

ALL ABOUT SIVANANDA

By

SRI SWAMI VENKATESANANDA



Sri Swami Venkatesananda



**SERVE, LOVE, GIVE,
PURIFY, MEDITATE,
REALIZE
So Says
Sri Swami Sivananda**

A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION

First Edition: 1957
Second Edition: 1971
Third Edition: 1978
Fourth Edition: 1985
(2000 Copies)
World Wide Web (WWW) Edition : 1998
WWW site: <http://www.rsl.ukans.edu/~pkanagar/divine/>

This WWW reprint is for free distribution

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Published By
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR—249 192
Distt. Tehri-Garhwal, Uttar Pradesh,
Himalayas, India.

PROLOGUE

Bhagavan! Thy child's tiny hands have gathered these small flowers from the immense garden of Thy glory, and woven them into a clumsy garland; but it is offered at Thy Divine Feet with a big noise (calling it "*All About Sivananda*"). The fragrance, and the beauty and the colour, belong to Thee. It is Thine own unsurpassable love for Thy children that makes Thee accept this, too.

It was said of Lord Sri Krishna that everything about Him was sweet. It is true of Bhagavan Sivananda, today. Dr. Kuppuswamy transformed himself into Swami Sivananda: and the austere, stern and hard taskmaster Swami Sivananda has somehow mysteriously vanished—when and how, no one knows. The Siva* we see in our midst today is the most loveable concrete manifestation of Divine Life.

May that Love dwell in our hearts!

Siva-Pada-Renu

* 'Siva' is 'Swami Sivananda'.

PREFACE

"*All About Sivananda*" is a kind of all-round meditation on the various phases of the personality and message of the great saint and sage, His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanadaji Maharaj, as visualised by the author, Swami Venkatesananda, who was a direct disciple of the Master. This is a veritable pen-picture of the many sides which the majestic hero of this book touched in his personal life and teachings.

This little, interesting book was printed three times already, in the years 1957, 1971 and 1978. But the printed copies were exhausted quickly, since devotees everywhere began to demand copies for their daily religious sessions. The impact of this beautiful presentation seems to have been such on the minds of lovers of God and religious men, that we received a pressing request from Sri D.S. Kulkarni, a retired teacher, from Hubli, Karnataka, that this book be made available to the public as early as possible, and with this request he sent his devout love-offering by means of a financial contribution towards its publication. This Institution is grateful to this ardent well-wisher of this Ashram and devotee of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivananda, for his being instrumental in the coming out of this book now in its Fourth Edition, for the benefit of everyone.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

Shivanandanagar,
7th March, 1985.

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Chapter One

THE LIGHT THAT IS LIFE

1. SIVANANDA’S LIFE

Siva’s life is God’s Guarantee to mankind. It is the Sadhaka’s Guide, an open scripture for all to learn from. It is a divine bridge, linking the finite with the Infinite, connecting the land of mortals with the Realm of Immortality.

As a student, he exemplified in himself the ideals of obedience and reverence. The Young Dr. Kuppuswami showed that selfless and dynamic service paved the way to material prosperity, too! He set an example in indiscriminate charity and proved that it *invited* wealth, peace and happiness. As a flourishing doctor in Malaya during the 1920’s, his cheerful countenance and robust body, proclaimed that intense work done with the correct mental attitude strengthened the body, lengthened life, and infused peace into the heart and bliss into the soul of man.

By the single act of renunciation of all that riches and a prosperous career, Siva had taught more than any scripture could, that realisation of the Self is dearer than wealth, dearer than everything, than life itself. Awe-inspiring austerities, begging and pennilessness caused—not unhappiness nor suffering in the heart of the zealous seeker Dr. Kuppuswami, but—an intensification of the faith in God and His Unfailing Mercy.

To mankind blinded by the cataract of materialism, faithlessness and egoism, Siva extended his helping hand—the Divine Life Society. He gave asylum to aspirants in his Ashram. In the Forest Academy, Siva’s students have their inner vision unveiled.

This God has clothed himself in human garb. He has come amidst us as a Divine Invitation to a perennial Forest of Immortal Bliss.

2. SIVANANDA’S HOROSCOPE

	Moon		
			Lagna Mars Saturn Rahu
Kethu			Mercury Sun
		Jupiter	Venus

I have watched Siva listen with great enthusiasm to palmists and astrologers praising and admiring his life and mission. Blessed are the palmists who have held the divine hand for few minutes; and blessed are the astrologers who have meditated upon His Divine Life for a while. Siva too, is interested in *them*, in encouraging them to express themselves and in making them known to the public at large. The creator of creation and the ordainer of the orbit of heavenly bodies; does he need to be told about his own traits and forewarned about his future?

He was born in 1887 to live for nearly another century. His birth-star was Bharani, which has made him rule the Dharani (earth). What need have we to analyse his horoscope? He has re-arranged our birth chart and changed the very course of our life. Blessed are we that we live in His Time.

3. SIVANANDA'S BED EXERCISES

The core of Siva's teachings is sincerity, earnestness and aspiration. He is firm in his declaration that if one is eager to do Sadhana, it will be impossible for him to find excuses not to do it! If one wishes to do some exercises, he says, he will do them, even if he is bed ridden, on the bed itself. He has given the following easy exercises, which every one, however old and infirm, can practise.

Exercise No 1: Catch hold of your ankles behind your back while squatting. Now bend forward and touch the ground with your forehead. Release the hold on the ankles and in one backward motion swing back, resting the two palms on the ground. Keep the right palm on the ground and swing the trunk to the right and touch the ground on the right side with the left palm also. Twist the trunk to the left side and place both the palms on the ground on the left side.

Exercise No 2: Stretch the legs forward. Catch hold of the toes with your hands. Try to bend forward and touch the knees with your forehead, without bending the knees.

Exercise No 3: Sit cross-legged again. Breathe out completely and slowly. Draw the belly in (Uddiyana Bandha).

Exercise No 4: Release the abdomen. Breathe normally. Now, draw the belly in and release in rapid succession. Do not hold the breath. Do not shake the body also violently. This is an exercise exclusively for the stomach. This is called Agnisara.

Exercise No 5: Close the fist and raise the forearm, bending at the elbows. Throw the arms forward; then again draw the forearm backward, bending at the elbows. Repeat this three or four times. Stretch the arms sideways and resume the normal position. Similarly, stretch the arms upwards and bring them back to the normal position.

You can similarly evolve your own exercises, to suit your needs.

4. SIVANANDA'S FAVOURITE ASANAS

Siva began practising Yogasanas even while he was serving as a doctor in Malaya. He was so enthusiastic about them that he taught them to his cook (who later became his disciple, Swami Shraddhananda, and attained Mahasamadhi at his lotus-feet). *Sirsasana* is undoubtedly the most favourite Asana of Siva. He regards it as the King of Asanas. It is a tonic to the brain, a cure for many ailments of the eyes and ears, a blessing for Brahmacharins and brain-workers, and an indispensable friend of spiritual aspirants. In fact, Siva likes *Sirsasana* so much that even to those who plead inability to do it, he prescribes the "Rabbit-Pose" (sit in *Vajrasana*, bend forward and touch the ground with the crown of your head, resting the palms a little away on either side) or at least, letting the head "hang out" of the bed for a while. *Sarvangasana* is the next important Asana which Siva likes very much and prescribes to everyone who wishes to maintain good health and enjoy a long life. "Even if you can't do *Sirsasana* and don't do other Asanas, practise *Sarvangasana* for a few minutes a day," says Siva.

Paschimottanasana completes the trio. It exercises the abdomen and the spine, thus warding off a host of diseases and preserving perfect health. *Sarvangasana* exercises the thyroid gland and enables you to enjoy everlasting youth. *Sirsasana* makes you shine with Ojas Shakti.

Vajrasana Siva prescribes to all to help digestion; sit in it for fifteen minutes after meals and you will never suffer from indigestion.

Siva is very very regular in the practice of Asanas; and he emphasises that even if you select two Asanas and devote three minutes to the practice, if you are regular, you will derive immense benefit.

5. SIVANANDA'S PRANAYAMA

Technique: Sit comfortably on a chair, sofa or easy chair. Draw the air through both nostrils, as long as comfortable. Retain as long as comfortable. Repeat your Mantra or "OM" while retaining the breath. Then exhale as long as comfortable. You need not observe any ratio between the inhalation, exhalation and retention; but let the inhalation and exhalation be deep and full.

Benefits: The benefits of this Pranayama are incalculable. All the muscles are relaxed. All the nerves are toned. Rhythm and harmony are established in the entire being. Mind is calmed. Circulation is promoted. An inexpressible peace and bliss come to reign within you.

You can do it in the morning while lying in bed. Your mind will become alert for commencing Japa and Dhyana. You can do it when the mind is about to lose balance on account of the setting in of lust, anger or other evil Vrittis; the mind will be filled with a great power that will prevent the evil Vrittis from disturbing it. You can do it just before commencing your study; the mind will be concentrated easily and what you study will be indelibly impressed in your mind. You can do it during your office work; you will get new strength every time and you will never be tired. When you return home from the office you can practise this Pranayama and you will be recharged with fresh energy.

The greatest advantage is that once you start doing it you will do it very often; and your mind can never find an excuse for not practising this Ati-Sukha-Purvaka Pranayama, very very easy and comfortable Pranayama which has all the advantages of Pranayama, without its “rules and regulations”. Do it from now without fail.

6. SIVANANDA’S METHOD OF MEDITATION

Siva is the living illustration of “Brahma Karma-Samadhi” which Lord Krishna has described in the Bhagavad Gita. He is a life-long ceaseless meditation on the Absolute. It is Siva who has fulfilled the mission of the sages of the Upanishads and who has synthesised meditation and life itself into a divine unbroken experience of God-consciousness.

His life demonstrates his teachings. And, he instructs his disciples to practise what he has aptly termed “battle-field Pratyahara”. The aspirant should be able to shut-in the mind on the battle-field of daily life, anywhere at any time. At the same time, Siva insists upon the first attempt at meditation in the quiet early morning hours—Brahmamuhurta. This is when the Sadhaka *fixes* his mind on God: Dharana. The rest of the day is to be meditation, unbroken God consciousness in the midst of endless routine of variegated activity.

Siva is synthesis, every inch of him. He cannot see difference among the Yogas, religions or systems of philosophic thought. To prove this, this Bee-God has gathered the essence from all Yogas and from all religions and in his own honeycomb, the Sivananda Literature, given us the honey of Divine Life, the Yoga of synthesis.

He wants us to be Bhaktas and Yogins, Dhyanis and Jnanins, dynamic selfless workers and detached Vedantins, all at the same time. He leads the way. The continuous meditation during the day that Siva practises and preaches is, thus, made to run through all the grooves of the Yoga of Synthesis. God in the man makes us His servants, God in the shrines makes us His devotees, God within us beckons to us to close our eyes and remain self forgetfully absorbed in him. God in all reveals the Cosmic Consciousness that pervades all creation and transcends it. This is the method of meditation that Lord Sivananda exemplifies in himself for our emulation.

7. SIVANANDA’S KIRTAN

Siva’s Kirtan, like Krishna’s Flute is enrapturing. In it mingle melodiously the plaintive prayer of a meek devotee, the eager comradeship of a loving friend, the humble submission of a loyal servant, and the total surrender of a conquered beloved. In the sweetest nectar of his Nama-Sankirtan, Siva has mixed the Nava-Rasas; and in his mode of singing he beautifully expresses all the Bhavas.

Siva adores all Gods, knowing that there is only One God. He sings the following invocatory San-Kirtan Dhvanis invariably at the commencement of every auspicious undertaking.

Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Jaya Ganesha Pahi Mam
Sri Ganesha Sri Ganesha Sri Ganesha Raksha Mam
Jaya Sarasvati Jaya Sarasvati Jaya Sarasvati Pahi Mam

Sri Sarasvati Sri Sarasvati Sri Sarasvati Raksha Mam
Saravanabava Saravanabava Saravanabava Pahi Mam
Subramanya Subramanya Subramanya Raksha Mam
Jaya Guru Siva Guru Hari Guru Ram
Jagad Guru Param Guru Sat Guru Shyam
Adi Guru Advaita Guru Ananta Guru Om
Chit Guru Chidghana Guru Chinmaya Guru Om
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Namah Sivaya Namah Sivaya Nama Sivaya
Namah Sivaya Namah Sivaya Nama Sivaya
Dattatreya Dattatreya Dattatreya Pahi Mam
Dattaguru Dattaguru Dattaguru Raksha Mam
Anjaneya Anjaneya Anjaneya Pahi Mam
Hanumanta Hanumanta Hanumanta Raksha Mam
Ganga Rani Ganga Rani Ganga Rani Pahi Mam
Bhagirathi Bhagirathi Bhagirathi Raksha Mam
Om Tat Sat Om Tat Sat Om Tat Sat Om
Om Shanti Om Shanti Om Shanti Om.

8. SIVANANDA'S DANCE

Was it to remove a Puranic misconception that Siva danced? Lord Siva's Tandava-Nritya even now evokes dreadful awe in the heart of the devotee; it signifies the end of a world-cycle, a Pralaya. Before our very eyes Bhagavan Sivananda has often danced; we now realise that Lord Siva's Tandava-Nritya, too, should have been a bliss-radiating spectacle, transporting those who are fortunate to witness it, to realms of bliss and peace. Siva's dance does signify the end of a world-cycle; those who have witnessed it are liberated here and now from the cycle of birth and death.

On the lecture platform Siva would sing:

Sunaja Sunaja Sunaja Krishna!
Tu Gitavala Jnana Sunaja Krishna

Or

Agad Bhum Agad Bhum Bhaje Damaru
Nache Sadasiva Jagad-Guru

Sivananda would dance like Krishna, with a countenance radiating bliss; and change the Sankirtan Dhvani and with a serenely peaceful expression do the Tandava-Nritya. Why did he combine the two? Is it to reveal to us that Krishna's Rasa-Lila, Siva's Tandava-Nritya and Sivananda's Dance had the same message to mankind, and led man, through self-surrender and annihilation of the little individual self, to liberation from Samsara?

Young and old, men and women, rich and poor, and high officials and haughty leaders—would dance with Siva. Siva’s bliss is highly infectious. Once he danced in Lahore; people who had no faith in Saguna-Upasana, in His Name, began to dance, too, and their headgears rolled on the ground; so blissfully self forgetful were they. Siva’s dance liberates us from our own little self’s vanities.

9. SIVANANDA’S PRAYER

To what sort of a God does this incarnate Divinity pray? Read the first line of Siva’s Universal Prayer: (text is given below)

“O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love”
Well, where does this Lord reside? Read further:
“Thou art the Indweller of all beings”.

If you read between these two lines, you get at the secret. Siva, Lord Incarnate, prays to YOU the real Godhead in you—and Godhead this God defines as Mercy and Love—to awaken you to the reality that God is Mercy and Love. Why has he called this the “Universal Prayer”; not only because people belonging to all religions and creeds can repeat it, but because this prayer will bring universal peace and prosperity. And, what doubt is there if all are merciful and loving?

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto thee
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient,
Thou art Satchidananda.
Thou art the Indweller of all beings
Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptation and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed and hatred,
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.
Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms,
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms,
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy Glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips,
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

10. SIVANANDA’S ROUTINE

“Routine” suggests a colourless life and insipid existence. But Siva the Master-Juggler is able to produce from his ordinary “routine”-box remarkable wonders that surprise and delight the world. Siva does not step out of his routine to work a wonder: he makes working wonders a routine job! The strong rope of his daily routine is composed of a thousand elastic bands of variegated

activity. Early great thought is immediately acted upon; and the resultant action is assimilated into the routine, instantly creating room for the next wonder!

Here is the sage's routine. He wakes up at 3 a.m. He concludes the recitation of morning hymns and Guru Stotras by 4 when he commences his morning meditation. At 6 he is ready for Asanas and bed exercises. Study and writing follow. After a light breakfast, the sage attends to his office-work,—interviewing visitors, instructing Sadhakas, inspecting Ashram-work, etc. At about midday he returns to his Kutir for his lunch and a brief rest. Study and writing follow again; and the evening is spent in studying the incoming letters and interviewing visitors again. After a spell of evening meditation, the sage goes to the Satsanga Bhavan for the Satsanga. He is not only the *Sat* (the reality, the Good, the wise) whose Sanga (association) people come to have, but he himself conducts the programme, and makes it highly interesting for everybody. The Satsanga concludes at about 10 p.m. and, after ensuring every guest has been properly served and every inmate is comfortable, the sage retires for the night.

Siva lives for the good and for the spiritual uplift of mankind. This divine task forms his daily routine. Regularity in his habits, systematic work and punctuality in his attention to every item of his programme—these are the qualities that characterise his daily life and contribute to the success of his Mission.

11. SIVANANDA'S METHOD OF WORK

Siva's method of work is methodical. His is a system that is designed to surmount all kinds of unsystematic activity of the workers who "help" (!) him. His own manuscripts and the various articles that are received for publication, get themselves triplicated at his hands, so that "even if one is lost the others would be same". Besides ensuring that the Ashram Library and "reprint shelf" are invariably provided with several copies of every new book, he maintains a Library of them himself, and he would laughingly reveal that "even if all these are lost, the Public Libraries in India would lend me a copy for reprint! I don't fail to send them a single book published by us.

To Siva all work is play and all play is work. His atonement with the Divine Will, his extraordinary sense of humour, and his disarming sense of oneness which he creates in everyone around him, make all his work look like a divine play. Those who have watched him very very closely know that he has a hidden, inward seriousness that transforms all play into work; a joy ride in a car would bring Divine Life to more people; a pleasure trip to Hardwar, Dehra Dun or Mussoorie would prove to be a round of Satsangas, and would culminate in a precious volume of his lectures and talks.

As a wise and efficient administrator, he trusts everybody and lets each office bearer of the institution handle his responsibility. He tolerates any amount of inefficiency. But the vital departments are under his immediate supervision; distribution of books free, attention to guests, holding of medical camps, etc. By his own example in the management of these departments, he gives the best lead to others in charge of other departments. With the insight of a Master, he would point his finger just at the spot where there has been a lapse!

Siva's method of work is incomparable.

12. SIVANANDA'S DURBAR

There sits His Holy Majesty, Siva, with mighty "Generals" of his Adhyatmik army, rulers of the mind and conquerers of the senses, at his feet, having been robbed of their heart. Siva has dethroned the little self which had so long reigned supreme in their heart, and enthroned himself there. No crown adorns his cleanshaven head; but the crowns of thousands of devotees' heads vie with one another for a dust of his feet.

Siva's Durbar is incomparable. Milk and honey flow; and fruits and sweets are offered to him and instantly distributed to every-body. Poets and musicians, talented artists and learned pandits, are all honoured.

Is it like Janaka's Durbar? Janaka was a royal sage; Siva is a sage royal. Janaka had enormous wealth; and he gave rich presents to those who deserved them. We don't hear that Janaka was involved in debt and yet was charitable! And, that is precisely what we find in Siva. When the Ashram is in debt to the tune of Rs. 80,000 Siva personally ensures that no item of expenditure is curtailed!

Is it like Karna's Durbar? Karna approaches Siva very close in charity. Whoever approaches Karna never returned empty-handed. But Siva never waits to be approached! He runs to you, to give you everything—food for your body, mind and soul!

Akbar, perhaps; he was famous for his lavish support of artists and poets. But the poor songster or poet who did not come up to his expectation forfeited his head; in Siva's Durbar, he gains almost equal recognition with the best of musicians and poets!

Above all, which King gave away such a wealth of wisdom? Apart from the dinners and entertainments, apart from the music, dance and drama, apart from the titles and presents awarded, Sivananda's Durbar will forever raise before our inner vision the inexhaustible spiritual treasure that Siva gave everyone, in plenty.

13. SIVANANDA'S TRAITS

The predominant feature of Siva's personality is the perennial inspiration that he radiates everybody who approaches him. Diffidence and gloom dare not get anywhere near him. In his presence "the lame climb hills and the dumb wax eloquent". The "artist" who has just learned to hold the brush, the "musician" who has found the first-lessons a nightmare, a doctor who can prescribe "Saridan" for headache, the "engineer" who is sure that bricks and mortar go to make a wall, and the "writer" whose assets is the luck which brought him to Siva, would all feel for the period they are in His Presence that they can perform better than the experts in their field!

