

EXPERIENCES OF A PILGRIM SOUL

Experiences Of A Pilgrim Soul

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(Auto Biography)**

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PART I

1. TO FELLOW PILGRIMS

We are all Pilgrims of Eternity coming from an unknown past, living in a multicoloured universe and passing into a mystic future. Whence we come and where we go, we know not: but we come and go playing our role in this evolutionary drama of *Existence!* Who exists, why, how and who started this cosmic play and what is its goal? – every intelligent man and woman must find out an answer to these age-long inquiries. Through the dark inferno, burning purgatory and pleasing paradise of this mounting **Divina Commedia**, a rhythmic heartbeat keeps time to a mystic song whose refrain is, “*I am Aum*”. Who is this ‘I’—that is the first person in us, and the baffling personality in the second and the third persons? That universal ‘I’ in the individual, is the *Pilgrim Soul* here. Fellow Pilgrims, pray walk with him as he talks with you.

These are random footprints left on the sands of Time by the patient Pilgrim whose plodding steps met with grim trials in the ups and downs of human destiny. Hard was his lonely journey, long his search in the tangled woodlands of cosmic life and high was the aim of his inner aspiration guided and fulfilled by a Pure Almighty Grace–Light. In heat and cold, weal and woe, in storm and stress, in sun and in shower, a bright vernal hope kept cooing in his heart “*I am, Pilgrim! Onward!*”. Birth and death, exit and entrance, coming and going, cradle and grave, childhood and dotage are but punctuations in this Song Celestial — “*I am Aum!*” Last birth saw him meditating on the Banks of the Ganges, and this birth was brought about by an aspiration to reveal for the good of humanity, his meditative intuitions. In the present body, the Pilgrim lives in tune with the Inner Divine, loving the beauty of Nature and basking in the company of saints. Nature made him a poet and Saints made him a Yogi. This book is a record of everything fearful and peaceful that helped the pilgrim to know the mystery of existence.

He was born in a family of saints and savants; but admitted no caste, race or religious difference. He had a good modern education; but he created a university whose professor was ‘I’ in the conscious Heart. He was born in India but considered himself a universal citizen, a friend of mankind. Books he read in several languages; but Nature was his Supreme Book of Knowledge. He rapturously studied Nature with the eye of intuition. He took delight in giving for the good of all what he gained, by hard work. He kept enough for himself and never asked even God to give him his daily bread. He lived a seeker among saints, following his inner voice and going from saint to saint. He never subjected himself to the pressure of person and planet. God’s-will-in-Conscience was the guiding light of his life. He ate leaves, fruits and nuts when he was hungry, kept his body and mind healthy and maintained an equilibrium of inner serenity. He lived in the soul and wore the gross, subtle and psychic bodies as robes.

This is the Pilgrim with whom you now walk ... come fellow-pilgrims—onward !

2. NATURE INSPIRES

The curtain rings up; the Golden Dawn gilds the calm stage of floral beauty round Azhagar Malai, near Madurai. The gemmed book of stellar heaven dissolves into her golden smile. The balmy kiss of Nature blossoms into colourful poems of living fragrance. The odorous breath of gorgeous Nature, awakens the song of universal harmony. The silent hill mumbles its message in the flowing stream. Birds warble welcome to the New Dawn. The song of Nature mingles with Vedic hymns proceeding from the temple nearby.

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The Pilgrim, now a little boy, is immersed in the sylvan symphony of solemn Nature. The grand hill speaks to him in the language of the flowing stream. Stones were cut out from this hill for the temple and its image. In the vast temple of sky-roofed Nature, the hill stands like a majestic witness of God. The mystic sky above envelops the earth. Blessings flow from that to this world spinning between Mars and Venus. The hill stands as an evidence of God's grand presence. The stream bathes it with the resonant *mantra* Aum. Flowers adorn it. Green Nature clothes it. The rising Sun weaves golden light to the rapturous God of Beauty in Nature. That celestial Beauty kindles the imagination of the Self-immersed Pilgrim-Soul. "Hail, Pure Almighty Grace!" ejaculates his heart. The heaven to him is the pure Omnipresent One. All emanations of Nature—the sun, the moon, air, sea, rain, stream, field and flower—are manifestations of His Cosmic Energy. The best worship is to live in tune with the universal Nature. The young pilgrim is immersed in the radiant Sunrise gracefully held in the golden plate of the New Dawn. An ineffable joy fills his being. He has lost tongue to express his rushing thoughts.

Crowds throng around and pour into the temple; drums drown the music of Nature; shrill pipes absorb human voices. Temple bells ring—in ceremonial worship. "Quick, Anand, the time is up" cries father Jatadhar as he drags the boy to the barber. The dreamy urchin bends his head to the barber brother who applies his painful knife to scrape off the ringlets and as they fall kissing the dust, the boy touches them. The father cries "Ah, pollution". "Why? This was my crown, a part of my body, oiled, combed tied and adorned with flowers by my mother; has pollution entered it now?" thought the boy. "Now, for a bath, cries Mother Kamakshi. Bathing finished, clothed in rich silk, the boy follows his parents and his uncle to the sanctum sanctorum and stands before the decorated image; It was a suffocating atmosphere amidst squeezing crowds hailing "Govinda, Govinda!"... The smell of sweat and breath spoiled his inspiration. The sanctum where the beautiful image of God stood, was fuming with incense, and cluttered with ceremonial articles and offerings. The priest ran through his professional ritual-muttering mantras and waving lights. He received the stipulated amount and poured three spoon-fulls of holy water, gave some tulsi leaves and plantain in a half coconut. The uncle with the boy, squeezed himself through the unruly crowd to the temple of limitless freedom. Pitiably scenes met the eyes. A poor lady with her baby, caught in the jostling crowd, hit against a stone pillar; her head was bleeding and her baby was trampled upon. The boy rushed forward to save the child... "Ay, don't touch her" cried, Mr. Caste... "Off with your caste ... Compassion is above caste and religion" cried the boy as he lifted the weeping child to the bleeding Mother ... He tore off his silk cloth and dressed her wound; a group of devotees afar kept on crying in deep fervour, "Govinda, Govinda!" But they were not allowed to enter in. Why? Mr. Caste had laid down that only certain people could approach the man-made image. Hundred whys and hows confused his brain as the boy was pushed into the bullock cart jingling forward to witness the Boat festival. His whys were often silenced by a curt "Keep quiet, chatter-box"—the uncle hushed up his surging mind. The festival crowd and the rustic indiscipline around did not please him. He saw a boat-festival; the image was taken across a sheet of water in a decorated float with music, dance and fanfare around. He witnessed drunken villagers rolling on the dust. He saw thieves and pickpockets in police custody ... There was feasting for a privileged caste on one side and starvation crying for food on the other side. A hundred such scenes touched his heart.. and there his pilgrimage commenced—from the sanctum of rational compassion !

The precocious boy silently escaped from his vigilant guardians and roamed all day long in wistful freedom. He attended service in a church and witnessed a conversion. He entered a Masjid and saw Muslims in solemn prayer before the Kaaba. He trudged four miles to Tiruparam Hill, famous for the Skanda temple below and a mosque above. He left the ceremonial pomp below and climbed up the hill pushing through bushes, briars and boulders on the steep path. He reached a grotto near a pond above the precipice, and sat still gazing at the sky and Nature absorbing knowledge with a tranquil mind. From that height he saw the temple tower, the steeple-cross, and dome-crescent; but above all these human buildings, the heaven-bound universal temple lit up by the sun, moon and stars

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appealed to him. Silent prayer in the inner sanctum gave him greater peace than the noisy worship in walled temples. Walled castes and dogmatic circles did not appeal to him. One young man, after conversion, called his aged father an ignoramus. This touched him to the quick. Caste and religion stood between man and man and divided the world into fragments of narrow sectarian camps. The young pilgrim was perturbed in the mind which was yearning for a mystic guidance to pure Truth. The old framework was gone. He kept the mind clear for the reception of new Knowledge. The idea of one vast heaven embracing the earth, one life breathing in all creatures, and one soul throbbing in all hearts was deeply imbedded in his evolving mind and he was sure that there must be one common path of salvation for humanity. Humanity seemed to him to be the collective embodiment of one soul. Intuition led him on and he sang his way to the sanctuary of Truth, struggling through a thousand social impediments, through dark clouds and thunder peals, finding his path with the help of the Inner Master who was the guiding Light of his life.

3. WANT-WIT MELANCHOLIA

The Pilgrim found the world, a battlefield of opposing forces. The Inner Master revealed to him the vanity of human wishes and the serenity of ingathered life. He heard from his brothers and uncles stories of Shakespeare's dramas and the lives of heroes and sages. The young pilgrim saw around him the play of lust, greed, envy, anger, prejudice and treachery. He saw gangs of Iago, Tartuffe, Rasputin and stomach minded sycophants raping Truth and Innocence.

He witnessed murderous Othellos and Macbeths killing purity. Selfishness blows trumpets. Ambitious Pride plays the band. Passions shoot out angry words. The battle of human acrimonies rages wild and people are trapped and jammed in the melee for pelf, power and pleasure. Friends of today part as enemies tomorrow. Passion ends in tension. Honeymoon wanes *anaemic*. Greedy hunger loots greeting generosity. Innocence is cheated; debts are denied. Intelligence is starved. Scholarship sleeps over manuscripts. Degrees are wet with tears. Culture is measured by caste. Conscience is gagged. Arrogance parades in golden pomp. Envy insults merit. Truth is mortified. Justice is falsified. Sacrifice is strangled. Freedom is coerced. Spiritual nations are held in subjection. Birth raises the curtain; Illusion stages the drama. Death brings down the curtain leaving behind a sordid silence. Is this life?

The wise grandfather died suddenly; the chaste grandmother followed him to the grave. Two lovely blossoms were plucked cruelly by fate and thrown into the dust. A bridegroom died of snakebite and his young wife swooned and died. The glitter of gold cost the life of a rich miser. A doctor's son was sickly. An astrologer's daughter became a child-widow. A professor's son was a muff. A sorcerer's wife was hysterical. A strumpet poisoned her good husband. Is this life?

Enough. The pilgrim saw enough of the world before him and that with the interest of a press-reporter. The pilgrim observed and observed the ways of the world and the tragicomic phantasmagoria of events. He was possessed by a want-wit melancholia which brought him to the stage of "to be, or not to be". He felt a mystic hunger which none could appease—no book, no preacher, no philosopher. He resorted often to lonely groves and hills and forests and temple-towers to brood over his inner problems. The riddle of the Self called for a Master who alone could solve it. Mother Kamakshi,

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grandmother Minakshi, great-grand-mother Bangaru, the old Guruvamma who served St. Thyagaraja, father Jatadhar, Pandit Sundara Srowthi and a lot of wise and learned souls poured into his ears, morals and stories. Book lore seemed a twice-told tale and his soul yearned for the “**Look-Lore**”. He felt as if he had already known all these things and facts. His thought moved far above the frameworks of mental creeds and Mosaic formalities. He sought for a brighter horizon far away from the humdrum monotony of ordinary life.

He heard from his elders the history of his own ancestry and how the river of life flowed from Delhi to Sivaganga. Musician Gopal Sastry was taken from Amalapuram to Delhi. He adorned the court of The Khilji Sultans. His descendants served the Moghul Emperors. They came with Aurangzeb to Golkonda, and settled there. In 1748, a political storm swept away Shankara Bharati to Benares where he took Sanyasa and resorted to the Himalayan solitudes for Yoga. His son, a yogi, poet and scholar, moved south and married a girl at Nellore. The girl’s father recommended him to Purnayya, the minister of Tippu Sultan. Vedam Sankara Bharati became a private secretary of Purnayya who sent him as his ambassador to Fort Dindigal. The fall of Tippu at Srirangapatnam changed the destiny of the family which settled in a village near Madurai. The terrible sufferings of the family in the battle of life, moved his heart. His ancestors lived in pomp and luxury as royal favourites. Now he saw a sudden change in their destiny.

His parents were healthy, godly and learned, but poor. His father was a living Upanishad and his Mother a breathing Gita. His brothers were good modern gentlemen and finished products of English Culture. And yet economic difficulties handicapped their liberal hearts. The pilgrim was so much moved by the pinch of poverty at home that he refused to be an additional burden to his parents. He earned a little money by bookbinding and singing songs in holy concerts and thereby met his school expenses. Unto the last, he worked six hours a day for his livelihood.

On the Mother’s side, the uncles were affluent in Madurai. They rolled in wealth and luxury but they did not have the peace of his pious home at Sivaganga. Their home was a frivolous pandemonium; their tinkling gold, their jewelled arrogance and disdainful smiles of insolent pride, their hysteric fits, uncontrolled passions, moaning sickbeds, mutual suspicions of green-eyed jealousy, the scenes created by sorcerers, astrologers and doctors—all these made a deep impression on his thinking mind. The elder uncle Ramaswami was the one wise man in that mansion. He put before the pilgrim’s mind the life-examples of saints and heroes and expatiated upon the miseries of family life. The young pilgrim was resolved not to entangle himself in the meshes of dark uncertainties. He was absent-minded in the class at school which seemed to him a prison. He cared to read his lessons only a month before examinations. Songs came to him; but they were soaked in doleful tears. He took pleasure in visiting saints and monks in the neighbourhood and listlessly wandered with them. He learnt many things from them but the riddle of life remained to him yet unsolved! “Where is that Master who can hold the nectar of wisdom to his thirsty lips?”—queried his mind.

4. ST. PURNANANDA

One day, there was a new stir in the family, a new enthusiasm. A ripe old sage, tall and majestic, stepped into the Garden where the pilgrim was contemplating at the foot of a margosa tree. The mother and uncle worshipped the saint. His gray beard and shining eyes attracted all. But the boy was simply observing him from his seat under the tree. The sage suddenly walked towards him and exclaimed “Who is this Yogin?” “Here is my last son lost to the world, roaming here and there, inattentive to the class, murmuring poems, and talking to himself—an eccentric boy” said the mother. Sage Purnananda remarked “He

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is a sage, looking within; leave him in my hands...” The boy rose up, fell at the feet of the Sage and wept out his melancholia... Purnananda affectionately caressed the boy, and brought solace to his burning heart by a single sentence: “My child, be centred within.” The pilgrim Soul found his first Master whom he faithfully served and followed. He named him Satyarka.

Purnananda was the elder brother of his maternal grandfather Mahadev, an advocate, a mantra Siddha. As a boy, Purnananda fled from home and did hard penance in Uttarakasi up the Himalayas. He studied the Vedas and puranas in Benares and entered the order of Shankarite Sanyasins. He was a fully qualified Yoga Vedantin. He was like a bearded Ramana Maharshi in appearance. During his long journey he had opportunities of meeting all the saints of the last century like Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Ramalinga, Dayananda, Sundaraswami, Siddharuda, Santananda and B. R. Rajam Ayyar, the author of ‘Rambles in Vedanta’. He was a genuine Vedantin who could boldly declare “I am I. ‘I’ is God”. He took special care in moulding the spiritual life of the Pilgrim and gave him for two years, an esoteric training. A course in Asanas and Gita-study were finished in one year. Next year, the great sage taught him the life and works of Godmen. This naturally led him to Self-reflection. He was dreamy in the class; the teacher scolded him in the school and his parents scolded him at home. Mere materialists discouraged his spiritual mood and called him mad. Disappointments blasted his mystic hopes. With pale despair he ran to his only sympathiser Purnananda, and demanded: “Bhagavan, even study and contemplation could not remove my giant grief. My inner depression has no expression.”

Purnananda: Satyarka, the soul wants something else. It is not satisfied with home, school, teacher, kith and kin.

Pilgrim: Yes, Sir. Teacher canes me, father scolds me, mother chides me, brother bothers me, friends desert me, the school frightens me, home disgusts me and the tumultuous vanity of human life calls me Mad.

Purnananda: Compose yourself, Satyarka. Noumenon outshines the phenomenon, know this. Heart is home; mind is world; God is Father, Grace Mother, Virtue Brother, Purity Friend, and Divine Love, the Leader of your life. Conscience is your Master. His voice is the eloquence of Truth. Follow That. There is a mystic university in your brain and a light in your heart. Nature is the Principal and intuition the method of revelation. You will get all knowledge from within, just as you get your poems in finished forms from within. Observe an artist. Who paints pictures from the point of his brush? Brush? Colours? Hand? No. It is the Pure Soul that uses as instruments the brain, heart, hand and brush to paint the picture. So the soul within shall use your pure mind and loving heart to reveal itself.

Pilgrim: Yes, thanks, Bhagavan. He who makes the plants blossom and fructify, He who makes the sun shine, the Spring smile, the winter cold and the summer warm, He who makes the wind blow and the earth grow greens, He who has led the stream to flow and the sea to swell shall teach me wisdom.

Purnananda: Satyarka, wisdom is already there just as fire is latent in the wood. A mystic Master kindles it. You are a Yogi, born for a divine work. You cannot live like others, an animal life of eating, drinking, sleeping, earning, enjoying, mourning and dying. Your stars shall never lead you into the labyrinth of worldliness. Go ahead and God shall guide you from Saint to Saint. Listen to the story of Sadasiva Brahmam.

5. SADASIVA—THE SILENT SAGE...

NERUR is a charming village on the Banks of the Kauvery. Nature smiles green and gold around it and birds warble sweet and solemn in the peaceful woodlands crowning its majesty. A solitary temple stands in the heart of the sonorous woodland like a

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Yogin in trance. A Sivalingam adorns its sanctum. Behind the temple stands an evergreen Bilva Tree under which a Jivanmukta lies interred. You can hear the eternal symphony of 'Aum' in that peaceful serenity. Seekers meditate under that tree and enter into spontaneous introspection and meditation. We feel a mystic presence there and that vibrating presence was created by the Spiritual dynamism of a silent sage of blissful trance.

This Sage of supreme knowledge was *Sadasiva Brahman*. He was born in Tiruvisanallur on the banks of the Kauvery. His father was Somasundara Avadani and his mother Parvatidevi. Both were pious, learned in Vedic lore and devoted to God and the Saints. Sadasiva was brought up in Vedic traditions. Under the tutelage of the famous poet and scholar Ramabhadra Dikshita (the author of "Janaki-Parinayam"), Sadasiva attained peerless merit in Literature, Grammar, Logic and Philosophy.

He bloomed into a Sanskrit poet of rare genius. He breathed in his songs, the fervour of inner ecstasy. Hear this song:

"Nil souci ! No care, for the self-controlled Souls of inner equipoise, the gracious compassionate saints who are elated in the company of sadhus. They were, are and shall be victorious over Cupid, the tempter. Their senses are free from infatuation. Their hearts are laid at the feet of the Paramahansa Guru and they are intoxicated with the nectar of Divine bliss and beatitude. Nil souci for them—*Chinta nasti kila thesham*.

Sadasiva was a fair youth, an ideal celibate. He longed for Renunciation. Prompted by elders, he bowed unwillingly to the yoke of wedlock. The wife attained puberty. A grand feast was getting ready. The Son-in-Law was hungry for a simple food and entered in, "Enter not Wait, wait," shot forth a feminine voice.

This was a timely hint to the seeker. "Yes, I shall not enter home. For my simple hunger, they keep me waiting so long. Can they satisfy my inner hunger? Never. Off! Off!" He said to himself. Off he flashed away like a quick lightning. None could trace him for years. The wife spent her lonely days in prayer and contemplation.

Sadasiva, free like the wind, wandered in forests repeating "Sivoham, I'm Sivam, I'm Sivam." "O Lord, wake up within me the Bliss that I am". This was his constant prayer. He walked with open palms along village streets. Pious people gave him food, he ate it standing and vanished into woodland solitudes. He composed a poem called Siva Manasa Puja for His Worship. Here are a few lines from it:

"O Transcendence! How can mind think of Thee,
Where shall I adore Thee, O Omnipresence?
O purity, Should I bathe Thee with water?
Should I clothe Thee? Space is Thy garment!
What Shall I offer Thee, O Giver of Plenty?"

To wave a lamp before Thee, O luminous Splendour My mind has been swallowed by Thy infinite glory. Words fail, I am overwhelmed by Silence, Silence !

Thus singing and meditating, Sadasiva reached Kumbakonam and saw the Kamakoti Acharya Parama Sivendra Saraswati who was a Vedic scholar adored by thousands of disciples. He at once knew the sage in Sadasivam. He trained him in hard ascetic discipline, taught him Shankara's works and had a desire to install him in his place. Sadasiva served the master as a fervent disciple. He sang his melodious songs during the hours of worship. He wrote a commentary on Brahma Sutra and Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. He practised Raja Yoga. His Atmavilasa written at this time is a treasure of vedantic ideals. Let me translate a few lines from the Book here :

"Life flows along the mind, between the banks of likes and dislikes. It wends its course through ups and downs and pours itself into the Ocean at last" ...

"The Ocean has only one answer to the enigmatic enquiries of the river—From cloud to current I am everything. All are my becomings".

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“The Sun devours into its effulgence millions of stars. Even so the mind of million thought–impressions must be devoured into the Self-Light”.

Sadasiva discomfited learned savants in logical discussions. They grew envious of his sharp intellect and complained to the Master. The master one day cried “Silence, Sadasiva, Silence”. Sadasiva plunged into eternal silence from that moment. Not only that, he threw away his clothes and set out as a naked wandering monk. He travelled all over India and beyond its borders as far as Turkey. Relatives called him mad. They complained to Sivendra who exclaimed “Ah, when shall I be mad like Sadasivam?” Scholars called him a shameless sham. They cast on him scandalous aspersions. The silent sage gave power to a humble washerman who challenged those puffed–up book worms. He enlightened many by his cosmic energy. Critics tortured him with painful remarks and rainful stones. The naked sage ran to sylvan solitudes ignoring the world. The body consciousness was cast away like the slough of a serpent. Self–immersed in speechless trance, Sadasiva walked on in his natural majesty. Sadasiva one day fixed himself in trance on the sands of the Kauvery, near Kodumudi. Heat and cold did not affect him–rains poured down. The violent flood carried and buried him somewhere. None could trace him. The world thought he was dead. The bright summer returned. Labourers dug sand in the river. Suddenly a spade was stained with blood. Surprised, they dug carefully and Lo, an effulgent figure stood up from the depth of the Sandy grave. “Lo! Sadasiva Brahman!” cried the crowd. But the Brahman walked away with a serene smile as if he rose from sleep.

Great yogins do not care about their powers; God fulfils His will in them. For the Ego is lost in them. Sadasivam walked unattached, unnoticed. Yet miscreants gave him trouble.

Those were days when the land was a cockpit of rival forces. Armies were camping on the way. The Commander of a regiment overloaded Sadasivam with firewood to be carried to barracks. He treated him roughly. Lo, the heap caught fire and the wood was burnt to ashes. Sadasiva cured chronic patients and restored life to a bride who died from snake bite. Once mischievous boys set a mad dog upon him. The dog–bite ulcered his leg. Maggots dropped from it. He replaced them saying “Eat your Karma.”

Once a Muslim army chief felt insulted by the nudity of the innocent saint. He drew his sword and cut off his arm. Blood was flowing, the sage in trance took no notice of it. The culprit was stunned; he begged pardon of the sage. The Sage remembered his arm just then. He touched the arm and it was healed. Sadasiva went smiling in peace.

Sadasiva did two magnificent things. In 1738 he met Saint Thayumanavar near Tiruchirapalli. He initiated him in silence and equality of vision. He then meditated in a forest near Pudukkottai. Pudukkottai was then devastated by Muslims and Maharashtras. The throne was threatened by rivals. The king Vijaya Raghunatha Thondaman had no issue. One day this king bowed before Sadasiva. The sage knew his grievance. He wrote for him a Mantra on the Sand. He gave him butter to eat. “Give liberally, feed thousands, celebrate Navaratri, honour vedic scholars, the state shall prosper” wrote the Sage. The king obeyed and the State prospered. He got a son whom he named Navanitha Thondaman. Sadasiva became the presiding saint of the State. Every Friday there was puja, poor feeding, and festival in the Palace. A Sivajnanapuram was raised where the sage sat in Samadhi. Thus his spiritual force gave new life to a State.

He was fond of children. He played with them and took them to festivals. Once by his Yogic power, he took a set of children to the festival at Madurai, and brought them back with temple offerings.

Sadasiva felt his mission fulfilled. One day he descended into a pit, shed his body and flew away as the luminous soul which had no name, no form, no hunger and no desire.

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“Have faith in God, consecrate life unto His will, silence the senses. Be centred in. Take refuge in Truth and Truth shall save you.” This is the final teaching of the great Brahman.

6. YOGI SATYARKA

The silent life of Sage Sadasiva made a deep impression upon the aspirant. Sage Purnananda by songs and stories intensified the spiritual aspiration of the precocious boy who demanded more and more of the nectar of Self-knowledge. One day Purnananda gave sanyasa to a Vedic scholar. He observed keenly the Viraja Homam and other ceremonies. The boy eagerly demanded the new sanyasin “Sir, you have changed the colour of your clothes, but has the colour of your mind changed? Why do you assume orange colour?”

The scholar gently said to the boy “I have seen life in the world. I have suffered a lot by attachment to wife and children and wealth. There is no joy in life. Hence I renounce it to seek Self-delight and remain peaceful.”

Purnananda explained the meaning of the ceremonies: “The flame represents the fire of wisdom. The body-consciousness and all attachments are cremated in the mounting flame of knowledge. The orange colour connotes renunciation. The monk lives in the Spirit which is Bliss. This Spirit or Atma is Brahman (Ayam Atma Brahma). Thou art That (Tat Twam Asi), Sivoham (I am Bliss), Shuddhoham (I am the Pure) says the monk and he becomes That Reality.”

He then read the **Atma Vidya Vilasam** of Sadasiva and Sage Purnananda explained it. The boy felt enraptured on hearing these lines:

“The Yogi, steady like an unruffled flame, radiates the light of wisdom. Like a peacock, like a koil, like a fawn, like a deer, he roams in the woodlands of serene peace, free like the breeze, steadfast in meditation. In majestic solitude, the Self-King enjoys the freedom of inner bliss.”

The boy meditated with Purnananda who gradually initiated him in the esoterics of Yoga Vedanta. He related to him the pure life of Godmen like Ramakrishna, Dayananda, Vivekananda, Ramathirta, Ramalinga and Sundara Swami whom he had seen. The interesting accounts of these saints kindled divine emotions in the boy’s heart.

Boy: Master, can I become a God-man?

Pur: O yes, Satyarka! God is in you here; open your heart and see. *You are a Yogi!*

Boy: How to open the heart ?

Pur: By closing the mind.

Boy: How to close the mind ?

Pur: By ingathering the senses and stilling the mind.

Boy: How to do that ? The mind wanders like the wind. I am here; the mind goes for a dip in the river.

Pur: You must not allow the mind to go out. It must get in and sink in the heart; the heart must sink in the soul and the soul must become one with God who is the real ‘I’ the real You and the real He. He who achieves this is a real Yogi. He reaches Godhood.

Boy: Can all attain Godhood?

Pur: Attain that yourself first and radiate divinity.

Boy: Radiate! How! Can you radiate Godhood to me? I feel God as Pure Grace. I have a devotional fervour. When you speak of God and Godmen, I am delighted. When people talk about things of the world and body, I feel disgusted. There is nothing in the family-life except hatred, envy and quarrel. The home is a hell to me. My heart wants something; I feel as if I have lost something. I must find it out.

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Pur: You will find it here (heart) my boy, you have a hunger to know God.

Boy: Can I see God just as I see you, Sir?

Pur: God can be seen not like physical things. We can be conscious of His Pure Grace.

Boy: Then how is it my Mother says often that Lord Venkatachalapati came in her dream and gave her a bell and flower just before I was born. Another Swamiji says that God comes to him and gives him whatever he wants. He suddenly gives flowers, fruits, sacred ashes and sometimes images and people run after him. They say he has all powers of God.

Pur: Such dreams are manifested by the psychic plane above the mind. God is in all forms. But God is God, unlimited, pure, immaculate. What you have seen is a little power of the psychic mind. These are miracles played by some inferior powers.

Boy: Sir, can you show me such miracles? Can you bring me an orange now just as that Swamiji does?

Pur: I can give you one anna to get an orange from the shop.

Boy: That I too can give. I am curious to know about these miracles.

Pur: My boy, if you want to see the Real, you must never think of these miracles. Your miracle man can bring a flower or fruit when they are ready behind. Look at the sky; what a miracle and mystery! The wind, sun, moon, stars, rain, lightning, light, heat—everything comes from that wide sky. Is this not a miracle? Can any Swamy create the sun or the stars? Can he stop the heart from beating or create a new heart and place it into a dead body? ... Can anyone raise the dead?

Boy: Some say that there was a Swamiji who offered to raise the dead from the grave and make all human beings immortal. He said he would never die, they say.

Pur: Where is he now?

Boy: Dead. Then why did he say so, that he could raise the dead and immortalise men and women?

Pur: My boy, know this too. We can never tamper with God's universal law. The body must die. What is born certainly ripens and rots and dies. What is immortal is the Self or Soul—the I in you and me. It lives in the body but it is not body. When it leaves the body we die. Death is for the body, not for the soul. Great Mahatmas like Ramalinga tried to raise the dead.

Boy: My Teacher who lived with R explained to me thus. People are dead to the soul. R called them back to a life conscious of the immortal soul.

Pur: Yes, he wanted to make men and women live in the Eternal Self which is the God in all. That is the meaning of immortality and raising the Dead. None can create the sun and moon and the earth.

Boy: Scientists create many things. They create oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, electricity. Uncle told me how Faraday discovered electricity... I saw a professor creating electric sparks.

Pur: These are not creations, my boy; these are discoveries of the innate powers of Nature. Electricity and magnetism have been in Nature before the scientist discovered them. Suppose there is no sky, no air, no sun, can the scientist breathe and live? Can he carry on his experiments? Nature is the wonder of God. We must utilise it to realise God. To realise God in the Self and in the universe of beings is the meaning of life.

Boy: I understand all these now; unless I see God how can I believe in His existence? Has not God the power to come before me and say, 'See I am here'?

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Pur: Impertinent demand! Next day you will command God to bring you breakfast ! You fellow, you want to make Almighty Grace your servant! Do you deserve God's Grace first? There is the Queen of India in England. Can you meet her directly tomorrow ?

Boy: No sir. I am too small to go to England. But if I do great things, people will speak about me to the Queen and she may invite me. But God is everywhere. They say he came out of a pillar. He is in my heart. Can't he flash before me now?

Pur: Suppose you want my favour; you love me, serve me, know me and get near me day by day. Then you become dear to my heart. The purity of your love shall lead you to me.

Boy: But before I love God, mind wants to love some thing else—fame, name, ease, luxury, etc. How to control the mind?

Pur: There is a science of mind-control; it is called Yoga. Yoga is to yoke the mind to God.

Boy: How can I yoke it before knowing what God is? The mind is too perturbed to know that.

Pur: God is here in your heart where you place your hand and say "I am." To centre the wandering mind there and meditate is called Yoga. Practise yoga from today.

Boy: Very well, sir. I will not put any more questions. I surrender to you, my Divine Master. I shall simply do what you say.

Purnananda separated the boy from all his environments, from family, parents, relatives and friends. He closed the garden door and allowed only the Mother of the Boy-Yogin to bring him eatables in the morning. She used to place them in a corner and go away after doing pranam to the Sage. The boy cooked food for the master. Purnananda first taught the boy Pranayama, rhythmic breath and then a subtle inner pranayama which the boy mastered in a day. Purnananda then taught him about the endocrines and subtle Nadis especially the Brahmanadi through which Kundalini passes. The boy learnt all Kriyas.

Pur: Pranayama and Asans are aids to keep the body and the nerves fit for yoga. You have learnt enough. Now you should know how to clean the alimentary canal and the brain and nose by Hatha Yoga. Practise Nauli, Udyan, Gaja Karni, Kapala Bhati and your inner parts shall be clean.

Boy: Sir, is it not enough if the mind is pure and heart turned Godward? Meditation pleases me more than all these forced exercises.

Pur: That is right; but meditation will come to you naturally when your heart is perfectly pure in God-love.

Six months training made the boy feel God-conscious. This was the routine followed by the boy under the tutelage of Purnananda. He rose up with the Sage at 4 am., answered calls of nature, cleaned his teeth, took ten mouthfuls of water and cleaned his tongue and stomach by a subtle process. Then he did inner pranayama and Kapala Bhati; then japam with the mantra *Aum Shuddha Shakti Jaya Satya Jyoti*. Then Purnananda caught hold of his hands and charged his psychic planes with his Yogic force. Both sat together for one or two hours steeped in meditation. It was a delightful hour the like of which was not known to him before. Then Purnananda would teach him a few lines from the Gita which he learnt by heart.

At six O'clock both of them did Siras, Bujanga, Salaba, Dhanur, Mayura, Padma, Bhadda Padma, Nava, Paschimottana, Sarvanga, Matchya, Jayasan and Santi Asans. After this both took their bath. The body was cleaned by applying Bilva fruit and red mud. The disciple cleaned the clothes of the Master and obeyed him implicitly. Purnananda taught the boy Pranayama Gayatri even before Upanayanam. He had no faith in rituals and ceremonies and Idolatry. He always insisted upon inner worship by meditation. After bath

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the disciple would wear the orange cloth of the Master. The Master allowed it smilingly, saying "I have already given you orders". Facing the universal sanctum they will concentrate upon the Sun and then close their eyes in meditation. One hour passed like one minute. Then Purnananda would give the boy a mixture of rare herbs which was followed by milk and honey. After this he read the Gita, chanted the Upanishads, and sang with his sweet voice prayers to the Pure Almighty Grace.* The Boy sat introspective assimilating this psychic nutrition. He got by heart many prayers sung by the grand Master which he remembers to this day.

Sometimes he could not contain his inspiration. He sang his poems in high pitch. Purnananda used to say, "Murmur sweetly like Ramalinga Swami. He wrote his poems at night and sang them to himself in the morning. Consecrate your poems to God enthroned in your heart". The Yogi followed the Master's instructions and remained Self-immersed; he was indifferent to school lessons which he revised just a month before the examination and passed to higher classes. Purnananda made him learn English and modern sciences. But the young Yogi had a university within himself. Book learning was nothing before that Inner Look-Learning. Purnananda watched his progress and said "You have attained Diploma from the Self-University. A great Mystic shall come to decorate you with M.A. (Master of Atma Vidhya). Before that, you will have to face some more trials in life."

7. GLITTER OF GOLD

The Yogi was immersed in the wisdom taught by Purnananda. But parents drove him to school again.

Those were days when youths became soulless counterfeits of Western modes. A pitiful decadence of spiritual culture set in. The Yogi was compelled to mix with English boys and speak English as the Mother tongue. Christian Missionaries influenced him. His brothers spoke only English at home and he saw them acting English plays. English here, English there, English at home, English in school, English in the street influenced his plastic formative period. But English widened the scope of his knowledge and gave a scientific nourishment to the spiritual idealism developing in the boy. Though his tongue was soaked in English, his heart throbbed with spiritual dynamism. His maternal uncle took special care of his study but warned him against "the dangerous Vedanta that would render him unfit for life". The rich uncle had no child; his wife bribed temple gods and astrologers, doctors and sorcerers and yet remained sick and crazy with a careworn body. Diamonds shone on her body but darkness clouded her mind. She liked the yogi and recommended him for adoption to her husband, who settled with the parents the whole affair.

One Friday at about 2 pm., the uncle allowed the yogi to take tiffin with him and then played his gramophone which echoed a song, which meant, "To day's men are not sure of the morrow. While yet the body endures, let me turn my gaze within in silent solitude." This awakened the soul of the boy and the heart of the uncle. With dripping tears in his eyes, he took the boy to a secret chamber, closed the door, led him to a deeper chamber, closed the door and looked piercingly into his introspective eyes:

Uncle: Now, my darling, be my child; this bungalow, this wealth and everything shall be yours. I will send you to England for I.C.S. You will become a Collector...

Pilgrim: And then? Is this the aim of life, uncle? I am the child of the Almighty Grace. Her love is wealth; and Her presence is Home for me.

Uncle: Impertinent! See here, golden jewels, garlands of golden coins, pounds, mohars, rubies, diamonds, emeralds, ornaments, gold and silver vessels. All these are yours. Be my child. Say yes, my darling.

*(See Veda Sadhanam)

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Pilgrim: Uncle, why do you keep these ornaments locked up? I am the child of God who has given me heaven and earth as toys. Your wealth is nothing before the wealth of God and His name.

Uncle: Off with your philosophy! Come round to normal thinking and practical life. You will be a power in Madurai if you possess this treasure and be my child.”

All pragmatic effusions! The boy listened to the cry of a beggar before the mansion and the threats of the servant to drive him away. Suddenly he plunged his hands into the golden heap and ran with a few coins saying “This is for the starving brother crying at our door”! The plumpy uncle gave a breathless chase, caught the boy, snatched the coins crying “Go, go to your God and let me see how He feeds you to day...” He quickly closed the doors locked the safe and remained buried in disappointment for an hour. The Yogi boy felt a call. He ran to the temple free, free, free! A fervour rushed him onward.

8. THE GRACE DESCENDS

Hatha and Raja Yogas, by a meticulous process lead one to the conquest of the body and the mind. Bhakti, Karma and Jnana Yogas lead one to psychic perfection. Tantra Yoga by an esoteric practice, awakens the cosmic force. The main object of all these Yogas is to set in motion the Cosmic Energy pent up in the psychic centres. The Pure Sama Yoga, by an intensity of Divine fervour, achieves the descent of the Divine Grace from above when the heart is receptive like a well-tuned Radio.

The lonely Pilgrim with a lightning rush of emotion dived into the conscious presence of the Divine embodied in the idol of Minakshi, caught hold of the sacred feet and sobbed unconsciously saying, “I’m your child, O Grace, possess my being anon: let me live in thee and for thee.” It was not a stone, not a sculptor’s creation. The Soul within the symbol possessed the soul of the Yogin who felt a descent; and that descent continued. He felt a warm vibration of the Cosmic force; its dynamism works in him even today. He saw a light burst out of his forehead and that light leads Him even today. A psychic consciousness possessed his being and it throbs in him even today. Ah, how can words describe that Splendour! What is the glitter of gold before the shining Sun and what is the Sun before the ineffable effulgence of the Divine Grace—light? An immutable ecstasy of inner delight, a rosy innocence of peace, a showerbath of pure consciousness, a pearl diver’s plunge into the mysteries of the transcendent Silence, the perennial music stream of the Aum-Flute .. such were the blessings of a moment dedicated in utter surrender to the Pure Almighty Grace! Have faith, equal souls, the Pilgrim speaks from the sanctum of Truth. Open your heart of psychic love and you will be conscious of the shower of Bliss, Light and Energy. Be a loving child and the Divine Grace shall fondle you and feed you with nectar.

The boy was dragged away from the sanctum by Sri Devendra Bhattar, the high-priest of the temple who was his admirer. The boy walked to the Sunderasa (Lord the Beautiful) temple, and sat Self-immersed in a dark lonely corner, under a dry old tree. The symphony of the Spirit, the ethereal harmony of the tuneful soul, the rapturous song of God-consciousness played in his cerebrum. It is Aum, the soul-conscious song animating all beings from ant to saint. It is the song flowing in the hill stream and blowing in the wandering air. It is the hymn of ages that hums in honeybees, that breathes from the perfumed breeze. At the same time devotees were singing inspired songs before the sanctum. The hymnal atmosphere of the temple awakened the songful soul in the boy and he too murmured a lyric that has become popular today:

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“Like the seer poets of yore, let me sing Thy glory, O Grace Light! Tune the Harp of my life in full harmony and fulfil my being in the ecstasy of song—offering. Strike the gamuts of my Love-Soul, now like the chorus of morning birds, like surging seas and rapturous hill torrents, like the gentle breeze kissing jasmynes, now like the infinite Aum of the rolling spheres; let me live to tune Thy glory. As a symbol of the glory, as a surety of Thy Omnipresence, as a dynamic witness of Thy protecting Grace, as a flowing current of the universal energy—live and breathe as life in me, O Pure Almighty Grace dancing in my heart...!

Hours passed; vesper ceremonies dissolved into the lull of perfect silence when a solitary voice called “Who is Here?” “**This is the heart**” replied the Self-immersed boy. “Ah ... You? ... come, come!” said the high-priest as he dragged him into the kitchen; and there he sumptuously fed him with delicious offerings. The anxious uncle after a fluttering search found him there and the boy exclaimed “O uncle, God’s Grace feeds me; come and share the delicacies.” The uncle had no words to express his wonder... He called the boy home endearingly. But the free-bird was free for ever!.. The tapasya of the previous births fructified now.

9. TAYUMANAR—THE SEER-POET

The blissful joy of an occult embrace, the creeping sensation of energy—flame, the widening light of Grace, made him conscious of God. He listened to the voice of conscience. He faithfully followed the inner Guide. The boy hid himself in a secret corner of the temple till late at night. He heard suddenly Sadhus singing a song that touched his soul. It was the famous *Ananda Kalippu* of Tayumanavar, Song of Divine Bliss. The boy ran to the Temple tank where the Sadhus sat and sang. The Pilgrim joined the choir.

“The speechless Master taught me a wordless Word; wordless, I lost myself in tranced—ecstasy, friend. A tactful Witness, He directs the universal play. Be an unattached witness like Him to the play of moods and modes around, O friend. See things and discern them well in the Grace—Light. Grace is Knowledge, Truth and Bliss.” He learnt from the Sadhus about *Tayumanar*, the mystic Poet who breathed Upanishads in Tamil. He bought a book for four annas and got the whole by heart. Maharshi Tayumanar was His impersonal Guide to Self—Knowledge. For details of his life and hymns, the readers can refer to the book—Voice of Tayumanar. Here, a succinct account of the Silent Sage is given.

ST. TAYUMANAR

Tayumanar was the confidential adviser and steward of King Chokkanatha at Tiruchirapalli. His father who held the same post, had already trained him in spiritual lore and statecraft. He was too introspective and self—reflective for a court life of diplomatic machinations and cunning perfidies. The young Tayumanar lived in meditative silence away from politics, expecting a Master to initiate him. Sage Sadasiva initiated him in Vedantic reflection and Mula Yogin in the Siddantic Self—surrender. Tayumanar spent his life in meditation and song—offering. The king one day gave him a rich shawl which he offered to an old lady shivering with cold; in her he saw the Universal Mother. He could not even pluck flowers for worship since he saw in them the smile of God. For through cosmic consciousness he saw everything, from clod to God as one Supreme Self.

King Chokkanatha died in a camp brokenhearted and his Rani Minakshi was crowned as the queen. She requested Tayumanar to help her in the administration and the saint again entered politics. He managed the state ably and restored peace and order amidst stormy scenes of bloodshed and betrayal. The queen admired his wisdom, honoured his sense of duty and loved him for his handsome looks. Love developed into lust and lust into animal passion. She first treated him as a companion, then made overtures as

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a lover, offering him her wealth and royalty. “My heart is God’s throne; there is no place for two in it. So forget my body and send your mind God-ward” said the fair youth. The Queen contrived tricks to force him to submission. Tayumanar escaped her noose in the garb of a wandering monk and then took a fast horse to Ramnad. The disappointed queen fell a prey to enemies and committed suicide.

The Saint lived as a family man for a few years and then renounced everything and went to Chidambaram where he realised Siva in Jiva and attained final beatitude at Ramnad. A temple for his image has been raised in the garden where he lived a silent life of inner communion and song-offering.

The hymns of Tayumanar are immortal flowers of Divine wisdom. The Pilgrim soul chanted them as the song of his soul. Here are a few flowers for our readers:

“Come collectively, O humanity, to enjoy the bliss of Eternal Life! Love the Unique One above all and open your heart to His Grace. Call with aspiration and He will respond. Silence the tongue and silence the mind. Look within and be one-pointed. Develop love and compassion. Curb pride, vanity, arrogance, lust, greed and envy. Amassed gold is not wealth. High mansion is not heaven, sham logic is not philosophy. Vain discussion is not wisdom. Ephemeral pleasures are not happiness. Let I and mine be burnt in the flaming camphor of the Divine Grace. Let thoughts be absorbed in silent Self-reflection. All religions and philosophies empty into the ocean of Self-Silence. O Ecstasy of immutable Silence, inconceivable Reality, how can I worship Thee? My salutation is only a half salutation—for Thou art my Self, I am when Thou art; I am Thine forever and can never be away from Thee. My act is Thy act, Let me dissolve in Thee like salt in the sea. Like the red hot Iron, I shall be Thy flame-Self. Let my love realise thy Omnipresence. The universe of beings is Thy multiplicity, Let me adore Thee by serving all beings with compassion. Crows eat together; rivers seek the ocean; even so, let souls live in collective consciousness of Thee, Unique One!”

The boy forgot himself in inner communion and song-offering. But what about his education and the other side of life in the world? We call him a Pilgrim Yogi now.

10. YOU LAUGHING BOX

Sivaganga is an old historic city of heroic annals. Its famous heroes (like Marudus, Rani Velu Nachiar, Muthu Vaduganathar, Umayan and Katta Bommu) stood in the front-rank holding the standard of Indian freedom. The Yogi took interest in staff-play and shooting in the company of the local Maravas. He loathed walled-institutions and found his school in the open workaday world. He could not be controlled by teachers or brothers. He roamed among saints, scholars, heroes and artists and often disappeared into silent solitudes, unknown to others. For days together, he would live with good saints, forgetful of school and home. His dreamy mood, silent gestures and his love of God brought him the title of “God-mad”. Streets he avoided and found peace in the sanctuary of Nature, faraway groves and country temples. His melancholia had completely gone but a serious serenity had possessed him. In the class he was humorous, laughing, and playing. He thought it really a waste of life to be imprisoned in a walled empire of the ‘Sir’ who was verily a Tzar with a frightful cane and a more frightful marks-register. The boy could not bear the insolent words of the teacher. He used to write during dictations, even the “Dam-fool-idiots” that fell from the teacher’s mouth and read them aloud. “What is one plus One?”—“My one plus one is One; I’m the blissful One; besides That there is none” the boy sang... “You idiot stand upon the bench” “Ha ha ha ha”. You laughing Court-fool ... Ah Ah Ah!! “You write imposition ten times”... “Ah Ah Ah”... “I will beat you”... “Ah Ah Ah!!” The teacher gives him a problem: The boy

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writes a poem. He uses carbon sheets prepared by him from oil and lamp–smoke for writing impositions. Or he meditates in the class until the teacher pulls him up by the ear and makes him stand upon the bench. There a bird sits on the mango tree, the boy runs there and throws some groundnuts before it. It eats and he sings: “Gambol, gambol, Bird of Bliss, come and receive a loving kiss!...”

The boy liked dramas; he acted and composed songs for the theatre. He collected all his early songs in a note book. Once he attended a drama and did not prepare his class lesson. The teacher took him to task. “Cram all, jam all into the brain” was his method. “Now, you repeat the poem” commanded the teacher, waving his bamboo–sceptre. The boy composed on the spot a new stanza and sang it. “Shut up, idiot! You... a poet... very well... here is your reward; receive ten cuts.” Plash ... ! The boy laughed and while raising his hand, a big note book fell down from his armpit. The despot of the third class quickly picked it up and went through its pages: “O ho! these are your compositions!.. Hum... you have become a Kamban, very well, receive a medal on the back for your poetry, and stand upon the bench”.. ranted the autocrat. The boy snatched his notebook from the teacher, jumped out of the window, and ran to yon grove and took refuge under a mango tree. The monitor ran to catch him. He could not follow him but reached the grove and threw stones at the mangoes. A heavy stone fell upon his head and blood flowed. The boy could not bear this offence; the monitor ran away afraid to see the blood ...

“Ah, stings and arrows of obdurate misfortune ! Is there no freedom for one who dedicates his life to God and song–offering? The class, alas, is a concentration camp where genius is smothered. The home is a worse prison of conflicting human temperaments. Where is freedom in this world?... God too keeps mum watching all these insults and injuries to innocence!.. So let this life end in that lake.” So reflecting, the Yogi hurried to the sheet of water, sat on a bridge and looked at his sorrowful image flowing with tears of grievance and blood of insult mingling with passing ripples on the lake. Ducks swam carefree, upon shimmering wavelets. “Shall not this mind swim in inspired couplets? O God, take my soul to a heaven, free from human coercion. Here I drown myself and drop my body. Take my soul to perfect freedom” sang the boy. And before he took a step to jump into the deep lake, a protecting hand drew him back.

11. SAVIOUR JNANA SIDDHA

A luminous Yogi stood there saying “Child, why do you weep?” He applied quickly the juice of a herb to the wound and led the Pilgrim deep into the dark grove. The boy followed him in wordless surprise. He was a middle sized Fakir with the appearance of Sai Baba, wearing a long Jibba with a headgear and his beard was half–grey. His eyes shone with the rays of compassion and love blossomed in his lightning smile. The Yogi believed that he was his Saviour, sent by God. He fell at his feet and cried out his grievances with all the emotion pent up in his heart.

Pilgrim: Divine Master, should I live in this world of slavery poisoned by tyranny, treachery, greed and envy? I want to drown myself in that lake, so that my soul can reach a better world of freedom.

He: Take hope, my child. God leads you. Look here, off with fear! God is there dancing in the heart. Drown the mind deep into that heart and keep quiet, silent, calm, ingathered and God will guide your destiny. He pervades all under the sky.. Look at the sky.

Pilgrim: Father, He smiles in flowers, sings in birds, speaks in streams, laughs in waves. His compassion rains from clouds; He whispers into my ears “Here is your Master”; Thou art my hope and prop. Father, I surrender! Thou art God in person. Do Thy will in this child...

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The Saint touched the heart, embraced the Pilgrim and kissed the crown just where the grace descended. Then he caught hold of his palms and steeped himself into Samadhi. A mystic current thrilled the body; the siddha poured himself into the Pilgrim. That vibrating presence continues even today. Then suddenly he rose up, brought two ripe mangoes from a bush, and gave one to the Pilgrim as he ate another. It satisfied his hunger in and out.

Pilgrim: Father, Thy Love is limitless. Thou hast given me a new life. I am reborn in Thee. I am curious to know all about you, your name, place and particulars...

He: The Soul has no name, no form. This form may vanish tomorrow and all names are artificial. Silence is the Language of God. The Heart is His seat. I wander God-mad, seeking the God-mad. The heaven-bound earth is my little home. Nature is my friend. The Sun is my guide the moon my maid, the air my fan, the earth my bed and the sea, God's holy concert. See how the duck swims in all depths. Even so swim in this ocean of moods and modes. See how the Sun watches its seasons. Watch unattached, the play of Nature around, fixing the attention here, in the heart, where you place your hand and say 'I'.

Pilgrim: Father, your beaming face, blissful love, warm heart, and wise words and sweet smiles have captured my soul. I am a slave of Thy will.

He: Do not be a slave of any will, my boy; be yourself. You are what I am. Remember God in all. Respect saints; but worship God. Many saints try to sit on God's throne and create different schools of thought. They divide the world into spiritual fragments. This must go. One God pervades all humanity. Be conscious of that One in the many. God is beyond name and form. He can be realised within, as a Pure Consciousness (Shuddha Shakti). You are a Pilgrim Soul; keep moving on and you will meet many true saints. .

Pilgrim: Aum Shuddha Shakti—Hail Pure Almighty Grace .

He: Praise God who sent me to you. Now go home and come tomorrow morning..."

LIGHTS ON YOGA

The Pilgrim called the Master Jnanasiddha, or Jnana Baba. He was the summum bonum of spiritual knowledge and realisation and he was his light and leading. Such a wonderful mystic was Jnana Siddha—so simple, so pure, so perfect, so sweet and so free from egoism that he did not care to have a name. He gave the Pilgrim a treasure of wisdom. He was everything to him.

The Siddha often spoke these words; "Do not create institutions around personalities lest you should divide further the broken human society. God alone is; none can take His place. His grace is your solace..."

The Pilgrim daily brought him food from home. Daily he gave the boy fruits. The mystic Siddha expected nothing from the society. He was too deep for the mental plummet. He kindled hope in the desperate. He came like springtime showers to parched fields. He vibrated the warmth of Cosmic Force even like the sun. His embrace was a solace: it was the embrace of a subtle light to the blossoming spirit; Often the Pilgrim slept on his lap like a child on the lap of its Mother. Feeling, sensation, perception, conception and all mental impressions were drowned into an ethereal void within. He felt as if he had broken free from a narrow cage to fly with him in God's wide heaven! ... The soul saw from that height, the fauna, flora, genus and species of the earth like toys of infant fancy. He taught the Pilgrim many Yogic exercises. Sometimes both floated in the lake like swans. Sometimes the Master took the disciple to yonder graveyard at night and said "This is the end of

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bodied life. Upon the ashes of lust, greed and envy, the Pure One dances.”

Pilgrim: How to burn them, Baba? They rise up somehow. Somehow a care clouds the mind; a desire springs up from a mysterious ambush.. Is there a Yoga to conquer grief?

He: Joy and grief are mental waves. See this bud. It keeps ingathered at night waiting for light. Even so keep calm, self-gathered, silent in meditation. Be in your natural state as you are within. The light will open the path of life. Live within...

Pilgrim: When we open our eyes, there is a world to test us. How can we meet the world?

He: The bud opens by Light. Its beauty and perfume spread around us naturally. Bees gather its honey. Even so the blooming soul spreads its divine aroma around. The honey of pure Bliss attracts seekers. From today you are that Pure Bliss (Shuddhanandam). You were a Yogi in your previous birth. You continue the same life as a Pilgrim Yogi. Record your life when the inspiration comes. What you got from me, you distribute to those bees of love that seek you.

Pilgrim: Love ... what sort of love ?

He: See here is a bud. The bud blossoms and the blossom is fertilised. Love is the pollen of fertilisation. Love grows into fruit. At first it is sour, unripe. Sour mango is only fit for pickles. Do not come out in the unripe stage, for then you will be shut up in the pickle jar. See nature. How the tree holds firm the sour mango! When it ripens naturally, the fruit gets liberated.

Pilgrim: I understand you, Baba. When the being, the mind, the heart and the soul fully develop by meditation, devotion and dedicated service, liberation comes naturally. Like butter in milk, like fire in wood, like perfume in bud, Divinity is latent in all and it manifests naturally as the inner principles become mature and receptive.

He: Intensify Yoga and take refuge in the fundamental Truth.

Pilgrim: What is that fundamental Truth? How to attain it ? Which Religion is good for me?

He: No human religion is perfect. Religions divide mankind. Yoga is common to all and this is an Era of Yoga. The fundamental Truth is your Divine Spirit, the Light in your heart's cave. Call it by any name; it is the Pure One in all. The impure mental impressions hide it; you must remove them by psychic love and purity of life.

Pilgrim : What is meant by purity of Life?

He: Purity is the foundation of all Yogas and religions. Purity is God and Purity is the path to attain Godhood. Moral Purity is the first step. Develop the qualities of unselfish service, compassion, truthfulness to conscience, talking to the point and observing silence, celibacy, continence and psychic love for the soul of beings, these are the fundamental virtues. See the other sex as a flower or bird. See one soul in two bodies. Never pray God for gifts. Pray for Grace and work for food. Serve saints and follow their good lead. Meditate on God.

Pilgrim: Master, I believe that Aum, Ram and Prem are one. A is Sat, Shuddha; U is Universal energy, Shakti; and M is Man the individual soul moved by it. AUM itself contains the mantra, Shuddha Shakti. This is what I believe.

He: That is right. Gather-in the errant mind and fix it in the heart. Rise heart's love Godward. This is the Yoga that you must do. Now I must go North.

Pilgrim: Father, how can I live without your guidance?

He: I will guide you through great living Saints.

Pilgrim: Let me know a few of them.

He: You will see the Shankaracharya. Then you will get the favour of Sai Baba of

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Shirdi who is a great Siddha. Narayanji, Brahmanand, Siddharuda, Ramana, Aurobindo, Udiya Baba, Brindabanji who knew Ramakrishna—all these will guide you on.

Pilgrim: Have you seen Ramakrishna, Ramathirtha, Vivekananda or Dayananda ?

He: O Yes; they are the Lights of India. You will meet their direct disciples. You can read their words. Believe in my guidance and go onward—I will meet you again, upon a mountain.

The Siddha left for the Himalayas and the Pilgrim felt his presence and guidance all along during the grim trials of his existence.

Fellow-pilgrims, this is not a miracle. This pilgrim seeks God and no human miracles in His name. God sent him many such Guiding Lights. Life is a psychic evolution. When the soul is ripe and the faith strong, help comes to lead us on. How? Do not ask the Pilgrim. Help surely comes. Follow the path further—firm in faith.

12. PANDIT DEIVASIKAMANI

The study at the school was of very little importance to the Yogi. He found his book in Nature and his school every where. He was mostly engaged in song-offering, meditation and the company of saints and artists. But he passed examinations with merit to the surprise of his teachers. Only one teacher found out his genius and took particular care of him. He was his Tamil Pandit.

Deivasikamani Pandit—That was his name. He taught him Tirukkural of St. Valluvar. (Read Tirukkural couplets.)

Its ideas impressed the budding poet. During contemplations, couplets of the same metre came out of his intuition and he wrote them upon walls with a piece of charcoal. One day he was writing on the wall of a temple hall these lines:-

- (1) In life that blossoms from the inner Light
There is no caste and no communal fight.
- (2) That Social union is good for all
Which is for all by all, a peoples' rule.
- (3) This world shall be a sinless paradise
If men above hunger and thirst arise.
- (4) The God in man is always pure and calm.
The vital demon raises bloody storm.
- (5) No man is a slave to any other man
All souls belong to the Almighty one.
- (6) The world belongs collectively to all
And not to any individual.
- (7) Enjoy the fruit of labour with Thy kin
After sending prayers to the Divine.

The Pandit observed him with interest from behind him and saw all his songs and poems collected in a big note book. "It is a new Gospel of Perfect Life" he remarked, "preserve these immortal blossoms and the world will need them one day."

Pilgrim: Master, the world has heaps of books written by inspired souls. Who will take notice of my simple humble song? It is like a lamp before the Sun.

Pandit : There is light in your word and fire in your expression. I will teach you Grammar and Kamba Ramayanam and you will become a scholarly poet. Follow me to the Lotus tank every evening.

That great scholar taught the Pilgrim the sublime verses of Kamban. The Samadhi of Kamban was four miles from Sivaganga. The pilgrim and the Pandit went there now and then and studied Ramayana avidly.

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Simultaneously, the Pilgrim poured over Shakespeare Milton and Shelly under the tutelage of another great English scholar—**Seshaya M.A. B.L.**—who quoted fine lines from Homer, Virgil, Dante, Goethe and Kalidasa.

The study of classical literature in Tamil and English kindled in him, poems of epic grandeur and sublimity. Poems of breath and beauty, came spontaneously. His great Epic of Superman—Bharata Shakti was slowly taking shape in his meditations. God created a congenial atmosphere for the fulfilment of his aspiration.

His close neighbour **Pandit Sundara Srowthi**, a saama Vedi and an eminent Vedic Scholar expounded Ramayana, Maha Bharata, Bhagavatam, Skandam and other ancient Sanskrit classics every day. The young pilgrim heard his thrilling expositions calmly from a solitary corner and assimilated the substance of the ancient works and their poetic beauty. One day he wrote the life of Rama and Krishna in a sublime poem of varied metres and recited them in the temple before Pandit Deivasikamani, who admired him.

Pandit: O, you are a Mahakavi (great poet) like Kamban! Go on; you will leave an immortal work behind you and humanity shall adore your muse one day.

Pilgrim: Sir, Where is Kamban and where is this young bud ? I am conscious of my limitations. But I feel often that Someone fills this simple reed with His melodious breath. I cannot but sing. I feel the hand of a master Artist painting a great picture on the canvas of my imagination. Who is that Artist, that Master—Singer pouring himself into this flute? I am more interested in finding That One who inspires me.

Pandit: You are a Kavi—yogi. You are already in tune with the Infinite One who stimulates your poetic fancy. He is the song and the Singer in you. You can sing out only His songs.

Pilgrim: Yes, I know the Mystic one whose voice, I echo. He lives in me as life. He dances in my heart. He sees from my eyes. But I must see Him and tell the world, “I have seen the unique One who is the Man within men”.

Pandit: He will reveal Himself when the mental veil is off.

Pilgrim: Sir, I know nothing of His mysteries. I am His simple instrument, a submissive child. Just as a child allows the mother to clean him and adorn him, I allow Him to do whatever He likes with this passive child. If I know anything, He is the knowledge in me. If I sing any worthy song, He is the Singer in me, I am nothing. But I have a burning passion to discover Him and embrace Him. Would That Omniscient One be pleased to know my heart and manifest Himself ? I seek Him within, not in any image or symbol.

Pandit: He is sure to hear your prayers.

The Pilgrim was much interested in music, dance—drama, musical discourses and aesthetic activities. Sivaganga was a centre of art and culture and the constant resort of famous artists. The artists of South India found their fame and fortune at Sivaganga and Chettinadu. The Pilgrim attended the performances of gifted artists like Ramanathapuram Srinivasa Ayyangar, Konerirajapuram Vaidhyathanar, Mahavaidyanathar, Vinai Dhanammal, Tiruvarur Jnanammal, the ingenious dancer, Flute Sanjivi Rao, Sulamangalam Vaidhyathanar, Harikesanallur Muthia Bhagavathar, Madura Sesa Bhagavathar, Bhadaram Krishnappa, Jaladarungam Subbiah, Dasaratha Rama Bhagavathar, Girisa Bhagavathar and many others with whom he came into contact to improve his technical knowledge of music, dance and katha. He composed every day poems and melodious songs in many tunes which later on found their place in his works KIRTANANJALI and NATANANJALI. The great scholar Deivasikamani Pandit observed with delight the progress of the blooming poet in art and songs and encouraged him in every way. He introduced the yogi to all prominent artists and sages who often visited Sivaganga. Gratitude to this great soul.

The Pandit was a profound scholar in Tamil and Sanskrit, a philosopher and a yogin.

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He was chosen as the Raja Guru (Royal Preceptor) of the Raja of Sivaganga. This scholar was a close companion of Ramalinga Swamikal, Mahavidvan Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, Poet Vedanayakam Pillai and Arumuga Navalar, the great Saivite Missionary. He treated the Pilgrim as his son and equipped him with knowledge not only in the field of art and culture but also in Yoga and Religion. But he too had his enemies who were jealous of his power and position and one day he was murdered and thrown into the local tank. Ah ! murderous envy! The young pilgrim invoked his soul and felt its descent into him. For he was able to expound any poem and speak on any subject as he sent a prayer to the spirit of the Pandit. The tragic end of the Pandit was his eye opener.

His eyes were wet with tears for years! Scholars are many and many are book-worms. But where can we find an erudite yogin like Deivasikamani who was everything to the forlorn child! The pilgrim felt himself— orphaned! It was an irreparable loss!

Alas! envy lurks in enemies ! Enemies stage a Macbeth or an Othello in human life! The tragedy of that wise man taught the young pilgrim a grim lesson! Why was the Son of Man crucified? Why did not the Father in Heaven prevent it? Why was Buddha poisoned ? Why should the wise Socrates take hemlock and die? Saviours are killed by sinners ! Is there no protection for them ?

Any good man who comes before the limelight of fame is pulled down by envious foes. Is it the order of life in this world? The Pilgrim too had his enemies. A sort of fear haunted him. He felt the shadow of a ghost behind him. One day a jealous relative stole his manuscript of poems and threw it into flames! Alas, 2000, poems were lost! The patient poet wept out a poem! The cruel tyrant laughed and jumped. The Pandit appeared in his dream that day and said “Fear not. Keep quiet and silent. Go to Ramadas Bhagavat and he will guide you”.

—Yes, the pilgrim thanked the impersonal Master and sought the feet of Ramadas.

13. THUKARAM RAMADAS

Thukaram Ramadas—that was his adorable name. It was 5 am., the yogi was floating in the Odayar—Tank, and singing:-

“Guide me O God just as Thou guidest the stars dawn—ward! Guide me towards light just as thou leadest the world from darkness to sunlight. I am ignorant, innocent, helpless, friendless standing dismayed in a lonely forest of devils and tigers! Guide me to a saint who could know my heart and feed my keen hunger for Realisation”.

—Who sings there? – He sings Here..

—Come here! What is there...

—What is there?... I am happy, looking at heaven and floating on water!

—You can be happier floating, like a boat on the ocean of God—Consciousness!

Rama Calls—Come here.

“O God, I am no more forlorn” said the pilgrim as he went ashore and saw the person who called him—

He was *Thukaram Ramadas* held in respect by all savants, artists and princes! The yogi was shy, childlike, too timid to approach such a great man.

In the twilight of the crimson dawn, the Yogi (“Yogi” became his popular name) met the Saint.

Ramadas looked deep into his eyes and said: “Ah, it is you! Yogi, follow me !” He had known him already !

The Yogi quickly collected pekul twigs and flowers in the garden nearby and followed the Saint.

St Ramadas reached his Math (Ramadas Math). His chaste wife washed his feet. He

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entered the sanctum. The Puja articles were kept ready for him. There was an attractive painting of Rama with his bow. Ramadas seated the yogi on a *Grass mat*. The yogi adored his feet with flowers and sat in the lotus pose. “Keep mentally repeating Ram Ram until I finish the puja” said he and the yogi lost himself in the delight of Ramanam.

The Saint performed his sandhya and Gayatri japam; he performed his Aupasanam (Fire worship) and directed the yogi to throw the sticks, collected by him, one by one in the sacred flame saying “Aum Ram”.

Then he rang his bell and performed Puja to Rama. After that he tuned his Tambura and sang melodiously a song on Rama. The Master ordered: “Now sing a song on Rama”. A song came and he sang it. Sri Rama Jaya Ram JayaJaya Ram— It was in the *Sindu–Bhairavi* raga; the yogi, raised his cadence with such a measure and volume that, the Master singer was enraptured. It was a blessed morning. He closed the door. Like Jivatma with Paramatma, the yogi sat with Ramadas who placed his hands upon his head and then applied a pinch of sacred ashes (Vibhuthi) between his brows. Thus the Saint initiated him. The pilgrim felt very humble before the magnanimous personality of Ramadas.

Ramadas was an imposing figure shining like an image of gold. There was a mystery in his lotus eyes, a seriousness in his face, a grace in his mien and a charm in his musical voice. He had no pontific arrogance. The yogi touched and embraced his feet saying “I am Thy humble servant; If Thou art Ram, make me strong and faithful like Hanuman”.

Ramadas: There is a fire in you. Rama has set it ablaze today, my boy. Your surrender to God is perfect.

The yogi touched his feet again and then his heart.

Yogi : My humility embraces Thy lotus feet again and my love, Thy heart.

Ramadas: This feet of flesh and this palpitating heart count for nothing. This body shall die and become dust one day. But Rama, who breathes in this human body is immortal. Think of Him.

Five minutes were spent in meditation.

Yogi: Master, my words fail before Thy Light. I know, nothing. I am forlorn. None likes me. They call me God-mad at home and in the school. I had a Master whom you know—Deivasikamani.

Ramadas: Ah; yes, yes! He spoke of you to me before he was killed by some enemy. See that case—after so much enquiry, the court decided that he fell into the tank and died, for he could not swim.

Yogi: Ah, master, he can float in water like me. Such is the world—on the side of sinners ! Are you safe from enemies, Sir!

Fellow pilgrims, here is a brief account of Tukaram Ramadas as he related it.

Samu, alias Mahalingam, was the only son of his pious father Narayanan, petted by his mother, Muththammal. The boy was obstinate, illiterate, unwilling to learn letters. He would not obey anyone. His uncle’s sons studied in the school, read good books and called him an ignoramus. He took pleasure only in tending cattle and in singing at random anything that came to his memory! His voice was sweet.

A Brahmin boy tending cows with the village shepherds seemed peculiar to his relatives. “I do the work which Sri Krishna was pleased to do” said the boy. The boy became a stout and strong youth of eighteen and still he tended cows and played with cowherds. He drank a cup of milk and then sang and sang!

Once a prince passing through the forest heard the song and commanded his servants to bring the singer. Samu was at his best. He sang a song on Lord Mahalinga in kalyani ragam. The prince was pleased with him and presented him a laced cloth saying “Go to a musician and develop the art”. This was a red letter day to Samu. He placed the laced-cloth at the feet of Mahalingam, worshipped Him and then his parents. On hearing what

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had happened, they were much pleased and said “God has given you at least a voice. Now go and live by your talents in singing”. Samu did not care to learn music. He put on the laced cloth and strutted proudly before all. His cousins hated him, insulted him, asked him to go away from the house. “Get out and earn your livelihood. We cannot feed obstinate fools at home,” rebuked the uncle.

He never went beyond Alakapuri, his village. But the rebuke impelled his steps. Samu left his home one night after saluting God and his parents mentally. His legs struggled with the rugged path and his mind struggled in the battering cross currents of wayward thoughts. He enquired way farers if there was any town nearby where he could find work. “Go to Sivaganga,” said a traveller. Samu walked ten miles and reached Sivaganga in the hot sun. He went round the town but could not find a shelter. He was tired and hungry. He laid his burden in front of a temple. A blind man who rang the temple bell during worship crying “Hara Hara Mahadeva” directed him to a choultry nearby. There the Brahmin youth was able to satisfy his hunger. Samu reposed himself on the bare floor at night lending ears to the rattling of tongues around. One traveller was speaking of a musician at Piranmalai, Vadivel Pillai by name, who taught music to earnest students freely. Samu jumped up and walked all the way to Piranmalai, saw Vadivel who readily accepted him as his disciple. But he stayed there only five days. He heard of Anai Brothers at Tanjore who imparted music to 50 students. Samu continued his journey to Tanjore and after a tiresome search reached the house of the Elephant brothers (Anai means elephant). They were very kind to this youth and took interest in his study. They were pious devotees of Rama. They received initiation from the pious Sadguru Rama Swami of Marudanallur, famous for his Bhajans.

Sri Ramanavami festival was celebrated very grandly at Marudanallur for which Sadguru Swamiji wanted singers. He came to Anai Brothers and requested them to send a true devotee with him. Samu was the chosen devotee. He accompanied the Swami to Marudanallur near Kumbakonam.

The place thrilled with Ramanam and devotional concerts and jingling dances in divine ecstasy. Hundreds of devotees lost themselves in God intoxication. Sri Sadguru swami hailed from Tiruvisainallur which gave birth to three spiritual gems—Ayyaval, Bhodendra and Sadasiva Brahman. They were pioneers in the Bhakti—cult and the traditions set up by them were followed by Sadguru Swami who realised Rama!

The divine atmosphere transformed Samu. He was reborn in Rama—Prem. His fervour, devotion and sweet voice attracted Guruswami who accorded his desire to live there and spend his life in Rama’s love. His love of Rama was so profound and his devotion so perfect, that one day he had the vision of Rama and cried in spiritual ecstasy “O Green Lord! Rama Rama!”. For days together he was immersed in Rama consciousness. The Guru called him Tukaram. For like Tukaram his breath was Ramanam and music was Ramprem. He was also called Ramadas. He was a youth of 23 years, tall and fair, strong and luminous.

The parents anxiously searched for him from place to place and after five years of ardent search met him while he was immersed in Ramajapam. They embraced him fondly and the son told them that his life has been amply fulfilled now.

The parents appealed to Guruswami to send him with them. The Guru instructed him for two days the manner of leading spiritual life as a family-man, gave him his sandals and blessed him. Tukaram Ramadas with the Guru’s blessings followed his parents to his native place, Alakapuri. The Brahmachari was married to the chaste Muthulaxmi and both went to the great Guru at Marudhanallur. The Guru blessed them, gave them a big picture of Rama and requested them to love Rama and live in Rama’s love. By his grace, Tukaram became a talented singer and got by heart plenty of hymns and lyrics in several languages.

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His musical discourses were largely attended. He performed Radha Kalyanam and gave musical discourses on Rama and Krishna and God–men. His voice touched the hearts of the audience. He performed Hari Katha and Bhajan in all pilgrim centres. Kings and Lords gave him rich presents. But he returned to his Guru and placed all gifts and presents at his feet. He offered money which was used in raising buildings. The presents were returned to Tukaram with blessings. The Guru had one son named Kalyan Raman whom he left in charge of Tukaram. Tukaram served the master unto the last, trained the son to carry on his mission and turned towards Sivaganga giving performances in all pilgrim centres on the way. Kings honoured him. The Rani of Sivaganga built a concert hall for him and made arrangements to supply the things needed for his Puja. Festivals for Rama and Siva were grandly celebrated there and the whole day was filled with devotional concerts and discourses.

Tukaram Ramadas had fine children who devoted themselves to the service of their holy father. Dasaratha Ram was a Sanskrit Scholar, a musician, an actor and was famous for his Ramayana discourses. His brother Radhakrishna was a talented musician and devotee. The Rani of Sivaganga and the Rajah of Ramnad patronised his divine art and enriched his Math with gifts in kind and coin. Ramdas–math attracted all musicians, and Katha–performers of India. The Pilgrim had the blessings of Ramadas to develop his art by their close contact. Many of the songs that are found in the Kirthananjali and Natananjali were sung in those days to the hearing of adepts like Muthia Bhagavathar, Sesha Bhagavathar, Mangudi Chidambara Bhagavathar, Panchapakesa Bhagavathar, Tiger Varadhachari, Namakkal Narasimha Aiyangar, Dasaratha Rama Bhagavathar etc..

One day he seriously thought of taking up Hari Katha (Musical discourses) as his profession and performed a few Kathas too. But the inner voice dragged him within and told him “Your work is in silence. You must create the art in yoga. You need not waste your life in public performances for which there are many.”

It so happened and the pilgrim’s creative songs flowed through the pen instead of the tongue.

He who creates the art must work like a painter and sculptor in lonely silence. It is the tree deeply rooted in inner silence that bears rich fruits. Fellow pilgrims, let us go further on.

14. SONGFUL LIFE

The yogi was immersed in psychic devotion for God in the heart and the devotion was expressed in song offerings. Poetry, music, dance and painting were the fourfold expressions of the heart’s emotions. He paid little attention to class lessons against the teacher’s cuts and parental threats. He disliked the family atmosphere which was a cockpit of likes and dislikes. He had elder brothers with whom he rarely spoke. He rarely visited his home. He rambled in woodlands, fields and lake views. He liked solitude or the company of saints and saintly singers.

Song was an intuitive urge in his soul, a psychic hunger. It sought satisfaction in pouring out the inner rapture into cascades of emotional verses. He breathed poems and lived in poetic dreams. Many of the songs that have come out in book forms were the gift of his youthhood. Poetry is a rhythmic expression of the soul in tune with God in Nature. It is not a mere jingle of tingling words metric beats or pleasing metaphors. Poetry is a creative force, a vision of the inner experience embodied in a spontaneous flow of rhyme and rhythms. It flows with the honeyed juice of psychic ecstasy. Poetry is the towering art, that has immortalised its votaries. We can forget countries and their political history. But we cannot forget Shakespeare, Racine, Goethe, Homer, Dante, Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa and Kamban, who have been the harbingers of cosmic renaissance. Song is the symphony of the soul and dance its moving ecstasy. The rhythms of the Poet sing in the voice of the

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musician and jingle in the measured steps of the dancer.

The Yogi took delight in the art of dance too. He sang his songs and danced in delight. His very life was a choreographic representation of his feelings and emotions, kindled by environments. Dance is an aesthetic science of mood, time and melody, a harmonious fusion of music and poses. The Yogi utilised these arts for his spiritual development.

He was enraptured at the sight of the sunrise, the full moon, green fields, gardens, high hills and streams. He was moved to music and dance at the very thought of God in the beauty of Nature. He freely joined holy concerts, ecstatic dances round a lamp (Dipa-pradakshanam) and took part in the Bhagavata melas or holy dance-dramas. He joined choreic music of pure devotees and danced to the rhythm of trained voices and well-tuned cymbal beats. There were fine dance, dramatists then at Sivaganga, noted for their grace, agility, verve and vigour who lived the part they played. The poise, in their pose, the thrill in their voice and the emotion in their act sublimated the art towards divinity. The Bhajans of Ramadas, Sivakataksham Bhagavat, Krishna Raju, Ramakrishna devotees, the thrilling Tevaram and Tirupugazh tunes emanating from the temple sent him to raptures. Dedicated souls loved God and lived in God. They sang for God, not for laud. The company of such pure souls developed the genius in the poet and added to his knowledge and fervour, so that he composed many of his famous lyrics and melodious songs during this period of his devotional life. He came in close contact with all the renowned artists of those days especially Ponnuchami, Srinivasa Iyengar, Girisa Bhagavata and Subbarama Dikshitar.

He evinced a deep respect for Ramanad Srinivasa Iyengar who was a disciple of Patnam Subramania Iyer, the direct disciple of Thyagaraja—the King among saintly singers.

A grand old lady of the family, who lived with Thyagaraja and copied his songs, could sing thousand Kirtans. The Yogi adored Thyagaraja and followed his footsteps in song offerings. The grand lady and Mr. Iyengar used to speak of Thyagaraja. The young devotee wove his life into songs for a musical discourse. Dear Readers, listen to the Wonderful story of St. Thyagaraja who was verily the Raga Raja!

15. SAINT THYAGARAJA

The nineteenth century is the golden age of Indian culture which saw towering personalities who brought glory to India. Three great stars of divine radiance adorned the galaxy of music. They were St. Thyagaraja, Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Syama Sastri. They made singing a Divine Worship. All of them were born at Tiruvarur. Thyagaraja created a New Era in music. He kept the crystal symphony of music along the ups and downs of destiny.

Tiruvarur, on the banks of the Cauvery is the cultural centre of South India. Renowned saints flourished here and one of them was Girija Brahmam, a pious man well versed in Telugu and Sanskrit. He had five sons; the last one was Rama Brahmam, a fervent devotee of Rama and Thyaga Raja. He lived by giving discourses on Srimat Bhagavatam. His wife Shanta Devi was a pious graceful lady gifted with a sweet voice. Shanta-Ram had three sons, the first two were worldly and the last was the holy Thyagaraja.

Thyagaraja was born on the 5th May 1759 in Kataka Lagnam. His star was Pusam. He was born with musical gifts. He learnt Sanskrit and his thoughts were soaked in spiritual consciousness. He was a songful soul.

Rama Brahmam settled with his family at Tiruvaiyar on the banks of the Cauvery with a view to educate his sons in the local Sanskrit College. He lived in a small cottage in the Tirumanjanam St., near the Temple and made his living by singing God's name. His life was a stream of devotional fervour. Thyagaraja imbibed his father's spirit and acquired a

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rich store of songs from his mother. The father got him admitted in the Sanskrit College of Tiruvaiyar. Thyagaraja studied there four years and picked up enough of Sanskrit. He loved Ramnam and Ramayana and adored Rama on whom he composed melodious songs. He was attracted to the Court musician Sonti Venkataramanayya whose voice stirred his emotions. His mind surpassed academic learning. He left the college to learn music. His mother encouraged him and the Court musician took special care in teaching music to the budding prodigy. He appreciated his compositions. Thyagaraja dedicated a song every day to Rama and his songs were the rhythmic out flow of fervour from the fountain of Ramaprem (Love of Rama).

Krishnananda initiated him in Rama mantra and asked him to invoke Narada. By the grace of Narada he got Swarnavam, an old book on notations which was very useful to him. He avidly studied all available books on music. One fair day Sonti Venkataramana blessed him and said: "You are now perfect in the art of music. Rama will guide you, hence, make your life a song offering to Him."

Rama Brahmam died blessing his son and leaving Rama's image as his only inheritance. Thyagaraja daily counted on the rosary 1,25,000 Ramnams. He completed 96 crores of Ramnam in his 18th year. He hailed the grace of Rama with the full blaze of his musical ecstasy in high pitched Atana Raga *Ela Daya Radu*.

"O Rama, why does not Thy grace flow towards me now? I have taken utter refuge at Thy feet. To save the devotee is Thy creed. Ocean of compassion, respond to my call: O lotus-faced Splendour enthroned in the heart of yogins. Thou art the refuge of humanity !"

He had the vision and impersonal protection of Rama.

But destiny placed him in hostile surroundings. The elder brother insulted him, and called him an imbecile, a misfit, a madcap and he destroyed many of his songs in the burning fire. Thyagaraja kept tranquil in his mind, and trials strengthened his faith in God. He sang: "My neighbours are agnostics. They deride me. How virulent is the dark age ! O, Rama Thou art my light and hope".

After the death of his father, his brothers quarrelled about partition: Thyagaraja quietly took Rama's image to a humble cottage and left all other things to his turbulent brothers. "Rama is my life, light and wealth" said he. Still the trouble was not over.

The elder brother, Japyasan thought that Rama's image was the source of his gifted songs. At dead of night he stole the idol and flung it into the river flood and laughed like a villain. Thyagaraja was stung with bitter agony. "O Rama, where are you? Why have you forsaken me in this wicked world? I cannot live without you" cried he sleepless, foodless, wandering along the river. He broke into fits of devotional agony and poured out his grief in pathetic hymns

"O Rama, would you come back to wipe my tears? Would you reappear to heal my broken heart, to remove my dark despair by the splendid smile of your charming face?"

Rama responded to his prayers. "Go and find me buried in the sand near the College" said He in a dream.

Thyagaraja ran and found the image in the particular place. He took it fondly, hugged it to his bosom, led a procession, held a festival and dedicated thrilling songs of ecstasy showering flowers of love.

Even the unscrupulous elder brother was moved by this miraculous recovery of the image. He cherished an inner reverence for the saint.

Thyagaraja's fame and name and devotional purity reached far and wide. Princes invited him to visit their places but the saint would not move from the feet of Rama.

Raja Sarabhoji of Tanjore was a great lover of art and learning. He was a patron of

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poets and singers. He wanted to be immortalised by the music of Thyagaraja and sent a Brahmin to bring him to his court with the promise of gold and royal honours.

The messenger approached the Saint with diplomatic respect, offering fruit and cocoanuts, which the Saint placed at the feet of Rama.

Messenger: The King is pleased with you! He offers you a mansion, lands and wealth.

Thyagaraja: Why should the King offer these things to me? Let him give them to the needy.

Messenger: Revered Sir, kindly follow me to the King's presence and sing one song in praise of him and a treasure shall be yours. Thyagaraja was introspective looking at Rama and burst into a song which is sung every day by musicians

“O mind; do you long for affluence or Rama’s Presence? Do you want to taste milk and curds or the nectar–juice flowing from prayer and meditation? Do you want to take holy bath in the Ganges or to wallow in the hellish mire of sensual life? Do you want to hail Rama or flatter plutarchy?”

The messenger was struck dumb. He bowed to the Saint and carried reports to the King. Even before he could reach the palace, the King got severe colic and no doctor could cure it. He ran to Thyagaraja, fell at his feet and attended his concert. He received Tulsi water from the Saint and he sipped it, the pain was gone. The King offered to give him wealth and mansion. The Saint meekly refused all material offers and said “Offer yourself to Rama and develop love for Him”.

The King attended his holy concerts. One day Thyagaraja was telling his disciples that a thatched shed was needed to hold his music class. The King offered to raise the shed himself. But before he could send materials, a disciple, Venkata Ramana by name, accomplished it perfectly. The King was discomfited here too.

Swati Tirunal, King of Travancore was a singer, composer, linguist and patron of arts and letters. Famous musicians flourished under his patronage. He heard the songs of Thyagaraja and wanted to honour him personally. He despatched his Court artist Vadivelu to see the Saint.

Vadivelu bowed before Thyagaraja and delivered the message of the King.

V: “His Majesty Swati Tirunal, the King of Travancore, a great poet and a patron of poets, desires to hear you sing a song and honour you richly”.

Thyagaraja counting the rosary replied: “*I sing of Rama and am satisfied to remain at His feet*”..

V: “Very well, Sing Rama before the King, you will be his Royal–musician. He will give even his Samrajya, empire to you if you sing before him”.

Thyagaraja looked at the face of Rama, tuned his tambura and sang a song, which sings in million hearts today: “Love of Rama is my Samrajya; all other titles, positions, prestige and Kingdom are only Sham–raja. Faithful devotion to Thee, O Rama, is the only status that I want for ever.”

Vadivelu was stunned. He got the song by heart and rendered it before the King of Kerala.

“He is the Emperor of Singers. His Rama Bhakti is richer than kingdoms. I am blessed by his message” remarked the King.

Govinda Marar, a talented musician of Swati Tirunal’s Darbar saw the Saint and sang a song in high pitch. Thyagaraja blessed him and sang “Countless are Mahatmas who live in Thy grace. My salutations to one and all of them”. He was equal–minded and appreciated genius wherever it was found.

Thyagaraja was a tall, lean imposing personality with broad chest, high front, bright face bulging cheeks, thick neck and a well developed larynx. His eyes sparkled with inner

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light. He had a flute-voice and sweet expressions. He wore a Tulsi garland which he counted all day long. He dressed himself like an orthodox Brahmin, tied a laced chaddar round the waist and put on a nice silk-bordered upper cloth. He put a sandalmark on his face. A Tambura was always by his side which he tuned as a song came to him. He took river-bath at 5 am. and performed his Puja with devotion. He partook the food first offered to Rama. He taught his disciples free, and fed them too. He never sold his art. He fasted on the 11th day of every fortnight (Ekadasi) and spent the whole day in japam and Bhajan.

He was an expert in astrology. He was a strict disciplinarian and never allowed his disciples to go astray or listen to erotic songs. He kept a serene atmosphere of peace and divine fervour around him.

After years of concentrated devotion, The Saint made a pilgrimage to famous temples. The disciples carried him in a palanquin.

At Tirupati the sanctum was covered by a curtain and the priest would not remove it. Thyagaraja sang "O Venkatesa, would you not remove the curtain *between you and me*?. Remove also the curtain of I and mine so that I can get a clear view of you".

Miracle! The curtain fell! and the priest fell at the feet of the Saint. He went through the ceremonies of worship and gave him prasad. He was honoured by the temple authorities. At Pudur, by passing the current of Rama-mantra, he brought to life a devotee who had just breathed his last. He visited Upanishad Swami at Kanchipuram. At Kovvur Sundaresa Mudaliar welcomed him with royal honours and showered gold coins upon him. The Saint refused to touch them. The devotees hid a thousand mohars in the palanquin.

Thyagaraja was carried by the disciples through a forest. Suddenly stones hit the palanquin. The frightened devotees cried, "Thieves! Thieves!"

Thyagaraja: "Fear not; we have no money."

Rama Rao whispered the secret of one thousand coins hidden in the palanquin.

"Take them out and give them to the poor thieves" ordered the saint.

Rama Rao: It is Rama's money meant for his festival. Thyagaraja fell into silence. In the morning the thieves fell at his feet and ejaculated "Sir, we were thieves till last night. We saw two heroes who kept guard in the front and at the back of your palanquin. They disappeared at dawn. Who are they?"

The Saint said, "How fortunate are you to see Rama and his brother guarding this humble soul!" The thieves took leave of him to be honest tillers of the soil. Thyagaraja utilised the money in celebrating Sri Rama Navami. In Madras he lived with the famous Veena Kuppa Iyer who adored Venu Gopal. The Saint dedicated songs to Gopal and thousands felt blessed by hearing his songs. Thyagaraja made a long pilgrimage to Srirangam, Madurai, Rameswaram, Dhanushkoti and met real Saints on the way. He sang at temples and holy places. When he returned home, his relatives thought that he brought rich rewards and awards from Kings. Thyagaraja gave them Temple Prasads saying: "These are more than money and medals. The Pilgrimage strengthened my faith in God".

Thyagaraja sang 2401 songs in different tunes. He spent his last days in hearing Ramayana and Bhagavatam. He forecast his death and assumed orders. His wife died. He died soon after his wife's death in 1845 on the Ekadasi day amidst a loud eclat of Ramnam giving out his swan-song:

"Rama, free me from the petty mortal body." A light flashed and shot into the air. The body fell down. The song-soul flew into the unknown. Disciples spread his songs. From 1907, Thyagaraja Kirtanas were sung by all widely.

16. THE SPIRIT OF THYAGARAJA

The Pilgrim soul was tremendously impressed by the wonderful story of Thyagaraja. It went deep into his heart. He felt that Thyagaraja was his soul. Day and night he thought of him and continued his Rama japam with such concentration that even his heart throbbed to the rhythm of Ram, Ram! Now he wanted to visit Tiruvaiyar and meditate where Thyagaraja's body was buried. Who will guide him? There was a big Music festival at Pudukottai and all the artists of South India had gathered there. The festival was managed by his uncle, Hari, who was the court musician. Hari loved the yogi. He introduced the young singer to prominent savants. The yogi asked them if some one would take him to Thyagaraja's Samadhi.

"O, yes, come with me, my boy. I go there in January with friends" said a consoling voice. That was Girisa Bhagavatar who spoke. He made it a duty to visit the Samadhi every year and hold a concert there. Sesa Bhagavatar, Krishnaiyar and many others agreed to go. Hari too joined them. The yogi went with them.

They reached Tiruvaiyar. Ramudu, a progeny of Thyaga's brother, received the musicians and showed them the picture of Kodanda Rama adored by Thyagaraja and also his japa mala. The yogi adored Rama and demanded: "Is there any descendent of Thyaga? Where is his family now?" Ramudu replied: "No; His family is extinct; I am the progeny of his brother that gave the Saint all troubles."

Girisa Bhagavatar said "Thyagaraja has hundreds of children and thousands of family members ..."

"O yes" said the yogi "His songs are his children and all singers are his progeny". The Vidvans were fed at the local choultry. The yogi was so full of Thyaga's spirit that he could not think of food. Nor did he like the gossip of the musicians criticising all absent musicians.

He quietly walked to the burial-ground near the flowing river and steeped himself into deep meditation invoking the spirit of Thyagaraja.

Song after song blossomed in his soul.

Thyaga's Spirit rose like a flame
From the song of the flood
And said "I live for Rama's name
Which leads me to Godhood.

I know the pricks of all pleasures
And tricks of royal courts
Song-offerings are my treasures
Ram gives me all comforts.

My hut gives me happy peace
And mala gives me solace
What is there in a king's palace,
In praise and in applause?

The Spirit of the Saint danced
In my heart singing Ram
To Ram my soul was well cadenced
The river was singing AUM

The songs outlived the saintly poet. The Yogi refused to enter the vanity fair of Samsara. Songs were his progeny too. He invoked Thyagaraja into his soul. He heard from musicians hundreds of his songs and hundreds blossomed in his soul. Later on, as he

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was the editor of Samarasabhadini at Tanjore, he used to visit Thyagaraja's sanctuary very often and attend Thyaga Brahma festival and sing innumerable songs in several tunes.

17. THE THEOSOPHIST YOGI

Song offering and inner communion were the breath of his life. The Yogi had no interest in rituals and ceremonials. His brothers indulged in open polemics with him. His parents and relatives invested him with the sacred thread at an enormous expenditure. The Yogi demanded from the priest the meaning of the Gayatri. "Impertinent ... shut up" shouted all. The Yogi threw off the thread and ran to the Theosophical Society and sat before the picture of Madame Blavatsky seeing her wide lotus eyes and shedding tears. P. R. Narayana Iyer, the great Theosophist, watched him and kindly demanded "What is the matter with you?"

The Pilgrim: Hinduism has become undoism. Gayatri has lost its meaning. Vedas are sleeping in meaningless brains. They flout at me as I demand the meaning of the Gayatri.

PR: I will teach you the meaning of Gayatri and Sandhya. Here is a Sandhyavandanam book with meaning. The Yogi meditated on the Gayatri before the morning and the evening sun. "Lead me, Almighty Grace Light, to pure bliss and dynamic peace—Aum". This was his conscious prayer.

The Yogi was attached to the Theosophical Society. He meditated before the grand picture of Madame Blavatsky. Shankara Iyer and A. Rangaswami Iyer explained the Secret Doctrine of Blavatsky. The Yogi attended the class regularly and also the Sanatana Dharma class. On the White Lotus day P. R. Narayana Iyer, and F. T. Brooks spoke about Blavatsky.

Helena Petrovna Hahn was born in the midnight of 31-7-1831 at Ecarterinoslav near Kiev in Southern Russia. She belonged to a princely family and her fore fathers were governors. She was born with occult powers. She learnt many languages, arts and sciences. She was a musician, an artist, and a storehouse of occult philosophy. In her eighteenth year, she was married to general N. V. Blavatsky a vice-governor. But after three months she left home and wandered all over the world in search of occult masters. She met the guards and guides of the Occult Hierarchy who opened the doors of the mystery of human life. Master M and Master K. H. directed her destiny. She mastered the hidden science of mysticism in India, Egypt, Tibet and Arabia. The episodes of her adventurous life can go into an epic. She smiled in silent contempt at abuse, slander, calumny and scandal that tried her patience at every step. She met Col. Olcott in New York and his acquaintance resulted in the victory of her ideal in life. Madame Blavatsky wrote the Voice of Silence, Isis Unveiled and the Secret Doctrine which provoked the admiration of progressive thinkers. The Theosophical Society was started in New York in 1875 to promote psychic research, universal brotherhood and to encourage comparative study of religions. Theos+sophia means wisdom of God. It was based on the Vedic and Neo-Platonian dictum: "Nothing is higher than Truth".

Blavatsky and Olcott came to India in 1879 and established the Theosophical Society centre at Adyar. Blavatsky spent her brilliant last days in England (1887-1891). A magnificent soul was attracted to her who was destined to develop Theosophy as a universal force of new life and new humanity.

That was Annie Besant (1881-1932); the soul of India, wore her body. The Young Yogi adored Mother as Shakti and aspired to see her. On the White Lotus Day Annie Besant came.

Annie Besant was a graceful soul with the face of an angel and the heart of a mother. The Pilgrim fell at her feet saying "Hail Holy Mother!" Shankar introduced the boy and the Mother's heart smiled into him as she patted him on the back saying, "Lovely

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boy, there's light in you."

Pilgrim : Mother, I want to hear from you, the meaning of the Gayatri...

Besant: Fine! This evening ... Read this Gita, my boy...

Pilgrim: Thanks Mother, I know the Gita by heart; hear me chanting it ... (The Pilgrim sang the sixth chapter and the Mother was much pleased).

Pilgrim : Give me a mantra too, Mother.

Besant: "Mind is man; mind is hell and heaven. Be a master of the mind. Repeat this prayer: "O hidden Light, lead me to Victory!" When you grow up, read this Milton." The Mother's eloquence still rings in his ears as she recited these lines from Milton:

"What though the field is lost; All is not lost—Hail horrors! Hail infernal world ! Farewell happy fields where joy for ever dwells !"

"The mind in its own place and in itself can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. Here at least we shall be free. Here we may reign secure and in my choice to reign is worth ambition though in Hell. Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven. To be weak is miserable. Doing or suffering Awake, arise or be for ever fallen!" –The Yogi read Milton and still preserves that copy.

The Pilgrim listened to the Mother's lecture on the Gayatri that evening. O how clear was her explanation, her voice and her style and substance ! It was the voice of the inner soul! Gayatri is a mantra for inner illumination. AUM, the Supreme Brahman is the Individual, Universal and the Transcendent Reality pervading all beings in the physical, vital and mental planes. Let us meditate upon the Unique One worth adoring! The Pure Almighty Grace shall lead our evolving Soul, to the height of Truth–Light–Knowledge–Peace and Bliss. Then darkness shall disappear; evil, falsehood, enmity and misery shall end. Love and compassion, unity and harmony, goodness and amity shall characterise the confederation of nations. The human race shall be reborn in the glory of the inner divinity when minds create a concentrated force of psychic love and harmony.

This was the substance of the Mother's words that day. The Pilgrim saw her often while he was in Madras. He took an active part in all her movements especially in the Star, Home rule and Scout movements.

Annie Besant brought a vernal hope into his gloomy life. She was an incarnate genius, a dynamic flame, an incomparable manifestation of affable love and marvellous powers of organisation. She was a born orator, with a voice that was the admiration of great speakers. She was a rebel against all sorts of bondages and broke fetters with her iron will. She had the fire of Joan of Arc, the spirit of Maitreyi, the beauty of Beatrice and the heart of the Buddha. After a hard fight with conscience she, the wife of Father Wood and the mother of a son and a daughter, left home and found solace, in the Secret Doctrine of Madame Blavatsky.

The Theosophical Society is a world organisation for the study and research of the Divine Wisdom that underlies all religions. It is in communion with the Masters that lead humanity towards the hidden Light which sustains life.

Annie Besant made the Society a world federation with branches in all countries and enriched it with cultured members, mystic thinkers, and with wealth and wisdom. The Yogi was much attached to the Theosophical Society and attended its classes regularly.

He was a member of the Star which hailed J.Krishnamurti as the Avatar of Maitreya. But the J.K of those days was quite different from the J.K. of today.

18. J. KRISHNAMURTI

The Pilgrim came in personal contact with J.K. much later; but he studied his lectures and contemplated upon his ALL–FREE–WIDE–HORIZON. He had opportunities to watch the pure life of J. K. free from all old traditions and mental patterns and human frameworks. ‘**At the feet of the Master**’ was superseded by **Commentaries on Life**. The images of Krishna, the Buddha and Jesus adored by the youthful J.K. melted slowly into an impersonal reality. J.K. was trained in Cambridge under leadbeater and Besant. J.K. in Adyar, was hailed as Maitreya, the world Teacher and an organisation grew around his name. The Order of the Star might have developed into a new religion and given J.K. a unique place in the history of religions.

But J.K. dissolved the Order of the Star and came out of the Lodge with three followers. The Pilgrim one day interviewed him and attended three of his lectures and conversations. These are the ideas of J.K. that pleased the pilgrim, for they are similar to his own.

