

CHAITANYA AND HIS AGE

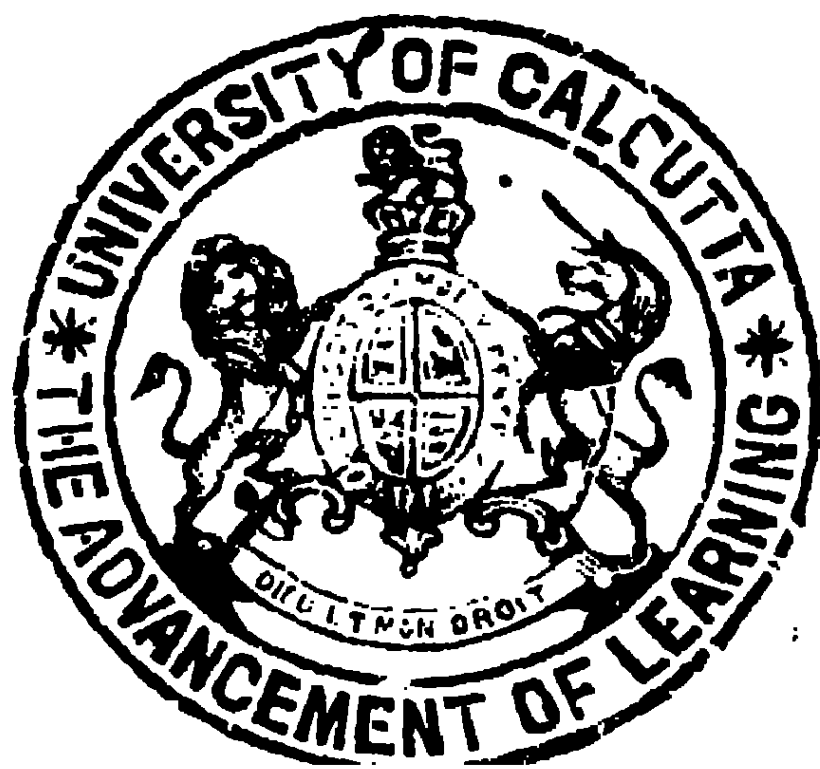
Chaitanya and His Age

(*Ramtanu Lahiri Fellowship Lectures
for the year 1919 and 1921*)

By

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Bengal, Chaitanya and his Companions, Typical Selections
from Old Bengali Literature, Folk Literature
of Bengal, the Bengali Ramayanas,
Banga Bhasa-O-Sahitya,
etc., etc.**



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Dedicated

To

The Hon'ble SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE,

Kt., C.S.I., M.A., D.L., D.Sc., Ph.D.,

F.R.A.S., F.R.S.E., F.A.S.B.

Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University,

whose resolute and heroic attempts

to rescue our Alma Mater from destruction

at the hour of her great peril

may well remind us

of the famous line of Jayadeva

“ प्रलयपयोधिजले धृतवानसिवेदं ”

with the sincere gratitude of

the Author

PREFACE

The first 190 pages of this book embody my lectures as Ramtanu Lahiri Research Fellow for the session 1919, and the remaining portion is meant as my lectures for 1921. The subject chosen for 1920 was "The Bengali Prose Style from 1800 to 1857." As this subject was to be studied by the students of the Indian Vernaculars in our University for their examination, the urgency of its treatment required me to stop the Chaitanya topics and deliver a course of lectures on the prose-style last year. These lectures were delivered and published early in 1921. And, I next hastened to revert to my half-finished lectures on Chaitanya. There are some points in this book which are a repetition of the things said in my other books, but this could not be helped. As I have attempted to give here a complete and consistent story of the great hero of my memoir I had to include all noteworthy points of his life in a short compass. There are of course many things in this book not dealt with elsewhere and I have always tried to present the incidents of Chaitanya's life in a new light. It is hoped that the sketch herein presented will, by its comprehensive character, satisfy the curiosity of all students

who want to have a clear account of Chaitanya, his religious views and of the sects that follow his religion. Everything said in this book is based on old authority, though I have not given references in all cases, as it would make the book heavy with foot-notes and more or less mar its popular character. The readers will find one and all of such references in the works mentioned in the bibliography given on pages 97-98 of this book.