Siva is all-optimism. He excels Churchill here: Churchill was sure of "ultimate victory" but to Siva every moment is success, and successive moments can only surpass each other in the glory! Problems and difficulties, obstacles and impediments, are as straw before the godly gale of Siva.

Siva is the positive pole in relation to the negative one—every distressed person on each. When they meet, a wonderful current of joy is generated and the bliss completes the circuit! Negative thoughts, negative feelings and negative (destructive) activities dare not approach him. In and around him thrive love, compassion, service, selflessness and unbounded dynamism.

“Seeing good in everything” is the material of which Siva’s eye-balls are made. Serving all respectfully, worshipfully, lovingly and with all compassion is the power that animates his hands. Love is the predominant trait in this God among men. *Sarva-bhuta-hite ratah*—devoted to the welfare of every-body this divine being dwells on this blessed earth.

14. SIVANANDA’S BEHAVIOUR

Siva’s behaviour is a model for every gentleman in the world to copy. The poise and dignity of bearing, the nobility and serenity of demeanour, the grace and compassion of his look, the sweetness and kindness of his speech, the majesty of his gait, and the politeness of his commands these are the qualities of Siva that ought to be closely watched, learnt and assimilated.

The sage who is worshipped by the foremost saints of the world as Lord Incarnate, bows to everyone and greets even a child with folded palms. He always uses the respectable mode of addressing everybody. By his own example he has revived the glorious “Namaskara-Yoga” which Lord Krishna taught to Sri Uddhava (*vide* the Bhagavata).

Siva is a Universal Being in which every person sees his own reflection. An American Businessman finds that Siva’s polished manners and efficient administrative ability, would obtain for him a front-rank among the businessmen of America. Europeans crowd round his lotus feet, claiming that, by virtue of his etiquette and cultured behaviour, he belongs to them.

Towards his own disciples and everyone who comes to him with an afflicted heart; Siva behaves as though he is their grandmother,—loving, indulgent, consoling and kind. There is no limit to his tolerance and forbearance in their case. But he does not merely want to heal their sores: he infuses strength into them. Occasionally he would show that his heart is full of compassion, but not weak: and for a brief moment now and then he would reveal that he is a divine taskmaster, stern and exacting.

Siva has no codified behaviour: it is the spontaneous expression of his divine nature.

15. SIVANANDA’S SISHTACHARA

The devil finds it convenient to quote the scripture: for he has information without the responsibility to know, the true spirit to assimilate and to put it into practice. An Upanishadic Mantra is parodied to pamper pride: “who is to bow to whom?” asks the false Vedantin. Yagnavalkya was instructing Maitreyi on the state of Absolute Consciousness where one is not conscious of a second thing! The false Vedantin’s doctrine is laconically expressed by Siva in his famous Sutra: “*Teen Kaalme Jagat nahim, daal me nimak nahim*” (He prattles ‘there is no world in the three periods of time’, but he is angered when there is no salt in the soup!). To such Vedantins,

Siva is an eye-opener. His Sishtachara is intended to awaken them to the right way to qualify themselves for the descent of Vedantic realisation.

Siva honours all Sannyasins, Sadhus, Pandits, Artists and Leaders. He greets them with a Namaskara that portrays the divine humility and devotion of his heart. He offers them fruits and milk, while giving them the Prasad or his own books free he stands up, bows down before them and gives with reverence. While receiving them and when they take leave of him, he expresses his gratitude for their visit. If they deliver a lecture Siva gives them a special seat of honour, garlands them and introduces them in glowing terms to the audience. After the discourse, he thanks them and surprises them saying “I am the foremost student”.

Entertainment of guests is a divine art which ought to be learnt from Siva. In it is found a paradoxical synthesis of reverence, familiarity and oneness. In his presence and in his attitude towards them, they are not awed by the reverence nor pampered by his familiarity, nor do they take undue advantage of the spirit of oneness. There is a perfect balance which he alone is able to achieve and sustain. There is something inexpressibly grand in his Sishtachara which levels all—quells the Pandit’s pride and uplifts a baby-soul.

16. SIVANANDA’S AURA

Discussing Siva’s aura. Dr. Audrey Kargere, Ph.D., of America, a noted authority on the subject concludes: “I believe he is the Avatar of this new age”. According to her, “the main theme of his auric picture is that of a photographic lens, which can see human beings and what is happening in the world. But it is focussed towards the Atma and it brings and materialises sparks of genius and inspiration to the earth-plane. This is very important as it designates the world teacher of this age. The blue in his aura transmutes the rose of love into the spiritual and idealistic; his nature is warm full of love, his heart is like a house and he invites everyone to move in. The violet signifies the religions—that he might be the Columbus of the spiritual field and has uncovered and will uncover many lands spiritually unknown to man, unless he treads the path that Swamiji outlines. The flame seen in his auric film was given to me in an uplifted moment, represents the purified state of man and gives the power of electricity to influence and inject all with Atma’s energy. Swami Sivananda’s reserve of power comes from this source. His expression comes under the red ray. Its planet is Mars and it gives power. He has positive reconstructive thinking and has the ability to heal himself through will-power. The red ray when used in the expression field means leadership. His life path colour is the blue ray: that gives him an insight into the scientific. Therefore, as a doctor he will have tremendous insight in the healing of man”.

Siva’s aura creates a powerful divine field around him; all those who enter this field are instantly transformed from beasts into human beings, and from human beings into divinities. The hopeless regain hope, the grief stricken find solace, the dying spirit is revived and the lamp of love, light and life is lit in every heart.

17. SIVANANDA’S PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

To saints have been ascribed a spiritual radiance that eludes the eye, and a resplendence that invisibly attracts the heart. But in the matter of physical appearance, very few of them could claim

attractiveness; on the contrary, aspirants are warned that great saints might often have a repulsive exterior! Not so with Siva. Like Lord Rama and Sri Krishna, his physical appearance is as charming as his manners, and as attractive as the magnetism of his spiritual personality.

Swami Paramanandaji said once: "It is not necessary for Swami Sivananda to be advertised in the European Press; nor for him to deliver lectures nor even to talk to the people. Let him merely walk along the streets of a big city: there will be a crowd following him". Dr. Sivananda-Saroj's description is ecstatic: "That broad back, that skin with pigment moles, always red somewhere, with bruise or from the bite of a lucky insect. Those legs with shining skin; those feet we decorated with flowers: I have concentrated so much upon them that I can see them in solidity and relief" (though she is in Bombay). "At times the Figure turns his back and now comes in view that sweet child-like face shining with divine Ojas. How happy do we feel to see that face! How much do I wish to be there, to put on Kumkum and Akshat on that broad forehead which looks so beautiful with it. A Christian-devotee in South Africa after experiencing a miracle of Siva's saving Grace, asked for a photograph so that she could "Kiss the big belly".

Majestic, tall, handsome and gigantic personality, with broad shoulders, powerful limbs, well-proportioned in every detail—Siva's physical appearance is a sculptor's idol, the masterpiece of the divine artist.

18. SIVANANDA'S CLOTHING

Siva's clothes and his radiant personality, belong to a Mutual Admiration Society. They enhance each other's charm.

The summer style is as delightful as the winter style is majestic. The *dhoti* he wears is the usual 54" cloth; but he rolls it up at the waist so that it barely covers the knees. That is the mark of Sannyasin. The *dhoti* is held in position by a belt of simple, coarse, towel. It is a cheap variety cloth; but around Siva's waist it is gorgeous and colourful. A thin piece of cloth is thrown around the shoulders, partly covering the chest; one end left loose and the other stuck into the *dhoti* at the waist. While walking in the sun, and occasionally when a fan is not at hand, the cloth serves as a soft fan! The sight attracts many "fans", eagerly watching the graceful movements of Siva's hand.

During winter, a great coat prevents the cold wind from hampering Siva's work; whatever be the weather, the service must go on. The gigantic personality appearing in the overcoat seems to be quite different from the simple Swami of summer months.....Till he smiles and reveals: "the blanket you use is clumsy and hinders your work; I have made it into a coat and it doesn't interfere with my work". Sages do not advertise themselves; they are hidden in caves or coats.

Siva's clothes proclaim that a Sannyasin need not let dirty clothes proclaim his indifference to the world; the clothes he wears anyhow, should be neat and clean. They should be such as would serve the purpose, without increasing the wearer's vanity; deeply coloured ochre robes are to a Sannyasin what gaudy dresses are to modern men and women. As in everything else, Siva pays neither too much nor too little attention to clothes.

19. SIVANANDA'S FOOD

Siva's food sustains humanity. Blessed are the shopkeepers that supply him the food stuffs! Blessed are the cooks that prepare the food!! Blessed are the devotees who contribute funds to the Annakshetra!! They provide the material food for Siva's physical body; and in return get from him indispensable food for their soul, viz., his grace.

See with your inner eye. Every particle of the food that Siva takes is vitalised by the prayer of a devotee somewhere in the world; prayer for Siva's long, long life on earth. Our prayer is his food.

For hours on end, Siva would sit consoling a heart-broken devotee, listen patiently to the tale of woe of a destitute widow or even to the pointless peroration of a proud Pundit; but he is extremely hasty while taking food. He can't waste a minute more on it.

The fish in the Ganges, the monkeys of Muni-kireti, visitors and disciples, by turns, get first attention; Siva must assure himself that they all had their share, before he can dine. When the food is best, he gets the least! The "Distribution List" would swell so.

Siva's diet is regulated by an extraordinary rule of tongue-control. The menu is constantly changed, so that the world seems to rotate round his dinner. This is the ideal he places before all Sannyasins. "Never demand a particular kind of food; take whatever comes—whether there is too much or no salt, too much or no chillies, too much or no sweet, in the food". Fasting on Ekadasi, saltless diet on Sundays, fruits and milk on some, rotti-dhall on others, and sumptuous South Indian dinner on occasions,—thus Siva offers a pattern for his disciples to adopt.

20. SIVANANDA'S DRINK

Lord Siva drank poison to save universe. Our Siva too, drinks away through his divinely graceful eyes, all our sins, all our evil Samskaras, the poison that has entered our heart and is ruining our life. A benign look; and the poison escapes our being through our eyes, as silent tears. Lo! when he has thus drunk the poison and saved our souls, how happy he is! For the sake of our well-being, he the Saviour is ready to sacrifice all his time, all his energy, his life itself. Ready to drink our poison, he the Lord joyously wears us—venomous cobras, full of sin and sinful tendencies—on the crown of his head, around his neck and his powerful arms. We become his ornaments, when he has drunk away our poison! That is the most favourite drink of Siva.

Ganges sprang out of Lord Siva's head; and Ganges-water is our favourite drink. For years during his Svarga-Ashram days Ganges-water was his milk, coffee, dhall, soup—everything—for he would merely soak dry bread in Ganges water and take. Even today, he likes Ganges water; and asks for fresh water, cold and nice.

Milk and fruit juices come next in order; and they sustain his divine physical sheath for us—for humanity's sake. This supreme embodiment of infinite patience, has not the patience to provide his overworked instrument—the body—with proper nourishment. Therefore, his devotees

thought of the juice as a common friend that satisfied both; it didn't demand much of Siva's precious time, nor deny our prop (his body) the minimum material requirement.

Rasanam Rasatamam: the supreme essence of all essences, he drinks constantly. It is the nectar of jnana. He is the fountain-source of this nectar, being the Self or all. Uttering his sweet Name—Om Namah Sivanandaya—we, too, can share this drink with him.

21. SIVANANDA'S TONIC

Our talents are his tonic. Our spiritual evolution is his sweetest elixir. Our determination to lead the divine life will make him dance in joy. Our growth in dispassion and discrimination gives him the greatest delight.

A young child repeating the Guru Stotra; a good Sadhak singing Siva's inspiring philosophical song; a pious family devoutly singing the Lord's Names; you and I sitting on Ganges bank in silent meditation—these are the tonics that instantly replenish him with inexhaustible energy. Give him a “dose” and see for yourself.

The buoyant body battered by persistent neglect and ceaseless overwork since his youth doesn't dare to strike work; his mighty will whipping the divine horse makes it gallop on and on. The all compassionate heart is least compassionate towards itself. The loving Lord who brings the whole world within the warmth of his embrace is cold and indifferent towards himself.

Very recently, doctors who happened to get the privilege of examining the blessed instrument of this incarnate divinity found a remedy. They appealed for his mercy upon themselves! They asked for his recognition of their talents. They prescribed some tonics for keeping up his physical strength. *To satisfy them*, he acceded to their request.

Chyavanaprash of the Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical works and Sanatogen are the principal tonics he takes. Phospho-Lacithin and Multivite tablets, too, sometimes. What tonics are good for the cosmic benefactor who is the strength of the world? Our devout, ardent, heartfelt, and humble prayers to Him to live long, radiating the same bliss and peace that he has been radiating all these years of his most fruitful life on earth.

22. SIVANANDA'S HEART

Sivananda's Heart is the Almighty's Compassion. It is the universal organ through which the cosmic life-blood of all beings flows, getting purified and infusing life in all beings. There are chambers, too, in this Great Heart: the Love chamber expands and into it flow the evil tendencies of everyone, drawn irresistibly by the divine impulse of His Sat-Sankalpa. The worldly man is received in the heart and then begins the wonderful process of transformation. The Divine Life Society (with all its Branches) is a Great Lung. It contains innumerable air-cells (departments of divine activity) which purify everything that comes in their contact. Siva makes the worldly man take part in the Mission. Through selfless service to humanity, performed with Narayana-Bhav all impurities are burnt away and the person becomes divine. This saintly soul finds a place in Siva's

Great Heart. He becomes one with Siva. He partakes of Siva's compassion and cosmic love. He carries Siva's life giving message to the entire world and vitalises all humanity with Divine Life.

A praiseworthy doctor at Trichinopoly examined Siva's heart, during his epochal All-India Tour in 1950, and declared that Siva was "suffering from a large heart". The sage's loving smile was eloquent enough a comment on this!

Col. Rikye and Major General A.N. Sharma have been astounded that in spite of such overwork, shouldering such responsibilities, and such neglect of physical needs, Siva's heart is perfect and very healthy. They know that Siva's large heart is the main source of his joy (and does not make him "suffer"!)

Every beat of this divine heart of Siva assures us that our salvation is his first concern.

23. SIVANANDA'S ART

Siva's art is the expression of the beauty of his soul. There is in it no artificiality. His artless smile is the consummation of the divine art of radiating the Bliss of Self-realisation which fills his heart. The gracefulness with which he hands you the priceless gift of his inspiring books expresses several Bhavas at the same time—the Bhavas of humility, worshipful service, generosity and true magnanimity. His gait is majestic yet not proud; fast yet not clumsy; rhythmic yet not regimental; there is music in his walking.

Like the blossoming of the rose, like the joyous morn of the spring, and peaceful dawn of the day—Siva's art is part of divine nature. There it is in every detail of his daily habit. The way in which he ties the *dhoti* and the towel round his waist; the ease with which he gracefully adorns himself with muslin *Angavastram* (upper-cloth) or adjusts his gown. The way he takes a quick glance at his apparel before the ardent devotee clicks the camera to take a picture of the Creator's Master-piece, Siva's radiant form. The way in which he picks up a little of a devotee's offering, put it into his mouth and then dips his fingers in a bowl of water and wipes them with a towel. There is art in everyone of these every-day actions.

When he delivers a lecture, when he raises a finger in admonition or sweeps his arm in cosmic identification, when he throws up his hands and dances in ecstasy or with hands on his hips performs *Nritya*, there is inexpressible art in every movement of his limb.

While taking bath in the Ganga or while retiring to bed; or as he rests in bed with the left sole planted on it and the right ankle placed on the left knee, occasionally shaking the right foot—Oh, it is a joy to stand and watch him.

24. SIVANANDA'S MANO-VIJNANA

(Sivananda's Psychology)

Siva's psychology is, unlike the Western psychologists', a practical recognition of the soul's supremacy over mind and intellect, and not a mere intellect's guess-work of the workings of

the mind (which is the foundation of the ever-changing pattern of Western psychology). From his day-to-day actions, psychologists have great lessons to learn.

For the control of the mind, or augmenting the mind's power of perception and creative thinking, and for the purification of the mind, Siva gives a remarkable two-pronged weapon: discriminative reasoning to quell the turbulent mind, and Japa of the Lord's Name to let the latent soul-force transform the mental substance itself into a purer reflection of the Divine Light within.

Siva studies another person's mind, not with a finite intellect but with the all-penetrating microscope of his spiritual insight. In an instant, by a mere look, therefore, the other person's mind becomes apparent to him; and a volume can be written on the tactful way in which he deals with diverse people. Adapt, adjust, accommodate, he has said; and his dealings with all is an illustration on this.

Unlike the psycho-analysts of the West, Siva assures us that it is waste of time brooding over the past. "Positive overcomes the negative" is his emphatic assurance. Satsanga, Sankirtan and light unselfish service is the wonderful mixture he administers to the worst mental cases and as the patient recovers, Siva infuses healthy ideas into him, makes him do Japa and meditation. The past is completely forgotten and over the foundation of the Eternal Present a magnificent edifice of positive happiness, peace and power is erected, under the guidance of this master Psychologist, Siva.

Chapter Two

THE DIVINITY'S DOCTRINE

25. SIVANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY

Siva's philosophy can be compared only to Lord Krishna's. It has a place for all the philosophies of the world!

It recognises the Real and the unreal, and that which makes the unreal appears as Real. It awakens the worldly man, guides the Sadhaka, serves as a touchstone for a sage's realisation, and proclaims the Truth which transcends all these.

Here are some of the salient features which bear out the above:

"The world is not unreal; but is a lesser reality than Brahman."

"That which hides the Real and makes the unreal appear as real is Maya."

"The various religions of the world are the different viewpoints of the same Truth."

“Dvaita, Visishtadvaita, Advaita and Ajata-Vada are the progressive realisations of the Reality.”

Siva’s universal philosophy has in it a philosophy for every person. This itself proves that he is God Incarnate. He does not preach the same philosophy to two persons, but being their Antaryamin (Inner Ruler) knows the ‘viewpoint’ of each person and guides in a manner best calculated to effect the person’s rapid spiritual evolution.

The fundamental principle of Siva’s philosophy is that philosophy itself has the only purpose of providing the foundation for the spiritual endeavours of the Sadhaka. Therefore, Siva’s philosophy is indistinguishable from his teachings: he is practical, dynamic and, therefore, leaves philosophical wranglings to spiritual bankrupts who delight in discussing the magnitude of unacquired wealth!

26. SIVANANDA’S DOCTRINE

Siva has no doctrine of his own. He redelivers the divine message that has time and again been given to us by God. He speaks for God; for he is one with God. Yet, if we can audaciously read a doctrine into his teachings, it is “The Doctrine of a Little”. It is otherwise known as the Yoga of Synthesis. Siva warns us that only the harmonious development of the entire being of man can take him easily to the goal. A weak spot anywhere in the structure would ruin the whole. Moreover, specialisation in any one branch of Sadhana would rob one of the spirit of understanding and tolerance, would breed contempt and hatred, and ultimately fatten one’s egoism. Siva’s “Doctrine of a Little” completely avoids all the pitfalls on the path and leads the Sadhaka along the smooth, easy, pleasant road to the Lord’s Feet. Here is the Doctrine, in Siva’s own words. He has put it in the form of a small song which can be sung in the Mahamantra tune. Siva himself sang this “Song of a Little” at every meeting he addressed during his all-India-Ceylon Tour in 1950:

Eat a little, drink a little,
talk a little, sleep a little

Mix a little, move a little,
serve a little, rest a little

Work a little, rest a little,
study a little, worship a little

Do Asana a little, Pranayama a little,
reflect a little, meditate a little

Do Japa a little, do Kirtan a little,
Write Mantra a little, have Satsanga a little.

Do a little of each; you will have time for all. God-realisation is thus brought within your easy reach; and you are saved from the fear of a fall.

27. SIVANANDA'S CREED

The fundamental article of Siva's creed is that Truth is universal. He has declared in unmistakable terms that the Truth can be realised through a diligent practice of the methods prescribed by any religion and by any of the Yogas. He does not want to abolish the variety in religions and in the Yogas, nor to unify all mankind under the banner of a Universal Religion. He sees the need for diversity to suit diverse minds and differences in the mental equipment and stage of evolution of individuals. He points out (to the philosophers and those who encourage and "feed" on such non-essential differences) that all the religions have the same Truth as their substratum, prop and goal.

