

A Messenger of Peace and Wisdom

by and about

Swami Krishnananda

The Divine Life Society

Sivananda Ashram, Rishikesh, India

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PREFACE

The Divine Life Society felt it an honour and a privilege to celebrate the 75th Birth Anniversary of revered Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj in an adequately befitting manner, commensurate with the services being rendered by him to the Society for over half a Century, with singular devotion, dedication and spirit of undiminished renunciation. Though Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj initially was not at all in favour of any such Celebration, true to his spirit of renunciation, he was gracious enough to accede to the wish of the senior monks of the Ashram, thereby leaving very little time for the Swami Krishnananda Amrita Mahotsava Committee for planning its various projects.

One of the projects of the Celebration Committee was to bring out a suitable Souvenir on the occasion, in addition to re-printing some of Swamiji's books, as well as small booklets for free distribution.

We record with great satisfaction that, in spite of the lack of time, the response from devotees, admirers and disciples of Swamiji, has been so spontaneous and immense that the Souvenir has become larger than what we had hoped. It is because countless in number are those who have received an awakening, an inspiration or a total transformation in their lives by their association with the revered Swamiji, who came forward to pen their feeling of gratitude. So profound and deep are Swamiji's love and wisdom that no one who had an occasion to meet him, ever left without being 'touched' or 'affected' by his thoughts. A perusal of the articles in this Souvenir—outpourings of the contributors' experiences and feelings—will reveal the depth and profundity of the Saint in Swami Krishnanandaji. Yet, the Wholeness which is the Real Krishnananda, stands beyond anyone's grasp—both of the intellect and the heart. Truly, therefore, Gurudev said: "He is a wonder to me!"

We wish to express our gratitude to the numerous contributors for their feelingful write-ups which portray in different colours, the multifaceted resplendent personality of the Swamiji; and the value of the Souvenir is enhanced by the Swamiji's own scintillating articles and poems.

It is, therefore, with joy and satisfaction that we are releasing this Commemoration Volume on this auspicious occasion of the Amrita Mahotsava of revered Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, with the earnest

hope that no sincere reader of this Volume will go 'unaffected' by one or the other of the articles, thus bringing a true transformation in his or her inner being.

- Sri Swami Krishnananda Amrita Mahotsava Committee

ARTICLES BY SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

THE VEDAS AND THEIR MESSAGE TO HUMANITY

For the first time, perhaps, in the history of mankind, the great ideal of *Yajna* was propounded in the Vedas, especially in the Rig-Veda, to its immortal glory. In the famous hymn, called the Purusha-Sukta, we have this enunciation of cosmic sacrifice as an all-round duty. The importance of sacrifice was raised to such heights in this glorious hymn of the Veda that it has been identified with the existence of the Creator Himself. God Himself is Sacrifice,—"*Yajno vai vishnuh.*" Narayana became the First Sacrifice. And His Sacrifice has had its impact in a series, in lesser and lesser densities of manifestation, until the last particle of earth has been reached, which also is performing a sacrifice of its own. Every atom of creation is engaged in a sacrifice because of the impulse of this supreme Sacrifice that has been imported to it by the Eternal Being.

The Purusha-Sukta enunciates the cosmology of the Veda. In the beginning the *Purusha* alone was, and the Purusha is all that is, and also what shall be. The Purusha is all creation, and is, at once, above all creation. Past, present and future do not exist in Him, He is the Timeless Eternal Being. From Him, the All-Reality, proceeds the Creative Cosmic Person who manifests Himself further as this visible Universe of Space and Time, of Sun and Moon and Stars, of Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth in their vast comprehensiveness. From this cosmic manifestation arises all that is of a variety in the mineral kingdom, in the plant, the animal, the human being or even the angel or the celestial. The Purusha is All-in-All. The individual creations,—celestial, human, animal, plant and mineral—are the descents of the One Purusha in graded densities of concretisation, diversification and externalisation in Space and Time, and these varieties are His own Heads, Faces, Limbs, Forms, Parts, and He sees through their eyes, hears through their ears, thinks through their minds, works through their bodies. The gods

of the hymn are the ancient contemplators of this Unity of Existence by an act of self-sacrifice in communion with it in every level of their being. The Universe is the Object of Meditation as the Self-alienation of the Absolute. The individuals, thus, have to lead a cooperative life of mutual sacrifice in the light of this Great Universality of the Purpose of all life. The social groups are the principles of coordination for mutual good by way of participation in the working of the social structure as a whole.

In this grand hymn, the Purusha-Sukta, we have four facets of life beautifully presented, which is the philosophy as well as the sociology and the mystical meaning behind life as a whole. The great principle that is finally laid down in this hymn is the goal of attainment. Any effort directed towards this end, or purpose, little or small, intense or mild, whatever be the character of the effort of the endeavour that we put forth, is motivated by an impulse towards the attainment of an aim immediately visible, or perhaps remotely seen at a distance.

The fixing of this ideal is one's primary duty in the performance of *Sadhana*. The aim of the Nation determines its constitution. We cannot frame the constitution of a government unless we have its aim before our minds. What is it that we are asking for? What does the Nation mean? What is required? That is to be clear, first of all, with the people and leaders of the Nation. When the ideal of the Nation is clear, the system of working out this ideal is laid down. This is called the constitution, the law and the order. And then there is the organisation which is called the administration,—we call it the government, which is the working mechanism that puts into visible action the ideology that is framed in the constitution on the basis of the final attainment towards which the Nation is moving or ought to move.

This is also echoed in the system and doctrine of Buddhism when it clinches its essentials as the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *Sangha*. What they call the Buddha is the ideal that is set up before us as that which has to be reached;—the universal Goal of life is signified by the term *Buddha*; the consciousness of the Infinite which is the ideal of attainment. Not necessarily a human being or a Guatama Siddhartha is signified by the term Buddha, here. It is rather the cosmic ideal that is denoted by the term in the organisational doctrine of the Buddha.

What is the method of attaining the ideal? That is the *Dharma*, the constitution, the technique to be adopted in practical life, for the purpose of

the attainment of this ideal,—Dharma, the Law. And in order that this Dharma may become fructified or materialised in day-to-day existence, there is a necessity for cooperative activity among people, an organisation, which is the Sangha,—this is the government. In a similar fashion was the mention made, long ago, of the entire process of the practice of Sadhana, in the Purusha-Sukta.

The hymn starts with the proclamation, "*Sahasra-sirsha purusha.*" etc. It speaks of the Ideal ahead of us;—the multiformed Absolute with eyes everywhere, with ears everywhere, with hands and feet everywhere, with everything everywhere. That is the Purusha, the Supreme Being, who has no past or present or future,—"*Purusha evedam sarvam yad bhutam yat cha bhavyam.*" Whatever was, whatever is and whatever shall be, in short, that which transcends the very notion of time, is the Purusha. This is the Goal succinctly stated, precisely presented before us.

Now comes the next question: how to attain this ideal. This is the *Sadhana*, or the Dharma, or, we may say, the methodology to be adopted. The whole process of creation which has been described in this *Sukta* is the fundamental base behind the description of the Dharma or the method of *Sadhana* to be practised. There is a manifestation, an evolution of the Purusha, stage by stage. There is a concretisation of the Universal Person. First, there is affirmed the Universal Self, the Purusha. Then, gradually coming down to the level of space and time, it becomes more and more conceivable to us. The descent takes place in a systematic manner. That is why we call creation a universe and not a chaos. This is the unified organisation that is the creation of God, mathematically thought out with utter minuteness of execution, so that there is no need for any amendment of this constitution of God. The act of the human parliament requires amendments according to the situation prevailing at any given time. But all the exigencies have been preconceived already by the Purusha. He knows all the circumstances that would arise at any time in the future until the next step in evolution. Every provision has been made in this Constitution so that there need be no necessity to think over it every day, or for amending it or improving it for the day. The coming down of the Purusha as creation is the manifestation that is described in the Purusha-Sukta. The Absolute seems to come down gradually, and slowly. In the beginning, this happens inconceivably, later on notionally possible of conception, and later still, further, it becomes visible. Suffice it to say that the Purusha comes to the earth-level where we are standing now, on which our feet are planted. That

is the completion of creation. This fulfilment of creation by God is usually known as the *Virat*, a term that we use for our notion of God as completely manifest in the universe. But all these events had taken sufficient time, may be logical time, in the coming down of the Purusha to the level of the earth in a gradational, systematic and methodical manner. In this process, there has been included the necessity of bringing into a harmonious relationship every level of being. It is not a segregated scattering of particulars that God has done in creation, but an integration which has come down as various degrees of lesser integration, again, in more and more concretised forms, until things come to the level of the individual which, also, is an integration of personality at the lowest. There is no chaotic arrangement anywhere in creation, even down to the lowest atom. Everything is an organisation, and even an atom is a beautiful organisation by itself. There are organisations after organisations, wholes and wholes emanating from wholes,—"*Purnam adah purnam idam.*" At every stage one whole comes from another whole leaving the intact. The difference is only in the intensity of the concretisation of wholeness and the consciousness embedded in it. But wholeness is nevertheless present until one comes to the wholeness of this physical universe which is the *Virat* consciousness.

Again, there is segregation taking place, in another type of wholeness, which is the individuality dividing into the subject and the object, through the evolutionary process of the plant, animal and human to which we belong at present. We are humans; we are cut off in consciousness from the Universal Integration of the *Virat*.

And nevertheless, we are retaining a sort of wholeness in our personality. We are undivided, somehow. The essence of the wholeness of individuality has now taken the name and form of egoism. Unfortunate is this, indeed. Yet, divinity is reflected there in this affirmation. Such a vehement affirmation is inconceivable unless there is an eternity backing it from behind. Else, why should a human being be so egoistic and intractable? There is an eternal wholeness of self-affirmation that supports this isolated affirmation of wholeness we call personality. It is a travesty of affairs, a downfall, but, behind it, very legitimately, is the Ocean of all existence. Therefore, we are in a complex situation. We are neither here nor there; we are between the devil and the deep sea, as one may say. From the one side there is the impact of the universal, and from the other side there is the impetuosity of the individuality. That is where we stand today, at the cross-roads, between God and the devil. But we are neither God nor a devil

entirely. We have the elements of both in us. However, neither element is complete in us, and that is the superiority of the human individual over the animal. You can fall, you can rise,—you have the freedom. But what freedom? To fall or to rise? Both freedoms have been bestowed upon us, and we can do whatever we would like. To hell or to heaven you go by your freedom. Mankind is at the brink between the Universal Divinity of Virat and the further urges into segregation that are also impelling everyone to move on externally, outwardly, into social and physical relationships. The Virat consciousness is not the end of creation.

The *Panchadasi* of Vidyananda says that right from the concept of the Universal Seed Isvara's Will, up to the manifestation of the *Virat*, is God's creation. But then the *Jiva* comes—our own individuality,—which starts with the waking consciousness, descending into dream consciousness, going into sleep, and coming back to waking consciousness, returning again into dreaming and sleeping, in a cycle,—this is *Samsara-chakra*, the wheel of metempsychosis. But the impulse of the great ideal before us is not lost hold of. God will never forsake us even in hell; even in the downmost nether regions God is with us. And He is speaking to us in his own language, beckoning us to Himself. That is why we are restless wherever we are. Whatever be the stage in which we are, we have a sense of insecurity, restlessness and indeterminability of the future, all which is a reflection of the truth that we are not in a perfected condition. We are aiming at an ideal of which we have lost consciousness now, but towards which we are struggling under the conditions in which we are placed. This is the saga of life. We are trying to solve the problems and pains of life by ways and means conceived by our individual mind through the perceptive faculties provided in the waking life, which is the first step that the individual takes in asserting independence. In the Biblical language, here is the Fall of Satan. Here arises the consciousness of good and evil into which Adam and Eve are supposed to have been roused against the dictates of God, by their eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Until then they had no consciousness of personality and sex, not even of space and time, evidently. So, it was the garden of paradise. Then, when Adam and Eve became conscious that they were naked, God remonstrated. "How do you know that you are naked? Have you eaten the fruit? How has the consciousness come into you? Up to this time, you were not aware that you were." Everything was—that was all. Everything is, not "I am." The 'I-am'-consciousness is the beginning of thoughts which can tear apart man in his woe. And he connives and contrives and manufactures gadgets, psychological and physical instruments for ridding himself of the

misery of sorrow that has come upon him on account of this isolation from the All-Being. He invents technology and radio and social organisation and political set up, international ideals of peace and harmony. Nothing succeeds. All these externalised attempts of the human individual remain as gluing broken pieces of glass to come together into an apparent wholeness. But broken glasses are broken glasses, they can never become one whole, again. The effort has not succeeded and it cannot succeed on the face of it because the assertion of individuality is at the back of every attempt at unity. As is the Hindi saying, "*Mooh me Ram, bagal me chhuri.*" You have a theoretical ideal of unity before you, but in the pit of your arm is concealed secretly a knife to attack the neighbour, should the time come for it. There is a subtle prejudice in us to affirm ourselves in our own individuality, irrespective of the ardent endeavour of everybody to come together on a common platform of humanity, or even an organisation of all nations. A psychological analysis of individual prejudices will reveal that personal security is at the background of even international welfare programmes. If the security of the ego is threatened, let welfare go to the dogs! If this is the ideal, well, one can imagine the consequences.

The great constitution of God, the *Dharma*, as enunciated in the Purusha-Sukta, is of the completeness of creation, and the individuals under it are not supposed to independently assert themselves. There is a need for cooperation, which is mentioned towards the end of the Sukta, commencing with the Mantra, "*Brahmanosya mukhamasit,*" etc. The *spiritual* ideal, the *political* administrative system, the *economic* order intended for the maintenance of personal security and social existence and the *labour* required for its achievement are what are called the '*Varnas*', a system of universal social organisation. "*Chatur varnyam maya srishtam guna-karma-vibhagasah,*" says the Bhagavad-Gita. God says, 'I created it,' which means to say that the initial sanction behind this organisation of groups of humanity into a set up of cooperation is in the principle of the ultimate inter connectedness of creation. There is cycle of cooperative activity continuing right from the Creator onwards. The Creator Himself enunciated this great law of cooperation (*Purovacha Prajapatih*). Cooperative activity does not necessarily mean work in the sense of physical movement or doing something, in a visible form, always. Action is an external symbol in the form of motion, social and personal, of an internal unification of feeling, ideology or purpose.

"*Samano mantrah samitih samani*," says the Rig-Veda towards the end of it. "Let your deliberations be common, your assembly of a common aim." Meet together; come together; work together; sit together; speak together; converse together; have a common ideology, so that you may have a common working aim, a single reality, is the note of the concluding message of the Rig-Veda.

THE ECSTASY OF GOD-LOVE

While the *Srutis*, as the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* are called, lift the principle of Godhead above the region of creation and make it shine gloriously in the firmament of utter perfection beyond the dust of the earth, and create a sense of veneration and fearsome devotion to the Eternal Potentate, the Epics and *Puranas* joyfully endeavour to bring the Judge of the universe to a homely relation, of a friend, philosopher and guide to humanity in turmoil. God, while He is the powerful parent and ruler over all things, to whom everything is subject as dependent and servant. He is also the friend of man, as in the symbol of the concept of *Narayana* and *Nara*, God never separable from man's welfare, *Krishna* never forsaking *Arjuna*, and coming to his succour and help even unasked and unsolicited. Many a time, man himself does not know that he needs help from God, but God knows it even beforehand. This is the intimacy and compassion which characterises God as highlighted in the Epic and *Purana* texts. The comradeship of God and man is the special touching feature which is promulgated here as distinguished from the transcendent majesty of the *Brahman* proclaimed in the *Upanishads*, or the gods adored in the *Samhitas*. It is the purport of these specialised teachings to make religion not only easy of practice but also a pleasant and enjoyable means of concourse with God, who is with us at all times, and is ever wary of the needs of devotees. The relation between man and God is now the apotheosis of the emotions and feelings, loves and aspirations of man, and human longings are concentratedly focussed on the form of God. While the *Krishna-Arjuna* relation is one of dignity and wonderment, as the cosmic and the individual working in unison, the most intimate relation of man with God, according to the *Bhagavata Purana*, is to be found reaching its heights in the love of the *Gopis* of *Vrindavana*. While the father-son relation, the master-servant relation, the friend-and-friend relation, and the mother-child relation are indeed master-pieces of human relation, the romance of the soul in its

ecstasy of God-vision is considered as the highest point which love and devotion can reach. In the *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad*, the intimacy and ecstasy of the union of the soul with the Absolute is compared to the self-transcendence felt in the communion of the lover and the beloved in an act of fast embrace. Rarely does the soul rise to total action in life. Mostly, what works in the daily occupations of man is the pressure and vehemence of intellect, mind and senses. The soul is supposed to rise to the surface of direct action, pulling up the whole personality without exception, in hunger, sleep and sex. The totality which one experiences in these states is a feeble apology for the entirety of merger which one experiences in God-union. God is not merely the awesome justice of the universe but a source of beauty and attraction capable of enchanting the whole world, surpassing every form of beauty and loveliness conceivable anywhere, melting the hearts of things at the very sight and even a thought of that Glorious Beauty. Beauty of beauties is God (*Sakshat manmatha-manmathah*).

Religion pales into a dreary occupation when it becomes a muddle of rules and regulations and a Procrustean bed of regimented practices, and is bereft of the thrill that one feels in the presence of the beloved. Religion is not merely discipline but also love and grace. The instance of the *Gopis* is, on the one hand, an illustration of the super-individual and supersocial nature of the soul's asking for God, and, on the other hand, the way in which God can dissolve His parliament and council of enactments and roles, and run to the devotee personally without the use of secondary means of assistance. The twenty-second verse of the Ninth Chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* is a promise of God that He shall personally take care of His devotees when they are undividedly united with Him. Spiritual ecstasy is the subject of the five chapters delineating the *Rasa-Lila of Krishna* in the tenth Book of the *Bhagavata*. Here devotion reaches a pitch to the point of breaking and collapsing as the individual is melting down into the blissful menstrium of the sea of God. Devotion of this kind, known as *Ragatmika-Bhakti*, or the devotion of ecstasy, as different from *Gauna-Bhakti*, or formalistic and disciplined form of devotion, commences with a kind of agitation of the soul within, a stimulation it feels in itself, not through the intellect, mind and senses, but verily as it is in itself, when the devotee attempts firstly to cry for God in a state of bereavement from Him; secondly becomes temporarily unconscious through exhaustion caused by the intensity of longing; and thirdly enters into a rapturous impulsion to imitate God, His features and actions, and dances in the spirit of a possession, as if that which one imitates has actually entered the person so imitating. The best actors in a dramatic

performance are those who virtually become the very part they are playing and lose their personal identity. The *Gopis* were in this penultimate state of actual union with God, which, further on, led them to a state of tearing down all the empirical shackles of personality-consciousness and external relation in a verily maddening reach of giddy heights where it is not merely the devotee that runs after God, but God Himself running to the devotee, God wanting man much more than man wants God. It is not enough if the devotee wants God; the highest devotion is where God loves the devotee and behaves as if He is a very servant of the one who loves Him. The lives of the saints who lived such a life of God-possession are examples practically to be seen in the history of religious thought and practice.

THE PATH OF DIVINE DEVOTION

Religion, in fact, is the way in which we daily establish our relation with God. The manner in which we contact God in our life is our practical religion. Mostly, our love for God keeps us in a state of reverence and awe and creates in us a particular type of devotion, known as *Aisvaryapradhana-Bhakti*, i.e., the love of God and adoration of God as Creator, Father and Sovereign Supreme, as *Isvara*, or the Master of Creation. But there is another type of internal contact that the devotee establishes with God, more intimate, we may say, in a sense, an attitude of affection for God, which goes by the name of *Madhurya-pradhana-Bhakti*. Here, intellectuality, ratiocination and analytical approach cease, and the soul speaks to God in its own language of unquestioned rapture. It contacts God in the vitality of being, rather than the words which the tongue speaks. Love needs no philosophy, nor does devotion to God.

We hear of saints like Narada travelling to all the worlds including *Vaikuntha*, *Satyaloka* and *Kailasa*. These analogies of Divine Masters penetrating through the realms of the cosmos, contacting God on one side and meeting men and even demons on the other side, is a representation of the significance of divine devotion, the extent to which it can have an impact on everyone and everything, especially as we have it portrayed in the Epics and the Puranas. Creation is said to be constituted of different realms, or *Lokas*, as they are called; and to make the relevance of God to creation interesting, catching and vibrating to the soul, to stir the personality and make one's hair stand on end even by listening to the glories of God, these

notable scriptures employ a technique of presenting God as a *Personality*, not entirely dissimilar to our own. God also lives in a realm as we do, though His region is all-inclusive, while ours is localised. God is the repository of supreme compassion, pity and mercy. He is not merely a judge who is only mathematically precise, regardless of our representations. God is concerned not only with law, but also justice. *Dharma* is not merely law, it is also due dispensation of justice. If there are five hundred witnesses manipulating against an innocent person, he can be penalised with even capital punishment, because there is evidence. This is law working. But it is not justice. God is justice, it is true, not merely law; but God has also a tender feeling towards His creation, to man and to all creatures. To know that we love God and that God loves us is certainly a greater satisfaction than any other consolation that we may have in terms of legal protection or judicial security.

The special emphasis of the Epics and the *Puranas* is that *God can hear us and speak to us, and we can speak to God. The stories, analogies and symbols that these scriptures employ for describing man's relation with God, and vice versa*, signify that God is nearer to us than we imagine; and He will help us even if we are unconscious of His presence. It is not that God thinks of us only if we think of Him. Our relation to God is not a bargain or compromise; it is not a give-and-take covenant. God is portrayed not merely as Grandfather (*Pitamaha*) or Father (*Pita*) but also as Mother (*Mata*) and Supporter (*Dhata*). The Lord proclaims in the *Bhagavad Gita* that He is the Saviour, the Protector, the Generator, the Withdrawer, the Sustainer, the Onlooker, the Supervisor, and many other things of that nature, which make out that God is all and is everything.

It should follow, therefore, that it is easier to contact God than anything else in this world. Some purely rationalistic texts of a logical character may argue that God is difficult of approach, more difficult than anything in the world; but here we are told that other things are more difficult to approach than God. The point is that things in the world are not so near to us as we imagine; they maintain a spatial distance from us, and are away from us, but God is nearer to us than anything else, for God is not in space. The inclusiveness of God keeps us always non-separate from Him. God is nearer to us than parent, wife or children, all which relation will break down when one is in real difficulty, but God's help comes instantaneously. Our human relations may help us when we maintain a requisite relationship with them,

but our relation to God is not conditioned in any manner. It is told, again and again, that God loves us more than we seem to love Him.

An interesting incident is recorded in the Drona-Parva of the *Mahabharata*, the mere listening to which would strike us with wonder and make us sob for the love that God has for man. Towards the end of this Book, Arjuna is speaking to Bhagavan Vedavyasa and exclaims: "Master, can you explain to me one interesting thing? Whenever I was up in arms in battle, I used to see some mysterious figure moving in front of me, which I could not decipher properly, something visible sometimes, sometimes invisible, but not touching the ground. I saw a figure like that of a human being, now coming out of the mist as it were, making himself slightly visible to my eyes, now going into the background of the misty atmosphere of the war field. He was doing nothing, looking this way and that way, moving to this corner and that corner. The only speciality that I observed in his appearance was that he had a trident in his hand, a knot of hair on his head, and I saw some snakes round his neck. I could not understand who it was or what it was and what was the meaning behind it."

Sage Vyasa smiled and replied: "Arjuna, it is good that you have spoken to me about this mystery which you could not understand, nor can anyone understand. Do you know who fought this war and who it was that is bringing you victory? Who can stand before valiant warriors like Bhishma and Drone? Is there a man in all the world who can face them in war? But who defeated them? Someone else has worked this miracle in your favour but remained always in the background. Do you know whom you saw? It was Lord Siva. You are indeed blessed. He knew the predicament in which you all were since your opponents were indomitable. Lord Siva knew this and He was moving in the midst of the forces in war sucking the energy of the Kaurava regiments by His mere presence, but not taking any direct action. Oh, who could stand before Him if He were really to take up arms? Blessed art thou that you could see Him."

God works like this. And there are other instances, to the same effect, as on occasions when Bhishma spoke to Duryodhana in plain words. Duryodhana used to feel diffident and despondent as he could not see during the regime of Bhishma in the war any symptom of victory being on his side. Angered and upset, Duryodhana used to meet Bhishma frequently in the evening and cry out: "What is this? What is happening, grandsire? Thousands of my people are being slain every day and you are yet alive, the

invincible commander-in-chief." Bhishma would reply, "My dear child, do not tease me and taunt me every day. You are under the wrong impression that I am only pretending to fight and have not done my work well. But it is not so. I would have pounded all the Pandava forces in a single day but for the presence of that inscrutable person who is sitting there as the charioteer of Arjuna. But for His subtle intervention from moment to moment, the Pandava regiments would not have been there on the first day itself. I could have single-handedly uprooted the Pandava army. You do not know my strength. I have told you several times that you should not engage yourself in a conflict with those whom Krishna is helping. But you would not listen to me. And now you come and speak to me unpleasant words which are unbecoming on your part." Bhishma indeed did his best. He went to the extreme of his ferocity. Like blazing fire he began to burn the opposing forces. Thousands were massacred by the arrows that Bhishma shot. But not a single Pandava could be killed. Again Duryodhana wept at night: "What is all this, Master; you could not kill even a single Pandava? And I have depended on you for my security. After so many days of battle you could not bring down even a single Pandava." Again it was the same reply which Bhishma gave. "My dear boy, I do not want to get angry with you though you often irritate me with these words. But I shall tell you the truth once again. You cannot win this war as long as Krishna is on the other side." "Well, this is the old story again," said Duryodhana. "I am not here depending on you senile people. I have stalwarts like Karna." There could have been a cutting reply from Bhishma to this unwarranted verbal attack from Duryodhana, but Bhishma held his tongue, because there was no use frowning on the stupid man who would not listen to sane advice.

