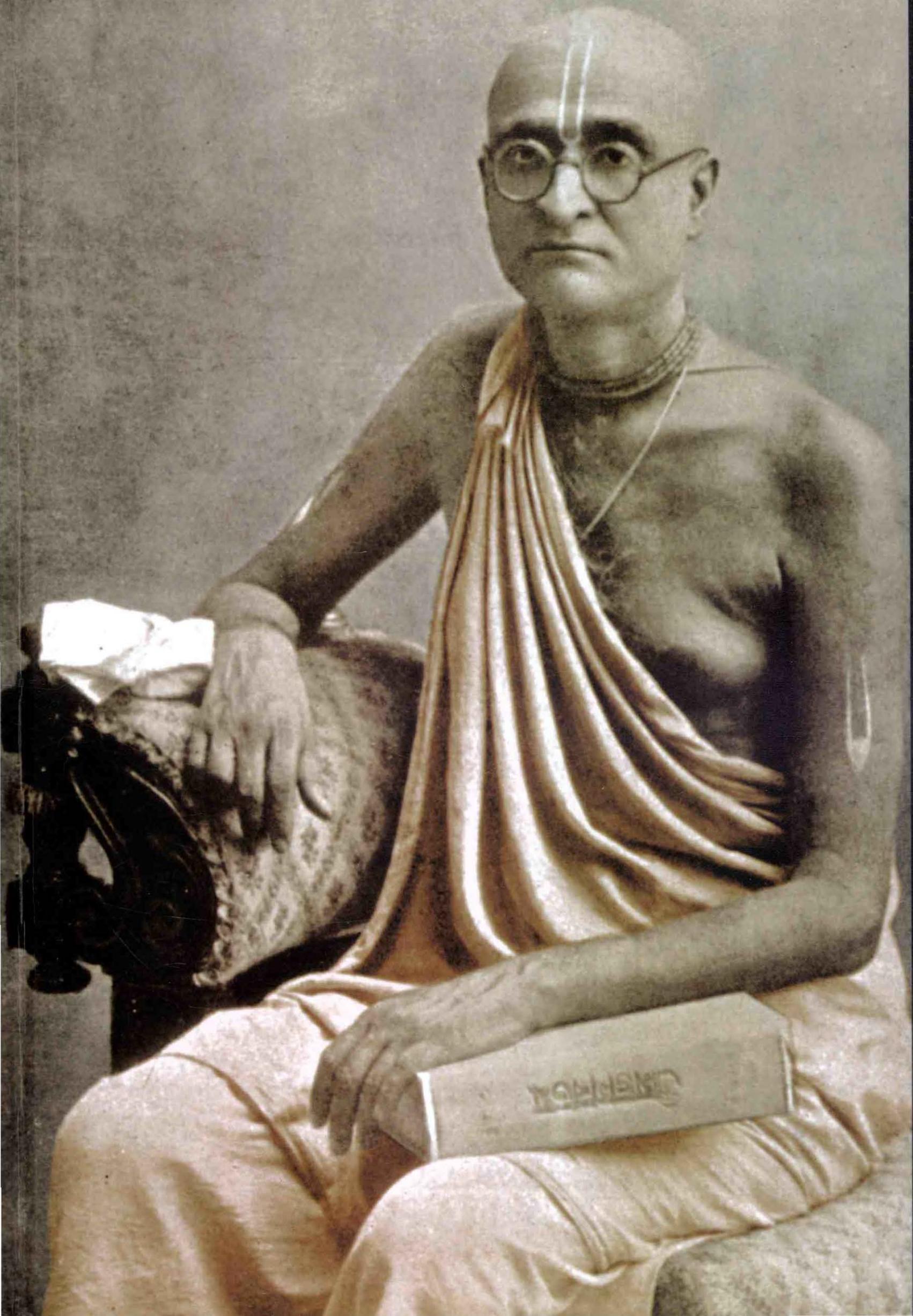


PRABHUPADA SARASWATI THAKUR

The Life & Precepts of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati







ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ବାଘେର ଦାୟତା

Prabhupada
Srila
Saraswati
Thakur

ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ବାଘେର ଦାୟତା



I N V O C A T I O N

P R A B H U P A D A P R A N A M

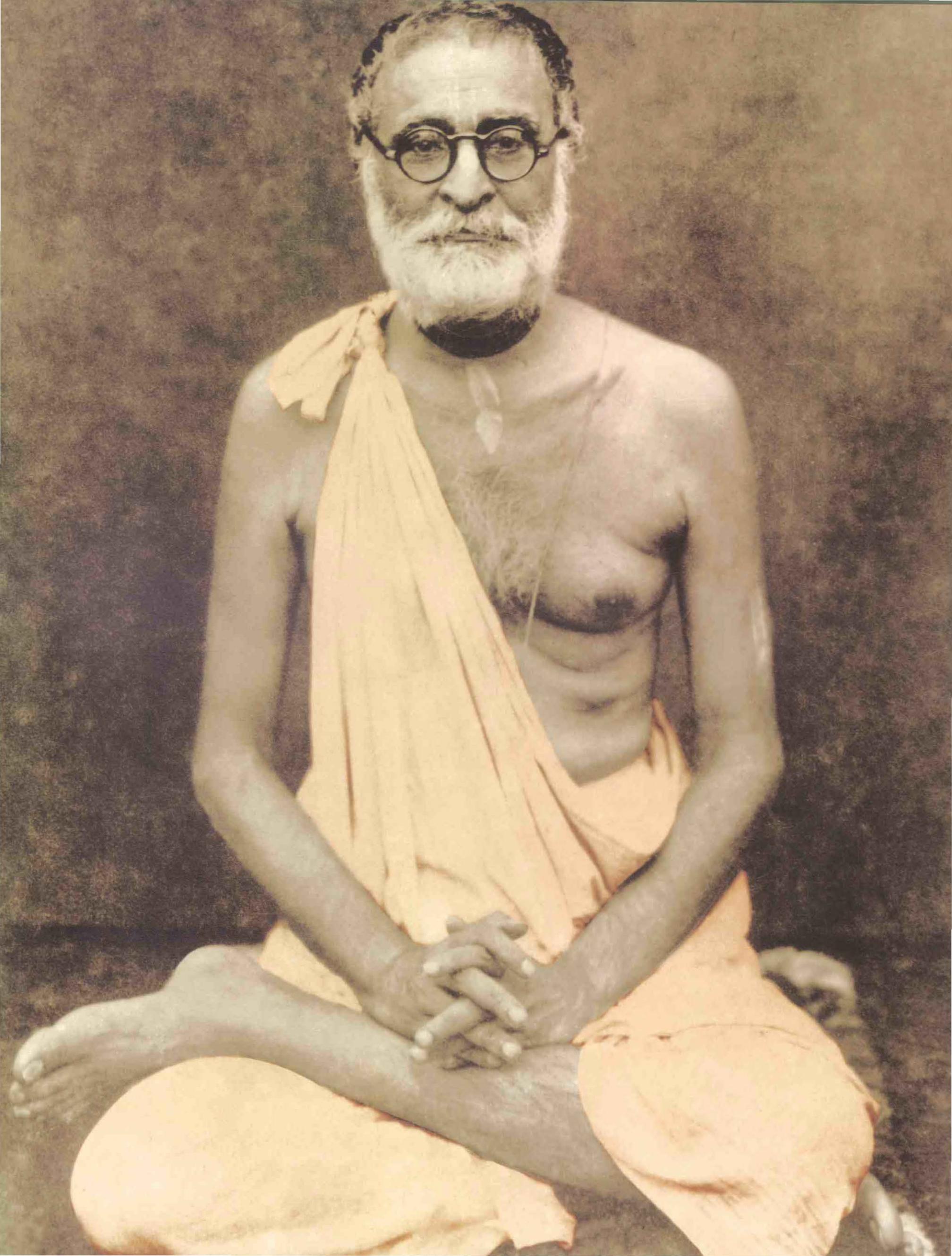
*nikhila-bhuvana-māyā-chinnāvicchinna-karttrī
vibudha-bahula-mṛgyā-mukti-mohanta-dhāttri
śīhilita-vidhi-rāgā-rādhyā-rādheśa-dhānī
vilasatu hṛdi nityam bhaktisiddhānta-vānī*

WITH HIS FIRST STEP, HE CUT TO PIECES THE WHOLE PLANE OF EXPLOITATION, and with his second, he crushed the speculation of scholars of salvation and liberation. With his third, he softened *vaidhi bhakti* with a touch of divine love (*rāga marga*). Taking us beyond Vaikuṅṭha, he has introduced us to the highest worship of Śrī Rādhā and Govinda.

With the softness of Vṛṇḍāvana within, and the hardness of a devastator without, he created havoc in the world—fighting with one and all. Singlehandedly fighting against the whole world, and cutting everything to pieces—that was his external attitude. And his second attitude was to stop the boasting research of the scholars and doctors of different schools of thought; and third, to minimize and slacken the grandeur of the worship of Nārāyaṇa, and establish the service of Rādhā-Govinda as the highest attainment. He caused the domain of love to descend into this plane, with the service of Rādhā-Govinda, establishing the flow of divine love from the heart as all in all.

That was his history—the real existence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. May his divine teachings, *bhaktisiddhānta vānī*, dance eternally within the core of our hearts.

—*Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī*



PRABHUPADA SARASWATI

A Divine Life PART I



INVOCATION 5

INTRODUCTION 8

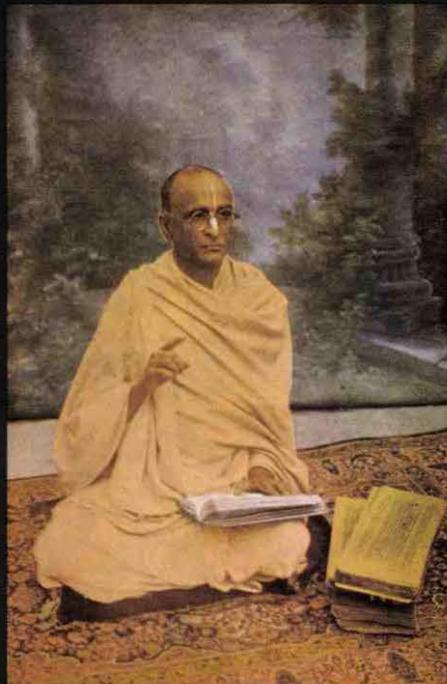
A DIVINE LIFE—SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI THAKUR 13

SRILA GAUR KISHORE DAS BABAJI 53

SRILA BHAKTIVINODE THAKUR 63



Prabhupada's Precepts PART II



GURU PUJA—WORSHIP OF SRI GURU 75

PREACHING IN THE WEST—THE BEGINNING 78

INTERVIEW: PROFESSOR SUTHERS OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, JANUARY 1929 83

LETTERS FROM HIS DIVINE GRACE WITH MY ETERNAL BLESSINGS, SRI SIDDHANTA SARASWATI 89

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SRILA PRABHUPADA ANSWERS QUESTIONS FROM HIS DISCIPLES 93

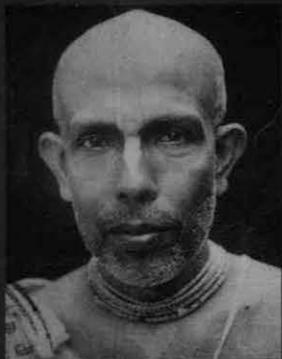
BHAKTISIDDHANTA VANI EXCERPTS FROM LECTURES AND ESSAYS 101

THE EROTIC PRINCIPLE AND UNALLOYED DEVOTION 107

THE SERVICE OF SRI RADHA RADHA DASYAM 117

SARASWATI THAKUR

Divine Memoir PART III



REMEMBERING THE LOTUS FEET MEMOIRS OF THE DISCIPLES OF SRILA PRABHUPADA 122

SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION TOTALITARIAN WAR AGAINST ILLUSION BY SRILA BHAKTI RAKSHAK SRIDHAR DEV GOSWAMI 137

MY LORD AND MASTER HIS DIVINE GRACE BY SRILA A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI MAHARAJA 147

A FEW GLIMPSES OF THE LOTUS FEET OF SRILA PRABHUPADA BY SRILA BHAKTI PROMODE PURI GOSWAMI MAHARAJA 153

SRI RUPA'S LINE OF THOUGHT 163



PRABHUPADA SARASWATI THAKUR

The Life & Precepts of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī

INTRODUCTION

SRI BARSHABHANAVIDEVI DAYITA DAS

sarasītaṭa-sukhadotāja-nikaṭapriya-bhajanam
 lalitāmukha-lalanākula-paramādarayajanam
 vṛjakānana-bahumānana-kamalapriyanayanam
 guṇamañjari-gārimā-guṇaiharivāsanavayanam
 śubhadodaya-divase vṛṣaravijā-nija-dayitam
 praṇamāmi ca caraṇāntika-paricāraka-sahitam

NEAR THE BANKS of Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa at Svānanda Sukhada Kuñja, she is devoted to the service of her Beloved, and is very dear to the goṇī girls of Vraja headed by Śrī Lalitā. She (Nayanamañi Mañjari) is the favourite of Kamala Mañjari (Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura) who is preeminent in Vṛndāvana. She joyfully sings the divine qualities of Guṇa Mañjari (Śrīla Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābāji) and the spiritual threads of those qualities entwine, weaving a tent where Śrī Krishna likes to dwell.

I bow down to the appearance of the beloved companion of Śrī Vṛṣabhānunandīnī (Śrī Rādhikā) and the servitors at his holy lotus feet.

—Śrī Dayita Dāsa Praṇati Pañcakam verse 4

It is from this transcendental domain that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda descended into this world. An eternally liberated associate of the Supreme Guru, Śrīmatī Rādhārānī, he descended into this plane to capture souls lost in forgetfulness of Her divine service to Śrī Krishna, Reality the Beautiful.

In the beginning, his followers were astounded by the depth and intensity of his devotion. His lectures were so philosophically deep that afterwards a few of his intimate disciples would have to explain to the audience what they had just heard. Sometimes pounding his fist upon a table, raving about the Krishna conception of divinity, his face would blush like a red lotus (*kuvalaya*).

After coming out of *nirjana bhajana*, secluded devotion, on the order of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura he began the revolutionary preaching activities of Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh. As his mission grew he acknowledged, “I was alone in my *bhajana*—now I have five hundred men who represent me, and Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s creed of divine love is rapidly expanding everywhere.”

Rather than hide from the modern world and its allurements, he embraced technology in the spirit of service (*yukta-vairāgya*) with a willingness to employ everything in the service of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. His philosophy of service is condensed in these words: *pūjala rāga patha gorava bhaṅge, mātala harijana viṣaya raṅge*—keep the path of *rāga-marga* high above, don’t try to bring the higher plane down, but worship it by doing whatever is necessary for their divine service. At the same time his vision of service was unlimited. He wanted to reveal

the entire spiritual domain to the world. When asked where the money would come from for his innumerable spiritual projects he replied, “I will take one brick from a temple in Vaikuṅṭha and that should more than cover the cost.”

His Krishna conception was so high that he felt if anyone failed to serve Krishna, even for millions of years, He is so attractive and irresistible, that one would never give up the attempt. Having initiated a disciple with *mantra-dikṣā*, he overheard the new initiate discussing the meaning of the verse, *klīm kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopījanavallabhāya svāhā*. A look of intense sorrow came over his face and he spoke sadly, “I have been trying to offer a flower to the holy feet of Krishna for so long, and yet I am unsuccessful.” His mood revealed the depth of the pain of separation from Krishna that he felt.

But Śrīla Śaraswāti Ṭhākura had zero tolerance for superficial devotion. After circumambulating Vṛndāvana with his disciples (*Vraja Maṇḍala Parikrama*), he thrust his palm to his forehead saying, “I am so unfortunate; I couldn’t find a single Vaiṣṇava in Vṛndāvana!” His followers were astounded. After all, Vṛndāvana is the land of self-realized souls. So, they inquired about the local renowned devotees who were chanting three hundred thousand names daily, reading, and speaking the works of the Goswāmīs. He replied, “Oh, they are all *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* (neophytes).” Having descended from the highest quarter in the spiritual domain, he deplored those who deceived the public by imitating the behavior of his worshipable lord, Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu, and his entourage. To him Krishna consciousness was not a cheap thing, but the most valuable substance conceivable.

His devotion to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī was extraordinary. Once someone in his presence was speaking of the beauty of Lakṣmi Devi. An overwhelming desire in his heart to describe the beauty of Śrī Rādhā collided with his normally strict external silence on esoteric spiritual subjects. It reached such intensity that he fainted in ecstasy.

So it is not with timidity, but the greatest confidence that we present the life and precepts of Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Śaraswāti Ṭhākura. His divine words are superconcentrated with the highest spiritual potency. The sincere, attentive reader will be impregnated with the depth of his Krishna conception of Divinity.

In the absence of *bhakti-siddhānta* we are incessantly bombarded with spiritual misconceptions (*kalera doṣa nidhe rajān asti hy eko mahāguṇaḥ kīrtnād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-sanga parmarṇ vrajet*). The inspiration for this publication was born out of the necessity to save ourselves, as well as to preserve his divine teachings. After an endless sojourn in the realm of ignorance, by his mercy we have been brought to the shore of the *bhakti-siddhānta-sindhu*, the ocean of the pure conclusions of devotion. May we forever dive deep in its purifying waters.

As we approach the millennium, practically all of the direct disciples of Śrīla Śaraswāti Ṭhākura have gone to Krishna’s abode to join in his divine pastimes. It is their combined devotion (*saṅkīrtana*) to his holy lotus feet that is the source of all our wealth and has manifested in the form of this book. Śrīla Prabhupāda taught by his own example that in the Kali Yuga it is not possible to progress spiritually—alone. Only by combining our efforts to serve the lotus feet of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga do we have any hope for success.

We bow down to the holy lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda, our *param guru*, in whom all of our spiritual preceptors have found their only shelter (*āsrāya vighraha*).

Humbly,
The Publishers

Editors note: The text materials for *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur* are from many sources: Śrīla Prabhupāda, his disciples, grand disciples, Gauṛīya Maṭh publications such as *The Harmonist*, *Gauṛīya*, etc.. *Shri Chaitanya’s Teachings* was the source for “The Erotic Principle and Unalloyed Devotion” and “The Service of Śrī Rādhā: Rādhā Dāsyam.”

Except when otherwise noted, the following chapters were written by Devamayī dāsi: “A Divine Life: Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswati Ṭhākura Prabhupāda”; “Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura”; and “Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji.” And the following chapters were translated by Devamayī dāsi: “Questions and Answers”; “Letters from His Divine Grace”; “Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Vani”; “A Few Glimpses of the Lotus Feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda”; and “Remembering His Lotus Feet.”



Prabhu

S r i l a B h a k t i s i d d h a n t a S a r a s w a t i T h a k u r

pada



SRI GAUDIYA MATH, CALCUTTA, INDIA 1930

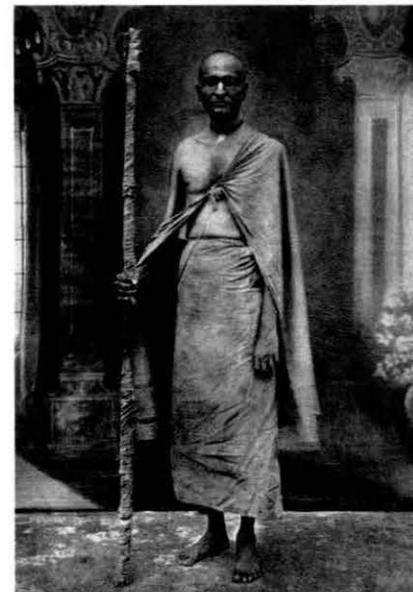
A DIVINE LIFE

*śrī siddhānta-saraswatīti viditau gauṛīya-gurv-anvaye
bhāto bhānur īva prabhāta-gagane yo gaura-saṅkīrtanaḥ
māyāvāda-timiṅgilodara-gatān uddhṛtya jīvanimān
kṛṣṇa-prema-sudhābdhi gāhana sukham
prādāt prabhuṁ taṁ bhaje*



“In the great Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇava teachers’ line,
as Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī he’s renowned.

Like the radiant sun in the morning sky,
he appeared to rescue all souls swallowed by
the all-devouring impersonal philosophy.
By spreading the teaching of Lord Gaurāṅga
to sing the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa,
he gave all the chance to dive in the ocean
of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person.
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, my lord, divine master—
at his feet do I pray to serve him forever.”



—Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī

DIVINITY CAN BE SEEN BY ITS OWN LIGHT. The transcendental life of Śrīla Prabhupāda Saraswatī Ṭhākura can be known to us only by his own causeless mercy—for such is the nature of the Supreme Lord and His representatives who come to this world. Śrīla Prabhupāda was an infinite ocean of divine treasure; if we are fortunate enough, perhaps we can touch the waves of that ocean as they lap the shore of our mortal plane. Within that ocean are his innumerable transcendental qualities such as scholarship, genius, spiritual realization, humility, magnanimity, compassion, mercy, and divine love, to name only a few. The essence of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s life cannot be revealed in many volumes—let alone a single chapter—if they are merely a catalog of facts and figures. It takes the dedication of a lifetime to attain a true glimpse of his message, and his life is his message.

We are about to stand in front of a divine personality; we are about to catch sight of that reality which is eternal and infinite. Yet in our meeting with the eternal we have to retrace the footsteps of time, because we must begin somewhere.

CHILDHOOD, 1874–1892

Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura made his appearance in Puruṣottam Kṣetra (Jagannāth Purī) in the state of Oṛissā, at 3:30 in the afternoon on Friday, the 6th of February, 1874. He was born in his family home, which was next to the holy site called the Nārāyaṇ-chhātā of Śrī Jagannāth Temple, and which always reverberated with the chanting of the holy name. He was the fourth son of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīmatī Bhāgavatī Devī. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura firmly established the concept of pure Vaiṣṇavism in the hearts of many educated and spiritually inquisitive people of Bengal in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura was a beautiful child with all the bodily symptoms of a great personality that are described in the scriptures. Everyone was amazed to see that the child was born with his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck like a brāhmaṇ’s sacred thread. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura named his son Śrī Bimalā Prasāda, meaning “the mercy of the

transcendental potency of Lord Jagannātha, Śrīmatī Bimalā Devī.”

When Śrī Bimalā Prasāda was six months old, Lord Jagannātha’s annual chariot festival took place. That year the chariot stopped in front of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s house and could not be budged an inch for three days. So while Lord Jagannātha stayed in front of the house, *kīrtana* was continuously performed there under the leadership of Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya (“Mahāśaya” is an honorific title). On one of these days Śrī Bimalā Prasāda, in his mother’s arms, went to see Lord Jagannātha, and extended his hand towards the Deity as if to offer his obeisance. At that moment a garland fell from the neck of Lord Jagannāth and encircled the child. The crowd was jubilant witnessing Lord Jagannāth’s blessing on the child. Amid the tumultuous sound of “Haribola!”, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura fed Bimalā Prasāda some of Lord Jagannātha’s *mahāprasād*, and thus observed the child’s *annaprasān* (“grain ceremony”—first feeding of grains) under the most auspicious circumstances.

Śrī Bimalā Prasāda lived in Jagannātha



Once, when Bimala Prasad was a boy,
 he took a mango
 without first offering it to the Lord.
 When his father chastised him for this,
 he became very remorseful
 and immediately vowed
 never to eat a mango again
 —a vow which he observed his whole life.

Dhāma for ten months with his mother. Then they travelled to Bengal and resided first at Rāṇāghāṭa and then at Śrīrāmpura. Once, when Śrīla Bimalā Prasāda was a small boy, he took a mango without first offering it to the Lord. When his father chastised him for this, he became very remorseful and immediately vowed never to eat a mango again—a vow which he observed his whole life. In 1881 Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had a house built in Calcutta at Rām-bāgān and named it Bhakti Bhavan. As the foundation was being dug, a Deity of Śrī Kurma Deva manifested Himself from the ground. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave this Deity to his son Śrī Bimalā Prasāda when he was eight or nine years old, and taught him the mantra and the method of deity worship. The child duly started his deity worship with great care and devotion.

When Śrī Bimalā Prasāda was in fifth grade, he invented a new method of shorthand



PRABHUPADA'S BIRTHPLACE IN JAGANNATH PURI

which he called Bicanto (or Vikṛnti). His teachers were always amazed by his mastery of Bengali and Sanskrit, his extraordinary intelligence and memory, and his pure moral and devotional nature. At this time Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave him Śrī Chaitanya Śikṣāmṛta to read. Śrī Bimalā Prasāda also displayed extraordinary ability in mathematics and astrology. He studied astrology under the tutelage of the famous astrologer Mahesh Chandra Churāmaṇī, and impressed his teacher with his mastery of the subject and his exceptional talent. He also studied astrology with Paṇḍit Sundar Lāl. Seeing his scholarship

in many different subjects, including the scriptures, his teachers named him Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī—"master of scriptural conclusions." When Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura was a student in the seventh grade in Śrīrāmpur, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave him *harināma* (the holy name) on *Tulasī-mālā* (rosary made of *Tulasī* beads), as well as Śrī Nṛṣiṅha mantra.

In 1885 Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura founded the Vaiṣṇava Depository, a press which was housed in his own home. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura learned about the printing press and began assisting his father in proof-reading. At this time, Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's magazine, *Sajjan Toṣaṇī*, resumed publication. In that same year Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura accompanied Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya on his pilgrimage to such places as Kulīngṛām and Sargṛām. At these places he heard extensive discussions on the holy name. Also in 1885, Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya established his "Viśva-Vaiṣṇava-Rāj-Sabhā" ("great assembly of the Vaiṣṇavas of the world") in the house of Śrī Rāmgopāl Basu on Bethune Row in Calcutta. Many well-known personalities such as Madangopāl Goswāmī, Nilkānta Goswāmī, Bipiṇ Vihārī Goswāmī, Rādhikānāth Goswāmī, and Shishir Kumār Ghosh attended the meetings of the society and participated in discussions. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura used to carry *Bhakti-rasāmṛta Sindhu* (*The Ocean of the Nectar of Devotion*), by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, to these meetings, and listen to the discussions there with rapt attention.

Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura was not interested in associating with other boys of his age unless they were interested in spiritual matters. His two favorite books were *Prārthanā* and *Prema-Bhakti Chandrikā* by Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura. As a young boy he published books on astrology, such as *Surya Siddhānta* and *Bhakti Bhavan Pañjikā*. In the afternoons he spent hours debating about religion and philosophy with other students in Calcutta's Beadon Square. Later while still a teenager, he founded the August Assembly. All members of the Assembly had to take a vow of lifelong celibacy. Many educated people, both young and old, took part in the Assembly.

SANSKRIT COLLEGE AND WORK IN TRIPURA, 1892-1905

In 1892 Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura finished high school and enrolled in the Sanskrit College. He was more interested in reading many different books in the college library than in reading his own textbooks. He studied the Vedas under Paṇḍit Prithvidhar

Sharmā after college. He also studied the *Siddhānta Kaumudī* within a very short time. As a student in Sanskrit College, he refuted some of the concepts of Professor Pañchānan Sāhityāchārya. Subsequently, no one wanted to debate with Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura, for fear of defeat. But his spiritual interests did not allow him to stay in college for very long. He wrote in his autobiography, "If I keep studying at college with great attention, then I will be under a lot of pressure to enter family life. But if I am seen as a stupid, incompetent person, then no one will try to influence me towards material progress. Thinking this, I left the Sanskrit College, and in order to live a life of devotional service, I wanted a pious occupation so I could have a modest income."

In 1897 Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura established the Sāraswat Chatuspāthī (The Sāraswat Academy) at Bhakti Bhavan. Many prominent and educated men such as Lalā Haragaurishankar, Dr. Ekendranāth Ghosh, Sātakeri Chaṭṭopadhyāya, Shyāmlāl Goswāmī, and Saratchandra Vidyāvinod came to study astrology and mathematics there. From Sāraswat Chatuspāthī, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura published astrological magazines such as *Jyotirvid* and *Bṛhaspati*, as well as quite a few ancient astrological texts. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura's reputation as a very knowledgeable astrologer spread in the educated society of Calcutta. Later Sir Āśutosh Mukhopaddhyāy, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, said that the chair of astronomy at the University of Calcutta would be reserved for Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura.

In 1895 Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura accepted a job with the independent state of Tripura, as a scholar and tutor for the royal family thereof. After King Virchandra passed away in 1896, his son, King Rādhākiśor Manikya Bāhādur, requested Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura to tutor the princes, and later to supervise the estate in Calcutta. But Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura soon wished to retire from this job, and the King allowed him to do so in 1905 with full pension. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura accepted that pension until 1908.

BHAJAN LIFE AND INITIATION, 1898-1905

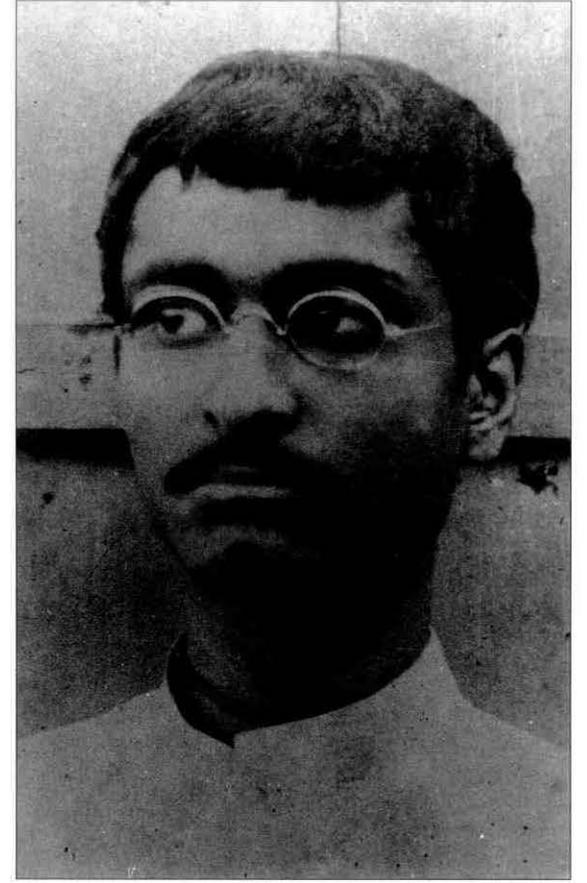
Previously, in 1898, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura had visited different places of pilgrimage such as Kāśī, Prayāg, and Gayā. At Kāśī (Benares), he had an extensive discussion with Rām Miśra Shāstri about the Rāmānuja *sampradaya*. During this period the renunciate nature of his devotional life became very

apparent. As early as 1897 he was observing the four months of *chāturmasya* with great austerity and devotion. He would eat only boiled food (*habīṣyānna*) which he cooked himself, and sleep on the floor without pillows. In 1899 he wrote various articles to preach Vaiṣṇavism in a magazine called *Nivedan*, published in Calcutta. In 1890 his scholarly book *Baṅge Samājikata*, consisting of research on society and religion, was published in Calcutta.

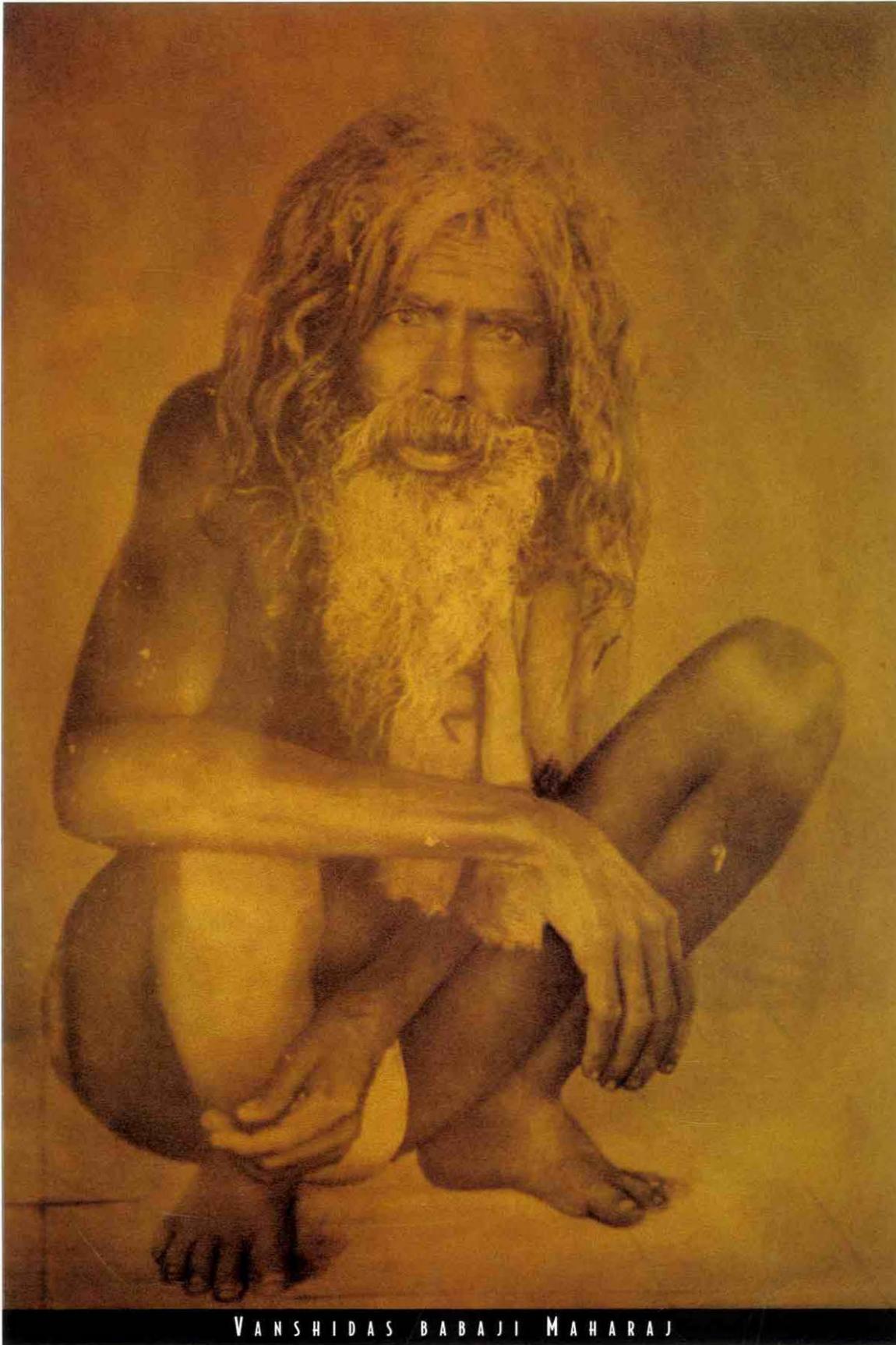
In 1897 Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura established his own *bhajan-kuṭir* (cottage for reclusive devotional practice), called Ānanda-sukhada-kuñja, on the Godruma island of Navadwīp on the bank of the river Saraswatī. There, in the winter of 1898, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura met with an extraordinary, exalted Vaiṣṇava saint, Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji, who captured his heart. Saraswatī Ṭhākura wanted to take shelter at the lotus feet of Śrīla Gaurkiśor Dās Bābāji, and by the order of Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura he surrendered at the lotus feet of Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji and received *bhāgavati dikṣā* (initiation) from him in 1900.

Shortly before this, in March of the same year, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura had gone to Remunā via Bāleśwar to see the Deity of Kṣīrachorā Gopināth (Gopināth who stole the *kṣīra*, or milk pudding, for his devotee Śrī Mādhavendra Purī). Then he went to Purī via Bhuvaneśwar. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura became very attached to the holy city of Purī. His great desire was to establish a *maṭh* in front of the *samādhi* of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura. The subregistrar of Purī, Jagabandhu Paṭṭanayak, and others requested him to take charge of the service of the Deity of Śrī Giridharī at Sātāsan Maṭh. In 1902 Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura started to build his *bhajan-kuṭir* called Bhakti Kuthi near the *samādhi* of Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākura. The King of Kāśim Bāzār, Mahārāja Maṇīndra Chandra Nandi, who was grief stricken due to some personal tragedy, used to live there in a tent and listen to the *hari-kathā* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura. At this time Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura regularly used to read and explain the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛta* to the audience in Bhakti Kuthi, in front of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. During this time he labored to collect material for *Vaiṣṇava Mañjuṣā*, a Vaiṣṇava encyclopedia.

One Bābāji, Rādhā-ramaṇ-charaṇ dās, who lived in Purī, had concocted a song: *bhaja nītāi gaur rādhe śyām/ṣapa hare kṣṇa hare rām*. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura not only protested against this but presented a very strong argu-



"If I keep studying at college with great attention, then I will be under a lot of pressure to enter family life. But if I am seen as a stupid, incompetent person, then no one will try to influence me towards material progress. Thinking this, I left the Sanskrit College, and in order to live a life of devotional service, I wanted a pious occupation so I could have a modest income."



V ANSHIDAS BABAJI MAHARAJ

ment and proved it to be inauthentic and against Vaiṣṇava scriptures. This Bābājī also introduced the *sakhiveki* concept by dressing one of his followers as Lalitā Sakhi. This was against Mahāprabhu's teachings since an ordinary *jīva* was being worshiped as though he were an expansion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura was always a fearless and forthright speaker, and thus opposed the

Bābājī. Therefore, those who opposed him, unable to defeat him in argument, tried other ways to suppress his preaching. Although Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura silently tolerated this oppression, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura asked him to go to Māyāpur and practice his *bhajana* there, without obstacles.

IN SRI MAYAPUR DHAM, 1905-1910

In February 1905, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura went on pilgrimage to various holy places in South India. After visiting Simhāchal, Rājmahendri, Mādrās, Peremvedur, Tirupati, Kañjiveram, Kumbhakonam, Śrīraṅgam, Madura, etc., he returned to Calcutta and then went on to Śrī Māyāpur. In Peremvedur he gathered information about the practice of *tridaṇḍa vaiṣṇava sannyās* from a Tridaṇḍi Swāmī who belonged to the Rāmānuja *sampradaya*.

In 1905, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura began preaching Śrīman Mahāprabhu's message while residing in Śrī Māyāpur. Following in the footsteps of Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākura, he would take the holy name 300,000 times a day. He would sleep on the floor for only a few hours, eat very simply, and take the holy name day and night. In the afternoon he would speak *harikathā* to the assembled devotees. On some days he would go to Kuliya to have darśan of Śrīla Gaurkiśor Dās Bābājī and receive his instruction. Śrīla Gaurkiśor Dās Bābājī was very pleased to see the great renunciation of Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura. He used to say, "In my Prabhu I see the same kind of renunciation that was seen in Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha." Śrīla Bābājī Mahāśaya used to address his disciple Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura as "my Prabhu" ("my master"). Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura also received the blessings of Śrīla Vamśidās Bābājī Mahārāja in Navadvīp. Seeing Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Vamśidāsa Bābājī Mahārāj would say, "Someone very close to my Gaura has come to me."

Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura began his intense preaching of pure devotional principles in a society in which the authority of the *brāhmaṇas* was unquestioned, and the concept of pure devotion was misinterpreted and misrepresented by the imitators of Vaiṣṇavism (the Sahajiyās). In India in the 19th and early 20th centuries, most *brāhmaṇas* were more concerned about rules and regulations that were separated from the concept of devotion and not based on the injunctions of authentic scriptures than they were about what was spiritually and morally beneficial for the rest of society. A *brāhmaṇa* was no longer a person with brahminical qualities, but simply a person born in a family of *brāhmaṇas*. Since the caste system was rotting at its core, it had become meaningless and was in fact detrimental to the spiritual and moral welfare of society. The *brāhmaṇas* opposed any ideas that might



AS BIMALA PRASAD BRAHMACHARI

threaten their preeminence, which was bereft of any moral or spiritual basis. Although many educated people had lost their faith in the beneficial role of the *brāhmaṇa* class, they did not know who could take their place. The pure Vaiṣṇavas led reclusive lives hidden from the public eye, and the Sahajiyā Vaiṣṇavas aroused more hatred and suspicion than respect. In this context, Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to establish the principles of *daivī-varṇāśrama dharma*—the system in which the service of the Lord is placed in the center of society, a Vaiṣṇava is respected by everyone else, and one's caste is ascertained according to one's natural tendency, not according to one's birth.

A LETTER FROM BHAKTIVINODE

In the meantime Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was very concerned that pure Vaiṣṇavism was being overshadowed by many other wrong concepts and also by imitators. He felt that among all his sons and disciples, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura was the most qualified person to preach pure Vaiṣṇavism; he had more enthusiasm, courage, and qualification than anyone else. Therefore, Ṭhākura Mahāśaya wrote him a letter:

Saraswatī!

People of this world who are proud of their own aristocratic birth cannot attain real aristocracy. Therefore they attack the pure Vaiṣṇavas, saying, "They have taken birth in low-class families because of their sins." Thus they commit offenses. The solution to this problem is to establish the order of Daivī-Varnāśrama Dharma—something you have started doing; you should know that to be the real service to the Vaiṣṇavas. Because pure devotional conclusions are not being preached, all kinds of superstitions and bad concepts are being called devotion by such pseudo-sampradāyas as sahajiyā and atibāī. Please always crush these anti-devotional concepts by preaching pure devotional conclusions and by setting an example through your personal conduct.

Please make great effort so you can start the parikrama [circumambulation] of Śrīdhām Navadvīp as soon as possible. It is by those actions that everyone in this world will receive Kṣṇa-bhakti [devotional love for the Lord]. Please try very hard to make sure that the service to Śrī Māyāpur will become a permanent thing and will become brighter and brighter every day. The real service to Śrī Māyāpur can be done by acquiring printing presses, distributing devotional books, and preaching congregational chanting (not reclusive

A Letter From Bhaktivinode Thakur

Saraswatī!

“ People of this world who are proud of their own aristocratic birth cannot attain real aristocracy. Therefore they attack the pure Vaiṣṇavas, saying, “They have taken birth in low-class families because of their sins.” Thus they commit offenses. The solution to this problem is to establish the order of daivi-varnāśrama dharma—something you have started doing; you should know that to be the real service to the Vaiṣṇavas. Because pure devotional conclusions are not being preached, all kinds of superstitions and bad concepts are being called devotion by such pseudo-sampradayas as sahajiyā and atibāri. Please always crush these anti-devotional concepts by preaching pure devotional conclusions and by setting an example through your personal conduct.

Please make great effort so you can start the *parikrama* [circumambulation] of Śrīdhām Navadvīp as soon as possible. It is by those actions that everyone in this world will receive Kṛṣṇa-bhakti [devotional love for the Lord]. Please try very hard to make sure that the service to Śrī Māyāpur will become a permanent thing and will become brighter and brighter every day. The real service to Śrī Māyāpur can be done by acquiring printing presses, distributing devotional books, and sankirtan—preaching. Please do not neglect to serve Śrī Māyāpur or to preach for the sake of your own reclusive bhajan.

When I am not present any more, please take great care to serve Śrī Māyāpur Dhām which is so dear to you. This is my special instruction to you. People who are like animals can never attain devotion; therefore never take their suggestions. But do not let them know this, directly or indirectly.

I had a special desire to preach the significance of such books as Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Ṣaṭ Sandarbha, and Vedānta Darśan. You have to accept that responsibility. Śrī Māyāpur will prosper if you establish an educational institution there. Never make any effort to collect knowledge or money for your own enjoyment. Only to serve the Lord will you collect these things. Never engage in bad association, either for money or for some self-interest. ”

bhajan). Please do not neglect to serve Śrī Māyāpur or to preach for the sake of your own reclusive bhajan.

When I am not present any more, please take great care to serve Śrī Māyāpur Dhām which is so dear to you. This is my special instruction to you. People who are like animals can never attain devotion; therefore, never take their suggestions. But don't let them know this, directly or indirectly.

I had a special desire to preach the significance of such books as Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Ṣaṭ Sandarbha, and Vedānta Darśan. You have to accept that responsibility. Śrī Māyāpur will prosper if you establish an educational institution there. Never make any effort to

collect knowledge or money for your own enjoyment. Only to serve the Lord will you collect these things. Never engage in bad association, either for money or for some self-interest.

All the Vaiṣṇava devotees who were in contact with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura knew that the relationship between them was not mundane, like that between an ordinary father and son. Their relationship with each other was completely transcendental, like that between Guru and disciple, as is evident in this letter.

Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura became more enthused now to preach pure Vaiṣṇavism.

Apart from delivering *hari-kathā* and leading congregational chanting, he also started collecting facts about the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradayas* (branches of disciplic lineage). He started writing and publishing articles about Vaiṣṇava *āchāryas* in *Sajjan Toṣaṇī*.

In 1906, one gentleman called Śrī Rohiṇī Kumār Ghosh came to visit Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura. He was the nephew of a High Court judge, Śrī Chandra Mādhav Ghosh of Barishal. Rohiṇī Bābu gave up his home life to have a devotional life in Navadvīp. He found a guru from the Bāul *aṣampradaya* (one of the pseudo-Vaiṣṇava groups) and started residing in his *āśrama*. One

afternoon he came to Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura and heard some invaluable devotional instructions from him. Rohiṇī Bābu was deeply touched by this discussion, and when he came back to the āśrama that night, it was all he could think about. Without taking his meal, he went to bed. That night, he had a dream in

which that Bāul Guru and his female companion came as tigers to attack him, but Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura came to rescue him from this danger. The next morning when Rohiṇī Bābu was awakened by the sunlight streaming through his window, he immediately left that āśrama and set off for Māyāpur to beg Śrīla

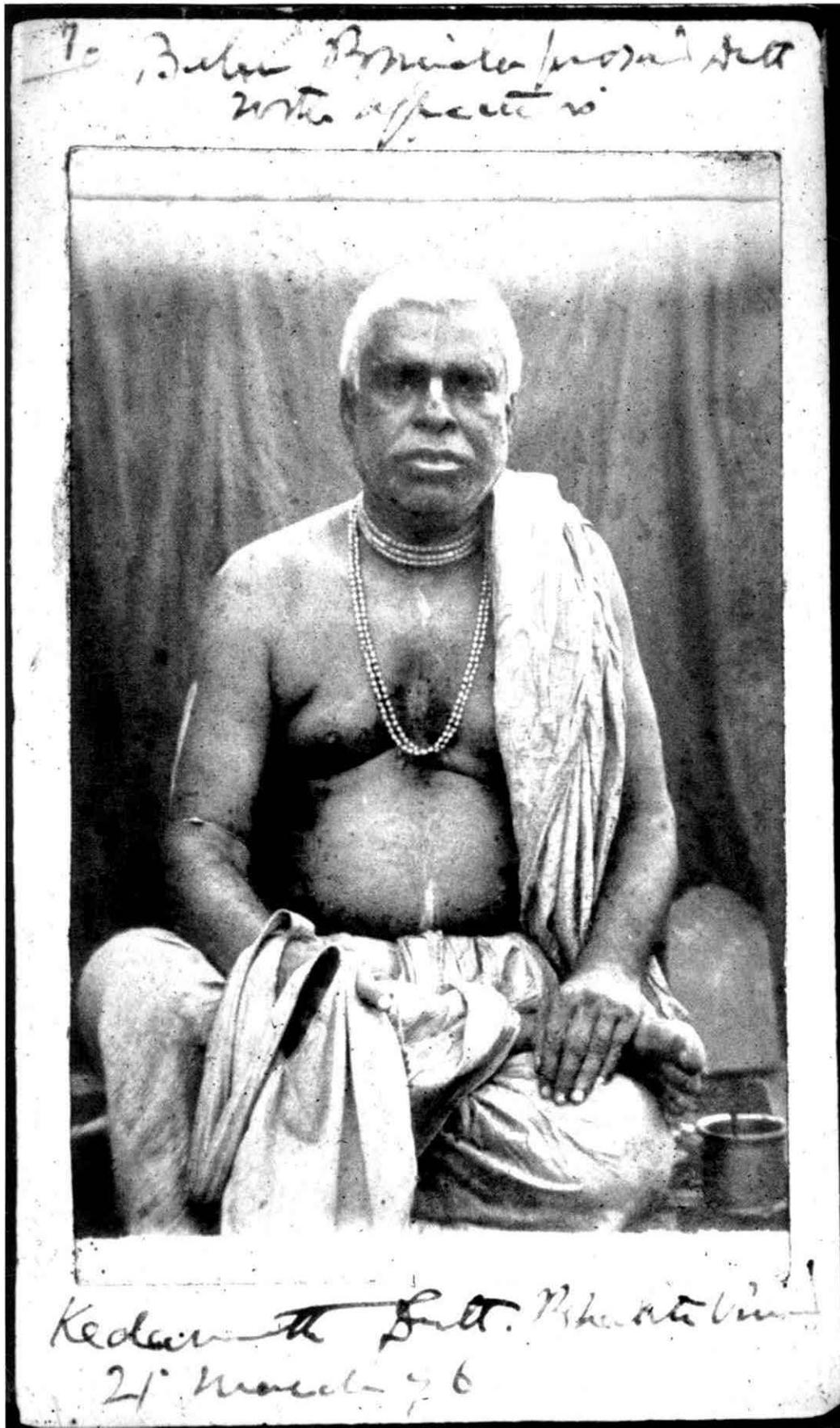
Saraswatī Ṭhākura for shelter at his lotus feet. He was the first disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda (Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura was thus addressed by his disciples).

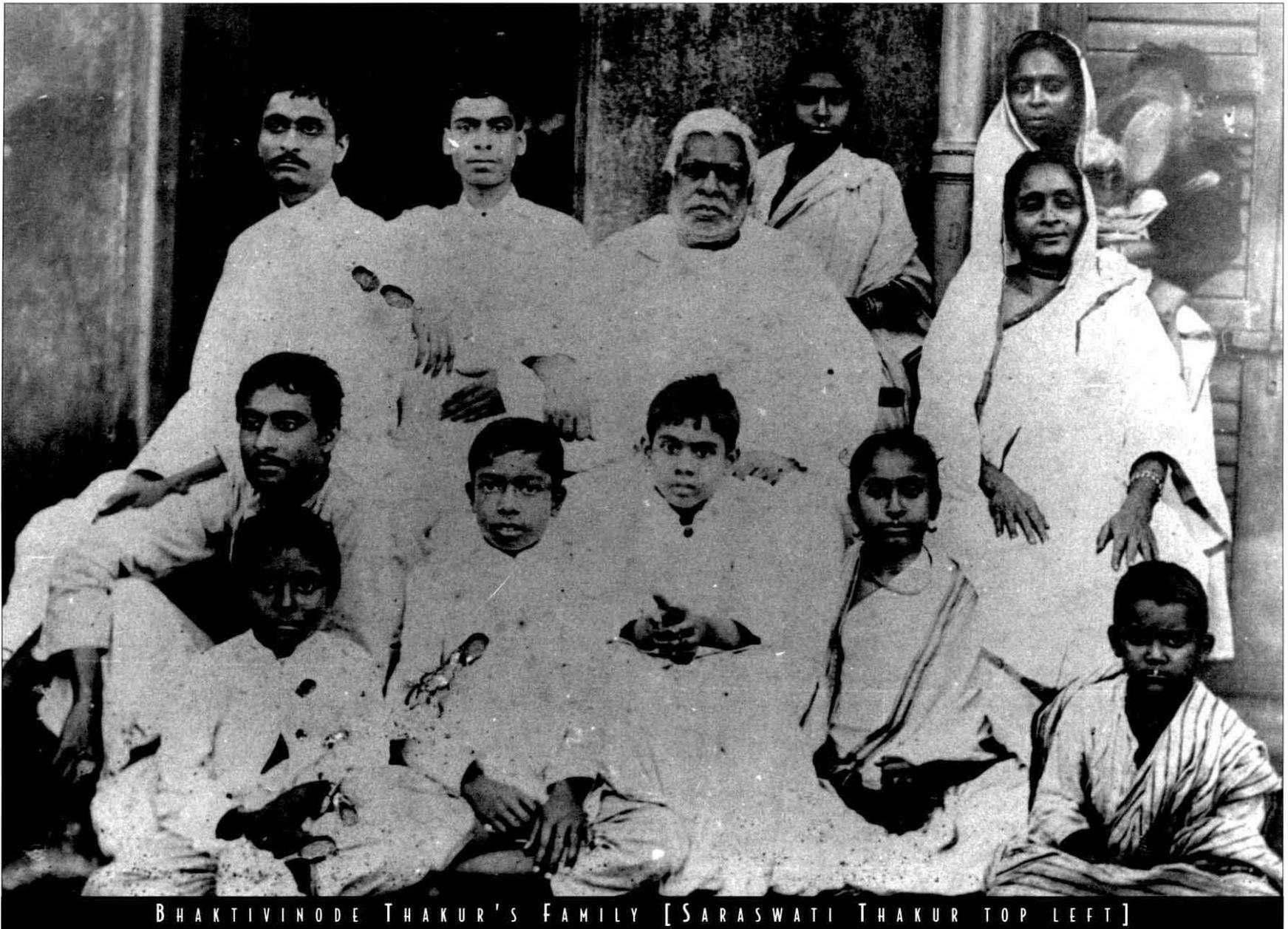
BHAJAN KUTIR AT SRI VRAJAPATTAN, 1909

In February 1909, Śrīla Prabhupāda built a small *bhajana kutir* near the Bhavan, or residence, of Śrī Chandraśekharaḥcārya, who was the maternal uncle of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Remembering Mahāprabhu's *vraja-līlā* that was performed here, he called this Śrī Vrajapattan. Śrīla Prabhupāda continued his service at Śrī Yogapiṭh (the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu), but stayed at Śrī Vrajapattan. At this time his mother, Śrīmatī Bhagavatī Devī, was staying at Yogapiṭh and assisting him in his service to Śrī Māyāpur Dhām.

While he was staying there by himself, two very young boys came to him and took shelter at his lotus feet. One of them, Aśvini Haldār, came from nearby Ballaldighī. Even though he was illiterate when he first came, by the grace and guidance of Śrīla Prabhupāda he became a great scholar of scripture. Later when Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him initiation, he named him "Vaiṣṇavadās" ("servant of the Vaiṣṇavas"). Śrīpāda Vaiṣṇavadās Prabhu served Śrīla Prabhupāda for the rest of his life. He was known as a very expert *kīrtan* singer.

The second boy, Śrī Pañchānan Samāddār, came from the village of Vinodnagar, in Jessore district. His father, Śrī Tāriṇīcharan Samāddār, had had the good fortune of associating with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya had visited their village once as well. The little boy Pañchānan was very attracted to *hari-kathā*, and at the age of twelve he left home one night during the predawn hours and set forth in search of his devotional destiny. Somehow he came to Navadvīp and, as if by some unknown attraction, came to Māyāpur and met Śrīla Prabhupāda. Hearing from Śrīla Prabhupāda, he knew his destiny was at the lotus feet of this great personality. So he stayed there with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Later Prabhupāda sent him to different schools, including the Sānagar School in Calcutta and the Hindu School in Navadvīp. But his main teacher was Śrīla Prabhupāda himself. Later he was known as a great scholar and writer, and talented in many arts. In 1913, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him initiation and named him "Paramānanda Vidyāratna." Throughout his life, he was always by the side of Śrīla Prabhupāda and he





BHAKTIVINODE THAKUR'S FAMILY [SARASWATI THAKUR TOP LEFT]

served his spiritual master in every capacity. Śrīla Prabhupāda made him one of the trustees of the Gauṛīya Maṭh.

BRAHMINS AND VAISHNAVAS, 1911

In 1911 the Vaiṣṇava devotees were confronted by a great deal of hostile criticism from the orthodox *brāhmaṇas* of Bengal, known as the Smārta Samāj. These *brāhmaṇas*, although bereft of real scriptural knowledge, were very proud of their own birth and social position, and their doctrines of rules and regulations. Because of their elevated social status, it was easy for them to influence the masses, who were ignorant of pure devotional conclusions. Even some Vaiṣṇava devotees supported the *brāhmaṇas* in order to get some favor from them. At this time Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was ill and bedridden. But he was still very concerned about the situation and wanted someone to confront the *brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas*

face to face. In accordance with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's desire, and having been so requested by the famous scholar Śrī Madhusudan Goswāmī of Vṛndāvan, Śrīla Prabhupāda arranged a meeting with the *brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas* at the town of Balighāi, in Medinipur district. Paṇḍit Śrī Viśvambharānanda Dev Goswāmī presided over this meeting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda read there his famous article, "Brāhmaṇ and Vaiṣṇava." When he arrived, the assembled scholars were sitting in two different groups: those who believed in the superiority of *brāhmaṇas* over all other classes of people, and those who believed in the superiority of Vaiṣṇavas, irrespective of birth or social position, over all other classes of people. At first Śrīla Prabhupāda quoted from many scriptures glorifying *brāhmaṇas*. The joy of the assembled *brāhmaṇas* knew no bounds, because even they did not know that there was so much glorification of *brāhmaṇas* in so many different scriptures. But then Śrīla Prabhupāda

started his glorification of Vaiṣṇavas, again based on scripture, which far exceeded the glorification of *brāhmaṇas* in quality and quantity. This time the *brāhmaṇa paṇḍitas* were not so pleased. Unable to respond to the evidence presented by Śrīla Prabhupāda, they started shouting. One or two of them desperately tried to present new arguments, but Śrīla Prabhupāda crushed those also by dint of his scriptural knowledge and irrefutable logic. He personally answered all questions and refuted all arguments by the *brāhmaṇas*, and thus established the superiority of pure devotees over all classes of people.

THE GAURA MANTRA, 1911

In that same year, at a meeting attended by many devotees and scholars of religion, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the truth that the Gaura Mantra is eternal and should be chanted by all devotees. He based his conclusions on the evidence of many scriptures, such as the

Chaitanyopaniṣad from the *Atharva Veda* as well as other *Upaniṣads* and *Purāṇas*. Thus he crushed the theory that the name Gaura is not an eternal name of the Supreme Lord and that Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was not an incarnation of the Supreme Lord. Unbeknownst to Śrīla Prabhupāda, his Gurudeva Śrīla Gaurkiśor Dāsa Bābāji was also present in the audience and ecstatic to hear his conclusions.

KASHIM BAZAR RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE, 1912

In March 1912, Śrīla Prabhupāda was invited by the Mahārāja of Kāśim Bāzār, Calcutta, Śrī Mañindra Chandra Nandi, to deliver *hari-kathā* at the “Kāśim Bāzār Sammilani,” an annual religious conference. But when Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived there, he saw that the organizers were more interested in their mundane concept of religiosity and in pleasing other people than in promoting the concept of pure devotion. To protest these concepts, which were contradictory to pure devotion, Śrīla Prabhupāda fasted during his entire stay there and accepted *prasādam* (food that has been offered to the Supreme Lord) only after his return to Śrī Māyāpua Dhāma.

PILGRIMAGE AND PREACHING, 1912

On November 4, 1912, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the company of a few devotees, set out to visit the holy places where Śrīman Mahāprabhu and his associates had their pastimes, such as Śrīkhaṇḍa, Yājigrām, Kātwā, Jhāmatpur, Chākhāndi, Daihāt, and so forth, and preached about pure devotion there. In Śrīdhām Māyāpur and the surrounding areas, and sometimes in other villages of Bengal and in Calcutta, Śrīla Prabhupāda constantly preached and answered spiritual questions.

THE PRINTING PRESS AND THE ANUBHASYA, 1913–1915

In 1913, Śrīla Prabhupāda established a press called Bhāgavat Yantrālaya at 4 Sānagar Lane, Kālighāt, Calcutta, and began publishing and printing such books as *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* with his commentaries called *Anubhasya*, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* with the commentaries of Śrī Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākura, the *Gaurakṣṇodaya* by the Ōṭiyan poet Govinda Dās, and so forth. In the evenings he would lead *saṅkīrtana* and afterwards deliver *hari-kathā*. Many distinguished gentlemen of Calcutta would come to listen to him. In 1914 Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura disappeared from this world to enter into the

transcendental abode of his eternal pastimes. In January 1915, Śrīla Prabhupāda moved the printing press to Śrī Vrajapattan at Māyāpura, and continued publishing and printing books from there. He finished his commentaries on *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* on June 14, 1915.

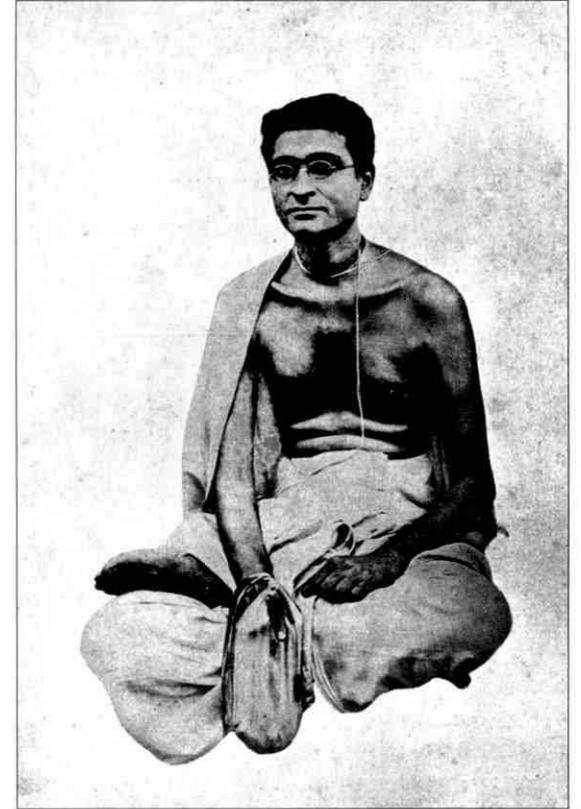
EDITING SAJJAN-TOSHANI, 1915

After the disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, his famous and widely distributed Vaiṣṇava magazine, *Sajjana Toṣaṇī*, continued publication under the editorship of Śrīla Prabhupāda. In July 1915 he moved the Bhāgavat Yantra press to the town of Kṛṣṇanagar, and began publishing Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's books.

DISAPPEARANCE OF HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER, 1915

On November 17, 1915, on the holy day of Utthan Ekādaśī, Śrīla Prabhupāda's *dikṣā* guru, Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja, disappeared from this world. Śrīla Prabhupāda immediately set forth for Navadvīp from Māyāpura. Śrīpād Kuñjavihāri Vidyābhūṣan (later Śrīmad Bhakti Vilās Tīrtha Mahārāja) has described this incident in the biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Saraswatī Jayaśrī*. A few so-called Bābājis of Navadvīpa began arguing with each other about who would give *samādhi* to the transcendental body of Śrīla Gaurkiśor Dās Bābāji. They all had some ulterior motive, namely to own this *samādhi* temple themselves so they could make money in the future from devotees and pilgrims. Apprehending a breach of the peace, the Inspector of Police, Śrī Barīndra Nāth Sīngha, arrived there.

After much argument these Bābājis said that Śrīla Prabhupāda was not a *sannyāsī* and therefore did not have the right to give *samādhi* to Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja. Śrīla Prabhupāda responded in a thunderous voice, “I am the only disciple of Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. Although I am not a *sannyāsī*, I have observed *brahmachārya* (celibacy) all my life. By the grace of Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja, I have not lived a secret life of illicit conduct and debauchery, like some ‘monkey’ renunciates. If there is someone among those present here who has a genuinely pure character and who is a renunciate, then he can give *samādhi* to Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja and we have no objection to that. If there is anyone here who, in the last one year, or six months, or three months, or one month, or even in the last three days, did not have any illicit contact with a woman, then he can touch this blissful

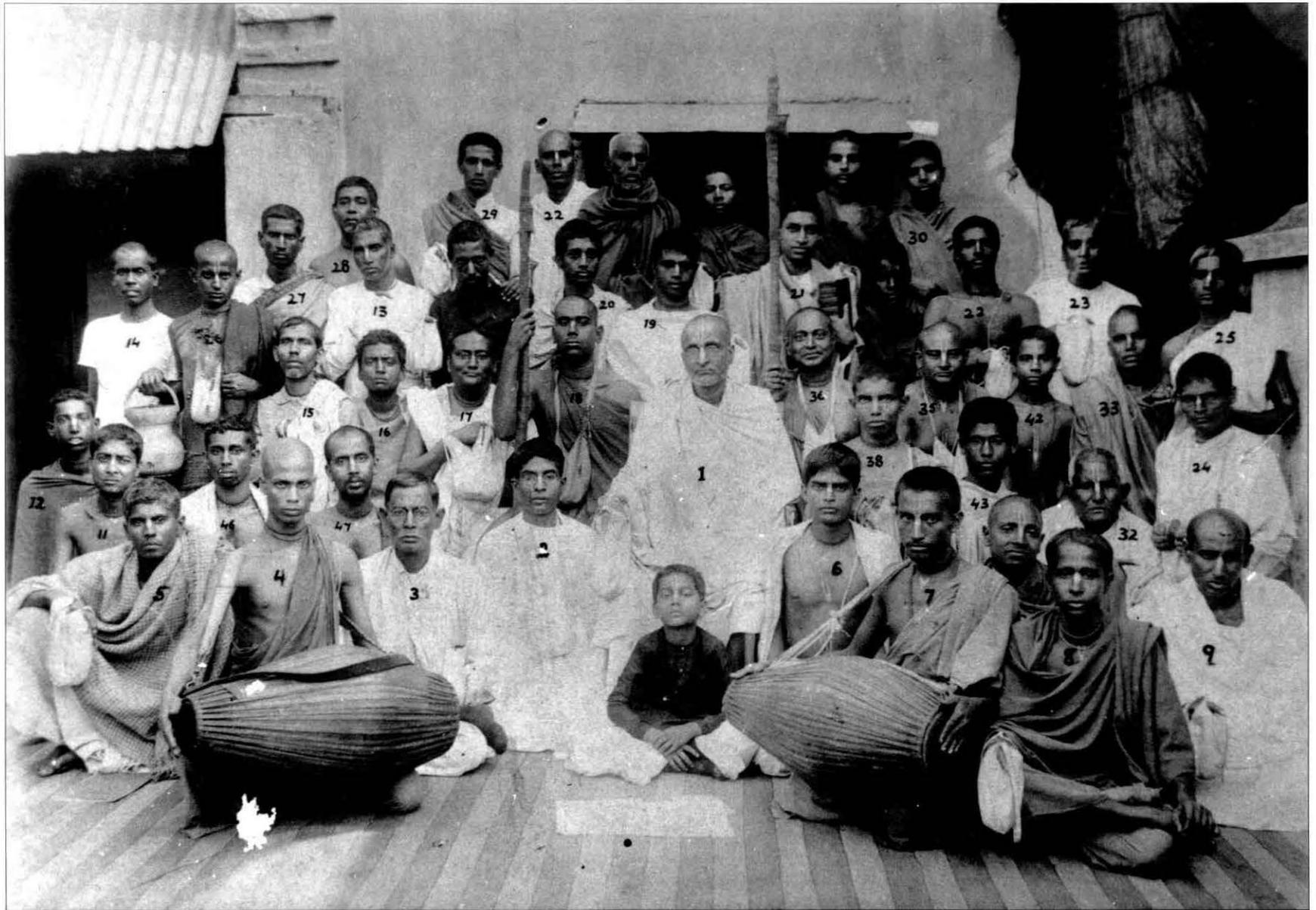


If there is anyone here who, in the last one year, or six months, or three months, or one month, or even in the last three days, did not have any illicit contact with a woman, then he can touch his blissful transcendental body. If anyone else touches his body, he will be ruined.”

...Everyone present was amazed to see that all the so-called Babajis left the scene, one by one.



ON THE DAY HE ACCEPTED SANNYAS 1918



GAUDIYA MATH SANKIRTAN PARTY

transcendental body. If anyone else touches this body, he will be ruined.”

Hearing this the inspector asked, “What will be the proof of this?” Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “I will believe their words.” Everyone present was amazed to see that all the so-called Bābājis left the scene, one by one. The Inspector of Police was dumfounded.

Then by the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Vaiṣṇava devotees with him were fortunate enough to carry the transcendental body of Bābāji Mahārāja. Some people said, “When Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāj was alive, he said, ‘My body should be dragged on the ground of Navadvīp so it can be covered by the dust of Navadvīp.’ His instruction should be obeyed.”

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Even though we are stupid, ignorant, and offensive, we should still be able to understand the significance of these humble words of my Gurudeva, which were spoken to destroy the pride and arrogance of materialistic people.

Even Lord Kṛṣṇa considers Himself fortunate to carry the body of my *gurudeva* on His shoulders or head. After the disappearance of Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākura, Śrī Gaurisundara took his blissful body in his own arms and danced; such was the reverence he showed him. Therefore, following in the footsteps of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, we shall also carry Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja’s blissful body on our heads.”

On November 17, 1915, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave *samādhi* to his Gurudeva, on the Nutan Charā of Navadvīp, on the banks of the Gaṅgā. Sixteen years later, the moving currents of the Gaṅgā arrived at that holy place. By his instruction, on August 21, 1932, some of his disciples from Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, including Śrīpāda Narahari Prabhu and Śrīpāda Vinoda Vihārī Prabhu (later Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja) and others, removed this *samādhi* by boat across the Gaṅgā from Navadvīpa to Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, Māyāpura.

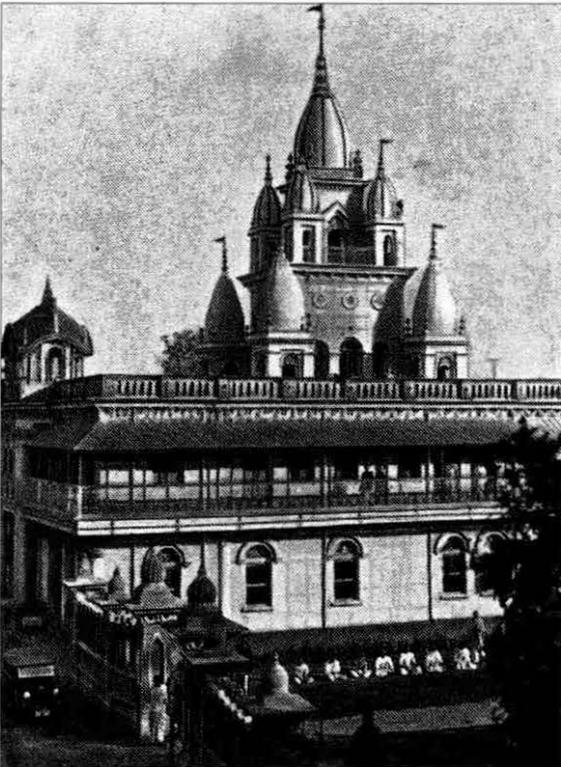
THE DIVINE VISION OF ŚRILA PRABHUPADA, 1915

After the disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda was grief stricken and was feeling the pangs of separation. At that time a wonderful incident took place. Śrīpāda Paramānanda Vidyāratna has described this in *Saraswatī Jayaśrī*:

Śrīla Prabhupāda was feeling very discouraged in the absence of Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya and Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja, seeing the helpless condition of the spiritual section in the country and the propaganda of the *sahajiyās* (imitators). He was thinking, “How will I fulfill the desire of my spiritual masters? How will I be able to preach the message of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu? I do not have enough money or manpower. Nor do I have any knowledge or talent that would enchant the public. I have no material skill or wealth. How can this grave task be performed by me? I won’t be able to preach the mes-

sage of my spiritual masters.”

Thinking all this, Śrīla Prabhupāda displayed his pastime of gloom and depression. Then one night he saw in a visionary trance that Lord Gaurāṅḍar had arrived from the east side of the Yogapīṭh temple with His associates. Amid the sound of saṅkīrtana, He was ascending to His birth site. With Him were the six goswāmīs. Śrīla Jagannāth Dāsa Bābāji, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji were also present in their effulgent transcendental forms. Addressing Śrīla Prabhupāda directly, they said, “Why are you in such a state of anxiety? Begin your task of establishing pure religion.



Everywhere preach the message of Śrī Gaura and spread the service of the holy name, abode, and desire of Śrī Gaura. We are always ready to help you, being eternally present with you. In your mission of establishing pure devotional service, you will always receive our help. Behind you innumerable people, unlimited wealth, and extraordinary scholarship are waiting to help you. Whatever you need at any time will immediately appear to serve your mission of pure devotion. With full enthusiasm, proceed with your preaching of the message of pure devotion as it was preached by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. No material problems can impede you. We are always with you.” The next morning Śrīla Prabhupāda told us about this visionary trance with great ecstasy.

SANNYAS AND FOUNDING SRI CHAITANYA MATH, 1918

Even though Śrīla Prabhupāda was already a great renunciate and an eternally lib-

erated (*nitya-siddha*) spiritual personality, in order to preach extensively as a travelling mendicant (*parivrājaka*) and to set an example of Daivi-Varnāśrama Dharma, he decided to take sannyās in the year 1918. By accepting the saffron cloth, he actually took a humble position below his two gurus, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji, who had both accepted the *paramahaṁsa-veśa* (the white cloth of a renunciate Vaiṣṇava who has given up *varnāśrama dharma*; sannyās, which requires wearing a saffron cloth, is part of *varnāśrama dharma*). On the full moon day of March 7, 1918, on the auspicious occasion of the appearance festival of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Prabhupāda took sannyās in Śrī Māyāpur according to Vedic rites. Early in the morning he shaved his head and then went to bathe in the old Gaṅgā, near Vāman Pukura. Śrī Rāmgopāl Vidyābhūṣan, Śrī Ananta Vāsudev Prabhu, Śrīkānt Dāsadhikārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Prakāś Aranya Mahārāj), and a few other devotees accompanied him. On the way Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke on such topics as the story of Ajāmila, the sannyās pastime of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and some verses from the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. After bathing he offered his *daṇḍavats* and returned to Vrajapattan. The devotees had collected and arranged all the necessary paraphernalia there. Śrīla Prabhupāda went inside the temple and, remembering his Gurudeva, he took *tridaṇḍī sannyās* (the word “*tridaṇḍī*” signifies the three-fold vows of serving the Supreme Lord with body, mind, and soul).

In the meantime all the devotees were waiting outside. Among them were Śrīpād Paramānanda Vidyāratna and Śrīpād Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣan. A big crowd had also assembled to celebrate the appearance festival of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. When Śrīla Prabhupāda emerged as a sannyāsī, everyone became very sad, and remembered the sannyās pastime of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Overwhelmed with devotional emotion, all started crying.

That same day, Śrīla Prabhupāda established Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh and installed the Deities of Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda there. This Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Māyāpur is the Ākar Maṭh (the original or parent maṭh) of all the Gauṛīya Maṭhs all over the world. In the afternoon he delivered a lecture about the appearance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to the assembled crowd. The next day he initiated some of the surrendered devotees, such as Śrīpād Haripada Vidyāratna, Śrīpād Ananta Vāsudeva Prabhu, and Śrīpāda

Bhakti Prakāśa Prabhu.

After taking sannyāsa, Prabhupāda displayed his extraordinary pastimes of renunciation and austerity. This was described in the memoir of Śrīpāda Ananta Vāsudeva Prabhu quoted in *Saraswatī Jayāśrī*:

Before taking sannyāsa he used to wear a top garment twenty-four hours a day. No one ever saw his upper body. But after sannyās he would wear a chādar most of the time. He gave up wearing sandals. Walking everywhere without sandals made his feet bleed, but he still would walk without sandals. Seeing his example of great renunciation, we were amazed. During chaturmāsya (the four months of the rainy season) he would sleep on the floor and would only eat during the day, never after sunset. In the heat of summer in Māyāpur he would close his door and chant night and day.

Later that month Śrīla Prabhupāda gave a very scholarly lecture called “Vaiṣṇava Darśana” (“The Vaiṣṇava Philosophy”) at a literary meeting in the Kṛṣṇanagar town hall. In May he took some of his disciples with him to preach in different places. In Daulatpur he stayed in the house of Vanamāli Poddar and preached continuously for several days. There he initiated quite a few devotees including Śrīpāda Yaśodānandana Prabhu and Śrīpāda Narahari Prabhu.

At this time, his disciple Śrīpāda Nayanābhirāma Prabhu (later Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhārati Mahārāja) earnestly assisted Śrīla Prabhupāda with his preaching activities. Śrīmad Bhārati Mahārāja would preach in very simple language and present the Vaiṣṇava concept in a simple, but attractive, way. Śrīla Prabhupāda engaged Śrīmad Bhārati Mahārāja to speak to the general public. Śrīmad Bhārati Mahārāja would sometimes make them laugh and sometimes make them cry. His preaching captured their hearts and they would come by the thousands to listen to him. He was an expert *kīrtana* singer. Śrīla Prabhupāda always knew the greatest strength of each of his disciples, and he would engage them accordingly. Before he left this world, he told Śrīmad Bhārati Mahārāja that he was a hard-working, practical person, and should serve the mission.