In the matter of the Yogas, however, Siva exhorts the earnest aspirant to synthesise in his daily routine all that is best in all the approaches to self-realisation and practise the Yoga of Synthesis.

Siva affirms that God is both immanent and transcendent. Naught but God exists. While, therefore, God is the substratum for all that appears to be, He is not just that much: He transcends the mind and the intellect and that transcendental Being can only be realised by the sage in the highest super-conscious state.

The adoration of the Immanent Divinity is what Siva lays the greatest stress upon: service of humanity with cosmic love and a feeling that it is God that pervades every being here. When meditation is combined with this, Siva assures us that realisation of the transcendental Reality is only a matter of course.

The most joyous assurance Siva gives us is that God, "knowing" the evil that is rampant in Kali Yuga and the weaknesses that a human being is heir to in this age of Materialism, makes Himself more readily available to all than in previous Yugas: "a little Kirtan and meditation, service and Sadhana will enable you to realise Him here and now", Siva declares. His creed is the Word of God.

28. SIVANANDA'S IDEALS

Siva is the ideal for all sages and saints. Yet, in order to bring home to us the need for "ideals" to provide a pattern for our life, he has chosen some for himself!

Just as Lord Buddha did in days of yore, Siva promises that till the last of us is liberated from Samsara, he will continue to guide us and forego the personal delight of getting absorbed in the Infinite. It is our greatest good fortune that birth after birth we shall be his disciples and followers.

In forgiveness, Jayadeva is Siva's ideal. Jayadeva procured pardon and salvation for those who cut off his limbs. Siva's first prayers of the day are offered for the health, long life, peace, prosperity and enlightenment of those who consider themselves his adversaries.

In cosmic love, Ranti Deva is Siva's ideal. Who else could be such a perfect exemplar of the famous declaration of Ranti Deva:

*I desire not kingdom, pleasure nor liberation.
I pray that the misery of the afflicted be relieved.*

In forbearance, Siva's ideal is the Avanti Brahmin. Often he would refer to it in his talks. The story occurs in Bhagavata and illustrates the nature of the saint: he calmly endures all insults, dishonour and calumny. Siva turns a deaf ear to those who indulge in them and radiates cosmic love and divinity.

Lord Gauranga is Siva's ideal not only for the unrivalled zeal in the dissemination of Sankirtan-Bhakti-Yoga; but also for the great ideal embodied in the following Sloka, of which Gauranga and Siva have been the greatest examplars:

Lord Hari should be adored by one who is humbler than the blade of grass, more forbearing than the tree, free from vanity but who respects everybody.

29. SIVANANDA'S MOTTOS

Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise
Be good; do good; be kind; be compassionate.
Enquire "Who am I ?", know the Self and be free.

* * *

Practise Ahimsa, Satyam, Brahmacharya;
This is the foundation of Yoga, Vedanta.

* * *

Adapt, adjust, accommodate;
Bear insult; bear injury; (this is the highest Sadhana).

* * *

Detach-attach, Detach-attach
Detach the mind from the objects.
Attach it to the Lord.

* * *

Nothing exists; nothing belongs to me;
I am neither mind nor body; Immortal Self I am.

* * *

Work is Worship;
Dedicate it to God.

Even this will pass away;
Balance your mind in pain and joy.

* * *

Tat Tvam Asi: That Thou Art:
Realise this and be free.

30. SIVANANDA'S VIEW OF LIFE

As with everything else, Siva's view of life is an analytical synthesis! A paradox that perplexes the pandit. But a conundrum that caters to the needs of everybody.

"Life is a mystery" he declares. Its origin and its end are enshrouded in a cloud of ignorance. The fleeting period in between is a mystery, too: otherwise, why should one man's life be so different from another's?

"Life here is the fruit of your past Karma", he says. Primordial ignorance prompts the Jiva to seek the bliss which is its own nature, in the outside objects. Good and bad actions that are performed in this quest have to return to him as pleasure and pain; to enjoy them he has to take birth here. Self-realisation fries the seed (Karma) and prevents rebirth.

"Life is a great blessing and gift of the Lord, to be utilised well in Sadhana to attain Self realisation," he asserts referring particularly to birth as human being. Neither the celestials nor the sub-human species can practise Sadhana and attain Him. Only man can. God's compassion has so arranged the Karmas that the gift of human birth could be bestowed on the Jiva.

"Life is an opportunity for the Jiva to recover Supreme Knowledge by selfless service, cosmic love, meditation and Self-realisation", proclaims Siva. It is waste of time arguing about the "why" and "wherefore" of life. It is wisdom to utilise the Present in such a way that Time itself could be conquered and immortality attained here and now.

Siva Himself views life from all the angles at the same time; and lives in the Consciousness which sanctions infinite views of life to suit different people at different stages of evolution. His philosophical view of life is that "Life is the indicator of Immortality. Man wants to live. No man wants to die. That itself shows that the Self is Immortal.

31. SIVANANDA'S WAY OF LIFE

Siva's way of life is the way paved by the great Avatars or incarnations of the Lord. He lives to relieve the aches of the human heart.

Siva's Life is an ever-green banyan which has its roots deep in the ageless earth. His ways are modern; but his ideals are ancient. He uses the most modern methods to re-deliver the message of the Maharshis of yore. Like the banyan, he has spread the cool shade of his life divine to give shelter to the whole world. This universal banyan, Siva the Cosmic Benefactor, has stuck deep roots

in a hundred places all over the earth! He is ready to assimilate all that is good everywhere. He is the eternal student's way of life.

Siva's way of life is the royal road to the human heart. He is an unopposed reformer. By his splendid personality, radiant smile, ready wits, inspiring books, gracious looks, thrilling letters, and tireless service, he wins the hearts of all into which he instils his ideals and implants his philosophy. This peerless sage of fearless; for he knows he is rooted in the Supreme Reality.

Siva's way of life is laid with the lustrous golden bricks of love and goodness. Righteousness is his breath; but love is his life; and service his very soul. Along the straight and narrow path of Yoga he leads mankind; but his broad heart and selfless love have smoothed and widened it considerably.

Siva's way of life is God's Reassuring Grace spread out before humanity. If we tread the path of Siva, his own life is the guarantee that we shall soon reach the goal. In the dark and dangerous, wilderness of worldly life, Siva's way of life is our luminous guide. "Lead, kindly light, lead thou me on".

32. SIVANANDA'S ETHICS

Siva is a reincarnation of Sage Vyasa, where his ethics are concerned. In his works he has treated elaborately of all aspects of ethics—social, personal, national etc. But the ethical principle that he holds dearest to himself and which he exemplifies in his daily life is this: "It is a great sin to harm others, to injure any being, to wound any one's heart, to think ill of anybody on earth or to insult or abuse anyone. It is a great virtue to serve others, to love others, to be good and to do good to all".

Siva's Sannyasin-disciple should selflessly and egolessly serve all and love all, meditate and strive to attain Self-realisation. He should be an embodiment of Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya.

Sivananda's lay-disciple should lead an ideal divine life, develop the heart through charity and service, grow in devotion through Sankirtan and worship of the Lord, serve saints and Sadhus, and serve humanity at large in every way possible.

A doctor should treat the poor free and even look to the comforts of his patients. The worst crime a doctor can commit, according to Siva is "to demand more fee when the patient is on the table". The doctor should serve the Lord in the patient.

An advocate should be thoroughly honest and truthful and plead for the poor, free.

A government official should work hard for the prosperity of mankind. "To take bribe is heaven-closing", says Siva.

A student should study his lessons well, and treat his parents and his preceptor with reverence due to Divinity.

A businessman should eschew greed from his transactions, serve the people, do a lot of charity and work for the minimum of profit.

Be good; do good—these four words sum up Siva's ethics. They are of universal application.

33. SIVANANDA'S TEACHINGS

The very cream of Siva's teachings, you will find in the following pages. On this, therefore, shall we peep into Siva's pulpit, to see with what weapon he drives his teachings into the very core of our heart? What a wonder, there at his holy feet we find our heart! He has stolen them. *That*, then, is the greatest secret. He steals our heart before talking to us or approaching us with his books. With the two universal arms of "Selfless Service" and "Universal Love" he embraces you and becomes one with you. Then a mere gaze would do to enlighten you.

The greatest sermon is his own divine life. Watchful eyes would see a scripture every second in his presence; his smiles are eloquent; and from his glittering eyes gushes forth Grace. The greatest lessons are contained in his life, which is an open book.

Love lends divine power to his words—spoken or written. Practicability characterises every precept. Practice is what he insists upon. He doesn't fail to warn you that theoretical wranglings invariably leave you dangling in mid-air, neither here nor there!

Through his writings he speaks to you; you see him before you when you read his books. Through his personal talks, he "wakes" you up; a few moments in his company most assuredly make you healthy, spiritually wealthy and wise. You are awakened to the glory of the Self, to the talents hidden in you, to the strength and the wisdom that you possess, and to the foundation of joy that waits within you to be tapped! Siva's teachings transform your life—beastiality yields to humanity and humanity is lifted up to Divinity.

34. SIVANANDA'S YOGA

Siva's Yoga is the Yoga best suited to you. He is the Indweller of all and is, therefore, aware of our talents and difficulties. He does not ask us to change our religion, or relinquish our avocation in life. He makes us feel that we have already been practising Yoga; and that all that we have to do is to go on vigorously with it, adding a few details here and there! Mysteriously and miraculously, he supplies the vital need in us, divinises our life, and from where we are he leads us to God, making us feel all the time that we are going our own way and are not led by the ear by him.

Siva recognises that every man has his own religion, that there is a Yoga for each man. Therefore he has expounded all the religions of the world and all the Yogas that have so far been given to man. All of them have found their fulfilment in Sivananda Yoga. The sage of cosmic vision, cosmic love and cosmic consciousness has dealt with all Yogas, and given us their very essence in his writings. What is remarkable, however, is that while glorifying the particular Yoga, treated in a particular work, he has quietly slipped in a few vital factors belonging to other Yogas, thus bringing about a synthesis, with one special Yoga predominant.

That in brief is Sivananda Yoga; the Yoga of Synthesis. He is emphatic that a lop-sided development of any aspect of the human personality is to be avoided. Everyone has a head, a heart and the hands; everyone thinks, feels and acts. In some one aspect is predominant and in others, another. Sivananda Yoga takes this into account, and is, therefore the Yoga for everyone.

35. SIVANANDA'S INTEGRAL SADHANA

“Vedanta must come from within”. “The Truths of the Upanishads must be realised in your inmost heart”, says Siva. He does indeed encourage the threefold “Jnana Yoga practice, of hearing, reflection and meditation.” But meditation is not an easy matter. You attempt to meditate now. The heart must be thoroughly purified and made steady, before real meditation is possible. It may take several births. But you should go on purifying the heart”, says Siva. And, he places his own life as the most inspiring example.

Ceaseless, untiring, dynamic, selfless service, egolessly performed with Atman-bhava regardless of rewards, silently searching the heart for old, old Samskaras, and sublimating all feelings and emotions—this is the lesson that Siva’s glorious life has for us. This is true Karma Yoga which takes us to the threshold of the Kingdom of Sivanandam, the realm of all auspiciousness and Supreme Bliss.

At the same time, constant remembrance of the Lord’s Name, Japa and Sankirtan, seeing, greeting, and loving God in all, and thus living in perpetual God-consciousness—this the Bhakti Yoga that Siva’s attitude teaches us. This lends the strongest foundation of Sivananda Yoga, the greatest momentum to our march, the best purifying agent for our heart.

Asanas and Pranayama to keep the body and nerves healthy; study of sacred scriptures and meditation to maintain mental alertness and keenness of vigilant discrimination—these are part of Siva’s own daily routine.

This is the Sadhana, Siva assures us that if we are earnest and sincere, we can attain Self-realisation with in the twinkling of the eye. “The Vedantic aroma will waft around you, and you will radiate peace, bliss and love. You need not advertise; everyone will know you are a sage.”

36. SIVANANDA'S SOCIOLOGY

Siva’s Sociology is based on the doctrine of the unity of humanity. He does not stop with “Do as you would be done by” motto. Though he lays great stress on “Be good; do good”, yet he points out that goodness is the gateway to God who dwells in all.

Thus, in politics, Siva regards patriotism as a stepping-stone (on which the patriot shall not pause, however) to universalism. God is the father of all mankind; the entire universe is the Fatherland, devotion to which marks Siva’s patriot. Man is not bound by boundaries: “break down the walls that separate man from man by cultivating cosmic love and spirit of selfless service”, says Siva.

Siva's economics is a headache to auditors and accountants. To him theft and cheating may be a moral mistake, but not a financial loss! Extravagance might mar the spirit of simplicity in the seeker, but is not as bad as hoarding. Indiscriminate charity is a great virtue in his eyes. Siva's economics gives the right place to wealth, as the slave of man and not as his master.

Siva's society is one in which every person is free to express one's talents, pursue one's aspirations, grow in goodness, serving one another and bound by the strongest invisible chords of cosmic love. He recognises the infinite diversity of men's minds and, therefore, exalts adaptability, forbearance and understanding as the greatest among virtues.

Siva's Ashram itself is a bold experiment in Siva's ideals in sociology. It is well worth the study of the sociologists of tomorrow, who would like to lay the foundations of an enduring social order uniting the whole world in a common bond of brotherhood.

37. SIVANANDA'S COURAGE

Siva's courage is not like a Dictator's daring, warrior's valour or hillmen's heroism. It is the inevitable fruit of his identity with Truth. He knows what is good and what is not; because he is the Supreme Good. Hence he is undaunted by undermining influences. In every case he has always proved he was right!

In Malaya, his friends felt that he didn't know how to "enjoy life". He stuck to his righteous ways of self-restraint. Today while they lead a life of misery, his is a life of glory.

As a Sadhu in Svargashram, he used to carry with him four cloth-bags wherever he went. They contained: medicines, fruits, spiritual literature, and writing material (note-book, etc.). The first three for distribution to any-one he might meet while walking along the road, and the fourth for recording sublime thoughts as they occurred. "Great" Sadhus would whisper among themselves that Siva was carrying a household with him! Service has today enthroned Siva in the heart of humanity and even they who mocked at him meekly bow down to him in reverence.

During his propaganda tours, Siva danced and sang Kirtan. Sannyasins belonging to the Sankara School of Advaita Vedanta, with their little heads laden with ill-digested philosophy, jeered at him. Siva didn't mind and he didn't retaliate either. They are today his unacknowledged followers! Though late in their career, they, too, have begun to sing His Names in sweet Sankirtan.

Siva, the Prophet of the New Age, has a provision of the shape of things to come. He has the supreme courage to give a hold to humanity along the road to Divinity.

38. SIVANANDA'S MIRACLES

Devotees of Siva, all over the world, have recounted the astounding experiences they have had of the divine powers of Bhagavan Sivananda; how he appeared in their dream and gave them wholesome advice, how they saw him in a vision and got his blessings, how he saved them from calamity and healed them of their illness. These experiences have been published in a number of volumes issued by the *Forest Academy*.

Even to a great Yogi, space and time are no great impediments. If the X-ray can see through flesh and the meteorological instruments can probe into the weather of tomorrow, what cannot the spiritually enlightened mind of a Yogi do? Clairvoyance, thought transference, distance healing, etc., are so commonplace with Siva that he might not even be aware of them!

The conduct of the Divine Life Society's affairs is a great miracle. Without a budget, without a reserve fund, without a bank balance and without a regular source of income, to run a big institution on such a lavish scale is a miracle.

To recruit everyone with the least inclination and lesser qualification into his fold and to transform everyone into a saintly personality without the rigours of austerity of regimented life of Sadhana; that is a miracle of the highest order.

To sit in his simple Kutir on the banks of the Ganga in a corner of the Himalayas and to spread the light of divine knowledge to the four corners of the world, to let his life-transforming message resound in every nation of the world—this is the greatest miracle of this all-pervading Divinity who appears before us as Swami Sivananda.

Chapter Three

IMMORTAL WORDS OF INFINITE WISDOM

39. SIVANANDA'S PEN

Siva's Pen is Lord Krishna's Flute and Lord Rama's Arrow. The music that issues from It is enchanting, but it pierces our hearts and destroys our evil desires without our knowledge and in spite of ourselves. That is why the hollow fountain-pen has a sharp nib.

Ink is poured into the barrel of the pen; but Siva's touch converts it into spiritual manna. It is distributed to the whole world. Even if it is a mere signature on the fly-leaf of a book, at the close of a typed letter, or on an official receipt, a look at it fills your heart with joy, mind with peace and soul with Divine Light.

Siva has, not one, but several pens. "D.I.N.—Do It Now"—he has dinned into our ears. He does so. The moment a thought comes to his mind, it must be recorded and shared with the whole world. The instruments of transmission must be ready at hand. It is because he has so zealously gathered the precious pearls from the depths of his Realisation, that we are so rich today.

The warrior's rifle, and the "Big" Power's Bombs (Atomic and Hydrogen) cannot stand before Siva's Pen. The Hand that wields the Pen belongs to a Sage; the rifle is in the hands of a slave, and the bombs are used by benighted souls.

Blessed is the Pen for it is ever in the grip of Siva's Divine Hands. Let us pray that we too might be in his grip; then is our salvation assured. Blessed is the Parker Company; for it has provided Siva with his Pen.

May we all keep our hearts as clean as the paper on which Siva's Pen writes, so that Siva might inscribe on the tablet of our hearts his Divine Name which spells Liberation.

40. SIVANANDA'S STYLE OF WRITING

Siva, the incarnation of patience, tolerance, endurance and love, is extremely impatient with himself. He can not serve humanity enough, fast enough and well enough—to his own satisfaction! He is impatient to reach out to every man and woman in the world, awaken everybody and enable everybody to attain Moksha this very second. This secret is revealed in the style of his writing.

Truth, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth is given in every sentence, which the moment you turn to it, passes a death-sentence on the ignorance in your heart. Siva does not mince words, beats about the bush, indulge in arguments, or parade his pedantry. He offers you not a paper garland of flowery words, but a fragrant garland of Atmic flowers. Every paragraph of his book drives you—not to your dictionary—but to the meditation room, to start the practice then and there.

Siva is not a spiritual book-seller, asking you to “see my *Hatha Yoga* for the Asanas, *Science of Pranayama* for the breathing exercises and *Health and Long Life* for instructions on diet”. Every book is perfect and complete in itself, sufficient to lead a neophyte to the highest rungs of the spiritual ladder.

Easy, lucid and understandable; direct, forceful and fiery; Siva's style is characterised by the clarity of sage's realisation, the authority of an Avatara's utterances, the commiseration of a cosmic benefactor.

Siva's is the sovereign style: overwhelming in its power to win your heart, and from there to conquer your mind and eradicate your undivine Vasanas and Samskaras.

41. SIVANANDA'S LETTER

Siva's letter is a spiritual awakener. Your problems, whatever they are, solved in simple, straight forward and to-the-point sentences. But Siva never stops with that. Remember: he is a doctor of body, mind and soul. He alleviates pain, heals the ailment, and at the same time shows you the way to avoid it. His letter shares this characteristic.

The very first line, the mode of his address, is a supreme lesson in Vedanta. “Beloved Atman” “Glorious Immortal Atman” “Adorable Self”—thus he reminds you that you are not this body or mind, but the all-pervading Immortal, Satchidananda Atma. The subscription, besides re-affirming this truth reveals the secret of Siva's extraordinary divine love for us and the reason for his abiding and deep interest in us. He is “Thy own Self—Sivananda”.

Only Siva can infuse deep and divine love into language. His peremptory instructions are perfumed with the soul-elevating aroma of a love that commands our implicit obedience. His straight notes acquire mellifluous melody and always gladden the heart of the recipient. Selfless love that is interested only in our spiritual evolution, sparkles in every sentence. Siva's soul seems to pray to you to wake up from the slumber of nescience. Ah, what solicitude! What positive encouragement breathes in every line! Never is a criminal condemned, nor a sinner scorned. They (we) are his special wards.

Whether the letter be simple acknowledgement of something received or a reminder of work to be done, it always contains, whether you asked for it or not, some grand, elevating thought. It is a great joy and an inspiration to receive Siva's letter.

