

YOGA CHAKRAVARTY
EMPEROR OF YOGA



SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

The Author

YOGIRAJ



SRI HARRY DICKMAN

YOGA CHAKRAVARTY

By

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SRI HARRY DICKMANN,

M.H.Y., S.D.L.S., M.S.G.S., F.FU.

(Master of Hatha Yoga, Star of the Divine Life
Society, Member, Sivananda Gyana Sabha,
Fellow of the Forest University)



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Published by
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for

THE YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST UNIVERSITY

First Edition : 1958

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Library
West Virginia University

Printed

Out of the magnanimous donation of
The Abode of the Lord of Seven Hills,
A matchless devotee and disciple of Guru Bhagavan.

Library
West Virginia University

Printed by
SRI DEVENDRA VIGYANI
At
Vigyan Press, Rishikesh.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The author of this highly interesting account of the life and work of Sage Sivananda, is an advanced Yogi. He is one of the few seniormost disciples of Sri Gurudev who have thoroughly mastered every line that has been written by him so far.

This book was written by the author when he was in Germany in the 1940's. A few more articles written by him on the life and teachings of Sri Gurudev have already been published in the volume "YOGI SIVANANDA"; and some, of still more recent ones are included at the end of this volume.

P. O. Shivananda Nagar
8th March, 1958.

} Publishers

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श्री शिवानन्दपंचकम्

(श्री पार्वन्दि सर्वेश्वर शास्त्री)

श्लोकः—शिवानन्दो विजयते, गणनाथप्रियस्सदा ।
गङ्गाप्रवाहसीतात्मा, हृषीकेशप्रतिष्ठितः ॥
पुरत्रयजयानन्द, प्रशान्तस्वान्तभूपितः ।
शिवो विजयते मित्रचन्द्रादिगणसंयुतः ॥

व्याख्या—पुरत्रयजयः=त्रिपुरासुरसंहारः
मित्रचन्द्रादयः=सूर्यचन्द्रादयः (योगिपत्ने तु) पुरत्रयजयः
स्थूल, सूक्ष्म, कारणशरीरत्रयविजयः । मित्रचन्द्रादयः=
मित्रश्रेष्ठादयः (अन्यत् सुगमम्)

श्लोकः—नूतनोऽयं शिवो भाति, सुवि शूली न च स्वयम् ।
नचोग्रः शान्तमूर्तेश्च, न दोषाकरसंग्रही ॥

व्याख्या—योगी, नहि शूलरोगी । शान्तमूर्तेः हेतोः न चोग्रः
दोषाकरश्चन्द्रः तत्संग्रही शिवप्रभुः अर्थं नूतनस्तु ये
दोषिणः । तेषां संग्रहीन इति विशेषः । शिवस्तु त्रिशूलधारि-
त्वात् शूली । पापिनामसुराणां भयंकरत्वात् उग्रः इति नाम
प्रसिद्धः । (अन्यत् सुगमम्) ।

श्लोकः—आनन्दा बहवः प्रोक्ताः, शताधिकगुणा श्रुतौ ।
तत्प्रवाच्यः शिवानन्द, इति सूचयतीव नः ॥

व्याख्या—श्रुतौ आनन्दवत्युपनिषदि । तत्र शिवानन्दो नोक्तः
तत्र वक्तव्यत्वेन सूचयतीव योगी वर्तते । इत्युत्प्रेक्षालंकारः ।

श्लोकः—पराशक्तिः शिवा प्रोक्ता, तदानन्द शिवो भवेत् ।
तद्ध्यानी मुनिवर्योयमिति तन्नाम वक्तिः हि ॥

व्याख्या—योगोध्यानमिति कोशः । वक्ति वदति इति तन्नाम
निर्वचनमत्र (श्लोके ...) श्लोके ।

श्लोकः—आनन्दपंचकं चैतत् शिवप्रीतिविधायकम् ।
अनेन प्रियतां देवो, भगवान् लोकशङ्करः ॥

LIFE AND TEACHINGS

OF
SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA SARASWATI

—o—
Prayer :

Om Namō Bhagavate Vasudevaya.

Oh ! Thou Flute Bearer of Brindavan. Oh ! Keshava, Thou hast played Thy flute thousands of years ago in the holy land of Bharata Varsha, and yet people even to-day speak of Thy flute and the enchanting melodies Thou hast played on it.

But, Oh ! Master Musician, canst Thou play a Divine song on this broken reed in praise of Thy lover and devotee, who though bearing the name of Siva, is a true incarnation of Vishnu, for he never destroys the world, has infinite compassion and patience and is an upholder of Mankind. And yet when look on the smiling face of the benevolent Siva, He says: Siva and Vishnu are one. There is only one without a second. "Ekam Eva Adviteeyam Brahma." Or hast thou forgotten the ancient teaching of Rig Veda : Truth is one, wise men call it variously. 'Ekam Sat Viprah Bahudha Vedanti.' And He continues : "I will never destroy thee, what I am intent to do is to destroy thy ignorance and misery, so that thou mayest enjoy immortality, Bliss Absolute and obtain

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infinite wisdom. Om Namah Sivaya ! Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya !

The purpose of writing this book is to draw the attention of the world to the most sacred life of a unique Soul now living among us and whose grace knows no limits, no boundaries, no colour prejudice, nor caste-distinctions. For him there is no Hindu, nor Christian, no Muslim, or Sikh or Buddhist, no Indian or European or American, but all are the Blessed Immortal Self.

It is therefore, I called him a Soul and not a personality, for he being a Sage in the truest sense of the word, has transcended the limits of human personality and shines in his pristine glory as a mighty Soul, as a Mahatma, a Mahapurusha.

India was never without her Saints, Sages and Yogins. Even to-day there are several Yogins and Jnanins whose fame has crossed the frontiers of her Motherland and reached the shores of the Western hemisphere.

Swami Sivananda is a household name of modern India.

The Divine Life Centres are scattered all over India, where the teachings of the great Swami are taught and practised by his disciples and followers.

But not only in India, even in Europe, America and Africa the name of the great Swami is becoming more and more popular.

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The purpose of writing this book is to draw the attention of the world, to this living Saint and Sage, who is ever ready to push on and extend his helping hand to every sincere seeker after Truth by his advice, profound knowledge of the sacred lore and personal spiritual experiences.

Especially the European readers, interested in the teachings of Yoga and Vedanta should not miss this rare opportunity and come in contact with this great Yogi of Himalayas.

If only a few souls would be inspired to make a deeper study of the Sage either by procuring his works, visiting his Ashrama or by means of correspondence and thereby be lifted up spiritually and morally, then the aim of the author would be amply repaid.

My sincere thanks to the Swamis Sri Narayana, Sri Paramananda, Sri Visweswarji and others who helped me to gather some interesting matter pertaining to the Life of the Saintly Sage of Himalayas.

—HARRY DICKMANN

MASTER SIVANANDA AND INDIAN YOGA

[*Sri Eyvind Kulsrud, Sivananda School of Yoga,
Oslo, Norway*]

I shall say about Yoga and the benefit for the human beings from this system. I bow to Dr. Sri Swami Sivananda who is my Guru and mention about his work for the uplift of humanity.

Swami Sivananda was born in India and he is my Guru. The world Guru means Teacher in our language. He studied medicine. Then he set out to work rather serve the purest of the pure.

He has met lots of Yogins travelling all over the country and learned how they lived and how they could help others both bodily and spiritually. He ultimately understood that the ancient old Indian culture which was hidden in different Yoga systems could help the human beings a lot all over the world.

In the year 1936, he founded his own Yoga-Vedanta Forest University at Rishikesh on the banks of the holy river Ganges. He had no account in the bank or other kind of capital. He could also not get any help from any organization or from fortunated people. He was alone and as our famous editor

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“Ibsen” says “He who stays alone stays strong” and so also with my beloved Guru Sri Swami Sivananda.

He also studied philosophy and perfected himself in this subject. Soon all over the country, the word about his selfless service went and he was not standing alone for very long time. He got his hands full of work. A hospital in the forest was erected by him for treatment in the natural way (diet), with surgeon ward and X-rays ward. He believed in healing by prayers as well as in the cure by a hospital. He founded out also a drug-department with harvesting and cultivating drugs. Then people came in throngs to help him. Somebody travelled and held speeches and gathered money for the expansion of the activities for the cause of mankind. Others wanted to write books about his Ashram and its activities. But Guru once said, “If you want to help me, then start washing hospital equipments, floors and do nursing work.” It was several unselfish people that settled by him and did do their duties only for the reward of the service.

Today this Ashram has about 250 inhabitants and none of them has any salary or other form of wage but they are provided with free boarding and lodging.

A good number of pilgrims, students, sages and others from the whole globe are visiting this Ashram and paying respects to this Great Master. They needn't to pay anything for their stay. They receive learnings from Swami Sivananda's inspiring spirit.

The sick people are treated free of cost. People all over the world send their gifts to our dear Guru. God helps his children and to this day no one has had to go away from him without help, both bodily and spiritually.

Apart from the embracing work (that would keep a western man busy) he has got time to give about 300 books all about Yoga and other Indian learnings, different religions and so on. Also about Vedanta, but we shall not mention this science here tonight, but keep us on the Yoga system.

He gives 4 different magazines: The Divine Life, Wisdom Light, Health and Long Life and the Yoga Vedanta Forest University Weekly. Swami Sivanandaji has found out that all living religions are one. We will find the same moral bid, the same health advertisements, the same punishing bids for evil doings in every religion. And that the prophets are sent from the same God in certain times to renew the learnings to the human beings, no matter where they are and who they are. He doesn't deny any living religion or any prophet or sage.

He wants to help a bad Christian to be a better Christian, and a bad Hindu to be a better Hindu, and he wants to use the Yoga system to be the bridge-builder between the East and the West.

He has originated the religion of heart. From the intoxication of his learnings, we all become brothers both brown, dark, red and white people.

How can Yoga be a helper in this task. Let us first get the short history of Yoga and the use we can have of it.

Yoga is a very old system, i.e., 6000 years old. We might well talk about several different systems of Yoga. But now we will take a view of one special system of Yoga, i.e., Hatha Yoga.

The word Hatha Yoga is tried to be translated with the following meaning: "To make the body a tool of the soul". Yoga means unity and then with the One are the Absolute, or the only true living God. The explanation of God or the OM is: Omnipotence, Omnipresence and Omniscience. He is the viewer or seer not to be seen. He is the originator without being originated. He is nearer you than your breath and farther away from you than the East and West. He is present in everything—in trees, bushes, flowers, people, deers, etc. God is life and the life is God.

As told before, it has many systems of Yoga but peculiar for them all is that all of them lead us to Vairagya (Sindsro) everlasting peace and eternal bliss. Hatha Yoga through its Asanas, breathings and exercises gives us a smooth and healthy study.

Yoga is not cult, doctrines, rituals or superstition. It is no 'ism'. It is real and perfect Science about the body and mind or soul printed down of Yogins from time to time—from Guru to Chela (disciple).

It is simple and very easy to learn if you start with the beginning and not as people usually do here

in the West. Start with the higher forms as Raja Yoga. That will be as if you build a house on sand as it says in the Bible. When the hurricanes come and the rains shower down, it will stay no longer and go vaster. You must build your house on the rock and it will stay no matter how strong it rains or blows.

You have to tread the path with easy small steps and gradually take bigger tasks. Every Asana you can do, you will feel more and more comfortable and after practising the Asanas for a while you can start with the Pranayamas and so the spiritual disciplines as concentration, meditation and inquiry inside. After that you can start to eradicate your bad habits by Mantra Yoga and you might conquer them peak by peak, for now you know the road to go.

It does not matter much to know what you are today and what you were yesterday. You cannot change a bit of the past and you can master if you will the happenings of just now. You form yourself what to be tomorrow. It may sound funny, but I guess it will make it more clear for you what I mean what I say about the Yoga learnings.

"You are to-morrow what you think to-day" and you sow a thought and harvest a habit, from habit to character the way is not very far, may be a little longer from character to fate, and you come to that point that you have sunk into it and cannot usually come out of it by your own power. You have to get aid and the aid is Hatha Yoga.

SIVANANDA'S YOGA

Dr. FREDERIC SPIEGELBERG, Ph. D.,
(Stanford University U.S.A.)

Excerpts from a lecture on "Rishikesh, Sivananda's Yoga" at the American Academy of Asian Studies in San Francisco on February 14, 1958.

I have presented to you in former talks several of the great Indian leaders of insight and wisdom. Though they died on earth, they all belong to eternity. To-day I shall talk to you about a man who is very much alive with us on earth. Only yesterday did I receive an encouraging letter from him in which he says.

"Yes, I am never there with you all, in spirit. There is a close bond of spiritual relationship between the two great institutions we represent. The Lord's will carries on its divine work, through us at different points on the earth".

He is aware right now of our getting together in his name.

In order to introduce the radiant personality of Swami Sivananda to you, the best thing of course would be if he could stand here in my place, right in front of you. The next best thing, the one we have

to be content with, would be if I could just drop my ego and let Sivananda take hold of my body, my mind and my voice. I should try to lend by means of expression to him. May be this could be done by telepathy; I do not know. May be it could be achieved by intelligent imagination; I do not know. But I do know that my absence and his presence would be the most desirable thing and is needed here tonight.

If this body, standing before you, would be Swami Sivananda's how would I act? I would represent a level of awareness, unbelievably high. My eyes would be sparkling with radiant joy. My words would be convincing, powerful, and carrying authority. They would not be like the "Words of the Scribes", because I would be one with the Divine. I would live in the Now, and not in the body.

If I were Swami Sivananda, standing here before you, how would I not act? I would be free of moods, free of fear. I would have no inferiority complex whatsoever; accordingly, I would not need to compensate by boasting. I would also be free of humility, which in our midst can usually be defined as the attempt to appear in the eyes of others as less than I very well know I am. I would have no enemies. You might think that you were my enemy, but I would know you only as my friends. There are a great many words in our language, of which I would not know the meaning. It would be impossible for you to make me inwardly understand the meaning of things as : boredom, downheartedness, fatigue, worry, jealousy, craving.

The talk following this introduction contained :

1. A brief biography of Swami Sivananda.
2. A visit of Rishikesh and a guided tour through Sivananda Ashram, telling about its various departments: The Office, the Temple, the Yoga Museum, the Cave, The Forest University, the Elementary School, the Free Dispensary, the Pharmacy, the Sanatorium.
3. A sketch of Sivananda's Day, from Morning to Night.
4. A presentation of Sivananda's book-productions, divided into several sections.
5. Reading of Inspiring Excerpts from a variety of books and periodical articles.

The meeting was closed with a showing of colour slides of the Ashram and with the playing of several Kirtans, sung by Swami Sivananda in English and Sanskrit.

The capacity audience was immensely interested and kept asking questions long after the meeting was officially closed.

ACHIEVE THE LIFE'S GOAL

(*Sri Swami Sivananda*)

THE GOAL OF LIFE

Attainment of Self-realisation of God-consciousness is the Goal of Life. Brahman or the Absolute Self is the one Supreme Undying Principle or Essence, which dwells in the inner chambers of your heart and everywhere. Brahman existed in the past, exists in the present, will exist in the future also. Brahman is the existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute. He is an ignorant man who vainly searches for happiness in the perishable objects of the external world which is only a dream appearance in reality, conditioned in time, space and causation. The worldly man will not have peace of mind. Although he amasses wealth, begets children, gets titles, honours, fame, name and lives for long in this world, his mind is always restless. He thinks that he is still in want of something. Rich people possess immense wealth, have decent bungalows, servants, take dainties and palatable dishes and enjoy all sorts of comforts, but have no peace of mind. They are searching—they want something else—they are searching for something else; but, what that something is, they do not know. They

feel that they are in need of something, but the nature of which they do not exactly comprehend.

To have a human birth is difficult. To follow the Vedic path is rare. To be well-versed in the scriptural lore is still rare. But the rarest of all is discrimination between the Self and the not-self, Self-realisation and getting established in Brahman. Liberation is attained through well-earned merits of a hundred crores of births.

Remember that you are a lonely pilgrim in this world. The whole world is a public inn only. Your permanent abode is in the Atma, the Immortal Self which is all and above all. Finish your pilgrimage very quickly by doing rigorous Tapas and meditation and reach your original abode of Immortality, everlasting Bliss and Peace, in this very birth !

You cannot extend your life-time even by a second though you are ready to spend crores of pounds for this purpose. What other harm is there for you than wasting such a precious life ?

Time is fleeting. The night is wasted in sleep and other pleasures. The day is wasted in idle talk, amassing money and maintaining the family. Days, months and years are rolling away. Hairs become grey. Teeth have fallen. You are still attached to the perishable articles of this world through Moha, infatuated love. How long you like to remain slaves to these fleeting pleasures ? How long you intend to repeat the same sensual enjoyments ? How long you like to worship mammon and woman ?

If you waste your precious time in this manner, when will you find time to meditate on the Lord and to do virtuous deeds ? Think and reflect.

The kings and lords will pass away. This world will pass away with all its occupants. The sun, moon and stars, etc., will pass away. All joys and sorrows will pass away. Wife, children, wealth, property will pass away. The five elements, the earth and heaven will pass away. Only Brahman, the one Eternal, Undying, Satchidananda will shine eternally. Hasten to know him through Sadhana !

O Man ! Wealth, vehicles, sons, women, dominions, property are worthless ! They are all perishable. Seek the Lotus-feet of the Lord and attain Immortality, Eternal Bliss and Supreme Peace ! This is why you are born in this world !

YOUR DELUSION

Helpless you were, when you were a baby. Helpless you are, when you are seriously ailing. Helpless you will be, when you grow old. Why then do you boast of your ability, capacity, independence and freedom ? Why are you proud and egoistic ? Transcend body and the mind and realise that Immortal Self. Then only you will be really strong and can be really independent and free. Rise above delusion and illusion through discrimination, self-analysis, and enquiry of 'Who am I' ?

This world is a play of colours and sounds. This sense-universe is a play of nerves. It is a false show kept up by the jugglery of Maya, mind and senses.

When you are young, when your senses are strong you enjoy the sensual pleasures only for a short period—say for about twenty years. What is this short evanescent period of twenty years in eternity? What is this despicable jarring monotonous sensual life compared with the eternal and peaceful life in the immortal Self within? If the nerve of taste, the glasso-pharyngeal gets paralysed, you cannot enjoy the different kinds of palatable dishes. If your retina or the optic nerve is paralysed you cannot enjoy the diverse beautiful forms. If the auditory nerve is paralysed you cannot hear the melodious music. If the olfactory nerve is paralysed you cannot enjoy the various sweet fragrance. If your sensory nerve of the hands is paralysed you cannot enjoy the soft things. If the nerve erigens is paralysed you cannot enjoy conjugal bliss. Can you not clearly comprehend now that the world is only a mere play of nerves? Can you not understand now that this universe of opposites is illusory and momentary? You depend upon these nerves for your happiness. *If the nerves go out of order, you will become miserable even though you possess enormous wealth and innumerable costly buildings.* Can these little illusory sensual pleasures which depend upon the play of nerves be compared with the everlasting real happiness? It is mere itching of the nerves only, which tickles those deluded souls who have lost their power of discrimination and real understanding.

The world of names and forms is ever changing. Seas dry up and vast sandy deserts come into being

in their places. Elevations become depressions and depressions become elevations. Sand is being made into stone and stone into sand. Blocks of stone become lime and lime becomes dust. Very big cities and model towns are being built in the forests and again those cities become deserted places or big forests. Grass is made into blood, blood into milk; milk again into blood and blood becomes flesh. A youth becomes an old man after some years and an young handsome girl becomes an ugly old woman with her cheeks wrinkled. A begger turns into a zamindar and a zamindar into a Tongawalah. A fatty man becomes very thin and a lean girl becomes a fatty woman. There is one changless and imperishable Thing at the back of all these ever changing and perishable things, which is the Eternal Atma or Immortal Brahman or the Supreme Self. Behind these names and forms which are illusory and momentary, there shines the ultimate principle—the Eternal Atma or the Supreme Brahman which is formless, colourless, changeless, fearless, timeless, endless and beginningless. Hindu scriptures treat of this ultimate Truth or Supreme Principle. He who realises this Brahman attains Immortality, Freedom and Eternal Peace.

Wealth and power promise to give you physical comforts, but they never give. They delude you and entangle you in the meshes of Samsara. They only make you slaves. They shut out for you the doors of the illimitable domain of everlasting peace and eternal bliss of the Atma. They have no value at

all for the dispassionate aspirants. Kick them ruthlessly as mere bits of straw or broken glass pieces. But they appear to be highly valuable in the eyes of the worldly-minded. Therefore you like to spend your whole life in the pursuit of these two fleeting, worthless shadows !

If you are deluded and subdued by Vasanas, you will do impure acts. You will become egoistic, self-assertive and proud. Evil resolves only will always revolve in your mind. These evil resolves will have the sensual enjoyments only as their standard or goal of life. They will try to get wealth by foul or unjust means for their sensual enjoyments. They will be caught in the net of countless hopes and anticipations. They will be ever-ready to do anything to get money. Money is the only God for them. You will become greedy and irritable soon. Evil qualities like hypocrisy, anger, deceitfulness and dishonesty will manifest in you.

In this scientific era—the age of the so-called modern civilisation—greed, passion, selfishness are increasing day by day, nay hour by hour. One nation wants to devour another nation. Man has lost his manliness. On account of his passion he is under the firm grip of women. The son drags his father to the courts for the division of property. The wife divorces her husband and marries another if he happens to be more rich, more beautiful and younger. Chastity or Pativrata Dharma has almost ceased to exist. The younger brother poisons his

elder brother to take possession of the estate. You see cruelty, dishonesty, injustice and atrocity everywhere. No one keeps his promise. The father has no faith in the son. The wife has no faith in the husband and vice versa.

Imagine for a moment that your skin and flesh are inverted and exposed. Then some one will have to stand always by your side with a stick to drive off the crows and the jackals. Then why do you have Moha for this dirty body ? Why do you apply perfumes ? Are you not a big fool ? You are not this dirty, perishable body. You are the Atma, ever pure and Effulgent. Realise this and be wise.

The body is the first Mayaic knot or tie. Wife is the second knot round the neck. Son is the third knot round the waist. Daughter is the fourth knot round the knee. Grandson is the fifth knot round the ankle. He who has cut asunder these knots or ties and who has no Moha is really a strong and powerful man (Dheera)—and not one who can allow a motor car to pass on his chest, or who keeps a big stone on his chest, or who has first class magisterial powers or who has a double-barrel gun or who is a member of the Council of State or the Legislative Assembly or the Parliament.

All hopes of happiness in this world terminate in pain, despair and sorrow. Pleasure is mixed with pain. Beauty is mixed with ugliness. Kindness is mixed with anger and harsh words. There is no real prop in this world to lean upon. Diseases,

exhaustion, weakness and loss of vigour are all brought about by sensual indulgence. The sensual objects destroy the whole man and he has no help from any quarter on this earth. Fair sex infatuates. Money and power fill the mind with hollowness and vanity! Each and every nation is engaged in war. Peace is nowhere. Trust not this illusory world.

REMEDY

Why should you prolong your bondage unnecessarily? Why should you not claim your divine birthright now? Why should you not break your bondage now? Delay means prolongation of your sufferings. You can break it at any moment. This is in your power. Do it now. Stand up. Gird up the loins. Do rigorous and vigorous Sadhana and attain freedom, which is immortality or eternal bliss.

The divine within you is stronger than anything that is without you. Therefore, be not afraid of anything. Rely on your own Inner Self, the Divinity within you. Tap the source through looking within.

Improve yourself. Build your character. Purify the heart. Develop the Divine virtues. Eradicate evil traits. Conquer all that is base in you. Endeavour to attain all that is worthy and noble. Make the lower nature the servant of the higher through discipline, Tapas, self-restraint and meditation. This is the beginning of your freedom.

Without renunciation you can never be happy. Without renunciation you can never be successful in gaining the highest good. i.e., Moksha. Without renunciation you can never be at your ease. Therefore renounce everything. Make happiness your own. Hold renunciation as the foremost of things.

Become a good man first. Then control the senses. Then subdue the lower mind by the higher mind. Then the divine light will descend. Only then the vessel will be able to receive and hold the divine light. So long as your senses are not subdued or withdrawn, you will have to practise Tapas or self-restraint, Dama or Pratyahara.

You may conquer millions of persons in a battle, but you will become the greatest conqueror only if you can conquer your own lower self or mind.

Build your spiritual life on sure foundation, on the rock of divine grace and strength of character. Take refuge on the Lord and His eternal Law. There is no power in heaven or on earth that can bar your progress now. Success in Self-realisation is certain. Failure exists not for you. There is light on your path. All is brilliant.

Purify the heart first and then climb the ladder of Yoga steadily with courage and undaunted spirit. Climb onwards swiftly. Attain Ritambara Prajna and reach the summit of the ladder, the temple of wisdom, where the cloud of virtue or nectar drizzles from Dharmamegha Samadhi.

Sufferings purify the soul. They burn the gross material, sins and impurities. The Divinity becomes more and more manifest. They give inner spiritual strength and develop the will-force, the power of endurance. Hence sufferings are blessings in disguise.

Spiritual life is toilsome and laborious. It demands constant vigilance and strong perseverance before substantial progress is made.

Meditation and worship are the means of evolving your potentialities and seeking a higher level of consciousness or existence.

Practise meditation persistently and calmly without haste. You will soon attain Samadhi or Nirvikalpa State.

Only when you have purified your heart, silenced the mind, stilled the thoughts and surging emotions, withdrawn the outgoing senses, thinned out the Vasanas, you can behold the glorious Atma during deep meditation.

Even a ray of your light during meditation will lighten your path. It will give you great deal of encouragement and inner strength. It will goad you to do more Sadhana. You will experience this ray of light when the meditation becomes more deep and when you rise above the body-consciousness.

You yourself have built the walls of prison-house through ignorance. You can demolish the walls through discrimination and enquiry of 'Who am I?'

When the electric lamp is covered by many wrappings of cloth, there will be no bright light. When the cloth is removed one by one, the light grows brighter and brighter. Even so, when the Self-resplendent Atman which is covered by the five sheaths is stripped off the sheaths by meditation on the pure Self and practice of 'Neti, Neti' doctrine, the Self-luminous Atman reveals itself to the meditator.

There are five means by which perfect tranquility or emancipation can be attained. They are Satsang or association with the wise, dispassion, enquiry of 'who am I', discrimination between the real and the unreal and meditation. These are called Heaven. These are religion. These form the highest happiness.

Vigilant among the careless, awake among the sleepers, restrained among the indulgent, reflective among the thoughtless, the wise boldly marches forward, reaches the goal and attains immortality and eternal bliss.

Follow not after mundane vanity. Be humble and simple. Meditate seriously, climb the terraced heights of Upanishadic wisdom and enjoy the eternal bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This is the way and the only way to peace.

Sex-attraction, sexual thoughts, sexual urge are the three great obstacles in the path of God-realisation. Even if the sexual urge vanishes, the sex-attraction remains for a long time and troubles very

much. The organ of sight does great mischief. Destroy lustful look and adultery of the eye. Try to see God in all faces. Again and again generate the currents of dispassion, discrimination and enquiry. Eventually you will be established in Brahman. Again and again generate sublime divine thoughts and increase your Japa and meditation. The sexual thought will be annihilated.

Life is unfolding of the latent capacities of the soul. Lead the divine life. Generate sublime divine thoughts in your mind through meditation, Japa, Kirtan and study of the sacred scriptures.

Worship is the unfolding of the bud of the flower of the soul. Worship is life. Worship bestows life eternal.

Bask the body in the physical sunlight. Bask the soul in the sunlight of the Eternal. You will have good health and everlasting life.

SADHANA

The workings of Maya are so very subtle, so very difficult to overcome and the human nature is fundamentally so Asuric and unregenerate that real spiritual development and progress in Sadhana are indeed very hard to obtain. To achieve success in any measure in the spiritual life is the most difficult and uphill task that it is the Divine Grace alone that can raise the aspirant from darkness to light. So vehement, self-assertive and rebellious is the egoistic Self of man that it refuses to be changed from its vicious state to the state of virtue, goodness

and saintliness. It is a great blunder to think that the mere act of renunciation is sufficient achievement in the spiritual life by this egoistic assumption. The eradication of egoism in all its aggressive forms comprises the very core of spirituality and all spiritual Sadhana.

Right from the very beginning of your spiritual life you must clearly understand that in true humanity, sincere desire to root out gradually pride, egoism and jealousy, earnest and unceasing introspection to find out one's own defects and improve oneself, lies your hope of progress. Without this basis, all sorts of Sadhana becomes a delusion and a waste. It makes the aspirant puffed up, more and more.

You will encounter various difficulties in the beginning of your Sadhana. You are not conscious of any spiritual progress, but you are only conscious of your failures in your attempts in meditation, the resistance you meet and your defects and weaknesses.

If you persist in your Sadhana vigorously and diligently if you are regular in your Sadhana you will attain success. Meditation will come without effort. Meditation will become habitual. All resistance will vanish. You will develop strong will-power. You will have triumph at every step. Failure and despair will be unknown to you. Sadhana will go on in great strides.

Live with a definite purpose. Do not roam about aimlessly. Walk with a definite aim. Climb

the hill of knowledge steadily and reach the summit of the temple of Brahman or the sweet abode of Immortality.

In the spiritual path there are constant failures, and setbacks. Repeated endeavours, constant vigilance and undaunted perseverance are needed. Steadily resist the promptings of the lower nature. Gradually it will lose its power over you. You will gain strength. Even if you fail, it is one step nearer to victory or goal. The will-force will penetrate into the subconscious mind and eradicate all wrong impressions, vicious habits and evil traits.

Hard enough is it to purify the lower nature. Difficult enough it is to practise concentration and meditation. But vigilance, constant practice, steady and persistent efforts, company of sages (Satsang), resolute will, strong determination will obviate all difficulties and render the path easy, pleasant and attractive.

A bath in the Ganges removes sins. Kalpa Vriksha removes the poverty of man. It bestows whatever one wants, but it cannot remove the sins and give him coolness. Moon removes the warmth and gives coolness, but it can neither remove the sins nor the poverty. But Sat-sang with the sages and Yogins removes sins, poverty and the three fires (Tapas) of Samsara. Therefore have constant Satsang. You will have quick progress.

Regular concentration and repetition of Lord's names will remove scepticism and infuse faith and

devotion. Sadhana of any kind produces deep Yogic impression and strengthens the spiritual momentum. Nothing is lost when the candle is burnt. So is the case with the Yoga also. Spiritual progress is slow. Hence it becomes difficult in the beginning. The effect is there already. After some time, it will become quite tangible and perceptible.

Sadhana or the spiritual practice should make you ever cheerful, more concentrated, joyful, balanced, peaceful, contented, blissful, dispassionate, fearless, courageous, compassionate, discriminative, reflective, unattached, angerless, I-less, desireless and mine-less. Sadhana should give you inner life, introspective inner vision and unruffled state of mind, under all conditions of life. These are the signs of spiritual growth. Even when you get a glimpse of truth or the Supreme Being, your whole life will be changed. You will become a changed being. You will have a new heart, and a new vision too. A new thrill of spiritual current will pass through your entire being. A wave of spiritual bliss will sweep over you. The state is indescribable. There are no words to express it. There is no language to describe your inner experience.

Do not probe with your little intellect in spiritual matters. Have reverence and full faith upon your Guru. The Guru is a physician of the soul. He helps the aspirant to free himself from the bondage of desire and to attain the immortality and eternal bliss.

The sun gives light to the whole world, but it can be easily veiled by a thin layer of cloud or a small piece of handkerchief held before your eyes. You cannot see the light of the sun. The preceptor is full of divine knowledge. He is a spiritual sun. His grace is ever flowing like the Ganges. If you have no faith in him, if you have no receptive attitude and if you have no real strong aspiration, you will not get the light from him. This lack of faith, lack of aspiration, lack of receptive attitude act as cloud and screen you from the spiritual light, which emanates from the Teacher.

Spirituality means growing into the form of the Divine Ideal. It is the transformation of your nature from the human to the divine. You can hope to achieve perfection only when you effect this transformation. It is purification and change of heart alone that makes Dharana and Dhyana possible. To grow in Sattwa, you must entirely destroy the Asuric side of your nature. Never imagine for a moment that you are anywhere near to the Goal, unless and until you strive with earnestness and diligence to rid yourself of evil tendencies, get established in a pure Sattwic ethical character.

Remember this point clearly. Constantly reflect upon this. Meditate upon this. Know what that true spirituality is. Fully realise the importance of becoming a changed man ethically and morally. Carefully avoid the dangers of self-deception. Do Sadhana regularly and pray for His Grace. Regularity in

Sadhana is of paramount importance. Imagine not that you have scaled the heights of spirituality. Patiently wait for the results. When your nature is changed, purified and prepared Divine Grace will flow of itself, illumination will flash of itself, in the firmament of the soul. Bliss and Ananda will spontaneously flow in and fill you when you have emptied yourself of harshness, egoism, pride and passion. Perfection and Immortality will be yours. Where there is kindness, humility and purity there spirituality springs up, saintliness shines, divinity descends and perfection manifests itself.

Bathe in the river of Divinity. Plunge in it. Take a dip in it. Swim in it. Floeatt. Rjnioice.

CONCENTRATION EXERCISES

I

Ask your friends to show you some playing cards. Immediately after the exposure, describe the forms you have seen. Give the number, name, etc., such as clubs king, spade ten, diamond queen, heart's jack, and so on.

II

Read two or three pages of a book. Then close the book. Now attend to what you have read. Abandon all distracting thoughts. Focus your attention carefully. Allow the mind to associate, classify, group, combine and compare. You will get now a fund of knowledge and information on the subject.

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Mere skipping over the pages inadvertently is of no use. There are students who read a book within a few hours. If you ask them to reproduce some important point of the book, they will simply blink. If you attend to the subject on hand very carefully, you will receive clear, strong impressions. If the impressions are strong, you will have very good memory.

III

Sit on your favourite meditative pose about one foot from a watch. Concentrate on the tik-tik sound slowly. Whenever the mind runs, again and again try to hear the sound. Just see how long the mind can be fixed continuously on the sound.

IV

Sit again on your favourite Asana. Close your eyes. Close the ears with your thumbs or plug the ears with wax or cotton. Try to hear the Anahata sounds (mystic sounds). You will hear various kinds of sounds such as flute, violin, kettledrum, thunderstorm, conch, bells, the humming of a bee, etc. Try to hear the gross sounds first. Hear only one kind of sound. If the mind runs, you can shift it from gross to subtle, or from subtle to gross. Generally you will hear sounds in your right ear. Occasionally you may hear in your left ear also. But try to stick to the sound of one ear. You will get one-pointedness of mind. This is an easy way to capture the mind, because it is enchanted by the sweet sound just as a snake is hypnotised by the note of the snake-charmer.

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V

Keep a candle flame in front of you and try to concentrate on the flame. When you are tired of doing this, close your eyes and try to visualise the flame. Do it for half a minute and increase the time to five or ten minutes according to your taste, temperament and capacity. You will see Rishis and Devatas, when you enter into deep concentration.

VI

In a lying posture, concentrate on the moon. Whenever the mind runs, again and again bring it back to the image of the moon. This exercise is very beneficial in the case of some persons having an emotional temperament.

VII

In the above manner, you can concentrate on any star you may single out from the millions of stars shining above your head.

VIII

Sit by the side of a river where you can hear a roaring sound like "OM". Concentrate on that sound as long as you like. This is very thrilling and inspiring.

IX

Lie on your bed in the open air and concentrate upon the blue expansive sky above. Your mind will expand immediately. You will be elevated. The

blue sky will remind you of the infinite nature of the Self.

X

Sit in a comfortable posture and concentrate on any one of the numerous abstract virtues such as mercy. Dwell upon this virtue as long as you can.

YOUR FOREMOST DUTIES

All humanity springs from the cradle. Verily, the home is the source and the fountain-head whence the stream of humanity flows. The Mother is the visible creatrix of Mankind. Upon parents therefore, rests the supreme onerous duty of moulding the future character of child-humanity. Whether the world abounds in noble, righteous and splendid heroes or is filled with petty, vicious and ignoble specimens of humanity depends upon the parents and the homes of to-day. Parents are the well-wishers of the children. They should not allow their children to cultivate bad habits. They must be lofty ideals and examples for children to follow. The mother is not to sing cinema songs and other meaningless blabberings to lull their babies. Only Kirtans glorifying the Almighty Lord and His sweet names should be sung. Sing "Hari Narayana, Hari Narayana." Or "Siva Siva Sankara, Hara Hara Sankara." This leaves a deep divine impression in the tender mind of the child. The child is full of divine qualities. He will bloom forth into a perfect man.

A child imitates the parents. What habits you acquire the child acquires from you. If you play at

cards, if you smoke, if you use vulgar and indecent language, if you are quarrelsome, if you gossip and speak scandal, the child also will come to do all these things. Parents should correct themselves from this moment. If you are irreligious the child too will become irreligious. Realise now your grave responsibility ! Perceive clearly the far-reaching consequences of your conduct. Upon you rests the making or the marring of the society and the nation, its glory or ignominy. The parents of the present day who are slaves of fashion teach their children to put on collar and open coat and to treat with contempt those who wear simple clothing. They teach their children fashion instead of sublime mottoes such as : 'Plain living and high thinking.' They pamper and spoil their children with toilet and luxuries. They encourage artificial mode of life. They create in their children exaggerated notions of false dignity, superiority etc. The children's character must be built in such a way that it can never be shaken by adverse influence in later life. The parents should themselves lead the divine life.

O parents ! O Fathers and Mothers ! Do not waste your lives in fashion and passion. Walk in the path of righteousness. Preserve your Grihastha Dharma and Pativrata Dharma. Study the Gita, Upanishads, Bhagawata and Ramayana. Become good Dampatis. See divinity in all. Open the door of Elysian Bliss. Bring Vaikuntha in your home. The father should be the main teacher to the child. Sing the Lord's names. Train your children to sing Nam.

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Fill your house with spiritual vibrations. You are visible Gods to the children. Conduct yourselves like Gods.

Ideal parents are fit to be worshipped. They are worthy of highest adoration. The children should look upon them as Gods on earth.

They should obey them implicitly, reverently listen to their advice, and carry out their instructions with love. They should never hurt their feelings or behave rudely. Just as the parent longs with eagerness to make his child shine in the foremost ranks in society, even so the son should conduct himself in such a noble way that the world may remark, "If so noble is the son, how much greater and grander indeed should be the fortunate parent of this worthy one?" The conduct of the son should add glory to the father.

Ye, Students! You are the future hopes of the Motherland. You are the coming citizens of the country. You should always think of the goal of life and live to attain that goal. The goal of life is the attainment of freedom from all sorts of miseries or the state of Kaivalya or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.

Lead a well-regulated life. Moral strength is the back-bone of spiritual and material progress. Ethical culture is the part and parcel of Sadhana. Keep up Brahmacharya or the vow of celibacy. By the observance of Brahmacharya many sages and saints of yore have attained perfection and immortality.

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Brahmacharya is the source of new strength, vigour and vitality and success in life and eternal happiness hereafter. Loss of this energy is the cause of diseases, miseries, and premature death. In the preservation of this energy you must take particular care and attention.

Have intense faith in the Vedas and also in the power of Mantras. Practise meditation. Take Sattvic food. Shun evil company. Do not cut jokes with women. Practise chaste look. Up to this time you were blind and ignorant. You were in the dark. Now light has come. Wake up. March forward. You will conquer all your obstacles.

The man who serves the world really serves the Lord. The man who helps others really helps himself. A selfless worker constantly endeavours to look upon all with equal vision as manifestations of the One Divine Being. All service to him is therefore a continuous worship of this ever-present divinity.

Selfless service is the greatest force to inspire and elevate man to high levels. It brings about an all-round development of your faculties which nothing else can do. It ennobles your character, makes you manly and brings spontaneous spiritual awakening. Selfless service is most essential for physical, moral and spiritual regeneration of the youth of the world.

Scientists have made conquest over the physical forces or external nature. But have they conquered

the inner nature? Have they made conquests over mind, Gunas, Vrittis, Sankalpas, Vasanas? Have they attained triumph over the turbulent and boisterous senses or Indriyas, their real enemies of peace and wisdom? Have they achieved victory over their lower nature or the Asuric, diabolical forces or the brutal instincts such as lust, anger, and known the resplendent glory of their own Innermost self or Antaryamin or Inner Ruler? No, certainly not; Here lies their utter defeat. Here lies their helplessness and hopelessness. Their inventions have augmented their vanity and restlessness, have made them forget their essential divine nature and have made their mind run outwards with externalising tendencies. Their inventions have brought out destruction of the world through hatred, jealousy etc., and also war. Their inventions have created enemies, thirst over possessions, lust for more dominions and craving for more objects of luxuries. O Students! If you really want immortality, eternal bliss, go beyond science, study Adhyatmic science or Brahma Vidya, the Science of sciences, reflect and meditate on the infinite, unchanging Atman within, that dwells in the chambers of your heart.

Economists speak of four things, land, labour, capital and organisation, to increase one's wealth and resources. Sages who are divine economists also speak of four things—discrimination, Vairagya, longing for liberation and meditation or the four means of salvation. If the land is not ploughed and manured, if the soil is full of stones, you cannot

have a good harvest or crop. Even so, if the inner land viz. mind is not prepared properly, if the weeds of lust, anger, greed etc. are not removed you cannot have a harvest of spiritual wealth or divine bliss. Understand this. Economists speak of capital. Vedantists speak of good Samskaras (good tendencies). Good Samskara is the asset or the capital for the aspirants. Those who are born with good spiritual Samskaras have quick spiritual progress, and soon amass the inexhaustible spiritual wealth through Self-realisation.

You are only students now. You do not know what is this world. The world is a very great thing or solid reality for a passionate, worldly-minded man. As the mind is soaked with the worldly thoughts, worldly Vasanas, and worldly Samskaras, as he is surrounded by Asuric environments, as he is breathing the atmosphere emanating from the sensual filth, he is not able to comprehend subtle things which are transcendental. He has forgotten all about the glory of divinity and super-living. There are scorpion stings on one side, flies, bugs, mosquitoes, thorns, that trouble him from another corner. Sun scorches him in summer and the biting winter chills his blood. Influenza, plague, leprosy, fashionable appendicitis, pyorrhoea, small-pox are ready to devour him. Fear, delusion, grief, sorrow and misery kill him every moment. Desire, anger, jealousy, worry, anxieties and cares and excitements torment him every second.

Birth is suffering, disease is suffering, death is

suffering, sorrow, grief, pain, amentations are sufferings, union with unpleasant objects is suffering, separation from the beloved objects is suffering, unsatisfied desires are also sufferings. Therefore search within. Make a definite plan to look within and introspect and rest in the supreme Abode of Peace and Immortality now.