And how does God help? Asvatthama's role in the *Mahabharata*, again, is a case in point. After a lot of importunity Asvatthama obtained from his father Drona the knowledge of an invincible missile known as *Narayana-Astra*. After repeated pressure from the son, the father initiated him into this terrific mystery, saying. "All right, come here, I shall give you something now. But beware, I am giving you fire in your hands by which you can burn the world; but, my child, do not use it against devotees of God. It will not work against those who are protected by Narayana. I am warning you in this regard, lest you should yourself be in danger if you misuse it." Yet, Drona was cautious. He would not tell him how to withdraw the missile, because if it could be withdrawn, it could be used again several times. Knowing the immaturity and lack of understanding from which Asvatthama suffered and

his eagerness to use it one day or the other, Drona taught him its use once only and never told him how to use it a second time.

And we know how the occasion came for it. When Drona left his mortal coil, the fury of Asvatthama knew no bounds. He yelled out, "My father has given me some power; and today there shall be none remaining on the Pandava side." Saying this, Asvatthama let off the *Narayana-Astra*. Then what happened? Not even thousands of atomic bombs can work that devastation which *Narayana-Astra* is capable of. The *Astra* multiplied itself millionfold, the whole sky was filled with burning missiles; there was no sky, no stars, no sun and no moon; it was all fire. When Arjuna, who was not initiated into this *Astra* by Drona on account of his partiality for his son, saw it, he queried Krishna, "Lord, what is it that is coming? This is something new which I have not had the occasion to see before." Krishna replied: "I know what it is, and there is no remedy for this. No one can stand up against this *Astra* of Narayana, which has emanated from my own being. There is no one who can face it, not even the greatest of warriors. The best thing for you all would be now to stop fighting, throw down your arms and offer obeisance to this *Astra* with folded hands, because this weapon will not attack anyone who is not its enemy. Therefore, prostrate yourselves before it, and all shall be well." On hearing the words of Krishna, Arjuna ordered the entire army to throw down its weapons, shouting loudly: "Prostrate yourselves before this great fire that is coming. That is the only way of saving yourselves." And all did so, except Bhima, who retorted: "I am not a coward. I shall not bend before anyone. I shall see to it." Saying thus, Bhima took up his mace and began brandishing it against the *Astra*. Arjuna and Krishna argued with Bhima, "This is not the time to show your valour. Come down from your chariot and throw down your mace." They pulled him down to the ground. And, well, the *Astra*, beholding no one against it, extinguished itself. The *Astra* entered the body of Krishna himself, for he was Narayana standing there for the welfare of the righteous and the devout.

Asvatthama was gazing from the top of a tree, to see the ashes of the Pandavas. But no such thing happened. No ashes and no fire. The Pandavas were up in arms once again as if nothing had happened. Asvatthama left the field cursing all including even his father, saying that he was duped by his father's false initiation which was really of no utility to him: "These days even parents tell lies". Thus he cried and went out. On the way he met Vyasa, who explained to him that his father had not told him a lie and had initiated him properly. The only difficulty was, the *Narayana-Astra* was

used against Narayana Himself. That was the reason why it did not work. We should not use our power against God. Human effort cannot contradict Divine Majesty.

The wondrous way in which the great Incarnation Krishna furnished divine robes to Draupadi, the way in which He invisibly fed the Sage Durvasa and his thousands of disciples on prayer from Draupadi, the stunning drama of His going as an ambassador to the court of the Kauravas on behalf of the Pandavas, His revelation of the Cosmic Form in that assembly, His mighty role as divinity incarnate, in the Bhishma, Drona and Karna Parvas in the Mahabharata, are all too grand and glorious to be put in any word or language.

Again, we have instances like the release of the *Sudarsana-Chakra* of Narayana on the predicament of Ambarisha who became the target of Durvasa's anger, as we have it recorded in the Srimad Bhagavata.

The point is that such miraculous divine occurrences, the subtle workings of God, above the ken of the human mind, bring out the fact that God is always conscious of what our needs are and takes immediate steps to redress the sorrows of the devotees. In fact, God works His miracles every moment. Every incident in the life of the world is a divine miracle. The tales in the Epics and Puranas highlight the ways in which God can be loved and encountered. God is adored in the affectionate personifications as *Father, Friend, Master, Child*, or one's *Beloved*. God is also adored as the immensely compassionate Mother. We call it devotion when we run after God. What do we call it when God is running after us and wants us perennially? In fact, this latter mystery is the pinnacle that divine devotion can reach. It is not just enough if we want God; His wanting us is, indeed, the supreme attainment. The Lord's promise in the Bhagavad Gita is well known: "Those who contemplate on Me undividedly and worship Me as the All, to them, who are ever united with Me, I provide what they need, and protect what they have."

A PROJECT OF EDUCATION

The world has, first of all, to stand 'outside there' as an 'object' of the percipient individual, in order that the latter may make any sense of life at all. But, is it true that the world is really 'outside there', as an isolated object staring at the individual?

This strange predicament which one encounters in the study of anything would testify to the value that seems to be attached to such processes and doctrines and ways of living as the purely astronomical, physical, chemical, biological, historical, political, social, economic, civic, aesthetic, and even ethical and epistemological envisagements of existence, as they stand today. The whole edifice may tumble down if the meaning of a life of this kind is rooted in the basic requirement that the world is 'outside' the individual.

Modern astronomy and physics, to mention the least and the most obvious, fortunately, appear to have, unwittingly though, stumbled upon the fact that the universe is an undivided continuum, an organism, in which the space-time complex has to be transfigured into a four-dimensional perception, and that matter is not 'outside there' to be seen or dealt with by an 'individual'. The 'individual' so-called goes with the universe.

This should augur, evidently, a new vision of life in its entirety, awakening man from his slumber of empirical phenomenalism which, dream-like, is taken for reality, very erroneously. The return process to this great Fact of the Universe is education. A logical ascent to perfection is called for. The movement, then, is from the social scene to the psychology of the individual, the cosmical set-up and the Ultimate Reality.

Education may be said to be the process of awakening to the structure of existence. It is a graduated widening and ascent in the dimension of consciousness to the degrees of reality. Life is essentially a system of adjustment of oneself to the laws of the universe. The meaning of human enterprise in the world, thus, is coordination of the individual with the facts of the cosmic arrangement of things and a harmonious cooperation in the fulfilment of its purpose. The evolutionary scheme of the universe would lay down the required curriculum of the educational career.

But, the empirical insistence that the world is outside the individual has, however, to be taken into a matter-of-fact consideration, since all progress is from a lesser reality to a higher degree of being. This would also substantiate

the empirical value of the stages of the evolution of the universe conceived and experienced as a reality of pragmatic existence in a world of enterprise and progress.

The individual may be said to constitute a cross-section of the universe. The human being operates like a miniature cosmos. This would mean that the principles that are active in the universe direct and condition the existence and activity of all human life. The analysis would also reveal that there is a universal performance implicit in the existence of human beings and in their pursuits of what they consider as their objectives or aims. Towards this end, there is all the striving of human life, concerning which there has always been felt the necessity for intense educational training as a method of introducing a universal manifestation into the adventures of human individuality.

These insights may perhaps be adequate to begin a spade-work for laying the foundation of a proper educational career for humanity. When a child is born and practically knows nothing except for the fact that it is evidently self-conscious of its bodily existence and has a feeling of awareness of a vague and nebulous atmosphere of persons and things around it, there is also in it a pressure towards objective consciousness, and the inclination of the child is more in the direction of externality of perception and feeling than an awareness of its own existence as a human unit. What we may call the cosmological scheme is naturally to be followed in an understanding of the educational project, since it would appear that education is nothing short of a conscious discipline of the individual to ascend gradually, stage by stage to levels indicated by cosmic evolution. The condition of the child-consciousness mentioned may pave the way with which the educational method could be commenced for implementation. In the earlier stages of education, call it the kindergarten, the Montessori stage, or the primary education level, there is always to be a psychological programme to bring slowly into a state of gradual integration the many-sided, rather distracted, perceptions of the external world by the child. Often education begins with training in writing reading and basic arithmetic and discipline. Later on, the mind of the child is allowed to move further in a similar integrated fashion along wider areas of human society around, together with the civic sense involved in every kind of human relationship, whether in the family or in the community of people outside, because, practically, the human individual is primarily concerned with other such individuals more than with things which are not human. There are instincts

of the species which pull it to its own kindred individuals or kith and kin or others who are related humanly in any manner. Human relations may be said to be the immediately felt necessities in the process of study and training, which include the norms of civic duty and behaviour in regard to the immediate environment of any society, determined, of course, by the psychology, the social set-up or, rather, the sociological tradition and scheme operative in the particular human environment,—it may be in a locality of a linguistic society bringing people together with an affinity of any cultural and fraternal thinking.

With this method of what we may call human understanding scientifically introduced, an important barrier post in education is crossed. Then the student is further introduced to the world which is made up basically not only of human beings alone, but other things also that are there, which form the wider expanse of the vast earth, among which we live. This takes one to the commencement of studies in the syllabus of geography, including an exposition of what this earth is made of, how large it is, what things there are on the other parts of the earth beyond the limits of the areas of one's own family, community, province or country, etc. Regional geography is the primary stage. The other aspects of it may include the ways of people living in different parts of the world, their cultural behaviour, their outlook of life, things that grow and are manufactured in those areas, the natural ways of economics, social existence, the speciality of various parts of the physical world, and so on. Geography concerns itself mainly with the earth, but may open the gates to giving a wider vision of the astronomical concept of the solar system and the planets revolving round the sun, of which the earth is one. The student's knowledge is raised to a higher level of a surprising dimension, and, with a proper system of teaching, this may bring deep satisfaction and joy to the student's mind by a gaining of insight into the marvels of the working of the solar system and the astronomical complex in a general way. Here, another stage of education may come to a close, leaving space for introducing a further channel of studies in the progress of educational or human consciousness. This would be an entry into the history and culture of the people, to whose national family one belongs. The chronological narration of the history and culture of the people of one's own country would be an essential, extending further the vision gained earlier in the initial study of a local atmosphere alone. The study of the history of one's country may commence from the earliest known times to the present day, as an outline, but gradually deepening the studies in the higher courses of education, extending to world history.

Then comes also the need to learn how people in the country are managed by what is known as the governmental system. Here commences the work of sowing the seed of the study of political science, firstly in the theoretical norm for every type of human administration, and, subsequently, the ways by which the norms are applied in different types of political management, including the political governance of one's own country. The training in the economic and social sides of human living grows gradually side by side together with the study of the science and the method of political administration and management. The hierarchy of civic management and political positions in this scheme will open up a new vista of human obligation and duty in the world of variety, both human and non-human, living and non-living things. These subjects should be introduced gradually by stages, right from basic outlines to profound studies in later stages.

The study of ethics and human morality, though it forms a difficult subject and may even look a controversial point of study, may be taken up as the next stage, bearing in mind that the ethical or moral sense is not attempted to be introduced into the student's mind from the point of view of any family tradition, local custom, religious faith or stereotyped training of any kind. This would make the subject a little difficult, since it would appear that ethics, practically, borders on a whole philosophy of life rather than remain an instruction on norms of human, behaviour and conduct. Leaving aside the philosophical or metaphysical foundations of ethics and morality for the time being, the student here in this stage may be given sufficient information on the necessity for mutual cooperation among human beings, as a social factor behind survival in the world, the necessity to see that, in one's own life, one does not injure, harm or exploit another in any way, whether in thought, word or deed, and does not appropriate what one has not earned, or expect more than what others also would expect justifiably on the principle of mutual coordination and cooperation,—'Live and let live'. The higher implications of ethics and morality are to be postponed for study at a still later stage.

That human beings love beauty, architecture, sculpture, painting, music, literature, and such other channels of expression for an emotional satisfaction is not in any way less important a theme than the fact of the insistent aesthetic sense and the primary urges and impulses of human nature. People like everything that is artistic, all that is systematic, laid out symmetrically, in an orderly way, methodically, and effectively. A graduated

scheme here, again, is necessary as a course, for supplementing the educational career, so that the intellect and the emotion may slowly get blended into the integrated comprehension of both oneself and others, and understanding and instinct do not stand apart as opposites.

In a way, it may be said that the study of the external world and or what are called the humanities would be practically covered with the advances that have been so far made, but the world is deeper than what a superficial study of astronomy or geography may tell us. The sciences of physics and chemistry are profound explorations into the mysteries of matter, which is the substance of the physical universe. This area may form the next stage of studies, again, in a graduated manner, rising from the lowest stages to the higher ones. The biological constitution that is unavoidable and inextricable in living beings, or organic life in general, takes us to the principle of life that seems to germinate and dawn at the level of the vegetable or plant kingdom. The science of botany concerns itself with life and growth, etc., in this region of the living world. Animals reveal a higher and more intensive form of instinctive life, deeper and wider in every way, than what is covered in the plant kingdom. This latter branch of study comes under zoology including entomology and such other fields of study. When urged further, the study enters the profundities of anatomy and physiology in the human organism.

The human being tops the list of living beings, in whom intellect and reason are active in a predominant way and the endowment of understanding raises men above matter, biological life and instinctive perception. The study of psychology is a research into the structural workings of the human mind and reason, the will, the emotion, the feeling and the internal actions and reactions of the psyche. In the scheme of the educational process, the touching of the field of psychology, rising above the level of biology, would land one at the portal of higher education in a predominant and significant meaning. Here, the studies should cover both the Western and Eastern sciences of psychology. In the West, Behaviourism, Hormic and Gestalt psychology are prominent at the main schools. In the East, this area is covered in different places,—the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, and the like.

The empirical action and reaction processes of the psychological apparatus are studied in psycho-analysis which brings out the practical problems of one's personal and social existence. In the West, Freud, Adler

and Jung, mainly, and in the East, the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita and Patanjali have gone into the depths of the operation of the human psyche. A thorough knowledge of the psycho-analytic process involved in individual and social growth is essential to understand one's own personality and individual aims in society. This knowledge is indispensable for a clear understanding of the background and functions of any human being in different circumstances of life and its environment relations.

With this we bid goodbye to all empirical education, and now the student is lifted to the universe of philosophy. How does one know that there is a world, what is it that one is expected to do in this world, and what can one hope for while living in this world? These questions and the like commence studies in the field of the theory of knowledge, called epistemology. The philosophical adventure starts with a recognition of the limits of the capacities of the human being to know anything at all. Western philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel and their followers have done extensive researches in this field and proclaimed their conclusions. In the East, the schools of Jainism, Buddhism, the Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta have taken this aspect of study rigorously, in an intensive manner.

The question involved in the knowledge of the world of experience leads one to the theme of pure philosophy, viz., cosmology and metaphysics, the latter being sometimes called ontology. The problem of the knowledge of the world arises on account of the assumption that the world is outside the perceiving subject. The cosmological schemes in the schools of thought give us a wider picture of the whole situation in the number of the stages of descent and ascent. The point is that the universe has no distinction of inside and outside, in which everyone and everything is included, so that the question of perceiving the world does not arise in such an integrated state of being. In the East, the Samkhya and the Vedanta provide a complete delineation of the scheme of the evolutionary process. There is one, ubiquitous, primordial, undifferentiated, universal continuity,—we may call it the matrix, or material substance, or energy. We may call it *Prakriti* in the language of the Samkhya. The condensation of the cosmic purpose in a totality of Awareness is called *Mahat*,—the Cosmic Intelligence, or Reason. A further centralisation of this Universal Creative Will in a state of limitless Self-consciousness is known as *Ahamkara*. A further concretisation of this primordial energy is the diversification in the subtle, super-electro-magnetic forces which become the principles of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell,

known in the Sanskrit language as the *Tanmatras*. By permutation and combination of these invisible original principles in certain proportions, the five gross elements, viz., Ether, Air, Fire, Water and Earth, are formed. Here cosmic creation is complete, down to the lowest level of matter, i.e., the Earth principle.

We have to add here a very important note that the Universal Intelligence is immanently present in all the stages mentioned, right from *Prakriti*, or primary matter. The physical and psychical isolation of individuals is said to be a sectional, piecemeal division of this Cosmic Being, which descends down to the physical matter of crass sense-perception. The issue concerning the perception of the external world raised at the level of epistemology arises because of the split of individuality out of the Cosmic Substance, and the individuals erroneously assume an unwarranted independence of subjectivity, as if they are the knowers and the world is the known, while the fact seems to be the other way round, i.e., the Total Nature is the seer or the knower, and the individuals are only split sparks, as it were, shunted out from the cosmic wholeness. It is, thus, the individuals that are to be regarded as the objects of the Universal Subject, rather than the quaint supposition on the part of isolated individuals that they are the subjects and the universe is their object of perception and contact. In the above details may be found almost the entire range of the rungs in the ladder of descent and ascent in all forms of life. It need not be mentioned that the aim of all education, therefore, seems to be a graduated wholesome ascent from the lowest levels of existence to the highest perfection of the Universal Absolute.

Students of philosophy are generally required to have a requisite background of the implications of the mathematics of Space, Time and Gravitation, and sufficient acquaintance with literature, logic and semantics.

NOTE:— Factors which are not directly connected with educational, psychology or philosophy and the process of a rational training of the human individual, such as the intricate activities of the internal world of man, are not, however, unimportant, at least from the point of view of knowing oneself, or anyone for the matter of that. In our analysis of the process of descent in the cosmological set-up, we ended with the cosmic event at the point of a large physical universe concluding in separation at the grossest level of matter or the Earth-principle. Up to this level is the state of cosmic existence and there are no individuals here. But scriptures like the

Upanishads, the Epics and the Puranas, and cosmological narrations such as those we have in the Holy Bible, speak of a fall of man, and philosophers like Leibniz speak of what they call a 'constitutional appetite' of individuality. All this is, perhaps, intended to convey that what we call the world of experience is a network of reactions set up by individuals in respect of the universe from which they have been severed (which is the fall spoken of) and which they consider as an external object to their own mental awareness. According to the Puranas, the isolated sparks are the divine radiance of what we call the gods or angels of heaven and the higher realms of being. The Aitareya Upanishad makes a pertinent point when it says that these angels cried aloud, being cast in the ocean of hunger and thirst and wanted food for themselves, which they craved from the Creator. The idea seems to be that the isolation of individuality from the Cosmic Core implied simultaneously a reversal in the process of perception by consciousness in the angels so-called, causing these subjects to consider the universe as the object of their knowledge and contact. The reversal of perception here, placing the object in the position of the subject and the True Subject in the position of the object, is the beginning of what is known as Samsara, or the fall of the individual into the sea of mental and physical turmoil. The angel enters into the grosser individuality, as goes the narration in the Aitareya Upanishad. The continuous radiance of consciousness sparked off from the Universal Whole concretises its will into a potentiality of an assertive, total independence from the Whole, and then there is an obliteration of the consciousness of the Whole, a darkening cloud hangs over it, as one has in the state of deep sleep. The reversal of the activity of consciousness continues and, like a ray of light getting split and distorted through a chaotically structured painted prism, it gets deflected as dream-consciousness and waking consciousness, which are characteristics of the mortal individual, not to be found in the realm of the angel. The three states of consciousness, viz., sleep, dream and waking are, thus, a travesty into which the original truth of one's being enters to seek its own imagined kingdom and to rule over it; for, has not the poet said, "It is better to rule in hell than serve in heaven"? The three states of consciousness suffer through five degrees of conscious descent in individuality, called the sheaths of individuality, and known as the Anandamaya, Vijnanamaya, Manomaya, Pranamaya and Annamaya layers of experience, i.e., the causal, intellectual, mental, vital and physical involucre of the individual. The ego is nothing but the inveterate power of self assertion by consciousness in this condition. The involved individuality placed in this predicament of inexplicable agony searches for that which it has lost. Hunger and thirst, heat and cold, are by-

products of the instinct to maintain individuality in this state, independently of any vital relationship with the Cosmic Reality.

An interesting feature of this individual circumstance is the split of the original androgen into the male and female bipolar existence for the process of descent and self-multiplication, and their struggle to unite with each other in a spatial and temporal communion, all which is the saga of sex-life, which is nothing but the inner longing of consciousness, in its bipolar condition, to gain integration of experience by entering into its own counterpart in the particular bipolar set-up, in the space-time context of an externally perceived universe. Here we have a fund of information concerning the difficulties of human beings, the troubles of every man, woman and child in this world, and a diagnosis of their present degradation. Though academic learning and teaching in educational institutions through courses of education, as we have suggested, or otherwise, may not be concerned with this deeper mystery of the psycho-analytic world, here is an essential knowledge for every human being endeavouring to know his own or her own true substance and aspirations in the world. Especially, seekers of truth, who are ardently striving to return to their original Home in the Absolute, will find that, in the long run, this analytic understanding of themselves is necessary and inevitable for transforming themselves into perfect persons in their journey to the great goal of all existence.

QUOTES BY SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

* "He who knows, knows not; he who knows not, knows." This is a statement in the Upanishad, meaning that one who has realised the Truth has no personality-consciousness, and one who has it knows not the Truth.

* Our prosperity, our friends, our bondage and even our destruction are all in the end rooted in our tongue," says a famous adage.

* When senses trouble you, remember the sages Narayana and Nara. They are the supreme masters over the senses, before whom Indra had to bow his head in shame.

* It may be that we try to remember God when we are comfortably placed. But the test as to whether He has really entered our hearts is whether

we remember Him in sickness, suffering, opposition and times of temptation.

* Manu Smriti says: One-fourth of one's knowledge comes from the Teacher, one-fourth from study, one-fourth from co-students and one-fourth by experience in the passage of time.

* "He is called a 'man' who, when anger rises forcibly within, is able to subdue and cast it out as a snake casts away its slough with ease," said Hanuman to himself when he suspected that the fire he set through the whole of Lanka might perhaps have burnt Sita, too.

* Who is a fool? He who thinks that the world has any regard for him and is really in need of him.

* The pain generally felt at death is due to the nature of the intensity of the desires with which one continued to live in the physical body. The more is the love for the Universal Being entertained in life, the less would be the pain and agony of departing from the body.

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* Dirt is matter out of place. Weed is a plant out of place. Nuisance is action out of place. Even those things, acts or words which are normally good and useful become bad, useless and even harmful when they are out of place, time and circumstance. A knowledge of this fact is an essential part of wisdom.

* Material amenities and economic needs and the satisfaction of one's emotional side are permissible only so long as this law and order of this eternal truth of the liberation of the Self in universality of being regulates their fulfilment.

* The temptation from the evil one comes, first, in the form of unsettled thinking which makes one immediately forget the Presence of God. This is at once followed by the implementation of the evil move, whether in the shape of passion or anger. When the deed is done and the matter has ended, the remembrance of God might come in, but it rarely appears in the presence of things which we either love or hate.

* "Do the best and leave the rest" is the key motto in Karma Yoga. The 'doing of the best', of course, does not mean being foolhardy or going headlong without thought on consequences, but the harnessing of one's full resources to the execution of a noble ideal which is calculated to aid one in the attainment of God-realisation. To 'leave the rest' is to resign the results of the work to God, for, when even the best that one can do falls short of the effort needed to achieve a desired result, the mind is likely to get upset, which is not the spirit of Karma Yoga. All work is God's,—even the Sadhana that we do.

* The more we try to depend on God, the more He seems to test us with the pleasures of sense and the delights of the ego. Finally, the last kick He gives is, indeed, unbearable. Those who bear it are themselves gods.

* The teaching of the Yoga-Vasishtha emphasises that when there is perception of an object by the seer or observer, there has to be pre-supposed the existence of a consciousness between the subject and the object. If this conscious connecting link were not to be, there would be no perception of

existence. There cannot be a consciousness of relation between two things unless there is a consciousness relating the two terms and yet standing above them. The study of the perceptual situation discloses the fact that the subject and the object are phases of a universal consciousness.

* Poison is not real poison. Sense-objects are the real poison. Poison kills one life, but sense-objects can devastate a series of lives.

* These persons do not get sleep, says Vidura to Dhritarashtra: Those who are sick, those who have been overthrown by others and are deprived of power and assistance from any side, those who are afflicted with lust, and those who are scheming to deprive others of their possessions.

* The Mahabharata says that the Vedas are afraid of him who tries to approach them without a knowledge of the correct import of the Epics and Puranas. Here is a covert suggestion that the Absolute of philosophy should also include the variety and conflict of practical life, in order to be real and not merely an object of speculation.