42. SIVANANDA'S APHORISMS

1. Work elevates when done in the right spirit without agency, attachment and expectation of fruits.
2. Even scavenging when done with the right mental attitude is a Yogic activity for realisation.
3. He who works in the world with Atma Bhav will eventually reach Atma.
4. He is powerful Yogi who keeps up the meditation while performing actions.
5. Keeping up Brahma Bhava While practising Karma Yoga is more difficult than pure Jnana Yoga.
6. To serve humanity, while living in the world is superior to a life of seclusion in a cave.
7. One can conquer the whole world through love, humility and service.
8. The whole world is bound to work with one who feels himself one with the world.
9. Only he who is unselfish and devoid of Moha for the body can do real Karma Yoga.
10. The Karma Yogi purifies his heart through constant selfless or disinterested service.
11. A special power comes from God to those who have a pure and steady love to humanity.
12. The more you spend your energy in elevating others, the more Divine energy will flow to you.
13. Aspirants of the present day lack in the spirit of service and the burning love for the Lord.

14. The world abounds with people who show some kind of lip-sympathy or vague shallow sympathy.

15. The spirit of service must deeply enter into your very bones, cells, tissues and nerves.

16. A real Karma Yogi does not make any difference between menial and respectable work.

43. SIVANANDA'S ANDADI

Andadi is a poetic style in Tamil: in which the first word of a stanza is the last word of the previous one.

SERVE thy Guru with Bhava, the humanity with humility, so that thy physical sheath may be cleansed and entering the vital, thou canst develop and radiate the divine virtue of LOVE.

LOVE the creation entire, so that thy ego may melt and dissolve; and thus freed from the bondage of the vital, thou canst proceed to PURITY.

PURIFY the "mental" by study of scriptures, Satsanga and service to thy Guru, only in order that thy "ego" may utterly dissolve and thou wilt be qualified to MEDITATE.

MEDITATE on the teachings of the Guru, on the sacred utterances of the scriptures, so that thou wilt REALISE.

REALISE thine own true nature, that Thou art That, that thy true being is Existence-Consciousness Bliss Absolute.

* * *

SEEK: the First Requisite for a true aspirant, only that he may FIND.

FIND that silence is the Reality, and ENTER.

ENTER the Hall of wisdom in order that he may REST.

REST, the quest having ended and life's fulfilment having been attained.

* * *

Patience is the prerequisite for Self-realisation.

Self-realisation is the fruit of meditation.

Meditation succeeds concentration.

Concentration is the result of practice.

Practice leads to awareness.

Awareness is a conscious state of Being.

Being is Para Brahman.

44. SIVANANDA'S SAYINGS

1. Remember God at all times.
2. Enquire "Who am I?" and realise the self.
3. Make friendship with any one after studying him very carefully.
4. Do always virtuous actions.
5. Hear the wise words of great souls and follow them.
6. Do those actions that are pronounced to be right by the Shastras.
7. Don't make friendship with childish persons.
8. Move with the world tactfully. Adapt.
9. Give up bad company.
10. Don't talk much before great souls.
11. Avoid unnecessary discussions.
12. Don't exaggerate or concoct or twist when you talk.
13. Develop mercy and cosmic love.
14. Share what you have with others.
15. Good and bad, friend and enemy, pleasure and pain, virtue and sin are in the mind only.
16. Mind, when purified by the removal of six passions, becomes your Guru.
17. Patience, perseverance and vital will are indispensable for reaching the goal.
18. Purity of food leads to purity of mind.
19. Don't do any action harmful to anyone.
20. Guru is necessary to show you the path to peace.

45. SIVANANDA'S TWENTY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get up at 4 a.m., daily. Do Japa and meditation.

2. Take Sattvic food. Do not overload the stomach.
3. Sit on Padma or Siddha Asana for Japa and Dhyana.
4. Have a separate meditation-room under lock and key.
5. Give in charity one-tenth of income or one anna per rupee.
6. Study systematically one chapter of BhagavadGita.
7. Preserve Veerya (the vital force). Sleep separately.
8. Give up smoking, intoxicating drinks and Rajasic food.
9. Fast on Ekadasi days or live on milk and fruits only.
10. Observe Mouna for 2 hours daily and during meals also.
11. Speak truth at any cost. Speak little, sweetly.
12. Reduce your wants. Lead a happy, contented life.
13. Never hurt the feelings of others. Be kind to all.
14. Think of the mistakes you have done (self-analysis).
15. Do not depend upon servants. Have self-reliance.
16. Think of God as soon as you get up and when you go to bed.
17. Have always Japa Mala around your neck or in your pocket.
18. Have the motto—"Simple living and highthinking".
19. Serve the Sadhus, Sannyasins and poor and sick persons.
20. Keep a daily spiritual diary. Stick to your routine.

46. SIVANANDA'S NECTAR DROPS

1. Moksha is your birthright. Moksha is freedom or Immortality.
2. Moksha is a harbour of eternal peace.
3. Kaivalya is joy eternal or perfect delight.

4. It is free from even the least trace of misery.
5. Moksha is liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.
6. Moksha is the supreme panacea for all worldly ills.
7. He who attains Self-realisation is perfect and thoroughly contented. He is free from grief and hatred.
8. Self-realisation is Self-discovery.
9. Freedom or Immortality is the birthright of all.
10. Immortality lies in Self-realisation.
11. All men are eligible for emancipation.
12. Moksha confers infinite bliss.
13. That man who is endowed with dispassion, discrimination, self-restraint, devotion, who lives in seclusion in the company of sages crosses Maya and attains eternal bliss.
14. The bliss of Self-realisation cannot be described in words. It is like the experiencing of joy which a dumb man has when he tastes a delicious sweetmeat or sugarcandy.
15. Self-realisation is not a product or effect.
16. God is realised through non-violence, truth and continence.
17. Essence of all faiths is freedom and happiness.
18. Yoga confers self-mastery.

47. SIVANANDA'S PROVERBS

1. The eye that sees not the beauty of the Lord is blind.
2. Pain is an eye-opener.
3. Pain is thy silent teacher.
4. Religion is self-realisation.
5. Life without religion is death.
6. Sacrifice everything rather than principles.

7. This world is essenceless; God only is the Essence.
8. Character is the key to self-realisation.
9. Remember God at all times.
10. There is no treasure like the wealth of Atma.
11. There is no safe boat like Satsanga to cross the of Samsara.
12. There is no enemy like anger.
13. There is no teacher like pain.
14. There is no friend like the spiritual teacher.
15. There is no abode like Brahman.
16. There is no virtue like purity.
17. There is no vice like conceit.
18. Think "I am Immortal Atma"; Immortal Atma you will become.
19. Life is short. Time is fleeting. Realise the Self.
20. Purity of heart is the gateway to God.

48. SIVANANDA'S TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Practise Truthfulness, Non-violence and Celibacy.
2. Be good; Do good.
3. Be Tolerant.
4. Be kind to all.
5. Serve all; Serve the Lord in all; Love all.
6. Share what you have with others.
7. Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise.
8. Think rightly; Act rightly.

9. Behold the one Self in all. See God in every face.

10. Feel “I am the all pervading Immortal Self”.

49. SIVANANDA’S WORDS OF WISDOM

1. Renunciation alone can make you fearless and happy. It is the bestower of eternal peace and Immortality.

2. This world is not an illusion. It belongs to a lower order of reality than the Absolute. It is a relative reality while Brahman is the absolute Reality.

3. The basis of lasting unity of all humanity is the religion of heart. The religion of the heart is the religion of love.

4. Men can be united only if they are free from hatred and petty-mindedness and if they are perfectly established in ethical culture.

5. Illusion is born of ignorance. From illusion spring separation, differences, duality, manifoldness and vanity. Therefore, destroy the ignorance by the sword of the knowledge of Self and become free.

6. Man is the resultant product of the sum total of his thoughts.

7. Peace is the most covetable possession on earth. It is the greatest treasure in all the universe. Peace is the most important and indispensable factor for all growth and development. Peace is the fourth condition or super-consciousness.

8. The elimination of egoism is the sole condition of Self-realisation.

9. Evil is a kind of knowledge to show the superiority of goodness by way of comparison.

10. Virtue and vice, pleasure and pain, are of the mind, not thine, beloved Ram! Neither doer nor enjoyer art thou. Indeed thou art ever free. Renounce the ideas: ‘I am the doer. I am the enjoyer’, and be ever happy.

50. SIVANANDA’S ESSENTIAL TEACHINGS

“Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise;
Be good, Do good, Be kind, Be Compassionate;

Enquire “Who am I?” Know the Self, and be free—this is my message. Everything is contained in this. Serve. Serve all. Serve the sick and the poor. Serve with love, with Atma-Bhava, Narayana-Bhava. Feel that you are serving the Lord in all. Develop cosmic love. Expand your heart. Give, give. Give in plenty to all. Share what you have with others. Eradicate selfishness and greed. Annihilate egoism and pride. Purify your heart. Transform your nature. Eradicate all the evil

qualities that lurk in your mind. Cultivate divine virtues. Lust, anger, greed, pride, egoism—all these must be removed. Truthfulness, love, purity, humility, nobility, magnanimity,—all these must be developed. Meditate in Brahmamuhurta. Do Japa and Kirtan.

“Be good, do good”—this one formula will do for Self-realisation. All the teachings of all prophets are contained in these four words. Be kind to all. Speak soft, loving, sweet words of consolation; never utter harsh, angry, vulgar words. Be compassionate. Compassion is a divine virtue; cultivate it by active unselfish service.

“Enquire ‘Who am I?’ Know that there is one Atman, Immortal, Unborn, all-Blissful, Peaceful, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. Your goal is to realise this. Forget not the goal. Attain this through service, Japa, Kirtan, Prayer, meditation, right conduct and the Grace of God and Guru. May God bless you all”.

51. SIVANANDA’S RADIO TALKS

Here are a few inspiring extracts from the Radio Talks that Siva delivered from the Radio Stations of India, during his All-India Tour:

“You are not this little passing personality hooked on to a mere name and form. You are not Ramaswamy or Mukherji or Mehta or Garde or Apte. You have only fallen into this little delusion by an accident through some passing cloud of ignorance. Awake and realise that you are Pure Atman.” (*Bombay*).

“Of the two, Shreyamarga and Preyamarga, choose you all to proceed along the Shreyamarga, Divine Life teaches you how to do this. Do it through service, selfless Seva, love or devotion to parents, elders, society, country and to the human-kind in general, through worship, meditation and realisation. Strive incessantly to develop a noble character for, virtuous character is the basis of all achievement”. (*Patna*).

“Lead an ideal life of peace. Kill ruthlessly suspicion, prejudices of all sorts, envy, jealousy, selfishness, greed of power and possessions. Practise daily meditation and establish peace in your heart. Then radiate it to your neighbours and all who come in contact with you. Disseminate it far and wide. Preach the gospel of peace to all men and women of the world”. (*Calcutta*).

“If you injure another man, you injure yourself. If you help another person you help yourself. *Ishaavaasyam Idam Sarvam*: there is one life, one consciousness in all beings. This is the foundation of right conduct. This is the foundation of ethics”. (*Vijayawada*)

52. SIVANANDA’S SERMONETTES

God is Truth. God is Love. Speak the Truth. Love everyone. You will realise Him quickly. Have Satsanga with Sadhus, Sannyasins, Bhaktas. This alone can give you Viveka, Vairagya, spiritual strength and peace of mind. There is no other way. Hunt out for Sadhus. They are everywhere. Sincerity and earnestness are needed in you. They are ever ready to receive you lovingly with outstretched hands.

By Satsanga your mind will be saturated as sugar in water with thoughts of God, with Divine Glory, Divine Presence, with sublime soul-awakening spiritual thoughts. Then only will you be established in the Divine Consciousness always. Then you can attain Self-realisation within the time taken for the squeezing of a flower.

Name of the Lord is a potent unfailing antidote for those who are bitten by the serpent of Samsara. It is a nectar (Amrita) that can confer immortality and perennial peace.

Yama (the God of Death) is terribly afraid of those who repeat the names of the Lord. He cannot approach them. Repeat the name of the Lord always and attain the fearless state.

May the Lord guide you in all your activities! May he enlighten your path enabling you to achieve the goal of life, viz., Self-realisation, your birthright! May you live drowned in a life of joy, bliss and prosperity!

53. SIVANANDA'S DAY-TO-DAY UTTERANCES

See Mother Durga in your wife: A visitor came-along with his wife for Swamiji's Darshan and said "Swamiji, for last eight months I have not been having any peace. I have been deceived by my wife." Swamiji asked him, "Why did you marry?" "I married against my will," replied visitor. "Serve her" said Swamiji. "Serve *her*? I should serve her or God?" asked the visitor who was a bit surprised to receive such a command from Swamiji. Swamiji replied, "See Mother Durga in her. Change your Bhav. See God in everyone. God is not someone who jumps from heaven into the earth to give you Darshan? You should see Him in all. He is present in all beings." The visitor agreed to follow Swamiji's advice. Then looking at the lady Swamiji said, "Serve your husband."

Service and charity give meaning to life. A certain devotee of Swamiji was celebrated his sixtieth birthday and at his request, an inmate of the Ashram had typed a telegram conveying Swamiji's blessings, and brought it for Swamiji's signature. Swamiji read the telegram which wished him the celebration of centenary too, and remarked, "What is the use of man living for hundred or two hundred years, disease-ridden and giving trouble to others? It is better to die early in good health rather than living for and suffering for bodily ailments causing suffering to others also. Long life by itself is not a great achievement. One should serve. One should do charity. Then only life becomes fruitful and meaningful. A long life destitute of service and charity means nothing."

54. SIVANANDA'S TREASURE OF TEACHINGS

True culture is the attainment of wisdom of Atma or the Self.

True culture is the discipline of head, heart, and hand. True culture is the attainment of discrimination, dispassion, aspiration and devotion.

True culture is the enquiry of 'Who am I' and finding out the real significance of 'I'.

True culture is right thinking, right speaking, right acting, right living and right meditation.

True culture is honourable, plain living and sublime thinking.

True culture is annihilation of egoism and living in the divine.

True culture is a life of self-restraint, selfless service, cosmic love and self-surrender to the Lord.

True culture is practice of Yoga in the true Vedantic spirit.

True culture is the culture of the inner self of man.

True culture manifests itself in a man in the form of adaptability, egolessness, selflessness, spirit of service, love and supreme devotion to God.

True culture is divine life, a life of truth and purity.

Chapter Four

MULTI-PHASED MESSAGE

55. SIVANANDA'S VERSATILITY

Don't refer to the dictionary for a definition: let us turn to Siva for a demonstration. Siva is versatile: but is he "unsteady" or does he "turn round"? Far from it. But he *has* in abundance "the faculty of turning easily to new tasks and subjects!" How? Because he is firmly rooted in Absolute Consciousness, the fountain of Supreme Wisdom, Chit-Shakti. He knows (in the words of the Upanishads) "that by which all this is known". He is one with that which is the fountain-source of all power. What, then, is impossible for such a divine being?

This faculty is natural to him. In Malaya he (Dr. Kuppuswamy) used to contribute articles to news papers. He was asked to cover "Sports" besides his own field, viz, "medicine". He readily accepted. He studied a few books and overnight made himself thoroughly familiar with the game, with the result his article was a masterly work. Even so with the different branches of medicine and fields of activity. Details of administration of a Hospital, principles of accountancy—when the need arose he manifested the talent. His colleagues would wonder: "was he bluffing us, he was only a doctor; he is as good an accountant and administrator!"

The Ashram and the Divine Life Society are unparalleled achievements and are the living monuments to his versatility. There is no aspect of the work with which he is not familiar and in regard to which he would not give fruitful advice and wholesome direction. Book-printing and get up, photography and art, music and medicine, Yoga and Vedanta, rituals and festivals—he is a master of all. Over and above all this, he knows the other great Vidya—Indrajala Vidya by which he hides his faculties and makes you feel you know better!

56. SIVANANDA'S WORKS

Sivananda's Works of Corporal Mercy, the whole Malaya used to praise when he lived there. "To feed the hungry": I have heard it from the lips of his own cook that, if a hungry man called at his house in Malaya, the doctor would give his own food away and starve. Even today, whatever be his other preoccupations and whatever be the financial problems of the Ashram, he takes the keenest delight in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, and clothing the naked. "Visit prisoners, visit the sick, harbour strangers, and bury the dead" are the other four Works of Corporal Mercy. Siva's words of life-transforming counsel do go out to the class of "prisoners" (criminals) who have somehow escaped the arms of the Law. Visiting the sick has been the great service on which Siva's Life Itself has been based. Harbour stranger? To Siva none is a stranger: into his Ashram as into his Heart all are welcome. Siva not only buries the dead human beings, but animals and insects; but what a grand spiritual festival he has made of it! He buries the corpse, but lets the soul fly on the wings of his prayers and Kirtans.

Volumes have been written by the disciples and devotees of Siva on the Seven Works of his Spiritual Mercy: viz., "to convert sinners, instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, console the afflicted, bear wrongs patiently, forgive injuries, pray for the living and the dead". To what extent Siva has gone in order to effect these! All his divine knowledge and spiritual wisdom, acquired over long years of tedious austerities, he has placed at the disposal of everyone. He delights in distributing knowledge free to all. Millions of sinners have been converted. The ignorant are enlightened. Doubts vanish in His presence or after a perusal of his book. He radiates cheer and removes afflictions. He is the embodiment of patience and forgiveness. He constantly prays for the living and the dead.

57. SIVANANDA'S LITERATURE

The Sivananda Literature bestows upon us the best of boons: for it is not composed of mere words, but it conveys to us the "Word that was with God". Therefore, it inspires us and elevates our souls. Sivananda Literature is the safest elevator which takes us to the Seventh Heaven in the twinkling of an eye.

"The purpose of Language is communication; that is what we learn after two years' study of Literature", writes an M.A., student. Then Siva's literature stands unrivalled as the best medium of communication. It is easily understood by everybody. It is the average school-boy's companion, every man's guide, and the friend indeed of everyone in need of peace, happiness and solace.

Siva's Literature is a library, comprehensive and complete. He has said the Last Word on every subject you wish to study, whatever be your object. Nothing is worth learning that has not been dealt with by him.

Siva's Literature is the Light that puts out the darkness of ignorance, forever. It illumines your heart, silences all doubts, and dissolves all problems.

Sivananda Literature is for all in all conditions of life. It makes the young grow old in wisdom. It makes the aged grow young in spirit. It promotes prosperity; it is your consoling friend

in adversity. It restrains you in happiness; and relieves you of your sorrow. It inspires the dispirited; it strengthens the weak. It humbles pride; and uplifts the downtrodden.

Siva's Literature is the echo of the ancient sage's call; it is the voice of Awakened India. It is free India's best contribution for commonwealth, world-peace and salvation of Man. Bacon declares: "If I might control the literature of the household, I would guarantee the well-being of the church and state". Assuredly,—if the Sivananda Literature fills the bookshelf of every household.

58. SIVANANDA'S GITA

Siva's Gita is the song of his illumined soul. Hence he sings: "At the present moment I am the richest man in the whole world. My heart is full. Further, all the wealth of the Lord belongs to me now. Hence I am King of kings, Emperor of emperors, Shah of Shahs, Maharaja of Maharajas. I take pity on the mundane kings. My dominion is limitless. My wealth is inexhaustible. My joy is inexpressible. My treasure is immeasurable. I attained this through Sannyasa, renunciation, untiring selfless service, Japa, Kirtana and meditation."

Siva's Gita is the revelation of the greatest secret of success in life: "I am ever hard-working. I have intense application to work. I never leave a work till it is finished. I never procrastinate any work. I finish it then and there. I am very quick in doing things. I cannot suppress the spirit of service in me. I cannot live without service. I take immense delight in service. Service has elevated me. Service has purified me. I know well how to extract work from others. I extract work through kindness, service, respect and love".

In giving us a glimpse into his nature, he proclaims the ingredients of sainthood: "I love nature, music, art, poetry, philosophy, beauty, goodness, solitude, meditation, Yoga and Vedanta. I am humble and simple. I am frank and straightforward. I am perfectly tolerant and catholic. I am merciful and sympathetic. I have spontaneous and unrestrained generosity. I am bold and cheerful. I am patient. I can bear insult and injury. I am forgiving. I am free from vindictive nature. I return good for evil. I serve that man who has injured me, with joy".

