathe the spirit of service, love and devotion that characterise all his teachings.

—*Searchlight*,
Patna.

51. THE TRIPLE WITHDRAWAL

First withdraw the senses from the objects,
Then withdraw the mind from the senses
Through dispassion, discrimination and practice.
Then withdraw the mind from the Prana
By practising Kumbhak or retention of breath.
Now plunge yourself in Brahman or the Absolute
By withdrawing all the Vrittis or thoughts,
Just as the Sun plunges in the horizon in the evening
By withdrawing its rays.
Practise these again and again.
Practise eternal vigilance, Vichara, determination and resolution.
Now Nirvikalpa Samadhi will supervene
You will realise your Satchidananda Swaroopa.
You will be freed from the cycle of births and deaths.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Light Divine, pp. 142.

52. THE GREAT LIGHT AND WONDER THAT SIVANANDA IS

HEART OF SIVANANDA

WORLD PEACE :

WE are agreeably surprised to find that Sri Sivananda, the great sage of Rishikesh is not one of them, i.e. the advocates of modernism. Thus we find that he advocates Brahmacharya—not birth-control for controlling population growth. He says, 'There is one Dharma—Sanatana Dharma.' We are therefore happy to find Sri Sivananda is not one of those worshippers of modernism but a prophet of Dharma in its truest sense.

We find on the cover of his book the following description :

"Sri Swami Sivananda—Born on the 8th September, 1887, in the illustrious family of Sage Appayya Deekshita and several other renowned saints and savants. Sri Swami Sivananda had a natural flair for a life-devoted to the study and practice of Vedanta. Added to this was an inborn eagerness to serve all and innate feeling of unity with all mankind. Though born in an orthodox family, Swamiji was broadminded and catholic, pious and devout.

"His passion for service drew him to the medical career ; and soon he gravitated to those parts of the world which most needed his service. Malaya claimed him. He had also commenced editing a Health Journal and wrote extensively on health problems. He discovered that people needed right knowledge most of all dissemination of that knowledge he espoused as his own mission.

It was divine dispensation and the blessing of God upon mankind that this doctor of body and mind, renounced his career and took to a life of renunciation to qualify himself for ministering to the soul of man. He settled down at Rishikesh in 1924, practised intense austerities and shone as great Yogi, saint, sage and Jivanmukta.

"In 1932 he started the Sivananda Ashram. In 1936 was born the Divine Life Society. In 1948 the Yoga Vedanta Forest University was orgainsed. Dissemination of spiritual knowledge and training of people in Yoga and Vedanta were their aim and object. In 1950, he undertook a lightning tour of India. In 1953, he convened the World Parliament of Religions. He is the author of over 200 volumes and has disciples all over the world, belonging to all nationalities, religions and creeds. To read his works is to drink at the Fountain of Wisdom Supreme and grow spiritually to be immortal and eternally peaceful and blissful."

The description of Swami Sivananda is more than amply corroborated by what we find in his books. Tributes from his disciples form a fitting introduction to the books.

Where each line breathes wisdom, it is difficult to select excerpts and there is no doubt that it would detract considerably from its value if a line or two were taken out from its setting.

It is indeed a great personality who now sits in his home in the hills, and India will have causes for regret if such a personality is not properly honoured and recognised. We take the liberty of taking a few excerpts from the book WORLD PEACE, page 52 :

"The world is impermanent. Man's life here is still more fleeting. Even a thousand years is nothing compared to eternity, what to say of even a full life-span of hundred years. People are merely wasting their life in worthless pursuits of political and social reform. Days, months and years are quietly slipping away. Death will snatch them away unawares. Beware. Reform yourself. Society will reform itself. Get worldliness out of your mind, the world will be peaceful. That is the only solution."

What a beautiful advice. If only our reformers had a fraction of the wisdom, if not sense, displayed in these few lines.

We close with some quotations from both the books :

"There is only one language, the language of the heart. There is only one Dharma, viz., Sanatana Dharma. There is only one law, the law of cause and effect. There is only one religion, the religion of love or the religion of Vedanta. There is only one Sun, one Moon, one Akasha, one Brahman, one Purushottama and one Chaitanya. Feel the oneness everywhere. Realise the Satchidananda Atma, the common thread of consciousness that links all these names and forms. All diversities, all differences, all qualities, which are Mayaic or mental creations will now totally vanish."

"Pleasure and pain art not two entities by themselves. They are obverse and reverse sides of the same coin. The difference is not in kind, but in degree. They are a pair of opposites. Both pleasure and pain are objective. Both of them mentally converted by the change in your Bhavana or mental attitude or imagination. Many vegetarian students who have gone to other countries to prosecute their studies have become inveterate meat eaters. Meat was repulsive to them when they were at their original homes. Mere sight of meat used to induce vomiting. How is it that they are able to relish meat with avidity, cupidity and stupidity now ? All these take place by simple change in the attitude of thinking."

1. God plus desire is man. Man minus desire is God.

2. Man is the greatest miracle on this earth.

3. Man is tripartite. He is composed of body, mind and soul.

4. All being God's children, are brothers and sisters.

5. This body is the means of attaining the supreme good or Self-realisation.

6. Just as man lays aside the overcoat, so also he lays aside the physical body at death.

7. Death does not mean total annihilation. Death is only change.

8. Death does not end the chain of sequence.

9. The working agent, the soul in the body does not, cannot die with the body.

It seems invidious to pick out a few gems from the ocean of wisdom, but the few we have picked up will show the quality of the books and of the man. Our readers will find that these books will repay perusal a thousand times. They are the product of a great mind.

We pray that such a Light may be with us for many years to come to illuminate the darkness of modern time.

—*The Truth*,
Calcutta.

53. A GLOSSARY OF SPIRITUAL TECHNICALITIES

WISDOM OF SIVA : AMRIT GITA

THESE are a nice production of their kind in English, on Saint-Mat, in which the learned author has very elaborately touched upon the various aspects of the cult of Saints. One who reads the book to acquire knowledge of the technicalities of the Saint-Mat. It is a complete glossary of spiritual technicalities used in parlance of Sufis as *Ilmae Senna* and of saints as *Antari-Gyan*. The contents are free from bias and can be usefully read by men of all religions. True to say, Sivananda has put the English-knowing public under a deep debt of gratitude. We wish these books could be translated into Hindi also.

—*Tha Awaza-I-Khalak*,
Varanasi.

54. GOD AS THE ALL-PERVADING AND INDWELLING PRESENCE

1. THE Director of that mind, intellect and the senses, is no other than the all-merciful Lord, your inner ruler, Antaryamin. Know Him and be free.

2. God is all-full. He is self-contained. He is eternal satisfaction.

3. God pervades the entire universe. He is the Soul of this world (Viswa Atma).

4. God is the indweller of your heart. He watches all your thoughts. Therefore, you cannot deceive Him.

5. God is the breath in your nose. He is the Light in your eyes. God is the root of all joy, strength, peace and bliss.

6. Power, beauty, fame, prosperity, strength, fortitude, etc., are manifestations of the Lord.

7. God is not a dictator. He is not an autocratic ruler of this world. He is your loving father, kind mother and Immortal friend.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Voice of the Himalayas,
p.p. 48.

55. SIVANANDA'S EXPANDING DIVINE DYNAMISM

VOICE OF THE HIMALAYAS :

THE climber of Mount Everest, Tensing Norvey, was and is bound to be ever applauded for his grit to encounter physically the snow-capped peak, the topmost one that man has discovered, but the Mount Meru of Divine glory is within the ambit of only sublime souls like that of our renowned Swami Sivananda of Himalayan fame. He alone is gifted uniquely to transcend all human limits and transmit to the eager aspirants, divine joy and the radiance of peace and bliss. Swami Sivananda is incessantly active and blesses people with books by the hundreds.

—*The Wednesday Review*,
Tiruchirapalli.

56. SAINTS : THEIR MISSION AMONG MANKIND

1. A SAINT is a source of perpetual inspiration. He prevents many a ship-wreck in the lives of many human beings.

2. A Sage or Yogi is the master-adept or real hero who has achieved the impossible. A sage is the salt which preserves the society from decay and degeneration.

3. Have the company of saints who will heal your sores, infuse new life into you, rejuvenate you and show you the way to Peace and Happiness.

4. It is very difficult to get Satsanga or association with the wise. Satsanga or association with the wise is the one penacea for all the ills of life.

5. He is blessed who has the opportunity of serving saints and the Divine Cause. A realised sage or saint is a fountain of delight, joy and illumination. Seek his company and evolve. Serve him with faith and devotion.

6. A Sage is the torch-bearer of wisdom: He is the beacon-light or light-house that guides humanity in the dark ocean of Samsara.

7. God is the great purifier. A saint also is a great purifier. God incarnates as saints and sages when their need is felt most.

8. Divine grace works through the saints. Lives of saints are the compass needles on your voyage to Moksha. Follow the teachings of Saints and Sages, the Perfected Beings, the seers of Truth. Attune yourself with their Spirit.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Voice of the Himalayas,
pp. 189-191.

57. SIVANANDA ON THE CULTURE HE VOICES AND THE MEN OF GOD HE REPRESENTS

13. Numerous persons are turning from a war-torn and sullied atmosphere to India and her ancient, divine Wisdom which is found in the Gita, the Upanishads and in the Advaita Vedanta philosophy.

14. India alone can lead the world towards a better understanding, harmony, fraternity and peace.

15. Indian culture shows the way to the unity of mankind, and universal peace and good-will.

16. India will always lead the world in spirituality. She does not stand in any need of spiritual enlightenment from others.

17. India's contribution to the world can always be through spiritual means.

18. Sages of India are the torch-bearers of good-will, harmony, peace and unselfish love.

19. The spiritual leadership of India will be accepted only when there are economic independence, material prosperity, and social and religious equality in this country.

20. The cultural integration of the masses makes a nation great.

21. Culture attains a new fragrance through the practice of Yoga.

22. Real culture is the attainment of Self-realisation.

23. India's strength depends on the spiritual regeneration of her people.

24. Glory to India that has preserved in her bosom the message of Dharma, renunciation, selfless service, and universal Love !

25. India will not be able to rival the West in physical science, but in the spiritual field she will certainly be unparalleled.

26. Nothing can surpass the Upanishads in their depth of wisdom and message of peace.

27. Upanishads constitute the central basis of Hindu religion and philosophy.

28. The main glory of India is in her Rishis and Seers.

29. Sri Shankara, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Madhwa, Sri Vallabha and Sri Nimbarka, among others, have greatly contributed to the progress of human thought.

30. The spiritual literature of India, given by her Rishis, will ever continue to retain their infinite brilliance through ages to come.

31. The Indian Rishis of yore rejoiced in spiritual wisdom, communed with God, and enlightened the world with divine knowledge.

—*Voice of Sivananda*,
pp. 21-23.

CHAPTER TWO

SIVANANDA'S STORIES : PHILOSOPHICAL, ILLUMINATING AND DIVINE

GOD-INTOXICATED SIVANANDA : HIS STORIES AS POWERFUL AGENCIES FOR THE TRANSMISSION OF SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Aureate with the Wisdom of the Divine, overflowing with the life of the Godhead, engrossed in the most radiant activities directed to render real to our spiritual sensibilities and susceptibilities, to our thought, feeling, experience, the living Power Goodness and Beauty of the omnipresent Reality, Sivananda has for his central divine Mission, the distinctive characteristic of an all-absorbing divine enthusiasm for disseminating ideas that illuminate our minds and resolve the riddles of our limited life, thoughts that engage the activity of the very best powers of our discrimination, reflection, and awareness, thoughts that arouse in us spiritual resolves to be as perfect in every phase and aspect of our Nature and Life as he is, as Great in the acts of Service and Grace as he is, as illimitable in inner freedom and joy as he is. Therefore, with Sivananda, stories are not vehicles that convey amusement, nor means that exert some sort of persuasion or afford some kind of relaxation, but are powerful agencies for arousing in the reader a luminous spiritual awareness, for transmitting such instruction as would familiarise them with the greatest values which we associate with the phenomenon of the spiritual experience and realisation, and that is precisely the reason why we are bound to find in each story that his inspired pen limns, nothing of the kind of amusement which the common psychology of normal humanity would universally look for, nothing of the exquisite expression of literary artistry which some lovers of literature are bound to look for, but a content which is primarily philosophical, an intent which has for its aim the illumination of our life, a purpose which seeks to divinise the whole of our existence.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

SIVANANDA'S STORIES : PHILOSOPHICAL ILLUMINATING & DIVINE

1. SIVANANDA'S GRAND STYLE AND GRANDER THOUGHT

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

THE book throws a flood of light on the ancient Puranas and in the present day such philosophical treatises are a necessity. The book is a veritable mine of treasures and it is invaluable to students and teachers of philosophy. It will also enable the ordinary layman to have a clear grasp of the realities of life. The author in this book dispels the false notion of the present-day politicians that "might is right".

The introduction that covers the first 18 pages is very admirable and instructive. It is a harmonious blending of the Bible, the Quoran and the Gita. These words from the Gita "that pleasures which arise from the contact of the sense-organ with the object is at first like nectar, but in the end is like poison", if properly understood and followed, would certainly change the course of events of the world. Yet the author only demands a mild middle course. He says "Extreme asceticism and self-torture are not essential for the attainment of the Self." Jivanmukti should be the aim of everybody, and then none will be attracted to any worldly object.

The short stories that cover the remaining pages are really useful and valuable. It is indeed a golden chain and some of the stories that shine like diamonds increase the brightness of the pages. It appeals to the young and the old alike. The different stories aptly demonstrate the various virtues of mankind. These happy illustrations are also linked with very instructive advices. The author is vehement against the hypocrites and false prophets. He advises everybody to develop the love for God. He says "Love is a mighty force. Love transforms. Love redeems. Love confers immortality and Eternal Bliss". Suffice it to say that it is impossible to illustrate the cardinal virtues in a better way than this.

Regarding the style, I shall merely echo the opinion of Mr. Vijai Raghavachariar that it is "written in such a simple, elegant, and beautiful style with a vividness of expression, lucidity and a mastery of details."

—K.C.C., *Leader*,
Allahabad.

2. TUKARAM AND THE TRANSCENDENCE OF BODY-CONSCIOUSNESS

SIVAJI Kansari, a brazier, had intense devotion for the saint Tukaram. He used to do Kirtan with Tukaram. Whenever Tukaram visited his place he would close his shop and attend his Sat-sang. He served the saint with immense faith and devotion. The wife of Sivaji Kansari did not like the ways of her husband. She got enraged at the Saint as he was the cause of her husband's change of mind. She did some mischief one day. She said to Tukaram : "O Saint, today the weather is very chilly. Take hot water bath. I shall prepare it for you." The saint consented. The brazier's

wife asked the saint to sit down on a plank and poured boiling water on his head. Blisters appeared on the body of Tukaram. The saint kept quiet. His mind remianed quite unruffled. He did not speak a word. On the contrary he blessed the woman. As his mind was ever fixed at the lotus-feet of Lord Krishna, he did not feel any pain at all. The woman was quite stunned when she found that the saint was not a bit affected even though blisters formed on his body. Her nature was suddenly changed. She repented very much for her wrong action. She prostrated before the saint and said: "O venerable saint, pardon me for my cruel action. Through thy Grace my mind is entirely changed now. I am quite a different woman now. I have a soft heart now. Allow me and my husband to serve you and remain in thy blessed company." The brazier and his wife joined the band of Tukaram's most faithful followers.

Saints and sages are above body-consciousness. They have conquered the pairs of opposites, pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour, respect and disrespect, praise and censure, heat and cold, by annihilating the mind and ever dwelling in the Lord. They always return good for evil, bless the man who persecutes, pray for the man who injures. They are an embodiment of mercy and love. Even a moment's company is a blessing for the worldly man. It will produce a radical change in his nature. The benefits of Sat-sang cannot adequately be described in words. The glory of a saint or a sage or a Yogi is ineffable.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophical Stories, pp. 35-36.

3. SIVANANDA'S MORAL TALES AS LITERATURE

DIVINE STORIES :

DIVINE Stories contains 34 short stories, illustrative of highly religious, moral and philosophical doctrines and truths, told in an entertaining and engaging manner. Like the Maharshis of old, who have narrated several interesting stories to Yudhishthira, at the time of his exile, Swami Sivananda has narrated stories, each of which contains a very valuable and salutary lesson, a moral truth, a spiritual precept.

As literature, Swami Sivananda's moral tales would rank indeed very high, and these would forthwith demonstrate that Swamiji's Forest University is really achieving more in educating people and directing them along right pathway to reality and higher life than many of the modern chartered universities, shining in pretentious blocks of cement and concrete known by the grandiose appellation of "Research Institutes" and "Departmental Buildings."

—Dr. R. Nagaraja Sharma,
M.A., Ph.D.,
Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

4. THE WEARY FOX AND THE CONCEITS IN HUMAN IMAGINATION

A GUN-SHOT resounded in the forest.

A hunter with his shot-gun was aiming at a tiger. The roaring of the tiger and the

noise of the shooting rent the air. All the animals in the forest got terribly frightened. They ran hither and thither and hid themselves in bushes.

One fox began to run at tremendous speed. It ran and ran, till it reached the outskirts of the forest, after madly coursing through the entire forest. For hours together it had been running like this.

On the outskirts of the forest, the fox was met by the hunter who was amused at the sight. The fox rested for a while there, completely exhausted with fatigue. The hunter asked: "O Fox! Why have you been running like this?" The fox did not recognise the hunter. "Oh, Sir! There came a hunter to the forest. He began to shoot the tigers. I thought he might mistake me for a little tiger and shoot me also. Therefore, I ran for life! I am now greatly fatigued. Kindly give me something to eat."

The hunter gave a hearty laugh. "You poor thing! You thought I will mistake you for a small tiger? What a vain imagination has caused you all this worry and trouble! I pity you." He then gave it some meat to eat.

Even so is the case with our mind. Imagination works havoc with man. Where there is nothing, he imagines a snake. Every moment the mind spins newer and newer imaginations. These imaginations trouble and worry man. Almost always these imaginations prove baseless and unnecessary. Oh man! Cease this wasting evil. Give up this trait at once. And, you will ever be happy.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Stories, pp. 109-110.

5. THE ROLE OF SIVANANDA'S STORIES OF VISION AND MEANING IN THE REORIENTATION OF THE PRESENT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES:

THE book "Philosophical Stories", is a collection of very illuminating stories. These stories are eminently good to pass our time: but, more than that, they teach us a lot. The Swami has that idea of making education interesting and that is a great idea. Many of us do not know our religious truths: many of us do not know so many things of life that matter, in spite of our materialistic education. This is a sad story for the present as well as for the future. We want culture. But what is culture? Does it consist in mere intellectual attainments? Is it merely a materialistic performance and discipline? It is all these and more than all in one. Culture should signify comprehensive perfection, perfection in all walks of life. So we need to know all those things—all those religious and ethical truths, so beautifully communicated in these strong stories of vision, meaning and spontaneity. That idea of culture you can form by reading these stories.

And this message is communicated to all joyously. I wish our education, as implied in these stories, could be both instructive and interesting. One thing will do this, provided our teachers are real teachers. Let them have limited course to do. At present there are so many things to be taught. Perhaps, the aim is to drill the

mind of the pupil in so many things just for the sake of examination. This is very disappointing and not in our interest. No progress is possible under the present system of education in which there is over-emphasis on courses and examination. What we need is culture or training and not the fund of information, all ill-digested or not at all digested, just committed to memory without intelligently understanding the thing. Is this to be educated? Will such an education lead us to our goal of real and lasting freedom? Will this education, as given at the moment, elevate us? Will it console us? Will it enable us to express the divinity in us through our words, deeds and thoughts?

—Prof. B.S. Mathur,
Education,
Lucknow.

6 SIVANANDA'S REASONS FOR WRITING STORIES

THERE is something peculiarly charming in stories. The mind is elevated when it hears soul-stirring stories with morals. Is there any man or woman or child who is not interested in listening to a good story? Panchatantra, Mahabharata, Hitopadesa and Puranas contain wonderful stories. Hindu Rishis, seers and sages have taught philosophy through stories, anecdotes and parables. They used stories as the medium of spiritual instructions.

A lecturer or a Bhagavatar or Katha-Vachak aslo introduces stories during his exposition. Only then the discourse becomes very interesting and charming. Only then people listen to their discourses with rapt attention. The ideas also are indelibly impressed in the mind when they are given along with instructive stories. Even Upanishads contain stories. Stories of Uddalaka and Swetaketu, Nachiketas and Yama, Uma and Indra, Bhrigu and Varuna, Maitreyi and Yajnavalkya, Gautama and Satyakama Jabala, are well-known to you all. The highest Vedantic philosophy is narrated in the form of stories.

There is nothing more interesting to a child than stories. So also to a spiritual child moral and divine stories are like drops of nectar to appease his spiritual hunger and thirst. Only the so-called rational minded men of the modern world have an aversion to stories. They brush aside everything as myth and bunkum; they want scientific proofs. Even when a scientific discovery is explained to another person it assumes the form of a story.

Knowledge enters your heart through stories. Life is a long story; it teaches you lessons. History teaches you lessons. Therefore, our ancestors adopted the simple story-telling method of imparting knowledge. You learn quickly; and the lesson stays in the heart for long. Every story has a moral. When you joyously read a story, its moral silently enters your heart. Your character is moulded. Avoid the blunders that led others into trouble and ruin. Emulate the example of the great ones. You will easily shine as a Superman. Stories of blunderers tell you what not to do; stories of great ones tell you what to do. Armed with this knowledge, march on, brave hero, to your great goal. You must become divine. May God bless you!

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Stories,
pp. 40-42, ii.

7. MOHA OR INFATUATED LO

MOHAN loved his wife Savitri passionately. Savitri was a very beautiful woman. She had great devotion for the Lord. She had studied Vedantic literature also. She had discrimination, dispassion. She was practising meditation daily. One day Mohan told his wife Savitri that it was his prayer that after his death he may be for ever in her company, whether it be in heaven or hell. Savitri asked her husband, "My Lord, what is there in me that makes you desire my company always ?" Mohan answered : "Your beautiful face, affection, your treatment, your sweet smile, your curly hair, your rosy cheeks and scarlet lips, your gait, your gestures, your piercing glances, your melodious voice, your songs, all these fascinate me."

Savitri then asked : "Suppose I lose my colour on account of aneamia, I get pits on my face on account of small-pox, I get eruptions all over my body, I get bald-head and all hairs fall down, I give you a little harsh treatment, I begin to love somebody else, would you still wish to remain in my company ?" Mohan was bewildered and stunned.

Savitri said : "O Your love is only Moha or infatuation or passion for body. It is not real love. It cannot last for ever. There is an immortal Self or Atman within the hearts of all beings. It is the fountain-source of all beauties. It is the beauty of beauties. You will have to realise this Atman through purification and meditation. Then only will your love last for ever. Give up this passion for my body. Turn your mind inwards. Dive deep into the recesses of your heart and behold the splendour of Atman." Mohan came to his senses. He prostrated before his wife and took her as his Guru. He plunged himself in spiritual Sadhana and attained Self-realisation.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophical Stories,
pp. 51-52.

8. SIVANANDA : HIS UNIQUE MANNER OF EXPRESSION AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO CULTURAL PROGRESS

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

PUBLISHED in the Sivananda Diamond Jubilee Series, Number Eight—this is another of the invaluble books written by the great author. It contains about eight stories assorted under different sections, each with definite morals and ideals calculated to foster spiritual living and thinking. As the Swamiji says, in the foreward, the more popular method of giving spiritual instructions to aspirants is by giving them descriptive incidents and examples showing the lessons to be derived from them. The book is certain to achieve this noble object—for, the subject-matter, the style and the manner of expression contain the unique distinction of the seer and saint seeking to render a great service. The numerous problems of life are treated and solved through these transforming narratives for the all-round and permanent benefit of the reader. It is agreed on all

hands that the great and the only real objective of human evolution is Self-realisation. Amidst all the 'joys' and 'sorrows', all sins and charity, that objective is steadily working itself up, but man is oblivious of it because of the wrong ideals and aims which surround him in the unreal and deceptive world of Maya. To transcend the evil atmosphere and perceive the Light is a great albeit strenuous task. It requires bodily, mental and intellectual discipline under capable leadership. Ethical and spiritual lessons of the right sort can alone lead us on the Path. Swami Sivananda's writings provide the aspirant a safe ladder to climb the heights of peace and bliss. The "Illuminating Stories" are calculated to steady the mind and intellect by instilling healthy thoughts and feelings. As the publishers rightly say, "in a pleasant almost imperceptible way they light the flame in the mind of the reader, impart true knowledge and pure spirituality in him." The book is specially suited for study in schools and colleges. Any new orientation in educational reform in India cannot fail to take advantage of such excellent books written by a great saint and containing eternal lessons for the mental and cultural progress of all.

—*Champion*,
Calcutta.

9. SIVANANDA, A GREAT DYNAMO OF SPIRITUAL ENERGY

ILLUMINATING STORIES:

SWAMI Sivananda of Rishikesh is a veritable dynamo of spiritual energy. He does not hide his light under a bushel but spends his vast store of physical energy and spiritual illumination in spreading light and life around him. The number of books he writes, the articles he contributes to all the religious magazines of the country and the propaganda he is carrying on in various ways, all these prove his great love for the masses and his ardent desire to see them uplifted. He is not a fanatic but a remarkable student of all religions. He finds many good things in other religions though he remains a staunch Hindu. The book under review contains a number of stories selected from sacred books of all religions. It is didactic and each story is expected to teach us a particular lesson. The stories are arranged under different classes each having a comman aim. For example, stories that glorify the Lord, stories that lay emphasis upon Guru Bhakti, and on the nature of the Mind. They are taken from the Puranas and other sources and form an inexhaustible source of light and inspiration.

Teachers who want to inculcate into the minds of their students, the fundamental ethical principles and religious truths common to all historical religions, will find this book a great help.

—*Federated India*,
Madras.

10. THE TWO YOUNG YOGIS

IN days long gone by two Yogis, Ram and Sham lived in the Vasishta Guha, Himalayas, fourteen miles from Rishikesh. They discussed together how they could make themselves

more comfortable, for near their cave there were many angular pieces of stones and thorns which cut their feet. Ram said : "Look here Sham ! I shall suggest you a new plan to obviate this trouble. I thought over the matter very seriously last night. We shall kill 100 bulls, tan their hides and spread them over the ground as a nice carpet. What do you think of my plan ?" Sham considered this for a month. Then he said, "Dear Ram ! I have a better plan. This is quite easy too. I am quite sure you will like it immensely. Let us kill only one bull and make 2 pairs of shoes. Let us use these shoes. Whenever we walk, there will be a carpet below us. Don't you like my plan ?" Ram replied : "Hurrah ! This is indeed a better plan, Sham. Thank you very much indeed for your timely wise suggestion. I think you have got a better brain than mine. Let us adopt this plan immediately." They at once killed a bull and prepared two pairs of shoes. They led a comfortable life.

These two were the first Yogis of Himalayas. There is not much difference between one place and another, one woman and another, one Guru and another. The differences are due to the veils of Maya. Ignorant people cling to the objects. But when you are strong enough to break the attachments, you will conquer Maya and you will enjoy supreme peace in whatever conditions you are placed.

Man carries his own thoughts and Samskaras wherever he goes. If a man with undisciplined mind remains in the cave of the Himalayas, he will be building castles in the air. He will not be benefited by solitude and seclusion. The desire for comfort is ingrained in the mind. Though the two Yogis renounced the world, yet they wanted comforts while they remained in the caves. The idea of comfort must entirely die. Wherever there is the idea of comfort, there is Dehadhyasa or attachment for the physical body. Kill this idea of comfort and Dehadhyasa and identify yourself with the Supreme Soul or Paramatma and enjoy eternal Bliss or Kaivalya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophical Stories,
pp. 86-88.

11. BEREFT OF LITERARY EMBELLISHMENTS, SIVANANDA'S DELIGHTFUL STORIES TRANSFORM LIFE

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

THE title is an ample indication of the substance in the book. The Swami has one theme and that is a good and virtuous life, religious in the true sense, capable of leading one to unending joy and satisfaction in the world. The stories are really interesting and instructive. Everything is crystal clear and impressive, The Swami has not tried to be artful or artistic. But there is a grandeur of thought and simplicity which cannot fail in their effect. Misery-stricken people need this food ; it will transform and brighten up their life and experience. What more do you want ? You have something to pass your time delightfully and you have something that will enlighten you without taxing you.

—*The New Democrat*,
Bombay.

12. FORBEARANCE—THE TEST OF SAINTLINESS

A SPIRITUAL aspirant once went to a certain saint and said, "Sir, tell me a means by which I may obtain a vision of God." The sant advised him to retire to seclusion and apply himself to uninterrupted prayer for one year. "On the completion of the year," the saint further said, "after having thoroughly subdued and annihilated your egoism, come to me after taking a bath." According to this advice of the saint, the aspirant started prayer in right earnest, A sweeper used to come to sweep the ground round the hut of the saint. On the day when the aspirant was to complete one year of his Sadhana (prayers), the saint called the sweeper aside and mentioning the place where the aspirant was living, said, "There is a person engaged in worship of God at that place, when he finishes his bath, scatter dust over him with your broom." The sweeper did as he was instructed to do. This had terribly upset the aspirant who, in his fit of anger ran after the sweeper to beat him. "The scoundrel has thoroughly defiled me", said he, and taking bath for the second time and thus purifying himself, he came to the hermitage of the saint. "Sir, full one year has been completed since you gave me your instructions, may I have the privilege now to have a vision of the Lord ?" The saint replied, "Child, your mind is not yet dead ; even now you run into anger to bite like a venomous snake. Go and do worship for one year more, and kill the mind." The aspirant, therefore, retired again, and engaged himself in prayer for another year.

On the day when the second year was to be completed, the saint told the sweeper to touch the aspirant with his broom, when the latter finished his bath. The sweeper did exactly as he was asked to do. This time, the aspirant did not run after the sweeper to beat him, but rebuked him in harsh and unbecoming words and taking bath again went to the saint with his prayer for a sight of God. The saint replied, "The serpent of your mind even now emits terrible and fearful hisses. How can you expect to see God without killing it ? Go and apply yourself to your practice of prayer for a year more. But take care, if you fail in the test next time, God will not favour you with His Vision." This time the aspirant carried on his spiritual practice with very great determination. On the day when he was to complete the third year of practice, the saint asked the sweeper to throw upon him the entire lot of dirt he collected that morning. The sweeper carried out this instruction also, but the aspirant had now conquered anger. Bowing before the sweeper, he said with unaffected humility, "Brother you have done me a great favour ; had you not done this, how could I have freed myself from the grip of anger ? I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Then again the aspirant approached the saint. The saint blessed the aspirant and initiated him. The aspirant did rigorous spiritual practices as per the advice of the teacher and soon had the supreme vision of God.

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp. 44—45.

13. A RICH STORE OF GUIDING WISDOM IN EACH STORY

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

THIS book is divided into three parts and contains 15 stories culled from the lives and teachings of not only ancient sages and saints but also from the lives of present-day householders who devoted their lives to religion and spiritual practices. The Swamiji has contributed a usefu introduction explaining that the Lord whom we worship is not far from us. He is residing in the chambers of our hearts. We do not recognise the Self, because we cling to things unreal mistaking the physical body for the Atma. The author further points out that Vairagya is purely an internal mental state. Even a Sadhu who remains in a cave in the Himalayas, may be attached to his Kamandal or a piece of cloth. Whereas a person may possess perfect Vairagya even if he lives in the midst of luxuries. In the opinion of the Swamiji, extreme asceticism and self-torture are not necessary for the attainment of knowledge of the Self.

The stories illustrate that the aspirants should not be afraid of difficulties and troubles. They must have courage, patience, perseverance and strength of mind. Troubles and difficulties are blessings in disguise. Some of the stories teach the benefits of Sat-Sang which cannot adequately be described in words. It is said that a moment's Sat-Sang will overhaul the vicious Samskaras.

Sannyasis are made of sterner stuff. A Sannyasi is one who has controlled his senses and disciplined his mind. Appearances are not always to be trusted. One should possess keen discernment and good power of judgment to discriminate the real from the false. Mere book-learning will not help us much.

—N.R.,
Malabar Herald,
Cochin.

14. ILLUMINATING LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF THE ENLIGHTENED

DURBUDDHI was an atheist in the city of Gaya. He lived during the time of Lord Buddha. Durbuddhi was a very cruel man. He ill-treated good people. He robbed the wealth of others. He terrorised people. He was a fierce personality. Children and ladies were frightened at the mere mention of his name. He was a Rakshasa in human form.

One day he approached Lord Buddha, when he was seated in meditation. When Buddha opened his eyes, he saw Durbuddhi standing in front. The saint greeted him. Durbuddhi abused Buddha in return. He used the most objectionable language in abusing Buddha. He said to Buddha, "O fool ! You are an imposter. You are a cheat. You are a hypocrite. You are a rogue in the guise of a saint. Get away from this place. If you come here tomorrow, I will kill you. The city is full of beggars and imposters like you. They have spoiled the whole country. You are a mere idler. You are a burden on society. You drain the resources of householders who earn their livelihood with the sweat of their brow, through hard labour."

Buddha heard all these and kept silent. The next day also Durbuddhi came and abused Buddha in similar vulgar words with added fury. Even then Lord Buddha kept quiet. This incident repeated itself for over a month. As days passed on, Durbuddhi became more and more furious. At last one day he asked Buddha, "O man! are you deaf? Do you hear what I say? You sit like a block of stone in spite of my abuses. You are a shameless creature. Tell me what sort of man you are."

Buddha coolly replied, "Friend! I have been all along hearing what you spoke. I am not deaf. But I may tell you that I have not accepted any of your insults. When I have not accepted it, to whom will it belong? You gave me some presents, but I have declined to accept them."

Saying this Buddha again kept silent.

Durbuddhi's mind was at once changed by the calmness of the Muni. He was thoroughly transformed. He fell at Buddha's feet and cried, "O Lord! pardon me. I am a vile wretch. I have wronged you, a pure and godly personality. What a great crime I have committed! Again and again, I entreat you to pardon me. Thou art an ocean of mercy. Forgive me." Durbuddhi then became a follower of the Great Buddha.

Friends! learn patience from Buddha. Be noble and magnanimous. Rise above censure and praise. You are very weak. You cannot bear the insult of your own brother. If any one speaks a little harsh word, you are at once upset. You are wild with fury. What is censure and praise? They are mere vibrations in the ether. Do not attach any importance. Be same to pleasure and pain, to success and defeat, to censure and praise, heat and cold. Bear insult. Bear injury. You are now the emperor of emperors. You are now the Shah of Shahs!

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp. 83-84.

15. SIVANANDA'S PATH TO CONSCIOUS SOUL-GROWTH AND UNENDING JOY

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

THESE illuminating stories form a companion volume to the philosophical stories by the author, already reviewed in these columns. Eliminating the problem of the struggle for existence, these stories explain some of the fundamental tenets of Hindu Philosophy in a most effective and easy manner. The morals underlying some of the more important anecdotes are highly inspiring on account of their association with concrete instances of abiding human appeal. The book brings salvation within the reach of the many by telling them to enter the way of becoming, the way of conscious soul-growth, by leading a life of self-control, unselfishness, sympathy and love. If that way were faithfully followed, it would lead at least after many births to deliverance of the wayfarer and ultimately from the cycle of births and deaths, by breaking the ties of desire which bind one to this earthly existence.

—*The Hindu*,
Madras.

16. THE PIG THAT WAS OFFERED MOKSHA

ONCE Lakshmi complained to her Lord, "O Lord ! You do not give liberation to the people of the world. They are undergoing immense sufferings." Lord Hari replied, "My beloved Lakshmi ! they do not want Moksha. They are perfectly satisfied with their earthly lot and sensual life. Their minds cannot be weaned from sensual pleasures and they are totally sunk in worldliness." Lakshmi said, "This is not true, my Lord". Lord Hari said : "Then Lakshmi, find it for yourself. You can visit the earth plane. I shall ask Narada Rishi to accompany you."

Lakshmi consented. She came to this world along with Narada. They both saw a pig revelling in filth along with its partner and several children. Lakshmi said to the pig, "O pig ! why do you lead such a miserable life ? Come to Heaven, Vaikunta. You will be extremely happy. I will give you Moksha." The pig replied, "I shall consult my wife and let you know." The pig consulted his parther. It said, "My beloved wife ! A beautiful lady has come with a Rishi. She offers Moksha for us. Can we go to Vaikunta ?" The she-pig said, "First find out what this Moksha is. What is Vaikunta ?"

The pig asked Lakshmi, "O lady ! my wife wants to know the nature of Moksha and Vaikunta. Please describe to me its nature." Lakshmi said, "In Vaikunta Lord Narayana dwells. There is neither hunger nor thirst, neither sorrow nor pain, neither disease nor death. One enjoys the company of the Omnipotent, Omniscient Lord. He is ever happy ; he enjoys all divine Aiswarya. He is never in want of anything. All his desires are fulfilled."

The pig related to its wife all that Lakshmi had stated. She-pig : "My beloved husband ! find out from that lady whether in Vaikunta we can get that stuff for our food." The pig asked Lakshmi, "My wife wants to know whether she can get in Vaikunta "that stuff" for her food." Lakshmi enquired, "Pray, what is that stuff ?" He-pig, "Why I mean excreta, offal !" Lakshmi replied, "O pig ! she cannot get this there. She can get divine nectar."

Pig : "My beloved wife, that lady says there is no offal there, in the Heaven." She-pig : "What ! no offal ? What is such a Heaven, Vaikunta ! I'll have nothing to do with it. In that case I do not want to come to Vaikunta."

He-pig : "O Lady ! Thank you very much, but we don't want Vaikunta. Neither my wife nor the juniors wish to come to Vaikunta as we cannot get offal there for our food.

Lakshmi now realised the truth uttered by Her Lord. She returned to Vaikunta. Lord Hari : "O Lakshmi ! my beloved consort, what is your opinion now ? Have you investigated into the matter ?" Lakshmi: "Yes, my Lord ! what you said is quite true."

The ignorant worldly man is immersed in worldliness. He has no idea of transcendental divine bliss that is independent of sensual objects. He is quite satisfied with sensual pleasures. Even if God appears before him and says, "Come along with me, enter this celestial car, I will take you to Vaikunta," he does not want Vaikunta. He is like the pig who revels in the filth. Procreation and eating are his goals. If he can get some bread and Dhall, a little ghee or

some sweetmeats, one or two vegetables, a wife and some children, it is more than Vaikunta for him. Nobody wants higher divine life, God-realisation, Moksha. Nobody likes Vairagya, renunciation, Sadhana, Nivritti. Pitiable is the lot of a worldly man however rich and worldly-wise he may be !

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp. 178-180.

17. SOUL-STIRRING STORIES FROM SIVANANDA, THE GUIDE, FRIEND AND PHILOSOPHER

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

SIVANANDA is a guide, friend and philosopher. In this atomic age we need Atmic-realisation more than ever. Who can give it if not His Holiness who began his life as a physician, only to finish as a great healer of the physical and mental sores of all and sundry—cognisant of the indubitable fact that the body and mind are inseparable in essence and that, therefore, the simultaneous treatment of both the body and the soul is the one and only remedy for all ills, not to say evils.

In a pleasant way, *The Illuminating Stories* light the flame in the mind of the reader and impart true knowledge and fine spirituality. They are of permanent value and abiding interest as they treat of lofty ideals, paving the way to eternal Truth. This soul-stirring book from the inimitable pen of Swami Sivananda contains the essence of the fundamental basis and teachings of Hindu religion and philosophy. Even a casual perusal is sure to lead the reader to a more intimate study of the problems of life, death and immortality—so lucidly and forcefully presented for no other purpose than for edification, happiness and peace. Its chief aim is none other than to awaken men to the true purpose of human life and to enlighten him about the various means and methods of attaining the goal.

—V.T.N.,
Indian Republic,
Madras.

18. UPLIFTMENT OF MANKIND, THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF SIVANANDA'S FREE AND FLOWING NARRATIVES

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

MAN learns a lot through illuminating stories. It is his nature, especially when he is advanced in years or when he is small in age, to refuse to be directly taught. But he must be taught, if our aim is real flowering of man. The Swami of Rishikesh has tried to do successful teaching through those philosophical stories, which are interesting and elevating alike. A student of literature will admire his free, flowing, strongly narrated stories. They have a store of wisdom and experience to communicate. They communicate that very successfully but they do not allow the literary reader to be lost in them because the moment he feels lost, the story ends. The Swami, has, like Bacon, great knowledge and awareness to communicate,

but he does not have patience to spin out that knowledge and awareness into longer stories. He does not want to give you literary stories of sustained atmosphere. Obviously, his one aim is to give his message and then to uplift mankind. In this aim he is positively successful.

"Open your eyes now. Do virtuous actions. Seek the company of the wise. Remember Him. Practise meditation. You will have a new glorious life."

This is his message. A complete picture of our activities is here. Concentrate upon the living present, the future will take care of itself. The Swami wants us to forget the past and also the future. Act, act in the living present. That is the advice to be written in letters of gold and eternity.

—Prof. B.S. Mathur,
Commonweat,
Poona.

19. CHOKAMELA THE COBBLER SAINT

CHOKAMELA, the Mahar Saint was dining one day underneath a Pipal tree. Lord Krishna joined him and took food. The wife of Chokamela brought curds and served them to Lord Krishna. When she was serving some bit of curd splashed on Vitthal's (Lord Krishna's) robes. Chokamela scolded her severely. "Is this the way to serve our Lord of Pandarpur ! There is no humility. There is no faith. There is no Bhav." A Brahman priest passed along the road. He heard these words. He thought that the Mahar had blasphemed Lord Krishna. He became very furious and struck Chokamela with his fist on the cheeks. Then he took bath in the river and went to the temple to worship Vitthal. When he looked at Vitthal, he witnessed the stain of curd on His Pitamber. His cheeks were swollen and tears flowed from his eyes.

The Brahmin priest was alarmed. He thought within himself : "What a terrible mistake have I committed ? That Mahar is a real saint. He has obtained the Grace of Vitthal. Vitthal loves him very much. I am a condemned wretch. I am a hypocrite. There is no sincerity in my worship, My heart is still stony. I have great Brahmin Abhimana. I hate the depressed classes. I have no real love for all human beings. I am a proud Brahmin. I have injured a devotee whom Vitthal loves most." The Brahmin priest repented very much. He became very humble. He crossed the river to bring the saint from the other shore. He took the saint to the temple of Vithoba, The swelling in the cheek of Vitthal disappeared. There was a radiant smile in his face.

There is no distinction of caste, creed or colour for God. All are equal in His eyes. All are His children. He who has devotion is dear to the Lord, be he a Brahmin or a cobbler, a Kshatriya or a scavenger. He who has devotion is a real Brahmin. He who has no devotion is a Sudra even though he is a Brahmin by birth. Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who have equal vision and cosmic love for they will soon see God.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophical Stories,
pp. 42-43.

20. PROFOUND TRUTHS OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY FROM THE SAINTLY PHILOSOPHER SIVANANDA

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES (VOL. I) :

THIS is a volume of stories by a saintly philosopher to elucidate the profound truths of Hindu Philosophy and religion. In the introduction the author declares that God is immanent in man and that we are all striving for realising Satchidananda. He explains clearly Maya and Avidya and stresses the imperative need for acquiring *Viveka* (discrimination) and *Vairagya* (dispassion) by controlling the mind and conquering egoism. We must practise meditation and remove the obstacles thereto.

Amidst the stories in this volume many are familiar ones and some new. Among the latter is the story of "The Rich and the Poor." It describes how a man exchanged his heart of love for a heart of stone and became utterly miserable. He says at the end of another story relating to Chokamela: "Blessed are the meek. Blessed are those who have equal vision and cosmic life, for they will soon see God." The story about the cobbler saint at page 106 is very charming. Equally interesting is the story about "The Young Man and a Pundit." All the stories illustrate noble ethical and spiritual lessons.

—K.S. Ramaswami Sastri,
The Hindu,
Madras.

21. LORD GOURANGA AND A LEPER

LORD Gouranga went to Puri. He went to the temple and worshipped the Lord. Then he returned back to his hut. A leper had a strong desire to see Lord Gouranga. He went to temple and found that Lord Gouranga had already left the place. The leper ran after him and cried bitterly : "O Lord ! Why hast Thou forsaken me." He was very much pained in heart. He fainted. Lord Gouranga had already walked a long distance. He stopped all of a sudden as if someone had called him. He immediately ran back towards the temple. He saw a poor leper in a state of swoom. He lifted him up in his arms. Atonce he was healed. Leprosy vanished. The leper shed profuse tears : "O Lord ! I came to worship thee. I did not come to be healed. My sickness taught me many lessons. I am always remembering God. I have a soft compassionate heart. I am humble. I have discrimination between the real and the unreal. I have dispassion. I feel I may again become proud and may forget God if I am cured of my malady."

Generally people remember God when they suffer from some incurable diseases, when they have nothing to eat, when their son or daughter dies. If their disease is cured, if they put on some fat and flesh they atonce forget God. This is Maya. If you remember God even when you are hale and hearty, even when you are in affluent conditions, you will never get any kind of trouble, pain or suffering. Pain or suffering is a great purifier of heart. It is a blessing in disguise.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophical Stories, pp, 23-24.

22. SIVANANDA'S VIEWS AND REVIEWS OF THE MONUMENTAL STORY BOOK OF INDIAN IDEALISM IN SANSKRIT LITERATURE

THE Yoga-Vasishtha or Vasishtha Maha Ramayana is the earliest work of the highest order on Vedanta, in Sanskrit. It is a monumental work. It is one without a second in the Sanskrit literature. Vasishtha the great sage, taught the principles of Vedanta to his royal pupil Rama, the victor of Ravana and hero of the epic Ramayana. He narrated beauti ul interesting stories to illustrate the principles. The book is written in the language of Valmiki.

It is the crest jewel of all the works on Vedanta. It is a master-piece. A study of the book raises a man to the lofty heights of divine splendour and bliss. It is really a vast store of wisdom. Those who practise Atma - Chintana or Brahma Abhyasa or Vedantic meditation will find a priceless treasure in this marvellous book. He who studies the book with great interest and one-pointedness of mind cannot go without attaining Self-realization. The practical hints on Sadhana are unique. Even the most worldly-minded man will become dispassionate and will attain peace of mind, solace and consolation by study of this book.

The Yoga-Vasishtha Ramayana was once one of the most widely read books in India. It greatly influenced general philosophical thought. The late Pandit Brindawana Saraswati of Benares had read the Yoga-Vasishtha one hundred and sixty-five times. It is a comprehensive, deep, systematic and literary philosophical work of ancient India.

The name of Vasishtha is derived from the Sage Vasishtha. Though the book is called Yoga-Vasishtha, it treats Jnana only. Practical Yoga is dealt with in two stories. The word 'Yoga' is used in the title of this work in its generic sense. It is known by the name Gnana Vasishtham also.

Rishi Valmiki the author of Ramayana compiled this remarkable book. He related the whole of Yoga-Vasishtha to Rishi Bharadwaja as it passed between Sri Rama and sage Vasishtha.

Yoga-Vasishtha contains a system of ancient philosophical thought unique of its kind. This is a valuable heritage from the hoary past of this sacred land, Bharatavarsha or Aryavart. The system of thought presented in this book is a highly valuable contribution not only to Indian philosophical thought but also to the philosophical thought of the whole world at large.

Those whose minds are turned from this world, who have become indifferent towards the objects of this world and who are thirsting for liberation will be really benefited by a study of this precious book. They will find in this book a vast mine of knowledge and practical spiritual instructions for guidance in their daily life. Yoga-Vasishtha first enunciates a doctrine in its various aspects and then makes it very lucid through interesting stories. This is a book for constant study. It must be read and re-read and studied or re-studied as many times as possible.

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Yogavasishtha,
pp. i-ii.

23. SIVANANDA ASSEMBLES THE PRINCIPAL PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHTS AND THEMES EMBODIED IN THE ILLUSTRATIVE NARRATIVES OF THE PRACTICAL MYSTICISM OF YOGAVASISHTHA

THE nature of Brahman or Sat and the methods to attain Self-realisation are vividly described in this book. The main enquiry regarding the final beatitude or *Summum bonum* is beautifully dealt with. This book embodies in itself the science of Ontology, the knowledge of the Self, the principles of psychology, the science of emotions, the tenets of ethics and practical morality, discourses on theology etc. The philosophy of Yoga-Vasishtha is sublime and unique.

According to Yoga-Vasishtha this world of experience with various objects, time, space and laws is a creation of mind *i.e.*, idea or Kalpana. Just as objects are created by the mind in the dream, so also everything is created by the mind in the waking state also. Expansion of the mind is Sankalpa. Sankalpa, through its power of differentiation generates this universe. Time and space are mental creation only. Through the play of the mind in objects nearness seems to be a great distance and *vice versa*. Through the force of the mind a Kalpa is regarded as a moment and *vice versa*. A moment of waking experience may be experienced as years in the dream. The mind can have the experience of miles within a short span and a span can be experienced as a hundreds of miles. Mind is not anything different and separate from Brahman. Brahman manifests itself as mind. Mind is endowed with creative power. Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation.

The doctrine of Drishti Srishtivada is expounded in Yoga-Vasishtha. In some places Vasishtha speaks of Ajativada of Gaudapadacharya, the great Guru of Sankaracharya. You begin to see and then there is creation. This is Drishti-srishti-vada. This world does not exist at all in the three periods of time. This is Ajati-vada or non-origin of the universe.

Moksha according to Yoga-Vasishtha is the attainment of essence of Bliss of Brahman through knowledge of the Self. Moksha is freedom from births and deaths. Moksha is the immaculate and imperishable seat of Brahman wherein there are neither Sankalpas nor Vasanas. The mind attains its quiescence here. The sum total of pleasures of the whole world is a mere drop when compared to the bliss of Moksha. That which is called Moksha is neither in Devaloka nor in Patala nor on earth. When all desires are destroyed, the extinction of the expansive mind alone is Moksha. Moksha has neither space nor time in itself ; nor is there in it any state external or internal. If the illusory idea of 'I' or Ahamkara perishes, the end of thoughts which is Maya is Moksha. Extinction of all Vasanas constitutes Moksha. Sankalpa is only Samsara ; its annihilation is Moksha. It is only Sankalpa destroyed beyond resurrection that constitutes the immaculate Brahmic seat or Moksha. Moksha is freedom from all sorts of pains and the attainment of supreme bliss (Sarva-duhkha Nivritti and Paramananda Prapti).

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Yogavasishtha,
pp. iii-v.

24. SELF-REALISATION HERE AND NOW

STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA :

VASISHTHA, the great sage taught the principles of Vedanta to his royal pupil Rama and narrated several interesting stories to illustrate the principles. It is these stories that fill this book. Every story holds aloft the idea that Self-realisation can be had in and through the world.

—*Sunday Times,*
Madras.

25. THE WORLD AS CASTLES IN THE AIR

VASISHTHA said, "O undaunted Rama ! The mind of a sage is not different from Brahman. The mind of the unenlightened one is the cause of his ignorance and error. There are infinite Shaktis in Brahman, viz., Iccha Shakti, Kriya Shakti, Jnana Shakti, Bhuma Shakti, Akarta Shakti, etc. The Supreme Brahman is Full, Perfect and Undecaying. His power of fluctuation is present in the air ; His power of hardness is present in the stone, heat in fire, vacuity in Akasa and fluidity in water. His bliss is felt in the hearts of the holy ; His prowess is seen in Yogis ; His creative power in the works of His creation and His power of destruction in the cosmic Pralaya at the end of a great Kalpa. Just as the tree is contained in the seed, so also everything is contained in Brahman. Brahman is One. He manifests as many through His illusory power. Brahman only manifests as Manas or mind through thinking, as the Jivatma or the individual soul through the Upadhi or limiting adjunct of Avidya, as Ishwara through the Upadhi of Maya and as the universe through Vikshepa Shakti or projecting power!

"Bondage and freedom are the conceptions of the ignorant. It is wrong to speak of the bondage of the soul which is ever free. It is untrue to seek the emancipation of the soul, which is always emancipated. The world is as real to the men of this world who are sunk in the mire of ignorance as the fabulous story or the old grandmother's tale narrated by a mother to her boy."

Rama said, "O venerable Guru, please narrate the story to me. I am eager to hear the same." Thereupon Vasishtha narrated the story.

"A certain boy once asked his mother to recite to him some pretty story for his amusement. Whereupon she related the following mythical story :—

'Once upon a time, three princes lived in a city called Void. They were very noble, virtuous and brave. Of these three, two were never born and the third never entered the womb for being conceived. They started on a journey and took rest in the garden of Akasa. They ate various kinds of fruits and continued their journey in the upward direction. Having gone a long way, they came across at mid-day a confluence of three waves. Of these three rivers two had no water in them, while in the third there was nothing but white sand. They all took their bath in the last river and

sported for a long time and drank some water, which was as sweet as milk and cheered their spirits. They resumed their journey and reached a town at sunset which was not then in existence and built there three houses. One house had no foundation, the second had no walls and the third had neither walls nor roof. The three princes dwelt very comfortably in these three beautiful houses that were built in an invisible town in the Akasa. They found three pots in their houses. The first two broke into pieces upon their lifting, and the third was reduced to dust at their touch. They put in these pots eight measures of rice minus twelve measures and cooked the same in a beautiful manner without water and fire. They distributed the food to countless, mouthless, tongueless and teethless Brahmins. The three princes partook of the remaining food with full satisfaction of their hearts. In the evening they went out for hunting and spent their time in a pleasant manner.'

"After the mother had finished her story, the boy was very pleased at what he had heard. He believed that the story was quite true. Similarly the ignorant persons who have neither discrimination nor Atmic enquiry believe that this world is quite real. This air-built castle of the world which is taken for a reality, is like the story, heard by the boy, which is only a false fabrication of the imagination of the boy's mother. The mother has given a name and form to an airy nothing. Even so, the mind has given a name and form to these illusory objects of this false world. This universe is nothing but of the nature of Sankalpa. The mind generates world. Nothing is really existent, save the creations of your imagination. The imagination fashions all the objects in their peculiar fanciful forms. The heavens, earth, sky, air, rivers, mountains, trees, etc., are all creations of your Sankalpa or imagination, like the visions in your dreams. Imagination gives a shape to an airy nothing. The expansion of this mind alone is Sankalpa and Sankalpa generates this world through its power of differentiation. The whole universe is the net-work of imagination or Sankalpa. Sankalpa or imagination is teh most active power of the mind. Therefore, O Rama, annibilate all Sankalpas and attain the Nirvikalpa State wherein, there are no modifications of the mind or Sankalpas."

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Yogavasishtha,
pp. 48-51.

26. SIVANANDA'S ART OF COMMUNICATING SPIRITUAL AWARENESS

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

THE lives and teachings of ancient sages and saints as well as of present-day householders who devoted their lives to religion and spiritual practices, are protrayed in a beautiful manner in the form of stories,—to show that Lord whom we worship is residing in the chambers of our hearts and not far away from us. We do not recognise the Self in us because we cling to things unreal, mistaking the physical body for the Atma. The author points out that spiritual wealth is the real wealth because it is eternal. Vairagya is purely a mental attitude.

Even a Sadhu remaining in the caves of the Himalayas may be attached to his Kamandal or his loin cloth, whereas a person living in the midst of luxuries may possess perfect non-attachment to the things around him. In the opinion of Swami Sivananda, "extreme asceticism and self-torture are not the essential things for the realisation of the Self within or Oneness with every other being."

The stories illustrate that troubles and other difficulties are blessings in disguise. They also explain the benefits of *Satsanga* which cannot be adequately described in words.

Says the author, "There is no boat more safe than *Satsanga* to cross the ocean of Samsara." The author rightly warns that one should not do anything blindly nor follow anyone in a blind manner. Appearances are not always to be trusted.

—*The Leader*,
Allahabad.

27. THE GREATNESS OF SWEET SPEECH

INDRA once asked Brihaspati, "Can you tell me the one quality which will get for one respect, fame and the confidence of worthy men ?"

Brihaspati said, "Yes. Sweetness of speech is the one thing by practising which a person is esteemed by all and becomes famous. This is the one thing. O Shakra, which yields happiness to all. One may always secure love of all creatures by practising sweetness of speech."

He who does not utter a word and whose face is always marked with frowns is hated by all. Lack of sweet speech makes him so. He who, on seeing others speaks to him first with smile succeeds in winning over every one. He gains the love of the world.

The quality of speaking first (Purvabhashitva) without craving for the prestige of being spoken to first by the other man is indeed a great quality. Lord Rama always spoke first. He was a Purvabhashi.

A gift unaccompanied by sweet speech does not please men. It is like food without condiments. It is like rice without curry.

A king who is desirous of even inflicting punishment should use sweet words. Sweetness of speech secures one's object, while at the same time it never pains any heart. Sweet speech pleases more than does the gift of an object.

A man of good actions and good, pleasant and sweet speeches has no equal.

Indra began to follow the instructions given by Brihaspati

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp. 189-190.

28. DYNAMIC CULTURAL INHERITANCE EMBEDDED IN INSPIRING STORIES

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

SWAMI Sivananda is a well-known writer on Yogic topics and as we have had the occasion to review some of his books in these columns, his name must be familiar to our readers. He is a recognised authority

on religious and philosophical subjects. The stories are mostly taken from the Hindu *Puranas* and *Itihasas* but there are even some from contemporary life, also humorous skits like "the Conference of Mosquitoes," "a Cobbler Saint," "Raghavan and his wife," 'Two Nambudris', etc. The style is so simple that even young boys and girls in the lower secondary classes can understand them very easily. Every story conveys a moral and we would recommend the book for the use of children in every Hindu household. At a time when a wave of irreligion and atheism is spreading among the rising generation and when religious education has been rigorously divorced from the curriculum of schools, Hindu parents who are keen on bringing up their children in accordance with Hindu ideals will do well to provide their children with a copy of this book so that they may imbibe in their spare hours the great truths taught by the Hindu seers and savants of times gone by.

—*Cochin Argus.*

29. THE MAGIC SEAT AND THE HUMAN DESIRE

ONCE there lived an old man at the foot of the Vindhya Hills by name Vitthal Jadhao. He was a very poor man. He possessed nothing but a thatched hut. He was a very lazy man. Therefore he had to suffer a lot in his life.

He had heard that Sadhus possessed such Siddhis and Yogic powers as to create many things according to their wish. One day as he was thinking of some plant to live without doing any work, this fact came to his memory and he thought that if he could go to the caves of Vindhya Hills he could surely meet a Sadhu and get from him what he wanted. With this intention he started and at last, after walking a considerable distance he met a Sadhu. He went near him and prostrated before him. The Sadhu entertained him nicely by offering him a seat, etc., and enquired about the purpose of his visit. Vithal Jadhao said, "Beloved Guruji, I am a very poor man. Except a small hut I possess nothing. In this old age, I am also unable to do work and earn something. Kindly help me by giving me some wealth. I know perfectly well that you can produce as much money as possible by your Yogic power." The Yogi kept silent. The old man pressed him again and again. The Sadhu, at last, gave him a seat, saying that whenever he likes to have something he must sit on that seat after washing his feet, face, hands, etc., and think of those things he wants. Whatever he thought would instantaneously materialise. Thus he could obtain them without any effort.

The old man thanked the Sadhu heartily and taking the seat he swiftly went to his house. Not even a minute did he want to waste. He at once washed his face, sat on the seat and thought of food first as he was very hungry. Immediately sumptuous repast of various tasty dishes appeared before him. He ate the food to his heart's content. Then he wanted to take rest and so he thought of a cot. He got a cot with velvet matress and silken-pillows. He rested a while, but his mind was entirely restless. He rose up from his bed and again sat on the seat and thought that his hut should be

changed into a big palace. Within the twinkling of an eye the old thatched hut turned into a beautiful palace. On seeing the palace he rejoiced very much. Yet he thought that such a big palace would be of no use without a large amount of wealth. Immediately bags of diamonds, gold and silver coins were placed before him. Now his joy knew no bounds. But he wanted some servants to attend upon him. They also came and stood before him with folded hands. He rejoiced very much, but lo ! the thought occurred to him that if there should be an earth-quake now, what would be his position. Suddenly an earth-quake occurred ; the palace was raized to the ground, he and the servants died and everything was a heap of ruins.

Desire is a great obstacle, a great barrier in the path of Self-realization. Control of mind means really abandoning of desires. If one wants to discipline the mind perfectly well, he must give up all desires without reserve, all longing for worldly objects, and building castles in the air. The monkey-like mind will always be restless, desiring something or other. Just as the fish taken out of water tries to get into the water by some means or other, so also the mind will always entertain evil thoughts. Killing all the desires ruthlessly, controlling the mind, freeing it from the surging emotions and bubbling thoughts one can attain the one-pointedness of mind. Such a mind will be as calm as a lamp in the windless place. One who attains such a state of mind can meditate for a long time, Meditation will come by itself.

If one allows his mind to run towards the worldly things as per its own inclinations and to entertain unholy thoughts and evil desires he will surely meet with destruction in the end. Therefore give up desire. Have always that one idea to attain that supreme abode, the abode of joy, peace, bliss and immortality. Practise Sadhana. Be regular in your Yogic practises. Strive to attain that Goal. You will rejoice for ever.

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp. 158-160.

30. MOST WHOLESOME LESSONS FROM THE MODERN APOSTLE

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

THE well-known saint of India has begun to preach his teachings by various methods. By the present method he has elected to communicate his teachings by illuminating stories touching the various problems. According to the author, there are two ways of advising aspirants. One is directly to lay down definite rules and principles to be adopted and put into practice. The second way is to give these instructions by giving them descriptive incidents and examples showing the lessons and principles to be derived from them. The second method is liked and appreciated by the majority of persons as they find it easy to grasp the subject easily. The author in this book has written a series of stories illuminating the principles on various subjects.

—*The Coimbatore Times,*
Coimbatore.

31. ABSTRACT THEORISING AND CONCRETE ILLUSTRATION : A CONTRAST

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

DRIVING home the imperative need for leading highly religious and righteous life through abstract theorising or philosophising rarely impresses the average man or woman. If the same truth is put in the form of a story, it leaves a lasting impression on the hearers. These illuminating stories are over a hundred and every story stirs you to your very depths. The stories gladden the heart, cheer the spirit, and wield a subtle influence on the reader, for the better.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

32. MAYA AND THE METHODS OF TRANSCENDING HER

TWO persons were walking along a riverside. It was the rainy season and the river was in floods. A black bear with shaggy hide was being carried away along the river. It looked like a black blanket floating downstream. They were tempted to take it out for themselves.

Desire (Lobha or Trishna) always lands a man in troubles and miseries. Even Sri Sita had to undergo many hardships on account of the enticement of an imaginary golden deer.

One man stood on the shore and the other jumped into the water and caught hold of the "blanket". The bear was drowning. It promptly caught hold of the man. Finding it impossible to pull the blanket ashore he tried hard to get out of the bear's clutches; but the bear would not let him go. His efforts proved futile. The other companion cried from the shore "Leave the blanket (he was still thinking that it was a blanket) and come away. Why do you want to lose your life for the sake of a blanket ?" He replied, "I am willing to leave the blanket, but it is the blanket that is not prepared to leave me. It is holding me fast." Thus, caught by the bear, the greedy man went to the bottom of the river.

This applies to all of us who are in the clutches of Maya. We run after Maya at first thinking she would be very pleasant, full of joy and sensual pleasures. Afterwards, when we have an inkling of her real nature, when we find she is troublesome, illusory, ever-changing, we want to get rid of her. Then she will not leave us. She has caught hold of us with an iron grip. So we are going round this wheel of birth and death.

We should be courageous, alert, real aspirants. Then and then alone can we get out of Maya by God's grace that is always waiting to descend upon us. Cry for help and that very moment you will get it; only the cry should come from the very core of your heart, out of real thirst to get rid of Maya. We are yet clinging to Maya. We have only lip Vairagya, to make others imagine that we are great Bhaktas. Our only aim is to acquire name, fame and money. Lord Krishna has made it plain in Chapter VII of the Gita (Sloka 14) "This

Maya is very hard to cross. But those who take shelter in me, always remember me, pray to me, can go beyond her". Again He has suggested two ways of achieving this aim viz., getting above Maya, by Jnana (Knowledge and Bhakti (Worship). Karma (Selfless service) is essential for both. Even the worst sinner can attain this goal, either through knowledge (Gita IV-36) or through Bhakti (Gita I-30,3X1). Jnana is a difficult path (Gita VII-I9 and XII-5). Bhakti is easy of practice (Gita VIII 14 and XII-6 and 7). A man should not feel ashamed to be a Bhakta. He should not think it any way inferior to knowledge. Highest knowledge is synonymous with Para Bhakti. Lord Krishna has Himself said so. (Gita XI-48,53)

In Bhakti also there are two varieties : Nirakar and Sakar. Of the two, Sakar is the better for the vast majority. (Gita XII-2). So all of us should adopt Sakar Bhakti, Kirtan, as our path, always remembering. God and uttering His name, we should strive hard, do rigorous Sadhana to get rid of this Maya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Stories,
pp. 34-37.

33. FABLES OF SIVANANDA'S BRIGHTEST PHILOSOPHY

DIVINE STORIES :

THESE are fables, parables, discourses, anecdotes. It is a highly useful book for the seekers of wisdom and those who uplift their character, deepen their view of life, practice ancient Hindu philosophy or serve humanity with selfless motives.

The philosophy of Sivananda is the best, the boldst and the brightest.

—*Careers and Courses*,
New Delhi.

34. A TELLING ILLUSTRATION OF THE EFFECTS OF PAST ACTS

PARIKSHIT asked Vyasa : "O Lord ! How was it that Yudhisthira who had very good knowledge of Dharma, agreed to play chess and gamble away his kingdom ? Was he not able to perceive the unworthiness of his act and to desist from it ?"

"My dear Parikshit !" replied Vyasa : "Such indeed is the power of Prarabdha that it clouds the understanding of even a wise man. Maya is very powerful. It deludes man and makes him do actions which he knows are not strictly according to Dharma."

"My Sire ! I do not agree with you. I think we will surely be able to nullify our Prarabdha by intelligent methods."

"I will show you !" replied Vyasa, smilingly. "I shall tell you what is going to happen to you. You can see for yourself how much of that prophecy you are able to falsify."

"Very shortly you will come across a beautiful horse near your palace. I now tell you that you should not attempt to capture it, or take it to your palace, but you will not be able to resist the temptation. Then you will ride this horse, even though I tell

you should not. You will proceed towards the South, th I am telling you now that you should not. There on your way you will meet Maya in the form of a beautiful maiden. I tell you you should not approach her : but in spite of yourself, you will. You should not take her to your palace : but you will ! She will instigate you to cut the throat of Brahmins who perform the Havan. I tell you you should ignore this, but you will not, but on the other hand you will act upon her advice. This will give you leprosy. Now be very careful." Vyasa went away.

The appointed day came. Parikshit noticed a horse near the palace. It was heavenly. He thought within himself : "Vyasa asked me only not to ride it. Let me take it to the palace. He took the horse within the palace. Then he thought : "Vyasa only asked me not to go in southerly direction. Let me see how beautifully he gallops." He rode the horse. In that joyous moment he again thought : "What is there in the South ? Let me see. But, even if I see the maiden as Vyasa prophesied, I will ignore her." He went to the South. There he met the damsel. She was so charming, attractive and bewitching. He thought: "Vyasa only asked me not to take her to the palace. Let me talk to her." He got down and was talking to Maya. He lost his heart to her. "Vyasa only warned me against listening to her advice and cutting the Brahmins' throats. I will take her to the palace ; but will not accept her advice at all." He took her to the palace. The Havan was going on. The Brahmins started criticising the woman and laughing at her. She got offended. She told Parikshit : "Cut the throats of these people who dare to mock at the queen." Parikshit hesitated. But her words were irresistible. In a fit of temper, Parikshit cut the throats of the Brahmins with his sharp sword. At once he got leprosy. He was ashamed of himself. He cried bitterly. Vyasa appeared before him.

Parikshit fell at Vyasa's feet and admitted that what Vyasa told him was true to the very letter. He asked for pardon for all that he had done.

Vyasa touched Parikshit : immediately he got cured of leprosy.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Stories,
pp. 106-109.

35. THOUGHT-PROVOKING PAGES OF SIVANANDA FOR THE AROUSAL OF THE MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF MANKIND

ILLUMINATING STORIES

SIVANANDA, the modern spiritual apostle has been at his great mission of disseminating spiritual, religious and philosophic truths for two decades now, in a variety of ways suited to different tastes and temperaments. The great lessons underlying each one of the seventy seven stories in the attractive book under review, are illuminating and will be very wholesome and effective for readers who desire to get initiated in the real life of happiness but who, by their education and environment feel unable to imbibe the great teachings

directly. The Swamiji's previous works entitled 'Philosophical Stories', 'Lives of Saints', etc., have already become very popular by virtue of their intense appeal to the moral and ethical consciousness of the reader. Couched in easy and forceful style, all his own, every page of the book is highly thought-provoking. A perusal and study is bound to yield fruitful results. The book can with great advantage be introduced in our educational institutions.

—*Champion*,
Calicut.

36. STORIES OF EXCELLENT EDUCATIVE VALUE : THEIR INTENSIVE APPEAL

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

The story and the moral form part of the book written by Swami Sivananda, the well-known writer on Yoga and Philosophy.

Containing over forty stories—all illuminating illustrations of various aspects of Hindu philosophy—the book has an excellent educative value to every Hindu.

—*Free India*,
Madras.

THERE is no distinction of caste, creed or colour for God. All are equal in His eyes. All are His children. He who has devotion is dear to the Lord, be he a Brahmin or a cobbler, a Kshatriya or a scavenger. He who has devotion is a real Brahmin. He who has no devotion is a Sudra though he is a Brahmin by birth.

37. THE SAINT KNOWS BETTER

SWAMI Jnanananda was sitting outside his Kutir, studying the Bhagavata.

One old man approached, cried bitterly and related the disease he was suffering from. Severe stomach pain with a lot of complications. Jnanananda prescribed for the old man fried onions as the only cure.

"But, Maharaj people say that one should not take onions as it is forbidden foodstuff." "No, no ; you must take. Wait. I will myself prepare the onions." Jnanandandaji went to the bazar, fetched some onions and gave him the fried onions.

A young boy was watching all this from a distance. His mouth watered at the very smell of the onions. When the old man left the place he quietly approached Jnanandandaji and said : "Maharaj ! Kindly give me some onions, too. I am very fond of it."

Jnanandandaji at once sat up and in a tone of admonition said : "No, no ; you should not even touch onions, They are very bad. Onions are even worse than meat. It will excite your passions. It is Tamasic food."

The boy began to laugh merrily : he told his companions : "Look at this hypocrite : he himself gives onions to the other man ; but preaches big philosophy to me and forbids me from touching onions. What sort of Sadhu he is !"

The boy could not understand that in the case of the old man the very onions that were forbidden in his case, was a positive help. Jnanananda ji unmindful of the criticism went on with his study.

Sages know better than human beings, what should be taught to particular aspirants. Their instructions may vary from Sadhaka to Sadhaka, according to their evolution. We should not question the wisdom of their judgment. Their instructions may sometimes seem contradictory. But, in fact, they are not ; it is only our ignorance that makes us unable to understand their point of view.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Stories,
pp. 101-102.

38. A TREASURE-TROVE OF INSPIRATION AND INSTRUCTION

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

THIS is a collection of thought-provoking and didactic anecdotes. Simple and interesting to read, they do contain admonistions of deep wisdom and precious hints and pointers to all the seekers on the Divine Path. Each story carries with it, a distinctive message of guidance and inspiration. These stories expound the deepest philosophy in a most easy and effective manner. In this volume, Swami Sivananda, the great sage of Rishikesh, offers to his readers about forty attractive tales, designed to guide, enlighten and inspire.

—*The Wednesday Review*,
Tiruchirapalli.

39. AYAZ AND THE MINISTERS

AYAZ, a mere slave, became the Chief Minister of Mahmud Ghazni. Mahmud Ghazni loved Ayaz intensely. This aroused the jealousy of other ministers. The other ministers tried their level best to make the Emperor angry towards Ayaz and send him away, but all their efforts and tricks proved futile. The other ministers one day asked Mahmud Ghazni, "O adorable Emperor ! Please tell us why you love the slave very much." The Emperor replied, "Yes. There is a positive reason for this. You will know this after some time."

After two months the Emperor called all his ministers including Ayaz and said, "My beloved ministers ! I will hide myself tomorrow in the royal garden outside the city. Start in the early morning tomorrow and find me out before the sunset. I will give rich presents to those who find me out."

They all consented and went to their houses with a cheerful heart. Their minds were ever on the nature of the presents they might get on the following day. They did not get good sleep that night.

The Emperor ordered in the night that all the streets leading to the city gates must be filled with groups of variety of singing and dancing parties of young

beautiful damsels before sunrise. It was done accordingly.

The ministers started for the city gates at dawn. Each minister could not resist the temptation to hear the music and see the dancing performance of young beautiful girls. Every minister thought within himself, "The garden in which the Emperor is hiding is a small one. I can find him out in a few minutes. Let me enjoy the music and dancing. I have not witnessed such a grand function in my life-time." He would look at the the sun and think : "O, there is yet ample time. It is only 1 p.m. Let me sit for some more time. All these girls are expert songsters and dancers."

The sun was about to set. The ministers got up and hurried to the gates to reach the garden outside. But by the time they reached the garden, the sun had set. They found to their shame, their Emperor in the happy company of Ayaz. The ministers asked Ayaz, "When did you come here ? Did you not witness the dancing and singing parties ?" Ayaz said, "What dancing and singing parties ? I did not see any. I came straight to the garden at sunrise and met my Master. I have been with him all the time since then."

The Emperor said, "Look here, ministers. That is the reason why I love Ayaz intensely. His eyes see nothing but me. His heart has no place for any thing save myself. How can I forget him ? How can I cease loving him ? He is dearer to me than my life itself. How can I ignore him ?"

You must also love the Lord with whole-hearted devotion just as Ayaz loved his Master. Your eyes should see nothing but the Lord. Your heart must have no place for anything but your Beloved. You must ever chant and sing His name and glories. Only then He will enthrone Himself in your heart. He will become your lover Himself. You will dwell in Him happily for ever.

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp. 134-136.

40. SIVANANDA : HIS MISSION OF CEASELESS SELF-EXPRESSION

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES :

OUR readers are familiar with the writings and mission of Swami Sivananda, who is ceaselessly writing elevating things for the uplift of misery-stricken people of the world. These stories have the same purpose. The idea is of Truth. There is nothing like Truth which has to be grasped as early as possible. The Truth that the Swami has made his own through experience, he wants to share with others. He knows that people of the world find it difficult to seize the truth and so wisely he communicates the truth through fine and happy stories, written in a plain language of inspiration and penetration.

"If you entertain noble thoughts, sublime ideals and holy pictures, you will be a centre of joy, power and peace. Just as darkness cannot stand before the Sun, so also evil thoughts cannot stand before sublime thoughts."

This is what he says and this way is the way to action and noble deeds, because with good and sublime thoughts you are certain of a good life of good deeds, holy and joyous.

—*Sunday Herald.*

41. SIVANANDA ON HIS METHODS OF IMPARTING INSTRUCTION

THERE are two ways of advising aspirants. One is to lay down directly rules and principles to be adopted and put into practice,—some very rational minded and practical persons like this way—the second way is to give these instructions by giving them descriptive incidents and examples showing the lessons and principles to be derived from them. The second method is liked and appreciated by the majority of persons, as they find it easy to grasp the sense and the import of terse instructions. I have given ample such laconic lessons in my earlier works such as the *Aphorisms, Spiritual Lessons, Twenty Instructions, Forty Golden Precepts*, and so on. In the volumes *Philosophical Stories, Stories from Mahabharata, Stories from Yoga Vasishtha*, etc., and the *Lives of Saints*, I have given valuable guidance to the aspirants, through anecdotes and illustrative stories. The *Illuminating Stories*, will further the work done by the preceding volumes. They constitute a companion to the aspirant in the Sadhana Marga and will guide, inspire, advise, and encourage him at every step.

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories, p. v.

42. A JOYOUS SAINT OF BLISSFUL GOD REALIZATION AND HIS UNTIRING CREATIVE ACTIVITY

HOW TO CULTIVATE VIRTUES :
DIVINE STORIES :

THE more I know of Swami Sivananda, the more I cherish for him, a growing esteem and appreciation : there is in him a spiritual greatness and an effusion of love and goodwill with something of that overflowing friendliness that characterised Walt Whitman. He seems to be a lovely soul just bubbling over in his joyous realisation of the presence of God, and his influence of helpfulness among his own people seems to be widely spreading its large wings ; and his creative activity, dedicated to that end, is torrential, and I think, utterly selfless. The first book, a very compendium of wisdom in little homilies, is overflowingly rich with practical advice ; it portrays the myriad aspects that he sees in the spiritual life around. In the second book Sivananda adopts the simple story-telling method of imparting knowledge ; it is a delightful little book.

—Rechard Whitewell,
Science of Thought Review,
London.

43. SIVANANDA ADOPTS A LITTLE-KNOWN STORY TO DELINEATE THE TRUE NATURE OF THE LIFE OF MAN IN THE WORLD

ONCE upon a time a certain King while out for hunting was chased by an enraged tiger and her three cubs. Fleeing in great fear for very life, the king suddenly fell into an old, deep and dark well. As he fell headlong, the king managed somehow to

catch hold of a plant that was growing from the sides of the well about half way down. Clinging tightly to the plant, the unfortunate man remained thus suspended in the semi-darkness while the ferocious tiger sat growling above, seeking for some means of springing upon him. The little plant, unable to bear the weight was cracking. Down, in the well waters a crocodile awaited with terrible open jaws to snap at the king when he fell. A venomous snake was crawling along the plant towards the man to deliver its deadly bite. At this moment two rats were gnawing with their sharp teeth at the roots of the plant that was already beginning to snap under the strain. At this juncture, there fell a drop of honey from a beehive built on the branch of a tree above the well. A breed of deadly insects had injected their venom into the hive and rendered this honey into veritable poison. In his pitiable and precarious condition with a terrible end imminent upon him, the doomed man put out his tongue to taste the drop of honey.

This is Samsar, Such is the precarious condition of man. While in this pitiable state, he attempts to get at pleasure, which is indeed poison.

The tree is compared to the earthly domain; the tiger and its three cubs (four in number) to Kama, Krodha, Lobha and Moha; the two rats to the day and night that cut short man's life, the cobra and the crocodile to death above and below. In this precarious condition, the man of the world tries to taste pleasure even as the king, the honey, and this earthly sensual pleasure is a veritable venom destructive of the soul of man.

Under the circumstances, the only way left for the king was to submit himself to the Supreme Being. Similarly human beings should, in spite of the numerous temptations and difficulties on earth, strive to get God-realisation.

—Swami Sivananda's
Illuminating Stories,
pp.213-214.

44. SIVANANDA MAKES A STORY TO MARK THE TRANSIENCE OF THINGS AND SIGNIFY THE IDEAL OF SELF-REALIZATION

ONCE the famous King Haripriya of the Panchalas built a very attractive and spacious hall for conducting religious discourses and assemblies of the people. There was a beautiful garden, and a lake of crystal water attached to the hall.

Haripriya announced the opening of the hall and all the subjects assembled at the appointed time. The hall was packed to suffocation. The king was seated in his Durbar. When all people assembled he rose amidst cheering crowds to address the audience. He communicated to the people some important affairs of the state. He then called for comments from the people regarding the construction of the hall. The king said that he would modify or rebuild any particular defective portion of the hall which the audience would point out.

Every one examined the hall well but could not find any defect in its construction. They said that the building was built by an

expert and they dared not give any suggestion. Then from amidst the crowds came forward a half-nude Sadhu and said to the king as follows : "O king ! There are two defects in the hall which in my opinion is beyond correction. I am really sorry for it when all of you are immersed in its beauty." The king requested the Sadhu to tell him about the defects. The Sadhu said. "O king ! This hall will be subject to the ravages of time and one day it will be raised to the ground. The skilful engineer who built this hall will pass away and the future generation some hundred years hence, will not know of even the existence of the hall and that of the architect."

These words of the Sadhu shed a flood of light on the clouded understanding of the king who was deluded by his own glory and the greatness of the hall.

Everything that is created has to meet with destruction. There is no escape from the clutches of death for any creature. Nothing is permanent. Not even the broken pin will follow you when you die. The physical body which you brought into the world with you, will have to be left behind. Wake up ! Friends, open your eyes now. Strive for liberation and attain Godhead.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Stories,
pp. 59-61.

45. MODERN NOVELS AND SIVANANDA'S STORIES—A STUDY IN CONTRAST

ILLUMINATING STORIES :

THIS book contains choicest anecdotes from Hindu Religion, Indian history and mythology presented under classified heads carrying distinctive morals and tenets of Hindu religion and philosophy. Written in a simple, effective and forceful style, the moral principles contained therein are a source of inspiration to young minds. The distinctive feature of this collection is that unlike other modern novels and short stories, which little serve the edification of the reader, particularly the student, it is full of inspiring illumination. The *Illuminating Stories* is a work of permanent and abiding interest to the student-community in view of the lofty ideals it places before them. The anecdotes, associated as they are, with the past, remind us of the pristine glory and magnificent heritage of this great land of ours, and appeal fervently to the youth to follow those precepts for the ultimate realisation of the Spiritual Truth and Eternal Happiness. We recommend this valuable book for the use of students in High Schools and Colleges.

—*Student's Companion*,
Madras.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LESSONS, THE LECTURES, AND THE LETTERS OF SIVANANDA

SIVANANDA : HIS SPOKEN WORDS AND WRITTEN WORKS AS GOD-WARD GUIDES SHEDDING LIGHTS ON THE PATHS THEY TRAIL

Apart from the pre-emience constituted by the irresistible fascination and a transforming power, the best of our aspirations and sensibilities, find themselves exerted upon by the immediacy of his Presence, in virtue of a transcedental holiness he commands, wherein does the essential greatness of a really great God-Man consist except in his exceptional gifts and boundless enthusiasm for taking up, without any respite, with no regard for results, with an Eye supremely unconcerned with the oppositions and ouslaughts from petty human resentment and condemnations, by the magic of his spoken words and the spell of his written works, a Mind here and giving it an inspired elevation that lifts it out of its own littleness and limitations, and sets it moving towards the realisation of the highest aims ; a Heart there and restoring to it a peace it had never known, a love it had never tasted, and a joy it never could believe was due to it ; and a Life elsewhere and imparting to it the power to refine itself, to raise itself to a divinity, and thus capture the ecstasy of existence ? This, then, is the type of greatness we see ensouling and governing the whole of the life of Sivananda, and finding its fullest manifestation in all the lessons he imparts, the lectures he delivers, and the letters he writes.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE LESSONS, THE LECTURES, AND THE LETTERS OF SIVANANDA

1. THE CADRE OF SIVANANDA'S SPIRITUAL LIGHTS COVER THE WHOLE RANGE OF HUMAN LIFE

SPIRITUAL LESSONS :

THIS is a valuable collection of Swami Sivananda's lessons on the manifold aspects of human existence. To thoroughly understand and appreciate the lofty ideals and noble precepts contained in this book, the reader has to, in the first instance, cultivate a broad-mindedness in himself. as otherwise, they only seem to be 'impracticable' at first sight. The remarkable feature of the book is that every lesson has a distinct moral of its own brought out in a lucid style. The book commends itself to the youth of the country.

—*The Students' Companion*,
Madras.

2. THE VISION OF SIVANANDA AS A COSMIC INDIVIDUAL

ALL feet are the feet of the Lord, the *Virat Purusha*. Study Purusha Sukta and Gita Chapter thirteen, verse thirteen, *Sarvatah pani padam*, i.e., "everywhere That hath hands and feet." If you remember this, you will realise God quickly. All hatred will cease. You will develop cosmic or universal love. The idea of superiority and inferiority will vanish. You will see everywhere Lord Krishna,—*para Bhakti*. You will have *Samyag darshan* or *Samyag jnana*. Respect all. Prostrate before everybody.

That Yogi in a cave who makes the mind waveless (thoughtless) helps the world more than the man who works on the platform with lectures, etc. He actually pervades and permeates every atom of the universe. Such a Yogi is absolutely free from selfishness. Ignorant worldly-minded persons foolishly charge such Yogins with selfishness. This is a great mistake. Those eleven Buddhas who remained hidden helped the world more than the Buddha (Gautama Sakhya Muni) who appeared on the stage for *Lokasangraha*.

—Swami Sivananda's
Spiritual Lessons,
pp. 1,98.

3. SIVANANDA : THE MYRIAD-MINDED SPIRITUAL LEADER

SPIRITUAL LESSONS :

THE wide range and versatility of these lessons are certain to appeal to all classes of readers though the "worldly-minded" are apt to regard some of the ideals set forth here as impracticable, ascetic or high pitched.

—*New Book Digest*,
Bombay.

SPIRITUAL LESSONS :

THE book is a collection of the author's writings and is dedicated to all the Rishis and Maharishis. "The materials" the author himself assures us in the foreword, "are amplified, enlarged and divided into sections." The English is quite simple. The lessons are of quite matter-of fact. The advice given is also quite sound.

—U. C. Bhattacharjee,
Modern Review,
Calcutta.

4. THE INDIAN YOGIS OF SUPERNORMAL POWERS AND PERFECTION

SOMETIMES Nitya Siddhas take births out of their own free will just to help the world. They do not do any spiritual Sadhana or Tapas. From their childhood they evince remarkable knowledge and power. Sri Jnanadeva of Alanda which is seven miles from Poona, was a Nitya Siddha. He touched a buffalo when he was a boy ; it repeated the whole Vedas. Sadasiva Brahman of Karur, Trichinopoly District, who lived 150 years ago, was also a born Siddha.

There are Swapna Siddhas also. Some people get Upadesha Mantra during dreams. They repeat the Mantra and become Siddhas soon.

A Jnana Yogi is always in Samadhi or Jnana Nishtha. He need not sit in a room ; no Asana is needed for him ; he is not affected by Maya ; there is no "in Samadhi" and "out of Samadhi" for a Jnana Yogi. He is very silent and speaks a few words which produce a tremendous impression. They give a new life and joy to all those who understand him and his message.

A Jnani may or may not have any Siddhis. But if he likes, he can have. He will find out quickly the *modus operandi* and exhibit them. He cannot have the Anima, Mahima Siddhis which belong to a fully developed Hatha Yogi. He will have spiritual Siddhis through Sat Sankalpa.

When a Jnani sees outside, he may simply see but the Vritti may not assume Vishayakar as in the case of worldly-minded persons. Pain in the body and quarrels always exist in the world. A Jnani has to face these when he does Vyavahar. He does not mind them ; he rises above them, and laughs and smiles as they are unreal. He knows that there is neither pain nor quarrel in the Atman.

—Swami Sivananda's
Spiritual Lessons,
pp. 94, 201, 202.

5. THE REVELATION OF YOGA SECRETS IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

THIS book is a collection of Sivananda's letters to an earnest seeker and Sadhak.

In the beginning there is a detailed picture of the greatness of Sivananda, written by several persons of eminence. Sri Sivaprem, Editor of *Divine Life*' writes, "we have the proclamation of Lord Buddha that though diversity and unity, good and bad are, inseparable, right exertion alone can bring about release from misery and suffering, from the cycle of birth and death. Anyone who has come in contact with Swamiji will assert with confidence on the success of his saintly life."

In this book, Sivananda has written authoritatively about the basis of Yoga, science of Yoga Sadhana, on cultivation of virtues, victory over self, selfless service, devotion to God, conquest over mind, towards a better world, practical Sadhana.

In book two, *Yoga for the West*, he reveals the secrets of Yoga Sadhana, cultivation of virtues, victory over self, selfless service, devotion to God, conquest of mind, and the rest.

In book three, *Amrita Gita*, Sivananda narrates Hatha Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yogasastra, etc.

In book five contains a series of prayers in Sanskrit.

—*The Searchlight*,
Patna.

6. SIVANANDA'S PROGRAMME OF LIFE FOR THE RISE OF MAN FROM INTELLECT TO INTUITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Rev. Pannalalji,

6th May, 1944

A sincere feeling of 'helplessness' and a growing conviction of the worthlessness of mere intellectual learning are the first glimmerings of the dawn of intuition. They are, as it were, the first flashes of intuition itself. You have them; as they grow deeper and deeper into your soul, you would find that the veil of ignorance is progressively lifted.

The simplest thing for your venerable self to do is to put down on paper your ideals—intellectually conceived, of at first as the right ideals. Kindly formulate your own programme of life. Assert to yourself 'If I am convinced that a line of donduct is good, I MUST adopt it without a moment's hestitation.' I enclose for your noble self's information a printed from of Resolves. It is the model on which I wish your noble self could draw up your own.

Next, as soon as you wake up in the morning, please meditate on your ideal. Run over the whole ground mentally again and again. Let the thoughts sink into the subconscious. Then you will find a mysterious transformation within yourself. Your ideal will become a reality.

Lastly, kindly sit up at night for halt an hour and reflect for a while on your day's thoughts, words and deeds. Find out for

yourself how far you have been able to live up to your ideals. Analyse the causes of failures. Do not lapse into mere regret or remorse—please do remember success is not achieved by weeping over failures, but by concentrating upon success itself. To repent is good, but to sink into gloom and despair on that account is worse than failure itself. Please let the mind ever dwell on po sitive divinity. Sages have emphatically declared that every one of us is essentially divine: there is absolutely no reason why you should not realise this divine nature here and now. Let this conviction grow into you.

After the self-analysis, when you have (as your own spectator) found out the internal weaknesses that caused the failures during the day, kindly formulate fresh resolutions for the morrow to help you avoid the mistakes of the previous day.

Prayer, Pranayama (Breath-control), pure food free from exciting stimulants, study of scriptures, seclusion, restraint of speech through observance of Silence for a couple of hours a day—are all excellent practices that make the progress easier and the path smoother.

Intellect is the foot-stool of intuition. You have to let the eye of intuition open and flood the intellect with Knowledge that it could not hope to achieve by itself. It is possible. It is easy if you are determined to achieve it. I will serve you and guide you.

Satchidananda Swaroopoham,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realisation,*
pp. 181-182.

7. DELIGHTFUL DISCOURSES OF SIVANANDA ON HINDU PHILOSOPHY

LECTURES ON YOGA AND VEDANTA:

THESE lectures contain some very beautiful discourses on Hindu Philosophy giving practical advice for all aspirants. The Swami has very liberal views and acknowledges that essence all religions are equal. Should be found useful in libraries and study groups.

—*The Indian Theosophist,*
Varanasi.

8. SIVANANDA INDICATES THE SIGNS THAT REGISTER SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

THESE are the signs that indicate that you are growing in meditation and approaching God. You will have no attraction for the world. The sensual objects will no longer tempt you. You will become desireless, fearless. 'I'-less and 'mine'-less, Dehaadhyasa or attachment to the body will gradually dwindle. You will not entertain the ideas, "She is my wife: he is my son; this is my house." You will feel that all are manifestations of the Lord. You will behold God in every object.

The body and mind will become light. You will always be cheerful and happy. The name of the Lord will always be on your lips. The mind will be ever fixed at the

lotus-feet of the Lord. The mind will be ever producing the image of the Lord. It will be ever seeing the picture of the Lord. You will actually feel that Sattwa or purity, light, bliss, knowledge and Prem are ever flowing from the Lord to you and filling up your heart.

You will have no body-consciousness. Even if there be body-consciousness, it will be in the form of a Samskara or a mental retention. A drunkard may not have full consciousness that he has a cloth round his body. He may feel that something is loosely hanging from his body. You will feel that something is sticking to you like a loose cloth or loose shoes.

You will have no attraction for the sex. You will have no sex idea. Women will appear to you as manifestations of the Lord. Money and gold will appear to you as pieces of stone. You will have intense love for all creatures. You will be absolutely free from lust, greed, anger, jealousy, pride, delusion, etc. You will have peace of mind even when people insult you, beat you and persecute you. The reason why you are not perturbed is that you get immense spiritual strength from the Indweller or the Lord. Pain or pleasure, success or failure, honour or dishonour, respect or disrespect, gain or loss, are alike for you.

Even in dreams, you are in communion with the Lord. You will not behold any worldly pictures.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lectures on Yoga and Vedanta,
pp. 77-78.

9. THE PRE-EMINENTLY PRACTICAL LETTERS OF SIVANANDA OF CALM WISDOM AND GREAT SPIRITUAL POWER

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION is a collection of life-transforming letters of Sivananda. The letters are soul-stirring. Every word has behind it the mighty spiritual power of the Sage. Even as one reads it a new vista of knowledge and wisdom opens up before him. The approach is always direct. The appeal is to the soul. The Sage's mission is to awaken the divine consciousness in man not merely to frighten him with a dreadful picture of the world and its evils.

These letters are pre-eminently practical. They do not indulge in vain philosophical discussions. Siva tells you what to do. He tells you why to do it. He always insists that if you do what you should do, you will know what you ought to know.

—*Careers and Courses*,
New Delhi.

10. THE DYNAMISMS OF MAYA AND THE TRIUMPH OF HUMAN ASPIRATION BY DIVINE GRACE

YOU will find in the Gita that you can cross this illusion 'Maya duratyaya' by devotion unto the Lord. 'This divine illusion of Mine, caused by the qualities is hard to pierce; they who come to Me cross over this illusion.' Obtain the grace of the

world's Mother, Maha Maya. Through Her grace you will be able to transcend the three Gunas. She will introduce you to Her Lord, Brahman. Then and then alone can you rest in everlasting peace and attain the immortal abode. She helped Ramarkrishna Paramahamsa and Vemana of Andhradesa. She is ready to help you all, to take all Her children back into Her sweet bosom of love. Do total self-surrender unto Her. Say unto Mother: "Mother, I am thine. Save me. Have mercy on me. You have saved several souls. I too am Thy son." You will feel Her warm embrace now.

It is very difficult to get a human birth. Utilise it for higher purposes. Do not waste it in idle talking, eating and drinking. You will never get again a birth like this. Cross the ocean of Samsara through the grace of the Mother and rest in your Self—Sat-chit-ananda Swaroopa. I bow with folded hands once more to my loving Mother of compassion and mercy. Mother Kali who is known as Parvati, Durga, Ambika, Ganga and Gauri and who assumes the forms of Saraswati, Lakshmi, Sita, Radha, and Kundalini.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lectures on Yoga and Vedanta,
pp. 245-146.

11. SIVANANDA'S SIMPLE SERMONS ON THE BEAUTY AS MORAL EXCELLENCES AND SPIRITUAL REALIZATIONS

YOU must learn the principles of real life, through Sat-Sang. Real life is living for others. You beautify yourself by wearing diamond rings and Banares Sarees. Is there beauty in diamond rings and Banares Sarees ? Seva-Bhav, charity, is real diamond. You dress yourself nicely and see yourself in a mirror a thousand times; does that give you beauty ? Beauty is within. Infinite beauty dwells in the chambers of your heart. *Jyotisha mapi Tat Jyoti Tamasah Paramuchyate Jnanam Jneyam Jnanagamyam Hridisarvasya Tishtitam.* You spend all your time in beautifying this body ! Morning you have a shave; in the evening you have another shave. This is all waste of precious time, precious life. You must learn to utilise time properly, through Sat-Sang.

Love all. Embrace all. Be kind to all. Help the down-trodden brothers. Instead of having six or seven shirts for youself, give a shirt to the poor man. Thus only can you evolve. Thus only can you realise the Atma which is the One Self that dwells in all.

—Swami Sivananda's
Goal of Life & Its Attainments,
pp. 27.

12. THE SPIRITUAL GOAL OF LIFE AND SIVANANDA'S SOUL-ELEVATING TEACHINGS FOR ITS ATTAINMENT

GOAL OF LIFE AND ITS ATTAINMENT:

SWAMI Sivananda gave lectures of the Glory of Satsanga, Essence of Yoga and Vedanta and Goal of Life and its Attainment, in the month of March 1953 during his Dehra Dun visit. These lectures are

beneficial, sublime, life-awakening, heart-capturing and soul-elevating. Sri Lilavati Sharma has edited these lectures to enable the disciples and devotees of Swami Sivananda in India and abroad to take the best advantage of Swami Sivananda's Upadesh. The language is simple but effective.

Short account of Swamiji's life, his visit to Dehra Dun and the opinions of some well-known people are also included in this book.

—*Bombay Samachar,*
Bombay.

13. FROM SIVANANDA'S ROORKEE UNIVERSITY LECTURES

TAP the Source within and attain that inexhaustible strength born of the realisation of the Bhuma. Become a Dheera. Who is a Dheera ? He who is endowed with the Four Means—Viveka, Vairagya, Shat-Sampat and Mumukshutwa. You should have intense concentration, renunciation and a strong yearning for Liberation, not yearning for a little promotion in office. The highest yearning of a District Judge is to become a High Court Judge, the highest yearning of a clerk is to become a Head-Clerk. Poor deluded soul. He is a master of the whole world. He can rule the whole world if he has got discrimination. That discrimination he can develop by a study of the Yoga-Vasishtha and the Upanishads : not by studying novels and newspapers. What idea do these newspapers bring you ? "There was earthquake in Japan". "So and so was kidnapped." "A great leader was shot dead." "There was a railway accident in Mexico in which two hundred people were killed." Such are the headlines. And without the newspaper you cannot live. You have made your mind the plaything of emotions and sentiments. You have to control these emotions. Everyday you have to watch and discipline your mind. Annihilate your desires and cravings. He who has given up cravings and desires, he and he alone attains to Peace and Bliss : this is the emphatic declaration of the Lord in the Bhagavad Gita.

You should always have this ideal before you. You may fall down a thousand times yet, you must rise up and with tottering steps you must march forward. You must again and again assert : "I am not this body, not this Prana, nor this mind, nor the intellect ; Chidananda-rupa Sivoham Sivoham".

You should be ever intent in equipping yourself with the Four Means. People do not even know what the Four Means are ! Sadhana Chatushtaya—Viveka, Vairagya, Shat-Sampat and Mumukshutwa—these look to be mere imaginary ideas or words ! Man today knows everything except Atma-vidya. He specialises in so many things ; but does not know what is Viveka or discrimination ! "What is the Atma ? What is the Self ? Who am I ? — you should enquire into this ; that is your duty. Although you have to earn money in this world and to maintain your family, that is not your highest duty. The highest duty is to know, to understand and to realise the nature of the Atma. That only will relieve you of all the sufferings and various kinds of tribulations, from birth and death. If you know the nature of the Atma, if you understand your own essential divine nature, you won't aspire much for the

worldly objects. Money is necessary : but if you forget the nature of the Atma, what is the use of your becoming the Lord of the whole world ? All the objects of the world have meaning only when vou have the correct understanding born of the Knowledge of the Self.

—Swami Sivananda's
Goal of Life & Its Attainment,
pp. 33-35.

14. SIVANANDA, THE LIVING PUNYAPURUSHA : HIS CLASSIC IN RESOLVING MODERN PROBLEMS

SATSANG BHAVAN LECTURES :

SIVANANDA needs no introduction; for, his books are legion and his name and fame as a Living Punya Purusha have been writ large in the hearts of all Hindus. This latest work, "*Satsang Bhavan Lectures*", emanating from his facile pen is a healer, containing 196 pages filled with divine vibrations and sublime spiritual thought-currents.

The five chapters of the book speak volumes on his scholarship which is happily combined with understanding.

Sivananda says, "There is a way to *Supreme Happiness*; there is a way to the Fourth State; there is a way to the fourth dimension; follow the way; that way is *Vairagya*. Serve; love; give; purify; meditate; realise; be kind and compassionate."

His explanations of social and metaphysical problems and their solutions found in these pages, are clear and carry conviction. The message is "Love of God is service of man". This is for him not a mere theoretical concept to be preached but a matter of daily practice. He does not advocate the orthodox tight-rope walking Sadhana. According to Swamiji, "If one wants peace, joy, happiness, salvation, then, in this Kali Yuga, the only sure way is the Japa and Kirtan of the Maha Kaliyuga Dwadas Akshara Mantra." The author writes with spiritual depth and intellectual persuasion. He practises what he preaches—exactly what the country and the world need today. Says he, "What OM is for Sannyasis, Gayatri is for householders and Brahmacharis. Gayatri gives all prosperity." And, "Those who do not have spiritual Samskaras should cultivate them. Mere study or intellectual acrobatics will not serve the purpose. An M.A. or Ph.D. is not always fit for the spiritual path, Cut the knot of Avidya and drink the Nirvanic Bliss. Repeat Sri Ram. All Yogas are combined in Sri Ram. Life is a pilgrimage to the shrine of God. Death is just an aspect of life; it is the gateway to a higher life. So, be not afraid of death. Attain immortality by living the Life Divine."

The three things essential for God-Realisation are: (1) Constant remembrance of God; (2) Cultivation of virtues; and (3) Spiritualisation of all activities. He who has these and has as much devotion to the Guru as he has to the Lord, to him alone the truths of Vedanta are revealed.

The book is noteworthy for its various and extensive quotations. Almost every quotation is followed by a parallel from the literature of other religions evidencing the

enormous labour of the author. The book is intended as a companion volume to youngsters and teenagers of both sexes who will profit considerably from the volume. This does not mean that Sadhaks have nothing for them. There is a mine of information for them as well. All are sure to be taken up with the good writing and civilised human philosophy. It has a vivacity, penetration and breadth of outlook which establishes it as a classic.

—V. T. Neelakantan,
Sunday Standard,
Madras.

15. WESTERN PSYCHIATRISTS AND INDIAN THOGHT

WESTERN psychiatrists and psychoanalysts say that Brahmacharya will lead to neurosis, They have no knowledge. The vital energy should be sublimated into Ojas, spiritual Shakti, which will move the whole world. If it is transmuted into Ojas Shakti, it is useful for Realisation for doing great work in the spiritual path, elevating people. The fruit of observing Brahmacharya is Veeryalabha, attainment of immense spiritual strength and Samadhi. So be on the alert. Be vigilant. Be diligent. Become ideal Brahmacharins, ideal citizens, ideal Indians, Yogis, Vedantins, sages and Bhagavatas. All you can do through the power of Brahmacharya. Become a Bhishma, Hanuman, Lakshmana. It is within you, tot make yourself a great Yogi. Also do no neglect your material prosperity. Both are necessary, material and spiritual,—not lopsided development. Wealth is necessary. Acquire wealth and spend it in charity, in serving the poor, in serving spiritual institutions. There is a great work before you.

Spiritual discipline is very necessary for keeping the body, mind and the senses under your control. Some people like moving about always. This is due to Rajas. If you sit in one Asana, this Rajas will be removed. So sitting in one Asana is a help to remove Rajas. Practice of Tratak, gazing on a spot or the Lord's picture steadily, will make the mind and eyes steady. When the eyes are steady and the mind is steady, you will have good concentration. These are the aids for bringing the body and the senses under control, for purifying the heart and mind. And when you are purified, you will have very good meditation, and you will be able to rest in your own Satchidananda Swaroopa. So let us all practise spiritual discipline.

—Swami Sivananda's
Satsanga Bhavan Lectures,
pp. 109, 70.

16. DIVERSITY OF THEME AND RICHNESS OF THOUGHT IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO DR. CHHATRAPATI :

A COLLECTION of letters written by Swami Sivananda to Dr. Chhatrapati, this book contains instructions for leading a purer and better life as a preparation for the realisation of the Self.

—*Sunday Times*, Madras.

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO DR. CHHATRAPATI :

DR. H. J. Chhatrapati, a medical practitioner of Junagadh, is presumably a great admirer of this spiritual teacher, and he is the proud possessor of a large number of letters from the Swami. These letters deal with problems both of this world and the other. With the pious intention of allowing others interested like him in spiritual matters, to share the pearls of wisdom embedded in these letters, he has collected them in a pamphlet.

—*The Hindustan Times*,
New Delhi.

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO DR. CHHATRAPATI :

SWAMI Sivananda is known to take great delight in writing personal letters to his disciples covering a wide range of topics social, medical, religious and spiritual. Here are some of his fine letters to Dr. Chhatrapati which may also prove useful to spiritual aspirants and others for attaining spiritual as well as material progress.

—*The Hitavada*,
Nagpur.

17. SIVANANDA : HIS STEPS TO A REFLECTION UPON THE LIMITATIONS OF WORLDLY LIFE AND HIS WAY TO GOD-REALIZATION

THIS world appears to be very beautiful, charming and attractive. Delicious drinks, luscious fruits, fragrant flowers, sweets and toffees, tea and coffee, beautiful women and magnificent gardens—and the mind is attracted to them. The man who has no discrimination and dispassion is attracted ; he lives in Maya, thinks always of Maya, dwells upon constantly sensual objects, and is filled with Asubha Vasanas. He leads an Asuric life in this world.

But, reflect for a moment on the true nature of this world. With all these beautiful things, there is a constant under-current of Janma, Mrityu, Jara and Vyadhi—birth, death, old age and disease. Loss of property, death of near relatives and dear friends, dishonour and defeat, these are the things that you experience daily, even though you run after the beautiful objects, thinking they will give you unalloyed happiness. You are immersed in sorrow. You are sorely disappointed. You have misunderstood the nature of the world. This is a world of pain, sorrow and death. You cannot get real peace, happiness or bliss in this world, from these sense-objects. Where can you get them ?

Behind these names and forms, behind these fleeting sense-objects, behind these perishable phenomena, there is the Satchidananda Para-Brahman, full of bliss, full of eternal peace and wisdom, illumination and enlightenment. Attain this Atma, through study of sacred scriptures, meditation, Japa, Kirtan and Satsang. You will be freed from the trammels of the flesh, from slavery to the mind, from the shackles of transmigration.

Avidya, Kama and Karma bind you to this wheel of birth and death. You have

forgotten your real essential nature. You are ignorant of your Satchidananda Swaroopa. Therefore, you feel that happiness lies in this external objects of the senses. And, desire arises in you for them. Then you exert to obtain them, and Karma results. Karma brings about birth and death.

Therefore, if you want to free yourself from birth and death, free yourself from desires, from attachment, from Asubha Vasanas, and ultimately from this primordial ignorance, develop discrimination, dispassion, serenity of mind. Practise the Ashtanga Yoga of Patanjali Maharishi, Bhakti Yoga of Devarishi Narada, Jnana Yoga of Sankaracharya, Karma Yoga of Bhagavan Krishna or the Yoga of Synthesis which is most suitable to the modern age. You will be freed from birth and death. You will enjoy eternal bliss. This is the goal. This is your Dharma. You have taken birth here as a human being in order to reach this goal here and now, in this very birth. If you do not strive to reach the goal, you are wasting your life, and neglecting this precious gift of human birth.

Forget not the goal. In order not to forget the goal, Satsang is most essential. Satsang keeps the fire of aspiration alive in your heart. It is a shield to protect you from lapsing into lethargy, from gliding back into the old grooves of sense-cravings, from forgetting your goal. Satsang is your best friend, your spiritual nourishment. Satsang is greater than your parents; your parents gave the body, but Satsang gives you spiritual illumination. Satsang is one of the fundamental means of attaining God-realisation. Where there is Satsang, Mahatmas and great saints assemble. They remind you of the Reality; they guard you against the unreal glitter of worldly objects; they save you from the formidable ocean of Samsara. Their glorious example inspires you; their soul-elevating Upadesh is your guide. From Satsang you get practical lessons in control of mind, concentration and meditation.

—Swami Sivananda's
Satsang Bhavan Lectures,
pp. 79-81.

18. THE ADORABLE EASTERN GUIDE : HIS LETTERS FOR SPIRITUALISATION OF THE WORLD

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO
DR. H.J. CHHATRAPATI :

THIS is the second in a series of letters from the Swamiji to a pupil. Throughout, the book illustrates the devotion and service the Easterner gives his teacher, which we miss in the West, where the pupil so often comes to get without giving in return.

—S.H., *The Acquarian Path*,
London.

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO
DR. H.J. CHHATRAPATI :

THE book contains a collection of one hundred and one letters written by Swami Sivananda to Dr. Chhatrapati of Junagad, over a number of years, from 1943 to 1950. At best the letters give the impression that the Swamiji has all along been giving to the Doctor, suitable prescriptions for the upliftment of the soul by practising severe *Sadhana*.

—*The Fire*, Kanpur.

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO DR. H.J. CHHATRAPATI :

A faithful compilation by a faithful Sadhaka who shares his joy with others, far and close, who might be eager aspirant for a similar joy.

—*The Wednesday Review*
Tiruchirapalli.

19. LESSONS FOR MENTAL BALANCE UNDER THE STRESS AND STRAIN OF LIFE

Blessed Self,

30th June, 1946.

Adorations.

Try your level best to keep cool and calm in difficulties, adversities and trying conditions of life. Pray fervently from the bottom of your heart and wait. Help is bound to come. Have firm, perfect and on-pointed faith in God.

Develop universal sympathy and cosmic love of pure nature. Lead a life of oneness and unity. Have deep, concentrated, right thinking.

Forget not the goal. Everyday place a step further towards the goal. Maya will assume various forms. Watch. Pray. Conquer obstacles.

May the All-merciful Lord guide you in all your activities !

Thy own Self,
Sivananda.

—*Sivananda's Letters to Dr. Chhatrapati*, pp. 55-56.

SIVANANDA'S ACCENT OF PERSISTENT EFFORT

INSPIRING LETTERS :

This book is a collection of the various letters received by Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh along with the replies sent by him to the correspondents concerned. The letters are classified under different headings such as 'Guru and Disciple', 'Nivritti Marga', 'Brahmacharya', 'Hatha Yoga', 'Raja Yoga', 'Jnana Yoga,' etc., with a useful glossary and index. The letters and the replies deal with the numerous doubts and difficulties which confront spiritual aspirants in their path of progress and author has tried to elucidate them in his own characteristic simple style devoid of highly philosophical and metaphysical expressions. The Swamiji rightly emphasises that the whole work must be done by the aspirants themselves, because he says, 'now-a-days people want a drop of water from the Kamandal of a Sannyasin and desire to enter into Samadhi immediately. They are not prepared to undergo any Sadhana for purification and Self-realisation. They want a magic pill to push them into Samadhi.' As the spiritual path is 'thorny,

slippery and rugged', one must have iron determination, patience and perseverance to reach the goal. The book contains numerous practical hints not only for householders-men and women but for students and Sannyasins as well.

—*The Leader,*
Allahabad.

21. THE PROCESSES OF MENTAL PURIFICATION

BELOVED Ram,

10th July, '37.

For a beginner in the spiritual path, a Guru is necessary. When the mind becomes purified, the purified mind itself becomes the Guru. A Guru can clear doubts, show the spiritual path and inspire his Chelas. The rest of the work will have to be done by the aspirant, himself. Self-reliance is necessary.

Guru Kripa, grace of a Guru is very necessary. That does not mean that the disciple should sit idle. He must do rigid Purushartha, spiritual practices. The whole work must be done by the student. Now-a-days people want a drop of water from the Kamandal of a Sannysin and desire to enter into Samadhi immediately. They are not prepared to undergo any Sadhana for purification and Self-realization. They want a magic pill to push them into Samadhi. If you have got such delusion, give it up immediately.

If you carry out all the instructions given in this letter, then you will get a true Guru. If you implicitly obey the instructions of your Guru and do spiritual practices with interest and attention and please your Guru by all these Sadhanas, then you will get His Grace. What is wanted is rigid Tapas. Then alone the Grace from Guru (God) will descend and not by merely saying : "I have accepted you as my Guru. Give me Diksha or initiation and Mantra."

How to qualify yourself to be a disciple ? Purify your mind. Develop such qualities as nobility, courage, magnanimity, generosity, love, straightforwardness and truthfulness and eradicate all evil qualities such as lust, greed, anger, avarice, Raga-dwesha and such other negative qualities which stand in the way of ethical perfection and Self-realization. Ethical perfection is a prerequisite to Self-realization. No amount of practice can be of any solid value to the aspirant if he ignores this side of Sadhana. Love all. Prostrate before everybody. Be kind to all. Talk sweet, loving and endearing words. Fail not to observe the vow of celibacy at any cost. One cannot thrive on successfully in the path of spirituality if he does not preserve his vital fluid. Eradicate lust and passion first. Develop Bhakti. That indeed is the first step before you approach a Guru.

Purify yourself. Give up selfishness, pride, egoism, hypocrisy. Regenerate your lower nature. Enquire your mind in silent moments whether it really wants Mukti or it simply talks of higher things out of curiosity or getting Siddhis for knocking money by exhibiting to the public. Find out if there is burning Vairagya or if the mind wants to have a son or daughter. Do not cheat yourself. Develop Vairagya first. Your Guru will come to you.

Carefully read this letter thrice. I am always at your service. Whenever you find any difficulty in the course of your Sadhana you can write to me. Always enclose stamps for my reply. Be sincere and earnest. You will attain the ever-lasting Bliss.

Ever Thy Own,
Swami Sivananda.

—*Insipring Letters*,
pp. 30-33.

22. SIVANANDA, EVERYMAN'S SPIRITUAL COMPANION

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO GAJANAN :

SRI Gajanan Sharma, a seeker after spiritual solace, began contacting His Holiness Sri Sivananda Saraswati of Rishikesh in 1946 through correspondence which naturally led him steadfastly to spiritual Sadhana and bliss. This book contains some of the letters received by him from the revered Swamiji. Three of them are facsimile reproductions of the Swamiji's own handwriting.

—*My Magazine*,
Madras.

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO GAJANAN :

THIS book contains stimulating advice on matters spiritual in the shape of letters from Swami Sivananda Saraswati to a disciple, Sri Gajanan Sharma.

—*The Hindu*,
Madras.

23. THE INNER POWER THROUGH DIVINE WISDOM

PRIYA Atman,

Salutations. Thy diary for September and resolve form for September and October.

Stick to the resolves, the lower mind will always try to deceive you. Be on the alert. By controlling a desire your Will-power will increase. You will have more inner power to fight with the senses and mind. You will have to experience this yourself, by actually controlling your desires.

Place before the mind the fruits of Self-realisation such as Immortality, Eternal bliss, Supreme peace and infinite knowledge. Also think of the defects of sensual life. Sensual pleasure is momentary, deceptive, and imaginary. It is an enemy of Brahma Jnana. You will develop real Vairagya.

Through repeated failure to find true and lasting satisfaction and happiness in material objects of this world, you arrive eventually at discrimination, right understanding, wisdom and true knowledge. Knocks and blows, pain and miseries open your eyes to transcendental divine things and generate aspiration for the Divine.

Use intelligently life's forces. Obey the law. Abandon wrong thinking and wrong

action. Lead the divine life. Practice humility and self-surrender. You will not be a blind victim of circumstances. You can overcome disorder and disharmony. You will enter the path of victory. No evil will harm you. You will become a superman.

May you shine as a dynamic Yogin in this very birth !

Thy own Self,

—Sivananda.

Sivananda's Letters to Gajanan, p. 14.

24. SIVANANDA, THE INDIAN PROMETHEUS : HIS LIGHT ON LIFE'S PROBLEMS

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

THE compendious volume of over five hundred pages contains a collection of Swami Sivananda's very inspiring letters to an earnest seeker and Sadhaka. It is full of instructions on practical Sadhana and deals with initial lessons in Vedanta, character of the Divine Life, Yoga for the West, Amrita Gita. The first part of the book contains several illuminating studies of the Swamiji by several distinguished disciples of the East and the West who unanimously acclaim him as the Prophet of the Age whose many- sided life and activity are all calculated to restore the equilibrium of a world rapidly drifting down the precipice of wrong ideals, destructive means, and misapplication of scientific findings.

Sri Swamiji's letters to an aspirant are pearls of absolute wisdom, containing crisp and direct statements on many problems that confront man in his various life-phases. They moreover point to the moral, spiritual and religious means that can lead us to permanent solutions for all problems. A study of these is bound to provide the background and create the atmosphere necessary for a correct approach to the understanding of the problems and the difficulties. Sri Swamiji next assigns the proper values to things, events and developments and emphasises this cultivation of the sense of values. Indeed it is to the wrong sense of values that most of the ills of man can be truthfully ascribed.

Sri Swamiji is a great tower of spiritual illumination directing the Sadhaks who contact him by appropriate advice. His letters are a unique means whereby intimate relations are established with devotees all over the world. The book under review is of great utility in solving difficulties of every description one faces day after day, by the cultivation of correct attitudes, proper adjustment and a sense of values. It is one more valuable addition to the great series which have been published already by the institutions personally guided by Sivananda.

—*Champion*,
Calicut.

25. THE ROLE OF SELF-ANALYSIS IN CHITTA SHUDDHI

BELOVED Immortal Self, 22nd July, 1950.

Thy kind letter of the 17th July.

Surely such experiences as those you have related, are the results of very good spiritual Samskaras created by past Yogic practices.

A pure mind can make the best use of these and help spiritual evolution. But, an impure mind will utilise them for fattening egoism, pride, etc.

Therefore, the main thing is to make the mind pure through rigorous self-analysis, eradication of evil tendencies, cultivation of virtues, meditation, Japa, Pranayama, etc. Kindly be regular in the maintenance of the Spiritual Diary and send me a copy every month. I will serve you nicely and guide you. May God bless you !

Thy Comrade-in-Sadhana,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-Realisation*, p. 253.

26. SIVANANDA, THE DISPELLER OF DOUBTS

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

SIXTH in the "Inspiring Letters Series", this five-hundred-page book contains a collection of letters written by Swami Sivananda to a disciple in the process of clearing his doubts and solving his problems. As most of these doubts and problems are all common to all Sadhakas and seekers of Truth, a deep study of this book would throw a flood of light on each individual step in the path to Realisation. In addition to the illuminating letters, the volume contains "First Lessons on Vedanta", "Charter of Divine Life", "Yoga for the West", and "Amrita Gita."

—*Sunday Times*, Madras.

27. SIVANANDA'S INTERPRETATION OF THE INCARNATION OF KRISHNA

ETERNAL Satchidananda-Swaroop ! 19th March, 1940.

What is it that came as Lord Krishna ? What is Lord Krishna in essence ? His body ? No : because that body had limbs, a shape, a colour, etc., and was finite. That something within Him was HE ! THAT SOMETHING is YOUR own Self ! And, That Something is the Self of all—Vasudeva Sarvam. Only the outer cloak is different. In a Sage, in a decoit, in a learned pundit, in an illiterate villager, in the Prime Minister, in the peasant, in the cow, in the dog, in the tree—in every atom of Creation this Something is present : obviously that Something is beyond also: for, WE DO NOT KNOW. To know is to limit. To realise is to BE THAT. Thou art That. Meditate on this Truth and realise It.

There is a significane in Lord Krishna having assumed a blue-coloured form also. Look at the sky above. You know well that it is all empty space. Yet, it appears to the eyes as blue ! Optical illusion ! That is a lesson to us. Lord Krishna's Blue Form is really an indication to us not to be misled into the belief that He is only that Form of a Flute-Bearing Boy, but that He is, in truth, Formless and Nameless, All-Pervading Essence—*Satchidananda*. The Form was only to help the Sadhaka fix his mind.

Meditate on this. Enthrone Lord Krishna in your heart. Then dissolve all Names and Forms. Enquire into the Essential Nature of all Names and Forms. Don't give up the enquiry till your mind gets quiescent and tranquil. You will experience a Supreme Peace and Great Bliss. Gradual practise will grant you that Great Experience—Samadhi. May God bestow Final Emancipation on you, in this very birth !

May you live drowned in the ocean of Bliss in an illumined state.

Thy own Self in Satchidananda,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-Realisation*, pp. 143-144.