* The four noble truths of the Buddha that there is suffering, that there is a cause for suffering, that there is a way out of suffering and that there is a state beyond suffering are proof enough to show that he was not a nihilist in the sense in which the word is used today, but a practical man who had an eye to doing something than merely conjecturing about Truth and its realisation.

* If omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence are to be pressed into one being and this being is to be focussed into a jet of action, what will be the result? This is what happened when Sri Krishna lived as a Person in this world. This is also the difficulty which people feel in writing a biography of Krishna, for, to be all-comprehensive is a difficult thing for the mind to think.

* The more does one become fit for the practice of Advaita Vedanta, the less is the consciousness of the body and world around. Advaita and body-consciousness do not go together.

* "Man proposes; God disposes," says an old adage. It does not mean that God is perpetually opposing whatever man does. What really happens is that when man exerts through his egoism in a manner which violates the

eternal law of God, he naturally feels frustrated, being beaten back by the law of Truth.

* It is difficult to live in society with mental peace, because it is difficult to be charitable in nature. Charity of things is of less consequence than possession of charitable feelings, and resorting to charitable speech, charitable demeanour, and charitable actions through a general charitable temperament. This is, in short, what is called self-sacrifice, for it involves parting with some part of the delights of the ego.

* The notion of oneself being identical with the body is the cause of egoism. It is this egoism that entangles all judgments of value in the preconception that knowledge is acquired through the senses and the mind or the intellect. This prejudice of egoism is Samsara, the persistent idea that all knowledge is in terms of space, time and externality.

* When Maricha cried out: "O Lakshmana, O Sita," Sita mistook it for Rama's voice. She could not identify Rama's voice as different from that of another, though she had lived with Rama for so long. So is the case with the Jiva. It has forgotten its association with the Absolute and cannot distinguish the call of the Spirit from the clamours of the senses. This is called delusion.

* Krishna was a person of great enjoyments. Vasishtha was devoted to rituals. Janaka was a king. Jadabharata was looking like an idiot. Suka was renowned for his dispassion. Vyasa was busy in teaching and writing. But all these are regarded as equal in knowledge. Different forms serve different purposes, but their essential being is one.

* Man's conscience in its essentiality is not an accomplice of harm and injury being done to anyone. It is necessary for the evil one intending to destroy others to destroy his own conscience first. The self of the killer is killed much before the act of killing takes place.

* Just as, when we touch a live wire, the electric force infuses itself into our body, when we deeply meditate on God the power of the whole universe seeks entry into our personality.

* The 'Advaita' of Sankara is not so much the assertion of oneness as the negation of duality, as the name of his system suggests. God is not one or two or three, for He is above numerical affirmation. He is not anything that we can think of, but, however, He does not involve in any difference; hence

He is 'Advaita', non-dual. Such is the cautious name of Sankara's system of philosophy.

* No saint has been able to maintain the spiritual balance throughout his life. There have been occasional reversals though these might not have left any impression on their minds any more than the mark left by a stick drawn on water. But the mark is there when it appears. Such is the difficulty of leading the spiritual life. The case of immature seekers is much more precarious, indeed.

SCRIPTURAL CAPSULES

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...1

The earliest statement of the Nature of Reality occurs in the first book of the Rig-Veda: *Ekam Sat-Viprah Bahudha Vadanti*. "The ONE BEING, the wise diversely speak of."

The tenth book of the Rig-Veda regards the highest conception of God both as the Impersonal and the Personal: The *Nasadiya Sukta* states that the Supreme Being is both the Unmanifest and the Manifest, Existence as well as Non-existence, the Supreme Indeterminable.

The *Purusha-Sukta* proclaims that all this Universe is God as the Supreme Person,—the Purusha, with thousands of heads, thousands of eyes, thousands of limbs in His Cosmic Body. He envelops the whole cosmos and transcends it to infinity.

The *Narayana-Sukta* exclaims that whatever is anywhere, visible or invisible, all this is pervaded by Narayana, within and without.

The *Hiranyagarbha-Sukta* of the Rig-Veda declares that God manifested Himself in the beginning as the Creator of the Universe, encompassing all things, including everything within Himself, the collective totality, as it were, of the whole of creation, animating it as the Supreme Intelligence.

The Satarudriya or Rudra-Adhyaya of the Yajur-Veda identifies all things, the high and the low, the moving and the unmoving, the good and the

bad, the beautiful and the ugly, nay, every conceivable thing, with the all-pervading Siva, or Rudra, as the Supreme God.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules... 2

The *Isavasya Upanishad* says that the whole Universe is pervaded by *Isvara* or God, who is both within and without it. He is the moving and the unmoving, He is far and near, He is within all these and without all these.

The *Kena Upanishad* says that the Supreme Reality is beyond the perception of the senses and the mind because the senses and the mind can visualise and conceive only the objects, while Reality is the Supreme *Subject*, the very precondition of all sensation, thinking, understanding, etc. No one can behold God because He is the beholder of all things.

The *Kathopanishad* has it that God is the Root of this Tree of world existence. The realisation of God is regarded as the Supreme blessedness or *Shreyas*, as apart from *Preyas* or temporal experience of satisfaction.

The *Prasna Upanishad* says that God is the Supreme *Prajapati* or Creator, in whom are blended both the matter and energy of the Universe, God is symbolised in *Pranava*, or *Omkara*.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...3

The *Mundaka Upanishad* gives the image of the Supreme Being as the One Ocean into which all the rivers of individual existence enter and with which they become one, as their final goal.

The *Mandukya Upanishad* regards the Supreme Being as the Turiya, or the Transcendent Consciousness, beyond the states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep.

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* regards the Reality as the Atman, or the Self, beyond the physical, vital, mental, intellectual and causal aspects (Sheaths) of the personality. It also identifies this Atman with the Supreme Absolute, or Brahman.

The *Aitareya Upanishad* states that the Supreme Atman has manifested itself as the objective Universe from the one side and the subjective individuals on the other side, in which process, factors which are effects of

God's creation become causes of individual's perception, by a reversal of the process.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...4

The *Chhandogya Upanishad* says that all this Universe is *Brahman Manifest*, in all its states of manifestation. It regards objects as really aspects of the one Subject known as the *Vaishvanara-Atman*. It also holds that the Supreme Being is the Infinite, or *Bhuma*, in which one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, and understands nothing else except the Self as the only Existence.

In the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* we are told that the Supreme Being is Pure Consciousness, in which subjects and objects merge together in a state of Universality.

The Supreme Being knew only Itself as '*I-Am*', inclusive of everything. As He is the Knower of all things, no one can know Him, except as '*He Is*'.

The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* says, 'Thou art the Woman', 'Thou art the Man', 'Thou art Girl', 'Thou art Boy', 'Thou deceivest us as the old man tottering with the stick', 'Thou movest everywhere, in the form of everything, in all directions', 'Thou art the dark-blue Butterfly, and the Green Parrot with red eyes', 'Thou art the thunder cloud, the Seasons and the Oceans', 'Thou art without beginning and beyond all time and space', 'Thou art That from which all the Universes are born', 'That alone is Fire, That is the Sun, That is Air, That is the Moon, That is also the starry firmament, That is the waters, That is Prajapati, That is Brahman'.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...5

That Divine Being, who, though Himself formless, gives rise to various forms in different ways with the help of His Supreme Power for His own inscrutable purpose, and Who dissolves the whole Universe in Himself in the end,—may He endow us with pure understanding.

He is the Great Being who shines effulgent like the Sun, beyond all darkness. Knowing Him alone one crosses beyond death. There is no other way of going over there.

The One God, Creator of the heaven and earth, is possessed of all eyes, all faces, all hands, and all feet in this Universe. It is He who inspires all to do their respective functions, as if fanning their fire into flames Of movement.

Manu says in his *Smriti*: In the beginning, all this existence was one Undifferentiated Mass of Unmanifestedness, unknown, indefinable, unarguable and unknown in every way. From this Supreme Condition arose the Universe of name and form, through the medium of the Self-existent Creator, *Swayambhu*.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...6

The *Mahabharata* says that *Narayana* alone was in the beginning, who was the prius of the creative, preservative, and destructive principles, the Trinity known as *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Siva*,—the *Supreme Hari*, multi-headed, multi-eyed, multi-footed, multi-armed, multi-limbed. This was the Supreme Seed of all creation, subtler than the subtlest, greater than the greatest, larger than the largest, and more magnificent than even the best of all things, more powerful than even the wind and all the gods, more resplendent than the Sun and the Moon, and more internal than even the mind and the intellect. He is the Creator, the Father Supreme.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...7

The *Bhagavadgita* in the *Mahabharata*, says: The Supreme Brahman is beyond existence and non-existence. It has hands and feet everywhere, heads, mouths, eyes everywhere, ears everywhere, and it exists enveloping everything. Undivided, it appears as divided among beings; attributeless, it appears to have attributes in association with things. It is the Light of all lights, beyond all darkness, and is situated in the hearts of all beings.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...8

He is the sacrifice, He is the oblation, He is the performer thereof, He is the recitation or the chant, He is the sacred fire, He is what is offered into it. He is the father, the mother, the grandfather, the support, the one knowable Thing. He is the three Vedas, the Goal of all beings, the Protector, the Reality, the Witness, the Repository, the Refuge, the Friend, the beginning, the middle and the end of all things. He is immortality and death, existence

as well as non-existence. He is the *Visvarupa*, the Cosmic Form, blazing like fire and consuming all things.

According to the *Bhagavata* and the *Mahabharata*, God especially manifested Himself as Bhagavan Sri Krishna, who is regarded as the foremost of the divine Incarnations, in whose personality the Supreme Being is fully focussed and manifest.

Srimat Bhagavata says: He is *Brahman* (the Absolute), *Paramatman* (God), *Bhagavan* (the Incarnation).

According to the *Pancharatra Agama* and the *Vaishnava* theology, God has five forms: the *Para* or the Transcendent, *Antaryamin* or the Immanent, *Vyuha* or the Collective (known as *Vasudeva*, *Sankarshana*, *Pradyumna* and *Aniruddha*), *Vibhava* or the Incarnation, and *Archa* or the symbolic form of daily worship.

According to *Saiva tradition*, God is *Pati*, the Lord who controls the individuals known as *Pasu*, with His Power known as *Pasa*.

According to the *Sakta tradition*, God is the Divine Universal Mother of all things, *Adi-Sakti*, or the original Creative Power, manifesting Herself as *Kriya-Sakti* or *Durga*, *Ichha-Sakti* or *Lakshmi*, and *Jnana-Sakti* or *Sarasvati*. But the Supreme Mother is beyond all these forms. She is One, alone, without a second.

Swami Krishnananda's Scripture-Capsules...9

According to the *Bhakti tradition*, God is the Supreme Object of Love, in respect of Whom love is evinced as in respect of one's father, mother, friend, son, master, or one's own beloved, in the five forms of affection, known as *Shanta*, *Sakhya*, *Vatsalya*, *Dasya* and *Madhurya*.

To the *Vaishnavas*, God is in *Vaikuntha* as *Vishunu*. To the *Saivas*, God is in *Kailasa* as *Siva*, or *Rudra*. To the *Saktas*, God is in *Manidvipa*, as the *Supreme Sakti* or the Divine Mother. To the *Ganapatyas*, God is *Ganesa*, or *Ganapati*. To the *Sauras*, God is *Surya*, the Sun. To the *Kaumaras*, God is *Kumara*, or *Skanda*.

POETRY BY SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

THE DIVINE AMBASSADOR

[This poem describes the scene of Lord Sri Krishna's going on a peace mission to the court of the Kauravas.]

1. The glorious Master, Mighty Krishna, in his omniscience,
Majestic rode to Pandavas with all his retinue.
2. Yudhishtira and all the brothers seeing Krishna come,
Rose up in honour, folding hands and fell prostrate on ground.
3. In all compassion Krishna great with charming smile on face
Did seat himself on throne arranged by melting hearts of love.
4. The Master, then, enquired in grace the welfare of brothers,
Who sobbed and poured their bursting sorrow in their exiled life.
5. "O great one, what can we say, poorlings, of our condition,
Thou knowest well how we were forced to live in wilderness.
6. Bless us, O Master, we are thine, what else is there in us,
Except thy mercy and affection which alone we crave."
7. Sri Krishna turned his gracious glance and spoke in soothing
terms,
"Well, what is past is past, of course, now further steps be
thought."
8. "A messenger, learned in lore, be despatched quickly hence,
To court of Kurus with a request that your share is due."
9. "Since errand sent with milder touch bore not a happy end,
Methinks a stronger politic take up this task on hand."
10. "Whom shall we send, thou, all-knowing, may kindly suggest us,
A person who would speak and explain facts of justice plain."
11. So wondered eldest of the brethren, good Yudhishtira,
To which Sri Krishna thus replied in loving tender words.

12. "I am here, king, ready am I to do this work of peace,
As errand-man I go to Kurus and convey your views."
13. "No, nothing doing, thou shalt not, our heart and soul thou art,
Thy single march to camp of foes I wholly disapprove.
14. "Thou shalt not go, our life thou art, our life is in thy life,
No, never, Master, I shall myself or my brothers go."
15. In loving kindness Krishna spoke to fearstruck righteous king,
"Fear not my life, I have the strength to protect myself safe;
16. "Not all the kings, with all weapons can face me in battle,
As herd of deer dare not stand before a lion's rage.
17. "If act unlawful Kurus deem to mete to my person,
I shall not wait for war to render justice to thy cause;
18. "But, then and there, to heap of ashes I shall burn all foes,
With might the earth has never seen nor see with all its eyes."
19. So assuring the divine one had chariots harnessed well,
With Satyaki and handful heroes, as a God would move.
20. Sages and saints and learned ones were seen on wayside tracks,
And queried Siddhas spoke to Krishna on his greeting them;
21. "O Perfect One, we heard that thou would deliver addresses
In court of Kurus, which to listen we are journeying;
22. "Thy speech should indeed be a treat to ears and our hearts,
On knowing this we trek and fly to Kurus' royal court."
23. Sri Krishna smiled and bowed to them in humble reverence,
And speeded up for urgent task in Hastinapura.
24. The blind old ruler, Dhritarashtra, summoned Sanjaya,
And called for details when he heard that Krishna is on move.
25. "What for is this, why does he come, what kind of person he,
In full-description please recount this novel circumstance."

26. To which the wise and good minister spoke in plainest terms,
Why Krishna comes and who he is and how to receive him.
27. "O honoured king, thou askest who this Krishna is who comes,
And why he does this errand now to court of thy highness.
28. "Listen with care to what I say, I say this for your good,
And good of all and everyone and peace to all ensure.
29. "This Krishna, mighty, looking normal, is not normal one,
No one can know his secret thoughts or deeds he does perform;
30. "I warn thee, king, receive him well with kindest of feelings,
Let no one show irreverence or proudly speak to him.
31. "His power even angels dread and dare not approach him,
His hidden aim, O please listen, is ruin of thy sons,
32. "Who harm intend to Pandavas whose friend this Krishna is,
Who's heaven-bent to save the brothers with his might and mien.
33. "Beware, then, please instruct thy sons to behave well with him,
And gladly part to Pandavas their lawful share of land."
34. On hearing this, the frightened king did quake in deepest grief,
And forthwith ordered all arrangements for reception grand.
35. "Lo, drench the streets and strew with flowers, hoist festoons and
raise up flags,
Let best of music and procession greet the coming guest so
great."
36. And Bhishma, sire, sagely hero, strict instructions gave,
"We should receive the greatest one with greatest love and care."
37. Duryodhana who heard all this and saw the movements made
To receive Krishna whom he knew as comrade of his foes.
38. Disdainfully agreed to do the behest Bhishma sire's
For fear of elders and the fear of old sire's wrath.
39. Music and band and gaiety best find finest dancing scenes
Did greet Sri Krishna, august guest, who arrived at the gate.

40. The Yoga's lord on beholding the colour, sound and haste,
Noticed the soulless pageantry set up to buy his heart.
41. Duryodhana did feign all courtesy and honour high,
Which, all-seeing, the subtle eye of Krishna just did gaze.
42. Rejecting pleadings falsely made by cunning Kuru's chief,
Krishna, the friend of poor souls, did bid goodbye to kings.
43. In humble hut of Vidura the Master spent his night,
Who, overwhelmed with joy supreme, fed Krishna with the peels.
44. And threw the stuff of plantain fruits knowing not what he gave,
For lost he had his ego-self and sunk in joy divine.
45. In morn, on waking, Krishna rose with friends and crowds
around.
And marched to palace where all waited for his great coming.
46. When Krishna entered he there saw the sages and the saints
Standing to honour and receive his magnetic presence.
47. "May sages first be seated," so did Krishna expressed wish,
At which did Bhishma order hundreds of the best of seats.
48. When all were seated Krishna sat as last of all to sit,
Saluting all the audience with loving folded hands.
49. Who was to speak the first of words, no one there ever knew,
So, Bhishma, great, the sire old, with welcome broke silence.
50. "Supremely honoured all are here with presence amidst us
Of best of men and greatest master, Krishna, Yadus' lord.
51. "May we receive his message now and know his intentions,
So that the earth would grace enjoy and all would live in peace."
52. As rumbling cloud would deeply sound and touch the hearts
below,
In sonorous and soothing words Sri Krishna stood and spoke.
53. "Elders and sages, learned ones, in this wise audience,
Know well the tragic history of Kuru's family.

54. "As God creates the field of world and all living beings
In bond of loving sacrifice with mutual share of love,
Dvaipayana, the sage, was cause of Kuru-Pandavas.
55. "As seer-seen in cosmic set-up mingle united,
The Pandavas and Kauravas should share and live in peace.
56. "But Kuru hosts betrayed their trust and harmed the Pandavas,
From very childhood poisoned them and tried to burn them live.
57. "By tricky game of vilest dice they were exiled to woods,
And now from exile returned they demand their kingdom's share.
58. "I'm fully sure that you elders would endorse this my view,
That justice calls for equity; let justice then be done."
59. "Hail, hail, I fully hold the same opinion of the law,
That Krishna's words be respected and Pandu's sons have share."
60. Thus Bhishma judged and then proclaimed the justice of the
cause,
That half of kingdom be made out to Pandava brothers.
61. Drona and all the sages there assembled then did rise
And one by one gave voice to justice hailing Krishna's views.
62. Everyone spoke in full agreement that the share of land
In justice due to Pandavas be forthwith made over.
63. Silently groused, and seated haughty, raged Duryodhana,
And rudely gave a counterbolt to all this good advice.
64. "How come that all the people here speak as if I have failed,
What fault of mine it is if Pandu's children lost the game?"
65. Sri Krishna quickly raised his point rebutting counter terms
And hinted at the flaws that lay on head of Kuru king.
66. "Is it true that the Pandavas lost all by their own choice?
Or were they duped by gamester's tricks which none could
decipher?"

67. "However and whatever that be, now the exile's terms
Are completed and thus the share of Pandavas is due.
68. "Let this be done and all shall then be well I do believe,
There need be no delay at all in this the plainest truth."
69. "Nothing, nothing, I shall not give, let there be no such talk,"
So retorted in arrogance Duryodhana, the king.
70. "Do wise ones in assembly here approve of rudeness this,
Which unbehaving youngster speaks before a visitor?"
71. Sri Krishna turned to those on seats with this his surprised look,
Awaiting gestures in response from all the aged ones.
72. "Be not so proud and unrelenting, listen well to sense,"
Thus all the sages assembled in chorus raised their voice.
73. "The young is also fool in one, methinks he's out of wits,"
That sensible and sound advice he scornfully abhors."
74. So Bhishma wrath voiced forth his view and Drona seated there,
The sages 'gain illustrated their judgment in stories.
75. But Kuru chief wrung up his brows and defied everyone
And added that he is no one who can be threatened thus.
76. Sri Krishna queried if he would give five villages 'tleast,
For poor brothers five in number for their humble homes.
77. "No talk of gift, let there be no such prating before me,
I fear none, and threats I care not, speak not thus, Krishna;
78. "A needle-point of space the Pandavas do not deserve,"
So twisting back his face from all clinched up Duryodhana.
79. With raised up brows, astounded by this unabashed conduct,
Sri Krishna even insisted that something be given.
80. "Let houses five at least be granted creature comfort's sake,
To helpless Pandu's poorest children come from forest life."

81. To every request Krishna made and elders there endorsed,
Duryodhana struck up his thigh and grimmed in defiance.
82. Roused up to quick Sri Krishna addressed all the audience,
"This meanest man is shame to all, to ruin all Kurus.
83. "How keep you hint in this reputed palace of Kurus,
Uncouth, shameless, inhuman brute from manner he behaves.
84. "I request you to bind him up, banish him from this place,
And hand him over in all goodness to Yudhishtira."
85. As provoked snake would hiss and offer then and there to bite,
Duryodhana rose up from hall and rushed out to his house.
86. Returning home he connived with his henchmen secretly,
To bind and lock up ambassador Krishna, honoured guest.
87. "This man is hatching with the help of Bhishma and others
To bind me and then haul me up to bitter foe of mine."
88. Shrewd Satyaki and friends there heard the secret whispered talks
Regarding catching Krishna and then imprisoning him.
89. Conveyed to Krishna strangest news in wide assembly hall,
And asked the Master that they should to danger meet prepare.
90. Sri Krishna turned to old king seated and then admonished,
"King, listen, I think that your son is asking for trouble;
91. "For news has reached that he intends to catch and bind me up
With Duhsasana-Karna group's assistance on his side.
92. "Let him then try and please himself, and all of them may come,
And imprison me with their strength, if strength they any have."
93. Gandhari, queen, seated in hall, on hearing Krishna's words
Was deeply distressed, wailing, at once summoned eldest son.
94. On call from mother, Duryodhana hotly entered hall
And stood defying in demeanour, pride at highest pitch.

95. The parents strongly reprimanded standing defiant son,
In grief-struck-speech and fear-struck feelings jointly facing him.
96. "Fool, art thou sane or gone off mad to think doing mischief,
Be thou restrained, and behave well and respect elders' words."
97. Then Krishna rose up from his seat and stood as lion raged,
And directed his final words on proud Duryodhana.
98. "Thinkest thou in thy delusion that I am here alone,
Unbefriended and unprotected and be caught by thee?"
99. "Look, all the gods and army-chiefs of all the fourteen worlds
Are here and now at this moment and at this very spot."
100. So saying Krishna laughed aloud which shook the earth below,
As quake would rend the very corn of every inch of ground.
101. Angels as stars there shot up from his arms,
Fierce tongues of fire rushed out from his mouth,
Brahma on forehead, Rudra on his chest,
The guardian gods from shoulders did emerge,
The sun and moon and all the stars of skies
Projected from his blazing Mighty form.
Yudhishtira and Bhima, Arjuna,
The two brothers, Nakula, Sahadeva,
Were all there seen with uplifted weapons.
From eyes and ears and all his myriad arms
Emergent flames fiercely jetted forth,
As if portending end of all the worlds.
From every pore of that Divinity
Speedingly rose bright rays as solar lights.
The earth and all atmosphere trembled
And oceans lapped up roaring surging waves.
There wonder-struck the blessed ones beheld
That Glorious Form which Lord, the Master showed,
Revealed in Himself as the All-in-All,
The Soul and Self of all creation vast,
All worlds, all gods, and all creation glowed
In that Majesty Krishna's—All in One.

ON MAN

Man! What a strange composition he is?
The higher and lower adroitly blended;
An angel with brute crossed, genius with folly;
Where meet celestial and terrestrial belts,
Where gravity pulls from points sundered in twain;
A river that inclines and flows to the depths
From heights of durationless Infinity!
A power-projectile that's facing senseward,
But tethered to endless expanse of being,
With long-extending silken three-stranded ropes:
A flame that is burning, a wave on the sea;
A force that is rushing, constant becoming;
A spectrum, a prism, a triangle, a line,—
All things in one; and what a contrast he makes!
How mean, and how low; yet how great, and how grand!

There isn't a creature born so ungrateful,
So stupid, presuming, self-centred debased,
A bad judge of things when in adversity,
So unjust to others, so false to himself;—
Now give him power, and his head quickly turns;
He sees, then, the world with a new set of aspects;
Oppose him, he cringes when found to be weak;
If strong, he flies into a passion and rage,
And threatens creation with uplifted doom;
Arrogates all goodness to himself in vain,
And imputes the evils of Satan to 'thers.
For him all are suspects, save himself alone;
All wrong, except what is his and what he is,
He'd sting like a scorpion and bite like a snake;
Is sly like a fox when occasion demands;
When wroth a tiger, and ravenous in greed;
A beast in emotions when left unrestrained.
Whatever he does, and whatever he thinks,
Lives indelible in the ether's records,—
He smugly deceives himself, secret in deeds,
Like th' ostrich in sands, amidst forces all o'er;—
Befooled by the senses, by forms tantalised,

Like th' stag in the fable bewitched by the tunes
Of th' hunter who's let loose his hounds for his prey;
Feeble in judgments, gregariously ruled.
A rumour that's spread he converts into rock
By heaping accretions from funds of his mind.
As vapour hardens into liquid and earth,
A breeze of some word that a vagrant uttered
Gets planted as flint in his immature will,
And he worries himself, and pesters others
With th' crotchets and pranks of a credulous heart,
Thus, then, is created a universe of thoughts,
Of imaginations and feelings and whims,
Shaky edifices built over quicksand,—
The worlds of beliefs faiths and baseless fancies
In selfishness rooted, from nescience rising.
All these are the walls of the prison he's raised
To throw himself in, with his boasted learning.