SRI KSHETRA-MANDAL PARIKRAMA, 1918

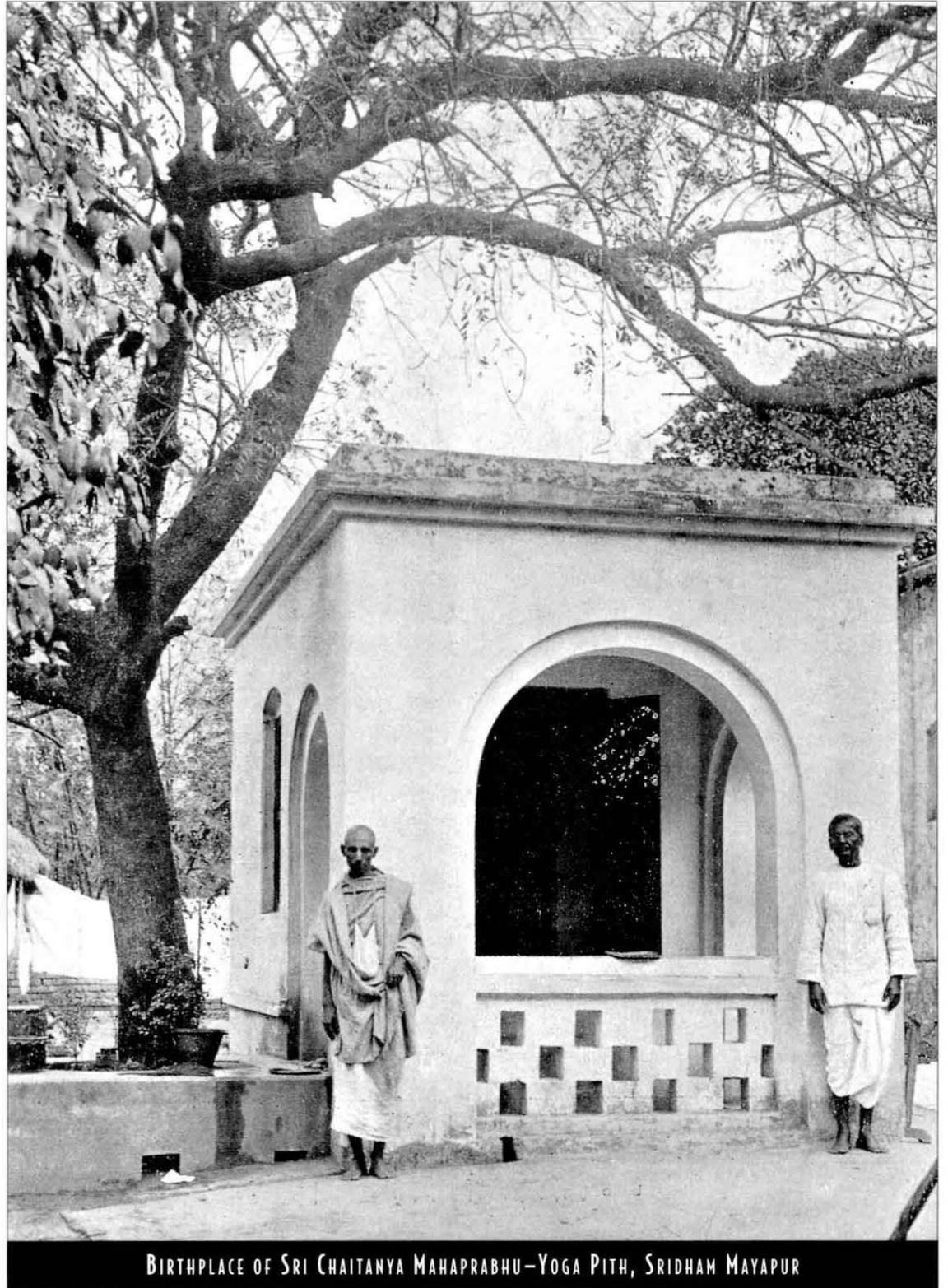
To celebrate the fourth disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda set forth for Purī Dhāma on June 2, 1918, along with twenty-three other devotees. Before going to Purī Dhāma, Śrīla

Prabhupāda accepted the invitation of Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣana and went to his residence in Gauribārī Lane, Calcutta, with all the devotees to take prasādam for two days. Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu was an ordinary impoverished postal employee. Despite this fact, he arranged for a sumptuous feast of many courses for Śrīla Prabhupāda and his entourage. On his way to Purī Dhāma Śrīla Prabhupāda also preached at different places such as Sāuri, Kuāmārā, and so forth. Then he went to Remuna to see the Deity of Kṣīrachorā Gopīnāth. At a meeting in Bāleśwar, he gave a lecture on the Śikṣāṣṭaka verses of Mahāprabhu. On his way to Purī he became overwhelmed with the mood of separation of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Many distinguished government officers and citizens came to listen to his lectures, and some of them invited him to lecture in their homes.

After celebrating the disappearance festival of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura with extensive preaching and *saṅkīrtana* in Purī, Śrīla Prabhupāda came back to Calcutta. For a little while he stayed at No. 3 British Indian Street. He delivered lectures there, and his disciples used to visit him daily. Sometimes Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣana would cook for Śrīla Prabhupāda there. During August and September 1918, a representative of a group of opponents of Vaiṣṇavism presented Śrīla Prabhupāda with twenty-nine questions. He answered all of them on the basis of scripture and logic and thus silenced his opponents. These questions and answers were subsequently published in an article called “The Answers to the Questions of the Critics.” Later Śrīla Prabhupāda came back to Bhakti Bhavan.

BHAKTIVINODE ĀSAN 1918–1919

In the next few months and years, something unprecedented took place. The big city of Calcutta, previously thought by Vaiṣṇavas to be a very unfavorable place, became the center of preaching for Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission of pure devotion. It started when his disciple Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu, who was always burning with fervent enthusiasm to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda, submitted a new proposal at his lotus feet. One day in Māyāpura, he said, “Prabhupāda, how many people can come here and listen to your glorious, powerful, and unparalleled message about Śrīman Mahāprabhu? On the other hand, people from all over the world come to Calcutta or pass through that city. If we can arrange for a residence for you in Calcutta, faithful people



BIRTHPLACE OF SRI CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU—YOGA PITH, SRIDHAM MAYAPUR

from many places will have the good fortune of listening to you.” Śrīla Prabhupāda granted this request. Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu rented a two-story house in November 1918 on No. 1 Ulṭoḍīngī Junction Road, next to the famous temple of Pareśnāth.

That same month Śrīla Prabhupāda established the spiritual institution called Bhaktivinoda Āsan there. The temple room and Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room were upstairs, and three or four devotees, including Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu, lived downstairs. The rent was Rs. 50 per month. This was beyond the means of an impoverished postal employ-

ee. Other devotees staying there tried to help Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu, but most of the time they also found it difficult to come up with that money. But Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu always went out of his way to supply whatever was necessary to serve his *gurudeva*, even if he had to incur a substantial debt in order to do so.

Śrīla Prabhupāda now started his regular preaching program in the newly established Bhaktivinoda Āsan. More and more people came to listen to him. On February 5, 1919, on the auspicious appearance day of Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, Śrīla Prabhupāda re-estab-

lished the Viśva-Vaiṣṇava-Rāj-Sabhā. He gave a scholarly lecture on the ancient history of this assembly. On June 27, in Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja (the *bhajana kuṭir* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura), the worshipable deity form of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was installed.

PREACHING IN EAST BENGAL, 1919

On October 4, 1919, Śrīla Prabhupāda set forth to preach in East Bengal (now Bāṅglādeśh) and north Bengal. Right before natural disasters, a strong hurricane and flood, had hit East Bengal. Thousands of people became homeless and many people died. Usually autumn is a season of festivity in Bengal, since during this time of year Bengalis celebrate their Durgā Pūjā festival. But this year grief and loss took the place of festivity in many places. Śrīla Prabhupāda chose this time to preach his message of pure devotion. He decided that this was the proper time to sing the verse:

*tat te 'nukampām susamīkṣamāṇo
bhuñjāna evātmakṛtam vipākam
hṛdvāg vapubhir vidadhan namaste
jīveta yo muktīpade sa dāyabhāk*
—Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.14.8

“My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reaction of his past misdeeds and offering you respectful obeisances with his heart, words, and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda preached in many different towns and villages in East Bengal. Wherever he went, many people came to listen to his lectures. In many places special meetings were arranged where Śrīla Prabhupāda was requested to speak. Many distinguished gentlemen invited Śrīla Prabhupāda to their homes to deliver *hari-kathā*. He led *saṅkīrtana* processions in different towns and villages. Śrīla Prabhupāda visited such places as Dāmurhudā, Kusthia, Pāvnā, Sātberia, Sāgarkāndī, Belgāchi, Rājbarī, Lauhajaṅg, Domsar, Nārāyangaṅj, Dāccā, Sirājīdighā, Kotchandpur, Śrīpāt Maheśpur, and so forth.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE KASHIM BAZAR CONFERENCE

In April 1920 the religious conference “Kāśim Bāzār Sammilani” took place in Kummilā, East Bengal. The members of the



SRILA PRABHUPADA'S WORSHIPABLE MOTHER, SRIMATI BHAGAVATI DEVI

Viśva-Vaiṣṇava-Rāj-Sabhā were invited to participate in that conference. But when they saw the agenda, which included the discussion and singing of Lord Kṛṣṇa's very intimate pastimes with the *gopīs*, by the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda they sent a questionnaire to that conference, care of the gentle and humble Mahārāja of Kāśim Bāzār, Śrī Maṅīndra Chandra Nandī. Seven questions were posed regarding the propriety of such discussions of the intimate pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa among conditioned souls. The Mahārāja duly presented the questionnaire to the assembled paṇḍits. But no one dared to answer those questions.

DISAPPEARANCE OF SRIMATI BHAGAVATI DEVI, 1920

In June 1920 Śrīla Prabhupāda's worshipable mother, Śrīmatī Bhagavatī Devī, left this world to enter the abode of her eternal pastimes. Six years earlier on that very day Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had left this world. For many years, Śrīmatī Bhagavatī Devī had dedicated herself to assist the divine mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Before she left this world, she called Śrīla Prabhupāda to her bedside and expressed her last desire, that the message and the holy name of Śrīman Mahāprabhu be preached all over the world.

SRI GAUDIYA MATH, 1920

On September 6, 1920, Prabhupāda founded Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh at Bhaktivinoda Āsan and installed the Deities of Śrī Śrī Guru

Gaurāṅga and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda. Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement gained great momentum immediately after he chartered the Gauṛīya Maṭh. Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to start a great mission which would propagate Śrīman Mahāprabhu's teachings in their purest form. He wanted to preach that the goal of life is to love and serve Kṛṣṇa, and that the only way for the fallen souls of Kali-yuga to be delivered is to chant the holy name and render unconditional devotional service. He wanted to preach his concept of pure devotion to all classes of people—the educated and the uneducated, the rich and the poor, the orthodox *brāhmaṇas* and the young people influenced by Western ideas. He wanted hundreds of people to come to his lectures and thousands of people to read the books and magazines published by the Gauṛīya Maṭh. In short, he wanted to start a spiritual revolution, a seemingly ambitious goal for someone who had only a handful of men to help him and hardly any money to spend. But the Gauṛīya Maṭh grew at an amazing speed. People came from all fields of life, and most of them were highly educated. Many people came to join his mission with many different talents and skills to contribute—scholars, writers, editors, administrators, doctors, engineers, lawyers. Śrīla Prabhupāda's unique personality and his powerful speeches touched many people's hearts and changed their lives forever. A spiritual revolution was indeed taking place in Bengal.

The devotees of the Gauṛīya Maṭh worked very hard to propagate Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching mission. They begged from door to door, worshiped the Deities, performed *kīrtana* inside the temple, and went on *nagar-saṅkīrtan* on the streets of Calcutta. They also preached at various places, being so instructed by Śrīla Prabhupāda. In 1920, Śrīpād Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣan Prabhu suddenly left for Basra (in present-day Iraq) to take a temporary position, so that he could pay off the huge debt he had incurred in trying to serve the Gauṛīya Maṭh.

On November 1, 1920, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave *samyāsa* to Śrīpād Jagadīs Bhaktipradīp, who was a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He was the first devotee to receive *samyāsa* from Śrīla Prabhupāda. Now he was called Śrīla Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja.

On March 14, 1921, Śrīla Prabhupāda revived Navadvīpa Dhāma Parikramā. At the end of March he once more went to preach in Purī Dhām. At this time Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāj published a book

called *Āchār O Āchārya (The Spiritual Master and His Conduct)*, by Śrīla Prabhupāda. This book introduced revolutionary ideas by criticizing the contemporary practices of those gurus who had turned religion into a money-making profession.

From the 1920s onward, Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement started spreading steadily. Preaching went on continuously, not only in Bengal, but in other parts of India. Scholars of every field came to listen to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures and ask him spiritual questions.

SRI CHAITANYA MATH, MAYAPUR, 1920

As Śrīla Prabhupāda was spending more and more time away from Māyāpur while preaching at the Bāgbāzār Gauṛīya Maṭh or going on preaching tours of different places in Bengal, Bihār, and Orissā, in 1920 he decided to establish some of his disciples at Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Māyāpura. He directed two devotees, Śrīpād Narahari Dās Brahmachārī and Śrīpād Vinoda-vihārī Brahmachārī, to take charge of that maṭh.

GAUDIYA MATH IN EAST BENGAL, 1921

In 1921, Śrīla Prabhupāda preached at different places in Bihār, including Dhanbād, and then returned to East Bengal to preach extensively there. Some of his disciples who were influential speakers, such as Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tirtha Mahārāja, also delivered many lectures and answered questions. In the beginning considerable opposition to Śrīla Prabhupāda's outspoken preaching arose. The professional speakers of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* did their best to launch a powerful campaign to mislead the common people against Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission. Initially it worked, when some people refused to open their doors to Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples. But being empowered by his blessings, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples were very determined to preach. They decided that if there was no food and shelter for them, then they would just go hungry and drink the water of the Burigaṅgā river. But they would go on preaching tirelessly. Such determination was rewarded by a renewed interest in Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism among the spiritually inquisitive. The ground for Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching in East Bengal was made fertile by the advance work of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda went to East Bengal, he gave realizations to the inquiring

public that were beyond their dreams. For example, Śrīla Prabhupāda resided in the city of Dacca for one month and gave thirty different interpretations of the following verse from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

*om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya
janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś
chārtheṣv abhijñāḥ svarāt
tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye
muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ
tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayo
yatra tri-sargo 'mṣā
dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ
satyaṁ param dhīmahi*

—*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1

“O my Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, O all-pervading Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I meditate upon Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa because He is the Absolute Truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the manifested universes. He is directly and indirectly conscious of all manifestations, and He is independent because there is no other cause beyond Him. It is only He who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmāji, the original living being. By Him even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water. Only because of Him do the material universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual, although they are unreal. I therefore meditate upon Him, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is eternally existent in the transcendental abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world. I meditate upon Him, for He is the Absolute Truth.”

Even great scholars were amazed to hear these interpretations. Many sincere souls took initiation then from Śrīla Prabhupāda. One of the disciples who came from Dacca was Śrīpād Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, who later became one of the main writers in the preaching mission of the Gauṛīya Maṭh.

That same year, Śrīpād Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣana Prabhu returned from Basra and joined Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching mission in Dacca. Śrīla Prabhupāda had been missing him greatly, and had already made plans to take Śrīpād Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣana Prabhu with him to different places.

On October 13, 1921, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the Śrī Madhva



Prabhupada Prestha, Srila Bhakti Vilas

Tirtha Maharaja. Srila Prabhupada said of

him, “He is the life of Sri Gaudiya Math

and the main reason for its prosperity

in devotional service.

He is the original architect

in the creation of the Gaudiya Math.”



On August 19, 1922, Srila Prabhupada began publishing a magazine called *Gaudiya* from the Krishnanagar Bhagavat Press, which would become the most famous and widely distributed spiritual Bengali magazine and one of the chief instruments of Srila Prabhupada's preaching mission.

Gauṛīya Maṭh in Dacca, and on October 31 he installed the Deities there. In Faridabād Śrīla Prabhupāda delivered *hari-kathā* in the house of Śrī Saratchandra Bandopadhyāy, who was grief-stricken by his son's death. Hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda's *hari-kathā*, he felt relieved and took initiation from him. Later his two daughters, Śrīmatī Āparaṇā Devī and Suṣamā Devī, also took initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīmatī Āparaṇā Devī was a poet and a writer. She subsequently wrote quite a few articles in the *Gauṛīya* magazine. Much later she translated Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī's *Stavamālā* and Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī's *Stavavali* into Bengali poetry, which was much appreciated by the Vaiṣṇava devotees.

On his return from Dacca, Śrīla Prabhupāda renovated some ruined temples and places of pilgrimage from the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes, and reestablished regular worship there. Among them were the famous Gaura-Gadādhara temple in Champāhaṭī, the birth site of Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura, the guesthouse in Modadrumdīp, etc. In 1933, Śrīla Prabhupāda put Satīśa Prabhu (Śrīpāda Satprasaṅgānanda Brahmachārī, later Śrīmad Nayanānanda Bābājī Mahārāja) in charge of the Gaura-Gadādhara temple in Champāhaṭī.

PURUSOTTAM MATH IN PURI, 1922

"Hyutkale Puruṣottamāt"—"From Utkal (Orissā) the concept of pure devotion will spread to the whole world." To honor this prediction of the scriptures, Śrīla Prabhupāda founded the Puruṣottam Maṭh in Purī in June 1922. Following in the footsteps of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, he participated in the pastime of cleansing the Guṇḍichā temple and in *parikramā* of Purī Dhām along with his disciples. He sent his disciples to preach in various parts of Orissā.

PUBLICATION OF THE GAUDIYA MAGAZINE, 1922

On August 19, 1922, Śrīla Prabhupāda began publishing a magazine called *Gauṛīya* from the Krishnanagar Bhagavat Press, which would become the most famous and widely distributed spiritual Bengali magazine and one of the chief instruments of Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching mission. In its first year the magazine was jointly edited by Śrīpāda Atulchandra Bandopadhyāya Bhaktisaraṅga (Śrīpād Aprākṛta Prabhu—later Śrīmad Bhakti Saraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāja) and Śrīpād Haripada Vidyāratna (later Śrīmad Bhakti

Sādhak Niṣkiñchan Mahārāj). In its second year, Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda became the assistant editor. Subsequently Śrīpāda Bhaktisaraṅga was editor-in-chief, Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda was editor, and Śrīpāda Haripada Vidyāratna was assistant editor. From 1930 onward, Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja) became joint editor of *Gauṛīya*.

In each issue of *Gauṛīya* there was an editorial; sometimes there would be an article by Śrīla Prabhupāda or an article based on his lectures. All together each issue would comprise three or four articles, short paragraphs on current topics and recent events or information on upcoming events, and a column of questions and answers. Browsing through old issues of *Gauṛīya*, one can find the names of Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja and Śrīmad Pranavānanda Brahmachārī as those who answered questions from the readers.

For a few years, Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda was posted in Dacca as a teacher in a high school there. But he used to send one or two articles every week. Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Prabhu also used to write articles, and would proofread the whole magazine. Śrīla Prabhupāda trusted him with the proofreading because he would work very hard and frequently stay up all night to make the text free from errors. The result was a perfect production every week. Devotees used to distribute *Gauṛīya* with great enthusiasm. One devotee from Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Māyāpura, Śrīpāda Satyen Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Nilaya Giri Mahārāj) used to take the first train to Calcutta every morning to sell and distribute *Gauṛīya*. The philosophical and literary standard of *Gauṛīya* was unsurpassed.

Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen, Professor of Bengali literature at the University of Calcutta, was a well-known scholar and writer. Some of his books, such as *Rāmāyaṇī Kathā* (*Topics of the Rāmāyaṇa*) were prescribed textbooks for the students of Bengali literature. The editor of *Gauṛīya* wrote an article criticizing some of his ideas. When Dr. Dinesh Sen read that article, he was so impressed by its literary standard that he wrote a letter of praise to the writer. That letter was kept in the archives of the Gauṛīya Maṭh. But more importantly, *Gauṛīya* helped to keep the fire of devotional inspiration burning in the hearts of many Bengalis, when another big fire was burning in the heart of Bengal and the rest of India.

GAUDIYA MATH AND THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT OF THE 1920S

That other fire that was burning in the hearts of the masses of India was the desire for freedom. On one hand was Mahātmā Gāndhī's nonviolent movement for freedom. On the other hand was the more radical guerrilla group. There were little pockets of guerrilla resistance everywhere in India. The British government, which was very reluctant to give up India, "the jewel of the crown of the British empire", was intimidated by both groups.

In Bengal one of the groups of guerilla freedom fighters was called the "Anuśilan Samiti" (Organization for the Cultivation of Freedom). Actually, "anuśilan" means cultivation, but what was to be cultivated was not specified, for obvious reasons. Hundreds and thousands of young, educated, and talented men, with the support of their mothers, sisters, and wives, gave up their education, family life, and profession, and risked their lives to join one of these two movements: Mahātmā Gāndhī's nonviolent movement or the guerrilla movement. If there was one desire that was shared by the whole nation, it was the desire for freedom from the British.

But Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to preach about another kind of freedom which transcends any freedom of the mundane world: the freedom of the soul. While nationalistic leaders were preaching that it is the birthright of a nation to have freedom and sovereignty, Śrīla Prabhupāda was preaching that it is the birthright of every soul to seek freedom from material bondage and find its rightful place in the realm of eternity. The nationalistic leaders would argue that that could wait, but Śrīla Prabhupāda insisted one should not waste one minute while reaching for the supreme goal of human life, because it can end at any moment.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "First of all we have to know who we are. After that it will become very easy to find out what is our foremost duty. The only path to our eternal welfare is to serve the Lord and have His grace. The human birth is the root of devotional service. It is not possible to render devotional service in animal life.... We all have to become free. But the state of freedom is nothing other than the state of cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the support of all our senses, being fixed in our real identity." (*Upadeśāmṛta* pp. 462-463)

As one can imagine, it is easier to arouse the oppressed masses to seek political freedom than to arouse the soul to look for its eternal prospect. Yet many young men gave up the nationalistic movement and came to Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual movement.

Śrīpād Vinoda Vihārī Prabhu was formerly a member of the secret organization called the Anuśilan Samiti. He gave up his affiliation with it and joined Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement, and so did a few others. But the British police remained very suspicious of their activities. So they sent undercover agents to the Gauṛīya Maṭh to spy on the activities of its members. One such undercover agent listened to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures with rapt attention, and gave up his profession to become Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciple. Before begging for Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy, he disclosed that he had come as a spy. He became Śrīpād Gaurendu Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Vardhana Sāgara Mahārāja).

After this incident, in 1924 or 1925, another very learned gentleman, Śrī Rāmendra Chandra Bhaṭṭāchārya, who was not known to any of the devotees, began coming to the maṭh regularly. He would silently listen to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures with rapt attention. One day Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī was giving a lecture when he arrived. One devotee, Śrīpāda Kīrtanānanda Brahmachārī, cautioned Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Prabhu about this gentleman. He said, "I have noticed that he does not ask anything, but listens to every word with rapt attention. He must be a spy."

Śrīpāda Kīrtanānanda Prabhu started keeping an eye on this gentleman. But it so happened that very soon Śrī Rāmendra Chandra Bhaṭṭāchārya attracted Śrīla Prabhupāda's attention. It was discovered that he was no spy, but in fact was formerly in Mahātmā Gāndhī's freedom movement. Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him initiation, and later named him Śrī Rāmānanda Dāsa Brahmachārī. Within a few years he gave him *sanmyās*, naming him Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Prabhupāda was very fond of him, and so were his other disciples. Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja was known for his extraordinary scholarship, his poetic talent, his powerful preaching, his saintly character, and his wholehearted dedication to serving his *gurudeva*.

Many distinguished citizens of Calcutta admired Śrīla Prabhupāda's unprecedented and extraordinary contribution to the Vaiṣṇava movement of Bengal. But not everyone shared their sentiment. The famous Bengali leader of the freedom movement, Netāji Subhāsh Chandra Bose, complained to Śrīla Prabhupāda that he was diverting the attention of the youth from the freedom movement to his devotional mission. Śrīla Prabhupāda appeased him by saying, "These

men are not so physically strong. They will not be of much use to you." Of course, he did not think that Netāji would be interested in the concept of spiritual freedom at that moment.

THE ACHARYA WHO COULD INSPIRE AND ENGAGE

Freedom fighters or not, intelligent and spiritually inquisitive young men were coming to Śrīla Prabhupāda, giving up their family ties and material prospects. To cite only one example: Before he took initiation, Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī used to go to Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh every day after work. One day, just as he was about to leave for Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, he was stung by a scorpion hidden in his shoe. Two days previously a man had died from a scorpion's sting. Although Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī was bleeding profusely, and the blood was blackish with venom, he told his weeping mother he was all right and set forth for Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh as if nothing had happened. There he listened to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lecture, and although the intense pain continued throughout that evening and the rest of the night, his mind was on Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, not on his pain. When his Godbrothers refer to this incident, he says, "That was my time of *navānurāga* [the first stage of love, when any separation seems risky and unbearable]."

Śrīla Prabhupāda's transcendental personality was extremely attractive, and his powerful preaching could plant the seed of divine love in one's heart—with tangible results. The proof of this was to be found in the atmosphere of the Gauṛīya Maṭh, which was always lively with the sights and sounds of uninterrupted, wholehearted devotional service. Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja said in his memoir, "When I went there again, I saw many things that touched me. Śrīla Prabhupāda was delivering a lecture to so many gentlemen—educated persons. In another place the elderly Śrīpād Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja was giving a lecture. Elsewhere Śrīpāda Bhakti Swarūpa Parvata Mahārāja was found writing receipts, collecting funds from the people. It was a hive of activity. I felt a transcendental happy atmosphere there."

At the center of this transcendently happy hive of activity was the *āchārya* who was known to be "softer than a flower and harder than a thunderbolt." Nothing escaped Śrīla Prabhupāda's keen eyes. His affection for his disciples was also all-encompassing. Śrīla Prabhupāda would personally supervise the distribution of *prasādam* to his disciples; he would



OLD SRI CHAITANYA MATH TEMPLE

stand there and make sure everyone ate well. When his disciples' family members came to visit, he would personally welcome them, make them comfortable, and spend considerable time with them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's deep humility was reflected in his thoughts, words, and actions. He called his disciples "Prabhu" ("master"). He never asked any of them to do anything for him, personally. Yet each of them was eager to render some service to him, for he was their supremely worshipable lord ("Paramārādhyā Śrīla Prabhupāda"). Not only was he worshipable to them, but so was anyone who served him with total dedication. Because Śrīpād Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣaṇ had a long history of selfless dedicated service to Śrīla

Prabhupāda, the brahmachārīs staying at the maṭh would stand in line to eat his remnants (a traditional Vaiṣṇava devotional practice), in the hope that it would give them *guru-sevā-kuñja* (the grove of devotional service to Gurudeva—*kuñja* means "grove").

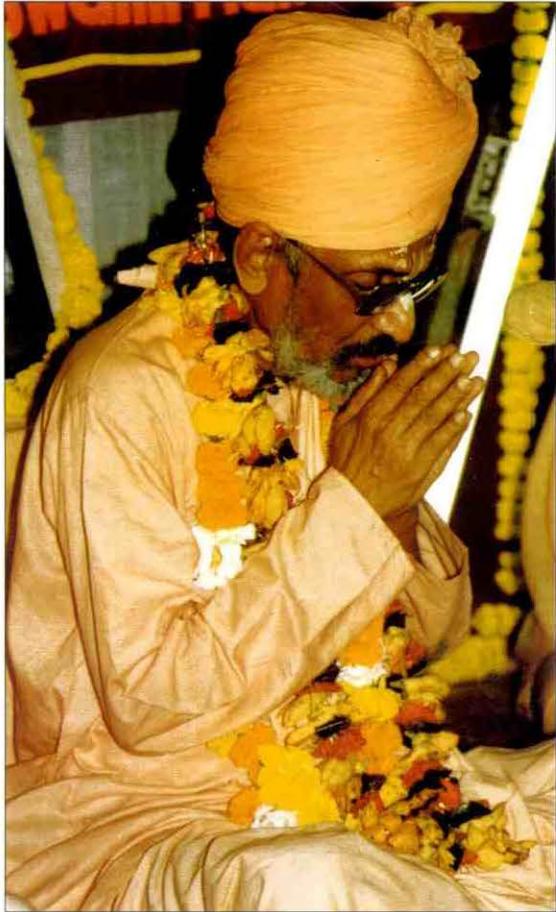
VRAJA-MANDAL, SRI CHAITANYA MATH, 1922-1923

On September 28, 1922, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Vraja-maṇḍal (Mathurā and Vṛndāvana) with the goal of establishing centers for preaching the pure devotional concept of Śrīman Mahāprabhu as preached by Śrīla Gaurkiṣora Dāsa Bābāji and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Later he went back to Dacca, East Bengal, to preach there again.

Then he went to Kuliya, Navadvīp, and S̄aotāl Pargaṇā (in Bihār).

On March 2, 1923, Gaura-Purṇimā day, construction of the new temple of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Māyāpura began. As per Śrīla Prabhupāda's plan, the Deities on the main altar were Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda, and outside on the four sides were altars to Śrī, Brahma, Rudra, and Chatuḥ-Sana, as well as the four *āchāryas* of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradayas*, Śrī Rāmānujāchārya, Śrī Madhvāchārya, Śrī Viṣṇuswāmī, and Śrī Nimbarkāchārya.

Later Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Purī Dhām with many devotees for Śrī Jagannath's Ratha-yatra (chariot festival), and following in the footsteps of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, he sang



SRILA BHAKTI KUMUD SANTA MAHARAJA

and danced in front of the chariot of Śrī Jagannātha in the mood of separation. Later he lectured to a huge crowd consisting of many distinguished gentlemen from Calcutta. He also sent some disciples to preach in Orissā and Mādrās.

PUBLICATION OF SCRIPTURAL TEXTS, 1923

In 1923 Śrīla Prabhupāda started printing *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* at the Calcutta Gauṛīya Printing Works. Eventually all twelve cantos were published, with summaries of each chapter and various commentaries.

THE FIRST VYASA-PUJA, 1924

On February 24, 1924, the fiftieth birth anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda, his disciples celebrated his *vyāsa-pūjā* for the first time. In response to their homage, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave a speech, which is regarded as a jewel in Vaiṣṇava literature. He addressed his disciples as “*āmār vipad-tāraṇ bandhu-gaṇ*” (“my friends who rescue me from danger”).

PREACHING, 1924

The same year, during Gaura-Purnimā,

the first edition of *Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavat*, by Śrī Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, was edited by Śrīla Prabhupāda and published by Śrī Mādhva-Gauṛīya Maṭh, Dacca. In July, Śrīla Prabhupāda established Tridaṇḍī Maṭh in Orissā. Later he established the Sāraswat-Āsan in Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, a devotional school in which the devotees could study scripture and study and distribute Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's books. In October, he went to Dacca for the fifth time. There he gave an erudite lecture about Śrī Mādhva-Gauṛīya *sampradaya* and its concept of Vaiṣṇavism. On December 16, he gave a lecture at the Benares Hindu University on “The Place of Vaiṣṇavism in the World of Religion.” This lecture was very much appreciated by such distinguished professors of Oriental Studies as Prof. Pramathnāth Tarkabhuṣaṇ and Prof. Phanībhuṣaṇ Adhikārī. He searched for the places in Benares that were visited by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Later he indicated to his disciples the location of the Dasāśvamedha Ghāṭ in Prayāg where Śrīman Mahāprabhu instructed Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī. He went to preach in the village of Ārāil, which had previously been visited by Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Two of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *brahmachārī* disciples, Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja) and Śrīpād Nandasunu Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāj), visited one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *gṛhastha* disciples, Śrīpāda Vaikuṅṭhanāth Dāsādhikārī, for a few days, to attend a preaching program in his house. During this time, Śrīpāda Vaikuṅṭhanātha Prabhu's eleven-year-old son would always stay close to the *brahmachārīs*, listening avidly to their spiritual discussions. He seemed to have a voracious appetite for devotional topics. So the *brahmachārīs* told his father, “Your son is very extraordinary. Unlike other children of his age, he is not so interested in playing as in listening to *hari-kathā*.” Śrīpāda Vaikuṅṭhanātha Prabhu said, “This is how he has always been. Would you like to take my son to the *maṭh*?” The *brahmachārīs* answered, “We would love to have a boy like this in our mission.”

So the parents decided to send their son to the *maṭh* with the *brahmachārīs*. Even though the boy was the beloved child of a wealthy landholder, he was very happy at the prospect of a life in the *maṭh*. When the time came for the *brahmachārīs* to leave, the parents did not deviate from their decision. Referring to this incident, later the *brahmachārīs* said it reminded them of how little Dhruva Mahārāja



Sripad Vinode Vihari Prabhu

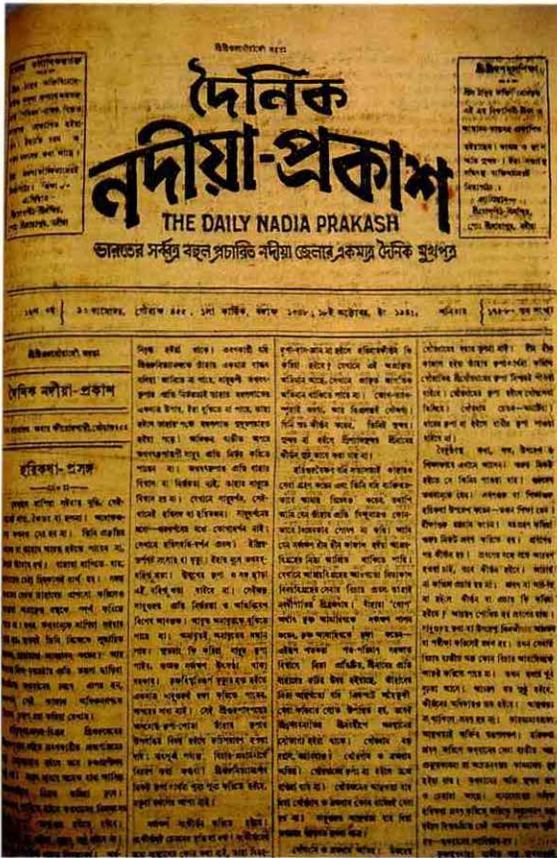
[Srila Bhakti Prajnana Keshava Maharaja]

managed to protect his spiritual master

by his extraordinary dexterity

and presence of mind.

He risked his own life in order to do so.



In October 1926, Srila Prabhupada began publishing a new weekly spiritual magazine, *Nadiya Prakash*, which later became a daily, in both Bengali and English, at Sri Bhagavat Press, Krishnanagar.

was dressed by his own mother as she bade him go to the forest to meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda became very fond of this boy (who later became Śrīmad Bhakti Kumuda Santa Mahārāja). He sent him to school, but he himself also tutored him. Later Śrīmadā Santa Mahārāja became known for his powerful preaching.

DEVOTEES ATTACKED: GAURA-MANDAL PARIKRAMA, 1925

On January 29, 1925, Prabhupāda took many devotees and went on a parikramā of the whole Gaura-maṇḍala to visit and preach at the various places where the pastimes of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and his associates took place. Everywhere Śrīla Prabhupāda preached about the pure devotional concept of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism (the Sahajiyās) and the commercial exploiters of the Vaiṣṇava concept were intimidated by Śrīla Prabhupāda's powerful preaching and his ever-increasing following. That year, in Navadvīp, they made plans to launch a vicious attack on the saṅkīrtan party.

Hundreds and thousands of devotees assembled at Poṛāmātalā, Navadvīp, for preaching and saṅkīrtan. Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda were placed on the back of a decorated elephant and were guarded by two devotees. Sannyāsīs were giving lectures and many people assembled to listen to the *harikathā*. Unbeknownst to them, some carriages which had been filled with broken bricks and draped with cloth were waiting nearby.

Suddenly the thugs started throwing these broken bricks at the assembled devotees. Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, who was on the elephant, immediately guided the elephant away from the scene, to protect Their Lordships. The devotees first tried to appease the thugs by reasoning with them, but this did not work. Many of the devotees were wounded and began bleeding. All of them tried to look for shelter in the nearby homes, especially for Śrīla Prabhupāda. But all the nearby homeowners had been ordered beforehand not to open their doors. They were also afraid that they too would be attacked by the thugs. Amidst the shock and confusion, somehow Śrīpāda Vinoda Vihārī Brahmachārī managed to take Śrīla Prabhupāda inside a house. There he exchanged his white clothes with Śrīla Prabhupāda's saffron clothes so Śrīla Prabhupāda wouldn't be recognized. Then he very quickly took Śrīla Prabhupāda away to a safer place. Thus Śrīpād Vinoda Vihārī Prabhu managed to protect his spiritual master by his

extraordinary dexterity and presence of mind. Even though Śrīla Prabhupāda was always protected by the Supreme Lord Himself, due to Śrīpād Vinoda Vihārī Prabhu's sincere love for his *gurudeva*, he got this opportunity to protect him. He risked his own life in order to do so.

Some of those present were completely shocked, and one local resident wrote in the *Ānanda Bāzār Patrikā* of Calcutta, "I witnessed the re-enactment of what Jagāi and Mādhāi did to Śrīla Nityānanda Prabhu more than four hundred years ago." All over Bengal, many distinguished people protested in magazines and newspapers against this incident. As a result the Chief Inspector of Police of Navadvīp was fired, and the next year the police department sent 36 police officers to escort the devotees on *parikramā* in Navadvīpa.

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S CONCERN FOR WOMEN DEVOTEES

On September 21, 1925, Prabhupāda gave a long lecture to the devotees assembled at the Gauṛīya Maṭh about how to lead an exemplary devotional life. An excerpt from that lecture follows:

All of you please perceive everything of this world as ingredients for serving Kṛṣṇa; everything of this world is actually meant for Kṛṣṇa's service. Please see the whole race of women as beloved consorts of Kṛṣṇa, and help them to always engage themselves in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Please do not consider them as objects of your sense enjoyment. They are to be enjoyed by Kṛṣṇa; they are never to be enjoyed by the living entities. Please do not see your fathers and mothers as a means to your own sense gratification, but see them as Kṛṣṇa's fathers and mothers. Please do not see your sons as a means to your own sense gratification, but see them as belonging to the group of servitors of Bāla-Gopāla. With your eyes please see the kadamba tree, the river Yamunā and its sandy bank, and the beauty of the full moon. You won't have any more mundane feelings; you will see Goloka, and the beauty of Goloka will be manifest in your home. Then you won't have any material feelings for your home. You will be relieved from the propensities of householder life.

Our maṭhs are being built at many places, and many sannyāsīs, vānaprasthas, gṛhasthas, and brahmachārīs are living there all the time and receiving the opportunity to learn spiritual conduct. But we have been trying for a long time to also give the mothers [women] the opportunity for devotional service. Of course, those who have the facility and opportunity for devotional service in their own homes do not need a separate residence.

But very often we hear that many of them get impeded in their devotional service due to bad association. It will be very beneficial for them if we can build Śrī Viṣṇupriyā-pallī ["pallī" means "neighborhood"] in Śrīdhām Māyāpura near the residence of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and if they can live there separately from their families and render devotional service. They actually belong to the group of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī [the wife of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who was left behind in Navadvīp when He took saṁnyāsa]. Therefore it is proper for them to live in the house of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and to serve Him under the shelter of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī. There should not be any bad association or mundane male association for them there. Only a few devotees like Īsān [the old devotee servant who took care of Śrī Śachīdevī and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī after Śrīman Mahāprabhu left] would stay at a distance and take care of them. It is necessary to have such an exemplary neighborhood so that the mothers [women] can read scripture every day, discuss devotional topics with each other, and have iṣṭa-goṣṭhī about devotional topics, so they can give up all luxury and live an exemplary, saintly life and always chant the holy name and take care of the ingredients of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's service and serve him in every way. —Saraswatī Jayasrī, p. 339

PUBLICATION OF NADIYA PRAKASH, 1926

In 1926, Śrīla Prabhupāda held nāma-saṅkīrtan for three days to celebrate the appearance day of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Thereafter this became an annual tradition.

One of Śrīla Prabhupāda's dear disciples, Śrīpāda Bhāgavata Janānanda Dāsa Brahmachārī, had disappeared the year before. In April 1926, Śrīla Prabhupāda established a maṭh in Chiruliyā in his memory and named it "Bhāgavat Janānanda Maṭh". Then he preached at different places in Bengal and sent his saṁnyāsī preachers to different places in Bengal, Bihār, Orissā, and northern and western India. He himself also travelled all over India to preach the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, to have discussions with scholars of religion, and to collect facts about the religious traditions of India.

Śrīla Prabhupāda also established the Paramahansa Maṭh in Naimiṣāranya, and he established Paravidyāpīṭh in Śrī Māyāpura. He installed the Deities of the āchārya and Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in the newly built temple of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh.

In October 1926, Śrīla Prabhupāda began publishing a new weekly spiritual magazine, *Nadiyā Prakāśa*, in both Bengali and

Vol. XXVIII, No. 1,

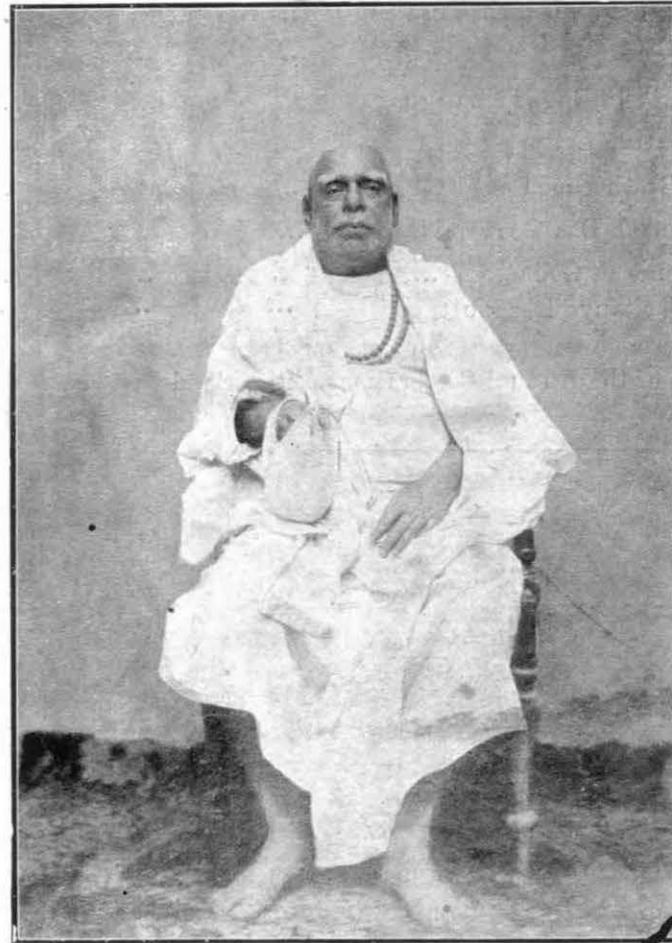
श्रीश्रीगुणोराज्ञे जयतः

June, 1930.

THE HARMONIST

OR

SREE SAJJANATOSHANI



SRILA THAKUR BHAKTIVINODE (FOUNDER OF THE HARMONIST)

EDITED BY PARAMAHANSA PARIBRAJAKACHARYYA

Sri Srimad BHAKTI SIDDHANTA SARASWATI Goswami Maharaj

English, at Śrī Bhāgavat Press, Krishnanagar. The joint editors of *Nadiyā Prakāśa* were Paṇḍita Pramoda Bhūṣana Chakravartī (Pranavānanda Brahmachārī) and Paṇḍita Śrīyukta Chaṇḍīcharaṇ Mukhopādhyāy. In its second year, Śrīla Prabhupāda turned it into a daily spiritual newspaper. From this time to its fourth year, Pranavānanda Brahmachārī was its editor. Then in 1930 Śrīla Prabhupāda made Pranavānanda Brahmachārī joint editor of *Gaurīya*, so Atīndanāth Bandyopādhyāy and Kṛṣṇakāntī Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Kusum Sramaṇ Mahārāj) became joint editors of *Nadiyā Prakāśa*.

PUBLISHING THE HARMONIST MAGAZINE, 1927

On June 15, 1927, Śrīla Prabhupāda started publishing *Sajjana Toṣaṇī* in English, Sanskrit, and Hindi. The English version was called *The Harmonist*. Its editor, Professor Niśikānta Sānnyāl (Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇās Bhaktisudhākar) of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack was a learned scholar and a talented writer. Śrīla Prabhupāda was extremely fond of him. Śrīpāda Bhaktisudhākar Prabhu used to offer his entire salary to Śrīla Prabhupāda each month. Śrīla Prabhupāda would then give it to

Śrīpāda Narahari Prabhu and tell him, "Now you manage your household [Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, Māyāpura] with this."

Under the expert editorship of Śrīpād a Bhaktisudhākar Prabhu, *The Harmonist* enjoyed the same fame and popularity as *Gauṛīya*. Śrīla Prabhupāda considered Śrīpād a Bhaktisudhākar Prabhu a strong pillar of his preaching mission, and before he left this world he expressed his gratitude to him. Many devotees who were proficient in English, such as Bhakti Pradīp Tīrtha Mahārāja, Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja, and Bhakti Saraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāja, regularly contributed to *The Harmonist*. From 1933 onwards, Śrīpāda Abhay Charan Prabhu (later Śrīmad Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāja) also contributed to *The Harmonist*. The British editor of a British-run newspaper of Calcutta sent a letter of appreciation to the editor of *The Harmonist*.

The following letter appeared in *Gauṛīya*, Vol. 14, No. 24, p. 383:

The Biosophical Institute
250 West 100th Street

New York City

December 10, 1935

Dear Sir,

Since we have been receiving your magazine *The Harmonist*, each issue has given

us new joy and inspiration. The spirit pervading the whole magazine is a most unusual one.

Sincerely yours

Sd/ Sylvia Goodwin,
Secretary to Dr. F. Kettner

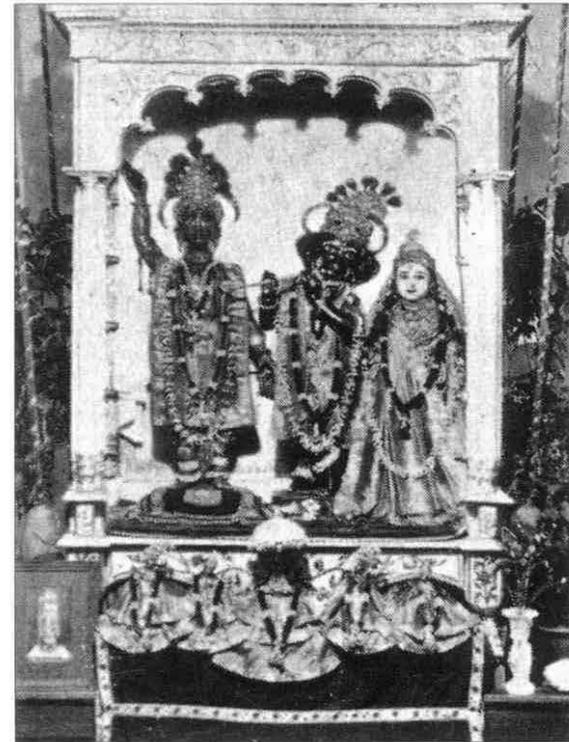
In September 1927, Śrīla Prabhupāda set forth to preach in North India in different places. Among them were Kāśī, Kānpur, Lucknow, Jaipur, Galatāparvat, Salimābād, Puṣkar, Ajmūr, Dwārkā, Sudāmāpurī, Girṅār Parvat, Prabhās, Avantī, Mathurā-maṅḍal, Indraprastha, Kurukṣetra, and Naimiṣāranya.

KURUKSHETRA, SRI CHAITANYA PADAPITH, 1928-1929

In 1928, Śrīla Prabhupāda edited the fourth edition of *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. He went to preach in different places of Āssām. On November 4, during the solar eclipse, he went to Kurukṣetra and, following the mood of separation of the *gopīs* and Mahāprabhu, he preached the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to millions of devotees who assembled there. At that time he installed a Deity of Śrīman Mahāprabhu at Śrī Vyāsa Gauṛīya Maṭh in Kurukṣetra and opened a spiritual exhibition ("Bhāgavat Pradarśanī") there. He gave Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja responsibility for the Kurukṣetra maṭh.

In 1929, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the Ekāyan Maṭh in Krishnanagar. In January he discussed Vaiṣṇava religion extensively with Professor Albert E. Suthers of Ohio State University. Śrīla Prabhupāda presented the concept of Vaiṣṇavism as extended and perfect Christianity. At first Professor Suthers was very skeptical and argumentative, but after long discussions he was very impressed by Śrīla Prabhupāda's deep, scholarly, and logical presentation. As a result he decided to visit Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birth site before he left. Later Śrīla Prabhupāda established a Gauṛīya Maṭh in Delhi.

Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to establish all the sites which Śrīman Mahāprabhu had visited as places of pilgrimage. He called them "Śrī Chaitanya Pādapīṭh" and selected 108 such places. He began this task in October 1929 and established the first two sites at Kānār Nāṭṣālā and Mandar. Later that year he preached extensively in Bihār, in such places as Bhāgalpur, Nālandā, and Rājgiri. Subsequently he went to Benares and interpreted Śrī Sanātana-Śikṣa (Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's instruction to Śrī Sanātana Goswāmī). Then Śrīla Prabhupāda set forth once more on his



North Indian preaching mission, and visited Faijābād, Ayodhyā, Naimiṣāranya, Karaṇā, Miśrik, Sītāpur, and Lucknow. Throughout North India, many took initiation from him.

On June 1, 1929, the first post office had opened in Māyāpura. At this time, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples had arranged to have electricity at Iśodyān and electric lights on the domes of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh.

THE MAYAPUR EXHIBITION, 1930

On February 3, 1930, Śrīla Prabhupāda arranged a spectacular spiritual exhibition at Māyāpura, which went on until March 17. The famous chemist, Sir Prafulla Chandra Rāy, opened the exhibition. Thousands flocked to see the exhibition, which contained many stalls depicting stories and lessons from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* through dioramas and paintings.

Śrī Jagabandhu Datta, a rich businessman of Calcutta (originally from Bānarīpārā, Bariśāl), had the good fortune of associating with some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples. He was an experienced and prudent man in many ways, and he watched the activities and conduct of the devotees at the Gauṛīya Maṭh with a keen eye. Previously he had seen and heard so-called devotees concocting their own philosophy to gratify their senses. Within a short time, he realized this was not the case here. Even though he was wealthy and successful, in the late 1920s he was overwhelmed with physical and emotional problems. He wanted some relief from his material miseries, and he came to visit Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was very merciful to



SRI JAGABANDHU BHAKTIRANJAN

him and spent many hours with him, speaking *hari-kathā* and explaining many things. Śrī Jagabandhu Datta was extremely impressed by Śrīla Prabhupāda's explanations. He began to have a clear concept of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's message of pure devotion. He said of Śrīla Prabhupāda, "What I have heard from him, I have not heard from anyone else." Sometimes he would invite Śrīla Prabhupāda to his home to deliver *hari-kathā* to his friends and relatives. Following is an excerpt from one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures at Śrī Jagabandhu Datta's house:

Śrī Gaurasundara lived in his own house in Navadvīpa only to arouse the devotional consciousness of the people who were attached to their family life. Again when he displayed his pastime of leaving home, that was also to enlighten the ignorant souls. He told his mother and his wife, 'Know Kṛṣṇa as your only son and husband.' Leaving his mother grieving for her son, and his helpless young wife grieving for her husband, he set forth for the eternal welfare of the poor, miserable, and fallen souls of the world. Giving up all his material duty and the vows he had taken at his wedding, he went for *kṛṣṇa-kīrtan*.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa-līlā*, departing from his household life, was not the same as Śākyasimha's [Gautama Buddha's] departure from his house, as Śākyasimha was motivated by the selfish desire to attain liberation for himself. Śrīman Mahāprabhu displayed his pastime of *sannyāsa* only to eradicate the eternal poverty of all living beings and to give them an eternal and unequalled gift. He himself was not lacking in anything. He is the only husband of the eternal race of women; He is the only son of the eternal mothers and fathers; He is the eternal friend and master of His servants.

It is not that Śrīman Mahāprabhu's magnanimous gift will remain confined within the perimeters of Bengal; nor is it due only to those who are born in brāhmaṇa families. People of all races—irrespective of whether they are sinful or pious, Hindus or non-Hindus; indeed, all the living entities of the whole world—can accept this magnanimous gift, which was never offered before, if they can give up their pride.

—Saraswatī Jayāśrī, p. 356

THE BAGBAZAR GAUDIYA MATH, 1930

Śrī Jagabandhu Datta begged Śrīla Prabhupāda to give him initiation, and Śrīla Prabhupāda granted his request, giving him the name "Jagabandhu Bhaktirañjana". Śrīpāda Bhaktirañjana Prabhu had no children to



Nagar Sankirtan at Ultodiñgi Junction Road, Calcutta

inherit his wealth, and he wanted to offer his wealth to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission. He wanted a specific service in which his wealth could be utilized, and he begged Śrīla Prabhupāda to give him that service. Śrīla Prabhupāda had been thinking of having a bigger building in Calcutta, where more devotees could stay and more people could come to attend lectures and *sañkīrtana*. He also wanted to have a printing press on the premises. So he expressed this desire to Śrīpāda Bhaktirañjana Prabhu.

Śrīpāda Bhaktirañjana Prabhu was ecstatic to have the opportunity to finance the new Gauṛīya Maṭh temple. This service became his life and soul. He bought a sizable piece of land in the heart of Calcutta. It was located near the Gaṅgā, on Kāliprasād Chakravartī Street in Bāgbāzār. Within two years, construction of the new temple was finished. It was a beautiful, palatial marble temple, with many rooms, a conference hall, a library, large kitchens, and a hall for the printing press.

On October 5, 1930, Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndhārvikā Giridhārī were taken on a chariot from the Gauṛīya Maṭh at No. 1 Ulṭodiñgi Junction Road to the new Bāgbāzār Gauṛīya Maṭh. A big *sañkīrtana* procession escorted Their Lordships all the

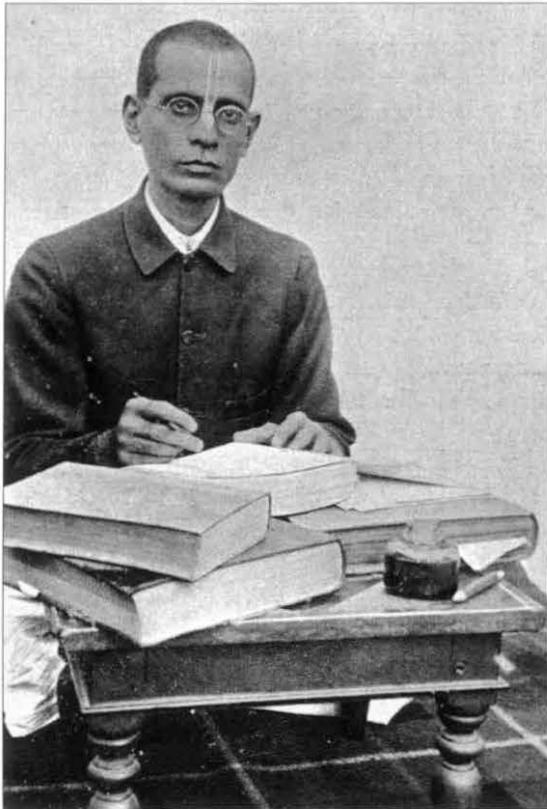
way. A large crowd followed the procession. It was a major event in Calcutta. It was described thus in *Gauṛīya*:

The city of Calcutta has been overwhelmed with joy today. Everyone forgot their daily tasks of earning their livelihood. When the tumultuous sound of *kīrtana* was heard on the streets of Calcutta, all the people, attracted by that sound, left whatever they were doing and came running into the street. The devotees following the chariot, headed by the *sannyāsīs*, were singing a special song composed [by Śrīla Prabhupāda] for this occasion, "pūjala raga patha gorava bhange, mātala harijana viṣaya rañge."

—*Gauṛīya*, Volume 9, No. 8

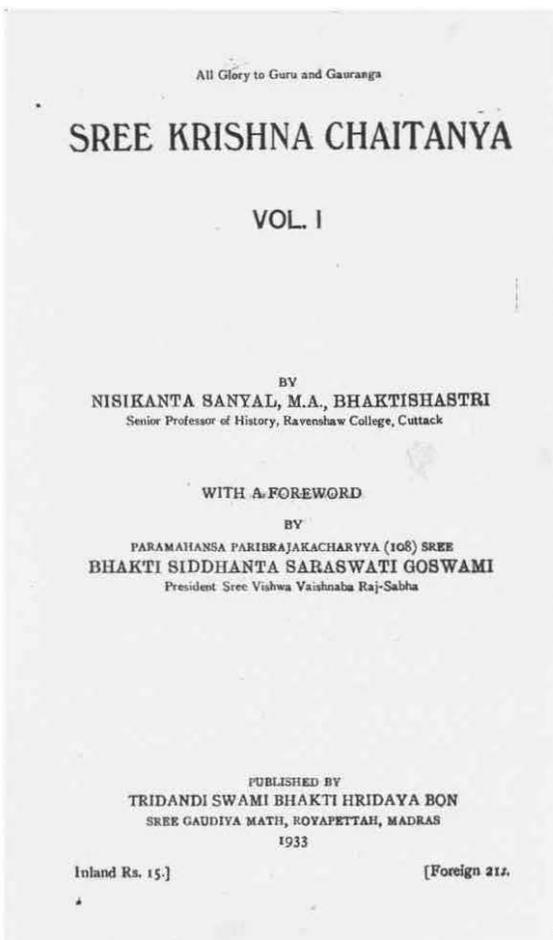
The gist of the song was as follows: "Today, the servants of Hari have become intoxicated by the joy of his divine pastime. They worshiped with great reverence the street on which He rode His chariot."

So many people came to the Gauṛīya Maṭh that day that as people went up the stairs, the iron banister was bent by the pressure of the crowd. Great festivities took place following the Deity installation, *ārati*, *hari-kathā*, and *prasādam*. Thousands of destitute people were also fed sumptuous *prasādam* that day. Śrīla Prabhupāda said in his *hari-kathā*:



Professor Nishikantha Sanyal,

author of Sree Krishna Chaitanya



Now we have only procured a seat [for hari-kathā]. We have built a castle to preach about the Lord by spending someone's entire savings of a lifetime. But we have to protect ourselves in this castle from the association of materialistic people; we have to defend ourselves from the confusion of this age of Kali (the age of quarrel and hypocrisy). So we have to publish and distribute many more books. Only if we can construct the temple in the form of books and in the form of ideal lives can the idea of devotional service remain permanently in this world.

In the Bāgbāzār Gauṛīya Maṭh, Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching mission gained new momentum. More devotees were staying at the maṭh now, and more people were coming to listen to hari-kathā. The professors and students from prestigious nearby colleges, such as Scottish Church College and Presidency College, were coming to listen to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lectures. Śrīla Prabhupāda had a core group of eighteen sannyāsīs for preaching and organizing. The sannyāsīs were always travelling and preaching, and they only stayed at the maṭh for a few days at a time while en route to their next destination.

Shortly after the construction of the Gauṛīya Maṭh temple, on November 19, Śrīpād Jagabandhu Bhaktirañjan left this material world. Śrīla Prabhupāda was deeply saddened by the departure of his dear disciple. By his instruction, every year the Gauṛīya Maṭh would celebrate the disappearance day of Śrīpāda Jagabandhu Bhaktirañjana Prabhu, and the Gauṛīya would publish a special issue dedicated to his memory. As long as Śrīla Prabhupāda lived in this mortal world, he glorified Śrīpāda Jagabandhu Prabhu with great affection in many of his letters, speeches, and articles.

Before he left this world, Śrīpāda Jagabandhu Prabhu wrote a poem to Śrīla Prabhupāda. The translation of that poem is as follows: "What can I give you Gurudeva? The wealth I can give you is yours. You are my treasure and I belong to you. By giving you your property I have nothing to lose. You knew about the sadness in my heart, who else could I talk to? By giving you what belongs to you, I become yours. Jagabandhu dāsa says, 'O you who are the land of nectar personified, you have everything. All I have is you.'"

SOUTH INDIA, 1930

In December 1930, Śrīla Prabhupāda went on a preaching mission in South India.

Among the places he visited were Kurmakṣetra, Siṁhāchal, Kabhur, and Maṅgalgiri. He established Śrī Chaitanya Pāda-pīṭh at Maṅgalgiri. Many distinguished high officials, scholars, and professionals were attracted to the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu as preached by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

EMPHASIS ON BOOK PUBLICATION

Śrīla Prabhupāda called his printing press Bṛhat Mṛdāṅga (the big drum). During saṅkīrtana the sound of the ordinary clay drum (mṛdāṅga) can be heard only in the immediate vicinity. But the divine message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu can be spread all over the world through the publication of books.

At the opening ceremony of the Bāgbāzār Gauṛīya Maṭh, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "...to establish internal hari-bhajan in this world, quite a few books have to be written and published. The temple which is within the books and the temple which is within the devotees are more important than the temple built with bricks and stones, because by constructing such temples hari-kathā can be preached in this world much longer."

Śrīla Prabhupāda had among his disciples a very talented team of writers and editors, who dedicated their lives to his publication mission. Among them were: Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, Śrī Paramānanda Vidyāratna, Śrī Bhaktisudhākara Prabhu (Professor Niṣikānta Sanyāl), Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja, and Śrī Pranavānanda Pratnavidyālaṅkāra (later Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja).

After the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, another name would be added to this list, that of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, who published beautifully designed English translations of *Bhagavad-gītā* (as *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*), *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta sindhu* (as *Nectar of Devotion*), and *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. These books would capture the hearts of millions of people all over the world.

The printing presses of the Gauṛīya Maṭh were busy night and day printing books, magazines, and pamphlets. It is not possible within the narrow scope of this chapter to list all the books published by the Gauṛīya Maṭh.

BHAKTIVINODE INSTITUTE AND SAT-SHIKSHA EXHIBITION, 1931

On April 3, 1931, Śrīla Prabhupāda opened a new high school in Śrīdhām

Māyāpura, called the Bhaktivinode Institute. At a large assembly there he gave a lecture about material education and spiritual knowledge. Later he went to preach at the resort of Dārjeeling in north Bengal, in the foothills of the Himālayas. On September 6, during the celebration of the Gauṛīya Maṭh's anniversary, Śrīla Prabhupāda opened a big exhibition in Calcutta, the Sat-Śikṣā exhibition.

REJECTION OF SAHAJIYA IMITATIONISTS

Śrīla Prabhupāda preached against the abominable practices and concepts of the pseudo-Vaiṣṇava *sampradayas* (*sahajiyās*). Inside the Gauṛīya Maṭh as well, he kept a vigilant eye out against any potential for imitation in the path of devotion. Śrīla Prabhupāda preached in very forceful language against any false external display of devotion. He made it very clear in his lectures that devotion for the Supreme Lord is not some cheap sentiment. Devotion means submission to Gurudeva, self-discipline, self-sacrifice, and wholehearted effort to render devotional service. Unless one is an eternally liberated soul, one cannot attain the platform of spontaneous love (*rāgānugā bhakti*) without first going through all the stages of regulated practice (*vaidhi bhakti*).

Even though Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted his disciples to become knowledgeable about scripture, so they could become expert preachers, he did not encourage new devotees to read the intimate pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. He made it clear that if a devotee prematurely enters that realm of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes which can be understood only by advanced devotees, then such an act of trespassing will do more harm than good to his *bhajan* life. If one with a propensity for sense-gratification reads about Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's intimate pastimes, then his enjoying propensity will only increase, because he will not realize their transcendental nature. This will be very detrimental to his devotional life. Śrīla Prabhupāda did not even encourage new disciples to read the tenth canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. He also disapproved of indiscriminate displays of paintings of *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā*. An article on this subject, entitled "Alekhya," appeared in *Gauṛīya*, Volume 13, No. 41. Śrīla Prabhupāda made it very clear that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not an object of sense enjoyment, but the object of worship and service.

Every spring a festival called "Vasanta-gān" ("Songs of Spring") or *dhulaṭ* used to take place in the town of Navadvīp. In different public places of Navadvīp, music concerts



would be held in which professional singers would sing songs about the intimate pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. These concerts were attended by many local people as well as people from East Bengal. During the concerts, members of the audience would become emotionally aroused and start to dance, roll on the ground, and so forth. Every year some scandals would arise in connection with these concerts. When the festival first started, the audience consisted mostly of uneducated women. Subsequently some educated people, such as writers, also started attending these concerts. They tried to rationalize listening to these songs with the excuse that Mahāprabhu used to like the songs of Jayadeva, Chaṇḍidāsa, Vidyāpati, Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, and Rāya Rāmānanda. But Śrīla Prabhupāda quoted from the scriptures written by the Goswāmīs, and cited the examples of the conduct of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and his associates, to establish that if one who is in an illusioned state listens to these songs composed by liberated souls, it is only sense gratification in the name of *śravan-kīrtana*. He particularly mentioned the history over the previous few hundred years of the community of *sahajiyās*, which confirmed this fact. For some people these music concerts were a means to develop reputations as *bhaktas* (devotees) or *rasiks* (connoisseurs of *rasa*), and for others they were a means for commercial exploitation of ignorant people. But by indulging in these practices, one can be deviated from the path of *bhakti*, which is the supreme goal of life. This was discussed in detail in an article called "Vasanta-gān" which appeared in *Gauṛīya*, Volume 1, No. 22.

Just as Śrīla Prabhupāda was opposed to the enjoying mentality, he also rejected the

idea of renunciation for its own sake—without consideration of whether it is favorable for one's devotional service. Instead, he propagated the principle of *yukta-vairāgya* (positive renunciation), according to which one gives up his enjoying propensity but accepts everything that is favorable for devotional service.

NORTH INDIA AND PUBLISHING IN HINDI, 1931

In October, Śrīla Prabhupāda was invited to preach in Benares at the Mint Palace. Later he went to Lucknow and introduced a new Hindi magazine, *Bhāgavat*. In November he sent one of his *sannyāsī* preachers to the Viceroy of India, Lord Willingdon, in New Delhi. On November 17, he celebrated the anniversary festival of the Delhi Gauṛīya Maṭh for the first time. On December 6, he installed Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda there.

VEHEMENT OPPOSITION TO IMPERSONALISM

Following in the footsteps of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke out against impersonalism through his preaching mission. The impersonalist religious sect of Bengal, called the "Brahma Samāj", which was founded by Rājā Rāmmohan Rāy in the 19th century, was the greatest opponent of Vaiṣṇavism and the idea of a personal God.

Once the instructor of the Sādharaṇ Brahma Samāj of Calcutta, Śrī Hemchandra Sarkār, came to the Gauṛīya Maṭh to find out about Śrī Chaitanya Deva and His successor *āchāryas* from Śrīla Prabhupāda. During the discussion that followed, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "It is the concept of the Brahmas that is based on idolatry. They have opposed gross

idolatry but they have accepted subtle idolatry. The idol that is made by the material mind on the basis of a material concept of the formless Brahma is more dangerous than the idolatry of demigod worshippers. Real Vaiṣṇavas are not such idolaters. Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism is clearly different from the two kinds of idolatry: iconolatry and iconomachy. The pure Vaiṣṇavas never worship some doll made of wood or clay or a doll fabricated by the material mind. The worshipable Lord of the Vaiṣṇavas is not some imaginary temporary thing."

Hearing this, Śrī Hemchandra Sarkār said, "Then don't you worship idols?" Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "We do not worship any imaginary form or doll whom we are going to break later. We worship the eternal deity form that is manifested by the transcendental knowledge potency of the Supreme Lord, whose potencies are inconceivable."

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda made Śrī Hemchandra Sarkār understand the difference between idolatry and deity worship through a logical presentation. Finally Śrī Hemchandra Sarkār said, "But we see that the Vaiṣṇavas in our village worship many demigods." Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Considering them to be real Vaiṣṇavas, you criticize us, but they cannot touch the real Vaiṣṇavas or real Vaiṣṇavism. To ascertain the real form of Vaiṣṇavism on the basis of its degenerated form is not an intelligent act. Vaiṣṇavas never become gross or subtle idolaters by worshipping some imagined gross temporary form, as the demigod worshippers do, or some imagined and temporary subtle form or idea, as the impersonalists do. One imagines the absence of God's embodiment of eternity, knowledge, and bliss and of His inconceivable potency by giving him an imagined form based on a material concept or making him formless. This is against the injunctions of the Vedas. Humans have no right to expand their imaginations by thinking that just because God does not have material senses or form, He cannot have transcendental senses or form. Just because the Vedas have denied the material form of Brahma, some people have thought the Supreme Lord cannot have a transcendental form which is an embodiment of eternity, knowledge, and bliss either. On one hand they are saying 'Brahma', indicating that this worshipable truth is greater than themselves, but on the other hand they are trying to measure that great reality. Rājā Rāmmohan Rāy has protested against the ignorant concepts of someone with the title of 'Goswāmī'. But he did not hear about Vaiṣṇavism from a real Vaiṣṇava āchārya—this

we can prove with hundreds of logical statements." (*Saraswatī Jayaśrī*, pp. 348–350)

PREACHING IN SOUTH INDIA, 1932

Śrīla Prabhupāda went on an extensive preaching mission in South India in 1932. He had already sent some of his disciples to preach in South India. Among them were Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja and Śrīpāda Hayagrīva Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja).

On January 10, 1932, Prabhupāda went to Mādrās with twenty disciples. A large party of high government officials were waiting to receive him there. Among them was the mayor of Mādrās, Mr. T. S. Rāmaswāmī Āyar. A large *saṅkīrtan* procession accompanied Śrīla Prabhupāda to the Mādrās Gauṛīya Maṭh in Gopālpuram, and there some of the officials gave speeches honoring Śrīla Prabhupāda. On January 23, Śrīla Prabhupāda installed deities at the Mādrās Gauṛīya Maṭh. He also laid the cornerstone of the new temple at Rayāpetṭā. On January 27, the governor of Mādrās, Sir George Frederick Stanley, came to the Mādrās Gauṛīya Maṭh to lay the cornerstone of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kīrtan Hall.

Śrīla Prabhupāda preached with great success in Mādrās and surrounding areas of South India. Many people took initiation from him. Then he went back to Māyāpur in time for Śrī Navadwīp *parīkramā*. This year, his disciples took such examinations as the Bhakti-śāstri. The purpose of these examinations was to make Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples familiar with the intimate details of all aspects of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism.

On May 23, Śrīla Prabhupāda returned to Mādrās. This time he met with the āchāryas of different *saṁpradāyas* and explained Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism to them. Later he also preached at Uṭkāmand, Mysore, and Kabhur.

GLORIFICATION OF SRIMATI RADHARANI

When asked "Who are the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas?" Śrīla Prabhupāda replied that they are the devotees of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, p. 236). He called himself Śrī Vārṣabhānavī-dayita dāsa (the servant of the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī).

He said that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is the transcendental energy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the personification of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pleasure potency (*hlādinī-svarūpā parā śakti*), is the spiritual master of all devotees. Indeed, She is even Kṛṣṇa's Guru: Kṛṣṇa learns to be an actor and dancer as

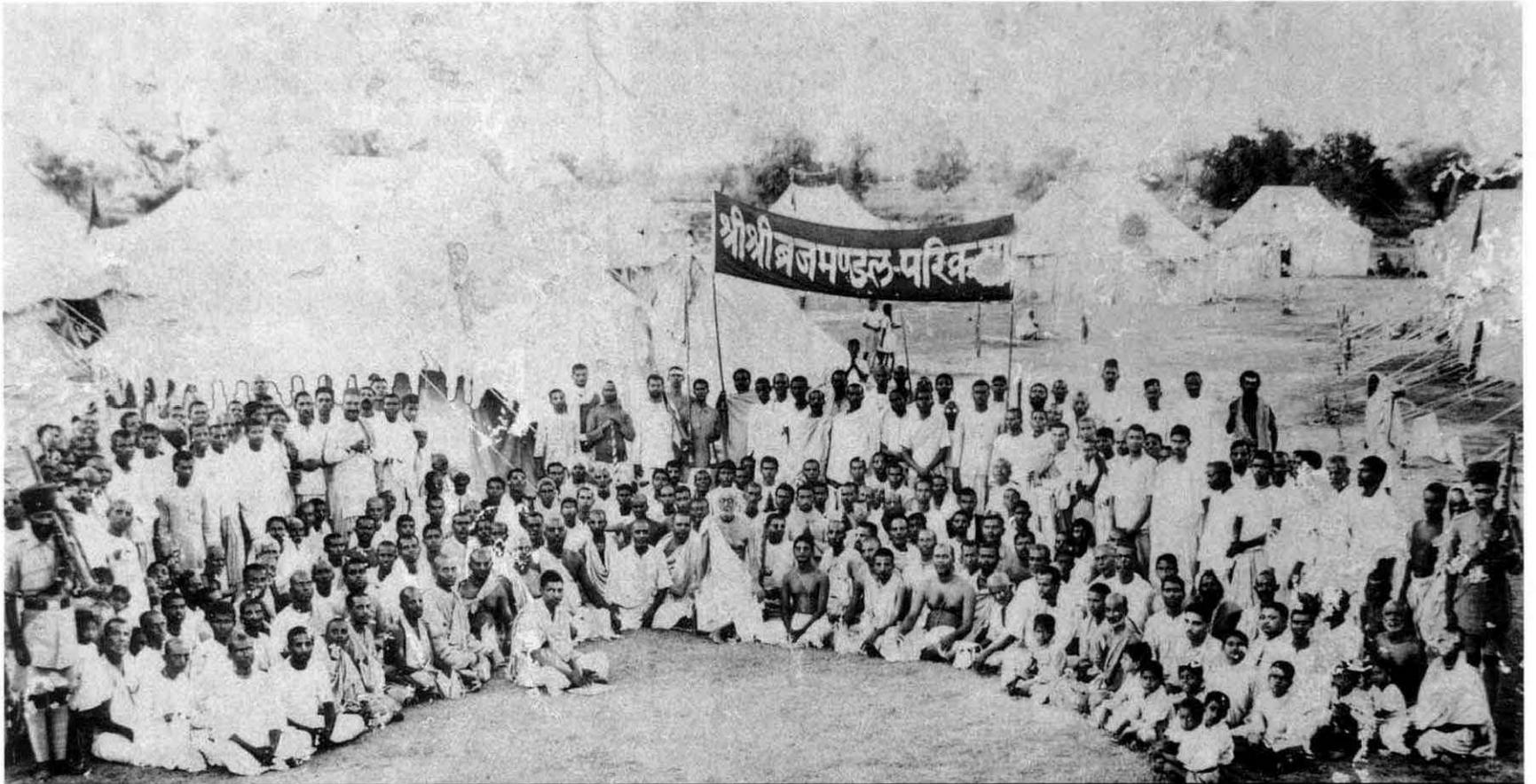
Her disciple. All the pure devotees who are not worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mellow of conjugal relationship (*madhura rasa*) know Lord Nityānanda to be their original spiritual master. But the original spiritual master of those who worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *madhura rasa* is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* p. 27)



BON MAHARAJA WITH LORD ZETLAND IN ENGLAND

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort; She is the crest jewel of the *gopīs*. No one is more dear to Kṛṣṇa than Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is not inferior to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in any way. It is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself who enjoys Himself in two separate forms, as the enjoyer and the enjoyed. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty is so stunning that He Himself becomes enchanted by His own beauty. But if the beauty of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī were not greater than that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, She could not enchant Kṛṣṇa, who can enchant the whole universe. That is why She is called Bhuvan-mohan-mohinī. She is the light of the full moon of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, (Kṛṣṇachandra). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the sum total of all ecstasy, all beauty. He is the original reservoir of all wealth, prowess, and knowledge. So the greatness of Rādhārāṇī, who is the *āśraya* and *viśaya* of this most perfect Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is beyond the limit of human knowledge—even beyond the limit of understanding of many liberated souls. (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* pp. 330–1)

Whenever Śrīla Prabhupāda talked about Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, he would become overwhelmed with the symptoms of deep loving ecstasy. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī's famous composition *Vilāpa-Kusumāñjali* consists of verses addressed to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in the mood of intense separation, as Śrīla Dāsa Goswāmī is an intimate servitor of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in his eternal identity as Śrī



Sri Vraja Maṇḍala Parikramā, 1932

Rati-mañjari. (The mañjaris are young pre-teen girls who serve Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.) Śrīla Prabhupāda could quote from memory all 104 verses of *Vilāp-Kusumāñjali*, and tears would flow from his eyes. He was always in a mood of separation from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Every Rādhāṣṭamī day (the appearance day of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī), Śrīla Prabhupāda would display the symptoms of deep ecstasy while talking about Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Following is an excerpt from a lecture given by him on the day of Rādhāṣṭamī in 1931 at the Sāraswat Nāṭmandir of Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh.

Let that personification of supreme magnanimity, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is always eager to collect the mercy of the Supreme Lord on behalf of all living entities, appear in our hearts and make Her presence known. Let Her appearance be our object of worship. Without submission to the one whom Govinda considers to be everything to Him (sarvasva), we do not realize the meaning of the word "sarva". "Govinda sarvasva"—"śva" means "one's own", "śva" means "wealth". If we have the one who is Govinda's own wealth—the one who makes Him wealthy; that wealth is everything to Govinda—if She becomes the object of our worship, then we will understand what worship is. If after reading the 18,000 verses of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam we do not come to know about Her, then our reading was in vain.

If by some unknown sukṛti we get the

association of those who are close to Śrī Vṛṣabhānumandinī (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī), if we are fortunate enough to hear about Her, then we can get the inspiration to proceed towards our supremely beneficial goal. She is everything to the son of Nanda who is the reservoir of all ecstasy, and we will never attain devotional service to Govinda without serving Her and Her servitors.

—Prabhupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī, pp. 99–100

SRI VRAJA-MANDAL PARIKRAMA, 1932

It is in this mood of separation from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that Śrīla Prabhupāda went on Vraja-maṇḍala praikramā. In October, Śrīla Prabhupāda started his Vraja-maṇḍala parikramā with many devotees. He circumambulated the Vraja-maṇḍala along its 32-mile perimeter. At each place of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, he gave *hari-kathā*. For the benefit of people who spoke other languages, he himself and many of his followers gave *hari-kathā* in different languages. Śrīla Prabhupāda explained Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī's *Upadeśāmṛta* to the assembled Vrajavāsīs and scholars.

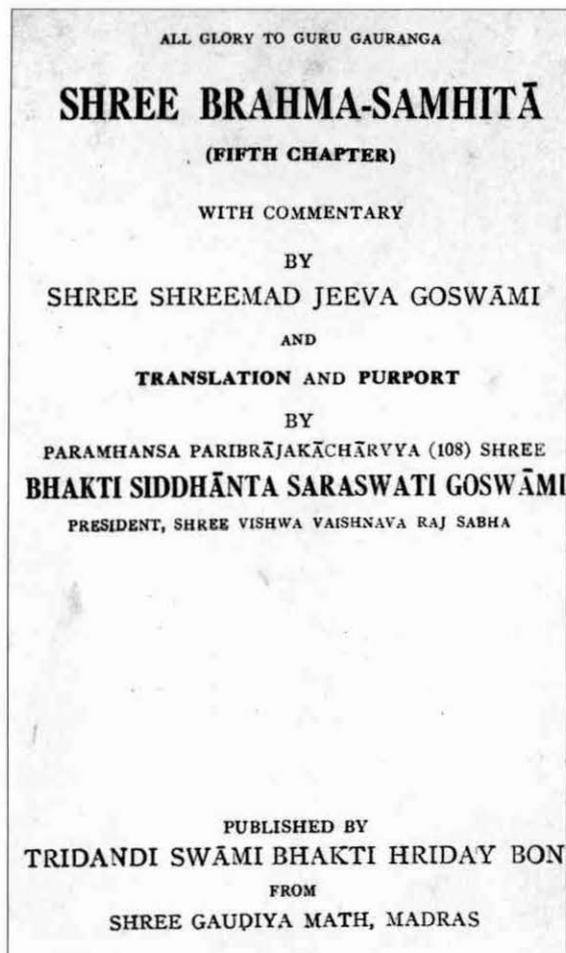
On November 4, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Haridwār to lay the cornerstone of the Sāraswat Gauṛīya Maṭh. By his request, the governor of Yukta Pradesh, Sir William Malcolm Haley, laid the cornerstone of Śrī Rūpa Gauṛīya Maṭh.