You have all studied in schools and colleges. Although you have studied it is only the materialistic education without ethical, moral and Yogic cultures. Listen to the convocational address given by the Rishis of yore to their students on their departure from Gurukulavasa and try to put it in practice.

Having taught the Vedas the preceptor exhorts the disciple: "Speak the truth. Do your duty. Never swerve from the study of the Vedas. Do not cut off the thread of the offspring after giving the preceptor the fee he desires. Never swerve from duty. Never neglect your welfare. Never neglect your prosperity. Never neglect the study and teachings of the Vedas. Never swerve from the duties of the Gods and to the manes. May the mother, father, preceptor and guest be thy visible Gods. Let only those actions that are free from blemishes be done, and not others. Only those that are good acts should be performed by thee and not others."

RETIRED PEOPLE

Retired people have no programme of life as they have not associated with sages. As soon as they

retire they commute their pension and build a big house in a big city and spend their life in idle gossiping and playing cards. They want to purchase a big land and like to have a title 'Land Lord'. They want to walk in the Marina beeches with walking sticks in their hands. This is their highest aspiration and realisation too. This is their idea of Moksha. Quite puerile!

You must retire from service as soon as real Vairagya and Viveka dawn in you. Do not mind about the pension. Give up the clinging to your wife and children. Birds allow their young ones free as soon as they learn to fly. In the same manner give up your attachment with your children and relatives and try to amass the inexhaustible spiritual wealth.

Get a big plot of land on the bank of any river or near the sea-side and develop this into a big socio-religious Ashram. If your ideas and motives are unselfish and if you really want to serve humanity with sincere faith and supreme universal love you may even get the land free. The work you undertake to disseminate the spiritual knowledge is a divine work. Therefore you are bound to get the divine help also.

The Ashram, so-constructed must be a mile and a half away from the village or town. There should be picturesque scenery. Then only there will be perfect solitude. After acquiring the land put an ordinary fencing and build some thatched cottages.

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Dig a well. Get the help of a retired Engineer and make out a Master-plan to construct some good buildings as Lecture Hall, Sankirtan Bhavan, School, Dispensary, Library, rooms for Brahmacharins, householders, Vanaprasthas, and Sannyasnis etc.

If you have not enough money join with some of your friends who have got some spiritual tendencies. They will help you and co-operate with you. Many people will come and build rooms for themselves and stay there for doing Yoga Sadhana, practising meditation and doing selfless service.

Have a nice good garden by the side of the Ashram with various kinds of fruit - trees etc. Arrange for a plot of land to sow wheat or rice. This will make the Ashram self-supported and financially independent to a very great extent. Have some cows and buffaloes. Then the Ashramites can live on milk given by the cows of their own Ashram, take food produced from their own Ashram land, eat the fruits and vegetables they get from their own garden.

Have a good library. Every year buy some new books and add to the library. Build a small dispensary. This small dispensary may in course of time become a big hospital. Start a primary school and educate the poor children of the locality. You can also start a small industrial school, and subjects like, weaving, tailoring, soap-making, carpentry etc. can be taught.

There should be a prayer hall, a temple and some artificial Guhas too. In the Ashram there should

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be morning and evening prayer, common meditation, study of Gita, practice of Yoga Asanas and Pranayamas, Mantra-writing classes, etc. Every year the anniversary is to be conducted in a grand scale. Sadhana weeks, Sankirtan conferences, Parliament of Religions are also to be conducted. Let there also be poor-feeding, Akhanda Kirtan. Havan for world-welfare, play of Divine dramas and dialogues, regular lectures and discourses on Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and other religious scriptures etc. All festivals are to be observed and celebrated with faith and devotion. A daily routine is to be fixed for the Ashramites and for the visitors and that is to be carried out promptly, regularly and punctually. Then the Ashram will become a dynamic spiritual centre, radiating joy, peace and bliss everywhere.

Now, your heart will be brimming with joy when you think of the useful work you have done. You will have a pure and soft heart through your selfless service. You will earn undying fame. You will have extreme satisfaction that you have spent every minute of your life-time in the service of humanity, in the uplift of the down-trodden and the less fortunate ones. You will surely enter the abode of bliss and immortality, obtaining undying fame in this world.

HEADS OF GOVERNMENTS

Heads of Governments, Presidents and Prime Ministers of the world states must have good training in Yoga and study of Vedanta. They should be

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pious, God-fearing, kind and merciful. They should all lead a divine life. Then only they can do immense good to their peoples and the world at large. They should inaugurate schemes for building Ashrams as detailed above with slight modification to suit their own people. It is the great leaders of people who are at the helm of affairs that can put such unique beneficial plans into practical operation. They can instantly command resources, afford facilities and organise enthusiastic workers to start such institutions upon a nation-wide scale.

There must be an Ashram of this kind in every village near each and every town and big city. Each and every nation needs this plan urgently to change the present perverted military-mindedness and re-educate the war-scared and hate-scared people upon lines of nobler aspirations, loftier sentiments and refined ideals. Only then the attention and energy of men will be diverted into beneficial constructive channels.

If all people begin to rigorously practise Yama, kindness and mercy, how can they at the same time stand with weapons and guns in their hands to destroy each other. Any international league, or party or treaty without spiritual basis will totally fail to bring about lasting peace and happiness for the world. War will again break out after some time with re-doubled vigour and increased hatred, more machine guns and aeroplanes will be constructed, new inventions like Atom bomb etc will be made.

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Sannyasins should become advisers to the Governments. They should guide the Presidents and Prime Ministers as well as the people in the proper path.

Then only peace and friendliness will fill men's hearts and they will give up the craze for invention of fresh atomic weapons. The thirst for money, power and self-aggrandisement will gradually give place to love and sacrifice, service and simplicity. The atomic weapon will be discarded and an atmosphere of love and universal brotherhood will come to prevail. Spirituality will reign and materialism will wane. There will be Paradise or the Kingdom of God upon the earth !

SURE MEANS TO ATTAIN GODHEAD

Self-control, sweet and pleasant speech, good manners and behaviour, Satsang with Mahatmas, good spiritual preceptor—this is a Supreme Blessing. This must be your Sadhana.

To live righteously, to do praiseworthy deeds, to abstain from liquors, tobacco, to abhor and cease from sin, to lead a contented life, to be meek and humble, to hear the Lord's Leelas and the Srutis, to be pure at heart, to associate with the wise, to enter into Samadhi or the superconscious state—this is a Supreme Blessing. These must be your ideals in life.

To live on the banks of Ganges, to have dispassion, discrimination, yearning for liberation, to practise Japa, Kirtan and meditation—this is Supreme Blessing. This must be your aspiration in life.

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To serve the poor, the sick, the saints and the country, to raise the fallen, to lead the blind, to share what you have with others, to bring solace to the afflicted; to cheer up the suffering, to have perfect faith in God, to love your neighbour as your own self, to love God with all your heart, mind and soul, to protect cows, children and women—this is a supreme Blessing. This must be your aim in life.

To eradicate the evil habits, to kill the desires, to mortify the lower nature, to crucify the flesh, to subdue the senses, to control passion, to wage war against anger, lust, jealousy, greed etc. is a Supreme Blessing. This must be your daily practice.

To have self-control, to have a balanced mind in success and failure, victory and defeat, pain and pleasure, to have equal vision, to manifest the divinity within through daily regular meditation to be brave and march forward in the spiritual path breaking all barriers and conquering all the obstacles that stand in the way, to realise God and dwell in His supreme abode enjoying the permanent bliss and Ananda and attain the Goal of Life—this is the blessing of all blessings. Awake, arise, stop not till you achieve the Goal of Life.

May you turn back, move in the company of sages, be regular in your daily Yogic practices and regain back the lost Kingdom of Bliss and Supreme Peace! May you all enter the kingdom of peace, the only warless abode! May the Divine Harmony

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fill your whole being and may you all soar high in the spiritual heights of Atmic knowledge and Brahmic Bliss! May you all go beyond Maya or nature and rest in the Satchidananda, sexless and passionless Atma! May the Almighty Lord crown all your efforts in the spiritual path with sanguine success! May you all shine as beacon lights of the world radiating love, joy, peace and power! May the Lord bless you all!

Om Santih! Santih!! Santih!!!

The service dearest to the Lord !

JNANA YAJNA

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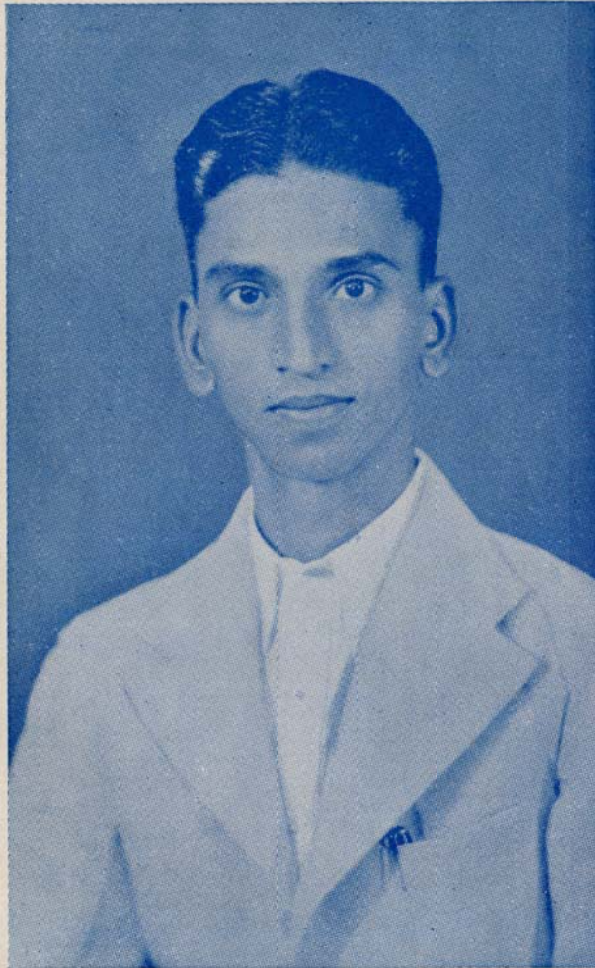
THE NEED IS GREAT AND THE GLORY IS GREAT

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GURU BHAKTI RATNA



SRI T. ELUMALAI

Chapter One

EARLY LIFE OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

Swami Sivananda was born in the village of Rithigudi in the district of Madurai in the year 1889. He was educated in the Government School at Rithigudi.

YOGA CHAKRAVARTY

He was distinguished by his extraordinary powers of memory. He was called only at a brief period of his life.

His mother, Mahadevi, was a devoted devotee of Sri Krishna. She displayed nothing extraordinary in her life, when at the age of seventeen she was married to a young man named S. S. Srinivasan, who was a student of the Government School at Rithigudi.

They had a son named S. S. Srinivasan, who was a student of the Government School at Rithigudi. He was a student of the Government School at Rithigudi. He was a student of the Government School at Rithigudi. He was a student of the Government School at Rithigudi.

Chapter One

EARLY LIFE OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

Swami Sivananda known as Dr. Kuppuswami Aiyer in his Purva Ashrama was born on the 8th September 1889, at Pattamadai, on the banks of the holy river Tamraparni, in South India.

From the lives of great saints we learn that some of them were conscious of their Divine mission from the very childhood, while others became conscious of the Father's call only at a later period of their life.

Sri Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai, South India, displayed nothing extraordinary in his boyhood, when at the age of seventeen he suddenly felt a burning sensation in his body, accompanied by the thought that he was going to die.

This led him to think over the problem—who is it that is dying? And who is he himself in reality? This enquiry or Atma-Vichara coupled with the practice of Maunam became his favourite and only method of Sadhana, which made him in course of time one of the greatest Jnanins of modern India.

Sri Shyamacharan Lahiri Mahashaya's life was quite uneventful till his 33rd year of age. He was rather of an agnostic turn of mind, when by the Master's touch the veil of Avidya (ignorance) was removed and by the practice of Kriya Yoga he ascended the highest summit of human evolution and became the famous Yogi Lahiri Mahashaya of Benares.

The Seraphic poet and Vedic scholar of great repute, Sri Kavyakantha Ganapati Muni was dumb and afflicted with all sorts of diseases, like enlarged spleen and liver and epileptic fits during his first five years of earthly existence, but was relieved of them in his sixth year by branding with red hot iron.

As though to make amends for the past dumbness, Sri Ganapati Muni exhibited marvellous powers of perception, attention, resource and recollection.

The prominent features of Sakya Muni were in his teens those of a Kshatriya viz., physical strength, chivalry and prowess. Only as a grown up man he came to investigate the causes of human sufferings and became a Buddha.

On the other hand, there are souls who from the very childhood were conscious of their Divine Mission.

Sri Sankaracharya embraced Sannyasa at the age of seven.

Yogi Jnana Dev exhibited Yoga Siddhis even while being a child. So did Sri Krishna too.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa enjoyed the bliss of Samadhi in his earliest boyhood, rather in his childhood.

There is, however, no difference as regards the greatness of a Yogi or a saint as to whether he manifested his Divinity either in an early age, or at a later period of his earthly existence.

But for a devout disciple who wants to mould his character according to the patterns of his Guru, and who wants to follow in the footsteps of his Master, it is decidedly better if he can follow up the spiritual evolution of a soul who was conscious of his spiritual destiny from his very childhood and who made conscious efforts to unfold his latent Divinity through the succeeding phases of human life viz., boyhood, youth and manhood.

In this respect the life of Sri Swami Sivananda is very useful for close study. For he was an Adhyatmic fighter from his very childhood and every youth can find a noble example for imitation, as to how to make life a success and yet not to be entangled in the meshes of worldly life, and how to use this very life as a means and a stepping-stone for the highest spiritual evolution.

Yet in order to do full justice to the Saints and Sages who did not exhibit their spiritual powers in their childhood or teens, I must humbly admit that a close study of their lives too will disclose a spiritual undercurrent e.g. when the school mates played their childish pranks with Venkata Rama

(Sri Ramana Maharshi), when he was asleep, he exhibited a very meek character, quite different from that of his waking consciousness.

Yogi Lahiri Mahashaya used in his childhood to sit in a Yogic posture and burry his body, except his head in sand.

But now let us focus our entire attention on the holy life of the Beacon Light of Rikhiḷesh—His Holiness Sri 108 Swami Sivananda Saraswati.

Swami Sivananda, like other great spiritual luminaries was born in a very pious family.

His father P.S. Vengu Iyer was called a Mahan or Maha Purusha (great soul) by the populace.

His mother, Parvati Ammal, was a woman with equally devotional heart imbued with high spirituality. Not only his parents were great devotees, but their ancestors also were great Bhaktas, Yogins and Sages. The foremost of them was, no doubt, Sri Appayya Deekshitar. He was a versatile genius. Sri Appya Deekshitar is the author of more than a hundred Sanskrit works dealing with philosophy, poetry and rhetoric. Siddhanta Lesha and Parimala are very valuable works on Vedanta Philosophy. His poems in praise of Lord Siva are in great favour even today among Siva-Bhaktas.

Sri Appayya Deekshitar once performed a miracle of changing the Vishnu Murti into Siva Murti. He once visited in South India the Tirupati temple. The Vaishnavas refused him admission on pretext of his being a Siva Bhakta. Sri Appya Deekshitar

then changed the Vishnu image into Siva Murti by his Yogic powers. The Mahant was much perplexed, granted admission, begged pardon and prayed to Sri Appayya Deekshitar to change the Murti again into Vishnu.

Swami Sivananda's uncle Appayya Sivam was also a great Sanskrit scholar. He has written many philosophical books in Sanskrit.

Swami Sivananda had two elder brothers who occupied very high positions in society. P.V. Veeraraghava Iyer was the personal assistant of the Raja of Ettiapuram and P.V. Sitarama Iyer, B.A., was the Inspector of Post Offices.

Swami Sivananda was born at a very auspicious time on the 8th of September, 1887.

The place of his birth, Pattamadai in South India, on the banks of the sacred river Tamraparni also known as Dakshina Ganga, is a very beautiful and lovely spot.

Swami Sivananda possessed as a boy a marvelous physique which he developed by systematic and strenuous exercises on parallel and vertical bars and other gymnastic exercises.

As his parents were of a very orthodox type of Brahmins, they did not seem to be in favour of such physical exercises. Therefore Swami Sivananda left his bed early at 3 A.M. when all his house people were still sleeping and did his physical exercises.

He was obedient to his parents and teachers. But he was not timid or shy and had no fear from

persons who held the reins of power. It is therefore that he was asked to deliver reception addresses to mighty potentates on railway stations and other places. Swami Sivananda was not much inclined at this period of his life towards the practice of Japa, but he listened with rapt attention to discourses of Bhagavadgita and watched with great interest the ceremonial worship (Pooja) of his father.

Just as now-a-days the Swami keeps several note-books, wherein he records his spiritual experiences, sublime thoughts etc., so the student Kuppuswami Iyer kept his note-book where he recorded every important experiment, or thought expressed by the professors.

It is therefore no wonder that he was much beloved by his professors and was taken by them in confidence and engaged as their assistant.

So, after finishing his medical studies Dr. Kuppuswami Iyer was quite familiar with the secrets of medical science and was an able physician and surgeon from the very start of his medical career.

THE SWAMI AS DOCTOR

After finishing the medical studies he started a medical journal entitled "Ambroisa". It was much liked by the reading public, and the number of the subscribers increased rapidly.

Yet after two years, Dr. Kuppuswami Iyer desired to actively engage himself in the service of the suffering humanity. He discontinued, therefore,

the publishing of the journal and sailed straight to settle in the Federated Malaya States where he served as doctor for ten years, from 1913 till 1923.

At this time too, he wrote several medical books, such as "Household Remedies," "Obstetric Ready Reckoner", "Fruits and Health", "Diseases and their Tamil Terms", "Fourteen Lectures on Public Health" etc., etc. He always took interest in physical culture and sports. He wrote also articles on sports in special journals.

He was also a great lover of music and poetry. He could compose songs. He was a good songster. He had at home two harmoniums. He was fond of religious music and Sankirtan.

Swami Sivananda's life as a doctor was characterised by utter selflessness and untiring service. Dr. Kuppuswami Iyer was a specialist in various branches of medicines. This is hard to believe, yet it is a fact. We must remember that while a student, Kuppuswami Iyer was present at hospital even during holidays. He put his heart and soul in his studies. The Swami once said that he did not know what it means to do things by halves. Whenever he took up anything he did it whole-heartedly.

Europeans generally cannot believe that one can be a master in several branches of learning. Therefore, great men like Kalidasa and Patanjali are a puzzle to most European scholars. It seems to them that there might have been three Kalidasas, for

Kalidasa exhibited his literary genius in various ways and styles.

Sri Aurobindo Ghose strongly attacks such a wrong opinion and clearly states that it was due to the ancient Gurukula system of education that could and did produce great poets like Kalidasa and men of science and spirituality like Patanjali Maharshi. Regarding Patanjali European scholars too maintain that the author of Panini's Mahabhashya and the author of Yoga Darshana must have been two different persons. But Prof. Surendranath Das Gupta who is *the* authority on History of Indian Philosophy, refutes such an erroneous view declaring that there is nothing to prove that there were two different authors of the Mahabhashya and Yoga Darshana, but there are several reasons which support opposite view, i.e., the author of the great Commentary of Panini and the author of Yoga Philosophy are identical.

We must here not forget that Patanjali was the author of an important work on medicine too. For indeed Patanjali Maharshi gave to mankind a message for the body in his medical treatise, a message for the mind in his Mahabhashya and a message for the soul in his Yoga Sutras.

And if somebody now-a-days cannot believe in the fact that a man can be so manysided and yet well-versed in every line of knowledge, let him look at a modern exponent of Indian thought and culture viz., Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati, who is still living in

flesh and blood among us. He is publishing authoritative books on the Philosophy of Vedanta, on the science of Yoga, on Tantra, on Health problems and various other problems on Medicine,—on metaphysical problems such as the "Life of the soul after death" etc., etc. And on every branch of knowledge he throws a mass of light and information. His works bear the stamp of authority. We see that the Swami has like Patanjali Maharshi given a message for the body in his books on Hatha Yoga, Pranayama, Yoga Asanas, Health and Long Life, the Family Doctor etc., a message for mind in his Mind, Its Mysteries and Control, and message for the soul in his Raja Yoga, Practice of Vedanta, Vedanta in Daily Life, etc., etc.

And like the great Acharyas of yore, Swami Sivananda too has produced masterly commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads and Brahma Sutras.

Need we then after all these considerations entertain any doubts that the Swami was a specialist in Tropical medicine, in Surgery, in Gynecology, Ophthalmology, etc. He prosecuted microscopical studies too.

The Swami was a most sympathetic doctor. He tried to understand the feelings, troubles and anxieties of his patients. In serious cases he himself nursed his patients and administered medicines to them. If the patient happened to be poor, Dr. Kuppuswami did not take any fee from them for the

treatment. He even provided them with clothing and money.

The Swami was much liked by the eminent English physicians like Drs. Green, Parson Garlik and Glenny.

Many cases that were pronounced hopeless even by the great doctors were cured by him successfully.

It is now-a-days more and more recognised by leading medical authorities that besides the medical skill, the doctor's personality too plays a vital role in successful treatment of a sick patient. An encouraging word has often produced no less effect than a patented medicine. No wonder that Dr. Kuppuswami's charming and magnetic personality attracted many thousands of people. He could infuse with his sweet loving words and his wit and humour new courage and hope in his ailing patients.

We often hear people saying "I underwent a serious surgical operation; were not the physician a friend of mine, or a colleague from the University, I would be since long dead. Thanks to the constant vigilance, I was saved from the clutches of certain death."

Such and similar phrases show clearly that most physicians are more interested in money than in the welfare of their patients. Not so was it with Dr. Kuppuswami; every man's life was dear and sacred to him. It was not that he treated his rich patients with more care and the poor ones with less care.

Even at this stage of life the Swami practised perfect equality. And this came not as a result of an enforced or deliberate moral discipline but rather as the outcome of his supreme moral structure or character.

To throw more light on this rare spiritual trait of Dr. Kuppuswami Iyer, I am impelled to cite a case mentioned by Sri S. Sridhar in his book "Light-Fountain" (by Prism) chapter 1, Page 1, "It happened once that a humble woman of the low caste—a pariah was about to give birth to a child. She had none to call her own and to be of help. This young Brahmana doctor of a most celebrated family was at once by her side, all tenderness and sympathy, more solicitous than if she were his own sister. He looked to her comfort, eased her as best as he could, and, as the necessity arose, kept vigil that night, stretching himself down on the earth and passing the night thus outside the door of her lowly-dwelling. Only when the task on hand was completed did he return home and think of himself."

In his practice of Yoga Vol. I and other works also, the Swami has expressed that the mind has three defects or deficiencies viz., Mala, Vikshepa and Avarana.

Mala is impurity of the mind. It is the result of impure thoughts, resulting from contact with sensual objects. These contacts with objects producing sensual thoughts and desires make the mind restless. This restlessness of the mind is termed Vikshepa or tossing of the mind.

An impure and restless mind is quite unfit to see the clear light of Atma within. We may say that it is covered with a veil of darkness or nescience or Avidya. This is Avarana.

We see that there is a connection or Sambandha of these three Doshas or faults of the mind. It is also clear that an impure mind cannot become either spiritual or moral. And the impurity results from sense-contacts with their respective sense-objects and from latent desires or Vasanas.

The Swami's birth in a highly spiritual family was conducive in kindling the good spiritual Samskaras and suppressing the bad ones if any.

Now the youth and even maturity to some extent are the critical times regarding the moral behaviour of a man.

Though on one side the Swami was lucky to have been born in a devotional family, on the other the life in Malaya, far from his Motherland offered too much temptations for the young enterprising Indians. Boredom often visits the young men in such conditions. What they generally do in such cases is that they venture out in search of sensual pleasures. What saved the young Dr. Kuppu-Swami from a sensual fall, one might naturally ask? The answer is plain: good Samskaras acquired in his childhood in a pious family and selfless service of a purely Niskama Karma type during his life as a doctor. It is a proverb "Constant occupation prevents temptation".

In this connection it is interesting to note how he spent his time when free from the obligations of medical profession. What were his recreations?

Dr. Kuppuswami was lover of music. He was himself a wonderful songster. But even here and at this stage of his life we see the spiritual undercurrent very clearly. He loved devotional music. He conducted Sankirtan and staged dramas from the great Indian Epics: Mahabharata and Ramayana.

He also loved to study books on Philosophy. He used to pay money in advance to his book-sellers so that every new publication on Yoga and Vedanta might be reserved for him.

The doctor was also interested in physical culture. He contributed regularly his articles on matches and games to various journals. He wrote articles and books on medicines too, which were much liked by the reading public and which helped to increase his income also.

As he showered his money and kindness to one and all, even to those who would in the opinion of the general public, not rightly deserve it, it is no wonder that the doctor was most kind, generous and charitable towards Sadhus and Mahatmas.

Once he treated a serious case of sick Sannyasi. The Sannyasi had some rare manuscripts with whom he never wanted to part. But out of a sense of deep gratitude to Dr. Kuppuswami Iyer for his kind treatment he voluntarily offered those valuable

manuscripts to the doctor. Those manuscripts contained the highest truths of Vedanta Philosophy. As the gunpowder easily catches fire, so the already spiritually inclined soul and by selfless-service-purified heart of the Swami caught the idea of renunciation.

We can compare this period of Dr. Kuppuswami's life, to a lotus-leaf which though lying in water is not contaminated by it. Even so the Swami though living in the world was not tainted by it.

SANNYASA

Just as a ripe fruit falls from the tree at the slightest touch of a soft breeze, so the already ripe soul of Dr. Kuppuswami discarded the worldly life and embraced Sannyasa.

We do not know what were the last incidents in his Poorva Ashrama, whether the manuscripts of the grateful Sannyasi whom the doctor had successfully restored to health, or the life-story of the famous Yogi Sadasiva Brahman with his raptures of Samadhi and the utter Oblivion of any body-consciousness, that gave the last push to leave this world of comforts, competition, struggle, enjoyments and sufferings. The chief reason was the ripeness of the soul. The good Samskaras from his childhood, the well-regulated student-life, the life of selfless service, the study of Vedantic and Yogic scriptures and last but not least the actual contact with Mahatmas,

Sannyasins and Sadhus were the stepping-stones that led to his spiritual maturity.

And so on a blessed day in 1924 Dr. Kuppuswami purchased a ticket for India and left Malaya for good.

He liquidated all his doctor's activities, gave away in charity most of the furniture and other belongings to his friends. In Madras he left the remnants of his earthly goods including some hundred rupees to one of his friends saying: "Let everything be with you. If occasion demands I shall communicate with you". But inwardly Dr. Kuppuswami had already renounced everything and never thought nor asked for anything from his friend, though he had difficulties to face and many critical moments in later life.

He went to Benares and visited the famous temple of Kashi Viswanath. Here he spent the rest of money he had with him and made his surrender a fully complete one. Now he walked penniless in sun and rain visiting all famous places of pilgrimage like Nasik, Poona, Pandarpur etc. In the Vindhya hills he stayed for some time with a famous Yogi. From here he proceeded to Dhalaj, a village on the banks of the river Chandrabhaga and stayed for a few months with a pious soul—a local Postmaster. When Dr. Kuppuswami expressed the desire to settle down in a calm and solitary place for intense Sadhana and rigorous Tapascharya, his host suggested him to go to Rishikesh—a place ideally suited for this purpose.

The Postmaster gave him twenty-five rupces for trainage. The doctor then proceeded straight to Rishikesh. Rishikesh is a city of Yogins, Sadhus and Mahatmas. It is located on the banks of the Ganges in Himalayas.

It was a few days after his arrival at Rishikesh, while he was seated on the banks of the holy river Ganges, one evening an old Sannyasi approached him and inquired about his mission in coming to Rishikesh.

Dr. Kuppuswami had met several Sadhus during his wanderings but he did not ask till now anyone of them to initiate him. But here was the Saint sent by Divine Providence. Brahma Tejas splashed from his austere but kind face. The Sannyasi said to the doctor: "Your face shows that you are born to fulfil a great mission. How I wish to initiate a person of your type, to be enrolled in the holy order of Paramahansa". The doctor at once felt that this is his divinely ordained Guru and gratefully accepted the Sannyasi's kind offer. The Sannyasi continued: "I am coming from Benares. My name is Viswananda. I have been a Sannyasi for a very long time. You are a proper Adhikari for initiation. I shall initiate you to-morrow morning." Early in the morning both the Guru and disciple took a bath in the holy river Ganges. The preceptor had already kept an ochre robe for his disciple. After proper rites and recitation of sacred Mantras Swami Sivananda, for such was his spiritual name now, was initiated into the mysteries of "Tat Twam Asi"

Mahavakya. The veil of Avidya was torn asunder and the Swami stood free and brilliant like the Sun.

This was the beginning of his glorious spiritual career for he was destined to be the Spiritual guide and Teacher not only of India but the world at large.

In the evening Sri Swami Viswananda (Swami Sivananda's Guruji) wanted to leave for Benares and addressed his disciple as follows: "I cannot remain here any longer. I have a big Ashram at Nadia. You may follow me if you like. I shall give you all conveniences for Sadhana." Swami Sivananda said: "Oh hallowed Teacher! My joy knows no bounds when I hear Thy honeyed words. I would like to remain here, if you would approve of it. My heart is captivated and charmed by the lofty Himalayas and Ganges." The Guru replied: "Yes, you can do so. May God bless you. May you become a dynamic Yogi."

This blessing has become true, for Swami Sivananda has excelled all Indian Swamis as regards Niskama Karma Yoga or Seva, his stupendous literary work and diverse other activities too. His teachings have awakened not only India alone, but his message of Synthetic Yoga has reached and is eagerly assimilated in Europe, Mexico, California and Africa.

The preceptor took leave of his famous disciple with a heavy heart, for most probably he knew that he would never more see with his physical eyes his beloved and glorious disciple again. The disciple did Sashtanga Pranams for his blessings.

THE DAYS OF TAPASCHARYA

After his initiation Swami Sivananda did rigorous Sadhana and intense Tapascharya.

The first year was spent by him in the practice of Nishkama Karma Yoga. Seeing that there was no medical aid for pilgrims on the road to Badri Narayan the Swami founded The Satya Sevashram free dispensary on the banks of the Ganges for the sick pilgrims, Sadhus, Mahatmas and poor villagers. He served the sick whole-heartedly.

The Swami generally advises neophytes to start their spiritual Sadhanas with Karma Yoga or Selfless Service. For at first the mind must be purified of its impurities and mental dross, and to achieve this end Karma Yoga has to be resorted to.

If a young aspirant in Nivritti Marga takes up at once to Vedantic Sadhana without any preliminary discipline he is most likely to be overpowered by Tamas. If he is not by the side of a watchful, loving Guru, he may for a long time imagine or confound his negative Tamasic state for deep meditation.

This is the most dangerous state, for the aspirant will not even try to extirpate himself from this Tamasic state and make the needed effort to overcome it.

People often complain that even after long years of sincere struggle either in Bhakti or Jnana Marga they do not make any tangible progress.

"The reason is not far to seek" says the Swami, "they have not yet purified their minds by selfless service". After having established the Satya Sevashram free dispensary on the banks of the Ganges at Lakshman Jhula and having served there for about a year and a half, the Swami plunged himself in deep meditation at Swargashrama. He performed the most severe and rigorous Tapas. Long before the rise of the sun he stood in the cool water of the Ganges practising Japa and meditation. He ate 5 or 6 days' stale bread dipping it in water as the only condiment.

He lived for a long time in a dilapidated Kutia where none would live in. This Kutia was always "open", for the doors and windows had gone out of service and it had other non-human inhabitants too viz, lizards and scorpions.

One old influential Sannyasi Swami Kalyana Dev recognising the spiritual greatness of the Young Swami, introduced him to the Swargashram authorities and secured for Swami Sivananda a good Kutia in the premises of Swargashrama.

His Sadhana was more intense and more inward than that of the ordinary Sadhus and Sannyasins. We read on a slip of his note-book from those days of his Sadhana period: "more time (8 hours) should be spent in meditation and meditation alone, even 12, 16 hours daily."

"Even study and medical treatment should be given up for some time for pure meditation alone.

Winter must be well utilised. That is the best time for meditation.”

The general routine of the Swami was broadly speaking as follows:

Rising early at Brahma Muhurta he chanted loudly the Pranava and other sacred Mantras and Stotras in praise of the Lord. This was a signal to other Sadhus to resume their Sadhanas too.

As mentioned already he went to the Sacred river Ganges where he stood in the cold waters doing Japa and meditation till dawn.

The next item in his daily routine was paying visits to sick Mahatmas, Sadhus and the poor villagers rendering them the necessary medical aid. This lasted oftentimes till two O clock in the afternoon.

The evening hours were spent in long, protracted and deep meditation. The Swamiji was generous, liberal and kind-hearted. How could he enjoy the benefits of his spiritual realisations and experiences for himself alone? He would share them with every sincere Sadhaka and seeker after Truth.

The Swami wrote his spiritual experiences on slips of paper which were knitted to gether to form a note-book. The numerous writings of Siva are but the outcome of his spiritual realisations and personal experiences during the years of his hard Tapascharya on the banks of Ganges at Swargashrama.

The Swargashrama authorities noticed the extremely pious and noble character of the young Tapa-swi and offered him better food and an additional share of curd, ghee and milk.

The Swami accepted this offer but ate himself the very food every other Sadhu was allotted to, and distributed the additional rations to sick and ailing Sadhus and Mahatmas.

Afterwards the Swamiji's urge to visit the Holy Shrines and famous places of pilgrimage rose to high pitch and he started the life of a wandering Monk.

THE WANDERING MONK

It is a usage in India that a disciple after completion of his spiritual training is sent to pilgrimage. This was in vogue in Vedic times and it is observed now-a-days too. The visit of holy shrines, sacred spots of pilgrimage rouses sacred memories e.g. Brindavan makes us ponder more vividly on the Leelas of Sri Krishna of sacred memory, Buddha Gaya on Lord Buddha and Benares on Lord Siva etc. The mind of the pilgrim is saturated with Sattvic thoughts.

Further the very places are mighty centres of spiritual radiation, being sanctified and saturated with high spiritual vibrations of thoughts left behind by Avatars of the Lord and Mahatmas and great Yogins.

Swami Pranavananda has given on the pages of the Divine Life Magazine the relative worth, or po-

tency of several famous places of pilgrimage in India. Further a wandering Sannyasi has to face various difficulties, troubles inclemencies etc., which tend to develop a very necessary quality for a Mumukshu or seeker after liberation viz., Titiksha or the power of endurance and forbearance. The wandering monk is not only highly benefited by the spiritual vibrations of the sacred places of pilgrimage but enjoys generally also the uplifting influence of Satsang with Mahatmas, Sadhus, Yogins and Jnanins during his tour. It is therefore, that the time-honoured tradition is still alive and is observed by the Holy ones just as it was in vogue in days of yore, when Sri Krishna and Sri Rama of sacred memory graced the earth with their holy presence.

In the case of Swami Sivananda it was all the more necessary to come in contact with Yogins, than in the case of ordinary Sadhus and Sannyasins. For as we know Siva's Guruji left him on the very day of his Deeksha or initiation. Further, so far as we know Swamiji did not meet his Guru after his departure from Rishikesh. So Sri Siva was not fortunate enough to get all the knowledge, lessons and guidance from one Guru. He had awakening from the master. He had the revelation of the Truth in a flash from the Master. The current was set up. But Siva had to undergo spiritual practices with his own inspiration and inner strength. That is a real beauty in him. As for the knowledge of Raja Yoga and Hatha Yoga, he had learnt the secret from almost all perfected souls in the interior parts of the Himalayas during his

vast tour and pilgrimage to Badri, Mount Kailas and other places. This is probably the reason why his writings widely differ from works written by authors on Yoga. In other books we generally find the teachings or methods of a particular school of Yoga. But in almost all books written by Swami Sivananda we find an abundance of methods pertaining to different schools or Yogic traditions.

In India a serious seeker after Truth can with sufficient patience find the master who teaches the particular kind of Sadhana most suitable to him. But a European aspirant may after purchasing several books not be able to find the Sadhana appropriate for him. The works of Swami Sivananda will have a special appeal in the West for the following reasons. Firstly, they are very practical and secondly they contain various methods culled out from various sources, so that the European student can easily find the method suited for him. This would hardly have been the case if the Swami had been privileged to undergo the whole course of his Sadhanas at the feet of a single Guru. Of course it is easier, simpler and less troublesome to achieve success in the spiritual path, while following one definite course of exercises which can be learnt from one Guru.

But the Swami was destined to be the Guru and guide of a vast multitude of Sadhakas with different aptitudes, capacities and temperaments. Therefore it is no wonder that by the decree of the Supreme Brahman he had to learn different methods from different Gurus. During a short period of an

intense type of Sadhana he underwent full course of Hatha Yogic and Raja Yogic discipline, thus subduing the body and mind making them fit instruments for the Divine mission for which he was specially intended by the dispensation of Providence.

During the Parivrajak life he covered long distances bare-footed, walking on rugged paths. He had to sleep on public roads, to starve for days together, his body being subjected to hot Indian sun and showers of rain. But Siva likes hardships, sufferings and trials for they all go to build a strong will and develop a rare trait of character which adorns every real Mahatma viz., Titiksha--the power of endurance. The Swami visited Badrinath and Kedarnath, travelled up to Rameshwar in extreme South India, as well as to Mount Kailas and Mansarowar lake in Tibet. The Swami has written an inspired book describing his experiences during his Yatra to Kailas and Mansarovar. The Swami paid also a visit to Sri Ramanashrama in Tiruvannamalai and Sri Aurobindo Ashrama in Pondichery where two famous Hindu Rishis and Yogins have their residences.

Such was in brief the life story of our illustrious Swami prior to his missionary work, which began even a little earlier to his establishing the Divine Life Society. It took nearly twelve years of hard Tapasya and Sadhana of more intense and more inward kind, than that of ordinary Sadhus and Sannyasins which chiselled and moulded Dr. Kuppaswamy Iyer into Swami Sivananda Saraswati of world-wide fame.

Chapter Two

SIVA'S WRITINGS

After having successfully completed his course of Sadhana and Tapascharya, and having obtained experiences in the difficulties of Parivrajaka life too, the Swami wanted to share his rich experience of inner spiritual life with other Truth seekers also.

Not only this, he wanted to rouse those souls who never had tasted the bliss of Yoga or Samadhi, from their spiritual inertia; he would serve as a spiritual friend, brother and well-wisher to his less fortunate brethren that they too might climb up to the blissful abode of union with the creator and enjoy the Advaitic Bhav.

He wanted to show the most effective means how to tear the veil of Maya, how to remove the impurities and deficiencies of mind, how to steady it and render it one-pointed and finally merge it into the Lakshya.

Siva's ambition was now to become a Light for those souls who were still groping in darkness, a cosmic friend to the distressed, down-trodden and

afflicted. That the Swami is the most prolific writer on Yoga and Vedanta now-a-days is beyond any shadow of doubt. A few years ago Siva had already published sixty volumes of most precious spiritual literature, not to mention his publications for free distribution, his various pamphlets, messages and articles which he regularly contributes to various journals and magazines in India.

One thing which is particular to Siva and to Siva alone, is that he gives immediate response to any call. Not only the high class periodicals and spiritual journals have been able to secure Siva's articles but also for business journals and even magazines containing sex-matters. Some people find it strange and ask why such a great Swami as Siva should give his articles to those papers also. But Siva says that he is deliberately doing so, for the youths who will otherwise accumulate sensual impressions and sex-ideas only, are given thereby a chance to get good spiritual Samskaras too. And it is the fond hope of Siva that sooner or later the spiritual Samskaras will overpower the animal ones and the sense bound Pasu will emerge as a glorious Yogi or Jnani. What if one does not see immediate results.

And indeed some youths have approached Siva's sacred lotus-feet asking for remedies and advices to correct their wrong ways. Siva has in such cases full understanding. He does not assume the stern and grave face of an ordinary moral teacher. No, he is in such cases a doctor, a friend, a real spiritual

saviour. His words are full of encouragement, he gives instructions according to the particular type of the enquirer, he selects Asanas, Bandhas and Pranayam, for some, he advises the method of Vichara for others. In extreme cases Siva sends his spiritual vibrations and saves the unfortunate sense slave. Some realised souls enjoy the Bliss of Self for themselves, allowing a few chosen disciples who happen to come in contact with them, and who have obtained their favour to enjoy the perfume of their souls, the sage himself maintaining mostly silence. Some others are more accessible; they keep a few Sadhakas by their side and train them in the path they have trodden. They have not much contact with the world, if any, and they do not go and preach to the world, such a mission being entrusted to a few chosen disciples. Every one of these Mahatmas is a blessing to the world, even those that do not speak any word orally. Their thought-vibrations undoubtedly purify the mental atmosphere.

But in order to be benefited by those spiritual vibrations the recipient must possess a calm, receptive mind, a trait rather difficult to find among the active, restless westerners. So an oral teaching and printed book is a thing the West urgently needs. It is therefore that publications of Siva have an immense value for the Westerners. And it is to be specially borne in mind that almost all Siva's books whether big or small ones and even his pamphlets and leaflets are written from the

practical point of view, giving a lot of information on practical Sadhana.

Being fully aware that there are many Sadhakas, devotees and followers who would be much benefited if they could not only read his printed words, but hear his voice also, the Swami has condescended that several of his speeches, messages, Kirtans and Mantras were recorded in gramophone records. I have often heard Western disciples asking for the correct pronunciation of the OM Mantra. These Sadhakas will be happy to learn that there is available an OM Kirtan chanted by Swami Sivananda and recorded in the Calcutta gramophone records. There is also a record containing the Mahamantra. This is a novel, simple idea of how to help Western students who have no possibility to visit India or meet spiritual teachers to learn the correct pronunciation of Mantras.

And every student of Mantra Yoga knows that the correct pronunciation of a Mantra augments the efficacy of it. Not only this, it is said that a wrong pronunciation especially of the so-called Beeja Mantras, might lead to quite disastrous results, at times.

The Swami being always on the look out for means of how to help sincere aspirants has adopted this original way to teach the Mantras by means of gramophone records to foreign students. But not only the Western students

will appreciate this novel way of getting spiritual instructions, even Indian Bhaktas who are unable to visit Rishikesh will be delighted to hear the voice of their beloved Master and Guru.

And, now, a cursory review of some of Sri Swamiji's works will not be out of place.

Practice of Brahmacharya. The practice of Brahmacharya is a subject of utmost importance to every Sadhaka whether of the Bhakti or Jnana Marga, whether he be a Raja or Hatha Yogi, or a follower of the path of Karma Yoga.

Brahmacharya is the basis for success in Life and God-Realisation also.