Behold! how he gropes though descended from Light,
Though th' ocean of wisdom is at his background!
In a flash he can ope his vision to the truth
Of's being, if only he wills and he strives.
But he wouldn't, as owl he can see not the day,
Though th' blaze of the sun is there dazzling all things,
Uninterrupted, homogeneous and one.

Lo! What does man need but some food and clothing,
And a shelter to guard him from wind and from rain:—
He struts like a peacock posing what he's not,
For th' sake of this meanest of things, his ego;
Which's a dog in the manger, that won't be appeased
And would not rest peaceful in'ts cravings galore,
In'ts hunger for fame and power and renown,
And name and authority, prestige and pride;—
Sheer empty sounds that mean so much to the fool,
So much of concrete reality and life,
And what it can offer with its outstretched arms.
He'd face a bullet, but not bear calumny!
Poor Soul! He does not know what disturbs his peace
Defies understanding and eludes his grasp;

Whether seen or unseen; here or hereafter,—
This world, this ego, and its concomitants,
And what is beyond these, the Truth of all truths,
And wisdom consists in seeing things clear,
Not closing one's eyes when the world blows as storm.

But wisdom lingers and not fall from the blues;
The patient and waiting do gain it in time.
Look! here is the lofty crown of creation,
Confined in the walls of collapsing clay,
With past wholly buried, and future unknown;
Death's at his elbow, yet acts as immortal!
A marvel indeed; a wonder of wonders,
For's frail tabernacle holds th' light of Heavens;
And truly it's said, man's the image of God!
The Cosmic is here, masquerading in form;
Scratch him, he's animal; probe him, he's Divinity.

Then what of his fate? He's bound back' to the Lord,
Our Ruler, Sustainer, Protector and Guide,
Lord, Parent, Indweller, Director, Resort,
Friend, Consoler, Solace, the Beginning and End
Of what is and is not, the Seed of all life;
Who heats as the Sun, and who blows as the wind,
Who pours down as rain, and who freezes as cold,
Who's change and destruction, who's relentless Time
That winds up creation in'ts all-swallowing folds;
Who's Immortal Essence, the Nectar Divine,
That Resplendent Grandeur, the Supreme Abode
Of Peace and Perfection, the One Existence
That Sages proclaim as the myriad-visioned,
Whose heads are the heavens, whose feet are the earth,
Whose eyes are the Sun and the Moon e'er aglow,
Whose ears are the quarters, the scripture's whose speech,
Whose breath is this breeze, and whose Universe is heart,—
Almighty Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.
To know Him is life, to forget Him is death;
To love Him with heart is service done to all;
To serve Him with soul is fulfilment supreme;
Adore Him, the world shall adore you as self.

As children do sit round their mother for food,
Creation with longing to him gravitates,
Whose root is this Being, thund'ring through silence.

This's man's destination which's slowly realised
Through gradual ascent, by effort and by Grace
That work together by a law that is strange
In'n integral world that is cause and effect
At once, in a sweep that does stagger one's thought
Which is wont to imagine a linear logic
Of a reason encumbered by space and by time,
This Goal which is mighty's attained in One's Self
In deep contemplation by a passionless heart,
Which seeks not pleasure in these tinsels mundane
Pretending to done the attire of a gem,
But soars to the heights of empyrean that's God's;
By service of man, by compassion and love
For all that is seen, as His Body revealed
To senses that discern Spirit as matter;
By worship and giving in unselfish acts
Of charity, sweet words and feeling for life;
By chastened, ennobled and straightforward deeds,—
Both inward and outward,—by truth, continence,
By openness, kindness, contentment and peace,
Study, introspection, company of saints,
By vigilance unsleeping, dispassion for fame,
For name and for wealth, for power and status,
For rewards and good words, for honour, respect;
By trampling down ego with wisdom and sense;
With restrained emotions, being tranquil within
When th' world disregards you and treats you as dust,
And casts you aside as an unwanted weed;
By prayer that's silent, fortitude, and faith,
With a fire of longing for God, God alone,—
Nothing short of God,—though this flesh may here melt,
And th' skin rend asunder, bones crack and dissolve.
In such sublime states of communion and joy
Has man intimations of what he's meant for.
But is this easy? No; the knowers declare
That th' path is subtle and is sharp as a sword

Or a razor whose edge we cannot visualise,
As th' track of the fish or of birds in the sky,
The way to Eternity's invisible.
The heed that the seeker in this art and science
With intense awareness is called to maintain
Is unremitting and a winkless living
Of th' canons defining this infinite way
To th' Infinite Being;—with hardship obtained!
May peace be on man, he succeed in his quest!
May Masters and Teachers their Grace on him shower!

PRINCIPLES OF A HIGHER ORDER OF LIFE

The Import of the Gita's First Chapter

The war of life which's Gita's song
Is spread on Kurukshetra's field,
The arena that this world is,
A house disjointed, 'gainst itself.

The seer and the seen do stand
Opposed to each other, how strange!
Else how would seer run to seen
If seen is not apart, afar.

To grab, to pound, annihilate
The seen's existence out and out,
By love or hatred as the means
Is seer's purpose throughout life.

In love the seen is pulled, absorbed,
And made one's own, nay, one's own self,
So that the seen is all destroyed
And seer ever reigns supreme.

In hatred does the seer clinch
The life and substance of the seen
By abrogation, cutting off
The very soul and being seen's.

This confrontation is all life,
The good and evil are all here,-
The high and low and great and small
Are all within this battlefield.

Eternal is this painful hold
Which seer exerts on the seen,
Ambivalent as love-hate grip
Of seer-seen, Bharata war.

The Pandavas and Kauravas
Descend from single family;
Dvaipayana, the divine sage,
Was source of all this warring fold.

So does the range of seer-seen
Is transcendent in origin,
For even conflict is on ground
Which's common both to contenders.

This supreme ground, the ground of grounds,
Is Gita's gospel's highest ground,
The ground of action as worship,
And ground to unite God and soul.

The warrior hates his opponents
And raises arms to tear and kill;
This is the scene where objects seen
Are treated as other than self.

But love erupts and pity wails
For warrior-chief is also friend
And brother-born to outside world
In secret connection to things.

Lo, men kill men by waging wars,
But wars are waged for peace of men,-
Contradiction is life on earth,
It's hard to know what's right and wrong.

Thus Arjuna bewails his fate,
He loves and hates the Kauravas,
As all do love in zest the world,
And also cry that world is hell.

The past, present and future's men
Are represented her in one
As symbol of eternal man,
The soul that ensouled Arjuna.

Who is the generalissimo
Of impending armageddon
Now weeps in deepest affection
For what he hates on other side.

Do people love all this mankind,
For whose welfare is service done?
And yet to protect man from man
Law courts and soldiers are deployed.

This wisdom's anguish is the theme
Of first of chapters in the text,
The section first which though a wail
Is Yoga called of dejection.

It's Yoga, sure, for here, in this
Are dug up seeds of illusion
Which keeps the soul bound hard to earth
Through love as well as hate of all.

The mystery is seeker's grief,
The first condition of ascent
To freedom gain from thralldom life's
By surrender and detachment.

In supreme disillusioning
Of one's own role and world's status,
Thus humbly reached in careful search,
The path is cleared for light to dawn.

Renounce in hate or cling in love
Is not the choice in Yoga's core;
Immense and subtle is this way,
For none can live as an island.

Renunciation does not click
Since renouncer is closely linked
With renounced things and all the world,
for all creation stands as whole.

Nor has attachment any sense
For none can cling to one's own self,
And objects loved in secret bonds
Are in the heart of him who loves.

To do or not to do an act
All singly none can clearly know,
Unless the far-reaching results
Are weighed on balance carefully.

This question is equivalent
To be or not to be here;
The world is vast, creation big,
Where none is free to raise one's voice.

Interconnected are all things;
This is the reason why no one
Can safely say or do a deed
With no repercussions on things.

That is the good which clears the heart
Of tensions born of suppressed wish
By treatment method out to it
As sickness heal physicians.

In this the great enactment world's
No one approaches one-sided,
The drama is wholesomely full,
No act in it is by itself.

To throw the bow and arrows down
In resentment through confusion,
By wrenching oneself from the whole,
Is not a cure to aches of life.

The Import of the Gita's Second Chapter

The highest wisdom and solace,
The Divine Song, the Gita called,
Condenses knowledge in practice,
And thrills the soul to fullness' peaks.

The Lord declares that no one dies
But forms are shed for soul's ascent,
That deathless soul pervades all space,
Immortal is the soul of man.

Many have died and gone to winds
And none is spared from ending thus;
So grief on death behoves us not
Since death is law of every life.

'Tis natural that beings die,
Unnatural they breathe and live;
For ocean's tide is life's turmoil
And not a drop fixed remains.

In such a sea of movement this,
Who can afford to stand unmoved;
All stasis forms seemingly don
Illusion's fantastic joke.

All speed and transit is this world,
A flux, a wisp, a puff of wind;
But steady none is ever posed;
All things are seen removed from truth;

Becoming though is all this life
And nothing is as being's core,
Yet one is there that knows the flux
Which itself is outside the flow.

Immortal soul, the Atman, here
Permeates all, the flowing stream;
Eternal, deathless, transcendent
Is self of all this universe.

Involved in earth, in plant and mind
The soul rises to reason's form
To think and act as human will
By cycles of evolution.

Since all the seeds of variants
Are hidden well in all species,
The worst can one day best become
And none is lowly anywhere.

If this is so, there are no norms,
Either aesthetic or ethic,
In all the world at any time,
Except within a framework's fence.

By contrast and comparison
The codes behavioural thrive;
An absolutely right or wrong
No one can pinpoint forever.

The finely forms or ugly looks
Are also not by themselves there;
These are the modes of reaction
Of conditioned mention's moods.

The pains and pleasures filling life
Are also psycho-physical;
Adjustments, maladjustments made
With Nature are pleasures and pains.

Hence duty and not right is law
Since all demands are out of tune
With law integral which is world;
The world is law rather than things.

To do one's duty one has right,
But not to covet fruits of deeds;
Be not attached to ends of works,
Not also cleave to inaction.

Action incumbent reigns all worlds,
Since action is evolution
To higher goals' integration
To culminate in Godhead's reach.

Balance is health, is Yoga known,
Participation is the rule,
Attachments lose their meaning here
Where all the world is self-contained.

Desires cease for want of things
That stand outside the knower's field;
The consciousness is firmly poised
In Yoga which is attention.

Rooted in itself is the world,
Its knowledge is its being's self;
To plant oneself in such a state
Is yoga's peak where sorrow melts.

As winds hurry the boats in sea,
The senses drive the reason out;
Hence, reason balanced his remains
Who restrains senses in the self.

As world of senses which see light
Is night of darkness for the sage;
The realm of light where sages live
Is dark abyss to passion's rage.

In subdued states of Yoga's heights
Desires merge in liquid mass
As rivers lose identity
In ocean's fullness, vast and deep.

This is the state of Brahman great,
In this established no one grieves;
Fixed thus even at end of life
Brahman's beatitude attains.

The Import of the Gita's Third Chapter

Knowledge and action are the rule,
The twain which constitute the world;
These twin approaches single aimed
Are not divided as opposed.

The eye of knowledge or of deed
Is hard to see since roots of things
Are screened from human perception
Which dual envisions the world.

As waves and ocean are not two,
Action and knowledge are the same;
As sun and light, or seed and oil,
Knowledge and action are combined.

Though Brahman-all is act and science
In one compass undivided,
In lesser levels deeds proceed
From subjects confronting objects.

An action is the relation
Obtaining fluidly moving
Between the seer and the seen,-
Reciprocation ensouls deeds.

As one descends to lower realms
Cutting the seer from the seen,
Actions become the binding chains
Keeping the gulf a chronic ill.

The force of deeds gets mellowed down
When seer-seen approximate
To greater friendship and union,
Till vanish they in communion.

When knowledge sees its object there
As sundered from its subjectness,
Action becomes imperative
To thought and content harmonise.

Action is that which holds intact
The subject-object relation
In harmony and perfection,
For soul of all is harmony.

The soul's universality
Compels the performance of acts
So that its law of harmony
Is manifest in daily life.

Thus action itself is knowledge
Since union is its ambition
Where deed and doer merge in one
To form the higher soul of life.

The welfare works of society
Or actions for one's well-being,
Inward or outward, all move straight
Towards the Soul universal.

When soul the soul to itself pulls,
They call it love or selfless deed;
Nothing but soul there ever is,
Which haunts the world as men and things.

No one can exist without work,
For movement is the condition
Of all relative forms of life,
Whether on earth or in heaven.

Since thought is action finally,
Physical restraint is not poise
While mind revels in thoughts of deeds
Which connect it with world of sense.

The body's actions are not deeds
When mind to body is not tied
And lofty reaches contemplates
Within to contact soul of things.

Except as Yajna, sacrifice,
All deeds are binding in this world;
But what is Yajna, know this well
By careful thought in reason's calm.

When God created fields of life
He ordained then the role of works
Which gravitate to sacrifice,
So that all deeds are Deity's home.

The doer and the end of deed
Are bound together as a whole
By glorious Deity transcendent
To both the agent and the work.

Thus none can work by oneself free
As urge to acts is well ordained
By that which holds the two in one
Unseen by both as soul awake.

As triangle doer, deed and soul,
The soul ruling from high above,
Perform the scene of experience;
And none is owner in this play.

Obligation to one's duty
Refers to stages of Selfhood,
Wherein the balance in between
The seer-seen is clear maintained.

Oneself, society, nation, world,
The universe and Being's height
Are rising levels to the Self,
Through which perfection is attained.

The higher stage to lower stands
As Deity inclusive and real;
The Yajna is the higher goal
When to it lower is offered.

The lower isolation self's
Which opposed looks to its object
Is sacrificed in Yajna high
That integrates the sundered poles.

The Deity includes and transcends
The lower cleavage of the self
From its own object, though severed
Does still belong to widened self.

By sacrifice union is reached
With higher forms of wider self;
This divine cow which yields all wish
Is here at hand with everyone.

Who worships Deity in this way
Has all the wishes quick fulfilled,
To self the Deity stands good stead
In mutual graced recognition.

He is a thief who thinks he owns
Or does by himself deeds alone;
While all the wealth is Deity's form
And Deity rules ever supreme.

Here none is owner, share-holder,
For all belongs to Brahman great
Which is the Self of universe
And owns it indivisibly.

From That which is one alone
A cosmic impulse emanates;
From this the self-alienation
And desires' rains on crops of greed.

The world and body then emerge
And so the cycle continues
Of give and take which is this life,
The wheel of empirical law.

Since all is thus with all entwined,
All action though perennial,
Is no action in truest sense;
The deed is no deed binding none.

The mendicants though well detached
Are also in this cycle bound,
For who could expect alms of good
If none there is to offer alms.

But one who grounds himself afirm
In all-pervading Self of all
Does fear none and has no needs
Nor does depend on others' grace.

He does nothing while doing all,
Nor does he gain by doing deeds;
Actions done or not done here
Affect him not, nor disturb poise.

He disturbs not the ignorant
Who have their faiths illiterate,
But follows suit with environment,
Maintaining rule of harmony.

To disrupt minds is no teaching;
The sage with child as child behaves;
His presence thus is no presence
As sugar sweet in milk dissolved.

As wave collides with wave in sea
Senses with objects commingle,
Since sense and object both are formed
Of same substance universal.

Thus actions or performances
Are all of cosmic origin,
And none can claim a single act
As one's own move or claim its fruits.

Egoism, the arch-devil,
Does wrongly show that someone acts,
While acts are Nature's purposes
Which comprehend all history.

The duty each one's in the world
Depends on one's circumstances;
And no one unfit for a work
Can render that as duty's role.

The total of capacity
Determines work as duty-bound;
The body's strength and mental make
Do proclivity works' decide.

None takes from world what one gives not;
Here Karma Yoga sums up work;
Else, social balance gets disturbed
And chain of Karma binds one hard.

The other's duty is that work
For which one is not fitted best;
And one's own duty each shall choose
To bring to life stability.

Passion and anger are the foes
Which distort duty and prevent
The basic goodness of the soul
To rule one's life for commonweal.

These fiery forces, instincts dark,
Should get subdued by force of mind,
By force of reason and of soul,
Which surpasses all puissance.

By contemplation on the Self
The reason moves the mind aright,
And senses home of urges low
Get restrained well for Yoga's way.

The Import of the Gita's Fourth Chapter

The hands of God feel everywhere,
As Incarnations mighty come
To rid the earth of dissension
And free all souls from sorrow's pangs.

As four-dimensioned transcendent
In three-dimensioned forms abides,
The Supermental Infinite
Takes up the role of finitudes.

As conflagrations hide in sparks
God-Absolute as glory hails
As excellences seen in life
In great and grand and wondrous forms.

The harmonise extremes in life,
To Kingdom God's proclaim on earth,
To heal the sick and raise the low,
To trample ego God descends.

Of righteousness to plant the roots,
The universal justice fix
As forms of all performances
The Divine fingers operate.

As law unseen wakes up to work
When forms and things set up revolts,
The Arms of God are uplifted
As thunderbolt to ego's strikes.

As we approach the facts of life
So facts react to pay our dues;
However does one God adore
One reaps benefits in that way.

The social order is fitted
To enable the souls to rise
Above the finite involvements
To freedom's peak par excellence.

The wisdom's head and strength of arms,
Cooperative give and take,
And labour for life's sustenance
Sum up the pattern survival's.

As life exceeds mere survival
Reason has supreme part to play
In rooting every adventure
Firmly in Spirit's wide domain.

As social norms cannot negate
The needs of individuals,
They do arrange for gradual growth
By scales in life's experience.

To study and restrain senses,
To household keep and train passions,
To secluded as recluse live
And wisdom reach are steps levelled.

No action binds if intention
Does not connect the act with self;
And acts are done to free oneself
From impulses which compel acts.

Physical acts are no more acts
If acting mind is not attached;
And acts performed release the self
From subjection to life's instincts.

The greed for wealth and progeny
And world-renown are instincts called;
By means of them one transcends them.
This wisdom everyone should gain.

In sacrifice actions dissolve,
Whereby the self offers itself
In knowledge-fire burning all sins,
The all-inclusive Godhead's light.

Actor, action and action's goal,
Are waves in one abounding sea;
Here none does act and none fruits reaps
As all is just tumult of waves.

To adore gods, senses subdue,
Behold the One in sense-contacts,
Restrain all functions entirely,
Are some of Yoga's various ways.

To give material charity,
And offer gifts of belonging;
To fire create within oneself
By Tapas done, are Yoga's forms.

To drown oneself in scripture's lore,
To learning reach for clearing doubts,
To breath control in harmony
Are also Yoga's multi-limbs.

The highest sacrifice, Tapas,
Is union with universals,
Until the Great Universal
In meditation is attained.

By Yoga freed from action's bond,
By knowledge having dispelled doubts,
Rooted in all-pervading Self,
Forces act not on such a sage.

ARTICLES ABOUT SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

Message of the President Swamiji Maharaj by Swami Chidnanda

Radiant Divinity,

My beloved fellow Sadhakas treading the path of Divine Life, Om Namō Narayanaya! Jai Sri Gurudev Sivananda!

With immense joy, I avail of this privilege of offering my salutations and my loving felicitations to Revered Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj upon his special 75th Birthday Anniversary, 25th April, 1997. Our long association in the sacred service of Beloved and Worshipful Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj spanning a half-century has made us close and affectionate brothers-in-the spirit. This fact adds to my happiness in penning these lines for his Amrita Mahotsava. By the grace of God and loving blessings of Sri Gurudev, we have spent more than half a century of our earthly life in Holy Uttarakhand on the banks of Divine Mother Ganga, in a spiritual fellowship that has been able to weather all the winds of change and the ups and downs that are inevitable to all human relationships. Children of the same parents have different natures, different tastes and opinions. Even so, Beloved Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj and this servant of Gurudev have thought alike and at times thought differently too. We have basic and fundamental similarity in our twin lives which (similarities) are of the very essence. They are the rock foundation of our enduring fraternity. This was seen and blessed by Worshipful Gurudev even as early as the late forties. At times we have differed in our views on certain matters. Yes, even on certain policy and dealings of the Society matters. But, at all times I have never hesitated to speak openly and frankly to Swamiji Maharaj. This has never affected my high regard, admiration, veneration and affection for this incomparable Philosopher, Monastic and Spiritual Personality that Swami Krishnanandaji is. Long may he live and prosper.

I pray to the Supreme universal Spirit and to Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj to shower His Divine Grace and Choicest Benedictions upon Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. May God and Gurudev grant him good health, long life, progress, prosperity and success in his life and actions. May God and Gurudev fulfil all the aspirations of his heart. May revered Swamiji continue receiving abundant affection and love

of all his disciples, devotees, admirers and followers of both the East and the West. May he shine as a radiant and effulgent spiritual life guiding and illumining our global human family for long many years to come. May thousands emulate his lofty example and follow his footsteps and be benefited and become illumined. This is my message and prayer for H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj for whom the heart of this servant cherishes high regard and deep affection. May peace be unto the whole world. May all beings be happy everywhere. Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya!

- Swami Chidananda

Amrit Mahotsav Message of Felicitations

Blessed Immortal Atman!

My dear brethren in Divine Life, OM NAMO NARAYANAYA!

Loving good wishes.

It is a great happiness to me to give this message for the most auspicious Seventy-fifth (75th) Birthday Anniversary of Revered and Esteemed Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. He is the leading light of Gurudev's Divine Life Society. He is the foremost disciple of worshipful Gurudev and a spiritual personality of towering status to whom thousands upon thousands look for guidance, blessings and inspiration. Long may he live!

I offer my loving felicitations and prayers to the Almighty of his good health, long life and abidance in the Self! May HE abide in the SELF at all times.

I have impressed much more in a separate letter containing a special Message for your Souvenir in which I have put all the feelings of my heart. Read it when the Souvenir is ready. God bless you & all. Again felicitation.

- Swami Chidananda

HE IS A WONDER TO ME! by Swami Sivananda

It is very rare to find such a Synthetic Yogi as Swami Krishnanandaji. One may be a Vedantin condemning Bhakti and Karma Yoga. But Swami Krishnanandaji is like myself; he is like Lord Krishna. Integral perfection can be had only when you combine service and devotion with Jnana. You can declare: "There is no world in the three periods of time." But if you find a sick man on the roadside, you must rush to relieve his suffering, giving up your meditation. That is the sign of a Jivanmukta. Externally he appears to be only a Karma Yogi; but he views the whole world within himself. Lord Jesus, Lord Buddha and Sri Sankaracharya—how much service they did! It is because Swami Krishnanandaji is also a Synthetic Yogi that I have got the greatest admiration for him.

He is very quick in his work. He has a vast and deep knowledge of Vedanta. It is all God's grace. It is not merely due to study in this birth. It is all due to Purva-Samskaras. His knowledge is a treasure for those aspirants who care to learn, study and imbibe the knowledge from him.

Krishnanandaji is a wonder to me! He has excelled me. He has excelled Sankara. He has excelled Dakshinamurthy. He came a few years ago. As usual, I asked him to stay in the Ashram. After six or seven days, he told me, "I know the Gita a little." I asked him to recite the Gita. And he recited a chapter of the Gita beautifully. Then, gradually... how he evolved and grew in knowledge and wisdom is a wonder to me!

Swami Krishnanandaji is a master of Western philosophy also. This is because of the intense thirst for knowledge that he has. He wants to compare Western philosophy with Indian philosophy. It was because he was proficient in both philosophies that he was of great help to Prof. Edwin A. Burt of the Cornell University, when the latter was here. We should study Western philosophy also and find out the grandeur of that philosophy. Of course, Western philosophy cannot satisfy an absolute idealist like Krishnanandaji. People are stunned by his knowledge. With poor nutrition, ill-health, and many inconveniences, how Swami Krishnanandaji has done so much is a wonder; it is all due to God's grace. It is all due to his Purva-Samskaras. One lecture of his is quite sufficient to inspire and elevate you.

Not a single harsh word he has spoken. He never becomes angry. He never complains. I think there is none in this Ashram of his type. These are all divine attributes. He has more divine qualities than are mentioned in the Gita. Lord Krishna was in a hurry; therefore, He enumerated some major virtues only, and we have to add to them the virtues that Krishnanandaji possesses.

He is the proper man to go to the West. But if that is not to be, even his mere presence in the world is sufficient. His books are treasures for us. I am sending them all over the world. A man remaining in his own Kutir can send powerful thoughts that would stir the whole world. It is not necessary to go here and there, delivering lectures; it is not necessary even to write books. It is good that a great man remains in his own place; bees will come when the flowers bloom. Swami Krishnanandaji is silent dynamism.

MESSAGE BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

OM NAMO NARAYANAYA, JAI GURUDEV

It is a great sense of joy to note that the auspicious Amrita Mahotsava of Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj is to be celebrated in the month of April, '97, commencing from the 11th to 25th. It is in the fitness of things that this function will be celebrated for about two weeks and that the disciples and followers of Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj in particular and the public in general who will take part in the august functions. There may be many Mahatmas and Mandaleswars taking part and sharing their knowledge with the Sadhakas and general public and they will be certainly stand to gain by attending the various functions.