28. HUMANITY'S SPIRITUAL QUEST AND SIVANANDA THE BEST GUIDE

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

THIS nicely got up and attractive book is mainly a collection of Sri Swami Sivananda's inspiring letters to an earnest seeker and Sadhak. Practical Sadhana, First Lessons in Vedanta, Character of Divine Living, Yoga for the West, Amrita Gita, are included in this book. Sri Shradha Ratna Pannalal is the person to whom most of the instructive letters have been addressed. He is following the Upanishadic maxim 'Acharya devo Bhava', that is, treat your Guru as your God. It is that complete surrender and faith that have roused His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda to instruct him fully and forcibly so as to touch the inmost secrets of the Sishya's nature. One might at first fancy that the teaching, being personal to a particular Sishya, may not serve any purpose for others. But going through these letters, almost every reader will find that many of the difficulties and problems, the defects and drawbacks of this particular Sishya, are found amongst numerous other people including every reader. So, every earnest reader will do very well to go carefully through all the instructions in these letters and note with joy how many of the instructions are directly applicable to himself. It is not possible for most readers to have personal access to His Holiness who is busy contacting hundreds of disciples and seekers for help in all nooks and corners of the country and beyond, through post. Delicacy may prevent many people from seeking such access or contact. The Publication of this book is an excellent remedy for all these disadvantages. It enables even shy and sensitive Sadhaks to have practically the fullest benefit of His Holiness' teachings without the teacher knowing that he is imparting any aid or information. This is exactly what occurred in the case of Ekalava; who was very anxious to get at the best teacher in the world to impart Dhanur Veda to him, namely, Dronacharya. But Dronacharya declined to be his Guru for that purpose. Not daunted by the refusal, Ekalava, with gigantic faith in the power of the Guru, made a clay-figure of the Acharya and in the immediate presence of that clay figure, he practised Dhanur Veda. "Thy faith has made thee whole", was the remark of one great spiritual Star of Palestine. Ekalava's faith was so perfect that the entire spirit and power of Dronacharya came into the image, and thence into the heart of the Bhakta so that he became

perfect in Dhanur Veda much to the surprise and chargin of Arjuna. Readers who care to place such Ekalava faith in His Holiness in the solitary recesses of their heart and practise the teaching in the solitude of their own homes, sea-shores, temples, forests, or other suitable places, utilising this book, will obtain an experience similar to Ekalava's. They will find that on almost every topic, the present and other similar publications of Sivananda will fill up the void in their hearts and serve as an excellent staff to support themselves in their march to the heights of spirituality. For the purpose of enchancing the Guru-bhakti so essential for progress, this volume has included several articles or pamphlets describing or extolling the nature of the greatness of the personality of Sivananda. The earnest aspirants will find the value of this excellent addition. One must renounce egotism and with all humility embrace the feet of the Guru, before one could derive the best from that Guru.

Describing the benefits of Padatirtham, the Guru Gita says that the acceptance of that Tirtham will wash off haughtiness, egotism, etc., from the heart of the Bhakta and make it really receptive and highly sensitive so as to prepare the soil of that heart for the refreshing rains and seeds of truth flowing from the gracious Master. One can go on in this strain to any extent about this book, for it fully deserves and requires such a commendation or recommendation. But in view of lack of space and lack of time, we shall close this review with giving only a few samples of the instructions contained in this volume.

The instructions are so very full and varied that a Sadhaka, who has mastered them by reading and re-reading any number of times may find the book a valuable dictionary of reference, which in times of difficulty, he may, with great advantage, consult readily. Some of the instructions contained in the letters are as follows :—Inspiring appeals to the reader to be up and doing ; to work towards perfection ; to equip oneself with Sadhana Chatushtaya, to remember the eva nescence of the world in order to strengthen one's own Vairgya, to give up sense pleasures and free oneself from the body-consciousness; the revelation in forcible terms as to what real happiness is, which alone ought to be aimed at, and describing it in accordance with Scriptures as the bliss of Atman, which is the first and central teaching ; the appeal to the reader to lose no time and to start Sadhana at once so that he may learn the secret of self-transformation and utilise one's human birth which one gets in accordance with the law of Karma, so that one may pass on from a bad or indifferent life to a good life and thence to God-life, and thus conquer the world and oneself.

Truths have to be repeated constantly and rubbed into oneself and none should feel any delicacy or shyness in doing his utmost to grasp the essence of all scriptures, and to realise everything heard or read, as part and parcel of one's own nature. That the Guru stresses the need to make resolves and renew them, and keeps a watch on one's daily routine, is a much needed advice. The use one can make of Nature, which is a silent teacher, and even of one's failure in one's efforts as other valuable aids to one's progress, is another valuable teaching. His Holiness' constant insistance on the cultivation of virtues, most of which are embodied

in Sadhana Chatushtaya or in the Yama-Niyama prescriptions but which are here given with simplicity and originality so as to capture the heart of the Sadhaka, is highly impressive and useful. He urges on the Sadhaka to renounce, to be bold, to be righteous, to be sincere, to adapt to each position, to be contented, charitable, self-confident, optimistic, patient, persevering, selfless, self-controlled and detached. In his letters, he points out that spiritual strength is the great need of the hour and urges on the Sadhaka to free himself from evil as the first step in self-conquest, and for that purpose to be ever vigilant, never lazy, never selfish, never miserable, egotistic, or worried about oneself or about other matters. He calls on the devotee to break the bond of attachment which leads to anger and to see that he has no enemies at all—not even amongst the lower creatures such as rats and snakes—to maintain perfect Brahmacharya and to root out the animal instinct in himself. He prescribes particular Asanas, for instance, Siddhaasan as helpful for Brahmacharya and for overcoming passion. In other letters, he reveals the secret of Karma Yoga and spurs the Sadhaka to serve spiritual institutions and achieve spiritual communion with the Divine, to note that God is working within oneself as well as in the Sadhus one serves. He exhorts the Sadhaka to Tapas and self-discipline, to shake off fear and stand firm in Abhayam, as the same is the basis of all Yoga, especially Jnana Yoga. In yet other letters, he describes the nature of God and God-love, the various stages of Bhakti, and the part played in our Sadhana, by daily prayer, specially noticing the efficacy of prayer in Sadhana. He recommends especially Sri Krishna Bhakti.

Sivananda enjoins on every earnest seeker the practice of the Presence of God so highly valued as the essence of Christian piety. He also shows how one in the midst of business, can associate God with the business and make every act of life a real part of spiritual Sadhana. His Holiness is so well-known for his Bhajans and insistance on the Kirtan of the Lord's Name which really is the basis of all strong faith and spirituality. Akhanda Kirtan, Japa and Yajna, especially referring to the glories of one's Ishta Devata, are duly stressed. To the progressing devotees, he points out that the Lord is ever with them. He points out also how when suffering comes, the Sadhaks should not give way and break up their Sadhana. He points out why the Bhakta suffers and also the remedy at hand for the suffering, that is, the utilisation of that very suffering for developing one's spiritual progress through surrender to the Supreme Will. Such surrender will destroy Karma and make one feel that all that happens to one is for the best. One has to keep in tune with the Divine and see the Divine Hand in every happening, so that worry, sorrow and distraction will completely disappear. It is such a devotee that can be described as God's heir. What has been detailed above is only a small fraction of the vast mass of instruction that is found in this volume. This must suffice to hearten the reader to go through the book from cover to cover, again and again, and feel that to be a real guide or hand-book for most in the all-important spiritual quest.

—*Sai Suddha,*
Madras.

29. SIVANANDA'S METHODS FOR OVERCOMING WORRY

BELOVED Atman,

Nothing has ever been achieved by worrying ; on the contrary worry has always been the greatest stumbling block to success in the undertaking about which the man worries ! Therefore, give up worrying; be still, tranquil and peaceful. Your very nature is Eternal Tranquility of the Atman. Remove thorns one by one; you will cease to suffer pain at heart. Stop throwing pebbles into the lake : you will find that the lake soon resumes its perfect stillness. Past is past ! Future is unknown ! But, the Present is in your hands. Live the Present well.

I am glad that the Antaryamin in you has prompted you to ask for the only remedy to all human ills, which alone can give you that Peace and Bliss. That remedy is *self-surrender to the Lord* and His remembrance. There is a Key to open the gates of His Realm ; and it is : OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VASUDEVAYA, the Great Dwadasakshara Mantra which Narada taught to Dhruva, which not only helped the latter to regain his rightful place here, but earned for him the immortal status of the Dhruva Nakshatra ! You are now initiated into this Great Mantra. Repeat it all times, particularly between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m. and at bed-time and if possible in the evening also. Whenever the worry threatens to enter thy heart, repeat the Mantra ; the worry will fly away.

You can initiate your family also into this great Mantra. You can sing the Mantra nicely ; you can do Japa of the Mantra, mentally. And, you can, write the Mantra (in any script) in a note-book regularly. All these will give you peace and bliss.

Remember the story of Kuchela. His condition was worse than what you could imagine even. And, when he went to Lord Krishna, he was so overwhelmed by the Lord's Love that he forget to ask him for wealth. The Lord, who is the Antaryamin of all, knew it and had not need to hear Kuchela's predicament from his lips. Kuchela became Kubera ! Repeat His Name always : pray for devotion and yet more intense devotion. You will find that all problems melt away before this Great Sun of devotion to His Lotus-Feet.

May God bless you all with health, long life, peace, prosperity and Kaivalya !

My respects and adorations to all.

Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realisation,*
pp. 174-175.

30. SIVANANDA, THE SAINT FOR THE MILLIONS : HIS ILLUMINATING INSTRUCTIONS

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

MILLIONS of people, all over the world, read Swami Sivananda's valuable writings on matters pertaining to the divine life, with interest and profit, and the present book which is a summary of most of his teachings will be welcomed by the reading public all over the world. It contains instructions imparted by the great saint to all Sadhaks and in addition, it contains lengthy

parts devoted to such subjects as First Lessons in Vedanta, Character of Divine Living, Yoga for the West, and Amrita Gita. There are also several extracts from various writers containing appreciations of the Swamiji's work and mission in life. The teachings of the Swamiji while leading to assured spiritual results are of the most practical character. He says: "You must be friendly with the four sentinels, i.e., Shanti (quiescence of mind), Santosh (contentment), Satsang (association with Sages) and Vichara (Atmic enquiry)". He also says. "You must have faith, aspiration and devotion. You must have a pure heart, a clean conscience and an irresistable will, fiery determination and tenacity of purpose". He is one of those that have realised that humanity is one, that life is one, that God is one and that, in consequence, Dharma is also one. One of the books included in the volume—Book IV—is styled 'Yogasaropanishad' or Wisdom Nectar. It contains fourteen aphorisms which contain the essence of all Yogas. This is one of the few books the reading of which improves men's character and morals.

—*The Federated India*, Madras.

31. SIVANANDA'S PRINCIPLES FOR FACING UNKIND CRITICISM

BELOVED Atman,

24th January, 1948.

Your problem is simple and easy of solution. I will suggest several methods of getting over this imaginary fear. Follow them and be free.

When someone criticises you, forget that man. Think over within yourself: "Is it true?" If the criticism is true, then correct yourself. If it is not, ignore it. Supposing I call you a man, you will not get offended; supposing I say "You are a woman" you should ignore it, as any one's calling you what you are not, will not change what you are! If you tread the Path of Virtue, if you lead the Divine Life and if you have a character beyond reproach, then this fear will vanish. Even if people criticise you, you will be convinced that their criticism is baseless.

The best reply so destructive criticism is a deaf ear! The worst retort to a gross insult, is ignoring it! The best antidote to the poison of hatred, is love. Remember these three points well.

This world is a play of Maya. All these actors come upon the stage for a few miniutes and then disappear. What does it matter if some one speaks ill of you? When one does speak ill of you, at once go back mentally to a date ten years ago: "Where is that man who is now insulting you?" Or, live mentally, say, in 1960. Perhaps, then you would have long forgotten the incident which, disturbs your peace today.

You should practise Sadhana. You should meditate regularly. Read some good spiritual literature everyday. Understand things aright. Be fearless. Be bold. Treat the world with contempt. Have the one great aspiration, "I must realise God."

May you be in direct communion with the Lord, thy Ishtam, Guide, supreme refuge and solace!

In Life Divine,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realisation*,
pp. 215-216.

32. SIVANANDA'S LUMINOUS TEACHINGS OF IRRESISTIBLE CHARM

THE GUIDING LIGHTS :

THE book under notice is a fairly big book every page of which is strewn with rays of light and hope which dispel the gloom of doubts and indecisions, enthuse and inspire the disappointed, the strayed, the waylaid.

Swamiji's letters, characteristic of his powerful personality and irresistible charm, form the substance of the book under notice, They are based on the questions put by the aspirants and the curious seeking steady, undying light that can safely and surely guide them on and on to their cherished destination. What is said therein is said with directness, force and finality. Every word is alive with the breath and the spirit of one who has realised all that is worth realizing. The sincerity and the confidence with which Swamiji speaks therein are simple and majestic,

—Dr. A.S. Gopani,
Bhavan's Journul,
Bombay.

33. THE SPIRIT OF A KARMA YOGIN

Sri Dr. Adhwaryoo.

BELOVED Atman,

Om Namo Narayanaya !

You all came as angels, comforted the patients, gave them a new vision, a new life. Is this not Supreme Yoga taught by Lord Krishna in the Gita ?

Worship God in the poor and the sick.
Root yourself in God.
The Light is within you.
Be up and doing.
Have equal vision.
Behold the Self in all.
Give. Give. Give.
Develop the power of endurance.
Be fiery in your determination.
Draw strength from within.

Sivananda.

—*The Guiding Lights,*
p. 19.

34. SCINTILLATING GUIDES FROM SELF-REALIZATION

THE GUIDING LIGHTS :

A UNIQUE volume containing 575 letters written by Swami Sivananda in his own hand-writing to his devotees seeking spiritual guidance. Here the reader will feel impressed by the words of the master which shine with the illumination of his realisation.

—*The Chetana,*
Bombay.

35. SIVANANDA'S ART OF WORSHIP WHILE AT WORK

SRI Devaki Kutty, M.B.B.S.,M.R.C.O.G., 11-9-1953

Lucknow.

Om Namo Narayanaya

Adorable Immortal Self,

Salutations and adorations.

Thy kind letter.

As you have got tremendous work, you can do a little Japa and meditation in the early morning as soon as you get up and at night before you retire to bed. During work you can practise a little Nam Smaran. Even if there is a break it does not matter. In the early morning practise mild Kumbhak or retention of breath and recite OM mentally when you retain the breath. Do this for 5 minutes. This will give you abundant energy. Detach. Attach.

D.I.N.
Devotion, dedication, discipline
Service, sacrifice and sublimation
Aspiration, renunciation and meditation
Enquiry, discovery, recovery.
May Lord bless you.

Om Tat Sat.
Thy Own Self,
With regards, Prem and OM,
Sivananda.

—*The Guiding Lights*,
pp. 17-18

36. SIVANANDA'S ENLIGHTENING EPISTLES ON THE LIFE DIVINE

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO GAJANAN :

THIS work advises Gajanan on matters spiritual. Swamiji takes great delight in writing individual letters to thousands of his disciples all over the world and Sri Gajanan is one among such fortunate souls to receive letters often from Gurudev. With the permission of Swamiji, Sri Gajanan Sharma has published the letters in a book form.

—*The Wednesday Review*,
Tiruchirapalli.

37. CARDINAL SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS FOR THE CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS

Beloved Atman, 29th December, 1939.

THY very kind letter of the 17th December.

Incessant Vichara is the only thing that can give you peace. Happiness is hidden in peace. You are happiest when your mind is in the most quiescent condition. This state you daily experience in deep sleep. There you actually forget completely all your past experiences ! And you are happy. When you come back to the waking state of consciousness again, you begin to recollect the memory of your experience : and you feel pleasure and pain.

When the senses are tired, when the mind, too, is exhausted, when you want to sleep and to sleep only, (examine this condition of yourself !) you care for nothing, you bother not on what you are lying down—whether it is your own best bed or a piece of gunny rag—you do not care if it is your own house you are in or a railway station platform—you want to sleep, and you *will* sleep ! Does this not conclusively prove that your happiness is independent of all the various things that you call "mine" ? Does this not also show that Peace which is the characteristic of this state of deep sleep. alone can give you happiness ?

Meditate. Pray. Do Japa and Kirtan. For, through these alone will you be able to rise to this state of Peace and mental quiescence in which you will experience unalloyed bliss.

Ever thy humble Sevak,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realization*, p. 14.

38. SIVANANDA : HIS ENGAGING STYLE AND THE ESSENCE OF HIS SADHANAS

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

THIS sumptuous volume contains letters written by the Swami to his devotees and Bhaktas giving them guidance on the path of Sadhana. They are written in a direct and engaging style, and deal with topics such as Bases of Yoga, Essence of Yoga Sadhana, the Great Guides, the Cultivation of Virtues (Atmagunas), Victory over the lower self and Selfless Service, Devotion to God, the Auxiliaries to Sadhana, and Conquest over Mind, Towards a Better World, and lastly, with the Highest Achievement and the Path of Light. The Appendices refer to practical Sadhana, First Lessons in Vedanta and the Character of Divine Living. The *Guide* also includes the books *Yoga for the West*, the *Amrita Gita*, *Yogasaropanishad* and a commentary which gives the cue that the Ten Upanishadas are composed by the Swami himself. The texts of Sri Kanakadhara Stotram, Sri Subramanya Bhujangaprayata Stotram, Srimad Hanumadashtottara Shata Namavali, Sani Stotram and Dakshanamurti Ashtottara Shatanamavali, are also given.

—*The Hindu*,
Madras.

39. SIVANANDA : SOME ASPECTS OF HIS APPLIED SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY

BLESSED Self, 4th April, 1949.

Thy kind letter.

And, who does not have the element of anger ? But, the brave ones who wish to preserve their vitality and to direct all their energies to the pursuit of the holy aim of realising God constantly, endeavour to

eradicate this element from their being. You are a brave one ! Therefore, get over anger. Don't get upset when you fail ! For, that is worse. Mark ! if in March you got angry a dozen times, in April you reduce this to ten . and so on till you achieve the goal.

The world is full of the opposites – love and hatred. But, if you will, you can annihilate these within yourself. That is the secret and that should be done. Try your best to please everyone : and if they turn against you, you have the power *not* to make them enemies. One cannot be your enemy unless you also acquiesce in this relationship. You go on loving all : doing good to all, for that is good to your own Self.

And, remember, a true Bhkta knows that life, its joys and sorrows, it ups and downs are all His gifts; and he greets all with a smiling face. God-Love transforms everything into bliss. This leads to complete oneness with the Beloved. Then, no misery, no more trials, no more tribulations. A Para Bhakta *craves not* for Moksha or even merely for His Darshan. He lives for Him; he lives in Him and ultimately he becomes that which He is !

May God bless you !

Thy own Self,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realisation*,
pp. 106.

40. SIVANANDA'S LETTERS ON THE DYNAMICS OF HUMAN MIND IN RELATION TO SELF-TRANSCENDENCE

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO DR. CHHATRAPATI :

THIS booklet contains letters written to Dr. Chhatrapati by Swami Sivanandaji. Ordinarly, personal letters do not interest common readers unless they reflect on subjects of general interest. Swamiji's letters to the doctor are of an instructive value to all the readers in as much as they deal with subjects of common interest, like Sadhana, Meditation, Love, Truth, Service, Sacrifice, etc. These letters are of varied interest to the readers. A few lines from the letters are quoted below which would speak for themselves. In the letter bearing No. 6, Sivananda, writes :—

The mind, in the initial stage, has to be coaxed to fix itself on God. It has its old habits of running into the nasty ruts of worldly desires or thoughts. When it is pulled back again, at every step, it gets the required training and becomes meek and submissive. *Samatva* is Yoga. To attain this is very easy only for one who is sincere."

In letter No. 67, he says :—

"Love is life ; contraction is death. One should die but once.....one filled with hatred dies at every turn of his life."

Again in letter No, 75, he says :—

"To love the public is to love God ; to serve them is to worship Him in the best possible manner."

I am sure, lines like these must create an interesting reading to the average readers.

—*The Indian Nation*,
Patna.

41. SIVANANDA'S ELEMENTS OF YOGA SADHANA IN DAILY LIFE, FOR EVERY TEMPERAMENT

BLESSED Child of the Lord !

I have received your two delightful letters.

Yoga has a solution to every person's problems, however complicated. Yoga is for every one in whatever situation in life he or she might be placed. You are perfectly right when you say that each individual should have the liberty of chalking out his or her path to God. That is what happens, whether one wills or not. No two persons look exactly like each other, not even father and son. No two minds think exactly alike. There are some "patterns"—that is all. That is so with Yoga, too. Each person does chalk out his or her own path, in accordance with the innate tendencies of the mind and the external circumstances. The various paths described by the scriptures are only broad "patterns" or indications of the Path.

As there are some things in common for all peoples, e.g., eating, drinking, sleeping there are certain fundamentals in Yoga which are common to all, and which are imperative. Truth is one. You have to be absolutely truthful. Non-violence or, positively, Love. You should love all and hate none. Purify. You should be spotlessly pure. These three practically go together.

If you try conscientiously to practise these three virtues, all problems will be solved. There will arise a desire in you to know why you should practise these virtues, what for you live at all. It is to realise the Godhead within; it is to realise that you are Eternal, Immortal. These virtues are the characteristics of that Godhead within. If you wish to realise the Godhead, then you naturally should strive to express that Godhead in your every-day life.

I am very glad to know that you keep yourself intensely active throughout the whole day. That is one of the surest means of keeping the mind away from evil. Yet, I should think that a week's rest in a quiet place, to be spent mostly in meditation would do you a world of good. For, that will enable you to practise the exercise that I am going to suggest to you.

Spend the whole week in silent meditation in seclusion. Be silent as far as you can. Study some good book on Yoga: I am sending you "Concentration and Meditation" separately. Think, think, think. Feel that the Spirit that indwells you, is in every one else, too. Feel that Spirit is a calm witness of all that you do, as calm as you are when you are fast asleep, but yet fully conscious (it is in this consciousness only that you are able to work, and this consciousness continues in sleep also, as you are able to say on getting up "I slept well"). These Ideas, I know are not easy to grasp, much less to realise. But, meditate on them in silence and seclusion. You have the Grace of God; you will get a glimpse of this truth in a short while.

Then, resume your activities. Every hour or so, or whenever you get the chance, close your eyes for a couple of minutes and try to raise the consciousness within that there is that Eternal Principle within which is a Witness and is not affected by what is going on around you. In these two minutes

you would derive greater peace and refreshment than anything else can give you. When this practice is repeated hour to hour every day for some time, it will become a continuous stream of peaceful meditation within yourself while externally you are busy with your work. This is a very, very advanced stage; do not expect it to come within a few days. You have to go on with the practice. All that you need to do is somehow to find a few minutes just after getting up from bed and a few minutes just before going to bed for deep silent meditation and during the rest of the day just devote two minutes every hour to this.

Giving up an evil habit is easy enough. When you have advanced a little bit in the above practice, you will be able to do it at one stroke. But the fault-finding nature is hard to overcome. Therefore, concentrate your attention first on this. The moment you see a fault in some one else, divert the gaze, stop the thought, think of your own faults and the other person's other good qualities. If the fault-finding persists, try to feel that as the same consciousness is within the other person as in you, the fault is much yours as it is the other person's. Try somehow to think and reflect and not to indulge in emotion. You will succeed. Later you will realise that fault-finding is only a play of ignorance.

Some traits are in one's very nature. Some people are fond of travelling. Some like seclusion. These are difficult to change. Find out your essential nature. There is no harm in giving scope for your nature to work itself out—only you have to stick to the fundamental principles I have enunciated above, i. e., Truth; Love, and Purity, and an unbroken remembrance of the God within. The rest will follow your natural tendencies.

May you shine as a star in the Spiritual Firmament !

—*Thy own Self,*
Sivananda.

42. THE DYNAMIC MISSION OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE IN THE SPIRITUAL ASCENSION OF MANKIND

GUIDE TO GOD-REALISATION :

SWAMI SIVANANDA is in the habit of entering into intimate correspondence with his disciplies whose doubts and difficulties he undertakes to dispel by means of striking and convincing letters.

Guide to God-realisation is the *sixth number* of the general series entitled "Inspiring Letters Series." The volume contains a number of letters written by Swami Sivananada to Pannalal of Amritsar, a devoted disciple, in which many personal and philosophical, ethical and moral, Yogic and mystical problems are solved to the satisfaction of the party concerned.

There are also included in this volume, "Practical Sadhana," "First Lessons in Vedanta," "Yoga for the West", and other tracts.

Particular attention may be drawn to Vedantic Catechism in the course of which through the well-known device or form of

dialogue between teacher and pupil, important philosophical truths are taught for the benefit of Sadhakas, who may be laymen unacquainted with the metaphysical technicalities.

Unlike different systems of religion and philosophy prevalent in Great Britain, Europe and America, which do not require the aid and help of a spiritual preceptor or initiator into the details and mysteries of spiritual practices, Hindu systems of Vedanta have laid absolute and unconditioned emphasis on the imperative need for securing the sympathetic services of a Guru. Methods of God-realisation have to be taught by the Guru in accordance with the equipment and receptivity and eligibility and responsive co-operation of the disciples.

The volume under notice, and other tracts and units of Sivananda Literature are bound to play a highly dynamic part in putting genuinely eager aspirants along proper lines of Yogic Sadhana. At a time like the present one when barefaced atheistic tendencies are stalking rampant throughout the world, under the cover of civilization and scientifically controlled, simplified, and delightful life, correct exposition of the nature and value of ancient Indian Vedantic Methods of God-realisation and Higher Life is indispensable for vindication of national self-respect.

Towards the conclusion, some prayers in Sanskrit are printed, including Sri Sankara's celebrated prayer addressed to Goddess of Wealth, (Sri Mahalakshmi), (Kanakadhara-stotra). Those who sincerely and genuinely require directions to live higher life would find Sivananda's *Guide* reliable and welcome. They would *not* be left in the lurch. The *Guide* would take them to the cherished goal of Immortality.

—Dr. Nagaraja Sharma, M.A.,Ph.D.,
Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

43. SIVANANDA'S FORMULAE FOR, AND MESSAGE ON INDIVIDUAL SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR WORLD-REFORMATION

BELOVED Self,

14th March, 1948.

You are perfectly right when you say that one should find peace within oneself before one launches out on a peace mission. Most of the ills of mankind owe their origin to leaders trying to pour into the eagerly outstretched palms of humanity, what they themselves do not have. Imagine the havoc that could be caused by a kind friend pouring out a drink from a bottle that contains poisonous liquid. This has been very mildly characterised by the Eastern Sage—the blind leading the blind.

The best course is to subject oneself to searching self-analysis, and at the same time to spread the Message of Peace and Unity, in a *spirit of service* of humanity. This spirit is most important, as it is the lack of it that spoils both one's own self-improvement and the very purpose of the work. Every moment you should feel that whatever you do, you do in the spirit of service—you serve the Lord in all. You can work wonders if you have this spirit. Spiritual progress, too, will be rapid if this spirit is kept up.

And, it is perfectly true that Yoga is not something completely divorced from daily life. I lay the greatest stress, on the contrary, on 'Yoga *in* Daily Life.' Yoga and daily life must be made to merge into each other. The ideal is to remember God constantly ; you can begin by remembering God frequently.

The ideal is to work selflessly and egolessly ; to begin with however, it would be necessary to set apart some time, a few minutes even morning and evening for and analysis of the inner personality, the mind and the ego, and for an examination of your daily actions—to find out how far they were selfish or otherwise.

The ideal again is to meditate constantly on the Omnipresent Self and to let the mind constantly dwell on the sublime Truths propounded in the Scriptures. To begin with, it would be imperative to set apart a few minutes in the early morning (the earlier the better, and it is best an hour and a half before sunrise) for meditation on the Self and for study of Scriptures. This period of meditation should, as it were project itself in your daily life ; and you should frequently check-up to find out if the current is flowing through.

The mightiest actions flow from, not the little mind or the intellect, but from the God Within. The noblest thoughts are not manufactured by the little mind, but by the Consciousness (the Power of God) within. The Power to transform society, to shape the destiny of one's own self and of others, springs not from the physical organs or the intellect, but from the Supreme Source of All-Power within, God. Your constant endeavour should be to contact It ; and It will flow through you. Your real personality is made of That Power and That Knowledge. What earthly power can approach this Divine Power ? What mundane knowledge can be compared with this Supreme Knowledge ?

The Lord has endowed the human being with a knowledge of good and evil; and freedom to choose either. Actions bear fruits and have to be enjoyed. This explains the suffering in world. When suffering reaches the maximum limit, the individual develops discrimination and dispassion, turns to God, for help and guidance. Then the person takes to spiritual practices, achieves the goal of life and goes beyond suffering once and for ever.

Your past actions have left impressions in your sub-conscious mind which now prevent you from achieving full sucess in Self-control. But by repeated efforts (Purushartha), you can overcome the past habits.

Do not be diffident. Then no effort is possible. You have very good qualities in you viz., simple living, attempt at self-control, a highly developed conscience, discrimination, thirst for knowledge, a heart feeling for others. These have been achieved by efforts, practices of the past lives. By the efforts of this life you will make some progress towards the Goal of life, i.e., God- or Self-Realisation. Whether you achieve this in this life or in the future births depends on the intensity of your efforts, sincerity, etc. The Saints can show the way, You have to travel yourself. Others can bring the food to you. You have to eat it yourself. Spiritual power is communicated by a Guru to a Sishya at the proper time, i.e., when the disciple has undergone the

preparatory training. How much time and energy you spend for your studies or for getting a job ! Can you murmur if you have to spend time in Sadhana or achieving that Bliss which puts an end once and for all to all sorrows, and takes you to the Goal ?

Most of the persons in the world are selfish; every one is running after a life in the senses only. But you need not worry about this. Maya is powerful. But Maya has no power over the devotee of the Lord. He knows your difficulties. He is ever willing, ever ready to help you. He is not watching your struggle dispassionately. Have faith in His Grace, His Love. Only with this faith, can you advance in the spiritual path.

So start Sadhana at once. Sadhana consists of certain practices to purify the mind, like Japa, Kirtan, prayer, study of Gita, etc., self-control, service of others with Iswar-Bhav. Look to the Lord as a child turns to the mother when faced with difficulties. He is the refuge of all who have none else to look to.

May the Lord show you a way out of the present condition. May He lead you, guide you and protect you.

Thy own Self,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realization*,
pp. 225-226.

The Second Phase

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DRAMATIC ART AND THE POETIC STRAIN IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA : THE EPOCH-MAKING SCRIBE OF SIPIRITUAL VALUES

—The Nobility of Function the Dramatic Art and the Poetic Tone Acquire and Execute In the Genre of the Literature He Pours Out in Profusion.—

How would one who is neither a dramatist essentially nor a poet primarily, but first and last, a Mahayogi who perceives in man the centre of the cosmic life, finds in the universe around him an Eternal Presence constituting at once the stuff, the structure and the soul of all that is, dwells in a state of Consciousness which is coincidental with the Being of God, and is swept away by an overwhelming sense of urgency to employ all methods of expression and communication, for taking up as many individuals as possible and shaping their spiritual destinies, setting them live by the Values of Love, Service, Truth, Goodness, and God-realisation, a restless Sage whose sole ecstasy seems to consist in making words sheer excuses for pouring upon mankind a sense and a significance, a value and a power, an ideat hat liberates them from the tyrannising spell the senses wield, a thought that generates in them sublimated sentiments, the power for ennobling actions, the impulsion for greatness, an illumination that yields them the broad meanng their life conceals, and quickens into action the capacity for spiritual realisation their soul bears— use the techniques of the dramatic art and the principles of poetic expression, except wholly unconscious of the equipment they require, unaware of the conditions of creation they impose and the circumstances of excellence they demand ?

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE DRAMATIC ART AND THE POETIC STRAIN IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. SIVANANDA EMPLOYS THE EFFECTS OF THE DRAMATIC ART FOR A TOTAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE LIFE OF HUMANITY AT ALL ITS LEVELS

BRAHMA VIDYA VILAS :

ABSTRACT ideas are difficult to chew but given a particular shape and form, make a permanent appeal even to a most ignorant heart. His sentiments are readily aroused and he begins to compare his self with the object on the stage. There are people who will at once assume the colour of the stage performance and in a country like India, this mode of teaching has a very wide scope and its own merits. In fact, in this materialistic age, where riches have come to be regarded as the real Truth and the source of Complete Satisfaction and Eternal Happiness, the author has done a great service by bringing out such literature which apart from its being an inspiration and a guidance to its followers, will also serve as an eye-opener and rather a challenge to the materialistic thinkers.

A diamond in the quarry is like a stone on the street until the polisher fetches out its hidden beauties. Similar is the case with our literature and philosophy. Indian literature and philosophy is full of such diamonds but they need a polisher. As a skilled polisher, the author has brought out the hidden beauties of spiritualism by dealing with such an abstruse subject in the form of plays. The very first play of the book, *Running After the Shadow*, as its title indicates, leads the reader to a very living discussion of materialism and spiritualism. The important requisites for the advancement and prosperity of a nation, its high degree of culture and character, have been successfully dealt with. Similarly, the *Passion and Anger* is both instructive and entertaining. In fact, these are the two dire diseases that assail all men from within.

The author has not been theoretical throughout, but is fully alive to the difficulties of common man in practising a spiritual life. In the play, *Practical Sadhana* he deals with the various obstacles that come in the way of living a spiritual life and tells how to overcome them. The play, *Four Letters* is more a caution than any instruction. The reader will find in the play an answer to the most important question of life—'What is to be done ?' Similarly, the play *Yoga Therapy* provides an answer to the most common ailments of the body and suggests a way to keep fit. Lastly, the play, *Coffee vs. Milk* will be read with

interest by those who are used to tea or coffee and others who are yet to create a taste for these and other stimulants. In fact, overmuch use of these stimulants, which is so common and has become a part of the polished society, is not injurious but helps in draining the energies and bringing the end nearer. A glance at the pages of the book is bound to grip the reader's attention and leave a permanent impression on his mind which may in time conquer his heart.

—*The Mussoorie Times*,
Mussoorie.

2. SIVANANDA : HIS HISTRIONIC ART AND HIS POETIC STRAIN PRESENT THE PATHETIC PARADOX OF MAN AS AWAKE IN ASPIRATION AND ASLEEP IN DELUSION

Scene 5

Act One

(*The man is now in his last silence. Limbs have struck with paralysis. The pallor has now settled upon his face. The condition is very critical and pitiable. At this juncture one day..... the old man hears someone passing the street outside, singing the following song.*)

Deadend is the taste now for all pleasure,
No more doth man receive relatives' regard ;
Gone are his equals, gone from hither,
His own body he now prepares to discard.
With staff in hands he hobbles painful,
Dark cloud veils the eye ;
Yet in this condition, so shameful
He trembles greatly and fears to die.
Thou didst not enjoy Life
But life did thee enjoy ;
Nor did the five fires of penance burn
But wert burnt by the senses five ;
Time was not spent, but thou in turn
Life fully spent waiting Death to arrive ,
Craving is not ended, but still prevails
Though soon thy life will be ended amidst relatives viels.
Wrinkles fill thy forehead and face
And the hairs on thy head are gray.
Thou hast reached the end of thy losing race.
But the strong cravings continue to hold their sway
All life has now wasted away
In vein enjoyments of objects gross,
Wearied is lone man upon life's thorny way
Gain has he none, but great his loss.
Repair O man ! to yon Holy place
Pray now to God for Mercy and Grace
What use to weep now and lament on fate
Take refuge in Lord's Name, ere it is too late.

Man :— (*calling his son*) My son, go, look and find out who sings this chant ? Bring him in to me.

(*Boy goes out and returnes presently together with a venerable aged monk of serene shining countenance.*)

Monk :— Why didst thou call me ?

Man :— Respected and holy sir, the message of thy holy song has entered the very core of my heart. My eyes are now opened. You have suddenly illumined the

gloom of my life's twilight. I crave thy blessings, my Lord !

Monk :— May thou perceive thy right duty. What can be the greater blessing to bestow. *(Exit).*

Enter Wife

Wife :— Who was that village boor ?

Man :— He Ram Ram, do not speak thus disrespectfully of a holy man. He was a saint, who imparted true wisdom unto me. He blessed me too.

Wife :— What wonderful blessings did he so give ?

Man :— Now Death draws near. Renounce the cravings of this sensual life. Turn now thy mind to the Lord ....

Wife :— Very fine. Your monk seems to be quite an astrologer. So he is right and your friend Lord Yama is proved a liar ? You and your Sadhu ! What other work has he ? They wander about, pocketing everything they manage to get and yet day and night they preach to you to give up everything and get away from home. Breaking up homes and splitting families is their only avocation. Curse be upon them. They cling to life and seldom die young. *(The old man unable to bear this insulting talk, claps his hands to his ears).*

Wife :— *(continuing)* When your friend Yama has given definite promise that he will come for you only after writing four distinct intimations, why then do you despair so ? You haven't received a single letter so far. So many children this big household—why did you set up all this ? If you had only thought to say your beads, you might have as well entered the cloister long before you met me. Every time you only make me weep. I have wept my eyes out and yet your hard heart is never moved. And if you go away, who will look after me ? I have a good mind to jump into the river with a stone tied to my neck.

(Once again delusion seems to overtake the man. He softens somewhat).

Man :— There, there, don't you cry like that. I am not going away anywhere. Am I ?

(A fit of coughing seizes him. He hastily calls for his spitoon).

—Swami Sivananda's
Brahma Vidya Vilas,
pp. 282-284.

3. THE DIVINE WRITER SIVANANDA GIVES GLIMPSES OF LIFE EVERLASTING

WAVES OF BLISS :

GOD has denied man his peace of mind lest he should not turn to Him. So though man has come by the good things of the earth, he has not forgotten his Maker. Since the dawn of creation, his one ambition has been to seek God and find Him. However, there is no avenue close to God. This the seeker must have in mind and must be prepared to tread a tortuous path, if he were disposed not to take counsel with those who walk with God. One would credit Sri Swami Sivananda with catching a glimpse of life everlasting. He would tell them who listen to him, how to reach the portals of Heaven.

—*Hindustan Standard,*
Calcutta,

This is almost a text-book on Sadhana. Swami Sivananda is well-known both as a divine and a prolific writer. The present volume deals with the equipment necessary for the realisation of Spiritual Bliss. The Swami details his ideas on the nature of the body, mind, soul, Brahman, the realisation of Brahman and the Bliss accruable therefrom.

—*The Bharata Jyoti,*
Bombay.

The book is a sort of miscellany treating about God. God-realisation, experiences of Sadhaks, mind and its control, diet, etc. It is a good book to cheer up the aspirant. Some of the pieces are replete with humour and in some, man's failings are shown up to ridicule. The book will provide an interesting and profitable reading.

—*Bharata Jyothi,*
Cuddapah

4. REVELATION, RHYTHM AND RHYME IN SIVANANDA'S POETRY

BRAHMAN Immortal is all this that is,
Nothing is many, though many may seem;
All this that exists, is Consciousness-Bliss,
Pure and Eternal, Awareness Supreme !
Blessed and Calm is that Absolute Peace,
Where Sun and the Moon are but lamps without oil ;
Thither that go will return not again,
Brahman I am That, and all this is That !
All this is One, and that One is Silence,
Santam, Sivam and Adwaitam they call;
When mind and the senses dissolve into one,
All no more is reason, that State is Supreme !
When shattered to pieces are knots of the heart,
Here and now do we Brahman become ;
To the right and the left and in front and behind,
Up and below is that Brahman alone !
This Atma and Brahman are One in Essence,
That One Undivided Essence is this all ;
All this is Brahman, and Brahman alone,
Absolute Existence, Knowledge and Bliss!
The Bliss that I get when the poem is read,
Can none on this earth or in heaven explain ;
For Brahman is all, and that Brahman is Bliss,
For Joy that the mind and the senses know not !

—Swami Sivananda's,
Wisdom Sparks,
pp. 9-10.

5. EVERY LITERARY ARTIFICE FINDS ITS HIGH OFFICE IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

BRAHMA VIDYA VILAS :

SWAMI Sivananda who exploits every literary artifice to propagate the truths of Vedanta and to induce men to lead a life that would slowly but surely lead them on to the realisation of the Infinite, has chosen

drama as a vehicle to impress on the minds of people the need for practising virtues and avoiding weaknesses and vices. In this book which contains more than twenty plays, he has extolled the good and the true, exposed the hypocritical and the bad, stressed the need for love and toleration and has explained the different Sadhanas that lead to the same goal.

—*The Sunday Times,*
Madras.

In this book some of the unpublished Plays of Swami Sivananda have been brought together. They present spiritual truths in a graphic manner to grip the reader's attention and conquer his heart. The book contains the teachings of Swami Sivananda in the form of plays. Swamiji presents these twenty-one one-act plays both for the purpose of presentation and performance. They are arranged in a serial order of increasing interest.

—*Sevika,*
Bombay.

6. SIVANANDA RAISES THE UPANISHADIC PERSONAGES INTO LIFE AND RE-ARTICULATES THE SYLLABLES OF INNER EXPERIENCE THEY PRONOUNCED

BELOVED Maitreyi ! Verily, I am going away from this house into the forest, to enter into another order of life, Sannyasa. Therefore, let me divide my property between you and Katyayani, the other wife.

Maitreyi : My venerable Lord ! If this whole world with all its wealth be mine, tell me, can I become immortal.

Yagnavalkya : No, Maitreyi. Like the life of rich people will be your life. But there is no hope of attaining immortality by wealth.

Maitreyi : Of what use then would the wealth be to me, if I cannot become immortal thereby ? Tell me, O venerable Lord of the means of attaining immortality of which thou knowest.

Yagnavalkya : O Maitreyi ! You have been truly dear to me even before and you speak words which are dear to me, and which are just after my heart. Come, sit down. I will explain to thee the means of attaining immortality. Try to understand well what I say.

Verily, not indeed for the husband's sake, the husband is dear, but for the sake of the Self is the husband dear. Verily, not indeed for the wife's sake, the wife is dear, but for the sake of the Self the wife is dear. Verily, sons are not dear, that you may love the sons ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, sons are dear. Verily not for the sake of wealth, wealth is dear ; but for the sake of the Self is wealth dear. Verily, the Brahman is not dear that you may love the Brahman ; but that you may love the Self that the Brahman is dear. Verily, the Kshatriya is not dear that you may love the Kshatriya ; but that you may love the Self

is the Kshatriya dear. Verily, not for the world's sake the world is dear ; but for the sake of Self is the world dear. Verily not for the Gods sake the Gods are dear ; but for the sake of the Self are the Gods dear. Verily not for the Vedas' sake are the Vedas dear ; but for the sake of the Self are the Vedas dear. Verily not for the elements' sake the elements are dear ; but for the sake of the Self are the elements dear. Verily not for the sake of the universe, the universe is dear ; but for the sake of the Self is dear the universe. Verily, the Self (*Atma*) is to be seen, heard, reflected and meditated upon, O Maitreyi ! When we see, hear, reflect and know the Self, all this (universe) is known.

—Sivananda's
Upanishad Drama,
pp. 93-94.

7. SIVANANDA AND THE VALUE OF THE STAGE AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL FACTOR IN THE SCIENCE OF SCIENCES

BRAHMA VIDYA VILAS :

THIS book consists of Plays with a philosophy. Brahma Vidya or "the Science of Sciences" that "enables man to know the very source of Knowledge itself" as Sri Swami Sivanandaji puts it is the precious legacy which the sages of yore have left behind them. Brahma Vidya enables us to lead a better and more fruitful life here, a life of harmony, love, service, peace and joy.

—*The Hitavada*,
Nagpur.

WORKS of Swami Sivananda hardly need any introduction. Anyone, who comes in contact with him either in person or with his writings is spiritually enriched. This book is one of his many gems. In it Swamiji has presented the great spiritual knowledge and truth in the form of delightful plays, for art appeals to heart. The author brings home the truth of our own selves, As Sri Swamiji himself puts it, Brahma Vidya or the Science of Sciences enables man to know the very source of knowledge itself.

The plays presented in it, suits every great festival or celebration. To possess this book is to add to one's treasure."

—*The Amrit Bazar Patrika*,
Calcutta.

8. THE INTELLECTUAL ACUMEN AND INTUITIVE PERCEPTION OF SAGE SIVANANDA SET SANKARA, THE FORMIDABLE INDIAN GENIUS, AT A WRESTLE WITH THE WITS OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHERS

Enter Descartes

Sankara :—PLEASE take your seat They say you are a great thinker. We ould like to hear your central doctrine.

Descartes :—"I think, therefore I am"—this is my deduction. This is quite mathematical as well as logical.

Sankara :—Sir, where did you get

your major premise—"Thought implies being" ?

Descartes :—Plants and animals do not think. And thought can appear only where there is existence. That existence is a mere extensive concept than thought. Hence thought proves Being by logical implication.

Sankara :—You seem to say that Being is as much an immediacy as thinking and that no syllogistic argument is needed to infer one's own existence. To infer an immediacy is an abuse of reason, Sir. We need proof only in relation to things other than the Self. The Self is the indispensable presupposition of every act of reasoning. It is a fundamental reality. You cannot with all your logic prove its non-existence.

Sankara :—Does God exist or not ?

Descartes :—Yes, God, as a perfect Being, must exist ; for the idea of perfection includes existence.

Sankara :—Does matter exist ?

Descartes :—Why not ? Matter is extension, and so, it must exist independent of mind.

Sankara :—So you believe in God, matter and mind ?

Descartes :—Yes, sir.

Sankara :—Do you experience their existence in deep sleep ?

Descartes :—No, sir.

Sankara :—Then the validity of your doctrine has no proof. (Descartes exits).

Enter Spinoza the great pantheist of rare metaphysical genius

Sankara :—Good morning, sir. What is your system ?

Spinoza :—The great reality of all existence is Substance. It supports all phenomena giving them reality.

Sankara :—What is phenomenon ?

Spinoza :—It is an appearance, a thing perceived. It is a state of the perceiving mind.

Sankara :—What originates this perception ? What creates changes in the mind ?

Spinoza :—Something external ; what it is in itself, we can never know.

Sankara :—So you believe in a God from whom everything has come out.

Spinoza :—Yes Sir, all exists in God and by Him. He is the fountain of life. The universe is nothing but the manifestation of God. To know God with perfect knowledge is the highest point of human development and happiness.

Sankara :—You are right. But your statement is only a belief. You have not proved it on the unimpeachable basis of reason or experience. God exists ; God is the only reality. Well, how do you arrive at this conclusion ? In life we contact finites and relative things only. If you say that the world comes out of God, your God will cease to be one ; it must contain elements of multiplicity. If you say the appearance is causeless, then you establish two independent realities.

Spinoza, unable to establish his Reality as an unquestionable fact, exits.

Enter Locke, the great British Idealist.

Sankara :—What doctrine have you to impart ?

Locke :—The impressions produced by objects on the senses are only vague at first.

They become definite by repetition. In time the mind comes to reflect on its own operations about the ideas got by sensation, It thus becomes furnished with a new set of ideas. These are ideas of refleection.

Sankara :—Then, you say we know only by ideas ?

Locke :—Yes, in all our knowledge, we never rise one jot beyond these ideas which sense or reflection has offerd for the mind's contemplation.

Sankara :—What about the primary qualities which are invariable ?

Locke :—Even this invariability is only an indissoluble association in our mind. And it is no standard of reality.

Sankara :—What do you say with regards to causality ?

Locke :—Our knowledge is subjective only. Though causes work steadily and effects flow from them constantly, yet their connections and dependencies are not discoverable in our ideas. So our knowledge of them can be only experimental.

Sankara :—So, you say that all our knowledge is of the nature of ideas, and that we cannot legitimately claim to know anything beyond them, either God or nature ?

Locke :—Yes, Sir. We cannot know things, we can know only ideas.

Sankara :—Your conception reduces life to a long dream ?

Locke :—Yes, it does.

Sankar :—Do you dream in your deep sleep ?

Locke :—(After a moment's reflection) No, sir.

Sankara :—Then your dream doctrine falls to the ground.

Now Locke, unable to counter argue, retires silently.

Enter Berkley and Hume

Seeing Sankara they shrink back as if expecting a blow.

Sankara :—You need not fear me. Are you cold ?

Berkley and Hume :— We are not cold, we expect it.

Sankara :—(with sympathy) Poor fellows !

Well, Berkley, what do you think of the existence of this world ?

Berkley :—Sir, it is only our mind. All that we know of is only our own mind and its ideas.

Sankara :—How are these ideas regulated ?

Berkley :—We have to accept a law proceeding from an omniscient Mind, call it God if you will. And it governs all ideas. At all events, there is no entity different in kind from a mind.

Here Hume interferes.

Hume :—If so, what is the secure basis on which mind itself stands ? We are aware of feelings, volitions and cognition of pleasure and pain, etc. But we never come across the substrate of feelings, the mind itself. So there is neither matter nor mind. All is but ideas changing every moment.

Sankara :—You both, Berkley and Hume, hear me!

to ideas proceeding from an internal substrate of feelings—mind. Hume has gone a step further and reduced even this substrate to an idea. But have you experienced deep sleep ?

Berkley and Hume :—Yes, sir.

Sankara :—Do you experience mind or ideas therein ?

Berkley and Hume :—(After a little thinking.) No, Sir.

Sankara :—Then, how can your conclusions stand ?

Berkley and Hume exit with a sense of defeat.

Enter Kant proud of his discovery of the Critique of Pure Reason.

He could not tolerate Hume's doctrine.

Sankara :—Why do you hate Hume ?

Kant :—Because he has dragged the public into scepticism. God, freedom and religion have been turned into sensations.

Sankara :—What doctrine have you discovered to rectify this mitake ?

Kant :—All is appearance only ; the Reality is unknownable.

Sankara :—If the world is unreal and God is unknowable, you too preach scepticism in different words.

Kant :—In active life we must accept the claims of practical reason. The starry heaven above us and the moral law within us are founded on necessity and universality. The Categorical Imperative is the characteristic expression of moral law. It postulates the existence of God and the immortality of the soul.

Sankara :—Your views are confined to the waking and the dream states only. They disappear in sleep. The identification of pure consciousness in sleep as the highest reality can alone satisfy us. Pure Consciousness alone can be said to transcend both time and space.

Enter Fichte

Sankara :—Are you Kant's follower ?

Fichte :—No Sir, Kant views non-ego as an independent reality. But I deny it. All that we know is derived from ourselves. The necessity for a non-ego ia a necessity created by the ego.

Sankara :— How do you know that the ego exists.

Fichte :—For I am conscious of it.

Sankara :—To be conscious of the ego is to be at the same time conscious of the non-ego. That is to say, realism is accepted and scepticism accompanies her.

Exit Fichte silently.

Enter Schelling

Sankara :—What is your doctrine, brother ?

Schelling :—I believe in a special faculty called the intellectual intuition. Only those who possess it can realise the identity of the subject and object.

Sankara :— Is God real or ideal ?

Schelling :— God is neither ideal nor real, neither mind nor nature but both. In Him all difference is lost in indifference.

Sankara :— How can we realise God ?

Schelling :— For that, we must transcend

consciousness. For consciousness is incompetent to comprehend it. To know the Infinite, we must lose our individuality in the universal.

Sankara :— Well, the identity of the individual self with the absolute is the identity of two distincts—the ego and the non-ego. The unity, therefore, is superficial, and not real. Ecstasy or intuition in which all difference is lost is not knowledge. Knowledge is conscious apprehension of Truth. The defect is due to your confining yourself to waking and dream states alone. Partial data can give us only fractional truth whereas fulness of data gives us the whole truth. And unless you include sleep you cannot be said to have analysed life as a whole. Thus awareness which is present in all the three states coupled with them is the Reality.

(Exit Schelling)

Enter Hegel, the greatest of Kant's followers

Sankara :— What do you think of him ?

Hegel :— Think of whom ?

Sankara :— Of that young man, the teacher of Categorical Imperative. Who else could I mean ?

Hegel :— Kant calls this world unreal. And God, he says, cannot be known. This doctrine does not appeal to me.

Sankara :— How would you improve his system ?

Hegel :— The object, though distinct from the subject, is identical with it. Being and non-being are identical. A thing is made up of its determinations, concepts, universals, thoughts. When all the determinations are abstracted from a thing, we can with equal reason treat it as being or non-being.

The identity in difference of subject and object is the absolute Idea. The universe is not any particular mind but the objective mind.

Sankara :— You say that, from the Idea, nature is deduced, and by a synthesis of these two we get to the absolute spirit which is the end and consummation of the world process. That is to say, the absolute Idea passes from the sphere of pure thought into actual existence the Absolute Spirit.

Hegel :— Yes sir, you have rightly understood me.

Sankara :— If your first principle were only an abstract one, how could the world be deduced from it except as a make-believe ? How can we get from the one what is not in it ? Do you mean to say that your God is an expert juggler who draws out from an empty casket the innumerable objects of the world ? Is this your secondless Absolute ? If you claim organic unity, you have to presuppose a manifoldness in a subtle condition. And in no case can the multiplicity form an abstract unity ? Life will laugh at this idea. Your Absolute becoming the individual, heaven and hell, sin and virtue, bliss and worship and grace, life and its trials, is the cruellest satire on our feelings and aspirations. The very step by which you prove Being to be identical with Non-being takes one's breath away.

The theory of Maya alone can solve your difficulty I dare say. Our ignorance of the Reality is the cause of the appearance of the world.

Hegel :—(With a sense of shame) I feel it now. (Exit Hegel).

Enter Schopenhauer

Sankara :—Is your God the Idea or different from it ?

Schopenhauer :—Will is the first principle. A concept is only passive. My desire or will to do anything is not to be converted into a mere concept.

Sankara :—Your will cannot exhaust all reality. Feelings more than will or reason effect as much. Love claims quite half of the energies and thoughts of younger half of mankind. It is the ultimate aim of human effort. Passions, anger, etc., cloud the intellect and usurp the judgment. Will is only an instinct, a little more complex than other instincts.

Schopenhauer :—The will predominates in active life.

Sankara :—But action is possible only in the sphere of time and to make it active you have to drag it to the empirical arena where time, etc., reign supreme.

Schopenhauer :—The world is an illusion. It is a manifestation of the Will's activity, a visibility of its affirmation.

Sankara :—Why should it lead to an illusive world ? Why should it lead to evil ? You are contradicting yourself. You must admit that this affirmation itself is unreal. For this world is an illusion; you have already specified it. Hence nothing is gained by the theory of your Will. Your will with its activity is only illusory. And you have no idea of the Absolute beneath the phenomena.

Schophenhauer leaves the hall disappointed.

Mill Enters

Sankara :—Sir, you are well-known for your system of logic. Are you not ?

Mill :—They say so. According to my view, experience is the only source of knowledge. All *a priori* or intuitive knowledge is to be rejected.

Sankara :—How do you define body and mind ?

Mill :—Body and mind are permanent possibilities of sensations and feelings.

Sankara :—How can a series of feelings be aware of itself as a series ?

Mill :—A bond of some sort of feelings should stand for a person and this will be his ego.

Sankara :—What is reality ?

Mill :—I believe in consciousness alone. And matter and mind are mere states thereof.

Sankara :—Have you searched for your consciousness with matter and mind in sleep?

Mill :—Sir, consciousness is not known then.

Sankara :—Then how can you prove its existence ?

Mill exits while Bradley steps in

Sankara :—What is your notion of Reality, Sir ?

Bradley :—I cannot admit a personal God. The highest reality must be superpersonal. I understand that you believe in the conversion of the Absolute into God through Maya. But I hold that there cannot be any practical relation between It and the finite will.

Sankara :—If so, where will substance, quality, time, space, relation, etc., disappear?

Bradley :—These must be included, and, somehow fused into the Absolute.

Sankara :—What is this but an intellectual confusion? What you rejected first as faulty is included subsequently.

Bradley feels defeated and retires.

Enter Bertrand Russell

Sankara :—Come in, explain your system.

Russell :—Seeing and the object seen are mental. There is no relation between them though there may be two sides of perception, subjective and objective. So, the existence of the one is not essential for the existence of the other. That is to say, consciousness by itself would not demand an object.

Sankara :—Is what causes the object to be perceived real?

Russell :—The cause that leads to the perception of an object is a real independent entity.

Sankara :—Here we come to the parting ways. If the cause is real, then, your Reality or pure-consciousness is affected. According to us, the cause of perception is no transcendental reality, and so does not affect the oneness of pure consciousness.

Now Russell, having nothing to gainsay, takes his exit.

Enter Whitehead

Sankara :—Physiologists and psychologists say that certain light-waves strike on our retina and set up movements in the eye. The optic nerves communicate these to the brain-cells, and we have sensation. And this sensation, somehow, gives rise to perception.

The idealists hold that the percept is a creation of the brain or the mind.

The realists believe that it is more or less a copy of the external thing. Do you differ from these opponents?

Whitehead :—My view is quite different, Sir. According to me, sensations and projections are not successive acts, but simultaneous. The objects are presented to the percipients immediately and just as they exist.

Sankara :—How do you account for the errors in perception?

Whitehead :—Errors are due to conceptual presuppositions, through symbolic reference. But causal efficacy is impeccable. Thus, the solidarity of actual things becomes an established fact. Man is only one of the infinite number of percipients in the world. Percipients act and react upon each other according to their internal relationships.

Sankara :—In optical illusion, there is a common ground, such as a bush, and you may say that it is mistaken for man. Here, the symbolic reference can take the blame. But in hallucinations and dreams, false perceptions occur without any such real ground. Your view of perception does not cover all possibilities and as such is not acceptable. What do you say?

Whitehead:—(In a choking voice). Anythig further?

Sankara :—In the next place, assuming that things are as they are presented, how can we assert that they are as real as we are.?

Whitehead :—In ordinary life, we have plurality of minds and subjects. Are they not independent of each other ? And if your mind is real, is not my mind so ?

Sankara:—Yes, we admit plurality of minds and subjects in ordinary life. Yet, reflection on the nature of the subject makes its plurality inadmissable.

Whitehead :—Then you mean to say that there are not different subjects.

Sankara:—Certainly, even when I think that I am an object to other subjects, I do not really cease to be the subject. I am ever the subject. But when I think of myself as an object to other subjects, I only become an additional object to my mind—the real subject. The real perceiver never changes.

So do not belittle sensuous perception simply because only high-grade organisms have it. Your failure to explain dream perceptions and hallucinations is due to your not recognising the presence of consciousnes in man. Void of sensuous perception and high intellection, man would have to be satisfied with a life like that of a plant.

Whitehead:—Please tell us how to harmonize the varying contradictions in life.

Sankara:—Contradictions are unavoidable in relative experience. All particular experiences form part of the manifold in the relative world. To harmonise these contradictions, you must reach the state of non-manifestation. This state is called Turiya in Sanskrit. And it is attained through consious disciplinary procedure. Unless you reach this state, you cannot trace the common background of all varying experiences in life. You know all experiences come through contrast. Knowledge of subject-object relationship is impossible in the absence of its opposite, the absence of that subject-object relationship as data. This non-manifested state of the mind we experience daily in deep sleep. We also have it in the interval when one idea succeeds another. It is the silence that intervenes between two ideas.

This must be consciously experienced. We can have this experience through our Will trained in the analysis of life as a whole. Knowledge derived from human experience in parts and aspects is not full. Hence all knowledge attained by the Western philosophers, being confined to parts of life only, namely, waking and dream states, is only partial. And knowledge of these two states in only a partial expression of the whole knowledge, Para Vidya, Para Vidya stands for the totality of existence and experience. It is given to very few individuals to attain this state through intelligent analysis of the three states of life and conscious stopping of the movements of the psyche to touch the base that produces all variations in manifestation. In that state, consciousness remains in its true glory. The ego ceases to operate. When it again comes into life, it sees all life illumined with the light of the antecedent state of unified absolute consciousness. Only after this experience, can one successfully account for the variations in life and harmonize them—into a homogeneous whole. This is the conception of Reality as taught by the Eastern philosophy and is a successful solution to all the problems of life.

Enter : Einstein—a great modern scientist
(Seeing him near the door-way, Sankara utters in a loud tone.)

Sankara :—Here comes our scientist. Come in, Sir. We agree in many respects, I suppose.

Einstein:—You base your principle "I am Brahman" on scriptural tenets. But we start with reason.

Sankara:—Sir, you are mistaken. Our philosophy does not believe in intepretation of texts; it does not start with authority. On the other hand, it starts with facts of life. What you speak of is scholasticism and not philosophy, brother.

Einstein :—Is it not solipsism to say, "I am Reality ?"

Sankara :—No. It is only half-idealism like that of Berkley that leads to solipsism. Idealism fully understood leads to a denial of the ego and to the theory of the cosmic mind. Berkley could not deny the ego. He thought that his mind was the Reality and that other minds and objects were his ideas. This is absurd. But in our philosophy, mind covers the three planes of existence, and goes beyond ego and waking stage. Our mind is the witness of the three states. So if you begin with the ego, then there will be many egoes and objects. This solipsism is false from the Absolute point of view. Absolute Mind is not solipsism which says, "Ego is real and all else is unreal."

Einstein :—Modern science has reduced the world to idea. Bergson, the great French philosopher, too, holds that Reality is creative movement and that causality is unreliable. I believe in epistemology, that even this mentalism is subject to revision.

Sankara:—It is indeed a great progress in science. But it is not the end. If everything is idea or movement, how will you explain consciousness which presupposes movement ? Consciousness never becomes an object. It is the radical fact of Reality.

The sense of idea is not possible unless the sense of its non-existence is not given us as the data of experience. So, we must search for the changeless, witnessing consciousness which witnesses the appearance and disappearance of these ideas. But, how can we arrive at it so long as we confine ourselves to the waking or dream state or even to both which are subject to changes ? To arrive at it, therefore, we must take deep sleep also into consideration, where all the objects and ideas of the other two states are absorbed in the Mind. Even this 'I' vanishes, for it is only an idea. Descartes was wrong to view it as indubitable always. For this 'I' is not found in deep sleep. Hence awareness or the witnessing consciousness of the three states alone is real. The individual souls and the world are all unreal. Nothing save Brahman or the Absolute is real and eternal. The world vanishes in deep sleep. The objects of the dream vanish as soon as you wake up. Hence the world of experience and the dream world are unreal. Beyond the three states is the Atman or Brahman. It is the silent witness or Sakshi, the fourth state.

Einstein:—Thank you very much, Sir, for your reasonable exposition of the Reality. I hope that science will, in the near future, take lesson from Eastern philosophy and arrive at the ultimate Reality.

—Swami Sivananda's
Brahma Vidya Vilas,
pp. 94-114.

9. SIVANANDA AS A PLAYWRIGHT ACTIVATED BY A PROFOUND PHILOSOPHIC PURPOSE AND A DIVINE VIGOUR

BRAHAMA VIDYA VILAS:

THIS is a collection of plays dealing "with the science of sciences" Brahma Viday.

Oddly enough, they reminded me a little of Shaw. Like Shaw's plays, they deal with subjects not usually considered "good dramatic material"—and they have much humour.

Of them, Sri C. Rajagopalachari, a former Governor-General of India, wrote : "Gold beaten into all sorts of shapes gives joy. So have you beaten the Upanishads into new and artistic shape !"

One of these plays is performed at the Yoga-Vedanta University on all festive occasions.

I cannot see them having long runs at West End Theatres, but there is a naive charm about them which makes reading them a very pleasant experience.

—*The Voice*,
Sussex, England.

BRAHMA VIDYA VILAS

FROM his mountain home at Rishikesh, Swami Sivananda Saraswati is engaged in popularising Hinduism. He is a living inspiration to his numerous devotees. To the many books to his credit he has added this volume on Brahma Vidya, in which he seeks to expound the philosophy of the Advaita Vedanta. With a view to make it easy of comprehension to the lay mind, he has presented it in a series of plays, or rather, conversation pieces. He has kept in mind the Upanishadic injunction that the seeker after Truth should withdraw his eyes from external objects and turn them inward and probe into the hidden recesses of his own being.

—*The Mail*, Madras.

10. IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE, GENUINE SPIRITUAL APPRECIATION OF THE INNATE GREATNESS OF WOMAN

1. WOMAN is the Divine Power on earth. Woman is the first teacher of man. See woman as the Energy of God.

2. Woman is the Sajiva Maya or Chaitanya Maya; she is an embodiment of sacrifice, Ahimsa, and patience. If she is weak in striking, she is strong in suffering.

3. Woman is an embodiment of gentleness, softness, sweetness, service and selflessness.

4. Woman has innate sweetness; she is kind, tender and affectionate. She has a motherly heart; so, she is fit for Bhakti Yoga.

5. The women of India have preserved the spiritual character of our society.

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of the Himalayas, p. 279.

11. IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE, OBVIOUS EXAGGERATIONS OF THE WEAKNESSES OF WOMAN FOR PURPOSES OF FOSTERING DISCRIMINATION AND DETACHMENT IN ASPIRANTS AND FOR ELIMINATING THE ELEMENTS OF SENSUOUSNESS FROM THE SANCTITY OF MAN-WOMAN RELATIONSHIP

From Act II—Scene I

Brahmacharya : DEAR Discrimination ! Om Namo Narayanaya unto thee ! I consider thee as a Sannyasin ; therefore, I address thee thus. It is through your aid alone that the inner, Atmic eye is opened. By the way, may I know how our reverd King is getting on ? I too have heard a lot of bad reports about our enemy Passion and his happy go-lucky ways and those of his comrades, Pride and Envy. Passion has introduced new fashions not only in New York, London and Paris but even in Madras amongst the Brahmin girls of orthodox families who apply talcum and cherry blossom powder and Hazeline Snow to their faces instead of the sacred turmeric powder and dress their hair like the French girls. The sacred precepts and teachings of our ancient sages and Rishis have been totally ignored. They will accept anything as true only if a Johnson or a Russels brings something in the theory of evolution, motion, atom, relativity, transcendentalism etc. Shameful indeed ! Their brains are all clogged with foreign particles. They do not have the brains to absorb anything good in others. There is a degeneration in the present young men and women in India. This is the age when they cannot walk even a short distance without a Riksha, a car, a tram, a bicycle or a carriage. What an awfully artificial life ! The bobbing hair amongst the ladies of India has become a severe epidemic and has invaded the whole of India. This is all due to the mischief of Passion and Greed. Back to the point. I am already making arrangements to defeat their canker, Passion to its very core. My battalion is ready for battle. Will you kindly inform our King about this point when you next meet him ? Dear Discrimination, you are perfectly aware of my powers and knowledge of Self-control. It was I who infused power and Ojas Shakti into Lakshman, Hanuman, Bhishma, and other Brahmacharins. You know all this well. Passion and his companions will tremble when they simply hear my name. What say you, O Discrimination ?

Discrimination :—I am very much pleased with you, my dear Brahmacharya, I am quite aware of all your powers. I shall also join hands and help you, in all affairs. I will create discrimination in these passionate men and wake them up. Then Passion will run away. I will point out to them the various defects of sensual life such as birth, death, disease, old age and the pains of Samsara, and the glory of spiritual life. I will point out to them that the world is unreal like mirage, and that Maya with the help of the senses and the mind is deluding them. I will help these passionate men to root out Moha first which creates the idea of "mine-ness" such as "my wife", "my son", "my house", which causes delusion and affection for sensual objects and infatuated love, which causes

people to take the body as Atma. I will make them understand the tricks of mind and Indriyas. I will make them realise that this world is a dream, a mere play of the mind. I will also help them in destroying affection and attachment which cause bondage. I will instruct them thus : "Wake up friends, from this mire of illusory Samsara now. Passion has wrought great havoc in you as you are drowned in Avidya. How many millions of fathers, mothers, wives, sons you have not had in previous births ? This body is full of impurities. What a shame it is to embrace this filthy body. It is mere foolishness only. Give up Moha for this body. Also give up identification with this body by meditating upon the glory of Shuddha Atman. Give up worship of the body. Worshippers of the body are Asuras and Rakshasas. Poets have exaggerated the beauty of ladies. They are misguided persons who put young men in the wrong path. Descriptions like : "damsels with bewitching eyes," "faces like the moon," " rosy cheeks and honeyed lips" are false and imaginary. Where is the beauty in the dead body, in old women, in sick ladies ? Where is the beauty when a lady is infuriated ? You are aware of this and yet you cling to their bodies ! Are you not confirmed fools ? This is due to the force of Maya ! How mysterious is the power of Maya and Moha ! The beauty of a woman is false, artificial and decaying. Real beauty is undecaying and eternal. Atman is the source of all beauties. He is the Beauty of beauties. His beauty is everlasting and undecaying. It is the ornaments, silken clothing with fanciful borders, dressing of the hair with golden hair-pins, flowers, application of powder to their faces, lip-salves to the lips and unguent to their eyes that lend a temporary decoration and artificial glittering. Deprive them of their face-powders, their ornaments and gaudy dress, and ask them to wear a simple white cloth without any borders. Where is the beauty now ? Beauty of the skin is a delusion only. You have given up Atma Bhav and Atma Drishti. You should love your wife on account of the Chaitanya or Atman that is hidden in her body. The moment she dies, you throw away her body immediately. In loving your wife, you have really loved the Atman only. By delusion and passion you have temporarily transferred your love to the body of your wife. "Now wake up ! Open your eyes ! Delay not ! Death is ever waiting to devour you. Take the skull of a young lady and ask it : "O skull, where are the honeyed lips, rosy cheeks and charming face like the moon ? Behind the shining skin there is the raw flesh. Behind the smiles of a young lady are hidden frown, anger, etc. Behind the rosy lips lie germs of diseases. Behind their gentleness and the kind words are hidden harsh words, abuses, etc. Life is fleeting and uncertain, O passionate men ! Realise the beauty of the Atman in the heart. Body is the abode for diseases. The net of affection in this world is strengthened by long indulgence. It has entwined its thick, knotted twine around your neck. You are not affected by any sorrow when you hear the words : "Child is dead". But you are drowned in sorrow and grief as soon as you hear : "My child Rajam is dead". This is due to Moha. Your self-interest and the idea of "Mineness" is there. So many Englishmen and Germans died in the late war. So many people died in the Quetta and Bihar earthquakes. You never wept. Not

a single drop of tear came from your eyes. Why ? Because your self-interest was not there. Moha or self-interest is Ajnana. If you eradicate this, you will get Atma Jnana and eternal Atmic Bliss. My duty is to dispel your ignorance and its consequent effects. Sorrow springs from attachment. Indriya Sukha is misery only. Much wealth causes uneasiness, fear and danger from robbers". My dear Brahmacharya ! I will infuse discrimination in this manner in the minds of passionate people and their eyes will be quickly opened. Our enemy Passion will be surely destroyed. This is my grand plan in short... Adieu, O Brahmacharya !

—Swami Sivananda's
Brahmacharya Drama, pp. 22-29.

12. THE DRAMATIC VERSION OF SIVANANDA'S LOFTY VEDANTIC VIEWS

BRAHMACHARYA DRAMA :

THIS drama in four acts describes the part which Brahmacharya can play for a successful divine life A war was waged by Brahmacharya, the Chief Officer of King Reason assisted by Discrimination, the Minister of Reason, understanding the friend of Reason, and other well-wishers against the King Passion who was helped by Cupid, Adharma, Anger, etc. The battle, long and fierce ended in the victory of Reason and in the complete annihilation of the enemy.

One may be tempted to suppose that since that characters of this drama are all abstract ideas, it may be lacking in personal touch. But the author has relieved the readers of this monotony by making his characters say quite modern and current ideas. For example Materialist says to King Reason : "I am already doing this kind of work everywhere, particularly, amongst the students of colleges and high schools. I speak highly of fashion, liquour, smoking, meat and indulgence. I preach that Moksha, rebirths, Vedas are all alike. I have many followers and admirers". The play is full of Kirtans set with lofty Vedantic ideas.

In the appendix the author describes the importance of Brahmacharya, its glory and relation to character-building.

—*The Hindu Outlook.*

13. A SCALE OF SIVANANDA'S VALUES

THE best man in the world
Is a Sage or a Yogi.
The best woman
Is a Pativrata.
The best thing in this world
Is pain or suffering.
Because it opens your eyes
And makes you strive for liberation.
The best treasure is contentment.
The best wealth is Japa.
The best virtue is Truthfulness.
The best food is meditation.
The best time for meditation
Is Brahma Muhurta.
The best friend is your Atma.
The best book is the Upanishads.

—Swami Sivananda's
Wisdom Sparks, p. 147.

14. THE NAIVETE OF SIVANANDA'S BLANK VERSE BEARS A MINE OF WISDOM AND SHOWS A WAY TO ILLUMINATION

WISDOM SPARKS :

THIS is a religious book intended for the truth lovers and also for those who seek Divine Wisdom and Illumination. The book is divided into 14 chapters dealing with the Invocation, Mysteries of Vedanta, Light on Yoga, Spiritual Instructions, Philosophy in humour, Bhakti Rasamritam, Hindu Culture, Health and Long Life, Philosophy, Upanishadic Wisdom, Yoga Vedantic Garland, Philosophy of Numbers, Hail Heroes, Supreme Abode, and other subjects relating to the religion and every-day happenings in the Divine Life.

The book is written in the form of poetry in a simple language, and any layman with a rudimentary knowledge of English can understand the same. Those who want to acquire Wisdom would be highly rewarded by a perusal of this book. We commend the services of the Swamiji to the public.

—*The Coimbatore Times*,
Coimbatore.

15. A TREAT OF ORIGINAL AND EXHAUSTIVE DEFINITIONS OF HEAVEN AND HELL FROM THE DIVINISING WISDOM OF SIVANANDA

MIND makes heaven of hell and hell of heaven.
Mind is the cause for bondage and liberation.
An impure mind (Ashuddha Manas) binds you.
A pure mind (Shuddha Manas) liberates you.
An impure mind creates heaven and hell.
A pure mind takes you to the Eternal.
From the absolute view-point there is neither heaven nor hell.
It is all Brahman and Brahman alone
Heaven and Hell are states of mind
He who has a Sattvic mind is in heaven
He who has a Rajaso-tamasic mind is in hell.
He who is lustful, angry, malicious and greedy is in hell.
He who is merciful, generous, truthful and pious is in heaven.
From a relative view-point
Indraloka is heaven
Raurava, Maha Raurava, Kumbhipaka are hells.
In heaven the virtuous soul enjoys Divya Bhoga.
Moves in celestial cars, drinks nectar, Soma Juice.
Gandharvas and Apsaras serve him.
He has neither disease nor fatigue
In hell the wicked soul gets Tatana Sareera
A very thick mysterious body.

He is tortured in diverse ways.
There is no such thing as eternal damnation in hell
Man repents, improves, disciplines and becomes divine
Lead the divine life and attain immortal bliss.

Do not bother about heaven and hell
Rest peacefully in your original home of Immortal splendour.

—Swami Sivananda's
Light Divine, pp. 188-189

16. MORAL CONTENT IN DRAMATIC EXPRESSION

BRAHMACHARYA DRAMA :

ANCIENT sages said, and wisely too that, if one wanted to attain the highest degree of strength—physical, mental and moral—one should follow unswervingly the path of Brahmacharya. While many of us agree with this precept we betray a weakness, make a compromise and drift to marriage. The institution of marriage (Grihastha Ashram) as devised by Hindu Dharma is a golden mean between carnal passion on the one hand and unadulterated Brahmacharya on the other. The drama under review has for its argument the fact that 'King Reason assisted by his officers—Brahmacharya, Discrimination, etc." fights with "King Passion" and destroys him and brings purity, peace and bliss to the people. The book is full of fascinating dialogues and inspiring philosophical songs. The author states that the drama was first staged in Villupuram on April 6, 1940. The didactic value of the drama will benefit greatly young, impressionable minds which are tossed about by the tempestuous blast of indisciplined life. The book will make a good text-book in schools and colleges.

—*The Independent*,
Calcutta.

17. IN THE SECOND SCENE, FOURTH ACT, OF SIVANANDA'S BRAHMACHARYA DRAMA, THE TRIUMPHANT CONTINENCE REPORTS TO THE CHARACTER REASON THE DESTRUCTION OF IGNOBLE TRAITS AND PASSION IN HUMAN NATURE, BY THE POWER OF MORAL ATTRIBUTES

Enter Reason and Brahmacharya.

Reason :

Jaya Sita Ram Jaya, Jaya Sita Ram Jaya
Jaya Sita Ram Jaya, Jaya Sita Ram.
Pure Reason is free from egoism and selfishness,
Pure Reason certainly does not contradict intuition.
It is a help to the aspirants to make real Vichara,
It takes the student quickly to the door of intuition.

Neti-neti doctrine is practised through
the pure reason,
Pure Reason elevates (the aspirants) to
the height of Brahmic splendour.
(Jaya Sita Ram Jaya .. ..)

Reason : Dear Brahmacharya, what news now from the battle-field ?

Brahmacharya: Good news, my Lord ! Our enemy King Passion is mortally wounded. We have already cremated the dead bodies of all his allies. Here are the ashes :

Reason : Slain ! Hurreh ! Hurreh ! Jeyho ! Jeyho ! Joy ! Joy ! Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Balhari ! Balhari ! Any more news, my dear Brahmacharya ?

Brahmacharya : Kshama and Patience killed Anger. The fight was no doubt very furious. Contentment (Santosh) killed Greed and also insatiableness; Satyam destroyed falsehood; Magnanimity slew Jealousy ; Dhyana killed Cupid; Honesty killed Theft; Sirshasan with the invaluable assistance of Pranayam, Uddiyana, Mudra, Tapas, Tranquillity was able to deal a deadly blow to Passion and bring him to the ground with a heavy thud. Humility killed Pride, Vanity and Haughtiness. The state of Passion is indeed pitiable ! He cannot move or stir out, for he is helpless. He is bleeding profusely and may slip into eternal rest this moment or the next. Vichara and Discrimination were of great assistance to our forces. They were the real leaders. But they too had to depend on me for a decisive victory. Through thy Grace, my Lord, a glorious triumph is ours. Hail, a thousand hails to thee, great Lord ! Now the whole world rejoices in Atmic bliss, Supreme Peace and Eternal Satisfaction. We have been invited by the Prime Minister of Brahman, the Revered Vichara, to attend His Divine Majesty's Council. Let us all proceed thither to pay our sincere homage to the Divine Majesty Brahman the Mighty Source for all. Come, come this way, my Lord !

—Swami Sivananda's
Brahmacharya Drama,
pp. 72-74.

18. FOR READING AND RE-READING

PEACE AND PERFECTION :

THE book deals with Jnana Yoga, meditations, Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and allied topics. Certain questions that naturally crop up as one sits down to ponder, are answered in one chapter while guidance to aspirants is provided in another. Saints and sages are given in one chapter and wisdom sparks are collected in another. The book deserves to be read and re-read.

—*Searchlight*,
Patna.

19. SIVANANDA ON THE NATURE, THE MOODS, AND THE GREATNESS OF SAGES

JUDGE NOT A SAGE :

ONLY a sage can know a sage.
He will sometimes appear like a Sarvajna
all-knower.

He will sometimes appear like an Ajnani, ignorant man.
He knows when to act like a Brahma-nishta
And when to behave like a fool.
Do not judge him.
If you approach him with the proper Bhav,
With faith, devotion and spiritual thirst,
He will impart the highest knowledge to you.
If you approach him with a bad motive,
He will behave like a mad man
And you will be deceived.
Great will be your loss then.

—Swami Sivananda's
Peace and Perfection, p. 136.

IMITATE NOT THE SAINTS :

BRAHMA-Nishthas are like fire.
They can consume anything.
Their very touch purifies everything.
They are beyond good and bad ;
They are themselves the Supreme Good.
Do not imitate their actions.
Their actions are strange and mysterious.
They are beyond your intellect.
If you commit theft and say :
"Did not Krishna steal butter",
You will be hopelessly ruined.
Krishna lifted up the Govardhana-Hill
With his little finger.
Can you lift even a big stone
With all your strength ?
Follow the Upadesha of saints and Mahapurushas ;
You will attain Brahma-Jnana here and now.

—Swami Sivananda's
Peace and Perfection,
pp. 137-138.

LAUGHING AND WEEPING :

YOU laugh when you get pleasure ;
You weep when you get pain.
You enjoy pleasure when you get what you want ;
You get pain when you do not.
Raga-Dwesha, likes and dislikes,
Are the first Dwandwas ;
Sukha-Duhkha are the next pair ;
Harsha-Shoka are the subsequent pair.
He who has discrimination,
Cuts at the very root,
And has no likes and dislikes.
All are experiences to him :
He does not experience pleasure and pain.
Therefore he is neither elated by pleasure
Nor depressed in pain.

—Swami Sivananda's
Peace and Perfection, p. 65.

THE PRARABDHA OF A SAGE :

A BOY lies on the surgeon's table.
His abdomen has been ripped open.
Those standing around are weeping in agony,
It is painful to look at.
But the boy does not suffer pain.
He is under chloroform.
A sage's Prarabdha is like this.
His body is subject to various diseases.

Others see that his body has disease.
But the sage is unperturbed.
He is ever calm, peaceful and blissful.
He has no attachment to the body.
He is in Sahaja-Samadhi.
That is why it is said
That Atma-Jnana destroys all Karmas.
Sanchita and Agami are actually destroyed;
Prarabdha loses its effect on the sage.

—Swami Sivananda's
Peace and Perfection,
pp. 135-136.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND GASTRIC FIRE:

A HEALTHY man with excellent digestion
Is not afraid of taking a nice feast.
The powerful gastric fire
Will at once digest the rich food.
The same rich food is poison
To a man of weak digestion.
Similarly, a Sage or a Jnani
Who is established in Atma-Jnana
Would appear to be engaged in intense activity;
But the Great Fire of Jnana
Will reduce all Karmas to ashes.
The very Karma which binds an ignorant man
Does not touch the Jnani.
He is ever free, a Jivanmukta.

—Swami Sivananda's
Peace and Perfection, p. 135.

20. THE ARTISTIC ENDOWMENT OF SIVANANDA DESIGNS A DRAMATISED GUIDE TO THE CENTRAL CONTENT OF THE UPANISHADIC THOUGHT

THE UPANISHAD DRAMA:

IN "The Upanishad Drama", Swami Sivananda has given a dramatic setting to the subject-matter contained in the four important Upanishads, viz., Kathopanishad, Kenopanishad, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and Chhandogya Upanishad. The writers of Upanishads generally prefer dialogues to the discourses proper, to elucidate their theme, because that method is more impressive from the point of view of teaching and the name Upanishad itself suggests a teacher and-disciple association. In the Kathopanishad, the enquirer is Nachiketas and Yama appears in the role of a teacher. In the Kenopanishad, the prayer of the preceptor in which he seeks power and vigour through Upanishadic virtues forms the basis of the teaching. In this Upanishad, the Swamiji has introduced Brahmananda as the preceptor and Vichara Chaitanya as the disciple.

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad which is considered the greatest of Upanishads by Sri Sankaracharya, Yajnavalkya, the famous sage, expounds the doctrine of Brahma-Atman identity (Advaita) in reply to the enquiries of Maitreyi chiefly, though two other disciples, Gargi and Uddalaka appear later on. In the Chhandogya Upanishad, it is Narada who received the knowledge about Brahman

from Sanatkumara, another well-known sage of the Vedic Age. A distinction is made in this Upanishad between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge of the scriptures, Narada representing originally theoretical knowledge and Sanatkumara the practical side of it.

It need hardly be stated that in all these Upanishads, the conception and knowledge of Brahman (the supreme being or power) in all its aspects is dealt with; and it is a synthesis of this that is appearing in the Bhagavad Gita.

The Swamiji's rendering of the whole thing in a dramatic form makes it easy reading even for beginners in the Vedanta Philosophy.

—*Madras Information,*
Madras.

21. SIVANANDA'S METHOD OF CONVERSION RENDERS ALL LIFE INTO A MAGNIFICENT YOGA

ALL householders cannot renounce the world.
They will have to do Sadhana in the morning.
They can do Japa and Kirtan at night.
Even in the office they can write Mantra.
They can study a little Gita.
They can roll the beads in the pocket.
Every now and then they can repeat "HARI OM".
"Sri Rama", "Sita Ram", "Radheshyam".
They can feel: "The office is Brindawan."
"All beings are manifestations of the Lord.".
Give up "Gap Shap" and idle talk;
Utilise every second in Nam Smaran.
Visualise the image of the Lord now and then.
You can also realise God amidst work.
If you find it difficult to do this even,
Adopt the "method of conversion."
Follow the teachings contained
In the verse "Atma Twam Girija Matih .."
Convert all works as offerings unto the Lord.
Let your sleep be your Samadhi.
Let your walk be perambulation.
Let all your speech be praise of the Lord.
Let all your sensual enjoyments be worship of the Lord.
Let your food be offering unto the Lord.
Say: *Om Tat Sat—Brahmarpanamastu. Krishnarpanamastu, Ramarpanamastu.*
Repeat the sloka:
Yatkaroshi Yadasnasi Yajjuhoshi Dadasi Yat;
Yat Tapasyasi Kounteya Tat Kurushwa Madarpanam
And, *Kayenavacha Manasendriyaairva Buddhyatmanava Prakriter Swabhavat,*
Karomi Yadyat Sakalam Parasmai Sriman Narayanaeti Samarpayami.
You can also attain God-realisation easily.
By this unique method of conversion.

—Swami Sivananda's
Waves of Bliss, pp. 90-91.

22. ADVAITIC THOUGHT AND DEVOTIONAL MUSIC DISTINGUISH SIVANANDA

UPANISHAD DRAMA :

SWAMI Sivananda has brought out the Upanishadic Philosophy in the form of Drama. The technique of Drama is a method to appeal to the head and the heart of the public. Dramas of this kind are not new, *Prabodhachandrodaya* and *Sankalpa-suryodaya* had been written to instruct the high truths of *Advaita* and *Visishta-dvaita.*

Here Swami Sivananda imaginatively reconstructs the Katha, Kena, Brihadaran-yaka and Chandogya Upanishads in dramatic form. The effort is satisfactory.

Santi Rasa is well-maintained. The author follows the Advaitic school of thought, but there is enough devotional music and song to enliven the dramas. Each Upanishad drama has a foreword by Sri C.V. Narayana Aiyar, an introduction which gives the gist of the teachings of the Upanishad and a synopsis. The language is simple. The book should prove very popular.

—K.C. Varadachari, M.A.,Ph.D.,
The Hindu, Madras.

23. THE MOST RESOURCEFUL MIND OF SIVANANDA, REMEMBERS AN INSTANCE IN THE EPIC OF MAHABHARATA, AND MAKES IT A POINT FOR PERSUADING PEOPLE TO A SPIRIT OF RENUNCIATION.

YUDHISTHIRA passed by the side of Naraka (hell)
Because he uttered once a harmless lie.
The dwellers of Naraka rejoiced very much.
Their pangs were alleviated
Because they had Yudhisthira by their side.
The Viman came to take Yudhisthira to heaven.
Yudhisthira declined to enter the Viman.
He said : "Thousands rejoice by my presence here.
I will give all my merits;
Let these dwellers of hell go to heaven :
I do not mind remaining here".
Countless Vimans came to take these people.
Then a great Viman came to take Yudhisthira also.
Yudhisthira said : "I cannot come;
I have given all my merits to them."
The Messengers said:
"You have increased your merits millionfold
Through your renunciation.
Come to heaven now here is the Viman."
Yudhisthira also went to heaven.
Such is the power of renunciation;
Therefore practise renunciation.

—Swami Sivananda's
Waves of Bliss, p. 17

24. SIVANANDA AS THE VOICE OF TRUE AND ETERNAL RELIGION AND HIS USES OF DRAMA AS A MEDIUM OF SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT

UPANISHAD DRAMA :

SWAMI Sivananda is doing meritorious service in the cause of humanity. His voice is the voice of true and eternal religion, to ask man to see the Reality be hind ephemeral things of life. Money is too much with us; there is destruction, apparently endless, and all-covering. There is only one way-out. We must go back to the fundamental urges which are for the manifestation of God in us.

Swami Sivananda is an intelligent observer of life. He knows people want relaxation from miseries. They may have relaxation in abundance. But they must be instructed to rise above misery; they must have some elevating, and so perennial, philosophy.

Upanishad Drama is such an attempt. It gives the reader a sure key to the treasures of past knowledge as enshrined in Upanishads, our most ancient wisdom records. Along with initiation into wisdom there is relaxation. There are songs which embody most sublime precepts of religion. And then you have an atmosphere, which recommends practice extensively and sincerely. And all this communicated in a severely simple fashion. Certainly, a brilliant and inspiring performance.

—*Malabar Herald*,
Cochin.

BRAHMACHARYA DRAMA :

THE most effective and entertaining medium of instruction to youngsters is drama. Choosing the drama as his medium, the author, in this book discusses the importance and efficacy of Brahmacharya. The characters in the drama are King Passion and his numerous agents and King Reason. Divided into four acts, the drama makes capital entertainment. The drama has so far been staged by several schools, clubs and institutions.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

BRAHMACHARYA DRAMA :

THIS is an inspiring Drama in four acts inculcating the virtues of celibate life in preserving a person's vitality and fostering spiritual powers. A book to be read by all young persons specially.

—*The Indian Review*,
Madras.

25. KATHOPANISHAD AND THE CONQUEST OF DEATH

AMONG the Upanishads the Kathopanishad occupies an unrivalled place. It gives, in a nut-shell, the solution to the greatest problem which has faced all mankind from time immemorial; the problem of Life and Death. Fear of Death has always haunted the ignorant man and, unable to find a cure for it, the

maddened man has been running amok hither and thither in search of a solution. The uncertainty of life drives him to seek happiness; and like a monkey he jumps from one branch to the other tasting the apparently sweet (and bitter) fruits which, only give him unceasing pain in the stomach. Where then lies the solution ? What exactly is Death, the horrible ? Can we get over this formidable disease; and, if so, how ?

These questions, our ancients have answered for us, Science has progressed by leaps and bounds in the past one or two centuries; it is now a tree with many branches spreading over the entire humanity shutting out the Sun of Supreme Knowledge. In our admiration for the shady branches, we have not cared to peep through them, to go beyond them, to face the Sun—the very life of life itself. Our ancients were Masters of this spiritual Science; not content with the acquisition of that Degree, they have left for us a rich legacy the immortal fruits of their research. One such—the Kathopanishad—gives us the answer to the Eternal Question; and, what more, a practical answer. It has come right down to brass tacks : "Do this—thou shalt be free from Death," they declare.

We first have a hint on what not to give as charity—useless things, "stale plantain." Then we get a glimpse of the reverence shown in days of yore to a guest and how miserable they were if a guest had, even unintentionally, been neglected. Third, you are given an example of the temptations that a seeker after Truth comes across and of how they have all to be brushed aside, with the conviction that they are but ephemeral; the difference between "sreya" (good) and "preya" (pleasant) is emphasised here, of which the wise choose the good discarding the "pleasant" as worthless. Only they are eligible to receive Knowledge. The importance of approaching the proper Guru (preceptor) is then brought out. After explaining the significance of OM, the imperishability of the Atman; the Upanishad declares that the subjugation of the senses and the mind are of paramount importance for the realisation of the Self. While discoursing about Brahman, we are told that it can be attained only by the mind purified by the study of the Srutis, by the practice of the instructions given by the Spiritual Preceptor, by the practice of the four-fold means and constant meditation. Further on, clear, concise and comprehensive instructions are given on the method of meditating on Brahman, besides an abundance of theoretical knowledge on Brahman, Atma, transmigration and Prakriti. *Inter alia*, the essential unity underlying the variegated manifestations is stressed, with admonition that he who sees difference runs down quickly to darkness and is caught in the wheel of births and deaths. Lastly, the imperative necessity of keeping a constantly vigilant eye on Yoga Sadhana is brought out; and "the essence of Sadhana" is given in a few words.

This should, after you have read it or seen it enacted, open your eyes to the hidden treasures of Knowledge that are within your easy reach. You have yourselves to blame for not seizing them; you have closed your eyes against them and you imagine you are impoverished ! Open your eyes ? Let the Upanishads serve as your inseparable companions; they will throw a beam of light on the Path to Freedom. There is no easier way to conquer Death.

— Swami Sivananda's
Upanishad Drama, pp. 5-7

26. THE MEDIEVAL MORALITY PLAYS VERSUS SIVANANDA PLAYS SEASONED WITH THE VITAL MYSTICISM OF INDIAN SPIRITUALITY

BRAHMA VIDYA VILAS :

THE interesting Morality-plays of old English literature are brought to mind by this collection of philosophical plays by Swami Sivananda, wherein the senses, the feelings and emotions are the *dramatis personae*. As the sub-title of the book suggests, this book is a "play with a philosophy" and the truths of the Vedanta philosophy are brought from the pulpit to the theatre-pit in a novel and enjoyable form. This interesting book shows that philosophy can not only be the business but also the pleasure of life. Brahma Vidya, which this book dramatises, is "the Science of Sciences that enables a man to know the very source of knowledge itself" and as such its present palatable form should be a powerful aid to the reader seeking it.

The language of the plays is simple and conversational and enables the reader to understand the philosophical "plot". The price is moderate for the number of pages.

—*The Organiser*,
Delhi.

27. THE REVIEWER'S REPRESENTATION OF SIVANANDA AS THE REINCARNATION OF AN ANCIENT UPANISHADIC RISHI

UPANISHAD DRAMA

UPANISHADS form the fundamental basis of the evolution of the Hindu philosophy, religion and culture. The truths sublimated in the 'Upanishads', the practical lessons propounded for intimate guidance of man in the deep spiritual realms, which they present, are of eternal value for the aspirant. The 'Upanishad Drama' is written by the well-known spiritual Guru with an intimate realization of the life and lessons of the 'Upanishads'. It is, therefore, a priceless treasure in spiritual Sadhana. The Swamiji is an adept in presentation of the dramatic version which helps the average reader in grasping the events or truths or situations with ease and precision. An earnest study of the book under review leads the student through heavenly portals. It almost seems as if an original seer and propounder of 'Upanishads' is reincarnate, in the person of Swami Sivananda to re-interpret the gospel in manner easily understood by modern people. The plays can with great advantage be enacted on the stage and the screen and in educational institutions. Verily they are in the words of Shri C. Rajagopalachari "Gold beaten in various shapes and forms". We are sure every reader of the 'Upanishad Drama' will feel himself vastly changed for the better.

Every home, school and library should have a copy of this cheap, great book.

—*Champion*,
Calicut.

28. SIVANANDA'S MELODY FROM THE SNOW CAPPED MOUNTAIN, ON SIVA THE SUPREME TEACHER

DAKSHINAMURTHY :

ENTHRONED on His seat on Himalaya's
or Trans-Himalaya's heights.
Siva taking youth's form human, exquisite,
everlasting,
Teaches reverend sages sitting at His feet
Lessons of Eternal Wisdom, vanquishing
Doubt, darkness, death, despair and
delusion.
He, the Teacher of teachers—the Supre-
me Teacher—His method unique.
His teachings flash from heart to
heart.
Soul to soul, which no spoken words
convey,
His silence nevertheless their doubts
destroys.
This is the wonder of wonders !
His hand is raised in benediction over this
ancient land,
On which He casts His south-ward gaze,
Just as He "Conscious many faced"
blesses all races and climes
Facing them as they spread in front,
Eternal Watcher ! Standing sentinel,
shedding Love
For earth's constant welfare.
For as He seeth and silently rules.
Naught can go wrong in His world,
In whom all beings sentient or inert
abide.
Whose one will ordains that good over-
cometh evil
And righteousness ever prevails even if
seemingly delayed.
All teachers of whatever degree
represent
Him in all good things they impart,
And His power goeth to bless both the
teacher and the taught.

—Swami Sivananda's
Waves of Bliss, p.-62

29. THE POETIC STRAIN OF SIVANANDA FURNISHES A COMPLETE HAND-BOOK OF SPIRITUAL REALIZATION FOR THE GENERALITY OF MANKIND

WAVES OF BLISS :

THESE WAVES OF BLISS are the pointers to the waves of bliss of the Atma or Brahman. The first section of this book deals with the eternal background of the universe. The second chapter tells how discrimination detects the impermanent and false character of the universe. An exhortation to aspirants to wake up from ignorance is the theme of the succeeding chapter. Then is expounded the aspirant's conduct in relation to his Guru and the method of Sadhana.

The de-hypnotization of the Self from its belief in the world and its identity with the consciousness of the Absolute is effected through positive affirmation of itself as the Infinite Consciousness and Bliss. The methods are highly advanced and can be practised only by those who have dedicated

themselves to the cause of the Realisation of the Infinite. Says the author : "Even a slight tinge of worldliness makes one unfit for experiencing such an exalted condition of the truth of Brahman."

Simple stories and parables and even humorous anecdotes are the channel through which the Swamiji conveys wisdom of renunciation. It is one of the methods of carrying enlightenment to the vast majority of our people.

—S. P.,
Nagpur Times,
Nagpur.

WAVES OF BLISS :

A COLECTION of poems of spiritual import, this book will prove of immense help to the admirers of Swami Sivananda.

—*Sunday Times*, Madras.

WAVES OF BLISS :

THIS consists of a series of spiritual maxims calculated to guide the spiritual aspirant to Light. Coming from one who had devoted his life to the realisation of the Light of the Self, their value to the aspirant is beyond doubt.

New Delhi,
Organiser.

30. METAPHORS SIMILIES AND SPIRITUAL MESSAGE IN SIVANANDA'S UNSOPHISTICATED FREE VERSE

LIFE is like the lightning flash.
It is fleeting and transitory.
It fades quickly like the rainbow,
Like the impression on the water.
It is a bubble, a dream,
A shadow, a mist, a mirage.
And yet man thinks that life is permanent here.
This is Maya's delusion, mind's jugglery.
It is deception of the senses.
Wake up. O Man ! from this long slumber.
Understand Maya's tricks and learn to discriminate.
Attain knowledge of the Infinite
And enjoy Immortal Bliss of Brahman.

—Swami Sivananda's
Waves of Bliss, p. 19.

CHAPTER FIVE

SIVANANDA : HIS RELIGIOUS RHAPSODIES AND HIS DEVOTIONAL COMPOSITIONS

SIVANANDA

—The Structural Expression of the Inspired States of His Religious and Devotional Awareness as a Measure In Touching and Elevating the Emotional Potential of the Aspiring and Responding Popular Mind, by Devices Suited to it, and Shaping it into its High Spiritual Destiny—

The upsurge under the ardency of devotional fervour, of the adoring heart into spiritual ecstasy and self-rapt intensity of religious awareness, finds its objective counterpart and expression in a series of songs surcharged with a rare power that stirs and sublimates the emotions of the audiences within its ambit, a succession of rhapsodies consisting perhaps of merely rapid and high-pitched repetition of the luminous attributional Names of the Divine which may seize the rebellious energies of the listening minds, tame and tranquillise them into a wide silence and serenity which sense the significance of the powerfully articulated divine attributes, and turn susceptible to the God-Reality not as an Idea, an abstract something nothing, but as a Presence, a Power, an illuminating Grace, real to the thoughts it has touched and transformed, actual to the feelings it has aroused and possessed, a number of compositions formulated by a flowing inspired spontaneity which may embody the most exalted aspirations addressed to the omnipresent Divinity, or bear radiant responses of Love presented to the Divine Beloved, or expound the vision of the nature of the Godhead gained, or revel in spiritual aestheticism of unsullied purity, or carry a rich directional advice of spiritual wisdom for aspiring mankind. It is this spirit, this content, these forms, these powers, these effects that we find in the religious rhapsodies raised by the ringing voice Sivananda commands, in the philosophical verses he composes, and in the devotional lines he limns.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

SIVANANDA : HIS RELIGIOUS RHAPSODIES AND HIS DEVOTIONAL COMPOSITIONS

1. MYSTIC SIVANANDA, THE SOUL-STIRRING DIVINE SINGER RENEWS THE MEDIEVAL METHOD OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS AND STRIKES A NEW LITERARY STYLE OF NATURALNESS

INSPIRING SONGS AND KIRTANS :

SWAMI Sivananda is known for his Sankirtan as well as for his philosophical books and service to humanity through the many activities of his establishments at Ananda Kutir. He is a mystic devotee of the Lord first and foremost and Bhajan and Sankirtan call forth his deepest enthusiasm.

In giving a new life to this hoary method of spiritual progress, he has adapted Sankirtan to the tedencies of the times, The Namavalis, the prayers, the philosophical songs are all composed in English, There are also a number of songs in this collection in Hindi, Sanskrit and Tamil. The songs are called inspired songs. To know the truth of the description one should read them, or better, hear them sung. They are simple and artless. There are no tricks of thought or of phrases in them. Neither is there any skill or originality in the musical tunes indicated. They are yet soul-stirring by their very naturalness and naivete. The bare names of God, the familiar tunes in music and the old axioms of philosophy as they escape from the inspired singer during a state of superconsciousness, become sweet and blissful.

Swami Sivananda always mixes his discourses with his songs and charms his hearers with them. A number of these songs have been gramophone-recorded. This is an invaluable book for all spiritual aspirants and propagandists.

—Y. M. S., *The Hindu*,
Madras.

2. THE INFLEXIONS OF SIVANANDA'S VOICE INTONE THE ENVELOPING PRESENCE OF THE DIVINE KRISHNA

Shri Krishna Dhwanis :

Sri Krishna Govinda Here Murare
Hae Natha Narayana Basudeva
Shyama Sundara Madana Mohana

Jeya Jeya Panduranga
Panduranga, Panduranga, Panduranga,
Panduranga
Panduranga Jeya, Panduranga Jeya,
Panduranga Jeya, Panduranga

Panduranga Hari, Panduranga Hari,
Panduranga Hari, Panduranga
Jeya Jeya Vittala Panduranga, Jeya Hari
Vittala Panduranga
Vittala Vittala Panduranga, Vittoba
Vittoba Panduranga.

—Swami Sivananda's
Inspiring Songs & Kirtans, p.134.

3. THE TRANSCENDENTAL TENDERNESS OF SIVANANDA PLEADS WITH THE MORTALS AND LAYS DOWN FOR THEM THE MANY ROADS TO IMMORTALITY

(This song has been recorded in the gramophone.)

Ram Ram Ram Ram, Jeya Sita Ram,
Jeya Jeya Radheshyam.
Turn the gaze, draw the Indriyas,
Still the mind, sharpen the intellect ;
Chant OM with feeling, meditate on Atma,
Chant Ram with feeling, meditate on Sitaram
Chant Shyam with feeling, meditate on Radheshyam
O Children of Light, will you drink not,
Won't you drink the nectar of immortality ? (Ram Ram .. ..)
All Karmas (are) burnt now,
You have become a Jivanmukta ;
That blessed state Turiyatita
No words can describe,
O Children of Light, will you drink not,
Won't you drink the nectar of immortality ? (Ram Ram .....)
The grass is green, the rose is red,
And the sky is blue ;
But the Atman is colourless,
Formless and Gunaless too,
O Children of Light, will you drink not,
Won't you drink the nectar of immortality ? (Ram Ram.....)
Life is short, time is fleeting,
The world is full of miseries,
cut the knot of Avidya,
And drink the sweet Nirvanic bliss,
O Children of Lignt, will you drink not,
Won't you drink the nectar of immortality ? Ram Ram.....)
Feel the divine presence everywhere,
See the divine glory all-round ;
Then dive deep into the divine source,
Realise the infinite Bliss.
O Children of Light, will you drink not,
Won't you drink the nectar of immortality ? (Ram Ram.....)
Do Asan, Kumbak, Mudra,
Shake the Kundalini ;
Then take it to Sahasrar
Through Chakras in the Sushumna.
O Children of Light, will you drink not,
Won't you drink the nectar of immortality ? (Ram Ram.....)

—Swami Sivananda's
Inspiring Songs & Kirtans,
pp. 59-60.

4. SIVANANDA, THE SUPERB EXPONENT OF THE LIFE DIVINE

INSPIRING SONGS AND KIRTANS :

SWAMI Sivananda who is revered and admired by thousands all over the world, is not only a superb speaker and exponent of the Divine Life Movement but also a splendid Sankirtanist. The songs sung by him

and now in this book are in half English and half Sanskrit (or half Hindi). It is pertinent to quote the following from the Publishers' Note : "At one time when Sivananda rose on the Sankirtan platform at Rawalpindi, and sang his inspiring songs, the half-inclined Arya Samajists also joined him in chorus unaware they were doing so, and danced along with him in such ecstasy that they, like other Sanatanists present, cast off all shyness in singing the glorious Names of the Lord. Thus his inspiring songs came to be popularly known as *Injection Dhwanis* which like the injections of an eminent doctor went straight into the system and turned confirmed atheists into eternal theists and won for him universal appreciation and recognition as *Kirtan Samrat*." The importance and efficacy of songs and Sankirtan need no emphasis. Those who wish to spend their leisure hours in the most fruitful manner cannot do better than to go in for this book.

—*My Magazine*, Madras.

5. AFFIRMATIONS AND ASSERTIONS IN THE DIVINE SELF-NATURE

SONG OF CHIDANANDA :

This song of Sivananda has been recorded in the gramophone, and also in the All-India Radio, Calcutta.

Chidanand Chidanand Chidananda Hum
Har Halme Almast Satchidananda Hum
Ajaranand Amaranand Achalananda Hum,
Har Halme Almast Satchidananda Hum

Antarai

Nirbhaya Aur Nischinta Chidgananda Hum
Kaivalya Kevala Kutastha Ananda Hum
Nitya Suddha Siddha Satchidananda Hum
Knowledge Bliss, Knowledge Bliss, Bliss Absolute,
In all conditions I am Knowledge, Bliss Absolute.
I am without old age, without death, without motion,
In all conditions, I am Knowledge, Bliss Absolute.

Antarai

I am without fear, without worry Bliss Absolute
Existence Absolute
Knowledge Absolute
Independent, unchanging, non-dual Atma
Immortal Atma
Advaita Atma
Eternal pure, perfect Knowledge, Bliss Absolute
(Chidanand.....)
Sivanand Sivanand Sivananda Hum
Aghadbhum wala Aghadbhum wala Akhilananda Hum
Chidanand Chidanand Chidananda Hum
Har Halme Almast Satchidananda Hum.
Nijanand Nijanand Nijananda Hum
Har Halme Almast Satchidananda Hum.

6. SIVANANDA'S RHAPSODIES RELEASED FROM AN EMOTIONAL AWARENESS INTENSIVELY RAPT IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Song of Prarthana

Hae Krishna Aja Bansi Bajaja,
Hae Krishna Aja Gita Sunaja,
Hae Krishna Aja Makhan Khaja,

Hae Krishna Aja Lila Dikhaja.

—Swami Sivananda's
Inspiring Songs & Kirtans,
p. 40.

Song of Govinda

Rama Krishna Govinda,
Radha Krishna Govinda,
Gopala Krishna Govinda,
Krishna Krishna Govinda,
Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda,
Banke Bihari Govinda,
Brij Bihari Govinda,
Shyama Bihari Govinda,
Kunja Bihari Govinda,
Krishna Murari Govinda,
Audh Bihari Govinda,
Govinda Govinda Govinda Govinda,

—Swami Sivananda's
Inspiring Songs & Kirtans,
p. 49.

7. SIVANANDA'S EMPHASIS ON SERVICE AS A VALUE HIGHER THAN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PSYCHIC POWERS

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

READERS of THE ASTROLOGICAL MAGAZINE and the general public, I am sure, would be fully aware of the useful and valuable work being accomplished by Swami Sivananda in his Himalayan Asrama in the direction of humanising and spiritualising mankind on the lines laid down by classicists of the Vedanta of ancient India, and in some of the works and publications of the Swamiji noticed by me in the columns of THE ASTROLOGICAL MAGAZINE, readers would have found theoretical exposition of the doctrines of the Vedanta and practical guidance in pursuit of the programme of psycho-physical purification mapped out by Yoga-system.

POCKET PRAYER BOOK is a small brochure or booklet in the course of which Swamiji has collected and presented in an eclectric manner together in one and the same context prayers addressed to different deities and superior powers that have to be chanted by aspirants proceeding along the path of philosophy and spiritual *Sadhana* towards realization. The daily programme commences with sun rise and runs practically to sunset or sun-down. The programme includes Suryanamaskara, Sandhya, Gayatri, Parayana, Yoga Sadhana, and other disciplines. Certain mantras are also given. Important instruction to sadhakas in the shape of certain Do's and Don'ts is concisely and convincingly explained for the benefit of beginners, and those who may be too busy to make a study of the original Sanskrit works.

Towards the conclusion, striking emphasis is laid on the gospel of service. Serving Lord Narayana in the shape of attending to a dying sick person is spiritually more valuable than the obtainment of Yogic powers and *siddhis*.

—Dr. Nagaraja Sarma, M.A.,Ph.D.,
The Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

8. SIVANANDA : HIS MUSIC OF SILENCE AND HIS BELOVED INDWELLER

MUSIC OF SILENCE :

HEAR the music of the meeting of the Soul with Soul—
It is the Divine Music, thrilling and soul-stirring.
It is the music that transcends Rag-ragini ;
It is the music that gives rapturous ecstasy :
The light of this music illumines the world.
It is the source for all vocal music ;
It is the source for all musical instruments :
It is the music of that supreme Silence.
It is the music of the flute of Sri Krishna;
It is the music that delights Radha :
It is the music without stringing and playing --
It is the music of the Sahasrara lotus.
Sivananda says : "Listen to me, brother !
There are only few,
Who have heard this music of Silence."

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 82.

LORD IS THE INDWELLER :

Within this seed, is the Lord ;
Within this flower, is the Creator :
Within this fruit, is Lord Narayana.
Within this water, is the indweller ,
Within this fire, is God :
Within this Sun, is the Inner Ruler.
Within this mind, is the Almighty ;
Within this breath, is the Absolute :
Within this eye, is the Eternal.
Within this sound, is Sadasiva ;
Within this heart, is Supreme Brahman :
Within every object, is the Indwelling Presence
Sivananda says : "Listen to me, my friend,
My beloved Lord is within :
Feel His immanence.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 81.

9. SIVANANDA, TYAGARAJA, GOURANGA AND MIRA—THE PHILOSOPHY AND POWER OF THEIR SONGS FOR THE SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION OF MANKIND

THE essence of the various spiritual disciplines useful for an aspirant in his every day life has been presented in the form of songs in the present volume, *Inspiring Songs and Kirtans*. A good collection of Sankirtan Dhwanis has also been included in the end so that it may be useful for devotees for their daily Sankirtan at home.

The presentation of philosophy in the form of songs has a peculiar attraction. Philosophy, though dry, when put in the form of songs and sung in a melodious tune become more intelligible to the ordinary man. He gets himself merged in the music of the soul through the medium of songs and Sankirtans.

The Rishis of yore have invariably written their inspiring works either in the form of poetry or in the form of songs. The Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavat and other sacred Hindu scriptures are all written

in poetry. They can very well be sung also. It is easy to remember songs, small couplets and poetry than volumes of prose.

You all know the importance and efficacy of songs and Sankirtan. They inspire you and elevate the depressed mind. Sages who have sung the glories of the Lord, have attained God-consciousness, and their names are legion. The most famous of these are Sri Tyagaraja Swami of Tiruvayar, Sri Purandaradas of Mysore, Ram Prasad of Bengal, Lord Gouranga of Nawadwip, Mira —Queen of Chittor and others. They have composed innumerable inspiring songs which directly touch the heart of the devotee and inspire him to lofty ideals of peace, bliss and immortality. They came face to face with God, conversed with them and received their blessings and attained Sayujya Mukti on leaving their mortal coils.

Even if you get by heart some selected songs from this book and sing them whenever you get time at your disposal you will be highly benefited. They will remind you of what Sadhana you have to do and in what items of Sadhana you are lacking. They will serve as a reminder when you neglect your daily routine, either due to laziness or lack of sincerity or over-work. Every song has the names of the Lord attached to it and hence the mere singing of them will form a kind of Sadhana.

—Swami Sivananda's
Inspiring Songs and Kirtans,
pp. iv-v.

10. SELECTIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURES

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

THIS little book provides a daily guide to aspirants who are generally not in a position to do wholetime Sadhana. Swamiji has culled some choice selections from the Upanishads, the Gita, the Bhajan of Mira and Surdas and the Tulsidas Ramayana and presented them. The spiritual instructions of Swamiji which are included at the last pages of the book would provide perennial fount of refreshing inspiration.

—*The Wednesday Review*,
Trichinopoly.

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

THIS publication is meant to be a daily guide-book to aspirants, who are not generally in a position to do whole-time Sadhana. Covering practically every aspect of Sadhana which can be easily practised during a day, it contains selections from the "Gita", "Upanishads" and Tulsidas "Ramayana". The 'hints for daily routine' enhance the value of the book.

—*Free India*,
Madras.

11. SIVANANDA : HIS SPIRITUAL ODYSSEY AND HIS CHALLENGING ANSWER TO AN ENCOUNTER FROM HUMAN REASON

THE UNFATHOMABLE :

THROUGH the Grace of Sadguru,
I have fathomed the Unfathomable :
I have known the Unknowable :

I have seen the Unseen.
I have forded the Unfordable ;
I have approached the Unapproachable :
I have drunk the elixir of wisdom,
I have conquered the Death ;
I swim on the ocean of bliss :
Thus sayeth Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 102.

REALISE IT YOURSELF :

How can I describe that exalted state ?
It cannot be written on paper ;
It cannot be told in words :
There is no language
To describe that state.
Language is imperfect,
Can you explain colour
To a blind man ?
It is like that state
Of a dumb person,
Who tastes a sweet thing.
How can it be explained ?
You will have to realise it yourself :
Thus sayeth Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 103.

12. HE FIRST TURN IN RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN A THEIST AND AN ATHEIST :

THIS instructive dialogue dealing with the existence of God was published out of a donation given by Sri C. Ramayya, President of the Divine Life Society Branch, Madras, nd is intended for free distribution.

The theist, in this booklet, confounds the atheist with his arguments and instructs him on the manner of attaining Self-realization.

—*The Ceylon Observer*,
Colombo.

13. SIVANANDA PORTRAYS THE NATURE OF THE REQUISITE EQUIPMENT FOR A DEVOUT LIFE IN THE DIVINE

Do you really want God ? Do you really thirst for His Darshan ? Have you got real spiritual hunger ? Only he who thirsts for the Darshan of God will develop love; unto him alone will He reveal Himself. God is a question of supply and demand. If there is sincere demand for God, the supply will come at once.

Pray fervently like Prahalad. Sing like Radha. Repeat His Name Valmiki, like Tukaram and Tulsidas. Do Kirtan like Gouranga. Weep in solitude like Mira, over the separation from the Lord. You will have Darshan of the Lord this very second.

Love is the immediate way to the Kingdom of God or the vast domain of perennial peace and joy. It is the life-principle of creation. It was the driving force behind Mira, Tukaram and Gouranga. Therefore, develop pure, unselfish love. Pure love is a rare commodity. Cultivate it gradually. All your negative qualities like dislike, prejudice, will be eradicated. Love is a great purifier of the mind. Abandon all sorts of

wrong beliefs, weaknesses, superstitions, wrong notions and ideas of impossibilities. Live in Love. Cling fast to the faith in the Divine Life. Aspire fervently and constantly to live in the Divine.

Love all and aspire ceaselessly for the Grace of God. Do not make any difference between male and female. When you are in the company of women, repeat the Mantra, "Ek Sat Chit Ananda Atma". The same Atma which is in your heart prevails in all the bodies of women. The idea of sex will vanish. You will see God in them.

Feel that Lord Krishna works through all hands, sees through all eyes, hears through all ears. Thirst like Gopis for His vision. Lord Krishna's Grace is bound to come. He is the Immortal friend. Never forget this. You will realise Him.

—Swami Sivananda's
Light, Power, Wisdom,
pp. 1, 9, 12.

14. SIVANANDA ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LIFE

LIGHT, POWER AND WISDOM :

AS the title signifies, this book is an attempt to lead the world to light, power and wisdom. What is of greatest significance in life is the removal of ignorance and simultaneous coming of light which will give us power indefinite and ever-lasting. This idea is communicated beautifully and simply in course of stray thoughts, which are elevating and compelling. His message reads:

> "Cultivate peace in the garden of your heart by removing the weeds of lust, hatred, greed, selfishness and jealousy. Know and feel always that you are the pervading, immortal consciousness, the undying eternal Arma".

Peace is internal and it finds itself in so many shapes and things of the world. Don't hunt for peace outside your mind or heart, as the Swami seems to suggest. This act and experience of finding peace in heart or mind is the surest road to peace and rhythm in the world. But think of the conditions. Remove lust, hatred, greed, selfishness and jealousy. That is you must have unlimited love and sympathy to find peace in the world. The idea is alright. One thing more. You think of God everywhere. Think of yourself as pervading the world. Will not this idea create the reality of your oneness with God ? We are unhappy because we think ourselves as separated from God and as such from people of the world wherein God Himself resides.

—Prof. B.S. Mathur,
Malabar Herald,
Cochin.

15. THE CLOSE PRESENCE OF SAINT SIVANANDA WHISPERS A COUNSEL OF POWER AND PERFECTION

KEEP up your mental poise amidst the changes of the world without consideration of success or failure, gain or loss, pleasure or pain. Have the mind always rooted in

God amidst activities. Use the blow pipe of "Teevra Vairagya" and intense concentration to kindle the fire of devotion.

Work with a heart within and God overhead. Have a profound faith in the Will of Providence. Meditate on the divine attributes of the Lord, viz., Mercy, Cosmic Love, Beauty of beauties and All-pervasiveness. You will get success in life and God-realisation. Dear Friend, can economical efficiency and a few more comforts with electric lights, fans and sofa give you real peace and freedom, Santi and Mukti ? Certainly not. Search, understand and realise. The guide has come.

Give up all sorts of fears, anger, care, worries and anxieties. Do not be disheartened by failures. Pain is the best thing in the world. It is an eye-opener. Never forget this. Always protect yourself from evil influences. Do not allow the spiritual Samskaras to be obliterated. It is difficult to regain what is lost in spirituality. Exercise Vichar, Viveka, always. Utilise your will to resist evil influences.

Do not grumble about bad environments. Create your own mental world and environments. Build up your character properly. Establish virtuous healthy habits. Understand the glory, splendour and power of the Self which is at the back of your mind, thoughts, will and memory. Keep your body strong and healthy by regular exercise. Become a spiritual hero. Shut out the doors of the senses. Still the thoughts, emotions and feelings. Sit motionless and calm in the early morning hours. Have a receptive attitude. Go along with God. Commune with him.

—Swami Sivananda's
Light, Power And Wisdom,
p. 105, 109, 112, 115.

16. SIVANANDA IN EXALTED STATES OF DEVOTION

PUSHPANJALI :

AMONG the various works of Swami Sivananda, *Pushpanjali*, depicts most vividly and clearly the rare and exalted states of excellence and love felt by Sivananda for God. These peoms are the result of over flow of his love for God. These poems were not deliberately composed but they were jotted down first and re-touched later. The poems deal with various subjects such as divine drink, Mother Kundalini, Durbar of God, etc. These poems can be got readily by heart. They have the essence of pure love and supreme wisdom to make one a Jivanmukta.

—*Coimbatore Times,*
Coimbatore.

17. ATTRIBUTES OF SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS CONSTITUTE THE RARE FLOWERS SIVANANDA OFFERS AT THE LORD'S ALTAR

DIVINE FLOWERS :

HE Prabhu, bestower of Bliss,
My basket of flowers is empty now.
I shall offer Thee, O Lord !
Some rarest divine flowers.
I cultivated them with great difficulty ;

These flowers cannot be had in any market,
Or in any garden in the three worlds :
I offer Thee the divine Champaka of Shanti,
I offer Thee the divine rose of equal vision,
I offer Thee the divine Jassamine of Santosh,
I offer Thee the divine Parijata of wisdom,
I offer Thee the divine Mandara of discrimination,
I offer Thee the rare flower of self-restraint ;
These flowers will be more pleasing to Thee, O Lord,
Please accept these flowers, my Lord :
Thus sayeth Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 124.

18. OTHER WORLDLY ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMORIES ATTEND SIVANANDA'S THIS WORLDLY SIGHTS AND SUSTAIN HIM IN THE UNBROKEN CONTINUITY OF DIVINE REALIZATION

REMINDING DIVINE FRIENDS :

THE Sun and fire remind me
of the Self-effulgence of the Lord ;
They draw my thoughts to God.
The flowers remind me
Of the Infinite beauty of the Lord :
The Sky and the Ocean remind me
Of the Infinite nature of the Lord.
Thunder and Atomic bomb remind me
Of the Omnipotence of the Lord ;
The earth, the water, the wind and the fire
Remind me of the purity of the Lord :
Ether reminds me of the subtle
And all-pervading nature of the Lord.
The stars and the Himalayas
Remind me of the Infinite glory of the Lord.
I thank these friends cordially :
Thus sayeth Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 129.

SAHAJA SAMADHI :

I look at the blue sky,
It remainds me of Lord Krishna ;
I look at the blue water of Ganges,
It reminds me of Radheshyam :
Whatever I see,
It reminds me of my Beloved.
I see His beauty everywhere ;
Whatever I do, it becomes His worship :
Wherever I go, I move round Him.
When I lie down.
I lie prostrate at His feet.
Whatever I take, is His Prasad ;
I enjoy Sahaja Samadhi :
Thus sayeth Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 110.