Unfortunately, there is only a small percentage of people who can easily control their passions and sexual cravings. The vast majority of people are rather very sensitive to the lures of the senses. The sex-instinct is nature-born; it is not like the smoking or drinking habits, which are artificially acquired habits. What I want to say is this: if teachers and parents were really men of true insight, they would not seduce their children by means of bad examples to these deleterious vices. I deliberately said by example, for it is the example and not so much mere verbal advice, which influences the moral behaviour and excites the imagination of the infantile mind.

In Europe it seems quite impossible to arrange a wedding ceremony, a birthday celebration or even

a funeral, without serving the guests with alcohol. Yet, if for one or two generations, the adults would abstain from seducing the young folk, whether knowingly or otherwise, these two vices, viz., alcohol and nicotine poisoning would be eradicated.

But the problem of Brahmacharya will last so long as men will live on earth.

Though several European and American leading medical men have rightly emphasised the need and importance of sexual continence, the Western scientists have not yet evolved out any method as to how this ideal could be realised in practical life.

In Indian literature we can find some very valuable treatises on this subject. But these books are in vernacular and it is a great service to the Western world that the Swami has written a practical guide book on this vital subject in English language.

The West though admitting that continence is of Paramount necessity for physical and mental well-being of the individual, it still lacks in the knowledge of practical methods enabling one to achieve this high ideal.

It is true that Dr. August Forel has written that if one wants to lead a life of continence, he must control his thoughts. Quite true! But unfortunately the learned professor does not say how to control the thoughts. Count L. Tolstoy says that if a bad thought has arisen in our mind, we cannot help it, for it is already there. What can we do, in

his opinion is to enter into warfare with it by means of logical "discussion" trying to prove it that it is a wrong thought, that it has no right for existence etc., etc. This may seem all right and true, but it lacks in psychological insight.

He tackles the mental problems as if they were purely physical ones. But the Indian mind is subtler than that of the best European philosophers'. Siva's advice is just the opposite. Says the Swami: "If a bad thought enters the mind, do not wrestle with it. You will only tax the will and the evil thought will become stronger. Become indifferent. Become a silent witness of the intruding thought. Do not identify yourself with the mind. The evil thought will pass off soon." This will seem a paradox to many a European student not versed in Indian psychology. The European philosopher thinks that the struggles with the mind ought to be similar to the fight with the physical body. But the Indian sages have practised long and deep introspection, and they know the subtle laws and mysteries of the mind. They know how to subdue and control it.

"Well", might ask a European student, "I submit that the Indian Yogins have observed and analysed the workings of the mind and detected the subtle laws which have escaped the European scholar or Philosopher, but still I want to know the rationale of this procedure." I am sure that the Swamiji could give long and profound lectures explaining the *raison d'être* of the Yogic method.

Indeed, in some other work entitled "Mind, Its Mysteries and Control," the Swami has given a detailed account of the laws governing the workings of the mind.

But the Swami though formerly a doctor of medicine is now primarily a doctor of the soul and his ambition is at present not to deliver scholarly lectures, but to give sure, practical and reliable methods enabling one to subdue the lower nature in order to realise the soul and attain God-communion.

Besides, another famous Indian Yogi Sri Aurobindo Ghose has, in his "Yogic Sadhan" given exactly the same advice for subduing evil desires.

Yet, in order to satisfy the curiosity of the Western reader, I shall try to explain this psychological phenomenon according to my understanding. Let us take the following example. A lewd thought has occurred to a pious man's mind. He is alarmed and his finer feelings revolt. In his righteous indignation he repeats again and again: "I don't wish that this lewd thought (calling it by its name) should remain in my mind." Is it not clear that so long as he is pronouncing the name of the lewd or blasphemous thought, it is in his mind, being drawn by means of his attention to his conscious mind?

And the more and the longer he keeps it in his conscious mind the more havoc it can work. But if he ignores it by keeping his attention fully engrossed in some other object of deep interest, the undesirable

thought is no more watered by the energy of the soul and it has to leave the sphere of the conscious mind, for the mind can attend to one thought only at a time. If the aspirant is vigilant and repeats this method of thought-rejection every time, a dark thought tries to enter the chambers of the conscious mind, the undesirable thought is starved to death in due course of time.

A second and even more subtle point where we find a difference between the views of the European philosopher and the Indian Yogi is the following. Count L. Tolstoy maintains that a thought occurs suddenly and imperceptibly. But the Yogi who has ardently and assiduously practised Pranayama, Pratyahara and meditation knows beforehand what kind of thought is trying to enter his mind. And the Yogic student is advised to check it while it is in a subtle state, while it has not yet stepped over the threshold of the conscious mind.

Indeed a Yogi can perceive an approaching thought just as we can see an acquaintance coming to us through a window of our house. If we tackle with a thought while it is slowly rising like a bubble from the subconscious mind it is easy to control it by not allowing it to burst over the surface of the conscious mind. It is far more difficult to control it when we have already admitted it in our conscious mind, but even then we can drive it out by ignoring it, i.e., by not identifying ourselves with it, by adopting the Yogic method just outlined above.

But the problem of Brahmacharya must be approached from the physiological plane also.

The sex-glands produce generally more vital fluid than the organism can reabsorb. This is one reason why the youth generally fail to keep up Brahmacharya. The Hatha Vidya gives efficacious methods, viz., Uddiyana Bandha and Nauli Kriya to strengthen the lymphatic system thus enabling the organism to reabsorb the extra fluid. This reabsorbed fluid is transmuted in a most potent spiritual force--Ojas.

The Swami has devoted a whole chapter to Hatha Yogic Asanas, Kriyas, Bandhas, Mudras and Pranayamas which are specially suited for keeping up of Brahmacharya. All these exercises are illustrated.

Writes Sri Swamiji: "A combination of Asanas such as Sirshasan, Sarvangasan and Siddhasan is very conducive to keep up Brahmacharya. Each has its own specific action. Siddhasan acts on the testes and its cells and prevents the formation of semen. Sirshasan and Sarvangasan help the flow of semen towards the brain. Padangushthasan acts on the spermatic duct effectively (Practice of Brahmacharya.)

In the chapter: "How to keep up Brahmacharya?" the Swami writes: "There is no sex nor sexual Vasana in Brahman. Brahman is Nitya Shuddha (eternally pure). By constant thinking on that Sexless Atma, you will be established in Brahmacharya. This is the most powerful and effective method.

This is the best kind of Sadhana for those who know the right technique of Vichara. For others Hatha Yogic Kriyas are the best."

In the article "Combined method of Yogins and Bhaktas", the Swami has dealt with almost all methods that are conducive for keeping up of Brahmacharya. Another instructive article is entitled: "How to avert the sexual intoxication." It is just what the title says, it gives practical advice to the Sadhaka, i.e., it says clearly what he should do when there arises a sexual craving, in order to combat it.

Various methods are given to suit different conditions and different temperaments. In short this is a most practical book for every sincere Sadhaka, whether he is an aspirant of Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana or Karma Marga. It is a boon for every student who is trying to lead a pure and moral life. So far as I know this is first book in English dealing with this problem from the practical point of view, i.e., it gives definite Sadhanas to enable one to maintain strict physical and mental Brahmacharya.

Some years ago I read a big book written by a Swedish scientist extolling the benefits of sexual continence. Unfortunately, the esteemed professor did not give any practical methods. And it is no wonder that no European author could give a definite scheme of really practical exercises, because it could be evolved only by the Yogic scientists who have made investigations, researches and practical observations,

having subjected themselves and their disciples to these Yogic processes.

And yet how badly Europe stands in need of such practical knowledge of this subject ! A German scientist had a few years ago published a book bearing the title : "Sexual Katastrophen" (meaning sexual catastrophies). Alas ! How many catastrophies could be avoided by a timely practical advice. Elaborate treatises showing the utmost necessity of continence may do some good in a few cases, but what is urgently needed is a book giving practical methods of how to avert the sexual intoxication and establish oneself in physical and mental Brahmacharya.

Thanks to the Lord ! Sri Swami Sivananda's Practice of Brahmacharya is such a book, giving all the necessary practical knowledge of the subject. May it become more widely known among the students and youth in Europe is the sincere wish of the present writer. It will save many a youth from sexual catastrophies and make them healthy and strong physically, mentally and morally.

In the Yoga Society at Riga (Latvia) we had with Sri Swamiji's kind permission translated it into Latvian language for the benefit of those not knowing English. Though we had many Latvian translations of Swamiji's works, "The Practice of Brahmacharya" had the greatest demand. This shows clearly the utmost necessity of such works in European languages. It is the duty of parents and teachers to place this book in the hands of their children and students.

It will be a blessing indeed ! It will bring back many a truant soul to the Path of Self-Control and Brahmacharya !

PRACTICE OF YOGA

It is a book whose perusal, nay constant study will be of immense help to every sincere student of Yoga.

This is a practical guide book containing various Sadhanas from various Yoga Margas. The fact that it has in a relatively short time seen the third edition speaks clearly about the worth and value of this work. In the foregoing pages I have already mentioned that the Swami had not pursued his course of Yoga Sadhana under the guidance of a single Guru. He had to learn the technique of various Yogic exercises from several Mahatmas during his long and extensive travels in the Himalayas.

Here a note of warning would not be out of place. Not every one and all can and should imitate the Swami in this particular point. The Swami advises himself his readers: "Stick to one Guru and to one kind of spiritual Sadhana."

The Swami was evidently chosen by Providence to serve as a world-teacher to a vast multitude of disciples and followers in various countries. It was therefore quite necessary to the Swami to get in touch with Masters of different schools of Yoga,

without having any predilection to any particular school or sect.

I was fortunate enough to get the book shortly after it has been issued out. I was perplexed and quite astonished to find a mass of different Sadhanas, which were clearly and elaborately described therein. Yet, the first edition was soon followed by the second enlarged edition, containing several new articles. The third edition is fully revised, the various Yoga paths are dealt with in separate chapters. The Hatha Yogic Asanas are illustrated to facilitate a better understanding.

The chapter on Pratipaksha Bhavana teaches the Raja Yogic student how to eradicate his weaknesses and evil traits in his character.

The chief and most difficult Anga of Yoga Sadhanas, viz., Dhyana or meditation is very elaborately treated in this most valuable book. The Swami teaches various kinds of meditation, e.g., Meditation on Virat, Meditation on Gita Slokas, Meditation on Mahavakyas, concentration on Breath, with the Soham Mantra, concentration on Anahata sounds and various forms of Saguna and Nirguna meditation.

The Swami teaches how many hours to meditate and how to increase the time of meditation. Various obstacles in the path and means to overcome them are fully dealt within a chapter specially devoted to this question. A chapter bearing the title "Ever Control the Indriyas" is noteworthy. The Swami points out that no sustained spiritual success is

possible, if the Sadhaka does not observe scrupulously this important point. Energy accumulated by long protracted Sadhana can be lost in a short time through the uncontrolled Indriyas. Alas ! This simple truth our school teachers and clergymen do not know. The morality in the Western countries would be much higher if this simple Sadhana would be widely taught in our schools. And though Lord Jesus has emphatically declared the necessity of the control of the Indriyas as well as one's own thoughts in his statement in the Sermon on the Mount: "If you look at a woman with a lustful heart, you have already committed adultery," yet the vast majority of European people think it is only the main act which is sinful and such prescriptions as thought-control or Indriya-control seem to them too high for ordinary worldly people. But such an attitude shows not only a lack of reverence to the teachings of their own Teacher and Master, but also lacks in scientific approach to the problem in view. For every student of Yoga Shastra in general and Swami Sivananda's works in particular, knows clearly that the Indriyas, if uncontrolled, excite the mind, and what thoughts one thinks result in the acts that he does !

The first volume was followed after a few years, as promised by the Swami, by second volume, which contains advanced lessons in Yoga. The chapters on Cultivation of Virtues, Eradication of Evil Qualities, Memory-Culture, Will Culture and Conservation of Energy are but a few outstanding subjects

treated in this most practical book. It seems that the Swami has still to say something more on the Science and Practice of Yoga as he has hinted that he will publish a third volume containing super-advanced lessons on Yoga.

SURE WAYS FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE AND GOD-REALISATION

It is a copious volume which was all typed by the Swami himself. It embodies the central teaching of Srimad Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Vasishtha, i.e., that Self-realisation can be achieved while living in the world but inwardly being non-attached to it.

There are lots of books written by American and European authors trying to show ways and means of how to attain success in daily life. But their aim is to teach their readers how to attain material success only. But the Swami has never left out of sight man's highest good, viz., God-realisation.

Says the Swami : "European occultists also teach concentration, but their works lack the spiritual background, where as a Yogi develops concentration and will-power in order to attain Self-realisation." Many books published on the subject of success in life are written simply by professional writers, whose chief aim is not so much to help the unsuccessful men towards a prosperous life, as to enrich themselves by means of making high promises and similar advertising arts.

But Swamiji's aim in writing this book is perfectly selfless and utterly pure. For he was a most successful doctor in his Poorva-Ashrama yet he

renounced all his wealth for a higher spiritual goal. Lord Jesus Christ strongly denounced material riches as a great bar for salvation. So did Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, too. But the Hindu Dharma Shastras say that material success is a thing to be aimed at by a Grihastha but to be renounced by a Sannyasi. So the desire for material security or even prosperity is a legitimate one for a householder because he has to maintain his family-members. But not only this, an ideal householder ought to regard, according to Hindu Dharma, the whole humanity as his own family. He has to help the weak, the helpless, the needy, the poor and the sick, and do works of charity for the upkeep of Dharma itself. Such an ideal Grihastha is in no way inferior to an ideal Sannyasi. Every one is great in his own place as it has been so beautifully said by the great Swami Vivekananda of sacred memory.

And now the illustrious Swami Sivananda gives elaborate methods of how to achieve success in business and daily life, and spiritual life also. There are many obstacles which hinder a successful life. These are not only the outward conditions but very often the inner weaknesses which obstruct, or make real success impossible.

So, shyness, diffidence, lack of courage, lack of a definite aim are but only a few of such weaknesses the Swami has mentioned and elaborately dealt with in his stupendous work. The Swami has given practical methods how to overcome these deficiencies

standing on the way to success. One's evil habits are other obstacles which mar a man's positive attainments in life. The Swami has prescribed as a sure means for eradicating them the method of Pratipaksha Bhavana. Pratipaksha Bhavana is elaborately described in a special article in his "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-realisation."

But a man wishing for the highest success needs not only to be free from evil habits and weaknesses, but he must also acquire several positive virtues such as pluck and knack, a pushing nature, self-reliance, etc. The necessity and means of how to develop these virtues are fully dealt with in several chapters. Yet the vision of the Swami is always centred on the ultimate good, the *summum bonum* of human existence. No material success can satisfy permanently the infinite soul encased in a human body. The soul's cry for more, and ever more, will be appeased only after the attainment of God-realisation or Self-realisation. And, here the Great Master Sri Swami Sivananda has given various methods to suit different temperaments for as one coat does not suit Mr. Brown and Mr. Johnson, so also one kind of Sadhana cannot and should not be prescribed indiscriminately for all aspirants. So the Swami has given lessons on Bhakti and Jnana, Hatha and Raja Yogas in his "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-Realisation."

To enter into some details the Swami advises the practice of Tratak to control the wandering mind and says that it is a good exercise not only for

Hatha Yogins but also for Raja Yogins and Jnana Yogins, for they also would do well if they adopted this beneficial Yogic Kriya in order to achieve the Ekagrata state or one-pointedness of mind.

A time-table and daily routine for Hath Yogic Exercises are included in the book.

Two Indian professors have examined this system and adopted this scheme of exercises and speak in high terms about its efficacy. The Memory-Culture, Will-Culture, Thought-Culture and Bhava-Culture are minutely described in this marvellous work whose aim is to make everybody a success both in the field of material advancement and achievements as well as in the Adhyatmic realms.

YOGA IN DAILY LIFE

It is a small volume of 153 pages, but containing a mass of information on the practical side of Yoga. In this book the Swami has dealt with Karma, Bhakti, Raja, Hatha and Jnana Yogas. It is not only a compendium of Yoga, but it is rather a guide book for aspirants. The first edition was one of the first publications of the Swami. And one feels that the long-cherished desire of the great Swami to share his spiritual knowledge with thirsting aspirants bubbles forth in this book after the long years of silent preparation, intense Sadhana and vigorous Tapascharya. It is clear to a casual reader even, that the Swami is keen in his attempt to show diverse ways in order to meet the needs of various types of aspirants.

The present third edition is much enlarged and fully revised, especially as regards the ninth section of the book which contains altogether new articles. The introduction has, among other articles a Prayer to Guru, several songs and Stotras.

Section I is a preliminary, imparting instructions on Diet, a philosophical article on "Happiness within", the four paths of Yoga and the Importance of Guru.

The Second Section is devoted to Bhakti Yoga. Mysterious help from the Lord of Bhaktas, Benefits of Japa, Bhakti Yoga Sadhana, Evening Katha at Home, Advice to Householders, Nil desperandum—these and some others are the interesting chapters on the Yoga of devotion.

In the article "Duties of Womanhood" the Swami's ideas are quite in conformity with the best European psychologists, like Yung and Adler when he says: "Early training and impressions are lasting," and with the foremost educationalist Peitalazzi, when the Swami writes: "Formation of character can be done very efficiently by mothers at home. Therefore, home is the beautiful training ground for the building up of character in children under the personal guidance of the mother." Unfortunately, some heartless politicians are trying to separate children from their parents in order to make them obedient slave-automatons in the hands of the ruling caste. These unhappy individuals must not only forego the happy moments at their parent's home but they are unable

to evolve the finer religious sentiments, for they receive only dull political drill and no religious training.

The Third Section is devoted to Karma Yoga. Coming from the pen of a supremely selfless soul, an equal to whom is hard, if not impossible to find now-a-days, this section will not disappoint any real aspirant of Karma Yaga.

The Chapter: "Attain Nirlipta State" is the summit of Karma Yoga where it merges either into Bhakti or Jnana. "How to find Right or Wrong Action" and "Inner Voice" are further interesting articles in this Section.

The next, i.e., Fourth Section, deals with Raja Yoga. This is a most interesting Section. The following topics are dealt with under separate chapters, viz., Raja Yaga, Metaphysics of the Inner Man; Tame the Six Wild Beasts, Chitta, Mind, Its Mysteries, Control of Mind and Siddhis. When one finishes reading this Section, the feeling involuntarily arises: Oh, if the Swami would have written more on these and similar lines! But if such be his desire, he will be happy to note that the Seventh Section again deals with allied subjects.

The Fifth Section is devoted to Jnana Yaga. Being written by a practical Vedanti, a real Mahatma and a veritable Rishi, it will at once set the aspirant of Jnana Marga on the right path. After explaining the true nature of Atma the Swami gives most practical advice on Vedantic Sadhana supplying him with

formulae for meditation, Vedantic assertions, 'Soham Dhyana, etc. The problem of Good and Evil and Unity and Diversity are beautifully described in a lucid manner by the learned Swami in this Section.

Section Six treats with Hatha Yoga. The most important Asanas are nicely described and supplied with photos. It ends with the description of Sukh purvak, Bhastrika and Sitali Pranayams.

Section Seven deals with the Antaranga of Yoga, viz., Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

So in these seven sections the Swami has dealt with All Angas of Yoga and the five Margas.

The next, i.e., Eighth Chapter treats with the most important discipline, the basis of all Yogas, viz., Brahmacharya. After explaining the importance of Brahmacharya, the Swami has given practical methods for achieving this otherwise difficult but vital object. After having dealt with each Yoga path separately, the Swami has once more recapitulated the most important items in the Ninth Chapter, which deals with Yoga in a nutshell.

The tenth chapter contains interesting narratives from the lives of famous Yogins both modern and of bygone days.

The Appendix contains Inspiring letters, being advice of the Swami to Sadhakas together with the letters of the enquirers. A time-table is also appended too.

The book closes with the Swami's article on the importance of keeping a spiritual diary. A most useful book for every Yogic aspirant indeed.

PRACTICAL LESSONS IN YOGA

It is a big volume dedicated by Swami Sivananda to students of Yoga in West and East. It covers the entire field of Ashtanga Yoga and it can be warmly recommended to all Yogic aspirants in the West. In order to estimate the real worth of the book, especially for the Western student we have to say a few words about the Yogic literature in West, specially in Europe. It is relatively easy to secure a good book on Vedanta Philosophy, but it is rather difficult to get a reliable book dealing with practical Yoga, i.e., with Yogic Sadhanas. There is a lot of misleading books written by authors who were quite ignorant of the subject. To quote a few instances : An American writer, Ramacharaka, has written a big volume entitled Hatha Yoga, where except one single breathing exercise which has some resemblance to the Sukh Purvak Pranayam, all other exercises are nothing but the fanciful inventions of the American writer. In his (Ramacharaka's) book you will not find a single Asana nor a single Hatha Yogic Mudra, neither Ujjayi, nor Bhastrika nor Kevala Kumbhaka. An even more misleading book is the Agni Yoga (Published in France in Russian language) where the author has not dared to sign his name. It is held in high esteem, however, by the followers of

Roerich. There the anonymous author denounces all forms of Yoga, saying that with the advent of Agni Yoga all other forms of Yoga should be abandoned.

A good book written by a European author is the "Yoga Explained" by Major Yeats-Brown. But the author has described only about 20 Asanas, three Pranayams and Pratyahara, evidently those practices he had learnt at the feet of his Guru Bhagavan. Nevertheless this book breathes quite a different air than the books of Ramacharaka and Agni Yoga, because the author came in actual contact with a real Yogic Master. What he had learnt he had beautifully explained in his book "Yoga Explained." But an aspirant desirous to know the Yogic science beyond the stage of Pratyahara, i.e., one desirous to learn Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi must search for further guidance elsewhere. The works of the French authors Jean Herbert and Romain Rolland though good by themselves have only a theoretical interest. The "Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines" by Dr. Ewans Wentz, although giving a lot of different Yogic Sadhanas, is surely not meant as a guide-book for a beginner in Yoga and cannot be used as such; however, its worth as a literary treasure is undeniable. Swami Vivekananda's thought-provoking and dynamic Raja Yoga which is now available in several European languages is unfortunately too brief. Swami Vivekananda was himself conscious of this fact, for he wrote that one

can hardly practise Raja Yoga with the help of the book, that one has to find a real Guru. Unfortunately, the vast majority of European aspirants will never be able to visit India in search of a Guru. They will necessarily have to depend on reliable Yogic text books and practical guide-books.

Swami Sivananda's book "Practical Lessons in Yoga" is a real boon for such Yogic students in the West, especially in Europe. The Swami has not only explained elaborately the eight Angas of the Ashtanga Yoga in a simple, lucid manner, but he has kept an eye on the needs of the European student giving him many preliminary instructions which are not to be found in any other book written by a Hindu author. The Swami was fully aware, while writing his Practical Lessons that many things which might seem quite unnecessary to mention in a land where Yoga is at home, might be unknown in a foreign country. It is, therefore, that in his chapter on Pranayama the Swami has given no less than eight preliminary Sadhanas prior to describing the traditional Yogic breathing exercises. The chapter on Yogic diet, Yoga and its Objects, Yoga discipline, etc., will throw much light on various subtle points which are mostly overlooked by other authors. Much space is devoted in the book by the Swami to the vital problem of Concentration. The subject is dealt with both from the theoretical as well as from the practical point of view. I do not know any other book written by the Swamiji, where the

theoretical side of this question has been so interestingly and fully dealt with as in his "Practical Lessons in Yoga". At the end of this Chapter, the Swami has given ten practical Sadhanas for concentration. In the chapter devoted to Meditation, the Swami has beautifully described the effects of meditation. Says the Swami: "Meditation is the most powerful mental and nervine tonic. The holy vibrations penetrate all the cells of the body and cure the various diseases that human flesh is heir to. Those who regularly meditate save the doctor's bills." At the end of the chapter the Swami has given various exercises for Saguna and Nirguna meditation. An exercise for Nada Laya Yoga is also included.

The next chapter naturally deals with Samadhi. Therein are described the nature and various kinds of Samadhi. Having dealt with the entire scheme of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga, the Swami has devoted the following two chapters for those topics which have a great attraction for the vast majority of Western students of Yoga, especially to those interested in Occultism. It is a truism that many truth-seekers who have later trodden the paths of Yoga or Vedanta have recruited from the flock of occultists. The titles of these two chapters are: The Serpentine Power and Spiritual Vibrations and Aura. In the Lesson dealing with the Serpentine Power, the Swami has elaborately described the nature of Kundalini Shakti, the Nadis and Chakras. The student of Kundalini Yoga should possess a clear and

sound knowledge of these subjects, says the Swami. Each Chakra is illustrated separately. Then there is a plate showing the Ascent of Kundalini through all Chakras. The Swami has warned the enthusiastic emotional students in the following way:

"Do not mistake, my dear Kundalini brothers! O ye enthusiastic and emotional young Yogins! the movement of the rheumatic winds in the back due to chronic lumbago for the ascent of Kundalini. Do your Sadhana with patience, perseverance, cheerfulness and courage, till you get the Nirvikalpa Samadhi."

Swami Sivananda stresses the importance of Nadi Shuddhi and Uddiyana Bandha. Asanas, Pranayama, Mudras and Bandhas are the various Sadhanas to awaken the Mysterious Kundalini.

In no other work has the Swami touched the subject of Aura, but being fully aware that this is also a point of great interest to many Western students of Yoga, the Swami has devoted the Twelfth Chapter to this subject. It bears the title Spiritual Vibrations and Aura. The approach to the question in view is quite scientific and practical, too. The auric colours and their significance are given on pages 318 and 319 of the Practical Lessons in Yoga. On page 310 we find the method how to develop a protecting auric shell.

There are two Appendixes at the end of the book. The first Appendix contains three schemes for (1) the Elementary Course, (2) the Intermediary

Course, and (3) the Advanced Course, and an article "How to Maintain a Spiritual Diary" as well. The Second Appendix is an article on Yoga and Science.

Though in this book which was evidently written for the benefit of the Western students of Yoga, the Swami has tried as far as possible to avoid all technical Sanskrit terminology, yet at the end of the book we find a Glossary of Sanskrit words with their English equivalents.

Again I have to reiterate that this work of the Swamiji is a book for every Western aspirant of practical Yoga. The Swami has made the otherwise difficult understanding of various Yogic practices and their sequence easy and intelligible.

YOGA ASANAS

There have by now issued several books dealing with Hatha Yogic Sadhanas from the prolific pen of Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati, viz., The Science of Pranayam, Hatha Yoga and Yogic Home Exercises. Yoga Asanas was the first of this series and it is an elaborate treatise of Yogic postures.

There is nowadays a revival of Hatha Yoga in India. Even the West is much interested in this Science and both the European and American scientists have highly appraised the scientific investigations conducted by Sriman Kavalayananda of Lonavla and Shri Yogendra of Bombay.

The University of Yale in the U.S.A. has awarded Mr. Behanan a scientific title for a dissertation on Yoga.

It is our fond hope that the proposed Yoga University at Rishikesh in whose programme is also included Hatha Yoga in its lower as well as higher aspects, will contribute its share in throwing more light on a Yogic path which has in recent times attracted the interest of the West notwithstanding the efforts of several misguided fanatics who vainly try to discredit this ancient science promulgated by the Rishis of yore.

Swami Sivananda's Yoga Asanas is the most comprehensive work on this subject dealing with about 90 Yogic Asanas. I know of no other work published till now in English or in Hindi where such a great number of Yogic postures are discussed. Not all postures are of equal importance for the Yogic practitioner, nor have all the same spiritual, physiological or therapeutical value. The Swami has very elaborately described the technique, benefits and therapeutical value of the most important cultural postures such as Sirshasana, Sarvangasana, Paschimottanasana, etc. The most important meditative postures are also beautifully described by the Swami. If an Asana has a definite value for the attainment of Brahmacharya, it is always pointed out by the author. To quote a few instances, on page 29 of his Yoga Asanas, writes the Swami: "This (Sirshasana) is very useful in keeping up Brahmacharya. It makes you an Oor-

dhvaretas Yogi. The seminal energy is transmuted into spiritual Ojas Shakti. This is also called sex-sublimation. You will not have wet dreams, spermatorrhea. In an Oordhvaretas Yogi the seminal energy flows upwards into the brain for being stored up as spiritual force which is used for contemplative purposes (Dhyana). When you do this Asana, imagine that the seminal energy is being converted into Ojas and is passing along the spinal column into the brain for storage. Sirshasan invigorates, energises and vivifies."

Again, on page 38 while describing Sarvangasana, the Swami says : "It helps a lot in maintaining Brahmacharya. Like Sirshasana it makes you an Oordhvaretas. It checks wet dreams effectively. It rejuvenates those who have lost their potency."

On page 73 while describing the benefits of Gomukhasana the Swami states that it helps in maintaining Brahmacharya and good health. A similar statement we find also at the end of the Chapter devoted to the meditative Asanas : "They (Padma, Siddha and Swastika Asanas) are suitable for keeping up Brahmacharya." While describing on page 88 Padangushtasana, the Swami writes : "Rishis of yore prescribed this Asana along with Sirsha and Sarvangasana for Brahmacharins for the preservation of Veerya."

And, to quote one instance more, while elucidating the technique of Baddha Padmasana, the Swami advises as follows : "Draw the belly backwards and upwards. Repeat "Om or Ram" mentally. Imagine

that the seminal energy flows towards the brain for being stored up as Ojas Shakti. Do this special practice for 10 minutes daily. You will have no wet dreams. This process is a great help for keeping up Brahmacharya." (Yoga Asans page 97)

After describing the technique of an Asana, the Swami has generally pointed out the benefits one derives from practising a particular posture.

After the Section on Asanas follows an important, interesting and very useful Chapter bearing the title "Special Instructions." Further it is found in this worthwhile book a chapter devoted to the lives of Great Yogins such as Sri Jnana Dev, Sri Trilinga Swami, Sri Sadasiva Brahman and other Yogins. Then follows a Section devoted to the most important Mudras and Bandhas, which is followed in its turn by a Section dealing with the eight kinds of Pranayama as found in authoritative traditional treatises on Hatha Yoga. The Yoga Addenda contains a description of Kundalini, the Nadis and Chakras. The book is profusely illustrated.

At the end of the book is attached the Abhyasa Karma and Dinacharya, containing three schemes for daily practices, for busy people, elementary and advanced courses, and a course for wholetimed Sadhakas;

HATHA YOGA

It is a profusely illustrated manual dealing with the entire course of Hatha Yogic practices.

Hatha Yoga has a special appeal for a great majority of Western people and that deservedly, too. The form of education our students receive in our High Schools and Universities is far from being conducive to the development of a devotional temperament, rather the contrary.

What the Universities aim at is the development of a spirit of rational thinking, scepticism and an objective approach to all life's problems.

It is no wonder that the intelligentsia have their devotional traits suppressed and the rational ones developed. We need not wonder that a foreign teaching will appeal to a Western mind, if it can withstand the scientific criticism.

And, that Hatha Yoga can withstand such a criticism has been amply proved by such famous pioneers of Yogic culture as Sri Yogendra of the Yoga Institute of India and Sriman Kunalayananda of the Lonavla Institute.

Sri Kunalayananda has in his high class Quarterly Yoga-Mimamsa shown, based on laboratory and clinical data the therapeutical and profilactical value of many Yogic Asanas and several Pranayamic exercises. Sri Yogendra has on similar lines proved the exceedingly high hygienic value of the purificatory practices advocated in Hatha Vidya. Notwithstanding the critical spirit inculcated in Western high schools and Universities, there have arisen queer cults like theosophy, antroposophy, the Roerichians

and Rosicrucians. They have all one thing in common, i.e., they denounce Hatha Yoga as a lower form of Yoga, a dangerous practice impossible and unsuitable for Europeans.

The objections raised against Hatha Yoga by these sects are too queer to be dealt with seriously, e.g., the antroposophists declare that the astral body of an Indian extends outside the physical body and therefore he can practise Hatha Yoga, whereas the astral body of a European resides inside the physical body and therefore Hatha Yoga is impossible for him (sic.)

Mrs. Helen Boerich writes in "Occultism and Yoga": "In the temples of India, Hatha Yogins were and still are held some times to be used for some secondary purposes, yet no Hatha Yogi could ever become truly initiated. And as soon as this Hatha Yogi left the temple, he could not get back any more, as having an easy access to lower layers of the Fine World, he deprived of higher control and dependent on himself solely, becomes a prey to, and abode and even instrument of, the darkest powers".

Rightly has it been said by the great orientalist Prof. Max Muller that the theosophists have done more harm than good to Hinduism. Mrs. Annie Besant, however, had lately declared that Hatha Yoga is not so bad as many think it to be, but the later sects still hold to these erroneous ideas originated in the camp of Theosophy.

It seems that Swami Sivananda was aware of these false teachings preached by the leaders of these misguided sects and cults, therefore, he came to extend his helping hand to the bewildered European student who would like to practise this kind of Yoga originated by the Rishis of yore, but are unnecessarily alarmed by the unreliable statements of the fanatical pseudo-Gurus.

And indeed it is noteworthy to note how the Swami tries to correct the error of these self-deluded pseudo-teachers.

Siva does not enter into dispute, trying to prove the falsity of their ideas. What he does is he simply teaches what Hatha Yoga really is. Next he has put a lot of photos, in his book "Hatha Yoga", taken from Indian and European students. There we find photos from Latvian, German and Bulgarian Yogic students besides the Indian Sadhakas. We find further several pictures which were supplied by the ladies section of the Latvian Yoga Society, amply showing that ladies can equally benefit by these Yogic practices, a thing never doubted by Indian teachers of Yoga.

There are several photos of one and the same posture performed by Indian and European students, both men and women, going to prove beyond any shadow of doubt the simple truth that we all are the same creatures of God and have the equal rights and ability to practise this ancient science.

Says the Swamiji:

"No Hatha Yoga, no success.

No Hatha Yoga, no health.

No Hatha Yoga, no Veerya.

No Hatha Yoga, no beauty.

No Hatha Yoga, no long life".

Another distinctive feature of Swami Sivananda's book is that it covers in a relatively small volume the entire field of Hatha Yogic Sadhanas viz., the purificatory processes (Shad Kriyas), Asanas, Bandhas, Mudras, Pranayamas and concentration exercises.

The Swami has beautifully explained the difference between Bandhas and Mudras. He has pointed out that the word Mudra denotes a seal, i.e., the Mudra seals the mind. Yoni Mudra, Bhuchari Mudra, Agochari Mudra, Sambhavi Mudra, etc., greatly control the mind and though being physiological practices, are of immense spiritual value, a truth fully known only to those who have had long, protracted and systematic training on these lines.

The Gurus of the Hatha Yoga schools generally hide these higher practices, regarding them far too sacred to be offered to a casual curiosity seeker, notwithstanding the fact that such secrecy has led to many misunderstandings and wrong interpretations by the followers of other schools of thought.

Many people regard Hatha Yoga simply as a well-developed system of physical culture, well

suited as a preparatory stage, or a preliminary to Raja Yoga. There is some truth in such a point of view, but it is not the whole truth. We must not forget, that even every Yogic Asana tends, either directly or indirectly, to exert a spiritual benefit on its practitioner.

But the chief aim of Hatha Yoga is to awaken the Kundalini Shakti. In order to be able to accomplish this task one needs have Nadi Shuddhi, which can be achieved by means of Shad Karmas, Pranayama and other Hatha Yogic Kriyas.

The awakened Kundalini liberates the Jiva transforming the Pasu (animal) into Divya Sadhaka. The Gheranda Samhita says that unless the Kundalini Shakti is awakened from her sleep, a man is an animal, even though he be performing thousands of Yoga exercises.

When Kundalini reaches the Sahasrara Chakra the Sadhaka enjoys the highest Nirvikalpa Samadhi, i.e., the state of superconsciousness.

Another important point in Hatha Yoga is to possess a healthy body. Diseases cut short the normal span of a human life. The body is a raft designated by Providence for the purpose of crossing this ocean of Samsara. If we do not attain the goal in one incarnation we must build another body. By such dyings and recurrent births we lose much time unprofitably. So the Rishis of yore were intent on finding means to prolong the life of the

human body. The Nava Kalpa of the Rasayanas was one means, Hatha Yoga another.

The last chapters of Swami's Hatha Yoga deal with these important topics, viz., "How to awaken Kundalini" and "Health and Longevity".

Says the Swami: "Brahmacharya is the basis for the attainment of perfection of body or Kaya Siddhi. Complete celibacy must be observed. This is of paramount importance. By this practice of Yoga the semen becomes transmuted into Ojas Shakti. All the cells are vivified or galvanised by the power of Ojas. The practice of Brahmacharya, Pranayam, Sirahasan and other Hatha Yogic Kriyas and meditation entirely renovates the system and gives new strength, vigour and vitality to the cells. There will be a charm and grace in the movements of the practitioner. He can live as long as he likes. That is the reason why Lord Krishna says to Arjuna: "Thasmat Yoge Bhava—Therefore, become a Yogi".

SCIENCE OF PRANAYAMA

"Pranayama is the Yoga par excellence" is the statement in an authoritative Yogic text attributed to Sri Gorakh Nath. It is therefore no wonder that Swami Sivananda has written a special book on this subject.

Long, long before our Western scientists had discovered or rather rediscovered, the law of psychophysiological parallelism, the Hindu Yogins taught that there is an intimate connection between the

workings of the breathing and human mind, and *vice versa*.

Since in most cases it is rather difficult, if not practically impossible, to control the mind by the mind itself, the Yogins of India developed an ingenious science of mind-control by means of a definite system of regulated breathing exercises. Says the Swami: "If one controls breath or Prana, the mind is also controlled. He who has controlled his mind has also controlled his breath. If one is suspended the other is also suspended. If the mind and the Prana are both controlled one gets liberation from the round of births and deaths and attains Immortality. There is an intimate connection between the mind, Prana and semen. If one controls the seminal energy, the mind and Prana are also controlled. He who has controlled his seminal energy has also controlled his Prana and mind." In another place the Swami writes: "The chief aim of Pranayama is to unite the Prana with the Apana and take the united Prana-apanas slowly upwards the head. The effect or fruit of Pranayama is awakening of the sleeping Kundalini."

As to the benefits of Pranayama the Swami states: "He who practises Pranayama will have good appetite, cheerfulness, a handsome figure, great strength, courage, enthusiasm, a high standard of health, vigour and vitality and good concentration of the mind. This Pranayama is quite suitable for people in the West and East, men and women."

Patanjali Maharshi gives only a few instructions on Pranayama, but the later Yogins have developed

a marvellous science dealing with Prana and its control. The School of Hatha Yoga speaks of eight kinds of Kumbhakas, i.e., Pranayamic exercises. These are all described by the Swami in his book Science of Pranayama.

The rhythmical breathing exercise as taught by Yogi Kaga Bhusunda is also nicely dealt with in Swamiji's book.

Since Pranayama is an advanced exercise, the Swami has elaborately described the preliminary exercises leading the Sadhaka to real Yogic Pranayama. So we find in the Swami's book a beautiful description of Kapalabhati, which is not included by the Yoga Shastras as a Pranayamic exercise, but it is very valuable preparatory exercise for the traditional Pranayamas such as Bhastrika, etc.

The Yogic postures best suited to Pranayamic exercises are elaborately described and illustrated.

The anatomy and physiology of the respiratory apparatus is also treated in the first Chapter of the book. The reader will find clear and full answer to the questions "What is Prana and Pranayama?" in the Swami's book.

In the introduction the Swami has beautifully described the exalted state and supernormal achievements of a Yogi who has gained full mastery over Prana. The book contains also two chapters on Pranic healing and distant healing.

It is more noteworthy that these articles come from the pen of the world-famous Himalayan Yogi and Swami.

KUNDALINI YOGA

It is a big book dealing in a simple, lucid manner with an intricate problem of the Science of Yoga, viz., The Serpent Power or Kundalini Shakti.

The awakening of the sleeping Kundalini has aroused a great interest among the Occultists, Theosophists and similar schools of thought in the West. But much confused and queer ideas have crept in these Cults. The various Schools of Occultism in Europe seem to believe that awakening of the Serpent Power will impart them miraculous psychic powers and make them supermen. No doubt there is some truth in these exaggerated fancies of these ignorant men, who profess to possess an occult knowledge. The leaders of these cults lacking both practical as well as theoretical knowledge of the subject, have implanted many erroneous ideas, such as the identification of the Kundalini Shakti with sex-force, the dangerousness of the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti, and the painfulness or intense burning sensation one is said to experience when the Shakti pierces the Chakras or centres of spiritual forces, and ascends along the Sushumna Nadi.

It is not the object of the present writer to show, or to prove, the erroneousness of these views; all I want to say is that these irresponsible authors have implanted unnecessary fears in the hearts of many an aspiring and truth-seeking soul, and have misguided their followers. This one I have to say here briefly that the awakening of Kundalini is nei-

ther painful nor dangerous, nor is it correct to identify the Shakti with sex-force, nor will the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti stimulate or excite the sexual feelings, rather the contrary, it will make one a master of his sex-impulses.

Years ago a well-recognised authority on scientific Yoga taught me that the Sadhaka can be safe from sex-temptations only when the Kundalini is awakened in him. This statement is also in conformity with the texts of Gheranda Samhita. But just as it is of no use to fight with physical darkness, the simplest way being to let the light in and the darkness will disappear of itself, so also the darkness of ignorance will give way to true knowledge. Need I say that Swami Sivananda's book is the true light the Western student so badly needs?

The Swami has done a great service to humanity by placing this book within the easy reach of the aspiring Sadhakas. The subject-matter is treated in a very clear, simple and lucid manner. This is the peculiarity of the Swami that he can explain the most intricate problems and the highest philosophy in a charming simple way easily to be understood by every one. The Swami has beautifully explained the nature of the Kundalini Shakti as well as all technical terminii which have connection with this subjects, such as Chakras, Nadis, etc.

But it is far from being a theoretical exposition. The Swami's aim is and always has been to uplift mankind spiritually. Therefore, it is but quite natu-

ral that the Swami has given a lot of various practical instructions for awakening this sleeping primordial force. Not the development of the so-called Siddhis is the chief aim of the Swami but the ultimate goal is the attainment of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi or the state of superconsciousness, which can be achieved when the awakened Kundalini Shakti reaches the Sahasrara Chakra in the brain.

As Hatha Yoga is the Yoga whose aim is the awakening of the sleeping Shakti, the Swami has devoted much space to the description of the various Asanas, Mudras, Bandhas and Pranayamas, which are used by great Yogins in order to awaken the Kundalini. It is noteworthy that the Swami has given many practical exercises for Trataka Yoga. The Swami stresses the importance of this exercise as a simple and effective means to focus the mind and attain the Ekagrata State.

"It is not only the Hatha Yogi", says the Swami, "who can profit by it, but even Jnana and Raja Yogins will derive great benefits from its practice." Then the Swami refers to the famous Jnani of South India Sri Ramana Maharshi who always gazes either on the opposite wall or on the Sacred Aruna Hill.