Great religious souls are born for reinstating the religion. With the passing of the time the vitality of a religious movement is lost because of unworthy life of the followers. Then comes the time for the advent of another great teacher. In accordance with the needs of the time, he preaches the highest ideals and spiritual discipline to realise them. All great teachers are right for all of them promulgate their views ordered by God Himself. This is possible because through mystic realisation they are attuned to Him and He becomes real to them. But then why is there so much difference in their views? To this it may be pointed out that difference is apparent and not real. It is mainly the difference of emphasis and not content of the goal.

Sri Krishna came and prescribed unselfish work as a major means of realisation. But with the passage of time people forgot the goal and began to work without any purposiveness. As a result the work became meaningless from the spiritual standpoint, because for religious growth it is not only religious action that is necessary, it is religious thinking that is more essential. Then came Buddha. He saw the futility of action without thought and hence rejected it. This created a stir and saved men from callousness to higher mooring.

On this auspicious occasion, I pray Lord Almighty and Sadguru Dev to Bless Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj SATA-SAMVASTARAM the Upanishadic age of one hundred years with robust health and happiness and continue the present Guru Seva, and to this fine sentiment, I add my own.

HARI OM TAT SAT

Sivananda Ashram
Dt. 26th, March, '97

Swami Madhavananda
Vice-President

THE MAKING OF A SCHOLAR-SAINT
A MINI BIOGRAPHY OF SWAMI KRISHNANANDA
by Swami Chidananda

Great is my happiness to express my homage and high regards to our most revered Swami Krishnananda Saraswati, my beloved spiritual brother and fellow-disciple at the feet of our most worshipful Guru Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, upon this joyful and auspicious occasion of his Platinum Jubilee Jayanti Utsav.

Sri Swami Krishnanandaji is the foremost spiritual personality of our Gurudev's holy Ashram, who has inspired, guided and enlightened countless spiritual seekers ever since his advent at the headquarters of the Divine Life Society in the year 1944. He has drawn to himself innumerable fortunate spiritual aspirants by the sublime spiritual quality of his life and his deep knowledge and rare wisdom.

Today, Swami Krishnanandaji is enshrined in the hearts of countless Sadhakas and students of Yoga and Vedanta all over the world by his loving disposition, his kindness to them, and his genuine keen interest in their spiritual progress and welfare. Thus, it is not only we, at the holy Sivananda Ashram, but also many thousands of spiritual people in many countries all over the world who will be rejoicing upon this very happy occasion of his Platinum Jubilee.

Beloved Swami Krishnanandaji shines as the leading light of our monastic brotherhood at Sivananda Ashram, and as the foremost amongst the spiritual teachers of the Divine Life Society, whom worshipful Gurudev left behind to carry forward his spiritual work. That he is a man with a mission in this modern age becomes clearly evident by the way in which he grew up in his young age and showed unmistakable signs of what was to come right from the very beginning of his life.

Birth and Infancy

Swamiji physically hails from the South Kanara district on the Western coast of South India. In his Purvashrama, he was the eldest son of a family of six children, four of them being his younger brothers and one a sister. Known by the name Subbaraya, he was born of orthodox Shivaralli Brahmin parents. The forefathers of Swamiji belong to one of the respected Brahmin families settled in the Tuluva Desa or South Kanara district by Maharaja Mayura Verma, ruler of Banavasi. This family was well-versed in the performance of religious rituals and in the knowledge of Tantra-Sastra and was one amongst those authorised by the above ruler to practise Paurohitya and Tantra as their services to the religious life of the community. As such, devotion and worship of God was very much a tradition in the family.

As a child of two years of age, Subbaraya was taken on a pilgrimage to Tala-kaveri in Coorg district. This is a very holy place at the source of the sacred river Kaveri in South India. In those days, during the first quarter of the century, there were neither good roads nor motor bus transport services available. So, the pious parents trudged on foot the entire distance of the pilgrimage, carrying the little child Subbaraya. The very next year, the parents took him to the famous hill-shrine of the Lord of the Seven Hills at Tirupati. Little Subbaraya went once again in the company of his grandfather to holy Tirupati and had Darshan of Lord Venkateswara, when he was a child of five years. From then onward, he started his school career.

School Days at Puttur

In the educational field, he surpassed all of his classmates in every class. He had early education at St. Francis Xavier's School at Darbe in Puttur town. He studied upto 5th Standard in this school. His subsequent education was in the Board High School at Puttur. At this time, the family was financially passing through a difficult period. But, thanks to young Subbaraya's brilliance in studies, he was fully exempted from school fees and similar dues by the school authorities who were highly pleased with his great proficiency in studies. Subbaraya used to score the highest marks in the class. He used to take part in the school debates which were being conducted in English. Once during the annual inspection, the District Educational Officer was stunned by the forceful oratory of young Subbaraya and was deeply impressed by the power of expression evidenced by the young scholar.

Subbaraya had great liking for the Sanskrit language and took keen interest in the study of Sanskrit. Not satisfied with what was taught in the class-room, young Krishnananda took to earnest self-study of Sanskrit with the aid of the *Amara Kosha* and other textbooks. He eagerly took guidance from any Sanskrit Pundit whom he happened to meet. He had a natural flair for the learning of this classical language and had an inborn genius for it. Consequently, he made rapid progress in this study, and even while at high school, he used to compose original poems in Sanskrit. Side by side with his studies in the school, he learnt Suktas from Rigveda, Pavamana, etc., from his father who was himself well-versed in Sanskrit and in the sacred scriptures. But then, his was not a case of "all work and no play" and he was no mere bookworm. As a young student, Subbaraya was fond of playing at Ramayana with his younger brothers and friends. Subbaraya himself took the role of Rama, his brother that of Lakshmana or Sita, and the others were given other suitable roles. Thus they formed a troupe and he used to lead this play during the midday lunch-hour recess or after school hours, with bows and arrows prepared from the branches of trees. He enjoyed this play and so did the others too.

Love for Scriptural Studies

The deeper spiritual side of Subbaraya's nature began to shine in his conduct at this time. After he began studying Sanskrit, he took to the study of the Bhagavad Gita of his own accord. Such was his intellect and unusual

memory that he soon learned it by heart and began to repeat the whole of the Gita daily. During holidays, he would explain the meaning of this sacred text to his mother and his younger brothers. One thing is noteworthy about his spiritual state at this time, and that was, that though the family belonged to the Madhva sect and the members were followers of Sri Madhvacharya's Dvaita Philosophy, yet somehow, young Subbaraya began to be drawn towards Sankaracharya's absolute Advaita Philosophy. He began reading Sankaracharya's *Viveka Chudamani* and Upanishad Bhashyas. He developed monastic tendencies and a desire for solitude, an aversion to large gatherings and mixing with people.

At that time, there was at Puttur a very cultured and well-read gentleman belonging to the legal profession, by name Baindur Shivarama Holla, who had a good library of religious books. The aspiring young seeker Subbaraya used to meet the advocate and borrow from him the Vedas, the Upanishads and similar other books and delve into them to explore their inner meaning. Gradually, a certain change was wrought in his nature. The spirit of liberation and the spirit of renunciation were awakened in the youth's heart. Subbaraya began to feel more and more that the only thing worth striving for was Kaivalya Moksha or the divine state of spiritual liberation. At times, he used to give expression to his feelings by saying that some day he would renounce everything and go away in quest of Kaivalya Moksha. But the people at home did not take it too seriously.

Government Service—A Brief Interlude

Sometime in 1943, Subbaraya took up Government service at Hospet. But this phase lasted only for a short period. Even during his service, the youth was said to have been conducting Gita classes for the earnest public. He took leave on grounds of ill health and was at home for a while, recouping his health. But after a month's stay at home towards the end of that year, he left, giving the impression that he would rejoin his government service at Hospet. But he straightaway went to the sacred city of Varanasi. There he studied the Vedas and Sanskrit for a little while. But the call to seclusion and Sadhana drew him further north and he left Varanasi for Hardwar and thence for Rishikesh, briefly informing his parents through a letter that he would now be going in quest of the higher knowledge.

As a Sadhaka in Sivanandashram

Arriving at Rishikesh in the year 1944, the brilliant young seeker came face to face with his Guru upon the holy banks of the sacred river Ganga. Filled with the spirit of renunciation, young Subbaraya met his worshipful holiness Satguru Sri Swami Sivananda filled with the radiant light of Divine Realisation. The story of his first meeting with His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in whom the young man saw his spiritual preceptor, is told in an interesting manner by Gurudev himself (See *"He Is a Wonder to Me"* on page 2 in this Souvenir). Though Subbaraya was devoted to the pursuit of Self-Knowledge and was a Bala-Jnani, he did not hesitate to joyously undertake, willingly do, with the efficiency of a master and with the delight of one interested, any work that was allotted to him by the authorities of the Ashram. The Sivananda Charitable Dispensary needed an able hand to serve the sick that resorted to its medical aid; Swami Krishnanandaji was chosen for what he considered a blessed privilege. He used to conduct the Ashram Satsanga and play the most important roles in it, chanting hymns, reading from the scriptures and delivering lectures. He was well-versed in the Mantras and therefore he willingly undertook to conduct any ritual that was to be performed at the Ashram. It was he who culled out Mantras from several sources and codified the Sannyasa Diksha ceremony now adopted in the Sivanandashram. He became the Programme Director of all the Sadhana Weeks; he managed them most efficiently and won the admiration of the hundreds of Sadhakas who took part in each Sadhana Week, for his punctuality, regularity, and capacity for intense and hard work. Any department of work at the Ashram that needed an able organiser to set matters right claimed Krishnanandaji as its own. Beneath all this heavy load of strenuous work, he could put up a happy smile, and could, when not engaged in all this responsible work, meditate in absolute peace.

His needs were few, and wants were none. He had attained such a mental state that austerity was welcomed by him. His mastery over the senses and his hard work soon earned for him the admiration of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji himself, who during the course of his talk to aspirants, on the 17th September, 1945, said: "Though he is a young man, he is full of Vairagya. He has controlled his tongue. I have tested him in so many ways. There is a fire in his speech. His words come from his heart. He is a young man with spiritual Samskaras. He who has done spiritual Sadhana in the previous birth is born with such Samskaras. He has done much work. He has translated several poems from Sanskrit."

Sannyasa Diksha and After

Subbaraya entered the Holy Order of Sannyasa on the 14th January, 1946, on the holy Makara Sankranti Day, and since then has come to be known as Sri Swami Krishnananda Saraswati. In his own words, he felt a mysterious change took place within himself when Sri Gurudev uttered the glorious Mahavakyas.

Though he continued to take an active part in the Ashram work even after this initiation, there was an almost imperceptible change in him. Automatically and miraculously, as it were, newer channels of work opened up before him. The service took a new turn. He took to lecturing and writing: no one knows how it came about—neither how the other departments of work dropped from him nor how the mantle of a Guru was thrown upon him. It is here that we see the mysterious hand of Providence unmistakably working His Will. Day by day, the young Swami grew more and more lustrous, more and more silent and reticent, more and more introspective and meditative, more and more a manifest man of God. He had long before become a master of the art of resorting to inner seclusion. Now he resorted to external seclusion also. The silence of the forests around the Ashram attracted him. The thought of God, God-consciousness, kept him awake many a night. He rapidly became blind to the world of names and forms, and deaf to all the talk of the world. His gaze fixed on the ground before him, he flitted about like lightning, whenever he had to move out of his Kutir. He eagerly discussed Vedantic truths; he listened to aspirants' doubts and delightfully cleared them; but worldly topics dared not approach him. Living in the world, amidst men and women, yet he was living far beyond and above it, beyond the reach of the worldly. Frequently he went away from all human habitation, in order to commune more thoroughly with That. Such was the fire of his renunciation that no thought of hardships could ever deter him from seeking the seclusion of the densest forests. At other times, he plunged himself in intense activity. Meditation and study, seclusion and selfless service—they all went hand in hand.

Then came the great day, somewhere in 1948, when he had, what he termed "a lightning glimpse of Truth." He was so lost in it, that for a considerable time after that he took no interest in anything. His behaviour—already reserved and serene—became still more austere. For several months he confined himself to a room and uttered not a word to anyone on any subject whatsoever. He never asked for anything; there was no desire in him

to express. He took what came to him unasked. He was ever blissful and peaceful.

Swami Krishnanandaji's emergence from this period of what we could only term as "concentrated God-consciousness" was hailed by the establishment of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj promptly appointed Sri Swami Krishnanandaji its Professor of Vedanta. There was "fire in his words" even before; now there was that clarity which clearly indicated a perfect perception of Truth. The words were illuminating. He spoke as one endowed with authority.

As He is Today

The story of Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, after 1948, is just one of a Jivanmukta enjoying the Sahaja-Samadhi-Avastha. It is the story of Jada Bharata retold. Radiating peace and bliss, he lives in Sivanandashram in a state of Continuous Self-Awareness. All service is welcome to him; though he does not desire to do this or that. When the flower blossoms, bees rush to it; they do not need invitation. Similarly, Krishnanandaji has without the least ostentation drawn to himself many aspirants and seekers after Truth from all parts of the world; to them all, he has become a Guru. He guides Sadhakas not only in Jnana-yoga and Vedantic Sadhana, but in other branches of Yoga as well. He is himself an adept in Hatha Yoga, a master of Raja-Yoga and a great Bhakta of Lord Krishna. He is a master of the Yoga of Synthesis propounded by His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj; and is today a wonderful replica of the Master. Hari Om Tat Sat.

HUMILITY—THE HALL-MARK OF TRUE WISDOM

by Swami Madhavananda

Prostrations to Sri Satguru, who is Consciousness, eternal and peaceful. My salutations, again and again, to Lord Sri Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, the delighter of Devaki and Yasoda, the darling of Nandagopa. My prostrations to Radhapati, the source of supreme bliss, whose grace makes the dumb eloquent and the cripple cross mountains.

In Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, we have a saint of the old Rishi type; and his life, it may be said, is a commentary on the high ideals of service, love and goodness. His practical life holds aloft a blazing torch of

righteous living to aspirants so as to dispel the darkness in the path. It is beholden on all aspirants in particular, and his admirers and well-wishers in general, to keep in mind the facts, the principles and the lessons indicated by the Swamiji's life and utterances with a sense of gratitude for the invaluable benefits conferred by them. On this holy and auspicious occasion, let all aspirants, as far as possibly can, exert themselves to study and assimilate his life and teachings and make them the working principle of their daily life.

It is a truism that a Jnani alone, of all men, knows God as He is—the perfect Infinite Spirit, who is like the sun after darkness, than whom nothing is greater, nothing more subtle, and nothing older. It was divine dispensation and the blessing of the all-merciful Lord that our beloved Sri Swami Krishnanandaji relinquished the mundane life at a very young age and took to a life of renunciation; influenced by the great saint, our blessed Gurudev, settled down at Rishikesh and practised austerities and took to intense studies, as a result of which Swamiji not only qualified himself for the purpose of ministering to the souls of men, but also bloomed into a great Vedantin, Yogi and saint. To my observation, Sri Krishnanandaji is a qualified Vedantin and displays in his life the simplicity and humility of a man endowed with true spiritual knowledge. Any new aspect of knowledge, spiritual or secular, which he is not conversant with, though it may be very ordinary, is all wonder to him; and childlike he wants to know more and more about it. This is admirable indeed.

I have used the word 'wonder' in the last sentence and it means to ponder, to question, to be aware of ignorance, to be surprised, to marvel, to be curious. When we are filled with wonder, we necessarily open our minds and become willing to listen. The child is full of wonder and awe, because it is not yet become too sophisticated to see the beauty, the good, in the smallest, most commonplace things. As the years pass, we grow our know-it-allness and become progressively blind to what is real and good in our world. We often fail to realise the purity and the good that is in all things. Is not the child, looking for the good, healthier in mind and body than the adult who looks at the unfamiliar with fear or distrust? The child looks at life through the mind-glass with pristine purity and sees clearly, not bringing imperfection into what it views. But later in life, we are apt to look through the mind-glass darkly. It is only when we are in the wondering process that we begin to really understand the majesty, orderliness, and divine origin of all that exists. How can one possibly look beyond what is before his eyes and ears without a sense of wonder?

The great spiritual leaders have always said that humility is the surest sign of true understanding. What is meant by humility or meekness? Are we not talking about humility when speaking of a sense of wonder? Can any man who stands in wonder of anything be other than humble! The truly humble man recognises his own uniqueness, but he also recognises that he has a way to go. Through his sense of wonder he is aware that there are still newer vistas of knowledge, still greater heights to climb. The meekness, too, is not being meek to the things of the earth, not grovelling before the idols of the world. On the contrary, the meek man is meek in his wonderment of the glorious knowledge that must be behind outer appearances. He is full of wonder, knowing that much truth remains invisible to his sensory system. Humility and meekness both enable us to wonder, to ponder, to be in awe.

Perhaps our first step towards wisdom, towards God-consciousness is getting rid of our know-it-allness and adopting an attitude of true humility. We should begin to stand in awe, to wonder at the infinite good, orderliness and unity that exist in the universe. We shall never take the first step if we close our minds and hearts to the visible in the invisible, says a thinker. Humbly we must look with eyes that see, and ears that hear, rather than with the superior attitude of "I know all that." It is a sign of self-destroying egotism never to be impressed, never to be moved to wonder by anything or anyone. It is a sign of wisdom to question, to wonder. We learn only through the process of wondering. He is foolish who believes that he must always act in a sophisticated manner as if he is in possession of all knowledge; the wise man recognises that he knows not. God gave us three essential abilities to develop the total consciousness: to reason, to know that we know, and to know that we know not. The man who hopes to raise his consciousness should develop his reasoning power, and ability to sort and analyse what he knows, and should know that he still has much to learn. The humble man knows this and comes into a higher consciousness. Why do we lose our sense of wonder and humility? Because of the fear of appearing naive. If one has real faith in God-force, one should express all the more clearly one's sense of wonder. If we approach anything in life with contempt due to familiarity and assumption of know-it-allness, we are kept in ignorance. We have to be humble to be creative or to rise to a higher level of consciousness. The person who is contemptuous dwells in the lowest level of his consciousness, and he suffers much, as all men suffer who leave their humility buried in the mud of ignorance in which they are wallowing. In what manner do we begin to reactivate this child-like, but very mature and wise sense of wonder? The strength to sustain a sense of wonder with

humility against the great pull of habit does not come easily; it has to be willed by conscious action over and over again. It takes very real effort and patience, but it is most rewarding and it will spark our creativity, and new horizons will be opened to us,—a great new awareness and a higher consciousness.

On the sacred and auspicious occasion of Swamiji's Platinum Jubilee, as his true admirers, let us emulate his life principle and humble ourselves before God and He will lift us up in due time. My humble suggestion to one and all is: Dedicate yourselves afresh to his teachings, to his wise counsels. Give your thought to his sublime message—as revealed through his ideal life—of peace, service, goodwill, love towards all beings, purification and refinement; and cultivation of all that is positive and desirable and effacement of all that is crude, coarse and impure in thought, word and deed. May Swamiji's sublime, ideal and dedicated life be prolonged for a long time to come so that he may continue to guide aspirants and be a source of inspiration to one and all. Hari Om Tat Sat.

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA, SILENCE AND DYNAMISM COMBINED

by Narayan Kiekens

My younger brother, Siva Kiekens, followed the International Yoga and Meditation Course in January and February 1970 under the guidance of Swami Krishnanandaji. Coming back to Belgium he was full of Swamiji and of his teachings. So I was looking forward to have Darshan of Swamiji too.

In August 1973 I could visit Gurudev's Ashram for the first time. I saw Swami Krishnanandaji the first evening of my stay in the night Satsanga. But Swamiji got an asthmatic fit shortly after he arrived and had to be taken to his quarters. So that first time I had not the privilege of hearing one of his unparalleled lectures. Just before returning to Belgium, at the end of the month, I could briefly visit Swamiji in his house somewhere on top of the hill.

During later visits I had the good fortune to see Swamiji in a better state of health. During one of his daily Darshans, some two years ago, I heard somebody inquire after Swamiji's condition. Swamiji said: "Bad is better than worse." So he even doesn't want to complain though he is a person that

suffered all his life, as he himself said. Every time I met Swamiji he was cheerful, having an attentive ear for all, taking care of the affairs of the Ashram, enlightening people coming for his Darshan etc. Gita says: "The grace of that Being makes the dumb eloquent and the cripple climbing mountains." Sick we can only be physically and mentally, but what we really are is beyond sickness and pain. That is what I heard Swamiji saying in his lectures, what I read in his books, what I see in his life.

In 1962 we associated with Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji. We found his name in the bibliography of a book. We wrote a letter to "Swami Sivananda, India" and got a quick reply, that changed our life completely. It brought us to India and made us the family of Swami Chidanandaji, Swami Krishnanandaji and so many other wonderful souls.

We will celebrate Swamiji's birthday in the Swami Sivananda Ashram of Aalst, Belgium. We pray whole-heartedly to Bhagavan and Sri Gurudev to keep Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj among us for many years to come. His life is a blessing and an inspiration for so many.

GURUDEV WAS ALL APPRECIATION FOR SWAMI KRISHNANANDA

by Swami Hridayananda Mataji

I appreciate what Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj has done for the Holy Master, H.H. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and I also know in what great esteem Sri Gurudev held Swami Krishnanandaji.

I wanted to study the Brahma-Sutras and I told Gurudev about this. Gurudev told me to go to Krishnananda Swamiji to know what the Brahma-Sutras are. But, I did not know where to find Krishnananda Swamiji. Gurudev told me: "Stand near the post office at Four O'clock in the morning. A young Sannyasi will pass by to have his bath in the Ganges. That is Swami Krishnananda. You can tell him: 'Gurudev has asked me to learn the Brahma-Sutras and other Scriptures from Krishnananda Swamiji'." I did what Gurudev told me and Swami Krishnanandaji readily agreed to teach me. That is how I learned many things from Swami Krishnananda.

Gurudev used to say: "Real *Perfection* can only come when service and devotion can be combined with Jnana. Words must come from the heart, then everything will be *Perfect*. Man can only serve man if he sees God

reflected in the one he serves." According to Sri Gurudev, service to the poor was not just human compassion but it was service to God. This we could see from the life of Swami Krishnanandaji.

"You must love humanity with purity, nobility and magnanimity. Learn to cheer the suffering. To have perfect faith in God, to love your neighbour as your own self, to love God with all your heart and soul, is Divine Life. You must serve and do your duty to all the people. As long as the world exists for you, there will be suffering individuals also there. Only through service and renunciation we can remove the evil qualities of egoism. Forget yourself when you serve others." This is the teaching of our Holy Master and this is what Swami Krishnanandaji did all his life. Gurudev appreciated this so very much.

A true Sannyasin is one who does not hate, does not reject and does not want anything from others. This is exemplified in Swamiji's daily life.

I know for certain that Gurudev's blessings are always on Swami Krishnanandaji, because Gurudev told me what He thought of him and how much He appreciated him.

May the life of Swami Krishnanandaji be a source of inspiration to one and all.

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA - AS I SEE HIM

by Swami Yagnavalkyanandaji

It was 16th May, 1952 when I had the privilege to have had the Darshan of Revered Gurudev and Swami Krishnanandaji, in the Hall which is now a Book-Stall. He was talking on Upanishads. About 20 people were there. I sat down. In about a few minutes his lecture was over. I saw Swamiji just like a boy and from a distance. You could count his ribs. He, straight, left for his room upstairs. In those days he would hardly move out of his room, so even if you move about in Ashram, you would hardly see him.

On several visits I had no chance to have his Darshan, because our visit was in connection with Eye Camp. After about two years I felt I should read something about Indian Philosophy. So one day I went to Swamiji's room. The room was like a bookstall. He was sitting on the cot, bare bodied, books all around. I requested "I want to study something about Indian Philosophy,

what should I read?" He replied, 'Introduction to Indian Philosophy' by Chatterjee & Banerjee—published by Calcutta University." Before I could speak anything he joined hands and said "Om." This literally meant I should leave.

In 1959 Swami Chidanandaji then Gen. Secretary was deputed to U.S.A. and Swami Krishnanandaji was appointed as Gen. Secretary. Temperamentally he is a person who does not like to mix with people and have random talks, but as Gen. Secretary he had to meet number of people, discuss various items and this activity exposed the latent quality of administration. He managed and led the Ashram into development in various directions. He has to keep himself very busy because Ashram has expanded and with expansion his work also expands. The characteristics of his character is very clean and clear in his talks and writings. That has helped greatly in the development of Ashram. I would cite one small incident. Once, about eight army officers and myself were sitting in Gurudev's Kutiya. In the meantime Swamiji came for signature. He was standing near the door. Gurudev said, "Krishnanandaji tell these people what is Divine Life in ten minutes." Without any preparation and hesitation, like a tape recorder his speech started. He completed in ten minutes and left. After he left, Gurudev told those officers "He is the rebirth of Shankaracharya."

During all these years of management he never allowed his spiritual activities to be slowed down. Books after books have been coming from his pen. We could see that over and above, he being a Spiritual wizard, he has become a practical man—quite polished. His language appears to be tough to understand for an ordinary man. When he starts his lecture, a flow of Ganga comes out from him continuously. I think he is second to none except Dr. Radhakrishnan, whom I have heard in Mumbai.