ONLY GOD I SAW :

WHEN I surveyed from Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh,
By the side of Tehri Hills, only God I saw.
In the Ganges and the Kailash peak,

In the famous Chakra Tirtha of Nimisar too, only God I saw.
In the Dadhichi Kund of Misrik,
In the sacred Triveni of Prayag Raj too, only God I saw.
In the Maya Kund of Rishikesh and
In the hot springs of Badri, Jumnotri and Gauri Kund to boot, only God I saw,
In tribulation and in grief, in joy and in glee,
In sickness and in sorrow, only God I saw
In birds and dogs, in stones and in trees,
In flowers and fruits, and in sun, moon and stars, only God I saw.
In the rosy cheeks of Cashmere ladies,
In the ugly faces of the African negroes, only God I saw.
In filth and scents, in poison and dainties,
In the market and in societies, only God I saw.
In trains and cars, in aeroplanes and steamers,
In Jutkas and dandies, in tumtums and landows, only God I saw.
I talked to the flowers; they smiled and nodded,
I conversed with the running brooks; they verily responded, only God I saw.
In prayer and fasting, in praise and meditation,
In Japa and Asan, in Tratak and concentration, only God I saw,
In Pranayama and Nauli, in Bhasti and Neti,
In Dhouti and Vajrouli, in Bhastrika and Kundalini, only God I saw.
In Brahmakara Vritti and Vedantic Nididhyasan,
In Atmic Vichara and Atmic Chintan, only God I saw.
In Kirtan and Nam Smaran, in Sravan and Vandan,
In Archan and Pacasevan, In Dasya and Atmanivedan, only God I saw.
Like camphor I was melting in His fire of Knowledge,
Amidst the flames out-flashing, only God I saw.
My Prana entered the Brahmarandhra at the Moordhini,
Then I looked with God's eyes, only God I saw.
I passed away into nothingness, I vanished.
And lo, I was the All-living, only God I saw.
I enjoyed the Divine Aiswarya, all God's Vibhutis,
I had Viswaroop Darshan, the cosmic consciousness, only God I saw.
Glory, glory unto the Lord, hail ! hail ! Oh sweet Ram !
Let me sing once more Thy Name, Ram Ram Ram. Om Om Om, only God I saw.

—Swami Sivananda's
Practice of Karma Yoga, p. xvii.

THANKSGIVING TO THE LORD :

O LORD ! Thy blessings on me are beyond description.
You are the coolness in ice and the Ganges water ;
In the juice of cucumber, orange, malta,
Almond drink, buttermilk and sherbet ;
I recognise Thee in all these.
I return from the Diamond Jubilee Hall,
And take a bath in the Ganges ;
I am refreshed, invigorated and galvanised :
This is indeed Thy blessing !
Thou art the warmth and stimulent in tea and coffee ;
Thou art the nutrition in cocoa, butter and milk ;

Thou art the Vitamin, protein and hormotone ;
Thou art my cell, tissue, blood and nerve ;
Thou art my life, vitality, soul and all ;
Crores of prostrations unto Thee, O Lord !

—Swami Sivananda's
Gyana Jyoti, p. 107.

I AM ALONE WITH THEE :

O My Lord of Compassion !
The stars are shining,
The eyes are all closed,
All have shut their doors,
Here I am alone with Thee.
The hours which I like best,
Are those in which I meet Thee ;
My heart is enchained
In the noose of Thy Love :
Thou art my true Beloved.
At Thy sight I am enchanted.
Thy sight gives me life to live on ;
I drink the nectar of Thy eyes :
I shall sing Thy Lilas,
I am lifeless
Without a sight of Thee :
So says Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 26.

HOW SHALL I CALL HIM ?

I

SHALL I call Him the celestial honey or divine syrup ?
Shall I call Him the sweet juice
Of the Divine Sugar-cane ?
Shall I call Him the light of lights ?
Shall I call Him the ocean of Bliss ?
Shall I call Him the fountain of Joy ?
Shall I call Him the Beauty of beauties ?
Shall I call Him the ocean of knowledge ?
Shall I call Him the divine medicine,
That cures the disease of birth and death.
Shall I call Him the nectar of Immortality ?
Shall I call Him the cream of the Vedas four ?
Shall I call Him the inexhaustible wealth ?
Shall I call Him the abode of Everlasting Peace ?
Shall I call Him Moksha Dhama ?
Shall I call Him Param Pada ?
Shall I call Him Paramam Gati ?
Shall I call Him Brahma Nirvana ?
How shall I describe Him ?
Let me become Silent !

HOW SHALL I CALL HIM ?

II

SHALL I call Him the blue-necked, Neelakantha ?
Shall I call Him the three-eyed, Trilochana ?
Shall I call Him the holder of Trident ?
Shall I call Him the bearer of bow ?
Shall I call Him the friend of poor ?
Shall I call Him the Guru of the World ?
Shall I call Him the consort of Lakshmi or Gauri ?
Shall I call Him the cowherd of Brindawan ?
Shall I call Him the beloved of Radha ?
Shall I call Him the heart of Siva ?
Shall I call Him the Adi-Purusha ?
Shall I call Him the old man of the Upanishads ?
Shall I call Him Ponnambalam or Arunachala ?
Shall I call Him Vaikunthanath or Kailashnath ?
Shall I call Him Sripati or Gouripati ?
How shall I call Him ?
Let me sit at His feet !

—Swami Sivananda's
Wisdom Sparks, pp. 85-86.

19. PROFOUND PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT IN SIMPLE SONGS

INSPIRING SONGS AND KIRTANS :

MOST religious people can understand and realise the importance and efficacy of songs and Sankirtans. These inspire men and elevate the depressed soul. Sages and poets have praised the glories of the Lord in the form of songs and Sankirtans. Their names are legion and as examples of them may be mentioned, Sri Tyagaraja, Sri Purandarasadas and Lord Gouranga.

As Swami Sivananda himself says in an autograph-forward to the book, "The presentation of philosophy in the form of songs has a peculiar attraction for the people. The whole Indian philosophy is given in this book in the form of songs and charming tunes". The songs are all in English and a few reproduce Sanskrit Bhajans or Namavalis. Three of them at pages one-fifty-nine and one-sixty are in Tamil.

The book will be prized widely by all the admirers of Swami Sivananda.

—*Federated India,*
Madras.

20. FEATURES AND LINEAMENTS OF SAINTHOOD AND THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE DESTINATION SIVANANDA REACHED

WHO IS A SAINT ?

A SAINT is a God on earth ;
To him the whole world is mere straw :
To him gold and stone are alike.
To him pleasure and pain are the same ;
He is free from 'I'ness and 'Mine'ness :
He is free from lust, anger and greed.
He loves all beings as his own Self ;
He is endowed with dispassion and mercy :
He speaks the truth and serves all.
He ever meditates on the Lord ;
He does not speak ill of others :
He has equal vision.
He sees Devi or Mother in all women ;
He is ever joyful and peaceful :
He sings the glory of the Lord.
He has Divine knowledge ;
He is fearless and generous :
He never begs, but gives.
He is majestic and Lordly ;
Such a one is rare,
In the whole world :
So says Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 86.

OCEAN OF SWEETNESS :

I HAVE found the key of Mystery ;
There is wonderful rest in the land of bliss.
Wonderful is the sorrowless land,
It is Infinite ocean of sweetness ;
Look within and rest peacefully,
The three forms of misery are no more :
The five kinds of afflictions are not here,
One becomes speechless and silent,—
There is stupendous silence.
The seer, seen and sight have become one :
The knower, known and knowable are one.
There is the divine music of the Supreme harmony,

Without the play of fingers and strings ;
One enjoys freedom and perfection ;
Bliss is filled to the very brim:
I have realised oneness,—
So says Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Pushpanjali, p. 100.

DROP BECOMES THE OCEAN :

AS water mingles with milk,
As sugar and salt dissolve in water,
So does the individual Soul
Mingle with the Supreme Soul.
No duality remains;
The drop mixes with the ocean,
The river joins the ocean,
Camphor melts in the fire.
The lover and the Beloved become one,
The thinker and the thought become one;
The meditator and the meditated become one :

Thus sayeth Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 108.

THE TREE OF IMMORTALITY :

I TASTE the nectar, that drops
From the Tree of Immortality ;
I have taken the Divine Essence.
This Tree is a mysterious tree,
With roots above,
And branches below.
It has no bark ;
Its sap is Ananda Rasa :
It lives without rain.
It is a Jyoti Vriksha ;
It is a luminous tree :
It makes man Immortal.
Sages and Rishis rest under this tree.
It gives the immortal fruit,
That confers immortality on man ;
Its marrow is undying bliss :
Take shelter under this tree,
And attain Immortality :
So says Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 48.

MY FAITH :

PEOPLE profess diverse faiths ;
Some are Dwaita-vadins,
Some are Lokayatas,
Some are Nir Ishwar-vadins,
Some are Naiyayikas,
Some are Dadu Panthis,
Some are Digambaras,
Some are Nanak Shayees,
But I believe in the one Infinite :
I am that Infinite :
So says Sivananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pushpanjali, p. 46.

CHAPTER SIX

THE FORMS AND THE AIMS OF HYMNS AND PRAYERS IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA

—And the Hymns and Prayers As the Principal and Many-bodied Means, Accommodative of All Aims, and Accessible to All mankind, For Obtaining Any Benefit and Attaining Consummate Spiritual Communion, by the Active Exercise of the Powers of Aspiration and the Rhythms of Adoration—

Poised above all need for elementary modes of approach to an immediate realisation of the eternal and infinite Divine Presence and Power, the God-possessed Consciousness of Sivananda yet assumes, doubly compelled by the logic of an all encompassing Love and the pressures of prophetic duties, the heart of humanity, and articulates for it its own attitudes of adoration, affords many dignified oral utterances to its basic needs, hopes and aspirations, in prayers distinguished by an eloquence of sheer earnestness that will not fail to strike into a new height of spiritual resonance the sympathetic chords of sincere seekers of the Divine, a beauty lyrical in expression that is bound to delight the simple-minded literate, a variety in pattern calculated to supply models for all moods and temperaments, and an integrality of Godward ascent which ignores no aspect of life-development and spiritual evolution, and formulated such hymns to which we may resort either for inspiration and guidance, or for solace and succour, or for storing our minds with a predominence of spiritual objectives they carry, with the profoundest philosophical perceptions they bear, or yet for making them a ready-made verbal medium for pouring out the fullness of our own inspired bosoms. Is this all ?—No, Sivananda has also selectecd and presented such Stotras from Srutis and Puranas that are, in their original Sanskrit tongue, bound to touch us with a rare spiritual sublimation and set our religious susceptibilities astir and panting for great realizations.

— SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE FORMS AND THE AIMS OF HYMNS AND PRAYERS IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. THE GREAT LITTLE GIFT OF SIVANANDA TO HUMANITY'S HOURLY APPROACH TO GOD

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

THE importance of prayer and Sandhyavandana has been recognised by Hindu thought and the Vedic religion provided Mantras for the worship of the One Divine Spirit in various forms and manifestations. The daily *Abhyasa* of worship is a very real means for the attainment of internal peace and joy and outer harmony. This small pocket prayer book has been provided by Swami Sivananda, to serve as a constant companion. It contains the Peace-chants or Shanti-Mantras of the Vedas and the devotional verses addressed to Gods and the important Mantras used in Sandhyavandana, Suryanamaskara, Tapa-Padhati, Archanaviddhi, important Mantras from the Upanishads, Gita, Asanas, Pranayama, and other well-known prayers. In a sense, it provides a daily guide for *Nityakarma* for all seekers.

—K. C. V., *The Hindu*,
Madras.

2. THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE—THE GREATNESS OF ITS CONCEPTION OF GOD AND THE GRANDEUR OF ITS SOLITARY PURSUIT OF SPIRITUAL PERFECTION

O ADORABLE Lord of Mercy and Love !
Salutations and Prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient ;
Thou art the Indweller of all beings,
Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, anger, greed, hatred and jealousy.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.
Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy glories.
Let thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

—Swami Sivananda's
Practical Guide for Students of Yoga, p. xii.

3. SIVANANDA ON PRAYER, ITS IMPORTANCE, ITS SERVICES AND ITS POWERS

PRAYER is the effort of man to commune with the Lord. Prayer is a mighty spiritual force. It is as real as the force of gravity or attraction.

Prayer elevates the mind. It fills the mind with purity. It is associated with the praise of God. It keeps the mind in tune with God. Prayer can reach a realm where reason dares not enter—it can take you to the spiritual Realm or kingdom of God. Prayer frees the devotees from the fear of death. It brings him nearer to God and makes him feel his essential immortal and blissful nature.

The power of prayer is indescribable. Its glory is ineffable. Sincere devotees only realise its usefulness and splendour. It should be done with reverence and faith, and with a heart wet with devotion.

Prayer is the trusty companion along the weary path of Moksha. Sincere prayer clearly shows one the next step. It was the prayer of Prahlad that rendered cool the burning oil when it was poured on his head. Prayers without attachment will ultimately lead to Moksha. Prayers are powerful spiritual currents. There is nothing so purifing as prayer.

Draupadi prayed fervently. Lord Krishna ran from Dwaraka to relieve her distress. Gajendra prayed ardently. Lord Hari marched with His disc to protect him. It was the prayer of Mirabai that rendered into nectar the virulent poison that was given to her.

When you pray, you are in tune with the Infinite. You link yourself with the inexhaustible cosmic powerhouse of energy and thus draw power, energy, light and strength from Him.

Prayer does not demand high intelligence or eloquence. God wants your heart when you pray. Even a few words from a humble, pure soul, though illiterate, will appeal to the Lord more than the eloquent, flowing words of an orator or a Pundit.

Even when the medical board has pronounced a case to be hopeless, prayer comes to rescue and the patient is miraculously cured. There have been many instances of this description. You may be aware of this. Healing by prayer is really miraculous and mysterious.

Do not pray for the attainment of any selfish ends or mundane gifts. Pray for His mercy, for divine light, purity and for spiritual guidance. Pray constantly.

Prayer generates good spiritual currents and produces tranquillity of the mind. If you pray regularly, your life will be gradually changed and moulded. Prayer must become habitual. If prayer becomes a habit with you, you will feel as if you cannot live without it.

Prayer can move mountains and work miracles. Pray even once from the bottom of your heart. Have a meek receptive attitude of mind. Cultivate intense feeling in your heart. The prayer is at once heard and responded. Do this in the daily battle of life and realise for yourself the high efficacy of prayer. You must have strong conviction in the existence of God.

Get up in the early morning and repeat some prayer. Pray in any manner you like.

Become as simple as a child. Open freely the chambers of your heart. Discard cunningness and crookedness. You will get everything. Sincere devotees know pretty well about the high efficacy of prayer. Narada is still praying. Namadev prayed and Vittal came out of the image to eat his food Ekanath prayed and Lord Hari showed His form with four hands. What more do you want ? Pray fervently right now from this very second. You will attain eternal bliss.

—*Sayings of Swami Sivananda*, pp. 125-127.

4. THE DISCERNING CHOICE OF SIVANANDA IN THE INSPIRING VEDIC AND PAURANIC HYMNS

STOTRA CHINTAMANI :

STOTRA Chintamani which constitutes the second issue in the general series known as "Visvanath Mandir" Series. contains a number of hymns addressed to different deities that are recited in the course of daily prayer and worship. These have been brought together in the form of a booklet. The prayers are in Sanskrit and printed in Devanagari. They have also been translated into English. Each page of the Sanskrit text is made to face the corresponding page of the rendering into English, and this arrangement would be appreciated particularly by beginners not so well up in knowledge of Sanskrit. "Ganesha-stotra" "Chandrasekhar-ashtakam", "Sankashta-mochana stotram", "Anandalahari", "Aditya-hridayam", and "Shani Stotram" form the contents of the booklet

—Dr. R. Nagaraja Sharma, M. A. Ph. D., *Astrological Magazine*, Bangalore.

5. SIVANANDA ON THE SPIRITUAL NATURE AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL VALUE OF HYMNS AND PRAYERS

THE importance of hymns and prayers can never be over emphasised. Prayer should be the constant and inseparable companion of the aspirant in his spiritual path till he attains the final beatitude or Jivanmukti. Prayer makes the mind calm and introspective. Prayer bestows peace. It turns the mind towards God. Prayer awakens the spiritual force in man. It is the master-key to open the realms of eternal bliss. It is the expression of the spirit within. Prayer can efficiently help the control of mind. It is the real guide and preceptor.

These prayers and hymns are the utterances of realised seers of the past. Therefore they will surely influence, elevate and inspire the readers. These are the thoughts of devotees and Jnanis in their hour of meditation. Devotees expressed their thoughts at the time of their communion with the Lord and the Jnanis expressed their own experience of Self-realisation in these words. This book, *Stotra Ratna Mala*, is a

collection of such utterances. One who knows even a little of Sanskrit can well appreciate the deep thoughts contained in these prayers. The Vedantic Stotras of Sri Sankara are highly soul-elevating. The expressions of Sri Vilwamangal Swami and Lila Suka who composed the Govinda Damodara Stotram and Sri Krishna Karnamritam are very inspiring.

—Swami Sivananda's
Stotra Ratna Mala, pp. ix-x.

6. SIVANANDA'S GOLDEN TREASURY OF PRAISES AND PRAYERS FROM THE EASTERN RELIGIOUS TEACHING

POCKET PRAYER BOOK:

SWAMI Sivananda has culled some choice selections from the Upanishads, the Gita, the Bhajans of Mira and Surdas and the Ramayana of Tulsidas and presented them in this handy book, with English translation. He has also given brief hints on some of the Asanas and Pranayama.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

POCKET PRAYER BOOK:

FOR students of the Eastern Teachings, this handy sized book contains a wealth of spiritual guidance and, according to the aptitude of the student and the time available for his disposal, it may be used in whole or in part, for daily meditation and prayer.

—*The Acquarian Path*,
London.

7. SIVANANDA RENDERS INTO FLOWING ENGLISH, THE EARLY MORNING HYMNS FOLLOWED BY THE FAMOUS DAKSHINAMURTHY STOTRA

PRATAHSMARANA STOTRAM:

I REMEMBER in the early morning, the self-effulgent Atma-Tattva seated in me, which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, which is the Goal of the Paramahamsa, which is the Turiya (fourth) states; I am that Brahman which is attributeless, which transcends and is superior to the states of waking, dreaming, and sleeping at all times: I am not the aggregate of the elements.

I resort in the early morning to that God of gods, who is described as the unborn, the imperishable and the foremost who is beyond the reach of mind and speech, by whose grace all speech is illumined, and whom the Vedas describe through statements like "not this, not this."

I bow down in the early morning to the Eternal State called Purushottama, which is Full, beyond darkness, brilliant like the sun, in which secondless Being this entire universe is apparent like snake in the rope.

One who in the early morning recites these three sacred verses which are the ornaments of the three worlds, shall reach the Supreme State.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pocket Prayer Book, pp. 5-7.

DAKSHINAMURTHY STOTRA :

To Him who, by virtue of the power of illusion that abides in the self, beholds, as in a dream, the universe existing within Himself—like the reflection of a city in a mirror—although it is manifested without, but who, when awake, beholds nothing but His own secondless self—to Him who is incarnate in the Teacher, the Lord (Siva) facing the South, be this prostration ! (1)

To Him who, like unto a magician or like unto a Yogin, manifests by His own will this universe, which was undifferentiated in the beginning like the plant latent in the seed but which subsequently became differentiated owing to the various conditions of space and time created by Maya–to that Teacher-incarnate, the Lord (Siva) facing the South, be this prostration ! (2)

Whose light alone that is the reality shines forth in objects which are illusory (which have no real existence), who awakens his devotees by instructing them in the Vedic text, (Mahavakya) "Tat Twam Asi" 'That thou art' which being realised, there will be no more return to the ocean of Samsara, to that Teacher-incarnate, the Lord (Siva) facing the South, be this prostration ! (3)

Whose consciousness streams forth outside through the eyes and the other organs like the light of a mighty lamp placed within a jar with many holes, and after whom alone, all this world shines shining in the consciousness 'I know'—to Him who is incarnate in the Teacher, the Lord (Siva) facing the South, be this prostration. (4)

Those who talk much in vain and understand that the body or the breath or the sense-organs or the fickle Buddhi or the void to be the 'I' or the Self are indeed on the same level with women and children, with the blind and the stupid ; they are quite deluded. To Him who destroys this great ignorance caused by the play of the power of Maya—to that Teacher-incarnate, the Lord (Siva) in the form of Dakshinamoorty (facing the South) be this prostration ! (5)

Who is the Inner Self which, enshrouded by Maya, like unto the sun or the moon in eclipse, merely exists in deep sleep on account of the withdrawal of sense-organs, but which when He wakes, is recognised by Him as "I have slept"—to Him who is incarnate in the Teacher, the Lord (Siva) facing the South, be this prostration ! (6)

To Him, who by means of the blessed symbol (Jnana-Mudra which consists of a circle formed by joining the thumb and the index finger at their tips) reveals to His disciples His own Self that always shines within as the "I" constant in all the varying states of childhood, manhood and old age, of Jagrat (waking state), Svapna (dreaming state) and Sushupti (deep sleep state) and so on—to Him who is incarnate in the Teacher, the Lord facing the South, be this prostration ! (7)

To the Atma, who, deluded by Maya, beholds in Jagrat or Svapna, the universe in variety, as cause and effect, as master and servant, as teacher and pupil, as father and son and so on—to that Teacher-incarnate, the Lord facing the South, be this prostration. (8)

To Him whose eightfold form alone, viz, earth, water, fire, air, ether, sun, moon and soul, appears itself as this sentient and non-sentient universe ; beyond whom, supreme

and all-pervading, there exists none else for those seekers after Truth—to Him who is incarnate in the Teacher, the Lord facing the South, be this prostration ! (9)

Because the identity of the Self with the Universe has thus been explained in this hymn, therefore by hearing it by reflecting and meditating on its teaching, and by reciting it to others, one will get that Divine state which is endowed with the supreme splendour of being the Universal self, as also the Lordship of nature with eightfold divine powers (Aiswarya) as : Anima, Mahima, Garima, Laghima, Prapti, Prakamyam, Isatwam, Vasitvam. (10)

—Swami Sivananda's
Stotra Pancharatna, pp. 50-54.

8. SIVANANDA'S HYMNOGRAPHIC GUIDES TO GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

STOTRA CHINTAMANI :

THIS is a very useful book by the Swamiji. It contains selected Stotras from hoary Hindu texts in Sanskrit, on the Gods and Godesses popularly adored, with explanatory meanings in English. The God-idea gets saturated in mind by repetition of names and virtues—and thus enables the practitioner to live in God-consciousness. *'Parayana'* is an effective means of cultivating Bhakti Yoga. The book will indeed be the best companion, not only at hours of prayer, but as an inspirer at all odd hours or minutes.

—*Champion*, Calicut.

INSPIRING SONGS AND KIRTANS :

THIS is a collection of songs and prayers suited for congregational recitation and Kirtan. Even Sanskrit and Hindi songs are printed in Roman characters. Devotees inclined to Kirtan and Bhajan will find the book useful.

—R. S., *Indian Theosophist*,
Varanasi.

9. THE PRAYER OF SAINTLY LOVE AND THE PRAYERS FOR SUCCESS, PROSPERITY AND INTELLECTUAL POWER

1. PRAYER OF SAINT :

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाक् भवेत् ॥

MAY all become happy. Let no one be afflicted by diseases. May everyone come across auspicious things. Let no one be subject to pain, miseries and afflictions.

2. PRAYER FOR SUCCESS :

कृष्ण कृष्ण महायोगिन् भक्तानामभयंकर ।
गोविन्द परमानन्द सर्वं मे वशमानय ॥

O KRISHNA ! O Krishna ! Thou art the Yogi of Yogis. Thou bestoweth fearlessness on Thy devotees. O Govinda ! Thou art the giver of Supreme Bliss. Bring everything in my favour.

3. PRAYER FOR PROSPERITY :

आयुर्देहि धनं देहि विद्यां देहि महेश्वरि ।
समस्तमखिलां देहि देहि मे परमेश्वरि ॥

GIVE me long life, give me wealth, give me knowledge, O Maheswari—the consort

of Maheswara, Siva. O Parameswari, give me also everything else that I desire.

4. PRAYER FOR GOOD INTELLECT :

य एकोऽवर्णो बहुधा शक्तियोगा,
द्वर्णानने का निहितार्थो दधाति ।
विचैति चान्ते विश्वमादौ स देवः,
सनो बुद्ध्या शुभया सं युनक्तु ॥

MAY that Divine Being, the One who—though Himself colourless—creates various colours in different ways by means of His own power with set purpose and who dissolves the whole world in Himself in the end —may He endow us with a pure intellect !

—Swami Sivananda's,
Gems of Prayer, pp. 1-8.

10. EVERYMAN'S PERENNIAL SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION FROM SIVANANDA

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

AMONG the numerous publications of the Sivananda Publication League, none is a greater boon to religious aspirants than this small book. It contains inspiring instructions from Swami Sivananda Maharaj, extracts from several well-known devotional songs in Sanskrit with their translations, a collection of important Slokas from the Bhagawad Gita, and Namavalis for Sangeetam and Bhajana. It contains also the ten stanzas of Shanistotram which if repeated every morning is said to bring about a cessation from the Peeda of Shani. The book is certainly a perennial spring of refreshing spiritual inspiration.

—*Federated India*,
Madras.

11. METAPHYSICAL THOUGHT AND ACCENT ON RENUNCIATION IN A HYMNAL MEDITATION SIVANANDA SELECTS

DHYANASHTAKAM :

1. THAt is knowledge which bestows tranquillity on the senses. That, which is established by the Upanishads is fit to be known. They are really the lucky people in this world, who are intent on the realisation of the Supreme Reality. All others are simply wandering in a state of delusion.

2. Having at the very outset conquered the enemies like pride, delusion, craving for objects, likes and dislikes and such other enemies, attaining the highest state in Yoga having fully experienced the bliss of immortality born of the highest Brahma Vidya, those lucky people move about in their houses even in the midst of the pleasures of family life.

3. Leaving one's own house which is the cause of degradation, induced by the thirst for Atmic knowledge, drinking the essence of the meaning of the Upanishads, free from desire, with extreme dispassion for objects of enjoyments, lucky souls wander in solitude giving up the company of men and all attachments.

4. Lucky indeed are those who having cut off the bondage creating ideas of 'I' and

'mine', equal in honour and dishonour, perform actions with equal vision, knowing the real doer and offering unto Him all the fruits of their actions.

5. Lucky are those Brahmins who having cast off the three desires (of wealth, children and Heaven), treading the path to Moksha, living on alms to maintain the body. They spend their time in the meditation of the most effulgent and self-luminous Brahman in their hearts.

6. They alone are worthy persons who meditate with one-pointedness on the Brahman who is neither Sat nor Asat nor either, who is neither great nor small, neither male nor female, nor a eunuch, Others wander about here and there bound by the strong cords of Samsara.

7. They alone deserve the praise of all who having found the world (Samsara) to be a great bondage, steeped in utter ignorance, without any essence, full of miseries of birth and death, cut as under this bondage of Samsara by the strong sword of knowledge of Self.

8. Those are lucky men indeed who by their peaceful mind determine the one Reality, giving up all attachments, knowing the absolute Reality, wander with good souled Mahatmas drinking the nectar of knowledge of Self through the discourses on sacred scriptures.

9. He who renounces the company of worldly-minded persons as if a dwelling place of serpents, deserts the company of even the most beautiful lady as if she were a cropse, leaves off the enjoyment of the sense objects as if poison—such a Paramahamsa attains liberation. Glory to Him! Victory unto Him!

10. The whole world is Nandanavana, all trees are Kalpaka (wish yielding) trees, all waters the waters of the sacred Ganges, all actions pure, words vulgar or wise the highest truth (the head of Sruti). This is the realization of one who has realised the Brahmic splendour.

—Swami Sivananda's
Stotra Ratnamala,
pp. 167-171.

12. SIVANANDA PRESENTS THE QUINTESSENCE OF THE SACRED TEXTS AND AFFORDS SEVERAL AIDS TO ULTIMATE REALIZATION

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

ANOTHER very useful and inspiring publication by the great sage of the Himalayas, this book will be found a daily constant companion to keep the aspirant firmly on the path of spiritual Sadhana and meditation. It contains the quintessence of the Gita, the Upanishads, and Ramacharitamanas of Tulasidas, besides practical hints on meditation and great spiritual instructions. Constant remembrance of God, His virtues and divine attributes is accepted to be a very valuable spiritual aid to continued progress and ultimate realization and the book under review provides a sure means to that end. A copy in the pocket will more than benefit the reader. The English meanings of Sanskrit Mantras and verses are indeed a boon.

—*Champion*, Calicut.

13. A HYMNOLOGICAL MASTERPIECE ON THE INFINITE GRACE, BEAUTY AND POWER OF THE DIVINE MOTHER

Kalidas Krita—Amba Navamani Mala :

(TO Her) the Goddess of Knowledge, whose eloquence is sweeter than that of a parrot, whose hair is braided resembling a swarm of dark bees, who is a boat to cross the ocean of samsara, who holds a lyre and young parrot in hands, and who is worshipped by Goddess Saraswati (may my prostrations be). (1)

(To Her) the daughter of Maharishi Matanga, whose countenance is like that of a blue water-lily, whose graceful eyes are always intent upon protecting the whole universe, whose eyes are more beautiful than those of a doe and who forms one-half of Lord Siva (may my prostrations be). (2)

(To Her) whose palms are as soft as the Lotuses held by the goddesses Lakshmi and Saraswati, who again holds lotuses in both of Her own hands, who is pure and who is the embodiment of all the powers of Lord Siva (may my prostrations be). (3)

(To Her) whose face is beautiful as a cool moon, whose teeth are like jasmine buds, who is the seat of the treasure, Mukunda, who freed Manmadha through Her sweet compassion and who slew the Asuras for the welfare of the Devas (may my prostrations be). (4)

(To Her) whose bust is more prominent than a water pot, who is embraced by Lord Siva, whose son is (the all-powerful) Skanda, who killed the two Asuras, Sumba and Nisumba, who is prideless and before whom Ramba dances (may my prostations be). (5)

(To Her) whose lower lip is deeply red, who is the mother of the whole universe, who excels the swan in gait, who protects Her true devotees, whose beauteous form bears all graces (may my prostrations be). (6)

(Except Her) who protects Her dependants, the ocean of mercy, the embodiment of Navasakti, adorned with precious jewels, who delivers all those resorting to Her lotus feet from obstacles and sins, (I know no other goddess). (7)

(Except Her) who is intent on protecting those who prostrate before Her, clever and skilful, the Goddess of gods, who rides a lion, who annihilated all her enemies and protected the Devas (I know no other Goddess). (8)

(Except Her) the Divine nurse, who is worshipped by the supreme devas, the daughter of Mighty Himalayas, highly famous in all three worlds, who sports in the large forest (hriday) with great delight. I know no other goddess. (9)

In the house of those who read with devotion, this Navamanimala Stotra in praise of the Goddess of Power dances in mirth Lakshmi (the Goddess of Wealth) and in their tongue, Saraswati (Goddess of Learning). (10)

O Mother ! O Goddess of Infinite Power ! You may hurl me into the nether world or instal me on the throne as the emperor of all the worlds : but I shall never let go my hold on Thy Feet ! (11)

—Swami Sivananda's
Stotra Pancharatna, pp. 63-69.

14. SIVANANDA'S COMPREHENSIVE POCKET-TEXT IN THE ART OF DAILY PRAYER

POCKET PRAYER BOOK :

FOR the religiously minded but less leisured folk, the publication entitled POCKET PRAYER BOOK by Swami Sivananda, will be very useful. 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of' wrote Tennyson and this really pocket prayer book gives briefly the essence of daily routine and the "Stotras". The methods of Suryanamaskara, Asanas, Pranayamas, Bhajan, Sankirtan and common prayer are included in this small but highly instructive book. The Slokas are given in the Nagri script with simple English translation and can be easily followed by any one interested in the efficacy of prayer.

—*The Hitavada*
Nagpur.

15. SIVANANDA PENETRATES INTO THE SENTIMENTS AND THE PROBLEMS OF A KARMA YOGI, AND FORMULATES FOR HIM, A PRAYER

O LORD ! I do want to serve the world disinterestedly and practise Niskamya Karma Yoga to get Chitta Suddhi. I am sometimes perplexed, agitated and depressed. I am in a dilemma. I do not know what to do. I have no clear idea of right and wrong. I have no knowledge of the Shastras and the Smritis. I do not know Sanskrit, neither Laghu nor Siddhanta. I have no training to hear Thy shrill inner voice.

This world is full of apparent contradictions, puzzles and paradoxes, troubles and tribulations. This is a peculiar world. Thou hast given me a peculiar mind, with strange habits and ways. Nay, this world is full of temptations. I have no strength to resist temptations, public opinions, criticisms, oppressions, pressure and even aggression. I am not able to please anybody to the fullest extent. Enemies do crop up though I keep quiet, though I do not interfere with anybody.

O Sweet Adorable One ! Give me strength to control the restless turbulent Indriyas and the ever-wandering, ever wavering mind. Stand behind me always and guide me at every step of my action. Give me good Preranas (thoughts). Give me Chitta Suddhi. Give me a calm, pure and balanced mind. O Lord ! Give me light, knowledge and purity.

O Loving Lord, Thou art all-pervading; Thou art Antaryamin, the Indweller, the Sutratman, the silken thread that runs through and holds all beings; Thou art Life, Intelligence, Thought and Conscionsness. Bless me to behold Thee everywhere and in everyone. O Sweet Adoable Presence the Glory of glories, the Light of lights, the Deity of deities ! Remove the veil of ignorance that blurs my vision, and grant me the strength to realise my Oneness with Thee and with all humanity.

—Swami Sivananda's
Gems of Prayers, p. 45.

16. THE COMPASSIONATE SIVANANDA LOWERS THE ALTITUDES OF HIS ADWAITIC EXPERIENCE, ASSUMES THE HEART OF HUMANITY, AND UTTERS PRAYERS MARKED BY THE ELOQUENCE OF EARNESTNESS, A LYRICAL BEAUTY IN EXPRESSION, A VARIETY IN PATTERN AND AN INTEGRALITY IN THEIR APPROACH TO THE DIVINE

I

O Lord of all life, O Heavenly Flame,
Centre and Soul of every sphere,
Thy light is truth,
Thy warmth is love.
Grant us wisdom to make us free,
Come, fill our hearts with peace,
Direct us, protect us, save us,
Till we reach the other shore of immortality.

II

O Lord ! Omnipotent,
Fountain of Light, Life and Love,
The secret of secrets,
That abides in my heart,
Inspire me,
Cleanse and heal,
Guide and Save.

III

O Sun of my Soul, Light of Lights,
Thou Saviour dear,
Great Master, Benevolent Guru,
Point Thou out the way,
Take my will, and make it Thine,
Lead me to my journey's end,
Lift up my mind,
Let Thy grace be given to me.

IV

O adorable Lord, of compassion and love,
Purify and strengthen myself,
Purify my heart and mind,
Purify my senses,
Purify my intellect,
Purify my eyes and ears,
Purify my tongue,
Purify my whole being.

V

O adorable Lord of love and mercy,
Prostrations and salutations.
Make me Thy instrument,
Let me plant love
Where there is hatred,
Joy, where there is sorrow,
Strength where there is weakness
Light where there is darkness,
Hope where there is despair,
Knowledge where there is ignorance.

VI

O Omnipresent Lord on High,
Ruler of the earth and the sky,
Indweller of all beings,
Salutations unto Thee !
OM is Thy sacred Name,
Bliss-Consciousness is Thy Essence,
Silence is Thy Language,
Thy own glory is Thy resting Abode,
May we live in Thy great Harmony,
May the holy forces bring illumination to all,
May Peace and Goodwill abide among all beings.

Bless us to be aware of Thy Presence
everywhere.

VII

O adorable Lord,
Let my tongue sing Thy glory,
Let my mind be filled with Thy thoughts,
Let my feet perambulate around Thee,
Let my hands serve Thee,
Let my eyes behold Thy beauty,
Let my ears hear Thy Leelas,
This is my fervent prayer, O Lord !

VIII

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, O Lord, to Thee !
Take my moments and let them flow
In ceaseless adoration of Thee.
Take my hand and let them move
At the impulse of Thy service.
Take my feet and let them go
Swiftly and lightly towards Thee.
Take my voice and let me sing
Ever and always Thy glory.
Take my lips and let them move
In repetition of Thy holy name.
Take my silver, take my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect, take my reason,
In any way as Thou shalt choose.
Take my will and make it Thine.
It shall no longer be mine.
Take my heart, it is Thine own,
For Thy use as the royal throne.
Take my love, which I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be
Ever and only all for Thee.

IX

O Lord !
Lead us from the unreal to the Real,
From darkness to Light,
From mortality to Immortality,
From hatred to Love,
From impurity to Purity.
From limitation to Infinitude,
From weakness to Strength and Power.
From want to Fulness,
From bondage to Freedom,
From diversity to Unity,
From imperfection to Perfection,
From disharmony to Harmony,
From ignorance to Wisdom.

X

Grant us, O Lord, Strength and Grace,
To serve humanity selflessly and
untiringly,
To slay egoism, passion and pride,
To forgive those who hurt us,
To bear calmly insult and injury,
To be ever peaceful in mind,
To have Thee in heart, at all times,
To cultivate universal love and
endurance,
To have devotion to Thy Lotus-Feet.

XI

O Lord !
Thy way is Mercy,
Thy Name is Love,
Thy Light is Wisdom,
Thy life is Existence,
Thy essence is Satchidananda.
Thy nature is Truth,
Thy drink is Bliss,
Thy language is Silence,
Thy wealth is Knowledge,
Thy abode is Saint's Heart,
Thy Seat is Brahmapuri.
Shower Thy blessings on us.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Life, Vol.XX.,pp.209-210;
and Siva's Treasure, p. 6.

17. THE LIGHTS OF SIVANANDA ON THE SIGNIFICANCE AND THE PROPER AIMS OF PRAYER

MANY pray, but few seem to realise the great meaning and significance of prayer, and yet fewer are inclined to grow eloquent one the mavellous powers that result from the raising of a heart-felt prayer. Prayer is the arousing of a powerful *Bhavana* in which we sense, feel, know and experience the Presence and Power of the all-pervading, all-knowing, all-loving Godhead. It is the expression of the heart and soul of man, of the spirit within. Through the instrumentality of sublimated feelings of surrender and devotion, prayer becomes the most powerful weapon in the hands of man, both for material welfare and inner peace of mind, and also for rapid spiritual evolution.

Prayer makes the mind calm and introspective, turns the mental forces towards God, and awakens the spiritual consciousness in man. Hundreds of devotees know the tremendous influence that prayer exerts upon one's life. If the prayer is sincere and if it proceeds from the bottom of the heart, it will at once melt the heart of the Divine Being and brings out immediate responses. Prayer can work miracles and is the beginning of all Yoga Sadhanas and Realisation. In whatever way one may pray, the results and the benefits are bound to ensue in abundance. One should always pray to God, for purity of heart, for greater devotion, for peace of mind and inner spiritual development.

—Swami Sivananda's
Contribution to Gujrati Monthly
Magazine, *Prarthana*.

18. PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES AND TRANSEMPIRICAL ENDS IN THE PHENOMENON OF PRAYER

PSYCHOLOGICALLY, it should be remembered that prayer is not merely uttering of words but an intense and sincere feeling of and a longing for contact with a Power which is all-pervading, which includes everything within itself and which is the most real of all beings. The nature of thinking and feeling is such that it is not possible to think of or feel anything without transforming the psychological organ into the mode of the object which is thought or felt. And because, in the case of prayer, the object is infinite Power itself, the mind takes such a powerful mode, that the devotee gets endowed with super-human powers in addition to his achieving the purpose for which the prayer is offered.

—Swami Sivananda's
Daily Readings, p. 102.

PRAYER generates good spiritual currents and produces a rare tranquility of the mind; it elevates the whole emotional nature and is accompanied by the growth of inward grace inner strength, and a sense of at-one-ement with the Supreme Being. The intensive purified feelings raised in acts of prayer, bring about the most beneficial inner change in the heart; the receptive attitude of the silenced praying mind puts the soul of man in tune with the Infinite, links it

with the cosmic powerhouse of inexhaustible energy and surcharges it with strength, grace, energy, light. When prayers are raised on foundations of absolute devotion, purity of motive, detachment from all worldly concerns, and unyielding faith in the Divine, they lead the inner being of man into highest spiritual Experience.

—Swami Sivananda's
Daily Reading, p. 101.

19. THE GRAMMER AND THE HIGHER DIALECTICS OF PRAYER IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

—A Simple Search and an Easy Research In the Vast Rose Garden of Sivananda Literature Reward With These Fragrant Flowers Grown on the Grounds of Prayer—

THERE are no problems that cannot be dissolved by prayer no suffering that cannot be allayed by prayer; no difficulties that cannot be surmounted by prayer; and no evil that cannot be overcome by prayer. Prayer is the miracle by which God's Power flows into human veins. Therefore, pray.

* * *

PRAY not for earthly goods nor heavenly pleasures, but, for His Grace. "Thy will be done, my Lord ! I want nothing, "shall be thy prayer. For you know not what is good for you : and you may be asking for trouble and praying for perdition. Pray for Grace.

* * *

PRAYER should spring from the heart ; it should not be a lip-homage. Empty prayer is as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. Prayer that comes from a sincere, pure heart is at once heard by the Lord. Prayer always draws the Divine Grace.

* * *

PRAYER is an invocation, a calling forth of the spiritual forces ever-flowing through the human heart, mind and soul. A life destitute of love and prayer is like sapless tree in the desert. Pray at least for a few minutes when you get up from, and when you go to, bed.

* * *

PRAYER represents a mystic state when the individual consciousness is absorbed in God. Prayer educates the soul and enlightens the heart; it gives peace to the countenance and lustre to the face.

* * *

PRAY not for relief from suffering, but for strength and endurance to bear it. Pray to the Lord for strength to overcome your defects and weaknesses. Send the arrows of prayer in all directions. Perhaps one will surely enter the Lord's heart. Your duty is to pray and only that. Worry not whether He hears or not.

* * *

PRAYER gives the mind an inner vision, bestows inner spiritual strength and brings the aspirant nearer to God.

* * *

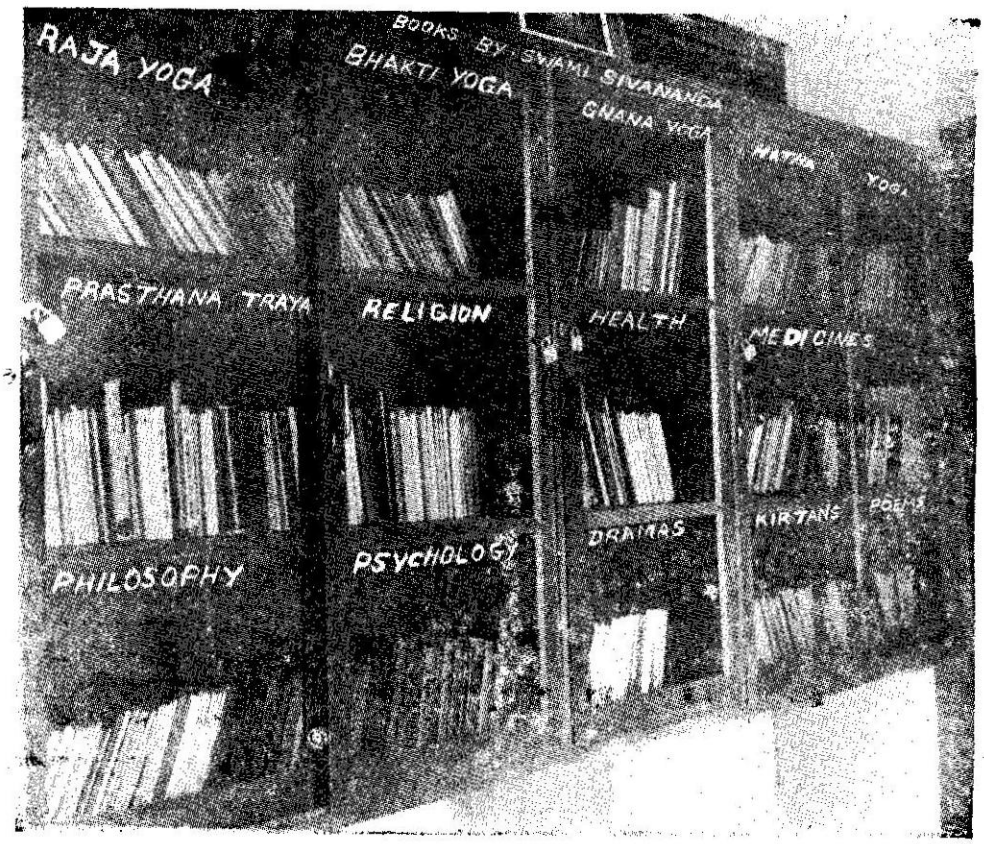
PRAYER is the very soul and essence of religion. It is the very core of man's life. No man can live a delightful and peaceful life of progress, without prayer. Prayer is not asking God for getting something ; it is a communion with God, a meditation on God, an act of supreme Love, a transforming exercise in the adoration of the Divine.

* * *

Approached in a spirit of comparison, by a thought luminous in its perceptions and constructive in its reactions, the Sivananda Literature constituted of the collectivity of Sivananda's written works, will be seen to bear the Aurelian meditations, the Baconian aphorisms, the Emersonian epigrams, the Confucian analects, the Wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata Purana, and the apothegms and the adages of the Panchatantra.

Effectively these works convey a message, an idea, an illumination for each of the infinite moods humanity displays in the being of each individual and with the passage of every moment. This is not all—academic reason would be, now here and now there, delighted to discover long-winding sentences laden with sophisticated metaphysical subtleties. Proteus are the phases of his prose and his poetry ; and, Procrustean our criticism of them.

EVERYTHING that enriches everyman's inner and outer existence is clasped by Swami Sivananda and made a subject for exposition. Spiritually, morally, intellectually, materially, he is all things to all men. Dynamic psychology, practical philosophy, institutional religion, ethical life, family doctor, bazaar drugs, household remedies, nature cure, indoor exercises, techniques of breathing, elevating excursions, conquest of fear, becoming rich, students' development, women's ideal, children's culture, everyman's success in life, influencing others, all branches of Yoga, Vedanta, spiritual knowledge, methods of God-



realization—all these and many more themes have the ablest and authoritative treatment at the enlightened hands of Sivananda, the Philosopher-Guide of students, women, children, busy people, of everybody. Drawing from the divine Bounty, a diversity of gift, Sivananda employs the most fertile methods in presenting us with the powerful living thoughts that build our bodies, improve our minds, strengthen our spirits, inspire us with new hopes and energy, and release the light of our inmost beings to our overt empirical existence. An examination of the following publications of Swami Sivananda, Radha's Prem—Three Acts Play, Upanishadic Drama, Dialogues from Upanishads, Illuminating Stories, Lives of Saints, Sivananda's Lectures, Inspiring Letters, Conversations on Yoga, Philosophy and Yoga in Poems, Inspiring Songs, Wisdom in Humour, would attest this fact. "Play", "drama", "dialogue", "story", "biography", "lecture", "letter", "conversation", "poem", "song", "satirical essay" corrective in purpose—all these forms of literary art Sivananda exploits energetically to cater for the individual tastes of all persons.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Difficult of enumeration are the number of benefits the world of humanity derived from Sivananda's works. Looking at his books, Shakespeare would price them above dukedom, Milton would find them 'the image of God in the eye', R. Choate would claim them as "the only immortality". Bovee would call them "embalmed minds", and Cuyler would come to declare them as "the very

Peregoric elixir percolates through the pages of Sivananda Literature; his aphorisms make mankind's anodyne; his spiritual teaching coached in single words has acted as life-belts to sinking men, as the lighted torches to seekers after Truth in a world enveloped by the darkness of Ignorance, as the wisdom that furnishes a complete philosophy of integral divine living to tens of thousands. Almost every line that he has poured into print has proved to be a gentle guide anchoring the soul of man in the delightful consciousness of God.

THIS spiritual luminary of supernal splendour and greatness, Swami Sivananda, is the Philosopher-Guide of everybody. Whether you seek success or Self-Realisation, health or happiness, personal medical aid or a knowledge of metaphysical abstractions, wealth or long life, light on marriage or meditation, tips on conquest of fear or hints on influencing people, guidance on practice of Vedanta or of Yoga—Swami Sivananda would enlighten, help and serve you with breathless earnestness and boundless love. To his correspondents from every part of the world, he gives answers and solutions to questions and problems pertaining to philosophy, religion, psychology, ethics, politics, sociology, jurisprudence, music, art, literature, medicine, and to every riddle involved in the 'episodes' that emanate from the gamut of everyday human life.

essence" of a Seer and a Saint. And, upon the Library these books make we may write, even as an Egyptian king, during the days that preceded the dawn of present European civilization, wrote over his library, "the medicines of the soul."

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Ancient oracles spoke their wisdom briefly; so does Sivananda. In the massive treasure-troves of his living thought, arrayed for the recovery by an aspiring humanity of its own exalted status and dignity in the Divinity, are the almost endless variety of ruby and diamond.

To people with their depressing psychological problems, a word from the Swamiji has always carried a peace and a power that worked their way into their whole beings, built in them a new mental attitude, reconstructed their spirits, renewed their energies and made them happy livers of their normal lives with a spiritual goal to work for. Men in the moments of bitterest pain have drawn from his pen philosophic consolation. Persons of rank and fortune receive from him a most helpful light on everyone of their problems. Housewives and spinsters from every altitude of society send him, as they would to their own dear mothers, personal epistles pouring out their hearts, and seeking light and joy. By the power of their pens, students entreat him to help them pass their examinations. Potentates and prelates, administrators, officers and university professors, intellectual lotus-eaters and illiterate masses—to be brief, everybody in every nook and corner of the world, receives from this universal Philosopher-Guide, enlightenment, special cheer and strength and a new life of inner fullness. —**Omkarananda**

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CADENCES OF DIVINE LOVE IN THE SYMPHONIC EXPRESSIONS OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA

—And Intensities of Devotion Long-sustained In An Inner Exalted Spiritual Atmosphere As a Prelude to the Denoument of the Drama in the Conational Powers of Human Consciousness, by a Significant Double Movement : the Egress of the Infinite Godhead Immanent in Man, by the Leaven of the Divine Love, into the Transcendent Deity, and the Ingress of the Transcendent Deity, by the Power of the Divine Grace, into that Immanent Godhead—

In combination with the covertly operative Forces of the Divine Grace, the special concatenations of inner psychic and conational conditions, establish a complete sway over the human heart, gain a total control upon its adoring powers, and turn them into a great radiance of overwhelming divine love, which has fires that purify, tears that drip nectar, sentiments that organise themselves into high states of ecstasy, moods that make a Heaven and find a Paradise even in a lament, visions that apprehend the exquisite spiritual beauty of the Divine Beloved everywhere, many types of exalted spiritual feeling which sense, touch, grasp and experience the Divine by all manner of relations with it, through all "bhavanas", in all conditions, at all times, an aesthetic being which is a habitual captive to the trances that throw open the gates of the transcendental realisations. It is a Divine Love which gathering up all its raised and rarefied energies into one all-consuming Flame casts it, with an infinite concentration, upon the responsive, reactive, close advancing Bosom of the Eternal Lover, until at last the Lover and the Beloved are lost to the observing human eye, into the ineffable Beyond, leaving their foot-prints upon the sands of human history, the inspirational impress of their life-incidents upon the memories of the devotees, and the glimpses of their wisdom-light upon the pages of religious literature. Any number of structural details concerning such matters as we have sought to hint here, can be found in the writings of Sivananda who has distinguished himself at once as a supreme Jnani and a supreme Bhakta.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE CADENCES OF DIVINE LOVE IN THE SYMPHONIC EXPRESSIONS OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. SIVANANDA THE INCARNATE DELIGHT OF DIVINE LOVE LETS FALL FROM HIS HOLY LIPS THE SYLLABLES OF ASSURANCE FROM AN INTUITIONAL EXPERIENCE

PRACTICE OF BHAKTI YOGA

"BUT I assure you on the authority of my own intuitional knowledge as well as that of other illumined souls that the Reality can be realised by man. But one who has known cannot communicate it to others for want of means. Even the knowledge acquired by the five senses which are common to all cannot be communicated to others.

"You cannot tell the taste of butter to a man who has never tasted it or even communicate the idea of colour to one born blind. All that a teacher can do is to tell his disciple the method of knowing the Truth or the path that leads to the unfoldment of intuitional faculty."

—*Yoga Vasishta.*

And this is exactly what Swami Sivananda Saraswati does in his latest publication "PRACTICE OF BHAKTI YOGA". In fact, Bhakti Yoga is considered to be the most practicable form of religion for this *Kali Yuga* or Iron Age, for the simple reason that the student needs but to have the spiritual inclination. Progress is then by stages and that without serious and sudden conflict with the material side. As against this form, both *Karma Yoga* (salvation through work prescribed in the Vedas) and *Jnana Yoga* (intellectual discernment of the Power Supreme and consequent living in the higher plane) would seem to demand rather a high degree of sacrifice and endeavour.

The word *Bhakti* is apt to be confounded with ritualistic observances, baths and pilgrimages, but that is a mistake. Bhakti demands of the seeker nothing but all embracing love, which is wide enough to include the humblest of us, from the tiny ant to the mighty elephant, from the condemned prisoner to the mighty emperor, from the worst scoundrel to the reputed saint on the surface on the earth. It is hatred, pride and egoism that divide man from man, and nation from nation, and really these are but mental creations—products of ignorance only. Just as darkness is dispelled by the penetrating rays of the burning sun. so also jealousy, hatred and egoism give way to Divine Prem (love).

Surely, if this could be practised more widely, the world would be rid of much of the present-day turmoil.

It is indeed very encouraging to observe that Western civilisation is beginning to recognise the importance of this phase of religion to humanity at large. Instances of Europeans and Americans coming under the influence of great Yogis In India are available in quite large numbers, and Swami Sivananda speaks very highly of one Mr. Nixon and his creditable work in the field of *Bhajan* (congregational singing) in Northern India. Perhaps, this is no other than "Krishna Prem" under which Pseudonym several excellent articles on the teachings of Bhagawat Gita appeared in the *Aryan Path* recently ?

—*The Champion*,
Calicut.

2. A SIMPLE REFLECTION UPON THE PULSE-BEATS OF DIVINE LOVE WITHIN HIMSELF AIDS SIVANANDA DESCRIBE ITS TRANCENDENTAL NATURE AND DELINEATE ITS SUPERHUMAN MOVEMENTS

THE divine love is ever expansive; it grows in volume and intensity at every moment ; it has a ceaseless flow and is of the subtlest feelings. Even Sattvic Bhakti is far below the true Bhakti when one loves God for the sake of love. The divine currents of love begin to flow only when one goes beyond the influence of the three modes of Nature, the three Gunas. Attributes reside in matter and describe one or other aspect of relativity, while divine love is beyond matter and relativity. You can grasp with the mind and describe in language an object only through its properties. Devotion is devoid of these and so it cannot be described in words, and it is impossible for the ordinary human mind to have any conception of this exalted divine love. It is different from the grosser love for things of this world.

Divine love is infinite. Worldly love is often divided, fleeting, transient. It is easily broken. It decreases or wanes or declines like the waning moon. Newer interests, fresher attactions have to be resorted to, in order to keep earthly love alive. A girl loves her parents first. This love gets decreased when she gets married. She loves more her husband. When she begets a son, she loves her son more than her husband. This is mundane love. But divine love grows deeper and deeper every moment. It expands like the waxing moon. It ascends higher and higher like the Himalayan ranges.

Worldly love is divisible. A man who has six children distributes equally or unequally his love among all the six. But devotion to the Lord is not divisible. Divine Love seeks no return, grows from more to more, every moment, knows no break, is subtler than the subtlest and is of the nature of pure, inner experience. It is a spontaneous outpouring of the heart.

Divine love is not dependent on youth, beauty, wealth, or virtue. It is not tainted by self-interest. There is no thought of personal gain here. It is very subtle, very soft, very slender, very remote. It is the

fountain of all sweetness. It is unvaried in sweetness. It is constant, unwavering, brimful, sublime. It unites the devotee with the Lord and, makes him an embodiment of bliss.

Ordinary emotion depend on certain external causes and objects and are therefore, transitory. The emotion vanishes, when the cause or object is removed. One also becomes satisfied in a short time by sense enjoyments. One can never becom satiated with devotion or divine love. It can be experienced for all times. Devotion is independent of causes. Its content is a perennial fountain of eternal bliss. Therefore it becomes more and more enjoyable as it deepens, strengthens in course of time.

Sensual desires cannot exist when this unbroken love operates. Bhakti practised in order to get away from ills or to attain certain desires is not genuine Bhakti. Whatever the mind wants can be had in God. His one attribute Ananda or the Infinity embraces everything. At the initial stages of the development of this love, there is a glimpse of the Lord. Gradually the devotee becomes identified with the Lord. Bhakti is realisable by intuition alone. Though Bhakti is beyond speech and intellect, it can be directly intuited when you contact God in your innermost being.

—Swami Sivananda's
Narada Bhakti Sutras,
pp. 146-148.

3. SIVANANDA THE MOST ELOQUENT EXPRESSION OF THE DYNAMIC MYSTICISM OF DIVINE LOVE : GOD-REALIZATION AND ITS METHODS CONSTITUTE THE CONTENT OF HIS LITERATURE

ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA :

THE Sivananda Literature is ever on the increase and it has something perennial and interesting to communicate and to elevate. Everything that the Swami says is a step towards God-realisation and Self-knowledge.

Essence of Bhakti Yoga allows you to be initiated into the mysteries of God. The path is clearly given and it leads to knowledge, truth and immortality, and it is through devotion alone that God can be realised. Man's work on earth has to be the realisation of Truth and it can come through appreciation, understanding and sympathy. Man must have faith and prayer as his weapons. Faith will give him strength and determination. Prayer will give his whole life a new touch of sacredness and virtue. Faith is not to exclude reason. Prayer does not signify inaction and contemplation, alone. Man has to live a life of constant prayer in the company of sacredness as if he were living in a Temple, Church or Mosque. His prescription of faith and prayer is a clear call to a life of meditation, action and sacredness. I don't think he wants all of us to give up to the world, but one thing he wants us to be aware of ; and that is of God Himself. Try to see God everywhere, in all your thoughts, actions, dreams and emotional experiences. That way alone is the way to success in life.

The book is a treasure of genuine devotional emotions and aspirations, written by one, who has loved God more than his own life and who is finding Him in his neighbours all over the world.

—Prof. B.S. Mathur,
Malabar Herald, Cochin.

4. DIVINE LOVE REVEALS NO RELATION TO EMOTIONALISM AND RECOMMENDS ELEVEN EXCELLENCES FOR THE CULTIVATION OF DEVOTION

BHAKTI is the slender silken thread of Prem or love that binds the heart of a devotee with the lotus-feet of the Lord. Bhakti is intense devotion and supreme attachment to God. Bhakti is supreme love for Lord. It is the spontaneous out-pouring of Prem towards the Beloved. It is pure, unselfish, divine love or Suddha Prem. It is love for love's sake. There is not a bit of bargaining or expectation of anything here. This higher feeling is indescribable in words. It has to be sincerely experienced by the devotee. Bhakti is a sacred, higher sublime sentiment that unites the devotees with the Lord.

Sandilya defines Para Bhakti or preliminary devotion as supreme attachment to God. "Sa Para Anuraktir Ishwara." "Para Anurakti" is intense attachment or love for God. The Narada Pancharatna defines it as realisation of God alone as "mine" accompanied by deep love for Him without attachment to any other object in the world. It is undivided love for God in which He alone is felt as "mind".

—*Practice of Bhakti Yoga*,pp.13-14.

It would be a gross mistake if you consider Bhakti as merely a state of emotionalism, while it is actually a thorough discipline and training of one's will and the mind. a sure means to intuitive realisation of God Almighty through intense love and affection for Him. It is a means to a thorough apprehension of the true knowledge of the Reality, beginning from the ordinary form of idol worship right unto the highest form of cosmic realisation of your oneness with Him.

You can achieve this by following the eleven fundamental factors which Sri Ramanuja had prescribed. They are—*Abhyasa* or practice of continuous thinking of God, *Viveka* or discrimination, *Vimoka* or freedom from everything else and longing for God, *Satyam* or truthfulness, *Arjavam* or straight-forwardness, *Kriya* or doing good to others, *Kalyana* or wishing wellbeing to all, *Daya* or compassion, *Ahimsa* or non-injury, *Dana* or charity and *Anava sada* or cheerfulness and optimism.

—*Essence of Bhakti Yoga*, p. 86.

5. SIVANANDA AND THE SCIENCE AND POWER OF THE SPIRITUAL SOUND—FORMS

BHAKTI AND SANKIRTAN :

FOR the common man, who is beset with all sorts of doubts regarding devotion to God, the book under review will be found to be very useful. The translation of the Bhakti Sutras of Sandilya in Chapter Five

adds to the value of the book. In the section on "Science of Sankirtan", the Swamiji, quoting the experiments of Mrs. Watts Huges, tries to prove that sounds produce shapes and forms and that particular sounds produce particular effects and that the Sankirtan in a particular note and pitch helps concentration and thereby the realisation of one's aspirations. The last sub-section "the four stages of sound" wherein the Swamiji explains *"Para" "Pashyanti", "Madhyama" and "Vaikhari"* is the basis on which Mantra Sastra has built up.

—*Bharata Jyoti*, Bombay.

6. SIVANANDA'S PROGRAMMES AND PROCEDURES IN THE DAILY PRACTICE OF BHAKTI

SELECT an Ishta Devata either Siva, Rama, Krishna, Vishnu, Dattatriya, Gayatri or Sakti according to the advice of your Guru or own inclination or on consultation with a good astrologer who will select the Deity according to your planetary influence. Get the proper Mantra also like *Om Namasivaya, Om Namo Narayanaya, Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Om Sri Ram Jeya Ram Jeya Jeya Ram*, etc. Keep a particular photo of the particular deity in front of you in the meditation room. For six months practise Tratak (steady gazing) on the picture from fifteen seconds to fifteen minutes. See the picture carefully with concentration for fifteen minutes without winking till tears flow profusely. Study constantly Bhagawat, Ramayana, Narada Bhakti Sutras and Sandilya Sutras. Live for one year in Ayodhya, Mathura, Phandarpur, Rishikesh and other holy places. Pass through the course of Nava Vidha Bhakti. Repeat your Guru Mantra constantly. Have sleep for only three hours. Select a Bhav suitable for you, either Mathura, Sakhya, Dasya, or Vatsalya. Make ungrudging, unreserved true perfect self-surrender to God. Do Antarika prayer from the bottom of your heart. Prayer can move mountains. Prayer can reach a realm wherein reason can hardly enter

Have Eka Nishta (devotion to one ideal). The Bhakti must be Ananya, Avyabhicharini (unwavering, one-pointed, single-minded devotion). Develop slowly Anurag, Prem, Prithi, Viraha (pain of separation from God) Bhav and Maha Bhav. In Maha Bhav, the devotee is unconscious of his body and the world and is absolutely merged in God or Ishtam. From Apara or lower Bhakti, the devotee passes on to Para or progressive emancipation after passing through Salokya, Samipya, Sarupa and Sayujya Mukti.

"Dadaami Buddhiyogam Tham Yena Maamupayaanthi Thae—I give the Yoga of discrimination by which they come unto Me" Gita-X-10.

After enjoying the lower Mukti, a devotee finally attains Kaivalya Moksha, the same state as that of a Jnani. An earnest Sadhak with Utsaha (perseverance) can realise within 2 or 3 years. I assure you emphatically. I assure you sincerely and boldly. Make a sincere effort, and watch the results.

Follow Lord Krishna's instructions in the Gita, as described in the terms *Macchitta, Yukta, Matpara.*

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan,
pp. 160-161.

7. SPIRITUAL LOVE AND SIVANANDA'S SYNTHETIC VIEW OF HINDU LIFE

WISDOM OF SIVA :

SWAMIJI here gives a synthetic presentation of the scheme of life conceived by Hinduism. To the Grihastha who needs a composite view of life, and inspiration for day to day life, the presentation is helpful. The goal of life, faith and aspiration, Vairagya and renunciation, Sadhana, Self-control, Yoga, Jnana, Karma, Bhakti Enquiry, Meditation, and Samadhi are the subjects dealt with, from the background of personal experience and with a view to help the busy householder.

—*The Pilgrim*, Madras.

8. THE INNER TACTUAL EXPERIENCE BEHIND THE APPARENT MADNESS THAT REPRESENTS DIVINE LOVE BY THE METAPHOR OF NECTAR

IN the Upanishads, the Atman is compared to Madhu or honey. The Sufis often compare it to wine; the Shaktas compare it to liquor. In the Vedic Yajna it is Soma juice. All these symbolise the enjoyment of the sweetness of divine bliss.

A devotee who has drunk the wine of divine love cannot observe the conventional rules of propriety. He is not a slave of the conventional laws of society and scriptures. The God-intoxicated devotee is not conscious of himself. The devotee grows into the likeness of the Lord and therefore shares with Him His perfection and partakes of His infinite Bliss and joy. He realises the Atman within and beholds the Atman in every creature.

When one is happy in his own Self, then alone he becomes independent. If one depends for his happiness on perishable objects, he begins to weep when the centre of his pleasure is withdrawn. The husband weeps when his wife or son dies, when the bank in which he has deposited his money fails. Objects that are conditioned in time, space and causation are Vinasi, perishable. They cannot give, therefore, eternal happiness to human beings. So in the Gita Bhagavan Sri Krishna says: "The delights that are contact-born, they are verily wombs of pain, for they have beginning and ending, O Kaunteya, not in them may rejoice the wise." Ch. V-22. That which from the union of the senses with their objects at first is as nectar, but in the end is like venom, he whose Self is unattached to external contacts and findeth joy in the Self, having the self harmonised with the Eternal by Yoga, enjoys happiness exempt from decay (Ch. XVIII-38 and V. 21). "The man who rejoiceth in the Self, with the Self is satisfied, and is content in the Self, for him verily there is nothing to do". Ch. III-17. Nothing can shake a man who rejoices in the Self (Atmarati), who is satisfied in the Self (Atma tripta); and who is contented in the Self (Atma Santushti); and who plays in the Self (Atma Kreeda).

It is Vasana (subtle desire) that draws a man outside towards external objects. Avidya (ignorance) has got two forces, the

Avarana or veiling power, the shakti that screens the man from his real Satchitananda Swaroop behind and the Vikshepa Shakti that makes the mind and senses outgoing. the restlessness of the mind is due to desire and Vikshepa Sakti. Avidya clouds the understanding and produces intoxication. destroys the intellect and makes the intellect perverted, stony and barren. Therefore, man always thinks that he can get pleasure in external objects, mistakes the body, children and wife as Atma and takes the unreal world as real. When lust manifests the intellect becomes blind and the most intelligent man becomes an easy prey to passion. A worldly-minded man vainly searches for his happiness in outside perishable objects. The idea that he should dive deep into the chambers of his heart by collecting all the dissipated rays of the mind, and with drawing the out-going senses and meditate on God never strikes him. He never believes in devotion, concentration and meditation. He cannot imagine of a pure, unalloyed happiness that is independent of external objects, although he enjoys the bliss of the Self daily at night. He foolishly thinks : "If I have a son, if I have a garden, I will be happy". The tendency of the mind is such that it tries to seek happiness outside in perishable objects. This is due to the force of Avidya.

But the devotee gets the grace of the Lord. His intellect is calm and tranquil. All the outgoing energies become transmuted into spiritual energy. He gets help and strength from Mantra Shakti, Sadhana Shakti and Upasana Shakti. Sattva flows from the feet of the Lord towards his mind. All desires melt away. The Vikshepa Shakti is destroyed. He has the firm, unshakable conviction that the real happiness is in God. His mind is always inward. He has antarmukh vritti. The senses do not wander about. They get absorbed in the mind and the mind gets absorbed in God. He is ever peaceful. He enjoys the happiness within. He delights in the bliss of God. He, therefore, stands adamant even amidst grave troubles and calamities. So Rishi Narada uses the expressions "Stabdho bhavati". The devotee becomes serene and "Atma aramo bhavati" (happy in the bliss of the Self).

The devotee gets divine intoxication. Lord Gouranga was so much intoxicated with the divine nectar of prem that sometimes he did not know when it was daybreak and when it was night. Mira, though a young Rani, danced in the streets amidst males and men of inferior class on account of this intoxication of Krishna Prem.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa remained in the thick jungle for four days without taking any food when he was under this divine intoxication. Words can hardly describe the nature of this divine intoxication. One has to feel it himself. Even if there is a mild intoxication it will give immense strength to the devotee to face the difficulties in the battle of life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Narada Bhakti Sutras,
pp. 37-40.

9. SIVANANDA REVIVES THE ANCIENT INDIA'S CULTURE OF SPIRITUAL LOVE

BHAKTI YOGA:

THE Swamiji has brought out this twelfth chapter (Bhakti Yoga) of Srimad Gita for free circulation with a view to propagate ancient knowledge to the people of Hindustan. The twelfth chapter of Gita has a special appeal in so far as it epitomises the cult of love, and the Indian mind is specially exercised by the teaching. What is said of action, (Karma) equally applies to (Bhakti) love. Love and Sacrifice to the Lord, unremitting love without a break or expectation of reward, carry to far-reaching results in elevating human kind to the extreme limit of Bliss, the end of all miseries, births and deaths and to the state of perfection. Though it cannot be said that the booklet possesses any extraordinary emphasis or novelty, the spirit underlying the deed deserves to be praised and we give our good wishes to those who have taken into their heads to resuscitate our ancient culture.

—*Federated India*,
Madras.

10. THE TERRAIN OF COMMON MENTAL STATES AND THE RISE OF UNCOMMON SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

SOMETIMES the mind remains quiet for a short time. You will find neither Raga nor Dwesha in the mind. This silent state of the mind is called Tushnim Avastha. The aspirant mistakes this for Samadhi. This is a neutral state of the mind. This is an obstacle on the path of God-realization. He should overcome this state of the mind by careful introspection and vigorous meditation. A careful Sadhak through experience and acute acumen can find out exactly the nature of the various states of the mind. He should adopt effective methods to control those states. Mere study of books will not help him much. Experience and practice will do him much real good.

Stabdha Avastha is another kind of mental state. It is akin to Tushnim Avastha. This is also another obstacle on the path. When you experience some fear, when you hear some wonderful astounding news, the mind gets stunned for sometime. This is Stabdha Avastha. Tushnim and Stabdha Avasthas are Jada states. There is no perfect awareness. The mind remains like a log of wood in a state of inertia. It becomes unfit for active meditation. When these states prevail, there is heaviness of body. The mind is dull. There is lack of cheerfulness. The mind also becomes dull for the time being. The student can find out these states by these symptoms. An intelligent Sadhak who practices meditation daily can easily find out the different states into which the mind passes. A beginner finds meditations dry in the beginning. But an advanced student who has an intelligent and comprehensive understanding of the nature of the mind and its operations and the laws of the mental plane will find meditation very interesting. The more he meditates, the more he gains control of the mind.

He can understand the nature of the Vrittis and the different mental states. He can control them. He will actually feel that he is gaining inner spiritual strength and that he cannot be easily swayed by the mind now.

—*Practice of Bhakti Yoga*, pp. 192-193.

11. THE RICHNESS OF HIS MANY-SIDED SPIRITUAL CULTURE AND THE ZENITH OF HIS WIDE-SPREAD AUTHORITY, OCCASION SIVANANDA FORM AND BECOME THE SOUL OF A LIVING SCHOOL OF DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

PRACTICE OF BHAKTI YOGA:

AT a time when even theorising about Bhakti Yoga is at a very low ebb, a book on the practice of it by such an authority on the subject as Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati, is most welcome. The Adwaitins with their emphasis on Jnana have always regarded Bhakti Yoga as detracting from the true path and as a concession to the spiritually weak. When ultimately Iswara, the subject of Upasana, and the individual soul who has to practise Upasana have both to be negated as untrue, what fundamental value can Bhakti have in that system? The Visishtadwaitins, on the other hand, with their emphasis on the efficacy and expeditiousness of *Prapatti* or surrender have given up the process of Bhakti as difficult and tedious, No wonder that we have reached a state when Yoga is rare and Bhakti Yoga as a living school of thought is rarer still.

As such a time a book such as the one on hand is greatly to be welcomed. The value of the book lies not only in the exhaustive treatment which Bhakti as mode of God-realisation and as God-enjoyment receives therein, but in the very simple and forceful language used throughout, the illustrations of many viewpoints by apt stories of Bhaktas, simply and beautifully told, and the very many practical hints and instructions given to students about the practice of Bhakti Yoga.

The chapters on Bhakti Sadhana, "Obstacles in God-realisation" and "Samadhi or Cosmic Consciousness" are full of useful suggestions and thoroughly practical intructions. A time-table on Japa and a model spiritual diary perhaps illustrate the minuteness and detail with which the idea of teaching how to become a Bhakta is worked out. The book proper culminates with the text (in Sanskrit), translation, notes and commentary in English on the Bhakti Sutras of Narada—the Sage to whom this book itself is dedicated.

—D. R., *The Hindu*, Madras.

12. DIVINE LOVE : ITS NATURE, ITS TYPES, ITS RHYTHMS, AND ITS FULFILMENT IN A PLENITUDE OF GOD-ENJOYMENT

BHAKTI is intense love of God. Bhakti Yoga is the path of devotion. It appeals to the majority of mankind. "Love for love's ake is the motto or formula of a Bhakti-

Yogin. God is an embodiment of love. You will have to attain Him by loving Him. God can be realised only by means of a love as ardent and all-absorbing as the conjugal passion. Love for God must be gradually cultivated.

He who loves God has neither wants nor sorrows. He does not hate any being or object. He never takes delight in sensual objects. He includes every one in the warm embrace of his love.

Vasana or worldly desires and Trishnas or cravings are enemies of devotion. So long as there is any trace of desire in your mind for sensual objects you cannot have an intense longing for God.

Love of God and the rapturous ecstasy enjoyed by fellowship with God cannot be adequately described in words. It is as if a dumb man who had tasted some palatable food and could not speak about it. It could be revealed only to the chosen few. He who has once experienced love will see that alone, hear that alone and speak of that alone, because he constant y thinks of that alone.

Bhakti is of two kinds, *viz.*, higher Bhakti or Para-Bhakti and lower Bhakti or ritualistic Bhakti. Ritualistic worship is Vaidhi or Gauni Bhakti. It is formal Bhakti. Vaidi Bhakti is the lower type of devotion depending on external aids. It is lower Bhakti. The mind becomes purer and purer. The aspirant gradually develops love for God through ritualistic worship. He who does ritualistic worship, rings bells, adores a Pratika (symbol) or Pratima, does Pooja Arti, etc., with flowers, sandal paste, burns incense, and waves light before the image, offers Naivedya or food for God, etc.

Mukhya Bhakti or Para-Bhakti is advanced type of devotion. It is higher Bhakti. It transcends all convention. A devotee of this type knows no rule. He does not perform any external worship. He beholds his Lord everywhere, in every object. His heart is saturated with love for God. The whole world is Brindavan for him. His state is ineffable. He attains the acme of the bliss. He radiates love, purity and joy wherever he goes and inspires all who come in contact with him.

Santa Bhav, Dasya Bhav, Sakhya Bhav, Vatsalya Bhav, Kanta Bhav, and Madhurya Bhav are the six kinds of attributes of devotees or Bhavas towards God. The Bhavas differ in type and intensity of feeling. The different Bhavas are arranged in order of their intensity. Dhruva and Prahlad had the feeling of a child to its parents. This is Santa Bhav. In dasya Bhav the devotee behaves like a servant. His Lord is his Master. Hanuman is an ideal servant of God. In Sakhya Bhav there is a sense of equality. Arjuna and Kuchela had this Bhav. In vatsalya Bhav the devotee looks upon the Lord as his own child. Yasoda had this Bhav for Sri Krishna. Kausalya had this Bhav for Sri Rama. Kanta Bhav is the love of the wife to the husband. Sita and Rukmani had this Bhav. The clumination is reached in Madhurya Bhav. The lover and the Beloved become one through the intensity of love. Radha and Mira had this type of love.

Bhakti Yoga is the chief of sciences. He is wealthy indeed who has love for the Lord. There is no sorrow other than lack of devotion to the Lord. There is no right course except love of the devotees of the Lord.

The name, qualities and Lilas of the Lord are the chief things to be remembered. The lotus feet of the Lord are the chief objects of meditation. The devotee drinks the nectar of prem or divine love.

In Madhurya Bhav there is the closest relationship between the devotee and the Lord. There is no sensuality in Kanta and Madhurya Bhavas. There is no tinge of carnality in them. Passionate people cannot understand these two Bhavas as their minds are saturated with passion and lower sexual appetite. Sufistic saints also have the Bhav of lover and the Beloved, Madhurya Bhava. Gita Govinda written by Jeya Deva is full of Madhurya Rasa. The language of love which the mystic uses cannot be comprehended by worldly persons. Only Gopis, Radha, Mira, Tukkaram, Narada, Hafiz, can understand this language.

Atma Nivedan is total, ungrudging, absolute, self-surrender to the Lord. It is the highest rung in the ladder of Nava-vidha Bhakti. Atma-nivedan is Prapti or Sharanagati. The devotee becomes one with the Lord through Prapti. He obtains the divine grace or Prasada.

There are no distinction of caste, creed, family, colour or race among the devotees. 'God does not look into these things'. He looks to the purity of heart of the devotees. Any one can become a devotee of the Lord. Nanda, an untouchable; Rai Das, a Chamar; Kannappa, a hunter ; Sena a Barber ; Kabir, a Moslem weaver ; Sabari, a Bhilini ; were all devotees of the Lord and great saints. Kannappa, an illiterate barbarian who poured water from his mouth on the linga, who offered swine's flesh became the best among the Bhaktas. The Vaishnava Alvars of South India and the Nayanars of Saivism of South India were from different classes of society.

God reveals Himself to His devotees in a variety of ways. He assumes the very form which the devotee has chosen for his worship. If you worship Him as Lord Hari with four hands, He will come to you as Hari. If you adore Him as Siva, He will give you Darshan as Siva. If you worship Him as Mother Durga or Kali, He will come to you as Durga or Kali. If you worship Him as Lord Rama, Lord Krishna or Lord Dattatreya, He will come to you as Rama, Krishna or Dattatreya. If you worship Him as Christ or Allah, He will come to you as Christ or Allah.

—Swami Sivananda's
All About Hinduism,
pp. 232-234.

13. THE ENTHRALLING DISCOURSES OF SIVANANDA ON THE NATURE OF DIVINE LOVE AND LIFE

GOSPEL OF DIVINE LIFE :

SIVANANDA delivered a number of interesting and instructive discourses and sang many devotional songs at practically every meeting he addressed during his All-India Tour. This book contains extracts from some of his discourses and reproduction of some of the songs he sang. The book also includes Explanations of some Mantra and Hints on Sadhana.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

GOSPEL OF DIVINE LIFE:

THIS book contains Swamiji's English religious songs and excerpts from speeches bearing on Yoga and kindred topics, which people who thronged to hear him at various places in his recent country-wide tour, wanted to memorise.

Containing as it does appropriate illustrations, the book is worthy of welcome by aspirants.

—*The Organiser*, Delhi.

14. A CHALLENGE FROM SIVANANDA—THE DEMANDS OF DIVINE LOVE THAT YIELD AN IMMEDIATE VISION OF GOD

IF you remove a fish out of water and place it on the shore, it will flutter with intense agony; it will be thirsting for re-entry into the water. If you keep a body in the cold water of the Ganges for a short time, he will be greatly agitated; he will shriek and yell out. He will be panting to come out of the water. When a house has caught fire, the owner of the house runs immediately to the municipal office to get the fire-brigade for extinguishing the fire: he takes urgent and immediate steps. If the aspirant has the same thirsting, the same panting feeling, the same urgency, the same intensity of seriousness and earnestness for realising God, as the fish has for getting back into the water, as the body has for getting out of the water, as the man whose house is on fire has for getting the fire-brigade, he will have realisation of God this very second. There is no doubt of this.

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan,
pp. 22-23.

COMBINE all the love you cherish towards all worldly objects, wife, son, wealth, property, relatives, friends and then apply this combined love towards God. You will realise God in this very second.

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga in Daily Life,
pp. 9-10.

15. SIVANANDA THE SOUL OF BREVITY AND CONDENSATION IN THOUGHT, PRESENTS BY EXAMPLES THE MANY MODES OF GOD-REALIZATION

OF the obtainment of the Glory of God, in Shravana, it was Parikshit; in Kirtan, it was Vaiyasik Sukhdeva, the son of Vyasa Rishi; in Smaran, it was Prahalada; in serving the Lotus-feet of the Lord, it was Lakshmi; in worshipping, it was Prithu; in prostrating, it was Akrura; in service, it was Hanuman; in loving as a friend, it was Arjuna; and in surrendering completely to the Divine, it was Bali. Thus the highest attainment of the Lord Krishna is to be had through any and all these modes.

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti Yoga, p. 27.

16. SIVANANDA BRINGS INTO BEING A HOUSE-HOLDER'S HANDBOOK FOR DEVOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PATH TO GOD-REALISATION :

IN this booklet, Swami Sivananda gives in brief detail how a man, a householder, can step on the path to God-realisation. Under various sections, the Swamiji has tackled several aspects of spiritual *Sadhana.* This booklet will be a very good companion during one's leisure hours.

—*My Magazine,*
Madras.

PATH TO GOD-REALISATION :

THERE is a general belief that Self-realisation here and now is outside the province of the householder. This book clears that misconception and shows a way out.

—*The Hindu Organ,*
Jaffna.

PATH TO GOD-REALISATION :

THE second edition of this small booklet, shows us Divine Light. The style is lucid and the complex themes have been described simply. Each individual has his own way of worshipping God, which he develops consciously or unconsciously. This book shows the way to those who need guidance in this matter.

—*Careers & Courses,*
New Delhi.

17. FROM HIS OWN OBSERVATION, SIVANANDA STRIKES A BALANCE BETWEEN PURITANIC EXCESSES AND UNBRIDLED INDULGENCES

Blessed Immortal Self. *20th November, 1940.*

I THANK you warmly for your kind letter and the "flowers" that you sent for the school.

The question you have asked about needs and comforts is very pertinent and I believe one which ought to be agitating the mind of many like you. I am aware that there exists even today a puritan school of thought that would prohibit a seeker from being anything like his neighbour. I do not think so. My own experience in renunciation tells me that in a seeker gliding to either extremes there is danger of his undoing what he intends to do—to get his ego under his will, to "kill" it. The cunning ego finds even in the extreme form of renunciation an opportunity to assert itself and there is pride of renunciation (a most dangerous enemy to a real seeker), there is pride of being something quite different from others.

I, therefore, think that the best is the golden mean. Neither give yourself away to extreme luxury ; nor torture your body (and fatten the ego) by extreme forms of voluntary poverty.

The most essential thing is to have peace; and to have peace one should be "unattached". I know it is difficult to understand

what this means. Just let the things remain there unnoticed by yourself. If a new thing comes and is added to your room, you would feel as though it was ever there. If an old thing is missing and you find you have lost it, you should feel that it was never there. That is it.

It does not mean, either, that you are to be callous and negligent. Not at all. In that case, a mad man would be the greatest Yogi ! You have externally to be diligent in preserving what you have (though you would be ever ready to share what you have with others), and keeping everything neat and clean, in its place. You would be ever willing to give them away when you find another person has the greater need, and you wouldn't grieve when a thing is lost, in spite of your care. There is a method of achieving this. That is : TREAT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE AS THE LORD'S. The Lord wills the things to be there ; He wills you to take care of them, and make use of them; when the Lord wills He will remove them ; but till the Lord wills it so, you would preserve them ! That is the secret.

May God bless you !

Wishing you Kaivalya,
Sivananda.

—*Guide to God-realization*, pp. 74-75.

18. SIVANANDA, THE DIVINE COMPANION ACTIVELY AIDS AN ASCENT TO GOD-EXPERIENCE

PRECEPTS FOR PRACTICE :

THOSE precepts that Swami Sivananda has personally practised or has seen others practising are called together in this book. The precepts have been arranged under various convenient heads and in a form best suited to the lay reader and appealing to the public. Bhakti, practical Sadhana, Saintliness Self-purification and Yoga are some of the chapters, the lessons in regard to which are put down in pithy sentences in this book. PRECEPTS FOR PRACTICE deserves to be a constant companion for those aiming at a divine living.

—A. B. N. Sinha,
Searchlight, Patna.

19. TYPES OF DOMINENT SENTIMENT AND QUINTESSENTIAL TASTE OF A SUSTAINED SPIRITUAL FEELING

THE permanent emotion (Sthayibhava) on being mingled with Rasa is changed into these four : Vibhava, Anubhava, Satwika and Vyabhichari. Sthayibhava Rasa matures with the mixture of Vibhava, Anubhava, Satvika and Vyabhichari, just as curd mixed with sugar, pepper and camphor becomes a delicious Rasala.

Vyabhichri is of 33 kinds, such as delight, rapture, etc. Emotions exhibited by words, gestures and Satva are Vyabhichari. They are also called Sanchari Bhavas. They are Nirveda (self-disparagement) Vishada (despondency), Dainya (abject humility), Glani

(sorrow), Srama (exhaustion), Mada (arrogance), Garva (pride), Shanka (doubt), Trasa (fear), Avega (impulses), Unmada (raving), Apasmara (conclusion), Vyadhi (illness), Moha (loss of sensibility or consciousness), Mrityu (death), Alasya (idleness), Jadya (stupor), Vreeda (shyness), Akargopana (cloaking one's own real bearings), Smriti (remembrance), Vitarka (wrong argument), Chinta (reflection), Mati (determination), Dhriti (calmness), Harsha (delight), Autsukya (solicitude), Uggrate (ferocity), Amarsha (impatience), Asuya (jealousy), Chapalata (fickleness), Nidra (sleep), Supti (sleepiness) and Bodha (waking or knowing).

Sthayi Bhava or Krishna-rati is the mainstay of Rasa. It is the Master of 49 different Bhavas. It is the bliss-potency of Lord Himself. It lies in a subtle unmanifested state within the individual soul. Vibhava is the cause or extension of Rasa. Anubhava is the effect of Rasa. Stupefaction, horripilation and the like which constitute the Sattvic Bhava are the specific effects of Rasa.

Sanchari Bhava is support or auxiliary to Rasa, Vibhavas and Anubhavas are the outer things which help the manifestation of Rasa. The inner thing is the Bhava. Bhava thus is the main basis of Rasa.

The nature and essence or Bhava are pure Chit. The mind of the devotee is reduced to a state of pure Chit owing to the constant practice of devotion and the grace of the Lord.

The eight Sattvika Bhavas are Stambha (paralysis), Sveda (perspiration), Romancha (horripilation), Svara-bhanga (hoarseness of voice), Vepathu (trembling), Vaivaranya (change of colour), Asru (tears), and Pralaya (loss of consciousness).

—Swami Sivananda's
Essence of Bhakti Yoga,
pp. 52-53.

20. SIVANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY, METHODOLOGY AND SELF-EXPRESSION IN THE PHENOMENON OF PURE SPIRITUAL LOVE

RADHA'S PREM :

THE essential idea behind this book is to bring out clearly the sublimity of the path of devotion to the Lord. The love of the Gopies towards Lord Krishna is interpreted in its philosophical aspects. Written in the form of a Drama, the book makes refreshing reading.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

RADHA'S PREM :

UNDOUBTEDLY, this book is priceless and every reader will surely be immensely benefitted by it.

—*Sai Sudha*,
Madras.

"PRACTICE OF BHAKTI YOGA" deals with the various aspects of Bhakti starting from the early stage to the Brahmic Consciousness, and describes in detail the obstacles one has to surmount and the necessity of close adherence to *Sadhana* or devotional practices.

—*The Illustrated Weekly of India*,
Bombay.

21. SOME STRAINS FROM SIVANANDA'S SERMONS ON THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE AND THE INEFFABILITY OF SPIRITUAL LOVE

THE term "Bhakti" comes from the root "Bhaj" which means "to be attached to God." Bhakti is of the form of supreme love towards God. It is love for love's sake. The devotee wants God and God alone. There is no selfish expectation here. Bhakti is of the nature of nectar. It is the spontaneous outpouring of love towards God. It is pure unselfish love or Suddha Prem. It is the sacred higher emotion with sublime sentiments that unites the devotee with the Lord. It has to be experienced by the devotees.

Bhakti is the basis of all religious life. Bhakti destroys Vasanas and egoism. Bhakti elevates the mind to magnanimous heights. Bhakti is the master-key to open the chambers of wisdom. Bhakti culminates in Gyana. Bhakti begins in two and ends in one. Para Bhakti and Jnana are one.

There is no virtue higher than love, there is no treasure higher than love, there is no Dharma higher than love, there is no religion higher than love, because love is Truth and love is God. Love, Prem and Bhakti are synonymous terms. This world has come out of love. This world exists in love and this world ultimately dissolves in love ; God is an embodiment of love. In every inch of his creation, you can verily understand His love.

A life without love, faith and devotion is a dreary waste. It is a real death. Love is divine. Love is the greatest power on earth. It is irresistible. It is love alone that can really conquer the heart of a man. Love subdues an enemy. Love can tame wild, ferocious animals. Its power is infinite. Its depth is unfathomable. Its nature is ineffable. Its glory is indescribable. The essence of religion is love. Therefore, develop pure love.

Do you really want God ? Do you really thirst for His Darshan ? Have you got real spiritual hunger ? Only he, who thirsts for the Darshan of God, will develop love. Unto him alone, He will reveal Himself. God is a question of supply and demand. If there is a sincere demand for God, the supply will come at once.

Develop the mine modes of Bhakti gradually. Hear the Lilas of the Lord : this is Sravana. Sing his praise : this is Kirtana. Remember His names : this is Smarana. Worship His lotus-feet : this is Padasevena. Offer flowers : this is Archana. Prostrate before Him : this is Vandana. Do service unto Him : this is Dasya Bhava. Make friendship with Him : this is Sakhya Bhava. Do total unreserved self-surrender unto Him : this is Atma Nivedana.

Sit not idly craving God to help thee, but be up and doing as God helps only those who help themselves. Do the best you can and leave the rest to God. Serve the devotees. Remain in their company. Do Japa and Kirtan. Study Ramayana and Bhagavatam. Live in Brindaban or Ayodhya for some time. You will soon develop devotion.

Kindle the light of love in your heart. Love all. Include all creatures in the warm embrace of your love. Cultivate Viswa Prem or all-embracing, all-inclusive cosmic love. Love is a mysterious divine glue that

unites the hearts of all. It is a divine magical healing balm of very high potency. Charge every action with pure love. Kill cunningness greed, crookedness and selfishness. Immortality can be attained only by performing acts of kindness continuously. Hatred, anger, and jealousy are removed by continuous service with loving heart. You will get more strength, more joy, more satisfaction by doing kind acts. Practice of compassion, charitable acts, kind services, purify and soften the heart, turn the heart-lotus upwards and prepare the aspirant for the reception of divine light.

The Shastras are endless. There is much to be known. Time is short. Obstacles are many. That which is essence should be grasped, just as the swan takes the essence of milk alone from a mixture of water and milk. That essence is love or Bhakti. Drink this essence and attain the everlasting abode of Peace and Immortality.

Live in love. Breathe in love. Sing in love. Eat love. Drink love. Walk in love. Talk in love. Pray in love. Meditate in love. Think in love. Move in love. Write in love. Die in love. Taste the honey of divine love, and become an embodiment of love (Prem Vigraha or Prem Murthy).

—Swami Sivananda's
Essence of Yoga, pp. 22-25.

22. SIVANANDA GRANTS A VERBAL TENEMENT TO THE ESSENCE OF HIS DIVINE LOVE, WISDOM AND ATTAINMENT

PUSHPANJALI :

THIS represents still another contribution of Swami Sivananda towards trying to serve and improve the world, philosophically as best as he could, depicting most vividly and in the greatest measure the rare and exalted states of excellence and love felt by the Swami to God. Certain most obtuse questions stand suddenly solved by a simple illuminating verse in *Pushpanjali*. Dealing with various subjects such as divine drink, Mother Kundalini, Durbar of God, etc. The book is of immense value to the English-knowing public who need not regret their inaccessibility to the beauties of the famous compositions of the Indian saints of the past. The essence of pure love and supreme wisdom, this useful publication, is sure to be greatly admired by one and all alike.

—*Lokaprakasha*,
Trichur.

23. SIVANANDA COMMENTS UPON THE MAGNUM OPUS IN BHAKTI LITERATURE

THE text-book of the highest kind of Bhaktas is the Srimad-Bhagavata. It embodies the great ideals of Renunciation, Devotion and Knowedge brought to a stage of unblemished perfection. This Purana, far above what a Purana is supposed to be like, is the cream of the devotional literature of the Hindus. It is the wealth of the lovers

of God. It a book of divine wisdom. It advocates the path of non-action. Sri Krishna-Chaitanya (Gouranga) is said to have been considering this work as the greatest of Indian spiritual productions. It is a great authority on pure Spiritual Dharma, not as a means for Artha and Kama, but directly for Moksha. It has fascination even for those, who are keenly alive in finding out its defects. The whole body of the work is completely saturated with high expositions of Bhakti, Vairagya and Jnana—devotion, renunciation and Wisdom. The Ideal of Renunciation and Knowledge of Rishabhadeva, Jadabharata and the Brahmana of Avanti, the Devotion of Dhruva, Prahlada and Ambarisha, the Wisdom of Narada, Kapila and above all the Immortal life and Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Krishna to His devoted disciple Uddhava form the neucleus of the Srimad-Bhagavata.

—Swami Sivananda's
Essence of Bhakti Yoga, pp. 9-10

24. SIVANANDA PROVIDES US WITH AN EPISODE THAT MIRRORS THE CONDITION AND THE EFFECTS OF THE MOST EXALTED SPIRITUAL STATE

SRI Suka Dev entered the forest in a nude state. The damsels, who were taking bath in the river in a nude state, saw Suka Dev, but did not mind a bit, but after sometime Sri Vyasa came in search of Suka Dev. He shouted "O Suka Dev, where are you ? All the trees responded to the shouting because Suka Dev was one with them. The damsels began to dress themselves as soon as they saw Sri Vyasa. Sri Vyasa said "O damsels ! you did not mind a bit when my young son was passing in a nude state, but you put on your dress, when you see me, an old man. What is the matter ? What is the difference ?" The damsels replied "Suka Dev is in an exalted stage. Did you not hear the response of the trees even to your shouting ? He is one with these trees. He is above body-consciousness and sex-idea too."

—Swami Sivananda's
Wisdom Nectar, pp. 48-49.

25. SIVANANDA : HIS TRIPLE EMINENCE

—Sivananda As the Greatest Living Saint, A Master-Mind, A Prophet of the Love Divine—The Sublimity, the Lucidity and the Comprehensiveness of His Comments on Devotion—

NARADA BHAKTI SUTRAS :

THIS well-known book on devotion to the Lord containing 84 Sutras has been translated into English by Swami Sivananda. Along with the Sanskrit text is given transliteration and translation in simple English. Swamiji's commentaries are invariably lucid and comprehensive. Swami Sivananda is a follower of Sankara but in this commentary he clearly comes out as a great upholder of the cult of devotion and a protagonist of Sankirtan. Sublime in this preaching devotion to the Lord, Swamiji is easily the greatest living Saint who has been guiding

all to divine life, whether the individual concerned is a Yogi, a Jnani or a Bhakta. The universality of the teaching of this prophet of the new age, this Lord Incarnate, is bodly proclaimed by his various publications. This book is clearly a masterpiece of the master mind of Swami Sivananda. To the height of sublimity has he risen in this commentary.

—A. B. N. Sinha,
Searchlight,
Patna.

26. SIVANANDA TAKES THE REPRESENTATIVE TYPES IN ACTS OF DEVOTION AND PATTERNS AN INTEGRAL PRACTICE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN DIVINE LOVE

GOD looks upon all with an equal eye. We all know know how Sri Ramachandra ate the fruits already tasted by the Bhilini Sabari. Sudama's grains are more welcome to Lord Krishna than the most sumptuous feast that can be offered by a mighty potentate on this earth. What He wants is your loving heart. He neither wants a big temple nor rich presents from you.

Bhakti can be acquired and cultivated. Constant Sat-sang with devotees and Bhagavatas, repetition of His Name. Sri Rama, Sita Ram, Hari Om, etc., constant remembrance of the Lord, prayer, study of religious books such as Ramayana, Bhagavatam, Hari Kirtan, Service of Bhaktas, etc., can infuse Bhakti in your heart. Pray fervently like Prahalad, Sing His Name, like Radha. Weep in solitude like Mira on account of Viraha Agni. Do Kirtan like Lord Gauranga. Sing Bhajan like Ram Prasad of Bengal. Dance in Divine ecstasy like Chaitanya Maha Prabhu and enter into Bhava Samadhi. Repeat His name like Valmiki, Tukaram, or Ram Das.

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga In Daily Life, pp. 8-9.

27. SIVANANDA CITES THE INSTANCES OF THE GENIUSES IN INDIAN SPIRITUAL LIFE, FOR A RECONCILIATION OF THE PURSUIT OF DIVINE LOVE WITH THE ACQUISITION OF DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

BHAKTI Yoga and Jnana Yoga are not incompatibles like acids and alkalis. One can combine Ananya Bbakti (one-pointed devotion) with Jnana Yoga. The fruit of Bhakti Yoga is Jnana. Highest love (Para Bhakti) and Jnana are one. Perfect love is knowledge. Sri Sankara, the Adwaita Kevala Jnani, was a great Bhakta of Lord Hari, Hara and Devi. Jnana Deva of Alandi, Poona, a great Yogi of late, was a Bhakta of Lord Krishna. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa worshipped Kali and got Jnana through Swami Totapuri, his Adwaita Guru. Lord Chaitanya was a fine Adwaita Vedantic scholar, and yet he danced in streets and market places, singing Hari's

names. Appayya Dikshitar, a famous Jnani of Adaipalam, North Arcot District, Madras, the author of Sidhanta Lesha and various other Vedantic books, was a devotee of Lord Siva. It behoves, therefore, that Bhakti can be combined with much advantage with Jnana.

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga in Daily Life, p. 20.

28. SIVANANDA THE MINSTREL OF GOD ON THE TRIUMPHANT ALL-INDIA TOUR—INTERSPERSED THE PERORATIONS OF THE SPEECHES HE MADE, WITH ECSTATIC SONGS

STORY OF MY TOUR :

THE Swami describes in this book the places he visited, the personages he met and the shrines he visited. It may be recalled that Swami Sivananda went on a tour of India and Ceylon on September, 9, 1950. Part I is more or less a report while part II contains a gist of the lectures delivered. Swamiji spent about ten days in Bihar and visited Patna, Hajipur and Gaya. The Chief Minister of Bihar presided at the Patna meeting and Mr. Justice Bhuvaneshwar Singh at the Hajipur meeting. The Patna University Hall meeting was presided over by the Vice Chancellor. All these are described in verses. The book will make available to those who could not attend the meetings, the priceless teachings of the saint in a nutshell.

—*The Searchlight*, Patna.

29. SIVANANDA : A REPRESENTATIVE ASPECT OF HIS BRILLIANT EXPOSITION OF NARADA'S APHORISMS ON DIVINE LOVE, AND HIS ARGUMENTS FOR A RECOURSE TO BHAKTI AS THE BEST MEANS FOR SUPREME BLESSEDNESS

Sutra 81. Trisatyasya Bhaktireva Gareeyases Bhaktireva Gareeyasee,

ONLY love of the absolute, eternal truth is the greatest; this love indeed, is the greatest.

In all the three periods of time, i.e. past, present, and future, devotion alone weighs heaviest (most glorious).

Of the three paths, the path of devotion is greater than the path of works and the path of knowledge.

In this Sutra, Narada emphasized the value and importance of devotion. Divine love is eternal.

Repetition of the word "Gareeyasee" adds force. It glorifies devotion to the highest degree.

Bhakti alone is preferable to other paths. The path of devotion is the highest path. Love of God is supreme. Devotion to God is devotion to the Eternal Truth.

Trisatyam : The three eternal truths are [1] Jnana, [2] Karma and [3] Bhakti. God is

love, goodness and truth. God is experienced by the devotee as love. God is Experience by the Jnani as Truth. Narada says that the first is better than any other.

According to all the three forms of Truth practised through the body, speech and mind, the path of devotion is the best path.

Truth as practised through the body, speech and mind is called the three forms of truth. The Holy Rishi Narada has realised the superiority of devotion from the standpoint of all these three Truths.

In the 12th chapter of Gita, Lord Krishna says, "The devotee is Yuktottama" the best and highest among those who are united to Him.

"Among all Yogis, he who, full of faith, with his inner Self merged in Me, worships Me, he is deemed by Me to be the most divine." Gita, VI. 47. Thus, the Bhakta is given the highest place.

Para Bhakti and Jnana are one. Para Bhakti is superior to Mukhya Bhakti even. In Para Bhakti the devotee is one with his higher Self. The object of his love now is not the personal God but the Absolute. The devotee now passes beyond time, space and causation, beyond the three Gunas, beyond the three states of walking, dream and deep sleep, even beyond the Triputi or subject-object, relationship. He realises his oneness with the Lord.

Sutra 82. Gunamaahaatmyaasaktiroopaasakti Poojaasakti Smaranaasakti Daasyaasakti Sakhyaasakti Vaatsalyaasakti Kaantaasakti Aatmanivedanaasakti Tanmayaasakti Paramavirahaasakti Roopaikadhaapyekaadasadha Bhavati.

Bhakti or Divine Love, though in itself one only, manifests itself in the following eleven forms: [1] Love of the glorification of the Lord's blessed qualities; [2] Love of his enchanting beauty; [3] Love of worship; [4] Love of constant remembrance; [5] Love of service; [6] Love of Him as a friend; [7] Love of Him as a son; [8] Love for Him as of a wife for her husband, [9] Love of self-surrender to Him; [10] Love of complete absorption in Him; [11] Love of the pain of separation from Him.

First of all the devotee serves the Lord as a servant his master. Then he approaches Him nearer and behaves towards Him as a friend does towards a friend. The relationship is then felt to be more closely personal. Therefore, the devotee rises higher and manifests parental affection for the Loved One, as a father to his son. Lastly, the little remaining remoteness between them disappears altogether. The two become one in spirit. The devotee develops the marks of a beloved wife's love for her beloved husband. In Atmanivedan or complete self-surrender, there is complete self-absorption. He feels the living presence of God anywhere and everywhere and permanently loses himself in the Lord.

You can know you love the Lord when you feel you cannot live without Him.

The purpose of the life of a devotee is to lose all sense of distinctive personality and be dissolved in the Lord, like a camphor in the fire.

Narada and Vyasa, Sukadeva, Kakabhusundi, Sesha, Suta, Saunaka, Sandilya, Bhishma, Prithu, Parikshit and Janamejaya delighted themselves in singing the glories of the Lord. The Gopis of Brindavan, the Rishis of Dankarayanya were naturally attracted by Sri Krishna's enchanting personal beauty. Ambarisha, Lakshmi, Prithu, Bhara, spent whole time in worship : Prahlada, Dhruva, Sanaka in remembrance ; Hanuman, Akrura, Vidura in service. Uddhava, Arjuna, Sudama, Rukmini and Satyabhama loved Sri Krishna as a husband and Dasaratha, Kausalya, Devaki, Nanda, Yasoda, Kasyapa, Aditi, Manusatarupa, as their son.

Bali, Vibhishana, Hanuman, Ambarisha, Sibi did complete surrender to the Lord. Sanatkumar, Suka, Sanaka and Yajnavalkya immersed themselves in His Bliss (Tanmayasakti). Uddhava, Arjuna, Gopis and Radha experienced anguish of separation. Each of them is characterised by a predominant attitude. All these eleven forms of Bhakti are possible for the same Bhaktas during different moods.

Viraha is the highest manifestation of love. It is a common characteristic of all devotees, because it is in the very nature of intense love that it cannot bear separation. This is one of the supreme tests of devotion in Sutra 29. This stages of love is typically manifested in Radha, and the Gopis when they were separated from Sri Krishna.

If all these forms of attachments cannot be developed together, you can select one or two sentiments and cultivate love for God accordingly. Love is fundamentally one. Therefore, no distinction of higher and lower should be made among devotees, according to the difference of sentiment cultivated by them.

All these eleven types of divine love were found developed among the Gopis.

The nine modes or stages of Bhakti are described here. The highest is Madhurya Rasa or Kaantaasakti where the lover and the beloved become one. Sufists also entertain this Bhav. The Bhakta begins with Dasya Bhave, attitude of a servant like Hanuman. This is the lowest rung in the ladder of Bhakti. Then he takes up a friendly attitude towards God like Arjuna. Fear vanishes now. He claims equality with his object of worship. Then he develops a Bhava of parental affection towards God. He takes Lord Krishna as his son.

The student of Sri Vallabhacharya Sampradaya school of thought entertains this Bhav. All fears and expectations vanish. There is fear of downfall in Kaantaasakti, if the devotee is not careful. He is carried away by lustful propensitites. He mistakes physical sensations for devotion. Emotion is not devotion. Many unhappy, unpleasant occurrences take place in those who cherish this Bhava. A high standard of purity is required in those, who take this Bhava. This Bhava is purely mental. Dressing like a female and showing gestures like a woman is mere hypocritical show. This is not necessary in this Bhava.

—Swami Sivananda's
Narada Bhakti Sutra,
pp. 200-205.

30. SIVANANDA'S SERMONS ON SELF-REALIZATION THROUGH EXERCISES IN SPIRITUAL LOVE

GOSPEL OF DIVINE LIFE :

THE All-India Tour undertaken by Sri Swami Sivananda is fully described in the above work. The book contains among other interesting material the English Songs that were sung, also a demonstration of Yoga Asanas by Swamiji himself, and these Asanas are described in eight illustrations.

—*Luzac's Oriental List and Book Review*, London.

GOSPEL OF DIVINE LIFE :

SECTION one of this publication contains Sivananda's Messages on 'Self-realisation', 'real education', a word to parents and girls and Sannyasins ; section two deals with Sivananda's songs. Section three is devoted to the treatment of such subjects as Mantras, Asanas, Pranayama, eye-exercises and Surya Namaskara.

—*The Pilgrim*, Madras.

31. SIVANANDA THE PERSONIFICATION OF DIVINE LOVE, APPLIES A TABULAR TOUCH TO THE CONDITIONS, FORMS AND TYPES OF DEVOTION

1—Five kinds of Bhavas :

(SANTA) or peaceful, self-controlled and serene, as Bhishma.
(Dasya) Servant and Master Bhava, as Hanuman.
(Sakhya) Friendship as Arjuna.
(Vatsalya) Parental affection as Kausaly, Yasoda.
(Madhurya) wife husband, or Lover and beloved like Gopis, Gauranga.

2—Six meas of developing Bhakti :

1. Service of Bhagwatas, Sadhus, Sannyasins etc.
2. Repetition of God's Name, Japa, Smaran etc.
3. Satsang.
4. Hari Kirtan (Loud repetition of Lord's Name).
5. Study of religious books as Gita, Ramayana, Bhagwata etc.
6. Pilgrimage and stay in Holy Places like Brindavan, Ayodhya, Pandarpur Chitrakuta, etc.

3—Eight signs of Bhakti :

1. Tears—Ashrupaata.
2. Horripilation—Pulaka.
3. Tremor—Kampana.
4. Crying, weeping—Rodana.
5. Laughing—Haasya.
6. Perspiration or sweating—Sveda.
7. Fainting—Moorchha.
8. Inability to speak—Swarabeanga.

4—Four qualifications of a Bhakta :

1. Humble as a blade of grass.
2. Forbearance like a tree.

3. Not to desire praise or respect for himself but to praise and respect others.
4. Always repeating Lord's Name.

5—Five thorns in the path of Bhakti :

Pride of 1. Caste 2. Learning 3. Position 4. Beauty 5. Youth.

6—Requisites in Bhakti :

1. Nishkamya (without any desire for fruits) 2. Ananya (undivided love towards God only) 3. Avyabhicharini (intense love towards the chosen Deity or Ishta-Deva) 4. Akhanda (Taila Dharvat) unbroken, continuous love. 5. Sadachara Sahita (with noble qualities and character) 6. Deeply earnest and serious i.e. Real not for show.

7—Seven forms of Prem :

1. Sheha (melting of heart by love or Prem).
2. Mana (that sentiment which interferes with the enjoyment of a couple who are at heart desperately in love with each other, notwithstanding their being together for enjoyment).
3. Pranaya, Love which makes the lover think himself at one with the beloved, it is the thorough unification of the one with the other.
4. Raga-Sneha, when it makes its object feel happiness even when put to misery for the sake of the beloved one is called Raga.
5. Anuraga: (Raga, when it descovers ever new sweetness in the beloved one is Anuraga-Raga).
6. Bhava: (Bhava, is the name of that emotional state the essence of which is likened into the rays of the rising sun, i.e., it ushers in Prema just as the rays usher in the rising sun. It melts the heart by unquenchable desire for attainment to Sri Krishna).
7. Maha-Bhava: The highest pitch or consummation of Bhava.

—Swami Sivananda's
Triple Yoga, pp. 147-150.

32. SIVANANDA SOUNDS FROM HIS LYRE A FEW NOTES THAT DISTINGUISH A DEVOTEE OF DIVINE LOVE FROM A PERSON GIVEN OVER TO SPIRITUAL LOGIC

JNANA Yoga is crossing the river by swimming. Bhakti Yoga is crossing the river by a boat. The Jnani gets knowledge by self-reliance and assertion. The Bhakta gets Darshan by self-surrender. A Jnani asserts and expands. A Bhakta dedicates or consecrates himself to the Lord and contracts himself.

A Bhakta wants to eat sugar-candy. A Jnani wants to become sugar-candy itself. A Bhakta gets Krama Mukti. A Jnani gets Sadyo Mukti. A Bhakta is like a kitten which cries for help. A Jnani is like a baby monkey that clings itself boldly to the mother.

—Swami Svananda's
Sadhana, p. 300.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SIVANANDA'S PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSES IN THE SEQUENCE OF DEVOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

—And the Development of the Dynamisms of Devotion into Divine Love and Oneness, Both by the Growing Ecstasies of the Tranquil Heart that Take Into Their Transformatory Processes the Entire Resources of the Human Personality, and By the Graded Emergence of the Self-existent Transcendent Love Lodged in the Luminous Confines of the Inner Psychic Being—

Beginning with a steady disclosure of the august possibilities of an emotional awareness rendered radiant by continued stress of aspiration and lifted beyond the impulsions of average human nature, a widening love metamorphosed by sustained adoration and surprised by a felt Divine Presence, an yearning which is inspired with the knowledge that the Divine is its one Destiny, its sole Delight, a growing faith guided by an inward guidance formed by Grace, a self-offering and surrender which put away all limitations of an egoistic mode of consciousness and open themselves to the intimations, influences and invasions from the Light, the Power, the Sweetness of the Divine, an outlook which sees everything under the Light of Godhead and is wholly governed by a scale of values which measures and weighs everything against the background of the Divine as the supreme Value, the greatest Good and the highest Truth, the dynamisms of devotion lead the God-Lover through the spontaneous efflorescence of a self-existent and transcendent Love poised in the inner psychic heart, through beatific avenues that permit as a common experience, a normal condition, not the glimpses of Godhead but a conscious and active enjoyment of God-Nature, an enjoyment which culminates in a splendid coalescence and commingling of the being of the God-Lover with the Spirit of the Transcendent Deity, and a recovery of the Oneness of each with the other, of the other in each.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

SIVANANDA'S PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSES IN THE SEQUENCE OF DEVOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. THE PRINCIPAL APPEAL OF SIVANANDA REVOLVES ROUND THE HIGH EMINENCES OF HIS SPIRITUALITY AND THE SWEETNESS OF SIMPLICITY THAT CONSTITUTES THE SOUL OF HIS STYLE

ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA :

SIVANANDA is widely known throughout this country as the author of several works on Yoga, philosophy, and the Upanishads, and as an eminent spiritual guide to aspirants of the Yoga-marga and as residing at Rishikesh, radiating spiritual benefits to his disciples. Some of his standard works have attracted the attention of ardent devotees and he has endeared himself to them. Written in simple, direct and natural style his works do not present the complex problems of the language or matter and make a direct appea lto the reader.

The *Path of Devotion* ultilises the natural craving of the human mind for love ; and in loving divinity the level of love is elevated to its highest. Divine love is unfolded in the simplest language. A psychological analysis of the whole significance of Bhakti is given. Kirtana is one of the most popular forms and is rightly emphasised.

The work is divided into two sections : (1) The essence of Bhakti and (2) The practice of Bhakti. The main texts followed are the *Bhagavata* and the *Vishnupurana*. The nine aspects of Bhakti are taken from the exposition of Prahlada in the *Bhagavata*. The section dealing with Rasa in Bhakti is clearly written and is in simple language without being jumbled into the jargon of dialectics, Self-surrender is the high water-mark of Bhakti and the section dealing with the same is to be read with care and understanding. It is true that it becomes complete only after God-realization. A firm resolve to surrender oneself is the first step. Other steps lead on to purer and purer atmospheres of life and finally to the goal. *Para Bhakti* is the highest form of Bhakti and is the culmination of the path of Devotion and leads to Para Jnana which ultimately aids in the realisation of the Absolute. (pp. 66-72).

The methods to be followed by modern Sadhakas are explained in the second section. Puja or worship in its various aspects, repetition of Mantras of Japa, etc., are dealt with in the succeeding sections. Appendix 'A' contains certain practical demonstrations of devotional hymns. The Ekasloki Ramayana and Bhagavata are noteworthy as Appendix 'B'. The next

Appendix contains a conversation between a thiest and an athiest and is of practical interest to the present generation. The last appendix contains devotional Kirtans. The Swami has rendered to the English reading public, a real service by arranging for the publication of this work.

—A. N. Krishna Aiyangar,
Indian Rebublic
Bombay.

2. THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE DYNAMIC CULTURE OF THE EMOTION OF LOVE AND ITS CONSUMMATION IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ADWAITIC ONENESS

LOVE is the quickest way to Truth or the kingdom of God or the vast domain of perennial peace and joy. It is the life-principle of creation. It is the highest expression of soul-force. It is the sum total of all the duties of religion. It is the magic wand in the hands of a devotee by which he conquers the whole world. It was the driving force behind Mira, Radha. Tukaram, Tulsi, Gouranga, Jesus and God-intoxicated Sufis, Mansoor and Shams Tabriez.

Sankirtan develops love. Sankirtan is the easiest, surest, safest, quickest, way of attaining God-consciousness. Those who do Sankirtan in the beginning for the sake of mental enjoyment will realise the purificatory effects of Sankirtan after some time and then they will themselves do it with Bhava and Sraddha. There is a mysterious power in the name of the Lord.

Man cannot live on bread alone but he can live on the Name of the Lord, Real Swaraj consists in the attainment of God-consciousness through pure Love and selfless service of country and humanity with Atma-bhava. Cultivate this pure love by eradicating selfishness, greed, lust, pride and egoism.

Combine adoration with Love, Then you will develop true Bhakti. Adoration preserves, auguments, dignifies and broadens love. Endeavour in making your faith a matter of adoration and love. Practise this religion of loving adoration in your daily life.

Utter in every breath the name of the Lord. Centre your thoughts upon His lotus-feet. Pray like Goswami Tulsidas for purity of mind. Sing like Mira the songs of surrender, Have pure, unselfish love for the Lord. Let it grow more and more every day, Do not ask God for Siddhis, worldly possessions, not even for salvation.

If you are not able to form the image of your Ishta Devata you may try to hear either the sound of the Mantra repeated by you or to think on the letters of the Mantra in order. This will stop mind-wandering.

Try to feel that the Lord is seated in the Chambers of your heart. If the form of the Lord produced by your own imagination suits your best in your meditation, you can meditate on that form. Though you can only have a hotch-potch glimpse of the form, gradually it will assume a clear-cut and well-defined shape on account of constant practice. Be regular in your meditation. Think and feel that the form is surrounded by a halo of light and the darkness in your mind is dispelled by this divine splendour.

Cling like a bee to the Lotus-Feet of the Lord. Find out the path that leads to love. Taste the honey of divine Prem. Become Prememaya. Become an embodiment of love. Live in love. Move in love. Breathe in love. Speak in love. Sing in love. Have your very being in love.

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan.

If you really want to root out hatred and develop Prem or pure love, you will have to serve that man whom your mind dislikes. You will have to serve that man who is planning to destroy you. When you hear that your bitterest enemy is sick, you will have to run immediately to his house and shampoo his legs with full Prem. You will have to attend on him day and night, just as you attend on your sick wife, son or mother. Even if inimical feelings rise in your heart, you will have to subdue them by raising frequently the opposite positive feelings of love. This is doubtless a trying, difficult Sadhana. But the benefits are wonderful. You will become the centre of power and energy. You will become a spiritual giant indeed. You will become an embodiment of love, Prema Murti or Prema Vigraha.

When you try to control anger when somebody has injured you, you should not only check the big wave of anger, but also try to eradicate the internal burning which remains even though you do not speak harsh words or express outwardly any signs of anger in the face. This is most difficult; but it can be eradicated by continuous service and love.

Whenever your friend is annoyed with you, speak to him first with a smile and apologise sincerely with tears, even though you are right. Serve him nicely with Prem. Vindictive spirit is a deadly enemy of peace, devotion, love and Jnana.

—Swami Sivananda's
How to Cultivate Virtues and Eradicate Vice.

DEVELOP universal love gradually through selfless service, Satsang with great souls, prayer, meditation of Guru Mantra etc. When the heart is contracted through selfishness, in the beginning, man loves only his wife. children, a few friends and relatives. As he evolves, he loves the people of his own district, then the people of his own province. Later on he develops love for men of his own country. Eventually he begins to love other people of different countries. In the long run he begins to love all. He develops universal love. All the barriers are broken now. Heart is expanded infinitely. It is very easy to talk of universal love. But when you want to put it into actual practice, it becomes extremely difficult. Petty-mindedness of all sorts comes in the way. Old wrong impressions which you have created by your wrong mode of life in the past, act as stumbling blocks. Through iron determination, strong will-power, patience, perseverance and Vichara (right rnquiry), you can conquer all obstacles quite easily. The grace of the Lord will descend on you if you are sincere.

Universal love terminates in Adwaitic unity or oneness or Upanishadic consciousness of seers and sages. Pure love is a great leveller. It brings equality and equanimity. Hafiz, Kabir, Mira, Gouranga, Tukaram, Ramdas . all have tasted this universal love. What others have achieved, you can also attain.

Feel that the whole world is your body your own home. Melt or destroy all barriers that separate man from man. The idea of superiority is ignorance or delusion. Develop Viswa Prem. all-embracing love. Unite with all. Separation is death. Unity is eternal life. The whole world is Viswa Brindavan. Feel that this body is the moving temple of God. Wherever you are, whether at home, in office, railway station or market, feel that you are in the temple. Consecrate every act as an offering unto the Lord. Transmute every work into Yoga by offering its fruits to God, Have Akarta-Sakshi-Bhava if you are a student of Bhakti Marga. Feel that all beings are images of God. ISAAVAASYAMIDAM SARVAM...this world is indwelt by the Lord. Feel that one power of God works through all hands, sees through all eyes, hears through all ears. You will become a changed being. You will enjoy the highest peace and bliss. May Lord Hari take you all to His bosom and bathe you with waters of sweet love,

—Swami Sivananda's
Essence of Bhakti Yoga.

3. SIVANANDA THE APOSTLE OF LOVE, DISSEMINATES BHAKTI LITERATURE AND BUILDS MANY BRIDGES BETWEEN THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE HEART

ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA:

THE paths through which God could be approached and attained are many. Every one of them has been elaborated, discussed, analysed and systematised in our scriptures. The most popular and the most easy of these is Bhakti Yoga. Apostles of Bhakti have, from time to time, proved the supreme efficacy of this Yoga and of its many ways of approach. In this book, Swami Sivananda expounds Bhakti Yoga in all its aspects. The nine forms of Bhakti the ways of practising Bhakti and other allied matters are discussed succinctly. The appendix contains a bunch of songs of Bhakti.

—*Sunday Times*, Madras.

ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA:

THE pursuit of God through Bhakti-spiritual love—is the sweetest and best of of human endeavours. The human heart panting in love for the Divine, constitutes the real sublimation. And in this book we are taught this divine, path to spiritual exaltation through Bhakti.

—*Indian Literary Review*,
Bombay.

4. THE ASCENDING STATES AND MODES OF DEVOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THROUGH Sat-sangh and Swadhaya or the study of devotional books, comes admiration for the Lord; from admiration comes Sraddha or faith; from Sraddha comes devotion to the Lord. Then the devotee practises Sadhana Bhakti, viz., Japa, Smarana and Kirtan. He burns the sins and obstacles to attain his devotion by the above

practice. From Sadhana Bhakti he develops Nishta devoutness; from Nishta comes Ruchi or taste for hearing and chanting the names and glories of the Lord. Then comes Rati or intense attachment. Rati softens the heart. When Rati is intensified it is called Sthayi Bhava (steadiness or permanent form of Bhakti Rasa). When Sthayi Bhava is intensified, it is called Maha Bhava or Prema Maya. Now the devotee drinks the Prem Rasa and lives in the Lord. Such a devotee is dead to the world and its attractions. He remains like one unconcerned with the activities of his body even. He reaches the state of Jeevanmukti or liberation while living.