PREACHING MISSION TO THE WEST, 1933

In 1933, the English book *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya*, by Professor Nīśikānt Sānnyāl, was published in a beautifully bound edition. It was Śrīla Prabhupāda's desire to send a preaching mission to Europe now. Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to preach Mahāprabhu's message all over the world. He used to tell his disciples, "We'll go on our preaching mission, riding horses, elephants, trains, boats, and airplanes." His dream of preaching all over the West was later greatly fulfilled by his disciple, Śrīmad Abhay Charaṇāravinda Bhaktivedānta Swāmī, who took initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1933 in Āllāhābād.

On March 18, 1933, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave instruction to Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāj, Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja, and Śrīpāda Samvidānanda Dās Bhakti-śāstri as they were departing to preach in Europe. At a meeting that was arranged to see them off, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave a farewell address entitled *Āmār Kathā* ("My Message").

In the beginning of May, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples established a preaching center in Kensington, London. At the end of that month, Śrīla Prabhupāda got letters inquiring into spiritual matters from Lord Zetland, who had formerly been the governor of Bengal, and the Marquis of Ludian, to which



he replied. In June he got letters of appreciation from Lord Irwin's secretary, the Marquis of Ludian, the editor of the *London Times*, and Sir Stanley Jackson. In July, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples met with King George V and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace, and also with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In November, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples went to preach in Germany and France. At the end of December they returned to London. As one can imagine, this was not a very favorable time to preach Śrīman Mahāprabhu's mission in Europe. Traumatized by the First World War, the West was plagued by the Great Depression, international tension, and the rise of totalitarianism. Furthermore, all of these factors had combined to create a deep cynicism about God and spirituality, which was manifest in the popularity of thinkers such as Nietzsche and Freud. The atmosphere, particularly in Germany, was one of extreme anxiety, due to the recent collapse of many aspects of the predominant world view, from the way war was waged to the workings of the universe.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE GAUDIYA MATH

In the meantime, preaching in India was going on in full swing, in the midst of the

great national current of the freedom movement. In the same year the Bāgbāzār Gauḍīya Maṭh was opened (1930), throughout India Mahātmā Gāndhī's followers took an uncompromising stand upholding his nonviolent noncooperation with the British Government. That year Gāndhī went on his famous Salt March, which was a decisive turn in the march towards freedom. In Bengal, the guerilla groups also carried on their subversive activities. That same year three young Bengali freedom fighters—Binay, Bādal, and Dinesh—launched an open attack on British officials at the Writers' Building in Calcutta. In the chaos that followed, two of them were captured (of whom one later died from his wounds and the other was executed), and one managed to commit suicide. In the heart of Bengal emotions were running high against the British. It might be considered amazing that at a time like this, the Gauḍīya Maṭh managed to win such a favorable position among the educated people of Bengal—that so many people came forward to somehow participate in this mission of pure devotion. Śrīla Prabhupāda hoisted the flag of the Gauḍīya Maṭh to a great height, and he upheld its goal as the most sublime destination of human birth.

Regarding the contribution of the Gauḍīya Maṭh, Śrīla Prabhupāda said:

In the history of spirituality, how many other historical events of great revolution, like the preaching of the Gauḍīya Maṭh, have taken place, the historians of spirituality will determine. What a great revolution this is, that everyone in the Gauḍīya Maṭh is dedicating themselves to preach something that at first sight seems completely unique in the history of the human race. They [the devotees] are not afraid of thousands of people who are proud of their knowledge. Nor are they ready to indulge the deceitfulness and debauchery of the lecherous. The Gauḍīya Maṭh is ready to put to death the mentality of the innumerable living entities of the world who are averse to Kṛṣṇa and who are devising many plans to steal the property of the Supreme Sovereign. They [the devotees] do not want one penny from this world [for themselves]; they want to give the world that which is complete. They want to completely give them Chaitanya Deva, who is the full transcendental consciousness.

PREACHING IN INDIA, 1933

That year, Śrīla Prabhupāda preached extensively in Bombay, and the Bombay

Gauḍīya Maṭh preaching center was established on Bābulnāth Road. In August, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave a lecture about one of his books, *The Vedānta: Its Morphology and Ontology*. Later he preached in Navadvīpa. In November he preached extensively in Bihār and Orissā. At the same time, preaching went on in Karāchi, in present-day Pākistān.

BUILDING A NEW TEMPLE AT YOGAPITH, 1934

In January 1934, the King of Tripurā, Mahārāja Vīrvikramkiśor Devavarma Māṇikyā Bāhādur, came to the Gauḍīya Maṭh with his retinue and gave a lecture in appreciation of the Gauḍīya Maṭh's preaching mission. On February 4, on the occasion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *vyāsa-pūjā*, a seminar took place in London, over which Lord Zetland presided. On March 18, Śrīla Prabhupāda laid the cornerstone of the new Yogapīṭh temple in Māyāpur. On April 24, Lord Zetland opened the Gauḍīya Mission Society in London. On May 6, the well-known archeologist, Sir Ramāprasād Chanda, gave a lecture at the Gauḍīya Maṭh called "Navadvīpa At the Time of Śrī Chaitanya."

One of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples, Śrīyukta Sakhicharaṇa Rāy Bhaktivijaya, financed the construction of the Yogapīṭh temple in Māyāpur. Śrīla Prabhupāda greatly appreciated this service. Before he left this world, Śrīla Prabhupāda told Śrīpāda Sakhicharaṇ Rāy Bhaktivijaya that his life was successful, as he had done a great service to Śrīdhām Māyāpura.

On June 13, while the foundation was being excavated, a four-handed Deity of Lord Viṣṇu manifested Himself from the ground. Prabhupāda expressed his opinion that this deity was worshiped by Śrī Jagannātha Miśra. The archeologist Ramāprasād Chanda declared the Deity to be quite ancient.

On August 14, deities were installed at the Pāṭnā Gauḍīya Maṭh. On September 1, on the day of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, *Saraswatī Jayāśrī*, a biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda, was published. Different sections of the book were written by different disciples, and the descriptions of many incidents were quoted from the memoirs of other disciples and from *Gauḍīya*. The principal writers of *Saraswatī Jayāśrī* were Śrīpād Paramānanda Vidyāratna, Śrīpād Kuṅjavihārī Vidyābhūṣan, Śrīpād Ananta Vāsudeva Prabhu, Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, and Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja.

In October, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to

Mathurā with many devotees to observe Kārtik-vrata, and he established the practice of śravan-kīrtan of *aṣṭa-kālīya līlā* (hearing and chanting of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes during the eight periods of the day). On December 6, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciple from Andhra Pradesh, Śrīyukta Y. Jagannātham, published *Śrī Chaitanya Śikṣāmṛta* in Telegu.

EXTRAORDINARY PREACHING ORGANIZATION

Śrīla Prabhupāda's unique and unprecedented contribution to the world of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism did not consist solely of his own greatness, but also included the extraordinary preaching organization that he envisioned, built, and nurtured. He alone could bring a spiritual revolution to Bengal and to India—indeed, to the world—but he wanted to leave behind a magnificent spiritual legacy, in the form of a group of dedicated souls who would carry on his mission in his absence in the face of seemingly insurmountable difficulties. He attracted these pure hearts, taught and trained them, and left them behind him to spread his movement throughout the inevitable advancement of Kali-yuga in future decades. Even under the shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet, they had to face many tests and trials, but with Śrīla Prabhupāda's divine guidance, ultimately fate favored them.

In the Gauṛīya Maṭh, devotees lived very simply. Sumptuous feasts were offered to the Deities on festival days to feed mahāprasādam to the guests and to the beggars and destitutes. What the devotees ate every day was nourishing and satisfying, but plain. Their austerity was unsurpassed. They didn't have more than two sets of ordinary clothes each. In eating, sleeping, living, and travelling, they tried to do with the bare minimum. Every penny that came to the maṭh was recorded, and so was every penny that was spent. Some of these financial statements, which were given in complete detail, can be seen in the old issues of *Gauṛīya*. In Prabhupāda's Gauṛīya Maṭh, his disciples lived in an atmosphere of deep mutual affection and respect. Everyone was always extremely busy with their respective service, and transcendently happy and peaceful.

Anyone coming to the Gauṛīya Maṭh would be awed by the divine personality of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and then impressed by his team of dedicated disciples. The disciples of a guru are known as his *vaibhāva* (wealth), and Śrīla Prabhupāda was certainly a very wealthy spiritual master. This wealth of his was "in the form of ideal characters." Śrīla Prabhupāda's

disciples were known for their unending enthusiasm for preaching, their undefeatable scholarship, their sincere humility, their strong moral character, and their total dedication to serve the mission of Gurudeva. All Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples who stayed at the different maṭhs were intelligent, talented, hard-working, and knowledgeable about scripture.

The core of Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching mission consisted of eighteen *sannyāsīs*:

Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja
 Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja
 Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja
 Bhakti Sarvasya Giri Mahārāja
 Bhakti Sambandha Turyāśramī Mahārāja
 Bhakti Viveka Bharatī Mahārāja
 Bhakti Śrīrūpa Purī Mahārāja
 Bhakti Prakāśa Araṇya Mahārāja
 Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhastinemi Mahārāja
 Bhakti Bhūdeva Śrautī Mahārāja
 Bhakti Svarūpa Parvata Mahārāja
 Bhakti Prasuna Bodhāyana Mahārāja
 Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānasa Mahārāja
 Bhakti Sambala Bhāgavata Mahārāja
 Bhakti Vijñāna Āśrama Mahārāja
 Bhakti Sudhīra Yāchaka Mahārāja
 Bhakti Vaibhava Sāgara Mahārāja
 Bhakti Vardhana Sāgara Mahārāja

They were all expert preachers, and some of them were great scholars, such as Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānasa Mahārāja, who had been the court *paṇḍita* of Orissā and Bhakti Sarvasya Giri Mahārāja whom Śrīla Prabhupāda sent to speak with the Viceroy of India.

Śrīla Prabhupāda called Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja "Śāstranipun [expert on scripture] Śrīdhara Mahārāja". Śrīmad Śrīdhara Mahārāja was a talented writer of Bengali, English, and Sanskrit. When he wrote his glorification of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda described his style as "happy style". Śrīla Prabhupāda also said of this verse to Śrīpāda Aprākṛta Prabhu, "I am satisfied that what I came to say will remain after me; I find in this verse the *siddhānta* (perfect conclusion)." Śrīla Prabhupāda noted the highly philosophical content of Śrīdhara Mahārāja's lectures, and when he himself delivered *hari-kathā* it would always give him great satisfaction to see Śrīdhara Mahārāja in the audience.

Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja was also noted for his scholarship. He translated the *Bhagavad-gītā* into English and wrote quite a few other books in English. His powerful lectures in Dacca became legendary. Śrīla



SRILA KRISHNADAS BABAJI MAHARAJA

Prabhupāda sent him to preach in the West, along with Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāj. Śrīmad Bon Mahārāja's English lectures were so well-reputed that the mere mention of his name would attract high government officials to attend *hari-kathā*.

Śrīmad Bhakti Saraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāja was also famous for his scholarship and his lectures. Śrīmad Yāyāvāra Mahārāja was known for his ability to quote scripture. Among the brahmachārī preachers, Śrīpād Hayagrīva Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja) and Śrīpād Siddhasvarūpa Brahmachārī were known for their preaching ability. Śrīpāda Hayagrīva Brahmachārī was instrumental, along with Śrīmad Śrīdhara Mahārāja, in opening *maṭhs* in Āssām and Mādrās and many places in India.

Śrīpād Svādhikārānanda Brahmachārī (later Śrīmad Kṛṣṇadās Bābājī Mahārāja) was also an expert preacher. He was known for his extreme simplicity, incomparable humility, and very austere lifestyle. He was always chanting and singing, and was always in an extremely happy mood. It was impossible to offend him in any way. Pride and anger could not come anywhere near him. Everybody loved him and he loved everybody. He used to make small, inexpensive pamphlets of Śrīla Prabhupāda's



SRILA BHAKTI PRADIP TIRTHA MAHARAJA

lectures and so forth, and distribute them widely during his preaching trips. He was very dear to Śrīla Prabhupāda. He was a very expert singer, and knew many songs and verses by heart. Śrīla Prabhupāda said in one poem, *kanaka kāmīnī, pratiṣṭhā bāghīnī, chhāriyāchhe yāre sei ta' vaiṣṇava*—“one who has been released from the clutches of the three tigers representing money, women, and personal ambition is a Vaiṣṇava”. By the light of this statement, every devotee who met Śrīpāda Svādhikārānanda Brahmachārī thought of him as a Vaiṣṇava.

Prabhupāda always stressed the importance of preaching. Once Śrīpāda Hayagrīva Brahmachārī asked Śrīla Prabhupāda whether they should learn the local language while preaching in South India. Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “You have to preach in the language you know [in common with the South Indians, e.g., English and Hindi]. I cannot let you waste your precious time learning a new language.” Śrīla Prabhupāda sent his preachers all over India and Burma, and to England, France, Germany, and the United States.

Śrīla Prabhupāda told his disciples:

Please preach the kīrtana of the Supreme Lord, even if in doing so you have to incur debt; then in order to pay off that debt, you will have to be even more engaged in sevā. When your creditors put pressure on you, you will be forced to beg more for

alms. Again, as the pious householders will not give you alms unless your character and conduct are pure, you will be forced to preserve a pure lifestyle with great determination and care. I will not leave one penny for you, so that in future you won't indulge in laziness and you won't be able to give up your devotional lives full of hari-kīrtana and hari-sevā.

The maṭh is the center of hari-kīrtana, and hari-kīrtana is life and consciousness. To ensure that there is no place for laziness, bad conduct, trivial thought, gossip, or vulgar desire in the maṭh, you have to go from door to door, where your hari-kīrtana will be tested by the public. When the public will think that they are the givers of alms and you are the receivers of alms—in other words, that their status is higher than yours—they will criticize you in many ways, thinking you are objects of their mercy. Perhaps some of them will also be ready to kick you out. Then, on one hand, you will be able to become ṭṭnād api sunīcha (humbler than a blade of grass) and mānada (respectful to others), and on the other hand, you will take great care to make your lives and characters pure and exemplary. Furthermore, what will be beneficial for you is this: as you will correct the mistakes of the common people by citing the message of sādhu, śāstra, and guru-varga, you will not make those same mistakes.

Please do not be upset if someone criticizes you personally. But your guru-varga, śāstra, and mahājans are completely faultless, supremely liberated, and eternal associates of the Lord. If, due to ignorance, someone criticizes them, then you should correct that person's mistakes by telling them the real truth. This will be very beneficial for both you and the ignorant people. If you become lazy about begging for alms from door to door to collect ingredients for hari-kīrtana, and if you indulge in laziness and bad habits, preferring reclusive bhajan so you can escape others' criticism, then your character will not be purified. You will not have the life of devotional practice. I will never give you any opportunity to become deceitful in the path of devotion in the privacy of your own home; I will never give you any opportunity to live in a reclusive place so that you can become undisciplined in your heart, thinking no one will come to see or hear you there. You are my dearest friends. I will never allow you to get into trouble. I will never allow you to give up the path of pleasing the senses of the Lord so you can please the senses of the people of the world, as well as your own, because you received some temporary position or you could not tolerate some temporary criticism.

RADIO BROADCASTS AND WELCOMING GERMAN DEVOTEES, 1935

On January 15, 1935, the Governor of Bengal, Sir John Anderson, came to Śrīdhām Māyāpur, visited the holy places of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes, and gave a speech. On February 23, on the occasion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's 61st appearance anniversary, a big gathering was arranged in Śrī Puruṣottam Maṭh, Purī. The King of Orissā, Gajapati Śrī Rāmachandra Dev himself, presided over the gathering. Before Gaura-purnīmā that year, Śrīpāda Sakhicharaṇ Bhaktivijay brought electricity to the Yogapīṭh temple. On March 20, on the auspicious occasion of Śrī Gaura-purnīmā, the King of Tripurā came and opened the newly built temple at Yogapīṭh. In April, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the Gayā Gauṛīya Maṭh. On April 13, he sent a few preachers to Burma to spread the message of Mahāprabhu. On June 9, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples preached Mahāprabhu's message on the radio for the first time, at the Indian Broadcasting Service, Calcutta. Among those who delivered *hari-kathā* on the radio were Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja and Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda Prabhu. Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Pratnavidyālaṅkāra (later Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja) sang the collection of verses entitled “Gopināth-vijñapti” by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. At this time, Śrīla Prabhupāda was in Darjeeling, North Bengal. But he and his other disciples heard the broadcast from there. When Śrīla Prabhupāda returned, he requested Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Prabhu to sing “Gopināth-vijñapti” again for him.

On July 8, he installed deities at the Bombay Gauṛīya Maṭh. At this time, Śrīman Samvidānanda Dās, M.A., received a Ph.D from London University in Vaiṣṇava history and literature.

On September 12, the twelve cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam with the commentaries of Śrīla Prabhupāda were completed and published. The summaries of each canto up to the ninth was written by Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī, the summary of the tenth canto was written by Śrīpād Nandalāl Vidyāsāgar, and the summaries of the eleventh and twelfth cantos were written by Śrīmad Bhakti Bhūdeva Śrauti Mahārāja.

On September 18, the devotees in Gauṛīya Maṭh and many distinguished citizens of Calcutta welcomed two German devotees, Ernst George Schulge and H. E. von Queth, who came to Calcutta with Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛday Bon Mahārāja to see Śrīla Prabhupāda. They were each given a decorated cloth scroll



welcoming them at a lavish reception in their honor. In October Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Mathurā and observed Kārtik-vrata at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. On November 7, he went to Delhi, and from there he went to Gayā. At this time, preaching in Burma was going on very successfully.

PREACHING IN THE WEST, BURMA, AND INDIA, 1936

On February 12, on his 62nd appearance anniversary, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the Bhaktivinoda Research Institute. In London his appearance anniversary was also celebrated at a special gathering. In the meantime, Śrīmad Bhakti Sarvasya Giri Mahārāja and Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhastinemi Mahārāja were preaching in Burma with great success, and on March 8, a Gauṛīya Maṭh preaching center was established there with the help of the education minister, Dr. Bame, on 29 Brookings Street, Rangoon. On March 15, Śrīla Prabhupāda installed deities in Sarbhog Gauṛīya Maṭh, Āssām. On March 29, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Purī, where a *saṅkīrtana* festival was held for seven days. In June and July, Śrīla Prabhupāda preached at

different places in Bengal. Among them were Bāliyāṭī, Godruma, Dārjeeling, and Baguā. On June 13 and 14, at Dacca University and the Bar (law) Library of Dacca, Śrīla Prabhupāda's *sannyāsī* disciples and the two German devotees preached *hari-kathā*. In August, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Mathurā to observe Puruṣottam-vrata. On September 9, he came back to Calcutta Gauṛīya Maṭh.

MEETINGS WITH SCHOLARS AND INDOLOGISTS

Throughout his preaching mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda met with many scholars, national leaders, and Indologists from abroad who were visiting India. At one time or another, Śrīla Prabhupāda met with all the most famous men of Bengal. He also met with high government officials and scholars of religion from all over India. Even though Śrīla Prabhupāda made it very clear through his *prachār* (preaching) and *āchār* (conduct) that the supreme goal of life is *kṛṣṇa-prema* (love for Krishna), he was still very perceptive of the world situation. In his lectures he would make insightful comments on such diverse subjects as Professor Einstein's findings, medical exper-

iments with monkey glands, the Pope's effort to bring peace to Europe, and so forth. His extraordinary power was that he could make his audience see their surroundings from a Krishna-conscious point of view because he could immediately elevate them to that level. They listened to Śrīla Prabhupāda's *hari-kathā* for hours, took part in discussions, and asked him spiritual questions. All of them left him with a sense of reverence for his divine personality and a favorable impression of Vaiṣṇavism. This should not surprise anyone, as Śrīla Prabhupāda's scholarship was unquestionable, his logic was razor-sharp, his concepts were deep and sublime, and his expressions were strikingly beautiful.

What was felt by many of his contemporary scholars in India was thus expressed by Professor Dinesh Chandra Sen of the University of Calcutta: "What you have achieved is imperishable. What you have done we could never even have conceived. Everything of ours is going towards degradation. Only you have protected everyone by performing this noble task. What you will do will inspire the whole world, not just Bengal or India."

**"I have caused anxiety for many people.
Perhaps many people have considered me
their enemy, because I was compelled to
tell the unadulterated truth. I asked them
to serve the Lord with all sincerity. I have
given much anxiety to many people
only because I wanted to inspire them
to serve Krishna sincerely
without material desire and duplicity.
One day they will understand this."**

It is not possible to mention here all those he met, but following are the names of some of them: Rāut Rāy Sāheb, His Excellency General Puṇya Samaser Rāṇā Jambāhādur of Nepāl, Manmathanāth Mukhopaddhyāy (Calcutta High Court Justice), September 1924, Paṇḍit Pramath Nāth Tarkabhūsan, Professor Phanibhūsan Adhikārī, December 1924, Paṇḍit Madan-mohan Mālavya, April 1925, The Mahanta Mahārāj of Śrī Nāthdwār, Gokulnāth Goswāmī Mahārāj of Bombay, the Āchārya of Madhvāchārya Maṭh of Urupi, the Āchārya of Gādir Maṭh of Salimābād, 1926, Professor Albert E. Suthers (University of Ohio) 1929, A.P. Sen, Professor Rādhākumud Mukhopaddhyāy, Dr. Rādhākamal Mukhopaddhyāy, Dr. A.N. Sengupta 1929, Sir P.C. Roy (famous chemist) 1930, Dr. Kālidās Nāg (famous historian and professor at the University of Calcutta), Śrī Jatindra Nāth Basu, Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen (famous writer and professor at the University of Calcutta), Śrī Birajmohan Mukhopaddhyāy (Vice Principal of the Law College of the University of Calcutta), Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld (German scholar and world traveller), Dr. Stella Kremrich, A.J. Jacob (American world traveller), Col. Dwārakā Prasād Goel (Principal of Calcutta Medical College), Dr. Gaṅgānāth Jhā (Vice Chancellor of Āllāhābād University), Vasanta Kumār Chatterjee, 1931, Justice Sundaram Cheṭṭiyār of Mādrās High Court, Sir P.S. Shiva Swāmī Aiyar, Sir George Frederick Stanley (Governor of Mādrās), Professor K. Pañchpagesan of Purukote College in Mādrās, Dr. Suniti Chatterjee of the University of Calcutta, Sir William Malcolm Haily (Governor of United Provinces), Dr. Sudhindu Kumār Dās (Professor of Krishnagar College), Śrī Viśwambhar Vyākāraṇ Tirtha Vedānta Śāstri of Rādhākānta Maṭh of Purī, 1932, Śrī Satis Chandra De (Principal of Howrah Narsingha College), Professor Ranada Charaṇ Chakravartī, Śrī Sanjiv Kumār Choudhury (professor from Nepāl), Śrī Ganeś Chandra Chanda (Superintendent, Archaeological Division of Bihār), 1933, Rāi Bāhādur Rāmprasād Chanda, Śrī Ānanda Mahāpatra (Senior Professor in the Āyurveda Department of the Sanskrit College in Purī), Mr. Junakar (Professor at Dacca University), Khagendra Nāth Mitra (Professor at Presidency College, Calcutta), 1934, Sir Jadunāth Sarkār, Dr. Henry Hand and Mr. S.V. Rosetto of California, Mr. S.N. Rudra Bar-at-law, Indirā Devī (Queen of Cochbihār), Mme. M. Potters (French scholar), 1935

CORRESPONDENCE WITH WESTERN REPRESENTATIVES

Śrīla Prabhupāda maintained a steady correspondence with his representatives in Europe. Following are excerpts from some of his letters to Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja.

April 4, 1933

"Your conversation with the cultured people of the west following the words of the Divine Lord will surely be appreciated by all sincere souls amidst their busy life. I don't know anybody who was more delighted than myself to hear that at last the Gauṛīya Maṭh Office has been opened in the British Isles."

May 5, 1933

"By delivering *hari-kathā* to many people, maybe one or two good people will become interested in devotional topics—this is my expectation."

June 27, 1933

"The esoteric representation need not be placed on the table at the sacrifice of the exoteric code and exposition, as the people are found to be very hasty to judge a person by his external appearance."

July 26, 1933

"We are no mediators, but on the other hand solicitors of congregational meetings. So shifting from the centre of London is now out of the question."

August 21, 1933

"I have much enjoyed learning that the senior Tridaṇḍī Swāmī has been honored and received by Her Majesty, the Queen of England. This unforeseen chance is really a very rare opportunity that hardly falls to the lot of a monk with his triple staff and bowl in his hand.

"We take pride that you are acting as our proxy in a distant land, which our crippled movements have not yet approached."

August 28, 1933

"I learn with great delight that the City of London has found you keeping the fast on Janmāṣṭamī day and am more glad to learn that you could make *pārāyaṇa* (completion) of Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta on that day."

February 23, 1934

"Though we are distantly placed by the will of Providence, still the symbolic

sounds in letters will not keep us at such a distance.

“One does not receive a letter from the Supreme Lord. We hear about Him only from His devotees, and our news also can be sent to Him through His devotees. Such communication took place long before telegrams, air-mail, or radio.

“The benign hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a better judge than our silly selves. We should ever be in the service of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, whatever troubles we meet in our journey of life.”

THE FINAL DAYS, 1936

On October 24, 1936, Śrīla Prabhupāda bade farewell to Śrīmad Bhakti Śāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāja and sent him to preach in England and America. At this time Śrīla Prabhupāda blessed him and gave him *śalagrāma-śilā*, *gomati-śilā*, and *govardhan-śilā*. That same day Śrīla Prabhupāda set forth from Calcutta for Purī Dhāma. He arrived the following day with many of his disciples accompanying him. Among them were Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Kuñjavihārī Prabhu, Hayagrīva Dās Brahmachārī, Paramānanda Vidyāratna, and Sajjanānda Brahmachārī.

Many devotees came to the train station to welcome Śrīla Prabhupāda, and they brought a decorated car for him. When Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived at the Puruṣottam Maṭh, a big crowd was assembled there to have his *darśan*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda seemed to be in a meditative mood of deep devotion in Purī. He showed transcendental symptoms of divine ecstasy. From time to time he would tell the devotees, “It is in this life that we have to serve our Lord, so we can gain eternal service at the lotus feet of our eternal Lord. We should not waste any time!”

People started coming from all directions to hear Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda expressed his desire to celebrate the Annakuta festival at Chāṭak Pravat. There was not much time left before the festival, but his dedicated disciples made all the arrangements quickly. The following description was printed in the *Gauṛīya*, 15th Canto, No. 16:

Tridaṇḍi Swāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Hayagrīva Brahmachārī, Śrīmad Sajjanānanda Brahmachārī, and others took great care to bring sumptuous foodstuffs for the festival and to decorate the place. Sādhumivās was beautifully decorated with fruit, flowers,

mango leaves, banana trees, coconuts, and water pots. On the altar was a very beautiful embroidered canopy. All of the way from the street to Chāṭak Parvat was decorated with flags, banana trees, waterpots, and arches. Different foodstuffs, such as white rice, yellow rice, sweet rice, khichuri, rice pudding, chāpātis, puris, and so forth were arranged in the shape of a mountain. There were other mountains of foodstuffs, such as the Bengali delicacies described in Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, the delicacies of Vraja described in Śrī Govinda Līlā, and all the favorite offerings of Lord Jagannāth. Also an immeasurable amount of mahāprasād, consisting of many vegetable and grain preparations and sweets, came from the Jagannāth temple. Tulasī mañjaris were placed on all the offerings, and Śrīla Prabhupāda, singing the songs of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha, worshiped Śrī Govardhana. The festival opened with sankīrtan. Then, by Śrīla Prabhupāda's instruction, Śrīpāda Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda read about Śrīpāda Mādhavendra Purī's Annakuta Festival from the fourth chapter of Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā.

Hundreds of people were fed mahāprasād that night, and the next morning hundreds of beggars and destitute people were fed.

One day Śrīla Prabhupāda, sitting in his *bhajana kuṭira*, told the devotees, “All the residents of the maṭh should always be engaged in the service of Śrī Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇava. They should always be engaged in hearing Hari-kathā and discussing Hari-kathā. If one becomes averse to *hari-kathā* and *hari-sevā* then one will again be entangled by one's material desires. Then one's time will be spent in gossiping, criticizing others, fighting with others and gratifying one's senses. If the residents of the maṭh do not understand that *vaiṣṇava-sevā* is the most beneficial thing, then they will not make progress in the realm of devotion. One has to cultivate one's Kṛṣṇa-consciousness by sincerely serving the Vaiṣṇavas and by endeavoring to please the Vaiṣṇavas with body, mind, and soul.

“By the petition of a Vaiṣṇava, merciful Kṛṣṇa will give His mercy to this sinful soul.” This we have to remember all the time.

“If a Godbrother falls from the platform of service to Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇava, then you should think that your own brother is falling down. Then you have to openly advise him about *hari-bhajana* and nicely make him understand the situation. Sing the beneficial message of Guru and Gaurāṅga to him. If you merely comment on his downfall, then you are not his well-wisher. You have to be merciful to

“All of you please preach
about Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunath
with great enthusiasm.
The supreme goal of all our desire
is to become specks of dust
at the lotus feet of the followers
of Sri Rupa Goswami.”

শ্রীল প্রভুপাদের স্বহস্তলিখিত পত্রের কিয়দংশ

শ্রীশ্রী গুরুগোবিন্দো দ্বন্দ্বতঃ।

18/43 Mall Road
Calcutta.
18.11.27

আমনার ২৩।১২।২৭ ও ২৩।১২।২৯ তারিখ
দুইবার্ড পার্শ্বপত্রি। মতরায় রামকৃষ্ণীর বার্ড
পার্শ্বপত্রি। আরি প্রভুপাদে। অম লিখি। এটি পক্ষার্থ
কৃষ্ণাবরুণে দেয়ার্থে। মতকন্য তাঁম। লিখিত
কোনোপক্ষে অর্থাৎ পার্শ্বপত্রি। মতকন্য Harunurind
কৃষ্ণ দেয়ার্থে পার্শ্বপত্রি। নিম্নলিখিত পক্ষ: article
মত-ভক্তি যে defination দিয়াছেন তাহা
অসম্পূর্ণ। তারপর deduction বা অবরোধ বুঝাও
lukunam শব্দ প্রয়োগ করিয়াছেন। absolute
truth আদ্যক্রমীতে lukunam বলিয়া বর্ণনা
হইলও উহাই Best Kunam. অবরোধ বা অবজন
বিচারে lukunam অবতীর্ণ হইল না। Inaccessible
by sense descends down but is not lukunam
becomes ~~down~~ upon the material eyesight.
যদি কিছু কৃষ্ণের change কোণ্ডে পার্শ্বপত্রি
হয়। যেহেতু কৃষ্ণপ্রার্থে আমনার অজিগাম্যতা লিখিত
আমি কৃষ্ণের অময় দুইবার্ড পার্শ্বপত্রি, একইকিষ্ণ
আমি কৃষ্ণের সৃষ্টির হইল। অজিগাম্যতা মেহান্ত শীঘ্র
অজিগাম্যতা সৃষ্টির বলিয়া আমনারও সমুদয়
সৃষ্টির agility ও activity বলিয়া না যায়।

him by talking to him about the Lord. By doing this you will benefit yourself as well as him, and your goal of living in the math will be accomplished. We are living together to help each other serve the Lord.

"We will not live in this world very long. If we can die while continuously doing hari-kirtana, then our birth will be successful. We have not come to this world to be carpenters, to deal with wood and stone. We are only carriers of the message of Śrī Chaitanyadeva."

On December 7, 1936, Śrīla Prabhupāda left Purī for Calcutta. The next day a huge crowd of devotees was waiting at Howrah Station to welcome Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda's car was decorated with flowers, and it went to the Gauṛīya Maṭh amid a saṅkīrtana procession. While in Purī, Śrīla Prabhupāda had displayed his pastime of illness. So his disciples had engaged the most famous physicians in Calcutta, such as Sir Nilratan Sarkār, Dr. Shivapada Bhattāchārya, Dr. Indubhushan Basu, Dr. P. Brahmachārī, and Dr. Nagendra Gopāl Biśwās, to take care of Śrīla Prabhupāda full-time. As instructed by the doctors, Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples requested him not to speak for very long at a stretch. When asked how he was, Śrīla Prabhupāda would say that his only problem was that he was not allowed to do hari-kīrtana.

Śrīla Prabhupāda told the assembled devotees, "One should not make many disciples. I have not made any disciples. They are all my Gurus. I learn something from all of them. May they give me the opportunity to follow the example of their pure devotion. This is my prayer."

HIS FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

On December 23, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave his final instruction to the assembled devotees: "I have caused anxiety for many people. Perhaps many people have considered me their enemy, because I was compelled to tell the unadulterated truth. I asked them to serve the Lord with all sincerity. I have given much anxiety to many people only because I wanted to inspire them to serve Kṛṣṇa sincerely without material desire and duplicity. One day they will understand this."

PREACH ABOUT SRI RUPA AND SRI RAGHUNATH

"All of you please preach about Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha with great enthusi-

Śrīla Prabhupada would personally, carefully go through all of the Gaudiya Math publications to insure their spiritual accuracy. Above is a postcard he sent regarding an article in *The Harmonist*.

asm. The supreme goal of all our desire is to become specks of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī. All of you remain united in the shelter of the *āśraya-vigraha* in order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the Supreme Entity of non-dual knowledge. All of you somehow live simply in this temporary world with the single goal of serving the Lord. Please do not give up your devotional service in spite of hundreds of dangers, insults, or persecutions. Please do not be discouraged by seeing that most people of the world are not listening to the transcendental topics of devotional service. Please do not give up *śrāvana-kīrtana* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, which is your own *bhajana* and your sole property. Please always chant the name of the Lord, being humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree.

THE FIRE OF SANKIRTAN

“We only cherish one desire in our hearts: to sacrifice this body, which is only a lump of matter, in the fire of the *sañkīrtana yajña* of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya and his associates. We do not wish to be heroes by dint of our action, bravery or religiosity. But let this be our real identity life after life: that we are specks of dust under the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa. Let that mean everything to us. The Bhaktivinoda current will never be stemmed. Please take up the mission of preaching the desire of Bhaktivinoda with greater enthusiasm. There are many qualified and accomplished people among you. We have no other desire; our only message is this:

‘Taking a blade of grass between my teeth, I fall down and pray again and again that I may become the dust at the feet of Śrī Rūpa birth after birth.’

“Living in this world, one has to face many kinds of difficulties. It is not our job to try to remove those difficulties. Nor should we become depressed by them. After these difficulties are gone, what shall we gain? What will our eternal lives be? While staying here we should have some idea of that. All the things that attract us or repel us, what we want and what we do not want—we have to resolve these things in our minds. The more we distance ourselves from the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, the more these things will draw us in. The joy of *kṛṣṇa-sevā* can be realized when one is attracted to His divine name after transcending the happiness and misery of this world. At present, the topic of Kṛṣṇa is startling and per-

plexing to us. The continuing events of our lives pose obstacles to the realization of our eternal fulfillment. Knowingly or unknowingly, all human beings are struggling to eliminate these. Our only need is to enter that realm of eternal fulfillment, transcending all duality.

“We have no attachment or hostility towards anyone in this world. All arrangements of this world are temporary. Everyone has an indispensable need for the Absolute Truth. May all of you with one goal, and in harmony with each other, attain the right to serve the original *āśraya-vigraha*. Let the currents of thought of the followers of Śrī Rūpa flow in this world. May we never under any circumstances show antipathy towards the seven-tongued fire of *śrī kṛṣṇa sañkīrtan-yajña*. If we have an increasing attachment for it, then all our goals will be fulfilled. All of you please preach fearlessly about Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunāth with great enthusiasm, under the guidance of their followers.”

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda displayed his pastime of illness. At the same time he was incessantly chanting and meditating. Śrīpāda Kuñjavihārī Prabhu made up a duty roster for some of the devotees who were present, so one of them would be with Śrīla Prabhupāda every hour of the day and night. Among those who had this service were Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Pranavānanda Brahmachārī, and Kṛṣṇānanda Brahmāchārī.

REQUESTS SONG SRI RUPA MANJARI PADA

In the morning of December 31, 1936, Śrīla Prabhupāda requested Śrīdhara Mahārāja to sing the song *śrī rūpa-mañjari-pada sei mora sampada* by Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura. He also asked Śrīpāda Navīna Kṛṣṇa Vidyālañkāra to sing the song *t’uhu dayā sāgar tārayite prāṇī* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Then Prabhupāda expressed his appreciation to some of his disciples for their service, and gave some instructions for the future. Finally he said, “Love and rupture both should have the same end in view. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura lived by the concept of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha. We should also live our lives according to that concept.” Then Śrīla Prabhupāda told everyone, “All of you who are present here, as well as those who are not present, please accept my blessings. Please remember that our only duty and religion is to propagate the service of the Lord and His devotees.”

DIVINE DISAPPEARANCE

At about 5:20 the next morning, Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī was at Śrīla Prabhupāda’s bedside. Suddenly Śrīla Prabhupāda came out of his deep meditation and said, “Who is here?” Pranavānanda Prabhu said, “It’s me, Pranavānanda, Prabhupāda.” Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Oh, Pranavānanda Prabhu?” Pranavānanda Prabhu asked him, “How are you feeling, Prabhupāda?” Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “What can I say? Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa!” These were his last words. As it was time for the next devotee, Kṛṣṇānanda Prabhu, to take up his post at Śrīla Prabhupāda’s bedside, Pranavānanda Prabhu went back to his room. He sat there thinking, “Is Śrīla Prabhupāda going to leave us now? What will happen if he leaves us now, what shall we do?” His thoughts were interrupted by the sounds of footsteps. It was Kṛṣṇānanda Prabhu. He said, “Come quickly! I think the great disaster has happened to us.” Then there was the tumultuous sound of crying all over the Gauṛīya Maṭh, and amazingly enough, all the clocks in the *maṭh* stopped.

At 5:30 A.M., on Thursday, January 1, 1937, Śrīla Prabhupāda left this world to enter Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda’s *niśānta-līlā*. At the predawn hour when Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda are united as One, when the divine pastime of Śrī Gaursundara is eternally manifest, the most worshipable lord of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who called himself Śrī Vārṣabhānavī-dayita dāsa (the servant of the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī), entered the abode of his eternal pastime.

The grief and lamentation of the devotees at the Gauṛīya Maṭh were beyond description. Some were sobbing as if their hearts would break, some were chanting loudly with eyes flooded with tears, some were falling at Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lotus feet, some were falling on the ground and chanting with their heads bowed down, and some were hitting their foreheads and saying “Oh Prabhupāda! Oh Prabhupāda!” Even though the sun had just risen, it seemed that in the sky of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas the sun had just set.

The devotees started performing the Vedic rites with great care, in spite of the intolerable burning pain of separation. First of all they bathed Śrīla Prabhupāda with sandalwood water. Then they dressed him in new clothes and decorated him with flowers, garlands, and sandalwood. Crying incessantly, they put tilak on twelve parts of his body. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda was laid on a new bed in front of the Deities. The devotees circumambulated him and performed *pūjā*, *bhoga*, and *ārati* to



him amid tumultuous saṅkīrtan. Thousands of people started coming to have their last darśan of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Flowers and tears were everywhere. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda was taken to Śealdāh Station amid a saṅkīrtana procession of thousands of people. A devotee of Śrīla Prabhupāda called Śrī Yāmiṇī Mukhopadhyāya arranged for a special train for Śrīla Prabhupāda. The train was fully occupied with thousands of devotees, both men and women. The destination was Krishnanagar, but all the way from Calcutta to Krishnanagar, thousands of people were waiting at every station to see Śrīla Prabhupāda. The devotees were displaying photos of Śrīla Prabhupāda from the windows of the train, and the crowds were offering flowers to those pictures. At Krishnanagar Station, all the high government officials were waiting to offer their obeisances to him. Then he was taken to Navadvīpa Ghāṭ by car, and then they crossed the Gaṅgā on boats to arrive at Māyāpura. A big crowd was already waiting at Māyāpura. When the Calcutta devotees met the Māyāpura devotees, another wave of grief engulfed them.

First Śrīla Prabhupāda was taken to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace in Yogapīṭh. More devotees were waiting there. Then they laid him down in front of the Deities and offered him pūjā and āratī. Both the Hindus and the Muslims of Māyāpura were singing his glories with tears in their eyes. Śrīla Prabhupāda was given the garland which had been offered to Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Next he was taken to Śrīvās Aṅgan, Śrī Advaita Bhavan, Śrī Bhakti Vijay Bhavan, the samādhi mandir of Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja, and finally Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh; at each stop he was offered pūjā and āratī. When he came to his own Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, the devotees' hearts broke with unbearable pain.

They decided that the place of his samādhi would be in between Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh and Śrī Bhakti Vijay Bhavan. Singing saṅkīrtana, sannyāsī, brahmachārī, and gṛhastha

devotees together began digging the foundation of the samādhi mandira. Śrīla Prabhupāda was bathed in Gaṅgā water, dressed in new clothes, and decorated with sandalwood. Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīp Tīrtha Mahārāj wrote the samādhi mantra with sandalwood, following the injunction of Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Goswāmī. Now Śrīla Prabhupāda was brought to the place of samādhi, and amid obeisances, prayer, glorification, and offering of flowers, he was seated on a marble throne covered with delicate cloth. The tumultuous sound of glorification and saṅkīrtana resounded as sandalwood, flowers, garlands, and āratī were offered at his lotus feet. Devotees were rolling on the ground, crying "Jaya Prabhupāda!" and singing his favorite songs, śrī rūpa-mañjari-pada, svānanda-sukhada-kuñja manohara, and yaśomati nandana.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja and Śrīpāda Pranavānanda Brahmachārī offered a fire sacrifice. Śrīla Bhārati Mahārāja read the disappearance pastime of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura from Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, and the devotees circumambulated the samādhi, singing yei ānilo prema-dhana and gurudev kṛpā bindu diyā. Then they sang Śrīla Prabhupāda's pranām mantra (nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale śrimate bhaktisiddhānta-saraswatīti nāmine, etc.):

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

"I offer my respectful obeisances to Śrī Vārsabhānavī-devī-dayita Dāsa, who is favored by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and who is an ocean of mercy and the delivers the science of Kṛṣṇa.

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto you, the personified energy of Śrī Chaitanya's mercy, who deliver devotional service which is enriched with conjugal love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, coming exactly in the line of revelation of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī.

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto

you, who are the personified teachings of Lord Chaitanya. You are the deliverer of the fallen souls. You do not tolerate any statement which is against the teachings of devotional service enunciated by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī."

EPILOGUE

Śrīla Prabhupāda is the most magnanimous giver of the message of Mahāprabhu in this age. He took the treasure which had been safeguarded by a few and gave it to many. He revived the saṅkīrtana movement of Mahāprabhu by enabling devotees to joyfully assemble together in a modern institution. Now that Vaiṣṇavism was no longer in constant danger from oppressive regimes and reactionary brāhmaṇas, and now that the permanence of printing could protect the sanctity of the true and pure Vaiṣṇavism of Mahāprabhu from the corruption of Sahajiyā interpretation, it could be given out again, freely.

Before Śrīla Prabhupāda began the Gauṛīya Maṭh, the general public had come to regard sannyāsīs with contempt or, at best, apathy, for their personal conduct and spiritual backgrounds were considered questionable. But Śrīla Prabhupāda conquered the public's apathy towards sādhus and religion. He defeated the sahajiyās, who wrongly imitated the pastimes of the Lord, and the impersonalists, who belittled the path of pure devotion. He protected Śrīman Mahāprabhu's mission from those who would dilute and distemper it in the name of adaptation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda knew that while the mundane world had changed greatly since Śrīman Mahāprabhu's time, the path of Vaiṣṇavism was eternal and required no modernization. Instead he modernized its institutions: devotees could assemble freely, to do saṅkīrtana in the halls of the Gauṛīya Maṭh and hari-kathā in the pages of Gauṛīya.

Śrīla Prabhupāda saw and appreciated the inventions of the modern world the way he appreciated anything—as items to be utilized in Mahāprabhu's mission, for devotional service. He preached through the printing press, while simultaneously using it to protect the sanctity and authority of pure Vaiṣṇavism from corruption and misinterpretation. He himself wrote more than 108 essays and books; published the magazines Sajjan Toṣaṇī, Gauṛīya, Nadiyā Prakāś, Bhāgavata, Paramārthi, and Kīrtan; and established the presses Bhāgavat Yantra, Gauṛīya Printing Works, Nadiyā Prakāś Printing Press, and Paramārthi Printing Works. He published Bhāgavad-gītā, Śrīmad

Bhāgavatam, *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata*, and *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* with commentaries.

Śrīla Prabhupāda established 64 temples, introduced devotional exhibitions, conducted radio broadcasts, and established organized *parikramās* of the holy Dhāmas. He was the first *āchārya* to research and compile information on the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* and emphasize their common ground.

Śrīla Prabhupāda won the respect and admiration of all by inspiring excellence in every spiritual endeavor: the scholarship, integrity, and refinement of the Gauṛīya Maṭh were unquestionable. His standards were unassailable. He was so formidable in debate that he was never defeated. The strength of his conviction and fierce determination earned him the title of *siṁha guru*, or “lion guru.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda was not, however, merely a teacher of strict austerity. He spread compassion and devotion around him like a fountain; he nurtured his disciples with divine affection. As Śrīla Bhakti Kusuma Śramaṇa Mahārāja wrote in his biography of Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Prabhupāda Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura*, “Wherever he appeared, many people had come there before him in order to see him, and as soon as he arrived the sound of *saṅkīrtan* would reverberate in all directions. Even when he was walking, he was absorbed in the ecstasy of *hari-kathā kīrtana*. An unearthly, indescribable current of joy would follow Śrīla Prabhupāda everywhere.”

The greatest gift of Śrīla Prabhupāda was that he gave the highest concept of devotion to thousands of surrendered souls who took shelter at his lotus feet. Those who came to inquire from him about *kṣṇa-prema*, the ultimate goal of their lives, were overjoyed to find out that whatever concept of pure devotion they might have had before, Śrīla Prabhupāda's concept was infinitely higher than that. His disciples saw him as their supreme source of the highest devotion. Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja has expressed this very beautifully in his *Śrī Śrī Dayita Dāsa Daśakam* verses:

“From his lotus feet, the nectarine river of divine love flows throughout the universe; his servitors, like bees, maintain their lives drinking the honey that falls from his lotus feet; and the pure devotees in the shelter of the confidential mellows of Vraja revel in the bliss of singing the glories of his lotus feet.

“Parental affection, so highly esteemed in the world, is a colossal hoax. And without a doubt the reciprocation of conjugal affection

shared in matrimony is legal dacoity. And worldly friendship and family relationships are simply cheating in disguise. I have gleaned these thoughts from the rays of light that emanate from the toenails of the holy feet of that great personality, the embodiment of supramundane affection.”

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī said, “The Bhaktivinoda current will never be stemmed”, and indeed his movement has flowed all over the world, brought and carried on by his disciples and grand disciples. Śrīla Prabhupāda is the personification of Śrīman



Mahāprabhu's causeless and perfect mercy. He is the desire tree (*kalpa-vṛkṣa*) of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas. Not only has he attracted them to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's movement—through his own preaching or the preaching of his followers—but, through his message and the example of his personal conduct, he is also able to provide them with everything they need for devotional service, eternally.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bhaktiśāstrī, Śrī Hari-kṛpā Dās Brahmachārī, *Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī*, Bombay: Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1980.
Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Ānand Sāgar, *Śrīla Guru Mahārāj: His Divine Pastimes & Precepts in Brief*, Navadvīp: Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, 1994.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Kusum Śramaṇ, *Prabhupāda Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura*, Māyāpur: Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1940.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Pramod Purī, lectures and discussions on audio-cassette, Māyāpur: Śrī Gopināth Gauṛīya Maṭh Archive.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Pramod Purī, *Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura*, Māyāpur, Śrī Gopināth Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1992.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara, lectures and discussions on audio-cassette, Navadvīp: Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh Archive.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Vallabh Tīrtha, *Śrī Gaura-pārsad o Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavāchārya-gaṇer Saṅkṣipta Charitāmṛta*, vol. 2, Calcutta: Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1994.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Vallabh Tīrtha, *Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Goswāmī Mahārāj Viṣṇupāder Pūta Charitāmṛta*, Calcutta: Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh,

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Vilās Tīrtha, *Śrī Chaitanya-darśane Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura*, vols. 1–2, Māyāpur: Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1974.

Majumdār, R.C., *History of Modern Bengal: Part Two*, Calcutta: G. Bharadwāj & Co., 1981.

McKay, John P., Bennet D. Hill and John Buckler, *A History of Western Society*, vol. 2, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1991.

Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, *Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāder Upadeśāmṛta*, ed. by Śrīla Bhakti Mayūkh Bhāgavat Mahārāj, Māyāpur: Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1990.

Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, *Śrīla Prabhupāder Harikathāmṛta*, ed. by Śrīla Bhakti Vilās Tīrtha Mahārāj, vol. 1, Māyāpur: Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1955.

Saraswatī Jayaśrī, ed. by Śrīpād Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, Calcutta: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1934.

Sen, Sailendra Nāth, *History of Modern India: 1765–1950*, New Delhi: Wiley Eastern Ltd., 1979.

Sen, Śrī Sukumār, *Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihās* (History of Bengali literature), vol. 4, Calcutta: Ānanda Publishers Ltd., 1940.

Gauṛīya, 1924, 1925, 1934, 1935





Gaur

Srila Gaur Kishore Das Babaji Maharaj

Kishore





GAUR KISHORE DAS BABAJI

Srila Gaur Kishore Das Babaji Maharaja, the spiritual master of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupad, was the personification of pure devotion in the mood of Srimati Radharani. He was the embodiment of Vipralambha, the intense mood of separation from Krishna. Everything we know about his life points only to this one central theme; all other details have been lost to us.

THE EXACT DATE OF HIS APPEARANCE is not known, but it was in the early part of the nineteenth century. He was born in the village of Bāgjan in the district of Faridpur in East Bengal (now Bānglādesh) near a place called Tepākhola on the bank of the river Padma. The names of his parents are not known. But they named him “Varṇsidāsa.” He earned his living as a grain merchant. Although he was married early, probably when he was a teenager (according to the prevailing social custom of the day), he was not attracted to family life and spent most of his time in devotional practices, in an introspective mood of devotion. After the death of his wife he left his family and his village and went to Vṛndāvana. He became completely absorbed in his *bhajana* and, while living in great austerity and renunciation, rendered devotional service to his Lord in the mood of pure devotion. Shortly after coming to Vṛndāvana, he took shelter of Śrīmad Bhāgavata Dāsa Bābāji, who was an intimate associate of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja, and received the *veṣa*, the garb of a

bābāji (a reclusive renunciate Vaiṣṇava), from him. Henceforth he was known as Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji. For thirty years he lived in different places in the Vraja-maṇḍala and intensely practiced his *bhajana*. He used to beg for alms (*mādhukarī*) and spend his nights under trees. He considered all Vrajavāsīs as eternal associates of Krishna, and would bow down to the trees and animals of Vṛndāvana. From time to time he went on pilgrimage to different holy places of North India and the Gaura-maṇḍala. During these pilgrimages, he met with Śrī Swarūpa Dāsa Bābāji in Purī, Śrī Bhagavāna Dāsa Bābāji in Kālnā, and Śrī Chaitanya Dāsa Bābāji in Kuliya.

Around 1894, when by the divine effort of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the true birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Māyāpura Dhāma, manifested itself, Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja came to reside in the Gaura-maṇḍala at the instruction of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja. From then until his disappearance he stayed in different places in Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma. He

looked at Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma with his transcendental vision and considered its residents *dhāmvāsīs*. He would collect the abandoned clothes of dead people who were cremated on the banks of the Gaṅgā, and then he would wash them and wear them. He would cook plain rice in abandoned clay pots, offer it to his Lord, and take *prasādam*. Day after day he would just live on plain rice and a few green chilis. Sometimes he would live only on the water of the Gaṅgā, and sometimes he would just fast. But day and night he would chant the holy name. He was completely detached from any kind of mundane association, and most of the time he would be alone in a deep mood of divine love. Sometimes he would chant on *tulasīmālā*, and sometimes he would chant on some rag that he had knotted himself. Sometimes he would dance on the bank of the Gaṅgā, crying “Gaura! Gaura!”, and then faint. Sometimes he would wander around the different places of the *dhām*, remembering Mahāprabhu’s pastimes in an ecstatic mood.

Seeing Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja’s extraor-

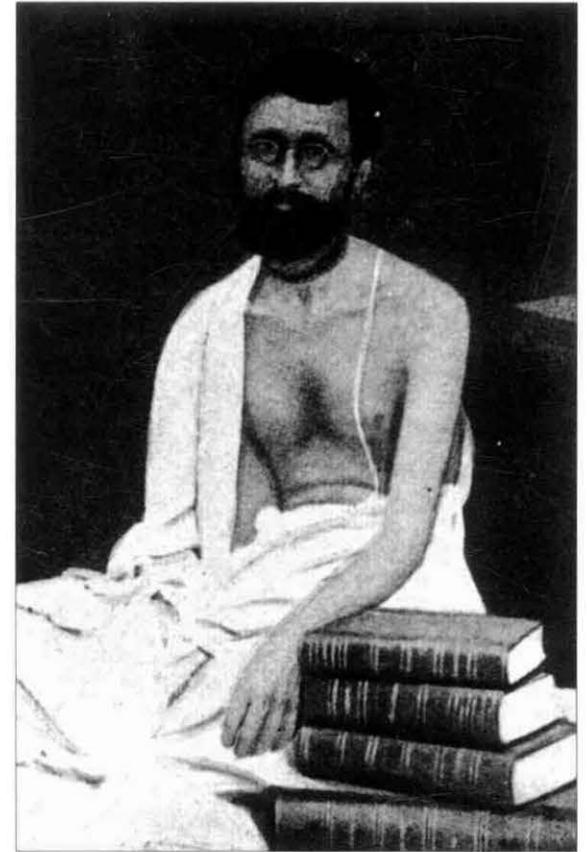
Some people praised the interpretations of a famous speaker of Bhagavatam to Srila Babaji Maharaj. But Srila Babaji Maharaj knew in his heart that the speaker was accepting money in exchange for Bhagavat Katha. So he said, "No, he is not interpreting Bhagavatam, he is talking about sense enjoyment. He is not saying 'Krishna, Krishna' or 'Gaur, Gaur', he is saying 'money, money!' Krishna Katha does not manifest in one's mouth, when it becomes a means of earning a living."

dinary renunciation and pure devotion, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was always amazed. Sometimes Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja would come and visit Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya in his residence, called Svānanda-sukhada Kuñja, in Godrumadvīpa and discuss *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* with him. Together they would spend many hours discussing *hari-kathā*. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja was especially fond of two books, Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura's *Prārthanā* and *Prema-bhakti-chandrikā*. Like that of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī, his renunciation was colored with his deep love for Krishna.

In 1898 Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura first came in contact with Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja in Svānanda-sukhada Kuñja. At that time Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura heard Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja singing a song dedicated to Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī in a deep and earnest mood of love. Hearing that song sung by Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura became overwhelmed with love. The theme of the song was the way in which Śrīla Dāsa Goswāmī was looking for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and asking for Her mercy. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote down that song and made it available for devotees of later times.

INITIATION

In 1900, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura got initiated by Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji, at the instruction of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura was Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja's only disciple. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja was absorbed in his pure devotional *bhajana* and had had no desire to make any disciples. But due to the exclusive devotion and sincerity of Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja had to change his mind. It has been said that after being repeatedly requested by Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura for initiation, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja told him he would give him initiation only if he received Mahāprabhu's permission. Then the next time Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura approached him he said he had forgotten to ask Mahāprabhu for His permission. Instead of being discouraged, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura came again and humbly submitted his request. Then Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja said, "Morality and scholarship are not the prerequisites for being favored by Krishna. One does not become qualified for initiation through having those qualities." Being repeatedly rejected in this way, Saraswatī Ṭhākura did not give up his determination to receive Bābāji Mahārāja's mercy. Śrīla Rāmānujāchārya had been rejected by Śrīla Goṣṭhipūrṇa eighteen



times before finally being accepted by him. When Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura requested Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja again and again with great humility and sincerity, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja became very pleased with him, and with great affection gave him initiation. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja never allowed anyone to touch his lotus feet. If someone tried to take the dust of his lotus feet he would curse them: "Everything will be ruined for you." So insincere materialistic people were afraid to touch his lotus feet. But at this time he himself gave Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura the dust from his lotus feet. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura's initiation is reminiscent of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura's initiation by Śrīla Lokanātha Dāsa Goswāmī. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja instructed Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura to preach Mahāprabhu's message all over the world.

Many good people were very eager to render some service to Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. But it was almost impossible for anyone to get an opportunity to do so. Once the king of Kāśim Bāzār, Rājā Maṇindra Chandra Nandī, sent a distinguished gentleman to invite Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja to come to his palace. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja responded, "If I go to the palace of a king I may become greedy for money. Then my relationship with the Rājā will become unfriendly. Therefore it will be better if he leaves his wealth and family and friends and comes here to stay with me. I will build a home for him here like mine, out of another *chhai* (the covering of a boat), and

together we will spend our time in *hari-bhajana* in great ecstasy.”

Even during cold winter nights, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja slept outdoors, on the bank of the Gaṅgā, under his *chhai*—the semi-cylindrical wooden covering of a boat, open at both ends. One can imagine how the cold night wind from the river would pass through the *chhai*. Thinking of this hardship someone insisted on leaving a quilt for Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. But instead of covering himself with the quilt, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja hung it on the inside wall of the *chhai*. When asked the reason for this, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja replied that just by seeing the quilt, he would not feel cold.

Sometimes some sincere Vaiṣṇava would come and stay with Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja as his servitor. Once he told his servitor, “Tomorrow we will observe the festival of Śrīla Sanātana Dāsa Goswāmī’s disappearance day (*tithi*).” The servitor asked, “Where shall we find the paraphernalia for the festival?” Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāj said, “Do not tell anyone anything. Instead of eating our meal tomorrow, we will just chant *harinām* all day, without interruption. That is a festival for destitutes like us.”

The wife of Girish Bābu, the owner of the Navadvīpa Dharmasālā (guesthouse for pilgrims), wanted to build a cottage for Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja said, “I have no problem living under the *chhai*. My only problem is some insincere materialistic people always come to me and ask for my mercy. They do not want what is good for them, they only disturb my bhajan. If you let me live in one of your outhouses then these people will not go there and bother me.” Since Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja insisted on living in one of their outhouses, Girish Bābu first purified it, then demolished it and had a new room built in its place.

MONEY MONEY!

Some people praised the interpretations of a famous speaker of *Bhāgavatam* to Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāj. But Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja knew in his heart that the speaker was accepting money in exchange for *bhāgavat-kathā*. So he said, “No, he is not interpreting *Bhāgavatam*, he is talking about sense enjoyment. He is not saying ‘Krishna, Krishna’ or ‘Gaura, Gaura,’ he is saying ‘money, money!’ *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* does not manifest in one’s mouth, when it becomes a means of earning a living.”

One person dressed as a Vaiṣṇava came with a companion to see Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. The

companion started praising this person to Bābāji Mahārāja. He said, “My *prabhu* here goes from one place to another to deliver the fallen souls. If he does not go to some place then what will happen to those people?” Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja became irritated and said, “If he travels to get some name, fame, power, position, and money in the name of delivering the fallen souls then he himself will become fallen. Instead of delivering the world, he will deceive the world.”

Once Śrī Narendra Kumār Sen of Āgartalā came to Bābāji Mahārāja and begged for Siddha Praṇālī (revelation of one’s eternal identity in the spiritual world). But Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāj said, “One cannot know the Supreme Lord through imagination. When devotees sincerely chant *hari-nāma*, gradually the Lord reveals His real identity to them through the syllables of the holy name. At that time the devotees also come to know their own identities, and their favorite service also becomes manifest in their heart.”

One time a newly renounced person dressed in a loincloth succeeded in collecting a quarter of an acre of land in Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma from an employee of a rich landlady. Hearing this, Bābāji Mahārāja became very angry and said, “Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma is a transcendental place. How is it possible for a materialistic landholder to own so much land here that this renunciate can be given a quarter of an acre? All the wealth of the world is not equal to one grain of sand in Navadvīpa. What is the spiritual asset of this person that he could acquire so much land in Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma?”

Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja had great insight, intuition, and vision. He could see inside people’s hearts, and he could also see, with his transcendental vision, things happening in far-away places. Once, as he was chanting and meditating on the bank of the Gaṅgā, he suddenly started shouting, “Hey! Hey! Look what is happening! A dog is entering the Madan-mohan Temple!” Later the devotees there found out that a dog had indeed entered the Madana-mohana temple in Vṛndāvana that day!

BHAGAVAT BUSINESS

One day one renunciate Bābāji, Padmanabha Dāsa, came to Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dās Bābāji Mahārāja and asked for his permission to read from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* to the general public. But Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja remained silent. When Padmanabha Dāsa saw

that Bābāji Mahārāja did not give permission, he thought in his mind, “If I can study *Bhāgavata* from someone who is dear to him, then perhaps I will get his permission.” So he approached Saraswatī Thākura and humbly requested that he teach him about *Bhāgavat*. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “I cannot say anything without asking Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja first.” Then Śrīla Prabhupāda asked Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja about this, and Bābāji Mahārāja said, “This person is an insincere businessman. Even now he keeps a plate for collection when he reads from *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. Then after he learns *Bhāgavat*, he will start his *Bhāgavat* business. This will be very harmful for him. You keep your door closed.” So Śrīla Prabhupāda did not give Padmanabha Dāsa any instruction about *Bhāgavat*. Eventually Padmanabha Dāsa went away. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja called Śrīla Prabhupāda and told him, “Siddhānta Saraswatī Prabhu, come and sit near me. I wasn’t angry with you. If Padmanabha Dāsa had gotten instruction from you and become a businessman, he would invite inauspiciousness to himself and others. I did not want you to support that. That is why I asked you to keep your door closed.” Hearing this, Śrīla Prabhupāda was very happy and offered his obeisances to Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja gave Śrīla Prabhupāda the dust of his lotus feet and blessed him with great happiness.

MARRIAGE AND DEVOTION

One gentleman called Śrī Śambhunāth Bandhopādhyāy, or Śambhu Bābu, used to come to Śrīla Prabhupāda and listen to his *hari-kathā*. After Śambhu Bābu got married, he asked for Śrīla Prabhupāda’s advice on how he could practice his devotional life while married. Śrīla Prabhupāda told him there would be many obstacles to devotional practice for a married person. Hearing this, Śambhu Bābu seemed very saddened. A few days after that, Śrīla Prabhupāda came to see Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja along with some of his disciples such as Paramānanda Vidyāratna and Śambhu Bābu. When Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja heard about Śrīla Śambhu Bābu’s marriage, he said, “Well, it is good that Śambhu Bābu got married. Now every day he himself should cook for Krishna, and after offering it to Krishna, he should serve that *prasādam* first to his wife. Thinking of his wife as a Vaiṣṇava, he should accept her remnants. Instead of thinking of her as someone to be enjoyed or exploited by him, if Śambhu Bābu

Gaura Kishore could not tolerate
 unsuccessful *bhajana*:
 "When there was no *nama-sputi*
 [manifestation of the name],
 he would often go to throw himself
 into the Ganges.
 He entered the water up to his neck
 and would only come out again
 when the name would appear.

thinks of her more or less as his worshipable guru, then it will be very beneficial for him. The whole world—all the money, wealth, men, and women—only exists for Krishna's enjoyment. He should use Krishna's property for Krishna's service. He should not think of his wife as his servitor. But he should respect her as the servitor of Krishna."

Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja was very much against any kind of insincerity or deceitfulness on the part of a devotee. He would call insincere devotees monkey renunciates (*markaṭa vairāgi*). A monkey eats fruit and vegetables and roams in the forest wearing no clothes. So he bears some similarity with a renunciate. But actually he is very aggressive, greedy, and lusty. Those who take the garb of a renunciate and, forgetting how Śrīman Mahāprabhu punished Chhoṭa Haridās, secretly engage in sense gratification and debauchery are called monkey renunciates. Seeing so many monkey renunciates in the places of Vaiṣṇava pilgrimage, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja became very unhappy. As if to express his own feelings about this, one day Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja wore a very fancy and expensive *dhoti* and *chādar* and appeared in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's residence. Seeing Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja in these fancy clothes, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was very surprised. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja said, "It is better to wear fancy clothes than to wear the garb of a renunciate and secretly engage in sense gratification. Just see how these monkey renunciates have so much power and position. They are oppressors of real Vaiṣṇava practice."

HOW TO SEE THE VAISHNAV

Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja usually would not give any instruction. But just by seeing him people felt their hearts were purified. He preached by his own conduct or devotional practice (*ācāra*). But sometimes he would deceive those materialistic people who would go to him with some ulterior motives; because they were not interested in hearing *hari-kathā*, he would not deliver *hari-kathā* to them. Instead he would let them speak about mundane things and they would leave without realizing that they had not received his mercy. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda wrote of him:

Even after seeing Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji, many people—the immature and the clever, the young and the old, the scholarly and the foolish, those lacking devotion and those proud of their devotion—did not have the proper transcendental vision to see him.

This is the transcendental power of a pure devotee. Hundreds of people came to him for his instruction, to fulfill their material desires. But that instruction was actually deceiving them. Many people take the garb of *sādhus*, and many people outwardly act like *sādhus*, but in reality, not only are they not *sādhus* but they are very far from any *sādhu*. But there was no such impurity in my lord. By his own example he demonstrated that purity was truth. His genuine affection was incomparable to anything in this world. One who received that affection would consider the eight kinds of yogic perfection to be of no value. He had no dislike for his competitors or his enemies. Even to those who received his mercy, he did not demonstrate any external favor. He used to say, "In this world there is no one who is the object of my liking or disliking. I consider everyone to be respectable." Another inconceivable thing was that some deceitful, materialistic people, whose mood was unfavorable to pure devotion, always used to surround my *gurudeva* without understanding his real position, and considering themselves objects of his affection, kept their attachment to petty things. But he did not outwardly make any effort to get rid of them, nor did he accept them in any way.

DIVINE MADNESS

In *The Madness of the Saints*, University of Chicago Professor June McDaniel writes of Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja:

"Although he wore his begging bowl as a hat, did his worship in an outhouse, and would beat with an umbrella Vaishnavas who wanted initiation from him, he was greatly respected by the Vaishnava community for his detachment and devotion. He spent thirty years in a state of intense love for Krishna, roaming about the various groves of the heavenly Vrindavan as a confidante of Sri Radha. He became well known as a perfected renunciant (*siddha bābāji*) and liberated soul (*paramahansa*) in Vraja and Navadwipa.

He wandered for many years through the villages in Vrindavan, continuously worshipping Krishna in the mood of *rāgānuga bhajan* (spontaneous devotional love).

In the year 1894, Jagannath Das Baba ordered him to leave Vraja and go to Bengal. He lived in Navadwipa from that year until his death. His behavior was considered unusual in Navadwipa. He would beg dry food from householders and offer it as ritual food to Bhagavan. He would cook in used and rejected clay pots and would cover himself with the

clothing of corpses left on the banks of the Ganges. He ignored the opinion of others (who felt this behavior to be impure) and would use rejected and unwanted things. Sometimes he would wear a rosary of *tulsi* beads around his neck or have it in his hands for counting the Holy Name; at other times he would use a rosary (*māla*) made of torn cloth with knots. He often roamed about naked or with his loincloth half untied.

In his ecstatic moods (*bhāvas*), distasteful foods became delicious to him. He would eat raw rice, or other grains, soaked in water or in Ganges mud. Srimati Lalita Didi of Radharamanbagh witnessed him at worship:

“One day he picked up an unripe eggplant from the market and sat down at the base of a *jhao* tree at Baganbari. He cut the eggplant into pieces and dipped them into Ganges water and put a *tulsi* leaf on them. He offered them to his *istadevata* [personal deity] and sang a song of offering: “*bhaja patita uddharana, sri gaura hari.*” He then said, “I don’t know the right method of cooking this, but please eat a little of this food.” As soon as he said this his voice became choked, and his body turned bright red and began to swell, while tears flowed from his eyes in streams, soaking his face and chest. Seeing these signs of love, Lalita-didi was amazed. When the *bhāva* subsided nearly an hour later, he again sang a song. Putting Sri Gaura to sleep, he ate the unripe eggplant. His face showed expressions of great pleasure and happiness, more intense than one would make if tasting *pañcāmṛta* (nectar).”

He would roam around Navadwipa with an iron pot, begging for food. Often he wore the pot on his head. He went along the road saying, “*Jaya Rādhe!*” and the local people thought he acted like a madman (*unmatavat*). Little boys would run along behind him, and he would play with them: “When he saw a boy who was dark, he would think of him as Krishna, and the fair boy he thought of as Gaura. When the children would touch him, he would say, ‘Look Ma Yasoda, your Gopal has punched me!’ or ‘Look Ma Saci, your Gaura is making a face at me!’”

13 DAYS OF ECSTASY

He would often fall into trances, madly calling out the name of Krishna. Once when he was living at the Ranis *dharamsala* (shelter), he began to shout loudly, “Ha, Krishna Chaitanya.” Other Vaishnavas heard him yelling only these words for hour after hour. They thought that, unless they could change

his mood (*bhāva*), his throat would become torn and bloody. Several of them got together and began to shout, “*Naraharir prana Gaura.*” This changed the mood of Siddhababa Gaurkiśora Dāsa, who began shouting, “Raghunandan, Raghunandan!” and then calmed down. Another time in that *bhāva*, he locked the door of his meditation hut from within, and he stayed for thirteen days yelling, “Ha, Krishna Chaitanya,” crying continuously, slapping himself on the chest, and tearing at this hair.

When he went for his bath, he would tie up, in a cloth, about or ten kilos of Ganges dust, and would do ritual worship while keeping it on his head. One day, Srijukta Radhadasi Mata of Baralghat asked him, “O Bāba, what is that on your head?” He smiled and replied, “Just see, Ma your crazy child. It is not certain when or where he will die, and for that reason, he keeps this Navadwipa Ganges dust on his head. If the body goes in any other place, then this dust of Gaura’s Ganges will be there.”

Because he was disturbed by the people around him, he took to doing his meditation in unlikely places. For some time he stayed in the outhouse of Girishbabu and did his worship there. He also did his worship in the Rani’s outhouse, and purified it.

BRICKS AND STONES SINGING KRISHNA’S NAME

A devotee went to do his worship where Gaurkiśora did his—in the outhouse of the Rani’s *dharamsala* [a shelter for religious practitioners]. He perceived [*anubhāva kore*] that the bricks and stones were all singing Krishna’s name [*harināma*]. Seeing that by the power of Babaji’s chanting the name of Krishna, consciousness [*chaitanya*] had been infused even into unconscious objects, he left in amazement.”

Gaurkiśora spent much time avoiding persons who wished to be disciples. He refused to have servants, and cursed at his visitors and he would hit people who wanted to take initiation from him. Kedarnath Bhaktivinoda greatly desired initiation, and Gaurkiśora would hide from him—often in the veranda of a prostitute’s house near the bazaar. He considered it great fun to elude his pursuers.

Gaurkiśora could not tolerate unsuccessful *bhajana*: “When there was no *nāma-spurti* [manifestation of the name in meditation], he would often go to throw himself into the Ganges. He entered the water up to his neck and would only come out again when the name would appear.”

A devotee went to do his worship

where Gaura Kishore did his—

in the outhouse of the Rani’s *dharamsala*.

He perceived that the bricks and stones

were all singing Krishna’s name.

Seeing that by the power

of Babaji’s chanting the name of Krishna,

consciousness [*chaitanya*] had been

infused even into unconscious objects,

he left in amazement.

He would also threaten suicide when his readings of sacred text were disturbed by outside noises. He was intensely emotional, with moods of strong joy and sorrow.

In Navadwipa, at times he would worship with Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda at the birthplace of Chaitanya, which had been recently found by Bhaktivinoda and restored with images of Mahāprabhu Chaitanya and his wife, Vishnupriya. They would sing and dance, with their bodies undergoing the eight kinds of ecstatic transformations (*sāttvika bhāvas*):

*My dear mind, sing aloud
The blissful names of Nitai and Gaur
Delight O my mind
In the vision of Rādhā-Krishna's
Sport in Vrindavan
Revealed to us through the mercy of Śrī Gaur.
Everyone chant, Nitai-Gaur!*

Gaurkiśora's divine madness was not recorded during childhood and adolescence—it is only described after he joined a renunciant Vaishnava order. His purity was proved by his immunity to impurity, or even his conquest of it (such as causing an outhouse to resonate with *krishna-nāma*). He had inborn devotional love, like Krishna's *gopis*, and its spontaneous nature was shown in his *asastrīya* (not according to *sastras* or rules) behavior. He reversed many Vaishnava rules about purity and proper worship techniques, but thought constantly of Radha and Krishna, so he was a pure devotee and a liberated soul (*paramahansa*), beyond the rules of even Vaishnava society, and his madness was a participation in Radha's state of divine passion (*divyonmada*).

Śrīla Gaurkiśora Dāsa Bābāji did not discuss his inner experiences. The reality of his handmaiden identification was deduced by the experts in the science of *rasa* and sometimes exhibited as his irrational and peculiar actions, which were seen as divine madness because of their focus on Krishna and Chaitanya. Unlike many *sahajīya* imitationists, he also had traditional Vaishnava initiations and was part of an accepted lineage; thus behavior not specifically Vaishnava (such as wearing his begging bowl on his head) was interpreted as eccentric rather than mad. Even his apparent impure behavior shows only the detachment of the liberated *paramahansa*." (pgs. 53—57)

GURU SEES DISCIPLE AS GURU

Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja had inconceivable love and respect for his only disciple, Śrīla

Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. He told Śrīpāda Jagadīśa Bhaktipradīpa (later Śrīla Bhaktipradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja), who received his *harināma* initiation from Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his *dikṣā* initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda, "You should always associate with Saraswatī Prabhu. He is my spiritual master and an ideal Vaiṣṇava. Just see what kind of example of renunciation he has set, despite being the son of a wealthy person. Abandoning all kinds of bad association, he is earnestly serving the holy name, taking refuge in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. His renunciation is incomparable. He is an intimate associate of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana and my Mahāprabhu. You should also serve the Vaiṣṇavas with body, mind, and words. Always engage in *nāma-saṅkīrtana*—chant the holy name very loudly." He referred to Śrīla Prabhupāda as "my master" (*āmāra prabhu*). If anyone came to him with an offering of some fruit or vegetable from Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja would accept that with great happiness and ask the devotee about Śrīla Prabhupāda with great reverence and affection. One of Śrīla Prabhupāda's most dear and intimate disciples, Śrīpāda Paramānanda Vidyāratna Prabhu, has left the following account: One day in 1911, by the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda, I went to the Nutan Chaṛā [on the bank of the Gaṅgā] of Śrī Navadwīpa Dhāma to have *darśana* of Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Gaurkiśora Bābāji Mahāśaya, with some green chilis to offer him. Bābāji Mahārāja was an effulgent personification of intense renunciation in the mood of pure love for Krishna. He would soak some rice or beans one day and eat that for up to seven days with some green chilis. When he heard that I had come from Śrī Māyāpura, he asked me, "How is my master? Please offer him my *daṇḍavat*. Please tell my lord he should set aside everything else and preach about *Ṣaṭ Sandarbha*." At that time I saw Vanamālī Bābu in his association. In the afternoon many people came for his *darśana*. I heard that every day at that time many people would come to have *darśana* of his lotus feet. He would sit in front of his *chhai* and grant everyone the good fortune of having his *darśana*. I saw Bābāji Mahārāja taking *harināma* on a rag that he had knotted himself and turned into a *mālā*. He chanted *harinām* loudly for some time and ordered everyone present there to do so as well. Being so ordered by him, everyone chanted *harinām* loudly. Before evening I bowed down at his lotus feet and came back to Śrīdhām Māyāpur. Translated from *Saraswatī Jayāśrī*, Vol. I, p. 154. The songs

He would often fall into trances, madly

calling out the name of Krishna. ..

in that *bhava*, he locked the door

of his meditation hut from within,

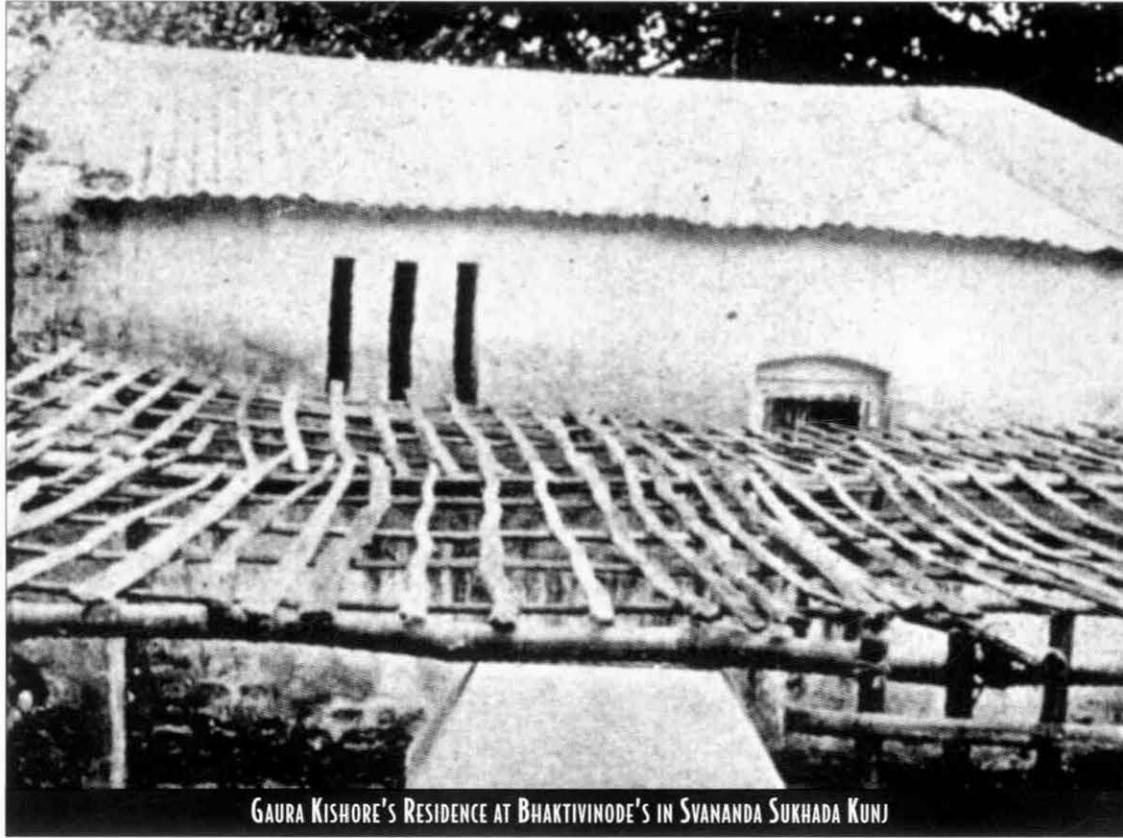
and he stayed for thirteen days yelling,

"Ha, Krishna Chaitanya,"

crying continuously,

slapping himself on the chest,

and tearing at his hair.