The essential qualities of an ideal Sannyasi are Punctuality, Discipline and Self-Control—all these qualities are visible in every cell of his body.

May this "Amrit-Mahotsav" be the foundation stone of His Centenary celebrations as well.

THE ROYAL SWAN IS SEVENTY-FIVE by Baldeo Sahai

He has been rendering yeoman's service to mankind by interpreting ancient Indian philosophy in modern scientific idiom. In doing so Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj has drawn profusely upon the immense output of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji. Swamiji is not only a writer of impeccable English prose marked with a rare felicity of expression and a happy turn of phrase, but is also an impressive speaker. His evening discourses at the Ashram are eagerly awaited and some of his books are transliteration of his lectures. Being a master of his subject, he has off-hand recorded interviews in which the devotees—some of them from other lands—have expressed their spiritual difficulties and the Swamiji has authoritatively resolved them to their satisfaction. It is indeed a pity that his books are not prescribed in the courses of even Indian universities so that our future citizens get acquainted with the Indian heritage through the commentaries written by a profound scholar.

The cultural atmosphere of the period in which the Vedic literature like the Upanishads was written was altogether different than what it prevails today. To fill this cultural gap of centuries is a colossal task which has been so beautifully bridged by the interpretations of Swami Krishnanandaji. He has written commentaries on all principal Upanishads and produced many other erudite volumes.

Take for example his exposition of the first *Mantra* of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. The horse of the Asvamedha Sacrifice is symbolic, a piece of contemplation, the avowed purpose of the Upanishad—which universalises the particulars. The head of the horse—the beginning of the body—is the dawn, beginning of the day. The eyes may be compared to the sun and the moon, the *prana* within to the Cosmic Wind, mouth to the Cosmic Fire, body to the entire year, limbs to seasons, and so on. The sacrificial horse symbolises the entire external universe. The Asvamedha Sacrifice thus becomes an object of contemplation, literally an animal but psychologically and spiritually, as an element like any other element in creation as a whole.

Extending the metaphor, Swamiji elaborates, the clouds are the flesh of his body, the rivers are veins and arteries, the plants and shrubs his hairs, his

yawning is like the lightening and the shaking of his body is like the thunder of the raining season.

A reference to *Asvamedha Yajna*, therefore, does not mean that a horse is physically brought to the *Vedi* and sacrificed with a sword in hand. It is purely symbolic. The purpose is that the performer of the *Yajna* will contemplate upon the entire creation as the *Virat-svarup* of the all-pervading Brahma—*Isavasyam-idam sarvam*.

In the same vein, Swamiji explains the Panchagni Vidya in the *Chhandogya Upanishad*. The first oblation really is the universal vibration in the celestial Heaven. The second is the reverberation in the lower regions of atmosphere in the form of rainfall. The grosser manifestation of events in the world is the third oblation. The fourth sacrifice is the Man himself who energises himself with food and produces virility. The fifth oblation is the woman whose union with man brings about the birth of a child. These are the five fires—Panchagni—and are not to be regarded as individual events. Here, again, the emphasis is on rising above one's little ego, expanding his consciousness and establishing oneness with the *Virat*.

Swamiji is able to interpret ancient symbolism in the modern language of science because he is soaked in the Vedic lore and has meditated upon these esoteric mysteries. He has also thoroughly imbibed the contemporary scientific temper and is well conversant with western philosophical thought.

Analysis Of Western Thought

He has analytically examined the contribution of almost all major philosophers of the West ranging from Socrates to Kant, Bergson and Whitehead. The point of reference has been mostly the Vedanta and the works of Gurudev Swami Sivananda. Gurudev wrote as many as 300 volumes and by comparing his philosophical thought with that of the West, Swami Krishnanandaji has shed incandescent glow on both.

In explaining Vedanta, Swamiji says that man is neither pure spirit nor pure mind or body. He is a harmonious blend of the body, mind and spirit. The spiritual Self, the thinking mind, and the physical senses together constitute an individual. "We are an organic whole, not merely separate parts." as Descartes thinks.

Swamiji elaborates that an organic unity cannot be explained by mechanical laws even as the functions of the human body cannot be subjected entirely to the mathematical laws of physics. The fulfilment of the individual lies in the final realisation—*Darshan*—of the Absolute.

Reconciliation With Science

Referring to the predicament that there is no freedom in the universe and indeterminacy—or the Heisenberg principle of uncertainty—reigns supreme, Swamiji precociously points out that such a conclusion is exaggerated. This principle only means that the ways of tracing the movements of the electron are not yet known to the scientists. That their present instruments of research are not as subtle as the force with which the electrons move. He is very right and the efforts are already on to discover some definite design of the orbits in 'electron cloud.'

Swamiji is like a *Rajhans*, the Royal Swan, who is perfectly at ease in all the regions of the universe. He can take superb flights in the infinite heavenly regions, glide gracefully over the world of water, and as well walk with steady steps over the *terra firma*. He can delve deep into the past, survey the contemporary scene with ease, and also entertain elevating visions of the future indicating lines of future research.

Once this scribe approached him to suggest some material for writing a book on 'Contribution of India to the Thought of the World.' And the long bibliography he rattled off at the spur of the moment! It covered coveted volumes on history, science, astronomy, astrology, mathematics, philosophy, and what not. I would require several lives to go through the books mentioned by him. He has not only read but chewed and digested many of them. His range of knowledge is indeed stupendous.

His writings are generally lucid but at times he can be quite abstruse compelling the reader to tap his intelligence and pull himself up. At first sight few can visualise the greatness of this small man. We at the Sivananda Ashram are really very fortunate to have him in our midst, enjoy the privilege of sitting by his side and talking to him. The genial sunshine he sheds around and the jokes he may fling at you will never give you an impression that you are in the presence of a walking encyclopaedia. Whenever I have written anything sensible about philosophy, the credit goes to Swamiji, if there has been anything wrong, the fault is entirely mine.

I with my entire family offer our humble homage to revered Swamiji on the auspicious occasion of his Amrit Mahotsava and pray for many many more years of his precious life.

MY GURU—AN EMBODIMENT OF FATHOMLESS LOVE

Tushar Kumar Chattopadhyay

At that time, I was a youth of twenty-four. I was working as a lecturer in physics in an undergraduate college. To live was a great struggle for me, for I was suffering from chronic colitis for years together. I had a love affair with a lady who refused me all on a sudden and married someone else. Repeated failure to change my state of affairs brought me to the verge of utter despair. I was thinking of giving up my life, as joy seemed to have vanished from my mind altogether.

However, within the deep core of my heart, I had a peculiar feeling that life was a tremendous mystery and before one left this earthly existence, one should try to unravel this mystery. "Should I give up my life without the experience of this unravelling?"—Day and night, this question perturbed me. Fortunately, at that critical period, I came across a book. Its name was "Autobiography of a Yogi." Its author was Paramahansa Yogananda. I had read many spiritual books before, but those were far different from this particular book. The entire writing was a piece of masterly art, a real romance. Seven consecutive days passed and I was almost absorbed in the book. In it was a description of the direct, intuitive, spiritual experiences of a Yogi, who dedicated his life to know the supreme cause behind the panorama of life. Slowly the idea crept into my mind: "Life is still worth living; the mystery of life is the source of all inspiration for living." I was very interested to delve deep into this ocean of life, vibrating in every nook and corner of the great universe. But, how to do it? Who was to help me? And above all, where was such a person who had already fathomed this great depth? Suddenly the answer came. One rainy afternoon, I was browsing at a book-stall in a railway station. One of the books drew my attention. It was "Yoga Asanas" by Swami Sivananda. Its language was very lucid and its exposition was extremely clear. I purchased the book then and there and read it. Within a few days, I wrote a letter to Swami Chidananda, the President of the Divine Life Society from where the book was published.

Swamiji was absent in the Ashram then, but a reply came from his personal secretary, who invited me to come over to the Ashram and meet the senior Swamis for the answers to all my questions. Accordingly, I reached Riskikesh. The calm and quiet environment of the Ashram made my whirling mind peaceful and joy bubbled up from a source deep within, after a long time. There were many Swamis who attracted my notice by their appearance, but whom to approach for my answers?

One morning I was talking with the man in the reception office, who advised me to attend Swami Krishnanandaji's morning lecture. He then escorted me to Swamiji's Kutir—"Gurukripa."

At first sight, I was not much impressed by Swamiji's appearance. He had no long beard, his eyes were not closed in meditative mood, nor was he very grave. He looked a man of ordinary stature and he frequently cut jokes with the other Swamis who had assembled to listen to his discourse. I sat in one corner. The lecture was yet to start.

But, as the lecture started after a few minutes, the whole atmosphere vibrated with a different spirit. Words from his lips came out like a flowing fountain and I drank those words to my heart's greatest content. Ah, it was a real treat for me! Never did I feel such happiness just by listening to a lecture. Today, I cannot recollect the topic of that day's oration, but it was something concerning human happiness. Everything around was tranquil, and Swamiji's words, like the rays of the sun, illumined my mind and lifted it to a plane of consciousness where knowledge alone was the object to be pursued. I forgot my bodily worries. Joy filled my mind. When the lecture ended, it seemed as if we woke up from a happy dream.

I approached Swamiji when the room was a bit less crowded, bowed down to him and told him that I wanted to learn the art of meditation. He gave an affectionate laugh. By that time he was aware that I was a lecturer in physics. He asked, "How many years did you take to understand the principles of physics?." "Approximately nine years" I replied. "It may be more than that to learn meditation, my dear sir!" he smilingly remarked. I stayed with him for more than twenty minutes. When I was ready to take leave. I found him looking intently at me with a peculiar gaze and mutter certain prayers, all of which I could not understand.

It was then the month of June. I came back to Calcutta, my place of work, within a few days, but could not forget that smiling face and those sparkling words. Doubts about the existence of God tormented me day in and day out, in my leisure and during activities. I wrote a letter again, this time to the newly-acquainted personality. The reply came within a fortnight. It was a long letter, illumining my mind about my various queries. I quote below a few extracts from this writing, which pulled me tremendously towards Swami Krishnanandaji:

"As regards your query regarding the existence of God, etc., these doubts arise on account of the inability to reconcile the various doctrines of philosophic thought with the central issue of any philosophic problem in an organic completeness."

"Modern theories of evolution and discoveries of physics, chemistry and biology are merely tentative conclusions based on empirical observation and they cannot be taken for the whole of truth, since every thing that is empirical has to be founded upon something that is noumenal, a fact which no one can gainsay.

"An insight into the nature of the ultimate reality may require a preparation in the form of extensive study and deep research under a competent guide."

These remarks vibrated within my mind persistently. In October 1976, on my way back from Badrinath, I once again dropped at the Ashram. This time I stayed for six days. I met Swamiji every morning. One day he told me: "You have to practise deep meditation in order to know about God. I shall tell you certain techniques." But, after this, he was utterly silent. Slowly, my leisure days came to an end. I had to come back again with out any guidance.

Two months later came the Christmas Eve. I was feeling restless continually. "Would he not guide me ultimately?" "When shall I receive the directions?"—Questions of this sort agitated me every day. All on a sudden, due to some tremendous urge. I purchased a ticket for Haridwar and left Calcutta. I still remember that wintry December morning when I reached Haridwar in the early hours. All was dark around, everything was chilly, and the chill made me shiver up to my bones. The atmosphere was heavy with fog, and when my bus started its movement, my whole mind was also full of

mist. I could not understand properly whether I was going to tread the right path. Swami Krishnanandaji was in his Kutir, looking through certain papers. When I arrived, he looked up and stared for a few seconds at me. "So you have come"—he smiled, "Well, go and take bath, you are tired. I shall call you when necessary." He turned his attention once again to his files.

A few days later, one morning at eight o'clock, I was summoned. The room was empty. Swamiji started talking about concentration and meditation. At that time, I was trying to concentrate my mind with the help of certain Hatha-yogic methods. He told me: "Those are not for you. You should practise Japa. That is the easiest method of concentration." Then he uttered two Mantras. "Choose between the two" he added. I chose one. "Okay" he said, "that is your Mantra then. Practise Japa with it. It will lead you to meditation." I was also instructed by him about the technique of meditation. And all this took only fifteen to twenty minutes. Surprisingly enough, it took two more years for me to understand that this was my initiation (an event completely free from rituals) and that he was my sole spiritual guide.

Two days later, he called me again, this time, it was afternoon. Spontaneously he explained to me the techniques of Raja Yoga and how to move in this path of spirituality, amidst a modern, sophisticated city life. At one moment I asked him, "Is meditation always good for a human being? I see that it produces headache, etc., in my case." Smilingly he replied, "Meditation, conducted rightly and under a proper guide, can never have any ill effect." Then, with a mischievous look and with eyes twinkling with joke, he added, "And I don't think I am a wrong doctor for your spiritual ailments, inasmuch as I have treated thousands of patients successfully."

Days and months rolled by. I was back home and working, but my whole mind was all intent to get in touch with this person of immense wisdom. Yet, somehow I was also attracted towards Paramahansa Yogananda's writings and lessons. I continued practising the *Yogoda* lessons (certain spiritual techniques) and also the meditation methods prescribed by Swamiji Maharaj. I was a bit perplexed at that time. Who was my real Guru? I could not judge. The superb writings of Paramahansa Yogananda appealed to me tremendously. I was overwhelmed with the wisdom of this man whom I had no chance to meet physically.

Since 1977, I started visiting the Ashram twice a year—in summer and in the autumnal vacation. Each time I put the same question to Swamiji: "Who is my Guru?." He never replied clearly, but only talked this and that. At last, one morning in 1977, when I asked him, "Did you initiate me, Swamiji? There was no ritual at all when you gave me the Mantra." He gave a tender look and said, "Well, something was done and that was the ritual for you." The words rang with such a power that they flashed like a lightning, and within a second, I realised who was my true Guru.

Our relationship became sweeter after this event. Several times he said, "Tushar Kumar, why don't you marry?." "Marriage? Isn't it the burial of Sadhana?" I wondered.

"No, No" he explained, "sometimes, marriage may help your spiritual evolution. Marry an untutored girl; she would help you." I had every intention to marry a postgraduate girl, if at all I decided to be wedded. I therefore strongly objected to this proposal. "Impossible" I exclaimed, "I can't marry a girl without post-graduation. And why? I won't marry at all."

My Guru, a man of a different realm, never argued. "Okay, okay, we would see to it later. Now carry on your Sadhana." And then he changed over to a different topic. He touched all the facets of my life in his instructions and discussed almost everything, including my health, my academic life, my family affairs, over and above my spiritual progress. As I advanced slowly, his instructions became rarer, and when we met, most of the time he talked about the multifarious varieties of the life spiritual. I continued my Sadhana, but felt very lonely at heart. No one was there to share my inner feelings of joy and sorrow. Moreover, I stumbled many times in attempting to control my biological urge. In 1977, I told him, "Swamiji, I am feeling that I should marry... Should I marry? What do you suggest?." "Of course, you should marry. It is essential for you," he remarked gravely, and then smiled: "Didn't I tell this to you long ago?." I was struck dumb with awe. So, this man foresaw whatever was going to happen in my future.

As I slowly evolved, I found to my utter surprise that all his predictions about my life came true to the word. Whatever he spoke was truth for me. I started obeying all his directions without the least hesitation. A conviction came in my mind in the light of which I understood that this divine personality had already become the director of my hitherto commonplace

life. I also realised, by his grace, that to find God was the *summum bonum* of human existence.

The profundity of his wisdom is incomparable. His knowledge on any subject whatsoever, besides Yoga and Vedanta, is something to be really admired. When he speaks on physics even (which fortunately is my subject), it seems that he understands physics far better than I do. His writings carry a depth of thought which reflects his keen intellect and yet have a peculiar grace and charm. But all this apart, his love for everybody, however insignificant he may be, is beyond ordinary conception. Outwardly grave and self-possessed, when this sage of the modern era keeps quiet, it seems that there is an insurmountable barrier surrounding him. As one comes nearer to him, however, it seems that he is but a fountain from which there is a continuous emanation of rays of love, soothing every soul that approaches. When I read, in various spiritual books about the qualities that God possesses, and when I remain in close proximity of my divine Guru, I feel that God is manifesting his unique character through him.

I have heard that he is a man of great spiritual attainments. But, who am I to judge his level? Can an insect fathom the ocean?

I am blessed to have his love, for no one else in this earthly plane has loved me so much, no one else has shown so much concern for me. An ordinary human being, unless he becomes a God-man, is perhaps incapable of such a selfless love. In the words of a great saint of modern times, "Once we experience the love divine that flows through us from God, it gives a glow to life that nothing else on earth—no powers, no glories, no amount of sense-satisfaction—can give us."

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA: A GOD-MAN

Swami Narayanananda Mataji

On the holy and auspicious occasion of the 75th anniversary of the coming on earth of His Holiness Most Revered Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, I would like to write a few words about this great God-man.

I met Swamiji in 1983 and for the past many years have had the privilege and blessing of serving Swamiji and of spending time in his holy presence. Swamiji's greatness is really unfathomable but there are certain aspects that can be mentioned here.

What has impressed me enormously about Swamiji is that he is established in God-awareness and does not need the approval or recognition of anyone to confirm his greatness. Swamiji knows that his real worth does not increase or decrease according to public opinion, and is free from all the paraphernalia and entrapments of name and fame. Therefore it is very joyful to be in Swamiji's presence—no formality is required and there is no tension or fear of inadvertently offending him in any way. He expresses himself spontaneously and allows us the same freedom without requiring the rigidity that is expected of many Gurus. In fact, Swamiji is so immersed in the universality of his being that most of the time he does not even defend himself from criticisms of those who misunderstand and condemn him. It is very rare indeed to meet such a great Saint who is liberated from the encumbrance of ego-identification.

Yet despite being unaffected by public opinion, Swamiji is known throughout India and all over the world as a great seer and God-man, a master of Eastern and Western philosophy, a knower of Truth. Though Swamiji never leaves the Ashram or travels anywhere, his reputation as a stalwart of highest thinking has attracted countless devotees and seekers from every part of the globe. They come to meet the exalted personage of Swami Krishnananda after learning about him or reading his excellent books, many of which have been translated into different languages. These visitors ask a variety of questions and it is a wonder for all of us to see how he replies to each one, always leading our attention to the highest universality, Self-awareness. Countless people have been totally transformed after meeting Swamiji and bathing in the bliss of his divine love. Every evening Swamiji presides over an hour-long meditation during which time all are free to apply their own meditation techniques. Not a word is spoken, not a sound is made, but the meditational vibrations emanating from Swamiji are so powerful that we are whisked away into a state of pure being, unaffected by time and space. With the holy blessings of Swamiji, the meditators merge into the One Self that Alone Is.

Swamiji's writings can be classified under the following headings:

1. Commentaries on Scriptures
2. Poems
3. Independent Monographs
4. Conversations

Under the first category comes Swamiji's magnificent expositions of the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. Swamiji's commentaries on the Brihadaranyaka and Chhandogya Upanishads are especially superb and they read as a harmonious flow in a soft and touching style revealing an indepth insight into the profundities of the Upanishads. Swamiji's *Philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita* is a masterpiece which has evoked praise from scholars and seekers as the best revelation of the true import of the Bhagavad Gita; these lecture delivered extempore are a comprehensive textbook that serves as a philosophical and spiritual guide.

Swamiji's poems include an independent classified portrayal of the Bhagavad Gita in poetry arranged subject-wise, called *The Song of God Almighty*, a novel presentation in Swamiji's own characteristic style of poetry. Swamiji's major poem, in five parts, is *The Epic of Consciousness* written in Miltonian style of epic majesty which touches the whole of the cosmology of the descent and the ascent of creation, to be read, to be-lived.

Swamiji's monographs are the most important contributions to philosophical literature. They are *The Philosophy of Life*, *The Ascent of the Spirit*, *Essays in Life and Eternity*, *Self-Realisation: Its Meaning and Method*, *The Philosophy of Religion*, *Studies in Comparative Philosophy*, *The Philosophy of the Panchadasi* and *The Realisation of the Absolute*.

The Yoga of Meditation and *The Yoga System* are highly penetrating and comprehensive. Swamiji's major books on the practice of Yoga are: *Introduction to the Philosophy of Yoga* and *Yoga As a Universal Science*.

Among conversations, Swamiji's encounter with a Canadian lawyer in *The Problems of Spiritual Life* is a great treasure of insight, clarity and profundity. *Your Questions Answered* touches upon practically every aspect of spiritual inquiry, analysis and contemplation.

Also, there are a number of Swamiji's manuscripts lying unknown to the world as they are yet to be published.

But Swamiji is much more than all the intellectual and philosophical attainments for which he is so famous. Swamiji is at heart a true lover of God, immersed in ecstasy of the Divine, constantly aware of the bliss that permeates his entire being. Sometimes tears well up in his eyes; often Swamiji bursts into a devotional song, and there are occasions when he dances to express his joy.

Swamiji has a wonderful sense of humour, rather Swamiji's humour is an expression of the joy he always feels. He sees himself in every aspect of creation and is a master of histrionics. Swamiji can imitate any person, any animal, he can even produce the sounds of trains and aeroplanes. When Swamiji tells a story he moves the hearts of his listeners by identifying himself with each character of the tale, becoming one with their thoughts, emotions and actions. One day he mono-acted Bhagavan Sri Krishna as ambassador for the Pandavas; every scene and role was played by Swamiji alone, commencing with Krishna telling Yudhishtira that he would try for peace and concluding with Krishna showing the Vishwarupa in the Kuru's court. Each character was played in such detail and perfection that it appeared as though the entire drama was actually unfolding at that very moment. Even Draupadi's expression of grief and demand for retribution were a wonder to see, not to mention the magnificent portrayal of Sri Krishna and His manifestation of the Vishwarupa.

Finally, a few words regarding Swamiji's contribution to The Divine Life Society. Swamiji has been a resident of the Sivananda Ashram since 1944, and Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj loved him as his own dearest son. Swamiji has made an incalculable contribution to the spiritual development of this Ashram by his mere presence, and also by giving guidance to so many seekers in person and by correspondence, by giving countless invaluable discourses over the years, and through his many illuminating writings. Ever since Swamiji became the Secretary of The Divine Life Society in 1957 and General Secretary in 1961, he has protected the Society from all kinds of administrative interference, moving heaven and earth to free the Headquarters Ashram even from several acts of the Government by means of official exemptions. This monumental feat has been accomplished by the positive influence that Swamiji has exerted on persons of every level and rank, as well as by managing the Society in a straightforward and transparent manner which leaves no room for doubt about its his integrity.

So many different types of people reside in the Ashram, each with a unique temperament and manner of expression. That they are all able to live and work together peacefully is a great credit to Swamiji's remarkable flexibility and administrative skill.

The outstanding characteristic of Swami Krishnananda is a thorough going blend of Eastern thought and Western logic simultaneously with an

extraordinary capacity to speak and write in a classical style with great literary merit, and above all Swamiji's rootedness throughout in his aspiration for unity with the Absolute—a rare example indeed to emulate by everyone who seeks perfection in their approach to life. Perfection—in everything from all sides—that is Swami Krishnananda.

May Most Worshipful and Revered Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj remain with us for a very long time to come.

A LIVING GITA IN THE SIVANANDA ASHRAM

Viveka Mataji

In a mysterious manner I came under the spiritual influence of the Great Satguru Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. It happened in San Francisco in 1991. I was invited by a friend of mine to attend a Puja being conducted by a Swami from the Sivananda Ashram of Rishikesh at Wesley Zineski's house in San Francisco. The Puja was in progress and the Swami, Sri Karthikeyan, had just finished Abhisheka to the Holy Sandals (Padukas) of Swami Sivanandaji and he handed over one of the Padukas to me to wash and dry. As I received the Paduka, a strange and powerful spiritual current permeated me from head to foot. I was transported to a different realm of Consciousness. This was my first 'encounter' with the Great Master, and I was struck by his radiance, compassionate Sakti, a gentle yet firm and powerful magnificence. Thus I had his Darshan in the form of the Paduka Puja which fulfils the aspirations of everyone's heart without fail. Since then there had been a great transformation in my life.

After the Puja, Swami Karthikeyan talked about his Satguru Swami Sivananda and the Sivananda Ashram, the activities there and the great Saintly souls who continue the tradition of the Master. He also extended an open invitation to visit the Ashram for anyone who wishes to experience the Ashram life, on the banks of the holy Ganga in the Himalayas. This inspired me and I decided to visit the Rishikesh Ashram.

I travelled with Wesley Zineski to Rishikesh, and arrived in the Ashram in time for the sacred Navaratri and the Skanda Shashthi Celebrations. The spiritual atmosphere generated during these Celebrations by the ceremonial Pujas, chantings and the presence of the President Swamiji Maharaj and Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj is something to be experienced for oneself.

The morning meditation session of the Ashram graced by the President Swamiji Maharaj is a beautiful, precious light to kindle in the early mornings. And Swami Brahmanandaji's warm presence and teachings of the Scriptures are an unsurpassed and indispensable diet for the soul which I truly treasure.