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan,
pp. 27-28.

THERE are four kinds of worship, corresponding to four different states and dispositions of the Sadhaka himself. The realisation that the Supreme Spirit (Paramatman) and the individual spirit (Jivatma) are one, that everything is Brahman and that nothing but the Brahman everlasting being is the highest state of Brahma Bhava. Constant meditation with Yoga-processes upon the Devata in the heart is the lower form (Dhyana Bhava). Lower still is that Bhava of which Japa (recitation of Mantra) and hymns of praise are the expression and lowest of all is external worship (Bahya Pooja).

Pooja Bhava is that which arises out of the dualistic motions of worshipper and worshipped the servant and the Lord, a dualism which necessarily exists in greater or less degree until monistic experience is attained. He who realises Advaita Tattwa knows that all is Brahman. For him there is neither Yoga nor Pooja nor Dharma, Dhyana, Japa, Vrata or other rituals. For he is a Siddha (perfect sage in its fullest sense), that is, he has attained Siddhi (perfection) which is the aim of Sadhana.

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan, p. 21.

A DEVOTEE should study books which place before him the ideals of devotion, the glory, the sweetness and the Leelas of the Lord, the stories of saints and the practices which help him to cultivate devotion. Devotion develops by the study of such devotional scriptures.

The most important books are Ramayana, Srimad Bhagavatam, Narayaneeyam, Gita Vishnupurana, Adhyatma Ramayana, Tulsi Ramayana (Ramacharitamanas) Vishnu Sahasranama, Sandilya Sutras. Siva Purana, Devi Bhagavata, the Narada Pancharatram, Practice of Bhakti Yoga,, Essence of Bhakti Yoga, Bhakti and Sankirtan, Bhakti-rasamritam, songs of Alwars and Nayanars, Thevaram, Thiachakam, Dasabodha, Tukkaram's Abhanga, Jnaneswari, Bhakti Rasayana, Bhakti Rasamritasindhu, etc.

Every act that awakens the emotion of Bhakti must be done. Keep the Pooja room clean. Decorate the room. Burn incense. Light a lamp. Keep a clean seat. Bathe, wear clean clothes. Apply Vibhuti or Bhasma and Kumkum on the forehead. Wear Rudraksha or Tulsimala. All these produce a benign influence on the mind and elevate the mind also. They generate piety. They help to create the necessary Bhava or feeling to invoke that you want to worship. The mind will be easily concentrated.

Practice of Sadachara or right conduct, Satsangh, Japa, Smarana, Kirtan, Prayer, worship, service of saints, residence in places of pilgrimage, service of poor and the sick with divine Bhava, observances of Varnashrama duties, offering of all actions and their fruits to the Lord, feeling the presence of the Lord in all beings, prostrations before the image and saints with all the eight parts of the body, renunciation of earthly enjoyments and wealth, charity austerities and vows, practice of Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya—all these will help you to develop Bhakti.

You must not give leniency to the mind. You must rigidly follow all the rules prescribed in the Bhakti Sastras. Then alone you will evolve quickly. You must keep up daily routine and programme and follow it strictly at all costs. If you are lenient to the mind, laziness will overtake you and you will procrastinate everything. That 'tomorrow' will never come. Even if you are of advanced age, think you are a college-student and follow the daily routine. The benefits of keeping up daily routine and daily spiritual diary cannot be adequately described. This is the master-key for success in spiritual life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Narada Bhakti Sutras,
pp. 191-193.

5. DISPOSITIONAL DIFFERENCES IN DEVOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND SIVANANDA'S METHODS FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF ALL FORMS OF LOVE INTO DIVINE LOVE

ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA :

VARIOUS means have been indicated in the sublime teachings of Hindu seers, prophets and saints for the highest Self-realization, that constitutes the goal of every human being. These are but apparently independent and self-contained. In essence and in their fundamentals, the different paths—Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and other Yogas are deeply inter-related. The apparent difference arises because of the emphasis laid on particular aspects, in the practical application of the different means, according to the aptitude, temperament and Samskaras of the different individual aspirants. The process of right thoughts arousing the proper Karmas which in turn engenders 'Bhakti' or divine love, leading ultimately to the total annihilation of all ignorance and the revelation of the Jnana in which all duality is wiped out, has been generally accepted as the right course in spiritual study and progress. There is one definite advantage however in 'Bhakti Yoga' which is bound to attract the aspirant to its constant practice. It follows the natural instinct in human nature which is "to Love", and by a transformation of all little and petty acts of motivated love, to one of Divine Sublimity, redeems the 'Sadhak' in a natural and easy manner, of all misguided and sorrow-laden pleasures, The true Bhaktha, like the true Jnani, is raised to the pinnacle of Adwaitic bliss and Sivananda in whom is blended the essence of all the varied paths, lays down in the book under review, practical steps following which the reader can ascend to the glorious height without doubt. The philosophy of Bhakti, 'Divine Name, 'Bhav and Rasa in

Bhakti', 'surrender' and "Para Bhakti" are illuminating chapters in this invaluable and soul-stirring book, a perusal of which is bound to give 'life' and 'livin ' their true purport and significance. The details on the practice of Bhakti are lessons which are replete with precious instructions. The appendices to the book and the crisp verses add considerably to its usefulness. In this 'Kali age', Bhakti Yoga is peculiarly suited to redeem all from sin and ensure permanent joy. A Yogi like Sivananda can alone lead the aspirant along the great path. We would earnestly request every one to study this book with attention and interest and thereby tread the path of "Bhakti', necessary at once for ridding men of the effects or stings of past Karmas and ensuing peace and bliss for the present and the future.

—*The Champion*,
Calicut

6. THE ELEVEN PINIONS WHICH WORK THE WIDE WHEELS O INTEGRAL DEVOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IT would be a gross mistake if you consider *Bhakti* as merely a state of emotionalism, while it is actually a thorough discipline and training of one's will and the mind, a sure means to intuitive realization of God Almighty through intense love and affection for Him. It is a means to thorough apprehension of the true knowledge of the Reality, beginning from the ordinary form of idol worship right upto the highest form of cosmic realization of your oneness with Him. You can achieve this by following the eleven fundamental factors which Sri Ramanuja had prescribed. They are *Abhyasa* or practice of continuous thinking of God. *Viveka* or discrimination, *Vimoka* or freedom from everything else and longing for God, Satyam or truthfulness, *Arjavam* or straightforwardness, *Kriya* or doing good to others, *Kalyana* or wishing well-being to all, *Daya* or compassion, Ahimsa or non-injury, *Dana* or charity and Anavasada or cheerfulness and optimism.

Abhyasa or practice is a sustained and persistent effort to achieve mastery over a certain thing. Through continued practice the Sadhaka tries to secure the steadiness of his mind, to restrain all its external *Vrittis*, thereby converging them upon his one object—the Lord. Through persistent Abhyasa he checks the outgoing tendencies of his mind and directs them inward, he constantly dwells and meditates upon the Lord.

Viveka or discrimination enables him to choose between the right and the wrong : to follow and to adhere to what is right, i. e., what should be done, and to abstain from what is wrong i. e., what should not be done. How does he discriminate between the right and the wrong ? That which elevates and takes him nearer to God--his Ideal--that which brings good, joy and peace, he considers as right and adheres to and acts in accordance with it. That which brings him depression, pain and restlessness, that which pricks his true conscience, that which drags him down from goodness and takes him away from God, he considers as wrong and abstains from it in toto and guards

himself against its influence. As regards his diet, he discriminates between the Sattvic food, i.e. what should be taken, and Rajasic or Tamasic food, i.e., what should not be taken. Thus he discriminates between the right and the wrong, follows the directions of the wise, respects their warnings and obeys their admonition and commandments. Thus he perseveres and strives to reach his goal, following the path of righteousness.

Vimoka is longing for God alone, renouncing everything else that does not accelerate his progress. Obviously, one has to renounce what is earthly if he wishes to attain what is eternal, permanent and infinite. The Sadhak has to renounce all his desires and cravings for the material objects; he has to renounce the evil Vrittis of the mind through introspection and right exertion. Only then he can develop true longing for God, only then can he proceed Godwards. You cannot drink two things at a time in the same cup. If you wish to progress Godwards, then, necessarily, you have to renounce all else that are not conducive to your progress. This is the secret. To want nothing is the greatest and most efficacious way to attain the keenest longing for God.

Satyam or truthfulness is surely the prime postulate in Sadhana. God is Truth: to realize Him, therefore, you must need become the very embodiment of Truth. You have to live the Truth; you should have to think of Truth alone, speak the truth alone and do, what is right and true to your conscience.

Arjavam is straightforwardness or honesty. There is no place for deceit crookedness or falsehood in the quest of God. God neither wants your riches nor your intellect, but he wants only a pure, truthful heart altogether shorn of deceit, shallowness and hypocrisy. There is nothing to hide from Him, for He is the all-knowing, all-pervading Spirit. Your heart must be as pure as the white snow and as clear as the crystal. Just as you cannot see a clear and correct reflection in a corrugated, dust-coated mirror, even so, if your heart is cobwebbed by selfish desires and dishonesty, and corrugated by hypocrisy and crookedness, you can hardly know the real nature of God. The Sadhak must cultivate a heart like that of a child.

Kriya or doing good to others comes next. As a true devotee, you should behold Him in all, for He is the manifest form in whatever you perceive. The Sadhak's foremost duty is to do good and serve others, irrespective of any distinction or personal consideration. Serving and helping those in distress open your eyes to the sorrows of human life. You begin to understand the painful nature of the worldly existence. The stony selfish heart learns to feel for others. Then compassion, mercy and love nurture in your heart. Your heart becomes purified and *Vairagya* dawns in you.

Kalyana or wishing well to others is another necessary qualification for the devotees. With a pure loving heart, you should pray to the Lord for the good and well being of others. First pray for others, for the peace and welfare of the world, and then for your elevation. You should not entertain any grudge or illfeeling towards your opponents, but you should wish for all that is good and auspicious. This is the true spirit of a devotee.

Daya or compassion comes next. God is love. He is all-merciful and compassion personified ; and as you seek to realise Him, you must needs become a veritable ocean of

mercy and love. You must cultivate a heart as broad as the infinite sky.

All the divine virtues that are necessary for one's evolution have their origin in Ahimsa or non-violence. Ahimsa is a life-giving force. Ill-will, hatred, anger and malice cannot stand before its mighty potency. It is a special attribute of the soul. Practice of *Ahimsa* culminates eventually in the realization of unity and oneness of life. It generates the feeling of universal brotherhood, and cosmic love.

Next is *Dana* or charity. "Charity covereth a multitude of sins", proclaimed Jesus Christ. Abundant, spontaneous charity with a pure heart for relieving the suffering of the distressed is a potent means to elevate the heart and to destroy its shallowness and impurities. You must have a large heart. The more you give, the more will come to you. This is the law of nature.

Anavasada is cheerfulness and hope. This is an essential virtue for a devotee. There is no room for depression in the spiritual path You must be optimistic, zealous and persevering There are many active forces that will oppose your progress and actually assail and pull you down. But you must not lose your hopes or be depressed. You have to brave the storm and proceed in spite of the difficulties and adverse conditions that try to cow you down, to push off from the path of Sadhana. With cheerfull perseverance and optimistic zeal, relying on the inner Self, you should proceed with *Sadhana*, and ultimately the success will be yours.

—*Sivananda Yoga Samhita*,
pp. 59-64.

7. SIVANANDA LITERATURE AND THE NATURE OF THE APPROACH TO THE DIVINE BY ACTS OF DEVOTION

ESSENCE OF BHAKTI YOGA :

THE Sivananda literature is ever on the increase and it has something perennial and interesting to communicate and to elevate. Everything that the Swami says is a step towards God-realisation and Self-knowledge.

Essence of Bhakti Yoga allows you to be initiated into the mysteries of God. The path is clearly given and it leads to knowledge, truth and immortality, and it is through devotion alone that God can be realised. Man's work on earth has to be the realisation of Truth and it can come through appreciation, understanding and sympathy. Man must have faith and prayer as his weapons. Faith will give him strength and determination. Prayer will give his whole life a new touch of sacredness and virtue. Faith is not to exclude reason ; indeed, it has to include it ; for faith alone, by itself, unaided by reason, will lead us nowhere. Prayer does not signify inaction and contemplation alone. Man has to live a life of constant prayer in the company of sacredness as if he were living in a temple, church or mosque. His prescription of faith and prayer is a clear call to a life of meditation, action and sacredness. He wants us to be aware of God. Try to see God everywhere, in all your thoughts, actions, dreams and emotional experiences. That way alone is the way to success in life.

The book is a treasure of genuine devotional emotions and aspirations, written by one who has loved God more than his own life, and who is finding Him in all mankind.

—Prof. B. S. Mathur
New State, Madras.

8. THE SYMBOLISM OF THE FLUTE, THE ESOTERIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SPORT OF DIVINE LOVE AND THE DEVOTEE'S EXPERIENCES

KRISHNA'S Flute is the symbol of freedom or Pranava. He has preached Prem through His Flute. He has created this world out of the Dhwani OMKARA that proceeds from His Flute. He stands on the right big toe. This signifies the Upanishadic utterance: "Ekameva Adwaitiyam Brahman —One without a second". He shows three curves while standing. This represents the three Gunas by which he has created this world. He gazes at Radha and puts the Prakriti in motion. He is the *primum mobile*. The lotus on which He stands, stands for the universe.

In the esoteric sense heart is the Brindawan. Mind is Radha. Gopis are the nerves and the Indriyas. Anahat sounds that proceed from the heart are the melodious songs that come out of Krishna's Flute. Sahasrara Chakra is the Param Dhama. Lord Krishna is Para Brahman. The five Koshas are the five fortresses. Pranas are the gatekeepers. The Shad-Chakras are the gates. Immortality is the Jumna. Crown of the head is Kadamba tree. Mind melts in Brahman. Radha is united with Krishna This is Ras Lila.

Radha asked Krishna: "O my Dear! Why do you love the Flute more than me? What virtuous action has it done so that it can remain in such a close contact with your lips? Kindly explain to me, my Lord, the secret of this. I am eager to hear." Sri Krishna said: "This Flute is very dear to Me. It has got some wonderful virtue. It has emptied off its egoism before I begin to play. It has made its inner hollow quite void and I can bring out any kind of tune, Raga or Ragini, to my pleasure and at my sweet will. If you also remove your egoism completely and make perfect self-surrender, then I shall love you also, in the same manner as I love this Flute."

This body also is the Flute of Lord Krishna in the macrocosm. If you can destroy your egoism and make total self-surrender, unreserved Atma-Nivedan to the Lord. He will play on this body-flute nicely and bring out melodious tunes. Your will, will become merged in His Will. He will work unhampered through your instruments, body, mind and Indriyas. You can rest very peacefully then without cares, worries and anxieties You can watch the play of the universe as a Sakshi. Then your Sadhana will go on by leaps and bounds, because the divine will or divine grace itself will work through you. You need not do any Sadhana at all; but, make the self-surrender from the core of your heart with all your being, *sarva bhavana*. Learn the lesson from the Flute and follow its ways. If you have done complete Saranagathi at the Lotus Feet of Lord Krishna you have already reached the realm of peace, the Kingdom of Immortality, the dominion of

eternal bliss and everlasting sunshine. You have found out a joy that never fades, a life that never decays nor dies. You have reached the other shore of fearlessness which is beyond darkness, doubt, grief, sorrow, pain and delusion.

The gist of the Rasa Lila is the essence of devotion, Parabhakti, or oneness, the merging of the Lover and the Beloved. The secret of Rasa Lila is that men or women while remaining in the world and doing all sorts of activities can develop Krishna-Prem and can realise Godhead at their very threshold. It teaches: "Give the mind to God, just as Radha did, and the hands to work. Sing. Dance in divine ecstasy. But forget Him not."

Even the Sufists have admiration and devotion for Radha and Krishna. Their philosophy is founded on Radha's Prem to Lord Krishna. They try to develop the same Bhav which Radha had towards Lord Krishna.

Every nerve, every atom, every cell, every tissue, every pore in the skin of the body of Radha vibrated the Name of Krishna. She could never forget Him even for one millionth part of a second. She never slept at night. She was singing Lord Krishna's Name throughout the night. She was a Gudakeshi, one who conquered sleep like Arjuna and Lakshmana.

A little Dhwani, melody, from the Flute of Krishna, at dead of night, would intoxicate her with Krishna-Prem and would bring her out into the dense forest to hear His sweet, heart-enthralling music of the Soul, the melody of Omkara.

No power on earth could stop her. She taught to the world the gist of self-surrender, the very core of the highest Bhakti or Atma-Nivedan Bhakti, the highest rung in the ladder of devotion which begins from the first step of Dasya Bhava or relation of master and servant and culminates in complete merging by total and perfect Saranagathi. The name Radha stands for Atma-Nivedan or offering of heart, soul, mind, and the whole being, *Sarvabhava*, at the Lotus-Feet of the Lord, just as the name Hanuman stands for the spirit of perfect and supreme service to the Lord.

—Swami Sivananda's
Practice of Bhakti Yoga, pp. 45-50.

1. SPIRITUAL experience is proportionate to spiritual fitness.

2. Within the temple of your own heart is the source of life, wisdom, bliss, peace and joy.

3. A devotee realises that God alone is and that there is nothing apart from Him or beyond Him.

4. Grace is in proportion to surrender. Greater the surrender, greater is the Grace.

5. The devotee experiences tremor of body, horripilation, choking of voice, thrills of joy, tearful eyes.

6. He experiences Viraha, extreme pain in forgetting God, in separation from God.

7. He whose life is rooted in the experience of the Supreme develops love for all beings and becomes free from hatred for any man.

8. The liberated Soul enters God in Moksha, just as the owner of a house enters his house.

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga-Vedanta Sutras, p. 21.

9. SIVANANDA THE CUSTODIAN OF GODLINESS AND WISDOM, EMPLOYS THE DRAMATIC POSSIBILITIES FOR A POPULARIZATION OF THE RELIGIOUS IDEAL OF LIVING FOR AND BY DIVINE LOVE

SAINT ALAVANDAR :

HERE is a very inspiring drama. The idea behind this interesting play is to initiate people of the world into mysteries of religion so as to allow them to live well in joy and comfort. People in general look upon religion as something serious and too abstruse for ordinary mortals. Swami Sivananda is doing immense service to humanity by writing popular books on religion. He has shown his grasp of the great truths of religion by dramatising them in a very simple language. He has mixed up with dramatic possibilities rare gems of wisdom and experience which, if followed, will lead us a great way towards God-realisation.

Saint Alavandar is a play about an intelligent boy-king. who defeats a great so-called Pundit of the Court in an argument and after ascending the throne as a reward to his victory, renounces it and the world along with it, because, under instruction and initiation from a saint, he starts in his endless quest of GOD. The Swami appears to overdo the picture. He wants all of us to give up the world. I say "appears" only because actually he wants us to live by GOD, perhaps in this world itself, as he is living and doing benefit to us from his "Ananda Kutir" in Himalayas.

One thing more I gather from this play is :

"Look beyond things ; their appearances are deceptive. You may find wisdom in altogether ignorant faces. A Sadhu, all ragged and uncouth, may be more learned than a University Don in spite of his apparently tremendous learning passing all comprehension.

—*The Commonweal,*
Calcutta.

10. SIVANANDA DESCRIBES THE DEMANDS AND THE ORDEALS OF DIVINE LOVE IN DEVELOPMENT

THE path of love demands endless patience and endurance. Eventually the devotee or lover comes out victorious in his battle through the grace of the Lord just as the first prize winner comes out triumphant in the obstacle race after passing through the drum, the ring, the slippery plank, etc. Even so the devotee has to pass through dry wilderness and cyclonic storms. He has to cross many fierce foaming streams. He has to ascend many precipitous peaks. He has to bear patiently severe persecutions. There is no room for lamentation or despair even if there are thousand and one difficulties. All will melt away like rent clouds or mist before the sun if the aspirant is sincere and persistent, if he has iron determination and fiery resolve and if he is regular in his prayers and worship.

How courageous the man acts who knows fencing when he is pelted by stones by several people on all sides ! He strikes off

each stone very dexterously and protects himself in a marvellous manner. Even so the devotee must be bold when he treads on the path of love. The Lord will appear only when the devotee has abandoned the iota or the least tinge or trace of egoism, when he has made complete self-surrender. He will be tested in a variety of ways. When Draupadi fully relied on the help of the Lord alone and when she totally placed herself at the feet of Sri Krishna, the Lord of Dwaraka ran to her rescue immediately and multiplied her cloth.

Mira had to undergo a fiery ordeal before she entered the portals of the region of supreme Love where her beloved Krishna reigns in supreme sp endour and glory. She underwent persecutions of all sorts. She walked bare-foot in the burning sand of Rajputana. She lived on alms. She slept on the ground. She served continuously. She never felt it through the grace of the Lord. She was always in rapturous delight.

Through the grace of the Lord the fire was converted into ice for Prahlad. Burning oil was like cool oil of sandal for him. Through the grace of Girdhari Gopal, cobra was converted into an idol of Krishna (Saligram garland of flowers) for Mira, poison was changed into nectar and a bed of sharp nails into a bed of roses. Madhava's grace makes a dumb man eloquent and a lame man ascend the highest peaks of Himalayas.

The devotee must crush his bones of his right leg into a fine powder and extract oil out of it and then burn a wick with this oil for six months continuously (Akhanda Deep). Then only he can obtain the love of the Lord. Then only he can freely enter the kingdom of God. Then only the Lord takes care of the rudder and rows the boat of his devotes safely to the other shore.

What is the divine love ? It is not the selfish love of worldly-minded persons to get something from another. It is not love to see the handsome face of a maiden or her piercing glances or her beautiful dress. It is not a temporary outburst of some vague emotion. The language of love is the language of tears. It can hardly be described in adequate terms. The fortunate devotee only experiences within himself this sweet love. The flame of divine love burns in the heart of the thirsting devotee day and night. He never cares for his food and water. He is emaciated. He pines away for the separation of the Lord. He does not sleep at night. He does not know when his Beloved will give Darshana. So he keeps vigil throughout the night. When the devotee has completely killed his egoism, when he has made perfect self-surrender without any reservation of secret desire for his gratification, when he pants and thirsts like the fish out of water for meeting his Beloved, when he feels the separation from the Lord intensely, when the Viraha Agni scorches him to the extreme degree, the Lord appears before the devotee. Then only the Lord wipes his tears; feeds him with his own hands and carries him on His shoulders.

There is no loss in total unreserved self-surrender. It is not at all a bad bargain. It is a mighty gain indeed. You will have to give your body, mind, soul and possessions unto Him. The Lord then gives Himself unto you. The whole wealth of the world belongs to you. Lord Himself becomes your own. You have purchased Him by showing your love unto Him. He is your slave now.

You will become one with the Lord, just as the sugar, when dissolved in water, becomes one with the water. What He wants is your whole heart fully charged with pure love. The devotee says, "I am Thine and Thou art mine also." Even if there is the slightest tinge of selfishness you cannot attain Him.

The lover who has developed supreme love is not a slave to forms, formalities and dogmas. He is not bound by the rules of the society. There is no outward show. There is no ringing of bells. He does not care for the sarcastic remarks of the world. His state is indescribable. He pours forth his love on his Beloved. The love is spontaneous. The flow of love is gushing in a continuous stream. There is no break. Sometime when he feels the acute pang of separation from his Beloved, he feels as if he is roasted in a hot pan over the furnace. Immediately the divine nectar dribbles. Then he feels as if he has taken a plunge in the cool water of the Ganges.

The lover cannot bear the separation of his Beloved even for a second. Every moment of separation is a pang of death for him. One second appears to him as one year. When there is separation, he thirsts and pants for His presence. His eyes become vacant, and his face becomes blank and there is burning in his heart. He gives up his food, drink and sleep. He is restless. He sheds profuse tears of love. He finds solace in tears. His thirst is quenched a bit. He nourishes the delicate and exquisite creeper of love through his tears. He has no thought save of his Beloved. The fountain of love within his heart is ever full. It never dries up. Love gushes out from the fountain within in continuous stream. It is a perennial current of Supreme Love. Nothing can obstruct its flow.

The path of love is doubtless beset with difficulties. But the devotee who is adamant in his resolve and fiery in his Sadhana and Vairagya, who has dedicated himself and his all to the Lord, and who remembers Him always, crosses over all difficuties quite easily. He gets the divine grace at every step, and at every stage. He always lives in God.

The Bhakta says 'I am Thine", the Vadanti says "I am He." The devotee who utters "I am Thine" eventually realises the significance of the formula "I am He." "Dasoham" culminates in "Sivoham" or "Soham" or "Gopaloham" when he develops Para Bhakti or Supreme Love. The fruit of love is Jnana. Lovebegins with two and ends in one.

O beloved Ram. Will you not develop a heart that bursts forth into tears of Joy at the name of the Lord ? Allow the waves of love to arise constantly in your heart. Feel the warmth of the Divine embrace. Bask in the deep sunshine of Divine Love. Taste the bliss of eternal love. Drink deep the nectar of divine love and be ever happy.

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan, pp. 45-50

11. SIVANANDA'S DISTINCTIVE SERVICES TO HUMANITY BY THE ADVOCACY OF THE METHODOLOGY OF BHAKTI AS THE EASIEST PROCESS OF GOD-REALIZATION

PRACTICE OF BHAKTI-YOGA :

LOVE is divine. It is the greatest power on earth. It is irresistible, The holy Swami preaches in this book the

gospel of Love. Bhakti-cult has been recognised as one of the easiest processes of Self-realisation in this Kali Yuga. The Swami has, therefore, done a distinct service to humanity by exposing the various secrets of Bhskti Rasa and by offering many practical hints and instructions on Bhakti Sadhana. Bhakti Sutras of Narada, one of the most authoritative books on Bhakti Yoga, has been given in original and very comprehensive commentaries and translations have been added. The book closes with a number of songs and life-sketches of devotees.

—*The Industry*
Calcutta.

12. THE REBELLIOUS FORCE OF THE RESIDUAL SENSE-THOUGHT POTENCIES AND THE COUNTER-MEASURES FOR RAPID SPIRITUAL GROWTH

THIS is the greatest of all obstacles. The mind refuses to leave completely the sensual pleasures. Through the force of Vairagya and meditation, the desires get suppressed for sometime. All on a sudden the mind thinks of sensual pleasures through the force of habit and memory. There arises mental disturbance. Concentration decreases. The mind moves outwards in sensual objects. In the Gita you will find: "O son of Kunti, the excited senses of even a wise man, though he be striving, impetuously carry away his mind. Such of the roving senses as the mind yieldeth to that hurries away the understanding, just as the gale hurries away a ship upon the waters"—Chapter 11-60, 67. "The objects of senses, but not the relish for them turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body; and even relish turneth away from him after the Supreme is seen."—Chapter 11-59.

Some desires lurk in the corners of the mind. Just as old dirt from the corners of the room comes out when you sweep, so also through the pressure of Yogic practices, these old lurking desires come out to the surface of the mind with redoubled force. The Sadhak should be very careful. He should be ever watching the mind vigilantly. He must nip the desires in the bud by developing his Vairagya, Viveka and increasing his period of Japa and meditation. He must observe Akhanda Mowna and do vigorous meditation and Pranayama. He should live on milk and fruits for forty days. He should observe fast on Ekadasi days. He should give up mixing with anybody completely. He should never come out of the room. He should plunge himself deep into the Sadhana. Kshaya means hidden Vasanas. This comes under the category of Vishayasakti. Worldly ambition of all sorts can be included under this head. Ambition makes the mind very restless. Man should have the one laudable ambition of getting Self-realization.

—Swami Sivananda's
Practice of Bhakti Yoga,
pp. 180-181.

* * *

WHEN the aspirant does intense Sadhana to obliterate the old Samskaras, they try to rebound upon him with vengeance and with re-doubled force. They take forms

and come before him as stumbling-blocks. The old Samskaras of hatred, enmity, jealousy, feelings of shame, respect, honour, fear, atc., assume grave forms. Samskaras are not imaginary nonentities. They turn into actualities when opportunities crop up. The aspirant should not be discouraged. They will lose their force after sometime and die by themselves. Just as the dying wick burns with intensity just before it gets extinguished, so also those old Samskaras show their teeth and force before they are eradicated. The aspirant should not get unnecessarily alarmed. He will have to increase the force of momentum of spiritual Samskaras by doing Japa; Dhyana; Swadhyaya, virtuous actions, Satsang, and cultivation of Sattwic virtues. These new Spiritual Samskaras will neutralise the old vicious Samskaras. He should be intend on his Sadhana. He should plunge himself into his spiritual practices. This is his Kartavya or duty.

—Swami Sivananda's
Practice of Bhakti-Yoga,
p. 210.

13. SIVANANDA THE KINDLY LIGHT ACTS AS A LAMP UNTO THE FEET OF THE LAY PUBLIC ALONG THE PATHS OF SPIRITUAL LOVE AND LIBERATION

AIDS TO GOD-REALIZATION :

IN this small pamphlet of about sixteen pages, Swami Sivananda gives in his usual terse and aphoristic manner, various lessons which will help the Sadhak to realise God. The book can be used as a pocket companion by all persons interested in God-realization.

—*The Federated India*
Madras.

EASY PATH TO GOD-REALIZATIN:

HERE is another guide-book for the laymen which shows the easy path to salvation. The saint makes practical suggestions to the worldly-minded people; explains to them what real happiness is and how it can be achieved. He not only shows the way bur leads the seeker by the hand to this noble path.

—*The Chetana*, Bombay.

14. THE REQUIREMENTS AND THE REWARDS OF SIVANANDA'S RELIGION OF LOVE

THERE is no virtue higher than love; there is no knowledge higher than love; there is no Dharma higher than love; there is no religion higher than love; because love is truth; love is God. This world has come out of love. This world exists in love and this world ultimately dissolves in love. God is an embodiment of love, In every inch of His creation. you can verily understand His love.

True religion does not consist in ritualistic observances, baths and pilgrimages but

in loving all. Cosmic love is all-embracing and all-inclusive. In pure love no one is shut out from its warm embrace. It is wide enough to include the humblest of us, from the tiny ant to the mighty elephant, from the condemned prisoner to the mighty emperor, from the worst scoundrel to the reputed saint on the surface of this earth. It is hatred that separates man from man, nation from nation and country from country. It is pride and egoism that divide a man from another man. Hatred, pride, egoism are mental creations. They are the products of ignorance only. They cannot stand before pure love. Just as darkness is dispelled by the penetrating rays of the burning sun, so also jealousy, hatred and egoism are dispelled by the rays of Divine Prem.

It is easy to talk of universal love, But when you come to the practical field, you obviously show signs of failure. If anybody talks ill of you and uses harsh words, at once you are thrown out of balance. You get irritated and show angry face and pay him in the same coin. Where is universal love ? You do not like to part with your possessions when you see people in distress. A man who is struggling to develop cosmic love and realise Him through love cannot keep anything for himself more than he actually needs for keeping the life going. He will sacrifice even this little to serve a needy one and undergo privation and suffering willingly with much pleasure. He will rejoice that God has given him a rare opportunity to serve Him. People talk of universal love but are very niggardly in action. They show only lip-sympathy and lip-love. This is absolutely hypocrisy. Those who have developed pure, cosmic love are very very rare in this world. But those who talk of universal love are plenty. He who tries to develop universal love should try to possess various Sattwic virtues such as Kshama, patience perseverance; tolerance, generosity, straightforwardness, mercy, truthfulness; Ahimsa, Brahmacharya. Nirabhimanata, etc. He should serve humanity untiringly with a disinterested, selfless spirit for many years. He has to kill his little self ruthlessly. He must bear calmly insults and injuries. Then only there is the prospect of cultivating cosmic love. Otherwise it is all vain and flowery talk and idle-gossiping only. It is sugar in paper or tiger in the carpet.

Pure divine love consciously felt and spontaneously directed towards all beings including animals and birds is indeed the direct result of one's vision or realisation of the Supreme Being. Let me repeat here the words of Bhagawan Sri Krishna : "He who seeth me everywhere and seeth everything in Me, of him I never lose hold and he shall never lose hold of Me". Ch. VI 30. "The self harmonised by Yoga, seeth the Self abiding in all beings, all beings in the Self ; everywhere he seeth same" Ch. VI 29.

How can that Yogi of pure love who has this grand vision of cosmic consciousness hate another, abuse another and show contempt and anger towards another ? He is dear to God. That is the reason why Lord Krishna says : "He who beareth no ill-will to any being, friendly and compassionate, without attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain and forgiving, he, My devotee, is dear to Me" Ch. XII 14.

The saints, seers and prophets of the world have spoken of love as the end and

aim or goal of life. The Rasa Leela of Sri Krishna is full of Prem and divine mysteries. The stripping of clothes of Gopis means the destruction of egoism. Lord Krishna has preached love through His flute. Lord Buddha was an ocean of love. He gave up his body to appease the hunger of a cub of a tiger. Raja Sibi gave from his own breast an equivalent weight of the pigeon's flesh to satisfy the appetite of the hawk. What a noble soul ! Lord Rama lived a life of love and showed love in every inch of his activity. My dear children of Love, draw inspiration from their teachings. Tread the path of love, commune with God and reach the Eternal abode of love. This is your highest duty. You have taken this body to achieve Love which alone is the goal of life.

Dear brothers, if you wish to attain perfection, if you wish to enjoy infinite peace and bliss, if you wish to become immortal, develop pure divine love, cultivate universal love by serving and loving all, for love alone will bring you liberation, love alone can carry you to the other shore of bliss and immortality, the shore which is beyond all grief and pain and sorrow.

Purify your thoughts, speech and action in the fire of love. Bathe and plunge deep in the sacred water of love. Taste the honey of love and become an embodiment of love (Prema Vigraha or Prema Murti).

May the divine flame of love grow brighter in you all !

May we all feel universal brotherhood and cultivate universal love !

May we all recognise God in all beings and see God in all faces !

—Swami Sivananda's
Practice of Bhakti Yoga,

15. SIVANANDA PRESENTS THE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND, AND TRACES THE GROWTH, OF THE ATTITUDE OF ADORATION IN AN ASPIRANT THAT BEGINS WITH IDOL-WORSHIP AND FINDS ITS CULMINATION IN FINAL DIVINE REALIZATION

THE mind is disciplined in the beginning by fixing it on a concrete object or symbol. When it is rendered steady and subtle, it can be fixed later on an abstract idea such as "Aham Brahma Asmi." The devotee superimposes on the concrete idol, the Lord and His attributes. He does Shodasopachar for the idol, the sixteen kinds of paying respects or service to the Lord such as Padyam (water for washing the feet), Arghyam, Asana (seat), Snana (bathing), offering clothes, applying sandal paste, offering flowers (Archan,) burning incense, waving of lights and camphor, Maha Naivedyam etc. The wandering mind is fixed now in this form of worship. The aspirant gradually feels the nearness of the Lord. He attains purity of heart and slowly annihilates his egoism.

He who has done Pooja with flowers and other articles of worship for some time can take to mental worship. In mental Pooja

the devotee offers mentally all offerings to the Lord. This is advanced form of worship. The devotee says unto the Lord, "O Lord ! I am Thine. All is Thine. Thy will be done. Thou art everything. Thou doest everything. Thou art just. I am instrument in Thy hands. I am nothing. I can do nothing. I have nothing and thus he destroys his egoism, and does self-surrender to the Lord.

Even in worshipping a small idol he has to repeat the Purusha Sukta and to think of the Virat Purusha with countless heads, countless eyes, countless hands who extends beyond the universe also and of the Lord or Atma who dwells in the hearts of all beings.

The aspirant gradua y begins to feel that the Lord he worships is in the idol, in the hearts of all creatures, and in all the names and forms of this universe. He begins to feel His presence everywhere.

He repeats the Mantra of the Lord during worship and touches his heart, his head, tuft of hair, arms and hands. There is Chaitanya in every letter of the Mantra. Through repetition of the Mantra and touching the parts of the body with repetition of the parts of the Mantra the aspirant is gradually divinised. There is spiritual awakening. Spiritual currents are generated. Tamas and Rajas are destroyed. He is filled with pure Sattva. He becomes identical with the object of worship. He attains the same world of, or proximity with, or the same form of, or absorption into the Lord.

For a Bhakta or sage there is no such thing as Jada or insentient matter. Everything is Vasudeva or Chaitanya—Vasudeva Sarvamiti. The devotee beholds actually the Lord in the idol. Natsi Mehta was put to the test by a Raja. The Raja said, "O Narsi ! if you are a sincere devotee of Lord Krishna, if as you say the idol is Lord Krishna himself, let this idol move." According to the prayer of Narsi Mehta the idol moved. The sacred bull Nandi before Siva's idol took the food offered by Tulsidas. The Murti played with Mira Bai. It was full of life and Chaitanya for her.

How sublime is Hindu philosophy and Hindu mode of worship ! It does not stop or end with worship of idol alone. The Sadhak is taken step by step to higher stages of devotion and Samadhi or communion through the worship of the idol. Though he worships the idol, he has to keep before his mental eye the all-pervading Lord. He has to feel His presence in his heart and all objects also. The ways and rules of worship, Pooja Vidhi and the secrets of worship that are described in the Hindu scriptures are scientifically accurate and highly rational. It is only ignorant people who have not studied the scriptures, who have not associated with the devotees and great souls vilify worship of idols or Murtis.

The aspirant who worships the idol in the beginning, beholds the Lord everywhere and develops Para Bhakti. From Vidhi Bhakti he passes on to Ragatmika Bhakti or Prema Bhakti. He beholds the whole world as the Lord. The ideas of good and bad, right and wrong, rogue etc., vanish. He sees the Lord in a rogue, dacoit, cobra, scorpion, ant, dog, tree, log of wood, block of stone, sun, moon, stars, fire, water, earth etc. His vision or experience baffles description. Glory to such exalted Bhaktas who are veritable Gods on earth, who live to

lift others from the quagmire of Samsara and save them from the clutches of death !

Tulsidas realised the all-pervading essence. He had cosmic consciousness. He communed with the all-pervading formless Lord. And yet his passion for Lord Rama with bow in his hand did not vanish. When he had been to Brindavan and saw the Murty of Lord Krishna with flute in His hands, he said, "I will not bow my head to this form." At once Lord Krishna's form assumed the form of Lord Rama. Then only he bowed his head. Tukaram also had the same cosmic experience as that of Tulsidas. He sings in his Abhanga, "I see my Lord all-pervading, just as sweetness pervades the sugar cane", and yet he always speaks of his Lord Vittala of Pandharpur with His hands on the hips. Mira also realised her identity with the all-pervading Krishna and yet she was not tired of repeating again and again, "My Giridhar Nagar."

Madhusudana Swami, who had Advaitic realisation, who beheld oneness of the Self, who had Advaitic Bhav was intensely attached to the form of Lord Krishna with flute in His hands. From the above facts we can clearly infer that one can realise God through worship of Murty or idol, that the worship of the Lord in Saguna form is a great aid for Vedantic realisation also and for the realisation of the Lord in His all-pervading formless aspect and that the worship of the Murty is very essential for the purpose of concentration and meditation in the beginning and that such a worship is not in any way a hindrance to the attainment of God-consciousness and those who vehemently attack Murty Pooja are groping in extreme darkness and ignorance and they have no real knowledge of Pooja and worship and that they enter into unnecessary, vain debates and discussion against Murty Pooja to show that they are learned persons and that they have not done any real Sadhana at all. They are persons who have made idle talking and tall talk as their habit and profession. They have ruined themselves. They have unsettled the minds of countless persons and ruined them also. The whole world worship symbols and Murtis only in some form or other. When one advances in meditation the form melts in the formless and he becomes one with the formless essence.

Empty vessels only make such sound. A practical man who does meditation and worship, who is full of knowledge and real devotion keeps always silence. He influences and teaches others through silence. He only knows whether a Murty is necessary in the beginning for concentration or not.

However intellectual one may be, he cannot concentrate without the help of some symbol in the beginning. An intellectual and learned person on account of his pride and vanity only says, "I do not like a Murty. I do not wish to concentrate on a form." He cannot concentrate on the formless one. He thinks that people will laugh at him when they come to know that he is meditating on a form. He never does any meditation on the formless one. He simply talks and argues and poses. He wastes his life in unnecessary discussions only. An ounce of practice is better than tons of theories. Intellect is a hindrance in the vast majority of intellectual persons. They say that the existence of Brahman is a guess work, Samadhi is a bluff of the mind and Self-realisation is an imagination of the Vedantins. Deluded souls !

They are steeped in ignorance. They are carried away by their secular knowledge which is mere husk when compared to the knowledge of the Self. There is no hope of salvation for such people. First their wrong Samskaras should be flushed by good Samskaras through Sat-sang. Then only they will realise their mistakes. May the Lord bestow on them clear understanding and thirsting for real knowledge !

—Swami Sivananda's
Bhakti and Sankirtan,
pp. 167-172.

16. SIVANANDA AND THE MAIN MOVEMENT OF SPIRITUALIZATION IN INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY THAT TAKES ITS PROGRESSIONS BY THE LOVE OF THE DIVINE AS THE MOTHER

ANANDA LAHARI:

THE celebrated work of Sri Sankaracharya, *Ananda Lahri* has been a source of permanent religious and spiritual inspiration to many. The work here published with a lucid commentary by Swami Sivananda and a rendering into English by Boris Sacharow, is the *fourth* edition. The *Yantra*, the mystical symbol, the aspect of Abracadabra and talismanic methodology of meditation, are all described in detail in respect of each stanza in an illuminating manner for the benefit of worshippers and *Sadhakas*.

Though ignorant critics, Eastern and European, have held that the cult of Devi-worship and worship of other mystic symbols like *Sri Chakra* is only another form of deification or apotheosis of *sex-instinct* for which the orient is supposed to be notorious the profound truth has been universally recognised that all sex-relations stand supremely sublimated in mother-love, which is devoid of all carnal manifestations. It is one of the main and *master-absurdities* of Freudian psychology that it can never understand any relationship with women, *unless* it is carnally tinged, thus, for instance Oedipus complex, Electra complex and so forth. Study of ANANDA LAHARI would demonstrate the truth that Indian psychology has spiritualised and sublimated sex-instinct in mother-cult. The work will be welcomed by all Devi-worshippers.

—Dr. R. Nagaraja Sharma,
M.A., Ph. D., D. Litt.,
Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

17. SIVANANDA'S PSYCHOLOGY OF, AND SOUND DISCIPLINES FOR, THE PSEUDO-PARA-BHAKTA

AN ignorant neophyte in the path of devotion says, "I practise Para-Bhakti. There is no need for me to go to the temples and worship idols. What is there in worshippinig idols, offering flowers and waving lights ?" He is labouring under a serious delusion. This is the state of those who proceed in the spiritual path without the advice or aid of

the spiritual preceptor. They do whatever they like. They follow the promptings of the lower mind. They do not make any spiritual progress. They are also like the Pseudo-Vedantic Students.

It is very difficult to develop Bhakti. Bhakti Yoga is as much difficult as Vedanta or Jnana Yoga. The internal enemies, *viz.*, lust, greed, anger, hatred, egoism and jealousy are very powerful. They stand in the way of cultivating devotion.

The aspirant should pass through the various initial stages or Bhumikas of Bhakti Yoga, just as the student should go through Matriculation, F.A. and B.A. before he sits in the M.A. Class.

He should practise Chariyai and Kriyai to begin with. He should visit temples and do Puja. He should make garlands of flowers for the Lord. He should sweep the floor of the temple. He should bring water for Abhisheka. He should clean the lights. He should put lights. He should ring the bells. All these should be done with faith, devotion and intense Bhava. He should prostrate again and again before the Deity. He should do Parikrama (perambulation) round the temple.

Some aspirants think that it is beneath their dignity to ring bells, clean lights bring water and make garland of flowers. They think that it is the work of a menial servant.

Such aspirants cannot dream of developing Bhakti even in crores of births. They have not understood the alpha, beta of Bhakti-Yoga.

Study the lives of sixty-three Nayanars, the Tamil Saints of Southern India. They were illiterate but they had intense and unswerving devotion to the Lord. They practised day-in, day-out Chariyai, Kriyai or the preliminary purificatory services in the temple. They attained Siva-Sayujya through these practices alone.

It is very difficult to reach the stage of Para-Bhaki. Para-Bhakti and Jnana are one. Para-Bhakti is the highest Bhakti. It comes through total, unreserved, ungrudging self-surrender, Mira, Nama Dev Gouranga, Ekanath had this Bhakti.

If the aspirant falsely and foolishly imagines that he has attained the highest state of Para-Bhakti and neglects to practise Chariyai and Kriyai his little devotion also will evaporate quickly. He will soon fall into the deep abyss of worldliness or Maya.

Be humble and simple. Think that you are only a very small student in the Bhakti Yoga Class. Strengthen your aspiration. Be vigilant. Be in the company of devotees and protect yourself from temptations or worldly influences. Be ever vigilant. Then only you can grow in Bhakti. Then only the Divine grace will descend.

False Tushti or contentment is a serious obstacle in the spiritual path. Maya works in a variety of ways. It assumes various forms and deludes the aspirant, in a variety of ways. When the aspirant has not reached even to the second Bhumika of Bhakti, he falsely thinks that he is in the highest stage of Para-Bhakti. This is Maya. He gives up Sadhana. Further progress is stopped by such false imagination. If he lives under a Guru his defects will be pointed out, but, he does not want to do so. He has false idea of independence. His arrogance, imperative, self-assertive nature, Self-sufficiency, vanity

act as intoxicants, veils and stumbling blocks. He himself does not know what he is really doing, what his real position is.

He who has reached the stage of Para-Bhakti will be absolutely fearless, desireless angerless, I-less, mine-less. He will be extremely humble. He will have no attachment for anything. He will be enjoying all Divine Aiswarya. He will be in the possession of all virtues enumerated in the 12th Chapter of Gita. He will be above body consciousness. If he does not posses all these marks or signs of a Bhagawata, if he simply says "I am a Para Bhakta", do not believe him : He is a Mithyachari or hypocrite. Have no value for his words. People shed false tears through habitual lachrymal irritation. These are not the sincere, tear-drops of Prem of a devotee. Do not mistake emotion for devotion. Be on the alert.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Life, Vol. VIII, No. 6.

18. THE LURE OF THE DIVINE LOVE AND LIFE : THE TRIALS ITS PURSUIT INVOLVES AND THE ENDLESS STRENGTH THE DIVINE FAITH YIELDS

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA :

THE Swamiji would not satisfy what he calls the idle curiosity of the reader ; nor would he reveal his Tapasya and Sadhana, except to those who desire these. No mention therefore of these is to be found in the autobiography. Swamiji believes that when there is the irrestible Divine call, everyone will be drawn to it. But there is the deep faith in God pervading the entire book. Whether in the Malayas, in dense forest, or on the top of a hill, he continued to fully believe in God and being his only helper, defender and guide. Not for a moment even after starving for days or in high temperature did that faith ever abandon him. If an incident is found mentioned it is merely to put a sermon about the need for complete surrender to the Lord. The various instructions emanating from the Swami find full support in the incidents of his life. The autobiography is a valuable addition to his philosophy elucidated through personal incidents, and is bound to be welcomed to an expanding circle of his devotees all over the world.

—A. B. N. Sinha,
Searchlight,
Patna.

19. SIVANANDA'S EXHAUSTIVE STUDIES IN THE RADICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATIONS RESULTING FROM THE REPETITION OF THE RAMA MANTRA

THE word Rama signifies that Supreme Reality in whose contemplation the sages spend their lives in everlasting bliss.

—Ramatapani Upanishad.

"Ram Nam" is a blessing which millions of Hindus have treasured in their hearts since ages past. It is the supreme purifier of the mind of man, the bestower of perennial joy, the giver of peace and the key to the gate of Immortality.

The *Ramarahasyopanishad* says that the words "Ra" and "Ma" are the essence of the two most important Mantras, Ashtakshara and Panchakshara, which, when the words "Ra" and "Ma" are removed from them respectively, not only lose their primary meaning but give the opposite meaning.

When "Ram Nam" is chanted, a significant change takes place in the entire organism of the person chanting it. There is a two-fold e fect produced by the utterance of the Divine Name.

The Mantra-Shakti or the power generated by juxtaposition of the letters of the Mantra and by the utterance of the same, the whole nervous system of the chanter of the Mantra is set in vibration—a vibration which brings about rhythm, harmony and equilibrium in it. When the nervous system is in such a harmonised state the breath, too, flows rhythmically and the mind rests in a state of tranquillity. It is in this peaceful state of the mind that the divine Consciousness is reflected and the supernal joy of Eternal is experienced.

The idea of the Divine Being generated in the mind at the time of the repetition of the Name, gives a direct fillip to the mind in its attempt to unite itself with the Divine Being. The nervous system is in a state of perfect harmony when the vibration produced by the chanting of the Divine Name pervades it with a force of integration. The Divine Name is not merely a sound ; it is a force which can overcome all the destructive forces in the human system and render it pure and make it fit for the experience of Satva, the highly transparent medium through which the Immortal Being is reflected.

"Ram Nam", like the Ashtakshara or the Dwadasakshara Mantras, is a powerful aid in destroying the animal passions in man. Passions are agitative forces, and "Ram Nam" is a tranquil force. When one adheres to "Ram Nam" with exclusive and genuine devotion, it becomes the destroyer of all pains.

But one's faith must not be divided between two or more Mantras. One should stick to "Ram Nam" with full confidence in it. The more the faith and concentration, the quicker does the Lord's Name destroy the evils in man. The votary of Rama prays :

"I prostrate myself, again and again, before Sri Rama, the Saviour from all calamities, the Giver of all prosperity, the Delight of the world."

It bestows on one the beatitude of absolute independence or Kaivalya.

But "Ram Nam" should not be used for the sake of obtaining worldly ends. "Ram Nam" is the saviour of man from the afflictions of mortality itself. It raises man from all penury and exalts him to the status of an undaunted sovereign over himself. Why do you use a gun to destroy a mosquito ? "Ram Nam" can cure the disease of Samsara itself; what to speak of lesser wants and turmoils ? Therefore, use "Ram Nam" as a Moksha Mantra and not as a servant to fetch you

the glittering glass-pieces shining in the form of the objects of the world.

"Ram Nam" is the guardian in your body, protecting you at all times against all attacks, preserving your purity and virtue, and warding off the inimical urges of desire, passion and anger.

The repetition of the Mantra should be done with Bhava or deep feeling. A tremendous effect is produced when *Namoccharana* (repetition of the name) is attended with a consciousness of the relation of the *Namoccharak* (chanter) to the deity of the name. This, however, does not mean that a mechanical repetition of the Mantra without feeling is absolutely devoid of all beneficial results. The Name is potent enough to cause a change in the psychological and the physical being of man even when it is mechnically repeated.

"Ram Nam" is a Mantra formed by significant letters, which by the very fact of their being uttered produce a result, even if this result may not be directly connected with the consciousness of the chanter of the Mantra.

There is a very peculiar process of physical and psychical transformation taking place at the time when the Mantra is repeated. Unconscious and mechanical repetition produces no direct psychical change, but causes biological changes through the nervous system which is immediately influenced by the vibrations set up by the chanting of the Mantra, and these biological changes indirectly bring about psychological changes ; for these two natures in man are related to each other as effect and cause, repsectively and the effects are so intimately related to their causes that change in the effects will be felt by the causes, and vice versa.

The devotee should not test the Lord by the chanting of His Name. For example, one should not use the Name as an excuse for the deliberate perpetration of evil acts. The Name, can overcome the effects of even such acts, but the implications of such acts would be that the devotee who uses the Name thus has not genuine aspiration and devotion to the Lord, and his mind is still being attracted to things other than those that pertain to the Lord and to His Way. Hence the condition for chanting the Divine Name is well laid out :

"He who is humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, who does not crave for respect, but respects others, is the one fit to repeat the name of Hari."

God helps those who help themselves. The best possible effort that one is capable of exercising under the intellectual circumstances provided by God should be put forth, and only beyond this effort should one seek the grace of God. Idleness is not self-surrender. Surrender of the self to God becomes complete only when the individual consciousness is flooded over by love for the Divine. God's grace descends when the efforts exercised are found to be inadequate in the realisation of God.

"Ram Nam" has a transforming effect not only on the psychological but also the biological personality. Even the physical ailments can be overcome by the chanting of the Divine Name. "Ram Nam" is unfailing in its action, infallible in its operation. "Ram Nam", properly understood, is the

same as Omkara, the symbol of the Absolute, and Rama to the true devotee is the Absolute itself. Sri Rama is all-pervading. He is in the heart of all beings as the Antaryamin. What a power and glory should His Name possess! Even ordinary names of things of the world have the power of stimulating a corresponding mode of consciousness in man. How much more powerful should the Name of God be !

Saint Tulsidas says : "The Name is even superior to the Lord, because the Aguna and Saguna aspects of Brahman are tasted and realised by the power of the Name. Rama delivered a single woman, Ahalya, while His Name has purified crores of wicked people ! Rama gave salvation to two of his faithful servants, Jatayu and Sabari, but His Name has been the saviour of countless wicked persons. Blessed is the son and blessed are his parents who remember Sri Rama in whatsoever way it may be. Blessed is even the Chandala who repeats the Name of Rama day and night. What is the use of high birth to one who does not repeat "Ram Nam !"

What a mighty power is latent in "Ram Nam" ! Only those who are endowed with devotion know it. The scientists now declare that sound vibrations have such a tremendous force that they can direct this power to silk fabrics and clean them of all dirt more thoroughly than a washer man can.

The moment you utter the word Rama, the form of the Lord is aroused in your consciousness. So the advanced devotees say that the Divine Name is the exclusive support of those afflicted by the tribulations of the Samsara.

—Swami Sivananda's
article published in
Bhavan's Journal,
Bombay.

CHAPTER NINE

THE DOMINANT SPIRITUAL TRENDS OF SIVANANDA'S AESTHETICAL THESES IN THE FIELD OF FINE ARTS

SIVANANDA AND THE INDIAN ART

—When in the moments of contemplative calmness and intensity, the creative urge in the artist is aroused to full activity, and given a free reign, it stimulates into function the intuitive forces, involves disciplines comparable in their rigour to those of Yoga, implies an experience spiritual in nature and aesthetic in effect, contacts such images of beauty that are the ideations and determinate aspects of the indeterminable infinity of the Beautiful, raises such structures or art-forms in stone or sound, in line and colour, in word or life, which elude, once for all, the all-effacing hand of time, and exert varied inspirational and cultural impress upon the generations of mankind.—

Transcendental in aim, spiritual in motive, contemplative in expression, sublimating in its immediate effects, and fraught with profound suggestions and a high illumination for the discerning intelligence, Indian art stands unchallenged and supreme in the galleries and the auditoriums of the world, not so particularly in those specific excellences to which the ancient Grecian and modern European arts lay a proud claim, but primarily in its essential spirit, features and characteristics, in the background of the loftiest intuitional and religious experiences it commands, and in the unique distinction of having evolved in the aesthetic environment, an independent technique of envisioning, approaching, experiencing and expressing the several nuances of the Divine as the absolute Beauty and the absolute Delight. Whether it is the architectural magnificence of the temple at Kalahasti, or a sculptured figure of Nataraja, or a fresco painting in the Ellora caves, or a poetic structure evoked either by a Vedic Seer or the creative mind of Shankara, or the songs of Tyagaraja wrapt in the enthralling forms of melodic sound, we are moved to a wonder at, and an admiration of, the genius of Indian art as the crown and culmination of the heights of spiritual possibilities to which art anywhere in the world, can justly hope to rise to, as the result of revelations received in states of the spiritual consciousness raised by the higher forms of Yoga-Sadhana and rarefied by a distinctive type of spiritual askesis.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE DOMINANT SPIRITUAL TRENDS OF SIVANANDA'S AESTHETICAL THESES IN THE FIELD OF FINE ARTS

1. THE ART OF INDIAN MUSIC—ITS ORIGINS, ITS DEVELOPMENT, ITS ARCHITECTONICS AND ITS INTIMATE RELATION TO TRANSCENDENTAL REALIZATION

MUSIC AND THE OTHER ARTS

NOT merely the magical spell it wields, the widest universality it claims, the subtleties that characterise its melodious manifestations, but several other unique features, all its own, distinguish, dignify and exalt the art of music over and above all other arts. Painting, Sculpture, Literature and all other avenues of human emotional expression have the advantage of form of some kind, of being able to appeal to the human mind through the eye, a more satisfactory sense than the ear, and of comparative stability of existence of duration. The forms can be seen, kept steady for constant inspection and even corrected over and over again, if need be. But Music has no facility of this sort, and originating as it does, as invisible sound, lingering in the air for but the barest fraction of a moment, it disappears into ether, leaving not a tangible trace behind for verification even, let alone for correction. In its effects and influence on the human mind, however, it is more universal than others : even the grossest forms of the other arts can be neither enjoyed nor appreciated by any one who has not had some preparation or training in these respective arts and their functioning principles. But Music is for all ; from inanimate objects to consciousness-transfigured Yogi, every bit of creation is subject to its irresistible sway, in some measure or the other, to a smaller or greater extent ; and if there is any agency under the sun which can make Man, with all his conflict of feelings and passions and with sorrow, disease and death dogging him at every step, forget all of them for at least a blissful moment of unalloyed pleasure, it is music and music alone. That this form of art happens to be also a delectable medium for getting in tune with the Infinite is one of the favours bestowed on Mankind by a merciful providence.

THE INDIAN MUSIC : ITS DIFFERENTIA

Apart from its aesthetic and artistic value, this wonderful art of music had always held for the Indian mind, a clarion call to spiritual development, and had been widely cultivated and had attained a high level of perfection in India, at least some three thousand years ago. It was in fact

one of the unmistakable indications to us of the high state of civilization which the people of the land had reached even in those early times. What distinguished Indian Music, however, from its prototypes in other climes was its outlook and tendency : it was never regarded in India as a mere lay art, as a mere system of pleasing the sensuous part of man. It was always held to be but an extension and outward symbolization of the Omnipresent Pranava Sound —OM—and utilised only for purposes of God attainment—a feature it has retained to the present-day, as will be evident from the fact that, upto the end of the last century, the subject of musical compositions has rarely been anything but God and His glories.

MUSIC : CARNATIC AND HINDUSTANI

The elaborate system of musical practice and expression developed along these lines was originally one and the same throughout the vast land and had a supreme unity of nature and purpose. From the early eras of the Christian century, however, the northern part of the peninsula came to be coloured by the impact of Arabic, Persian and Moghul civilizations. As a result, it began to show increasingly certain natural and inevitable modifications in practice and came gradually, in course of time, to be labelled the northern or Hindustani Music. The South, which was protected from such onsets by its geographical position, escaped from coming under the sway of these influences ; and the original system accordingly was preserved there in a purer condition and is flourishing even today under the appellation, Carnatic Music. But it is well-known that both these systems are of the same origin and substance, though, of course, considerable variations have manifested themselves owing to growing differences in the styles of expression.

THE BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL THEORY

Even as it is the case with other arts, the art of Indian Music too was for a long time confined to its practical and operative or expressive aspect. As soon as practice reached a certain height of development and gathered growth and variety, theoretical expositions of the subject began to appear. These were, of course something in the nature of a necessity, if the practical secrets of the art, garnered by centuries of experience, were to be preserved from oblivion and corruption. These treatises on Music were accordingly a record of the practices up to their respective dates and functioned naturally as a grammar of rules on that basis for subsequent guidance. Narada, Bharata, Sarangadeva, Purandaradasa, Venkatamaki and a host of others form a galaxy of musician-grammarians who earned immortal names for themselves by leaving to posterity rich treasure-troves of musical knowledge. In the treatises left by them we have clear and accurate expositions of the principles governing musical practice—the differentia and genius of the various *Ragas* and *Melas*, the nature and operation of the distinctive *Gamakas* and other important points calculated to give a practitioner a firm and comprehensive grasp of his chosen field. These therefore, served both as a record of the achivements up to their time in the theory and practice of Indian Music as well as a stimulant to further research and progress.

THE KEY-STONE OF MUSICAL ARCHITECTONICS

But then, the growth of any form of art is never appreciably dependent on the rules and grammars on the subject but is more the result of uninterrupted and rich tradition in the practice of the art. The art of music is no exception to the rule. Speaking generally, we find that what kept Carnatic Music on such a high level of excellence are not the grammatical rules and regulations laid down from time to time but the careful preservation and fostering of the rich heritage of practice by generation after generation through the Gurukula system of musical education. There is no need to dilate on this, as everyone in India is familiar with the phenomenon directly or by hearsay. But a special factor that worked in the same direction and contributed to the same result deserves mention here. It is a fact admitted on all hands that the special feature and glory of Carnatic Music is its Raga system and that for rendering a Raga with verse and truth of expression wide "hearing", constant practice, considerable experience, rich imagination, and flair for artistic effects are the *sine-qua-non*. This is only to say that the Raga is the keystone of musical architechtonics and that on the preservation of its purity depends the well-being of the whole molodic system. The invention of a device for mapping out the all-important Ragas and the handling of the device with brilliant efficiency is the special factor adverted to above. The reference of course, is to the musical form of composition known as the Kirtan or Kriti. It is impossible to imagine a more suitable or satisfactory method for fixing the contour and trends of a Raga and making a blue-print of it, so to say, leaving at the same time plenty of scope for imaginative handling of the same. What better medium can be conceived of for preserving the outlines of the special ambulations of each particular Raga than a composite picture of it, which the Kriti is ? Even today, you will find eminent professors engaged in the ticklish task of laying down the grammar of Rasa, sedulously investigating all the Kritis in that Raga as sung by various authoritative exponents in the past and clinching the issues only after such exhaustive comparisons. It must also be a matter of common experience that beginners in music who want to distinguish and recognise Ragas like Ananda Bhairavi, Yadukula Kamboji, Nilambari, etc., are always advised by knowledgeable persons to take one or two Kritis in those Ragas as infallible patterns to guide them to the spirit of the Ragas. This, again is also why great pioneers who design a new Raga (for the first time) invariably take the precaution of composing one or more Kirtans in that Raga, laying there by down, as it were the four corners of the new Raga for the guidance of others.

THE SHEET-ANCHOR OF CARNATIC MUSIC

This Kriti form of composition, so reliable an indicator of Raga tedencies and the sheet anchor of Carnatic music, has been handled by numberless composers from the time of its invention by Thalappakkam Chinnayya in the fifteenth century A.D. Many of them have been outstanding genuises and left behind them a rich legacy of soul-stirring Kirtans. But it is sad to have to record also that the greater portion of this has been allowed to be lost. Lacking the means of permanent recording and easy

duplication, few of them used to keep any systematic records or copies of their composition pieces. A few notes jotted down now and then by a composer, excerpts made from the originals by admiring pupils—these form the extent of the records that have come down to us ! The result was that, when a particular singer who had sole custody of some Kirtans shuffled off his mortal coil, those Kirtans promptly joined him where he was : They were lost to posterity once for all ! The magnitude of the loss sustained in this way and by accidents is simply staggering.

A SACRED DUTY FOR MUSICAL ORGANISATIONS

A few instances will serve to give us an idea of the above referred to fact. Tradition has it that Purandara Dasa, entitled to be called, so far as an individual can be so called, the Founder of the Carnatic Music because of his abundant and meritorious services to it, composed as many as 5,00,000 Kritis; today the most diligent search would probably fail to unearth more than 500 ! Kshetragna, it is believed, left over 4,000 of his inimitable Padas. We can call ourselves lucky if we can lay our hands on even 200 (and even these are on the eve of permanent disappearance) ! There is evidence to show that Thyagaraja who lived barely a hundred years ago, composed no less than 24,000 Kritis (it will be noticed with interest that number is the same as the total number of verses in Valmiki Ramayana); 700-800 is the utmost we could boast of being able to recover ! It is the sacred duty of all Nada-Yogis to preserve the Kritis that the unique good-fortune of the present generation and the Lord's Supreme Grace have preserved so far; and further to enrich music by adding soulelevating compositions in praise of the Lord and vividly portraying the evanescent nature of the tantalising pleasure of this world and the eternal nature of the Bliss of communion with the Lord. Thus would they render a double-service : spiritual by elevating the people and preserving the grandure of our music.

MUSIC AND SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Now, let us consider the spiritual Power of Music. Music melts the hardest heart, softens the brutal nature of man, heals many people of many maladies. Wherefrom has music derived this mighty power ? From the Supreme Music of Brahman, the Sacred Pranava. Listen to the vibration of the Tambura or the Veena : do you hear the majestic Pranava-Nada ? All the musical notes are blended beautifully into this Pranava ; all the musical notes spring from this Pranava; music is intended to reverberate this Pranava-Nada in your heart. For Om or the Pranava is your real name, your real Swarupa. Therefore, you love to hear music which is but the most melodious intonation of your own essential name. When the mind thus gets attracted and unified with one's essential nature, the great Power of God stored up there wells up within and heals body and mind. The Bhakta enters into Bhava-Samadhi by singing devotional music. He comes face to face with the greater storehouse of Knowledge and Wisdom, Ananda or Supreme Bliss. Therefore, he emerges from this Samadhi as a Jnani and radiates Peace, Bliss and Wisdom all around.

THE TYPICAL INDIAN MUSICIAN : A PARA-BHAKTA

Such a Para-Bhakta or Jnani was Tyagaraja. Such is this glorious Music way of

God-realisation which Tyagaraja gave to the world. It was because Tyagaraja could enter into the very soul of each Raga that he could compose songs that would be in conformity with the Raga-Bhava. It is this harmony between the Raga-Bhava and the Bhava of the Kriti that evokes in the heart of the person singing that Kriti the Bhava that Tyagaraja filled it with. There is a mighty spiritual force and power in the Kritis; therefore, they have been immortalised. As long as man utters sounds, so long will Tyagaraja Kritis remain, and so long will the undying fame of this great Prince among music-Yogins, endure and inspire thousands and thousands of Sadhakas to take to the art of music as a spiritual discipline, as a method of spiritual experience and attain union with the Paramatma, whose first manifestation was the Music of the Pranava. One significant feature in the case of music as the spiritual mode of life is that it not only brings about profound spiritual changes in the musician, but also transforms, elevates and renders peaceful and blissful the minds of the listeners. That is why great Saints like Mira Bai, Tukaram, Kabir Das, Sri Tyagaraja, Purandarandasa and others wove into the magic of the sweetness of their music the power and message of great Upadesh. With sweet music, the sublime thoughts find the hearts of the listeners and effectuate in them a great spiritual transformation.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

2. THE ART OF PAINTING—THE LINE AND COLOUR OF SIVANANDA'S DISCERNING INTELLIGENCE INDICATE ITS RICH SPIRITUAL POTENTIALITIES AND IDENTIFY ITS CREATIVE PROCESS WITH THE PROGRESSIONS IN YOGIC DISCIPLINES

CONCENTRATION of mind for which the Yogi practising the Yoga of Patanjali Maharishi has to struggle hard, comes easily and effortlessly to the Yogi in the field of painting. The landscape before him or the inspiration within him at once subdue all other Vrittis and the Vritti of the Perfect Beauty alone remains behind. Perfect Beauty is the nearest approximation to God or the Absolute. By experience and keen observation the painter or the artist discovers what is particular and uncommon in every object he sees. He has clearly understood the common nature of the objects, by long and intense contemplation, he has found out that there is some defect in every object; the same defect is not found in all objects. The particular or uncommon feature in an object is its highlight, the defects are its dark points. The artist seeking out Perfect Beauty in these objects, tries to reconstruct Nature by synthesising all the great characteristics found in various objects and by removing all the blemishes that mar the beauty of those objects. Thus he arrives at Ideal Beauty: and the method that he has adopted is precisely the same that the Jnana Yogi adopts in arriving at the consciousness of the Absolute (i.e., the method of negating all the imperfections that exist in the sense objects as they are contradicted by

others, by asserting the perfections that lie beyond these imperfections and finally by diving deep into these perfections to discover the Absolute which is Perfect, Infinite and Immortal.) The artist's studio is to him what a cave is to a Jnana Yogi.

This Ideal Beauty is not the product of the finite intellect of the artist. No artist, however much he struggles with the help of his little intellect, can ever arrive at the Ideal Beauty. Ideal Beauty is the Light that descends into his consciousness when the intellect has ceased to function. Long and protracted concentration on the Perfection which is the substratum of all imperfections in Nature, persistent application of the Neti-Neti doctrine by which all imperfections and blemishes are negated as "not this, not this" ultimately lead the artist to the realm of the superconscious, where the unthought Truth reveals itself to the heart of the artist. In this enlightened heart is born real art. Thus the artist is a Dhyana Yogi or Raja Yogi.

This method of arriving at the Ideal Beauty precludes the artist getting attached to any particular object or conception. The real artist should be preequipped with the sword of discrimination with which he ruthlessly slays the imperfections and limitations that hide the spark of Perfection that is the Reality of every object. He perceives an object, at once separates the Reality from the appearance, the Substratum from the sheaths, the Truth from the limitations. No doubt it was the object that inspired him, but his inner consciousness does not receive the consciousness as it is, but the Truth underlying what appears to be. There this spark of Knowledge is added to the store of knowledge thus acquired before and the Ideal grows clearer within. A stage is soon arrived at, when the artist feels that art itself is a step in the ladder at the top-rung of which is his goal. Art, he realises, had turned his vision inwards in quest of truth. The quest now takes a different turn altogether. He feels that Ideal Beauty exists only in the Self, the Beauty of beauties. Thence forward, he strives to realise the Self, even abandoning the art which had served only as a ladder to ascend to the threshold of Self-realisation.

That indeed is the goal of this glorious Brush Yoga. Brush Yoga includes not only the art of painting, but all the plastic arts, sculpture, architecture, even photography.

If you closely analyse the stages that precede the birth of a great work of art, you will readily discover that art is a kind of Upasana or devotional practice. First, the artist gets into the mood; his mind becomes calm and serene. It is like the stage when the aspirant is ready for meditation. With this serene mind he begins to contemplate upon a concrete object, the thing that he wishes to express in his work of art. This is the commencement of meditation. The third stage is when the object is transformed within the consciousness of the artist into a symbol. The name and the form have lost their value and out of them arises a symbol, an ideal. This ideal rising within the inward consciousness of the artist, attracts to itself, like crystal a number of other ideal concepts. This is meditation. The next stage, if it can be termed a stage is beyond thought. It is the field of intuition. The work of art is born within the artist's

consciousness, intuitively. It is like Samadhi. Then the artist comes down to external consciousness and thinks of translating the vision into an artistic form. He selects the material and method of achieving this aim. This is more akin to the sage's Lokasamgraha Karma, or service of humanity. The final stage is, of course, the actual reproduction on the canvas or in stone, the symbol that was intuitively born within the consciousness of the artist. This is the actual Lokasamgraha Karma of a Jivanmukta. By its very nature, all works of art share the imperfections of phenomena : for that intuitive realisation of the artist is of a realm far beyond the mundane, and no brush can paint it and no chisel can shape it. It is this factor that leads the dissatisfied artist to excel himself every time, and finally to discover the Beauty of beauties within himself in his Self.

The artist is a very great Karma Yogin, too. In how many hearts devotion to God is aroused by a great work of art. How wonderful are Ravi Varma's pictures of Gods ! How charming is the picture of Murli Manohar painted dy Sri Nathu Ram. The picture is so attractive that the Sadhaka very easily concentrates and meditates upon the Lord and thus attains Him. The picture speaks to him : it is not the picture, but the Lord who is present in the picture. To produce such inspiring forms is a great service to the world. These artists have rendered the greatest service to the world. They are great Yogis. Glory to the Brush Yogis ! May God bless them all !

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga Maharnava,
pp. 59-63.

3. THE ART OF INDIAN DANCE : THE SACREDNESS OF ITS ORIGINS, THE DIVINITY OF ITS FOUNDERS AND THE GREATNESS OF THOSE WHO LIVE ITS TRADITIONS

NO man is an absolute male and no woman is an absolute female. There is always a mixture of masculine and feminine qualities found in both. There are some males in whom the feminine elements are predominant. Example are many in the world. Even so, no man is absolutely emotional. There is a mixture of both. One may be more rational and in him the faculty of reason may be more developed, and the other may be more emotional and in him the heart may be more developed.

Some foolish dry Vedantins who pose themselves as "Advaita-Vadins" dislike Sankirtan and speak ill of Sankirtan and Nritya. Swami Rama Tirtha, a fine example of ideal Vedantin, danced in the Brahmapuri forests, when he was in divine ecstatic mood with *ghunghru* tied to his feet. He had a harmonious combination of head and heart. Lord Gouranga was another genius. He was master of Nyaya (Logic). He also did Nritya and Sankirtan. He developed his head and heart.

Nritya is an exact science. Nritya is Adhyatmic and celestial. The founders of this blessed science are Lord Krishna and Lord Siva. You will have to exhibit the

six Bhavas in your Nartanam (dance). There are—Utpatti (creation), Vinasam (destruction), Gati (movement), Agati (stability, Vidya (knowledge) and Avidya (ignorance).

Nritya that accompanies a Kirtan is an inseparable, sacred movement of the various limbs of the body in accordance with the inner divine Bhav. Nritya is a divine science. Those who do Nritya should bring out the six Bhavas. It is an external manifestation induced in Bhaktas by the thrill of ecstasy from within and helps the devotees in merging themselves in the Lord.

Supreme joy and magnanimity of the sacred Nritya could only be understood by Rishis and devotees like Narada, Vyasa, Suka, Mira, Tukka, Gouranga, Hafiz and others and not by the worldlyminded persons whose minds are saturated with passion.

The Adi Gurus for this celestial Nritya were Lord Siva, Krishna and Mother Kali. Dancing that accompanies vulgar music and obscene songs with intoxicants is invariably the outcome of passion and base thoughts. It has a deep tinge of lust. Do you see clearly the difference now, friends ?

Mark, how Lord Krishna stands with Flute in His hands showing these six Bhavas. O dry, one-sided Vedantins ! Give up cavilling. Learn to be wise. Give up dry, idle talking. Develop your head, heart and hands and attain perfection. There is not an iota of hope for your salvation till you develop your heart. Dear friends, bear this in mind always.

THE POWER OF NRITYA

In the Lord's Supreme Dance, the universe had its origin : indeed, in it alone has the world its life : and finally, when the time comes, into His dance all this will be withdrawn.

Nritya creates, sustains and destroys. Preserved on the high pedastal of Purity, Sublimity and as an expression of the finest sentiments of the heart, this threefold process is at once divinised. Nritya will then create devotion in even a stony heart hardened by a subhuman pursuit of of material pleasures ; Nritya will sustain the devotion of the dancers themselves and their life, too, as well as the life of all the spectators—Nritya is a life-giving tonic, and Nritya will destroy all the evils that assail a man from within . For, it is lack of development of the heart that gives room for the growth of Evil. Nritya develops the heart and therefore, annihilates Evil.

Lord Krishna was very fond of dancing, To please Him the Gopis would dance : the dance would make them forget themselves and lose themselves in Him. They lived in Him : and He lived in them ! In recent times, Mira Bai took up this tradition. She danced her way into the heart of the Lord. Lord Gouranga danced along the roads, singing the names of the Lord. The very sight of him could convert even confirmed rogues into perfect saints ! In the many Sankirtan Conferences over which I have presided, held all over Northern India, all the participants used to dance in ecstasy—Sannyasins, Bhaktas, Yogis, all !

For, dancing is a part of Synthetic Yoga. It develops one's body, mind, heart and soul. The intellect of even the spectators is sharpened and subtilized when they try to follow the meaning of those rapid movements of the limbs and eyes !

Dancing spreads its magic spell over all your faculties : it is a powerful aid to concentration. When the devotee feels the need of an aid to drive out extraneous thoughts from his mind, he takes to Nritya. Very soon he is filled with God ! Such is the power of Nritya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Music As Yoga,
pp. 65-68.

4. THE ART OF CONSECRATED POETRY—SIVANANDA : HIS PRE-EMINENT SERVICES TO THE PHILOSOPHICAL RELIGION OF THE BEAUTIFUL IN INDIAN THOUGHT

ANANDA LAHARI :

THIS authoritative Tantrik work of Acharya Sankara with 35 different commentaries is unparalleled for its beauty in composition, diction, metaphor, high flights of poesy and deep philosophy. The essence of Sri Vidya is compressed in this work. For the attainment of material and spiritual boons one would in vain seek for anything better.

Bengal, once a land famous for its grasp on the subtleties of Tantra has almost forgotten it in the present age of rush and hurry, and the debased and crude form of Tantra is now practised in Tibet. It was Arthur Avalon (Justice Woodroffe), who resusciated our interest in the subject. Laudable though his attempts were, he had no commentary to offer. It had been left for a realised soul in the person of Sri Swami Sivananda to give us the authentic deeper significance of the work. Mr. Boris Sacharow, an oriental scholar of Berlin, noted for his interest in Hindu Philosophy and the practical side of Yoga, found the book so engrossingly interesting that he approached Swami Sivanandaji with a request to give his exposition, and the resultant work is the book under review.

There is no faltering or halting suggestiveness noticeable anywhere in the commentary, nor any trace of pedantism, and it has indeed been a pleasure to go through the book on such an intricate subject so simply treated. The arrangement of the stanzas makes it more attractive reading. First comes the text in Sanskrit characters which is followed by italicized English rendering, next comes the literal meaning followed in its turn by lucid, comparative analysis without any laborious foot notes or mutilation of the beauty and the deep import of the subject matter.

In addition to a tricolour picture of Tripurasundari the book contains a picture of Swami Sivananda and two of his autograph letters. The correct diagram of Sri Chakra, the secret potent of Sri Vidya of the Tantras and Agamas, has also been given in the book and its proper significance explained in the introduction. Thus a lost treasure has been retrieved again.

Lovers of Tantra all over the country will find the book most illuminative and a valued addition to the collection on the subject. The book is a reference in itself owing to its comprehensiveness. The publication should prove both instructive and useful even to a layman.

—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta.

5. THE ART OF REVEALING A TREND OF ORIGINALITY IN ART INTERPRETATION

—Sivananda : The Width of His Learning and the Depth of His Experience Raise the Dignity of Art and Assign to It the New Function of Awakening In Man A Perception of the Absolute—

THE ultimate theory of art must be based on ultimate facts about the nature of the really Beautiful, the fountain-head of Beauty. If it turned out to be a truth that 'art' must be understood in two different senses (1) the one Absolute ; the ultimately Beautiful and (2) the verisimilitude of its predominant elements as seen in life and the world, it would be reasonable to say that the purpose of artistic activity is to awaken intuition (by giving powerful glimpses of the Real entity of art) to the perception of the Absolute, which is Art's Self. In this sense alone it is true to say that Art for art's sake is the highest maxim of art. In a work of art facts of life would serve only the purpose of exposing the hollowness of life. This was truly the high function of tragedy and Aristotle was intuitively right when he said that "Catharsis" was the essence of tragedy. Yes, true art must purge a man of the whole world, its tinsel and glamour by bringing out the deepest tragedy about human life that it is the rarest chance given to the soul to realise its blissful nature, but by getting dazzled by its tinsel and glamour, the soul abides in darkness ; that its greatest joy is heaviest sorrow. Such a tragedy yet remains to be written. But because books like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata view life as a whole, and expose life's hollowness, and thus raise one to the heights of reflection and meditation, i.e., because they raise man above earthly existence and stimulate his intuition to the perception of the Absolute, they are works of real art. They have intrinsic value. For want of intuition in the West, Art has not been understood in its real nature. So that in their hands it has become the idealisation of the instinctive functions. Repeated experiments have been performed for the translation of ideal love in terms of inter sexual existence. Only repeated catastrophic results have issued forth. Murders and divorces have multiplied. The perfection of jealousy only has been attained. That such love must find its apotheosis (and even metamorphosis) in jealously is no wonder. It is but natural. Thus once it is realised that the Good, the Beautiful, and the True has absolute existence and therefore only positive value, it becomes the function of ethics, art and science to attain to it. And further when it is understood that the good, the beautiful and the true are one and the same, it becomes plainly the duty of man to harmonise ethics, art and science. Just as ethics would by conduct raise man to the heights of meditative realisation of the good, art of the beautiful, science also would not keep limited to the phenomenal facts of the world. By investigation it would raise man's curiosity to the pitch of meditative realisation of truth absolute. In a word, art is the means to intensify the urge of realising the lovable absolutely beautiful, ethics the means to regulate life to such realisation and science the discipline of meditation.

It must be remembered that no artist can do more than create conditions for the psychosis of the Beautiful. That such conditions have been successfully created will be shown if (1) for the time being there is perfect forgetfulness of the world, (2) of the bodily self, (3) perfect absorption in the idea of the Beautiful (4) the absorption in a feeling of the intense love devoid of any trace of sensuousness (viz., there is the identification of the supra sensuous self with the Highest in terms that transcend the categories of human knowledge) i.e., ecstatic absorption and (5) a lasting sense of emptiness of the world and an everpresent urge for eternal ecstatic absorption. Such will be the attraction of the art, that even the most attractive thing in the world would lose charm and interest before it. The perfect artist may yet be born. But a glimpse of the highest art has been given to us by Shakespeare in "As You Like It." No girl has ever come upto the standard of Rosalind. Undoubtedly on the plane of the phenomena, Shakespeare has struck vigorous brushes that are suggestive of the true beauty of art. Just as the Karana Brahman or the higher Brahman is to be reached through penetration of the Karya Brahman or the lower Brahman, the Absolute in the phase of the Beautiful is to be reached through the artistic activity of the artists of illumined intuition. Lord Krishna was the ideal artist, most perfect—his art was the expression of the perfect blend of the selves. Thus it was most enchanting. It may embarrass logic, but none-the-less, it is true, to say that he was the embodiment of the Absolute, he was the embodiment of the practice of art trying to attain to the meditative realisation of the absolute and his art was the expression rather the diffusion of ecstasy all about.

—Swami Sivananda's
Studies In Western,
Philosophy, pp. 244-246.

6. THE DIVINE MUSICIAN SIVANANDA—HIS TREATISE ON MUSIC AS ONE OF THE MAIN METHODS OF GOD-REALIZATION

MUSIC AS YOGA :

SWAMI Sivananda, versed in sacred music, shows how music can aid Yoga, convey divine thoughts, and lead to the Life Divine. By the singing of Kirtans and songs in praise of the Lord, he says, the mind melts and becomes one with Him. Some of the Swami's inspiring speeches and writings on music, and soulful hymns, are reproduced in the present volume. There are also illuminating articles by his disciples on music and dancing, and many significant photographs of composers and musicians who sang or played in the presence of the Swami. This valuable and interesting book has been published with the aid of a donation by Dr. R. T. Werther of Australia, to the Jnana Yajna Fund.

—*The Mail,*
Madras.

7. COMPARATIVE STATEMENTS OF SIVANANDA ON BEAUTY IN THE REALM OF RELATIVITY AND IN ITS OWN TRANSCENDENCE

THE transcendental origin of Beauty is declared in the Upanishads. The Taittiriya Upanishad sets all the degrees of subjective response to objective Beauty as Priya or simple experiences of the beauty, mode or conscious enjoyment of Beauty-Pramoda or exalted bliss, obtained in personal participation. The happiness you get when you look at a beautiful object is Priya. The happiness you obtain, when you are in possession of a beautiful object is Moda. The happiness you get when you actually enjoy the beautiful object is Pramoda.

Beauty and love are as body and soul; Beauty is the mine and love is the precious stone, diamond or ruby.

Beauty is Truth and Truth is Beauty. God is the source of all Beauty. God is Beauty itself. He is Beauty of beauties. He is Infinite Beauty. He is the Supreme Beauty. Divine Beauty is pure, un-mixed and un-corrupted. It is without change, growth or decay. It is ever the self same. All earthly beauty pales into insignificance before the beauty of God.

Beauty of the Lord is self-existent. It is Transcendent. It is Perfection. It is beyond imperfection.

Beauty of worldly objects is the creation of the human mind. There are transitory, deluding objects through which beauty is perceived.

Beauty and ugliness are relative terms. They are inseparable. They are the two sides of the same coin. Ugliness exists to glorify Beauty.

Physical beauty depends upon colour, symmetry, rotundity, powder, lipsticks, rouge, dress, cutex for nails, ornaments and dressing of hair. It is fading, illusory beauty. If there is a slight defect in the eye, nose or skin of the face or ear, if there is no proportion between the trunk, limbs etc., physical beauty vanishes. But the Divine Beauty is independent. It is everlasting and real.

Beauty manifests through beautiful objects and is perceived by the human consciousness. It is subjective in human perception and objective in expression. It is present in objects.

Brahman is beauty itself. It shines in opposition to the object of beauty and in contradistinction to the so-called beautiful bodies, beautiful arts and sciences. The beautiful individuals in one respect may be beautiful and in another not. They may at one time appear to be beautiful and at another not. They may appear to be beautiful to some and to others even ugly. But that is not so with respect to Brahman or the Absolute. It is the Absolute Beauty altogether by itself. All beautiful things 'participate' in it in the usual way. The absolutely Beautiful is beyond the limited conception, knowledge and imagination of men. It cannot be represented. Why ? Because that is Sat-Chit-Ananda.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophy and Teachings,
pp. 190-192.

8. THE AESTHETICISM OF ANANDA LAHARI—SIVANANDA'S EXPOSITION OF MYSTIC SHANKARA'S POETIC GENIUS AT A GRAPPLE WITH TRANSCENDENT BEAUTY

ANANDA LAHARI :

IN this book Sri Swamiji has given masterly expositions on each *Sloka* of ANANDA LAHARI (Wave of Bliss). This book treats of the greatness of Shakti and the worship of Mother Goddess—Tripura Sundari.

Mother worship is the worship of God as the Divine Mother, Sri Mata. There is no God greater than the mother. Yet, just as you cannot separate heat from fire, you cannot separate Shakti and Siva. Worship of the Mother is worship of Siva.

Mother's Grace is boundless. Her mercy is illimitable. Her knowledge is infinite. Her power is immeasurable. So the Upasana or worship of Devi leads to all other attainments.

It behoves, therefore, that the aspirant, even as the child runs with outstretched hands to the mother first than to the father, should approach the Mother first and she will introduce her spiritual child to the Father.

And this book will help you to approach the Mother. A study of ANANDA LAHARI, daily, will be a great help to all who wish material as well as spiritual progress. "You will then," says the Swamiji, "attain high position, success and *Sayujya Mukti* as stated in stanza 22."

—*My Magazine*,
Madras.

9. THE FIRST COMPLETE DANCE SEQUENCE OF BHARATA NATYAM SURRENDERS TO SIVANANDA THE WHOLE SECRET OF THE INNER SADHANA THIS FORM OF CLASSICAL DANCE CARRIES IN ITSELF

THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF BHARATA NATYA

"The Alaripu"

THE glorious Bharata Natya Vidya and the tradition of Nritya in Bharatavarsha form one of the approaches to divinity through art. It is a deeply significant Sadhana for the realisation of God through the avenue of Kala. This spiritual basis underlying Bharata Natya is brought out most graphically and in a scientific manner in the very first complete dance sequence which a student of Bharat Natya has to learn. This sequence is called the Alaripu. Prior to this, various stances and movements are taught. The Alaripu is the first *regular sequence* taught to the beginner. It is most significant in its purpose and its import, for, in it we have the revelation of the Inner Sadhana of Bharata Natyam. I shall explain to you how this is so.

To understand the significance you must have an idea of the Alaripu. To state it simply, it is made up of rhythmic movements of all the various parts of the body on

after the other, in a definite order and sequence. These rhythmic movements are set to music and accurate and perfect timing. This timing of Talam is one of the most essential factors in the dance. The movements stated above range from movements of the eye-brows and end ultimately with movements with the soles of the feet. The hands and feet, of course, move most of the time in the performance of the dance. The dancer takes up the opening pose and commences the Nritya. This Nritya is usually done before the Deity. The dancer moves the eye-brows first. Secondly, movements are made with both the eyes and with beautiful rhythm the pupils of the eyes are made to dart from side to side and up and down. Next, in perfect rhythm again, the dancer moves the neck to the right and the left. This neck-movement is a most important item in the dance and is kept up throughout the dance. Forming the background of the whole sequence are an inspired smile and the incessant movements of the neck and the eyes, the combined total effect of all the three being to indicate that the dedication of the soul is aimed cheerfully and spontaneously and that the result of the dedication is supreme and perfect happiness.

Now, the head movements over, the movements of hands follow. Starting with the shoulder, then the elbows and then the wrist, all these are deftly moved in beautiful well-controlled movements which it is a real pleasure to watch and to follow. One of the features that enhances this beauty is the perfect symmetry with which both sides of the body, right as well as left, alternately execute these movements. The movements of the arms and hands are completed with a series of beautiful graduated motions of the open palms of the hand held in a definite scientific position. This over, the dancer next moves the chest, then the waist and then the hips, all in a graceful, well defined manner and to accurate timing.

The graceful dance proceeds onward and the movements of the trunk now give place to those of the lower limbs. The thighs, the knees and the ankles are all skilfully brought into play and neat movements are deftly executed by the artist in the course of the dance. Movements of the feet follow, which ultimetely conclude with a thrilling finish with rapid manipulatian of the soles and the dancer's feet upon the boards. This finale of pattering of the sole upon the floor is a sheer delight of wonderful rhythm and marvellous timing. Thus the Alaripu ends and the dance comes to a close with a beautiful prostration of Namaskara. From the physical point of view, this comprehensive dance-movement is meant to serve as an excellent preparation for taking up the higher lessons. It prepares the dancer successfully by serving as an ideal, all-comprehensive exercise which enables the dancer to get control over every part of the body and to master the manipulations of them all with perfection, accuracy and grace.

Now, you have in the Alaripu complete and comprehensive dance-movements of the entire body from the head right up to the soles of the feet. All the above stated movements are done with utmost devotion and deep reverence. The entire dance is filled with fullest *Bhava* and the Bhava is that of earnest *dedication* and

complete surrender. Herein is revealed the secret of the spiritual basis and the Inner Sadhana of Bharata Natya. The movements of the entire body systematically, part, by part, symbolise the dedication of your whole being in every aspect of its life here. Bharata Natya will now be seen as an offering of oneself, an Arpana of one's entire being to the Divine Being. It is a spontaneous and exquisite sacrifice through art, at the altar of the Universal Being. Bharata Natya is now seen to be the process of ecstatic and blissful Atma-Nivedan. Deep sincerity and intense Bhava are the predominant elements in this process of Atma-Nivedan. Bharata Natya reveals through the Alaripu its aim and purpose, its meaning and significance. The Alaripu conveys to you the message "Oh ! man, live a life of perfect dedication, live a life of complete surrender and sacrifice, let all parts of your being, let your entire life and its activities, be offered most reverentially unto the Lord. Live for God. This is the way to come face to face with and to realise the Supreme Being" Alaripu is an exposition through dance of:

"Kayena Vacha Manasendriyairva,
Budhyatmanava Prakrite-swabhavat,
Karomi Yad-yat Sakalam Parasmai
Narayanayeti Samarpayami"

It reveals through dance the Inner Gita Sadhana of :

"Yat Karoshi Yadasnasi Yat Juhoshi
Dadasi Yat,
Yat Tapasyasi Kounteya Tat Kuru-
shwa Madarpanam."

Whetever you do with any part of your being, it is all verily worship of the Lord and is devotionally offered up unto Him in whole-souled dedication. This Bhava of surrender and dedication is the Philosopher's stone, as it were, which transforms the base metal of mundane secular life into pure gold of spiritual Sadhana. The Bharata Natya brings this message to you and the Alaripu reveals beautifully and graphically this process of full dedication of the entire being before the Lord.

—Swami Sivananda's
Music As Yoga,
pp. 78-82.

10. TONES AND SEMI-TONES OF IDEALS IN A UNIQUE EPISTOLARY AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORK

SIVA GITA :

THIS is an epistolary autobiography of Swamiji. It contains 18 letters and as many pictures of Swamiji. Swamiji in a revealing mood deals with the fundamentals of his spiritual personality. The letters are said to have been written in one hour. The unfurlment of the unique personality is elevating in the extreme.

—*Gnanasambandam,*
Dharmapuram, Mayavaram.

SIVA GITA :

THIS is an epistolary autobiography of Swami Sivananda. It is, as its title suggests, a collection of epistles in which the Swamiji has given us a brief glimpse of himself, his thoughts, spiritual ideals, hitherto known only to himself, are here revealed.

—*Luzac's Oriental List and*
Book Review,
London.

11. SIVANANDA'S CONCEPTION OF WISDOM, VIRTUE AND PURITY AS AESTHETIC VALUES

KINDLE the Light of Truth within your heart. Make this your ideal : the infusion of this Light in everyone. Your aim should be to maintain an unshakable sweetness of disposition, to be pure and gentle, and to be happy under all circumstances. These are the blessed conditions. These are the beauties of one's character.

* * *

HAVE the wisdom of Vidura, the virtues of Yudhishtira, the purity of Bhishma, the liberality of Karna and the gallantry of Arjuna and the strength of Bhima. You will attain greatness and Immortality.

* * *

MOULD your character. Come out of the centre of your small narrow egoistic circle and have a broad vision. Speak gently and sweetly in a courteous manner. Eradicate undesirable thoughts and desires. A sublime thought elevates the mind and expands the heart ; a base thought excites the mind and renders the feelings morbid and dark. Those, who have even a little control over their thoughts and speech will have a calm, serene, beautiful, charming face, a sweet voice and their eyes will turn brilliant and lustrous.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pearls of Wisdom.

12. SIVANANDA : HIS PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION IN SPIRITUAL AESTHETIC SENSIBILITY

EDUCATE your eyes to see God in all faces to behold unity of Self in all beings. Educate your ears to hear the words of Ancient Wisdom. Educate your tongue to utter pleasant, loving and truthful words. Educate your hands to do charity and serve the poor. Educate your mind to be always cheerful and calm and to think of the Immortal Atman. This is real education.

* * *

EDUCATION should teach the pupils to love God and man. Education should instruct the students to be truthful, moral, fearless, humble, and merciful. Education should teach the students to practise right conduct, right thinking, right living, right action, self-sacrifice and to attain knowledge of the Self.

* * *

THE main purpose of education must be to make man a real man with all divine attributes. The study of soul-elevating magnanimous, spiritual scriptures should be made compulsory. Education must be best calculated to promote plain living and high thinking. Practical instructions on ethics and Yoga and meditation and control of mind should be imparted to the students. Each student must be taught that his first and foremost duty is to attain Self-realisation and to cultivate universal brotherhood.

* * *

GROW. Evolve. Expand. Develop pure Love. Reflect. Meditate. Obtain Jnana. Have the treasures of spiritual-consciousness latent in you, unfolded. You are a centre of thought, power and influence. Courage, power, strength, wisdom and joy are your divine heritage from the Absolute Being ; they are your birth-right.

13. ELEMENTS OF SIVANANDA'S BEAUTY—CULTURE IN MORAL EXCELLENCE FOR LADIES

BLESSED Devis,—Grow in the simplicity and purity of Sita. Kindle the lamp of devotion in your heart. Sita was rich in the inner beauty of the soul. Attain this unfading beauty through purity and devotion. Care less for dress and ornaments.

* * *

MODESTY is the ornament of women. To go beyond the boundary of modesty, to behave like a man, destroys the elegance, grandeur, grace and beauty of the fair sex. Nothing can atone for the want of modesty in a woman, without which beauty is ungraceful.

Modesty is the fundamental virtue which a woman ought to possess. Modesty is a wonderful mixture of humility, politeness, decency, elegance, gentleness and sweetness. A modest woman is restrained by a sense of propriety. She commands respect and is raised o the status of a divinity by modesty. A woman without modesty is a flower without fragrance.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ideal Womanhood, p. ii, 15.

* * *

FASHION is a snare ; it excites panion and should be abandoned. Take no recourse to face powders, Talcum, blossom, and lip-paint. They mar the beauty ; they are artificial. This shining skin will soon be covered with many wrinkles ; it is a fading beauty ; it is a false beauty ; it is a tempting beauty. The Beauty of Beauties is your own inner Being. Wear simple dress ; obtain purity in thought ; develop virtues : this is your real and highly precious ornament and beauty aid.

—Swami Sivananda's
Advice to Women, p. 9.

14. THE ENDLESS HUMAN QUEST FOR HAPPINESS AND SIVANANDA'S FIRST LESSONS IN THE REALIZATION OF BEATITUDE

WAY TO PEACE AND BLISS :

SINCE the creation of the world, Man has always yearned for peace and bliss. But, by a travesty of circumstances which are beyond the purview of this brief review, he has always been doing something or other which invariably keeps him far removed from the only goal which he honestly and sincerely desires. But there can be no doubt that every person, if he is asked why he is doing this or that particular thing, only answers that he wants thereby to attain happiness. After a little while you ask him if the happiness sought by him had been found, he would answer : "Not yet.". He would go on doing something or other in the belief that he was thereby promoting his happiness. The strange phenomenon goes on and on. In the mean while, humanity is as far away from real happiness, bliss or peace as the North pole is from the South.

Swami Sivananda's small brochure gives us in a nutshell the reason why we are

unable to attain the peace we seek. He wants us to control the mind and to look at things with a mental attitude which is free from attachment. The holy author preaches self-education in universal love. This self-education is not so difficult as one would suppose. If only because this self-education in universal love will help to put an end to the unseemly sectional quarrels in India, the Swamiji's little book deserves to adorn every book-shelf in the land. This little brochure of sixteen pages may be aptly described as the most wonderful presentation of the excellent wisdom by the holy Acharya.

—*The Forward*,
Calcutta.

15. SIVANANDA ON ART, TALENT AND LITERARY CRITICISM

Q. WHAT is art ?

A. Art is perfected skill in the use or employment of anything to answer some purpose, the system of rules for the performance of certain actions, the work executed or the manner of the execution of a work appealing to the aesthetic taste or the sense of beauty. This is too broad a question.

Q. What is talent ?

A. Talent is a superior kind of mental endowment or capacity,

Q. What is the techniqne of effective argument ?

A. Effective argument is based on a complete knowledge of all the fundamental component elements of the subject of the argument and of their relation to the party concerned, and also in basing the argument on the most basic facts which are acceptable to that party. Also the rules of thinking and arguing as embodied in the Eastern and Western systems of logic, play a great part in enabling one to be effective in his argument.

Q. Is literature passive in struggle against exploitation ?

A. It has both phases. In so far as it records the struggles it is passive. But in so far as it brings about a change in the attitude and conduct of men who are influenced by it, it is active, creating conditions favourable to the progress of the struggle.

Q. Can literary criticism completely root out the various reactionary tendencies which opposed a healthy peoples' literature ?

A. Mere literary criticism as understood today would not be able to achieve this by itself, as the connection between literary criticism and the people is not close enough. But undoubtedly by influencing the mind of the more educated and cultured class to whom literary criticism appeals its influence would percolate to the masses also in various indirect ways.

—Swami Sivananda's
Yoga : Questions and Answers,
pp. 121-138.

16. SIVANANDA THE PATRON OF ALL ARTS INSTALLS LAMP-POSTS ON THE PATHWAYS TO THE SHRINE OF INNER PERFECTION

ILLUMINATING TEACHINGS:

'ILLUMINATING Teachings' is a pocket edition of the numerous teachings of Swami Sivananda arranged and classified under various heads. The first chapter "Light on Human Life" gives a clue to the inner surge of human being which is further explained in the next chapter, "Light on Reality" "Light on the Upward Path" and "Light on Inner Life" are two really illuminating chapters. The basis of Sadhana is followed by Light of divine wisdom and Light of divine Love.

The last two chapters *Light on Spiritual Sadhana* and *Light an Realisation* give a fitting close to the teachings of the saint.

The efforts of Swami Sivananda to bring ancient wisdom to the very door of all and sundry and to preach unceasingly for the spread of Divine way of living deserves all commendation.

—A.B.N. Sinha,
Searchlight, Patna.

17. SIVANANDA : HIS THEORY OF ART AND HIS PRINCIPLES OF ACTION FOR ARTISTS

ALL beings however low in evolution, all actions however trivial in their nature, all things however lifeless they may appear to be, bear the stamp of the Light of the Eternal. To men of vision and wisdom, the Principle of the Beautiful is seen to be dancing and the Splendour of the Truth shining equally in them all, in all creation—in the man toiling in the field, in the birds and the beasts of the forest, in the blossoms of the garden, in the waves of the sea. The life of art is not for the fleeting pleasures nor for solacing the sorrow-stricken heart nor yet for mere aesthetic enjoyment; it is something more than all these, and is primarily a systematic and scientific living in the absolute beauty, in the endless harmony, in the play of the undying Joy.

The artist should be moved by the Beauty of Truth, guided by the Vision of the Highest in everything that he deals with, and his art should be progressively creative and spiritually suggestive, the fruit of the revelation received in moments of inspired Vision, of total self-absorption in that which transcends the self, and of an intensive aesthetic experience. In his creative moods the artist should soar high—high into the skies of luminous Imagination and of glorious Existence, wholly oblivious of all mundane madness. Purified in heart, one should wave the magic wand of art at whose touch everything is converted into the Beauty of the Beyond. An art that panders to the lower appetites of men, that does not aim at discovering the meaning of life, that does not awaken the spiritual consciousness in the human heart, is soulless and therefore unsalutary in its

effects and malefic in its influence. The test of true art is implied in its profoundest suggestions. True art should embody the best genius of the artist, the finest in him, and lead the beholding eye into a subtler plane of refinement and thrill; all art that falls short of this great purpose is profane and perishable.

—Swami Sivananda's
Contribution to *Art & Culture*
Vol I. No. 1
Bangalore.

18. SIVA THE SUPREME DEITY OF ALL DIVINE DANCE AND SIVANANDA'S TEXT IN THE ART OF ADORING HIM

PHILOSOPHICAL STORIES:
LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP:

THESE two volumes are written for religiously inclined Hindus. The first is a collection of parables and allegories with explanatory morals and lessons on ethics and religion. The second is a comprehensive treatise on the Saiva philosophy and gives a rational explanation of the theories and practices connected with it. Sanskrit texts and English translations of many Vedic and other passages on Saiva Sadhana are added.

—*Hindustan Times*,
New Delhi.

TREASURE OF TEACHINGS:

A compilation of Swami Sivananda's teachings covering the various spiritual and ethical aspects of life. Some of the important subjects dealt with are: Dharma and Adharma, functions of reason and perception, secret of happiness, path of Sadhana, wisdom of Vedanta, the Supreme Reality, etc. The simplicity and directions with which the saint explains even the most terse concepts are remakable indeed.

—*The Chetana*,
Bombay.

19. SIVANANDA DRAWS HIS CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENTS IN THE FIGURES MUSICAL SOUNDS SHAPE AND ADVANCES HIS THESES ON THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF SINGING DIVINE NAMES

VOICE FIGURES:

THE first manifestation of God is Ether or Sound. Sound is the Guna or quality of Ether. Sounds are vibrations. They give rise to definite forms. Each sound produces a form in the invisible world and combinations of sound create complicated shapes.

The text-books of science describe certain experiments which show that notes produced by certain instruments trace out on a bed of sand definite geometrical figures. It is thus demonstrated that rythmical vibrations give rise to regular geometrical figures.

The Hindu books on music tell us that various musical tunes Ragas and

Raginis have each a particular shape which the books graphically describe. For instance the Megha Raga is said to be a majestic figure .seated on an elephant. The Basanta Raga is described as a beautiful youth decked with flowers. All this means that the particular Raga or Ragini, when accurately sung, produces aerial etheric vibrations which create certain characteristic shapes.

This view has recently received corroborations from the experiments carried on by Mrs. Watts Hughes, the gifted author of "Voice Figures". She recently delivered an illustrated lecture before a select audience in Lord Leighton's studio to demonstrate the beautiful scientific discoveries on which she has alighted as the result of many years of patient labour.

Mrs. Hughes sings into a simple instrument called an "Eidophone" which consists of a tube, a receiver and a flexible membrane, and she finds that each note assumes definite and constant shape, as revealed through a sensitive and mobile medium. At the outset of her lecture, she placed tiny seeds upon the flexible membrane and the air vibrations set up by the notes, she sounded, danced them into definite geometric patterns. Afterwards she used dusts of various kinds, lycopodium dust being found particularly suitable. A reporter describing the shapes of the notes, speaks of them as remarkable revelations of geometry, perspective and shading. "Stars, spirals, snakes, wonders in wheels and imagination rioting in a wealth of captivating methodical designs" such were what were shown first.

Once when Mrs. Hughes was singing a note, a daisy appeared and disappeared, and "I tried" she said, "to sing it back for weeks before, at last I succeeded". Now she knows the precise inflections of the particular note, that is a daisy, and it is made constant and definite by a strange method of coaxing and alteration of crescendo and diminendo. After the audience had gazed enrapty, a series of daisies, some with succeeding rows of petals and some with petals delicately viewed, they were shown other notes, and these were pansies of great beauty. "How wonderful, how lovely" were the audible exclamations, that arose in the late Lord Leighton's studio, and exquisite form succeeded exquisite forms on the screen. The flowers were followed by sea-monsters, serpentine form of swelling rotundity, full of light and shade and detail, feeding in miles of perspective. After these notes came others and there were trees, trees with fruits falling, trees with a foreground of rocks, trees with sea behind, "Why" exclaimed people in the audience, they are just like Japanese landscapes.

While in France, Madame Finlang's singing of a hymn to Virgin Mary "O Ave Marium" brought out the form of Mary with child Jesus in her lap and again the singing of a hymn to 'Bhairava' by a Bengali student of Banaras (India) studying in France, gave rise to the formation of the figure of 'Bhairava' with his vehicle dog.

Thus the repeated singing of the name of the Lord gradually builds up the forms of the Devatas or the special manifestations of the deity, whom you seek to worship and this serves as a focus to concentrate the benign influence of the Being, which radiating from the centre, penetrates the worshipper or the singer or Sangeeta-Premi.

When one enters the state of meditation, the inner Vritti-flow is greatly intensified. The deeper one goes into meditation the more marked is the effect. The concentration of the mind upwards sends a rush of this force through the top of the head and the response comes in a fine rain of soft magnetism. This feeling arising from the downward power sends a wonderful glow through the body, and one feels as though bathed in a soft kind of electricity.

The above experiments demonstrate the following facts :—

1. Sounds produce shape.
2. Particular notes give rise to particular forms.
3. If you want to reproduce a particular form, you must recite a particular note in a particular pitch.
4. That, for that purpose no other note and no other pitch, chanting even the identical note will avail. For instance in '*Agnimile purohitam*' -'*Ile Agnim purohitam*' will not do. In doing so, the efficacy of the Mantra is gone. You cannot therefore transpose or translate a Mantra. If you do it, it will cease to be a Mantra. When a Mantra is defective either in Svara or Varna, it is incorrectly directed and may produce a result just contrary to what was intended.

But such is not the case with Rama Nama or any name of the Lord, viz., Siva, Krishna or Hari, etc. These names may be sung in any and every way.

"Ulta nama japat jaga jana,
Valmiki bhaye Brahma Samana."

All the world knows that Saint Valmiki (previously known as Rogue Ratnakara) became one with Brahma (the Lord) by uttering even the Ulta Nama—Mara, Mara, for Rama, Rama.

Rama nama japate raho, Rijh bhajo ya khijh
Ulta pulta oopaje jesa dharti ko bija.

Therefore repeat the name of the Lord. Repeat it either in love (with feeling and Bhav) or in anger, it will have its proper effect ; just as the seeds must sprout and grow, either sown properly or thrown into the fields in whatever way, the peasant pleaseth to do.

Sangeeta is an exact science. The harmonious vibrations produced by the singing of the names of Lord help the devotee to control his mind easily. They produce benign soothing influence on the mind. They elevate the mind at once from its old ruts or grooves to a magnanimous heights of divine splendour and glory.

It consists of a series of harmonious vibrations, electrical in their nature and make-up.

Music relaxes nervous tension and makes parts of the body affected by tension to resume their normal functions.

Music is highly beneficial in its treatment of nervous disorders, sleeplessness, etc.

Music has tremendous power to bring comfort and solace when one is in a state of despondency.

There is a great Shakti in every word. The very uttering of "Hot Pakouri" brings saliva in the mouth. If you utter the word faeces, when a man is taking his meals, he

will immediately vomit. When such is the case with ordinary words what to speak of the names of God. Every name of God is filled with various divine Shakties and nectar, Nama and Nami are inseparable. Name is even greater than the Nami. Even in worldly experiences, the man dies but his name is remembered for a long time. Kalidas and Shakespeare, Valmiki and Tulsidas are remembered even now.

An objector says "If I say 'Sugar Candy, Sugar Candy', can I get it ? How can I see God if I simply sing Rama Rama ?" In the case of sugar candy ; sugar candy is outside, but God resides in the very chamber of your heart. He is close to you. By repeating Rama Rama, the mind becomes one-pointed. It melts in silence, in the heart you get Darshan of God. The knower of God is as good as God Himself. God is Chaitanya and so is His name. It is not so with other objects or names of objects.

Name of the Chaitanya (Atma), even of the human being is ever the same. There is a man in sound sleep, the Pranas are there in and with him. He will not hear you, if you call on him addressing 'prana-prana.' Just call him by his name Rama or Shyama, he will hear you and will get up from his sleep. Such is the power of Nama. Nama is nothing but Chaitanya personified.

'Sangeeta' breaks the three Granthis or knots of ignorance. Brahma Granthi, Vishnu Granthi and Rudra Granthi. It purifies the Nadis (Nadi Shuddhi) and the pranamaya-Kosh (vital sheath) and easily, awakens the Sleeping Kundalini that is coiled up in Muladhara Chakra and eventually brings on divine ecstatic mood (Bhava-Samadhi). It produces Ekagrata Chitta (one-pointed mind), purifies the Chitta (Chitta Shuddhi), destroys all Vasanas, Trishna (cravings), Kamanas Chapalta, Sankalpas and all sorts of whims, moods, fancies and wild imaginations. It destroys the three Doshas (faults) viz., Mala, Vikshepa and Avarna (impurities), tossing of mind and veil of ignorance. It annihilates the three kinds of Tapas (fevers) Adhyatmic, Adhibhoutic and Adhidaivic. It eradicates the five Koshas (afflictions) viz., Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Ragadwesha (love and hatred) and Abhinivesa (clinging to life) and also Janma, Mrityu, Jara, Vyadhi and Duhkha (birth, death, old age, sickness and miseries). It destroys the three kinds of Karmas, viz., Sanchita (accumulated), Prarabdha (fruitiscent), Agami or Kriyamana (current actions). It destroys Rajas and Tamas and fills the mind with Sattwa (purity). The mind is more concentrated on the melodious Dhwani (sound) and gets Laya (dissolution or involution) soon. Just as the snake is charmed by sweet melodious sound, so also the snake-mind is charmed by sweet melodious Dhwani of Sangeeta.

He who does Sangeeta forgets the body and the world. Sangeeta removes Dehadhyasa (identification with the body). It brings Super-intuitional knowledge. Tukarama was an agricultural peasant. He could not even sign his name. He was always doing Sankirtan of Lord Sri Krishna's name "Vitthala, Vitthala" with cymbals in his hands. He had Darshana of Lord Krishna in physical form. His inner-sight (Jnana Sakti)—Divya-dristi was opened by Sankirtan. His inspiring Abhangas are texts for M.A. students of the Bombay University. Wherefrom did the unlettered Tuka derive his knowledge ? He tapped the fountain of

knowledge through Sankirtan. He penetrated into divine source through Bhava-Samadhi ; that was brought about by deep Sankirtan. Does this not clearly prove that God exists, that the Swarup of God is knowledge, and that Sankirtan has tremendous influence ?

The first manifestation of God is Ether or Sound. Sound is the Guna or quality of Ether. Nagar-kirtan purifies the Ether, air water, and earth. When the earth is purified, you will have abundant crops, Aushadhies will grow exuberantly.

Sangeeta purifies the surging, evil lower emotions and fills the mind with sublime soul elevating higher emotions. It destroys the mind "Mano-nasa," and brings about thoughtless state. Practise, try, fill yourself. Just as the intoxication that you get by taking a dose of opium or Canabis Indica, lasts for some hours, during the following day also, during Kirtan, a spiritual wave comes from the Indweller of your heart and purifies the mind and Prana-maya-kosha. At night you will be free from bad dreams. All diseases are cured thereby. Doctor's bills will be saved. Just as oil flows from one vessel to another vessel, Sattwa flows from the Lord to your mind.

Sangeeta gives you the strength to face the difficulties in the battle of life. Singing the names of the Lord is a mental tonic. A strong habit of singing the names of the Lord will be formed in six months. Even when anyone is in a dying state, the habit of singing the name of Lord will come to the rescue at the last moment.

—Swami Sivananda's
Music As Yoga, pp. 52-62.

20. SIVANANDA ON THE EXPERIENCE OF THE DIVINE AS THE INFINITE TRUTH, CONSCIOUSNESS AND DELIGHT

—The Insights of Sivananda Into the Thoughts that Were the Despair of the Intelligentsia—

BRAHMA ANUBHAVA UPANISHAD : ESSAYS ON YOGA :

THE first of these pamphlets gives a translation, verse by verse, of the said Upanishad. Notes and commentary are added after every verse, besides the free translation of each verse. Religious profundities are, to novices, no more than obscurities, and the Upanishads are often the despair of even cultured men. This pamphlet, therefore, is not likely to be of great use to beginners. But it may foster the desire to study, which is certainly a good thing at a time when the world is slowly coming to an appreciation of the real stuff in our glorious literature.

The second one contains five essays regarding the glories of Yoga and the dangers in the way of the student of Yoga.

—S. Vaidyanathan
The Scholar,
Calicut.

21. THE METAPHYSICS, THE COSMOLOGY, THE MYTHOLOGY AND THE AIMS OF THE DANCE OF SIVA

THE Tandava or celestial dance of Lord Siva is extremely thrilling and charming, exquisitely graceful in pose and rhythm and intensely piercing in effect.

Nritya or Tandava is an inseparable, sacred movement of the various limbs of the body in accordance with the inner divine Bhav.

The dance of Lord Siva is for the welfare of the world. The object of His dance is to free the souls from the fetters of Maya, from the three bonds of Anavamal, Karma and Mayamal. He is not the destroyer but He is the regenerator. He is the Mangal Data and Ananda Data, bestower of auspiciousness and bliss. He is more easily pleased than Lord Hari. He grants boons quickly, for a little Tapas or a little recitation of His five letters.

Aghad Bhum is His song of dance. When Siva starts His dance Brahma, Vishnu, the Siva Ganas and Kali with Her bowl of skull join Him. Have you not seen the picture of Pradosha Nritya ? It will give you an idea of the dance of Siva.

Kali was very proud of her ability in dancing. Siva started dancing to quell Her pride. He danced very beautifully, very artistically. Kali had to put Her face down in shame.

Lord Siva is an embodiment of wisdom. He is the light of lights. He is Param-jyoti or supreme light. He is self-luminous or Swayam-Jyoti. The dance of Siva represents the rhythm and movement of the world-spirit. At His dance the evil forces and darkness quiver and vanish.

You can witness the dance of Siva in the rising waves of the ocean, in the oscillation of the mind, in the movements of the senses and the Pranas, in the rotation of the planets and constellations, in cosmic Pralaya, in epidemics of infectious diseases, in huge inundations and volcanic eruptions, in earth-quakes, landslips, lightning and thunder, in huge conflagrations and cyclonic storm.

As soon as the Guna Samya Avastha wherein the three Gunas exist in a state of equilibrium is disturbed by the will of the Lord, the Gunas manifest and quintuplication of elements takes place. There is vibration of OMkara or Sabda Brahman. There is manifestation of primal energy. This is the dance of Siva. The whole cosmic play or activity or Lila is the dance of Siva. All movements within the cosmos are His dance. He gazes on Prakriti and energises Her. Mind, Prana, matter begin to dance. When He begins to dance the Sakti Tattva manifests. From Sakti, Nada proceeds and from Nada, Bindu originates. Then the universe of names and forms is projected. The undifferentiated matter, energy and sound become differentiated.

The burning grounds are the abodes of Siva. Rudra is the destructive aspect of the Lord. Lord Siva dances in the crematorium with Kali in His ten-armed form. The Siva Ganas also join with Him in the dance.

Nataraja of Chidambaram is the expert dancer. He has four hands. He wears the Ganges and the crescent moon on his matted locks. He holds Damaru in his right hand. He shows Abhaya Mudra to his

devotees with His raised left hand. The significance is 'O devotees ! do not be afraid. I shall protect you all.' One left hand holds the fire. The other right hand points down on the Asura Muyalaka who is holding a cobra. He has raised the left foot in a beautiful manner.

The sound of the drum invites the individual souls to his feet. It represents OMkara. All the Sanskrit alphabets have come out of the play of the Damaru. Creation arises from Damaru. The hand which shows Abhaya Mudra gives protection. Destruction proceeds from fire. The raised foot indicates Maya or illusion. The hand which points down shows that His feet are the sole refuge of the individual souls. Tiruakshi represents Omkara or Pranava.

Nataraja dances in the hearts of devotees who have burnt egoism, lust, hatred, pride and jealousy. He dances quite gently. If He dances vehemently the whole earth will sink down at once. He dances with His eyes closed because the sparks from His eyes will consume the entire universe. The five activities of the Lord Panchakrityas, viz., Srishti (creation), Sthiti (Preservation), Samhara (destruction), Tirobhava (illusion) and Anugraha (grace) are the dance of Siva.

May you all comprehend the true significance of the dance of Siva. May you all dance in ecstasy in tune with Lord Siva and merge in Him and enjoy the Sivananda, the final beatitude of life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Music As Yoga, pp. 71-73.

22. THE GREAT EPIC : SOME GLIMPSES OF ITS BEAUTIES AND THE GREATNESS IT INSPIRED IN MEN AND WOMEN

BEAUTIES OF RAMAYAN :
GREAT MEN AND WOMEN :

SWAMI Sivananda expounds the philosophy of the Ramayana in his "*Beauties of Ramayana*" (Yoga Vedanta Forest University, Rishikesh, Rs. 3). He shows that the ideals and precepts enshrined in the great epic show the way to progress on both material and spiritual planes. The book has been published with the aid of a donation by Srimati Kumudini Devi of Secunderabad. Another Yoga-Vedanta Forest University publication is Swami Sivananda's "*Great Men and Women*", in which the Swami makes his salutation to eminent persons, living or dead, of India and other countries. The book is priced Rs. 3.

—*The Mail*, Madras.

23. AN ASPECT OF SIVANANDA'S DISSERTATION ON MUSIC AS A SYNTHESIS OF SEVERAL YOGAS

MUSIC is Nada-Yoga. More urgent than even the achievement of technical perfection in Sangeetha and the enhancement of its melodic values, is the formation on the part of our musicians of the correct attitude towards this Vidya. In our country, music has always been regarded as Nadopasana or Yoga Sadhana, and never as food

for the senses, however refined they may be.

Adepts in Yoga have recognised that there are vital centres in the subtle body of man which vibrate and produce certain astral sounds. When certain Mantras are chanted or Kirtans sung, these inner vital-centres are influenced and the spiritual power latent in them is manifest. This power enables the Nadopasaka—the spiritual aspirant who has made music his spiritual Sadhana—to get absolute control over his mind and the senses and thus to rise into the superconscious realms of Samadhi. When the mind attains Laya in Nada the mental modifications cease—and this is the aim of the Raja Yogi—and the Yogi gets into trance. This is the goal of Yoga; and this is the goal of Nadopasana.

Music is a synthesis of the various Yogas or paths to God-realisation. Besides, it enjoys the unique privilege of defying one of the fundamental spiritual doctrines, viz., that which is pleasant is not good, and that which is good is not necessarily pleasant. It is in music that you find the sole exception to this rule. It is both pleasant and good—Preya and Sreya, in the terminology of the Kathopanishad.

Music, like Krishna Lilas, caters to people of all temperaments, wins the hearts of all and transforms all beings—human, sub-human and superhuman. Devas, even the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva) are pleased and easily propitiated by music. What to say of human beings, even animals are charmed and tamed by sweet, melodious music.

Music itself is Hatha Yoga Sadhana : for it involves a good amount of control and regulation of breath. There is deep and full breathing; and this greatly strenghthens the lungs and purifies the blood, too.

Moreover, the various musical notes have their own corresponding Nadis (subtle channels in the vital sheath of the body) in the vital centres within—the Kundalini Chakras—and music vibrates these Nadis, purifies them and awakens the psychic and spiritual power dormant in them. Purification of Nadis, not only ensures peace and happiness of mind, but goes a long way in Yoga Sadhana and helps the aspirant to reach the goal of life very easily.