One thing has struck me in regard to the recognition of the Vaisnavas by the Hindu society in general. The Goswamies of Khardah and Santipur—the descendants of Nityananda and Adwaita respectively—not only enjoy the highest social rank amongst the Vaisnavas but have quite a respectable standing amongst the lay Brahmin community. My idea was that they created this position outside their own society, even after they had broken stringent caste-rules, through the sheer dint of their noble sacrifices and high spirituality. But quite lately a book named “Sri Nityānanda-vamsāvali-O-Sādhanā” written by Pandit Kshirodbihari Goswami—a direct descendant of Nityananda—has disillusioned me on this point. I now find that the descendants of Nityananda and Adwaita had very nearly become outcastes in the primitive stages of the promulgation of the Chaitanya cult. They redeemed themselves, however, in

the eyes to the Brahmin community, outside their own ranks, by contriving to enter into frequent matrimonial alliances with the 'kulin' Brahmins of the mother society, often by satisfying large pecuniary demands of the latter. This alliance with a large number of 'kulins' has gradually made their position secure in the Hindu society. This shews that the caste-rules amongst the Hindus is a factor of so great an importance that though the efforts of a prophet may for a time succeed in unloosing its hold upon our people, it reasserts itself with all its rigidity, a short while after. And, however mighty the enemy, it is only by manœuvres, tactics and bribes that he can expect to gain his lost position in society—not by open war. The Sahajiyas disregard the caste-rules at night, fearing exposure in daylight. It is for this reason that some of them have compared themselves with bats (p. 380).

I take this opportunity of expressing my hearty thanks to Dr. Sylvain Levi, the distinguished Orientalist, who has kindly written a fore-word for this book in the form of a letter. The high compliments that a scholar of his world-wide fame has given me, have been very gratifying to me, as indeed they would have been to any Indian. There can be no question as to the sincerity of his appreciation, though I feel that there may have been a friendly bias. I regret, however, that my presentation of Chaitanya does not appear to be sufficiently indicative of the

greatness of his character, and Dr. Levi will not give him a place in the ranks of the world's greatest men. He refers to Chaitanya's religion being restricted to a narrow geographical area contrasting it to that of Buddha. The universal recognition of the Buddha and a few other greatest leaders of the world in the spiritual domain is chiefly due to political causes, the advantage of which Bengal of the 16th century could not evidently possess. Vaisnavism of Bengal is, besides, the youngest of the world's reputed creeds, so it is perhaps premature to pass a judgment now on Chaitanya's work. Regarding the view that the theology of Chaitanya lacks originality, the codes of all religions of the world may be traced to earlier sources; and a complicated code of Ethics is not, in my humble opinion, always the true criterion of the greatness of a faith. The infusion of life into the universal truths and their presentation in the most attractive form are, I submit, a far truer test. I cannot follow the reason that love for God is a peculiar or local feature of Indian religions, which cannot be appreciated outside India. The difference, I think, lies in the fact that Europe has not yet transcended the ethical limits, beyond which lies the domain of mystic felicities. Chaitanya did not ignore mankind; he tried to lead men to the dizzy heights of paradise, which my learned friend, following the limitations of Christian theology,

speaks of as "forbidden." I agree with him so far that Chaitanya cannot have a universal recognition in this materialistic age. But I verily believe that when this age will be followed by one of spiritual awakening all over the world, he will be differently judged. He brought to the doors of ordinary men the highest spiritual bliss of divine love, which like the stream of the holy Ganges, lay entangled in the meshes of Indian religious philosophy, more knotty than the matted locks of Siva. I hope, my esteemed friend will not take me amiss. As a Bengali, it is natural for me to be prejudiced in favour of my Bengali apostle. But love always sanctifies the soul. If I have been blind to the defects of Chaitanya's religious system, I do not regret it. I would in that case only crave my friend's forgiveness. Speaking for myself, my heart, more than to any logic, responds to the couplet first sung by Nityananda :

"One who admires Chaitanya and sings praises of him, is dear to me as my life."

I hold myself fully responsible for the numerous misprints and errors which will be found in this book, and do not accuse anybody. I am not a good proof-reader and that is all that I can plead as my excuse.

7, VISWAKOSH LANE,

CALCUTTA.

The 15th April 1922.

} DINESH CHANDRA SEN.

FOREWORD

BY

DR. SYLVAIN LÉVI.

MON CHER AMI,

Vous m'avez demandé une préface pour votre livre : " Chaitanya et son époque." Je n'ai guère de compétence sur ce domaine ; ce que j'en connais, je le dois essentiellement à vos ouvrages : depuis le jour où j'ai lu avec une émotion inoubliable votre " Histoire de la Langue et de la Littérature Bengalie " j'ai suivi avec un intérêt qui ne s'est jamais ralenti votre activité si féconde, et 'cest ainsi que, grâce à vous, le Bengale du temps de Chaitanya m'est devenu familier. J'avais eu pourtant l'occasion d'effleurer le sujet il y a très longtemps, au début de mes études. Je commençais à recueillir des matériaux en vue de ma thèse sur le Théâtre Indien ; j'avais trouvé à la Bibliothèque Nationale à Paris, un vieux manuscrit en écriture bengalie qui contenait le traité de Rūpa Gosvāmin sur l'art dramatique (nāṭya) ; je fus frappé par la ferveur de cet écrivain qui greffait sur un recueil de définitions banales une longue suite d'hymnes