GAURA KISHORE'S RESIDENCE AT BHAKTIVINODE'S IN SVAMANDA SUKHADA KUNJ

written by Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura were very dear to Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja. He used to sing one of them all the time. The essence of all instruction is in that song:

*gorā pa-hu nā bhajiyā mainu
prema-ratana-dhana helāy hārānu*

*adhane yatan kari dhana teyāginu
āpana karama-doṣe āpani ḍubinu*

*sat-saṅga chhāri kainu asate vilāsa
te-kāraṇe lāgila ye karma-bandha-phā'sa*

*viṣaya viṣama-viṣa satata khānu
gaura-kīrtana-rase magana nā hānu*

*kena vā āchhaye prāṇa ki sukha lāgiyā
narottam dāsa kena nā gela mariyā*

"I am dying due to not worshipping Gora (Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu). Due to my negligence, I lost the great wealth of *prema* (Divine Love). Trying to take care of useless things, I lost my wealth. I am being drowned due to the reaction of my own bad karma. Giving up good association, I was enjoying sense pleasure in bad association, and for that reason the entanglement of karmic reaction became a noose around my neck. All the time I drank the terrible poison of material life. I did not absorb myself in the sweet nectar of *gaura-kīrtana*

(songs glorifying Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu). Why do I still have life? In the hope of what happiness am I still living? Why didn't Narottama Dāsa just die?"

Leaving the eternal glory of *kṛṣṇa-prema* in this world through his own unforgettable pastimes, Śrīla Gaurkiśora Bābāji Mahārāja disappeared from this world in the year 1915 (on the 30th of Kārttik) at the predawn hour to enter his eternal pastime.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dās, Śrī Hari-kṛpā, *Param Gurudev Prabhupād Śrī-śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī*. Bombay: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1980.

Dās, Śrī Hari-kṛpā, *Śrī-śrī Gaura-pārsad Charitāvalī*. Bombay: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1977.

Mahārāj, Śrī Bhaktikusum Śramaṇ, *Prabhupād Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura*. Māyāpur: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1940.

Mahārāj, Śrī Bhaktivallabh Tīrtha, *Śrī Gaura-pārsad o Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇav-āchārya-gaṇer Saṅkṣipta Charitāmṛta*. Calcutta: Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1992.

Saraswatī Jayasrī, edited by Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda. Calcutta: Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1935.

McDaniel, June, *The Madness of the Saints: Ecstatic Religion in Bengal*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989.

In Navadvīpa, at times he would worship

with Thakur Bhaktivinode

at the birthplace of Chaitanya, which had

been recently found by Bhaktivinode

and restored with images of Mahāprabhu

Chaitanya and his wife, Vishnupriya.

They would sing and dance,

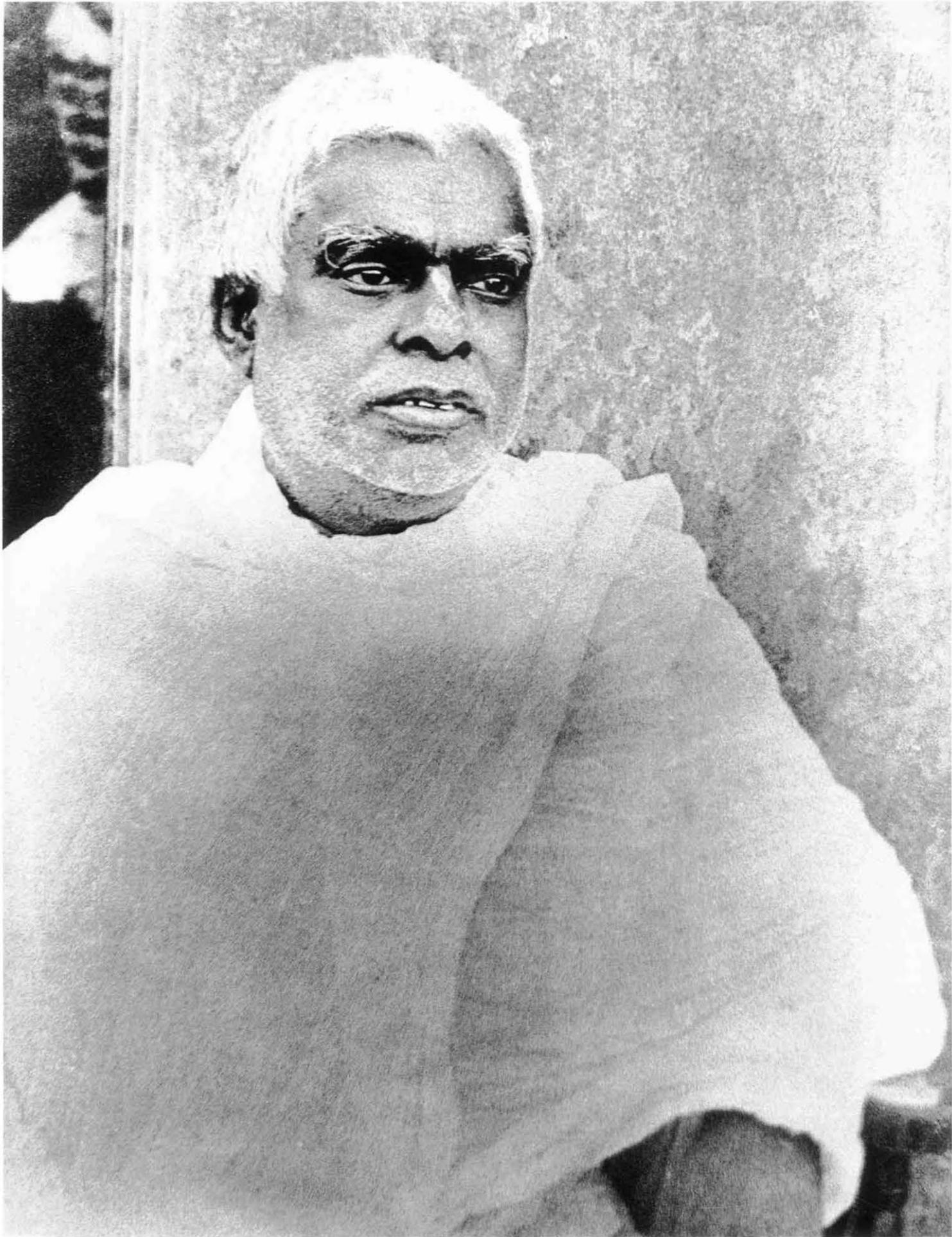
with their bodies undergoing

the eight *sattvika bhavas*.



Bhakti

Winode



BHAKTIVINODE THAKUR

vande bhakti-vinodam sri gaura-shakti-svarupakam
bhakti-shastraj-a-samrajam radha-rasa-sudha-nidhim



“I bow to Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur,
the personification of Sriman Mahaprabhu's potency,
the king of all those who know the scriptures and the ocean of the sweet rasa
which comes from Srimati Radharani.”

—Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Dev Goswami

The ancient Vaiṣṇava line of pure devotional service which was spread by Madhvāchārya in the thirteenth century was inconceivably enriched by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the supremely merciful incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīman Mahāprabhu appeared in 1486 in Navadvīp, West Bengal to deliver the sinful living entities of Kali-yuga, the present age of hypocrisy and quarrel. He spread His movement of devotional love through congregational chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa (the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*) and pure devotional service. Śrīman Mahāprabhu is known as the most munificent incarnation, as He distributed pure love of God to innumerable people throughout India without consideration of their qualification. He predicted that one day His message of pure devotional love would spread all over the world. Under His guidance and instruction, His intimate associates and followers have given the world an immense wealth of Vaiṣṇava literature: the six *goswāmīs* (headed by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī) left a myriad of works, from the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta Sindhu* (a treatise on devotion) to the *Hari-bhakti Vilās* (a treatise on Deity worship); Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura wrote the first major biography of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, *Śrī Chaitanya*

Bhāgavata, focusing on the early part of Śrīman Mahaprabhu's life; Srila Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Goswāmī wrote the *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, focusing on Śrīman Mahāprabhu's later pastimes. These are just a few examples, and the full extent and content of the Vaiṣṇava literature produced by Mahāprabhu's followers are still known to only a few fortunate souls.

This pure devotional movement remained vibrant and continued even after the disappearance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In fact, it brought one of the greatest spiritual awakenings in India for hundreds of years, leading to a renaissance of Vedic culture. Unfortunately, the theology and practice of this pure devotional line were buried in ignorance and misconceptions during the nineteenth century in Bengal, Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace. As many as thirteen pseudo-Vaiṣṇava groups (*apasampradayas*) claimed to be Vaiṣṇavas but did nothing more than arouse hatred and prejudice against Vaiṣṇavism in the minds of the general public, because of their practice of sense enjoyment in the name of religion. Such pseudo-Vaiṣṇavas are called Sahajiyās (those who cheapen). Nineteenth-century India was under British rule, and the oppressive and exploitative ruling class cared very little for the material prosperity or intellectual awareness of

its subjects. In addition, some of the prominent intellectual representatives of the ruling class displayed extreme religious and cultural chauvinism, looking down upon the “native” culture and religious concepts as something that should be suppressed for the benefit of all. The so-called *brāhmaṇa* class, ignorant of their own spiritual heritage and morally weak, relentlessly imposed their selfish concocted religious edicts over all the other classes of India's Hindu majority—a people already morally, socially and financially feeble after more than four centuries of Muslim dominance. The spiritual and moral consciousness of the populace had fallen to new depths. Many educated and influential Bengalis were turning away from their own spiritual and cultural heritage. Some of them had joined the impersonalist religious cult called the “Brahma-Samāj”, founded in 1826 by Rāmmohan Rāy, and others were looking to the west for intellectual and social reform. But a great cultural and intellectual renaissance was slowly taking place in Bengal. That time marked the appearance of one of the greatest saints of the pure Vaiṣṇava line of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism—Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the son of Śrī Ānanda Chandra Datta (belonging to

"I began to feel like my life had been spent uselessly. I had not accomplished anything. I had not been able to taste the nectar of the joy of serving Sri-Sri Radha-Kṛṣṇa, the personification of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. If I could, I would have liked to retire from my job in a few years. Then I would go to Mathurā/Vṛndāvana, and somewhere in the woods on the bank of the Yamuna I would make a little shelter for myself, so I could be a recluse and engage myself in devotional service. But due to my old habits, it would probably be hard on my body, so I should not live there alone. Perhaps I would have a companion. Then I went to Tārakeswar on some errand. While I was sleeping there, Mahāprabhu came to me at night and said, "You are thinking of going to Vṛndavana, but what about the work you are supposed to do in Navadvīp, which is close to your home?"

After I came back from Tārakeswar, every Saturday I would go from Krishnanagar to Navadvīp to look for the places of Mahāprabhu's pastimes. But I could not find anything, and that made me very sad. The people there are very concerned about making their own living. They do not make any effort to find the places of Mahāprabhu's pastimes.

One evening my son Kamal, a clerk, and I were standing on the rooftop looking around. It was about 10 o'clock at night, and it was dark and cloudy. Suddenly we happened to see a brightly lit mansion across the Ganges, to the north. When I asked

Kamal he said he had also seen it. But Kerani Bābu (the clerk) said he did not see anything. I was very amazed.

In the morning I looked in that direction again from the rooftop of that house (the queen's mansion) and noted that there was a palm tree there. When I asked the local people they told me that that place is called "Ballal Dighi" (the lake of the Ballalls). There is an old ruin there of the fort built by King Lakshman Sen. The following Monday I went to Krishnanagar, and the following Saturday I went to Ballal Dighi. Again that night I beheld that amazing sight. Later I went all around that place on foot, and by talking to the older residents I found out that this was Mahāprabhu's birthplace. Eventually I visited all the villages where Mahāprabhu's pastimes took place which are described in the Bhakti Ratnākara by Śrīla Naraḥari Chakravartī and also in the Caitanya Bhagavat. I wrote Śrī Navadvīp Dhama Mahātmya and sent it to Calcutta to be printed.

In January of 1894 we had a big meeting in the Krishnanagar A.V. school. Many learned, rich and famous Bengalis came to that meeting. Dvārik Babu (the chief engineer of Nadia District, Dvārakanāth Sarakār) and I presented all the facts about Śrī Mayāpur in our speeches to all of those present.

Everyone agreed with us and gave their blessings for starting devotional service in Māyāpur, to recognize Māyāpur as the birthplace of Mahāprabhu."



**BHAKTIVINODA THAKUR (RIGHT)
DISCOVERED THE BIRTHPLACE
OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU**

the famous lineage of the descendants of Śrī Puruṣottam Datta) and Śrīmatī Jagat-mohinī Devī, was born on Sunday, September 2, 1838, in Bīrnagar (also known as Ulā Grām) in Nadiyā district, West Bengal, in the house of his rich and famous maternal grandfather, Śrī Īśwar Chandra Mustauphi. His parents named him “Kedarnātha.”

Most of his childhood was spent in the opulent household of his maternal grandfather in Bīrnagar. Bīrnagar was a very beautiful and prosperous village, with a happy and carefree populace. The sounds of laughter, music, poetry, and storytelling could be heard in all the neighborhoods, garden paths, and bathing ghāṭs. Śrī Kedarnātha was a lovable child who made friends with a lot of people in his household and in the village. As an extremely intelligent child, he made friends with a lot of adults and asked them a lot of questions. He was very inquisitive about spiritual matters, and most of his questions were about the nature of Divinity, the nature of the living entities, and the relationship between the two. Unfortunately, almost all his spiritual inquiries were met with half-baked, confusing answers.

From early childhood his unusual talent for writing was noticed. He would go anywhere if he could hear about the Rāmāyaṇ and the Mahābhārat. By the time he was six years old he had mastered the facts and history therein. When he was nine he started studying astrology.

Ten-year-old Śrī Kedarnātha was full of spiritual questions which he would ask many different people—the person who crafted the deity form of Goddess Durgā, the Muslim guard of his grandfather’s treasury, his teacher in school, his uncle at home, and so forth. He has written about these conversations in his autobiography, in his own unique, interesting, lucid, storytelling way. It seems that he had some deep conviction in his heart about a monotheistic personal God, and he knew that God to be Rāma, or Kṛṣṇa. As a little boy he was very attached to the chanting of the name of Rāma.

He lost his father at the age of eleven and when he was twelve, he was married, according to his mother’s desire, to his first wife, the daughter of Śrī Madhusudan Mitra. He referred to the arrangement of his childhood marriage (not uncommon in those days) as “playing with dolls.” Even though he viewed the situation in this way, he did not protest.

He was first educated at a Sanskrit *ṭol* (elementary school) where he learned Sanskrit, Bengali, and arithmetic. Later, when

he was seven, his grandfather Śrī Mustauphi Mahāśay sent him to an English-medium school in Krishnanagar, called “Krishnanagar College.” Śrī Kedarnātha excelled in English, and received a class promotion and an award. Some time later, some educated men organized an English school in Ulā in the parlor of Śrī Kedarnātha’s uncle’s house. Again Śrī Kedarnātha excelled in reading and reciting, and learned Bengali and mathematics as well. In his mind he always pondered over spiritual matters. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote, “Even while Father was living I began to become a little thoughtful. ‘What is this world? Who are we?’ These two questions were in my mind when I was ten years old. On some days I thought I had the answers, on other days I had none.”

When Śrī Kedarnātha was fourteen his maternal grandfather, Śrī Mustauphi Mahāśay, passed away. So, he went to Calcutta with his mother, Śrīmatī Jagat-mohinī Devī. His maternal uncle, Kāśiprasād Ghosh, requested Śrīmatī Jagat-mohinī Devī to come to his house near the corner of Hedua and Beadon Street along with her children. She did not want to live in Calcutta, so she left Śrī Kedarnāth with his uncle and went back to Ulā. Śrī Kāśiprasād Ghosh was highly educated and was well-known in the intellectual society of Calcutta. He enrolled Śrī Kedarnātha at the local school, called Hindu Charitable Institution. Śrī Kedarnātha studied there for four years, and at this time displayed his mastery of the English language. Some of his articles in English were published in *Hindu Intelligence*, a prestigious newspaper.

In 1856 Śrī Kedarnātha enrolled in the Hindu School, which became the University of Calcutta. Among his classmates were Śrī Satyendra Nāth Tagore and Śrī Ganendra Nāth Tagore (brothers of the famous poet Śrī Rabindra Nāth Tagore, who became a Nobel laureate in 1913). While Śrī Kedarnātha was at the Hindu School, various intellectuals—such as Professor Clint, Reverend Duff, and Keśav Chandra Sen (who afterwards became a leader of the impersonalist cult, the Brahma Samāji)—were attracted to him because of his literary talent and his mastery of the English language. At this time he also came in contact with a member of the British Parliament, George Thompson, who taught him how to be an effective orator.

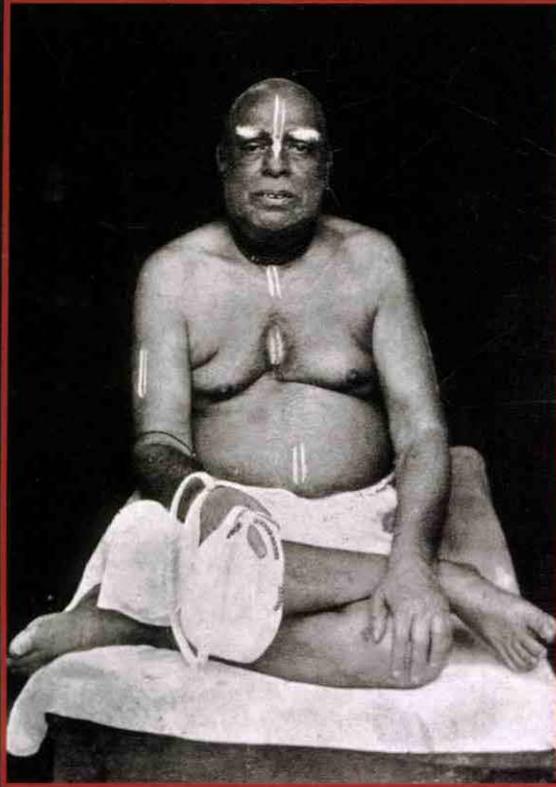
In 1856, Śrī Kedarnātha published his book of English poetry, *Poriyed*. Reverend Duff and others praised it highly and encouraged him to continue writing. Some of his English

poems were published in the magazine called the *Library Gazette*. He read extensively from Sanskrit and Bengali literature, as well as the writings of various European authors. Among them were Hume, Addison, Carlyle, Hazlitt, Macaulay, Goethe, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Voltaire. The members of the British Indian Society were very impressed by his scholarly speeches.

He also studied the impersonalist Brahma religion, Christianity, and Islam. In particular he studied the Bible and the Koran, and he also studied the work of Channing, Newman, and Theodore Parker. Śrī Kedarnāth wrote in his autobiography that he preferred Christianity to Brāhmoism because of the idea of a personal God. The eldest son of Maharṣi Debendranāth Tagore, Śrī Dwījendranāth Tagore (the eldest brother of the poet Rabīndranāth Tagore), was a close friend of his. Together they studied many books about philosophy and religion. Śrī Kedarnātha called Śrī Dwījendranāth Tagore “Baṛa Dādā” (“big brother”), and in his autobiography, Śrī Kedarnāth has mentioned that he appreciated Baṛa Dādā’s liberal character and they had mutual affection for each other. Later he refuted many of Baṛa Dādā’s impersonalist arguments in his spiritual novel, *Prem Pradīpa*.

In 1858, Śrī Kedarnātha set forth for Purī. On the way, he stopped at Chhuṭigrām to visit his paternal grandfather, Rājvallabh Datta. Śrī Rājvallabh Datta blessed Śrī Kedarnāth, saying that one day he would become an exalted Vaiṣṇava. Shortly after that, he passed away. Then Śrī Kedarnāth went to Śrī Jagannāth Purī, where he passed the teaching examination. Then he got a job as a teacher in Cuttack.

Later the famous Bengali scholar, educator, and social reformer, Īśwar Chandra Vidyāsāgar, who was Śrī Kedarnāth’s teacher and mentor, recommended him for the job of headmaster in the high school in Bhadrak. It was in Bhadrak that his first son, Annadā Prasād, was born. In 1860, he wrote his *Maths of Orissa* in English, which was praised by the historian Sir William Hunter. His next work was *Bijaṅgrām*, written in Bengali in *amitrākṣar chhanda*, unrhymed meter. This is the first work ever published in unrhymed meter in the history of Bengali literature, contrary to the notion that Michael Madhusudan Datta was the first to use it in Bengali. This long poem was written after Śrī Kedarnāth went to see the devastation of his childhood village of Ulā by an epidemic. The former beauty, prosperity, and joyfulness of Ulā were contrasted with its



BHAKTINODE THAKUR

In his autobiography, Bhaktinoda Thakur, writes: "While in Sri Purusottam Ksetra on the 25th of Magh 1280, Bimal Prasad (Saraswati Thakur) took birth in the house of Ramachandra Atya. All of the auspicious ceremonies like the first grains etc. were done with Jagannath Prasadam."



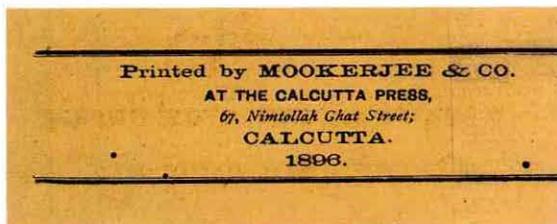
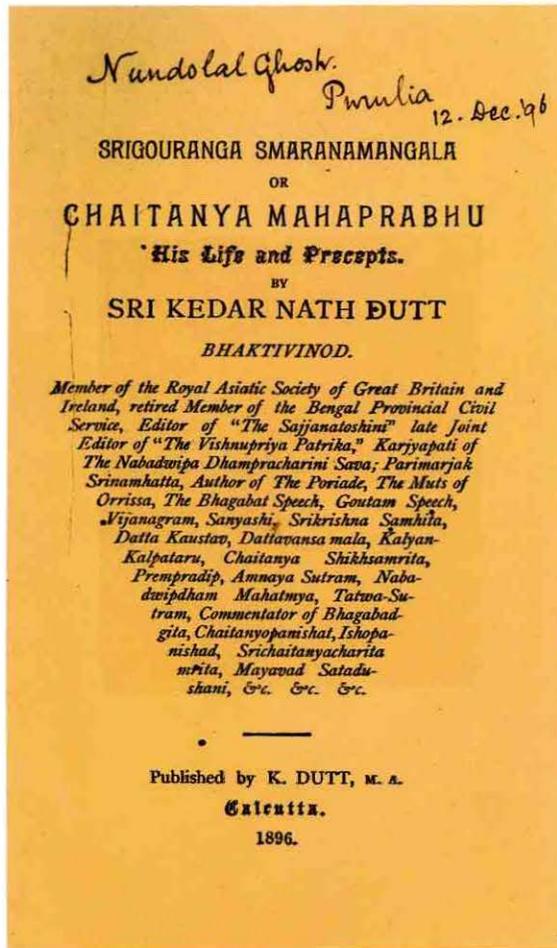
PRABHUPADA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI



DIVINE DESCENT

"Whenever real religion is lost and
irreligion is prominent,
at that time I descend myself
or send one of my representatives."
Lord Krishna, Bhagavad Gita





Thakur Bhaktivinoda wrote, "The object of this little book is to bring the life of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his precepts to the notice of the educated and religious people."

destruction by disease and subsequent desolation. Due to his mastery of imagery and narration, the poem makes a very vivid and lasting impression on the reader's mind.

Śrī Kedarnātha entered the civil service and, in 1866, at the age of twenty-eight, became Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector at Chhāprā. There he found a Muslim teacher to teach him Urdu and Persian. In March 1868, he was appointed Deputy Magistrate at Dinajpur.

The local zamindar of Dinajpur, Kamal Lochan Rāya, was a descendant of Rāmānanda Vasu, who was a follower of the path of Vaiṣṇavism as propagated by Śrī Mahāprabhu. Therefore Kamal Lochan Rāya favored the concept and practice of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism. Śrī Kedarnāth was very happy to associate with the Vaiṣṇavas there, and to find copies of Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta and a Bengali translation of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, as well as Bhakta-mālā. By reading Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta again and again, he became very attracted to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and spent many hours studying and analyzing the path of pure Vaiṣṇavism. In his autobiography, he has written, "From this time, I started thinking of Śrī Chaitanya Deva as the Supreme Lord. The seed of faith in Vaiṣṇava religion in my heart fully sprouted at this time. I loved to read Vaiṣṇava scripture night and day." At that time he used to submit his questions to the Supreme Lord with great sincerity and pray for His mercy. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to Champāraṅ for a few months, and then to Purī. There his dedication to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's path grew very intense. (Actually, to a student of Vaiṣṇavism, it is readily apparent that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was an eternally liberated soul, and an eternal associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. So one should not assume that he became a great devotee of Śrīman Mahāprabhu at one particular point in his life, even though externally it might seem that way. Also not very much time elapsed between his first contact with Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates and the beginning of his writing and preaching about pure Vaiṣṇavism, and yet his knowledge and realization of Vaiṣṇavism were practically endless. It was not humanly possible to know and realize so much in such a short time.)

When Śrī Kedarnātha went to Purī with his family, he was deeply absorbed in his study and meditation on Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Therefore he was looking forward to going to Purī, where Śrīman Mahāprabhu performed the last twenty-four years of His pastimes. The books on Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes, such

as Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta and Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavat, were Śrī Kedarnātha's constant companions. He also studied other Vaiṣṇava scriptures, such as Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and its commentary by Śrīdhara Swāmī. At this time, other scholars of Purī, such as Gopināth Paṇḍit, Hariharadās Paṇḍit, and Mārkendeya Paṇḍit, who had previously studied the Nyāya and the Vedānta, started associating with Śrī Kedarnātha and studying Śrīmad Bhāgavatam with him. Śrī Kedarnātha also studied the Vaiṣṇava literature written by the six goswāmīs. Scholars and spiritually inquisitive people listened with great interest to his discussions of Vaiṣṇava philosophy at the daily meetings held at the temple of Śrī Jagannāth. In 1874, Śrī Kedarnātha's fourth son, Śrī Bimalā Prasāda (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda) was born in Purī. Altogether Śrī Kedarnātha remained in Purī for five years.

Subsequently he was transferred to different places in Bengal, and he visited the principal Vaiṣṇava holy places. In 1878 he was transferred to Naṛāl, in Jessore district, where he became very popular as a great Vaiṣṇava magistrate. Many kīrtana singers used to come to sing their songs to him. There he published his Kṛṣṇa Saṁhitā in 1880 and Kalyāṇa Kalpataru, a collection of his own poems, in 1881. Kṛṣṇa Saṁhitā was highly praised throughout India. In Naṛāl Śrī Kedarnātha was initiated by Śrī Bipiṇa Vihārī Goswāmī. He followed all Vaiṣṇava practices very strictly. He decided to interest educated people in Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism, and therefore started a Bengali monthly, Sajjana Toṣaṇī, the first Vaiṣṇava newspaper. After three years in Naṛāl he went on a pilgrimage for three years to Āllāhābād, Ayodhyā, Benares, Vṛndāvan, and so forth. In Vṛndāvan he met Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābāji Mahārāj, who was considered the leader of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāja became his religious guide and helped him with his missionary work. In 1886 the goswāmīs of Vṛndāvan gave him the title Bhaktivinoda. Previously, he wrote Śrī Chaitanya Gītā under the name of Sachchidānanda Premālaṅkara, and so he became known as Sachchidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura began the greatest mission of his life: preaching Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism through books and lectures. He founded the Vaiṣṇava Depository, a printing press. The books which set forth Vaiṣṇava philosophy were in Sanskrit. He undertook the exposition of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇava philosophical system to the educated public in a simple



SRILA JAGANNATHDAS BABAJI MAHARAJA

and readable form. His style was sweet, free-flowing, lucid, and readable. He was a great master of Bengali prose, and in his hand it became a perfect medium for scholarly concepts expressed in a simple and attractive way. One retired professor from the University of Calcutta, who is well-known by his pen name, Vānārasīnāth Bharadvāj, wrote a book about the extraordinary contribution of Śrī Kedarnāth Datta to nineteenth- and twentieth-century Bengali literature. He called him "the undiscovered literary genius of Bengal." Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's work *Śrī Chaitanya Śikṣāmṛta* demonstrates his integration of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy with that of other schools. Subsequently he published *Bhagavad-gītā* with its commentary by Viśwanāth Chakravartī and his own Bengali commentary, *Rasik-ra-jana*, as well as Gunarāj Khān's *Kṛṣṇa Vijaya*. Many educated people from all classes became his disciples.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had a dream in which Śrīman Mahāprabhu commanded him to render service to Navadvīpa, the birthplace of the Lord, which had fallen into obscurity. Very soon thereafter Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was transferred to Krishnanagar as Subdivisional Magistrate. He went there with great joy, hoping to find the place where his beloved Śrīman Mahāprabhu had been born. While in Purī he had obtained

Narahari Chakravartī's *Bhaktiratnākara* and a book by Paramānanda Dāsa, which greatly aided his archeological investigation. After much effort, he succeeded in finding the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. With the help of the scriptures and his own research, conducted by asking the local people about the history of the surrounding place, he was able to pinpoint the very birthsite of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He also got help from government surveyors and engineers and consulted government maps. His findings were supported by the most revered Vaiṣṇava devotee of the time, Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. At a meeting in Krishnanagar attended by many Vaiṣṇava devotees, scholars, and inquisitive educated people, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura presented his findings about the birthsite of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Everyone was completely satisfied with his findings, and very respectfully agreed to help him to establish the site.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then composed his *Navadvīp Dhām Māhātmya*, glorifying each place within the boundary of Navadvīp, which was published in the same year. He established "Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Prachārīṇī Sabhā" (Society for the Glorification of Śrī Navadvīp Dhām) in 1894, with the ruling prince of Tripurā as its president. The society established a temple at the birthsite of Mahāprabhu and installed the deities of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā there. From then on daily deity worship as well as periodic festivals were maintained. On this occasion, a great festival took place, which was attended by thousands of devotees. Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya established "Śrī Māyāpur Sevā Samiti" (Organization for the Service of Śrī Māyāpur), and exalted Vaiṣṇava devotees, as well as many distinguished citizens from all over Bengal, became members of this society. Thus he established Śrīdhām Māyāpur as the bona fide birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. All his life he stressed the importance of developing Śrīdhām Māyāpur, and by his effort, and the effort of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, Śrīdhām Māyāpur later was developed into a town of temples.

In 1896, Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya started travelling on his preaching mission. First he went to the state of Tripurā, on the invitation of the Mahārāja of Tripurā, and gave lectures to the assembled scholars and intellectuals. On the first day he talked about pure Vaiṣṇavism and the glories of Harinām, and on the following two days he talked about Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes. The spiritually inquisitive people of Tripurā, who had never heard



"Our educated brethren of Europe and America have taken, of late, to the study of the Sanskrit language, and it is our belief that this brochure will go to their hands in a very short time."

From, "A Few Words in English"

in introduction of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu:

His Life and Precepts.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur captured the hearts of the people of Bengal and interested them in Vaishnavism through his sweet transcendental personality, his powerful writing, and his extensive preaching. Throughout Bengal great sadness was felt at his disappearance, but the Vaishnava devotees knew that Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's message would be carried on by his worthy successor, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur.

such a presentation, realized the beauty of Vaiṣṇavism. After returning from Tripurā, Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya preached in the villages of Bengal and the areas surrounding Calcutta. At the same time, he wrote and published much Vaiṣṇava literature. His books were widely read and appreciated, and he was given the honor of being made a Member of the Royal Asiatic Society (MRAS) in London.

The famous scholar and writer Shishir Kumār Ghosh, who was the founder and editor of the *Amrita Bāzār Patrikā* of Calcutta, read some of the books written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He became a great admirer and follower of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and began coming to him to listen to his *hari-kathā*. He requested Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to preach widely in Calcutta. Shishir Kumār Ghosh, who had great influence over the intellectual section of Calcutta, called Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura "the seventh Goswāmī." Very soon Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became known for his simple and saintly character, his unlimited knowledge of the scriptures, and his uncompromising stand on the pure Vaiṣṇava concepts, which he upheld through his own conduct and preaching (*āchār* and *prachār*).

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was a prolific writer of Vaiṣṇava literature. His poetry and prose bear testimony to his extraordinary literary talent. In his literary style, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was much ahead of his time. No other *āchārya* has presented so much Vaiṣṇava philosophy in such simple, and yet extremely attractive, Bengali prose. Even today, his books are easy for the common people to understand. He has systematically explained many Vaiṣṇava practices that all Vaiṣṇava devotees must know and follow in their personal lives.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura established his own Bhakti Kuthi in Puruṣottama Dhāma (Jagannātha Purī) in order to preach and practice pure devotion. Later he established another *bhajana kuṭira* in Śrī Godrum, Navadvīp Dhām, called Śrī Svānanda-sukhada-ku-ja. Śrīla Gaurkiśor Dās Bābāji, who had great respect for Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya, used to come there and spend many hours discussing *hari-kathā* with him. Śrīla Bābāji Mahārāj also encouraged other devotees to surrender unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya. Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya saw Saraswatī Ṭhākura as the next *āchārya* in the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇava line, and he greatly encouraged Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura in his preaching work by giving him

instruction and inspiration.

In 1908, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura accepted the *paramahaṁsa veṣa* (garb of a Vaiṣṇava renunciate). On June 23, 1914, on the disappearance day of Śrī Gadādhara Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura left this material world to enter the afternoon pastime of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura captured the hearts of the people of Bengal and interested them in Vaiṣṇavism through his sweet transcendental personality, his powerful writing, and his extensive preaching. Throughout Bengal great sadness was felt at his disappearance, but the Vaiṣṇava devotees knew that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's message would be carried on by his worthy successor, Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswatī Ṭhākura.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

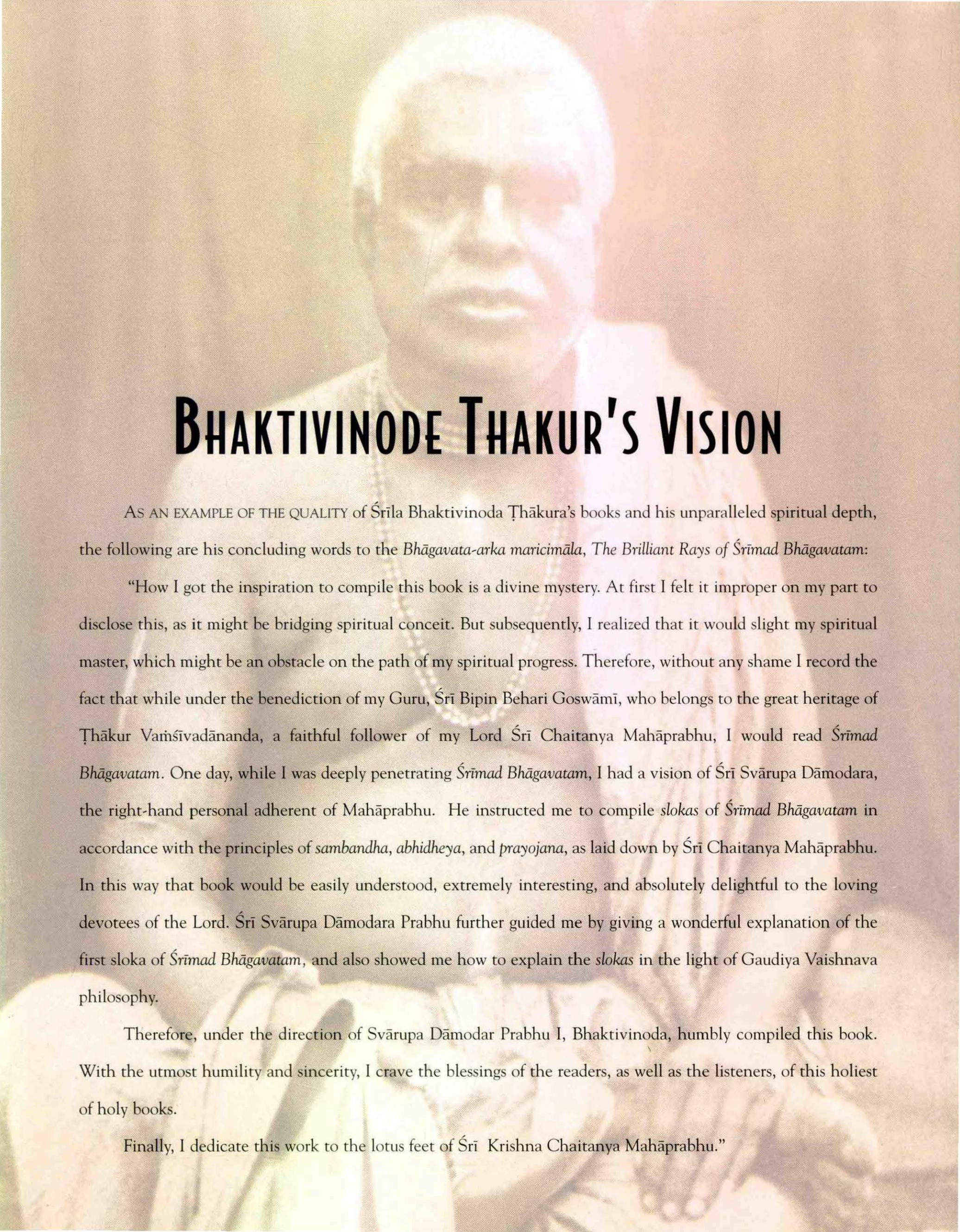
Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Vallabh Tīrtha, *Śrī Gaura-pāṣad o Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavāchārya-gaṇer Saṁkṣipta Charitāmṛta*, vol. 2, Calcutta: Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1994.

Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Vilās Tīrtha. Introduction to *Jaiva Dharma*, by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Mādrās: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1976.

Saraswatī Jayasrī, ed. by Śrīpād Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, Calcutta: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1934.

Vidyāratna, Śrīmad Paramānanda, *Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura*, Māyāpur: Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1976.





BHAKTIVINODE THAKUR'S VISION

AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE QUALITY of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's books and his unparalleled spiritual depth, the following are his concluding words to the *Bhāgavata-arka maricimāla*, *The Brilliant Rays of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

“How I got the inspiration to compile this book is a divine mystery. At first I felt it improper on my part to disclose this, as it might be bridging spiritual conceit. But subsequently, I realized that it would slight my spiritual master, which might be an obstacle on the path of my spiritual progress. Therefore, without any shame I record the fact that while under the benediction of my Guru, Śrī Bipin Behari Goswāmī, who belongs to the great heritage of Ṭhākur Vaiṣṇavadānanda, a faithful follower of my Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, I would read *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. One day, while I was deeply penetrating *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, I had a vision of Śrī Svārūpa Dāmodara, the right-hand personal adherent of Mahāprabhu. He instructed me to compile *slokas* of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in accordance with the principles of *sambandha*, *abhidheya*, and *prayojana*, as laid down by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. In this way that book would be easily understood, extremely interesting, and absolutely delightful to the loving devotees of the Lord. Śrī Svārūpa Dāmodara Prabhu further guided me by giving a wonderful explanation of the first sloka of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and also showed me how to explain the *slokas* in the light of Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy.

Therefore, under the direction of Svārūpa Dāmodar Prabhu I, Bhaktivinoda, humbly compiled this book. With the utmost humility and sincerity, I crave the blessings of the readers, as well as the listeners, of this holiest of holy books.

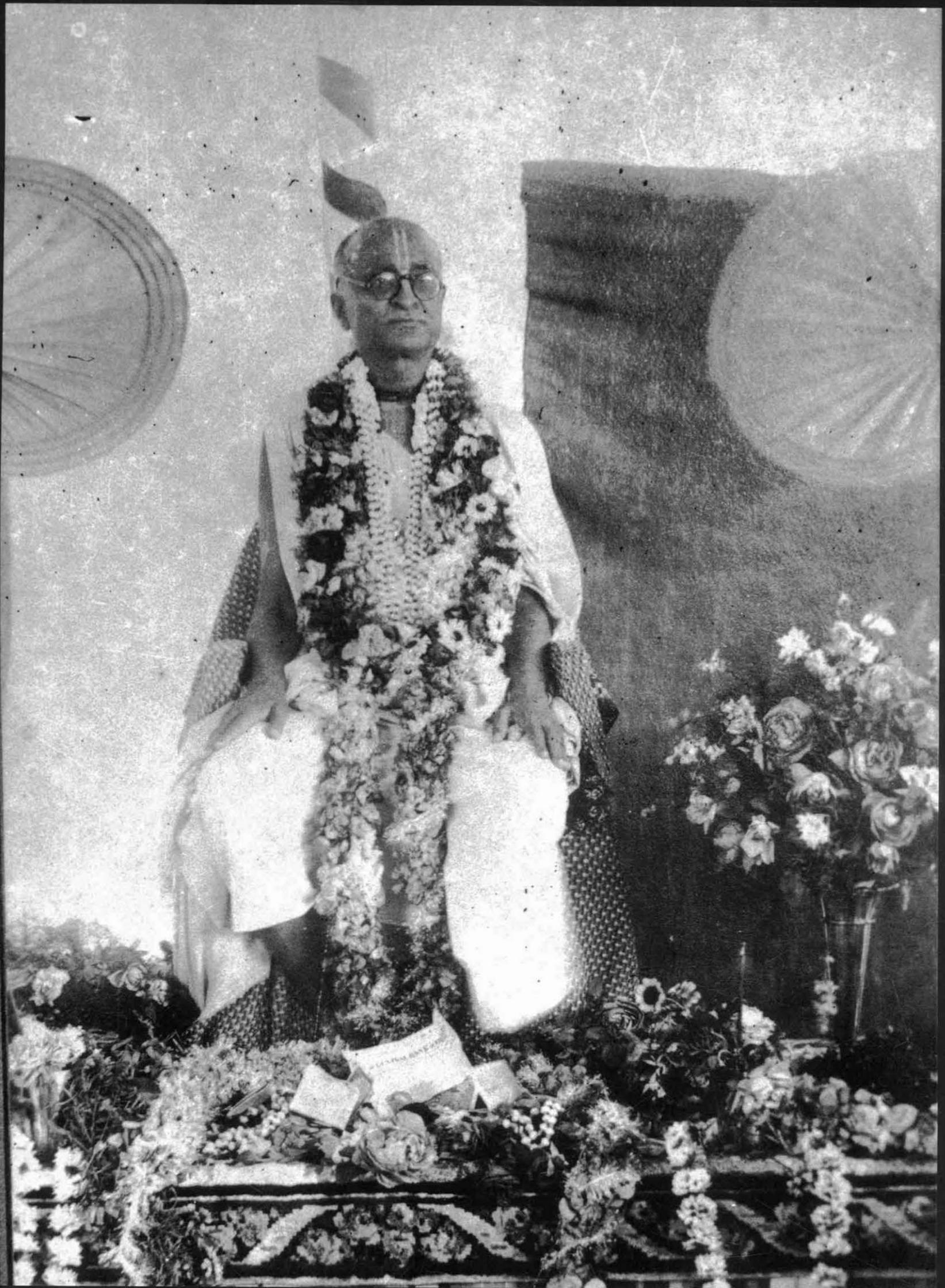
Finally, I dedicate this work to the lotus feet of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.”



Prabhupada's

S r i a B h a k t i s i d d h a n t a S a r a s w a t i T h a k u r

Precepts



THE LAST VYAS PUJA CELEBRATION IN 1936, AT WHICH THIS FAMOUS ADDRESS WAS DELIVERED.

GURU PUJA—WORSHIP OF SRI GURU

WE HAVE TAKEN UPON OURSELVES the responsibility of welcoming this grave charge. Everyone in the audience has accepted an ordinary seat; I alone have been provided with a lofty sitting place. Everyone is being told in effect, "Do have a look at a big animal from the zoo-gardens. What arrogance! So foolish! So wicked! Have you ever seen such a big brute! Garlands of flowers have been put around his neck! What laudations! What bombastic long-drawn, and hyperbolic adjectives! And how complacently too he is listening to the praise of his own achievements, how intently, and with his own ears! He also evidently feels delighted in mind! Is he not acting in plain violation of the teaching of Mahāprabhu? Can such a big brute, so selfish and insolent, ever be reclaimed from brutishness?"

BY MY COMMAND, BE GURU, DELIVER THIS LAND

I happen to be one of the greatest fools. No one offers me good advice on account of my arrogance. Inasmuch as nobody condescends to instruct me I placed my case before Mahāprabhu Himself. The thought occurred to me that I would give charge of myself to Him and see what He would advise me to do. Then Śrī Chaitanyadeva said to me, "Who-so-ever you meet, instruct him regarding Krishna, by My command, be guru; deliver this land. In this you will not be obstructed by the current of the world. You will have My company again at this place."

In these verses is to be found the proper explanation of the apparent inconsistency noticed above. He whose only teaching is humility greater even than a blade of grass, said "By My command, be guru; save this land!" In this instance Mahāprabhu Himself has given the command. His command being, "Perform the duty of the guru, even as I perform it myself. Also convey this command to whomever meet." Chaitanyadeva says, "Tell them these very words: 'By My command, be guru; save this land. Deliver the people from

their foolishness.'" Now whomever would happen to hear these words would naturally protest with folded palms joined. "But I am really a great sinner; how can I be guru? You are Godhead Himself, the Teacher of the world. Only you can be guru."

To which Mahāprabhu replies, "If you follow my order you will not be obstructed by the current of the world. You will have my company again at this place." Therefore, in this case, in telling others about Krishna, there is no risk of forgetting Him.

This thing called the world troubles us; color, taste, smell, touch, and sound dash themselves against us in mighty waves. For this reason it does not pay to be worldly minded. Śrī Chaitanya said, "For those who wish to get across the sea of worldliness, and are intent on serving God, free from desire for all other objects, the very sight of worldly people and looking at the opposite sex with the spirit of enjoyment is worse than swallowing poison."

THE WORLD SHUTS OUT GOD

Those who want to be employed in the service of God should never cast a covetous eye on any worldly object. By the vision of the partial, external, physical world the vision of God is shut out. No sooner does the world, or, in other words, anything perceivable by the senses, present itself, than it at once causes forgetfulness of the Lord; and all of those persons who are connected with the absolute truth begin to look small. One who is moving forward on the path of devotion with the object of serving Krishna should, therefore, by all means avoid worldly persons.

It is best to scrutinize one's own ineligibility. Why should a person be anxious to pry into defects of others when he does not seek to scrutinize his own conduct? On the other hand, even those who are low on the scale of service, meaning less committed, may attain a higher level. Let us remember the instruction, "Not to speak ill of persons who listen to and

remember with care the instructions of the spiritual scriptures and the saints. Even those who live by sin can know Krishna and prevail over His deluding power if they follow the conduct of the devoted servants of the Lord who covers all the worlds by His wonderful strides."

DO NOT IMITATE THE VAISHNAVA

Those who are fit possess abundant power of devotion. They are strong. I should not apply myself to find out the shortcomings of the Vaiṣṇavas, or to condemn the service of Lord Krishna or to seek to establish my own point of view by neglecting the method by which I may be enabled to serve the Lord and His devotees. No language can describe the havoc that is wrought in human life by such arrogance. We make this submission with all humility, "May you kindly refrain from merely imitating the conduct of the Vaishnavas. May you always follow in their line of thought." There is no relationship for us other than with the devotees of Krishna. Relationship with other persons can only aggravate the desire for sensual gratification.

Do not practice the craft of being guru for the purpose of injuring others through malice. Do not adopt the trade of a guru in order to get immersed in the slough of this world. But if you can, indeed, be My guileless servant; you will be endowed with my power - then you need not fear."

I have no fear, my *gurudeva* has heard this from his *gurudeva*. And it is for this reason that my *gurudeva* has accepted even such a great sinner as myself and has told me, "By My command, be guru; save this land." It is only those who have never heard these words of Gaurasundara who say, "How odd to listen to one's own praise!"

While the guru is instructing his disciple in the eleventh *skandha* of the *Bhāgavatam* what a great sin, in their opinion, he is perpetuating! What is the *āchārya* to do when he has to explain the *sloka*: *āchāryam mām vijānīyam*,

If I disobey the law which has come down
to me through the chain
of preceptorial succession,
the offense, due to omission to carry out
the command of the guru,
will sever me from the lotus feet
of Sri Gurudeva.
If, in order to carry out the command
of the guru, I have to be arrogant,
brutish, to suffer eternal perdition,
I am prepared to welcome
such eternal damnation
and even sign a pact to that effect.

“Never disregard the *āchārya*. Never entertain that the *āchārya* is your equal in any sense.”

These are the words of Sri Krishna Himself by which the *jīva* is to be benefitted. Is the guru to desert his seat—the seat of the *āchārya*—from which these words are to be explained? That office his *gurudeva* has conferred on him. If he does not act up to its requirements he is doomed to perdition by reason of his offense against the holy name in the shape of disrespect towards the guru. He has to do it in spite of the fact that such procedure is apparently open to the charge of egotism. When the guru imparts the mantra to the disciple should he not tell him by this *guru-gāya-trī-mantra* to worship the guru? Should he say instead, “Give the guru a few strokes of the shoe or horse whip?” The guru is never to be decried. The guru is the abode of all the gods. Should *gurudeva* abstain from communicating these words to his disciple while reading the *Bhāgavatam* to him? “To one who possesses guileless spiritual devotion to the *gurudeva*, similar to the transcendental devotion that is due to Krishna, all the holy mysteries are manifested.” Is the *gurudeva* not to tell these things to his disciple?

Gurupūja, the worship of the guru, has precedence over all others. The guru is to be served just as Krishna is served. The guru is to be worshiped in a particular way. Is the guru to desert his seat without telling all these things to the disciple? In the emancipated state no defect is possible, this simple truth ordinary foolish people entirely fail to grasp.

In a sense guru is like the hand attached to the body of God, Who is all-existence, all-intelligence, and all-bliss (*sat-cit-ānanda-vigraha*). With His hand God rubs His own feet. The hand of God is His own limb. In this case God is serving Himself. God, Himself appears as the guru in order to teach how to serve Himself. Our *gurudeva* is also one with the body of God. There is God to be served, there is also God who serves; God as object and God as support. Mukunda is God to be served, He is the object God. The most beloved of Mukunda, Śrī Gurudeva, is serving God the support. There is no one so dearly loved by God as our *gurudeva*. He alone is the best beloved of the Lord.

Our *gurudeva* has said, “Oh my mind, whether it be religion that has been prescribed, or irreligion that has been forbidden by the Vedas, you need perform neither. Placed as you are in this world, propagate the unstinted service of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna in Vraja and recollect unceasingly the darling son of Śrī Sacī, Śrī

Gaurasundara, knowing Him to be non-different from the son of Nanda, Krishna, and the guru to be the best beloved of Śrī Krishna. In the *Gostha* i.e., in Śrī Navadvīpa, Vaikuṅṭha, Swetadvīpa—Vṛndāvana, never stint in your regards for the denizens of Navadvīpa and Vraja inasmuch as they are the servitors of Gaura Krishna. Do not condemn the Vaiṣṇavas or the brahmins.”

For example, if having sat down to a meal, assuming gentle manners, we choose to take insufficient food, thereby the belly will not be filled; if we cheat the smith in the matter of steel; if not being able to understand how to do a sum in mathematics we feel ashamed and do not confess our ignorance to our teacher—in any case no success will be gained. Likewise if we desire the service of God but have no regard for His dearest then we will never be satisfied.

Hypocritical sectarians, pseudo-Vaiṣṇava sects, that cherish internally the longing for earthly fame, and others naturally think, “What a shame it is for one to listen to the eulogies of disciples while occupying the seat of the guru.” But every Vaiṣṇava regards every one of the Vaiṣṇavas as the objects of his veneration. I am doing the duty of the guru, but if I preach that no one should shout, “*jāya!*” to me, it would be nothing short of duplicity. Our *gurudeva* has not taught such insincerity. Mahāprabhu has not taught such insincerity. The word of Krishna has come down to *gurudeva*. I have to obey it in all sincerity. I will not disrespect the guru at the insistence of any foolish or malicious sectarians. Especially as Śrī Gurudeva has directed me saying, “By my command, be guru; save this land.”

If I disobey the law which has come down to me through the chain of preceptorial succession, the offense, due to omission to carry out the command of the guru, will sever me from the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva. If, in order to carry out the command of the guru, I have to be arrogant, brutish, to suffer eternal perdition, I am prepared to welcome such eternal damnation and even sign a pact to that effect. I will not listen to the words of other malicious persons in lieu of the command of the *gurudeva*. I will dissipate, with indomitable courage and conviction, the currents of thought of all the rest of the world, relying on the strength derived from the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva. I confess to this arrogance. By sprinkling a particle of the pollen of the lotus feet of my preceptor, crores of people like you will be saved. There is no such learning in this

world, no such sound reasoning in all the fourteen worlds, no mangods, that can weigh more than a solitary particle of the dust of the lotus feet of my *gurudeva*. *Gurudeva* in whom I have implicit trust can never spite me. I am by no means prepared to listen to the words of anyone who wants to hurt me or to accept such a malicious person as my preceptor.

In the presence of Śrī Chaitanyadeva, Śrī Swārūpa Dāmodara said, "Oh ocean of mercy, Śrī Chaitanya, on the manifestation of your mercy the dust in the shape of mental disquietude is easily wafted from the heart and the heart quickly becomes cleaned of any impurities. Then is manifested, in the clean heart, the highest bliss born of devotion to Śrī Krishna. The conflicting interpretations of the Śāstras give rise in the mind to opposing speculations which only cause perpetual strife. Only by obtaining your mercy is the favored heart intoxicated with the elixir of the devotion to God whereupon the wranglings of the Śāstras cease to disturb. Your mercy promotes perennial devotion, in other words, directs all *jīva* souls from hankering after objects other than Krishna, conducting them to the very pinnacles of beatitude. Oh ocean of kindness, Śrī Chaitanya, may that non-evil producing mercy of yours be poured down upon me."

When Śrī Swārūpa Dāmodara speaks these words to Śrī Chaitanyadeva, the Lord does not avoid listening to them. Yet in order to teach humility to foolish people, He exhibits at times another line of conduct, observing, "Such words should not be addressed to me," but not for the purpose of teaching duplicity. Ignorant people naturally entertain doubts. I have learned from my *gurudeva* that, "I am as contemptible as the maggot in stool." But when our *gurudeva*, by command of his guru, by command of Mahāprabhu, conducts himself in the aforesaid manner, may no one cast offense at his feet.

It is only when we have occasion to listen to the praises of the Supreme Object, and they react in our hearts, that we may learn about our utter worthlessness. The Vaiṣṇavas' profound humility and obedience teach us that it is never possible to approach God and His devotees except by such humble submission. If we learn to be arrogant, we will surely be deprived of the service to God and His devotees for good. "There are persons who do not worship His devotees while worshipping God. Verily they are arrogant persons and not worshippers of God at all." In the matter of worship, God and His devotees are to be equated. If the same devotion with which we worship



God is not aroused in our hearts to the feet of His devotees, we are rendered perfectly worthless, and we have lived in vain.

All of them are instructing me about the highest service of God. May we be ever ready to sweep away from our hearts, by the rough application of hundreds of thousands of pointed broomsticks, the wicked design of desiring to be honored above other persons by the devotees of the Lord. Krishna will be merciful to us and we shall be blessed with the gift of devotion to His Divine Feet the very day that we are delivered from the evil desire of seeking advantages and honors from others. A person is relieved from all ineligibilities by being imparted fitness for the service of God. Immoral men and women, sudras, and the rest

may look condemnable and contemptible in the eyes of the world for their evil deeds. But even such persons are enabled to attain the eternal good by noting the model disposition of the devotees of God, who honor all persons without requiring to be honored, and by following their conduct and teaching. Let us end with the text already quoted, "There are those who worship God but do not worship His devotees. Verily such persons are arrogant sinners. They are not worshippers of God at all. "Let the censorious people calumniate us to their heart's content. We will not mind them. Let us roll in the dust and forget everything in the ecstasy of intoxication by excessively drinking the strong and tasty wine of the love of Lord Hari."

PREACHING IN THE WEST

THE BEGINNING

The happy day has come when we are destined to spread the message of our Great Master to distant corners of the earth. The spiritual service to which we are dedicated has now passed the bud-stage and blown fully into a flower whose aroma we have to carry across the seas with that willingness which characterized Śrī Hanuman when he leapt over the wide ocean with the message of Śrī Rama. This extension of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's spiritual gift to foreign countries is our humble offering at His Feet.

The Words of instruction of Śrī Gaurasundara are verily His beautiful body; the preachers of His Word through the ages are His secondary limbs; the teaching of Śrī Gaurasundara is His potent weapon; and the Grace of Śrī Hari Himself established in the Word of Śrī Chaitanya is His eternal associate. Therefore, for the purpose of truly presenting Śrī Gaurasundara, the Lord of the Gauṛīya, to the aliens, I am addressing these few words of mine to the preachers who are about to proceed to countries beyond India:

The crest-jewel of the order of the *sannyasi* of the triple-staff, Śrīla Prābodhananda Saraswati Goswamīpad, instructed those who have assumed the triple-staff of renunciation, in the following words: "I say this, by holding the straw between my teeth, by falling at your feet and uttering hundreds of the humblest entreaties: All ye good souls, by throwing off everything to a distance, practice love to the Feet of Śrī Chaitanya Who is so surpassingly Beautiful." Following in the footsteps of all the former devotees, I am making my submission to them to pursue the identical method of reaching.

Śrī Krishna Chaitanya Deva is the

Supreme Teacher of all teachers of this world and the ideal Possessor of Intelligence that is the highest of all. It should be our only duty to constantly chant those words regarding the cleansing of the mirror of the heart of which He speaks in His Eight Precepts, *Śikṣāṣṭakam*. We are only the bearers of the Transcendental Word. We shall never in any way hesitate to offer every honor and facility, for which they are eligible, to all persons of this world. We must pray to all for the boon of aptitude for the service of Krishna. We shall come across many persons in this world, possessing an endless variety of characters, disposed or hostile to the service of Krishna. But we should not slacken in our loving service of the Lord of our hearts and should offer due honor to all persons.

Those nations to whom you are going for the propagation of the chant of Hari are mounted on the summit of proficiency in all affairs of this world. They are practiced in the exercise of their rational judgement, are endowed with the quality of good manners and are superior and glorious in many respects. Therefore, we should maintain our hope unshaken that they will prove to be worthiest recipients of the heard transcendental Voice if we unlock to them the gates of the natural exhibition of abiding argument and enduring judgement. If we unpack our baggage of the genuine discourse of Hari by relying on the qualities of forbearance it will certainly receive the garland of welcome from the hearts of nations gifted with keen intelligence.

We must not look at the world by being weighed down with the mentality that is oppressed with the sense of deficiency or otherwise, by the poverty or otherwise, of the display of worldly erudition, rank, etc. by any par-

ticular person. This is the state of forgetfulness of our real selves. All persons of this world are really superior to us in every way as far as this world is concerned. All those matters are not any commodities that are fit to be coveted by us. We are merely beggars with the triple-staff of renunciation devoted to the chanting of the Words of Śrī Chaitanya. We have no more nor any higher desirable object than the Pleasure of serving Śrī Hari-Guru-Vaiṣṇava.

We are not the operators of the instrument, but we are only the instruments. We must always bear this in mind. The triple-staff Bhikṣus are the living *mṛdāṅgas* of Śrī Chaitanya. We must constantly give forth our music at the lotus feet of Śrī Guru. We should practice the function of the peripatetic preacher, *parivrājaka*, of carrying aloft the victorious banner of the Commands of Divine Śrī Gaurasundara by constant submission to Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas, fixing our eye on the pole-star of the heard transcendental Voice. We must always bear in mind that we have been initiated in the vow of the peripatetic preacher for the sole purpose of promulgating the Heart's Desire of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. If we are constantly inspired with the duty of discoursing about the Truth under the guidance of Śrī Guru, no hankering after travelling, nor any veiled form of desire other than chanting of *hari-nāma*, will ever strike any terrors into our hearts.

The vowed service of the Name, the Transcendental Abode and the Desire of Śrī Gaurasundara, is our only eternal function. We are Bhikṣus of the triplestaff. The in-gathering of the smallest alms, even such as are gathered by the bees, is our only means for serving the manifestation of the Manifestive Divine Form



BON MAHARAJA RETURNS FROM THE WEST WITH CONVERTS [A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA ON RIGHT]

of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh all over the world. We are neither enjoyers nor abnegators of mundane entities. We recognize as our highest objective the desire for carrying with veneration the shoes of the order of the *Paramahamsas*.

It will be our only duty, to proclaim to all the people that complete reliance on the Transcendental Absolute Truth is by far the highest form of freedom and one that is infinitely superior to the partial independent mastery over the distorted reflected entity in the shape of this mundane world. By holding the straw between our teeth in supplication we shall carry aloft the banner of that real freedom to all persons. We should be constantly engaged in chanting the exhilarating Name of

Śrī Hari by adopting as our fundamental enlightening principle that the highest path is the path of submission, endorsed by Śrī Rūpa with the exhortation to cherish the unwavering faith that He will always protect us.

GAUDIYA MATH IN ENGLAND

My Lord Marquess,

It is with feelings of great joy that I, on behalf of the members of the Gauṛīya Mission in India, do hail this opportunity of conveying our hearty and most respectful congratulations to Your Lordship for kindly accepting a prominent position in the British Cabinet as the "Secretary of State for India." Being purely and thoroughly religious people, although we are

not very conversant and very keenly concerned with political issues, we may make bold to state this much: that Your Lordship is perhaps the only person in the whole of Great Britain who enjoys the most unflinching confidence of the vast people of this country and who can most ably guide their destinies in this critical moment, and we are sure many of their legitimate aspirations will be fulfilled so as to tighten more closely the silken tie of friendship and goodwill between the British and the Indians.

So far as we are concerned, Your Lordship being the most distinguished patron and President of our London Gauṛīya Mission Society, it is a proud occasion of great importance and honor to us to express our most

The triple-staff Bhiksus are the living
mridangas of Sri Chaitanya. We must
 constantly give forth our music at the
 lotus feet of Sri Guru. We should practice
 the function of the peripatetic preacher,

pari-vrajaka, of carrying aloft the
 victorious banner of the
 Commands of Divine Sri Gaurasundar
 by constant submission to Sri Guru
 and the Vaishnavas,
 fixing our eye on the pole-star
 of the heard transcendental Voice.



A. B. GOSWAMI MAHARAJA WITH LORD ZETLAND IN LONDON, ENGLAND, 1934

heart-felt felicitations for the significant appointment. May the Supreme Lord grant Your Lordship a long life and glorious success in Your Lordship's mission, and may He bestow His choicest blessings on Your Lordship.

With the kindest regards to Your Lordship,

In the service of the Supreme Lord,

Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

(quoted in *Gauṛīya*, Vol. 35, No. 44)

"We had several very earnest and important discussions with His Lordship who had from the very beginning of our activities in London encouraged and helped us in all possible ways. His Lordship has presided over several of our lectures and has very kindly become the President of the Society we have recently started in England with its headquarters in London. His Lordship has also very kindly taken a good deal of trouble in going through the manuscript of my 'Lectures' and has kindly consented to write a foreword to it. We have received many letters from His Lordship and in most of those letters he assured me of his perpetual sympathy, in such encouraging words as 'I need hardly assure you, that you have my continual good wishes for your work in this country.'"

(Śrīla Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja, "First

Year in England," as quoted in *ibid.*)

"The 60th anniversary of the birth of the President of the Gauṛīya Maṭh, Calcutta, was celebrated at a reception at Grosvenor House, given by Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon and members of his Mission in London.

"The Marquess of Zetland, offering the Mission his best wishes, commented on the fact that India had always been the home of spiritual movements and expressed the opinion that in times like the present, when the minds of men were distracted by a multiplicity of material considerations, it was a matter for congratulation that, whether from India or any other country, there should still be this great spiritual force.

"The Mahārāja of Burdwān hoped that the advent of the Mission would result in continued goodwill and good fellowship between India and Britain, of which there was a very great need at present."

(quoted from Reuters, February 2, 1934 *ibid.*)

BON MAHARAJA IN BERLIN

Berlin, November 10, 1934

Tridaṅḍī Swāmī B.H. Bon, Preacher-in-charge of the London Gauṛīya Maṭh, delivered a most erudite and interesting lecture on Mahāprabhu's philosophy in German at the

Berlin University in the presence of a large gathering of scholars and men of learning. It was appreciated by the audience. Swāmīji is receiving sympathies from all quarters. The British ambassador in Berlin is much impressed and has arranged for an interview of Swāmīji with a high official on his return from a lecture tour on December 20. He starts on Monday, the 12th of November for Leipzig to deliver a lecture at Leipzig University. (ibid.)

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS

Thirty years after the disappearance of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, his disciple Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja left the holy land of Vṛndāvana, India and sailed to New York City to introduce Krishna consciousness to the Western world. In 1966 he established ISKCON, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Within ten years the name of Krishna was known internationally.

This extraordinary empowerment is unequalled and unimaginable. He attributed his success to humbly following the divine order of his *gurudeva*, Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, who wanted his disciples to preach the message of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in the West. In *Śrī Chaitanya-Cavitāmṛta* it was pre-

dicted by Chaitanya Mahāprabhu Himself:

*prithivite āche yata nagara ādi grāma
sarvatra prachār hoibe mora nāma*

“One day My name will be sung and preached in every town and village in the world.”

In appreciation of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja’s worldwide preaching success, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja spoke the following on behalf of all of the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas around the world: “I consider him to be *saktyāvesa avatara*, and it is confirmed in his writings on his spiritual journey through the Atlantic. How he landed there in America, and the nature of his beginning the movement, his intense degree of dedication to Krishna and dependence, and how much he made himself empty of any other desire than the order of his *gurudeva*—so empty that Krishna came down to help him, and it is corroborated that Kṛṣṇa worked on his behalf.

In his poem, *Prayer to the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa*, we find him pleading with Krishna, “My dear Brother, Your good fortune will come to you only when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī becomes pleased with You.” Seeing our *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, as Rādhārāṇī’s delegation and his order as Her divine service, he humbly submitted that he

did not feel himself worthy or fit to discharge his divine service, yet he dedicated himself to that purpose. He was so earnest in his prayer to Krishna to discharge the duty that he had been given by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, that divine power came down to help him.

Otherwise, it is impossible. It is not a thing of the ordinary level that anyone can do. The highest thing has been taken down to the lowest position so extensively. It cannot but be divine power, embodied and in a great intensity and magnitude. So, *saktyāvesa-avatāra*, I cannot but take him to be so.

THE BANNER OF DIVINE LOVE

Our Guru Mahārāja wanted to spend the next ten years of his life preaching in the West, but left this world and was unable to do so. But Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja gave him those ten years, with his unparalleled success in fulfilling our Guru Mahārāja’s dream of spreading Krishna consciousness in the Western world. We are happy, we are pleased, we are proud!”

Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura wanted every man woman and child to be brought under the banner of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. To this end, all of his sincere followers are preaching his message of divine love all over the world.



A. B. GOSWAMI MEETS WITH THE KING AND QUEEN OF ENGLAND

GOD BLESS THE KING



INTERVIEW: PROFESSOR SUTHERS

OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, JANUARY 1929

Professor Suthers: Did the worshippers of Krishna ever encourage the obscenity of the engravings we see on many Hindu temples?

Saraswati Thakur: Those who are actual worshippers of Krishna do not promote obscenity. All decency and morality emanate from the lotus feet of Krishna. The highest sense of morality of the soul, in its pure unadulterated condition, is manifested as love towards the Supreme Soul. The culmination of this pure love is found only in the devotees of Krishna. The highest morality taught by the noble Jesus does not even come near the principles of amorous love enshrined in the devotees of Krishna.

Professor Suthers: Your Holiness seems to have taken a biased view in saying that the good moral precepts of Christ come nowhere near the morality of amorous love of the devotees of Krishna.

Saraswati Thakur: Certainly not. In fact, we claim to be greater, and better Christians than Westerners. Our judgement is not restricted to secular morality. The morality of spiritual love transcends supranatural morality, which again surpasses secular morality. If Christian morality can be nourished with amorous love for Divinity, then it may be perfected. To a pure soul, one who has transcended mundane morality, and entered the plane of divine love, secular morality is dwarfed in comparison. But he feels no apathy or attachment to mundane morality. On the other hand, morality waits like a maidservant to assist spiritual morality in the service of the Lord of Transcendental Love.

At the same time we should understand that the character of one culturing spiritual love is never devoid of morality. One hostile to morality or fallen from it can never be a spiritual man. In the blazing core of the teaching of Śrī Chaitanya Deva's ideal, debauchery is not devotion. The evidence is abundant when reflecting on the character of Śrī Chaitanya Deva and His followers. Secular moralists concerned with worldly enjoyment, or its renunciation, are unable to grasp in their tiny brains that the pinnacle of morality is realized in the Amorous Sports of Krishna. And it has been adored and glorified by the highest realized souls who are the intimate followers of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, namely Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī and his associates and followers.

Professor Suthers: How can your statements be reconciled with the descriptions that are found about Krishna's Amorous Sports?

Saraswati Thakur: Krishna's Amorous Sports are not temporal, lustful sports of dramatic heroes and heroines like Romeo and Juliet, or even that of ideal spouses. The lust of this world is a mental passion. But lust as it exists in the transcendental region of Krishna has a different form. Here, lust is always goaded by the enemy, one of the six passions; whereas in the transcendental region of Krishna, the loveliness of the spiritu-

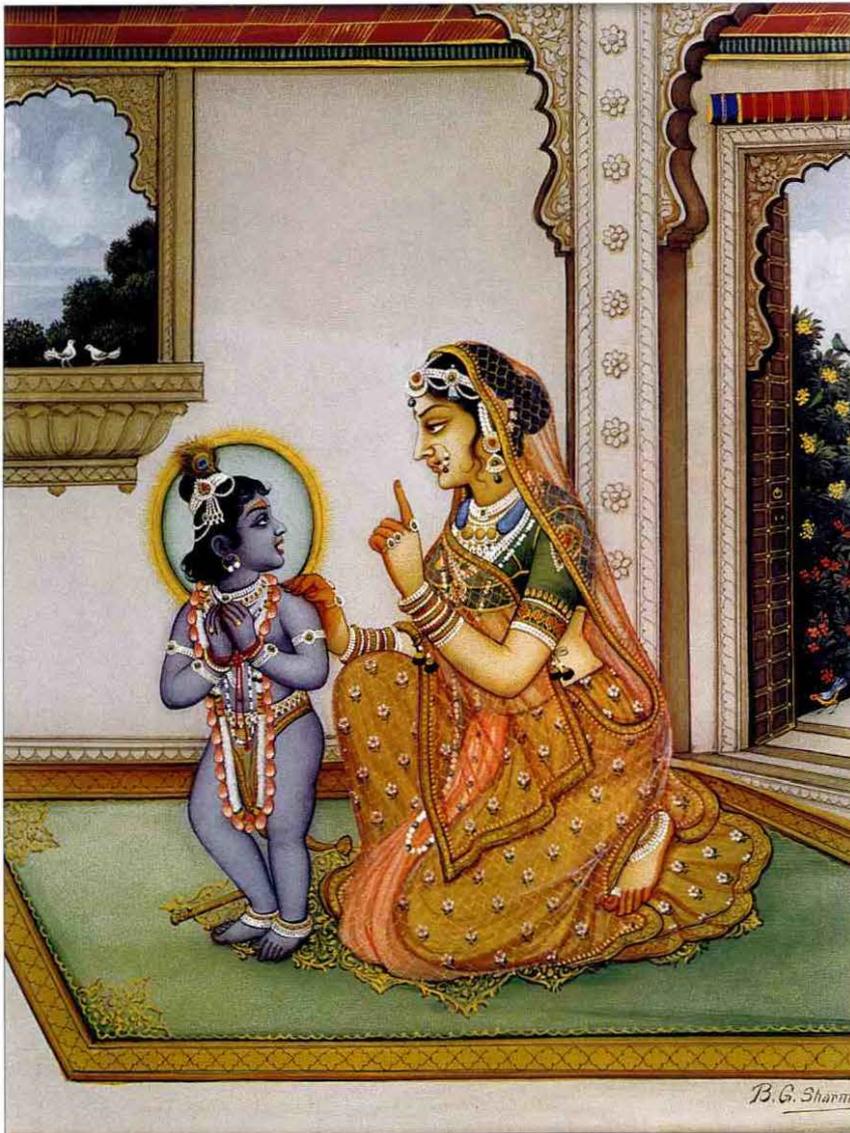
al body of Krishna ever drives a lust for Krishna, which takes form as sublimated love, or the desire to gratify the immaculate senses of Krishna. The conductor of worldly lust is the enemy (passion), and the conductor of love is Krishna. It is the Amorous Sports of Krishna that are appropriate; but there is no such consistency in the lust born of the body and mind of the *jīva* (creature). Krishna's Amorous Sports should not be considered indecent, because it is Krishna who is the only unrivaled enjoyer, the Embodiment of the Real Truth and the Spiritual Despot.

Professor Suthers: What other conception can be better than the Fatherhood of Godhead? It is only Jesus who has taught us to call God "Father." No other feeling can be better in the religious world than the love that arises in the mind when God is called upon as in The Lord's Prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name."

Saraswati Thakur: Yes, it is true that the Fatherhood of God is a special feature of Christianity. Why in Christianity alone? The Parenthood of God is found in some Indian religious conceptions too. But if we consider with a scrutinizing scientific analysis, we can find that this Parenthood has been attributed to God from the inductive point of view, i.e., out of gratitude to God whose kindly presence we admit on the analogy of the worldly father, or from some desire to get some worldly benefit from Him. There is only to be traced the attitude of gratefulness of a being or that of an indifferent spirit of his, when the different religions of India too call Him the "Creator," "Sustainer of the Universe," "Protector of the World," "Controller of the Universe," "Great Father" etc., from the angle of vision of the attributes of Nature on the one hand, or Brahman, etc., from the angle contrary on the other. And so such conceptions are only indirect or secondary instead of being the principal or chief ones. But in the indirect conception there is no attachment or love. This point has to be understood carefully.

Though there is no connection between the attributes of Nature and the Names of God like "Narāyaṇa," "Vāsudeva," "Hṛṣīkeśa," etc., as prevalent in the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, yet they are indicative of His Majesty. There is a spirit of regard and reverence behind these. But where there is no such restriction of reverence, rather where, in spite of some reference to His Supreme Majesty, there is a lack of the rise of such reverential spirit, the innate *loving* spirit remains steady and does not become slackened. The conception of Sonship of God has its basis on the feeling of such sweetness of the highest love.

Vāsudeva and Devakī were told by Krishna: "I reveal My Majesty before you that you may know Me to be God; or else you would have thought of Me as a human being." God also told Arjuna: "Just see My Majestic Form." Vāsudeva told Krishna: "You are not our son, but the OverLord of Divine Spirit and nature." Arjuna in the *Gītā* asked



pardon from Krishna for having called Him friend, etc. In both these examples God's majesty has been indicated. But such was not the conception of Nanda and the ladies of Braja. They regarded God as their son and lover, as the case might be, whose lotus feet are adored by all the scriptures, by deities like Brahma, Śiva, etc., men, *gandharvas*, etc., and worshiped Him with low salutations. Nanda, Yaśodā, etc. did not look upon Krishna as the Supreme Father or the Highest God. If a person becomes the overlord or the wealthiest millionaire of the world, his parents do not stand like other people before him with folded palms in awe and reverence, offering prayers and expressing gratitude, nor do his friends hesitate to be jocular as ever in his presence, nor does his wife deal with him with special veneration like the other people of the outside world and stay at a respectable distance. When His friends the cowherd boys reported to mother Yaśodā that He had put some earth into His mouth, she rebuked him. She could not do so if she had the idea that Krishna, the Supreme Father, was the object of her reprimand. She was able to regard the Highest Entity as her own object of so close and affectionate love that due to the depth of that love she could chide or even beat Him and think of the Sole Maintainer of all maintainers as worth maintenance and nourishment at her hands. This is not intelligible to the mere theorists of gratefulness who are foreigners to affectionate love towards God. When chided by His mother, Krishna, afraid as it were, of her, opened His mouth to prove His innocence; and she saw the limitless universe within It. Yet her feeling towards Him as her son was not removed, such was the depth of her affectionate love for God.

Professor Suthers: What you just said appears to be an effusion of emotionality. Please convince me rationally how the conception of God's sonship is superior to His fatherhood.