Trapped in music, the mysterious mind with its thousand hoods of Vasanas and Vrittis, lies quiescently on the lap of the Sadhaka; and he can make it dance to his tune, control it according to his will and mould it as he pleases. Mind, the instrument of Satan in man, the magic wand of Maya, the terror of all spiritual aspirants, is there in the hands of this Music Yogi under his perfect control. The wonder of wonders in the case of this Music Yoga is that it is not only the musician whose mind is thus controlled, but the minds of all those who listen to music become calm, peaceful and blissful. That is why great Saints like Mira Bai, Tukaram, Kabir Das, Sri Tyagaraja, Purandaradas and others wove their Upadesha into sweet music : with the sweet music, these sublime thoughts would easily get into the heart of listener, which is at other times zealously guarded by the vicious cobra of worldliness. It is Music Yoga that effortlessly brings about the Chitta-Vritti Nirodha of the Raja Yogi—control of mental modifications.

That Music Sankirtan is an integral part of Bhakti Yoga it is needless to

mention. Sankirtan and Bhakti are inseparable.

When thus, the mind is steadied and purified and when the mind is merged in the Nada—all music is but the manifestation of the sacred Pranava or OM—the eye of intuition is opened and the Music Yogi gets Yoga-Siddhi or Samadhi.

What an inestimable service does he render to humanity ! The true musician is the highest Nishkama Karma Yogi. He removes the sorrows of the people who listen to him. Music cures incurable diseases, dispels the gloom of ignorance, of wrong notions, and of despair from the heart, and instils in it joy, cheer, happiness and hope. You cannot easily repay the deep debt of gratitude you owe to the Music Yogi who renders you this inestimable service. It will earn for him the richest blessings of the Lord who will bestow upon him the highest reward of Atma-Jnana.

Such is the glory of this wonderful Music Yoga. Music is not an instrument for the titillation of the nerves or satisfaction of the senses; it is a Yoga Sadhana which enables you to attain Atma-Sakshatkara. It is the foremost duty of all musicians and institutions interested in the promotion of music to preserve this grand ideal and this pristine purity that belongs to music.

Saint Tyagaraja, Purandaradas and others have repeatedly pointed this out: and by their own life of renunciation and devotion they have emphasised that music should be treated as Yoga and that true music can be tasted only by one who has renounced the world—freed himself from all taints of worldliness—and who practises music as a Sadhana for Self-realisation.

—Swami Sivananda's
Music As Yoga, pp. 4.

24. SIVANANDA : HIS CRITIQUE OF PHYSICAL BEAUTY AND HIS PERSUASION TO NOETIC BRILLIANCE AND BRAHMIC REALIZATION

PHYSICAL beauty is no beauty. He who has knowledge of the Self is the most beautiful man in the whole world. He is the really handsome man. Though Ashtavakra had eight kinds of deformities, he was the most handsome man. He had the Brahmic aura in his face. The eyes sparkled with the light of the soul. With this light he subdued Raja Janaka, with this light he made Raja Janaka enter into Samadhi, in the twinkling of an eye.

—Swami Sivananda's
Easy Path to God-Realization, p. 134.

MINUS skin, minus dress, minus ornaments, woman is nothing. Just imagine for a moment that her skin is removed. You will have to stand by her side with a long stick to drive away crows and vultures. Physical beauty is superficial, illusory, and fading. It is only skin-deep. Do not be deluded by external appearances. These are the jugglery of Maya. Go to the Source, the Atma, the beauty of beauties, the everlasting beauty.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Treasure, p. 29.

25. A CRITIC OF HIGH COMPETENCE, INSIGHT AND INTEGRITY ESTIMATES THE VALUE OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE AS THE NUTRIENT OF WORLD'S HIGHER THOUGHT AND LIFE

DIVINE LIFE FOR CHILDREN :
DAILY MEDITATIONS :
JAPA YOGA :

SWAMI Sivananda is nothing if not original. Author of round about 150 and odd works bearing on different aspects of Indian Philosophy, Culture, Religion and Morality, Sivananda is the only personality today whose influence in the direction of leading Divine Life by all has magically and miraculously as it were stands spread throughout the world. There is no wonder Swamiji should have turned his attention to the correct and proper type of instruction that should be imparted to youngsters of primary and secondary stages of education, as firm foundations should be laid safe and secure for the purpose of character-building and construction at the most impressionable period of growing life and mind when impressions of experiences would be deeply and strongly imprinted on mind-and-soul still constituting the personality of the subjects.

The volume which constitutes the First Number of children's Series, stands divided into nine conveniently arranged sections on Divine Worship, Saints and Sages, The heroes and Heroines of India, Epics and the Puranas, Health and Brahmacharya, Moral Lessons, Spiritual Instructions, Moral Stories, and General Knowledge. The Central Indian Government and the States today take special pride in categorising themselves as secular, notwithstanding serious interference with temples and temple properties by means of legislative enactments, and I suggest pure secularism would eventually lead to chaos and conflict. In India, particularly, religious and moral instruction would be found inseparable from education. If *Divine Life of Children* is prescribed to be compulsorily studied in High Schools, yougsters would be enormously benefited. Only if and when children are taught to lead Divine Life can there be any hope for adults and grown-up men and women being saved and enabled to live higher life of morality and religion, service and sacrifice.

Daily Meditations numbered as the thirtyfifth number of the Forest University Series, has been codified, collected and compiled from the vast and ocean-like expanse of writings of Sivananda. The book contains twelve sections corresponding to the months of the year, and the author has given his readers a thought for a day, not for the purpose of academic discussion or hair-splitting debate, but, for active, concrete, dynamic living of God-given life.

In the course of a brief prefatory indication entitled "To the Reader", the author has stressed the fact that on each day only one thought should be assimilated and meditated upon. These *Daily Meditations* are bound to be highly useful and advantageous to all interested in pursuit of Divine Life.

In *Japa-Yoga*, which is described as "A Comprehensive Treatise on Mantra-Sastra" Swami Sivananda has described the

general philosophy of Japa-Yoga, and the details relating to practising of this form of approach to the Lord. The general philosophy of Yoga, Glory and Majesty of the Holy Name of the Lord, Nature and Characteristics of the different *Mantras* dedicated to and presided over by different Gods and Goddesses, the deities of Hindu Pantheon, Account of Sadhana, Tales and Stories relating to adepts and masters of Japa-Yoga have been treated in a most illuminating manner by Sivananda who combines within himself full, reliable, and accurate knowledge of the contents of the leading classics in Sasnskrit bearing on the subject, and effective and successful control over the complicated discipline and methodology of practice of Yoga.

While heartily congratulating Swami Sivananda on his striking and attractive exposition of the principles relating to the theory and practice of Japa-Yoga, it is necessary to point out that according to ancient Indian classic tradition, four types of species or patterns of Yoga have been discriminated from one another. They are (a) Mantra-Yoga or Japa-Yoga, (b) Laya-Yoga, (c) Hatha-Yoga and (d) Raja-Yoga. These are arranged in ascending order of realizational importance as they stand. A popular misunderstanding should be cleared here.

There is no question of any inferiority or superiority in regard to these. Of course, Japa has been assigned to the first or opening stage. Next an aspirant climbs up to Laya. Subsequently, the third stage of perfection in Hatha-Yoga is realised. Finally, an aspirant finds the peace that passeth all understanding in the highest stage of Raja-Yoga.

Contemporary Sivananda Literature is being enriched day by day by Swami himself, his disciples and admirers. The World's Higher Thought and Higher Life thrive on it.

—Dr. R. Nagaraja Sharma,
M.A., Ph.D.,
Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

26. THE ORCHESTRA OF ART—SCULPTURE, PAINTING, POETRY, MUSIC, DANCE AND DEVOTIONAL SONG : ALL OBTAIN AN ILLUMINATING TOUCH FROM THE AESTHETICAL WAND OF SAGE SIVANANDA AND RELEASE THROUGH THEIR CONTOUR, COLOUR AND CADENCE THE TRANSCENDENTAL TRENDS LAID IN THE DIGNITY THEIR SOUL WEARS, SHOWS AND SOUNDS

Religion and philosophy, rhythm and harmony, music and tala, Kirtan and Nritya, and beauty and art are intimately connected. They are inseparable.

Art has its own greatness and its own necessary function or place in human life. Art makes a nation great. It is the dynamic expression of the soul in forms of beauty. Art gives joy. Art elevates and inspires the mind. Art helps you to keep communion

with Nature and Nature's Lord. Art fills the mind with sublime thoughts.

Art, poetry, sculpture, music, Nritya, Kirtan, Science are all expressions of the Infinite-Satyam, Sivam, Subham, Sundaram, Kantam. They are all expressions of joy and higher emotions. You can realise God through music, Nritya, Kirtan, poetry, art, etc. Art, Nritya, and Kirtan infuse a new spirit, vigour and joy in your mind, They relieve you of your depression. Sit before the picture of Lord Siva and Murli Manohar, the Supreme Artists; and you are a changed being. Art, Nritya and Kirtan help you to forget your cares, worries and anxieties, because they are instruments of God for bringing to you solace and comfort.

An artist is an Assistant or Deputy of Lord Brahma or the Creator. With a tiny brush he instils various Bhavas in the picture. He creates and stuns the spectator. The Lord is the greatest artist. He is the greatest mathematician. He is the greatest dancer. Lord Nataraja is the Master Dancer of Tillai-Ambalam. He is the Professor (M. A., Ph.D.) of Tandava Nritya. He defeated even Kali who was proud of her achievements in Nritya.

Sankirtan is Nada Brahma Upasana. Kirtan and Nritya bring Laya or dissolution or merging of the mind in Brahman. The rhythm, the tune and the gestures help the fusing of the mind and its absorption in its Source. They are auxiliaries in the attainment of Samadhi. Geeta, Vadya, Tala and Nritya make up the Sangeeta which is offered in the service of the Lord. Divine Bhavas are expressed through the gestures in Nritya. Kirtan is Nada Brahma Yoga. Without Laya or harmony no life can exist. Through Kirtan and Nritya, the finer sentiments are expressed, the mind is elevated, inspired and brought into communion with the Lord. It attains Laya in Brahman.

Sama Veda is all an ocean of music.

Nritya or dancing is the Science of sublimated expression of one's finest emotions and sentiments. Both man and woman can do Nritya. The Lasya Natanam is easy, sweet, pleasant and elegant; it is best suited for woman. The Tandava Natanam is more suitable for man as it is a vigorous and powerful form of dancing.

Grace, rhythm, technique and vigour are so blended in Nritya that a spectator feels as though he is transported to higher, spiritual, ethereal realms.

Poetry, vocal and instrumental music, Thala, painting and gesture are fused together in the graceful art of dancing or Nritya.

The gestures, the Mudras, express various Bhavas and the higher, finer sentiments. They are rhythmical and harmonious. They are graceful. The prompter or the assistant actually sings the Thala : 'Thaam, dhiththaam, thai, thaththai—thagidatha thaam dhiththaam'. The dancer keeps this time. It requires great training to play the cymbals; the cymbals actually produce various time-"sounds". The Thala guides and adds grace to the performance.

Nritya is the best form of exercise also. Nritya even for a few moments gives you maximum exercise in minimum time. You perspire freely. All the limbs are exercised. Close the door and do Nritya. Commune with the Lord.

Nritya enables you to get over your shyness. Shyness is a great obstacle to material and spiritual progress. Meera danced on the roads of Brindavan ; and she was a Princess ! At various Sankirtan Sammelans in the Punjab I used to sing and dance also. Many high officials and wealthy businessmen used to join with me and dance self-forgetfully. They used to sing Kirtan and enjoy the Bliss of the Lord. Shri Krishna Prem (A European Professor in his Poorvashram, Mr. Nixon, Ph.D.) also likes dancing and used to dance with me.

In the world or realm of Nritya, the Manipuri technique occupies a unique place. The ancient state of Manipuri is the cradle of Indian Nritya which had its origin in prehistoric times.

Bharata Natya and Katha Kali (a peculiar product of Malabar) are also classical Nrityas. Bharata Natya is soul-elevating and thrilling to witness. It is reputed to be divine in its origin.

Ball-room dances are no dances at all ; they have no spiritual touch. They are sensuous. They excite lower emotions and passion. They are Rajasic in nature. They exercise a demoralising effect on those taking part. Even Indian ladies take part now in ball-room dances. They are losing their modesty, their rare ornament and precious jewel. Ball-room dances go hand in hand with cocktail party, punch, Vermouth and Champagne. Indian ladies (and men) should never take part in this kind of dance which brings in moral degradation and dishonour.

Free India needs poets, dramatists, dancers and singers. Kirtanists to act on the Indian stage. They should be well-versed in Indian art, in the classical Indian dances like the Bharatanatya, Kathakali and Manipuri dances. Above all, they should be established in Yama and Niyama which are indispensably requisite if the divine nature of the art is to be preserved and if the artists are to derive the maximum spiritual benefit from its practice.

New artists are needed now who will set up a new standard in Art who will keep pace with the swiftly-changing times. They will be able to create a new happy blend of Spirit and Matter, the Lord and His Nature, with the Spirit as the Basis, the Support and the Goal. Such a blend will ultimately lead man from darkness to Light, from the unreal to the Real, and from mortality to Immortality.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

27. THE ARTIST DIVINE AND THE DIVINITY IN THE ARTIST HUMAN—THE ECSTATIC LOVE-INSPIRED LIASON OFFICER SIVANANDA LINKS THE TWO AND LETS THE ONE RESULTANT TRANSCENDENT RHYTHM REMAIN

ART is a gift of the Lord Himself and an artist is an Amsa of the Lord Himself. By devoting his art to the depiction of the greatness of God, the artist expands this Amsa and makes it pervade his entire being. He grows more and more into the Lord. Thus can an artist make the best of his art and use it as his bridge to cross the ocean of discord-ridden worldly existence—*samsara-sagara.*

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of the Himalayas, p. 236.

The Third Phase

CHAPTER TEN

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SIVANANDA'S LITERATURE TO THE CONCORD AMONG WORLD'S RELIGIONS

SIVANANDA

—And the World's Religions As Organised and Institutional Structures Enduring By Virtue of Whatever Never-Dying and Ever-Lingering Power the Universal Religious Aspiration and Realization Breathed Into Them, and the Possibility of a Concord and Positive Achievement Among Them on the Basis of a Shift in Emphasis to the Spiritual Values By a Grasp of the Origins, the Nature and the Destiny of the Progression of the Inner Religious Spirit—

As the farthest reach of current Western psychological research has exceeded the nineteenth century scientific notion of the sole reality and autonomy of the material principle, and arrived by its experimental knowledge, at the autonomy of the human mind, the spiritual aspirant transcends the brilliant limitations of all forms of conceptual consciousness and gains in his own experience the perfect awareness of the autonomy of the inner Spirit in man, and constantly endeavours to stabilise himself on its stately altitudes and realise its immeasurable riches in life here. Dissociated from the obstructing workings of an ego-centric life, "born anew", totally spiritualised in nature, possessed of a larger vision of enlightened intelligence, living from subtler and wider existence, knowledge and delight of being, the spirit of religious progression constantly expresses powers from higher levels of consciousness whose substrata alone are so imperfectly known, studied and categorised by the psycho-analytical thought on three levels of the 'subconscious', the 'preconscious', and the 'conscious'. The instinctive consciousness of the forms of life in the animal kingdom, the intellectual consciousness of the mental men, the aesthetic and cultural consciousness of the artistic and morally integrated personalities, are there in the spiritual individual taken up by a subjective process of radical transformation and rendered into the radiant terms of the pure light of universal consciousness, the parent of all power, forces, energies, principles; and, seeking the Self of the Transcendent Godhead in religious realization, he obtains the full Power of his inner Being.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF SIVANANDA'S LITERATURE TO THE CONCORD AMONG WORLD'S RELIGIONS

1. SIVANANDA THE GOD-REALISED GUIDE TO THE CONTENT OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND HIS DEVOTED MISSION OF ESTABLISHING CONCORD AMONG RELIGIONS AND DISTRIBUTING PEACE AND HAPPINESS TO ALL HUMANITY

—Clarity of Thought, Illuminating Ideas And Force of Expression Constitute the Trinity of Sivananda's Literary Quality—

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

SWAMI Sivananda is a prolific writer of faith and illumination. He has gifts of clear thinking combined with forceful expression. He has come near God and is in a position to take people that way in all religious intensity.

World's Religions is a very commendable effort to ask people to be truly religious. It sees no distinction and occasion for difference in the religions of the world. Swami Sivananda rightly sings :

Brahman, Allah, Jehovah
Ahura Mazda, are one
Truth is one
Sages call it by different names.

He wants peace and happiness all over the earth. He is a believer in the merits of rhythm and harmony in the world. In all religions he finds that God is approached through love, devotion and fellowship He concentrates on the philosophy behind religions and he finds the same philosophy, philosophy of love and truth. The Swami has illustrated his philosophy by referring to the central ideas and sayings of all religions in a remarkably interesting fashion. I find the book compelling and transforming.

—*The New Democrat*, Bombay.

2. SIVANANDA ON THE TEMPER OF MODERN CIVILIZATION, THE REASON IN RELIGION AND THE IDENTITY OF ALL RELIGIONS IN THE SPIRIT OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL THOUGHT

Why modern civilization has despised religion is because it understands by religion an outburst of the irrational spirit. Far from it ! Religion is the light that

enlivens the most rational life, the manifestation of the eternal glow of intelligence that peeps through even the mightiest genius of the world. There can be no civilization without religion if it is destitute of spirituality. That religion which aims at nothing more than a happy utilitarianism is not a solacing religion. Materialism is the crude product of a want of proper illumination and insight into the true essence and hence, it is not worthy of consideration. An impure heart and conceited brain cannot understand religion. True religion begins where the intellect ends. Religion is neither emotion nor scholarship, but knowledge that is direct and immediate, a faith born not of practical necessity but of impersonal experience. The revelations of the Vedas and the Upanishads, the gospel of the Buddha, the teachings of Christ, all have sprung from an impersonal source, though this impersonality is made known to us only when it expresses itself through personalities. No intelligent man of the world can say that he has reached the zenith of intelligence : knowledge grows and widens when experience deepens itself. Many rank materialists have turned into great spiritual heroes, which shows that the shallow world cannot satisfy the deep spirit in man. This One Spirit is common to all and, therefore, religion must be One, not two or many. Though shirts and coats may be many, the person is the same who puts them on.

Therefore, abandon fight and argument ; be not intolerant, O happy sons of God ! Blossom ye joyous flowers of the garden of the earth ! There is no Asiatic or European or American, no Hindu, or Christian or Moslem, but there are sons of God, worshipping Him in the temple of the universe, there are seekers of Truth, who are studying in the school of the vast Nature, there are human beings who are marching towards the Divine Being, there is the finite stretching itself to the Infinite. Therefore, peace is thy birthright, religion is the way, universal brotherhood is the ideal, spiritual perfection is the one goal of each and every inhabitant of this earth. Mere bread for the body is not enough ; religion is the bread of the soul, without which life is but death and civilization a mere mockery.

—Swami Sivananda's
Unity of Religions, pp. 26-28.

* * *

PEACE be unto all ! Without peace there is no joy, and a joyless life is a valueless existence, for, it is struggle, a pain, a process of becoming a "not-itself, a self discrepancy". The reign of peace, therefore, means the freedom of life, the liberation of mankind, the salvation of all beings. All strive for peace, all want unperturbable happiness. All crave for eternal life. If we think and breathe, it is for this purpose ; if the wind blows and the water wriggles, it is towards this end. Nothing changes, and nothing moves even a bit, if not to perfect itself, to become the whole and self-sufficient, to break down the barriers that limit its scope and jurisdiction of existence. The process of this kind of urge and movement in thought and act, man calls, Religion.

Religion is not a dogma or a comfortable fancy or a hobby of a certain group of people. Religion is the expression of the Universal impulse to live the Divine Life, an inherent impulse which none can resist.

Every person thinks differently, and yet, thinks towards the One Supreme Being. Differences are in the roads and the ladders and not in the city reached or the roof climbed over. The lower distinctions can be brought together and reconciled only in the light of the higher unity of the Truth. Man is a combination of the animal and the Divine, God and brute crossed at a point. Every individual has both these characteristics in him. The brutal propensity hurls him down to difference, misery, battle, blood-shed and death, and the Divine reality lifts him up to the rich and splendid realm of glorified and purified plentitude of the immortal Essence. Religion is the answer to the call of this higher impetus from the one Real God who is seated in the heart of the Universe as its very life itself.

Therefore, ardent religionists ! Can you not account for religious wars, for poverty, for grief, for restlessness ? The seed of the perpetration of evil is sown by the lack of ability to apprehend the nature of wisdom, truth and justice. It is not the human aspiration but the subhuman propensity that ravages the very values of life through contempt for alien temperament and hatred towards the other inhabitants of the earth. It is a great mistake that the boys and girls of today are spending their career in "education for a job, bread and comfort", neglecting the central realities of true civilization and culture. It is imperative that all schools and colleges should, if they intend to work for the happiness and freedom of mankind, include as the most important item in the curriculum, the art of perfect living, of the essential values of life—virtue, love, purity, truth, universality, wisdom and justice, which constitute the very heart of religion, religion which soars high up to the possibility of cosmic salvation. There is no life in the education if it is destitute of the religious consciousness, for religion is the very meaning of life's purposes, the one aim of the struggle for existence. If religion is rejected, there is nothing left in the mortal except a heap of bones and a mass of flesh.

—Swami Sivanana's
Self-Realization, pp. 68-69.

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Hinduism : THIS is the essence of duty : Do not do to others what if done to you in return you will dislike. Treat others as you treat yourself.

Buddhism : Do not do to others that which may give pain to your own self. Give that happiness for others which you want for your own self.

Christianity : Whatever you want that others should do to you, do that yourself to others. For this is the rule.

Islam : None becomes a true believer until he loves his brother even as he loves himself.

Zoroastrianism : That nature is really good when it will not do to others what is not good for itself.

Taoism : Consider that your neighbour's gain is your own gain and that your neighbour's loss is your own loss.

Confucianism : Do not do to others what you do not wish that others should do to you.

Sikhism : Consider others as you consider yourself.

Hebraism : Do not do to your fellowmen what is painful to yourself. Thus is the

whole of the Torah and the remainder is only a commentary on it.

Jainism : We should consider in happiness and misery, in joy and grief, all beings as our own self, and therefore one should not do to others what would be undesirable for one's own self.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions, page i.

3. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF RELIGION AS CONSISTING IN THE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND GOD—SIVANANDA'S ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE CONCORD WHERE DISCORD PREVAILS AND DISCLOSE THE CONNECTING LINKS BETWEEN RELIGION AND RELIGION, WHERE THE CONFLICTS OF EXOTERIC MUMBO-JUMBO BLUR THE VISION

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

THIS book which comes from the gifted pen of Sri Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh who needs no introduction to the religious world, is dedicated to all religionists throughout the world. The sole purpose of the book is to prove to the world that every religion, by whatever name it is called, establishes a relation between man and God or the Infinite, and that religion is the link between man and God. The purpose served by such a publication in endeavouring to establish concord in place of the horrible discord that pervades India in particular owing to the diversity of religions, cannot be exaggerated. The author's vast learning and deep knowledge of the scriptures of mankind and the scholarly manner in which the golden link between all important religions of the world is explained, make the book fit for serious study and a perusal of it will be of immense benefit to all those leaders and reformers who have undertaken the responsibility of leading men from ignorance to knowledge and from serfdom to freedom, not to speak the profit that the student of religion will obtain.

The book contains eleven chapters dealing with eleven great religions of the world, viz., Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Sufism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Shintoism. In his inimitable style the author has clearly brought out the important fact that religious minds of all ages revolved in the same spiritual groves and that the fundamentals of all religions are one and the same. This book, like others from the same pen, is eminently readable and thought-provoking.

All educated people of the country—young and old—interested in good living on earth, will do well to read the book so that the message of all religions, viz., the Divine Spirit of Man, could be spread all over the country which would ultimately serve to avert any catastrophe in the world.

—K. C. N.,
Madras Information,
Madras.

4. SIVANANDA DRAWS OUT AND RAISES INTO A BROAD AND IMPRESSIVE PROMINENCE THE ESSENTIALS OF RELIGIONS AND WHITTLES DOWN THEIR NON-ESSENTIALS THAT TAKE COMPLETE POSSESSION OF HUMAN PETTINESS AND STIR ALL DISCORD WHERE REASON, RHYME AND REVELATION DEMAND AN ACCORD

RELIGION is the link between man and God. Every religion always establishes a relation between man and God or Infinite. Religion should give shelter even for the worst type of sinner. It must be perfectly tolerant, broad and catholic.

Religion lays down the laws of life. Religion teaches us how to lead a divine life. Man cannot progress spiritually without religion, just as a tree cannot grow without water and manure. Religion is the support that helps us in climbing the steep and narrow ladder of emancipation. It is the most important factor that helps the earnest spiritual aspirants in understanding the principles of oneness of life and universal love.

There is a supreme Lord, who is all-pervading, immortal, infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, perfect, ever-pure, self-existent, all-merciful, all-blissful. We can attain eternal bliss, immortality and everlasting peace by attaining God-realization. All religions admit this unanimously. This is the essential part of all religions.

To attain Godhead one should be truthful, humble, pure, compassionate, dispassionate, forgiving, tolerant, unselfish, desireless, I-less, mine-less, generous, charitable. All religions admit this unanimously. This is the essential of all religions.

Those who want to lead the divine life, should be free from lust, greed, anger, hatred, jealousy, pride, selfishness, egoism, hypocrisy, etc. All religions admit this unanimously. This is the essential of all religions.

To realise God one should develop love. He should have ethical perfection, self-restraint, the spirit of self-sacrifice, good conduct, devotion to saints and God. He should study the holy scriptures and have perfect faith in the existence of God, in the scriptures and in the words of spiritual preceptor. All religions admit this unanimously. This is the essential of all religions.

To come face to face with God one should pray and meditate regularly. He should be in the company of saints. He should serve the saints, the poor and the sick. He should lead a simple life and avoid all luxuries and should fast when the senses become turbulent. He should control the senses, reduce the wants and subjugate the mind. All religions admit this unanimously. This is the essential of all religions.

To commit adultery is a sin. To rob other's property is a vicious action. To tell lies is bad. To hate others is wrong. To kill another man is a crime. All these evil deeds will bring down a man to the level of a brute and throw him in infernal regions. All religions admit this unanimously.

You must be able to differentiate the essentials from the non-essentials in religion and philosophy, through the power of pure

reason and discrimination. Then only you can be happy. The essentials of all religions are one and the same. They all agree. Religions differ only in non-essentials.

You may dress in simple clothing in any way you like. You may eat simple food in any way you like. You may dress your hair in any way you like. These have nothing to do with meditation. Real religion and philosophy is beyond the senses and the intellect.

Real religion begins when one has gone above all body-consciousness. Real religion begins when one has gone beyond the petty customs, manners and conventions. Those are all meaningless social bindings. They have nothing to do for a man who has expanded himself.

Be catholic and liberal in your views. Expand. Ignore trifles. Rise above the petty customs, ceremonies, touchism and kitchenism and markism. Look to the internal fundamentals or essentials. Ignore non-essentials. Unite with all. Put out anything that separates and divides you from your neighbours. Then you will find the unity of religion, unity of philosophy, unity of Self. Then and then alone you will be in bliss and knowledge.

The ideals and principles of all the religions are always noble. But practice needs sincerity, which is rarely found among us. Many preach Buddhism, but no one gives up desires and Himsa. Many preach Christianity, but no one practises love and forgiveness. Many preach Islam, but no one recognises the brotherhood of man. Many preach Hinduism, but no one realises the divinity in all. Hence the world is wicked, not for want of truths, nor on account of religions; but alas ! it is wicked for the lack of true followers of these ideals and religions. If everybody instead of suggesting or promulgating these old old truths, practises them, he can alone do much benefit to the world. Practice instills truths into the hearts of men, whereas preaching amuses their ears. Preaching has become the livelihood of men while practice has become their object of scorn.

May you all have a comprehensive understanding of the essentials of all religions ! May you all learn to discriminate between the essentials and non-essentials of all religions ! May you all recognise the essential unity of all religions and thus lead a life of perfect tolerance, happiness and bliss !

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions,
pp. xvii-xix.

5. SIVANANDA : HIS FAMOUS TEXT-BOOK IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION—THE ENERGISM OF HIS PERSONALITY AND THE UNIVERSALITY OF HIS APPEAL AS A SHAPING RELIGIOUS FORCE

GOD, MAN AND RELIGION :

SWAMI Sivananda of Ananda Kutir, is a dynamic personality. All the knowledge and wisdom he has gathered in his life of disciplined spiritual quest he places at the disposal of the world by means of these leaflets and booklets. In this booklet, he takes up the central idea of man's ultimate search

after happiness and shows how that can be satisfied only by man's realising his oneness with God and the Universe, as explained in the *Mahavakyas* of the Upanishads. The emphasis in this leaflet is on Love and Bhakti which is bound to have a universal appeal.

—S. K. Y.,
Federated India,
Madras.

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

THIS is another book by Swami Sivananda, who tries to find good in everything. Being a serious student of religion and having realised, like the Great Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, that the goal of all religions is the same, Swami Sivananda desires that every man and woman of our country should have a fair knowledge of the main essentials of religions other than their own. The religions so dealt with are Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, with Hebruism, Jainism, and Sikhism as forming part and extensions of Hinduism. Islam is dealt with as a religion understood by all people and as an Esoteric religion observed by the Sufis. Religions of the Far East, China and Japan are also given fair and sympathetic treatment.

Emphasis is always laid on the need for realisation of the fundamental unity of religions and need for sympathetic understanding and toleration. This book is bound to be of invaluable help to all students of comparative religion.

—*Federated India*,
Madras.

6. THE DOCTRINES OF JAINA PHILOSOPHY, THE SPIRIT OF SHINTO ETHICS AND THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF SIKHISM FROM THE MAGNUM OPUS ON WORLD'S RELIGIONS IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

JAINA PHILOSOPHY

THE Jain philosophy bases its doctrine on the absolute necessity of conquering the lower nature for the realisation of Truth.

Jainism divides the whole universe into two main divisions, viz., sentient beings (Chetana, also called Jiva or Soul) and non-sentient things (Jada also called Ajiva or non-soul). Soul is that element which thinks; knows and feels. It is the divine element in the living being. The true nature of the soul is right knowledge, right faith and right conduct. The soul is undergoing evolution and involution, so long as it is subject to transmigration. Whatever is not soul is non-soul (Ajiva).

The combination of the Jiva and the Ajiva causes all diversities in this universe. Their interaction or interplay is the cause of the world-process or evolution. When the soul is stripped of all its Ajiva bondage, it becomes pure and attains its ultimate Mukti.

There are five gateways of Knowledge. The first is the senses. There is only one sense, the sense of touch in the lowest form of life. There are two, three, four and five senses in higher forms of life. The second source is study. The third is Avadhi or the psychic faculty through which more subtle things are known. The fourth is mind. Knowing by which the mental processes of

others are known. The fifth is Absolute Knowledge.

The Jain canon is divided into two parts, viz., (1) Shruta Dharma, i.e. philosophy and (2) Charitra Dharma, i.e. ethics. The Shruta Dharma enquires into the nature of nine principles, six kinds of living beings and four states of existence. The nine principles are : Soul (Jiva), non-soul (Ajiva), merit, on account of which man is happy, demerit, on account of which man suffers from misery. The fifth is the state which brings in merit and demerit. The sixth is Samvara which stops the inflow of foreign energies. The seventh is destruction of actions. The eighth is bondage of soul with actions. The ninth is total and permanent freedom of soul from all actions.

Dharma is that which keeps the soul from falling downwards. The bounds which keep it attached to the universe are those of Karma, virtuous and evil actions.

The four states of existence are Devas (celestial beings), Manushyas (human beings), Tiryanch (infra-human, animals, birds, etc.,) and Naraka (the lowest state of existence that of being a denizen of hell).

Living beings are of six kinds viz., the one organed (having body only); fire, air, water, earth and vegetable; the two-organed (having body and taste); the three-organed (having body, taste and smell) the four organed (having body, and organs of taste smell and sight); the five organed (having body and organs of taste, smell, sight and hearing) animals and human beings.

Six kinds of living beings are divided into six classes :—earth-body beings, water-body beings, fire-body beings, wind-body beings and vegetables, all of them having one organ of sense, that of touch, and animals. These animals are again divided into four classes :- beings having two organs of sense, those of touch and of taste, such as tape worms, leeches etc., beings having three organs of sense, those of taste, touch and smell ; such as ants, lice etc., beings having four organs of sense, those of touch, taste, smell and sight, such as bees, scorpions etc. ; beings having five organs of sense, those of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. These are human beings, animals, birds, men and gods. All these living beings have four, five or six of the following capacities:—capacity of taking food, capacity of constructing body, capacity of constructing organs, capacity of respiration, capacity of speaking and the capacity of thinking. Beings having one organ of sense, i.e. of touch, have the first four capacities. Beings having two, three and four organs of sense, have the first five capacities, while those having five organs have all the six capacities.

—Sivananda's
World's Religions, pp. 111-113.

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SHINTO ETHICS

PURITY is one of the fundamental virtues of Shinto ethics. There are two significations of purity. One is outer purity or bodily purity and the other inner purity or purity of heart. If a man is endowed with true inner purity of heart, he will surely attain God-realization or communion with the Divine. Sincerity is also the guiding ethical principle of Shinto.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions, p. 163.

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MAIN PRINCIPLES OF SIKHISM

THE following are the main principles on which Sikhism is based·—

(i) Belief in the One true God.

(ii) Implicit surrender of one's will to God.

(iii) The practice of righteousness and rectitude.

(iv) Fatherhood of God and universal brotherhood of man.

(v) No worship, but of the Lord God.

(vi) To work in good faith as a duty imposed by God, abandoning fear for a bad result and giving up hope of reward for a good result.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions, p. 129.

7. SIVANANDA'S WORK ENCOMPASSES IN THE SUBSTANCE OF ITS BRIEFLY TREATED THEMES, THE PHILOSOPHICAL, HISTORICAL, ETHICAL AND PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF EVERY PRINCIPAL RELIGION OF THE WORLD

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

THIS is a very useful book containing the details of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Zorastrianism, Taoism Sikhism, Herbruism, Jainism. Many people do not know the existence of various religions in the world. The author has given in a nutshell, the principles of various religions. The language is very readable.

We commend the services of the author and this book must find a place in every library so that every student may know the existence of various religions and they may try to respect each other.

—*The Coimbatore Times*,
Coimbatore.

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WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

SWAMI Sivananda has written a large number of books on the truth and spirit of Divine Life in its various aspects. People according to their temperaments, opportunities and stations in worldly life can profit by studying them, and more by trying to live what they state. For, after all, that is the test and justification of such writings and speeches.

The book under review is a compendium of all principal religions of the present-day world. The study deals with the subject in a systematic and succinct manner which is helpful both to the general reader and the specialist who desires to experiment with it in his or her own life. Each religion is briefly, but also fully explained in all its aspects; historical, philosophical, practical and ethical.

The inclusion of Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Shintoism is a happy idea, for in books of this kind they are either wholly omitted or dealt with in a comparatively scrappy manner. The introduction explains what real religion is. It maintains that real religion is the truth of man's relation to

God, that the various religions are but the expressions of that Truth, from time to time, according to the needs and conditions of places and persons, that all religions contain essentials and non-essentials, and that the former is the common Golden Link which establishes the fact of the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man which is realisable in practice through proper effort.

—M. S. M.,
Human Affairs, Udipi.

8. THE PERVASIVE POWER OF THE RELIGIOUS FEELING AND SIVANANDA'S RECIPE FOR THE SPREAD OF GOODWILL ON EARTH

THE religious instinct or the religious feeling is the strongest and the deepest of all feelings in man. All other feelings are acquired by the individual later on as he grows up into an adult in life, whereas, the religious instinct is deeply ingrained in the individual even from his very birth. Psychology will tell you that even parentally through heredity these deep-seated instincts of the parent's religious faiths and belief sink into the consciousness of infant individual. Therefore, you can imagine how very vital, how very strong this religious feeling is in man. To vitiate this sense with the misguided and false separatist tendency has been the great blunder of unthinking and hasty people. To transform this religious consciousness by the touchstone of love and of oneness will create amidst us such a great positive constructive power of sweet unity and harmony that it will immediately set to work in dissolving all differences, resolving all conflicts, ending all strifes and misunderstandings and giving to mankind in a large measure the sweetness of peace, concord, loving co-operation, harmony and prosperity for which you are all eagerly thirsting and panting. The task of building up a harmonious future of peace and goodwill upon earth can only be done by such concerted co-operative endeavour brought about by such a world-religious unity.

—Swami Sivananda's
Unity of Religions, p. 44.

9. SIVANANDA ASSISTS THE ENVISIONMENT OF THE REALIZATION OF HUMAN UNITY IN DIVINE ONENESS

IMAGINE a pure white canvas on which is drawn a beautiful evening scenery of a group of pilgrims sitting around a blazing fire by the side of a forest stream. How absurd would you think if the water in the picture felt hostile to the fire drawn thereon. For you know that these two factors are a mere creation, just a trick of a little paint and oil. Beneath it you find the one common canvas, pure, permanent and solid, under the passing play of colours. Beloved Immortal Self ! Rays of the same Divine Light ! Dwell for ever in the loving awareness of this sweet and glorious unity that throbs in the spiritual heart of the entire mankind. I pray to you—commit not the grave mistake of forgetting this central fact and losing yourself in external rituals, little

customs and conventions that seem to differ. For, if you do, you will be grasping the shadow and losing the substance. You will be helping invaluably in the noble cause of human solidarity if you will pledge yourself to feel this oneness, assert and manifest this oneness, and propagate and spread this message of unity everywhere.

—Swami Sivananda's
Unity of Religions, p. 43.

10. THE GIFTS FOR NON-SECTARIAN VIEWS, CATHOLICITY AND SCHOLARLY PRESENTMENT RENDER SIVANANDA'S WORK ON WORLD'S RELIGIONS A THING OF UTMOST DELIGHT AND ILLUMINATION TO ALL RELIGIONISTS

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

IN this book, Swami Sivananda has succeeded in throwing adequate light on the essentials of the principal religions of the world. There are eleven chapters dealing with (1) Hinduism, (2) Zorastrianism (3) Judaism, (4) Buddhism, (5) Christianity, (6) Islam, (7) Jainism, (8) Sikhism, (9) Confucianism (10) Taoism and (11) Shintoism.

The book is an evidence of the vast and varied scholarship of the writer as also of his extreme catholicity. There is nothing of that narrow sectarianism that generally characterises the preachers of religions. It is a book that will amply repay perusal.

—*The Indian Nation*, Patna.

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

TO understand and appreciate the fundamental unity behind the diverse religions of the world, the seeker of the true religion should have a grasp of the essential teachings of all religions. This invaluable book gives a lucid and comprehensive account of Hinduism, Zorastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Sufism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Shintoism. For a student of comparative religions as well as for the ordinary man who is dazed by the numerous religions, the book is invaluable.

—*The Sunday Times*,
Madras.

11. THE PERSPECTIVES OF SIVANANDA ON RELIGION AS THE LIFE IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE DIVINE, ON THE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY AND ON THE ATHEISTIC BELIEFS AS ENVIRONED IN LIMITATIONS AND DEFEATED BY THEIR OWN INNATE INADEQUACIES

THE MEANING OF RELIGION

RELIGION is the name given to one's attitude of life, based on the consciousness of the nature of one's relation to God or Oversoul. Religion is also, otherwise, called the attitude of life towards matter and spirit.

God is the deepest truth of the universe, and truth is one. Therefore, the axis of religion is essentially one and the same.

Religion presupposes a fundamental Existence, be it God, Consciousness, or Atman.

The cosmic process of creation and dissolution, through its scenes of appearance and disappearance, in the changing colours of life and death, drives home to mankind the lesson that this life is only an act in the process of *becoming*, where many parts are played by various individual entities, and yet no part by itself is complete and capable of giving the character of wholeness to this cosmic process.

Religion is the means that binds man to the cosmic whole, and shows that he is a part of the whole, trying to abide by the law of the whole, and aiming at the fulfilment of the common purpose of the constituents of the whole.

Self-realization is the ultimate goal of religion; all the rest is only a preparation.

Religion indicates that which has a practical bearing. It is assiduous spiritual practice for evolution. Mere ideological belief without a practical effort is no religion at all.

True, adherence to a particular creed or dogma can also be called practice of religion, but if it does not lead to harmonious self-development and realization of God, its purpose is fruitless.

Religion is focused into various practical modes which differ in accordance with the psychological constituents and the traditional and the cultural background of the individual. Yet, religion cannot merely be a set of opinions, dogmas and rituals, but life in the Eternal as its basic perspective. This perspective translated into practice leads one to the attainment of divine consciousness, freeing one from all limitations and imperfections.

Simple and practical religion is a life of righteousness, goodness, purity and selfless service. The pivot of religion is Truth or the Law of Eternal Virtue. Its precepts are: "Be good. Do good. Be kind. Be pure. Be compassionate. Love all. Serve all. See God in all". Such religion alone can awaken man to the consciousness of the unity of all existence and the realization of the Immanent Spirit, here and now.

* * *

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

RELIGION is not divorced from philosophical wisdom, nor is it alien to the spiritual science of the Self. If the Self is an established fact, and the knowledge of it is true, the way to it also is true and established. This established way is religion.

When religions are founded on non-essentials, on classes, climes, sentiments, idiosyncrasies and the practical needs of a particular society, of a limited part of humanity, they are bound to be cut off from each other. But, when it is known that man is not merely a body, that his ultimate demands are not peculiar to his personality alone, that the essential calls of the inner reality are similar to those in others, too, it will be found that the views of life cannot basically diverse and that, if all aim at a common experience of reality and perfection, their conduct in life can only be a preparation for that Supreme Experience-Whole. This preparation is the religious

life, though it may have many appellations and may pass through the moulds of temparamental peculiarities.

Let it not be thought that religion is a dogmatic, other-worldly, pet tradition of believers or irrational emotionalists. Religion is the most rational science of life itself. which no one can gainsay, the science of man as he essentially is, not merely as he presumes himself to be. Religion is the way to the realization of the highest perfection. If perfection is a possibility, religion is real and it is the only method befitting the human ideal.

Man can never live without God, for God is the Whole and man is only a part. Man's religion puts him in consonance with Truth. Religion is the form taken by the relation that is between man and God, the link between the lower and the higher natures in oneself. Man's own Higher Nature is God; his essence is the Real; his existence is universal and immortal. Religion is the way spiritual, the way to God. Religious life is spiritual life, a religious man is a spiritual man, for it is not possible to be religious without reverencing the Spirit that is one.

Philosophy has its root in the practical needs of man. Man wants to know about transcendental matters when he is in a reflective mood. There is an urge within him to know about the secret of death. the secret of immortality, the nature of the Soul, of the Creator, and of the world. Philosophy helps him to know all these. Philosophy is the self-expression of the growing spirit of man.

Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is an integral part of religion. It is a rational inquiry into the nature of Reality. It gives clear solution to get rid of pain and death and attain immortality and eternal bliss.

Religion and philosophy are twin-sisters; the relationship between them is very intimate. Most of the problems of philosophy are the problems of religion. While philosophy struggles to gain an intellectual understanding of the real nature of world, of man and of God, religion dynamically experiences the very Essence of all Existence. Philosophy is man's mental movement towards God or Truth or Reality, and religion is the movement of his heart and soul towards the same goal. Philosophy knows God; religion lives and moves in God. Philosophy is forever searching, inquiring, questioning; religion is sensing, realizing, experiencing.

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INADEQUACY OF ATHEISTIC BELIEFS

RELIGION presupposes belief, faith, conviction. No one can be irreligious in the ultimate analysis. Even the non-believer believes in his non-belief. Even the denier of God accepts the existence of the denier, i.e. himself. The question is, however, whether this type of attitude can meet the needs of the soul, of one's emotions, of the hunger of the spirit. Atheism or the naturalistic religion is a substituting belief. Nature is considered to be all-in-all. She is the mother, and man is the son. Religion, therefore, according to this view, is the relation between unconscious nature and conscious man. Bertrand Russell said that it is a wonder how the mother who is unconscious, i.e., Nature, has produced a son, i.e.,

man, who is conscious. It is not a wonder; it is a misconception. Because, nature is not unconscious, though we may accept that man is produced by nature. If nature is unconscious, man also would be unconscious. That means the universe would be blind. There would be no aspiration whatsoever. There would be no attitude of life because there is no consciousness. The naturalistic religion which is synonymous with atheism, because it denies the existence of God altogether, is a very poor substitute for what we mean by real religion. Man cannot get on for ever with this attitude. When the body is healthy, when the circumstances are good, when there is no difficulty whatsoever in life, apparently man with an audacity tries to deny the existence of a supernatural Power. But it is said that suffering is the basis of religion; it is the precondition of all true knowledge. Unless one comes to the consciousness of certain inadequacy in the conditions of life, unless he finds that something is wanting in his consciousness, in his experience, he will not reach God. His consciousness would not stretch towards God.

But this kind of aspiration towards the ideal which is not the actual, has been denied by another view of life which is called agnosticism. It is the brother of atheism. It is a kind of religion of certain people. They say that truth cannot be known; God cannot be known—He is not and can never be known. There may be God—the agnostic does not deny God, but he says religion is only an ideal which can never be realized. If religion is the relation of man to God, and if God cannot be realized, then religion is phantasm. But, this position of the agnostic is untenable from the very face of it. He says that Truth is not known. He is better than the atheist or the naturalist in this respect at least that he grants that there may be Truth—and there is a Truth—but his only contention is that it cannot be known; so, religion is futile. Why is this view untenable? Because it is illogical. When the agnostic accepts that there may be a Truth, he implies in his statement the possibility of knowing the Truth.

We cannot be conscious of a fact which is not contained in our consciousness. That which is outside our consciousness is not ours and we cannot speak about it, cannot think of it, can never have any relation to it. What is Truth? Truth is that which is perfection. It is complete. It is without the difficulties and imperfections and the wants and the inadequate conditions of life. That is Truth. It may not be possible to know it. Does It exist? We do not know. That is the answer of the agnostic. When we are conscious of our finitude; we are at the same time conscious of the existence of an infinitude. We cannot know the existence of a boundary unless we know that there is something beyond the boundary. We cannot know that we are suffering unless we know that there is a possibility of having another experience which is different from suffering. We cannot know that we are mortal unless there is some state which is immortal. We cannot know that we are men unless we know that there are others like us and different from us. Therefore the implications of agnosticism cannot overstep religion, though from the outside it appears to be a mistake but there are others who say that

we need not have such a difficulty at all. Agnosticism may be wrong; but religion is equally wrong. Why? We see that the agnostic is confined to the superfluous experience of life; and, because he does not admit the consciousness of something which exists, he is not correct. We say that the religionist who professes to be conscious of a direct relation between himself and what eternally exists also is equally incorrect. There is an antithesis to every thesis. We can prove anything, and disprove anything—that is the nature of the intellect, because the basis of the intellect is duality, and incomplete knowledge.

This leads to another view of life called scepticism. Everything is doubted. God is doubted; the nature of this world is doubted; experience itself is doubted. Our life ends in doubting! This is another substitute for religion. We do not know what is really right and what is really wrong. With this attitude how long can we live in this world? Evidently, there is one error in this statement of the sceptic. It is a specious argument. He doubts everything; but he does not doubt his own position. He is confident that what he thinks is true. Though he calls himself a sceptic, he is not sceptic about his own position. He goes beyond scepticism when he asserts that scepticism is the perfect substitute for religion. If that also is doubted we will be mad. Truly, there is a doubter. He is the basis of religions. He is eternally conscious of himself. That doubter cannot be dispensed with as an unconscious being, because what is unconscious cannot even doubt. Therefore, scepticism, too, is a feeble and completely unsatisfactory substitute for religion.

—Swami Sivananda's
Parliament of Religions Commemoration Volume.
pp. 628-631.

12. THE POETRY OF LIFE IN RELATION TO THE PAGEANTRY OF THE GREAT REVELATIONS IN RELIGION

LIFE is something grand and majestic, full of meaning and purpose. It has a profound philosophy and a grand goal. It is an immortal dance of beauty on the stage of eternal truth and goodness. It is a self-luminous luminosity, a self-sufficient entity. It is wisdom to know and speak of life as a realm of reality and a centre of joy in itself. This truth of life cannot be proved by the help of our senses or by anything in the phenomenal world, but can only be experienced in the deepest recess of on's own heart of awareness. The very nature of the individual life is to expand itself into the unlimited vastness of the Infinite, to be seated in the heart of all, to govern the life of all, to rule the universe from within, to wield perfect power and bliss.

The purpose of our life here is to dance to the rhythm of the beat of the Eternal Heart of the Supreme Beloved, to become identical with the Light of Truth and thus live the fullest life, the divine life, a life in God, breathing eternal youth and unfading freshness, moving in limitless wisdom and peace.

Every phase of life has in it some poetry; every facet of life glows with the Eternal

light of Truth ; every storm and stress of life is rich with the splendour of spiritual glory. The whole world is throbbing with the consciousness of God who is the source and end of all that is. Man's duty consists in being in harmony with this all-pervading principle of God.

This innermost immenent principle within all existence, the highest spiritual consciousness that is latent in all, is a pure unity without parts, a unique homogeneity admiting of no differences. To guide and help us experience this One Undivided Essence, the immortal masters of all religions have handed down to us beaconlights of Mahavakyas or great utterances embodying their innermost experience, which contain in themselves the quintessence of all the spiritual wisdom necessary for the world. A few are given for comparison and meditation.

Buddhism : Buddham Saranam Gacchami. Dhammam Saranam Gacchami. Sangam Saranam Gacchami.

Christianity : "I and my Father are One."

Confucianism : The three secrets of happiness are to see no evil, to hear no evil, and to do no evil.

Hinduism : Tat Twam Asi-"That thou art",

Jainism : Ahimsa Parmo Dharma.-Non-injury is the highest religion.

Judaism : Be still and know that I am God.

Mohamadanism : La Illaha Illullah-Mahomed Rasullullah. There is no God but Allah-and Mahomad is the Messenger of Allah.

Sikhism : Ek Omkar, Satnam : There is but one God. His Name is Truth.

Sufism : Anal Haq-"I am God."

Shintoism : Prayer is of the foremost importance in appealing for the Divine Grace.

Taoism : Tao is everywhere. It is priceless treasure. It is the Guardian and Saviour. It is the Sanctuary where all beings find refuge.

Zorastrianism : He is but the same one God, but men give Him diverse names, Hoomta, Hookta, Havareshta. Mansni, Gavasni, Kunasni—Pure thought, pure words, pure deeds.

These Mahavakyas summarise and reveal the central truth in all religions, the essence of all paths to perfection, the goal of all wisdom and spiritual practices, of the oneness of life and self and of the nature of Truth, which is free from all change, impersonal and all-pervading. These Mahavakyas or great sentences, are the master-key to the manifestation of the perfection of the soul, the unveiling of the Essential Nature of the Self. A continuous repetetion of any one of these Mahavakyas awakens the inherent spiritual consciousness within us. Profound meditation on these Mahavakyas generates a tremendous force in life, which causes the realisation of the truth of the Absolute.

—Swami Sivananda's
Unity of Religions, pp. 83-85.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE PRIMACY AND THE PREDOMINANCE OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE IN SIVANANDA'S RELIGION OF THE HEART

SIVANANDA

—And the Emergence into Conscious Life, of the Religious Awareness a Constitutional Necessity of the Human Individual Within the Fold, or Outside the Circle, of the Creedal Circumstance, and its Processes of Progression a Matter of Inwardness and Inner Experience, and Its Destination Is Laid Through the Avenues of Ultimate Values and Finds Its Seat of Rest and Crown of Perfection upon the Bosom of the Infinite As the Beloved, the Supreme Godhead—

The daring of the discovering spirit, the boldest marches of the superior mind, the dynamic spirit of spiritual adventure, an ever-seeking idea bent on breaking the barriers of the complacency and routine of rational awareness, the movement of the most profound perceptions insisting on the insufficiency of the merely intellectual, the efforts of the unknown parts of the creative intelligence that seize on flashes, insights, intimations, intuitions, illuminations, and test their power and value in life,—are activities arising from those sources of consciousness that lie beyond the reach and comprehension of the insolent spirit dressed in the assertions of the fixed formulas of modern knowledge of the mere processes of phenomena. Not binding itself in its field of discriminating investigation to a restricted study either of the deliverances of sensible experiences, or of the data of the interesting phases of higher psychological phenomena, the religious intelligence of the aspirant, with its skill, subtlety and intensity of understanding highly heightened in all directions of their spiritual activity, by prolonged practices in a powerful Yogic discipline, releases into a dynamic functioning its fundamental capacity for experiencing the world of being in our realms of becoming, works from dimensions above our four-dimensional space-time continuum, deals with the hidden essences of all manifested things that determine their processes and surface expressions which alone are open to the most scrupulous search and utilitarian exploitation by the pragmatic human reason and scientific technique, and holds in its own being the experience of the existence of Consciousness as such, *Consciousness-in-itself, or Consciousness as an Infinity of Dear Delight.*

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE PRIMACY AND THE PREDOMINANCE OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE IN SIVANANDA'S RELIGION OF THE HEART

1. BY A LONG CHAIN OF SUSTAINED REASONING, SIVANANDA SEEKS TO ESTABLISH HIS SPLENDID THESIS ON REAL RELIGION AS THE GREATEST COMMON FACTOR AND UNIVERSALLY UNIFYING FORCE IN THE WORLD, AND LAYS THE FOUNDATIONS FOR HIS OWN RELIGION OF THE HEART

IN this world of phenomenon, the general rule is that the subtle is veiled or covered over by the gross. The truth or the inner essence of anything is hidden by its outward appearance. The 'Tattwa' is hidden by the 'Nama' and 'Rupa'. To perceive the inner truth, the underlying essence, you will have to combine observation with discrimination and impartial enquiry. If you fail to do this, you will get but a superficial glimpse of things and miss the substance thereof. Religion is no exception to this rule. The real import is not properly understood by a great many, precisely because of the above-mentioned reason. The sincere inquiry into the true implication of religion is conspicuous by its absence. Thus religion, from being rightly understood in its true light as the greatest common factor and universally unifying force in the world, has come to be misunderstood and mis-construed as a disruptive element that is at the bottom of many a quarrel, conflict and warfare, too. Many would readily quote history, remote as well as recent, to support this opinion. The term Universality with reference to religion will perhaps evoke a sceptic smile in many. I would laugh at such scepticism, for, they err in the same way as a man seeing a coloured Diwali lamp takes the external coloured glass to be the real lamp and fails to perceive the pure white light.

Universality is the greatest characteristic of true religion. This fact is not affected by the vote or opinion of the non-discriminating man. When I say true religion, I mean religion in its pure essentials and not its conventional conception. The universality of religion does not lie in the rituals, external marks or traditional observances, nor in the personal apparel and social customs adopted by followers of particular aspects of religious life. These are but its ever changeable surface appearances. But a little reflection and inquiry will reveal to us the unmistakable truth that religion is the root impulse in the heart of every human being. Religious sense is one that is common to the entire mankind. Because, this religious sense or religious feeling springs out

of the very fact of your being a man. At its basis religion constitutes the primal spiritual 'urge to Self-awareness' of the eternal principle in man. This, principle throbs in the heart of all. All the religions and faiths that ever existed and exist today are but slightly varying processes for the development and consummation of this fundamental universal urge towards the one Infinite source and origin of all life. It is, therefore, the one fundamental aspect of human consciousness. All the other aspects of man's consciousness, such as that of sex, of age, of caste, parentage, pedigree, position and power, religions group or political party, all these are acquired by the individual later on in life as he grows up and develops individuality and becomes an adult. These aspects depend upon factors external to him. They change when things change. They also change when the individual alters his thoughts, mode of living, or his philosophy and view of life. A Hindu youth falls in love with and marries a Christian girl. He begins to live and move like a Christian. An Indonesian lady marries a Hindu and begins to feel entirely like a Hindu lady. A Japanese professor domiciled in America voluntarily becomes a citizen of U.S.A. After some years he becomes oblivious of his previous political consciousness. Count Leo Tolstoy, the high noble man, completely transformed himself into a peasant. We see how these outer layers or "Upadhis" (as the Sanskrit term goes) are easily shed by man, as they are later acquired from this world. But you cannot shake off your Soul-consciousness, as this matter springs from the depths of your nature within. And real religion is the method of awakening and making manifest this Soul-consciousness. At different times in human history, divinely inspired beings, the prophets and world teachers, appeared and presented this self-same method of inward awakening and attainment in a form peculiarly suited to the need of the people of that time. But always the aim and the inner process has been, now is and will for ever be, the same to all mankind everywhere and at all times.

The spiritual being of man is Atman. This Atman is Sat-Chit-Ananda. It is also ineffable peace. Ayam atma shanth. Shantam, Shivam, Shubham, Sundaram, Advaitam. Peaceful, Auspicious, the Best, Beauty, Radiance, Non-dual : such is the nature of the Atmic experience. To manifest these is, therefore, the essence of true religion. It is the concern of religion to eliminate the evil in man's personality, to develop in himself all that is sublime, good, auspicious and beautiful. Religion does this by first laying down upon the seeker the practice of a perfect good life. All religion is based upon the foundation of Sadachar. Moral rectitude and ethical perfection form the universal basis of every religion the world has seen so far. Be good, do good, be kind, be pure, be compassionate, be tolerant, serve, love, give, form its prime principles. One important aspect of universality is thus found in the starting rungs of its practical ascent. The beautiful anecdote of Abu-ben Adam, the moving story of Ranti Deva, the Biblical narrative of the good Samaritan and the sublime depiction of Gautama, the Buddha, at the sacrifice of King Bimbisara, all serve to bring out most beautifully and effectively the universal nature of the true essential religious consciousness. The unvarying insistence upon the practical acquirement of the Daivi Sampad or godly traits like

purity, truth, compassion, universal love, forbearance, humility, absence of anger, spirit of brother-hood, self-denial, selfless service and sacrifice, form yet another beautiful golden bond of universalism in practical religious life. The conquest of brute passions, of lust and sensuality, control of the senses and the renunciation of greed, covetousness, attachments, desires, of pride and egoism, all of which go to form the indispensable part of practical religion, are further aspects of universal prevalance in all true religious life.

Real religion awakens man to the consciousness of the unity of all existence and a perception of one Spiritual Essence that pervades everywhere and indwells every being. To bestow the highest perfection, the highest knowledge and the highest bliss of Self-Experience is the meaning of life. The craving for knowledge, for undiminishing joy and abiding peace is inherent in every human being. The unceasing struggle, consciously or otherwise, to attain the above state is part and parcel of life. To bestow the bliss of this attainment is the main concern of religion. *Thus its universality is seen in the fact of its being the root urge throbing in the heart of all human kind and human life being the active expression of this urge.* Its universality further lies in the fact that in its fundamentals the round-up of world religions reveals but a single, simple pathway to Blissful, unity, the pathway to peace, here and hereafter, to brotherhood and universal selfhood. Isa Vasyam Idam Sarvam; Sarvam Brahmamayam, are expressions of this experience. The religious sense, therefore, makes all mankind kin. It enfolds all mankind in a warm embrace of spiritual oneness. Such unification alone could be vital, effective and abiding, for, through religion you link up man to man at the deepest abiding and essential root part of his spiritual personality. This consciousness interpenetrates entire humanity like a beautiful golden thread running silently through all the numerous beads of variegated hue that go to make a necklace. No conflict or divergence in any superficial part of man has any power to mar this sweet spiritual unity, if only you wake up to a full appreciation of this fundamental fact. When religion is thus perceived in its true essence, then the Christian, the Muslim, the Hindu, the Buddhist. the Jain and the Parsee will feel themselves not as any particular religionists but as brother souls proceeding together in perfect harmony along the pathway to perfection and bliss. They will feel their identity of aspirations, of the inner Sadhana and the identity of their spiritual aim. The right view of religion will unfailingly make it into a powerful unifying factor by making the entire mankind feel as one through perfect identity of aspiration, endeavour and ultimate attainment.

Blessed Self, understand, therefore, the true import of religion. Know religion in its proper light. Let not personal bias, force of conventions, opinion of fanatic or dogmatic persons, blind your vision into a narrow view of religion. Embrace, therefore, this religion of heart that helps to link you with the one common source and origin of all existence. Religion is one for all human beings. It is one, universal and eternal.

—Swami Sivananda's
Radio Talks, pp. 61-75.

2. SIVANANDA—THE SOURCES OF HIS RENOWN REST UPON THE VASTNESS AND THE VALUE OF HIS CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD'S SPIRITUAL LITERATURE

WORLD'S RELIGIGNS :

IN this attractive book, Swami Sivananda whose contribution to the spiritual literature of the world, is very great, in several respect, makes a comparative study of the prominent religions of the world and clearly shows how the essence of all these is the same, although their non-essentials differ. Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Zorastrianism, Tcaism, Confucianism, Sikhism, Hebraism and Jainism have all been analysed and as the result they present a common basis of acceptance for human evolution along well-defined spiritual channels. In these days of religious fanaticism leading to strife, hatred and murders, a study of the book by everyone who can read, is bound to remove the mist and veil through which man looks at man and present the reality which permits everyone to blend one's ideas with those of the others for individual and collective happiness in its higher sense. As the Swamiji correctly avers, "Religion is ultimately of Divine Origin." The transmitters of truths, emphasied aspects of religions at different periods and countries for specific objects. If this truth is realised by followers of the so-called differing religions it is bound to transform human relationship in a manner calculated to ensure peace and piety alround. The world is passing through gloom and fear and the destination of man is indeed hurried amidst the unnatural and irreligious currents and crosscurrents to which man still hugs as his refuge and end. The result is writ large everywhere. From the mirage, man has to turn to his own ultimate destiny. It is here that spiritual teachers make their presence felt. Swami Sivananda, the spiritual volcano offers from the depths and stillness of Himalays, a panacea, the only one, by which man can redeem himself and become all-powerful. It will certainly help people to tread the rightful path of the Swamiji's prescriptions are applied. The book under review is specially important as in it, members of the different religions will find the essential unity of all religions amidst the apparent diversity. The book may with great advantage be prescribed for study in educational institutuions in India. It will give the necessary right training to boys and girls to perceive the gold embedded in the differing and diverse faiths.

—*The Champian*, Calicut.

3. THE ORIGINS, THE NATURE AND THE IDEALS OF SIVANANDA'S RELIGION

1. COSMIC LOVE SIVANANDA'S CREED

GOD is my creed.
Cosmic love is my creed.
Selfless service is my creed.
Brotherhood is my creed.
Sacrifice and renunciation are my creed.
Fellowship and unity are my creed.

Equal vision and equanimity are my creed
Worship of truth is my creed.

2. SIVANANDA'S ART OF LIFE IN THE DIVINE

I HAVE no dogmas and no sectarian creed.
I teach the Way of Life Divine—
The art of Living in a righteous manner.
Beat the drum of Dharma, or the Life Divine.
Hoist the flag of Dharma, or the Life Divine.
Blow the conch of Dharma, or the Life Divine.
Enter the illimitable domain of Bliss Eternal.

3. THE IDEALS IN SIVANANDA'S RELIGION

TO raise the fallen, to lead the blind.
To share what I have with others,
To bring solace to the afflicted,
To cheer up the suffering,—
Are my religious ideals.
To have perfect faith in God,
To love my neighbours as my own Self,
To love God with all my heart and soul,
To protect animals, women and children,-
Are my religious aims.
My watchword is Love.
The Religion of love.
Is my practical Religion.

4. SIVANANDA'S RELIGIOUS UNIVERSALITY IN LIFE AND ACTION

I SING the names of all saints of all religions.
I respect all cults, faiths and creeds.
I serve all, love all, mix with all,
And see the Lord in all.
I stick to my promises.
I serve the poor ; this is my delight.
I do mental prostrations even to asses,
Dogs, trees, bricks, stones and all that exists.
I respect elders and Sadhus ; I obey
My religious convictions.
Which always find expression through my actions.

5. TRAITS THAT TEXTURE THE LIFE RELIGIOUS

I am a strange mixture of service, devotion, Yoga and Jnana.
I practise and advocate the 'Yoga of Synthesis'.
I practise Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya.
(Truth, non-injury and purity),
I love nature, music, art, poetry,
Philosophy, beauty, goodness, solitude,
Meditation, Yoga and Vedanta.
Through these religion is revealed.
I am humble and simple.
I am frank and straightforward.
I am perfectly tolerant and catholic.
I am merciful and sympathetic.
I have spontaneous and unrestrained generosity.
I am bold and cheerful.
I am immensely patient.
I can bear insult and injury.
I am forgiving, and bear no ill-will.
I am free from vindictive nature.
I return good for evil.
I serve with joy the man who has injured me.
I expect these traits in every religious aspirant.
He who possesses these qualities.
Is a man of religion.

—Swami Sivananda's
Parliament of Religions, Commemoration Volume, p. 626.

4. ESTEEMED A GOD BY THE MILLIONS, SIVANANDA IS ESSENTIALLY A DISTRIBUTOR OF LOVE AND A DISSEMINATOR OF WISDOM WHO EMPLOYS A LOGIC ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE ACUMEN OF A SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHER AND AN EFFECTIVE METHOD ASCRIBABLE TO AN ABLE PROPAGANDIST

DOON LECTURES :

SWAMI Sivananda has been scattering the seeds of wisdom all over India. His message is the message of all the seers and sages of ancient India. He is looked upon as a god by millions all over India. In his first lecture entitled, 'Advice to Aspirants' he demands from all, an integral surrender of self to the will of God. He quotes from "Swetaswara Upanishad", the following:

"He who has supreme devotion to God, and has intense devotion to the Guru as he has to God, unto him are the truths of the Upanishads revealed." He is perfectly correct when he states, "Peace is for the desireless."

Swamiji in refuting the argument of an atheist states—"Existence is God. The doubter exists. The denial of God exists." About Samadhi he states—"during the state of consciousness in the Divine, all names and forms vanish and time and space melt away. Feeling of intense bliss in infinite void cannot be expressed in words."

Swami Sivananda seems to have separate prescriptions or directions for separate types or personalities. One wonders how the sage of Rishikesh discusses astounding things, in so fascinating a way.

—*The Amrit Bazar Patrika,*
Calcutta.

5. THE HEART OF A GOD-INTOXICATED SAINT AND THE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AS THE EPIC THEME OF HIS RELIGION OF LOVE

1. SOME ESSENTIALS OF RELIGIONS

THERE is one Supreme Being—
He is Existence, Knowledge and Bliss,
Absolute.
He is the Indweller of all beings;
In Him alone can we find Eternal
Bliss,
Everlasting Peace and Immortality.
Attain Him through Self realisation,
Purification of heart, faith, devotion,
And ceaseless meditation.
Share with others what you have.
Love all, serve all, be kind to all.
Feel His Presence everywhere.
These are the essentials of religions.
The fundamentals of all religions are the
same.
Only the non-essentials differ.
It corresponds to Sadachara,
Or right-conduct of Hinduism.
The 'Sermon on the Mount' in the Bible
Corresponds to the Noble Eight-fold path
of Buddhism
And the Sadachara of Hinduism.
All these aim at ethical perfection.
There is God or the Supreme Being;
In Him alone you will find supreme
Peace,

Ete nal Bliss, Freedom, Perfection and
Immortality,

2. CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION

NEVER hurt others' feelings.
Speak the truth
Do not kill any sentient being.
Cultivate divine virtues.
Love all. Be kind to all.
Be good ; do good ; be charitable.
Purify the heart ; serve humanity.
Share with others the best you have.
Love your neighbour as your own self.
Cultivate universal brotherhood.
Destroy all barriers
That separate and divide humanity.
These are the essentials of all religions.

3. CONDITIONS THAT GOVERN RELIGION AS A WAY OF REALIZATION

ERASE egoism, likes and dislikes ;
Annihilate lust, greed and anger ;
Cultivate divine virtues ;
Abandon evil qualities ;
Control the senses and the mind ;
Give up desires, cravings and 'mine-ness;'
Have perfect faith in God,
In the Scriptures and in the advice of
your Guru ;
Practise non-injury, veracity and
celibacy ;
Enquire 'Who am I ?';
Know the Self, and be free.
This is true religion.
To be just, to be friendly to everyone.
To be sincere and true to oneself,
To meditate on the Immortal Self within,
To be good and to do good to all
And make others happy,
To comfort the sick and the afflicted,
To serve the poor,—
Is indeed the real religion.
Real religion is not
A mere intellectual assent
To a certain creed or dogma.
It is *realisation* and *becoming*.
He who has equal vision and balanced
mind
Under all conditions and circumstances
Is truly religious.

4. SIVANANDA'S EPIC THEME OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

I

Behind all names and forms is the one,
nameless, formless Essence.
Behind all agencies is the one, supreme
Governor.
Behind all lights is the one Light of
Satchidananda.
Behind sounds there is the soundless,
supreme Silence.
Behind all teachers is the one, supreme
Divine Teacher.
Thou art That—*Tat Twam Asi*, O Ram !

II

Behind all these perishable things is the
one, imperishable Absolute.
Behind all these motions is the one,
motionless Infinite.
Behind time, minutes and days, is the
one, timeless Eternity
Behind hatred, riots and wars, is the one
hidden, all consuming Love.
Thou art That, *Tat Twam Asi*. O Ram !

III

The essence of religion
Is tolerance and Self-Knowledge.
Religion is not acclaimed by
Marks on the forehead,
Matted locks and long beard,

Standing in the hot sun or in ice-cold water.
Not orange-coloured robe,
Not shaven head,
Neither customary rituals,
Nor elaborate, priestly devotions
Proclaim the true religion.
But a life of goodness, purity, service detachment and selflessness
Is the true religious life.

—Swami Sivananda's
Parliament of Religions Commemoration Volume, pp. 96-97.

6. SIVANANDA ON THE ASCENDENCY OVER CREEDAL ENCRUSTMENTS, AND THE CLAIMS, OF THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE AS THE SOUL AND SPEECH OF ALL RELIGIONS

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

ALL religions contain a mixture of truth which is divine and error which is human. The fundamentals or essentials of all religions are the same and the difference is only in the non-essentials. All religions have sacraments, Samskaras, and Sunnats. All use physical appliances to help concentration of the mind during devotion like the Mala and the rosary. All have Japa, Azkar and litannies. Their agreement is so great that the followers of the several religions all agree in the disastrous error of saying also "My religion is the only true religion".

We are led astray by the desire for finality for a creed which can be formulated for a theory of things which logically constrains assent. It is hard for us to understand that ultimate reality which transcends all forms and which is the most emancipative of all philosophical conception. We surround ourselves with fixed horizons of thought, and everyone of us is apt to imagine his own horizon is the boundary line of existence.

Self-contemplation is the life of the mystic and the saint. Whether we know it or not we are being challenged by the problem of reality. Swami Sivananda points out that Love is the positive pole or reality, the inner essence of things in and through which all are to be one in the ultimate analysis.

—*The Hindu*,
Madras.

7. RELIGION AS SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE—THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SIVANANDA'S RELIGION

RELIGION AS THE EXPERIENCE OF SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

THE essence of religion lies in the immediate experience of the Divine. The blissful experience is obtained by regular Sadhana. Religion is realization, not religious observances nor doctrines nor theories. Religion is not mere belief or ringing of bells or blowing conches. It is the attainment and realisation of the Divine Wisdom and the Divine Consciousness.

Man becomes God through discipline, self-restraint and meditation. This is religion. Religion is assiduous spiritual practice and Self-realization.

Real religion awakens man to the consciousness of the unity of all existence and a perception of the one spiritual Essence in all beings.

Mere intellectual assent cannot make one really religious. Religion is not in books; it is direct realisation of God or the Atman. It is freedom from ignorance, illusion, fear, doubt, grief and delusion. It gives the solution for the riddle of life and death here. The religious ideal inspires man to find God and search into the Nature of the Transcendental Self and realise it.

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of the Himalayas,
pp. 256-260.

* *

FUNDAMENTALS OF SIVANANDA'S RELIGION

LOVE all. Serve all. Practise self-restraint. Be pure. Be virtuous. Be tolerant. Be selfless. Do Charity. Share what you have with others. Have faith and devotion. Meditate on God.—These are the fundamentals of the religion of daily experience.

—Swami Sivananda's
Voice of the Himalayas, p. 258.

* * *

REAL religion is above mind and senses;
Real religion is Self-realization.
The essence of religion is love and unity.
Ram or Raheem is the same for me.
Krishna or Kareem is the same for me.
God or Allah has no difference for me.
Ahur Mazda or Jehovah I consider the same.
I accept and respect saints and prophets.
I respect all *gurus, pirs,* and friars.
I find the underlying truth in all religions.

* * *

There is only one caste;
The caste of humanity.
There is only one religion;
The religion of Love or the religion of oneness.
There is only one Dharma;
The Dharma of Truthfulness.
There is only one Law;
The Law of Cause and Effect.
There is only one God;
The omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent Lord.
There is only one Language;
The Language of the Heart or the Language of Silence.

—Swami Sivananda's
Parliament of religions Commemoration Volume
p. 625, 97.

8. STEP BY STEP, SIVANANDA MAINTAINS HIS ARGUMENT ON RELIGION, IN ITS ESSENTIAL SPIRIT, AS THE SOURCE AND THE INSPIRATION OF ALL THE GOOD IN THE WORLD

RELIGION produces a living influence on the heart and life of a person. It affords spiritual food for the mind. It transforms man into divinity. It is life divine. It melts, purifies and changes the heart.

The foundation of religion is faith, Its superstructure is Self-realization. Its walls are holiness, truthfulness, purity and non-injury. Discrimination, dispassion, serenity, self-restraint, one-pointedness of mind, and aspiration are the bricks. Love is the cement.

Social customs and conventions have been wrongly given the status of religion by ignorant people. These social customs and conventions are changing from time to time, according to the needs of the society or the exigencies of the occasion for the preservation of the society and the spiritual well-being of the individuals, according to the evolution of the age.

You cannot call social customs and conventions as religion. Religion is eternal and unchanging. If you strictly follow it, it will lead you to eternal bliss and freedom from the trammels of birth and death.

If man always remembers the essential unity of all selves, if he is religious, if he has really understood that all beings are one, that all are children of one God, if he has knowledge of the law of Karma, the teachings of saints, prophets and seers, if he has understood the illusory nature of this world—he will never think of doing any harm to others in thought, word or deed. He will never manufacture bombs. He will never think of aggrandisement. He will be ever leading the life divine and be happy for ever. He will be ever serving others. He will contribute all his powers towards the happiness of others.

Irreligious life is the cause of war and riots. Irreligious life is the cause for restlessness, power-politics, party-politics, murder, arson and all sorts of disgraceful, abominable, heaven-closing, brutal acts.

A truly religious man is a veritable blessing on this earth. He is a cementing, synthetic force. He is all love. His heart is filled with mercy, kindness and affection. He is a blessed peace-maker. He is a super-man.

Quoting scriptures will not make one religious. Taking one meal a day, the bending of the knee, standing on the head for three hours or on one leg till sunset, practising Vajroli or Nauli, or doing Tratak on the sun, will not make one religious. Religious life is a life of rigorous discipline. It is the annihilation of the lower self and the development of a rich life of fullness in the Eternal.

If you take away religion, man would live for no purpose. There is no living without religion. It is only religion that makes existence valuable and fills the mind with love, devotion, serenity and cheerfulness. True religion shows its influence on every part of your conduct and makes your life sublime and divine. Religion is the tie that links man with his Creator.

Religion is the foundation of society, the source of all goodness and happiness, the basis of virtue and prosperity of the individual and, through the individual, of the nation. Civilization, law, order, morality and all that elevates man and gives peace to the nation are the fruits of the practice of religion.

Religion teaches men their close relationship with God and produces in them the awakening of divine-consciousness It generates in them vigorous, sublime

thoughts. Religion is mixed up with your very being and daily life. It gives you security, perennial joy and a new hope when all mundane hopes disappear.

Religious life is the greatest of all blessings. It lifts man from the mire of worldliness, impurity and infidelity. Intellect is vain if it is not illuminated by religion. Religion does what philosophy can never do. If you live in accordance with the rules of religion, you will attain wisdom, immortality, ever-lasting peace and eternal bliss. You will become the wisest, the best, the happiest among all living beings.

Religion is the supreme home of undying peace. It is the goal to which all things tend. It is the impregnable citadel of virtue, purity and ever lasting bliss. It is an imperishable fortress which cannot be destroyed by any number of atomic bombs.

Religion is not a dogma. It is not merely a belief, or emotion. It is not merely a little prayer which one does when he suffers from severe intestinal colic or chronic dysentery. It is pre-eminently life in the ever-lasting Silence. It explains to the ignorant the nature of the Unseen and shows the way to realize God.

—Swami Sivananda in his *Parliament of Religions, Commemoration Volume*, pp. 73-74.

9. BY THE PRESENTMENT OF AN OPULENT TREASURE-TROVE OF ILLUMINATION ON WORLD'S LIVING RELIGIONS, SIVANANDA SETS A PRECEDENCE IN THE ART OF EXPOUNDING THE RELIGIONS BY A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THEIR INNER CONTENT

WORLD'S RELIGIONS:

"Religion !" What treasure untold resides in that heavenly word, more precious than silver and gold, or all that this earth can afford", so sang the poet. And yet, looking at the world's history, we find that nothing is more responsible for the great atrocities committed on this earth, than those committed in the sacred name of religion. This is due to man's ignorance of religion, and all that it conveys. While religions teach, all in their turn, righteousness, truth, love, faith and man's regard for God and man, there are recorded in the chronicles of this world numerous instances of hatred, bigotry, cruelty, faithlessness and treachery, all unreligious and ungodly.

World's Religions is, therefore, a book which provides for its readers short outlines of all known religions in this world. Written by Swami Sivananda, an erudite scholar and a great saint of our own times, the book has a precious message to give to men and women of all religions. Beginning with the great Iranian prophet Zoroaster, the first and the most ancient of all world-teachers, the book deals briefly with the teachings of other prophets and founders of faiths who followed him at other times in other lands.

The book is a beautiful presentation of All-in-one and One-in-all. A very careful and conscientious attempt has been made by Swamiji, to show how a golden thread

passes through the different religions, and how Zoroastrianism has proved the parent source of all latter-day religions and faiths. Those who are not fortunate enough to acquaint themselves with the original teachings of the Avasta, the Geeta, the Bible (Old and New Testaments), the Koran and books on several other religions and faiths, will find in this book a wealth of information and illumination stored in one place, in a competent and readable form.

—*India International*,
Bombay-14

10. THE SUFI MYSTICS AND VEDANTIC SANNYASINS—THE IDENTITY IN THEIR UTTERANCES AND CHARACTERISTICS—SIVANANDA'S RELIGION OF THE HEART AND ITS OBJECTIVE OF SELF-REALISATION

Sufism is the religion of love with Madhurya Bhava, with the concepts of the lover and the Beloved. Lal Shahbaz, Mansoor, Shams Tabriez, Sachal, Rohal, Dalpat, Shah Inayet, Shah Latif, Bulleh Shah, Hafiz, Rumi, Jami were all Sufistic mystics.

The Sufistic saints are as liberal and catholic as the Vedantic Sannyasins. They are mystic saints. They are devotional. Their utterances or sayings have a wonderful directness, freshness, spontaneous loveliness and charm.

The Sufi mystic sees the Lord in all. He experiences cosmic vision, beholds his Beloved everywhere and in all objects. He has no sense of possession, is free from egoism, lust, greed, anger, pride. He is perfectly passionless and enjoys perfect peace and poise. His state is beyond description. He is like the Jivanmukta or the living liberated sage. He terms the heart as the palace of the Beloved. He does not care for dogmas, or doctrines, creeds or sects. He has attained Parabhakti or the supreme devotion.

—Swami Sivananda's
World's Religions. p. 105.

* * *

RELIGION, in effect, begins with the opening of the eye of intuition. Intuition leads to God-realisation. Religious discipline aims at the opening of the eye of intuition. Before this stage is reached there is confusion. The intellect sees many diverse religious paths. The heart is seduced by worldly motives and religious differences arise. But really all religious quarrels are intellectual or emotional, resulting from clashes of worldly motives. If these motives are shunned, the religion of faith takes man safe to intuition along one of the paths built by saints and sages. The conditions of successful journey up to intuition on any path, whether it lies through Arabia of Mohammed or Jerusalem of Christ or the Gangetic Himalayan Rishikesh, are the same, i.e. Truth, Purity, Love, etc. They are like food and water for the traveller. The only basis of true and lasting unity of all humanity is the religion of the heart. Religion of the heart is the religion of love. Men can be united only if they are free from jealousy, hatred and petty-mindedness. Heart must be purified first. Ethical culture is of paramount importance. Self-realization eliminates fear altogether. Real religion is

Self-realization. Real religion is the conquest of fear and death.

—Swami Sivananda's
Unity of Religions. p. 24.

11. NONPAREIL AMONG THE GREAT RELIGIOUS WRITERS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, SIVANANDA BEARS A POWER BORN OF GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS AND AN APPEAL EMANATING FROM THE DIRECTNESS OF HIS APPROACH TO THE CENTRAL ISSUES OF LIFE AND THOUGHT

WORLD'S RELIGIONS :

SWAMI Sivananda, the Sage of Rishikesh, is an outstanding figure in the religious world and has written a number of religious and other books which are all remarkable for their directness of approach and clarity of exposition. The book under notice presents an elementary idea about the conceptions of God, essential principles, and teachings of the eleven great religions of the world, viz., Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Toaism and Shintoism, and discusses their fundamental doctrines, specialities, scriptures ethical views, and so on. The introduction to the book contains a convincing account of how all the streams of religions have taken their rise from Asia and are directly traceable to the Vedas. The book is written in an interesting way and is a most readable volume.

—*The Industry*,
Calcutta.

12. FOR PURPOSES OF A DISCLOSURE OF THE ONTOLOGICAL DIMENSION IN THE EVENTS OF EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE, SIVANANDA REQUISITIONS THE SERVICES OF AN AWAKENED ACTIVITY OF EVERYMAN'S REASON AND REFLECTION

ALTHOUGH everything is transitory in this world, people purchase enormous plots of land, build bungalows in various places and erect five-storied houses. They want to establish eternal life in this sense-universe. This shows that man is essentially immortal. In spite of the knowledge that everyone has to die, man thinks that he will live for ever and makes very grand arrangements to live here perpetually. Further, nobody wants death. Everybody wants to live, and takes treatment when ill, spending any amount. Hence, the essential nature of man should be eternal existence.

Even a fool thinks that he is wise. Everyone wants to show that he knows more than others. Nobody likes to be called a fool. Children tease their parents with various sorts of questions. The desire to know is ingrained in them. These indicate that our essential nature is knowledge.

When a man laughs, people seldom ask why he is laughing. On the other hand

when a man cries, everybody asks why he is crying. This shows that our essential nature is bliss. No one wants misery but everyone wants happiness, and all one's activities in life are directed towards the acquisition of happiness. This also proves that our real nature is bliss. In deep sleep when there are no objects, senses or mind, we feel bliss; hence our essential nature should be bliss. That again is the reason why people ailing from painful maladies even desire to give up their bodies and thus get rid of the pain.

If everyone then is of the nature of existence-knowledge-bliss, there should be an all-pervading principle having these characteristics and different from the perishable, inert, pain-giving physical bodies. Therefore, Brahman or God, whose nature is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda), should exist.

The existence of God or the Self is determined or indicated by the existence of the Upadhis or limiting adjuncts, viz., body, mind, Prana and the senses, because there must be self-consciousness behind their activities.

You always feel that, despite your possessions and all sorts of comforts, you are in want of something. There is no sense of fulness. If you add to yourself the all-full God only, you will have fulness.

When you do an evil action, you are afraid. Your conscience pricks you. This also proves that God exists and witnesses all your thoughts and actions.

To define Brahman is to deny Brahman. The only adequate description of Brahman is a series of negatives. That is the reason why the sage Yajnavalkya declares in the 'Brihadaranyaka Upanishad' about Brahman as *neti, neti*, or 'not this,' 'not this'. This means that the residue left after sublating the names and forms is Brahman. Brahman or the Self or the Immanent God cannot be demonstrated as He is beyond the reach of the senses and mind but His existence can be inferred by certain empirical facts or common experiences in daily life.

Sometimes you are in a peculiar dilemma or pressing pecuniary difficulty. Help comes to you in a mysterious manner. You get the money just in time. Most of you might have experienced this. You exclaim at that moment in joy "God's ways are mysterious indeed; I have got now full faith in God. Up to this time I had no faith in God."

—Swami Sivananda's
God Exists, pp. 5-7.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A PANORAMIC PRESENTATION OF POPULAR AND PHILOSOPHIC HINDUISM IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA

—And Hinduism As a Vital Synthesis of All Types of Spiritual Experience, a Dynamic Gospel of God-Communion, Self-Knowledge and Cosmic Love, a Fraternity of Faiths, a Federation of Intuitive Philosophies, a Vast Scheme of Spiritual Culture Affording a Stage of Ascent, a Point of Support, a Symbol of Philosophic Suggestiveness, a Method of Religious Progress to All Kinds of Temperament and to Every Grade of Human Evolution—

Founded upon an immediate and direct experience of Godhead in a thousand forms and a formless transcendence, through a rich diversity of approach and discipline, by hundreds of nameless Men of all-seeing Wisdom and ever-humming sonority of transforming Words, Hinduism is essentially a vital synthesis of all types of religious realization, a vast system of practical techniques for God-communion, Self-knowledge and Cosmic Love, a happily blended body of intuitive life-philosophies, a wide and comprehensive scheme of spiritual culture that has formulated Vedanta for the idol-less intellectual worshippers of the Infinite who live their lives into the object of their metaphysical cognition, framed Yogic methods for the mystically inclined formed numberless idols that respond to the pragmatic faith its all-governing teaching cause in the simple believers, concealed for the common human nature the enlivenment of a scientific truth in a superstitious practice, created doctrines that embody a working knowledge of the spiritual laws, proliferated rituals that metamorphose human energies and raise human nature towards a divine character, projected a pegeantry of year-round festivals that are at once a delight, an education and a discipline, made myths that engender heroic spiritual moods, given epics that cheer, comfort, and pattern the popular conduct to the most glorious forms and evolved a hundred devices through exotic rituals and esoteric practices for turning the whole of life into a grand God-ward procession, and has always been throwing up, almost at the turn of every century, a number of saints, sages, Yogis, Jnanis, men of wisdom, mystics who illustrate its central teaching, illuminate its ruling doctrines and energise its vital power.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

A PANORAMIC PRESENTATION OF POPULAR AND PHILOSOPHIC HINDUISM IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. THE MANIFOLD MERIT OF SIVANANDA'S EMINENT SCHOLARSHIP EXERCISED IN THE EPITOMIZATION OF THE WHOLE OF HINDUISM

—A Profound Learning Divested of All Pretences, An Objectivity of View, A Freedom From All Angularities And Prejudices, A Capacity for Condensation Within a Small Compass, of a Vast Material, A Gift For High Intellectual Achievement Constitute Some of the Leading Excellences Which Sivananda Has Pressed Into His Service For A Panoramic Representation of the Literary Sources, the Historical Background, the Metaphysical Spirit, the Mythological, Ethical, Ceremonial and Cultural Aspects, of Hinduism—

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

A modest title as it is, no other title could more fully describe the contents of this remarkable book. It is remarkable in many ways. It is verily an epitome of Hinduism, its meaning, its holy writ, its history, ethics, rituals, philosophy, mythology, sects and of the four Yoga paths. To have compressed all this within the narrow compass of a single handy book is a feat; to have told it all so simply and so lucidly is a high intellectual achievement; to have presented this mammoth material in an amazingly objective manner with no bees in the bonnet and no tendentious remarks is a work worthy of emulation. Religion, philosophy and ethics are the fatal rocks on which many an author has floundered. Generally angularities and prejudices prevail in many writings of this nature and authors on such subjects soon find themselves baited on irrelevancies and trivialities. Here is profound learning without any pretence, abiding care and sanity in adumbrating the canons of probably the most ancient of human faiths. This is almost a miracle and one cannot help being struck at once by the unusual gifts of the author.

There is perhaps no other book in English language which in such a limited space gives so much on such a complex theme like Hinduism. A better edition of the book should be made available to the European and American public, and it is sure to dispel many illusions and perverted

notions with which Hinduism is still regarded abroad. It is up-to-date in details, drawing for its material even on the census reports. Clarity in exposition and sustained poise distinguish this highly valuable work.

—*The Hindustan Times*,
New Delhi.

2. THE HINDU WORSHIPS A THOUSAND GODS, MEETS IN EACH OF THEM THE SELF-SAME OMNIPRESENT AND OMNISCIENT DEITY AND MAKES OF A MAIDEN, A SPIDER, A RAVEN, A SERPENT, A TREE THE TEACHERS OF A CULTURE AGAINST WHICH BOTH THE ANCIENT GRECIAN PHILOSOPHER AND THE MODERN EUROPEAN GENTLEMAN LOOK CRUDE BARBARIANS—SIVANANDA ON THE POPULAR HINDU OBSERVANCE OF THE NATIVITY OF ONE OF THE TYPICALLY INDIAN SAGES OF UNIVERSAL VISION, COSMIC LOVE AND SUPREME WISDOM

DATTATREYA Jayanti falls during the 3rd week of December. Anasuya is generally quoted as the model of chastity and she was the wife of Atri Maharshi—a great sage and one of the Sapta Rishis. She was well established in Pativrata Dharma. She did severe Tapas for a very long time in order to beget sons equal to Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

Once Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati requested their husbands to test the Pativrata Dharma of Anasuya, wife of Atri Maharshi and ask her to give them Nirvana Bhiksha.

The Tri-murtis came to know through 'Jnana-drishti' about the Tapas and wish of Anasuya. They agreed. The Tri-Murtis put on the garb of Sannyasins, appeared before Anasuya and asked her to give them Nirvana Bhiksha. Anasuya was in a great dilemma. She could not say 'No' to the Bhikshus. She had to maintain her Pativrata Dharma also. She meditated on the form of her husband, took refuge in his feet and sprinkled over the three Sannyasins a few drops of water, which were used for washing the feet of her husband. The Tri-Murtis were converted into three children on account of the glory of "Charanamrita" (water). At the same time there was accumulation of milk in the breast of Anasuya. She thought that these children were her own and fed them with the milk in a nude state and cradled them. She was eagerly expecting the arrival of her husband who had gone for taking his bath.

As soon as Atri Rishi came back home, Anasuya related all that had happened during his absence, placed the three children at his feet and worshipped him. But Atri knew all this already through his divine vision. He embraced all the three children. The three children became one child with two feet, one trunk, three heads and six hands. Atri Rishi blessed his wife and informed her that the Tri-Murtis themselves had assumed the forms of three children to gratify her wish.

In the meantime Narada went to Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati and informed them that their husbands had been turned into children through the power of Pativrata

Dharma of Anasuya and that they would not return unless they asked for Bhartri Bhiksha from Atri Then Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati assumed the forms of ordinary women, appeared before Atri and asked for Pati Bhiksha. Atri Rishi duly honoured the three ladies and with folded hands prayed to them that his wish and the wish of Anasuya should be fulfilled. Then the Tri-Murtis appeared in their true form before Atri and said · "This child will be a great sage according to your word and will be equal to us according to the wish of Anasuya. This child will bear the name of Dattatreya." Then they disappeared.

Dattatreya attained manhood. As he had the rays of the Tri-Murtis and as he was a great Jnani, all Rishis and ascetics worshipped him. He was gentle, peaceful and amiable, He was Avadhoota. He preached the Truth of Vedanta. Dattatreya taught his Gita, named Avadhoota Gita to Lord Subramanya. This is a most valuable book which contains the truth and secrets of Vedanta and the direct experience of Self-realization.

Once, while he was roaming in a forest happily, he met king Yadu, who, on seeing Dattatreya so happy, asked him the secrets of his happiness and also the name of his Guru. Dattatreya said that the Atman was alone his Guru and yet he had learned wisdom from twenty-four individuals and that they were, therefore his Gurus.

Dattatreya then mentioned the names of his twenty four Gurus and spoke of the wisdom that he had learned from each, as follows:—"The names of my twenty-four teachers are:—earth, water, air, fire, sky, moon, sun, pigeon, python, ocean, moth, honeygatherer (black bee), bees, elephant, deer, fish, dancing girl—Pingala, raven, child, maiden, serpent, an arrow-maker, spider, beetle."

1. I learnt patience and doing good to others from the *earth*,

2. From *water* I have learnt the quality of purity.

3. From *air*, I have learnt to be without attachment though I move with many people in this world.

4. From *fire* I have learnt to glow with the splendour of self-knowledge and Tapas.

5. I have learnt from the *sky* that the Atma is all-pervading and yet it has no contact with any object.

6. I have learnt from the *moon* that the Atman is always perfect and changeless and it is only the Upadhis or limiting adjuncts that cast shadows upon it.

7. Just as the *sun* reflected in various pots of water, appears as so many different reflections, so also Brahman appears different because of the Upadhis (bodies) caused by the reflection through the mind. This is the lesson I have learnt from the *sun*.

8. I once saw a pair of *pigeons* with their young birds. A fowler spread a net and caught the young birds. The mother pigeon was very much attached to her children. She fell into the net and was caught. From this I have learnt that attachment is the cause for bondage.

9. The *python* does not move about for its food. It remains contented with whatever it gets and lies in one place. From this I learnt to be unmindful of food and to be contented with whatever I get to eat.

10. Just as the *ocean* remains unmoved, even though hundreds of rivers fall into it, so also the wise man should remain unmoved among all sorts of temptations, difficulties and troubles.

11. To control the sense of sight and to fix the mind on the Self, is the lesson I learnt from the *moth.*

12. I take a little food from one house and a little from another house and thus appease my hunger. I am not a burden on the householder. This is the lesson I learnt from the *black bee,* the honey gatherer.

13. *Bees* collect honey with great trouble, but a hunter comes and takes the honey easily. From this I have learnt the lesson that it is useless to hoard things.

14. The male *elephant,* blinded by lust, falls into a pit covered with grass even at the sight of a female elephant. Therefore one should destroy lust. This is the lesson I have learnt from the elephant.

15, The *deer* is enticed and trapped by the hunter through its love of music. Therefore, one should never listen to lewd songs. This is the lesson I learnt from the *deer.*

16. Just as a *fish* that is covetous of food falls an easy victim to the bait, so also the man who is greedy for food loses his independence and easily gets ruined. Therefore, the greed for food must be destroyed.

17. There was a *dancing girl* named Pingala, She being tired of looking for customers, one night became hopeless. She had to be contented with what traffic she had that day and retired to a sound sleep. I have learnt from that fallen woman the lesson that the abandonment of hope leads to contentment.

18. A *raven* picked up a piece of flesh. It was pursued and beaten by other birds. It dropped the piece of flesh and attained peace and rest. From this I have learnt the lesson that a man in the world undergoes all sorts of troubles and miseries when he runs after sensual pleasures and that he becomes as happy as the bird when he abandons the sensual pleasures.

19. The *child* who sucks milk is free from all cares, worries, and anxieties, and is always cheerful. I have learnt the virtue of cheerfulness from the *child.*

20. I have learnt from the *maiden* that living among many would create discord, disturbance, dispute and quarrel. Even among two there might be unnecessary words or strife. The ascetic or the Sannyasin should remain alone in solitude.

21. A *serpent* does not build its hole. It dwells in the holes dug out by others. Even so an ascetic should not build a home for himself. He should live in the temple or cave built by others.

22. The mind of an *arrow-maker* was once wholly engrossed in sharpening and straightening an arrow. While he was thus engaged, a king passed before his shop with his whole retinue. After some time, a man came to the artisan and asked him whether the king passed by his shop. The artisan replied that he did not notice anything. The fact is that the artisan's mind was solely absorbed in his work and he did not know what was passing before his shop. I have learnt from the artisan the quality of intense concentration of mind.

23. The *spider* pours out of its mouth long threads and weaves them into cobwebs, It gets itself entangled in the net of its own making. Even so, man makes a net of his own ideas and gets entangled in it. The wise man should therefore abandon all worldly thoughts and think of Brahman only. This is the lesson I have learnt from *spider*.

24. The *beetle* clutches hold of a worm, puts it in its nest and gives a sting. The poor worm, always fearing the return of the beetle and sting, and thinking constantly of the beetle, becomes a beetle itself. I have learnt from the *beetle* and the worm to turn myself into Atma by contemplating constantly on It and thus to give up all attachment to the body and attain Moksha or liberation.

The king was highly impressed by the teachings of Dattatreya. He abandoned the world and practised constant meditation on the Self.

Dattatreya was absolutely free from intolerance or prejudice of any kind. He learnt wisdom from whatever source it came. All seekers after wisdom should follow the example of Dattatreya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Hindu Fasts and Festivals,
pp. 60-65.

3. AN AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE BASIC BELIEFS, IDEALS AND ETHICS OF HINDUISM IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

THE publications of Swami Sivananda are now fairly well-known in North India. As a spiritual guide he has a large following and his books command a wide market both in and outside India. In the book under review, an attempt is made to present *all about Hinduism*-a rather ambitious plan for the size of the book nevertheless carried into execution with skill and erudition. Considered as a popular presentation of all essential points about Hinduism, and giving a brief account of all that a Hindu should know, or is presumed to know, the book is fairly exhaustive and the language simple and suited to the general reader. Within the compass of twelve chapters the entire ground of the literary, philosophic and spiritual back-ground and foundation of Hinduism is presented in an easy style and in unmistakable language. Differences of opinion about the relative merits of the systems of thought, there are bound to be. That apart the presentation is useful and commendable, and the book will surely serve the purpose of an elementary text-book to all who would like to know about Hinduism, both in India and abroad.

According to the Swami, Hinduism is the source of all religions. 'Hindu' is not a mere name. The whole history of our nation, our ideals and ideas are indissolubly connected with one another.

Hinduism is, I should say, a way of life strictly in conformity with *Sanatana Dharma*. India is the land of the great teachers of the world and the message that India has to give the world is that of peace

and prosperity which the Western war-ridden nations sorely lack.

The eight sections of Chapter II, give a brief account of the basic literature and the philosophic systems and their fundamental ideas. Chapter three deals with Sanatana Dharma wherein Varnashrama Dharma is also described and discussed. Basic religious ideas, such as the law of Karma, are dealt with in the next section. Some of the main Hindu rituals find a place in the fifth chapter. Hindu Ethics is only the expatiation of the Hindu mode of life and Hindu philosophy, the expansion of Hindu life to suit the main idea of release from Karma. Among the systems of philosophy described in chapter seven, the systems of thought of Bhaskara and Yadava have been noticed. The fourfold path of Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Raja Yoga is dealt with in the eighth section. The treatment of the Hindu sects in chapter nine is popular. The work will serve as a good hand-book for information on the basic ideas of the Hindus.

—A. N. Krishna Ayyangar,
Indian Republic,
Madras.

4. THE INALIENABILITY OF HYGIENIC ACTIVITY, PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPANSIVENESS, SOCIAL INTEGRATION, SPIRITUAL EMANCIPATION FROM EACH OF THE HINDU FESTIVALS

THE entire structure of Hindu life is built on ever-enduring spiritual realities, on the eternal verities, on truths and laws discerned and discovered by the ancient Hindu Rishis. Festivals form one of the most important components of this strong structure of life, and each festival, it must be particularly noted, carries in itself a four-fold purpose: (1) a deep spiritual import, (2) a many-sided hygienic activity, (3) a high social significance and aim, and (4) an ample measure of individual mirth and joy.

As the attainment of God-consciousness is the dominating and central aim and goal of life, for the Hindu, and as laymen cannot find themselves in a position to devote their lives wholly for pure spiritual pursuits and engage themselves day and night, like the advanced Sadhakas and Yogis, in a continuity of contemplation, meditation, and realisation, there are many special days in the year and special hours in the day that are set apart for their religious activity, worship in the conducive atmosphere of special celebrations, and for popular approaches to the Divine Being.

On these days of festivals, people engrossed in professions and in various kinds of work, find the much needed relief and the necessary atmosphere for religious thought, reflection and activity. Every festival day reminds them of the glory of God, the splendid sport of His Divine Energy in cosmic manifestation, in the affairs of humanity, in lives of all beings, the need for God-realization and thus tends their minds towards things of enduring value and towards living the Life Divine.

The festivals afford them ample opportunities and the right environment for non-mundane activities, for filling oneself

with spiritual fervour and zeal and enthusiasm.

In every festival there is bathing in the morning before sunrise, in the river, or tank or well, and there is the recitation by every individual of the most elevating Sanskrit verses and the perfomance of Japa, saying of prayer, singing of Kirtan.

These festivals bring about in men, moods of reverence, spiritual awe, and render them susceptible to the intimations of the Divine; they spiritualise the thoughts of men, and as the Hindu religion has almost innumerable festivals in a year, the current of spiritual thought and ideas is constantly kept up throughout the year. The Hindu fasts, festivals, *vratas*, *jayanthis* aim at purifying the heart, controlling the senses and cultivating devotion to the Divine Being. The dramas and plays staged during the Festivals, inculcate into the minds of the masses, through the instrumentality of the most impressive stories, incidents and episodes, the Hindu standards of conduct and ideals of life. The lives of Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Sri Bhishma, Nala, Harischandra, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Yudhishthira, Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, have always been sources of great spiritual inspiration, encouragment and advancement in the moulding of life, conduct and character of the Hindus, they have exercised a deep influence, brought light into their puzzling situations, a resolving power into the conflicts of their duties, a lasting peace for mind and a powerful force for direction and aim in life.

The general cleaning up that takes place during such festivals as Deepavali, is essentially a hygienic activity. The houses are freshly plastered and white-washed; new utensils are purchased; everything is kept neat, clean, and sanctified. Besides reminding the devotees that the Lord is all-pervading, that His Being fills the whole universe by its Living Presence, the spreading smoke from the burning dhoop or scented sticks, acts as a disinfectant. A host of such activities go a long way in contributing to and preserving the health of the inmates of the house. During Holi, people clean their houses, remove all dirty articles around the houses and burn them. Thereby the disease-breeding bacteria are destroyed. The sanitary conditions of the locality are much improved. On the psychological level, the festival is instrumental in burning away the impurities of the mind, such as lust, and other potencies for lower life.

Socially, Holi is an 'embracing' function, a function for the exercise of mutual cordiality, and love between the unequals, the great and the small, and also the equals, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, meet in a common festivity and acts of endearment. The embracing ceremony, is calculated to unite disunited hearts; sympathetic understanding, a co-operative spirit, a recognised sense of unity, an active mood to laugh away all petty bickerings, misunderstanding common in life,—are brought into a dynamic play. Distinction and differences vanish for the time being; a sense of oneness of all Life is strongly felt; feelings of hatred and inequality are completely abandoned during the festival; even passers-by and strangers are included in this general activity of sport, educative mirth and uniting play. The festivals provide innumerable opportunities to test one's capacity to adjust and adapt oneself

to the varying types of social environment and activity. Qualities of tolerance, forgiveness, positive regard for each other, freedom of thought, action, feelings, and a great fondness for each other, are called into definite manifestation.

Individually, every person finds on these occasions of festivals, the much needed rest, change and abundant cheer from the monotony of everyday's hard work. They satisfy his sense for the novel and his love of variety; special dishes, colourful or new clothes, observance of delightful ceremonies make for an expression of greater affinity with the members of the family and bring him a large measure of happiness. Visit to the temples yields him the much longed after peace of mind, works towards an integration of his inner personality and gives him a sense of being in the all-pervading Presence and Power of the Divine is engendered.

The different manifestations of God or Incarnations of the Divine Being, have different special days of worship · during Sivaratri Lord Siva is worshipped; during Vaikunta Ekadasi Lord Vishnu is worshipped; during Skanda Sashti Lord Subramanya is adored; during Dattatreya Jayanti worship is offered to Lord Dattatreya. One of the most popular festivals, celebrates the birthday of Lord Ganesha. Ganesha personifies wisdom and power; He breaks all obstacles to spiritual progress, and bestows material success. At the commencement of all new undertakings, marriages, expeditions, studies, etc., the Hindus invoke His Grace and Blessings. He is also the Lord of Harmony and Peace. Riding on the mouse represents that He has effaced all egoism; and the holding of Ankusa represents that He is the ruler of the world; it is emblematic of his Divine Royalty. There is one of the most scientific and symbolic philosophies behind the morphology of His form. By worshipping Lord Ganesha, the Hindu mothers hope to earn for their sons the sterling virtues of the auspicious Lord. The Ganesha Vrata was first prescribed by the divine sage Narada to Sri Krishna, and by Sri Krishna, Yudhishthira was instructed in it. It was celebrated by Damayanti to find her lost husband, by Lord Rama to get back Sita, by Indra to defeat Vritrasura, by Bhagiratha to get down the celestial Ganges, by Draupadi and by Samba to get cured of incurable disease.

One of the versions of the legend traces the origin of the Holi festival to the burning of Cupid by Lord Siva. Festivals are fraught with a spiritual value; apart from the various amusements, they create faith in the Divine, when properly observed, and wean men from sensuous pleasures and take them gradually towards spiritual communion with the Divine Power. They are meant not only to exhaust the potencies of our inferior nature through sport, ceremony, ritual, symbolic performances, but to acquire positive divine nature. Various alleged origins of this festival of lights, Deepavali, are extant. Some celebrate the marriage of Lakshmi with Lord Vishnu, some the victory of Lord Krishna over Narakasura; it commemorates the return of Sri Rama to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana, and in Bengal the festival is dedicated to the worship of Kali. The Great Festival Dussera or Durga Puja or Navaratri is held in commemoration of the victory of Durga, consort of Lord Siva over Mahishasura. Durga is the Divine Mother that brings into play the cosmic manifestation.

We find in Devee Sukta of the Rig Veda Samhita that Vak, the daughter of the sage Andhirna realised her identity with Divine Mother, the Power of the Supreme Lord which manifests throughout the entire universe among the Gods, among men and beasts, among the creatures of the deep ocean. Religious observances, traditional worship and Vratas are expressive of more than one significance. Apart from being occasions for the adoration of and communion with the Divine, they are commemorative of illuminating stirring by-gone events, all allegoric when interpreted from the occult standpoint, and lastly, deeply significant pointers and revealing guides to the individual on his path to spiritual Realization.

—Swami Sivananda's
Contribution published in
Bhavan's Journal, Bombay.

5. SIVANANDA'S ENCYCLOPAEDIC SURVEY OF HINDUISM FOR UNIVERSITY RESEARCH SCHOLARS

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM:

THIS is a remarkable publication which makes an encyclopaedic survey of Hinduism. Written in a lucid manner it starts with the efinitions of Hinduism and a Hindu.

After a detailed study of the scriptures, basic ideas, rituals, ethics, philosophy, and mythology with copious extracts from various sources, in eleven chapters he concludes. "Hinduism is characterised by wide toleration, deep humanity and high spiritual purpose. It is free from fanaticism. That is the reason why it has survived the attacks of the followers of the other religions of the world. The foundation of Hinduism has been laid on the bed-rock of spiritual truths. That is the reason why this structure has lasted through scores of centuries. A world-religion, it is more a League of Religions than a single-religion with a definite creed. The Hindus in India are greater in number than all the Muslims of the world. Glorious had been the past of this religion still more glorious is its future. It has a message to give to a world rent asunder by hatred dissension and war—the message of cosmic love, Truth and Non-violence, the gospel of unity of Self or Upanishadic oneness." Dedicated to all those who love Hinduism and its sublime philosophy and practise its teachings, students of philosophy will find in the volume a wealth of information for study and discussion.

—*The Free India*, Madras.

6. THE METAPHYSICAL METHODOLOGY IMPLICIT IN, AND THE DEEPEST PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF, THE BLESSED NIGHT OF HINDU FAST AND VIGIL—GOD, WORLD AND MAN, THE INFINITE, THE COSMIC MANIFESTATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL REVOLVE IN THEIR INTER-RELATIONSHIP ROUND EACH HINDU OBSERVANCE

SIVARATRI is the "Blessed Night", the "Night of Siva". It is one of the memorable days of the year. It is an occasion for disciplining ourselves, for restraining the

objective tendencies of the mind. Life on earth is the stepping stone to Infinite Existence. It is attained through the negation of individual separateness and through the affirmation of the Divine Unity. In view of the fact that the only meaning of life is this effort towards spiritual realisation, it goes without saying that every moment of our life should be utilised for that noble purpose. But there are certain times in the year when the universal forces move towards the inner Reality, when the conscious struggle of the individual to achieve Self-realisation is helped by the external powers also. Ordinarily, every one has to swim against the current of Maya, the creative Power of Existence, and face terrible oppositions from cosmic forces. But the spiritual effort or Sadhana is given a further impetus to enhance the vigour of its spiritual march and lessen the power of its obstructing factors, when divine forces manifest themselves on the terrestrial plane.

This spiritual manifestation of the Transcendental Divinity upon earth is of two varieties—embodied and disembodied, concrete and abstract. Embodied Divine manifestations are seen in personalities like Sri Krishna etc., when the action of the Divine can be clearly seen with the eyes. But the abstract manifestations cannot be seen by the physical sense, but can only be felt by the inner soul. Universal Forces reveal themselves to rectify certain defects in any part of the Universe. Epidemics, earthquakes and the like are such universal happenings. Sudden uplift of certain parts of the world are some of the constructive aspects of the universe. Spiritual forces sweep away evil, at times even without human awareness. The Kalki Avatara and the beginning of Krita Yuga are an example. In Sivaratri we find one such disembodied manifestation of spiritual forces and the suppression of undivine powers.

In Northern India, devotees believe that Sivaratri is the day of the marriage of Siva with Parvati. This has got a very deep significance. The marriage of Siva and Sakti is the starting point of the union between them. Siva is the Truth of Unity or Absoluteness. Sakti is the creative diversifying force presenting the phenomenon of the world, and its marriage with the Absolute signifies the merging of separative consciousness in Absolute Oneness. This sums up the process of the entire Sadhana of the spiritual aspirant. His whole struggle is to merge in Absoluteness. The cosmic event of the marriage between the the universal beings, Siva and Sakti, has got a direct bearing upon the life of every individual, for the whole universe is the expression of Siva and Sakti. The psychological change that occurs during a cosmic event is felt in every creature of the universe, because, the beings of the world are parts of the one Whole Existence. Whatever the universal being (Brahma, Vishnu or Siva with their Saktis) does, the individuals also must react to in proportion to the subtlety of the condition of their mental being, because, the people of the world are only the productions or children or aspects of such a Being. Hence the marriage between Siva and Sakti, the symbol of the dissolution of diversity in Pure Absolute Consciousness, has got its yearly recurring psychological counter part in the eternal passage of time, and that is Sivaratri. This is the day when it is easiest for all beings to move towards the Eternal Reality

or Brahman, for they all have got the help of the Universal Power at that time.

Fasting and vigil are two of the striking observances during Sivaratri, the day of the "Peaceful" spirit. Man is a Trinity : body, mind and soul, The soul need not be meddled with. For, it is the changeless Noumenon. It is the body and the mind that have to be disciplined and moulded. Fasting is the denial of the demand of the body and vigil is the negation of the requirement of the mind. The externalisation of the physical and the mental forces is blocked and twined inward through worship, Kirtan, Japa and meditation. Fast and vigil are the negative withdrawal from worldly impulses, and practical Sadhana is the positive spiritualization of the personality. This is a necessary auxiliary of every true Sadhana for the Divinisation of man.

The main characteristic of the being of Lord Siva is "renunciation" and "meditation". He embodies in Himself the Ideal of asceticism and Supreme Contemplation of Truth. These two are the faces of Integral Sadhana—the negative "denial" and the positive "assertion". The beauty of the Hindu conception of Spiritual Attainment and the means thereof is that it discards no fundamental aspect of transformation. The observance of Sivaratri is a living of the Life of Siva, a state of being lifted up from the attractions of phenomenal diversity to the Essential Condition of the Spiritual Reality. All methods of approach to Divinity and all attempts to undermine selfishness and disintegrate it into God-Being practised on such an occasion, will be crowned with undoubted success.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

7. SIVANANDA AROUSES THE INTERROGATORY MOOD AND FURNISHES THE INQUIRING MIND WITH THE RATIONALE OF THE HINDU RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

IN these days of general spiritual degeneration, the Hindus are indifferent to the great utility and deep significance of the various Fasts and Festivals spread throughout the year. The force of habit or custom, however, persists, and many of these are observed mechanically and often in their lighter aspects. It would certainly give the needed spiritual fillip if Hindus keep to the religious aspects of these observances. These require a knowledge of the significance of the innumerable Fasts and Festivals. Quite a large numer of Hindus are in fact throughly ignorant of these. It is for their edification and proper moulding that this excellent book is written. The well-known author interprets the significance of the many Jayanthis, Vratas, Melas, Utsavams and other allied special observances amongst Hindus in a manner calculated to convert the indifferent to the realities, and so reinforce the great spiritual utility which our ancestors sought to perpetuate through them. The Swamiji's knowledge of special observances and festivals in the different areas of this vast country portrayed in this book are very illuminating. Every Hindu

must possess a copy of this great publication for true spiritual guidance, reference and proper observance of the occasions dealt with. It is bound to do immense good, fostering zeal and spirit, where these are absent and channelising them correctly, where they are loosely understood and indifferently observed. As the Swamiji truly observes in the introduction, "The observance of the Holi and other festivals goes a long way to protect religion, to destroy visciousness, to remove disease, to contribute health and happiness and to cultivate noble and virtuous qualities which will lead to the attainment of eternal bliss and immortality.

—*Champion*,
Calicut.

8. IN THE FEDERATION OF DYNAMIC PHILOSOPHIES THAT HINDUISM IS, LIFE BY PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS AND DISCRIMINATIVE DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN THE BEING AND THE BECOMING ACQUIRES A DISTINCTIVE PLACE, PROCEEDS BY THE METHODS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE THREE-FOLD PAIN OF ALL EMBODIED EXISTENCE—SIVANANDA RECAPITULATES ITS LEADING PRINCIPLES AND FIGURES OUT THE CHARACTER OF FINAL RELEASE IT AIMS

THE Sankhya system of philosophy, founded by the Muni Sri Kapila, an Avatar of Vishnu, is generally studied immediately after a study of the Nyaya school of thought. One of the best systems of philosohy in the world, the Sankhya philosophy which has won great admiration from many Western thinkers, is more categorically dualistic, denies that anything can be ever produced out of nothing, and assumes the reality of Purusha and the Prakriti, the knowing Self and the objects known.

The Sankhyas do not accept Ishwara or God ; therefore, on account of this atheistic attitude, the Sankhya system is called Nir-Ishwara Sankhya. The Sankhya thinkers dismiss the need for an intelligent Creator of or even any superintending power for the world on the grounds that the creation produced by Prakriti has an existence of its own independent of all connection with the particular Purusha to which it is united. But as Prakriti is non-intelligent, and cannot do anything by itself, it is pre-supposed that there is that one Lord who gazes on it, a gazing which puts her in motion and enables her to create. Prakriti is always under the control of the Lord. The theory of Vedanta makes out that an intelligent Creator alone can have a thoughtout plan for the universe, and that Prakriti is only a helper. The Sankhya trinity, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, reminds of the Vedantic triad, Satchidananda. The term 'Sankhya' which in one of its senses is used to mean philosophical reflection, is derived from Sankhya or number, and as the Sankhya system is an analytical enumeration of the principles of the universe, the name that the system bears is appropriate.

That in its cause, the effect truly exists beforehand, is one of the central features of the Sankhya philosophy. Cause is a substance

in which the effect subsists in a latent form ; even as the whole tree exists in a latent and dormant state in the seed, the whole world exists in a latent state in Prakriti, the Avyaktam, the unevolved, the Avyakritam, the undifferentiated. The effect is of the same nature as the cause ; the effect or the result or the product is not different from the material of which it is composed. Of the two ultimate realities of the Sankhya, the Purusha is the Intelligent Principle whose constituting essence is Consciousness, and Prakriti, the eternal unconscious principle, subject to continual change, held in a state of rest or equilibrium by Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, is the ultimate cause of the world. The Samyoga or close association of Purusha with Prakriti initiates and sustains the evolution of the world ; and this whole process of cosmic evolution is summed up in terms of the twentyfour principles of which the Prakriti is the primal base and initial limit, the uncaused cause, the first original cause, the primal stuff and the prius of the universe. There is nothing in the world which is not a Vikriti of Prakriti. The five gross physical elements form the last limit, the final evolutes. Following in the main its dualistic metaphysics, the Sankhya theory of knowledge accepts only three independent sources of valid knowledge : perception, inference and scriptural testimony. In the realm of ethics and individual life, the Sankhya system envisages the idea th t suffering which is universal, is brought on man from three different sources : Adhyatmika, Adhibhautika, and Adhidaivika. Ethical action becomes necessary for the transcendence of the web of Nature, into the eternal freedom of Purusha. According to Sankhya, salvation or Mukti is only phenomenal since bondage does not belong to Purusha, and as ignorance is the cause of all suffering, a knowledge of the twenty-four principles, the right knowledge of the reality, of the Self that is different from the moral agent that strives after merit and is subject to demerit, takes us to the summum bonum of existence. The classical Sankhya thought argues against the existence of God because a belief in God is inconsistent with the distinctive reality and immortality of the individual selves, because God who is said to be eternal and immutable cannot cause that which is mutable and changing, whereas Prakriti which is atonce eternal and everchanging is the ultimate cause of the universe, and also because though the theists may argue that the non-intelligent principle is controlled by God, we find that there is nothing in an ever-perfect being devoid of all unfulfilled desires and unattained ends, to induce him to such a control.

As the experience of pain is an embarrassment, and stands in the way of the practice of Yoga Sadhana and the attainment of Moksha. The Sankhya System starts with the idea of the universality of suffering which arises from the three sources : the psychological nature of man assumes and embraces both bodily and mental disorders and sufferings such as fever and headache, the pangs of fear and the effects of greed,—*Adhyatmika* ; the external world which through the instrumentality of men, animals, scorpions, pricks of thorns, inflicts on man, pain,—*Adhibhautika* ; supernatural agencies such as planets, ghosts, demons, and also elemental agencies, thunder, cold, heat, rain—*Adhidaivika*. To bring about a

complete cessation of all forms of pain without any possibility of return, the Sankhya system of thought lays down the roads that lead the individual to Mukti, liberation, freedom. Kapila Muni imparts a knowledge of the twenty-five principles which annihilates pain in all its manifestations. Everyman on earth desires freedom from suffering and desires a condition of permanent happiness but this freedom and this condition of positive delight could be achieved only by Tattva-Jnana, the right knowledge of the reality, the discriminative awareness of the Purusha as the unchanging and unaffected and ever abiding pure Consciousness. Bondage is traced to wrong knowledge, Viparyaya, which includes not only Avidya or ignorance, but also Asmita or egoism, Raga or desire, Dvesha or hatred. Since the cause of all suffering is ignorance and the identification of the Self with the *Buddhi* and egoistic consciousness, the rise of discrimination which dissociates the Self from the not-self, liberates the pure Self from its identification with the successive series of evolutes ; but as this dissociation and this non-identification must be made a matter of direct and living experience, unselfish activity, ethical life, non-attachment, Vairagya, spiritual training must be resorted to. When there is the clear recognition and realisation of the Self as a reality which is beyond the web of Prakriti, which is eternally free and essentially immortal, the self ceases to be affected by the vicissitudes of the body and the mind and remains as the disinterested witness of the mutations of the physical and psychical nature.

The Sankhya system seeks to effect the liberation of Purusha from the fetters which bind it on account of its association with Prakriti. This it does by conveying the *Prama* or correct knowledge of the twenty-four constituent principles of creation and rightly discriminating the Soul from them. Its Pramanas or means of obtaining the corret measure of existing things are three, viz., Pratyaksha or perception by the senses, Anumana, inference, and Apta Vachana, trustworthy testimony. When the separation of the Soul from the body takes place by the destruction of the effects of virtue, vice and the rest and Prakriti ceases to act in respect to it, then there is the final and absolute emancipation or the final beatitude. When the fruits of acts cease and body both in its gross form and in its subtle form, dissolves, nature does not exist in respect of the individual Soul. The soul attains the state called Kaivalyam, and is freed from the three forms of pain. When one attains perfect knowledge, virtue and vice become destitute of causal energy but the body continues for some time on account of the previous impulse, just as after the action of the potter has stopped, the wheel continues to revolve owing to the momentum given to it. In truth, the soul is neither bound nor released nor migrates, but nature alone in relation to various beings is bound, migrates and released. If pain is natural to the Purusha, if the Purusha is not naturally free from the action of the Gunas, no salvation from rebirth is possible.