All labels limit our scope. All organisations around personalities divide humanity into sectarian camps. Religions, temples, ceremonials, codes and books, all fortified creeds springing around personalities enslave mankind. Ceremonies are unnecessary for spiritual growth. Man is responsible to himself and to no other individual. The world problem is complicated, for the individual is complicated. The world will be happy if individuals are happy in the freedom of the soul. You are indeed the master of your evolution; take care of your action to day and you can command tomorrow. Man must be free from all castes, sects, religions and from being coerced into any belief that constrains him to slavery. The inner progress of the individual must not be throttled by fear or personality complexes.

The Pilgrim never liked personality cults and sectarian religions. He realised the I which is the focal centre of all beings. Conscience is its voice. Self–conscious, one can be all–conscious and live an all–inclusive life of cosmic consciousness. Self–fulfilled in the All–Self, one can move among the multitude with the peace of the Self in solitude.

The Pilgrim saw during his spiritual sojourns many sanyasins, forming circled forts around themselves compelling disciples to adore their feet and sandals, declaring themselves as incarnations of God. One circle hated another. The God of one circle was the Satan of the other. A was God in his Ashram, and B in his, and C in his; B was hated by A and by C. Thus the world was divided into sectarian labyrinths and humanity was caught in an enchanted cul–de–sac of futile ‘isms.’

When the Yogi sang or spoke out these truths, he was taunted and heckled. The Yogi wrote dramas with these ideas and staged them boldly.

19. TEN PRINCIPLES

The pilgrimage of life is not through a rosy path. There are thorns on the way and dangerous thickets from which tigers and jackals pounce upon you suddenly. Thieves and traitors rob you and misguide you and mislead you. Thunder storms and scorching heat, hunger and starvation and privation bring untold difficulties upon you. All these ordeals tested the patient pilgrim and cruel disappointments followed him like a shadow.

The Yogi lived an inner life amidst men who never understood him. They teased him, bullied him, called him mad, scandalised him, tore his poems, burnt his manuscripts, enclosed him in dark rooms, manhandled him, and made home and street, hot–beds for him. The worst of it was they tried to yoke him in wedlock; for an astrologer told them that he would be all right when a girl embraced him. The girl was brought by her parents and his parents gave a feast for them. All of them came to him.

The Yogi just wrote a poem on the evils of worldly life.

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They: Dear boy, happy news to you! You are to be married...

Yogi: Alas, alas !

They: To this lovely charming girl...

Yogi: Alas, loss, loss !

They: A rich girl ... You will have plenty of wealth!

Yogi: Alas, alas! You are forcing me to eat gall when my stomach is full of nectar !

“Hear my song, please, and you will know the sobs and tears behind the deluding smiles of maya.

They heard his humorous poem on “Wedlock and Padlock”: A God–mad poet marries a glamour girl. He speaks of God and thinks of God and she torments him and worries him for jewels, silks, cosmetics and sweets. She makes his life bitter. He flies away to keep company with saints and she chases him wherever he goes for peace, and spoils his meditation till at last he pretends madness. She leaves him for another man. The poet becomes a saint and she becomes a sinner. At the fag end of life she seeks a Master for spiritual solace. The saint one day meets her and she tells him the horrors of her wanton life, her quarrel with her husband, son, and daughter–in–law, the same tale as that sung by the poet !

The relatives tried to bring about a forced marriage—a marriage which should serve a good theme for the famous French dramatist Moliere. The proposal was there, preparations were there. All were vigilant. A week before the marriage, the bird broke the cage and escaped. How? He went to an astrologer and offered an inducement to him saying “Sir, you will get plenty of money; go at once to such and such home; see such and such man; say that the Yogi will not live long. Recommend to him such and such groom. Tell the father that he will live long and protect his property ... and he will have plenty of children ”.

The drama was acted and the trouble was transferred to Mr. G, who enjoyed the property of the girl fully and died mournfully, a slave in the hands of a slut !

The Yogi met a God–man who looked like a madman. Surprise! He knew Jnana Siddha and Ramalinga. He recognised the Yogi and said “Well done! you have escaped a tiger!”

This sage never came to the limelight. He was happy and secure and carefree. He had four followers who were very obedient to him and did whatever he commanded them to do. They used to go up the hill near Madurai with him at night and return early morning now and then. All of them were happy, free and resourceful. They called him a Siddha and the Siddha called himself Pittha–madman. He was mostly silent and when he opened his mouth, nuggets of eternal wisdom were revealed. The Yogi noted all of them in verse and read his verses before the four followers.

One day the Yogi read before the Siddha the following poem:

You are yourself, O Perfect One

Happy in your peaceful heart

A bright Witness like the Sun

A Master of the silent art.

Free, free from servile bonds

Free from hope and free from fear

Free from lands and free from hands;

Having nothing, You have all, Sir!

The Siddha suddenly poured out sublime verses and the Yogi was surprised at his erudition. He was calm, profound, deep.

His contact was enlightening. It inspired ten principles of life in the Pilgrim:

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1. Move on; do not stagnate. Do not allow anything to bind you.
2. Purity is Divinity; be pure in thought, word and deed. Love, serve, meditate and be calm.
3. Respect God—men but adore God above all. Do not seat anyone on God's throne in your heart. Pray for grace; not for gifts.
4. Do not waste time in ceremonies and rituals and forced sadhanas. Be conscious of the Pure Almighty Grace that guides your life. To be conscious always is Yoga and religion.
5. Record your intuitions silently and leave your footprints on the sands of time for the good of fellow travellers. Choose the best; leave the best of your works to humanity.
6. Make life a song—offering meditation. Read good books and think deeply; write from self-revelation. Wait for inspiration and let God—current move the brain, heart and pen.
7. Love silence more than talk; walk alone and talk to your conscience. Preserve, reserve and serve. Waste not energy in vanity.
8. Consecrate everything to God and follow His will in everything. Put off self-will. His Will is law! Go on doing what you ought to do in this life and leave no lingering thought behind.
9. Roll on towards the Ocean of Bliss. Go from saint to saint and do not turn back nor retrace your steps. Keep life streaming on ... Enjoy the ups and downs of life; the goal is certain. Never borrow nor beg. Lead a simple life, eat natural fruits and nuts, wear simple dress; do not be a burden on anybody.
10. Brave difficulties patiently. Take lessons from sufferings and betrayals. God is your only companion and saints your only friends. Serve God in humanity by song—offering and keep calm and quiet. Do not leave your pose unless for a sacred mission. Keep away from fame and name, praise and blame. Seek not followers. Let God bring you men and means. Do not build Ashrams that will entangle you in burdensome responsibilities like collecting donations and keeping accounts. Contact living saints and meditate at their feet. Love God, live God and be God-conscious seeing His play in the universal temple as a dynamic witness. Let your days be your own. Let your life be God's own.

These are the ten principles of life followed by the Yogi all along his life. The Siddha produced gold from copper by a secret process of alchemy. The four disciples were enriched thereby. They sold the gold and spent the money as the Siddha ordered them to do. The Yogi was taken into confidence after a few months and he himself made gold and gave to monks and students.

But the inner Master prevented him from producing artificial gold. The Siddha one day gave him a big lump of gold. The Yogi was afraid to touch it. He had no need for gold; for God never kept him in want. He buried it at the backyard of a poor man who had five daughters and went away leaving a letter in that man's hand to find and utilise the gold.

One day the Siddha told him that he had learnt alchemy from Ramalinga Swami and the talk turned on this great Saint of Vadalur. Deivasikamani Yogi often lived with Ramalinga and told the Yogi about the graceful life and soulful hymns of Ramalinga.

The Yogi meditated and opened inner communion with the luminous Saint. One day he went with the Siddha to Vadalur and saw the precious writings of St. Ramalinga.

20. *RAMALINGA'S INFLUENCE

A memoir of Madame Blavatsky speaks of St. Ramalinga whom the Pilgrim loved from his boyhood. Deivasikamani Yogi had lived with the Saint and often spoke about him and his hymns.

Ramalinga was born on the 5th October, 1823 at Marudur, near Chidambaram. As a child in the arms of his mother, he delighted in observing the camphor light offered to

* For details, see 'St Ramalinga and his revelations'

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Nataraja, the symbol of cosmic dance. He lost his parents and was brought up by his brother and his loving wife. He neglected book-lore, untaught, he taught wisdom. He composed spontaneously poems of spiritual ecstasy. He was expelled by his brother for his negligence in study. The boy prodigy, by a process of Mirror-Flame-meditation, developed concentration and intuition which kindled his genius to such a stupendous extent that he was able to expound ancient scriptures with wonderful clarity in style and substance. The Divine Grace descended into his pure Soul and it was manifest in his thrilling poems which evoked awe and reverence from savants like Professor Velayudam of the Presidency College.

ST. MANICCAVACHAKAR

The Tiruvachakam of St. Manicavachakar had tremendous influence on Ramalinga. Manicavachakar was the minister of a Pandyan King. The King sent the minister with a large sum of money to purchase horses for his army from Port Tondi. Manicavachakar spent all the amount in building a temple for Siva and suffered incarceration at the hands of the king. He was set free by a divine miracle and he spent his last days at Chidambaram collecting his hymns, contained in Tiruvachakam which he placed before Lord Nataraja and disappeared saying "Here is its meaning." Ramalinga read this work even in the nuptial chamber by the side of his wife.

His soul was wedded to the Divine whom he realised as the Supreme Grace-Light of infinite Compassion. His life was spent in song-offering. He petitioned to the Lord to save humanity from divisions into castes and religions, from mental ignorance, vanity, falsehood, theft, fornication, insolence, and sensualities. He could not bear to see plants fading, the poor hungering, and animals crying in the hands of butchers. He raised a Temple of Light at Vadalur with seven curtains to denote the seven planes of consciousness. He lit the Lamp of Grace there, behind the curtains and thousands gathered to worship that Light crying: "Hail Supreme Grace-Light Hail unique Compassion!" He dedicated 1500 lines in praise of the Grace-Light. The Arul Pa containing his songs is adored as the Scripture of universal harmony. He lived until 1874 giving humanity a new life of collective consciousness.

THE ONE SOUL

The Pilgrim had a vision of Manicavachakar and Ramalinga in his inner communion. He invoked their spirit in his soul and lived the pattern of life provided by them. His heart extended into wide compassion. He had inner communion with the Buddha and Jesus Christ. He loved the cross as a symbol of sacrifice. He moved lovingly with the devotees of all religions and found the possibility of universal harmony in the soul. The word 'Sama Yoga - Spiritual Socialism' was inspired in him which became the mission of his life. He considered the heaven-bound earth as his temple-home, humanity as his kith and kin, the collective soul as God and loving service as worship. He would not accept anything that divided the world into narrow sectarian walls. He went into slum quarters and cleaned them. He started a small school for the depressed classes in an old temple; he boldly took them into orthodox temples and fought against exclusivism and monopolism. "Be wide like the sky, broad like the horizon, deep like the sea, free like the wind; live like a stream and sing like the birds" sang he to all. He acquired strength in silent inner communion and found joy in loving service. He helped public benefactions. He kept inner peace and solitude even while moving among the multitude. Of course, many thought him crazy and eccentric. They criticised his new ways and created obstacles. They were enraged when the soul-free pilgrim threw away his sacred thread, and wiped off caste-marks and aristocratic distinctions.

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The critics came down upon him crying “ See this little Sama Yogi here! He says all are one. He will make hands and legs one and eyes and nose one!” “My brothers” replied the Yogi: “ Not like that; none can make eyes and nose, hands and legs one, for each of them has its natural function. But they are one in the body. The same soul breathes in all irrespective of name and form. It is in the heart of beings. See this clock. It has different parts. You turn the key. Its force moves all and runs the clock which shows the time. I want you to remember THAT UNIQUE SOUL—force behind all.” Only one wise man understood the yogi and sympathised with him. That was Mr. Kodanda Ram, the president of the Ramakrishna Home at the end of the street where the Yogi lived. He gave the Yogi a room there and explained to him the life and teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

21. RAMAKRISHNA SHOWS THE WAY

At a critical time in his life, like Haridas and Tukaram he suffered at the hands of unscrupulous critics and envious bookworms. They decried his songs and discouraged what they dubbed his ‘Godomania’ and ‘Saintocrazia’ ... it was a period in his life when he renounced all caste scruples and served scavengers and depressed classes and mingled freely with all devotees and prayed in churches and Masjids... Sri Ramakrishna’s life and sayings gave him immense courage during this time.

Ramakrishna is the crowning glory of spiritual India. He was the high priest of the Indian Renaissance. He planted at Dakshineswar a synthetic force of spiritual harmony nurtured by his Vedantic apostle, Vivekananda. This unschooled genius made Anglicised Indians think again with the brain of India. The pioneers of New India were charged with his spiritual dynamism. He was born at Kamarpukur, a hamlet near Calcutta on 18-2-1836. He was a receptive, retentive, emulative, intuitive genius God—centric to the core. He staged the holy stories he heard and Sang the songs of Ramaprasad, Chandidas, Kamalakanta and Jayadev from memory. He had no need for bread—winning book—lore for he was born with soul—winning intuition.

In 1856, he became the priest of the Kali temple at Dhakshineswar, raised by Rani Rasamani. That image of grim grace appealed to his frantic fervour as the universal Mother whom he pined to see. Life was intolerable to him without Her grace and hence one day, he seized the sword at her feet, to immolate himself and bathe her with the blood of his heart. Lo, a splendid current of light engulfed him in an ineffable beatitude. He was reborn with a new language of wisdom clear to the modern world. He adored his wife Sarada Devi as Mother Shakti. Bhairavi Brahmini, a female saint of high culture initiated him in Tantra Yoga which he easily mastered. Totopuri, a naked monk, installed him in featureless trance and taught him practical Vedanta. For six months Ramakrishna steeped himself in trance and realised the **Pure Self**. He realised also that the Impersonal and personal Gods are one like milk and whiteness, the snake and its wriggle, a diamond and its lustre. He entered into the spirit of Islam, Christianity and Buddhism and found out the essential harmony of religions which stream severally, like rivers into one ocean of Satchidananda (Truth—knowledge—Bliss). “Come Children of immortality” he called from the temple tower after integral realisation. Talented youths gathered round his radiant personality.

A brilliant young man came to him one day demanding, “Have you seen God? Can you show Him to me?” “Yes, my child, yes. I see Him clearer than I see you and you too can see Him within.” said the Paramahansa. The youth was his chosen apostle—Vivekananda (Naren) and he was fully satisfied with the Master. He sang a melodious song; the Master in trance touched his heart. That touch charged him with divine electricity. “I was waiting for you, my child” said the Master endearingly. The student of Spencer and Mill, the rationalist of Kesavachandra’s Brahmasamaj, a graduate of the Calcutta University, adored this unlettered saint. As bees swarm round flowers, lovers of God swarmed

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around him. Vivekananda was the chosen one like Arjuna to Krishna. After his father's demise, his family was reduced to poverty and Vivekananda requested the Master to pray to the Mother for his famished home. "Do that Yourself" said the Master. Thrice he tried; thrice he forgot family and poverty. He demanded spiritual light from the Divine Mother. One day he left the Paramahansa for Pavahari Baba. He was an equal-minded sage who gave his sustenance to a thief, running after him. The thief became a saint and Vivekananda saw him later on, in the Himalayas. But Baba did not satisfy his higher vision. He returned to Ramakrishna as his conquering instrument. Ramakrishna poured into him his spiritual force before he left the body on 15-6-1886.

22. THE LION OF VEDANTA

Vivekananda started the Ramakrishna Mission and trained a brotherhood of monks to serve it. These Sanyasins first lived in a ruined home at Belur among snakes, reptiles, owls and rats. They bore in the name of their Master, the pinch of poverty, the kicks and curses of the ignorant, the derision of the insolent and the threats of parents and relatives. They begged their food, but were kings of selfdom. Their hearts were united with the spirit of the Master. Their health was broken, not their faith. They prepared themselves and went all over the country spreading the Gospel of Ramakrishna.

Long did Vivekananda wander, gaining knowledge and sowing the seeds of the Master's words wherever he went. After his historic contemplation on the cape-rock of Kanyakumari, he visited Ramnad, where the famous Raja Bhaskara Setupati urged him to attend the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Swamiji gladly agreed and the *Raja* gave him all conveniences. The Raja helped him, Madras hailed him, Kshetri Raja dressed him, Mother Sarada Devi blessed him and Bombay saw him off.

The impersonal guidance of Ramakrishna led him to Chicago. In that friendless city of hedonists, he suffered for two months. By the grace of one good lady, he was able to surmount difficulties and address the august assembly of Religionists on the 11th September, 1893, a red-letter day in the history of spiritual India. 10,000 people heard him with rapt attention. His red robe drawn at the waist by an orange cord, his yellow turban, olive complexion, red lips and his trumpet Voice of flaming inspiration kept the Parliament spellbound. They found a clear difference between the "Ladies and Gentlemen" of other speakers and his "Brothers and Sisters". Thundering cheers followed his sparkling expressions which pleaded for the fellowship of faiths, and laid the foundation of Universal Religion. He condemned narrow sectarianism, bigotry, fanaticism, blind beliefs and superstitions that have devastated peace in the world. He delivered there, the message of divinity of the Spirit and equality of mankind:

"Ye children of immortality, ye divinities on earth, come up. O, lions, shake off the delusion that you are sheep. You are souls, immortal Spirits, free, blessed and eternal. This is the message of India. May I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God I believe in the sum total of all souls, and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species.

Him worship in whom there is no past life nor future, birth nor death, in whom we always have been and always will be one—Him worship and break all idols".

Thus roared the Lion of Vedanta and won laurels for India. Humanity makes a pilgrimage to this country since that day of spiritual victory. His words are engraved in the heart of humanity. He established centres of spiritual dynamism in East and West and trained missionaries for universal service. The Ramakrishna mission by his inspiring lead is to day a tremendous force for the social, cultural and spiritual uplift of humanity. Vivekananda blessed the baby-pilgrim in 1897. When Vivekananda died on 4-7-1902 hundreds of

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Sanyasins took up his work and continued to tread on his path...

23. SWAMI NARAYAN

The Yogi had two elder brothers. J. V. Ram, the eldest was an advocate, a scholar and a tireless singer. He was a political leader too. The next brother I. Rangaswami, a science teacher, was a good scholar of Sanskrit and English. He could repeat from memory the whole Gita, Upanishads, Ramayan and Bhagavatam and act the plays of Shakespeare impressively. The Yogi improved his knowledge of music, literature and Sanskrit by listening to them.

J. V. Ram sang a variety of divine songs and that was an inspiration to the Yogi. He made the latter read the works of Vivekananda, Tagore, Aurobindo and Ramathirtha, which improved his style and substance. Ram asked him to read the lives of great men—especially Indian leaders. He kindled ablaze his patriotism and took him to all local meetings, religious and political. He attended all congress sessions and had close contact with national leaders like Tilak. But he cared little about his home and profession. He appeared for the poor and defended Truth and Justice. He spent for the congress all his income and led a very simple life at home. Even before Gandhiji advocated charka, he was spinning for his clothes and made all the members of the family spin. He lived an ideal life and loved simplicity and sacrifice. He often went with his brother—advocates on excursions to places of natural beauty and always had a company of cultured friends. The Yogi took pleasure in listening to his fruitful talks. The Yogi once accompanied him to Rameswaram and Dhanuskoti to enjoy the sea-life. Five advocates followed him. A week was spent very joyfully. Next day the party sailed in a boat. The Yogi sang his boat-song and all were happy until a sudden high wave splashed into the boat. The boat was caught in a whirlpool and the boatmen could not ply the oars. “Danger, danger!” cried the advocates. The Yogi cried, “Courage courage! Ram Aum!” The party became desperate, they wailed over the fate of their homes and families in the event of their being drowned. The Yogi sang, “Leave the boat of life to the mystic—pilot. He will take us ashore safely even against this turbulent storm”. Just then, a steam launch was coming from Rameswaram. It was a few yards off. J. V. Ram stood up and waved a red kerchief. The launch came near the boat. “Save us save us” cried the party. The launch approached the boat and all friends jumped into it. The boat too escaped the whirlpool but was quickly driven ashore. There were two Punjabis and a Swamiji in the launch. The Swamiji was a fair, bright, strong man with a charming smile on his lips. He was very joyful and jovial and spoke good English. The party thanked him for his timely help and saluted him with great devotion. The Yogi spoke to him in Hindi. The Swami liked him and asked him to sing a Tamil song. The Yogi sang his song with deep fervour;

O mind why this fuss!
God is there to protect us !
He is the deathless Self in all
The sphere is His playing ball!...

The ocean is His bathtub
The bright sun is a bulb
That lights His universal home
The wind calls Him Aum, Aum!

Swamiji appreciated the tune but wanted the Tamil song to be explained in English or Hindi. That was done and he opened a book and read:

No foes, no fear, no danger, none
Can touch Thee, O Eternal One!
The Spheres are Thy dolls; sing, dance and roam

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They praise Thee Aum Tat Sat Aum ... !”

J. V. Ram: O, This is Rama’s lullaby. Are you his disciple ... Swamiji ?

Swamiji: Yes; I am Narayan who lived with him unto the last...

Yogi: Very good Swamiji! God has sent you here. Please speak about Rama.

Other friends requested Swamiji to give them an account of Rama’s life and Swami Narayan did so with great enthusiasm as the boat was sailing on—Even the waves listened with joy to the story of Rama.

24. SWAMI RAMATHIRTHA

Ramathirtha was the foremost apostle of absolute monism. He hailed from the family of Tulsidas Goswami of Ramayana fame. He was born in Muralivala, in 1873, 22nd October. His father Hiranand was a poor priest. Rama had a meteoric career of thirty–three years like Shankara. Within this span of life, he immortalised himself by his Vedantic contemplation and cosmic vision. He was motherless, penniless, dauntless. He sang AUM like a temple conch and forgot misery in its sweet resonance. He liked to hear and read Yoga Vasistham, a supreme work on Pure Monism. He learnt Persian, Urdu and Sanskrit in a village school. He loved Sufi poets, and Bhagavatam. An original genius, he was *himself*, from A to Z. From the local village school, he passed on to Gujranwala High School, and thence to Foreman College, Lahore. His self–imposed poverty, simple life, sacrificing spirit, and studious nature were all examples to the student world. His college fees were Rs 4-4, boarding Rs. 3-8, room rent in slum quarters Re. One. Breakfast cost him two pies and a square meal 2 annas. He earned money by teaching mathematics to students, spent Rs. 8 for himself and sent something home to his wife and father.

All: O, how frugal, how simple! Was his life all smooth? Had he no difficulties ?

Swamiji: He had lots of difficulties. One dark night, he entered his hovel; a cobra hissed at him. He found his things stolen. His scholarship was stopped since he failed by five marks in English. Ah misery! He starved two days and prayed to the Almighty: “Thief–self has denuded me, O Supreme Self ... Let Thy will be done; Thou art my all, all powerful ”. The college confectioner, Jantumal took pity on him and fed him for one year. He got Rs. 15/- by teaching boys. He treated Bhakta Danaram as his spiritual Master and sent him money. Money like water, must be in circulation; so he spent all that he could earn. He plunged himself into mathematics which he loved more than his wife. He got in B.A., 148 out of 150 and M.A. he passed with record merit. Mr. Bell, the Principal, recommended him for senior wrangler–ship on a scholarship of 200 pounds; but Rama refused it and took a job in the same Foreman College as a professor of mathematics on a monthly salary of Rs. 80/- within which he maintained his family and helped poor students too. He attended the Indian National Congress in 1893 and saw Dadha Bai.

J. V. Ram: Did he join the Congress and did he like politics?

Swamiji: The platform rhetoric of political megaphones did not attract him. He wanted freedom for India but a Vedantic freedom. He studied Vedanta under the Shankaracharya of Dwaraka. He was God–intoxicated and Nature–drunk; the whole creation danced to the rhythm of his ecstasy. The song of birds and the flute–voice of cool breezes ecstasied his soul. He considered all Nature as his body, rivers as his arteries, mountains as his bones and he spread his hands East and West.

He was rich in inner treasure. He built no home; but homed God in the temple–heart. He was conscious of the soul that moved life and limb and the God that moved the soul. “Strings move the pantomime, the player moves the strings and the soul moves the player, the Soul is I”.

J.V. Ram: It is said that he met Vivekananda once.

Swamiji: Yes; once, Swami Vivekananda was his guest. His Vedantic clarion

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awakened him. He presented a watch to that lion of Vedanta which he put back into the packet of Rama saying 'Let this remain in this pocket of mine.' His mission was at once revealed to him. He was not one to sell his soul for a handful of coins. Bread-winning professorship and minting passports for government jobs did not please him.

Yogi: Naturally... He was free like the wind.

Swamiji: Off he ran to the Himalayas, and steeped himself in the I-Consciousness. The Brahmapuri forest rang with his Vedantic outbursts. Suns and moons and stars and nature danced to the harmony of his inner music. Returning to Lahore, he held discourses on Vedanta to the displeasure of the proselytising college authorities. He had to leave his job and work in the Oriental College for Rs. 68/-. In 1899 he visited Amarnath and enjoyed the music of the waterfall. Coming back, he started ALIF, a Vedantic journal in Urdu, to pour out his thoughts and glimpses.

Yogi: What about his wife and children?

Swamiji: He threw his money into the river, called his wife Mother, compelled her to disown him as her husband and leave her children forlorn in the public market and fled away to the Himalayas. All space was his home and all lives his kith and all Nature his wealth.

Yogi: Was Swamiji with him then?

Swamiji: Yes, I left home to serve the Master. I brought rations from Kalakambiliwala Choultry for his food. Kirtisingh, the king of Tehri, was impressed by his Vedantic life. He taught his prince Vedanta easily.

Yogi: How? Teach us likewise, Swamiji.

Swamiji: "You are in this body, just as you live at home. Home is not you nor the body. You are the SOUL, **Atma**, the Divine; That breathes in you as life: lofty freedom's height is your abode..." This simple reflection awakened the Self-I in the prince. Kirtisingh, a student of Herbert Spencer, was soon converted into a Vedantin by Rama's contact. "I am not Swami, SO-AM-I. I am I. All things in Nature whisper we are I" said Rama.

Yogi: What made Rama go to Japan? Who paid his fare?

Swamiji: Listen, Rama never depended on any man.

There was once a wrong announcement of a Parliament of Religions in Japan. The Rajah sent Rama in a ship to address it. He was received by the Sikhs and Panjabis in Hongkong and Tokyo. Puransingh, a devotee, arranged for his lectures in the Indo-Japanese Club and Bhuddhist University. His lecture on *Success of life* was much appreciated. "If Tokyo is not having a Parliament of Religions, Rama will have one. The whole world is his country and to do good his religion" declared the bold Vedantin. "Work from good to better daily. Sacrifice yourself for others like a seed for the plant. Forget yourself in work. You can be free when ego-I shall cease to be. Be fearless, self-reliant, self-helpful. God is everywhere. He is neither Mr, nor Mrs, nor Miss—He is a Mystery." These words of Rama won him a place in the heart of the Japanese. He sailed to America with the Circus party run by Mr. Chatre.

Yogi: What made him go to America? How did he meet his expenses?

Swamiji: Adventure made him go forward. He never cared for money.

"Who are you, Sir?" ... "Your Self" ... "Your luggage?" "100 pounds, body" ... Why did you leave your home?" ... "To serve the universal home" ... "Why did you leave your family?" ... "To serve humanity" ... "How do you live?" ... "By loving all" ... Have you any friend in America?" ... "Yes, one. Yourself..."

This conversation pleased an American who became his friend and helper at once.

Yogi: Where did he live in the U. S.?

Swamiji: Rama lived in San Francisco, near Shasta Springs, as a guest of Albert Hillers. His lectures were food for inner health. His smiles were a tonic for the pining mind.

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A richly decked aristocratic lady mourned over the death of her son. Rama got her to adopt a Negro boy.

Yogi: What about his work in America ?

Swamiji: Shasta Springs attracted many visitors. Once the President of the U. S. came there and Rama in an appeal, requested him to provide India with technical assistance. Swinging in his hammock, Rama was freer and happier than the president. With his Gospel of Self-consciousness, he toured New York, Buffalo, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Philadelphia, California etc. "Follow your inner voice faithfully. Assert your Self-Majesty, Preserve Inner Balance. Be happy and cheerful. Find world unity in the unique self." This was the substance of his speeches. He visited England, France, Geneva, Rome and Egypt (He addressed the Egyptians in Persian) and returned to India after two and a half years of foreign travel. Crowds welcomed him. He threw into the sea all welcome addresses and presents and fled again to the Himalayan solitudes. He passed fearless by the lion of the forest as a lion of Vedanta. "Off with reading, writing, name fame and nonsense. Are these toys the end of life? I am one with the—unique One" exclaimed Rama.

Yogi: He spoke about India's freedom and gave a constructive programme too.

Swamiji: O, yes. He spoke about India's freedom and spiritual strength. He prophesied that India shall be free by soul force. He told the shadowing police "I feel that my country must be free, and India shall be free very soon." He gave a plan of Vedantic socialism, a collective life in soul-consciousness for India.

He took a vow of complete silence and grew a beard during his last days. "Death, take away this body: I have enough of bodies" he said one day, before plunging headlong into the rapid Himalayan torrent which carried him away ... 1906—on the Deepavali day his body was recovered and buried with due honour by the Raja of Tahri.

This Raja educated his sons in England and they held high posts in the Government. One was an engineer and the other a magistrate.

Rama's life and Vedantic socialism had a rapturous influence on the pilgrim.

25. AUM RAM

The Pilgrim was curious to know the fountain from which Ramathirtha and Vivekananda drew their Vedantic Knowledge. By God's Grace he was able to see many realised souls. The list was long and the occasions which brought him in contact with those saints are long stories. Experiences in the school, at home, in the world and the adversities of human life drove him to the feet of saints. The trials and tribulations of his juvenile career are themes for a Dickens to be woven into novels like Oliver Twist. Pass on, O, pass on fellow Pilgrims, and quickly traverse barren deserts to *yon oasis* where a green smile greets your weary life. There stands Aum Ram chanting *Aum* with every breath.

Blessed be that Mystic Sage *Aum Ram* whom people called perverted since he kept himself aloof. Ram gave the pilgrim a gracious look. "No rain; no grain! No Grace, no solace! Look within, for Truth Divine!" said he as he touched the Pilgrim's heart. His friend, an Avali, a fine Muslim Saint, called parrots and doves and they settled on his shoulders. He gave them fruits and fondled them. He taught parrots to speak out "Ram Rahim." To the pilgrim he said "Live like this Parrot carefree in the grove of God's Grace. Say Ram Rahim!" Aum Ram told him "Life is a mystic theme, a mumbling stream struggling towards Bliss supreme. Wail not when you fail, Hail God and sail on! He is the Light of hope and the shore of Peace. Aum Ram *was* an ocean of Sanskrit learning, a trumpet of Vedanta, a peerless exponent of Hindu scriptures and Puranas. But he expounded sacred works only to a group of aspirants. He spoke of Shankara and quoted extensively from the Gita, Upanishads and Brahma Sutras.

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The Veda is the fountain of Knowledge. It treasures the intuitions of perfect Sages. It speaks of what to do, what to say and what to know, and how to live in the Spirit. Sage Vyasa gave it a standard form and rendered the quintessence of the Veda into Vedanta. Vedanta is the crown of Vedic knowledge. The Gita and the Upanishads are the text books on Vedanta. Vyasa rendered their idea into a memorable work called 'Brahma Sutras' which is the cornerstone of Vedanta around which all teachers built their schools of philosophy. It is a book of Spiritual Science whose crowning conclusion is that Brahman or the Pure Spirit in the heart of beings, is the summum bonum of life which can be attained, by self-reflection and not by mental reasoning. Commentators differ with regard to the nature of Brahman and its attainment, its causality with the world and its rapport with the human soul. Madhva regards God, Soul and the World as separate entities and God as God and Soul as Soul. Ramanuja maintains that God is the Lord of Nature and Soul, and the Soul involved in Nature gradually evolves through surrender and devotion, towards life Divine, Divine approach, Divine Consciousness and Divine Being. He says "Jiva or the soul is the eternal servant of God". Shankara's absolute monism maintains God as Pure Self-Bliss realised by inner communion and self-reflection. The Self outlives the perishable body. It is an eternal witness. Be the Self and off with the non-Self which causes grief and confusion. Shankara gives all prominence to the Supreme Self, the only Reality that *IS*. The Universe he says, is a superimposition on the Supreme Self.

In four chapters containing 564 terse Sutras, the book tries to prove the uniqueness of Brahman, refuting all other schools of thought in favour of Vedantic monism, clarifies the practices leading to realisation, and concludes with elaborating the fruit of Self-realisation. The Pilgrim could not understand why there should be so many opposing schools of thought around the Gita and the Brahmasutras. He approached Pandits and they could not satisfy him.

The yogi meditated upon Shankara to explain to him the Science of the Soul which Vedanta was.

Fortunately for him Sri Satchidananda Narasimha Bharati, the Sringeri Shankaracharya came to Sivaganga with his paraphernalia and camped for a month in the local Theosophical society.

26. SHANKARACHARYA

The Pilgrim was attracted to Narasimha Bharati whose gaze often fell upon him as he offered flower garlands woven by himself during the Puja and as he sang his verses. The local savants took him one fair evening to the Acharya. The Pilgrim Yogi offered him five songs and His Holiness blessed him and hailed him as Kavi-Yogi Bharati. He attended all the enlightening discourses given by His Holiness publicly and privately and took notes. One day devotees requested the great Teacher to speak about the Life and teachings of Shankara. He did so in his simple Tamil.

Shankara is the universal brain of India, the richest fruit of Her spiritual evolution. He was born at Kaladi in A.D. 788 and lost his father while yet a child. His mother tended him fondly and gave him a sound Vedic education. The divine boy mastered Sanskrit quickly by intuition and discovered the mission of his life. The ways of the world never pleased him. He disentangled himself from the crocodile of mundaneness and went in search of a realised Master. He received formal initiation of Self Knowledge from Govinda Pada, the disciple of Gaudapada, who was the author of Mandukya Karika. Shankara prepared himself for a universal mission at Benares. He wrote then illuminating commentaries on the three fundamental works of Vedanta—the Gita, Upanishads and the Brahma sutras thus laying the scriptural foundation of his universal mission. He condemned the false doctrines of atheistic heterodoxy and ritualistic orthodoxy. He rose to the heights of the sublime

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Upanishads and poured out the nectar of Advaita with the songful refrain of Brahma Tat Twam Asi Bhavayatmani—Know, God is real; Thou art That”. He summarised all his teachings in the Viveka Chudamani. He dedicated thrilling songs to the Divine Supreme worshipped in different names and forms. His logical skill was indomitable and the Truth he expressed was irrefutable. He took his stand on the *Eakam—Sat*—Truth is One (the dictum of the Vedas) and won a place among the Immortals. He awakened humanity to the realisation of the non-dual Self or the Atman which is Brahman

He set out on a conquering pilgrimage challenging and defying the impostors of the day who made India a divided house of quarrelling creeds. He won by his impeccable logic the diehard ceremonialist Mandana Misra and his wife Bharati. Both became his staunch followers. Mandana assumed orders under the name Sureswaracharya. Shankara made Sureswar the *Pontifex Maximus* of the Sharada Pitam, Sringeri which is the dynamic centre of Advaita for India. Shankara travelled widely in India from Cape to Kailas raising the standard of Tat Twam Asi (Thou Art That) against storms and whirlwinds of opposing forces. He dedicated his sweet hymns and canticles to all the important Deities in the pilgrim centres of India which he visited on foot. Siva, Vishnu, Kumara, Shakti, Surya, Ganesa and many such Hindu deities find their place in his popular hymns. He made a synthesis of the existing schools of thought in the vast ocean of Advaita. Human life was weltering in the saturnalia of dreadful orgies and creedish superstitions. Shankara removed the thick veil of gloom overshadowing the immortal Self—Truth and gave a death blow to effete forms of ceremonies. He removed the dross of ages and brought out the shining Truth of Self—God from the hidden heart of the Vedas. He rekindled Self—Knowledge which is India’s glory and the bedrock of her spiritual culture and civilisation. After amply fulfilling his mission, he disappeared in the snowy heights of Kedarnath. He outlives his mortality as The immortal voice of Advaita. He is eternal like the Self in all.

In Badrinath, Puri, Dwaraka and Sringeri, in Kanchipuram and in many other places monasteries and institutions flourish and indeed all over the world, in every faithful home Shankara’s Gnostic Light shines.

27. SRINGERI JAGADGURU

Sivaswami, the son of Gunakkal Rama Rao (the court Pandit of Sri Krishna Raja of Mysore) was a gifted boy. He was a born poet and Yogi and he mastered the Sanskrit language and the Vedic lore before he was eight years old. Sri. Narasimha Swami, the pontiff of Sringeri chose him as his successor and initiated him in the traditions of the great Sharada Pitam. The Master made the novice a Light of Vedanta philosophy. He took him along with him during his spiritual tour of twelve years all over India. He then installed the youthful Swami of twenty years on the throne of Sringeri just before he passed away. Sri Satchidananda Siva Abhinava Narasimha Bharati—that was the long monastic name of Sivaswami. People called him Jagadguru (World Teacher) which he really was. He was a luminous personality, simple, loving, dignified, erudite, generous, magnanimous, a master of Vedanta, astrology, nadisastra and thought reading. He was easy to approach and sweet to talk to. He did hard penance for six years and then travelled thrice round India enlightening millions of disciples lifting their souls above life’s turmoils. Many kings and zamindars adored him and offered him lands and gold and many scholars followed him as disciples. Some of his followers became erudite monks and torch bearers of Vedanta. One Venkataramana, became Bharati Krishna Tirtha, and then Puri Shankaracharya. This Saint saved the Pilgrim from embracing Christianity. K. Ramachandra Iyer became later on Ramananda Saraswati; Ardanari became Vallimalai Swami of Tiruppugal fame. Sri T.K. Balasubrahmanya Ayyar, the savant of Srirangam, became his fervent apostle. Under His inspiration Mr. Aiyar started the Vani Vilas Press, brought out a new edition of all the works of Shankara, organised a Shankara gurukulam to train Vedantic missionaries and

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edited a journal called Hindu Message to propagate Hinduism. The Jagadguru visited Iyanpalayam and opened the beautiful temple for Skanda on the banks of the Kauvery and also a school for Vedic students. He renovated Kaladi, the birth place of Adi Shankara and raised a monument where his mother Aryamba was cremated on the bank of the Purna river. Not only Hindus; Muslims and Christians too flocked around him to receive his wisdom—nectar. He had such a universal heart that he murmured even in sleep “Sarvoham! I am Siva”.

The Pilgrim met this great Saint twice and received his blessings. The Jagadguru called him Kavi Yogi and that title has become world known by His grace. The Jagadguru spent his last days in solitude and meditation. He trained a precocious young boy Narasimhan by name for his place and brought to light the great Yogi Chandrasekhara Bharati. Now let us approach the Jagadguru.

28. THE JEWEL OF KNOWLEDGE

It was a fair evening; the sun was showering its golden rays upon the calm atmosphere. Sri Kanta Sastry, the Manager, took the pilgrim upstairs where the Acharya was sitting before a group of Pandits repeating Sanskrit slokas from his inexhaustible memory. He blessed the pilgrim with his benevolent smile and tenderly enquired about his sadhana. The pilgrim sang a song in reply.

“I live in God to do His Will; I seek in Saints His cosmic thrill. To serve Saints and sing His glory—this is my life history.”

Acharya: Be a saintly singer of God, Kavi Yogi. You must learn Sanskrit and Shankara’s works.

Pilgrim: Bhagavan, hearing from a Master is better than learning from books. Purnananda and Jnana Siddha have taught me Yoga and inspired in me a fervour to seek saints and assimilate their realisations. I humbly request Bhagavan to teach me the essence of Vedanta in simple words. I want to know its practical side, its sadhana.

The Acharya, eyes half-closed, directed his gracious gaze upon the Pilgrim and sat silent straight and motionless for five minutes. The Pilgrim felt a vibration.

Acharya: This is Vedanta; you have felt Brahmakari; now get by heart these ten stanzas from Viveka Chudamani. You must repeat them tomorrow.

Here is the substance of the ten verses :

“Thou art That Brahman, meditate, meditate! It transcends caste, creed, lineage, birth and pedigree, name, form, space, time and causality. It is beyond thought speech and sense organs. It is Pure consciousness awake in the Yogin’s heart. It is the substratum of the changing phenomenal world, the cause of creation, preservation and dissolution. It is deathless, immortal, ever free. There is nothing beyond it. It is everything. It is One absolute, Truth—Knowledge—Bliss. Meditate upon that—Your Reality.”

Next day the great Acharya gave the Pilgrim a copy of Vivekachudamani (the Jewel of Knowledge) as a guidance to life. This, along with the Gita formed the scripture of Yoga Vedanta for him. That evening the Jagadguru gave a thrilling speech on Vedanta and its Sadhana which impressed the young pilgrim deeply. Here is its substance:

Veda is a book of Truth; Vedanta finds that Truth as the Self. The Self or Atman is our reality; body and mind are outer and inner coverings of our being. The coat is not the man. Man wears robes; they are not the man. Even so home and surroundings are not the Self. It lives in them. The Divine Self is free from all human limitations and mental delusions. The world is non-self. Attachment to it is misery. But the world is a field for our perfection and realisation. Know first the eternal Self and treat the non-self as ephemeral. Be indifferent to the pains and pleasures of here and there. Cultivate inner equipoise. Control the senses, be detached from the object of senses, endure pleasure

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and pain, develop faith and sincerity, be equal-minded and aspire deeply for realisation. Self reflection and discrimination are the two fundamental methods of knowing the Self and leaving non-self behind. Attachment to non-self is the cause of sorrow and turmoil. For it is moved by the Nature of three modes—calm, passionate and torpid. Bliss is life in union with the Self–Eternal. Life out of tune with the central Self leads to all confusions. Soaked milk shows butter by churning. The heart manifests the Brahman by constant reflection. The Self is Brahman; it is Kutasta (Silent witness) and Tatasta (imagined cause of the world play) and Swarupa (Self–Truth). The Self is the Knower, Known and Knowledge; It is the Ever Pure Truth whose cosmic energy or Shakti plays as the universe. Creation, preservation, destruction, involution and evolution are the plays of cosmic Energy. Self–Brahman is Sat, Truth. Its conscious Force is Chit; the world is a play of its creative Ananda, ever changing.

The Pilgrim assimilated a treasure of Knowledge at the feet of Narasimha Bharati which was very useful for him to understand Vedantic Saints like Ramana Maharshi later on. He studied with sincere interest the Vivekachudamani and other works of Shankara of course with the help of the Vedantic scholar Aum Ram.

Dear Companions, this happened earlier in his life. It is after this that he was able to understand the Vedic scriptures.

29. THE FIRE COOLS

Vedanta and the company of Saints gave him joy and peace. He took refuge in the Self–Truth. But how to treat the non-self world? When the windows of the mind were opened, the world of matter and energy dominated his view. There was the home, the country, the nation. India was in bondage. Indians were not free to act and speak. Heroes like Sivaji and saints like Ramadas, wrought for national freedom. Mazzini and Garibaldi fought for the liberty of Italy. Good old Maravas and Naicks gave him thrilling accounts of local heroes like Vadugu Velayi, Marudus, Katta Bommu and Kumaraswami. They were the pioneers of Free India. They started a no–tax campaign. They challenged the British in the open battlefield and their adventures have been woven into romantic stories by the Pilgrim. Their sacrifice at the altar of Mother India whipped up the conscience of the nation.

The Pilgrim was a staunch nationalist, a follower of Tilak and Sri Aurobindo, who depreciated the begging policy of the moderates. The period between 1907 and 1912 made an eventful history with Tilak and Savarkar in Bombay, Lalaji in Punjab, Aurobindo and B. C. Paul in Bengal, Chidambaram Pillai and V. V. S. Ayyar in Madras. The Pilgrim took his political initiation from three patriots :-(1) V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, (2) Poet Subramania Bharati (3) Justice Mani Iyer. Of course his eldest brother J.V. Ram was encouraging him to serve the country. He often met Mr. Pillai at Madurai in the mansion of Mani Iyer. He floated then a Swadeshi Navigation and the young Patriot collected rice from house to house singing his songs and offered the proceeds to Chidambaram Pillai. Poet Bharati encouraged his songs. J.V. Ram regularly read the Bandemataram of Sri Aurobindo and it nourished the patriotic fervour of his young brother, the Pilgrim.

India is our Home
We fight for its freedom.
We offer our blood
For the Country's good!

He wrote these lines with his own blood and sent them to V. V. S Ayyar who had just returned to Pondicherry. He read with immense interest Savarkar's Indian war of Independence and indeed all the Revolutionary pamphlets which came to J. V. Ram. He opposed the Minto–Morley reforms and the diarchy proposed by the British who were

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keen upon a divide-and-rule policy. He learnt shooting and was becoming a firebrand when Justice Mani Iyer advised him to be cool and attend to his studies. Those were days of the Tirunelveli riots which ended in the murder of Collector Ash. Many patriots took refuge at Pondicherry. The Pilgrim too wanted to live with those patriots when Justice Mani Iyer again advised him to cultivate his knowledge and develop his poetic genius calmly and then come out when God brings him an opportunity.

He was just reading the “Character of Happy life” by Sir H. Wotton. “This is the ideal for you; follow it” said Mr. Ayyar explaining these lines impressively:

“Happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another’s will
Whose armour is his honest thought
And simple *Truth* his highest skill
Whose passions not his masters are
Lord of himself though not of lands
And having nothing yet hath all”

Bharati and V. V. S. Aiyar were in Pondicherry then and the Yogi went to see them and took that opportunity to see Sri Aurobindo.

Swami Keval Ram (Amarendranath Chatterjee) too was then with him to see the Integral Yogi. He adored Sri Aurobindo as his Master. “Mere ascetic life will not give you joy and release. Be a living Gita. Find your part in the universal play of God’s will, play it and leave the result to God”. These words of the calm serene Master enthroned in dynamic peace impressed the Pilgrim. He joined a group of Sadhus and set out on a pilgrimage to North India visiting holy Saints on the way. He went to Puri, Dhakshineswar and meditated in the room sanctified by Ramakrishna. He learnt the secrets of Tantra from Kalicharan, a great Tantra Yogi who had seen Bhairavi Brahmini who initiated Ramakrishna in the esoterics of Tantra. He had the darshan of Swami Brahmanand and Mother Sarada Devi who had just returned from a pilgrimage to Rameswaram. The Pilgrim met there a Punjabi Saint who called himself Premji. With him he went to Lucknow.

30. LUCKNOW CONGRESS

All India Congress session was held in Lucknow (26-12-1916). It offered a very good opportunity for him to see Tilak, Malavya and other leaders. J. V. Ram also attended the session. But the Pilgrim did not depend upon anyone for any favour. Mr. Premji was a great friend of Mr. Kaparde, for both loved Sai Baba. Through Kaparde, he saw Tilak and the Pilgrim saluted Tilak, repeating a verse from the Gita. Tilak was a large-hearted leader, a great scholar, a man of sympathy and simplicity. He liked the Pilgrim; the Pilgrim endeared himself to him by sincere services. Tilak was short in stature but tall in brain. He quoted the Gita very often and his politics was a Gita. He had just returned from his exile in Mandalay. He came with his Gita-Rahasya. He was the dominant figure in the Lucknow session though the President happened to be Hon. Ambika Charan Muzumdar. After the Surat split the Nationalists and the Moderates united in the Lucknow Congress. It was a Congress of unity and serenity. Gokhale and Mehta passed away in 1915 and with them the Moderate Convention too waned away. Tilak started the Home Rule League. Dr. Annie Besant jumped from religion to politics and joined with Tilak to popularise the cry of ‘Home Rule’. The Lucknow Congress achieved the Hindu-Muslim unity too. Tilak, Kaparde, Dr. Besant, Aurandale, Wadia, Surendernath Benerji, Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, Jinna, Mazur-ul-Haq, Malavya, Polak and Gandhiji were there on the dais. Gandhiji had just returned from Durban with laurels for his Passive Resistance. He was just observing the proceedings and moving about doing social service. He had a group of Gujarati volunteers.

The Pilgrim learnt to be ardent like Tilak and active like Gandhi. In the Subject’s

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Committee hall a group of leaders were talking about the ways and means of liberating India and they were not satisfied with the self-government resolution. Tilak was there. The Pilgrim was listening to him. Premji was by his side. The Pilgrim spoke out that such noise cannot bring freedom. Inner freedom is necessary for national liberty. Leaders must seek Saints for their guidance. Tilak turned back smiling and demanded "Where is such a saint?" Premji replied "at Shirdhi" Kaparde joined him saying "Yes, Sai Ram, a powerful Saint".

Tilak had already seen Sai Baba. He proposed to see him again and the Pilgrim was all enthusiasm to go to Shirdhi. The Pilgrim followed Tilak and reached Kopergaum from where they went to Shirdhi. After taking bath, both of them went to see Baba. What a glorious day!... O God, You have led me to the fountain of peace and Bliss! ...

31. SAI RAM

My thoughts fail before Thy Splendour!
My brush blushes before Thy Wonder
My heart was lit by Cosmic flame
As I saw Thy face, O Sai Ram!
Thy gentle touch transformed me;
Thy gracious smile it made me free.
A forlorn pilgrim, I found indeed
A father, mother and friend in need.
O, Sky-Wide Witness watching all,
Living in all, loving every soul,
Nature is Thy thrilling form
Psychic Love Thy charming name.
Thy breath is Cosmic Consciousness,
Thy Presence is a thrill of Bliss!...

Saints are the guarantee of a nation's vitality; they are the saviours of humanity.

They are our safeguards in the tiresome pilgrimage of life. The Sun lights the world from above and the Saint enlightens the world from below. Life in the world is a gloomy wilderness of pain and pleasure.

It is a cockpit of likes and dislikes, loves and hatreds.

In a world of futile glamour, the simple Saint of selfless love and grace, radiates peace and bliss. He scatters smiles of wisdom on the path of human evolution.

A touch of grace from his compassionate heart shall elevate man to his spiritual dignity. This is the service of the real Saint and such was Sai Ram, the Light of Shirdi.

The Pilgrim soul had the unique opportunity of meeting Sai Ram and receiving his blessings. Fortunately Lokamanya Tilak and Kaparde and Dixit, three well known national leaders were there on the first day and the devotee Mahalaspthy gave a thrilling account of the mystic life of Sai Ram. "Keep silent, in perfect surrender; God's will shall be done. He is the Supreme". This was his message to the Pilgrim Soul. "Go and take rest. Freedom shall come to India". This was his message to Tilak. "Do you think I am this flesh and bone? They call me Sai! I have no name, no form. I am God-Anal Haq". This was his constant saying. He pointed to the Space above and said "All the sky-bound space is my mandir. Its sanctum is the heart".

Kabir says: "Baba Yogi remains always alone. He never goes on any pilgrimage. He observes no austerity, no festivity. Mind is his seat, his temple, his mazjid. He prays silently in the mind and rests firmly in introspective silence".

I adore in the heart by silent meditation, the unique one.

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He is the one in all, the “All-in-All.”

But Sai allowed devotees to worship him and forms of God. There was a temple nearby where Mahalaspthy, a pure devotee, worshipped Kandoba, a form of Siva and Baba encouraged him. He lived in a Mazjid but allowed there the reading of the deeds of Rama and Krishna and the singing of the songs of Hindu poets.

The coordination of religions and cultures—that is Sai Ram. Tilak remarked “He is a Saint for all who speaks not from books but from the soul”.

That is Sai Baba the leading Saint of Modern India. His story has been woven into a big book of 53 chapters, 1000 pages in highly florid and resonant Marathi by Anna Saheb Dabolkar. This book is daily studied there. There are Bhakta Lilamrutam, Santa Katamrutam, Sai Bhajana Mala and so many interesting anecdotes and chronicles of reminiscences recorded by prominent devotees. But Baba used to say, “None of these know or reveal Baba’s mystery”. He paid grateful tributes to one name—Venkusa claimed to be his Guide.

VENKUSA

Venkusa is really Venkatesa, the name given to Gopal Rao Deshpande, a millionaire of Selu, a governor for Jintur Pargana. He was a fervent devotee of Tirupati Venkatesa whom he worshipped in his castle every day. He was pious, liberal, learned and compassionate. A Divine oracle proclaimed that Kabir will come to him as a boy. One day a fakir’s widow came with a charming boy. “Ah, Come, my Kabir” exclaimed Gopal as he saw the boy. He anxiously enquired the widow about his birth and credentials. “His parents were Brahmins” declared the lady. “They lived in Patri, Hyderabad. They handed over the child to my husband who was a sufi Saint and a singer of Kabir’s songs. We brought him up on Kabir’s lines. My husband, breathing his last, commanded me to offer the boy to you, Sir. He is Allah’s child, take care of him”. Gopal Rao gladly accepted the boy and brought him up in a holy atmosphere of sacred hymns and devotional concerts. Gopal was rich but had no money taint. He had a family; but regarded woman as Mother Shakti. He was a breathing Gita and living Dasbodh. Sai’s life was bathed in his spiritual exuberance. Sai was pure, spotless, fervent and sincere. He imbibed Sufi culture from the fakir and Hindu culture from Gopal. With the fakir he was steeped in the love—ecstasy of Al-Hillaj, Hafiz, Attar and Rumi. His imagination went humming from flower to flower until it was absorbed in the honeyed sweetness of divine love which removed mental veils of names, forms and creeds and united him with God, soul to soul. Gopal’s life and hymns awakened divine consciousness. Dasa Bodham, Jnaneswari, songs of Tukaram and Sanskrit hymns transformed his introspective genius into a peaceful delight of inner communion. All religious thoughts streamed into his widening consciousness living in tune with the Infinite.

Gopal poured into his young Kabir all his spiritual power and left the body saying “Now go westward and settle there”. Chandu Bhai Patel of Dhupkeda went to Shirdi to conduct a marriage ceremony and Sai went with him and found the village calm and peaceful for spiritual life. This happened in the year 1872 and since then until his passing away in 1919, for 46 years, Sai stuck to Shirdi. A powerful spiritual centre developed around his aura which attracted seekers from all corners of the country, But his path was not smooth.

GOD—MAD FAKIR

The forlorn fakir went about the village muttering “Hari Aum, Allah Malik! Ram Rahim Anal Haq”. None evinced regard for him. He entered Kandoba’s temple one winter. The poor pious goldsmith who conducted worship there drove him out saying “A Muslim cannot step into a Hindu temple.” The same man, Mahalaspthy adored him as God later on.

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Mischievous boys pelted him with stones and abuses. He was taken for a crazy fakir sitting alone under yon gud neem (sweet margosa) or in that dilapidated mosque speaking to himself. He wore rags, lived upon alms, observed silence, bore insults and sometimes cured diseases by a herb or by a touch. Like Ramana and Seshadri, he lived in a spiritual exaltation beyond cosmic riddles. He had no problems to solve. He was not caught in the framework of books and labelled creeds. Fixed in the supersonic region of inner silence, he was a passive witness to the active world. He was like one who satisfied his hunger with ripe fruits in the Garden of Divine Grace and never counted them nor discussed their vitamin value. A devotee demanded Kabirdas "Sir how did you get this Bliss? What is the process of getting that?" And Kabir's laconic reply was: "No more thought of process. Who thinks of the procession when the bride and the bridegroom enjoy united bliss?"

Like St. Tayumanavar, he would not pluck a flower for worship for there the Divine Beloved smiled.

Admirers knocked at the door of Jalaludin Rumi to honour him. "No more Rumi; I is dead; He alone lives. Allah breathes as myself" declared the great mystic poet. Guru Nanak pointed to the Moulvi at Mecca the presence of God's sanctum (Kaba) in all directions, Buddha stood silent before a restive audience holding an apple and an orange. When pressed for a message he said: "This is love and this apple is faith. Cultivate both and serve humanity". Such was Sai. Even this name was given by people. He was molested, calumniated and derided. Yet he kept quiet without the least qualm or quail in perfect self-equipose.

He used to burn oil-lamps in the mosque. One day the oil-merchant refused to pour oil into his can. Sai Ram had the faith to burn lamps with water and this miracle roused the village to high reverence. That was a red letter day in his life. The pagan fakir became a regal saint. The madman was hailed as Godman. Hindus worshipped him with sandal paste flowers and incense. Muslims who honoured him as an Aвали did not like this. Sai said "Jaisa desh, Vaisa Vesh. Allow tradition and belief and observe the heart that loves God in all. "Kam me Ram dekho".

Moulana Javar Ali one day demanded "Baba, do you know Al Koran and the Shariat?". Baba said "I have studied no book except inner look by which knowledge comes from the Self". The good Moulvi kept Sai Ram with him in his home at Ratha for two months and initiated him in the cult of Bismilla. Sai served him humbly, cutting wood, carrying water, cooking food and running errands and this showed how a disciple must obey a master. The Moulvi liked Sai, loved him and at last lived at his feet at Shirdi.

Mahalaspathy adored Sai Ram as God. Erudite scholars and popular leaders like Dixit, Kaporde, Nana Chandaolkar, Ganapati Rao, Patil, Bayaji Bai (who brought food to Sai), Das Ganu Maharaj, Anna Saheb, Lele Sastri, Sri Santaram, Balwant, Mrs. Tara Bai, Sadasiva Tarkhad Renge, Dhumal, Shama, Sathe, Narke, Bhave, Abdul and many other great devotees evidenced the divine powers of Baba. His heart of compassion was always looking after the safety and welfare of his lovers. A pocket of udhi from Baba saved the life of devotees in peril. By a mere thought he averted mishaps and dangers. One day he was saying "my Nana has met a dangerous accident. But I will not allow him die". Just at the moment Nana and his friend Sastri were coming in a tonga. The horse reared and rudely overturned the tonga. Nana and Sastri fell down, but felt a hand lifting them up safely. "My devotee shall not perish" *Na me Bhakta Pranasyati*—says the Gita and Sai Ram proved it indeed. He had a store of inner knowledge which surprised scholars when he explained lines from scriptures.

Two great souls hailed the glory of Baba before the world—Kasinath Upasini Baba and B. V. Narasimhaswami.

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THE CHARM OF SAI

Kasinath Pandit married thrice, lost all hopes and props in life, passed through the dark inferno of vital tragedy culminating in a desperate attempt at suicide when he heard the voice of Sainath: "I am here; no despair". He took refuge at the feet of Sainath who commanded him to a silence of four patient years. Local people gave him a lot of trouble. When the Pilgrim met him in the Kandoba temple, he was stark naked seated in filth, muttering "Sad Guru Sai nath". Yes, Sainath roughly scrapped all past karmas and purified him and made him Upasani Baba. He settled at Sakuri which has now developed into the wide Upasani Kanyakumari Samastan ably managed by Godavari Ma.

Dwarakamayi was Sai Baba's Darbar Hall which attracted the elite of Maharashtra. Mr. Dixit used to say "I feel like dust before him. Educated men and women assemble here and feel the magnetic charm of Sai. We ignore wealth, position and future prospects and take pleasure in silent communion before his Presence." Dixit was the most sincere devotee of Baba. He was a moderate and Kaparde an extremist. But both of them met amicably at the feet of Baba. Baba had a crimson light on his face. He had piercing eyes, a loving smile, calm outlook, deep insight, grand humility, and a helping hand that was ready to protect devotees. He showed instant response to fervent prayers wherever the devotee might be. He was dressed like a sultan; devotees offered silver palanquins, a silver mace and a crown which he refused to wear. He had a begging bowl and cried before one or two houses "Roti lav, dhal lav!". He ate very little and gave the rest to devotees. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jains, Buddhists and Zoroastrians gathered before him; to all he declared lifting his right hand: "All are one in God" All felt a mystic vibration before him and forgot differences born of mental imaginations. He chose his instruments very carefully and never tolerated black-sheep in the fold. He hated scandals. He read the mind and listened to the heart while the tongue spoke. He got plenty and gave plenty to the poor. Only 16 Rupees were left in his pocket when he left the body crying "Alla Malik Hare Ram!". He died turning South as if he expected someone from that direction to carry on his work.

The yogi loved Sai Ram and remained at His feet for three months receiving the current of Divine touch. He knew Jnana Siddha, and was pleased to know that he blessed the yogi. "Your vessel is full now. You can pour it out to the needy. It shall be filled again. You will hence see four Silent Dynamos. By long Silence you will become a Bright Light."

These were his message to the yogi. The yogi, with moving emotion made a song-offering and took leave.

Lead us, O Lord Supreme
To serve Thee in good faith,
To glorify Thy name
To love and live Thy Truth.

Our hopes abide in Thee
Like life in breathing air.
Let Thy grace make us free
To follow Thee sans fear.

Kindle Thy light and hope
In our calm communion.
Let the New Dawn rise up
From inner Peace and Union.

We hold Thy helping Hand
With Thee we walk or stand.
Lead us, O cosmic Flame...
Hail luminous Aum, SAI RAM

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“Go to School” said Sai blessing him. Premji travelled with the Yogi up to Dhond and then departed. The Yogi returned to Sivaganga. Mr. S. M. Narayanaswami, the headmaster of the Rajah’s High School requested him to act as a teacher.

The Yogi liked the post; the students liked him. He thought he could do useful work as a teacher and he had plenty of time to read a whole library of chosen books which made him a successful thinker and writer. He once saw Mr. Michael who was the Principal of the Pusumalai Teacher’s Training Institute. He got first place in the admission list. “Work and Live. Live to Love God and Serve men. Don’t waste time in wandering for food and creature comforts. Earn them by honest work and do it as a Karma–Bhakti Yoga” ... Thus spoke his conscience and hence the Pilgrim is seen at Pasumalai. Satyarka imbibes Christian ideals at Pasumalai ! ... Now the Second Part of his journey begins, a grand preparation to fulfil the mission of life!...

Note: “Pilgrim Soul”, “Yogi”, “Satyarka”, “Paul Satyarka”, “S”, “Seeker Pilgrim”, “Kavi Yogi” are the various names given in this book to denote himself, by the Author, Kavi Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati. Incidentally, it may be observed by intelligent readers that these are different stages of evolution of human to Divinity, in the pilgrimage from mortal mixture of body and mind to immortal knowledge, from objective world to subjective perception. This is given here to avoid confusion to the readers.

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PART-II

PREPARATION FOR HIGHER LIFE

32. THE FLAMING CROSS

A cross, a Bible and name of Jesus Christ, ah, what wonderful services these have done to humanity! Blessed are the missionaries that have sacrificed themselves to serve mankind with the flaming Cross of Corpus Christi. The Bible is a Book of books. It was possible to print it in 1611 and since then it has been translated into 400 languages. Good Friday when Jesus was crucified on Mount Calvary, the wound on his breast and His agony have become a unique symbol of Sacrifice which the whole world adores and admires. The Ascension, Pentecost and Easter days are celebrated all over the world. The blood of the holy Grail runs into the veins of millions and the heart of Christ throbs in the lovers of humanity. Jesus suffered the agony of the crucifixion to create one living humanity animated by one Holy Ghost, and living as children of one Father in Heaven. Thousands of Missionaries preach, teach, conduct schools, hospitals, orphanages, nunneries, seminaries, and many such useful institutions with that incomparable symbol of service and sacrifice—the Cross. If humanity keeps the Bible in the heart and lives it in life, hears the Sermon of conscience in the Soul and immolates ego personality on the Cross of Love, then Kingdom of Heaven shall descend and heavenise earth—life.

Work is worship; service is practical Religion. Knowledge is brain, love is heart, and work the nerve and muscle of existence. God is the Master of Cosmic Life. Service must be offered to fulfil His will in humanity, always conscious of His witnessing Presence everywhere. The individual is linked with the Universe of Beings. Names and forms are garments of One Spirit that is the life in all. Work widens the soul into All-Soul. It is a powerful means of collective living. Sacrifice is the dynamism of work—sacrifice like rain clouds that cherish the earth, sacrifice of the flowing stream, smiling flower, fruitful tree, burning lamp or a loving mother. The flaming cross has inspired a sacrificing Spirit in those dedicated souls called Missionaries. The Pilgrim wanted to be one such missionary when he saw the American Church Organisation at Madurai and Pasumalai.

Pasumalai offered a turning point in his life. There he lived a Christian Life, doing Christu—Sadhana, assuming the name Paul Satyarka. He attended the Church, sang Psalms took part in Prayer classes, learnt the Bible in the seminary and saw how Christianity was propagated by an organised evangelism. On the back ground of his experience with the Saints of India, the Christian missionary—spirit shone as a light of hope in darkness.

The class routine was very easily gone through. Mr. Millar, Lorbeer, Michael, Fen. Banning and Lausen were all models of kindness, helpfulness and sympathy. The principles of teaching, methods of teaching, organisation and discipline, kindergarten, notes of lessons etc. were all copied in a month. Many standard works on pedagogy especially written by Rousseau (Emile), Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori, Wren, Mrs. Gordon etc. were studied and notes taken. Model lessons were successfully given. The pilgrim teacher learnt some arts like painting, globe-making and carpentry as a hobby. He played football and badminton and ran a scout troop to guard the village from thieves. He was the secretary of the Lyceum and he gave weekly talks on educational and cultural subjects. He led a simple life of natural diet, which cost him Rs. 10/- a month. Above all he developed a missionary spirit and studied the Bible and moved closely with great men who influenced his future. He closely studied the Christian Organisation.

Christ—Conscious life: This was the subject of Rev. Stanley Jones that thrilled the heart of the Pilgrim. Rev. Jones was a fervent soul, a finished orator with a voice and style that at once melted the heart of the hearer. He delivered ten lectures which made the Pilgrim Christ—conscious. He sang “In Thee, O Lord, I put my Trust; let me not be put to confusion:

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Be Thou my strong rock and home of defence that Thou mayest save me. Draw me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for Thou art my strength.” He composed many hymns and solos and wrote in poems the Life of Jesus in Tamil and English. He stood first in the Bible examination. All these things resulted in an attempt to convert him and send him to Serampur for B.D. course. He also studied for the M. A. Degree course of the Chicago University and wrote a theme on the **Bible in Shakespeare**. A bright future was waiting for him.

33. SADHU SUNDARASINGH

Sadhu Sundara Singh, hailed as the second Christ, influenced the Pilgrim further. The Pilgrim could talk with him in Hindi and so they came closer together in the proposal of establishing a Unitary Church at Lahore.

The Sadhu was born on September 3, 1889 as the eldest son of Sher Singh, a wealthy Sardar and landowner of Ramdur in Patiala. He belonged to a family of brave sikhs who held high ranks in the British army. His tender mother often told him that he must one day become a Sadhu. Sunder loved Krishna and read the Gita. He sought the inner peace which he knew as the greatest treasure. He attended the American School where the Holy Bible was taught. Sunder had a deep inbred faith in the Sikh religion and the Grandha Saheb and the Gita. Hence he first hated the Bible and even burnt it. His father prevented him from further hatred saying that the Bible was a great work and that the missionaries were doing very good social and cultural service to humanity. The hunger for peace was eating him. No religion gave him inner satisfaction. At last he took the Bible and one early morning, he read it and meditated over its teaching “Attain ye the Kingdom of Heaven and every thing shall be added unto you”. This made him read the whole Book. He developed a tender heart.

He was self-immersed when he saw the bright Christ face dispelling the cloud in his heart. With brimming joy and beaming peace, he followed Christ to the bitterest opposition of his father and relatives. A storm of communal fury raged around the calm of his heart which took utter refuge in the Father-in-Heaven. He was cast out and disowned and treated with contempt by his clan and was at last poisoned. The Divine Grace saved him from so many persecution, till at last he was baptised by Rev. Redman of the Anglican Church, Simla in September 1905. He took the Cross and walked through the thorny way of suffering and sacrifice in the name of the thorn-crowned Jesus. After four years of evangelistic work he joined St. John Divinity College at Lahore, passed the necessary examinations and prepared himself for the missionary work in full vigour.

This was in 1910, Mr. Stokes, a wealthy American missionary encouraged him. Sundar in saffron robes, got the licence to preach as a deacon, by the Diocesan Mission Council. But he was not bound to any particular church. His heart was with humanity; he preached everywhere and to all and sundry, the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He bore cruel prosecution and poisonous calumnies. He dared heat and cold, storm and violence to fulfil the mission of his life, amidst most unfavourable circumstances in North India. In 1911, he fasted like Jesus, for forty days and was even declared dead by a doctor. He recovered by the effect of his penance and dared into Tibet with the cross.

Tibet was a land of the Lamas who were orthodox Buddhists rolling the Mantra “Om Mani Padme hum” in their mystic wheel. They will not tolerate any intruder. The Sadhu spent here fearful days of torture. He was tied to stocks in a crippled position and leeches were thrown upon his naked body and they sucked his lifeblood. He was once sewn up in a wet yak-skin and thrown into a dreadful charnel well stinking with putrefied human flesh and bones. The well was closed and locked. The reader can imagine the torturous suffering of the Sadhu panting for his very breath. He remained there praying “

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Lord, let Thy will be done !”. Three dreadful nights passed in this killing hell. “Have you forsaken me, Lord ” cried the dying Sadhu at the dead of night, when a rattle was heard; the covering opened, a rope was let loose, which the gasping soul grasped as a mysterious hand dragged him up gently to the fresh air above. The Sadhu looked around to thank his deliverer... but found that it was the Impersonal One who rescued him so mercifully from the hellish well of dead bodies. The Lama coming to know of this, chased him out of the city. Weak, hungry, lonely, friendless, he trudged his way in the snowy wilderness as a martyr of faith. His sufferings convinced a few who became his followers. The Sadhu visited Mt. Kailas in 1912 and there met the great holy Kailas Maharishi, who gave him force to work out a Unitary Mission. The inter-divisions in the name of religion and churches must be cemented and humanity must be united as one brotherhood under one fatherhood. He also started a Sanyasi mission. He was welcomed in Madurai by Rev. Zumbro, of the American College. The Yogi had a long conversation with the Sadhu. He also went with him to attend big Christian Conferences. He adored the Sadhu who sang “Sacrifice brings a new Light into a Life that flows from love’s height.” Service is the manifestation of love and that he saw in missionaries like Zumbro, Millar, Jones and Popley. He was enamoured of the Sadhu and his universal mission ... The Sadhu too induced him to get baptised in the American Church. He was ready and great promises were made to him. But God flashed a new Light into his heart.

34. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

He loved the Gita as much as the Bible. Yet he could not see clearly a standardised Hinduism and an organised Society for it. Hinduism was a divided camp of sectarian creeds.

There was a Christian Conference in the Washburn Hall at Pasumalai, presided over by Mr. Obeyed. All the missionaries of South India attended it including **Rev. H. A. Popley** and **Stanley Jones**. The Pilgrim was given the opportunity of addressing the audience on the Bible and Tirukkural. At night he staged with his Christian friends the complete Life of Jesus Christ. The Pilgrim acted the part of Christ. This attracted the missionaries. Mr. Popley paid him compliments and took his Poetic version of Jesus Christ’s life for publication in the C.L.S. Press. The Bible teaches essentially, purity of the heart, meekness, gentleness, forbearance of wrongs, patience, righteous life, loving service, and Divine perfection. The Kingdom of heaven is within; to attain it is to attain everything good. At the beginning was the *word* says the Bible. “A” is the starting point of letters, the basic sound. God is the origin of the universe. He is the heart-dweller; take refuge in Him. Purity of the mind is Dharma. Have a clean conscience, psychic love, and a life free from lust, greed and envy. Live here an ideal life; your life shall be divine” says Tirukkural. The Gita says “consecrate all actions to God. Act as His instrument; whatever you do shall be a sacrifice to God.” The hearts of the great seers mingle in truth, love, surrender and service. Every prophet comes to remind humanity of the fundamental principles of a peaceful life of purity, love, faith, compassion and service. But the petty mind multiplies sects around personalities and divides the world into fragments of opposing camps. The Unique One is eclipsed by egoistic personalities. He commits the greatest sin who creates a fortified mission or religion around the self-sufficient vanity of his personality. If the Bible is one, Christ is one and God is One, why should there be so many Churchianities, and quarrelling Isms and persecution in Christendom ? Instead of labels and personalities and sects, why not follow Truth and Love and serve humanity in the name of God who is in all and all-in-all? Let mankind think over this !

There was a proposal to convert the Pilgrim and send him to Bible Degree course at Serampur and then to Chicago University. At the opportune moment Puri Shankaracharya delivered a series of lectures on the Bhagavad Gita in the hall of Natesa Ayyar, Advocate, Madurai. Those lectures convinced the Pilgrim of the impersonal, universal and immortal

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nature of the soul in all.

The lure of the M. A. Degree was gone. A debate was grandly arranged in the Washburn Hall. The Pilgrim challenged fourteen speakers who maintained that India will become Christian very soon; for everyday conversions are increasing and missionaries are everywhere. In a two hour's talk, the Pilgrim said: "These conversions shall have reversions when man begins to think of the Soul which is above religions and which is one in God. Slave India, underdeveloped dark India, falls a prey to a mess of pottage. But free India, self-conscious India of a Dayananda or Rammohan or Vivekananda shall, by her Yogic genius, bring the whole of humanity to live a self-conscious collective life. That life shall be a limitless horizon of Spiritual freedom in which all talks of your religion and my religion shall be silly. For, who are we to divide Unique God and the equal Soul into pieces of opposing camps? ... There shall be One World and one self-conscious humanity, walking head-erect in the universal hall—that day shall dawn when the Divine conscience is not oppressed by artificial creeds of megalomaniacs. We must have a new set of Sama Yoga Missionaries who accept the teachings of all God-men but hold God above all human creations and mental constructions. Then, one can extol Christ and follow his teachings of love and sacrifice, without being a Christian; at the same breath, one can follow peace, meditation and nonviolence of the Buddha and love his renunciation, without becoming a labelled Buddhist. I can read Shakespeare or Milton without being converted to Shakesperianism or Miltonism. The one remedy for the peaceful coexistence of humanity, is to follow consciously the Pure Soul-voice of conscience, and regard with equal reverence all the spiritual benefactors of the world, holding God in the soul above all." The Flaming Cross thus inspired the inner Truth, which shall take humanity across the turbulence of warring ideologies, to a shore of limitless Freedom of Conscience.

35. TAGORE AND RAMMOHAN

There was anyhow, a conflict in the mind of the Pilgrim, between his Sama Yoga and conversion to a religion. Christianity produced wonderful missionaries who were doing excellent organised service to humanity. The cross rules the world. Sama Yoga offers a Self-conscious Freedom of life which listens to Prophetic voices, takes the best from them, but adores God in the Soul by meditation, love and compassionate service. East, West, North or South—the Horizon is one limitless circle. At this juncture, Rabindranath Tagore visited Madurai with C. F. Andrews, proclaiming His Message of the Forest. Tagore took an eminent place among the Seer-Poets of humanity. He had a vision, a mission, and a universal message. The yogi had the golden opportunity of coming in contact with the great Poet five times. His sharp feminine voice, aesthetic fervour, high-souled vision and loving manners charmed the Pilgrim. He was staying in Major Ganapat Roy's house and the Pilgrim saw him and greeted him with an English song. An interesting conversation proceeded.

Tagore: The idea is very good: We must live an equal soul-horizoned-universal-life without quarrelling over the points of the compass, as you say. All dogmatic isms have hoodwinked humanity into a fortified prison of fanatic creeds which try to dominate, tyrannising over human conscience, as you say. East and West are two poles of one dynamic life; they must unite and they are uniting.

Pil: Yes, North and South too, in a wider horizon. The Vedic discipline called Yoga, appeals directly to the Divinity of man, seeing all in the Self and the Self in all. India's Vedic Yoga is not a walled religion. It gives limitless freedom of scope to the widening soul of humanity. The intuition of our Rishis was inspired by inner-communion with God in Nature—Unity of God and Brotherhood of man are the two wings of Vedic life and indeed the sort of life conceived by the Bible, the Koran, and the Gita.

Tagore: The one man that achieved this synthesis of souls was Rammohan. You are

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exactly repeating his ideas of the Unitary Temple in which East and West, Veda and the Bible can amicably unite in cosmic-consciousness. My reverence goes to him who was the pioneer Reformer of New India. Then the subject turned on Rammohan.

RAJA RAM MOHAN RAI

Rammohan was born at Radhanagar (22-5-1722), in an orthodox Brahmin Vaishnavite family. He was a master of Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and English literatures and his genius was a synthesis of the Vedic, Islamic, Christian and Tantric cults. He decried image worship for which he suffered exile. He rebelled against child marriage and forced widow-hood for which he was excommunicated and persecuted. He escaped to Tibet, where he studied Buddhism; but the Buddhists were against his condemnation of Idolatry. With the help of some kind ladies he narrowly escaped murder at the hands of fanatics. He wandered fourteen years in search of Truth and returned home as a bold rebel against orthodoxy which was a bundle of effete superstitions—child marriage, idolatry and Sati (burning of widows along with the husband's dead body). He worked out a synthesis between the scientific West and the Vedantic East. He combined the dynamic Tantra with the luminous Vedic Yogas of Love, Work and Knowledge. He did many more good acts; he started a Religious order which he did not call by his name. He called it by the name of Brahman, common to all. 1815—commenced a new Era of Unitarian life, assimilating all that is virile in Vedic and Western cultures. He wrote books for children and elders expounding his wide synthesis.

He went forward against the orthodox oppositions, to condemn the chaotic caste system, idolatry, polytheism, priest-hood, sectarianism, early marriage, forced widow-hood, Sati or woman burning, animal slaughter, and he upheld the tenets of sex equality, human dignity and freedom of conscience.

Injustice done to womanhood undermines the honour of a nation. Blessed is the name of Ram Mohan that gave equal status to ladies. His brother Yuga Mohan died, and his young widow was burnt on the pyre. 2600 widows were burnt in three years; this appalling cruelty kindled ablaze the feelings of Rammohan. He edited Samaveda Kaumati and Veda Mandir to educate the public. Mr Orthodox cried himself hoarse and spent a large amount of money in polemic disputations and imputations; but nothing availed against the rushing progress of the Time Spirit. Lord William Bentinck's Government helped him and Ram Mohan rushed through his social and spiritual reforms. His Brahma Samaj (25-6-1828) attracted great souls like Dwaraknath and Rabindranath Tagore. Impersonal Brahman was adored by prayer and meditation in the Samaj. Devotion to One God, service to humanity, compassion, equal vision, charity, unity and freedom of conscience were the principles of the Brahma Samaj. Rammohan gave education to women, encouraged post puberty marriage, widow marriage, discouraged the dowry system and saw that Sati was ended by an act of parliament. He was the Saviour of India's womanhood. He modernised India; he encouraged co-education; he brought the ray of knowledge to every home. He ran the Anglo-Hindu School, assimilating the Vedic Knowledge and nourishing it by scientific knowledge.

Tagore: Yes ... India seeks to fulfil his ideal of One Humanity. He was a superman. What a wonderful work he did in England! Akbar, the Moghul King made him Raja Rammohan and sent him to England to plead on his behalf in the Parliament. He went as a Moghul ambassador but proved the prophetic ambassador of human conscience. Great personalities like Lord Brougham, the Duke of Cumberland and William-IV welcomed him. His speeches in parliament were appreciated by all. He raised Unitarian Churches in London, Bristol and other places. A fatal fever ended his meteoric career in Bristol. His

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tomb in Arno's Vale inspires every one that visits the place.

The Poet closed his eyes for a few minutes and remained silent. Then his daughter-in-law sang a song of his, accompanying it on the sitar. The poet then sang his famous song "Make me pure within, O Indweller and make me fearless".

The Pilgrim saw him another day in company with friends. He dedicated a poem to him:

"Hail Rabindra, Universal Poet,
Thine is the flute-voice of the Inner One
A free unfettered ocean-voice
Thundering with a gift to break the bonds
And render life a music of the soul."

He was then tired, lying down on a couch. Suddenly he stood up. Friends requested him to recline on the pillows since he was indisposed. "No, do you look at my grey beard? I am not old; I have become young. A poet sings "Lying you are in Kali Yuga, dark age; waking up you are in Dwapara, standing up, you see Treta and walking you attain Satya Yuga. See Satya Yuga marches." The Poet paced the room majestically while his daughter-in-law tuned in her sitar "Jana gana Mana." When she sang *Aharaha Tava...*, the poet took his seat on the couch and looked seriously saying "This is the Ideal India of my vision. O God ! Let Bharat be enthroned as the spiritual Empress of the World! Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, Musalmans, Christians and all humanity shall pay her homage, East and West shall unite before Her spiritual dynamism. Let united India lead united humanity."

The yogi again represented to him the decadent state of Indian religions and the blind conversions going around. The poet spoke at large about the importance of silent meditation by which alone heart can unite with heart. It is not conversion or reversion that we need; it is an inner transformation that we want. The essence of all religions and the heart of all prophets lead humanity at large towards Oneness. Mere dogmatic moralism cannot appeal to the present sense-ridden humanity. All must live in the vedic Truth of Ekamwam, Oneness ... *Ekam sat*. The poet invited the yogi to visit Shantiniketan soon. The latter promised to Visit that abode of peace and harmony.

36. HAIL DAYANANDA!

Tagore's influence widened his thought. He liked Rammohan. Dwaraknath and his son Debendranath continued his work. Debendranath was inspired by the lines of the Isopanishad which said:

"The world is the omnipresence of God. Covet not another's property; give and enjoy what you have". His seat of meditation in a wilderness became the abode of peace. The Shantiniketan developed around it as a world centre of cultural beauty and harmony. But the unitive Brahma Samaj too split into Adi and Sadharana Brahma Samajas. The Sadharana Brahma Samaj founded by Kesav Chandrasen was greatly influenced by Ramakrishna's Shakti-Cult. Kesav professed an Asiatic Christ and adapted the Motherhood of God. He declared a New Dispensation which was an eclectic synthesis of all religions.

Everyone spoke of the unity of God and universality of the soul. The Pilgrim saw the Christian influence in the Brahma Samaj. His quest has not yet found an answer. What about Hinduism and its Veda? Has anyone organised it and given it a standard form? Why should so many go out of its fold to other religions? Why should there be so many sectarian divisions and institutions? Why should this Acharya hate that Acharya while both are Hindus? Such questions haunted his mind and he still believed in Christianity as a better

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organised religion than the sectarian Hinduism.

The Pilgrim was still in the glamour of Christendom. Brahmic influence had stabilised his Christian zeal and also the constructive work of the American missionaries. One day he was called to take part in a debate between the Hindus and the Christians. He was searching materials in reference books. He happened to read Satyarth Prakash and the life of Dayananda and this opened his eyes. Mr. M. J. Sharma of the Arya Samaj spoke to him about Dayananda and his mission. Rishi Dayananda was the stalwart Reformer of India and her Vedic Culture. After Harsha's days, local disharmony and alien impacts shattered the stronghold of spiritual dynamism in India. The unique reality of the One spirit in All was miserably lost into the dark labyrinth of cock-and-bull stories spun around personalities. Ludicrous superstitions, mythical falsehoods, priestly arrogance, fear of inanimate stars and stones and a hundred other drawbacks kept back progress of the nation. Vedic India was hoodwinked by Tantric orgies and Puranic tales. A Vedic Titan rose to clean the dust of ages. He was Rishi Dayanada, the superman of the last century. Like a Colossus, he walked on the national stage, undaunted by thundering oppositions. He had no mercy for the germs of disease that ate into the vitals of the nation. His Sathyartha Prakash came like panacea to restore vitality to the nation. He combined in his adventurous life, truth and sacrifice.

He was born in 1824 at Mourvi in a Gujarathi family. His father Amba Shanker was orthodox to the backbone. The boy Mulshankar was brought up in the family tradition. On a Sivaratri day (the night dedicated to Siva) he observed fast and vigil in the Siva temple along with his father. Sleep waved her magic wand over the vigilants. Kirch ! Kirch ! A sudden rush of rats! They made heavy inroads upon the stone image of Siva and his offerings. They bit to pieces Siva's stinking oily cloth. The stone was as stone. This scene shattered the faith of the boy in idolatry. The father gave him a sound Sanskrit education which opened his eyes wider still. Death stalked the family driving him to renunciation. The fond father prepared the yoke of wedlock for the rebel child. But he ran away. The youth of nineteen, wandered with ascetics in search of Yogic knowledge. Now his name was Shuddha Chaitanya. The anxious father traced out the young bravado in a choultry, tore off his orange robe and mounted guard over him to carry him away in the morning. The invulnerable rebel escaped suddenly and took cover at the top of the temple tower. The disappointed father searched here and there and went afar. Dawn hurried Shuddha Chaitanya away to continue his pilgrimage. He wandered for fourteen long years. He went from place to place, acquiring knowledge and experience as he went, and observing the ruined state of national life. He was a personal witness to the bloody scenes of the Indian war of independence waged by Nana Saheb and Tantia Tope. He witnessed the death of Rani Laxmi Bai in the battle near Gwalior. He felt for the miserable condition of Hindu society. He was disgusted with the caste and creed disabilities, hypocrisies, superstitions, blind passions, ignorant idolatries and political slaveries that degraded this dignified land of Vedic civilisation. He saw Indians enthralled by alien highbrows and foreign religions flourishing under state patronage. He saw English spreading to the detriment of native languages. The big guns charged enslaving forces with cries of "Swadharma and Swarajya" were hushed by treachery. Moved by compassion, the fervent pilgrim sought for a remedy to the ills of the decadent nation. He declared within him, a war of spiritual independence and sought a Master for guidance. One Blind Master had eyes to see into his heart !.

VIRAJANANDA, a Punjabi saint, had the insight to look into the heart of the Vedas. He was a champion of Pure Vedic Truth. He had a passion for the Rishi Culture. He poured his flaming aspiration into the heart of His disciple, now known as Dayananda.

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He trained him for two and half years. He asked him to throw off all ignorant rubbish heaped upon the Vedic culture. “The Veda speaks of the pure Impersonal One. The Veda calls That AUM! No idolatry; no ceremonial pomp; no caste rigour—the Veda is a common Book of Universal Truth-Light. Go my child; hold high the banner of the Veda. Truth shall bring you victory”. Thus the blind saint opened his eyes to reality and sent him out to fight with the forces of ignorance and establish the kingdom of Truth–Light.

Dayananda entered the arena of public reform, held aloft the banner of Aum and challenged the forces of darkness. He gave frontal strokes to petrified orthodoxy, and threw open the Vedic treasure to humanity. He held before the country, the ideal of a bright Vedic India free in spirit and strong in matter. He condemned do–nothing asceticism. He stimulated all to national service. His disciples—Samaji Krishna Varma, Lala Lajpat Roy and Shraddhananda—fought bravely for the freedom of the country and for social uplift. He achieved a century’s work within a few years. In 1875 he founded the Arya Samaj to propagate Vedic Idealism. The Samaj took firm root in Bombay, Lahore, Gujarat, United Provinces, Oudh and Ajmer. Swamiji wrote many books to educate the public. Satyartha Prakash is his masterpiece. It is an encyclopaedia of spiritual information. It contains illuminating chapters on the Unique One. Vedic discipline, Brahmacharya Culture, The ideal family life, the duties of man from birth to death, the ideal of womanhood, matrimonial relations, widow marriage, bringing up of children, political economy, kingship, crime and punishment, Royal Councils, warfare, unity, renunciation, the present condition of India and its remedies. He proved the virility of Vedic Culture and the vanity of spurious religions spun around personalities.

He had to challenge an array of hostile critics, keenedged persecutors, and treacherous traitors. He torpedoed all strongholds of ignorance and maintained the Vedic Standard against vital storms. He was poisoned many times. A live cobra was thrown upon him and a sword darted at his neck. The heroic Brahmacharin tore them asunder and braved all attacks. He thundered forth his Vedic Truths and silenced falsehood. In 1872 he visited Calcutta, and saw Ramakrishna and Keshab Chandra. He invited Blavatsky and Olcott from America for his aid. But afterwards he found it better to stand upon his own feet. He had high soaring ideas for the glory of India. He proposed to bring together native kings for a united action. He wanted to recast New India in the Vedic mould. But alas, the concubine of a Raja poisoned his food and brought about his tragic end. 30-10-1883, Dipavali day, Dayananda shed his mortal coil at Ajmer, meditating on Gayatri and muttering Aum! But he lives in thousands of devoted hearts.

He has left indelible marks in every sphere of regenerate India. He was the forerunner of our national freedom movement. He gave a plan to Shyamaji for India’s freedom. The National Congress was born in the same Bombay ten years after the Arya Samaj. He gave us the word Swarajya and a motto—*Satya meva jayate* (Truth alone triumphs). He removed untouchability; he introduced Hindi as our national language. He advocated widow remarriage and condemned child–marriage. He started Vedic Colleges and Brahmacharya Gurukulas. He encouraged female education in Kanya Gurukulas. He introduced Shuddhi and Sankatan (purification and readmission) of souls converted to other religions and thus promoted the solidarity of the Indian nation. Hail Dayananda!

“God is one and unique, nameless, formless–featureless. Veda is the universal scripture of Godhood. All are equal in birth. Brahmacharya Culture is the root of life, married life is branch and flower; unripe fruit is Vanaprastha and ripe fruit is Sanyasa. No slavery to personalities, no barrier, no ceremony; no image! The impersonal Self–existent Divine can be attained only through the pure heart disciplined in Yoga and meditation. Be virile, be bold; be pure, free, and united; serve home and humanity. Sing Aum Aum!”

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This is the message of Dayananda and let it ring in all souls! The pilgrim was a faithful lover of Dayananda and the Arya Samaj from that day. He won the debate against the other party and proved that India shall regain its Spiritual glory. He peeped into the Vedas and gathered valuable knowledge. He compiled a book from ancient scriptures called Veda Sadhanam. The training course was over now with good results.

With the zeal of Dayananda and zest of Christian missionaries, the pilgrim left Pasumalai and went from village to Village, singing songs and hymns and preaching the Vedic Truth and giving Yogic demonstrations to aspirants. He stayed with Keval Ram Swamiji at Tanjore for a week. Both became friends. They went to see Sri Aurobindo again for a purpose. Aurobindo softly told them in sweet accents, "Fear not! God leads the country. Surrender and offer yourself. His will shall lead you." Swami Keval Ram was a tall fair imposing figure, the first Bengali revolutionary. He grew hair and a beard and came to the South with the message of the Gita and Ramdas to train Shivajis. But the time was not for it. He was watched by the secret police. Hence he suddenly shaved off his over-growth and went back to Uttarpara, his village and became Amerendranath Chatterjee again. Keval Ram directed the Pilgrim to be a teacher for three years and earn money enough for his future. Just then Mr. V.V.S Ayyar paid a visit to Swami Keval Ram and became a bosom friend of the Pilgrim whom he urged to spread the national spirit among students.

He at once started for Kattuputtur where he got an appointment to serve the Zemindar's High School there. Why Kattuputtur? For the Samadhi-temple of his patron saint Sadasiva Brahmam was quite near, at Nerur. The Pilgrim always had spiritual purposes behind him while he stayed in any place for professional or national purposes.

37. TEACHER-PILGRIM

Education is the manifestation of the divine potentiality latent in every soul. The head, heart, nerves, body, soul, and emotions must have a harmonious development to build up stalwarts for the nation who can carve out a career for themselves and serve humanity by their brain and brawn. Schools are congenial centres of training for children who are the future hopes of a nation. The nation begins in the classroom. An all-round mental, moral, physical vocational, aesthetic and spiritual training must be given to children to make them fit to face the trials of life, and meet the exigencies of circumstances. A man-making system of education must be a synthesis of Spiritual, technical and academic cultures. It must take into account the psychology and inborn genius of the child. Education is not mental gymnastics-parrot-like grinding for the bugbear of examination. It is not the manufacture of gramophonic mentalities, repeating text books to get a license for job-hunting servility. Education is a living factor, an art of self-perfection and world perfection. It kindles the innate genius and evenly fosters the mind, muscle, taste, emotions, character and social tendencies. The teacher is not a task master. He is a brother, a guide, a helper who puts the growing genius of the child on the right path and directs the body, senses, mind, heart, emotions, will and intelligence to imbibe the right sort of observation, reasoning, thinking and acting. Yoga is the basis of education and science its edifice. Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga and Karma Yoga must be included in the curriculum. Yoga will develop intuition, introspection, concentration, intelligence, clarity of vision, patience, moral strength, celibacy, vital energy and add light and lustre to the student-life. Brahmacharya is the foundation of this spiritualised scientific culture.

But this ideal education could not be given in a Government school working under the repressing thumb of a bureaucratic-Grant-in-aid code. Macaulay and Curzon made it an instrument of servility. The cultural Pilgrim was in correspondence with the hero and scholar Sri V. V. S. Ayyar to work out a modern Gurukulam and he wanted the friendly

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Pilgrim to serve in organised schools until the higher aim was solemnised. S was an eternal student aspiring to gain new knowledge and experience, making experiments in the laboratory of Existence.

The Zemindar's High School at Kattuputtur (Tiruchi Dt.) offered him a very good opportunity for self-development. It had a green natural environment. The teacher Pilgrim lived almost in the big garden behind the school, convenient for meditation and lovely for a poetic dreamer. He lived upon plantains and groundnuts or bengal gram which were easily found and spent all his hours in Yoga, study, teaching and writing. A fully-equipped laboratory was at his disposal to study and experiment in physics, chemistry, botany and zoology. He taught students geography, science and English. He taught selected students scouting and extracurricular lessons by taking them on excursions. He was very busy with well-planned programmes and he prepared his lessons thoroughly before going to the class. He wrote not only notes of lessons, but the lessons themselves so that they became books later on. He made original researches and compiled his own geography, physics, chemistry, botany, zoology and mathematics. He wrote dramas and staged them with the help of his scouts. He trained himself as a scoutmaster under Mendis and got certificates for good turns and social services. He often conducted Camp-Fire-Yarns and scout displays. He engaged his troops for social service, temperance work and rural reconstruction. He moved his quarters to surrounding villages where he started social reform work and Harijan uplift service. He conducted a Harijan school at Sri Rama Samudram. He trained a set of boys who preferred to live in yoga and do social service. He took boys to the River Kauvery for bathing, prayer and scout-drill. Many stopped taking intoxicants and utilised their money in starting small-scale industries like spinning and weaving. He made many stop flesh-eating. He encouraged coconut planters to make sugar instead of leaving the tree for tapping. When the Government threatened him he wrote "Why do you taint our brain with tainted money?" He conducted a national school for adults. In many places he conducted studies in ancient spiritual literature and a large number of people attended his discourses. The Head Master P. G. Sundaram Ayyar, was a musical genius. A Music Association was formed in which the Pilgrim sang his daily compositions. He learnt music from able savants.

With all these various activities, he openly worked for the National Congress and the Khilaphat movement for which he toured the District with Dr. Rajan, Dr. Swaminathan, Kalki and other leaders. He advocated noncooperation with the Government openly, and for this, he was closely shadowed and a police post was established at Kattuputtur to watch and report all his movements. But who can find fault with his social work and spiritual talks? He lived in the local Mosque and practised Islam. He wove the life and messages of the Prophet into songs and read them every night to his Muslim friends.

38. ISLAM GAVE HIM PEACE

Islam gave him Peace. Abdulla Moulvi led him every day into the delight of the Sufi Cult and Koranic Life. The Pilgrim assumed the name *Suraj* among the Muslims. Abdulla Moulvi who taught the Koran to Suraj was a shining personality, a versatile genius in Semitic culture. He wrote out the *Al koran* five times in his life. He was an expert in Unani medicine and he knew sorcery. He often took the Pilgrim at midnight to the graveyard for meditation. Once they both went to Natharsha Mazjid in Tiruchy. There was a mass prayer by Muslims. The solemn hymn of 'Allah ho Akbar' went up from fervent hearts. Prayer over, Abdulla embraced a fakir. The fakir embraced the Pilgrim and kissed him at the forehead saying "My Child, the fountain is here; let it be the stream of your life". The

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Pilgrim learnt the yoga of Islam from these two saints. The fakir was a Sufi mystic. He said “Like Rumi, see God in the Self. Like Hafiz consecrate all to Him! The Spiritual path is like climbing a date tree. Climb patiently; you will eat plenty; if you slip and fall down you will be crushed. Milk is the product of the cow’s love for the calf. Bliss is the product of the soul’s love for the Supreme. Aspire; It will inspire. You can say Anal Huq (I am god) when your soul clings close to God. By love you will become divine”. Rasul Muhammed is a supreme example of this love. Rasul saw God in nature. He read the unwritten scripture in the Sky, the sun, the moon, stars, ocean and earth. Islam is a practical religion which takes into account, every aspect of life. Unity of God, surrender to His will, brotherhood of man, and service to humanity form the sheet anchor of Islam. The 6247 verses of the Koran contained in 114 chapters, are the revelations of the Prophet during his stay for 13 years in Mecca and 10 years in Medina, recorded by his disciples. The Koran comes from the word *Ikra*, to voice forth. Evil doers cannot climb the razor-sharp *Al Sira* to heaven. The faithful can easily reach the Paradise flowing with milk and honey, flowers and fruits, springs and rivers. Prayer and meditation were the sadhanas of the Prophet. He gathered spiritual energy in the lonely cave of Hira. He prayed to God on behalf of humanity pining with anguish and agony from lust, greed, envy, slander, anger and murder. The Divine Grace descended upon him and spoke through his medium. Wicked elements plotted against his life; they stoned him to bleeding as he ran for refuge to a cave called Thouri. There too they traced him to kill him. Disciple Abubakkar lamented, “Ah Rasul, we are but two and the enemies are powerful” “Not two; my friend; *a Third One* is behind us—the omnipotent Allah. He will save us” said the prophet. Seeing a spider’s web at the entrance of the cave unmolested., the enemies fled away. The prophet reached Medina successfully, where he founded the Islamic Republic around the prayerful Mosque. Devotees offered to crown him and he said. “I am a simple servant of Allah. Adore Him alone; pray, fast, repent sins; hate none, love all, unite and serve one—another”. The five daily Namaz (worship), the Friday Hudba (prayer) and Ramzan fasts and prayers created a thrill in the hearts of the devotees and they became one in the body of the Prophet of God. He reconquered Mecca without shedding blood. Once Rasul was praying alone on the battle field. Enemies caught him saying, “Alone, you are. How will you defend yourself ?” The prophet said “I am never alone; the Almighty One is with me and He will defend me.” He prayed to God in the Mosque of the heart with burning faith and his enemies submitted to him. He refused to judge even murderers and he did not punish even poisoners. For he believed that God would do everything and nothing happened without His Will.