The book is profusely illustrated in order to facilitate the understanding of the right technique of the various Sadhanas. Pictures of the Chakras both separately and as they are located in the Sushumna canal will be found in this valuable book of the great Himalayan Yogi.

Other forms of Yoga like Bhakti Yoga, Nada Laya Yoga and Vedanta Laya Yoga are beautifully dealt with in the Swami's book. There are a few books in European languages dealing with Kundalini Yoga or Serpent Power, but even these works have approached the subject from the theoretical point of view.

Swami Sivananda's book is on the contrary a practical guide-book meant in the first place for the earnest Sadhaka who aims to awaken the Kundalini Shakti in order to get both emancipation from the thralldom of worldly desires, the slavery of mind, senses, Moha, attachments, etc., and to enjoy Divine ecstasy, bliss and rare exquisite powers as well.

Some readers and especially the European students might still entertain the doubt whether one can expect success in rousing the sleeping Kundalini Shakti simply by following the instructions from a book, without the personal assistance of a Guru. The present writer has in this connection inquired the Swami himself on this very important point and he received from the Swami a clear and direct answer, that any one *can* awaken the Kundalini Shakti by following the instructions and practising the Sadhanas as found in his book, even without the personal assistance of a Guru. But I venture to say that the Swami's help and guidance is and ever will be ready for an earnest Sadhaka. For has not the most merciful Swami said time and again: "I will serve you nicely?" The Swami is ever ready to

serve; he only complains that there are a few real, earnest Sadhakas. Written in a simple, lucid manner, containing a mass of detailed instructions on various kinds of Sadhanas and being profusely illustrated it is a real boon for every Sadhaka but especially for the European student of practical Yoga.

ESSENCE OF YOGA

It is a nice volume, beautifully got up, dealing with different methods and practices. The importance of this book is clearly seen from the fact that the Swami has advised all branches of the Divine Life Society to have a copy of this book in their libraries for the use of their members. In a sense it contains the essence of all other Swami's books, dealing with spiritual culture. It is a survey of the various paths of Yoga, not only from the theoretical but rather from the practical point of view. The first chapter bears the simple title "Yoga". Here the Swami gives clear information, avoiding all academical definitions, what Yoga is and what benefits it does confer upon its practitioner. Says the Swami: "Yoga is a perfect, practical system of self-culture. Yoga is an exact science. It aims at the harmonious development of the body, mind and soul. Yoga is the turning away of the senses from the objective universe and the concentration of the mind within. Yoga is eternal life in the soul or spirit." Regarding the benefits which accrue from the practice of Yoga the Swami says: "Yoga brings in perfection, peace and everlasting happiness. Yoga

can help you in your business and in your daily life. You can have calmness of mind at all times by the practice of Yoga. You can have restful sleep. You can have increased energy, vigour, vitality, longevity, and a high standard of health The practice of Yoga will help you to control the emotions and passions and will give you power to resist temptations and to remove the disturbing elements from the mind. It will enable you to keep a balanced mind always and remove fatigue ... It will enable you to hold communion with the Lord and thus attain the *summum bonum* of existence."

Next the Swami points out that in order to attain success in Yoga the aspirant must abandon worldly enjoyments and practise Tapas and Brahmacharya. Further the Swami stresses the utmost importance of a Yogic Guru and points out evil qualities which stand as obstacles on the way to success in Yoga such as self-sufficiency, impertinence, pride, luxury, name, fame, self-assertive nature, obstinacy, idea of superiority, sensual desires, evil company, laziness, over-eating, over-work, too much mixing and too much talking.

After describing the nature and the results to be gained through the practice of Yoga, the Swami has devoted several chapters elucidating the various branches of Yoga. As Karma Yoga is the necessary preparatory discipline for all Sadhanas, the Swami has elaborated it at first. He himself has been and is even now, one of the greatest living Karma Yogins, therefore his instructions on this point are the more

noteworthy as coming from the pen of an adept in Karma Yoga. Next comes Hatha Yoga. The meaning of the word Hatha, the interdependence of Hatha and Raja Yogas are nicely described. The general description is followed by two articles on Asanas and Pranayama. As Hatha Yoga leads to Raja Yoga, so naturally the next chapter bears the title Raja Yoga followed by a supplementary article, viz., control of mind. Here the reader will find worthwhile instructions and devices culled in the laboratory of the silent Himalayan caves on the banks of the holy river Ganges during his days of intense Tapascharya. Teaches the Swami: "Never wrestle with the mind; Do not use any violent efforts in concentration. When the mind is jumping and wandering much, make no violent effort to control the mind but rather allow it to run along for a while and exhaust its efforts. It will take advantage of the opportunity and will jump around like an unchained monkey at first. Then it will gradually become quiet and look to you for orders. If evil thoughts enter your mind, do not use your will force in driving them. You will lose energy. You will tax your will. You will fatigue yourself. The greater the efforts you make, the more the evil thoughts will return with redoubled force. They will return more quickly also. The thoughts will become more powerful. Be indifferent. Keep quiet. Become a silent witness of those thoughts. Do not identify yourself with them. They will vanish soon. Substitute good thoughts."

These articles are followed by one on Nada Yoga. The Swami gives a short but clear description of its method. The Swami concludes this chapter with the following words: "The sound entraps the mind. The mind becomes one with the sound as milk with water. It becomes absorbed in Brahman or the Absolute. You will then attain the seat of Eternal Bliss."

After describing those branches of Yoga which culminate in Raja Yoga, the next chapter is devoted to Bhakti and its feeders Japa Yoga and Sankirtana Yoga. Several chapters of the book are dealing with Vedanta. Really the title of the book should be Essence of Yoga and Vedanta. A very illuminating article in this section is entitled "Know Thyself."

The articles 'Message of Gita' and 'Essence of Yoga Vasishtha' give a gist of the Jnana portion of these two chief Scriptures of Sanatana Dharma of Hinduism. The practical side of Vedantic Sadhana is beautifully described in the chapter "Philosophy and Meditation on Om."

The book contains many instructive messages, dialogues from Upanishads, elucidation of the Science of Self-Realisation, questions and answers and a very detailed description of the need of keeping a spiritual diary and the way to do it.

YOGIC HOME EXERCISES

It is an attractive book dedicated like "Practical Lessons in Yoga" and "Hatha Yoga" to aspirants in

East and West. It contains a practical course of easy Yogic exercises for modern men and women. This book had a special appeal to the reading public and that deservedly, too, for the first edition was sold in a remarkable short time. In the Introduction, the author speaks of the necessity of health for success in life and God-realisation. It is really a commentary on the Sanskrit stanza "Shareeram Adyam Kalu Dharmasadhanam."

The Swami further points out the benefits of Yogic exercises and how physical and mental efficiency is gained through Yoga. The first chapter is devoted to the Science of body structure. The anatomy and physiology of muscles, nerves, brain and glands is very lucidly described, as well as the relation of body and mind is dealt with. The next chapter bears the title Health and Hygiene. Bath, sleep, Yogic diet, fasting, diseases (Adhi-Vyadhi) are the topics which are very nicely described therein. The theoretical part ends with a chapter dedicated to the most important moral and spiritual discipline, viz., Brahmacharya.

Part Second begins with a course of Yogic Exercise. This course is evidently meant for very busy aspirants, for it can be completed in fifteen minutes, yet it includes several Asanas, two Pranayamic exercises, Uddiyana Bandha, Nauli Kriya and Yoga Mudra. So every man and woman can get good health and all-round development by devoting only a quarter of an hour daily to regular Yogic

exercises i.e. fifteen minutes only. This is a span of time the most busy man or woman can afford. If any one thinks otherwise, or doubts this statement of mine, I would kindly ask to watch the time spent in useless talks, reading of newspapers, etc. Many useless things swallow many fifteen-minutes each day. So why not spend at least fifteen minutes for physical and mental health ?

Both the meditative and cultural poses are fully described and illustrated. The photos were taken from Yogi Prem Chaitanya who performs all Asanas with a peculiar charm. The book contains 22 illustrations. The frontispiece shows a beautiful picture of Sri Swami Sivananda, his calm face and lustrous eyes beaming with spirituality.

In the Chapter on Prana and Pranayama the Swami has described the nature of Prana and described at length the Sukh-purvak, Bhastrika and Sitali Pranayamas. Readers wishing to learn other Pranayamic exercises too, should refer to Swami's Science of Pranayama, Kundalini Yoga, Hatha Yoga or Practical lessons in Yoga.

The next chapter deals elaborately with the Science of Relaxation. Exercises for physical and mental relaxation are given therein.

The last Section contains very valuable chapters on control of thought and Mind and Meditation.

An attractive book, a boon for every busy man or woman in East or West.

INSPIRING LETTERS

It is a very useful book containing Swami Sivananda's replies to his numerous devotees and inquirers. There are now-a-days many books published on Vedanta Philosophy, nearly as many on Bhakti but by far less on Yoga. On Yoga we have, thanks to God, the Sutras of Patanjali Maharshi with the commentaries of Vyasa, Vachaspati Misra and a few others, too. On Hatha Yoga there are a few worthwhile attempts made by some pioneers and scientific research workers in this field of Yoga Vidya.

Swami Sivananda has come to aid those students on practical Yoga who, being located in foreign countries, where Yoga is not known and where one cannot reasonably expect to meet a Yoga Guru, by publishing practical guide books on the subject, e. g., Practical Lessons in Yoga, Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Yogic Home Exercises, Practice of Yoga, Vols. I and II, Science of Pranayama, Kundalini Yoga, Yoga Asanas, etc.

But it is impossible to mention even in a big book all possible obstacles and difficulties a student might encounter in his onward march on his path to Self-Mastery and Self-Realisation. The gracious and benevolent Swami has many times offered his help by correspondence to all aspirants and Truth-seekers.

No wonder that thousands of Sadhakas have availed themselves of this rare opportunity to be

guided by a Perfect Master---the great Himalayan Yogi. But what is a wonder is this : how the Swami, being extremely busy with the management of various Ashram activities, the publishing work, building and construction works, medical aid and many other activities, too, is still able to attend to and answer all letters pouring from all parts of the world of ours.

Yet, when several Sadhakas and intimate disciples have expressed their astonishment on this point, the most compassionate Swami simply replied that he is not tired to serve them at all, but complained that he can hardly find the real type of aspirants, who would whole-heartedly, assiduously, strictly and minutely follow his spiritual instructions. Now the difficulties of a Yogic student are generally different from those of a follower of Jnana Marga. The former has a feeling of a lack of technical knowledge as regards a particular Yogic Kriya in the initial stages of Yogic Sadhanas and a lack of purely psychological knowledge when he reaches the Antaranga stage of Ashtanga Yoga.

A student of Vedanta encounters many philosophical problems in the beginning of his path and seeks the Guru's Anugraha in a later stage when he sees the necessity to transcend the limitations of the intellect and open the Divya Chakshu or the eye of intuition.

The difficulties of a devotee of Bhakti Marga are still different from those of the Yogi or Jnani,

The problem of Health may bother at times every Sadhaka but it may be tackled differently according to the predilections of the aspirant. Of course, this can be done effectively only by a Guru who has had himself integral and an all-sided development. And who else but Siva can justly claim to be a Guru of integral, all-sided development.

The Swami is a great Tapaswi; he is a great Bhakta of Lord Krishna and Lord Siva; he was initiated into the highest mysteries of Advaita; he did the most intense Hatha and Raja Yogic Sadhanas. Therefore, it is easy for him to direct every type of Sadhakas according to the path most suited to them. The letters containing both the inquiries of the aspirants and the answers by the Swami, are grouped according to the Yoga Margas, i. e., Hatha, Raja, Bhakti and Jnana Yogas. Chapters on Health, Brahmacharya, etc., are also to be found therein. These are especially very interesting.

One youthful aspirant complains that he has fallen a victim to a sexual vice. The Swami graciously offers his help. After some months the very same aspirant writes that he is now free from that evil habit, but still suffers from lack of vigour, weakness and nervous debility and asks the Swami for further instructions. Another aspirant asks the Swami's advice on Dhauti, i. e., what to do when one has troubles in drawing out the swallowed cloth. Again he finds the Swami's guidance. In short the Swami tells not to do any violence, to draw out a

little, then make a pause and so forth. The help of vomiting is also recommended. If no possibility to draw out presents itself, one may cut with scissors and swallow the rest. No harm will ensue. Nowhere in the Yogic literature did I find these instructions. And it is quite natural. They are the outcome of difficulties encountered by Sadhakas while engaged in actual practice. Therefore, the immense value of this unique thrilling book to all students of practical Yoga.

RAJA YOGA (THEORY AND PRACTICE)

Raja Yoga is the king of all Yogas says Swami Sivananda. It concerns directly with the mind. Purification, establishing good habits, obliterating bad ones, controlling the modifications of the mind, making the mind one-pointed and finally the total suppression of all mental modifications are the chief Sadhanas of Raja Yoga. Thought is the Mother of Yoga says Swami Abhayananda of Benares. The absolute control of the modifications of Chitta or mind substance is the Rahasya of Raja Yoga.

Unfortunately there are very few valuable works on this subject in English and even less in other European languages. Vyasa's commentary with Vachaspati Misra's Gloss, Vijnana Bhikshu's Yoga Vartika and Yoga Sara Sangraha, Rajamartanda of Bhoja Raja were the chief treatises one could get on this important subject.

Recently Prof. Surendra Nath Das Gupta and Jnanaeshwar Ghosh M. A. have written valuable

books on Patanjali's Raja Yoga, but these works are not meant as guide books for practical students of Yoga---their interest is purely academical.

Even the former works are chiefly theoretical elucidations and are of little value to a practical student, except he has the advantage to sit at the feet of a Raja Yogic Guru.

Further we need not forget that the greatest part of commentaries of Patanjali's Yoga Darshana available to an English reader were not by the followers of Patanjali's Yoga philosophy but adherents of Advaita Vedanta.

Swami Vivekananda has rightly pointed out that Raja Yoga is a vast subject but Vedantins generally try to limit its scope. Himself a paragon of Vedanta, a real Vadanti-Kesari, Vivekananda while writing the commentaries on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras has written them from the point view of Sankhya---the philosophy on which the system of Patanjali is based. This is the peculiarity of the great Indian sages who can for the time being forget their own viewpoint--- a phenomenon quite uncommon to a European scholar or philosopher. Really Swami Vivekananda's Raja Yoga was till now the only book whose aim was to acquaint the reader with the practice of Raja Yoga. But many sincere students of practical Yoga have complained that the commentaries were too brief to be practically useful. The reason is not far to seek. Patanjali Maharshi, like other Sutrakaras of yore, has in a relatively small number of Sutras

compressed vast mass of deep and profound knowledge. So it would require a big volume if not several volumes to completely elaborate the meaning of each Sutra. Secondly there are approximately two hundred Sutras and if only one or two sentences are added in the commentary of each Sutra, it will greatly increase the bulk of the book.

Prof. Puran Singh, the biographer of the Swami Rama Tirtha, writes that modern India lacks the type of Patanjali's Yogin. It may be true that at present there are relatively few Yogins who strictly follow the classical Yoga of Patanjali Maharshi, but I sincerely doubt if India of today is incapable of producing them, if she only willed so, or could any one doubt, even for a moment, that such Mahatmas like Gandhiji, Sri Aurobindo Ghose, Sri Ramana Maharshi etc., were incapable of mastering Patanjali's Raja Yoga? Or, to put the question differently--- are the systems of Sadhanas followed by these great souls in any way easier than the Yoga Sadhanas of Patanjali Maharshi? The answer is an emphatic "No."

The path of a true Jnani is in no way easier than that of a Raja Yogi. But one might ask: "Why then are there now-a-days a lot of followers of Jnana Marga and relatively small percentage of pure Raja Yogins?"

There are several reasons for it. Firstly the influence of the brilliant intellect of Sri Shankara Acharya is still keenly felt in India. Secondly the

followers of Advaita Vedanta preach openly their doctrines, write commentaries and original works, disseminating their philosophy far and wide.

The Yogins on the other hand have formed some semi-secret organisations and have written only a few books dealing with their system of practice. The history of Religion clearly shows that those confessions, cults and churches which have no books have only a small following.

Really the Swami's book has supplied a long-felt need for a practical treatise on Patanjali's Raja Yoga. The original Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are given in four chapters.

The first chapter deals with Samadhi. Five kinds of Vrittis and their control, three kinds of Vairagya, nature of Ishwara, obstacles in meditation and various methods to enter into Samadhi are the subject matter of this Pada. The second chapter is the Sadhana Pada. It deals with Kriya Yoga i. e. the disciplinary processes leading to Samadhi. The Bahiranga Sadhanas i. e. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara and their benefits are described therein.

The third chapter is called the Vibhooti Pada. It treats with the Antaranga Sadhanas of Raja Yoga i. e. Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Samyama on external objects, mind and internal Chakras and the way to acquire various Siddhis is described therein. The fourth chapter or Kaivalya Pada treats of independence of a full-blown Yogi who has achieved

perfect discrimination between Purusha and Prakriti and who has separated himself from the three Gunas. Such topics as the nature of mind and Dharmamegha Samadhi are also dealt with in this Pada. In order to render the subject very clear and attractive the Swami has divided the subject-matter into fourteen chapters.

The eight limbs of Raja Yoga viz., Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are treated separately under eight chapters along with many other chapters on Yoga Sadhana, Mind, Its Mysteries and control etc.

The chapter on Mind in six sections will help the student much in his practical Sadhana. There are copious annotations and commentaries under each Sutra. The word for word rendering will be of immense use for the students of Patanjali's Yoga Darshana.

In the Appendix the original Sutras in Deva Nagari Characters in four chapters are given for easy reference of the students. Page-number with reference to the Sutras is also given, so that there is no difficulty in finding out any particular Sutra in the book. This book has supplied a long-felt want. The Swami has placed the world under a great debt of gratitude to him. Every Yogic aspirant will be highly benefited by a study of this marvellous book.

HOW TO GET VAIRAGYA

The books so far dealt chiefly with Yoga Abhyasa i. e. Yoga practice. The control of mind is a *sine*

qua non in all Yoga Margas. This doctrine was taught by Shri Krishna to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. Arjuna complained that this advice seemd to be rather impracticable since it would be easier to control the wind than the always unsteady mind. Shri Krishna, however, said that it was possible to control the unsteady, fluctuant, mind, if the aspirant took recourse to two potent means viz., Abhyasa and Vairagya. Patanjali Maharshi also says in his Yoga Sutras Ch. I-12: "Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah" -- which means: Their (the mental modifications) control is done by practice (Abhyasa) and non-attachment (Vairagya). It is very important to note that Yogeshwara Shri Krishna and Maharshi Patanjali -- the two greatest authorities on the Science of Yoga have given the very same advice for effecting the supreme control of mind. But in order to achieve this mind-control both Abhyasa and Vairagya are necessary. Prof. Neelakantha Brahma says in his Philosophy of Hindu Sadhana that the Jnani generally stresses Vairagya while the Yogi devotes his energies chiefly to Yoga Abhyasa. But what is Vairagya? The word Vairagya means dispassion, or non-attachment. Practically it is a state of mind devoid of mental impurities, desires for perishable things; it is a state of perfect equality under all conditions and towards all beings and becomings.

Though the instructions on Vairagya are scattered in Yoga Vasishtha, in the teachings of Lord Buddha and Sri Sankara Acharya, there are very few

books entirely devoted to this important subject. Personally I have seen only two viz. Bhartruhari's Vairagya Shatakam and Sri Swami Sivananda's 'How to get Vairagya.' The nature of men is to seek happiness; by a serious blunder men think that the evanescent pleasures of the senses do constitute real happiness. It is therefore that the Sage Sivananda has in the first chapter of his "How to Get Vairagya" shown that real, imperishable happiness is within. It is here that we ought to seek true undecaying happiness. Patanjali Maharshi has stated that for a man of discrimination all sensual pleasures are really pain. Yogi Jaigishavya also declares that compared with inner soul bliss all pleasures derived from sensual objects are nothing but pain.

The book of the Swami gives full and detailed information on this subject. Among other things therein are dealt with the following topics: What is Vairagya, The glory of Vairagya, Varieties of Vairagya, stages in Vairagya, how to develop Vairagya, what Vairagya is not.

Chapter VII of the book contains the Essence of Raja Bhartruhari's Vairagya Shatakam. The next chapter is entitled "Inspiring Stories" - it is inspiring indeed! The appendix contains Prasnottari of Sri Sankaraacharya.

Such in brief is the valuable book of the Swami whose importance is greatly enhanced by the fact that till now there are very, very few books on this important subject.

SAMADHI YOGA

A Yogi well-established in Abhyasa and Vairagya reaches at last the superconscious state of Samadhi. In Samadhi one realises himself as soul, and overcomes the error of identification of the Self with body and mind. According to Patanjali Maharshi it is in Samadhi that we realise our Real Nature, whereas in the states of consciousness we are subject to wrong identifications owing to the vibrations (Vrittis) of our mental substance (Chitta).

The knowledge derived in Samadhi is direct knowledge whereas the knowledge we get in our waking state by means of our sense-organs and mental processes is indirect. Samadhi is intuitional, transcendental knowledge.

Intuition comes from within and gives us face-to-face view of Reality; thought comes from without and gives us only an indirect view of it. Says the Swami: "Samadhi is blissful union with the supreme Self. It leads to the direct intuitive realisation of the Infinite.

It is an inner Divine experience which is beyond the reach of speech and mind. You will have to realise this yourself through deep meditation. The senses, the mind and the intellect cease functioning. There is neither time nor causation here." In another place of his Samadhi Yoga the Swami says: "Samadhi is not a mere emotional enthusiasm or an exhilaration of feeling. It is the direct unique intuitive experience of Truth or Absolute Consciousness

or the ultimate Reality. It is beyond all feeling, throbbing and thrill. There is perfect awareness in Samadhi which is beyond expression and feeling. The aspirant rests in his centre now—the goal of his search---and realises the absolute freedom, independence and perfection." In the introduction the Swami has given vivid inspiring description of how Uddalaka, Sikhidhwaja and Prahlada entered the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi; their experiences and how they came down from Samadhi to the ordinary state of consciousness. As to the Sadhana the Swami teaches: "The more the thinning of the Vasanas, egoism and Dehaadhyasa, the greater the bliss of the Self. The more the Sadhana, the more the experience of joy of the Soul."

Method and discipline are necessary in work. Then only you will have efficient out-turn. Nothing will come out of chaos. The arduous practice of Yoga demands an abundance of energy and nerve-power on the part of the Yogic student. If one conserves the seminal energy only, he can have an abundance of energy and nerve power. Therefore the practice of Brahmacharya is of paramount importance if one desires to practise Yoga and achieve the highest end of Yoga quickly." And then a very encouraging word for the doubtful aspirant: "Every effort in the spiritual path, any sort of spiritual practice never goes in vain."

The book has twelve chapters. The first chapter deals with Sadhana, the second deals with what

is Yoga, who is Yogi and different paths in Yoga. The third chapter is devoted to Mind its Mysteries and control. The next chapter describes the Control of Mind. The following two chapters deal with the evil qualities and Divine qualities respectively. In chapters 8 and 9 we find the description of Prana-yama, Pratyahara and Dharana. Chapter 10 is an elaborate treatise on Meditation or Dhyana. Meditation in different paths, Meditation on Om, obstacles in Meditation, Seclusion and Meditation are some of the topics of this chapter. A very interesting article is Meditation :—Benefits and Experiences will also be found in this chapter. Here for the first time the Swami has narrated his own experiences during deep meditation.

The following chapter bears the title : Siddhis, its subdivisions are : (1) Siddhis and (2) Kundalini Yoga. Chapter Twelve, the last one, is devoted to Samadhi. Different kinds of Raja Yoga Samadhi viz., Savitarka, Nirvitarka, Savichara, Nirvichara, Sananda, Asmita and Asamprajnata Samadhi are described at first. Then comes Bhakti Yoga Samadhi followed by Jnana Yoga Samadhi. This is a thrilling and very useful book for every type of aspirant. Students of Raja Yaga will derive immense benefit by following its priceless instructions.

WRITING OF SIVA ON VEDANTA AND BHAKTI

Thus far have been reviewed only the principal books of the Swami dealing chiefly with Yoga. The

Swami has written at least as many books on Vedanta and Bhakti too.

Vedanta in Daily Life, Practice of Vedanta and Jnana Yoga will be of the same importance for a student of Jnana Marga as Practice of Yoga, Practical Lesson in Yoga, Kundalini yoga, Raja yoga for a Yogic aspirant.

There is now-a-days a vast literature dealing with Vedanta both in English and in the vernaculars. The works of Swami Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirtha have opened the eyes of many Westerners to the sublime heights of Vedanta philosophy. Vivekananda was a pioneer of Vedanta in the West. As such he had to acquaint his audience with the basic principles of the Philosophy of Advaita, and could not enter into the particulars of the system nor elaborate a system of exercises as advocated by Sri Sankara Acharya or other teachers of Vedanta.

Sri Rama Tirtha too has given only hints on the practice of Vedanta i.e., the system of Vedantic Sadhanas. The distinctive features of Swami Siva's works is that he introduces the reader with various schools of Vedanta (the various Vadas are dealt with in 'Vedanta in Daily Life'), and gives various schemes of Vedantic Sadhanas (particularly in practice of Vedanta). Nowhere do we find such an elaborate treatment of Sadhana Chatushtaya as advocated by Sri Sankaraacharya as in Siva's Vedanta in Daily Life. In these works we see Siva not only as a brilliant scholar but also and primarily, as a sage, a full-blo-

wn Jnani, for only a Rishi is able in such a simple and lucid manner to explain the highest tenets of the highest philosophy the human genius has evolved. Besides these big works which include also such books as the Ten Upanishads, Principal Upanishads Vol I & II; Philosophy and Meditation on Om the Swami has also written a lot of minor works on Vedanta. The chief characteristic of these works is also their practicability. I venture to say that in Siva's minor works many a European student will find more concrete, practical advice on Sadhana than in big books of other authors, for the Swami is not content with merely teaching Philosophy; his aim is to push on and firmly establish the Sadhaka in the Spiritual path, so that he may for himself realise the goal propounded by the sublimest philosophy of Vedanta.

Two of these minor works need especially to be mentioned here viz., Vedanta for beginners and Stories from Yoga Vasishtha. They both are very, very practical and instructive. An equally vast literature as on Vedanta and Yoga has been contributed by Siva on Bhakti also. Besides his stupendous book Bhakti Yoga which deals with the subject matter in all its phases, the Swami has quite recently published several books devoted to the Bhakti Marga e.g. Lord Siva and His Worship, Bhakti and Sankirtan, Lives of Saints, Sangeeta Leela Yoga, Sangeeta Bhagavata, Inspiring Songs and Kirtans etc. The books Japa Yoga and Yoga by Japa can also be included in the list of books on Bhakti. It is rather difficult to draw a demarcation line where one Yogic

path ends and another begins. To take a concrete example Japa is practised by Mantra Yogins, Bhaktas and even Vedantins repeat their Mahavakyas and Sivoham and Soham Mantras.

In Siva's greater works, especially, we find how one form of Yogic Sadhana melts into another. In his books on Vedanta you will find some instructions on Bhakti and his treatises on Bhakti often culminate in Advaita. The Swami is an ardent advocate of integral development and does not want one-sidedness. We have so far omitted Karma Yoga. Himself a perfect Karma Yogi of world-wide fame the Swami has written an exhaustive treatise entitled practice of Karma Yoga, and a small volume; "Karma Yoga is the best Yoga." The Practice of Karma Yoga contains an inspiring article: Fate and Free Will. There are many quotations from Yoga Vasishtha and Bhagavad Gita. Especially a neophyte should not omit the practice of Karma Yoga as it purifies the heart and prevents him from becoming idle and Tamasic. There is today no other Swami who has written so many books on all the different branches of Yoga. Besides his works on Yoga, Vedanta, Bhakti and Karma the Swami has written books on the great Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana, his Ananda Lahari is a commentary on Tantric science, his Health and long life his medical Science. In his "What Becomes of the Soul After Death" the Swami has dealt with a little known aspect of parapsychological studies. The theory of Reincarnation is proved by the Swami with many

interesting, highly convincing instances where people have remembered their previous incarnations. The little-known colour therapy and Kaya Kalpa are dealt with in Swami's Health and Long-Life; the Science of Symbols is described in his Lord Siva and His Worship. One simply is awe-struck at the versatile genius of the great Swami. The Swami has also written many poems and dramas. The Brahmacharya drama is both inspiring and instructive. He has also written "Philosophy in Humour," "Philosophy of Proverbs"; in a word Swami has adopted various means and ways to impart the highest Truth to both the ripe and unripe aspirant. How benevolent and compassionate is our Swamiji Maharaj indeed !

If anyone would like to know in a short span of time about the teachings, philosophy and the work of Sri Siva he need not despair. The Sivananda Publication League has recently published a big book over six hundred pages where the earnest inquirer will get all the needed information. The title of this book is "Philosophy and Teachings of Swami Sivananda." It is a wonderful book compiled by the Divine Life Society. I cannot too strongly recommend this work to every aspirant. Before closing this chapter I will have to draw the attention of my esteemed readers to the Life and Sayings Series which are biographical works written by ardent devotees on the Life and Teachings of their Guru Deva. A sage of Ananda Kutir by D. Jhingan M.A.L.L.B ; Light Fountain by Prism, Sivananda the Perfect Master are all worth the study. Saint Sivananda though

smaller in bulk breathes fervent devotion to the Master.

Quite recently the Swami has published himself an autobiography which it goes beyond a shadow of doubt will be greatly appreciated not only by his devotees and admirers but by the reading public at large.

Chapter Three

PHILOSOPHY OF SIVA

Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion. It is a rational enquiry into the nature of Truth or Reality. It is an integral part of religion in India. Philosophy as understood and practised in India is a means to get rid of pain and death and to attain immortality and eternal bliss. Man wants to know about the secret of death, the nature of soul about God etc. Philosophy helps him to know all these things. Philosophy is the Self-expression of the growing Spirit in man. Great creative thinkers and philosophers appear in all ages. They elevate and inspire the people. What is this Samsara, why this Samsara, Is the World real or mere appearance? Is there any Creator or Governor of this Universe? What is the nature of the Creator? What is the relation between man and Ishwara? Is there any way of escape from the round of births and deaths? Is there any such thing as Impersonal Absolute? What is its essential nature? How did man come into bondage? What are the means of release?

These and many others are the questions that arise in an awakened soul and vehemently demand for a solution. It is Philosophy that gives us the much longed for answer. In the following pages I shall try to give a few samples of Siva's Philosophy.

BRAHMAN

Whatever has beginning or end is unreal. That which exists in the past, present and future is real. Only Brahman exists in the three periods of time. Hence Brahman alone is real. Only real thing can be eternal, unchanging, beginningless and endless. Anything which is nothing in the beginning, and in the end, necessarily does not exist in the middle also.

The reality underlying all names and forms the primal one from which everything originates is Brahman. Brahman is the inner reality or essence. The five sheaths viz., Annamaya Kosha, (food sheath), Pranamaya Khosa, (vital sheath) Manomaya Kosha (mental sheath) Vijnanamaya Kosha (intellectual sheath) and Anandamaya Kosha (blissful sheath) are the manifestations of Brahman. They are grounded in Brahman.

Brahman or the Eternal transcends the phenomena. Creation and destruction are only phenomena. Brahman is Infinity. Brahman is Eternal. Brahman is Immortality. Infinity must be one. There cannot be two infinities. That which is unchanging, indivisible, non-dual, beginningless, endless,

timeless, spaceless, causeless can be infinite. There can be no differences or distinctions, in Brahman. Brahman is self-luminous, self-existent, self-contained, self-established, self-revealed. Brahman illumines itself by itself. Brahman is ever illumined by its very nature. Brahman is birthless and deathless, because He is infinite, bodiless and timeless. Brahman is not a negative blank such as you have in deep, dreamless, sound sleep, because he is pure Consciousness, Knowledge absolute. In Brahman you have perfect awareness, pure intelligence. Brahman or the Absolute is Satyasya Satyam. It is the Self of all Selves.

The objects seen in the waking state are as unreal as the objects seen in dreaming state. All objects are unreal. The witnessing subject only is real and eternal. Life is a waking dream. How can a thing which changes be eternal and real. Nothing save Brahman or the Absolute is real and eternal.

The mental world is as much objective or unreal as the material. The only reality is Brahman or the Atma.

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 Atma or Brahman. Brahman is the basis of three states (waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep). It is the silent witness or Sakshi. Brahman alone is Tureeya or the fourth state. It is through hearing of the Srutis (Sraṇa) reflection (Manana) and constant meditation (Nididhyasana) that we can realise

Brahman. Realisation of Brahman is regarded as the highest of all knowledge. A strong and wise man who is endowed with the four means only can attain Self-realisation. He who truly realises his unity with Brahman realises Immortality. Says Siva: "Withdraw the senses, look within and search your heart. Dive deep into the deepest recess of your heart through deep meditation on the Innermost Self or Inner Ruler. You will doubtless realise your identity with Brahman and get to the heart of the Infinite and the heart of infinite joy and bliss." (cited from Philosophy and Teachings of Swami Sivananda).

M A Y A

Ma--not, Ya--that. Maya is not that. It is not Brahman or the solid Reality that is at the back of this seeming universe, at the back of all minds and all objects. Maya is an illusory power of Brahman. It is Sat-Asat Vilakshana Anadi Bhavarupa Anirvachaneeya Maya. It is neither Sat as Brahman nor Asat as the horns of a hare because you sense the object. It is Anirvachaneeya (indescribable). It has got two Shaktis viz., Avarana Shakti (veiling power) and Vikshepa Shakti (projecting power). The first one does not allow you to realise your Divine Nature which is Existence absolute, Knowledge absolute, and Bliss absolute, the second projects the universe and the body and causes Abhimana. Just as heat is inseparable from fire, coldness from ice, so Maya is inseparable from Brahman. It is Atmasraya (dependent on Brahman).

Maya is the Upadana Karana (material cause) for this universe. Ishwara is reflection of Brahman in Maya. That portion of Brahman which is covered by Maya is Saguna Brahman or Ishwara. The whole world exists in a seed-state during cosmic Pralaya. Ishwara has complete control over Maya. Just as Avidya is the causal body for Jiva Maya is the causal body of Ishwara.

Maya has got two Avasthas viz., Guna Samya Avastha and Vaishamy Avastha. The former is a state wherein the three Gunas--Sattva, Rajas, Tamas--exist in a state of equilibrium. This occurs in Cosmic Pralaya. When the period of Pralaya is over Spandana or vibration takes place in the Maya of equilibrium, because the Jivas who were in a subtle state want to enjoy the fruits of their actions. This is Vaishamy Avastha. When the original Maya is agitated during projection or Srishti, the three Gunas Sattva, Rajas and Tamas manifest.

Brahman is Anadi-Anantam, but Maya is Anadi--Santam. Maya is beginningless but terminates as soon as you attain Brahma Jnana.

Brahman is Sat-Chit-Ananda, Maya has the opposite nature---Asat-Jada-Duhkha. The Why of Maya can only be understood when you attain knowledge of Brahman. Do not rack your brain now to know the Why of Maya. This can only be understood when you attain knowledge of Brahman. You cannot find an answer in any of the Scriptures. The Why is itself a logical absurdity. You can have a

Why only for worldly matters where Buddhi functions. There can be no Why for the questions of the transcendental plane where a gross and finite intellect conditioned by time and space cannot reach. This inscrutable indescribable Maya cannot be said either to exist or not to exist.

There are ways to destroy Maya. After this destruction, you will know the why and the nature of Maya. Maya is that illusive power of Brahman which makes Anitya (impermanent) appear as Nitya (permanent), Asuchi (impure), as Suchi (pure), Duhkha (pain) as Sukha (pleasure) Anatma (Non-Self), as Atma (Self).

If we know Brahman all names and forms and limits will melt away. The world is Maya as it is not the essential truth of the infinite reality of the Brahman.

Says Siva : "If you give up entirely reading of newspapers and shut yourself up in a room for a month and if you plunge yourself in deep meditation, you will have a very light impression of the world in your mind. Gradually this light impression also will be obliterated. The world is nothing but a play of two currents of Raga-Dwesha. If these two currents are destroyed the world will vanish. Because the minds of the worldly people are filled with passion, attachment and delusion, this world appears to be real."

AVIDYA

Avidya is that portion of the primitive non-intelligent principle in which Sattva is subordinated to

Rajas and Tamas. This is subordinated to Ra known as Malina Sattwa, because it is impure on account of the predominance of Rajas and Tamas. It is the reflection of Jiva, whereas Maya is the reflector of Ishwara. Maya, is called Shuddha Sattwa on account of the predominance of Sattwa. The world of experience is due to the force of Avidya. It is the force of Avidya that plunges us in the ocean of Sam-sara. It is a negative power which makes us forget our divine nature. Avidya operates through the mind, and the mind functions through space and causation. Avidya is an illusory power that disintegrates the Divine into a million different fragments. Pleasure, pain, desire, Karma, attraction, repulsion, delusion, pride, lust, egoism, anger, jealousy, the three bodies (gross, subtle, causal) five sheaths are all effects of Avidya.

Avidya is the source of all ignorance, sins and misery. Avidya is beginningless (Anadi) but it has an end. *Knowledge of Self terminates Avidya.* As soon as one gets knowledge of the Self, Avidya terminates. Brahman appears as the world on account of Avidya, just as the rope appears as snake in the dusk. If we bring a lamp, the snake disappears, but the rope remains. Even so, when we get knowledge of the Brahman, the appearance of the world will vanish. Avidya is not negative, but it is a positive (Bhavarupa). It is erroneous knowledge. Avidya or Ajnana which constitutes the causal body is the source from which the two bodies gross and subtle have come into being.

GET RID OF AVIDYA

It is useless to rack the brain and ask : "Whence comes Avidya ?" "Where is Avidya?" "Why should there be Avidya ?" To get out of the fire of Samsara is our duty.

With Mano-Nasha Avidya goes. In the state of liberation wherein there is annihilation of mind (Manonasha) there is no Raga and Dwesha. Avidya inheres in the mind but not in the Self.

THE WORLD

The world is a play of colours and sounds. This sense-universe is a play of nerves. It is a false show kept up by the jugglery of Maya, mind and nerves. You enjoy the sensual pleasures for a period of twenty years when the senses are strong. What is this short evanescent period of twenty years in eternity ? What is this despicable, jarring monotonous sensual life, compared to the eternal and peaceful life in the immortal Self within ? We enjoy the world through our nerves. If a particular nerve centre has become weak or atrophied we cannot enjoy a particular object. Do you not now clearly see that this world is a mere play of nerves ? Do you not understand that this universe of opposites is illusory ? If the nerves go out of order, you become miserable, even though you possess enormous wealth. Can you call these little sense pleasures which depend upon the play of nerves as real, lasting happiness ? It is mere itching of nerves

only, which tickles these deluded souls who have lost their power of discrimination and understanding. You are deluded or deceived by the senses. That which is changing and perishable cannot be real. There is neither mind, nor matter, neither world nor creation in reality. Brahman alone shines in His pristine glory. This is the absolute Truth.

The whole experience consisting of perceiver and perceived is merely an imagination of the mind. That which exists only in imagination does not exist in absolute reality. Duality consisting of subject and object is a creation of the mind and the external senses.

Objects are all like ordinary illusions though regarded as real.

In deep sleep you have no experience of the world because there is no mind. This clearly shows that there will be world only if there is mind and that the mind alone creates this world. This is the reason why Srutis declare that this world is Manomatra Jagat and Manahkalpita Jagat.

In Samadhi or superconscious state, wherein there is annihilation of mind, there is no world. Just as the snake in the rope vanishes when a lamp is brought, so also this world which is mere appearance of superimposition disappears when one attains illumination, when the sun of knowledge dawns.

A liberated Sage has no world. This world is an illusion or unreal for a man of discrimination. For a passionate man who is ignorant, this world is

a solid reality. He is immersed in Samsara. This world is everything for him. There is nothing beyond this world. Because it is said there is no world, *the young aspirant should not give up the practice of Karma Yoga*. People in whom a little dispassion has dawned should not abandon the world. The world is the best teacher. You will have to learn many lessons from this world. Remain in the world but be not worldly minded. View the world as Brahman only. Change your angle of vision. You will be happy and wise. If you constantly keep before the mind this idea that the world is unreal, you will develop dispassion and burning desire for liberation.

Brahman or the Supreme Self is the only living reality. He is your own Innermost Self or Atma. He exists in the past, present and future. He is self-luminous, self-existent. He is the substratum of this world.

JIVA : THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL

The individual soul and the Supreme Brahman are not different. The individual soul becomes Brahman by worshipping Him. He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman Himself.

The union of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul is like the mingling of milk with milk. The separate sense of individuality vanishes. The individual soul becomes identical with the Supreme Soul. He realises that one essence or one consciousness pervades all space.

Annihilation of the little self, purity of mind and love for all beings is the substance of true religion.

The Jiva falsely superimposes the body and other limiting adjuncts which are not Self upon himself and identifies himself with them. This identification constitutes bondage. The freedom from this identification is Moksha. That which causes this identification is Avidya or nescience. That which removes this identification is Vidya. Attainment of knowledge of the Self eradicates this Avidya and its effects. The Swarupa of Moksha is the attainment of Supreme Bliss and removal of all kinds of sufferings.

From illusion spring separation, difference, duality, manifoldness and variety. Illusion is a form of ignorance. All sorrows, tribulations, miseries and troubles have their root in ignorance.

There are seven links in the chain of bondage; they are: (1) Misery (2) Embodiment (3) Karma (4) Raga (5) Dwesha (6) Aviveka and (7) Ajnana.

Misery is the final link in the chain of cause and effect. Every link depends for its existence upon the previous link.

If the root-cause Ajnana (ignorance of the Self) is removed by Atma Jnana or knowledge of the Self the other links will be broken by themselves. From ignorance, non-discrimination is born; from non-discrimination, Abhimana; from Abhimana Raga-Dwesha; from Raga-Dwesha, Karma, from Karma, this

physical body; from the physical body, misery. If you want to annihilate misery, you must get rid of embodiment.

If you want to get rid of embodiment you must not perform actions. If you wish to cease to act, you must abandon Raga-Dwesh. If you want to free yourself from Abhimana, you must destroy Aviveka and develop Viveka, or discrimination between the Self and non-Self. If you want to get rid of Aviveka, you must annihilate Ajnana. If you want to get rid of Ajnana, you must get knowledge of the Self. There is no other way of escaping this chain. Man is, in essence, the all-pervading immortal Soul. He identifies himself on account of delusion and ignorance with the five illusory Koshas or sheaths and thinks that he himself is subject to various changes. He identifies himself with the physical body or Annamaya Kosha and when the physical body is burnt he thinks himself burnt.