Bondage belongs to Prakriti, but is attributed to Purusha who is eternally free. Union of Purusha with Prakriti, brought about by non-discrimination is bondage ; the failure to discriminate between Purusha and Prakriti is the cause of Samsara or bondage ; disunion of Purusha and Prakriti due to discrimination is emancipation. The

Lingadeha or subtle body which migrates from one gross body to another in successive births is composed of intellect, egoism, mind, the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of action, and the five Tanmatras. The impressions of action, done in various births are imbedded in the subtle body. The conjunction of the Linga with the gross, physical body constitutes birth ; separation of the Linga from the gross physical body is death. This Lingadeha or the subtle-body is destroyed by the knowledge of Purusha. The Jiva must realise the perfection of Purusha, attain to the status of Purusha, become conscious of the real nature of the Higher Purusha. Freedom or perfection is a return to one's true Self, the removal of an illusion which conceals the true nature of man which consists in the higher Purusha. Discrimination between Prakriti and Purusha gives salvation or Moksha. The term 'Sankhya' means also 'Vichara' or reflective discrimination. Though both Purusha and Prakriti are *Sat* or real Purusha is Asanga or unattached, conscious, all-pervading, eternal, Prakriti is the real doer and enjoyer and its activities are for the benefit of Purusha.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

9. UPON THE CANVAS OF TRADITIONAL BACKGROUND, THE PHILOSOPHER-SAGE SIVANANDA DRAWS A PANORAMIC PICTURE OF HINDU SYMBOLS AND SECTS, FASTS AND FESTIVALS, FEASTS AND RITUALS, AND THROWS UP THEIR UNDERLYING MEANING INTO A BROAD RELIEF

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

THE book of the scholarly Saint of Rishikesh, entitled *All About Hinduism*, dealing as it does with the various facets of Hinduism in a short compass, is one of the best publications we can have. We have profound learning and deep knowledge of the Indian rituals, philosophy, religious sects including those dealing with the Yoga Margas dealt in a simple and easily understandable language. We have no hesitation in claiming this as a highly valuable publication on Hinduism in recent times.

—*Dewan Chand Review*, New Delhi.

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

THE author reminds us that no people rejoice in as many festivals as do the Hindus. "These festivals give ample opportunities for every Hindu to fill his heart with religious zeal and fervour and march forward in the path of Yoga. Every festival day reminds him of the glory of God and His Lilas (Divine Play), and the necessity for Self-realisation, and thus goads him to soar higher and higher in the realms of eternal bliss, ultimately to merge himself in the Light of lights."

This is an excellent encyclopaedia of Festivals, Jayantis, Vratas, and Special Observances. The author gives not only the traditional background, the actual observances, usually performed, but the inner significance illumining the whole.

—A. S. D., *Theosophist*, Madras.

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

FASTS and Festivals play an important part in the life of an average Hindu. They date from very ancient times and their number has grown very large in course of time. The author has brought together some of the important ones in this book and has given a brief account showing their origin, and their significance. He has treated the subject under classified heads such as Festivals, Jayantis, Vratas for Ladies, Melas, and Special Observances, arranging them in an alphabetical order.

—*The Prabuddha Bharata,*
Almora.

10. SIVANANDA ON THE ROLE OF MYTHOLOGY IN THE RISE OF RELIGION AND THE NEED FOR RESEARCH IN HINDU SYMBOLOGY

MYTHOLOGY is a part of every religion. Mythology is concretised philosophy. Mythology is the science which investigates myths or fables or legends founded on remote events, especially those made in the early period of a people's existence. Mythology inspires the readers through precepts and laudable examples and goads them to attain perfection or the highest ideal. The abstract teachings and high subtle ideas are made highly interesting and impressive to the masses through the garb of stories, parables, legends, allegories and narratives. The sublime and abstract philosophical ideas and ideals of Hinduism are taken straight to the heart of the masses through impressive stories.

All religions have their own mythology. Mythology is slightly mixed with a little history. It is difficult to make a fine distinction between history and mythology. In every religion there are three parts, viz., philosophy, mythology and ritual. Philosophy is the essence of religion. It sets forth its basic principles or fundamental doctrines or tenets, the goal and the means of attaining it. Mythology explains and illustrates it by means of legendary lives of great men or of supernatural beings. Ritual is still more concrete. It gives a still more concrete form to teach philosophy so that every one may understand it. Ritual consists of forms and ceremonies, etc.

Puranas contain various myths. The cosmogonic myths of the Puranas are very interesting. A certain portion of Hindu mythology is even now presented to the public in the form of dramas during days of Hindu festivals. Thus the minds of the people are saturated with Hindu ideas and ideals and lifted to great spiritual heights.

There are great truths behind the ancient mythology of Hinduism. You cannot ignore a thing simply because it has a garb of mythology. Keep your intellect at a respectable distance when you study mythological subjects. Arrogance, intellectual pride, vanity delude you, and therefore, they have to be given up. Cultivate love for imagery. Sit like a child and open your heart freely. You will comprehend the great truths revealed by mythology. You will penetrate into the hearts of the Rishis and sages who wrote mythological works.

You study geography through maps. There is no real country or town in a map, but it helps you to know a great deal about the different countries. Similar is the case with myths. You can grasp the subtle philosophical truths through myths only. By studying mythology you will get several object—lessons for moulding your character and leading an ideal life. The lives of Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Bhishma, Nala, Harischandra, Lakshmana, Bharata, Hanuman, Yudhishthira, Arjuna, Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Radha, are sources of great spiritual inspiration for moulding your life, conduct and character. When you are in a dilemma, as to what to do during puzzling situations, when there is conflict of duties, you will get the exact solutions through study of mythology. Thus mythology has its own benefits and advantages. It stamps on the minds the subtle and abstract teachings of the Vedas, through instructive stories and illuminating discourses and paves the way for men to lead a divine life and attain perfection, freedom and immorta lity.

—Swami Sivananda's
All About Hinduism,
pp. 251-252.

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THE outward symbols should not be neglected ; they are very beneficial and significant. When viewed from the right perspective, you will find that they play a very important part in your material as well as spiritual life. Though they may look very simple and unimportant yet they are very scientific and effective. Make a research study of our Vedic customs and injunctions. You will find wonderful and precious gems in every one of them. Their utility and efficacy will be revealed in following them.

For instance, in these two acts of burning scented sticks and camphor before the deity, observe the profound philosophical and spiritual meaning implied. The smoke from the burning scented stick or the *Dhoop* spreads itself all over the room. It acts as a disinfectant. Burning of Dhoop denotes that the Lord is all-pervading, that He fills the whole universe by his living presence. It is to remind this fact that Dhoop is burnt. The devotee prays, "O Lord ! let the Vasanas and Samskaras dormant in me vanish like the smoke of this Dhoop and become ashes. Let me become stainless." Burning of camphor denotes that the individual ego melts like the camphor and the Jivatman or the individual soul becomes one with the supreme Light of Lights.

Bells are rung in temples while doing Pooja, to shut out the external sounds and to make the mind inward and contemplated. Lights are waved before the Deity. This denotes that the Lord is all-light. The devotee says, "O Lord ! Thou art the light in the sun, moon and fire. Remove the darkness in me by bestowing your divine light. May my intellect be illumined." This is the significance of waving lights.

—Swami Sivananda's
All About Hinduism,
p. 261, 258.

11. VERBAL SKETCHES OF SIVANANDA'S INSIGHTS INTO THE HIDDEN SIGNIFICANCES OF HINDU CEREMONIES

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

IT is a common but true saying that whatever a Hindu does is religion and so he lives religion which does not cease even after he dies ! For, ceremonies for him keep on continuing. Fasts and festivals with rigid penance and colourful jubilations of various sorts attendant on them fill almost every day of the year. Each of them has a meaning behind it and a definite purpose to fulfil. This purpose and meaning are true at every level of human living and knowledge, so that each individual can participate in and benefit by them according to his own temperament, and stage of mental, emotional and spiritual growth. At the lowest and obvious level they regulate the life of the individual in its multiform details for a healthy and harmonious existence. They also serve a useful social purpose of intercourse in civic life of high aspiration where ehe congregational aspect of worship predominates. Tantric authorities and clairvoyants ascribe to them besides the power of evoking and manipulating the hidden and finer powers of nature within and outside man for purposes beneficent or otherwise according to the ethical posture of the Upasak, and generally recommended and used in the former way. That these are possible and true is demonstrable from the crude effects of the various nationalist political and like demonstrations that are being held every day all over the world, and copied and manifolded by other special interests. The Hindus specialised in religion and devised various means of making the presence of God prevail in the thoughts and actions of people according to the instations, temperaments and levels of development in life. For the common man and woman, each of the fasts and festivals has a legend behind :t, mostly allegorical, to serve as an inspiration, or at least an inducement, and satisfaction for the aspirant undertaking it. These legends by themselves form a huge collection of cradle-tales for Hindu childhood profoundly affecting its thoughts and actions in later life. When expressed in appropriate cermonies, performed punctiliously, they certainly constitute a silent, steady and sure means of integrating life in the individual, the family and society as preparation for the later Ashramas. Swami Sivananda has done timely service in bringing together in a readable form to the modern mind the various important fasts and festivals in various parts of the country, the legends and purposes, and the religious and spiritual background behind them all. Many perform these festivals and observe the fasts now-a-days as a matter of mechanical routine for placating public opinion and out of a vague fear of the sin of defaulting. It is high time that proper understanding of the subject is obtained so that the observation is infused with life. To the non-Hindu the book will help to appreciate the background of the ceremonies in the daily life of the Hindu, as they are in his own as prescribed and followed albeit in a different form conditioned by circumstances of place and time, but resting on a principle common to all religions of human family.

—M. S., *Human Affairs*, Udipi.

12. FOR PERSONS OF MYSTIC TEMPERAMENT AND CONTEMPLATIVE BENT OF MIND, HINDUISM HAS EVOLVED A PHILOSOPHICAL SCIENCE OF YOGA-PRACTICES THAT BRINGS ABOUT A COMPLETE CULTURE OF THE HEART, A CONVERSION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURE INTO SPIRITUAL CHARACTER AND AN UNFOLDMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS INTO UNLIMITED AMPLITUDES—SIVANANDA'S BRILLIANT REPRESENTATION OF ITS CENTRAL THEORETICAL CONTENT AND ITS CHIEF TRENDS

THE root 'Yuj' from which the term Yoga is derived, signifies 'to join', and in the context of the Yoga system of Patanjali, it not only means a method of effectuating a union of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul, but also connotes a restraint imposed on the activities of the mind. Rightly regarded as a branch of, and a supplement to, the Sankhya system, the practical philosophy of Patanjala Yoga has its own distinctive side and charm for the aspirants of mystic temperament and contemplative bent of mind and what is of particular importance here is that it claims by directly acknowledging the existence of a Supreme Being, a greater orthodoxy than the Sankhya system. In this Yoga, the practising aspirant seats himself in a comfortable posture, takes to the exercise of watching his mind, silences the bubbling thoughts, restrains the thought-waves and enters into a luminous state which transcends all phenomenal conditions of mind and achieves Asamprajnata Samadhi. Because the methodology of Yoga leads the student to this high altitude of spiritual experience, it is generally known as Raja Yoga, or the king of Yogas. Though Raja Yoga is a dualistic philosophy and treats of Prakriti and Purusha, it helps the student in Advaitic realisation of oneness eventually. Primarily dealing with the various psychic powers and discipline of the mind, this Yoga has for its aim the teaching of the means by which the individual finds its fusion with the Supreme. The cardinal note in the scheme of its techniques is the control of the thoughts of the mind—chitta-vritti-nirodha. As method of higher mental discipline, Yoga effectuates new heights in the power of concentration, arrests the wanderings and vagaries of the mind, and leads the aspirant to the obtainment of superconscious state or Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

According to Raja Yoga School of Patanjali, there are five conditions or planes of mental life : Kshipta, Mudha, Vikshipta, Ekagra and Niruddha. The Kshipta plane is that wherein the mind, filled with Rajas, wanders amongst various sensual objects ; the Mudha plane is that wherein the mind is, on account of Tamas, in a state of sleep and impotence ; the Vikshipta plane is that wherein Sattva preponderates and the mind oscillates, on account of a tinge of Rajas, between meditation and objectivity, and the rays of the mind are slowly collected and gathered, but here there is no possibility of destroying the Kleshas or afflictions of the mind. The last two planes which are conducive to Yoga are, the Ekagra plane wherein the mind is one-pointed, and there

ensues deep meditation, and the Niruddha plane wherein the mind is under perfect control, and there results an annihilation of all Vrittis of the mind. The last two planes manifest the Sattwa element of the mind, to the highest degree and help the attainment of Kaivalya or final beatitude. When Ekagrata or the state of concentration becomes a permanent condition of the mind, it is termed Samprajnata Samadhi in which there is a distinct consciousness of the object of contemplation. In Niruddha state, all the psychoses and modifications and afflictions of the mind are totally destroyed, and even the thought of the object of contemplation is absent, it is called Asamprajnata Samadhi. Both these forms of Samadhi, are known by the common name Samadhi Yoga.

A Vritti is a whirlpool or thought-wave in the mind-lake, every Vritti or mental modification leaves behind a Samskara or impression or latent tendency which may, when the occasion arises, manifest itself as a conscious state. When all the Vrittis are arrested, the mind enters into a balanced state—Samapati. When the waves of the turbulent empirical consciousness subside, and leave the mind in a state of perfect placidity, the Self realises itself as separate from the body-mind phenomenon and knows itself to be free, immortal, self-effulgent Intelligence. All the modifications of the mind are to be brought to a cessation, the functionings of the mind should cease. The effort to restrain all the Vrittis of the mind and to make it steady like the jet of a lamp in a windless place is Abhyasa. To render the mind inward and destroy its outgoing tendencies, to turn it back to its source, Hridaya Guha, and allow it to get absorbed in the Atman, is Abhyasa. This practice or Abhyasa has to be taken to for a long time, without any break, and with perfect devotion, as stated in the fourteenth aphorism of the first chapter of the *Yoga Sutras*. By habituating the mind to the experience of knowledge, by dispassion, desirelessness, Vairagya, the Vrittis of the mind are thinned out, the obstacles or Pratibandhas are removed, the outgoing tendency of the mind is effectively checked, and the whole mental consciousness is made to move towards the plane of discriminative knowledge and Niruddha state or plane. The best and easy way of keeping the mind in a state of equanimity or evenness which is conducive to the attainment of Samadhi, is the development of virtues and the performance of meritorious and moral actions. Compassion will eliminate hatred and jealousy; mercifulness softens the heart, removes the cruel, harsh nature. Vairagya, Abhyasa, and virtues, eradicate all forms of lower nature, remove Tamas and Rajas, and fill the mind with Sattwa.

Disease, dullness, doubt, carelessness, laziness, indolence, worldly-mindedness, sensuality, mistaken notion or illusion, missing the point, instability, restlessness, distractions of the mind,—these are the obstacles. Pain, despair, tremor of the body, inhalation, exhalation are the companions of the causes of distraction. By a recourse to proper methods, diseases from the system must be eliminated; laziness and dullness can be conquered by exercises in Pranayama, by practice of Asanas and cultivation of active habits. Doubt is removed by discrimination, reflection, acquisition of right knowledge, study of important sacred texts, Avirati or the tendency to repeated sensuous

enjoyment can be destroyed by the power of dispassion, by contemplation on the limitations, deficiencies and defects and consequences of worldly pleasures and worldly life, such as impermanence, disease, old age, misery, death. Association with the high-minded and holy men and a study of the works on Vairagya will also help in this; they also remove from the mind Bhrantidarshan which consists in valuing that which is worthless, in imagining an undesirable state to be the most desirable state. Anavasthattva or instability is that fickleness of the mind which does not allow the Yogi to remain in the state of Samadhi, even though he has reached it with great difficulty. Steady practice will remove all the obstacles or stumbling blocks on the way.

Cultivation of friendliness, Maitri, towards equals, Karuna or mercifulness towards inferiors, cheerfulness, Mudita, towards superiors, indifference, Upeksha, towards wicked people or with regards to things pleasant or painful, good or bad, produce tranquillity and calmness of mind. Obstacles make their manifestation only when the aspirant is not absorbed in concentration ; when the Seer identifies himself with his own inner spiritual Nature, there arises undivided experience.

The achievement of Samadhi is made possible through devotion to God ; though devotion to God is one of the many aids to the practice of Yoga, it is the best means for the attainment of concentration and the restraint of all mental modifications. The method of developing devotion to the Divine, is described in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth aphorisms of the first chapter of the *Yoga Sutras* ; the fruits of devotion are stated in the twenty-ninth aphorism and the twenty-fourth, the twenty-fifth and the twenty-sixth delineate the nature of the Divine. Infinite knowledge is God. Vayu Purana says : "Omniscience, eternal satisfaction, eternal knowledge, independence, non-decreasing power, infinite power—these six are said to be the Angas of the Great Lord". Knowledge, non-attachment, Aishwarya, Tapas, Truth, forgiveness, Dhairyam or endurance, power of creation, Atma Swaroopajnanam or knowledge of Self and being the Adhishthan or substratum for everything and of all activities—these are the ten unchangeable (Avyayas) qualities that always exist in God.

God of Patanjali is a special Purusha or particular Soul unaffected by afflictions, works, fruition, and vehicles. In Him is the highest limit of the seed of omniscience. He is ever free, unconditioned by time, and is the teacher of even the ancients. The ancient teachers were conditioned by time ; but God is Adi-Guru without whose help spiritual progress is not possible ; God is all-knowing, ever existing, ever independent and He aids the aspirants, and removes the obstacles and throws light on their path. The sacred syllable OM is the symbol and name of God. Repetition of and meditation on OM, if practised will eliminate all impediments and obviate all difficulties on the path, and will lead to experience of God in Samadhi. In aphorism twenty of the first chapter, it is stated that Asamprajnata Samadhi is obtained by "faith, energy, memory, meditation and discernment". Aphorism twenty-one, states that success in Samadhi is speedier for those who express intense

Vairagya or dispassion ; and, in the twenty-third aphorism we find, "or, by devotion and self-surrender to Ishwara" ; that is to say, in attaining Asamprajnata Samadhi success is rapid if one has devotion to Ishwara and if one resigns oneself to Him. Ishwara-pranidhana or total, ungrudging, unreserved self-surrender to Ishwara, is true devotion which procures for the devotee purity of the heart, enlightenment of the intellect, removal of all afflictions and attainment of Yoga.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

13. SIVANANDA'S DETAILED ACCOUNT OF HINDUISM IN ITS PHILOSOPHIC, RELIGIOUS AND RITUALISTIC ASPECTS

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

SRI Swami Sivananda, living as he does a life of cloistered seclusion, pale asceticism, and philosophic contemplation, in the sequestered and serene solitude of the sacred Himalayas, has herein expounded the philosophy of Hindu religion and its ethical and metaphysical background in its true perspective and with an erudition, cogency and phenomenal mastery of the subject, that leave nothing to be desired. The learned author has in the work under review, given an exhaustive exposition of the following facts of the Hindu religious faith : (1) What is Hinduism ? (2) Its scriptures (3) Sanatana Dharma (4) Basic Hindu religious ideas (5) Hindu rituals (6) Hindu Ethics (7) Hindu philosophy (8) Karma, Raja, Bhakti and Jnana Yogas (9) Hindu Sects (10) Hindu mythology (11) Philosophy of Hindu symbols.

—V. V. R.,
Indian Republic,
Madras.

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

STEEPED in religious beliefs and sanctified customs and conventions, Indians believe in fasting on sacred days, celebrate festivals and other religious ceremonies on particular days with deep fervour and devotion. But very few know the religious, mystic and esoteric significance and the underlying philosophy behind the devout observation of such festivals. In this highly informative book, Sivananda gives in a lucid manner the inner significance of our festivals and fasts.

—*Sunday Times*,
Madras.

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

IN this work an attempt has been made to give an account and significance of the important Hindu fasts and festivals. The Swamiji has listed seventy of them ; and his attempt to explain the deep spiritual import of these festivals, is really laudable.

—K. C. N.,
Madras Information,
Madras.

14. SIVANANDA ON HINDUISM AS A VERITABLE EIFFEL TOWER, A FAITH OF INSISTENT BELIEF IN THE INNATE DIVINITY OF MAN, A LIFE-THOUGHT BASED ON WORLD'S SUBTLEST PHILOSOPHIES, AND AS A RELIGION RICH IN SYMBOLISM AND HIGHER ETHICAL VIEWS AND RICHER IN ITS SPIRITUAL TRENDS AND TENDENCIES.

IF Hinduism, or shall I say Hindu Culture, has absorbed the shock of the impact of many an invading foreign culture, and held its own against adversaries formidable enough to make their influence felt on the surface by agitating the tranquillity and setting afloat a few ripples of reaction (in themselves a sure sign of the powerful quiet of the deep), it is solely because it has ever shot its roots *above*, far above the reach of the alien axe, in the transcendental region of the One: it is because of its insistent belief in the Divinity of Man (a grand assertion which put to shame the invader's conception of Man as the highest-evolved animal): and what is more important—its universality of outlook. It has ever been against the grain of Hinduism to monopolise Truth or to claim an exclusive entry into the Realms of Reality. In fact, the Hindu found the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven open to the very tiniest worm as well as to the nighly evolved celestial.

With this Unity of Consciousness as the rock-foundation, Hinduism presents an awe-inspiring spectacle of an Eiffel tower built by the arduous struggle of many a Seer who has constructed one step to ascend to the summit of the tower, in accordance with the temperament, outlook and needs of the generation which he incarnated himself to awaken. Between the Charvakas who refused to believe in a life beyond the physical death, in a power beyond the elements, and who thus busied themselves in adorning their own bodies to their gratification, and the Kevala Advaitins who perceived the One alone and asserted the Existence of One alone and the perception of diversity as a false superimposition on the One, or the Absolute Idealism of the Yoga-Vasishtha which treated of the diversity as a mere dream, these brave souls have constructed the grandest structure which covers the entire universe, with the result that every invader finds, on a closer inspection of the fortress he is besieging, that his own home is within it!

The Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddhists is one brick which goes to form the first step in Yoga (Yama): and Buddha Himself is considered an Avatara.

The ethical principles underlying Christianity form as it were the secondary scripturial injunctions of the Hindu (the Smritis) which had in themselves enunciated the Law in a far more comprehensive manner: and the philosophical doctrines of the Christian find their parallel in Hinduism, again, far more clearly and scientifically stated.

* * *

Religion satisfies the deep inward craving in man who is not always content with leading merely an animal existence and wants spiritual consolation, solace and peace. Man cannot live by bread alone. A

rime comes in the life of many of us when mere worldly prosperity does not satisfy us and we hanker after something more. In the cause of many more, trials and tribulations of life turn their attention to spiritual solace.

Hinduism is the oldest of all living religions. This is not founded by any Prophet, like Christianity, Buddhism and Mohammedanism. Christianity, Buddhism and Mohammedanism owe their origin to the Prophets. Their dates are fixed. But no such date can be fixed for Hinduism. Hinduism is not born of the teachings of particular Prophets. It is not based on a set of dogmas preached by a particular set of teachers. It is free from religious fanaticism.

Hinduism is also known by the names Sanatana Dharma and Vaidika Dharma. Sanatana Dharma means eternal religion. Sanatana Dharma is so called not only because it is eternal, but also because it is protected by God and because it can make us eternal. Vaidika Dharma means the religion of the Vedas. The Vedas are the foundational scriptures of Hinduism. The ancient Rishis and sages of India have expressed their intuitive spiritual experience (Aparoksha Anubhuti) in the Upanishads. These experiences are direct and infallible. Hinduism regards the spiritual experiences of the Rishis of yore as its authority. The priceless truths that have been discovered by the Hindu Rishis and sages through millennia constitute the glory of Hinduism. Therefore, Hinduism is a revealed religion.

Hinduism, unlike other religions does not dogmatically assert that the final emancipation is possible only through its means and not through any other. It is only a means to an end and all means which will ultimately lead to the end are equally approved.

Hinduism allows absolute freedom to the rational mind of man. Hinduism never demands any undue restraint upon the freedom of human reason, the freedom of thought, feeling and will of man. It shows the widest freedom in matters of faith and worship.

Hinduism is a religion of freedom. It allows absolute freedom to the human reason and heart with regard to questions such as nature of God, soul, creation, form of worship and the goal of life. Hinduism does not lie in the acceptance of any particular doctrine, nor in the observance of some particular ritual or form of worship. It does not force anybody to accept any particular dogmas or forms of worship. It allows everybody to reflect, investigate, enquire and cogitate. Hence all sorts of religious faiths, various forms of worship or Sadhana, diverse kinds of rituals and customs have found the honourable places side by side within Hinduism, and are developed in harmonious relationship with one another.

Hinduism does not condemn those who deny God as the Creator and Ruler of the world, who do not accept the existence of an eternal soul and the State of Moksha or state of liberation. Hinduism does not render the upholders of such views unfit to be recognised as pious and honourable members of the Hindu religious society.

The religious hospitality of Hinduism is proverbial. Hinduism is extremely catholic and liberal. This is the fundamental feature

of Hinduism. Hinduism pays respect to all religions. It does not revile any other religion. It accepts and honours truth wherever it may come from and whatever garb it may put on.

Despite all the differences of metaphysical doctrines, modes of religious discipline and forms of ritualistic practices and social habits prevalent in the Hindu society, there is an essential uniformity in the conception of religion and outlook on life and the world among all sections of Hindus.

* * *

Hinduism has within its fold various schools of Vedanta, Saivism, Saktism, Vaishanavism, etc. It has various cults and creeds. It is more a League of Religions than a single religion with a definite creed. It accommodates all types of men. It prescribes spiritual food for every-body and according to his qualification and growth. This is the beauty of this magnanimous religion. This is the glory of Hinduism. Hence there is no conflict among the various cults and creeds. The variations are an ornament to Hinduism. They are not defects, Rig Veda declares, Truth is one; sages call it by various names. *Ekam Sat Vipra bahudha vadanti.* The Upanishads declare that all the paths lead to the same goal, just as cows of variegated colours yield the same white milk. Lord Krishna says in Gita, "However men approach me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine". All diversities are organised and united in the body of Hinduism.

The philosophy of the Upanishads is lofty, sublime and unique. Even western philosophers have paid their tribute to the ancient seers of the Upanishads. They have been amazed at the lofty heights scaled by them. Schopenhauer studied the Upanishads and meditated on the thoughts of the Upanishads just before going to bed. He said : "The Upanishads are the solace of my life and they will be solace to me after my death also".

The Raja Yoga system of Hinduism is also splendid and unique, The lessons are immensely practical and highly instructive. No system of physical exercise on the surface of the earth can compete with Hatha Yoga. Kundalini Yoga is wonderful. Hence the Americans and Europeans are in search of Hindu Sannyasins and Yogis. They visit Himalayas frequently in the quest of Yoga teachers. Some are living under Hindu Yogis as disciples and are practising Yoga.

Further, Hinduism prescribes graded series of different Yoga Sadhanas to suit students of different states, temperaments and capacities, of different stages of spiritual development and different conditions of life. Hindu Yoga and Vedanta teachers lay great stress on self-restraint, Tapas, renunciation and practical Sadhana, which is best calculated to control the mind and the senses, and unfold the divinity or attain self-realisation. Hinduism is not a religion of mere theories. It is eminently practical. That is the reason why India is the only glorious land of sages, Rishis, Yogis and saints.

Hindu ethics are superb. Hinduism lays great emphasis on ethical discipline. Yama (self-restraint), and Niyama (religious observances or canons) are the foundation of Yoga and Vedanta. Without ethical perfection no spiritual progress or realisation is possible. A Yogic student or aspirant

must be strictly ethical. He must be truthful and pure in thought, word and deed. He must possess excellent conduct. He must not injure any living being in thought, word and deed. He must practise rigidly right thought, right speech and right action.

Religion is the practical aspect of the philosophy. Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. The philosophy of Hinduism is not an arm-chair philosophy. It is not meant for intellectual curiosity and vain discussion. Hindu philosophy is way of life. The philosopher of Hinduism seriously reflects, after hearing the *Srutis*, does *Atmavichara*, constantly meditates and then attains self-relization or *Atma-Sakshatkara*. Moksha is his goal. He attempts to attain Jivanmukti now and here.

Religion is spiritualisation of human life for a Hindu. Religious culture is really the culture of freedom for him. Religion governs all the departments of Hindu life. He must realise the freedom of the soul in every department of life. Religion affords the greatest scope for him for the culture of true freedom. Religion is the only way to him for the realization of perfect freedom in life.

It is in India alone every man knows something of philosophy. The cowherd who tends the cattle, the peasant who ploughs the fields, the boatman who pulls at his oar singing songs replete with philosophical truths. Even the barber repeats *Om Namahsivaya, Sivoham* before he takes up the razor. The Paramahamsa Sannyasins, the itinerant monks of Hinduism, have disseminated the highest Vedanta from door to door. In exchange for a handful of rice they have distributed from door to door through religious songs the priceless gems of Hindu religion and philosophy.

These are the greatest and important features of Hinduism.

—Extracts from Swami Sivananda's *All About Hinduism*, Published In *Sunday Times*, Madras.

15. SIVANANDA ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND THE STYLES OF THOUGHT AND LIFE IN HINDUISM

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

THE book contains in a short space an outline of the *Prasthanatraya*, the six systems of Indian philosophy, the four Vedas, the four *Varnas*, *Ashramas* and *Purusharthas*.

The book may well serve as a helpful introduction to that multi-faced matrix of all faiths, which is Hinduism.

—*The Vedanta Kesari*, Madras.

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

A BOOK of two hundred and sixty pages, it includes within its all-embracing sweep every aspect of Hindu life, religion and thought. It gives the kernel of Hindu scriptures, explains the Hindu social organisation and throws light on Hindu philosophic systems and religious practices. A priceless treasure for book lovers.

—*Suday Times*, Madras.

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

HINDUISM is an ancient and dynamic religion. Festivals of Hindus are qualified by fasts and vigils There is an old and enduring philosophy behind these observances. Swami Sivananda is well-known as the organiser of Divine Life Society and an Ashram at Rishikesh. In the book under review he has detailed Hindu festivals, Jayantis, Melas, and Vratas (fasts) and explained the special significance of each. This is the latest, but perhaps not the last of Swamiji's popular publications for guiding and uplifting Hindus.

—*Hindustan Times*,
New Delhi.

16. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION, AND THE PRACTICAL METAPHYSICS, OF ONE OF THE LEADING HINDU FESTIVALS

RELIGIOUS observances, traditional worship and Vratas have at times more than one significance. Apart from being the adoration of the Divine, they are commemorative of stirring bygone events, allegoric when interpreted from the Occult standpoint and lastly deeply significant pointers and revealing guides to the Jiva on his path to Realisation.

Outwardly, the nine days' worship of Devi or the Mother is in the nature of a Vijaya-Utsav. These nine triumphant days are offered to the Mother for her successful struggle with the formidable demons led by Sumbha and Nisumbha. But to the spiritual aspirant in his life of Sadhana, the particular division of the Navaratri into sets of three days to adore different aspects of the Supreme Goddess has got a very sublime, yet thoroughly practical truth to reveal. In its cosmic aspect, it epitomises the stages of the evolution of Man into God, from Jivahood or individuality to Sivahood or infinitude. In its individual import, it shows the course that his spiritual Sadhana should take.

Now, the central purpose of existence is to recognise your eternal identity with the Supreme Spirit. It is to grow into the image of the Divine. The Supreme One embodies the highest perfection. It is spotless purity, Niranjana. To recognise your identity with That, to attain union with That, is verily to grow into the very likeness of the Divine. The Sadhak has therefore, as the initial step, to get rid of all the countless impurities and the undivine elements that have come to cling to his embodied state. Then he has to acquire lofty virtues, auspicious divine qualities. Thus purified and rendered full of Sattwa, Knowledge flashes upon him like the brilliant rays of the sun upon the crystal waters of a perfectly calm lake.

This process of Sadhana implies resolute will, determined effort and arduous struggle. In other words, strength, infinite Shakti, is the prime necessity. It is the Divine Mother, Supreme of Brahman that has to operate through the aspirant. Then consider how on the first three days of Durga Puja, the Mother is adored as Power, Force, Durga the Terrible. You pray to Mother

Durga to destroy all your impurities, your vices, your defects, She is to fight with and annihilate the baser animal qualities in the Sadhaka, the lower Asura in his nature. Also She is the Power that protects your Sadhana from its many dangers and pitfalls. Thus the first three days marking the first stage of destruction of Mala (impurities) and determined effort and struggle to root out the evil Vasanas in your mind, are set apart for the worship of the Destructive Aspect of the Mother.

Once you have accomplished your task on the negative side, that of breaking down the impure Vasanas, propensities and old habits, the next step is to build up a sublime spiritual personality, to acquire positive qualities in place of the eliminated Asuric qualities. The divine qualities—Daivi Sampat—that Lord Krishna enumerates in the Gita, have to be acquired. The Sadhaka must cultivate and develop all the auspicious qualities. He has to pile up immense spiritual wealth to enable him to pay the price for the rare gem of divine wisdom (Jnanaratna). If this development of the opposite qualities, *Pratipaksha Bhavana*, is not undertaken in right earnest, the old Asuric nature will raise its head again and again. Hence, this stage is as important in an aspirant's career as the previous one. The essential difference is : the former is a ruthless, determined annihilation of the filthy egoistic lower self, the latter is an orderly, steady, calm and serene effort to develop purity. This pleasanter side of the aspirant's Sadhana is depicted by the worship of Mother Lakshmi. She bestows on Her devotees the inexhaustible wealth of Daivi Sampat. Lakshmi is the Sampat-Dayini aspect of Brahman. She is the Purity Itself. Thus worship of Goddess Lakshmi is performed during the second set of three days.

Once the aspirant succeeds in routing out the evil propensities and in developing Sattwic, pure, divine qualities, he becomes an Adhikari. He is ready now to receive the Light of Supreme Wisdom. He is fit to obtain Divine Knowledge. At this stage comes the devout worship of Sri Saraswati, who is Divine Knowledge personified, the embodiment of Brahmajnana. The sound of Her celestial Veena awakens the notes of the sublime Mahavakyas and the Pranava. She bestows the Knowledge of the Supreme Nada and then gives full Atmajnan as represented by Her pure dazzling snowwhite apparel. To propitiate Sri Saraswati, the Giver of Jnana is, therefore, the third stage.

The tenth day—Vijaya Dashami—marks triumph and ovation of the Jiva at having attained Jivanmukti through the descent of knowledge by the Grace of Goddess Saraswati. The Jiva rests in his own supreme Self of Sat-Chit-Ananda, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. This day celebrates the victory, the achievement of the Goal. The winner of Victory flies aloft. Lo ! I am He ! I am He !

—Swami Sivananda's
Hindu Fasts and Festivals,
pp. 15-18.

17. SIMPLICITY OF SELF-EXPRESSION, CATHOLICITY OF SPIRIT AND A HIGH INSPIRATIONAL VALUE CHARACTERISE SIVANANDA'S WRITINGS AND DISTINGUISH HIS ENCYCLOPAEDIC TREATMENT OF HINDUISM

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

SWAMI Sivananda's writings on religion and spiritual subjects are clear and simple in language, catholic in spirit and persuasively stimulating in their appeal. This book on Hinduism—philosophical, ritual, social, cultural, ethical and historical to mention but a few important ones—being described and explained in their separate settings as also in their integrated links with one another. Hinduism is unique in many respects. It is "more a League of Religions than a single religion with a definite creed." Its very differences and contradictions, striking on the surface, constitute its underlying and essential unity, catholicity, universality and foundation on Truth. Without binding people to any set of dogmas and practices, which must breed bigotry and fanaticism, it allows each to make his or her own quest, in due course assimilating the new experience also within its purview. Its supreme purpose of Unity with the Godhead is to be achieved through the practice of Yoga which again is not regimented in narrow and rigid forms, but adapted to the physico-psychic condition of each individual who has to choose it by personal experimentation and experience. As for philosophy "it is a federation of philosophies" rejecting none but recognising no one particular in preference to another, but ever ready to include in itself any new speculation in human thought. In ethics similarly it is all-embracing, strict only with regard to the fundamentals but tolerant and elastic as to their application in practice. Ages have not dimmed nor tarnished its vitality and spirit as measured by higher and permanent human values. It is a world religion not only in statistical sense but in that it has been allowing other religions to live by its side, either born out of itself or come from without, and in both cases, profoundly though subtly affecting them, so that the "Hindus live in perfect harmony, peace and friendship with all of them." This historical fact needs to be noted by present-day alarmists of Hindu culture, who would fain resort to political and militant experience for its sake, thereby betraying their own ignorance of and faith in the cause, thus doing it harm. The chapters on the various rituals and daily obseverances of the various sects in Hinduism, while throwing much light on their origin and purpose, indicate also that they need not be accepted and followed by every one as quite indispensable. It is upto everyone to understand oneself in relation to them and decide what to do. If world unity is to be achieved through religion, and a true living one without it is impossible, the approach offered by Hinduism seems to offer the only means for its consummation. This does not mean that a Hindu should consider himself superior to others, which will be only exposing his own stupidity but by living his Faith in such a manner that he feels at home with all on the great Quest by living their own. The Swamiji's book will help a Hindu to do that, as it will guide a non-Hindu to understand former and his

own better as a comrade in the great Brother-hood of Religion. To treat exhaustively the various manifestations of ancient widespread living religion within the compass of two hundred and sixty five pages is a difficult matter.

—M. S. M., *Human Affairs*, Udipi.

18. HINDUISM AS A MANY-SIDED EXPRESSION OF INTEGRAL INTUITIONAL-EXPERIENCE AND A BODY OF DISCIPLINES BOTH FOR THE PHILOSOPHIC INTELLIGENCE AND THE POPULAR LIFE

THE philosophy of Hinduism is not a product of systematic classification and analytical observation. It is not a system which is classified and pigeon-holed under a heading or category. There is no classification of phenomena. It cannot be made to fit into a compartment. The sublime Hindu philosophy has come through profound intuition. The Rishis and seers tapped the source through living the Truth. They had deep penetration into the Truth, through the eye of wisdom or intuition in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. They disciplined the outgoing senses, led a virtuous life, did rigorous Tapas and intense meditation. They were absolutely moral, righteous and developed all the qualities of the heart ; they practised dispassion and renunciation, had no attachment for mundane things and embraced poverty, purity and austerity. They lived in forest, ate fruits and roots, breathed pure air. They lived on the banks of the Ganges with Himalayan scenery, which had high spiritual vibrations, and did not live in Mount Road or Mall.

Newton discovered the Law of Gravitation ; Einstein the Law of Relativity. Greater than these two discoveries was the Rishis' discovery of the Law of Karma.

Yoga or Vedanta is not a system which can be taught and learnt by lectures or correspondence courses. The Yogic student should live under a Preceptor for some years and lead a rigorous life of Tapas, discipline and meditate like Indra. Only then he can become a Yogi.

The mission of a Hindu, is religion ; the vitality of a Hindu, is religion. He drinks religiously, sleeps religiously, marries religiously, sits religiously and walks religiously.

The Vedantic philosophy furnishes the metaphysical background for the Hindu religion. It is that bold philosophy which proclaims with emphasis that the individual soul is identical with the Supreme Soul or the Infinite. It is a system of great speculative daring and logical subtlety.

—Swami Sivananda's, *Wisdom Nectar* 147, 162 and *Precepts for Practice*, 256-257.

19. THE TIRELESS LITERARY ENERGY OF SIVANANDA TURNS UPON A FAITHFUL DEPICTION OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS AND SALIENT FEATURES OF, AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES IN, HINDUISM

HINDU FASTS AND FESTIVALS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY :

SWAMI Sivananda's untiring energy in giving all kinds of instructions to all his various disciples, finds one more exemplification in the latest publication. It is very evident that the life of the religious minded or ceremonially minded Hindu, is a round of observances, fasts and feasts in memory of some remarkable event in the life of a great Avatar of astronomical phenomenon. His belief in worlds other than the one here preceived, makes him extremely superstitious and to many this has been one of the chief drawbacks of Hindu religious life. Swami Sivananda attempts to give the reasons for the observance of fasts and feasts in tne context of spiritual discipline and realisation.

—K. C. V.,
The Hindu,
Madras.

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

ANY true Hindu reader of this book will not fail to note that the claim of the book to contain the salient facts and features about the Hindu religion is not without any justification. The subject is treated under well-defined captions with the result that the reader is able to understand clearly and completely what Hinduism is. The author has given a sufficient account of the Hindu scriptures, the rituals and observances which a true Hindu observes in his daily life and also the Hindu ideals of "Dharma". Chapters relating to the "Darshanas" or the Hindu philosophical systems deserve particular mention in giving the views of the systems as interpreted by the Hindus. The public must feel thankful for the publication as one coming from the Sivananda Publishing League, Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh, and from the pen of Sri Swami Sivananda, who is too well-known to need any introduction.

—*Sai Sudha*, Madras.

20. SIVANANDA ON THE SIX ALL-COMPREHENDING SCRIPTURAL SOURCES OF HINDUISM

SANSKRIT Literature can be classified under six orthodox heads and four secular heads. The six orthodox sections form the authoritative scriptures of the Hindus. The four secular sections embody the later developments in classical Sanskrit Literature.

The six scriptures are:—

(1) Srutis, (2) Smritis, (3) Itihasas, (4) Puranas, (5) Agamas, and (6) Darshanas.

1. THE SRUTIS

The Srutis are called the Vedas or the 'Amnaya'. This is the basic foundation of the Hindu Religion. These are direct intuitional revelations and are held to be Apaurusheya or entirely superhuman, without any author in particular. The Veda is the glorious pride of the Hindus, nay, of the whole world ! The Veda is the source of the other

five sets of scriptures, why, even of the secular and the materialistic. The Veda is the storehouse of Indian Wisdom and is a memorable glory which man can never forget till eternity.

The Veda is divided into four great books : the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda and the Atharva-Veda. The Rigveda is divided into twenty-one sections, the Yajurveda one hundred and nine sections, the Samaveda one thousand sections and the Atharvaveda fifty sections. In all, the whole Veda is thus divided into one thousand one hundred and eighty parts. Each part has its own Upanishad and so there are 1,180 Upanishads in total.

"The Rig-Veda", says Max Muller, "is the most ancient book of the world. The sacred hymns of the Brahmanas stand unparalleled in the literature of the whole world; and their preservation might well be called miraculous". (*History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*).

The Yajurveda is again divided into two parts, the Shukla and the Krishna. The Krishna or the Taittiriya is the older book and Shukla or the Vajasaneya is a later revelation to sage Yajnavalkya from the resplendent Sun-God.

Each of the four Vedas is divided into four groups: the Mantra-Samhita, the Brahmana, the Aranyaka and the Upanishad, to suit respectively to the Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and the Sannyasin. The Samhitas are metrical poems, comprising prayers, hymns and incantations addressed to various deities, both subjective and objective. The Brahmanas are prose explanations of the method of using the Mantras in the Yajna or the Sacrifice. The Aranyakas are mystical sylvan texts which together with the philosophical Upanishads constitute the Brahma-Kanda of the Holy Vedas, while the Samhitas and the Brahmanas form the Karma-Kanda.

The Rigveda-Samhita is the grandest book of the Hindus, the oldest and the best. It is the Great Indian Bible, which no Hindu would forget to adore from the core of his heart. Its style, the language and the tone are most beautiful and mysterious. Its immortal Mantras embody the greatest truths of existence and it is perhaps the greatest treasure in all the scriptural literature of the world. Its priest is called the Hotri.

The Yajurveda-Samhita is mostly in prose and is meant to be used by the Adhwaryu (the Yajurvedic priest) for superfluous explanations of the rites in sacrifices supplementing the Rigvedic Mantras.

The Samaveda-Samhita is vastly borrowed from the Rig Vedic Samhita and is meant to be sung by the Udgatri (the Samavedic priest) in sacrifices. The Atharvaveda-Samhita is meant to be used by the Brahma (the Atharva-Vedic priest) to correct the mispronunciations and wrong performances that may accidentally be committed by the other three priests of the sacrifice.

There are two Brahmanas to the Rigveda; the Aitareya and the Shankhayana. The Shatapatha Brahmana belongs to the Shukla Yajurveda. The Krishna Yajurveda has the Taittiriya and the Maitrayana Brahmanas. The Tandya or Panchavimsha, the Shadvimsha, the Chhandogya, the Adbhuta, the Arsheya and the Upanishad Brahmanas belong to the Samaveda. The Brahmana of

the Atharvaveda is called the Gopatha. Each of the Brahmanas has got an Aranyaka. There are as many Upanishads and Brahmanas to each Veda as there are Shakhas or branches (sub-divisions, *i.e.*, 21, 109, 1000, and 50 respectively to the four Vedas.

There are four Upavedas or subsidiary Vedas, *viz*,. the Ayurveda, the Dhanurveda, the Gandharvaveda, and the Arthashastra, forming auxiliaries to the four Vedas respectively. There are six Angas or explanatory limbs to the Vedas, the Shiksha and Vyakarana of Panini, the Chhandas of Pingalacharya, the Nirukta of Yaska, the Jyotisha of Garga, and the Kalpas (Shrauta, Grihya and Dharma) belonging to the authorship of various Rishis. The Pratishakhyas, Padapathas, Kramapathas, Upalekhas, Anukramanis, Daivatsamhitas, Parishishtas, Prayogas, Paddhatis, Karikas, Khilas and Vyuhas are further elaborations in the rituals of the Kalpa Sutras.

Among the Kalpa-Sutras, the Ashwalayana, Shankhayana, and the Shambhavya belong to the Rigveda. The Mashaka, Latyayana, Drahyayana, Gobhila and Khadira belong to the Sama Veda. The Katyayana and Paraskara belong to the Shukla Yajur-Veda. The Apasthambha, Hiranyakeshi, Bodhayana, Bharadwaja, Manava, Vaikhanasa and the Kathaka belong to the Krishna Yajurveda. The Vaitana and the Kaushika belong to the Atharvaveda.

2. THE SMRITIS

There are eighteen main Smritis or Dharmashastras in number. These are the ancient sacred law-codes of the Hindus dealing with the Sanatana-Varnashrama-Dharma. The most important are those of Manu, Yajnavalkya and Parashara. The other fifteen are those of Vishnu, Daksha, Samvarta, Vyasa, Harita, Shatatapa, Vasishtha, Yama. Apastambha, Gautama, Devala Shankha, Likhita, Ushna, Atri, Shaunaka. The Smritis are next only to the Vedas in authority and importance. They supplement and explain the ritualistic injunctions called 'Vidhis' in the Vedas.

3. THE ITIHASAS

There are four books under this heading; the Valmiki-Ramayana, the Yogavasishtha, the Mahabharata and the Harivamsha. These form the fifth Veda embodying all that is in the Vedas, but only in a simpler manner. These are called the Suhrit-Samhitas or the 'friendly treatises', while the Vedas are called the Prabhu-Samhitas or the 'commanding treatises' with great authority. These works explain the great universal truths in the form of historical narratives stories and dialogues These are very interesting volumes and are liked by all, from the inquisitive child to the intellectual scholar.

4. THE PURANAS

There are eighteen Puranas in main ; the Brahma, Padma, Vishnu, Shiva, Bhagavata, Narada, Markandeya, Agni, Bhavishya, Brahmavaivarta, Linga, Vamana, Varaha, Matsya, Kurma, Garuda, Skanda, and the Brahmanda. Of these six are Satvik Puranas and glorify Vishnu ; six are Tamasic and they glorify Siva. The best among the Puranas are the Bhagavata and the Vishnu. All the Puranas belong to the class of Suhrit-Samhitas.

5. THE AGAMAS

These are practical manuals of divine worship in embodied forms. The Agama

include the Tantras, Mantras and the Yantras. These are treatises explaining the external worship of God, in idols, temples, etc. They are divided into three sections: the Vaishnava, the Shaiva and the Shakta Agamas.

The Vaishnava-Agamas are of four kinds: the Vaikhanasa, Pancharatra, Pratishthasara and the Vijnanalalita. The Brahma, Saiva, Kaumara, Vasishtha, Kapila, Goutamiya and the Naradiya are the seven groups of the Pancharatras. Among the existing books on the Agamas, the most famous are the Ishwarasamhita, Ahirbudh Nyayasamhita, Sanatkumarasamhita, Naradapancharatra, Spandapradipika, and the Mahanirvana Tantra. The Naradiya section of the Santi-Parva of the Mahabharata is the earliest source of information about the Pancharatna.

All the Agamas treat of (1) Jnana or Knowledge, (2) Yoga or concentration, (3) Kriya or making, and (4) Charya or doing. They also give elaborate details about ontology and cosmology, Liberation, Devotion, Meditation, Philosophy of Mantras, Mystic Diagrams, charms and spells, Temple-building, Image-making, Domestic Observances, Social Rules and Public Festivals.

6. THE DARSHANAS

These are the intellectual portion of the Hindu Writings, while the first four are intuitional and fifth emotional. The Darshanas are divided into three pairs of aphoristic compositions which explain the philosophy of the Vedas in a rationalistic method of approach. They are the Nyaya and the Vaisheshika, the Sankhya and the Yoga, the Mimamsa and the Vedanta. Each set of Sutras has got its Bhashya, Vritti, Karika, Vyakhyana, Tika and Tippani.

Sutra.—Svalpaksharamasannigdham
Saravad Vishwatomukham.
Astobhamanavadyam Cha
Sootram Sootravido Viduh

A Sutra or an aphorism is a short formula with the least possible number of letters, without any ambiguity or doubtful assertion, containing the very essence, embracing all meanings, without any stop or obstruction, and absolutely faultless in nature.

The Sutrakara or the composer of the aphorisms is said to be as happy as one would be while getting the first male son, if he is but able to reduce one letter in his abstruse Sutra of far-fetched words and ideas. The best example of the greatest, the tersest and the most perfect of Sutra literatures are the series of aphorisms called the "Ashtadhyayi" composed by Panini. Panini is the father of all Sutra-Karas, from whom all others seem to have borrowed the method of composition. The Sutras are meant to explain a big volume of knowledge in short assertions suitable to be kept in memory at all times. The Six Vedangas and the six systems of Hindu philosophy form the twelve sets of Sutra literature of the world. In addition to these, there are many unimportant later compositions like the Bhakti Sutras, Narada, Sandilya, etc., which also wish to assume an equal form with the famous Sutras mentioned above.

Bhashya—Sootrartho Varnyate Yatra
Padaih Sootranusaribhih
Swapadani Cha Varnyante
Bhashyam Bhashyavido Viduh

A Bhashya is an elaborate exposition, a commentary on the Sutras, with word by

word meaning of the aphoristic precepts, their running translation, together with the in lividual views of the commentator or the Bhashyakara. The best and the exemplary Bhashya in the whole of Sanskrit literature is the one written by Patanjali on the Vyakarana-Sutras of Panini. This Bhashya is so very famous and important that it is called the 'Mahabhashya' and its celebrated author is specially called the 'Bhashyakara.' Patanjali is the father of Bhashyakaras; the next important Bhashya is the one on the Mimamsa Sutras written by Shabara-Swamin who learnt the art from Patanjali's commentary. The third important Bhashya is written by Sankara on the Brahmasutras, in close following with the Shabara-Bhashya. The Bhashyas on the six sets of aphorisms dealing with Indian Philosophy were written by Vatsyayana, Prashastapada, Vijnanabhikshu, Vyasa, Shabara and Sankara respectively. On the Vedanta Sutras there are about sixteen Bhashyas like those of Ramanuja, Madhwa, Vallabha, Nimbarka, etc.

Vritti—Sadvrittih Sannibandhana.

A Vritti is a short gloss explaining the aphorisms in a more elaborate way, but not as extensively as a Bhashya. An example is Bodhayana's Vritti on the Brahma-Sutras.

Vartika—Uktanuktaduruktanam
Chinta Yatra Pravartate
Tam Grantham Vartikam Prahuh
Vartikajna Vichakshanah

A Vartika is a work where a critical study is made of that which is said and left unsaid or imperfectly said in a Bhashya, and the ways of making it perfect by supplying the omissions therein. Examples are the Vartikas of Katyayana on Panini's Sutras, of Sureswara on Sankara's Upanishad-Bhashyas, and of Kumarila Bhatta on the Shabara Bhashya on the Karma-Mimamsa.

Vyakhyana.—A Vyakhyana is a running explanation in an easier language of what is said in the original, with little elucidations here and there. A Vyakhyana, particularly of a Kavya, deals with eight different modes of dissection of the Sloka, like Pada-Chheda, Vigraha, Sandhi, Alankara, Anuvada etc., This forms an important aspect in the study of Sanskrit Sahitya Shastra. An Anu-Vyakhyana (like the one written by Sri Madhwa) is a repetition of what is already written, but in greater detail. An Anuvada is merely a running translation or statement of an abstruse text of the original. Tika is only another name for Vyakhyana. The best Vyakhyana is of Vachaspati Misra on the Vyasa-Bhashya and the Sankara Bhashya.

Tippani.—Tippani is just like a Vritti but is less orthodox than the Vritti. It is an explanation of difficult words or phrases occurring in the original. Examples are Kaiyata's gloss on the Mahabhashya of Patanjali, Nagojibhatta's gloss on Kaiyata's gloss, or Appayya's gloss on Amalananda's gloss on the Bhamati.

—Swami Sivananda's
All About Hinduism, pp. 21-28.

21. SIVANANDA : THE FACTORS OF VALUE IN HIS EXPOSITION OF HINDUISM, THE PHILOSOPHICAL EDIFICE OF HIS LIFE-SCHEME AND HIS GIFT TO WORLD-THOUGHT

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

THROUGH several publications written by Indians and Europeans under the imposing titles "Hindu View of Life", "Idealistic

View of Life", "Heart of Hinduism" and so forth, are current, still, the essentials of Hinduism are far from being grasped and understood correctly in their proper philosophical perspective and spiritual settings. It is, hence, refreshing to note that Swami Sivananda's exposition of the fundamentals of Hindu religion and philosophy while keeping as close as possible to the original classics in Sanskrit, is presented in the garb of modern English terminology in a concise yet fairly exhaustive manner. Distributed over a dozen chapters, the subject-matter encompasses and controls all the *six* systems of Indian Philosophy, the Shad-Darshanas, and the three schools of the Advaita Vedanta, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita. In addition, the theory and technique, practices and programmes of *Yoga* which constitute the special and distinctive contribution made by India to world philosophy, are explained for the benefit of eager students and aspirants.

Though Swami Sivananda recognises the truth in all religions and systems of philosophy, he holds that Advaita is the highest, completest and perfectest philosophy of life. That is in conformity with Indian philosophic tradition. One supremely significant and noteworthy characteristic of Indian Philosophy is that it has never cared to make converts, and proselytisation has been alien and repugnant to Indian conscience. Each champion has argued in favour of the system of his choice. After Sankara, Advaita has been championed by stalwarts like Vachaspati Misra, Appayya Dikshita and Madhusoodana Saraswati. Likewise, Visishtadvaita, after Ramanuja, has been upheld as the highest philosophy by Vedanta Desika, Madhvacharya, Anandalwar and others. In its turn, Dvaita after Madhvacharya has been argued to be the soundest philosophy of life by Jayatirtha, Vyasaraja, Vijayindra and others. The philosophic game is still on. It will never end. It is an eternal and timeless game.

This volume is carefully prepared and authoritatively documented. It will take rank with Max Muller's fine exposition of the *Six Systems* of Indian Philosophy.

—Dr. R. Naga Raja Sarma,
M.A., Ph.D.,
Astrological Magazine,
Bangalore.

22. IN THE HINDU PANTHEON, SRI KRISHNA COMMANDS AND OWNS THE MOST POPULAR AND THE MUCH BELOVED PLACE, AND IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE, HE FINDS HIS SUPREME LOVELINESS AND PERFECTION MIRRORED AS A CONSCIOUSNESS THAT ILLUMINES AND A POWER THAT TRANSFORMS

THE world of time in which one lives is the visible face of the Timeless Light of the invisible Glory that throbs at the heart of all things. The unrest and the struggle of human life dimly foreshadow the feeble response which man makes to the call of the Higher Life. The call is eternal, and the intensity and the quality of the response to it from man's side depends on the depth of his awareness of the fact that his state is

one of a severe want which can be fulfilled completely by nothing on earth. The welfare of the society, of the different nations, is directly proportional to the extent in which the laws regulating the same accord with this deeper spiritual presence in man, which refuses to be neglected in the daily affairs of his life. When man knows that the light which glimmers within him is the light which descends from above him, he becomes fit for abundance and joy in all directions. His conceit gets melted in the willing surrender of self to the Divine. When the advice from the Self, which is the deepest and the highest, is paid a deaf ear to, and its orders are disobeyed, it begins to speak in a loud tone and manifests itself with determination to put an end to wrong. In Krishna we have an instance of such a descent of the Eternal among the temporal.

The life of Sri Krishna is the concrete visible representation of the life of the universe itself. It is the pattern of perfection demonstrated before the consciousness of man, the ultimate ideal and goal of all beings presented in miniature, as it were, to the vision of those who have the eyes to see, the Brahman glorifying in form and action on the plane of the earth whose essence is the constitution of form and action. The birth of Krishna is the heralding of the reign of the blessedness of the Supreme Being, the peace that is the heart of the undying indwelling Spirit. The world knows not what it wants, and is unaware of the profound hidden significance of its quests in the reign of space-time. The One appears as the many ; the love for the Eternal takes the distorted shapes of desires and ambitions in life. There is the unceasing music of the flute of Sri Krishna, summoning the mute ones grazing in the pastures of the earth, beckoning the souls engaged in the work of their household and in serving their earthly lords, penetrating, vibrating and thrilling the fortunate in every nook and corner, drawing forth towards itself the wanderers in the desert of Samsara, and bathing them all in the nectarine showers of its all-engulfing and enrapturing Omkara-Nada. The flute of Krishna sends you the message of hope, fullness and the bliss that knows no end, the beatitude that can find no comparison anywhere. It assures you with the promise of the unsurpassed truth, goodness, beauty and satisfaction that is God's.

Listen to that call, O lovers of Truth, the call of that Omnipresent Self, the Self of the universe ; the life, light and love of all that here breathes or moves. Let your thirst be quenched and your hunger appeased by the delicious Manna of the holy Name of Krishna ! Krishna is not merely the son of Devaki, the darling of Yashoda, the prince of Dwaraka or friend of the Pandavas. He is your heart and soul, your light and delight, your aspiration, goal, existence and content in one. Krishna is the Name of the Real of reals, of whatever is the greatest, the best and the blest, whatever is at its highest, and is the crown of all existence. Krishna stands for the one goal of all endeavours, the essential and ultimate core of the happiness sought in the ideals of individual life, family life, social life, universal life and divine life. His life is His message for all. In Krishna is to be seen the great example of the ideal statesman, the ideal politician, the ideal reformer, the ideal householder, the ideal friend and benefactor, the ideal Yogi, saint, sage and the ideal of God. The

greatest man of action, the supreme centre of love, the summit of knowledge and power, the moving spirit of the trans-empirical Absolute, Krishna lived and taught the life that is ceaselessly rooted in the consciousness of what is the highest Reality and beatitude of beings, and shone with a light that can never be dimmed by the dusts of the mortal earth.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA.

23. SIVANANDA : CONCERNING HIS EXALTED SPIRITUAL EMINENCES ALL THE WORLD OFFERS THE EVIDENCE, AND HIS LITERATURE ELICITS BY ITS ENDLESS VARIETY AND VAST EXTENT THE ADMIRATION AND WONDER OF EVERYONE

ALL ABOUT HINDUISM :

H. H. Swami Sivananda Saraswati of the Divine Life Society, is so well-known in and out of India that it is hardly necessary to introduce him to the readers. The Swamiji is a prolific writer and the vast out-put of his literature in accordance with the Vedantic School of Thought, which H. H. teaches, will be simply amazing and bespeaks of his indefatigable energy to propagate the idea of the Divine. A great devotee of the Lord, he is, and, as such, the mighty effort and pains he takes to infuse, in men, true devotion to Lord—Bhakti, is at once arresting and elevating, being suffused with the melody of divine songs named 'Bhajan' and of which he is a great votary and exponent. A Nivritti-Karma-Yogi, he is, as all Vedantins are. The great esteem he enjoys in the whole of India is evidenced in the mighty receptions that were given him all over, during his recent whirl-wind tour throughout India and Ceylon. An article from his pen graces this issue. As regards the above book it is unique in itself as exposition of the Veda and Vedantic scheme which is our present Hindu Religion. For the great service he does in awakening the dormant souls, we pray Sri Bhagavan Narayana, Sri Yoga Devi and the Great ones of the Mandalam, for their blessings on him, for ever and ever,

—*The Shuddha Dharma*,
Madras.

24. REDOUNDING TO THE ETERNAL CREDIT OF HINDUISM IS THE THEORY OF CAUSE AND EFFECT IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, IT HAS STRUCTURED INTO THE DAILY DYNAMIC POPULAR BELIEF—SIVANANDA MAKES A CYCLOPAEDIC SURVEY OF THE LAW OF KARMA, INDICATES ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND SHAPES UPON IT A SPLENDID CULTURE OF CONDUCT TOWARDS SPIRITUAL PERFECTION

Karma means not only action, but, also the result of an action. The consequence of an action is really not a separate thing. It is a part of the action and cannot be

divided from it Breathing, thinking, seeing, hearing, eating, are all Karmas, Thinking is mental Karma. Karma is the sum-total of our acts, both in the present life and in the preceding births.

Any deed, any thought that causes an effect is called a Karma. The Law of Karma means the law of causation. Wherever there is a cause, there an effect must be produced. A seed is a cause for the tree. which is the effect. The tree produces seeds and becomes the cause for the seeds.

The Law of Karma is one of the fundamental doctrines not only in Hinduism, but also in Buddhism and Jainism. As a man sows, so he shall reap. This is Law of Karma. If you do an evil action you must suffer for it. If you do a good action, you must get happiness. There is no power on this earth which can stop the actions from yielding their fruits. Every thought, every word, every deed is, as it were, weighed in the scales of eternal, divine Justice, The Law of Karma is inexorable.

Things do not happen in this universe by accident or chance in a disorderly manner. They happen in regular succession. They follow each other in a regular order, There is a certain definite connection between what is being done now by you, and what will happen in the future.

You are the master of your own fate. You are the architect of your own fortune. You are responsible for what you suffer. You are responsible for your present state. If you are unhappy, it has been your own making. If you are miserable, it has also been your own making. Every action bears a fruit sooner or later. A virtuous action produces pleasure as its effect. An evil deed causes pain.

Desire produces Karma. You work and exert to acquire the objects of your desire. Karma produces its fruits as pain or pleasure. You will have to take births after births to reap the fruits of your Karma. This is Law of Karma.

Man is threefold in his nature. He consists of Ichchha (desire feeling), Jnana (knowing) and Kriya (willing). These three fashion his Karma. He knows objects like chair, tree. He feels joy and sorrow. He wills to do this or not to do that.

If you put a seed in the earth, it sends up a little stem. Then leaves come out of the stem. Then come flowers and fruits. There are seeds again in the fruits. Mango seed only produces mango tree. If you sow rice, you cannot expect a crop of wheat. The same sort of seed produces the same kind of plant. A human being alone is born from the womb of a woman ; a horse from a horse ; a dog from a dog. Similarly, if you sow the seed of an evil action, you will reap a harvest of pain and suffering. If you sow the seed of a virtuous action, you will reap a harvest of pleasure. This is Law of Karma

Whatever you sow by your actions comes back to you. If you make others happy through service, charity and kind acts, you sow happiness like a seed and it will give you the fruit of happiness. If you make others unhappy through harsh words, insult, ill-treatment, cruel acts, oppression etc., you sow unhappiness like a seed and it will give you the fruit of pain, suffering, misery and unhappiness. This is the immutable Law of Karma.

Your actions in the past are responsible for your present condition. Your present actions will shape or mould your future. There is nothing chaotic or capricious in this world. You become good by your good actions and bad by your evil actions.

If you entertain evil thoughts, you must suffer the consequences. You will be in difficulties. You will be surrounded by unfavourable circumstances. You will blame your surroundings and circumstances. Understand the law and live wisely, Entertain noble thoughts. You will be happy always.

Behind the action there are desire and thought. A desire for an object arises in the mind. Then you think how to get it. Then you exert to possess it. Desire, thought and action always go together. They are the three threads, as it were, that are twisted into the cord of Karma.

You sow an action and reap a character. You sow a character and reap your destiny. Hence destiny is your own make up. You have built it. You can undo it by entertaining noble thoughts, and doing virtuous actions and changing your mode of thinking. Now you are thinking that you are the body, Mr. So and So. Now start the anti-current of thought. Think that you are all-pervading immortal Brahman. Brahman you will become. This is an immutable Law.

Every action produces a threefold effect. It gives you an appropriate reward or fruit. It also affects your character. It leaves behind an impression in your mind. This impression will urge you to repeat the act again. The impression will assume the form of a thought-wave in the mind on account of a stimulus either external or internal. An action produces an effect in the world also.

Conduct or behaviour reveals your character. Conduct moulds your character. Cultivation of good conduct needs rigorous discipline and constant vigilance. You will have to watch every thought, word and action. You must be extremely careful when you conduct yourself with others. With all your good intentions you will be carried away by the force of your previous wrong impressions, instincts and impulses. Even highly educated people lack in behaviour. Good behaviour indicates that you have a refined or polished, disciplined mind, real good spiritual culture. The practice of Japa, Pranayama and Mowna or vow of silence will help you to control the impulses etc.

Thought moulds your character. If you entertain noble thoughts, you will develop a noble character; if you entertain evil thoughts, you will develop a base character. This is the immutable Law of nature, therefore, you can deliberately shape your character by cultivating sublime thoughts. Thought materialises and becomes an action. If you allow the mind to dwell on good, elevating thoughts, you will do naturally good and laudable actions.

A boatman without oars, rudder and sails is carried away helplessly by the winds and currents, but a clever boatman with oars, sails and rudder, ably directs the boat in any direction he likes and reaches the other shore safely. Even so he who knows the Laws of nature, the law of thought, the Law of Karma, the law of cause and effect can sail fearlessly in this ocean of Samsara and

reach the other shore of fearlessness and immortality quite safely, He will utilise helping forces to his best advantage and neutralise the opposing forces skilfully with the help of the knowledge of the laws. Knowledge is a torch-light. Hence knowledge is absolutely indispensable. Ignorance is the greatest sin. An ignorant man becomes a victim or slave of nature.

Karma is of three kinds, *viz.* Sanchita (accumulated works), Prarabdha (fructifying works) and Kriyamana or Agami (current works). Sanchita is all the accumulated Karmas of the past. Part of it is seen in the character of man, in his tendencies and aptitudes, capacities, inclinations and desires, etc. Tendencies come from this. Prarabdha is that portion of the past Karma which is responsible for the present body. That portion of the Sanchita Karma which influences human life in the present incarnation is called Prarabdha. It is ripe for reaping. It cannot be avoided or changed. It is only exhausted by being experienced. You pay your past debts. Prarabdha Karma is that which has begun and is actually beairng fruit, It is slected out of the mass of the Sanchita Karma. Kriyamana is that Karma which is now being made for the future. It is also called Agami of Vartamana.

In Vedantic literature there is a beautiful analogy. The bowman has already sent an arrow ; it has left his hands. He cannot recall it. He is about to shoot another arrow. The bundle of arrows in the quiver on his back is the Sanchita ; the arrow he has shot is Prarabdha and the arrow which he is about to shoot from his bow is Agami. Of these he has perfect control over the Sanchita and Agami, but he must surely work out his Prarabdha. The past which has begun to take effect he has to experience.

There is another beautiful analogy also. The granary represents the Sanchita Karma : that portion taken from the granary and put in the shop for sale corresponds to Prarabdha ; that which is sold daily represents Agami.

The whole lot of Sanchita Karma is destroyed by attaining knowledge of Brahman or the Eternal. It can be greatly modified by entertaining lofty, divine thoughts and doing virtuous actions. Agami Karma can be destroyed by expiatory rites or Prayaschitta and by removing the idea of agency through Nimitta bhav (instrument in the hands of God) Sakshi bhav (silent witness of the action of the senses and of the mind).

You have no Bhaga-svatantara but you Karma-svatantara. That is the reason why Lord Krishna says "Karmanyeva adhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana. Thy business is with the action only, never with its fruits." Janaka and others attained to perfection by action. You can change your character, your thoughts and desires. Man's will is ever free. Through selfishness his will has become impure. He can render his will pure, strong and dynamic by getting rid of his base desires and likes and dislikes. Every soul is like a husbandman who has got a plot of land. The acreage, the nature of the soil, the conditions of weather are all pre-determined. But the husbandman is quite at liberty to till the earth, manure it and get good crops or to allow it to remain as a waste land.

What you are now at present is the result of what you thought and did in the

past. What you shall be in the future will be the result of what you think and do now. You find an environment which is best suited to the tendencies you acquired in a former life. You can create better conditions for the future. You can make your Karma what you choose. You can rise to a very high state of perfection. You can become an Indra, you may become a perfect Yogi. You can change your character, thoughts and actions. Therefore Bhishma and Vasishtha have placed Purushartha or exertion above destiny.

The central teaching of the Gita is Self-realization in and through the world. The same thing is preached by Sri Vasishtha to Sri Rama, To serve humanity, God in manifestation, and to think of God, while living in the world amidst various activities is far superior to a cave life. Selfless work is Yoga. Work is Atma Pooja. There is no loss in Nishkamya-Karma. Real spiritual progress starts in Nishkamya-Karma-Yoga.

Serve everyone with intense love, without the idea of agency, without expectation of fruits, reward or even appreciation. Utilise this body-machine in selfless works. Feel that you are only Nimitta (instruments) in the hands of God or a Sakshi of Prakriti's activities, when you do Karma-Yoga. Worship God in the poor and the sick. Have no attachment to any place, person or thing. Keep up the mental poise amidst the toil and moil of the world without considerations of success or failure, gain or loss, victory or defeat, respect or disrespect, pleasure or pain. Have always a balanced mind. Have the mind firmly rooted in the Self, amidst all activities. Then, will you become a true Karma-Yogi. Work elevates, when done in the right spirit. Even if people scoff at you, revile, beat or taunt you, always be indifferent. Be steady in your Sadhana.

Selfish Karma leads you to rebirth and that rebirth generates new Karma while working off the old. Get rid of Karma if you wish to get rid of the miseries of re-birth. Selfless work will not bind you. They will purify your heart and lead to the descent of the divine light and grace. Understand the Law of Karma and Law of cause and effect. Think rightly. Act nobly. Meditate regularly and attain eternal bliss and immortality.

—Swami Sivananda's
All About Hinduism,
pp. 124-128.
Practice of Karma Yoga,
pp. 218-219.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE TRADITIONARY LORE ON, AND THE SCIENTIFIC INQUIRIES INTO THE PROBLEM OF, METEMPSYCHOSIS IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

—And Metempsychosis As a Factual Individual Process in the World-Orders of the Non-Physical Cosmic Nature and As an Evolutionary Machinery Involving the Persisting Psychic Entity Constituted of a Not-easily-conceivable Parapsychological and Spiritual Complexity, the Veiled Layers and Levels, the Multiple Profundity and Power of a Being Seething with Submerged Memories, Slow-rising Aspirations, Some Dynamic and Some Dormant Desire-energies, Thought-forces, Conational Vibrations, the Residuum of Aeonic Action-effects, and Abounding in All Kinds of Normal, Super-normal and Instinctual Potentialities and Possibilities That Urge by Their Own Latency and Seek by Their Own Pressures, From Time to Time, the Provision of Appropriate Conditions and Environment for Aggressive Manifestation or Gentle and Purposive Expression —in a Long-drawn Odyssey of Experience Essential for the Methodical Growth and Development Which Proceed Sometimes by the Necessity of an Apparent Regression, and Always by an Inwardly Constrained Progressions, of the Finite Organic Centre of Consciousness, till It Acquires a Plenitude of the Wisdom of, or Performs Action with the Awareness Resting in, or Expresses Devotion to, the Supreme Transcendence, and Thus by the Fruition of Its Method, Exceeds the Confines of the Finitude, Oversteps the Dimensions of the Cosmic Determinations, Breaks the Cycle of Births and Deaths, and Immerges into the Timeless Eternity of the Unborn Being—

The truth and validity of man's survival of the bodily death, has always been sought to be settled by the inadequacies of the biological account of heredity, the inability of the scientific attitude to trace the genealogy of genius, the incapacity of the logical thought to explain the glaring inequalities and cruel anomalies of life, the soundness of philosophical valuational and moral arguments, a close examination of the psychological evidence, the spiritualistic experiments, communications, photographs, the implications of the results of psychical research, the recent but important though unreliable technique of "hypnotic regression", an appeal to the testimony of the world's great prophets and founders of religions, the academic acknowledgement of the presence of order and purpose in the scheme of the universe, and the principle of the evolutionary nisus in biological nature, the laws of conservation of energy and compensation, a reference to the several instances of persons who bore memories of past lives, to the Enlightened and to the Yogis who have, by virtue of their Perfection, recounted their own and other people's past lives; and the importance and value of the doctrine of rebirth is demonstrated by the great significance and meaning it assigns to life, the integrity and dignity with which it invests the human soul, the sting it takes away from death, the extension of the interests of life beyond the brevity of a single earthly existence it brings about, and several other benefits in perspective, purposiveness, moral progress and spiritual development it holds out, for those who believe in it.

— SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE TRADITIONARY LORE ON, AND THE SCIENTIFIC INQUIRIES INTO THE PROBLEM OF, METEMPSYCHOSIS IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. THE HINDU UPANISHADS, THE EGYPTIAN PRIESTHOOD, THE ANCIENT GREEK THINKERS, THE CHINESE BOOKS, THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES, THE MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHERS, THE RECENT PSYCHICAL RESEARCHERS, THE SPIRITUALISTS AND THE SCIENTISTS—ALL MEET ON, AND TREAD, A COMMON GROUND IN THE AFFIRMATION OF THE FACT, THE MEANING AND THE VALUE OF REINCARNATION FOR ALL MANKIND, IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

—A Recourse to the Logical Enunciation of the Law of Metempsychosis, Aids Sivananda Extend the Modern Vision Beyond the Petty Span of a Few Mortal Years of a Single Existence, And Opens For Its View the Vistas of a Divine Meaning the Brief Human Life Bears In, Between And Beyond, Its Apparent "Birth-pangs" Made Luridly Current By Folk-Lore and Its Unfounded Death-agonies Painted in Popular Myths, And a Metaphysical Destiny the Deathless Genius In It, Asserts As Its Fundamental and Ultimate Right.—

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

THE present volume as the title suggests, treats in detail of the subject and furnishes an answer to the age-long question of reincarnation. Everybody is curious and anxious to know this science. In recent times, there has been much speculation on this problem. This has led to a lot of research work too. Great scientists, the inventors of many marvellous things, mighty emperors who have done stupendous work, inspired poets, wonderful artists, many Brahmas, Rishis, Yogis have come and gone. Many will be anxious to know what has become of them. Do they still exist? What is at the other side of death? Have they become non-existent or have they dwindled into an airy nothing?

The fact of continuity of consciousness after physical death has come to be accepted as such by most of the modern thinkers, latest of whom, the famous scientist

Dr.J.B. Rhine has expressed himself in favour of such a belief. Many books have been written on this subject. But hitherto most of the works deal mainly with the astral or other spirit world. This present book by Swami Sivananda is a departure from the usual line in that it is based. to a great extent, upon authoritative scriptural texts and upon knowledge derived through reasoning, deep reflection and personal meditation. The work also gives valuable information about the different beliefs on the subject, of the various races and religions.

We feel that the perusal of the present work will confirm man's belief that 'Death is not the end of life', that his actions here unfailingly react upon him in the 'after state' too and will stimulate his Vichara or discrimination. We have no doubt that the readers will be helped to make a proper evaluation of the real worth of this physical existence upon the earth plane in the light of his new knowledge of the supra-corporeal states of being. The Journey of the soul after death as described in the Garuda Purana and other lores is given in detail in this volume by Swamiji who has connected this with the western researches in spiritualism.

The Chapter V, deals with the subject "Doctrine of Reincarnation", Swami Sivananda gives the following instances to prove the theory of incarnation—

Kamlesh Kumari Devi alias Gita Moorti commenced preaching Gita at the age of two and a half years. She was born on Tuesday the 12th Dec. 1939. The ideas of the transmigration of Soul and eternity of life although recorded in our holy scriptures are dormant and latent in our practical life.

Swami Krishnananda presented to her some Hindu books, Hindu Dharma, Parshist, etc., which she fluently read to the astonishment of the Swami, After that she delivered lectures at Hardwar, Rishikesh Ludhiana, Jandiala, Guru Har Sabai Mandi, Mukerian, Dharma Kot, Gujeranwala and other places.

The other girl, Mahindra Kumari, alias Chand Rani, 3½ years old died in Tango Burma on 15-10-'39 and was reborn in Amritsar in May 1940. At the age of 3½ years she forced her present mother to go to the house of her previous parents. The girl went on insisting again and again, and importuned her mother everyday to accompany her to visit her real house and real 'Jahai'. It is rightly said that persistence prevails and proved true in this case. At last the mother yielded, the baby led, and the mother followed her, to an unknown destination. The baby girl took her mother from Mushki Mohalla passing through the various streets and blind corners, brought her mother in Kucha—Beriwala, at the end of the street, before a house which she claimed as her own. Her previous life's brother's wife came from an adjoining house, on hearing the knocks and shouts at her door, the baby girl recognised her Jahai and ferociously embraced her by clinging to her legs, and subsequently recognised her 20 years old Sita, and other relatives and her belongings. She recognised her Gold Mutter Mala and photo of her own dead-body, saying that it was she who was sleeping. At the time of her death she had a great desire (Vasana) to see her brother S. Sunder Sing, and his wife, who

were not present at the time of her death and perhaps that deep-rooted Vasana at the time of leaving her body in Burma, led her to be reborn in Amritsar, to meet her brother and his wife.

In Baroda a Jain boy of 6 years surprised his mother by relating the incidents of his former life. He said that he was previously at Poona of parents who belonged to Patan. He was known as Kevalchand and later ran a drapery shop at Poona. He had business relations with several merchants of Patan. He had 6 sons, one of whom was named Ramanlal. All these were verified when the boy and mother visited Patan.

The doctrine of reincarnation is supported by Guru Nanak Dev in Guru Granth Sahib as well as by the great Philosophers of Greece such as Socrates and Plato who lived about 2400 years ago.

"All our knowledge is remembrance of what we have known only before we are born"—*Platonic doctrine af reminiscence.*

"We must have received our knowledge of all realities before we were born." Our souls exist formerly apart from our bodies and possessed intelligence, before they came into man's shapes"—*Philosophy of Socrates.*

A three-year old boy at Jhansi can reproduce from memory the whole of Srimad Bhagawad Gita and Ramayan and his pronunciation is perfect. The boy was trying in vain to speak something since he attained the age of 5 months and at the age of one year and a half he recited to his hearers Gita etc.

The instructive value of this book is greatest and we hope the readers of this journal will not fail to add to their libraries such a valuable publication.

—*The Wednesday Review*
Tiruchirapalli.

2. AN IMPRESSIVE WEALTH OF SCHOLARSHIP IN THE SUBJECT HE DEALS WITH, PROMPTS SIVANANDA MAKE A KALEIDOSCOPIC PRESENTATION OF THE WORLD-WIDE FAITH IN THE DOCTRINE OF REINCARNATION, SINCE THE DAWN OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION

THE doctrine of reincarnation is accepted by majority of mankind at the present day. It has been held as true by the mightiest Eastern nations. The ancient civilization of Egypt was built upon this doctrine and it was handed over to Pythagoras, Plato; Virgil and Ovid, who scattered it through Greece and Italy. It is the keynote of Plato's, Philosophy when he says that all knowledge is reminiscence, It was wholly adopted by the Neo-Platonists like Plotinus and Proclas. The hundreds of millions of Hindus, Buddhists and Jains have made that doctrine the foundation of philosophy, religion. government and social institutions. It was a cardinal point in the religion of the Persian Unagi. The doctrine of Metempsychosis was an essential principle of the Druid faith and was impressed upon the Celts, the Gauls and the Britons. Among the Arab Philosophers it was a favourite idea. The rites and ceremonies of Romans, Druids and Hebrews expressed this truth forcibly The Jains

adopted it after the Babylonian captivity. John the Baptist was to them a second Elijah. Jesus was thought to be a reappearance of John the Baptist or one of the old prophets. The Roman Catholic purgatory seems to be a makeshift, contrived to take its place. Philosophers like Kant, Schelling and Schopenhauer have upheld this doctrine. Theologians like Julius Muller, Dorner and Edward Beecher have maintained it. And today it reigns over the Burmese, Siamese, Chinese, Japanese, Tartar, Tibetan, East Indian and Ceylonese including at least 750 millions of mankind and nearly two-thirds of the human race. Is it not wonderful then that this great and grand philosophical education which the Hindus, Buddhists and Jains gave to the world centuries and centuries before the Christian Era should or could be blotted out of existence from the Western and European world by the soul-blighting and absurd dogmas of the dark ages that supervened ? By the persecution of the wise men and destruction of the innumerable works in the library of Constantinople, the Church hierarchy managed to plunge the whole of Europe into mental darkness which has given the world the black record of inquisition and the loss of millions of human lives through religious wars and persecutions.

Transmigration made its appearance in the early Christian church. Elijah was reborn as John the Baptist. "Did the blind man sin, or his parents that he was born blind ?" ask the believers in transmitted retribution. There is a period of anxiety immediately after death, when angels contend with demons for the possession of the departing soul on its way to purgatory.

Pythagoras and others have got their belief in metempsychosis from India only. Pythagoras who flourished in the 6th century also taught a doctrine of transmigration ; and, curiously enough, prescribed obstinence from the eating of flesh.

The doctrine of reincarnation is common to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. What is reincarnation ? Reincarnation is the doctrine that soul enters this life not as fresh creation, but after a long course of previous existences and will have to pass through many before it reaches its final destination. What possible motion in the brain causes the idea : 'I am I ?' This recognition of a real unit does not vary from the cradle to the grave. From childhood to old age, during the age, during the whole course of the total change of all brain-molecules I am I is undisturbed, This 'I am I' is the soul. It is this soul which makes memory possible. It has its own consciousness and not the consciousness of anyone else, therefore it is a unit existing by itself.

Even in the New Testament there is sufficient evidence for reincarnation In St. John IX—2 a question is put to Jesus by his disciples—Which did sin, this man or his parents that he was born blind ? This refers to two popular theories of the time—one that of Moses who taught that the sins of fathers would descend on children to the third and the fourth generations and the other that of doctrine of reincarnation. Jesus merely says that neither that man's sin nor his father's sin was the cause of his blindness ; he does not deny the pre-existence of that man. Lord Jesus also means that John took the reincarnation of Elijah.

—Swami Sivananda's
Practice of Karma Yoga.
pp.172-178.

3. EMBEDDED UPON THE FIVE MILLENNIA OF POPULAR INDIAN RELIGIOUS HISTORY, WE FIND A CLUSTER OF ILLUSTRIOUS PERSONALITIES THAT WRESTLED WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF DEATH, WRESTED FROM IT THE SECRETS IT ENSHROUDS AND THE MYSTERIES IT CONCEALS—SIVANANDA RAISES INTERESTING THEMES THEREON

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

THE Swami has been bringing out many useful publications on Hindu religion and philosophy for the last several years. The book under review emphasises in very clear and simple language and in a convincing manner that the soul is eternal and immortal. Birth and death are just like doffing old clothes and donning new ones and people of understanding need not feel sorry at the loss of their nearest and dearest. The Swamiji explains the value of performing Shraddhas and Tarpanas for the departed souls so that their onward march may be facilitated, and their blessings may be vouchsafed to us. It tells us that we need not fear death. A book every Hindu should read.

—*The Bharata Dharma*,
Madras 14.

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

THIS is the second revised and enlarged edition of the book. It is the first of the "Divine Mysteries Series" and is appropriately dedicated to Lord Yama, Markandeya, Nachiketas, Savitri and Nandi the eternal attendant of Lord Siva, who have all unravelled the mysteries of the life beyond death. This subject of *postmortem* existence is one of the enduring interest and great importance. It has been dealt with in the scriptures of all ages and places. The Swami's lucid and forcible account of what happens and what man's duties are cannot but impress even the dullest mind. Every ardent and thinking devotee amongst Hindus will do well to make a careful study of what His Holiness has written,

—*Sai Sudha*,
Madras.

4. THE NISUS OF INDIVIDUAL EVOLUTION AND THE PROGRESSIVE UNFOLDMENT OF THE COSMIC PURPOSE CONSTRAIN THE OPERATION, AND THEREFORE THE HUMAN ACCEPTANCE, OF THE LAW OF REINCARNATION—SIVANANDA INDITES A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS PRE-BRIDEY-MURPHY CASES OF REBIRTH THE TWENTIETH CENTURY BORE A WITNESS

EXACTLY twenty years ago, a sensational, sensational because so amazingly credible and true, Case of Rebirth at Delhi, reported officially by a locally appointed committee consisting of enlightened, critical and competent men, was much publicised in

leading Indian and foreign newspapers. Born on the 12th of October, 1926, Shanti Devi, a little girl, who bore in her memory the most vivid and living pictures of the whole span of her past life beginning in the year 1902 and ending in the year 1925, began, ever since she could speak, to recollect and narrate whenever the context and associations in daily life, necessitated, the incidents, events and experiences in surprising detail, of her past life at Muttra, with her husband Pundit Kedar Nath Chaubey. Her unbelieving parents not only dismissed such graphic narrations of the past life, as though they were the jabber of a child, but fervently hoped that these recollections would efface themselves from the memory of the child as she grew. But, contrary to their expectation and hope, the child was insistant on recollecting more and yet more of her past life, and persisted in requesting her parents to take her to Muttra, the city of her previous birth, where she desired to show the present parents, her old house and certain things in it which only an inmate who long lived in it could have so done.

At last, the child prevailed over the parents. A grand-uncle of the girl, was called ; Shanti Devi gave him the address of her husband in previous life ; inquiries were made ; communication was sent to her husband Pundit Kedar Nath, and surprisingly enough a response came from Pundit Kedar Nath of Muttra who in his letter, among other things, suggested to the inquiring party at Delhi to contact a relation of his, Pundit Kanji Mal, who was employed in Messrs. Bhana Mal Gulzari Mal of Delhi, and give him an interview with the child, Shanti Devi. No sooner Sri Kanji Mal was brought into her presence, she had not only recognised him to be the younger cousin of her husband but made most satisfactory responses to the questions touching facts of an intimate nature.

Aroused to a fresh and active interest in efforts at probing into the facts of Shanti Devi's narration of the events, facts and experiences of her past life, the parents, the party and Kanji Mal called Kedar Nath Chaubey to Delhi, from Muttra. When Pundit Kedar Nath Chaubey came to Delhi, with his ten-year-old son, and his present wife, to see Shanti Devi, at the very first sight, Shani Devi recognised her husband and felt greatly touched by the figure of her son, and began to shed tears. After a long interchange of thought and words between Shanti Devi and her alleged husband, who was greatly moved by the veracity of the recollections and the truth of her statements, Pundit Kedar Nath confirmed the fact that the same Soul, viz., that of his first wife who had died at Muttra, and stated that her narration of the details in each of their particulars, was true. This made the parents grant the repeated request that the the girl Shanti Devi made many a time during the past few years, to go to Muttra, which the girl now reiterated with greater force as a result of the present meeting with her husband of previous life. Shanti Devi not only gave out the colour of the house at Muttra, named the roads and streets leading to that house, described the Vishrant Ghat, the temple of Dwarkadhish, but stated certain things which only the former wife of Pundit Kedar Nath could alone have known. She alo said that she had hidden "underground" in the upper-storey room of the house at Muttra, some

money, a hundred rupees from which she had vowed to give to the temple of Dwarkadhish, Upon the grant of this request and wish of Shanti Devi to go to Muttra, the persuasion of the investigating committee was exerted ; and the party with the committee, parents, Shanti Devi, left for Muttra. As the train steamed into the Muttra Station, Shanti Devi shouted in joy "Muttra, has come", "Muttra has come," and when she got down from the train, identified in the crowd, an elderly man wearing a typical Muttra dress, whom she had never met before, came down from the arms of Deshbandhu Gupta's arms where she was, and instinctively touched the feet of the old man, stating that he was the elder brother of her husband, named Babu Ram Chaubey, This fact when found to be true, was but only one among the many surprises that Shanti Devi held for the admiration and awe for her witnesses. She had not only led the way to the house at Muttra, from the Railway Station, but went on giving certain interesting facts as that there was on that particular road no tar earlier, and when once in the house of her description, she had successfully passed every test that the inquiring gentlmen put to her. When she was taken to the Dharmashala at Muttra, she identified the "brother" of her previous birth, now in twenties, and recognised her "uncle-in-law." At every step the truth of her past narrations which were dismissed as so much of a child's jabberings were proved true, and proved true beyond doubt. When in the house of her description, she entered its courtyard and felt dismayed at the absence of the well that was then during her previous incarnation there, noting which her "husband Pundit Kedar Nath lifted up the stone-covering the wallless well and showed her the well. And going upstairs, she dug up the hole where she had hidden money, and to her uneasinesss the money was not there, as it was, as Pundit Kedar Nath confessed that he had taken it from there, after the death of his former wife, now the girl Shanti Devi. After this when she was taken to her "parents" house, she recognised them, and both the girl and the parents sank into continued sobs ; it was with great difficulty that the girl was weaned away from the parents of her previous birth, and taken to the Vishrant Ghat where she unfolded many more surprises to the investigating committee and to others, by the display of the contents of memories of her previous life. Such instances as these are not uncommon in India. Recently, some seven years ago there was another case of another girl who has recognised parents of her previous birth, and when a similar process of investigation had been conducted, and her narrations found true, the parents of the girl in her previous life, who are rich, are now supporting her, and giving her decent education, as the present parents are poor. It is ridiculous to presume that rebirth is untrue when one has not taken pains to pursue the results of the investigations that have been conducted. Rebirth is not only a spiritual fact but upon reflection will be seen to be an essential and logical necessity to ensure the gradual evolution and progressive unfoldment of consciousness of the individual soul in its movement towards ultimate perfection. It is expression of Cosmic Law in all nature.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Divine Life, Vol. 20, No. 2,
pp. 40-42.

5. THE INTRINSIC "WHAT" AND "HOW" OF LIFE CONSTITUTE A PROFOUND MYSTERY—A MORE MYSTERIOUS SHROUD DEATH WEARS—FROM A MOOD OF METAPHYSICAL REFLECTION SIVANANDA DISMISSES BOTH AS JUGGLERIES OF THE ILLUSION-CONJURING PRINCIPLE AND BY A REALISTIC APPROACH BEATS NEW PATHS FOR ELUDING THEIR NEVER-ENDING REIGN OF TERROR

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

THE knowledge of the other world is a subject of absorbing interest. Every creature must perish, every man is bound to meet his death. The mystery of life and death despite many scientific discoveries and explorations remains to be a mystery still. No body has been able to say definitely, no science can hold out an assurance that a particular analysis of life beyond death is solid and reasonable. We grope still in the darkness of ignorance, all is a guess-work. We are not convinced in the heart of our hearts about our positions beyond this type. Different religions put forth different arguments. Islam and Christianity do not believe in rebirth; Hindus do. According to my mind, Hindu Religion has got a solid basis and the argument propounded in favour of rebirth is reasonable and convincing. We cannot say that there is no life beyond death. Death is a subject of the deepest interest to everyone. We shudder at the idea of death. We do not want to think that we would cease to exist in the world some day. But the fact remains that we must die and it is interesting to know the way in which the soul leaves the mortal frame.

The entire subject is dealt with and expounded in very interesting detail in the book. "Birth and Death are juggleries of Maya", says the author. According to his opinion death is not a thing to be afraid of. It is a pleasant beginning of the beginning of a new life with fresh woods and pastures new, according to one's own deeds and actions performed in the present life.

After defining death, the writer in an interesting way describes the Soul's journey after death, Resurrection and Judgment, Doctrine of reincarnation, Shraddha and Prayer, for the dead, Lokas or planes.

Further he suggests conquest of death. The book is very informative and worth reading. In view of the get-up and the most vital subject which the book contains, the price is reasonable.

—*The Indian Nation*, Patna.

6. SEVERAL BUTTRESSES TO THE DOCTRINE OF REINCARNATION SIVANANDA ERECTS BY A RECOURSE TO AN EXAMINATION OF THE GLARING ANOMALIES OF LIFE, THE FACT OF AN INSTANT LIKING AND IRRESISTIBLE ATTRACTION TWO DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS CONCEIVE FOR EACH OTHER AT FIRST SIGHT, THE OBVIOUS OPERATIVE LAW OF CAUSE AND EFFECT, AND BY A SEARCH FOR THE ANTECEDENTAL CAUSES OF INSTINCTUAL EXPERIENCES

MAN clings to this earthly life. This clinging to life proves that there is past experience and existence. This proves also that there is a future life. Man likes this

life immensely and strongly yearns for a future life also.

Some are born and pass out within a few weeks, a few months, a few years. Some children die in the womb. Some are centenarians. Why is this ? Why do some people come and live for a short time and others live longer ? Is this accidental ? Is there any law that governs life and death ? Do the human beings come here and pass out without any definite purpose ? There is a law which governs life and death. That law is the law of cause and effect.

The law of cause and effect governs everything. The law of cause and effect is inexorable and all-powerful. This whole world runs under this supreme law. All the other laws come under this one law. The law of Karma is the law of cause and effect. God does not punish any one. Man reaps the fruits of his Karma. The law of cause and effect operates on him. He reaps a harvest of pleasure for his good actions. He suffers and experiences pain and disease, loss of property for his wicked actions.

Instinct is the result of past experience. One of the important arguments for reincarnation has been built on this by the Hindus. The past experiences of death remain in the subconscious mind or Chitta in a latent or dormant state. They are in the form of Samskaras or impressions. They are working underneath the conscious objective mind. Man is terribly afraid of death, because the past experience of pain is in the subconscious mind.

Love at first sight is a certain feeling of a previous life altogether. These souls loved before. They remember that and actually feel as if they had met each other. Such loves are not at all a matter of sex, and are seldom broken off. Lord Buddha told his wife of her kindness to him in a previous birth and several times gave details of the previous lives of other people.

Every effect must have a cause. Something cannot come out of nothing. Existence cannot come out of non-existence. This is the fundamental principle of modern science. This is the fundamental doctrine of philosophy also. You have not come out of nothing. Here is a cause for your existence here. One is born blind. One is a genius. One is dull. One is rich. One is poor. One is healthy. One is sickly. There is a definite cause for all these things.

The cause is the unmanifested condition of the effect. The effect is the manifested state of the cause. Tree is the cause. The seed is the effect. Vapour is the cause. Rain is the effect. The whole tree remains in the seed in a potential form. The whole human form remains in the drop of semen in an invisible potential state. The seed of a banyan tree can produce only a banyan tree but not a mango tree. The drop of human semen can produce only a human being but not a horse. From a tiny drop of semen a big human form with various limbs and organs comes out. What a great marvel ! From a small seed a gigantic banyan tree comes out. What a great wonder ! Just close your eyes and reflect over this mystery. You will be struck with awe and wonder.

Within the gross physical body there is another subtle body or Linga Sareera or Sukshma Deha. This subtle body comes out with all its impressions and tendencies at the time of death of the gross physical body.

It is like vapour. It cannot be seen by the naked eye. It is the subtle body that goes to heaven. It manifests again in a gross form. This remanifestation of the subtle form into the gross physical form is called the law of reincarnation. You may deny this law but the law is there. It is inexorable and unrelenting. If you deny the law it clearly shows that you are quite ignorant of it and it will surely operate whether you admit it or not. The light of the Sun is there whether the owl accepts it or not.

—Swami Sivananda's,
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
pp. 58-60.

7. SIVANANDA REFUTES THE ARGUMENT THAT THE ABSENCE OF THE MEMORY OF PAST LIVES DISPROVES REINCARNATION AND REINSTATES THE DOCTRINE UPON THE ACCESSIBILITY OF SUCH A REMINISCENCE TO YOGA METHODOLOGY

AN objection is brought against the doctrine of reincarnation. That objection is "Why do we not remember our past?" Do you remember what you did in your childhood? Will you say you did not exist then, because you cannot remember? Certainly not. If your existence depends upon your memory then this argument proves that you did not exist as children, because you do not remember your childhood. The details have passed out of your memory, but the knowledge you have acquired through your experience is part and parcel of your being. Those experiences are still in your subconscious mind or Chitta as impressions.

If you remember your past you may make a bad use of the present. Your inveterate enemy in your past life may be born as your son in this life, If you remember the past you will draw your sword to kill him. Feelings of enmity will rise in your heart at once. When you enter college you carry with you all the knowledge you acquired at school. You increase and develop that kind of knowledge in your higher studies. You do not remember fully everything you do at school yet the experience is there when you are in the college, Even so past experience influences your present.

Mother Nature has concealed the past from you. It is not desirable to remember the past. Suppose for a moment you know the past. You know that you have committed a sinful action in your past life and you are going to suffer for it. You will be thinking of this always. You will worry yourself constantly. You will not have sound sleep. You will not relish your food. That is the reason why sages tell you, "Do not plan for the future. Mould your present. Live in the solid present. Entertain good thoughts. Do virtuous actions. You can make your future better."

A Yogi can remember his past lives, through concentration on the Samskaras. He can tell you all about your past lives also through concentration on the Samskaras or impressions that are lodged in your subconscious mind.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
The Third Hong Kong Edition,
pp. 63-64.

8. THE ADVENTURES OF SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT AND THE SETTLED WISDOM OF REVELATORY EXPERIENCE IN THE PHENOMENA OF LIFE AND DEATH

—The Powers of Death Pursue Those That Have Succumbed to the Sway of Desire, Permit the Sense-pleasures to Perplex the Play of a Purposive Thought And to Impede the Progress of an Upward Moving Soul—Dispassionate and Grown in Wisdom Man Touches the Curve of the Timeless and therefore the Deathless—Immortal Sivananda Cites the Inspiring Instances of the Great that Triumphed Over Death And Reviews and Represents a Number of Practical Indian Traditional Philosophic, Theistic and Mystic Methods for Conquering Death –

DEATH is a subject which is of the deepest interest to everyone. One day all must die. The terror of death overshadows the lives of all human beings. It brings considerable unnecessary sorrow, suffering and anxiety to the survivors who are anxious to know about the fate of the departed souls.

In the West also this question has roused a great deal of interest and attention in certain scientific circles. Much investigation has been made. But the researches have, however, been confined more or less to finding out whether or not the individuality survives and persists after the dissolution of the physical body. This has been proved in the affirmative by actual communication with the spirit-world through science, mediumship, etc.,

A knowledge of this science will rob death of all its terror and sorrow and enable you to see in the proper light and to understand its place in the scheme of your evolution. It will certainly goad you to find out suitable methods to conquer death and attain immortality. It will forcibly urge you to take to the study of Brahma Vidya in right earnest and find out the true Master or illumined sage who can put you in the right path of Truth and explain to you the mysteries of Kaivalya or Brahma Jnana.

The one aim of all Yoga Sadhana is to meet Death fearlessly and joyfully. A Yogi or a sage or even a real aspirant has no fear of death. Death is terribly afraid of those who do Japa, meditation, and Kirtan. He and his messengers cannot dare to approach them. Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita "Having come to Me, these Mahatmas come not again to birth, the place of pain, non-eternal; they have gone to the highest bliss. Chapter VIII-15.

Death is painful to a worldly man. A desireless man never weeps when he dies. A full-blown Jnani never dies. His Prana never departs. Your highest duty is to prepare for a peaceful life hereafter, Conquer the fear of death, Conquest of fear of death and conquest of death are the highest utility of all spiritual Sadhana, Pray to the Lord for devotion in every birth of yours. End the cycle of birth if you want everlasting bliss, Live in the eternal Atma and be happy for ever.

Bhishma had death at his command (Ichha mrityu). Savitri brought back Satyavan, her husband, to Life through her power of chastity, Markandeya conquered death through worship of Lord Siva. You also can conquer death through devotion, knowledge and power of Brahmacharya.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes of the Soul After Death,
pp. x-xi.

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THE Charvakas or the materialists hold that the combination of matter or body produces thought, intelligence, consciousness, mind and soul, and that consciousness etc., last so long as the body lasts. They believe that thought or intelligence or consciousness is a function or secretion of the brain, just as bile is a secretion of the liver. Very strange indeed ! Combination of atoms and molecules can never generate thought, intelligence or consciousness. Motion cannot produce sensation, ideas and thoughts. Consciousness or intelligence is verily not an act of motion. No scientist can prove that matter or force has ever produced consciousness or intelligence. The Charvakas or the materialists are deluding themselves by various false arguments. They have lost their power of discrimination on account of sensual indulgence. They have not got the subtle pure intellect to discern things in their proper light. Consciousness, intelligence and bliss are the attributes of the Universal Soul. This body is constantly changing. This physical body, which is a combination of the five elements will be destroyed. But the eternal Soul which is the basis, substratum and source for matter, energy, mind will ever remain. The sense of 'I' will continue to exist even after this body perishes. You can never think or imagine that you do not exist after the body is destroyed. There is an innate feeling in you that you do exist after the body is gone. This proves that there is an Immortal Soul independent of the body. The soul can never be demonstrated, but its existence can be inferred by certain empirical facts.

The innate question "What remains after death ? What becomes of the soul after the death of the body ? Where is he gone ? Does he still exist ? spontaneously arises in all minds. This is a momentous question which touches the hearts of all deeply. The same question rises today in all people of all countries, as it arose thousands of years ago. No one can stop this. The same question is discussed today and it will be discussed in the future also. From ancient times, philosophers, sages, saints, Yogis, thinkers, Swamis, metaphysicians and prophets have tried their best to solve this great problem.

When you lead a life of luxury, when you are rolling in wealth, you forget it. But the moment you see that one of your dearest relations is snatched away by the cruel hand of death you are struck with awe and wonder and begin to reflect within yourself. "Where is he gone ? Does he still exist ? Is there a soul independent of body ? He cannot be totally annihilated. His impressions of thoughts and actions cannot die."

The Seers of the Upanishads boldly declare with emphasis on account of their intuitive realisation that there is One All-pervading Immortal Soul, Self-luminous All-Blissful, Birthless, Deathless, Decayless

Timeles, Spaceless, Thoughtless and that the individual Soul is identical with this Supreme Soul when his limiting adjuncts such as body and mind are dissolved, when he is freed from ignorance through knowledge of the Imperishable Soul. Soul is the Inner Ruler and Director of the mind, Prana and the senses. Mind borrows its light from the Soul.

Soul is beyond the realm of physical science. Soul is beyond the reach of material science. Man is a soul wearing a physical body. Soul is extremely subtle. It is subtler than ether, mind and energy. Consciousness, intelligence are of the soul and not the body. Consciousness is evidence of the existence of the Soul. Personality of man is a brief partial manifestation of the Immortal, All-pervading, Indivisible Soul or Atman or Brahman. Soul is the immortal part in man.

Do not identify yourself with this body. You are not this perishable body. You are immortal Soul. Identify yourself with the Soul. Tat Twam Asi'. 'Thou Art That'. Feel this Realise this and be free.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death, pp. 14 16.

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THE individual souls or Jivas build various bodies to display their activities and gain experiences from this world. They enter the bodies and leave them when they become unfit to live in. They build new bodies again and leave them again in the same manner. This is known as transmigration of souls. The entrance of a soul into a body is called birth. The soul's departure from the body is called death. A body is dead if the soul is absent.

The conception of a human child in the womb of the mother is the fusion of sperm of man into ovum of woman. Spermatozoon and ovum are microscopic living cells. They cannot be seen through the naked eye. This fusion is generally known as conception and technically as fertilisation of the ovum. In the mother's womb sperm (Suklam) and ovum (Retas) are fused into one single cell. This single cell after fertilization develops into an embryo and further in course of ten months into a complete human child.

Man has always tried to tear aside the veil and know the course of events subsequent to the death of an individual. Various theories have been put forward, but it cannot be said that he has succeeded in tearing aside the veil that covers the life beyond.

Science has been struggling to unravel the mystery, but so far, no data has been furnished which can form the basis of a theory. But experiments in this direction have yielded many an interesting fact.

Natural death, it is said, is unknown to unicellular organisation. When life on earth consisted of these creatures, death was unknown. The phenomenon appeared only when from unicellular the multicellular evolved.

Experiments conducted in laboratories have shown that whole organs such as thyroid glands, the ovary, supernal gland, the spleen, the heart and the kindneys isolated from the body of a cat or a fowl, can be

kept alive in vitro to show increase in size or weight due to the appearance of new cells or tissues.

It is also known that after the cessation of an individuality, parts of the organisation, can continue to function. The white blood-corpuscles of the blood, if cared for, can live for months after the body from which they were withdrawan has been cremated. But the life, it is true, is the life of blood corpuscles ; it is not the life of the individual.

Death is not the end of life. It is merely the cessation of an important individuality. Life flows on to achieve its conquest of the universal, life flows on till it merges in the Eternal.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes of the Soul after Death, pp. 3-4.

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ALL are terribly afraid of death. No one wants to die. Even intellectual persons who have grasped the idea that the Soul is Immortal and that the Soul is distinct from the body are also awfully afraid of death. Mysterious is Moha or infatuated love for the body. Mysterious is Maya or Avidya !

This body is an instrument for all sorts of sensual enjoyments. That is the reason why man is intensely attached to the body. Through ignorance he identifies himself with the body. Through erroneous misconception he has mistaken the impure, insentient, non-permanent, pain-giving body for the pure, sentient, eternal, all-blissful Soul. So he is caught up in the whirlpool of birth and death. Man has lost his power of discrimination through the force of Avidya or ignorance. From Avidya is born non-discrimination or Aviveka. Hence he is not able to discriminate between the eternal and the non-eternal, real and the unreal, Atma and Anatma, truth and falsehood, matter and spirit, Jada and Chaitanya. From Avidya is born egoism, there is play of the two currents, Raga-Dwesha or likes and dislikes. He performs actions through likes and dislikes. He takes bodies to reap the fruits of his actions. Therefore Avidya is the root-cause of human sufferings. Avidya is the cause for Karmas and births. If you free yourself from Avidya, through Knowledge of the Imperishable Atma, you will have conquest over death and merge yourself in the Immortal Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman or the Absolute.

The student of Jnana Yoga equips himself with the Viveka, Vairagya (dispassion), Shad-Sampat or six-fold virtues and Mumukshutwa or intense yearning for the final emancipation. Then he approaches a Brahmasrotri, Brahma-Nishtha Guru, hears the Srutis or the Upanishads, then reflects on what he has heard, meditates constantly on Nirguna Brahman and attains Self-realisation or Atma-Sakshatkar and thus achieves conquest of death.

The student of Bhakti Yoga develops the Nava-Vidha Bhakti or nine modes of devotion. He does Japa of Mantra, does Kirtan and serves the devotees. He does total ungrudging self-surrender to the Lord. He says to the Lord, "I am Thine. All is Thine. Thy will be done". He attains the vision of the Lord and thus obtains mastery over death.

The student of Raja Yoga practises Yama or self-restraint and Niyama or religious observances. He sits, restrains the breath, withdraws the senses, controls the thoughts, practises Dharana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) and Samadhi (union with the Lord) and thus attains conquest over death.

The student of Hatha Yoga awakens the Kundalini Sakti, that is lying dormant in the Muladhara Chakra through Asana, Pranayama, Bandhas and Mudras, takes it through different Chakras, viz., Swadhishthana, Manipuraka, Anahata, Visuddha, Ajna and unites the Sakti with Lord Siva in the Sahasrara Chakra and thus attains conquest of death.

A Karma Yogi purifies the heart through constant selfless service. He kills the egoism through self-sacrifice, attains illumination and thus achieves conquest of self.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death, pp. 149-151.

9. NOT ALL THE PETRIFIED CUNNING OF RUSSELLIAN WISDOM THAT CONCEALS BENEATH ITS PROFESSED SCIENTIFIC ATTITUDE A SHEER HABIT OF THOUGHT BENT ON PERPETUATING A NEW TYPE OF OBSCURANTISM, CAN EVER ACCOUNT A WHIT FOR INFANT PRECOCITY NOR DO ALL THE RESOURCES IN SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION CAN EVER SUCCEED IN TRACING THE GENEALOGY OF GENIUS—SIVANANDA WAVES A HAND OF TRIUMPH TO THE LAW OF METEMPSYCHOSIS

YOU acquire knowledge through experiences. A man plays on the harmonium. He places each finger on each key consciously. He repeats it again and again. After some time the movement of the fingers becomes a habit. He plays a tune without looking into the particular keys. Even so your tendencies are the result of your past conscious actions.

Sri Sankara and Sri Jnana Dev knew the Vedas and other Shastras in their boyhood. A child plays on the piano in a masterly manner. A child delivers lectures on Gita. Goethe, the eminent German poet, was the master of seventeen languages. These geniuses did not acquire these in this life. They must have had them in past lives.

Every child is born with certain tendencies or predilections generated by past conscious actions. No child is born with a vacant mind or a clean blank page of a mind, a tabula rosa. We have had past lives. This is the emphatic declaration of the great sages, Rishis and Yogis of the past and of modern times. Jesus Christ believed in it. He says in the Bible, "Before Abraham was, I am." Reincarnation made its appearance in the early Christian Church. Elijah is reborn as John the Baptist.

We have got boy-geniuses. A boy of five becomes an expert in piano or violin playing. Sri Jnanadev wrote his commentary Jnaneshwari on the Gita when he was fourteen years old. There had been boy-

mathematicians. There was a boy-Bhagavatar in Madras who conducted Kathas when he was eight years old. How could you explain this strange phenomenon ? This is not a freak of nature. The theory of transmigration only could explain all these things. If one man gets deep grooves in his mind by learning music or mathematics, in this birth he carries these impressions to the next birth and becomes a prodigy in these sciences even when he is a boy.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
pp. 60-61; 72.

10. SIVANANDA SUGGESTS BY IMPLICITNESS THE LINES OF RESEARCH IN, AND SUPPLIES THE INITIAL DATA ON, THE PROBLEMS OF METEMPSYCHOSIS AND MAKES THE ORTHODOX HINDU AND WESTERN EXPERIMENTALIST JOIN HANDS ON AN ISSUE OF SCIENTIFIC IMPORT

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

THIS is a clear and authoritative exposition of the truth regarding the reincarnating soul, in accordance with the conclusions given in the sacred lore of the Hindus, from the Upanishads down to the Puranas. Herein, it is shown that the beliefs of Christians, Jews and Muslims are unsatisfactory while that of the Hindus is more rational, in that it rejects the notion of eternal damnation, which does not harmonize with Divine Justice, not to speak of Divine Grace. Evidently facts are given to show that in some cases previous lives are remembered.

—*The Life Natural,*
Pudukottai.

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WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

THE question as to what survives the body and as to what happens to that after the body falls has been engaging the mind of man for ages. The Hindu religion and philosophy does offer complete answer to the question. The journey of the soul after death as described in the Garuda Purana and other lores is here detailed by Swami Sivananda, who has linked this up with the Western researches in spiritualism.

—*The Sunday Times,*
Madras.

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WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

AS its name implies, the book seeks to explain what happens when death occurs and what becomes of the soul, which is indestructible, after death. It claims to contain the essence of the teachings of the Upanishads. It should be a good book for the orthodox Hindu while the scientific mind of the modern Hindu will find it very interesting.

—*The Fire,*
Kanpur.

11. SIVANANDA RENDERS RIDICULOUS THE IRRATIONAL REPUDIATION OF THE THEORY OF REINCARNATION BY CERTAIN ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITIES AND SUSTAINS HIS ARGUMENT ON THE RECURRENCE OF BIRTH AS AN INDISPENSABLE REQUISITE OF A LINGERING EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

Man can hardly attain perfection in one life. He has to develop his heart, intellect and hand. He has to mould his character in perfect manner. He has to develop various qualities such as mercy, tolerance, love, forgiveness, equal vision, courage etc., He has to learn many lessons and experiences in this great world-school. Therefore, he has to take many lives. Reincarnation is very true. One small life is a part of the long series that stretches behind you and in front of you. It is quite insignificant. One gains a little experience only. He evolves very little. During the course of one life man does many evil actions. He does very little good actions. Very few die as good men. Christians believe that one life determines and settles everything. How could this be ? How can the everlasting future of man be made to depend on that one small, little, insignificant life ? If in that life he believes in Christ he will get eternal peace in heaven, if he is an unbeliever in that life, he will get eternal damnation, he will be thrown for ever in the lake of fire or horrible hell. Is this not the most irrational doctrine ? Should he not get his chances for correction and improvement ? The doctrine of reincarnation is quite rational. It gives ample chances for man's rectification, growth and gradual evolution.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
Third Hong Kong Edition, pp. 71-72.

THE purpose of transmigration is not reward or punishment but betterment and perfection. It prepares the human being for the ultimate realisation which frees him from the cycle of births and deaths. It is not possible to achieve perfection and absolute freedom without a plurality of lives.

Man develops tendency and aptitude in several births and becomes genius in one birth. Buddha gained experiences in several births. He became a Buddha only in his last birth. In one birth all virtues cannot be developed. One can cultivate the virtues by gradual evolution. The baby sucks, the young duck swims. Who taught this ? They are the Samskaras or the tendencies of previous births.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
Third Hong Kong Edition, p. 71.

THE human body is only a vesture and dwelling place for the immortal Soul. The Soul can certainly re-inhabit another dwelling place and put on another vesture in order to develop and realise better than before the Divine plan and purpose for it. The Creator has so planned. The soul of a depraved and corrupted human being is given another training in another body. The evolution of all beings is for a better condition. Evolution to the higher and not

deterioration to the lower is generally the law and principle of Nature. But there is exception to the general rule.

The soul armed with the little virtue and divinity gained in the previous existence enters another life to increase, develop and better that original stock. There is now a greater response of the body controlled by the soul to Good, Goodness, Truth, Holiness and other attributes of God.

No opportunity is afforded to the sinner to purify himself in later births. His finite sin, if not somehow purged, precipitates him at death into endless misery. This cannot be. This is not reasonable. The doctrine of transmigration gives ample scope for the sinner to correct and educate himself in the future births. Vedanta says that there is hope of salvation even for the worst sinner.

He reaps the harvest of his misdeeds for a limited period. After he has been purged of his sins, he is again born as a rational being and is thus given a fresh chance for working out his emancipation with freedom of will to choose the right path or the wrong one, and with knowledge to distinguish the one from the other.

You are responsible for your well-being or otherwise, through your own Karma or action. The diversity in individual characters, the different predilections or tendencies of the different children at their births and the inequalities of human lives can only be accounted and explained through the Law of Karma. The Law of Karma gives liberty and freedon to an individual to grow to his full perfection.

The image of a man is reflected in a mirror. Nothing passes from the man to the image. The image is not the same as the man nor yet is it another. In exactly the same way rebirth takes place. The new being is like the image. The Karma which gives rise to the new being is like the mirror, through the agency of which the image of the man is reflected.

The enlightening influences of Yogis and Sages, their lives and teachings assert themselves more and more in the new life. The light of God is more sought and the gravitation towards God becomes stronger and stronger. More and more, the life gets fitted to see God and hear His voice. Progress advances from one existence to the next,—we cannot say through how many lives—until the final and stainless state of perfection is reached and the individual soul merges itself in the Supreme Soul.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
Third Hong Kong Edition,pp.74-76.

12. ANTHROPOLOGISTS HAVE UNCOVERED THE PRESENCE AND THE CURRENCY OF THE DOCTRINE OF REBIRTH AMONG THE INDIGENOUS IDEAS AND IN THE LEGENDS OF ALMOST EVERY COUNTRY UPON THE FACE OF THE WORLD—SIVANANDA HAS GARNERED UPON THE SUBJECT A NUMBER OF PROFOUND PERSONAL PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS FRAUGHT WITH GREAT SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE ART OF LIFE

WHAT BECOMES OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH: SWAMI Sivananda has presented in this book the different views about the problem of life after death, whether

the soul is reborn and what happens to it in the interval between death and rebirth. According to the ancient Indian thinkers, whether we earn the results of good actions or of bad, the highest state is that in which we transcend both these and attain the Highest Reality or Brahman. There has accumulated a good deal of evidence to show that there is a life after death, the life of the disembodied being carrying the Sukshmasarira along which is the nucleus of the next life. Swami Sivananda has gathered all the material about the subject in this work.

—K.C. Varadachari, M. A., Ph, D.,
Hindu, Madras.

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

SWAMI Sivananda has made himself known to the reading world through many of his spiritual writings. His work 'What Becomes of the Soul After Death' deals with the theme of death and the life after it from various aspects. The author has based his views on Hindu scriptures of which he has made a thorough and deep study. He agrees with the thinkers of all religions when he points out that death is not the end of life and that the soul is Immortal, From his works it is crystal clear that Karma and re-birth are the two great pillars of Hinduism and Buddhism. Human life, to enjoy eternal happiness, needs to be perfected and this is accomplished through myriads of births. Swami Sivananda explains how reincarnation depends on Karma. In this context he writes that if a man indulges in deeds of a beastly nature he will take the birth of an animal. It reminds one of the Christian teaching 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.'

Death and the mysteries around it would be less puzzling after a perusal of this useful book. The subject is so well-explained that Death loses its gloom and darkness. The book rekindles the flame of piety in everyone giving spiritual food both to the meditative and to the doubtful.

—A. G.,
The Bharat Jyoti,
Bombay.

13. THE RATIONALE OF PRE-EXISTENCE AND REINCARNATION HOLDS ITS OWN INVIOLABLE STATUS AND ACCENTUATES THE INADEQUACIES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE BIOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF HEREDITY

YOU do not come into the world in total forgetfulness and in utter darkness. You are born with certain memories and habits acquired in the previous birth. Desires take their origin from previous experiences. We find that none is born without desire. Every being is born with some desires, which are associated with the things enjoyed by him in the past life. The desire proves the existence of his soul in the previous lives,

—*Philosophy and Teachings of Swami Sivananda*, p. 8.

Heredity cannot explain all the inequalities and diversities of nature and endowment—the cases of geniuses. The parents, brothers and sisters of these prodigies are quite common persons. Tendencies are the result of the past actions. They do not come through heredity. The geniuses have gained their talents in their previous lives.

If your desires are not gratified in this life under present conditions you will have to come back again to this earth plane for their fulfilment. If you have a strong desire to become a Master Musician in this birth and if you cannot achieve this and still cherish this desire, this desire will bring you back to this earth plane and place you in suitable environments and favourable conditions. You will start again from your childhood with a tendency to become a Master Musician.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes of the Soul After Death,

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Boy-mathematicians, boy-musicians, boy-saints, boy-poets—these are extraordinary phenomena. How do you explain such strange occurrences? It is impossible to have such an achievement in one birth alone. Through gradual evolution in several births, one becomes a genius or a prodigy in one birth.

—Swami Sivananda's
Conversations on Yoga, p. 127.

14. A PARAGON OF INDIAN SPIRITUAL PRODIGIES SEEKS OUT THE SOVEREIGN FUNCTIONARY OF DEATH AND DRAWS OUT FROM HIS ARCANE, BY COUNTER-REASONING AND DISCRIMINATIVE DISCUSSION, THE SOVEREIGN SECRETS AND ATTAINS THE ETERNAL AND INFINITE BY YOGA TECHNIQUE AND THE METHOD OF GNOSIS

I THINK you all remember the story of Nachiketas, which is narrated in the Kathopanishad. Gautama, the father of Nachiketas, was performing a sacrifice. Nachiketas asked his father "To whom will you give me?" The father replied "To Death I will give you."

Nachiketas went to the house of Yama, the Lord of Death. He stood there for three days and nights without receiving any hospitality, as Yama had gone out and as there was none to receive him. The Lord of Death returned and found Nachiketas waiting in obedience to his father's promise to give him to Death.

Yama said to Nachiketas, "O Brahmin! as thou, a venerable guest, hast dwelt in my house three nights without eating, choose now three boons in return." Then Nachiketas first asked that his father might again be pleased with him. Yama said, "Your father will recognise you as before. He will sleep peacefully at night and when he sees you released from me, he will lose his anger."

The second boon was that of the heavenly fire and Yama said that that fire will be known by him and called by his name. As for the third boon, the boy asked for the secret of Death. "There is that doubt, when

a man is dead—some say he is and some say he is not—this I should like to know. Tell me, O Lord of Death, thy secret. Can man escape from thy clutch ?"

Yama said "Do not ask that. On this point even the gods of olden times had doubt. Verily it is not easy to understand it—subtle is its nature. O Nachiketas ; choose another boon. Do not press me on this point. I will give you sons, grandsons, gold, horses, dominions, wealth, long life, fair damsels to attend on you, chariots etc."