The aspiring Pilgrim, after singing the Life and Teachings of the Prophet, requested Abdulla Moulvi to initiate him in the Sufi Cult. For six months, the pilgrim lived the life of a Sufi and met many genuine Sufi saints.

39. THE SUFI PILGRIM

Sufism is an offshoot of Islam influenced in the 8th century by Neoplatinism, Vedantism and independent thinking of mystic poets. It believes in the inward expansion of life towards upward ecstasy flowing within one’s soul. By ecstasy and contemplation, it reaches the perennial source of peace and happiness. St. Rabia of Basra says “Love of God leaves me no time even to hate the Devil. Apart from the Beloved, I have no existence.” Sufi Byazid said “No God beside me; worship me”. The soul was so much one with the Beloved. Mansur Al Hallaj was an occultist who drew flowers and fruits and gold pieces from empty air. He was imprisoned as an heretic, nailed to the cross and executed; he cried before death “Pain and pleasure, life and death are one to me. I am the Eternal ONE”. Just as multicoloured bulbs shine with indivisible colourless electricity, one imper-

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sonal God shines in the myriad beautiful forms. Not forms of Beauty but the Formless One alone must be adored by *Love*. “Soul to soul we are one;” says Hafiz, “when we are one, we are all” Sufism is sweetened by Love and deepened by Knowledge. Attar gave sufism a standard form. He was keeping a big pharmacy and perfumery shop. He treated 500 patients a day. A dervish wept at his treasures and said “See, how I go lightly; you have heavy burdens, bondages of home, money and things. How can you ascend God-ward”. Attar renounced all and went to Mecca. He travelled with Sufi saints in Egypt, India and Turkey and settled in Nyshapur. “I moisten dry bread with tears; my heart is sorrow-laden. I shall live in complete retreat, doors closed, absorbed in the Divine Essence” said he before retiring into complete self-solitude and silence. His soul returned to the Source. He was murdered by the Mongols who invaded Nyshapur. The blood of Attar inspired the nation to defeat the invaders. Attar has written many mystic books in prose and verse. Jalaludin Rumi, blessed by Attar, says. “I am a planet revolving round the *Sun* Attar. He had an all-absorbing Love which consumed every thing except the will of the Beloved.” “O drop, find Thy ocean! O Atom, find Thy God” says Attar. His Discourse of the Birds is a fine mystic allegory. The birds in a forest at the instance of Hoopee try to find out their hidden King *Simurugh*, crossing the seven Valleys of Search, Love, Knowledge, Detachment, Unification, Bewilderment, Annihilation. Consumed by Love only 30 birds reach the Royal Presence of Divine Glory to find that they are one with Himself. “I went from God to God until He cried from me. *O Thou I*. God is the mirror of myself” says Attar. Al Ghazzali, the moral theological mystic of Damascus who retired into religious seclusion and meditated in Jerusalem says in his *Alchemy of Happiness*, “Eye cannot see the eye. I cannot see the I. The eye may fade; yet *You* are. Seek loneliness; let none stand between you and God who alone *is*. Rumi’s *Masnavi* says “Love needs no mediator. A loving God, uses Prophets as mirrors to instruct man, just as a mirror is used to instruct the parrot. When the inner voice sings in love, the outer noise is a nuisance.

Abdulla Moulvi and the mystic fakir revelled in Hafiz and Rumi and when they quoted them with explanations it seemed as if they were tasting heaven’s nectar. The Pilgrim flew into love-ecstasy with the Beloved in the heart. A thunder awakened him from that ecstasy.

40. THUNDERING AWAKENING

Self Awakening suddenly comes and life’s mission is revealed in a surprising manner. The pilgrimage passed through the light and shade of the changing world. The Pilgrim slept in an inn forgetting his destiny. A sudden fire in the inn woke him up, to make haste with his onward journey. Neither the high school science-room nor the Mosque and Khilaphat were the aims of his Pilgrim Life. He had a long distance to cover and hence the Inner Master smote him awake to his life mission.

The Pilgrim Teacher indulged in extracurricular lessons very often. He laid out a botanical garden and dug a well and used dynamite of his own to split the rock. That raised a commotion in the mind of the school authorities. On another occasion, during the Deepavali days, his students requested him to prepare fireworks. The youthful teacher prepared crackers, and coloured fires and then bent to prepare matches. He soaked sticks in boiling sulphur and then tried to make a paste of phosphorus and potassium chloride with glass sands. He was pounding the compound in a mortar and requested a boy to pour water. The dull boy stood still. The chemicals burst ablaze; the glass mortar shot up and fell into pieces on his wrist which began bleeding. Poison fumes choked his breath and he fell down senseless. The headmaster and teachers and the Inspector ran down there and were anxious for his life. The doctor was sent for. The Pilgrim did Pranayama for five minutes and was all right. He wiped off the blood and conducted the lesson and made the matchsticks. “A bloody victory” remarked the nspector.

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The news spread around and all looked at the Pilgrim with awe and fear. The police came and enquired, “Who made bombs...?” Mr. Scandal spun a terrible yarn saying “He is the friend of V.V.S, a revolutionary. He is here to teach boys how to make bombs etc. etc”. The C.I.D. trouble was already there.

This accident was a warning of God. “Waste not days here. The body is the same dying matter everywhere. Take care to fulfil your mission.” He sang a pathetic song which meant “Guide me, O Lord out of this dark wilderness; I know nothing but Thy Grace. Thy Grace is not a mere dictionary word. It has saved true lovers always ... I go forward... show me the path!” He felt a crushing burden, an unbearable melancholia again and deemed it better to end life in the wilderness of Nerur. He hurried to the tomb of Sadasiva and meditated there. “To be a teacher of boys is not my mission. There are thousands of teachers. The school is a cockpit of mutual acrimonies. One teacher, a favourite of the head master, is another’s spy. School meetings were bear gardens. Talebearers were favourites of superiors. You teach national songs; you are a revolutionary, you speak of Gandhi ... You are instigating students to noncooperation. You read Young India... You are a Gandhian: you wear Kaddhar; you turn the charka; you have violated discipline.” Such were the remarks of spies. But if a teacher addresses public meetings and reports come in the papers, if he openly follows national leaders and writes patriotic songs and essays in papers and tours the district ... he is certainly a danger to the recognised institution which receives grants from the government although that money is from the people. Moreover, the Pilgrim took to teaching as a makeshift, until a better avenue was opened to him. He had relations with V.V. S. Ayyar at Pondicherry and his aim was to prepare the ground for a political action. In a moment, all these vague ideas exploded, and the higher aim of life come to the forefront. ‘Go, Go, Go,’ cried the koil.. Gogogogo—crowed the cock. The swelling Kauvery was singing a mystic song of inner awakening. The stars above were slowly pouring themselves into the Golden Basket of the peaceful orient.. There was a voice within and five commands flashed in the inner silence:

1. *Live with Saints for Spiritual perfection.*
2. *Make The Entire Life A Song—Offering To God*
3. *Embalm All Your Experiences And Realisations In the Bharatashakti and numerous Other Works. Write books for the New Cosmic Age.*
4. *Consider The World As A Temple, Humanity As God And Service As Worship.*
5. *Live In Yoga And Give Yoga To The World Through YOGA SAMAJ.*

The life—purpose had been revealed now... The Pilgrim went forward. Summer holidays gave him a chance.

41. RIVER AND THE RHYTHM

Free, free, the Pilgrim walked along the green shades of the Kauvery Banks. Fair Nature was one companion and another companion was the Muse singing an ‘Onward’ song to the rhythm of which the Pilgrim marched. It was a happy hopeful march towards the fulfilment of a great object of his life-Bharata Shakti—this was his constant dream. A great Poem is a gift of God in the Soul of the Poet. It is an efflorescence of the Inner exuberance. The Pilgrim—poet invoked the soul of Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa, Kamban, Homer, Virgil, Dante and Milton.

He visited pilgrim centres where festivals went on. He met his friend V. V. S. Ayyar and Justice T. V. Seshagiri Ayyar at Tiruppalaturai where they were looking for a fine plot of land near the river, for a Gurukulam. Mr.Ayyar requested the Pilgrim to be with him. “Yes; but I shall come to you with an Epic of Supermen—Bharata Shakti”

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assured the Pilgrim. The Pilgrim sang a few poems from inspiration; The Ayyar blessed him and the great Poem Bharata Shakti, that was struggling for expression in his heart.

Now the lonely Pilgrim meets three saints while attending the Navaratri festival at Ayyanpalayam where Jagadguru Narasimha Bharati had installed a beautiful image of Muruga. One was **Swami Brahmananda**, the naked saint of Sendamangalam. He belonged to the order of Sadasiva Brahman. He was a scholar in Sanskrit, a master of Shankara's works and he knew English. He suddenly relinquished his job and home and took to the hard path of a naked ascetic. He was persecuted by ignorant ruffians. The Pilgrim once protected him from being stoned to death. The Avadhuta loved the pilgrim who learnt from him the Brahma Sutras and Vivekachudamani of Sri Shankara. He was Vedanta personified. He had a cave near the Kolli Hills at Sendamangalam where the Pilgrim went for meditation now and then.

The other Sanyasi was **Swami Ananda giri**, a master of Asans, Pranayama and Kriya Yoga. He could repeat by heart the Gita and the Bhagavatam. His talks were enlightening. The third was **Veda Giri**, a ripe old Sanyasin who was a treasure-house of spiritual Intuitions. Yes, God sent these holy men to inspire the lonely Pilgrim. The four became close friends and walked together, sat together, meditated together and talked of yoga and Vedanta. The Yogi listened to them and took notes. Their talks were very useful to his great theme, Bharata Shakti. They visited Gunasekaram, and then went to Mukkombu on the Vijayadasami day in 1920. That was a day sacred to the Goddess of Learning. They took their bath in the wide brimming river, and sat in meditation facing the golden dawn. The atmosphere was serene, tranquil, peaceful. The beauty of Nature danced in delight to the song of the morning breeze, melodious birds and the mumbling stream. Some mystic angel was playing the anthem of New Humanity in the ears of the Yogi. Fair damsels were adoring Mother Kauvery with colourful flowers and tuneful hymns. Parrots, koils, sparrows, crows and bulbuls were holding a solfeggio on fruit trees.

The poet felt an exhilaration in the heart which was in communion with Self-God. He had a cosmic-vision of that unique self in all those devotees bathing there, in those birds, cows, trees, fruits, flowers, in those three sages meditating nearby, in the vast sky and the fair earth. The crimson East opened gently the golden door of felicity. The Messenger of Light entered the universal arena. The splendour of the morning Beauty, kindled cosmic vision in the communing Poet! The whole Nature seemed an Epic of Spiritual exaltation. "Hail Almighty Grace Light, loving Mother and Father, the Supreme Lover, Lord of human destiny, the Master who leads the evolving soul onward! Him let us adore by Self-offering and He will fulfil our aspirations." Thus blossomed Bharata Shakti. Two chapters were written at the spot and read to the Saints who blessed and appreciated them. The first chapter on cosmic creation was read before the Flaming Vedic altar in the temple of Skanda on the sacred victory day. From that moment, the intoxicated Poet poured his melting soul into the ready moulds of golden verses. The Bharatha Shakti was sung on hills and forests and river banks and in pilgrim centres. On his way to Kutralam, the Pilgrim met his friend Poet Subrahmanya Bharati at Kadayam and read his poems. He blessed the attempt, appreciated the style and substance and both went to Tiruchendur where the Pilgrim got new inspiration. Two cantos were finished by this time, Siddhi Kandam and Gauri Kandam. Sadhana Kandam needed a lot of study and thinking. So he returned to Kattuputtur to prepare himself. After taking notes for a week, he set out again, visited Tirutani, Tirupathi, Kanchipuram, Bangalore, Mysore, Sivasamudram etc. He lived in temples, churches, mazjids, monasteries and in charming natural scenery to write the Grand Epic of Supermen. The school reopened and he continued his routine work along with the writing of the Epic which was partly finished and needed much touching and refinement. We will know about this later on.

42. THE CALL OF GANDHIJI

Bala Gangadara Tilak, the idol of the nation passed away uttering the memorable lines of the Gita meaning “When righteousness declines and the unrighteous forces abound, I come from time to time to establish virtue and to put down evil”. The Pilgrim had seen Tilak twice before. Once, in the Lucknow Congress, after which he visited Sai Baba at Shirdi. Next time he saw that dynamic Maharashtrian at Madurai on his way to Rameswaram. Tilak gave him the Gita with the message, “Stand up and fight for the right cause”. He was like a nimble candle burning with the flame of India’s Glory. Intelligence beamed bright in his phosphorescent eyes. After Ramadas–Sivaji, after Nanasaheb who roused the nation for a resolute fight for freedom, Lokamanya Tilak emanated to inspire India and reorganise her forces for a determined agitation, sending the clarion call: “Swarajya is my birthright and I shall have it.” His word was magic, his voice was inspiration, his personality was magnetic, his action was daring and he was India to the last moment of his life. What he said was law and his roaring flashes in the Kesari and Maharashtra, echoed in millions of hearts. The days of weapons had gone; Tilak fought against guns and canons and seditious acts with the indomitable courage of his soul, inspiring the nation with his spirit of sacrifice. Swarajya (Home–Rule) and Swadesi were the breath of his life. He routed the moderates in the Surat tussle of 1907. He hated reactionary petitions and cringing prayers. He was for a bold fight for the birthright. He put forth a policy of Home Rule, Self–determination and responsive cooperation against the mendicant rhetorics of Gokhale and Surendranath. He opposed the moderate President in the Surat Congress; the audience hissed and heckled down the convention and another meeting was arranged under the presidency of Sri Aurobindo to maintain the bold policy of full independence and self–help. Tilak was exiled by the British tribunal; he went, Gita in hand to Mandalay and came back with his monumental work, the Gita Rahasya. He declared his bold policy of Home Rule in the Lucknow Congress (1916).

The Pilgrim Teacher wept at his death before a big gathering held in the school and prayed God for a gift of thousands of Tilaks to liberate and reinstall India on Her rightful throne. He collected Tilak Swarajya Funds and held public meetings. He raised brave volunteers among his students to spread kaddhar, spinning, prohibition, temperance, unity and social harmony which were the programmes of Mahatma Gandhi to whom Tilak left his mission.

He saw Gandhiji first in 1914 at Madurai, next in 1916 at Lucknow, then 1917 at Pondicherry and again in 1921 in Dr. Rajan’s bungalow at Tiruchy. The Mahatma gave him a coarse kaddhar saying, “Come out of the jail and work in villages”. He chose the Pilgrim for rural reconstruction services. Since 1920, Gandhiji was India and his life India’s History. His experiment of Passive resistance in Durban bore fruit in the Noncooperation Satyagraha, in India.

The tragic massacre at Jallianwala Bhag, roused up fire in the nation and that fire was the Oriflamme of Gandhiji’s Satyagraha. The Apostle of Nonviolence and Truth gave the nation a new strength in the soul and courage in the heart to march on with the name of Rama against the stormy flames of the Brun Cannon. His life from A to Z was a dedication to God in humanity. Gandhi was a living Bible and a breathing Gita. His real life began when he fought against the Black Act in South Africa. He bore insult and injury, with a smile. He excused one Amir Khan who slapped him down. He was soft to the ruffian ways of opponents. Field Marshal Smuts, his official enemy, shook hands with him. From Kellenbash to Kachalia, from Valliammai Nagappan to Narayanaswami, all friends followed him unto the last. His Dandia March was a forerunner to Dandi–Salt Satyagraha March. His Satyagraha Salt flavoured the hot tea of Lord Irwin. His *young India and Harijan* and his simple words sparked out of the anvil of Truth, went deep into the heart of the nation.

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The Yogi Pilgrim had religious reverence for Gandhiji, the incarnation of Truth and Virtue. He once organised a festival to celebrate his glory and approached Mahatmaji for a message. An interesting conversation took place between them. It was in Amjat Bagh of S.Srinivas in Madras.

Pilgrim: Mahatmaji, do you think with Sri Aurobindo, that God guides the nation?

Gandhiji: Yes, God is behind good movements. I believe in the absolute oneness of God and therefore of humanity. God demands self-surrender.

Pilgrim: Is absolute surrender our only duty? Many play with the word surrender; they want us to surrender all our money and enslave our conscience. Action and its fruit and initiation-everything must be surrendered, they say; if so, we will be producing only a set of idle slaves of others' will. Even to God, we must not surrender our daily cares and demand from him food and clothing. "God, give me food or I shall starve; do my work or I shall weep" is not a sensible prayer.

Gandhiji: Surrender is not inaction; it is not leaving everything to His will and shirking our responsibility. It is not overburdening God with our mundane aspirations. If you say "God, I surrender to Thee; save my dozen children and feed them three times a day"... it is unwise. We must trust in God and do our *duty* as worship. The heart must be crystal clear, pure in love, free from fear, and the mind must take refuge in Truth. I trust men because I trust God.

Pilgrim: Mahatmaji, there are critics of your Ahimsa; they say that you cannot be nonviolent against a biting snake and shooting enemy. Sri Krishna commanded Arjuna to kill his enemy-kith-and-kin on the battle field.

Gandhiji: Ahimsa is a powerful weapon in the hands of Truth. I do not want to live at the cost of even snakes and reptiles. Our thoughts must be completely free from venomous intentions. Perfect innocence, limitless love and compassion, absence of vanity and egoism mark a follower of nonviolence.

Pilgrim: You are all that; hence we hail you as Rama or Krishna.

Gandhiji: It is blasphemy to call me Rama or Krishna. Such glorification mystifies our movements. I am a simple man, a servant of humanity conscious of my limitations. Truth is dearer to me than Mahatmaship. It is my refuge and religion. I do not want to create a new religion. *Duty*-that is my creed ...

The Pilgrim took a very active part in Gandhian service, for which he was closely shadowed. Once Gandhiji passed through the Kattalai station and the Pilgrim teacher took a lot of his students and Muslim friends to see him. At midnight they crossed the Kauvery to the station. The train came at 1-00 a.m. A song was sung in chorus. The stout Shoukat Ali sleeping near Gandhiji rose like a lion, preventing the midnight disturbance. But Gandhiji woke up to receive devoted offerings and requested the Pilgrim to see him at Tiruchirapalli. The Pilgrim got into the same train with some of his followers.

At Tiruchi he stayed with Gandhiji in Dr. Rajan's house. Gandhiji addressed a mass meeting. A few ladies were chattering in some corner over occupying a chair. Gandhiji asked the volunteers to remove the chair and said. "Thus power politics must be removed". "Unite internally! resist injustice externally. Remove caste difference, keep life clean, wear kaddhar, spin an hour per day for the nation, promote temperance, start national schools, encourage basic industries: boycott alien institutions, offices, armies, etc; resist enslaving laws; shed off fear complex..." this was Gandhiji's programme to gain freedom in one year. Gandhiji gave the Pilgrim a coarse piece of kaddhar with the message "Sing God and serve humanity".

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The Gandhian Pilgrim returned to the school wearing kaddhar and there was a huge hubbub. Reports went against him to the educational authorities and to the Zemindar. The students who had followed him to see Mahatmaji, were to be publicly punished. The Gandhian Teacher wrote a bold letter to the headmaster the substance of which is as follows:

“Dear Sir, with great love and respect to your sweet and melodious personality, and to your qualities of the head and heart, I maintain that I have done nothing incriminating in seeing the Idol of our nation, one who guides us safely across the dark turbulent ocean of national grievance. Can anyone, any human being, punish these youths who have gone to see their Saviour? Me punish! For I led them—not on any wrong path but on the right path which will increase their patriotism and courage. These are the coming Indians. We saw so many professors and teachers in the meeting sitting along with the students who cried “Hail India! Hail Mahatma” I cannot understand why you took a fancy to punish these patriotic youths. Is it to get any title or certificate for loyalty? Do you know great persons like Tagore, Motilal, C.R. Das, S. S. Ayyangar and Rajaji who have kicked off their degrees and titles to join the ranks of Gandhiji? If these good students are caned for their patriotism, I will be obliged to rouse them to action and here is my resignation”.

The headmaster hushed up the case and the Pilgrim went on with his bold duty. He staged a fine drama depicting Mahatma’s Ideals. Gandhiji was sent to the Yerewada jail for his article “Shaking the Mane” in Young India. The Pilgrim took a procession, fasted that day and addressed a big meeting at Kattuputtur, Tiruchi and Karur.

Commotion again! Now the teachers were compelled to sign an agreement binding them for three years and give three month’s notice before resignation etc., etc.; The conscientious Pilgrim, felt the inner call. He placed a laconic resignation on the headmaster’s table: “Sign, agreement? ... No, *Resign...! Freedom calls. No more walls!*”

Teachers and students gave him a rousing farewell address. They presented a medal. He spoke with great emotion: “From an armchair life, I venture into a life of sacrifice in the open street. From sacrifice to sacrifice I shall go, until nothing is left in me except God. Gandhi is in a small prison and the Indians are in a big prison. We have a collective duty in converting prison—India into free—India. We can no more worship the jailer. I threw off the turban and coat which were symbols of slavery and wore Gandhi’s kaddhar, the symbol of simplicity and sacrifice. I leave this palatial building to go from hut to hut, singing God’s name with the humming wheel. I leave this schoolmastership, to be the master of the mind and the servant of humanity. I leave profession to fulfil my mission in life as a humble servant of God in humanity. Bless me good hearts, with the joy of continued sacrifice until God alone is left in me”..

The vacation came again, and the Pilgrim, after touring the district with leaders, went to the Kolli Hills near Sendamangalam where Prakasananda stayed. Ten friends followed him. Fortune met him there.

43. THE SIDDHA BLESSED HIS WORK

Kolli hills gave him immense courage. Friends prepared food and all sat together to pray God in Nature before eating. A missionary attended the prayer. He then took the party up to his school. That solitary man from the West in the name of Jesus and His Cross, has converted the hill tribes and has given them elementary education. He has made them remember God. The Pilgrim wondered if there was any such missionary for Hinduism. He then went among the hill tribes. He preferred to stay with them that night, after bidding farewell to his friends. The atmosphere was resonant with the mumbling stream and howling of jackals. To live among innocent villagers, was a delight indeed. The villagers gave

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him jack-fruit and plantains and groundnuts . They told him that a Saint was roaming in the next hill curing diseases and blessing devotees. Something told the Pilgrim that the Saint must be one who had blessed him in boyhood. He went there with the help of a hillman.

The Saint hurried towards the Seeker, embraced him saying “Come, Shuddhanandam! Prakashananda told me about you. Read a few verses from the Bharata Shakti...”

Surprise! ... He knew everything!...

Pilgrim: Master, all the success in my life is due to your blessings. All defeats and disappointments are due to my vanity and egoism. After twelve Years, you have drawn me to yourself. Shall I not follow you ...

Jnana Siddha: Wait Shuddhanandam, fulfil your aspirations, finish Bharata Shakti ... Read a portion from the book; let me hear...

The Seeker read the portion on meditation and he was delighted to listen. He knew now enough Tamil to understand my poems.

Jnana Siddha: It is very graceful and melodious. But do not rush to the press. Gold gains in carat as you treat it in fire again and again. Give pure gold to the world. You are going up in spiritual height too. But I see a red aura in you. Your mind is confused. Some other force drags you down ... Not sex; you are above it. Some politics...

Pilgrim: Master, I serve Gandhism. I have resigned my post as teacher. I will go to jail as a non-cooperator.

Jnana Siddha: That will never happen, my child; you can serve Gandhi with your pen; you will waste time and ruin your genius, if you jump into the vortex of politics and go to jail. Hot words may throw you behind the bars. But when you come out, who will care for you ? Bigwigs and professional politicians came to the limelight and they became rich and fat. Your silent life cannot suit a crowd life. Another school calls you and then another fortunate friend shall take you to work with him. He will help you much... Go forward from saint to saint.

Pilgrim: By your Grace, Father ... Lead me from within. I shall not allow anything to stand between me and God. But I have seen life in temple, church, masjid, and in monasteries; I have seen many saints. Each has a walled creed. Every Pontiff wants our surrender to his *Feet-Heaven*. I have seen the Vanity of *I'm God*. Sometimes I stand before branching roads, without a signpost. Confusions worse confounded...

Jnana Siddha: My child, I have already told you about that. All creations round personalities divide humanity. See your Self, yourself; then see the world as the expansion of your Self. Avoid bondages, do not invite new bondages. The Divine leads you from the heart. Follow that lead. Live, move and have your being in God and God alone. Annihilate mind in God-consciousness. You will have contact with five great masters who will know your ripeness and add to your yogic realisation. I will be watching you from obscure heights. Fear not! your path is clear and bright ... Go forward with the only companion—*God-in-Conscience*...

The Pilgrim sang a hymn in his praise and the Siddha held him in his embrace and poured into him his spiritual dynamism. Ah, that moment of high exultation!... The seeker became one with God in the Guru. They meditated that night on the hill temple, and in the morning at 5-AM the Siddha said : “Shuddhanandam, I go that way; you go this way to Prakashananda who is waiting for you...” He vanished like a lightning and the Pilgrim seeker sought Prakashananda in the Dattatreya Cave.

Prakashananda affectionately welcomed him, gave him fruits and heard a chapter from the Bharata Shakti and blessed the work. Three days were spent in the cave, in calm meditation—for speech was a heavy burden in the delight of the Siddha's vibrating

embrace...

He returned to Kattuputur and a letter was waiting for him, calling him to Devakottai, where a friend of his had started a National school.

The camp shifts to Meenakshi Sundara Vidyasala, Devakottai. Let us follow the seeker there. From the Third Part of the Pilgrim soul, we refer to him as 'S' meaning *Seeker Pilgrim ! ...*

PART-III

THE SEEKER PILGRIM

44. NATIONAL SCHOOL

G. Sundaram, M.A. L.T. is a faithful friend of the Pilgrim. He is a scholar, writer, and a Gandhian idealist. He organised the National High School at Devakottai and it afforded a field to inner development and consecrated service. The school was situated in a compound in a vast plain away from the town; there were two buildings. The long tiled building was used for holding classes. The storied cement building had a library and a hall for science. This building was made available for the Pilgrim. There was a well and a garden and a peaceful terrace where 'S,' the Seeker Pilgrim meditated at night. The library contained all standard works in English. 'S' studied good books and made experiments in science. He wrote illustrated Science Text Books in Tamil—physiology, zoology, physics, chemistry, botany, ethnology and geography.

The Pilgrim took mainly fruits and soaked Bengalgram for his food and sometimes he ate saltless dhal and rice. He wrote poems even while he took his food. His life was a stream of study, meditation, and writing. He remained silent very often and spoke just for the students in the class. On holidays he remained Self-immersed. He taught science and geography sometimes in silence and that had a good effect on the students. He allowed boys to think and know. A few boys lived with him always and to them, he taught his *Yoga Siddhi* and *Bharata Shakti*. These faithful boys—Vaidyanathan, Varadan and Raghavan recorded his teachings which appeared in book form later on. The detailed commentary on the *Yoga Siddhi* was dictated by 'S' to these boys. With G. S., he studied the works of Tagore, Gandhi, Karl Marx and H.G. Wells and also books on sociology and economics and held useful discussions on national problems. G. S. was the first to appreciate his *Yoga Siddhi* and Universal Anthems. Erudite scholars came to 'S' and their company was soul-elevating. His knowledge of Sanskrit, Hindi and music was thus developed. He appeared for the Hindi examinations and passed with credit. He had the opportunity of studying the Siddhanta Philosophy, for the Chettinadu was its stronghold. The merchant princes of the place were deeply interested in religion and Tamil literature. They arranged lectures for the Pilgrim on festive occasions. The Pilgrim took an active part in their social and cultural services. The local advocates and judges were his close friends.

'S' had the opportunity of meeting famous political leaders too at Devakottai for that place was a centre of Gandhian politics and the Chettiars liberally contributed to the National Fund.

'S' had three scout troops which he utilised for his good-turns and social services. He got certificates from Mr.Mendis, the Scout Commissioner, for his services. Once he saved two persons from drowning in a tank. He cured snake bites and dog bites. He gave first aid in case of accidents. He took his scouts on excursions. He taught them spiritual socialism and made them live like brothers. He was surprised to see honest labour cringing before plutocratic misers. Rich mansions there and poor huts here, rubbed vanity there

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and wretched poverty here! A rich drunkard raped a poor housewife and killed her; when the husband complained to the police, the case was hushed up by tainted money. A pitiable beggar was bitten by the dog and beaten by the servant of a rich usurer and when the matter reached his ears he laughed and said “Well done, my servant, my dog!” There were incidents of usurers murdered by debtors, brothers poisoned by brothers, husbands poisoned by whores. The judicial court was just near him and ‘S’ heard the law-twisting arguments of famous advocates. Truth and justice were struggling through the jugglery of words. The Pilgrim was just revising the fourth canto of the Bharata Shakti which is an account of the Demon World and whatever he wrote in it happened before him. He foresaw the tragic death of Gandhi after freedom and a movement by which the world was claimed for workers. He went into villages and collected handspun yarns from the poor for the looms running in the National School. He spun and wove his own clothes. He did rural service with his scouts.

But his path was not smooth. The police watched his politics; the teachers complained about his excursions and night classes for chosen students. The rich came down upon his idea of equal soul and one humanity. Thieves plundered a rich man who strongly criticised spiritual socialism. They stole his wife’s jewels, ‘S’ ran with his scouts and complained to the police who took action to trace the thieves. The rich man’s heart was changed and he helped “S” in all his good turns.

From the science hall of the National High School “S” prepared himself for a life of Universal Yoga. He collected all his *Yoga Siddhi* couplets into a scripture for his life and mission and his students got the whole book by heart and chanted it everyday.

45. THE YOGA SIDDHI

Rev. H.A. Popley was already known to S as a great missionary who lived in Christ for the service of humanity. He came to Devakottai with three Englishmen to give lectures on town planning. Kamala Subrahmaniam brought him to the science hall. Popley saw the life and work of S and remarked, “You love Christ, live Christ and your book on Christ is popular among Tamil missionaries.” S showed him his *Yoga Siddhi*: His students chanted the whole book in half an hour. Rev. Popley was much pleased and ejaculated, “This is a modern Kural!”. S explained to him how it formed the central chapter of the Bharata Shakti. Popley saw the Bharata Shakti too.

A month passed; Rev. Popley returned *Yoga Siddhi* with a fine preface. He also wrote an encouraging letter. Here is a portion of it.

“Dear Brother,

I was delighted to see your pure life and read the Gospel of your life. *Yoga Siddhi* is one of the best modern books in style and substance; it is like the great *Tirukural*. But it contains many new ideas which will serve as mottos for the new awakening of humanity. The great Truths contained in this Book are for all, for all times. These Truths find a Proof in your own life. Hence their practical value. I appreciate your tremendous literary service to humanity at large. The world shall recognise you as a great Poet and Thinker, one day.

I hope to see this book in print very soon.

In his preface to the Book Rev. Popley wrote:

“I am delighted to write a short preface to the *Yoga Siddhi* which I had the first privilege of seeing and appreciating. I was then greatly struck with the way in which the author had worked out the Ethical Principles of India for Modern Life.

The book in Kural metres is written in a chaste simple Tamil. Most of the stanzas are so simple that one with any education at all can understand them. Like the author of the

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Kural, he has dealt with practical life and its needs, and he has done so from the point of view of today rather than that of yesterday. The modern conception of social service and national life find their place in it. We venture to think that in the development of Indian Ethical thought, this book will occupy a distinct place. The author is one who not only thinks but also acts as he has been foremost to live his ideas. The author got this new Gospel during his silent inner communion with God. I commend this book to the public with great pleasure and I suggest to school teachers and inspectors that they may find this book exceedingly useful as a moral textbook for schools.”

Rev. Popley met S many times and took delight in hearing his poems and appreciating them. He popularised his songs by singing them often before the public. Thus S was introduced by an English missionary to the Indian public.

Thiru. V. Kalyana Sundara Mudaliar was another great friend of S. He appreciated his works especially the Yoga Siddhi and wrote a fine poetic preface in which he said “This modern Gospel of universal Truths is a treasure of wisdom. Let savants study it and popularise it among the masses.”

A few lines from the Yoga Siddhi are given here and the reader is requested to study the “Gospel of Perfect Life” for fuller details:

Within the heart, as Knowledge–Self He is
Whose holy Grace ordains abundant bliss.
Whose temple is the boundless universe,
His moving temple every being is.
Speak out and pray with tender heart and true
Steeped in love; the Lord will answer you.
Why quarrel over is or not, O man?
Live and serve the world as best as you can.
Of what avail is human birth if it
Knows not the native Godhood and is That.
Someone within points out, ‘This is the path’,
Follow that path, fearlessly, in faith.
Be bold and do the righteous deed you feel;
The Grace of God will stand a sentinel.
Harp not upon thine ancient glories, man;
New progress make to suit the time’s elan
In life that blossoms from the inner Light,
There is no caste and no communal fight.
Serve ye the world with love for better ends;
The more you serve, the more the soul expands.
Not by his wealth, nor form nor lore, nor fame;
Know man by love which is his sublime name.
The man is light and woman energy
They are like gold and art in jewellery
Love is the chaste energy of the heart
That fosters home and world and life of art.
The God in man is always pure and calm
The vital demon raises bloody storm.
This world shall be a sinless paradise,
If men above hunger and thirst arise

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That social union is good for all
Which is for all, by all, a people's rule.
Yoga is atonement with the One
That comes when the wandering mind is won.
You are the swan of mystic white lotus
Which blossoms in the Golden spring of His
As days go on, deluded days go off ;
You feel the truth in God and keep aloof.
Hail heavenised earth and divinised life !
Let truth and bliss live like husband and wife.
Live all under the canopy of God.
Brimful of bliss and light spreading abroad.

Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastry is one of the great thinkers and scholars of India. He appreciated the book and wrote:

“Yoga Siddhi in couplets, is one of the world-books. It is indeed a new Gospel of Perfect Life. Every couplet is a sparkling jewel of truth tested by practical experience.”

The greatest admirer of the Yogi and his poetic genius was V. V. S. Ayyar, the great hero, patriot and scholar to whom the Yogi's life was closely united with a brotherly affection. He gave an introduction to his *magnum opus* **Bharata Shakti** and to **Yoga Siddhi**: “This is really a Holy Book for the New Era, heading towards One World and One Humanity and One people's Government for all the world...”

46. DESTINY CHANGES

The National High School was to be recognised under the Grant in Aid code. The Inspector, C. Sundaram came and saw S teaching science. S thought over his future. As usual the inner voice spoke out “Onward, Pilgrim Soul !” S tried to organise a model school in a garden with the help of his followers—a school in which Asans, Pranayam, Meditation, Yoga Siddhi and Gita would be taught along with sciences. He chalked out a new syllabus and wrote text books for his *Samayoga Samaj* when the call of V. V. S. Ayyar came:

“We have started a Tamil Gurukul in the Bharadwaja Ashram. I request you to join us and help the Gurukulam as its Educational Adviser and also to edit a Monthly.” The inner call intensified. V. V. S. Ayyar sent T. R. Mahadevaiyar for a personal talk.

S handed over all his manuscripts to Sri. Mahadev and started out alone one dark night, taking leave of his bosom friend G. S. who was unwilling to leave him.

But what to do when the Inner Master calls ? It is He who commands this life and living. It is to fulfil His Will that S was born. So S wanted to go forward to Rameswaram on foot. But Vaidhyathan would not allow him to walk. He hired a cart that was just going to Devipattanam. From Devakottai S reached Devipattinam next morning and took rest in the local choultry.

God brought him a new friend there.

St. Raghuvir was a real seeker, a Sanskrit and Marathi scholar, an ardent student of Das Bodh. He was a former revolutionary, a friend of Savarkar, a man who had suffered the stings and arrows of misfortune in life. He was a graduate of the Bombay University. He left his job to serve the country. But he was tired of politics and took to religious life. He laughed at misfortunes and said “Every failure in life gave me more success in renunciation and realisation. The world is a wilderness of envy and hostile troubles. To live unknown in God is the way to peace. I have taken refuge in Raghuvir—Samarth and His

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Dasbodh” said he. He read to the Pilgrim Dasbodh and that was nectar to his parched lips.

Both of them walked all the distance to Ramnad. There Pakshiraj met S and invited him to the Congress held at Rameswaram. This was also a divine call... Onward!

President S. Srinivas was already known to him as a large-hearted patriot, a good organiser, an Advocate General who non-cooperated and joined the ranks of Mahatma Gandhi wearing pure kaddhar. Almost all the political leaders were there with whom S had the chance of close relationship. S was given a seat on the dais. He spoke on the need for Gurukula Culture and the training of heroes for our freedom and missionaries for our religion. He sang his song at the Conference. He spoke on Hindu Dharma and how to propagate it, in the famous Temple of Ramanath.

He went with the leaders in a boat to Dhanushkoti when S. Srinivasa Ayyangar requested him to be the editor of a Daily and work for the Congress. He did not quite approve of his going to a Gurukulam and living a sequestered life among young boys. But the Inner Call persisted in directing him to V.V.S. Ayyar. Not for the Gurukulam, not for the Journal, S went to Shermadevi only for V.V.S. Ayyar and before going there, he surrendered his future once again to the Pure Almighty Grace that inspired his poetic genius and that brought a new light to his existence.

Eyes wet with tears, heart melting in the fire of fervour, the Pilgrim sang a song and continued his life-journey.

47. O, GUIDING LIGHT !

Lead me, O Guiding Light!
From gloom to golden dawn
Lead me to Wisdom's height
Where mental worries are gone

Forlorn, I left my home
Spurning shining gold.
Singing Aum jaya Aum
A silent pilgrim, bold

In the forest of dismay
Thy lightning smile smote darkness
And kept my days always gay
Blooming in Thy brightness.

Wipe out my bitter tears
Drive out doubts and fears
Mother, merciful Grace,
Let my heart see Thy face!

Thou feedest my hunger
Thou movest my finger
I am Thy silent singer
Thy love keeps me younger!

I win the frightful game
Of wistful existence
By the magic of Thy name
Blissful inner Presence!

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Thy splendour dazzles my soul
Thy Grace—Light is my all
To sing Thee is my call
Thy glory is my goal.

“Forward” came the order. The pilgrim marched on to meet a great friend of his life—V.V.S. Ayyar. Now hear his story.

48. THE HEROIC V.V.S.

In politics and literature, S followed V.V.S. Ayyar. The world must know about this great personality.

Varakaneri is a fertile hamlet on the banks of the Kauvery near Tiruchirappalli. There was an orthodox Brahmin family, noted for its Vedic culture. Sri Venkatesa Ayyar was the head of the family. He was a graduate, an Inspector of Schools. His wife Kamakshi was a pious lady devoted to God and to her husband. They had an illustrious son born to them on the 2nd April, 1861 (Tamil Vikrama). He was V. Venkata Subramaniam briefly V. V. S. As a child, V. V. S. took interest in hearing the Ramayana and the Mahabharata from his father. He played what he heard, and his hobby was to get by heart Tamil and Sanskrit verses. Rama and Arjuna were the two heroes he adored. He took pleasure in aiming, shooting, jumping, swimming, wrestling and in staff-play. He loved the beauty of nature which he enjoyed like a poet. He was a precocious student. He passed his matriculation with credit and joined the St. Joseph's College. He took English, Latin and mathematics as his special subjects. He had a taste for reading standard works in Tamil, English, Latin and Sanskrit. He liked the style of Emerson, Mill, Carlyle and Spencer. He was first in the class and first in the playground—a champion footballer. In 1893, he took his B.A. degree in literature, history and Economics, with a first class in Latin. In 1901, he became a law graduate and set up his practice in Tiruchi. His wife's brother, Rangoon Pasupathi Ayyar, was a prosperous cloth merchant. He called Mr. Ayyar to settle in Rangoon. Ayyar started with the blessings of his mother and father. The father ejaculated: “All right, my boy, go like *Saul* and come back like *Paul*!”. It was a prophetic utterance. Saul, the Biblical figure went to seek his ass. St. Samuel put a crown upon him on the way and said, “My son, you are the king of this country by the Divine Will.” Saul was first a revolutionary, an Anti-Christian. He then converted himself and became a great apostle of Jesus. Mr. Ayyar was the junior of an English barrister in Rangoon. He too wanted to become a barrister. Pasupathi Ayyar sent him to England to study for the barrister course and also manage a share market.

Mr. Ayyar set sail to London, on the 28th September, 1907. He joined the law course in Lincon's Inn. The course was easy for him since he was already well founded in Latin. Roman law got him the first prize. He spent his time in reading the best classics of the world. He read daily Kamban and Kural, Homer and Shakespeare, Virgil and Shelley. But they were not enough. Another service waited for him.

Shyamaji Krishna Varma had started “The India House” for the benefit of progressive Indian youths studying in London. He gave them scholarships. He trained them as bold heroes of liberation. Shyamaji was a disciple of Dayananda. He was a scholar in Sanskrit, French, English and Latin. He became bar-at-law and earned enormous wealth. He had a good friend in Madame Cama, a rich parsi lady who gave liberally to the patriotic youths consecrated to India's freedom. She was the first lady who made a flag for India and hoisted it at an International Conference. Both of them organised an Indian Home Rule Society for the liberation of India. They conducted a paper called the *Indian Sociologist* for their revolutionary propaganda. They could not edit the paper from England. So they went to Paris, leaving ‘India House’ in charge of patriotic Indian youths.

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Mr. Ayyar visited one day 'India House' and saw Savarkar, who was also studying for the bar. He was attracted to that short youth and his heroic friends in 'India House'. Mr. Ayyar lodged with them and helped their secret activities. They practised shooting, swordplay and war-techniques. They managed everything by turns and their activities were kept confidential. They sent one of them (Tirumalai), to employ himself under the Scotland Yard Police, simply to hoodwink them with favourable reports. They continued the Indian Home Rule League and held revolutionary meetings each week. They celebrated the birthday of Shivaji, Pratapsingh, Guru Govinda Singh and Nana Saheb. They celebrated the First Indian War of Independence and trained themselves for another such violent-war. Vira Savarkar was the head and Ayyar was the heart of the revolutionary youths. Savarkar was a genius, a fiery patriot, a born champion of Hindustan and Hinduism, a follower of Tilak. As a student in the Ferguson College, he began his revolutionary activities and started a Mitra Mela and Abhinava Bharati Sangha for that purpose. His brother also supported him and for this he was sent to jail. From England Savarkar was sending arms to the revolutionaries in Maharashtra and so Ayyar, to his followers at Pondicherry and Tirunelveli. Nanasahab, Shivaji, Mazzini and Garibaldi were the heroes of these brave men. Savarkar's "Indian War of Independence" was their Bible. Mr. Ayyar was the fervent apostle of militant Nationalism. He daily met Indian youths and leaders in London and implanted the spirit of service for the country in their minds. R. C. Dutt, the great historian, B C. Pal and Lalaji appreciated these youths. The moderate Gokhale, discouraged them. The youths celebrated the jubilee of 1857 very grandly. They issued pamphlets on the Martyrs for India's Freedom. They celebrated Dipavali festival to which they invited Gandhiji who came and helped the youths in preparing vegetarian dishes and served them neatly. Gandhiji taught the spirit of service to the youths. In the evening gathering, Gandhiji presiding, maintained that Ahimsa, sacrifice and truth were the means of freedom and not violence. He appreciated the youths for having created a unity among Indians in London. Savarkar, proposing a vote of thanks to the President, made an impressive speech maintaining that they must follow champions of liberty, like Shivaji, Guru Govind and Nana Saheb with heroic courage and sacrifice. Savarkar stuck to his gun, and Gandhiji to his Ahimsa-charka unto the last. These youths had to meet many treacherous spies sent by the Government and Mr. Ayyar dealt with them boldly and destroyed their false reports. One C.I.D. official named Kirtikar was brought to his senses at bayonet point by Mr. Ayyar. Among these bold youths, there was one engineering student, called *Dingra*. He bore without quail, a needle driven deep into his wrist. This brave daring young man was chosen for special action. For a few months, there was a busy rustle of activities. Suddenly the members of 'India House' dispersed to different places. Savarkar and Ayyar passed their examinations; the barrister certificate came; they returned it, saying that they did not want to practise law at the British Court, that enslaved India. They got back the fees paid for it. Mr. Ayyar was the first non-cooperator.

May 11th 1910; "Horror, horror!" cried London! An Indian youth shot dead Curzon Willy, and his defender, Lal Kaka. Mr. Curzon I.C.S. was an advisor to the Government of India. He was shot in the Imperial Institute by Dingra. The latter was cool; his pulse was normal when he was taken into custody. "I have no ill-will against Curzon Willy; I shot him simply to show others how India must be liberated from the enslavers." He died on the gallows crying, "Thank God! I gave my life for my country!" Another tragedy took place simultaneously in the Nasik-Jackson murder. The gun in action was from India House. Savarkar was arrested and thrown into the jail. Ayyar saw him in jail; Savarkar requested him to hurry on to India and continue the activity, from Pondicherry.

Warrants hounded Ayyar. He assumed the name of V. Vikrama Singh and escaped in a ship to Paris via Amsterdam. The Argus-eyed spies found him with Madame Cama, in

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Paris. There he practised the art of warfare. One day Ayyar and Cama left for Marseilles. A ship was anchored off the coast. A nimble body slipped from the latrine slit into the ocean and swam across to the shore!... Naked, he touched French territory ! The sergeants ran after him crying “ Ho, ho, thief, thief ! catch him ! Mr. Ayyar embraced Savarkar... “Hail Hero!” cried Madame Cama ... But the sergeants quickly arrested him and carried him away. “He is in free France; leave him; you have no power to hold him,” cried Mr. Ayyar. He lodged a complaint in The Hague Committee through the French Govt. He agitated in the Paris papers. Savarkar was taken to Bombay for trial.

Mr. Ayyar escaped the vigilant eyes in the garb of a fakir, set sail for Bombay, met Savarkar in the jail at Nasik and came as a Muslim fakir to Pondicherry. The spies were deceived. Ayyar posted a number of letters from Paris, saying that he was going to Brazil to settle there. The British turned their attention towards Brazil ... A Turkish cap and Allaha Akbar saved Mr. Ayyar from the Andamans, to which Savarkar was sent. Bharati embraced him. Sri Aurobindo, admired his adventure which can only be compared to the escape of Garibaldi to Brazil and Sun Yat Sen to London. The British Govt. came to know of the Ayyar’s stay in Pondicherry after six months. His adventures at Pondicherry are a fit theme for a Dumas or Hugo. With his wife and children, surrounded by vigilant vengeful eyes, (there was a price upon his head), Mr. Ayyar continued his violent activities. He started revolver practice for young men and one of them, Vanchi by name, shot down Mr. Ash, the Sub-Collector of Tuticorin, at the Maniyachi station (17-6-1910). Ash was a repressive collector, who sent to jail the brave Chidambaram Pillai and many other patriots. Repression raged wild in the district ensuing from this tragedy. The police traced and found out Ayyar at Pondicherry to be the cause of this political murder. Threatening clouds of miseries overshadowed his life. Hooligans and hired traitors were howling and prowling around his shelter to carry him away to the British boundary; His ordeals and adventures at Pondicherry remind us of “Jean Val Jean” in Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables*. Rs. 10,000 were offered to anyone who brought away Ayyar dead or alive to the British boundary. One day hooligans besieged his house with a determination to carry him away. Ayyar silently removed his things to another house by the terrace.

Then he sent an air-shot from the top. The hooligans fled away. The spies dropped a jar, containing explosives and incriminating articles. In the backyard well Ayyar’s servant Parvati found them. Mr. Ayyar saw the dangerous articles and secretly toothem to the French Governor, explaining and complaining to him, about the mischief of the cunning spies. The Governor promised him protection. The spies suddenly searched his house and drained the well; they were disappointed. They could not find the incriminating things.

War broke out in Europe; Emden—the terrible torpedo ship was scouring the Bay of Bengal. The political refugees were suspected of having some connection with Germany. So the French and the British proposed to exile them—Sri Aurobindo and Mr. Ayyar, to Algeria. The order of deportation was handed over to them. Sri Ayyar worked at white-beat, day and night, translating the holy Tirukural into English. After finishing the monumental work, Mr. Ayyar saw the French Governor and said, “ We shall go to Algeria—if Rs. 20,000 are sanctioned for our normal expenses.” Money dismayed him. The Governor allowed Mr Ayyar and Sri Aurobindo to remain peacefully at Pondicherry. This was in 1914. S saw Ayyar again in 1917 and he asked S to prepare the ground to start a Gurukula. After the treaty of Versailles in 1919, India had a reformed Government—a Double Govt. The political prisoners were liberated. Mr. Ayyar returned to Madras. He attended the Benares Congress and toured India for one year and then took charge of the Daily, *Desa Bhaktan*. In press and platform, he worked for Gandhiji’s noncooperation movement. He fully accepted the creed of Mahatmajji and sincerely followed him.

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The London–and–Pondicherry–Ayyar disappeared and a new Satvic-Ayyar was created by Gandhiji. He wore a kaddhar dhoti and Chaddar. Tall, stout, strong, sturdy, majestic, with his lion–like face, Ayyar was a magnificent personality. He was in close correspondence with S who contributed to his paper now and then. His leaders were brilliant, substantial, thought–provoking and they were translated into English by other papers. S went to see him one day in Madras; just then, he was taken into custody for a leader in the *Desa Bhaktan*–(which was not written by him) on the charge, that the editor was responsible for all articles in the paper. Ayyar spent nine months in the Bellary jail as an A–class prisoner. He spent the period in writing an illuminating study on **Kamba Ramayanam**. Coming out, he presided over the Dt. Congress session at Koilpatti; but just as the conference began, he was served with 144, prohibiting speech. He then visited Kallidaikurichi where he took charge of the National school. That was a stepping stone to Bharadwaja Gurukulam at Shermadevi which he started next year.

Mr. Ayyar began his great educational work here and S had the fortune of being his lieutenant.

49. NEW EDUCATION

Sri Ayyar gave S a warm welcome. “Here is a Yogi, a great Poet, the author of the monumental work, *Bharata Shakti*. He will live among us as a Rishi of the Ashram and serve us with his pen and tongue ” said Ayyar in a welcome gathering held in the prayer class. S conducted the prayer with a new song composed by him then. S gave away his all to the Gurukulam. He ate groundnuts, plantains and curds with Mr. Ayyar and delightfully spent his days in reading master poets–Kamban, Tagore, Kalidas, Shakespeare, Homer, Racine, Victor Hugo, Shelley, Byron, Milton etc. He who trained heroes and martyrs up to 1915, trained now Brahmacharins who would be the future heroes of the Motherland. The Gurukula contained 100 students from various parts of the country. They got a man–making education and their progress was wonderful.

In a wilderness, full of thorny bushes and reptiles, a charming cultural centre of art and literature was created by the strenuous effort of the Acharya (Mr Ayyar) and his obedient assistants and the enthusiastic students. Two big old wells were cleared and made fit for drinking. The wells supplied sufficient water for the Ashram fields and gardens. The inmates joyfully ploughed the fields spread manures on them, tended the crops and gathered the harvest. They spun and wove their own clothes. They spread sand beneath the trees to hold classes. Small cottages were built of the dry grass gathered from the Kolindina hills nearby. The inmates chopped down bamboos to build huts. Even bricks were laid by the Ashramites. Cooking too was done by the Ashramites in a simple way which was healthy and clean. Clothes were washed by Fullers’s mud, not by soap. Shaving too was done by one of the Ashramites. So self–help was the first lesson taught there. Even boys from rich families adjusted themselves to the new discipline. S made them active scouts who willingly worked for the better. They were trained to face life with patience and courage. At night they kept sentry, patrolling the Ashram area by turns. Thieves and robbers were caught red–handed and punished by Ayyar himself without sending them to the Police Station. Thieves became honest labourers. The students became strong and agile, hale and healthy as they lived on ragi, rice, vegetables coconuts and buttermilk. Tea, coffee, tamarind and chillies and onions were prohibited. None complained about food except a few gluttons now and then. At the call of the dinner-bell students formed a circle round S who conducted the prayer with a new song daily composed for the purpose. Then they silently ate their meals and stood up after singing a prayer to God. After dinner Sri Ayyar and S read Kamban’s Ramayana making a comparative study of it with Tulasi and Valmiki, Homer and Kalidasa. Then they meditated for fifteen minutes. “Poetry

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and yoga shall be your great occupations in the Ashram. At night you can do your yoga and during the day read me your poems,” said the gracious Ayyar. S read to him daily, his Bharata Shakti and he suggested improvements in it. It was rewritten in the Gurukulam. A library of precious works helped S to improve his knowledge. Mr. Ayyar gave him many fine works for study and discussed their merit during private conversations.

A press was started. S gave all his money for the press and for the Bala Bharati of which he was the editor-in-charge. Bala Bharati was the only illustrated monthly of those days which appealed to cultured readers. S contributed to it selections from the Bharata Shakti, wrote articles on the Gita, Upanishads, life and teachings of Saints and Godmen, and masterpieces of the world. All have come out in book form. He was in charge of the Ashram, when very often Mr. Ayyar went on tours. He had the satisfaction of fulfilling his great aims in imparting Brahmacharya culture to students. It was a new system of practical education—a real Basic Education.

The Ashram worked silently and calmly at the foot of the hill. Duties were done by bell calls. At 4 a.m. the morning bell rang; and the whole Ashram rose up with melodious tunes. They went out, returned, and cleaned their teeth; after ten minutes meditation, they did manual work and physical exercise. Asans and pranayam were compulsory to all. Then repeating Tamil or Sanskrit verses like Kural or Gita, all went in two rows with S for a bath in the river. They did Gayatri or Ramnam as they returned. Then at seven they took breakfast and went to their lessons—Tamil, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Mathematics, Sciences, Geography, literature etc. They listened to the teacher with concentration. At noon they again cleaned their bodies, said their prayers and sat for dinner all together. After dinner they turned the charka with thrilling songs for 45 minutes to spin yarn for their clothes. At two again the school continued. There was music class at 4-30. At five the boys and girls did gardening work. Sometimes they played football, they practised wrestling, fencing, archery etc. until 6 pm. Then they took their bath, did their Sandhya and came together for Bhajan. Melodious songs were sung after japam and meditations. This over, the students took their supper at 6-30. They studied their lessons for two hours and then Indian history and the stories of world heroes, astronomy, geography etc. were taught to them. Then they committed to memory poems of great poets and took to their beds at 10 pm. with pure thoughts. S taught yoga for a group of worthy students. They became teachers of others. Ten of his students made good progress in yoga which helped them to learn lessons quickly and to rekindle the latent genius in others.

The Ashram celebrated memorable days—the birthdays of Tilak, Gandhi, Bharati, Sivaji, Ramakrishna, Dayananda, Vivekananda etc. and also holy festivals like Navaratri and Ramanavami. They did Bhajan singing the songs of inspired saints and the new songs of S. Mr. Ayyar spoke on those occasions about Brahmacharya cult and national freedom. S used to address the students on purity of life, unity of hearts and divinity of the soul.

One noteworthy feature of the Gurukula culture was that each moment was self-culture and education. S took all the students and the teachers to distant places on foot, covering ten miles per day holding regular classes on the way according to the timetable. These travelling classes did much good to the boys. He visited high schools and colleges on the way to teach science and geography to his students. They visited temples and conducted mass prayers; the temple authorities were good enough to feed them all. The Brahmacharins recompensed them by their physical help and aesthetic services like songs and decorations. On riverbeds morning and evening, mass prayers were held. Bhajan parties went round the town or village followed by friends in large numbers. At the end of every street, S lectured on our Dharma, on the Gita, on yoga and on hygiene. People willingly invited the party to their homes and feasted them. Sometimes the party collected

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rice and food materials during Bhajans and cooked food for all. Wherever they found charkas, the students spun and wove wherever they found a loom. They demonstrated Asans and Pranayamas before the public and the touring school conducted by S was a great success. The dramas staged by the party attracted the masses. Thus they visited the following places: Tirunelveli, Sri Vaikuntam, Alvar Tirunagari, Kulasekarapatnam, Tiruchendur, Banatirtam, Agastya Hills, the grand Kalyan falls, Papanasam, Vikramasingapuram, Kalladaikurichi, Kadayam, Tenkasi, Kuttralam, Chenkottai, Padmanabapuram, Varkalai, Kolachal, Kottarakarai, Neyattangarai, Qilon, Tiruvanandapuram, Vaikam, Nanguneri, Tisayanvalai (kaddhar centre), Nagarkoil, Kanyakumari etc. Money poured in during meetings and Bhajans. More than Rs. 5000 were collected during these tours; that money was utilised for putting up new palmleaf sheds for students.

50. COMMUNAL TUSSLE

The monthly journal, Bala Bharati, was a grand success among the cultured. The Gurukul was flourishing smoothly. Ayyar's name became famous. This roused up envy in the heart of enemies—for there are hostile forces behind any good movement in this world. Or, why should Jesus hang on the Cross? Why was Shankara poisoned and Gandhiji shot down? God also wanted the Pilgrim to go further and not to remain stagnant in a cockpit of human opposites. God stimulated him forward by revealing the nature of human affairs. Any movement of egoistic personality is doomed to end in a fiasco. All quarrels are bred in the mind which is egocentric, fed by desire, envy, pettiness and passion. Mr. Caste-prejudice threw wanton aspersions on Ayyar and his colleagues. "Ah Brahmin Gurukul ... Two Brahmin boys are fed inside the kitchen. The dead Sanskrit is revived; Ayyar has a thread; he performs Sandhya Japam and ceremonies... Ayyar sings a lullaby to babies while the country wants stalwart heroes... etc.etc" Such complaints coming in influential papers, poisoned the public mind. The Congress had donated Rs. 5000 for the Gurukulam. In Malaya Rs. 20,000 were collected. But it was withheld. All sources of public help were stopped by hostile propaganda. Ah, Ayyar, who never shed tears one day told S: "Life is miserable; the tragic end of my life is near..." He often came to the Kutir of S and heard Danava Kandam in the Bharata Shakti and drew some consolation. But his mind was tortured by the wicked vituperation of destructive critics in the papers. Enemies threatened to invade the Ashram and burn it.

Ayyar at once packed all precious books and manuscripts into a big dealwood box. While helping him in that act S told him "Let them come; I shall stand at the gate with sword in hand." Ayyar took his sword, looked at it for five minutes... and then ejaculated "Come what may ... the spirit of 1910 is still burning in me..." This was overheard by a talebearer who reported it at once to the enemies mobilised by So-and-So. So and So knew only word bullets whereas Ayyar had dealt with live bullets. The invasion was hushed up. Silly anonymous letters poured in. Mr. Meanness wrote: "Sir, I dropped 4 annas in your charity box. I do not want to encourage your Gurukulam. Hence return the money or I will be serious" "Sir, send back my son; I do not want to place him in a Brahminism" Like this postcards were coming. One silly man wrote ten letters with all the filthy words found in the dictionary in ten different ways. Innocent Ayyar! He bore with patience the crown of thorns. He did not want to intensify acrimonies by attacking the opposing parties. He left the future to judge him. He attended the Congress assembly at Tiruvannamalai. There he met the opposers. They refused to come to terms. In despair Ayyar went to see Ramana Maharshi. Before his presence the agony burning in the heart of the Heroic Ayyar calmed down. The Maharshi was a regular reader of the Bala Bharati. He enquired about S. Ganapati Sastri, a great Vedic scholar offered to pacify the oppos-

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ers. He came to the Gurukul; or did Bhagavan send him for S? ... For, S became his bosom friend and the Sastri requested S to come away to T'malai and continue his meditation at the feet of Ramana. He prophesied that S would certainly go to Ramana and meditate in the hill cave. S told Sastri all his ordeals and wanted to see Ramana at once... But Ayyar would not part with him. The communal tussle opened his eyes.

S took the Brahmacharins to Kanyakumari. There he meditated on the Vivekananda Rock. The Pilgrim S thought of his past and present and he prayed to the Pure Almighty Grace for a better future—a future that could fulfil his Pilgrim Soul in the Divine atonement. He felt the temple of integral realisation still far away.

51. ON VIVEKANANDA ROCK

Here sat Vivekananda whose life mission was inspired by Thy ocean—Voice; O Pure Almighty grace! Thou art my sole protection, my sole refuge. I breathe in the hope of Thy mercy. I bear the burden of life with the strength of Thy Grace. Thy message comes to me from the ecstasy of this Ocean-Dance. Feed me with the flames of Thy cosmic energy. Let I and mine be eaten away by those flames of Divinity. Plant Thy victorious vision of Yogic Splendour into me. Clasp me with the fullness of Thy smiling Grace. My heart sings with the vast ocean. From Thee I came, in Thee I live, and into Thee I merge. Thou art my all. Lead me to the fulfilment of Thy Will, O Compassion! My tears mingle with this ocean of limitless bounty. O, Healing Grace, at the slightest glance of Thy Will, my cares and anxieties shall disappear. My mental wounds shall heal. I twist round Thy feet in utter surrender and submission. Fill this weak empty reed with Thy songful breath. Tune this humble Vina into a delightful harmony of Thy transcendent art. Under the diamond canopy of the moonlit heaven I sit alone with Thy Omnipresence and mingle my silent prayer with the tumultuous hymn of the waves. As I sit upon this rock, once occupied by the Lion of Vedanta, my heart goes to pining humanity, shackled by the heavy chains of mental slavery. I see men and women pale with fear, cares, anxieties, poverty, ignorance, sloth, villainy, treachery and sinful thoughts, words and deeds. The brute in man forges dangerous weapons of mass murder. The tears of our ancient Mother cry day and night here for Thy mercy. Is there deliverance for India, for humanity? O Mercy, cherish Thy Race here with love and light. Remove our mental gloom by a flash of Thy hopeful smile. Pour Thy nectarine Grace upon our parched life and make our Being brimful of blessed peace and bliss!

Fear, ignorance and ego, illusion of the divided mind, I-ness and my-ness, the tangled knots of complicated castes and religions—let them vanish totally by a total surrender of the human to the inner Divine. The multiple is a varied unity of the many in the Unique One. Give us the strength to hold high the standard of spiritual socialism. Give us the voice to declare the unity of nations in the eternal freedom of the Pure Spirit. Give us the joy of dancing with the rapturous symphony of Nature and the celestial flow of Krishna's flute. Let us enjoy his flute and obey His conch. Let all sorrows be scorched in the flaming Yogic fire. Let all of us be one communion growing towards one equal divinity. Let our hearts be strung into a garland of triumphant Love dedicated to Thee in humanity. Give us valour, heroism, strength and conquering adventurous spirit to face thunder and storm and go forward to fulfil Thy universal mission of purity, unity, and divinity. Let our life be a living fountain of radiant joy and divine energy. Let us see man and woman as two forms of one blissful Spirit. Let clannish disputations, selfish falsehoods disappear before the dawn of Thy Truth—Light! Let our Motherland smile with the freedom of her soul. Let it be a land of happy fields, rich yields, large bounties, endless enjoyments, and limitless wealth. Let her sons and daughters be torches of Truth—Light. No more sham shows and shrinking lives! Let us be living fountain of Thy cosmic energy, enjoying the abundance of divine

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beauty and spiritual bliss. Give us the heart to live for the welfare of the commonweal. Let not insolence crush innocence. Let poverty perish root and branch and love, honesty, truth, righteous dignity, luminous wisdom, opulence and concord flourish in our existence. Let heaven wed the earth in happy felicity. Give us the heart to think in terms of humanity, universe and Unique Divine. Give us the resource to adore Thee in collective humanity by consecrated service. Hail Pure Almighty Grace... Salutations !

With a new resolve S returned to Sri Ayyar to open a new page in his life. The inner voice spoke again "Onward pilgrim..."

52. THE LAST CONVERSATION

S and Ayyar attended the Kamban Festival held in the Hindu College School, Tirunelveli. After the meeting they went to the Tamaravaruni river bed, had Sandhya and meditation and fruit diet. Learned scholars came there. They spoke of Kamban and Kalidas. A spy was watching them from a distance. Friends took leave. S and Ayyar were left alone with silent nature. Except for the murmuring symphony of the river, there was no noise. Ayyar revealed his heart to S that night.

A: Day by day my heart yearns for inner realisation. You are blessed; you have taken sanyasa early in life. Life in the world is full of cares and anxieties. A storm in the mind overthrows peace. Past impressions thickly gather overclouding the mind.

S: The gnostic equilibrium is overthrown by sensations, perceptions and impressions. Sankalpas and Samskaras (modifications and past impressions) toss the mind and unbalance it. We must not feel the burden of life and work. One must surrender to God, allow Nature to achieve its will and be a simple witness. God is the doer, and enjoyer of the result.

A: We grasp all these intellectually; but in actual life we are misled by the world's illusion. I cannot run the Ashram in the teeth of communal agitation. I retire from tomorrow. Will you take charge of it? You are fit, free, calm and strong.

S: It will be like Arjuna deserting the battle field. I am here only for you. I am not much hopeful about the future of the Ashram. Let us concentrate upon Bala Bharati.

A: Merit weeps; honesty sobs broken hearted. I think it better to take to yoga and be calm. I do not see any clear way out of the cold and bold wars going on around my name.

S: Throw open the kitchen for all. Caste must go away any day.

A: My aspiration is to do Dwija Samskar for all and create a Dasa Simha group of heroes who will be prototypes of Guru Givinda Singh. Ganapati Sastri is ready to do the Upanayana for all.

S: Excuse me. I am not for creating another caste or group and thread ceremony for all is an antiquated idea. Upanayanam is opening of the spiritual eye by meditation. Thread will create more disturbance. Today we must unite all. Simply make the mess and kitchen common. All are equal in soul.

A: Let us go to Madras and consult Mahatmaji. Anyhow, I am tired of the world and life; my end is near. Please take charge of the Gurukul and Bala Bharati.

S: God calls me within and conscience commands me to go forward. Gurukulam is a failure; I shall run the Bala Bharati for some months and then follow the Divine Call.

After a restless night both went to Madras to meet Mahatma Gandhi. This momentous meeting was later on reported in journals.

53. BOLO RAM! KARO KAM !!

Sri V. V. S. Ayyar, a great scholar and hero of our Freedom Struggle, was my bosom friend and leader.

We both directed the Bharadwaja Ashram at Shermadevi; the Ashram was so called because our Gotra was Bharadwaja.

The Ashram went on finely with a hundred Brahmacharins who came from various parts of India. Dedicated souls helped us to make the Ashram a success.

I taught science, English literature and scouting and took the students often on excursions, conducting classes on the way, singing songs and collecting money for the upkeep of the Ashram from the willing public.

We taught students Sanskrit which we considered as the spiritual Lingua franca of Bharat.

Some social problems impeded our progress and we went to Mahatma Gandhi for a solution. Gandhiji was then put up in Amjat Bhag, the mansion of Sriman S. Srinivasa Ayyangar. At the time we went. Sri S. Satyamurti with six other leaders was raising his stentorian voice against Mr. Winston Churchill who had then called Mahatma, a half-naked Fakir.

The prattle in the British Parliament had led to the rattle of tongues and battle of words here!

We tore into the thick of the verbal battle and reached the hall where Mahatmaji was gracefully sitting in *Virasan* and spinning; for, he believed that every yard spun on the charka took us many miles forward to freedom.

We saluted Mahatmaji and sat before him repeating Ram Nam. Gandhiji's heart and tongue were humming Ram Nam with the Charka's "Aum". But the leaders' verbal battle challenged the peace of Ram Nam!

Gandhiji gently said, "Bharatiji, Chant Gita".

I recited the sixth chapter: when I sang "*Uddharet Atmanatmanam*" Gandhiji said, "Yes, Freedom rests in our hands: we have to raise ourselves by our own soul-force and that soul-force comes by constant repetition of Ram Nam. Work is in our hands and the fruit follows His Will."

I repeated the stanza: "*Karmanyeva adhikaraste: maa phaleshu kadachana*" which carried the same sense.

Gandhiji had finished his daily spinning by this time and soon heard our plea.

He gave us a written solution to our problem stating, "Food must be prepared purely and shared commonly."

He appreciated the teaching of Sanskrit in the ashram.

As Gandhiji was talking to us, Sri Satyamurti and other leaders trooped into the hall and scrummed round Mahatmaji. Mahatmaji looked at them through his magic spectacles and remarked, "Your rattling tongue has drowned the voice of the Gita! Bharatiji chants the Gita and you..."

Satyamurti: "Gandhiji! I read Gita and Ramayana every day."

Gandhiji: "You read; but do you heed the voice of the Gita and the Ramayana? What do they teach you? Do you know?"

Satyamurti: "Ours is to read and yours is to teach. We want to know from you what the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* teach!"

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Sri S. Srinivasa Ayyangar walked in at that time from his chamber with impatient steps and said, “Gandhiji, we have no time for Gita or Ramayana. First Swaraj, then Gita.”

Gandhiji: “I would rather put it like this: First Gita and then Swarajya.”

Sri S. Srinivasa Ayyangar went hastily inside the kitchen where his wife Smt. Ranganayaki whispered into his ears “Mind, it is a Mahatma with whom you talk. Perumal (God) has brought him to our home... Go and get Upadesam (spiritual advice) from him. Come, come!”

This whisper transformed him. Sri Srinivasa Ayyangar came before Gandhiji who was picking the scattered pieces of cotton. Giving those pieces to Smt. Ranganayaki, Gandhiji said: “Waste not little pieces; you can make a wick out of them for the oil lamp!”

Smt. Ranganayaki reverentially took them and made wicks, lit an oil lamp and placed it by the side of Gandhiji and it shone like a pearly smile in the twilight!

Gandhiji: “See your wife ... She is a Mahalakshmi who has lit the lamp of wisdom!”

Ayyangar: “Gandhiji, I simply said we have no time for Gita and Ramayana; please tell us in two phrases what they teach.”

Gandhiji remained with eyes closed in meditation, listening to his heartbeat which kept tune to Ram Nam.

Gandhiji: “Would you follow what I tell you?”

“Yes Yes “ was the united reply from ten mouths.

Gandhiji looked seriously and said, “Let this be our dynamic mantra: “*BOLO – RAM KARO – KAM*” All echoed his voice, saying “*Bolo-Ram, Karo-Kam!*”

Gandhiji further explained, “Gita is a scripture of dedicated action and *Ramayana* is the story of Rama’s consecrated action to quell the hostiles and uphold Dharma. So, *Bolo-Ram Karo-Kam!*”

A chorus of the sacred melody swept the crepuscule with the refrain “*BOLO-RAM KARO-KAM! BOLO-RAM KARO-RAM.*”

All kept time to the rhythm of the *Mantra* and Sri Satyamurti began to dance to the ecstatic tune of *Bolo-Ram, Karo-Kam* and the twilight–lamp too danced in joy.

54. ART OF POETRY

Ayyar resigned everything and read the Bharata Shakti and revelled in Kamban.

Poetry is a supreme gift of God; it is the art of arts; it is a mantra of the Real. The ear enjoys music, the eye painting; but something deeper is needed to appreciate poetry. A poet embodies himself in his song. The head heart and soul must identify themselves with the poet’s idea to comprehend it fully. Poetry is a difficult art. In the course of the human evolution we have met with very few immortal poets. Poetry is not an array of words set to metrical beats. It is not a Johnsonian jingle. A singer’s harp is different from a juggler’s drum. An inspired poem is different from mere metrical jingle. Poetry is a great formative power. It is an inner vision embodied in a spontaneous flow of rhythmic expressions. Pleasure and pastime are not its purpose. Poetry has a mission beyond them. It is a delightful fountain of the spirit cherishing the beautiful Garden of Existence harmoniously. Poetry is a self–revelatory rhythm high in emotion, deep in thought and far in vision. The poet is not a mere composer. He is a messenger of Truth and harmonious living, a medium between life and spirit. His creative word opens human eyes to the vision of the Divine in man. The Poet’s insight sees a new dawn of hope for humanity. The Poet is the prince of Renaissance; he is the channel of new life and the harbinger of new humanity. Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa, Kamban. Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, Racine, Moliere, Victor Hugo, Goethe, Pushkin, Virgil, Dante, Homer, and Tagore and Aurobindo are the master Poets known to us.

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Sri Ayyar appreciated the Bharata Shakti and other poems and requested S to concentrate upon poetry and give the Bharata Shakti to the world in perfect poetic shape and substance. He blessed the work with a thrilling preface. “This is a monumental Epic of Supermen that can very well take its place among masterpieces of the world. From the beginning of the new world, up to its spiritual transformation it gives us a treasure of evolutionary ideas. It deals with all the spiritual and historic personalities. The author lives the life of a Maharshi. I have closely observed his spiritual life. I have seen him writing from inspiration. Bharata Shakti is a gift to the New Era of humanity. It is the Mahakavya of this age!”

The beloved Ayyar introduced to journals the national songs of S too. S was known to the public at large by the blessings of the large-hearted Ayyar.

The agitation grew wild and anti-papers were emitting vital poison against the Gurukulam and the Dwija samskaram. He little cared for the ignoble strife. He never spoke a single word derogating the other party.

Sri Ayyar and S were to go to the Belgaum Congress. But S remained in the Ashram and met the critical situation tactfully. The Ayyar wrote to S a touching letter from Belgaum in which he said among other things “Mahatma Gandhiji finished the Congress session in a single day. He did not read his presidential address. He delivered the substance in half an hour and proceeded further. I met all leaders. All are one with Mahatmaji. Only in the South, the destiny is hard against us. I saw Savarkar in Ratnagiri. He is as agile as ever...”

He brought with him plenty of books as usual, mostly books on the Sikh Gurus. He requested S to read all and write in verses the life of Guru Govinda Singh. S did so and Ayyar appreciated his poem and himself wrote in prose the same. These were read in the Vira Sangham which was meant to rouse a heroic spirit in the land. S was its secretary. Six months rolled on thus in the delight of the muse and in meditation. The last day came. Alas, what a fatal day...!

55. FAREWELL! FAREWELL!

The Brahmacharins of the Ashram started for the Kalyan falls. They sang with the birds “The Pilgrimage is long. Be bold, Pilgrims, The Sun and Stars shall guide us all. Our captain is God and our light is Conscience. Go forward, Pilgrims...” Ayyar blessed them all. The whole Ashram went for an excursion. Ayyar, his daughter and S were in the Ashram. S had heavy work with the Bala Bharati—the whole department was in his hands and also the Ashram, accounts and management.

S was writing treatise on the Gita which was appearing in the Bala Bharati. The sixth chapter of the Gita said: “O Krishna, my mind is perturbed...”

Ayyar came repeating the same and said:

A: Indeed, my mind is perturbed. I feel my end is near. In the morning, Subadra compelled me to take her to the Kalyan falls.

S: Something pains me; my heart weeps unawares. It is better you cancel your tours.

(Subadra came running now and said: “Father, my kit is ready; let us go”. Fatal maid!).

A: The mind is a stormy sea tossing here and there. Confusion! To be or not to be—We become Hamlets everyday.

(S: read a chapter from his Bharata Shakti—chapter on meditation).

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A: It is sweet to hear. Bharata Shakti is a great work. It must be published and also translated into English. It is a Mahakavyam. Bharati, read the chapter on Guru Govinda Singh again.

(S read it and also a poetic version of Ayyar's adventurous life).

A: My life too! What am I, a straw in the whirling destiny. What do I know even after reading and writing so much? Our future is a mystery. I know one thing: Life is an adventure. We have to face it or fall down.

S: Yes; there is a Master behind the mystery of the world. Its riddle cannot be unravelled by the mind; day or night, we have to follow the inner light. Even to print any of my works, I am not bold. My conscience says: "Wait for the right time". I have your blessings. That is a great encouragement for me, You are my real brother, my guide and my hero.

A: Enough ... enough.

S: Sainly scholar, sacred friend, O mother-like heart—Ayyar, your greatness shall shine like the sun. I have written your great life in prose and poetry. I will publish it one day. We can improve this Gurukul like Shantiniketan and Dayalbagh and start industries here to maintain it. Let us break the begging bowl. Let us widen out press, journal and publications. There shall be a big science institute here to make researches. We will train our Brahmacharins as skilled workers, and industrial scientists.

A: That is our aspiration. To build up a system of Brahmacharya culture which shall give the country saints and savants, scholars and heroes, scientists and discoverers; poets, like Vyasa, Kampan, Valluvar, Shakespeare and Hugo ... But the future is mysterious! I imagine the unforeseen scenes of my life from Varaganeri to Tiruchi, Tiruchi to Rangoon, Rangoon to London, London to India House, thence to Paris, Paris to Bombay, thence to Pondicherry with this Turkish cap... Pondicherry to Shermadevi and Shermadevi to Kalyan falls... thence ... I do not know ... Life is a mystery—reel of Fate...(He put the cap upon the head and looked serious!)

S: Fate, fate! gigantic projects crumble before petty jealousies. Great hearts and heads come to us; we have not the heart and head to honour them and utilise their genius. Tagore, Gandhiji and Shraddhanand in the North built up Ashrams and they are flourishing. One Ayyar found a Gurukul here and communal storms are shattering it. Pity pity! But one day people will recognise your indomitable brain and innocent heart which offends none. We have sown a seed and feed it with the blood of our sacrifice. We will see the leaves, flowers and fruits. The seed—spirit shall not die.

A: Bharati, I do not hope to see even the leaves. My life is tragic. The future is dim and gloomy, I go with the satisfaction of having done my duty; God knows my conscience... That is all...

The bell rang for dinner Ayyar sat by my side. His daughter served food enthusiastically. After dinner she sang and played the violin. S was busy with the Bala Bharati. Ayyar corrected the proof of his story Anarkali.

The fatal clock struck, done, done, done. 3 P. M. Ayyar with Subadra came to S to bid farewell ... eternal farewell, alas!

A: 4.30! Bharati, we go! Take charge of the Ashram. Tomorrow Bala Bharati must be bound; the next day posted. Farewell ... Aum!

S: Return as early as possible ... Aum, Aum!

Ayyar looked brilliant in spite of the care etching lines on his aged visage. The golden evening sun was writing upon it a poem of chiselled beauty but with a tragic colour. A manly man, a stately hero, a saint in white clothes, with a flowing grey beard, lion-like

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mien, sturdy frame, strong muscles, a form with broad chest, iron hands; the tender hearted hero marches forward. The daughter follows him like a lovely fawn ... The Raja Rishi of grand simplicity and plain majesty disappears into space... With her green sari and smiling face, the angelic Subadra walks like a jasmine creeper by his side. S watches them off. Then he closes the Ashram–gate and goes to his duty. He is all alone in the Ashram with one assistant to look after the kitchen...

Next day ... S was restless ... something was troubling him. He had a bad vision in his meditation ... What has become of Ayyar ... No news!

Next morning Anantakrishnan came sobbing and swooning “Ah, Ayyar has fallen into the roaring current following his daughter ... Ah fatal hour ! fatal falls! fatal girl ! fatal Tamilnad!.”

S took a scout–run to Kalladaikurichi ... thence he hurried in a jatka to the Kalyan falls ... Ah ... what a misfortune! what a disaster! The dream of ages was swept away by a flashing current of fate! S wept and felt as if he should also jump in the current and meet the beloved of his heart in heaven. But what is the use? ... Who knows the beyond! “Quick, attend to your mission in life ” urged the inner voice.

Just then Ayyar’s body was brought out and that of his daughter...His wife hurried from Tiruchi and wept ... S wept and wept ... All wept! the mountains wept ... trees wept ... the pitiless waterfall wept ... But Fate was standing petrified. S stood aghast! Ayyar had become a cadaver! His beard was gone. His face had been picked by fishes and his body eaten by water insects. S turned his face. He had no faith in ceremonies. He dedicated a touching elegy to Ayyar and returned to his office after making arrangements for Ayyar’s wife at Kalladaikurichi. He read the Gita and took courage. One garb has gone, He will return in another garb. He was a Karma Yogin full of ideas and aspirations. He will reincarnate.

How did this happen? Ayyar was explaining with the aid of his binoculars the Hill View and infusing a spirit of adventure into the boys and girls. He spoke of Hannibal and Napoleon, crossing the Alps. He spoke of Pratapsingh fighting the enemy up the hills of Komalmer and of Leonidas at Thermoply ... Listening to his spirited words, the students reached the summit and were ready to scale the heights down to Malabar. From Agastya hills to Malabar will be a fine adventure–thought they. Fired by enthusiasm, a Brahmacharin crossed a slippery chasm to the opposite rock. Others followed him. Subadra too ventured in spite of a warning from her father. “Ah, Appah!”– A silvery voice! a lightning form mingled with the roaring current ... Ah Subadra! a roaring voice ... a Titan frame mingled with the tumultuous falls....

The Titan was fighting with the rapid current for a minute and then fate carried him to the Heavens. The dreadful current swept away the famous heroic scholar, in a sudden twinkle! The Pilgrim’s destiny too changed suddenly...

Now ... Papers moaned and condoled the sudden tragic end of the brave hero...! For a month S went about addressing condolence meetings. V.V.S. was the foremost topic in press and on the platform. How long? Few days! The daily papers with headlines about Ayyar, went on to grocery shops. Gandhiji too paid a few lines of tribute to the departed Ayyar. But everything faded into the chaos of petty quarrels and party bickerings for power. The music of the Charka was heard in Sabarmati where Gandhiji was confined to his Hridaya Kunj. The Swarajya Party was parading its power politics strutting into the council, then walking out ... ! The leader Chittaranjan Das died, Subrabmanya Siva died. The message of Death warned S as usual. S was the editor, printer and publisher of the Bala Bharati. He conducted Bala Bharati and the Ashram for six months faithfully. He spent all his money ... to the last pie ... He ran the press with

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the help of the Brahmacharins. Mr. Anti–Ayyar came, saw and went. S was equal to all. He reformed the kitchen and made all eat together. Even then the other party was not satisfied. Funds stopped. Friends stopped Trends stopped! The Ashram was like a crumbling temple sans idol. The inmates were never mates! Hate, hate, hate! ‘Kindly take a class Sir!’ , Who are you to command me, Vap!’ ‘Please stamp the journal’ dear Sir, ‘I, to stamp! Val Val!’” One day a firebrand came at midnight, and printed seditious songs. When objected to, he threw all the types overboard, broke the machines and ran away. Each remained to eat and quarrel and not to help or work ... Unfortunate Tamils! Unfortunate Ashram! From that day S lost all faith in institutions which deteriorated after the founders. S took a vow to be free from organisations, personalities, Ashrams and institutions. S had a mission and that would be fulfilled silently... No more bondage of disciples, ashrams, kitchen pinpricks, donations, critics and seandalmongers. Shame follows fame and blame follows name! None is happy. Happy is he who lives alone; unattached... free free... ! *Recently S visited the place. It was in utter ruins, all deserted; such is the fate and failure of wanton human creations!

But Karma dragged him on ... The Time Spirit called him for another field of service. He had a call to edit the Samarasa Bhodhini at Tanjore.

56. TANJORE EXPERIENCE

An era of cultural life suddenly changed into a period of Rural reconstruction in Tanjore District. S became a nomad again. He was now the editor of a triweekly called Samarasa Bhodhini in the West Main Street, Tanjore. He shed three tears of pining grief before he left the portals of the Tamil Gurukulam—one for the beloved V.V.S, one for the fate of the orphaned Gurukul in ruins, and one for the unfortunate Tamil Nad which does not know how to use its great men while alive. He left everything behind and reached Tanjore with a loin cloth. The proprietor of the triweekly welcomed him grandly, and gave him a cosy room for writing and meditation. For one year the pen played on the paper pouring out the dreams of a thinking mind. Articles on yoga, naturopathy, Spiritual Socialism, Daily Meditations, stories, novels, poems, commentaries on events of the day, local news, India news, World news, Gandhian Policy of Rural reconstruction and many interesting items made the paper popular. S took a scout run to Vennar River at 4 a.m. After ablution he finished yogic practices and meditation in a grove nearby, and came walking to the office at 7 am and plunged into reading papers and writing for the paper. By 10 a.m. he finished everything and then took his usual fruit–nut food, reading good books while eating. Then he saw proofs and finished off the official routine at 2 pm. Afterwards he left for the Saraswati Mahal Library in the Palace to read and take notes. The library of Rajah Sharfoji had a very rare collection of useful ancient works. They helped him to enrich his works on yoga. Yoga Siddhi was finished and given a standard form and printed in the Purnananda Press where Samarasa Bhodhini was published. S wrote books on art, science, music and yoga.

He often visited Thyagaraja Samadhi at Tiruvaiyar and meditated there composing his inspirations into melodious songs. He met many good artists at the Thyagaraja festival. The inspired poet sang from the Soul, rather the Soul sang from his heart. It is the Soul that paints an artist’s dreams at the point of his brush. It is the Soul that fashions images of grace and beauty from the sculptor’s chisel. The entrancing music of a Master Singer flows from the inner Spring of psychic emotions. Such were the songful words of St. Thyagaraja, Shyama Sastri, Dikshitar, Gopalakrishna Bharati, Ramalingam and Vedanayagam Pillai

*Swami Chidbhananda of Sri Ramakrishna Thapovanam, renovated the Ashram in honour of Ayyar and it is maintained by the Tapovanam, with the original Name, Bharadwaj Ashram

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who were all contemporaries. S studied their lives and wrote books about them. His songs too were now gaining public recognition.

POLITICS

S entered the political arena now. He was welcomed as a leader of the Tamil Nad. But he was disgusted with the dog-fight of power politicians and cacophony of sectarians. He attended on invitation the National Congress presided over by Sarojini Naidu who spoke mostly on rural reconstruction. But leaders indulged in instruction more than construction and their life of ease and luxury led to rural as well as urban destruction. Corruption set in the Congress camp; divisions dissolved today what they resolved yesterday. He attended the Conjeevaram conference, took part in its deliberations and called for an Editors' Conference over which he presided. This Provincial Congress in 1924 was the Surat of South India. Mudaliar wanted national representation. Naicker fought for communal representation allowing Brahmins 3% seats. Thus a part of the community could not have any voice in the Congress. That noisy Congress which ended in a fiasco of passionate scenes, hushed up the Voice of Mother India who wanted unity and harmony. The same noise, and the same party fanfare, disturb the political tragedy, the same communal vendetta. They speak of equality and they do not care for quality. Their equality is but skin deep, nay kith-and-kin-deep. "All are equal but my caste is great, right or wrong." If A is the head of a particular department, A-group predominates in it refusing opportunity for the rest. Political opportunist sycophancy gained the upper hand so that true merit remained hushed up in obscurity. S had brilliant prospects in politics for he had dared through dangers for national freedom. But a timely warning came from the Jnana siddha who sent *Yogaprakash* to see S. S met him accidentally in the Kamakshi temple. He was a graduate, a scholar, a perfect yogin trained by the great Siddha. They understood each other and hence spoke without reserve.

S: I have wasted precious time in politics which I repent. But my path is still dark. Scandal and slander of vandals, suicidal fratricides, hellish noise against the inner Voice — this is politics of the day.

Y. P: The Siddha saw me in Uttara Kasi and spoke about you. Bend; you will be straight. Be simple and humble and you will be high and grand. Do not sacrifice yoga for politics. Sow the seeds of spiritual socialism in villages.

S: That is what I want. This candle shall not be shaken by political winds. The Tree of Eternity shall put forth blossoms of spiritual aroma. Yoga is my mission. It can mend the zigzags of religions dividing humanity into narrow selfish camps.

Y. P: But remember this instruction of the Siddha. Your awakened yoga must appeal to the soul of humanity. Your spiritual current must flow from heart to heart. March like a star towards the New Dawn and pour yourself into His Golden effulgence. Now for meditation...

Yoga Prakash remained with S for a month. Both went to Madras. They stayed in the Ramakrishna Home. Swami Sivananda was very kind to them. S gave a musical discourse on Ramakrishna in the prayer hall. S thought of joining the Ramakrishna Home, but something took him to Vadalur where he meditated in the Temple of Light and wrote a treatise on Tirumandiram and also an authentic life of Ramalinga. After that, he hoisted the unity flag at the Vedaranyam Dt. Congress Conference. The president of the Swarajya party S Srinivasa Ayyangar became his good friend. He proposed to print his national songs and make him a Congress leader; but Yoga Prakash warned him not to jump into the uncertain politics (polytricks) of those days; for Gandhiji's voice was hushed up by election tomtoms. S stood for peaceful rural-service. The Swarajya Party pushed forward to the Council. Tanjore had

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influential leaders of the rich party who smothered the triweekly Samarasa Bhodini for it stood for the Gandhian ideals of self-help.

On returning to the office, S found his boxes broken and his precious manuscripts stolen by wicked hands. Some white-ant-eaten papers were strewn inside the box. He had invested money in the Local Cooperative Bank. The hostile elements had plotted to knock him down that night.

His cheque book was missing. He ran to the bank. Just then a cheque had come to the agent of the bank for being cashed. The signature of S was forged by so and so... the friendly agent helped him to find out the thief and the thief happened to be the well-known so and so. How vile was human nature! S withdrew his money. The enemies smelt this and prepared a dangerous plot... The night reminded him of Shakespeare's Macbeth.

But here came the helping hand—Yoga Prakash came in time at midnight, knocked at the door and along with him came a good friend “Go to Marudur, at once” said the friend. All went there ... They stayed in a garden for three months, training S.S.L.C. boys in yoga. An engineer edited an industrial magazine in which the science articles of S were published. S took silence for a month and then set out to villages for constructive work. The Congress had appointed him for the purpose. On the way, one fat Stone-Bone-Tone-Swami offered to immortalise his body. He took him to one Incense Swami who called himself Ramalinga, the same Ramalinga of Vadalur who vanished in 1874. But the raving diarrhoea of his mouth was so stinking that S had to take leave of him at once. The Immortal Stone-Bone and Incense Ramalinga gave up their ghost in one year. S met peculiar monks on the way claiming to be God-men, and calling men to worship them. He had many difficulties. The Divine Grace brought him to Pamani at last. He saw the condition of the poor and this inspired him to take up a particular village for his work and that happened to be Pamani. A Yoga Samaj was started there and the ideal of spiritual socialism experimented upon.

57. RURAL SERVICE AT PAMANI

Pamani is a memorable village. S was forlorn, helpless, clad in a single loin cloth, friendless. Many knew him; but he knew only the Inner One. Those were days of rich hedonists and they commanded the press and the platform. The eyes of the spies were set upon S already. The Pilgrim Soul stumbled through the dark night; even the guiding Stars were hidden in thick clouds. The wayfarers love and hate, flatter and slight us. Where is real Love? Nature weaves the ever-old behind the mystic curtain of the never-told. The reading world knew him intimately from papers and books. But how many read, how many know letters in this unfortunate country suffering from chill penury? Even the alluvial Indo-Gangetic plain was not green enough to feed its population. Monsoons had failed. The Kauvery did not flow with the milk of grace enough to feed her floral children. 40 crores of human beings living huddled in 15 lakhs of square-miles, led a miserable hand-to-mouth existence. Only 35% of the land was cultivated. Only 17% lived in towns. There were 3018 towns and 70 lakhs of villages. 85% of Indians were villagers who lived by agriculture. Scarcely 12% were able to read and write. Not even 1% of the ladies were lettered. The forward classes, the so called English educated were hunting after employment. The so called backward classes carried on a miserable life by the sweat of their brow. The country had its tap root in the villages. A perfect village promotes a perfect country. The village is a miniature country. It is the unit of the universe. It is the life of towns. Real India is rural India. Real patriotism is rural service. A rotten village contaminates the country and freedom without rural health will be a sick-man's appetite. Hence S dedicated himself to service in villages.

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S saw the plight of the villagers. They were suffering for want of food, clothing and shelter. Poverty and ignorance, the root of sins, swallowed them like a dragon. They buried their hearts and brains in the stomach. They forgot body and its pain in drunkenness. They were tottering in hopeless slavery. They were threatened into implicit and immoral obedience at the hands of landowners. They bore with endless patience and painful obedience, the abusive ill-treatment of their overlords. They were often whipped to bleeding by the insolent rich.

For six months in the year they have no work, and Satan creeps into idle brains. The earnings of their hard labour are scattered in drink, debauchery, dispute and in treatment of disease. Ladies are forced to a sinful life by poverty. Idleness breeds poverty. They live in unhealthy ill-provided huts. They live in hell. They use dirty water for drinking. Epidemics and contagions are their uninvited guests. Their cattle die of sickness. Sometimes they reside in cattle stalls and the cattle reside in their bedrooms. Bugs dance in their bedding to the lullaby of mosquitoes. They overlook nature's warning and attribute disease to the wrath of Mariamman to whom they sacrifice goats, hens and buffaloes whenever fever or diarrhoea or dysentery attacks them. They do not know that Mariamman is only a personification of rains. They are involved in bad debts and they waste their brains and energy in dodging the creditors who are interested in lodging complaints. Litigation impoverishes them further. What can they save for a rainy day and how can they be healthy and peaceful?...

They know nothing about Hinduism or Sanatana Dharma beyond the frontal decorations and idol worship. They are divided into thousand sects—why, they do not know. Ah, they live in fear of the Almanac! Education! Let us reserve our tears. The village schoolmaster with his pitiless cane drills into them a few verses and multiplication tables. Where is modern scientific advancement and where is this poor school? Boys do not care to attend the school, for they can earn a few annas by labour. They do not know what India is... What civics can you expect from them? In a sequestered vale of life, they keep doing their traditional routines. They know nothing of history or geography or modern science.

S seriously planned for the redemption of villages. He composed songs in popular folk tunes for the villagers. He set in poetic and musical form Indian history, geography, lives of saints, and historical personalities. He made songs on all constructive programmes and duties of a citizen. He composed songs on yoga, spiritual disciplines, moral conduct and patriotism. He pitched his camp in an ancient temple where he began holy concerts. At the end, all were given handfuls of sweet rice and varieties of food. The whole village rich and poor gathered without any difference of caste or religion to join the mass prayer and singing. They sang in chorus with S and danced to the beat of cymbals and mirdangam. The accompaniments were played by Harijans. Rich land owners danced holding the hands of poor labourers. The spirit of this song entered deep into their hearts:-

A nectar delight thrills my heart
An electric force sweeps my veins
A Divine fervour animates my being
As I think of Thee, O Mother Divine!...

The sun of free India has risen
Mother, lead us from Light to light!
March on, soldiers of liberty from glory to glory
Revolt against the wrong, against evils, headstrong.
Cut off the bonds of caste and creed
And slavish parasites!

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Root out the tyrant's selfish greed
And fight for human rights!...
We hug the flames of heroic fervour
To live in slavery is death; to die for liberty is life.
Village is the root of the nation's life
Feed the root and the tree will give you fruit.
One God resides in all the souls
All are equal walking temples
Names and forms are like garments
Live all as one communion.
United in the pure Spirit,
Live all in love and peace and joy!...

Thousands of songs thrilled the village atmosphere and effected a new transformation. Then S began his constructive work and it was easy to achieve, for the spiritual basis was firm and people were convinced of the Mission of Spiritual Socialism. A Yoga Samaj was established in a garden.

S served as a missionary of spiritual socialism. He toured many villages. His example, brought exemplary followers. The rural programme achieved by him was appreciated by Mr. K. T. Paul, President of the Y.M.C.A. and of the Rural Reconstruction League. Papers gave good publicity to his works.

Here is a News Paper report of the rural service at Pamani:

1. Cottage Industries have been started. A hundred charkas spin and two looms work. For the Dipavali, all the members of the Yoga Samaj wear the kaddhar made in the village.

2. Carding and spinning are taught by volunteers in surrounding villages. Workers are provided with wheel, ginner and bow and sufficient cotton. Villagers sing as they spin and this adds joy to the work. They earn each on an average, four annas per day.

3. Coconut jaggery industry is being experimented with. It can avert day to day fermentation. Many villagers have stopped taking liquor, tea and coffee; smoking and chewing tobacco too have been cut down. Gambling finds no place in the life of the village dedicated to service. Family people lead a chaste life.

4. Various avenues have been created for labourers. They are better treated now. They too join the Bhajan with rich men. The labour force is conserved to local development and coolies are not sent now to foreign lands for indentured labour.

5. The whole village depends upon agriculture. Rice and Ragi are the main crops. New methods of agriculture are taught to them. Cotton growing and cereals cultivation are experimented. The labour classes take ragi, cholam and dry crops grown easily. Edibles are produced and sent for sale to the towns nearby. Tobacco is discouraged. The principles of production, preservation, and consumption are considered before exportation.

6. Peasants are encouraged to save money, to put by something for the future need. Their debts are slowly liquidated by labour. People feel the value of time, economy, simplicity and cleanliness. Litigation has much diminished. A Panchayat group offers justice to the villagers. Their court is held before the temple.