A daily devout study of Sivananda Gita will mould you into a Sivananda.

59. SIVANANDA'S UPANISHAD

The modern Maharshi's Upanishad is unique in every way. In sublimity of thought and the stirring grandeur of presentation, the Sivananda Upanishad ranks with the best of the ancient "classical" Upanishads. The soul-force and moral courage of the seer, reflect not only in every line of sparkling wisdom on every page of this Immortal scripture, but also in the daringly modern method adopted to present the Truth.

The Upanishad is the most authentic, for it is in the sage-author's own handwriting! For that very reason it is the most inspiring, too. The charming picture of Siva steals your heart; and retrieve it with a message inscribed on it.

Here is a page: “Is there really any happiness in this world? Then, why do you cling to these mundane objects? Search within. Look within. Meditate and rest in the Supreme Abode of peace and immortality now. Never delay a second. Plod on. March forward. Realise now and free. May you reach the goal of life in this very birth.”

Truth is revealed in simple, direct, and vigorous style: “One Immortal Soul or Atman dwells in all beings. This all pervading Atman is the support for this world, body and life. Mind, intellect and senses derive their intelligence from this Atman. You are not this perishable body. In essence you are this Atman. Identify yourself with this Atman. Feel *I am the Immortal Self* or *Atman*. Again and again repeat mentally this formula. This will make you absolutely fearless at this perilous hour. *Tat Tvam Asi*”.

Siva’s Upanishad is your Guru, to guide you in your meditation. Concentrate on the divine picture of Siva that adorns every folio and read the opposite page several times. Then sit for Dhyana—you will soon enter into Samadhi.

60. SIVANANDA’S YOGA, ASANA CHART

Most of the people of the world have a code of morals for themselves and another for others! A glutton would speak of the glory of fasting; and the father of a dozen children would extol Brahmacharya. Siva’s example ought to open their eyes. He talks to others on things which he himself has practised. He treats others with even greatest respect and consideration than he expects from them.

Siva does not waste a single minute; and does not waste a single minute of other people’s time. He is dynamic; and he enables others to be dynamic. He likes clearcut, precise and concise presentation of all subjects; he leads the way. Siva is the favourite Guru of the busiest man and the most dynamic Sadhaka. To them he provides wonderful facilities.

The inspiring “Twenty Instructions” and its well-grouped counterpart the “Sadhana Tattwa”, as well as the Yoga Asana Chart, are illustrations of this truth. They are to be framed and hung on the wall. Just glance at them; and you know what to do without having to wade through big volumes.

Siva’s Yoga Asana Chart is the Sadhaka’s friend. The technique of the important Asanas and the “benefits” in a few words are given, alongside good pictures of a Sadhaka actually doing these Asanas. Besides saving your time, it is an unforgetting reminder and compelling inspiration; you glance at it in the morning and automatically begin to do the Asanas.

Similarly the “Twenty Instructions” chart reminds you of the essentials of Sadhana and of the imperative need to be regular. It saves you from sloth, and spurs you on to the grand goal of human life—God-realisation.

61. SIVANANDA'S SMRITI

Sivananda Smriti is the Modern Man's ancient scripture. It is the ancient message broadcast through a modern transmitter. Siva and Siva alone could expound Dharma and lay down the code of morals, and re-interpret Sanatana Dharma in a way suited to the spirit and the needs of modern times. For, he is the divine bridge that links the Past with the Present. He has the insight into the Truth embodied in our scriptures and the farsight to foresee the March of Time.

Siva is the Prophet of the New Age. Just as Lord Sri Krishna, just before the dawn of Kali Yuga, gave the Bhagavad Gita to serve as our guide, even so Bhagavan Sivananda has given, at the dawn of a new Golden Era of spiritual revival a new code of morals, universal in its concept, modern in its application, liberal in its doctrines, kind and considerate in its injunctions and prohibitions.

Siva takes cognisance of the confusion that has taken place in Varnashrama Dharma and revives the spirit while ignoring the non-essential formalities. He showers the Lord's Grace and Compassion on everyone, convinced that It will by Its own Merit transform the "undeserving" recipients into deserving aspirants. He relegates "sin" to its rightful position as a mere mistake, and thus takes its sting away. He exalts virtue for its own sake; he exhorts people to be good, for, it is good to be good and to do good! He does not hold out promise of heaven to good people; but guarantee Moksha straightaway—release from the miseries of birth and death!

Truth, Love and Purity he exalts above all virtues; and the repetition (Japa) of the Lord's Name is sufficient expiation for any mistake (sin) committed, provided, of course, that it is supplemented by a firm determination to turn away from the sin. Sivananda Smriti is the scripture for the coming generation.

62. SIVANANDA'S GOSPEL

Siva's is the Gospel of Divine Life. It is the word of God. It is the Eternal Truth, Immutable Law, re-stated to suit modern conditions, re-interpreted to help us understand It. This Gospel amply illustrated by Siva's own daily life is a synthesis on all sides. There is synthesis of life in the Spirit and life in the world. There is synthesis of ancient tradition and modern civilisation. There is synthesis of conservative views and progressive ideas. There is synthesis of ideals and realities. What is most wonderful of all: there is a mysterious synthesis of the Great Transcendental Reality and the illusory unreal appearance.

Siva leads to the Paradise of "Sarvam Brahmamayam" through the boulevard along which there is an infinite variety of trees, casting a delightful but paradoxical pattern of light and shade. The seeker after Truth is asked by Siva to do his work in the world with zeal and enthusiasm, but cultivate the Sakshi (witness) Bhava within. He utilises every useful instrument that modern science provides him for the propagation of ancient scriptures. Unquestioning faith in God and the Glory of His Name is indispensable for a disciple of Siva; but in matters (like caste restrictions, organisational methods, diet to an extent), dress and such other details his views are most modern and progressive. The Transcendental Truth is nameless, formless and beyond all attributes; but Siva insists that an aspirant should worship a Saakaara Murthi (God with form), and do Kirtan and Japa

of a Name, and let the Abstract Absolute Truth reveal Itself. He exhorts the aspirant to feel “Sivoham” (I am He: I am Brahman), but behave “Dasoham” (I am the servant of all). An aspirant should meditate on the Mahavakya “Aham Brahmasmi”; and as he walks along the road should prostrate mentally even to a donkey. Such is the glorious Gospel of Siva which leads us to the Grand Goal of God-realisation: *Sarvam Brahmamaya*.

63. SIVANANDA’S MESSAGE

Siva’s Message can be summed up in the words that he frequently uses: “DETACH-ATTACH.” “Detach the mind from the objects of the world and attach it to the Lord,” he explains. That is the central theme of his Message.

“There is no pleasure at all in worldly objects. What appears to be pleasure in the objects is illusory; the fountain of joy and bliss is within yourself. Milk appears to give you pleasure; but the third glass produces retching and vomiting. Homogeneous, Immortal and Eternal Bliss can be had only in the Atma, the innermost Self.

“Ignorant of this perennial source of Immortal Bliss, waiting within him to be tapped, man runs after the objects of the world, in the hope of getting happiness. Cars, bungalows, wife, children, property, wealth, position, power, name and fame—all these he acquires: but they do not give him happiness.

“The man of discrimination renounces all these. He renounces egoism, Kartritva and Bhoktritva Abhimana (doership and enjoyership), too. He is a spiritual hero, a Dheera. He has withdrawn the senses from their objects and directed the rays of the mind within. He soon realises the Atman.

Kaupeenavantah Khalu Bhagyavantah. That sage who has no belongings and who belongs to humanity, is fearless, blissful and peaceful. He radiates peace and bliss. He has gone beyond Raga-Dvesha (likes and dislikes), pleasure and pain, honour and dishonour, success and failure. He rests in his own Self. He is the living proof of the Glory of Self-realisation. You should try to attain Self-realisation, in this very birth, nay, this very second."

This is the great Message of Siva. Blessed are they that have heard it! Thrice blessed are they that have acted up to it.

64. SIVANANDA’S ADVICE

What Siva says always takes the form of *advice*, never a command. The mighty Yogi knows not how to order people about. He is so full of love and compassion that even his advice, borders on request. What he advises you to do is for your own good only; yet he makes it appear as though it is for his sake you have to do it and so requests you to do so! “Kindly do Sadhana”. “Please do Japa”. You have done a lot of work; kindly take rest". In this respect, too, Siva is an exemplar in ideal gentlemanly behaviour.

Siva advises the young boy or girl to obey parents, teachers and elders; study well; maintain good health by regular exercise, Asanas and Pranayama.

Siva advises the mother to mould her children into Yogins. Siva advises retired people to prepare themselves for Sannyas. Siva advises doctors and nurses to serve the patients with Atma Bhav or Narayana-Bhav, to treat poor people free, and place the patient's recovery and health above all pecuniary considerations.

Siva advises advocates to be honest, truthful and just; and to plead for the poor, without fees.

Siva Advises politicians to take a genuine selfless interest in the welfare of the people and to treat service of the nation as Sadhana.

Siva advises the Sannyasins to plunge in the holy work of spiritual uplift of mankind.

Siva advises everyone to lead the divine life of truth, love and purity; to spiritualise all activities by offering all actions unto the Lord as His worship.

Siva advises all of us, earnestly requests us, to realise the Self through the practice of the Yoga of Synthesis. He is earnest in his request because his Mission is fulfilled only if we attain Self-realisation and become Immortal. That is his greatest delight.

65. SIVANANDA'S EXHORTATION

Standing on the summit of Self-realisation, Siva exhorts you to run up and share the supreme bliss with him. His exhortations are not an arm-chair advice on adventure. He himself is not only an assurance of achievement, but he has made achievement easier by paving the way with years of selfless toil. His is an exhortation by example.

Even as a young doctor, Siva was ever eager to share his knowledge with all and therefore conducted a journal "Ambrosia". Today he exhorts every man—doctors, engineers, Yogins, Jnanins, etc.—to broadcast all knowledge and not to make a trade-secret of it. This is the greatest service to humanity and best worship of God.

Dr. Kuppaswami (Siva before he became a Swami) was devoted to the welfare of the patients and did all that lay in his power to restore them to good health. Today he exhorts doctors and nurses to be kind and compassionate towards patients, assuring them that by such service rapid spiritual progress can be made.

Sadhu Sivananda served the Mahatmas and the poor people of Rishikesh, at the same time carrying on intense meditation and austerities. Today he exhorts all Sannyasins to be dynamic and judiciously divides their time between selfless service, study, and meditation.

The Sage of Self-realisation, the Lord Who dwells in all beings,—Bhagavan Sivananda—demonstrates in his daily life the significance of "*Sarvabhutahite Ratah*" (devoted to

the welfare of all beings). This Supreme Being in human garb, therefore, exhorts all saints and Yogins to work for the spiritual awakening of man.

Lord Sivananda exhorts everyone to become one with Him and enjoy perennial peace, eternal bliss and immortality.

66. SIVANANDA'S ADMONITION

Blessed are they who have been personally admonished by Siva even once; they belong to the rarest class of men.

Among Siva's inspiring philosophical songs, there is one "Song of Admonition" which begins with:

Is there not a nobler mission than eating, drinking and sleeping?

It is difficult to get a human birth; therefore try your best to realise in this birth.

Time sweeps away Kings and barons, where is Yudhishtira, where is Asoka?

What have you learnt, tell me frankly, from the Bihar and Quetta earthquakes?

Have you got now real Vairagya; do you practise Japa and meditation.

When your throat is choked at the time of death who will help you for your salvation.

Be up and doing in Yogic Sadhana, you will attain Immortality.

Admonitions are hidden away in his writings. Occasionally one might hear them in his lectures. In conversation, it is extremely rare. Behind this admonition is the recognition of oneness. The Song of Admonition goes on!

Am I not thou, art thou not I, one alone is, therefore, true. Even his admonition, therefore, is full of love and solicitude for our permanent well-being. He is one with us. He feels for us. He is eager that we should quickly ascend to the plane of super-consciousness. He is impatient to serve us immediately from the miseries inherent in worldly life. His admonitions awaken us to our real spiritual nature; to the transient nature of the world and to the fact that all worldly pleasures are but wombs of pain. If, therefore, he chooses any of us to administer a personal admonition, be sure, we are saved. Siva's divine admonition would awaken divinity in a stone.

67. SIVANANDA'S SONG

Siva's songs are the allurments of the almighty. They stir up the slumbering, lead the weak, save the sinful, and cheer up the despondent soul. They are a paradoxical mixture of caution and good cheer.

Krishna's divine songs compelled Gopis to rush to Him: Mira's songs compelled Krishna Himself to dance in front of her. Siva's songs convert an atheist into a devotee, awaken knowledge of the Self in a Sadhaka, and instantly unite the devotee and the Lord in an Infinite Bond of Self-realisation.

Siva's songs are like a divine fire for a worldly man: as the strains reverberate in his ear, the evil in the worldly man's heart is burnt away. Siva's songs are like an ocean of nectar to the devotee: he delights in swimming in it, and remaining forever drowned in it, he attains Immortality. Siva's songs are the cool, refreshing, fragrant breeze of the spring, to the weary traveller traversing the hills and dales of life: they infuse new life, new vigour, and new divine strength into him, so that he can climb the pinnacle of perfection with ease and delight.

Set to simple tunes, they are rich in their contents. Even a little boy can sing them and inspire even a mighty Yogi. The songs are universal in their application and direct in their appeal.

During his epochal All-India-Ceylon Tour in 1950 there was not a gathering in which Siva did not sing his English philosophical songs. Long after the Tour had been completed, young children in every town visited by Him, were singing his "Song of a Little" and "Song of Ities" and parents were thankful to Siva that he had sown rich spiritual seeds in the virgin soil of their children's heart. Siva's songs are unforgettable. They are the Lords Compassion for man's redemption.

68. SIVANANDA'S POEMS

Siva's poems are not poems in the usual sense of the word: they are flashes of intuition captured by his mind and couched in his own sweet inimitable language. They form the threshold to trance. The fruits of Siva's trance-experiences, they can lead us into trance.

He who reads Siva's poems knows that, long after he had laid the book aside newer and newer meanings "flash" within him. As the poem sinks deeper into him, its significance becomes clearer still. That which is beyond grasp has been captured by the Siva and the inexpressible has been clothed in mystic expression by the compassionate sage.

Siva's poems are the keys to the meditation-chamber in your heart. It is when you enter this chamber is meditation possible; and the poems unlock the gates to it. A glance at any poem, before the practice of meditation, will elevate the mind, shut out distractions, flood the heart with aspiration and the whole being with inspiration.

On the lonely inward path of meditation, Siva's poems are lamps that throw a flood of light; they save you from pitfalls, lead you to the goal, they are the landmarks of progress.

The wisdom of life-long experience, the knowledge that one could acquire after years of study, and the information that others would take tomes to convey,—are all given to you in simple sentences, strung in delightful verse, easy to read and assimilate, difficult to forget, and impossible to ignore.

69. SIVANANDA'S PARABLES

In his own talks and discourses, Siva seldom uses a parable or a story. He does not need them. It is a miracle that a mammoth gathering of people, obviously standing at various spiritual levels, understands Siva's utterances, without any need for amplification. Even the greatest among the professors does not rate the discourse as commonplace; nor does a simple layman feel it is beyond his comprehension. The divine personality of Siva enables his soul to transmit the message direct to the soul of the listener. Therefore the huge audience listens spell-bound.

But Siva has mercifully given his Parables as a boon to the preachers, teachers and mother. It is a preacher's scripture. The Parable brings the Truth within the grasp of all, and it has the weight of Siva's divine authority, besides. The teacher in the class-room, and the mother at home, trying to instill holy ideas in the young heart, have in the *Parables of Sivananda* a peerless scripture of practical value. When Educational Authorities begin to value inculcation of moral ideas in the youth of today, they would discover in the *Parables of Sivananda* an unrivalled text-book.

Listen to the Parable of the Old Lady and the Needle. "An old lady lost a needle in the house. But she was searching for it outside, in the moonlight. A man asked her; 'O Lady, what are you searching here?' She replied: 'I lost a needle in the house. There is darkness inside. So I am searching for the needle here'. Worldly people are like this old lady. They are searching for happiness in the objects where real happiness does not exist. Look within. Control the mind. You will find the object of your quest in your own Atman."

70. SIVANANDA'S STORIES

Man likes stories. Woman likes them still more, and often creates some. Children love them. There is no one in the world who does not like stories. That is why our ancient seers presented (and preserved, too) great spiritual truth, through interesting stories, the Puranas.

Siva, too, has written a number of story-books. Children, young and old, love to read them. And, the lessons that Siva intended to convey through them, are forever store in the student's mind.

Siva often tells the story of a polished cheat who said he was I.C.S. in summer and P.C.S. in winter, meaning Ice Cream Seller in summer and Potato Chop Seller in winter! Siva himself is a K.C.S. throughout the year. He is knowledge—Cream Seller. Even spiritual knowledge, Pundits often give us, with a lot of chaff. Not so with Siva. He gives us the very essence of it. The price: the human birth that we have already taken is valuable enough for him to bestow the greatest gift of the *essence of knowledge*. This characteristic we find to marked degree in his stories. Stories are expected to be long winding, full of "details" and verbiage not directly connected with the main theme. Siva's stories are not like that. He gives us the essence of the Truth, and yet makes the stories highly interesting.

Siva's style in this as in every other manner of presentation of the Truth is unique and inimitable. He "sees" the Truth; he "sees" our heart; he "sees" the simplest effective method of planting that Truth in this heart. The method of a master is always simple.

A school in a foreign land (South Africa) has set the example for all nations to follow, by prescribing Siva's ILLUMINATING STORIES as a text-book.

71. SIVANANDA'S WISDOM IN HUMOUR

—In His own words—

One man puts his title as M.Bh. This is not a doctor's title; it means only "Madras Brahmin". One man has his title S.S.O. It is not a sub-divisional officer. It means "Simply Sitting Officer"—i.e., an idler, loafer or a *falthu*. One man uses the title M.R.K.D. It means a "Member of the Rice-Killing Department"—i.e., a glutton or *Sappattu-raman*, who fills his belly with rice or rotti up to the mouth. Another calls himself I.C.S. in Summer and P.C.S. in Winter; it means Ice Cream Seller in summer and Potato Chop Seller in Winter.

Such title-holders are plenty in this world. Please do not aspire to own such big titles and come to limelight. Shun all such titles, hide yourself; you will be peaceful. Sincerity, simplicity, humility, generosity and devotion to God—these you should own and not self-deluding and world-cheating titles of the above type.

* * *

Half a dozen monkeys sat on a mango tree and discussed certain things. One monkey said: "Now listen to me. People say that man descended from us. No monkey ever divorced his wife. No monkey ever starved his children. No monkey abandoned his children and took Sannyasa. No monkey smokes, gambles, drinks and dances in a club. No monkey suffers from syphilis and takes 606 injection. No monkey marries a fourth wife at 80. No monkey takes another monkey's life with a gun or knife or atom bomb. Be quite sure that he did not descend from us. Darwin is incorrect in his statement".

* * *

Siva sometimes reads such pieces to infuse wisdom into casual visitors to the Ashram. In personal discussion and conversations, Siva is full of humour, though his lectures are more serious and serene, full of the fire of wisdom and Vairagya.

72. SIVANANDA'S MEDICAL HUMOUR

—In His own words—

Think well before you act: The doctor said: "Shake the bottle before use". The attendant had by mistake giving the mixture to the patient without shaking the bottle. He then saw the label. He thought of a bright idea. He shook the patient several times. The feeble patient died immediately. Always be on the alert. Hear the instructions with rapt attention. Think well before you act.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing: The Ayurvedic teacher said: *Bhedikki Eduthatu Vaalam*. Bhedi means cholera. It also means “motions”. Vaalam means croton. The teacher meant that Croton is very useful in constipation—to induce good motions.

The student administered it in cholera: the patient died at once.

* * *

English Laddu: Europeans like immensely this Laddu. They die for this Laddu. They eat it with avidity, cupidity and stupidity. Bhramin children throw this away. Some Indians also take this Laddu with the same avidity and stupidity. Its shape is different from Hindu Laddu. Its composition also is different. Its colour is different. Its property also is different. This Laddu is Tamasic. It hinders meditation. It is an enemy of Naturopaths. It cannot be broken lengthwise. It is not man-made Laddu. This famous English Laddu is Anda or egg.