Saraswati Thakur: It appears as if you were either inattentive for a while, or unable to closely follow me. I was all this time giving you scientific reasons. In the Vaiṣṇava philosophy there is no place for material emotion of any kind. The ephemeral emotionality relating to matter is no devotion: it is only the property of the mind. Our conception is that of the property of the soul. I was so long adducing reasons and examples to convince you how the natural love of the soul for God reached its climax in the conception of His sonship as the Son of Śrī Nanda. You will not be able to easily get that idea with the help of reason only. You should not think of material emotionality when the actual example is given. With innumerable reasons I shall show you that the conception of the Fatherhood of God emanates only from a sense of gratefulness. Fatherhood has been attributed to God more or less in accordance with such conceptions as God has created us, sustains us with the various gifts of nature, and for these He is Father and we should be paying Him reverential homage on that account.

Professor Suthers: Our Jesus Christ has called God as Father not exactly on these grounds; Jesus introduced himself as God's son for something else.

Saraswati Thakur: Yes, about Jesus' sonhood you say: "The Son is the complete revelation of the Father whose nature he shares, and of whose powers he is the sole heir, the only begotten son, and he is in absolute dependence on the Father. My Father and I are one. My Father worketh hitherto and I work. The son can do nothing except what he seeth the Father do. As son, he knows the Father; as God, he can speak for God. As wholly dependent on the Father, and wholly obedient to His will, the message is true."

Now the ideal regard based on the sense of gratitude of the son to the Supreme Father is not absent because of the conception of Jesus' sonhood of God on account of his being His heir in respect of His nature, power and attributes. I think that you conceive of God as the Supreme Father in imitation of Christ, His son, and read hymns to Him with various praises indicative of gratefulness. In our Gauṛīya philosophy there is no sense of gratitude or any other cause at the root of the love or attachment towards God. Where there is some cause, the Gauṛīya philosophy does not call such love causeless or motiveless. The attribution of parenthood to God must have some cause behind it. Him or her whom we call father or mother and who are adorable, we cannot worship when, averse to God, we stay in the mother's womb; even after being born we cannot do so in our infancy or childhood. Rather we being their indulged pets treat them as our servants. There is no devotional piety during those periods when instead of worshipping them, we demand and accept service from them. It is no mean outrage on such adorable parents to convert them to servants. This is the effect of our desires. Thus we see that human or other beings do not acquire fitness for serving parents from the very beginning. Though with the growth of intelligence we show some efforts to serve them, generally this has its origin in a retributive sense of gratitude or dutifulness in return for the benefit received from them. Often we show such efforts in order to inherit the property earned by them with labor and left behind by them. Under the circumstances it is the sense of gratitude or obedience to established order originating from motives, that is at the root of the conception of parenthood; there is absolute want in it of causeless or

motiveless love.

The offering of service to the master in consideration that if the money paid by him as wages is not discharged, there will be sin committed—amounts to trafficking. The service of God or attribution of Parenthood to Him or calling Him as the Sustainer, Protector, Savior, Affectionate, Gracious, etc., arising out of the sense of awe, hope, dutifulness or gratitude—all these originate from some motive or cause and as such, are far from His service and worship which arises from the natural love of the soul towards Him.

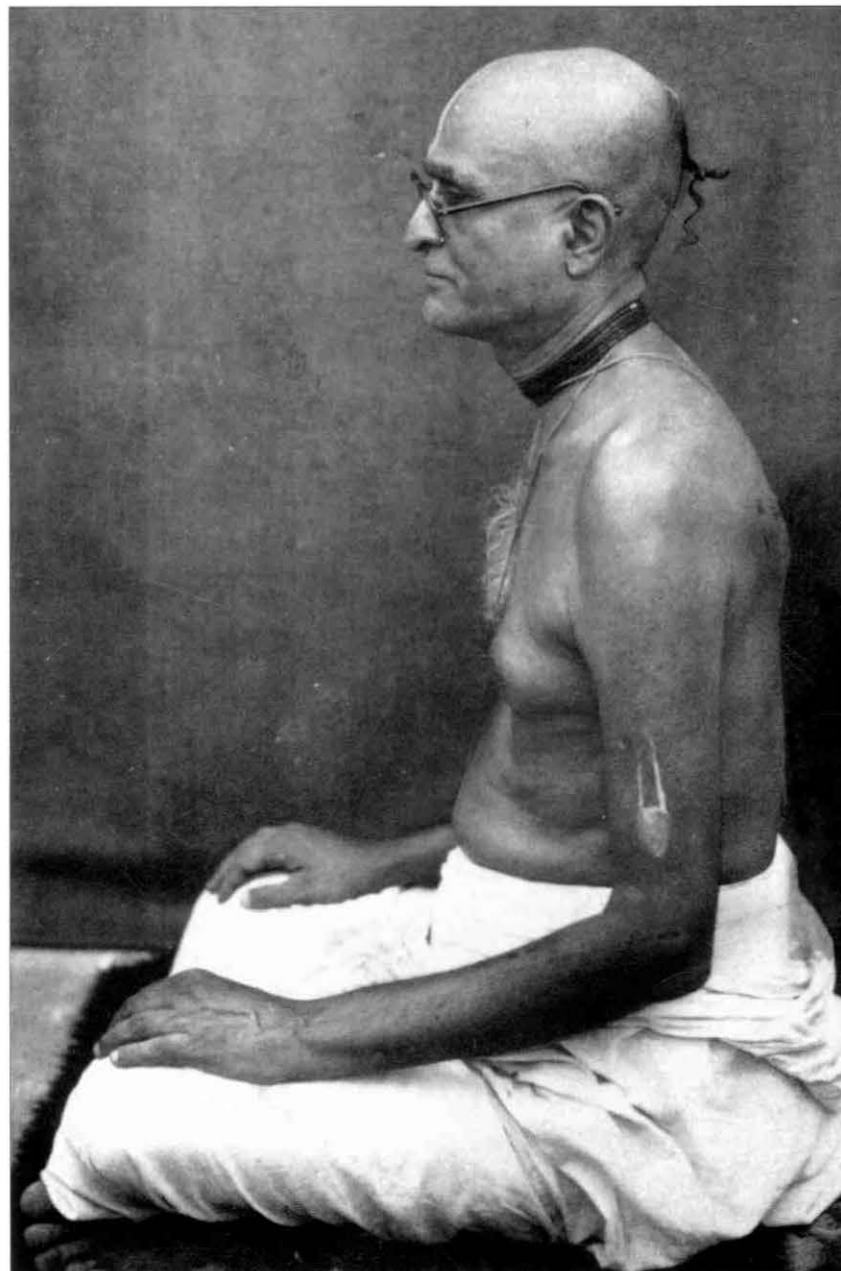
Professor Suthers: I have just listened to many subtle truths in the science and philosophy of religion. Please let me have a conception of these intricate matters.

Saraswati Thakur: The essential principle of Vaiṣṇavism is that, how-so-ever great a scholar and intellectual giant a man may be, he will not be able to appreciate even the easiest points of the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, until and unless he has entirely surrendered himself to an Āchārya whose character is the embodiment of the Vaiṣṇava philosophy. You must have heard about the Indian scripture named *Gītā*, which has been translated into different languages in the civilized world. There is a *śloka* in it which says that the Vaiṣṇava philosophy is understandable only with unconditional surrender, honest inquiry, and serving temper. It is only to such an approach the professors of Vaiṣṇava philosophy, with these three as the preceptorial fee, may give instructions about the correct philosophical truths. These professors are never to be tempted by any type of worldly fees.

Professor Suthers: The *Gītā* accepts the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul. What does your Vaiṣṇava philosophy say about this?

Saraswati Thakur: The *Bhagavad-Gītā* is not separate from the Vaiṣṇava philosophy. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* fully reveals the true import of this doctrine—that of changes of births for the soul. Christianity has disregarded the principle of change of births on the alleged ground that if it is accepted, men will not restrain their sinful propensities, rather they will indulge in vices at their sweet will in their present life, on the expectation that they will be able to make good their sins, guilts, and wrongdoing of this life in the course of the following ones. But the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* has crowned the principle with its true significance by means of a much fuller scientific and philosophical meaning, by instructing the urgent necessity for ardently taking up and culturing devotion to God even while the human form of life, not easily available in the after-lives, is at our disposal, without spending a single moment thereof in other useless pursuits. If we do not accept the doctrine of transmigration of the soul and adopt the instruction of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, we shall not be able to get over the all-devouring disaster of regarding matter as the sole object of our concern, which has kept its mouth wide open.

Though most of the Christians do not admit transmigration, many of the intellectual giants of the Christian world have shown several instances of their acceptance of the doctrine. Even in the Bible in St. John 9.1.2, we find, “And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man who was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, “Master, who has committed the sin? This man or his parents, that he was born blind from his birth?” It is seen that even some Christian Fathers clearly gave instructions about transmigration. Origen said: “Is it not more in conformity with reason that every soul for certain mysterious reasons is



introduced into a body and introduced according to its deserts and former actions?” And Goethe says, “I am sure that I, such as you see me here, have lived a thousand times and I have to come again another thousand times.”

What the Greeks called metempsychosis and is called transmigration in the English language was at one time, more or less, admitted in ancient Greece, Egypt, and many places in the West. Some say that the apostles of Christ the Great, failing to reconcile their previous and subsequent conclusions with the doctrine of transmigration, were compelled to discard it. Yet no rationalist among the Christians has been able to refute the doctrine on the basis of sound reasoning; on the other hand, most of them have had to admit it. Herodotus, Pindar, Plato, etc. have all accepted it. Huxley, the illustrious scientist of the nineteenth century, has written in his religious work, *Evolution and Ethics*: “None but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity, like the doctrine of evolution itself—that of transmigration which has its root in the world of reality and it may claim such support as the great argument of analogy is capable of supplying.”

Professor Lutoloski has said, “I cannot give up my conviction of a previous existence before my birth, and I have the certainty to be born again after my death, until I have assimilated all human experiences, having been many times male and female, wealthy and poor, free and

enslaved, generally having experienced all conditions of human existence.” But such transmigration theories of the empiricists of the West or those of the Western philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries like Franciscus Mercurius Helmont, Leichtenbourg, Lessing, Herder, Schopenhauer, etc., or of Jalaluddin Rumi of the Sufi sect of Persia, or of the Theosophists, or of the Indian *Nyāya* philosophy under the aphorism: “The desire for the mother’s breast milk is due to the habit of the previous life,” or of the Buddhist doctrine of annihilation in matter, these are assailable by various hostile reasonings and, having their origin in inductive concepts, are incomplete and imperfect. But the conclusion in this respect of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is fully flawless and significant. The Vaiṣṇava philosophy shows the royal road to the acquirement of the highest blessedness even in the present life—there is no need to wait for future lives. As such, the Vaiṣṇava philosophy is thoroughly aloof from all the wrangling full of useless riddles over the doctrine of transmigration.

Professor Suthers: I am able to feel the super-excellence of the Vaiṣṇava Philosophy among the Indian Philosophies. But to my mind the acceptance of idolatry in the Vaiṣṇava Philosophy like the other Indian philosophies seems to be a stigma in it.

Saraswati Thakur: Idolatry has never been accepted in the Vaiṣṇava philosophy; on the other hand, it has been more or less accepted in the other philosophies, at least mentally, if not in so many words. In the very word “Bhagavān” (God) have accumulated all the excellences that there are in the human and suprahuman conceptions. The existence of Majesty—the furthestmost limits of both vastness and minuteness, is a characteristic of God. The second characteristic is His Omnipotence. If one understands the word “omnipotence” to mean what is conceivable by the human intellect or what is possible for man, one is wrong. God is Omnipotent, because what is impossible according to the human intellect is within the ambit of the inscrutable power of God. Due to His inscrutable power, He is simultaneously both with and without Form. It will be the denial of His inscrutable power, if you say that He cannot have His form, or He has not His eternal form, only having a Form for the time being, none in the end. By dint of His inscrutable power, He is with His eternal sportive form before a liberated soul conversant with the service of His potencies. Contemplation only on formlessness is rather unnatural and devoid of differential excellence. God is always All-Good, All-Glory, and All-Beauty. His beauty is visible only to the transcendental eye. God is the Transcendental Reality, pure, full and sentient in essence and sentient essence in His form.

It is true that God has no material body, but He has His *sat* (eternal) *cit* (all-sentient) *ānanda* (all-blissful) transcendental body visible only to the eye that is clear (devoid of matter). To the material eye, God is formless, but to the transcendental eye He is with His body of *cit* or all-sentience. The *mūrtis* (forms of body) prepared and worshiped by those who have not seen this *cit*-body of God with their true and eternal eye cleansed with the collyrium of the love of God are of course idols, and all the worshippers of those idols must be idolaters. The worship of *mūrtis* of God prepared from imagination may be called idolatry. Suppose I, who have not seen Jacob, make a *mūrti* of his out of imagination. This *mūrti* is not the replica of his form. Besides, if Jacob is a creature of this world, whose body, mind, and soul are different from one another, his photograph, being only the replica of his material body, is different from his eternal and intrinsically true form. But God with his *sat-cit-ānanda* body is not such a thing; His Body and Soul are not dif-

ferent from each other; nor are His Name and Soul, His Figure and Soul, His Attribute and Figure. His Attribute and Soul, His Sport and Soul, His Sport and Figure, His Sport and Attribute, different. If a pure entity or unmixed soul sees that eternal Form of God and receives it in his own pure receptacle, and then places this Transcendental Form in the world from his heart, illuminating the intrinsically and essentially true Form of God—that should never be called idolatry. Just as by coming down to this phenomenal world, God remains untouched by the influence of *māyā* by dint of His inscrutable power, so does His true Form too, as revealed to the unmixed entity of His devotee, remain above it, even though brought down here. For this reason the Vaiṣṇava philosophy terms *Śrī Mūrti* as His “*archāvatara*” (Worshippable Descent).

The conception of God without Form in contradistinction to His Essential Form is as calamitous as is the falsely imagined Form of God for one competent to see His True Form. Such insignificant processes occur before attaining to the Real Entity and do only grope in the darkness. The *Śrī Vighraha* of the Vaiṣṇava Philosophy cannot but be the direct indication of the Essential Form of God. By way of an imperfect comparison it may be said to be the proxy of the essential Form of God which is beyond the cognizance of the material eye, just as there are, in art and science, crude representations of invisible matter.

How can those, who have not in their heart love of God which is the true function of the soul and is the science of the true knowledge of realities, think of the *Śrī Mūrtis* (*śrī vighraha*) as other than idols? The deliberations of the Vaiṣṇava philosophy are very fine and have shown by true scientific analysis that they are all, more or less, idolaters who declare themselves as partisans either of the doctrine of no Form of God or that of His material Form. Just as those who attribute Godship to matter and worship it like the fire worshippers among the uncivilized people or the worshippers of the planets, such as Jupiter, Saturn, etc. of Greece, are crude idolaters, in a similar manner the others, who declare everything beyond matter as formless, and become exponents of the doctrine of non-distinction, are equal or even greater idolaters. The Henotheists or worshippers of one of the Vedic deities or the worshippers of the five deities (called *pāñcopāsakas*) worship many icons, considering them as God. According to them, God has no *sat-cit-ānanda-vighraha*, and as without some form there can be no subject for contemplation, to make it easy to meditate on Him, some form has got to be imagined. They are all idolaters. So also is the conduct of some of the Yogis and others to be regarded as idolatry, who, for purifying their heart or improving the function of the mind, imagine a God and perform practices of contemplation, etc., of some imaginary form of His. Those who consider *jīvas* as God are the most blasphemous idolaters, because to imagine any worldly thing or form as God is idolatry.

There is a world of difference between the worship of *Śrī Mūrtis* as ordained by the Vaiṣṇava philosophy and the doctrines of God with form and without form of other thinkers. Mahāprabhu *Śrī Chaitanya Deva* has refuted all sorts of idolatry and instructed the service of the *archāvatars* of the All-merciful God of Inconceivable Potency.

Professor Suthers: I am truly astonished to hear from your Holiness these mysteries of the Vaiṣṇava Philosophy and their scientific analysis with the most reasonable arguments. I never knew that Vaiṣṇava philosophy provides such excellent solutions, corroboration and elucidation to the problems we in the West perceive in Indian philosophy.

Saraswati Thakur: The Vaiṣṇava philosophy speaks about true wisdom. True

wisdom is not subject to an attack from any rival camp like the changeable and fluctuating knowledge of the empiricists; this is the special feature of Vaiṣṇava philosophy. The philosophies that have been, are being and will be built on the foundation of empiricism will be enlarged and altered and ultimately abandoned along with the increase and decrease of experience. Before the civilization five-thousand years old, the three-thousand year-old civilization is imperfect; and the seven-thousand year-old one is more enlarged; and in ten thousand years it will be still further changed and enlarged. The Vaiṣṇava philosophy built, as it is, upon the strong unalterable foundation of true and perfect wisdom, is not fit for change and reformation through scuffling and disputes like a football being kicked to and fro.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, which is the essence of all the Vedas and Vedāntas speaks of the real Truth. This scripture describes something which is beyond the regions of human civilization and all the rules and regulations of society, and speaks about the attainment of another spiritual body by the soul. Some empiricists of the inductive school do not recognize this change of body for the soul. There are others who try to prove such a change by various mundane reasonings. Some of them cite the example of the tendency of the newborn monkey to grasp the branch of a tree, or that of a newborn rhinoceros to fly away from the mother, considering which they say, every one must have to admit the previous life of the creatures and cannot disbelieve the transmigration of the souls. As a baby rhinoceros is born, it runs away from the mother lest the mother should lick its skin. Her tongue is so sharp that the bark of a tree licked by her is removed. The baby comes to the mother only when its hide gets hardened in the course of a few days. Seeing these, the empiricists realize that this habit of the baby rhinoceros is indicative of its previous birth.

The Vedic scriptures, however, have given a scrutinizing analysis of the mutual difference of the soul, the mind and the body as the atomic sentience, pseudo-sentience, and matter. The soul (*ātmā*) is the owner of the body and the mind. These two are the properties of the soul which again is the property of the Suprasoul (*paramātmā*). The Suprasoul is the causal sentience and the soul (*jīvātmā*) is the effectual sentience. The soul has two bodies or distinguishing properties; one is the subtle one or mind and the other the crude one i.e., material body. The outer body is the aggregate of atoms of the five elements of matter; the inner or mental body is the conductor of the outer body. The soul in its conditioned or bound state is connected with foreign properties through the mind. The soul is now asleep and inattentive to the service of the SupraSoul. Seeing the owner asleep, the subordinate workers, mind and body, are busy about their mean self-interest, instead of looking after the interest of their owner. All the universe, animate and inanimate, is included within the SupraSoul; in reality every creation is animate. Our scriptures have proved this since time immemorial. Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose has proved, even by the inductive process, before the empiric school, that there exists animation [spirit, consciousness] even within the grass shrubs, creepers, etc.

Professor Suthers: I shall some time soon see Dr. Bose. Is the conception of our difference from the SupraSoul born of our ignorance?

Saraswati Thakur: We shall consider how in our conditioned state we have been enveloped by the two distinguishing properties, and how again we shall be liberated therefrom. These two are non-souls. Even in this conditioned state we are animate, not sentient. The non-souls—the body and the mind, are connected with the outer and mental worlds. We

have yet to attain to what is beyond the body and the mind. By “*jīva*” is meant “soul,” “mind” and “body.” According to Śrī Rāmānujācārya, the SupraSoul is indeed a sentient body. He has two bodies; in His mental body there is the aggregate of *jīvas*; the outer body is the material world. The different parts of the mental body of the SupraSoul are the *jīvātmās* or atomic sentience. When the *jīvātmā* or atomic sentience feels himself as a protege of the Full Sentience or SupraSoul and becomes steady in His eternal service, his nescience or ignorance becomes extinct. It is this contact through service between the SupraSentience and the atomic sentience, as the Asylum and the dependent respectively, that amounts to the absence of the material conception of differentiation.

In the all-world philosophical conception, the Sonship to Nanda of the Plenary God as found in the Vaiṣṇava philosophy is entirely a novelty. There is no such higher conception about Godship, so nice in every respect, in any other philosophy. The other philosophies can conceive of only the Fatherhood of Godhead. But the excellence of the Sonhood of Godhead in which has been manifest the climax of love of God, has not found place in the brain of any other philosopher.





জনাব এম. এ. এ. এ.
মহোদয়

LETTERS FROM HIS DIVINE GRACE

WITH MY ETERNAL BLESSINGS, SRI SIDDHANTA SARASWATI

Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, Śrī Māyāpura, December 22, 1927

I received your letter yesterday from —. Quite a while ago, before I even went to the western states, I received another letter from you. Since I was travelling all the time, I could not send a timely reply. You have probably read in the *Gauṛīya* about our festivals at different places in the western region. You may have heard about them from some devotees also. Everywhere all the good people were very happy to hear about Śrī Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma is the most cherished place in the hearts of the devotees of the Lord. Everywhere in this place one remembers the Lord. That is why we feel this great desire to live here for quite a while. If I am needed elsewhere for the service of the Lord then I have to go there, to Calcutta for example. Śrīman Mahāprabhu is extremely merciful; that is why even in a place like Calcutta he has kept many devotees. At the Gauṛīya Maṭh there is always *hari-kathā*, and everyone there is always intoxicated with devotional service. Just as Mahārāja Parikṣit listened to the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in his last days, in the same way, I desire the association of these devotees in my last days. Where there is no *hari-kathā*, it does not matter how many friends and relatives are there or how comfortable that place is; in my last days, such places and such association seem extremely unnecessary and undesirable to me. By the mercy of the Supreme Lord I see everywhere, in all the maṭhs, the inclination to serve the Lord, and I think of the mercy of Mahāprabhu. How I was spending my life enjoying material pleasures before! Instead today I have been granted the association of devotees and the opportunity for devotional service, everywhere I go. If we can spend the rest of our lives, the last days, in this way, then we do not have to live a painful life, averse to devotional service.

You have said that you cannot thank your luck because you cannot hear *hari-kathā* from those who are eager for devotional service. But it is only your constant desire to serve the Lord that is keeping you separate from others, for the time being. Please always read the *Gauṛīya* magazine and other books written by devotees—that will have the same effect as hearing *hari-kathā* directly from devotees.

Even though in this world we don't get to meet many devotees from the spiritual world, the conversations and pastimes of the devotees of Mahāprabhu's time eternally exist in the form of books and sound, and that is why we do not feel so much pain from material troubles. If we live here in the association of the words of the spiritual world, then the memory of this association will keep us at a distance from material misery.

Wherever you may live, topics of the Supreme Lord will never leave you. In every material situation, you can remember the Supreme Lord and you can understand what is devotion. When the Supreme Lord will be willing, you will get the opportunity to come back here.

Then you will once more get the opportunity to hear *hari-kathā*. Whatever situation the Supreme Lord keeps His devotee in makes him happy; we should stay in that situation, forgetting our own miseries.

The ordinary people of this world cannot understand the topics of the Supreme Lord, of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, of the transcendental character of the devotees. When the desire to serve the Lord manifests itself in the heart, then one can remember the Lord under all circumstances.

You are always endeavoring to attain what is spiritually beneficial; that is why the Lord, through his books, is revealing himself in your heart. In *Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata* it is written

*yata dekha vaiṣṇavera vyavahāra-duḥkha
niścaya jāniha sei parānanda-sukha*

“Whatever is externally seen as the misery of a Vaiṣṇava you should know to be his supreme happiness.” To test us the Lord is residing behind this material world. If we notice his appearance behind each thing, our belief in the external will decrease.

*adyapi sei līlā kare gaura-rāya
kona kona bhāgyavān dekhibāre pāya*

“Even today Lord Gaurāṅga is performing his pastimes, but only a few fortunate souls can see that.” When will we have such good fortune to follow Śrī Gaurasundar everywhere and, by following his instruction, become travellers on the path of *bhakti*?

This world is the place where the Lord tests us. To pass the test we have to hear *kīrtana* from the devotees of the Lord. You are hearing that *kīrtana* through the books. Therefore you should not think you are lacking in anything.

Once Hiranya-kaśipu concluded that the Supreme Lord does not exist in this world. He tried in many ways to convince Prahāda of this, and he presented many arguments against the Lord's existence. But Śrī Nṛsiṃhadeva appeared from a pillar, and Hiranya-kaśipu and the whole world was benefitted. The devotee sees the Lord everywhere, and the non-devotee cannot feel his presence anywhere.

We are situated in the middle; sometimes we show our attraction for devotional service, the next moment we engage ourselves in material enjoyment. It is by the desire to serve the Lord that we can control the desire to enjoy the world. In material enjoyment there is temporary happiness and temporary misery. But in service to the Lord, our eternal devotion brings joy to the Lord. To bring him that joy, we can always be engaged in service. I do not know if you will gain some benefit for the time being by reading this long letter. I am incapable of expressing myself in articulate language. Sometimes I remain silent

because I am incapable of making everyone understand everything.

The work that needs to be done before the festival at the Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh is being done now. At the house of Mahāprabhu, on the south side of Gaura-kunḍa a building is being constructed with lions at the door.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, March 15, 1915

I have received your affectionate letter dated March 9, 1915, and gotten all the news. You please stay where you are and keep chanting Śrī *Harināma* regularly. Also read Śrī *Chaitanya Bhāgavata* and Śrī *Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*.

The very language of your letter, which is soft with humility and lively with devotion, is a reflection of your great heart and your devotional service. Śrī Śrī Gaurasundara is especially merciful to those who are humble and helpless. Many of us have been extremely happy perceiving your humble demeanor, your gentle nature, your devotion to the Lord, and your inclination for devotional service with indifference to the world. I am also praying at the lotus feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu that your enthusiasm for devotional service may increase day by day, you may be respected by everyone, you may progress in spiritual life and you may worship the Lord continuously. All the devotees here are offering their *danḍavats* to you. I will be very happy to know by the mercy of the Lord you are chanting *harināma* without any obstacles.

Your insignificant well-wisher,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Calcutta, June 26, 1927

Surrounded by enemies, we are engaged in serving the Lord and his devotees with great determination. Each of us, more or less, becomes forgetful of service to Krishna, being servants of our six enemies (lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride, and envy). My prayer to you all is that you be united and serve the Lord together in a spirit of friendliness and cooperation, having the same goal in your heart. “*Ekāki āmāra nāhi pāya bala*” (“When I am alone I have no strength.”)—remember this line and perform *kīrtan-yajña* in union. The indispensable quality expected of those who are in charge of the *kīrtan-yajña* is that they will have friendship with all Vaiṣṇavas; they will engage themselves in devotional service by pleasing all Vaiṣṇavas. I hope with that good quality you will perform all your activities for the festival.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Gaudiya Math, Calcutta, July 28, 1935

Yesterday morning I arrived here from Bombay and received your letter dated the 26th. We are extremely grief-stricken to hear that — has left this world to go to his eternal abode. Everything happens by the will of the Lord. The Lord picks up first those who are closest to him. We have no objection to that. We are suffering due to our own

misfortune and lack of qualifications. By remembering his attachment for devotional service, we can also gradually enter his destination. It is necessary to write about him in great detail in such magazines as the *Gauṛīya* and we are planning to provide a memorial spread. There should also be a fitting memorial for him, in the form of a service.

I have not finished reading your article yet and have not given it to Pranavananda Prabhu. Very soon I will give him an article about the New Year.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Puruṣottam Maṭh, Purī, February 20, 1935

I received your letter written in pencil. If one has devotion to the Lord then there will be no cause for dissatisfaction. In this world, we become subject to our own karma by being averse to devotional service. Due to our past karma, sometimes we enjoy happiness, sometimes we become loving to others, sometimes we suffer misery and sometimes we become inimical to others. But when we feel the necessity for devotional service, then all material troubles and the desire for happiness do not make any difference to us. Please engage your mind in devotional service at all times. Then no one can harm you in any way. If you live in this world in a fickle-minded way, if you show enmity to anyone, then you will not remember to serve the Lord. Verbal fights, physical fights, mental fights in the form of dissatisfaction will not let you serve the Lord. Therefore please become as tolerant as a tree and live in Śyāmanta Pañcak to carry out the desire of the Lord; then you will be benefitted. Please wait patiently for the day Śrī Gaurahari will take you somewhere else.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

c/o A.K. Sarkar, Benares Cantonment, May 10, 1926

I received your affectionate letter dated May 3rd and got all the news. We have heard that — has passed away. Now we have to pray for the well-being of his soul. Malice towards Vaiṣṇavas brings both material and spiritual disaster to the living entity.

It has become quite hot here in the last few days. My health is not good. Śrīpād Tīrtha Mahārāja has been preaching *hari-kathā* at Murśīdābād [in West Bengal state], Bhāgalpur, Munger, Jāmāpur, Pātnā [in Bihār state], etc., with great success. He has been here in Benares for the last week and has been giving *hari-kathā* at the Dasāśvamedha Ghāṭ. Everyone has been listening to his lecture with great appreciation and enthusiasm. There is an effort now to establish a Gauṛīya Maṭh in Benares. Only by the desire of Viśvanāth [Lord Śiva, the presiding deity of Benares] will it be possible.

Śrīman — is eager to establish a *maṭh* in Benares, but because of the excessive heat right now, he does not think this is the right time. I do not know how long I will stay here.... This world that is averse to the Lord is a place for painful tests. Tolerance, humility, and praise for others are some of the things which will help us to serve the Lord here.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Limekhera, Shillong, October 17, 1928

Yesterday the professors arrived here safely. At this time all of us should have gone to Kurukṣetra on the occasion of the solar eclipse and attended to our duties there. But because of Nimānanda Prabhu's enthusiasm and earnest request, I was forced to come to Assam state. Letters and telegrams are coming from Kurukṣetra, one after the other. You all should go there immediately, without any delay. What has to be done in Assam can be done later.

There are only twenty-five days left before the solar eclipse. People all over Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and central India are quite aware of the festival at Kurukṣetra on the occasion of the coming solar eclipse. Our estimate is that about two million people will gather there.

We are preparing a chariot. We need tube-wells and temporary tents there. We also need to send a Medical Relief Mission. After a long time a solar eclipse will occur. I will write in brief the significance of this solar eclipse according to Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

It is a very ancient religious practice to bathe at Brahmāsar at Kurukṣetra during the solar eclipse. Krishna went there with Balarāma on a chariot. The Vraja-vāsīs also went there for the purpose of bathing at Brahmāsar on the occasion of the solar eclipse. Therefore the Gauṛīya devotees, who desire to unite Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, will take great care to perform their service of worship there. Remembering this pastime at Kurukṣetra, Śrī Gaurasundara sang in front of Lord Jagannāth's chariot to express the intense mood of separation of the gopīs. For the *karmīs* (fruitive workers) this practice of bathing during the solar eclipse is recommended so their sins will be nullified and they will get the opportunity to take the holy name at a very auspicious moment.

The *jñānis* (the seekers on the path of knowledge) have a desire to merge with the Supreme Lord, who is our goal. But even though Krishna is the object of the gopīs' intense hankering and the gopīs are always absorbed in the thought of Krishna, they still want to remain as separate entities from Krishna.

All kinds of people should be present there. Please tell Tīrtha Mahārāj about this letter. Both of you please endeavor to make all arrangements for the service of the union of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Govinda with great enthusiasm.

We will be here for another five or six days. After that we will go to Calcutta via Goālpārā and Dhubrī.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Calcutta, October 9, 1934

I received your letter dated the 5th and learned of your physical illness. My prayer to Krishna is that you may feel better and serve Krishna, by his mercy. We have to accept whatever situation we find ourselves in by Krishna's arrangement. To desire physical well-being to serve Krishna is also favorable for devotion. What the non-devotee wants when he tries to get some service from the Lord, by getting a cure for his illness so he can continue his bad habits, is not acceptable to us. But it is definitely an adorable practice to pray to Lord Nṛsimhadeva, who destroys all obstacles, and Lord Ganeśa, who gives success by destroying obstacles—for the continuing one's service to Krishna.

You should know that your name is Śrī Dayāmaya Bhāgavat Dās

Adhikārī ("one who has attained the privilege of serving the merciful Lord"). We are going to Mathurā the day after tomorrow to observe Urjā-vrata. I hope you are rendering your service without trouble.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Calcutta, July 29, 1935

Yesterday morning we arrived at Calcutta from Bombay. I see that some difference is arising between the concept of the devotees and that of the householders who consider themselves superior devotees. We can see from the realization that was expressed by Śrīdhara Mahārāja from Delhi that our only worshippable objects are the Supreme Lord and His devotees. Only by serving the Supreme Lord and His devotees can our inclination to serve our own families be decreased. But those who are residing in Śrīdhāma now may become so-called "superior devotees" by following the *sahajiyās* of Kuliya. Then they may think that the servitors of the maṭh are their servitors. Then these residents of Śrīdhāma may think they are the worshippable objects of Vaikuṅṭha, instead of thinking of how to serve the holy *dhāma*. One resides in Śrīdhāma only to serve the devotees. Therefore, if instead of serving the Lord and His devotees, they harbor some expectation from the devotees and express dissatisfaction with them, then instead of doing Śrīdhāma-sevā (serving the holy *dhāma*) they commit the offense of Śrīdhāma-bhoga (enjoying the holy *dhāma*). Instead of enjoying the holy *dhāma* one should live in some other enjoyable place and serve the devotees of the holy *dhāma* from a distance. If the devotees of the maṭh do not have the means right now to pay off their financial debt to those who want to enjoy the Śrīdhāma, then in the future the devotees may try to give these people their money back, so they can live in comfort. A list should be made of the amount each of them has spent in their effort to enjoy the holy *dhāma*.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Delhi Gauṛīya Maṭh, New Delhi, December 4, 1931

I received your card dated November 26 and another letter following that. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* has instructed us not to praise or criticize others' nature or activities. It is said also in *Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata* that one goes to hell by criticizing others. My instruction to you is not to criticize others, but to correct and purify yourself.

I am forced to criticize my own disciples and those who have come to me for instruction. I do not understand why you would go out of your way to try to perform such a difficult task.

The servant of the Harijans,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Ekāyan Maṭh, Krishnanagar, July 13, 1930

I completely support the work you are doing in the state of Āssām to distribute the mercy of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Indeed you have received the mantra of the holy name. As a result of that you will realize the meaning of the message of Śrī Chaitanyadeva—*āmāra*

ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa (“by my order, become a Guru and deliver this land”). Then you won’t have to suffer the waves of the material ocean and Śrī Chaitanyadeva will give you a lot of strength.

Please publish daily and regularly a short paragraph in the *Nadiyā Prakāśa* and discuss different topics. Until love for the Lord awakens in our hearts, provincial spirit does not leave us. This we have noticed in all countries and all societies. It is possible only for you to expand the family of Śrī Gaurāṅga in Āssām and to preach pure devotion there.

You have discussed the verse *niṣkiñcanasya bhagavad-bhajanon-mukhasya*. Therefore it is not necessary to explain to you that realizing the significance of this verse, you should always dedicate yourself to the service of the Supreme Lord. All these topics are described nicely in *Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*. When you read these things, please act accordingly. We read in the writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura that *kāma-krodha chhaya jane, lañā phire nāñā sthāne* (“six people [namely lust, anger, etc.] always take me to various places”) and reading this, we offer our obeisances to the lotus feet of Śrī Thākura Mahāśaya. Still our bad destiny does not let us serve the Lord; instead it takes us to the path of wrong judgement. You should know that our only hope is the mercy of Guru and Vaiṣṇava.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Calcutta, November 22, 1924

I have received your letter. According to the “*ṛmād-āpi*” verse, which Mahāprabhu has given to instruct the Vaiṣṇavas, one’s tolerance must be like that of a tree. When by the mercy of Krishna you get the opportunity to tolerate, then please be tolerant. Even if it becomes intolerable, you should learn to tolerate. Please come to Calcutta in the near future. But in the meantime please take this opportunity to learn about devotional practice, which tolerates misery. I will let you know about other things later.

With eternal affection,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Patiala House, Delkhusa, Lucknow, Cant, November 3, 1931

I have received your long letter. I have also received four or five letters from — Mahārāja. The people there are very materialistic, therefore their conduct is also like that. If we patiently tolerate that, then they will eventually regret their bad conduct.

None of you should be afraid of the upcoming troublesome monsoon or any diseases. If diseases come, please embrace them and in due course of time bid them farewell. Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja used to say, “If painful diseases arrive in our body, they will automatically run away very soon, for lack of sumptuous foodstuff. Only in the bodies of rich, comfort-loving people do they always reside a long time, because they get a lot of indulgence.” Please try very hard to find provisions for the upcoming festivals of the Maṭh.

With my eternal blessings,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Śrī Puruṣottam Maṭh, Porākuṭhi, Puri, May 7, 1929

I received your letter dated May 5th and got the news therein. This world is temporary; no one has come to live here eternally. Wherever the Lord keeps one at any point in time, one should cheerfully stay there and accept the reward or punishment from the Lord. All rewards and punishment that come from the Lord are ordained for one’s ultimate benefit. We adore the rewards that come from the Lord’s illusory energy, and His punishment gives us pain in many ways. Knowing that this punishment from the illusory energy is ordained for the purpose of gaining the mercy of the Lord, devotees do not reject it. They accept it cheerfully, and with tolerance, realizing it to be the mercy of the Lord. Those who do not understand that the troubles of this material world are actually the mercy of the Lord search again and again for material happiness and material progress, and ultimately meet with failure.

The coming Saturday is the day of the Śrī Chandana-yātrā festival. At this time of the summer, the water pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana are celebrated in the lake Narendra Sarovara. At this time many pilgrims come to Śrī Kṣetra and get relief from many kinds of material fire. Please come to Śrī Puruṣottam-Kṣetra and become free from material want by listening to *hari-kathā*. We will not have any material want if we participate in the service of the divine festivals along with those who are serving the Lord. To always be engaged in *hari-kathā* is the instruction of *Sādhu, Śāstra, and Bhagavān*.

By the mercy of Śrī Jagannātha, we are all well. We are getting a good opportunity to always chant *harināma*. You also please come to Śrī Puruṣottam Maṭh as soon as you can, and become free from your material misery.

The servant of the Harijans,
Śrī Siddhānta Saraswatī

Translated from the Bengali:

Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī, Prabhupāder Patrāvali, 5th ed. vols. 1-3, Māyāpur, Nadiyā: Tridaṇḍi-Bhikṣu Śrī Bhakti Prajñān Yati Mahārāj, Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1991.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

SRILA PRABHUPADA ANSWERS QUESTIONS FROM HIS DISCIPLES

QUESTION: Everything I know is based on my experience of this world. So how will I know about anything which is transcendental?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: It is true that in our present state it is very difficult for us to know about something which is transcendental. But it is also true that there is a way of knowing these things. If we have friends and relatives in a faraway place then a messenger will bring us their news.

QUESTION: But the messenger does not come to everyone, does he?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Those who are not visited by the messenger are very unfortunate. But there is one thing—you will see that the messenger will definitely bring the news to those who are really hankering for this news.

QUESTION: How will we recognize the messenger from Vaikuṅṭha? How will we know which message is true and which is not?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: If my prayer is sincere, then by the mercy of the omniscient God, everything will be revealed. One who wants to be educated will only come to know an educated person by the kindness of the latter. The Supreme Lord, who is in my heart, will help me in every way; all I have to do is depend on him.

In this world, there are two ways of gathering knowledge. One is to know things by experiencing them in this world. Another is to understand that the experience of this world is incomplete and insufficient. Therefore, to gather the knowledge which belongs to another world, we have to completely surrender ourselves to a saint who has descended from that world, and hear from him.

QUESTION: Material experience is all we have. How can we give that up and surrender to something transcendental?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: We should not be afraid of it, thinking it will be very difficult. One has to have great strength of mind to know the truth. If one wants to learn to swim he must not be afraid of water. At the same time one should know that *saraṅgati* or the path of exclusive surrender is not a difficult thing. In fact it is very easy and natural for the soul. Anything which is opposed to it—that is unnatural and painful.

QUESTION: How can we have such courage?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: We have to hear about the Supreme Lord from his own agent. When we hear those things then all material experience and the inclination to make false arguments have to be locked up. When we hear about the Supreme Lord from a *living sādhu* who can deliver these talks in a bold, lively, inspiring way, then all weakness will disappear from our hearts, we will feel a kind of courage which was never there before, and the soul's natural tendency to surrender to the Lord will fully manifest itself. In that surrendered heart the eternally manifested truth of the transcendental world will spontaneously reveal itself.

QUESTION: Are the path of exclusive surrender and firm determination the two most important things for us?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Absolutely. One should have such firm determination also to worship the Lord—"I must receive his grace, I must not go astray. I must always go on chanting his name. God will undoubtedly help me, if I am a bona fide seeker."

If one fully surrenders himself at the lotus feet of his guru then he will definitely attain all success. The mercy of Śrī Gurudeva, who is non-different from Śrī Rūpa, will be our only capital. Only that will be beneficial for us.

QUESTION: Can one worship Krishna without being under the guidance of Śrī Gurudeva?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Never. Our only aim in life is to cultivate Krishna consciousness. This can only be done under the guidance or instruction of a devotee of Krishna. Śrī Vārṣabhānavīdevī (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī) is most favored by Krishna. Worshipping her is most favorable for worshipping Krishna. No one is more favorable than Śrī Rādhā. Those who are very dear to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī are all our spiritual masters. We the Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas are the worshippers of Krishna, who belongs to Rādhārāṇī. The Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavas are more on the side of Rādhārāṇī than on the side of Krishna. Śrī Gurudeva is non-different from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Only by getting the favor of the most favored is it possible to cultivate Krishna consciousness. When one is not under the guidance of the most favored, one will not find anything favorable for the cultivation of Krishna consciousness or for the pursuit of Krishna's happiness. Instead one will find that one's heart is dominated by the demonic desire for one's own happiness. One must give up such tendencies,

which are unfavorable for devotion, and give up all pride and arrogance. A devotee can find all opportunity to serve Krishna only when he wants to serve Krishna under the guidance of *gurudeva*. But unfortunately we have forgotten to make any effort to make Krishna happy; instead we have become busy in pursuit of our own happiness.

Alas! Instead of making Krishna the head of our household, we are acting in the role of the householder and we have become attached to our family life. But if we want what is good for us then we have to become careful, while we are alive in this human body. Otherwise we will be deceived; we will miss our golden opportunity.

QUESTION: Will it be more helpful if we become *sannyāsīs*?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Never. The external garb of a *sannyāsī* will not help anyone. If a devotee thinks that *gurudeva* is his life and soul and serving *gurudeva* is his life's purpose, then he will become a real *sannyāsī*. One has to become a devotee-*sannyāsī* by being attached to *gurudeva* and the holy name. But those who do not serve Krishna under the guidance of *gurudeva* and have bad association, face disaster. They will never know the Supreme Lord, nor will they ever be able to serve him.

In this world it is possible to take the garb of a *sādhu* and deceive other men. But the omniscient Lord, who is the giver of the results of karma, will not let them get away with it. Those who are taking the garb of a *sādhu* and spending their time in bad association are only hurting themselves. Those who rely on others instead of relying on God face only misery.

QUESTION: Whom does Krishna attract?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: The personality called "Krishna" attracts the three worlds. It is reality which attracts. Whom does Krishna attract? Magnets attract iron; they will not attract wood. Similarly the Lord attracts the servitors, who are eager to serve him, to worship him. The servitors are attracted by the charm of service. But on his path, if the servitor is distracted by something else, then this original attraction will evade him. On one side there is the attraction of the material world, which is the cause of all bondage; on the other side there is the attraction of Krishna, which is the cause of all bliss. In this world the objects of the senses—the form, the smell, the touch, the sounds of external objects—are very close to me. That is why I, the weak person, become attached to them. Under the circumstances, only if we can continuously hear about the Supreme Lord from guru and *sādhu* can we be protected from these nearby enemies. If we are not attracted by the lotus feet of Krishna then we will definitely be attracted by *māyā*. When Krishna's name, form and pastimes will attract us, we will get relief from our present role as the enjoyer, as "Krishna." The more we discuss topics of Krishna, the more we rid ourselves of the false identity of enjoyer. Then Krishna will really attract us.

QUESTION: Why are we not feeling any closeness to Krishna?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: The living entity is constitutionally a servitor of the Supreme Lord. But if we do not always associate with the Lord and his devotees, and serve them, then how can we feel close to the Lord? If we are busy with worldly matters then how can we hear the Lord? At present we are enchanted by false hopes, which have resulted in wrong judgement. Thus we are preoccupied with this world. We have become subject to wrong judgement, because we have gone far away from the

Original Fountainhead of our life. Step in quicksand and you will drown very quickly. Similarly, that on which we depend has a treacherous foundation, and that is why we are drowning in this material ocean. Instead of being on the path of Krishna we are spending our time in material endeavors, possessed by wicked desires. *Viṣṇumāyā* or the illusory energy of the Lord is imprisoning us by letting us become material enjoyers or fruitive workers. Therefore, we should be cautious—extra careful. We should know that we require instruction at every step. We need the constant guidance of Śrī Guru.

Serving the devotees is more beneficial than serving the Lord. The living entity receives more benefit by associating with devotees than with the Lord. The abode of *gurudeva* is more favorable for pure devotion than the abode of the Lord. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura says *yethāya vaiṣṇava-gaṇa sei sthāna vṛndāvana* ("Where Vaiṣṇavas are living—that is Vṛndāvana") and we have to try to understand the full meaning of these words. But if we become indifferent to the service of *gurudeva*, we will not become servitors. We will remain proud and arrogant, entangled in external thoughts.

There is no higher thought in the theistic world than service at the lotus feet of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. Therefore we have to constantly hear *hari-kathā*, so we will not be deprived of the service of the Lord, who is *adhokṣaja*, beyond the senses and we will not become dependent on our senses and a path of false logic. We have to pay great attention to devotional service, because we have wasted many lifetimes doing other things. We have to become mindful so we can fulfill our greatest necessity in this very life. If a devotee always serves guru and Krishna with great care, attachment and love, then he will definitely feel Krishna's association.

QUESTION: Why is there so much misery in this world?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: The Supreme Lord says, "I have arranged so much misery, pain, trouble and danger, not to make you suffer, but to teach you that all this misery is unnecessary; so you will search for that happiness which is eternally desirable, the joy that is eternally adorable.

QUESTION: Why are trivial talk and gossip, *grāmya-kathā*, unfavorable for devotion and harmful for us?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Śrīman Mahāprabhu has said, "Do not hear *grāmya-kathā* and do not speak *grāmya-kathā*. Do not eat sumptuous food and do not wear fancy clothes." He said those words for those who are very attached to devotional service. If one eats sumptuous food it only harms oneself. This does not create any problem for others; it does not cause any disturbance in anyone else's devotional life. But it is much more harmful to wear fancy clothes. People wear fancy clothes only for the sake of others. The only purpose behind wearing fancy clothes is to distract others' eyes and minds from devotional service to the Supreme Lord. It is also not beneficial to indulge the tongue. "If one runs here and there to satisfy his tongue, then such a tongue-indulgent person does not attain Krishna." Mahāprabhu also said this. If one hears *grāmya-kathā*, one hurts oneself more than by eating sumptuous food, and if one speaks *grāmya-kathā*, one hurts others more than by wearing fancy clothes. Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī said that to hear or speak harmful things (untruth, gossip, things which are distasteful or trivial) is the same as associating with a prostitute. Such talk distracts the mind and contaminates consciousness, creating a great obstacle to devotion. Those who are attached to such talk automatically will be

unattracted by *hari-kathā*.

If five ordinary people get together, invariably they will discuss trivial things. This is why devotees constantly talk about the Supreme Lord. Where there is *hari-kathā*, there is no gossip or talk about trivialities.

QUESTION: What is the process for attaining happiness?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: When a devotee is firmly situated at the lotus feet of his *gurudeva*, he gets *gurudeva*'s association through his service. Then he gets relief from fear and grief and becomes really happy. If one is always engaged in the service of *gurudeva*, with body, mind, and soul, one soon attains the mercy of *gurudeva*. When *gurudeva* is pleased, then one's inclination to serve *gurudeva* increases day by day. This brings the highest benefit and the only truly desirable thing.

QUESTION: What is devotion?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Devotion means to endeavor for the happiness of the Supreme Lord. When one has devotion the only thing that matters is Krishna's happiness. A devotee never seeks his own happiness. This is the soul's natural inclination. When the living entity finds his real identity, he sees that his eternal, spontaneous tendency is to seek Krishna's happiness. In his real identity he has no other business. Mundane, inferior urges are not the property of the soul. They are not the property of the real person, but of the perverse person. That is why these urges change all the time; they are temporary. Only devotion gives relief from fear, illusion, and grief, which originate from a second interest—things other than Krishna. Devotion has only one root, purpose, shelter and destination. Devotion means sole attachment to the Lord—undivided attention to Krishna.

QUESTION: Does God interfere with the independence of the living entity?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: The living entity is a minute particle of the infinite consciousness of the Supreme Lord. As the the properties of the ocean are present in a drop of ocean water, the Supreme Lord is completely independent. The living entity is also independent, but not completely. The living entity is not created, it is eternal. It is not part of matter; it is part of consciousness. The independence of the living entity is not given to him by anyone on this plane. Independence is intrinsic to the soul, and although its misuse causes suffering, God does not interfere with anyone's independence. He is not a killer of consciousness—He is an ocean of mercy. That is why He endows us with conscience. One who worships the Lord according to the guidance He provides through the scriptures, uses his independence properly and is supremely benefitted.

QUESTION: What is *māyā* (the illusory energy)?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: *Mīyate anayā iti māyā*. That which can be measured is *māyā*. *Mā + yā = māyā*. That which is not, is *māyā*. What is temporary and destructible is *māyā*. What is not centered on Bhagavān is *māyā*. Bhagavān is the controller of *māyā*; He cannot be measured. According to Christianity, the Lord is one entity, and Satan is a separate entity. But the *māyā* which is described in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is not like that. According to the *Bhāgavata* school, *māyā* resides in the Supreme Lord in a condemned state; *māyā* is a part of Krishna. It exists

to correct those living entities who are averse to Krishna by punishing them.

QUESTION: How are we to live in this material world?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: If a man is tied to a rod and beaten, then he will be forced to suffer the beating, but that is not his real desire. Similarly we have to live in this world in a spirit of rejection. Otherwise, misery and disaster will be unavoidable.

QUESTION: Who will be delivered from this material world?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: If one gives one hundred percent the Lord will definitely deliver him. If the association and service of the *sādhus* and guru does not become an integral part of our life, the desire to give one hundred percent will not arise within us. On the other hand, it is not possible to attain the Lord who is complete, unless one completely dedicates himself. God is complete and perfect. He wants what is complete and perfect—complete love, complete surrender. The complete can be attained only by giving completely. One receives according to what one gives.

QUESTION: To whom does God not reveal Himself?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: God is infinite consciousness and the living entity is minute consciousness. If someone wants to reserve part of his consciousness for other things thinking, "I do not want to give God everything," then the infinite consciousness will not reveal Himself to that person.

QUESTION: If I serve Krishna according to my liking, is that devotion?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: No. To serve Krishna according to His liking is devotion. What we like is a reflection of our material desire—not devotion. This is why we cannot be enjoyers, nor renunciates. We must become devotees, give up our independence, take shelter in him, and take great care to make him happy.

QUESTION: Why are we not making any progress in our *bhajana*?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: We are preoccupied with the external world. Thoughts of the material world are dominating us. It is necessary to look inside, instead of outside for objects of sense gratification. Are we not supposed to be extremely eager to serve the Lord who is residing in our heart? But we are not doing that; so how can we make progress in our *bhajana*? Is it possible to make any progress in our *bhajana* if we are eager to increase our own comfort or to improve the comfort of our family? How can we have any enthusiasm or eagerness to serve our eternal friends—Krishna and Guru—when we are busy making those robbers who are known as our friends and relatives happy? It is not possible to go East when we are walking West. I am saying so many things, yet people's illusion that those who are far from them are actually close to them is not going away. It is their destiny to be miserable. So, what can I do?

QUESTION: What is the *dharma* (property or characteristic) of *prīti* (love or affection)?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: The characteristics of *prīti* and *apṛīti* (absence of affec-

tion) are never the same. The property of the soul is the property of *prīti* and the property of the mind is the property of *apṛīti*. There is no conflict between the *dharma* of *prema* (love), the *dharma* of *bhakti* (devotion), the supreme *dharma*, the *dharma* prescribed in the *Bhāgavata*, and the *dharma* of *sevā* (service). There is harmony in all that. Only when we fall from the practice of this loving devotion do we think of each other as objects of exploitation. A person can have no problems when he knows every human being to be a servitor of Krishna. Then a person can realize that he is a Vaiṣṇava. Then the spontaneous affection of one Vaiṣṇava for another automatically awakens in his heart. Nowhere in this world does this *prīti dharma* exist; everywhere there is the *dharma* of conflict, which is full of the fighting propensity.

QUESTION: How does a devotee see this world?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: A *mahābhāgavat* sees the whole world as the mercy of the Supreme Lord. Mercy is something to be worshiped. We cannot be the masters of this mercy, nor can we control it. If we think of this world as an object of our enjoyment instead of seeing it as an object of Krishna's enjoyment or as a manifestation of Krishna's mercy, then we have to be punished for that, we have to face some misery.

QUESTION: What kind of firm faith should we have in the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: A true disciple knows his *gurudeva* to be someone who is extremely dear to Krishna, who is sent by Krishna, and who is the Servitor Lord (Sevaka Bhagavān). A sincere disciple has the same devotion for his *gurudeva* that he has for the Supreme Lord. And he worships and serves him the same way. Those who do not serve their *gurudeva* this way fall from their positions as disciples. No one can chant the holy name purely unless they see *gurudeva* as non-different from Krishna, as Krishna's manifestation.

I shall serve Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga with simplicity and sincerity under the guidance of *gurudeva*. My *gurudeva* has the word of the Supreme Lord, and I will be obedient to that word in the proper way. I will not disrespect my *gurudeva* under the influence of anyone in this world. If I have to become proud, if I have to become a beast, if I have to go to hell, by carrying out the order of *gurudeva* who is sent by Krishna, then I want to sign a contract to go to hell for all eternity. I will not listen to anything anybody says, other than the order of my *gurudeva*. By the power that has come to me from the lotus feet of Gurudeva, I will throw out all other currents of consciousness of the world with a punch of my fist. If I throw a particle of dust from the pollen of the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva, then millions of people of this world will be delivered. There is no scholarship, there is no good concept in the fourteen worlds that is heavier than a particle of dust from the lotus feet of my *gurudeva*. A true disciple will have this kind of firm faith and determination.

QUESTION: To be Mahāprabhu's associate and to be His devotee—is this the same thing?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: No. One who is His associate is called His *saṅgi*. *Saṅgi* means one who goes with Him everywhere. Those who do not associate with Him all the time cannot be called His *saṅgis* or associates. At the same time Śrī Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura was Mahāprabhu's associate, even though he did not appear when Mahāprabhu manifested

Himself. But Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura descended to this world only to fulfill Mahāprabhu's desire. He is eternally engaged in Mahāprabhu's service; in his heart Mahāprabhu's desires manifest themselves. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura nurtures the mood of intimate service. Therefore he is an eternally liberated associate of Mahāprabhu.

QUESTION: The following is considered to be the most significant verse of the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

—*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.66

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.” But Mahāprabhu said of this verse, “*eho bāhya*”—this is also external. Why is that?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Yes, Mahāprabhu said to Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu that even this great verse was only external. Devotional love for the Supreme Lord is the natural inclination of the soul. So the Supreme Lord should not have to canvass for Himself. He should not have to coax us to love Him. He should not have to somehow persuade us to become His devotee. He should not have to make us promise to love Him. His devotees naturally engage themselves wholeheartedly to make Him happy, due to their spontaneous, uncontrollable love for Him.

If a father has to take great trouble to make his son love Him, then everyone can understand what kind of son he has. It is only natural that the devotee will automatically, following his heart's desire, serve his Lord. But in this situation it seems that the opposite is happening. Not only has the devotee forgotten his Lord, but he has forgotten his own eternal identity. Being forgetful of his eternal existence, he has become the master of the temporary, and he is serving the temporary. This is why Mahāprabhu said of this great verse that it is external: to teach us about pure devotion—the supreme devotion belonging to Vraja Dhāma.

QUESTION: Is Mahāprabhu's mercy the highest mercy?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Of course. There is no one more merciful than Mahāprabhu and His devotees. The help or benefit which has come from them is the real help. Any other proposal of help is actually very deceiving, and a great disservice. But the relief, the help, which comes from Mahāprabhu and His devotees, is really the supreme and eternal help. This relief does not last only for a few days. It is not that kind of help which will soon create some bad side effect, some unfavorable reaction. It is not that kind of help which will be favorable to some and unfavorable to others. We can do something good for our country, but that may have a bad effect on another country. I might get some happiness at the expense of someone else's misery. Someone else may enjoy something which will create a lack in my life. I may benefit by riding in a horse-drawn coach, but this will definitely create discomfort for the horses. Mahāprabhu and His devotees did not deceive mankind by proposing such means of relief. The relief which they have recommended, the gift which they have bestowed, will be supremely beneficial to all people at all times. This relief is for the whole universe.

Therefore it is not narrow-minded help. Mahāprabhu and His devotees were never interested in any kind of relief which was narrow-minded, sectarian and temporary. No bad reaction ever comes to anyone from Mahāprabhu's mercy. This is why Mahāprabhu's mercy is called '*aman-dodayā*'—the faultless mercy. This is why we say Mahāprabhu is supremely magnanimous, and His devotees are even more magnanimous. This is not fiction, this is reality.

Mahāprabhu's mercy is perfect and unlimited. Everyone else's mercy is limited and therefore deceiving. All other incarnations, such as Matsyadeva, Kurmadeva, Varāhadeva, Rāmacandra, and even Lord Krishna Himself only bestowed their supreme mercy on the surrendered souls. But They all annihilated the opposing party. Only Mahāprabhu distributed his mercy even to the opposing party. He did not hesitate to bestow his faultless mercy on the Kāzi, the Buddhists, and others.

QUESTION: Shall we always tell the unadulterated truth?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Absolutely. We will fearlessly tell everyone the truth, without deceiving anyone. We have to speak the kind of truth that is truly beneficial for the living being, even if it is unpleasant. This is not the same as creating anxiety for others (*bhutodvega*). We have to search for reality. We have to think about the good of all people in the world. We have to do what is beneficial for ourselves and others with great determination. We have to try to work not just for the welfare of the people of this age, but for the eternal benefit of people of every era. We have to tell everyone about that joyful abode of the Lord, the land of the infinite, from which no one has to come back. But to tell others about that transcendental world it is absolutely necessary for us to get the shelter of the lotus feet of the spiritual master.

We will always serve Śrī Gurudeva, who is the giver of transcendental knowledge. If we live in our own house then we should serve him together with all our family members. We will keep the Lord and His devotees in nice houses, and we ourselves will live in simple quarters or in thatched cottages. If we feed the Lord without feeding ourselves, then we will definitely receive His mercy.

We must think at all times, "Everything belongs to the Lord." Our lives will be successful if we can use everything in the world in the service of the Lord. All these concepts have to be preached by first following them oneself. Śrī-Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga will not be pleased until we can speak the truth fearlessly.

If I am afraid that if I tell the truth objectively, it may become unpleasant, and so I do not speak the truth, then that means I have given up the path of revealed truth and accepted a path which is not bona fide; then I am an atheist and a cheater.

QUESTION: Who is attached to household life?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: One who thinks of oneself as a man or woman is attached to household life. Such a person is an illusioned householder (*gṛhavrata*). The illusioned householder is greedy for money, relations with the opposite sex, and name and fame (*kanaka, kāmīnī, pratiṣṭhā*). One who has the tendency to enjoy these three things is an illusioned householder or *gṛhavrata*.

A *gṛhavrata* thinks, "I need others to serve me. The goal of my life is to be the owner of my household and to gratify my senses in any way I like."

We are living on the level of consciousness centered on the body. We are pretending to be masters, by becoming *gṛhavratas*. We are

getting into trouble by looking at this world through the eyes of enjoyment. Until we have the proper intelligence to see that the whole world is meant to serve the Lord, we will remain on the level of the illusioned householder; we will never know about our real benefit. Those who resolve to take the path of enjoyment or the path of complete renunciation lose everything. They never get to know the Supreme Lord.

By depending on this temporary world one can only get misery and death. Actual death and the suffering of the three-fold miseries result from a materialistic lifestyle which is averse to Krishna.

All the thoughts and efforts of this material world are actually leading to death. The *gṛhavrata* does not think, "These kinds of thoughts and tendencies are taking me to hell day by day, and they can only give me more and more misery, now and in the future."

QUESTION: How should one live in one's house?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: One can destroy his tendency to fall into the dark pit of materialistic household life by having the beneficial association of the great saints. Only by associating with liberated souls does one achieve the qualifications to become a transcendental householder (*pāramārthika gṛhastha*). Those who do not associate with the devotee *bhāgavata* (the Lord residing in His devotee) and the book *bhāgavata* (the Lord residing in the scripture *Bhāgavata*), which are non-different, cannot have a beneficial life, living in their own homes.

It is good to live in one's own house with the desire to serve the Lord; then one can serve the Lord properly. But this is not possible for the illusioned householder attached to money, the opposite sex, and name and fame. One should enter into his house resolving to serve Krishna. That is much better than false renunciation. Nothing good can come from false renunciation. If one's household life is favorable for devotional service then that is acceptable; on the contrary, if it is unfavorable for devotional service, then such a deep, dark pit called "home" should be given up. But if one wants to show off his desire for renunciation and shows some detachment then that is not beneficial. Such an immature renunciate will fall from his position in a few days.

The tendencies of the illusioned householders can only be destroyed by associating with the devotees. Those who enter into household life following the rules of the external world will be more and more absorbed in the illusioned condition. Just as the devotees of the Lord need to enter into the *sannyāsa āśrama* (the lifestyle of a renunciate), in the same way they need to enter into the *gṛhastha āśrama* (the lifestyle of a householder). The festival known as *gṛhapraveśa* (entering a house for the first time) should be celebrated only by a devotee householder, not a non-devotee householder. When a devotee enters his house we should know that he has actually entered his maṭh. For a devotee, there is no difference between entering his house and entering a maṭh. But there is a heaven-and-hell difference between a devotee's entering his house and a non-devotee's entering his house.

One should enter one's house only to always engage oneself in the service and thoughts of Krishna, and to have everything favorable for that. The householder should always stay away from bad association and gossip. He should nurture with great care such qualities as enthusiasm, determination, and patience, and such devotional practices as hearing and chanting (*śrāvana-kīrtana*). To serve Hari, Guru, and Vaiṣṇava, to chant Śrī Nāma, to associate with the *sādhus*, and to hear about the Lord are the essential duties of householders. If all their endeavors are directed toward the service of the Lord, then they will

definitely benefit, they will be protected and their lives will be fulfilled.

QUESTION: When something happens, how should we perceive it?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: If you see it from the other side, from Krishna's side, then you will see that everything is all right. But if you see it from this side, from your own or someone else's controlling position, then everything will be topsy-turvy.

So to see things from the other side is to take knowledge from the descending path, the path of revealed truth. This is to see things through a deductive process. This is the proper perspective. But to take knowledge from the ascending path, to see things through an inductive process, is to see things with a calculating mentality. Then we do not see the Lord as the controller. We think we are the controllers and see everything with that egotistical vision. The result of this is misery.

QUESTION: When a devotee is born in a family, does that family benefit from his or her birth?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: When a great saint, a pure devotee, appears in a family, then his ancestors and descendants for a hundred generations each are elevated. When a devotee of the middle stature (*madhyama bhāgavata*) appears in a family, then his ancestors and descendants for fourteen generations each are elevated. When a neophyte devotee appears in a family, then his ancestors and descendants for three generations each are elevated.

QUESTION: Why are devotees sometimes born in low-class families? If devotees are not subject to the results of their actions (*karma*) then why are they sometimes illiterate or disease-ridden?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: Devotees are never subject to the result of their karma. It is by the will of the Lord that they take birth and perform other pastimes. But when we see that they are born in low-class families, are illiterate, or are disease-ridden, we should know that there is a great or noble purpose behind it. If people saw that devotees were always born in high-class families or were always strong or educated, then they would become discouraged. So the merciful Lord, in order to benefit people of all classes, sends His devotees to different classes of society to give His mercy to other living entities. This is something like catching a wild male elephant by sending a trained female elephant. Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura has said in the *Chaitanya Bhāgavata* that a Vaiṣṇava delivers everyone just by taking birth. In a land and in a family where a Vaiṣṇava descends, many hundreds of miles around that place become purified by his influence. Even if you see some external misery in a Vaiṣṇava's life, you should know that he is in great ecstasy. Those who are blinded by pride in their material possessions do not know any of these things. Intoxicated with pride in their education, money, and family, they do not recognize a Vaiṣṇava.

If a devotee appears in a low-class family, then we should not think that it is a result of his sin, that he was subject to the result of his action. Rather, we should know that he has purified a low-class family. If a good person becomes successful only in the devotional process, then we should consider him a great soul.

QUESTION: Where there is *hari-kīrtana*, is that considered to be *dhāma* (a holy place)?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: I cannot think of the places where devotees of the Lord reside or congregate and always chant and discuss the holy name and pastimes of the Lord as anything other than Śrī Dhāma. These places are partial manifestations of the eternal holy *dhāmas*. Śrī Viṣṇu is residing in the heart of every living soul, in every atom. Thus every place is Śrī Dhāma. The day the mercy of Śrī Gurudeva is manifest in one's heart, one achieves this kind of vision.

QUESTION: What is the difference between weakness and deceitfulness or hypocrisy?

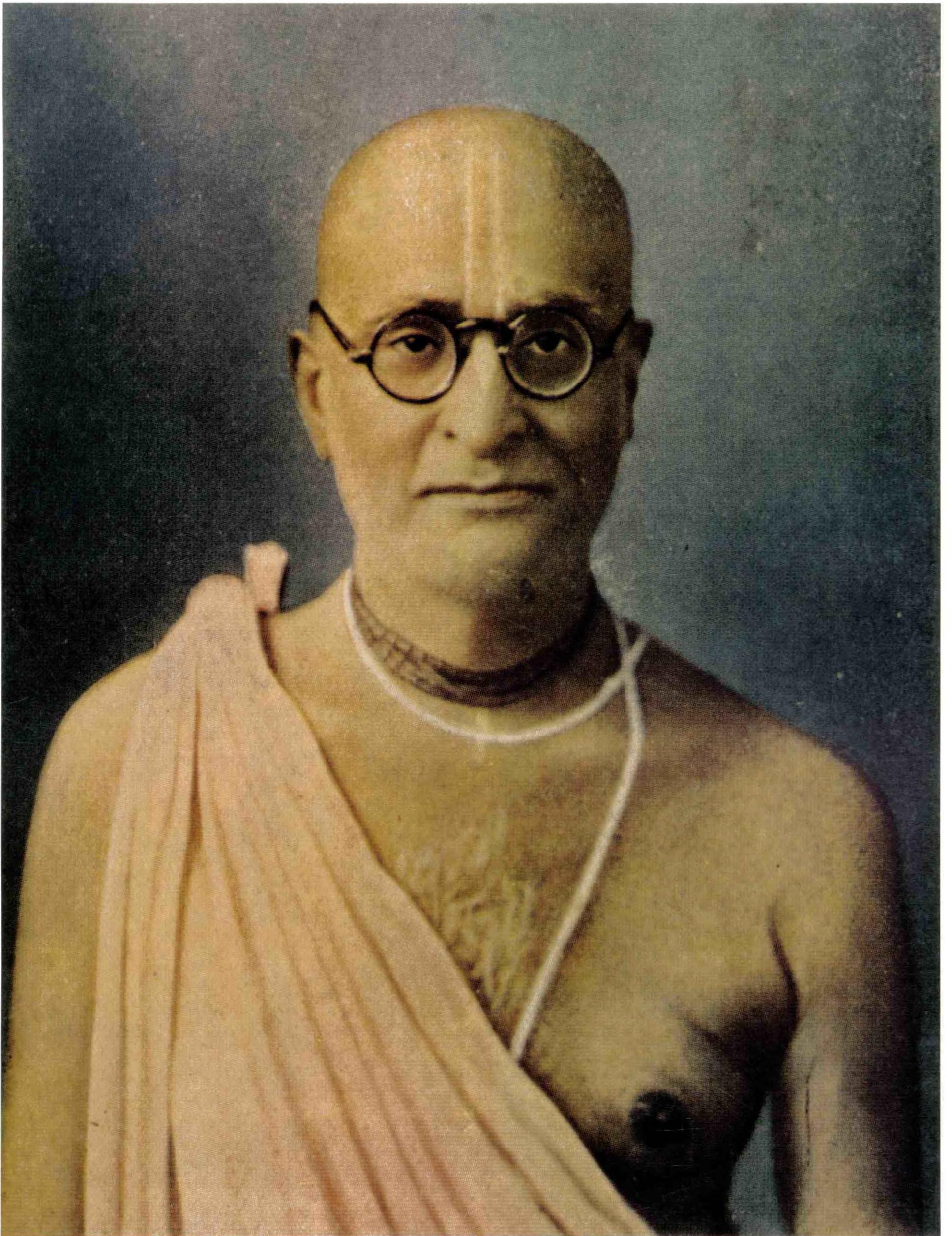
SRILA PRABHUPADA: Weakness is one thing and deceitfulness is another thing. They are not the same. Good things happen only to a person free from deceitfulness. A deceitful person does not get any benefit. Another name for straightforwardness is *vaiṣṇavatā* or the quality of a Vaiṣṇava. A straightforward person can be weak, but he is not deceitful. A person who is deceitful says one thing and thinks another. A weak person is always ashamed, sorry, and mortified because of his own inadequacies, but a deceitful person is proud of his own tricks.

"I will deceive the *āchārya*; I will fool the doctor; I will hide the poisonous snakes of my bad tendencies in the dark recess of hypocrisy, I will not let anyone know about them—but I will get some name and fame from other people by pretending to be saintly,"—this kind of mentality is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of terrible deceitfulness. Such people will never benefit. One gradually receives the grace of God by listening to the pure words of a *sādhu* in a humble, sincere mood. If we put on the garb of a devotee and become busy with non-devotional activities, if we are absorbed in material enjoyment and that becomes a priority, or if we take the *tridaṇḍa* and want to kidnap Sītā, like Rāvana, then we are stabbing ourselves to death. We are doing something terrible in the name of *hari-bhajana*. If for millions of births we have some weakness, some bad habits, that is not so harmful. But if once we take to the path of deceitfulness—we pretend to be devotees, but secretly engage in sinful enjoyment—then all troubles will remain with us. It is better to take birth among millions of other species, as a bird or a beast or an insect. To take the path of deceitfulness is never good.

QUESTION: Is it proper to think of a non-devotee as a devotee?

SRILA PRABHUPADA: No. Śrī Gurudeva is Nāmāchārya; he is *śrīnāma-kīrtana-kāri* (the chanter of the holy name). One who is an offender to the holy name should not be considered Guru. A bona fide guru does not make provision for anyone's sense gratification, nor does he say anything with the purpose of pleasing anyone. One who is on the path of pleasure does not like the words of those who are on the path of the highest goal. Such people are in search of something pleasing to them; that is why they are deprived of what is really beneficial.

To think of a non-devotee as a devotee and to think of false devotion as devotion is only self-deception. When one does not have the good fortune of serving or honoring a devotee, then he has this desire to accept a non-devotee as a devotee. But can a crow become a peacock by attaching some peacock feathers to its body? Can a disguised jackal become a lion, the king of beasts? How long can this deceitful trick be covered up? The truth will always be manifest. Those who serve Krishna are not weak; only they are strong and determined. Only by one's good fortune can one understand that the highest thing is devotional service to Krishna, that the great person is a servitor of Krishna. Due to attachment to the external, one can admire someone's



BHAKTISIDDHANTA VANI

EXCERPTS FROM LECTURES AND ESSAYS

MY GURUDEVA IS RESIDING IN MANY DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES. If he does not reside in many different personalities, then who will protect me? Those whom my gurudeva considered close to him are my saviors. But I hope I never have to see the faces of such evil-doing rascals as those who have criticized the lotus feet of my Gurudeva, or those who have somehow supported such criticisms.



BY ATTRIBUTING FATHERHOOD TO DIVINITY, we can only demand some service from Him and later express some gratitude. But expressing gratitude is not rendering devotional service, nor is it a symptom of love. The concept of service from the father on one hand and of expressing gratitude on the other is founded on partial realization. This is not the same as having the unalloyed desire for the happiness of the Lord; this is not devotional service.

In the concept of demanding service and expressing gratitude, there is an inherent element of calculation, of give and take. The causeless and uninterrupted desire to serve the Lord cannot develop from this. This underdeveloped concept of theism can blossom fully when one attributes sonhood to Divinity. In the concept of [the Lord's] fatherhood the son's true identity [as the eternal servant of the Lord] is not revealed, but in the concept of [the Lord's] sonhood the father's identity [as His eternal servant] is fully included. *Ātmā vai jayate putraḥ*—it is the *ātmā* (the parent) who gives birth to the son. The son cannot serve his father from the beginning, but the father can serve his son from the beginning.



MUNDANE RENUNCIATION, sacrifice and austerity are not the symptoms of saintliness. The ant may say, "The elephant eats a lot; I do not eat so much, I eat very little." Then the ant becomes a greater *sādhu* than the elephant! But the elephant carries Krishna to Syamanta Pañcaka (in Kurukṣetra, where Rādhārāṇī sees Krishna again) and the ant may bite

Krishna. In spite of eating a lot the elephant is carrying Krishna, serving Krishna, and in spite of eating a little the ant may bite Krishna.



I WHO AM SUBJECT TO THE THREE MODES OF MATERIAL NATURE am definitely faulty, but the I who can transcend the three modes of material nature and the eternal truth, an attractive and enjoyable entity. If by considering the enjoyable entity (the liberated servant of the Lord) to be the same in quality as the unenjoyable entity (the conditioned soul) the idea of the enjoyable entity is given up, then the resulting inactive condition can be found even in such inanimate objects as stones. The argument or endeavor to give up transcendental qualities in order to give up material faults is only stupidity or self-deceit. For example: suppose I have a boil on my body. I go to a doctor to consult him about how to get relief from this pain. He tells me, "Stab yourself to death, then you will get eternal relief from your pain." What I need is a cure for my boil; I do not need to commit suicide. The *māyāvādīs* commit suicide in order to get rid of the boil. We have to solve the problems of this world of duality. But the faulty argument that in order to do so it is also necessary to destroy the eternal individuality of the soul is only stupidity. The devotees of the Lord will never accept such advice. To destroy the property of the self, of consciousness, can never be a justified principle. It is the existence of that which is not the real identity of the self that should be destroyed. The element of consciousness which seeks the eternal truth always forbids and scorns self-destruction. No intelligent person can desire the imaginary peace that comes from self-destruction. The eternal desire of the soul is to cultivate love for the Lord.



THE FULL REALIZATION of *ānanda* (bliss or joy) is our supreme goal. Mere relief from pain is not our need. We have to find our wealth in a positive liberation. But we have to make sure that we do not look for the wrong thing. One has to be very cautious about this. We have to do the

preparatory groundwork before death. We will accept the help, knowledge and intelligence of our friends, of science, or any other source only if that helps us to serve the devotees of the Lord. But we will not cultivate any tendency to carry our burdens and trash from here to the other world.

To be under the shelter of the Lord is the only safe path. If we know how to do some arithmetic, we can understand how much endeavor is needed to meet the temporary needs of one hundred years, so in that ratio, how much more endeavor is needed to meet the needs of our eternal life. That effort has to start in this life, because only this human life can facilitate the pursuit of the eternal goal. If human beings can understand this simple mathematics, then they will not pursue any activity in this life other than cultivating Krishna-consciousness. Our every step, every breath, every action should be aimed at establishing our relationship with Krishna.



SRI GURUDEVA has said, "Come, we shall all serve the Lord together." When he said "we," he did not mean any one person. Some people become selfish thinking, "It is my service alone, no one else has a right to do this." But the merciful Śrī Gurudeva says, "Give up your envy and competitiveness, let us all serve the Lord together."

The worship of the Lord is higher than anything. "Since this is higher than anything else, no one else can do it" or "I won't let anyone else do it"—such envy does not come from the lotus feet of *gurudeva*. The *kīrtana* that is done by everyone is *saṅkīrtana*.

The message of Śrī Gaurasundar is that in to pray to the Lord for his help, we have to become *ṭṇādapī sunīca*—humbler than a blade of grass. One does not ask for help unless he understands his own limitations. When we consider ourselves helpless we realize, "Things are not getting done by my own endeavor; I have no choice but to accept help from others," then only will we pray for such help. The work that has to be done by many can never be done by one's own effort.



IF I PROCLAIM MYSELF TO BE SUPERIOR TO OTHERS, no one will listen to me. They will slap me in the face and knock me down off my pedestal. If I do not have the tendency to give respect to others, then I should not tell others about the Supreme Lord. If the only goal of my life is to serve the Lord, then I should not humiliate and disrespect anyone in this world. If the world belongs to the Lord, then I should know what my relationship is with His world.



JUST AS THIS GREAT EXTERNAL MANSION, the Gauṛīya Maṭh, has been built, similarly to establish internal *hari-bhajan* in this world quite a few books have to be written and published. The temple which is within the books and the temple which is within the devotees are more important than the temple built with bricks and stones, because by constructing those temples *hari-kathā* can be preached in this world much longer. Now we have only procured a seat [for *hari-kathā*]. We have built a castle to preach about the Lord by spending someone's entire savings of a lifetime. But we have to protect ourselves in this castle from the association of materialistic people; we have to defend ourselves from the confusion of this age of Kali (the age of quarrel and hypocrisy). So we have

to publish and distribute many more books. Only if we can construct the temple in the form of books and in the form of ideal lives can the idea of devotional service remain permanently in this world.



THOSE WHO ARE TRANSCENDENTAL HOUSEHOLDERS work very hard for devotional service just as they work hard to maintain their families. The transcendental householders are completely indifferent to material enjoyment. They are engaged 24 hours a day in devotional service and all their endeavors are aimed at pleasing Krishna; in so many different ways they are serving the Lord all the time. These householders have great respect for transcendental morality and for devotional injunction. They have no attachment for or hostility towards social rules. Since their consciousness is directed towards devotional service, they transform all moral injunctions into devotional injunctions.