He identifies himself with the Pranamaya Kosha and thinks "I am hungry"; "I am thirsty"; "I did this action." The Pranamaya Kosha is quite foreign to the real Self. He identifies himself with the Manomaya Kosha and regards himself as the thinker and thinks "I am angry", "I am lustful," "I am greedy." The Manomaya Kosha is entirely distinct from the real Self of man.

He identifies himself with the Vijnanamaya Kosha and regards himself as the cogniser and thinks "I am intelligent, I know every thing, I am the

enjoyer." He identifies himself with the Anandamaya Kosha and feels "I am happy." Both the Vijnanamaya and Anandamaya Koshas are quite foreign to the real Self of man.

Just as there is a set of five vessels, one within the other, just as there are layers of an onion, so also there are five Koshas lying one within the other.

The Jiva is entangled in the Samsara by the five Koshas; Avidya (ignorance) Asmita (egoism) Raga-Dwesh (likes and dislikes) and Abhinivesha (clinging to life). He is tied to this earthly life by the three knots, Avidya (ignorance) Kama (desire) and Karma (action).

He is endowed with three bodies viz., physical, subtle and causal. He does actions with the five Karma Indriyas or organs of action viz., Vak (speech) Pani (hands) Pada (feet) Upastha (reproductive organ) and Guda (anus). He gets knowledge of the world through the five Jnana-Indriyas as organs of knowledge, viz., Srotra (ears) Twak (skin), Chakshus (eyes), Jihwa (tongue) and Nasika (nose).

Jiva purifies his heart through selfless service, charity and virtuous actions. He practises self-restraint, controls the senses and the mind. He cultivates sublime virtuous qualities, develops the four means of Salvation—Viveka, Vairagya, Shat Sampat and Mumukshutwa; hears the Srutis, reflects and meditates on the significance of the Upanishads such as "Aham Brahma Asmi" "I am Brahman," "Tat Twam Asi"—Thou art That and eventually attains knowledge of the Self.

Just as the water in the pot that is immersed in the ocean becomes one with the ocean when the pot is broken, just as the bubble becomes one with the ocean when it bursts, just as the pot-ether becomes one with the Universal ether, so also Jiva becomes one with the Brahman when the veil of ignorance is removed.

The Jiva or the individual soul is only relatively real. Its individuality lasts only so long as it is subjected to unreal Upadhis or limiting conditions due to Avidya. The Jiva identifies itself with the body, mind and senses when he is deluded by the Avidya or ignorance. He thinks, acts and enjoys on account of Avidya. In reality he is not different from Brahman or the Absolute.

When the knowledge dawns on him through annihilation of Avidya he is freed from his individuality and finitude and realises his essential Sat-Chit-Ananda nature. He merges himself in the ocean of Bliss. The river of life joins the ocean of existence. This is the truth.

CITED FROM PHILOSOPHY AND TEACHINGS OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

It is difficult to do full justice to the teachings of a sage a fully-illuminated Jnani; therefore the present writer has tried to give the Philosophy of the great Swami in his own words.

But it is impossible in a short space to deal with all salient points of Siva's philosophy; so only a few

were selected out. The reader is kindly advised to refer to such works as "Philosophy and Teachings", "Vedanta in Daily Life", "Practice of Vedanta", "Jnana Yoga" etc.

Siva possesses like other great Rishis the ability to express the most abstruse tenets of Vedanta in clear, simple lucid words.

Chapter Four

SIVA'S MESSAGE

We have just made a short review of Siva's philosophy. If you, dear reader, want in a microscopical pill, I would like to express the gist of Siva's philosophy in these few words. "You are not this perishable body, you are the Immortal Blissful Atma. Come out of the cage of flesh and roar like a lion of Vedanta OM, OM, OM, Soham, Sivoham."

If, now, you would again ask me what is Siva's message to the world at large and to the spiritual aspirant as well, I would tell you it in four short words viz., Serve, Love, Meditate, Realise !

From the perusal of Siva's philosophy it is quite clear that the Swami is a follower of Sri Sankara Acharya's Mayavada.

Though a Mayavadi Siva does not advocate running away from the battle-field of this world when one is not sufficiently advanced in spirituality, when his dispassion has not reached the state of Para Vairagya; he does not preach the doctrine : "Shuṇ

work from a distance." On the other hand Siva teaches emphatically: "Karma Yoga is the best Yoga." "Karma Yoga is a best purifier."

One might ask here: "Is there not an inconsistency for what is the necessity to engage oneself in work and selfless service if the world is nothing but a mere illusion?" Yet there is a reason for doing so, especially in the case of a neophyte. The Gita has advised the continuation of works even in the case of a Jivanmukta, a full-blown Jnani, in order to set a good example to be emulated by the unregenerated ones. This shows that work is not an absolute necessity for the liberated soul, but it is a *sine qua non* for the aspirant. In order to make it quite clear where lies the necessity for works in a world which is merely an illusion we must make it clear what is denoted by the word Illusion.

First of all we must understand the basic distinction between an illusion and hallucination. e.g. if a feverish patient sees in his room a horse where none is, it is a hallucination. If on the other hand a man mistakenly conceives a man in a post or a snake in a rope it is an illusion or delusion.

The psychological difference between a hallucination and illusion is this, that in the former we see an object where none is present, whereas in the latter we perceive a different object instead of the actual one. This might be caused by fear, suggestion, or auto-suggestion. The psychological explanation

is that in every case the mind presents a false picture in place of the true one.

We are constantly the victims of hetero-and-auto-suggestions caused by our fears, predilections, desires expectations etc. No wonder that we do not see the Reality of the world but only our imaginary ideas of it. The Reality of the world is Brahman Itself. If we see in every object and everywhere Brahman, it is a true vision. If on the other hand we perceive only the superphysical phenomenon it is a distorted, false vision. The senses cannot reveal the Reality. The ego adds to the havoc played by the senses. And so long as we are kept in the clutches of delusions we are caught in the meshes of Maya.

It is, however, foolish to be simply a slave of our cravings, desires, longings and ego, for no one has achieved Moksha or liberation that way. On the other hand one is doomed to be in bondage so long as he does not change his ways.

And the first step towards liberation is to imitate the ways of the wise.

The sage has realised the Truth; he sees his own Self in his neighbour, his friend and enemy also. Therefore his ways are so different. He forgives his persecutors and assaultants as did Lord Jesus in days bygone and Mahatma Gandhiji in quite recent days. So we who have not yet been happy enough to see the glorious vision of the Lord or Supreme

Brahman, must still try to serve the needy, the poor, the sick knowing that all is Brahman, or that all is the blessed form of Hari. Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahma. Vasudevah Idam Sarvam.

By following this simple course we shall in due time purify our minds and in a pure mind the glorious vision of Reality will be manifest.

Chapter Five

DHYANA YOGA

From what has been stated in the last chapter we can see that the three main paths to Self-realisation viz., Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana are not really different as might seem to a beginner but they all lead to the same goal—the Atma and each is necessary for the perfection of human being. They are on the other hand really interdependent.

An aspirant according to his Samskaras or bent of mind gives predominance or favours the method of his own liking. This is but quite natural. But whether one adopts the path of Karma, Bhakti or Jnana one has to go through Sadhanas.

All Sadhanas are aiming directly or indirectly to obtain full control over the mind, for without it no Self-realisation is possible.

This can be attained through Dhyana or Meditation. Therefore this particular path which deals with Dhyana is called Raja Yoga (Kingly or best Yoga).

Patanjali Maharshi has beautifully explained in his Yoga Darshana that only when we can attain full restraint of all mental modifications Atma-Darshana can be had, for unless we are unable to do so, we will invariably identify ourselves with the Vrittis or modifications of our mind-stuff e.g. at one time we feel we are the body, at another we identify ourselves with the mind, feelings, emotions or the intellect. It is only when all the mental waves have subsided can we be our real Self,—the Purusha, the Atma.

Now, from what has been said, it would seem that the one and only thing to be done is to sit calmly and inhibit or suppress every thought as soon as it arises, or tries to arise, in our consciousness. Yea, it sounds quite logically, but why then has the Master of Yoga—Maharshi Patanjali developed a system of Ashtanga Yoga (of eight limbs)?

Swami Vivekananda says in his Raja Yoga on this point, that if one would attempt from the very beginning to suppress thoughts without any preliminary discipline or purification, he would simply fall asleep. This is due to lack of Sattva and preponderance of Tamas.

YAMA NIYAMA

It is evident that nothing worthwhile is gained by simply falling asleep i.e. from changing the state of consciousness to that of sub-consciousness. The

Yogi must be able to fully restrain his thoughts, yet retain complete awareness.

In order to see the bottom of a lake two things are necessary. Firstly: the surface of the water must be perfectly calm. Secondly: the water must be pure also. Similarly if we want to see the bottom or source of our mind—the Purusha or Atma, our mind-stuff—Chitta must be waveless, or thoughtless and pure. Therefore the need of moral training or ethical perfection. Sri Swami Sivanandaji lays especially great stress on ethical training. Says the Swami in "Yoga" pp. 10, 11: "All methods of Yoga have ethical training and moral perfection as their basis. The eradication of vices, the development of certain virtues forms the first step in the ladder of Yoga. Disciplining of your nature and formation of a steady and pure character through a set of right habits and regular daily observances is the next step. This is Yama and Niyama in Raja Yoga

The inherent restlessness of the mind constitutes the greatest problem to the follower of Yoga. By its very nature mind is ever outgoing. Also it is always unsteady. The resolute turning away from earthly attachments the determined effacement of the ego, deliberate stoppage of all inharmonious mental processes and the constant dwelling upon a single idea, all these methods require a firm control of the mind and the conscious direction of its powers towards the desired end."

There are five Yamas (restraints) and five Niyamas according to Patanjali Maharshi. Ahimsa

(non-injury) Satya (truthfulness) Asteya (abstinence from theft) Brahmacharya (continence) Aparigraha (abstinence from avariciousness) are the restraints.

The observances or Niyamas are Saucha (internal and external purity) Santosha (contentment) Tapas (mortification) Swadhyaya (self-study, repetition of Pranava and study of scriptures) and Ishwara-pranidhana (worship of God or self-surrender).

The need of moral perfection and the attainment of the thoughtless state by total suppression of all modifications of the mind being made clear, one still might ask, "But what about the intermediary steps prescribed in the Yoga Shastra? What is their *raison d'être*?"

Such questions might arise in a theoretical student only for an aspirant who actually tries to restrain his Vrittis or mental modifications knows their necessity and marvels at the deep psychological insight of the great Yogi Patanjali.

The mind in human beings is found according to Yoga psychology in five different states. These are: (1) Kshipta—ever restless, fluctuating and unstable, (2) Ktipta---inert, dull, Tamasic, (3) Vikshipta---an alternating state of restless and Tamasic inertia, (4) Ekagra -one-pointed, concentrated, and (5) Niruddha---fully restrained or totally controlled.

ASANA

It is evident that the first three states ordinarily found in human beings are of no avail to a Yogi.

He aims at one-pointedness or Ekagrata in order to achieve finally the state of Niruddha or absolute restraint of all mental modifications.

In order to achieve this one-pointedness, the Yogi tries negatively to avoid anything that might cause a distraction and positively to concentrate the mind on the Lakshya or point of concentration. These means are both physical and mental. It is well known that the movements of the body, whether voluntary or involuntary, might and do cause distraction of our attention. A man sitting on a chair generally changes his position after some minutes. To persons not accustomed to the oriental modes of sitting cross-legged, these postures might seem at first uneasy but those who have mastered them, will find that only by adopting these meditative Asanas one is able to sit perfectly still without the least bodily movements for a long time, even several hours at a stretch. Of course, even this has to be learned.

The Sadhaka who has mastered a Yogic posture can easily forget his body when he sits in meditation, for the body does not require any change of position.

There is still another point to be considered. In all meditative postures the basic requirement is that the head, neck and spine should be on a vertical line i.e. he must sit erect.

Why this injunction? The English surgeon James Braid has proved by his experiments with

hypnotic patients that postures influence greatly our thoughts and emotions.

Rajarshi Bala Sannyasi states in his "Raja Yoga and Nava Kalpa" that low and dark thoughts enter our minds when we sit with a bent spine. Therefore the need of keeping the spine erect.

PRANAYAMA

There is still another important point to be considered. During deep meditation there is a reversal of Pranic current from the senses, a thing of great importance to the Yogi. A bent spine renders a great obstacle to the reversing of these currents making a serious obstacle to the student of Dhayna Yoga. We just mentioned the vital or Pranic currents. If their flow in the sensory organs is strong, there is every likelihood that the sensory perceptions would be carried to the mind of the individual whether he desires it or not.

The method to acquire the control of the life by currents is called Pranayama by Yogins. In the Yoga-Vasishtha are enumerated several methods to achieve this Prana-control. (vide Stories From Yoga Vasishtha pp. 96-97 : By Swami Sivananda).

The Yogi gains mastery over Prana by adopting a course of regulated and controlled breathing. Prana causes breathing and by controlling our breath we can control our Prana.

In harmonious breath is another cause of mental fluctuation. Harmonious breathing means harmonious

thinking. There is a *Sambandha* between breathing and the operations and functioning of the mind. No doubt, it is easier to control the breath than the mind. Therefore the Yogi aims at mind-control by controlling and harmonising the breath.

The importance of Pranayama is beautifully explained by Siva in his Yoga pp. 20-21. Says Siva : "At numerous places in a huge workshop several apparatuses are at work—a boiler, a refrigerator, a whistle, a fan, an art lamp, and electromagnet etc. Suppose you wish to control the working of the several systems. The most effective way would be to go right to the central generating room of the workshop itself. Once you get at the main switch board of the entire workshop, you can regulate at will the initial motive force i.e. electricity, in this case. Though all the other aspects of this key-force electricity, namely heat (boiler) light (arc-lamp) motion (motor), sound (whistle) and power (electromagnet) can be easily controlled by you. As the Yogi progresses step by step in Yoga, he establishes control over successive centres of energy or Chakras located in the cerebro-spinal system. This gives him an absolute mastery over the force and elements related to the particular Chakra.

It is only now, having gained a control over body and Prana and established them in a condition of harmony and balance, that you can come to be on the threshold of the most important part of the Yoga Sadhana, namely concentration and meditation. In the latter stages all the Yogas converge

out the common point of meditation. Ultimately this-forms the master key to establish the final Union with the Infinite. The first four practices (Yama, Niyama, Asana and Pranayama) prepare the dual interdependent instruments of Body, Mind and make it fit for Dhyana. With Pratyahara begins Yoga proper.”

So far we have seen that the third and fourth limbs of Patanjali's Raja Yoga are bodily disciplines. For an uninitiated onlooker they might appear as purely physical, but we have just seen that they have intimate connection with our mind and are aiming at its control.

The famous Yogi Pavahari Baba said to Swami Vivekananda that one must put the same interest and energy in the means as for the goal itself.

It is only by adopting such a course that rapid success will be possible.

PRATYAHARA

The next or fifth step in the Ashtanga Yoga is very important. With it begins the internal Yoga. The last three steps viz., Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi are dealing directly with the concentration of the mind.

In order to successfully concentrate the mind on a definite object or point, one must be able at first to detach it from all objects of distraction, such as sound, sight, etc. Pranayama or the control of life-force in the sensory nerves accomplishes this difficult

task. It is therefore that Pranayama precedes the practice of Pratyahara. Nay, a real Pranayama automatically leads to it.

The word Pratyahara is derived from the words Prati—opposite, contrary, and Ahara—food. By food are meant the impressions we get from outside objects through the sense organs. In the practice of Pratyahara the senses are disconnected from their respective objects and connected with the mind within. In Pratyahara the outgoing tendencies of the senses are checked or curbed. The practice of Pratyahara gives us real strength of character. Without Pratyahara men are merely puppets in the hands of whims, blind instincts and bad habits.

Swami Vivekananda says that only after mastering Pratyahara we shall make a real step towards our freedom.

Swami Abhavananda Saraswati eulogises Pratyahara in the following words: “It is a great penance to restrain the mind and all the senses. His lustre, who is master of this penance spreads far and wide. His misery is destroyed . . . In truth the soul alone is the centre of the energies. How can he be miser. But whatever slavery existed in him due to the slavery of the senses, has been removed by the Pratyahara. When he experiences this, he gets immediate entrance in Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi after that and the way to see the soul becomes devoid of thorns. (vide Sapta Prashnottara Mala). Says Siva on this point : Just as the sun collects all

its myriad rays and plunges beyond the horizon, the practitioner withdraws his mind from all his external senses into himself, like an octopus retracting its tentacles. It is a scientific centrifugal movement prior to the purposeful focusing of the full mind which concentration implies. This can be likened to the circumference of a circle contracting into the centre. This practice renders the tendency of your nature 'inflowing' or Antarmukha. The individual gradually becomes an unmoved, undisturbed witness to the play of outer phenomena. Sense-objects can neither attract nor repel him now. In the practice of Pratyahara you will have to drag the outgoing senses again and again from the sensual objects and fix the mind on your Lakshya or the point, just as the cart-driver drags the impetuous bulls and fixes them to the yoke. You must drag the senses gently. Some aspirants draw them violently. That is the reason why they experience a little headache occasionally.

Pratyahara is a trying discipline indeed. It is disgusting in the beginning, but later on it becomes very interesting. You will feel inner strength. It demands considerable patience and perseverance. It will give you tremendous power. You will develop immense will-power. During the course of practice, the senses will run again and again like a wild bull towards objects. You will have to withdraw them again and again and fix it on the Lakshya or point. That Yogi who is well established in Pratyahara can meditate quite calmly even in the

battle-field where countless machine-guns roar in a continuous stream.

You should practise withdrawal from the Indriyas one by one. Deal with the most turbulent senses first. Practise Pratyahara of that particular sense to start with. Then you can take another Indriya. If you try to manipulate all the Indriyas at a time, you will gain no success. The task will be an uphill work. You will feel exhausted.

ITS VALUE TO-DAY

Pratyahara is a unique and incalculable blessing to the individual to-day. Life to-day is a continuous bustle and feverish hurry. It is filled with countless distractions. Economic distress, anxiety and insecurity have come to prevail as permanent conditions everywhere. Man lives perpetually in a state of nervous strain and tension. This has stunted the growth of budding generations. The chief problem for the medical profession has become neurasthenia and neurosis. The thousand and one distractions of modern life have made man a stranger to serenity and poise. It is calmness that makes life worth living. Without it a man's greatest strength fails him in time of stress. Pratyahara enables you to overcome the impact of external tumult and retain a sane sense of values even amidst the complex whirl of life to-day.

The most successful and the greatest leaders of men who have made history, had this power of

Pratyahara developed in them. Knowingly or unknowingly they are masters of this stage of Yoga. The oft quoted example of Napoleon is quite in point. In the thick of battle, he could withdraw completely into himself and snatch a short period of sleep sitting astride his charger. The great Gladstone had this capacity. He could relax perfectly at will and thus retained his youthful spirits and health to the very end. Pratyahara brings mental and physical wear and tear to a minimum." ('Yoga' by Swami Sivananda pp. 20-23).

DHARANA

The next step is Dharana or concentration. Maharshi Patanjali gives the following definition: "Deshanbandhaschittasya dharana," which means: "Concentration is the fixing of the mind on one place (object or idea).

Siva has beautifully elucidated this point in his "Yoga" pp. 23-24 in the following way: "Having checked all other operations of the mind, it is now brought to bear upon a single point. The tremendous power that any force develops when collected and directed through a given point is fully recognised. This is seen in the rush of the water at the sluices of dams, the impelling power of steam from a railway boiler. As the sunlight when passed through a lens emerges as a single fiery ray of intense power, the whole mind attains a single-pointedness through Dharana. Now experience has shown that interest

and attention of the mind is attracted by three distinct means viz sound, vision (physical or mental) imagination or idea. The Yogi enters into deep meditation by concentrating his mind upon the mystic inner sound of Pranava. This is Anahata Nada which becomes audible when the inner sheaths are perfectly purified and harmony established or again a Mantra is repeated in a harmonious tone, and the mind is concentrated on the continuous unbroken sound. A concrete form of any aspect of the deity or the syllable OM is chosen for fixing the mind. The rational Vedantic type fills the mind with some sublime idea or formula upon which the mind is made to dwell intensely and continuously." Siva however, warns the student not to build castles in the air during the Sadhana.

Says Siva: "Manorajya (building castles in the air) is not concentration. It is wild jumping of the mind in the air. Do not mistake Manorajya for concentration or meditation. Check this habit of the mind through introspection and Self-analysis. Swami Sivananda has given the following important instructions on Dharana in his Raja Yoga pp. 258-260:

(1) "Purify the mind first through the practice of Yama and Niyama. Then take to the practice of Dharana. Concentration without purity is of no use. There are some occultists who have concentration. But they do not have good character. This is the reason why they do not make any progress in the

spiritual path. Ethical perfection is of paramount importance.

(2) A man whose mind is filled with passion and all sorts of fantastic desires can hardly concentrate on any object even for a second. His mind will be jumping like a monkey.

(3) There can be no concentration without something upon which the mind may rest. The mind can be fixed easily on a pleasing object such as Jasmine flower, mango or a loving friend. It is very difficult in the beginning to fix the mind on any object which it dislikes.

(4) Practise concentration till the mind is well-established on the object of concentration. When the mind runs away from the object of concentration bring it back again to the object.

(5) It is very difficult to practise concentration when one is very hungry and when one is suffering from acute disease.

(6) Train the mind in concentrating on various objects gross and subtle of various sizes, big, medium and small. In course of time a strong habit of concentration will be formed. The moment you sit for concentration the mood will come at once, quite easily.

(7) For a neophyte the practice of concentration is disgusting, and tiring.

He has to cut new grooves in the mind and the brain. After some time, say two or three months'

(regular practice), he gets great interest. He enjoys a new kind of happiness. He becomes restless if he fails to enjoy this new kind of happiness one day. Concentration is the only way to get rid of worldly miseries and tribulations. You have taken this physical body only to achieve concentration and through concentration to realise the Self.

Patanjali Maharshi has given in his Yoga Sutras various kinds of concentration in order to suit various temperaments e.g.: Dharana on sense-perception, Meditation on the sorrowless condition of the mind or the luminous mind, Dharana on the desireless mind, Dharana on the knowledge of dream and sound sleep etc. And finally Maharshi Patanjali says: Yathabhimatadhyana or by meditating on one's own chosen object."

Siva gives the following commentary on this Sutra: Meditate on anything that appeals to you as good or anything which the mind likes best. Having suggested so many methods in the above Sutras for concentration, and meditation, Patanjali Maharshi in the end says; "Concentrate on any object that appeals to you much.'; You can select any pleasant object that brings in concentration of the mind easily. This is the meaning of this Sutra.

Select any gross object that the mind likes such as pencil, apple, rose, chair etc. and concentrate on it. The mind should be trained to concentrate on gross forms and objects in the beginning period of Sadhana and then gradually it can concentrate on

subtle objects. After a regular practice on these, the mind becomes fit for concentration on internal Chakras and abstract ideas. Retire into a solitary place. Sit in a steady posture. Close your eyes. Avoid all distractions. Then you will have wonderful concentration. When you concentrate on one object, do not think of any other object. (vide Swami Sivananda : Raja Yoga" pp. 251-252)

Deep concentration leads to Dhyana just as perfected Meditation culminates into Samadhi. It is difficult to say where Dharana ceases and Dhyana starts, or where Dhyana ends and Samadhi begins.

In Dharana or concentration an effort is involved in order to focus the divergent rays of the mind on a point and hold them steadily fixed on it. The word concentration means gathering to a centre, and the Sanskrit word Dharana is derived from the root "to build". So both these words point out two important psychological features of this important Yogic process. However the word 'gather' can be more appropriately applied to "Pratyahara", for the characteristic feature of Dharana is that the attention is steadfastly held on the Lakshya.

The undisciplined mind does not like this training or drill. The mind utilises every possibility to slip away from the firm grip of the conscious will. It must be brought back as soon as one notices that it has left the chosen point. This, however, should not be done excitedly or violently but rather calmly

and peacefully. One need not wonder that the mind wanders or slips away often. The mind is by its very nature restless like a monkey and unsteady like mercury. Then again we have allowed it every freedom and have spoiled it thereby. No wonder that it does not like to behave according to our behest.

One need not become impatient in withdrawing the mind back from its wanderings and fix it again and over again on the Lakshya. It is clear that this demands constant effort and great patience on the side of the Sadhaka.

In the next stage i.e. in Dhyana the effort is less. Owing to constant systematic practice coupled with ethical perfection the mind's wanderings become less and less and ultimately cease entirely. The thoughts flow now like an unbroken stream of oil. This is the simile given in the Shastras for Meditation or Dhyana.

The definition of Patanjali Maharshi in his Yoga Darshana follows: "Tatra Pratyekatanata Dhyanam---A continuous flow of perception (of thought) is Dhyana (vide Yoga Sutra Ch. III -- V. 2)

Siva gives the following comment on this Sutra : "There is continuous current in the mind of one object like the flow of water in a river (Pravaha). There is only one Vritti in the mind. It is Ekarupa Vritti Pravaha. The Meditation should be done at the appointed time daily. Then the meditative mood will come by itself without any effort. Sit also in

the same place daily for meditation. Meditation on God must become habitual."

SIVA'S INSTRUCTIONS ON DHYANA

(1) Meditation is doubtless difficult. It will be difficult, nay indeed impossible for a beginner to take to subtle meditation all at once. There must be graduated practices and the mind must be rendered very subtle for higher practices of concentration and meditation. Just as the archer first aims at gross things, target etc., and then takes to subtle points, so also the student of Yoga should do gross concentration to start with, and then take to subtle concentration-practices. There must be a gradual ascent in the successive stages of Yoga. But Yoga Bhrashtas like Jnana Deva or Sadasiva Brahman of Karur, Trichinopoly, Trilinga Swami and others can at once take to higher stages. Such persons are very, very rare indeed.

(2) The object of meditation in the beginning must be Personal God, the body of Virat or the four armed Maha Vishnu, or the flute-bearer Lord Krishna or Rama or any other object. Later on, meditation can be practised on Impersonal God. In Savitarka meditation you will have a comprehensive understanding and knowledge of the objects their excellences and defects, all the features, present, past and future, and also those near and remote, even those unheard of or unthought of. The whole knowledge of the objects and elements will be revealed to

you. The name Sampatti is given to the four experiences collectively, Savitarka, Savichara, Sananada and Asmita. Asmita Amadhi culminates in Dharmamegha Samadhi. Then comes absolute dispassion for him. This brings him Asamprajanta Samadhi.

(3) Why do you read many books? It is of no use. The great book is with your heart. Open the pages of this inexhaustible book the source for all knowledge. You will know everything. What is that knowledge of Brahman or the Source or Self. Close your eyes. Withdraw the senses. Merge deep in the Supreme Soul, the Light of lights, the Sun of suns. Complete knowledge will be revealed to you. You will have direct intuitional knowledge and Divine wisdom by direct perception. All doubts will vanish now. All mental torments will disappear. All hot-discussions, heated debates will terminate now. Peace and Jnana alone will remain.

(4) Forget the body. Forget the surroundings. Forget the friends and relatives. Forgetting these is the highest Sadhana. It helps meditation a great deal. By remembering God you can forget all these things. Merge within by practising deep, silent meditation. Taste the spiritual consciousness by withdrawing the mind from the sensual objects and fixing it on the object of meditation. This will lead you to Samadhi, the highest goal of Yogins.

(5) You will have to note carefully whether you remain stationary in the spiritual path even after many years of meditation or whether you are progressing.

Some times you may even retrograde or fall downwards also if you are not vigilant and careful, if your Vairagya wanes and if you are slack in meditation. Reaction may set in. Some practise meditation for a period of 15 years and yet they have not made any spiritual progress. Why? This is due to lack of earnestness, Vairagya, keen longing for liberation and intense constant Sadhana. Just as water leaks out into the rat holes in the agricultural fields so also energy is wasted in wrong channels through Raga and undercurrent lurking, subtle desires. Suppressed desires also will manifest and harass you. Unconsciously you will become a victim to those desires. (Vide "Raja Yoga" by Swami Sivananda). pp. 327-330)

OBSTACLES IN MEDITATION

Meditation is no doubt a difficult process. It is the most important Sadhana in Raja Yoga. The Sadhaka has to encounter various obstacles. I will mention only a few of them. Depression, doubt and fear are some of the main obstacles even for an advanced student. They should be removed by Vichara and Satsanga. Says Siva in his Samadhi Yoga p. 240; "Sometimes depression will come and trouble you. The mind will revolt. The Indriyas will pull your legs. The undercurrent of Vasanas will gush to the surface of the mind and torment you. Sensuous thoughts will agitate the mind and try to overwhelm you. Be bold. Stand adamant. Face these passing shocks. Keep your mind cool. Do not identify your-

self with these obstacles. Increase your period of Japa and meditation."

A weak aspirant though he may be strong in concentration is overcome by idleness. But a strong aspirant, if he is weak in concentration is overpowered by Vikshepa or tossing of mind. Concentration and energy should therefore be well-balanced.

The Vasanas are very powerful. The senses and mind are very turbulent and impetuous. Again and again the battle must be fought and won. That is the reason why the spiritual path is called the razor path in Kathopanishad. There is no difficulty for a man of strong determination and iron-will even in the razor path. Strength comes from within at every step.

Success in Yoga is possible only if the aspirant practises profound and constant meditation. (Ibid. p. 241).

EXPERIENCES IN MEDITATION

Siva often encourages his disciples to narrate their spiritual experiences. So we come across them in some books and from time to time in the Divine Life magazine also. But I have no doubt the reader will be more interested in the experiences of the Master himself, so I quote some as found in Siva's "Samadhi Yoga". Another book replete with mystic experiences is Swamiji's "Kundalini Yoga".

Says Siva: "When you enter into deep meditation you will have no consciousness of your body or

surroundings. You will have equanimity of mind. You will not hear any sounds. There will be stoppage of upgoing and down-going sensations. The consciousness of egoism will also gradually vanish. You will experience inexplicable joy and indescribable happiness. Gradually reasoning and reflection also will cease.

When you enter the silence through deep meditation, the world outside and all your troubles will drop away. You will enjoy supreme peace. In this silence is undecaying bliss. In this silence is real strength and joy.

When you practise rigorous meditation, Kevala Kumbhaka or natural retention of breath without Purak (inhalation) and Rechak (exhalation) will come by itself. When Kevala Kumbhaka comes you will enjoy immense peace and you will have one-pointed mind.

During meditation you will see small pin points of light. These will become as big as the sun if you continue your practice. You will behold luminous divine forms of Krishna, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Kaali, Ganesh, Ram and others. You will see beautiful scenes of gardens and buildings. When you repeat Gayatri Mantra or any other Mantra, you will feel a spiritual current going to the anus region or Muladhara Chakra. Then the currents will go to the head also. You will feel great joy. Your heart will be filled with intense love. You will feel that a powerful spiritual current is going up along the spine during meditation.

You will feel that will-power is radiating from you. Your consciousness will be deeper now. Thoughts of God will start the spiritual currents in the body. Do not check these currents. If heat is produced in the head, apply butter, Amala oil, or Brahmi oil. Take cold bath three times during summer. Take butter and sugar-candy.

Sometimes you will feel the presence of your Ishtam near you. The image will begin to appear as living when you practise regular meditation. While meditating with closed eyes on the image placed in your heart, you will find that the image is becoming more and more luminous. Even with open eyes, you will see a bright sun or moon. You will see lights of different colours.

You will experience a great upward pull on the anus and the lower end of the spine. Sometimes you will feel great tingling sensation at the lower end of the spine. You will feel as though some great change in your system will happen soon.

In dream you will feel that you are trying to come out of your body. You will feel great pressure at the end of the spine.

When you meditate with closed eyes, you will see in your body two luminous strings in which are placed luminous lotuses at intervals and the strings passed through the image of your Ishtam seated in one of these lotuses in the region of the heart.

Continue your meditation. You will feel that your anus and a spot in the top of the head are connected by these strings. You may feel that you will lose your physical consciousness. Be not afraid. Be bold and courageous. You will have cosmic vision. Do not open your eyes now. You will come back to normal consciousness.

Pure emotions will rise in your heart. You will begin to love every creature. You will feel that the whole world is nothing but pure consciousness. This rare experience will give you great bliss. You will feel that the Lord is sporting in all things as this pure consciousness.

You will have Sakara realisation and Bhava-Samadhi at the Anahata Chakra. You will experience Nirvikalpa Samadhi at Sahasrara." (Vide, "Samadhi Yoga" by Swami Sivananda pp. 235-236).

SAMADHI

The eighth and last step in the ascending ladder of Yoga Sadhana is Samadhi.

Patanjali Maharshi defines Samadhi in his Yoga Darshana pada III Sutra 3 in the following words: Tadeva Arthamatranirbhasam Svarupashunyamiva Samadhi," which means: "The same Dhyana is Samadhi when it shines with the object alone, as it were, devoid of itself."

Siva gives the following comment on this Sutra: "The thinker and thought, the meditator and the

meditated become one. The mind assumes or becomes the Dhyeyarupa. The separate notions "contemplation" and "contemplated" and the "contemplator" vanish. In the state of Samadhi the aspirant is not conscious of any external or internal objects. Just as the arrow-maker, having his mind engrossed in the arrow, knew not the king passing by his side, so also the Yogi knows not anything when he is deep in his meditation (vide: Raja Yoga by Swami Sivananda pp. 335-336). The difference between Meditation and Samadhi is this; in the former there is Triputi or a triad of meditator, the object of meditation and the process of meditation whereas in Samadhi there is only one big wave in the ocean of Chitta. The meditator is so engrossed in his meditation that he is solely aware of the object of his contemplation. This is, however, the lower kind of Samadhi. It is termed Samprajnata Samadhi. It is like a big flame devouring all sparks and little tongues of fire, or a huge wave swallowing all smaller ones. There is only one Vritti in the mind-lake.

In the highest or Asamprajnata Samadhi even this last wave dies, and what remains is the pure consciousness, or the immaculate resplendent Purusha or Soul. In this highest Samadhi all seeds of Samskaras are burnt in toto.

The way to the Asamprajnata Samadhi goes through the Samprajnata Samadhi. This latter has also several divisions viz., Savitarka, Nirvitarka,

Savichara, Nirvichara, Sananda and Asmita Samadhi.

Savitarka Samadhi is Samadhi with reasoning. In Savitarka Samadhi concentration is practised on gross objects and their nature in relation to time and space. This is a gross form of Samadhi. When the Yogi meditates on the elements as they are by taking them out of time and space, then it is called Nirvitarka Samadhi or Samadhi without questioning or argumentation.

If the Yogi meditates on the subtle Tanmatras and their nature in relation to time and space it is Savichara Samadhi with deliberation or discrimination. This is subtle Samadhi. It is subtler than Savitarka and Nirvitarka Samadhis. Tanmatras are the root-elements or Sukshma Bhutas.

The Yogi will get knowledge of the Tanmatras.

Says Siva: "There is a mysterious power, Achintya Sakti in meditation. Although ordinary meditation is possible only in ways already heard and thought of, yet even such things as have not been heard or thought of may be directly cognised by the force of meditation." (Vide Samadhi Yoga p. 397).

"If you meditate on the subtle Tanmatras by taking them out of time and space, by thinking as they are, it will constitute Nirvichara Samadhi (without deliberation or discrimination). As there is pure Sattva only in the mind owing to the

eradication of Rajas and Tamas, the Yogi enjoys internal peace or contentment (Adhyatmic Prasada) and subjective luminosity. (Ibid).

When the Yogi gives up the gross and subtle elements and meditates on the Sattvic mind itself then this is termed Sananda Samadhi as it gives the perception of intense joy. The Yogi meditates in this form of Samadhi on the mind as devoid of Rajas and Tamas.

In the Asmita Samadhi the self knows the Self. It bestows the knowledge of the subject of experiences. The Sattvic state of the ego, only remains. The Yogi can think himself now as without his gross body. He feels that he has a fine body. This Samadhi takes the Yogi to the root of experiences and shows the way to freedom.

The Yogi feels, "I am other than the body." He experiences that the gross, subtle and joyous Samadhis are not the highest Samadhis. He finds defects in them also and gets disgusted with them. He proceeds further and practises Asmita Samadhi. He experiences Self-consciousness (Asmita). He experiences a feeling of "enough" and develops dispassion in its highest form (Para Vairagya). This finally leads to development of Asamprajnata Samadhi." (Vide Samadhi Yoga by Swami Sivananda p. 298).

The highest stage of Samadhi is called Asamprajnata, Nirbeeja or Nirvikalpa Samadhi. It is brought about by the constant practice of the cessation of

all mental modifications. The method consists in making the mind blank. It is the practice of thoughtlessness. It is the effacement of thought.

Only after having achieved good results in Samprajnata Samadhi can the Sadhaka hope to get success in Asamprajnata Samadhi.

All will-power is required and the greatest vigilance too. All thoughts must be nipped in the bud, they must be destroyed on the instant of their appearance. The Sadhaka must be very vigilant, he must guard himself against sleep and oblivion also.

But this supreme restraint is also a kind of Vritti. When, however even this last Vritti dies or melts away, the Yogi reaches the state of pure consciousness devoid of all thoughts.

Siva explains the state of Asmaprajnata Samadhi in his Raja Yoga in the following words: "This is the highest Asamprajnata Samadhi which brings Kaivalya or Independence. Here, there is no Alambana for the mind. It is rendered perfectly steady. All Samskaras are fried up.

There is no Triputi here. This is not Laya state or deep sleep. There is perfect awareness. This is a stage where a Yogi gets the highest knowledge. There is Prajna or pure consciousness. This is a state like ocean without waves. The only Sadhana for attaining this state is Para Vairagya. Rajas and Tamas are completely destroyed. When there is Ekagrata, Samprajnata Samadhi is possible.

Asamprajnata Samadhi is possible when there is perfect Nirodha of mind. Para Vairagya brings complete rest to the mind. All Vrittis stop. This is the highest end of Raja Yoga which gives freedom.

In Samprajnata Samadhi there is only a partial inhibition of mental functions. Partial inhibition of the mental functions cannot totally uproot the seeds of rebirth. It cannot lead to final liberation wherein the seer rests in his own native, pristine, Divine glory. Asamprajnata Samadhi destroys the impressions of all antecedent mental functions, and even goes so far as to tide over even Prarabdha. A Yogi has no Prarabdha at all. The mind having no object to grasp, becomes as it were, non-existent. This is Nirbeeja or Niralambana Samadhi.

Chapter Six

YOGABHYASA AND ABHYASA KRAMA

Siva's distinctive feature is his practicality. Therefore it is but proper to say a few words about the Yogic Sadhanas as advocated by him.

Sri Aurabindo Ghose said that the idea of testing (a disciple) is an unhealthy one. I do not know whether Siva too has expressed similar ideas somewhere in his innumerable works, but one thing is certain, that Siva is the very embodiment of this thought. Siva has no time to wait for a decade of years to ascertain whether the aspirant is worthy of his Deeksha or not. His is not the policy to impart spiritual instructions in homeopathic doses as is the case with many other teachers.

But just on the contrary, Siva's heart is yearning to impart the whole of his spiritual treasure to every aspirant who approaches him. He does not classify them in the worthy and unworthy ones. When some onlooker makes objections to this liberal distribution

of the sacred knowledge, Siva simply replies: "Yes, I am the Guru of thieves and rogues."

The objector invariably stands disarmed and helpless to raise any further argument against this most loving and benevolent Guru. Especially the European students of Yoga, those who know the Swami now and those who will be acquainted with him in the near future, are and will be grateful for his ever-ready spiritual help, guidance and unrestricted share of Adhyatmic knowledge.

Siva wants to spiritualise the world quickly, and it is well known that he has evolved a system of Sadhanas by following which the Yogic aspirant can attain Self-realisation quickly.

If we compare the time-tables in Siva's several books, we find some differences. This might puzzle a beginner in Yoga who eagerly devours the many books on Yoga written by the Swami. The reason is not far to seek. Siva has written several books on similar topics having in view at a particular time different capacities of various types of Sadhakas.

This is especially evident if we study the Swami's "Practical Lessons in Yoga." There we find three time-tables viz., for the beginner, for the advanced student and for the whole-timed Sadhaka. These are given here below: DAILY ROUTINE FOR ASPIRANTS :

1. ELEMENTARY COURSE

Meditation	...	...	1	hr.
(Morning)	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	hr.

(Evening)	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	hr.
Study	...	...	1	hr.
Asanas	...	...	15	min.
Sirshasana	...	...	3	min.
Sarvangasana	...	...	3	min.
Matsyasana	...	...	2	min.
Bhujangasana	...	...	2	min.
Salabhasana	...	...	1	min.
Dhanurasana	...	...	1	min.
Uddiyana	...	...	1	min.
Relaxation	...	...	2	min.
Pranayama	...	...	15	min.
(Puraka-Kumbhaka)	...	...	...	...
Rechaka	...	...	10	min.
Bhastrika	...	...	2	min.
Sitali	...	...	2	min.
Relaxation	...	...	1	min.
Selfless Service	...	...	1	hr.
Total Time	...	...	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	hrs.

2. INTERMEDIATE COURSE

Meditation	...	...	2	hrs.
(Morning)	...	...	1	hr.
(Evening)	...	...	1	hr.
Study	...	...	2	hrs.
Asanas	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	hr.
Sirshasana	...	...	5	min.
Sarvangasana	...	...	5	min.
Matsyasana	...	...	3	min.
Bhujangasana	...	...	3	min.
Salabhasana	...	...	2	min.

Dhanurasana	...	...	2	min.
Mayurasana	...	...	2	min.
Paschimottanasana	...	...	3	min.
Uddiyana	...	...	2	min.
Nauli	...	...	1	min.
Relaxation	...	...	2	min.
Pranayama	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	hr.
(Puraka-Kumbhaka)	...	...
Reckaka	...	...	20	min.
Kapalabhati	...	...	2	min.
Sitali	...	...	3	min.
Bhastrika	...	...	3	min.
Relaxation	...	...	2	min.
Selfless Service	...	...	1	hr.
Total Time			6	hrs.

3. ADVANCED COURSE

Meditation	...	...	6	hrs.
(Morning)	...	...	2	hrs.
(Evening)	...	...	2	hrs.
(Night)	...	...	2	hrs.
Study	...	...	3	hrs.
Asanas	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$	hr.
Sirshasana	...	...	3	min.
Sarvangasana	...	...	3	min.
Bhujangasana	...	...	3	min.
Salabhasana	...	...	3	min.
Dhanurasana	...	...	3	min.
Mayurasana	...	...	3	min.
Paschimottanasana	...	...	3	min.
Uddiyana	...	...

Nauli	...	...	3	min.
Pranayama	...	...	1	hr.
(Puraka-Kumbhaka)	...	...
Rechaka	...	...	45	min.
Kapalabhati	...	...	3	min.
Sitkari	...	...	2	min.
Sitali	...	...	2	min.
Bhastrika	...	...	3	min.
Relaxation	...	...	5	min.
Selfless Service	...	...	3	hrs.
Total Time			13 $\frac{1}{2}$	hrs.