Nachiketas said : "These things are ephemeral. They wear out the vigour of all the senses. Even the longest life is short. It is nothing when compared to Eternity, Keep thou thy chariots, the damsels, the dance and music. No one can be made happy by wealth. Give me the one boon, the only boon I seek—How may man escape thy mouth ?"

Lord Yama found out that the boy was a qualified student for the attainment of Jnana or wisdom of the Soul. He told him how man might escape from the hands of Death. He said, "O Nachiketas ! Just listen to me with rapt attention. I shall tell you the way to attain Immortality. Man is bound by desires. The desires are born of the senses. These bind him to the wheel of birth and death. He must destroy the desires and subjugate the mind and the senses. This is the first step to be taken. The body is like a chariot, the senses are the horses, the mind is the reins and the intellect is the driver. The Atman or the Self is the Lord of the chariot. The sensual objects are the roads. The horses gallop after the objects of senses and carry the chariot with them. They must be guided along the right path. He who has no discrimination and whose mind is always uncontrolled, his senses are not controlled like the turbulent horses of a driver. He does not reach the goal, but enters into the round of births and deaths. But he who has understanding and whose mind is always controlled, his senses are under control like the good trained horses of a driver. He reaches that goal whence he is not born again. He reaches the end of his journey, that highest place of Vishnu.

"Meditate on the One, the Eternal, the Atman, which dwells in the cavity of the heart. Fix your mind on the Supreme Self. When all the desires of the senses are destroyed, when the three knots of ignorance are broken, then you will attain Immortality or Self-realisation or Brahma-Jnana. Thus you may conquer Death. O Nachiketas ! This is the secret of Death."

This Atman cannot be found by the sensual or the weak. It cannot be attained by arguments or discourse or study. The Self reveals Himself to him alone whom He chooses. The choice of the Self is determined by the purity and unselfishness of the life of the aspirant.

Arise ! Awake ! Having reached the great Teachers, learn and realise that wonderful Atman. Like the sharp edge of razor is that path, difficult to cross and hard to tread—thus the wise say.

Nachiketas then having acquired this knowledge imparted by Yama and also the whole teaching about Yoga, attained Brahman or the Immortal Soul, having become free from passion, all impurities and death. Thus it will be with others also who thus know the nature of the Atman or the Immortal Soul.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death pp.162-165.

15. THE INEXORABLE SPHINX OF HUMAN EXISTENCE CASTS UPON THE COMPLEXION OF MUCH TROUBLED SENSITIVITY AND THOUGHT OF MAN, THE IRONIC SMILE OF THE RIDDLE OF HIS OWN DESCENT AND DESTINY—SIVANANDA, LIKE A VEDANTIC LION, ROARS OUT THE ANSWER, EXPLAINS AWAY THE DESIGNS OF DEATH AND LINKS THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF THE SOUL OF MAN TO THE DEATHLESS BEING AND THE ENDLESS JOY OF A SPORTIVE ABSOLUTE

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

THE problem of life beyond death has ever been a most fascinating subject of speculation from time immemorial. Paraloka Vidya or the science about the departed souls and their planes of living is a subject of absorbing interest and a mysterious science which contains many hidden wonders. It has intimate connection with Panchagni Vidya of Chhandogya Upanishad.

The present volume is based to a great extent upon authoritative scriptural texts and upon knowledge derived through reasoning, deep reflection and personal meditation. It throws a flood of light upon all aspects of post-mortem existence and gives valuable information about the different beliefs on this subject. It tends to confirm the belief that death is not the end of life and that the actions done here in this life unfailingly react upon the person in the after-state and influence his 'Vichara.'

The central note of the book is that one aim of all Yoga Sadhanas is to face death fearlessly and joyfully and that the conquest of fear of death and conquest of death is the highest utility of all spiritual Sadhana. Swami Sivanandaji gives out the call "Arise, awake and conquer death through devotion, knowledge and power of Brahmacharya,"

He suggests "Fix the mind on the supreme Soul, meditate and realise your essential nature; you will be freed from the wheel of births and deaths; you will attain eternal bliss and immortality. Identify yourself with Brahman, transcend all the states and be ever happy and blissful.

—The Indian Express,
Madras.

16. GOOD AND EVIL FATES ARE NOT GROUND OUT OF THE LOTTERY-WHEEL OF BLINDED FORTUNE BUT RUNG OUT WITH THE RHYTHMS OF THE ARGUS-EYED AND MYRIAD-HANDED JUSTICE

The doctrine of reincarnation assists most when we look at the inequality and injustice and evil in the world and seek for the solution. Why is one man born in Central Africa among the cannibals and the other in the peaceful part of India? Why is King George born to rule over the territories on which the Sun never sets and why is a

labourer in Assam to work as a slave in an Englishman's tea garden ? What is the cause for this apparent injustice ? Even those who have belief in the personal creator of the universe must believe in this doctrine of reincarnation in order to exonerate God from the charge of maliciousness,

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After death,
Third Hong Kong Edition, p. 70.

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Man does actions with the expectation of getting fruits and so he takes a birth to enjoy the fruit of his actions. In the next birth, he does some more actions and he has to take another birth. In this manner the Samsaric wheel is revolving from eternity to eternity. When one gets knowledge of the Self, he is liberated from this round of births and deaths. Karma is beginningless and Samsara is also beginningless. When a man does actions without expectation of fruits in selfless spirit, all the fetters of Karma get loosened gradually.

Die to live. Kill this little 'I' and attain immortality. Live in Brahman. You will live for ever. Possess Atma, You will have eternal life. Identify with your soul. You will cross the ocean of death or Samsara. Rest in your Satchidananda Swaroop. You will have everlasting life.

A leech moves on a blade of grass and reaches the end of the blade. It first catches hold of another blade with the fore-part of its body and then draws its hind part on to it. Even so, the Jivatman (individual soul) abandons the present body at the time of death, fashions the future body by his thought and then enters into that body.

A good or bad deed always brings its good or bad fruit. You will find in Mahabharata : "Just as a calf finds out its mother among a thousand cows, so also one action that was performed in a previous birth follows after the doer."

Yadrisham Kriyate Karma tadrisham
Bhujyate Phalam,
Yadrisham Vapyate beejam tadrisham
prapyate Phalam.

Just as the fruit corresponds to the seed that has been sown, so also the fruit of the actions that are performed by us corresponds to the nature of the actions that we perform. This is an infallible law of nature. He who has sown the seed of a mango tree cannot expect a jack fruit. He who has done evil actions throughout his life, cannot expect happiness, peace and prosperity in his next life.

A human birth is the result of mixed Karmas, viz., good and bad. When good Karmas outweigh the bad, man gets the birth of a Deva, Yaksha, Gandharva and the like. When evil Karmas outweigh the good he takes as an animal, devil, etc. He falls into a lower birth. When good and bad Karmas are equal he gets a human birth. By good Karmas man attains the heaven, by bad Karmas the hell and by mixed Karmas he attains the world of men. The future birth of each soul is the result of its past actions and the theory of Karma and reincarnation play an important part in determining the same. The law of cause and effect, action and reaction holds good in the case of Karma also.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
pp. 79-80; 87.

17. SEVERAL UNERRING POINTERS SIVANANDA RAISES TO THE KINETIC PSYCHIC ENERGIES THAT CONSTRUCT AND THE POWERFUL SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES THAT BREAK, THE CYCLE OF CONSTANT AND COMPULSORY BIRTHS AND DEATHS

IF you wish to free yourself from birth and death, you must become bodiless. Body is the result of *karmas* or actions. You must not do any action with expectation of fruits. If you free yourself from *raga-dwesha* or likes and dislikes, you will be free from *karmas*. If you kill egoism only, you can free yourself from *raga* and *dwesha*. If you annihilate ignorance through knowledge of the Imperishable, you can annihilate egoism. The root-cause for this body is, therefore, ignorance.

He who realises the Eternal Soul which is beyond all sound, all sight, all taste, all touch, which is formless and attributeless, which is beyond Nature, which is beyond three bodies and five sheaths, which is Infinite and unchanging, self-luminous, frees himself from the jaws of death.

There are two kinds of soul viz. the individual soul or Jivatma or the human soul and the Supreme Soul or Paramatma. The individual soul is an image or reflection of the Supreme Soul. Just as the Sun is reflected in different pots of water, so also the Supreme Soul is reflected in different minds of different persons.

Soul is spirit. It is immaterial. It is intelligence or consciousness. It is Chaitanya. Individual soul is reflected Chaitanya. It is this individual soul that departs from the body after its death and goes to heaven, with the senses, mind, Prana, impressions, desires and tendencies. It is endowed with a subtle astral body when it proceeds to heaven.

When the water in the lake is absorbed the reflection of the sun in the water merges in the sun itself. Even so, when the mind is annihilated through meditation, the individual soul merges itself in the Supreme Soul or Paramatma. This is the goal of life.

The individual soul has become impure through cravings, desires, egoism, pride, greed, lust and likes and dislikes. Hence it is finite, (Parichinna,) it is endowed with limited knowledge (Alpajnana) and limited power (Alpa Saktiman). The Supreme Soul is Infinte, Omniscient and Omnipotent.

The individual soul is under bondage through ignorance and limiting adjuncts such as mind, body and senses. It is mere appearance. It is illusory. When it attains knowledge of the Imperishable, it is freed from limiting adjuncts and bondage, Just as the bubble becomes one with the ocean, so also the Jiva becomes one with the Supreme Soul when ignorance is destroyed.

The Supreme Soul is formless, attributeless, all-pervading, indivisible, decayless, timeless, spaceless. The Supreme alone exists. This world of names and forms is illusory. It is superimposed upon the Supreme Soul, just as sanke is superimposed on the rope. Bring a light, the snake in the rope vanishes at once. Attain illumination or knowledge of the Supreme Soul. This world will vanish in toto.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
Third Hong Kong Edition,
pp. 2-3; 9-11.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ESCHATOLOGICAL THEMES AND THEIR EXHAUSTIVE EXPOSITIONS IN THE HINDUISM OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA

—And A Few Summary Research Analyses in the Temper, the Tendencies And the Accomplishments of the Twentieth Century Time-Spirit—

At a time when a subtle scientific conceit born of a knowledge of the simple biological fact that man is the highest product of evolution, has precluded the modern mind from the possession of an urge to envisage the potentialities of a progressive evolution in his own inner consciousness; when the modern man has no other view of human history than the economic, no other conception of human progress than a mere fulfilment of the five-year plans, no standards of conduct and no scale of values other than those dictated to him by the directing pointers of his own personal preferences and prejudices; when in the cosy conditions of an easy existence created by the twentieth century civilization, he has determined to blaspheme art by surrealist notions, elbow literature and the positive contents of the cultural past to lower and lower levels of decadence, denounce Plato and Christ, improve on Machiavelli and Marx, deliberately avoid the time-tried wells of wisdom and drift on the drains of materialism, positivism, pragmatism, 'humanism'; when in conscience he has grown so easy as to reduce men into 'the living torches of incendiary bombs', we have in Swami Sivananda the most powerful of the Spiritual Influences, the gracious magical transforming Power, pouring a strange spiritual significance into our existence, and in his Literature a galvanizing Force that reduces the organic structure of our life into a non-stop drill in discipline, giving a purposive direction to the course of our existence, and drawing out from within ourselves, powers that create things that endure as against the ephemeral creations of the modern man. The Wisdom of Swami Sivananda, the grand cultural toiler on a grand scale, the prophet to whom the Divine Reality theologically termed God, is a palpable and living experience of unbroken continuity, writing a matter of spontaneous outpouring of most profound insights into the complex mechanism of humanity's material needs, external demands, vital insistences, deeper urges, deepest longings and aspirations, service of all mankind a powerful passion of the noblest order, has been 'pursuing' the natures of men and engaging itself in the noblest task of chastening, purifying, moulding, regenerating and illuminating them. This, then, is the supreme value to contemporary humanity, of the activism of the presence and the thought of the spiritual Superman.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

ESCHATOLOGICAL THEMES AND THEIR EXHAUSTIVE EXPOSITIONS IN THE HINDUISM OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. SIVANANDA AND THE NATURE OF THE THOUGHT-CULTURE OF THE INNER BEING SECURED BY HIS SPIRITUAL ESCHATOLOGICAL VISION

—In General, a Tremendous Psychological Crisis in Consciousness Marks the Moment of Death and Makes it the Most Momentous and Decisive Fraction of Time That Can Settle a Life-Time of Fate in the Birth to Come : Sivananda Discusses This and Some Other Important Points and Supplies, Backed by the Scriptural Authorities, the Extra-Psychological Reasons that Govern the Great Need for Reading Scriptures to the Dying Man—

Man takes birth in this world with a definite purpose. It is not for mere sensual enjoyment that man is born in this world. The goal of life is Self-realisation or God-consciousness. The various activities of life should ultimately lead to that ideal or goal : or else the life is wasted. There is no difference between the life of a beast and that of a man if he does not attempt to attain the goal of life.

In the Gita you will find, "Whosoever leaving the body goes forth remembering Me alone, at the time of death, he attains My being ; there is no doubt about this."

It is very difficult to keep up God-consciousness at the time of death when diseases torment the body, when consciousness fades away. Some people imagine, "Why should a man become a Sadhu and spend his life in the Himalayas ? What is wanted is that one should think of God at the time of death. That can be done even at home." This is a mistake.

The thought of God comes to a man at the time of death only through the grace of the Lord. You have to keep the practice of remembrance or Nama Smaran every day, every hour, rather every second. When a strong habit is formed by unceasing practice throughout the period of your life, then it would be easy to remember God at the time of death. For this you will have to lead a well-regulated life after learning it from a saintly personality and living with him for some years. If you can do this while remaining in the world, it is all the more helpful for your spiritual growth. You

can be in the world and at the same time be out of it.

Pursuing the worldly activities throughout the day and sleeping at night, you will find no time to think of God at all. Even if you do some Japa or prayer for 10 or 15 minutes daily while the rest of the time you spend in worldly activities, you cannot make very great spiritual advancement. Therefore, the remembrance of God should be constant so that the thought of God may come automatically at the time of death as well.

A devotee says to the Lord "O Lord, let me enter the cool shade of your lotus-like feet this very day, when my senses are strong, when my memory is good. When the intellect is perturbed and perverted at the time of death, it may be carried away by the threefold disease of the body." Even the most devout aspirant may fail to think of the Lord at the time of death due to the weakness of the physical body.

That is the reason why Gita, Bhagavat, Vishnu Sahasranam and other holy scriptures are recited at the death-bed of the sick man; even though he may not be able to speak, he may hear what is read out to him. This will help the sick man in forgetting the body idea or his ailment and think of the Lord. Man always desires to die a peaceful death with his mind fixed on God. When his memory fails, these sacred sentences of the scriptures will remind him of his real nature.

Ordinarily a dying man is haunted by various horrible thoughts. He cannot concentrate his mind on God. His mind will be clouded with innumerable thoughts. He will be thinking "Who will look after my young wife and children if I die ? What will become of my property ? Who will realise the outstanding dues from the debtors ? I have not done such and such work. The second son is not married. The first son has not been blessed with a child. The work is half-finished ; many law suits are pending judgement." Thus reviewing the actions of his whole life and thinking of the future, he will feel miserable.

When holy books are read and if his interest in the Lilas of the Lord is created, there is every possibility of the man forgetting his worldly attachments. The relatives gathered round him should not begin to weep. Then his mind will be more afflicted. On the other hand they must encourage him to think of God alone. When the mind of the sick man is thus gradually turned from the network of worldly and centred on the picture or Lilas or teachings of the Lord, all favourable conditions are created thereby for the passing of the life-breath. The mind also is peacefully alighted on the thought of God.

He will then repent for his follies and pray to God sincerely. Sincere prayers can undo the evil effect of bad Karma, Viveka and Vairagya will dawn in him in the twinkling of an eye. Even if at the time of death, real Viveka and Vairagya dawn in him, it is enough to give him the solace, which the soul strives for.

Ajamila was a pious man, but due to contact with a woman of ill-fame in the forest, he lost all his Tejas, divine splendour and Tapas-Shakti. When he saw the messengers of Yama threatening him with noose and spears, he called for Narayana, his second son. As soon as he uttered the

name of Narayana, the messengers of Vishnu arrived with the celestial car, drove away the messengers of Yama and took Ajamila to Vaikuntha.

King Parikshit heard Srimad Bhagvat from Sri Suka, the born Siddha, and the son of Sage Vyasa, for seven days. He observed fast for seven days and on the seventh day Sri Suka initiated him into Brahma Vidya. He meditated on the Supreme Tattwa and became one with Supreme Brahman. The mighty Takshaka appeared before him and by his poisonous venom killed Parikshit. Parikshit felt as if some insect was licking his feet. He went above body-consciousness. He burnt his body by the fire of Yoga-practice even before Takshaka bit him.

King Khatwanga realised the Supreme Brahman in one hour.

These great men had done intense Sadhana throughout life and they remembered the Lord constantly.

May all realise God in this very birth by constant remembrance on Him ! May He appear before you at the time of your departure from this body !

— Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death,
pp. 144-148.

2. SIVANANDA PENETRATES THROUGH THE IRON-CURTAIN OF DEATH, PRESENTS ACCURATE DETAILS OF THE LIFE BEYOND, AND PORTRAYS WITH METICULOUS FIDELITY THE SCENES INTO WHICH THE CONTINUITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS RELEASES MAN FROM THE WORN-OUT CORPORAL FRAME

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

THE first and second editions of this wonderfully illuminating book were published in India in 1946 and 1950. This third edition revised and enlarged is just printed at the Standard Press, Hong Kong, on art paper and is beautifully got up.

While describing how death differs from swoon and sleep, Swami Sivananda describes the process and signs of death and refers in detail to the soul. The subject is as interesting as it is mysterious. In the West also the question has aroused a great deal of interest and attention in certain scientific icrcles. Be it said to the credit of Swami Sivananda that he has tried to accurately describe the other side of death from ancient scriptures as well as from other books. On the cover is printed a physical body which has just been cast aside by the soul, as also the disembodied, subtle and astral self of man. What other religions have to say about resurrection, judgment by God and reward or punishment after death are dealt with in detail. This doctrine of retribution was borrowed by the Jews from the Parsis and later lent to Christians and Muhammedans. How the dead will rise in their graves and how reward and punishment will be given them are described. From the Yogavasishtha are given the six kinds of Pretas. The Pitruloka, the Swarga and

the Naraka as portrayed in the Puranas, as also in the religious books of other religions are discussed with the lucidity that characterises the writings of the great Swami. Next follows details of the Yamaloka, the Indraloka, the Kuberaloka, the Goloka, and the Vaikuntha. Next are described the seven planes and the interval between death and rebirth. The way to conquer death or to die at will are discussed. Certain cases are cited in support of rebirth. The book can certainly be described as masterpiece of the divine being of Sivananda Nagar and will amply repay perusal.

—A.B N. Sinha,
Searchlight, Patna.

3. THE LOFTINESS OF SIVANANDA'S CONCEPTION OF REAL HEAVEN AS GOD-EXPERIENCE—THE SAGE OF THE AGE OF EXTRAVERTED SCIENCE CONTRASTS THE PORTRAITURES OF HEAVEN IN INDIAN THEISM WITH THEIR SENSE-DETERMINED PROTOTYPES IN OTHER WORLD-FAITHS

—From the Psychological Standpoint, Sivananda Speaks of Heaven As a Habitation in Consciousness Formed by the Forces of Human Desires And Buttressed by the Acts Of Imagination—

THE conception of heaven of the Hindus is different from that of the Christians or of the Mahommedans. Heaven of the Hindus is a place where the departed souls go to reap the fruits of their virtuous deeds. They remain there for some time till the fruits of their virtuous actions are exhausted. Then they come back to the world. They eat in heaven the divine feasts of the shining ones or the Devas. They move in celestial cars. Indra is the Lord of the heaven or Swarga. Various kinds of Devas dwell here. Celestial damsels like Urvasi, Rambha dance here. The Gandharvas sing. There is no disease There is no trouble of hunger and thirst. here. The inhabitants are endowed with a Tejasic or brilliant subtle body. They are adorned with shining garments. Heaven is a thought-world. Whatever one wishes, he gets it at once. So it is a happier world than the earth-plane.

The Christians, Mahommedans and Zoroastrians believe in heaven of all kinds of sense-enjoyments. The departed souls pass through the bridge Al Sirat. The faithful ones who have done virtuous deeds reach the paradise which is situated in the heaven. The Mahommedan conception of paradise is that of a beautiful garden, furnished with springs, fountains and rivers flowing with water, milk, honey and balsam. There are trees having their trunks of gold and yielding most delicious fruits. There are seventy effulgent, beautiful girls called hur-ul-ayun with big black eyes. The Jews and the Zoroastrians also have a similar conception of heaven.

The Paradises of the Zoroastrians are known by the names Bihisht and Minu. The persons who have done good deeds in the earth-plane enjoy the company of huran-i-bihisht or black-eyed damsels of paradise

who are under the care of the angel Zamiyad. The name for heaven is Garo-de-mana (Garotman in Persian) or house of hymns. The angels sing hymns here, just as Gandharvas sing in the heaven of the Hindus.

The Jews and the Parsis believe in seven Heavens. The Heaven of the Eden is composed of precious stones. There is a resemblance between the garden of Eden and the paradise of Zoroastrains. The two trees in Eden, the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, correspond to the painless tree and the Guo Karena bearing the white Roama.

The Parsis, the Christians and Mahommedans believe that heaven is eternal and permanent. All enjoyments come to them incessantly without any pain or difficulty.

Heaven also is a place of sensual enjoyment. The enjoyments in heaven are more intense, subtle and refined. They cannot give ever-lasting peace and real eternal bliss. They will wear out the senses. A wise man with discrimination and dispassion will never crave for the enjoyments of heaven. He will never dream to have an abode in heaven. There is jealousy; there is Ragadwesh (likes and dislikes) in heaven. Asuras fight with Gods. Real, thirsty aspirants should ruthlessly ignore heaven. They should yearn for the final emancipation or Moksha.

Every man builds up his own heaven according to his own desires and imaginations. Every man has his own idea of pleasures. Pleasures are always changing. A drunkard dreams of a heaven where there are rivers of wine. This would be a very bad heaven for a sober pious man. A young man dreams of a heaven where he will have celestial damsels, celestial cars, fine music and dance. When that man becomes old, he does not want a woman. It is your necessities and desires that make your heaven.

You have no idea of real eternal bliss of the Soul. Your mind whirls in sensual pleasures. That is the reason why you are carried away by thoughts of heaven or paradise. Have a clear understanding of the nature of the soul. You will have no craving for the enjoyments of heaven. Atma or the Soul is an ocean of bliss. The ocean of bliss or the fountain of joy is within you. Withdraw the senses. Look within. Fix the mind on the Soul. All sensual desires will melt. You will be immersed in the ocean of bliss.

The period for which you live in heaven depends upon the degree of your meritorious deeds. You can become an Indra or Lord of the heaven if you like. Indrahood is a position. The Indra who had lived before is not the Indra of the present day. Countless Indras have come and gone.

When man becomes disgusted with the world around him through miseries, sorrows disappointments, failure, loss of property, disease and death of dearest relatives, he thinks that he would go to some place where there would be all happiness for ever without any misery or pain, where he would live with his forefathers with a perfect body. So he creates heavens or Swargas. How can there be eternal happiness in a finite place conditioned in time and space ? Eternal bliss and immortality can be found in your own Atma or Self only.

A life in heaven is very much the same sort of life you lead here, only a little

happier. You have comfortable living there, but it is not eternal life of everlasting bliss. Further, you will have to come down to earth-plane when the fruits of good actions are exhausted. Heaven is not a permanent abode. Everything which has name and form must perish. Atma or Soul only is immortal and eternal. That is the reason why sages and thirsty aspirants after Truth do not long for the enjoyments of heaven.

Vedanta does not attach any special value to heaven. It teaches that these heavens are phenomenal and transitory. Even if one dwells in the heaven for millions of years, these millions of years are nothing before Eternity.

Lord Jesus says, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." Vedanta also tells the same thing. Real everlasting happiness can be attained by realising one's own Atma or the Immortal Soul. Eternal bliss is within. Perennial joy is in your own innermost Self. The little pleasure that you get from objects is only reflection of the bliss of the soul. It is a particle of that real eternal bliss of soul.

Man sees God face to face. He lives in God. There is no intervening veil or limitation between him and the Lord. He lives in absolute and complete oneness with Him. He is ever blissful. This is Heaven.

From the transcendental viewpoint, there is neither heaven nor hell. They are mental creations only. If your mind is filled with Sattwa, you are in heaven. If Tamas and Rajas preponderate in your mind, you are in the hell.

When a man who has done meritorious actions dies he becomes a Deva or God and dwells in heaven. He enjoys various kinds of pleasures in heaven. During his period of stay in heaven he does not do any fresh Karma or action. Dwelling in heaven is simply a reward for his past good actions. In the Deva form he does not perform any Karma at all.

Abandon the idea of heaven. The idea of obtaining eternal happiness in heaven is a vain dream. It is a puerile idea. Seek the eternal bliss in your own Atma through meditation. You are the Immortal Soul, free, eternal, you are ever pure, ever blessed. Assert your birth-right. Proclaim your freedom and be what you really are, ever free, ever blessed. Every thing in time, space and causation is bound. The soul is beyond all time, all space, all causation. Tat Twam Asi, Thou art that, my child. Realise this and be ever happy.

"Lord Buddha says: "Many thousand myriads of systems of worlds beyond this is a region of bliss called Sukhavati. This region is encircled within seven rows of railings, seven rows of vast curtains, seven rows of waving trees. This holy abode of the Arhats is governed by the Tathagatas and is occupied by the Bodhisattavas. It has seven precious lakes, in the midst of which flow crystalline waters having seven and yet one distinctive properties and qualities. This, O Sariputra, is the Devachan. Its divine Udumbara flower casts a root in the shadow of every earth, and blossoms for all those who reach it. Those born in this blessed region—who have crossed the golden bridge and reached the seven golden mountains—they are truly felicitous; there is no more grief or sorrow in that cycle for them."

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death, pp. 99-104.

4. THE ANCIENT INDIAN PERSPECTIVES AND CONTEMPORARY OCCIDENTAL THEORIES IN SPIRITUALISM—SIVANANDA EXPOSES THE LIMITATIONS OF SPIRITUALISTIC SCIENCES AND ACHIEVEMENTS AND TURNS THE TARGET OF HUMAN ASPIRATION AND ENDEAVOUR TOWARDS THE REALIZATION OF THE TIMELESS REALITY

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

THE second edition of the above book is before us. It gives a lucid account of the journey after death as expounded in the scriptures. The importance of Preta and Pitrukarma is emphasised. The Swami has also given the views about the stage after death according to other religions. According to certain important thinkers one of the ingredients of religion is the belief in a life after death. Death is not the end of life though it is the end of bodily existence. The author also gives reports of those who have retained the knowledge of their previous lives, thus proving that except those who have attained the Knowledge of the Brahman or God, others return to earthly existence again and again. Much material has gone into the making of this book.

—Dr.K.C. Varadachari, M.A,Ph.D.,
The Hindu, Madras.

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

The fate of individuals after the soul has shuffled off its mortal coils has always engaged the attention and thoughts of seers and mystics of the world. The Hindu religion, probably, offers the one and only correct explanation as to what happens to the soul after death, The theory of reincarnation is the only logical one. The learned Saint of Rishikesh has given us his searching thoughts on the subject and also dealt with the journey of the soul after death as narrated in Garuda Purana and other Indian lores. What is more, he has linked Indian theories with the researches in spiritualism carried out in the West,

—*Diwan Chand Review*,
New Delhi.

5. SIVANANDA EXPOSES THE LIMITATIONS OF SPIRITUALISM, WARNS AGAINST THE PRACTICES OF THE SPIRITUALISTS, AND RINGS A CALL TO SELF-REALIZATION AS THE SUPREME GOAL OF LIFE

THE spirits have no knowledge of the highest truth. They cannot help others in attaining Self-realisation. Some are foolish, deceitful and ignorant. These earth-bound spirits control the mediums and pretend to know everything regarding the planes beyond death. They speak falsehood. They put on the appearance of some other spirit and deceive the audience. The poor, innocent mediums are not aware of the tricks

played by their dishonest spirit-guides. The spiritualists waste their time, energy, and money in the vain hope of obtaining the favour of those spirits and transcendental knowledge through them.

The last thoughts of the spiritualists will be thoughts of spirits only. They cannot have sublime thoughts of God. Hence they will enter the region of the spirits only. Commnnication with the spirits will mar their onward march to higher blissful regions and make them earth-bound. Therefore, give up the idle curiosity of talking to the dead on everything regarding the spirit world. You will not gain anything tangible and substantial. You will disturb their peace.

No one should allow himself to become a medium. The mediums have lost the power of self-control. Their vital energy, life-force and intellectual powers are used by the spirits which control them. The mediums do not gain any higher divine knowledge. These spirits are not angels as the spiritualists claim. They are really earth-bound spirits.

The souls of Jivanmukas or great sages who have merged in the Absolute cannot by any amount of invocations or spirit calls or mediums, be recalled.

You create your destiny, your character, your future through your thoughts and deeds. There is no end of your experiences here and hereafter. You will continue to live and come back and be born again on this earth. Try to attain perfection and reach that state where there is no more birth, no more death, and no more disease, sorrow, tribulation or suffering, Meditate on the eternal Atman, thy innermost Self. Do not identify yourself with this perishable body, a combination of the five elements. Realise the Self and be free. Through knowledge of the Imperishable obtain perfect peace, eternal bliss, everlasting joy and immortality.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes of the Soul After Death, pp. 134-135.

6. THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH RESULTS IN SPIRITUALISM AND IN PARAPSYCHOLOGY, ON THE SULLEN SCEPTICISM AND UNSCIENTIFIC DOGMATISM OF THE RANK MATERIALISTS

The modern tendency is to speculate more and more on the life after death, after the advent of spirit communications, table tiltings, spirit taps, spirit light, spirit-writings, slate writings, materialised hands, card-liftings, tin trumpeting, planchette writing, Ouija Board manipulating and communications through media. Articles are freely written on the subject both in the West and in the East. There are any number of societies for the psychic research in the West. The effect of those researches has been able to convince the West of the survival of the soul after death.

The Westerner with the stage of spiritual advancement at which he has reached now and quest for scientific demonstration of every phenomenon, may find revelations and discoveries of the existence of the soul, through this phenomenon by a degree

of proofs and demonstrations. To the student of Eastern philosophy, bred and brought up in the sacred scriptures of India, the existence of a soul and its transmigrations are only the beginning of his philosophy. To the West it has come to be almost the end of their researches till now.

According to the spiritualistic school of thought the other world to which we go after death consisted of a number of spheres representing various shades of luminosity and happiness for which our spiritual conditions have fitted us. In these spheres the scenery and conditions of this world were closely reproduced and so also was the general framework of society. Death was made easy by the presence of celestial beings who lead the new comer into his plane of existence.

The souls of Jivanmuktas or great sages who have merged in the Absolute cannot by any amount of invocations or spirit-calls or mediums be recalled.

A departed spirit may bear intense love towards its former relations and friends. It may communicate with its survivors on earth.

Dying persons have very strong attachment to their children. If there are no persons to take care of their children they project their astral body after death, appear before the relatives and give a message. There have been records of such cases.

Some departed souls who bave intense attachment to relatives become earth-bound. They hover around them, remain close to them and try to help them. They try to be loved by them. They are conscious of their personalities. They do not know that they are dead.

A man is sitting in his room. He is thinking of a difficult problem. He is alone in the room. The room is closed. He beholds his 'double' which is like him. This comes out of him, goes to the table, takes a piece of paper and pencil in hand solves his problem and writes the answer on the paper. This double is the astral self of the man which can live independent of the gross physical body. Such instances are recorded in the Psychical Research Society of Europe and America. This clearly proves that there is a soul which is entirely distinct from the gross physical body.

After death the individual soul takes all his desires with it and it creates the objects of enjoyment by mere thinking. If it thinks of orange, the orange is there and it eats the orange. If it thinks of tea tea is there and it drinks tea.

He who wants to drink wine in heaven and eat delicious fruits and to live with celestial damsels and move in celestial cars, goes to a plane of consciousness where he will project all these ideas and makes his own heaven.

Modern spiritualism has given wonderful demonstrations regarding the existence of disembodied spirits who continue to live even after the dissolution of their gross physical bodies. This has opened the eyes of the rank materialists of the West and the atheists.

Some good spirits possess the powers of foretelling, clairvoyance and clairaudience. They have love and affection for their

friends, relatives. They try to help them during their distress, misfortunes, danger and calamities. They give a warning message to avert dangers.

The disembodied spirits remain earth-bound for some time after their death. They expect help from their relatives and friends. Prayers, Kirtan, Shraddhas, charitable acts, good thoughts help the departed souls in getting release from the earth-bound conditions and rising higher and entering the world of Pitris in order to enjoy the fruits of their good deeds.

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes of the Soul After Death, pp. 132-134.

7. SUPPORTED BY SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITIES AND WITH THE REVELATIONS RECEIVED BY PROFOUND PERSONAL MEDITATIONS, SIVANANDA OPENS WINDOWS ON THE NATURE OF THE PLANES OF EXISTENCE BEYOND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN AND EXIT FROM

WHAT BECOMES OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

THE plight and adventures of the human soul after death is the theme of Swami Sivananda's prolific explorations. Addressing himself to the human Soul itself, the author explains: "Immortality is thy birthright. Birth and death, life here and hereafter are just fleeting phenomena to which thou art unaffected witness." Swami Sivananda drawing on scritural sources for delving into the mystery of the soul also incorporates belief on this subject obtaining in other faiths and creeds.

—*The Hindustan Times*
New Delhi.

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH:

Man has always been intrigued by the question, "That becomes to the soul after death?" This book as the title suggests, details the journey of the soul after death according to varrious beliefs, the belief in re-incarnation and transfigration of souls, and the significance of Sharddha Ceremony. The appendix gives the opinions of eminent Westerners on this question. According to the author, "Death is the most common phenomenon in nature and yet the least understand fact. People are unnecessarily alarmed of death. Death is like sleep. Birth is like waking up from sleep in the morning. Just as you put on new clothes, so also you put on a new body after death. Death is a natural incidence in its course. It is necessary for your evolution. There is no pain at the time of death. Ignorant people have created much horror and terror regarding death."

An illuminating book for the general reader as well as the spiritual aspirants.

—*Free India*,
Madras.

8. THE COMON MAN ENCOUNTERS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE "LAST THINGS" WITH AN EXCITED INTEREST AND AN INSPIRED FEAR—SIVANANDA'S PHILOSOPHICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE ESCHETOLOGICAL THEMES APPEAL TO HIM, EVOKE HIS DELIGHT AND AROUSE HIS FAITH IN IMMORTALITY AND ENDLESS JOY AS THE END OF HIS LIFE

WHAT BECOMES OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

THE present book deals with the age-long question : What becomes of the Soul after death ? It gives valuable information about the theories held by various religions and by several philosophers on the subject and discusses the question in the light of the discoveries of modern science and psychology. The book is intended to enforce the truth that physical death is not the end of life, that the Soul being Immortal, physical death need have no terrors, that by desireless action, Immortality can be attained even in this span of life and that realisation of one's Self is the way to eternal happiness. Several instances of reported cases of remembrance of past lives are quoted to prove the survival of personality after death and these add to the human interest of the book.

—*The Federated India*, Madras.

WHAT BECOMES TO THE SOUL AFTER DEATH :

This is a thought-provoking book revealing the mysteries of the life after death. The book covers over 200 pages with XI Chapters and other appendix. The author takes the reader to his confidence in the successive chapters of his book by revealing the mysteries about death and soul's journey after death, and about the status of soul after death, doctrine of reincarnation, and also journey to various Lokas or planes. On the death of a person, the mortal, coils are left behind, and the soul is at liberty to travel at a moment's time to any place or any plane. Before the death, the time and space should not be annihilated due to the presence of the body. Just as a radio can be tuned to any station in the world, similarly soul after death can travel to any place and enjoy happiness in other Lokas. The author ably deals about the doctorine of Reincarnation, spiritualism and orher interesting problems. We commend the book specially to the rich, so that they may know about the certainty of their death, thereby giving advance opportunity to serve the public properly, and be just to all.

—*The Coimbatore Time*,
Coimbatore.

9. A MASTER-MIND IN THE SCIENCE OF CONSCfOUSNESS, SIVANANDA PRESENTS PEN-PICTURES OF HEAVEN LESS NATURALISTIC AND MORE PHILOSOPHIC THAN THOSE PAINTED BY EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, AND THROWS OPEN PARAPSYCHOLOGICAL WINDOWS UPON THE OTHER SIX PLANES OF SUBTLE NATURE AND BEING

There are seven planes. They are Bhulok (earth plane) Bhuvarlok (antariksha or the astral plane), Swargaloka (heaven or the mental plane,) Maharloka, Janaaloka,

Tapaloka and Satyaloka (Brahmaloka or the world of Brahma, the Creator). Tapasvins dwell in Tapaloka. If you keep different kinds of lights in a room such as kerosene-oil light, mustard-oil light, petromax, candle light, electric light ; the various lights interpenetrate in the room. Even so the Lokas interpenetrate. Each plane has its own matter of an appropriate degree of density, which interpenetrates the matter of the plane next below it.

The astral plane or Bhuvarloka interpenetrates the earth-plane and extends for some distance beyond it. The mental plane interpenetrates the astral but also extends further into space than does the latter. The vibrations of the astral world are more rapid or quicker than those of the physical plane. The vibrations of the mental plane are more rapid or quicker than those of the astral plane. The vibrations of the Satyaloka are more rapid or quicker than those of the mental plane. In each plane the soul develops a new higher sense or power.

When you pass from one plane to another you do not move in space. You simply change your consciousness. You change your focus of consciousness. You can have different sorts of vision through the telescope or microscope by using lenses of different degrees of potency or power. You have got different vehicles within yourself which correspond to different planes and which can function in different planes.

In the dreaming srage your astral body unctions. In the deep sleep state your causal body functions. Even so in the astral plane your astral body operates; in the Brahmaloka your causal body functions. Each plane is formed by matter of different degrees of density. In the mental plane the matter is subtler than in the astral plane. In the causal plane the matter is subtler than the matter of mental plane. The planes occupy the same position in space. Heaven is here. Brahmaloka is here. Have a different vehicle or body and a different subtler eye. You can function in any plane.

In the physical plane one gets knowledge of objects through the five Jnana-indriyas or organs of knowledge, viz., ear, skin, eye, tongue nose. In the mental plane or heaven he does not hear, see, and feel by separate and finite organs. He gets a Divya chakshus or a divine eye, an extraordinary new power or faculty. He can hear, see, feel and know everything of an object instantaneously, through this new mental eye. He gets an acccurate and perfect knowledge of all objects. He is not deceived or misled by any external appearance. There is no misunderstanding.

In the mind all the powers of all the senses are blended. Mind is a mixture or compound of all the organs. It can hear, see, taste, smell and feel.

He can get everything by mere Sankalpa or willing. If he thinks of a celestial car it is there before him at once. If he thinks of a place he is there immediately. If he thinks of a person he is before him at once. There is no distance for him. There is no feeling of separation for him. He reads the thoughts of others. Hence questions and answers are not necessary in the mental plane. The interchange of ideas is very quick.

He can know the past and the future also. He is endowed with clairvoyance and clair-audience. He can simultaneously manifest himself in various forms,

Heaven is a plane of enjoyment only. It is a place to reap the fruits of one's good Karmas done in the earth-plane. One cannot do fresh Karmas here. He cannot attain Moksha or the final emancipation from there. He will have to come down to this earth again for trying again for his salvation.

Indra, Varuna, Agni, etc., are the original Devatas or gods of heaven. There are Karma-Devas also here. There are men who have raised themselves to the status of Devas through meritorious actions done in the earth-plane. A Deva has a Taijasic body. Fire preponderates. The Devas exhibit different degrees of brilliance in accordance with different degrees of advancement.

There is neither day nor night for Deva or an inhabitant of the mental plane or heaven. He has neither sleeping nor waking. When he enters the heaven he experiences intense happiness. This is his waking state. He sinks into a state of unconsciousness when the term of life in heaven terminates.

Brahmaloka is the world of Brahma or Hiranyagarbha. This is also known by the name Satyaloka. Those who go by the path of Devayana reach this plane. Those who perform meritorious actions without expectation of fruits and who lead the life of purity and righteousness and those who worship Hiranyagarbha and all realised Bhaktas will go to this realm.

They attain Karma-Mukti or progressive emancipation, They enjoy all the Divine Aiswaryas of the Lord and in the end of the cycle merge themselves in Para Brahman along with Brahma, the Creator.

Brahmaloka becomes Vaikuntha or appears as Vaikuntha for a devotee of Lord Hari. It becomes Kailasa or Shivaloka or appears as Shivaloka for a devotee of Lord Shiva. It is the Bhava that works.

—Swami Sivananda
What Becomes to the Soul After Death
Third Hong Kong Edition,
pp. 125-129.

10. GOVERNED BY A COMPLEXUS OF EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTIONS, THE ANCIENT INDIAN, MIND TRACED THE NEXUS BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE WORLDS BEYOND, AND BUILT A NUMBER OF LIFE-LINES OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE "DEAD" AND THE LIVING, BY THE INSTITUTION OF SHRADDHA CEREMONY, AND INSISTANCE UPON THE UTTERANCE OF THE MANTRAS, THE RADIATION OF THOUGHT-FORCES AND THE RAISING OF PRAYER—SIVANANDA SUPPLIES THE RATIONALE OF THE ENTIRE PROCESS

FOR a householder the scriptures have imposed the Pancha Maha Yajnas, the five great sacrifices as obligatory duties of life. The neglect of these duties entails penalty. These great sacrifices are:—1. Deva Yajna (sacrifice to Gods). 2. Rishi Yajna (sacrifice to Rishis). 3. Pitru Yajna (sacrifice to ancestors). 4. Bhuta Yajna (sacrifice to

animals) and 5. Atithi Yajna (sacrifice to guests).

The Shraddha ceremony comes under Pitru Yajna. It is the sacred duty of the householdor. Every householder should perform the Shraddha ceremony of his ancestors. Pitris are forefathers who dwell in Pitrulok. They posses powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience. When Mantras are recited, they exercise tremendous influence through their vibration. The Pitris hear the sounds through the power of clairaudience and they are pleased. They bless those who offer the oblation. In Shraddha, the essence of food offerings is taken up by the sun's rays to Suryaloka and the departed souls are pleased with the offerings. Even in Germany and other foreign countries many persons perform Tarpan and Shraddha. They have scientifically investigated the beneficial effects of such oblations. It is the imperative duty of all householders to perform Shraddha and Tarpan to please the Rishis and Pitris. Gita and the Upanishads clearly bear testimony to the fact that the performance of Shraddha is very important. It is only the deluded soul with perverted intellect who misconstrue things and neglect to perform the sacred ceremonies and consequently suffer. They are misguided by false reasoning and logic. Satanic influences affect them very easily. Ignorance is the root-cause for this state of affairs.

Shraddha ceremony is done once in every year. A day of the Pitris is equal to one year of human computation That is the reason why we have to perform Shraddha ceremony once in a year. If we perform Shraddha once in every year, it is equal to daily performances of Shraddha for the Pitris. In their calculation we, their sons. live only for a few days, because the longest period of human existence of 100 years is merely 100 days for them.

Some people entertain the doubt, "when the Jiva undergoes transmigration and takes another birth after leaving this physical, body, is it necessary that we should perform Shraddha ceremony for him ? He is no more in the heavens. To whom will the oblations reach ?" In the ninth chapter of the Gita, Lord Krishna has made it very clear that those virtuous persons who perform sacrifices for the attainment of heaven attain to those worlds of enjoyments. "They having enjoyed that spacious world of Swargas, their merit (Punya) exhausted, enter the world of the mortals; thus following the Dharma of the triad, desiring objects of desires, they attain to the state of going and returning." This establishes the theory of attainment of heaven after death, and rebirth in the mortal world after the exhaustion of virtuous acts. The enjoyments in heaven and peace of the soul is enhanced by the performance of Shraddha ceremony. The suffering in worlds other than heaven according to the merits of one's own actions is mitigated by the performance of Shraddha ceremony, by his sons. So in both cases the performance of Shraddha is a great help. The Pitris remain in heaven (Pitruloka, Chandraloka) for a very long period.

According to the theory of transmigration, even if the individual is to take another birth immediately after his death, the performance of Shraddha adds to his happiness in his new birth. So it is the imperative duty of everybody to perform Shraddha ceremony for his parents and forefathers. Shraddha ceremony should be performed with great Shraddha (faith) as long as you

live. Faith is the main support for religion. In olden days the question "whether to perform Shraddha ceremony or not' did not arise at all. Then people were full of faith and had reverence for the scriptures. In these days when faith is almost dwindling into an airy nothing and when the list of non-performers of Shraddha increased, others of wavering faith, began to doubt whether it is necessary to perform Shraddha or not and whether any good will accrue out of it. This lack of faith in the Shastras has degraded us to the present deplorable condition. "Shraddhavan Labhate Jnanam .....the man of faith attains knowledge and thereby immortality and eternal peace" is the declaration of the Gita.

Some people argue and say that if a man once performs Shraddha ceremony to his forefathers at Gaya and other places of religious importance, they need not do it every year thereafter. This is not a general rule and does not apply to all. It applies only in certain exceptional cases. If people take shelter under this exception and discontinue Shraddha ceremony by once offering Pinda, etc., at Gaya, they do so out of sheer ignorance. They consider it merely a burden to perform Sraddha ceremony and avoid it. They have not discharged their duties properly.

The various religious observances imposed upon mankind by the Shastras tend to purify the ignorant man. The goal of Karma Yoga is purification of the mind. Shraddha ceremony being one of the obligatory duties as per the injunctions of scriptures, also tends to purify the mind. Besides this, the forefathers are also pleased and their good wishes and blessings tend to our material and spiritual growth.

People who die without a son will suffer in the other worlds. (This is, of course, not applicable in the case of Nitya Brahmacharins and spiritual aspirants who tread the spiritual path alone after renouncing all selfish desires and worldly enterprises). That is the reason why people adopt a son before their death for the due performance of Shraddha ceremonies, after their death. The Gita also supports this view. 'Patanti Pitaro Hyesham Luptapindodakakriyah--their forefathers fall (down to hell) deprived of the offerings of Pinda (rice-ball) and water."

But, if a man is religious-minded and if he has discrimination and dispassion, belief in the Shastras and the Vedas, if he has led a virtuous life till the end of his life, if he has devoted his last days in devotional practices, Japa, meditation, study etc., (even if he has no son) he will not have a fall. He will surely enjoy perfect peace. He will not be affected by the dark forces of ignorance. He is free from base attractions of the world. The Lord takes care of his progress. He has got self-surrender and there is no fear of downfall. He has mental purity. All religious observances have Chitta Shuddhi (purification of the mind) as their goal. This he attains by virtue of his past Samskaras and virtuous life in previous incarnations.

People of same communities in India spend money enormously and indiscriminately on Shraddha ceremony for show. This is mere wastage. Money should not be spent on luxury. It is a delusion to think that the Pitrus will get more peace by spending more money. Money does not count for the ease of the Pitrus but it is the intensity of Bhav with which the Shraddha is performed.

On such occasions the poor and deserving persons are to be fed sumptuously. Their necessities of life should be attended to. Study of scriptures should be done on such days. The performer of the Shraddha ceremony should observe spiritual discipline like Japa meditation, Mouna etc. He should maintain strict Brahmacharya. He should not spend his time in idle pursuits. He should pray to God for the whole day. Recitation of appropriate Vedic hymns should be done. The story of Nachiketas of the Upanishads should be studied. The performer attains immortality.

Revive the Vedic religion. Tread the path of Truth. Perform Shraddha ceremony. Shake off this slothfulness and indifference to the path of righteousness. Awake, arise! Tap the right source. Stick to your Varnashrama Dharma. There is no greater sacrifice than performance of one's own duty. Study Gita daily. Live in the world, but be out of it. Assimilate the teachings of Gita. This is the surest way to success in life as well as God-realisation.

May you enjoy the bliss of the eternal. May you attain the Immortal and imperishable seat of Brahman by regular performance of your Swadharma (duty) singing Hari's names, serving the sick and the poor, following the path of righteousness, by regular study of the Vedas and meditation on the Supreme Self. May the Lord guide you in all your activities!

—Swami Sivananda's
What Becomes to the Soul After Death, pp. 138-143.

11. THE SOUL'S SOJOURN ON THE SUPRA-PHYSICAL PLANES, DURING THE INTERVAL BETWEEN DEATH AND REBIRTH—SIVANANDA REPORTS ON THE DIFFERENT SPACE-TIME CONTINUUMS THAT GOVERN THE SUBTLER WORLDS

PEOPLE wish to know the exact period that elapses from the time of leaving the body and being born again. Does the soul take a new body in one year? Does it take ten years? How long does one live upon the subtler planes before reappearing on the earth plane? These are some of the questions. Now, there is no definite period of time in this matter. In mind two factors decide this issue, viz., the nature of the individual Karma and the last impression before death. It may vary from hundreds of years to a few months even. Those that work out some of their Karmas in other planes in subtler regions, take a considerable time before entering a fresh body. The interval is very long, for a year of the earth period passes off as a single day on the celestial plane. There is an instance cited, where, seeing the amazement and admiration of foreign tourists as the imposing ruins of certain ancient monuments, a saint present in the vicinity remarked, that some of these very people have fashioned these monuments centuries ago. Now they look in amazement upon their own hand work.

—Swami Sivananda's,
What Becomes to the Soul After Death, (Third Hong Kong Edition), pp. 129-130.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

EPICS, MYTHS AND SYMBOLS—THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL STATUS AND SPIRITUAL STATURE IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA

—And An Examination of the Sources, the Nature and the Mission of Spiritual Thought—

Thought must brighten the eyes, touch sentiment, inspire intelligence, and impart illumination to life. Thoughts that fail in this adventurous function, betray the impoverished and the impious sources of their origin, and become nothing better than a mischievous burden. Ideas should emanate from the burning furnaces of our deep inner experiences, and breathe into men's external life, a prodigious power; but, whatever may be the traditionally well-assessed and much acclaimed rich intellectual value of the academic philosophy, no life was touched and transformed, no nature controlled, new-made and impelled towards an achievement of things excellent, no being Enlightened by the most ardent pursuit of its alluring content. A deliberate straining of the uncommonly functioning faculty of their reasoning intelligence and the cautious employment of reflective language, capacitated the master-minds in the field of formal philosophy, to erect imposing structures of speculative and abstract thought; but the fascinating ideas made to dwell in them by the vigorous action of a conscious conceptual cleverness, possess no power to exert a shaping influence on the conduct of our everyday life in the world of hard struggles. Therefore, for a true enlightenment of the intellect by the guiding wisdom of life, a message or a lesson for resolving every perplexing circumstance of personal experience, for high moral and spiritual inspiration, and where the problem of life-enrichment is seriously involved, it is the transforming thought and the quickening word of Sivananda that the readers of his Literature seek.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

EPICS, MYTHS AND SYMBOLS—THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL STATUS AND SPIRITUAL STATURE IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. THE UNFOLDMENT OF THE LIVING CULTURE OF THE GREAT INDIAN EPICS, THE CONSTRUCTION OF A PHILOSOPHY OF MYTHS, THE RAISING OF A SCIENCE OF SYMBOLS, CONSTITUTE THE SALIENT TRENDS OF SIVANANDA LITERATURE ON THE THEMES OF THIS CHAPTER

—Encyclopaedic in its Sweep, First-rate in Its Tone of Erudition, Sivananda's Work on the Philosophy of Saivite Symbols, the Spiritual Significance of Siva-worship, the Systems of Saivite Thought and Sects in Saivism, Holds A Supreme Place in the Field It Represents—

LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP :

THIS is a most illuminating book of four hundred pages from the mighty pen of the Saint of the Himalayas—Swami Sivananda whose copious writings on philosophical, religious, ethical and spiritual subjects have enriched the divine literature of India. A serious study of this book is bound to prove highly instructive and will initiate the aspirant into the Siva-cult with all its ennobling and highly spiritual implications. The worship of Siva is not a limited dissertation, of value only to a particular set of religious devotees wedded exclusively to it. The master-author of this book reveals the essential identity and universality of Hindu thought and religion amidst apparent differences and divergences of modes of worship.

Hindu conception of Gods and Goddesses is rooted in ideals, beautifully blended to portray the highest in thought, word and act. It will be highly profitable to have a clear idea of these to enable one to soar to ethereal heights of perennial wisdom and bliss. "Lord Siva and His Worship" contains a lucid portrayal of a peculiarly popular God—conception amongst the Hindus. It is full of practical instructions for reaching Sivatattwa. The secrets and significance of the 'Siva Tandavas' have been clearly portrayed. There is an English translation of the Saiva Upanishad, as also a gist of all important Saiva Puranas. The number of Siva-Stotras in Sanskrit with English translation add very much to the utility of the book. The short life-sketches of the Saiva Acharyas, the Bhaktas and the sixty-three Nayanars will amply repay study. The book is invaluable and will be a source of strength and peace for everyone

who cares to peruse it. In these days of strife and struggle, such books will be found to assist in solving knotty problems of the present and the future. The public are indebted to the publishers for their noble endeavours.

—*The Champion*,
Calicut,

SIVA LILAS :

THIS is a small handy book depicting "SIVA LILAS". In the Hindu religion, Siva plays a very important part in the spiritual life of the people. The monumental temples in Southern India as well as some temples in the North testify to the great adoration in which the people hold Siva and His consort. In the first section, the learned Swamiji explains Siva Tattwa: in the second, he explains the significance of Siva worship; in the third section, he describes Daksha Yajna and in the fourth section he gives an account of Parvati's wedding and in the fifth, he throws much light on Nayanars and in the subsequent four parts he gives the accounts of four important Nayanars. As many of the people are ignorant of Siva Tattwa as well as the significance of Siva worship, the Swamiji has done an immense service to the Hindu religion, and we commend the book to the public.

—*The Coimbatore Times*,
Coimbatore.

2. WHAT SEEMS A BIZARRE FIGURE OF SIVA, DRAPPED IN BEWILDERING SYMBOLS, IS SCRUTINISED BY SIVANANDA TO BE AN ICON OF THE INFINITE BEARING AND SURROUNDED BY SUCH ARTICLES AS CONCEAL A COMPREHENSIVE AND SUBTLE LIFE-PHILOSOPHY THAT WOULD MAKE THE SYSTEMS OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT APPEAR CRUDE

LORD Siva is the Lord of Ascetics and Lord of Yogins, robed in space (Digambara). His trisul (trident) that is held in His right hand represents the three Gunas—Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas. That is the emblem of Sovereignty. He wields the world through these three Gunas. The Damaru in His left hand represents the Shabda Brahman. It represents OM from which all languages are formed. It is He who formed the Sanskrit language out of the Damaru.

The crescent moon indicates that He has controlled the mind perfectly. The flow of the Ganges represents the nectar of Immortality. Elephant represents symbolically pride. His wearing the skin of the elephant denotes that He has controlled pride. Tiger represents lust. His sitting on tiger's skin indicates that He has conquered lust. His holding a deer on one hand indicates that He has removed the Chanchalata (tossing) of the mind. Deer jumps from one place to another swiftly. His wearing of serpents denotes wisdom and eternity. Serpents live for a large number of years. He is Trilochana, the three-eyed One, in the centre of whose forehead is the third eye, the eye of wisdom.

"Hoam" is the Bija Akshara of Lord Siva.

He is "Sivam (Auspicious, Subham), Sundaram (beautiful), Kantam (effulgent).

"Santam Sivam Adwaitam"—Mandukyopanishad.

Serpent is the Jiva or the individual soul which rests upon Siva, the Paramatma or the Supreme Soul. The five hoods means the five senses or the five Tattvas, viz., earth, water, fire, air, and ether. The five hoods or the five serpents represent the five Pranas, which hiss in the body like the serpent. The inhalation and exhalation are like the hissing of the serpent. Lord Siva himself became the five Tanmatras, the five Jnanendriyas, the five Karmendriyas and other groups of five. The individual soul enjoys the worldly objects through these Tattvas. When the individual attains knowledge through control of the senses and the mind he finds his eternal resting abode in Lord Siva the Supreme soul. This is the esoteric significance of Lord Siva wearing the snake on his body.

Lord Siva is absolutely fearless. Srutis declare, "This Brahman is fearless, Abhyam, Immortal, Amritam." Worldly people are afraid even at the very sight of a snake but Lord Siva is wearing serpents as ornaments on His body. This indicates that Lord Siva is absolutely fearless and immortal. Generally serpents live for hundreds of years. Wearing of serpents by Lord Siva signifies that He is Eternal !

Lord Siva has white complexion. What is the significance of white colour ? He teaches silently that people should have pure heart and entertain pure thoughts and should be free from crookedness, diplomacy, cunningness, jealousy, hatred, etc.

He wears three white-lined Bhasma or Vibhuti on His forehead. What is the significance of this ? He teaches silently that people should destroy the three impurities viz., Anvam (egoism), Karma (action with expectation of fruits , Maya (illusion) and the three desires or Eshana, viz., desire for landed property, desire for woman, desire for gold and the three Vasanas, viz., Lokavasana, Dehavasana and Shastravasana and then attain Him with a pure heart.

What does the Balipeetha or altar which stands in front of the sanctum sanctorum of Siva's temple represent ? People should destroy their egoism and mine-ness (Ahanta and Mamata) before thy attain the Lord. This is the significance.

What does Nandi or the bull which is in the front of Sivalinga represent ? Nandi is the attendant or door-keeper of Siva. He is the vehicle of Lord Siva. He represents *satsang*. If you make association with the Sages you are sure to attain God-realization. Sages will show you the way to reach Him. They will remove pitfalls or snares that lie on your path. They will clear your doubts and instil in your heart dispassion, discrimination and knowledge. There is no other safe boat than Satsang to reach the other shore of fearlessness and immortality. Even a moment's satsang or association with the Sages is a great blessing to the aspirants and the worldly-minded persons. They get firm conviction in the existence of God through Satsang. The sages remove the worldly Samskaras. The company of sages is a formidable fortress to protect oneself from the temptations of Maya.

Lord Siva represents the destructive aspect of the Godhead. He is seen absorbed on the mountain peak of Kailas. He is an embodiment of serenity, renunciation and indifference to the world. The third eye in the centre of His forehead represents His destructive energy which, when let loose destroys the world. Nandi is His favourite. He is the doorkeeper. He is seen hushing all nature so that the Lord may not be disturbed in His Samadhi. He has five faces ten hands, ten eyes, two feet.

Rishabha or the bull represents Dharma Devata. Lord Siva rides on the bull. Bull is His Vehicle. This denotes that Lord Siva is the protector of Dharma, is an embodiment of Dharma or righteousness.

Deer represents the Vedas. Its four legs are the four Vedas. Lord Siva is holding the deer on His hand. This indicates that He is the Lord of the Vedas.

He has sword in one of His hands. This signifies that He is the destroyer of births and deaths. The fire in one of His hands shows that He protects the Jivas by burning all fetters.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lord Siva and His Worship,
pp. 125-129.

3. THE WESTERN INSTITUTION OF A RESEARCH IN THE PROPERTIES OF THE GANGES WATER—SIVANANDA FURNISHES THE SCIENTIFIC REASONS FOR THE REVERENCE AND THE SACREDNESS IN WHICH THE HINDUS HOLD THE RIVER GANGES

MOTHER GANGES :

THIS small booklet on the origin and sacredness of the river Ganges from the pen of Swami Sivananda is an inspiring study to millions of Hindus who worship the river as signifying an important aspect of Hindu religion and mythology. We read the Health Minister of India, Mrs. Amrit Kaur stating the other day that scientific experiment and investigation showed that the Ganges water possessed no particular virtues, and yet we have it on very eminent authority of foreign scientists and doctors who had made thorough research, years back, that the Ganges water possessed some mysterious good properties. It may not be scientific to admit the presence of mystery in the modern scientific researches and yet and word "mystery" is truthfully explained by the limitations of ordinary human skill and ability to comprehend big things. It will however be profitable to make another serious attempt by expert scientists to establish the truth.

The Health Minister's statement cannot however alter a bit the actual experiences and belief of millions of Hindus.

Things of the spirit are usually beyond intellectual perception, as everyone must know. In the case of Ganges water, however, a more thorough and expert research may reverse the Government view. This, it is hoped will be done.

In paying tribute with all his soul to Mother Ganges, Swami Sivananda avers in

this booklet, how every one may get eternal benefits by using the water of the Ganges.

The following translations of Sanskrit quotations from the book will be interesting:

"He who utters "Ganga", 'Ganga' even from a distance of hundreds of miles becomes purified from all sins and gains the world of Vishnu".

"When the body is afflicted by senility and diseases, the holy water of Mother Ganga is the medicine and Lord Hari from whose feet Ganga emanates is the great physician".

"Even a little study of Gita or the drinking of a little Ganges water and the worship even once of Murari will make one immune to Yama".

—*The Champion*,
Calicut.

4. THE PHILOSOPHICALLY PERCEIVED WILDERNESS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE EVOKED FROM THE INDIAN IMAGINATION, A MOST SIGNIFICANT NARRATIVE THAT WAS BORROWED BY TOLSTOY, THE RUSSIAN GENIUS, TO ILLUSTRATE HIS OWN RELIGIOUS REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

DHRITARASHTRA said: "O Venerable Vidura ! Tell me at full length the story of the Brahmin who was caught in the wilderness of life."

Vidura said: "Once a certain Brahmin was caught in a vast thick forest which was inhabited by wild beasts like lions, tigers, leopards and other kinds. The Brahmin became perturbed and frightened. He went hither and thither to find out some place of refuge. He did not succeed. He found the forest enmeshed in a net. He saw a terrible woman standing there with outstretched hands. Many five-headed snakes also lived in that terrible forest. There was a pit within the forest which was covered by trees, herbs and creepers. The Brahmin fell into the pit in the course of his wanderings. He got himself entangled in the spreading branches of a big tree. He was hanging there with feet upwards and head downwards.

"In this position he saw a big snake within the pit. He also saw a huge six-faced twelve-footed elephant slowly approaching the pit and a number of black and white mice and rats gnawing and eating the very roots of the tree. Bees swarmed in large numbers to drink the honey in the comb that was hanging from a branch of the tree. The honey was trickling below in drops. The man who was thus hanging from the tree drank the honey but his thirst was not quenched. He did not obtain any satisfaction. On the other hand the thirst became more and more intense. He was restless and discontented. He was not disgusted with life. He was still clinging to life. The thirst for life became intense. His disire to continue his existence even in such miserable condition was growing stronger and stronger.

Imagine the miserable plight of the Brahmin ! He got terrified of the carnivorous beasts, of the gigantic woman with

outstretched arms, of the huge snake at the bottom of the pit, of the elephant near the tree, of the impending fall of the tree through the action of the rats and lastly, of the bees flying about to taste the honey. But the ignorant Brahmin continued to dwell in this miserable condition. He lost his power of discrimination. He was lost to all sense of right understanding and intelligence. But he did not lose, at any time, the hope of prolonging his life."

Dhritarashtra said : "O learned Vidura ! Tell me, what is that wilderness you refer to ? What is the snake that dwells in the bottom of the pit ? What is that six-faced elephant ? Please explain to me in detail all about this excellent parable."

Vidura replied : "The 'wilderness' is this mysterious universe. The limited sphere of one's own life is the enmeshed 'forest' within it. The 'beasts' that dwell in this forest are the various diseases to which man is subject to. The 'gigantic woman' who resides in this forest is decrepitude which destroys beauty. The 'pit' is this physical body. The 'huge snake' that dwells in the bottom of that pit is time, the universal destroyer of all creatures. Desire for life is the 'tree' that grows in the pit. Man is attached to the spreading branches of this 'tree' and hangs down.

The 'six-faced elephant' is the year. This marches towards the tree that stands at the mouth of the pit. The 'six faces' are the seasons. Its 'twelve legs' are the twelve months. The 'rats and the mice' that are cutting off the tree are the days and nights that are continually lessening the span of life of all creatures. The 'bees' are our desires. The 'drops of honey' that are oozing out are the sensual pleasures derived from the gratification of our desires. The ignorant man clings to the sensuous objects. He is thus caught in the wheel of births and deaths. The sages know life's course to be even such. They tear off the bonds of this mundane life through discrimination, dispassion and knowledge of the Self and enjoy Eternal Bliss and Immortality." (*Santi Parva, Section VI*).

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Mahabharata,
pp. 1-3.

5. THROUGH THE AGES, THE EPIC OF RAMAYANA EXERCISED AN ENDURING VITAL POWER ON THE FORMATION OF THE IDEAL INDIAN CHARACTER, AND ON THE SHAPING OF THE NOBILITY OF THE NATIONAL TEMPER—SIVANANDA REORIENTATES ITS MESSAGE FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

ESSENCE OF RAMAYANA :

THERE are few Hindu homes in India where one would not find a copy of the Ramayana in one language or the other. It is as the author of the present book says, "a marvellous inspiring book for all times that has loomed large for centuries over the destinies of millions of people and will certainly continue to do so for ages to come." It exercises a great moulding power

on this life of man. Its teachings are wrought into the very life of every Indian, man woman, and boy. It is, in particular a text-book of morals, for the youths to inspire them to loftier and sublime ideals of conduct and character. It is symbolic of the glorious culture and civilization attained by ancient Hindus and has served as a beacon light to guide the path of successive generations through the ages that have intervened.

The present book is an attempt to present the Ramayana in a concise form in simple and elegant English and the author, who is a reputed Sannyasin, and writer of a series of books on the different aspects of the Hindu religion, has fully succeeded in his noble effort. To make the book more useful he has made a departure from the beaten track by dividing it into six sections. Section one is meant to introduce the readers to the background of the great epic; section two gives a synopsis of the seven Kandas in which it has been divided by Rishi Valmiki, the original writer of the book; section three is devoted to the actual story contained therein; section four gives the main characters of the Ramayana; section five the teachings of Ram; and section six contains a useful appendix.

The whole book has been excellently done and the fine printing and get-up have added to its attraction. It can safely be recommended for use as a text-book of religion for boys and girls in schools.

—*The Indian Nation*,
Patna.

6. THE WISDOM OF GOD AND THE WAYS OF DIVINE LOVE CONSTITUTE THE LIFE-LINES OF THE INDIAN SPIRIT—THE GREATEST BOOK THEREON BEARS THE NAME OF BHAGAWAT PURANA AND RECEIVES THE TRIBUTE OF A TREATMENT FROM SAGE SIVANANDA

KAVI said : The worship of the feet of Achyuta leads to everlasting good. The continuous contemplation and service to the lotus-like feet of Achyuta free a man, who is deluded by mistaking the worthless body for the pure Atman, from all fears. It teaches you to feel the consciousness of His Presence everywhere and in all things and attain bliss and freedom. Know perfectly those duties which please the Lord and lead to His realisation, which were taught by the Lord Himself for the realisation of Atman even to men of no learning. In following the path of Bhagavata Dharma one is not overcome by obstacles as in the path of Yoga. He may run along this path even with closed eyes without fear of losing his steps, without knowing where he goes and what he does. He will not fall again into the dark abyss of Samsara. A devotee who has attained the grace of the Lord never comes to grief.

"Whatever a man does by his physical organs, tongue, mind and other senses, by intellect or himself, by the instincts of Nature or Prakriti, he should resign everything as service to the Supreme Narayana. The secret of Bhagavata Dharma is thoroughly to renounce egoism, do everything as the servant of the Lord

and trust oneself to His grace entirely. He should renounce the benefit or responsibility of all Karmas to the Lord only. Sincerity and faith in the Lord will enable you to realise his immanence.

"The consciousness of duality or sense of separation is the cause of all fear. The Sense of duality makes the Jiva identify himself with the body and other unreal objects, strngthens the feeling of egoism or separation from the Lord, and makes one recede from the Lord and creates a forgetfulness or unconsciousness of one's true Self. This is caused by the Maya of the Lord. The wise man therefore should become a true devotee of the Lord and trust himself entirely to the Lord's grace and recognise the Lord as his friend, preceptor and the Lord. He who is removed from Ishwara forgets the Lord. There is the wrong notion, 'I am the body'. This is caused by the Maya of the Lord. Fear rises from devotion to the second. Therefore a wise man should worship the Lord only with unfailing or undying devotion, knowing his Guru to be one with the Lord and Atma. He should have sincere devotion to his Guru and the Lord.

"Though the world of differences does not really exist it appears to exist like dreams through the mind of man who thinks of it. Therefore, the wise man should control the mind which by its thought gives rise to the existence of the world and the difference of things. Constantly hearing the various acts of grace (Lilas) done by the Lord in His Avatars, singing aloud His praise and His gracious names, heedless of ridicule or censure, the devotee should live in this world without attachments.

"The devotee who serves the Lord constantly, and develops love to Him by singing the names of his beloved Hari, with his heart completely melting in devotion, laughs, weeps, sings and dances. His mind loses itself in ecstasy and becomes entirely oblivious of all external objects. He walks alone with the Lord and forgets the outside world.

"In the five Bhutas: sky, air, fire, water and earth, in the stars, planets, living animals, cardinal points, the trees, rivers, lakes or seas, and everywhere he sees the body of the Lord Hari and bows to it.

"He who worships the Lord in this way and who has resigned himself to Him, gets devotion, realisation of the Lord (Anubhava) and dispassion at one and the same time, just as by eating, one gets satisfaction (Tushti), nutrition (Pushti), and relief from hunger, all at one and the same time. The Bhagavata ultimately attains supreme peace or Moksha, the highest state of bliss. He does not bear any ill-will to any creature. He is friendly to all. His mind is ever fixed at the lotus-like feet of the Lord. He is ever pure. He purifies the world with the dust of his feet like the rising Sun.

"Knowledge of the Self reveals itself to those who are the devotees of the Lord and who worship daily. Those who are possessed of devotion are undoubtedly emancipated. Those who are destitute of the nectar of devotion cannot achieve emancipation even in dream. Think of the Lord at all times. With the mind not wandering after anything else, harmonised by constant practice, constantly meditating, you will attain the Supreme."

—Swami Sivananda's
Lord Krishna, His Lilas and Teachings, pp. 275-277.

7. CYCLOPAEDIC IN ITS SCOPE, SIVANANDA'S WORK ON THE METAPHYSICS OF THE WORSHIP OF A POPULAR SOUTH INDIAN DEITY, IS THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN THE FIELD IT REPRESENTS

LORD SHANMUKHA AND HIS WORSHIP :

THE worship of Sri Subramanya is more or less confined to South India and more especially to the Tamil country where He is traditionally regarded as the Deity who first taught the Tamil Language to Agastya. His worship is so popular in the Tamilnad that Sri Arunagirinathar has stated that He showers prosperity even on person who abuses him in good Tamil. A life of Sri Muruga, especially one written by a universally respected saint like Swami Sivananda who was himself born in the Tamil country, cannot but fail to obtain an enthusiastic welcome wherever His name is known, but the book before us is more than a mere story of His life. It deals with the philosophical significance of the facts connected with His life, His possession of six faces, His weapon and Vahanams, His victory over the Asuras and His marriages with the daughters of Devendra and the hunter. His Ashtotara Namavali is appended. An account is given of His well-known Bhaktas including the Tamil poets, Nakeerar, Arunagirinathar and Kumaraguruppa Swamigal and of the famous shrines which are famous for his worship. The book can be described as a regular cyclopaedia of the knowledge on Skanda and will help seekers realise the Supreme.

—*The Federated India*,
Madras.

MOTHER GANGES :

This little pamphlet, tenth in the 'Jnana Yajna series', gives Sanskrit and Hindu hymns to Ganga, Kirtan Dhwani which will interest devoted souls. The Divine Life Society is doing good work in spreading knowledge about Hindu religious culture in the country and abroad also by publishing a monthly magazine. The name of Ganga is always coupled with religiosity, piety and virtue by the Hindus for whom she has been the veritable mother since the hoary days of the ancient Aryans, and alongside the banks of which has grown and developed the whole culture of this ancient race. As such, this pamphlet too will be received well by the public.

—*The Nagpur Times*,
Nagpur.

8. SIVANANDA'S PROLIFIC EXPLORATIONS IN SOUTH INDIAN MYTHOLOGY FOR THE ESOTERIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL SIGNIFICANCES OF THE SYMBOLS, MYTHS AND LEGENDS WOVEN ROUND THE SIX-FACED GOD

IN common with all Hindu mythological accounts stories, the descriptions the legends about Subrahmanya also embody various esoteric truths. Lord Subrahmanya has six faces. He holds a spear or Vel, and he rides on a peacock. A cock is his banner. He

has two wives Valli and Devayanai. He is the son of Parama Siva—came out of Siva's third eye, in the form of fire or light—Jyotis. His achievements consisted of the destruction of the great Asura Soorapadma who with his assistants was enslaving Indra and other Devas. He married Devayana, the daughter of Indra. On the advice of Narada he married also Valli, the fosterdaughter of the hunter king Nambi, after testing her devotion pretty severely. Even as a boy, Lord Subrahmanya imprisoned Brahman for his ignorance of the meaning of the Pranava Mantra and released him only at the request of Lord Siva. Incidentally he also expounded to Lord Siva the meaning of the same Mantra. All these accounts are the interesting details greatly appreciated and cherished by deeply devoted Subrahmanya Bhaktas. The worship of Subrahmanya is more or less confined to South India though He is not unknown to the Hindus of the rest of India as Kartikeya. The Tamilians have a living faith in Subrahmanya and are as fond of His Leelas as the North Indians and the South Indian Vaishnavites are of Krishna's sports.

From the esoteric point of view, Subrahmanya is the Lord who incarnated Himself to illumine the intelligence of human beings and liberate them from ignorance of various kinds which hides the truth from them. Since human beings are in different stages and levels of development, Lord Subrahmanya has to meet them on their own level for fulfilling His mission of enlightenment. This He does in a unique way.

His six heads are symbolical of the six Pranic or Vital centres—the so-called six Chakras-of nervous activity in the human body, located in the spinal cord and at the junction of the eye-brows. It is through concentration on these centres that the Yogi acquires capacity to subordinate his lower nature, to sublimate it, and to utilize all his energy for establishing his own identification with the one Lord of the universe, which alone is the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute. Therefore, to say that Lord Subrahmnya's six heads represent these six vital centres is only to say that whenever an aspirant attempts to rise above his human limitation and experience oneness with the Eternal, Lord Subrahmanya gives him all the strength he requires for conquering the evil inside him and for the acquisition of the final Truth.

The Spear or Vel is the weapon which pierces through the demon of Ignorance. This is Ekagra Chitta or the one-pointed mind so much insisted upon in Raja Yoga without which progress is impossible for the Yogi. It is the preliminary for concentration, meditation and absorption (Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi) all of which together constitute the Yogic Samyama. In the legend, it is Soorapadma, the Asura who is slain by the Vel. That Asura is none other than ignorance.

That Subrahmanya came out of Siva's third eye is known to the eye of knowledge,

The peacock (on which Subrahmanya rides) is the most beautiful of all birds. It is the one bird which can reveal its inner joy by dancing and displaying its gorgeous plumage. When it does so, it evidences its perfect balance—for it is a very heavy bird and it has to keep its balance on its two very slender feet. All these points relating to the peacock are utilised for illustrating the ideas concerning the

inner significance of the Subrahmanya mythology. We can interpret the peacock as symbolising mental equipoise—the predominence of the Sattva over the Rajas and Tamas qualities. That tranquillity or mental balance, when once attained, produces contentment and happiness. Such a mental condition reveals itself in a superior sort of self-satisfaction—a state similar to that of the peacock which spreads out its beautiful plumage. It is this predominating Sattva that is the pre-requisite for the acquisition of True Knowledge—the knowledge symbolised by Lord Subrahmanya Himself.

Subrahmanya's cock-banner symbolises the approach or the dawn of knowledge. It is the cock that proclaims the coming of the sun in the eastern horizon. The sun is the heavenly body that dispels darkness. Likewise the cock on Subrahmanya's banner announces the approach of knowledge which will destroy all ignorance.

The two wives Devayani and Valli symbolise the two types of devotees among those who strive for Moksha or Liberation through union or oneness with the Supreme. One type consists of those who rigidly and sincerely observe the injunctions and follow the teachings of the Vedic scriptures and are thus the followers of Vaidik Karmas. That type is represented by Devayana, whom Subrahmanya married in the regular orthodox way. The other type consists of the ardent Bhaktas who attach more importance to right mental feeling and emotion than to rules and regulations. This type is symbolised by Valli; who grows as the foster-daughter of the hunter king, Nambi. Subrahmanya marries her in the combined Gandharva and Paisacha modes of marriage. He manifests love in wooing her and uses force in fighting against her relations who try to obstruct Him.

Subrahmanya legends also reveal that He is the God of the hill and other tribes whose modes of worship are primitive, crude and barbarous. That shows that Subrahmanya incarnated Himself only for the purpose of conferring knowledge upon all whatever their level of understanding or attainments. All the details relating to the Subrahmanya legends can be interpreted correctly if we bear in mind the underlying truth that Subrahmanya is Supreme Consciousness in an embodied form. This is amply borne out by the story about Subrahmanya having been the Guru of even His own father. The story goes that he questioned Brahma about the meaning of Om and that, when Brahma revealed his ignorance of it Subrahmanya put Him into prison. When the matter reached Siva, He was naturally amused and playfully challenged Subrahmanya to interpret the Mantra Himself. But child Subrahmanya would not do so unless Siva became Subrahmanya's disciple. Siva was fond enough of His child to assume the attitude of a disciple and got the explanation from His boyish lips. That incidentally won for Subrahmanya the name of Swaminatha. Here, too, we see that Subrahmanya symbolises Pure Consciousness which includes in it the meaning even Om, the highest of all Mantras.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lord Shanmukha and His Worship.

9. EXEMPLARY CHARACTER WAS EASY OF EXPRESSION FOR THE PERFECTED NATURES ENSOULED BY THE ILLUSTRIOUS INSTANCES IN THE INDIAN EPIC OF EPICS—MAHABHARATA : IN ORDER TO INCULCATE IN COMMON HUMAN NATURE, THE POWER TO RESIST TEMPTATION, SIVANANDA RECOUNTS A GRAPHIC EPISODE

RESISTANCE to temptation is a great virtue. Bhishma had it in full measure. So also Karna, Yudhishtira, Drona, etc., in the same degree. After Lord Krishna had failed in his mission to the Kauravas to induce them to give half the kingdom to their cousins, He took Karna a part of the way in His chariot and revealed to him his real origin—and that if he so wished he could reign as the eldest brother of the Pandavas instead of Yudhishtira. Karna refused. "For good or evil, for better or worse, I have cast my lot with the Kauravas and I cannot forsake them, O Govinda ! in their direst need on the battle-field of Kurukshetra."

Yudhishtira had also to pass through similar tests. Once, when, while the Pandavas were passing their lives in exile in the forests, Duryodhana who had come there in order to persecute them was himself caught as prisoner by the *Gandharvas*. But Yudhishtira sent Arjuna and Bhima to liberate him. Chitrasena, the king of *Gandharvas* explained to Yudhishtira that Duryodhana had come to humiliate the Pandavas. Yet Yudhishtira, instead of allowing the *Gandharvas* to destroy him, set him free and said 'O brother, never again do such mean things. Go back to your kingdom and reign in peace.' Yudhishtira knew that he had taken the vow of passing thirteen years in exile and could not reign as king by destroying Duryodhana without breaking his vow. Nor was it his nature to take undue advantage of his foe's helpless position. If he had to fight Duryodhana, he would do it on equal terms.

On three distinct occasions, Gods themselves put heavy temptations in his way in order to test his virtues. Once, when all his brothers had been killed by the Yaksha he chose that Nakula should live rather than his own brothers—Bhima and Arjuna—'I choose that Nakula, son of Madri, should live because abstention from injury is the highest virtue and therefore I do desire that neither of my father's wives should be childless.' Yaksha was so pleased that he revived all the brothers, Again at the gate of Heaven, Indra—Lord of the heavens—prohibited a poor dog accompanying Yudhishtira. 'Why O Yudhishtira ! Do you care so much for a dog ? You have attained immortality and a condition equal to mine even—the unparalleled success—and there are now before you all the joys of Heaven !' Yudhishtira gently replied: 'There is no pleasure for me in the happiness and joys purchased at the expense of a dog. It is given that the abandonment of one that is devoted is as much sinful as the sin of slaying a Brahmana. Not even for the sake of my own happiness shall I cast away this dog.' The dog was no other than god Dharma himself—who then blessed his son. But the gods had not finished with Yudhishtira. A third temptation was before

him, viz., a sight of Duryodhana sitting in the Heaven while his own brothers Karna, Bhima, Arjuna, etc., his queen Draupadi, Draupadi's sons, were nowhere to be seen. He insists on taking his abode by their side—wherever it be. When at last he finds them in the dark regions, undergoing unbearable agonies and when he hears them, all prayed to him most piteously to stay there just for one moment longer—because his presence eased their torments—he cooly told his guide from the Heaven : 'Return to them who have sent you here and tell them that I shall not return to them but shall stay here, since by my presence here, my beloved ones are comforted. What is Heaven to me where they are not ? This is my Heaven. That is not.' A more steadfast courage there never was ! Courage to resist such temptations even at the expense of one's own welfare !

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Mahabharata,
pp. 351-353

10. THE COMMON INABILITY OF THE ORDINARY CRITICS TO GAIN A GRASP OF THE IDEAS INTELLECTUALLY HELD FOR, AND THE VALUES EMOTIONALLY FELT IN, THE SYMBOLS, THE RITUALS AND THE IDOLS, THAT ACCOUNTS FOR MUCH OF THE HASTY CONDEMNATION HEAPED ON THEM

LORD SHANMUKHA AND HIS WORSHIP :

IN this book on Lord Skanda, or Kartikeya, or as he is better known, Lord Shanmukha, is graphically described in Swami Sivananda's usual style, much that should be of great importance to the worshippers of Lord Shanmukha throughout Southern India and Ceylon.

Divided into six sections—first we find the significance of the Incarnation of Lord Shanmukha, his worship, and the previous births of the *Asuras*. Section two deals with the *Daksha Yajna*, the curse of Nandi and the tyranny of the Asuras, the ultimate approach of the Devas to Lord Vishnu and the birth of Lord Skanda ; section three deals exclusively with the significance of the story ; section four is descriptive of the prominent Bhaktas of Skanda, and section five describes the Skanda Temples in Southern India and Ceylon ; section six contains three messages from Sri Swami Sivananda on the great occasion of Skanda Shashti in the years 1945, 6 and 7.

In the preliminary pages the English version of the Skandopanishad, the inspiring hymns to Lord Shanmukha, his Mantras and different Stutis, and the Ashtottara Namavali are given ; the book concludes with a number of soul-elevating Kirtans and the Dhwanis of the Lord and a bibliography pertaining to His incarnations ; and these latter will interest and benefit the readers a great deal.

—*Luzac's Oriental List and Book Review*,
London.

11. AMONG THE WORLD'S GREAT RIVERS, GANGES HOLDS AN UTMOST IMPORTANCE AT ONCE IN SCIENCE, IN LEGEND, IN RELIGIOUS PRACTICE, AND IN GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION AND STUDIES—SIVANANDA MAKES A SCHOLARLY LITTLE TREATISE ON THE SPIRITUAL ORIGINS AND THE CHEMICAL VALUE OF THE WATERS OF THE GANGES

THE Ganges is the most sacred river of India. Lord Krishna says in the Gita "I am the Ganges among rivers." No germ can flourish in the Ganges. It is saturated with antiseptic minerals. Even in the west doctors prescribe Ganges water for rubbing in the treatment of diseases of the skin. Ganges is not merely a river. It is a sacred Tirtha. It is possessed of mysterious powers which are not found in any other river of the world. Even scientists have admitted the efficacy of the Ganges water.

Dr. F. C. Harrison of McGill University, Canada, writes : "A peculiar fact which has never been satisfactorily explained is the quick death (in three or five hours) of the cholera vibrio in the waters of Ganges. When one remembers sewage by numerous corpses of natives (often cholera casualities) and by the bathing of thousands of natives, it seems remarkable that the belief of the Hindus, that the water of this river is pure and cannot be defiled, and that they can safely drink it and bathe in it, should be confirmed by means of modern bactriological research." A well-known French physician Dr. D. Herelle, made similar investigations into the mystery of the Ganges. He observed some of the floating corpses of men dead of dysentery and cholera and was surprised to find "that only a few feet below the bodies where one would expect to find millions of these dysentery and cholera germs, there were no germs at all." He then grew germs from patients having the disease and to these added water from the Ganges. When he incubated the mixture for a period, much to his surprise, the germs were completely destroyed."

A British physician Dr. C. E. Nelson, F. R. C. S. tells us of another striking fact. He says that "ships leaving Calcutta for England take their water from the Hooghly river which is one of the mouths of the filthy Ganges and this Ganges water will remain fresh all the way to England. On the other hand, ships leaving England for India find that the water they take on in London will not stay fresh till they reach Bombay, the nearest Indian post, which is a week closer to England than Calcutta. They must replenish their water-supply at Port Said, Suez or at Aden on the Red Sea." It is no wonder that the Ganges is very sacred and possessed of mysterious powers.

For a Hindu the word "Ganges" or "Ganga" has its own sacred association. Every Hindu thirsts for a dip in the Ganges, and for a drop of water at the time of his death. Aspirants and mendicants build their huts on the banks of the Ganges for practising penance and meditation. Bhishma spoke very highly of the glory of the Ganges in his parting instructions to the Pandavas from his bed of arrows.

Wherever a pious Hindu goes to take

his bath, he invokes first the Ganges and feels Her presence in water before he takes a plunge in the river. If he lives in a place far away from the Ganges he intensely yearns to see Her on some day and bless his being by bathing in the holy waters. When he is blessed to have a Ganges bath, he carries some water to his house and carefully saves it in a vessel so that he may use it for purpose of purification.

Hindus believe that all their sins are washed away if they take a dip in the sacred waters of the Ganges.

In the Satya Yuga all places were sacred. In the Treta Yuga Pushkara was considered the most holy place. In the Dwapara Yuga Kurukshetra was regarded as the most sacred place. In Kali Yuga the Ganges has that glory. Devee Bhagavata says "He who utters the name of Ganga even if hundreds miles afar is freed from sins and attains the abode of Lord Hari."

The Ganges came out of the Supreme Being. She entered the feet of Lord Hari and reached Vaikuntha. She issued from Goloka and passed through the regions of Vishnu, Brahma, Siva, Dhruva, Chandra, Surya, Tapas, Jnana, Maha and reached Indraloka and flowed as Mandakini.

The Ganges entered the matted locks of Lord Siva at the request of Bhagiratha who did rigorous penance for the descent of Ganga to Patala for the redemption of his ancestors, the thousand sons of Sagara who had been burnt to ashes by the Sage Kapila.

Thereupon She flowed down from the locks of Lord Siva. She was drunk by the sage Jahnu as the water inundated the Yajnashala of the sage. Then again she issued out of the ear of the sage and acquired the name of Jahnavi. She is also known by the name Bhagirathi, daughter of Bhagiratha. The Ganges flowed into Patala as Bhagirathi. The ancestors of the king were raised to Swarga by the touch of the sacred waters of the Ganges.

Ganga had to take a human form on account of her own fault in behaviour in the presence of Brahma. She became the wife of Santanu. Santanu also was a celestial being known as King Mahabhisha. He had to take birth in the world for his fault in conduct in the persence of Brahma, by showing vanity. Ganga gave birth to Bhishma, the illustrious hero and sage.

Ganga consented to bear the seed of Lord Siva which was transferred to her by Agni. She gave to the world Lord Subrahmanya, the great commander of the army of Devas, who killed the formidable Asura Taraka.

Ganges is the form of Vishnu. Her sight is soul-stirring and elevating. She flows in the valleys and lives by the side of Parvati, daughter of Himavan. How magnificent she is when she flows in the valley of Rishikesh ! She has a blue colour like that of the ocean. The water is extremely clear and sweet. Rich people from the plains get water from Rishikesh. They take it in big copper vessels to far-off places in India.

To have a look at the Ganges in Rishikesh is soul-elevating. To sit for a few minutes on a block of stone by the side of Ganges is a blessing. To stay for some months in Rishikesh on the banks of the Ganges and do Anusthan or Purascharan is great Tapas, which will take the aspirant to the abode of Lord Hari. To live for ever on the banks of the Ganges and spend the life in meditation is Sivanandam.

—Swami Sivananda's
Mother Ganges, pp. 5-9.

12. THE CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF INDIA FINDS ITSELF IMMENSELY ENRICHED BY THE LIFE AND WORK OF SIVANANDA—THE MESSIAH OF MODERN TIMES COLLATES A VAST MATERIAL ON SAIVISM AND FURNISHES PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHTS INTO THE ESSENTIALS OF SIVA-WORSHIP

LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP :

IN this, his latest publication, Sri Swami Sivananda gives exhaustive information, valuable and instructive, to the aspirants, especially to the devotees of Lord Siva. How to attain Sivatattwa or God-realisation and what practical Sadhana would help in achieving it, are fully explained by Swamiji in lucid and clear style. No author or publisher hitherto has taken so much pains as Sri Swami Sivananda to collect such vast materials relating to the worship of Lord Siva and put them in one volume in a comprehensive manner. It deals not only with the mode of worship of Siva, the significance of such worship, the attributes of Tattwa, Siva Tandavam, Yoga Shakti, etc., but also gives the essence of all Siva Puranas, important Siva Stotras with English translation, short sketches of the lives of Siva Acharyas, the Bhaktas and sixty-three Nayanmars. The religious-minded people would find the philosophical portion highly illuminating and helpful and the short accounts of Saiva saints and sages inspiring and soul-stirring. The Saiva Upanishads, Siva Yogamala and Siva-Sadhana are very useful addition to the book. The 'Nectar drops'—short aphorisms—three hundred and eighty-nine in all—are like Brahma Sutras and they must be read over and over again, meditated upon and inwardly digested.

—*The Leader*, Allahabad.

SIVA LILAS :

This book contains in dramatic form the essentials of Siva-worship based upon the great Sivapuranam. As the publishers point out while there are numerous books on Lilas of Lord Krishna and Rama, there is none which devotees could conveniently use on occasions sacred to Lord Siva. The publication fulfils the want eminently. Swami Sivananda, the author is too well known for his spiritual attainment and the wide diffusion of spiritual culture throughout India and abroad through the Divine Life Society and the innumerable publications on a large number of intricate subjects. The book under review maintains the simple high standard characteristic of the Swamiji's writings. It is bound to initiate the reader in the spiritual path through 'Siva-worship' which is one of the important aspects of Hindu religious life.

The chapters on Daksha Yajna, Parvati's wedding and the Nayanars are highly stimulating. Devotees of Lord Siva will derive an immense joy by a perusal of this work. It is sure to clear the doubts of various aspirants who generally entertain baseless doubts on the philosophy of Siva worship, Siva Linga, etc. The portions of the Sports of Lord Siva, selected for this work are based on Siva Purana. This publication has the distinction of being an unprecedented volume that deals with the wonderful Lilas of Lord Siva.

—*The Champion*,
Calicut.

13. REPLETE WITH INSTANCES OF INCOMPARABLE MORAL EXCELLENCE THE TWO GREAT INDIAN EPICS, HAVE BEEN, DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES, THE MAIN SHAPING FORCES BEHIND THE HIGH ETHICAL IDEALISM IN THE DAILY INDIAN LIFE—SIVANANDA ON YUDHISHTIRA AND THE CONQUEST OF CUPIDITY

LISTEN to these noble words of Yudhishthira on these two subjects. Draupadi bitterly resented the insults heaped on her by the Kauravas and after they had gone to the forests, she urged on Yudhishthira to take action to avenge her and never to forgive the Kauravas. This brought forth from Yudhishthira an admirable discourse on forgiveness, "If a man who has received abuses from another speaks to him in the same strain, if a man returns injury to injury, or a father kills his son or a son kills his father, how can there be any progress in this world where so much unrighteousness prevails? One should forgive every injury—no matter what kind—O Draupadi ! That man is indeed a wise one who does not give way to anger, who shows forgiveness even when insulted, oppressed or abused by another. Forgiveness is Divine. Forgiveness is Truth. Forgiveness is potential ascetic merit. It is asceticism, penance and holiness. Forgiveness is the foundation of the world. The man of wisdom should ever forgive—when he is capable of forgiving everything—for he attains "*Brahman.*"

But Draupadi was not satisfied with this kind of barren merits of virtue, if the virtuous are to suffer while the wicked prosper?

Gently, but none-the-less firmly, Yudhishthira answers her: "O Draupadi ! You speak hastily without realising what you say. Your question looks as if it might have come from godless persons. Never, never act with a desire to get the suitable fruits out of your actions. I give away because it is my duty to give. I act because it is my duty. I act virtuously, not because I desire the fruits of virtue, but because I do not wish to transgress the ordinances of the *Vedas* and thereby I follow the path trodden by the holy men, O Draupadi !

"The man who wishes to reap the fruits of his actions is a trader in virtue. He is by nature mean. Never allow such a blot on your good name. It is true that every act has its own consequences, results and fruits, and therefore if you act virtuously, the results must be good and, in the long run, must end prosperously to the virtuous. But who knows of the divine dispensation of God? Therefore though you may not see the fruits of virtue, they may be blessings in disguise. You should not doubt the God's actions. You should perform your sacrifices with a will, practise charity and forgiveness with modesty and without insolence. Acts in this world have their fruits and virtue is eternal. Therefore despel all your doubts about virtues. Reflecting upon all this, do not give way to scepticism—doubts regarding the merits of virtues. Acquire faith in them. Above all, do not slander God who is the Lord of the universe. Strive to know Him. Bow down to Him humbly, O Draupadi ! Never disregard that Supreme Being through whose divine grace alone man may acquire immortality through piety."

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Mahabharata,
pp. 356-358.

* * *

IN days of yore, there was a king named Ambarisha. He rid himself of his faults and defects, worshipped the righteous and acquired great success and fame.

He reflected within himself and said, "I have got rid of many faults. But I have got one great vice, viz., cupidity, which should be eradicated. I am not yet able to destroy it. Man fails to free himself from desire on account of this vice only. It is cupidity which impels one to indulge in forbidden acts. I will sever this cupidity with sharp-edged swords.

"Desire springs from cupidity. Anxiety originates from desire. He who becomes a victim of desire acquires many evil qualities. He falls into ditches without knowing them."

"He takes births again and again on account of cupidity. He is united with a body and is moved to action owing to this cupidity. He dies when his Prarabdha Karma is exhausted and again takes births."

"One should destroy cupidity by intelligence, dispassion, discrimination and meditation on the Supreme Self. One should desire for the sovereignty of his soul alone. This is the true aim. The soul is the real King of kings. He who realises the *Atman* is the real Emperor of emperors."

Ambarisha applied himself diligently in eradicating this cupidity and destroyed this evil trait completely. He practised regular meditation and attained Self-realisation. (*Aswamedha Parva, Ch. 31.*)

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Mahabharata,
p. 67.

14. THE BOOK ON SRI RAMA IS INDIA'S POPULAR BIBLE, THE BOOK ON SRI KRISHNA HAS ALWAYS BROUGHT HOME TO ALL THE SIMPLE DELIGHTS OF A CHARMING PERSONALITY AND THE LOFTIEST METAPHYSICAL THOUGHT AND EXPERIENCE IN ANECDOTES AND EPISODES—SIVANANDA ON RAMAYANA AND THE ALL-PERVASIVE VASUDEVA AS THE GRANTER OF COSMIC VISION

RAMAYANA is a marvellous book which contains the essence of all Vedas and sacred scriptures. It is a treasure for man. It is a reservoir which contains the nectar of immortality. It delineates the character of a son who kicks off the throne and the pleasures of the senses and the world to fulfil the words of his father and lives in the forest for a period of fourteen years. It depicts the character of a father who sends even his most beloved son in exile in order to keep up his word. It delineates the character of an ideal chaste wife who is devoted to her husband till the end of her life and shares the adversities of her husband and serves him untiringly in the forest, and who also regards her husband as God. Above all, it also points the character of a brother, who places brotherly affection above everything else in this world and follows his brother in the forest leaving all pleasures of the palace and leading the way to ward off all dangers.

Ramayana is a book that is studied by all—man, woman or boy in India. The teachings of the sacred book are wrought into the very life of every Indian man, woman and boy. Mothers tell the stories

to their children, teachers to their students, the old to the young. It is a non-detailed text-book for the students in schools.

—Swami Sivananda's
Essence of Ramayana, pp. 19-20.

COSMIC VISION GRANTED TO YASODA

On day Yasoda took her child on her lap and suckled him. She kissed her son again and again. Just at that time the child yawned. When he opened His mouth, the mother saw the whole universe within it. She saw the sky, the space between the earth and the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the four quarters, fire, air, oceans, continents, mountains, rivers, forests, islands and all things in the universe, animate and inanimate.

Yasoda who saw the whole universe within the mouth of her own son, shuddered and closed her eyes immediately in great fear. She was struck with wonder.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lord Krishna His Lilas and Teachings, pp. 51-52.

THE WISDOM OF LORD KRISHNA

Births and deaths are as unreal as are dreams but they have an existence even as objects in dream have an existence. Even though the world is unreal, the Samsara does not vanish to that man who is thinking of the sense-objects like the experiences of evils in dream.

Therefore, O Uddhava ! do not indulge in enjoying the objects through the outgoing organs. Never allow your mind to be tainted by desire and run out through the avenues of the senses. Note that the delusion of plurality is caused by ignorance and non-perception of the Atman.

Whatever others may say or do unto you, do not care the least about that, but through single-minded devotion, patience discrimination, enquiry and meditation, realise the Atman. Whatever wicked people might do towards you, even if they beat, insult, ridicule, scorn, or deprive you of your means of living, spit at you, do bodily injury to you, throw dirt or excretions at you to draw you from your penance, even if you are thus harmed in various ways by the ignorant and put in difficulties, remember that you are the immortal soul and that nothing can affect or taint you if you keep your mind pure and realise you are the immortal Atman and nothing else."

Uddhava said : "It is very difficult to discard or endure the insults of the wicked and keep peace of mind. Except your devotees who have firm faith in your grace, who have taken shelter at Thy feet, who practise the religion taught by Thee, who are even-minded, no others including even the learned can overcome the frailties of nature or the force of your Maya. Human nature is human nature. O Lord. It is too strong or powerful for men. Therefore, O best of teachers ! O Lord of the Universe, Antaryamin of all, kindly explain, how even an ordinary mortal can attain such tranquillity of mind to disregard the taunts and insults of the wicked. Please explain to me in such a way that I may grasp it."

The Lord said : "O disciple of Brihaspati there is not in the world a sage who can control his mind when he is pierced by harsh words of the wicked.

Even arrows aimed and directed with force at the most vital parts of a man will not give so much pain as the cruel harsh words of the wicked which rankle in the heart for ever.

O Uddhava ! I shall narrate to you a very sacred story of ancient times. Listen to it with rapt attention. It was recited by an ascetic who was ill-treated by the wicked, but who bore it with great patience and fortitude, and who thought it was all due to his own past actions. This was sung by him.

—Swami Sivananda's,
Lord Krishna, His Lilas and Teachings,
pp. 225-227.

15. NEVER WAS THERE IN ALL THE WEALTH OF EXCELLENT HUMAN CHARACTER, BOTH OF THE EAST AND THE WEST, A PROTOTYPE OF THE SUPREME IDEAL IN LIFE OF BEARING AND BEHAVIOUR, SRI RAMA—SIVANANDA BUILDS ON THE BASIC MORAL CONTENT OF THE EPIC A GREAT LITTLE RELIGIOUS TEXT FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

ESSENCE OF RAMAYANA :

THE vast majority of our people do not read the Ramayana and those who read do not study the epic with faith and reverence under great souls. They jump to hasty and unwise conclusions by a mere superficial reading of Ramayana here and there. They read the epic like reading novels with the attitude of curiosity-mongering and caviling spirit. That is the reason why they are not able to comprehend the truths, the depths and the secrets of Ramayana. Hence in order to familiarise the public with the allegoric meaning of the Ramayana, Swami Sivananda has brought out this excellent brochure on the Essence of Ramayana. The work is divided into six sections. The first is a preliminary to the study of the great epic. The Story of Valmiki is beautifully presented here. The second section gives in six pages an impressive synopsis of the seven Kandas and the third is an elaboration of the synopsis. The fourth and the fifth sections deal with the characters of the Ramayana and with Sri Rama's teachings respectively. The last section is a very useful appendix comprising *Stotrams* and messages usually associated with Ramayana. Of these Adityahridayam, Rama Gita, Sri Nama Ramayana and Ramahridayam, in original Sanskrit are noteworthy.

After Adhyatma Ramayana and Tulsi Das's great work, Swami Sivanandaji's exposition ranks as the most noteworthy interpretation of the inner meaning of the most ancient and glorious epic of the world. And the interpretation comes from the pen of one whose eyes have seen and whose heart has felt the significance of the epic.

Written in simple, readable yet forceful English the little book deserves way into the home of every cultured Hindu. The cry now is, for imparting moral and religious instruction to our boys and girls in the High School. Here is a book which may well form the basis for such instructions.

—*The Leader*, Allahabad.

16. SIVANANDA ON THE PHALLIC EMBLEM AS THE LIGHT OF CONSCIOUSNESS, IN ITS ORIGINAL SENSE AND REPRESENTATION, PERPETUATED IN THE MINDS OF THOSE WHO ARE BORN INTO THE RELIGION THAT CONCEIVED IT IN A SPIRITUAL GENIUS

THE light of Consciousness manifesting out of Sadasiva, is in reality the Sivalinga. From Him all the moving and unmoving creations take their origin. He is the Linga or cause of everything. In Him the whole world merges itself finally. The Siva Purana says, "Peetamambamayam Sarvam Sivalingascha Chinmayah." The support of Peetam of all is Prakriti or Paravati and Linga is Chinmaya Purusha, the effulgent light which is self-luminous. Union of Prakriti, Parvati and Purusha or Sivalingam is the cause of the world. In Sanatkumarasamhita, the Siva Purana, Lord Siva says, "O Paravati, daughter of mountain, there is none dearer to me than the man who worships me in the Ling knowing that Linga is the root-cause of everything and knowing the world to be Linga-maya or Chaitanya-maya.

The Lingam is like an egg. It represents the Brahmanda. Whatever that is contained in the Brahmanda is in the Lingam. The whole world is the form of Lord Siva. The whole world is a Lingam. Lingam also is the form of Lord Siva,

Linga signifies that the creation is effected by the Union of Prakriti and Purusha. It means, Laya, Jnanam, Vyapyam, Prakash, Arthaprakasha, Samarthya and the symbol which denotes the above meaning. Linga means the place of dissolution for the world and all beings. It signifies also, "Satyam, Jnanam, Anantam, Truth, Knowledge and Infinity." It indicates that Lord Siva is endowed with all-pervading, and self-luminous nature, Linga is a symbol which makes us understand the various kinds of Artha which are indicated above.

There are six Lingas, viz., Anda Linga, Pinda Linga, and Sivalinga. These Lingas are taken to mean the characteristics by which the Anda (the Universe), Pinda (the body), Sadasiva, etc., are to be recognised and understood.

The union of Linga with Yoni is representation of the Eternal Union between the static and the dynamic aspects of the Absolute Reality. This represents the Eternal Spiritual Communion of the paternal and the maternal principles from which all the phenomenal diversities have originated. This is an eternal communion of the Changeless Being and the Dynamic Power or Shakti from which all changes flow.

Further, the lower sexual propensities in the aspirants are eradicated by this sublime conception. The spiritualisation and divinisation of Linga and Yoni helps the aspirants to free themselves from sexual thoughts. All base thoughts gradually vanish by entertaining this lofty idea. All sensual relations in this world are spiritualised as the manifestations of the ultimate Creative Principle, of the eternal Self-enjoyment and Self-multiplication of Lord Siva in and through His Power or Shakti.

The union of Linga with Yoni symbolises the creation of this universe by Lord

Siva in conjunction with His Shakti or Power.

The so-called educated men of the modern age have no spiritual insight and philosophical penetration. Hence they criticise the union of Linga and Yoni as immoral and obscene owing to their extreme ignorance and lack of enquiry, deep thinking and Sat-sang or association with Sages.

Jneya or that which is to be known is Siva-Ananda which is a product of Siva and His Grace, Shakti. The Jnata (Knower) is the individual soul. He knows Siva by abiding in Siva-Ananda and obtains Jnanam or Knowledge. Moksha is the attainment of Siva-Ananda. He who attains Moksha will attain supreme knowledge of Siva. He who gets established in Siva-Ananda dwells for ever in it. He attains Siva and Shakti in Siva-Ananda and is endowed with true knowledge which is really union of Siva and Shakti.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lord Siva and His Worship,
pp. 223-225, 227.

17. IN DREAMS AND DRAMA, ART AND RELIGION, PSYCHOLOGY AND LANGUAGE, SYMBOLISM HOLDS A DOMINATING PLACE—THE INTERPRETATION OF SAIVITE SYMBOLS AND SECTS SEEMS TO FORM SIVANANDA'S FORTE

SIVA LILAS:

THIS is a Drama in Five Acts. Professor Darpeswar personifies the modern graduate ignorant of his religion and all that it stands for. He gives expression to the doubts and disbelieves that assail the average educated person. How Sivadas explains to him the mysteries of the religion and unfolds the grand philosophy underlying Hinduism from the subject-matter of other acts. In the end the Professor becomes an ardent follower of the Lord. Written in an attractive style and full of cogent arguments the book deserves to be placed in the hands of all young men now in colleges.

—*The Indian Nation,*
Patna.

SIVA LILAS:

This work is presented in a kind of drama in 5 acts. Devotees of Siva will find a want fulfilled in this booklet which deals with the wonderful Lilas or sports of Lord Siva. The style is simple and many baseless doubts will be dispelled in the rendering of the little known subject of Siva and Shakti Doctrines.

—*The Luzac's Oriental List And Book Review,* London.

LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP:

Swami Sivananda who has given us many books on Hindu spiritual subjects gives us yet another on Siva. This is a detailed book of nearly four-hundred pages in which the full knowledge of the author on Siva has been adequately given out. The author reveals himself a great scholar of Hindu philosophy and Saivaites would love to get this book and delight themselves. Indeed this is an encyclopaedia on Saivism.

—*The Whip,* Calcutta.

18. LIKE THE ILIAD AND THE ODYSSEY, THE RAMAYANA AND THE MAHABHARATA FORM AN IMPERISHABLE PART OF WORLD'S CULTURAL HERITAGE—SIVANANDA DISPLAYS HIS OWN GALLERY OF THE GREAT FROM THE LATTER EPIC, EXPLAINS THE SECRETS OF THEIR GREATNESS, GIVES EXPERT CLUES TO THE POWER OF PERSONALITY THEY POSSESS, AND OUTLINES THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES IMPLIED IN THEIR LIVES AND TEACHINGS

MAHABHARATA—the very mention of the name gives a thrill of holy ideas. This is a great *epic* heroic poem. It contains the essence of all scriptures. It is an encyclopaedia of ethics, knowledge, politics, religion, philosophy and *Dharma*. If you cannot find anything here, you cannot find it anywhere else. It contains one hundred thousand verses.

This wonderful book was composed by Sri Vyasa (Krishna Dwaipayana) who was the grandfather of the heroes of the *epic*. He taught this *epic* to his son Suka and his disciples Vaisampayana and others. King Janamejaya, son of Parikshit, the grandson of the heroes of the *epic*, performed a great sacrifice. The *epic* was recited by Vaisampayana to Janamejaya at the command of Vyasa. Later on, Sauti recited the *Mahabharata* as was done by Vaisampayana to Janamejaya, to Saunaka and others, during a sacrifice performed by Saunaka in Naimisaranya, which is near Sitapur in the United Provinces.

The *Swayamvara* of Draupadi, the coronation of Yudhishthira, the game of dice, the forest life of the Pandavas, the fight between Arjuna and Karna, between Arjuna and Bhishma, the speeches of the warriors in the council of war, are amazing. They command the admiration of the readers and produce an indelible impression in their minds.

It is very interesting to remember the opening and closing lines of this great *epic*. It begins with : "Vyasa sang of the ineffable greatness and splendour of Lord Vasudeva, who is the source and support for everything, who is eternal, unchanging, self-luminous, who is the Indweller in all beings, and of the truthfulness and righteousness of the Pandavas". It ends with : "With raised hands, I shout at the top of my voice, but alas, no one hears my words which can give them Supreme Peace, Joy and Eternal Bliss. One can attain wealth and all objects of desire through *Dharma* (righteousness--duty). Why do not people practise *Dharma* ? One should not abandon *Dharma* at any cost, even at the risk of his life. One should not relinquish *Dharma* out of passion or fear or covetousness or for the sake of preserving one's life. This is the *Bharata Gayatri*. Meditate on this daily, O man ! when you retire to sleep and when you rise from your bed every morning. You will attain every thing. You will attain glory, fame, prosperity long life, eternal bliss, everlasting peace and immortality."

The *Mahabharata*, the most renowned *epic* of India, is the only book of its kind in the whole world. It contains countless stories besides the main episodes—the *Mahabharata*—which teach moral lassons or illustrate some characteristics of the ancients of India. It contains the history

of ancient India and all details of its political, social and religious life. The stories, songs, nursery tales, anecdotes, parables, the discourses and sayings contained in this *epic* are marvellous and highly instructive. It contains the brilliant records of mighty heroes, warriors of great prowess, deep thinkers, profound philosophers, sages and ascetics and devoted wives of chastity. The beauty and charm of the language is extremely striking and attractive.

One is struck with amazement and becomes tongue-tied when he reads of the marvellous strength of Bhima, of the wonderful skill in archery and bowman-ship of Arjuna, of the dexterity of Sahadeva in the use of swords and of the profound knowledge of Nakula in astronomy and of the extreme righteous conduct and justice of Yudhishthira in all matters. The deeds of heroism done by Bhishma, Karna, Drona, Parasurama, Jayadratha, Dhrishtadyumna and many others are super-human. These heroes did severe *Tapas* and obtained rare boons from the Lord. That is the reason why they did marevellous heroic deeds which baffle description.

Yudhishthira did not wield arms. He did not take active part in the war-front. He did not use bow and arrows. He had neither the strenght of Bhima nor the skill of Arjuna in archery. But he was an embodiment of righteousness, He was an incarnation of *Dharma*. That is the reason why he was called as *Dharmaputra*. He was a wise and ideal king. He established peace and order. He guided his brothers in the path of truth and righteousness and checked them whenever they went astray. Arjuna bore manfully the insults which Draupadi was subjected to before his eyes. He could not disobey Yudhishthira and show him the least disrespect. All the brothers were meek and submissive before Yudhishthira, however mighty and heroic they were. They could crush mountains and dry up oceans with their arrows. They were terrible before their opponents but they were mild and gentle before Yudhishthira and were ever ready to obey his commands. They would never speak a word in opposition. Such was the awe inspiring personality of Yudhishthira. Had it not been for Yudhishthira, Arjuna and his brothers would not have won the war. Yudhishthira was the founder of an empire. He is an inspiring example, even now, for the rulers of kingdoms and states. He was an embodiment of justice, patience, steadiness, purity, truthfulness and forbearance.

Draupadi, Savitri, Kunti, Madri and Damayanti were highly devoted to their husbands. They were bold and fearless when they were under extreme difficulties, hardships, sufferings and privations. They were pious. They bore the sufferings through the force of their chastity and moral strength. They were ideal wives and ideal mothers. That is the reason why they have left an immortal name behind them.

The *Mahabharata* still exerts marvellous influence over the millions of *Hindus*. The lustre and high renown of these brilliant personages of *Mahabharata* has not suffered a diminution, in spite of the ravages of cruel time. Their character was untainted and sublime. Hence their deeds also were admirable, laudable and sublime. Determination has ever been the key to success in the lives of great men of all countries. Heroes would not move an inch from the path of their duty when they are called upon

to perform it. They were fiery in their ditermination. They had iron will.

The noble and heroic grandsire Bhishma—who controlled his death and who was unconquerable in war even by the gods—still inspires us with the spirit of self-sacrifice, undaunted courage and purity. Yudhishthira is still a model of justice and righteousness. Remembrance of his very name generates a thrill in our hearts and goads us to tread the path of truth and virtue. Karna still lives in our hearts on account of his extreme munificence and liberality. Karna's name has become proverbial. People even now say, whenever they come across a very generous man, "He is like Karna in gifts."

Even now we admire Arjuna as a perfect man and worship Lord Krishna as our Protector and Saviour. Whenever we are in trouble a nd distress we pray to Him, "O Lord ! Save us just as you saved Draupadi and Gajendra in days of yore."

The sufferings of the Pandavas and Draupadi, Nala and Damayanti, Savitri and Satyavan, clearly explain to us the fact or hard truth that the goal of life or perfection, can only be attained through pain and suffering. Pain is the means through which man is moulded, disciplined and strengthened. Just as impure gold is turned into pure gold by melting it in the crucible, so also the impure and imperfect weak man is rendered pure, perfect and strong, by being melted in the crucible of pain and suffering. Therefore, one should not be afraid of pain and suffering. They are blessings in disguise. They are eye-openers. They are silent teachers. They turn the mind towards God and instil mercy in the heart, strengthen the will and develop patience and power of endurance, which are the pre-requisites for God-realisation.

The message of *Mahabharata* is the message of Truth and Righteousness. The great *epic* produces a moral awakening in the readers and exhorts them to tread the path of *Satya* and *Dharma.* It urges them strongly to do good deeds, practise *Dharma,* cultivate dispassion by realising the illusory nature of this universe and its vain glories and sensual pleasures, and attain Eternal Bliss and Immortality. It induces people to do what Yudhishthira did and abandon what Duryodhana did. Stick to *Dharma* tenaciously. You will attain material and spiritual prosperity. You will attain everlasting happiness and *Moksha,* the *summum bonum* of life. This is the final purport or central teaching of *Mahabharta.*

—Swami Sivananda's
Stories from Mahabharata, pp. v-x.

19. REVELATORY THOUGHT, SPECULATIVE INSIGHT AND MINDS GIFTED WITH A CAPACITY FOR RICH IMAGERY, HAVE CONJOINED AND CONJURED UP FROM THE MATERIALS FURNISHED BY NATURAL PHENOMENA, THE LUXURIANT SYSTEMS OF SYMBOLS THAT ENSOUL THE MANY RAMIFICATIONS OF HINDUISM, PARTICULARLY THE SAIVITE WHICH FORMS THE THEME OF SIVANANDA'S PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

LORD SIVA AND HIS WORSHIP :

THE work under notice is a compendium of all information about the Lila of Siva and his devotees, and gives the prayers and

praises and hymns devoted to Siva with their English translations. The introduction deals with the general importance and the fruits of worship of Lord Siva. The first chapter is devoted to the exposition of the nature of the Divine Life and the features of the real aspirant. The second chapter briefly states the Siva-Tattwa. The third is devoted to the exposition of the Saiva-Siddhanta philosophy and the sixth to the Shakti-Yoga Philosophy and the next to the Veerasaiva Philosophy. Interspersed between these chapters is an exposition of symbology of Saivism and the meaning of the Tandava-dance of Lord Siva. The ninth chapter explains the Sadhana or methodology of approach to the vision and experience of Siva and His Grace. The tenth chapter collects materials from the Saiva Upanishads on the personality of Lord Siva—Rudra. The eleventh chapter gives an account of South Indian Saiva Acharyas followed in the next chapter by certain *Puranic* devotees of Siva. The festivals conducted in honour of Siva are recounted in the twelfth chapter. The concluding chapter deals with all other matters pertaining to Saiva-worship. The book is bound to be of use to devotees and to a certain extent to those who seek to know more about this most important phase of Hinduism.

—*The Hindu*, Madras.

20. SIVANANDA ON THE RELIGIOUS IMAGE AS A MEANINGFUL AND MANY-SIDED GUIDE TO THE REALIZATION OF THE UNSEEN OMNIPRESENT REALITY WHICH IS TO THE HUMAN THOUGHT INCOMPREHENSIBLE AND BY THE HUMAN LANGUAGE INDESCRIBABLE

AN image or a Sila or a Vigraha or a Murti represents the form of the particular Lord who is invoked in it. A Linga represents Siva. It represents the secondless, formless Brahman. The Sruti says, *Ekamevaadwitiyam Brahma*—the Brahman is one without a second." There is no duality here. A Lingam is shining and attractive to the eyes. It helps concentration. Ravana propitiated Siva and obtained boons by worshipping the Linga.

A Saligram is an idol of Vishnu. There are images of Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, Kartikeya, Ganesha, Hanuman, Dattatreya, Sita, Lakshmi, Parvati, Durga, Kali, Saraswati, etc., according to the taste of the particular devotee. The respective deity is invoked at the time of worship and Pooja is offered to the image. Though the image is worshipped the devotee feels the presence of the Lord in it and pours out his devotion upon it. Pictures of the Lord are also equally effective for worship. This is one of the primary means or methods by which one can develop devotion to the unseen God. Image worship is a very easy path. It denotes that the Lord is all-pervading, that He is present even in objects like stones, wooden pieces, clay and such other insignificant objects too. The mind requires a support or prop in the beginning. It cannot have a conception of the Absolute in the initial stages. Image worship is not contrary to the view of Vedanta. It is rather a help.

—Swami Sivananda's
Philosophy of Hindu Symbols,
p, 1-2.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE FACADE OF ANCIENT TEMPLES, THE MODERN MONASTIC CENTRES AND THE PLACES OF ETERNAL PILGRIMAGE

SIVANANDA

—Finding in the Indrawn and the Sustained Contemplative Activity the Freedom from the Fetters That Yoke the Immortal Self to the Trammels of the Mortal Life, Seeking in Spiritual Consciousness, A Universality of Feeling and Living That Make All the World His Home and All Men His Own Self, the Indian Monk Is A Cosmic Man, A Gnostic Mind, A Moving Divinity—Great Is the Nation That Brought Him into Being, That Sanctifies Itself by Cherishing His Presence and That Benefits Itself by Paying Him A Homage—

Something quite unique, and challenging even the invincible critical intelligence, there seems to reside in the essential Indian genius that forms and finds in the place of Niagara a Ganges, the Empire State Building a Brihadeeswara or Lingaraja Temple, the urbane sea-resort a Jagannath Puri, the alluring park a beauteous hermitage, the modern aerial pleasure-trip a perennial peripatetic pilgrimage, the arm-chair philosophy a power of life and personality, the scientist a saint, the technologist a mystic, the carnival a socially and spiritually integrating festival of lights, and, to sum up, in the whole of India the one vast cosmopolitan city of Godhead. Again, note the habitual trend of the Mind of a typical Indian saint like Sivananda ! It is not an expected admiration of, or the furnishing of a fund of information and comment on, the pillared porches, the pyramidal gateways, the elaborate sculptural designs executed with unsurpassed delicacy and finish, the clusters of detached images that constitute the figural paraphernalia of the main imposing forms, the corridor halls and the tanks mantled with the green, that make, by their total effect, so indelible an impression of extraordinary magnificence upon the mind of even a casual visitor and yield him a spectacular gratification, but the spontaneity of a never anticipated visualisation of the divinities, the Presences enshrined in the utterly plain, and architecturally insignificant, inner sanctum sanctorum, and an addressing to them an adoration, that absorb his interest and concern. This is not all : an intangible quality of singular greatness presides over even a pilgrim-centre. Resting upon a popularity that dates back to the times that preceded the dawn of history, ancient to the ancients themselves, the Shrine that is the Badrinath, claims, from tens of thousands, year after year, the proud homage of a pilgrimage, as a prospect in the tranquillizing and transforming spiritual experience, an act of penance, a deed of religious merit, a thing incumbent upon the evolutionary need of the inner being, as something obligatory on the growing other-worldly impulse, or at least as a necessity imposed upon oneself by the pressures of this-worldly motives.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE FACADE OF ANCIENT TEMPLES, THE MODERN MONASTIC CENTRES AND THE PLACES OF ETERNAL PILGRIMAGE

1. DISTINGUISHED BY THE FEATURES OF THE DRAVIDIAN STYLE, THE COLOSSAL TEMPLE STRUCTURES OF RAMESWARAM, MADURA AND SRIRANGAM ACQUIRE IMMENSE ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN, FROM ANTIQUITY, CENTRES THROBBING EVERYDAY WITH GREAT POPULAR SPIRITUAL AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY—ON BEHALF OF THE INDIAN MASSES, SIVANANDA RAISES TO THEM, IN A SORT OF FREE VERSE, HIS OWN EMINENTLY SAINTLY ADORATIONAL REPRESENTATIONS

—With Their Seven-storyed Gate-Pyramids Bearing Allusions to the Seven Higher Planes of Consciousness, Jnana-Bhumikas, Their Whole Morphological Appearance and Effect Meant to Make A Universe in Miniature, Their Very Floral Geometrical Designs and Ground-Divisions Determined by a Shrewd Wisdom and Philosophic Insight Formulated in the Silpa and Other Shastras, and Themselves As Houses Raised to the Ineffable Infinity Giving Itself in Effable Forms to Devout Experience, the Great Indian Temples Are, Apart from What They Would Be from Other Considerations, the Open Crypts of Deathless Hindu Civilization of Ageless Past Ensconced Not So Much in Their West-Admired Architectural Wonders and Iconographical Marvels, As in the Multitude of Apparently Meaningless Rituals, the Overcrowded Symbols that Look Bizarre by Eluding Understanding, the Idols of Distorted Shapes Conditioned to Fantastic Manual Gestures and Bodily Attitudes, the Sonorous Chants Whose Syllables and Significances Escape Intelligibility, Art-Museums, the Ever-vibrant Institutions of Cultural Activities and Spiritualised Sociality and Are Resorted to As Much for God-communion in Praise, Prayer and Contemplation, As As Centres that Spell Temporal Success and Cater to the Human Needs for Strength, Comfort and Inspiration—

RAMESHWARAM

LORD Rama worshipped Siva here—
So the Linga is called Ramalingeshwar.
People take the water from Gangotri
For Abhisheka for this Linga.
This is one of the four Dhamas.
This is a Jyotir Linga.
I offer my praise to Ramalingeshwar,
The bestower of happiness.
Om Namo Bhagavate Rudraya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, p. 22.