7. Rice loses its vitamin by milling and causes constipation. So the villagers are trained to use hand-polished rice. They sing as they pound the rice in the mortar with a long pestle.

8. One of the Yoga Samaj members has been chosen as the Taluk Board President. He helps the Rural Service programmes sincerely. The water tanks are well guarded. The

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drinking water is pure and so the village is free from cholera. Harijans use the same pure water; there is none to prevent them. Untouchability has been rooted out. Harijans come into the temple and sing with the Yogi and play the mridangam to his songs.

9. A boarding school has been started; a good teacher conducts it. The boys are taught scouting games.

10. A night school is conducted for adults. They are freely supplied with slates, pencils and books.

11. The sick are treated free with medicines made from local herbs. People are encouraged to take sun-baths, do asans and take tub-baths. Nature cure is practised with success.

12. A reading room is spontaneously working. People read good books and magazines. All are supplied by the Yogi.

13. Cattle breeding is taught to the villagers and now animals are healthy and cheerful.

14. Morning 7 am. and evening 7 p.m. the whole village gathers in the Yoga Samaj compound for Bhajan, meditation and prayer. This creates a unity of hearts. On holy occasions and on Saturdays, elaborate arrangements are made for Divine concerts and ecstatic dances. The Yogi's songs are sung in every house. Songs have created a harmonious beehive communal life. After seeing the routine work going on vigorously, S kept a vow of silence of 3 months during which he copied his Bharata Shakti and wrote an elaborate commentary on his Yoga Siddhi.

58. SERVE RURAL INDIA

A similar work was started in Shakti Nilayam at Palaiyur more elaborately with the help of Rajagopal and Srinivas who had lived with Gandhiji at Sabarmati. At Palaiyur, a regular Gurukulam was conducted with about 70 students. The students bathed at the Pamani and the Kauvery rivers and kept the Ashram clean and tidy. Every night S read his Bharata Shakti and explained to the villagers the life and teachings of inspired prophets, like Ramakrishna. The students did a lot of social work. Once they put out a wild fire in the village which was burning some thatched cottages. They rescued two children from the flames. During the winter, Pamani river just in front of the Ashram was in spate and students ran a boat across it to help the villagers. Ladies from the surrounding villages turned the spinning wheel and earned wages every day. The yarn was made into cloth for the students. Mahatmaji appreciated the constructive work and wrote a loving letter each month.

Congress leaders came and encouraged the rural service.

S was called to preside over the Rural Reconstruction conference organised by Mr. K. T. Paul in the Y.M.C.A., Madras. Representatives had come from all parts of India for the conference. The Presidential address of S was printed and circulated:

“Life is a mission. Every one has a purpose in life beyond eating and drinking. Our mission today is to serve Rural India. Let us do our best to serve all causes that are good, honest, just, pure, lovely and holy and live in tune with the universal Divine. We are happy to serve today God in the poor. We have the faith and fervour to assure you that, Ramarajya is verily Grama-Rajya. Peace and plenty flow from perfect villages. Every Indian wants India's freedom. India is the Mother of Divine culture. India is the fountain of soul-force. With sincere heart and sinewy arms we must liberate her and enthrone her in our immortal Love. Our home must be ours, just as our body is ours.

We sing the past glory and hail our petty political victory. But seeing around, we are shocked at the social slavery, disunity, caste repressions and ignorance. We do not care for the march of time and the regenerative forces that lead its progress. We are dark

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without a man-making education. We are groping in the gloom without the guiding light of wisdom. We do not know how to break the chains rusting in the hands of this caste-ridden society. Poverty is slaying us alive. Kitchen problems crush the soul. India has risen from her stupor with a fluttering anxiety for freedom. She shall no more be a prisoner in her own land. Freedom is within ourselves. Freedom begins at home. Test yourselves. Are you free from poverty, ignorance, slavery, falsehood or hypocrisy? Do you live by honest labour? Did you fulfil your duty today towards yourself, your home, your land and humanity? Life is a mission of love and service. Do your words and deeds agree with your thoughts?

Freedom comes from the soul. National freedom comes from the village which is the soul of India. The treasure of freedom lies in our backyard. We search for it in the Atlantic deep! Secret societies, conspiracies, revolutionary plans, and brute forces have failed. Platform orations have gone with the sea winds. Monster petitions have gone to the waste paper basket. But Mahatma's gentle voice has thrilled our heart and touched the heart of England. It has shaken the foundation of slavery and effeminacy. Even the foe watches us with an open mind. Patriots brave prisons and bear insults. They go forward with the smile of sacrifice. Gandhiji's Satyagraha has impressed the world. It is the leading path of our salvation. It is the life of our national endeavour. The council fight by Desabandu Das stunned the bureaucracy. But its rigour recoiled itself after his death. Bold questions and vehement answers, walking ins and walking outs, have not frightened John Bull enjoying India under the rolling fan of our communal fights and mutual jealousies. The land is torn by party feelings and petty quarrels. Platforms echo mutual abuses. There are long speeches and no action, no constructive work. We know a big leader who roars with the Bay of Bengal "Let us follow Gandhi!" but he never wears Kaddhar nor does he spin a yard! The money wasted in elections can be utilised in constructive work.

Our Freedom movement has its root in the villages. India wants food and clothing, not vote hunting parties. The food problem is the first problem of India. All noble virtues of humaneness are buried into the stomach. Suicidal conflicts and communal acrimonies rage around poverty and ignorance. Indians must be made to work honestly for securing the needs of life. Now, many live at the cost of a few toilers. Eaters are millions and workers are poor in number and capacity; even they produce commercial crops and not food crops. They gain in gold and silver by exportation of raw materials impoverishing the Mother. Cotton, groundnuts, sugarcane, tobacco, coffee, tea, etc. are produced for exportation. Rice, wheat, cereals, fruits, vegetables, coconuts and other food crops must be produced in sufficient quantities and distributed to the people cheaply. This can be done only by a reorganisation of rural economy. The village must smile with green and golden crops.

Go back to villages, you patriots! Bring the light of education and the music of industry to cottages. Teach them ways of health, modern farming, weaving and gardening. Make each home a sanitorium. Root out taverns and brothels. Purify rural life. Rural uplift uplifts India to freedom's height.

S has finished another aspiration in life, service in villages. His constructive works were appreciated by people and the papers. He experimented his spiritual socialism and got very good results.

59. ALL STOLEN !

God marked out for the Pilgrim another important field of service. S saw the pale emaciated masses suffering from frightful diseases. He was already experimenting in diet and nature cure and contributing articles in the 'Naturopathy' of Bezavada, 'Nature Healer'

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of Calcutta and 'Life Natural' of Kanchipuram. S was called to edit the last. He left Pamani for Kanchipuram. At Tiruvarur station, two spies got into the same compartment. They flattered S saying "You are our Guru; we have found out a Mahatma at last. Give us a Mantra. Lead us to light. We follow you closely to your Ashram.

S: I am not a Guru nor do I accept disciples. I do not want the burden of ashrams and disciples. Trust in God and do the right duty.

They: We have come to do our duty, master. You are God for us.

S: God ! ... There is only one God; He is omnipresent through His pure Grace. Find Him in your heart.

S sank into silence. The spies looked here and there, whispered, and smiled. They went on flattering S who was indifferent to them. Mayavaram station came. S had to change for Kanchipuram. The spies cringed humbly requesting S to accept at least coffee. S never touched coffee. He refused to have it. They brought fruits. S went to the pipe to wash himself. When he came back, all things were stolen—money purse containing Rs. 100, ticket, Bharata Shakti, his poems and a precious manuscript called 'Swarajya Siddhi'. S felt anxious. He could not understand the will of the Omnipresent in sending these thieves and spies to rob him. While he was amazed, the ticket examiner came ... S put before him the truth. He would not listen. S went with him to the police... There, an old friend of him sat. He was the inspector. He made a search... Only one sheet of the Bharata shakti was found in the railway latrine. All else was lost.

S walked three miles in dark overclouded gloom to reach the Mayavaram temple. He threw even the trunk on the road. He sat in a corner of the temple and sang "I am not angry with you, O God, for snatching away all my things. I am free now from I and mine. Come and possess me It was 5-00 a.m. S went to the Cauvery, and took his bath. An old woman with her grandchild was standing there. S had a medal offered to him for his poems on Sivaji. (He took an important part in conducting Sivaji festival in Madras). He gave away the medal to the child. He gave away his shawl to the old lady. Free from worldly possessions, he was meditating. Suddenly an old sage Nirmalananda, appeared before him. He was an erudite scholar, S saluted him. He took S into his Vedanta Ashram and said "Do not care for what is lost. You are going to gain ten times more."

At 7 a.m. a lady came, a scholar in Vedanta. She gave him food. She was more than a mother to him. Swamiji straight away opened the Brahmasutras and began lessons for ten days. S studied the Brahmasutras with Shankara's commentary. Then he studied the Upanishads. His explanation was wonderful. He explained realisation of Vedanta as the flowing consciousness of Brahmakara, the Aum vibration. A month with him and a sight of his Vyasa Puja were a great opportunity in the Pilgrim's life. The sage daily practised with S all the processes of the Hatha and Raja Yogas, Asans, Pranayam, Dhyana, Dhouti, Bhasti, Banda, Mudras, Thratakam etc.

S got money from his Savings Bank account and started towards Kanchipuram.

At Kanchi, Rangachariar of Prativadi Bhayankaram Math lodged him in his temple where day and night S could hear the hymns of Alvar Saints. S edited and wrote the whole magazine dedicated to nature cure. Besides that, he studied the hymns of Alvars and heard Srimad Bhagavatam fully.

The Math wanted to make some idols and ornaments for the Rama temple at Sitarama Bhag, Hyderabad. S and his friend Rangachari went to Madras and stayed in the Clock Tower House, Santhome. S had varied engagements in Madras. Mahatma Gandhi had come then and S had an interview with him. S served the Humanitarian League, Madras. He wrote songs and pamphlets on vegetarianism. He stopped animal sacrifice in many places. In Periapalayam, near Madras, he went with a batch of youths and stopped the

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ghastly murder of goats and hens in the name of the merciful Mother. At Tenali, he fasted for a week to stop killing of animals before a stone called Big Mother. In the teeth of opposition he appealed to the English collector and he stopped it by law—for the street belonged to the Jains. S enacted a drama for this purpose. The Humanitarian League is still doing good work. But how many stop meat-eating and killing of animals? Flesh craves for flesh!

60. IN TUNE WITH NATURE

During these days he had contact with justice Ramesam who was a naturopath. He ate nature food. S prepared for him several kinds of salads and fruit dishes. He was a torrential speaker, a great scholar and S spent long hours with him. S treated many hard cases by natural and psychic powers.

One day he returned home very late at night and saw all his things stolen away—Again a test of Destiny! His national songs and historical novels were lost. He had two kaddhar clothes spun and woven by himself and they too were lost. His certificates were also lost. The watchman was raving in a drunken mood. The place proved unsafe and dangerous. Fortunately, his F.D. Receipts and S. B. Pass Book were safe; they were put in an old note book. Now the temple images were finished and despatched. The house was vacated. S loved Nature and took to nature cure. He opened a Nature Home in which yoga was also taught.

A songful life in tune with God in Nature—such was given to the pilgrim. Body is the temple of Nature in which God lives as life. Ether, air, fire, water and earth are the five manifestations of Nature. Everything that we see on the earth is a combination of these five elements. Life in tune with Nature is health and happiness; life out of tune with Nature is disease and suffering. The book YOGA FOR ALL will give you details of a Perfect Life in tune with Nature. Gandhi appreciated this book as practical and critical.

God never created disease and misery. They are the defect of human perversions. The real man is the Soul. It is a fountain of delight and divine consciousness. Disease is the operation of Nature to retrieve us from unnatural life. The whole elemental world is Nature's free dispensary, open to us day and night. Nature's *materia medica* is very simple. Man is mind; the mind must be pure; for that, thoughts must be pure; for that impressions must be pure; for that the senses must be pure; for that the food must be pure and moderate, measured to the hunger limit. The body must be pure in and out. Water must be pure to keep the body pure. The air must be pure to keep the life-breath pure. The sun's helium cures neurotic diseases. Its light has a tonic effect upon the body. Rhythmic breathing is the first condition of health. Pranayama is the best way to keep the breath marching to the rhythm of the heartbeat and energise the air taken in. By pranayam the blood assimilates a large amount of oxygen. Sunlight gives D Vitamin. It tones up the skin and invigorates blood circulation. Rhythmic stroll in the sun, or garden-work in pure air and sun do good to the glands. The proper use of water in and out purifies the body and cures diseases. Bath in a waterfall, swimming, tub-bath, abdomen bath, cleaning of the intestines by dhouti or enema, drinking pure water—these are the means of health got from water. Disease is abdomen-born. The abdomen must be kept clean. The elimination must be regular. The food must be fresh, pure, substantial, assimilative and easy for digestion. Fruits, nuts and milk form perfect food. Hand polished rice, wheat, dhal, coconuts and vegetables can be made into a variety of dishes. Too much concentrated food and fried stuffs are not healthy. The food must be as natural as possible to keep the vitamins intact. Two meals (after nine in the morning and before six in the evening) are quite sufficient with water or curdmilk at

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intervals. S had been living on raw food—plantains, groundnuts, coconuts and milk. He fasted once a week, every Friday. He never took tea, coffee or any unnatural food. He took a regular sun-bath. His breath marched to the rhythm of Aum, Aum, Aum. Aum, Shuddha Shakthi Aum. His regular breathing was made a pranayam. His breath passed through the sushumna. He kept silent most of his life and never wasted his energy. He was a perfectly pure Brahmacharin, never attracted by sex. He sublimated the sex energy by hard Sadhanas following the Yoga of Tirumular. He was always in meditation, or engaged in lofty thoughts. He kept company with saints and sages and hence he enjoyed perfect inner health.

The gnostic equilibrium must be kept intact. That is the secret of health. Gnostic equilibrium is a subtle inner balancing force which keeps the body, vital and mind in tune with the psychic heart and the heart in tune with the divine soul. This is developed by pure diet, self-conscious life, mental peace, self-control and meditation. Nature will then easily do her functions of hormonal secretion, food assimilation, regular elimination, circulation of blood, respiration of air and building up of the body from skin to spinalis.

S had his sanatoriums organised in the home of five friends. Mr. Kenneth, the proprietor of the Diocesan Press was treated by S. He built a fine sanatorium on his terrace, and the whole family took to Life Natural. S visited patients and treated them freely. He organised a vitamin store to supply hand polished rice and hand pounded wheat flour. This gave work to the poor. He held weekly classes in Naturopathy, asanas and pranayam for college boys and he gave demonstrative lectures on health, diet and yoga to students and the public. He often visited parks with his volunteers and addressed the audience on Life Natural and Yoga Asans. He spread vegetarianism through the Humanitarian League wherever he resided.

The National Congress (1926) was grandly celebrated in the Spur Tank Maidan. S was in the reception committee. Mr. Muthurangam who was the chairman of the reception committee gave him all facilities to conduct a naturopathic conference. S spent one thousand rupees for the conference. It was well represented by all the leading naturopaths of India. The Congress Nagar was full of various activities. Mr. S. S. Ayyangar too took interest in naturopathy and allowed a stall free for a naturopathic dispensary. With strenuous effort, S organised a well furnished clinic there with vapour chests, tubs for sitz bath, spinal bath, turkish bath, enema arrangements, spray tubes, wet packings etc. Two doctors were in charge of it day and night and about hundred patients took advantage of it. Prominent men and women visited it including Sarojini Devi and Annie Besant. "This is very interesting; you are doing good service" said Mother Besant. The conference Pandal was full; about 5000 people attended the functions. Nature diets were arranged on tables, and distributed to friends. The grand Sun-Rise flag was hoisted with Vedic Chants. Mr. R. C Chatterjee, the father of Nirmal Chandra Chatterji presided over the meeting. S sang a prayer on Mother Nature and delivered the welcome address as the chairman of the Reception Committee. After the President's address was over, K. L. Sharma, the great naturopathist, Ramesam, the apostle of nature diet, Dr Krishna Rao, the principal of the Indian Medical College, H. L. Sharma, the expert sun curist, Bairava murthi, P. Venkatramayya, D. Ramakrishna Rao, Dr. P. D. Raju etc. spoke impressively. Mr. Kenneth, Mrs. Kenneth. Dr. Annie Besant and Dr. Arundale attended the function. Sri. Satyanarayana demonstrated Asanas and Sri. T. Ramachandra explained to the audience the curative and stimulative and tonic effects of the Asans. K. L. Sharma in his inimitable style and enthusiasm demonstrated the various methods of cold water baths and steam baths. The sunlight and colour cure was demonstrated in an interesting way by two experts in chromopathy. The thundering eloquence of Justice Ramesam captivated the audience and attracted many to the way of

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Nature. The Sunrise Flag of Nature was flying aloft with Aum in the centre. A set of musicians were singing the songs of S at intervals. The conference resolved to create a central Naturopathic Institute at Vijayawada, train naturopaths and send them abroad for propagation of the great science of Life Natural. Naturopathy must be recognised by the Government and the naturopaths given facilities to run nature homes. Vaccination is a dangerous unnatural act and it must be made penal by an act of the Government. Nature stores must be started on a cooperative basis to provide people hand-polished rice, and vitamin food stuffs.

S was unanimously chosen as the President of the All India Naturopathic Association with headquarters at Vijayawada. Sri. Hanumanthayya dedicated his property for running a Nature home there. Delegates and friends were served with twenty varieties of nature diet. S opened the kitchen wide for all. Fruits, nuts, salads, tomatoes, vitamin cakes, honey, fruit juice, coconut scrapings, soaked cereals, almonds, pistas etc. were distributed freely to delegates and a vitamin feast was given for 300 delegates.

S ran into raptures in his address to the large audience of so many good souls:

“In the fullness of my joy, I cannot find words to express the bliss I enjoy at the sight of so many living gods before me. Welcome, messengers of the golden age, welcome angels of health and happy life, welcome to this historic city, the capital of the Tamil Nadu, sanctified by St. Valluvar, the author of Tirukkural.

This land of natural beauty and salubrious air invites you for a happy repast this night.

We see in this large gathering, enthusiastic naturopaths, pioneers, scholars, workers, doctors, leaders, willing listeners and delegates from all parts of India and prominent public leaders too. This is an evidence of the popularity of our humanitarian health movement patronised by East and West, North and South. Naturopathy was born in the holy forests and hermitages of our sacred land. It was seen in the daily life of our ancient seers, sages and saints. Their Light leads us Godward by the medium of Life natural. We have already had three big All India Conferences in Kanpur, Belgaum and Vijayawada. This Fourth All India Naturopathic Conference is of unique importance in as much as it has a health home, a service troop of fifty volunteers in uniform, demonstrative lectures by experts, a nature exhibition, and a set of delegates who are prepared to set an example to others by taking only Nature Diet. Our reception committee is a brotherhood of sincere lovers of service.

It is their large-hearted cooperation that has strengthened my hands to organise this conference to the best of my ability. Earth has bitterness, but you can sweeten its cup of life by sincere love. We have encamped here to bear all difficulties, inconveniences and trials for the love of Mother Nature.

The world suffers hell in a brutal wilderness of mutual hatred and suspicion. Cruel diseases afflict humanity. Lust, greed, envy, fraud, and disunity are apparent to us every where. Man has forgotten the natural law of living; he is multiplying his needless wants. He has buried his soul in a heap of vital desires. Lawyers, doctors and priests meddle between man and man, man and nature and man and God.

God created the world of beings from spiritual bliss. Miseries are man-made. Impure life, impure diet, impure thoughts and surroundings make man impure. Pure food, pure air, pure water, sunlight, natural exercise, pure thoughts can restore man to health and peace. The health of the body depends upon the hormone regulation which depends on the proper proportion of the elements that constitute the body.

Elimination of impurities and foreign bodies and assimilation of pure food, water, air, and thoughts are the secrets of health. Balms, powders, acids, mixtures, extracts, essences, syrups in attractive phials with boastful advertisements entice man to transgress the

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laws of natural health. Bad food—load ferments in the alimentary canal and constipates the bowels rendering the body a stinking latrine. A latrine cannot be cleaned by scents. It can be cleaned only by water. The body cannot be cleaned by drugs and injections. The tongue shows bitter taste, it is coated yellow, the stomach has no hunger and yet man gluts it yet more ... ! Fast man, fast a day! No, he will not listen! Knowledge comes by intuition and health by purification. Nature affords us a Universal Health Home with the purifying remedies of air, light, warmth, water, earth, green vegetables and fruits. The means of health is near, easy, free. The sun spreads its golden rays for all. Bask in the sun at 9 a.m. or 5 p.m. for half an hour. Run a mile and perspire freely. Then bathe your body and abdomen inch by inch in cool water. Splash water on the abdomen. Do nouli (churning of the abdomen) sarvangasana and fishpose. These stimulate the bowels and clear away the clogged dirt. Steam bath will perspire out all the dirt in the skin. It will cure fever and headache and cold. Eat pure food moderately, and chew it well calmly and peacefully. Talk to the point gently. Do not lose your temper or run wild into passion. Cultivate courage and manly virtues. Develop psychic love for God. Surrender to God in the heart, all your thoughts, words and deeds and you can be happy and free. For, the great aim of Life Natural is to lead you God—ward. Prakriti Yogins are the harbingers of a new age of Divine life. Life Natural is pure living in union with the inner Divine. We aspire for a Divine humanity, a transformed universal life, a peaceful harmony of loving hearts living in tune with the Infinite. A Spiritual efflorescence of collective existence, economic freedom, healthy social amity—all these flow from Life Natural.

The din of the town life is the funeral drum of health. Man has become a slave to machines. Politics has made him a part of the state machine. Hotels and hospitals have spoiled his health. Custom has made him a coward. There is no peace and concord in the family life. Cinemas poison the mind. Drugs and dainties poison the body. Mill rice kills vital stamina. Injections deject the body ! Spectacles, poor spectacles ! Short sight, spermatorrhoea, nocturnal emissions, constipation, dyspepsia, gonorrhoea ... hundreds of such virulent diseases are butchering the nation. Suicide! Suicide!...

Take care of the seed; the seed shall take care of the plant. Take care of students; impart them Brahmacharya culture. Revive the old Gurukula Education. Propagate nature cure, yogasans, pranayama, meditation, pure vitamin diet, Brahmacharya, Gita—study. Start Yoga Samaj in which missionaries of life natural shall be trained. Let us give them degrees and certificates of merits when they successfully treat patients. Let us have courses like Bachelor of Naturopathy (B.N.), Master of Naturopathy (M.N.), Y.V.-Yoga Visarad (Skilful in Yoga), Y.D.-Yoga Dira, Y.S.-Yoga Samrat, Y.M.-Yoga Maharshi Y.V.M.P.-Yoga Vedanta Maha Purusha. Y.B.-Yogi Brahmachari Y.G.-Yogi Grahasta; Y.Va.—Yogi Vanaprasta and Y. S. —Yogi Sanyasa etc. We must bring out sufficient literature and have a syllabus for the Yoga University and Nature College. We must have an array of dedicated souls for our great spiritual work. The movement is a great purifier of humanity. It shall harmonise humanity into a pure loving communion in spiritual consciousness. It shall bestow Swarajya and Samrajya. Blessed are they that realise Nature in life, for they can realise God in Nature. Blessed are they that live in tune with Nature for theirs is the joy of life. Blessed are they that are the Pure Yogins of Nature for theirs is the kingdom of health and happiness here. Blessed are they that are Pure Sama Yogins, for they are the messengers of peace and harmony on the earth.”

S made experiments in health and found out the cause of disease and the natural way of healthy living. Cancer, heart failure, blood pressure, eczema, tuberculosis, nervous debility, seminal diseases, diabetes, fistula etc. were cured by him by natural methods. But the patient must be patient. There is no magic short—cut in nature cure. Frequent contamination of the blood and tissues by vaccines, serums, injection of toxins, artificial remedies which are pharmaceutical products render the cells of the body weak.

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Morbid matter accumulates in the cells and tissues by unnatural gulping of indiscriminate food and medicines and injections. Yoga is the remedy for all diseases. Yoga is Life Natural. Yoga stimulates the fountain of health. It conserves gnostic equilibrium. S found out this gnostic equilibrium during a week's fast in his boyhood. Once he took fat cakes fried in groundnut oil; this affected the liver and made him giddy with bile. He vomited the stomach sediments and fasted for three days. The tongue was coated bitter; he fasted until it got clear and natural taste returned. He took water in which tulsi was soaked and did many pranayams. This had a good effect. The elimination was clean. He felt then a healthy current pleasantly coursing through the body. He could then feel the link between the mental–vital–physical body and the psychic body of Sat–Chit–Ananda. He could feel the gnostic or vijnana dynamism holding the lower and the higher together and it was felt like an active current in a dynamo. This was the Gnostic Equilibrium, a power that gives peace and bliss and makes one conscious of the inner Divine. S was poisoned by enemies five times. He eliminated the poison by vomiting, and fasting for a week or two. He saw the gnostic force counteracting the effect of the poison. He was very careful about his diet. He made a number of experiments in food and found out the best vitamin food for general health and the best food for the yogin. Mahatma Gandhi appreciated his method of eating and the choice of his food. He had a talk with him upon Life Natural. He was interested in naturopathy and yoga.

JINANANDAM

S continued all his experiments on yoga and naturopathy from the humanitarian quarters. It had Jain surroundings. There was a Stanakvasi mandir and a Swetambari mandir just near him and Digambar Jains were his intimates. So he took to the study of Jain literatures—Tatvarta Sutra, Sarvarta Siddhi, Panchastikayam, outlines of Jainism etc., Jainism and naturopathy went together. He was initiated in Jainism by Gambira Vijayaji Maharaj, a torrential speaker and by Premsagar Vijayaji. He visited the Abu hills, Aara and Sramana Belgola for further instructions in Jainism. He collected materials for a monumental work; he studied Maha Purana with Mallinath, the editor of Jaina Gazette and he had discussions with professor Chakravarti Nayanar, the great Jain philosopher. He made researches into the life and teachings of Lord Mahavira. The Jain friends requested S to weave His life into a classical Poem. S took to silence and fasting for fifteen days. He never came out of his lonely room. He did not even touch water. Within ten days of fasting the Jinanandam (Life and teachings of Mahavira and the Jain sages) was finished. The Jains hailed the work as sacred and published it. They invited S to visit Jain villages and expound the book of poems. Sukladhyana in Jainism gave an impetus to his yogic culture. Thus he assimilated knowledge and inner experience every day from every source.

The seeker Pilgrim gently enters hence into yogic silence. Dear Readers, here ends the Third Part of the Pilgrim Soul!... Now onward!



PART IV

POLITICS LEADS TO SILENCE

61. THE MADRAS CONGRESS

1927 was an important year in the annals of the Congress. A pamphlet named Ranganila Rasul outraged the religious sentiments of a section of His Majesty's subjects. Hindu Muslim riots devastated North India. Lahore to Nagpur, all important towns were shaken by these communal riots. 2500 people were killed and 2500 injured. What a pity it was ! Play music before the Mosque; at once swords cry for vengeance! A.I.C.C. convenes a unity conference. Mr. Ayyangar passes a resolution according to which Muslims are at liberty to slaughter cows. Ah, poor cows! Who is to protect the Sanatana Dharma in its own land? Tears, tears! The world is for the violent, perhaps! The great Shradhdhananda is shot in cold blood! Ganesh, the editor of Pratap is murdered...Who is to demand ? After a condolence meeting and a condolence resolution, the tragedy is forgotten! Anyhow the Congress chose Dr. Ansari, a good hearted Muslim to preside over the Madras Congress. Just at the time, the Viceroy called Gandhiji and gave into his hand an announcement by the Secretary of States for India. The Simon Commission comes to decide India's immediate destiny .. "Is that all?" "Yes" replied Lord Irwin. The commission was an eyewash. The country was roused to boycott it. Simon Commission Boycott was sure to come.

The Spur Tank was converted into a beautiful Congress colony. All the top leaders of India were seen there when the tricoloured flag was hoisted by the majestic Subash Chandra Bose. "This flag hoisted in the South to day shall fly soon on the Red Fort of Delhi, in the North!" said his prophetic voice. In a private talk Subash Bose maintained that India allied with Japan, shall challenge the British to freedom. S told him about the great heroes of the Tamil Nadu like Katta Bommu, Peria Marudu, Chinna Marudu, Vira Thevan, V.V.S. Ayyar etc. Subash insisted upon a bold policy. The Presidential address dealt at length with the communal union and concord of hearts. Mr. Ansari was an equal-minded gentleman. He had full faith in Mahatmaji. "Noncooperation did not fail, we failed the noncooperation" said he amidst thundering ovations. Mahatmaji attended the kaddhar exhibition. He was confined to charka then and went out only to collect funds for the kaddhar work. His voice was hushed within the compound of the Sabarmati Ashram. The Swarajya Party wielded much influence then. Nehruji and Rajaji were always with Mahatmaji. The usual resolutions on communal harmony, removal of untouchability, temperance, boycott of British goods, better treatment of Indians in South Africa were passed smoothly. The boycott of the statutory Commission was a significant note of the Congress. The Commission was appointed in utter disregard of India's right of self-determination. The only self-respecting way was to boycott the commission in every form and organise mass demonstrations of our feelings.

The most important of all was the resolution declaring the goal of India as complete Independence—Purna Swaraj. S. S. Ayyangar moved it and Jawaharlal, who had just returned from Europe, supported it in a thrilling speech.

S was sitting by the side of Subash Bose. Mr. Satyamurthi called him to the rostrum saying "Go on with your National Song". S sang two of his inspiring National songs in Tamil. Here is their English version:

Wake up, stand up, and march
March on to freedom heroic sons!
The Mother's smile leads us to day
From light to brighter light ! ...

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The flame of freedom raises our hope.
March on, heroes!
From height to higher heights
The Sun of free India has risen!
Dark fear has fled away before the light.
Heroes of Truth offer their libations.
Behold the flag of the Mother India
Flying upon the proud Red fort,
Storms and quakes shall not shake our Flag.
Through life and death we guard it.
We hold this body for its sake,
The Mother inspires us with Renaissant thoughts.
We shall live a new pattern of social life
In tune with the infinite spirit.
Spiritual socialism is our ideal.
March on, heroes, towards freedom!
With mind full of peace, heart full of love.
Hands full of work and life smiling with harmony.
March on, to the goal of collective existence
Where man does not stand between God and soul,
Where social barriers do not obstruct progress
Where cosmic consciousness unites all souls
To live all for each and each for all;
Where happiness flows from inner Communion,
Where the land has no landlord.
Where labour enjoys its fruit
Where there is one universe, one humanity,
One God under one vast heaven.
Towards that unique goal of spiritual socialism
March on, Soldiers Of freedom !...

Sarojini Devi appreciated the tune of the song. Satyamurthy introduced S to all leaders. Madan Mohan Malavya took S to his residence. His mind was engrossed in the progress of the Benares University.

T. Prakasam became a close friend of S. He attended the naturopathic conference and visited the nature cure dispensary too. He requested S to take charge of the Swarajya Daily. Satyamurthy hailed the proposal ejaculating “Go on! flash on! Fight on with pen!”

Swami Shraddhananda blessed him and encouraged him to uphold Vedic ideals in his writings. In a conversation with the leaders, he maintained that the land could be liberated by spiritual strength. Brahmacharya Gurukula is the centre of a country’s energy. Sadhu Vasvani spoke with his sweet mellow voice and encouraged S in spreading the ideals of the Bharata Shakti. (Spiritual Dynamism of India). S took charge of the Swarajya Daily, the very next day.

62. SWARAJYA SEVA

The pilgrim is now found busy with press telegrams and news flashes. He lives in the third story of the Swarajya office, calm and alone with a codpiece. He whistles ... the compositor comes and takes the matter. A knock at the door... The compositor places proofs and goes. A whistle AUM... the servant comes and takes back proofs and instructions to subeditors. Letters pour in. S sees and types away replies. Water is brought to him; he bathes early morning. Meditation finished, he goes to the press, distributes mat-

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ter... comes up with a load of journals, reads them patiently and takes notes... He writes the leader and subleaders, a story, a novel, a drama and poems... He writes with lightning speed all interesting matters and sends them to the subeditors. He scrutinises the news and notes, everything that goes into the paper and revises proofs, and gives strike orders. His work gets finished before 1 p.m. Again he takes bath and meditates. Then he sees letters, replies to them and posts them. At four, the car comes; he goes to meetings— political, social, religious, cultural etc.

He pleaded for the remarriage of young widows and started a Remarriage League. He conducted the marriages of many young ladies who lived happily with their chosen husbands. He encouraged fallen sisters to marry and settle in family life. One Purna Tilakamma was the first to marry a Brahmin. She conducted a Reformatory for fallen sisters and many of them were married to suitable males. S supported the Bill brought by Muthulaxmi, against presenting ladies to temples. The orthodox people agitated against these reforms; they cursed him. S went on with his campaign of equality between man and woman. Once S went forward with youths to Sriperumpudur and lectured before the temple on Social reforms: "Honour womanhood! Cherish motherhood. Woman is divine. She is the architect of human life. She purifies, inspires and beautifies life. Her smile delights home and country. Her tears cast a gloom on existence. Cheer her up, She is the mother of heroes." The temple priests frowned at this song of woman's uplift. S went further to sing the equality of souls in high pitch: "The soul is one in all bodies like sunlight, wind and rain, sea and earth. All are equal in the soul. Forms and names are mere garments. The Spirit is one in all. Unite in the spirit; work and share the fruit with all. All have a right to walk head erect, and lead a life of purity, unity and divinity. The effete old cannot suit the progressive new. A child's garment cannot suit a giant." Ladies were not allowed to attend the meeting; but they applauded the song from a distance.

Another meeting was held in the open in which ladies were present. In that very place young widows secretly expressed their throbbing anxiety to remarry, if chance offered itself. Rukmini Aurundale, Mr. Aurundale, Annie Besant, Ramdas Pantulu, and Justice Sadasivam supported the reform movement for which S spared half-a-page in his daily. The Theosophical Society was the most progressive institution of those days. The Gokale Hall was the rendezvous of all reformers and cultured men. Annie Besant was conducting a Weekly called 'Commonwealth'. She prepared a Commonwealth Bill and went to England to introduce it into parliament through Ramsay Macdonald, her friend. S evinced great reverence and admiration for her.

Another activity of S was to teach Asans and Pranayama to students and elders of Madras. Thirty youths regularly practised asans in the morning. S was one of the editors of the 'Brahmacharya', an English monthly devoted to yogic culture to which he contributed articles. He gave lectures on the Brahmacharya culture to students in colleges.

In politics, S was an out and out Gandhian. He liked the No-Tax Campaign at Bardoli started by Vallabai Patel. He appealed for funds and requested people to send their contributions to Bardoli where the peasants refused to pay taxes. There was a stalemate in the local politics except in election meetings held by the Swarajya Party. Three Swarajists broke their promises and turned a volte face upon their party creed and took portfolios as ministers of the state. Power politics led to corruptions. S strongly criticised electioneering power politics of the opportunists. He organised Satyagraha conferences to propagate Gandhian noncooperation. To stimulate the sleepy condition, a chisel was applied to the nose of General Kneel's statue by Somayajulu. Kneel killed Indians in cold blood during the revolution of 1857. The Govt. arrested the Kneel-Satyagrahis. Gandhiji encouraged the movement and that added momentum to the dull political situation. The Satyagraha day was celebrated with a hartal. S went with

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volunteers around Madras singing his national songs and awakening people to action. The Madras Party leaders did not dare to hold public meetings. They held secret meeting, in the Mahajana Hall and in the Tamil Nadu Office. S criticised their effeminacy and organised a bold Satyagraha agitation. Open meetings were held in parks and gardens. On the Satyagraha day a meeting was held on the sea beach. Hired hooligans threw stones and broken knives upon speakers. Some fled away. The crowd too was dissolving. S raised his voice above the waves and sang a song whose refrain was: "Fear not! fight on, freedom comes." Next day 144 was issued on him and other leaders of Madras. But S had his meeting in some other place. There too the vigilant police served 144 just after his speech was over. S spoke in the next quarter; thus he went on with his propaganda and the Govt. went on serving him with 144. The Simon Commission landed in Apollo Bunder. The whole country held boycott meetings. In Tilak ghat a meeting took place. S.S. Ayyangar, Satyamurthi, Prakasam, Besant, Nageswara Rao, and other leaders of Madras spoke on the boycott of the statutory commission. Suddenly an army of horsemen galloped trampling the crowd and whipping them. People ran here and there in confusion. The leaders fled away. S and Prakasam stood there bravely. Hooligans threw stones which S sent back upon them with a newspaper bat. After one hour, the soldiers fled away. S conducted the meeting in the moonlight.

Military lorries reconnoitred the town, street by street. Any whisper of Hartal or boycott sent anyone to jail. S and other leaders secretly organised the Satyagraha. They requested students to keep away from classes and the lawyers to avoid the High court. On the Simon Commission boycott-day people thickly gathered before the High Court to prevent lawyers from entering the portal. Hooligans too joined the masses. They stoned the hotels that were open. Harrison Hotel feasted its clients with band and dances. The hooligans broke the window panels, looted the dishes ... and caused much damage. Stones were thrown at advocates... At once wagons of soldiers came and took their stand on the balcony of the Y.M.C.A. and threatened to shoot the Satyagrahis. The hooligans with loud noise threw stones upon Pandaley, the Inspector General. The Police Inspectors were wounded by the hooligans. Fire was opened! Dom! Dom! Dom! Shells flew ... Two were wounded. A harijan boy died. The leaders hid in their cosy corners. S phoned to the congress office; No response. He sent the information to Prakasam, who came jumping and went at once with S to the spot crying "Stop Stop, shooting" "The Military captain would not listen. The Andhra Lion opened his shirt and roared "shoot me and not the people!" S followed him. The military captain was stunned. Prakasam took the dead harijan in his car to the hospital.

For a month from that day, Madras was trembling with rumbling patrol cars and none could speak of Satyagraha nor write about it. But S went on with his strong leaders on boycott, Satyagraha, noncooperation and Gandhism. He took active part in the Satyagraha Conferences held at Papanasam, and Nanguneri.

S often met a promising youth who organised meetings for him. He was Kamaraj (Kam-ka-Raj), the man of action.

Subash Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru are the two great leaders whom he admired.

He was cool and keen, a fighter against poverty and ignorance. As a C.M. later on he promoted education. He had capacity to achieve things. Jawaharlal Nehru, the idol of the Nation admired him.

Among national leaders of the Gandhian era, S had great admiration for Subash Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru. He studied both of them closely. Subash was the Garibaldi and Nehru the Mazzini of Indian Freedom.

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His adventurous escape from India and his wonderful organization of Indian National Army shall go into the annals of world heroes. Subash was a militant patriot.

Kamaraj, was an enterprising youth. S knew him from his boyhood. Born in 1903, schooled in selfless service, he helped his uncles who were cloth and timber merchants; but felt an inner urge to serve India. He read papers, attended political meetings, followed Mahatma Gandhi and Satyamurti. He participated in the Satyagraha and Quit-India movements, went to jail and slowly rose in public esteem until he became the secretary of the Tamil Nad Congress, then its president, then a member of the Legislative Council, then the C.M. of Madras and then the President of the All India Congress. He presided over the Diamond jubilee of S and held him in respect as a bold fighter.

Nehru was the great son of a great father. He was a finished product of Harrow and Cambridge, a Natural Science tripos. But he discovered the Soul of India in him by his close contact with Mahatmaji. The sacrifice of the Nehru family takes a bright page in the history of modern India. Gandhi in Yeravada jail and Nehru in Naini jail inspired the nation to action. The prince of Ananda Bhavan found rest only in the prison. Mothilal Nehru made two magnificent gifts to India—one is his palatial Ananda Bhavan and the other is his princely hero—Jawaharlal Nehru. One fair day, Ananda Bhavan became ‘Swarajya Bhavan’ and the whole Nehru-family underwent an orgy of arrests and convictions. Nehru was the chosen heir of Mahatma Gandhi. He had the character and capacity to guide and lead the nation. He was so full of love for India and compassion for the poor that he had no time to think of God. Humanity was his God and service his religion. In an interesting conversation he told his friends emphatically “My religion is socialism. I have no other religion. I want a social order devoid of vested interests and narrow domestic walls. India suffers because she is unable to effect the social adjustment based on equality. To free India and remove her poverty is my effort. After liberation, India shall work for a World federation. India is a part of the world-movement. We see before us a rapidly changing new world.” S had the pleasure of hearing Gandhi, Nehru and Subash and writing about them daily in the ‘Swarajya’.

During this time the railway workers began a country wide strike. Labourers supported them everywhere. S took part in their meetings. During this time, the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee requested S to tour the country and rouse the masses to self-determination. S visited every important town—Chengleput, Tindivanam, Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, Vellur, Erode, Coimbatore, Tiruchi, Dindigal, Madurai, Tirumangalam, Virudunagar etc. Kamaraj organised meetings for him at Virudunagar. S spoke on Bardoli Satyagraha, Gandhian plan of noncooperation and the efficiency of Soul Force. He joined Satyamurthi at Tirunelveli. Then he went to Tuticorin where the District Congress held its Sessions. S met there Chidambaram Pillai, the great patriot. He delivered three lectures under his Presidentship. Some of his companions were violent in their words. Chidambaram Pillai roared out “I have the courage to fight singly the enslaving forces. But I have no faith in Ahimsa. By sacrifice of body life and spirit alone, we can liberate this land ... Tilak is my ideal... etc...” S made a memorable speech from his inner vision. That was his last speech on the political platform. This is its substance:

63. THE DAWN OF FREEDOM

“We have gathered here under a dark sky; the world is buried in the gloom. The few electric lights are fighting in vain against the pitch dark night. Even millions of stars above are not able to light the world. We are expecting a new dawn that shall remove the gloom. Just for the moment let us make use of artificial lamps—for lamps are necessary at night.

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Human effort is necessary and human leaders for our progress. A Karam Chandra (the moon of action) is shining today in the political firmament. At a time when our hands were too weak to use violence against the well-armed alien rule, Mahatma Gandhiji had shown us the path of Truth and sacrifice. Our ranks are disunited. Our country is famished, underfed and underdeveloped. We must put forth a united front in fighting poverty, ignorance and thralldom. Freedom lovers must fight slavery in all its forms, social and national. We must be conscious of the Pure Almighty force which is the Soul in us and which is the quintessence of our being. We have a force in the soul which is divine, mighty, invincible. It can be developed and manifested by yoga. By pure life, meditation and one-pointed devotion to the Divine in the heart, we can rise above all social barriers and be conscious of the inner man who is one in all. This inner harmony can unite us as one conscious humanity. We must think in terms of the universe of one humanity. We must unite in heart's love as one mankind. Then by mutual love and sympathy and international fellowship of nations we can live like children of One Mother Earth. No nation shall enslave another nor exploit the neighbour.

Life must be a psychic expansion of the soul and our mutual relationship must be an efflorescence of psychic love. No movement can unite us without this psychic love deep in the heart. Religions and traditions, Ashrams and institutions have failed for want of this psychic love. But where is real love in this world of self-seekers and traitors ? Where is faith in this world of vital egoism, where friends desert to enemy camps after exploiting your resources ? In this wicked world of wolves and tigers, where is psychic love that St. Francis had for Jesus ? My heart goes now to Yogiraj Aurobindo as I stand here. He says: "India shall be liberated by the Divine Force; God is leading the nation" Mahatmaji's moral force and the spiritual force of great Rishis shall radiate and liberate not only India, but the whole humanity from vital egoism and dividing mentality. Be sure, India shall be free in less than two decades; it shall be free not by the ordinary political means—but by Yoga. The current of Bharata Shakti generated from the heart in tune with God has a tremendous force. It is a centripetal force of divine radiation. Scientists have discovered ethereal waves and electronic currents traversing the world. The soul force and its spiritual dynamism can spread thousand times quicker than electronic currents. A yogi in a cave, can transmit his ideas to millions at a time. The God in my heart calls me for such a yoga in silence and solitude. Silence is not sloth. It is inner-eloquence. It is the silent sun that paints the colourful world of nature. Trees deep-rooted in the earth, blossom and put forth fruits for the world. In deep-rooted silence, the self-absorbed yogin radiates his spiritual force and his thought-currents to transform the world. The world is but an impression of ideas in matter. Ideas can change the trend of life. Ideas breathed in yogic seclusion can influence hearts and set in motion thought currents to action. By tapasya, India shall be free. The coming war shall change the trends and traits of nations. A nation can progress only by unity of consciousness and dignity of labour. Educate the masses, industrialise, militarise and spiritualise the nation and make it efficient to keep pace with the time spirit. India's freedom is freedom of humanity from mental and social bondages. Let every Indian find in him the soul of India-Bharata Shakti—and every one shall be a free India. India shall lead the evolution of humanity by its spiritual force. Develop it by yoga. From today yoga shall be my sole Occupation. Mahatmaji's movement of Ahimsa shall give freedom to our land. But another movement shall come up which shall make the land common to the people. Another movement shall come, in which people shall realise that life and living, land and its fruit belong to the Unique One who is the Life of Lives and the Lord of all. What we call today a political movement of freedom, shall develop into a spiritual movement. Humanity is waiting for the message of a Life Divinising Yoga from India. It is for this that India gets free. Free India is free world. This is the time for constructive work. Go to villages,

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O ye, who seek name and fame in towns!... Mother calls you from villages. Start model schools, cottage industries; stop evil habits, cultivate a good life. When the call comes, join and fight. Divine personalities shall guide you from behind. God is with the Nation. Go forward!..."

The pilgrim left behind the political arena and entered the solitudes of forest glens and mountain caves ... Silence!

64. AMONG BUDDHISTS

The pilgrim did not take leave of his friends. Even the spies knew only in the morning about his disappearance. From Tuticorin, he went to Arunachal where he saw Ramana. "Be as you are within and the world will take care of itself" said he. S would have remained in the cave up the hill. But he had an invitation to preside over a spiritual conference at Kolar. He went to Bangalore by bus and thence to Kolar. He presided over a large gathering of Buddhists there and delivered lectures on the Heart of Buddha:

Glory to Buddha, Ocean of Compassion ... Let us identify our hearts with the universal heart of the Enlightened One. His tender heart throbbed for the agony of the suffering multitude. The Vedic Culture that preached the ideal of One God, One humanity and One world disappeared into shades of cumbrous rituals, dark ignorance, dreadful orgies and caste arrogance. The masses were oppressed by the classes. Humanity was weeping in the desert of arid disappointment.

The merciful saviour came like a golden dawn of hope for all. He came as the ethical embodiment of the Upanishads. His heart thought beyond the luxuries, vain glories, tempting beauties, sweet dainties, delicate arts, jingling feet and charming melody that surrounded his youthful life. He had a lovely wife and a lovely child. These worldly pleasures did not attract him. He wept the tears of pining humanity. His father filled Kapilavastu with pomp and luxury, colour and joy—thrills of painted beauty. Streets and balconies echoed with the song "Love is life and life is joy; The world is good and our prince is sweet". Prince Siddharta saw these rejoicings from his golden car and his eyes searched for the other side of life. Destiny brought him face to face with a poor old man trembling on his staff. The Prince for the first time learnt that he too must act this part. Rich or poor, fair or foul, king or beggar all must become old and die. All must bend and bow before fate. The world was a prison—house of agony. Outside his golden prison, grief grinned at smiles and pain pricked pleasure. The old man appeared in his dream and said "Wake up, renounce and go!" Siddharta rose up, crossed the lure of wife and child, palace and luxury, and escaped on a fast horse into the forest solitude. He wandered in search of knowledge. Hatha Yogins did not satisfy him nor the penance of ascetics. He saw the merciless priests killing goats to attain pleasure in heaven. He stopped animal sacrifice in the Kingdom of Bimbisara. He sat, after a long search, under the Bodhi tree and got enlightenment by meditation. To a shepherd who gave him milk he said, "Hunger and thirst know no caste. All beings have an equal right to live, love and do good". From Sujata who offered him milk and rice, he learnt how to be peaceful by unattached devotion to duty. To a mother who moaned the death of her child, the Buddha said "Life is a tale of misery and every home has its tale of sorrow. Forbear your misery patiently". Vital passions (the army of Mara), assailed him in vain. Home and throne tempted him. He stood the test and conquered desires and bondages. He was free from woes and bonds; his heart and mind were pure. Knowledge flashed in that purity; freedom of peace and wisdom rose in the restful mind. For fifty years, the Buddha taught Dharma. He avoided extremes of asceticism and hedonism.

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The Pilgrim studied Dhammapada under Bikku Prasanta. There was a Buddha shrine at Kolar. He read there his Poetic Life of Buddha and His teachings. The Bikshus liked him and taught him the Pitakas—Vinaya Sutra and Dhamma. He visited Gaya and meditated under the Bhodi tree where the Buddha sat.

ESSENCE OF DHAMMA

1. He who takes refuge in the Buddha with right understanding, sees fourfold noble truths. They are, the sorrow and its cause, its extinction and the eightfold path. The eight fold path is: Right View, Wish, Word, Effort, Action, Living, Right Reflection and Meditation.

2. Blessed is Buddha's advent; blessed is His righteous word! Blessed is His Sangha, its accord and penance !

3. The All-Knowing Master is detached from all. He is free, free from cravings.

4. Avoid evils; pursue all virtues; keep the mind pure and clear—this is the teaching of the Buddha Dharma.

5. Even Gods honour that saint and sage who is free from stain and conceit and whose senses calm down like the steeds of a good charioteer.

6. Lust, anger, desire, delusion, doubt, pride, unsteady mind and ignorance are the fetters that bind you. Be free from them.

7. The perfect peaceful saint with right knowledge is calm in thought, word and deed.

8. Self is the Lord of the Self. Self is the refuge of Self. So control well the Self like a merchant controlling his horse.

9. Him I call a Brahmin who is pure, serene, stainless, meditative, reaching the highest goal.

10. Him I call a Brahmin who has a good control over thought, word and deed and who does not do any harm to others.

11. Wise, sinless, noble, heroic leader, sage, conqueror—him I call a Brahmin.

12. The bee sucks honey from the blossom without molesting its scent and hue; even so let peaceful sages wander in the villages.

13. Channels lead the water, blacksmiths fashion arrows; carpenters ply the wood; even so the wise control the Self.

14. The solid hill is not shaken by the whirlwind; the wise are not shaken by the praise or blame of the world.

15. Vengeful thoughts such as 'he reviled me, struck me and plundered me' must cease, then hatred ceases.

The wind does not move a hill. Rains do not pierce through a well-thatched house. *Mara* tempts not the wise man of strong, self-controlled mind, sparing in food and drink, free from lust, greed and envy.

16. Find out your own faults; judge your deeds. Do not find fault with others. Much rolling of the tongue does not show the learned. Love, courage and patience show a man of learning.

17. There is the pure one, righteous, true, restrained, nonviolent, and virtuous. People love him who does his duty with insight.

18. *SAMMA SANKALPA (RIGHT ASPIRATION)*: There is no fire like kama, no sin like hatred (dwesha) no pain like Skandas and no Bliss higher than peace. (Skandas are material qualities) Rupa, sensation (Vedana), abstract ideas (Sanna), tendencies of the mind and mental power (Vijnana). Pain and fear rise from doing. He who is free from doing has no fear.

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Fear and grief rise from lust. He who is free from them has no fear or grief. He who has no craving (Thanha) has nothing to fear or grieve over.

By love conquer anger, wickedness by meekness, by free gift conquer miserliness and falsehood by truth. Have a good mental control; give up evil habits; afflict not others. Gain health; that is a supreme gain. Contentment is the highest wealth; gratitude is the best kin and Nirvana the sublime bliss.

19. *SAMMA VACHA* (Right Speech) : A man of gentle words shown in good deeds, shines like a fair flower rich in colour and perfume. Praise and blame are twins. Rise above them. Refrain from raging speech. Restrain the rattling tongue. Fix your Self in truth and right conduct and then preach to others; then none can blame you.

20. *RIGHT LIVELIHOOD*: Indulge not in pleasures; be vigilant, Ascend to wisdom's height. The perfume of virtue is sweeter than the perfume of lotus, jasmine and sandalwood. A spoon tastes not the soup. A fool knows not Dharma. Just as the tongue enjoys the soup, by a moment's contact, the wise learn wisdom from the wise.

21. *Guard against evil*: Age, beauty, joy and wisdom increase for him who worships virtuous elders. This body decays and dies by age; no wise man guards it for ages. A diamond cuts a gem; evil destroys the evildoer.

22. *Peaceful life*: Happy we live with Love amidst hatred and with nothing as our own. Happy are the peaceful who seek neither gain nor loss. Pursue virtue like stars which follow the moon. He who kills, lies, steals, drinks and fornicates digs up his own roots and perishes.

23. *Samma kammanto* (Freedom from Karma) The lustful are caught in the current of craving like a fly in the spider's web. Desire is stronger than iron fetters. Just as a smith removes dirt from the gold and silver, the wise should remove the mental stain bit by bit. The transgressor is led to evil by his own acts, just as iron is corroded by its own rust. The good are seen afar like the Himalayas; the bad go unnoticed like arrows shot at dark of night.

24. *Samma sati* (Right mindfulness) No father, mother, kith or kin can do better good to one self, than a well controlled mind. The world is ablaze with lust. Darkness covers this life. Why not seek the Light ?

25. *Samma Samadhi* (Meditation): In youth, manhood and at dotage, one should take care of himself; the Self is dearer than aught else. The Self is its own master. The Master of the Self is the real Master.

Charity, purity, sacrifice, wisdom, courage, patience, truth, love, resolve and equanimity are the ten perfections of Buddhahood.

(Dana sila nikkamma, panna virya kanti satya adishtana, metta upekka-dasa Parimita srutam)

26. The Vow: I take refuge at the feet of the Buddha and promise to abstain from killing, stealing, adultery, falsehood, intoxication, untimely meals, music, dance, indecent shows, garlands, perfumes and toilets.

65. AMONG JAINS

A week's contemplation on the Buddha and his Dhamma brought peace to the mind. But the heart wanted something more. Now the pilgrim was immersed all day long in Samadhi calm and silent ... living upon groundnuts, margosa leaves and water. He went wherever there was a calm atmosphere for meditation. Mysore was a lovely place for tapasya. The Pilgrim visited the monasteries of Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhavacharya. He heard the monistic, dualistic and qualified monistic lectures. But the three could not agree. The pilgrim tried to bring them together in a conference. For there was one strong

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basis of their reunion. All the three accept God-realisation as the goal of life. All the three recognise the Gita as their authority. The pilgrim just wanted the three to read the Gita together without the commentary and organise a movement to popularise it instead of quarrelling over commentaries. The spirit of the Vedic religion had gone; only effete formalities remained. So without wasting his time the pilgrim went to Kengeri where there was a Brahmacharya Ashram organised by Major Ramachandraji. He stayed there for a week, trained the youths in yoga and then went to Mysore. The Mysore college students were on strike that day. There was a riot. The Pilgrim saw the play of human passions and went further to Sramana Belagola. He was guided by the Jains who knew him very well by his works on Jainism.

* * *

The titanic image of Gomateswar standing 56 ft. high upon the Vindya Hill, 400ft high, presented an imposing sight, a wonderful work of art, a majestic poem in stone. Gomata means he who delights. His original name was Bahubali. He was a hero; he conquered a kingdom. But like Asoka he became remorseful, threw off the sword, renounced the kingdom in favour of his brother Bharata and came away to this hill and attained perfection. Chamunda Raja made for him this gigantic image. It is held in high reverence by the Jains who celebrate a festival for it once in ten years. There is a Chandragiri adjoining it with 21 Jaina temples. Emperor Chandragupta lived here as a Jain. He trained 12,000 Jain missionaries and sent them abroad to convert south India. He lived here 12 years and died fasting for 20 days. Badrabahu sent 8000 Jain missionaries and converted Madura.

The Pilgrim went straight to the Gomateswara hill. Fortunately for him, Nemisagar, the head pontiff of the Digambari Math was there, performing the usual Puja. He welcomed the Pilgrim and gave him all conveniences to stay in his monastery. He was a learned man and a fluent speaker in Kannada, Hindi and Sanskrit. He had rivals in the locality who closed their doors when he was taken in a procession to the hill. The cause of discontent was only pelf and power. The other party learned in book-lore wanted to make a Sastri as the pontiff. Anyhow Nemisagar managed affairs very well with his Kannada devotees. He had a Sanskrit school where Jain scriptures were taught. The Pilgrim studied there two important Jain works. Sarvartha Siddhi and Sachanda Purana (the original of Jivaka Chintamani) and also heard the Bhagavata of Jains. According to them Sri Krishna was in hell and will come out as the next Thirtankar. The Pilgrim stayed up the hill in the cave of Bahubali for a week. His heart wanted to go further and seek a Mahaguru to know the mysteries of the heart. Jainism and Buddhism have laid a strong moral foundation of universal existence. But divisions have shattered even their solidarity. There are many schools of Buddhism and three main sects of Jainism—Digambari, Swetambari and Stanakvasi and the three are at loggerheads.

The pilgrim met two peculiar *avatars* who wanted to make him their devotee. “Do you accept a God above you? I am God and my wife is my Shakti. We are Radha and Krishna. Be our son! declare our manifestations, collect money for us...” “That is not my business... good bye Avatars” said the pilgrim and continued his search.

66. LIGHT FROM THE CAVE

The religions that grow round personalities lose their purpose after the prophets go and divide humanity into enemy camps. The Buddha said “Have faith in yourself. Be a light unto yourself. Life is like a burning faggot. The form, feeling, tendencies, perceptions and thoughts all are impermanent. Craving causes misery. Sex, immorality, falsehood, theft, vulgarity, malice and greed must be shunned. Moral purity, good thoughts, courteous service, concentration, compassion etc. must be developed. Jainism is a profound religion. The jains in India take only vegetarian food; they avoid night meals, observe ahimsa, and do

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humanitarian work. But who cares about the evolution of the soul shedding off the five karmas which hide knowledge, sight, feeling, passions and propensity ? How many have controlled anger, greed, bigotry, pride and covetousness ? Jainism prescribes fourteen steps to perfection for family men. All the 24 Jain Teachers, called Thirtankars (from Vrishaba Deva to Mahavira) have insisted upon the same fundamental disciplines of truthfulness, sex-control, purification, non-stealing and non-receiving, non-killing, vegetarian diet, taking pure distilled water, taking the evening meal before sunset, fasting twice a month, faith in the Arhats, salutations to Arhats, Siddhas, Acharyas, Teachers, and all Saints, worshipping Sadhus, abstention from sins and evils—are the disciplines which purify the soul and prepare it for perfect knowledge. The supreme sadhana in Jainism is the Sukla Dhyana, Pure Meditation. The cloth is bleached before it is coloured. Even so, the soul is purified of all its Karmas and Sankalpas before it takes spiritual colour. The evolution of the soul extends from matter to trees, animals, human beings and Siddhas and Divine Beings. This is denoted by the well-known *Swastik* symbol. Christianity preaches “Good deeds are the best prayer.” A good conscience is God’s voice. Conscious love and compassion lead to Godhood. Religions are like courses of studies. Each religion has a Lord, a Prophet, a Book and rituals. Purity is the common teaching of all religions. A pure heart is a higher scripture than printed books. Service with pure love is a practical Upanishad. The law revealed to Moses, on Mt. Sienai, is the fundamental teaching of all Semitic religions. It insists upon non-killing. But Pharaoh killed male children in thousands to limit the threat of births. Herod killed thousands of children to destroy Jesus who escaped. Adam and Eve begot Abel and Cain. Cain killed Abel and following him, millions of brother-men were killed. Read Racine’s *Esther* and *Athalie*; your heart will shudder with scenes of murder. Like history, religions too are red with ghastly murders in the name of God and prophets. Repentance and expiation tickets cannot reform and transform man. Murder is going on in the political battlefield and in religious prattle-field. Each religion speaks of one God and one humanity and service to humanity as the best form of worship. But in actual life what do we see? The bread of life is soaked in the blood of ambition. God does not demand your race, creed, colour or religion. God demands love, purity, and a clean conscience.

What is the essence of Knowledge? What is the central Truth and where to realise it? There is no use of wandering like this ... The Pilgrim’s heart was heavy with doubts. He wanted some reliable Master that could initiate him into the secret of the Cave-Light in the heart. He wanted to know the Heart’s Cave which the Upanishad and the Gita point out to be the fulcrum of our being. He was immersed in the words of the Upanishad: “He is the Supreme who knows the Brahman in the cave of the heart” when, the brilliant face of **Ramana Maharshi** appeared in his meditation. The Pilgrim was tired of long wanderings and meanderings in politics and religions and he wanted to turn a new page in his spiritual life, the page of yoga to which he was accustomed since boyhood. He remembered the words of Jnana Siddha who told “Go onward; look not back; go on and on and you will find the Master and the Light.” The Pilgrim started that same night for Mysore, thence to Bangalore. In Bangalore Prem Ashram, he met an old Sanyasin, a Hatha Raja Yogin who treated Madan Mohan Malavya offering to make his body youthful. S had a long talk with him:

S: With all your cordials, are you able to control death? Can you keep your body for ever?

Y: I thought so; but I have found it impossible to keep the body immortal. The Soul is immortal; that is all. The body must perish.

S: What is the use of thinking over this perishable body? It must die. If everyone becomes immortal in body, where is food in the world ? Even now, we want family plan-

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ning and birth control. It will be dangerous to the economy of the world.

Y : But how many can reach that immortality ? Not even one in a million

Three saints tried it and failed. I too failed. So I am now turning away to deeper trance ... The secret is not in the body.

S: Exactly. I searched and searched, wandered and wandered and I am called by Ramanashakti now.

Y: Ramana! I have heard about him. I too want to see him. Go first and I shall follow...

The Yoga Siddha gave S some of his cordial made of refined gold. S vomited all the sediments of the alimentary canal, cleaned the bowels and with a pure and clean body, heart and brain he set out to see Ramana...

67. YOU HAVE SEEN THAT!

Aum Aum Aum ! The train stopped at Arunagiri. S felt a thrill. He got down free like air with no burden except the body of 96 lbs. S mounted up the hill, reached the Virupakshi cave. He took his bath in the mumbling waterfall nearby, dried his clothes, and meditated. Two monkeys came near him. He threw at them the pocket of groundnuts he had ... They took half and left the rest. S took it for the evening food. He sat for ten minutes outside the cave, watching the wide sky and the sun setting on the other side of the mountain. He climbed to the Skanda Ashram above where he met Jyothi Brahman, jet black in colour. He said that his body was gold within, like that of Ramalinga. He showed some magic saying "Ramana does not know all these Siddhis."

S hurried down, wore the dried cloth and ran to Ramanashram repeating Aum Aum Aum Jaya Aum!

7 pm; Ramana was telling the Vedic scholar, Ganapati Sastri "S.B. is coming"... Once, twice But where ? Sastri looked, surprised as S entered the thatched Kutir where Ramana sat upon a cot. S did not see a human figure. He saw a flood of light and a lingam in the centre. He closed his eyes and remained self-immersed for an hour. Lo, the heart was visible, the cave opened. S entered the cave, felt a delightful peace and remained plunged into it ... As he opened his eyes, Ramana's brilliant Aurora-face looked at him and his glowing eyes were set upon his heart. The cosmic force got a new vigour. S sat still dazed by the light and closed his eyes again in inner communion. On opening his eyes again, Ramana smiled and said "You have felt that within; that is the Heart. That is the cave." G. Sastri ejaculated "Be in the heart's cave! Pure Bharati !" Ramana said "Be in the Virupakshi cave, and here is the key," Surprise!. The God man, asked "Are you hungry? come, take food", S bowed down saying "My hunger is in the heart; not in the stomach". S was too shy to take food in any home or ashram. His nature food was ready there-groundnuts and plantains. "You can appease your inner hunger in the cave" said the Maharshi. Suddenly Sastriji asked him to sit down and give them the story of the Bharata Shakti. S told it to them and read verses from the Sadhana Kandam. Maharshi said it was a great work and it must become popular.

S took leave of the Maharshi to the cave and Sastriji, followed him speaking about the saint and His Ashram. He told S that the Ashram must be reformed etc. S silently listened and said "All reforms must come from the Heart".

S entered the cave and saw a cobra. On the way too, he saw two snakes. But they went off passively. S was not afraid of them. S swept the cave, and lighted an oil-lamp. He tore his shawl into five pieces for his codpiece and one for sweeping the floor.

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S came out and sat on a rock for an hour. The night was dark but in that darkness there was a light. The mumbling stream was pouring its sonorous Aum into his ears. The Inner Aum mingled with it and sang a sweet lullaby to the meditative heart. Jackals were yelling afar and some ran down the hill in search of sheep. S went into the cave, closed the doors and nature sent him to a sweet solacing rest. He rose up at three and sat for meditation till five. The birds hailed the new dawn. S felt a rebirth, a renaissance.

S took his bath at the waterfall, wrote some poems and again immersed himself into the raptures of the lightning cave within. No thought! No mind! Food? Never mind! See there; an old friend comes up-B.V.N. and embraces S. "It is very good that you have come from platform to cave!" Here, you can feel peace..."

S: This is the Peace we want! Where is peace outside the heart?

B.V.N: Come. Today you can take your meals with me...

S: Provided, you allow me to cook for you. For, S never received anything unless he paid for it in the form of work...

B.V.N. was silent. He wrote out on newspaper margins all his thoughts.

68. THREE SAINTS

There were three high-minded souls that were friends of the Pilgrim, in his cave life. One was the indefatigable Ganapati Sastri and the other was the highly cultured B.V.N. There were many others but these two were really born-yogins, great scholars and their company was elevating. Let us now see B.V. Narasimha Swami.

S had known B.V.N. since his boyhood. He came in personal contact with B.V.Narasimha Iyer, M.L.C. in 1914. He was one of the great leaders of India, a close friend of Tilak, a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. S attended his lecture on Gandhiji and charka at Sivaganga and had a private conversation with him. He told S that God shall liberate the country and Gandhiji's charka humming Ram Ram shall inspire the land. His faith in God and Saints was deep and firm. He took an active part in the Home Rule movement started by Annie Besant. S sang his songs at meetings. He encouraged S as a national and devotional poet. He liked divine concerts more than national songs. Aurandale started a National Education movement. A Besant High School was started at Adyar. Funds were collected for it throughout the country. B.V.N. played a prominent part in the collection of funds. A lump sum was presented to Mr. Aurandale for the National School.

B.V.N. as a member of the Legislative Council, spoke in Tamil and freely expressed his views without fear or favour. He was really a lion, a Simha in arguments. Free India would gladly offer him the law portfolio. He continued his career as an astute politician. He went to England with Tilak and Kharade to argue the case against Sir. Valentine Chirol who insulted India in an indictive speech. Tilak called him "A legal genius of irrefutable arguments". "Stand up and fight. Swaraj is your birthright. Be resolute in demanding it" said Tilak. "Stand up and argue; Go forward boldly. God leads the nation" said B.V.N. "Krishna has blown the conch; the battle rages; who can stop it? Freedom is assured. Fight on! Fight like Arjuna; Sri Krishna's Gospel inspires us" said Tilak. Tilak and B.V.N. were staunch Sanatanists. They never forgot the Gita and Gayatri and Ramanam. B.V.N. was a regular reader of Ramayan and Bhagavatam. His thoughts were uplifted in spiritual aspiration. The fire was alive within and God kindled it ablaze by a stroke of tragic misfortune in his private life. During a ceremony, his two children met a watery grave in the well. Death of the dear ones, was a new birth to his soul. What is life but a funeral procession from the cradle to the grave through the pits and ruts of pitiless fate! The prosperous lawyer, the famous politician, the indomitable councillor found himself in a cul-de-sac. The

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gloom was impenetrable. He sought some light. He detached himself from home and the world and attached his heart to the feet of God in saints. The Saint of Narayanavaram initiated him in Ramanam and silence. He repeated Ram Ram within and observed silence once a week. Swami Suyamprakash of Sendamangalam initiated him in Vedanta and Tatvamasi mantra. When the mind was ready for meditation, B.V.N. came to Ramana. He came just a day before S. He was a transformed personality. His gray beard, new outlook, introspective vision and fervent devotion to Ram and Ramana and his simple life and silence marked him out for a sage.

B.V.N.'s wife came and saw him with tears in her eyes. She gave him food. What else could she do, poor worldly creature ! B. V. N. was Silence No. 1, and S was Silence No. 2 at the feet of Ramana. S helped him often in preparing his food and cleaning his vessels. Both of them translated the teachings of Ramana and planned for a sumptuous volume on Ramana Maharshi. S wrote his Ramana Vijayam and B.V.N. wrote his Self-Realisation. The WHO AM I (Nan Ar) of Sri Ramana did not find a *terra firma* in his mind; emotional devotion sought for something else. He studied Berkely and other English philosophers. Written conversations went on between S and B. V. N. which filled the daily Newspaper margins. He compared Berkely with Shankara and Shankara with Ramana. S maintained that these thinkers had their individuality and Ramana's-Who Am I-though as old as the world, had its originality. Ramana remained firm like the Arunachala Hill and His Grace flowed to devotees like a gentle waterfall. He was in search of a guru that could appeal to his devotional mind. S suggested to him Upasini Baba, the disciple of Sai Baba.

Sai Baba was a popular Maharashtra Saint of Shirdi. Tilak knew him. S too saw him. S told him about Sai Baba. Before S departed to Pondicherry, B.V.N. had a long talk with him in the Cave. He opened his heart, "My mind goes often to Upasini Baba and Sai Baba. Upasini keeps up the traditions of our country. I want to leave Tiruvannamalai and go to Sakori". So he went; and sent his brief account of Upasini Baba while S was silent at Pondicherry. He learnt Marati, read the speeches of Upasini who recommended Sai Baba to him. Sai's presence influenced him so much that he became his Vivekananda. His wonderful services and whirlwind tours as an apostle of Sai Nath are very well-known to all. He has built a beautiful Sai Samaj at Mylapore and has installed the Master's image there, S contributed often to Sai Sudha. B.V.N. presided over a meeting addressed by S in Madras after long silence. He embraced S to show his affections and requested him to undertake Baba's mission. But S went on a world tour. One day he was speaking at the Sai-mandir in Calcutta when the news of the death of B. V. N. reached him. S presided over the Mahasamadhi Puja and declared "B.V.N. lives in Sai who is the Sai Samaj." The great apostle of Sainath has taken a brilliant page in the history of spiritual India. Sai Mandirs in different parts of India, Sai Sudha printed in Sai Samaj, Madras, thousands of Sai institutions, Sai Film, Sai Pictures in every home in India stand in memory of the wonderful Sai missionary, Sri B. V. N. Swamiji.

69. KAVYA KANTAM GANAPATI SASTRI

Ganapati Sastri was a silver-voiced poet, a torrential speaker in Telugu and Sanskrit. He had learnt everything by intuition. He was born dumb and suddenly in his sixth year his voice opened into marvellous wisdom. In his tenth year he spontaneously composed verses. He studied all the standard works in Sanskrit and Telugu. He read the Ramayana, Bharatam and Bhagavatam. He quickly mastered the Vedas. Pandits in Nudea gave him the title **Kavya Kantam** (Poetry-voiced).

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He took to Japa Yoga from his youth. He continued his tapasya in all pilgrim centres of India. Yet his object was not fulfilled. His sadhana included not only self-realisation but also the liberation of India. He was a mystic patriot. In 1904 he performed his tapasya at Tiruvannamalai and dedicated 1000 verses to Uma Sivam and saw the Brahmana Swami on the hill. Up to that day the Brahmana swami was unknown. The Vedic scholar bowed to him and requested him to enlighten him as to what tapasya meant. For he had performed countless Japa and had only the intellectual grasp of the Vedic truth.

The young yogi looked at him for a few minutes; then he looked into himself for a few minutes and then opened his gentle voice saying in broken sentences (for he had been silent for the past 12 years).

“Turn your gaze within; find out the root of I. There, mind is absorbed—that is tapasya. Direct your attention to the source whence the sound of the mantra is produced. When the mind is absorbed into it, that is tapasya.”

The scholar was delighted to hear this original teaching. He named Brahmanaswami as Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi and taught his disciples to adore him as such. He saw the grace of Mother Uma in his contact with the Maharshi and sang his famous Umasahasram before the Maharshi and a circle of disciples. The Vedic scholar dedicated his entire life to the glorification of the Maharshi. He collected the teachings of Ramana into Ramana Gita. He taught the secrets of the Vedas and some mystic hints for meditation to S. He came now and then to the cave and encouraged S. Nayana was the eloquence of Ramana's silence. S composed many poems in the Vedic spirit and dedicated them to Bhagavan who read his poems and blessed him. He read the whole of the Yoga Siddhi. He daily told S about his experiences and heard the Ramana Vijayam.

70. SESHADRI SWAMI

One day the Pilgrim was passing through the temple to the hill after meeting the Maharshi. A peculiar sage was looking at him from the front of a building. He looked this way and that way, murmuring “Shuddhanandam! yes Shuddhanandam!” S stopped there and adored the sage whom he recognised as Seshadri Swami. To ordinary eyes he was dirt-and-dust-laden, clothed in rags, rustic and uncouth. He never stayed at one place. Devotees hunted after him. To S he was a Mahatma who had lost his body-consciousness. S approached him and prayed “O Mahatma, I live in the Virupakshi cave, in silence. Samadhi gives delight, no doubt. But when we open our eyes, a world is before us and all its sufferings affect the mind... How to transcend the Samadhi stage and live always in the Self Bliss—awake or asleep?” The sage looked deep into the Pilgrim's eyes and murmured, “ See Ramana. He sees all and yet lives in the delight of the within. Go on with your cave life. You will go on and on to immortal bliss and peace. Who sees from within? The eyes do not see. The Atman sees through the eyes. Know you are not the eyes. You are the seer. The eye is a window. You are the house owner. You see the world through the window. You live in the house; you are not the house Go, go...I will come” He went into the building, straight to the kitchen, took a mouthful of the food ready for him and scattered the rest and ran away. At night when S was going to Maharshi he peeped into the place where he used to sleep inside the temple. Silk quilt and pillows were laid for him. He put his dirty cloth upon it and laid his body on the bare ground.

S often met Seshadri Swami. One day he came to the Virupakshi cave at night. S meditated holding his hand. There was a good vibration. The sage sang in a melodious tone Muka Panchasati—verses on Devi Kamakshi and then he repeated a portion of the Purusha Suktam. He was leaning against the wall near S all the night. At 4 am he bathed

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with S. S washed his clothes and gave him a new codpiece. Seshadri blessed S and called him to go round the hill (Giri Pradakshanam) with him. S one day went with him and he dragged him to unknown corners of the forest and often made him meditate. Before going to Pondicherry S saw him and he said “Go ahead like that river; you will reach the ocean”.

S wrote the biography of this saint elaborately. Seshadri Swami encouraged the cave life of S. S was destined to tour the entire world but felt always as if he were immovably within. The Pilgrim was firm in bliss; the plane of Divine Will carried him to distant countries.

There was another silent Sadhu, Yogi Ramaiah, who was very kind to the Pilgrim ... He lived near the tiled hut of B. V. N. and came to Virupakshi now and then for meditation.

The whole T' Malai was permeated with the radiance of Ramana. S meditated all day long and went to the Maharshi every midnight and on special occasions. The contact with the Maharshi was a great blessing in his life and the Bhagavan revealed to him rare wisdom in solitary conversations. They have been collected in the book—**Midnight talks with the Maharshi** published in the Call Divine. As the editor of the **Call Divine** S lived in Ramana.

71. SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

We do not want volumes to tell the story of Ramana and his teachings. Ramana born at Tiruchuzhi educated in Madurai took a fancy to the life of saints. He was inflamed with an intuitive fervour to see Arunachalam. He was disgusted with home and school and the world. One day he felt as if his body died and the enquiry sprang in him. “Who lived in the body? Who Am I?” He realised that he was not the body; he was the immortal soul which is the God in man. To stabilise this experience he travelled to Arunachalam leaving a letter to his mother and brothers that he was going out in response to the call of his Father (Arunachalam.). At Arunachalam he sat self-immersed at the temple corner and in the Virupakshi cave. He attained his Self-pose in twelve years. The Vedic scholar Ganapati Sastri was the first to discover his wisdom. “What is tapasya” was his enquiry. “Find out the root of I and let the mind merge there—that is tapasya” said the sage. Ganapati Sastri adored him as Ramana Maharshi and from that day thousands resorted to him for peace and light. An ashram developed around him and famous disciples and fervent seekers came to him. His words were eagerly received by the East and the West. “Find out the thought-centre; be there self-immersed. Be the I that you are” is the central teaching of the Maharshi. But Ramana Maharshi's inner personality is greater than his life in the body and his silent natural state is bigger than volumes. Within a few years of contact with him, the Pilgrim gathered spiritual experiences that could run into volumes. There is no language to express some of the experiences. Some interesting revelations are given in this chapter for the sake of fellow pilgrim souls.

72. BE YOURSELF

The Pilgrim in the Cave was always Self-conscious. The Brahmakara was vigorously working in him. The personal Ramana was in that cottage below; but the impersonal Ramana was in the Virupakshi Cave homed in the heart of the earnest Pilgrim. The Pilgrim felt the peace of having attained the goal of his lifelong voyage. He saw the Maharshi rarely during the daytime unless he called him specially. Mostly he met the Maharshi at midnight when the world and the ashram slept in forgetfulness and when the universal symphony filled the air with peaceful Aumkar. The Pilgrim went to the Master doing Chara Pranayam and Brahmakara Layam. This was a very difficult sadhana which

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the pilgrim was accustomed to do all day long as he went on with his wakeful work. Even in deep sleep this sadhana was kept on. His sleep was not slumber; it was self-immersion in the Satchidananda consciousness. It was inner wakefulness. It was spiritual rest in the cradle of cosmic energy. The Maharshi took rest during the daytime just after dinner and went early to bed. He waited for S at midnight. Not a single day failed; he was sitting on the foundation wall before the thatched hut. You cannot imagine it now since all that space has been covered by cement buildings. Sometimes the Pilgrim visited Seshadri Swami before he came to Maharshi. As S entered the open hedge of the Ashram a thrilling presence delighted his heart. It was a rare occasion when Peace met Peace in Peace under the Peace-canopy. Maharshi with S walked as far as the pond near the ashram. The pond too was tranquil. It was a bright fortnight. The water was silvered by the bright moonlight. The shadowy moon danced in every wave and ripple of the small pond.

S: Vedanta dances there in each wave of the pond.

M: The waves break the shape of the moon. You see when the pond is calm and waveless, the moon-image is clear. Even so when the mind is calm and ingathered, you see there the image of the Self.

S: Mere image will not do. The original moon has light and delight.

Look at that vast expanse above. Ah, God twinkles in every star. He sings Aum in the breeze. His mystery leads the stellar cortege dawn-ward. Ah, my heart thrills with delight to enjoy this midnight before you. This is not a night, for your dawn-face shines before me ... O Master, how happy you have made me...Delight, delight! – The pilgrim sang in delight and danced in ecstasy ... Ramana was calmly watching him and touched his head as he fell at His feet. O, what a thrill of delight it was ... the pilgrim soul with the God of his temple!

M: You are a Kavi Yogi and the Self in Nature dances with the self in the heart .. This delight is born of union with the Beloved in the heart.

S: Self in Nature; Self in the heart, the Beloved in Union—are they different ... ?

M: No no...All are one Self in different forms. Forms differ; the Self is one. Stars, moon, sun and fire are forms; the light is one. Bulbs differ but the current is one.

S: I am the moon; I am the stars! I am the sky! I am the air! I am the dawn, I am the sun! I am the sea! I am the cloud! I am the rain! I am the earth ! I am the river ! I am the field! I am the lord of all I see and of all that the eye does not see! (again singing and dancing).

M: This is spiritual ecstasy ...

S: Why not dance with me ... ?

M: This is the seer, the witness, the audience. The player dances; the spectators enjoy; they do not dance with the player.

S: The moon's reflection dances on the mental waves of three modes; but the moon in the sky is calm, tranquil marching among the stars like a gentle swan in a lotus tank. When the day dawns, the moon and the stars merge their individuality into the splendour of the rising sun.

M: It is not the star and the moon merging into the sun. There is individuality even in that merger. The stars yet twinkle dazed by the sun. But the light merges into the greater Light. Swallowing millions of luminaries, the One Sun shines. Even so the one I shines when all mentations, when all the modifications of the mind are pacified. When the root of the mind which is the thought-centre is touched, I-consciousness alone remains.

Silence ensued here ... Half an hour of introspection took place. The Maharshi

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stood up; S took leave... **Aum Aum...**

These midnight talks have been collected in a separate booklet. Now the words of the Maharshi are given briefly here. These words were uttered on different occasions of the cave life—when people disturbed S, when peculiar types of seekers and critics came, when monkeys and animals approached the cave, when biographical points were discussed, when S read his poems, when he danced in emotion, when he spoke about other saints and when subtle spiritual doubts had to be cleared. Maharshi's mellow tone and piercing look, gentle words and calm equipoise quickly enlightened the seeker. Such a force Maharshi alone had. He spontaneously poured out his wisdom when proper receptive hearts sat before him. Now here is the quintessence of his teachings.

73. SUPERNAL WISDOM

First take care of yourself, Be the Self. The other Self, the world will go on by itself. You travel in the train of Grace. Throw your burden too in the train. Why do you bear it on your head? The Grace will support you and lead you to the destiny. Trust in the Pure Grace. The Master and the Grace are not outside yourself. God is the Master–Self. God is said to reside in the heart. But the heart is not a space nor an organ in the body, nor is God limited to space. The Heart is a centre of consciousness. God is not a person, form or name. It is Pure Almighty Truth–Light–Consciousness–Bliss that can be known as the Self, in the Self, by the Self. Self is the real state of man. Be That, be there. S interposed with a new interpretation of Ra-Ma-Na. Ra =the Pure bliss. Ma =I and mine ego. Na= Not, nil. When I and mine—ego, the lower vital ego is nil, then Ra-the Self–God is realised. That you are. He continued: Yes, there are two I's, one is the ego–I and the other is the Divine I. The ego I must disappear into the flames of the Divine I, just as the camphor disappears into the flame of Grace.

The Grace is not outside yourself. It's within yourself. You are That. It is not to be realised anew. Renunciation of the ego and realisation of the Self are synonymous. Giving up of the non–self is renunciation. Silence is the symbol of realisation. Silence is like the current; speech of all sorts is like obstructing the current for the purpose of lighting, heating, cooling, airing, tuning etc.

Be introspective, self–reflective; discriminate between the Self and non–self. Find out the thought–centre, wherefrom the mind rises. There you are, the Self that you are. Intellect is like a lamp; to see a thing at night a lamp is necessary. At sunrise, the lamp is of no use. Its light shall be swallowed by the sun light. Even so intellectual book–lore dwindles into nothing before the full blaze of inner realisation. This is real surrender — the melting of the ego in its source, the heart. The unreal ego–I vanishes into the Real Eternal I. That is surrender. It is the immortal I, Self, God, Paramatman. Knowing the Self is being the Self. Meditation is mental repetition of a concept, an inner Japam. Meditation carries an image. Vichara is greater than meditation. It touches the Self directly. Leaving sankalpa (past impressions), one must attain savikalpa and then the nirvikalpa and kevala samadhis by pure self reflection. That is one's natural state of being. You do not keep thinking I am a man. Even so you need not think I am Brahman. Be the Brahman which exists as the I in you. You do not call it a river after it has mingled with the ocean. You call that too the ocean. The final stage in spiritual realisation is Brahmakara Vritti. It is the vibrating consciousness of the Brahman. That is Jnana. What is the use of a water proof coat to a salt doll immersed in the sea? It becomes the sea. The objective world pales into insignificance before the Subjective Self. This is the realisation of the Self. To keep that realisation a constant current is the greatest attainment of man and woman. Truth is in silence. What is, is true.

74. EVERY ONE MUST COME THIS WAY

The Pilgrim stayed in the cave only for Ramana; he visited Ramanasram only for him. Ramana was a living temple. To be self-absorbed in the solitary cave brought Ramana to his heart more than going and seeing him. S never liked the crowded atmosphere. There were often quarrels over petty affairs. Human vanity and desire to possess everything and the self-sufficient pride of possession infect institutions. Attachment to institutions often obstructs the free flow of Divine Consciousness. Some of them do not tolerate even our devotion to God. The way in which they snatch away things from others and count the merits of persons in silver and gold, need not be elaborated. Human ambition plays its roll even around holy centres. The hill was full of mendicants clothed in ochre colour. Very often they disturbed the pilgrim in several ways. Their ideal Swamiar must never open his mouth even if he is beaten, robbed, cheated and reviled. He must wear only a codpiece and take whatever falls in his tin cup. Some did not like the passbook of S. One man was sent to the post office to withdraw five rupees. S forgot to write the amount in words. The man put 2 before it, wrote twenty five, spent away all and brought an account setting treble the price for a coconut, groundnuts and plantains. During festivals some vandals tom-tommed, "A great Siddha resides in the cave, go and see him for one anna, one anna." They began to sell S for one anna pieces. Maharshi kindly asked S to stay with him in the ashram. He secured a cosy corner for his Sahaja Samadhi and sent him fruits for dinner. One day S wept and wept... "Was this his goal—to sit in a rock cave with monkeys?" S heard a voice "Go to Sri Aurobindo ... Write and write!" Just at that time, Ganapati Sastri returned from Pondy and told him about his dharsan of Sri Aurobindo. "You can go and be there" said he. At once S wrote a letter to Sri Aurobindo and the reply came... "You can come for the dharsan." Ramana was first half-willing. Then after hearing the Ramana Vijayam, he was satisfied. That midnight he poured into him torrents of Bliss. S did not like food. He kept himself immersed in the Delight which only the enjoyer can know. The Bhagavan told him many things which could be found in the book "Midnight Talks."

The last day came. D.R. had come to take him to Pondicherry. It was the 20th of November. The Krittikai crowds thickly gathered around the Hill and Ramana Maharshi sat outside and S inside.

The spirit slept in the heart, the heart slept like a lotus in the smile of silence. The future slept in the cradle of destiny rocked by a mysterious force. Silent communion went on.

Maharshi suddenly rose up; the crowd melted away for breakfast. S caught hold of the feet of the Master and bathed them with the tears of his love. The Maharshi sat near him. S caught hold of his hands ... Brahmakara thrilled into the Pilgrim. He was grafted with the silent force of the Baghavan. The Heart spoke to heart. His luminous eyes darted into the Pilgrim's soul. Silence! S was charged and polarised with the Ramana-effect... He knew what was passing in his consciousness. The Maharshi gently said:

"Bharati, take refuge in Silence. Be here, there or anywhere. Only establish yourself in the Inner I. You have a Sankalpa to write books and print Bharata Shakti. Go on finish all aspirations. Leave not any lingering desire behind. Keep a clear sky within. Have self-equipose in silence. In storm and turmoil, be calm and self-confident. The world is a show of gold and sex. It is a theatre of lust, greed and envy. Be an introspective witness to the Drama. Be a Kavi Yogi. You go within, make your songs for the Divine. Yoga is establishment in the Self. Yoga is Self-Being."

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S: Master, I do not go; I remain here; only my sankalpa goes there to fulfil itself. Thousand valuable books and the Bharata Shakti must come out. I will return soon by Thy Grace...

M: Even after quarter of a century you must come here. Allow Karma to work itself and come free, free. You are well fixed. Nothing can divert your inner concentration.

Silence, silence for ten minutes. ‘tears, tears, tears’...

S touched His feet, placed into his hands a big ball of dates — 1250 in number, a date per week, perhaps ! Ramana took a bit and returned the rest to S. S understood his silent message. So many weeks of silence will give one tremendous force. Each date of the calendar tasted a date of Ramanamritam, the sweetness of Ramana Bhagavan. S set foot forward....

Accidentally Seshadri Swami met him near the temple. S adored him and gave him fruits. He returned them saying “Shuddhanandam, Ellam Vachukk...o” “Keep all our blessings with you and go forward...”

Guf Guf Guf Guf Guf...! Aum... The train stops at Pondicherry...

Silence achieved many things at Pondicherry. But Ramana’s presence was always there with him in his heart and breath. He was sending inspiration ... and the inner communion was vigorous. After finishing his mission in Sri Aurobindo’s Ashram, S returned to Ramanashram exactly as the Master predicted. He had contact with all Ramana Bhaktas. He seriously thought of settling in Ramanashram. But the Pilgrim is always in search of living forces. He had to take a world tour and achieve many things by the Divine Will. All the while he kept in close contact with the Bombay Ramana Samaj which gave him a welcome address and made him editor of the Call Divine. He presided over all Ramana Jayanti festivals in Bombay. We shall give a closing touch to this chapter of the Pilgrim’s life by reproducing his first Presidential Address in the Ramana Conference held in Telang Hall, Matunga Bombay. All compliments to P. M. N. Swamy !

75. THE I IN ALL

The recent years of human history has seen three great contemporary souls with whom the prime of my life was spent. Mahatma Gandhi the Karma Yogin, Sri Aurobindo the Bhakti Yogin and Ramana Maharshi the Jnana Yogin. Truth for me is God said Gandhiji. Life in Yoga is truth said Sri Aurobindo. The I in the heart is the fundamental Truth said Ramana. They are the silent trio who are eloquent in the soul–force that permeates modern thoughts. The fire of inner dynamism sparked out of their ingathered life. Ramana and myself lived together in the same cave. His presence was peace. His sight was light. His word served our spiritual need. When he sat the immortal self sat. When he stood the glorious self stood like a hill. When he walked the self walked. When he talked every word touched our heart. My being was polarised by the mystic dynamism of his subtle self–current. Ramana effect shows an awakening force just as Raman effect in science shows the vibrational frequencies of atoms in the molecule. One day a Sanskrit poet was pouring his verses on Uma before him. We all listened with admiration but could not digest the ideas implied in his thousand verses. I requested Ramana to give in four lines the essence of Knowledge. He suddenly breathed out four lines in Sanskrit which summed up the message: The Brahman shines in the heart’s cave saying “ I am I am here” Find that by sinking the mind into the heart, self reflection, or by control of breath. That is Knowledge, which surely leads you to peace and bliss. The self discovery is the summum bonum of existence tried by all sages from Socrates to Shankara, from Vasishtha to Aurobindo, from

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Krishna to Ramakrishna. Had humanity understood this fundamental truth, it might have seen a better world.

But how is the world today in spite of the advent of great spiritual luminaries from Ramakrishna down to Ramana, from Dayananda down to Aurobindo? Thousands of books pour out of the power-press. The literate world daily reads and reads letters. Science has taken giant strides forward to conquer time and distance and expand human self-will over land, sea and sky. Science expands from power to power pooling more power from the infinite source of Nature. Electric and electronic forces have become the warp and woof of modern life. Steam power, water power, tidal power, electric power, electronic power, atomic power, hydrogen power, solar power, cosmic power and a number of natural powers have connected the world with a network of factories. The thinking man applying his five senses and the mind, unlocks energy stored in the five elements. Scientific intellect measures the heights and depths of sky and sea.

Physical science must wed the psychic science of Yoga. Matter, the Prakriti must recognise the Spirit which is Purusha. People think in terms of matter and material good. They should think in terms of the Spirit and spiritual good. Today man lives in the dividing twilight mind tossed by the dual throngs of good and bad. Man should get beyond the mental gloom of ego, illusion, ignorance and think in terms of the Soul of things, the real I in all. When A is conscious of the same I in all, A shall see himself in B and B in C; then A, B or C are the one-I in several names and forms. When the inner eye opens to the conscious vision of this unique Divine I in the heart, then inner peace shall be established and life shall be an efflorescence of the inner Bliss.

Ahmi (I am) is the message of God to Moses. It is the essence of our being. Self enquiry and self attention gain strength by concentration and fathom the depth of inner treasures. Heart is the seat of the Self-I. It is not the palpitating heart of flesh; it is the heart of consciousness; the breath, emanates from that centre and returns to that. It is also the thought centre, the cradle of the Self. To love it is devotion; to live in it is life, to know it is knowledge, to be one with it is realisation. All thought waves cease in it. All fears and sorrows are brought about by the contact and attachment of the mind to ego-body. Mind is a phenomena of thought waves. Thoughts rise up with the breath and sink down when the mind abides in the central heart. So the secret of all yogas and religions and philosophical enquiries is the old method of Atma-Vichara, self-enquiry, the question of "Who am I?" I Self shines in your heart; find out the thought centre; that is the root of knowledge; that is the heart, the heart is your Self. Reside in the heart's cave firmly as your Self; the rest shall happen naturally. Find your native Self; be That; there. There is a mighty force leading world events. Leave the world into its hands. Enter into silent meditation; be calm within; the Within shall take care of the without.

This is the glorious contribution of India to the world. This is the remedy for the war-sick humanity. Real peace is in self-knowing. When I know my Self and see That in all, I can never wound anyone, for everything is myself; my happiness is the happiness of humanity and humanity's happiness is my happiness. The atomic-age shall not be a danger to lives and nations when the *Atmic-age* blooms.

76. SRI AUROBINDO AND THE MOTHER

Homage to Sri Aurobindo and the Mother who gave him a rebirth. The prime of his life, the best part of his life, was spent at their feet. For quarter of a century he lived at their feet in silent samadhi and attained **Sahasrara Siddhi** and **Mahaturya Siddhi** besides fulfilling all his literary dreams and poetic ideals. He lived just at the feet of Sri Aurobindo in the very room near his Samadhi. It was here that he rewrote his **Bharata Shakti**

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Mahakavyam in which he incorporated the life and teachings of Sri Aurobindo. He has extensively written Sri Aurobindo's biography (he was the first biographer of the Master) and has published treatises on his Integral Yoga.

The Pilgrim entered Sri Aurobindo Ashram with a black beard in the bloom of his life, (he was then about thirty) strong and healthy and returned with a grey beard. His love for the Master and the Mother is ever alive. After seeing many sages and living all religions, he came to Sri Aurobindo. The Pilgrim had seen him before, but Sri Aurobindo was transformed beyond recognition. He was lean and dark in 1916. Now he was fair and stout and had the biggest head in India. November 24th was his victory day. S entered the Ashram with the blossoming hope of a new life.

Shuddhananda! A call from above! The Pilgrim went up rapturous. The golden blue radiance of Sri Aurobindo ensnared the devotee. Sri Aurobindo nodded welcome with a sweet smile and pressed his hands upon his head and blessed him broadly. The Mother too blessed him lovingly. He offered humbly his Bank balance with a poem and surrendered to them with all his heart and soul. Again they smiled as if they said "Here we are, my child, come". The Pilgrim got entranced; he could not support himself. He fell unconscious. He was supported by an attendant and came out intoxicated with spiritual exultation. The pilgrim's spiritual journey was finished that day. He found his Father—Mother—Master and Home.

Next day, the Mother called him and gave him meditation in her private room for one full hour. "You can remain here" she said and provided the child with a cosy room. The child undertook to prepare luchi and sandesh and rasagulla for the Father—Mother. Mr.Naliniswar M.A became his assistant. S began to learn Bengali from him. He enjoyed the songs of Rabindranath in the original and the novels of Bamkin Chandra, especially Ananda Math and Rani Durga Choud Rani after whose model Sri Aurobindo planned his political constructions. Every day S took prasad to Sri Aurobindo and took for himself the fruit juice and the milk that he sent. The prasad department was at his disposal and he got money for the prasad from devotees. The Bengali and Gujarati devotees offered richly for the prasad and that offering went with the sandesh to the Mother with a poem every day. Most of his poems were thus the prasad of the Master and the Mother. The Mother taught French to the child very lovingly and he picked it up in a month and composed verses of different metres in French. Sri Aurobindo appreciated the poems and the Mother blessed them daily writing, "All my love and energy to you..." S loved Sri Aurobindo as much as Radha loved Krishna. Hence Sri Aurobindo baptised his child as Radhananda and the Mother called him 'Yogi'. He was known as Yogi all over the world. She encouraged and inspired S and he bloomed into a good French and English poet and picked up Western music also. The gracious Mother read his poems to sadhaks daily. The Mother tended him with such an affection that he forgot his orphaned days. S studied all the works of Sri Aurobindo for full twelve years and translated almost all of them into Tamil and wrote in English and French the biography of Sri Aurobindo and an illuminating treatise on Integral Yoga. Sri Aurobindo remarked them as dynamic works.

SRI AUROBINDO AND HIS MISSION

S delivered, many lectures on Sri Aurobindo and his yoga, his vision and mission after coming out of his silence. We reproduce here the speech he made on unveiling his picture in the Mahajana Hall, Madras:

"Glory to the Divine Architect of supermen and super women! Every thing seeming wonderful in this world, has a divine touch. Whatever is glorious, radiant, beautiful and dynamic is an emanation of the divine radiance. God is the soul of beings, homed in their heart. Asia is the chosen land of His emanations, especially India. Buddha, Sankara, Vyasa,

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Ramanuja, Madhva, Ramakrishna, Dayananda, Ramana, Sai Baba, Ramalingam and Gandhiji are such emanations; Jesus, Moses, Rasul, Zoroaster, Leotsu, Confucius too were such emanations. Sri Aurobindo was a manifestation; S felt in him a power, a presence, a magnetism unknown before. He was born with a mission. The immortal in him fulfilled it and left to immortal regions. He was a scholar in England, a poet in Baroda, a nationalist in Calcutta and an Integral Yogin at Pondicherry. He was an ideal man in Bengal and a superman in the Tamilnadu. He spoke a little, wrote much, thought still more and achieved an eternal pattern of Life Divine for all humanity. He loved India and laid the foundation of Greater India in his ashram. He lived to divinise men and heavenise earth. He chose varieties of men and women to live together in spiritual consciousness, without any difference of caste creed, religion, sect or scriptural bondage. He created a miniature Kingdom of Heaven and prepared shining instruments for his universal work of inner transformation. He made Pondicherry a Pilgrim Centre. He was the brain of the Swadesi movement and the crown of Indian Renaissance.