In the recently published Spiritual Lessons (the Diamond Jubilee Edition 1947) we find the following order of doing Asanas, Pranayams etc.

ABHYASA KRAMA

A1. Garudasana	...	...	1	min.
2. admasana	...	...	5	mins.
3. addhapadmasan	...	...	3	min.
4. iddhasan	...	...	5	min.
5. Ardha Matsyendrasan	...	...	2	min.
6. Bhujangasan	...	...	3	min.
7. Salabhasan	...	...	3	min.
8. Dhanurasan	...	...	2	min.
9. Pashchimottanasan	...	...	3	min.
10. Mayurasan	...	...	1	min.
11. Sarvangasan	...	...	3	min.
12. Halasan	...	...	2	min.
13. Matsyasan	...	...	2	min.
14. Sirshasan	...	...	10	min.
B1. Maha Mudra	...	...	12	min.

2. Yoga Mudra	...	...	2 min.
C1. Mula Bandha	}	...	6 min.
2. Jalandhara Bandha			
3. Uddiyana Bandha			
D1. Ujjayi Pranayama	...	...	2 min.
2. Sitkari Pranayama	...	...	3 min.
3. Sitali Pranayama	...	...	5 min.
4. Bhastrika Pranayama	...	...	5 min.
5. Sukha Purvaka Pranayama	...	...	10 min.
E Savasana	...	...	5 min.

1 hour 25 minutes.

And still another way of doing Yogic exercises and which I hope will be best suited to Western students of Yoga is to be found on p. 439 of "Philosophy and Teachings" by Swami Sivananda.

ABHYASA KRAMA

(For Daily Practice)

ASANAS	Hr.	Mts.
Sirshasan	0	10
Sarvangasan or Halasan	0	5
Matsyasan	0	2
Bhujangasan or Salabh or Dhanurasan	0	3
Paschimottanasan	0	3
Mayurasana and Ardha Matsyendrasan	0	3
Garudasan and Baddha Padmasan	0	2
MUDRAS :		
Maha Mudra or Yoga Mudra	0	2

JAPA :

Repetition of the Name of the Lord
either Guru Mantra or Ishta Devata 0 30

MEDITATION :

Either Saguna or Nirguna Meditation 0 30
PRANAYAMA Exercise No. I and II (vide pages of
"Science of Pranayama"

	or		
Sukh Purvak Pranayama	...	0	30
		Total	2 0

If we compare these schemes we note that in some of them Sirshasana stands first and again we find it as the last item of Asanas. There are different views in Yoga treatises regarding the places of Sirshasana. Hatha Yogic texts advocate it to be the last posture in the course of Asana practice. Some other Yogins insist it to practise as the first one in the order of Abhyasa Krama. They argue as follows : during the practice of various postures in the blood accumulate toxins, which are carried to the brain during the practice of Sirshasana if it is practised as the last exercise; on the other hand if it is practised in the beginning of Abhyasa, the brain gets abundant supply of fresh blood.

If, however, meditation is practised after Asanas, Sirshasana may be practised with great benefit as the last item in Asana Yoga, for Sirshasana renders the mind fit for Dhyana by toning up the brain and nervous system. May be this and several other

reasons are the causes why Hatha Yogins insist to put it as the last Asana in the course of Asana Yoga.

Matsyasana should follow Sarvangasana. This is the general rule. In one time table we find it following Halasana. But if we note carefully we will see that the Halasana is just preceded by Sarvangasana. The reason is this: Halasana may be regarded as a modification of Sarvangasana and it may be done without any interruption after Sarvangasana.

Sirsh, Sarvang and Paschimattanasana are the most important Asanas for health. Sirshasana is the King of Asanas according to some authorities, while other great Yogins are of the opinion that Sarvangasana is the most beneficent of all Yogic Asanas.

This shows that both these Asanas are of great importance for the physical well-being.

If one is very busy these two Asanas together with Paschimottanasana will keep him quite fit. However, it would be desirable to add Bhujang, Dhanur and Salabhasana, either one of them or all three, and Ardha-Matsyendrasana also.

Matsyendrasana though having a great spiritual and physiological value is a difficult posture; therefore Siva and other Yogic Gurus have introduced the Ardha (half) Matsyendrasana, whose physiological benefits are akin to those of the full or Purna Matsyendrasana. As for Bandhas Siva stresses mainly Uddiyana Bandha, which is highly eulogised in Hatha

Yogic text books as specially capable of rousing the dormant spiritual power (Kundalini Shakti.)

Its physiological benefits are equally great especially as an abdominal exercise, and a potent weapon to protect Brahmacharya. Siva also has greatly praised the simultaneous practice of three Bandhas viz. Jalandhara, Mula and Uddiyana Bandha.

It can be practised either separately or during Pranayama. Mula-bandha may be maintained throughout the Sadhana period of Pranayama, Jalandhara is done during Kumbhaka and Uddiyana Bandha at the end of Kumbhaka and beginning of Rechaka.

Bhandhatraya helps to rouse the sleeping Shakti and cures a lot of abdominal and intestinal troubles.

As for Mudras Siva generally advocates Mahamudra and Yoga Mudra.

Their spiritual and therapeutical effects are similar. The word Maha means great and it indicates that this Mudra has a great spiritual value in rousing the coiled serpent power. Its physiological merits are no less. A person practising it regularly for a very long time becomes immune to deadly poison, a fact verified by recent observations. Though its therapeutical values are rather extraordinary, it is a strenuous exercise and cannot at once be prescribed to every ailing man.

More important than Asanas is Pranayama. Success in Pranayama, especially the spiritual benefits, is obtained by coupling them with Bandhas and

Mudras. Success in Pranayama comes only to an assiduous student who is very regular in this kind of Sadhana. Irregularity in doing Pranayamic exercises may involve some troubles. Also a diligent student of Pranayama, especially if he practises long and protracted Kumbhakas, should observe the vow of Brahmacharya i. e. lead a continent life. A deviation from this rule may lead at times to unpleasant consequences. This is because the life-force is drawn in two diametrically opposite directions.

A man who is unable to control his sex-instinct may practise Pranayama avoiding long Kumbhakas. By following such course he need not fear anything. Also he can stress more meditation. But we need not forget that Pranayama is one of the most potent weapons to combat Kama (lust, sex-desires) and a great help to a sincere Sadhaka in his being established in perfect Brahmacharya. Sukh Purvak and Bhastrika Pranayamas can be highly recommended in this respect.

A few notes on the Sadhana from Siva's "Philosophy and Teachings" will not be out of place here : The general order of doing Kriyas is : first do all Asanas, then Mudras, then Pranayama and then Dhyana. Since the early morning time is suitable for meditation, you can follow this order : Japa, Meditation, Asanas, Mudras and then Pranayama. This is a better way. You can follow the order that which is suitable to you. After doing Asanas, take rest for five minutes and then begin Pranayama.

Bear always in mind that one should find exhilaration of spirits and soothing of nerves when he finishes Kriyas. He should never experience the feeling of fatigue. Practising less regularly every day is better than doing much for a day till one gets tired and leaving the practice for many days.

Regularity in the practice is an important factor for the attainment of success and full benefits.

Wholetimed Sadhaks can do Sirshasan for an hour and Sarvangasana for half an hour. They can spend one or two hours for the practice of Asanas and Pranayama. After all the practices are over, wait for 10 or 15 minutes and then have some milk, tea or fruits juice or some light tiffin. Do not wait for longer time. This rule must be observed by those who do the Kriyas for longer time.

Use your commonsense, discretion, discernment, discrimination, all throughout the practice. You can make slight alterations here and there, in timing and order to suit your Swabhava (nature). Instinct will speak aloud from within and guide you. Hear the voice and follow.

Those who have enough leisure at their disposal can take full course daily every morning from 4 to 6. It is a matter of two hours only. Those who are busy and bring forth some lame excuses or other can practise Japa, Meditation, Sirshasan, Sarvangasan, Matsyasan and Sukh-Purvak Pranayama. They are all very important."

We have made a cursory review of the great Swami's teachings pertaining to practical Yoga Sadhanas. Siva is famous as a Guru whose method of training gives speedy success in Self-realisation. After noting the various schemes of Yogabhyasa as advocated by Sri Siva, one might ask where lies the secret of his method, which accounts for the rapid results. At the first glance on these schemes we might not find in them anything exceptional, or extraordinary.

But if we compare these various schemes carefully we note the pliability in them. We note the adaptability to the needs of a particular Sadhaka, to his spiritual capacity and also to the time which is at his disposal (whole-timed or busy). So this adaptability i. e. imparting individual training according to one's capacities is one of the secrets of attaining results quickly.

The second is all sided training. In all schemes we note items of Selfless service (Karma Yoga), Japa and Meditation (Bhakti and Raja Yoga), Asanas and Pranayam (Hatha Yoga) Self-analysis and Vichar (Jnana Yoga). All these methods are blended into one, making an integral system of Self-culture. It is like the Yoga of Bhagavan Sri Krishna. Lord Krishna too speaks in His Gita of only One Yoga, even though He seemingly teaches various kinds of Yoga as the need of a particular type predominates, at a given moment. So it is with Siva also.

Next is what a devoted disciple so aptly called the Siva's Trisul.

Just as Lord Siva had His Trisul for destroying the Asuras, so our Siva has his Trisul for destroying the Asuras who occupy the inner citadel of our minds and present our souls in marching towards God. This Trisul consists of Daily Programme, Resolves Form and Spiritual Diary.

That a busy student needs a Daily Programme goes without saying. The secret of Siva's ability to cope with his multifarious works lies in his adhering to a Daily programme.

But even a whole-timed Sadhaka stands in need of a Daily Programme, for otherwise he will find at the close of the day that he has done little or nothing substantial at all, his time being used in various less important and quite unimportant engagements. So we should chalk out a Daily programme according to our requirements and circumstances and stick to it tenaciously.

The second is the "Resolves Form." Often times after hearing a good lecture or reading an inspiring book or getting a letter from our spiritual guide or Guru we feel an urge to make some changes in our mode of living or behaviour. We take a resolve to act accordingly and we stick to this resolve for some time also.

But as the fire of determination is not fed by new fuel it goes swiftly out and our efforts relax and cease quite unnoticed. It is only after a lapse of time that we disclose that our efforts were but brief. This is because our minds were attracted or distracted by

other thoughts and motives. Therefore the need of Resolves Forms which will serve as constant reminder especially at times when our efforts tend to slacken.

The third is a natural corollary of the first two: the "Spiritual Diary." It is widely admitted that keeping a diary and going through what is noted there is a sort of introspection which will act as a sure corrective and will lead to the reformation of old vicious habits if we are sincere about such a reformation. In the spiritual path it is all the more useful.

For a Sadhaka a spiritual introspection before going to bed is indispensable. Both Sri Siva and Lord Buddha advocate this practice. Close your eyes and think over all that you did during the day—the time that you spent in Satsang, the time that you wasted in idle gossiping, the time you spent in reading religious books, and in Sadhana, the lies that you told, the motive which prompted you to act the way you did. Which of the senses troubled you during the day.

You can thus find out means and ways for bringing these turbulent senses under your control. You can thereby root out the motives for bad actions. Many Saints and eminent men of the world like Sri Swamiji Maharaj and Benjamin Franklin have maintained spiritual diaries and rose to high position. We should note in the diary all mistakes and shortcomings and inflict self-punishment for every mistake

we did. Self-punishment will increase your will-power and will lead to easy control of the senses.

The Diary will also prove helpful in keeping up progress. If you glance at the previous day's work you will try to avoid even a day's slackness.

A combination of these three, viz., Daily Programme, Resolves Forms and Spiritual Diary is truly the surest way to quick evolution.

Mowna is also a practice advocated by Siva. It preserves energy and develops will-power. Siva does not prescribe long periods of Mowna but one or two hours daily, or a whole day during Sundays or holidays. And Siva points out to Mahatma Gandhiji who observed Mowna regularly on Mondays.

Further Siva insists that his disciples should close the gates through which energy might leak out. Therefore he advises one and all whether he be a Grihastha or Brahmachari to practise abstinence, to control the senses and to remain from time to time silent Mowna. The stress which the Swami lays on Yama and Niyama has also this object in view. It is meaningless to acquire spiritual power if one wastes it at the same time. "Ever control the Indriyas" is the motto of Sri Siva.

On the positive side the Swami advocates his aspirant to develop memory, will-power and organised thinking (Mental training).

The eradication of negative qualities and the developing of positive ones develop ones character and character makes one's destiny. It is besides the

only thing worth striving for, because it is the only treasure which will not be snatched from us by death; when we shall have to leave every material possession. Just as a skilled artist uses different precious stones and forms a mosaic of unparalleled beauty, so Swami Siva has picked up all worth-while psychological and mental devices to raise and elevate the merely animal human being, into a divine Man.

Unlike many great men of modern India who advocate Adhyatmic culture Siva stresses also physical culture and Hatha Yoga. He himself is a good example in this respect. He is now so. It is not long ago we celebrated His Holiness's Diamond Jubilee. Siva is an Advaita Vadi, a follower of Philosophy of Sri Sankaracharya. Yet he practises even to-day Sirshasan, Sarvagasan, Padmasan, Dhanurasan, Salabhasana and other Asanas also, as well as several kinds of Pranayamic exercises. His is a real system of all-round development including the physical, moral, mental and spiritual aspects of human personalities.

Such is the simple yet wonderful method of the great Sage of Himalayas.

Chapter Seven

SAYINGS OF SIVA

It is but natural that now the reader would like to hear the actual words as they were uttered or written by the great Swami himself.

Siva's sayings are pregnant with deep wisdom sprang up from a pure heart filled with Prem and Bhakti, all based on his own dynamic Self-realisation.

1. Patience, perseverance and vital will are indispensable for reaching the goal.
2. Moksha or emancipation is the ultimate goal of life.
3. Swarupa of Moksha is Sarva Duhkha Nivritti and Paramapada Prapti.
4. Non-attachment to worldly objects is freedom or liberation.
5. The way to liberation, freedom, perfect happiness and peace is through perfect purity of mind and heart; of every act, character and life, through self-restraint, control of mind and regular medi-

- tation on the pure self-luminous, indivisible, all-pervading Atman.
6. Lives of saints are the compass needles on your voyage to Moksha.
 7. A special favour comes from God to those who have pure and steady love towards all humanity.
 8. He who works in the world with Atma Bhava will eventually reach Atma.
 9. Even if one has nothing pecuniary to help others, one can help them amply with good thoughts.
 10. He who is unselfish and devoid of Moha for the body can do real service to humanity.
 11. The more you spend your energy in elevating others, the more divine energy will flow into you.
 12. He who has reduced his wants and controlled his Indriyas is fit for Karma Yoga.
 13. A Bhakta should have in his heart the all-pervading Rama even though he sees the picture of Rama.
 14. He is a real devotee who sees Lord Krishna in Siva, Rama and Durga and vice versa.
 15. Surrender is not pure and complete if a Bhakta sometimes cherishes some selfish desires.
 16. Feel and see Lord Krishna in everything, every moment and don't confine Him in the picture alone.
 17. The path of Vedanta requires strong will, clear intellect and bold understanding.

18. The erroneous notion that you are the body is the cause for pain and misery.
19. By practically forgetting the illusory names and forms, you have to realise Atma within the names and forms.
20. Elimination of egoism is the sole condition for Self-realisation.
21. He whose mind is calm, who is endowed with the four means of salvation, who is free from defects and impurities can realise the Self intuitively through meditation.
22. Brahmacharya is the Achara by which one can reach Brahman.
23. Veerya is the essence of thought, intelligence, life and consciousness.
24. He who has controlled the sex Indriyas but constantly dwells on the sexual thoughts is a hypocrite.
25. Keeping the mind fully occupied is the best panacea for maintaining Brahmacharya.
26. If one kind of Sadhana does not help you in keeping up Brahmacharya you should take recourse to a combination of methods.
27. A Yogi always directs his attention to the accumulation of the divine energy in him by unbroken chastity and perfect celibacy.
28. Brahmacharya includes not only control of sex Indriyas, but also all other Indriyas.

29. The Japa of any name of the Lord, Sattvic food, Satsang, study of religious books, Pranayama, Prayer, Kirtan, Vichar, Viveka etc. will go a long way in the eradication of sexual desires and sex impulses.
30. A proper understanding of Brahmacharya is possible when one lives in seclusion for some time.
31. Samadhi is the blissful union with the Supreme Self. It leads to direct intuitive realisation of the Infinite. It is an inner divine experience, which is beyond the reach of speech and mind.
32. Samadhi, Mukti, Turiya are synonymous terms. Samadhi means super-consciousness. Samadhi is loss of one's personality in the Divine. Just as the river becomes the ocean itself, so also the individual soul with higher consciousness and transcendental bliss and knowledge becomes the mighty Supreme Soul.
33. The state of Samadhi is beyond description. There is no means or language to give expression to it. The state of Samadhi is all bliss, joy and peace.
34. In Samadhi the Yogic practitioner gets himself merged in the Lord. The Yogi attains highest knowledge and eternal bliss.
35. Samadhi is not merely an emotional enthusiasm or an exhilaration of feeling. It is the direct unique intuitive experience of truth or Absolute Consciousness or the ultimate Reality.

36. Still the waves of the mind and hold it steady in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This needs constant protracted practice of meditation. There may be breaks in the meditation in the beginning. But practice can make you perfect. Later on you can remain absorbed in meditation. You can merge yourself in Samadhi with a mind steady like a flame protected from wind.
37. This Divine Knowledge is beyond the reach of the senses and the mind.
38. He who has mastery over the mind and Indriyas, he who always dwells in the inner Atman is a Jivanmukta.
39. A Jivanmukta or a full-blown Jnani is full of pure love, compassion, mercy, exquisite gentleness and hidden power and strength. Love and lustre shine through his brilliant eyes.
40. God loves you even when you turn away from Him. How much more shall He love you, if you turn to Him again sincerely with faith and devotion.
41. A real devotee says, "Let me take millions of births. It does not matter. But let me be attached to the Lotus-feet of Lord Hari.
42. Love your parents, love your friends, love your foes, love mankind, love animals, love one and all and serve all. Let your whole self be saturated with love. Radiate nothing but love.

43. The true expression of love is not through words but through actions.
44. Silence develops will-power, checks the force of Sankalpas and gives peace of mind.
45. The language of silence is more forcible than the language of speech.
46. Silence is the nature of the Supreme. Silence is the eminent condition of bliss. Still the mind and enjoy the Supreme Silence.
47. Silence the bubbling thoughts and surging emotions. Plunge deep into the innermost recess of your heart and enjoy the divine Silence. Know that Silence. Become Silence itself.
48. Atma is the fountain Source of all energy. Thinking on that omnipotent Atma is a dynamic method for augmenting energy, strength and power.
49. Om or Pranava is the symbol of Brahman. It is the word of power. From Om the world is projected; in Om it exists and in Om it is involved during cosmic Pralaya. Om is the essence of the four Vedas.
50. The Lord is all-perfect. He is all-powerful. All desires are gratified when one attains God-realisation, because he also becomes all-full and all-perfect.
51. This world is not an illusion. It belongs to a lower order of reality than the Absolute. It is relatively real while Brahman is absolutely Real.

52. Behind this world show, behind this physical phenomena, behind these names and forms, behind the feelings, thoughts, motions, sentiments there dwells the silent witness, thy immortal friend and real well-wisher, the Purusha or the world teacher, the invisible Power of Consciousness.
53. That place, where all speech stops, all thoughts cease, where the function of the intellect and all organs stop, is Brahman—Existence, Knowledge and Bliss.
54. Just as the light is burning within the hurricane lamp, so also the Divine Flame is burning from time immemorial in the lamp of one's own heart.
55. Religion is practical life in the Eternal Atma through earnest protracted Sadhana for years after withdrawing the turbulent Indriyas and controlling the mind.
56. Religion is radiant love. Religion is above mind and senses. Religion is above ceremonials and ritualism. Religion is union with God. Religion is the attainment of the Divine Consciousness or divine wisdom. Religion is freedom from ignorance, illusion, fear, doubt and delusion. Religion is a call to action in the spiritual field for fighting the battle of righteousness and establishing the ancient Dharmas which will declare the soul and confer Eternal Bliss.
57. Religion is the practical aspect of philosophy. Philosophy is the rational aspect of religion.

Worship of images and pictures is the beginning or starting point in religion. It is a crude form for neophytes. It constitutes the A B C or the alpha beta of religion.

58. The understanding and realisation of the right significance of "Tattvamasi" Mahavakya is the real, highest form of religion.
59. God never punishes the wicked nor rewards the virtuous. It is their own Karmas that bring reward and punishment.
60. Karma is an energy which an embodied being generates—be it vital, mental or moral---and which keeps him in the mundane world, the Samsara.
61. Actions which are of a binding nature lose that nature when one does actions with equanimity or evenness of mind through the help of pure reason, which has lost all attachment to sensual objects and which is resting on the Self. Real action is that which benefits others and aids to one's own Self-evolution.
62. "As a man thinketh so he becometh" is one of the great laws of nature. Think you are pure, pure you will become. Think you are noble, noble you will become.
63. Just as you can build your character (good or bad) by sublime or base thinking, so also you can shape your favourable or unfavourable circumstances by doing good or bad actions. A man

of discrimination is always careful, vigilant and circumspect. He always watches carefully his thoughts.

64. When one act is repeated very often, the Samskaras gain strength by repetition and tendency or habit is formed in the mind.
65. Old wordly Samskaras can hardly be changed without Satsang, Sattvic-food, and seclusion.
66. Common prayer and common meditation go a long way in bringing about world-peace.
67. Contentment is the best of all virtues. He who is not desirous of what has not got, who is quite unaffected by what he has or has not got and who is free from elation and dejection is said to be a contented man.
68. Never complain against bad environments. Create your own mental world wherever you remain, wherever you go and be contented with whatever Lord gives you.
69. Human love is hollow. It is mere animal attraction. It is passion. It is selfish love. It is mere hypocrisy and mere show.
70. Life of man on earth is nothing but a life of temptations and tribulations. Never be a fatalist. It is a most heinous crime to submit one-self to his Prarabdha without any exertion. By virtuous deeds and right thoughts you can disarm your destiny.

71. Eternal spiritual life cannot be attained without renunciation of this petty sensual life.
72. Purity of mind leads to perfection. There must be constant endeavour to keep the mind ever pure. You will have to check the rising Vrittis of the mind and keep them under your control.
73. Renunciation of desires, control of breath and right enquiry will counteract the actions of the mind and consequently check the rise of passion and illusion.
74. Do rigorous Tapas. There is nothing more powerful than Tapas to curb the turbulent Indriyas. By constant Tapas Indriyas become weak and eventually subside.
75. Purify yourself. Silence the bubbling senses. Quiet the mind. Silence the thoughts. Still the out-going tendencies or energies of the mind.
76. There are two ways for the control of mind, viz., one is Yoga through shutting up the outgoing tendencies of the mind and the other is Jnana through Brahma-Vichar. For some Yoga is favourable. For others Jnana is favourable. It depends upon the taste, temperament and capacity of Sadhana. It depends upon pecuniary matters also. He who has a permanent residence, food and other Yogic requisites can practise Yoga. He who is a Virakta and leads a wandering life can have the Vichara i. e. enquiry.
77. Stop the Vrittis. Still the mind. Overcome the Vrittis that rise up from the bed of impressions.

- Face the obstacles boldly and come out victoriously with the crown of success i. e. Self-realisation.
78. One cannot become master of his organs until he controls the organ of taste.
79. What you are now is the result of what you have thought. It is made up of your thoughts. Your character depends upon the quality of thoughts held in your mind and the mental pictures and ideals entertained by you.
80. Whatever form a man constantly thinks of through love, hatred or fear, that he attains in the course of time through concentration on the form he thinks about, just as a worm becomes a wasp. He who entertains thoughts of divinity becomes transformed into the divinity himself by constant thinking and meditation. "As you think so you become." Think that you are Brahman, you will become Brahman. Thoughts can shape a man.
81. If you develop the practice of cultivating good or sublime, divine thoughts, all bad thoughts will perish by themselves gradually. It is only by practical training of the mind that one can entertain good thoughts and actions and encourage good thoughts to rise. Thoughts gain strength by repetition.
82. When the spiritual summit of thoughtlessness is reached, one will attain eternal peace and supreme bliss.

83. Great is the power of environment. Those who feel uplifted here in Rishikesh, and breathe the peace of this holy air, often lose the fine moods as soon as they enter the train at Hardwar. One must frequently withdraw from the meaningless hurry of the world into such places, to refresh the spirit, imbibe vigour of will.
84. Memory is very important, because it brings success in God-realisation.
85. Brahmacharya, dietetic discipline of the senses are very essential for developing memory. The seminal energy has a direct, intimate connection with the cells of the Chitta and brain. You should try your extreme level best to preserve every drop of your vital fluid. Bad memory is due to heavy loss of this life-giving energy.
86. Japa, meditation, prayer, devotion, Asans and Pranayama develop memory wonderfully.
87. Practise Self-analysis or Self-examination for ten minutes before going to bed. Sit comfortably on a chair. Close your eyes. Think of all actions good and bad that you did during the course of the day. The mind will become subtle and sharp by the practice of Self-introspection. It goes more and more inward. It dissects analyses, groups, classifies and brings the list of actions in the twinkling of an eye. This practice will develop your memory.

88. Will is Atma-Bala. It is dynamic soul-force. Will, if it is rendered pure, can work wonders. There is nothing impossible for a man of strong will to achieve in the three worlds.
89. The force of Brahmacharya is at the back of the will. No will-culture is possible without Brahmacharya. Will is another name for the force of celibacy. Strength of will is essentially necessary to tread the path of truth. One can destroy wrong Samskaras, unholy desires, wrong imaginations and old morbid habits by the power of will.
90. Meditation on the Immortal Atma develops the will. It is the best method. Do not use the will in wrong directions. You will have a hopeless fall. Do not test the strength of your will in the beginning. Will is the king of mental powers.
91. Attention, power of endurance, overcoming, aversion, dislikes and irritations, fortitude in suffering, austerities such as standing on one foot, sitting in the hot sun, before five fires, standing in cold water in piercing winter, raising the hands and keeping them in the same position for an hour, fasting, patience, command of temper, forbearance, clemency, mental power of endurance firmness in meeting danger, power of resistance or attack, keeping up daily diary, all pave a long way in developing the will.

92. The practice of concentration is of great help to strengthen the will. You must have an intelligent understanding of the habits of the mind, how it wanders, how it operates. The practice of thought-culture, the practice of concentration, the practice of memory culture are all allied subjects. All these are of immense help in the practice of will-culture.
93. The more you spend your energy in elevating and serving others, the more divine energy will flow to you.
94. You must be able to think quickly and act promptly with unerring precision and profound consideration in times of emergencies. You must take care to see that you are not rash and impetuous. You must be cool and collected.
95. When you pray, you are in tune with the Infinite. You link yourself with the inexhaustible cosmic power-house of energy and thus draw power, energy, light and strength from Him.
96. In one's weakness lies the strength, because he will be always on the alert to safeguard himself.
97. If one rises above the sway of like or dislike, love or hatred, aversion or affection, he is no longer subject to his nature.
98. Feel the majesty of yourself. Keep yourself peaceful and happy under any circumstances and environments of life.

99. Positive always overcomes the negative. This is the law of nature. Negative evil thoughts cannot stand before positive good thoughts. Courage overcomes fear. Patience overcomes anger, and irritability. Love overcomes hatred, purity overcome lust.
100. Preaching has become the livelihood of many, while practice has become their object of scorn. It is easier to preach twenty than to be one of the twenty in following them.
101. Endurance is a condition of wisdom.
102. You should possess physical strength, mental strength and spiritual strength if you want to succeed in life.
103. He is a wise man who finds out the means for his liberation.
104. Empty prayer is a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.
105. Knowledge leads to Bliss. The secular knowledge that you get from the Universities is mere husk.
106. Evolution of the world comes from the union of spirit and matter.
107. Spiritual power is the highest power on earth.
108. Mind is like a monkey. It is never satisfied with the objects which are already under its possession. It jumps to other unattained ones.

It always wants variety and gets disgusted with monotony. Tame this mind by making it taste the Nectar of Atma within by regular meditation.

109. Yama or self-restraint is the root of Yoga, Asana (pose), Pranayama (regulation of breath), Pratyahara (abstraction) are the branches, Dhyana (meditation) is the flower; Nirvikalpa Samadhi is the fruit.

Chapter Eight

SIVA AND BUDDHA

The following few chapters will be dedicated to a comparison of Sri Siva's teachings and personality with saints and sages, both ancient and modern.

This will enable us to penetrate a little deeper into the saintly personality of the Sage adorning the Sacred Himalayas. It is said that only a sage can really understand the teachings of a sage and only a saint can estimate the greatness of another saint.

This is the more true about the saint and sage residing in the Abode of Bliss on the banks of the sacred river Ganga, for the grandeur of this Himalayan Yogi is hidden behind the outward garb of simplicity, kindness, love and benevolence.

There can be hardly found any other religion, except Hinduism, which could boast of such a vast religious literature as Buddhism, just as we can hardly find now-a-days a saint or a Swami whose writings were so prolific as these of Sri Swami Siva.

The Hindu scriptures have given a good counsel to be followed in cases the scriptures are too many i.e. to take the *essence* of them. Since the space of this article is rather limited, we shall follow this advice and will quote the Surangama Sutra for our purpose of comparing the teachings of Lord Buddha with those of Sri Siva, for it embodies the essence of moral philosophy and the rational of Buddhistic Sadhana. Said Buddha: "Ananda and all in this assembly! In explaining to you the rules of the Vinaya (religious discipline), I have frequently emphasised three good lessons, namely (1) the only way to keep the Precepts is first to be able to concentrate the mind (2) by keeping the Precepts you will be able to attain Samadhi, (3) by means of Samadhi one develops intelligence and wisdom. Having learned these three good lessons, one has gained freedom from the intoxicants and hindrances.

Ananda! why is concentration of mind necessary before one can keep the Precepts? And why is it necessary to keep the Precepts before one can rightly practise Dhyana and attain Samadhi? And why is the attainment of Samadhi necessary before one may attain true intelligence and wisdom? Let me explain this to you. All sentient beings in all the six realms of existence are susceptible to temptations and allurements. As they yield to these temptations and allurements they fall into and become fast bound to the recurring cycles of deaths and rebirths. Being prone to yield to these temptations and allurements, one must, in order to free himself from

the bondage and their intoxication, concentrate his whole mind in a resolution to resist them to the uttermost. The most important of these allurements are the temptations to yield to sexual thoughts, desires and indulgence, with all their following waste and bondage and suffering. Unless one can free himself from this bondage and these contaminations and exterminate these sexual lusts, there will be no escape from the following suffering, nor hope of advancement to enlightenment and peacefulness. No matter how keen you may be mentally, no matter how much you may be able to practise Dhyana, no matter to what a high degree of apparent Samadhi you may attain, unless you have wholly annihilated all sexual lusts, you will ultimately fall into the lower realms of existence.

Therefore Ananda, a man who tries to practise Dhyana without first attaining control of his mind is like a man trying to bake bread out of a dough made of sand; bake it as long as he will, it will only be sand made a little hot. It is the same with sentient beings, Ananda. They cannot hope to attain Buddhahood by means of indecent body. How can they hope to attain the wonderful experience of Samadhi out of bawdiness? If the source is indecent, the outcome will be indecent; these will ever be a return to the never-ending recurrence of deaths and rebirths. Sexual lust leads to multiplicity; control of mind and Samadhi lead to enlightenment and the intuitive life of Buddhahood. Multiplicity lead to strife and suffering; control of mind and Dhyana leads to the blissful peace of Samadhi and Buddhahood.

Inhibition of sexual thoughts and annihilation of sexual lusts is the path to Samadhi, and even the conception of inhibiting and annihilating must be discarded and forgotten. When the mind is under perfect control and all indecent thoughts excluded then there may be a reasonable expectation for the enlightenment of Buddhas". (Vide : Surangama Sutra by Win-Fao and Dwight Yoddard). From the above quotation from the Surangama Sutra it is clearly seen that Lord Buddha regards Brahmacharya or sexual abstinence as a sine qua non of spiritual development.

That Sri Siva's opinion on this important point fully tallies with those of Lord Buddha's. We can get ample evidence in many of his numerous books and writings, some of them having been revised in this book already. A few more references from Sri Siva's Ethical Teachings will follow : "Sexual Vasanas are more powerful than all other Vasanas. Therefore you will have to direct all your efforts in subduing the sexual Vasanas and the reproductive organ first.

Chastity or continence is an integral part of Yoga. It is an indispensable factor for the aspirants to divine union or blissful Samadhi. You cannot attain great heights of spirituality without chastity. Chastity or Brahmacharya lies at the very heart of Tapas or Yoga." (Vide : Ethical Teachings by Swami Sivananda pp. 136 & 137).

The next important hindrance and allurements of all sentient beings is pride and egoism according

to the Surangama Sutra. Says Siva : "The beginning of saintliness is killing of egoism or Ahankara, the end of saintliness is eternal life. The key to saintliness is Brahmacharya. The light of saintliness is love. The garb of saintliness is virtue. The mark of saintliness is humility. The road to saintliness is regular meditation. The foundation of saintliness is Yama and Niyama (Ibid, p. 137).

Further we are read the following Sayings of Siva : "Selfishness is the source of all vices. It is born of ignorance. A selfish man is greedy and unrighteous. He is far from God. He will do anything to attain his ends. He injures others, robs their properties and does many sinful actions to satisfy his selfishness. He has neither scruples nor character. Peace of mind is unknown to him. He is always planning and scheming for acquisition of wealth, power, name and fame. He always separates himself from others. He is very much attached to his wife, children and property. Attachment and sense of separateness are present in him to maximum degree. Selfishness is a great impediment to Yoga. Destroy selfishness through selfless service, charity, Satsang.

Man lives in vain if he is selfish and miserly. Man lives in vain if he has not got a generous heart, if he has no mercy and sympathy, if he does not lead a life of virtue, Tapas and meditation and if he does not help and serve religious institutions and religious teachers with uniform and artless courtesy and

devotion. Selfishness retards spiritual progress. If any one can destroy his selfishness, half of his spiritual Sadhana is over. No Samadhi or meditation is possible without eradication of this undesirable negative quality. Aspirants should direct their whole attention in the beginning towards the removal of this dire malady by contracted selfless disinterested service. (Ethical Teachings: By Swami Sivananda).

Buddha said: "Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome greed by liberality, untruth by truth. Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love."

Similar are Siva's teachings: "Love all, include all in the warm embrace of your love. Be kind to all. See God in all faces. Develop Viswaprem. Overcome greed by love, anger by patience, jealousy Ghrina by selfless service, fault-finding by nobility, crookedness by magnanimity. You will attain God-Consciousness. Hatred, Ghrina, prejudice, jealousy, anger will die by themselves."

Buddha said: "Let me teach you the middle path Oh Bhikshus, which keeps aloof from both extremes. By suffering the emaciated devotee produces confusion in society and sickly thoughts in his mind. Mortification is not conducive to triumph over the senses."

Siva says: "In the name of Tapasya do not spoil your health. Have a strong healthy body but

be prepared to give it up at any time. Without good health you cannot do your Sadhana uninterruptedly. Spiritual growth is gradual. There is progressive evolution. You should not be in a feverish hurry to accomplish great Yogic feats or enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi in two or three months. You will have to ascend the ladder stage by stage

Eradicate greed and other selfish cravings. Do not be much intimate with any body nor be wanting in friendship. Too much of everything is bad. Therefore always follow the golden mean".

Lord Buddha said: "The immortal can be reached only by continuous acts of kindness, and perfection is accomplished by compassion and charity."

Similar is the teaching of Sri Siva: "Hatred, anger and jealousy are removed by continuous service with a loving heart. You will get more strength, more joy, more satisfaction by doing kind acts. Practice of compassion, charitable acts, kind services, purify and softens the heart, turn the heart-lotus upwards and prepare the aspirant for the reception of divine light."

Said Buddha: "Truth is not solely for the Sannyasi; it concerns every human being, priest and layman alike. There is no distinction between the Bhikshu who has taken the vows and the man of the world living with his family. There are hermits

who fall into perdition and there are humble householders who mount to the rank of Rishis”

Sri Siva says : “The practice of Yoga or spiritual Sadhana is no monopoly of Sannyasins or Sadhus who remain in the Himalayan retreats. Even a householder while remaining in the world should practise spiritual Sadhana. Do not wait till you retire from service for practice of Yoga. Do it at home so that in your old age you can reap a rich spiritual harvest. The Yogins of the Himalayan caves are as much exposed to downfall, if they are not alert as householders living in the world.

Lord Buddha said : “Waste not the time with gossip but speak to the purpose or keep silence.”

Sri Siva says : “Can you expect real Santi if you waste your time in idle gossiping, in novels, newspapers ?”

Buddha said : “Meditate deeply on the vanity of earthly things and understand the fickleness of life.”

Siva says : “Deeply think over miseries of mundane life. A mustard of pleasure is mixed with a mountain of pain. Life is uncertain. The body is a bubble. This world is a Mela for two days. You are a pilgrim here. Complete your life’s journey in this very birth. Human birth is very rare.”

Buddha said : “A woman of the world is anxious to exhibit her form and shape whether walking, standing, sitting or sleeping. Even when represented as a picture, she desires to captivate with the

charms of her beauty, and thus robmen of their steadfast heart. Regard her tears and her smiles as enemies, her stooping form, her hanging arms, and all her diseantangled hair as means designed to entrap man’s heart. Restrain your heart. and give it no unbridled licence.”

Siva writes : “A young woman is very proud of youth and beauty. She will never believe a Sage if he tells her that her beauty is skin deep only and that her beauty will soon fade, her hairs will become grey and her skin will be filled with wrinkles. She will ceaselessly continue to tempt, allure and entice man by her tricks and clever speech. She is not aware that the tailor, the weaver, the embroider, the goldsmith and the toilet-maker have made her look beautiful for a few seconds. Man also in his infatuation and delusion forgets this point. This is Maya. The smiles, glances, tenderness, sweet speech, long curly hairs falling down her cheeks and the rosy lips are so many charms to entrap you. Beware; O man ! Wake up ! Find out the Beauty of beauties within you which is your own innermost Self. Oh woman ! Give up vanity. Sing like Mira and merge in Mira’s Giridharanagar.”

Buddha said “Cleanse your heart of malice and cherish no hatred, not even against your enemies, but embrace all beings with kindness.”

Siva says : “Love your enemies. Shampoo their legs. Give them the best treatment. Include even murderers in the warm embrace of your love.”

Buddha said: "Better than living a hundred years not seeing the highest religion, is one day in life of man who sees highest religion." Siva says "A crow lives for 300 years in vain. Human life is very precious because a man can do spiritual Sadhana and attain perfection. One realised soul is better than one thousand fools. The former can change the destiny of the whole world."

Buddha said: "He who is victorious should remember the instability of earthly things. His success may be great but he is ever so great that the wheel of life may turn again and bring him down into the dust. Great is the successful general but he who has conquered the self is a greater victor." Siva says: "In the war the victorious party will get a small kingdom and the rule will last for a few years only. But the Sadhak who conquers the lower self, Vasanas and Samskaras will attain the infinite Kingdom of God, illimitable domain of eternal bliss and enjoy everlasting peace and inexhaustible supreme wealth of Atma."

Buddha said: "There is not one living creature that the Tathagatha passes by or leaves aside but regards them all with mind set free and deep-felt love. The Tathagatha anxiously watches over his children and with loving care helps them to see the light." Siva is well known for his spirit of untiring selfless service. He says: "I live to serve you all. I live to make you all happy. I live to help you in destroying the ignorance and in attaining the goal of

life ... Kaivalya ... the final beatitude." These are not merely beautiful words but solid facts witnessed in Siva's everyday life. Like the Lord Buddha who attended to an old Bhikshu afflicted with a loathsome disease, the sight and smell of which was so nauseating that nobody dared to approach him. Sri Siva attended to serious cases of cholera and small-pox during his Tapascharya at Swarga Ashrama.

Even to-day he misses no opportunity to serve the ailing, the sick and distressed. The similarity of characteristics and teachings of these two great spiritual luminaries, the one of whom lived twenty five centuries ago, and the other, we are blessed to have in our midst to-day, is really astonishing.

There is however, a slight difference as regards how Lord Buddha and Sri Siva have dealt with some difficult philosophical and religious problems.

Lord Buddha did not explain clearly questions regarding the existence of the soul after death, neither did he teach about the nature or attributes of God. When the wandering monk Vachagotta approached Lord Buddha and asked whether the soul (Atta) exists after the death of the physical body, he remained silent. This has led many to believe that Buddha denied the existence of the soul and its life after the bodily death. This, however, is not the true doctrine, nor was it the teaching of the Lord Buddha either. On a similar occasion Buddha remarked: "If you cannot comprehend the nature of the Atta (Sanskrit: Atman) in his visible form,

how can you hope to comprehend him when he has become invisible ?”

Again many are of the opinion that Buddha denied the existence of God. But how could he answer in the *affirmative* the question raised by an inquirer as to whether he knows the path to the highest God ?

The fact is that Buddha did not consider these queries as of primary importance. People are subjected to sufferings. To discover the cause of human sufferings and show the way out was the mission of the Lord Buddha. To prosecute other questions instead was irrelevant in the opinion of the Enlightened One. He said that it is like when someone comes to aid the wounded man and wants to take out the arrow of his body, the latter asks him first to tell many silly questions about the caste, colour, height and relatives of the archer.

Aspirants and inquirers have at times approached also Sri Siva with questions like “Why did God create this world” and similar ones. Siva says these are Atiprasnas—questions which cannot be solved by the rational mind. Only when one has transcended the limits of human mind he can hope to understand the mysteries of this world, the creation etc. Our minds move in a world of cause and effect, but the real ultimate cause of this world lies in the causeless cause, so only by approaching Him we can get a glimpse of Truth and comprehend the world and its Maker.

As to the questions of the nature of the Soul, its existence after death, the nature of the Absolute etc. Siva has given elaborate explanations in his various works e. g. Philosophy and Teachings, Vedanta in Daily Life, What becomes of the Soul after Death etc.” These are subtle questions and people cannot rest content until they get an answer or solution, and it is futile to prohibit to ask their elucidation as some Himalayan Buddhists would do it. No doubt this was the cause why the Mahayana Buddhists supplemented the teachings of Buddha with those of Hinduism and now-a-days there is practically no difference between Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism.

Chapter Nine

SIVA AND LORD JESUS

“God has no use for the so-called Pandit who mechanically chants the Slokas but shuts his eyes to the sick man on the way,” says Siva.