MADURA TEMPLE

Madura is on the banks of Vaigai River
This was the Capital of Pandya Kings.
This is a magnificent temple.
The Deity is Sundaresa,

Consort of Meenakshi !
O Lord Sundaresa !
You carried earth on your head
For the sake of Puttu
Of the old lady.
You were beaten by the king
When you did not do your allotted work,
To please and serve thy devotees ;
You had to suffer a lot !
Thou art all-merciful !
Thou art Bhaktavatsala !
Prostrations unto Thee,
Om Namah Sivaya !

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, pp. 32-33.

LORD RANGANATHA

O Lord Ranganatha of Srirangam !
O Seshasayin, Sleeper on the couch of serpent !
Beloved of consort of Renaganayaki !
Salutations unto Thee, Hey Prabho !
I am Thy humblest servant,
Installing Thy Holy Feet
In my heart, I move and work.
Let Thy will be done.
Reveal Thy true form to me.
Andal merged herself in Thy light,
Thou art the husband of Andal
Daughter of Vishnuchitta
Avatar of Neela Devi,
Munivahana or Tiruppanalwar
Also vanished in Thy flame of splendour.
Let me lose myself in Thy effulgence.
Hail Ranga ! Wake up Ranga !
Wake up in my heart.
Om Namo Narayanaya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, p. 8.

2. EITHER EXTRAORDINARY SCENIC BEAUTY OR SOME NATURAL PHENOMENON THAT BAFFLES THE ATTEMPTS OF SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION OR MIRACLES AS COMMON OCCURRENCES IN THE LIVES OF THE VISITING DEVOTEES, CAN BE FOUND TO BE INSEPARABLE FROM THE MEMORY, OR THE MENTION, OF MANY OF THE INDIAN TEMPLES—THE CRITIC CONCLUDES HIS ESTIMATION OF SIVANANDA'S WORK WITH A PERTINENT COMMENT

TEMPLES IN INDIA :

THIS book gives a short account of each of the seventy-seven temples in India, including thirty Vaishnava, 29 Shaiva, 3 Devi and five Buddhist and Jain temples. In part II of the book are described 61 of the important places of pilgrimage in India.

The temple of Amarnath presents a physical phenomenon which might well baffle the proud scientist who prides on his self-suficiency.

—*The Searchlight*,
Patna.

PILGRIMAGE TO BADRI AND KAILAS:

The possibility of elevating influences radiating from centres of spiritual force is supported analogically by broadcasting, as is that of reception being conditioned by devotion ("tuning in"). And what shrines

are more quickening to aspiration than the several here described, magnificently set and hallowed by the reverence of ages? This practical "Pilgrim's Guide-book with a Spiritual Message" may remind even the reader with some mental reservations, of the inner pilgrimage, incumbent upon all, to the Himalayas of the Spirit.

—E. M. H., *The Aryan Path*, Bombay.

3. THE HIMALAYAS AS THE NURSERIES OF HIGHEST SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES AND THE DEPOSITORIES OF HOARY TRADITIONS AND ANCIENT MEMORIES

—The Indian Genius that Renders the Niagara A Ganges, the Empire State Building A Brihadeeswara Temple, the Urbane Sea-Resort A Jagannath Puri, the Alluring Park A Beauteous Hermitage, the Railway and Aerial Pleasure-Trip A Perennial Peripatetic Pilgrimage, the Arm-Chair Philosophy A Power of Life and Personality, the Scientist A Saint, the Technologist A Mystic, the Carnival A Socially and Spiritually Integrating Festival of Lights, Has Its Vital Centres and Its Heart in the Glaciered Regions of the Himalayas With an Inspiring Description of Which Sivananda Begins His Travelogue—

HIMALAYAS and holiness are inseparable to the Indian mind. To the Indian everything that is connected with the Himalayas is holy. The rivers that flow from the Himalayas are the holiest. The Sindhu or Indus from which the very names of India and Hindu are derived; the holy Ganges; the holiest of rivers on earth; and the Brahmaputra, to mention only the formost, have always been held by the Indian in very high esteem. Even those who have never had the good fortune of having the Darshan of the Himalayas, derive the greatest consolation by bathing in these rivers further on in their course. And, for a moment they feel that they are actually receiving the great blessings of the Himalayas that the holy river bears with its waters, and with which it floods the plains.

The Himalayas are as old as the earth itself, as Creation itself. Blessed be the geologists and their discoveries; but we shall rely on more reliable sources—the Maharshis who have given us their 'evidence' through the Puranas. Parvati, the supreme Mother, the Holy Consort of Lord, Siva, is considered the duaghter of Himavan. I would advise the scientist and the geologist to worship the Para-shakti, Sri Parvati, obtain Her Darshan and ask Her how old Her Father is! In those days, the Himalayas were not insentient mound of earth; they were sentient and live beings. Can my brother scientist conceive of mountains talking and travelling? We come across such instances in the Puranas and in Valmiki Ramayana also. We should have greater faith in the words of the Great Maharshis,

than in those of our brother scientist who always finds that his own predecessors in the science were wrong or that he has made certain discoveries which his predecessors thought impossible. Yet without learning this great lesson, he thinks that what he considers possible are alone possible and what is beyond *his* comprehension or experiment is impossible ! In the twinkling of an eye, the Maharshis were able to visualise the whole Kalpa, and to their eye of intuition the past, present and the remotest future appeared as vividly as the present. We have their word for it that the Himalayas have existed from time immemorial.

Sage Vasishtha, the son of Brahma the Creator Himself, has performed Tapas in the Himalayas. Sage Vyasa, the son of Brahma, who edited the Vedas, lived in the Himalayas. Can anyone even concieve of the period during which these Sons of the Creator should have lived in the Himalayas ? The Himalayas existed in their time !

From those times to the present day the Himalayas have had an unbroken line of Sages and Seers, Tapaswins and Jnanis, Yogis and Bhaktas, who have lived in Ashrams and caves, in the forest recesses and on snow-capped mountains, practised Tapas, contemplated on and realised the Self. Almost all the Rishis from whom the people of Bharatavarasha claim their ancestry lived in the Himalayas, in the Holy Hermitages.

Vedas had made Himalayas their very home. It was in the Himalayan Ashrams that the Great Gurus taught the Vedas to the disciple, and where the latter, observing the vows of Brahmacharya studied the Vedas, in turn to pass the knowledge on to his own disciples.

It is very clear from Lord Krishna's instruction to his disciple Uddhava (vide Eleventh Skandha of the Bhagavata) that it had become an established practice in His time that those who wished to tread the path of Nivritti, to contemplate on the Self in seclusion, always proceeded to the Himalayas. Incidentally, Lord Krishna makes mention of the Holy Badrikashrama itself, which ought to have existed and flourished during the Krishna-Avatara period.

Hearken to the words of the Lord Sri Krishna. He declares : "Among immovables I am Himalayas." The Himalayas are His Vibhuti. They are, then, as old as Manifestation or Creation itself. The very fact that the Himalayas represent the Lord's Vibhuti has made the Himalayas the holiest of holies, and made Holy Men resort to, and dwell in, them, and thus to continue the holy tradition. In the Himalayas, therefore, we find spiritual vibrations in a most concentrated form. Sages like Vasishtha, Vyasa, etc., are Chiranjeevis. They still reside in the Himalayas in their subtle form. Those who are endowed with subtle vision, through Sadhana and Self-purification, will be able to behold them and to get their blessings. What a powerful home of spirituality should the Himalayas be with all these Immortal Maharshis continually radiating sublime thought-currents and grace and blessings ! Blessed are they that live in the Himalayas ! Thrice blessed are they who practise Sadhana and Tapas in the Himalayas ! Surely and easily will they attain their Goal, viz., God-realisation.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas,
pp. 5-7.

4. THE TARGET OF BITTER AND MISTAKEN AND YET PERSISTENTLY THE OBJECT OF SUPERLATIVE DEVOTION, THE INSTITUTION OF MONASTICISM TRACES ITS OWN ILLUSTRIOUS ORIGINS, GREATNESS, UTILITY, FRUITFULNESS AND SUPREME NECESSITY TO THE ANCIENT INDIAN RISHIS, THE EARLY GREEK PHILOSOPHERS, THE BEGINNINGS OF BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY, SRI SANKARA, KABIR, CHAITANYA AND THE NUMBERLESS MEN OF CONSUMMATE SPIRITUAL VISION AND PROPHETIC POWER

ASHRAMS AND SAINTS IN INDIA :

THIS is a unique little book and something entirely new in my experience. It records in alphabetical order, giving a page to each, 107 Ashrams existing in India. The list is not confined to Vedantin centres, and includes for example Adayar, the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society. For each, there is a charmingly pithy statement of its location, founder and activities, ending with a salutation. The introductory essays on Ashram and on Saints and Sages state very clearly the need the world has of both, and the urgent duty of right-thinking people to support and encourage them. As the introduction says, "Spiritual institutions are a real blessing to the world at large. They are dynamic Yogic centers, where the life of man is properly moulded. It is here alone that people in distress find solace, peace, comfort and joy. It is here alone that man is taught the science of the Soul of Brahma Vidya, which helps him to attain the final emancipation through the knowledge of the Self."

—C. Nelson Stewart,
East and West.

5. INDIA'S TWO SPLENDID CATHEDRAL CITIES, KANCHIPURAM AND VARANASI ONE IN THE SOUTH AND THE OTHER IN THE NORTH, ARE AS RICH IN ARCHITECTURAL MAGNIFICENCE AS IN THE ASSOCIATIONS THEY BEAR OF SAINTS AND SCHOLARS, GODS AND THEIR BENEFICENT DEEDS

CONJEEVARAM

CONJEEVARAM or Kanchipuram is in the Chingelput district. It is 14 miles southwest of Madras on the Chingelput-Arkonam line. It was an important city of the Chola Kingdom. It was the capital of Tondamandalam in the fourteenth century. It was originally the capital of the Pallavas who ruled over South India between 4th and 8th centuries A. D. It consists of two divisions—Saiva or Big Conjeevaram (Saiva-Kanchi) and Vishnu or Little Conjeevaram (Vishnu-Kanchi).

The Vijayanagar kings conquered the Town. After the fall of Vijayanagar family in 2644, it was subject to the Muhammedan kings of Golconda. In 1751 Clive took the town from the French.

Conjeevaram is one of the seven sacred cities of India, the others being Ayodhya,

Muttra, Hardwar, Benaras, Dwaraka and Avantika (Ujjain). A pilgrimage to Conjeevaram confers happiness in heaven.

Kamakshi Amman temples, dedicated to the Goddess Kamakshi, the consort of Lord Siva is the most important one. An Yantra is placed in front of the idol. There is an image of Sri Sankaracharya in this temple.

Sri Ekambaranatha temple is another important shrine of Lord Siva. It has great Gopuras, large Mandapas, the 1000 pillared hall and fine tanks. The largest Gopura has ten stories, its height being 188 feet.

Kachchapeswaram temple, Kailasanathar temple are other Saiva temples. There is a temple for Chitragupta also. This is the only place where there is a temple for the lieutenant of Yama, recorder of Jiva's deeds.

The most important Vishnu temple is that of Varadaraja. The sanctum is built on a hillock. Vaikuntaperumal temple is another Vaishnava temple.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, pp. 71-72.

BENARES

Benares or Varanasi is the most sacred city in India. It is the centre of Hinduism and Sanskrit learning. Many Sannyasins live here. It is also known by the name Varanasi, a place between the two rivers, Varana and Asi, springing from the right and left feet of Lord Siva. Lord Buddha preached his new gospel here.

The temple of Lord Vishwanath is the most important one. The Mohammedans destroyed the old Viswanath temple, and threw the image in the holy well, Jnanavapi.

The next important temple is the Annapurna temple. Lord Siva deputed Annapurna to feed the world. The most popular festival is celebrated here. A big Annakut is held here during Deepavali. The golden image is taken out in procession.

Another important temple is the temple of Sakshi Vinayak. Every pilgrim should visit this temple after visiting Vishwanath and Annapurna temples. The feet and hands of Lord Ganesh are made up of silver.

There are 365 Chattras in Benaras where food is freely distributed. Asi Ghat, the Dasaswamedha ghat, the Manikarnika. Panchaganga are the famous ghats. The Manikarnika is the most sacred ghat. It is the central ghat of Benares.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, pp. 63-64.

PASUPATINATH

This is Lord Siva's shrine
At Kathmandu, Nepal.
People from all parts of India
Assemble here during Sivaratri.
The festival is unparalleled.
The State makes grand arrangements.
O Lord Siva,
Lord of Pasus or Jivas,
O Blue-necked Lord,
The Destroyer of Daksha's sacrifice,
The beloved of Uma,
The five-faced Ishwara,
Holder of Trident,
Swallower of Poison !
Prostrations unto Thee.
Through Thy grace
I realised oneness with Thee.
Sivoham, Sivah kevaloham.
Chidanandarupah Sivoham.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, p. 28.

6. PRIMARILY A LAND AS RICHLY STUDDED WITH TEMPLES AND SHRINES AS THE SKIES ARE DOTTED WITH STARS, INDIA THE PARENTAL-SOIL OF WORLD'S THREE GREAT RELIGIONS, IS STREWN ALL OVER WITH GREAT PILGRIM-CENTRES

—To the Destination They Individually Indicate and the Manifold Meaning, Gratification and Benefit they Imply, None Could Be a Better Guide Than A Philosopher-Sage Like Sivananda Combining the Advantages of Mature Experience and Literary Expression—

A TRIP TO SACRED KAILASH-MANSAROVAR :

KAILASH and Mansarovar on Himalayan heights man has seldom seen. The Swamiji has not only in his inimitable style described the glory of sacred mountains but also given comprehensive instructions and tips for those adventurous spirits who would venture to scale these heights. For those who are not destined to take the trip a reading of this booklet will surely transport them mentally to these highly venerated and magnificent spots. Read and you will know the value of the work.

—*The Vision*, Kanhangad.

PILGRIMAGE TO BADRI AND KAILASH :

This is a very useful guide book to those who wish to go on a pilgrimage to the famous holy centres of Badri, Kedar, Gangotri, Yamunotri, Mount Kailash, Manasarovar and Amarnath. Many pilgrims undertake the perilous trip to these places without proper equipment and knowledge and hence suffer great hardships on the way, risking their very lives. Swami Sivananda has done a service to the pilgrim world by bringing out this cheap handbook, which deserves to be translated into all the important Indian languages for the benefit of those who do not know English. The volume contains valuable practical hints and instructions based on the author's own experiences of such tours. In the concluding pages he deals briefly with the general nature of life in the Himalayas and the philosophy of the symbols of Siva, the Lord of Kailash. The value of the book is enhanced by some Sanskrit hymns with their English translations, given at the end. It also contains photographs of the temples of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Mount Kailas and Lake Mansarovar.

—*The Vision*, Kanhangad.

THE VALUE OF PILGRIMAGE

Why is so much sanctity attached to a pilgrimage, and not to a mere sight-seeing trip or an afficial tour ? It is because the very idea of "going on a pilgrimage" prepares your mind to be in a highly receptive mood, in a highly prayerful mood. It shuts out the worldly grooves in the mind. If you are alone, perhaps you live completely in a spiritual world of your own, with little or no family cares, worries and anxieties. This is the mental condition that is most conducive to the greatest reception of the spiritual vibrations that sarround you on all sides, in the Himalayas.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailash,
p. 112.

7. SIVANANDA IN TIBET, THE WONDERLAND OF LAMASERIES—THE HARD-WORKING BHOTIAS AND TIBETANS, THEIR GENIAL TEMPER, UNCOUTH EXTERIOR, QUAINT MANNERS, STRANGE CUSTOMS, SIMPLE ARTS, EDUCATIONAL NEEDS, BUDDHIST AND TANTRIC PRACTICES

—The Powerful Tibetan Monastic Communities Are Given Over to Gorgeous Ritual Inclusive of Thaumaturgical Ceremonies and Provide An Incomparable Cultural Contrast to the Placid Shankarite Monastic Establishments Wedded to Transcendental Experience—

TIBET is a predominantly a religious country. Almost every other Tibetan you meet would be a monk (Lama) or a nun. The Tibetan's religion is Buddhism with a peculiar admixture of Tantric forms of worship and rituals. OM MANI PADME HUM is the Mantra that the Tibetan constantly repeats with the help of a Prayer-Wheel which is his rosary.

Both the Bhotias and Tibetans of the Kailas-Mansarovar region are sturdy and hard-working people, peace-loving and religious-minded, cheerful and contented. Bhotias are traders who live on the borders of the Indian territory. They meet their Tibetan brethren at the various Mandis on the Kailas-route and exchange goods or sell them. Wool, sheep and ponies are sold by the Tibetan either for cash or in exchange for Indian piece-goods, jaggery, wheat, rice, etc.

Bhotias have quaint manners and customs. They are healthy, strong people. The ladies work hard in the fields. They wear strange silver ornaments in the neck, ears, etc. They are of Mongolian origin. They have no education. But now Bhotia schools are started at Pangu, Garbayang and other places where boys and girls read. Both men and women (as well as Tibetans) spin all day long while they are walking, sitting and carrying loads.

The inhabitants of Taklakot are called *Huns* or Hurnials. They are very rough-looking, fierce, strong and sturdy. They are illiterate.

They live on Bhotia tea (a strong kind of tea), Sattu, raw flesh and country liquor. They drink tea whole day and night (till they retire to bed). They have black faces owing to strong, cold winds. They possess mules and ponies. Whenever they move about they ride on ponies. A party of masked dancers both males and females, with their banging cymbals and beating drums gave us a performance in front of our camp.

All Tibetans are meat-eaters and drink large quantities of Chinese tea throughout the day. This tea is prepared in a peculiar manner, with salt and butter added to it. The Tibetan's wealth is his sheep.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas,
pp. 85-86.

8. QUACKS AMONG DOCTORS, CHARLATANS AMONG THE YOGIS, CHEATS AMONG THE CIVILIZED, THE WORLD WILL ALWAYS HAVE, IF IT WOULD HAVE DAY AND NIGHT AND CAN NEVER SEVER PAIN FROM PLEASURE OR CHOOSE THE GOOD TO THE EXCLUSION OF THE EVIL

—Sivananda Seeks to Develop in the Body Social That Quality of Mind Which Abandons the Canker of A Sensorious Attitude, and That Chasened Eye Which Honours the Monk, Envisages the Formation of Monasteries or Encourages the Growth of Monasticism—

ASHRAMS are spiritual abodes or centres where Sannyasis, Yogis and devotees live and practise meditation. Kathas, Yoga classes are held and spiritual aspirants are trained for religious propaganda. Householders come and stay here and lead the divine life during their holidays, charge themselves with spiritual energy and go back to the world, carry on their work with a new changed angle of vision, divine Bhav and selfless spirit. Ashrams are a blessing to the world at large. Had it not been for their existence, this world would have entirely wiped out spirituality and great dynamic Yogis, adepts and spiritual Masters.

In days of yore, Kings and Maharajas supported the Ashrams. They gave big free estates for their maintenance. They took an active part in the activities of the Ashram. They sat at the feet of the Rishis and seers and learnt Brahma Vidya or the Science of the Self.

At the present moment, they do not evince much interest in this direction. Some may donate a small sum here and there occasionally. Nothing more than that. They do not give their hearty support. This is a terrible spiritual loss for them.

Therefore those who want to start Ashrams and those who have already started Ashrams should find out ways and means to have economical independence. They should not and cannot depend upon admirers and devotees who give a small petty sum for a few months when they are in troubles and stop their donation after a short time.

Some of the leaders of India are of opinion that there is no necessity for Sannyasi Ashrams for leading the life of Nivritti, and that there is no necessity for Sannyasa, seclusion and meditation. They preach against Ashram life and Sannyasa. That is the reason why cultured Sannyasis who live in seclusion do not wish to enter the plains for preaching and imparting spiritual instruction. There is no warm reception for them. People have no receptive attitude to their instructions. This is a terrible loss to the people who are thus deprived of the immense benefits of their Sat-Sang. India also is surcharged with the ideas of another form of communism, or godlessness. If a Virakta Sannyasi stands at the door for alms with "Narayana Hari", the owner of the house says "Go and work. Run the charkha. There is no Bhiksha for you."

This is a sad condition due to the wrong preaching of some of the leaders. They will surely repent for their mistakes. Hindu

religion will be wiped out of India soon. They should always send separate batches of people who have religious tendencies for a life of meditation and seclusion and research in Yoga. Every religion has its own band of anchorites or monks.

Every man is born with his own Samskaras. Even if millions of leaders stand with their Lathis and preach, 'Do not take Sannyasa. There is no necessity for Sannyasa and Sannyasa-Ashrama", that man with Sannyasa-Samskaras will surely take up Sannyasa, at all costs. No power on earth can prevent him from doing so. Even Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva cannot stand in his way. Even if all foods are stopped for him, he will live on Bael leaves and Ganges water, and tread this glorious path. King Suddhodana tried his best to stop Siddhartha from becoming a Bhikshu. He was locked up within the four walls amidst dance, women and temptations. But Siddhartha left the kingdom, wife and son at the dead of night and became the Buddha, the Awakened or the Enlightened and converted several thousands as monks.

India even now abounds and will always abound in countless young thirsting souls like Buddha to embrace Sannyasa and lead the life of Sannyasa. Glory to such exalted souls !

May this world abound in countless ideal Ashrams ! May the Kings and Maharajas and Millionaires take now at least real interest in supporting and starting many Ashrams and thus receive the blessings of the Sages, and become more prosperous and enlightened ! May people understand the glory of Sannyasa and the usefulness of Ashramas !

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints In India,
pp. ix-xi.

9. SIVANANDA ON THE MONASTIC CENTRES AS THE ACADEMIES THAT IMPART THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE SCIENCE OF SCIENCES

ASHRAMS AND SAINTS :

THIS work gives a list of the principal Ashrams in India and describes the saints to whom these are dedicated : Goudiya Mutt, Rupkala Kutir, Ramana Ashram, Prabhudatta Ashram, Gita Bhavan, Aurovindo Ashram, Anandamayi Ashram and Dayallbagh Ashram and many others are all described in words that do credit to the author and raise him in the estimation of the numerous followers of these saints and in fact of others who believe in the catholicity of religion. Of particular interest is the reference to the Sevagram founded by Mahatma Gandhi and to Shahan Shah Ashram, at Rajpur, Dehra Dun founded by a Muslim divine.

—*The Search Light*,
Patna.

PILGRIMAGE TO BADRI AND KAILAS:

THIS is a pilgrim's guide-book written by Swamiji after he had visited the places spoken of in it, from his own personal knowledge and experience.

The centres of pilgrimages described are Badri, Kedar, Gangotri, Yamunotri, Mount Kailas, Manasarovar and Amarnath.

The details are so thoroughly given that an intending pilgrim can know from the book what equipment he should provide himself with, what route he should take, what facilities he can get on the route, in which places and at what cost, what is the pilgrim's programme in the various places, what traditions from the religious point of view are important to know, of the various centres, what beauties he could enjoy in the various places and in what way, as a pilgrim, he should conduct himself in the matter of the "Do"s and "Dont's."

There are many beautiful photographs of the places and the sceneries which enhance the value of the guide-book.

—Y. Mahalinga Sastrigal,
Gnanasambandam,
Mayavaram.

10. IF PHILOSOPHER ARISTOTLE WAS THE TEACHER OF ALEXANDER THE CONQUEROR TO BE, IF ALL THE WISDOM OF THE FORMER WOULD NOT RESTRAIN BUT STIMULATE THE IMPERIOUS IMPULSES OF THE LATTER—HOW VERY DIFFERENT WERE THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHER-SAGES THAT GUIDED THE FOOT-STEPS OF THE PHILOSOPHER-KINGS—SIVANANDA SPEAKS

WHO is a saint ? He who lives in God or the Eternal, who is free from egoism, likes and dislikes, selfishness, vanity, mineness, lust greed and anger, who is endowed with equal vision, balanced mind, mercy, tolerance, righteousness, cosmic love and who has divine knowledge, is a saint.

Saints and sages are blessings to the world at large. They are the custodians of superior divine wisdom, spiritual powers and inexhaustible spiritual wealth. Even kings bow their heads at their lotus feet. King Janaka said to Yajnavalkya, "O Venerable sage : I am grateful to your exalted Holiness for obtaining the ancient wisdom of the Upanishads through your lofty and sublime instructions, I offer my whole kingdom at thy feet. Further I am Thy servant. I will wait on thee like a servant."

Such is the magnanimous nature of saints and sages. Their very existence inspires others and goads them to become like them and attain the same state of bliss achieved by them. Had it not been for their existence there would not have been spiritual uplift and salvation for you all. Their glory is indescribable. Their wisdom is unfathomable. They are deep like the ocean, steady like the Himalayas, pure like the Himalayan snow and effulgent like the sun. One crosses this terrible ocean of Samsara of birth and deaths through their grace and Satsang or association with them. To be in their company is highest education. To love them is highest happiness. To be near them is real education.

They wander from village to village and disseminate divine knowledge. They move from door to door and impart wisdom. They take a little for their bare maintenance and give the highest education, culture and enlightenment to the people. Their very life is exemplary. Whether they deliver lectures or not, whether they hold discourses or not, it matters little.

Saints and sages only can become real advisers of Kings because they are selfless and possess highest wisdom. They only can improve the morality of the masses. They only can show the way to attain eternal bliss and immortality. Shivaji had Swami Ramdas as his adviser. King Dasaratha had Maharshi Vasishtha as his adviser.

Study the lives of saints. You are inspired at once. Remember their sayings, you are elevated immediately. Walk in their foot-steps, you are freed from pain and sorrow. Therefore the book, "Lives of Saints" must be your constant companion. It must be in your pocket. It must be underneath your pillow.

Do not superimpose defects on them on account of your Dosha-drishti or evil-eye. You cannot judge their merits. Be humble and sit at their feet. Serve them with your heart and soul, keep them in your garden, clear your doubts, get instructions and practise them in right earnest. You will certainly be blessed.

Every school, every college, every boarding house, every jail, every institution, every house, should have a saint for its guidance. Saints are in abundance. You do not want them. You do not wish to approach them. You do not wish to serve them. You do not aspire for higher things. You are perfectly satisfied with some broken shells and glass-pieces. There is no thirst or spiritual hunger in you for achieving higher divine knowledge and inner Peace.

There is no caste among saints and sages. Do not look to their caste. You will not be benefited. You cannot imbibe their virtues. In higher religion, there is neither caste nor creed. Cobblers, weavers, and untouchables had become the best saints. Wisdom and self-realisation are not the monopoly of Brahmins alone. South Indian Brahmins pay respects and give food only to the Brahmin Dandi Sannyasins. This is a serious mistake and grave blunder. What a sad state ! That is the reason why saints do not visit South India. Punjab, Sind and Gujrat have devotion to all saints. Hence they move in these parts and people derive much spiritual benefit from them.

May this world be filled with good saints and sages ! May you all attain the supreme goal through their Satsang and advice ! May the blessings of saints and sages be upon you all !

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams And Saints In India,
pp. xii-xiv.

11. SIVANANDA ON THE SACRED SHRINE OF SAINT SAI AT SHIRDI AND THE CONSECRATED SOCIAL ACTIVISM OF THE MODERN MONASTIC CENTRES

—Apart from the Temples of Great Antiquity and Acquired Impressiveness, Several Sacred and Small Shrines of Saints and Mystics, Attract Continual Streams of Pilgrims—the One at Shirdi is the Most Renowned and Miracles, Major or Minor, Are Evidentially Believed to be Wrought Into the Lives of the Devout, Even for a Single Visit Paid—

SAI BABA ASHRAM

THIS Ashram is in Shirdi In the district of Ahmednagar. The famous Sri Sai Baba lived here.

He had a dhooni (fire) here ;
That is kept up even now.
Sri B. V. Narasimha Swami of Salem
Made him known to the world.
He vigorously disseminated
His messages and teachings.
Sri Sai Baba had Siddhis.
He even now helps his devotees.
Sai Sudha is an English monthly ;
It is issued from Madras.
There is a Telugu monthly also.
The Head Office of Sai Baba Samaj
Is at Madras.
This was founded by Sri B. V. N. Swami.
There are branches all over India.
Glory to Sri Sai Baba and Sri B. V. N. Swami !
My adorations and prostrations to them.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints In India,
p. 66.

THE BELUR MATH

It is situated in Belur, near Calcutta
On the banks of the Ganges—
It was founded by Swami Vivekananda ;
This is the Head Office of Sri Ramakrishna Mutts and Missions.
There is a grand marble Temple here
For Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa ;
The statues of Vivekananda and Brahmananda are also here.
Swami Brahmananda was the first President,
Swami Shivananda was the successor ;
There is an industrial school here
And a college too, affiliated to Calcutta University.
Free education to the poor is given here.
There is a beautiful library also.
Glory to Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda !
My adorations and prostrations to them.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints In India,
p. 10.

LONAVALA ASHRAM

It is near Bombay.
It was founded by Swami Kuvalayananda,
A disciple of Sri Madhava Dasji of Malsar.
It is a Hatha Yogi institute.
It is known by the name "Kaivalya Dhama."
Swami Kuvalayananda is a research scholar in Hatha Yoga.
He was editing "Yoga Mimasa",
A valuable Hata Yogic Journal.
He teaches Asans and Pranayama.
And other Hatha Yogic Kriyas.
There are Allopathic doctors
To diagnose the diseases.
He prescribes suitable Asans and Pranayama.
He moves about and delivers lectures.
There is a Branch Ashram in Bombay.
Glory to Swami Kuvalayananda !
My adorations and prostrations to him !

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints In India,
p. 40.

RAMAKRISHNA MUTT, MYLAPORE

This is a reputed Ashram :
It is situated in Mylapore, Madras.
There is a big dispensary ;
The "Vedanta Kesari" an English monthly
And "Ramakrishna Vijayam" in Tamil

Are issued from this Ashram.
There is a well-known Students' Home,
And industrial Institute in Mylapore.
And a big High School at Mambalam,
Attached to this Mission.
Glory to the founder !
My adorations and prostrations to him

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints In India, p.59.

LORD JAGANNATH

O Lord ! Who dwells in Puri
Who was dear to Jaya Dev
The author of the Gita Govinda—
Who dwells in one of the four Dhamas
Silent adorations unto Thee !
Thou art the glorious Vishnu
Thou art the sole refuge of mortals
Thou residest in the heart of all beings
Thy Grace is invincible
Thou art the meaning of the Vedas
Thou art all in all.
Thy name has saved me.
I have obtained Thy Grace ;
By the sword of Thy grace
I have cut off my bonds.
Hail Jagannath ! Hail Grace
Om Namo Kesavaya.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, pp. 3.

12. LUXURIATING IN TRANSFORMING BEAUTY, THE PERENNIAL SNOWS OF THE HIMALAYAN HEIGHTS HOUSE, IN THEIR PURIFIED ATMOSPHERE AND RARIFIED BREEZE, THE LIVING, RESPONDING AND WONDER-WORKING INDIAN DIVINITIES AND YEARLY DRAW FOR THEIR PILGRIMS, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE FROM THE GANGETIC PLAIN AND THE DISTANT PENINSULAR SOUTH

PILGRIMAGE TO BADRI AND KAILAS:

EVEN in our present age of materialism a large number of our people do visit the holy shrines in the Himalayas and go to sacred places situated on the banks of the rivers. The journey through the mountains is a romantic affair and even the most depressed persons feel pleasure amidst the natural surroundings of the hills. They cannot remain unaffected by the ravishing beauty of the natural environments there. As the nature is bountiful on hilly tracts, the scenery of those places captivates their heart and the melodies of the streams, cuckoo and other birds make them forget the fever and fret of the routine of their life. They are transported to fairylands where they feel utmost pleasure. The book under review gives details of the pilgrimage to Badrinath, Kailas, Amarnath and a number of shrines in the Himalayas. The Details of journey include also the vivid description of the natural scenery. Apart from inculcating the spiritual value of pilgrimages, the book enables the readers to form a mental picture of those places and they for the time being, forget their actual environments and find themselves in the places of pilgrimage. This book serves another purpose also, i.e., it promotes tourism in the country by whetting the interest of its readers to visit these places in the Himalayas. The writer has done a great service to the nation by producing this book which performs manifold functions.

—*Careers & Courses*, New Delhi.

13. A STROKE OF SIVANANDA'S PHILOSOPHIC INSIGHT EXALTS THE PARAPHERNALIA AND THE ARTICLES OF RITUALISTIC WORSHIP INTO AN ATMOSPHERE OF ENLIGHTENING METAPHYSICAL CONNOTATIONS IMPLYING SEVERAL DISCIPLINES OF THE INNER SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

—Deficient in Psychic Experience and Devoted to Pursuits that Negate the Functions of the Highest Capacities of the Consciousness Within, But Yet Released into the Arcane of the Indian Soil, Some Earth-bound Foreigners, Like their Forbears Among the Prejudiced Old Western Indologists And their Mental Sons in India, Are Repulsed by the Sights of Idolatory Which Are to the One Born Into Them the Scenes of Idealatory—Ignorant of the Exacting Demands And Difficult Conditions the Sources of Image-Material and the Rules of the Image-Formation Make, the Critics Realise Also Too Little the Fact that the Idols Are Spiritually Treated, Subjected to Mantric Vibrations, Sanctified by a Manifold Religious Process, Played on by the Power of Pragmatic Faith from the Purified Human Heart And Made More A Magnatised Force of Consciousness than A Mere Concretion of Inert Matter that Passively Permits the Reading Into Itself, By and From, A Fertile Imagination, Meanings Which It Does Not Bear, And Becomes A Dignified Excuse For Taking Back the Powers, the Responses, the Boons, By a Credulous Soul that has Projected Them on It, And Either Gives It A Credit In All Solemnity or Makes to It A Votive Offering—

THE *tower of a temple represents Brahmarandhra. Balipeetam represents the navel or Manipura Chakra. Nandi represents Ajna Chakra. Dhwajastambham represents Sushumna Nadi which runs from Mooladhara to Brahmarandhra.*

Dik Devata dwells in the ears, Vayu in the skin, sun in the eyes, Varuna in the tongue, Aswins in the nose, Vishnu in the feet, Indra in the hands, Agni in the speech, Prajapati in the generative organ, Yama in the anus, Sutratman in the Prana, Hiranyagarbha in Antahkarana, Chandra in mind, Brahma in the intellect, Rudra in egoism, Siva in Chitta, Saraswati in the end of the tongue, Parvati in Anahata Chakra, Lakshmi in Manipura Chakra, Ganesh in Mooladhara and Satchidananda Brahman in Brahmarandhra at the crown of the head.

Satyam, Ahimsa, Tapas, mercy, love, self-restraint, contentment, forgiveness, Jnana, equal vision, peace are the real flowers of Pooja. All the Nadas are the waters for Abhiseka. The virtuous actions are the offering of incense. Vedanta is Pitambar. Jnana and Yoga are the Kundalas. Tapas and meditation are the lights. Japa is Chamara. Anahata is the music. Kirtan is umbrella. Pranayama is the fan.

Tattwas are the attendants of the Lord. Jnana Sakti is the Devi. Agama is the commander. The eight Siddhis are the door keepers of the Lord, Turiya is the Bhasma. Veda is the bull or Nandi. Kalyana Gunas represent the Trident in the hand. Panchakshara is the holy thread. Suddha Jiva is the ornament. The Vrittis are the Pooja-upakaranas. The Panchabhutas and the five Tanmatras are the Rudrakshamalas of Lord Siva. Tiger skin represents Ahamkara.

Kriya Sakti and virtuous actions are Dhoop or incense for the Lord. Chit Sakti which produces knowledge is also Dhoop.

Offering of the ego and the mind at the lotus-feet of the Lord is real Naivedyam. Just as camphor melts and becomes one with the fire, so also the mind of a sage melts and the individual soul gets merged in the supreme soul. This is real Karpoor Arati.

—Swami Sivananda's
Lord Siva and His Worship,
pp. 235-236.

14. IS SIVANANDA'S WORK ON INDIAN TEMPLES OF ANY PARTICULAR UTILITY OR DOES IT MERELY PROVIDE A TYPE OF INSPIRATIONAL VALUE AND HELP US STORE OUR MEMORIES WITH THE NAMES OF THE TEMPLES AND OF THE GODS WHO DWELL IN THEM ?

—Not the Pillared Porches, the Pyramidal Gateways, the Elaborate Sculptural Designs Executed with Unsurpassed Delicacy and Finish, the Clusters of Detached Images that Constitute the Figural Paraphernalia of the Main Imposing Forms, Nor yet the Corridor Halls and the Tanks Mantled With the Green, that Make In their Total Effect, the Impression of an Extraordinary Magnificence Upon the Mind of the Visitor and Yield Him a Spectacular Gratification, But the Spontaneous Visualisation of the Divinities Enshrined In the Utterly Plain Inner Cell, the Sanctum Sanctorum, And An Address To Them, Of An Adoration Rendered In a Rhymeless Song and A Rhythmless Poesy Rich in the Resonances of Great Sincerity and a Greater Saintliness, Engage the Whole of the Interest and Employ the Self-expressive Power, of Sivananda—

LORD VENKATESA

O Lord of Venkata Hill !
O Venkatesa, Venkatachalapathy,
O Venkataramana !
O Lord of Tirupathi Hills,
Consort of Alamelumangai :
Pratyaksha Devata of Kaliyuga :
O Glorious Vishnu !
Let me live up Thy golden Hill.
O coral-lipped Venkatesa !
Let me be a humble servitor
At Thy blessed Lotus Feet.
My heart melts
At the thought
Of Thy endless glory.
Om Namo Venkatesaya !

–Swami Sivananda's
Temples In India, pp 6

BUDDHA GAYA

THERE is a magnificent temple here.
Lord Buddha is seated here.
It is the most sacred spot.
For the Buddhists.
Lord Buddha attained Buddhahood
Under a Bodhi tree here.
O Lord Buddha !
Apostle of Ahimsa,
O Enlightened Teacher,
Salutations unto Thee.
Hail Buddha :
Buddham Saranam Gachchami.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples In India, p. 55.

MADURA MEENASHI

O Sweet Mother, Meenakshi !
Consort of Sundaresa
Who dwells in Madura

Thou art Gauri, Uma,
Sankari and Savitri
Thou art Mother of Ganesh and Skanda,
Thou art the destroyer
Of Mahishasura, Rakthabij,
And Dhumralochana
Sumbha and Nisumbha.
O Devi ! be pleased !
Protect me, guide me,
Remove the veil of ignorance.
Introduce me to Lord Sundaresa.
Make me rest in Samadhi.
Let me unite with Thy Lord.
Hail Hrim, Hail Ambika.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples In India, p. 53.

LORD VARADARAJA

This is a Vishnu Temple
In little Conjeevaram.
It is two miles distant
From the Great Temple.
There is a Hall of 96 pillars.
There is a tank.
Varadaraja is the deity.
O Kanchi Varadappa !
O Lord Narayana !
Sundara Varada
O my only Saviour !
In Thee all is born,
All move and into Thee all enter.
Thou art everywhere,
Like whiteness in the milk !
My heart is thy temple.
Hail Divine Grace
Hail Vishnu, Hail Varada.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples In India, p. 7.

15. A CERTAIN ORIENTAL CONCEIT MAY CHUCKLE AT THE SOULLESS WEST, BUT SIVANANDA PRODUCES FACTS THAT PROVE THAT THE OCCIDENT HAS BENEATH ITS THICKLY LAID OUTER CLOAKS, VEINS OF SPIRITUALITY IN WHICH THERE COURSES THE ICHOR OF GOD-AWARENESS—THE JESUITS, THE FRANCISCANS, THE DOMINICANS, THE BENEDICTINES, THE CISTERCIANS, THE QUAKERS AND SEVERAL OTHER MONASTIC, RELIGIOUS AND LAY SPIRITUAL ORDERS AS AGENCIES THAT SUSTAIN THE RELIGIOUS FORCES

—Numerous Have Been the Services Rendered By the Western Monks As Savants, Litterateurs, Philosophers, Artists, Apostles to the Cultural Vitality of the Civilization They Belong to—More Numerous Have Been the Gifts the Sons of Spiritual India Bestowed Upon A Furtherance of the Richness and the Grandeur of the Religion and the Philosophy They Were Born into—

WESTERN culture has come to be synonymous with materialism. People talk of the Godless West. There is the idea that atheism alone is generally prevalent in those countries of the Western hemisphere. To a certain extent there may be some justification for such an opinion. But this is not wholly true. This is a wrong notion arising partly out of bias and partly due to superficial observation. When one says that a desert is a waterless tract of land, you must not think that there is not a single drop of water in the entire area. Water is there in some places. Hidden springs are found at

times. There are life-giving oases. Even in the midst of widespread scepticism, sensuality and mammon-worship, there do exist groups of devout and sincere people to whom God is an ever-present Reality, the most important fact of their lives. These are the faithful few who are steadfast in their spiritual allegiance to the Almighty and who are bravely keeping alive the spirit of religion in the West.

The grace of God is such that however universal be the sway of agnosticism yet there remains always a class of people who refuse to succumb to the allurement of earthly things and live to strive for the attainment of a higher divine ideal. These are the seekers, the monks in their monasteries, the wandering mendicants and preachers, the recluses in their meditative isolation and the ascetics absorbed in penances. They are found even today not only in the East but also in the western countries. Numerous orders of such pious people are there. Though all such organisations have passed through difficult times yet they are, nevertheless, carrying on their work with faith in God.

Of such above-mentioned organisations the Jesuit Order of monks are well-known throughout the world as zealous missionaries in the cause of Christian religion. They are of an active Karma Yogin type. They are great educationists and social workers. They labour earnestly in a spirit of dedication and service in conducting educational institutions, industrial centres, hospitals and poor asylums etc. They do not stick to the extreme asceticism or seclusion but being ardent missionaries they mix freely with all grades of society, serving all, influencing them and bringing good and harmony in their lives. They are the worthy members of the *Society of Jesus*, the great order founded in the 16th century by that noble Spaniard named Ignatius Loyola. They are even now carrying on the work started by the founder and his renowned colleague, Francis x' avier.

The Franciscans are like Parivrajakas in India. They live a life of extreme simplicity and perfect trust in God depending upon Him solely for their needs. They are mendicant frairs and better known as the *Grey Frairs* from the grey coloured robes they wear. They take extreme delight in doing all kinds of simple humanitarian services. Moving amongst the lowliest and poorest, they minister unto them with humility and love. They do not so much preach but seek to teach by their own personal example how best to live a true Christian life of love, humility and service. They strive to emulate the inspiring life of their saintly leader, St. Francis of Assisi. This band of monks has set up a high ideal of great Tyaga and Virakti and leaving faith in the Omnipresent Lord.

In the field of ceaseless and wise Prachar the Dominican monks are the great workers. Their black robe has given them the name of *Black Frairs*. They belong to the order founded in the 13th century by St. Dominic and were formerly well-known as the *Preaching Frairs*. They specialise in lecturing, preaching and spreading the Gospel. They are scholarly and carefully trained in theology and allied subjects. They are religious Pracharaks through whose labours the ideals of religion are popularised and spread amongst the masses. Their activities are indeed like the cool, dawn winds in the acrid desert of western materialism. Another

set of monks who have kept up a tradition of high scholarship and deep learning are of the Benedictine Order. They too are well-versed in theology and doctrinaire.

Some others live in strict seclusion doing intense Sadhana. They practise great Titiksha and Tapas. They live alone in separate cells. They mostly observe the vow of silence, pray ceaselessly and fast frequently. They shun all luxuries, wear coarse clothing and eat very sparingly the simplest food. They adhere strictly to the stern rules and regulations of monasticism and live a rigorous life of hard work, meditation, introspection and penance. This class is made up mostly of the Carthusians, the Cistercians, the Capuchins and such others like the Carmalite sisters. Glory indeed to these noble ones who are clinging steadfastly to the ideals of spiritual Sadhana, self-restraint, holiness and spirituality even in the materialistic atmosphere of the West.

This is not all. Besides these orthodox monastic orders, there is even today in the West a considerable section of devout laymen living the true Christian life of faith, love and service. There are still innumerable people, pious Quakers, Presbyterians, Methodists and others trying to lead a life of belief and righteousness. The true spirit of real religion need not necessarily be tagged on to a Church. There are many movements, not strictly orthodox, but none the less sincerely spiritual and noble in their aims. Earnest and pure selfless souls are working at the back of such movements that are silently spiritualising the people even in the very midst of rank scepticism and greed. This is verily a heartening feature in this age. Even in dollar-mad America a number of such organisations are actively keeping the divine flame burning in the darkness of Godlessness prevailing generally. It is not entirely gloomy unrelieved by a gleam of Light. I give some of the names of such Societies and godly Headquarters like the Church of Truth at Philadelphia (H.Q. Washington), the Divine Science Movement (Colarado), the Fellowship of Divine Truth (Philadelphia), the Boston Home of Truth (Boston), the Science of Thought (consisting of a group of faithful believers inspired by Mr. H. T. Hamblin of England) and Unity movement (Kansas).

All these numerous monastic as well as lay groups of devout people are many an instrument through which God is preserving carefully the Spirit of Religion in the Western World. They are the hope of the times to come. They are like precious seeds carefully kept by the farmer during the dark chill winter months for sowing the fields at the proper time when spring comes again. As long as such groups of people are there, religion will never die out anywhere upon this globe. They are the guarantee for a rich and life-giving spiritual harvest for mankind for the future. They constitute the Lamp that God Himself is keeping alight in the West. They will never cease to be ; for, if this spirit of religion becomes extinct then humanity will go out of existence. Spirituality sustains humanity.

—Swami Sivananda's
Divine Life, Vol. 10, No. 7,
pp. 145-147.

16. MODERN FORMS OF HINDU MONASTIC LIFE REPRESENT A DELIGHTFUL BLEND OF THE CENOBITIC AND THE EREMITIC TENDENCIES

—Even on a Superficial Analysis, the Contemporary Indian Monasticism Will Be Found to Be Quite an All-Inclusive Institution Which Not Only Conceals in Some of Its Distant Covers, the Adept Who Easily Measures Up to the Most Exacting Standards of Orthodox Brahmanical Sannyasa, But Embraces and Shelters Everywhere the Novices Who Have Just Taken a Turn Away from Worldliness and Have Not Yet Shed Their Resemblances to Average Humanity But Are Bent on, Under the Shield of Ochre-Robes, and With the Stresses of Aspiration and Grace, to Pursue Strenuously the High Aims—That Sivananda Is the Greatest Champion of This Type of Monasticism Is Too Well-Known—Or, Is It Too Notorious a Fact ?—to Necessitate a Formal Statement—

SIVANANDA ASHRAM

IT is situated in Sivanandanagar
On the banks of the Ganges,
Via. Rishikesh, Dist. Dehra Dun.
The founder is already known to you
It is your health resort, holiday home
And final abode after retirement.
It is the most lovely spot
With high spiritual vibrations,
With picturesque Himalayan scenery :
Meditation comes by itself.
There is the Viswanath temple ;
The 'Divine Life', a journal
Is issued from here ;
Sadhana Weeks and Training Courses
Are conducted here.
There are branches in Golden Rock.
Rajgiri, Brindavan and other places.
Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy
Publishes books on Yoga, Vedanta,
Bhakti and other spiritual subjects.
Sivananda Nagar is its Post Office.
There is a charitable General Hospital
And a free primary school.
There is an Ayurvedic Pharmacy too.
Glory to Lord Viswanath !
My adorations and prostrations to Him.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints in India,
p. 77.

SIVANANDA SADHANA NILAYAM

THIS is situated in Tiruvengi Hills
Near Musiri, Trichinopoly district :
The Post office is Manamedu.
It is on the banks of Akhanda Kaveri.
It is the most lovely spot
For the practice of divine contemplation;
It is a branch of Sivanandashram.
Swami Adwayananda is the President :
He is a Tamil scholar, a Virakta,
A Bhakta-Jnani, Gita Vachaspati ;
A silent preacher and a propagandist.
He has written a book on Gita :
It is highly useful and elevating.
He conducts Sadhana Weeks here.
Glory to Sri Swami Adwayananda !
My prostrations and adorations to Him.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints in India,
p. 79.

RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAM, KANKHAL

THIS is situated in Kankhal,
Near Haridwar.
There is a library here.
This was founded by
Swami Vivekananda,
This is developed by
Swami Kalyanananda.
There is a big hospital—
Indoor and outdoor both,
Patients are carefully looked after.
Great service is done here.
It is a blessing to the poor
And the Sadhus.
Sadhu inmates look after the patients.
Hence, the service is laudable.
Glory to the Founder !
My adorations and prostrations to Him.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints in India,
p. 61.

RAMTIRTHA ASHRAM

THIS is in Lucknow
In the Marwari Gali.
This was founded by Narayana Swamiji,
Disciple of Sri Swami Rama Tirtha.
He started the Rama Tirtha League.
He is a Vedanti
And a dynamic Karma Yogin.
He has written commentary on Gita in Hindi
In two volumes :
They are very valuable books.
It is he who popularized
The teachings of Rama Tirtha.
He organized a band of Sevaks.
He is a disciplinarian,
He is a hard task-master.
Glory to Swami Rama Tirtha and Sri Narayana Swamiji !
My adorations and prostrations to them.

—Swami Sivananda's
Ashrams and Saints in India,
p. 63.

17. WITH A THERMAL SPRING CLOSE BY, THE VIEWS OF TWO SOARING SNOW-CAPPED PEAKS, SURCHARGED WITH A PALPABLE SANCTITY ALL ITS OWN, AND CAUSING AN IRRESISTIBLE SENSE OF THE SUBLIME AND THE ETERNAL, BADRINATH LURED INTO THE TAPESTRY OF ITS ASSOCIATIONAL LANDSCAPE THE IMPRESS OF THE LIVES OF SRI VYASA, SRI KRISHNA, SRI SANKARA AND A HOST OF SUCH OTHER LUMINARIES THROUGH THE INDIAN CENTURIES

—Sivananda Creates in the Minds of His Readers a Great Mood Corresponding to the Inspiring Greatness That Presides Over and Governs the Scenery, the Splendours and the Shrines of the Peaks Surrounded by the Green and of the Mountains Attired in the Snows and Known to Every School-boy in the World, As the Himalayas—

THE HOLY KEDARNATH

THE enchanting panorama, the lovely flower-beds laid out by the Supreme Gardener, Mother Nature Herself, and the snow-

capped majesty of the mighty Himalayas towering above the ancient Temple dedicated to Lord Siva at Kedarnath, flood your heart with inexpressible delight, a peace that surpasseth understanding and an inward feeling of living immersed in divinity. Holiness is in the very air. The hollowness of earthly glory is *visible* then and there.

The tedium of the trek up the steep hill—it is greatly assuaged by the devout pilgrim's all-consuming pious wish to have Darsan of the great Jyotir-Linga at Kedar, and the picturesque landscape through which the path leads him to the goal, but the seven-miles ascent up the steep hill is trying all the same—is amply rewarded by the sight of the lonely temple of Lord Kedarnath with the holy Mandakini flowing down the icy mountain-side that gives one the perspective of Lord Siva with Ganges flowing from His Jata.

The huge Siva-Linga at Kedarnath is perhaps the biggest in the whole world. It is a massive rock of resplendent Light for those with spiritual vision to gaze upon in enraptured silence and adoration. Its surface is uneven in appearance and yet has the mighty power of smoothening out all differences among the devotees, of various castes, creeds and social cadres approaching It. The most Holy of holies, the glorious emblem of Supreme Divinity, Lord Kedarnath is yet approachable to all ; and here in this Shrine the Bhakta has the supreme satisfaction of worshipping the Lord with his own hands, of actually laying his head at His Feet, and of enjoying an ecstatic embrace of the very Source of all Blessedness.

Kedarnath is an extremely cold place and the pilgrim here does not have the benefit of warm springs (which he has at Badrinath) nor of the material comforts and conveniences that the better developed township of Badrinath provides him with ; but the spiritual vibrations of the place, the ineffable calm that instantly lifts one's spirit to the highest realms of ecstasy, and the nearness to divinity that the aspirant feels here are unrivalled. Sadhakas would immensely like this place. No devotee of the Lord should fail to visit Kedar.

Behind and beyond the temple is a heavenly sight. Tradition has it that the Pandavas with Draupadi ascended into heaven through these lofty mountains. People still point to the awe-inspiring spectacle of the icy expanse as the Mahaprasthana or the Great Path that the Pandavas took before they left this mortal world to join the immortals. Their illustrious example seems to have inspired many great Tapasvins to follow in their footsteps, many have resolutely taken to the same path and they are said to have left their autographs on the rocks on the road to Mahaprasthan. Undoubtedly the very atmosphere of Kedarnath is permeated with the power and glory of Tapas and of the Highest Knowledge. Blessed are those who visit the Holy place ! Thrice blessed are those who do Sadhana even for a brief while here !! Supremely blessed are those who do rigorous Tapas at this most holy spot on earth !

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas,
pp. 5-6.

THE BADRINATH

"Gachchodhdhava Mayaadishto Badaryakhyam Mamaashramam" (Go Thou, Oh

Uddhava, to my Ashrama at Badri !) commanded Lord Krishna towards the close of the Krishna-Avatara, and Uddhava went to Badrikashrama. And now, nearly a lakh of pilgrims visit the Holy Badrinath every year !

Badrinath is one of the Four Great Dhamas (the foremost of holy places of pilgrimage): the other three are Jagannath Puri in the East, Rameshvaram in the South, and Dwaraka Puri in the West. The Northern Shrine of the Lord, Badrinath, is considered the greatest among these four.

The enthralling spectacle that greets the pilgrim as he approaches Badrinath and is yet a couple of miles away, makes him instantly forget the wearisome journey of the Goal. The glorious sight of the wide valley with the lustrous golden-towered temple of Badrinarayan surrounded by clusters of buildings and huts, and with two heaven-kissing mountains rising on either side, their snow-capped peaks brilliantly reflecting the rays of the sun, lifts his mind to an ethereal plane. The vision rises before his mind's eye of : of the Golden Majesty of the Lord to which the entire Universe clings as the buildings cling to the Temple here; and it is as though the Temple itself represents Dharma with Purity and Divinity, the two great mountains, zealously guarding it and vigilantly keeping a watch over it.

The hair-raising story that tradition and the Puranas associate with the place comes back to his mind. The Puranas speak of the origin of Badrikashrama thus :

In an age when the earth was still young, there flourished a Demon called Sahasra-kavacha, who was greatly oppressing the Devas and all beings. The Devas prayed to the Lord to rescue them from his clutches. Incarnating Himself as Nara and Narayana, the Lord descended at Badri and performed penance for thousands of years. Hearing of this glorious Avatara of the Lord, the Demon rushed towards Him to kill Him or to subdue Him. The two brothers Nara and Narayana fought fierce battles with the demon and destroyed his thousand coats-of-arm, one by one, and finally exterminated him. Having done this, they made Badri itself their permanent abode from which to keep a watch over Dharma and protect the devout and kill the wicked.

Gazing at the Nara-Narayana mountains and recalling the story to his mind, the Sadhaka witnesses on the stage of his own heart the ancient Drama re-enacted. There resides within himself the mighty demon Ahamkara or egoism protected by a thousand-fold coat-of-arms comprised of endless series of Vasanas and Samskaras, wrong notions and attachments. Who enjoys peace when Egoism is the ruler ? And, who can rescue us from the clutches of this inner Demon ? The Lord, Who as Nara-Narayana, gives us the hope and assurance that Nara (man) can become Narayana (God) by penance, by the practice of Dharma by ceaselessly waging war with the inner enemy, Ahamkara, and destroying his coat-of-arms one by one with the help of His Supreme Benign Grace.

Badrinath is different from Kedarnath in that it offers the pilgrims ample comforts and conveniences. At Kedarnath, while the willing spirit clings to the place, the weak flesh drags one away. At Badri the body gets its share of the joy, while the soul

is allowed to soar high. As you take a refreshing bath in the Holy Taptakunda, you feel God could'nt have been more merciful. If this hot spring is holy for no other purpose, it is most holy for it reminds you of the omnipotence of God, that could provide you with steaming water perennially at a place from which all the year around you can see the eternal snow very near.

There is a bazaar at Badrinath where almost all the necessaries of life are available. Badrinath possesses all the conveniences that are afforded by a modern town, with a Post and Telegraph Office, a Hospital, etc.

A word about the resplendent Murti of Sri Badrinarayan would not be out of place here. It is a mysterious idol which appears to the worshipper as his own Ishtam (favourite Deity). A Vaishnava feels it as Lord Narayana in meditative posture. A Saivite has no doubt at all that it is Lord Siva seated cross legged in contemplation. A Shakta is convinced it is the image of Devi. A Buddhist sees in it the precise figure of Lord Buddha ! As the Rawal Saheb (President) will explain to you, the Mysterious Murti lends itself to all these explanations. Surely, isn't God everything ? Badrinarayan silently proclaims the Unity of Godhead,

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas,
pp. 7-8.

18. WHILE THE SHRINE IN THE CENTRE OF THE CITY SUGGESTS THE MYTHICAL CHARACTER OF A CLEAVAGE BETWEEN THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR, THE TEMPLE HOUSED IN THE HEART OF THE FOREST OR BUILT ON THE TOP OF THE HILL OR SITUATED IN THE BEAUTEOUS SPOT CLOSE TO THF THREE SURROUNDING SEAS, GRANTS THE SPIRITUAL SEEKER THE GLIMPSES THROUGH THE GARMENTS OF NATURE, OF THE GODHEAD HE SUBJECTIVELY ADORES AS RESIDENT IN THE CAVE OF THE PSYCHIC HEART WITHIN HIMSELF AND OBJECTIVELY AS DWELLING IN THE INNER CELL OF THE TEMPLE WITHOUT

—Temples Seem to Be Distinctive of, and Peculiar to, the Temper and Individuality of India, and Whatever Exalted Purposes They May Serve and Refinement in Taste and Spirit They May Attest, the Jewish Synogogue, the Christian Church, the Mohammadan Mosque Cannot Be Called Temples Because They Enshrine No Idols—But, Then, Has Not the Hinduism That Cherishes a Proverbial Hospitality and a Superlative Reverence for All Religions, and That Is So Utterly Indifferent When All of Them, Either Individually or Collectively Administer to It Several of the Most Damaging and Unjustifiable Animadversions, Meet Them All on the Merits of Their Own Grounds ?—And Again, Has It Not a Chidambaram Temple that Houses an Idolless Deity, and Bears the Excellence of Enshrining a Sheer Ether of Space Canopying the Ether of Consciousness, a Thing That Is the Stroke of Genius Possible Only to the Supreme Greatness in Philosophical Conception and Mystical Experience Which We Associate Only With Hinduism and Its Subtle Metaphysics, and No Other Religion and No Other Philosophy Whether Platonic or Primitive—

BHUVANESHWAR

BHUVANESHWAR is an inland town about 20 miles south of Cuttack. It is a Railway station on the mainline between Calcutta and Madras.

The chief temple is the Lingaraja temple.

The name of the president deity is Tribhuvaneswara of the Lord of the three worlds. Siva is worshipped in the form of a large uncarved block of granite about 8 feet long. It is a Svayambhu linga.

The other temples are the Raja Rani temple, Brahmeswara temple, dedicated to Brahma and the Vasudev temple dedicated to Vishnu.

There are many rock-cut caves in the Udyagiri and Khandagiri. The Hathi Guha or the elephant cave, the Ravi Guha and the Ganesha Guha are found in the Udayagiri.

The Latghara Guha in the Khandagiri hill contains the figures of the Jain Tirthankaras. The figure of Rishabha Deva is beautiful.

There are many sacred tanks. The most sacred is Vindusagara. "Whatever merits may be acquired by annual pilgrimages to the source of the Ganges, the Prayaga or the Ganga Sagar, repeated for 60 years, may be acquired by a single bath in the Vindusagara."

Drops from all the sacred pools on earth, in heaven, in the lower regions and also nectar constantly fall into it. Hence the significant name, Vindusagara. It is celebrated to possess the combined sacredness of all the sacred rivers and tanks of India. Therefore, it is largely resorted to by pilgrims.

CHAMUNDI HILL, MYSORE CITY

There is a beautiful temple of the Goddess Chamundi, the Consort of Lord Siva, on the summit of this hill. There is an excellent road which leads up to the top of the hill, which can be reached in about half-an hour. Two-third of the way up Chamundi, sits a giant Nandi, the sacred bull of Lord Siva, hewn out of a single rock. It is 16 feet high.

Sri Chamundeswari is the tutelary deity of the Mysore Royal family.

The hill is 3490 ft. above the sea-level. The road up the hill is lighted by electric lights. There is a residence of His Highness the Maharajah at the top of the hill.

Dasera festival in September-October is very grand in Mysore. Huge crowds from all parts of India are attracted to the city.

CAPE COMORIN

Cape Comorin or Kanya Kumari is one of the most beautiful places of pilgrimage in India. It has a picturesque scenery. It is a lovely place where continent and ocean meet. There is sea on the three sides. The sacred temple is dedicated to the Goddess Parvati. The Indian ocean with its two arms, the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal washes and worships the holy feet of Mother Parvati.

Once upon a time the Asuras Baha and Mukha oppressed the Devas. The Devas approached Lord Siva who dwells at Benares. Lord Siva created two Goddesses out of His Shakti. The one Goddess manifested as Kali at Kalighat and the other as Kanya Kumari or Virgin Goddess at Cape Comorin. They destroyed the wicked demons. The warlike festival called Ambuchashi is celebrated in the temple in the second month of the Malayalam year.

There are several beautiful bathing ghats. Those who go on pilgrimage to Benares

should also visit Cape Comorin to fulfil their pious wish.

CHIDAMBARAM

Chidambaram or more correctly—Chit-tambalam (the atmosphere of wisdom) is about 150 miles south of Madras and seven miles from the coast. it is in the South Arcot district. It is a Railway station on Southern Railway on the mainline. It is chiefly noted for the most sacred and celebrated temple of Lord Nataraja.

The temple is in the midway between the Vellar river on the north and the Coleroon on the South, the sea on the east and the Viranam lake on the west. In days of yore the Pandya Kings, the Chola Kings and the Pallava Kings patronized the temple. All the Tamil saints have sung praises of the Lord. The temple was the chosen abode of saints and poets.

There is Akasa lingam in Chidambaram. Lord Nataraja, the presiding Deity of the temple is in dancing pose. His left leg is raised. The idol of Nataraja is enshrined in the Holy Sanctum, known as the Chit Sabha. There is a curtain behind the idol of Nataraja. This is removed on special occasions of worship. There is mere space which represents Nirguna Brahman, devoid of all names and forms. This is the Chidambara Rahasya. Lord Nataraja has come out of the attributeless Brahman. There is a Chakra (Chidambara Chakra) which contains the Panchakshara or five-letters of Lord Siva—Nama-Sivaya—on the wall to the back of this idol.

There are five courts or Sabhas in the temple viz., the Chit Sabha, Kanaka Sabha, Raja Sabha or Durbar, the Nritta Sabha and the Deva Sabha.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, pp. 67-70.

19. SIVANANDA PLAYS THE DOCTOR HE IS, FOR ADDING, IN TERMS OF THE REASONS OF HEALTH, ANOTHER SANCTION TO THE CURRENCY OF A PILGRIMAGE TO KAILAS, AND CONCLUDES HIS BOOK ON THE OBJECTIVES AND ADVANTAGES OF PILGRIMAGE, WITH WORDS THAT RING INTO THE READER THE PRESENCE OF A MUCH-ADORED SAGE AND BRING TO HIM THE LIGHT OF A MUCH-NEEDED MESSAGE

—The Daily Popular Conversations Interspersed With a Language Steeped in the One Common and Profound Philosophic Thought Keeps the Spirituality of the Vast Sub-Continent That India Is, a Vital Phenomenon, a General Yet Deep Mystic Realism That Has Percolated into the Hymns, the Songs and the Sayings of the House-wife, the Peasant, the Unlettered Beggar, Galvanise the Unifying Idealistic Aspirations of the Sea of Indian Humanity, and the Great Net-Work of Pilgrim-Centres and the Various Gods That Dwell in Them, Have Achieved and Have Always Fostered and Sustained for India, the Unity of Her National Type, Her Religious Faith, Her Racial Divergency—

YOU will find a description of Orteel's treatment in books on medicine for certain cardiac affections (heart troubles), the patient is asked to climb up hills slowly. So this Kailas trip, besides the spiritual benefit, removes many kinds of minor heart troubles.

The heart is invigorated and strengthened. The whole cerdio-vascular, nervous, pulmonary, ailmentary, integumentary systems are thoroughly overhauled and purified. There is no necessity for a Kuhne's steam bath. You perspire profusely during the march. The whole body is filled with fresh, oxygenated blood. The gentle breeze blowing from the tall pine trees all over surcharged with natural oil of pine disinfects the lungs and a consumptive is cured of Phthisis when he returns. The excessive fat is reduced. A Kailas trip is the best treatment for reduction of obesity in corpulent persons. Many kinds of stomach troubles, uric acid troubles, various sorts of skin diseases are cured. You will not get any diseases for a period of 12 years as you are charged with new electrons, new atoms, new cells, new molecules and new nuclei with renovated protoplasm. This is no *Arthavada* (glorification). You get two birds by throwing one stone. The Kailas trip brings spiritual blessings and good health. Hail to Sambhu the Lord Siva who dwells in Kailas with His Bhakti, Parvati, who gives Mukti to His devotees and who is known by the different names, Hara, Sadasiva, Mahadeva, Nataraja, Sankara, and so on.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas,
p. 89.

THE goal of life is God-realization which only can free us from the miseries of Samsara, the wheel of birth and death. The performance of the daily obligatory rites Nitya, Naimittika Karmas, Yatras, etc., unselfishly leads to the acquisition of virtue. This leads to the destruction of sin, which in turn results in the purification of the mind. This purification of mind leads to the comprehension of the true nature of Samsara or relative existence, its false and worthless nature. From this results Vairagya (renunciation) which arouses a desire for liberation, from this desire a vigilant search for its means. From it comes the renunciation of all actions. Thence the practice of *Yoga*, which leads to a habitual tendency of the mind to settle in the Atma or Brahman. This results in the knowledge of the meaning of such Sruti passages as *"Tat Twam Asi"*, which destroys the *Avidya*, ignorance, thus leading to the establishment in one's own Self. Thus you see that *Yatra* like Kailas trip is a *Parampara Sadhana* for God-realisation as it causes *Chitta-Shuddi* and Nididhyasan—Dhyana is a direct, *Sakshat Sadhana*. Householders who are set up in the world amidst various sorts of cares and anxieties find great relief in a Yatra. Their minds get quite refreshed by a Yatra. Further during the travel they come across Sadhus and Sannyasins. They can have good *Satsang*. They can clear their doubts. They can get various sorts of help from them in spiritual Sadhana. That is the main object of Yatra.

Let me bring to your memory, once more the last word of the Vedas, Upanishads—"TAT TWAM ASI", my dear Readers ! *Om Tat Sat, Om Shanti*, Peace be unto all Beings.

—Swami Sivananda's
Pilgrimage to Badri and Kailas,
p. 90.

20. THE TOWERING SAINT SIVANANDA ON THE ANCIENT LANDMARKS, THE TEMPLES AT TRIPLICANE AND MYLAPORE AND THE HEART OF SHANKARITE MONASTIC ESTABLISHMENTS AND THE BEAUTEOUS LITTLE PILGRIM-CENTRE AT SRINGERI

—Versed in the Silpashastras, Skilled in the Architectural Technicalities, Disciplined in Intelligence by Philosophic Thought, and by Virtue of an Intimate Familiarity with the Hindu Traditions and the Possession of a Capacity for Impersonal Attitude and for an Opinion Unconditioned by Prejudice, the Critic Gains the Right Vantage-ground to View the Greatness of the Ancient Indian Temples, to Roll His Eye Over the Rich Symbolism That Runs through Their Outer Structures and Grasp the Inner Meaning With Which Everything Within Them Is Lavishly Invested—

MADRAS

THERE is the reputed Parthasarathi temple in Triplicane. It is a temple dedicated to Lord Krishna as Divine Charioteer or Partha Sarathi. It is the only one of its kind in South India. There is a tank in front of the temple.

The Kapaliswara temple is another celebrated temple dedicated to Lord Siva. It is in Mylapore. The name of the Lord is Kapaliswara. There is a beautiful tank. The name of the town is connected with a legend. Uma, consort of Lord Siva incarnated in Mylapore as peacock (Mayura) and adored Lord Siva. A famous annual festival in honour of the 63 Saiva Nayanmars is celebrated in this temple in the spring. There is the image of Sambandar in this temple. He brought back to life a cremated *chetti* girl by singing a hymn in praise of Kapaliswara.

Avvayar the great poetess-saint was a devotee of Lord Ganesh. Lord Ganesh raised Avvayar to heaven with his uplifted trunk. There is an image of Lord Ganesh with his trunk uplifted. The memory of Avvayar is commemorated in association with this image of Ganesh. Saint Tiruvalluvar the author of Kural spent his last days in Mylapore. A temple dedicated to this great saint who is regarded as an Avatara of Brahman is in the vicinity of Kapaliswara temple. Tiruvottyur is a reputed place of pilgrimage. It is five miles to the North of Madras. There is a beautiful temple here. Adipuriswara is the name of the deity. The Samadhi of the great sage Pattinathar Pillayar is in Tiruvottyur.

SRINGERI

The name of the place Sringeri is derived from an old legend connected with Ramayana. Sringeri was originally the giri or the mountain of Rishya Sringa, the one-horned saint. Once there was a terrible famine in Ayodhya. King Dasaratha brought the saint to his capital. At once there was abundant rain.

Sringeri is a Mutt founded by Sri Sankaracharya. It is situated in the Mysore state on a spur of the Western Ghats.

—Swami Sivananda's
Temples in India, pp. 83-84.

The Fourth Phase

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE VALUATIONAL CONTENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL CONTINUUM IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

—And Concerning the Universe, a Conspectus Obtained by an Insight Definitely Keener and Richer Than, Though Not Specifically As Gifted for Scientific Discovery As, That of Albert Einstein, Cannot But Disclose to Us That Consciousness Is Central to Its Organic Processes, and When Observed in the Deeper Layers of Man, this Consciousness Comes to Reveal Itself at once as the First and the Fundamental Truth of His Existence, the Continent and the Synthesising Controller of All His Knowledge, and the End and Consummation of All the Value His Inner Constitution Carries and All the Delight His Being Bears—and, How, Then, Would Such an Insight, Encountering the Educational Agency and Finding Its Field, Its Resting Place and Its Acting Power Laid Nowhere Except in the Complexus of Capacities, Abilities and Functions Represented by the Whole of Human Intelligence, Conceive of Its Disciplines and Dynamic Save As a Continuum, Mark the Borders of Its Extent Except As Conterminous With the Boundaries of the Entire Field of Human Life, Activity and Expression, Whether the Specialised Skills of That Life and Activity Are Fitted to Some Technological Vocation, or to Civil Service, or to Political Leadership, or to Mathematical Genius, or to Philosophization, or to Sheer Poetization, or Merely to Some Type of Trained Action, and Discern Its Grand End Only in the Reaching By Life, of a Transcendental Destiny and Fulfilment ?—

The ultimate aim of education was formulated by Socrates as the discovery of Truth, by Plato as a many-sided development, by Aristotle as felicity through virtue, by Bacon as mastery over nature, by Comenius as happiness with God, by Milton as skilful citizenship, by Locke as a sound mind in a sound body, by Rousseau as the formation of habits, by Kant as preparation for some possible ideal future, by Herbart as moral improvement, by Froebel as realisation of a holy life, by N. M. Butler as an inheritance of culture, by Gentile as an ever deepening insight, by Dewey as an experiential self-organisation and social efficiency, and by Sivananda as the gradual realisation of the fundamental values of Truth, Love and Goodness, through a graded development of the intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities, and a possession, in Consciousness, as a culminating experience, of the absolute status of these basic Values, by an integral Self-realization. The merits of the last conception, and the limitations of the preceding formulations, of the ultimate purpose of education, will be borne out to our judgment, when we subject to a close inspection not only the full potentialities of the formulations themselves but also the world-view and vision of Man that inspired each of them.

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA.

THE VALUATIONAL CONTENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL CONTINUUM IN SIVANANDA LITERATURE

1. THE FOUNDING OF THE YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY WITH A NOETICALLY SYNTHESISING SPIRIT GREATER THAN THE ONE THAT DIRECTED THE CONCEPTION AND THE CREATION OF THE PLATONIC ACADEMY AND WITH A VISION PHILOSOPHICALLY MORE PENETRATING AND ANALYTIC THAN THE ONE THAT ANIMATED THE ARISTOTELIAN LYCEUM, AND WITH NO ENCUMBRANCE OR EMBARRASSMENT EXCEPT THE FINANCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL INADEQUACIES AT ITS INCEPTION

—Conceived as a Continuum, and Seen in the Light, and Measured Against the Scale, of the Highest Values of Life, Education with Sivananda Is the Richest Integral Phenomena Proceeding on Processes that Never Cease, Having Developed the Educant's Innate Abilities, Personality-Resources, Intrinsic "Genius", Until they Reach their Destination, and Find their Fulfilment, in the Realization of the Ultimate End Which is Coeval and Coextensive With the Perfection of the Infinite—Meant to Combine the Best in the Ancient Indian and the Ancient Greek Traditions in Education With the Fundamental Content and Lively Trends in Modern Western Humanities and Sciences, Make Studies in Yoga, Vedanta, World Thought, International Law, Compulsory and Render English the Medium of Instruction and Self-Expression, the Forest Academy of Swami Sivananda Owes Its Inspiration and Initiative Neither to the Brahmanical Forest "Universities" and the Budhist Viharas of Antiquity Nor to Some Modern Movements Represented Primarily by Tagore's Viswa Bharati, But to the Boundless Enthusiasm of the Greatest Living Philosopher, Sage and Prophet That Sivananda Himself Is, to Spread Light All Over the World, in the Varied Intensity and Colour of Its Florescence—

DURING THE ANCIENT DAWNS

THE impartment to the consciousness of the aspiring student of an indelible impression of the fundamental significance of the organic scheme of individual existence, as found laden in the very inner process of the growing, evolving, expanding, and self-integrating principle in the human constitution, was the informing spirit of the educational movement as carried on by the Self-enlightened teachers in the India of Upanishadic antiquity.

But it must be specially remembered as a stern defence against the irresponsible criticisms pronounced on the content of the ancient Indian philosophic thought, by

certain tenth-rate scholars of untoward reason,—these teachers were not like some Western and modern Indian speculative philosophers, dry visionaries or empty dreamers in that remote world of metaphysical abstractions ; and therefore it was that with these intuitive men of impersonal power and transforming character, it came automatic to introduce simultaneously with the teaching, into the critical but receptive intelligence of the seeking students, an extra psychological discipline for a continuous self-conscious effort at an achievement of the evolutionary End of the inner consciousness by a successful effectuation of the transmutation and transformation of the instinctual, sensuous and mental experiences into a structure of the divine energism.

As reply to the attitude of a conventional and insufficiently sceptical mind of our times, it becomes necessary to hint at two of the pragmatic results accruing to us from the individual unfoldment and exercise of the divine consciousness and its countless inherent powers. The apparently passive action of the divine energism attuned to the perfect rhythms of the laws not yet known to the mind of the experimental psychological science but known in immediacy to the Supreme Intelligence generally referred to in the mystical statements of Dr. Albert Einstein resulted in the spread of universal peace and manifold blessings for mankind.

REVIVAL IN OUR TIMES

General Indian history has the privilege to record, that after a lapse of many thousands of years, a rivival of this ruling principle in educational practice of an ancient age we owe to the founding of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy by Swami Sivananda. But this Founder-President is also a product of the Western culture in certain external aspects of his personality action ; therefore it is that we see the educational endeavour initiated by him, has assimilated into its system the Western dynamism in pragmatic knowledge and life-expression. We ourselves form modest representative effects of his educational discipline. An attempt at a better appreciation of the immense value of this practicable educational vision, devolves on us a running of our discerning eye over the framework of the fundamental principles of the educational process conducted down through the ages of the Western World.

EARLY HEBREW EFFORT

The centrally constituting principle of the patient educational process among the ancient Hebrew rabbis was a fervid spirit of inculcation at the schools of the synagogues, into the mind of the young, of the content of 'ecclesiastical' thought. Attention to the schools of the Hebrews, is here drawn because of the prominent role they played in transmitting to the Indo-European Greeks, the ray of light that was to illuminate the western world. The importance of the Hebrews, H. G. Wells states in his *Short History of the World*, "is due to the fact that they produced a written literature, a world history, a collection of laws, chronicles, psalms, books of wisdom, poetry and fiction and political utterances which becomes at last what Christians know as the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible. This literature appears in history in the fourth and fifth century B.C."

SCHOOLS OF THE SOPHISTS

In the Hellenic world, methods in eloquent public appeal and art of rhetorical persuasion, formed the soul of the machinery of education set in operation by the Sophists to afford assistance to the young Athenians in their achievement of individual political success and personal advancement. However, the measure of the impact of 'virtuous' influence the Sophists intended wielding on the character of the students, is well reflected in the somewhat of an egotistic assertion of the intellectual leader of the Sophists, Protagoras: 'If you associate with me, on that very day you will return a better man than you came." Presenting an able discussion of the new type of education brought to birth and fostered in Athens, by a body of eminent Sophist professors, De Burgh in the first volume of his *Legacy of the Ancient World*, adds a foot-line that the problem of present-day education is to do for the many what the Sophists claimed to do for the few.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE GREEKS

The quest of the universal in knowledge and the attempts at rendering the individuals happier and better citizens, formed the cardinal note in the Socratic educational endeavour. The principle of aristocracy in education reigns the realm of the Platonic ideal of the state. The special education of the rulers becomes a state-concern and the individual will in personal interests is trenchantly liberated only to be yoked to the demands of the ideal state. Concerning the common citizens, also in the 'Republic' and the 'Laws', Plato has sketched the subject of education as constituting a training of mankind to resist pleasure as well as to remain inured to pain. Again in 'Timaeus,' the great Greek philosopher gives 'music for the mind and gymnastic for the body' as the two principal features of the method of education which must help result in the purification of the eye of the soul.

There emerges from the 'Republic' of Plato a most helpful statement of truest discernment in any theory of education which affords a closest concordance to the thought of Swami Sivananda : Education is "not a process of acquisition, but the use of powers already existing in us." Aristotle reasoned that, "that which most contributes to the permanence of constitutions is the adaptation of education to the form of government"; therefore, the individual is to be fitted to subserve the ends of the state and under social control made to wax in virtue.

AIMS OF THE ROMANS

The guiding vision of the Roman conception of education aimed at the creation of a Cicero. The Roman authority on education, Marcus Fabius Quintilian, expressed himself on the moral excellence, mental brilliance and verbal eloquence, as constituting the main strands in the personality of the trained orator. Obviously, the educational procedure of the Romans, was, in the most general of its features, a reconstruction of the teaching of the Sophists. Civic loyalty, qualities of gravity and military energy, a strong sense of the greatness of Rome, thirst for renown, were woven into the character of the Roman student.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

With the emergence of early Christia-

nity, there were set up 'catechumenal' and 'catechetical' schools which by a studied process of a specialized discipline produced the Apologists and travelling preachers of the Christian beliefs and doctrines, who defended the faith and found themselves well-equipped to elevate the articles of institutional religion to the dignified and persuasive level of knowledge. The power and influence of this movement in early Christian education asserted itself to such an extent that it caught the enthusiasm of the Emperor Justinian which found an unhappy expression in the publication of an edict abolishing all schools of Athens and blowing the trumpets for the fullest operation of the institutions of Christian instruction.

MEDIEVAL CLOISTER SCHOOLS

But when the Roman Empire slided into the stinker of corruption, the devout teachers dictated by the interests of piety and spiritual calling, sought secluded spots to foster their chosen activities. Under the direction of St. Benedict there sprang up twelve monasteries, and the one at Mount Casslon became the prototype of all the institutions of that kind in Western Europe. Schools became part of the monastic life; 'the seven liberal arts' or theology was taught in the schools of the cloister; and, as young men from secular groups approached the monks for an education essential for their mode of life there developed two types of schools, one for the 'interni' and the other for the 'externi'. The governing principle of the educational process was under the iron control of the church and the general aim was to secure for the student the salvation of the human soul in a world of temptations and sin.

MOVEMENT UNDER SCHOLASTICISM

At the close of the eighth century, European educational endeavour with its informing spirit of religious belief flourished under the lustre of the character of Charlemagne. This Emperor to whose literary interests Gibbon offers an enthusiastic admiration in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, invited Albinus Flaccus Alcuin, an English divine, the most learned and accomplished man of his age, to found a palace school. Alcuin exercised so great an influence on the empire that scholars of the eminence of Erigena bear the stamp of his imprint. During the Middle Ages, Scholasticism carried on the movement of education along the traditional lines of maintaining the dominance of the institution of the church. Peter Abelard who crystallized the Scholastic method, was influential in founding the University of Paris. The period of these ages was illumined by the birth of many universities which, in the early part of their existence, were in their procedure of instruction essentially ecclesiastic.

DURING THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

With the dawn of early renaissance, educational process sought freedom from the domination by the principles of a powerful and relentless church. The guild burgher and court schools took their birth and rise. The renowned court school at Mantua, which became a model for many such schools throughout Europe, was founded by Feltre, who revived the Grecian principle in education, of a harmonious development of mind, body and moral nature; and, as the shackles of excessive ecclesiastic domination in educational endeavour were shattered, this noted

scholar fitted the young to the demands of a practical life in the world of renaissance.

ENTRY OF SECULAR FORCES

The spearhead of the northern counterpart of Italian renaissance, the great religious reformer, Martin Luther, in his immeasurable zeal for the glory of God and the welfare of man, wrested the system of education from the fist of the Roman catholic church into the hands of the people in general. To understand Bible and grow into good citizens were the principle features of this system of education that yielded itself more and more to the control of secular forces. Schools began to be founded by private bodies ; and the individual leaders of the endeavour extended their efforts to a formulation of the philosophy of education.

ENGLISH EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

In England of the seventeenth century, an illustrious poet, John Milton, who for sometime undertook the profession of tuition of his nephews by virtue of his 'Tractate on Education' wrote to Master Samuel Hartlib such lines as "The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first Parents by regaining to know God aright. I call therefore a complete and generous Education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices both private and public, of Peace and War." Besides pronouncing an indictment on the then existing system of education in schools and universities, Milton urged the students to take to a study of the classical writings of Greece and Rome. But, the ideals of Milton in a 'virtuous and noble,' 'complete and generous' education could not gain grounds against a rapidly growing field of scientific understanding and development and specially because nothing gave itself so easily to the imposing intellectual leaders active in the context of those times of English cultural history, as a perception, and the consequent advocation, of the need and value of the scientific knowledge. Moreover, these men of intrinsic mental greatness acquired a deep-rooted distaste for all forms of barren scholastic studies and aimed their missiles at the misdirected educational efforts of the universities. Two such noted men were Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes.

SCIENTIFIC TREND IN EDUCATION

The father of experimental philosophy, Francis Bacon, the author of the 'Advancement of Learning' who proved himself as one of the great forces that broke the barriers of the obscurantism of religious dogma and conservative authority, endeavoured to make education a machinery for the unimpeded transmission of the accumulated knowledge of society, to the young students in order that they might do their thinking up from the formulated conclusions piled up by the enlightened men of the past.

For the author of 'Leviathan,' Thomas Hobbes, the system of education has no other purpose than to offer itself in unquestioning submission to the inflexible hand of the soveriegn power. Students are to be trained to serve the designs of the state. In passing it may be stated that it is to these illustrious sons of England, the world is indebted for the effort they made in initiating the scientific trend in educational endeavour.

RELIGIOUS MOTIVE IN EDUCATION

Johann Amos Comenius, a great seven-

teenth century Moravian minister and educational reformer, visioned by an inspired insight the ultimate aim of education in the individual's achieved experience of the highest happiness that springs from our conscious possession of the Spirit of God. The basic principle in his system of educational endeavour of imparting encyclopaedic training to the student, makes it obligatory on the part of the teacher to follow the 'method of nature". Educational science is synonymous with the development of the entire man ; from broad-bases, through gradational process the teaching as it rises towards its superstructure, should become more exact and specific ; with the growing age of the child the developing powers of his observation and understanding would embrace more and more complex and wider fields. Comenius advocated the dependence of students on their own investigations rather than on authority, and a replacement of restraint and coercion by a stimulated interest in their studies. The final fruition of educational discipline is realized in man's established harmony with the being of God.

SOCIAL CURRENT IN EDUCATION

A dynamic reconstruction of the energies of the youth for a manifold function in the world of affairs, was conceived and formulated by John Locke to be the end of education. Wholesome social control of the impressionable mind of the student, the formation of habits rather than a presentation of much knowledege, is the leading principle in the educational philosophy of John Locke.

The versatile leader of the English Enlightenment, a towering intellectual being fashioned by an attitude of robust common-sense, a strong temper of practicality, the force of virtue, liberal views and social nature,—John Locke summed up his personal dissatisfaction with the scholastic fare offered him by university course, in mellowed terms: "I found very little light brought to my understanding." After advancing in his "Essay on Human Understanding," a proposition that mind at birth is a 'tabula rasa,' Locke has set forth in "Some Thoughts Concerning Human Understanding," many modern-sounding suggestions for instructing and training the "clean-sheet mind" of the child, and fitting it to meet harmoniously the many demands of a social life by rendering it quite receptive to the impressions emanating from the environmental world of men. "A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world," says Locke in his educational classic. The type of the English gentleman of good manners, practical temper, virtue and wisdom which Locke portrayed in his writings, bears resemblance to Locke's own grand social character scintillated by utilitarian wisdom and mental experience.

ACCENT ON NATURAL DEVELOPMENT

Important contributions to the theory and practice of education emerge from the pages of "Emile," the greatest work of Rousseau. The immense influence exerted on the subsequent educational reformers by the author of this moral romance is, by the very reason of its immensity, difficult of all computation. Such great names in educational reorientation and its long process of progress, as Basedow, Pestalozzi,

Herbart, and Froebel, carry in some measure or the other, a reflection of the influence of Rousseau.

The fundamental principle in the pedagogical doctrine of Rousseau, is assigned an active protective role of shielding the mind of the child against the intrusions of social influences and conventional disciplines. The mind of the child must be emancipated from the trammels of society and medieval restraint. On the positive side, the function of this principle consists in assisting and fostering the natural unfoldment and development of the instincts, capacities and native activities of the individual. The process of education should be dictated to us by the native interests and curiosity of the student. Every individual must learn a trade, and moral training is to be imparted not through precept but by example.

PESTALOZZIANISM IN EDUCATION

Bearing as he does the influence of Rousseau, Pestalozzi laid down "the natural, progressive, and harmonious development of all the powers and capacities of the human being," as the chief aim of education. The system of elementary education instituted by this pioneer Swiss educational reformer, addressed itself immediately to the interests and capacities of children and effectuated the development of the young by constantly calling into active exercise everyone of their powers.

ETHICAL ENDS IN EDUCATION

The renowned 'father' of scientific pedagogics, Herbart, promulgated the formation of ethical character as the goal of education. The mechanism leading to a realization of this ethical end is the proper monitering of this psychological fact of "apperceptive mass" in the educative process; and this imposes on the teacher the playing of an important role in understanding the already existing "cliques of of ideas" in the mind of the child and imparting to it such impressions or new ideas as are calculated to develop moral character.

KINDERGARTEN SYSTEM OF FROEBEL

The object of Kindergarten system of education founded by Froebel, consists in giving to children "employment suited to their nature, strengthen their bodies, exercise their senses, employ the waking mind, make them acquainted judiciously with Nature and society, cultivate especially the heart and temper, and lead them to the foundation of all living—to unity with themselves." Thus an unfoldment of the total personality is the design embodied by Froebel in the educational process. By this provision for the child's judicious acquaintance with society, Froebel takes a happy departure from Rousseau, and reconciles the two contrary currents of natural individualistic and social doctrines of education.

DEWEYAN EDUCATION IN AMERICA

The moving spirit behind the new methods of modern education in America, has been the nestor of its philosophy, John Dewey. But not all progressive schools are Deweyan; for, some of the progressive educators have thrown themselves into an exclusive emphasis on the "child-centred" schools as contrasted with the old "subject-

centred" schools. Necessitated by a study of the demands of an industrialized society and in reaction to the traditional type of instruction, Dewey has formulated social-economic goals for education.

"The school is 'par excellence' the potential social organ for promoting this liberation;" and that liberation is the economic freedom which "is a means to cultural freedom, to the release of the human spirit in all its capacities for development through science, art, and unconstrained human intercourse". School is a miniature community and a laboratory of work where the students are taught "through practice, and through trial and error, the arts and discipline necessary for economic and social order."

John Dewey formulated a principle in his "Experience and Education," that "education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual and for society must be based upon experience—which is always the actual experience of some individual." "There is no discipline in the world so severe as the discipline of experience subjected to the tests of intelligent development and direction." In "Democracy and Education," Dewey states that educative process "is a constant reorganizing or reconstruction of experience." In 'Education and Social Order," Dewey pleads for "the definite substitution of a social purpose, controlling methods of teaching and discipline and materials for study, for the traditional individual aim. And in the school as in society generally, that change will singnify more genuine development of individuality for the mass of individuals."

SPIRITUAL TURN OF ITALY

Under the fascist regime of Benito Mussoloni, Giovani Gentile, the eminent neo-idealist author of "The Theory of Mind as Pure Act" and "Reform of Education," held the office of the Minister of Public Eduation; the Gentile Educational Reform in Italy completely reorganized the general plan of the State Department of Education, and brought its action under the strongly centralized control and direction. An intense national consciousness was brought into being as the leading spirit of the reformed school system of Italy. In the thoroughly revised curriculum, religious subjects received an important place and a significant role; the chief interest in other subjects of education was shifted to the classics of literature and philosophy, and the tendered courses were calculated to result in a well formed individual development and many-sided expression.

An increasingly inward consciousness of consciousness, a growing profundity of self-awareness, an ever more deepening insight, are, according to Giovani Gentile, the consummative end of education. Philosophy, the highest and the concretest form of spiritual activity, is made the monolith for the firm foundation of education. The important function of creation, formation and expansion of the human spirit in all particular experiences forms the active educational process; and this process is rendered conscious and intelligible by philosophizing. Moral phenomenon constituted by the powers of good-will, charity, sympathy, open-mindedness, warmth of affection, brings about a growing and widening freedom and perfection of human personality, through a process of the liberation of the individual's empirical mind from all sense of otherness, from the

self-imposed barriers between oneself and others; this illuminating moral nature endows the self of man with a dynamic knowledge of others as something immediately identical with his own spiritual activity.

The principle presupposed as the subject of everything which we can think or speak of, is the Self-conscious mind of man; it is a developing process or act; reality is "the inward effort of the soul;" "man himself rises above humanity and becomes God;" "the absolute 'I' is the 'I' which each of us realises in every pulsation of our spiritual existence". For this reason it is that the starting point of all educational doctrine and discipline is the mind of the student. To the pupil, the teacher is the spiritual parent, the representative of the Self-consciousness of the universe; the teaching process should proceed on the wheels of perfect harmony and love between the teacher and the taught; learning is not an indifferent undergoing but an active participation by the student's rational intelligence or seeking will. The material of education is a re-enactment, a re-living of the past spiritual products embodied in religion, art, literature; and, knowledge is nothing if it does not resolve itself into an activity of self-expansion and Self-realization.

COMMUNIST EDUCATION IN RUSSIA

The Hinge Of Civilizations

Flawless methods of education, the organically regulating power of a strong social structure, the vitalizing force and shaping energy of an ever-enduring culture, the self-sustaining strength of a perfect civilization, the real happiness, true peace and unhindered spiritual progress of mankind, are determined, governed and guided by the immense driving power of the correct and integral conception of the many-levelled and complex being that man is. On the synthetic completeness of the view of the value of the human individual, hinge the inner richness and persisting character of a civilization.

Brittle Bases Of Communism

But that dangerously practical genius of crude prophetic force and world-wide influence, Karl Marx puts the human individual on the Procrustean bed of his ill-founded new-fangled thought constructed by his tremendous mental energy and embittered temper, under the impacts of a world of 'unkind' men, sights of the sorrows of the expropriated proletariat, German Philosophy, English Political Economy, French Revolutionary Socialism, the now largely obsolete nineteenth century scientific notions, and mutilates him till he looks that hedious thing, "the ensemble of social relations," a distorted being pegged to the amorphous pack, a being psychologically non-existent, illusory as a moral and spiritual entity, unreal as an autonomous individual seeking a self-development, real only as a focus of the interplay of unconscious social forces, a being whose family-unit is broken up, tradition derided, morality decried and religion annihilated, a being for whom he has built a powerful system of well-pruned emotionally appealing ideas, gave a modern gospel of hectic soulless action and unscrupulous bloody revolution, laid down the lines for the fulfilment of a 'historic' mission directed by faulty social dialectics, painted with vague colours and indistinct lines a picture of a never-to-be-realized terrestrial Paradise as answering

to the irresistible demand of the emerging life-integrating hunger of the inmost being in man, for true Heaven that symbolizes a realizable state of the perfection and dynamism of the fully manifest spiritual Consciousness, and ironically enough, enthroned himself in the provoked but not chastened nor enlightened affections of the millions of his dialectical-materialist disciples, as the only Deity.

The Future Of Communism

The obtuseness and obscurantism of the 'materialist' theses on the human individual have missed the very central meaning of man's existence, betray a wilful blindness to the bewildering complexity of the nature, power, range and function of individual consciousness, the now experimentally demonstrated possibilities of human personality, the existential presence of the ultimate divine reality in the empirical encasements of every man, an awakened recognition and conscious experience of which could become the one strong foundation for a true communism as against the crude, coarse, impracticable communism of Karl Marx, the importance of releasing into action the regenerating impulses, the beneficent and unifying moral drives, the enriching and progressively enlightening secret spiritual aspirations of the self-developing individual for increasing natural social solidarity and progress. They know nothing of the immense potentialities of a spiritually evolving individual consciousness, for the formation and maintenance of a free classless Stateless communal life, of the imperative need for the vigorous enlivement of the present structurally changed society, by the transformed; elevated, enlightened psychological nature of its constituting individuals. Despite its hastily set up spectacular superstructure and rapidly gained magnificent material opulence, a State or a Society founded on such a dangerously limited knowledge of the many-sided nature and the inward evolutionary destiny of the human individual, carries in itself many tensions weakening its mechanical cohesive forces, many quick working disintegrating elements: its transcience is visible, its collapse imminent; if it survives for a century or more, it would be on the condition of a complete loss of most of its basic ideals and an emergence into the new-clothed old values of old systems of society.

The blunder of the modern materialistic mind consists in its constitutional incapacity to seize luminously on the central fact that the Principle of Consciousness composing the essence of man's being, is antecedent to the Material Principle in Existence and Function, though later in its characteristic manifestation and increasing self-expression in and through the organic nature of the figures and formulations of an instrumental physical Energy. With Karl Marx the principle of consciousness is standing on its head; it must be turned right-side up again and if the structural change in the society effectuated by Communism aspires for an appreciable period of survival, it must ensoul as its informing spirit a radically changed nature and consciousness of men.

Education In The U. S. S. R.

Though its inflexible insistence on intensive ideological indoctrination and political supervision, and the consequent development in a world apart, in a compar-

ative cultural and intellectual isolation, of the student-mind in the present structure of the sovietic society, cannot but be construed in non-communist countries as constituting a very unhappy feature that never ceases to evoke from talented writers works of tales and tears, the many-branching and qualitatively different Russian system of universal and compulsory public education, has, especially during the course of past ten-years, achieved most noteworthy wide-ranged results quite unprecedented in the whole history of the world educational process. In that gigantic centralized machinery of modern Soviet education, made more robust and rigid by the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the vitalizing and governing, the dominant and determinative principle of an all-round communistic upbringing and training turns out tens of thousands of cadres of workers for furthering the continuous expansion and perfection of socialist production, of doughty defenders of the U. S. S. R., of prepared hands supposed to consummate the transition of the present socialist state and society into that "mystically" visioned communist pattern of collective human life.

The Soviet Student

The student in Soviet Russia is drilled, trained and educated to exercise strong nerves of a hardened body, show an ability to take to any technical task for hightening the economic prosperity of the socialist Motherland, bring into active play proletarian humanism, Soviet patriotism, a cultivated aversion to mysticism and philistinism, and if endowed with intrinsic powers of literary expression, to add to a "culture that is socialist in content and national in form." A dialectical materialistic world outlook is engendered in him; his attitude towards work is socialistic; the attributes of his character are adjusted to the rhythms of communist ethical thought; hard-work, selflessness, sacrifice are the common features of the expressions of his educated energies; vibrant with values altogether new to the history of human thought, he stands steadfastly for the cause of the workmen and peasants of the whole world and presents on demand evidences of the formal possession of an apparently rational and realistic recognition of the imperative and inevitable end towards which the wrinkled and aging human society is slowly but surely advancing under the drive of a compelling law that is conceived to be directing the evolutionary course of the world.

Political Organizations In Schools

Every secondary school has its own political organizations: the Young Communist League and the Young Pioneers; and in every tertiary education, an intensive study of the central principles of Marxism-Leninism, forms an integral part of the obligatory social and political course. The fulfilment of one of the main higher educational tasks, the ideological and political training in accordance with the spirit of the teaching of Marx-Engles-Lenin-Stalin, of the students and teachers, is achieved by the chairs of Marxism-Leninism which tutor the students in a conscious appliction of the Marxist-Leninist theory to scientific-theoretical and practical work. The students gain an acquaintance with the philosophical foundations of the Soviet state and society, deep-laid in the dialectical materialism, and are conceptually equipped to understand

how the conflict of opposites characterizes the history of ideas resulting in the culminating phenomenon of an utter overthrow of non-communist ideological illusions, the total effacement of the exploiting social systems in capitalist countries, and the crowning establishment of a perfect stateless world order and classless communistic society. The conflict of opposites, the seeds of struggle are discovered even in the history of matter and this discovery becomes the point of departure in scientific research. Since the dawn of the creation of human life on earth, there never was born a materialist so uncompromising in mood, so insensitive to the nature of the means employed in the achievement of his goals, so recklessly optimistic, as the modern communist with his idea of struggle and conflict and his fanatic conviction in his ultimate triumph over 'man' and the universe; and none in the history of human life has suffered so great a disillusionment that must await him.

The Soviet Pedagogics

The Soviet system of pedagogical methodology stems from the Marxist ideology; but the formulated expressions of the purpose, aims and tasks of communist education, were given in the light of new historic conditions of, and practices in, the bolshevik building up of Soviet socialist society by the two great geniuses and deified leaders, Lenin and Stalin; these men of phenomenal power over men, have also placed greatest emphasis on the importance of polytechnical education, communist morality, advanced scientific knowledge, the obliteration of the distinction between tal an manual labour, and the need for an ever increasing number of cadres of workers for, and builders and defenders of, Communism.

The Soviet Teacher

The spirit and tireless services of the teacher, that come closest to the interests, purposes and policies of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, are greatly esteemed by the Soviet public and richly rewarded by the Soviet Government. The credentials that the teacher must present for his honourable and specially important profession of teaching are a proficiency in it, a fervent Soviet patriotism, a scientific-materialistic world outlook, an appreciable knowledge of the mind of the students, a mastery of general knowledge, a capacity to extend to the pupils effective sympathetic understanding and endearing love, a desire to assist actively the Party in its historic mission of constructing Communism. By the scintillating hues and colours of his own high personal proletarian morality and socialistic humanism, the teacher forms the character of the students and fashions their minds in the intense yet all-pervasive light of communist ideology.

The Materialistic Temper

Engles asserts in his "Anti-Duhring" that "there is nothing like an 'eternal,' immutable moral law;" and, Lenin denies all morality taken from superhuman or non-class conceptions, and in phrases of emotional vehemence subjects such a morality to condemnation; such a morality "is a deception, a swindle, a befogging of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of landlords and capitalists." The communist morality is deduced" from the facts

and needs of the class struggle of the proletariat. Upon the Marxist postulate that "religion is the opium of the people" revolves the Soviet official attitude to the institutional religions. Interdicting the teaching of religious doctrines in all educational establishments a decree of the Council of People's Commissars, instituted the "freedom of conscience" which in terms of a phrase in Marx's "Critique of Gotha Programme," is the liberation of the conscience from the witchery of religion. The sceptre of religion haunts the minds of men in ignorance and economic helplessness; the error of religion must be fought with the light of knowledge and effaced from the consciousness of the young and old; the imparting to the pupil, of a purely scientific-materialistic interpretation of the essence of the phenomenon of nature and human society would dispel all religious prejudices and superstitions. As the religious standpoint is individually asserted and widely disseminated as something totally "inferior to, and inconsistent with, the point of view of dialectical materialism", it becomes a matter of small wonder, if it is the scheduled activity of some eminent Soviet biologists to demonstrate, with the aid of pirhed frogs, to the students in extra curricular classes, the non-existence of the soul.

THE TRAGEDY AND THE TRIUMPH

Before presenting to ourselves a nodding acquaintance with some of the recent trends in British education, a digression into an understanding of what we have now come to term as the tragic feature of our times, would prove itself most helpful in our finding of a solution for the burning problem of the antithesis between a technical and a liberal education, of the scope and status of humanities in a scheme of technical education

The Nuclear Frankenstein

From the rumbling sulpherous bowels of the materialistic, mechanistic, technological, political civilization of our troubled times, has emerged the most dreadful phenomenon of nuclear Frankenstein's monster, determined to destroy all mankind if the two power-blocks delay their action in destroying him. But the tragedy of our times is not so much constituted by the horrid modern triumph of scientific annihilation, the impending dismal scenes of Armageddon, as by the baffling complexity and specialized subtlety of the infra-spiritual mind of the modern man, the most polished insane maker of manifold figures of Frankenstein's monster.

The Sub-human Superman

The roots of all troubles, trials and tribulations of mankind are easily discoverable by any normally discerning eye, in the inferior consciousness and unregenerate nature of man. If there are distrust, suspicion, enmity and hatred among nations, the worst type of racial tyranny, devilish brain-washing and ideological indoctrination, dishonesty and disharmonies in public life, unhappiness and frustrations in private existence, one would never fail to perceive their determining power and sustaining strength in the savage instincts, feverish desires, primitive feelings, egoistic impulses of the science-minded free citizen of modern 'hyperdemocracy'. What characterize the excited modern man in supersonic motion, are soullessness, aimlessness,

irreligion, irrationalism, imbalance, ignorance.

Amazing conquests of science and triumphs of technique and a keener specialized skill in an application of further knowledge in these two fields, have annexed and added to the modern man undreamt of dimensions of material power and instrumentation, and swelled and strengthened him into a colossal one-eyed Cyclops capable of achieving anything that the downward driving trend of his desires may direct him towards. If an inexorable psychological law formulated by an infallible perception of the supreme poetic genius of Shakespeare, is to be received as a traditional fact of experience, it must be recognized that the technological and industrial Superman though engaged in the hectic task of an ever-increasing creation of a magnificent complicated civilization for the comfort of the common man, would, unless he adopts the measures of an action lying outside his own accepted limited knowledge and inadequate discipline, continue to be a victim to the rigorous unsparing pursuit under many undetectable garbs, of his own nature which is quite obviously rooted in the subhuman character of the primitive cave-man of the prehistoric times.

The Barbarian Within

Arising as he does from the general human consciousness which is yet nascent in its psychic conditions, diminitive in its moral stature, psychologically immature, crude and lop-sided in its intellectual activity, inexpressive and uncreative in its spirit and power of thought, the modern man armed by Titanic material powers and energies, finds himself caught under the currents and cross-currents of his own inner impoverished nature, falls a prey to an irresistible pull towards the undesirable, the evil, feels himself disposed to put his powers to purposes destructive, and driven to give his glorious achievements in all fields of human activity and endeavour, a perverse turn.

Whether in private lives or civil policies, in commercial dealings or international affairs, in material happenings or systems of thought for action, evil endures because our will lingers in them; "we are betrayed by what is false within;" we breed our own barbarians. And, the tragic feature of our times consists in the fact that the industrial civilization has, under the fashioning and driving power of the barbarous specialized subtlety of the modern mind, made it possible for the down-ward curve of our age to assume such glittering forms that appear as constituting a true progressive movement, that are at once most appealing and misleading.

Si ananda—the Spiritual Superman

But, this retrogressive movement in human nature, this back-sliding and reversal into the veiled forms of the octopus of evil, form passing phases and transitory features imparting a lesson of experience, a light of wisdom, to a groping humanity evolving under the self-expressive indomitable spiritual nisus in all consciousness. An inner evolutionary necessity and drive make it impossible for mankind to slumber long in the dark dungeons of ignorance, prejudice and selfish aims; and, our age has its prophets of higher vision and transforming power. The most popular and the greatest of the living spiritual prophets a

leaders of mankind, is Swami Sivananda. "Promethean in motive, intention, effort and endurance, Platonic in depth and horizonless ranges of thought, a Buddha in the most enlightened and compassionate nature, a Confucius in endeavouring to bring mankind to moral wisdom and happiness, a John the Baptist in initiating tens of hundreds of aspirants into the Holy Order of highest spiritual experience, a Christ in the performance of 'miraculous' deeds, and in eloquence a Saint Paul, Swami Sivananda has been successfully engaging himself in an overpowering Cyclopean task concerning a diffusion of divine illumination in all mankind, and making Herculean efforts to improve human nature around the world and enable individuals realize their own innumerable inner possibilities in virtue, goodness, growth and perfection."*

Sivananda— the Shaping Spiritual Force

At a time when a subtle scientific conceit born of a knowledge of the simple biological fact that man is the highest product of evolution, has precluded the modern mind from the possession of an urge to envisage the potentialities of a progressive evolution in his own inner consciousness; when the modern man has no other view of human history than the economic, no other conception of human progress than a mere fulfilment of the five-year plans, no standards of conduct and no scale of values other than those dictated to him by the directing pointers of his own personal preferences and prejudices; when in the cosy conditions of an easy existence created by the twentieth century civilization, he has determined to blaspheme art by surrealist notions, elbow literature and the positive contents of the cultural past to lower and lower levels of decadence, denounce Plato and Christ, improve on Machiavelli and Marx, deliberately avoid the time-tried wells of wisdom and drift on the drains of materialism, positivism, pragmatism, "humanism"; when in conscience he has grown so easy as to reduce men into 'the living torches of incendiary bombs,'—we have in Swami Sivananda, the most powerful of the Spiritual Influences, the gracious magical transforming Power, pouring a strange spiritual significance into our existence, reducing the organic structure of our life into a non-stop drill in discipline, giving a purposive direction to the course of our existence, and drawing out from within ourselves, powers that create things that endure as against the ephemeral creations of the modern man. The Wisdom of Swami Sivananda, the grand cultural labourer on a grand scale, the prophet to whom the Divine Reality theoretically termed God, is a palpable and living experience of unbroken continuity, writing a matter of spontaneous outpouring of profoundest insights into the complex mechanism of humanity's material needs, external demands, vital insistances, deeper urges, deepest longings and aspirations, service of all mankind a powerful passion of the noblest order, has been 'pursuing' the natures of men and engaging itself in the noblest task of chastening, purifying, moulding, regenerating and

**The quotation here dovetailed into the context, is from one of the earlier publications of the author.*

illuminating them. This then is the supreme value to contemporary humanity, of the activism of the presence of the spiritual Superman.

Sivananda—
The Light of Mankind

The long scrolls of the history of human experience, record that nor a scholar however great, nor a formal philosopher however well-known, nor a writer of best-selling fiction, nor a mathematical prodigy, nor a first-rate scientific genius, nor a builder of imposing humanistic system, nor a laborious social worker, nor a great moral preacher, nor yet a powerful political leader, but a lord of wisdom, a man of God with that name of transforming power, a being of universal compassion expressing itself in dynamic Service—be that being a Buddha or a Christ or a Sivananda—that brings harmony and peace to all mankind, implants in their lives love and light, wields a tremendous power on their affections, on their thoughts, on their activities, elevates the lowly to the status of the truly great, levels the great to the condition of a growing, evolving, lowly beings. Such a living human phenomenon of highest spiritual perfection and an endearing world-redemption, is the true leader of humanity, the immortal light of mankind, the ultimate aim of the educational process, carried over to, and continued on, the supra-educational planes.*

—SWAMI OMKARANANDA

Sivananda and the Existence-Education Continuum

2. NOT YET ENTRENCHED IN THE SCEPTICAL, THE SCIENTIFIC OR THE MATERIALISTIC OBSCURANTISM CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SWIFT-MOVING, VAINGLORIOUS AND ARROGANT AGE OF FANTASTIC CONTRIVANCES AND DEADENING ARTIFICIALITIES WE LIVE IN, THE ANCIENT WORLD, WHETHER OF THE EAST RENOWNED AS INDIA, OR OF THE WEST FAMOUS AS GREECE, PRESERVED A POWER OF THOUGHT, OR COMMANDED CONSTANTLY A VISION OF LIFE THAT COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND THE AIM OF EDUCATION AS ANYTHING LESS THAT AN APPREHENSION OF THE ETERNAL VALUES, AS AN APPRECIATION OF THE SUPREME HUMAN VIRTUES, AND AS AN ABIDANCE BY THE SIMPLE AND ELEMENTARY EXCELLENCES OF LIFE

—Resolute at remaining eternally ultra-modern, the ancient Indian values exert an irresistable spell on the spiritual susceptibilities of sensitive minds, and carry an outstanding challenge to the undaring and self-complacent moods of contemporary sceptical intelligence, and promise to make of life a heaven on earth, and of life in the Heaven a reality in the events of everyday experience on earth.

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The dynamism of ultimate Indian values forms the pervasive feature of the education Sivananda conceives in terms of the acts of insight life gains, the adjustments life accords to environment, the growth life furthers for the mind, the expansion life effectuates in moral nature, the steady unfoldment life brings about, of the inner spiritual consciousness.—

—Our contention remains that existence reveals to the philosophical reflection, a latent, profound and all-embracing Value, and also carries within itself, all the functions of the educational agency that furnish the conditions essential, and the stimulus needed, for the emergence of the varied aspect and power of that Value—functions which may be rendered efficient and even increased 'apparen$_t$ly' in number, by formal instruction, by acts of ingenuity intelligence permits; again, any philosophically reflective reconsideration would perceive the uninterrupted and unseverable connexion in development that subsists between existence and education, between life and thought, a development, always valuational in character and content, that never terminates except in the arrival at, and by an obtainment in experience, of the permanent states of self-accomplishment in the Perfection of the Infinite.—

CONDITION prevailing throughout the world to-day unmistakably demonstrate the truth that material advancement alone does not mean advancement towards peace and harmony. Material welfare does not give one inner contentment though it might be, to a certain extent, a help to the achievement of that contentment, as it saves one from the struggle for one's daily bread, and consequently provides one with greater opportunities for diving within and for discovering the inner peace. But mankind does not live by bread alone. The secret lies in the fact that man, often unconsciously, strives to achieve Godhead, for God has given him the grace of intellect with which to think and find out the way towards the realization of his Godhead, and even if his mundane ambitions and desires for a time distract his attention from God, ultimately the spirit wins and man resumes his quest of God.

Many are the ways which lead one towards Self-realization. Each individual has his own problems, every nation has its own peculiar problems. Wisdom consists in finding this out and in so moulding the shape of education. The culture of India is rooted in spiritual values, and unless these values, implicit and explicit in Indian culrure and spiritual life, find, in one manner or other, by one way or other, their way into the lives of students, education, at least in India, loses its significance, and would not fulfil its function of endowing them with a vision to live by, with ideals to work for, not only for deriving keen delight in creative, progressive work and moulding of thought, but for making the nation prosperous, materially and spiritually.

Civilizations based on the shifting sands of Godless culture, are bound to crumble down. Civilizations based on the culture of the Spirit alone would endure the onslaughts of hedonism and selfish, animal instincts of man. Selfishness naturally creates discord, disharmony, and destruction; selflessness leads to peace, harmony, progress and happiness. India's culture is essentially spiritual; India's civilization, too, is basically spiritual.

When India was spiritually great, there was no poverty as one sees today. True spirituality always gives a greater sense of responsibility. It makes the nation strong and prosperous. It is the Godless doctrines that promote mutual hatred, class war and distribution of poverty. The Indian's thirst for wisdom, for positive religion, for a practical spiritual life, ought to be met in the right way, if the nation is really to live. If India is spiritually alive, it will again regain its creative force and prosperity. Degeneration of the spiritual life in India was a contributive factor to its decline.

In view of such a mission and for an all-round, well-founded development of the Indian life, it is time one learnt the essentials for bringing about a complete re-orientation of our educational system, and one should bear in mind that education, bereft of an inspiration from the knowledge of the spiritual values, can easily mar, not only individual lives, but the future of the whole nation. Weakness towards totalitarian baits, infatuation for glib slogans, impractical idealism at the expense of national interests, have already done considerable harm. The people must wake up to the dangers of national betrayal from harmful elements among themselves.

It is the duty of the educational authorities, the public at large, to see that the students are not led astray by false doctrines of oppression and regimentation of thought. The demagogues of materialism, whose roots lie not in the soil of the nation, but elsewhere, can never serve the interests of the people. The vainglorious, the timid, who revel in un-realistic slogans and personal addiction to foreign, Godless dogmas, can never give the right leadership to the people. The students must wake up to their responsibility of being Indians first, as upholders of their integral culture, of Dharma, of justice, truth and love, of spiritual values.

—Swami Sivananda's
Religious Education,
pp. 283-287.

THE PREPONDERANCE OF VEDANTIC VALUES IN THE EDUCATIVE PROCESS OF SIVANANDA'S CONCEPTION

Nowhere has Sivananda Literature on education sought to stop sustaining, much less felt inclined to relax the vigour of, the impassioned argument that the student, whether he be an adolescent receiving some species of specific instruction within the portals of a formal institution, or a grey-beard long-liberated from the cramping confines of an academy, and passing leisurely past

the avenues of an unconquered life, owes himself the primary duty of treating all the stage of life as a vast arena of educational opportunity and achievement, of considering himself a member of the world-family, a candidate for unrivalled eminence in wisdom, and of striving to obtain his rightful status and prestige as a universal benefactor by the rhythms of creative thought raised, by the feats of cosmic feelings performed, by the unnumbered adventures undertaken in the field of service, in self-sacrifice, in self-giving, and above all, in Self-knowledge.

REAL education is that which makes you realise your Self or Atma. Real education is that which helps you to control the mind and the senses and lead the Divine Life and realise the Satchidananda state. Real education is that which helps you to annihilate egoism, which enables you to attain immortality. Real education is that which helps you to attain the final beatitude which is the *summum bonum* of your existence.

You will have to put what you have learnt into practice. Only then will you grow. Control the mind and the senses. This is the time for you to spend a few hours or a few minutes in prayer. Be regular in your prayers. Make it a habit to get up at 4 a.m. This is Brahmamuhurtha—very efficacious for Japa, prayer and meditation. Take care of your health. Practise Asans and Pranayama. There is no system of exercise so effective as the Asanas. They nicely exercise the endocrine glands and internal organs. They facilitate good circulation of blood to various organs. Take Sattwic food. Cultivate divine virtues. Study Gita. If you are earnest, if you aspire fervently, and pray devotedly, you will become a Jivanmukta (liberated Sage) in this very birth. Tarry not. This life is meant for Self-realisation. Life is short. Time is fleeting. Attain this Self-realisation through Japa, meditation, through selfless service. Utilise every moment in selfless service. Take part in some socio-spiritual service. Purify your heart through selfless service. In a pure heart which is serene, which is free from passions and sense-appetites will the divine light descend.

One of the qualifications for a student of Yoga is serenity. Make the mind serene. You should know the science of controlling the senses. On account of Ragas (passion) the senses move towards the objects. But a Dheera (spiritual hero) restrains them and turns the mind inward. This university education will not make you a Dheera. It is mere chaff when compared to the Brahma Vidya (knowledge of Brahman).

University education will not help you to attain perennial joy. Passing the M.A. degree examination, writing a thesis and getting the Ph.D. degree will not help you to attain this. Only the knowledge of Brahman will enable you to do so. You should be a Dheera. The world has no attraction at all. You are attracted by a little colour, a few ginger biscuits. You have become a slave of the Indriyas (senses). You want strength born of discrimination. However great you may be intellectually, you are a mere plaything in the hands of Maya (illusion). The saints and sages are the repositories of this wisdom which can give you bliss and which can make you really rich. You may be a millionaire, but if your mind is filled with desires, then you are a beggar of beggars. A little Vichar (enquiry into the nature of the Self) and a knowledge

of this Self will enable you to rest in your own Swaroopa (essential nature). Then you will become a king of kings. You must realise that you are Satchidananda in essence : you are the Supreme Soul. Your nature is not sorrow and worry. Somehow this sorrow and worry have come. Bliss is your real nature. You are the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer. Let me remind you all of the last word of the Upanishad—Tat Twam Asi—That art thou. Accidentally you have forgotten this. Feel now : "I am not a clerk ; I am not a poor man." Your real nature is Satchidananda—Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute.

This is the message of Vedanta. In essence, there is One Homogeneous Consciousness. From that Consciousness the ears and other senses get their strength. That power, that wisdom, that light, That thou art. How much strength you get. The wealth of all the world is yours. The message of Vedanta is the message of Unity, Oneness of Consciousness. Just feel for a moment : "I am not Mr. Abraham, nor Mr. Sundaram"; feel that you are the All-pervading consciousness, not only of the whole world, because that is only the foot-print of a calf, but of the whole creation and beyond also. That is your nature.

—SWAMI SIVANANDA'S
Yoga and Realisation, pp. 184-185.

SIVANANDA'S IDEA OF INTEGRAL EDUCATION

Whatever be the other comprehensive connotations of the phrase 'integral education', it cannot but imply, as central to its purpose and aim, as Sivananda has on many occasions pointed out orally, the well-reasoned and methodical exaltation of the raw, plastic and impressionable human material to the most harmonious perfection in all the four fundamental aspects of its composite nature : one, the mental, embracing all the exalted functions of conscious intelligence ; two, the emotional, including, in its field of experience, all forms of aesthetic sensibility and activity as instrumental in effectuating a refinement and transformation of its basic energies and fashioning them into forms of a superlatively ennobling, constructive, creative and positive force ; three, the volutional, as expressive in every act of will, and as demanding in each of its workings, a complete governance by intelligent, discriminative and purposive thought; and four, the spiritual, covering a wide range of activities, from the simple forms of selfless service to a conscious recognition and appreciation or a realization of those high potentialities of the human spirit which were made patent in the lives of the greatest leaders of mankind, the Buddha and the Christ. —*Swami Omkarananda*

THE CONCLUDING NOTE CONCERNING THE INCOMPLETE PHASE

Since no adequate treatment of the various problems and aspects veering round the nature, the value, the importance, the processes and the branches of education, can here be attempted without increasing enormously the size of this volume, we have a proposal of issuing the matter meant to comprise the chapters, eighteen, nineteen and twenty, as an independent volume which will be distinguished, firstly, for comprehensiveness, secondly, for originality of approach to every theme, thirdly, for literary merits, technical competence, and immensity of value. —SWAMI OMKARANANDA