* * *

With one doctor there is prescription. With two doctors there is consultation. With three doctors there is cremation.

* * *

In a few words Siva gives the most sublime truth and life-transforming advice, in a highly interesting manner.

Chapter Five

THE MIRACLE OF MODERN AGE

73. SIVANANDA'S 90-YEARS' WORK

In less than thirty years, Siva has done what would have been difficult for even a man of success to do in 90 most active years. Starting from scratch, Siva has himself done what (i) he and his immediate associates, (ii) his direct disciples, and (iii) their disciples ought to have done in due course of time.

This itself is proof positive of his divinity that Siva the mendicant, just a Sadhu living on alms obtained from the Swarg Ashram could give shelter to a good devotee-pilgrim to Badrinath for one night, and the next morning give him a piece of paper on which Siva had jotted down twenty points, suggesting to him (the pilgrim) that he should print and distribute the “Twenty Instructions” widely. This leaflet of Twenty Instructions guides millions all over the world today. How Siva's works could spread so wide, so fast, is a mystery which no one but he could explain.

Siva has combined in himself (a) the sage who is beyond all “organisations” and “institutions,” ever eager to give, give, and give everything away, (b) the President or Secretary of an institution who is eager to create, to build, feeling it is his for whatever he wishes to do with it, and (c) a servant of the society, bound to serve the institution, to save its properties, which he does not regard as his, but towards which he has specific responsibilities because mysteriously Siva has been able to play triple role simultaneously, has he been able to turn out such enormous work.

Siva has delivered the message, demonstrated its practicability and its glory, founded an institution to perpetuate this, and strengthened this with his own divine Sat-Sankalpa and the spirit of dedication of his immediate disciples.

Details of this gigantic work are given in the following page.

74. SIVANANDA’S MISSION

Siva’s Mission in this incarnation is to re-establish Dharma. Siva’s Mission is just this; turning man’s gaze towards God, opening out a window in his consciousness through which man would perceive God, immanent in all creation, through transcendent, too. Siva has effectively proved by his glorious life and illuminating teaching that when man’s gaze is directed towards the world, his heart generates the undivine current of egoism, desire, hatred, and the like: and that when the gaze of the same man is turned towards God, from him flows the current of love, harmony, peace, selfless service—in short divinity.

Siva’s Mission is thus not proselytization but purification. He makes a Jew a real Jew, a Christian a true Christian, a Hindu a real Hindu, a Moslem a faithful Moslem, a Buddhist an ideal Buddhist. He reminds the followers of all the religions, of the ethical bases of the religion they profess, the spiritual goal they have to achieve. Standing on the Supreme Common Ground of all faiths, viz., God-consciousness, Siva roars his message of Divine Life so that people belonging to the various sects and sections might pay attention to their ranks and strengthen their force by rousing themselves to the full realisation of their glory.

Remoulding man in the image of God is Siva’s mission. Constantly he reminds each man of his divine nature, raises him to his divine stature, so that he can regain his spiritual heritage. To spiritualise the every-day activity of man, and to make Man’s Life on Earth a Life Divine—is Siva’s Mission. The Sivananda Ashram with its multifarious activities is itself Siva’s Mission on exhibition. There Sadhakas and Saints may be either *cooks* or clerks, typists or teachers, doctors or devotees, Sankirtanists or Scavengers, professors or proof-readers. All Work is worship if the angle of vision is changed: to proclaim this Truth is Siva’s Mission.

75. SIVANANDA’S ORDER

The Sivananda Sannyas Corps forms the “Front Rank” of the Adhyatmik Divine Life Army that has its Headquarters at Shivanandanagar in the impregnable fortress of Siva’s Divine presence. Ganga’s all-purifying purity and Himavan’s mighty protecting arms. The Advance Bases are found all over the world in every home. A young child in one household, a modest housewife or an aged grandfather in another—is a member of the Divine Life Army: he or she wins others’ hearts and

their allegiance to Lord Sivananda too. The Sannyas Corps launches mass awakening campaigns. A single member of Sivananda Sannyas Corps armed with the Atomic Bomb of Atmic Knowledge, shielded against “enemy” (Maya’s) onslaught by Siva’s Saving Grace, spurred on ceaselessly by Sivas Sat-Sankalpa assisted by the invisible forces of sages and saints of all ages can take sin’s citadel by storm, rout ignorance hoist the banner of Divine Life and crown YOU the Emperor of emperors, Atma-Samrat.

In Kali Yuga there is bound to be a state of continual emergency: in Sivananda Sannyas Corps, therefore, the emergency regulations operate always. Anyone with a little Vairagya, the mood to renounce and a desire to serve is readily initiated by Siva who invests the new recruit with the inspiration and the power that is Siva’s own. This should be seen to be believed: the recruit is quickly made to master Yoga Asanas, taught Kirtans and chants, encouraged to deliver lectures on Yoga and Vedanta, and made to study a few books (Siva’s own are the best for a rapid acquisition of a good knowledge), and in a few months he is equipped with enough ammunition to blast the hide-outs of Maya and materialism!

The Sivananda Sannyasa Corps is a composite Unit. Full-fledged Sannyasins. Fledglings who are given Brahmacharya initiation with *gerua* cloth, “advance-initiates” who are initiated into the Order and given the ochre robe though they are permitted to carry on their avocation for some time more, and householders, who are given the ochre cloth to worship and “keep as an ideal”—all of them are members of the Corps.

76. SIVANANDA’S DISCIPLE



1st September 1947.

Beloved Ram,

If anyone is rude and discourteous, if he cannot do Hari Kirtan, if he does not do prostrations to elders and saints, if he is not doing Nishkamya Karma Yoga, if he does not know Asanas, Pranayama, if he has no knowledge of the Yoga of Synthesis, if he does not serve the poor, if he is not generous and charitable, if he cannot feel the unity of the Self in all beings, he cannot be my disciple.

Swami Sivananda

77. SIVANANDA’S WAY OF TRAINING DISCIPLES

Siva’s way of training disciples is personal example. He is very strict with himself, and very lenient with his disciples. He is very regular in his own service and Sadhana; but he does not find fault with his disciples if they are lax. Every limb of his precious body wails that Siva is an extremely hard taskmaster; but his disciples know that Siva is all milk and honey. We have to learn from his example how to walk the razor’s edge, which Siva, by his own personal example and precedence has made smooth and pleasant for us.

The next important method Siva adopts in training his disciples is limitless encouragement and super-glorification. He would magnify a millionfold a modicum of virtue that a disciple might possess, ignoring the million faults of his conduct and character. Constantly glorifying the disciple for that virtue, Siva in his own divine way draws the disciple's attention Godward. Merely to get more appreciation from Siva the disciple strives to grow in that virtue! His faults perish uncared for.

The third is the greatest of all. Siva conquers the hearts of his disciples, by showering his loving grace upon them, by serving them, by making them feel that he lives only for each individual aspirant. He makes them feel at-home in the Ashram. He allows them every liberty. He identifies himself with them. When they have, after years of his Sishya-Seva, "come into his grip", he quickly raises them to high spiritual levels by a few words of advice, to suit the particular needs of each aspirant.

The fourth is a wonder. Siva creates opportunities for the aspirant to grow in virtue, and to manifest his goodness and his talents. He allows each Sadhaka to pursue his own path to God, guiding him by Grace, protecting him from pitfalls, and leading him lightly onwards.

78. SIVANANDA'S TRISULA

Lord Siva had his Trisula ready at hand, even Yama, the Lord of Death, trembled before It. Our Siva (Bhagavan Sivananda), holds a Trisula which saves us from death, save us from rebirth and makes us immortal.

Siva's Trisula is "Regular Sadhana". Regularity in Sadhana is more easily professed than practised. Therefore, the first prong of the Trisula is THE RESOLVES FORM. Every New Year's Day, the earnest disciple of Siva takes "Resolves" to do a certain minimum Sadhana, to have some control over his habits, etc.

Resolves are as easily broken as they are taken! It won't do to postpone all the Japa and all the meditation, etc., that we have "Resolved to do" per day, to the last hour. There must be a DAILY ROUTINE which contains in it the elements of positive Sadhana that the resolve forms "promised". The resolves are now "pinned down" to fixed hours of the day.

Avoidable and unavoidable obstacles, inevitable omission and wilful remissness—find "lame excuses" why "I Just couldn't adhere to the routine". We discover how rigidly one day follows the other in its routine, only when we have loosened the reigns of the mind, and let our evil tendencies have the upper hand. Soon we roll down to a depth where we have never been in this birth. THE SPIRITUAL DIARY prevents this. It is a record of our spiritual assets and liabilities. It is a Divine Master that keeps us vigilant and watchful. One day an item is missed: unavoidable. The Diary points out that there is no reason for the repetition of the fault. Siva raises the finger of warning from the columns of the diary. "Beware". We can't err twice if we maintain the diary.

The Three together—the Resolves, the Daily Routine and the Spiritual Diary—save us from ourselves !

79. SIVANANDA'S DISCIPLINE

Siva's Discipline is a unique, bold experiment at self-discipline. Siva's discipline is an experience of Self-realisation at every step.

Siva's discipline is comparable to a fond mother's eagerness to make her young son walk. She hopes he would eventually win a marathon race. But she knows the tiny legs aren't strong enough to provide a firm and steady support for the body. She makes the child walk, but would not let it overexert itself or overtax its capacity.

Siva asks his disciples to keep the ideal before them, of perfect Vairagya, absolute spirit of renunciation, supreme control over mind and senses. But he makes generous allowances to cover each aspirant's defects and shortcomings.

Siva's discipline is the disciplined of the spirit. It is the readiness, the eagerness and the willingness that count. Sincerity is the greatest virtue. Rarely does he "test" his disciples to see if they are sincere in their sincerity!

Siva's discipline is the discipline of love and spirit. By loving the most undisciplined, and by forgiving even the incorrigible, Siva "touches" their heart and in an extremely subtle way makes them feel the discipline is delight.

Siva's Discipline is discipline inspired by personal example. The rigid discipline which he demonstrates in his own personal life, and the supreme compassion which he shows towards the recalcitrant disciple but the latter to shame which generates a spirit that disciplines the disciple in spite of himself.

Siva's Discipline is Discipline by Choice, where the disciple is allowed absolute freedom to make or mar his career, but with resplendent Sivananda, illumining the path of Discipline by the Light of His Life, thus leading the disciple to self-discipline the disciple cannot go astray.

80. SIVANANDA'S ASHRAM

The Sivananda Ashram is Paradise on earth, a real Vaikuntha, Kailasa, Saket-Puri of Lord Rama, Go loka of Lord Sri Krishna, heaven and the Param Dham, in truth. It is the abode of the Living God, the shrine of His Incarnation.

The Sivananda Ashram is a world in miniature. A month's stay there will enable you to gain more experience than a life time *elsewhere*. You will meet these people of multifarious temperaments, from all parts of the world, seeking after a wide range of goals.

The Sivananda Ashram is the loving bosom of a Cosmic Mother, Sivananda. It is the refuge of the destitute and the desperate. It is the last resort of everyone who has lost all hope and interest in life—where the hope and the interest are revived.

The Sivananda Ashram is the retired officer's spiritual home, the Sadhaka's Tapovana, the devotee's Temple, and the Karma Yogi's Yajñashala. It is the fountain-source of the Yoga of Synthesis, at which the thirsty aspirant might drink deep the nectar of wisdom that, perennially wells from the heart of Sivananda.

The Sivananda Ashram is an asylum. Those on the verge of a nervous breakdown, they who might go insane any moment, those who cannot find peace and harmony in their own home or the society they live in—they are welcomed, looked after, and transformed into useful citizens and householders.

The Sivananda Ashram is the place in which to search for a "lost son"; every young man whose previous good Samskaras generate dispassion at heart goes straight to Siva, the only modern sage who joyously welcomes such young men. So parents immediately wire to Siva: "Please look after my son who has run away from home and who, I am sure, has come to you."

Sivananda Ashram is what its name implies: the place, which affords refuge to those who seek auspiciousness and spiritual bliss.

81. SIVANANDA'S NAGAR

Sivananda Nagar is the Heart of the Universe; for there dwells the Lord Incarnate of the present Age, radiating life, light and love to all beings all over the universe.

Sivananda Nagar is the Capital of the Spiritual World, the Realm of Life Divine; for there dwells the mighty spiritual emperor of mankind.

It is a wonderful township whose citizens are all heroes, gems and geniuses. Its soil trodden by the divine feet of Bhagavan Sivananda is such that he who comes in contact with it is mysteriously transformed. Everyone greets the other with an "Om" or "Om Namo Narayanaya". Humility and reverence are in the air. Love and selflessness are in the very atmosphere. Spirituality permeates the entire township. One can't escape the beneficent spiritual influence of the place; though one may not be quite aware how it has affected him.

It is a township far away from the din and bustle and the unholy "air" of modern cities; but it commands all modern amenities. A school and playground for children, shops and hotels, hospitals and pharmaceutical works, a Post Office, convenient bathing ghats on the Ganges bank, and the complete seclusion that only the Himalayan jungle can provide an earnest seeker after Truth—these are all found in this township. A first-rate Photographic Studio where Yoga films are also shown, good Libraries of spiritual books, and temples for devotees, are all found here. Art, music, dance, drama, films—everything is given the spiritual touch here.

It was a jungle hardly twenty years ago. A lonely Sadhu, living on alms, entered the locality and took up his abode in a dilapidated old room. Disciples tried to make it habitable. Some time later the Maharaja of Tehri gave a plot of hill-side land to Siva. Devotees contributed funds for building a few Kutirs. So, it grew into an ever busy township, a pilgrim-centre for people from all over the world. Sivananda Nagar is the glory of a sage's Satsankalpa.

82. SIVANANDA'S ANNAKSHETRA

Siva's Annakshetra, aptly named the Annapoorna Annakshetra, is presided over by Mother Annapurna (the Goddess of Food Herself): no one else would be able to manage it. There are Annakshetras in Rishikesh, whose sole concern is to feed Sadhus and Sannyasins. It is not one of the declared aims and objects of the Divine Life Society. That is because Siva does not regard feeding of Sadhus, Sadhakas and visitors, as a special "Mission". It is part of *his very nature*: his Mission is dissemination of spiritual knowledge.

The moment a visitor comes into Siva's presence, Siva MUST GIVE him something to eat or drink. If the visitor says: "I have just had my lunch at Hardwar" or "I had my tea at Rishikesh" Siva would brush the statement aside with "Oh, that is already digested!" Siva MUST GIVE. Then comes the gifts of books, the spiritual food.

Such is Siva's divine heart that the Annakshetra has gone on growing from strength to strength. From 4 to 400 in less than 20 years! Today it provides food, tea, milk and fruits to 200 resident-Sadhakas, 100 resident visitors, 100 passing pilgrims, besides the Ashram servants.

The Annakshetra is cosmic love in action. It is a cosmic kitchen. It has fed people from all parts of the globe. Siva himself used to take the greatest delight in serving food with his own hand, asking every guest "Do you want rotti, Bhagavan?" "Dhal, Bhagavan" Ganga-Amrit, Bhagavan". Thus he set an example in service of guest: *Atithi Devo Bhava*—may guest be your God.

The Annakshetra is conducted on the daily income of the Ashram! Even when the Ashram is in debt, the service and the feeding of Sadhus and Atithi-Narayans goes on! Such is Siva's Sankalpa that no obstacle or impediment can stand in the way. When the Ministers of the old Tehri State were taking tea with jaggery for want of sugar (in the 1940s), there was a roomful of laddus during the Sivananda Diamond Jubilee celebration (1947)!

83. SIVANANDA'S MAHASAMSTHANAM

Prativadi Bhayankaram Annangaracharya Swami, a renowned savant and spiritual leader of South India, regards Siva's Satsanga as "Devendra-Sabha". The Sabha or the Mahasamasthanam is presided over by the Lord of the Spiritual World. Those who are endowed with spiritual vision can perceive the tremendous spiritual power that is generated at Ananda Kutir. The Mahasamasthanam is the Abode of the Supreme Being, the Fountain-Source of Sivam and Anandam, from a minute part of the Ananda (bliss) of which, in the words of Annangaracharya Swami, all the beings in the entire universe derive delight.

Sivananda Mahasamasthanam is a great centre of art, culture and learning. Music, dance and drama have not only received great encouragement at the divine hands of Siva, but have received his spiritual touch. Music and dance as integral parts of Sankirtana Yoga, and drama as a great medium for conveying sublime thought have earned Siva's fullest support. The foremost among the Nada-Yogins (musicians) from all over India, the best among those endowed with histrionic talents have offered their art at the lotus-feet of Bhagavan Sivananda. Siva has honoured them all suitably, and has awarded Titles in token of his appreciation of their merit.

Srimati Rukmini Arundale of the Kalakshetra (Madras), one of the greatest exponents of Bharata Natyam, said “Swamiji, You have the extarordinary knack of attracting all talents to yourself”. Among Siva’s direct disciples are men and women who are highly talented in music, dance, drama, photography, painting, engineering, medicine and surgery, Yoga (theory and practice), Vedanta, and literature (English, Sanskrit, French, Tamil, etc). In the Sivananda Mahasamasthanam everyone is a genius: Siva has the divine power to awaken all latent faculties in his disciples.

84. SIVANANDA’S ART STUDIO

If Siva has excelled his own previous Incarnations has excelled all prophet, saints and sages of all times (even the modern ones), it is because he will literally live forever. A thousand years hence, he will be right in front of those who will live then—on the screen: and he will talk to them and inspire them with his divine voice, through the magnetic tape and gramophone records.

“*Uttishthata Jagrata Prapya Varaannibodhata*” is an Upanishad Mantra: but no one who utters it can command the fiery spirit of the original Divine Author. Not so in the case of Siva’s powerful utterances. “Do real Sadhana my dear Children”. “Within you is hidden God” “*Eko Devah Sarva-Bhuteshu Gudah*”—these and such other thrilling utterances of Siva people will be able to hear direct from him, in his own divine voice, for all time to come. This is the service that the Sivananda Art Studio has rendered to humanity; who can estimate it?

The Studio is the Sadhaka’s greatest friend; it provides him with the object of his meditation—Siva’s soul-elevating photograph. It is a permanent blue-print for saints: it faithfully preserves the life and works of the greatest living saint and divine being—Siva. It is a boon to foreign Yoga-students: it has fine films depicting Yoga Asanas, and other Yogic Kriyas, with the help of which anyone can learn the correct technique. It is humanity’s everlasting treasure house.

Art students and photo enthusiasts have unbounded admiration for the Sivananda Art Studio. A visitor—Cabinet Minister of the Indian Union—was surprised when Saradanandaji presented him an enlarged picture taken on the Minister’s arrival—15 minutes earlier. Everyone admits, it is one of the best equipped studios in the world, which does better work than any other.

85. SIVANANDA’S REGALIA

The Sivananda Regalia is the only real regalia in the world: for, while the crowns of mighty kings have rolled on the dust, and the sceptres of monarchs have been broken by relentless Time, the suzerainty of Siva will last forever. His glory is beyond Time, even as his crown is of the Immortal Spirit.

The Sivananda Regalia will forever remind the world of the future that God, the Ruler of the entire universe, lived in it as Man for the sake of mankind. The Regalia will sing the glory of the awe-inspiring sacrifices he made to free Man from the shackle of sense-hankering. Siva’s “begging bowl” will remind you of his warning that real happiness lies, not in the objects, but in dispassion and renunciation.

The Sivananda Regalia will forever proclaim to mankind the Gospel of Selfless Service. The manuscripts in His Own Handwriting will remind humanity that Divinity which dwelt on this very earth, served man, and rendered the greatest of all services—the service of spiritual awakening. The several volumes of “**Inspiring Letters of Paramananda**” will reveal the intense zeal with which Siva worked day and night, utilising every avenue of service, to reach the ends of the earth, in the shortest period of time.

The caskets containing Addresses of Welcome presented to Siva by the Public and by the Civic Bodies of India and Ceylon, during the Tour, will silently pay homage to the World Honoured Sage who demonstrated the mighty power of cosmic love and selfless service.