He was born on the 15th August, 1872, the same day as that on which Mazzini, the father of Young Italy died saying "Life is a mission and God is its vision". At Vadalur Ramalinga was predicting the birth of a new Light and there in Bengal Ramakrishna was kindling the spiritual flames of Awakened India. It was a psychological moment when the forces of renaissance were playing around his cradle. Sri Aurobindo's father Dr. Krishnadana Ghose was a finished product of Western culture; his maternal grandfather Raj Narayan was a champion of our spiritual culture. These two united in the young Aurobindo. For fourteen years he studied in London and returned to India as a Cambridge graduate. For eleven years he served in Baroda as a professor and imbibed the Spirit of the Gita and the Upanishads. As a vice-principal of Baroda College, he imparted not only academic culture but also a fiery national spirit to his students. He was the right hand of Tilak and supplied him with volunteers. He also wrote revolutionary articles in papers. He sought yoga and spiritual force for the salvation of the country. His was not a skin and bone life; it is a life of the spirit. A calmness descended upon him as he stepped into the Gate of India. He searched for a Master. He meditated with Brahmananda, met a Naga Sanyasin and cultivated a condition of absolute inner silence which was not disturbed by any work. His work was a consecration to the Divine. He was calm amidst storm. That is why he was able to grasp so quickly from Lele, the Maharashtra Bhakta, the path of surrender and meditation. He meditated with Lele in Baroda for three days and his mind was calm, serene and peaceful. God was his inner Master and the Gita was his luminous guide. He never prepared his speeches. He raised his hands in namsaskar, closed his eyes, meditated a little and speech came, rather poured from within. In Calcutta too, Sri Aurobindo meditated for a few days with Lele. He made rapid progress in the Gita Yoga. He offered acts and fruits to the Divine. He had a cosmic vision of the Self in all.

23-8-1906; Sri Aurobindo came to Calcutta as the principal of the National College, on a nominal salary of Rs. 150 leaving a proud job of Rs. 750 p.m. at Baroda College. His ideal was to impart to students under his charge, a powerful national education assimilating in it, the virile Brahmacharya culture and the modern scientific culture. But the College Committee was too timid to allow him a free hand. Hence, he reverted to journalism and became the editor of the Bandemataram started by Bepin Chandra Pal with a small capital of Rs. 500. Pal was an original thinker and speaker but not a dynamic actor. Sri Aurobindo put forth a bold policy of Self-Government without British control and he sought to destroy the shibboleths of the moderate, mendicant Gokhalites. Vandemataram though weak in finance, was a unique force of national extremism. Sedition was visible between its lines but legal action could not be taken. Absolute autarchy for India, national education, boycott of foreign goods, national

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self-sufficiency, development of key industries, pressure on England to grant India's freedom and responsive cooperation of Tilak were the policy of the paper. Sri Aurobindo's golden pen made it a dauntless instrument of national expression. It was a thunderbolt to the moderates who were hailing the Minto-Morley Reform. **Pal-Bal-Lal-Ghose-pillai** were the five names that inspired the nation. After the Surat tussle in 1907, the moderates became avowed enemies of the extremists as the above five were called—Bepin Chandra **Pal**, **Bala** Gangadara Tilak, **Lala** Lajput Rai, Aurobindo **Ghose** and Chidambaram **Pillai**. Sri Aurobindo raised his silvery voice in support of the nationalists. His was a gospel of Vedantic nationalism. "We seek freedom" he said "for the opportunity it offers to cultivate our highest manhood and for the fulfilment of our life in the Divine. A mere political movement may be crushed by a superior diabolic force, or cunning diplomacy. But an essentially spiritual movement that seeks to realise itself by a reconstruction of the economic life and a sound reconstruction of the state, cannot be killed without killing the entire people among whom it takes its birth. God in humanity and humanity in God is the ideal and bedrock of Indian culture. India's mission is the realisation and propagation of this spiritual ideal. The Divine is fulfilling this ideal in the nation. The Divine leads and chariots the nation. We are His instruments. He shall give us victory." This was the summum bonum of his platform orations. He was arrested once for a leader in the Bandemataram. This arrest brought him to the limelight of public gaze. One day a tragic impatient bomb of Yugantar youths led by his brother Barinda burst out killing ladies. His Manictola Garden was searched and incriminating articles were secured by the police. Sri Aurobindo's name was implicated in the bomb outrage which killed two whites. Sri Aurobindo's room was searched, his manuscripts taken, and himself tied and dragged and remanded into custody. He remained as an undertrial prisoner for one year, at the Alipore jail. He was not an advocate of armed insurrection. He was for a mass movement of bold passive resistance just as Gandhiji was carrying on in Durban then. For the nation was too weak and too divided and disunited for an armed revolution. His brother and Bupendranath (brother of Vivekananda) were preparing the Bengali youths for a violent action. For a time Sri Aurobindo encouraged it, but then abandoned it as unsuitable for the time-spirit for, the British were very strong and well-armed.

The historic trial went on. Aurobindo was a simple witness. He was all Gita and meditation. He had the cosmic vision of Vasudeva and got his mission and his yoga. Mr. C. R. Das crossed arguments with the Govt. advocate Mr. Norton. Chitta Ranjan Das in his peroration declared Aurobindo as a spiritual visionary, a poet of nationalism, a prophet of New Humanity and an apostle of Vedantic communism. The judge who was his mate in Cambridge, released him.

Sri Aurobindo came out, a new man, from Alipore and poured out his experiences, in the famous Uttarpara Dharma Rakshani Sabha: "God has given me a word to speak and a work to do. Until that word is spoken and the work done, no human power can crush God's instrument" said he. Abandoning everything to the Supreme Will, living in tune with the inner spirit sans ego and desire, he fought for the nation in the Gita Spirit. He taught the Gita Yoga to the people through the columns of his Karma Yogin and Dharma. Spiritual consciousness without selfish desire and egoism is a great force for victory.

Those were terrible days of prosecution and persecution and deportation. Tilak was deported to Mandalay and many national heroes were incarcerated or exiled. Some were hanged. The regulation act was regularly shadowing Sri Aurobindo. Sister Nivedita who helped him in editing the Karma Yogin, informed him of the impending deportation and requested him to leave British India and work from outside. He at once set sail in a boat to Chandernagore and there continued his meditation in the house of Motilal Roi. He gave his last will and testament to the nation in a famous letter in which he said, "Keep a united

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front. Let there be no division in the camp. Terrorism and violence have failed, Passive resistance and noncooperation shall prevail. Boycott the court, start Panchayat; boycott foreign goods, encourage Swadesi goods; support national education; develop manliness; God leads the nation. Freedom shall come. Have hope!” God sent Mahatma Gandhi to lead the movement of passive resistance and take us to freedom.

The inner voice called him to Pondicherry, the place of his glorification. Alone he came, a simple man with shirt and dhoti and his force attracted the world and a big ashram developed around him. India got freedom by the blessings of great souls who did hard penance towards that end. But Sri Aurobindo did not like vivisection. He stood for one India and one Asia and one World and one humanity. This ideal can be fulfilled only by a dynamic spiritual movement. For it is only spiritual consciousness that can unite souls and minds and hearts. Pondicherry offered him the field for the realisation of a Universal Yoga. It manifested the Supramental Yogin in him. Pondicherry was the chosen centre of Yoga Siddhi. The Inner Master directed his path. Its principle was to harmonise karma, bhakti and jnana and raise all above the mind to the gnosis or supermind. Sanyas, samadhi, nirvana, asceticism, other worldliness, mayavada these are never accepted by the Integral Yogin.

77. INTEGRAL YOGA

Sri Aurobindo’s Integral Yoga has been elaborated in two mammoth volumes—Life Divine and Synthesis of Yoga. The former is the book of principles and the latter book of practice. All other works are their offshoots. S has written succinct treatise of Sri Aurobindo and his Yoga, (Sri Aurobindo and Integral Yoga). His is a reverse of the old ascetic path. He is an Anti-Shankarite, a virulent critic of illusionism. More than three fourths of his voluminous writings maintain the reality of the physical world. The rest speaks of the supramental force which alone can transform and divinise humanity. Life is an evolution from plant to animal, animal to mental man and the mental man has hence to rise up to supermind, to be the superman. Yoga quickens this evolution. This Integral Yoga can be given only by the Master and the Mother. So the aspiring sadhak must take refuge in them, with unreserved surrender and offering of all that one is and has to the Mother who pours her Grace into the right instrument. Sri Aurobindo stood like a Colossus to span the gulf between life and yoga, earth and heaven, East and West. He sought to transform the Earth—Spirit itself, by the descent of the supramental force. There is none of the traditional practices, no asan, pranayam not even intense meditation in his yoga. Samadhi is not accepted. He was a Tantric and woman’s energy was the transforming force and yet there was no Shadchakra Bedam in his Yoga. He discouraged the continuous samadhi of the Pilgrim and wrote one day “You are going too much inward. Keep attention on the physical plane. You fast too much. You must take normal food for the body. Your Visuddha Chakra has opened. Hence you get good inspiration for your poetry. The Sahasrara is fully opened to the descent. Be conscious of the descent and keep quiet. Silence is good and you must be free from writing for some time.” He repudiated other worldliness and any negative attitude towards the empirical life. To know and have the divine consciousness in the physical—vital and mental planes, to realise life divine in the bodily existence, to conquer egoism, physical pain and suffering is the aim of his yoga. He says “Love man, love life, love God; seek God on the earth; fear not to enjoy life. Perfect the human might and perfect the race.” Every divinised individual is a life memorial to Sri Aurobindo.

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Tagore saluting him said “You have the word; the world is waiting to receive it. That word is Yoga of Life Divine” Transformation is the way to attain it. Transformation comes by surrender and aspiration.

Who understands the glory of surrender? Ramanuja and Desika gave it to the world in their day. Sri Aurobindo was giving it anew in our days. Yet, can the egoistic human entity easily surrender to a perfect Master?

The world is becoming dangerously agnostic; the yogic barometer shows a pitiful fall. The youths of the land must be given Brahmacharya culture. The world is a forest of hostile forces. Vital egoism, animal passions, and asuric ambitions, must yield to compassion and mutual help. Charity, clarity, self-control, equality, equanimity, moral courage, simplicity, purity and divinity must be cultivated in actual life—that shall be a fit memorial to Sri Aurobindo. Freedom is not a license to vandalism. It is a liberty to fulfil our duty and obligation to the society. Sri Aurobindo worked for the universal harmony; petty minded meanness, provincialism, casteism, religionism, sectarian clannishness, separative egoism, self-seeking are all odious to world-harmony. These must be rejected and people must live in love, heart to heart, soul to soul—that shall be a proper memorial to the great Master of universal yoga.

78. HIS SPIRIT

The Ashram of Sri Aurobindo is an empyrean of unostentatious purity and beauty, odorous with colourful flowers and sonorous with bird voices. Flowers had significance. Sri Aurobindo built up a floral language more effective than the human tongue. Each flower had a message and each leaf a whisper of Truth. From His elysian height of peace, the Divine poured ambrosial Grace of transforming love and energy. The pure instrument received and utilised it for the fulfilment of the Divine Will in him. After devoting twelve years to the Master’s service, S turned by the divine command, to rewrite the Bharata Shakti and translate it into English for the scrutiny of the Master poet. Sri Aurobindo saw it and blessed it each day and sent hints for its success. S sang all the songs necessary for the propagation of his universal yoga, the Pure Sama Yoga and the future Yoga Samaj. By the Divine Grace, some faithful friends came forward to publish them. About three hundred works came out from the Anbu Nilayam and Bharata Shakti Nilayam. But unfortunately the companies dissolved and S had to publish his works single-handed. By Divine Grace the Mother established the Ashram Press in which S printed his works—New Era Publications and some how they were sold. The Bharata Shakti was published at last. S 's magnum opus saw the light of the day with the blessings of the Master and the Mother and one great purpose of life was fulfilled.

Friends came to hear the Bharata Shakti, after the celebration of his birthday presided over by the Governor of Pondicherry. The Pilgrim was invited to the Himalayas. He was ready to go. He opened the Gita and the sentence “Work for a world union” came. How to work ?

Sri Aurobindo Ashram was a university of human nature. S had the highest regard for the Master and the Mother who were above ashram and ashramites. Anyhow to live within restricted boundaries was not conducive to the full growth of Divine consciousness. S was God-mad soaked in His consciousness. The Ashram developed widely on the material side and commercial too; but that is all necessary for an institution. Sri Aurobindo had a fatal fall and S wept over his plight. He was about to shed the mortal coil for a supreme purpose. S appreciated the drill and games and physical exercises growing in the Ashram and also the college in which spontaneous education was given to boys and girls. But his whole attention was on Sri Aurobindo who would pass away soon. Before that,

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why not all the sadhaks concentrate themselves in yoga and receive the force of the Master? Just as Ramakrishna gave his force to Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo could pour his force into pure receptive souls. Why not all receive it by a collective meditation at his feet?... This was what he was saying to all the sadhaks that came to him. From a high room given to him, S was seeing Sri Aurobindo and meditating day and night. He was thoroughly misunderstood ... S wrote a few lines saying “**Father, Mother, this bird goes out of the cage to soar in a wider heaven. It shall be ever grateful to you, ready to obey your call. It leaves a small corner to roam in the limitless world. It leaves the limited Ashram to sing in the Infinite world. It shall sing with the soul of Sri Aurobindo**”. S gave away his all to the Mother and with a smiling au revoir left the Ashram to a friend’s spacious home where he was immersed for six months in Mahaturiya Samadhi...!

A few days after S left the Ashram, news came to his door that Sri Aurobindo had left the body. S hurried to the Ashram, saw the spiritual emperor laid down clad in white silk on a bare bench. He returned invoking his presence. For a week, S was immersed in communion with the Spirit of Sri Aurobindo and received his force.

Sri Aurobindo is not in the tomb;
In this heart he has his home!

79. BHARATA SHAKTI MAHAKAVYAM.

A scientific theory is named after the discoverer—e.g. Raman effect, Compton effect, Hertz waves etc. The rishis and yogins of Bharat have developed a dynamic energy by hard spiritual disciplines. This Energy or Yogic Force is called **Bharata Shakti**. Bharata Shakti is the fountain of peace, bliss, light, love and cosmic energy. Ancient India, by this Bharata Shakti, commanded the respect of the world. The yoga that generates this Shakti fell and hence India also fell into dark slavery. India’s force is Yogic Force—Bharata Shakti. To rediscover this Divine Force and cherish it in the collective life of the nation is the way of regaining the lost paradise.

The Bharata Shakti Mahakavyam is a spiritual epic, that sings the evolution of this Bharata Shakti through allegorical characters and its victory over the hostile asuric forces. It brings within its scope, the entire achievement of the human intellect from the Vedic age to the atomic age. It endeavours to build a **Spiritual Socialism** for humanity. The life and inspired teachings of world’s prophets, sages, poets, heroes, the essence of all religions, yogas and philosophies are luminously interwoven into the main tapestry of the spiritual allegory. Four hundred yogins under the head of the Pure Sama Yogin (Shuddha) achieve a world–transformation and victory over the impure forces of Mavali and Kali. Shakti–Gowri, Satya, Bharata Muni, Shanta and other divine forces help the Pure force. They follow the Yoga Siddhi or the Gospel of Perfect Life which is a collection of the truths realised by four hundred yogins. Bharata Shakti is a monumental work on the psychology of human evolution. Now let us see the story briefly. The whole story is told in five Cantos of 50,000 lines.

CANTO ONE:-Emanation of the Pure one.

The Universal Divine dissolves the earth by a deluge. Infinite void prevails. The Pure force of the Divine wakes up, plays **Aum** and vibrates the atmosphere. Creative, and protective forces spring up. The elements are born and they combine into many forms. The new phenomenal world emanates. Bharat, the Land of Light, comes up and human life is born. Manu and Mati are the first man and woman; their progeny increase. Some cultivate divine qualities; some evil qualities. The mighty Bharata conquers evil forces and assumes sovereignty over the Divine Bharat. To his race belong all the great saviours, heroes, proph-

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ets and incarnate souls of the universe. The last king of the line is Satya. Satya is a great yogin full of universal love and sympathy. He rules the kingdom with his wife Indira, dawn-fair chaste and sweet. For long they had no child. One day Indira dreams of a child Saviour dispelling the hostile gloom and bringing new light upon the earth. The Child Shuddha, the Pure one is born to her. He receives an all-round training under the holy sage Bharata Muni. After perfecting his college education, Prince Shuddha goes round the country to see his subjects. Siddhiman, the premier guides him and tells him on the way interesting annals connected with the places visited by them. In Raighat the premier recounts the heroic story of Shivaji. They go to Panchavati where Shanta Rishi entertains them with the Ramayana, the history of Ramadas and Dasbodh. The rishi predicts his yogic eminence and the conquest of the Demon forces by the Yoga Shakti. He also tells him about Kali who often molests the peace of the Panchavati Ashram. Gowri, the grand daughter of Shanta, serves them food. Shuddha loves her at first sight.

The cunning Kali plans now to invite Shuddha to visit Kalinagar. Shuddha politely declines the invitation. Kali gets angry. He is the wicked brother of Satya, laying dark plots to kill the prince and usurp the empire. He is in alliance with Mavali, the Asuric king of Danavam and marries his terrible sister Mohi. They demonise Kalinagar and seek to conquer Bharat with their Asuric forces. The passionate devil Mohi instigates Kali and he despatches an impious army of asuras to devastate Panchavati and bring Shuddha as a prisoner. To root out divinity and to make Bharat a Danava Kingdom is the ambition of Kali.

Spies bring the news to Siddhiman. He at once mobilises the Maratta army and gets ready for action. The evil forces of Kali pour into the sacred precincts, set fire to hermitages, kill saints and howl out their slogans of "Down with God and Dharma !" Shuddha protected the saints. Vaha, the Demon pounced upon him like a hungry tiger roaring vengeance and spitting hellfire. Shuddha discomfited him. The demon laid his evil hands upon Gowri and the ladies. Shuddha cut him to pieces. A letter was discovered in his pocket revealing a plot against Shuddha and his capital Siddhinagar. The premier hemmed in all the Kali forces and ripped them in twain. The river carried them all to the ocean. The saints celebrated the victory and blessed Shuddha. Shanta predicted the future misery of the world under Danava rule and the final victory of the spiritual force manifest in Shuddha. Shuddha converts Panchavati into a military centre and leads the saints under Shanta to Siddhinagar.

King Satyan is getting old. He desires to leave the kingdom in charge of Shuddha and retire. Shuddha agrees, takes Gowri as his queen and wears the crown declaring that he is a servant of the people. Shanta and saints after giving him the Gospel of the Gita go to Himalayan solitudes to raise Sama Yoga Samaj for Shuddha.

CANTO TWO-Gowri Kandam.

Shuddha restored peace and harmony in the state. He taught military science to all and kept the army vigilant. He inspired the soldiers by giving them performances on the life and adventures of heroes like Rana Pratap Singh. Gowri organised a women's force for the army services. Shuddha's victory, coronation, his power and popularity kindled the jealousy of Kali into a hellfire. He contrived to mobilise demoralised army in Siddhinagar in the cunning garb of merchants, acrobats, religious mendicants, and Tantric sanyasins. These rogues peacefully settled in the town with whores and hypocrites. They tempted, divided and demoralised the innocent masses and one day raised the standards of rebellion. Shuddha discovered the hostile forces, arrested them and imprisoned all. Kali smuggled arms into the city and besieged the fort one night. Shuddha put down the rebellion and attacked Kali's forces. Satyan marched an army to Kalinagar and captured the fort. Here, after so many manoeuvres, Kali was defeated. But he again treacherously attacked the

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city. Shuddha was dejected. Gowri encouraged him. Like Gurugobinda Singh, Shuddha started out for the field and Gowri in the garb of a soldier went for his protection. Kali was aiming a shot at Shuddha. Gowri received it upon her breast and died. The battle was won but the loss of Gowri was irreparable. She was given state burial and a Gowri Vilas was built upon her tomb. The defeated Kali escaped to his capital and there he was taken a prisoner by Satya. One day, at midnight, Danavas came in a plane and took away Kali from the prison. Satyan chased the flying plane with another plane found in the armoury of Kali. He struck down the asuras, but Kali escaped. Satyan chased him and descended on the shores of Shyamala Isle where the asuras were looting. Satyan shoots them; they fly away declaring “ We are Danavas. We shall conquer the world for our Mavali “. Shantiman, the king of Shyamalam offers Satyan ships and soldiers to go round the world and discover Danavam. Satyan sails to all countries—East and West, to all the five continents, meeting with several adventures. Tired at last, he reaches Srikara Isle. King Srikara welcomes him and introduces him to Bhogamuni, a siddha. Bhogamuni initiates him in Siddha Yoga by which he is transformed into a youth. Srikara’s daughter Sundari was abducted and married forcibly by Mavali in Danavam. So he was interested in Danavam. He gave Sathya a plane and Bhoga accompanied him. Before taking off, Satyan gave a detailed letter to his son and queen and despatched his companions back to Siddhinagar.

CANTO THREE—Sadana Kadam

Now we return to Siddhinagar. Shuddha’s mind was agitated by conflicting thoughts. He disliked ease, luxury and the burden of royalty. He yearned for an atmosphere of calm serenity, to develop his spiritual power by which he wanted to transform the asuric forces. He sought a way to solve the riddle of life tortured by mental pricks and vital thorns. The Mother and the minister pressed him to take another queen and rule over the kingdom for the good of the people. But Shuddha gathered the state assembly and gave a new charter of freedom for the country. He traced the history of mankind from monarchy to anarchy, from monism to atheism. “No political creed or religious dogma has saved humanity from wars. A universalised soul—life, a yogic life, is the remedy and to fulfil this I shall do tapasya on the Himalayas” said he as he laid down the burden of the state and made it a people’s republic. Indira, Siddhiman, Bharata, Vijaya and Sumati were made the guardians of the Republic. He explained to them how Buddha, Mahavira and Rama renounced the world to do immense good to humanity. But the Mother and ministers put him in the palace of pleasures. Beauty, music, voluptuous luxuries of tempting sirens played around Shuddha. But he sat under a banyan tree on the banks of the Punya river in contemplation over his high mission in life. One midnight, he escaped from the guards in the garb of a sanyasin and wandered all over the country, seeking saints, searching for Truth and gaining knowledge by yogic experience. Some said that he was mad, some loved him, some hated him, some pitied him. Real Mahatmas loved him and helped him.

One evening he came to Kamapuri, the abode of hypocrites, materialists, hedonists and voluptuous tantrics. Kamini and Vamini—two stout wenches, vied with each other to possess him and use him for their tantric sadhan. They tempted him and took him into their Brothel Mandir. In a drunken fit they quarrelled and the Pure One escaped putting out the lights. Next morning in company with Uttama, a Buddha Bikshu—he condemned the misled tantrics, explained the secrets of Pure Shakti—worship, formed a Dharma Sangha to reform the miscreants, made them lead a regulated married life and educate their children properly and then left with the Bikshu for Buddha Puri. There he learnt Buddhism, practised Dhamma, pacified the differences among the Buddhists, taught them meditation and went with Jinananda to Jinapuri. There he lived in a mandir, studied Jain works, and the life of Jain teachers, united the Jains and went to Christupuri on

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Christmas day. Jesudas told him the history of Crucifixion. The pure One studied the testaments, practised the teachings of Jesus, appreciated the services of missionaries and went with Abdulla Moulvi to Masudipuri. He read the Al Quoran, wrote the life of Rasul, expounded the lofty truths of Islam, pacified Hindu–Muslim differences and then left for the Gurudwara with Sadhu Sundarsingh. There he heard the life and teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobindsingh and read Granda Saheb.

Then he went with Setna to a Temple of Fire, studied the life of Zoroaster and Zendavasta, compared it with the Vedic cult and went to Vedapuri. He mastered the Vedas. Satyananda taught him the secrets of Yoga Vedanta. But Vedapuri was a wilderness of castes, creeds and sects and pompous megalomaniacs. Vaikuntamani and Kailasamani opened opposite camps and destroyed the Vedic culture. Roaring conversions reduced Vedapuri into religious camps. Dayananda came to reform it. Still it was a pandemonium. Shuddha boldly challenged the braggarts, established the true Vedic Spirit, trained yogins as missionaries, started meditation classes, trained heroes to maintain discipline and went to Sivagiri where he met a true Master in Jnanasiddha. He initiated the Pure One in Siddha Yoga. Shuddha attained siddhi, realised Vedanta in Siddhanta, attained through Sama Yoga rare powers. There Shanta muni met Shuddha and took him to Yoga Samaj where he practised all the yogic systems and found the Pure Sama Yoga which is the synthesis of all spiritual paths. Then they go to Sri Aurobindo, the Master of Integral Yoga. They stay in his ashram for a few months, appreciate the meeting of the East and the West in the Master and the Mother, and then go to Ramana. Ramana's Who–am–I and absolute I-ism gives Shuddha new introspection. Then he goes with the Shantamuni to Vadalur. They do tapasya there and then see many saints on their way to Haridwar. They stay in the Kangri Gurukul preparing themselves for the Himalayan life; then they go to Rishikesh, see Swami Sivananda and with his blessings they reach Mt. Kailas. They do tapasya there and return to the pure Sama Yoga Samaj.

The Samaj is near the Agastyachalam. There, Shuddha trained yogins and sent them into the country to purify the life of the nation. About four hundred yogins remain with him for intense sadhana. Shuddha sends his yogic force to Satyan now dealing with the demons at Danavam.

CANTO FOUR–Satyan At Danavam

Bhoga tells Satyan, how the Danavas rose to power. Danavam is the lower vital egoistic world. Danavas, born to the ancient Bhoga and the titaness Maya, are hostile forces that thwart the divine advent. They multiply by promiscuous intercourse like germs of an epidemic, only to dominate and vitiate humanity. Mavali and Analan are the present Danava kings, titans of indomitable strength and inordinate egoism. They challenged even the heavens. They landed on the moon and Mars in Spaceships. Mavali abducted Sundari from Srikaram and married her by force and got a fine daughter called Shakti. She was the Spirit of **Gowri** reborn for the service of Shuddha. Sukra, the eccentric guru inflamed Mavali to conquer Bharat and the world.

Bhoga and Satyan landed by plane on the shores of the Danavam. They buried their plane in a sandy bush and went into the land. They met two shepherds and learnt from them particulars about Mavali and Sundari. They walked through the streets and saw drunken bouts and lover's quarrels. They saw the slogans of "Muscle is might, Mavali is great" written everywhere.

A sudden fog covers the scene. They shelter in the pial of Sundari. They see a procession of titans with Kali leading a military troop with terrible weapons, shouting "Kill and rule! Victory to our will! God is nil!" They march to the ship bound for Bharat.

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Satyan was dismayed. Bhoga sings now a song dear to Sundari. Sundari suddenly arrives, salutes her guru, takes both into the house. They make a secret arrangement to win the heart of Mavali by music. Bhoga plays the flute and Satyan sings. When they come out both are arrested and imprisoned. In the prison they sing and sing. Sundari pleads for those artists. Mavali orders the artists to play during his Bal dances. He makes plans with his ministers to conquer the world. Simultaneously his brother Analan too starts the campaign of world conquest. Mavali devises plans to annul his brother's expansionist ideas. Sukra advises him to demoralise and dominate Bharat which is the only centre of God-Force. Mavali sends terrible hostile asuras to Bharat under the head of Dhumaketu to help Kali first, and then to imprison him and capture the whole country. Kali, Mohi and Vikalpa start a campaign of ruining religion and culture to demoralise Bharat.

Here, in Danavam, Satyan and Bhoga, by music and art win the heart of Mavali. Sundari's daughter Shakti learns to play the Vina from Satyan. Shakti reveals herself as Gowri reincarnate for Shuddha. She assures the victory of Yogi Shuddha, here and there. She plays the tunes and songs liked by Mavali and gets donations to start an art university in a beautiful place at the foot of a hill, watered by a river. Bhoga gets professors for the university from all parts of the world, from Bharat, Srikaram, Syamalam and they form a secret society to transform the Danavas and make a spiritual conquest. Shuddha is sending yogic force to Shakti and she radiates it to the Kala mandir down the Golden hill, fed by the Diamond River. Danava ladies join the Kalamandir in large numbers. They stop taking wine, bal dance, debauchery, polyandry and other evil habits and reform their husbands too. The devotional songs and moral teachings of Satyan spread widely. Bhoga teaches yoga. All feel the thrill of a delightful presence. Shakti and Sundari attain yogic perfection and the force of Shuddha descends upon them. The art temple starts scientific industry and manufactures secret radios and television sets by which they keep themselves in close communion with Shuddha and Siddhinagar and also Analan who is a friend of Sundari. To please Mavali, the artists staged military features. But spies gave out to him about the spiritual activities of the artists and the moral purity of their associates. For, the Bal room was scarcely attended by ladies and the liquor revenue was decreasing.

Analan—the political rival of Mavali, starts another Art Temple in his capital patronising Satyan—Bhogan—Sundari—Shakti and friends. Let us call them the Four. Dunmati carries tales against them to Mavali who smells their moral atmosphere everywhere. Spies send false reports colouring them as the allies of Analan and foes of Mavali. The enraged Mavali bombards the Art Temple and turns the cannon's mouth towards Satyan and Bhogan. Sundari boldly challenges him, Shakti stands at the mouth of the cannon. Mavali suddenly swoons and so do the Danavas by a divine power. Next day, Mavali arrests and imprisons Satyan and Bhogan. Sundari starts satyagraha before the prison—house near the place. She is arrested. Shakti continues the satyagraha in spite of Mavali's entreaties. She fasts and sings the glory of Shuddhan. Mavali threatens to shoot her. The women of Danavam protest; even men rise in rebellion. Mavali massacres the insurgents. Analan sends war planes into Danavam. He bombs the prison, rescues Satyan and Bhogan with Sundari and Shakti and takes them off to Analam. Bhoga found his plane and kept it ready. War broke out between Mavali and Analan. Analan while helping Sundari and Shakti, tried to seduce them and force them to marry him. They spoke about Shuddha and Analan vowed to conquer Bharat and kill its saviour. Bhogan saw the danger of living with an asura. Analan led an air-raid to Danavam. Just at that time Bhogan-Satyan-Sundari and Shakti flew off to Srikaram and the king of that isle, Sundari's father, welcomed them all with tears of joy. They stayed there for a few days and then went straight to the Himalayas to see Shuddha.

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CANTO FIVE-Victory Of Shuddha Shakthi

Kali with his evil forces, conquers Bharat. Dhumaketu with his Danavas conquers Kali, imprisons him and marries his wife Mohi. Mohi now hates Kali and he declares vengeance on her. Siddhiman, the president of Bharat diplomatically enters Kalinagar, raises the standard of rebellion. Kali joins him and murders Mohi. Dhumaketu is taken prisoner by the opposing masses. Kalinagar becomes Shantinagar. Siddhiman flies to Sama Yoga Samaj to bring Shuddha. Shakti and others join them. They celebrate the Shuddha Jayanthi by meditation. Each yogi realises a truth and it is woven into an immortal Book of Light called Yoga Siddhi. They take a resolve to transform the world in the light of the Yoga Siddhi, The Gospel of Perfect Life.

The yogins form into a spiritual army of twelve divisions to fulfil the twelve branches of work prescribed by the Yoga Siddhi. They go about the country awakening the people to a new divine life. They work like Mahatma Gandhi with the blessings of the Bharata Muni who teaches yoga and leads people to self-realisation. Another army of Yogins teaches dharma and its practice; the next gives good education; another infuses universal love, another trains character and good behaviour; another branch goes from house to house and teaches people how to lead an ideal family-life, how to marry and get good children, how to bring up children and how to fulfil social obligations. The next army reforms politics. It spreads unity and self-consciousness. The world belongs to the people and they are free to work and live. Like air and water, land is common to all. The next army of yogins spreads the Gospel of perfect life in tune with the inner Spirit and the next creates Yoga Samaj in which thousand sadhaks lead a perfectly pure industrious life. Thus Shuddha gives a new life to the Punya Bhumi and sends missionaries to other lands too.

At this juncture Mavali fights Analan and his people drive him out. In despair he flies to conquer India. Here he sees Kali cowed down and Danavas killed. Mavali surrenders to Shakti and Sundari and they direct him to Shuddha. He becomes the industrial leader of the country and serves calmly the cause of Shuddha. The victorious Shuddha returns to Siddhinagar and proclaims on the Universal Radio His Gospel of Perfect Life in tune with the Self and his future plans to create one world and one humanity under one heaven. The Danavas declare Sundari as their queen and Sundari dedicates Danavam as a military centre of Bharat. Analan accepts Shuddha. One world is realised by the yogi in whom the Bharata Shakti is incarnate. Shakti consecrates her life for the mission of Shuddha. She leads ladies to perfect life in Sama Yoga.

Thus Bharata Shakti purifies, unites, liberates and divinises Bharat and the universe and all humanity. Jai Bharata Shakti!

After twenty years the Yogi had the opportunity of visiting the Ashram to address the World Union Conference. He was warmly welcomed by his old friends Sri Nolini Kanta and Sri M. P. Pandit to whom he expressed his aspiration to offer his all and be an Auroviller. He made his offerings to the Mother and sat in deep meditation near the Samadhi of the Master just before his room. The Spirit of Sri Aurobindo called him from within, but the Yogi was waiting for the Mother's call. He addressed the WU thrice and sang songs in English and French on his pet theme of One transformed humanity and one World Govt. of Spiritual Socialism-Sama Yoga. A soul-conscious collective mankind can launch upon the enterprise of forming one Govt. and one World Army to protect it, represented by the best men and women of each progressive nation. The Yogi has written a book on Spiritual Socialism elaborating the theme of One Humanity and One Government. He feels the force of Sri Aurobindo alive in all modern world movements. He gave many lectures on Sri Aurobindo and New Humanity, sang songs and contributed Radio plays on the Evolution of the Integral Yogin During the Centenary of Sri Aurobindo...

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The earth is one; the breath is one
The sky above is one
Humanity in Soul is one
The goal of life is one
North and South and East and West
Are one in Horizon
This harmony of life is best
Where all are everyone,
Prosper All! Prosper All !
Conscious of the One in all !.

PART V

TOWARDS ONE HUMANITY

80. A PLAN FOR INDIA

The search was over; the Pilgrim sought the company of great saints for a calm atmosphere to establish his inner laboratory and make more experiments in higher planes. All experiments were over now. The Sama yogi aspired to apply his yogic force to the world mechanism. Thousands welcomed him and gave him silver caskets and addresses. But his heart went to the suffering millions and to the arid condition of the country.

Even during his long silence he was closely connected with all the freedom movements sending songs, articles and thought waves for their success. Mahatma's Salt Satyagraha, Individual Satyagraha, Quit India movement, the I.N.A. of Subash and many other movements were closely watched by him from within. During the tragedy of Navakali, during the massacre of refugees, during the Razakar agitation, he deeply thought over the fate of India and its Vedic yoga.

S conducted a monthly by name **Bharata Shakti** to defend Akhanda Bharat and to unite the nation. He wrote a novel by name Dipa Jyoti expounding his idea of spiritual socialism. 15th August 1947 India became a free divided home according to the Coupland plan. On that very day, a fine soul was cruelly murdered in the Aurobindo Ashram. His blood flowed just next to his room under a mango tree overlooking the window of Sri Aurobindo's room. Even that tree fell down worm-eaten. Hooligans raised a hue and cry around the spiritual centre. Mother India was reeking with the blood and pain of vivisection. A shoulder cut here, a nose cut there, a perpetual headache at the top ! One had to take care of his back against the fanatic's sword. Soft hearted leniency was losing its ground in favour of the opposite party. Gandhiji must have gone to the Himalayas or taken up the work of reorganising Dharma. The god conscious Father of the nation was shot dead by Godse! The whole world was shocked. Then followed the death of Ramana Maharshi bleeding profusely out of a cancer in his hand. Then came the calm death of Sri Aurobindo. Three brilliant lights of India representing the Karma, Bhakti and Jnana Yogas were put out ... alas, leaving the country pitch dark. Romain Rolland, the great French Savant who was inviting S to Europe breathed his last. "I appreciate your fine French Poems and your writings. You represent in your writings the genius of the East and the West. I invite you for a tour in Europe". This was his last letter to S. Harry Dickman from New York and Christabel from Mexico and many such friends wrote to him about the pitiful condition of humanity after the second world war.

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Here, in India, the nation was undergoing an ordeal of hunger and want. Monsoons failed; some were experimenting in artificial rains. The Govt. was making its big hydroelectric schemes under the Five year plan.

Tree-planting ceremonies were officially done under the irony of fate of water scarcity. In the West, people were afraid of the Alpha rays and here men were afraid of the sun-rays. Scorching sun dried up water resources and, here and there, one could see only stagnant dirty pools like stinking dye-pits. The land of the Ganges and Kauvery had to import foodstuffs from the Atlantic shores, from Argentina and U.S.A. Prices shot up; taxes waxed. India had to fight against grim tragic poverty. Hunger was a dangerous rebel. India had plenty of mineral wealth, coal, iron, oil, thorium, mica, aluminium, manganese etc. The Government was just making experiments to mine them out in Neyveli, Salem, etc. For that men of technical skill and much foreign machinery were needed.

India's politics was torn by party bickerings and election rivalries. Power politics was a heavy drain upon the purse of the candidates. Education was not manmaking. The nation was taking up a Socialistic pattern. Border attacks were often warning us. Burma, Ceylon and Africa too were driving out Indians and helpless men and women poured into this famished country in large numbers and also refugees from Pakistan.

S sat self-immersed for six months at a stretch, alone, silent, taking only milk for his food—on the third storey of the Bharati Mills. He did a hard tapasya and prayed God to reveal a way to save the country from the chaos.

He was called to preside over a very big political gathering in the Commissioner's Bungalow at Pondicherry where he gave vent to his views. He also spoke in the same trend in ten other big meetings. A summary of the speeches is given here:

INDIA MUST WAKE UP AND ACT

WE all know the condition of our country. This infant Republic was established by our sacrifice and it must be maintained at a greater sacrifice. Mere passive and pacifying means will not do in these days of nuclear dynamics and space technology. India's borders must be well guarded against invasions. We must keep the world conscious of our strength. There must be compulsory military training for youths and constant mass parades. Switzerland is alert like this. Just like Thaishi in Japan, morning exercise must become a national discipline.

2. Education is the life of a nation. A man-making education must be given to all freely. It must have a fivefold perfection—spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and vocational. The brain, heart, nerves, body and soul must be developed a la fois. A sound literary, scientific, professional, aesthetic and military training must be given to all. Technical colleges must train mechanical engineers and civil engineers and supply all industrial equipments to factories. The academic education must have farm and fabric wings so that students can conduct collective farms and industrial concerns and work out development schemes for the progress of the nation. Our educational institutions must be a synthesis of Tuskgi, Sorbonne, Cambridge and ancient Gurukulas. Women must be trained for domestic responsibilities, as doctors, teachers, as exponents of fine arts and as nurses and women welfare workers. Child welfare centres must be in their hands and also cooperative supply stores for domestic use.

3. Agri-horti culture and cattle breeding and forestry must form special courses of training. The nation needs a strong vitamin diet with milk, curd, butter, ghee, dhal, vegetables, nuts, cereals, rice, wheat and fruits. Hand-polished rice, wheat chapati, sabji, curd and milk can be treated as our national diet and it must be available to all sumptuously twice a day. Tea, coffee, tobacco, pan etc. must be prohibited even like intoxicants. Every home must have a kitchen-garden and a cow for milk. Milk and honey must be available for all.

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4. The mineral wealth of the country must be excavated by mining engineers and geologists. During peace time all soldiers must work in factories, ammunition dumps and in police departments.

The wealth of temples and maths must be reasonably utilised to train spiritual heroes and missionaries for the nation.

5. Unity is our strength. But how to unite this nation of so many religions, sectarian camps, gurudoms, and ceremonial divisions? All religions talk of brotherhood but no religion agrees with another. So we must find out a new synthesis of hearts through love that blossoms from the soul. Religions as at present can never unite mankind. They are divided camps.

6. Love and harmony must be the law of life. They can achieve inner accord and lead humanity to a collective coexistence. Humanity is weltering in the blood of suicide, ambitious wars and turmoils due to mutual discord. Mankind lives under one canopy of heaven, walks upon one earth, enjoys equally the five elements, and is there no possibility of its living as one loving family?

Flowers of varied hues smile in one garden. Birds of different feathers sing together in a grove. Why not mankind live in similar harmony?

By yogic introspection one can see all as equal souls and all lives can be strung into a garland of spiritual consciousness. All hearts can throb as one psychic heart of love.

BAHAISM

Such a cosmic life of love and unity was organised by the Bahais at Haifa. Bahatism was a creation of Bab, Baholla and Abdul Bahai who won the homage of humanity by their immaculate life and infinite love and inspiring sacrifice. They tried to unite and harmonise humanity. Bab was shot on charge of heresy. His disciple Baholla carried out his mission.

He meditated on the mountain of Kurdistan for two years and spoke remarkable wisdom. Even Tolstoy admired him. He was exiled by the Persian and Turkish Governments to Bagdad, then imprisoned in Constantinople and then allowed to live free at Acca in a convenient house. For forty years he carried on his mission of universal love and brotherhood and died in 1892 leaving his work to his illustrious son Abdul Bahai. He electrified the faith of his followers who firmly believed that love was the basis of unity.

The fruits of Bahatism clustered in Abdul Baba. His love and purity attracted East and West to his feet. His love embraced and purified all. They forgot religion and nationality before his Spirit of Oneness. He gave humanity the baptism of the Divine Spirit. All are equal children of God. They are leaves and fruits of the same tree. Give broad education to men and women; create means of honest living by work and establish a Council of Nations to prevent war; maintain peace and economic independence. The light of Divinity must shine in every heart. Press forward; avoid stagnation; let science and yoga be two wings of social harmony. Realise the Self by inner communion and regard all as equal selves. Live in this spiritual communion. O people, gather together under the pavilion of unity, labour hard and progress in peace and plenty. Religions are man's creation. Love is God's creation. Such was the message of Baba. His great constructive work is Mashrac-el-Azcar which is a communion of souls living in peace and harmony around a temple of worship. Schools, hospitals, industries, gardens and fields grow around it.

The Bahai religion of love and brotherhood was represented in the Parliament of Religions in 1893. S had close contact with the Bahais of Haifa and America and contributed to their magazines. The pilgrim aspired to create such a spiritual colony at Vadalur and work out his ideals of Spiritual Socialism. Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar offered to help him to organise such a dynamic spiritual centre on the banks of the Kolladam near his Univer-

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sity at Chidambaram. But he passed away before S came out of his silence.

His great son Sir. Muthiah Chettiar invited S to address the Founder's day gathering. S went in a car to Chidambaram and crowds of people welcomed him on the way at Cuddalore.

81. HAIL SIVANANDA!

What a fortunate day! Swami Sivananda, his bosom spiritual companion had come to Chidambaram that same day. They had been friends since boyhood. During the long period of silence Siva once saw S who gave him the message "Be centred in; organise the life Divine" Siva started the Divine Life Society—which developed spreading branches all over the world.

S and S met before the sacred sanctum of Nataraja and garlanded each other. Siva embraced the pilgrim affectionately and his followers sang Hare Ram ... S broke his silence of quarter of a century and ejaculated "*Aum Sivam* we are one, heart to heart!" He sang a song and danced in ecstasy and then addressed a very big meeting in the Chitsabai. From that time Sivananda and Shuddhananda became one, soul to soul. S was his first biographer.

Swami Sivananda is grand like a hill but humble like a stream; he is great like truth but simple like love. He is a saint who calls with an affectionate tone even like Jesus, "Come all who are thirsty and partake freely of what I have". Swami Sivananda's inner life is a thing to be realised; but its centripetal force has attracted the world from London to Newyork, from Kanyakumari to Mount Kailas.

He was born on the 8th September, 1887 at Pattamadai. His ancestor Sri Appayya Dikshit attained the highest regency of the spiritual empire. He was a brilliant scholar, inspired poet, and an enlightened exponent of the ancient wisdom. He was a great devotee of Siva. Swami Sivananda is a veritable reincarnation of his grand sire; the difference is, the sire wrote in Sanskrit and the scion wrote in fertile English. One of his ancestors was the famous Sundaraswami, a vedic scholar who dedicated his life to spread Siva-Bhakti all over the country.

Siva's father was a Tahasildar at Ettyapuram, a Zemin centre remarkable for its scholars, poets and heroes. From his early boyhood, he was noted for his virile body and Vedantic heart. He had his early education in the Rajah's High School. He was precocious in his studies. He had a remarkable memory, sweet manners, melodious voice and histrionic talents. He took pleasure in devotional songs and ecstatic dances. He was brilliant in Tamil and English. He was an athlete but used his giant strength only to help others. He had a charming voice to sing for the Divine and a robust frame to serve His creatures.

After matriculating, Kuppuswami (that was the name given by his parents), joined the S. P. G. College, Tiruchirapalli. There he distinguished himself in English and was a notable star of the college theatre. But family incidents cut short his college career and he had to choose a profession. Kuppuswami joined the medical course at Tanjore and distinguished himself as an L. M. P. He was a clever pathologist, and a master of modern surgery. In 1918, destiny took him to Strait Settlements where he served as a doctor. And what a doctor he was! He cured physical and mental diseases of his patients. He had the loving heart of a mother, the helping hand of a real friend, the high-minded sacrifice of a hero and the enlightened peace of a sage. He served in Singapore and Johur. Wherever he was, his spirit was in the Divine and his heart in doing good to all. He kept an open door. He was a friend-in-need. His sympathy was proverbial. He was foreign to the crooked tricks of money grabbers. He had a magnetic personality that readily influenced those who came in contact with him. But domestic calamities brought a sudden change in his life. He

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married twice and had a child too; all died leaving him a lonely thinker.

The inner spirit urged him to go forward free and bold. He came back to India in 1922. He made a pilgrimage to Benares, Puri, Gaya and other religious centres. He took orders as a Sankarite Sanyasin and did penance in a sequestered resort near Rishikesh—which is now known as the Swarga Ashram. It was the nucleus of his greater Ashram. The spirit of Sundara Swamigal descended into him.

For ten long years he did Tapasya, and perfected himself in and out. He is a recognised master of the Hatha, Raja, Karma, Bhakti, Jnana and Kundalini Yogas and he is a true Vedanta Siddha, who lives in the consciousness of the Self in all. He is a true Jivanmukta and acts like a sage of inner detachment. Like wind and rain and the powers of nature, he acts without the taint of results, without the burden of egoism.

He started Sathya Seva Ashram at Lakshman Jhula and gave medical aid to the pilgrims bound for Badri Narayan. He invested his savings in the service. He ministered to the mind as he administered healing balm to the body of his patients. He took immense pleasure in serving saints and the poor. He preached the gospel of the Vedic Rishis embalmed in the Gita and the Upanishads.

In 1930 he again walked 500 miles up the Himalayas and visited Mount Kailas and Tibet. He traversed the length and breadth of our sacred Hindustan, saw many sages on the way, did sankirtan wherever he went even like Chaitanya and spread the Gospel of absolute monism with the zeal of Sankara. He came back to his Himalayan retreat and started the Divine Life Society in his Ananda kutir. From 1936 he poured out his soul experiences even like the limpid hill torrent roaring by his resort. He has done magnanimous literary charity.

Ananda Kutir is a humble simple hermitage a mile and a half from Rishikesh. A poor Dharmasala then that scarcely attracted the notice of the moderner, the Ananda Kutir has developed into Swami Sivananda Nagar now, with a big plot of land endowed by the Maharaja of Tehri, Garhwal State, in which are located a Temple, a Feeding Home, a Bhajan Mandir, three hospitals, an active post office. Kaivalya Guha is a set of small rooms for sadhaks and convenient homes for visitors. Siva has distributed far and wide many free pamphlets on all aspects of Divine Life. He is an author of valuable books on Yoga and Vedanta. His books have been translated into many languages and they command a good sale. Swami Sivananda's style is very simple. He has a fountain of practical knowledge within and it pours out in a style of spontaneous simplicity and clarity. His words go directly to the heart of the reader and appeal to reason, intellect and practical life. His books are a boon to humanity. Swamiji is devoid of the vanity of scholarship. Bhakti Sadhana, service to saints, social and religious service, asan, pranayama, mind control, meditation, nirvikalpa samadhi—all these and many more processes of self-perfection are clearly explained in his books and he himself holds classes and guides aspirants according to their fitness. He bows down to us before we say "Namaskar" and demands us "have you any service for me ?" He keeps nothing to himself. Whatever comes to hand is at once distributed among the vast number of his charitable works. He keeps himself fit by hard labour; he is good in spade work as he is in the word-work. He asks you to take yogic exercise and keep the physical instrument fit.

He is an adorable saint, of grand simplicity unassuming love and ego-free consciousness. He sees the One in all and the all in the One.

Sivananda to day lives in thousands of Anandas. He has created a big army of dedicated souls all over the world. He is a cosmic personality whose heart throbs in millions of hearts. He is *heart* from head to foot, every inch of his being. East and

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West, North and South unite in the encircling horizon of his love.

During a brief conversation at the Dharmapuram Math, where both were honoured by the pontiff, Sivananda requested S to go to the west and spread the gospel of Yoga Vedanta. How? When? Where is the means? “The call comes; meditate; the help comes” said the Master. His word had its effect. Sivananda introduced S to all his disciples East and West and they helped him a good deal. Indeed Sivananda guided his destiny after he came out of the Aurobindo Ashram. S had many disappointments among people who never understood him. But the one great man who always appreciated him and did his best for him was Sivananda.

He gave him the unique opportunities of presiding over almost all the All India Divine Life Conferences. And he accorded him the rare opportunity of presiding over the great Parliament of religions convened in His own Nagar just at the place where his monumental pillar stands with his memorable edicts of love, serve, give, know and realise.

Swamiji gave S a rousing welcome, took many photos, sent him rich food, gave a brilliant welcome address, printed his Presidential Address and distributed it widely and gave him many opportunities of speaking in the parliament. He helped him to see round the Himalayan heights...

The words that he uttered that day have come out in his brilliant Introduction to this book. The Pilgrim feels a duty in giving here the Presidential Address published by the great Master himself.

82. PARLIAMENT OF HEARTS

The whole Sivananda Nagar was jubilant, tastefully decorated with multicoloured festoons. Electricity had just been connected. A road was made for motors up the hill. Delegates had come from far and near. Sir C.P.Ramaswami Ayyar was accorded a princely welcome with bands and music. He was surprised to see such grand arrangements. He inaugurated the Parliament with his grand eloquent speech in which he paid tribute to the great Master Sivananda.

S stood up to deliver his presidential address. He was moved by emotion. That was the crowning hour of his life. He sang Aum Sivam, Sivoham Sivamayam and meditated one minute and delivered his speech:

“A glorious page opens today in the history of mankind. A magnificent chapter opens a bright in the annals of India. Salutations to the Pure Almighty Grace that has called for this Parliament of Religions in free India! Hosanna to the holy souls and seekers that attend this spiritual assembly! Today India gives the world a new message of purity, unity and Divinity through this Parliament. For the goal of India is not political freedom alone; the very object of this freedom is to liberate the voice of India for the full expression of her soul. India’s individuality has been established by the moral courage of Mahatma Gandhi; now India’s universality is to be established by her indomitable spiritual strength. Half a century ago Swami Vivekananda, the disciple of Ramakrishna won laurels for India’s spiritual glory in the Parliament of Religions held in the Chicago World Fair. Raja Rammohan, Ramathirtha, Dayananda, Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi and a number of saints and sages dedicated their lives in rekindling the spiritual fire in the heart of the nation. Their aspiration is fulfilled today by the indomitable founder of the Divine Life Society—Swami Sivananda. He has set up a Yogic Dynamo here whose centripetal force attracts humanity. This Parliament is a consummate victory of his spiritual advent and mission. Adorations to Siva, the guiding light of millions and the mastermind that presides over this magnificent assembly—a Parliament of Hearts.

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This Parliament holds its sessions in a sacred Himalayan resort resonant with the symphony of Ganga, the splendour of Nature's beauty and the sympathy of loving hearts. The atmosphere of quiet seclusion is the ideal place for rekindling the dormant embers of Divinity hidden in the heart's cave.

HOMAGE TO THE GREAT

We pay homage today to all saints and prophets and pilgrims of love and light that have sanctified this earth. Homage to the Vedic Rishis, Vyasa, Valmiki, Buddha, Mahavira, Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Chaitanya, Vallabha, Nimbarka! Homage to Satya Dharshi, Mulayogi, Manicavachaka, Vagisa, Tayumanavar, Ramalinga, Kabir, Tulsidas, Thukaram, Mira, Andal, Tagore, Aurobindo and other inspired voices of India ! Adorations to the Saviours of humanity who have sacrificed their lives at the altar of Truth—Buddha, Zoroaster, Laotzu, Confucius, Moses, Jesus, Rasul Muhammad, and homage to Mahatma Gandhi and his moral courage! Homage to the Dharma Chakra flag under whose protection we live with the mantra "Truth alone wins, Satyameva Jayate". Homage to the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, Brahma Sutra, Yoga Siddhi, Bible, Al Koran, Zendavasta, Tirukkural, Arutpa, Bharata Shakti and other illuminating works which are the guiding lights of seekers.

MORAL UNITY

The main purpose of our gathering today is to find out the connecting link among world's recognised religions and bring together the aspiring hearts in communion with the Divine.

Religion is a binding force even like yoga. It yokes the mind to the unique divine spirit, the God in man. Prophets are emanations of the time spirit; they come for the emancipation of souls from the evil effect of wrong living. They show the way to right living. They try to unite divided men. From *Moses to Mahatma*, from *Shankara to Sivananda*, the prophets have insisted upon a standard of moral purity which is common to all. "Shun evils; cherish virtue; keep a clear-mind, be pure in thought, word and deed; have self-control, sex-control, word-control; be true to your self, obey your conscience; kill not; be honest, plain, simple, adore parents, elders, give up vanity, pride, greed, gluttony, hypocrisy, laziness, indolence etc.; practise goodness, kindness, compassion—all these are common tenets of religions and scriptures. No prophet wants you to lie, kill, steal, fornicate, hate, divide or live a sinful life. Whether you follow Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, Rasul, Vedic Rishis or Agama Siddhas, these moral disciplines are to be observed. So here is a moral unity of all religions and faiths. Take for instance the golden rule laid down by the Analets of Kunfutu: "What you do not want yourself, do not do to others". The same is laid down by Buddha, Jesus and the same is repeated by the Indian Saint: "Hear ye the quintessence of Dharma and practise it. Do not do unto others what is to yourself disagreeable and distasteful." Great souls descend upon earth with mercy and compassion like the vernal dawn to liberate humanity unostentatiously from sins and shackles. They purify humanity by their virtuous conduct of nonviolence, self-control, compassion, patience, forbearance, magnanimity, liberality, askesis, meditations, etc. They are one in thought, word and deed, and they melt with pity for the suffering humanity.

They bear ignominy, contumely, crucifixion; they give their very lives to save lives upon this pitiable earth. The teachings are in books; some read them but do not follow them. Had they followed even the first teaching, "Thou shalt not kill", the world would not be weltering in fraternal blood. Man eats food soaked in merciless blood and dares to kill brother-man with the sword of jealousy. Eldorado is far far away from human ambition. The cross of Golgotha, the symbol of sacrifice must be found within. The Sermon on the Mount re-echoed in the life of one Mahatma Gandhi and he too was cruelly

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shot dead. The day dawns; the sun rises; yet the human heart is dark. Millions of stars march above harmoniously; man has not learnt to walk upon the earth in peaceful harmony. His passion leads him from greed to greed from war to war from blood shed to blood shed. Only the technique of war differs; only new weapons are forged for greater destruction. Man, the brute, has yet to evolve into man, the merciful. Politics has thoroughly failed to restore peace; from monarchy to anarchy, from democracy to communism, all experiments have failed to restore peace and bring in view the long-longed-for millennium. Two world wars have already devastated the earth and collapsed the balance of life. We see famine, pestilence, misery, despondency and disappointment everywhere. We see everywhere economic crisis, and a desperate struggle for existence. And yet the world is in fear of a third global war and deadlier weapons threaten total destruction of humanity. One atomic blast has swept off Hiroshima. Cosmic rays and hydrogen thunders are fluttering behind the war demon. No country is safe; no nation is happy; but there is yet hope for humanity.

The psychology of man must change; his vital egoism, mental arrogance and scientific excesses must submit to a deep love. Science has brain; it must have a heart. Science is needed. We must maintain our victory over nature. But science must be used to solve creature problems easily leaving time for spiritual development. The scientific brain must breathe with the heart of Buddha. Then the riddle of existence can be easily solved. Man must rise above the stomach, above vital passions, far above the twilight mentality which is the root of so many castes, creeds and sectarian camps in the world. It is mind that has divided man from man and has made nations mutual enemies. Mind must be trained by the heart of compassion. The thinking brain must cooperate with the feeling heart. The spirit of Buddha transformed a warlike Asoka into Devanam priyadarshin. The heart of Gandhiji gave a religious turn to politics. Man has an angel in him; the angel must be redeemed from the vital demon; man is the paragon of creatures; man is Divine in essence; he can lead a divine life. He can live in communion with the inner divine and enjoy peace and bliss with all the purity of his soul. But man does not know what he is, who he is, where he is, what for, whence he is and wherefore. Divine possibilities are latent in him. He is sleeping unawares, in illusion. The illusion must go and man must know himself first, then the world and then God who is omnipotent and omnipresent. This knowledge shall give him a psychic transformation.

THE PURE SPIRIT

Self finding is the first step to this psychic transformation. "Self-knower crosses misery" says the Upanishad- (*Tarati Sokam Atmavit*). Man suffers by separative ego-consciousness; he can be happy by the unitive soulconsciousness. "That soul is in the deep cave of the heart; the brave individual who is aware of that Atman enjoys eternal bliss" says the seer-voice. The Self-knower becomes That. Life is a bouquet of flowers which breathes fresh in soul-consciousness. Just as one current manifests itself as light, heat, wind, cold, and power in hundreds of machines, the soul, the Pure Spirit, Atman, manifests itself as life and living. It thinks in the brain, feels in the heart, sees in the eyes, hears in the ears, tastes in the tongue, moves in the muscles. That one is the Sat, the truth, the knowledge, the limitless bliss in all.

It is beyond caste, creed, religion, name, form, denomination, dimensions, attributes and countries; it is beyond time, senses, mind, colours, religions, birth and death. It is itself-the Thing in itself-know Thou art That. It is One in the many, the immortal in the mortal. If humanity is to live as one unique entity without the mental difference of caste, creed, religion, country and pedigree, it must cultivate soul-consciousness, and spiritual communion. A pot inside the ocean is full in and out. Life immersed in the soul is soulful in and out. He who sees the self in all and all as the self, shall not be deluded by the world nor

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come to grief; for he sees the one in all. Knowing that mighty Atman, great spiritual heroes shed off grief. He alone sees, who sees all as the equal soul.

MATTER, SPIRIT AND GOD

There are three principles in us—matter, spirit, God: deha, Jiva, Siva; body soul and the Divine. A gnostic force binds these three entities. It is the gnostic equilibrium—Jnana Sambandham—which leads the meditative soul to the realisation of the Divine in man. This force is felt vibrating throughout the body when the principles that constitute our being are in pure, natural state. The physical body, the vital nerves and the mental plane constitute the material part of our being. Above this is the spiritual plane of Sat Chit Ananda, the Divine part of our being. The Pure Spirit or divine soul manifests there. The vijnana or gnosis links the lower with the higher planes. When the mind is pure like a crystal, when the senses are well controlled, when the vital plane is free from egoism, desire, lust envy and other evils, when it is full of luminous peace and free from agitation, when the body is free from lethargy and tamas, then the gnostic equilibrium is felt like the flow of a current. This current is otherwise called Self-Consciousness. This enables introspection and meditation. What is called Kundalini is implied in this current of energy, this cosmic energy.

THE YOGIC WAY

The traditional yogas from the body-building Hatha Yoga to Atma Yoga, prescribe a number of Sadhanas. Moral purity (yama) is the first practice. It consists of the five disciplines of celibacy, non-injury, non-stealing, non-receiving and truthfulness. Cleanliness, austerity, holy study, contentment and divine worship are the fivefold disciplines called niyama. All the religions of the world are contained in yama and niyama. The third is the physical discipline, keeping the body and nerves strong and fit for sadhana. For this Hata-Yoga prescribes meticulous processes of intricate poses, asanas, breath control, inner cleaning, fixed gaze, etc. Through these it purifies the glands, nerves and muscles and hormones and ensures a virile body. Raja Yoga prescribes an easy, firm, steady pose. Next comes the purification of the vital body by pranayama or breath-control in the proportion of **1:4:2**. Inhalation one unit, retention of breath four and exhalation two. The four above processes yama, niyama, asana and pranayama are external processes. Pratyahara—ingathering of the mind, dharana—fixing the mind in concentration of the deeper self, dhyana—conscious meditation and samadhi or trance are the four internal sadhanas by which spiritual consciousness becomes natural like breathing.

EASY WAY

There is an easy way to the control of the mind and conquest of matter. It is to fill the being with spiritual consciousness and divine fervour. This is described in the Gita and the Upanishads and borne by personal experiences. It is to create a void in the heart and the mind by pushing off all mind wanderings and thought currents. A vacuum is a force in science. From cyclotron to x-ray, from television to ordinary ampule, everything works around a vacuum. In the heart is the core of our being shining like lightning in the rain-cloud. It shines in the vacuum. Remain half an hour calm and self-gathered allowing no thought current to disturb the gnostic-equilibrium. This single practice will do to create the void from which the gnostic force can surge up and circulate over the body. To attain this, inspiration and respiration can be watched; and as you watch them single-minded, they regulate themselves and the mind settles in the nest of the heart peacefully. No pranayama is necessary if you practise this. Another powerful way of creating the inner vacuum-energy is to develop psychic devotion to God or to the chosen Master. Psychic love annihilates egoism, lust, greed and envy and promotes

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concentration. The mind is elevated and sublimated by psychic love. This is the meaning of the adoration of the guru as Brahma Vishnu and Siva. The lower must surrender to the higher principle; this surrender removes egoism and creates the necessary field for meditation. Or pure selfless service to a divine personality or to a sacred cause purifies, energises and enlarges the individual and elevates his ego-free mind. Work is worship. Skill in work is yoga. Life is action. Action is thought, thought is man and man is soul. Or meditation alone will do. The current of meditation will lead the psychic soul to the divine sanctum. Man is as he meditates. For concentration, you begin with the Japa sadhana, puja, service of the master, study of holy books, and contemplation, holy thoughts and deeds promote meditation which is the central sadhana. All sadhanas mingle harmoniously in meditation. Yoga is one and unique; it is yoking of the mind to the self and self to the supreme Divine.

Keep your body clean, eat pure food to the hunger-point, sleep alone with pure thoughts; develop disinterested service as an exercise; after bath and ablutions, repeat 'Aum Aum', as you walk and whenever you have time. But regularly meditate before the rising sun and the setting sun at least half-an-hour. Consecrate to God every act of life and do work as worship. God is nigh when the mind is high. God is seen when the heart is clean. Do not attach too much importance to worldly things. Be resigned; rely upon God's will.

Pure collective meditation and prayer and japam must become national disciplines. Then the nation can unite in the spirit and make a harmonious progress.

Be high-minded; pure-hearted; go forward together united in the soul; then humanity shall live in you and you will live in humanity. Then you can realise the Divine in you and the divine soul in all and declare, *Deum meum Deum vestrum*-my Divine is your Divine.

DO GOOD

Love God; live God. Be conscious of That One in the multiplicity of beings and act. Serve, meditate, pray, chant, have compassion for the poor, do good. "God and the highest good are one" says Plato. Meditate upon God as a Pure Almighty Power (Aum Shuddha Shakti).

Then the individual shall live in the universality of God-consciousness. In the subtle cave of the heart, the supreme One can be experienced, the One who is the Brahman of the Vedantins, Father of the Christians, Allah of the Musalmans, Jehova of the Jews, Ahura of the Zorastrians.

Then the wife shall become dear to the husband not for the lust-provoking body but for the universal soul embodied in her; the husband shall be dear to the wife not for sensual desire but on account of the equal soul.

Similarly brother, sister, son, daughter, friend, countrymen, humanity, indeed all living beings shall be dear to one, not for any selfish desire but for the sake of the equal soul that is embodied in all.

Humanity lives by interdependence. A man or a woman means a soul breathing in the heart; a heart set up in the lungs, and lungs held in the throat and that in the trunk and that fed by blood, blood fed by food and everything run by the brain, a thought working in the brain, a will behind the thought, a soul behind the will, and a Divine behind the soul. A watch means two hands, wheels and mainspring set by a man. "Watch your word, act, thought, character and heart" says the watch. A fruit comes from a branch; a branch lives by leaves; they live by the nourishment received by the branch; the branches live by the trunk, the trunk by the roots, the roots by the water and thus everything in this world is a combination of several things. The life and culture of humanity is a synthesis of thoughts of several savants and the service of innumerable hands. Stars are many, the sky is one: rays

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are many, the sun is one; flowers and fruits are many, the garden is one; limbs are many, the being is one; ports are many, the ocean is one; lives are many, the Divine Spirit is one; religions are many but the spiritual ideal is one; prophets are many; but the aim of their message is one. That message is “Love Serve and live Self-conscious” This is **Spiritual Socialism**. A soul-conscious life is the remedy for the untold miseries of today brought by the divided mentality. Sing with the rishi:

“Let us live in love; let us get enlightenment together; let us not hate each other, let us live in the harmony of the inner spirit full of light, energy, glory, divine effulgence and peace. Peace, peace for all. Peace in the sky, in the air, earth, peace in the sea, in the wood. Peace be to the universe of beings, peace to Godmen, peace be unto all! Let peace reign upon the earth, everywhere !”.

Siva requested S to preside over all Divine life conferences—S presided over 18 big conferences.

Chidananda, the worthy President of the D. L. S. has taken up the Master’s work in right earnest. He organised an All India Divine Life Conference in New Delhi and invited S to preside over it. S went from Bombay to fulfil his function.

There was a big gathering in the Sapru Hall. Hon. C. Subramaniam inaugurated the meeting and S delivered his presidential address in which he said:

“O when shall we find a personality like him—a heart of limitless compassion! Siva lived to love and give! He appealed to all with his soul-wide psychic love. He is the universal charmer of hearts.

O Light, that outshines the lamp!
O Life, that outlives the body
O Truth, that is the Self in all
O All, that is everyone!

O Unique One that is the universe of beings ... Salutations. Seer of Yoga Vedanta!”

S visited Sivanandanagar several times. Swami Chidananda tended him like a mother and arranged for his lectures, each time.

S meditated in the tomb of Siva, invoked into him His Spirit and got an inspiration to write a big book entitled Sivananda And His Gospel—in Tamil and English. In a congregation he read again the poem which S dedicated to Siva when he broke his long silence before the sanctum of Nataraja:

We are but one He
We met in Him that day
Like two rivers soul-free
From mountains far away.
In a temple we met
Like two rays in the Sun
With a surging concert
Hailing the Supreme One!
The heart was beating time
As the tongue uttered Aum !
Heart entered the heart
Love embraced Love at home!
This became That
And That became This
Lord Nataraja danced
In ecstasy from above

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As Siva mingled with Shuddha
In pure psychic love,
The love that made us one
Continues like light in the sun !
Hail living Presence!
Hail Ganga's resonance!
Hail eternal Siva
In this conscious Jiva !...

S travelled all over the Himalayas and saw again the Kailas and the Agastya guha of his Mystic Master Jnana Siddha.

83. AT KANGRI GURUKULA

S was a close friend of Swami Shraddhananda and the Arya Samaj. He had written the life and teachings of Dayananda and had translated his famous Satyarthaprakash. Arya Samajists were his friends. They invited him for an extensive tour in North India.

S saw the Kanya Gurukul at Dehradun and came to Kangri Gurukul. He also stayed in the Aum Ashram at Jwalapur for a week delivering lectures on Veda and yoga. Swami Shraddhananda once declared "Give me a thousand Brahmacharins well versed in Veda and yoga and I shall liberate India ". He sacrificed everything for the sake of the great Gurukula. The first Gurukula on the banks of the Ganga was flooded and this was the second built at a great sacrifice. This was an institution fostering the ancient rishi culture.

Brahmacharya is the very root of existence. It is concentration of the heart and mind in developing divine qualities and giving expression to the innate genius of the student. The ayurvedic college trains doctors and prepares medicines. There is a high school and a Vedic mandir. Sanskrit and Hindi are specially developed here. S gave a series of lectures to students and professors.

The anniversary of the Gurukul and the convocation festival were grandly celebrated and S took part in them and spoke on the ideal of spiritual education for India. K. M. Munshi was the Governor of U. P. then and he delivered the convocation address in Hindi. S had the opportunity of meeting Munshiji many times. Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan is a monumental creation of his fertile brain. S utilised the opportunity offered to him to express his plans for the better education of Indian students.

"The soul of Shraddha is throbbing in every inch of this cultural colony. This is a luminous, well organised institution. The teachers and the students move like brothers with a graceful decorum. There is a big mandir for Vedic instruction but only a few study in it. The Vedas are the fountainhead of Sanatana Dharma which is our religion We Indians must safeguard our religion as much as the Muslims and Christians do their religions. If we neglect our religion, our people will embrace other faiths and will become strangers or enemies to us. Each Indian must know all about Hindu Dharma, sandhya, gayatri, havan, asan, pranayam and meditation. Spiritual culture will kindle the natural genius and afford the necessary concentration to master other subjects like science, mathematics and literature. We must organise and standardise Hindu Dharma and train missionaries here to propagate it and draw people into its fold. English is an international language and it must be taught with particular care. Modern sciences must be given special attention. Laboratories must be fully equipped and students encouraged to do experiments in physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, ethnology and mechanics. Small scale industries must be encouraged and students must earn their livelihood easily by working out of school

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hours, in farms and workshops attached to the Gurukulam. Intelligent students must be sent to foreign lands for technical training and when they come back they must teach students here what they have learnt. Thus technical knowledge must spread. Grown up students must be given military training.

Yoga must be taught along with Vedic scriptures. During holidays students must go among the masses and preach Veda dharma and perform havan.

S was much impressed by the missionary work of professors like Mr. Sukhadev and Darmadev.

S took this opportunity to compile Veda Sadhan and Hindu dharma. He was equally impressed by the activities of the **Supa Gurukul** near Navasari where he stayed for a week and delivered lectures on Veda dharma.

84. BEHOLD DAYALBAGH !

The pilgrim was invited to many places on his way to Dayalbagh. S was welcomed by friends in Delhi. He presided over the Kamban conference and next day delivered a lecture under the presidency of Sri Purushottamdas Tandon. Sri Anantasayanam Ayyangar, the Speaker inaugurated the meeting. S spoke for two hours on The Universal Expression of India's Soul. He recorded his songs on the Delhi Radio. Artists of Delhi gave him a feast and sang his songs at which the elite of the capital were present. Sri K S. Krishnan, the great scientist presided over the function.

Another time S joined the Kavi Arangam on the Republic day. Dr. Radhakrishnan presided. He sang his famous song on India's march to her universal spiritual victory. Next day the President Rajendra Prasad entertained all the poets at a feast in the Raj Bhavan. The Laxmi Narayan Mandir so grandly built by Birla attracted the Pilgrim so much that he remained there seeing every nook and corner of the wonderful creation for two days. Such a temple must be built in Madras. But funds! ... S presided over the Ramathirtha day at Gwalior. The Rani of Gwalior invited him for a lecture in the palace where he spoke on Gita Yoga and Hindhu Dharma. He appealed to the Rani to spare 100 acres of her forest lands to establish a dynamic centre for Sama Yoga in which active missionaries shall be trained in the ancient yogic culture and the modern industrial science. S went to Brindaban, where he forgot himself in Krishna-consciousness on the banks of the Jamna. He stayed also in the Udiya Baba Math where Swami Akhandananda was his host. It was a peaceful ashram where the Pilgrim meditated for three days silently. He also visited the big eye hospital conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission.

AT DAYAL BAGH

S visited Dayal Bagh twice—that wonderful industrial colony and ashram. He first went to Swami Bagh where devotees of Radhaswami were raising a magnificent marble mansion upon the tomb of their master. It will supersede even the Tajmahal in future. Here is Dayal Bagh, Sri Mehtaji welcomed him and treated him as his guest. S saw the Engineering colleges, Arts college, dairy farms, green fields, fruit gardens, and the factories where boots, soap, clothes, machine tools etc. were made. He saw students working in fields and factories. Dayalbagh is a self-sufficient spiritual colony. In the evening more than 3000 men and women gathered in the big prayer hall and S addressed them on Spiritual Socialism. Here is a substance of the lecture which was appreciated by the devotees and also translated into Urdu:

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SPIRITUAL SOCIALISM

Gurudev, Fellow Sadhaks and Friends!

I feel jubilant here before this holy congregation of sacred souls that have united in their life matter and spirit, West and East, Science and yoga, song and seva. I cannot forget your love and kindness to me and your beehive harmony of work and worship. You have shown a supreme example to the world of how humanity can live as one family, heart in Aum and hand in work. Your factories and schools and colleges are well equipped and richly endowed. This is an ideal Centre of Sama Yoga or Spiritual Socialism and I have the satisfaction of having seen my ideals solemnised in actual collective life. From garden to kitchen, from field to factory you are your own and you stand upon your feet while your heart is conscious of the One Divine who is the All. You have transcended petty differences of caste and religion and your collective life is an efflorescence of the equal soul. This is what I call Sama Yoga or Spiritual Socialism.

There are lots of isms in the world. Besides religious isms, there are many political isms. Everybody speaks of internationalism, but everybody seeks everything for himself. Self-interest stands in the way of international comcomity. Everyone cries for universal religion and oneness of humanity. But partiality and prejudice are hard to conquer. There are three main 'isms' in the political field, one is *nationalism*, the other is *socialism*, and the third is *communism*. It is little short of balderdash to talk of unity behind the vanity of "my ism up and yours down". One is the elder brother of the other. Nationalism wants everything for the nation. Communism wants to solve the economic problem of the human aggregate by pulling down the rich and by making the peasants and factory labourers the rulers of the country. Socialism aims at a Welfare State for all, by a transformation of the ideas of the people. The modern view of socialism can lead humanity at the most to a Welfare State. It can remove, to a certain extent, the economic disabilities of man by throwing the wealth of all for the good of all. But economics alone is not the fullness of life; there are many other problems of humanity which need close attention. Modern politics, whatever be its name and form, turns round and round about the stomach. It seeks to raise the standard of existence, providing man all creature comforts. It puts its faith upon giving man more food, more clothing, better shelter and greater facility of social living. With food and cloth and shelter alone the human heart is not satisfied. There are the problems of the heart and mind beyond problems of the skin. There are many problems of the spirit before there are problems of the material life. We do not see happiness in lofty homes of luxurious vanity. A man can cut a figure in the press and on the platform. His name can fill the dailies in block letters. He can be driving in Rolls-Royces and Pontiacs; but some want and sorrow may be weighing down the balance of peace in his heart. The riddle of existence must hence find a solution somewhere beyond body and mind.

Socialism is the highest reach of politics. It seeks to establish a Welfare State by a smooth distribution of wealth among workers. It sets to work every hand, and the work is dedicated to the good of the society along with its fruit. A beehive harmony of existence is the aim of socialism. The ideal is far from the actual. The outer agitation is there but not the inner preparation. We have to add a word before socialism, that alone can ultimately fulfil its fond hopes.

Spiritual Socialism—that is the fulfilment of human hopes. Spiritual Socialism is a pattern of higher and better life of cosmic consciousness conceived by the Vedic rishis. The Truth is one—*Ekam Sat*—called severally by seers. The spiritual socialist is a yogi. He sees himself in all and all in himself. He has no fear, has nothing to hide. His aspirations are fulfilled automatically. He lives in tune with all and he feels one with all. The world is his temple. The collective human soul is his God.

Sincere service is worship. The felicity of all is his happiness. He lives for all in collective consciousness. The all-ness of the individual is the basis of real socialism. The socialist works for his livelihood and enjoys the fruit of labour with the society. Society

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above self is his watchword. One must feel as equal with all. Give and enjoy what you get by work. Identify the individual with the collective man. Let the soul breathe for the society. Feel with the universe and share with others amicably—is the aim of Spiritual Socialism. The flower blossoms in the peace of the morning; its beauty is a poem of grace. Its smile is an ecstasy of self-giving. It gives away its perfume for the health of all. The songful bees drink its honey. The beehive is busy with work. Each bee has its work, and the work is dedicated to the social harmony. The society is soul-conscious and the soul is God-Conscious. That is the pattern of socialism that can do good to India and humanity. This Socialistic Government—Sama Rajya takes a part of the people's revenue as tax in order to give back the same in the form of several public benefactions.

Spiritual Socialism is a battery of two forces; Yoga and Science. One is spiritual and the other material. Yoga is a science of better life in tune with the infinite Spirit that is the core of beings. Yoga lays down the foundation of one world and one humanity, because it realises in meditation the unique one that is the all. Upon this unity of consciousness we can make a social order of life in which everyone works for the good of all, in which there is no profiteering individual egoism or totalitarian greed. Material life scientifically set upon spiritual consciousness is the remedy for the several disabilities that assail humanity today.

We cannot stop war until there is a vital transformation in man. War begins in the vital mind of foul passions and ambitions. Spiritual Socialism is the only panacea for the war-worn world. For it is an out-flowering of the equal spirit in all.

From Dayalbagh S went to Calcutta to address a conference and took the opportunity to visit Shantiniketan.

85. AT SHANTINIKETAN

S had already visited Shantiniketan while the poet was alive. J. C. Bose too was with him then. They were discussing about the plants in the beautiful garden of the poet. The poet spoke at length about his cultural dreams realised in that abode of peace. S attended his prayer meeting in the Brahmo mandir. S wrote this article later on in the Bhavan's Journal.

We went by the Gaya Mail to Bolpur and as we alighted, a messenger received us and we motored straight to the Guest House. It was early dawn and the blossoms around were feasting the humming bees as they wafted in the gentle breeze, welcoming the sun.

We strolled here and there breathing the beauty of that Abode of Peace. The poet's hand was visible in the ashram's life. Jawaharlal Nehru, as Chancellor of the Visva Bharati, was taking every care to keep the Tagore atmosphere alive in the Abode of Peace. It has considerably widened its activities as a Central University.

The words of the Upanishad written in Bengali characters greet us at the entrance to each department. The collective universal ideal of the Visva Bharati is summed up in the Vedic dictum "yatra visvam, bhavati eka nidam" which means "where the universe of beings gather in one nest of soul-consciousness." This magnificent ideal meets our eyes and also the ideals of peace, beauty and felicity—*shantam, sundaram, mangalam*.

We go to the Shanti Kala where Maharshi Debendranath, the poet's father, meditated under the saptaparna tree. We feel the thrill of a calm presence when we read the Bengali words on the cement seat of Debendranath: *Tini amar praner aram, maner ananda, atmer shanti*, which means "this place has granted us serene ease for the life, bliss for the mind and peace for the soul." This was the nucleus of Shantiniketan conceived by the great Maharshi and fulfilled by his famous son.

The whole of Visva Bharati is indeed an artistic creation beaming with the multicoloured rapture of existence. Beauty, beauty everywhere, smiling with the flow of inner

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satisfaction—beauty in the flora, in the orchards, beauty in the lives of professors, boys and girls and even in the subtle rhythm of their walk and talk.

The good guide takes us to Uttarayan where we see four buildings depicting the aesthetic rapture of the poet's imagination. We see "*Shyamili*" the mud cottage where the poet lived for a long time. We see there Tagore the painter, Tagore the sculptor, Tagore the artist.

Udichi and Punascha near it are cement buildings, with decorative nuances and the towering mansion of Visva Bharati is the "Udayan" otherwise called Tagore Sadan which is a sight to see. In the drawing hall we see the Darbar of the universal poet, his high seat, chairs, quilts, sofas, the things he used, and crossing this is the high elevated silver chair of Debendranath.

This hall contains the collection of Tagore's works—his lyrics, dramas, novels, stories, essays, sketches, books containing his introduction etc., etc. We come to know here that the poet was also a doctor of medicine, an actor, a dancer, a botanist, a student of natural science besides being a painter.

There is a touch of beauty in everything handled by him. He was against ascetic bareness and he set life values to everything he imagined. "My heart throbs to mingle with the heart of humanity—*Hridaye hamara krandan kare manava hridaye milite* " says the poet.

There is a special almirah containing the editions and translations of the *Gitanjali* which brought him the Nobel Prize and world recognition. Tagore's autographs are also preserved there. One script says; "We give our heart to things and they reveal their hearts to us ". Another says "Thou hast brought the distant near and made a brother of the stranger". Still another says "There are seekers of wisdom and seekers of wealth; but I seek Thy company so that I may sing."

Nearby there is a collection of famous letters written to Tagore. A card from Gandhiji says "Of course wherever I am, Shantiniketan is always in my mind ... Babu". The words of Nehruji are kept prominently: "We wonder how one human brain can weave so many lines in verse and prose, enriching universal life."

Our surprise increases as we go around the poet's garden. It is really a pleasing poem of leaves, tendrils and flowers. The poet by his botanical ecstasy has given new twisting to creepers, to mango and guava branches and has tried new methods of graftings and buddings and cross pollinations. The lotus pool in the centre is a memorial to his fanciful dreams of love and beauty.

There are so many Bhavans in Shantiniketan—Patha Bhavan which gives instruction up to the X-th class, Siksha Bhavan where students study up to the inter—arts and sciences, Vidya Bhavan where graduates are trained, and research scholars get diplomas and certificates; Sangeet Bhavan humming with music and jingling with dance; Kala Bhavan where students are trained in arts and artistic crafts. There are Hindi Bhavan and Cheeni Bhavan teaching these languages. These are beautified by the murals and frescos of Nandalal and Abinindra and we feel as if we are in Ajanta or Ellora. There is an agro—economic research centre too.

The Central University, as it is called now, is an excellent coeducation centre, building up the art of colourful life in the youth of the country. Though lady students have separate quarters, they study together and behave very decently with due decorum and courtesy to each other. The morning classes begin with a mass prayer and silent meditation in the open. Every process of life is directed by a ding—dong bell (Simharavam). After a few seconds of silence, the poet's songs are sung by the music students. And then they disperse for their classes.

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The classes are held under shady mango trees where students sit in a circle in front of the teacher who also sits on the ground with them. Classes are held inside rooms during the rains. The painters are allowed the freedom of drawing any scenery in the University campus. They go on with their work concentrating upon producing the best.

The Kala Bhavan is a veritable feast for the eyes. There we see the symbolic paintings of the poet and the exquisite workmanship of the lady students and the attractive handwork of the boys. Art plays an important part in the life of the students who decorate even their quarters with beautiful clay models sculptures and paintings. The Dandi Yatra of Mahatmaji has been painted on a wall and the painter has written under it "Awake, arise and stop not until you have reached the goal." We saw in the Kala Bhavan a student painting Krishna's smiling face and a lady painting a lotus opening at sunrise. The teacher is never a taskmaster there; he is a close friend and brother. The object of education is not stuffing the brain with information but drawing the obscure kernel of genius from the soul. We remember Rousseau's Emile when we see the youthful genius budding naturally and opening to the light with the hue and fragrance of Nature.

The library of Shantiniketan contains a vast collection of useful volumes in all languages of the world mostly English, French, German, Russian, Italian, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil and Telugu. The card system can bring you any book easily. I was glad to see among them my treatise on Tagore and also in Tagore's own library, *Varakavi Tagore* and also my *Bharata Shakti*.

The residential system, (the Gurukula system), brings the teacher and the taught close together and there is sympathy and enthusiasm on both sides. There is no tendency to strike or create disturbance among the students who are amiable friends of the teacher. The University has to enlarge its science section. The students learn elementary knowledge in physics and chemistry with the very limited quantity of apparatus at their disposal. English and Bengali media are kept here, and Hindi is duly encouraged. Now we turn to another grand creation of Tagore-SRINIKETAN. It has well organised departments of Rural Higher Education which offers diploma courses in Rural Service, Agricultural Science, and National Extension Service and a Leprosy Control Unit which treats and controls leprosy.

Seasonal festivities are a special feature of Shantiniketan. Sriniketan festival is a sight to see.

We see mural paintings and drawings on the floor. We hear thrilling songs dedicated to the *Palli Janani*, Village Mother. The painting of Nandalal Bose gives us a picture of Tagore blessing the cultivator and singing "Go back to the soil which is the breast of the land, and life blossoms from the dust..."

The rural festival begins by lighting an oil lamp placed in the centre of an ornamental circle with flowers smiling around it. Kamini greets the flamy Simoli which overlooks Malati smiling from the green bushes. The museum-hall in Sriniketan gives us all in a place, the work of fruitful art produced by the inmates, beautiful clay models, textile goods and ornamental woodwork. All these are put up for sale and they bring returns which smoothly turn the wheel of Sri, wealth, in this institute of art and beauty.

We see students going in groups for rural service and they do their national duty cheerfully. Tagore in a speech defines the object of Sriniketan thus:

"The object of Sriniketan is to bring back life in its completeness into the villages, making them self-reliant and self-respectful, acquainted with the cultural traditions of their own country and competent to make an efficient use of modern resources for the physical, intellectual and economic conditions."

"Our aim must be to give these few villages complete freedom, education for all,

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the winds of joy blowing across the village, music and recitations going on as in the old days.”

The poet gave the world a new pattern of life and kept his door open to all. The Visva Bharati is really a fulfilment of the poet’s famous prayer:

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken into fragments
by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of Truth,
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection,
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
into the dreary desert sand of dead habit,
Where the mind is led forward by Thee
into ever-widening thought and action;
Into that heaven of freedom, my father,
Let my country awake.”

The life in Tagore’s Visva Bharati is progressing towards this ideal, and its atmosphere opens the heart to the poet’s famous prayer; “Bring light to my heart, O Heart Dweller, and awaken the flames of beauty and purity in my life:

*Antara mamō vikasita karo antara dare he
Nirmalo karo ujwala karo sundara karo he.”*

86. RAM SMILED ON HIS FACE...

S was invited to preside over many conferences in South India. He visited Ramanashram on the way, addressed the inmates on the Ramana Effect. Then he went to The Vedanta Ashram, Agasthya Ashram, remained a day or two under the influence of Ramabai, the ecstatic devotee of Ram at Kollangode and then visited Ananda Ashram of Swami Ramadas and Krishnabai.

S had already seen Ramadas in Ramanashram sitting up on the hill and murmuring Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jayajaya Ram...

S approached the gate of the Ananda Ashram. A charming personality of lightning smiles flashed forth with a Tulasi garland. Before the garland settled on the neck, his hands held the guest in warm embrace. Ram! Ram! Prem! Prem! ... Ram in This, embraced Ram in That. Both entered the Sat-Sangh Hall and devotees chanted the sole mantra of the Ashram in a chorus ... Sri Ram Jaya Ram; Krishna Bai saluted S and made royal arrangements for his stay. It was a surprise! She brought him plenty of rich dishes saying, “This is your birthday and you must take all that I give you.” S took a little of the pure offering and steeped himself into silent meditation.

Papa called him at 5 pm and requested him to speak on yoga and sing a song. S spoke on japa sadhan and sang a song for the devotees of Rama and Ramadas and that song has become very popular since then. Fifty devotees from all parts of the world followed his lead in singing the song. A few lines are given here. Sing, O fellow Pilgrims!...

Sri Ram Jaya Ram Jayajaya Ram!...

Sing, O sing the sacred name,
Sing O Ram O Ram, O Prem!...
And feel the magic of the song
As you sing it all-along ! ...
You feel a thrill of Nectar-Bliss!
You feel the Joy of Divine Kiss!

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Ram is God and guide and guard,
Ram is Teacher, taught and Lord!
Ram is the seed and fertile field,
Ram is the green and golden yield!...
The billows roll with thrilling Aum,
The sky breathes out divine perfume!
The fountain of the mount in trance
Flows with felicitous cadence!...
North or South or East or West,
From sky scrapper to sparrow's nest,
He or she or it or they,
And everything that you survey
All are Ram under His sway! ...
He is the path, He is the goal!
He is the One, He is the All!...

“Ram to us is not the English word, which means sheep. Ram is Spiritual Bliss. Rama was a spiritual hero who killed the force of lust and pride. India that remembered Rama was brave and prosperous. By repeating Ram, Ram, Ram, a vibration is created in our psychic centres. We get the power of introspection and concentration and a tremendous willpower which aids victorious actions.”

Ramadas got this mantra from his father and as he repeated it, he became God-mad. He forgot his body, hunger and sleep and took delight in Ram. He threw off his family life and became a lonely pilgrim. His surrender was perfect. Ram became his Father and Mother. He wandered listlessly all over India forbearing insults and injuries. When S saw him up on the Arunagiri, he had only a loincloth. He looked at heaven and earth, men and monkeys and cried “Ram here, Ram there, Ram everywhere”. He lost all differences of caste and religion. He saw one God in all and one universal love in all scriptures. He laughed at trials and faced ordeals like a brave sportsman. He settled in a lonely desert and it became Ananda Ashram. God sent him a fellow pilgrim—Krishna Bai, a lady with two children. Her husband had died suddenly. Agony turned her life Godward. S once saw this lady with **Siddharuda of Hubly**. Siddharuda was a great mantra yogin. Even tigers became gentle before him. One dark night, S lost his way in the forest and a tiger was sitting inside a bush. “Namah Sivaya...” cried he. The tiger came out of the bush and ran before him and disappeared. S cried again, “Namah Sivaya”. A light was visible, S followed it and came to Siddharuda at midnight, and lo !... the tiger was there sleeping at his feet. The wild beast became mild and gentle. “See Siva in Jiva; fear not ... I am with you ” said the great Siddha. At dawn, he gently patted the tiger, singing “Sivam Sivam” and asked S to touch it. The tiger bowed before the sage and disappeared into the forest.

Krishnabai felt an inner peace by the contact of the sage. She saw Ramadas at the Ananda Ashram quite near Kasargad where she lived and took refuge at his feet. She served Swamiji and the Ashram and sank a well for its benefit. She saw God in Ramadas and he saw in her the universal Mother. The Ananda Ashram was removed to the present place... an arid desert at first, it has become a lovely oasis for God-lovers by the Grace of Mathaji. Trials came and came endangering even their lives. But Ram protected them. “Off with talks! ... Call with fervour, O Ram; His will shall be done in you ” said he to a pining American. God's Grace light is nearby; but man's egoism blinds him. S spent three memorable days in the Ananda Ashram. Ram and Krishna were very kind to him. He spoke to the members of the Ashram every evening on “Mantra Yoga and inner transformation” and sang his compositions. Ramadas embraced him saying “You are a Jivanmukta, a Siddha, silent like the sun and eloquent like the perfumed breeze in a rose garden...” He

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gave S a set of his books and requested him to contribute to his journal *The Vision*. The body Ramadas has become dust but Ramadas, the loving Spirit is gently shining in the lamp of his memory.. Jai Ram.

87. REFLECTIONS ON NEHRU

The pilgrim pays his homage to four great friends that lived to see a better humanity. Nehru, our beloved leader suddenly left us (1964).

India places at the altar of his soul, the wreath of homage wet with genuine tears. Jawaharlal Nehru, the prophet of Fabian Socialism has shed his mortal coil on the earth; but he lives for ever in the heart of humanity. He lived, breathed and had his being in the single ideal of creating a better world for a better humanity. His life was so dynamic, so full of assorted programmes of public good, so preoccupied with continuous achievements for the progressive nation and so grim with trials and sacrifices that mankind can stand up and say "He is a Friend of Humanity whose religion is service to the only God of his faith—the human aggregate."

I met him in 1920 for the first time in Allahabad in his Anand Bhavan. His great father was there warning him to go cautiously slow in politics. "The time is running, father, we have to run with the time spirit" remarked the son. He knew me as an old Congressman and he touched my heart so deeply that I could not forget him. I painted his sacrifice with distinct colours in the columns of the *Swarajya* and *Bharata Shakti*.

Gandhiji's hands were immensely strengthened when Motilal and Jawaharlal joined noncooperation leaving behind their Ivory—Tower—Aristocracy to sell Kaddhar in the open street with the toilers for freedom. "I would lay down my life for the country" declared Motilal in a mass meeting "and my soul would be happy if the freedom memorial is raised upon my bones". The father died before the altar of India's freedom; but the spirit of the son breathes in the sanctum of the temple of freedom.

Jawaharlal was taken to the Naini Jail. The father remarked with a smile "He worked like a trojan and now let him have some rest." The father and the son gifted away one day the palatial Ananda Bhavan to the nation and called it *Swarajya Bhavan*. Nehru was elected president of the Lucknow Congress, Gandhi aptly remarked "Congress leadership is a crown of thorns; Nehru should wear the crown and he alone deserves it. He can guide the ship of freedom through perilous seas".

I met Nehru twice during the Madras Congress, 1927 and he was then a dashing spirit flaming with the Soviet Ideas of Socialism and Collective farm. "I am a confirmed socialist" he said, "but a socialist of India." There was a discussion between Subash Chandra Bose and himself on this point. "Militarise the nation" said Subash. "Socialise the national life" maintained Nehru "the teeming millions of India are before me. I see their sufferings. To make them happy is my happiness". "Take Japan's help" said Subash. "Stand upon your own united strength and will" retorted Nehru. Yes, Nehru dedicated his life as a leader and Premier, for the fulfilment of this great dream of his life—a socialistic pattern of national life in which the wealth of all is consecrated for the good of all. His socialism is a synthesis of Locke, Montesqueu, Rousseau, Adam Smith, Prudhome, Karl Marx, Lenin and Gandhi. Nehru looked forward to a cosmic age of integral coexistence by which man shall enjoy peace and plenty living each for all and all for each, a life of love, work and knowledge. He saw the glimpses of such life and that is why the pearl of a lingering smile was hanging on his lips even after the departure of the soul from the body struck down by aortic aneurysm. Work pressure, more than the blood pressure weighed down his precious life. He finished all his records, fulfilled his duty and took leave of us in 1964.

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While I was giving a television lecture in Tokyo on the great men of India, the audience stood up as I showed the picture of Nehru and declared "This is our beloved leader; India speaks when Nehru speaks and he speaks and acts for the good of the teeming millions".

Gandhi and Nehru are our epoch-making leaders. Their words and deeds are treasured in our heart. They breathe as long as truth exists in this world. Their truth outlives the grave like seed the fruit. Nehru is not buried in Shantivan on the banks of the Jamuna. He is enshrined in every heart that throbs for a better humanity.

Like the Buddha, Nehru had no time for armchair philosophy. Humanity was his God; world his temple; and service his religion and to see all happy is his endeavour. "Gandhi speaks philosophy for me and I act for his philosophy" said he in a private conversation. Without being religious he was truthful and faithful to his duty. He was the Ashoka of Gandhiji. A peaceful world without war, an integrated humanity which has enough of work, enough of food, sufficient creature comforts coexisting in love and amity—is the fittest memorial to Nehruji. He had an immense power to live a life of crowded activities. He tried to keep India happy and united and the world peaceful. His policy of non-alliance promoted international understanding. He was a triumphant apostle of Gandhian socialism. He was a proof against abettors and saboteurs. Once an agent provocator offered to give him a revolver to shoot the British. Nehru warned him not to play the trick saying "We do not want to destroy life; we want only to transform the hearts by self-sacrifice."

If Gandhiji was an architect of our home policy, Nehruji was the architect of our foreign policy. He was conscious and careful not to sink this infant Republic into bloody wars. He used gentlemanly expressions even against enemies. We loved him, we love him, and we will continue to love him as one who has raised India's stature in the comity of nations. In the tension-ridden party politics of our land, the pull is strong on his side. He has been working out three Five-year plans to solve our social, cultural, economic and political problems. So many dams were constructed, so many industrial factories and so many technical colleges have been built. If India today keeps pace with the advanced scientific nations, the credit goes to Nehru. If the United Nations Organization hears the voice of India with special interest, the credit goes to our beloved Premier.

But monsoons failed; the wounds of vivisection were yet bleeding profusely: Famine and pestilence darkened our hopes. Testing problems faced us in India. India had to hold its own against black peril from the south, yellow peril from the north, green peril from the west, red peril from the east and white peril from everywhere. We could not find a healing balm for the Kashmir headache. The rise in prices and the burden of taxes entailed the discontent of the common man.

Critics raised anti-slogans around these points—Nehru's views of non-alliance, integration, coexistence, collective farm, socialistic pattern have come under the microscopic scrutiny of Anti-congressites. We do not want to discuss party-politics here. But we must listen to what people think. Some think that the Government must use its full strength in confronting enemies of the nation. Some say that the basic industrial and military muscle is weak and emaciated. A paper recently writes that India is the sick man of Asia. Still some maintain that we must be a well organised Hindu Nation and reorganize Hindu Religion with Bhagavad Gita as its Bible and Sri Krishna as our Saviour. Still others want us to rouse up the Vedic spirit, and stop conversions and build up a dynamic Spiritual nation.

