



Swami Sivananda in his words

I visited Kedarnath and Badrinath, Tunganath and Triyuginath. Swami Balananda, Swami Vidyasagar accompanied me. I had a dip in the hot-water springs at Badri Narayan. Throughout my travel I sang Kirtan and Bhajan and did mental Japa. By a steam-boat at Calcutta, I reached Ganga Sagar—the confluence of Ganga with Bay of Bengal. Srimati Maharani Surat Kumari Devi also was with me. There is a small temple of Kapila Muni at the sacred Ganga Sagar. I had a bath in the sea. There was a Mela (fair). I helped the pilgrims in getting up the ladder. In the early years of my Sadhana at Rishikesh, I decided to see Kailas. Mount Kailas is in Western Tibet. On the 12th June, 1931, I started on a pilgrimage to that sacred place. There is no place on all this fair earth which can be compared with Kailas for the marvelous beauty of the everlasting snows. Of all Yatras, the Kailas trip is the most difficult. It is called Mount Meru—the axis of Mountains! On the 9th September, 1950, I started on a dynamic Mission of Dissemination of Knowledge, undertaking an extensive tour all over India and Ceylon for a period of two months. I returned to Rishikesh on the 7th November, 1950. I visited all the important cities, towns and villages all over India. I addressed public meetings and conducted Kirtans. I delivered speeches in many Schools, Colleges and Universities on ethical culture and Real Education and addressed numerous public meetings on general spiritual topics. Several thousands of rupees worth of valuable books were distributed free of cost to the

public during this historic event—the All-India-Ceylon Tour.

Systematically to carry on the Divine Mission on a large scale, I established the DIVINE LIFE TRUST SOCIETY in 1936 and registered the Trust Deed at Ambala. In 1936 when I was returning from Lahore after presiding over a Kirtan Conference, I just thought of a Trust Society and alighted at Ambala and consulted an Advocate and prepared the Trust deed. Then the Divine Life Society was established for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge throughout the world and subsequently about 300 Branches were opened in all important cities. Thousands of students received initiation from me into the order of Sannyasa. So long as they undergo training they stay with me and work. Advanced students start their own Mission in big cities or have their own Sadhana in the Himalayan caves.

Many foreigners come to the Ashram and spend some weeks or months and admire the wonderful work turned out at the Ashram. The inhabitants of Shivanandanagar, young and old, men and women, enjoy the peace and bliss of this Holy Centre and help the world in a variety of ways. They all receive my careful, personal attention. I provide them with all comforts and conveniences and help them in their evolution. The Sivananda Hospital is a blessing to the Mahatmas, Yogins, pilgrims and the poor people of the neighbouring villages. Experienced doctors in different systems of medicine attend to the Hospital work. The General Hospital is equipped with modern apparatus like X-Ray, Diathermy and a High Frequency Apparatus for E.N.T. and eye cases.

Young aspirants, because of old habit, used to sleep in the winter cold till sunrise or till 6 or 7 in the morning. They must not waste their precious life in sleeping in the Brahmamuhurta, between 4 and 6 in the early morning. That period is highly favourable for deep meditation. The atmosphere also is charged with Sattvic vibrations. Without much effort one can have wonderful concentration at this period.

From my Kutir, I used to chant aloud several times the Mantras: "OM OM OM, SHYAM SHYAM SHYAM, RADHESHYAM RADHESHYAM RADHESHYAM" and thus made my students get up early for prayers and meditation. This had no effect on the Tamasic type of aspirants. I arranged their night meals before sunset. That enabled some to get up early morning. It is only those who load the stomach heavily at night that find it difficult to get up early in the morning.

In the beginning stages of Sadhana, even if people meditate alone in a room, they get up in the morning only to see that they were overpowered by sleep, and sleep the whole period in a sitting posture. This gave me an idea of a common prayer and meditation during Brahmamuhurta. One student would ring the bell in front of every Kutir and collect the aspirants in a common place for the collective Sadhana. I joined the group daily for some months and years.

*(To be continued in next issue)*