The Sivananda Regalia gives you within the half-hour you may spend in it, an idea of Siva’s Life and Mission. Every aspect of his divine life and work is represented in it. It is the Divine Life “Noah’s Ark”.

86. SIVANANDA’S SOCIETY

The Divine Life Society is a unique institution in that it is the great gift of a divine being who paradoxically combines in himself the Cosmic Consciousness of a God-realised sage, the dynamism of an enterprising industrialist, the “originality” of a film producer, the tact of a business magnate, the daring of an adventurer, the love of a cosmic mother, the anchorite’s spirit of renunciation and the supreme indifference and detachment of one disinterested in the affairs of the world!

Siva is truly Satchidananda Param Brahman, Infinite and Unconditioned. His creation shares these qualities. It is established in Supreme Truth: and it radiates wisdom and bliss. Infinite are the ways in which the Society serves humanity: and its service is unconditioned by any rigid rules or regulations.

The Headquarters of the Society, at Shivananda Nagar, is Cosmic Consciousness concretised. It is open to all; it keeps doors ever open in loving invitation to every sincere seeker after Truth. It has no boundaries, literally and metaphorically.

There are over dozen departments of dynamic activity at the Headquarters: if you have “new” talent, you can join up and Siva will provide a department for the manifestation and fuller development of your talent! “The Society is yours” he says.

The whole world passes through this strange institution almost every day. Even God has imposed some restriction upon arrivals into and departures from the world He has created; but in Siva’s Society you can walk in whenever you like and be looked after with **intense** love and affection and you can leave it whenever you like and be quickly “forgotten”, or immortalise yourself by glorious dedicated service. Perhaps, this Divine Being is experimenting in his laboratory, laws which may come into force in the next Creation of the world.

87. SIVANANDA'S UNIVERSITY

The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University founded in 1948 by Siva is unique in many respects. Its Professors are lifelong students of Yoga and Vedanta: and its students are all over the world. Resident Sadhakas, passing visitors, and thousands of others who are in contact with Siva, are the students. Every aspirant's own daily life, led in accordance with Siva's precepts is his curriculum.

The University has no buildings apart from the Sivanandashram, but it is built on the surest foundation of the Holy Wish of a Man-of-God to bring Divine Life and Light to every seeker in the world. Resident-Sadhakas and visitors attend the University classes and Satsanga: they get practical training in Yoga Asanas, Suryanamaskara and Pranayama, and they receive lessons in the theory and practice of Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.

Aspirants endowed with a little bit of dispassion and discrimination, with a lot of sincerity and earnestness, ready to "adapt, adjust and accommodate" and eager to dedicate themselves to life-long selfless service of humanity, join the University. Besides, a number of Indian and foreign students have undergone training at the University for short periods, and have received Siva's Titles at the time of their departure.

Siva moulds the students into saints. Atma-Jnana is the only "diploma" that the student is encouraged to get. The best facilities are provided to PRACTISE Yoga, not merely to learn about it. The General Hospital and the offices of the Divine Life Society provide fields for Karma Yoga; the temple and Bhajan Hall and also the Satsanga, are ideal for the practice of Bhakti Yoga; the jungles and Ganges bank invite you to meditate and realise God. Siva the Lord Incarnate allows each Sadhaka to pursue his own path and attain Him.

88. SIVANANDA'S SCHOOL OF YOGA

Advanced students of Siva have founded schools in various parts of the world. A Sivananda school of Yoga and Vedanta is conducted by Sri Swami Sivananda-Radha in Vancouver; another by Sri Swami Vishnudevananda in Montreal, Canada. Sri Yogiraj Louis Brinkfort and Srimati Edith Enna conduct Schools in Denmark; and Sri Swami Swaroopananda (Erich Pierschel) has a School of Yoga in Germany. Sri H. Schwab has established a Yoga, Vedanta Academy in Germany. A sincere seeker has established what he has termed as 'Sivananda University' in Havana, Cuba. These Schools are the Yoga Vedanta Forest University in miniature. Siva provides the inspiration and the guidance. Worthy students spread the message.

The Divine Life Society has, similarly, over three hundred Branches all over the world. Satsang is conducted, group meditation is practised, mass prayers are offered—each Branch is a spiritual power house.

The Sivananda Ashram, too, has its "branches" or prototypes in various places.

Everyone schooled in Sivananda Yoga—the Yoga Of Synthesis—is a Sivananda School of Yoga. Professors of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University often tour the country and go abroad, too, and they are really Peripetetic Schools of Sivananda Yoga.

It is the greatest wonder—greater than the Nine Wonders of the world—that sitting, in his lonely hut on the banks of the Ganga, Siva has been able to found, establish and conduct, dynamic centres of divine life, all over the world. This itself is proof positive of his omnipresent divine nature.

Yet another School of Yoga functions in Copenhagen, founded by Sri Robert C. Christensen, Norway has a school conducted by Sri Kulsrud; another in Holland led by Sri Marinus. Egypt has its own school of Yoga, too—all of them spreading Siva's Message of Divine Life.

89. SIVANANDA'S YOGA MUSEUM

In a world full of vulgar noise, with all kinds of rubbish poured into print and smeared over miles of paper every day, the Modern Man has neither the time nor the inner tranquillity to listen to learned discourses on Philosophy, nor to study at leisure, deeply philosophical tomes. When the channels to the 'Head' are thus clogged, it is art which appeals to the 'Heart' and elevates the soul straightaway. The Yoga Museum is a thing of Divine Art, the sublime creation of the Supreme Artist, Siva.

It was born in Siva's Heart. His Illumination (Self-realisation) was its father, and His Compassion the mother. The offspring, the Yoga Museum shares these two virtues. It is very pleasing to the eye: so, it is kind and affectionate towards you and teaches you all about Vedanta and Yoga in half an hour without the aid of any 'weighty' text or perplexing perorations! It is the House of Divine Life; every section contains a few well-chosen illustrations which give a succinct, clear and comprehensive idea of the fundamentals of Yoga.

The nature of the Absolute, and the nature of phenomena; the Transcendental Being and the Immanent God-head; the Path of Inward Contemplation (Jnana Yoga); the Path of Mystic Communion (Raja Yoga); the Path of Devotion (Bhakti Yoga), as well as the Path of Contemplative Dynamism (Karma Yoga)—are all 'shown' in the Museum through such pleasing pictures, that self-forgetfully you assimilate the great ideas 'framed' in them, without irksome toil.

Western aspirants (particularly) have acclaimed it as a marvel. Eastern philosophers have reverently admired the ingenuity of the sage. But, to me, the Museum stands as a monument to Siva's compassion which saves us, His children, from the sweat and the toil of acquiring Knowledge which he got the hard way. Wearing the diving outfit of renunciation, he fathomed the ocean of austerities and meditation; and the pearls of Truth he thus got he has strung into a lovely necklace and presented in to us as Yoga Museum.

90. SIVANANDA'S YOGA MOVIE

The silver screen has undoubtedly come to stay as men's best counsellor. Curiosity enough it represents a grotesque externalisation of an inwards approach to Truth. "Make the mind blank, put out the flickering flame of the senses, and let the light of intuition in", is the sage's advice. That in effect is what the cinema theatre does, *outside*; and so it has the power to externalise powerfully the consciousness of man.

Siva does not shy away from any modern invention. To him anything that can be made good use of, towards a spiritual end, is good enough. So he exhorts us to spiritualise the celluloid. Produce spiritual films, films that will inspire man to aspire for Self-realisation.

Siva has given the lead. The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University has three excellent movie cameras both 8 mm and 16 mm. Thousands of feet of film can unroll before you a great variety of inspiring subjects of absorbing interest.

Yoga Asanas performed by different people—a Yoga-student, a householder, a foreign student, a foreign lady-disciple, an Indian woman, a small child, a muscular gymnast, a lean and thin Hatha Yogi, a young Yogi, and an old ascetic. Siva's own Asana-performances are also filmed. No one who sees this will excuse himself for not practising Asanas daily.

Other Yogic Kriyas like Neti, Dhauti, Basti, Nauli, etc., as also Suryanamaskara and Eye Exercises are also filmed.

For all time to come you can see on the screen distinguished statesmen, scholars, leaders and saints meeting Siva in the Ashram. The Immortal Glory of a Divinity's Inspiring Life Divine is captured by the Sivananda Art Studio on the celluloid.

Many Yogins (like Sri Sivananda-Radha of Vancouver and Sri Edward Hain of London) have copies of the films which they exhibit in those cities.

91. SIVANANDA'S PRINTING PRESS

The literary output of no other single individual (who is at the same time the most hard-worked president of an international institution) has been so enormous in the world as to keep a well-equipped modern printing plant with an automatic printing machine, a crown cylinder Press, and a smaller traddle, a linotype, twenty compositors, and equal number of "binders" with an automatic folding-machine and a thread-sewing machine to assist them, busy day-in and day-out, and yet unable to fulfil the author's modest demands that the Press should release a book at least in the time taken for him to write it! Siva has no equals even in the enormity of literary production: We can't think of anyone creating just one paragraph as inspiring as every line of the countless volumes from his pen is.

This is the greatest secret of the success of Siva's Mission. His service-expectancy is just a little greater than the service-opportunities that present themselves to him. He works for the higher degree; and without allowing himself to lapse into complacency he promotes the expectancy, too, to a higher degree! Thus this Wonder Man of the Age who is none but God Incarnate, is not "satisfied" even today (when the whole world has been flooded with his Divine Life Message) with what has been achieved. Only he uses the eyes for the purpose for which He put them on the *forehead*—to look always forward to greater achievements—and not to look back and rest on the laurels.

What is most miraculous, however, is that since the Press was established, wonderful devotees of Siva, who have thoroughly imbibed his *spirit* of cosmic service, liberally donate for the

publication of books. What a great glory is theirs! They have immortalised themselves by taking an active part in the Jnana Yajna of Siva. They have become one with him; and their munificence enables His Message to reach thousands of His Children.

92. SIVANANDA'S MEDICAL ORGANISATION

Though Siva asserts that God can be realised through the selfless, egoless and desireless performance of one's own duties, whatever they are, yet he undoubtedly grants a soft corner in his divine heart to *service of the sick*; and often declares that the doctor is nearest to Divinity, if he serves the patients with Narayana Bhava, feeling that he serves the Lord in the patient.

The Sivananda Medical Organisation is therefore, an offshoot of his heart. Even after he renounced the world, the call of the sick was irresistible for him—and it was capable of drawing him from his meditation-chamber. People even now recall that wherever he went, a hand-bag of common drugs was ever with him—with which he could serve the sick lying on the roadside. He lived on alms but provided the sick Sadhus with fruits and milk. The first organisation that owed its existence to him, after Renunciation, was the Satyasevashram Dispensary. A small Charitable Dispensary grew up even before the present Sivananda Ashram was established.

The sage's Sankalpa works wonders. The late Capt. T.N. Srivastava bequeathed Rs. 20,000 for a Hospital at Sivananda Nagar. Several eminent doctors and surgeons became actively associated with Siva's Mission at this stage. General A.N. Sharma retired from the Indian Army Medical Service, and immediately organised the Sivananda Medical Organisation. Famous Eye Surgeons like Sivananda-Adhwaryoo, Dr. Sivananda-Ramjass and Dr. Sivananda Hridayananda conduct Eye Relief Camps; eminent Lady Doctors like Dr. Devaki Kutti, Dr. Padma Mudholkar, Dr. Sivananda Saroj and Dr. Amar Kaur conduct Women's Medical Relief Camps. Recently, the Red Cross Society has opened a Maternity and Chief Welfare Centre to supplement the Sivananda Medical Organisation's Services. The Organisation thrives on Siva's Miracles!

93. SIVANANDA'S PATHIES

Siva is a divine doctor who is one with the Origin of all *pathies* which is the Lord's Compassion. It matters not how: pain must be relieved and the patient made well.

Siva, therefore, recognises that just as different Yogas are necessary for people of different temperaments, and different religions are necessary for people of different mental equipment, different systems of treatment are necessary to bring quick relief to different constitutions. By his own example, he teaches us that to all *pathies* which we might adopt in the treatment of the sick we should add a good deal of *sympathy*.

In his own Ashram, under the aegis of the Sivananda Medical Organisation there is a well-equipped modern Allopathic Dispensary—with X-ray plant, microscope, diathermy, ultra-violet and infra-red lamps, an operation theatre and several wards. There is an Ayurvedic Pharmacy which produces wonderful specifics for the treatment of various diseases and tonics for toning up the system. There is a Nature Cure Sanatorium for those who are tired of drugs and would

prefer the natural way to health and healing. There is a Homeopathic Dispensary for those who are inclined to that system. Recently a Unani Hakim started a Unani Dispensary!

To those who with their inner eye opened, perceive that through all these *pathies* it is Siva's Grace that flows, and so, prefer to resort to him, Siva prescribes a suitable medicine *and* Namopathy, too, *viz.*, Japa of one's own Mantra and also the Mahamrityunjaya Mantra.

Some Karmic diseases are incurable. To those who suffer from them, Siva prescribes Omopathy; repetition of the Pranava, feeling "I am different from the body and mind: Immortal Self I am".

They say that Siva practised Allopathy. There is a slight error in this. He was Pathy-of-all: *Pathy* means Lord, and in Siva Siddhanta Literature is the term applied to God Himself. Siva is the Lord of all systems of Yoga and medicine.

94. SIVANANDA'S TOOTH POWDER

Next to "service of the sick", if there is one motto which has become synonymous with Sivananda, it is the motto "share what you have with others". Food, clothing, medicines, thoughts, spiritual experience and Knowledge of the Self—everything that He has Siva must share with others.

A good Ayurvedic physician prescribed a good tooth powder. It was prepared and given to Siva for his personal use. He found it very effective and gave his own valuable suggestions to make it more effective. He found it wonderful! The very next day, a good quantity had to be prepared, for every Ashramite to be immediately supplied with the Tooth Powder that Siva has had manufactured for himself! Shortly afterwards, the Sivananda Ayuurvedic Pharmeceutical Works had to prepare tons of the Sivananda Tooth Powder for use by spiritual aspirants and Siva's disciples all over the world.

This Tooth Powder and the Brahmi Amla Medicated Oil along with Chyavanaprash, have become so famous throughout the world that Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works find it difficult to cope with the demand!

Siva himself is regular in the use of the Tooth powder. He himself samples every fresh stock and gives valuable ideas to the manufacturers to improve its quality and effectiveness. The Tooth Powder is vitalised by the blessings, compassion and grace of the Supreme Sannyasin, Siva.

Those who have used the Tooth Powder have testified to the fact that it is marvellous for the teeth and the gums—and puts off toothless old age indefinitely. At 70 Siva's teeth are as strong as ever; and the regular use of Sivananda Tooth powder will enable you to enjoy a similar privilege.

95. SIVANANDA'S AYURVEDIC PHARMACEUTICAL WORKS

The Sivananda Tooth Powder gave birth to the Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works; every Ayurvedic Vaidya of repute suggesting a good tonic for maintaining Siva's precious body in sound health opened up a fresh avenue for Siva's loving service to flow to humanity.

Siva's Heart is the Abode of all; and Siva dwells in the hearts of all. Siva's Ashram welcomes all; and Siva's service is extended to all. Men, women and children adore Siva with equal fervour; and men, women and children receive his love in equal measure. The Ayurvedic Pharmacy reflects this attitude. It caters to your entire family, Bala Jeevanamritam for your child; Ashokamritam for the queen of the household; Arjunarishta for you. And the rest of the preparations for all.

Siva's books contain all the knowledge you need; Siva's life radiates all the wisdom that you need, Siva's Ayurvedic Tonics cater to your physical needs throughout the year! Brahmi-leaves and Brahmi oil specially for the summer; Shilajit specially for the winter! B.M.K. Trichoorna is ready to deal with the cold and cough that might assail you in the rainy season.

The young Sadhaka might need Brahmacharya Sudha; to an old dyspeptic Kshudha Vardhak Churna is a boon. Cureczema, Netra Jyoti Surma, Pada Raksha Malam and Medhu Maha Nivarak deal with the chronic ailments that sap people's vitality. So also the other preparations of the Pharmaceutical Works.

More than anything else, the Ayurvedic Pharmacy is an illustration of Siva's business ethics. Minimum of profit and maximum service, purity of preparation and scrupulous adherence to lofty medical ethics; these are illustrated in the Sivananda Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Works, for other business-houses to follow.

96. SIVANANDA'S ALL-WORLD RELIGIONS FEDERATION

The All-World Religions Federation of Siva represents a revolutionary step which the future evolution of Man towards a better understanding of his fellow-men. It is a Federation in the truest sense of the term. It is a union of all world religions, each preserving its individuality, but conceding common plan of action where the fundamental common factors are concerned. By calling for religious unity, Siva does not aim at creating a "One World Religion". While conceding individuality to each religion Siva warns the heads of each religion that they should not lose sight of the fundamentals, in an effort to distinguish themselves from others. The Middle Path which is the hall mark of Siva's Life, Teachings and Mission, shows itself in clear relief in the Federation.

Siva infuses enough faith in each man for his own religion, to feel that, that is the best religion on earth *for him*. At the same time, Siva makes each men feel that, similarly, other religions are best for other people. This remarkable Doctrine of Understanding, prevents the person on the one hand from becoming gradually irreligious as a consequence of lack of devout yet zealous faith in his own religion; and, on the other, it prevents him from letting his faith and zeal exceed their limits and encroach (often with violence) on others' faith.

The one direct effect of this great doctrine of Siva is that he has today disciples all over the world, each growing stronger in faith in one's own religion, and yet feeling drawn to the Great Unifying Factor of Diverse Denominations. Thus Siva himself is the All-World Religion Federation, in a way.

The world of tomorrow would certainly be a better place on account of the unostentatious labours of this Federation. Sufficient religious fervour would have been created to keep irreligion away: and sufficient love would have been instilled in man's hearts to make them live in harmony.

97. SIVANANDA'S ALL-WORLD SADHUS' FEDERATION

What was said of the All-World Religions Federation applies with equal force to the All-World Sadhus Federation also. The aim of this Federation is to bring together the men and women of renunciation, to which-ever religion they belonged. To ensure that they themselves adhere to the high standards of Sadhus is the Federation's task; but to perform their duties of radiating spiritual light and spreading the gospel of religion is their responsibility.

Who can be a better exemplar of the Sadhu quality than Siva himself? A firm adherent to his own principles—the highest standard of an Indian Sadhu—Siva illustrates in his life the truth that loving admiration (not merely indulgent tolerance) of everyone else's approach to Truth is the supreme *sine qua non* of a Sadhu.

Thus Siva's Sadhu becomes a peace-maker in the Daily Battle of Life, a Bliss-vendor in this impermanent misery-ridden world, and a spiritual transformer of all the currents of earthly life. Siva as a Sadhu, does not exclude himself from the world, but identifies himself with *everybody* and towers above all. He tells you how, by discovering the inner fountain of peace, you can enjoy peace and happiness in all conditions. Anyone who has seen him at close quarters when his physical sheath was assailed by illness, would have noticed the miracle of making a miserable condition yield joy, pain *give rise* humour, and of converting suffering and its concomitants into service of humanity (e.g., when a prescription for Siva's own illness is given by an eminent doctor, it would be developed by Siva into a book, for the benefit of all!) That is the Sadhu, the benefactor of humanity. A Federation of such Sadhus to whichever religion they belong is a boon to mankind.

98. SIVANANDA'S ALL-INDIA TOUR

Only the weapons were different: because the enemy was different this time. In the former Incarnations the Lord had given battle to powerful demons, the perpetrators of Adharma, and by destroying them had re-established Dharma. In the present age of materialism, the demon of selfishness and greed, is hidden in the heart of man. The weapons with which he could be annihilated were Siva's own radiant personality, his message of Divine Life, and the Lord's Name. Through the five gateways into human fortress, Siva entered and attacked the demon. Through the eyes, the radiance of his divine personality entered; through the ears, his message was thirst in; and the mouth was made to sing the Lord's Name. The tears of joy and devotion that millions shed during Siva's All-India Tour as they had his Darshan, were nothing but the life blood of the demon inside, drained away by Siva's missiles. Siva's Darshan and his soul awakening discourses and his ecstatic Sankirtan had purified the millions.