But the time spirit is heading towards one humanity and that is possible only by coexistence. Coexistence is possible only when man recognises man as the *equal soul*. When the soul in man is awakened and when the mankind unites soul-to-soul, then the world shall become one Spiritual Home of Humanity. The Scientific West and the Spiritual East shall unite in a happy basemain and we will have one order of spiritual socialism for all humanity

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and peace and plenty shall reign over the world.

Work and food and cloth for all,
Equal status for all!
Health and home and school for all
A happy world for all!...

This is the ideal for which the soul breathed in Nehru. The father lives in his daughter, Indira Gandhi. The gem of Bharat is fulfilling now the fond ideals of her father.

88. A DAY WITH SIR C. V. RAMAN

As a lover of Science I met J.C. Bose, P.C. Roy, Mehnath and C. V. Raman. Here is a tribute paid to Sir C. V. Raman:

Dr. Sir C. V. Raman is one of the great souls that have touched my heart. I have met him many times in my life and here I give to the readers of the *Bhavan's Journal* one significant day with him, really a red letter day in my pilgrim life.

I was addressing a meeting of savants in Bangalore. Smt. Raman presided over the meeting. I spoke about *Science and Scientists* and paid high compliments to Sir C. V. Raman saying “*Ramana Effect* revolutionised the spiritual world and *Raman Effect* the scientific world.” Smt. Lokasundari Raman appreciated my speech and invited me to her home and to the Raman Institute next day.

The same evening there was a garden party given to prominent Russian artists. The then Chief Minister of Mysore, Sri Hanumanthiah, presided over it. I was talking to the CM, when suddenly Sir CVR took me by surprise saying “Tomorrow I will receive you in my Institute.” The noble Raman does not stand on formalities. He observes no ceremony, no reserve. Straightaway he goes to the business. He was a giant in intellect and a child in heart.

Next morning, I entered the hall of the Raman Institute. The great scientist hurried from his room and at once led me into his lab, even before I wished him *Namaste*.

“Swamiji, behold... this is molecular spectra of scattered light. This is Raman spectra... You know who Raman is. It shows the vibrational frequencies of atoms in the molecule... See how it acts upon this crystal structure...”

The scientist forgot himself in his enthusiasm to explain to me the Raman Effect...when a phone call came...“Have you taken breakfast? It will become cold...” It was Lady Raman’s reminder ... For the great brain forgets stomach when immersed like a Yogi in the *lab-tapasya*...“Yes, yes ... you are right ... my dear, I am eating your nice *Iddlies* ... Come, come Swamiji ... quick ... fall in.” I took a bit of the Iddli given by him and a cup of orange juice. He swallowed his breakfast and fast led me to another chamber where I saw a beautiful car ... It was fashioned by him—a fine temple car nicely made and varnished... “Now pull the car...” said the scientist. I pulled... It tingled and the scientist ejaculated “Swamiji you are drawing an empty car... Do you want to see the God seated in it? ... I do not believe in stone Gods... Behold!” He suddenly produced a crystal and passed a dazzling light through it...There was a splendid light in the seat of the car and Raman danced with joy and declared... “Behold God, the luminous Science...” I remarked at once. “You are really worshipping the Vedic God of Light extolled by the Gayatri Mantra—*Bhargo Devasya dhimahi*”

...“Am I”? smiled C.V.R.

“Now come come...” he dragged me to his pet rose plants... “I will not nib a rose ... I greet its morning smile...O keep me smiling like you...” cried the scientist ... kissing its honeyed bosom.

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“Even Bernard Shaw was accustomed to greet the morning rose before he greeted any face” I told... “All artists and scientists of light must bow to the smile of flowers...” said Raman, explaining at the same time how flowers got their different hues ... Then he led me to his lab and showed light scattered by infrared frequencies and explained the quantum theory.

I demanded “It is like Compton effect?” “Yes they say both are coherent but different. See here.”

Raman drew a diagram on the board and then showed *Raman spectra* with large light-gathering power and special prisms of high resolving power. He showed how the lens in front of the plane window directed the scattered radiation upon the slit of the spectograph aligned to a tube and screened from the rays of the luminous arc. The lines produced were photographed. The intrinsic effulgence of Raman lines dazzled my eyes.

Suddenly he jumped to the upstairs hall... “Behold these diamonds...” he ejaculated ... How wonderful are light frequencies! See that diamond from this angle ... See its colourful light from this angle...” Thus he began to pour out knowledge from his luminous brain and I stood aghast ... The pages of atomic physics that I had studied came to my memory...

Raman changed his mind and thought-currents every moment. Now this, now that ... now yon phenomena, now flowers in the garden and now the blue sky ... He went on thus restlessly ... It was eleven ... Raman showed his well arrayed museum, his treasure of precious stones and led me to his library ... I was seeing some of his books ... and he buried himself into a recent book on Nuclear dynamics...forgetting the surroundings.

After fairly ransacking his valuable Science library, I sat before a bust of the great scientist wondering whether we can translate all these volumes into Indian languages... He jumped to me and sat near me and said as if he read my thoughts... “See, this statue contains four sides at the base. I have written my name in English in front ... Tamil & Telugu on the sides, Hindi at the back. English is the chosen language for science.”

Every minute with Raman was education and he created a hunger for Nuclear Physics in me.

I: “Sir, I want to know the use of your Raman Effect...”

He: “Here is a treatise upon the subject ... read it... You will know the effect of Raman’s discovery on salts, water, gases etc. It is an effect from a strongly illumined Benzoic liquid. Study the treatise at leisure... Now sing a song...”

I sang and he took his fiddle ... Raman is a great lover of music too.

Now came a call from his wife ... for dinner... A car was sent for me to visit his home. I went... I saw how the scientist lived in his house. I had seen the home of Jelico Curie (Jelico was the son-in-law of Madame Curie) in Paris. But I saw in the decent stone and cement building of Raman, a grand simplicity. I saw his study room, his bed, his table, the books that interested him at home.

Lokasundari kept the home clean and luminous. She wears no jewels and is herself the jewel of her husband. She got ready a delicious dinner. But I was content with fruits and nuts... I gave her some of my books and spoke with her for half an hour...Lokasundari has widely travelled with her husband all over the world. She must write his biography. She told me interesting things about the ventures of her great husband. The Nobel prize, and innumerable medals including the Lenin award and countless titles and certificates of merit did not attract Raman. He was as simple as ever. His mind was always for self-help and independence. He wanted to make everything in India without depending on imports... I asked him if he would become the Minister of Industry... “No. No ... that would be suicidal ... I and my

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science... I in my lab ... *ne plus ultra*" said Raman.

Raman's Research Institute established in 11 acres pulsates with his heart and brain, every inch. That tall imposing figure is no more; but his soul is there inspiring us to go deeper into the realms of modern science.

Kulapati Munshi is one of the great souls whom S met many times and discussed problems of India, her culture and spiritual resurgence. Here is a tribute to his memory contributed to Bhavan's journal.

89. IMMORTAL MUNSHI

The passing away of our dear, dear Munshiji, leaves a gap in the galaxy of great leaders, which is rather difficult to fill. He had such assorted array of abilities and qualities, his nature was so sweet and gentle, his genius was so flamboyant, his organising power was so dynamic, his aspirations to raise *Bharatiyata* was so towering that the whole humanity and the whole Indian nation can rise up and declare with one voice— Here is our Kulapati, here is a unique leader of our Dharma, here is real Bharata Ratna".

Gujarat gave India three saviours in Dayananda Saraswati, Gandhi and our beloved Munshi. The one upheld Vedic Dharma, the next gave freedom for the country and the last added glory to that freedom by saving the Divine culture of India through his great organisation, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

I have met Munshi in Sabarmati and Wardha with Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji had a deep regard for him and listened to him with great interest. While I was steeped in askesis at the feet of Sri Aurobindo, Munshiji came to Pondicherry. Sri Aurobindo saw his former student and impressed him with his message of "Spiritual Communion and Inner Transformation." After seeing Aurobindo, I had the fortune of meeting him silently. "The presence of the great Yogin has thrilled into me" he said. After finishing my silent *tapasya* of quarter of a century, I presided over the Parliament of Religions organised by Swami Sivananda Saraswati at Rishikesh. Munshi was then the Governor of U. P ... He gave a stirring message to the Parliament of Religions upholding the virile dynamism of Bharatiya Dharma. I met him next in the Kangri Gurukul, where I spoke in Hindi under his presidency. Munshi, the Governor, spoke for ten minutes expressing his ideal of Bharatiya Vidya "which is the potent factor behind India's universality". He appreciated the Gurukula system of education in which the ancient Yoga and the modern science united like life in body. He next visited the Aurobindo Centre at Jwalapur where I was then giving lectures and demonstrations on Yoga. He and Lilavati Munshi came. We welcomed them warmly and expressed our regards for them. He felt the want in our mind and promised directly more land for the expansion of our activities and took leave. His words were few; they were direct and constructive. His acts were dynamic, well planned and firmly founded on a fervour to raise the spiritual culture of Bharat to towering heights of world recognition.

I had several opportunities of meeting him in Bombay. He presided over the Ramana Jayanti festival, which I inaugurated. He then said: "I have deep regard for Sri Aurobindo, whose student I am, to Mahatma Gandhi who was my leader and to Ramana Maharshi who is an embodiment of *Atma Vidya* which is the life of Indian Culture." I have spoken to him about my experiences with Sai Baba and Meher Baba and he raised his hands to those silent saints.

I had fruitful opportunities of attending the Bhavan's functions and taking part in one or two. B. V. Bhavan stands an immortal monument, a perennial living edifice of his glorious dreams for the spiritual and cultural uplift of Bharat. To see round the Bhavan and its departments is itself an education. I often feel a youthful student as I enter the Bhavan and see its beehive activities. I often met the sweet Ramakrishnan of suave manners and offered my services to the *Bhavan's Journal* which is the voice of Bharata Mata. Sanskrit

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culture there, scientific culture in Andheri, Gita culture, dramatic culture, books and books on India's heritage, and towering above all, *Bhavan's Journal* ... my God! what an achievement in one span of life. He is an era in himself.

Birth and death are light and shadow of the carnal entity. But who lived such a life of variety as a lawyer, writer, journalist, teacher, leader, patriot, speaker, man of action, action and action! Munshi, how can he die, how can he leave us and how can we leave him or forget him? His soul is throbbing in each brick of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. He leaves behind him an army of trained cultural stalwarts who will continue the work dear to his soul, which is beyond all mutations and modifications. He leaves behind him his Shakti, Lilavati, who will continue the Bharatiya Samskritic Lila which is the mission of his advent.

The dedicated souls whom he has trained shall add to the glory of his evangel and declare to the world "We hold high the standard of Bharata-Dharma handed over to us by our inspiring leader, our Kulapati Kanaiyalal Munshi".

LIVE LONG MUNSHI

Live long, live long, lively Munshi
Live long like sun and sea.
Live long in He, live long in She
Of cosmic symphony.
You served like sky and wind and rain
Your love embraces all
You will return again, again;
In Bhavan is your soul.
Love you are and Light you are
Immortal Self you are.
The cream of Bharat art you are
You are the wisdom's core.
Your soul has become manifold
Your heart throbs in our heart
We are your soldiers strong and bold;
From us can you depart?
Restless work has given you rest
Leaving the rest to us
O super-soul! we'll do our best
For your Bhavan's progress.
For your mission's success
For Soul's immortal IS
By benign grace of HIS!

90. RAJAJI LIVES

The passing away of Rajaji's Spirit from that frail body came to S as he was addressing the Cape Town Hall in S.Africa. S was his friend and admirer since 1915. Every time he met him and offered him his works, Rajaji used to smile and ejaculate "What is the secret of your mystic productions ... Yes, real eloquence flows from ingathered silence... I want to be that." Rajaji clenched the feet of God and cleaved to the service of Gandhiji. Ram led him on. His long strong serene life is resplendent with resourceful insights and foresights which influenced even Kennedy and Mount Batten. Even Nehru who differed from him felt drawn to him. Even minds that loathed his dry exterior liked the perfume of his florid brain which healed acute cases. To con the glory of his dedicated life is to turn the pages of the Gandhian Era and to study the gift of his brain treasured in the pages of Young India, Kalki, Swarajya and the Bhavan's journal.

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His books promote the Better Life of humanity. Rajaji's works are gemmed with soulful words even like those of Plato and Aristotle. He scaled the heights of fame and name by the sincerity of his words and the clarity of his vision. The one motto worth adorning the Memorial of his renown is "Raise Yourself by dint of Self-dynamism—*Udderet Atmanatmanam*". S witnessed his genius in the Gaya Congress presided over by the great C.R. Das where he met stormy oppositions with the simple example of Boat with a bottom hole. He won the day as a No-Changer, as a puissant pilot of NCO. His fight against alcoholism, against untouchability, his melting heart for the suffering villagers, his Kaddhar-work at Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengode, his indomitable courage in maintaining the dictum of his conscience, speak highly of his integrity. Sincerity was his second nature. Rajaji lives as long Mahabharata, Gita and Ramayana (M.G.R.) breathe in the cultural life of India. The rich legacy of thoughts he has bequeathed to the nation shall guide its destiny for ages. His remarkable gifts of administration and organisation, the distilled wisdom of his ripe age, the expressions of his facile pen, his aspiration to restore peace and harmony in this atomic age—all go to declare his magnanimity.

91. THE SAGE OF TAPOVANAM

Swami Gnanananda Giri is the most long-lived, living sage of India. He was born at Mangalagiri (N.Canara Dt) to pious parents and renounced home in his eleventh year and went to Pandarpur. By the Divine Grace, the boy met there Ratnagiri Swami of the Jyotir Mutt Kashmir who loved the boy and adapted him as his follower. The boy was humble, simple, ardent, sincere and grasped quickly the essence of the Shankarite Vedanta. He served the Guru faithfully who appointed him as his successor under the monastic name **Gnanananda Giri**. But after the mahasamadhi of the Guru, Gnanananda left the monastery with one Ananda Giri and took to hard tapasya up the Shankara Hills and Himalayan solitudes. Then he wandered all over India North and South, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya and returned to the Tamilnadu to settle at Tirukovilur. Three miles from this place a fine Tapovan has grown around the aura of his askesis. About hundred followers of both the sex live at his feet serving him peacefully.

GNANANANDA TAPOVANAM is one of the dynamic spiritual centres of India to day. Outside its campus, there are hotels, provision stores, grocery shops, laundry, saloon, dispensary, post office etc. Inside the hermitage there are Kitchen, dining hall, temples, wells for water-supply and rows of rooms upstairs and downstairs where the disciples live, meditate, serve and are happy by the grace of the aged Master.

The whole Tapovanam rises at 4 am, finishes ablutions, gathers in the temple where puja and prayer and bhajans are performed. The Master sits silent on his seat and the disciples meditate at his feet. Then some devotee performs Pada puja which entails also feeding of the Bhaktas. Food is prepared and served at 9 am and the morning routine finishes within ten and the sage enters his cosy room for meditation. The devotees look after so many departments of work. Some study scriptures. Some like Haridas, give entrancing musical discourses. The evening routine begins at five and ends at eight after which the Tapovanam remains quiet and silent.

Sage Gnanananda Giri is a middle sized, stout, bright robust personality with a round smiling face and carefree heart. He walks briskly and answers questions clearly, with a slow intonation.

I have seen and been with him in four places; Kolli Hills, Dattatriya Cave of Swayamprakasa at Sendamangalam, Ramanashram and Vadalur. I have seen him with

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long matted hair and beard. Later on he cleanly shaved his head. He wears only one orange cloth round his body covering his big belly.

I had already written to him of my arrival and the inmates welcomed me, gave me a fine room in which the sage once lived. I finished my spiritual routines within 11 am. Then the secretary led me to a hall where the Sage welcomed me ejaculating “Swagatam, Varuga ... Maharshi Bharatiar...” Two monks of his order whom I know already accompanied me inside the room. The sage seated me near him and then the interview began.

I: Namaste ... I am happy to see you for the fifth time. I see you younger than before...

HE: Ha ha ha, very well ... Age is for the body, not for the immortal Self. I know you have just returned from Africa and go again to America.

I: Yes. Grace me with a message for humanity. We all know how mankind suffers to day. Offering to God mitigates suffering. But God is forgotten in the maze of personality cults...

HE: The Self is one in all persons. Self is the truth of human beings. The thinking man must realise God in the Self and see the same Self in all. To see the self in all and all in the Self is the greatest miracle. Behold Sunrise, sunset, stellar bodies, behold the sea, the wide sky, the rain clouds, thunder and lightning—are they not miracles of God ... ?

I: O yes ... But I have seen twenty persons materialising Vibhudi, Kumkum, rings, images of gods, diamonds, gold coins, flowers and fruits by apport. We cannot do these miracles. Perhaps they do so to attract people towards God...

HE: May be; they get crowds and admirers. Fruits and flowers can be bought in the market. But Self-Knowledge, peace and bliss are psychic miracles proceeding from meditation, introspection, reflection and from pure dedicated life.

I: All cannot lead such a life ... Will not dedicated service with love of God in the heart do?

HE: That is what the Gita says ... *Yoga: Karma Sukau-salam* ... Doing all our deeds as a consecration to God is the easy way of attaining His Grace.

I: Yes, The Gita says. “The world is a field of action; consecrated action leads to Self-Knowledge. Behold the Christian missionaries. They open schools, hospitals, orphanages, industrial centres and do a lot of cultural and social service inspired by the cross. We must also serve humanity likewise and spread our Vedic faith among the masses.

I: Exactly. Service must be our ceremony. I do study all scriptures; but I have no time for ceremonies and rituals. I have adapted constant meditation and *Shuddha Shakti Aum* Japam as my sadhana. The breath passes through the Shushumna due to my ceaseless inner pranayama since boyhood. I have made writing and singing a puja for the Inner Divine.

HE: That is Shankara’s way ... He says “whatever I do is Thy worship, O Siva.” When the Jiva breathes in tune with Siva and consecrates the very existence to Him in the Self, that itself is Yoga. To feel that Siva is always in the Jiva is Knowledge. This is depicted by Chinmudra, the symbol of Siva-Jiva unity when the three impurities of ego, illusion and vital passions are liquidated. Self-fixity is the reality and immortality of conscious existence. The physical, vital, subtle and psychic planes in us are perfected by consecrated good deeds, compassion for creatures, meditation and introspection. They are otherwise called Karma, Bhakti and Jnana Yogas.

I: Yes, Sri Aurobindo insisted upon surrender and consecrated service as means of self-purification. The purified ones reach Godhood. Ramana Maharshi was an

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advocate of Atma vichar and the knowledge of the Self–I in the heart. “To fix the mind in the Heart which is the I–centre, and live in that serene peace, is Bhakti and Jnana–Hristale manah swastata kriya ” says He. In that superconscious state, does the Jiva exist as a separate individuality or does God alone exist, just like the sun absorbing all stars ?

HE: The Veda speaks of Jiva, Siva and Jagat, Pati Pasu Pasam, God soul and world. When the binding force of Pasa goes away, when one is purified of all impurities of egoism, lust, greed, passion and delusion, the Jiva feels its identity with Siva. Siva is Tat, Jiva is Twam. Ignorance alone brings Jiva to the Twam stage. When ignorance and maya and ego are gone, Jiva finds itself in harmony with Siva. Then one lives in the everlasting Siva–consciousness. The sun is seen when clouds pass away. God is felt when Maya falls away. When ASI is understood, Tat and Twam become one and no impediment stands between Siva and Jiva.

I: Exactly this is the experience of Tirumular. Now I turn to a very interesting question. I have seen about hundred ripe souls from Jnana Siddha to Aurobindo. Jnana Siddha was more then 150 years when I saw him last in the Agastia-guha near Kedarnath. It was he that told me about your stay up the Shankara Hill in Kashmir. Many sages that I saw died pitifully of vile diseases. They never enjoyed health. They were chronic patients of piles, diabetes, asthma, rheumatism, cerebral thrombosis etc. I have been keen all my life in preserving this physical, vital and mental body free from ailments, by Yoga. But how is it that You look young and energetic in such an advanced age. Did you take any Kalpa or is it due to Vasidharana? Or is it due to Tantric esoterics? I have seen three tantrics die of venereal disease.

HE: Ha ha ha... ! (his whole mouth opened like that of Leo-T-Se of China when he laughed) ... The most effective Kalpa is to live in the consciousness of the Immortal Self. The immortal is in the mortal. Gnosis is the link between them.

I: Yes, I found out very early in life the GNOSTIC EQUILIBRIUM which connects the mind with the soul and the soul with God in us. It is otherwise called Gnana sambandam.

HE: I know; The immortal is held in the body by breath, food, and thought force. These must be pure and puissant. The breath must not be wasted. It must be conserved by pranayam. The vital force must not be wasted in silly sexualities. It must be saved and enmagazined. You have observed Yogic silence, for thirty years. Hence your vital breath is perfectly rhythmised. Prana and Apana, inspiration and respiration are signs of life. Heart is the hair spring that moves the hands of the human watch. The Manas must merge in the Prana. Prana merges and emerges with Manas. When it is saved, life is saved. When mind is calm and tranquil, breath is saved. By deep meditation mind is lost in the heart. By manonasa the triad of Knower, Known and Knowledge, the Triputi, is nullified in the Unique Self that alone is, ever as it is.

I: The method of Sri Aurobindo is supramental transformation. The descent of that force can divinise the cosmic existence, he says. Is it possible to divinise humanity collectively? There are the dualities of the twilight mentality always...

HE: Clouds are formed by the sun and shadow too. Light and shade denote the existence of the sun. Good and bad denote the existence of the mind of dual throngs. The mental curtain of maya must be removed by atmavichar... We must always be conscious of the Self–I that is beyond the mental plane, untrammelled, peaceful and blissful. All those that are thus established in the immutable Self–I shall enjoy life divine... To remember the Self is life and to forget it is death. The mind is tossed between sankalpa and vikalpa (imagination and variation) which cause the alternate play of love and hate. The Jiva must come to its own merging itself in Siva and then it can be free from birth and death. Luminous vision of Siva in Jiva is the state of peace, bliss and knowledge. Jiva finds its natural

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peace in Siva.

I chanted some Vedic hymns meaning that one enjoys nectar bliss and immortality by abiding in the psychic cave, the heart's core.

I presented him with a set of my books. He appreciated them and I exclaimed "Jai Mahatma Gnanananda Maharaj." He too ejaculated "Jai Maharshi Shuddhananda ki Jai" Then we took photographs. He caught hold of my uplifted hand and that was specially photographed. I extolled the services of Haridas and at once he produced an attractive picture of Himself blessing Haridas. Above the picture, Swamiji was depicted as Panduranga Vital.

I became twenty years younger by his contact... Jai Gnanananda!

92. LAND OF ASHRAMS

S had a nostalgia for saintly company even after having met great living sages of India. Whenever he presided over a conference or addressed meetings of devotees in any part of the world, he visited the spiritual or cultural centres nearby and learnt a truth which he noted in his diary. The list will cover many pages if we are to give details of every Ashram or institution. A brief note will do here. He met scholarly saints, saints of newspaper fame, saints of miracles, sorcerers, incanters, soothe sayers and a few who declared their avatar-hood and immortality. He had many adventures too. Two tantrics wanted to possess him, but he narrowly escaped their noose. There were saviours who could not save themselves from malady and malaise. There were rude magicians who threatened the gullibles of evil consequence if they did not surrender their all to them. There were yet noble souls who purified the atmosphere by singing the name of God and giving discourses on realisation and doing social work... S met some rare souls sweet and silent, calm and content just guiding sincere seekers who sought them. Now let us see round this holy land.

Sachcha Ashram : Areil on the bank of the Ganges is near Allahabad. It is an ideal resort for saints and sadhus, a poem of beauty cradled in the thrilling chorus of "Jago Bhagavan, Awake in our heart, O supreme God !" Guru Sachcha Babaji raised the standard of sainthood here. The wilderness of yelling jackals became a thrilling brindaban by His grace.

S had the delight of taking part in the Maha Chandi Yajna that was grandly celebrated here. He delivered lectures on Veda Dharma and Sanatana Yoga. Puri Shankaracharya appreciated his discourses. Baba and Mataji profusely blessed him and honoured him.

Shanti Ashram, Totapalli : SWAMI OMKAR has created a very charming centre of serene peace with palatial mansions, schools for children, prayer halls, lecture halls, press, publication forum, hospital etc. S stayed there long ago and recently too under the benign hospitality of the great Omkarji. There is a Ramathirtha institute too giving training in Vedantic socialism. Swamiji is a self made genius, a spiritual adventurer held in respect, East and West. His autobiography gives a very interesting reading.

Yoga Institute, Santacruz : This is an ideal centre of Better Life directed by the great Acharya Sri Yogendra and his wife Sita Devi and their sons Jaya Vijaya Devas. Asana and Pranayama are taught here. There is a Yoga Board here of which S is an active member. The simplified course of Yogendra's Yoga, promotes the art of living in energy and harmony. Hundreds visit this centre and are satisfied with the graded Yogic lessons taught here. S visits this centre frequently and stays as the guest of the Master.

Kaivalya Dham, Lonavala : This is another powerful centre of Hatha Yoga. Its originator Swami Kuvalyananda was a close friend of S. S has visited this centre of serene

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peace and puissance. Hundreds of sadhaks are benefited by the course of Asans and pranayam taught here. Yoga Mimamsa journal was published by this Dham.

Viswayatan, New Delhi: This famous institute of Yoga is directed by Yogi Dharendra Brahmacharin who is the Chairman of the Indian Medical Research Institute of which S is a member. In that capacity he used to visit this famous institute training hundreds of aspirants and treating patients too. It has full support and patronage of the Government. Swamiji had the honour of teaching Yoga to Nehruji and to our Premier, Indira Gandhi.

Sandhipini Ashram, Pawai: This is a popular Vedantic centre run by Swami Chinmayananda, the powerful exponent of the Vedantic knowledge contained in the Gita and the Upanishads. A dynamic mission is working in his name and thousands attend his Jnana Yajna. He is a disciple of the great Tapovan Maharaj of Uttar Kasi. S has seen him in the Sivananda Ashram and has attended his discourses in Madras. S once visited his Ashram at Pawai and delivered a lecture on Hridaya Vidhya...

Shankaracharya Ashram: The famous Mahesh Yogi who is initiating thousands in Transcendent Meditation all over the world, has raised this sanctuary of peace on the banks of the Ganges at Rishikesh. It is a convenient modern Ashram. S visited this Ashram twice and was delighted to breathe its atmosphere of ingathered tranquillity. Maharshi Mahesh once visited the Yoga Samaj.

Harikrishnamandir, Poona: This is a temple raised by Dada Dilip Kumar Roi and Miradevi, two emotional souls living in Krishna-Consciousness. They were well known to S while they were living in Sri Aurobindo Ashram. S once visited the Mandir.

Centres of Spiritual Dynamism: S had the blessed contact of great spiritual luminaries of modern India. He joined their prayer, bhajans and meditation, heard their discourses and was benefited by their satsangh. A few names are given here. Swami Sukhadevji of Paramatma niketan, Rishikesh, Mother Anandamayi of Dehradun, Mother Rama Devi of Mangalore, Malayala Swami of Vyasashram, Yerpada, Bharati Krishna Thirtha of Govardana math, Puri, Swami Niranjanananda Thirtha the dynamic orator-Shankaracharya, Sri Krishna Prem and Mrs. Chakravarti of Almora, the rapturous devotees of Krishna, Udiya Baba of Brindaban and Swami Akhandanandaji are all ripe souls. The wonderful Gita Bhavan raised by Mahatmas Goenka and Hanuman Prasad where S stayed very often, Yoga Niketan of Swami Satyananda, a serene secluded centre of meditative peace where S lived one day. Swami Abhedananda Ashram near the Padmanabha Temple, Travancore, Ramakrishna Kudil, and Chidbhavananda Ashram, Tiruppariaturai, dynamic educational centres, Gaudiya Mutts, Vaishnavi temple, Tirumullaivasal, Hari Baba Ashram, Band, Joshi Mutt, Himalayas founded by Adi Shankara, Mangalnath Ashram, Munikereti, Rishikesh, the Ashram of Prabudhatta Brahmachari thrilling with the name of Sri Krishna, Hubli, Siddharuda Ashram thrilling with Sivanam, Shankara Vihar, Madras conducted by the great Savant Prof: T.M.P. Mahadevan, the popular Ashrams in the names of Ramakrishna, Rama Thirtha, Ramana, Sivananda, etc. are all centres of spiritual magnetism. Swami Purushottamananda of Vasishta Guha, Deva Prayag was one of the great modern saints who initiated hundreds of seekers in self-realisation. S saw him twice.

Besides these centres of spiritual culture, there are centres of mystery and miracles.

93. *SATYA SAI BABA

Words or waterfall! Satya Sai Baba speaks in the Sai Samaj Hall, Madras. A big crowd listens to him in pin drop silence. Friends seated me just behind him. Baba suddenly turns and applies Vibhudhi to my forehead saying "Very glad. You are here". He takes me in a car to a devotee's home where he is adored. Baba wants me to sing a song. I sing four

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songs in Hindi, Telugu, English and Tamil. He stands up waving his hand. Lo! a ruby red lingam comes which he fixes between my eyebrows and says “All Knowledge will come to you, Speak round the world”. It was a miracle and an oracle. Baba invited me for the Navaratri. I stayed nine days in his Prasanti Nilayam jammed with devotees. He waved welcome with his hands, gave me a room and sent fruits for my diet. But I preferred to meditate on the hillock and riverbed. Satya is Sat, the river Chitra

is Chit and the Ashram is Ananda. There is an air of Truth–Consciousness–Bliss pervading the Prasanti Nilayam. Baba’s mother and brother gave me the interesting Ideals of his boyhood.

Ratnakaram Satyanarayana was born at sunrise on 25-11-1926. His parents were Krishna Bhaktas. Satya was a precocious boy who sang, danced, solved riddles, painted pictures and predicted events. He brought things by apport. He gave a handful of sand and it turned into sugar. He brought sweetmeats by waving hands up. The school was too little for the titan and book knowledge had only paper value. He was born with a wisdom rare for bibliography. His insight was stung awake by a scorpion bite in 1945. His strange ways could not be understood by parents and relatives. They tried in vain medicine and sorcery. The sight of a picture of Shirdhi Sai Baba in the puja room of the fervent Kesavaiya brought a light in his spirit. He was reborn in Baba–consciousness. Before an admiring crowd, he threw a handful of fragrant jasmine flowers which formed the clear name SATYA SAI BABA. He became famous by that name and miracles played around him to the stunning surprise of folks that flocked around him. The miracles were graceful, useful and meaningful. I have seen more than ten items which had a message in them. He was short nimble simple, elegant with a bewitching smile flashing from his tender coral lips. His moon–like face with a bushy coronet of mopped–up locks has a majestic attraction. I have lifted him two times and he is light like Krishna’s flute and has a might like Rama’s bow. His gemmed words have a style and substance that stir our hearts. He often called me for talks and each interview had a significance. I saw him giving rings, golden chains, *nimport quoi* by apport.

Ramakrishna Rao’s lovely boy was to be initiated in letters on the Vijayadasami day. Baba suddenly materialised a golden stylus, dipped it in honey and wrote in the boy’s tongue, “Hari Aum, Narayana” The boy quickly mastered the Telugu letters. The scientist Bhagavantam Gupta got a Gita message from a handful of sand poured into his hands by Baba. On the Sarasvatipuja day, Baba asked me to hold a bamboo cylinder above the image of Sai Baba in the sanctum of the Temple hall. I held and he touched it with a stick and lo, lo, Vibhudhi showered and showered from the narrow bamboo cylinder until it filled the whole room. The whole assembly of devotees cried “Jai Baba, Jai Baba!” and admiration reached the peak of emotional ecstasy. Baba convened a Kavi Arangam at night. Ten poets read their poems. He requested me to sing songs extempore. I sang four songs in English, Telugu, Sanskrit and Hindi.

UNIVERSAL SIRE!

Your eyes meet me everywhere
Seekers, seek Thee from far and near
You say ‘I am here, have no fear.’
This flute touches Thy rosy lips
And songs flow from Thy finger tips.
Gifts flow from Thy gracious hands
Calls come to Thee from all the lands
Have you time to take Thy meals

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While Thy Grace continuously heals
While you are playing million parts
Singing and dancing in all hearts ... ?

Baba appreciated my songs in a long speech saying “Shuddhananda has come at last to his proper place here” He visited the Yoga Samaj four times. Opening the Press building, he critically remarked “You have been with so many sages and done life long Tapasya. Yet why do you attach yourself to Samaj press, disciples and publications?... Come out now and be free” I replied him in Madurai “Sir, I am God–centric. My right left or about turns–come from His Will... His Grace guides me from A to Z”

There was a black period when papers scandalised him severely and a paper gave out that he will be arrested. I presided over the D.L.S. Conference at Venkatagiri. Just after my address ... Baba spoke out a challenge “None can send me behind bars. Scandal mongers too proclaim me. Krishna has no business without Kamsa and Duryodana”. We dined in the palace and set out to Madras. Baba spoke and I sang and the night was listening to us.

I wanted four, You gave me three
To love you, you made me free
You hide yourself in my heart
Is this your art? O good consort!

Just then a wheel punctured and the car stopped. The driver could not repair it. Baba exclaimed... “Behold, even if one wheel is punctured the other three cannot run. The four wheels are Dharma Artha Kama and Moksha–virtue, wealth, enjoyment and liberation. Now Dharma, the front wheel is in repair. I have to carry on its repair”. He went down and in five minutes the car was O.K; we drove on. The talk went on. A metal piece will sink in water. If it is made into a cup, it will float. Even so egocentric mind must be made large and wide by loving service. Then it can float in God’s grace. “Ego is rajasic ... Can’t God blot out Tamas and Rajas (lethargy and passion) and keep for us Satva alone? Baba pointed to a ceiling fan and declared “Behold, it has three leaves. Cut off one. It can’t function as it should. Even so the three Gunas are needed for the Prakruti Maya to run the world–play.”

Baba has created a wonderful Science College in the Whitefield, Bangalore. I once visited it and American friends helped me around. Baba has united East and West, Science and Yoga (Karma Bhakti and Jnana) in his Prasanti–mission.. Jai Baba !

India is torn to pieces by sectarian religions. Is there not an awakening force that can bring all together ? Is there not a love that can unite all hearts in love of One God ? This land of 15,000,00 Sq. miles is a home of two nations at loggerheads with each other. The Himalayan Range measuring 1600 miles long and 29,141 ft. high was the stronghold of India in the North. Even this impregnable border was attacked and crossed by the Chinese. The invasion roused all Indians but there were others who joined the invaders! A New Awakener is necessary to unite mankind into one communion of equal souls. Sri Aurobindo tried it in his great Ashram. A broader synthesis of humanity can be achieved by inner awakening...“I am here, India shall win ” said an oracle. It was the voice of the Silent awakener—MEHER BABA.

94. MEHER BABA, THE AWAKENER

Maharashtra is a land of mystic Saints like Ramadas, Tukaram and Jnaneswar. Five saints of recent days gave a spiritual push to aspirants and led them towards Light. They were Sai Baba of Shirdhi, Upasini Baba of Sakori, Narayan Maharaj of Khedgaum, Tajudin Baba and Hazarat Baba Jan. We have seen the first two saints.

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Narayan Maharaj went in search of saints very early in life. A Siddha kindled the latent fire in him. For seven years he meditated in silence and solitude under a margosa tree near Poona. God Dattatreya appeared in his vision and directed him to Khedgaum, 34 miles from Poona. He built there a temple for Dattatreya and developed a spiritual centre resorted to by millions of devotees. He lived like a prince. He took delight in serving saints.

Tajuddin Baba was a saint of the masses. He served as a soldier in the Madras Regiment and by a sudden fit of Divine frenzy, kicked off his job and wandered naked, dazed, and demented. He was imprisoned for 18 years for having walked naked into an English Club. His prayers in the prison drew crowds. Miracles played around him. One Raja Raghunath got his release by paying Rs. 2000 to the Govt. Tajuddin settled at Waki near Nagpur and it became Chota Nagpur and crowds rushed to see him. Sick patients came to him and he made them stand under a margosa tree saying "That is my hospital." Students came to him and the saint made them stand under a mango tree saying "that is my school; you will pass your examinations. "That is my court" said he asking litigants to stand under another tree. He asked devotees to pray in the open saying "This is my mosque and mandir." He allowed real seekers near him saying "Pray now in the Heart which is the seat of God". He marched all singing Ram Rahim for ten minutes and all their troubles were over and they went home joyfully. Before he died in 1925, millions of people were awakened to God-love.

Hazrat Baba Jan called Gulruk, was born in Baluchistan. She was an angel of beauty. Her parents arranged for her marriage. But she ran away to Rawalpindi where she was initiated in God-love by a Hindu saint and a Muslim Aвали. She did intense meditation on hills and declared aloud "I am God, Anal Huq!" She visited Mecca and came to India in 1903 and sat under a neem tree near Malcolm tank in Poona. She bore heat and cold and sat there calmly through storm and tornado "I am God; nothing can affect me" said she. Devotees raised for her a zinc hut which still remains. She was the most long-lived lady in the world.

Baba Jan was keenly looking for a lovely lad. On a fair day in May 1913 she saw that lad dashing off in a cycle to the Deccan College. She beckoned him to her side one day and the lad Merwan felt drawn to her. The venerable lady posed upon his forehead an affectionate kiss of spiritual bliss. Merwan felt an electric thrill. He was reborn in the Spirit. He was polarised by her vibrating cosmic energy. That was a turning point in his life. Day after day, her contact set in motion the awakened Self-consciousness. He wandered bliss drunk in divine frenzy. Babajan said "My child, you will create a great sensation in the world and do immense good to humanity." He felt dazed, stunned and dumbed. His parents were afraid and put him under medical treatment.

It was a Zoroastrian family. The father Shehriar Mundagar Irani was a keeper of the Silent Tower in Persia. He reflected upon the march of human life from cradle to grave. He renounced the world to wander with dervishes. He left the neverlasting in search of the everlasting. With a wooden bowl and staff, he wandered all over India and settled in Poona where he opened a tea shop. He was thirty-nine when he married Shirin Bano—a girl of fourteen. Bano was an angel of womanly virtues. Shehriar and Bano had seven children; two died and Merwan was the second son. Jal, Bairam and Ardeshir were marked for business. Mani, the daughter was a seraphic gem.

Merwan was born at 5 am. on the 25th February, 1894. His face was dawn-fair, his binocular eyes looked at the wonderland within. As a child he played with a cobra. As a boy he haunted Dakmas and graveyards and sat long alone in contemplation. The drop sought the ocean and the atom the whole. He matriculated from St. Vincent School and continued his studies at Deccan College. Destiny brought him in contact with Babajan as we have seen. He visited the five Masters. Sai Baba hailed him as Parvardigar

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(Incarnation). Narayan Maharaj, and Tajuddin blessed his spiritual frenzy. Upasani Baba discovered him. Upasani Baba aimed a pebble at the Jan-kissed front and brought him to normal consciousness. Upasani kept him for six months and declared "Meher holds my key. He is the Divine Master of the age. All must obey his commands." His psychic centres opened fully and became centres of God-Energy.

Baba's life is a polarity of human ascent and divine descent. Baba took to hard tapasya. He met severe trials and persecution at the hands of unscrupulous enemies. He accepted humiliation with patience and forbearance. He loved those who hated and reviled him. He opened centres of spiritual radiation in Poona, Dadar and Ahmednagar. The last was known as Meharabad, his headquarters. Baba took lifelong silence from 1925. Baba created Pimpalgaum in front of a hill for his silence and solitude. His silent influence brought peace to thousands. Devotees waited for him all over the world in deep reverence. He visited Persia twice and Europe and America nine times. The American devotees were thrilled and filled with peace and bliss by Baba's silent presence and soulful gestures. Baba calmly observes passing events, the riddles of existence, and silently solves them. He is universal in everything. His seven coloured flag represents all planes of consciousness—physical, mental, psychic, gnostic, knowledge and truth. His emblem contains symbols of all religions—Hindu Aum, Zoroastrian fire, Muslim crescent, Christian Cross and Buddhist Swastika. He is a silent international peace maker. None has achieved such a universal recognition so silently like Baba. Baba's words are sparks of inner Divinity:

"The unique question of ages is "Who am I?" and the unique answer is "I'm God. I tell you with divine authority God alone is. It is my God-ordained work to awaken humanity to unity and divinity. To day the urgent need of mankind is Love. I have not come to preach but to awaken. The religion that I shall give humanity is the knowledge of the One behind the Many. The book I shall make people read, is the *Book of the heart* that holds the key to the mystery of life. Real living is dying for God. One who dies for God lives for ever. God can be loved only by losing ourselves in Him through Love. If you honestly love God, you will find Him everywhere."

S has had inner communion with Meher Baba since 1924. S took to silence on the same day.

One fair morning, the post brought him a booklet, a Meher message and a beautiful picture. S felt a new delight. Baba came in his meditation every day. After returning from his foreign tour, he presided over the Divine Life Conference at Rajamundry. Dr. Dhanapati Rao approached him there announcing the arrival of Avatar Meher Baba. He hurried to Tadepalligudam. Baba endearingly embraced S, kissed his forehead and gave him a message on the Alphabet Board which he then used; "You are sincere. You live in God for God. My love and guidance are with you. I will not miss you. I will meet you soon." S was caught in the charm of his personality. He was enveloped in a wordless delight.

Next year, he presided over the Parliament of Religions at Sivanandanagar, Reshikesh. He had just finished his address to the large audience when he saw the sudden presence of Baba. Kishan Singh suddenly appeared there saying "Baba wants you". The yogi left the conference and jumped into the car which dashed through the pebbled mountain road to Dehradun and stopped before a garden house. A lightning flash, a thrilling presence. Baba embraced the Yogi quickly and lifted him up showering upon him, his charming psychic smiles. The Yogi forgot everything in the magic spell of that ineffable love. Thus spoke the Silent Splendour "Conferences cannot unite mankind. The heart alone can achieve it. I belong to no religion; all belong to me. The wordy gospels have failed. I am a silent awakener. I shall bring all together like beads in a rosary..." S read his presidential address. Baba appreciated it and remarked "I know everything. You have come for me. You cannot live apart from me." S said "Under the vast

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canopy of heaven, humanity must live as one spiritual communion conscious of One God in the heart. Love of God in the heart must widen into love of equal souls in humanity. Mineral, plant, animal, man and superman are only gradations of the awakened consciousness. Man must perfect his manhood and rise to his native Godhood. God–Men come upon the earth to remind this and rekindle divinity in the human aggregate. The rekindling force must spread East and West to enlighten humanity and bring a new era of God–conscious–world. The heart of the East must touch the brain of the West. Then wars shall cease and science shall be harnessed to constructive benefactions.” Babaji calmly heard the Yogi’s mission and blessed him saying “I go to England and America. Would you follow me?” Baba held his palm and got a promise from the yogi that he will follow the Master to the West. “Sure, settled; be prepared to go to the West” said Babaji. The words were ratified by a few minute’s inner communion.

S finished his European tour with great success. His mission of One World, One Humanity and One God, took root in the West. The Yogi presided over the Gita conference at Amroti and Baba called him to Ahmednagar. He visited Shirdi and Sakuri, stayed with Godavari Mathaji and Baba invited him for the Sahavas of February 25th. In the meantime Baba had an accident which told upon his emaciating body. Despite physical sufferings, Baba kept cheerful. Baba with the affection of a mother, made special arrangements to look after the Yogi’s convenience during the Sahavas. The yogi sat at the feet of Baba during the Sahavas and plunged himself into Samadhi all the time. He had flashes of inspiration which he wove into songs. The function was reported in the Awakener coming from America as follows:

“The next item was the recitation with musical accompaniments of the English song composed by the Yogi and placed at Baba’s feet. Others in the congregation repeated it line by line, following the lead of the Yogi:

“Blaze, Lights of Victory!
Blow trumpets of Glory!
Hail, Lord of Love Divine
Here is the ancient One !
Prophets came and prophets went
But who can equal his advent?
He is immortal in our heart.
And we are immortal in his heart.
To see him is a thrill of joy
His gracious look is sweet and coy;
To touch him is nectar–delight
Be lamp of love, he is the Light.
His embrace is a song of Bliss...
A new Life blossoms by His Kiss!
His Omnipresence who can miss?
In himself he has all that *IS*.
His language is the Psychic Love
All languages must learn it now!
Human isms have become cold
Here is One God, One Godly world
And One mankind faithful and bold
Built up by Baba’s Grace untold–
Our time is beyond Is and was
Since we have Baba’s Sahavas

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Baba promised to send him again to the West but commanded him to a *Silence Of Six Months More*. He had been silent already for thirty years and it continued for six months more during which he fasted mostly and never left his perch. He had wonderful visions and voices during this period.

After finishing silence, the Yogi met Baba again in Poona and Baba asked him to wait for the right moment. Baba called him to Pimpalgaum and said: “Your mission has begun; do my work in India.”

The Yogi toured the Andhra state thrice, and addressed many gatherings. He was enthusiastically received in all places. Eluru, Chirala, Vijayavada, Rajamundry, Ramachandrapuram, Masulipatnam, Vijayanagar, Vizagapatnam, Kakinada and a number of places abounding in Baba; devotees honoured him. He composed fresh songs in Telugu and English and sang them in the congregation of devotees. The secretary of the Andhra Meher Centre wrote to S:

“True indeed, you are an apostle of purity, unity and divinity. You have made your life a practical example to all of us, illustrating the control of the mind and the spirit, the realisation of man’s true mission in life, the discovery of the real existence above this earthly existence of one’s spiritual powers and potentialities. Your precepts are the expressions of your own great spiritual life, inspired by the Divine.

During your tour, you have awakened the spiritual consciousness of thousands of men and women dispelling their doubts and inculcating in them true love of God.

On behalf of the Meher Mandali, Andhra and the Andhra Public, I offer my profound thanks and Pranams to your revered Self for your great services and inspired lectures” (T.V.Seshagiri Rao).

Baba sent many telegrams of appreciation and called the Yogi again to Pimpalgaum and introduced him to his American devotees. The Yogi spoke with Don Stevens and other friends and admired the purity of their devotion. Aranguam and Meherabad put up a festive appearance that day, Baba embraced all. People danced in ecstasy of love for Baba offering him flowers and fruits. Baba adored lepers and all these scenes were nicely filmed by the American devotees. The Yogi gave a lecture in the Meher Centre, Poona A telegram came from Baba saying “You will be called soon. Baba has resolved to send you to America. Baba’s immortal love to his immortal lover. Yogiji, Baba sends you his choicest blessings and his heart’s overflowing love.”

There was a big festival arranged for Baba in Andhra and devotees invited the Yogi; he was about to start when a serious accident hampered his journey. Bandits entered his Yoga Samaj with lethal weapons. They assaulted the members. They opened the bureaux and saw books and manuscripts. The bandits fled away crying “We cannot eat his books for our hunger!” The Yogi cried to them, “Come brothers, I will cook food for you and show you how to live, honestly.” The police came incidentally, but the bandits disappeared. Baba sent this telegram “No one will be able to rob Baba from you. Beloved Baba has made permanent abode in your heart...”

EAST AND WEST UNITE

November first week, 1962 was a red-letter-day in the life of Baba-lovers. Guruprasad in Bund Gardens Road, Poona, saw a global gathering of chosen devotees of Baba from East and West. Shri Shantadevi, the Rani of Baroda is a blessed soul. Her mansion had been chosen by the Avatar to give Dharshan to his Eastern and Western devotees. Under a large-hearted Pandal tastefully decorated, souls sat in harmony and twenty thousand more were coming from the town for the embrace of Baba. Baba rose upon the dais like a shining Sun of Love. The Yogi, after embracing Baba sat at his feet in Mahaturiya samadhi. Baba’s radiant Presence united all souls into one communion of

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lovers. It seemed as if Baba alone breathed there in so many human forms. His lotus eyes, gracious gaze, rosy face, charming smile, mystic gestures, thrilling messages, loving embrace—all these expressions have entranced the heart of lovers who became one body in him. Baba tells us “I tell you with my divine authority that you and I are not we, but one. You should love God in such a way that you see everywhere nothing but God.”

The gracious Baba gave the yogi an opportunity of addressing the Western friends. Mrs. Elizabeth Patterson of Myrtle Beach Centre, Mr. Purdom, Ivy Duce, Ruth White, Harry Kenmore, Poet Francis Brabazon Eruche and Adi K. Irani were there. Brabazon introduced the yogi to the assembly. The Yogi addressed them on his mission in America for about half-an-hour. Next day, Baba himself introduced the Yogi to the American devotees and requested them to make arrangements for his visit to America...

United States of America is the chosen centre of universal movements. The soil has already been prepared by Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, Vivekananda, Yogananda and others including the lovers of Sufism and Abdul Bahai. The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans shake hands at Panama. America holds the banner of One World and One Humanity. America has helped to restore peace in the world by defeating two tyrants. Its generous help to India cannot be forgotten. America has saved the world from the verge of chaos and destruction. A World Spiritual Centre must be established in America. The crisis created by nuclear dynamics and space technology can be averted only by a synthesis of science and spiritual consciousness. We have to blaze a way beyond the twilight mind and attune life to the deeper soul.

The Pilgrim adores Baba for his ineffable love and large-hearted life. The “Silent Splendour” will give you ample evidence of his inner communion. “Live in God, as God.” was his great message. His very silence is a miracle; the peace that reigns during the sahasras is a miracle. The amicable union of East and West at his feet is a miracle. Two dangerous accidents have shattered his body and health. Yet he looks calmly at his sepulchre kept ready up the Meherabad hill. He says “I paint the martyrdom of selfishness”.

S had once a private talk with Baba just before his tomb. He said “My body shall rot here deep in a pit; but my Spirit shall live in lovers.” (He touched the heart of S). S saw a light in his eyes and cried “Hail Silent splendour!”. Baba kissed his hand and cheeks and embraced him ... That was the last meeting.

On the day ascension (31-1-69) S had the vision of Baba in his meditation. Next year he visited the tomb up the hill and sat there in samadhi three hours and then sang a song. He visited Baba’s room in pimpalgaum and felt his vibrating presence. He had a long talk with Mehra Mai, Manoja, Dr. Gouhar Sarosh, Adi, Erouch, Sastri, Shinde, Hamar etc and sang from his soul...

Where is Baba, where is Baba
Where is Meher Baba
Here is Baba; there is Baba
Hail immortal Baba.
The tomb is not his home be sure
And Death is not his goal.
All hearts of love and faith endure
In his love soul-to-soul.
From head to foot he is a heart
He is our soul indeed
He is a Love from root to fruit
He is the friend in need.
Hail Meher! Hail Meher! Hail Meher, hail!
Sail onward, brave heroes, sail onward, sail!

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The Fifth Part of the Pilgrim Soul ends here. The Expanding Soul travels round the world.

PART VI

EXPANDING SOUL

95. SWAMI SATYANANDA

Colombo, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Tokyo, New York, Chicago, California, Brazil, London, Paris, Geneva, Zurich, Brussels, Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Moscow, Volgograd, Leningrad, Copenhagen, Oslo, Lisbon, Cairo, Bombay, Delhi—these are the cosmopolitan centres of the world. These are the busiest places on the earth overflowing with all sorts of people, industries and cultures. God brought opportunities to His Pilgrim to go round the world five times and see the progress of mankind in these big cities. The opportunity first came from a co-pilgrim, a nice helpful companion.

S got the inner voice to see the world abroad and sow in fertile fields his ideas of One Humanity living a collective life of spiritual socialism. He had a passion to unite the scientific West with the yogic East which are but two poles of the universal powerhouse. S had written many books explaining his ideals widely read by friends in many countries. Mr. Romain Rolland was calling him to Europe and Swami Satyananda urgently called him to Malaya.

Satyananda was the angel of Malaya! His original name was Kailasam. Born in 1902, he was orphaned and was brought up by his scholarly uncle. Kailasam studied in St. Michael School, Ipoh and served the Malayan Government for ten years as a clerk. He studied the Yoga Siddhi and other works of S and also the works of Vivekananda and helped Swami Atma Ram in organising the Appar High School at Kuala Lumpur. He got an inner call to dedicate his life to spiritual and social service. He resigned his Government post and joined Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore and served the Vivekananda Ashram at Kuala Lumpur. In 1937, Brahmachari Kailasam desired to come to India and live with S. But S was steeped in silence and saw none. In 1940, He came to study Vedanta in Benares and Calcutta and saw S in Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The Brahmachari was sincere, strong-willed. S gave him meditation for five minutes and presented him with a copy of the Gospel of Perfect Life and requested him to study and follow it in life. He stayed in a friend's home for a week and studied the book and said "I like this and direct me to a useful service." "Go and tell everyone that all are equal souls in God and humanity can live as one family in one world if it is conscious of the One Soul that breathes in all. Work for this unity which comes by purity of Self consciousness and leads to Divinity. We will meet again".

Kailasam lived the Gospel and did a lot of social and educational service. He managed the Vivekananda Boy's School and also the Girl's School where he found his great co-worker, Sister Mangalam who is now directing his institutions.

The second World War raged wild and Malaya came under the sway of Japan. The meteoric emanation of Netaji Subash Chandra, the I.N.A. Hero, opened a new page in the life of Kailasam. He became an intimate friend of Netaji. He was in charge of education in the Azad Hind Government. He trained teachers. Netaji appreciated his service and appointed him as the Indian representative in Research Department of Japanese Military administration. He worked for the cultural relationship of India and Japan. He saved many Indians from the appalling terrorism of the military Government. He often had narrow escapes from bombs. He worked among the labourers on the Burma-Siam Railway line

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and sent confidential reports of the death of thousands of workmen from fatigue and starvation. Netaji wrote to him then “Many thanks for your kind letter. I am keeping good health. I hope you are quite well despite trying tours. We are preparing for the next offensive in Imphal. Our troops have fought magnanimously. The morale here is excellent both among civilians and among the army. We shall win India and India shall be free...” (19-10-1945).

Netaji’s disappearance was a severe trial to the I.N.A. patriots. Syonan became Singapore again. The atom bomb that devastated Hiroshima and stopped the Japanese War, blazoned forth two mighty powers (Russia and America) who hold sway in world politics. The victorious English Govt., brought to trial its erstwhile opponents. The followers of Subash Chandra came under the hard hand of martial law. Kailasam was detained for a few months by the military security forces. Three I.N.A. commanders were tried in Delhi for whom the prime minister Nehru himself stood as the defence counsel along with Bulabai Desai. Brahmachari Kailasam helped them with useful hints. Mahatma’s Quit India movement and the naval agitation in Bombay made Wavell think seriously. Wavell and Louis Mountbatten negotiated with the Indian leaders to accord India freedom. Mountbatten invited Nehru to Singapore and in that connection he stayed with Malcolm MacDonald. Kailasam endeared himself to Nehruji as he did to Netaji. Nehru appointed Kailasam as the secretary of the Indian Relief Committee. Nehru writes about him “He is an idealist who believes in practical religion”. He travelled over Malaya rendering help to the poor. Mr. S. K. Chettur and Tivy who were then representatives of the India Govt. in Malaya, appreciated his indomitable energy and public benefactions. He helped them to organise a Malayan Indian Congress and an Indian Welfare Home. He really dipped his soul in ceaseless selfless service. One day S got a letter from him which read as follows:

“All along my trials I remember you and what you told me in 1940. I go to India now as a delegate of the Asian Conference in New Delhi. I hope to meet you at Pondicherry and dedicate myself to fulfil your mission of Purity, Unity and Divinity.”

15th August, 1947, after the silent dharsan, Sadhu Kailasam stood before the window of S. S saw his inner opening. Tears dropped from his eyes as S touched his heart and blessed him. He murmured “I want Sanyasa now from your hands”. “You are already a Sanyasin. I call you Swami Satyananda from to day. I silently utter the Viraja Mantra ... Sit there closing your eyes ” said S to the calm Serene Sadhu. When the inner communion was established, he said “I have a new peace and energy now and I want a service.” “Go to Kuala Lumpur and start the Shuddha Samaj (Pure Life Society). The means shall seek you by the Divine Grace. Meditate at 6 am. and 6 pm alone, calmly and commune with the In-Dweller. He will show you Light and you will be victorious. The Gospel Of Perfect Life shall be your Book; work out its ideal in the individual as well as the collective life. Spiritual Socialism is my ideal and you will be its apostle in Malaya”. “Yes” he assured “I shall dedicate myself to the Shuddha Samaj in Malaya”. Swami Satyananda became the Pure Life Missionary. He created the Shuddha Samaj and wrote a touching letter in which he said:

“I have been working all these days with your inspiration to raise here the Shuddha Samaj. We have acquired a plot, collected money, and raised a building and prayer hall. I humbly request you to visit Malaya and open this Samaj and bless us with your graceful presence. I am really feeling your personal guidance in this work. Your pure life of Yoga and song-offering has already touched our hearts. I wish very much that you come out of your silence of quarter of a century to enlighten humanity. Malaya is looking for your guidance”.

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This was really a God-sent invitation and it resulted in five world tours. Swami Satyananda was a faithful fellow pilgrim unto the last. He visited S in Madras twice but he was dejected by hard trials in life. His health too broke down and he lost sleep and peace of mind. S saw serious pituitary defects in him. Satyananda requested S to go to Malaya and take charge of the Samaj.

S took off from the Meenambakam Airport and reached Ceylon, where his lovers welcomed him and arranged busy programmes for him. K. Ramachandran, the editor of Religious Digest, managed the whole programme. S missed the B.O.A.C. next day. He had to wait a week to catch another plane and this was utilised by friends to keep him busy lecturing in several associations. An All-Ceylon tour was chalked out for him on his return journey.

The pilgrim flew by the night B.O.A.C. and reached Singapore at 8.45 am. on the 8th May, 1952. Prominent citizens of Singapore-Chinese, Malayas and Tamils and Europeans welcomed him and the press gave him great publicity.

The Pilgrim was moved to tears of joy as he embraced Swami Satyananda and the sincere Govindaswami Pillai, his host. He dedicated a song to Malaysia:

Glory to Thee, O blessed land
Of beauty and plenty so grand
O land of green and golden hue
We are thy children brave and true
Thou inspirest enchanting dreams—
Land of lofty hills and lovely streams.
Cradled in mounting ocean songs,
Thou shakest hands with all nations.
To serve Thee every nation longs,
Land of Elysian glow and halcyon peace
To Thy culture and to Thy Race
Glory, glory, Malaysia, Sister of India
Glory to united Malaysia, jewelled hand of Asia

Lectures were arranged for him in the Divine Life Society and in the Ramakrishna Math and Theosophical Society. All communities had gathered to welcome him and caskets with addresses were presented to him. It must be noted that S presented to the Shuddha Samaj, all his presents in kind and coin and his welcome addresses too. For S was always free like air.

About his mission in Malaysia, S spoke in a welcome gathering: “Malaysia is a cosmopolitan country where all nationalities meet from East, West, North and South. Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Buddhists live here like the auricles and ventricles of one heart. Singapore is a world port, the gate of Asia, a rallying point of Asia, India, America and China and England. Malaysia is the best centre to work-out the ideal of One World. I have come out from a dynamic silence of quarter of a century with the message of New Humanity, a yogic humanity free from the differences of race, sect, caste and religion. It is only through a spiritual heart and cultural head that the soul of nations can unite with the life of individuals. My contact with Malaysia dates from 1915 when I began to contribute articles to the dailies of this country. Many of my books were published at Kuala Lumpur. Some of my books fell into Japanese hands and my songs were broadcast from Bangkok and Saigon and Singapore during the Subash regime. Swami Satyananda has called me now and I am at his disposal. He has organised a Shuddha Samaj (Pure Life Society) at Petafing which shall be opened on my birthday. I may stay here two or three months. I shall pour into your heart, what the Divine pours into mine. I am His humble servant and all

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honours you do for me, go to Him. I call you all to spend half an hour in the morning and in the evening to think of God, sing His glory and commune with Him in the silence of the heart. Inner Communion is yoga. Yoga is the spiritual art of perfect living. Yoga is the science of living in tune with the Infinite. It is not a life of bare asceticism. It is the plenitude of life in the pure soul-consciousness. Purity, unity and divinity are the three practices in yoga. Purify yourselves by selfless service that is Karma Yoga. Find unity in all souls by love and friendship; that is Bhakti Yoga. Live in tune with the Divinity of your soul by meditation that is Jnana Yoga. Through purity in and out, unity of consciousness, and divinity of life you can progress towards Truth, Light, Power, Peace and Bliss. Then you will live in God-consciousness as naturally as your lungs are breathing the air. You will see all in you and yourself in all. You can see then One humanity under the canopy of heaven, walking harmoniously on one earth. You will realise the one encircling horizon of spiritual vision. To provoke in you this vision of One humanity in spiritual consciousness, one better world of peace and plenty is my mission. Let us unite as one humanity in the peninsula which shakes hands with East and West, North and South. Let us unite in our hearts to achieve a transformed new world of peace and bliss. Live All! Love all! Be conscious of the All-in-all!...”

96. PURE LIFE SOCIETY

The Pilgrim was delighted to visit the Shuddha Samaj, Petaling, six miles from Kuala Lumpur. S was its patron. Swami Satyananda was its president and architect. It is a dynamic universal home of culture and industry. It has a beautiful communion hall up a mount, where Aum Light is adored. There is a nonsectarian school, Dharma Institute, orphanage, press, hospital etc. raised from the contribution of our sympathisers. The opening day was very grandly celebrated. The society was tastefully decorated. About two thousand elite of the town attended the function. The Raja Muda of Selangore hoisted the national flag. Mr. Rawson, Chief Social Welfare Officer declared the aims of the Samaj. The Pilgrim who was the life patron of the Shuddha Samaj, delivered his inaugural address. The salient points are given here from the Yogi's address and this was recorded and broadcast on the radio for the people of Malaysia:

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Your Highness, Swamiji, Chairman And Friends,

Let the pure Almighty Grace bless you all with strength, peace and spiritual bliss! The loving honour you have done me today, I offer it to that Grace-Light which guides my destiny. After a quarter of a century of yogic seclusion, I have come out by the divine command as a messenger of One Humanity. I have come as a citizen of God's omnipresent Kingdom. I call you all to be my fellow citizens.

Malaysia is as good as India to me, for both are ancient sisters linked by historic, political, economic, commercial and religious traditions. Malaysia stretches into the Indian Ocean like the jewelled hand of Asia with rich gifts of golden fruits. This lovely land, cradled in the music of the billows, has been floating in my imagination for three decades. Mother Malaysia has been calling me often with affection and her sons were sending me touching letters.

But one fervent heart had such a compelling charm that it made me come flying amidst you, leaving there in India my life-work.

I gave orders to Satyananda and requested him to create in Malaysia a Shuddha Samaj, on the basis of the Gospel of Perfect Life and the Yoga Siddhi. Now you see what he has achieved. Gratitude to Swamiji! Gratitude to all friends who have contributed

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liberally and worked hard towards this achievement. In opening the Shuddha Samaj today, I am not opening the doors of a building; but I am opening your hearts to the realisation of an Ideal that is dear to our soul—the ideal of Purity, Unity and Divinity in a life consecrated to yoga and seva, meditation and service.

THE SUPREME MISSION

HUMANITY today is suffering hopelessly in the darkness of divided mentality. Unity of consciousness and psychic harmony in life are far removed from its hedonic pragmatism. Patent faiths and creeds and dogmatic religions have not created unity. The scientific intellect has achieved material wonders but it leads men from war to war, bomb to bomb and now threatens to annihilate life on the earth by radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere. Two terrible wars have devastated the world. You in Malaya cannot forget the inhuman butchery and brutality that made your life an infernal horror recently. The powers are again arming themselves with terrible atomic weapons in view of a total war which means total destruction. It is Nietzsche's *Viet Armis* (Will to Power) that is the ruling craze of the age more than the words of the Gita or Al-Koran or the Bible. A simple switching here, throws a hydrogen bomb there wiping out a flourishing town. The money-power is in such hands and the state power too. Poverty and ignorance, fear and misery are the lot of the common man. Love and mercy have taken leave of the hardhearted man who kills human beings to glut his worldly ambition. This dangerous condition must be changed. Nations must live in the harmony of the equal Spirit like limbs in the body. Humanity must be reborn in spiritual consciousness. The human life must progress from impurity to purity, from vital slavery to real freedom, from divisions to equality, from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to Light and from falsehood to Truth. The shadow of misery must be chased off.

We read Moliere and Shakespeare in the vital intrigues of human relations. Man must see man as the equal soul. Then who is to hate whom? Who is to cheat whom? A natural fellowship shall then be established in the human consciousness. To achieve this harmony is the supreme mission of our Life. Can we achieve these dreams in this age of I. C B. M.?

But courage! There is hope! No despair! Think of the Pure Almighty Power that plays as life, as the soul, as the universe of beings and becomings. See the wonderful sky above and the mystic sea below. See how the rain clouds are woven by the solar rays. See how the sun and rain and wind and ether build this colourful existence. Know the electronic powers generated from the infinite sky. Your human inventions shall be impossible without the mystic power releasing energy from above. See how tranquil, silent, and calm Mother Nature is, in obeying That Almighty Power. Would you live such a peaceful and harmonious life? Would you walk towards your spiritual destiny even like those stellar bodies marching towards the dawn? Be conscious of the Pure Grace that animates your being and be a pilgrim of love and service tending towards Truth-Light. As you go on, you will know the PURE ONE who breathes in your life, throbs in your heart, thinks in your brain, sees in your eyes, hears in your ear, feels in your senses, and acts in your being. When I ask you who you are, it is that **PURE ENTITY** which answers from your heart "I am so and so". It is the soul in the individual. It is the maker and re-maker and saviour of the Universe. It is the Universal Divine. It is the soul in man and Nature in the universe. Beyond the Soul and Nature it is the transcendent unattached Supreme Purity. As Sat (Existence) it is the Truth as it is. As Chit (Consciousness) it is the Universe. As Ananda (Bliss) it is the play of life in the world of beings. It is the Pure Truth Consciousness Bliss-Shuddha Satchidananda Shakti.

Meditate for a minute upon this Pure One, whose infinite power is everything here and there. Repeat now the mantra Aum Shuddha Shakti Aum!

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Realise, realise; realisation is religion, not bell-ringing ceremonies! You are a spiritual pilgrim; the Pure Inner Divine is your goal. The heart is your sanctum; The Soul is your Self; psychic consciousness is your friend and guide. Pure intellect is your torch; you have the physical, vital, mental, intellectual, over-mind, super-mind and the bliss planes to ascend and transcend before you reach the PURE ALMIGHTY ONE. There are dangers on the way. Your mind is a dividing principle of nebulous thoughts and desires. You have to struggle through its gloomy vaults and rugged steeps. The vital egoism is a brutal tiger. It will swallow your peace and calmness. A stormy lust, a violent anger, a tumultuous passion, a jealous fit may smash off your creation and sweep off your hopes! The 'I' and 'MINE' may swallow you like a crocodile. Vanity may unbalance your serenity. Despair not! There is hope! Aspire, call, pray, concentrate, contemplate, meditate, study holy books, have holy company, worship holy saints, seek constantly within in calm silence and solitude. Purity of food, drink, raiment, talk, walk, sleep; purity of thought, action, purity of love, knowledge and communion; purity of heart and brain, body and nerves and selfless service to humanity are the essential helps to God-realisation.

God is the highest purity: Do good to fellow beings, God is there. When you are completely pure in and out, in thought, word and action, you feel a serene peace, a Self-satisfaction, a mystic exultation of life. The senses slowly sink into the mind, the mind into the heart, the heart feels a divine touch, the embrace of the Pure One. Then meditation comes to you naturally. As it deepens, you feel an equilibrium of force operating in you like a dynamo. That is called the Gnostic Force. It is the magnetic force in you that links the life with the Soul and the Soul with the Pure One. As you go on with meditation, this gnostic consciousness develops into psychic peace and that generates a blissful current in your plexus. This is called Shuddhakaram, Brahmakaram or Mula Shakti. The force goes up to the cerebral region and by intense trance develops into a flame of Pure Bliss. That is the Shuddha Shakti or the Pure Almighty Power and That keeps you conscious of the **PURE ONE**, God. This is Realisation. To build up the universal life upon this spiritual realisation is Spiritual socialism. Spiritual Socialism envisages one world for one humanity conscious of one God in the heart. A Spiritual Socialist is a Sama yogin who sees the equal soul in all. He develops in him the valour of Rama, yoga of Krishna, compassion of Buddha, patience of Jesus, fervour of Muhammad, truth and sacrifice of Gandhiji. His life is a synthesis of the Gita, Bible, Dhamma-pada and Al-Koran. Gandhi and Einstein, Ramana and Edison, Sivaji and Ramdas, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda must unite in one body to realise our ideal of a dynamic spiritual race. The life of collective humanity must be an immortal garland of devout hearts held together by the pure spiritual consciousness. Man and woman must live like the two currents of a battery in yoga with the inner Divine. East and West must unite like soul and body. Then shall wars cease. Then Asia shall be the light and Europe and America, the battery. Asia must regain its spiritual hegemony. For this we want a dynamic centre. Pure souls must be trained there in yoga and seva, meditation and service, and sent abroad to create many such centres everywhere. Come all, do your bit; show your generosity by substantial help. Rise, spiritual Flame! Rise up Atmic Fire; the atomic blast shall not prevail; the asuric weapons shall rust in negligence if the Divine Purity possesses nations and transforms their heart and brain. The Light of the East embraces the dynamic West. East and West shake hands in amity and live in purity, unity, liberty, equality and divinity of the inner Spirit. Awake, arise and achieve! Prosper all..."

97. UNITY TOURS

S was well-known to Indians, Chinese, Malays and Europeans; he spoke of One humanity and One world and so all people attended his lectures and the European officers took pride in presiding over them. His life and teachings were published in the Chinese

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language. So the Chinese flocked to his gatherings in large numbers. The Buddhist Associations gave him special welcome. Kuala Lumpur, Seramban, Johore, Singapore, Kuluan, Batu Pahad, Muar, Malacca, Segamat, Kuala Fila, Port Dixon, Negiri, Klang, Kuala Lingat, Selangor, Bukit Bintang, Bentang, Sitiawan, Telok Anson, Tanjon Malim, Perak, Batang Padang, Batu Gaja, Swettenham, Pera, Selatan, Kuala Kanjar, Ulu Kinta, Ipoh, Sungeisi Put, Kulim, Penang, Dato Kramat, Sungei Patani, Kedha, Alor Star, Langkaw, Perlis Kota Baru, Dungun, Taiping, Kemaman, Kuantan, Peckan and many other places were visited by the pilgrim. He had interviews with the sultans of Selangor, Seramban, Ipoh, Perak, Penang etc. He joined in prayer Muslims, Christians, Buddhists and Hindus. He had a fruitful interview with Sir Gerald Templar, the High Commissioner on May 14th, 1952 in the King's House. He explained to him Spiritual Socialism as a remedy for the ills of humanity. He assured that the 5000 rebels shall be won back by proper education and economic redress. It is hunger that rebels. Poverty must be liquidated, small-scale industries and good education must be given to children and adults. The Indians have made Malaya fertile by their labour and they must be given proper representation. Templar was very much pleased with the Yogi and his speeches and ordered two lorries of soldiers to guard him safely in those troubled times when he dared through hills and forests.

S addressed Rotary clubs on Internationalism. "Man is a social being. Equality of vision, unity of consciousness, and harmony of living—these are promoted by social gatherings. We must think and act in terms of humanity and universality. The individual must be universalised" said he.

The biggest meeting was organised in the Singapore Town Hall by the citizens of that international city and a grand address was given to him by the Mayor. Sri Malcolm Macdonald presided over the function. His words about the Pilgrim Yogi could not be forgotten: "He is a man with a rich assorted array of high gifts and achievements. Few men have played so many valuable parts in one short lifetime. As scholar and teacher, poet and prophet, saint and spiritual magnate, he has that manysided genius which we, in the West associate with the leaders of great Renaissant movements. He is one of the outstanding figures of India's Renaissance today."

UNITY OF RELIGIONS IN YOGA

S spoke for three hours at 100 words speed on the Unity of Religions. A few points from the lecture can be quoted here. The same was delivered in the World Religious Conference too (Visva Dharma Sammelanam in the Red Fort, New Delhi).

"We are living in a period of transition in the history of humanity when the old traditions are giving way to the impetus for the creation of one world and one humanity. The forces of harmony dormant in the heart of humanity are being rekindled by the Time Spirit. The Awakened Spirit of humanity transcends all differences of caste, creed, dogmatic faiths and religions, races and colours. It rings out the old and rings in the new dawn of universal felicity. This is an era of yoga and hence we see yogins like Sri Aurobindo and Ramana and Sivananda. Religion links the heart with the soul. Yoga enables us to establish inner communion with the Divine in the heart. Religion has a Saviour, a book, a preacher, a temple or church and a hell or heaven with a series of tedious ceremonies. Yoga directly unites heart with the inner Divine and establishes life in the Divine Consciousness. Religion grows around personalities. Yoga is impersonal. It concerns with the soul, God and the psychic love that unites both. Religions have divided humanity into opposite camps. Yoga unites all souls in the Unique One. It is the binding force of united living. You can belong only to one religion. If you are A, B will not agree with you. Yoga can be practised anywhere under the sky. You can be a yogin and live in harmony with all Godmen. There is no barrier of religion, caste or sex in yoga. All Godmen were yogins. They lived in inner communion with the Divine to serve humanity.

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Godmen came to liberate humanity from wrong living. All of them have agreed upon a standard of moral purity and inner worship of Truth. The human heart is yet dark and only a Light can remove the gloom. Science has worked material wonders. The brain of man has invented marvellous things from radio to the sputnik. But the brute in man uses today nuclear forces for murderous conquests. Human politics ends in homicide and his science ends in patricide. His economics exploits others and his religion divides and disrupts peace. The struggle for existence is armed with hydrogen bombs. We have seen the hideous ruins of the last war and a third war is fuming with nuclear flashes. Separative egoism allied with jealous competition rouses the War Demon into action. This is the hour to mobilise forces of Peace and love to solve the international riddle. Mind and heart must unite in psychic love with the loving soul. This union is Yoga.

The heart of Buddha, the brain of Shankara, the will of Aurobindo, the peace of Ramana, the fervour of Rasul, the sacrifice of Christ, the Yoga of Krishna, the heroism of Rama, the devotion of Hanuman, the emotion of Chaitanya and the patience of St. Francis must unite together with the intelligence of Edison and Einstein to make life a complete success. An inner concord of hearts and steady peace of the head can reform the world quickly and stop wars and turmoils. Yoga alone can achieve this. Concord is yoga. It is the force of objective living in subjective consciousness. The fingers are different in form and name: but they unite when you pick up a thing. Limbs are united in the body. Ports are many, the sea is one, trees are many, the garden is one; countries are many, the world is one; nations are many; humanity is one; Religions are many. Reality is one. We are many here; but our purpose is one—to find the spiritual link between religions. See this typewriter. The keys are many, but they strike at the one centre. So united in the heart, we can live as one humanity. We can live as one collective body in the soul. One electric current shines in the bulb, sings in the radio, heats the stove, cools the frigidaire, warms the air, turns the fan. Even so, one spiritual current moves as life in the lungs, thought in the brain, sight in the eyes, sound in the ear and soul in the life. By meditation we can see the One in the human aggregate and build up one peaceful humanity in one world conscious of the Unique One. This was the vision of prophets of religions and that vision is the mission of yoga.

Questions were answered and practical hints were given to aspirants in Yoga. Next day Macdonald invited S for a dinner and spoke many interesting things on the world situation and India. Nehruji stayed in the same bungalow as host to Louis Mount Battan and India's freedom was decided there. Macdonald was a perfect gentleman. He gave the pilgrim useful hints on Japan.

S opened a Tamil School at Singapore and encouraged Tamilians to cultivate their mother tongue. The Singapore Buddhist Association and the Chinese Association invited him. He spoke at length on the Light of Asia and to the Chinese, on the life and teachings of Konfutsu and Leotsu. Here is the substance of a lecture before a big audience of Chinese. He was invited to Canton and Peking by his Chinese friends.

98. LIGHTS OF CHINA

China gave the world two great sages in Leo-t-su and Kung-fut-Su. Leo was a born sage, 53 years older than Kung. He was born grey. He was employed in the So Palace and learnt wisdom by observing the world and human manners. He kept an eerie silence in an atmosphere green with envy and red with political intrigues. It conspired against his introspective life. Hence he fled away to the Gobi desert uttering some words of intuition to one of his intimates.

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The sage of silence saw one day a brilliant youth before him. He was Kung. He came full of doubts. He demanded, "Master, the World of Nature is beautiful but its life ugly. How to reform the world and humanity?" "My dear son, reform yourself first. See the sky above. From its silence stars blossom; the sun rises and the rains fall. Be like that majestic sky in contemplation." "How can I attain peace? Fly into solitude..."

But Kung did not want to run away from the world of Nature smiling green and gold under a wonderful starry canopy. He lived an ideal life and strived to create an ideal social order. To know about man and life was more important to him than to know about God and heaven. Leo taught in his Teo-te-king: "He who overcomes others is strong; he who overcomes himself is mighty. The entire world surrenders to a mind that is still and silent." Leo was like a mountain lake of lofty peace. Kung was like a stream of virtue which cherished life.

Kung was brought up by his mother Ching with an affectionate care. She told him the story of great saints and heroes. Kung says in his Analets "At fifteen my mind was bent on learning. At thirty I stood firm. At forty I was free from doubts. At fifty I understood the Supreme Will. At 60 my ears were receptive of Truth. At 70, I followed my heart and conscience. Great men seek within; and small men look to others. I contemplated and became pure in thought, word and deed. I developed Jen, social virtues". Kung mastered Chinese literature. He cultivated social efficiency. He founded an academy at 20 and trained young men in moral virtues and literature. "Think more than you read; speak less than you know; add experience to knowledge; be slow to say and quick to act; realise goodness in actual life. Act what you profess." These are some of his instructions to his students.

Kung was a loyal citizen. Sympathy is man itself. He had wide sympathy for the people who were suffering from the tyranny of an oppressive Government which was worse than a forest of tigers. Kung managed to become the Governor of Chung-Tu state. He restored healthy administration and social harmony. He advised women to obey their husbands. He made men live by honest trade. He kept labour above want. His heart throbbed for the multitude. He distributed the state revenue for public benefactions. He led a very simple life and gave liberally to the poor. The state grew strong under his regime.

But jealous Jagos and the insolent rich plotted against Kung. Cunning courtiers conspired. They enticed the Duke with fair damsels and corrupted the court-life. Kung's wisdom could not prevail over evil. With tears in his eyes, he ran into solitude and wandered for thirteen years. He rejected even the pension offered by the Duke and suffered chill penury. "With coarse rice to eat and water to drink and my bent arm for a pillow, I am joyful. Riches and honour acquired by unrighteousness are like floating clouds" said the political sage. The superman is superman even under trying conditions. The Lu ruler died and his dutiful son recalled Kung to be the minister. He was now seventy. He could not waste his time in politics. He repaired into a peaceful valley. He remembered the words of Leo and spent his last five years in contemplation and writing and teaching his disciples. He cautiously recorded his sayings and wrote a big historical work. They have immortalised him now.

The last days of Kung were spent in utter disappointment and solitude. None recognised his greatness. He breathed his last saying "None knows me." His body was buried in a hill forest and a statue stands there in his memory and China mourns there his death for three days each year.

The Analets of Kung were translated in French and they influenced the French Revolution. Rousseau read them. Kung says in his Analets:

"Elect men of virtue as administrators. People must love others like themselves sincerely. None shall store things selfishly in vain. Everything shall be utilised for the common good. Everyone must exert and enjoy. Examine yourself whenever you fail in your action. Be true to yourself. Do not be sorry if people know you not. Rule yourself and develop

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knowledge. See how heaven works and seasons march!” Great Kung! He lived alone, unrecognised and his books have become universal laws of life. He lives today in all of us.

99. PAPERS WROTE

The Singapore University requested S to open the philosophical section. S opened and delivered a lecture on THE PHILOSOPHIC CULTURE.

The professors of the University honoured him.

The papers of Malaya wrote brilliant leaders commenting favourably his views of One World and One Humanity and spiritual socialism:

“Yogiji is a true ambassador of India. Thousands have been ennobled by his divine personality, by his prayers and meditations. He has rekindled divine consciousness in thousands. He has made his life a practical example to others. He is a practical Guru. He met all types of people from the high heads of administration and leaders of the people down to little school children, orphans and destitutes. He addressed meetings of all types, religious, cultural, and cosmopolitan. He visited educational, religious and cultural institutions of all communities in this land and spoke on practically everything under the sun—politics, science, philosophy, economics, yoga, health and what not. He proved by his example that a yogi is not a mystery monger. By simple examples he drove home rare truths. For example he compared various religions to the keys of a typewriter striking at one and the same place, the same goal. Unity is natural and division unnatural—says he. His message shall ring in Malayan ears for ever and ever as a constant reminder of his historic visit”. (Indian Daily Mail).

“The Yogi is a very cultural, decent holy man”(Mr. Hawkins)

“He is a dynamic talker with a lively wit. He points out the points of similarities between religions without stressing on differences. His spiritual socialism breaks down the barriers between one race and another.”(Straits Times)

“The Yogi spoke on the Bible and Humanity” in the Y.M.C.A. Hall which was thickly packed. Many had to stand. The yogi in ochre clothes with a walking stick entered the hall which rose joyously to welcome him. He urged people to work for the uplift of humanity with a missionary spirit. He put forth a programme of service which he fulfilled. He maintained that the Cross is the best symbol of sacrifice for all humanity. He aspired to train yoga missionaries for the service of humanity all over the world. Mr.A.B.Samuel paid him high tribute. (Malaya Mail.)

The Yogi spoke in the Buddhist Temple, Singapore, on the Light of Asia. “Faith in oneself and compassion were the basic virtues of Buddhism” he said. These virtues will promote individual welfare as well as international peace. He urged the unity of all schools of Buddhism towards the building up of a united humanity. (Indian Daily Mail)

Kuala Lumpur Town Hall was packed with crowd. A large number had to wait outside. The Yogi spoke on the Gospel of Service in English. He repeated his talk in Tamil for the audience standing outside, a second time. The British Adviser Mr. Ross presided. Immediately after that, he addressed the audience in the Chinese Hall Assembly on Kung Futzu. Dato Cheng Lock presided. (Malaya Mail)

In Seramban S stayed in Dr. Tara Singh’s house and held prayer meetings. Hindi songs were sung. Addressing the Sikhs in Hindi, he said: “Have Nanak in the heart and the Gobind in life.” Mr. B. H. Tan welcomed him grandly in the Rotary club and Town Hall overcrowded with eager listeners of all communities. S addressed with demonstrations on Yoga For Health. He prescribed many varieties of vitamin food for health. He spoke on One Humanity in the Rotary club. At Malacca, he addressed a large cultured audience on

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The Riddle of Existence. His speech was translated into Chinese, and Malaya languages. Dato Cheng Lock Tan presided. The Victoria memorial Hall meeting in Singapore made history. The meeting was organised by the Inter Religious Organisation. Mr. Macdonald presided. Mr. Pakkiriswamy J.P. read the welcome address. S spoke on the Vedic, Zorastrian, Buddhist, Jain, Christian, Islamic and Sikh religions and synthesised all in yoga which is a psychic science common to all. The Commissioner General appreciated the speech and invited S to his residence for a lunch. He spoke in the British Council Hall on science and yoga. He answered intricate questions put by the Chinese audience. One learned man remarked “Without yoga, I can get trance by a peg of whisky” S replied “the whisky trance tells at a glance it is all dance of brain out of sense ... yogic trance is a delight full of light, day and night. Whisky is a curse that empties your purse”...All clapped hands, Dato Wan Shee Fun welcomed him in the Capital Theatre of Johur Barru: Mr. Justice Paul Storr presided. He said “the words of S were well tuned to the Time Spirit.” Purity of thought, word and deed is the essence of all religions. Purity of heart is the basis of all. Think thoughts that will lead you God-ward. Speak words that unite humanity and not divide them. Do deeds that do good to all. God and good are one. Consider the soul values of things. Love with your soul, the soul of your neighbour. Serve others as if you serve God in man.” spoke S (Tamil Murasu).

100. AT PENANG

S flew to Penang from Singapore with Swami Satyanandaji. Dr. C. H. Yeang, Theosophists, members of the Chamber of Commerce, Hindu Sabha, and local leaders welcomed him. The Han Chiang Chinese Hall was packed to the full. S spoke on the heart of Buddha and the brain of modern scientists. He gave a vivid picture of scientists and their achievements, and yogins and their fulfilments: “We must unite in the soul. The world must become One or none. Man must live with man in cordial love. A pure heart ennoble the mind. We can see a new era of dynamic peace and spiritual bliss raised to the height of cosmic consciousness. Humanity is shattered into opposite camps by vital egoism and divided mentality. The heart of the Buddha must unite with the brain of Einstein to create a healthy international amity. The dynamic West must unite with the spiritual East. East and West are the systole and diastole of new humanity”. (Tamil Nesan).

S held daily yoga classes in Dr. Yeang’s bungalow. He visited the surrounding villages with Dr. Toon Lok and Swamiji. He laid the foundation of a big Orphanage in the name of Ramakrishna. Dr. Yeang colour filmed all his tour activities and so Mr. Periaswami. His speeches and songs were recorded by the same. He was honoured by the Tamils in Tannirmalai Temple where he addressed the audience on Indians in Malaya. He requested the merchants of the Tamil Nad to start schools and purchase tin mines and rubber gardens from the temple funds. In Alor Star Assembly Hall, S addressed Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Buddhists on **Yoga For All**. He described how Buddha, Rasul, Jesus and Vedic saints got intuition by meditation. The heart is the fulcrum of the being. We want a yoga of the heart, a religion of psychic love in which there is no barrier of sect and creed. The Muslim audience put him many questions which he suitably answered to their full satisfaction. They gave him a special welcome. At their sincere request, S gave a lively picture of the Islamic Republic set up by Mohammad in Medina.

At Nibong Tebal, Dr. Sunil Kumar welcomed him and S spoke to the masses on “This Side and that Side of the Vindyas.” He pointed out how the heart of the Vedic Rishis mingled with the vision of the South Indian Sages. At Sungei Patani, thousands gathered to hear S and he addressed them on the Problems of Life and How to solve them. He taught a song to the masses. The grand reception at Taiping by the masses and the classes moved

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the heart of S. Brigadier H.A. Stone garlanded S. Many aspirants from Perak state attended the meeting in the big Hokkien Hoay Kuan Hall. Many Englishmen and Chinese were in the assembly. S addressed the Tamil audience on the beauties of Tamil Literature. Dr. Markandu was his host. The whole Sittiawan estate gathered in an overflowing crowd to welcome him in the Chinese Hall. The devotees of the Ding Ding Estates received him with loud ovations. S addressed the vast gathering before the Gandhi School on The Maxims of Valluvar and the Laws of Life. He sang many songs which appealed to the masses. Dr. Menon was his loving host at Dingding and Sittiawan and he requested the Pilgrim to write this book and publish it. The noble doctor lives in this book. S visited Pangor Island in a boat and entertained the friendly gathering with his spiritual Songs. The Ding Ding Hindu Sabha presented him with an illumined address. He spoke there on One Religion for all—the religion of Love.

Passing through many invitations on the way, S and party reached IPOH. The grandest reception was organised there by Mr. R.S. Sivam with music and dances and temple honours. Boys and girls marched along the road singing his songs. Mr. W. G. Scott garlanded him and the territorial chief of Kinta, Mr. Dato Haji Eusuff, read the address. On the way he laid the foundation of the Gandhi Memorial School at Sungeisiput. It has become a big institution now. S presided over its second anniversary.

Friends organised a very big gathering of all the teachers of the Kinta Dt. and S gave them a model lesson through his River Song. While he was in Ipoh six communists were shot. The Govt gave S a military escort.

The grand Public Meeting at Ipoh was attended by a large number of Englishmen, Muslims and Chinese. S spoke out of inspiration; The heart is the fountain of psychic love. There is an inner science to develop it. The material science treats about the elemental powers from earth to electrons. The inner science deals with the infinite psychic powers. It goes beyond the elements, beyond the matter, beyond the body, vital and mind. It touches the Spirit which is the divine entity in man. Spirit is the Master of our being, it is beyond the gross and subtle bodies. There is an Almighty Power behind the Spirit. It is the quintessence of beings. Egoism impedes the heart from its consciousness. Egoism is the iron curtain that stands between man and God, between man and man. Egoism is the Satan that drags and tempts the soul hell-ward. It must be conquered by a broad-minded psychic Love. We can't know a mountain by sitting at its foot and saying we know everything. We must climb high just as we climb the Penang Hill and the grand Buddhist temple there. We must reach the top and drink the fountain of Knowledge and see how that fountain flows into a songful stream to feed lives and fields. We can't know a river by dreaming on its bank. We must plunge in and swim and bathe in it. We must mingle with humanity soul to soul. See God in Nature. See Nature in your body and God in your souls; see the same in all. Then forget your caste-creed-mentality and remember the unique One that is all and all-in-all. The evolution of humanity is progressing towards this universal vision of One in all and one world for all.

In Tapah a grand prayer meeting was held and a public meeting attended by many Europeans. S spoke on the East shaking Hands with the West. In a very large gathering in Kwanton, under the presidency of Mr Griffiths, S spoke on The Equilibrium of Universal Forces. Next day he addressed the Indian audience on India and the World.

Thus throughout Malaya he travelled calling people to unite and march together towards the dawn of One World. In Kuala Lumpur he addressed a number of meetings in temples, Vivekananda Saba, Tamil Associations and Ladies clubs and the Vegetarian Association. He organised an All Malaya Siddhanta Conference and published many books. His speeches came out in printing. He addressed labourers in a mammoth meeting at Port Swettenham where he saw the Indian war ships. His songs dedicated to toilers were printed

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and circulated by the labour associations. He visited the Rubber Institutes and gardens and saw the process of making rubber sheets. The European officers gave him a fruit and milk feast. He visited the very big Leper Colony in Sentul and Surrenda. The lepers managed the colony ably. His address in Port Dixon and his address in the Chinese Psychology Club attracted the Chinese. They attended in large numbers his yoga classes.

Enough ... Let us close this chapter by giving a few lines from one or two of the innumerable addresses presented to him. They were a shipload and S returned many and left the rest in the Shuddha Samaj. He did not touch a single pie and everything went to the Pure Life Society. His words have come out in book form and there is no need of reproducing them here.

WELCOME WORDS

“Our welcome to the Yogi is a united one from all communities of this cosmopolitan country, and our reception committee is an international one. This is as it should be, for, our highly esteemed Yogi does not claim to belong to one sect, race, language, creed or country, but to the whole world and to humanity. His conception of life and all those attributes of man which make life sublime, are not limited by considerations of egoism in the least. He speaks as if he belongs to the whole world—a firm unwavering believer in the brotherhood of man. He has made his life a service to his fellow-men both in his native land and outside it. He is the greatest among the distinguished men that have visited this country. His divine talks and holy presence cannot fail to influence the people and urge them to higher and nobler aims of life. People are delighted to see him and receive his blessings. (IPOH).

We welcome you as one of the long unbroken lines of saints, prophets and sages who are a mighty testimony of the truth of the scriptures and of the existence of God in us. It is certainly the greatest historical event for Malaysia that your Holiness has by the Divine Command, come to our doorsteps in order that our hearts may be uplifted and our lives and our spiritual horizon may be transformed. In your selflessness and universal love, you have come to embrace us all irrespective of race, colour, creed, in divine communion. O Guru, give us that magic touch so that the higher powers and possibilities of our soul may be quickened, our spiritual lives awakened, our growth animated to the end that we may become holy and perfect. (Penang)

101. CULTURAL SERVICE

The further visits to Malaysia were of cultural and spiritual importance. Satyananda died in a ghastly car accident and Sister Mangalam wired for the patron. S hurried from Tokyo to Kuala Lumpur on the 6th July, 1961. Loving friends greeted him in the airport and took him to the Shuddha Samaj. His eyes were wet with tears of bereavement as he entered the orphaned society and laid a wreath upon the remains of Satyananda. S communed with his Spirit and found it still hovering about the Inner Communion Hall which was to be opened by S. He stayed in the same room where Swamiji stayed and spent his hours in helping the President as the Patron of the P. L. S. Mangalam looked after him like a real sister. The citizens of Malaya gave him a stirring Welcome Address in the Dharma Hall under the presidency of Dato Sambandam. They extolled his erudition, spiritual attainments and his mission of One Humanity and One World. Old and new friends arranged conferences in various places and there were constant meetings of the P.L.S, too. Here is a consolidated report of his lectures and activities reported in the Dailies of Malaysia.

“The Yogi writes more than he speaks, and meditates more than he writes. His mission is to awaken love and soul-conscious unity and harmony. He is now touring the country and addressing large gatherings of devotees. He is a linguist, poet, scholar, a

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master of the Spiritual Science, a Prophet of One Humanity. The Yogi lives in God and sees God in humanity. He has unravelled the mystery of human existence. His ringing voice and powerful words spark out wisdom which goes direct to our hearts.

He spoke thus before an audience welcoming him in the P.L.S. Society: “We have gathered here with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow—joy for the continuance of his work and sorrow for the fateful loss of the hero of the P.L.S. We cannot forget him who has created this Orphanage, this Dharm, a Institute, the press, the journal and has managed the Satyananda School for adults. I am here to do my best for the P.L.S as its patron. I have come again to establish here the nucleus of one humanity. My realisations have taken shape here. Satyananda lives as long as the ideal is alive in the P.L.S. I can settle here and expand the scope of this institution, if the committee needs my services. I have an idea to utilise the New Line buildings for a Polytechnical School where twenty industries can be started and machine tools can be manufactured and the elderly students of the S.H. School trained in mechanical engineering. I have an idea to expand the press and print my works here and dedicate the income to the P.L.S. All my institutions in India are run by the sweat of my sleepless pen. The school can be raised to the college level where we can impart academic, technical and spiritual education. An agricultural farm can be raised here and the farm products utilised to feed our children. An art section must be opened to train chosen students in painting, sculpture, music, dance and drama. We can hold art festivals during the holidays and collect funds for the P.L.S. We have to train workers and Pure Life missionaries and teachers too. Yoga camp can be held in the Communion Hall during the month of May and aspirants can be trained as missionaries of Spiritual Socialism. I am carrying on these activities in India.”

The Yogi laid the foundation for the new Satyananda School (the building is now complete) on the same day, opened the grand Inner Communion Hall and held a mass-prayer. Both the functions were done with Vedic ceremonies. He taught songs to the children of the Samaj and conducted the morning and the evening prayers and sermons and Havans on Sundays. He held spiritual camps wherever he went. He attended to the press work, edited the journal ‘Dharma.’

He presided over the anniversaries of the Gandhi Memorial School, Sungeisiput and Ramakrishna Orphanage Penang which had developed enormously since he laid their foundations ten years before.

He was welcomed all over Malaya as before and he addressed big meetings in the Town Halls of Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Sungeisiput, Penang, George town, Rangar, Bentang, Tapah, Telukansan, Taiping, Sitthiawan, Bukit Mertajam, Frizer Hill, Port Dixon, Swettenham, Malacca, Johur, Seramban, Killang, Singapore — etc. He visited temples, churches, mosques, Buddha mandirs and spiritual centres and addressed meetings on the unique Religion of the Heart. He gave thirty speeches on the Singapore Radio (thanks to Mr. Arasu) and recorded the whole of the Gita, Upanishads and the Yoga Siddhi. An influential committee was formed to organise his tours and lectures and Yoga Camps. Dr.Lulla Sarangapani, Nanvani, Govindaswami Pillai, Pakkirsami Pillai, Dr. Ch. Yeang, Toon Lok, Periasami, V. M. Sundaram, S. Padma Narayanan, S. Natarajan, Oorjitam, M. K. S. Mani, Vijaya Ratnam, Doraiappa, Katnam, Haji Din bin Ali, Vachakam, Paramalingam, Dato Zeinel, Dato Sambandam, and Datin Uma and Mani Iyer took active part in arranging his programmes. He addressed the Tagore Centenary meeting held in the Tunku Hall, Kuala Lumpur. He had interviews with ministers like Aziz and the great premier, Tunku Abdul Rahman, beloved of all the communities of Malaya. S learnt a bit of the Malaya language. Malaya Mail, Penang Gazette, Singapore Papers and Straits Times, Tamil Murasu and the Tamil Nesan gave him wide publicity. His life and teachings were printed and circulated by Dr. Lulla whose sincerity and large hearted help shall ever be

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remembered and he is the founder of the Yoga Samaj, Singapore. Similarly the large-hearted Rangaswami Pillai of Penang stood his host and helped him a good deal. R. S. Sivam, Labour Officer, Johur arranged a very grand reception for S. He visited Yoga Samaj recently on his way home from London!...