But the crowning glory of the Ashram is to be found in the precious presence of revered Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, who is easily available for "Darshan" for everyone, without any distinction, in the forenoon of each day and the hour-long period of silent meditation, every afternoon. It is amazing to watch Swamiji attend to various persons and businesses at the same time and with such swiftness that one wonders what is the secret of his powers. Perhaps it is the Cosmic Consciousness in which he is established all the time! Often he says: "Nothing is and can be outside the *Virat* or the Cosmic Being." And what we hear during the 'Darshan' time in the forenoon, is experienced during the period of silent meditation in the afternoon when, in the meditative presence of Swamiji, everyone present there is lifted above their little individualities to the fringe of an all-inclusive Cosmic Awareness, at least for the time being. I have never experienced such meditations before. Swamiji's presence in daily meditations and Darshans is an unending source of inspiration and instruction on practising the living of the Life Divine. In these sessions with Swamiji, like the Ganga Herself, we are swiftly moved by Swamiji's spiritual currents to the final goal of beatitude and God-realisation, found in an all-inclusive Divinity.

Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj is an invaluable asset to The Divine Life Society and the Sivananda Ashram. I have read the life of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and also the Bhagavad Gita. I feel that the Supreme Spirit Itself has bestowed the greatest of Blessings upon us in the personality of Swami Krishnanandaji—a living Gita in Sivananda Ashram. The great Being of Gurudev Sivananda is seen working through Swami Krishnananda in many a respect—his punctuality; his promptness in the disposal of problems, both mundane as well as spiritual; his clarity of understanding; his easy accessibility to one and all without distinction; his mother-like soft heart and concern for everyone's welfare; and above all, a total freedom from any kind of malice towards anyone, even those who try to offend him, belittle him, etc. I find in him a true and living example of the qualities of a *Jnani* and *Bhakta* given in the Gita, like: *Sarva bhuta hite ratah*,—interested in the welfare of every being; *Advashtha sarva bhutanam maitrah*....,—friendly and compassionate to all and hating none; and *Abhayam sarva*

bhutebyah, fearlessness to all beings. I have not the least doubt that Gurudev Sivananda would be proud of this disciple of his, who has maintained his spirit of renunciation and also an undivided dedication to the Master's Mission, till this date. I am endlessly grateful to the Holy Master, who has brought me into personal contact with such a living Saint, through the visit to the West by another of the Master's worthy and dedicated disciple, Swami Karthikeyan. And it is my sincere and heartfelt prayer to Gurudev that he may keep Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj in good health and well-being that he may continue to guide us for many more years to come.

THE DIVINE DIAMOND

by Prof. Vasudev Randev

It is a matter of great delight for thousands of seekers, Yogins and saints of all over the world that Amrit Mahotsava (75th Birthday Anniversary) Celebrations of our Pujya Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, The Divine Life Society Rishikesh is being organised befitting to this memorable event of the spiritual history of Bharatavarsha. It is really a very noble endeavour to publish a souvenir on the life and teachings of Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj—a great saint of the modern times on this auspicious occasion. I congratulate Revered H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President, the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh and other organisers of these celebrations who have taken up this worthy venture.

Swami Krishnanandaji is considered to be a concise walking encyclopaedia of secular and spiritual information due to his vast and intense knowledge of multifarious fields. In his morning Darbar you may talk to him on any subject but at the end you feel that Sri Swamiji knows better than even the specialists of that subject. Though saturated so much in Jnana, yet like Ulysses of Greek mythology he has always a great thirst of new knowledge and respects the learned ones.

He is a renowned author who is read with great interest and wonder in whole of the world, not only by the spiritual seekers but also by the students of Philosophy and Spiritualism.

Swami Krishnanandaji is an alloy of Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga. As the result of his many years of tapas, austerity and meditation, in pursuit of Self-realisation he may be termed as a great

spiritual master of the day, in whom the spiritual Indian culture pulsates and finds manifestation in his each action and every breath. People from every nook and corner of the world come and sit near his feet to quench their spiritual quest. Thus anyone who comes near him feels that Swami Krishnananda is his mentor.

He is of the view that work and worship are not contradictory but complimentary to each other. That is why when Sri Swamiji sits in his morning audience one wonders how this Sannyasin caters to so many diverse spiritual and secular matters. At one time he is talking to a foreigner on the intricacies of Dhyana, the other moment he attends to the accounts clerk and asks him the details of the cash vouchers and just at that time someone asks Swamiji for the extension of his stay in the Ashram. Sri Swamiji rings up the Reception office. But this is not the end of the story, just at that very moment some needy person comes for donation and Swamiji passes orders to help him and cracks jokes with him, and then there somebody wants his blessings for his newly married son. Sri Swamiji does all these things like the Great Videha King Janaka. The people who see this feat of Swamiji for the first time feel bewildered and say jokingly, "not two in one, not three in one but he is so many in one."

Sri Swami Krishnanandaji is basically an exponent of Sanatana Dharma and is proud of this heritage from Rishis of Bharatavarsha. But he is a firm believer of "open door" spiritual society based on the universal truth. Like his master Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, he does not profess to be a founder of any new thought. He has simply interpreted for us and the world, the Indian religious treasures of the past. His speeches and writings are thus fortified by quotations from the Indian scriptures, sayings of his great master and his own Anubhavas.

The greatest contribution of Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj to the spiritual realm is that he has tried to bring our spiritualism from the shelf of dogmas. According to him, "An educated mind cannot accept the canons of faith without rational evidence, whatever we are called upon to accept, must be justified by reason otherwise religious beliefs will be reduced to wishful thinkings."

The most obvious aspect of life is that everything in the world passes away. The vast mountains, the beautiful palaces, the strong castles, the great civilisations, all these are subject to decay and become the part of hoary

history, but according to Sri Swami Krishnanandaji there is something beyond this time and space, which no doubt is inspiring and unifying this universe but this great power is in it but is beyond it. In his views, "there is that being before this "becoming" and that being is the eternal truth."

Sri Swami Krishnananda is a man of universal approach to religion without subjugation to any type of barriers. According to him, "Intolerance is an expression of religious conceit and not a spiritual spark. He believes in the freedom of conscience. Each soul has a right to choose its own path and see God in its own way. Secularism does not merely require us to tolerate but to understand and love other religions. That is why praying in the mosque of Mohammedans, kneeling before the cross of the Christians, worshipping before the fire of Zoroastrians or performing Puja in a temple are equally important for Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj.

Let us pray to God and Sri Gurudev to bless this spiritual son of mother India with a very long life and a radiant health so that he may continue to carry on the torch of the Divine Life for many decades of the twenty first century also which is knocking at the doors of humanity."

A TRIBUTE

by P. Ganesh Prasad

I was a Sadhaka-inmate of Sivanandashram during the period between 1973 and 1983. When I stumbled into the Ashram life by the will of God, I was hardly 18 years old, little did I know that I will be face to face with an extraordinary personality, a like of which I have still not found. That was our Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, whom I regard as my Gurudev.

What is great about Pujya Swamiji is that he is a true Sat-guru. Many of us might have seen Swamiji with a stern countenance, mildly chiding the inmates and other familiar devotees most of the time and appearing to be rough with them. The only reason why Swamiji appears to be uncompromising is that he wants us to avoid being silly-minded in our approach to anything in life. Swamiji expects us to be always serious about spiritual life, for which purpose alone we live in such holy places. Swamiji Maharaj dislikes all those Sadhakas who keep losing sight of their spiritual goal and tries to advise them through his scintillating sermons not to get

side-tracked into unwanted ways of life which would lead to their spiritual fall. Many Sadhakas who have not seriously heeded to Swamiji Maharaj's advice have ended up as hopeless cases, i.e., neither able to continue in the Ashram nor able to go back to their kith and kin. The spiritual welfare of all the Sadhakas and devotees is foremost in Swamiji's mind. This precisely is what a true Sat-guru is supposed to do throughout his life-span and this noble role is being played by Pujya Swamiji Maharaj in an astounding way, unparalleled in the history of present-day spiritual reformers.

The majority of the Sadhaka-world in Sivanandashram would agree with me if I say that whatever little practical knowledge, worth-mentioning, is enshrined in our bosom today, has been solely from the holy mouth of Pujya Swamiji Maharaj. If we are something today in our spiritual knowledge, it is only due to Swamiji's blessings through his most inspiring discourses which always transported us to the realms of the ancient seers. That way we are eternally indebted to Pujya Swamiji for sowing the potent seeds of tree spiritual aspirations in our hearts. In this sense, Swamiji has been both our spiritual father and mother. Blessed are those who have come in touch with this twentieth century saint. To sit at Swamiji's holy feet is like sitting before the Almighty Himself. All our sins are burnt in toto by his mere glance. This is my firm conviction. Most fortunate are our blessed ears to have had the opportunity of listening to the voice of this living God on earth. The great Swami Chinmayanandaji once visited our Ashram and in the presence of many inmates and devotees passed the following remarks about Swamiji's discourses:

"My lectures are like the seashells on the seashore, while the sermons of Swami Krishnanandaji are like the pearls of the Pacific."

This one statement from a great man like Swami Chinmayanandaji, who himself was an eminent orator, speaks volumes on the greatness of Pujya Swamiji Maharaj. All the adjectives available in the modern dictionary may not be adequate to highlight Swamiji's greatness.

I may recall one more incident which left an indelible impression in my mind:

I served the publication league of the Ashram during the first few years of my Ashram life. Thereafter, Pujya Swamiji called me and asked me to work with Sri Karthikeyanji in the General Secretary's Office. At that

juncture, I expressed my desire to Swamiji saying that I wanted to be very close to him and do his seva like typing his personal letters, articles etc., and other activities like washing his clothes, preparing food for him etc. To this His Holiness remarked: "*Ganeshprasadji, I am like the Virat Purusha. The whole Ashram is my body and the various departments are my various limbs. Whichever department you serve, it will be like serving me only. So, do not get disheartened. Go and work with Karthikeyanji.*" I was transfixed for a few moments because the authority with which the Revered Swamiji spoke those few sentences literally transported me to the presence of the Almighty as described in the Vedic hymn Purusha Sukta.....**Sahasra seersha purushah, sahasrakshah sahasrapaath....** This enhanced my faith in the divine personality of Pujya Swamiji manifold.

I do not really know as to how I got estranged from the presence of this Great Being and have come to lead the life of an householder at the moment. I have taken it as the will of God.

Let us all sincerely pray to the Almighty to grant Pujya Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj excellent health and make him live amidst us for a very long time, to guide us all on the difficult path of search for Perfection.

Our sincere efforts to put into practice whatever Pujya Swamiji has taught us over these past few decades can only be our true Guru Dakshina to this Great Being on this holy occasion of His 75th Birthday Anniversary. MAY SWAMIJI MAHARAJ'S BLESSINGS BE UPON US ALL. Hari Om Tat Sat!

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA—A CONUNDRUM

by Matru Mandali, *Sivanandashram*

On such an auspicious day as this it is our privilege to bring to memory the life and teachings of a spiritual saint and savant, a deeply unassuming, unostentatious and humble personality, sitting in whose presence one experiences a deep silence and peace which emanates from him as fragrance from a flower.

Pujya Swami Krishnanandaji's life at a superficial glance, seems to be one of contradictions and rather enigmatic! While his teachings lean towards the *Jnana Marga* of *Upasana*/Meditation, his daily activities display a total, restless involvement in mundane affairs. Nevertheless, Work and Wisdom

enjoy an even balance in his life. He is an ideal *Karma Yogi*! Established, as it were, in a peerless state of inner tranquility, he freely and with utmost facility, jousts with '*Karma*' being all the while '*Asanga*' or unattached. At one moment he is totally identified and involved and the very next moment he is totally detached and free! He can at any given time, disengage himself from all activity and immediately plunge himself into profound inner solitude.

Being an adept in *Raja Yoga* he can focus his mind on any given subject and incisively penetrate into its core. This gives him the uncanny ability of understanding people and situations without any difficulty.

His sharp and perfect clarity of vision based on his inner experience of *Vedantic* Truths, enables him to effortlessly link-up any and every question/doubt with its philosophical implication and thus, bring us back again and again, to the one great movement/longing of the human soul for spiritual union.

Another unique feature of Pujya Swamiji is his ability to stay grounded in his 'being': Unmovable and unshakable is his abidance—no matter even if the skies opened-up and came tumbling down upon him! Like the strong and silent Himalayas he remains '*Achala*'. Although he sometimes appears to be perturbed, he, in truth, remains unshaken and steady in wisdom. Like the great, grand ocean which appears to be agitated and noisy on the surface but in its unfathomable depths, it remains silent and motionless, so is he!

Being established in total renunciation he neither needs nor wants anything. His favourite quote—"Everything is everywhere at everytime" expresses clearly his profound experience of Truth and the resultant '*Atmatripti*' or inner-contentment.

What we see of him is only the "tip of the iceberg" as it were! Two-thirds of him remains "*Adrishya*" or unperceived. Even the one-third portion of him which we see, we are not able to comprehend in toto. So how can we ever understand what or who he is.

His utter simplicity and childlike nature is so endearing; while his mother-like, caring attitude is so reassuring. His wisdom, rationality, intellectual genius; his unflinching dedication and devotion to Gurudev; his ceaseless and tireless *Seva* and his deep concern for *Sadhakas'* spiritual welfare—all this put together and more, *make him so dearly precious to us*

all, that we have to repeatedly thank God and Gurudev for this great good fortune that has been bestowed upon us.

Thus, on this holy occasion of the 75th Birth Anniversary of Beloved and *Pujya* Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, we offer our deepest, heartfelt gratitude to Swamiji for deigning to be in our midst as a source of Support, Strength, Solace and Succour and leading us from darkness to Light, from untruth to Truth and from mortality to Immortality. May God and Gurudev bless Swamiji with good health and long life so that he may continue to bestow grace upon us and guide us to eternal Peace and Beatitude.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

**AN ASPIRANT'S VIEWPOINT ON THE LIFE OF SWAMI
KRISHNANANDA, THE LIVING SAINT**

by Seshagiri Rao

I still remember very well my first visit for the Darshan of revered Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj in the Ashram. I actually came on a tour to Allahabad for the Kumbhamela as a pilgrim from Andhra Pradesh. This happened in the month of December 1988. In Allahabad, the weather was unbearably biting cold. Soon after my dip in the holy waters, I did not stay there even for one hour. Destiny willed it; I finally came to Sivananda Ashram.

In those days, revered Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj was residing in Govardhan Dham. It was about 10 O'clock in the morning when I went there. In front of Swamiji's room, in the verandah, there was already a gathering consisting of devotees from far off countries, Indian devotees, visitors and Ashram inmates, etc. The weather was very chilly. All of them who were squatting covered themselves with woolen shawls of different types. I was the only person covered with a thick Sholapur Blanket, to withstand the cold weather. A few feet away, I sat behind the gathering. In my Academic life, even up to the University level, I used to feel comfortable only in the back-bench.

After a few minutes, Swamiji came out from his room, himself fully covered with ochre robes. The gathering got up and prostrated to Sri Swamiji. It was the first time for me to meet a holy Saint directly. Therefore, I observed every movement of Swamiji meticulously. While taking his chair,

Swamiji expressed his feeling thus, "This cold atmosphere is very good for meditation."

Though it seems to be a general statement outwardly, it applies to me also. Because I went there with such sort of ideas only and, therefore, there is a possibility to think that after seeing my incongruous odd attire, Swamiji might have expressed indirectly what was in my mind at that time particularly. I still hold the same impression in the heart of my hearts.

After completing that day's early morning transaction, Swamiji took up my problem. Swamiji very kindly condescended to oblige me and permitted me the good fortune of staying in the Ashram to lead an Ashramite's life. And now, though I am an inmate of the Ashram since eight years, I could not improve my contact with Swamiji further. I have been overcome by a sort of diffidence, due to my health reasons. Even then, Swamiji has been showering his invisible grace on me, for which this recipient is grateful to him for ever in life.

By hearing Swamiji's thrilling discourses and reading his inspiring books, a higher regard and greater veneration are generated in my heart. Swamiji's wisdom-filled spiritual personality may be the only reason for that.

Though Swamiji is leading a simple life, he is devoted to a discipline of high thinking. His innate nature always keeps him in philosophical thought. Swamiji is well versed in English. Even at the age of Twenty, he was able to write a drama in English. His proficiency in Sanskrit, ordinary people like us cannot estimate. He avoids to parade his virtues before the world. Inwardly there is an intense penance to escape from material coils and achieve Perfection. But, outwardly, he behaves as if he is reacting to every minor action of others. He apparently seems to be struggling with the problems of Ashram matters, even though he can immediately switch over to philosophical teaching without any prior preparation. He enjoys inner tranquility but appears to be not having detachment from worldly chores. Just like Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, he is a staunch devotee of Lord Sri Krishna. Being a master of expression, language and diction, he is able to expound convincingly the old beliefs, Yoga, Vedanta and Upanishads besides Gurudev's writings. There is a subtle counter reformation of simplicity in his writings while expressing views on religious matters to suit modern conditions in a novel way. Through his vast

knowledge of English and Sanskrit, Swamiji has given a new meaning of the Vedas and the Upanishads to this sceptical generation. For the benefit of mankind he gave a new face to our ancient wisdom contained in our Puranas and Itihasas. He is the repository of all modern knowledge. He studied astrology in his early life itself. Everyday we can perceive his sixth sense in his tackling of people and issues, though he seems to be impulsive outwardly. He knows homoeopathy, physics, astronomy, chemistry, etc. He uses all these sciences as tools to express our ancient wisdom logically. He is an expert in reconciling spiritual injunctions of a contradictory nature when need arises. In fact, Swamiji has a tremendous memory power to remember persons, incidents and things. He feels more at ease with intellectuals of high calibre, and therefore, is capable of giving mental solace by solving their spiritual and mundane problems. Eminent people from all walks of life—scholars, professors, judges, doctors, engineers, ministers, Chief Justices, dignitaries—are coming to the Ashram and sitting at the feet of Swamiji to pay their respects. He knows in profundity about Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha of our religion and is capable of convincing even a rank non-believer with appropriate anecdotes. He is an expert in giving lessons to Westerners as well as to Oriental devotees, with a proper blend of Eastern and Western philosophy, Bible, Koran, etc. He is accessible to everyone at a scheduled hour every day.

There is divine grace in him. To help people to find a way to success even in their failure, to give a start at the point where others have become discouraged and to have the unique ability to succeed in projects which have been abandoned, are some of his outstanding achievements, with the divine grace of Sadgurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. He has done a yeoman service to the Ashram in enhancing its glory and spreading its noble Ideals to all corners of the globe by his remarkable abilities, by his strenuous, constant and untiring effort. To achieve this spiritual and material goal for the Ashram, he employed indirect, subtle psychological methods in dealings and made it a great Ashram of world repute from its humble initial stages. The Sannyasins and Sadhakas feel secure and happy for staying in and belonging to the Sivanandashram. Those who are doing Seva in the Ashram are having great regard for Swamiji's compassionate nature. Solomon expanded the Kingdom given by David without shedding a drop of blood with his knowledge and intelligence.

God's grace was with Sadgurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj Who made it possible for him to have an Ashram in his name for the sake of

spiritual aspirants. Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj watered it and nursed it. Now it has become a great tree which is giving shelter to one and all. As a spiritual son of Sadgurudev who is Knowledge-Incarnate, he fulfilled his mission in life like Solomon. Glory to God and H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj for giving holy Godmen in the form of his disciples.

On the auspicious occasion of Pujya Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's *Amrita Mahotsava*, I pray to God and Gurudev to give Sri Swamiji a very good health, to guide humanity for a long time to come.

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA, THE SHINING LIGHT OF THE SIVANANDA ASHRAM

by V. Krishnamurthy

On the happy occasion of Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj's 75th Birthday Anniversary I am happy to share my views on this great son of Bharatavarsha, whose heart throbs with divine love and compassion for all creatures. Swamiji is the very embodiment of knowledge - a Jivanmukta, a saint and sage of the highest realisation whose presence itself sanctifies the holy Sivananda Ashram, endowing it with great vigour and vitality. He has been relentlessly working for his Master's Mission since his advent into the Sivananda Ashram's monastic fold, right from the time of his entry.

Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj called him "the shining light of Sivananda Ashram", whose counselling and comforting words have brought immense consolation to sincere, seeking souls. He has been called the 'Modern Sankaracharya' and true to this description, His Holiness has not left anything untouched in his writings including the most abstruse subjects. The writings of Swamiji pour forth from his heart and touch the hearts of the reader's though most of his works on Advaita philosophy are 'a hard nut to crack' as Swami Chidanandaji jokingly puts it. A very large group of Western visitors always rally round Swamiji Maharaj for his 'morning *Darshan*', meditation and discussions. They are immensely benefited by his pragmatic approach to various spiritual and social problems.

As he is the General Secretary of the Ashram, his manifold duties hardly leave him for personal comfort and rest. Disregarding his own delicate health, Swamiji works tirelessly for the uplift of all mankind. His duties connected with the high office he is holding in the Ashram are telling upon

his health. But he hardly bothers about his own health, as the overwhelming thought in his mind is always to do the maximum possible good to any one who approaches him sincerely. His only thought is as to how best he can serve his Master and His Mission and to this end all his activities are directed.

The celebration of the 75th Birthday Anniversary of ' such a noble son of India really amounts to worshipping God in the manifest form. I pay my humble respects at the holy feet of Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj on this happy occasion and pray to God and Gurudev to grant him a long life and sound health so that countless seekers may be benefited by his Holy Presence, in the years to come.

MY GURU: COMPASSION INCARNATE

Dr. Bharat Chandra Nath

"Krishnanandaji is a wonder to me! Who knows how many Sankaracharyas have gone into our young Swami? He is our Dakshinamurthy", said Swami Sivananda in admiration of his beloved, juvenile disciple Swami Krishnananda. When Swamiji was a wonder to his own Guru, it is very difficult, nay, impossible, for worldlings like us to dilate properly even upon a single aspect of Swamiji's outer versatile personality, not to speak of his fathomless inner identity, wherein a saint of his stature hides himself. Quite aware of my incompetence, I yet cannot help sharing a few of my experiences of Guru-kripa with those who have a genuine love for India's spiritual culture and staunch faith in Guru's invisible grace.

When I was a B.A. (Final Year) student of Dhenkanal College in 1973, I developed a sort of emotional dispassion for worldly life and a keen disgust for Economics, the subject I was then studying. Leaving my studies, I escaped secretly from home to join Sivananda Ashram, about the grandeur of which I had heard and read before. Providentially, I could have the *Darshan* of Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj on 1st September, '73. At the first sight Swamiji Maharaj, with his soothing words of love, instilled a spirit of hope into my heart as I was in a dejected, melancholy mood at that time. I expressed my desire for some kind of service (Seva) in the Ashram as I intended to stay for a long time, Swamiji, two days later, sent for me, and to my joy and surprise, straight away asked me to work in the Publication League, in which I had a special inclination to serve, although I had not let

out my choice before. I gladly joined the department. But after a few days my determination to remain in the Ashram collapsed for personal, psychological reasons. On 9th September, I became completely restless and decided to return home. I approached Swamiji at an unusual hour. He could very well know my mind. "Are you remembering the members of your family?," he questioned. "Yes, Swamiji", was my helpless answer. He allowed me to leave and advised me to meet him the next morning for initiation. On 10th September (Monday), at about 8 a.m., I appeared before Swamiji. Then there was none else in his Kutir. The atmosphere was calm, serene and grave. Swamiji came out of his room with a rosary in his hand, and without any pre-initiation query, straightaway initiated me into the Mantra I was longing for! Then he gave me the necessary instructions for Japa and a copy of "Practical Lessons in Yoga" with his autograph. Swamiji's initiation gradually brought about a unique change in my life. It not only pacified the then turbulent tides of my inner life, but it sowed as well the spiritual seed to grow in future. Some wonder how Swami Krishnanandaji, who would at times avoid, for spiritual reasons, initiating new suppliants, did so willingly in my case without my prayer. I do attribute my initiation only to his supreme grace.

In 1976 when I was an M.A., (Previous) student of Banaras Hindu University, I suffered from a physical ailment accompanied with mental tension, from which I could not recover in spite of various medical treatments. Finally I went to Rishikesh from Varanasi in the 3rd week of November, '76. Coming to know about the details of my problem, Gurudev Krishnanandaji recommended me to do one round of Japa of a Samputa Mantra from the Devi Mahatmya, daily before retiring to bed. I followed his advice. The regular Japa of the Mantra gradually cured my trouble and brought me complete relief within a very short period. I am convinced that a saint of Swamiji's intuitive knowledge can be a better physician to treat certain diseases, his diagnosis going beyond the limitations of medical sciences. Later in '83 when I asked Swamiji whether I should still do the Japa, he categorically emphasised the continuation of the prophylactic Sadhana till the end of my life. But for his sympathetic consideration for my health, God knows what would have happened to me afterwards.