FRUITIVE ACTIVITIES (*karma kāṇḍa*) can never be beneficial for the living entities. They take them upward one moment and downward the next moment and make them very restless, like soccer balls. When one gets very severe punishment due to one's past sins, one wants to become pious again. And when one enjoys the fruit of pious activities, one fantasizes about more enjoyment and inclines towards sinful activities. This is why the path of renunciation that includes the renunciation of liberation is known as the only favorable path for devotion.



THOSE WHO CAN PERCEIVE the immediate benefit of material life think, "Let me now live my life the way I please. When everything is going to be extinguished after death, why should I be deprived of this present happiness?" The concept that consideration for the afterlife is only stupid and a waste of time has been imported into India as a bad effect of Western education. Then there are those who are in favor of learning tricks which will protect them from the law of the land. By confronting the law one may bring obstacles to one's material enjoyment, therefore some people consider those activities moral which do not conflict with the law. But there is a great lack of simplicity, honesty and sincerity in this kind of mentality, which is geared towards protecting oneself from the legal system. This kind of insincerity is not favorable for someone who wants to live his life on an elevated level, whether he is an Indian or a Westerner. There is no such lack of sincerity in devotional morality. Nowadays in India, there is hardly any effort to cultivate an attachment for morality and devotional consciousness. I have travelled from the Himāchala (the foothills of the Himalayas) to Kumārikā (the southern most tip of India), and from Assam and East Bengal (now Bangladesh) to Dwārakā, Bombay and Goa—and everywhere I noticed a lack of interest in morality and devotion. People are getting many kinds of education and they are learning many techniques to improve their material lives, but everyone is indifferent to the real object of learning. *Nārada Pancharātra* says:

*ārādhito yadi haris-tapasā tataḥ kim
nārādhito yadi haris-tapasā tataḥ kim
antar-bahir yadi haris-tapasā tataḥ kim
nāntar-bahir yadi haris-tapasā tataḥ kim*

“If the Supreme Lord Hari is worshiped, without practicing any austerity, then what is the need for such practice? If by practicing austerity the Lord is not worshiped then what is the use of such practice? If without practicing any austerity one finds the Lord manifest in his heart and his surroundings, then what is the need for such practice? If by practicing austerity one does not find the Lord manifest in his heart and surroundings, then what is the use of such practice?”



ONLY DEVOTION IS HAPPINESS; everything else is lack of happiness. When one thinks, “Let me be happy. Let everyone else experience some inconvenience or discomfort. But let me be happy at others’ expense. I dispossess you for my own gain,” one is on the path of fruitive action, or the path of knowledge, or the path of mundane interest.

Only one who is on the path of devotion thinks, “Let us not deceive or dispossess anyone, but let us all get together to serve and chant the name of the Lord, 24 hours a day.” On the path of pure devotion nothing is needed except chanting (*kīrtana*); no other irrelevant austerity is needed or accepted. *Kīrtana* is the only neutral and failproof weapon. First one has to hear through one’s ears. Gradually all other senses will act in a favorable way.

Devotion is not based on blind faith. One who has taken shelter of devotion has to go beyond the highest limit of human intelligence. We cannot be interested in any concept created by human beings. This is neutrality. To be influenced by any concept which has come from humankind or from the demigods, which has come from any particular nation or country, is to become shallow—to be on the relative platform. To indulge in one’s own imagination or in the state of consciousness that is a result of a deteriorated mind is to become very shallow—to live on a relative level. We will not be tempted by our previous experiences. We have to hear. We are the worshippers of the revealed truth. We have to hear those words that would pierce through our ears. The *ācārya* will give us those words that will pierce through our ears, and we will go to him with our offering of self-surrender.



THE KINDS OF GIFTS with which we are familiar in this world are temporary and inadequate. Moreover, the number of givers in this world is very small. If the receivers of gifts have high expectations, then the givers cannot meet those expectations. The learned cannot give to the uneducated, the rich cannot give to the poor, the healthy cannot give to the diseased and the intelligent cannot give to the foolish as much as they expect. But humankind could not even expect or pray for such a gift as Śrī Gaurasundara has given. They could not hope or expect that such a great gift could come to this world. They could not hope or expect that it was in their fate to be showered with such a gift. The gift that Śrī Gaurasundara has given to humankind is pure love of God. There is a great lack of love in this world. That is why envy, hostility, greed, etc., are causing so much pain to the living entities. People who are as good as demigods—and even the demigods themselves—are prepared to impede those who are desirous of serving the Supreme Lord.

Each of us is in great need; each of us has very limited vision. Being hounded by the three modes of material nature, we cannot search for reality, the Absolute Truth. This is why the bait of false concepts comes to tempt us. And if we give in, then the goal life is not fulfilled.

From which sacred source did this gift of Gaurasundara spring?

Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī is that gift of Gaurasundara. He is the trunk of the giant tree of love (*kṛṣṇa prema*), the highest fulfillment of human life. Śrī Mādhavendra sang the original mantra, which is the key to that love, which is the only goal of life, the only need of the uncontaminated soul. Śrī Īśwara Purī heard that song. Mahāprabhu displayed the pastime of hearing that song from Śrī Īśwara Purī. This is that song:

*ayi dīna-dayārdra-nātha he mathurānātha kadāvalokyase
hṛdayaṁ tvadalokakātarāṁ dayita bhrāmyati kiṁ karomyaḥam*

—Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 4.127

“O my Lord! O most merciful master! O master of Mathurā! When shall I see You again? Because of my not seeing You, my grieving heart has become restless. O most beloved one, what shall I do now?”

Śrī Mādhavendra Purī gave this gift to India. We do not know whether he gave this anywhere beyond India. Any Indian who has heard this original mantra which is the giver of *kṛṣṇa prema* has attained all his goals in life. And those who have not heard it are attached to petty things. The life of one who does not understand the value and necessity of this mantra is wasted. To sing this song of separation is the nature of the uncontaminated soul—this is our spontaneous propensity.

Ṭhākura Bilvamaṅgala at one time displayed the pastime of being attached to vulgar things. When Līlāśūka (Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura) became engaged in the service of Śikhpicchamauli (the Lord with the peacock feather on His head), he wrote *Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta*, in which he also more or less sang the song of separation. Let us discuss that subject about which Śrī Gaurasundara came to enlighten humankind. Even though we are proud of being Bengali, we are still engaged in material activities. This is such poverty that it cannot be expressed in human language. To eradicate this poverty Śrī Mādhavendra Purī sang this song of separation—“*ayi dīna-dayārdra-nātha...*”

With great sadness sometimes we jokingly call someone our “beloved” (*dayita*) even though he does not understand our hankering, our grief. When the Supreme Lord left the Vrajavāsīs (the residents of Vraja) they called the son of Nanda *dayita*. And they called Him Mathurānātha (the Lord of Mathura): they did not call Him Vṛndāvanapati (Lord of Vṛndāvana). Many of you have heard of ‘Māthuragāna’ (the songs of separation sung when Krishna was in Mathurā). The words of these songs signify the sentiments of separation. What is known as *viraha* (separation) is called *vipralambha* in the Sanskrit *Alaṅkāra Śāstra* (the study of linguistic ornamentation). The Vrajavāsīs, in their mood of separation, tell Krishna, “Yes, you are *dayita*, but You are now the Lord of Mathurā. You have severed Your relationship with us and have gone away. We are destitute: You are everything to us, and today we have been dispossessed of everything. So how else can we express our grief except jokingly? You are the apple of our eyes, now You are hidden from them. Leaving us in great anxiety You have gone to Mathura.

“O son of Nanda, will You always remain beyond our senses? Will we never be able to see Your exquisite form and sweetness? You are attained by knowledge. Because we have no knowledge we cannot see You. For we are ignorant, childish, naïve. Because we have not spent thousands of years performing austerities, You have gone to the level of knowledge, where *our* senses do not go. You are our only support—and Your heart is moist with mercy. When will we be able to see You again? Once You showed Yourself to us and our hearts have been stolen by that vision of You. You took everything from us and now You have gone

away to Mathurā. Our hearts are aching from not seeing You.”

For the heart that is afflicted by the disorienting disease of separation from Krishna—the heart that is so predisposed—what is the medicine? That medicine is Śrī Gaurasundara’s original mantra.

*ayi dīna-dayādra-nātha he mathurānātha kadāvalokyase
hydayaṁ tvadalokakātharaṁ dayita bhṛāmyati kiṁ karomyaham*

Gaurasundara said, “O human race, you who are absorbed in material matters, when you get tired of carrying the trash of your worldly affairs on your heads like porters, how will you find what is beneficial for you, how will you come to the destination of your life? In order to do that accept this instruction: please be engaged in Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana.”

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanaṁ bhava-mahādāvāgni-nirvāpanaṁ
śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitaranaṁ vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varhdhanaṁ prati-padaṁ pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanaṁ
sarvātma-snapanam paraṁ vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*

“Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and extinguish the blazing fire of material existence. That chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities. It is the life and soul of all education. The chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa expands the joyful ocean of devotional life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step.”



BEFORE SRIMAN MAHAPRABHU, only two and a half of the five kinds of relationships with Krishna were being discussed: *sānta*, *dāsya*, and the lower half of *sakhya*. The lower half of the *sakhya* relationship is full of awe and reverence. If we approach our friend with a sense of awe and reverence then that friendship is reverential—he is our revered friend. Śrīman Mahāprabhu has shown us a closer relationship with God, which people cannot easily understand. It is He who first showed us the transcendental relationships of parenthood and consorthood with God. He has revealed a greater scope of the concept that was existing before in human society. Before, people did not know that there is a mode of service to God in which they could think “I can serve You more than You can serve me.” People will be amazed that the servant of the Supreme Lord can render more service than the Lord Himself. Krishna’s cowherd friends climb on His shoulders to get the fruit from the palm tree. First they taste it themselves, then the portion they like best they give to Krishna, even though they have already eaten from it. They do not consider that Krishna is the Supreme Lord and they are minute souls. They are serving Krishna with intense love. They have such great confidence in their relationship, that they think, “If we do not feed him then who will feed him?”

Previously the *Ajā* concept of God (eternity—“beyond birth”) was prevalent. But that is not real theism, that is contrary to theism. To think of God as our father and mother is to think of Him as our servant. Our father and mother serve us from the beginning, when we cannot serve them—that service is not there in the beginning of our life. Therefore that service is not eternal. We will take the initiative to serve our parents after a lot of material experience. First we observe others’ behavior, then gradually we consider them worshipping. If we consider the Lord as our parent then we have this rotten concept that He is



our servitor and we are the enjoyers—He is only our servant.

I worship that Nanda in whose courtyard the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Lord, is crawling. I offer my obeisance to him whose parenthood the Lord has accepted and whose service as a father the Lord has accepted. It is not up to me whether that eternal infinite being will take birth in my house. It is impossible for me to approach Him. But if He comes to me on His own, I will serve Him as His father. If one cannot have the potency to come down to me because he has eternity, then let him have that eternity; my relationship with him is unnecessary.



MATHURA IS HIGHER THAN VAIKUNTHA because Krishna took birth there. Higher than Mathurā is Vṛndāvana, where Krishna has performed his Rāsa-līlā. Higher than Vṛndāvana is Govardhan Hill, where Giridharī played his pastimes with Gāndhārvikā (Rādhārāṇī). Higher than Govardhana is Rādhā-kuṇḍa, which is flowing with the nectar of love of the Lord of Gokula. One who makes his *bhajana* grove in any other place than Govardhan and Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the greatest fool. The bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the best abode of divine love.

Unless one’s theistic devotion and spiritual propensity have blossomed, one cannot understand these topics. Where the Supreme

Lord who is situated in infinity resides, in a place beyond the boundary of this universe where He is the central personality—that place can be called Vaikuṅṭha. But the servant of Śrī Chaitanya, Śrī Rūpa, says that Mathurā where the infinite Lord takes birth is higher than Vaikuṅṭha, which is the transcendental plane where the Lord who is eternal and infinite, to whom no concept of the third dimension can be ascribed, is residing. Śrī Krishna took birth in Mathurā in the house of Nanda—He did not want to be restricted by his eternity (birthlessness); ignoring His eternity He took birth. That plane is not just Vaikuṅṭha. But Vṛndāvana, where the Rāsa-līla took place, is higher than that. Vaikuṅṭha is situated in the lower half of Goloka. In the upper half of Goloka these things can be seen. Higher than Vṛndāvana are Govardhan and Rādhākuṅḍa. This is not a vague idea of the transcendental region, this is something higher than that.

We can see half of Vaikuṅṭha from here. When we are down here and we are looking at it with reverence, it is half exposed to us; the other half is invisible to us. From here we can only see the lower half. Our present eyes can see 180 degrees of the horizon. By seeing half, Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa, we are situated in *santa rasa*. Gradually it develops into the servitor relationship (*dāsya rasa*). Then we realize that millions of servants like ourselves are eager to serve Him. Then we start seeing His friends who feel His glory by serving Him. We only see half of this relationship—we do not see the intimacy of this relationship.

One who can realize this is a Vaiṣṇava. By standing on this lower platform, we can comprehend these two and a half kinds of relationship. Then we can reach up to the point where we can flatter the Lord. We still cannot go to that platform where intimacy and confidence are needed. The ecstasy that comes from these two and a half kinds of relationship is a lower kind of ecstasy. One who is situated here does not have the right to enter the higher realm of *unnata rasa*.

Śrī Gaurasundara said, “Why are you curtailing your relationship with the Lord by not reaching for the other two and a half parts of it?” Then he explained the other two and a half kinds of relationship. By His mercy it is possible to see the Lord in these five relationships. He has given us *unnata* and *ujjala rasa*. The supreme perfection of *ujjala rasa* is in consorhood. Śrī Gaurasundara has distributed the ecstasy of that relationship (*rasa*) to this world. No other incarnation before Him distributed this *unnata ujjala rasa* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Being merciful to the living entities of this age of Kali, Śrī Krishna Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has distributed it indiscriminately. If we can earnestly surrender ourselves at His lotus feet, then when we become self-realized after getting rid of our bad habits, we can taste the nectar of this relationship. Śrī Gaurasundara has taught the miserable souls how to nicely serve the Supreme Lord Krishnachandra by His own conduct. The perfection of service in the relationship of consorhood (*mādhura rasa*) can only be found in the teachings of Śrī Gaurasundara.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Translated from the Bengali:

Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, *Śrī-Caitanya-darśane Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura*, vols. 1–2, ed. by Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Goswāmī Mahārāja, Māyāpur, Nadiyā: Śrī Chaitanya Math, 1974

Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, *Prabhupādeḥa Hari-kathāṁṭa*, vols. 1–3, ed. by Tridaṇḍipāda Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, Māyāpur, Nadiyā: Śrī Chaitanya Math, 1955.

People will be amazed that the servant of the Supreme Lord

can render more service than the Lord Himself.

Krishna's cowherd friends climb on His shoulders

to get the fruit from the palm tree.

First they taste it themselves, then the portion they like best

they give to Krishna, even though they have already eaten

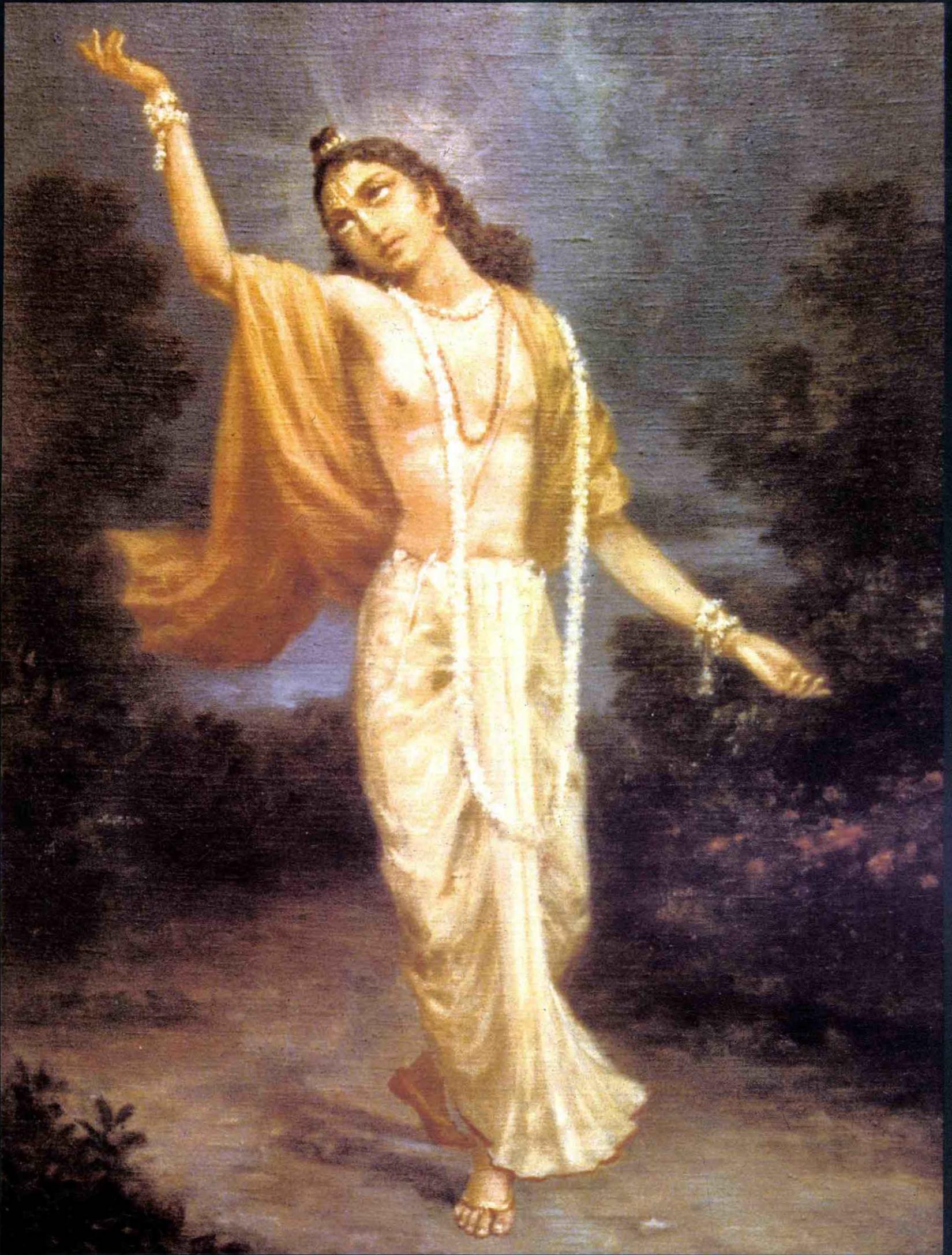
from it. They do not consider that Krishna is the Supreme Lord

and they are minute souls. They are serving Krishna

with intense love. They have such great confidence

in their relationship, they think,

“If we do not feed him, then who will?”



SHRI KRISHNA CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

THE EROTIC PRINCIPLE AND UNALLOYED DEVOTION

THE PASTIMES OF SRI KRISHNA with the milkmaids of Vraja as explained in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* are neither history nor allegory. They are not history because they are transcendental, whereas so-called history is only a record of our experience of this world in terms of the egotistic principle. They are not allegory for the reason that they happen to be the actual Concrete Reality of which this world is the perverted reflection. As a matter of fact, it is this world and its happenings that are allegory—they misrepresent our function and delude us into the acceptance of this perverted existence. The proper function of our souls is to serve the Absolute in obedience to the commands of Himself conveyed through Himself, in the form of His devotees.

The sexual principle is a misunderstood symbol of Reality. It can no more be banished from our consciousness than consciousness itself. The male and female forms are also not the sole and distinctive possessions of this world. There is Reality behind them as well. The soul has a body which is symbolized by the female form and which is absolutely free from any unwholesome material association. Our present objection to the female form is due to the egotistic principle that adopts the male form as more properly representing the pure little soul.

This repugnance to the female form prevents us from an unprejudiced examination of the female sex which is a necessary factor of our conception of amorous love. This amorous love is the highest subject of human poetry and the most powerful factor in all human activities. Its worthlessness is not established by refusing to recognize it as a part of our nature. It would be much more to the purpose to try to understand what it really is. The *Śrīmad*

Bhāgavatam is the only book answers this all-important question.

The worship of Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa is held by some modern thinkers to be dangerous, and even immoral. They apparently take exception to the erotic element, which is the prominent aspect of the highest worship of Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.

Sri Krishna Chaitanya teaches us that it is obligatory for everyone to pay homage to spiritual amour which characterizes the highest service of the Divine Person. This is the central topic of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, which deals with the transcendental service of the Personal Absolute.

Spiritual amour is the highest service to Divinity in His most complete manifestation. The real Nature of Divine Personality can never be fully understood by those who are unable to appreciate the pre-eminent excellency of His service by amorous love.

The conception of personality that is available to us in this world necessarily refers to the gross human physique combined with convention-ridden human mentality. These two are the definite contents of the conception. The functions of such personality can have meaning only if they supply the needs of body and mind. Man is connected with the entities of this world for the satisfaction of the needs of his body and mind by five varieties of relationship. These five modes exhaust all possible forms of such relationship. A person may stand in the relationship of impartiality to other human beings if he takes the help of non-animate entities in a spirit of strict impartiality. The emotional forms of relationship may be said to begin with the relationship of the servant towards his master. This is characterized by the sentiment of distant respect for

the master. The relationship of friendship is closer than that of servitude. Parenthood is still more intimate. Consort hood, as of the wife or mistress to her husband or lover, is the most intimate and comprehensive form of relationship possible with another entity. The chain of relationships is completed by the reciprocal relationships of master to servant, friend to friend, child to parents, husband or lover to wife or sweetheart.

There is no reason not to believe that the five forms of relationship are also inseparable concomitants of the personality of the Absolute Being. However, they are free from the fetters of the gross physical body and materialized mind. The personality of the absolute infinitesimal or the unalloyed soul should also be in a position to function in a fully wholesome and unrestricted manner, in terms of his spiritual body and mind.

Spiritual Personality is identical with the principle of unobstructed cognition. As complete intimacy must necessarily characterize the complete spiritual relationship, the condition of a wife or mistress is thus traced to the highest natural state, and one that is also realizable only in the predominated Absolute Infinity and also, by incorporation with the latter, in the absolute infinitesimal.

It is not possible for the mind of man to have the true conception of the actual nature of the unalloyed spiritual function. Such spiritual realization is possible only through the spiritual senses of the unconditioned soul. The functioning of the spiritual senses ensures the freedom of the soul from all unwholesomeness and limitation in a way that is exactly the opposite of the activities of the present senses, which create and multiply the restrictions of the conditioned state.

The Erotic Principle & Divinity

"...all the great religions

scrupulously avoid

and forbid any examination

of this all-important subject.

The worship of

Sri Radha-Krishna

is the only exception to this rule."

The wise man of this world is a spiritual zero. This has been established in strict conformity with empiric logic, by Buddhist thought. The goal of all activities on the mundane plane is represented by the balanced neutral state as a result of the simultaneous working of an infinite number of mutually hostile tendencies.

Consorthood, as of the wife or mistress of this world, is not eligible by itself to set the tune for other relationships. Mundane consort-hood is compelled to shrink at least outwardly, into the strictly private and personal corner of the affairs of this world. It is not welcomed for influencing other activities in an explicit manner. It can act openly only within the limits of extreme privacy. It is regarded as a sign of abnormality to be influenced in the greater affairs of life by the advice of wife or mistress on the score of amorous relationship.

Consorthood is nevertheless recognized as imparting its deepest charm to life in a world in which it would not be worth living devoid of this relationship. Everyone in this world is however compelled to repress, more or less, the working of this admittedly deepest principle of his individual nature, on account of the opposition of the uncongenial environment in the shape of the defective natures of organs, through which, and the objects towards which, it has to be exercised. But this cannot condemn the principle itself which is the ruling force of life. It operates with no less predominance, but with less weight of responsibility, by being driven underground by the blind opposition of an unsympathizing environment and instrumentals.

Should we deliberately deny ourselves the benefit of the guidance of well-considered opinion in this most vital and important affair of life? All the great religions scrupulously avoid and forbid any examination of this all-important subject. The worship of Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa is the only exception to this rule.

The worship of Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa has been subject to much easily avoidable misunderstanding that has been bred by sheer misunderstanding and ignorance, and easily welcomed prejudices. The personality of Śrī Krishna, the Eternal Divine Lover of Śrī Rādhikā, is the premier spiritual male of the Realm of Vraja, which is the Eternal Abode of the Divine Pair as depicted in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. This is thought to be an unworthy conception of the Absolute Personality, and even as the survival an historical myth of a national hero in the times of promiscuous sexuality and primitive barbarism.

Hostility to the Divinity of Śrī Krishna is entertained on the ground that morality should constitute the kernel and pervading principle of religion. We should not, however, forget that this advertised morality is at best only a regulative and restrictive principle. We are so much wedded to the indispensable nature of this moral regulation that it requires no small effort of the imagination to admit that moral intervention would be uncalled for and harmful but for the actually defective nature of our present environment and sense organs. It would be irrational to do away with moral regulation as long as we are compelled to remain in our present defective condition. But there must surely be a plane which is free from all defects, being the natural and eternal sphere of the activities of our unadulterated spiritual nature. The plane of Divinity is superior to that of our unconditioned souls. There is no need for any form of restrictive morality in the spiritual world, where the soul is not subject to the limiting operation of his present material and mental adjuncts. The stream of Viraja encompassing the mundane sphere effectively prevents the importation of any mundane defects into the Transcendental Realm. In the stream of Viraja morality and immorality are washed off the spiritual form of the soul. It is the plane of salutary sterilization of all mundane qualities.

The moral principle presupposes the existence of a strong and spontaneous tendency for evil as being innate to human nature. The good in this world is in a state of perpetual conflict with dominating evil. Moral regulation thus becomes the indispensable and permanent outward expression of the suppressed good life.

On further analysis, however, we discover that moral judgement can take its stand only on an attenuated form of the evil which it ostensibly seeks to eradicate. It does not advocate acceptance of the substantive good. What it chooses to call goodness is only relatively and tentatively a lesser evil. The substantive good has remained and will ever remain an open issue, if we are content to be finally guided by a purely restrictive moral code. The above difficulty and insufficiency of the immoral code is most clearly realized in practice by every sincere person. It can never be good in itself. Empiric morality, as synthesis, is a counsel of expediency for the establishment of a certain radically defective kind of social living. Does not the existence of positive regulation obstruct the practice of real goodness? The goodness that is producible by the so-



Amour is a hard fact of life.
 It is probably the controlling fact.
 Why should it be capable of doing harm?
 Or, should it be checked because of the
 inopportune character of our present
 organs and environment?
 Can a policy of repression of a really good
 principle be healthy in the long run?
 Is it not tantamount to refusal to think
 about the proper solution?
 Would it be honest or helpful,
 for humoring this criminal indolence,
 to gag those who put forward
 sound proposals for the real solution?

called moral regulation is not substantively different from wickedness.

It is necessary to fix our attention on this positive issue. Is the act of procreation of offspring good or evil? Is amour to be condemned or acclaimed? Can a questionable principle of blind regulation supply the answer to these real problems of life?

Amour is a hard fact of life. It is probably the controlling fact. Why should it be capable of doing harm? Or, should it be checked because of the inopportune character of our present organs and environment? Can a policy of repression of a really good principle be healthy in the long run? Is it not tantamount to refusal to think about the proper solution? Would it be honest or helpful, for humoring this criminal indolence, to gag those who put forward sound proposals for the real solution?

True, the religions have systematically avoided thinking positively on this fundamental issue. They have prescribed only regulations of the present evil life engendered by the uncongenial nature of the present environment and the defective character of our mind and body. This is not even negative help, if it is the only provision. The disease is marked, but no effort is made for its cure. But disease cannot be healed by a policy that refuses in principle to contemplate the restoration of healthy activity.

The question thus resolves itself into enquiry, "How can the fullest natural use of this amorous aptitude be secured." Aesthetics does not provide the answer. Aesthetics cannot overlook or heal the really unwholesome side of the mundane principle that is the only subject matter of its examination. The ethical answer, which is more to the point in one respect, has been considered and rejected.

Medical science, biology and eugenics confine themselves to the bodily consequence of the principle of amour and the reaction of these on the mind. They also cover much less ground than ethics.

The positive answer to the whole issue is given only by *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. This has been accepted and explained by Śrī Krishna Chaitanya. The answer elucidated by the teachings of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya is prevented from being misunderstood by His own illustrative career.

Any person who has taken the trouble to read the accounts of the career of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya penned by His associates and their spiritual successors, must be struck with the total absence of the erotic element in

His career. Śrī Krishna Chaitanya never mixed with women on the footing of sexual intimacy. His conduct is disappointing to those who expect to find a rich harvest of erotic activities because He was the supreme teacher of the amorous service of Divinity. The same characteristic trait is also noticeable in the careers of all bona fide followers of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya. Śrī Krishna Chaitanya categorically distinguishes the function of spiritual service or *bhakti* from *karma* (fruitive activity) and *jñāna* (gnostic asceticism). He tells us that the methods of work and knowledge are complementary aspects of the deceiving worldly function; neither of them has anything to do with *bhakti*, which is the proper function of the soul in its own transcendental plane. The conduct of a bona fide devotee appears external because the spiritual principle is distortedly reflected in matter. The spiritual activities of the unalloyed soul manifest to the mundane vision of conditioned souls, as corresponding mundane activities.

Spiritual manifestation on the mundane plane does not involve the transformation of spiritual activities into mundane. Those activities retain their uncontaminated transcendental character, even when they choose to appear, to the view of the people of this world, apparently in the identical forms of the events of this world. The impression that is naturally received by the conditioned soul, from the experience of such manifestation of spiritual events, does not appear as that of transcendence to the mundane aptitude of the person experiencing the same. That is to say it does not appear to him as different from ordinary mundane occurrences. But even this direct testimony to the contrary notwithstanding, spiritual events ever remain what they are—transcendental and inaccessible to the eclipsed cognitive faculty of the conditioned state, even when they are enacted on this mundane plane and do not seem to differ in any way from ordinary mundane occurrences.

The correspondence between the two must be both possible and inevitable, if we bear in mind the fact that Reality is necessarily One. The Transcendental Realm is the recognizable face of the Reality. The mundane realm is the same entity offering its deluding face to the unnatural approaches of perversely disposed souls. The mundane world is not unreal. The deluding power of Reality has its own plane of activity. But the plane of activity of the deluding face of the Divine Power is different from the plane of operation of the enlightening face of the same. There is an inconceiv-

able correspondence in expression between the two faces of power which is one at bottom.

Therefore, when Divine Power exposes the spiritual face of her activities to the view of spectators who are under the power of Deluding Energy, the latter receive the impression of the identity of such manifestations with their experience of the operations of the deluding face of Divine Power. The vision of mundane spectators is not relieved of its mundane quality by the actual, but unenlightened vision, of revealed spiritual activity in their own plane. They witness the real spiritual activity, but in an unnatural way by the operation of a specific aspect of Divine Spiritual Potency, which does not admit any perversely disposed spectators to the uneclipsed vision of the Truth.

In order to obtain the uneclipsed view of spiritual entities, when they choose to reveal themselves to the eclipsed vision of conditioned souls, appearing to the latter in the forms of the corresponding mundane occurrences, but being nevertheless categorically different from the same, it becomes incumbent on the conditioned soul to seek the help of the only method—that of being restored to his unconditioned state by being relieved of his obstructive mundane aptitudes.

As soon as the rational hankering for the adoption of such course arises in the conditioned soul, he is disposed to avail the offered help of the spiritual entities themselves for being enlightened regarding the method to be pursued for obtaining his liberation from the abject, insurmountable thralldom of the deluding face of power. It is possible for the conditioned soul to find the true course only by the special mercy of those very transcendental entities who so causelessly present themselves to his eclipsed vision. They have the power to reveal their spiritual forms to him in such way that it would leave no doubt in his mind about the reality of their transcendental nature. It is only by such mercy that the conditioned soul is enabled to avail himself of the help placed within his reach by the descent of spiritual entities to this mundane plane for the purpose of bringing about his deliverance.

Spiritual Amour in the same way displays itself to the eclipsed view of mundane spectators in the forms of mundane events. But such revelation should not be accepted by the mundane faculties for reasons that should be quite obvious even to the unenlightened judgement of conditioned souls. Śrī Krishna revealed His Amorous Pastimes in the Cycle of the Dvāpara Age to the eclipsed view of the

people of this world. But that did not enable them to recognize His Divinity, due to their nonacceptance of the proper method of approaching them.

We find from the *Bhāgavatam* that the great devotee Śrī Uddhava offered his obeisances to the Gopīs of Vraja saying, “These Damsels of Vraja are most fortunate in this world and have made a real success of their lives here because they have achieved supreme *prema* in Lord Govinda alone, Who is the Life of all beings. The salvationists who are afraid of births and deaths in this world, the Munis who have attained freedom from earthly bondage, and even we who are fortunate to have attained the company of Lord Śrī Krishna, all aspire after this *prema* but we are not eligible for it. What use is there, therefore, of being a *brahmana* by birth or by sacred-thread ceremony or by Vedic sacrifices, or even being born as Brahma the creator of this Universe? For those who have attained *kṛṣṇa-prema* are superior to all, even if they are born in an inferior caste!” From these utterances of Śrī Uddhava it is proved that the Erotic-Love of the Vraja Gopīs is the highest form of *prema*.

When the Ṛṣis of Daṇḍakāraṇya, who were practicing extremely hard penances, saw the Beautiful Rāma, their hearts flared up with desires in the wake of the sentiments of the Vraja Gopīs. Those *mahaṛṣis* also prayed to Lord Rāma in their minds that they might be born in Gokula as females when the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna would make His Divine Descent in Dvāpara, so that they might enjoy the Lord’s Charming Person. And Lord Rāma blessed them for the fulfillment of their mental prayer! They were thus born as females in the womb of the *gopīs* in distant Gokula, and somehow reached the famous Gokula of Lord Krishna and gained *aprakṛta* bodies from the Vraja Gopīs and attained Lord Krishna, whose charm and beauty far excels that of Lord Rāma.

Empiricists, although they seem to recognize the necessity of being taught and trained in the affairs of this world, are unduly skeptical in regard to such training in spiritual matters, where its necessity is very much greater, because we happen to possess absolutely no knowledge of it. In the *terra incognita* of the spirit, it is indispensable to have a guide unless we confuse the spiritual with the material and retain our faith in empiric efforts. But as a matter of fact, all predeliction for the limited shuts out the unlimited, not partially but radically, not quantitatively but categorically. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* asks those who really want to serve Krishna to forego all thoughts of any

The guru is not a mortal,

erring creature like ourselves.

He is the eternal servant of Krishna

whom He sends into this world

for the deliverance of causeless

Divine mercy, in order to help us rise

out of the depths of sin

to our natural state of absolute purity

by methods perfectly consistent with the

principles of our unbiased reason.

As long as we refuse to listen to him,

we are doomed to misunderstand

everything.



advantage in the worldly sense, the conscious or unconscious, direct or vicarious pursuit of which is the cause of all impurity and ignorance. This reform of life is the indispensable preliminary condition for obtaining any real knowledge of the Absolute. The nature and imperative necessity of such reform, and also its practicability, are clearly realized by close spiritual association with the good preceptor. It cannot be realized, unless and until one agrees, with the sincerity of real conviction, to receive it as a favor to which he can lay no claim on the strength of any worldly merit or demerit. It is only by such reasoned submission of the will

to the process of enlightenment from above that any clouded vision can be cleared up. The guru is not a mortal, erring creature like ourselves. He is the eternal servant of Krishna whom He sends into this world for the deliverance of causeless Divine mercy, in order to help us rise out of the depths of sin to our natural state of absolute purity by methods which are perfectly consistent with the principles of our unbiased reason. As long as we refuse to listen to him, we are doomed to misunderstand everything.

In our present sinful state, sex suggests the idea of sensuous impurity because our pre-

sent self is sensuous. The sense of impurity is really nothing but the incongruity of any material, limited, unconscious substance with the nature of the human soul. We are not on the same plane with the object of our thoughts but are yoked to it in a most unnatural way. This longing is the feeling of impurity or repugnance. So long as we continue to look upon sex with an eye of longing we can never think of it in any other way. But this longing is also part of our present acquired nature and cannot leave us until we can rid ourselves of this secondary nature itself. With this reform of nature our relation to the principle of sex also undergoes a complete transformation which is, however, otherwise incomprehensible to our present understanding. The female form of the human soul and Śrī Krishna is not the relation between the material female form and its corresponding male form. The amorous Pastimes of Śrī Krishna with the spiritual milkmaids of Vraja are not the amorous pastimes between male and female of this world. The amorous Pastimes of Śrī Krishna are not a concoction of the dismissed brain of the sensualist. The amours of this world could have no existence unless the substantive principle exists in Śrī Krishna. But no one denies the existence and importance of the principle of amour in the realm of the Absolute in its perfectly wholesome form.

It is because we choose to regard as material the female form of the soul that we are shocked at what we suppose to be shameless sensuous proclivities of the transcendentalists. This is inevitable so long as we deliberately choose to nurse the error that the sex of our experience is the real entity and not its perverted reflection and imagine that we have been able to solve the problem of sex by transferring our sensuous activity from the body to the mind and by condemning as impure the excesses of the external sexual act on no consistent principle. Such bungling philosophy has not confined and will never convince anybody of the real nature and purpose of the sexual act. This is so because the sexual act is the eternal concomitant in this sinful world of the highest function of the spirit which can never be minimized or abolished by all our empiric endeavors. The right understanding alone can save us from the terrible consequences of our present suicidal sexual follies.

The Personality of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya is identical with and yet distinct from Śrī Krishna. The Activities of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya are, therefore, also identical with and yet distinct from the Amorous Pastimes of

Śrī Krishna. The Activities of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya appear in the form that alone is capable of being received by the conditioned soul without any chance of muddling by his conditioned judgement.

The Mercy of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya and His followers is lavished on all mundane entities in such unstinted profusion that no one should have any chance of missing the knowledge of the descended transcendental entities from whom the conditioned soul is to learn the method of his deliverance.

This mercy expresses itself in the visible form as the Activities of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya and His bona fide followers. They teach conditioned souls the complete service of the Divinity by displaying to the eclipsed vision of the latter their own transcendental activities which are identical with the amorous performances of the spiritual milkmaids of Vraja. Those who misunderstand the activities of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya and His associates do so either through laziness, or by deliberate irrational hostility to manifest truth.

The perfect chant of the Name of Krishna is available to all souls, and it is identical with the amorous service of the spiritual milkmaids of Vraja. This is the sum and substance of the teachings of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya. Conversely, those who do not perform the congregational chant of the name of Krishna in the manner that is free from offense are not in a position to realize the nature of Divine amour. Those who miss such realization remain subject to the abject slavery of mundane lust.

The epistemology that helps us to realize the truth of the above conclusion is in conformity with the requirements of the Absolute as distinct from the pursuit of the deluding knowledge of non-absolutes. In order to realize the nature of the spiritual function, it is only logical to use spiritual means. The descent of Divinity and His eternal servitors provides us with the requisite spiritual means in an available form. Śrī Krishna Chaitanya teaches us how to avail this help when it actually comes within our reach of its own accord.

The service that is offered by Divinity and His servitors, when they choose to be accessible to us on the mundane plane, is in no way different from what is offered by the fully liberated soul on the plane of transcendence. The function of the soul on the superior plane is distortedly reflected in the unwholesome functions of the conditioned state. But until the constructive grossness of mundane corporeality and mentality are eliminated, they con-

tinue to obstruct the function of the soul on his own proper plane. This elimination is effected by the Grace of Godhead when He appears on this lower plane, and is inclined to confer His service on the conditioned soul. Those who are not allowed by Godhead to approach Him cannot recognize Him even when they see Him. Nobody can see Him as He is, even when He exposes Himself to the view of mortal eyes. This apparently self-contradictory statement is explained by the fact that there is actual correspondence between the formal aspect of mundane and spiritual experience. The conditioned soul sees Divinity as He is, but only when He chooses to remove the barrier from the path of his vision and also by simultaneously manifesting His Descent to the mundane plane, and not otherwise.

The conditioned soul fails to see Divinity when He exposes Himself to his view if he chooses, quite irrationally, to suppose Godhead to be a mundane entity, i.e. an object which is capable of being approached for the practice of any of the five forms of mundane relationship by his mundane senses. The mistake is inevitable under the circumstances, unless Godhead chooses to relieve the spectator of the fetters of his limited existence.

For the purpose of the deliverance of the conditioned soul it is not necessary for Divinity to end the worldly sojourn of the latter. That would be opposed to the Purpose of Divine Descent. Just as Godhead becomes visible to the conditioned soul without being transformed into any object of this world, in an exactly similar way the conditioned soul is lifted to the place of transcendence while continuing to appear as mundane to the external vision of mundane spectators.

One who is has a real vision of Divinity no longer need misunderstand the transcendental nature of His service. He is in a position to render such service by his spiritual senses. But his activities still continue to appear mundane to ignorant observers. This mistake can be removed if such activities of the real devotee are observed by a person with humility, and by no other method. It is for affording the conditioned soul of this world the chance to observe the activities of Himself and His devotees that the Supreme Lord chooses to manifest His Appearance in this world.

We should now be in a some what better position to understand how the chanting of the name Krishna in the company of transcendental devotees is identical with the performance of the amorous service of the spiritual milkmaids of the Realm of Krishna. The

For the purpose of the deliverance of the conditioned soul it is not necessary for the Divinity to end the worldly sojourn of the latter. That would be opposed to the Purpose of Divine Descent. Just as Godhead becomes visible to the conditioned soul without being transformed into any object of this world, in an exactly similar way the conditioned soul is lifted to the place of transcendence while continuing to appear as mundane to the external vision of mundane spectators.

amorous service becomes realizable as the transcendental word to the spiritual ear of the soul. There is no way of having access to the same as long as Krishna is not pleased to relieve us fully of the perverse inclinations of the conditioned state. But the chanting of the Holy Name without offense, in the company of self-realized souls and by the method followed by them, has the power to destroy the effects of our past atheistic activities and to relieve us from reversion to the mundane plane by imparting to us the positive eternal service of Divinity, tentatively and symbolically during the mundane sojourn, and fully on the termination of the allotted span of our mundane life brought about by the Will of Krishna.

The objections of certain Indians to the worship of Rādhā Krishna by the method of amorous love as practiced by the spiritual milkmaids of Vraja will be found to be inapplicable if we seek to be enlightened about the actual meaning of the function by reverently listening to the account of the career of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya from the holy lips of self-realized souls. And without unduly relying on our mundane judgement, which has no access to the plane of transcendence.

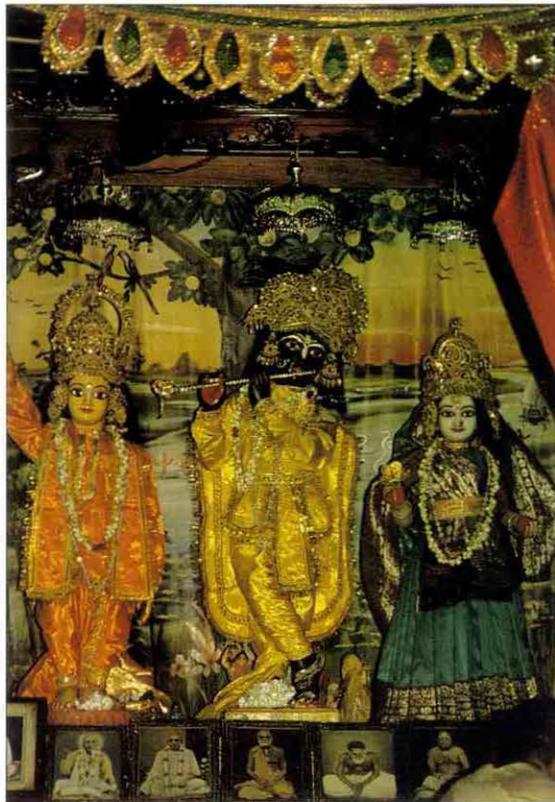
CHAITANYA LILA—KRISHNA LILA

The unprejudiced study of the career of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya offers the required help in the fullest measure. The esoteric reason for this is that Śrī Krishna Chaitanya is Śrī Krishna Himself. The associates of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya are the same as the spiritual milkmaids and other servitors of Śrī Krishna in Vraja. The Activities of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya and His associates are also identical to, and yet distinct from, the Pastimes of Śrī Krishna in Vraja. They can show themselves to us if they choose to do so. They can come down to this plane for the purpose of showing themselves to us in the only form that is not capable of being misunderstood—as the activities of self-realized souls. The speciality of the Appearance of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya consists in this: that Divinity Himself and His associates take the initiative for disclosing themselves to us by enabling us to regard them from the point of view that is necessary for such realization. The only thing needed is merely to adjust ourselves to the requirements brought home to us by such vision. Such adjustment is impossible under the guidance of deluded souls. The chance for self-deception is minimized if we avail ourselves of the interpretation of the career of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya offered by the

lives and writings of His associates and by those pure souls who faithfully live up to the teaching handed down in their works for our eternal well-being.

RAGANUGA BHAKTI

So long as one is in the fetters of *māyā* and misidentifies oneself with one's physical body and changeable mind, one must necessarily undergo the rudimentary path of *vaidhi*



bhakti, controlled and guided by scriptural prescriptions, supported by favorable arguments and reasons. Such a spiritual novice when he makes tangible progress in the long and scripturally controlled path of *vaidhi bhakti* may develop, listening to the *Bhāgavatam* and allied scriptures that deal with the transcendental Pastimes of the Supreme Lord Śrī Krishna, a spontaneous and intensely eager craving in his or her heart for being enabled to follow in the footsteps of any of the four categories of the dearest Associates of Lord Krishna in Vraja. Their feelings and applied sentiments to the dearest Śrī Krishna are expressed as: *dāsyā* (as a servant) *sakhya* (as a friend), *vatsālyā* (as parents) or *mādhura* (as consorts). When such a longing for *vraja-bhāva* is strongly and genuinely achieved, such an individual is no longer bound by the restrictions of scriptural injunctions or human reasoning and arguments. The soul soars in the higher realm of burning feelings for the service of Lord Krishna in subordination to any of the *bhāvas* of the four cate-

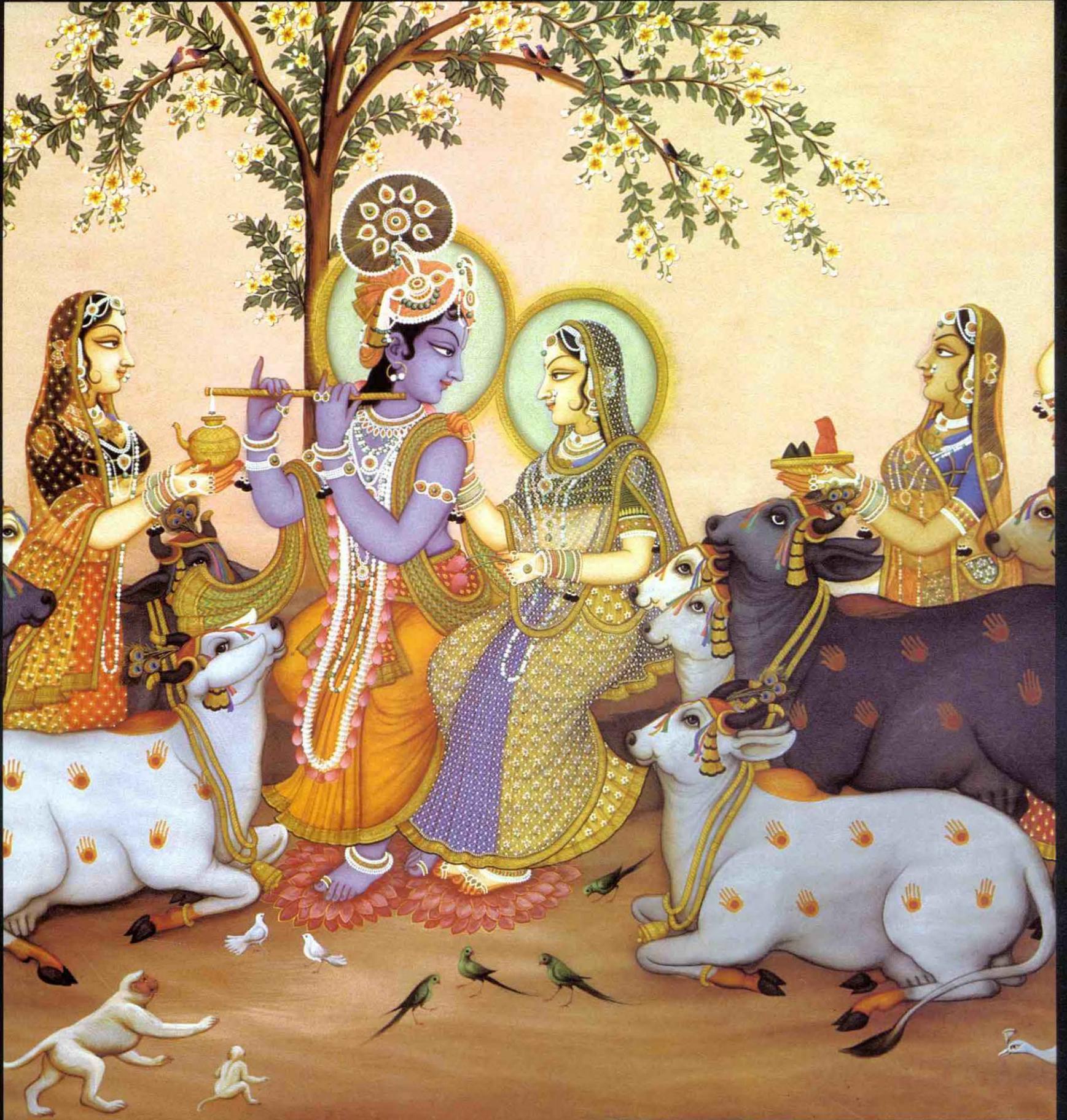
gories of the eternal Associates of the Lord of Vraja, which may awaken normally in the heart without any forced imagination. Such a *sādhaka*, practicing spiritual life, can no longer be kept restricted by scriptural regulations and mere human waves of feelings. In this stage, the individual serves by words and deeds the Supreme Lord and His dearest associates like Śrī Rupa and Śrī Sanātana in the same manner in which they had lived in this world—consonant with the basic directions of the scriptures, by chanting and listening to such scriptures like the *Bhāgavatam* that deal with the transcendental Pastimes of Lord Krishna in the company of His dearest Associates. While observing the regulative principles of devotion, the individual in whom the intense longing for the *bhāvas* of *rāgātmikā* Eternal Associates of the Lord is awakened, conceives a spiritual body. It is in accordance with that genuinely awakened *vraja-bhāva* (Gopī, Nanda-Yaśodā, Śrīdhāma-Sudhāma, Citrakapatraka), a *siddhadeha*—a permanent spiritual body which corresponds to and is favorable and fit for serving the Lord. Under the guidance of the dearest one of the Dearest Associates of Lord Krishna, for whose *bhāva* a craving has been aroused in the heart, such an individual engages himself or herself in service with that particular *sthāyi-bhāva* as a servant, friend, or handmaid. Such service is rendered mentally in the *siddhadeha* or spiritual body so conceived. Thus an individual, whether a man or a woman, either in *vaidhi-bhakti* or *rāgānuga-bhakti*, in the *sādhana* stage, must necessarily serve God and His devotees by words and deeds in the physical body by chanting and listening to the Name of God, listening to the scriptures and by worshipping in the temple as prescribed by the scriptures.



Sri

Radha Dasyam, The Service of Sri Radha

Radhama



THE SERVICE OF SRI RADHA

RADHA DASYAM

SRI RADHIKA IS NOT SPECIFICALLY mentioned in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. But in the description of the Circular Amorous Dance, the Rasa Pastime, Śrī Krishna is represented as leaving the circle of the dancing milkmaids in the company of a female who is more favored than all the rest. The milkmaids who were thus abruptly abandoned in the very midst of the dance praised the genuine devotion of the unnamed female who could induce Śrī Krishna to prefer her sole company to the combined attractions of all the others.

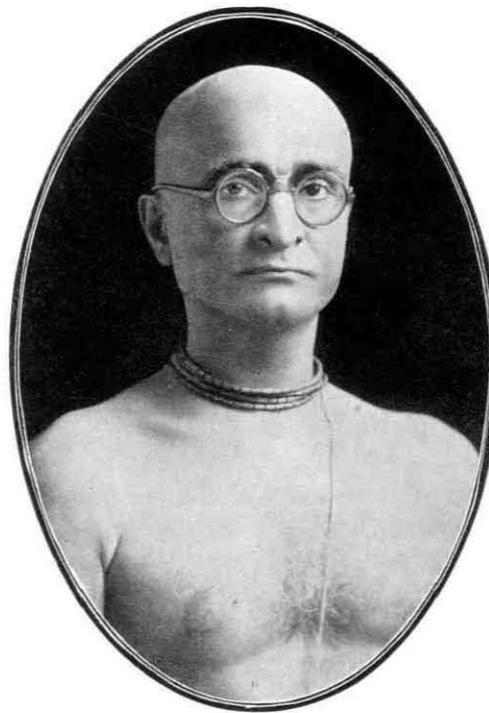
But although the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* mentions the above incident, the subject is not further developed in that work. This has been explained by the Goswāmīs of Vṛṇḍāvana, the apostles of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, as due to a deliberate resolve on the part of Śrī Śūkadeva who is the narrator of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, to avoid disclosing to his miscellaneous audience the "hidden matters" of the scriptures. The "hidden matters" can only be known by the special grace of Śrī Krishna and not otherwise. They are not to be divulged to all persons indiscriminately.

This explanation offered by the Goswāmīs is not opposed to the open treatment of the same subject by Śrī Jayadeva and other writers. In spite of the *Gītā Govinda* and its companion works, the subject of the relationship of Śrī Rādhikā to Śrī Krishna remains shrouded in impenetrable mystery. No language can convey to the lay reader anything but a misleading idea of the nature of the subject on which Śrī Sukadeva maintained such discrete silence. This result is hailed with unmistakable joy by Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja Goswāmī, author of *Śrī Chaitanya Charitamṛta*. Kavirāja Goswāmī pertinently observes that no joy can excel that of the narrator of the hidden subject when he realizes that those very persons are wholly and automatically barred from all knowledge of the subject. They will surely not appreciate the same for fear of whose neglect the writer is afraid to narrate fully.

Śrī Sukadeva's hesitation to divulge

the secrets of the Vedas is well founded. The conduct of Śrī Jayadeva Goswāmī in speaking without reserve is equally in order if we remember that his book cannot be understood at all by those who are lacking in the highest spiritual culture.

Certain uncritical writers have even thrown mud at the author of *Gītā-Govinda*; but they are the exceptions. Generally writers have thought it wise to avoid all reference to the



subject for the honest enough reason that they have failed to understand how a book which has a most obscene exterior could be cherished by all the great devotees of the country, whose conduct is universally admitted to have been free from any taint of causality. It is this paradox that has always exercised a salutary restraining influence on the saner sections of writers with regard to the treatment of this unintelligible subject.

Śrī Rādhikā is realizable as the counter-whole of the Personal Absolute. She is the Predominated Moiety of the absolute whole. With regard to Śrī Rādhikā, Śrī Krishna is the Predominating Moiety. The conception

of male and female refers to the principle of personality. As both personalities are fully divine, no grossness or inadequacy of the corresponding mundane conception need be imported into the subject. But it is imperative to admit the absolute logical validity, under the reservation of inconceivability by our present understanding, of the conception of the divine pair possessing actual male and female spiritual forms.

If this is not acknowledged the absolute realm is at once divested of the supreme cementing principle that holds together its diverse atomic personalities. The Predominating and Predominated Moiety are Absolute Cognition. The Predominated Moiety is simultaneously distinct from and contained in the Predominating Moiety. The Predominating Moiety can be but one. The Predominated Moiety alone may possess a plural nature without upsetting the principle of real monotheism. The individual human souls are dissociable particles of the Predominated Moiety. The Predominated Moiety is of the nature of the power of the Predominating Moiety who is the possessor or proprietor of power. The Predominating Moiety is the male absolute. The Predominated Moiety is the absolute female possessing the aptitude for obeying every direction of the Predominating Moiety for supplying all conditions of the activities of the Predominating Absolute.

This is the dry philosophical idea so far as it is possible to express the ultimate Transcendental Reality by means of the language of mundane thought. The real entity lies entirely off the plane of all mental speculation. Śrī Rādhikā is the eternal associated counter-whole of Śrī Krishna, her male consort. Śrī Rādhikā is the source of all individual souls whose function is to be employed in the service of Śrī Krishna by the alternative methods of loyal conscious submission, neutrality or actual opposition. The individual souls serve Śrī Krishna as constituents of Śrī Rādhikā. When they forget that they are constituents of

All individual souls are spiritual females
 in a subordinate position to Sri Radhika,
 whose service to Sri Krishna
 they naturally share
 by their nature as constituents.
 The object of endeavor
 of the individual souls is to learn
 to obey Sri Radhika.
 Only by obeying Sri Radhika
 can they serve Sri Krishna.

Śrī Rādhikā they forget the nature of their own selves, and engage in the abnormal activities of the mundane plane.

The relation between one individual soul and another is that of obeying each other as constituents of Śrī Rādhikā in the performance of their allotted service of Śrī Krishna. To use a mundane analogy, all individual souls are spiritual females in a subordinate position to Śrī Rādhikā, whose service to Śrī Krishna they naturally share by their nature as constituents. The object of endeavor of the individual souls is to learn to obey Śrī Rādhikā. Only by obeying Śrī Rādhikā can they serve Śrī Krishna.

Śrī Krishna is the only object of all worship. Śrī Krishna alone is the recipient of all service. No individual soul can be the recipient of any service on his own account or on account of any other individual soul. This points to the true significance of the scriptural injunction to abstain from sexual activity and avoid the company of all sensual persons, for qualifying for the service of Śrī Krishna on the spiritual plane. No idea of the positive nature of the function of the higher plane corresponding to the sexual activity of this world can be conveyed to those who are not completely free from the disease of mundane sexual desire. It is for this reason advisable to abstain from all empiric study of the descriptions of the amorous activities of divinity until one has been actually freed from every worldly passion by the preparatory service of Śrī Krishna under the direction of the bona fide *āchārya*.

Śrī Krishna alone is Godhead. Śrī Rādhikā alone serves Śrī Krishna. This is the only absolute truth. Śrī Krishna is the ultimate source of all real receivers of service. Śrī Rādhikā is the ultimate source of all real renderers of service. The infinite variety of the pastimes of Śrī Radha-Krishna constitutes the only reality.

Śrī Rādhikā is the Predominated Moiety of the Absolute. In other words, the Predominating Moiety of the Absolute is not the full Integer. The absolute nature of the personality of Śrī Rādhikā is fully on a level with the absolute personality of Śrī Krishna. Śrī Krishna is the consort of Śrī Rādhikā. The Absolute is both pair and singular person.

Monotheism is so dear to the heart of all rational persons in this age that very few people would agree to accept two Gods, even if they are assured that they are complementary to each other. The numerical reference is illogically allowed to limit the Absolute. It is con-

sidered to be binding on the Absolute to be a singular entity in the ordinary sense. But the pseudo-monistic view is calculated to destroy the personality of Godhead into the void of undifferentiated *brahman*. No theist should be prepared to reduce divinity, whom he is to worship, to absolute zero.

The only solution to the fundamental problem of theism is offered by the fact that Śrī Krishna is eternally a couple. He is both Śrī Krishna as well as Śrī Rādhikā. Śrī Rādhikā is as absolute as Śrī Krishna Himself. Śrī Rādhikā is at once identical with and distinct from Śrī Krishna.

Śrī Rādhikā is eternally distinct from Śrī Krishna. Śrī Rādhikā is the Predominated Moiety of the Absolute, whereas Śrī Krishna is the Predominating Moiety. Śrī Krishna is male, Śrī Rādhikā is female. They are two distinct and complementary persons. But neither of them is male or female in the limited worldly sense. The Absolute Male and the Absolute Female are from the worldly point of view a sheer contradiction in terms. But this apparent contradiction is accommodated in the absolute in defiance of all canons of our so-called rational judgement. It is this astounding fact that makes the Absolute the concentration of all mellowness (*rasa*), instead of making Him devoid of all mellowness. The empiric singular conception of Godhead would relegate all mellowness to the fractional parts and make the Absolute Integer the embodiment of all insipidity. Formal logic does not really admit any existence to any entity.

Those who are so anxious to discover any pretext for denying the absolute nature of the personality of Śrī Rādhikā as female consort of Śrī Krishna are themselves left without any standing-ground for establishing any kind of relationship with the Absolute. In the Predominating Moiety the singular numerical reference is also logical and admissible. The Absolute Master has no co-sharer in His mastership. Many masters would lead to a loss of mellowness in the Predominating Absolute. He would not be in a position to predominate over every entity. Plurality of females however, is not opposed to infinite mellowness. Singularity of the Predominated Moiety would deny the admitted infinite scope of mastership of the Predominating Moiety.

Śrī Rādhikā is the absolute source of all consorts to Śrī Krishna. The services of all the consorts are associated aspects of the service of Śrī Rādhikā. Śrī Krishna left the dancing circle of the milkmaids of Vraja as soon as Śrī Rādhikā withdrew Herself from the same.



In other words the aggregate of the milkmaids of Vraja fall short in the service of Śrī Krishna except in association with Śrī Rādhikā and under Her direction.

CONSORTHOOD OF SHRI KRISHNA

The consorthead of Śrī Krishna must not be confounded with any analogous mundane relationship. The Predominating Absolute is the only master of all entities. He is also the master of Śrī Rādhikā Herself. But Śrī Rādhikā is also the the only absolutely dominated entity. She is the only Absolute Female. There are real partial and real counterfeit males and females of an infinite variety. All real and unreal masculinity is a reflection of Śrī Krishna. No masculinity can exist except in relation of supposed or real mastership over associated femininity. So in every entity these two aspects of personality are conjoined. All femininity involves the co-presence of masculinity as master.

JIVA-FEMININE ENTITY

The individual soul (*jīva*) is a feminine entity by her proper nature. This is so because all entities, except Divinity, are subservients. The singularity of the Predominating Absolute has to be recognized without reservation. There is, however, also an infinity of divine personalities. But all divine personalities are fully divine. None of them have got any mas-

ter. The milkmaids of Vraja are the expanded forms of Śrī Rādhikā and identical with Her. But the *jīva* does not belong to the category of the associated constituent counterwhole of Śrī Rādhikā. The *jīva* soul belongs to the decentralized plane of manifestations. Śiva is the divine center of the principle of this decentralized existence. Śiva consorts for this purpose with Mahāmāyā. Śiva and Mahāmāyā are closely connected with the *jīva*. But the connection of the *jīva* with Śiva and Mahāmāyā is not identical with his connection with Śrī Krishna and Śrī Rādhikā. The connection of the *jīva* with Śiva and Mahāmāyā is established only when he is disassociated from the service of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna.

Neither Śiva nor Mahāmāyā can give the *jīva* the service of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna. On the contrary, their function is to delude the *jīva* into desiring certain covetable things of this world for his own advantage. Śiva is independent of Krishna. Śiva is a divine person. In this sense Krishna and Śiva are identical. Śrī Krishna never consorts with His deluding potency. The Divinity of Śiva is adulterated with non-divinity whereas Śrī Krishna is eternally unadulterated with *māyā*. The service of Śiva and Mahāmāyā is not only incompatible with the service of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna but implies positive aversion to the service of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna. It also implies aversion to the service of all divine personalities who are uncontaminated by association with *māyā*. The different Avatars of Vishnu cannot also be worshiped by any mundane reference.

All misunderstanding regarding the nature of the worship of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna is traceable to different degrees of willing affinity with the various concerns of this mundane plane. The so-called worship of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna that is unfortunately practiced now-a-days on such a large scale by the different sects of philanthropists in this country is a greater offense to the feet of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna than even the open hostility of the worshippers of Śiva and Mahāmāyā. The real worship of the milkmaids of Vraja is located on the highest plane of spiritual service which transcends all conceptions of mundane worship that are put into the brains of conditioned souls.

The subject of Divine Amour must be approached with an attitude of confidential submission. There is a bond of love between Śrī Krishna and Śrī Rādhikā. There is an agency who brings about union of the Divine Pair. And that intermediary possesses a personality connected with both by the relationship of identity. All this is logically necessary.

UNLAWFUL LOVE

To the above is added the stigma of unlawful love. As a paramour Śrī Rādhikā loves Śrī Krishna in defiance of all sumptuary (moral) principles of mundane loving intercourse. This is not accidental but deliberate. It is this characteristic of the function that bears a distant analogy to the illicit love for a paramour. Śrī Rādhikā habitually sacrifices, and makes it a point to sacrifice every other interest for Her love for Śrī Krishna. This is also the characteristic of the service of the milkmaids of Vraja, of whom Śrī Rādhikā is the foremost.

The paramour relationship is a most unfortunate analogy from the point of view of moral people. Illicit mundane love is not countenanced by any religious creed in the world. The sanctity of the tie of wedlock is also universally regarded as the seal and crown of the civilized intimacy between the sexes. Free sexual love is likewise universally denounced as the sign of unreclaimed animality. We have no idea of contradicting these undoubtedly proper views with regard to the legitimate form of sexual relationship of all civilized societies. But although it may sound paradoxical, it is nevertheless true that what is most unwholesome in this world is analogously the most wholesome in the realm of the Absolute, where everything is perfect. There is no such institution as that of conventional marriage in the spiritual realm of Śrī Krishna. The milkmaids of Vraja are absolutely free from all taint of sensuousness. They possess spiritual bodies which are so formed as to be capable of being fully used in the exclusive service of Śrī Krishna.

The real difficulty in the way of our realization of the nature of Transcendental Amour is that we cannot have the necessary basic conception of the nature of the spiritual body itself. We cannot project the mundane bodily conception onto the relationships of pure souls who are not encumbered by the grossness and limitations of the defective physical coils. The ideas of grossness, immorality, etc., apply only to the mundane plane. The spiritual personality of the spiritual milkmaids of transcendental Vraja needs to be realized instead of being criticized by the inadequate sources of our mundane experience.

The fact that a considerable number of people have been misled in trying to follow the preachers of the religion of unconventional spiritual amour, cannot properly be laid at the door of religion itself. There have been unfortunately many pseudo-preachers of the

religion who make use of the teachings of the *Bhāgavatam* for condoning and encouraging illicit carnality. These preachers are no doubt a great nuisance and come under the penal clauses of the Civil Law for safeguarding decency and morality. But these pseudo-preachers also represent popular demand for the pernicious doctrines which they spread among the people. It will not do to simply ignore this deplorable state of affairs, nor to allow the growth of the tendency. In a democratic and rational age, it is necessary to provide the right direction for a natural aptitude by means of an intensive counter-propaganda.

All the current religions are practically silent about this particular subject. But it has not become unimportant by being ignored by religionists. The preventive and discouraging methods do not offer any positive cure and have, as a matter of fact, been found practically useless.

THE MENTAL SPECULATION OF ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ

The truth is that there is a real plane for the wholesome exercise of the amorous disposition that is part and parcel of our soul. It is necessary to realize the nature of this plane in order to be relieved of our harmful errors in regard to sexual relationship. Some sort of conviction must precede the actual adoption of any proposed method. The personality of Śrī Rādhikā supplies the solution to this problem. Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī has offered detailed exposition of this subject in his monumental works. Śrī Jiva Goswāmī has explained the real meaning of those works. *Nāmaśreṣṭham manumāpi sachīpūtra matra swarūpam, rūpam tasyagraja marūpurīm māthurim goṣṭha-vātim.*

“It is by surrendering ourselves to the Preceptor’s feet that we can have abode in Mathurā. Otherwise we cannot gain entrance into the Transcendental Region. We should approach the guru who will confer on us the eight things, i.e., Nama Mantra, etc. The Nama is the Transcendental Sound and the Mantras are incarnations. The Name is identical with the Namee. The Mantra is required in order to reach the situation in which the Name can be properly chanted. The Son of Sachi is the Supreme Lord Himself. Damodara Swarūpa is the head of the Gauṛīyas or the transcendental servitors of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya. Rūpa and Sanātana were sent to Mathurā by Śrī Krishna Chaitanya to disseminate transcendental knowledge. There are several Purīs which can give salvation and among them Mathurā is the acme. *Goṣṭhavāti* is where

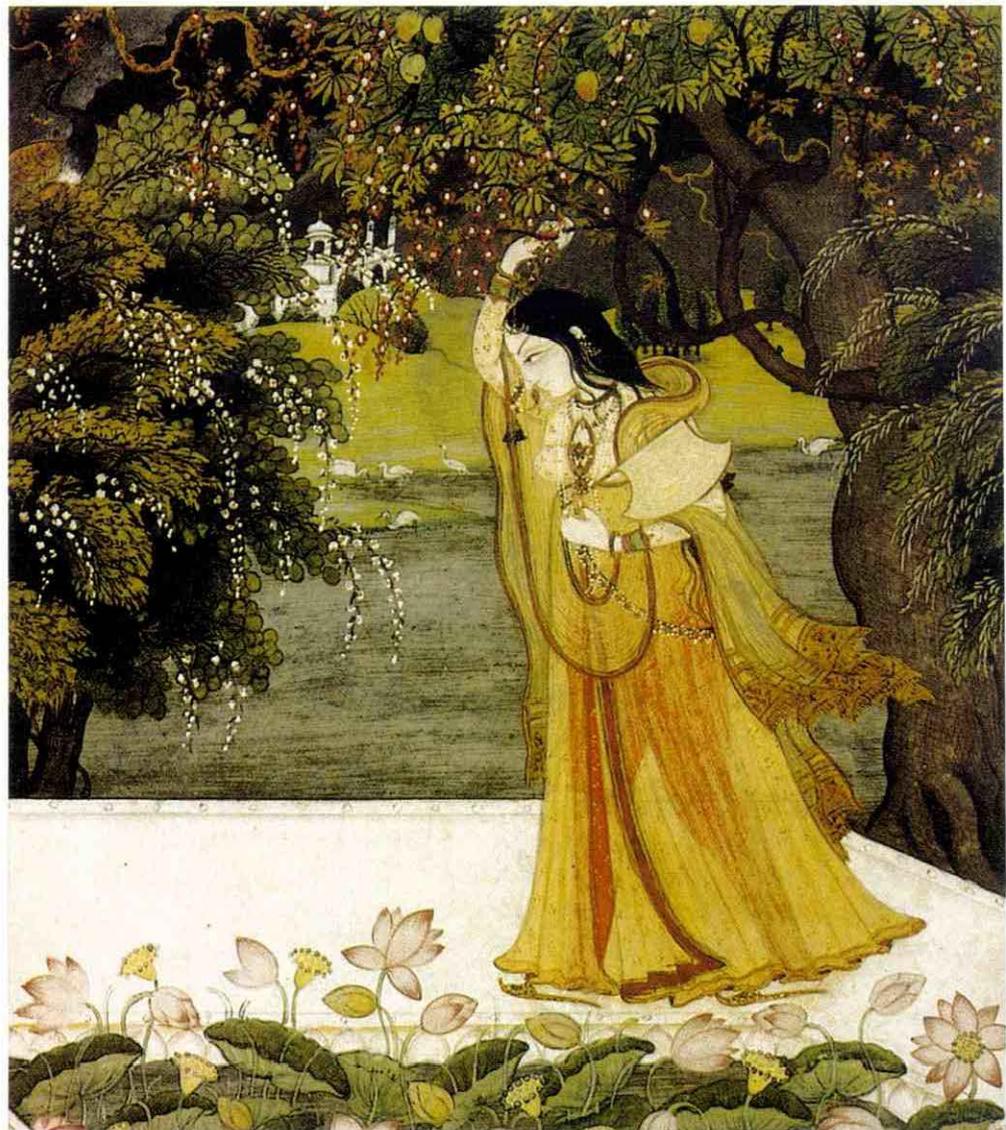
Śrī Krishna is feeding His cows.” The next thing is Rādhā Kuṇḍa, which is the pond where Krishna got rid of the sin He incurred by killing a cow named Aristanemī. He killed Aristotelianism or the rationalistic process of reasoning of this imperfect world. This Aristanemī was the incarnation of mundane knowledge, and Krishna killed him, for which act He expiated by taking a dip in Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa. This *kuṇḍa* is the mental speculation of Śrī Rādhā. The eternal land of our abode should be Rādhā Kuṇḍa. By the border of Rādhā Kuṇḍa we should have our groves.

A HANDMAID OF ŚRĪ RŪPA MAÑJARĪ

Mādhura-rati is the highest form of *prema*, and an individual soul even in the stage of *rāgātmikā bhakti* considers herself a maid called *mañjarī* whose service is guided by the dearest Rūpa Mañjarī and others who in turn are subservient to the eight *sakhis*—Śrī Lalitā, Viśakhā, Citra, Indurekhā, Campaklatā, Rangadevī, Tungavidyā, Sudevī—who are the counterparts of Śrī Rādhikā. They are all

engaged in the *aprakṛta* services of their beloved Śrī Krishna for His absolute pleasures, and no one else. Their complete satisfaction lies in the absolute pleasure of their beloved.

The physical body of this world can never reach the lotus feet of the Lord. Hence a *sādhaka* in *rāgānuga bhakti*, who may be a man or a woman in this physical world, develops the *aprakṛta* body of a *gopī* called a *mañjarī* if his or her *rāga* is awakened in the wake of the Vraja *gopī*. Specifically, she is a *mañjarī*, with a particular name, conception of her form and beauty, particular age, costume, specialized service (*seva*), and grove (*kuñja*) where she receives and serves the Divine Couple Śrī Rādhā-Krishna. The individual in *rāgānuga bhakti* meditates inwardly, looking upon himself or herself as a handmaid of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, who is the personification of the *rūpa*—beauty of Śrī Rādhā, which beauty is the projected Absolute Beauty of the Absolute Lord Śrī Krishna. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī guides the individual handmaid in the fold of Śrī Lalitā Sakhi, who in turn engages the handmaid in the specialized services of Śrī Rādhā-Krishna.



Divine

Remembrance by the Disciples of
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

Memoir



REMEMBERING THE LOTUS FEET

MEMOIRS OF THE DISCIPLES OF SRILA PRABHUPADA

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT AN INCIDENT from the time when I [Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī] first came to the Maṭh to be at the lotus feet of my Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda. The temple in Śrī Māyāpura had been opened and the Deities had been installed there. The circumambulation of Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma on the occasion of Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā had also taken place. At the end of the festival, everyone was going back home. Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting on a canvas chair on the front porch.

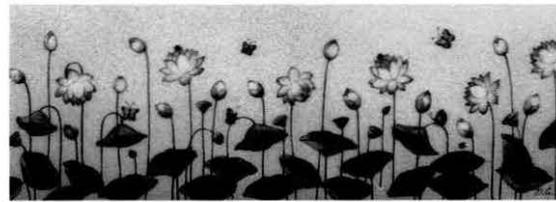
All the devotees were coming to him to offer their *daṇḍavats* before going home. Eager to hear what he was going to say, I came and sat behind him. Prabhupāda told the devotees, “Please do not deceive me.” I became very alert. The festival had ended, everyone was going home, how were they deceiving him? Prabhupāda said, “You gave assurances that you would do *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. I also became attached to you in this relationship. You came for a few days, and now you are going back to that material world. Then I am deceived. If you say, ‘No, Prabhupāda, we did not deceive you. We still have a few days’ work to complete, a few responsibilities to take care of. After we finish that we will come back to you and then whatever you will say, we will do,’ I will say ‘There is no need for all of that.’ If someone says, ‘My house is on fire, let me put out the fire and then I will come,’ I will say, ‘There is no need for that.’ The destination of your, our, and everyone’s self-interest is Śrī Krishna. The living entity has no other duty than to serve Him. If the whole world is destroyed by fire, it does not do you any harm: you are the transcendental, eternal soul. You have no duties other than serving Krishna. All your fulfillment lies in the lotus feet of Krishna.”

At that time I finally surrendered at his lotus feet. I realized that it is true that we want happiness, peace and bliss—but whatever we want, through that we unconsciously

want only Krishna, because He is the reservoir of all bliss. It is bliss, it is joy, that is the medium. Just as the standard of all currency is gold, similarly the standard of all fulfillment—whether it is on a theistic or an atheistic basis—is bliss or joy. Where shall we find that in this world? We can only find it by exclusive surrender to the Sweet Absolute, because Vedānta has said, *raso vai saḥ*—“He is the personification of infinite joy. He is Reality the Beautiful.”

Excerpt translated from the Bengali:

Goswāmī, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara, *Amṛta-Vidyā*, ed. by Śrīla Bhakti Sundara Govinda Mahārāja, Śrī Navadvīp Dhām: Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, 1985.