His songs were sung by the artists of the Bhaskar Studio. S took an active part in the Divine Life Society functions and conducted Vedic prayers and sermons. Swami Pranavananda, always dear to him, helped him a good deal. Here are a few sentences from the 100 lectures delivered by the Yogi all over Malasiya:

“I find no xenophobia in Malaya and hence I declare this country as the best centre to receive the seed of World Harmony. Everyone speaks of one humanity; but that can be achieved only when you love your neighbour as yourself and serve him sincerely. Humanity is One nation; it lives in one world under one sky. Narrow differences come only when you bring caste, religion, language and regional sectarianism and personality cults into the fold of one Humanity living inside the encirclement of one horizon. I travel by Air Malaya which takes me to Ports of Penang, Malacca, Singapore, Seramban and Kotabaru. Thousands of friends welcome me. But I find one Soul in every heart mingling with my expanding soul and it is that soul that comes to you throbbing with love. This love in the soul mingling with love in all souls, is the fountain of joy, peace and harmony. Man has not yet found this harmony in the soul. Nations live in walled selfishness afraid of one another. A is suspicious of B and demands passports and travel documents. Sectarian walls have shattered the peace of the horizon-wide universe. The fear of wars increase everyday and science has forged weapons of mass killing. Man fought with bows and arrows, swords and guns in the past centuries. Now he fights with atomic missiles which can reduce town after town to ashes. The War mania increases day by day. Russia and America try to open colonies in the Moon and Mars, at an enormous expense of the people’s money. Even then human psychology will not change. The heart must meet soul-to-soul in inner communion. This is otherwise called yoga and yoga is the unique remedy for the ills of mankind—the yoga of collective life in the purity, unity and divinity of spiritual consciousness. Be conscious of the Soul in all and you can feel one with all.”

S lived in the solitude of the Frazer Hill for a week. Padma–Narayan served him sincerely. S wrote there the Lights on Better Life. Narayan printed it later on. The Lights on Better Life contains the substance of all his various talks and answers for several questions.

Sister Mangalam gave him an impressive farewell and the elite of Malaya made speeches appreciating his services. Singapore friends arranged a very grand meeting in the Victoria Hall and gave him a hearty sendoff.

The Pilgrim, tuned the Song of Inner Awakening and took leave.

Wake up, wake up, wake up, within,
Wake up to love and faith !
Wake up to psychic life serene
Wake up to wider Truth!...
Be conscious of the Divine Grace
That removes mental tears
Behold, there the beaming face
That foils human fears.
Linger not between yes or no
Believe and bow to Truth!
March on forward, brave, hero!

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The path is straight and smooth !
The night of dark despair is gone
The grief is gone and pain—
Behold in sight, the lovely dawn
Which brings us Bliss again!...

IN BANGKOK

The Pilgrim set out to see South East Asia. In Bangkok, he saw the condition of the whole Asia. The politics of S.E.A. was dominated by U.S.A. and the commerce by the Chinese. Communists were working secretly. Bangkok, Saigon, Jagarta etc. were very fertile places influenced by the Ramayana Culture. In the Emerald Buddha Temple located on the grounds of the royal palace, Ramayana scenes are portrayed on the walls exquisitely by coloured murals. We meet there hundreds of orange-robed Buddha-Bikkus living upon alms and repeating the scriptural lines. Every morning at six, you can see armies of these ascetics going into streets with their wooden bowls, into which family people pour food piously. These Bikkus can travel free in cars and buses anywhere. They learn Pali and Sanskrit in which the Pitakas have been written. S gave three lectures in the Thailand Buddhist Association along with the inseparable companion, Swami Satyananda. It was there that S decided to attend the Second World Buddhist Conference held in Tokyo. The Penang Chinese friends got them the necessary permission to represent as delegates, their views in the Buddhist conference.

Thailand is under a military rule. The Siamese love their king, klongs (canals) and chao thi (house spirits). The king has no political power but he commands the love and loyalty of the people who adore his picture. The king alone has got the right to change the gem-encrusted robes of Buddha thrice a year. Bangkok abounds in magnificent temples, palaces, posh hotels, skyscrapers and monasteries. There are almost 34000 wats (temples) and monasteries in Thailand with about 2,50,000 monks attached to them. Even Govt. officials take it a privilege to enter temporary monkhood for a few months. Wat Arun (Temple of the Dawn) has a central tower 260 ft high. Every home adores its Spirit in a tiny shrine within its compound.

The land is greened by the great Chao Paya river and its tributaries and we can see floating markets on the bigger canals. The population of Thailand is 3.5 crores out of which 10 lakhs are muslims and 1.5 lakhs Christians; the rest are Bhuddhists. Muang Thai, (free Thailand) was never a foreign colony. The colourful classical dances of Thailand are a feast for eyes. Many friends invited S to their homes. They were sweet, gentle, obliging, polite and charming. The artful Thai, dances still before his eyes in bright golden flashes.

Bangkok Bharat Cultural League lodged them in their spacious mansion. Most of its members were Punjabis. S did Havan and spoke to them on the Vedic Culture and Civilisation. S spoke for thirty minutes in the Rotary Club. The elite of the town attended his lecture. He also addressed the Siamese Association on Ramayana of Kamban which they liked very much. The minister and prince of Thailand invited him for a party. They wear a black cloth in the Indian fashion. They like Sanskrit and the Thai language has more than 50% Sanskrit words. They have a typewriter for their language. Prince Dhani Nivat and Phye Arluman (a great scholar and journalist) became his intimate friends. S put before them the famine conditions of India and demanded rice from that land of luxurious yield. He also saw the ambassador of India who attended his lectures. The ambassador of Indonesia visited him and invited him to his country. The museum of Bangkok is full of beautiful Buddistic collections. There is an admixture of Tamil and Sanskrit culture in their manners and customs. A tour in Siam, Anam, Cambodia and Indonesia revealed the influence of Sanskrit and Indian culture upon S. E. Asia.

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S returned to Singapore. An astrologer tried to prevent him from going to Japan. But S and S boldly went forward.

102. PROGRESSIVE JAPAN

S and S took off from the Singapore Airport to Japan. The B.O.A.C. flew with fluttering speed. In the plane, were representatives to the Peking Conference. He had a talk with one who spoke French. But spies watched the communist representatives. The plane brought into view the fertile beauty of the Asiatic countries on the way. In Saigon, S heard about the strong fight put forth by Hochimin against the puppet-King installed by the French. The Vietnam war was fuming. The revolutionaries got all help from Red China. The plane had to struggle through a heavy storm in the China Sea. The crew were afraid and the captain gave out lifebelts and explained to them, how to escape. But S kept on writing his Tunes of Self-Delight invoking God's Grace and thanks to that Almighty Grace, the plane reached Honkong in peace. At Honkong, the Buddhist Association welcomed them. Mr. Fang was their host. They stayed in the International Hotel. Friends took them in their car for sightseeing up to the border of Canton. S peeped into People's China which was happy and progressive. On the way, S saw Formosa, a green fertile Island full of fruits and flowers. He saw the parks, gardens, colleges, temples etc in Honkong and gave a talk to friends in an interview. Wong Hok Yan welcomed them in the HongKong Buddhist Association Temple. At night, a lady knocked at his door. S opened. She was a spy. She noticed S going to the Canton Border. She spoke about the Kuomintang and Chiang. She commended the communist Party. S made her recount everything. "What is your opinion about Chiang?... "What is your opinion?" "All right; be it so"... Thus, he escaped and let her know at last that S was not concerned with politics. He wanted Unists first, not Communists. She went away with some notes about S which appeared in the press next day.

The plane stopped at Okinawa, the military port of America. There all the modern weapons and armaments were amassed. None was allowed to trespass in the port beyond twenty yards. S got an American soldier interested in yoga and through his help he saw the armaments. It was a terrible sight. The soldier explained to S the murderous weapons of war. Korea was attacked from this isle. The plane gracefully descended in Haneda Airport. Professor Watanabi of the Tokyo University was our interpreter. We also picked up a few important words without which we could not manage in Japan.

"O hai O go Saimas and Sayonara" can be heard a thousand times in Japan. S read the whole of the Nippon-Go, published when Malaya became Syonan-To. There are three varieties of strokes in Japanese letters-Kattakana, Hirakana and Kanji. Japanese language has no alphabets like ours, as we understand it. They consist of syllabaries each with a vowel and a consonant-eg. KA KI KU KE KO, GA GI GU GE GO, ZA ZI ZU ZE ZO- etc. pronounced in a sing-song tone. KA SA TA NA HA MA YA RA WA with their softenings are the fundamental syllabary. Japanese language has no article. Distinction is scarcely made between singular and plural.

The Japanese are angelic in beauty and manners. Their smiling face is like the morning lotus. They are very respectful and hospitable. They have high regard for India. Japan is the first independent Asiatic Nation, the first to challenge the West in education and industry and army, the first to defeat a Western country like Russia. Japan is the land of the rising Sun. It is ruled by Tenno or the Sun Dynasty. It is a land of sudden volcanoes, earthquakes, hot springs and sea currents from the Equator and Behring Strait. It has 3000 Islands in its crescent form covering an area of 148742 Sq. miles. Its population is increasing daily. It is overpopulated and needs a big colony. Tokyo alone contains a steady population of one crore besides innumerable visitors. Tokyo has three

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divisions—Upper, Lower and Middle called Marunochi. The upper division contains universities and cultural institutions. The lower is full of shops, business centres and art galleries. The middle looks majestic with the Royal Palace, forts, gardens, moats, administrative offices and banks. The Ginza Avenue is one of the biggest commercial centres containing all commodities from books to machines and daily requirements. The Nippons, as the Japanese are called, are brave, adventurous, gentle, sacrificing, loyal, obedient and they know how to die boldly for their Emperor and country. They combine in their life and living all that is best in the East and West. Theirs is a synthesis of Indian, Christian, Buddhistic and Shinto cultures. They adore the mirror and the sword symbolising a pure heart and brave life. They have very well understood the spirit of the times and utilise modern science and mechanism to keep pace with the progressive nations.

Zen Buddhism combined with the feudal and military culture exerted overwhelming influence upon the art and thought of the Japanese. Since the Meiji restoration in 1868, they assimilated western ideas and sciences. Mill, Bentham, Spencer, and Adam Smith taught them the utilitarian value of life. Voltaire, Rousseau and Montesque inspired them with the ideas of natural rights and liberties. American democracy and Germany influenced their politics. The Japanese managed heavy industries, built their own ships and machines, raised their own armaments and became a World Power capable of ruling and leading other nations. The labourers of Japan worked for the nation. Their wages were low and their output enormous. So they were able to capture the world market. India has many things to learn from Japan.

How did Japan become a power in such a short time and how it survived invincibly from wars, quakes and atomic blasts! Listen ... S studied the soul of Japan closely. There is no illiteracy in Japan. Boys and girls get very good education. Even the scavenger reads the daily paper. He too can make private studies and appear for a public examination and raise his status. All workers are educated. They are skilled and their technical knowledge is perfect. The nation has an esprit-de-corps, a discipline, an ideal, a consciousness to make country great. Their leaders are dexterous and they command obedience. They have modernised their industry. The Science Hall produces able industrialists The Govt. takes charge of the goods produced in factories and the production goes on without the anxiety of selling them. The Commercial Department takes care of it. The power is centralised in the feudal military regime which knows how to achieve things. Japan has a modernised army, air force and marine force which can challenge any nation. The maximum efficiency is put forth to get the maximum from mechanised industry. The working, farming and salaried classes enjoy the benefit of a flourishing family life well disciplined according to the national traditions. The home is a miniature country. Japs. have an insular advantage, good ports and shipyards; they ship their products very easily abroad and compete with England, America and Russia in trade. They have a steady place in the international market and their rate of exchange is favourable in every corner of the world. Japanese goods are selling rapidly. Every inch of Japan is utilised for industry or agriculture. You see shops even at the verge of the public roads. Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Yokahama and such great cities are some of the business centres of Japan. Mitsubishi electric company, Ikegi Iron Industries, Juju paper mills, Hitachi Industries, Sony electronics, Mainichi Asahi News Papers are evidences of Jap. industrial stamina. Spinning, weaving, mechanical tools, metallurgy, ceramics, woodwork, bamboo works, painting, printing press, gas, electricity, silk, toys, hosiery, radios, shipbuilding and a number of industries have made Japan rich and resourceful. Their new educational system promotes the national self-expression and glorifies the Nippon Cult of heroic adventure. S found out the secret of Japan's jump—on victory !

103. HOW THEY LIVE

The pilgrim is entranced to breathe the smiling atmosphere of the land of cherry blossoms, Dai Nippon. Dr. Miakoto Nagai, D.Litt., Senchou Muroto, and friend Prof. Dr. Baiyu Watanabe welcomed S with hymns and banquets of chrysanthemum. Rows of Zen monks exclaimed—Buddham Saranam Gachchami... as they led the guests to the waiting room after finishing the air office formalities. In came the representatives of the Asahi and Mainichi. Doso! Welcome! Doso! Click! Photo! At once it darts to the press officer and it is televised to Osaka and other places. A message, Revered Sir... How do you feel the journey? What is your impression about Japan and the world of progressive nations? How is India after the freedom? How can Japan help India? What is your yoga? How is it related to Buddhism etc.etc... S gave the following message:

“I come from the land of the Buddha, Gandhi and Shankara. I come from a country which has won a bloodless revolution led by the modern prophet, Mahatma Gandhi. I come from the land of Subash who collaborated with the Japanese to teach the enslavers a trenchant lesson on the battlefield. India is progressing rapidly towards national solidarity and economic salvation. It wants the help of the land of the Rising Sun, to bring a new dawn of Industrial Renaissance. We must unite as members and brothers of one Asia and keep pace with the Western nations in scientific prominence preserving at the same time our spiritual strength and soul force intact. Japan has inner light and material wealth. It is a synthesis of all that is best in the Asiatic spiritual culture as well as the European material dynamism. We have come to learn many things from Japan”.

Buddha was a supreme yogi. He meditated under the Bodhi tree for the good of all the world. Meditation is the central practice of yoga. Japan meditates and is full of inner strength. Japan gives a virile man-making education to its children; hence it produces supermen and superwomen who raise the fame of the country by their dedicated service in the field of culture, religion, and social-welfare. We will get the best of what Japan can teach us... A short life-sketch with this message came in the morning ‘Mainichi and Asahi’ which brought S and S a large number of excellent friends. The Directors and Editors of Mainichi and Asahi invited them for a dinner. These two magnificent dailies rule public opinion and wield the politics of Japan. What grand organisations they are! How many rotary machines and monotype machines dance to the tune of the quick-moving pen! The workers are very clean and cheerful. 5500 souls are so engrossed in their work that perfect silence prevails in the entire office of eight storeys. Like Niagara falls, printed sheets are pouring from the press; they are folded and stamped by machines and the agents take them in lorries ... About a crore read the papers. Asahi has its own telegram and phone connections and it owns planes to carry the daily to the length and breadth of the land. Japan Times is a prominent English paper. But Japs. like only Jap. language. English is just spreading. Many know German and a few, French. There are about 125 dailies and 1800 monthlies and weeklies in Japan. The directors of Mainichi and Asahi demanded many questions and S answered them and his voice was i n - tently heard and noted by the reporters. The whole mansion heard him through amplicall and his interviews came in the evening papers with photo. Quick! Everything quick!

What is the condition of Japan after the atom bomb calamity? “We are O.K. Bombs cannot ruin the rising sun. The sun is shining as ever and what can clouds do against its glory?” “What is the secret of such a confidence in your hearts, O Japs.!” The editors gave a vivid picture of the Japanese culture and mentality...

The Cult of Fujiyama, Nippon Cult, has its vital strength in Zen Buddhism. Dr. Suzuki, the Zen master has done wonderful service for the spiritual advancement of Japan and his Temple in Karnakura is a rendezvous of illustrious scholars and priests and savants

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of the world interested in Buddhism. He has also made a deep study of the Upanishads. He is aged and even in his dotage he manifests a wonderful enthusiasm for the propagation of Buddhism and meditation. His frame is frail but his faith is strong. S stayed with his disciples in the Sojiji Temple and monastery of Zen Buddhists in Tokyo. It is a very big monastery with grand residential quarters, temples of worship, underground meditation hall, library hall, dining hall, dormitory, concert hall and a college for the students of Zen faith. The whole area is connected with electric communication and orders from the head of the monastery are quickly obeyed as they flash from the phone above. There are about 500 Zen ascetics in the monastery all clad in overflowing black gowns. All are bald-headed and indeed Japanese pay reverence to bald heads. Many are like that, soldiers, professors and even ladies. Zen Buddhists, like Jains, do not take flesh or fish, not even milk. They are well disciplined spiritual soldiers. They meditate and pray in peace and they fight with weapons against the enemy of the nation when war breaks out. They are calm, courageous, bold and heroic monks, well educated, well drilled in national disciplines. They live for Japan and meditate for their inner strength.

Strong and intelligent youths are chosen for training in Zen discipline. Each has a room for himself and a wireless set, a bookshelf and a duty which he must fulfil. The entire routines and services of the monastery are managed by the inmates. They cook in the kitchen; they take two meals—morning and evening. They take bread, vegetables, tea, fruits and rice. They prepare hot water for bath. The bath room has a deep tank which has to be filled twice. Japs have no male or female restriction in bathrooms. Both bathe naked, even in the monastery but are above passion. They look after cleanliness, hygiene, washing clothes and vessels, sweeping floors, burning incense. They keep accounts, do marketing, they earn too their livelihood by working in schools and factories and fields; they cultivate vegetables for the inmates and they train themselves in fire arms and drill to serve the nation when the bugle calls. “Do this ” says the head. “Gladly” says the student. He accomplishes that duty and waits for the next. “Gather together there” phones the Guru ... They mark time to that place and stand in orderly rows. Shivering cold wind blows and chills the blood. It is 4 am. “Up! all! Meditate! Prepare” goes the order. The monks rise up, make up their beds. One man runs ringing the bell. All run after him to the bathroom. They clean themselves in and out. They keep attending to the appointed duties. “To the Hall for meditation !” runs the order. They dress themselves in Kimono and march quietly behind the leader down the steps, still down, to a spacious underground hall. There they sit head erect, back straight, legs crossed in Padmasan (lotus pose), close their eyes, control the mind, and meditate. The Master gently comes and meditates. None nods in sleep; none diverts his attention. One hour passes, half an hour more. A tingling sound! O, O! all stand up. The Master leads the prayer and choir. He reads from the holy books. They then sing and dance and come round and round a light. At about seven, the bell rings and all go to their rooms. They gather for breakfast. After that, the Master appoints special works for each of them. They bow and go to that work. In the evening, again they pray and meditate for an hour. At noon they study books. At night, they discuss religious questions or learn lessons. They have also drill and exercise.

Shintoism is the majority religion of Japan. The Japanese live as Shintos and die as Buddhists. “Namo Amita Butsu” is the Buddhist mantra. There are many sects of Buddhism—rather many schools—Zen, Shin, Soto, Jodo, Rinsai, Tendai, Otani, Krgoon, Singon, Hosso, Ditsu etc. There is a powerful sect called Nichiran which holds mass meetings each week. From 6 a m. to 6 p m. thousands of Nichirans congregate in the temple of that sect. They meditate, hear speeches and sing aloud beating a drum in a chorus.... **Aum namyo ho range kyo** (Hail Flame of the Lotus Heart). S visited many such congregations and made speeches. He saw the Shin organisation and visited some

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nunneries run by nuns. S held meditations in lonely forests and temples near hills. The religious fervour in Japan was unabated. Here is the gist of a speech:

Dr. Suzuki and fellow monks,

I lived your life. You are true artists of a life pure, simple introspective and free from dogmatic encumbrances and complicated ideologies. Nothing is hidden; all is daylight. You get everything from within, by meditation. The Zen discipline looks into the essence of things. The Zen life begins with the opening of satori or the exalting flash of insight in the heart. We call it Dhyāna; or Ch'an. The Zen art dominates Nippon cult. Your zazen or cross-legged posture, and the kaon, your character, discipline, self-reliance and meditation, your conception of art and beauty in life have all impressed me deeply. I have meditated with you, studied and contemplated with you and laughed with you and worked with you. I have become a new man in the company of Ranzi and Soto Zens. You open inner treasures and find Paradise within like the boundless sky clear and profound, silent and puissant. The spring comes, grass grows by itself. Even so your wisdom grows and your knowing is beyond saying. "This is It and That is That" says your realisation.

104. THE SECOND WORLD BUDDHIST CONFERENCE

Honganji Temple has the biggest Hall in Tokyo. It was tastefully decorated. Youths served as volunteers and they attended to every detail of the huge conference. The conveyance arrangements were very convenient. The delegates came from all parts of the world and they were well accommodated according to their country and convenience. Delegates came from America, Europe, China, Formosa, Ceylon, India, Malaya, Cambodia, Siam and Burma with rich presents to the conference. The Burmese delegates showered rubies in the hall. The audience counted more than twenty thousand. They were mostly Zens, Shins, Theravadas and Mahayanas. The speeches were made in Japanese or English. The Japanese language sounds like Bengali. The Conference lasted six days from the 29th of September, 1952. Dang,! Dang! Dang! **Buddham Saranam Gachchaami ... Dhammam Saranam Gachchaami ... Sangam Saranam Gachchaami ...** All the yellow robed monks sang this mantra of surrender and also the Pancha Sila mantra beginning with **Panadi pada Virmani ...** Then a set of bird-voiced Jap maidens warbled prayers showering flowers upon the audience. Then the sanctum opened: traditional worship went on. The atmosphere was filled with holy vibrations. The opening address was made by the Chairman of the Reception Committee followed by short speeches by two prominent leaders of public opinion. Then the delegates were introduced. The President was proposed. Mr. Malalasekara Gunapala Piyasena took the presidential throne and delivered his thrilling address in which he said:

"Buddhists form more than one fifth of the world's population. We have Buddhist governments in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. China and Japan are Buddhist countries. We must put forth our united efforts to spread the Gospel of Peace maintained by the Blessed One. Each of us must be a soldier to fight against greed, lust, envy, ill-temper, stupidity and ignorance. Let us fight this battle of righteousness, each a true warrior armed with the cuirass of love, riding the steed of energy, with the sword of wisdom in our hands, bearing aloft the banner of deliverance, with Truth as our battle cry."

He appealed to the Brotherhood to strengthen the world fellowship of Buddhists, to awaken dormant countries to give Buddhist education to children, to encourage literatures on Buddhism, to bring out correct versions of the Pitakas and to transliterate them in Roman script, to unite together and work for the peace of humanity and to reorganise the Sangha and unite all in the universal service.

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Many prominent people spoke each ten minutes. S made an appeal to revive Nalanda and Dakshasila Universities and create a unitary spirit. There is One Buddha and so there must be only One Sangha for all. The Dhamma must find its expression in life. He extolled the discipline of Zens. Zen Buddhism is a mystic religion of inner enlightenment. It was revealed by the Buddha to Kasyapa. It was handed from one patriarch to another until Bodhi Dhamma got it as the 28th patriarch. He set sail to Kuang Chu in South China and taught meditation to Emperor Wu, who got peace thereby.

Dhamma sat in meditation in his monastery leaning against a wall. He was called the Wall-gazing Brahmin. He died leaving a trained soul Hueko to succeed him. The Zen faith exercised tremendous influence in China, Korea and Japan. Two sects of Zens are dominant—Sotos, quietists and Rinzis—intellectual speculators. The Zens transcend all canonical and textual conventions and blind faith in Buddha's image to the freedom of self-unfolding. "Be as you are like fish in pond and bird in air. Realise Truth by self-enquiry. Reason; do not question. Dana, (giving) Sila (moral precepts), Kshanti (forgiving); Virya (diligence), Dhyana (meditation), Prajna (wisdom) are the six Prajna Parimitas. They give inner peace and liberation. Practise them" says the Zen Master. By meditation the Zen gets inner stability, inner void (Sunyata) like a clear sky. The Zen keeps the inner balance even amidst a whirlwind routine of daily activities. He has a strong willpower. He is a synthesis of Shinto-Confucian-Buddhism and Jainism..

Resolutions were passed for the unity and solidarity of the Buddhist fellowship, to organise and carry on activities in the social, cultural, educational and humanitarian fields, to establish Dhamma-centres throughout the world. Patrons were chosen among the Heads of Govt. to organise regional centres of Buddhists.

The delegates were presented with many fine articles made in Japan. The important industrial and cultural centres of Japan invited the delegates. S had the opportunity of studying Japan in detail with them. Besides this, many other friends invited him and Satyananda to several places.

The most interesting places in Japan are Tokyo, Yokahama, Nara, Kamakura, Kobe, Kyoto, Osaka, Nagayo, etc.. They are in the Honsha Isle covering about 91,277 square miles. The majestic snow-crowned Fujiyama is the central beauty of Japan—12,392 ft high, 60 miles round with lakes and hot springs. It is the sacred symbol of the nation adored by thousands of devotees. The hills of Japan are volcanic. Fuji was once a volcano; now its crater is cool, lotus-shaped and ice-crowned, visible from the distant plane.

S saw the grand Honshu Paper Mill, JUJU paper mill, Fuji paper mill with titanic machines all made in Japan pouring out rolls of paper. The pine wood for its pulp comes to the factory floating in a stream directly from the hills. Logs are cut, sized and pulped, pounded, treated, pressed, papered and sent in bales to the commercial dept. which pays and takes them for sales. Japan produced everything in surplus. S saw the very busy Hitachi Ltd which manufactured gigantic Crane-derricks, wall cranes, tower cranes, coal loaders, mono rail hoists, excavators etc. It had another factory for manufacturing water turbines, steam locomotives, diesel electric locomotives, Steam Boilers etc.

Another Factory of Hitachi manufactured high efficiency motors, railway equipments and textile machineries.

IKEGAI IRON WORKS is a very big factory. Mr. K. Kawase, Nagase, and Meijeko Nose—its directors and engineers invited S. The factory produced all heavy machines and machine tools, rails, printing machines, drilling machines, do—all rotary presses very efficiently. The workers put up a cheerful appearance. They told me "We are working for Japan and not for a man."

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S saw the Toyo Rayon Company, the biggest rayon silk factory in Japan run by ladies. It produced rayon filament yarns, rayon staple, Amilan synthetic fibre, rayon butterfly coloured textile goods etc.

The workers had clean quarters and the food arrangement was excellent. The dinner bell rang; the ladies just stopped work and stood at their post after washing their hands. Plates came and tea. They ate food with their chopsticks, washed their hands and mouth and at once fell to work. S was curious. He asked them "Do you not take rest or sleep after dinner...?" They replied "I sleep ... Japan sleep. I work, Japan Work..." in their broken English. S visited the pencil and stationery factories and match factories of Kobe and also needle and sewing machine factories. He saw the ship building yards of Yokohama, the yard where more than ten thousand labourers worked. Kobe Shipyard manufactured everything for shipbuilding. S saw five ships perfectly equipped and floated with cheers ... They were bought by America, Norway and Sweden.

The most imposing sight was the Mitsu Bishi Electric Town. Mr. Onaka and Yamashita, its engineers showed S around. From wire to wireless, from batteries to dynamos—everything was made there. Their accumulators were very famous.

When you enter a factory, the chief humbly bows before you and receives you respectfully presenting a bunch of roses. He shows in a film all the activities of the factory. Then he and his technical assistants present you with an illustrated book on the details of work. Then they take you round; a specialist explains the process of working. After seeing everything they take you to the dinner hall, set up music, and serve you with Japanese sweets and salts, bread, biscuits, fruits and tea. They take you to their quarters, show the homes of workers, introduce you to their family circles and leave you back in your residence presenting you with their pamphlets and a box of the samples they manufacture. Thus S got a big box of pencils, reams of paper, pens, clothes, silks etc. which he gave away to students and children.

S saw the agricultural farms and Japanese methods of cultivation. They take care of the daily rubbish and work hard in gardens and farms. Ladies take delight in growing kitchen vegetables, wheat, rice, fruits etc. Mr. Zhinozaki, a Japanese Christian, a popular businessman, took S and S to all important farms and factories. They saw pearl diving, colour industries, ceramics, farm industries etc.

S saw many monasteries, and religious institutions and met monks and nuns and attended their prayers and meditations. Dr. Watanabe took them to all known religious institutions. Each institution had a college or a university run from the offerings of the devotees.

Dr. Saburo Unno, of the Mayozen Temple, Yogamata, Tokyo, Akiyama, Principal of Harita Institution, Rev. Daito Suzuki of the Zenshuji Soto Mission, Sinya Kasugai of the Buddhistic University, Kyoto, Chioku Morikawa, Principal, Ryukoku University, Terizui of the Wakayama University and many others took S to several universities of Japan, where we had a good opportunity of studying the excellent system of education prevailing there. The woman's university of Tokyo organised by Jino Narsu is a world famous institution. The education begins there by painting letters and singing songs containing all etiquettes of a growing citizen. Through aesthetic training, the girls are fitted for higher studies. The Tokyo University is a marvellous institution. It is perfect in every aspect. Young people of both sexes behave very decently and take real interest in cultivating knowledge and technical skill. History lessons are shown by means of films. Visual education is the great advantage of the Jap. Universities. The science hall is well equipped and each student has a table and he is free to make experiments and discover new things. Thus S had a rich

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educative tour in Japan. Even Hiroshima had risen Phoenix-like from the atomic cinders. Japan is the best Asiatic country. India must imitate it.

S lived in two Japanese homes one in Tokyo and another in Kyoto and observed the social manners and domestic disciplines. The wife is obedient to the husband. The homes are built of pine wood, tastefully partitioned by hard boards well painted. In one house the motto “Heart is won by Heart” was decorated with two birds on a cherry tree. Japs are lovers of nature and birds. Thus in January they adore pine and crane, February plum and nightingale, March cherry-blossom and flower shows, April wistaria and cucao, Iris by the Bridge, June peony tree and wild boar, August full moon and wild goose, September chrysanthemum and wine cup, October maple and deer, November willow and rain, December pallowina tree and hoo, a big bird. Japs adore the plants and crops and celebrate harvest festivals. They adore the rice and wheat fields with festoons and lead processions for the God of Agriculture. Their field songs and May dances are very interesting. Singing and dancing are their national traits. S saw in the grand stadium of Tokyo a dance recital by 100 geisha girls. They had varieties of instrumental accompaniments. They acted incidents from history in operas and dances. Their cinema was very decent and educative. S saw the film studios and two films.

The poets of Japan are honoured by the people and the Govt. The Jap poetry is short and sweet. A college girl sang beautiful verses and explained their meaning in English. Let us see a few lines here. The verses are five lines of thirty words and they have the syllabic notation like the French

Tu Ki Ya Ara na Ha ru ya Mu ka si no
Haru mara na Wa ga mi hi ya wa
Mo to no mi ni si te

“In the moon there is none. Where is the spring and its floral smile? The bird voice is silent. Where is my lover? All is changed. But my Love is as warm as ever ... O Beloved”

Friends gave a touching farewell with fruits and flowers. Japan is an angelic land decked with hills, rivers, floral smiles and good-hearted greetings of lovely faces. Japan is a University country giving timely education to its children and at the same time preserving its religious and national traditions intact. Japan is an industrial heaven, the workshop of Asia where everything is manufactured from pin to plane... Long live Japan!..

The pilgrim took off from the Hanida port to Okinawa. There he saw the modern war devices, fighter planes etc. and reached HongKong. The plane required repairs. So, four days in HongKong gave him an opportunity to see in detail Canton and its political conditions before he took off. He reached Saigon, thence Singapore ... In Singapore he stayed two days and in the same B.O.A.C. reached Colombo...

105. CEYLON SPEECH

Mr. Kandia Vaidhyathan and a large number of devotees met S at Colombo Airport and gave him a poetic welcome in which the Buddhists took part. All the leading papers of Ceylon put the news in headlines and leaders. For one week the Colombo city was busy with receptions of several associations and K. Ramachandran held sadhana classes every day attended by a large number of devotees. An All-Ceylon Tour programme was grandly arranged by the invulnerable “Green Flag Rama”. The dailies and savants titled him as Tamil Vyasa. Special Yogi-Commemoration volumes were published. Vira Kesari, Dinakaran, Ceylon Times and Daily News reported his tours. All his lectures were published attractively by these papers. A grand Civic Reception was accorded to him by the Mayor and members of the Colombo Municipal Council at the Council Chamber of the town. The Premier Duddly Sena Nayaka, Dr N M. Perera, Bandaranaika and

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prominent Leaders of Ceylon joined in the welcome. S had a talk with the premier upon Asiatic Unity and he appreciated the Spiritual socialism and universalism of S. He called S the Messenger of One Humanity and One World. The Mayoral Hall was packed with chosen celebrities of the city. The Mayor in his official robes welcomed S with the official decorum and presented him with an ornamental Silver Address in which he said:

“On behalf of the Colombo Public Reception Committee, we extend to you a happy welcome, revered sir, and express our humble gratitude for graciously agreeing to the request of your devotees in Ceylon to visit us. The people of Ceylon, those who praise religion and enlightenment above all worldly advantages have been waiting for many years, for this opportunity to have your dharsan and your spiritual guidance.

We know of your selfless service and your devotion to your Motherland in her struggle for political freedom, which purified your heart and bestowed on you the blessing of compassion for your fellow beings and eventually led you up the path of lively and dynamic yoga. In this present world of rank noise, you have taught us the sublime virtue of silence. You enable us to share your Divine Wisdom which envisages one Spiritual humanity. The guidance of your Light shall be a spiritual inspiration for us all !” The Mayor handed the Silver Casket to him. The Pilgrim filled with emotion, led a minute of meditation, dedicated all honour to the Pure almighty Grace and spoke for half–an–hour stressing the need for a united Asia and a united humanity in yoga with the Inner Spirit.

“Ceylon, is a heart–shaped Isle and it floats in the bosom of the Indian ocean like a lotus of compassion. All the distant parts of the world are within five day’s reach from the Ratnamala Air Port. The heart has four chambers and Ceylon has four dominant cultures—Buddhistic, Christian, Islamic and Saivite. To me all these four are one culture of the heart, one religion of universal love and compassionate service to fellow beings with an inner sadhana of meditation and self–purification. I am an optimist and I see clearly the present world struggling with fluttering anxiety towards a future felicity of peace and goodness. The poet’s imagination is cradled in the music of a universal symphony in which all nations mingle their voice. I see the Light of united Love, burning in the sanctuary of One Humanity. Crossing the atomic blasts and hydrogen fumes, the immortal soul of humanity shall find a New World of peace and beauty. In the common sky–bound temple of New Humanity, let us adore One Truth Light that is the light of all souls. There shall not be sectarian walls nor national barriers. That state of blissful living is called Kaivalya, Moksha, Vaikunta, Tusita, Siddha Silam, Kingdom of heaven, Ramarajyam, or Siva Sayujyam. I call it Pure Bliss of collective existence in tune with the purity, unity and divinity of Spiritual Socialism. Live in tune with the inner Divine and serve God in humanity with your cosmic love and consciousness. I have brought you an immortal lamp of yoga; you can light your hearts in its flame of universal love. Let this temple island see seven million lamps of yogic glory!

The days of separate egoism are gone. No caste, no religion, no race pride, nor colour prejudice shall divide man from man in the future world of yoga. There is a common current of spiritual consciousness passing through the channel of conscience of each soul. You can worship Buddha in a stupa or Christ in church with perfect equality. You can adore Siva, Vishnu, Allah or Father in heaven with equal reverence and unity of consciousness, when your heart overflows with the genial current of Love. Prophets came with the message of love and sacrificed themselves on the altar of love. Buddha rose like a tower of light to teach this truth of universal love and compassion. Let us follow that light and cross the darkness of ignorant separative ego, to the dawn of peace and harmony where we see one divinised Humanity. Prosper Aum! I thank you sirs, for the unique honour you have done me, and I dedicate this honour and many more honours that I have received, to the Almighty Grace that leads this Pilgrim Soul towards the dawn of one humanity!”

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There was a very big gathering in the Colombo Town hall. The Citizens of Ceylon presented him an ornamental casket with an address in ornamental letters. Kandaiya Vaidhyathan presided. S addressed the gathering for one hour on the Harmony of Universal Existence:

“Lanka has been the friend and patron of my pilgrim soul. The heart of the Buddha throbs in its art of life. I saw the dominant influence of Ceylon in the Tokyo Buddhist Conference presided over by a gem of Ceylon. My mission is one for all countries, East and West. It is to connect in the dynamic yogic battery, the two forces of inner communion and material progress, meditation and science. I am confident of the fact that the reunion of the scientific brain with the spiritual heart can transform humanity into a peaceful race of universal love and harmony. Life is an evolution towards divinity. We meet five religions in the ladder of human evolution. The eightfold disciplines of Buddhism lay the ethical foundation of universal life. Christianity insists upon prayer to God and service to humanity. Islam teaches faith and surrender to God. Vedanta leads to self-peace and Siddhanta to Divine Bliss. All these are synthesized in the Sama Yoga which purifies the soul, unites it to God and divinises life. Life clinging to vital cravings is hell. Life free from Tanha, desire, lust, passion, craving and greed is free from grief. It attains the freedom of self-bliss and peace. Inner consciousness, compassion and comradeship are the head, heart and lungs of Buddhism. ‘Know by meditation and serve by compassion’ says the symbolic representation of the Bodhi Satva in contemplation. Islam and Christianity submit the human to the Divine Will in perfect self-abnegation. These three dominant religions of the world can be summed up in two words—charya—moral purity and kriya—pure worship. Through constant self-reflection and meditation, the Vedantin finds the self. Siddhanta leads to perfection of life in the Divine by charya—moral purity, Kriya—pure worship, Yoga—pure inner communion and Jnana—pure knowledge. Without the label of names and personalities, we can very well practise the central truths of all religions, by living in yoga with the inner Divine. Religions are like the Japanese homes partitioned by hardboards. There is a shrine room, drawing room, storeroom, dormitory and reading room. But if you remove the hard boards, the whole home is a wide hall. Rooms are many, home is one. Remove mental walls and separative ego; all can live as one collective Soul. By merely saying food or writing food, you cannot appease hunger. You must take food to the hunger point. By beating or threatening darkness, it can’t go. You must bring a light ; then darkness shall go. Even so you must live in yoga; only then you can feel like the Buddha, think like Shankara and act like Gandhi. The musician blends many tunes and the painter many colours for the beauty of their art. Even so hearts and minds blend in happy harmony to beautify the collective life of man. Humanity has murdered its prophets and mutilated scriptural texts. Hence it is murderously divided. The sermon is on its pulpit, mammon is in its cockpit. Religions are like colour bulbs reflecting one white light. Shakespeare is not mere alphabets and sentences; mere texts cannot make you religious or spiritual. Organise service like the missionaries, have the discipline of the Bikkus, be firm in faith like Muslims; have the equal vision of Siddhanta and be dynamic like Appar, the apostle of Saivism and unite all virtues in yoga like Sri Aurobindo and Ramana Maharshi and Gandhiji. That is the salvation of the individual as well as the collective man.”

S toured every nook and corner of Ceylon and people in large numbers welcomed him with songs, dance, caskets, addresses, festoons and felicitations.

S visited almost every town and village of Ceylon and addressed meetings on suitable subjects, gave meditations and answered doubts. In schools and colleges and educational institutions, he spoke on his scheme of yogic culture which included spiritual, mental, moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and vocational education. He addressed social service centres, prisons, health homes, labour associations, temples, religious centres on the

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Gospel of Perfect Life. Colombo, Wellavatte, Maharangama, Unipitti and other neighbouring parts of Colombo welcomed him. A grand welcome was given by the Vivekananda Sangham where he made an impressive speech on “How to save Hinduism and the Hindu Community” by sending trained Hindu missionaries all over the country.

Kandi welcomed him with temple honours and exposed before him the sacred Tooth Relic of Buddha preserved in luxurious golden chests studded with rubies and diamonds. The Mayor of Kandi, Mr. E. L. Senanayake gave him a public reception and presented him with an ornamental address in a silver casket mounted upon two elephants. His address on “Buddha and his Dhamma” was translated into Sinhalese by a Bikku. He spoke on Gandhi and Buddha in the Gandhi Memorial College and on Hindu Dharma at the Hindu Association. Mr. Fernando and Sumana Tilaka welcomed him in the big Town Hall of Nuweralia where he addressed the cosmopolitan audience on “East and West—the Two poles of the universal battery”. The Guntasala Farm School warmly welcomed him. It has many group industries like carpentry, weaving, cane-work, juice-making, beehive, poultry farming etc. which bring sufficient economic resources to the growing institution. S stayed here a week and studied the beehive harmony of its social work. The Peradaniya university and gardens welcomed him. S addressed the students and professors on The Vision Of Master Poets. He meditated in the orchards of the garden before the Mavali Ganga for two days and then went to Uduspet where he was taken in procession on an elephant. While sitting on the elephant, he wrote poems which became very popular. He opened two temples and showed the method of common worship. Vadulai gave him a glorious reception with songs and dances. 30,000 people listened to his speech on “Unity of Godhood and Soulhood.” He addressed a big prayer-meeting in the place supposed to be the Asokavanam where Ravana imprisoned Sita. He took his bath in the Sita Kund and did Havan and conducted a mass repetition of Ramanam. The Sindhis of Nuweralia honoured him and to them he chanted the Veda and the Gita. He was profusely garlanded and warmly welcomed at Bandarawella, Hattan, Maskelia, Kegalla, Chavagachery and Sigiria Hills (Here he saw the old monuments and frescos and planned for a drama). After visiting Nannoya, he came to Navalapitya and stayed in the Atmajyoti Nilayam. Master Muthia and Sankalpa Thera were his kind hosts. Here he addressed many meetings and held religious classes. He wrote songs and articles for the Atma jyoti which have appeared in book form. He spent a week up the Kandi Hills in Kambalai, Queensbury, Kalutara, Talavakkalai, Devonshire etc, and then came to Kadirkamam passing through Galle, Gurunakkal, Kuliapitya, where Mr. Silva, Mayor Vijayakula and others welcomed him grandly. He spent prayerful days in the Skanda temple of Kadirkamam. It was a tiled building with a mystery curtain. S became the friend of the Buddhist priests who officiated there and discovered the mystery of this ancient temple. It was only a Vel (spear) with a chakra. S remained in the temple meditating on Muruga and sang his famous poems on the Divine which were printed in thousands and distributed all over Ceylon. In Akkarai Pattu, Batticola, Karai Tivu, he addressed teachers and students and the masses on the life and teachings of Saivite Saints and sang his songs with the devotees. Ramakrishna Mission has done a good cultural service here. He paid high tributes to Swami Vipulanandaji, the great Tamil scholar. He was solemnly welcomed by Bikkus under the Bodhi Tree of Anuradhapuram, the old capital Of Ceylon. Collector Rajendram presided over the public meeting and S spoke on The Call of Bodhisatva to Peace and Brotherhood.

From Mathalai he went to Tirukonamalai where the grandest reception with procession was organised for him. He spoke on Hinduism and held classes for aspirants and taught them Vedanta and Siddhanta. He bathed in hot springs and in the Kiri spring, he

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floated. He was drenched in heavy rains as he reached Jaffna where despite uncouth weather an impressive civic reception was accorded to him in the Town Hall and silver caskets with ornamental addresses were presented to him. He addressed meetings in The Jaffna College, Navalar High School, Ramanathan Colleges, laid the foundation of a Science Hall in Vaddukottai, held Yoga Sadhana classes in mornings and lectures to masses all around Jaffna in evenings. Editors of the Eelakesari, Virakesari, Dinakaran and Ceylon Times helped him a good deal. Jaffna is the brain of Ceylon. Some pandits raised opposite currents against his Universal Yoga of Love, Meditation and Service. But the masses were always with him and attended his lectures in thousands. Necommbu and Mannar accorded him a very enthusiastic reception with brilliant processions and Catholic Fathers took part in the organisation. After thus visiting 100 places and addressing 300 meetings, S took twenty days of silence up in the Kandi Hills in the Devonshire bungalow and wrote many songs which were printed as **Atmanaadam** (Voice of the Soul) later on by the Atmajyoti Nilayam.

In his further visits to Ceylon too, he was warmly welcomed in all these places especially in the Tamaravalli of Mr. Krishnapillai who published his Mantramalai and Dhyanamalai. Mr. Thondaman arranged his tour in the hill resorts of Kandi, Colombo, Jaffna, Vavunia and many other places welcomed his ideal of One religion for all—Religion of one Godhood and One Soulhood. He wrote a drama on Navalar which has been published by the Atmajyoti and enacted by lovers of Saivam. He called upon people to unite like the song and accompaniments in a concert, with the fervour of Navalar, the missionary spirit of St Francis, compassion of Buddha, faith of Rasul and devotion of Appar. “Adore One God in the Inner temple of the heart by psychic love and service. Live in tune with the Time Spirit a collective life of purity, unity and divinity. Have English as the common tongue and cultivate your regional language. Let not language, caste, creed or religion divide the world into enemy camps. Give and take; mingle congenially with all. Live all for each and each for all...” This was his teaching to the people of Ceylon and the Atmajyoti Nilayam carries it on faithfully. Engineer Vaithilingam is building Shuddhananda Yoga Samaj at Vavunia, Ceylon.

Fellow pilgrims, you are already tired with this list of places visited by S. He does not want to repeat the places which he visited in Asia, Europe and America. But, a brief account of his visit to the west is not out of place here. His Visions and Voices shall come out soon giving details of his world-tours.

106. ROUND THE VERNAL JAPAN AGAIN

Rev. Yonosuke Nakano invited S for the Congress of the Human Spirit. He was already known to S as the president of a spiritual organisation called Ananayka. Mr. Nakano was a Shinto-Theosophist, an inspired genius, a lovely friend and a religious personality held in great respect by all. S went to Japan with two fine friends, K. N. Radhakrishnaiyar and K L. N Krishniyar who were leading industrial magnates of the Sowrashtra community in Madurai. S was given a grand welcome at Hong Kong by Swami Satchidananda, Malwani, Dasvani and friends. He stayed in the Hindu temple and delivered lectures to a large gathering of Hindus and Chinese and taught them asans and pranayama.

Japan was singing “Sakura” hailing the vernal season and cherry blossom when S and party landed at Haneda airport. Thoshihiro Nakano made princely arrangements in the Daichi Hotel, Shimbashi, for the delegates. Indeed all through the fruitful journey, the delegates were given princely treatment and royal feasts in luxury hotels. They were taken on visits to big factories, colleges, Shinto and Ananayka temples, theatres, and dances. S had the opportunity of speaking in many places and also in the subjects committees. Very good friends

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from all countries made the Congress delightful and useful. S had the opportunity of seeing Nara, Kamakura, Yokohama, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Hakata, Fukuka, Chikugo, Yashima, Numazu, Fujiyama, Takayama, Nagoya, Toyopet, Car factory at Toyoto, Mitsubishi, (Electric Town), Takamatsu, and many other beautiful places. He saw the World Industrial Fair in Tokyo where all heavy machines and machines for small-scale industries were displayed. Plastics, cameras, telescopes, binoculars, television sets, transistors, heavy machines for printing, weaving etc. were kept for show and a full day was spent in seeing the fair so grandly organised by the Government.

S had good opportunities of seeing the industrial, cultural, and economic progress of Japan during this tour and he met many fine friends. He studied the Shinto religion and observed the ceremonies in the Shinto temple where ladies offered flowers to Nature-God and danced gracefully. S went to Japanese homes and observed their social customs. He met poets and artists and sang his English songs to them. He learnt much about education in Japanese universities. His speech in the Congress was printed and largely circulated:

“All modern thinkers speak and write of One new Humanity living in the harmony of the equal Spirit. We have an organisation here for the cultivation of this Spirit which is the fountain of peace and bliss. The I-ness of the narrow mind must widen into All-ness of the Universal Self. The individual must live a collective life of the Spirit, without any difference of caste, creed or clime. Man-made religions and personality cults have enclosed his soul in mechanical frameworks. Narrow domestic walls limit his scope of a soul-free life in the wide universe. The voice of pure conscience has been smothered by ceremonial routines and mystic fears. Science leads the material progress of man but it threatens the world with a dark tragedy from the hands of totalitarian war mongers. Science must be tamed by the Spirit; a union must be created between these two forces of God and Nature. This cannot be done by religions and political diplomacies. The healthy union of science and soul can be effected by psychic love and harmony. A new collective life of psycho-spiritual consciousness is the only remedy for the frightful Armageddon clouding round humanity. The Spirit which is the fountain of felicity, has nothing to do with the dividing mental creeds. Man can live in direct communion with God in the soul without submission to the existing orders of the divided mentality. Take refuge in the Divine Spirit that outlives the mortal body. Feel the same in all. Love, serve, and live in the universal temple conscious of the One that is the heart of beings. Peace begins at home. It is supramental more than sentimental. Peace is attained by inner balance and equanimity. Open the gate of the Spirit for a happy reunion of humanity. Let our life be an efflorescence of the Central Spirit and let us go home and tell our people that countries are one in the world, nations are one in humanity, and humanity is one in the Spirit.”

Rev. Nakano appreciated his speech and presented him with a rich silk robe.

After the Congress, S stayed for 20 days with Mr. Masahiro Oki, president of the Japanese Yoga Society. Mr. Oki was very kind to him and equally so his wife and disciples. He arranged many lectures and television demonstrations of yogic exercises for him in various parts of Tokyo. S spent pleasant hours in the heavenly peace of the Maiji gardens. He had a large circle of high class friends who held feasts and yoga classes for him and recorded all his speeches and colour-filmed all his activities. He wrote a book called “Yoga and Human life” which was translated and published in the Japanese Yoga Journal. The crowning function was the televised lecture in the Asaki office in which S displayed rare asans and pranayam and kriyas for the health of the body, life and the mind. The Asaki presented him with a silver plate which he is using daily on his dinner table. Room No. 1 of the International House was packed with crowds to see the Yogi and his yogic life. The Japanese are noted for their hospitality and they gave many

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feasts to him. The farewell feast was attended by the elite of Tokyo including some of the members of the Mikado's family. Miss. Shibata of the Asaki estate, Misses Sakura, Michika, Osanai and Oki lavished him with presents which he gave back to the Yoga Institute while explaining. Friends organised a big conference for him. Japan looks like a graceful lady in a Kimono offering the tea ceremony to Mother Universe. The small islands scattered around her coast look like so many tea cups. S writes in a novel about his various experiences in Japan... and now let us jump on!...

107. ROUND THE WORLD

There is nothing to see elsewhere for him who has seen the Cosmic Reality within himself. Nothing is foreign to him who sees his Self in All. S felt at home in any country with anyone in the universal home. Thanks to the kind help of the Peace Council of India, S had the opportunity of going to Europe as one of the eight representatives to the World Peace Conference, Berlin. It was a stepping-stone to his world tour.

Friends gave him a hearty send off in the Meenambakkam Air Port. The plane reached Santa Cruz early morning. S was put up in the grand Tajmahal Hotel where all the delegates met and prepared a programme of work. Sri Sundarlal was chosen as the leader and Remesh, the secretary. S was to represent Indian culture and religion. The press took messages and photos. The party explained at midnight and reached Cairo early morning. S saw the gift of the Nile and the Egyptian art—the pyramids and the Sphinx. He saw the psychological change that had come over this ancient country.

The Middle East was in ferment. The plane soared 17,000 ft high above the Mediterranean sea. S was able to see the land below. The plane landed at 4 pm in Rome and his Italian friends shook hands with him. They arranged later on for an interview with the Pope and for a trip in Italy to see Dante's Tomb at Ravenna, Naples, Padua, the Grotto of St. Francis etc. The ravage of human fury was seen every where in Rome. The old imperial monuments disappeared into chaotic smoke. The dust of the times tarnished that sacred city. But the high Vatican stood as majestic as ever, and the Cross at the top of St. Peter's Cathedral, radiated the glory of Christ. Madonna with Jesus and St. Peter with the key attracted S inside the church. The Pope appeared on the balcony solemn and silent. A psalm was played on the organ. The congregation kept the chorus. The Spiritual Emperor blessed all and departed like lightning. Offerings poured into the charity box for distribution to Catholic institutions all over the world. Kingdoms fall but Christendom lives for ever. The Pope brought a new hope to S—that of a new united life in the Soul.

Rome is the eternal city of culture and beauty and architectural grandeur. The Tiber river winds its way through the city. The Vatican on the west bank is the spiritual capital of Christendom. The Peter's dome designed by Michel Angelo, the colonnades surrounding its basilica fountain of Piazza Navona, the church of Santa Maria containing Bernini's Ecstasy of St. Theresa, the delightful baths, St. Peter's church, and St. Paul's, the enormous colosseum, the seven-hilled majesty of the spiritual capital—all these impress one's mind deeply. S was impressed by the religious training given to catholic priests and cardinals there.

The plane crossed the silvery Alpien heights in a few minutes and descended in Geneva. Lake Lemman stretched like a sheet of shimmering silver plate with a jet spring in its bosom. It was surrounded by rose gardens. That night the delegates had to stay in a hotel. S found a friend who showed him around the universal city. He saw hotels flashlit around the splashing lake. He enjoyed the symphony of Nature. The League of Nations, the Red Cross Society, the Moral Rearmament Association, and many other public institutions of nations attracted S this side and that side of the Lake. Just then Chou-En-Lai had

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returned from Delhi after signing the Pancha Sila agreement. Geneva stood for purity, unity, honesty, unselfish prayer and meditation and for universal brotherhood.

White men moved with Negroes amicably. The alpine view and the lake gardens inspired S. He was steeped in meditation. When he opened his eyes some cultured ladies and gentlemen sat before him reverentially. They were surprised to hear S speak fluent French and also sing French songs. They proposed to organise meetings for him on his return to Geneva. The plane reached Zurich next morning. The academic and technical education combined in the Zurich university rich with many-sided cultures. In this University studied great souls like Pestalozzi, and Einstein. Watches, beautiful watches of many ornamental types attract you in Zurich.

The plane reached Prague at midday. There ended the American Zone and the Soviet zone began. S had time to see the cultural centres of Prague and also an opera. Within that time, the checking ceremonies and passport changes went on. The Soviet Zone gave the peace party a separate passport. Now off to Berlin in the Soviet train—all first class, well furnished beds, radio-sets, dinner tables, books for study and an attendant who answered you on pressing a bell. Dresden, the biggest industrial centre of the world was in ruins ... Alas, the human brain constructs, and in a freak, ruins the construction of ages!... It was a pitiful sight. But the green Nature of Germany put up a smiling welcome. The peace festoons and flags and flower bunches and smiling faces gave the party a delightful reception. The party went to the war memorial which was a grand artistic marble construction with the statues of heroes. Flowers were laid there and a song sung in praise of the heroes that gave their life for the country. One ambitious brain killed millions and itself committed suicide—that is power politics !

Berlin is divided into two sectors, Russian and American. S saw both. Both want to unite; people want it; politics taunts it. Bread is cheap in the Soviet zone and people secretly come and purchase it for the West. Berlin must unite; colonialism must go! See the gigantic buildings in Berlin pulled down by air raids! The grand Kaiser's palace is now Stalin Alle where soldiers practice drill. S saw there the Freedom Rally marching to the beat of drums and trumpets. S was lodged in Johaneshof, a grand Jewish hotel half-ruined by bombs. Jews have come again to commercial prominence in Berlin. The ghost of Hitler could not end them. S attended the students rally crying "Mirumir! peace, peace". A whole day was spent in seeing big factories like coach factory, iron works and the Berlin University where Sanskrit was taught to a few students. The University library had rare collections of ancient books. A boat excursion along the Spray river was arranged next day. Many tiny boats joyfully floated on the rapid river. Lovers enjoyed the vernal nature fair with the multicoloured flowers. Dinners were arranged on the banks of the river. The Kodak Camera and Film factory was there on the way. S saw the process of film making. All visited the Potsdam Collective Farm where about 500 farmers lived and worked happily. All their requirements were produced there. S observed the progress of agri-horticulture. There were tube wells and rotary pumps. India must have such collective farms to solve its food problem. The Silent Palace of Frederick-II at Potsdam is worth seeing. It is a heaven of fine arts; It is tastefully greened and many coloured flowers smile around beautiful Greek and Roman statues. It seems as if it is a conference of sculptural beauty. Here lived Voltaire and here he wrote his famous works which revolutionised the political and social world. The books of Frederick and the things he used including his pen and watch are carefully preserved. The visitors have to wear new big shoes kept ready at the entrance and then go in. The next important place is the Potsdam Conference Mansion where Stalin, Churchill, Truman, Molotov and other diplomats sat to decide the destiny of the world and Germany. The articles they used, and the piano they played are still there and their seats. There is a Girls' High School in its compound now. They

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enthusiastically received the peace party and took snapshots. S saw many ballade dances and operas and circus in Berlin. Operas were wonderful. The Opera Romeo and Juliet was remarkable. S began to write operas now in Tamil. It was a very good opportunity to meet friends from all over the world. All countries were represented in the Peace Conference—Canada, Finland, Iceland, China, Tibet, Arabia, Persia, France, England, Russia, Bavaria, Rumania, Italy etc., etc.,

108. PEACE CONGRESS

The Grand World Peace Council Chamber was tastefully decorated. Near that building was the Assembly Hall of Hitler. The flags of all nations were flying there with India's flag too. Was there peace among delegates of the same country? Come and see the noise around the dinner table... Any how the word peace was often heard ! Spies had come from the other zone. They were doing their secret propaganda. S studied the European politics.

The Chinese Minister took the chair and spoke in Mandarin and it was translated into French by his lady secretary. Many spoke in French. It was convenient for S to meet many good hearts. In that material atmosphere, S dared to speak on the spiritual basis of world harmony. He was scheduled for the political and cultural council. The same humdrum talks of Ban atomic Bomb! Who heard ? No test bombs! But hundreds were exploded since then! Reunion of Berlins—not yet! There was more vanity than unity. Pacts are Tacts of Uncle Sam! National security !... can you abolish passport and visa and mutual suspicion? Bombs exploded on Bikini had poisoned the fish on the Jap-coast... Put on paper ... who takes care ? Many bombs were exploded since then.

S spoke in English and French boldly on the spiritual basis of peace. Energetic speeches were made, masterpieces of political oratory. But has politics ever achieved peace in the world? See the bloodshed after Versailles! The warning nations speak of peace now with heaps of nuclear weapons in their armaments and secret stores. Is there peace in your mind? Do two of you agree? Why this dissension among brothers of the same race ? For the heart does not unite with the mind. The tongue speaks ... the pen puts down the resolution on white papers. But our pacts are swept away by the ocean ... Peace comes from within. The soul—centre is the fountain of peace. Live in yoga with it. Cultivate universal Love. Stop the inner war waged by impatience, lust, greed, envy; then the life can be peaceful, the surroundings can be peaceful, the country can be peaceful and the world by life in tune with the Psychic Peace in the soul. Yoga is the panacea of the world shattered by race and religious prejudices and group mentalities. India has that yoga which alone can restore inner peace. Europe has the science which can expand material life. Let the Yogic Spirit and the scientific dynamism unite in harmony. Then humanity shall be re-born in a new consciousness of purity, unity and divinity, equality and fraternity...”

S sang his peace anthem to the delegates; it was circulated with translations in all languages.

On the political platform S spoke on colonial ambition taking for example Pondicherry, then held by France; Points from the speech are given here and it was translated in all languages simultaneously. The Germans, French, English, Italians, Spaniards, Chinese, Arabs and Russians heard it a la fois. Poor Hindi had no ear phone! Not a word of Hindi was written in the hall which contained letters of all languages ! S induced one of the Indian delegates to speak in Hindi and another in Urdu.

Feast, feast, feast! Pork pork pork, mutton, mutton, fishes, eggs, wine ... Alas ! how can these people maintain peace when they kill so many goats, pigs, cows, birds and fishes to glut their belly? Food reform is the first reform. He who cuts goats today, cuts human

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throats tomorrow. They called S mad when he suggested a day of fasting and prayer for world peace... There was a very big feast in the Stalin Hall where the peace groups took a lot of pork and wine and grunted 'peace peace' from the bottom of the belching stomach. Some of the delegates fell ill next day... In an amphitheatre, a big Peace Conference was held. Words were shot out vehemently against warmongers "Ho Ho Ho!..." cried the audience standing up in admiration clapping hands. S was presented with a caged-dove by a renowned danseuse. He let it fly singing "Peace for all, for all the countries Peace ... Joy for all Joy for all for all the nations Joy !" Mr. Mukerji, the Sanskrit professor in the Berlin University, gave Indian delegates a vegetable feast in his small house. The four day's drama was over. Some went home. But the Soviet Government invited some and S was one of them.

109. THE PROGRESSIVE RUSSIA.

The visit to Russia was a memorable event in the life of S. A special train with luxury compartments was arranged. The tourists were able to see notable places on the way. Frankfurt and Goethe's Garden cannot be forgotten. Faust is shown on the screen. Warsaw saw war; we saw war ruins... Let the war be ruined! What a pitiful havoc! Ukraine comes! Wheat, wheat everywhere! Eat, eat Ukraine bread big like a Marvadi turban! This rich land was devastated by the German soldiers. The Ukrainians cut the crops and burnt the rest before the Germans came. Germans harvested only ashes ! They pushed on to Leningrad where they enjoyed the beautiful Peter's spring. Volgograd was totally destroyed and it rose phoenix-like from the cinders, to drive back the barbarians ! The train stopped in Brest with a victorious Aum. It was the first to receive Hitler's bomb and the last to give him a kick. The May park was tastefully decorated with historic images. A grand feast was given and then a dance performance by Ukrainian youths and maids. They melted into one another by love and ecstasy ... Five D's were omnipresent in Europe: Ditty, Dance, Drink, Dinner, Drama. These were the pleasures that delighted the public. But they gave importance to Duty and Beauty. S melted into poems. He composed more than 500 verses during his tour in the West. The train was like a home with table for writing, a table lamp, radio, dinner on the table, a maidservant answering to the bell. S had the fortunate company of an elderly lady Pavlova who knew French and who taught him a bit of Russian and gave him all true informations. He called her "my mother." She also liked his childlike simplicity and gave him many opportunities to speak and sing on the radio and in the feasts. Mercy Pavlova! Fortunate that she did not smoke nor take Ruskaya Vodka, the favourite wine of Russians. One peg will do to make you reel. The eyes bathed in green nature on both sides; and the ears drank the resonant voice of the "Mother" full of informations. The Russian alphabets were learnt and thirty words too. They have an admixture of Greek and Slav. They are full of diphthongs. We see Sanskrit roots in some Russian terms. Eg. Narodh= people (nara., man). Zdravstui! Moscow has come! Good morning ... Children offer a bunch of roses. Elders offer smiles. The Dean of biology in the Moscow University welcomes the delegates saying "We are happy to receive you all in Moscow. You will find your stay here very agreeable. You can let us know your interests; they will be provided for. India and Russia are sister-nations of Asia. We will establish peace in a world trembling from the atomic scare..." five minutes ... and the Indian delegates reply politely accepting the hospitality of the Soviet Govt.

Palatial Moscow Hotel ... each has a palatial room with hot baths, hot tubes to dry clothes, and well-equipped beds, phone etc. S utilised it to be alone in meditation! His diet was very simple and he made the best of his stay in Russia in gathering information and

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writing it down and preparing speeches for dinners and Radios. Three ladies accompanied the party wherever they went, as guides to educate them... Every minute was education. Every night S saw an opera, a circus, a film, a marionette show or a drama... or a music party entertained the guests. Cinema was very common. The hotel had a Cinema running all day long and S saw the Festival of Youths and Siege of Stalingrad, Cinderella, Prince Igor, reels on the Life of Lenin. There is a theatre in every park, finely developed in Russia. Dance, Dance, Dance! The whole Russia dances every day and every night in parks, schools, theatres, sanatoriums! S too danced with them twice. Russia makes her citizens materially happy.

The Govt. is run by peasants and factory labourers. The Trade Union has a powerful influence everywhere. Proper, cultured men are chosen for the Soviet Councils. All are properly represented. All have one lingua franca in the Russian language and each state cultivates equally its mother tongue. The educational system of Russia is inimitable. S visited many institutions including the world famous Moscow University. Students study under state scholarships amounting to 400 roubles each per month. There is free coeducation. Both boys and girls freely mingle. They are taken to young Komsomal camps where they are initiated in the Communist Culture. There are plenty of nurses and kindergarten teachers to train children. There are children's parks, libraries, films, and camps.

There are many working churches and Masjids. But the common people follow scientific atheism. They are trained to rely upon human force. The students get very good technical and scientific education. The wonderful Moscow University was built with the cooperation of the technical students, and professors. It is an epic in coloured marble, a world of scientific glory, a monument of Russian cultural eminence. S had a long talk with the students and professors and boldly explained them the omnipresence of an Unknown Force, the pure Almighty Grace. For with out elements the science cannot go on and without Grace the elements cannot exist. He took a preserved brain and asked them 'who thought in this?' They accepted the presence of a mysterious force.

The underground Metro of Moscow is really a wonder of the world all built in marble with historical carvings. The whole Moscow can take shelter there in times of danger and give fight to the enemy efficiently and troops can march secretly. Trains go underground to all states. S saw troop movements in the Metro. Like this there are many military devices. But you must not open your mouth about the Govt. or military or atomic energy or go anywhere as you like. Keep your opinions sealed within the mind.

The Kremlin Palace with its Red star is a wonderful structure. There is a museum of the Tzar's paraphernalia, his wine cups of gold and rubies, his big golden Bibles, his gemmed robes, the Queen's gaudy luxuries which tell us why communism came; The Tzar's churches are there and golden candies; but no light, no life ... All are simply for show. The huge bell of Moscow never rang and never rings.

Lenin's museum is very interesting ... It contains all things used by him and his life history which is shown on the screen.

In Leningrad Stadium a number of interesting sports and matches were staged. Russia won in each case. S stayed in Hotel Asteria in Leningrad. He visited Scientific Institutes meant for Labour protection. They made there dust cleaners, oxygen sprayers etc. He also visited the Eastern Academy in which Sanskrit is taught and masterpieces of Asia translated. Ramayana, Gita and Manu were translated by eminent scholars. He read the Gita in the original Sanskrit while the translation of Smolensky was verified. In Leningrad there are many wonderful statues and monuments of historic importance.

The winter palace inflamed the revolutionaries there. The Tzar shot there hungry

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peasants in cold blood. The prison house where Lenin, Gorki and other leaders were shut up, is a frightful scene even today.

The grand Art Palace of Leningrad is a world of beauty and aesthetic delight. You see there thousands of lifelike paintings and sculptures, and clocks and artistic works of exquisite masters of art. The articles used by great men, statues of all Greek and Roman celebrities and many more things will take full two weeks to survey.

The Neva River bed displays thousands of lotus-like faces when the sun is warm. People throng there to play games and take a sun bath and then swim in the river.

The Peter Springs are really a wonder of the world. There are many gold statues bathing in the flowing jet springs. There are many devices there which suddenly jet out water and artificial rains the moment you press your feet there. The springs overlook the North sea. The film studio in Leningrad has done a lot to promote education and culture in the country.

In Volgograd S saw the Mammai hills where the actual battle took place and the Germans were overthrown. The Don Volga Dam has entirely changed the geography of the land. The engineering Skill of Russians has brought cities within easy reach of communications. Moscowa in Moscow is another such engineering wonder. It has removed water scarcity and facilitated navigation. A new Volgograd has risen up grander than the old. Its park is an art world where you can see dance and drama and films of educative value every evening.

Tashkent is another beautiful city noted for operas, marble works and museums. S visited the Uzbek Science College. Science is taught there in Uzbek language. He gave three songs in the Navoi theatre. He saw an opera entitled Mother India played by ace actors. He visited the Pioneers camp and Komsomol camps and he gave many speeches at dinner parties. He visited a sanatorium on the bank of a flowing river where the inmates spent happy days. They were officials come on holiday visits to recoup health by a care-free life. They take sun bath daily and swim in the river. They eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. S studied closely the Russian *Kolhoz* (Collective farm). He also visited the cotton colony stretched for miles together. Coloured clothes pour from the busy mills like torrents of rainbows. Thousands of labourers live as one family. Their health is looked after by the health-centre there. Their children are brought up in the Creche.

The tractor factory and electric installation of Volgograd with the industrial factories of Kiev make Russia invulnerable in heavy machines. Russia is self-sufficient in everything. The labourers, farmers and state servants are, of course, part of the Govt. mechanism; but they are given sufficient payment and are sent to sanatoria like Soche for holiday-making and recoupment, just as motors are sent for a checkup.

S gave a series of radio speeches in Russia. The lines selected here will give the reader the happy condition of labourers in Russia. None can know anything about the military secrets of Russia or its political intrigues. Russia is fully armed with nuclear weapons. A Major portion of Asia and Europe is with Russia. Russia engages manpower in hard work and army service and the woman power for civil services. Ladies form 70% of doctors, 60% of engineers and 50% of professors. Maternity is rewarded in Russia. A mother is called glorious, when she gets five children and heroine when she gets ten! ... She is given lump sums as reward.

Tour over, friends and Govt. servants gave a hearty farewell to the Indian delegates and rich presents too. S got a Balalaika for his French songs and music, a camera, a pair of binoculars and a purse (empty).

S had to purchase things for the roubles with him; for not a rouble can be taken away from Russia. Roubles are thrown away in the American zone. The midnight plane

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took them off to Prague and there the Russian responsibility ended. S and party had to go to Geneva on their own responsibility.

110. TOILERS OF RUSSIA

Good friends gave the Pilgrim many chances of addressing dinners, conferences and radio-listeners. The radio authorities recorded his speeches in his own room and sent his voice abroad. Here are portions from his speeches:

“I address humanity from this peaceful corner. My heart speaks to the heart of all mankind. Blessed is science developed by the human genius that a whisper from one soul can awaken a million souls all over the world. O, toilers, listen to a song :

“Drop by drop, drops silver sweat
Crop by crop gives good harvest
With sickle song and sledge’s clang
You make mankind happy ... Live long
We raise the cup to drink your health.
And your health is indeed the nation’s wealth.
We kiss your hands
O..! Noble friends!

I welcome your bold experiments and brilliant achievements that have removed poverty, ignorance, fear and slavery and have opened a new page of hope in the history of mankind. Your ideas are realistic, based on scientific truths and what you think today, the onward-world acts tomorrow. Your rational realism has brought out the best in man for the betterment of human life, East and West.

Beauty and harmony enrich your life of art and industry. The historic glory of your new adventure is painted not only on the marble walls of the Metro but on the smiling faces of your men and women. Every one says “I am happy and peaceful”. There is work and food and cloth and health and home and school for all, equal status for all.

We had the joy of seeing fifteen big towns and forty villages and collective farms. We visited art homes, theatres; we saw operas and dramas. The country is jubilant with colours, rhythms, ecstasies of song–thrills and jingling dances. A rapturous beauty animates the chisel and brush of Russian artists! Art is an expression of the national soul... The national emotion acts on the stage, dances in operas, sings in concerts and plays in films. It is the emotional enthusiasm to achieve the best that inspires your poems, paintings and historic images. Metro and Makoba, Don–Volga Dam, Tractor factory and your wonderful electric system proclaim to the world “Here is a grand nation with work for every hand and knowledge for every brain.”

The secret of your satisfaction lies in the administration which gives equal opportunities for all. Russia lives for humanity and peace! Your days are busy with industries and your nights are joyful with music and operas.

Russia has built a historic, scientific materialism which maintains an equilibrium between production and distribution. Its Proletarian Socialism has formed a fraternal family of workers united by a common human interest. S got the Soviet–land Nehru award for his poetic work Soviet–Gitanjali. The medal and prize were given to him in a mass–gathering.

111. THE POET’S PERISCOPE

(Contributed to the Soviet Review)

Russia has richly honoured me for my poems and has given me another opportunity of visiting this land of new life.

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During my two visits to the USSR, I felt I was seeing my universal ideals sculptured in the warm hearts of its people.

The Soviet Union allows no colonial conquest. It is not a land of warmongering imperialists but of peace-loving friends. Mrs. Tamara Tomberg, writer and journalist, Madame Mirdza Kempe, the famous poetess, appreciated my poems, and whatever I spoke and wrote in Latvia, Estonia and Moscow was poetry and poetry.

Mr. A. Yar-Kravchenko, the hearty joyful artist who accompanied us, drew my sketch as I sang at his request:

The face is bright.
The brush is light
The heart is warm
Like dawn-lit bloom
The life is full of charm
Smiling with lightning form.

My sojourn in the USSR from Baltic Riga to rosy Tashkent, was a rhythmic march of soul's harmony.

I met hundreds of writers whose pen had kindled ablaze the victory of this dynamic nation of happy toilers. In a writers' gathering this song gushed out of my heart:

How beautiful, how dutiful
How life is delightful
Our future is hopeful
When our souls are helpful.
With pen of fire,
Free, without fear
We bring the far, near
As friends..... debonair !

Our time dissolved in a magic dream as new friends shook hands with us and feasted us in their cosy homes cradled in the beauty of peaceful nature, fragrant with green and golden smiles.

The visit to the Tolstoy Museum in Yasnaya Polyana is a remarkable event in my life. It shall rest ever green in my memory. It is an Eden of green simplicity and rural felicity. After seeing Tolstoy's library, his table, chair, bed, paino, his vessels, dishes, dresses and even his dumbbells, I stood embracing the two tall brich trees under which the mortal remains of the great thinker lie buried. It was simple like his life—no monument, no tomb. And nature adorned it with golden flowers of the season. My friends took a photograph as I sang full of emotion:

Gandhi's spirit is speaking here
With Tolstoy, soul to soul
What they are speaking I can hear
With my heart so closely near:
When shall we see a world of peace
Where wicked, wasteful wars shall cease
Where nations are one human-fold
And all countries form a unique world
Where lovers unite like gem and gold
Where Truth is bright and love is bold.
Where bread comes out of worker's sweat
Where joy smiles out of every heart

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Where the toiler to his field goes
Kissing the lips of blooming rose,
Where existence is Muse's treat
And peace keeps on in cold and heat
Where all have work and dress and food
Where government goes on as it should
To the rhythm of the people's voice—
Such is the new world of our choice!

Our sojourn in the Baltic region in Tallinn and Riga was poetic in every respect. My soul breathed poetry with the balmy breeze of the green woodlands and the tossing waves of the vast blue expanse. Blue sky above, blue sea below, green nature around sprinkled with golden flowers !

I am a lover of Pushkin and Mayakovsky. I had a hearty conversation with the Estonian poet Mr. Smuul, a fisherman, whom the roaring waves have made a renowned poet. We spoke about Pushkin's daring voice which inspired the new life in Russia. Taking leave from him I sang:

The sea which gave you songs
Calls me there Mr. Smuul
And now my being longs
To sing to it my soul.

We crossed the famous concert fair brimming with music and dance. *Vanemuine*, the pleasure ship, was waiting for us. I danced into the ship, which was dancing in the waves, which were bringing me messages from a depth of 50 kilometres. I have had many ship-voyages in other countries. But this voyage in the Baltic had a peculiar charm. We had the company of cultured friends who were eager to taste poetry with their ears while they tasted chocolates and coffee with their mouths. We saw for miles—nature in the sky was exchanging smiles with nature in the sea. After a hearty dinner provided by the captain, a song burst out of my heart, full of the joy of the sea :

We enjoy this life lit by smiles
That shine for miles and miles
Our future hope is on sails
Blowing bugles with Victory hails !
We cross the sea of existence
In the ship of social love
Our heart is open without a fence
Like the sunlit sky above !

A couple of days at Riga were worth many days of aesthetic joy. The fishery kolkhoz and the boat voyage, the visit to small-scale industries were fine. But the most impressive part of our sojourn was the visit to the poets' feast where Mrs. Kempe was our charming host. We had met already earlier and were friends. She was waiting with fruits and drinks and cakes. She read her poem, *Ashes of Nehru*, appreciated all over India. I had a nice talk with her for she became really my sister in heart and art:

Kempe: How do you feel in Russia ?

I: I feel India in Russia. There is sympathy for India and Indian art and poetry everywhere. How do you like the poems I sent you ?

Kempe: I like the fervour and emotion in all your songs. Your peace anthem was excellent.

Work and food and clothe for all
Equal status for all

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Health and home and school for all
A happy world for all
No idle rich, no more–beggars
All are equal workers.

This is our ideal.

I: This must be the ideal of all nations. Your collective and cultural life, your economic progress and industrial expansion, your excellent educational system have enthused us. Russia has given new impetus to our industry.

Kempe: I know India and the Soviet Union are one in the policy of maintaining world peace and coexistence. Here are my poems written in this spirit.

I: Thanks; I am learning Russian and I–shall be delighted to read your poems.

People watch with wonder, the space achievements of the cosmonauts. But there is a spirit behind the modern scientific expansion of Soviet genius. That spirit has inspired a cosmic renaissance. The bright dreams of the Marxist–Leninist theory have taken shape around that spirit which Russians call *Druzhba* and we call *Friendship*.

Our farewell dinner in Moscow was an overflowing expression of this friendship. The Novosti, hosts, gave us each a fine camera with which we could take photographs. But where is the camera to photograph the friendship bubbling with delight in our hearts ? Tears mingled with our *Dosvidanyas* !

Russia is a world of new experiments, new ideologies. This land of 2,24,00,000 square kilometres with a population of 236 millions is three–fourths in Asia and one–fourth in Europe. Siberia, which was a snowy wilderness years ago, is now a land of power plants and oil fields. Russia is Asia too. It is our close neighbour and friend. I was walking in the green birch forest on the banks of the Moskva River. Boys were playing volleyball. I joined them. Then they danced. I danced with them singing joyfully.

O sing and dance, sing and dance
Our joyful days enhance
Laugh and play like floral May
Come closer everyday!
Live to love and love to live
Work and live and give
Our life is a beehive!
Soul to soul we are one
Like the sky and the sun!

When this life of *Druzhba* is extended all over the world, we can live a peaceful life, all for each and each for all. Our integrated life shall be a wedding garland of various hues strung with one love which is our soul. Then, no walled divisions or rifts shall disgrace the harmony of human ranks. No hellish blasts of death rays shall dart from the political machinations of the warmongers. Learning and wisdom, love and life, industry and commerce, heart and brain shall unite in soul's harmony to lead mankind to a happy existence.

This was the ideal of Lenin and Nehru.
No more fear, no more harm
Our Life is full of charm
Our heart throbs with the cosmic heart
In tune with soul we play our part
And render life an exquisite art!

This is the feeling that animated my muse as we took leave from friends who crowded

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around us at Tashkent. Friends gathered in the green Park in front of Hotel Tashkent. S spoke to them on the Science of Better Life for All.

“Russia is a glorious Welfare State in which all are educated and all work and share the fruit in common. To visit Russia and see its progressive plans and live with its people a few months—this is indeed a fortunate occasion and a rare privilege in one’s lifetime!”

112. A STUDY TOUR

S had a fruitful tour round the countries of West Europe. God sent him good friends as guides and provided also the means. The whole Europe lived in fear of an atomic flare-up. Thinkers in England, France, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Italy were absorbed in finding a way out of the melee of conflicting ideologies which kindled the fumes of a nuclear war.

S sat alone on the bank of the Rhone contemplating before the statue of Rousseau. Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau revolutionised the thought—force of Europe. They insisted upon a government for the people, by the people based on a social contract. Adam Smith, a Scot, insisted upon devoting the wealth of all for the good of all. Since the destruction of the Bastille by the frenzy of freedom in 1789, Europe was experimenting on new principles of socialism to make people free and happy. The liberal constitution of Count Couver who said “I cannot make a speech; but I can make Italy ” and strove to advance the prosperity of the bourgeoisie. He suggested the separation of church and state. He secretly aided the militant hero Garibaldi of the Republican party of Mazzini. The red-shirted legions liberated Italy and yet cried “Sacrifice, more sacrifice !”. The gains of their democratic front were threatened by Bismarckian autocracy. Bismarck, as the Prussian ambassador to Russia, admired the autocracy of the Tzar. He was the premier of Prussia until 1890 and he revived the days of blood and iron. Germany followed his policy and waged two world wars. The ambitions of the Kaiser and Hitler were foiled by the democratic forces led by England and America. France and Russia, by violent revolutions, tried to bring political and economic salvation to the masses. But they have not yet brought peace to humanity. Fear enhances; the riddle of existence puzzles human understanding. In spite of Rousseau’s Social Contract, Le Capital of Marx and Mill’s Liberty, and Lenin’s Communism—wars rage, people suffer, infernal flames are kindled by political passions! Hamlet said: “to be or not to be ”—but once! We have to tell it many times!...

S fell into deep contemplation. The River Rhone was mumbling a mystic secret in his ears. The gentle breeze was kissing him with the perfumed breath of rose—beds. The ruddy evening was painting the lake view with an entrancing beauty. The Pilgrim forgot himself in trance. A few minutes passed and he opened his eyes to see ten friends before him !... Ah. Dr. Marco Todeschini greeted him with Margret Gita and Schneder.

Dr: Happy rencontre!

Gita: Welcome Yogi! Venez chez ... nous ...

Yogi: Thanks, thanks, God—sent friends! ...

Yes, God sent him very good friends who felt one with his heart and ideals. They arranged for his stay and planned his tours and lectures. They published his name, his life and mission in the local papers and put up big wall—posters. They gave him bread and vegetables and milk. They printed his messages and sent them abroad. Read this wall—poster:

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FRIENDS' HALL, BARTHOLO STREET, GENEVA.

Attend Two great conferences organised under the
auspices of

SYNTHESE UNIVERSELLE, GENEVA
for the spiritual progress of humanity!...

First Conference:-

(3-7-1954).

20-30 Hrs.

“WHAT IS TRUE YOGA AND HOW TO DO IT?”

By

YOGI SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI

A GREAT INDIAN SAINT

gives you all details with demonstrations.

Second Conference:

(5-7-1954).

20-30 Hrs.

“THE UNITARY SCIENCE OF CREATION...”

By. Prof. Dr. Marco Todeschini.

(Italian Savant appreciated by Einstein)

A L L A R E W E L C O M E !....

S had very useful programmes organised by cultured friends in popular halls and clubs. His lectures and poems, (all in French) were typed, cyclostyled and circulated widely. Many meditated before him for mental peace. They put their problems before him and were satisfied with his answers. Read this paper report:

THE YOGI IN GENEVA.

We have had the immense joy of receiving the visit of one of the most eminent spiritual personalities of India—Yogi Sri Shuddhananda Bharatiar. The Yogi gave on July 3rd in the Salle des Amis de l'Instruction, a much appreciated lecture under the auspices of Universal Synthesis and again on July 6th at the Vegetarian Society under the patronage of Mr. and Mrs Futes, the worthy pioneers of many spiritual causes. Moreover, he gave several talks before cultural audiences; for instance on June 27th at the home of Mrs. Lebherz at Vandoeuvres, after having preached and communicated at the Liberal Catholic Church and on July 1st, in a saloon of the Rhone Hotel, where a luncheon was given in his honour. He also assisted Madame Cerato in her Course of Yoga Asans at 6, rue Fendt, and for three consecutive days gave numerous private audiences. His dynamic activities have thrilled us. He still finds time to dictate to several different people a complete book in French—La yoga et Le yogui (yoga and the yogi) whose publication will be undertaken by ourselves. Let us add that the Yogi, who does not need to sleep, sometimes spends his nights sitting in an armchair studying all our books, or composing magnificent poems; these, too, we hope to publish soon.

The presence in Geneva of Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati has excited great, indeed sensational interest everywhere. We who have had the joy of being with him these few weeks cannot doubt that we have been in the presence of a truly great spiritual Master of India. We had, in fact received a letter from Sri Swami Sivanandaji which said, among other things “It is with the joined hands I beg all the nations of Europe to receive, to assist, to hearken and to follow Yogi Shuddhananda, who is one of the rarest spiritual personalities of India and the most qualified to bring to the Occident the message of the Orient.”

He came out of his long dynamic silence of 25 years, with the evangel of purity, unity and divinity. He widely travelled carrying his spiritual mission to India, Ceylon,

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Malaya, Thailand, Japan and European countries. He was honoured everywhere and has a large following. He lives always in samadhi (ecstasy) and works in dynamic inner peace. He has started a Yoga Samaj to train aspiring souls in yoga and service consecrated to the realisation of a better world and happier humanity. He holds yogic camps and radiates divine energy. He wants to make human life a powerhouse of light, energy, love and beauty, peace and bliss.

Yogi Shuddhanandaji came to Geneva expressly to contact Universal Synthesis, in order to discuss the project of founding Yoga Samaj in Switzerland, that privileged country unravaged by the noxious vibrations of war and human blood, where he might create a centre of meditation for peace and train a few aspirants in yoga. The great Sage of India has, moreover, offered his collaboration to Universal Synthesis, undertaking henceforth the functions of a coeditor. Our reader will thus have the delight of drawing their knowledge of yoga from the fountainhead and being able to study the Wisdom of the East—Wisdom supreme and as yet little known in the West” Mr. A. V. K. Swamy M.A., Brussels, who graced the grand function in the Hall of Rhone writes:

“From Belgium, we motored to his residence in Geneva. He sang his French songs to the accompaniment of a guitar. He took his bath and then sat in deep Samadhi for over two hours. A reception had been arranged for us that evening in the Hall of Rhone. Swamiji thrilled the audience by his oratory. His message was inspiring and the organisers when proposing a vote of thanks, said that it reminded them of Swami Vivekananda’s addresses before the American audience. He is today our saint, writer, seer, poet, sage, orator and love incarnate.”

S studied the trend of Modern Life and Thought in Paris, London, Brussels, Oslo and Rome. Paris on the Seine is the cradle of civilised Europe with its art, beauty and majesty. Notre Dame cathedral, Pantheon, Eiffel Tower, (300 metres high) Arc de triomphe, Museums, the Public Library, Academe Francaise which cultivates literature and sciences, operas, theatres, cabarets and so many attractions engage one’s attention. S was not interested in ancient monuments. He looked for things useful for the present and the future. He studied, how the language, literature and sciences were enriched by savants in the universities and academies. He attended theatres and saw there Racine’s *Atalie*, Corneille’s *Cid* and Moliere’s *Misanthrope* enacted. His great interest was in the Sorbone which is the seat of all faculties of letters and sciences. It is the brain of Paris. This university has produced great souls like Madame Curie. If there is another life for him, S would certainly study science here.

The good Swiss friends who took him to Ville de Neuve and Paris accompanied S to London too. London had grown enormously on the banks of the Thames always busy with shipping trade. You see the majesty of this world-city as you walk along the wide Queen Victoria Road which leads to the Thames. You see the clock tower, Big Ben, St. Paul’s Cathedral which are memoirs of the skill of Christopher Wren. The vast dome of St. Paul’s echoes around even the slightest whisper. S saw the war ruins around this wonderful Cathedral. He passed through Trafalgar Square, Charing Cross, St James’ Park and saw White Hall, the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and its cruciform structure. He saw the memoirs of Milton and Chaucer in the Poet’s Corner. He spent his time in the study of some historical records. Walking through Waterloo Palace he reached Piccadilly Circus where he saw the whole modern world and its peculiar manners and customs. S walked along Milton street (which was the old Grub street) where poor poets like Francis Thompson and Goldsmith wandered. He saw the bomb destructions around the famous Guild Hall. He saw the big White Hall (23 acres) which was taken away from Cardinal Wolsey by Henry VIII. He remembered Wolsey’s word: ‘Be just and fear not’. He saw Royal Buckingham Palace and the Constitution Hall. He visited the Scout Headquarters

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near it. He saw the feverish activities of the newspaper offices in the Fleet street. He visited the Atheneum and saw the book world. He saw the busy B. B. C. House and went to Kensington Gardens where he saw Albert Museum, Science Museum, Lincon's Inn and attended a fine film lecture on 'The Atomic Age'. He saw the mansions of famous artists and thinkers like Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell. He had the rare opportunity of visiting Stratford-on-Avon to see Shakespeare's home and also Othello enacted in the local theatre. He visited the great centres of culture like Cambridge and Oxford. Ten days in England enabled him to learn and know a good deal about the trend of the modern world. He admired the duty oriented character of the Englishman.

Europe is a hedonic heaven. Science rules the west and industry pools resources. But power politics fools it and hot war cools it dead... Europe is very costly. You require Rs. 100 per day. Where to go? There is no means of earning to a foreigner. Rooms are rare. Hotels are prohibitively costly. Only great savants are respected and given a platform. Ordinary persons cannot make a figure. Your books do not sell there. They buy their own publications. You can serve in hotels and homes as menial servants. S thought of settling in Europe. A Swiss lady liked the suggestion. S can live as poet and Yogi. But is it his aim in life? Then too there are restrictions and the cost of living is high!... So... off... Gone, seen, been... hence—onward Pilgrim!

Friends organised a big religious conference on the banks of Lake Lemon. They posed many questions; His answers are contained in 'Lights on Better Life'. "Man spoke to mankind. The voice of man did not touch human hearts. Prophets spoke; but man made religions around their name and lived a divided life of oppositions. With all his moon-hitting tel-stars, man cries for peace and peace.

113. THE GURU SWAMI

Thanks to the good services of the Saiva Siddhanta Sangam (SSS) of Durban. S was able to spend three happy months of spiritual tour in the S. African Republic. The Sangam was established by Sri Siva Subramania Guru Swamigal, an inspired genius. He was born on 10-5-1910 to Vira Saiva parents who drew their descent from Veera Brahmamu, the author of Kala Jnana Tatvam. His parents died while he was yet a child and God parented him. The child burst into laughter when the Camphor light was waved before Siva Subramania Swami in the temple at Dundee. He picked up the knowledge of Tamil and English under the guidance of one K. Muthusamy Govender. The youth lived by weaving carpets and gently he wove also verses in Tamil. He started a Tiruvalluvar Dharma Patasala and taught Tamil to young boys and girls Then he started a Samarasa Sanmarga Sangam to preach Saivism. His lectures and songs inspired devotees. He contemplated alone in green parks and under trees. He once had the vision of Siva who inspired him with the idea of starting the Saiva Siddhanta Sangam in Durban. He was also an adept in Yoga. Once he remained buried underground for more than an hour controlling his breath. He closely followed the Catholic mission in raising a Saiva Temple and holding weekly congregations there. His devotee Umapati Sivam secured the present building for the Temple in 37, Derby St, Durban. The sanctum was bright with oil lights lit before an image of Sivalingam containing Shakti in its bosom with Murugan and Nataraja on the pedestal. Karunananda, another fervent disciple was instrumental in starting 75 branches of the SSS and also in building a magnificent shrine in Umhlatuzana township in collaboration with the dynamic police officer K. Govender. Karunananda's son, Arunachalam is the enthusiastic secretary of the SSS to day. Umapati had a lovely daughter, Mangayarkarasi whom Guruswami gave in marriage to a lovely soul who is the present leader and Master of the SSS—Swami Sivananda Navalar. Guruswami

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married Parvati and had two boys. But he was not attached to his family. He relinquished even his job and dedicated himself fully to Saivism. His silver voice and golden words, his emotion and sacred mission created a spiritual commotion in the country and thousands followed this saivite mystic. He was forty three when his soul left the body on 5-5-1953 uttering **Aum Namasivaya**. That soul vibrates to day in thousands of loving hearts. The Sangam has vastly spread its wings. There is a press, a publication forum, film division, school, dispensary, congregation halls, vans for propaganda, an army of Saiva missionaries. They wear white gowns with a blue sash round the waist and a rudraksha mala round the neck which has a triangular pendent showing a Lingam. Every home has a lingam before which a light burns and prayers are told morning and evening by the inmates. With fervent souls like Sivananda, Mangayarkarasi, Brahmananda, Anjali and Arunachalam–Mariammal (Call them **Sibramam**) and the president Govender, SSS has a strong appeal to modern youths. Guru Swami lives today in the heart of dedicated followers.

114. JOHANNESBURG

The pilgrim had already seen Egypt and the Nile regions. After completing the difficult travel documents and paying the guarantee fees, he got the permit message from Pretoria. S left Bombay by the East African Airways at 4 am. on the 6th Oct. 1972 and reached Nairobi, the capital of Kenya at about 9.30. The BOAC bound to Jo'burg had already gone and so he had to stay in the lounge for a day. He made friends with some Kenyans in the airport who furnished him with useful informations about Kenya and Kenyatta, its leader who liberated the country from the British in 1963 by starting the KANU (Kenyan African National Union) and the MAV MAV agitation. With due permission they took him for a sight seeing too, Kenya and the Swahili language have made impressive progress after independence. Next morning at about nine, the B.O.A.C (British Overseas Airways Corporation) landed like a graceful swan; the pilgrim wished "*Ve ve tu sana, azandemno* (You are all very good; thank you)" to his Kenyan friends and got into the plane and sat conveniently among English Friends. Two of them going to the Gold mines of Jo'Burg became his friends. They gave him a brilliant picture of the Golden City. The BOAC dinner was very palatable and more palatable was the talk of the English friends. The plane crooned into **Jan Smuts Air Port** at 3 p.m. and smiling faces greeted him with garlands. Phillip Natesan and Arunachalam were there and the generous Lala Vallab. The Custom officer took him to the VIP ward, finished the routines in three minutes and gave him the Entry Permit, for Johannesburg was the gateway to S. Africa. This international port handled more than 1.5 million passengers per year. Friends took him to the Friends' Hotel adjoining the Port. S finished his ablutions and meditation, took fruits and nuts and milk while others had their repast. Then a fruitful causerie gave him an idea of the country, people, the places of interest and his programme.

The South African Republic governed and developed on modern lines by the White brain and the Non–white labour is rich in natural resources. It has a population of about 18 millions of which 45% is urban and 55% rural. The Cape region between the Indian and the Atlantic ocean forms three fifths of the Republic; Transwall 1/4, Natal 7% and Orange Free State 11%. Pretoria is the capital and Cape Town the legislative centre. Johannesburg, Durban, Pieter Maritzburg, East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town are the important towns scheduled to welcome the Pilgrim besides many other smaller places. Towns are occupied by the Whites (the English, Dutch, Germans, Jews, Japs and Chinese) and the Non–Whites live apart, apartheid. Zulus, Bosutas, Pondes, Sesetaes and Swahilis go by the name, *Buntus*. They are the natives and they live in reserves. They get modern education and become doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors and machinists. They come on migratory basis and work in mines and factories. They have their hotels and compounds. They can work and go to their reserved places. The coloured people born to

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Whites and Non-whites work in white owned farms; they are treated as an appendage to the Whites and they are given a particular area. Next come Indians who have no citizenship. The indentured-Indians, especially Tamils and Andhras 300 in number, were taken to Durban on 13-10-1860 in a paddle Boat called SS. Thuro, 217 ft long, weighing 1970 tons. Thuro reached Durban 113 years ago, 16-11-1860. Then came farmers, labourers, artisans from Madras, Bihar, Oudh. Twenty five years after came Gujaratis and Kathiavadis and settled here as traders and artisans. Indians live today under reformed conditions. They speak English, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi and Gujarati and preserve their ancient culture taking what is best in the European culture.

ROUND JO' BURG

Lala's car took S round the gold-city of fine roads and flowing traffics. The city council has well planned the high soaring expansion of this enterprising Town. Passing through magnificent skyscrapers, we come to Rand mines, the treasure field of S.Africa. After a chat with the Buntus there, we stroll on the banks of the Klips River; we visit the grand observatory, the Rhodes Park, swimming pools, Planetarium, Art gallery, Central Library, Health homes, and go round the famous Witwatersrand University and drive to Lenasia where Indians are allowed to live. A peep was also made into Seweto, homing 600000 buntu labourers. Phillip Subramaniam, the brother of Ph. Natesan lodges S and party conveniently. Friends and officers come for interviews. Meetings are arranged in big halls-in the town hall, community hall, in the high school, in Pretoria and the neighbouring Indian settlements. Demonstration lectures on Asans, pranayama, meditation concentration, lectures on Saints and sages, on Universal religion etc, were well attended.

Manifinger, the Jewish Yogi arranges a lecture to Whites in his spacious home. His whole family is dedicated to Yoga. Dr. A. Simon holds a talk on Judaism. Aged friends of Gandhiji like Selash Hillbrow meet him. But the Tolstoy farm created by Gandhiji is no more. Miss Pamela leads S and party to the Mayor J.C. Lenmer. The meeting was organised by Ph. Natesan. The councillors sat with him on the dinner table. After a good repast, S spoke on the stupendous brain of the Whites that has created the city and the manpower of Indians and Buntus that has achieved it. He pleaded for a fair treatment of the hard-working Indians who have adapted S Africa as their Motherland. "Feel for them and heal their fear complex. The thinking brain and the feeling heart must promote unity of consciousness and universal existence must be a song of soul's symphony." Photos were taken and the Mayor presented him with a big volume of the Jo'Burg Saga. The same day in Pretoria, S met the secretariat officers and spoke to them about the condition of Indians in S. Africa "We feel and we will do our best" said they. After a mammoth meeting in the Indian area of Pretoria we took off to Durban...

DURBAN

The plane touched the Durban port at 6 p.m. A grand reception was organised by Sivananda Navalar. Navalar's home was actually his home, with a Cosy room for meditation writing and reading. Swami Brahmananda and his dynamic wife Anjali stood looking for an opportunity to help the Pilgrim. Secretary Aru and his wife Mari cheerfully cooperated in his programmes. His dress, food and routines were the same as in Madras. Visitors were seen at 10 am, and 5 p.m. Lectures were given after 6-30 p.m. in spacious halls. They were based upon his Yoga For All, Secrets Of Yoga, Better Life, Gospel Of Perfect Life, and Bharata Shakti. Quotations were given from ancient hymns of inspired saints. A music party followed his tunes. Musical discourses on saints and Saiva Siddhanta at-

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tracted large audience. His special songs were printed and circulated. Two cars were at his disposal and a film division. All his lectures were taped then and there.