For two months Siva toured the whole of India and Ceylon. On the 9th September, 1950, he left Rishikesh, and returned to it on the 8th November. Indescribable were the scenes of devout reception that awaited him at all the centres he visited. Soul-stirring were his lectures at all gatherings over 180 of which he addressed. The Lord's Name filled the entire atmosphere of the country. The gospel of selflessness, the gospel of love, the gospel of true renunciation, the gospel of meditation—in short the gospel of Divine Life was broadcast throughout the length and breadth of the country. Millions had their rebirth in the life divine. The sage, the foremost son of Free India, by raising the banner of spiritual independence, restored India to her rightful place as the spiritual guide to all mankind.

Living Divinity, during those two months, flowed into a stream of supreme compassion, and flooded the hearts of millions with the nectar of Divine Life.

99. SIVANANDA'S WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

April 1953 witnessed a modern resuscitation of an ancient spirit whose eternal home is the hoary Himalaya,—the spirit of cosmic unity. Significantly it was Siva, the sage of cosmic vision, the living answer to the sincere prayers of the Vedic Rishis, who brought about this great event.

Intense work for a whole year materialised this miracle on the bank of Mother Ganga. Delegates from all over the world representing various World Religions gathered at Ananda Kutir. Dr. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer, a renowned scholar, savant and administrator, inaugurated the Parliament on the 3rd April. Continuously for three days the Parliament sat hearing the illuminating discourses of great authorities on various schools of thought. *Everyday* Siva's soul-stirring discourse concluded that day's session. The third day's final session came to a glorious and successful termination in the early morning hours of the next day!

Not a discordant note was struck, nor were the fundamentals forgotten. Every delegate had a patient hearing from the assemblage; cordiality prevailed throughout—the cosmic love radiated by Siva, the Apostle of Love and Peace permeated the entire atmosphere and filled the hearts of everyone. In a modern way, through Siva, the hoary Himalayas had re-delivered the ancient message of cosmic unity. Modern Maharshis assembled on the banks of divine Ganga had declared that religion was indispensable or man's life and that whatever be the religion of the individual, he should love those belonging to other religions, too. The new scripture embodying these learned discourses, and the numerous papers received for the Parliament is the sumptuous WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGION'S COMMEMORATION VOLUME.

100. SIVANANDA'S GLOBAL TOUR

In a life crowded by miracles, the Global Tour is the greatest. In a pictorial volume entitled DYNAMIC SPIRITUAL AWAKENING describing the All-India Tour of Siva, a Global Tour was announced! Copies of the book, with Siva's own autograph had gone round the world, signifying Siva's assurance that he would follow. And, Siva did—but how?

Even the announcement of the Tour had created a great spiritual stir in all the countries on the Tour programme. Branches of the Divine Life Society were formed; older, dormant branches

were revived. Regular activities were inevitable if the people were to be kept in touch with Siva's programme. Publishers vied with each other in getting Siva's books translated in the various European languages; they anticipated a large demand on them, during Siva's visit. When the publications were announced, people rushed to get them; Siva's books in their mother-tongue they were waiting for, and many felt it would be better to be familiar with the sage's teachings so that even before he came into their midst they could make enough progress to enable him to lead them quickly to the highest Goal. Invitations poured into Ananda Kutir, praying to Siva to "be my guest during your visit to this country".

Thus had Siva accomplished Global Tour almost overnight. His message had spread to the remotest corners of the world. His pictures had been enshrined in millions of homes. Millions all over the world studied his works in earnest and practised Yoga. They had spiritual communion with him and felt his living presence in their midst. Siva today literally dwells all over the world at the same time.

A devotee firmly believes that the Name is greater than the *Nami* (the Lord). In the ease of Siva's Global Tour it has been proved that His Name travelling round the globe has achieved at least what He Himself could have, if he had undertaken the Tour.

101. SIVANANDA IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

Thus, without boasting of spiritual powers to dematerialise the physical body here and to materialise it in another country, Siva has not only appeared in dreams, visions, in physical and astral form, in so many places all over the world, but in a spiritual way he actually lives all over the world at the same time.

A good devotee in South Africa feels Siva's presence in her house always. A direct disciple of the Master; living in Canada, realises that Siva alone works through her. A seeker living in Holland writes 'Day after day, minute after minute, I am conscious of your Presence here'.

Through his inspiring books, his illuminating letters, and his invisible presence, Siva is guiding countless men and women in Europe and America, nay the whole world, along the spiritual path. Without the trouble of a physical voyage to these places, he has reached out the heart of those who are *fit* to receive the spiritual light and enlightened them, and awakened all the rest of humanity to the grandeur and glory of the spiritual life.

Siva is Divine Life. Siva is peace and bliss. Siva is spiritual aspiration. Siva is synonymous with Self-realisation. The light of Atma-Jnana that Siva has transmitted to the West has materialised there as the life divine.

Sivananda Libraries in numberless homes; Siva's portrait on every altar: Siva's names on all lips—Siva dwells in everyone's heart radiating auspiciousness and joy. The Yoga-Vedanta Centres, the Branches of the Divine Life Society, and the great men and women who have stayed at Ananda Kutir for some time and returned to their country, taking with them soul-awakening reminiscences of the Sage's life and personality—these represent Siva Himself! They have spread to Europe and America.

102. SIVANANDA'S WORLD INFLUENCE

Siva's influence on the world is a beneficent influence for the good. In a world torn by strife and struggle, his is an influence for peace and amity. When the undivine clouds of materialism gather to hide the sun of wisdom, Siva's divine influence serves as the gale of spirituality to disperse the clouds. When the tempests of worldliness (of lust, anger, greed, selfishness and egoism) rage in the heart of man, it is Siva's tranquillising influence of discrimination and dispassion that serve as a protecting fortress. To the ship of humanity caught in the stormy sea of atheism, irreligion and immorality, Siva's wise guidance is like a powerfully favourable wind which gently but assuredly takes it to the harbour of peace and well being.

Siva's influence is so subtle that your scientific instrument can't measure it. It is so strong that, if you expose yourself to it, your heart can't escape feeling it. In your newspapers filled with information about riots, disasters and destruction, you will not find evidence of Siva's world influence: often it so transforms the person it touches that he is himself unaware of it, and even where he is so aware, the realisation of its magnitude makes him hide his insignificant personality in humility—as all good people do. But history—the newspaper—runs after Time whereas Siva stands ahead of it, and leads civilisation itself to its divine destination.

When, a hundred years later, people love one another, and nations abandon violent ideologies and adopt peace as their standard, men of vision would recognise Siva's world influence as the factor that transformed the heart of Man at the crucial hour of civilisation,—the twentieth century.

103. SIVANANDA'S LIFE-TRANSFORMING INFLUENCE

A young school-boy heard Sivananda's lecture during the Sage's early spiritual awakening tours (1930-32); there was a letter on the father's table the next morning: "My last Pranam to you. I heard Swamiji's lecture yesterday. I am going to find my real Father."

"I was an atheist before. I heard your lectures at Roorkee and was completely transformed," writes an Officer-resident of Roorkee.

Most of Siva's foremost Sannyasin-disciples the pillars of his mission—are the products of Siva's pen. A line in "Spiritual Lessons" or "Sure Ways for Success in Life" or "Practice of Yoga" transplanted them from worldly life to divine life. Of "Guru Bhagavan's wonderful message of Cosmic Love!" Sri Padma, M.A., writes: "He even first appeared in my dream and spoke the words Love, Love all, Love Everybody. Prem, which had a different connotation before, struck me as a Divine Quality, only when I SAW it exhibited by Guru Bhagavan towards me as towards many, many others. Guru Bhagavan is my realised God."

Here is a Doctor's testimony: "Somehow or other I have not been able to be a good earning member. I can't charge my poor patients and—to compensate for it when I feel like putting down a heavier rate for the rich the Voice of the Himalayas, Sri Gurudev, prevents me from taking undue advantage of them, either!" That is from Sri Dr. Sivananda-Saroj, M.B.B.S., of Bombay.

What it is to come under the magic spell of Siva's Divine Personality and his chastening message, it is impossible to describe; for, even they who have been transformed by its influence know it not. They, in spite of themselves, become GOOD; and the transformation is so thorough that they feel complete strangers to their own former self!

104. SIVANANDA MANDIR

A mendicant sat on the eastern bank of the Ganga, at Swarg Ashram. As the sun rose, its rays illumined the dense forest on the western side. Who knows what he thought, as he emerged from his deep meditation? And the mendicant, Swami Sivananda, took his abode on the western bank: still living on alms. He roamed the forest. The dense jungle of wood-apple (*bael*) trees tempted him to raise a temple for Lord Siva in his imagination and to offer all the bael leaves in worship. That was in 1933. In 1943 the temple had sprung up! And, the bael leaves were offered in worship. The mendicant's magic.

Today by the side of the Visvanath Mandir which he constructed, there is a Sivananda Mandir, where in his own time his own Vighraha (image) is worshipped. The career of this mendicant is the miracle of the Age.

There is a greater miracle. In millions of homes all over the world there is a Sivananda Mandir. Countless people literally worship Bhagavan Sivananda. No other Divinity on earth is today worshipped by people belonging to all religions, to all nations, to all creeds and all castes, except Sivananda. To a Hindu he is an Avatar of Krishna or Rama; to a Christian he is incarnate Jesus; to a Buddhist he is Lord Buddha come again. Here is one whom they can worship without leaving the religion they belong to! And, worshipping him, they discover the true glory and real essence of their own religion.

One became many: one Sivananda Mandir multiplied itself into countless Mandirs all over the world. And the transcendental became immanent. The shrine slipped into the devotee's heart. The dynamic divinity demands a living temple. Today Siva is enshrined in countless hearts, inspiring all from there to be good and do good; to serve, love, meditate and realise.

105. SIVANANDA GRIHA

Dr. Kuppuswamy (Siva before entering the Holy Order) renounced the world, and wandered along the roads of North India. The homeless Sadhu was the abode of Sivam (auspiciousness) and Anandam (bliss). The verandah of a Dharmasala was the first Sivananda Griha (house) in Rishikesh.

Seclusion was what he sought. His mind longed to immolate itself in deep meditation. Three and a half walls enclosing a bed of rubble welcomed him with its stumpy (doorless) arms: this was Sivananda Griha for some time—near Lakshman Jhula.

Irrepressible was Siva's love of selfless service. A man of awe-inspiring austerities, he yet had an extremely soft heart that melted at human suffering. The few moments he spent outside the

dwelling, found opportunities for service. The gratitude of the beneficiaries forced him into a small cottage, with a roof. This Kutir in Swarg Ashram became Sivananda Griha.

Devotees put up a fence around it; disciples laid out a garden. But to Siva the Mission of spiritual awakening was more urgent than personal considerations. Once again, when he settled down in Muniki-reti he had to share a dilapidated cow shed with a quadruped. That was the first Sivananda Griha in what is now Sivananda Nagar. In 1942 Siva occupied the present abode on the bank of Ganga.

Living in this humble old ill-ventilated, cave-like Kutir in a remote corner of India. Siva has constructed a Sivananda Griha in millions of hearts all over the world, in which he dwells. The heart of the Sadhaka who lives the life divine, who sings His Names and selflessly and lovingly serves all, who meditates and strives to reach the goal—that is the real Sivananda Griha.

Rani Kumudini Devi of Hyderabad has named her palace “Sivananda Griha.”

106. SIVANANDA CONSCIOUSNESS

By bestowing on his foremost disciples the supreme gift of a prefix of his own name. Siva has wrought a wonderful miracle. The entire household, the entire society, in which the blessed Sadhaka moves, becomes *Sivanandamayam* (full of auspiciousness and Ananda). Sivananda Srinivasan in Durban (South Africa), Sivananda-Magaritha in Europe, Sivananda-Kumudini in Hyderabad, Sivananda-Adhwaryoo in Gujarat, Sivananda-Vani in Delhi, Sivananda-Nilakanthan in Bengal, Sivananda-Sobha in Roorkee, Sivananda-Saroj in Bombay, Sivananda-Hridayananda at Ananda Kutir, Sivananda-Pannalal in the Punjab, radiate Sivanandam to all around them. Siva is no longer a mere Guru, just a religious preceptor. He is and has thus been recognised the Lord Incarnate. Hundreds of thrice blessed devotees like Sri Pannalal of Amritasar, Sri Padma of Madras, have “Om Namah Sivanandaya” and “Om Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya” as their Mantra.

To the Sadhaka himself, the gift is a boon. Siva tells him or her “We have become one now, on account of your great devotion and spirit of dedication: so you can prefix my name to yours.” Is just the name transferred? No. With it is transferred a mighty power, a divine spiritual force, subtle spiritual power. The aspirant begins to think, and feel that Sivananda is part and parcel of his inner being, and *vice versa*. When he is confronted by a crucial problem, when he is assailed by temptations, when he has the opportunity to serve others, and when he is engaged in the dissemination of spiritual knowledge, he asks himself “How would Swamiji think, feel and act in such a circumstance as this?” Sivananda from within guides him: the aspirant, too, thinks, feels and acts as if he were for the moment Sivananda Himself.

Not only this

107. SIVANANDA IN EVERY HOUSE

Householder-disciples of Bhagavan Siva have yet another way of getting established in Sivananda-Consciousness. They christen their children with His Name “Sivananda,” if the child is

a boy, and “Sivanandini” if it is a girl! A wonder of wonders! You can have a Sivananda in your own home. This is one of the best ways of ensuring the growth of the child into a saint, and of warding off evils and wrong doings in the entire household.

For, when the temptation arises to tell a lie, etc., the child may be innocently playing in front of you and the very thought “Sivananda is watching this” will save you from many a pitfall. Once the feeling is deep-rooted that Sivananda dwells in your house, no wrong thought, no fear, no grief and no negative feeling will ever arise in your mind.

Listen to what Sri Meeranidoo-Soomanah of Mauritius says: Yesterday I uttered your mystic Name 1001 times at the bedside of a sufferer in the hospital. Everybody thought that he would give up the ghost but your spiritual Name revived him. The world would be a real place for Gods and Goddesses if people utter your Name several times. My Lord is Swami Sivananda. The name of my nephew is Sivananda Somanah: so, we will utter your divine Name in our home."

Even so is the case in thousands of homes. Thus has the world recognised that “Sivananda” is not a Sannyasin’s name: nobody would call a baby with a Sannyasa-name—people would consider it inauspicious. But, Sivananda is the Lord’s Name, the fountain source of all auspiciousness and happiness. My only prayer to the blessed parents of Sivanandas and Sivanandinis is that they should not shorten the name, while calling the child, like ‘Seenu’ for ‘Srinivasan.’

108. SIVANANDA’S PADA-RENU

Lord Krishna says in Srimad Bhagavata that He runs behind the great Bhaktas and saints so that a particle of the Dust of their holy Feet might fall on His Head! Such is the glory of the Divine Feet of God-men. Even inanimate, insentient and impure dust coming in contact with Them is considered blessed, and glorified. It is this divine contact that makes the dumb eloquent and the lame scale mountain-peaks.

It is Siva’s divine radiance that shines through these pages: the shadows are cast by the imperfections in the instrument. Yes what a great glory it is to belong to Him, to be the dust of His Lotus-Feet.

Whether He protects the Dust in His Shoes, leads it along the luxurious carpet of material comfort and spiritual evolution or dashes it on the stones and pebbles of the rough and tumble of life, it is a supreme blessing, proudest privilege and greatest good fortune to remain for ever.

Sivapada-renu
Immortal Dust Of His Lotus-Feet

SADHANA TATTVA

By H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda

(a) An ounce of practice is better than tons of theory. Practice Yoga, Religion and Philosophy in daily life and attain Self-realization.

(b) These thirty-two instructions give the essence of the Eternal Religion (Sanatana Dharma) in its purest form. They are suitable for modern busy householders with fixed hours of work. Modify them to suit your convenience and increase the period gradually.

(c) In the beginning take only a few practicable resolves which form a small but definite advance over your present habits and character. In case of ill-health, pressure of work or unavoidable engagements replace your active Sadhana (spiritual practice) by frequent remembrance of God.

HEALTH CULTURE

1. Eat moderately. Take light and simple food. Offer it to God before you eat. Have a balanced diet.

2. Avoid spicy and hot foods, like chilies, garlic, onions, tamarind, etc., as far as possible. Give up tea, coffee, smoking, betels, meat and wine entirely.

3. Fast on *Ekadasi* days or once in a fortnight. Take milk, fruits or roots only.

4. Practice *Yoga Asana* (Hatha Yoga exercises) or physical exercises for 15 to 30 minutes every day. Take a long walk or play some vigorous games daily.

ENERGY CULTURE

5. Observe silence (Mouna) for 2 hours daily and 4 to 8 hours on Sundays.

6. Observe celibacy according to your age and circumstances. Restrict the indulgence to once a month. Decrease it gradually to once a year. Finally take a vow of abstinence for whole life.

ETHICAL CULTURE

7. Speak the TRUTH. Speak little. Speak kindly. Speak sweetly.

8. Do not injure anyone in thought, word or deed. Be kind to all.

9. Be sincere, straightforward and open-hearted in your talks and dealings.

10. Be honest. Earn by the sweat of your brow. Do not accept any money, things or favour unless earned lawfully. Develop nobility and integrity.

11. Control fits of anger by serenity, patience, love, mercy and tolerance. Forget and forgive. Adapt yourself to men and events.

WILL CULTURE

12. Live without sugar for a week or month. Give up salt on Sundays.

13. Give up cards, novels, cinemas and clubs. Fly from evil company. Avoid discussions with materialists. Do not mix with persons who have no faith in God or who criticize your Sadhana (spiritual practices).

14. Curtail your wants. Reduce your possessions. Have plain living and high thinking.

HEART CULTURE

15. Doing good to others is the highest religion. Do some selfless service for a few hours every week, without egoism or expectation of reward. Do your worldly duties in the same spirit. Work is worship. Dedicate it to God.

16. Give 2 to 10 percent of your income in charity every month. Share what you have with others. Let the world be your family. Remove selfishness.

17. Be humble and prostrate yourself to all beings mentally. Feel the Divine Presence everywhere. Give up vanity, pride and hypocrisy.

18. Have unwavering faith in God, the Bhagavad-Gita and your Guru. Make a total self-surrender to God and pray: "Thy Will be done; I want nothing." Submit to the Divine Will in all events and happenings with equanimity.

19. See God in all beings and love them as your own Self. Do not hate anyone.

20. Remember God at all times or, at least, on rising from bed, during a pause in work and before going to bed. Keep a Mala (rosary) in your pocket.

PSYCHIC CULTURE

21. Study one chapter or ten to twenty-five verses of the Gita or your scriptures with meaning, daily. Learn the original language of your scripture, at least sufficient to understand it in original.

22. Memorize important and inspiring portions of your sacred scripture according to your capacity. Memorize also any inspiring quotations from other spiritual books. Keep a pocket version your scripture with you at all times.

23. Read the Ramayana, the Bible, the Quran, the Bhagavata, the Upanishads, the Yogavasishtha or other religious books daily without fail. Study more during holidays.

24. Attend religious meetings and seek Satsanga (company) with saints at every opportunity. If not, create opportunities. Listen to spiritual discourses from learned and holy people. If possible, organize such functions on Sundays or holidays.

25. Visit a temple or place of worship daily. Preferably before you leave and upon your return from work, even if only for 5 or 10 minutes.

26. Spend holidays and leave-periods, when possible, in the company of saints or practice Sadhana at holy places in seclusion.

SPIRITUAL CULTURE

27. Go to bed early. Get up at four o'clock. Answer calls of nature, clean your mouth and take a bath.

28. Recite some prayers and Kirtan Dhvanis (devotional songs). Practice Pranayama (breathing exercises), Japa (repetition of the Divine Name of God) and meditation in the early morning. Sit on Padma, Siddha, or Sukha Asana throughout, without movement, by gradual practice. While you meditate, forget the outside world totally. Gradually increase the period of meditation.

29. Perform the daily prayers of your religion. Do not fail to fulfil your obligatory duties.

30. Write your favourite Mantra or Name of God in a notebook for ten to thirty minutes, daily.

31. Sing the Names of God (Kirtan) and pray for half to one hour at night with family and friends.

32. Make annual resolves on the above lines. Regularity, tenacity and fixity are essential. Record your Sadhana in a spiritual diary daily. Review it every month and correct your failures.