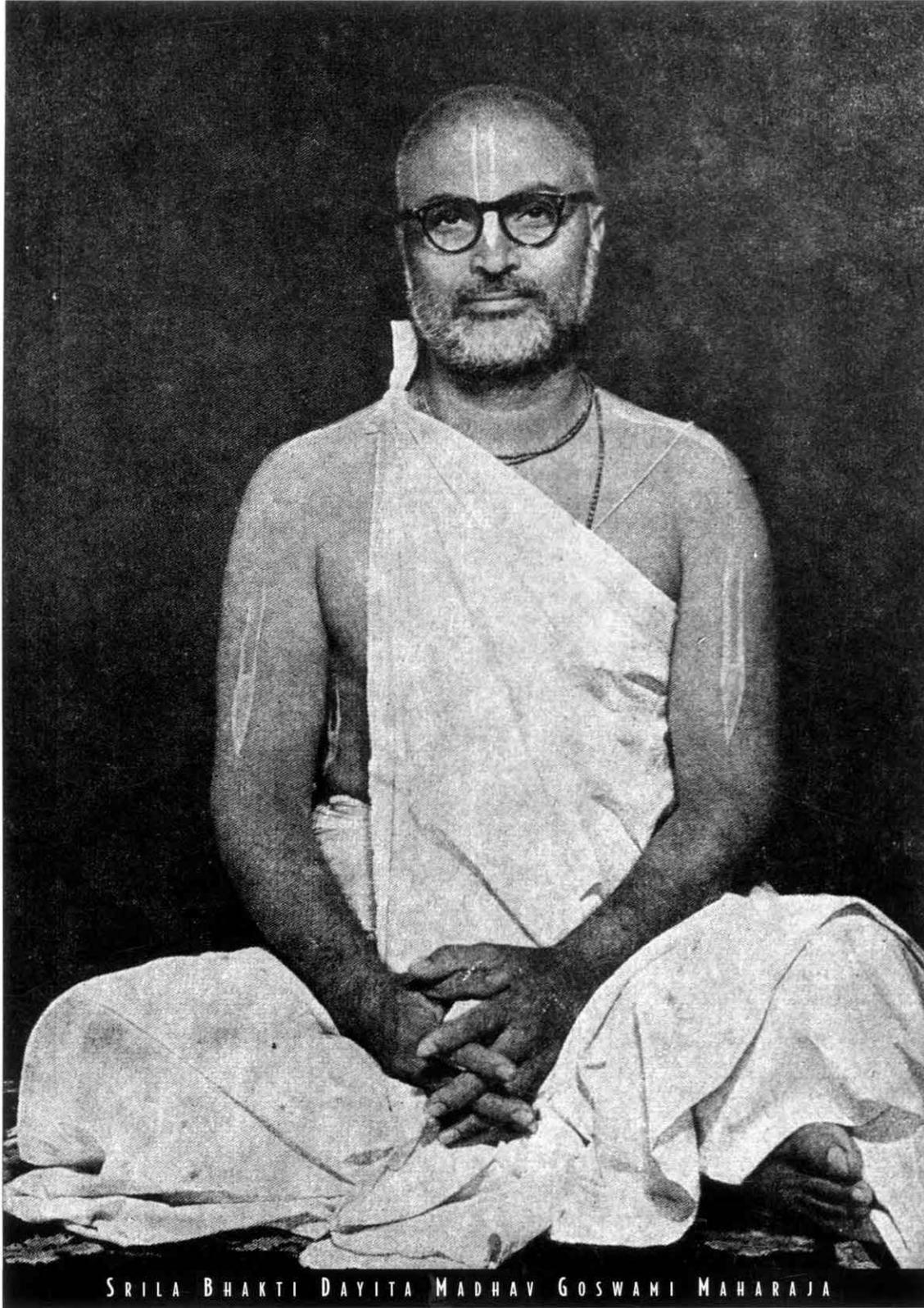
Around 1878 or 1879, when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was the Deputy Magistrate of Narāl, my father was a classmate of his oldest son, Annadā Prasād Bābu, at Narāl High School. Sometimes my father would go to Annadā Bābu’s house and have the good fortune of having the *darśan* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. I have heard from my father that Śrīla Ṭhākura, while residing at Narāl, used to travel to nearby places on his houseboat—such as—Kāliya, Lohāgarā, and Lakṣmīpāśa—to inspect the local proceedings and attend trials at law. At these times many fortunate people were able to hear about the pure devotional path of Gauṛīya Vaiṣṇavism from him.

Once Śrīla Ṭhākura went to inspect the condition of the Kanyādaha canal irrigation system, having been so requested by many

of the local residents. He left his houseboat at our *ghāṭ* and went there on horseback. I heard that my Gurudeva (Śrīla Prabhupāda), who was a very young child at that time, also came with his father in the houseboat. Our household sent some milk and sweets made of coconut and *kṣīra* (evaporated milk) to the travellers on the boat. In later years the holy association of these *āchāryas* helped my father to sincerely surrender at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.

One night in the spring of 1910, around 3 AM, I departed from my house with the goal of going to live in Hṛṣikeśa after visiting the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Navadvīp Dhām. I went on foot for about fifteen miles and then I travelled further by boat. Eventually I arrived at the Singiā railroad station. This was the first time I saw a train. One gentleman bought me a ticket and helped me board the train. I changed trains at Baṅgā and Rānāghāṭ and arrived at Krishnanagar at midnight the next day. Then I took a horse-drawn coach to the *ghāṭ*, took a boat across the Gaṅgā, and reached the town of Navadvīp during the pre-dawn hours. In the morning, on inquiring about “Mahāprabhu’s house”, I was sent to a temple. I was told this was the main temple of Mahāprabhu in this town. As I was about to enter a man yelled in a rough voice, “You have to pay an entrance fee of three annas (about eighteen paisa).” Shocked, I left the temple. Sitting on the front porch of a run-down temple of Lord Śiva at Porāmatalā, I started pondering what I should do next. Śrīman Mahāprabhu was the deliverer of fallen souls. He went from door to door instructing so many souls who had been burnt by the fire of material life about the supreme benefits of devotional life, and look what had happened here today when I tried to have His *darśana*. This thought profoundly disturbed even a young boy like myself.

Two gentlemen who were returning from bathing in the Gaṅgā passed by, talking



SRI LA BHAKTI DAYITA MADHAV GOSWAMI MAHARAJA

about Śrīdhām Māyāpura, the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Hearing them talking about Śrīdhām Māyāpur, I remembered what I had heard before [that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had discovered the true birthplace of Mahāprabhu, in Śrīdhām Māyāpura], and immediately got up to go to Māyāpura. I asked the local people how to get to the Gaṅgā and then crossed the river. At that time, the *pujāri* (priest) in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's house in Māyāpura was Rājārām Tewārī, the guard was Satyārāma, and the treasurer was Padmanābha Brahmachārī. The *brahmachārī* told me, "In

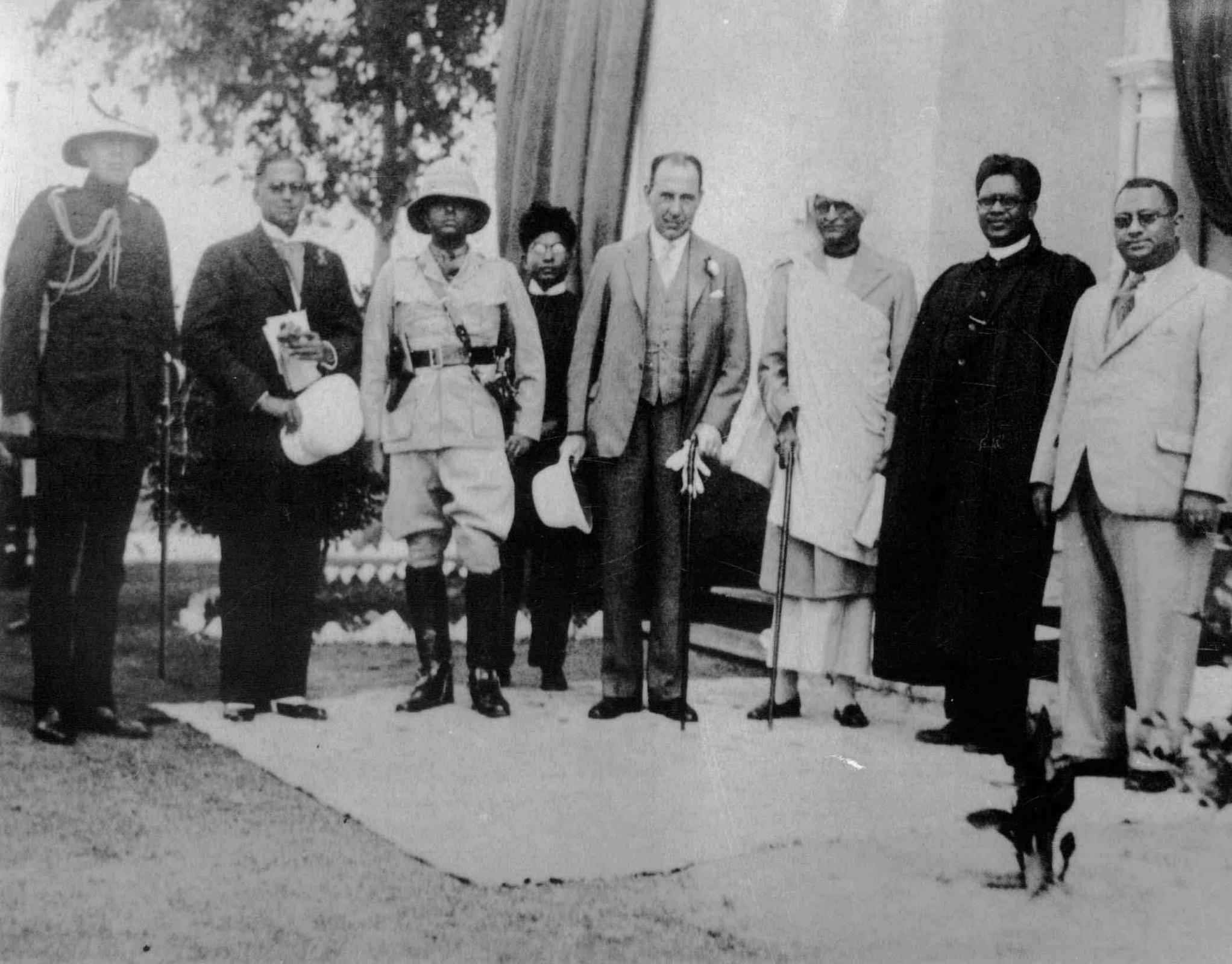
Vraja-pattan, which is nearby, lives Śrīla Siddhānta Saraswatī. He is a *brahmachārī* from childhood. Every day he chants the holy name 300,000 times, and his knowledge of the scriptures is limitless. Please take some *prasādam*, and then let's go visit him. Please stay here for a while. Your health will get better here and you will have the opportunity to hear about many spiritual topics." A little later, when I went to take *prasādam*, I had the *darśana* of the lotus feet of Śrī Mātā Ṭhākuraṅī (Śrīla Prabhupāda's mother). She sat next to me and personally served me *prasādam*, and then she

sent me to Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vraja-pattan with Padmanābha Brahmachārī.

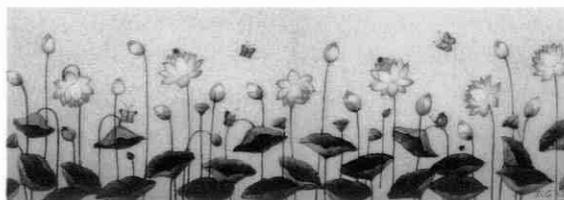
Arriving at Vraja-pattan, I had my first *darśana* of my most worshipping lord, the fulfillment of all my desires. At that time he was writing an article on "Conclusions (*siddhānta*) about the difference between Brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas". Seeing his soothing and pleasing beautiful face, and hearing from him such instructions as I had never heard before, I not only forgot all the troubles of my journey, but I felt as if I had arrived in a new world. So I stayed in Śrī Yogapiṭh. Every day I would do a little bit of service, and around 3 o'clock in the afternoon I would go to Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vraja-pattan and hear him read from his articles and his commentaries on *Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*. Once I went home for a few days, but after I came back I started staying in Vraja-pattan with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Prabhupāda would stay behind closed doors in his *bhajana-kuṭīra* and chant for long hours. Once, the day before Janmāṣṭamī, no milk could be found for offering. Suddenly Śrīla Prabhupāda thought, "If I could get some milk today, then I would offer it to Śrīman Mahāprabhu." As soon as he had this thought he chastised himself in his mind and thought, "Am I thinking this because I am afraid of the prospect of fasting without water tomorrow? Then this idea is very wrong." This was the time of the monsoon. All the land around Mahāprabhu's house was flooded. The only way to get around was by boat. Under these circumstances, that afternoon a milkman came to Yogapiṭha, wading in water up to his neck, with an abundance of milk, *kṣīra*, curd, butter, cream, etc. The milkman said that the rich landholder Harināth Chakravartī had sent these things from his estate to offer to Mahāprabhu. The *pujāri* at Yogapiṭha offered these items to Mahāprabhu and then brought them to Vraja-pattan, where Śrīla Prabhupāda was. It was Śrīla Prabhupāda's specific instruction that any sumptuous foodstuffs offered to Mahāprabhu should not be brought to him. But that day, when the *pujāri* brought those items to him, despite having been forbidden to do so, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and said, "How much trouble I have given You. Why did such wrong ideas come to my mind, that You had to send these things for me by inspiring someone else in his heart!"

Excerpt translated from the Bengali memoirs of Śrīpād Paramānanda Vidyāratna, as quoted in *Saraswatī Jayaśrī*, ed. by Śrī Sundarānanda



Vidyāvinod. Calcutta: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Bāghbāzār, 1934.



Śrīla Gurudeva [Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja] went from Calcutta to visit Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma with a few of his young friends, including Śrī Nārāyaṇa Chandra Mukhopadhyāya (later Śrīmad Bodhāyana Mahārāja). They had heard about the very beautiful place called Śrī Māyāpura, where Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu had appeared and where now very beautiful Deities were being worshiped at the Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh. Even though some people who were against the Gauṛīya Maṭh had tried to confuse him about Śrī Māyāpura, due to Mahāprabhu's mercy on him Śrīla Gurudeva overcame these

obstacles and went there in 1925. He could not reach Śrī Māyāpur before afternoon, and the altar was closed. Śrīla Gurudeva was very disappointed. When a *brahmachārī* servitor saw these good-looking, educated, dignified young gentlemen from Calcutta he welcomed them with great warmth, very respectfully invited them to accept *mahāprasāda*, and requested them to wait until the altar reopened. He also told them that a distinguished doctor—Dr. S.N. Ghosh—had been initiated that day, along with his wife, and had sponsored the feast that day. (In later years Dr. S.N. Ghosh (Sujanānanda Dāsādhikārī) became one of the chief supporters of the Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh founded by Śrīla Gurudeva.) After honoring *mahāprasāda*, Śrīla Gurudeva was waiting for the altar to reopen. Then the *brahmachārī* servitor came again and told them, “You do not have anything to do now. Our Gurudeva is here; if you see him, you will be benefitted by hearing *hari-kathā* from him, and we will also get the opportunity to hear *hari-kathā* again.”

Śrīla Gurudeva and his friends heartily accepted this proposal and went to Śrīla Prabhupāda's *bhajana-kuṭīra*.

Seeing Śrīla Prabhupāda's sweet, long, golden, transcendental, effulgent divine form, they were in awe and considered themselves very fortunate to be in his presence. They had been to many places of pilgrimage, but nowhere had they seen such a self-effulgent great saint. They immediately realized that he was an intimate associate of Mahāprabhu; he was a great personality from the spiritual world. Śrīla Gurudeva realized that Śrīla Prabhupāda must be the spiritual master whom Providence had ordained for him, by surrendering to whom his goal would be fulfilled. They offered their obeisances to Śrīla Prabhupāda with great respect and sat down.

Śrīla Prabhupāda asked them their names and so forth, and then asked what their purpose was in coming there. Śrīla Gurudeva said he had heard the name of Śrī Māyāpur, and had heard that beautiful Deities were

Srila Prabhupada wrote,

“One who is surrendered

never commits any offense.

The Supreme Lord does not see any fault

in one who is surrendered to Him.

The surrendered soul is always forgiven

because he is always dedicating himself

to the service of the Lord,

without any ulterior motive.

On the other hand,

one who is not surrendered

and who has ulterior motives

is in danger of committing offenses

at every step.”

being worshiped there. So he came to visit the Deities. Śrīla Prabhupāda asked them if they had not seen Deities anywhere else. Śrīla Gurudeva answered that they had been to many temples all over India and had seen many Deities. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda asked whether this had done them any good. Now Śrīla Gurudeva was in anxiety. He did not know what to say; one was supposed to be truthful to a saint. Śrīla Gurudeva said he did not know if it had done him any good; he only visited the Deities because he was supposed to. Śrīla Prabhupāda told them in an encouraging tone, “Of course one is supposed to see the Deities, but before we see Them, we have to learn how to see Them. One cannot see Their Lordships with the eyes of desire, but only with the eyes of love.”

Śrīla Gurudeva and his friends listened to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *hari-kathā* for a long time and felt an inexpressible bliss in their hearts. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s transcendental form and his powerful words made a deep impression on them. They wanted to know if they could see him again in Calcutta. They were told that in Calcutta a *maṭh* had been founded at āl Ultodanga Junction Road, and they could see Śrīla Prabhupāda there. Śrīla Gurudeva and his friends considered themselves very fortunate, and went back to Calcutta with joyful hearts.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to install the Deities in the Maṭh at Sarvbhog Kamroop, Assam, he sent Śrīla Gurudeva and his senior Godbrother Tridaṇḍiswāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja, along with Śrī Jānakīvallabha Brahmachārī and other devotees, to do the necessary arrangements beforehand. At that time Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Āśrama Mahārāja was in charge of that Maṭh. Among the devotees in Assam, Śrīla Nīmānanda Dāsādhikārī Prabhu was a learned and charismatic householder, very expert in preaching. Everyone expected him to make all arrangements for the *bhoga* and paraphernalia needed for the Deity installation. They also expected that he would make arrangements for the living quarters for Śrīla Prabhupāda and his entourage. When Śrīla Gurudeva arrived there a few days before the festival, he was surprised to see that no such arrangements had been made. Śrīla Gurudeva had such a transcendental personality, and was so determined to make all effort to do what had to be done, that nothing could discourage him. Immediately he engaged all his energies in finding living quarters for Śrīla Prabhupāda and his associates, and he accom-

plished his goal with a lot of hard work. Śrīla Nīmānanda Prabhu also came with his family to participate in the festival and found a place to stay in the Chakchakā Bazaar.

On Sunday, the 15th of March, 1936, Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived at the Sarvbhog railroad station with his associates, and they were welcomed with great festivity. Among those who came with Śrīla Prabhupāda were Śrīmad Kuñjavihārī Vidyābhūṣana Prabhu, Śrīmad Paramānanda Vidyāratna Prabhu, Śrīmad Vasudeva Prabhu, Śrīmad Kīrtanānanda Brahmachārī, Śrīmad Sajjana Mahārāja, and Śrīmad Krishna-Keśava Brahmachārī. In the forefront of the big *sankīrtana* procession, which accompanied Śrīla Prabhupāda and his entourage all the way from the railroad station to Sarvbhog Gauṛīya Maṭh, were a decorated elephant and a band.

Śrīla Gurudeva had been very anxious about not being able to collect a lot of foodstuffs for the guests. But by the sincere desire of his heart and by the inconceivable greatness of Śrīla Prabhupāda, before the latter’s arrival there was a mountain of rice, dahl, vegetables, and other foodstuffs. When the religious people of Assam heard that a great saint was going to come from Navadwīpa, people started coming from six, eight, twenty, thirty, or forty miles away and even further, from all directions, carrying foodstuffs on both shoulders, and they kept coming in a continuous flow. The whole Maṭh was filled with foodstuffs donated by them. Śrīla Prabhupāda was amazed, seeing their tendency to serve the *sādhus* and their simplicity. During Śrīla Prabhupāda’s visit to Sarvbhog Maṭh, every day there was a big festival and thousands of people were fed a sumptuous feast.

The next day, on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s request, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja dressed the Deities and decorated Śrī-Śrī-Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndhārvikā-Giridhārī with flowers, garlands, etc., inside the temple. Their Lordships were supposed to manifest in Their Deity forms after They were installed by Śrīla Prabhupāda. At the auspicious moment, which was at ten o’clock in the morning, Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived at the temple and saw that Their Lordships had been beautifully decorated. He then offered his obeisances to Them and said, “The Deities are already manifest.” Hearing this, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja became very remorseful, thinking that he had done what was supposed to be done by his *gurudeva* and so he must have committed a great offense. Then the Deities were installed with great *vaiṣṇava*



festivities and the appropriate rituals such as *sankirtana*, fire sacrifice, etc. At this *mahotsava* (Vaiṣṇava festival), innumerable people were served with *mahāprasāda*.

At the end of the festival Śrīla Bhakti Vijnāna Āśrama Mahārāja repeatedly requested Śrīla Gurudeva to inform Śrīla Prabhupāda that Nīmānanda Prabhu had not done what he was supposed to do. Thinking Śrīla Prabhupāda would not be pleased to hear this, Śrīla Gurudeva at first refused to inform him. But when he was asked repeatedly, then to keep the honor of his senior Godbrother, Śrīla Gurudeva considered submitting this to Śrīla Prabhupāda. One day, when Śrīla Prabhupāda was pacing up and down the front porch and Śrīla Gurudeva was following him and fanning him, talking to him about a few other things, he brought up the subject of Nīmānanda Prabhu. Śrīla Prabhupāda immediately became angry and chastised Śrīla Gurudeva. Śrīla Gurudeva became very repentant, realizing this was not pleasing to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Immediately Śrīla Prabhupāda changed his mood and started praising Śrīla Gurudeva with great affection. But Śrīla Gurudeva was not happy to hear this, thinking that Śrīla Prabhupāda was afraid that Śrīla Gurudeva would not be able to tolerate his chastisement. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda gave Śrīla Gurudeva many valuable instructions and indirectly let him know that he was very dear to him. The first thing Śrīla Prabhupāda said was, "Why do you want so much and why do you suffer so much? It is not proper to expect that someone else should do this much service. Your service to your *gurudeva* is all yours. If someone else performs some of this service, then you should be grateful to him. Rādhārāṇī is the only housewife in the household of Krishna. Śrīmatī Rādhikā knows that all service to Krishna is to be done by Her. If someone else helps Her in some way, then She is grateful to her."

When Śrīla Gurudeva wanted to explain the glories of *śaraṅāgati* (exclusive surrender) to his disciples, he frequently referred

to one incident at the Sarvbhog Maṭh. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja was very anxious, thinking he had committed a great offense by doing what was supposed to be done by Śrīla Prabhupāda. So he requested Śrīla Gurudeva to submit to Śrīla Prabhupāda his prayer for forgiveness for the offense that he had committed unknowingly and to let him know about the condition of his disturbed heart. Being so requested by Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva submitted this to Śrīla Prabhupāda in a letter. In response, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote, "One who is surrendered never commits any offense. The Supreme Lord does not see any fault in one who is surrendered to Him. The surrendered soul is always forgiven because he is always dedicating himself to the service of the Lord, without any ulterior motive. On the other hand, one who is not a surrendered soul and who has ulterior motives is in danger of committing offenses at every step."



DEITIES AT SRIVASA ANGAN, SRIDHAM MAYAPUR

Excerpts translated from the Bengali:

Śrīla Bhakti Vallabha Tīrtha Mahārāja, *Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Goswāmī Mahārāja Viṣṇupādera Pūta Charitāmṛta* (The Holy Biography of Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja), Calcutta: Śrī Chaitanya Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1986.



In February 1936, on the occasion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's 62nd appearance day, the great festival of his most auspicious *vyāsa-pūjā*

(worship of Śrī Guru on his appearance day) was held at Śrīvāsa Aṅgana (the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, an intimate associate of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu) at Śrī Māyāpura Dhām, and lasted for five days. No one thought at that time that this would be the last *vyāsa-pūjā* of his manifested pastime in this world. Śrīvāsa Aṅgana was reverberating with the loud sound of the *hari-saṅkīrtana* of thousands of devotees who came from all directions. The courtyard was decorated very beautifully with gates, pillars, and valances of many colorful flowers and leaves. The joyous mood of that great festival reminded devotees of the festival at Śrī Kheturī Dhāma. When Śrīla Prabhupāda, surrounded by devotees, arrived from Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, he first entered the temple and worshiped the Deities of Śrī Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Śrī Gaurasundara with

flowers, garlands, sandalwood, etc. He then came out of the temple and offered his prostrate obeisances. Then he went to the *kīrtana* hall and sat on his *āsana*, which was decorated with flowers and garlands. The devotees kept loudly chanting "Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda". Then Śrīpāda Narahari Brahmachārī, Seva-vigraha Prabhu, performed *guru-pūjā* with perfume, flower, incense, lamp, cloth, and fans. Śrīpāda Kuṅjavihārī Vidyābhūṣana Prabhu performed the flower offering (*puṣpāñjali*). Śrīpāda Rādhā-Govinda Kavya-Purāṇa Tīrtha Bhaktiśāstrī sang the invocation song. Then Tridaṇḍī Swāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Kevala Auṛulomī Mahārāja read about Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā from *Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata*. After this all the assembled devotees glorified Śrīla Prabhupāda by reading their offerings.

Rice, new clothes, etc. were distrib-



uted to hundreds of poor people. From eleven o'clock in the morning until early evening thousands of people who came from outside the *maṭh* were fed a sumptuous feast. The new magistrate of Nadiyā, Śrī Nīlakaṇṭha Mahādeva Āyār, came with his wife to pay his respects to Śrīla Prabhupāda. In the afternoon, amid loud chanting of "All Glories!", Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh Lecture Hall and sat on his decorated chair. On top was a decorated canopy and in front the verse *nārāyaṇaṁ namaskṛtya* was written. There was a decorated doorway in front of the hall.

After the offerings of everyone (those who were present, and those who were absent due to their service at distant *maṭhs*) had been read, Śrīla Prabhupāda responded to those offerings with the following words:

"Today in this great assembly where

many learned devotees are gathered, many devotees said many things. The audience here has spent a lot of time listening to these offerings. I do not have too many things to say. But what I wanted to say was expressed here today by the words of these learned devotees.

"Today I have learned about many things. Today the worshippable devotees here, by singing my glories, have actually taught me how to sing the glories of the Lord and the devotees. If a non-devotee is glorified then this becomes a cause of trouble for the both the glorifier and the glorified. My worshippable Gurus are trying to purify my heart by teaching me humility through their own example. I take it that they are saying to me, 'Please always remain engaged in the service of the Lord and His devotees, and please give the same respect to others that we are giving to you.'

"I have spent many years in this world

now. I have realized that I have no other shelter than at the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas.

"One who serves the Supreme Lord always considers himself the most fallen. Only when one thinks of himself as the most inferior can he become the best Vaiṣṇava; only then can he talk about the highest kind of devotion. *Sarvottama āpanāke hīna kari māne*'—The one who is superior to all others considers himself more inferior than anyone else.'

"We shall roll in the dust of the feet of the devotees. I have not made any disciples, nor will I make any. Otherwise I will be influenced by non-devotees, and I will go on a different path, in a different direction. You are all my gurus; please have mercy on me, considering me as your disciple."

After Śrīla Prabhupāda's speech, Tridaṇḍi Swāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja expressed his thanks to everyone and



begged for Śrīla Prabhupāda's causeless mercy on behalf of everyone. Then Śrīpāda Haripāda Vidyāratna (later Bhakti Sādhaka Niṣkiñchana Mahārāja) sang the song *prabhu hetuyā padye e minati mora*.

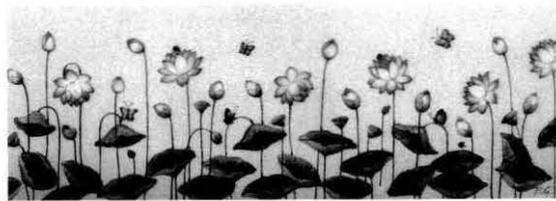
In 1920 Śrīla Prabhupāda was travelling in the village of Purulia, in Jessore District in East Bengal (now Bangladesh). There was a two-day festival of *hari-kathā* and *sañkīrtana*. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda proceeded to the Śolpur railroad station along with the other devotees. On the way was a river. After crossing the river Śrīla Prabhupāda and the devotees were going through a village. Śrīla Prabhupāda was in the front of the group. By the road was a one-room cottage belonging to an old woman. When the old woman saw Śrīla Prabhupāda, she became very anxious to give him something. By the time she had collected something to give and come out with it, Śrīla Prabhupāda had gone quite a distance. So she went behind the group anyway and tried to give the devotees her offering of one penny and four limes. The devotees did not want to take that. Then the old woman started begging them to take it.

The Supreme Lord is very affectionate to His devotees; in the same way, His pure devotee is also very affectionate to the devotees. Omniscient Śrīla Prabhupāda realized the situation, and looking behind him, noticed the sincerity of the old woman. Even though by

then he had gone quite a distance, he came all the way back to the old woman and with great respect and appreciation accepted her gift in his own hands. The old woman became very joyous. In a voice choked with emotion she cried "O merciful Lord" and fell at Śrīla Prabhupāda's feet. The devotees were amazed to see Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy on the old woman. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda resumed his journey and said, "Even a little gift from His devotees is considered a lot by the Supreme Lord. Mahāprabhu would have been displeased if we did not take this old lady's gift for Him."

Excerpt translated from the Bengali:

Bhaktiśāstrī, Śrī Hari-kṛpā Dāsa Brahmachārī, *Parama Gurudeva Prabhupāda Śrī-Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī*, Bombay: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, 1980.

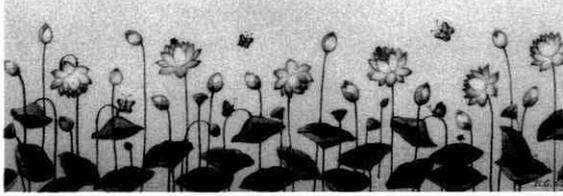


When Śrīla Prabhupāda was travelling in Orissa, one day, as he was coming back from the temple of Śākṣī Gopāla, some people on the road begged for alms from the household-

ers who were accompanying Śrīla Prabhupāda. But none of the householders were ready to give alms. Seeing this, Śrīla Prabhupāda stopped, sat down, and started talking about the duties of householders. In the course of his talk, he said, "If the householders think, 'I should not give any of my money that I consider reserved for Krishna to the poor and the destitute,' then they are actually showing symptoms of miserliness, cruelty, and lack of compassion for others. They should not consider giving charity to the very poor as fruitive activities. This kind of mentality will make their hearts very hard, and they will suffer from avarice. As a result of this, they will not want to spend their money even in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, which is our ultimate goal in life. This will invite offense regarding service. To save us from this kind of deceitful and sinful concept, Śrī Gaurasundara used to give money and so forth to poor people during His pastime as a householder. The money we have, we have earned only by the grace of the Lord. If we give some of this to begging poor people then that is not misuse of money, that is good use of money. To serve *prasādam* (food offered to the Lord) to others is the necessary duty of every Vaiṣṇava householder. Even if those others have become poor by their karma or destiny, they are still part of the Lord's family. Therefore it is definitely the duty of well-off householders to help them."

Excerpts translated from the Bengali:

Tridaṇḍi Swāmī Śrīla Bhakti Kusuma Śramaṇa Mahārāja, *Prabhupāda Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura*, Māyāpur, Nadiyā: Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, 1991.



In the year 1912, I heard that the religious conference called Kāśim Bāzār Sammilani would take place in Kāśim Bāzār, Calcutta from March 20th to March 25th. Curious to hear those discussions, I went to that conference. There I saw Śrīla Prabhupāda for the second time. Being earnestly requested by the Mahārāja of Kāśim Bāzār, Śrī Maṇīndra Chandra Nandī, Śrīla Prabhupāda came there to deliver some Hari-kathā. At that time I had not taken shelter at Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet. I went there only as an ordinary member

of the audience. When I arrived there I saw that some people such as the late Pulin Mallik, also known as Nityānanda Dās, a businessman called K.B. Sen, of Tārā Chānd Datta Street, Calcutta, and Śrī Gopendu Bandhopadhyaṅ of Kālnā—were all requesting Śrīla Prabhupāda to say something about the *mātṛ-mandir* (Mother's temple, or the temple of Goddess Durgā) of Kuliyā. In response Śrīla Prabhupāda told them, "I have come to deliver *hari-kathā*, so let me deliver some *hari-kathā*." At that time I used to stay close to Śrīla Prabhupāda most of the time to listen to his *hari-kathā*. I noticed that Śrīla Prabhupāda would first offer his *daṇḍavata* to everyone and then chant on his *tulasī* beads all day. I never saw him sleeping or resting. Another surprising thing I saw was that the Mahārāja of Kāśim Bāzār used to send an abundance of sumptuous foodstuffs for Śrīla Prabhupāda. But Śrīla Prabhupāda never accepted any of it. Only one day, Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted one *tulasī* leaf. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to distribute all that foodstuff among the guests. From March 21st to March 24th, the four days that he was there, I saw him fasting like this. One day Śrīla Prabhupāda

instructed me, "Eating, sleeping, and acts of personal hygiene should take place far from the eyes of the public." Even today we see that Śrīla Prabhupāda has this nature. In response to my question, Śrīla Prabhupāda made me understand what is wrong with the modern concocted lyric: *bhaja nitāi gaura rādhe śyāma / jaṇa hare kṛṣṇa hare rāma*". By quoting from the scriptures, he explained how it was against bona fide conclusion (*siddhānta*) and how it was faulty with *rasābhāsa* having contradictory devotional sentiments.

One day he was invited to give a lecture, but he was only given five minutes. He started giving his lecture in a very concise way by quoting the *brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva* verse from *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, but within a few minutes they asked him to sit down. In that short time, I realized the special characteristic of his talk: its originality and deep substance. I understood that this great personality had made a few objective true statements which were not pleasant to a group of people. Then I thought in my mind, "Perhaps this is why this great person is not accepting the food from the Mahārāja." Later



“It is not that one can serve God just because one has money. But if one has great determination to preach Hari-katha and to serve the Lord, and if one’s life is sincerely dedicated to service, then everything will be accomplished. You all please don’t worry about money. A math cannot be preserved by money...” In our practical experience also, this is what we have always seen. So many big things have happened here, and we never even had ten rupees in our possession. But just by the order of Srila Prabhupada, whose intentions always materialized, his blessings and inspiration made hundreds of impossible things possible.

when I asked him, he said, “If I cannot benefit someone, if I cannot deliver a materialistic person from the dirt of materialism, then if I accept his association by sharing his food, etc., my own mind will become dirty. Therefore everyone on the spiritual path should have the six kinds of association [as explained by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī in his *Upadeśāmṛta*] only with a devotee.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda was asked to stay in the private quarters of the Mahārāja. The Mahārāja employed one gentleman full-time to serve and attend Śrīla Prabhupāda. One day he told Śrīla Prabhupāda in front of me, “You are a real *vaiṣṇava*. The others who came took Mahārāja’s hospitality, but they did not benefit him in any way. You came to give Mahārāja the real benefit. But our great misfortune is that his associates did not let him understand your objectivity and concept of true Vaiṣṇavism.”

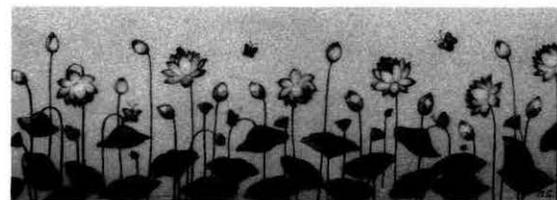
In the summer of 1917, there was a *vaiṣṇava* conference in the house of Śrī Vaṇamālī Poddār at Daulatpur. There I heard Śrīla Prabhupāda delivering *hari-kathā* night and day. Early in the morning he would start his *hari-kathā*, and sometimes it would go on until afternoon without interruption. Again in the evening he would give *hari-kathā*, which would go on until late at night. At this time, I heard Śrīla Prabhupāda interpreting the *bhakti yogena manasī samyak praṇihite* ‘male’ verse (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 1.7.4) in many ways. I remember he also interpreted the verse *ātma-sevānande yadi kṛṣṇa-sevā bādhe se ānander prati bhakter hay mahā krodhe* (“If a devotee sees that his joy in serving has become an obstacle to the service of Kṛṣṇa, then he becomes very angry at that joy.”) from *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. In this regard, he explained how Kṛṣṇa’s charioteer Dārūka detested his own ecstasy of love when, as he was fanning Kṛṣṇa, the fan fell from his hand due to this ecstasy.

This was the time when Rāmgopāl Bābu gave up smoking forever. Before coming to Śrīla Prabhupāda, he used to smoke so frequently that life would be unbearable to him unless he could smoke every few hours. One day Śrīla Prabhupāda told him, “The *vaiṣṇavas* will bring you the best tobacco available anywhere. You take all that, go at least one hundred yards from here into a field and offer it all to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa has a monopoly over all intoxicating substances, and they can only be enjoyed by Him. But if the living entity tries to enjoy what is enjoyable by Kṛṣṇa, he becomes enslaved by intoxication. What is meant for Kṛṣṇa’s sense gratification can actually dull the senses of the living entity, who eventually

becomes bereft of human virtues.”

I also heard something completely new from Śrīla Prabhupāda: The living entity should see himself as an object of Kṛṣṇa’s vision, and see the world as an object of Kṛṣṇa’s enjoyment. It is disastrous for the living entity to think that he is the seer, or that he is the enjoyer, or that he is the controller, of this world. Right now the world is going completely in the opposite direction from the consideration that “I am not the seer, but I am to be seen; I am not the enjoyer, but I am to be enjoyed.”

Excerpt translated from the Bengali memoir of Śrīpād Ananta Vāsudeva, as quoted in Saraswatī Jayasrī, ed. by Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinod. Calcutta: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Bāghbāzār, 1934.



The famous business tycoon, Śākṣi-Gopāl Baṛāl, used to come to the Gauṛīya Maṭh sometimes and listen to Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *hari-kathā*. One day Śrīla Prabhupāda was sitting at the Gauṛīya Printing Works when Baṛāl Mahāśay arrived there. Baṛāl Mahāśay started glorifying the interpretations of a professional *Bhāgavata* speaker. Śrīla Prabhupāda told Baṛāl Mahāśay, “Pure devotion has been described in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. If one hears interpretations of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from a materialistic person, then he may enjoy some taste of literature and poetry, but this cannot bring him the supreme benefit. After hearing *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, one cannot have greed or attraction for material enjoyment. Only those who have become free from worldly thought can hear *kṛṣṇa-līlā*.” It seemed to us that this concept was completely new to Baṛāl Mahāśay. He said, “Can somebody not benefit people, if by hearing his interpretations they are enchanted and openly shed tears?” Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “After shedding tears, why do they become attached to material enjoyment again?” This did not please Baṛāl Mahāśay very much. But we did not see Śrīla Prabhupāda deviate from speaking the truth as it is to please an influential business tycoon. We have seen thousands of examples in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s life that if someone had the highest position in society because of their wealth,



scholarship, or some power or position, Śrīla Prabhupāda never tried to please them in any way by minimizing the honest truth. It is the special quality of his character that he would never sacrifice the honest truth to gratify the senses of the people of this world, even if that meant that some influential person would become inimical to Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching and his mission and start persecuting him or his mission in some way.

When the preaching mission of this *maṭh* started, there was no material wealth to support this. All his life, Śrīla Prabhupāda's main weapon against materialism has been sincere *hari-kīrtana* that was detached from all worldly matters. He always says, "It is not that one can serve God just because one has money. But if one has great determination to preach *hari-kathā* and to serve the Lord, and if one's life is sincerely dedicated to service, then everything will be accomplished. You all please don't worry about money. A *maṭh* cannot be preserved by money. On the other hand, the characteristic of money is that if one is not serving the Lord, it makes him intoxicated with material enjoyment." In our practical experience also, this is what we have always seen. So many big things have happened here, and we never even had ten rupees in our possession. But just by the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda, whose intentions always material-

ized, his blessings and inspiration made hundreds of impossible things possible.

Another characteristic we see in him is that if he finds any fault with those who serve him all the time in many ways then he immediately tries to correct it by protesting strongly about it. Śrīla Prabhupāda never hesitates to strongly chastise his followers—which was always beneficial for them—thinking they might become displeased or sad. Whenever one's words, actions, conduct, or behavior are not proper according to the true injunctions of pure devotional conclusions, we have always seen Śrīla Prabhupāda condemn it in forceful language. The message of Śrīla Prabhupāda is this: "You should all get together and satisfy Krishna's senses. A person or a society will not be benefitted by personal or collective sense gratification."

Excerpt translated from the Bengali memoir of Śrīpād Kuñja-vihārī Vidyābhūṣana, as quoted in *Saraswatī Jayaśrī*, ed. by Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinod. Calcutta: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Bāghbāzār, 1934.



Here is an excerpt from a letter from Śrīla Prabhupāda I Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīp Tīrtha Mahārāja received in 1931:

"The Supreme Lord is existing everywhere. If we are engaged in serving one part of Him, then our concept of *kṛṣṇa-sevā* will be wiped out and it will become the worship of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Worshipping Krishna is different from worshipping Garbhodakaśāyī or Nārāyaṇa. If I suggest that you should serve a part of Krishna, then all your endeavor will not go towards Krishna; you will be rendering partial service, not full service. If one is not versatile in his service, then one will become eccentric, and he will become averse to the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's service, which is all-inclusive. If one has partial vision, then he cannot pay attention to all kinds of service. But Krishna, the Supreme Lord, is present everywhere; the wealth of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī [all-inclusive *sevā*] can be attained only by the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī."

I hope this invaluable instruction from Śrīla Prabhupāda will end the wrong concept that many of us have: "It is not I but so-and-so who is appointed for such-and-such service; why is the money or ingredient meant for such-and-such service being used for some other service?" This kind of eccentric con-

"It is so difficult to bring one person from the clutches of the illusory energy into the realm of devotion. One person came to us, and somehow we have sent him back to the material world. That one person means more to me than all these buildings and everything else here." Seeing Srila Prabhupada's mood, his disciples became very sad and remorseful. They talked among themselves: "We have caused some pain to Srila Prabhupada and we have to rectify it. We have to look for him and bring him back here."

sciousness will be completely removed when we have the all-inclusive mood of service by following the one who is very close to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī [Śrī Gurudeva].

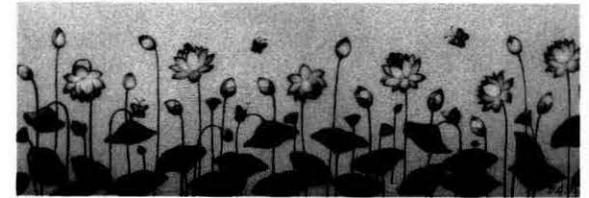
Excerpt translated from the Bengali memoir of Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīp Tīrtha Mahārāj, as quoted in *Saraswatī Jayasrī*, ed. by Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinod. Calcutta: Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh, Bāghbāzār, 1934.

Once Śrīla Prabhupāda sent his disciples to preach in a distant part of India. As the preaching was going on successfully, he instructed them to open a *maṭh* there. So his disciples were working night and day to open the *maṭh* on an auspicious day, as instructed by Śrīla Prabhupāda. Right before the opening of the *maṭh* and the installation of the deities, Śrīla Prabhupāda was to arrive there with his entourage, so a lot of service needed to be done. In the meantime, an unfortunate incident took place there. One *brahmachārī* devotee was seen acting improperly with a woman who was staying near the property. So his senior Godbrothers chastised him heavily. The next morning, that *brahmachārī* could not be found anywhere. In the middle of the night he had left without telling anyone and taken all his belongings. Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples felt sad and repentant; they thought perhaps they had been too harsh with him. They looked everywhere for him, but he still could not be found. Even though the devotees were not happy about this, they did not have too much time to look for him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived before the opening of the temple, and he was extremely happy to see the new building and all the arrangements. When he saw so many people were interested in the mission, he praised the preaching effort of his disciples. All the disciples were very happy to see that they had been able to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. Suddenly Śrīla Prabhupāda asked, "Where is —? I don't see him anywhere." Then the devotees told him what had happened. Śrīla Prabhupāda became very sad. He said, "It is so difficult to bring one person from the clutches of the illusory energy into the realm of devotion. One person came to us, and somehow we have sent him back to the material world. That one person means more to me than all these buildings and everything else here." Seeing Śrīla Prabhupāda's mood, his disciples became very sad and remorseful. They talked among themselves: "We have caused some pain to Śrīla Prabhupāda, and we have to rectify it. We

have to look for him and bring him back here." They thought about it a lot, but did not know how they could search him out, as they had already tried and failed. But Śrīpād Hayagrīva Prabhu (later Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja) did not want to give up. He always was fiercely determined to carry out Śrīla Prabhupāda's wishes, and he displayed extraordinary intelligence and resourcefulness in doing so. Suddenly he said, "I know where to find him. One day a devotee's watch broke, and he immediately repaired it. So he knows how to repair watches. He must be working for a watch repair shop." So they went to look for him in all the watch repair shops in the city. After they had gone to many shops, one shopkeeper, on being given the description of — said he was in the back room. So they went to the back room and found him there. Seeing them, he started crying: "Krishna has answered my prayer. I have been so miserable since I left the *maṭh*. Yet I was too embarrassed to come back. So I was praying to Krishna night and day that somehow He would take me back there, even though I didn't know how." So the devotees said, "Yes, you will have to come back, because Śrīla Prabhupāda is missing you greatly. Please forgive us for chastising you." Then — said, "No, I am the one who should ask for forgiveness." Then they were all crying, and the shopkeeper was very moved by the scene. Śrīla Prabhupāda was very happy to see his lost disciple, and the disciple was completely overwhelmed realizing the glory of his merciful Gurudeva. It is he who told this story to others for the rest of his life.

—Excerpt translated from the Bengali memoir of Śrīmad Bhakti Kumud Santa Mahārāj.



Throughout his manifested pastime, we noticed that anything that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to get done always got done. Whatever desire he expressed always was fulfilled, sometimes very miraculously. Let me tell you about just two incidents.

The new temple at Śrī Yogapīṭh in Māyāpura was going to be opened in a few days by the King of Tripurā. Since there was no electricity in Māyāpura at that time, we had ordered a generator to be shipped to Māyāpura

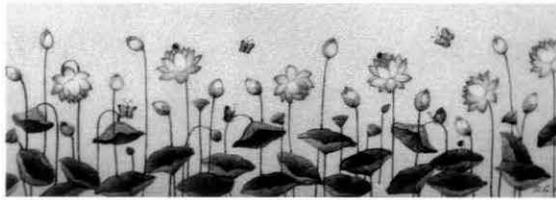
from Calcutta. We went to the Dhubuliā Railroad Station to get the generator. The generator had come on a railroad car from which it had to be brought down with a crane. But unfortunately there was no crane at that station at that time. So the railway clerk suggested that we send the generator back to Calcutta, so that it could come back to us in a railroad car with a door. We did not know if Śrīla Prabhupāda would approve of this plan. So I went back to Māyāpura on my bicycle to tell Śrīla Prabhupāda what had happened. As we had guessed, Śrīla Prabhupāda did not approve of the plan. He said there was no certainty that the generator would come back in time for us to use it at the opening. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda told me, "You go and try. You will find a way to get it out."

So I went back to the Dhubuliā Station and told my Godbrothers what Śrīla Prabhupāda had said. No one could figure out what to do now. Suddenly Revati-rāmaṇ Brahmachārī thought of somehow using some spare railroad ties that were lying around to get the generator down. So we got permission from the railway clerk to use those ties. We arranged them to form a ramp to the railroad car. Then we manhandled the generator down the ramp. Next we had to put it on our own bullock cart and take it to Māyāpura. But our bullock cart was rather old and worn-out, and it broke under the weight of the generator. Now we were really at a loss for what to do, and there was no one else there besides us. Suddenly a man appeared there on a brand-new bullock cart. He approached us and asked us if we could give him a job. We asked him if he would take our generator to Māyāpura on his cart, and he very happily agreed. When I went back to Māyāpura and told Śrīla Prabhupāda what had happened, he was very happy, and he told me to let him know when the generator arrived. It took the bullock cart a long time to come, but when it finally arrived Śrīla Prabhupāda was waiting for it. He gave the poor bullock cart driver a reward that was ten times more than what he had requested.

Everyone was very busy at the temple putting finishing touches on the arrangements for the upcoming opening. Besides all the devotees, all the local people who were available for work were employed there. We were working in the garden when Śrīla Prabhupāda came there. He pointed at a pond and asked if there was anyone who could clean it. Cleaning the pond would be very time-consuming, and there wasn't anyone available to do that. Then Śrīla Prabhupāda told us, "Perhaps it will be

done anyway," and left us. All of a sudden, a group of Muslim laborers arrived there from Murshidābād. They asked us if there was any job for them to do. All the poor people—Hindus and Muslims alike—liked to come and work for the Gauṛīya Maṭh, as they knew they would be treated well and paid generously. Śrīla Prabhupāda was always very generous to poor people. So the pond was cleaned in no time. Everything else Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted done for the opening of the temple somehow also got done.

—Translated from the Bengali memoir of Śrīmad Nayanānanda Bābāji Mahārāj (previously Śrīpād Satprasāṅgānanda Brahmachārī).



We see in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* that Śrī Krishna went to Sāndīpani Muni's āśrama to study the Vedas. One day, by the order of His guru, Lord Śrī Krishna went to the forest to get some wood. In the forest a rainstorm began, so Śrī Krishna could not return home but spent the night in a cave. When the Supreme Lord Himself took so much trouble to obey His *gurudeva's* order, then it is not surprising that other people also have to take some trouble to carry out their *gurudeva's* order. It is the duty of a disciple to serve his *Gurudeva* and obey his order. But the conduct of the *gurudeva* at the Gauṛīya Maṭh, Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, is rather unique. He does not order his disciples to do anything, even something very simple. If he becomes very thirsty, he will look at the waterpot, but he will not ask anyone to give him some water. Late in the day, after walking and speaking Hari-kathā, he may say he is a little bit tired, but he will not say "Please give me something to eat." He thinks saying that to his disciples would be ordering them around. He doesn't think he is superior to them, therefore he does not give them orders. He thinks that if he thinks himself superior, he will become proud. Everything about him is very unique. I am an old man now, but I have not seen anyone like him before.

Just by seeing him one will not know how much he knows. But I have seen many scholars, and I have not seen a scholar like him. I have in my possession fifteen interpretations of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, but his interpreta-

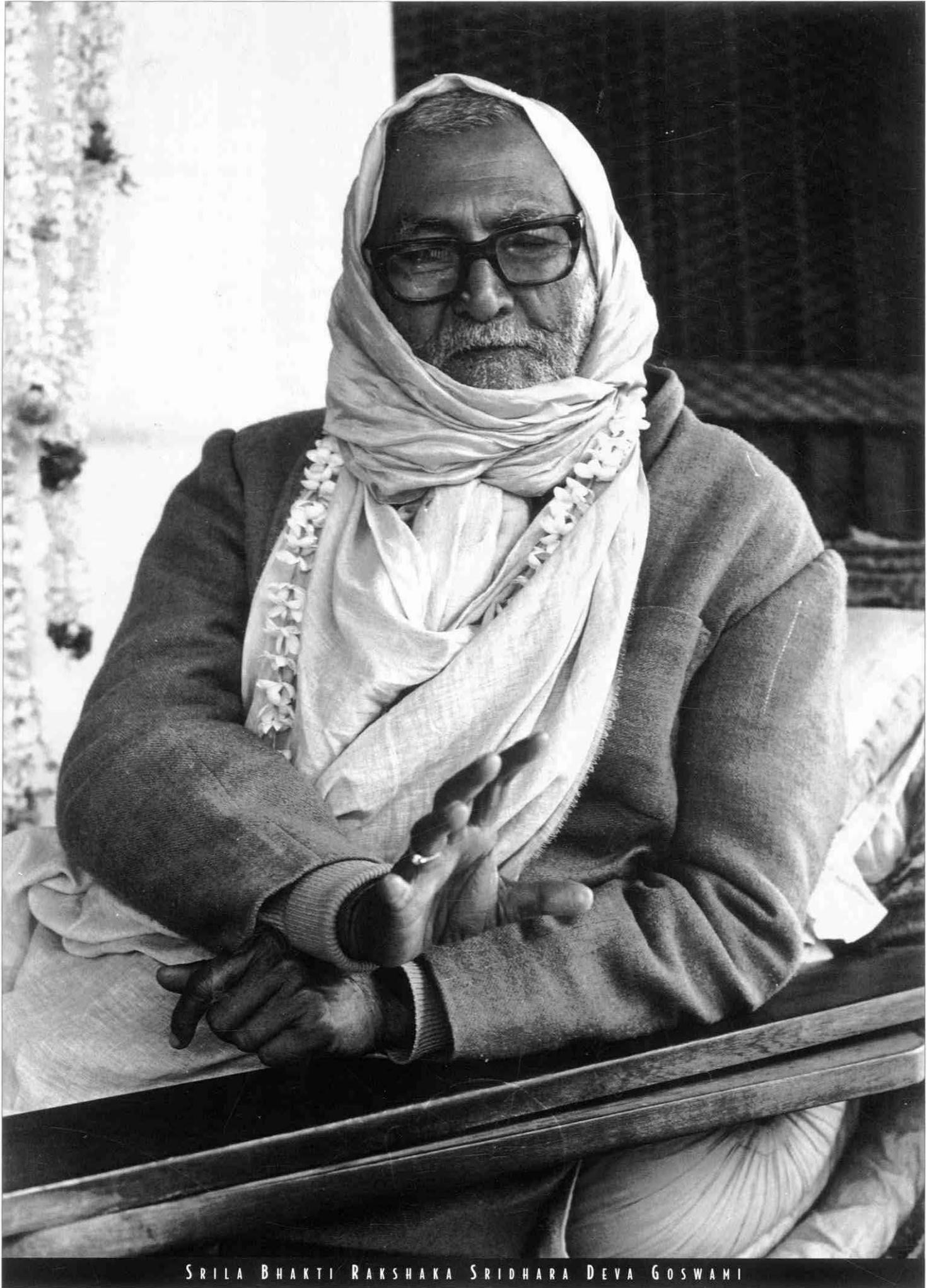
tion is always new. One day he was explaining a verse from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. He spent two hours explaining two lines. My heart, which is like a desert, absorbed the cooling nectar of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura's interpretation. If I had a great memory, I could have reproduced his interpretation. But who has interpreted *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as he has? If one wants to know if the rice has been well-cooked, one doesn't have to taste each and every grain of rice. By tasting one grain one knows whether the whole pot is cooked. So by hearing him once, one will know how unique his interpretations can be.

The reason for this is that he takes the holy name night and day. When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was present, I saw that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura used to sit nearby, but his lips were always moving. Who knows if they were moving at night as well? If it weren't so, then how could he give such interpretations, which can only be given on the strength of the holy name? The interpretation is not his own: the Supreme Lord makes him say these things.

When I used to subscribe to *Sajjan Toṣaṇī and Nivedan*, sometimes I used to come to Calcutta, and I saw his lips moving in this way, chanting the holy name. At that time I could not conceive that the strength of the holy name would make him so powerful, and Śrīman Mahāprabhu would make him perform such great tasks. Many people take the holy name, including myself, so why didn't I become so powerful? What to speak of having such power, I cannot even comprehend his interpretations. The effulgence of his interpretation cannot stay in a heart that is dirty and sinful. Pūjyapād Bhakti Vijay Mahāśay says that although he has been staying with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura for six years, he has not heard the same interpretation twice.

I am not a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, so it is not that it is my duty to glorify him. But due to my good fortune, I am a dog who has eaten the *prasāda* of the *vaiṣṇava prabhus* of Śrī Gauṛīya Maṭh.

—Translated from the Bengali memoir of Paṇḍit Śrī Vidubhūṣan Śāstrī, first printed in Gauṛīya, Vol. 3, No. 37

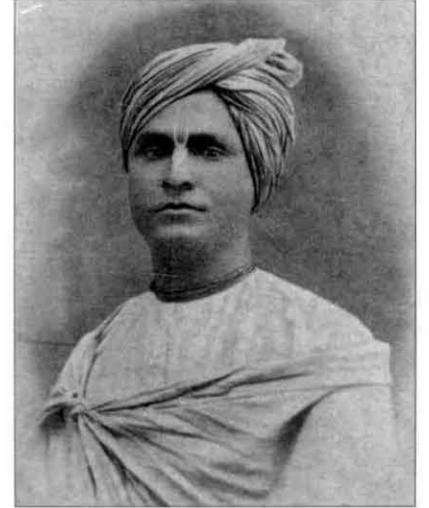


SRILA BHAKTI RAKSHAKA SRIDHARA DEVA GOSWAMI

SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION

TOTALITARIAN WAR AGAINST ILLUSION

BY SRILA BHAKTI RAKSHAK SRIDHAR DEV GOSWAMI



Just before Srila Prabhupada's ascent into the divine domain he called Sridhar Maharaja to his side to hear from his heart the song *Sri Rupa Manjari Pada*. Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Maharaja observed that Prabhupada gave Sridhar Maharaja entrance into the group of Sri Rupa. Srila Prabhupada once remarked, "I may be leaving this world, but at least there is one man who remains behind who can represent my *siddhanta*, and that man is Sridhar Maharaja. He is carrying the conception of Bhaktivinode Thakur."

THERE ARE SO MANY *brāhmaṇas* and *karma-kāṇḍīs* (mundane religionists) who will offensively consider that the Vaiṣṇavas are inferior because they have not received the sacred thread; those *brāhmaṇas*, etc., must be saved. Also, a person who is taking the Name may think that *brāhmaṇas* are superior and the chanter of the Name holds a lesser position.

His *abhimāna* or ego must also be helped to go higher: "Yes, I am said to be more than a *brāhmaṇa*, so I shall have to become very careful about my movements, my eating and other practices." This will help him to know that he must not go below the standard of an ordinary purificatory section. At the same time, society will also be warned to deal properly with these persons who are taking the Name of Hari, by conceiving that they are exclusively given to the chanting of the Name of Hari and are therefore superior to a *brāhmaṇa*. This system was introduced by our *Guru Mahārāja*, Srila Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswātī Goswāmī Prabhupāda. He conferred the sacred thread extensively.

That is to give the position of a *brāhmaṇa*, outwardly. In calculation from the inner side, a Vaiṣṇava is above a *brāhmaṇa*. But from the outer side also he created this particular society in which a Vaiṣṇava who is exclusively given to Kṛṣṇa consciousness must be recognized as not less, but more than a *brāhmaṇa*. He reformed the society to establish the position of the Vaiṣṇava, thus also encouraging him:

"You must not go down; you are taking the Name of Hari, exclusively given to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and you must maintain your position in the external way so that even the *brāhmaṇas* or the Vedic school will feel some reverence for the position you hold. You must be cautious in your dealings and practices so that people will think, 'Don't underestimate the devotees exclusively dedicated to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.'" In this way, he reformed society.

Although Mahāprabhu had not introduced this, our *Guru Mahārāja*, adjusted the society to bring Mahāprabhu's teachings to the world in a broad way.

Previously, Rūpa, Sanātana and their followers did not care to accept the sacred thread of the *brāhmaṇa*. Also, in the *sannyāsa* system of the *varṇāśrama*, Śāṅkara and others give up the sacred thread to the fire when they take *sannyāsa*, showing that they have no necessity of a sacred thread; they're above that, above *brāhmaṇa*. Yet their creed is 'we are one with *brahman*.' Here is the infinite difference. The higher a Vaiṣṇava is, the more he will say "I am the slave of Kṛṣṇa, and the slave of the slaves of the slaves of Kṛṣṇa." The Māyāvādīs identify themselves with the highest Entity, but they have fallen prey to complete misconception of the revealed scriptures of *Veda*.

The preaching mission of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswātī Ṭhākura, the Gauṛīya Maṭha, has declared totalitarian war against *māyā*, illusion, and even all other exist-

ing conceptions of religion. And our authority is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Divine love is the supreme most goal of every soul. Beauty and love is the *sum-mum bonum*, our highest attainment; that is the ultimate controlling principle, and not power. Beauty and love are found at their highest position with Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. The ultimate conception of the Absolute Truth is that of reality the beautiful and divine love. The difference between lust and love should be clearly realized. That should not be misconceived. The acme of dedication is demonstrated in the love of the inhabitants of Vraja.

Preaching (*saṅkīrtana*), and not counting beads (*japa*), is the real service of Kṛṣṇa. But because we have taken a vow, and it is ordered by Mahāprabhu and our *gurudeva*, we must chant the holy name while counting beads; it is our duty. Our *Guru Mahārāja* told us, "The *japa* beads must not fast." So, if we engage ourselves in preaching work, as opposed to sitting and chanting, there should be no doubt that we are really obeying the order of Mahāprabhu. Although he has advised us to chant one hundred thousand names, or sixty-four rounds daily, that is a provincial saying. What is really all-important is the spirit of service. We are not told that the *gopīs* always count the Name on *tulasī* beads, yet they possess the highest position in the service of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

Like Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda



ON "BHAKTISIDDHANTA ROAD" WITH DISCIPLES IN SRIDHAM MAYAPUR

Prabhu, our *Guru Mahārāja* wanted to attack *māyā* and, like a great general, he declared totalitarian war on illusion and even all other existing conceptions of religion. "Why is there this misunderstanding and misconception?" he thought, "Everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa: *iśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*. It is plain and simple and sweet. How can we think, 'This is for me, that is for Him?' Why should we let this misconception stand here at all? Attack it—crush the whole thing!"

He told us, "*Kīrtana* means to preach against misconception. As soldiers, you must go door to door and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness—Kṛṣṇa's interest—the Kṛṣṇa conception. If they understand that everything is for Kṛṣṇa, they will be saved. This truth is plain and simple. Why should they not understand this? Try to capture them, to release them from the

world of misconception and misunderstanding where they are now suffering from reaction."

In this way, we are not afraid of anything. A Vaiṣṇava who loved solitary life once asked our *Guru Mahārāja*, "Why do you stay at Calcutta? That is the place of Satan, where fighting for selfish interest is so acute. Leave that—come to the holy *dhāma*." But Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura especially chose that place, saying, "I prefer to represent Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's creed in an extremely contaminated place." For this reason, he wanted to send men to the West. "The East is captured by the glamour of Western civilization," he said, "so Western civilization must first be crushed. Then, its glamour will vanish and the whole world will come to join the campaign of divine love of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu." This was the same spirit with

which Nityānanda Prabhu canvassed the fallen souls of this world, in His attempt to take them to the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura once instructed a disciple at the time of initiation into the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra that Kṛṣṇa should be allowed to land in our hearts, just as an army is landed by the navy. An army is carried by a ship, and when they have landed, the fight begins, and they capture the country. Just as Julius Caesar said, "*Veni vidi vici*, I came, I saw, I conquered." So, we have to allow Kṛṣṇa to land in our hearts. Then the fight will begin.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura emphasized that *kīrtana* means not only loudly singing the holy name, but preaching. Jīva Goswāmī has given a definition of *sankīrtana*, *bahubhir militvā yat kīrtanam tad eva*

saṅkīrtanam: “When many join together in *kīrtana* that is *saṅkīrtana*.” Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu came and introduced *saṅkīrtana*. In this age of Kali combined effort will bear fruit. (*saṅgo śakti kalau yuge*). This is the difference between the preaching mission of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Thākura, and the so-called private *bhajana* of the *sahjīyās*, or imitationists.

Once, one of our Godbrothers was the subject of our *Guru Mahārāja*’s stern remark. He was a man of good character, but his tendency was generally towards *nāma bhajana*. He did not like to do any other service, but was only inclined to chant the name of Kṛṣṇa on his beads. I was in charge of the Delhi temple at the time, and was intimate with him, so I wrote to Prabhupāda: “If you permit, I would like to engage my Godbrother in some preaching work here in the Delhi temple.” The letter that Prabhupāda wrote is still here. He wrote me in his letter, “If you can bring him there and make him help you in the work of preaching, then you will be a real friend to him. I don’t recognize that sitting in the jungle of Balihati only chanting, counting beads, is *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam*, the proper cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Our *Guru Mahārāja* laid the highest stress on developing a serving attitude. Otherwise it is all bogus—imitation. And people will say, “Oh, there is no Kṛṣṇa there. These men are hypocrites. They are only dancing and making noise, they are not surcharged with a serving spirit.” Only through service can we directly come in contact with Kṛṣṇa. The real point is to practice how to attain the spirit of service, *vaiṣṇava sevā*. The Vaiṣṇava is doing service, and we must imbibe from him the methods of attaining this serving attitude.

Sevonmukhe, serving attitude was foremost. Our *Guru Mahārāja* did not allow us to read much, even of the lower types of scriptures dealing with general *sādhana* or practices, not to speak of the higher books. Rather, we were expected to actually follow those practices by hearing from the proper source and practicing accordingly whatever was instructed from there. Serve—learn to give yourself properly. There are different methods of service: *śravaṇa*, hearing; *kīrtana*, chanting; *smaraṇa*, remembering; *vandana*, praying, etc.. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī has mentioned sixty-four kinds of devotional practices, and it has also been further mentioned that there are one thousand types of devotional practices. But practices are not very important; the very life of the practice is all-important, for this is self-dedication. This

we should be very particular to learn. Dedication is work under a Vaiṣṇava.

One day, during the latter days of his presence in the world, Prabhupāda said to a *sannyāsī* who had led a full twenty years of life in the mission, “You did not see me—you could not see who I am. Like a zamindar you have kept some householder servitors under you, and from them you periodically give a donation to me. You have become like a broker, but you should be wholesale mine—my agent. But you are not doing that. You are dependent on those householders while maintaining some connection with me. This is not necessary. You are not a member of this world. You are mine alone. Whatever I say, you should do. You should not sell yourself to anything or any proposal of this world. You are to be my servant wholesale.” This necessary attitude is rarely to be found. We should surrender to whatever flows from the higher plane and thereby substantiate its reality.

There was once a *bābājī* who was thought by many to be a great devotee. Whenever he took the name, he shed incessant tears. Liquid also oozed from his nose, and he was seen to be in some abnormal meditating position. On either side of him his attendants would be constantly cleansing his tears and face with napkins, as he madly chanted the name. Atheists considered him a religious fanatic, while common people who had some simple faith in God, thought he was in the higher stages of devotion. But our *Guru Mahārāja*, rejected him and his antics as devoid of proper conception.

*atha niḥsattvāḥ-nisarga-picchila-svānte,
tad abhyāsa-pare ‘pi ca
sattvābhāsam vināpi syuḥ,
kvāpy aśru-pulakādayaḥ*

(*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu. Dakṣiṇa, 3.89*)

“Whenever shedding tears, hairs standing on end, etc., are seen in persons whose hearts are soft externally and hard internally, and who are habituated to crying, rapture, etc., even though they do not possess a semblance of divine emotion—such an imitative sentiment should be known as totally unsubstantial and lifeless.”

Such persons are representing the *Sahajiyā* school. Our *Guru Mahārāja* wrote several poems, one of which is *prākṛta-rasa Śata-dūṣaṇī*, ‘one hundred defects in the *Sahajiyā* conception.’ The defects are innumerable, but our *Guru Mahārāja* put forward a hundred

“I prefer to represent

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's creed

in an extremely contaminated place.”

For this reason, he wanted to send men to

the West. “The East is captured

by the glamour of Western civilization,”

he said, “so Western civilization

must first be crushed.

Then, its glamour will vanish

and the whole world will come to join

the campaign of divine love of

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.”

Guru Maharaja asked one of his disciples to speak something in praise and appreciation of another disciple. And he especially asked this of disciples who were a little antagonistic to one another. He asked them. "Speak something in praise of your 'friend.' "Why? To try to mark the bright side, the *svarupa*, and to try to ignore the apparent side. He instructed, "You try to speak something in praise of your friend, your apparent opponent." The Guru's order was given, and so the disciple had to speak something in praise. Necessity is the mother of invention; he had to dive deep into the bright side of the other person and try to bring that side out.

points of the defects in their process of 'advancement'. Mainly they are very easy purchasers. They are not prepared to pay the real price. But the death blow to them is this:

upajiyā bāde latā 'brahmāṇḍa' bhedi' yāya
'virajā', 'brahmaloka', 'bhedi', 'paravyoma' pāya
tabe yāya tad upari 'goloka-vṛndāvana'
'kṛṣṇa-caraṇa' -kalpavṛkṣe kara ārohana
 (C.c. Madhya 19.153,4)

One must first cross the different gross and subtle layers of the *brahmāṇḍa* (mundane universe); then *Virajā*, the extremity of the jurisdiction of *māyā* or misconception; then the *brahman* conception, the halo of the real, transcendental world; then, *Vaikuṅṭha*, which is *paravyoma*, a planet of consciousness.

There are some who are of the opinion that *smaraṇa* (remembrance) is exclusively connected with consciousness, or more concerned with the subtle part of our existence; so that should be the most effective form of *sādhana*, or means to the end. But our *Guru Mahārāja*, and *Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī*, and also *Kavirāj Goswāmī Prabhu*, laid stress on *kīrtana*—especially for the beginners. *Guru Mahārāja* says in his song *Vaiṣṇava ke?* ("Who is a *Vaiṣṇava*?"):

kīrtana prabhāve, smaraṇa haibe,
se kāle bhajana nirjana sambhava

"Internal remembrance can occur by the power of *kīrtana*, and only then is solitary service possible." *Nirjana-bhajana* or *smaraṇa*, exclusive solitary devotion, unconscious of the environment is not at all possible for beginners.

Promotion is inevitable if we always try to adhere to the lower duty. Eagerness for promotion is the enemy. That is for *pratiṣṭhā* (renown), and that will undermine everything. *Śrīla Prabhupāda* said that imitation arises from the attraction for *pratiṣṭhā* or desire to hold the superior position and acquire a name for oneself. That is the great enemy. Don't fall prey to that *pratiṣṭhā*, eagerness to hold the higher position. Rather, *dānyam*—humility, is the healthy sign of a devotee.

When our *Guru Mahārāja* addressed his disciples as *vipada uddhāraṇa bandhu-gaṇa*, "My dear friends who have come to deliver me from danger", we should, of course, recognize such a statement from both the relative and absolute standpoints. Students are a necessary part of a professor—when a professor has students, he feels the practical utility of his life

has been successful. Thus, from the relative point of view, disciples can help the *ācārya*. But from the absolute standpoint, *Kṛṣṇa's* will is everything, and the *nitya-siddha* or eternally perfect great souls who inwardly know the Lord's intentions cannot be disturbed by any danger in any respect, but outwardly such an appearance may be manifest in their dealings.

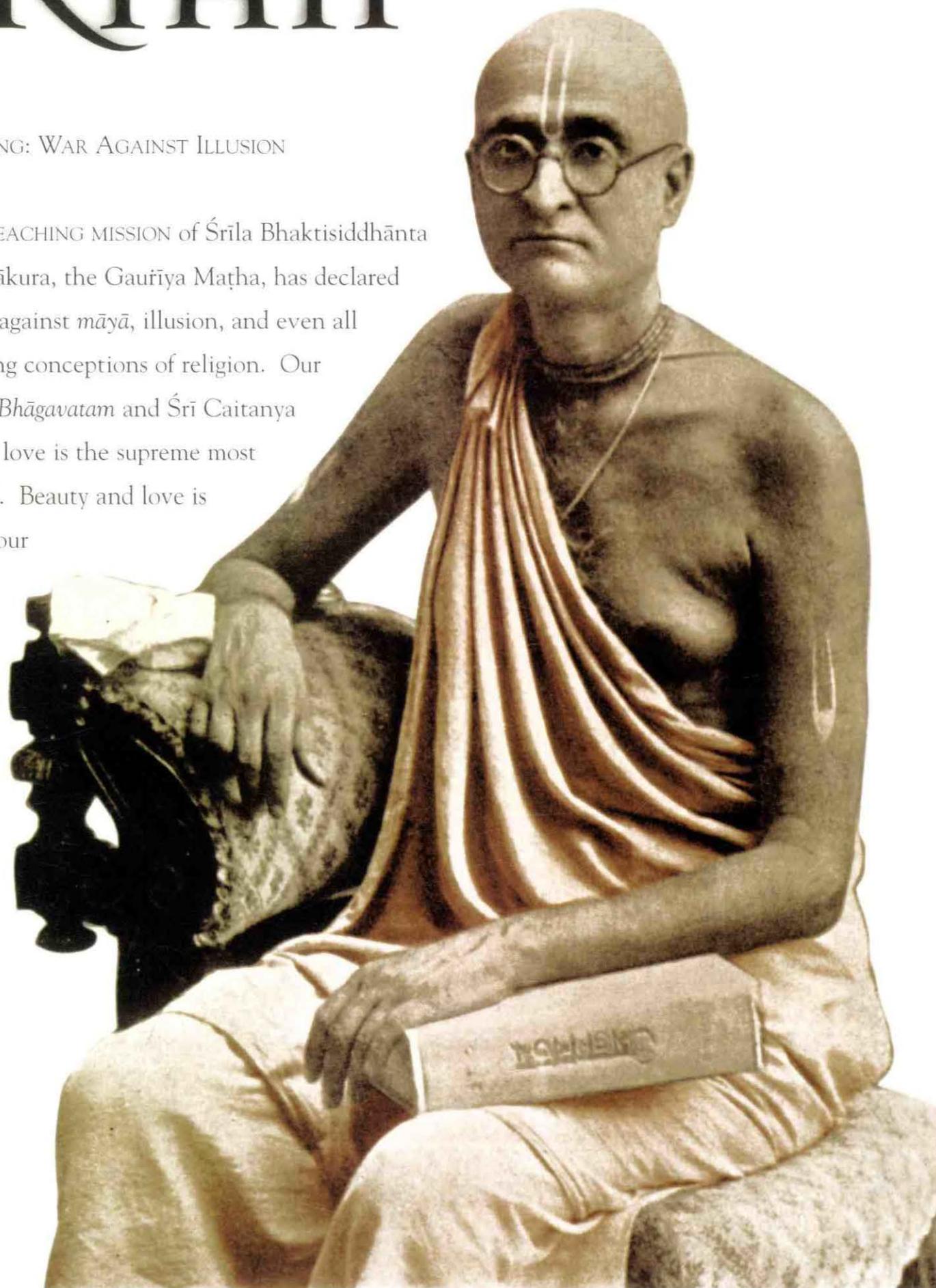
"The *Vaiṣṇava* is all in all, and I am nothing." Such a feeling grows infinitely in the *Vaiṣṇava*. "I am nothing, but he is everything - he is a *Vaiṣṇava*; *Guru* and *Vaiṣṇava* really hold *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. They are the stockists. But I am empty-handed; I have nothing." This is the nature of the association of the finite with the infinite. As much as we shall have a real approach towards the infinite, we cannot but consider ourselves to be the meanest of the mean. The standard of *Vaiṣṇava* qualification (*vaiṣṇavatā*) is measured in this way. And this is not lip-deep, but the sincere dealing of the innermost heart. When *Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Goswāmī* says, *purīṣera kīta haite muñi sei laghiṣṭha*—"I am lower than the worm in stool"—this is not mere imitation, it is heartfelt. *Ācārya-abhimāna*, the assertion of the guru over his disciple, is a different posture. That is assertion, but only for the service of the *Vaiṣṇava*; the sincerity is maintained therein. The guru's assertion is not selfish assertion. His assertion is only for the sake of saving the public and upholding the prestige of the *Vaiṣṇava*. So that is proper adjustment with reality, in twofold senses: to establish the real position of a *Vaiṣṇava*, and at the same time to save the ordinary persons from the danger and the reaction of false attempt or false thought. So that kind of assertion is not egoistic. Rather, we should know that as sacrifice in the dynamic sense.

In *Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā*, our *Guru Mahārāja* tactfully managed in this way: he asked one of his disciples to speak something in praise and appreciation of another disciple. And he especially asked this of disciples who were a little antagonistic to one another. He asked them. "Speak something in praise of your 'friend.' "Why? To try to mark the bright side, the *svarūpa*, and to try to ignore the apparent side. He instructed, "You try to speak something in praise of your friend, your apparent opponent." The guru's order was given, and so the disciple had to speak something in praise. Necessity is the mother of invention; he had to dive deep into the bright side of the other person and try to bring that side out. Thereby, the *Vaiṣṇava* atmosphere of giving and taking was aroused and the apparent, *māyika* side was

KĪRTAN

PREACHING: WAR AGAINST ILLUSION

THE PREACHING MISSION of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Thākura, the Gauṛīya Maṭha, has declared totalitarian war against *māyā*, illusion, and even all other existing conceptions of religion. Our authority is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Divine love is the supreme most goal of every soul. Beauty and love is the *summum bonum*, our highest attainment; that is the ultimate controlling principle, and not power. And beauty and love are found at their highest position with Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.



I asked Prabhupada why this difference

between Rupa and Sanatana.

He simply said, "It is *adhoksaja*,

beyond our understanding.

So Krishna Lila is "un-understandable"

(*acintya*). Everything is not bound

to come within our fist.

The Supreme Lord has

"ALL RIGHTS RESERVED."

This must be understood

if we at all want to be in connection

with that plane of reality.

gradually ignored, disregarded and dissipated. Something similar happens in *kīrtana* as well. Why is *kīrtana* so powerful? Because when we are requested to speak something, we cannot but utilize our best attention to speak. We have to assert our best ability in the attempt to gather the proper information to speak something about the Supreme Lord. So, also, in the case of the Vaiṣṇava, as in the case of the Lord, we must approach the *svarūpa*, the inner side, the inner aspect, the bright side—and ignore the apparent side; and thereby we will thrive. There, the real mutual relationship will be aroused. Once a year in the holy *dhāma* of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, it was the practice of our *Guru Mahārāja* to preside in a meeting under the banner of *Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā* (Universal Assembly of Vaiṣṇava Kings), and there his method was such: "Try to praise the Vaiṣṇava."

When we are conscious of the real substance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the actual wealth we are receiving from our spiritual master, then our spiritual life cannot be *sahajiyāism*, imitationism. We must be aware enough to detect our guru's advice when we find it in another. One who is awake will see, "Here is my guru's advice, I find it here in this man. Somehow or other, it has come here. How, I do not know, but I see my guru's characteristics, his dealings, and behavior in this person." When we are able to recognize a thing for its intrinsic value, then, wherever we find it, we cannot neglect it.

There is an example of this in an instance regarding Aurobindo Ghosh, of Pondicherry. He was the first leader of the Anarchist Party in India and practically the founder of the revolutionary movement in Bengal. In 1928, a case against him was proceeding in Calcutta High Court. A famous attorney, Mr. Norton, was in charge of the prosecution. Aurobindo had absconded, and when the case was going on, he was not to be found anywhere. Norton was concerned. How to find him? Aurobindo's English was very good English. He had been educated in England from childhood, and could speak English even better than many Englishmen. Mr. Norton began to search through different papers and magazines for Aurobindo's writing. Finally, he found Aurobindo's style of writing in the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, a Bengali newspaper. "Here is Mr. Ghosh!" he said. The editor of the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* was summoned to court to find out whether Aurobindo Ghosh had written the article. Mr. Norton examined him:

"This is your paper. You must know who has written this article. You *are* the editor."

"Yes, I know."

"Do you know this man, Aurobindo Ghosh?"

"Yes, I know him. I consider him to be one of the greatest men in the world."

"As the editor of this newspaper do you know who wrote this article?"

"Yes, I know."

"Has Mr. Ghosh written this article?"

"I won't say."

Mr. Norton asked him, "Do you know the punishment?"

"Yes. Six months imprisonment."

"You are ready for that?"

"Yes, I am ready for that." Holding up the newspaper article, Mr. Norton said, "Here is Mr. Ghosh! I rest my case."

He saw Aurobindo in his writing. So we must see, "Here is my *gurudeva*!" Our spiritual master would also sometimes say of one of his disciples who had departed, "Bhaktivinoda Thākura came to me, but I could not recognize him." Those whose divine vision is awakened are always seeing signs of divinity everywhere.