In October '89, during the Puja vacation, I, accompanied by my wife, visited the Ashram. It was her first chance to see Gurudev face to face. She was pining for initiation. Gurudev was kind enough to initiate her on the holy Ekadasi Day. Besides, we had another mundane purpose of seeking

Guru's blessings for the birth of a son, we being then the parents of two daughters only. I was feeling shy to appeal to a spiritual luminary for a silly, transient gain; nevertheless I could not suppress my mind. I implored, "Gurudev, we seek your blessings for a son." To this supplication His Holiness's immediate, emphatic response was, "I don't bless like this. Don't ask God for a son. If you do, you are directing Him to do this and that. Whatever God gives is for your good and you have to accept everything as such. Who knows God may come to your family in the form of a daughter?" He was then sitting in the Samadhi Hall, surrounded by a big gathering of devotees and visitors. I buried my long-cherished, temporal desire then and there. His last sentence, "Who knows.....daughter?" indicative of the future birth of a daughter, came true. Soon after our return from Rishikesh, my wife carried. And lo! the next year on an auspicious Thursday, we were blessed with a third daughter. Gurudev could foresee who was going to be born as our third child. We resigned ourselves to the Divine Will, drawing peace and solace from his words, pregnant with lifesaving meaning.

During my past visits to the Sivananda Ashram, I have always enjoyed Gurudev's spontaneous love and sympathy. Whenever I have entreated His Holiness, he has promptly clarified my doubts, be they transcendental or temporal. He is a Sanskritist *par excellence*. In September, '91 I put forth some doubts. He opened my eyes by removing my prejudices against some grammatical lapses in a few Stotras. It was he who could enlighten me with his spiritual justification for such linguistic errors. As a practical synthetic Yogi, he has been guiding me in the path of devotion.

Our spatial distance notwithstanding, I have been receiving his invisible merciful help and guidance day in and day out. During trials and tribulations, the moment I have fervently surrendered myself to my Guru's feet, I have realised his immediate, miraculous protection. Such experiences are too many to find place here. When I introspect, I trace so many vices in myself that I simply marvel at his *ahetuki kripa*, i.e., incomprehensible grace.

Gurudev is known the world over as a Vedanta Philosopher and a prolific writer. His literature on Yoga and Vedanta is nothing but the scholarly manifestation of his divine grace on humanity for all times to come. We are blessed and fortunate that we are his disciples. To me he is a *Daya Sagar*, a *Karuna Yogi*. The celebration of the auspicious 75th Birthday Anniversary (Amrita Mahotsava) of Gurudev, His Holiness Swami

Krishnanandaji Maharaj, is an ineffable joy to all of us. Let me conclude with these words:

Thy present incarnation doth attain Summers Seventy-Five;
Into thy reality, O Ageless Effulgence, Who can dive?
Amrita Mahotsva! a joyous, momentous Friday;
May we share divine nectar and be happy and gay,
Thy Lotus Feet, O Gurudev, be our eternal shelter;
A thousand and one prostrations unto thee, O Protector!

SACRED HEARTED SWAMIJI

by K.J.A. Gunasekaran

"The chiefest wealth is a heart that overflowth with mercy: for material wealth is found even in the hands of vile men." - TIRUKKURAL (TAMIL)

Swami Krishnanandaji, chief executive of The Divine Life Society Headquarters, is the heart of the Sivanandashram. He is a very simple monk, but tirelessly and wholeheartedly dedicated to the Divine Life Mission. He is a great Sage and a famous philosopher of the world.

In 1986, during the Kumba Mela, I stayed in the Sivananda Ashram. Swamiji asked me where I have been accommodated. I told him that I was staying in the dormitory, Ganesh Kutir Hall. At once Swamiji asked the incharge of Reception, 'why not give him a single room? Incharge Reception told Swamiji that I have requested, every time, accommodation in the Hall only. Swamiji told me: "All visitors usually demand a separate room, but you have requested accommodation in Hall." Swamiji thus showed keen interest and enquired every visitor and guest about his stay in Ashram, about his welfare, personal problems and inconvenience, if any, about stay at Ashram.

Swamiji is an Asthma patient. He is living on medicines and his diet is very very poor. Sometimes he suffered with reaction of the wrong dose of medicines. Yet Swamiji used to take his bath in cold Ganga river daily. Sometimes he did not get sound sleep at nights due to Asthma but yet he got up in Brahmamuhurta daily. He observed regularity and punctuality of time. He never refused to meet devotees. He delivered the lectures and attended the administration of Ashram works. He has no Sunday and holidays. Day and night he is working for Ashram activities. His life is a true meaning of

every *Sloka* of the Bhagavad Gita, particularly of "*Karmanyevadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana, Ma karmaphalaheturbhurmate sangostva karmani*" (II-47): "Thy right is to work only, but never with its fruits; let not the fruits of action be thy motive, nor let thy attachment be to inaction."

On 20th July, 1989 evening, I reached Ashram from Joshimath. Some persons were rushing to the Hospital and there was commotion. I enquired what happened. They told me that Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj was seriously ill and admitted in Hospital. So I also rushed in. But to my great surprise, I found that our Swamiji was delivering lectures on the Bhagavad Gita to his devotees even though he was unwell. Swamiji is an Ocean of knowledge, ever sharing it with others. The Tirukkural (Tamil) says: "Knowledge is likened to a sandspring: The more thou diggest and drawest thereat, the more excellent is the flow thereof."

Once Swamiji was sitting in front of his room. That was the "*Darshan*" hour, and devotees were sitting in front and around him. A lively conversation started and Swamiji touched on all matters and subjects. During the conversation, Swamiji solved individual, personal and family problems and cleared the difficult spiritual doubts. The conversations were interesting and absorbing so much so that we had forgotten the surroundings and the time. Swamiji Maharaj had to remind us: "The lunch bell rang long ago. All of you now go for your lunch. Namaskar and God bless you." We left Swamiji Maharaj with folded hands and I recollected that the Tirukkural says:

"Even unto the stomach some food will be offered when there is no food for the time being for the ear."

ARISE! AWAKE!
by Miss Medha Sachdev

Swami Krishnanandaji has been my guide since the time of my birth. That way I feel myself a blessed child of God. Since the year 1973, when I was only two months old, I have been continually going to the holy Ashram to have his *Darshan* every year with my parents. To me, he is knowledge and divinity incarnate. When he speaks, the words seem to be getting anchored in one's heart and soul. Inspired by his teaching, this petty self is trying to say something.

Our Indian Heritage is very rich. The intuitive knowledge of the Rishis of yore which was imparted orally from preceptor to pupil traditionally, has come to us in the form of scriptures known as the Vedas and the Upanishads. The highest knowledge of the 'Self' is given in these scriptures, having known which, nothing remains unknown in the universe. While on one hand, the *Rishi* conveys the Eternal Message that the whole universe is pervaded by that Omnipresent God, on the other hand, he directs the individual that by doing good deeds alone, he should wish to live a hundred years of healthy life. This universe is the shadow cast by the desires of each individual. By nature no individual can sit without any 'action' even for a moment. By 'action' we mean the expression of a desire, but the movement towards Truth is not the effect of a desire because it is a desire to destroy desire and such an action is not an action. It is the flaming march of the soul towards its extension into infinity, so says Swamiji in his book, *'Essays on the Upanishads'*.

But where are we? Do we ever sincerely practise Yoga to know our own selves? Our consciousness is covered with the illusion of ignorance. Everything in this world is transitory. Nothing is everlasting except the Atman. Forgetting the Divine Messages of the scriptures we are running after the ever-going attractions of this ephemeral world. How beautifully an Upanishadic Sage prays to the Sun-God:

"The face of Truth is covered by a golden vessel. O Sun! Remove that for me who am a seeker after Truth."

The philosophical and mystical teachings of the Upanishads are to be studied and followed in their entirety. Arise, O Atman! Awake! For how long will you sleep? Get up from slumber. Go and sit at the holy feet of the men of wisdom and strive for Self-realisation following their admonitions. That is the only path to happiness and attainment of Eternal Peace.

It is the duty of a man to think about the problems of his society and his nation. Even if a single person does some good to humanity, the whole of humanity will follow him and worship him. This way, improves the society. Come forward, youngsters! Do selfless service. Strengthen the feeling of renunciation. Do not fret yourselves for fulfilling petty desires. They will ruin you ultimately. Do not try to imitate Western culture. It has already brought a great fall in our moral values. Gird up your loins to bring back the lost values of the golden heritage of India. Always keep in mind:

"You are not this body, not this mind,
Immortal Self you are!
Serve, Love, Give, Purify,
Meditate, Realise,
Be Good, Do Good,
Be Kind, Be Compassionate."
(So says Sivananda)

On this holy occasion of H.H. Swami Krishnananda's 75th Birth anniversary, I pray to God for his healthy and long life so that he may keep on illumining spiritual seekers after Truth.

CONTRIBUTION OF SWAMI KRISHNANANDA TO THE REVIVAL OF INDIAN EDUCATION

by B.R. Naik

Much has been said so far about the desirable changes in Indian Education since independence. Recommendations of different committees and commissions of Indian Education in general and in the field of spiritual and moral education in particular have been discussed in detail on different levels so far. Still, after fifty years of independence we are facing a crisis of character.

On this background, it is really timely to take note of our very revered Swami Krishnananda's contribution to Indian Education on this auspicious event of his completing 75 years on this earthly plane.

Needless to say that he reiterates the views of Indian Saints and Seers that education is a manifestation of perfection already in man.

Education: A Pleasant Process of Imparting Knowledge

While explaining one of his points, Swami Krishnananda says that education is feeling of the needs of the students and supplying them with proper thing at proper time and in proper way. For this task the teacher should not regard teaching as a business with students and should have a capacity to make himself liked by the student's mind. According to Swamiji, this pleasant process of imparting knowledge is education. The right type of education should exceed the limits of parochial religions or the cult of any sect or society and should be free from the prejudices of caste, creed and

colour. Further he points out that the system of education that rejects all the religions in the name of secularism and also the human aspirations is thoroughly unsatisfactory. Education constitutes a vital process and it grows out of its own accord when soul is poured into it. The bread-earning education has to become life-earning education; for, the latter, in addition to supplying bread, shall also supply man with a soul to live by. The present-day system of education is unsatisfactory because it is founded on a mistaken concept of life's values. The human being is reduced to a speck in the gigantic structure of cosmos. It is a fact that man is not merely a humble cog in the machine of a relentless world, but the essence of man is a spiritual principle, co-extensive with the Universal Spirit. This view was lost sight of in Macaulian scheme moving along the ruts of so-called modernisation of thinking, a rationality of approach and a scientific attitude of life.

Need of a Textbook on "The Constitution of Man in the Universe"

On the background of this erroneous mechanistic view of life, the necessity of writing a small textbook on "The Constitution of Man in the Universe", is mentioned. This book should contain information on the structure of the human personality in relation to outer creation. It should deal with fundamentals of human conduct on the basis of this relation of man to creation. Ample illustrations are found in this regard in the gospels of the Saints and Seers of all religions. The students in the higher classes be introduced to the great heritage of India, giving a broader vision of culture in general, expounding the contribution of modern Saints like Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Sivananda and others to the revival of Indian culture. For bringing out unity underlying human aspirations, Swamiji recommends that separate section may be devoted to the lives and teachings of Buddha, Mahaveer, Christ, Mohammed, the Sufi Saints and Sikh Gurus.

Salvation of the Self and Welfare of the World

A careful thought of fourfold aim of human existence i.e. righteousness in all stages and forms (*Dharma*), economic independence (*Artha*), emotional satisfaction (*Kama*) and spiritual realisation (*Moksha*) will provide a sufficient background thinking to the teachers and help them keep in view the purpose of education which is likely to be missed in achievements of material ends. Taking into consideration that educational career is a holy pursuit, all types of indulgences of the sub-human urges be strictly discouraged. At the same time it is very important to note that no one

side of human aspect be stressed at the expense of the other. Else there is likely to be a revolt of the neglected aspect at some later stage. Unless the relation between the inner and the outer realities, the psychical nature of man and the physical and social nature of the world is harmoniously maintained at every stage of teaching, the aim of salvation of the self and welfare of the world (*Atmano mokshartha jagat hitayacha*) will remain a long way off.

Intuition as One of the Abiding Values in Education

Swamiji frequently points out that the ignorance of the fact that the student is a living being with outer desires and inner aspirations, has led to the grievous condition of present-day educational institutions. It is neglected that individual soul (*Vyashiti*) and Universal Soul (*Samashti*) are organically connected and not mechanically dovetailed. The Universal Spirit speaks in various languages of mind and intellect the same message of the integral value of the entire existence, the law of action and reaction called Karma, the laws of physics, chemistry, biology, psychology and sociology, of the moral science and of political history are all different affirmations of this Universal truth. Intuition is one of the abiding values that India has contributed to the world of education as higher than intellect. However, it is not understandable why it is still regarded mere fancy when the very foundation on which science is based is being doubted. One must know that sense, reason and intuition are stages of knowledge and intuition is nearer to reality than the other two.

Residential Schools as Prototypes of Gurukulas

Swamiji recommends residential schools as prototypes of ancient Gurukulas. He appeals to rich class to come forward with liberal donations. Then alone we can serve the needs of the students from majority cadre. By educating the majority we can free our country from mental slavery and ignorance of culture. More important than this is to find proper teachers. Teaching is a process in psychology and calls forth not only super-human patience but also infinite understanding on the part of the teacher. Last but not the least is the point that the authorities of the institutions should try their best in making the students feel that the management is genuinely interested in their welfare.

Swamiji Harps on the Note of Hope

Swamiji is hopeful that all these things can be achieved with efforts. On this auspicious event of his completing seventy fifth year, we pray to God and Gurudev to bestow their choicest blessings on him. May Swami Krishnananda live long a healthy, happy and blissful life! May his dream of educational reform come true and may new India of 21st century emerge with many more assurances for the entire humanity!

SWAMI KRISHNANANDA—A TOWERING SPIRITUAL GENIUS

by D.M. Sinha

Our country has been blessed by a long tradition of saints and seers who appeared from time to time to keep the torch of spiritual knowledge lighted. In this shining line of Rishis, H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj appeared like a blazing sun who established the Divine Life Society in the earlier years of this century. Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj is one of his foremost disciples. His unbounded kindness drew me to his sublime presence about 25 years ago, and, since then, hardly a day has gone by in which his divine grace has not filled my life with its rich and effulgent radiance, transcending the limitations of time and space.

Swamiji's orations in the Satsanga Hall or in his apartments at the Ashram, enchant his listeners, not only by their wisdom content, but also by his incisive power of precise expression. These ideas of Indian philosophy flow smoothly on well-chosen words with an ease and spontaneity which is simply astounding. The same power of precise expression manifests itself in his writings. Intricate concepts, which have been long regarded as the exclusive preserve of thinkers and philosophers, are rendered easily comprehensible even to an ordinary intellect which is then enabled to translate everyday experiences of life into sure steps for self-elevation. His language is frequently tinged with a subtle sense of humour, Witness a few enlightening examples as follows:

"The Divine Grace is like a lion's den; on entering it, the aspirant has to do nothing; for everything is then done by the lion?"

To a questioner, who had doubts about the practicality of spiritual theories—"what do you mean by this difference of the theoretical from the practical? Are you taking tea theoretically or practically?"

To an enquirer who questioned the divine sagacity in ordaining natural forces, like the force of gravity which makes people fall and break their bones—"You perhaps imply that God is not well-qualified intellectually. I too do not know if He has passed His graduation?"

To a listener who had some misgivings about the transient nature of the world in spite of Swamiji's logical exposition—"Beware! Your dear world is vanishing?"

These days, spiritual platforms abound from where attractive sermons preach the bliss of meditation. Many listeners rush to practice meditation, without undergoing the preliminary steps of self-discipline. To such despairing aspirants, who rue their failure, he is forthright when he compares meditation to the apex of the pyramid of Yoga practice. He says that this pyramid can be erected only on the solid foundations of Yamas and Niyamas, as described in the Yoga-Sutras of the Sage Patanjali. He asserts that "Meditation is the art of transcending space and time. The methods of Yoga are the ways of defying the operation of space-time and effecting a union between the Seer and the Seen, in their essentiality." In one stroke, he shatters the "erroneous awareness of the apparent duality of things."

When he asserts that "the moment we perceive an object, we deny God," he illuminates the common, individualistic perception and sublimates it to the unique oneness of experience of the Self. Such pointed quippings abound in his writings and in his speeches.

Swamiji has made valuable contribution to the spiritual treasure of the country by his prolific writings on the Upanishads, and on the philosophies of Bhagavadgita, the Panchadasi, Yoga, Life and other similar subjects of everyday importance. These writings throw a dazzling light on many dark recesses of misguided perceptions whereby the reader's mind is suffused with the splendour of spiritual illumination.

It is really a great and rare blessing to come in contact with such a saint who by his mere presence in his secluded apartment in the Ashram sends out powerful waves of spiritual illumination across the world. How true is his statement—"When a petal falls, it sends out vibrations which can be felt in the farthest stars." Indeed when such a saint condescends to contemplate spiritual truths, strong vibrations are sent out which transforms the thinking of every supplicating soul.

MOTHERLY KINDNESS AND RUTHLESS TRUTHFULNESS by Vandana Mataji

Motherly Kindness and Ruthless Truthfulness seem to me to sum up the intellectual giant of a Swamiji, carrying in his heart the true spirit of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji, on his face—when he smiles—a radiant joy; in his hearty laughter, which conveys his capacity of seeing the incongruous, his sense of humour.

Many people writing and speaking about Swamiji, will no doubt say much about his extraordinary gifts of intellect, his vast knowledge, not only of philosophy, theology, spirituality, but of all sorts of studies, events, peoples and places, in all of which he keeps himself so up to date. And this though he lives the Taoist truth; Lao Tzu says:

"Without going out of your door
You can know the ways of the world
The sage knows without travelling
Sees without looking
And achieves without Ado"

(Tao Te Ching)

Nor do I desire to eulogise his unusual capacity for administration carried out even in the tiniest details and often in between a highly spiritual dialogue at *darshan* times—without failing to return promptly to a previous speaker and the question posed before the interruption.

I can recall how much Ishpriya Mataji and I gained during the years 1974—1984 at these daily morning *darshanas*, and in particular by a Course Swamiji gave over weeks, for an hour each afternoon, on the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad with an unusual mastery and his ever facile presentation, stopping always on the dot of the hour.

However it was not his academic gifts that were so important to me. Swamiji himself looks at studies as "having no desirable effect on us except that they make us carry a burden on the head, of a lot of information, and often of some rubbish, which keeps us in a state of fattened egoism and an empty soul" (The Search for Truth V in DLS Magazine, Jan, '97). True enough! Sitting at his feet one learnt "knowledge" as he understands it—that which is "an assimilation of an object into our consciousness."

"Love, affection, friendliness—qualities of the heart" which make one "overcome the fear of the other" seem to be actually part of Swamiji's own complex character which one could easily miss, if one met him only briefly or rarely. I would like to delineate here something of the *feminine and gentle* side of Swamiji which I have experienced personally.

I recall watching Swamiji walking through the dirt of our Tapovan Sarai village; and I do so with grateful love. The graciousness with which he had accepted to come to us on Christmas morning, and the simplicity with which he sat on the floor of our tiny Sadhana Kutir, near a small Christmas Crib; and the joyful light-hearted, yet spiritual discussions meant much to us. Beside the Crib he was able himself to enter, like a child, smiling and intrigued by something which was being shown to him. He was, and is, interested in any and everything, for he seems to "see the Self in all things, and all things in the Self." If, at times, he seems to dispose abruptly of a person or subject, it is merely a superficial gesture, not one coming from the depth of his heart. Often the fatigue of overwork, and his constantly poor health, could also be responsible for these 'interludes'. I recall again, with loving gratitude the number of occasions when he gave time to help me personally with spiritual questions or with information for some book I was writing; helping me by going through it himself and suggesting a publisher. I owe to his suggestions two of my books published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Motilal Banarasidass! On one occasion he even offered to put in the diacritical marks on all the Sanskrit words in my book "Nama Japa"! When one realises how very busy he is, this was no small matter. Once I remember his coming to our rescue, like a mother concerned with everything that pertains to her children's comfort or needs, to obtain even kerosene oil,—at a time when it was scarce! This shows his true humaneness and humanity, permeated by the Divine Presence.

However, let me add honestly, it was not always thus! When it came to principles he believed in as true, he was very firm in his views and opinions given, and could decidedly say a 'No'. When we first arrived at Sivananda Ashram in the early 70's I fear that he looked askance at the pair of us: not quite sure of our *bona fide*! Two strange nuns claiming to have come only for Sadhana and to learn at the feet of Gurudev's disciples and for no other subversive purpose! He didn't seem able to believe it! Gradually, however, with persevering tenacity and seeking only the truth, we became good friends. Perhaps it happened one morning, and seemingly decisively. I recall the event. It was at a *Darshan* when Swamiji had a long and lively

discussion with Ishpriya Mataji. She ended the verbal battle by saying respectfully but firmly, "Swamiji, you are speaking from the philosophical point of view; I am looking at it from the psychological angle." To her surprise, the humble Swamiji said a few minutes later: "Ishpriya Mataji, tonight you will please talk at the Satsanga." To her horror he called her up in the Bhajan Hall that evening, just as Satsanga was about to begin and whispered that there were many Italian and other monks from Europe who had turned up, and that she should do well! She pleaded that they had surely come to India to listen to Hindu Swamijis of renown, like himself, not to her. But Swamiji stuck to his decision. And I think he was not disappointed by her performance!

A trait of Swamiji's character which has always struck me forcibly is his humble, solid desire for the Search of Truth—a subject on which he has been writing in the DLS Magazine for months. *Truth, Reality, 'Sat'* is what he is always seeking.

"Reality is quite different from *what we see with our eyes* or even what we *think with our minds*."—something one has to remember when judging, evaluating,—if we must—anything or anyone. He was always eager to "make a further enquiry" until one reached the root of the matter. No matter whence the truth came—from an intellectual or an unlearned simple person: he would give it a heating, elicit more questions, discuss it, and sometimes even intimidate some people in the process. But what eventually emerged was almost always greater clarity and purity.

In his masterly way of teaching, he would often quote or illustrate with stories the truth he was propounding, sometimes with a great sense of humour. To see him throw his head back and laugh aloud was pure joy.

It was equally painful, on other occasions, to see him in physical pain due to his bad health; it often elicited admiration at his courage and endurance though it also made me often wonder how wise he was being, and how loving to his own self! But even while not well he would show his sense of fun. For instance, after an interruption at *Darshan*: "These auditors give us a lot of trouble", he said. "And, on top of that, we have to pay them!" I resonated with that feeling having seen our Ashram and convent Treasurers' sufferings over even five paise missing!

A steadfast adhesion to Gurudev's teachings was often expressed in almost tender terms. Twice at least I've heard him say, when speaking of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda, "He was like our own father, mother, teacher, friend—everything." He has been faithfully attached to the "obedience he had received" from Gurudev, to use a Christian monastic expression, about his staying on at the Ashram, from the time Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was given the "obedience" of travelling to spread the Message. Even when very tired or ill, he has to be persuaded to leave the Ashram

Finally, he remains in my heart's memory predominantly as a man of the Spirit, a Spiritual Master. After one Sivaratri I recall his humble avowal: "I was without a thought for six hours",—no mean feat. It is from his Meditation and prayer life, I presume, that he draws his kindness, and what I call his passion for seeking and doing the Truth as I have seen and understood. In the title I have called this "ruthless" in the sense that when Swamiji thinks he has to be true to himself or to another, he will do so at any cost—even if it shocks some people or irks others; for he seems to suffer not at all from human respect—about what others think or say of him; only what God or Gurudev think of him.

This is how I have viewed Swamiji from my limited knowledge, and as I know him. My only prayer is that now, in the remaining years—hopefully, for us, many—God will grant him that he may—as T.S. Eliot puts it—"be still; and still moving into another intensity"* from which we shall all gain what he has the Best to offer us;—not administration but his Self, that Cosmic Consciousness he so loves.

MY OBEISANCE
by Swami Sivachidananda

I had no opportunity to have Darshan of Worshipful Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj either in 1958 (when I got Mantra Diksha from Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj) or in 1962, Gurupurnima Day, which I attended here at the Sivanandashram Headquarters. But in 1964, during Gurudev's first Punyatithi Aradhana observations, I first listened to Swamiji Maharaj and concluded that my beloved Gurudev had proved his last Gurupurnima message (1963) true. The message read thus: "Forget and remember. Forget the body and remember I am the all-pervading Immortal

Self."—that he is manifesting himself as Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, His heart and as Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, His head (brain). I was consoled to see my Gurudev in His transformed, rather transmigrated spiritual personalities.

When Parama Pujya Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj replied to my prayer saying, "If Krishnananda Swamiji will approve, I have no objection to grant you Sannyasa Diksha tomorrow, the Gurupurnima Day, 24.7.1983." I went to Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj. After much hurdles when I met Swamiji Maharaj and prayed for granting me Sannyasa Diksha, Swamiji Maharaj graciously and instantaneously said, "You are the fittest person for Sannyas." I got Sannyasa Diksha from two luminaries of the present day spiritual world.

I am indebted to Swamiji Maharaj. I am learning everything at everytime from Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, the Vedanta Kesari, the moving library and the custodian of the Virat-Svarupa of Gurudev, the Divine Life Society.

As an insignificant humble servant I feel blessed to contribute my hearty obeisance to the Great Spiritual Hero, the Bhakta, Jnani and Karmi together, and pray on this sublime Amrita Mahotsava Day to Sri Gurudev and Lord Jagannath to grant Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj perfect health and long life to guide us all till we are elevated to his stature to further Gurudev's Mission of spiritual service to mankind.