Similar are the words of Jesus Christ in St. Mathew Chapter V. v. 20 : “For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes Pharsees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Many unbiassed scientists and historians claim that Lord Jesus lived in India during his missing period between his 18th 32nd years of age. Swami Rama Tirtha (formerly professor of Mathematics at the University of Lahore) writes that Jesus Christ lived in Kashmere and that even today there is a medicinal herb called after Him (Isas (Jesus) herb.

If we probe deeply into the teachings of Lord Jesus we can find many similarities between His teachings and those of Hinduism. Really speaking

the teachings of Jesus Christ are more akin to Hinduism than to Judaism, both as regards the ethical norms and philosophical doctrines. In the scriptures of Judaism as represented in the old Testament we can find only Dualism i.e. the idea of a Creator and His Creation, including men which are quite distinct from Him. It is a blasphemy in the eyes of an orthodox Jew to think of an identity of man with the Lord, even though it is said that God created man in His image and likeness.

In the Sanatana or Hindu Dharma we find three steps of religious thought and realisation viz., dualism, qualified monism and pure monism. There are three great Acharyas representing those three schools of thought. Sri Madhvacharya stands for the philosophy of Dvaita or dualism, Sri Ramanujacharya for qualified monism or Visishtadvaita, while Sri Sankaracharya is the exponent of pure monism or Kevala Advaita.

If I mention here these three schools of Indian philosophical and religious thought and realisation it is simply because Sri Swami Sivananda is a true representative, nay the very incarnation of Hinduism, and in his writings we find alike Dvaita and Advaita. Siva is himself a great Bhakta who sings and dances in Divine ecstasy, and a fully realised Jnani who sits in Nirvikalpa Samadhi and serves his fellow-beings with Sarvatma Bhav, while enjoying the bliss of Sahaja Samadhi.

In the teachings of Lord Jesus we too can find these three steps of religious realisation. When His disciples found it difficult to grasp the ideas of non-dualism and asked to teach them the art of prayer, Lord Jesus in His compassion taught them the beautiful Lord's Prayer.

Here we find the idea of dualism i.e. the individual soul is praying to its Creator when Jesus Christ called the Father in Heaven. He addressed His own prayers also to the heavenly Father.

But in the teachings of Lord Jesus we find also higher realisations than merely dualistic ones. In St. John's Chapter IV. V. 5. Jesus says: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." This alludes to the doctrine of Visishtadvaita or qualified Monism as taught by Sri Ramanujacharya. In a small but practically very useful booklet viz., Yogic and Vedantic Sadhana Siva has nicely elucidated the teachings of Sri Ramanuja in comparison with those of pure monism of Sri Sankara. In Jesus Christ's utterance: "I and the Father are One" we find an echo of Upanishadic Mahavakyas "Aham Brahmasmi", 'Tat Twam Asi' or 'Soham' 'Brahmaivaham' etc.

Sri Siva too tries to elevate his aspirants to the sublime heights of Advaita. He addresses his letters not to Mr. X or Mr. Y but to Immortal Self or Blessed Immortal Atma. In his letters we find some times printed "Tat Twam Asi" and other inspiring

sentences whose aim it is to remind the soul of its real nature and its unity with the Supreme Soul.

Jesus Christ was meek, kind, forgiving and these are the very characteristics of Siva too. Swami Paramananda has so wonderfully described this saying: "If somebody abuses Siva, it is all melodious Kirtan for him."

People often think of Lord Jesus as being only meek. And meekness is often identified with weakness. Yet, the Lord Jesus could be also violent both in His acts as well as in His speech. He drew out by force the money changers of the temple of the Lord. He openly and forcefully called the scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites and the Jews as a nation of adulterers.

Siva is meek, compassionate like Jesus Christ. Living among a kind-hearted, religiously minded nation there could not occur so many occasions to manifest his active dynamic force against the evil. Yet Sri Paramanandaji mentioned one such instance when the Mahant of Swargashrama maltreated the Sadhus and Sannyasins and the latter complained about it to Siva. The latter rose at once and went straight to the Mahant. The Mahant got frightened, implored pardon for his misbehaviour towards the Sadhus and promised to change his ways. One of the most beautiful parables of Lord Jesus is the parable of the prodigal son. It is like the enchanting melody

of Sri Krishna's flute calling back the erring soul to the blissful home of the Heavenly Father.

What else are the multifarious activities of Sri Siva, but the calling back the Jiva to retrace its steps, to look within, to abandon worldly pleasures and attachments and attain real joy, happiness and bliss by realising one's own true nature the Atman.

Chapter Ten

SIVA AND MODERN SAINTS

We have in the preceding chapter compared the character and teachings of Sri Siva with the prophets and founders of two great world religions. If we would compare the personality and ethical teachings of Siva with those of the founders of other great religions too, it might easily lead to the result that the scales of Siva would outweigh those of his predecessors. This could hurt the feelings of the followers of those religions and it would be certainly against the principles of the Founder of the All World Religions Federation. Let us therefore direct our sight to those Saints who are still living in our midst and those who have discarded their mortal coil quite recently and whose memory still lingers in our minds.

(A) SIVA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Sri Swami Vivekananda was a dynamic personality, a true son of Bengal, the land of Shakti worship. Being specially trained by his Guru Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, he was sent to the

West to preach the most sublime philosophy of Advaita Vedanta and to lift for the first time the veil of mystery which covered the ancient science of Yoga, a science which the Western students eagerly wanted to learn, but many serious men had turned a deaf ear, because unreliable, ignorant persons had done a grievous mischief by offering a kind of Pseudo-Yoga, which was nothing but a counterfeit of real Yoga Vidya.

Like a star the great Swami appeared on the spiritual firmament, with his brilliant intellect and dynamic Shakti. He smashed the atheistic doctrines imported from the West, showed the youth of India the glory of Hinduism and explained in a rational way to the Western mind the scientific bases of Yoga, clearing it from all mystery mongering which was widely practised by many Western schools of Theosophy and Occultism.

Swami Vivekananda was successful both in the West and East. Alas! his span of life was but short.

As regards the Western world he laid a firm, solid basis for the study of Yoga and Vedanta. It was impossible under the then prevailing conditions neither to enter into the details and subtleties of the Vedanta philosophy, nor to give an elaborate treatise on the practice of Yogas simply because Vedanta in general and Yoga in particular were too little known in the West. It is no wonder that the Lord chose another tool to carry on and build up the work

started by Swami Vivekananda. It can be said from many points of view that Sri Siva is continuing, elaborating and widening the work which was begun by Sri Swami Vivekananda, even though Siva belongs to another outward mission. The outward difference might have some importance in the eyes of a bigoted devotee but hardly any in the eyes of the Lord Himself. Sri Aurobindo Ghose says that Bengal has Shakti and Madras or South India possesses the subtlest refined intellect.

But Vivekananda possessing great Shakti like a true Bengali was invested with a very rare and brilliant intellect too. Similarly Siva coming from South India does not only possess the finest intellect but is like Swami Vivekananda a most dynamic personality too. Sri Siva's mission is in many respects like that of Swami Vivekananda's. Siva like Vivekananda teaches universal tolerance based on the high ideals and tenets of the Vedas declaring that Truth is One but sages call it variously. Siva like Vivekananda imparts the light of Vedanta alike to Indians and Americans or Europeans. Vivekananda was a missionary of Hinduism, so is Siva too. Only by the word Hinduisim we must understand the whole teachings of the Aryan Rishis and not a special denomination. But while Swami Vivekananda had to cross the ocean in order to reach the hearts and minds of Western people Siva sheds his light to the whole world remaining in the cool, solitary heights of his Himalayan retreat at Ananda Kutir.

Vivekananda taught the basic principles of Jnana, Raja, Bhakti and Karma Yogas. Siva elucidates and teaches particulars also of these chief Yoga Margas including minor systems like Mantra, Hatha and Laya Yogas also.

Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna mission. Swami Sivananda laid the foundation of the Divine Life Society. Vivekananda taught the doctrine of selfless service to his direct disciples. Siva induces the spirit of Seva by his example. Swami Vivekananda had an integral development being a Jnani, Yogi, Bhakta and Karmi. Siva too is a Master of these four Yogas besides being an adept in Hatha Yoga. Even to-day Swami Siva performs regularly some vital Asanas and Pranayamas. Both Vivekananda and Siva possessed extraordinary musical talents and were gifted Sankirtanists. Swami Vivekananda had a strong physique, Sri Siva possesses also an athletic body.

Vivekananda had an exceptional memory being about able to recount eleven volumes of Webster's dictionary. Siva also has a phenomenal memory being able to remember the needs of thousands of his near and far disciples. His mastery of different kinds of science and human learning is also due to his extraordinary memory. Both Siva and Vivekananda declared that the secret of a superhuman memory lies in sexual abstinence or chastity. Both Vivekananda and Siva were in purity equal to Sri Suka Deva. Vivekananda opened the eyes of the Western world

to the stern fact that it is useless to simply preach moral rules without imparting rational methods based on scientific psychological laws which could enable the aspirant to overcome temptation to do wrong. Siva too has pointed out in his works that the educational system in our schools and universities is far from being perfect and that it does not teach the urgently-needed methods of self-control.

Having depicted the shortcomings of our educational institutions Sri Siva has given innumerable instructions of utmost practical value to suit persons of different tendencies and temperaments. "Sure Ways of Success In Life And God-Realisation," "Practice of Yoga" Vol. I & II. "Vedanta In Daily Life" and last but not least "Mind & Its mysteries and Control" Vol. I & II. are masterpieces in this direction. They contain a mass of practical information hardly to be found in other works on Yoga. It can be said that Vivekananda in his forceful dynamic manner showed the Western people the need of teaching methods of mind and sense-control and Siva actually does supply them in abundance.

Glory to Sri Swami Vivekananda !

Glory to Sri Swami Sivananda !

May the blessings of these two Master Yogins be upon us all !!

(B) SIVA AND MAHATMA GANDHI

What common traits are there between Sri Siva, the Glorious Jnani and Mahatma Gandhi, the venerable politician-Saint, whose tragic death has shocked

the whole world? Yes, there are many but the most prominent is that they both were Karma Yogins of the superior kind.

Siva is an untiring selfless worker sacrificing his time, energy and knowledge for the welfare of the whole humanity. Regarding the Mahatma we might make a mistake if we are not considerate enough in evaluating his work. We might think that the aim of Gandhiji was to bring about political freedom to India. Even this by itself is a high ideal indeed, but this is not the whole truth. The Mahatmaji knew that he would free India by purely spiritual methods, by means of his Atma Shakti or soul-force. Gandhiji was perfectly aware that by doing so he would do an immense service to humanity at large, by demonstrating the superiority of spiritual force over brute material power.

How many Europeans or Americans were there who could believe in the efficacy of Atma Shakti? But now we have seen the miracle, India was freed by soul-force, without single shot from the Satyagrahis. What a marvel in these days of materialism!

Now we might wonder and ask what means were adopted by Gandhiji in order to cultivate and develop the soul-force. As to this we can give a definite answer based on the writings of the Mahatmaji; the means employed by him were Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya. The Mahatmaji was a great votary of Japa of Ram Nam. By these simple means Mohan-

das Karamchand Gandhi became the hero of Modern India receiving the title 'Mahatma'.

The tremendous work done by Sri Swami Sivandaji, which has spiritualised not only India but the farthest corners of the whole world, is impossible to gauge at present, because it is still increasing and growing in size and measure. Saints are of different kinds. They have different missions too. The mission of Mahatma Gandhi was to free India by spiritual means and to demonstrate the superiority of Atma Shakti over physical weapons. The mission of Sri Siva is to spiritualise the whole world irrespective of caste, creed and nationality.

Gandhiji took a great burden on his shoulders, underwent great sufferings and sacrificed his life for the ideal. When his work was done he had to discard his mortal coil and uttering 'He Ram' he met his Beloved.

The task of Siva is to create numberless Saints and Adhyatmic heroes. It will be interesting to note that Sri Siva too asks even the aspirants, the members of the Divine Life Society to practise from the very start of the life divine the three basic moral injunctions viz., Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya.

Every one is admitted by Sri Siva as a member into the Divine Life Society. There is no distinction of colour, nationality, creed. He might have been a great sinner. But he must give a word of promise to adhere to the best of his ability to the principles of Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmcharya.

Mahatma Gandhi was a married man. When he took up the work of introducing justice to abolish misgovernment and attain ultimately freedom for his Motherland, he realised the need of Shakti. This could be got through Brahmacharya and Brahmacharya alone. Therefore he renounced the sexual life and advised his true followers and co-workers to do the same.

In order to be able to maintain strict Brahmacharya Gandhiji was very particular in his diet. He said that fruit diet is the best for this purpose. Even milk which he adapted later in India, he writes, is a little intoxicant. Further the Mahatma states that what he got by strict dietetic regulations, Raja Yogins attain by practicing Pranayama. Evidently at this period Gandhiji was not practically a student of Raja Yoga. This is more interesting, and shows that by very strict adherence to the simple rules of Yoga viz., Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya, coupled with dietetic regulations and Japa of Ram Nam one can rise to the status of Suprerman. In Sri Siva's teachings we do find all these means too.

Siva says : "Ahimsa is a wonderful quality of the heart. It is a rare virtue. It transmutes a man into divinity. He who is established in Ahimsa is God himself.

The power of Ahimsa is greater than the power of intellect. It is easy to develop the intellect but it is difficult to develop the heart. The practice of Ahimsa develops the heart in a wonderful manner.

Ahimsa is supreme love. Ahimsa is soul-force, Practice of Ahimsa is practice of divine life. Hatred melts in the presence of love. Hatred dissolves in the presence of Ahimsa. There is no power greater than Ahimsa. The practice of Ahimsa will make you fearless. He who practises Ahimsa with real faith can move the whole world, tame wild animals, win the hearts of all and subdue his enemies." (Swami Sivananda : "Samadhi Yoga" p. 152). No less is the stress the Swami lays on Satya, "If five thousand Rajasuya Yajnas and Truth (Satya) are weighed in a sensitive balance, Truth will undoubtedly outweigh five thousand Rajasuya Yajnas. That is the reason why Srutis declare "Satyameva Jayati Naanritam." Truth alone triumphs but not falsehood". Aspirant should sincerely endeavour to speak the truth at all times. If they are established in Truth, all other virtues will cling to them. Brahman is Truth and one can realise Him by speaking the truth." (Ibid. p. 149).

We do not know exactly what were the Sadhanas of Sri Siva. We may guess that they were more complicated and more integral than those of Gandhiji. Sri Siva too is a lover of Ram Nam but he has equal love for Krishna, Siva, Devi, Brahmakshara and Gayatri Mantras also.

The Swamiji's mission is to spiritualise the whole world; therefore he had to undergo different Sadhanas in order to be able to teach the aspirants of different Margas.

Not everyone will be able to reach to **those** heights as the Mahatmaji by adopting only **those** simple means as he had adopted himself.

But both these two spritual luminaries served selflessly humanity, both renounced wealth, both adhered strictly to the moral laws of Yama of Patanjali Maharshi, both were strict Brahmacharins and both raised to the state of supermanhood by means of Atma-Shakti.

May we all be inspired by their ideals, let us walk in their foot-steps ! May their blessings be upon us all !

(C) SIVA AND SRI AUROBINDO GHOSE.

Sri Aurobindo is a great modern Yogi now living in Pondicherry French India. He was brought up and received his education in England. After a most successful University career he returned to India and learned and became fascinated by the sublime glory of Indian Culture and Wisdom. He is living for several decades in seclusion in a beautiful Ashrama in Pondicherry. He gives Darshan on three days in a year only. He has written several valuable books on Yoga, Upanishads and other topics also. His commentaries on Gita are his magnum opus. The form and style of his writings is quite upto date but the subject of his teachings is chiefly the ancient wisdom of India. In this respect both Sri Aurobindo and Sri Siva are alike, though the latter's style is in general more easy, simple and

lucid. This is because Sri Siva wants to reach the hearts of vast multitudes and not only the intelligent upper classes.

Around Sri Aurobindo has gathered the intelligentsia and so his books seem to be written for the educated classes particularly. Sri Siva wants to reach everybody, the educated people as well as the less fortunate ones in this direction. It is therefore, that Sri Siva had to adopt a more popular way of writing in most of his publications.

Sri Aurobindo emphasises the integral development. Especially in his Essays on the Gita, Sri Aurobindo greatly stresses the need of Yogatraya viz., Karma, Bhakti and Jnana. In his opinion even a Sage should not renounce works. To Bhakti he gives the place of honour. This is what Sri Siva does actually. Sri Aurobindo lives in seclusion for several decades. Sri Siva serves humanity in various ways after having attained Self-realisation. Siva is the personification of Sri Aurobindo's ideal as promulgated in his Essays on the Gita. While stressing the need of the triple Yoga viz., Karma, Bhakti and Jnana and being in sympathy with Raja Yoga of Patanjali Maharshi, Sri Aurobindo seems not to favour Hatha Yoga. In this respect Sri Siva is more catholic and liberal, for though being a follower of Sri Sankara's Advaita philosophy, he has taught Hatha Yoga to many disciples. He even emphasises its importance as a means of regeneration of the youth of India. And the present writer

ventures to say that its blessings to the youth of our Western countries would be by no means of less importance. Siva sets himself a good example by practising daily a few Asanas like Sirshasana, and others and some forms of Pranayama too. He is very punctual in these practices. Sri Aurobindo has his predilection for mental methods. His system is for Uttama Adhikaris only.

Sri Siva adopts both physical and mental methods of Sadhana; to be more true Siva adopts every kind of Sadhana; knowing full well the variations in capacities and inclinations of different kinds of aspirants.

Sri Aurobindo's Ashrama is available to earnest, sincere aspirants. Sri Sivanandashram is accessible to every seeker after Truth.

Sri Aurobindo is a soul of rare Divine qualities. So is Siva too.

Both of them have transcended the mental plane and reached the supra-mental one. How can an ordinary mortal guess the real state of these two Mahapurushas? Glory to Sri Aurobindo! Glory to Sri Siva! May their blessings never cease upon us all !!

(D) SRI SIVA AND SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI

Sri Ramana Maharshi is a well-known Jnani residing for more than fifty years in Tiruvannamalai, South India, at the foot of the sacred Aruna Hill.

He is held in a very high esteem by his devotees, who style him as Bhagavan. The late Ganapathi Muni eulogises him as an incarnation of Subrahmanya. Sri Swami Sidheshwarananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Paris, writes that Sri Ramana Maharshi represents the pure tradition in Advaita Vedanta. Sri K. Subramanyam M. A. of the Vivekananda College, Madras, calls Sri Ramana Maharshi—"THE WHITE RADIANCE OF TRUTH".

These two statements beautifully characterise the sage, who is in his behaviour and ways of teachings like the ancient Rishis, though living in a modern world.

Sri Ramana Maharshi has not written much himself. In "Shad-Darshana" he has given his realisation of Truth and in his "Upadesa Saram" we find a compendium of the fourfold path. In the Light of Sri Ramana Karma, Bhakti and Yoga are steps leading to Jnana which confers Moksha or liberation. In regard of the writings Sri Ramana Maharshi resembles the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tze who too condensed his philosophy of Tao, in 70 verses only. In his Upadesa Saram the Maharshi regards Jnana as the climax of spiritual evolution and Atma Vichara as the best and direct Sadhana for Self-realisation. Though the Sage of Aruna Hill is in sympathy with all kinds of the four fold Yoga he sees to have special predilection for the path of Wisdom (Jnana).

And as regards the Sadhanas prescribed in the Jnana Marga the Sage of Tiruvannamalai stresses the

method of self-inquiry. Answering the question of a devotee "Why should Self-inquiry alone be considered the direct means to Jnana?" The Maharshi gave the following reply: "Because every kind of Sadhana except Atma-Vichara presupposes the retention of the mind as the instrument for carrying on the Sadhana, and without the mind it cannot be practised. The ego may take different and subtler forms at the different stages of one's practice, but is itself never destroyed.

When Janaka exclaimed, "Now I have discovered the thief who has been ruining me all along. He shall be dealt with summarily," the king was really referring to the ego or the mind. The Maharshi continued: "The attempts to destroy the ego or the mind through Sadhanas other than Atma-Vichara is just like the thief turning out a policeman to catch thief, that is himself. Atma-Vichara alone can reveal the truth that neither the ego nor the mind really exists, and enables one to realise the pure, undifferentiated Being of the Self or the Absolute.

Having realised the Self nothing remains to be known, because it is perfect Bliss, it is the All" (Maharshi's Gospel book II-p. p. 11 & 12).

Sri Swami Sivanandaji too has written a book entitled "Who am I?" dealing with Atma-Vichara. Siva has in several of his works alluded to the methods of Atma-Vichara. But Sri Siva says that this method does not suit everyone and all, that it is mainly for the Uttama Addhikaris. Yogi Suddha-

nanda Bharati says about these two Rishis in the following way: "Swami Sivananda is doing admirable work in this line (communal chants, worship, meditations, scriptural classes, centres of group meditations) and Maharshi silently spreads His force. Sri Siva does not minimise the value of teaching through silence. He eulogises it in his works and does it in actual practice also. Many visitors at Sivanandashram have attested to the marvellous changes they got, to the inner transformation attained simply by being in vicinity of the Sage of Ananda Kutir. It is no wonder, especially if we note the fact that even in his infancy the Swamiji's touch or benevolent look could relieve people suffering from physical diseases and mental worries. But while being fully aware of the value of silent communication the Swami still realises the great importance of oral teaching and reaching the hearts of people by means of printed literature. In one place the loving Siva complains: "It is a sad mistake to see many European and American Truth seekers coming to India and returning home without any spiritual instructions, simply because they met only a few Mouni Swamis (Swamis observing the vow of silence.)"

It is therefore that Sri Siva took up to write easy instructions and publish elaborate treatises on all branches of Yoga and spiritual Sadhana.

May the blessings of the sages of Tiruannamalai and Ananda Kutir be upon all of us! Hari Om Tat Sat.

Om Shanti ! Shanti !! Shanti !!!

Chapter Eleven

SIVA'S PERSONALITY

We have so far compared Sri Siva with a few ancient and modern saints, Prophets and Avataras and found many striking similarities both in their characters and teachings as well. Let us now focus our attention more closely and exclusively on the Prophet of modern India----Sri Siva.

Professor Yung, the famous psychologist of Switzerland, has rightly pointed out that we must distinguish between the individual and the personality. The personality is the make of the individual. The individual shines through the person, but the light of the Purusha is in most cases obstructed by the illusory sheaths that make up the personality. It is therefore that the Swami Abhedananda said, that the apparent man often more disguises than reveals the real man. It is like the white light passing through the prism. The white ray being broken by the prism may manifest different colours, but if we gather them all together, we get the pure white light again. As long as we are not able to collect all the different

component colours, we will not be in the position to produce the original white colour. Similarly so long as we have not achieved an integral development of our entire being, the real man, the Purusha is only partly manifested through our personality. But the inner-Self, the Atma can so powerfully magnetise man's personality, even including his body that it manifests the very nature of the Self. This is the statement of Sri Ramana, the Sage of Tiruvannamalai in the Ramana Gita. It is therefore that Sri Krishna so emphatically stressed the need of Purna Yoga, which includes Karma, Bhakti, Raja and Jnana Yogas as its component parts.

Sri Yogi Shuddhananda Bharti advises to "be centred in." And Yogi Sri Aurobindo Ghose says: "Bring the psychic being in front." Both are steps of the same process of spiritual unfoldment. The bee gathers honey in silence; even so the devotee must first go within, prepare himself, realise and afterwards make the real, the divine shine more and more brightly through the personality. This is what we should all aim at. Some succeed to spiritualise some parts of their being. But Sri Siva and Sri Aurobindo are most forcibly sounding the need of the integral development as promulgated by Sri Krishna, the Yogeshwara in the Holy Gita.

We admire great personalities who have perfectly developed some aspects of their personalities, for it is indeed very rare to meet a superman of real integral development. Such rare example we have in

Sri Siva, who is still living among us and whose life is a blessing to hundreds and thousands of aspirants all over the globe.

It is because of this integral development that many one-sided men could not comprehend the real state of Siva. Being themselves one-sided they are unable to estimate the integrity of Siva and want to evaluate him by their own narrow standards. So one says, Siva is only a Kitranist and not a Vedanti, because he pours out thrilling songs in praise of the Lord. Others say, Siva is not a Vedanti, he is simply a Karma Yogi because he is actively engaged in selfless service for the welfare of the World. Another says, Siva is a Hatha Yogi because he performs Asanas and Pranayamas.

All these expressions do not characterise Sri Siva at all; they only show that one-sided, biased and prejudiced minds cannot properly understand and judge a saint, a sage and a Yogi of real integral development. In the case of Sri Siva not only the psychic being is brought in front, but a perfect integral development of the entire being is achieved by him. The personality has become so transparent that it permits the inner spirit to shine through it. The mind, the vital and the body are magnetised and divinised by the powerful soul of Sri Siva, so that they are no bar for reflecting the pure light of the soul, which resides within the lotus of the heart and which is omnipresent at the same time. It is really difficult to speak of a personality, where the personality is transformed and swallowed by the Inner Reality.

Anyway the Inner Reality uses the divinely transformed inner instrument (Antahkarana) and the body as well. Further the activities of a Jivanmukta when manifested in the outer world are bound to assume some forms and it is in this respect that one can say a few words about the great personality of Sri Siva, being fully aware that words are finite, and the finite can never express the Infinite and Siva is the Infinity itself.

We have said time and again that Sri Siva's is an integral development. But for analytical purposes we need have to take one aspect after another for our study.

The first thing that strikes a European student of Yoga and especially those now living in Germany is the Swami's readiness to serve all inquirers with his spiritual advice and books notwithstanding any money abroad. Sri Siva being fully aware of this condition has undertaken the burden and the sacrifice upon himself and is supplying his valuable books gratis to people located in Germany, till more favourable times will come.

When the present writer objects His Holiness, that it is impossible to accept more books without paying at least the cost of the books, not to speak of the inner value of it which is invaluable, the Swamiji's answer was simple: "Don't worry about the cost of the books; the Divine work must be continued at all costs."

What a large, magnanimous heart our Swamiji Maharaj has. Will you find another man now-a-days

who will be equally kind, loving and helping as, Siva is? This is Seva, this is Bhakti, this is Jnana tool. What is the use of speaking much about Love, when the heart is dry and every act of extending helping hand and every attempt of sacrifice is thwarted by the rational voice of the small personality, the ego-self? And how many can boast of having conquered it? If there were only a few among our statesmen who had conquered the ego and would have a heart like that of Sri Siva, how different would be the life on this earth of ours, how many miseries, worries, bloodsheds would have been avoided?

No doubt the service itself may be styled as Karma Yoga. But what prompts one to do such acts of pure love, knowing fully well that it is a sacrifice, which can bring no material remuneration in return? It is nothing but real Love. But how and from what did arise this Divine Love, which knows no limits of the ego-centric self?

The limited understanding of the present writer would not have been able to solve this enigmatic question, had it not been for the illuminating articles of H.H. Sri Swami Tapovanji in the "Divine Jubilee" Volume where Swamiji lifts the veil of this mystery by declaring that it is Sri Siva's *Sarvatma Bhava*.

And what is the nature of this Sarvatma Bhava? It is nothing but the highest Advaitic realisation. It is the seeing of the Lord in every creature. It is the perfect vision unobstructed by the false glamour of Maya. It is pure Jnana and Para Bhakti in one. It is

the point where Bhakti and Jnana meet and where it is difficult, nay impossible to distinguish whether it is Bhakti or Jnana. So in the very life of Sri Siva we have an exemplary proof of the Shastric statement that Para Bhakti and pure Jnana are one and not different.

No one spiritual teacher has so many disciples, followers and admirers as has Siva to-day. This is due to his unique personality.

Owing to the modern system of education which imparts intellectual knowledge only without any moral training, the majority of people are now-a-days unfit for a real Yogic or Vedantic discipline. Even more the very education received by the upper classes makes them physically weak and emotionally supersensitive especially as regards their own dear ego.

It is therefore that many so-called educated men with university degrees are unable to pay the necessary obeisance as prescribed in the ancient Shastras.

This service of the-lotus feet of a Guru is necessary in order to effect the internal change and regeneration of the Asuric nature, to assimilate the lofty and sublime teachings of the Upanishads and realise the supra-mental truth in the case of one's own being.

Most of the university-bred people cannot stand these tests, even the test of waiting. But even for these people Sri Siva has a compassionate heart. He

makes the very approach to him easy. He prostrates first. He advises to offer the visitor good food, knowing quite well that the seeker is not accustomed to the rigid discipline of a monastic life.

Further Sri Siva gives his Upadesha at once. He knows the value of time. In this point Swami Siva is quite different from other Gurus. So a great many persons who would otherwise have to wait for one more human incarnation at least, are at once set on the spiritual path by this unique loving and compassionate divine Guru—Sri Siva !

Another most important point why Sri Siva has so many disciples and followers all over the globe is that he does not offer one and the same method of Sadhana to all inquirers alike, as is the case of those Gurus who were themselves followers of a single method of Self-realisation.

If the student happens to be of the same trend of mind as his Guru then it is all right, but otherwise the aspirant will not be able to profit much by the instructions of the Preceptor, even though these instructions might be valuable and effective for students of different types. Having had personal experience in various forms of Yoga Sadhanas Siva is able to render help and give advice to Sadhakas of different temperaments and capacities. Well has it been said by Sri Muruga Das B.A., "People talk of synthetic Yoga only. They do not put it in practice. But here is a practical man who practises whatever he preaches. One may combine service

and Bhakti or Bhakti and Vedanta. But here is a man who practises Karma, Hatha, Raja, Bhakti and Vedanta, Yoga, in his daily life. This is a new thing" (vide Uttara Yogi, Himalaya p. 75).

The following few lines of the same author beautifully characterise the unique personality of Swami Sivananda : "No one has kept such a huge correspondence with all sorts of people of the whole world: children, school boys, college boys, girls, women, Zoroastrians, Christians, Mohammedans, Germans, Latvians, Bulgarians, Americans, Englishmen etc. Two books "Inspiring letters" and "Light, Power, Wisdom" (collections of Siva's choicest letters) have already been published. His letters on the Divine Life magazine forms the "Treasure of Teachings". Three such other books are ready for publication. Each aspirant-correspondent has sufficient matter for a volume" (Ibid).

Siva is a World Teacher or World Saviour in the truest sense or in the most literal sense of the word. For, even children, school boys and the fallen ones can approach Siva. And Siva most lovingly encourages them to mend their ways advising to ignore the weaknesses and faults as not belonging to the real part of them and to fix their attention to the indwelling presence, the Atma, who is purity and perfection itself. It is very interesting to note how Sri Siva teaches aspirants. This approach is individual. Beginners are mostly taught Karma Yoga in order to purify the minds, to

develop virtues and an active temperament. People whose minds have become pure and tranquil are shut in lonely Kutirs for long, protracted meditations. As regards the Ashram work everybody is placed in his right place e.g. a cook in the kitchen, a typist in the office etc. But people get also allround training there. So everyone is taught first aid and some useful work. Sri Siva is an Ashtavadhani. He can do several things perfectly at the same time. This requires perfect Pratyahara (abstraction) and Dharana (concentration). Sri Siva educates his co-workers on similar lines. The typist or office worker is placed in a room where people constantly come in and go out. They must learn to detach their minds from the noise and tumult and keep it firmly fixed on the work. Even a question addressed to them should not throw them out of balance but they should be able to resume their work at once.

For Siva there is no difference whether his disciple is an Indian, European or American. The present writer has received a similar Upadesha from Sri Siva : "Make a firm habit of practising Pratyahara several times during your daily activities. Do deliberate Pratyahara amidst the din and distractions and try to keep the mind steadily fixed to some work. Also just before you commence Dhyana withdraw yourself completely. Turn the mind fully inward and commence meditation.

Siva generally advises people to meditate three times daily. His Holiness's advice to the present

writer was : "You may have four meditations, two long sittings, early dawn and even-tide and two short periods of Dhyān, one sometime at midday and the other at night before retiring." This shows that Sri Siva's teachings and advices are given to suit individual requirements and capacities. Siva himself notwithstanding his multifarious activities meditates five times daily, not to say of short periods during intervals at work.

One great Yogi in French India has shut himself in solitude for several decades and preaches Samucchaya doctrine, i.e., work and meditation, but people generally either work and do not meditate, or meditate and withdraw completely from activity and do not participate in the affairs of the world. This shows how difficult it is to lead a well-balanced life. Sri Siva is the best example of Samucchaya doctrine himself, and what more—he has been able to train several of his disciples on these lines and very successfully too.

It is most interesting to note how Siva rectifies defects and weaknesses in the character of his disciples. At first he elaborately describes the positive virtues of his disciples and praises them highly, then in the course of his narrative he touches also the weak points of his character but in a way that it will not hurt the feelings of the aspirant. Then he most lovingly encourages to root them out and gives practical instructions how best to accomplish the task.

This is unique and quite different from the ways of other spiritual guides or Gurus. This is no doubt another reason why Siva has so many disciples now-a-days. Again I must reiterate that the modern education has made many a man too super-sensible, especially as regards their dear person or ego. Siva knows it too well and in his infinite Grace does not close the doors to heaven even to these spoiled children of God, but as a loving father or kind-hearted doctor finds a remedy for them also. It is noteworthy for even the most tolerant Gurus have been stern and hard as regards their disciplining their Chelas.

We have pointed out that a beginner is generally taught Karma Yoga and an advanced disciple is often shut up in solitude for long and protracted Dhyāna. But if the latter becomes Tamasic he is at once advised to participate in active duties of life such as serving the sick or other beneficent works.

As regards Mantra Deeksha one is given to repeat Panchakshara Mantra of Lord Siva another Dwadasakshara Mantra of Sri Krishna and still another is given to repeat the pure Pranava Mantra. In this respect Swami Siva is like Sri Ramakrishana Paramahansa, who actually realised the unity of religions. This extremely laudable trait in Sri Siva's character has expressed itself also in establishing the All-Worlds Religions Federation. But while Sri Ramakrishna exemplified the indrawn ascetic and Swami

Vivekananda had to play the active part of the missionary work, Sri Swami Siva has expressed in his person both the characters of Sri Paramahansa Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, for he is devout, kind and loving like the former and untiringly active and dynamic like the latter.

EPILOGUE

What was the motive of writing this short life-sketch of the glorious Swami when many other biographical works by able authors and close disciples have already been published ?

I must frankly confess that I too do not know the exact purpose it will have to play in the Siva's Leela. Evidently it was the Will of the Lord.

I was asked by a Sannyasi disciple of Sri Siva, viz., Swami Narayanaji, to undertake this task. I think it was the wish of the Indian disciples of Sri Siva to see a book written by a European devotee, that would describe the Master in an impartial manner to suit the taste of Western admirers and aspirants.

Any way no one knows better the shortcomings of this work as the author himself.

Firstly the greatest part of the book was written in a D. P. Camp (displaced persons camp) in the Mess-Hall, where besides the usual business, children were playing and dancing. The noise could hardly disturb the attention of the present writer but the kind inquiries of friends and acquaintances, as to

how it is possible to work in such unfavourable conditions, took away much of his valuable time. Another but smaller part of the book was compiled out-of-doors, i.e., in woods.

As regards my personal intention, so it was to draw the attention of all seekers after Truth, and Yoga, both Eastern and Western, to not let slip away this rare opportunity, to contact a Yogi, a Rishi, a Bhakta and Viswa-Sevaka who is willing to share his vast knowledge and extend his helping hand to every Sadhaka.

I have tried my level best to depict before the eyes of my readers the evolution of the saintly personality of the Great Sage.

I must again confess that I am not satisfied with my humble work but sincerely hope that the day will come, and another more able and more fortunate soul will accomplish this rather incomplete biographical sketch. Let me explain what I mean by all this. It is evident that only a perfect Raja Yogi, who has attained full mastery over his mind can turn out such a tremendous work as the Swami is doing.

Unfortunately we do not know what kind of Raja Yogic Sadhanas did the Swami during his Tapascharya.

One of his earliest biographers D. N. Jhingan, M.A. LL. B. writes briefly about this period of the Swami on p. 27 of his "Sage of Ananda Kutir". During a short period of an intense type of Sadhana

he (Sri Swami Sivananda) underwent full course of Hatha Yogic and Raja Yogic discipline, thus subduing the body and mind making them fit instruments for the Divine mission for which he was specially intended by dispensation of Providence.”

May be, it would not be of much practical value to the aspirant to know what kind of Sadhanas were practised by the great Swami, for he, being born as a pure soul with good spiritual Samskaras, could easily do without the lower Sadhanas, which is not the case of ordinary Sadhakas.

On the other hand it is quite possible that Siva, the Viswa-Sevaka, has practised the lower Sadhanas also for a brief period in order to be able to teach aspirants from personal experience.

Let us pray and hope that one day or another Sri Siva will disclose the history of his pilgrimage to the inner Shrine and conquest of the internal world, which will surely be read, by thirsty Sadhaks, with no less rapture than his trip to Mount Kailas and Manasarowar.

May I on this occasion extend my thanks to all Swamis of Ananda Kutir who supplied me with data on Sri Siva's life and also to other authors from whom I have gathered many valuable informations. And last but not least I am extremely grateful to the Sage and Great Yogi himself for without His Grace and blessings this work would never have seen the world.

I must leave you here my revered reader. May some other more enlightened disciple lead you further. Nay, may the grace and blessings of the Perfect Master, Sage and Yogi of Himalayas be upon you all and lead you safely to the highest pinnacle of Self-realisation !

HARI OM TAT SAT

Appendix 'A'

CHARACTER BUILDING

(Extracts from Sri Swami Sivananda's "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-Realisation." Ch. IV)

A pure moral character is absolutely necessary for a Yogic Sadhaka, for an aspirant of Jnana Marga, for a Bhakta or Karma Yogi.

No spiritual unfoldment is possible without strong character.

Character is nothing but a bundle of habits. If we can change our habit, it will result in a change of character. Now we must learn the method how to do this. In Siva's "Sure Way's of Success In Life and God-Realisation" and "Practice of Yoga" the method of cultivation of virtues and changing the habits is dealt with elaborately : "You sow an action and reap a habit. You sow a habit and reap a character. You sow a character and reap a destiny. The impressions of thoughts, feelings and actions are impressed indelibly on the subconscious mind. You

may die, but the impressions are always there. It is these impressions that bring you back to this universe. The impressions of thoughts and actions coalesce together and develop into a habit. The habits coalesce together and form a character. You are the author of these thoughts and habits. What you are to-day is the result of your past. It is all habit. You can make and unmake it through thoughts and deeds.

A rogue is not an eternal rogue. Put these people in the company of saints. They will be newly moulded and will be transmuted into saints with virtuous qualities. Dacoit Ratnakar was changed into Sage Valmiki. Jagai and Madhai who pelted stones at Nityananda were changed into veritable devotees. Their mental images, ideals and thoughts were changed. Their hearts, habits were changed. It is within the power of every man to change his bad character and thoughts. If good thoughts and good ideals are supplanted in place of vicious thoughts and wrong feelings, the man will grow in the path of virtue. A liar will become a truthful man. A scoundrel will become a saint.

The method of Pratipaksha Bhavana (thinking of the opposite) can change the habits, qualities and character of man. Think of courage and truth. You will be courageous and truthful. Fear and the habit of telling lies will automatically vanish. Think of Barhmacharya and contentment, greed and lust will vanish. This method is quite scientific. Gene-

rally ignorant people who have no knowledge of the subconscious mind and the Yogic method of changing the habits and character think that they will have their old evil traits throughout their lives. This is a sad mistake. The character is the outcome of your thoughts, ideals and mental aspirations. If you change your thoughts, ideals and mental aspirations, your character will also change. Here I shall give you a lesson or exercise. Suppose you want to develop courage. I have already told you that the subconscious mind is your willing servant and you must know how to extract work from it. It will establish new character, new ideals, new mental aspirations and habits.

Now the first thing is that you must have a strong desire to possess this virtue viz., courage. Then alone the attainment is easy. The supply can come only when there is demand. This is the law. If there is no desire in you for developing this quality, first try to create a desire. When the desire has manifested, you should possess a will. Will follows desire just as dog follows the master. Feel that you actually possess this virtue. Repeat the words mentally and with all firmness at your command "Om Courage." Feel "I am in possession of this quality." Feel again and again, when you meditate or think on this virtue. Use your imagination also. Imagine that you have got this virtue and try to express it in daily conduct. Have a clear-cut mental image of this quality. Think again and again, of the immense advantages that you can get by the possession of this

noble quality. Repeat the practice again and again. This virtue will develop slowly. Wait coolly. Do not be discouraged. It takes some time for the development of a virtue. The force of old wrong Samskaras of timidity and fear are there. There is an internal fight between the old and new Samskaras. Eventually the new Samskaras will carry the day.

Have unshakable faith and confidence that you will possess courage soon. Develop attention in this direction. You are bound to succeed in a short time.

Likewise, you can develop any good virtue or character. Have a clear mental image of the thing you want to cultivate or develop. The new habit will develop around the image. Building of character is building of habits. The changing of character is the changing of habits. Habit is second nature. Character is first nature. Perhaps it is all nature. But it can be changed at any moment through will, interest, attention and faith. New healthy, strong, virtuous habits will replace old, morbid abnormal vicious habits. Yoga aims at changing the old habits. Selfless service, with the spirit of renunciation, devotion, prayer and Vichara, can change old habits of worldly nature into new habits of divine nature. The practice of Yama and Niyama, Tapas and Sadachara, friendship, mercy and the three kinds of Tapas that are mentioned in the seventeenth chapter of the Gita all pave a long way for the moulding up of character.

Build up your character. This will give you success in life. Character is the garb of saintliness. Practise daily to remove old evil habits. Establish daily virtuous healthy habits. Character will help to attain the goal of life. Character is your very being. May that character take you to the Atmic Bliss of Self-realisation."

Peace be with you all !

Appendix 'B'

TAP ALL POWERS

(From Sri Swami Sivananda's book: "Concentration and Meditation").

(1) In all man's struggles and attempts at achieving any desired end there is in reality no necessity at all for him to go in quest of external forces to aid him. Man contains within himself vast resources, inherent power, lying untapped or else only partially made use of.

(2) It is because he has allowed his faculties to get scattered on a hundred different things, he fails to achieve anything great despite his inherent potentialities. If he intelligently regulates and applies them, quick and concrete results will occur.

(3) To learn to rationally, and effectively use the existing forces man need not wait for any striking new methods, etc., to be invented, to guide him.

Since the dawn of creation, nature herself abounds in instructive examples and lessons to aid

man in every walk of his life. Observation will tell us that every force in nature when allowed to flow loosely over a wide area, moves slowly and with comparatively less power than it would do if gathered together in one mass and directed through a single restricted outlet.