At the same time, if my own relatives do not give recognition to my guru or to the service of Mahāprabhu, I must eliminate them. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda has explained the *śikṣā guru paramparā* in this way. Wherever we find the extraordinary flow of *kṛṣṇa prema*—we must bow down. That line may appear in a zigzag way, but still, it is the line of my *gurudeva*. We want substance, not form.

Once an Indian political leader, Śyāmasundara Cakravarti, asked Prabhupāda, "Why has the Lord granted freedom to the *jīva*?" Prabhupāda told him, "You are fighting for freedom. Don't you know the value of freedom? Devoid of freedom, the soul is only matter." Freedom offers us the alternative to do right or wrong. Once, Ghandi told the British authorities, "We want freedom." They replied, "You are not fit to have self-government. When you are fit, we shall give it to you." But finally, he told them, "We want the freedom to do wrong." So, freedom does not guarantee only acting in the right way; freedom has its value independent of right and wrong.

Free will is only absolute with the Absolute Truth. Because we are finite, our free will is infinitesimal. The possibility of committing a mistake is there. Our first choice was to dominate, and so, gradually we have entered the world of domination. As a result of this first action, everything else has developed. So, in different ranks, the species have been divid-



ed, from the demigods down to the trees and stones. And watery bodies, gaseous bodies, anything that we find here has evolved in that way. The activating principle in any form of embryological development is the soul. From the soul everything evolves.

Once I asked Prabhupāda, "Why is there a difference between Sanātana and Rūpa in their conception of the final part of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*? Sanātana closed his summary of Kṛṣṇa's

pastimes in his *kṛṣṇa-līlā-stava* in Mathurā, and Rūpa took it another step towards Dvārakā in his *Lalita-mādhava*. He wrote two plays dealing with *kṛṣṇa-līlā*: one about Dvārakā and one about Vṛndāvana. *Vidagdha-mādhava* takes place in Vṛndāvana; *Lalita-mādhava* takes place in Dvārakā. But Sanātana Goswāmī liked to complete Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Mathurā.

According to Sanātana Goswāmī, after a long separation between Kṛṣṇa and His

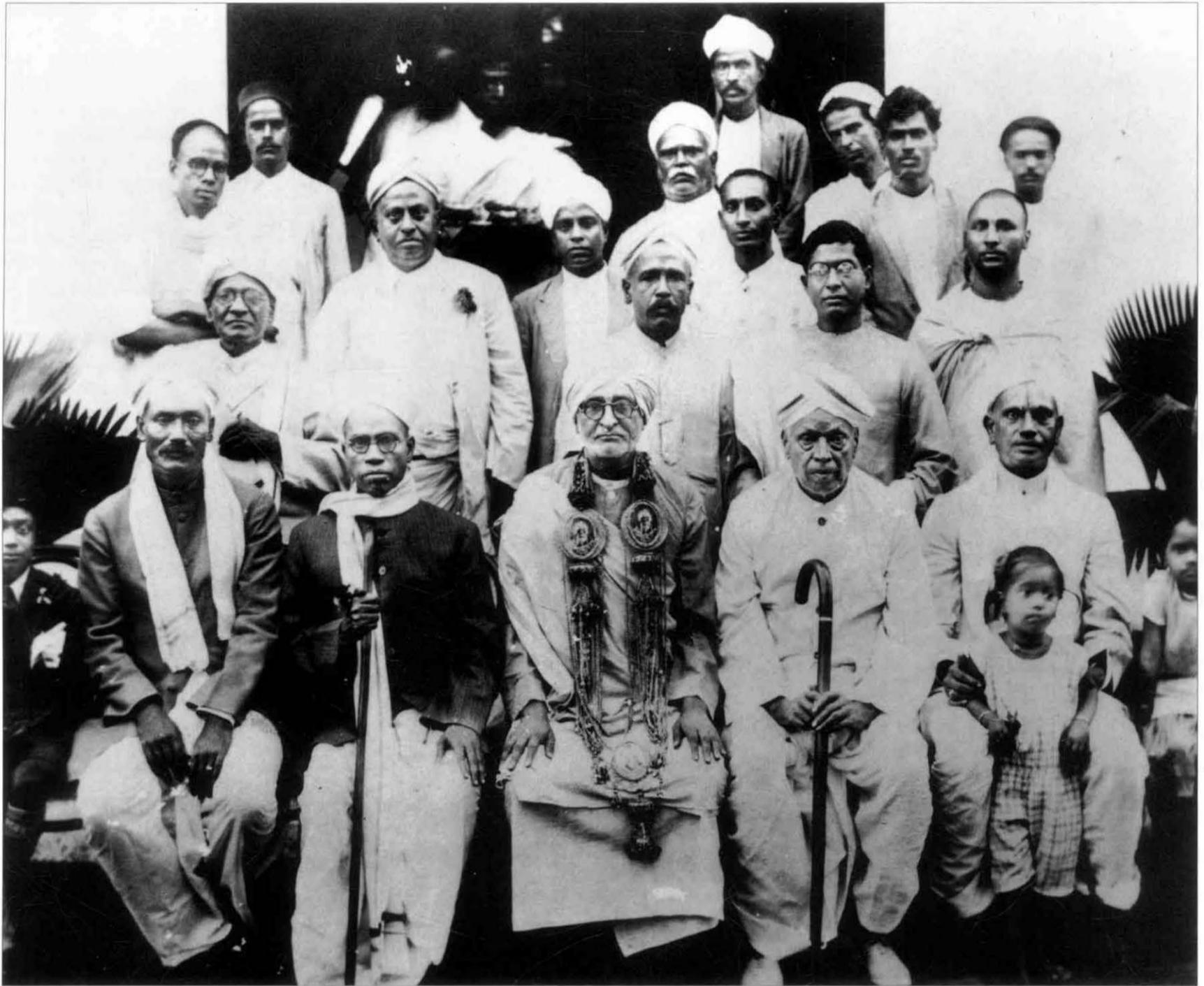
family and friends, like a wheel the pastime rotates from Mathurā again to Vṛndāvana. After Kṛṣṇa has gone to Mathurā, the residents of Vṛndāvana, overwhelmed by separation, begin to think, "Kṛṣṇa has been gone for such a long time. Nanda and Yaśodā have lost their child!" The separation intensifies and develops further until they begin to think, "Oh, Nanda and Yaśodā have no child!" Then they think, "They must have a child," and begin to pray for the appearance of Kṛṣṇa. Then Kṛṣṇa appears as the son of Nanda and Yaśodā. The cycle is complete and everyone is happy thinking, "Oh yes, Yaśodā has got a child." In this way Kṛṣṇa's pastimes again begin developing in Vṛndāvana and move to Mathurā, where He kills Kaṁsa.

In his *Kṛṣṇa-līlā-stava*, his summary of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, Sanātana Goswāmī did not take Kṛṣṇa into Dvārakā from Mathurā Maṇḍala. But Rūpa Goswāmī, in his play *Lalita-mādhava*, showed the parallels between *kṛṣṇa-līlā* in Vṛndāvana and *kṛṣṇa-līlā* in Dvārakā. And so, in his *Lalita-mādhava*, Rūpa Goswāmī draws a parallel between Lalitā as Jāmbavatī in Dvārakā, Rādhārāṇī as Satyabhāmā, and Candrāvalī as Rukmiṇī. They have their respective positions in both planes of *līlā*. In this way, he shows their transformation between Vṛndāvana and Dvārakā.

I asked Prabhupāda why this difference between Rūpa and Sanātana. He simply said, "It is *adhokṣaja*, beyond our understanding. So *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is "un-understandable" (*acintya*). Everything is not bound to come within our fist. The Supreme Lord has "ALL RIGHTS RESERVED". This must be understood if we at all want to be in connection with that plane of reality.

Once, Rādhārāṇī left the *rasa-līlā* when She saw that all the *gopīs* were being dealt with almost equally by Kṛṣṇa. Equal treatment towards one and all did not satisfy Her. She began to sing and dance in the most extraordinary way to get Krishna's undivided attention. Rādhārāṇī showed Her superior skills in various ways, and then disappeared. And even though Kṛṣṇa was apparently completely absorbed in *rasa-līlā*, He suddenly realized that Rādhārāṇī was gone. So He left everyone to search for Rādhārāṇī. He finally found her, and after walking together for some time, Rādhārāṇī told Him, "I can't move, I can't walk anymore. If You want to go any farther, You will have to carry Me." Then, Kṛṣṇa disappeared.

A disciple of Prabhupāda's once asked him why did Krishna disappear? And our *Guru Mahārāja* became very disturbed.



I noted when we were preaching in South India, that whenever any gentleman who was a renowned devotee in a particular place approached our Guru Maharaja, he used to ask such men, "Under whose guidance does your devotional service go on?" Generally they used to say, "No, no, I am directly concerned with Lord Krishna or Lord Rama." Then, when they went away, we heard our guru maharaja say, "He has no devotion." That person was dismissed as an imitation devotee. That is a vague kind of devotion. It has not taken any particular shape, because he is ignoring the asraya, the shelter-giving devotees in the positions surrounding the Lord. That is the great test of devotion.

Because, in this *līlā*, Kṛṣṇa is apparently showing disregard for Rādhārāṇī. Our Guru Mahārāja, by his very nature, could not even tolerate such a question. He had so much partiality toward Rādhārāṇī that he could not tolerate hearing *anything* against Her. In a rather excited mood he answered, "Do you find any devotion here? What *bhakti* do you find here that you have asked me such a question?" The question was rejected. He could not tolerate even an inquiry regarding that pastime.

When this news came to me, I tried to find what Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had written in his own words about this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in his collection, *Bhagavatārka-Marīci-Mālā*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura harmonizes the difficulties of the verse. He explains that Kṛṣṇa was thinking, "I want to see Her mood of separation." Only to appreciate the depth of the separation She felt from Him did Kṛṣṇa disappear. Then of course Kṛṣṇa returned after some time.

But our Guru Mahārāja could not even tolerate the idea. "Where is devotion to be found here?" But Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura interpreted this pastime to mean that Kṛṣṇa was driven to see what kind of happiness in separation Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī would experience. He took this as an example of how the Absolute becomes subservient to His devotee. And so we find that the negative, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, is so powerful that the positive, Kṛṣṇa, becomes powerless near Her. It is as if the pos-

itive loses its separate existence. This is the victory of devotion.

Devotion is represented as the negative, attracting and drawing the positive. There is the juice in a fruit and the one who extracts the juice from the fruit. The highest devotion is found where the extraction is in its most intensified condition. The victory of the devotees is when the Absolute admits defeat to His servitors. This reveals the real presence of devotion, dedication, and surrender.

Once Vidyāsāgar wrote in a book 'īśvara-nirākāra-caitanya-svarūpa' ('God is without form—a mass of consciousness'). Even though a young boy, Prabhupāda challenged him, "What have you written here? You say *īśvara*, Lord, and then you say *nirākāra*, formless! The Creator, the Master—formless! He has form, *ākāra*, but it is *cidākāra*, composed of consciousness. But you say He is only a mass of consciousness, without form. And He is the Creator? Where have you found this?" In this way he challenged Vidyāsāgar. But he was very young, and Vidyāsāgar may not have cared for the challenge. Nonetheless, he did his duty. That was his temperament. He would always challenge. He had to challenge whatever was against the line of Mahāprabhu, otherwise he could not have the satisfaction of having done his duty.

Once Rabindranāth Tagore wrote articles in some book under a pen-name, and Prabhupāda wrote back protesting against those writings, also under a pen-name. No compromise—protest.

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura began the service of the *dhāma* and Mahāprabhu, he had to do many things to attract the public to accept his discovery of the *dhāma* as authentic. At that time, the place was uninhabited. Gradually a building was constructed, and the worship of the deity of Mahāprabhu began.

The temple came later. Generally the *brāhmaṇa* cooks he required would not stay there very long because it was an isolated place and there were violent elements nearby. To ensure that the service continued, he had to undergo many undesirable things. Sometimes he had to prepare *gañjikā* (marijuana) by his own hand, for the cook! Otherwise, the cook would have left. At times, when 'respectable' persons came, he had to make arrangements for tobacco. There were many other trials.

Our *Guru Mahārāja*, Prabhupāda, also did similar things, to the extreme. When John Anderson, the Governor of Bengal, was invited to Māyāpur, it was arranged with a Calcutta

restaurant to supply appropriate food for him, including meat. The hotelier catered the Governor and his entourage, but the Governor was so charmed by Prabhupāda that he took only *prasadam*. When Prabhupāda suggested some similar approach in foreign preaching also, I modestly protested that if meat was served even near the *Math*, it would bring criticism to the mission. He said, "No, no! I decided all these things thousands of births ago. We have to do anything and everything for the service of Mahāprabhu." *Vaikunṭha-vṛtti*—no *kuṅṭha*, no limitation. That was his answer. 'I am prepared to do anything for the service of Mahāprabhu and the propagation of His Mission. The Grace of Mahāprabhu should be distributed throughout the length and breadth of the whole world. And to that end, anything should be done. No stone unturned. Physical connection is no connection. We care about our internal purity, that is all.' And to save so many souls from impure habits and diet, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja also took the risk of external contamination by filthy things. He went to the West, the anti-atmosphere, to save all of you. If a house is on fire, we must risk getting burned, if we really want to save the inhabitants.

Prabhupāda's thinking was revolutionary. He once told his disciples, "Only bogus, hollow people and men of shallow thinking like *Vṛndāvana*." I was very perplexed to hear this. I had been told all along that *Vṛndāvana* is the highest place of spiritual perfection. I had heard that one who has not mastered his senses cannot enter *Vṛndāvana*. Only the liberated souls can enter *Vṛndāvana* and have the opportunity of discussing *kr̥ṣṇa-līlā*. *Vṛndāvana* is for liberated souls. Those who are not liberated from the demands of their senses may live in Navadvīpa. But the liberated souls may live in *Vṛndāvana*. Now Prabhupāda was saying that shallow thinkers appreciate *Vṛndāvana*; but a man of real *bhajana*, real divine aspiration, will aspire to live in Kurukṣetra.

Hearing this, I felt as if I had fallen from the top of a tree. "What is this?" I thought. I am a very acute listener, so I was very keen to catch the meaning of his words. The next thought he gave us was that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, after visiting many different places of pilgrimage, remarked, "I would like to spend the last days of my life in Kurukṣetra. I shall construct a cottage near Rāma-hrad and pass the rest of my life there. Kurukṣetra is the *real* place of *bhajana*."

But still we must ask why? And this is the crucial point. Service is more valuable

according to the intensity of its necessity. Shrewd businessmen make a fortune during a war. In the same way, when Rādhārāṇī's necessity reaches its zenith, service to her becomes immensely valuable. According to its necessity, service is valued. And in Kurukṣetra, Rādhārāṇī has the greatest necessity, because although Krishna is so close, their *vṛndāvana-līlā* is impossible. In a football game, if the ball is just inches from the goal and you don't score, it is a great loss. In the same way, after a long separation, Krishna is in Kurukṣetra, so the hankering for union felt by his devotees must come to its greatest point. But because he is in the role of a king, they cannot meet intimately. The circumstances do not allow the *vṛndāvana-līlā* to take place. So at that time, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī needs the highest service from her group, the *sakhīs*.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that in that situation, a drop of service will draw the greatest amount of *prema*, divine love. In the pastimes of Rādhā-Govinda, there are two aspects: *sambhoga*, divine union, and *vipralambha*, divine separation. When Rādhā and Krishna are very near to each other, but can't meet intimately, service at that time can draw the greatest gain for the servitors. Therefore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "I shall construct a hut on the banks of Rāma-hrad in Kurukṣetra and contemplate rendering service to the Divine Couple. If I can achieve that standard where the prospect of service is so high, then there is no possibility of returning to this mundane plane ever again."

During the Vraja Mandala Parikrama one devotee noticed the local people making *dandavats* around Rādhā Kunda. He said, "Prabhupāda, see how they have devotion to Rādhārāṇī." Our *Guru Mahārāja* responded, "There is a big difference between them and us. They worship Rādhārāṇī because She is dear to Krishna. We worship Krishna only because He is dear to Rādhārāṇī."

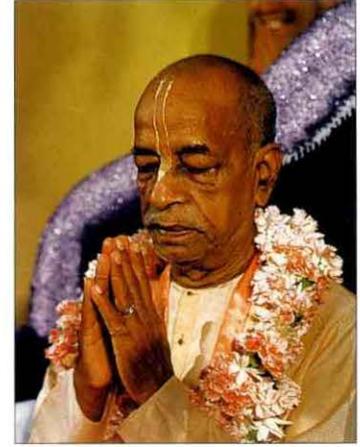
So our *Guru Mahārāja* was not vomiting what he heard from others, but giving something fresh. We should never think that we have understood Krishna consciousness, otherwise we shall be deceived. Rather we should place our tiny faith in the Infinite, with all our sincerity, and prepare ourselves for the waves of Infinite realization that may come to us by the grace of Sri Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Gaur Haribol!



MY LORD AND MASTER HIS DIVINE GRACE

BY SRILA A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI MAHARAJA



Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, under the inspiration of Srila Saraswati Thakur founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in 1965 and subsequently established over 100 branches worldwide, publishing and distributing over 100 million books, and within 10 years made the name Krishna known in virtually every town and village in the world. Srila Sridhara Maharaja remarked, "Our Guru Maharaja wanted to spend the next ten years of his life preaching in the West, but left this world and was unable to do so. But Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja gave him those ten years, with his unparalleled success in fulfilling our Guru Maharaja's dream of spreading Krishna consciousness in the Western world. We are happy, we are pleased, we are proud!"

WHATEVER I APPRECIATED FORTY YEARS ago, the same principle is going on. We have no change. What I understood from my spiritual master I am always doing that. Practically I met my Guru Mahārāja in 1922 and this poetry was written in 1936. That means fourteen years before writing this poetry, I met my Guru Mahārāja. At that time I was quite a young man, only twenty-five years old, and I was posted in a very responsible position as the office manager of Dr. Bose's laboratory. I was very fond in those days of Gandhi's movement. In 1922, I joined Gandhi's movement and gave up my educational career because one of Gandhi's programs was to boycott the universities. That's a very long story. Many students gave up their educational career and joined Gandhi's movement, and I was one of them.

Dr. Kartik Chandra Bose was a very important man. At that time he was managing director of Bengal Chemical Company. Now there is a street in the central Calcutta, Dr. Kartik Bose Street. So he was very important man, and he was our family physician and my father's very intimate friend. When I gave up my education and I was joining Gandhi's movement, at that time Dr. Kartik Chandra Bose asked me to join him. So with the permission of my father I joined. At that time I was fond of Gandhi's noncooperation movement and when I joined Dr. Bose's laboratory,

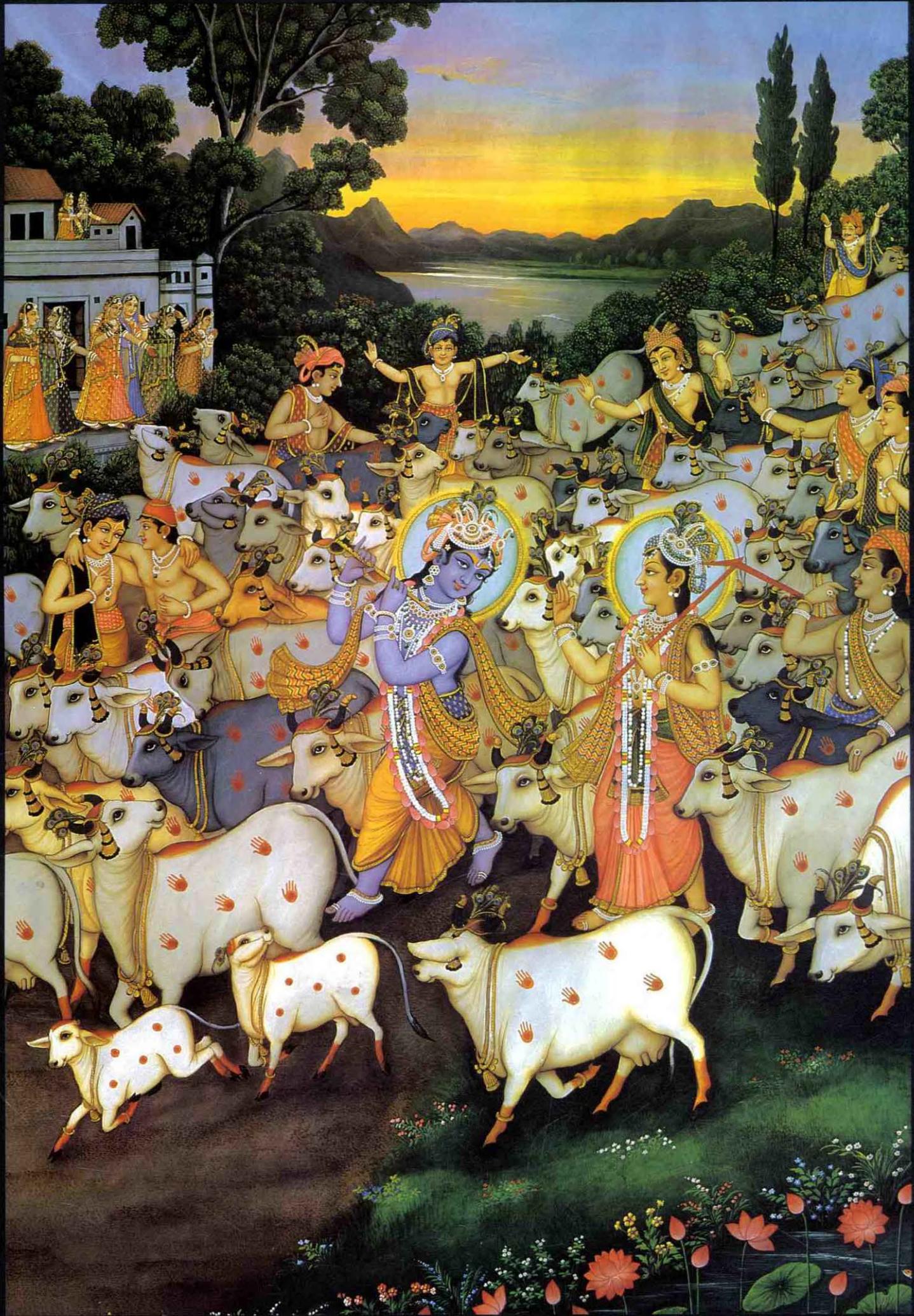
of course, I was dressed in *khadi*. Dr. Bose liked that dress, *khadi* dress. He told me one day that, "Out of your whole Gandhi's movement, I like this *khadi* only." Dr. Bose said, "And why? Because this will give impetus to industry. This hand spinning will gradually give impetus to India." Actually that happened. He was himself an industrialist.

So in 1922 I met my Guru Mahārāja through the insistence of my intimate friend, Mr. Narendranath Mullick. I did not like to go, but my friend forced me. He told me, "There is a nice *sādhu*. Let us go and see." I did not like very much these *sādhus* in those days due to my national spirit. So I said, "I have seen many *sādhus*. They come at my father's house. I was not very much pleased with their behavior." But my friend dragged me forcibly: "No, I have heard this person is very exalted." So I went.

My Guru Mahārāja's first opening version was, "You are educated young men. Why don't you preach Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's gospel in the Western countries?" I did not know but this was his blessing in the first meeting. I did not know but because we belonged to a Vaiṣṇava family we were very much worshippers of Lord Chaitanya and Nityānanda, our family Deity.

So I was very much pleased that "Here is a personality who is going to preach Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's gospel." I was very

much pleased. Anyway, from 1922 to 1933, practically I was not initiated but I got the impression of preaching Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's mission. And that was the initiation by my Guru Mahārāja. Then officially I was initiated in 1933 because in 1923 I left Calcutta. I started my business at Allahabad. So I was always thinking of my Guru Mahārāja, that "I met a very nice *sādhu*." Although I was doing business, I never forgot him. Then, in 1928, these Gauṛīya Maṭh people came to Allahabad during Kumbhamela. In those days they came to open their branch in Allahabad, and somebody recommended, "You go to see this Bengali gentleman." At that time I was running my big pharmacy and I was very well-known man in Allahabad as the proprietor of the pharmacy. So somebody recommended them, "You go to Abhāy Babu. He is a very religious man. He'll help you." So when they entered my shop, I was very pleased—"These men I met in 1922, and now they have come." In this way I became reconnected. And in 1933 I was officially initiated. When I was introduced to my Guru Mahārāja for initiation, so Guru Mahārāja said, "Yes, I shall initiate this boy. He is very nice. He hears me very patiently. He does not go away." So that was my qualification. The high standard of philosophy which he was speaking at that time, practically I could not follow what he was speaking,



but still, I liked to hear him. That was my hobby. Whenever there was chance – I was asking, “When Guru Mahārāja will speak?” So he took it very seriously. And then, in 1936—it’s a long history—during this *vyāsa-pūja* day, whatever I studied about our relationship with my Guru Mahārāja, I expressed in this poetry and since that day my Godbrothers used to call me “poet.”

And Guru Mahārāja also very much appreciated this poetry. Now somehow or other you have found it. I thought the poetry was lost, but I do not know how it was found by some of our disciples. I think it was found in a London museum or somewhere else by Gurudāsa. They had a stock of *Harmonists*, and from the *Harmonist*, my Guru Mahārāja’s paper, this poetry was found. Otherwise I thought it was lost. So anyway, this poetry is, “Adore adore ye all the happy day, blessed than heaven, sweeter than May.” So I heard that the month of May is very pleasing in the Western countries, so I compared the happiness of this *vyāsa-pūja* day with May Day.

“When he appeared at Purī, the holy place, my lord and master, His Divine Grace.” Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura appeared as the son of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, his fourth son. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was a family man. He has several children, sons and daughters. Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura was known in his previous life as Bīmala Prasāda Datta, son of Kedaranātha Datta. His father, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, his name was Kedaranātha Datta. He was magistrate and he was manager of the managing board of Jagannātha Purī. The system is, the local magistrate becomes the official manager of the managing board of Jagannātha Purī. At that time Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was situated in Jagannātha Purī and Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura appeared at Purī.

So when the Rathayātra ceremony takes place sometimes the big *ratha* stops at intervals. In front of house in which Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura appeared, the *ratha* stopped.

At that time Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura’s mother took the advantage because Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was magistrate, so the son, the little baby, was brought before the *ratha*, and the *pūjaris* allowed him to bring the child before the Deity and a garland was offered by Jagannātha. That was the first sign of his becoming the *āchārya*. In this way there are many incidences. Therefore his birth place is mentioned, “the holy place, my lord and master, His Divine Grace. O my master,

the evangelic angel, give us thy light, light up thy candle. Struggle for existence, a human race, the only hope, His Divine Grace.”

Actually, we are in a very precarious condition, in the modern civilization. We are being manipulated by the Western people. It is a soul-killing civilization. By nature the chance is given after many, many evolutionary processes. *Jalajā nava lakṣāni sthāvāra lakṣa vimśati*.

The evolutionary theory is there in the *Padma Purāṇa*. It is not Darwin’s theory. Darwin stole it from *Padma Purāṇa*, and he presented it in a distorted way with his own imagination. Actually, it is not theory but fact. *Jīva jatisu*. The soul, it is wandering within the cycle of *jīva jati*, different species of life. *Tathā dehāntara prāptiḥ*. This is Vedic knowledge, this evolutionary process. It is not Darwin’s theory. So by that process, lower animals and then the chronological order is there. First of all aquatics, *jalajā*. *Jalajā* means aquatic. Then *sthāvāra*, trees, plants. Then flies, then birds, then beasts, then human being. In this way, *bahu sambhavānte*, after many, many millions of years we get this opportunity of human life to realize God. And this civilization is denying, refusing the opportunity to the human society to understand God. Such a soul-killing civilization.

It is a fact. They are denying—“What is God? There is no God. Everything is science,” although they cannot explain science. They cannot do anything, simply talking like nonsense. Last night some girls, students of botany, came. So I asked them, “Can you manufacture a seed which can give birth to a big banyan tree?” “No, sir, it is not possible.” “Then what kind of botany you are studying?” Actually what is their science? They talk simply something which is going on in the middle portion. Where is the beginning and where is the end of knowledge—that they do not know. They are theorizing only in the middle. They do not know *janmādy asya yataḥ*, where is the beginning of this science. That in the beginning is Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says, *aham sarvasya prabhavo*. He is the beginning. *Bijo ‘ham sarva bhūtānam*. That seed, you scientist, you cannot manufacture. What chemicals are there that if you put them in the earth and pour some water, and they will grow a big tree?

These scientists, they cannot explain what chemical composition is there. But there is. So that is in the hand of Kṛṣṇa. So this knowledge means to understand the original source. That is philosophy, find out the original source. That is knowledge, *vedaiś ca sarvair*

Adore ye all the happy day,
Blessed than heaven, sweeter than May,
When he appeared at Puri, the holy place,
My Lord and Master, His Divine Grace.

Oh! my Master, the evangelic angel,
Give us Thy light, light up The candle.
Struggle for existence a human race
The only hope, His Divine Grace.

Misled we are all going astray,
Save us Lord, our fervent pray,
Wonder Thy ways to turn our face.
Adore Thy feet, Your Divine Grace.

Forgotten Krishna, we fallen souls,
Paying most heavy, the illusion’s toll.
Darkness around all untrace,
The only hope, His Divine Grace.

Message of service thou hast brought
A healthful life as Chaitanya wrought,
Unknown to all, it’s full of brace,
That’s your gift, Your Divine Grace.

Absolute is sentient thou hast proved,
Impersonal calamity thou hast moved,
This gives us a life – anew and fresh,
Worship Thy feet, Your Divine Grace.

Had you not come, who had told
The message of Krishna, forceful and bold,
That’s your right, you have the mace.
Save me a fallen, Your Divine Grace.

The line of service as drawn by you,
Is pleasing and healthy like morning dew,
The oldest of all but in new dress
Miracle done, Your Divine Grace



aham eva vedyo. Actually the knowledge terminates when you understand Krishna. He is the source of everything. There is a "struggle for existence, a human race, the only hope, His Divine Grace." Now we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sāraswatī Ṭhākura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And in the future the same knowledge will go to your students. This is called *paramparā* system. *Evam paramparā prāptam.* It is not that you have become a student, and you'll remain a student. No. One day you shall become also *guru* and make more students, more students, more and more. That is Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, not that perpetually one will remain a student.

Yes, one should remain perpetually a student, but he has to act as guru. That is the mission of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. It is not that because I am acting as guru, I am no longer student. No, I am still student. Chaitanya Mahāprabhu taught that we shall always remain a foolish student before our Guru Mahārāja. That is the Vedic culture. I may be very big man, but still, I should remain a foolish student to my guru. That is the qualification. *Guru more mūrkhā dekhi' karila śāsana.* We should be always prepared to be controlled by the guru. That is very good qualification. *Yasyā prasādad bhāgavat prasādaḥ. Arahā kariha mane āsa.* So we should become always a very obedient student to our guru. That is the qualification. That is the spiritual

qualification. Since 1922 my Guru Mahārāja wanted me to preach in the Western countries, then in 1965 it was fruitful—forty three years later.

It is better late than never. Yes. He desired me. I thought, "Now I am a family man. Let me adjust things." I would have accepted immediately but I was not so intelligent at that time. I thought, "My responsibility to family is there. Let me wait." But still, Guru Mahārāja was so kind to me that when I was *ghastha*, I saw him in dreams. He asked me, "You come with me." Then I was going, and after that, I was thinking, "Oh, I will have to take *sannyāsa* and go with him?" So it appeared to me very horrible. I was not very much inclined to take *sannyāsa*, but Guru

Mahārāja is so kind that he ultimately forced me to take *saṁnyāsa* and do this work. It is all his kindness. This is the memory of his kindness. Forty-three years ago, I remember the same thing as it is in 1922, and still the same thing is going on. There is nothing new. We have nothing new to do. Simply let us present “as it is,” and it will be successful.

You see. The spirit of my writing is the same. “Misled we are, all going astray.” This soul-killing civilization is misleading us. We must know this, this is a very misleading civilization. Our real aim of life is to understand our spiritual identification and search out our relationship with God, Krishna. That is our real business. But this modern civilization is misleading us in different ways. Therefore, I wrote this, that “Misled we are, all going astray. Save us, Lord, our fervent pray. Wonder thy ways to turn our face, adore the feet, Your Divine Grace.” So this portion he very much appreciated. We have to find out ways to turn the current. The current is sense enjoyment. Material life means the current of sense enjoyment, and this current has to be turned toward the sense enjoyment of Krishna. Sense enjoyment is there, but this mislead material civilization, thinks that sense gratification is only to be enjoyed personally.

When this sense gratification will be turned towards Krishna, then our life is successful. Just like the *gopīs*. Apparently it appears that the *gopīs*, were attracted by a young boy, Krishna, and for their sense gratification they made friendship with Krishna. The fact is that *gopīs* used to dress themselves nicely not for their sense gratification but knowing that by seeing them, Krishna is satisfied. Generally a girl dresses to attract the attention of boys. So the same thing is there, but it is Krishna’s sense gratification, not the *gopīs*’. The *gopīs* did not want anything except that Krishna would be satisfied. That is the difference between lust and love. Love is only possible, when it is directed towards Krishna. That is love. Below that, everything is lust. We should always remember this. The senses are not eliminated but when the gratification of the senses is directed towards Krishna, that is *bhakti*, or love.

And when the sense gratification is directed towards our self, that is lust. This is difference between lust and love. So Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sāraswatī Thākura knew this art, how to turn our activities for the satisfaction of Krishna. This is the Krishna consciousness movement. Therefore I wrote, “Wonder thy ways to turn our face, adore the feet, Your

Divine Grace. Forgotten Krishna, we fallen souls.” Why are we fallen? Because we have forgotten. Our relationship with Krishna is eternal. Unless it was eternal, how have Western people become devotees of Krishna? Artificially you cannot be a devotee of Krishna. The relationship is there eternally. *Nitya siddha kṛṣṇa bhakti*. By the process it is now awakened. *Śravanādi śuddha citte karaye udāya*. It is awakened. Love between a young man and woman is not artificial. But by certain circumstances, the love becomes manifest. Similarly, our love for Krishna, our relationship with Krishna, is eternal.

Jīvera svarūpa haya nitya kṛṣṇa dāsa. But we have to create such a situation where that eternal relation should be awakened. That is the art. That is wanted. Therefore, “Forgotten Krishna, we fallen souls, pay most heavy the illusion’s toll.” Because we have forgotten Krishna we are paying heavily and being taxed. What is that taxation? The taxation is *nivartante mṛtyu saṁsara vartmani*. This human life is meant for understanding Krishna, but instead of understanding Krishna, we are understanding so-called material science for sense gratification. This is our position. The energy which was given by nature to understand Krishna, that is being utilized to manufacture something for sense gratification. This is going on. This is *māyā*, illusion. Therefore it is, “Pay most heavy the illusion’s toll.” That we are paying because we have forgotten Krishna. And now that forgetfulness has resulted in nuclear weapons. Russia, America, and the others may one day have to pay heavily.

They are already paying heavily. The armament preparation is going on. More than fifty percent of the income of the state is now being spent for arms. Instead of other purposes, it is being spent for military strength, everywhere. That heavy toll we are paying. And when there is war there is no limit to how much we are spending. Why? Because we have forgotten Krishna. This is a fact. These people have made the United Nations, but they are fighting like dogs. This will not solve the problems. The problem will be solved if they pass a resolution that the whole world belongs to Krishna. Krishna says, *sarvaloka maheśvaram*. Krishna is the proprietor, so why not accept it? Who has created this planet? Have we created it or has the father created it? No. Krishna has created it, but we are claiming, “This portion is American, this portion is Indian, this portion is Pakistani.”

What is the value of this claim? We may claim it for 50 or 60 or 100 years, and after

that, one kick—“Get out.” Where is your claim? But they do not understand this philosophy. They are fighting. That’s all, that “This is mine. This is my land. This is my land.” They do not know. Krishna says, *tathā dehāntara prāp-tiḥ*. You are American today. But tomorrow, even within America, if you become an American cow or American animal, nobody will care for you. Nobody will care for your politics. But this art they do not know. This science they do not know. They are under illusion. They are thinking, “I shall continue to remain American, so let me waste my time for American interest.” There cannot be any interest. *Prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni gunaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ*. Everything is being done by material nature, and we are simply falsely thinking that we are making progress, (*ahaṅkāra vimūdhātma kartāham iti manyate*). This illusion is going on. “Forgotten Krishna, we fallen souls, pay most heavy the illusion’s toll.” We are paying, paying. “Darkness around, all untrace. The only hope, Your Divine Grace.” We are in darkness.

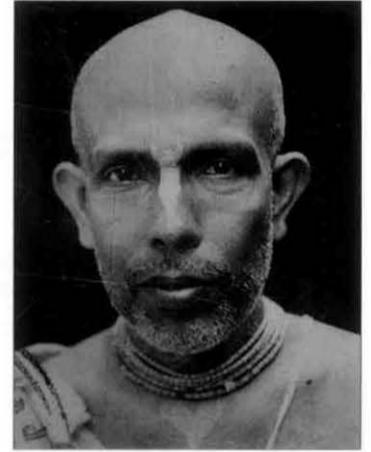
The right path is chalked out by Krishna, and by *paramparā* system. We have understand this philosophy. *Evam paramparā prāptam imam rājarṣayo viduḥ*. So keep this *parampara* system. This *vyāsa-pūja* is *parampara* system. *Vyāsa-pūja* means to accept this *paramparā* system. Guru is the representative of Vyāsadeva because he does not change anything. What Vyāsadeva said, your *guru* will also say the same thing. Not that, “So many hundreds of thousands of years have passed away. Therefore, I will give you a new formula.” No. There is no new formula. The same *vyāsa-pūja*, the same philosophy. Simply we have to accept it. Then our life will be successful.





SRILA BHAKTI PROMODE PURI GOSWAMI MAHARAJA

A FEW GLIMPSES OF THE LOTUS FEET OF SRILA PRABHUPADA



By Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaja

Srimad Bhakti Promode Puri Maharaja, the Founder-Acharya of Gopinath Gaudiya Math, Mayapur, went to Srila Prabhupada in 1922, became the joint editor of *Gauriya* Magazine, and served his Gurudeva continuously and intimately until his disappearance. At the age of 99, he is tirelessly spreading Srila Prabhupada's message through his *prachar* (preaching) and *achar* (conduct). Known as the epitome of *trnad api sunichena*, he was described thus in a poem by Srila Prabhupada himself: "He has devotion for Gurudeva, is learned, has a warm heart, keen intelligence, spotless character, and is always absorbed in *sankirtan*, preaching, and publication of *Gauriya*." (*Gauriya*, Vol. 12, No. 32)

ONCE, SRILA PRABHUPADA WAS viewing the Deities of Śrī-Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gandhārvikā-Gīrīdhārī at the Śrī Chaitanya Math, standing on the front porch of the temple. The door of that temple is not very wide, and Śrīla Prabhupāda did not have his glasses on. Standing next to him was one of his dear disciples. The disciple thought perhaps Prabhupāda could not view the Deities very well through the narrow doorway. He suddenly said, "Prabhupāda, this doorway is not very wide. So it is not possible to view the Deities very well from outside."

Hearing this, Prabhupāda smiled, and he said for the benefit of all of us, "We should not think of the Supreme Lord as an object of our vision. Instead we should meditate on the thought of how we can acquire some qualifications so we can become worthy objects of His vision. We should think about whether He wants to see us, and whether He will want to reveal Himself to us."

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam-indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe-hi jihvādau
svayam-eva sphuratyaḥ

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu, Eastern Wave, 2.109
"The holy name, form, qualities, and pastimes

of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are divine and transcendental. They cannot be experienced by material senses. The Lord manifests Himself spontaneously on the tongue of a devotee who is eager to serve Him." Just as a devotee waits to see the Lord with great patience and eagerness, sometimes the Lord also waits with great patience and eagerness to see His devotee. It is described in the *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, how the hidden Deity of Gopāla in Vṛndāvana was waiting for His beloved devotee, Śrī Mādhavendra Purī.

bahu-dina tomāra patha kari nirikṣaṇa
kabe āsi' mādharma āmā karibe sevana

Śrī-Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā 4.39

"For many days, I have been watching the road for you, and I have been wondering, 'When will Mādhava (Mādhavendra Purī) come here to serve Me?'" In this way, the Supreme Lord, who succumbs to His devotee's love, waits to see His devotee with great eagerness.

bhaktera dravya prabhu 'kāri' 'kāri' khāya
abhaktera dravya prabhu 'ulaṭi' nā chāya

"The Lord will grab food from His devotee, but He will not even glance at anything given by a

non-devotee." This is why one must be eager to serve Him with loving devotion.

bhaktir evainam nayati,
bhaktir evainam darśayati,
bhakti-vaśaḥ puruṣaḥ bhaktir eva bhuyasī

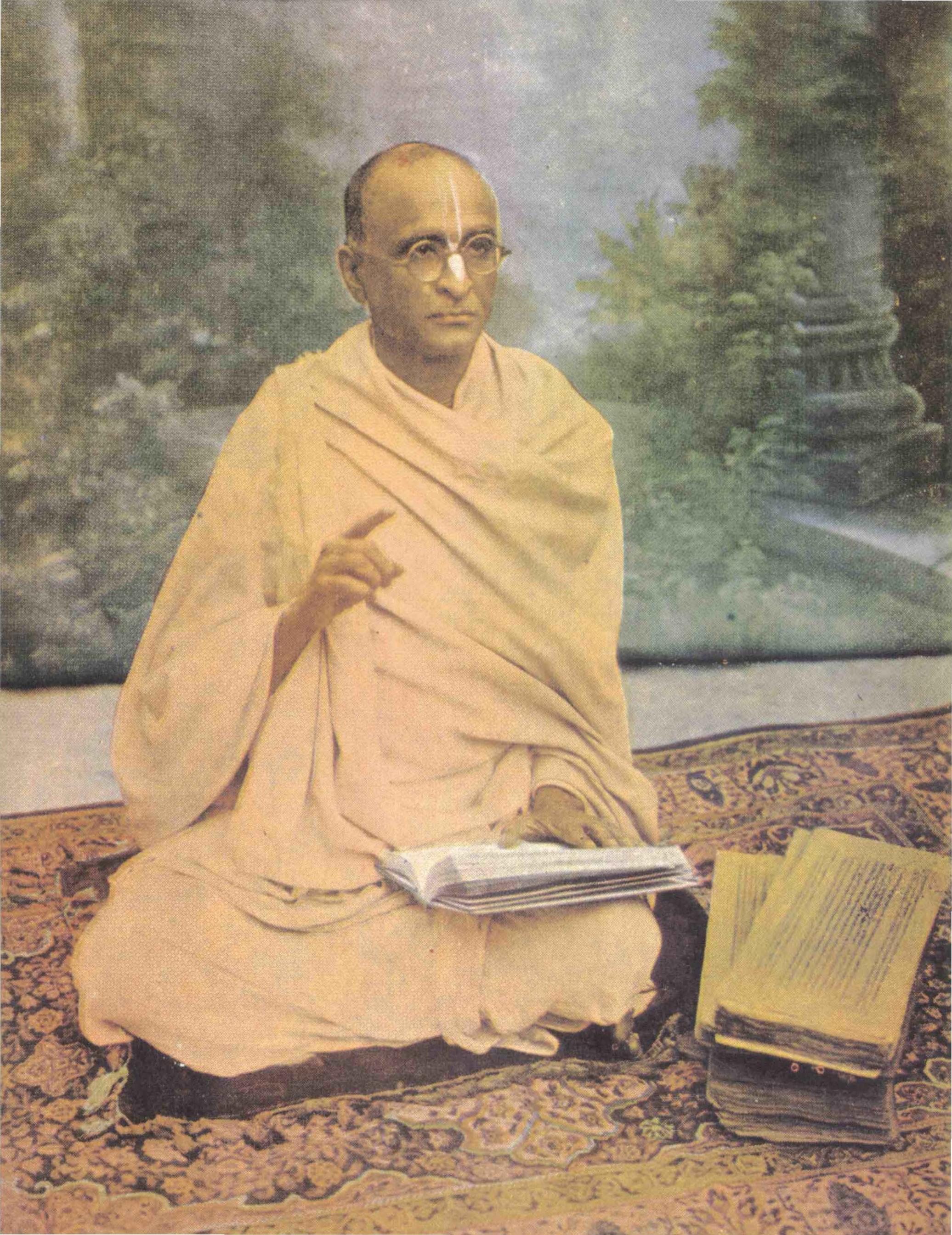
"It is only devotion which takes us to Him; it is only devotion which will reveal Him to us. He can only be conquered by devotion. Therefore in all scriptures, devotion is praised." When this devotion is mixed with spontaneous love, one quickly acquires the qualifications to be worthy of the Lord's vision. It is said in the *Brahma-saṁhita*,

premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi

Brahma-saṁhita 5.38

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, Who is Śyāmasundara, Kṛṣṇa Himself with inconceivable innumerable Attributes, Whom the pure devotees see in their heart of hearts with the eye of devotion tinged with the salve of love."

Another day, we were going from Śrī



Chaitanya Math to Śrī Yogapīṭha, following Śrīla Prabhupāda. At one point along the way, that same beloved disciple smelled something bad on the road and covered his nose with the end of his dhoti. Seeing this, Śrīla Prabhupāda smiled and said, “The transcendental fragrance of the holy *dhāma* is not reaching your nose. Instead, you are smelling the bad odor of the material world. The holy abode of the Lord is always transcendental, and one should not see it with material consciousness. The Lord’s holy abode is non-different from the Lord Himself.”

He has taught us, by his personal example, the high ideal of serving Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, the birthplace of Lord Gaurāṅga. At different places in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura—at Śrī Yogapīṭha, Śrīvāsa Aṅgana, etc.—Śrīla Prabhupāda had many transcendental realizations and experiences. With his supramundane vision, he always saw the three holy rivers Gaṅgā, Yamunā, and Saraswatī flowing together through Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. He viewed the river Jalaṅgi as non-different from the holy river Saraswatī. Śrīla Thākura Bhaktivinoda had the same kind of vision. In his famous poem, the fourteenth song of *Bhajana Lālasā* (*kabe gaura-vane suradhuni-taṭe*), he begins by saying, “When will I give up material happiness and wander around the places of Lord Gaurāṅga’s pastimes?” In the second verse, he says, “I will drink the water of the river Saraswatī.” This Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, the great place of pilgrimage, which is situated by the meeting place of the three holy rivers, was more dear to Śrīla Prabhupāda than we can imagine. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura had predicted that a wonderful temple would be manifest at Śrī Yogapīṭha. Śrīla Prabhupāda fulfilled this prediction by building a wonderful temple there, assisted by one of his wealthy disciples, Śrīpāda Śakhi-charaṇa Bhakti Vijaya Prabhu. A four-handed Deity of Viṣṇu manifested Himself from the earth as the foundation of this temple was being dug (June 13th, 1934, 10 a.m.). Following the conclusions of the revealed scriptures, Śrīla Prabhupāda called this Deity “Adhokṣaja,” containing the potencies of Śrī, Bhū, and Nīlā. Some famous archaeologists, headed by Śrī Ramā-prasād Chanda, determined the Deity to be very ancient. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to say that He was the household Deity worshiped by Śrī Jagannātha Miśra. This very beautiful Deity is still being worshiped at Śrī Yogapīṭha.

To perform his service to Śrīdhāma Māyāpur with great care and pomp, Śrīla Prabhupāda brought many famous persons to Śrīdhāma Māyāpur. One of them was the king

of the independent state of Tripurā, and another was the governor of Bengal, Sir John Anderson. Every year, Śrīla Prabhupāda took great care to celebrate the birth anniversary of Śrī Gaurāṅga at Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, and personally guided the 32-mile circumambulation of Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma. Śrīla Prabhupāda considered Śrī Chandraśekhara Bhavana, which was north of Yogapīṭha, and Hulora Ghāṭ, or the meeting place of the three rivers, which was south of Yogapīṭha, to be greater Māyāpur. From his lotus mouth came the prediction that one day there would be many Vaiṣṇava villages and neighborhoods on this strip of land. Many *maths* and temples would be established there, and tumultuous congregational chanting would be heard, accompanied by the sounds of conchshells, bells, cymbals, and *mṛdaṅgas*. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to say that Śrī Gaurasundara, the golden moon of Śrī Māyāpur, is eternally performing His pastime of congregational chanting with His eternal associates in His eternal abode, Śrī Māyāpur Dhāma.

Even today, the Supreme Lord, Gaurahari, is dancing and singing, wandering around Śrī Māyāpura with His beloved associates. Occasionally, some fortunate souls have heard a sudden sound of tumultuous *sankīrtana* at Śrīvāsa Aṅgana or Yogapīṭha, when apparently no one was there. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself experienced this. We have seen with our own eyes some individuals who were not very spiritually inclined, whose hearts were hardened by their own faulty arguments and who were proud of their material education, become enchanted upon arrival at Śrī Māyāpura by the overwhelming spiritual ambience of the holy *dhāma*. Their hearts could not resist the sweet attraction of the holy *dhāma*, which stopped their argument and caused them to lower their haughty heads in humility.

Next to the tall temple of Śrī Yogapīṭha is a big jackfruit tree. The ripe jackfruit of this tree is very sweet and juicy. We had the good fortune of tasting those ripe jackfruit. Our *grand-gurudeva*, Śrīla Gaura-kīśora Dāsa Bābāji, used to come and chant the holy name, sitting under that jackfruit tree. In those days Śrīla Prabhupāda used to live at the Sevaka-khaṇḍa of Śrī Yogapīṭha (which does not exist anymore). One day Śrīla Prabhupāda was surprised to see Śrīla Gaura-kīśora Dāsa Bābāji sitting under that jackfruit tree very late at night. At that time, Śrīla Gaura-kīśora Dāsa Bābāji used to live on the Navadvīpa bank of the Gaṅgā, at Rāṇīra Caṛa, under a *chai* (a portable bamboo and straw covering on a boat), and

Even today, the Supreme Lord, Gaurahari,

is dancing and singing,

wandering around Sri Mayapur

with His beloved associates.

Occasionally, some fortunate souls

have heard a sudden sound

of tumultuous sankirtan

at Srivas Angan or Yogapith,

when apparently no one was there.

Prabhupada himself experienced this ...

practiced his *bhajana* there. Śrīla Prabhupāda asked him how it was possible for him to cross the Gaṅgā so late at night. In those days the ferry service used to be closed at ten o'clock at night. This was also the time when Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji was performing his *līlā* of having poor sight. The road to Māyāpura was very arduous. So who had brought him here so late at night? When Śrīla Prabhupāda asked this question, Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji answered, "Someone' helped me cross the river. 'Someone' brought me here, holding my hand, etc." Śrīla Prabhupāda had no difficulty understanding that this "someone" was not an ordinary "someone." Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji often used to come to Śrī Māyāpura and roll on the ground of Śrī Yogapīṭha and the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura in loving ecstasy, and used to cry very earnestly, taking the names of Śrī Gaura, Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Śrī Gadādhara, and the devotees headed by Śrī Śrīvāsa. When Śrīla Prabhupāda used to send him some fruit or vegetable grown in Śrī Māyāpur, Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji would take that with great adoration, touch it to his head and chest, and in due time would offer it to Śrī Nityānanda and partake of the remnant.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's loving devotion for the lotus feet of his *gurudeva* is beyond our comprehension. At one time he told us, "When I used to think that I was a big scholar of mathematics and philosophy, by my good fortune I got the *darśana* of the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva. He ignored everything that was previously appreciated in me—my truthfulness, my moral and pious life, and my scholarship—knowing them to be of little value. When he ignored whatever was good in me, I realized how good he himself was, he who could ignore so many 'good qualities' in me; what inconceivable wealth there was in him. Being ignored by him, I realized that there was no one more fallen than me, more contemptible than me, and that this was my real identity. This great soul did not consider the things which I considered to be highly desirable, such as scholarship and pure moral character, to have any value. Then I realized that this great personality possessed priceless wealth within him. So I prayed humbly and sincerely to the Supreme Lord for His mercy. Later, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, I realized that without receiving the mercy of this great saint and serving him, nothing good could happen to me. When I realized that and acted accordingly, by getting the shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva and by receiving his unlimited

causeless mercy I considered my life fulfilled. I have understood that if people do not receive the same jolt that I received from my *gurudeva* then their consciousness will not awaken. Therefore I am telling everyone, 'I am the stupidest person alive; please, all of you, don't be stupid like me. Don't live your life within the limitation of a calculating consciousness. Please enter the realm of the unlimited, Vaikuṅṭha, and you will become very wealthy. I am only asking you to accept what I have understood, by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord, to be supremely beneficial.'"

In another place, he wrote, "Even after seeing Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji, many people—the immature and the clever, the scholarly and the foolish, those lacking devotion and those proud of their devotion—did not have the proper transcendental vision to see him. This is the incomprehensible power of a pure devotee. Hundreds of people came to him for his instruction, to fulfill their material desires. But that instruction was actually deceiving them. Many people take the garb of *sādhus*, and many people outwardly act like *sādhus*, but in reality, not only are they not *sādhus* but they are very far from any *sādhu*. But there was no such impurity in my lord. By his own example he demonstrated that purity was truth. His genuine affection was incomparable to anything in this world. One who received that affection would consider the eight kinds of yogic perfection to be of no value. He had no dislike for his competitors or his enemies. Even to those who received his mercy, he did not demonstrate any external favor. He used to say, 'In this world there is no one who is the object of my liking or disliking. I consider everyone to be respectable.' Another inconceivable thing was that some deceitful, materialistic people, whose mood was unfavorable to pure devotion, always used to surround my *gurudeva* without understanding his real position, and, considering themselves objects of his affection, kept their attachment to petty things. But he did not outwardly make any effort to get rid of them, nor did he accept them in any way."

In 1898, Śrīla Prabhupāda had his first *darśana* of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji at Svānanda-sukhada-kuṅja in Godrumadwīpa (one of the nine islands of Navadwīpa). Immediately Śrīla Prabhupāda became captivated and overwhelmed with loving ecstasy when he heard Śrīla Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābāji singing a song he himself had composed with intense feelings of love. Śrīla Prabhupāda later wrote that song down and thus made it avail-

able to all the other devotees. This song was addressed to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and dedicated to Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī.

Later we have seen Śrīla Prabhupāda displaying the same symptoms of deep loving ecstasy and intense separation in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. As described in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, during the chariot festival of Śrī Jagannātha, Śrīman Mahāprabhu was overwhelmed with intense feelings of separation. This mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, as displayed by Mahāprabhu, and His inner thoughts and feelings, were described very beautifully and eloquently by Śrīla Kavirāja Goswāmī, beginning with the famous verse *anyera hṛdaya mana, mora mana vṛndāvana*.

MY MIND IS VRINDAVAN

Speaking in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "For most people, the mind and heart are one, but because My mind is never separated from Vṛndāvana, I consider My mind and Vṛndāvana to be one. My mind is already Vṛndāvana, and since Vṛndāvana is most dear to You, why don't you place Your lotus feet there? That would be Your real mercy. You are the master of my life. Without you, I have no reason to live. My home is Vṛndāvana, and I want you—there. My dear Kṛṣṇa, when You were in Mathurā, You sent Uddhava to teach Me *jñāna* and yoga. Now You are saying the same things, but I can't accept it. There is no place in My mind for such things. It is not funny—You know My heart—don't speak to Me this way. Actually, I would like to *stop* thinking about You, and absorb myself in something else, but I can't. You think its clever to tell me to meditate on you—but you're killing me! We are *gopīs*—not *yogīs*. We will never be satisfied simply meditating on Your lotus feet. So what you say sounds nice, but is actually a lie. And this makes us even more angry with You. We have no body concept, so why should we want liberation? Rather, like a whale in the ocean of separation, our desire for you is devouring us. Please save us!" (*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 13.137–142)

Being immersed in this mood of separation, Śrīla Prabhupāda established the Gauṛīya Maṭh in Jagannātha Dhāma, participated in the chariot festival, and inaugurated the Bhāgavata exhibit. Whenever the topic of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's seeing Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra, which is non-different from Jagannātha Dhāma, came up, he became overpowered with deep feelings of separation and



PRABHUPADA WITH THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL JOHN ANDERSON

love. Tears would flow from his eyes and his voice would choke up with emotion. By seeing Śrī Jagannātha in Nilāchala, Śrīla Prabhupāda would be immersed in this mood and he would chant the following verse by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī:

*prīyaḥ so 'yaṁ kṛṣṇaḥ
sacharaṁ kurukṣetra-militas
tathāharī sā rādhā tad idam ubhayoḥ saṅgama-sukham
tathāpy antaḥ-khelan
madhura-muralī-ṭa chama-juṣe
mano me kālīndī-pulīna-vīpīnya sphayati*

Śrī Caitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 1.76

“O My friend, today I was united with My beloved Kṛṣṇa in Kurukṣetra. He is the same Kṛṣṇa and I am the same Rādhā, and the joyful

ecstasy of Our union is the same. Yet My heart is hankering for that forest on the bank of the Yamunā which used to be flooded with joy by the sweet reverberations of Kṛṣṇa’s playful flute.”

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her own Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa were Śrīla Prabhupāda’s life and soul. He used to become overwhelmed with loving sentiments whenever he described the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her merciful nature. The collection of verses called *Rādhā-rasa-sudhānidhī*, by Śrīla Prabodhānanda Saraswatī, was very dear to Śrīla Prabhupāda. I still remember how Śrīla Prabhupāda’s voice would choke in loving ecstasy and his eyes would become tearful as he was reciting verses from that holy book. (“I offer my obeisances in the direction of the breeze coming from the stirring of the garment of the daughter of King

Vṛṣabhānu. That breeze makes Madhusūdana feel very satisfied.”) Equally dear to him was *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, by Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī. He interpreted for us with deep feelings of love many such scriptures and verses glorifying Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. His extreme attachment for the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is expressed in his own name *Vārṣabhānavī-Dayita Dāsa* (“servant of the Beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa”). (“O Rādhārāṇī, why should I keep this life if You are not merciful to me? What need is there for me to reside in Vraja? O lotus-eyed One, without Your mercy, I do not want Kṛṣṇa, the killer of the demon Baka.”—*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*)

Every year, many devotees, following in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s footsteps, would go to Mathurā Dhāma to observe Kārttika-vrata. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to celebrate Kārttika-

There were times when,
 being instructed by doctors,
 his disciples requested him
 not to talk very much.
 If anyone would ask him
 how he was, Srila Prabhupada
 would answer, "I am fine.
 My only disease
 is that I am not allowed
 to talk about Krishna.
 He used to say,
 "To wake up a single sleeping soul,
 to make a single conditioned soul
 aware of his real identity,
 one should be willing
 to dedicate one's whole life."

vrata with great earnestness and austerity, and he used to spend his time in the holy *Dhāma* absorbed in deep meditation in a mood of separation. The memories of those times we spent with him observing Kārttika-vrata are still inspiring us to go on with our spiritual lives. I remember in 1932 Śrīla Prabhupāda circumambulated the entire perimeter of the holy *Dhāma* of Vraja-maṇḍala on foot in the association of many, many devotees, starting his journey on the 9th of October, the appearance day of Śrī Madhvāchārya. At every place of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, he himself described those pastimes. At the same time, for the benefit of devotees who came from many different regions, he saw to it that lectures were given in various languages. At the meeting-place of Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa and Śrī Śyāma Kuṇḍa, in a big assembly of devotees, including many Vrajavāsīs (residents of Vraja Dhāma) and many scholars, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave his interpretation of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmi's *Nectar of Instruction* in Hindi. I also remember a photograph of Prabhupāda giving a lecture at the bank of Śrī Rādhā-Lalitā Kuṇḍa which was published in the contemporary weekly devotional magazine *Gaudīya*. So many tents were set up there that it looked like a little town. What a beautiful sight it was!

On the 29th of October, 1934, Śrīla Prabhupāda discovered the place of pilgrimage where Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmi saw Śrī Gopāla in the village of Sati-garā in Mathurā. We were fortunate to be with him in 1935, when Śrīla Prabhupāda observed Śrī Dāmodara-vrata on the bank of his beloved Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa, starting from the 8th of October. Every day he gave lectures on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Upaniśads*, and other holy scriptures. Every day he would circumambulate Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa and would hear or talk about the eight daily pastimes (*aṣṭa-kāliya līlā*). At this time, to properly serve Śrī Vrajamaṇḍala, he started a regular meeting for the sake of preaching the glories of Śrī Vrajadhāma (Śrī Vraja-Dhāma *Prachārīṇī Sabhā*).

How much he loved talking about Kṛṣṇa is inconceivable. He would talk about Him for hours on end, and if anyone asked or even gestured for Śrīla Prabhupāda's *prasāda* to be brought in, he would be displeased. There were times when, being instructed by doctors, his disciples requested him not to talk very much. If anyone would ask him how he was, Śrīla Prabhupāda would answer, "I am fine. My only disease is that I am not allowed to talk about Kṛṣṇa." He used to say, "To wake up a single sleeping soul, to make a single condi-

tioned soul aware of his real identity, one should be willing to dedicate one's whole life."

Śrīla Prabhupāda used to love to listen to *kīrtana*. But he could not stand to hear *kīrtana* which was sung by an unqualified person, which was against bona fide Vaiṣṇava conclusions, or which reflected a mixture of clashing sentiments. That is why he has said, in a song he composed,

*prāṇa āchhe tāra, se hetu prachāra,
 pratiṣṭhāśā-hīna kṛṣṇa gāthā saba
 śrī-dayita-dāsa, kīrttanete āśa,
 kara ucchāiṣvare harināma raba*

"Kīrtana lives only when it is sung by a devotee who is free of the desire for name and fame. Such *kīrtana*, full of life, is capable of preaching the holy name, since it consists of the glories of Kṛṣṇa without being contaminated by personal ambition. 'Śrī Dayita Dāsa' (Śrīla Prabhupāda) is always hoping to hear such *kīrtana*. All of you please loudly take the name of Lord Hari in that pure mood." The path of exclusive surrender, without a desire for one's own name and fame, is the life and soul of a devotee. The *kīrtana* which comes out of the mouth of anyone who is not following this path of exclusive surrender is completely lifeless and not fit to be heard. Śrīla Prabhupāda could not tolerate any kind of imitation. Nor could he tolerate anyone overstepping the boundary of their rightful position, which had been earned by their devotional practice. He made it clear to us that one should try to be simple, humble, offenseless, and honest in the path of devotion, and there should not be a tinge of duplicity, deceit, hypocrisy, or desire for name and fame. In one song he said,

*yadi bhajibe gorā sarala kara nija mana
 kuṭināṭi chhāri' bhaja gorāra charaṇa
 gorāra āmi, gorāra āmi,
 mukhe balile nāhe chale
 gorāra āchāra, gorāra vichāra,
 la-ile phala phale*

"If you want to worship Lord Gaurāṅga, make your heart simple and straightforward. Worship the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga, giving up deceit and duplicity. Merely saying 'I belong to Gaurāṅga, I belong to Gaurāṅga' is giving Him lip service and has no effect. Following the example of His action and sentiment will bear fruit."

Śrīla Prabhupāda was extremely affectionate to his disciples, and if he found out any one of them was bewildered by *māyā*, he would

shed tears. In confronting those who had a demoniac mentality, he was deadly like a thunderbolt, but in his loving relationships his heart was softer than a flower. If in any of his mathas, any of his servants had to face any difficulty due to lack of money, Śrīla Prabhupāda used to take great care to send that money as soon as he heard about it. He could not bear the thought that a devotee had to undergo hardships due to lack of money. He used to become very concerned if he heard of any devotee being ill. His affection could not be compared with that of millions of fathers and mothers. If we were ever sad and miserable, as soon as we sat near him, all sadness went away due to the shower of his unlimited affection. Even his chastisement seemed very sweet. “Śrīla Prabhupāda has chastised me”—we used to say that with great pride, and considered ourselves to be really fortunate. All difficulties in our service were made worthwhile a million times over when we could see the signs of pleasure on his affectionate lotus face. What we felt can be expressed by this verse of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura in his book *Śaraṅgati*:

*tomāra sevāya duḥkha haya yata,
seo ta' parama sukha
sevā-sukha-duḥkha parama sampada,
nāsaye avidyā-duḥkha*

Śaraṅgati 16.4

“The suffering that comes from Your service is also our supreme happiness. Both the suffering and the happiness that come from Your service are our greatest treasure, and they destroy the miseries that come from ignorance.” If we could not properly perform some service which had been ordered by Śrīla Gurudeva, that would cause us great sadness. Our service to Śrīla Gurudeva seemed to consist of everything: devotion, worship, meditation, realization, austerity, and sacrifice. He was most dear to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore if we could somehow bring him satisfaction, we considered that as the highest fulfillment of our devotional practice.

If Śrīla Prabhupāda went away from us for a few days, our hearts used to ache in separation, and we used to think day and night, “When will he come back again?” Alas, how many years have passed since he left this planet! How am I spending my days in this long separation from him? Why is my soul still living here? For the sake of what kind of happiness? Perhaps due to my offenses to the holy name and at the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda my heart has become hard like a thunderbolt

and it does not feel any pain any more. If I really loved him, how could I live this worthless life here? O my merciful lord, please protect this fallen servant of yours. Even though I'm so fallen, so sinful, and so deviated from the path of devotional service, please pick me up and put me at the shelter of your lotus feet. Once you did give me shelter at your lotus feet, considering me the servant of the servant of your servants. We also got the assurance that if necessary you would come here again and again to rescue fallen souls like myself. O merciful Gurudeva, your heart is so full of affection! Please forgive all the offenses I have committed at your lotus feet, knowingly or unknowingly. The day before you left us, I clasped your lotus feet on my chest, and you looked at me with eyes full of affection. Please remember that. I am stupid, ignorant, bereft of scriptural knowledge; I do not know what is good or bad for me. Please correct me and make me worthy of your service. Please make me understand what my faults are and what my offenses are, so I will have the privilege of serving you. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said to Murāri Gupta,

*sei bhakta dhanya,
ye nā chhāre prabhura charaṇa
sei prabhu dhanya, ye nā chāre nija-jana
durdaive sevaka yadi yāya anya sthāne
sei thākura dhanya tāre chule dhari' āne*

Śrī Caitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā 4.46-47

“Glorious is that devotee who does not give up the shelter of the Lord, and glorious is that Lord who does not abandon His servant. If by chance a servant falls down and goes somewhere else, glorious is that master who captures him and brings him back by the hair.”

You gave me the Tulasī beads so I could offenselessly take the holy name. But alas, I am still indifferent to that. My worshipable Godbrothers, who are all my well-wishers, have set such examples for me by their own actions, but I was not inspired by that. I do not have the desire to take the holy name, what to speak of having love for the holy name. Have I been deprived of the mercy of the holy name due to my offenses at your lotus feet and the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas? O merciful Prabhupāda, please give me love for the holy name. Please inspire me. Let those lotus feet of yours, which I had the good fortune of holding on my chest and which are more cooling than millions of moons, be installed and worshiped in my heart for all eternity. This is my only prayer to you.

**O merciful Prabhupada,
please give me love for the Holy Name.
Please inspire me.
Let those lotus feet of yours,
which I had the good fortune
of holding on my chest
and which are more cooling
than millions of moons,
be installed and worshiped in my heart
for all eternity.
This is my only prayer to you.**



Sri

S r i R u p a n u g a G a u d i y a S a m p r a d a y a

Rupa



Just prior to the withdrawal of his manifest *lilā*, my causelessly merciful Divine Master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura, handed me over to the holy feet of that Divine Personality by having me sing this glorious prayer unto his lotus feet, Śrī Rūpa-Mañjārī-Pada. When will Śrīmad Rūpa Prabhu grace me with the dust of his holy lotus feet, ignoring my qualifications or disqualifications?

SRI RUPA MANJARI PADA

Śrī rūpa-mañjārī-pada, sei mora sampada, sei mor bhajana-pūjana—my everything is Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī’s holy feet.

There are so many classifications and positions in *rasa*: *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, *mādhura*, each with its divisions and subdivisions. In *mādhura-rasa*, Rādhārāṇī’s camp is special. There are so many gradations of *sakhīs* and then there is the group called *mañjārīs*, younger girls, who have more freedom to approach Rādhā and Govinda. When the Divine Couple are in union in a private environment, the *mañjārīs* can still approach them. If any of the materials of service are necessary, the *sakhīs* send the *mañjārīs* to that place. The *sakhīs* do not approach there. In this way the *mañjārīs* enjoy the highest confidence. The most confidential service to Rādhā and Govinda is supplied through the *mañjārīs*. Their leader is Śrī Rūpa Mañjārī. She is understood to be the leader of the whole group of younger girls, the *mañjārīs*; in *mādhura-bhajana*, she is all-in-all. This has been taught to us by Narottama Ṭhākura. This is the highest position attainable by the *jīva* soul. So she is our highest shelter.

Sei mora sampada—my wealth is in her feet. *Sei mor bhajana-pūjana*—my worship and service are also in her. *Sei mora prāṇa-dhana*, *sei mora ābharaṇa*—the very wealth and gist of my life are there; and the ornaments of my life are within her grace. *Sei mor jīvanera jīvana*—indeed, she is the very life of my life. I exist solely for her pleasure.

Sei mora rasa-nidhi—the fountainhead of all *rasa* is emanating from her feet. *Sei mora vañchā-siddhi*—and if I expect any fulfillment in life, it is also to be found in her feet. *Sei mor vedera dharama*—and if there is any duty recommended by the Vedas for me, I would like the duty to be at her feet.

Sei brata, sei tapa—if there is any gain from penance or vows, it will be found there. *Sei mora mantra-japa*—my chanting *mantra-japa* ends there. All things have only one end—they all meet in different phases in the feet of Rūpa Mañjārī. If she is satisfied all devotional practices are fulfilled. *Sei mor dharama-karama*—and any conception of duty

or activity has one end, and meet in one point: the holy feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjārī.

Anukūla habe vidhi, se-pade hoibe siddhi—my only prayer to the controller who is at the root of all affairs in this world is, “Please connect me there. Oh Absolute Manager, may you grant my prayer that all my tendencies may lead me to attain her favor. *Nirakhibo e dui nayane*—and it will be so very intense and concrete that I can see it with my own two eyes. It will not be vague, abstract, or imaginary—I want the most concrete realization by the grace of the Absolute Manager.”

Se rūpa-mādhurī-raśi, prāṇa-kuvalaya-śaśi—what sort of elegant beauty is in her holy feet! My heart leaps up as a lotus.

There are two classes of lotus: the white lotus came from the sun and the red from the moon. The *kuvalaya* is a mixture of the two. The luster of her body will feed me day and night as the life of my life which is compared to a *kuvalaya*. The *kuvalaya* is fed and nourished by the luster of the moon, and her holy feet are the moon, and my very vitality is likened to the lotus. May the luster of her beauty nourish my heart. *Praphullita habe niśi-dine*—and the lotus of my heart will grow in the rays of that luster, and dance.

Tuva adarśana-ahi—my Mistress, without seeing you, without your grace, my heart will burn to ashes. That is my present unfortunate position. *Garale jārālo dehī*—I have been bitten by the snake of separation and it has poisoned my heart—I feel like I am going to die. *Ciro-dina tāpita jīvana*—and this did not happen suddenly; I am eternally suffering the pain of separation from such a beautiful, hopeful life of fulfillment.

Hā hā rūpa koro doyā, deho more pada-chāyā, narottama loilo śaraṇa—I am in complete desperation, so for the last time I am begging your favor; otherwise I will die.

This was composed by Narottama Ṭhākura in praise of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī. He has illuminated the highest quarter of *bhajan*, spiritual life. This *sampradāya* is named the Rūpānuga-sampradāya—our *guru-paramparā* should be seen in this light. And the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjārī are the sum and substance of the life and precepts of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sārasvatī Ṭhākura.

—Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī

SRI RUPA'S LINE OF THOUGHT

Preach all over the world the teachings of Shri Rupa and Shri Raghunath with all your might. Our highest ambition in life is to turn ourselves into the dust of their feet. Ever remain united in order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one Absolute consciousness (Krishna) under the guidance of His eternally correlated aspect, His absolute subservient self, Shri Gurudeva.

Somehow manage to eke out your existence in this transitory world for the sole purpose of serving Godhead. Never give it up even if hundreds of dangers, insults and abuses come, nor be discouraged if the majority of the people in this world do not accept your words to serve Krishna sincerely. Renounce everything in life to serve Krishna, to sing about Him and to listen to talks about Him. Sing ever His Name, being humble as grass and patient like a tree.

I pray to offer this useless body of mine in the sacrifice of united singing of Shri Krishna's Name. That is my only wish. We do not desire heroic success in great deeds, nor wish to acquire immense piety in life.

Our very self consists in the dust of the feet of Shri Rupa Goswami Prabhu, my master. He is the be-all and end-all of our life. The spiritual line of Shri Bhakti Vinode Thakur will never close. You shall with greater energy devote yourselves to preach the desires of the soul. There are many men among you who are competent to do that with ability. We have no other object in life. Our only words are:

Holding a blade of grass with my teeth, I repeatedly pray, may God make me the dust of the feet of Shri Rupa in my every birth here below.

Let Shri Rupa's line of thought ever flow on earth. Let us never turn away from the united singing of the seven-tongued Name of Shri Krishna. If we can wholeheartedly be attached to it, with increasing aptitude, every desire of our soul must be fulfilled. With unflinching complete submission deserving the wholehearted followers of Shri Rupa, let you all preach the word of Shri Rupa and Raghunath with the greatest energy and without fear.

—Sri Siddhanta Saraswati

The publishers bow down to the lotus feet
of all of the followers of
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur
and gratefully acknowledge the dedication
of all of his disciples and grand disciples,
those who have dedicated their lives to propagating
the mission of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu,
under his divine inspiration.

And with regard to this publication
we wish to specifically thank:

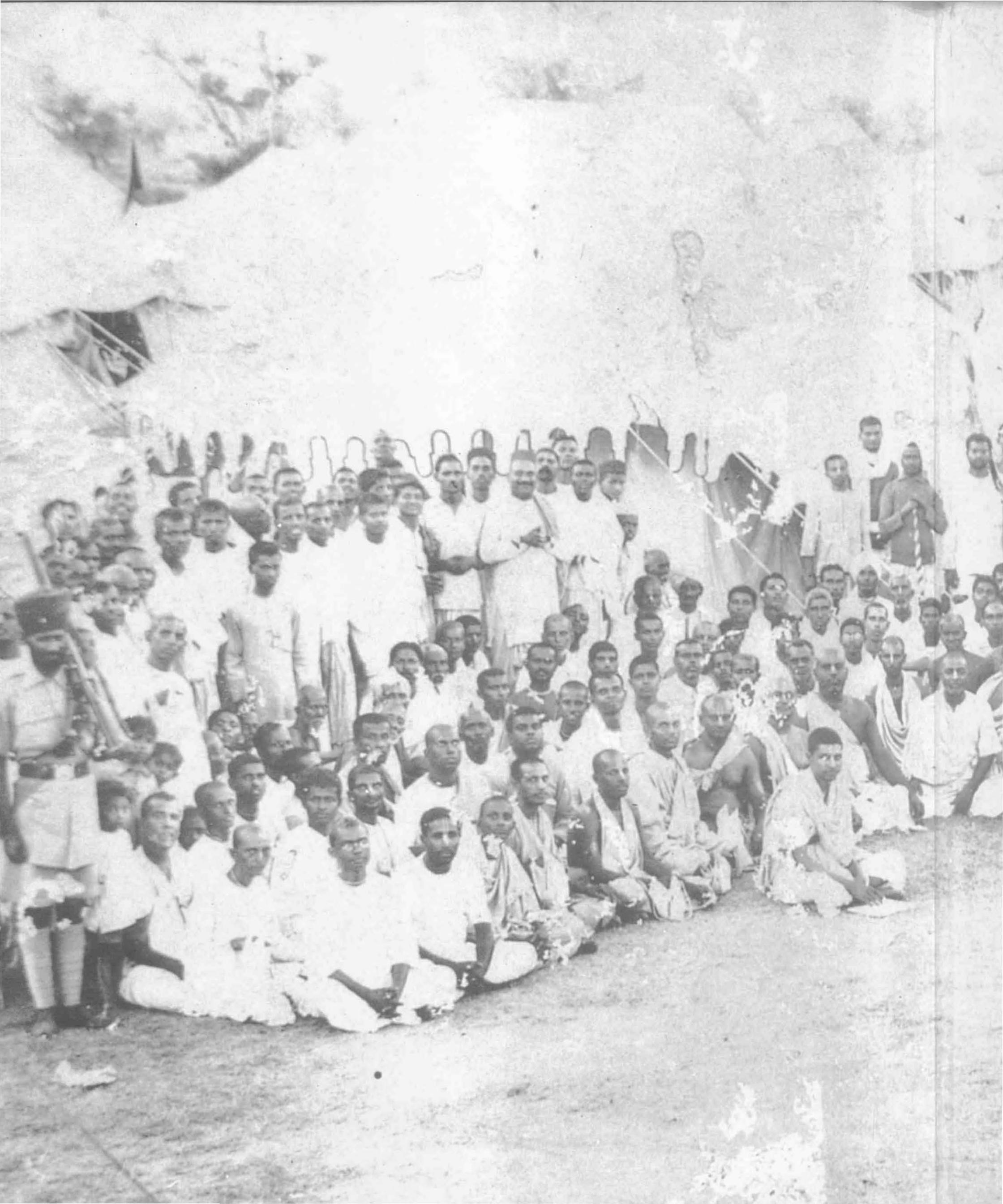
B.B. Bhagawat Maharaja
B. V. Sagar Maharaja
B.B. Bodhayan Maharaja
Devamayi Dasi
Rukmini Dasi
Rupamañjari Dasi
Jaya Shri Dasi
Vidagdha Madhava Das
Gauravani Dasi
Shobanakrishna Das
Sridhar Das
Jill Tabler
Shree Shyam Das
Vicharu Das
B.G. Sharma

Special thanks to Sripad B. G. Narasingha Maharaja
who originally presented this idea to the mandala publishing group
and supplied many of the photos and articles

This book was made possible
by the kind donations of

Govardhan das
Sudarshan das

design: room 19



श्रीश्री ब्रजमण्डल-परिषद्