A grand reception was given to S in the Durban Public Hall. Here are cuttings from leading dailies of Natal:

“The Maharshi Kavi Yogi jetted into Durban and addressed a capacity multiracial crowd at the Durban City Hall on 8th Oct, 73. His voice had a majestic attraction and his language a sweetness that appealed to the heart. “Brothers and sisters of the Cosmic Soulhood, I am a pilgrim of love.” said he, “travelling towards the New Dawn of Cosmic soulhood singing songs on One God, One better world and One transformed humanity. My heart aspires with Tagore to mingle with the hearts of all nations. I was longing to see this country sanctified by the foot prints of Mahatma Gandhi who prepared here the blueprint of Free India. Life is a breathing book of ages; each leaf is needed to make the whole book. Life is an orchestra of varied notes and instruments. Each artist must play his instrument and contribute his genius to the collective harmony of the musical crescendo. Every soldier in an army faces the maelstrom of the sanguine battle to bring victory to the national flag. In a public Library each reads his chosen book; let each follow his religion or conscience and live amicably with the brotherman. One electric current manifests as light, heat, air, warmth, sound, coolness; even so One Truth manifests as religions and philosophies. Let us unite in the Spirit of One Cosmic humanity. Just as several parts of a watch work by one key–force, the universe of beings live by one spiritual force. All Jivas are one in Siva. To live in tune with Siva is Yoga for the Jiva ... A gnostic equilibrium unites both; we call it Jnanasambandam. Every running river flows into one ocean; every living soul mingles with one God. When we are conscious of this fundamental unity of spiritual consciousness, we can see one humanity living in tune with one God in one better world. Then we can sing “Peace for all; joy for all...” The Maharshi wants to transform Science by Yoga. He gave a vivid picture of the world tension. “A spark in the international feuds shall blazon Alpha hell fire to destroy mankind”. He quoted several scientists and saints and said, “the seat of life is Love alone”.

The Leader wrote “The Maharshi has a remarkable knowledge of sciences and literature and scriptures. Dome wrote “The spiritual culture of the East has a congenial synthesis with the scientific intellectualism of the West. He has a first hand knowledge of the Eastern and Western systems of Philosophy. This modern mystic finds a link between S. Africa and the ancient Tamil Nadu.”

All the leading papers gave a succinct account of his life and Yogic attainments.

The Natal University lecture was attended by the Whites in large numbers. S spoke on “Yoga for the Modern world” with demonstrations. He answered many questions Dr. Poynton, the Professor of Para Biology presided and paid high compliments to his scholarship and scientific knowledge. He had many interviews with S.

Lama Anakarika Govinda and his wife Gautami Govinda were then in Durban delivering lectures. S met them and had a very interesting talk on the *Dumo Yoga* of Tibetan Tantricks which sublimated the vital force. The Lama appreciated his Gospel of Perfect life. Lectures were daily arranged in the Gujarati–Hall, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Tamil Fedaration, Tamil Vedic Hall, in the Inter religious society, in all Temple halls and very often in the Saiva Siddhanta Sangham Halls. Excursions were arranged at week ends to coastal villages, waterfalls, and hill views. Lectures in Tongott, Stanger, Binoni, Isipingo, in the Arulpa Kazhakam, Rama mandir, Ramakrishna Mission and the Sivananda Ashram were well attended. S held Yoga classes too to aspiring students. Mr. Tony and Francisco learnt yoga quickly. The Indian Council met him and discussed with him about the possibility of renewing better relationship between India and S. Africa. Dr. BM. Naidu, the savant, JN. Reddy, the gem of Durban, RG. Pillai the Education officer and the directors of colleges accepted his suggestions. Indians must not leave S.Africa. Their destiny is here. They must

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get good modern technical education and start all possible industries. The Indian University and the Sastry College must give students technical and scientific training along with academic education. Tamils must learn their mother tongue. Science and Yoga must unite in their life. An **African Art House** shall be raised in the Yoga Samaj grounds to train S.African students in Tamil, Saivism, Siddha Medicine and fine arts. A deputation of chosen leaders must wait upon the Indian Govt. to discuss means of reunion and friendship between the two Republics.

S visited the Gandhi Settlement and met there Susila Gandhi, the wife of Manilal Gandhi. He saw the Gandhi museum and the old treadle and press which printed the "Indian Opinion". He addressed the gathering in Hindi and visited places of Gandhian interest, like Dandee, Ladysmith, Pieter Maritzburg, etc. Some old people gave personal reminiscences of Gandhian Passive resistance.

A very grand meeting was organised in the Town Hall of Pieter Maritzburg. S gave a musical discourse on Universal Saivism quoting profusely from ancient hymns. Many colour photos were taken and a feast was given by S.S.S friends there. S laid the foundation of the SSS temple there and took leave. After visiting Unzinto and Swaziland, S and party made an adventurous trip towards Cape Town, 800 miles from Durban. They reached Port Elizabeth at night. Mr. Vandyar, the fruit merchant received them and showed around the big port and arranged a well attended meeting in the Mariamman and Subramanya temple Hall built at a cost of Rs 10,0000. There was folk dance and art display before S spoke on "The Miracles achieved by Devarams ." Next morning the party drove to East London, a big commercial centre. Gujarati devotees welcomed him in the spacious town hall. Next morning there was a gathering of Europeans who posed questions on Yoga and Universal Religion. Lalita O Reelly got meditation from him and promised to raise a Yoga Samaj there in a farm. Now, straight away to Cape Town.

CAPE TOWN

Blessed be the good V. T. Pillai and his family and The Ladies Association of Cape Town! S and party went round the magnificent Cape Town enjoying its luminous Beauty. The University, the Legislative Council Buildings, factories, workshops, are all seen everywhere. But the point where the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans meet and mingle is a sight of Nature's deep majesty. The Table mountain provides a spectacular background to the grand Cape colony.

We are lifted up the Cape Point Peak, by the flying Dutchman and we came to the fairest and the most stately height. Behold there the Vascodegama peak on the False bay. Up the peak on a polished rock is set up a compass which shows all the capitals of the world and all ports marked with distance from the Cape Of Good Hope. We stayed on the top for three hours seeing with the binocular the mystery of Nature around. Coming down, we saw the light house of 19 million candle power flashing light for 23 miles. A huge cave is seen on the False Bay side; its mouth is 40ft in diameter. There are tidal swimming pools on the way and monuments of the Portuguese navigators Bartholmio Dias and Vascodegama who pioneered the sea route to the East round the Cape. The fauna and flora reserves have been preserved carefully by the Govt. Meditation up the mountain peak was a joy for all the fifty visitors. Some Dutch and French people posed questions on Yoga and the answers were recorded. The party came down with plenty of photographs. It was a well spent day in the Pilgrim's life.

In the Cape Town Hall packed with Indian and European aspirants, S spoke on Sama Yoga demonstrating easy Asans, pranayama, bhandas, mudras, concentration and meditation technics and explained clearly purity, unity and divinity of life in tune with the Spirit that is the core of our being. The noble V. T Pillai and the members of the Ladies Association gave us a moving send off. The plane carried S to Kimberly.

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KIMBERLY

Mr. G.N. Naidu, president of the Siva Temple and architect of the Gandhi memorial Hall, a gem of Kimberly along with his wife Jagadambal and a fine Jewish gentleman whom S called Liberal Solomon (This gentleman booked our air tickets), the Gujarati friends who were businessmen welcomed S and lodged him conveniently. The first day was spent in addressing meetings in the Gandhi Hall, Siva Temple and Hindu religious league etc. The Divine Life Society provided accompaniments for his songs. Next day S visited the Synagogue and had an interesting talk with the Rabbi in charge, on Talmud and Thora. Judaism accepts only one God—Jehova and makes no image for him. It insists on moral purity and prayer and charity. Shun evil; seek good; Commit no murder, adultery, stealth; do not lie, cheat, curse; do not profane the name of God. Walk honestly and safely. Depart from wrath. Fear sins. Let your yes be a truthful yes and your no, a truthful no. None is God except God Himself. Do not eat anyone's bread without paying for it. The world is made better by everyman improving his conduct. The highest wisdom is Kindness. Live within your means. Such are the teachings of Judaism. S attended the Temple service and the Rabbi presented him with a copy of the Divine Prayer Book. "The Lord is with me and I will not fear" is the refrain of the Thora.

Then S visited the famous Diamond mines. The Europeans in charge of it welcomed him and showed him around. He saw how the precious stones were dug from deep holes cut into very hard rocks. The first diamond rush began on the banks of the Orange and Vaal rivers. Mr. Rhodes first discovered a methodical way of digging out diamonds from wells cut deep into rocks. Mr. Earnest and Mr. Harry earnestly undertook diamond digging in De Beers mine and in four other mines more than 400 metres deep. Bultfontain, Dutoitspan, Wesselton, and Kofflefontain mines gave good results. Drilling of blast holes in chambers and loading trucks and pulling them up are difficult jobs achieved by the strong Buntus and Indian labourers. S saw with awe and surprise how diamonds come out of very deep wells dug in rocks and how the labourers dare deep down the bowels of the rocky earth to recover diamonds from volcanic pipes. He saw also the treatment plant and the polishing and cutting of the precious stones. He got a sample of the diamond rock and took leave after a warm talk with the directors.

S visited some houses to see patients and recommend remedies. Next day, at about 2 pm the plane took S and party to Jo' Burg and thence to Durban. It was a fruitful and wonderful journey and pages can be written about the travel experiences. Let God bring S many such opportunities of studying Nature and human feature.

LAST DAYS IN DURBAN

Busy programmes engage the Pilgrim in Durban and its suburbs. Swami Sahajananda, the saint of silent dynamism, a lovely soul who mans the intricate Heidelberg quality presses and the photolithography singly and produces deluxe editions of Sivananda's works, promised to publish some of the works of S, and he is a man of his word. S has given him some manuscripts and hopes to give him more and more. Swamiji gave S many opportunities of addressing the Sat Sang in that peaceful resort well kept and managed by the devotees.

Mr. G. N. Naidu one day took food with S after attending his lectures. S told him about the need of bringing out The TamilVeda containing inspired hymns with English translation. "How much will it cost? Rs 4000 ... Promised. The magnanimous G. N. Naidu kept his instant promise instantly. The money was paid to SSS who are in charge of publications. Mr. M. V. Pather of Isipingo is a fervent soul with a large heart. His heart tickticks in the Roamer showing time on the wrist of S. How can I forget Dr. Dinadayal, when I sit in meditation before Nataraja morning and evening ? Every day S reads the Colliers Encyclopedia and every day, his heart thanks Swami Sivananda Navalar. O Brahmananda,

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gratitude to your timely help. The National Panasonic records daily holy songs. O Arun, Your Karun is unforgettable. O, V. S. Ayyar, O Madurai, how warm is your heart... Let God's will prevail in us all and do what is good for humanity.

115. RADIO PROGRAMMES

The Kartikai day was effulgent with lights and lights. S gave a musical discourse on Murugan and how He defied hostile asuras. The midnight rang in the new year—1973, S sang “Happy New Year, nineteen seventy three is here. Gone all fear, give good cheer—souls dear”. There were excursions and picnics and farewell functions in which all the VIPs of Durban took part and made speeches, Dr. B.M. Naidu, G. N. Naidu, J. M. Reddy, Bulabai, R. G. Pillai etc etc. Mr Devar arranged for a Radio Interview and then a programme on Yoga For All in the interview. S recounted how he enjoyed Nature and people of this sweet soil. The brain of the Whites and the brawn of the Non Whites have made this country beautiful and dutiful. The psychology, ecology and the structural character of different races show a new evolution. By improving the technical and academic education by encouraging new industries and discoveries we must solve the problem of unemployment. By a better collective cooperation we must build a social unit giving scope and hope for each individual. The country has vast natural resources yet undiscovered. Science must discover them and build up new flourishing industries. They asked about his life, how he acquired so many languages, how he became a poet, a Yogin and all their questions were suitably answered. The following speech “Yoga For All” gives the reader a short account of the Sama Yoga which S practised since his boyhood. SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (Indian Programme recorded on 4-1-73 for Saturday Mirror)

“YOGA FOR ALL”

We have great pleasure in broadcasting this speech recorded by our distinguished visitor Maharshi Kavi Yogi...

Yoga is a practical Gospel of Perfect life in tune with the Divine Spirit that is the fountain of peace, power and bliss in us all. It is a synthetic force that unites all in the harmony of the soul. Through psychophysical exercises (Asans and pranayam) it strengthens our nerves and gives us a strong, virile, luminous body hale and healthy. It stimulates hormones in our endocrines and energises active living. It brings peace and equipoise in the mind by stimulating gnostic equilibrium. It awakens the cosmic energy dormant in the psychic plane and accords a will to do and achieve the mission of human existence. The heart of a yogin vibrates with Divine love. His brain is ablaze with supreme wisdom developed by meditation, introspection and cosmic consciousness. He sees all in his self and the self in all. Yoga holds the key to inner treasures.

Friends, be yogins now: 1) Eat good vitamin food to the hunger point; drink fruit juice, milk and honey and warm water. 2) Be pure in thought word and deed. 3) Stimulate gnostic equilibrium and inner equipoise by ingathering the wandering mind. 4) Do Pranadharan, Jayasan, Sarvangasan and matchyasan, rhythmic breathing and pranayam for fifteen minutes daily. 5) Relax your nerves by Santi Asan heaving breath from the abdomen 6) Keep the inspiration and respiration going on to the rhythm of Aum Aum. 7) Take sun bath, then whole bath rubbing the skin inch by inch with a wet towel. 8) Wear clean clothes and sit before the Sun or a lamp. Burn a piece of camphor and concentrate on the flame repeating Aum SUDDHA SAKTI (Aum Pure Almighty Grace) for two minutes. 9) Do the same *mantra* in a rosary 108 times. 10) Then close your eyes and fix meditation in the heart or in the brain imagining the Light within you. 11) Read a holy book for ten minutes and live its teachings. This is Yoga for all. (Sama Yoga)

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I is the Soul, God is the Goal.
To God yoke the Soul, This is yoga for all.
dankie, tot Siens, (thank, good bye)

116. A MOVING FAREWELL!

The final day was a scene of moving emotional tears. The farewell function was very grand. Swami Venkatesananda graced the hall and said in a touching speech “I see Sivananda in Shuddhananda”. J. N. Reddy presided and Dr. Naidu, G. N. Naidu, Bulabai and several VIPS addressed words from their hearts. The crowning item of the day was the dance–thrill of **Jayalaxmi** arranged by the broad–hearted Bobby. She danced the Harati song of S and finished the remarkable function with “Peace For All” dance. S had no words to express the fruitful joy of his three months’ tour which shall be remembered for years. “I leave this sweet soil and its sweet people, carrying sweet memories that shall sweeten my life unto the last. I have the sight and insight to see a great future for this flourishing country. You have given me a life–work which I shall fulfil progressively. I carry your smiles for miles and miles.”

Next morning after Puja S took his milk, took only Nataraja with him and drove to the Air Port where hundreds had gathered to bid him bon voyage. S sang his farewell song as he slowly walked to the plane casting lingering looks upon emotional faces behind:

I live in you; you live in me;
We live in God; God lives in all.
Love is His name–Light is His form
Heart is His home–Nama Sivaya AUM.
Gather all in peace–pray for His Grace.
His grace is our wealth; His joy is our health,
We live in Him–He lives in us
Life is a kiss–Of His pure bliss.
Conscious of His call–In soul unite all.
And play singing Aum, Nama Sivaya Aum.

The plane takes off. But what can take off from memory the memorable SSS, SIBRAMAM Jo'Burg..Jan Smuts Air Port...enfin! Ph. Natesan, Mani and Lala Vallab with his wife all stand there. The final meeting is in the Friend’s Hostel... friends of rare faith gather there. They promise a press for the pilgrim. S promises good progress in his service to these lovely souls...Again, emotion. The plane is in motion ... Now, straight to Mauritius.

115. TEN DAYS IN THE GREEN HEAVEN

Happy days in Africa continued ... The East African Airways touched Mauritius at 5 p.m. on the 8th January. The noble A. V. Chettiar MP., received him and took him straight to the VIP room. Other ceremonies quickly finished. Nataraja and the pilgrim got into the car of Mr. Chettiar. Pandit Arunachalam, the Director of Tamil Studies accompanied them. Straight to Sivananda Ashram, raised so finely by Swami Venkatesananda. He saw S already in Durban with his White followers and requested him to accept the hospitality of his Ashram. Yes, the Pilgrim stayed in the very room of Swamiji and the smiling Panchali and her friends looked to his convenience. The busy programme started with a Radio interview and a speech with Songs. They were broadcast simultaneously. His arrival was announced and all papers published his life–sketch in French. Mr. Chettiar MP., a dynamic leader, is the president of the Hindu temples. He organised meetings in temples and schools. S spoke mainly in French which is known to all there. Next day Mr. Chettiar led him for interviews with the Governor Sir. A. L. Williams,

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Ram Gulam the Premier, Ringadoo, the finance minister, Y. R. Dhawan, the Indian High Commissioner and many other important persons of Mauritius. They were much pleased with the Spiritual Socialism explained in his Gospel of Perfect Life. The same day Mahatma Gandhi Institute arranged a big meeting for him in the Queen Elizabeth College hall. The elite of the island attended the meeting. The Hon'ble R. Jomadar, Minister for Education presided. The secretary introduced the speaker giving a short sketch of his life. The Pilgrim spoke on The Message of India to the Modern World! Message of India comes from the heart of a sage of spiritual courage. India's message is embalmed in the Vedas and The Gita. It is a collective life in tune with the inner spirit. A life of purity, unity and divinity. In the modern times, such a life in tune with the Infinite has been personified in three sages. 1) Mahatma Gandhi, who was a supreme Karma Yogin 2) Sri Aurobindo, whose life was a surrender and dedication to Sri Krishna. He reached the pinnacle of Bakti Yoga 3) Ramana Maharshi, who was a supreme Gnana Yogin. The Pilgrim dilated upon the life and message of modern saints quoting profusely from the Gita and the Upanishads. Gandhiji once told him that the essence of the Gita and the Ramayan was '**Bolo Ram Karo Kam.**' The Gita maintains 'whatever you do, do it as a consecration to me' India's message to the world is love in the heart, knowledge in the brain and a life of dedication to purified action.

His lecture was broadcast on the Radio and a Television programme too was arranged. Mr. Chettiar arranged functions in Port Louis daily. Pandit Arunachalam recorded many songs and arranged lectures before his teacher's Association. The cheerful disciples of Swami Venkatesanandaji arranged Yoga lectures and demonstrations daily to aspirants who were Chinese, Europeans, Hindus and Muslims. Every minute was utilised in a useful service.

Mauritius is a green paradise. It was born of a Volcano. The crater is still seen. The Isle is 40 miles long and 50 wide covering a space of 720 Sq miles. It is 500 miles from Madagascar. It has serene landscapes and majestic mountain views. It is a speck in the world map, but a gem. The Dutch-French and the English ruled over it and in 1968 it became free with its own flag. The French language is still prevalent there and a new language called Creole has grown there—a mixture of French, English, Dutch and Indian. There are 830000 people and they come from all continents so that it is now a mosaic of races, cultures and languages. It is at the crossroads of civilisation. A.V. Chettiar has a majestic mansion in Port Louis. It is a humming seaport with a high mountain background and majestic buildings, colourful with flowers and fruits. 140000 people live in it and it is the administrative and business hub of the fairy Isle. Maurice is a poem of beauty and harmony cradled in the rhapsody of the Indian Ocean. Thanks to the angels of Sivananda Ashram, the Pilgrim's French poems were widely circulated cyclostyled. A rousing farewell address was given to him and a purse of about Rs1500. French papers published interviews with the Pilgrim and let us give one here:

LES SEMINAIRES

A great Yogi and Poet, Maharshi Shuddhananda Bharati is a calm cheerful dynamic personality, a linguist, speaks French fluently and is a poet in French too. He was in deep meditation for three hours in lotus pose within his room. It seemed he was self-immersed absent to the external world. Then a gentle AUM. He came out smiling with welcome and our interview went on. His French is sweet and symphonic.

He: Many people here, men and women practise yoga for health, They do some asans and pranayam. Is that all yoga, Swamiji?. What is Your system of Yoga. Has it any report to modern science?

Yogi: There are many planes. Each plane has a system of Yoga. Mine is a Yoga of

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purity unity and divinity. It is a synthesis of modern science and inner-communion which is life in tune with the spirit. Science must be harnessed to constructive life expansion. It can solve economic problems. By inner-communion and meditation one can attain peace and self- equipoise. Life must be an efflorescence of the inner spirit which is a fountain of peace and energy.

He: Is Yoga a science or a mystic something ? Has it life-value ?

Yogi: Yoga is a psychic science just as physics and chemistry are material sciences. Life itself is Yoga. When you do your duty with a spirit of dedication, you are a Yogin. Yoga awakens the soul force, the inner dynamism.

He: We know you have written hundreds of books in several languages. How was it possible for you ?

Yogi: By silent ingathered meditation and self equipoise, the Book of Knowledge opens in you. My works are pages from that great inner book which is an endless treasure of wisdom.

He: I am interested to know some of the great men that have inspired you and also some of the great poets.

Yogi: I draw inspiration from the heart-dweller always. But Sri. Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Gandhiji, Vivekananda, Tagore, Romain Rolland, Bernard shaw, Betrand Russel—these eight have influenced my thought force. Shakespeare, Shelly, Milton, Kalidasa, Kamban, Goethe, Racin, Moliere, Corneille, Victor Hugo and Anatole France—these ten have influenced my style.

He: What is your special contribution to humanity ? You seem to be universal and versatile. But How will mankind remember you in future ?

Yogi: Spiritual Socialism—a collective life of humanity living in purity, unity and divinity of cosmic soulhood—That is my contribution to the thought-world and this has been woven into an immortal epic of Cosmic Souls called BHARATA SAKTI. I am translating it into English now.

He. We expect it soon. What is your impression of this island ?

Yogi : (composed a Verse in French and here is the English translation).

Thy green and golden beauty
Perfumes my ecstasy
Angelic Mauritius
So precious, so gracious
Sweet in land, rich in hand
A saga of things good and grand!

This is the first soil in Africa enriched by Indian labour. For six months the Pilgrim was immersed in compiling the Tamil Veda and the 'Learn-Tamil readers' and Mantramala for the African friends and then he flew to Italy, France and Brazil on a mission of Yoga and Self-culture. The world Yoga Conference at Saopaulo, Brazil organised by Madame Maria Helana gave him an opportunity to demonstrate his system of Sama Yoga with new asans, inner pranayam and meditation technics and also to address the remarkable conference on the Saints of modern days with whom he had personal contacts. The pilgrim has been invited for a wide tour in Australia and America. But he has entered into silence for a discovery from within something which shall be revealed when the Time spirit calls for it. Au revoir outer world and outer life. Now inner life and the inner world call the pilgrim for an inner pilgrimage to the very sanctum sanctorum of inner existence.

YOGA FOR TODAY

Prophets came with messages of love and peace; but the world is all the same. Sages kindled inner light but it was eclipsed by the mental gloom after their advent. Shankara taught “be conscious of the Brahman that thou art; Buddha taught compassion, Mahavira nonviolence, Christ patient, sacrifice, Rasul faith in God, Krishna surrender, Ramakrishna devotional fervour, Ramalinga unity, Aurobindo spiritual serenity and Ramana I–am–ness. Yet we see a divided world of personality cults. Neither pragmatic activism, spiritual passivism nor the existential psychoanalysis of modern thinkers have solved the riddle of life. The time spirit rebels against official orthodoxy and slave obedience just as it resists totalitarian dictatorship of fascist arrogance. Science must enrich material life and Yoga must build up inner strength and energy. Sama Yoga or spiritual socialism brings a harmonious blend of the physical, vital, mental and psychic forces with the immortal Spirit that is the Divine in man. It effects a synthesis of work, love, knowledge, energy and the psychic spirit and inner communion, which is kept in all the normal activities of existence. Just as one current flows and manifests as air, light, heat, sound etc, one fundamental energy generated by spirit expresses itself as thought, word, feeling, action, emotion. This energy comes by devotional fervour by chanting of mantras and by holy company. To be aware of the same Spirit in all beings and make life an efflorescence of That Unique One is Sama Yoga. The collective life of humanity conscious of the spirit is Spiritual Socialism. The human society of varied thought currents is united in the self–Spirit that is the core of beings.

The Vedic Rishi laid the foundation of life divine which is the collective life of humanity built around *Ekam-Sat*—the unique Truth of God in life. Before the serene peace of the dawn and the dusk, the Sama Yogin meditates upon the Self and holds communion with the universal self in Nature. He prays for the good of all, for the felicitous peace and harmony of humanity.

The evolution of the human entity towards Divine Reality is the object of his worship. The Sage of Sama Yoga envisages collective life in the Spirit in which every one has his place, his duties and obligations and every one lives conscious of the equal Self in all. The intellectual, heroic, industrial, commercial and several functions of the society are organised keeping intact Self–consciousness. Thus the Spiritual progress, cultural uplift, military prowess, agricultural and industrial standards are kept intact and every one is the master of himself and a servant of the social unit. Self–consciousness is the root. Watering the root is cherishing the fruit. This is Spiritual Socialism, integrated life of humanity in tune with the central–Self.

The time–spirit has given a rude shake to rigid traditions. We have to meet the challenge of the atomic age in which barriers between nation and nation are overthrown by telecommunications. The old despotism of group mentality melts away before the flaming manifestation of the latent Spirit. When the Spirit awakens in men and branches out into freedom of coexistence, then the tree of human existence shall smile out flowers of spiritual fragrance and put forth ruby–fruits of Divine sweetness. This is Spiritual Socialism. This is Vedantic harmony; this is the Kingdom of heaven promised by Jesus and this is Dharma Rajya envisaged by the Buddha. This is Ramarajya of Gandhiji and this is Atma Rajya or Self–wide empire of the Sama Yogin. This is Spiritual Socialism towards which modern ideologies are slowly progressing. Human life is vanity sans self–conscious unity.

Trees are many; the grove is one;
Branches are many; tree is one
Shores are many; sea is one:
Limbs are many; body is one;
Stars are many; sky is one;

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Flowers are many, honey is one;
Pages are many, book is one;
Thoughts are many; thinker is one;
Actors are many; the drama is one;
Nations are many; world is one;
Beings are many; breath is one;
The one behind the many;
Holds all in peaceful harmony.

TEN PRINCIPLES

The symbol of Sama Yoga was revealed to S during a period of silent Mahaturiya samadhi for 25 years. There are three lower circles and three higher and a middle one. The three lower are physical (black), Vital (Violet) and the mental (Green) planes. The higher planes are bliss (Yellow), Knowledge (red) and Truth (Orange). The blue gnostic plane connects the lower, with the higher. Inside is the wide white plane of purity. In the centre is a mirror representing peace. Inside the mirror is engraved spiritual radiance of unity and inside that is AUM representing the Soul or the Spirit. The Grace light is at the top. It is switched by the inner Master and Grace light floods the seven external and the internal mystic planes of Purity, Unity and Divinity (Shuddha Sakthi Aum). The Aum symbol lists the individual, universal and the transcendent Spirit. The Grace Light descends and transforms the planes. Purity, Unity and Divinity are the Sadhanas of Divine perfection, (See: Secrets of Sama Yoga and The Gospel of Perfect Life.) The Cosmic mission of Spiritual Socialism or Sama Yoga has ten disciplines.

1. Say AUM Jaya AUM with every breath and rhythmise inspiration and respiration.
2. Keep inner communion and feel the descent of that Grace–Light in the psychic planes
3. Behold the sky–bound universe as the temple of God and your heart as its sanctum.
4. Consider yourself as a member of the collective soulhood.
5. Encourage activities that promote purity of thought, word and deed, peace, energy and light. Remember the cosmic life that breathes in you
6. Do asans, pranayam; take vitamin diet–fruits, nuts, milk, cereals, vegetables etc (See Yoga for All). Observe the heartbeat or the breath during meditation. Keep fit to face problems of existence.
7. Maintain Gnostic equilibrium by ingathered silent meditation. Talk to the point and keep quiet. Pure silence opens psychic centres.
8. Avoid crowds, gossips, and keep even temper. Silence solves problems.
9. Observe this routine: six hours for sleep and rest six hours for study and cultivation of knowledge, six hours for upkeep of the body and six hours for Sama Yoga Sadhanas.
10. Be conscious of God manifest in the cosmic soulhood. God is the unique One; souls are one body in him and the Universe is the playground of His cosmic Energy.

Pilgrims, let our souls swim in the ambrosial waves of self delight and in the limitless fullness of freedom. Let us see a new cosmic race, a now era of cosmic consciousness and let us rise above groupist contradictions.

God's in our soul; God is our all
God is our goal; In God prosper all
His grace is our home; His force is our form
Life is a stream Singing AUM Jaya AUM.
In inner communion In cosmic union
Like rays in the sun we unite in the ONE
We live and we leave To men all He gave...
This is our duty–purity, unity–divinity.

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(Addendum By R.Venkatakrishnan, Secretary, Shuddhananda Yoga Samaj, Sivaganga)

SIVAGANGA IS SWAMIJI'S JEEVA GANGA

Swamiji was born in Sivaganga, which he used to refer as his Jeeva-Ganga. Sivaganga inspired him in many ways. It was in the forefront in the struggle for freedom from the British, dating back from the days of Raja Muthuvaduganatha Thevar and his Raani, the valiant Velu Nachiar and the heroic Marudu Brothers. Swamiji's close contacts with the members of the Sivaganga Royal Family like Udayana Raja, his Son-in-law Dilli Bacha Thevar, Kuttai Velu Dorai and a few others provided him with enough material to inspire him not only to cultivate the spirit of patriotism and the desire to work for the freedom of the country, but write interesting stories and novels on the native heroes Sandana Thevan, Veera Thevan, Raani Velu Nachiar, Marudu Brothers and Oomai Dorai (younger brother of Veera Pandia Katta Bomman).

Swamiji had the good fortune to live in an inspiring atmosphere. Vedic chantings in the street especially the neighbouring houses of Sundara Srowthigal and Ramasesha Ganapatigal, discourses and Hari kathas by Ramdas Bhagavathar and his son Dasaratharama Bhagavathar, music concerts by celebrated musicians of those days, particularly the Nadaswaram of Mayaandi Pillai and the violin of Ramdas Raju, study classes in the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Vedanta Sangam and the Theosophical Society, stage dramas in the street corners and literary and cultural programs arranged by local organisations. The Shiva temple near his house, the dingdong of the temple bell and the ceremonial Pujas equipped him sufficiently for his onward march towards **SELF REALISATION**.

His daily bath in the Lotus pond (Aatha Oorani) and meditation under the peepal tree on its western bank, visits to the Shiva temple, the Gowri Vinayaka temple, the Aanjaneya temple and the Sasivarneshwar-Periyanyaki Amman temple and his meetings with men of spiritual greatness laid a strong foundation for building up his ideal Spiritual mansion.

Rajah's High School where he studied introduced to him eminent teachers in Headmaster S.M.Narayanaswami Ayyar, Tamil Vidwan Pulavar Deivasikhamani Ayyar-he was Raja Guru also-Sanskrit Pandit Desikachariar, kind-hearted Chockalinga Aasaariar, Satyagiriraja Ayyangar, and the most lovable Drawing Master Safdar Alam Sahib. His classmates, Sri. G. Sundaram Ayyar with whom he founded the National School at Devakottai, Sri. P. Somasundaram Ayyar who later became a teacher of mathematics in Rajah's High School, Sri. M.G.Guruswami Ayyar who was a teacher and headmaster first and later an advocate and a freelance journalist, Sri. S. Somasundaram Pillai, a very close friend, whose intimacy helped him develop a cosmopolitan outlook, Sri. K.R.Ramalinga Ayyar, who was good at sports and games, Sri. N. Ananthavaidyanatha Ayyar, Professor of Chemistry in Annamalai university and later in Vivekananda College, Chennai, Sri. R. Ramasami Pillai who held high positions in the Iranian Oil company and who was a devoted student of Indian philosophy and Sri J.Ramaswami Ayyangar, the pet child of the rich Royal Astrologer were a few whom I have seen and from whom I had gathered interesting narrations of their school days in Swamiji's company.

THE CHIVIKULA FAMILY

Below is given a brief history of the Chivikula family, the content of which had passed on from one generation to its next. It was Sri J. Rangasami Ayyar, my father, who took great efforts to assemble stray details and give them a shape as a readable document. A genealogical tree was also prepared by him wherein one could easily trace the lineage of this family. This history dates back from the days of Sri Alagaiah Shastri and Ranganayaki Amma and what is heard of their fore-fathers is vague in their content. However a brief account of how and why they settled down in the Sivagangai Cheemai seems indispensable in this context.

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The Vijayanagar Empire witnessed its decline and downfall in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Since then the Chivikula family had been experiencing various odds. They had held respectable status in the society as they, in addition to their being great Vedic scholars, were endowed with a profound knowledge of the **MANTRA SHASTRA** and some training in horseriding too. Having lost the excellent patronage they had been enjoying during the rule by the Vijayanagar dynasty, many Hindu families had to face several challenges on the economic and social fronts. The Chivikula Family migrated to a village near Hyderabad. However there was very little improvement in their day to day life. In spite of several handicaps, they were able to keep up the torch of Vedic studies burning as bright as before, demonstrate their knowledge of the Mantra Shastra and horse-riding as and when opportunities came by. During the second quarter of the eighteenth century, many Hindu families were obliged to leave their native villages in search of better and safer avenues to lead a peaceful life. Several families migrated to Tamilnadu in the south and settled down in places near Vellore, Thanjavur, Tiruchirapalli, Madurai, Sholavandan, Tirunelveli and Sivaganga. The Chivikula family, which came on horses-back, chose to settle down in some village near Sivaganga. On being told about the liberal heart of the Raja of Sivagangai Cheemai, they sought an interview with the Raja who was an independent ruler in those days. The Raja who gave a patient hearing to their plight and on learning that they were Vedic scholars, was pleased to offer them wet lands in the village of Panaiyur, seven kilometers west of Sivaganga, as Dharmaasanam (free gift by the king).

The Rajaas and Ranees of Sivagangai Cheemai were known for their involvement and unique service in the construction and maintenance of temples, providing educational facilities to the deserving, patronage to fine arts and acts of chivalry, reverence to saints, savants and scholars and their humility in the presence of God-men. Their affection and interest towards the people they ruled was evident in what they did for the welfare of the community. Though they professed and followed Saivism as their religion, they were secular in their outlook and disposition. It was no wonder that the Raja offered the Chivikulas his kind patronage. The family settled down in Panaiyur and lived peacefully. The Chivikulas came to be identified as GURRAM INTIVALLU, meaning, 'family of horse riders'. In course of time, the successive generations lost this identity as they had neither horses nor any training in horse-riding. Lord Venkatachalapathy of the Seven Hills is the Presiding Deity of this family.

Alagaiah Shastri who hailed from this family was a Vedic Scholar. Young as he was, he went to Varanasi to equip himself with greater knowledge of the Vedic scriptures. During his return from Varanasi, after completing his studies, he was blessed to get a Shivalingam when he happened to take his bath in the Narmada River. Immensely pleased with this Divine Gift, he continued his journey towards Panaiyur. On the way, he chanced to rest for a day or two in the family of a Telugu Brahmin in the village of Gooty, near Ananthapur in Andhra. The host, on seeing the young Vedic Scholar and impressed with his disposition, proposed his daughter Ranganayaki in marriage with him. The marriage took place. After a few days of stay in Gooty, Alagaiah Shastri and his better-half Ranganayaki Amma made their way to Panaiyur. The newly married couple started their life. The Sambamoorthy Lingam, brought from the Narmada, was installed in the puja room and the couple offered puja to the lingam daily. A few years passed by. Ranganayaki Amma passed away as a Sumangali. (A married woman remains a Sumangali till the demise of her husband. If a woman passes away before her husband's demise, she is considered a blessed Sumangali) A portion of her sari folding remained unconsumed by the funeral flame. Surprised at this strange happening, Alagaiah Shastri considered it as a precious object of divine significance. So, this unburnt sari folding became an object of worship. Ranganayaki Amma came to be worshipped as the Sumangali Deity of the Chivikula

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Family. The firstborn girl child in this family used to be named Ranganayaki since then. To Alagaiah Shastri, the demise of his wife was a great loss and he felt a vacuum in her absence. In order to carry on his religious duties, he had to marry a second time. Meenakshi Amma was his second wife. A son was born to them. He was named Sundararaja Ayya. All that is available about him was that he had two sons and one daughter through his wife Guruvamma. The eldest son was Rangasami Ayya and the youngest was Subbarama Ayya. The daughter was Ranganayaki. Rangasami Ayya inherited the Sambamoorthy Lingam and Subbarama Ayya, the unburnt remnant of the sari of Sumangali Ranganayaki. (Let me confine myself to continue from Rangaswami Ayya because of the relevancy his lineage affords to the purpose of this write-up.)

Rangaswami Ayya and his wife Meenakshi Amma had three sons and two daughters. Of them, the second son, Jhatadhara Ayyar was the only person blessed with children to continue the family pedigree while his two brothers, the elder and the younger, passed away earlier, leaving no offsprings.

Jhatadhara Ayyar who married Kaamaakshi Amma had three sons and one daughter. The eldest son, J. Venkatarama Ayyar, popularly known as J.V.Ram, had no male issues and the youngest son, Swamiji, blossomed into a Yogi. It was, therefore, given to the second son J.Rangasami Ayyar to keep the lineage of the Chivikula Tribe unbroken.

J.Rangasami Ayyar married Meenakshi Ammal and had four sons and two daughters. R. Venkataraman the eldest son, was a gem among his four sons. His qualities of head and heart were admirable. He chanced to have Swamiji's Darshan in 1946 at the Aurobindo Ashram where Swamiji had been, then, immersed in his self-imposed SILENCE and writing his hundreds of books in several languages, mostly in Tamil. Venkataraman who was, by nature, spiritually inclined received the best training from his father in every field of purposeful activity. He had a bosom friend named T.Srinivasan who was endowed with all the basic qualities of a prospective yogi. These two youngsters cultivated in themselves great aspirations for a dedicated service to Swamiji and his mission, prompted as they were by constant study of Swamiji's writings. They even prepared a blueprint of their future plan. However, providence decided otherwise. T. Srinivasan passed away in 1947 and R. Venkataraman, in December 1963. However, both of them had sown seeds of their enthusiastic aspirations in their juniors like me. What has now been accomplished as a service to the memory and greatness of Swamiji in Sholapuram is but a sprouting of the seeds into growing plants, promising sweet fruits of Sama Yoga ideals.

Daily puja to the Sambamoorthy lingam, annual offering of puja and Samaaraadhana to the Presiding Deity of the family, Lord Venkatachalapathy, on a Saturday in the Tamil month of Purattasi, and invoking the blessings of the Sumangali Deity Ranganayaki Amma on auspicious occasions are the sacred duties of the Chivikula Family. Since 1977, the Chivikula Family has been assigned with one more sacred duty of nourishing the Yoga Samaj and the High School founded by Swamiji in Sholapuram. The senior-most male progeny of the family used to be entrusted with these duties while all the juniors participate as and when they find it convenient. Being the senior-most in the family, I have been privileged to carry on these traditional duties till now.

SWAMIJI'S PARENTS

Mother Kaamaakshi Ammal was a great woman, endowed with all the best qualities of head and heart. She hailed from the family of Vedam Sankariah and was the second child and first daughter of Mahadeva Ayyar of Madurai who was a lawyer. His wife was Veni Amma. She had three brothers and two sisters. Mahadeva Ayyar was

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proficient in Mantra Shastras also. Sage Purnananda was his younger brother who had taken to Sanyasa Ashrama very early in life. However he used to visit Madurai now and then and stay in Mahadeva Ayyar's house. It was this grand-uncle who first discovered the flame of spiritual fervour latent in Swamiji and initiated him into the realm of spiritualism by awakening the vital spiritual centres in him. Both Mahadeva Ayyar and Sage Purnananda equipped Kaamaakshi Ammal with religious routines, developed in her a spiritual bent of mind and taught her several effective mantras. Sage Purnananda, pleased with her service to him and modest disposition, administered to her the most celebrated **PANCHAKSHARA MANTRA**, which she used to chant systematically every morning and evening till her last breath. As a housewife, she used to perform her household duties, singing devotional songs and sacred verses or chanting the divine names of God. She spent her free hours, reading Holy Scriptures in the company of her friends. She was an expert in native medicines and herbal remedies. Whenever any ailing child was brought to her, she would administer remedial treatment to the great relief of tension and anxiety in its parents. She would apply relevant mantras to offshoot the severe pain and evil effect caused by scorpion-bite or stings by poisonous insects. She was ever kind and affectionate to children and entertained them with interesting stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata and funny anecdotes. When we were children, we had the privilege to enjoy the warmth of her affection and listen to stories from her .

The crystal sincerity of her character and the total absence of guile and other sordid traits of worldly nature were evident in her simple living and high thinking. Her three brothers were well-placed in Madurai and especially her youngest brother who was called Agent Subramania Ayyar was rich and owned big houses in Madurai and Sivaganga, lands in Ambalathaadi and coconut and mango groves in Kochadai. He was the agent of the richest AL.AR. family of Devakottai who were called the Zamindars of that place. They were close to the royal families of Ramnad and Sivagangai. So, Subramania Ayyar had the great advantage of an aristocratic life. However, Kaamaakshi Ammal was never inclined to encroach upon the affluent status of her brothers to her advantage and restricted her visits and contacts to occasions that warranted her physical presence as she was ever conscious of her limitations. She was born in 1866 and passed away on the 15th February, 1949.

Swamiji's father, **Jhatadhara Ayyar**, hailed from the family of Chivikula Alagaiah Shastri. He was a tall person with a robust physique. He was full of piety and never deviated from the path of truth. He was ever contented to lead a life of utter simplicity, ever depending upon God for the welfare of his family.

He preferred to shift to Sivaganga from Panaiyur in 1894 with his wife, two sons and one daughter, as he thought that Sivaganga was a better place for providing his children the best English education, which was the general aspiration of the parents in those days. His youngest brother-in-law, Agent Subramania Ayyar, offered him the spacious house he owned in the Rettai Agrahaaram for the comfortable living of the family. It was in this house Swamiji was born on 11th May, 1897.

Jhatadhara Ayyar got himself employed as the agent of one Annamalai Chettiar on a monthly salary of rupees ten. He was so judicious in spending that he was able to budget his family expenses within his meagre income. He practised the good old maxim, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be". His dictum was—Spend for your basic wants and needs and keep your hours of the day mostly engaged in activities that do not drain your slender purse. All his three sons inherited this wonderful economic formula from him and practised it to their great advantage.

I shall prefer to give here a heart-rending episode from Jhatadhara Iyer's life, as

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narrated by my father. As and when Jhatadhara Ayyar was directed by his Chettiar boss to go to Madurai on some errand, he used to be given enough money to meet his travelling expenses in a Jutka. This amount on many occasions exceeded twice his monthly salary. Jhatadhara Ayyar would save the money by making the up and down journeys on foot. To him, walking hundred kilometers in a day had never been a hard task. This may seem quite unbelievable but it was a harsh truth. He was held in high esteem by his friends, relatives and the cream of Sivaganga for his honesty, truthfulness and sterling character.

Of all his four children he had the greatest affection towards his last son whom he fondly called Chelliah. He enjoyed all his childish pranks and mischiefs. Never he reprimanded any of his children for any act of mischief or wrong committed by them.

When anyone in the family fell ill or got indisposed, he recited the sacred stotras, INDRAKSHI and SHIVAKAVACHAM, and applied the sacred ash to the forehead of the ailing one and bade him or her to drink the water mixed with the sacred ash. (This was practised by my father too).

Jhatadhara Ayyar was not given the benefit of learning English. So he desired his sons got the advantage of English education. All his three sons proved worthy of his ambition. At times, he would ask his sons to talk among themselves in English and feel elated at their proficiency in that alien language even though he could not understand even one syllable of what they talked.

Above all, Jhatadhara Ayyar always kept himself and his family at a safe distance from men and things that might pose a challenge to his sense of self-respect. I shall illustrate an incident from his life. His last brother-in-law Agent Subramania Ayyar had no issues. Little Chelliah (Swamiji) was so charming and active that he desired to adopt him as his son. His direct attempt to lure the boy with promises of wealth and win over him to his proposal failed. Little Chelliah, though he was just eight years old, declined the uncle's offer of material wealth and a luxurious and prosperous future in return for his consent to become his adopted son. His path of spiritual life, the Divine had already laid. The uncle tried his proposal with his sister and Jhatadhara Ayyar, suggesting that it would be a wise decision if they agreed to give the boy in adoption to him. His intention was to bring up the boy in an aristocratic fashion and secure for him in future a dignified job in the government and also raise the financial and social status of his sister's family. Jhatadhara Ayyar and Kaamaakshi Ammal politely negated his proposal. Agitated at their unwillingness to his proposal, he chose to sell away his house, occupied by Jhatadhara Ayyar and family. The family had to vacate the house. Kaamaakshi Ammal came to the rescue of her husband at this juncture. On her suggestion, Jhatadhara Ayyar purchased a house in the Shivankoil Agraharam with the money he secured by selling away the piece of land in a suburb of Madurai, gifted by a well wisher of Kaamaakshi Ammal at the time of her marriage. This incident taught Swamiji, even at the young age of eight, how pride and pelf made even blood relationship a mockery. Later in his life, this incident prompted him to compose a song in Tamil (Bandham vittale sukhameh) which echoed his satirical views on human relationship.

Jhatadhara Ayyar was a blessed soul in fathering illustrious sons among whom Swamiji ranked the top. He was born in 1860 and passed away on 12-12-1927.

ELDEST BROTHER J. VENKATARAMA AYYAR

Swamiji's eldest brother was J. Venkatarama Ayyar (J.V.Ram), an advocate. He was an ardent congressman, devoted to the policies of Tilakji and C.R. Das whom he had the fortune to meet at the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1916. In the company of local congressmen like Rajaram Naig and S. Nagaswami Ayyar, he threw his

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professional robes of foreign make into the bonfire and swore to wear Khadhi cloth. He started spinning in the charka every morning between 4 and 6, singing devotional songs of Mira Bai, Kabir Das and Saint Thyagaraja, endowed as he was with a good voice and musical talent. He got the yarn spun by him woven into Khadhi cloth at Paramakudi. This continued till his last breath.

He was a tireless singer and himself composed a number of national songs, which in the form of a book were released at a congress public meeting in 1938. His devotion to the congress movement was so pronounced that he ignored his practice. He hosted prominent congress leaders of Tamilnadu like V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, Subramanya Shiva, Satyamoorthy and Poet Subramanya Bharati when they came to Sivaganga to collect funds for the Swadeshi Steam Navigation company. Swamiji drew great inspiration from him for his dedicated service to the cause of India's freedom. J.V. Ram's involvement in the congress movement rendered him live in poverty. But he ever kept up his jovial mood and cheerful disposition. He had always a circle of admirers who enjoyed his humorous observations and witty talk. He had read many of Swamiji's books and wrote a few articles and a musical composition on Swamiji and his writings. He was born in 1889 and passed away on 18-04-1948, leaving his aged mother, wife and two daughters.

ELDER BROTHER J.RANGASAMI AYYAR

J.Rangasami Ayyar was Swamiji's second elder brother. He was a teacher and later became Headmaster. He was special tutor to the sons of Doraisinga Raja, Raja of Sivaganga. Among the three brothers, he was the only person in the family to learn Samskrit at the school. He improved his knowledge of that divine language by extensive study of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and many other books. He was proficient in Tamil and English. As a teacher he was highly resourceful, innovative and inspiring. He had the unique capacity to teach any age group any subject, from the infant standard to the degree level, as he was ever conscious of the pedagogic maxim: the child is the centre of the teaching-learning process.

He was the pioneer of the Scout movement in Sivaganga District, thanks to the patronage of Late Doraisinga Raja. His scout troop not only participated in the World Jamboree held in Madras in 1926-27 but won the recognition of the organizers for its turn out in that international fair.

J.R. took active part in the functioning of many public organisations, as a member of the Panchayat Board, a director in the local cooperative stores, first as a member and later as the President of Sri Ramakrishna Vivekananda Vedanta Sangam, the Correspondent of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyasala, a member of the Theosophical Society, a member of the District Library Authority and so on. He conducted study classes in the R.K. V.V. Sangam where he introduced to schoolboys the most valuable works of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's stories and parables, the sacred works of Aadi Shankara and Sri Raamaanuja and arranged lectures on Aandaal's Tiruppavai and taught Bhagavad Gita. He used to keep himself ever active and spent every minute of his life in some kind of purposeful activity. He was never tired of reading books on various branches of knowledge and equipped himself with up-to-date information in such branches as he was either interested or professionally involved. He was an extemporian and used to be sought after for translating into Tamil the speeches in English of distinguished personages of his times. In short, he was a walking encyclopaedia. He was held in high esteem by his students, parents and the general public as a model teacher and a personality of parts and promise.

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Swamiji had the greatest regard for J.R., as the latter was a teacher when Swamiji was a student. J.R.'s ideals of devotion to learning and dedication to his calling and the equanimity of temper he maintained in his ups and downs inspired Swamiji so much that he always gave due respect to him and his words of wise counsel. Swamiji joined the teacher training school at Pasumalai on his advice only. Indeed, J.R. was one of those who inspired Swamiji in the formative period of his life.

J.R. was a Karma Yogi in discharging his duties to the family, his teaching profession and service to the society. He was a Bhakti Yogi in his personal life and a Jnana Yogi in his mental makeup. He guided me in organising the Shuddhananda Yoga Samaj and Shuddhananda Bharati Desiya Vidyalayam High School. He was born on 29-04-1891 and passed away on 11-03-1986.

ELDER SISTER RANGANAYAKI

Ranganayaki was Swamiji's elder sister. She was married to Gopusami Ayyar and lived mostly in Devakottai. She took after her father in appearance and stature while all her three brothers, their mother. She combined in herself all that was acceptable in the old tradition and in the modern life, as she was capable of original thinking. She was talented in music and possessed a high degree of aesthetic sense. She was ever gentle in her talk and disposition. She was born in 1894 and passed away on 04-05-1945.

SWAMIJI: THE ILLUSTRIOUS SON

Swamiji presented himself as a multi-personality in his early days at Sivaganga. To his parents, brothers and sister, he was just like any other child of his age as he never disclosed his real self. To his classmates he was an entertaining companion. To the eminent teachers whom he adored, he was a precocious student. To some teachers, he was a mischievous, naughty and impertinent specimen. None could identify his inborn potentialities of a budding Yogi, capable of understanding the deep mysteries of the spiritual realm, because he never revealed his real image. His strange behaviour-pattern and mysterious physical absence, now and then, from his near and dear, both at home and in the school, puzzled everyone. Save Sage Purnananda and the Himalayan Saint Jnana Siddha, it was Vidwan Deivasikhamani Ayyar, his Tamil Pandit, who discovered in him 'a poet' and encouraged his poetic genius by guiding him in his literary pursuits.

J.R. speaks high of his attitude and behaviour towards elders in the family. He was ever humble and submissive to them. As and when any elder pointed out in him any shortcomings, he would not indulge in any effort to justify himself but withdraw from the scene smiling.

J.R. used to send him rupees six every month for his expenses when he underwent teacher training at Pasumalai. Swamiji would spend just three rupees only and save the balance. He would return the amount thus saved to J.R. He prepared his mono-diet using mud vessels and an improvised oven and ate only once a day. At times he chose to take fruits, groundnuts and milk, avoiding cooked food. He restricted his needs to the minimum and never submitted himself to sensual cravings. This he continued when he was a teacher in Kaattuputhur. He saved a few thousand rupees in course of time and invested the amount in a bank. Now, the monthly interest on this deposit was more than enough for his budget. This enabled him achieve economic freedom. When the school management questioned his devotion to and involvement in the activities of the congress movement, he resigned his job, stating "Freedom calls, no more walls". This self-cooking, he continued even after his settling down in Sholapuram when he was 85 years old.

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SWAMIJI AND HIS CLASSMATES

One of Swamiji's classmates was J. Ramaswami Ayyangar, son of the palace astrologer who was rich in name, fame and patrimony. One evening a Fakir-like man who was observing many children playing in front of the Shiva temple, called out Swamiji and J. Ramaswami and asked them to follow him. They were taken to the mango grove in the small village of Pudur near Sivaganga. After talking to them for a few minutes, he awakened the **KUNDALINISHAKTI** in them and initiated Swamiji with the Parashakti mantra and J. Ramaswami with the Guha mantra. He advised them to concentrate on the respective Divine Forces by chanting the mantras daily. He assured them that he would visit them now and then and disappeared. This was a strange experience to both of them. Swamiji experienced an inexplicable and thrilling spiritual transformation taking place in his 'self' as he went on chanting the mantra faithfully. He was making steady progress in this spiritual exercise, as he had been already equipped by Sage Purnananda.

J. Ramaswami, on the other hand, took it all in lighter vein and did not make any progress. When Swamiji was marching enthusiastically on the road to Self-Realisation, J. Ramaswami got himself involved in sensual pleasures offered by the material world. In the evening of his life, he had to lead a miserable life and was forced to earn his livelihood by giving music lessons in Veena.

While narrating this episode, J. Ramaswami Ayyangar told me that though both Swamiji and himself were initiated on the same evening by the same Master, Swamiji climbed up the spiritual ladder steadily because of his undiluted faith in the Master and scrupulous adherence to his directions whereas he made little progress due to his indifference. All that he could do in reverence to the Master was to name his youngest son Guharangan so that he might derive some peace of mind by uttering the sacred mantra 'Guha' which had become part of his son's name.

Swamiji identified this God-man as his great Master, the Himalayan Saint, Jnana Siddha, who was ignored as a lunatic by the general public of Sivaganga except J. Ramaswami Ayyangar. S. Somasundaram Pillai who was Swamiji's another classmate, was our teacher in Rajah's High School. He used to make references about Swamiji in the class. According to him, Swamiji was active by nature, witty in his talk, mischievous in his behaviour, jovial in his mood, secular in his outlook and care free in his mental makeups. I shall give a couple of interesting incidents narrated to us by Mr. Pillai.

As a boy, Swamiji entertained his classmates with a speedy swirling of his ears to their great merriment, especially during the mathematics class because the teacher had no taste for humour and was ever serious in his mood. Swamiji enjoyed irritating this particular teacher as he had little taste for mathematics. He was quite often one of the victims of this teacher's harsh rule of the rod. While others suffered the punishment, Swamiji had the knack to withdraw his stretched arm when the teacher's cane came down. The cane would make a great slash on the desk. Within the twinkle of the eye, Swamiji would jump outside through the open window, which had no bars in those days.

On an occasion when the annual inspection by the Inspector of Schools was going on, a funny incident took place. The inspector was observing the teacher in a classroom opposite to the one where Swamiji was standing on the bench, a punishment he had to undergo for having provoked the teacher-the mathematics teacher-by committing a mischief. Swamiji had the advantage of observing the opposite classroom. When he saw the inspector coming out and proceeding to his class, he dropped down to the floor a big pack of bound-books and notebooks he collected from the desk, causing a loud 'thud', which attracted the inspector's attention. The agitated teacher at once asked Swamiji to sit down. The inspector who was an Englishman guessed it was the jovial mischief of a shrewd boy. He entered the classroom smiling. He put a question to the whole class and invited an-

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swers from every boy. The question was: what behaviour of a boy attracts others to him? While all the boys answered in the traditional style by referring to the various good qualities attributed to a well-behaved boy, Swamiji replied, 'monkeyish behaviour'. The inspector was much impressed with Swamiji's witty reply laughed heavily and appreciated Swamiji for his sense of humour, originality and individuality. Soon after the inspector left the class, the impatient teacher cried out, "You are a monkey and he must also be a monkey to appreciate YOU."

Writing 'imposition' used to be one of the punishments meted out to slow learners and mischief-mongers in almost all the schools. Swamiji used to keep a huge stock of various 'imposition patterns' prepared by him, using carbon paper made out of lamp-smoke. Whenever the teacher gave him this punishment, he would at once draw out from his bag the ready-made 'imposition' sheets to the embarrassment of the teacher and the 'Hurrah' of his classmates, thus making the whole affair a mockery. Swamiji used to come to the rescue of his friends also by supplying them from his stock. Mr. Pillai told me once that he was one such beneficiary.

P. Somasundaram Ayyar had very often told me that Swamiji would surprise his classmates by his mysterious disappearance from the classroom. G. Sundaram Ayyar and M.G. Guruswamy Ayyar were scholarly even in their school days, Swamiji used to observe. They had shared their literary experiences with Swamiji whom they recognised as a born poet. Swamiji's another classmate N. Ananthavaidyanatha Ayyar inspired Swamiji to develop an interest in modern science while his playmate K.R. Ramalinga Ayyar encouraged him in sports and games. R. Ramasami Pillai who was known as R.R. Pillai was both a classmate and an admirer. He was a native of Sholapuram. He visited Swamiji's school one evening and on being requested spoke about Swamiji. He said that Swamiji, even as a classmate, had inspired him to a study of many scriptures and showed him the path for a life-spiritual. Mr. Pillai who was blessed with material prosperity and spiritual aspirations had read most of Swamiji's books. He promised to donate his huge library consisting of thousands of books to Swamiji's school but he passed away before fulfilling his lofty promise.

The narrations given above show that his aspirations, though hidden under a thin film of boyish merriment, were ever directed towards spiritual accomplishments.

MEMORABLE EVENTS

Late D. Shunmukha Raja, Raja of Sivaganga and patron of Rajah's High School, honoured Swamiji, the most distinguished old student of the school, at a special function. He also arranged for a very grand function in his old palace in 1957 to celebrate Swamiji's 61st birthday. It was a memorable function as it brought to light certain facts, till then not known, about Swamiji's dedicated service to our country. Sri U. Muthuramalinga Thevar, the unparalleled leader endowed with a towering personality and an eloquent tongue, delivered the keynote address. He dwelt at length his close contact with Swamiji both as a spiritual aspirant and a freedom fighter. He disclosed Swamiji's involvement as an active volunteer, underground, carrying secret messages from one end to another and maintaining close contacts with some of the great national leaders in the twenties (of the 20th century,) like V.V.S. Ayyar, S. Srinivasa Ayyangar, V.O. Chidambaram Pillai in the south and Tilakji, M.N. Roy and Raja Mahendra Pratap in the north. He also referred to Swamiji's link with the great revolutionary leader Shenbagaraman Pillai. He deplored Free India's indifference to great men like Swamiji when the country was in very bad need of their wisdom and guidance.

Late Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister, and his wife paid a visit to the school on 26-10-1988, thanks to the then District Collector, Mr. Pazhamalai who having been impressed with Swamiji's greatness and the programs at the anniversary function on

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20-10-1988 under his presidentship, was mainly responsible to include our school in the programme. Rajiv Gandhi offered his respects to Swamiji, enjoyed the chorus singing of the National song, Sujalam Sufalam, by the students, joined them in singing the National Integration Song, 'Chand Sitharome', and planted a margosa sapling and requested his wife Sonia Gandhi to plant another sapling and watered the plants in memory of his visit. This was a rare and proud privilege the school enjoyed. The Doordarshan Kendra, Chennai, videoed a programme in honour of Swamiji and arranged for its telecast as a programme of the national network. Swamiji and the school were thus taken to the length and breadth of India.

Swamiji has written hundreds of books in many languages, mostly in Tamil. His magnum opus is Bharata Shakti, an epic in 50,000 lines of poetry. When the Tamil University instituted the Rajarajan award, which carried a cash prize of rupees one lakh to the author of the best literary work in Tamil, Swamiji was the first person to be honoured with the award and the cash prize for his Bharata Shakti. At a colourful special convocation on 24-03-1984, the Chancellor of the University, Governor S.L.Kurana, honoured Swamiji.

On the recommendation of former Chief Minister, M.Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran ordered for payment of a monthly pension of rupees five hundred to Swamiji with effect from 1-12-1981 for his service to the nation during the freedom struggle and for his service and contribution to the growth of the Tamil language and literature.

The Kanakabhishekam function held on 10-10-1989 was a grand one. Swamiji gave his consent only after repeated persuasion. It was planned to perform on him the sacred Abhishekam (continuous pouring of water) with the 108 Kalasams of water, duly purified and made sacred with Vedic chantings by celebrated pundits well-versed in the four vedas. There arose a doubt in me if Swamiji could withstand the continuous down-pour of 108 kalasams of water. So I suggested to Swamiji for a trip to Courtrallam which was offering the best season. Swamiji agreed. Swamiji was accompanied by myself, Mr. R. Sellembron of Switzerland, my wife and A. Jagajyoti Ammal, one of Swamiji's admirers and a well wisher of the school. To our great surprise, Swamiji enjoyed his bath in the Five Falls, which was pouring down heavily. Swamiji utilized this opportunity to visit the Bharadwaja Ashram at Cheranmahadevi where he had the privilege to serve in the Gurukulam organised by his mentor the great V.V.S.Ayyar, Pathamadai, the birthplace of Swami Sivananda who was a very close spiritual-mate, the Siddhashram whose president, Siddha Narahari was Swamiji's great admirer and the Gandhi Museum at Madurai. The Kanakabhishekam function went on for two days with programmes of music, dance and drama on the first day and Vedic chantings and abhishekam with the sacred water in the 108 kalasams and waters of the Ganges, the Yamuna, the Godavari, the Cauvery and the Vaigai and many other rivers brought by Swamiji's admirers, speeches felicitating Swamiji, a symposium on education and the Decennium of the school on the second day. The Kanakabhishekam stage was constructed with the donation offered by Renate Bhulmann of Germany, an admirer of Swamiji. R.Sellembron of Switzerland to whom Swamiji was everything and propagation of Sama Yoga and Swamiji's writings was the only one ambition in life participated in the function and declared that he would complete the construction of the school building and continue his interest in the development of the school to the great satisfaction of his Master, Swamiji. He kept up his promise and helped us a lot even after the Maha Samaadhi of Swamiji.

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INCIDENTS: TOUCHING AND SURPRISING

J.R. conveyed to Swamiji who was then at Thanjavur that their father Jhatadhara Ayyar had passed away. The river was in floods. Swamiji swam across the river and reached Sivaganga. The rituals were to commence. The kith and kin asked Swamiji to get himself prepared for joining his brothers to perform the funeral rites. Swamiji told J.R, that he had taken a vow not to remove his beard and the lofty hair flowing from his head on either side of his shoulders. J.R. said to him, “Father and mother are the most supreme. You owe your existence on this earth to them. Aadi Shankaracharya who had taken to sanyasa ashrama deviated from the prescribed traditional norms and performed his mother’s funeral rites in spite of the stiff opposition from the Vedic pundits . None of us is greater than the Achaarya. It is for you to take a decision”. Swamiji, having been convinced of what J.R. had said, submitted himself to the discipline tradition had imposed and joined his elder brothers in performing the funeral rites.

The thirteen-day obsequies were over. Swamiji was about to leave Sivaganga for Thanjavur. Mother Kaamaakshi Amma to whom Swamiji was the dearest of all her four offsprings, gave him a carpet and a pillow for his comfortable night sleep as she could not bear her son’s indifference to what she thought were the basic needs of life. Swamiji understood the feelings of his good and kind mother but convinced her with his famous song, “Yenekkenna Manakkavalai”, politely declining her kind offer. The content of the song is as follows:

What are worries and anxieties to me?

O, it is my Mother who worries Herself about me day and night.

The Supreme Mother acts through my thoughts, words and deeds, She guides me and stands by me through thick and thin,

She drives out my problems, sows in me the seeds of strength.

Feeds me in the moon shine and swings me in the cradle of this universe and lights in me the flame of Shuddha Shakti

Her Grace wipes out my sores, Her protective hand assures me of Her Bliss,

She generates in me the Spiritual Flame through Her Graceful smile. What are worries to me ?

In this song, he demonstrates his sincere faith in Paraashakti, the Supreme Mother, while discharging his filial affection to his mother by appeasing her of her concern and anxiety.

Swamiji came to Sivaganga at the invitation of Sri K. Gopalakrishna Ayyar to pre- side over the dance Arangetrum (the inauguration of the first performance) of his daughter. Swamiji was accommodated in the ashram-like cottage in J.R’s garden. There was a gathering of Swamiji’s admirers. Sri Gopalakrishna Ayyar introduced his daughter’s dance master to Swamiji. Swamiji asked him if he had taught her Thandavam in addition to Laasyam. The dance master stammered , “No, Swamiji,” At once, Swamiji asked me to fetch a plate and a candlestick duly lit. On being brought, Swamiji placed on his right palm the burning candlestick fixed to the centre of the plate and performed the Thandavam to his musical composition “Haarati Natana Kalavati” in the raaga Naattai and went round in the hall, maintaining the relevant steps in perfect harmony with the song. He looked like Lord Nataraja in his Cosmic Dance Pose.

Sri R.Ramanuja Ayyangar who was in the gathering asked Swamiji how he could accomplish such a thrilling feat. Swamiji said, “ When I chose to write a book on Sage Ilango’s immortal “Silappadikaram” in which the celebrated author had given us the gram- mar and significance of many mudras (finger poses) in the Divine art of dance. In course of time, this great art came to be regarded as an intoxicant to one’s vulgar sensual pleasure. I desired to educate the people about its aesthetic significance and re- store its original status. So I made up my mind to study the art first and , if possible, learn

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it. It was not difficult for me to learn the art and its intricacies from a grand old lady of Gollumangudi, a village in the Thanjavur District. The mother in her taught me not only the art but the difference between Thandavam, meant for men dancers and Laasyam, for women dancers". This incident illustrates Swamiji's dedication, involvement and interest not only in learning fine arts but his thirst for perfection in any good exercise he involved himself, especially writing books.

SHUDDHANANDA YOGA SAMAJ AND SHUDDHANANDA BHARATI DESIYA VIDYALAYAM HIGH SCHOOL

It was July 1973. Swamiji wrote to me about opening of a high school in the western suburb of Sivaganga. I had just then taken charge as Headmaster of Rajah's High School, the alma mater of J.V. Ram, J.R., Swamiji, and all the sons of J.R. and my son. The project proposed by Swamiji was a lofty one. The procedures to be followed and challenges to be met would test one's patience. However, this was an opportunity to serve Swamiji and give a concrete shape to the aspirations of my Late elder brother Venkataraman and his friend Late T. Srinivasan. The Divine Grace and Swamiji's blessings gave me enough courage and will power to take up the project. My father, J.R., advocate R.Ramanuja Ayyangar and Peri. Nagu (Swamiji's longtime admirer who opened a library in Swamiji's name in Sivaganga in 1943-44) guided me. My classmate O. Pillappan, V. Srirangarajan (Paappaa Dorai of the royal family) affectionate friend S. Krishnan, Pramila Vijendra and her husband S. Vijendra (family friends), V. Venkataraman of the local typewriting institute, R. Krishnan of Salem and all the members of our family stood by me through thick and thin and rendered great help.

All of us decided to organise first an association before we embarked on our efforts to start the school. Swamiji advised us to organise the Yoga Samaj which should be the nucleus of all the welfare activities suggested by Swamiji in his book 'Yoga Siddhi'. I felt that Swamiji had greater plans. So I made up my mind first to secure a vast area of land. All of us who were involved in this venture inspected various villages around Sivaganga and at last found that Sholapuram was the most suitable village for Swamiji's aspirations. The vast area of land we had been looking for was available there. The SP.K.A. family of Sholapuram and the OL.KE. family of sakkandi promised to donate their lands. I prepared a rough plan of the proposed Yoga Samaj as is described in Yoga Siddhi.. I met Swamiji on 5th February, 1976 at Pudukottai where he had come on that day to preside over a conference of naturopaths. Swamiji was much pleased to learn about the availability of land and to go through the plan I submitted to him. He blessed me to go ahead. It took nearly eight months for me to contact the several owners of the land. Sri AN. Sethuraman, Sri AN.Subbiah and Mrs. L.Rajammal (wife of late SP.K.A. Lakshmanan Chettiar who was a daring and enterprising industrialist and had held powerful offices in the political arena) gifted 22 acres of land and the OL.KE. family 7.37 acres, both in one stretch, and the gift documents were got registered in January 1977.

Swamiji came to Sivaganga on 29-10-1977 to preside over the Kamban Vizha. A meeting was arranged to finalise organising the Yoga Samaj. It was resolved to name it Shuddhananda Yoga Samaj with Swamiji as Life president and get it duly registered. Advocate R. Ramanuja Ayyangar helped me a lot in drafting the constitution of the Samaj. It was registered on 08-11-1977. All the five trustees of Shuddhananda Samaj, founded by Swamiji in Sivaganga in 1947-48, which did not function as expected, were inducted as members of the new Samaj. Swamiji nominated the donors of the land as patron-members and fifteen others as members. About seventeen persons including myself became paid life-members. The executive committee elected me Secretary.

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In 1978 the application for permission to open the high school at Sholapuram was submitted to the Joint Director of School Education (Secondary) through proper channel. Sri KN. Ramanathan Chettiar, my old student, came forward to place his big house with a vast area of open space at my disposal to house the school there. The managements of high schools at Sivaganga and Okkur and Sri P. Dorairaj, the then Divisional Development officer who was, in the absence of an elected Panchayat Union, the ex-officio Chairman of the Union, helped me by issuing the 'No objection certificates' to enable me submit them along with my application. Sri C. Ayyamperumal, District Educational officer and Sri N.S.Rajagopalan, Chief Educational officer recommended the application very strongly. Sri A. Arumugam of the D.E.O.'s office and Sri A. Ilamaran, Deputy Inspector of Schools, Sivaganga, evinced sincere interest in processing the application. The Joint Director of School Education rejected the application and refused permission on flimsy grounds. I preferred an appeal to the Director of School Education who was the appellate authority.

Dr. K. Venkatasubramaniam was the then Director. He is known for his active nature, eloquent tongue, admirable disposition, administrative skill, readiness to do good and academic excellence. I met him at his office and submitted the appeal. He told me that he had the greatest reverence to Swamiji and admiration for his writings and added that he would do his best in the matter. As he was then leaving for Bombay, he gave my appeal petition to his stenographer with instructions to remind him on his return from Bombay. The stenographer, instead of putting up the file to the Director sent it to the office of the Joint Director who had rejected my application earlier. On August 1 st, 1979 when I met the Director he called for the file. The stenographer cut a sorry figure. The Director asked me if I had a spare copy of the appeal. Immediately I submitted a copy of the appeal.

The director sent it to the section concerned for necessary action. .Mr O. Pillappan, in the meantime, spoke to the Chief Minister M.G.R. Minister S. Ramachandran and Minister C. Aranganayagam, requesting them to put in a word to the Director to accord his permission.

At this juncture, it so happened that I met Sri O. Subramaniam, elder brother of Mr.O.Pillappan, who was then the Leader of the opposition in the Tamilnadu State Legislative Assembly. He was held in high esteem not only by his party men but by the Chief Minister and his cabinet and leaders of all the political parties. He asked me "What happened to your efforts? Have you received the necessary orders from the government?" I said, "No Sir, till this minute I have not received any orders." He chose to contact Minister S. Ramachandran. The minister was on camp. However, the minister's personal assistant Mr Mohandas was available. He understood the purpose of our coming and said, "The minister had already instructed me to speak to the Director of School Education and I have not so far been able to do so. I shall try now." He contacted the Director over phone and informed him of the minister's instructions to him and also added that the Leader of the Opposition was on his way to his office to meet him on the subject. Mr O. Subramaniam took me in his car to the Director's office. When we were climbing the steps to the first floor, he came across the golden words of Poet Subramanya Bharatiar displayed on the wall. The Director received Sri O. Subramaniam warmly. Sri Subramaniam jocularly said, "Please look at this. Poet Bharatiar wants schools in every street, in every village and in greater number in every town. But your department does not implement what you have so proudly displayed here. Don't you feel this headmaster deserves your appreciation for undertaking such a lofty project the Swamiji has given him. Please do the needful at your earliest." The Director smiled and said that he had already made up his mind to accord his permission and the orders would follow soon after the procedural formalities were over. He immediately sent for the superintendent of the section concerned. Sri Balaraman , the

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section superintendent, put up the file and told the Director that further action could be taken up after receiving the 'visit report' of the District Educational Officer concerned. The Director asked me to meet the officer concerned and request him to send his report as early as possible. Sri O. Subramaniam thanked the Director and I offered my respects to both Sri Subramaniam and the Director.

Immediately I returned to Madurai and met the District Educational Officer, Sri C.Ayyamperumal, who, accompanied by Sri A. Arumugam, the assistant concerned, camped at Sholapuram the same afternoon and instructed Sri Arumugam to prepare the report, furnishing necessary statistical data. Sri Arumugam collected all the particulars from the Deputy Inspector of Schools, Sri A. Ilamaran, and drafted the report as best as he could. The District Educational Officer went through the report and signed it. He arranged for the immediate despatch of his report to the Director. He also advised me to go to Madras and meet the Director. As advised by the D.E.O. I met the Director who instructed Sri Balaraman to put up the file with necessary draft proceedings.

Sri Balaraman submitted to the Director that he had already taken necessary action and he awaited the Director's approval. In private, Sri Balaraman told me that I should meet the Director the next day and show him the Fixed Deposit Receipt for Rs.50,000/- in the name of the proposed school, being the first instalment of the endowment, as he had already made a reference in the draft proceedings that the management had fulfilled that most important condition. I was emotionally moved by Sri Balaraman's voluntary interest in the matter. Thanking Sri Balaraman whom I had not known earlier, I asked him why he had taken such a risky commitment in the absence of such an important document. His reply was quick and astonishing. He said, "Sir, when I learnt that the school is named after the great Tamil saint-scholar and when I understood that our Director whom I ever hold in the highest esteem for his genuine interest in and effective support to good causes, was inclined to do his best, I made up my mind to do all that I can as a service to the noble cause. I have the greatest confidence that you will meet the Director with the F.D.Receipt. The Director asked me to meet him the next day.

Swamiji had given me already one F.D.Receipt for Rs.50,000/- which was in his name. I met the manager of the Adyar Branch of Indian Bank and requested him to issue a fresh receipt in the name of the school. He said that it was not possible to do so as the deposit was 'not transferable.' Even if it were foreclosed, the amount would fall short of such amount as had been paid as interest to Swamiji. When I felt helpless, Sri Premkumar of that branch who happened to be in the manager's room, met me on my coming out. He suggested to me that if I could convince the legal department at the head office of the urgency, my efforts might come out successful. Thanking him for his suggestion, I reached the bank's head office and located the legal section. I saw the name 'H.Ramanathan' on the name-board. On enquiry, I was given to understand that he was the son of the famous lawyer, Sri H.Harihara Ayyar of Madurai, who was my father's student. I sought an interview with him. I introduced myself as the son of Sri J. Rangasami Ayyar of Sivaganga whom he immediately recognised as his father's teacher. Encouraged as I was by his positive reaction, I explained to him my problem. He asked me if the deposit would remain with the bank. I replied, "Certainly, Sir." He phoned to the branch manager to foreclose the deposit and issue a fresh receipt in the name of the school. The other instructions he gave to the manager in this regard were ununderstandable to me. I thanked him and returned to the bank at about 4 p.m. and found the branch working. The manager was pleased to issue a fresh receipt in the name of the school.

It was 24 th August, 1979. I met Sri Balaraman who was ready with the orders of the Director and I showed him the F. D. Receipt. He took me to the Director's room and placed the typed copies of the order for the Director's signature. I showed the Director

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the deposit receipt. The Director, in a happy mood, signed the order. I received the order and thanked the Director who wished me well and the school a grand future. He asked me to convey his regards to Swamiji. I thanked Sri Balaraman profusely for all the sincere and great interest he had evinced in the matter and expressed my desire to honour him for his selfless service. He said that the favourable order itself was more than an honour and offered me good wishes. I met Swamiji at Adyar and informed him of the glad news. He felt very happy.

I informed Sri V. Venkataraman (who is called Type Maamaa) of the Director's order and requested him to make arrangements for the opening of the school on 1st September and convey the news to all involved in this venture. Sri Venkataraman, my youngest brother Sri R. Venkatarangan, Sri R. Krishnan of Salem and my wife, Srimathi Saroja started their work on 26th August which happened to be the day of Vinayaka Chaturthi. I returned from Madras on 28th August, met Sri C. Ayyamperumal, the D.E.O., Sri A. Arumugam, and Sri O. Pillappan and conveyed to them the happy news. A meeting of the Executive committee was convened and resolutions were passed thanking Swamiji, the Government, the Director and the Educational officers. The Executive Committee resolved to appoint me the Secretary and Headmaster of the school. I had to get myself relieved of my duties as headmaster of Rajah's Higher Secondary School. I met the Raja Saheb at Pudukottai along with Sri V. Srirangarajan (Paappaa Dorai) and got orders of relief on 31-08-1979. The next morning Sri J. Rangasami Ayyar, Swamiji's elder brother, and Sri Peri. Nagu, Swamiji's admirer, conducted Sri Vinayaka Puja and inaugurated the school at a simple function, attended by local people and well wishers from Sivaganga. The school had Standards from VI to IX only during the school year 1979-80 with a total strength of 59 pupils and a staff strength of four including the headmaster. The Chief Educational officer permitted the opening of Standard X during 1980-81. Now it became a full fledged high school. Swamiji paid his first visit to the school on 25-6-1980 and inaugurated standard X.

The Samaj and the school had to face many ordeals for nearly forty months due to nonpayment of staff grant for reasons that could be better guessed by the readers than described by me. I managed to borrow some amount every month from one affluent old student of mine and paid the staff. The staff members understood my plight and cooperated with me and stood the test. We resolved not to disclose this problem to Swamiji and carried on our work quite cheerfully, because of the growing reputation of the school.

Swamiji who settled down in his Thavakudil desired to put up pucca buildings for the school. The foundation stone for the proposed building was laid by Sri J. Rangasami Ayyar in Swamiji's holy presence and under the presidentship of Sri Peri. Nagu on 30-08-1984 when all the active members of the Samaj were present. With the amount Swamiji secured by disposing of the land in Adyar, the construction work was completed upto the basement level. Further construction got delayed due to paucity of funds. Swamiji desired that the school should be shifted from the rented building to the Samaj Campus and arranged for the construction of two tiled buildings. The school was shifted to these two buildings on 01-06-1987.

By now, the odds that the staff had been facing since the opening of the school, came to an end and regular payment of salaries was made possible when the department started releasing the staff grant.

Mr R. Sellembron of Switzerland who is devoted to Swamiji only and whose involvement in serving Swamiji and spreading his gospel of Sama Yoga, both during Swamiji's lifetime and after his Maha Samadhi, has no parallel, completed the construction of the school building with the active cooperation of his friends.

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The new building was declared open at a grand function on 30-08-1992 by Dr.K.Venkatasubramaniam, former Vice-Chancellor of the Central University, Pondicherry, who, in his capacity as the Director of School Education, passed favourable orders for the opening of the school. Sri O. Subramaniam, former Leader of the Opposition, who helped us greatly in our efforts, presided over the function. Rajakumari Srimathi S. Rajalakshmi Raghuraj, illustrious daughter of Late D. Shunmukha Raja, lit the Kuthuvilakku. Dr. S. S. Rajagopalan, veteran educationist and Patron of the Headmasters' Association, released the Souvenir. Mr.R.Sellembroon , the benefactor, Mr. Andre Marie of Pondicherry, founder-president of Kavi Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati Natakalayam and Swamiji's ardent admirer, Thiru Thamizhkanal Su.Mu. Bharati of Tiruchi and Thiru K. R. Muruganandam, the then M.L.A., spoke on Swamiji's greatness. Portraits of Late S. Doraisinga Raja and Late D. Shunmukha Raja, patrons of education, Late Mrs. Renate Bhulmann, Swamiji's sincere admirer and one of the benefactors of the school, Late T. Srinivasan and Late C. Ayyamperumal, former District Educational officer, whose involvement in the matter we ever cherish, were unveiled. The portraits of Dr. K. Venkatasubramaniam, Sri O. Subramaniam and Mr. R. Sellembroon were formally handed over to the headmaster. Mr. R. Sellembroon released, on this occasion, the audio cassette of Swamiji's Melaarnavam songs rendered by the famous Carnatic Musician Dr. M. Balamuralkrishna.

Late RM. Muthupalaniappa Chettiar of Paganeri, an industrialist, known for his generous and charitable disposition, was inclined to do something good for the school. Before he could translate this desire of his, he passed away. His son, Sri M.PL. Kannappa Chettiar, who participated in the Shuddhananda Jyoti Vizha on 7-3-1999, on seeing the incomplete School prayer hall in front of Swamiji's Shrine, declared that he would take up the work of completing the construction. He involved himself fully in the work and fulfilled his promise and the hall was declared open by him, on being requested by me, on 10th February, 2000. The school marches towards greater achievements, thanks to the patronage of well-wishers.

SWAMIJI SETTLES DOWN AT SHOLAPURAM

Swamiji arrived at Sivaganga at 9.30 a.m. On 10th June, 1982 for settling down at the 'Thavakudil' (Spiritual Abode) constructed in the centre of the 30-acre land of Shuddhananda Yoga Samaj at Sholapuram. A vast gathering of the public accorded him a grand reception at the railway station. On reaching Sholapuram, the villagers welcomed Swamiji in the traditional fashion, followed by welcome addresses in Samskrit by Sri Vaidyanatha Sastri and in Tamil by Arutkavi Professor K. S. Ramaswamy. Sri. J. Rangasami Ayyar, Sri R. Ramanuja Ayyangar and Sri Peri. Nagu, emotionally moved as they were, expressed their feelings of infinite joy over Swamiji's decision to settle down near his birth place, Sivaganga, offering easy access to such aspirants as sought his spiritual guidance.

Invoking Lord Nataraja's Grace on all, Swamiji expressed his great satisfaction over the Divine Will in choosing Sholapuram for his stay in the evening of his life where he, in his boyhood days, had spent many days in the company of his spiritual mentor Sage Jnana Siddha. He thanked the noble donors of the land for providing him with a peaceful atmosphere and enabling him to continue his spiritual mission and his service to Tamil. Soon after the reception was over Swamiji visited the area of his wanderings, identifying the 'Gandavana Poigai' (drinking water pond).

SWAMIJI: THE PATRON OF THE SCHOOL

Swamiji was much pleased with the daily routine in the school. He was happy that the boys were taught his songs, trained in Yoga and Suryanamaskar, encouraged to enact his dramas, involved in such activities as would make them responsible and devoted citizens of our ancient country and above all equipped with a

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spiritual bent of mind and a secular outlook. He wrote down one-act plays and thought provoking speeches for their ready use whenever they participated in the programmes of the All India Radio. Swamiji involved himself in teaching the school final boys during the night-study classes and enjoyed this self-imposed exercise.

Swamiji was very eager to see the Samaj-School complex green with shady trees, flower plants and fruit-bearing trees. K. Soman, the then physical education teacher, undertook this great project and transformed what was more or less a barren area into a green one. Swamiji, immensely pleased with the astonishing change brought about by teacher Soman and the enthusiastic team of students involved in this work, was prompted to call Sholapuram, a Solaipuram. (Solai means a grove). When the Late Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran introduced the 'free supply of nutritious food scheme, in schools Swamiji jumped up in a joyful mood and commended the good heart of the Chief Minister.

M. Madhavan, the mathematics teacher of his school, used to buy for him vegetables at Sivaganga. Sometimes, Madhavan would have spent more than what Swamiji had given him. Not knowing this, Swamiji would tell me that the mathematics teacher was an expert in securing so many kinds of vegetables so cheaply. To Swamiji rise in the train fare and postage had never been a matter of concern but any rise in the prices of other necessities would raise his eyebrows and make him feel concerned for the poor.

Another notable quality in Swamiji was that he never allowed others to spend for his personal needs. As and when he came to know of such instances, he would immediately pay the person concerned what he had spent on his behalf. I have had such experience on several occasions.

FOLLOWERS

Swamiji was never partial or selective in extending his love and affection as he felt His Presence in every soul. At the same time he was not attached to anybody.

He was quite different from many spiritual leaders. Neither he styled himself as a Spiritual Master nor organised a coterie of 'yes men' singing his praise to lure the public with miracles and fictitious benevolence. To him, Yoga Samaj is not a mere spiritual organisation, promising a paradise on earth, but a 'concept' meant for the betterment of every individual into a Sama Yogi who can work towards the establishment of a new social order based on the ideal of '**ONE GOD, ONE WORLD AND ONE COSMIC RACE**'. He demonstrated in his daily life how every one could function as a 'Yoga Samaj'.

When I suggested to Swamiji to organise first a Yoga Samaj in Sivaganga before taking up the school-project, he remarked, "Yoga Samaj should be founded in one's **inner self**. Man-made things will disappear one day or other. Institutions and organisations flourish during the lifetime of the founders and will start deteriorating with their exit. Their ideals will get betrayed by vanity. The pace of deterioration may vary. But I do not want to discourage you. Go ahead." Experiences confirm what Swamiji said.

None was permitted to meet Swamiji without undergoing a screening test by me or, in my absence, by Sri M. Madhavan, the mathematics teacher, whom Swamiji recognised as a model teacher. Only after satisfying myself of the bona fides of any visitor, I gave permission to the visitor to meet Swamiji.

Sri M. R. Balasubramaniam and Sri K. Rajagopalan of Vadalur, Mr. R. Sellembron (S. Ram Bharati) of Switzerland, brothers K.Nagarajan and K.Nagasubrahmaniem of Tiruvanmiyur, Pulavar K. Thyagarajan of Periamanali, R. Yogambal, her son Dr.R. Gopalan of New Jersey, and her daughter Jambagalakshmi of Chennai, Sri R.Sampathkumar of Ullagaram, Sri A.S.Dwarakanathan of Nanganallur, Sri V.Venkataraman of Sembakkam, retired Chief Educational officer Sri K. Thandeswaran, retired principal N.Shakuntala, Sri N. Thyagarajan of Virugambakkam, Sri K. Gurumoorthy

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of Guru Gas Agency (Broadway), Chennai, the freelance journalist Ragami and Sri Thangakaleeswaran of Malaysia who remain Swamiji's faithful followers till this day and continue their interest in the Samaj and the school. I can recall how dedicated and faithful were Thamizhkanal Su.Mu.Bharati of Tiruchi, B.Gopalakrishnan of Kambarasampettai and his wife, Mrs. Renate Bhulmann of Germany, R. Ramanuja Ayyangar and Peri. Nagu of Sivaganga.

Late Muthu, Swamiji's attender, deserves a special reference in this context. He was an illiterate but was far better than the educated. He was unsophisticated, unassuming and unattached even to his near and dear. All the twenty four hours he remained near Swamiji's Thavakudil and responded to Swamiji's 'AUM' call immediately and attended on Swamiji quite willingly, devoid of any sign of reluctance. He was contented with a monthly salary of rupees fifty. Swamiji had the greatest affection for Muthu who considered that his closeness and service to Swamiji were of greater value than money. He enjoyed the unique privilege to accompany Swamiji in his usual evening stroll. He continued his service in Swamiji's Shrine till the end of his life on 19-11-1997. A rare rustic specimen he was and a blessed soul he developed into.

WELL-WISHERS AND THEIR SELFLESS SERVICE

I wish to place on record my grateful thanks to the following good souls, service-minded by nature, who have been rendering great and selfless service to the Samaj and the school, prompted by their reverence to Swamiji and an admiration for his inspiring writings.

Sri G. Somasundaram and Sri V. Gururamakrishnan, Chartered Accountants at Madurai, having spent a number years in their boyhood at Sivaganga as students of Sri Ramakrishna Vidyasala and Raja's High School, are much attached to Sivaganga in general and to families like ours in particular. They have been rendering great service to the Samaj in their capacity as auditors and guide me severally.

Sri S. Srinivasaraghavan, one of the eminent lawyers at Sivaganga and grandson of late R. Ramanuja Ayyangar, who had been my guiding force throughout, takes after his noble grandfather in whatever he does in the interest and welfare of the Samaj.

Sri M.R. Balasubramaniam and Sri K.Rajagopalan of Vadalur and their families, Srimathi A. Jagajyoti Ammal and her family at Sivaganga, Sri N. Thyagarajan, retired secretary in the Directorate of Government Examinations, Chennai and Sri R. Sampathkumar and family at Ullagaram are ever devoted to Swamiji and render sincere service and help to the Samaj and the school quite voluntarily and continuously.

Pulavar Sri K. Thyagarajan of Periamanali who had the unique privilege and good fortune to live in Swamiji's Yoga Samaj at Adyar for a number of years is one of the very few persons who have read almost all the books written by Swamiji and can quote off-hand from Swamiji's writings. He keeps touch with me and attends important functions at the Samaj. He is a source of inspiration to me and the teachers of the school. He contributes his mite to the Samaj now and then.

Celebrated musicians Sri B. V. Raman and his (late) brother B. V. Lakshmanan, Violinist M. Balasubramaniam of Madurai, Mridangist N. Krishnamoorthy of Karaikudi (a retired Bank officer) and Sri H. Subramaniam, son of late Harihara Bhagavathar of Avudayarkoil, an expert in playing the instrument 'Zallari' (gathu vaadyam) and a retired official of the L.I.C. deserve my grateful thanks for their involvement in the Shuddhananda Sangeethaanjali (music concert of Swamiji's songs) at the Aaraadhana festival every year and their efforts to popularise Swamiji's musical compositions.

Late T.V.N. Senthil Mukundan, one of the prominent Nadaswara Vidwans at Madurai, was a great devotee and used to play Nadaswaram on every important occa-

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sion, both during Swamiji's lifetime and after his Maha Samadhi and rendered great service in training boys and girls in singing Swamiji's songs at the Aaraadhana every year. He had rendered musical notations to some of Swamiji's keerthans. His selfless service to Swamiji shall ever remain green in our memory.

During the time when the school was understaffed, retired teachers Late G. Lakshminarayanan (Swamiji's sister's son) and service-minded D.I. Lourdu engaged the classes and served the school as honorary teachers.

Swamiji's Birth Centenary was grandly celebrated on the 15 th and 16 th February, 1997. The credit goes to the Committee with Rajakumari Srimathi S. Rajalakshmi Raghuraj as President. Sri SL. Sathiah as Vice-President, Headmaster M.Madhavan as the Secretary, Sri S. Kaleeswaran as Treasurer, myself as coordinator and Messrs. O. Pillappan, AR.K. Kannappan, V.Srirangarajan, A.Jagajyothi Ammal, A.M.M.Raffique and KL. Pichai as members. With the active cooperation of the staff and students of the school, every member of the committee rendered dedicated service for the very grand success of the function.

Among those who participated in the function, special mention should be made about Hon'ble Minister Thiru Tha. Kiruttinan who in his address after declaring open an exhibition on Swamiji's life and work, declared that he would take immediate steps to see that the District Central Library at Sivaganga was named after Swamiji. Within a few months after the Centenary celebrations at a special function Hon'ble Minister Thiru K. Anbazhagan declared open the 'Sivaganga Kavi Yogi Shuddhananda Bharati District Central Library' and unveiled Swamiji's portrait.

THE PILGRIM SOUL BECOMES IMMORTAL

Swamiji, even at his ripe age, undertook long journeys alone, to places like Rishikesh, Simla, Hyderabad and Patna and politely turned down my request to take an escort with him. On certain occasions, these journeys would extend for several days. However, he used to send me epistles, describing his experiences. All our efforts to dissuade him from undertaking such journeys did not succeed. On the other hand, he enjoyed travelling, meeting people, observing men and nature which provided him with new material for writing. However, he informed us of the date and conveyance of his arrival at Sholapuram. I used to make arrangements to receive and escort him to the Thavakudil. .

In middle of February, 1990, he was returning from Madras by train. But I had no information. On reaching Sivaganga, Swamiji had dropped his small luggage of a travel bag on the platform but before he got down, the train had started moving. Swamiji was obliged to get down at Manamadurai, the next station. Somehow, he managed to pick up a bus and reached Sholapuram. He was very tired and looked very uncomfortable. When I enquired him about his travel bag, he, in his usual style, quipped, "That luggage I threw out on the railway platform and before 'this luggage' (meaning his body) got down, the train had started moving." This experience prompted him to give up travelling. He confined his movements in the Samaj grounds with his attender, Muthu. However, there was no change in his usual routine.

On 2 nd March, 1990, the Jyoti Vizha was to take place at 5 p.m. Swamiji used to preside over the function every year. Thamizhkanal Su. Mu. Bharati, Swamiji's most sincere admirer and follower since 1954, had come to request Swamiji to preside over his 'Mani Vizha' (61st Birthday) at Tiruchi on 25th March. Sri B. Gopalakrishnan of Kambarasampettai, another devoted follower, had also come to participate in the Jyoti Vizha. Both of them were talking to Swamiji. Swamiji who was unusually lying on the floor, leaning on a pillow for support, appeared to them as if he had been suffering from pain. Both of them came down and informed me of Swamiji's condition. I rushed upstairs and

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found that he was feeling uneasy. I asked him what was wrong with him. Instead of explaining his problem, he asked me if he might participate in the Jyoti Vizha and talk for fifteen minutes. I could guess he was distracting my attention. The teachers helped him with a more comfortable bed. He was not in a position to move on account of the severe pain. By this time, the Chief Educational officer, Sri K. Thandeswaran, (the chief guest) who had the greatest regard for Swamiji, came to see him. After paying his respects to Swamiji, he suggested that Swamiji should take rest. Swamiji seemed to agree with him. After instructing my office assistant to look after Swamiji, all of us came down. The function went on without Swamiji's participation. Soon after the function was over, all went to see Swamiji who looked better. ON 3rd March, there was improvement in his appearance and physical movements. I reminded him of Su.Mu.Bharati's Mani Vizha on 25 th March Swamiji confirmed his participation and asked me to take down what he dictated. It was his composition in praise of his affectionate admirer. Swamiji asked me to send it to him for being printed.

On 4 th March, all of us were surprised to learn that Swamiji had stopped taking any food and observed complete silence. I requested Dr.S. Netranandam to examine Swamiji. He requested Swamiji to take milk at least. But Swamiji just smiled and continued his silence and fasting. My wife, Srimathi Saroja, attended on him during day time and Muthu and his wife Nachammai during night. My wife persuaded Swamiji to take some milk and Swamiji consented. All of us felt relieved of our anxiety.

On 7 th morning, I arrived at the school at 9.20 a.m. Sweeper Nachammai and watchman came running to me and informed that Swamiji looked rather dwindling. I rushed to his bed side and found that he had breathed his last. He had chosen to leave this earth and become part of the Divine. His life of 2828 days in the 'Thavakudil' came to an end on 7 th March, 1990 (Sukla Ekadasi in the Tamil month of Maasi). With a heavy heart, I made arrangements for informing all those associated with Swamiji of his Maha Samadhi. The teachers and others busied themselves with arrangements for the obsequies to take place.

Swamiji always enjoyed the company of the school boys. He had often told me that he must be provided with some kind of accommodation in front of the school to enable him observe the school at work. All the teachers suggested to me to locate the Samadhi in front of the school. Arrangements moved fast. Hundreds of Swamiji's admirers from far and near and men and women from Sivaganga and other neighbouring villages and the villagers of Sholapuram thronged the campus and offered their respects to Swamiji's mortal remains. Those who had been very close to Swamiji read out his inspiring poems. The students of Swamiji's school recited Swamiji's Shuddha Shakti Mantra couplets. Some of our family members recited Bhagavad Gita.

On 8th March, Swamiji's body was carried in a procession from the Thavakudil to the place where the Samadhi pit had been constructed. Abhishekam of milk was performed and all the ceremonies prescribed for the burial of saints were performed. Swamiji's body was laid to rest in the Samadhi and the masons completed the construction by covering the top of the Samadhi. The obsequies were continued on every morning till 19-3-1990.

Yogi S.A. A. Ramiah of the Kriya Babaji Yoga Sangam offered a lingam to be installed in the Samadhi (Swamiji had once requested him to get for him a lingam). The installation of the lingam was performed by Yogi Ramaiah himself on 20th April 1990. A committee was formed with Sri S. Krishnan (of Rabeek Raja Transports) as president to take up the construction of Shuddhananda Shrine. Mr. R. Sellembron donated a lakh of rupees and Thamizhkanal Su.Mu. Bharati, Rs.10,000/-. Swamiji's admirers and the staff of our school offered as much as they could afford. The shrine was constructed within four months. The ceremonial opening was performed by Swami Vimalanandaji,

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President of the Sivananda Thapovanam, Madurai on 30th August, 1990. Since then, the school boys have been performing the abhishekam and puja to Jyoti Shuddhananda Lingam daily. (Swamiji had written a devotional piece called 'Sivalinga Naadam 'about sixty years back wherein is found a reference to 'Jyoti Shuddhananda Lingam')

On the Sukla Ekadasi Day in the Tamil month of Maasi every year, Swamiji's Aaraadhana is conducted and on 7 th March every year, the Shuddhananda Jyoti Vizha. On the Vijayadasami Day are celebrated Swamiji's Realisation Day in the morning and the Anniversary function of the school in the evening. On 11 th May every year Swamiji's birthday is celebrated when teaching of lessons to pupils of the S.S.L.C. class commences.

Swamiji's magnum opus, Bharata Shakti, and 'Yoga Siddhi' guide us in our work. In conformity with what Swamiji had written in the 9th and 10th chapters under the Yoga Iyal in his book 'Yoga Siddhi', we carry on with the conviction that Swamiji as a Divine Force lives amidst us in the Samaj-School campus, radiating rays of His Cosmic Energy to inspire us for concentrated service to Him and his ideals of Sama Yoga.

Let us sing Swamiji's song of Sama Yoga.

The earth is one, the breath is one.

The sky above is one.

Humanity in Soul is one,

The goal of life is one.

North and South, and East and West

Are one in horizon.

This harmony of life is best

When all are every one.

Prosper All, Prosper All

Conscious of the ONE in all.