(4) This gathering together and brining to bear upon of a force at a given point on any object, idea or action, forms the process of concentration. The concentrated application of a force makes for maximum results in minimum time and effort.

(5) As examples of the power generated by concentration of force are cited (1) The sluggish and leisurely flow of a river, dammed and accumulated rushes out with an amazing force through the sluice. (2) The phenomenon of ton-loads of cargo in heavy wagons being hauled or propelled by the power of steam, concentrated in the boiler of the engine. It is a most common domestic sight, the clattering and displacement of the covering lid of a cauldron when the latter commences to boil very much. (3) The normally warm sunrays become suddenly so hot as to burn up objects when centralised and brought into focus through the lens. And the simplest and commonest of actions, where one unconsciously uses this principle, is noticed when a man wishing to hail another a good distance away, automatically lifts up his palms and shouts through them.

(6) This law is equally applicable to man in all branches of his life's activities. With the utmost con-

centrated and careful attention, the surgeon executes minute operations. The deepest absorption marks the state of the technician, the engineer, architect or the expert painter engaged in drawing the minute details of a plan, chart or sketch, where accuracy is of paramount importance. A like concentration is displayed by the skilled Swiss workmen that fashion the delicate parts of watches and other scientific instruments. Thus in every art and science.

(7) This is specially so in the spiritual life where the aspirant has to deal with forces internal. The powers of the Mind are always scattered and resist attempts at concentration. This oscillatory tendency is an innate characteristic of the mind stuff. Of the various methods employed to curtail and arrest this tossing of the mind those using the medium of sound and sight, stand prominent, because these two have a peculiar knack of catching the attention of and stilling the mind. It is seen how the hypnotist gently subdues the mind of the 'subject' by making the latter gaze steadily into his (the hypnotist's) eyes and listen to the monotonous repetition of his steady deliberate suggestions. We have still another clue to this when we note how the mother gently croons the little child into slumber. Also the school master's sharp. "Now then, boys *look here*" whenever he desires them to pay special attention to what he is saying, is significant. He feels that by getting them to fix their gaze on him, he will draw the attention of their minds as well to his teaching. Therefore in the course of spiritual discipline too, the methods of

developing concentration take the form of gazing steadily at a dot, or at symbol of the Pranava, or the Mantra or the figure of the favourite chosen deity. With some others it is done by the audible repetition of the Mantra or the Lord's Name or OM or some select Kirtan tunes with regular rhythm and intonation. By these means the mind gradually gets indrawn and focused. As this state deepens, the person slowly loses awareness of his surroundings. The concentration, when continued, leads to a state of Dhyana or meditation, when the practitioner tends to forget even that physical frame.

Meditation, when persisted in and perfected brings about the experience of super-consciousness or Samadhi, the ultimate state of Self-awareness or Realisation.

Appendix 'C'

CONSERVATION OF ENERGY

(Extracts from Sri Swami Sivananda's "Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-Realisation.")

Certainly no one can hope to get substantial and solid success if he dissipates his forces. Some Sadhakas work for considerable length of time without attaining any tangible results. This does not prove that the method of Sadhana is a wrong one, but one cannot expect any good results if the powers acquired are or gathered by Yogic discipline are wasted or dissipated by one channel or another. It is therefore that Sri Siva urges his aspirants to be careful of such a wastage of the spiritual Shakti which is acquired by strenuous efforts. Says Siva : "The conservation of energy in this body is of paramount importance. Generally energy leaks through the six-rat-holes in the body in the vast majority of persons. Many do not know how to conserve energy and regulate it according to their needs. They do not know how to transmute one form of energy into another form. If you really want to achieve some-

thing grand and sublime that will give you spiritual good, you must know fully well the ways to conserve energy and utilise it for the spiritual pursuits and development of higher inner Yogic faculties.

A Yogi or Jnani does not allow even a very small amount of energy to be wasted in any useless direction. He utilises all conserved energy in Atma-Vichara and spiritual pursuits.

Energy leaks from six rat-holes in the body. These are the important ones. There are many other minor holes. Shutting up of all these main holes will bring about the closing of other holes. Just as the sub-observer who is in charge of the canal irrigation department puts the shutters in the canal and turns the water into the lands of the landlords for agricultural purpose, so also, the Yogi or Jnani shuts out all the apertures into which the physical and mental energy leaks out and transmutes them into Ojas (spiritual energy) and spends the conserved energy in spiritual pursuits, meditation and exploring the higher regions of the mind and Atma.

The six important rat-holes are : the hole of the reproductive organ, the hole of the mouth, the four holes in the mind, viz., the hole through which the energy leaks from unnecessary worry, from unnecessary fear on an imaginary description, from excessive anger and through thoughts—lustful and idle. Energy leaks through the mouth by idle thoughts, gossiping, censoring, scandal-mongering and all sorts of useless, worldly thoughts.

Just as a greedy man is very careful in the accumulation of wealth and does not waste even a single pie and considers it as his very blood, so also aspirants and those who want to rise up in the world as men in real sense of the word should conserve even a minute quantity of energy and utilise it for good purposes. Energy is all money. People do not understand the value of energy. They waste it like anything. They squander it like a profligate son. They repent and weep in old age, It is too late to gather honey in winter.

You should never enter into unnecessary discussions. Discussions end in hostility. Energy is wasted. Too much laughter is another channel through which energy is wasted. A man who always bursts into laughter cannot influence people. Serenity, seriousness and magnanimity (Gambheerya) are necessary if you want to impress and influence people. Idle people who sit on wayside laugh without rhyme or reason. The laughter of a spiritual man is of quite a different nature. It has a sense of awe and grandeur. It produces a thrill and joy in others. But the laughter of these idlers is disgusting and heart-rending. Note the difference carefully ! Try to be serious, laugh and smile occasionally. But do not attempt to put on Sunday faces of a clergyman. Be quite natural. Meditation on Atma, development of virtuous qualities, practice of mercy, Ahimsa and truthfulness, will naturally manifest an air of grandeur and awe by

itself. You need not assume or put on anything unnaturally.

Hypocrisy is the most dangerous and heinous crime. It is most detestable. A Jnani laughs and smiles through the eyes. It is only a foolish man that bursts into laughter. The smile and laughter through the eyes influence people tremendously. No energy leaks if you smile through the eyes. You will have to cultivate this wonderful quality.

Use measured words while talking. Do not talk too much. Try to finish a conversation in five minutes. Understand a man rightly when he approaches you. Speak to him politely with respect and dispose him off quickly; conserve energy. Don't indulge in long and unnecessary talks.

I always prescribe the practice of Mouna for one and all as this helps the preservation of energy, development of will and enjoyment of peace. Practise and feel. Then you can never leave it. It gives you great strength.

Almost all people are in the habit of shaking unnecessarily some part of the body even while they are sitting calmly. Prakriti wants movement. This is Her Swabhava. The man who is seated in a chair reading a book shakes his things and legs. They are moved unconsciously. It has become a strong habit. Energy leaks through this hole or channel in the body. It must be checked. Watch the different parts of the body and check them. Some people

rock the body from side to side or forwards and backwards. A Yogi will never do this. He will sit calm and serene and no part of the body will move unnecessarily in any direction. He can remain as a perfect statue.

Sadhus have got a wandering habit and energy is wasted there. They cannot practise any meditation. As soon as they reach a village they will feel quite tired and begin to sleep. No Sadhana is possible. An aspirant in pure Nivritti Marga should stick to one place and practise concentration and meditation. Too much walking must be avoided. It exhausts any man. It renders him unfit for active work.

Just as energy is wasted in loose talking so also, energy is wasted in loose thinking. If this mental energy is conserved, by right thinking, by disciplining the mind, you will have at your disposal a tremendous store of energy and you can utilise it for various useful purposes. If this energy is conserved, you will feel that you are very powerful. You will feel no exertion even if you turn out huge volume of work. You will feel that you are quite a different man. You will turn out mental and physical work with tremendous ease and rapidity. You will have tremendous concentration. Weakness and exertion will be unknown to you. You will have to watch your thoughts by introspection and meditation very carefully daily in the morning. You must try to entertain good and sublime thoughts. You

will have to divert the mental energy in new and useful channels. There will be some struggle in the beginning. After some practice the mind will run quite smoothly into new groves.

Another channel or hole through which energy is wasted is the unnecessary 'worrying' habit. A man knows pretty well that he will get a money-order on the coming Thursday and yet he will worry himself and visit post office four times daily and interrogate the postman several times. This is all worry. You ought to know that everything is already fixed through Prarabdha. He knows that God gives food for the frog that remains hidden between the strata of rocks and the child in the womb. He will talk on this subject for hours together and yet he will worry for his food, clothing etc. He has got very little faith. He has a worrying habit. Energy leaks tremendously in this channel. Too many desires bring worry. A businessman entangles himself by opening too many branches in different planes. The worry increases by leaps and bounds. This is his own creation. Many people develop worry by falsely imagining that they are inferior to others. The idea of inferiority kills them and worries them very much. The idea of superiority also brings in troubles and worries. The ideas of superiority and inferiority are all mental creations. It is illusory. All differences are unreal. Never think that you are inferior to anybody. You begin to treat others with contempt when you think you are superior to them. Remove

these two ideas from your mind. Burn them to the very root in the burial ground of your mind and enjoy everlasting peace and joy. Now comes imaginary "phobias" or fear of all sorts. Energy leaks in this direction. Man thinks: "I will develop pneumonia. I have got fever and cough now." He gets unnecessarily perturbed. A disease is intensified by thinking. An ordinary ailment becomes severe by entertaining unnecessary fear. Man is afraid of criticism. What is criticism after all? It is a mere sound. It is a mere vibration in the ether or air. Why do you bother yourself much? If any man calls you a dog, why do you become furious? You do not develop four legs at once. Do you? You begin to fight with him. Your eyes become red. You retaliate him. You call him a donkey. He gets irritated. He fights with you. Both become deadly enemies now. If you do Vichara it is all nothing. This is the way by which man creates trouble and misery. Give up all sorts of fear. Stand up like a lion. Assert: "I am the embodiment of courage. Nothing can affect me. I am invincible. I am Immortal Atma." Draw courage from within...

Excessive sexual intercourse drains energy enormously. Young men do not realise the value of this vital fluid. They waste this dynamic energy by immoderate copulation. Their nerves are tickled much. They become intoxicated. What a serious blunder they commit! They are slayers of Atma. When this energy is once wasted it can never be

recouped by any other means. It is the **most** powerful energy in the world. One sexual act **completely** shatters the brain and the nervous system. They foolishly imagine that they can recover the lost energy by taking milk, almonds and Makara-dhwaja. This is a mistake. You must try your level best to preserve every drop although you are a married man. Self-realisation is the goal. The highest duty for you is Self-realisation.

The man who has controlled his seminal power and transmuted it into spiritual Ojas is the happiest and most powerful man on this earth. He can command nature. He is proof against all temptations of this world. He can get success in any department of life. He has complete concentration. I have given in the foregoing pages a detailed description of all the sources through which energy leaks out and the practical and easy methods for conservation of energy. You will have to put these instructions into daily practice. You must know how to regulate energy. Some people spend too much energy in the beginning in unimportant affairs and just at the time when they are wanted to manifest their full powers and full energy, they feel quite exhausted. You should have foresight and deep thinking.

Understand fully the aim and purpose of life. Develop your inner faculties, conserve your energy and acquire knowledge of the Self. Atma is self-contained. You can get everything here. Develop

virtues. Remember the basis and source. Have the ideal always before the mind. Realise the ideal. Rise above worldliness. Become a magnanimous soul. Wish eagerly and fervently to attain Self-Realisation. Have a definite purpose and aim. Have faith, interest and perseverance. You are bound to succeed. May peace and joy abide with you for ever and ever !"

Appendix 'D'

DETACHMENT

Extracts from Swami Sivananda's : "Philosophy and Teachings."

We imagine that it is easy to live the life of a householder and remain detached. This is a dream. How many of us are strong enough to exert our will against the powerful attractions of the worldly life, how many can remember that these attractions will eventually turn themselves into sources of misery or pain? The senses draw us towards them but the wise man does not identify himself with the senses. One is mistaken if one thinks that the senses can ever be fully appeased. Our sensuous appetite grows with enjoyment, and we are always hankering after more, new pleasures. Is it genuine happiness? The greater the material prosperity the smaller are the chances of enjoying real happiness. Are the rich happy? They are beset with anxieties from morning till night (and even in their dreams) feverishly making plans, desperately striving to double their incomes. The rich are in reality beggars—since they

are always tormented by the need for more. In days gone by when there was leisure and society was well regulated the Grihastha could live a life of selflessness and detachment. But we live in different times. The man of the world today has so many diversions and distractions that he is almost bound to fall a prey to the Vishayas. So, if you want Brahma Jnana (Knowledge of the Soul) and eternal bliss it is best not to get involved in the pursuit of worldly success.

If any one aspires to be a Jnani or a Yogi he must be prepared to go through rigorous and exacting Sadhana. He must purify himself by service to other Jivas in whom he must see God. He must do Japa Kirtan, Dhyana, Asana, Pranayama.

Little knowing the immense power of the name of the Lord, people ask me why I talk of Japa. Let them try it and see the effect on their minds and hearts. Without a name how can you even think of God at first? It is extremely difficult to comprehend the formless without first fixing attentions on the Sakar. Repetition of the Name creates wonderful divine vibrations that go through our minds. Japa must create waves of Mantra, so that even when you are not reciting the Mantram you can hear it inwardly.

People object to the Personal God, and ask how the idol can be God. Well, the human mind is limited and it cannot assimilate and realise the Nirakara, in a single leap. It must be trained in the conception of the Personal and then alone can God

as Pure Purusha be grasped. Did not the great Champion of Advaita, Sankara, himself confess his love for the eternally beautiful vision of Krishna?

To the Jnani the soul is actionless, passionless, unchanging, eternal. The Supreme Consciousness does not share the life of the Jiva. It is not tainted by action. It watches, it witnesses and surveys, but it is not that which motivates action. Prakriti's ever changing drama is enacted, but the supreme Atma is above it. Therefore for a Jnani, sorrow and joy, wealth and poverty, the world of qualities, the manifested, has no essential authenticity.

No one can achieve the ideals of Karma Yoga without destroying Ahankara, and you cannot dissolve the accumulated layers of Ahankara without the magic solvent of Seva. One must GIVE and SERVE if one wishes to know. To the self-centred, Jnana will ever be empty and meaningless. God has no use for the so-called Pandit who mechanically chants the Slokas but shuts his eyes to the sick man on the way!

Great is the power of environment. Those who feel uplifted here in Rishikesh, and breathe the peace of this holy air, often lose the fine moods as soon as they enter the train at Hardwar. One must frequently withdraw from the meaningless hurry of the world into such places, to refresh the spirit; imbibe vigour of will. Solitude and holy associations are great curatives for the soul.

To feel that you are not the doer will add to your capacity to act. You will feel that you can draw from an inexhaustible source of energy. Your ego cannot take you far. But once you open the secret channels of the Divine you will never lack the power to act rightly. You will have ineffable joy of working for an omnipotent Master.

HARI OM TAT SAT

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BIRTHDAY HOMAGE

TO

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA

By

SRI HARRY DICKMAN

Several of the "Divine Life Birthday Souvenirs" have borne Sri Yogiraj Harry Dickman's tribute to Sage Sivananda. Some of them have been published in the volume "Yogi Sivananda" which is collection of such tributes paid to the Yogi by Western Disciples. The others are published here.

THE EXEMPLAR OF DIVINE LOVE

(*From 1952 Birthday Souvenir*)

There are already many biographical works on the great Swami and one asks in surprise how and why it is so when the great Swami is still dynamically working in our midst and books on various themes are flowing like a stream from his inspired, prolific pen.

One reason is that none of the biographers (including the present writer also) has been able to present fully the many-sided personality of Sri Siva, nor has any one up till now given a complete picture of Sri Swami Sivananda's Sadhana period.

But there is another point, too, why so many writers have had the urge to give honour to the sage of Himalayas. It is Love. The Swami radiates a superhuman love, which is felt far and near. People too often preach about love, but very few are able to illustrate their love. It is, therefore, that the great Bhakta of the nineteenth century, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa said "Let no one speak any more about Love, but let one practise it". And Sri Sivananda Paramahansa is one of the Mahapurushas who is able to act according to this most difficult precept of his glorious spiritual predecessor.

No doubt, India has a few more Holy Saints, some of the greatest ones quite recently left this

earth. But if we compare with those of the most exalted state, we find that as regards the state of unselfishness and cosmic love Sri Siva excels all. He does not think of his profits or even his own personal comforts. When I was in Germany, and was unable to remit money, because of the governmental restrictions, Sri Swami Sivananda without any remuneration supplied me with every new publication, so that two heavy boxes were fully packed with his books when I left Germany for the U.S.A. Sri Siva repeatedly wrote : "Do not bother even a bit about money, the Divine work must go on.

Now, one may wonder how did Sri Siva acquire this exalted state of unselfishness ? Though we know not the particulars of the great Swami's *Sadhana* we know for certain that he did rigorous *Tapasya* for more than a decade. But mere *Tapasya* gives control over *Indriyas* and mind; it does not necessarily soften the heart.

Sri Siva himself discloses the secret : "It is Nishkamya Karma Yoga, Japa, Kirtan and Brahmabhyasa. It is all these together that can produce the egoless state.

A great Yogi who passed away quite recently said as a last *Upadesh* to his disciples : "It is very difficult to get rid of egotism."

But what is the root of egotism ? It is ignorance the false identification of the Self with not-Self, i.e. body and mind. This vital point has not yet been

fully grasped by the modern European Savants, while Sri Swami Sivanandaji has clearly elucidated it in his commentary on the *Brahma Sutras*, and Sri Sankara-Acharya has spoken about it in his *Atma-Shatakam* or *Nirvana Shatakam*. The ancient *Sankhya Sutras* clearly lay stress on this point.

But mere intellectual understanding will not do. By Japa, Kirtan, Nishkamya Karma Yoga coupled with Bhakti we must first soften the hard shell of egotism and then by Brahmabhyasa ultimately remove the cause and perceive the Reality behind the false ego, which is strong so long as the Truth is not perceived or realised.

What will be the result thereof ? Not only the Sadhaka will enjoy supreme bliss for himself, but he will acquire a divine personality to help others, attain a similar state.

And it is this Divinity in Siva that attracts the millions of devotees in Bharat and in far off countries. It is the Divinity in Siva that spreads the Light, Love and Wisdom to all of us. It is the Divine Shakti that cures numerous sick persons and sheds blessings on the suffering humanity. On the occasion of the sixty-sixth birthday of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj we pray for a very long life of the glorious Soul, the great Yogi, Sage and Saint of the Himalayas ! May His blessings be unto us all.

HARI OM TAT SAT.

THE PROBLEM AND THE REMEDY

[*From Divine Life 1954 Volume*]

If we ask ourselves what is the need of the hour, the answer will be the same as it was when humanity was in its cradle. The answer will, of course, be 'more light'---more of spiritual light---that we need more badly than ever. It is therefore that we pay with a grateful heart, the honour and homage to sages like His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati who liberally shares the fruits of his long and protracted Sadhana and instense Tapasya which had culminated in the highest and the most subtle spiritual revelations.

People of a materialistic trend of mind cannot easily grasp the necessity of true knowledge and enlightenment. They are prone to think that if the economical conditions could be improved, people would live happily and the causes of the wars, strife and unrest will be easily settled.

But if we look deeper, we shall detect the fallacy of this mode of thinking. Tamerlane, the great conqueror, was one day immersed in deep thoughts. Seeing this his teacher, approached him and asked "What is it that causes unrest to your heart? Have you not subdued enough nations, conquered lands, destroyed kingdoms?" Rather indignantly answered, Tamerlane, "The World is too small to be shared with another."

Does not this show how easily the ego gets inflated and how insatiable are the fires of greed and desire?

Unfortunately, for the world of today there are more than of such ego-stricken potentates who wish to dominate and enslave the whole world.

Many nations are still dominated by foreign diabolical rulers. With all their unprecedented conquests they are not yet satisfied.

And do their own nations have a bit of better life? The answer is an emphatic 'no'. Yet people cannot see the real cause of suffering and trouble, and even if taught, they can hardly understand it.

THE SELF AND THE EGO

In ancient Bharatavarsha where the most exalted truths and the deepest mysteries regarding the Soul were discovered by the Rishis, it was said that wonderful is the teacher who possesses the highest wisdom and wonderful, too, is the student who when taught can comprehend it.

In the West the Socratic dictum "Know thyself" is either not understood at all or else badly misunderstood. Owing to the inability to comprehend and realise the inner Self, which is subtler than the subtle, the ego reigns supreme.

This is what the wise Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu so well understood when he wrote in his famous work Tao-te-king: "Where the Self is, there is no ego; where the ego is there is not the Self."

To return to the point, as long as the Self is not realised, the ego holds its sway, and we have seen that the cravings of the ego cannot be satisfied by fulfilling its dictates.

As the ancient Hindu-Law-giver Manu said: "The more the desires are gratified the more will they increase, like fire on which clarified butter is poured."

Thus we see how important it is to know the truth of the real Self and to know the nature of the ego.

PLAY OF AVIDYA

Incidentally, the question might arise: "Why has not the West solved the mystery of the ego?" The answer is simple enough because its mind was turned outward to the world of matter and its changing phenomena.

And it is only now that the best men in the Western hemisphere of the globe, seeing the bankruptcy of materialistic civilisation, are turning their ears to the message of the ancient and the modern Aryan teachers, amongst whom we have His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda.

Historically speaking, it seems that the credit of teaching and discovering the nature of the ego belongs to Kapila Muni the ancient sage and the founder of the Sankhya system.

Kapila Muni clearly and lucidly expressed the ego to be nothing but a Vritti in the Chitta i.e. a mental modification in the mind-stuff.

Maharshi Patanjali declares in his Yoga-Darshana that the ego is the result of Avidya or nescience. Further, Patanjali explains the nature of nescience as being the inability to discriminate between the real and the unreal, the permanent and the impermanent, the soul and matter, the Purusha and Ahankara. Purusha or the soul, according to Maharshi Patanjali is the only real Substance whereas Ahankara or the ego is merely a function of the Chitta or the mind-stuff.

Sri Ramana Maharishi has beautifully shown how in the absence of the knowledge of the difference between the Atman or the Self and the Ahankara or the ego, the latter poses for the former, and consequently, demands a satisfaction of material desires, greed, lust and passion. The unenlightened Jiva (individual soul) being deluded by Maya, tries to satisfy the irrational demands and promptings of the ego, thinking itself to be identical with it.

YOGA SHOWS THE WAY

Hindu psychologists and Yogins have demonstrated that unless and until man can grasp difference between himself (his real nature) and the mind and its functions and the ego as being only modification of the latter, it is difficult for him to control the mind and renounce the foolish and harmful promptings of the ego.

It seems strange that the West until now has not been able to understand these subtle truths of

the Sankhya and the Yoga systems of philosophy, though the Vedanta philosophers at once could grasp them—these being a part of their own system of thought.

Badarayana in his Brahma Sutras and Sri Sankaracharya in his Atma Satakam (also called sometimes Nirvana Satakam) clearly show the difference between the Atma (self) and the Ahankara (ego). Says Sankara in his work just referred to, "I am not the mind, intellect or the ego, my real nature is absolute existence, knowledge and bliss, I am the blissful one—Sivoham, Sivoham."

Those who can at once grasp the difference between Ahankara and Purusha are the Jnana Yogins, others have to take resort to eightfold path of Patanjali Maharshi (Raja Yoga).

As in ancient India, so also it is even now regarded that only a small minority of people are Adhikaris of the Jnana Marga and the majority stands in need of Yoga or the path of discipline and self-culture. Swami Sivananda has often expressed this point in his numerous works.

The need of the hour is plainly seen to be more light or knowledge on the practical side of the science of Yoga, especially its psychological aspect, viz. Raja Yoga. Sri Swami Sivananda has long ago recognised this paramount need and in his two volumes on Practice of Yoga he has thrown much light on this most interesting subject.

That not only the West but India herself stands in need of practical treatises on the science of Yoga is clearly seen by the fact that books like Practice of Yoga and Practical Lessons in Yoga are in constant demand from a large section of the public.

If one would object to and say that an equal necessity is felt for Hatha Yoga, too, I would agree with the objector. Only I would humbly add that in this line something substantial has been done by several Hindu Yogins and some western writers as well. Whereas on the practice of Raja Yoga we seldom and hardly find a reliable work written by a practical Master of this type of Yoga. Of course we can have a lot of theoretical treatises written by eminent scholars and philosophers on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali Maharshi, but so far as the practical side of Sadhana is concerned, an expert guide of this science showing an elaborate scheme of progressive exercises, leading on the student from Yama and Niyama to Nirvikalpa Samadhi is of paramount importance. Swami Sivananda is such an adept in the path of Yoga. His valuable books and messages, if spread over a much wider circle of the peoples of the world can surely meet the need of the hour and humanity then can solve its multifarious problems through sincere practice of the teachings of Swami Sivananda.

A PERFECT YOGI AND A SAGE

[From 1955 Birthday Souvenir]

Swami Sivananda is well-known today, the world over. He can rightly be called the Jagadguru, a World Teacher, because his teachings are universal, non-sectarian, and because he has students and disciples in all parts of the world.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Indian Republic and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan the Vice-President and many other distinguished visitors have paid their homage to this Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji at the Mother Centre of the Divine Life Society at Rishikesh.

More and more people from foreign countries, Europe, America and Australia are coming and staying at Sivanandashram now-a-days.

One may wonder what is the reason of this unprecedented attraction? What may be its cause and rational explanation?

I shall try in a humble way, slightly to lift this cover of mystery, knowing beforehand that my task will be far from complete. It is evident that the eminent guests of the Indian Republic are interested not only in the material welfare of their citizens but in their moral and spiritual well-being also. No wonder they are attracted to this well-known centre

of spiritual learning, the Yoga Vedanta Forest University.

One may still ask why people from western countries have crossed the oceans in order to pay a visit to a Hindu Swami.

Well, though the western world is rightly called materialistic in respect of its mode of living and in the system of education there are still many souls who hunger and thirst for spirituality, who have seen and realised the futility of the materialistic civilisation, and who long and yearn to have a glimpse behind the veil of Maya.

Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastri has rightly pointed out that almost every religion contains Bhakti, Jnana and Nishkama Karma; except Yoga which is a special discovery of the Indian religious genius, and it is chiefly and primarily, if not entirely this search for Yoga Vidya that leads those seekers after truth to go to the far off land of Bharata and stay at such centres of spiritual learning as the Yoga Vedanta Forest University.

But why the western people are interested in the Science of Yoga?

It is not the craving after Siddhis, as so many learned Hindus think. Even the interest in Siddhis is caused not by a desire for power but rather by a desire to actually witness that there is something behind the gross, materialistic forces and phenomena.

The chief interest is to learn the science of Self-realisation and Self-mastery in a scientific and methodical way, and this is what Yoga and only Yoga can do.

The great Swami lives in India and India is a land of Sages and Bhaktas from time immemorial. So it is but natural that he had to write on Bhakti and Jnana, too. I deeply regret that works like "Vedanta in Daily Life" and the "Practice of Vedanta" are out of print. They throw a great light on the subject, contain a mass of information, are lucid in style and what is more, they stress the practical side of Vedanta Sadhana.

The Swami is not only a prolific writer on Yoga philosophy and medicine, but is a dynamic worker, a brave Adhyatmic soldier who fights the ills of body, ignorance of mind, and affliction of soul.

The more I write the more I feel that my pen is inadequate to describe the full glory of Siva's divine ersonality.

As regards the teachings of Sri Gurudev the chief thing he stresses is practical Sadhana, not merely theoretical philosophical knowledge, with hair-splitting logic, even though he himself is a philosopher of the highest order, a follower of the School of Advaita Vada of Sri Sankaracharya.

Sivananda's Yoga is like that of the Bhagavad Gita i. e. Purna Yoga, the Yoga of synthesis. Siva does not favour one-sided development. Unlike

some modern Acharyas who preach the integral Yoga but are rather adverse in including Hatha Yoga in it, Swami Sivananda has realised may be as a medical man, or a practical Yogi, the necessity of including Hatha Yoga in his system of integral Yoga.

The great Swami practises what he teaches. Even at an advanced age he practises Sirshasan and various kinds of Pranayamas.

He says that it is Asanas and Pranayamas which give him energy and power to cope with the multifarious activities and responsibilities.

Before closing, I would like to mention one thing more which made him a magnet attracting thousands of souls and that is his impersonality, his egolessness. Having transcended the ego, he shines like the ultimate Reality—the Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman.

That God, the most High, the All-merciful may bestow a healthful long life, on His truest devotee, perfect Yogi and greatest Sage, is my humble prayer on the occasion of His Holiness' 69th birthday on 8th September 1955.

JAGADGURU SWAMI SIVANANDA

[From 1956 Birthday Souvenir]

More than any other sage, prophet, or saint, Swami Sivananda Saraswati deserves the title of *Jagadguru*, or world-teacher. The teachings of other world-teachers like Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed, were spread throughout the world chiefly by their disciples and followers, while Siva's teachings have reached the five continents directly from the Master himself.

There are literally in every part of the globe branches of Divine Life Society, as well as individual students, who follow the teachings of our Gurudev.

Little is known about the *Sadhana* period of the Guru, it seems, for some reason or other, the Master is not inclined to make it widely known. All we know is that he was born in a pious, religious-minded family, in South India.

After completion of his medical studies Dr. Kuppuswami Ayyer, (such was Swamiji's *Purva Ashrama* name) settled in Malaya as a doctor. He was very kind towards his patients. A poor Pariah woman received all his medical care and attention, as though she were very important.

Swamiji had a desire to make hygiene, preventive (prophylactic) medicine and treatment of diseases

more known among the populace, and so he had, soon after his student days, started a medical journal *Ambrosia*, while in India. It was much appreciated by the reading public.

Yet, in the midst of a successful medical career (Swamiji was in Malaya for ten years), he renounced the world, went back to India and proceeded to the Himalayas where he stayed during his *Tapascharya* period in the, even now, famous Swarg Ashram.

As said before, only little is known what kind of *Sadhanas* the Swami did. The reasons why the sage is so reluctant in disclosing this period of his life might be, among other, the following: first of all, not all, rather very few, could follow exactly the same way of life as the Master did; secondly, not every thing might be found, even in his estimation, right and useful after the attainment of illumination. Let me explain this a little further. Lord Buddha, during his *Tapascharya* observed long fasts, which reduced him to a mere skeleton, and he found that his mental faculties were impaired, too. After resuming a normal diet, Lord Buddha found that his mental faculties regained their normal tone. As a result of this observation, Buddha advised his followers to follow the middle path, i.e., not that of an extreme asceticism, nor of unworthy sense-gratification, which is generally followed by worldly persons.

Little as we do, we still know that Swami Sivananda, during his intense *Tapascharya* period rose

early in the morning, before sun-rise, and stood in the cold Ganga waters for hours doing his *Japa Sadhana*. As a result of this kind of *Tapasya* the Swamiji got lumbago, which troubled him for many years. So like Buddha, Sri Siva later taught his disciples: "Do not spoil your health in the name of *Tapasya*." But on the other hand, Swamiji says: "Watch the mind, control the *Indriyas*." Nor should this be wrongly interpreted that Swamiji advocates mental culture and disregards bodily discipline. Nothing could be more wrong than this idea. Even at this advanced age, the revered Swamiji, whose 70th birthday we now celebrate, is very punctual in doing everyday some *Yogasanas* and *Pranayamas*. He says and repeats often that the regular practice of *Asanas* and *Pranayamas* gives him good health and supplies abundant energy.

How widely different is Swami Sivananda from other great sages who minimise and even speak with contempt of *Hatha Yoga*. Yet when we read or watch their life-stories, they mostly all suffered from some or other kind of serious bodily disease.

There is another trait in Swamiji's behaviour which is worth mentioning here. In *Viveka Chudamani*, Sri Sankaracharya says: "Shun work from a distance." Swami Sivananda, too, is a follower of the philosophy of *Kevala Advaita* of the School of Sri Sankara, but he regards work as a great purifier. Work forms an important part in his Yoga of Synthesis. The motto of the Divine Life Society runs: *Serve : Love : Meditate : Realise and*

Swamiji's ethical teachings are simple and yet all-comprehensive: *be good, do good*.

If we look at these cryptic instructions from the Yogic point of view, we can discover that under the instruction "*be good*, we might include all the *Yamas* of Patanjali Maharshi, while the other part "*do good*" might stand for the *Niyamas*.

As to the mottos: "*Love*" stands for *Bhakti Yoga*, "*Serve*" for *Karma Yoga*, "*Meditate*" for *Raja Yoga*, and "*Realise*" for *Jnana Yoga*.

Swami Sivananda is an embodiment of the Gita teaching that the realised sage should not abandon work but work for the benefit of the world. Who could equal Sri Siva in this respect? He has established in his *Ashrama* a sanatorium, the Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical works, a charitable allopathic hospital, a free kitchen for all, and various other philanthropic enterprises. This and many other selfless services are rendered here for the children of Mother Ganga or the descendants of Bharata. Yet the soul of the mighty sage knows no caste, distinctions, religious prejudices, or national or geographical limitations. Knowing fully well the thirst for spiritual knowledge, the Swami has written about 200 books on Yoga, philosophy, medicine, etc. In order to reach the Western seekers of Truth and Spirituality, the Swami has written almost all his books in English.

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University is a boon for the Western Truth-seekers. They spend there some months, learn the techniques of Yoga from

qualified professors, besides having the rare privilege to get direct *Upadesh* (advice) from the mighty seer, Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj himself. After spending their allotted time in the *Ashram* they return home, and many of them have founded in their Western countries branches of the Divine Life Society or the Sivananda School of Yoga.

Notwithstanding all this, the sage of the Himalayas knows that it is not yet absolutely all that could be done. True Yoga is not any more such a mystery as when the great Swami Vivekananda first came to America. There are now-a-days books available on Yoga in almost every European language. But still the ordinary European or American seeker after Yoga-knowledge, especially those who have as their guide the printed book only, feel that many points, particularly those relating to the exact and graduated or step-by-step techniques, need a further elucidation.

As the present printing machines at the *Ashram* are unable to cope with the mass of unpublished manuscripts the Swamiji has written, he is planning to instal new and more up-to-date machinery.

Such, in brief, is the life and work as seen from a far distance by a humble devotee who had the good fortune to drink the *amrita* (nectar) of the wisdom of the Holy Sage and feel his protection and guidance on the path of Yoga.

May he, the present Great *Jagadguru*, live long for the benefit of mankind and glory of modern Bharatavarsha.

STORY OF SWAMI SIVANANDA

SIVANANDA LITERATURE

SIVANANDA LITERATURE

[*The Sunday Searchlight Magazine*]

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES, PEACE AND PERFECTION, HEART OF SIVANANDA, STORY OF MY TOUR, ASHRAMS AND SAINTS, ILLUMINATING TEACHINGS.

These six books by Swami Sivananda Saraswati published by the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University, P.O. Sivananda Nagar, Rishikesh, contain the price-less teachings of the great savant of Rishikesh couched in his characteristic inimitable language as illuminating as instructive.

In the SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES (Pages 440, price Rs. 4) are portrayed the aspirant's perception of the working of his psyche as well as of the forces of the astral world. Self-realisation is the consummation of all experiences and transcends the realm of the mind and is thus indescribable. Attempts have however been made in this book to describe the super sublime state of cosmic consciousness and of the other preceding phases of occult perception. Of the 12 chapters the first two relate to the nature and states of consciousness and cosmic consciousness. The third chapter describes the various experiences that the aspirant has to pass through in the path of meditation. Different phases of Samadhi experiences and psychic powers of Yoga are detailed in subs-

quent chapters. In the last chapter are recorded the experiences of some Christian mystics.

PEACE AND PERFECTION (pages 272, price Rs. 3) contains 455 poems dealing 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 guide to aspirants are jotted down in another. Saints and sages are given in one chapter and wisdom sparks are collected together in another. The book deserves to be read and reread.

HEART OF SIVANANDA (pages 190, Price Rs. 3) 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 a 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 here is no doubt Swami Sivananda has been the greatest success in this direction.

In STORY OF MY TOUR (pages 188, price Rs. 2) have been described the places visited, the personages met and the shrines visited in English verse. It may be recalled that Swami Sivananda went on a tour of India and Ceylon on September 9, 1950, returning to Rishikesh after three month. 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 Bhubaneshwar 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.

ASHRAMS AND SAINTS (Pages 120, Price Rs. 2) gives a list of the principal Ashrams in India and describes the saints to whom these are dedicated. Govdiya Mutt, Rupkala Kutir, Ramana Ashram, Prabhudatta Ashram, Gita Bhavan, Aurovindo Ashram, Anandamayi Ashram and Dayalbagh 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 catholicity of religion. Of particular interest are the references to the Sevagram founded by Mahatma Gandhi and to Shaban Shah Ashram at Rajpur, Dehra Dun, founded by a Muslim divine.

ILLUMINATING TEACHINGS (Pages 224, Price Rs. 2) 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 three really illuminating chapters. 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 on 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

Ethics of The Bhagavad Gita, The Moral And Spiritual Regeneration of The World, Sivananda Vani, Temples In India, Telegraphic Teachings:--

In his "ETHICS OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA" (page 347 Price Rs 4/-) 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 Sivananda 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 Jnana, 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 Sivananda Nagar soon succeeds 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 Jnana Yoga and it is only after that 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 frustrate 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 MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REGENERATION OF THE WORLD:—

It 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 faith 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 desirable 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 end every religion can contribute, but the greatest contribution has ever been and will in future continue

to be of India, with its Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita. There is no trace of a taint of religious seclusion in the either. Swamiji advocates the teaching of moral and spiritual books in schools and colleges, and is of the opinion that attempts should be made to impart those teachings to the Sadhus to make them serve the people with love and selflessness. If humanity is to survive and advance a religious and spiritual outlook has to be created specially in public and social workers.

SIVANANDA VANI:—

It is a collection of 120 letters printed in manuscript addressed to a beloved disciple by Swami Sivananda. Practical instructions on every aspect of the Yoga or Sadhana have been curtly though clearly set forth in these letters. It may be claimed that the author has answered the daily doubts that generally arise in the mind of the Sadhak in a manner likely to be universal. A list of some practical instructions printed at the end, forms a good supplement to these letters.

In his *TEMPLES IN INDIA* Swami Sivananda gives a short account of each of the 77 temples in India, including 30 Vaishnava, 29 Shaiva, 13 Devi's and 5 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-sufficiency.

TELEGRAPHIC TEACHINGS:—

It contain 183 telegrams sent 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.

The copy of the review tekan from THE SUNDAY SEARCHLIGHT MAGAZINE 6th October 1957.

Reviewed by A. B. N. SINHA.

SIVANANDA THE PROPHET OF REAL RELIGION

This book gets its importance because of at least two things viz. that it is a collection of the correspondence between two big VIP'S of India, the compiler and the *persona grata* of the compilation. There is the added strength to this work because it contains among the many usual features in the Divine Life Society publications, some fine selections of thoughts that emanated through the lips of the Swamiji from time to time. Apart from this aspect of the collection, the book is a good synopsis of the genesis, history and working of the Mercara (Coorg) Branch of the D.L.S. under the Presidentship of the Ex-C-in-C, India that might well be a safe Model for many a branch in existence or of be formed in the future. In short, the book is a good guide for the modern

youth notwithstanding its heavy price or cost but against such a charge might be said that there is no monetary valuation for things appertaining to the Spirit and Swami Sivanandaji's efforts are only in that direction. •

STEPS TO SELF-REALISATION:—

The twenty-one chapters in this book are arranged under various headings starting from prayers and ending with "On Various Topics." The Supreme Truth and Knowledge of the Brahman, Atma, Upanishadic sparks, Vedanta, Mind, Sage, Service. Real Religion, Cause and cure of diseases, and Brahmacharya are some of the major topics dealt with in these pages in the usual style of the D.L.S. Publications and in such simple language that could be understood by even the smallest of aspirants for realisation. The book is well presented by the donation of Swami Om Narayanji.

Review taken from THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW 4th Dec. 1957.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES:—

In this magnificent work, the readers have the benefit of a valuable treatise on the nature of the Inner Spirit of Man and a Lucid metaphysical study of what Man could become by a protracted discipline of his body, mind and will. A clarification on the meaning of 'Cosmic Sense' as obtained by both the Eastern and Western thinkers, is presented in the course of this study. This good book makes a

distinction between the really evolved Sadhak whose prerogative 'Illumination' is, and the Pseudo-Sadhak who claims to be in a state of high evolution; another point which is worthy of notice in this work is that the exhibition of Siddhis is no criterion of spiritual greatness.

—The Wednesday Review,
5th February, 1958,
Tiruchirapalli.

SIVANANDA'S METAPHYSICS AND MESSAGE

[By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri]

This is a valuable contribution by a distinguished and experienced scholar who has seen life both in the official and non-official fields. Nearly half of the work is an intelligent epitome of Indian Philosophy. The various *Darshanas* or systems of philosophy are presented in their proper profile and from a proper perspective. The bold and crisp style of the author has neatly and deftly traced the evolution of Indian Philosophy, and in this process of tracing, the Fundamentals have not been lost sight of. The development of Sivananda's synthesis of Yoga has been brought out in a cogent manner by the philosopher in the author. Judging from the present standards, we find that the estimate of the place Sivananda occupies in the field of Indian Philosophy, is not exaggerated. This is a neat and cogent book for the modern mind.

—The Wednesday Review,
5, February, 1958,
Ttiruchirapalli.

THE SAGA OF A SAGE:—

This is a neat book by a neat lady about a neat sage whose saga is meant for students to be neat in their life for a neat career towards God, Sri Padma is an

ardent disciple of Sri Swami Sivananda and an illustrious daughter of an illustrious father, Sri R, Ranga Ramanuja Ayyangar, whose musical contribution has placed the music world under a debt of gratitude. Sri Padma herself is a Vainikajyoti and has the capacity to mesmerise the listeners of her Veena recitals, Indian and Foreign, and make them enjoy her sweet music. The presentation of the sentiments, experiences and thoughts of the great spirit of the modern age is well planned and her service in the cause of the youth of the country deserves all appreciation, not necessarily by the student population but by the general public as well. This must prove a good guide to many aspirants of spiritual approach and progress under the spiritual leadership of Sri Swami Sivananda.

Review taken from THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW.
20th November 1957.

ALL ABOUT SIVANANDA

[*By Sri Swami Venkatesananda*]

Under 108 sections, the author, one of the youngest inmates of the Sivanandashram and closest to Sage Sivananda, presents to us a clear-cut and an extraordinarily revealing picture of Swami Sivananda. These sections are grouped under five chapters. We would say that this book gives a better picture of Swami Sivananda, his teachings and activities than any other book published so far.

Review taken from MY MAGAZINE issued from Madras Dec. 57.