enthousiastes à Krishna; ce fut pour moi l'occasion de m'initier au mouvement inspiré par Chaitanya. Je lus ensuite, avec une surprise et une admiration que je retrouve encore après tant d'années, le drame original et puissant où Kavikarnāpūra met audacieusement en scène Chaitanya et ses compagnons. J'ai longtemps rêvé d'en donner une traduction parallèlement à celle du Prabodhachandrodaya, pour mettre en contraste l'ingéniosité raffinée de l'un et la fougue passionnée de l'autre. J'ai traduit le Prabodhachandrodaya, et j'ai dû m'en tenir là, faute de temps. Je sais gré à votre livre de me ramener vers le héros que j'avais trop négligé, et de me le montrer dans une intensité de lumière qui laisse par instants les yeux un peu éblouis.

Vous possédez à un degré extraordinaire le don capital de l'historien, qui est de projeter la vie sur le passé mort. C'est un don de poète autant que d'historien, et vous êtes si essentiellement poète que votre style oscille entre l'épopée et le lyrisme. Ce besoin de vie que vous portez en vous ne vous permet pas de vous arrêter à ces froides combinaisons de possibilités qui sont partout le fond de l'histoire et dans l'Inde plus que partout ailleurs. La pénurie des documents positifs y laisse à chaque instant l'historien embarrassé pour rattacher dans une continuité provisoire la série des faits connus. Vous ne pouvez pas vous résigner à cette attitude

d'expectative. Vous faites résolument la part de l'impossible ; mais cette discrimination une fois opérée, le possible glisse aisément au probable, et le probable au certain.

C'est là un effet fatal de votre imagination fougueuse. Pourtant vous n'êtes pas sans connaître ni reconnaître les exigences de la plus sévère critique, vous épuyez tous les documents avec la patience d'un érudit, et vous pressez vos étudiants avec une éloquence pathétique de rechercher les documents encore inédits. Si j'étais plus jeune, j'aurais voulu vous suivre et je ne doute pas, pour l'honneur du Bengale que vos appels soient accueillis avec empressement par la jeunesse studieuse. Une figure comme Chaitanya mérite les hommages d'un pays entier ; il est juste que les savants lui consacrent leurs veilles, comme les paysans lui consacrent leurs chants.

Je suis assez disposé (et j'ai tort peut-être) à faire bon marché de sa theologie qui m'apparaît plutôt indifférente et de seconde main, sans puissance d'invention ou de système ; ses autres qualités, d'orateur, de poète, de lingiuste, etc., n'auraient pas suffi à le mettre hors de pair. Mais ce que donne à sa personnalité un relief unique, c'est le don d'amour qu'il a su porter jusqu'à l'extrême limite des possibilités humaines, en le tournant tout entier sur Krishna, et qui s'est associé spontanément chez lui à la

beauté créatrice de l'art. Sa conception de la danse, appliquée à la propagande de l'amour divin aurait séduit l'esthétique délicate de la Grèce ; elle aurait sans doute placé Chaitanya à côté d'Orphée. Qu'il y ait eu, dans ses transes mystiques, un élément maladif, vous ne le contestez pas ; vous citez un de ses propos où il parle lui-même de ses attaques d'épilepsie. Mais cette faiblesse même me plaît ; elle est la part de la " bête," pour reprendre les termes si expressifs de Pascal, chez un être où la part de " l'ange " est si belle. Je sens, chez ce *sannyâsi* ivre d'amour, la sourde lutte sans cesse déchaînée, et qui le jette à terre, écumant, au milieu des visions qui lui découvraient un monde interdit.

Vous avez vous-même, en plus d'un passage, évoqué par comparaison la figure du Bouddha, cet autre héros indien de l'amour universel. Mais j'ai peur que votre passion dévote et presque fanatique pour Chaitanya vous ait rendu un peu injuste à l'égard de son grand rival. Vous aimez à insister sur l'œuvre sociale de fraternité humaine courageusement poursuivie et en partie réalisée par le missionnaire de Krishna ; vous vous plaisez à montrer les Musulmans ou les Musulmanisés admis dans son église, et vous glorifiez l'esprit de " catholicité " qui anime sa prédication. Ici, je le déclare franchement, je ne puis vous suivre. Vous pourrez mettre en cause, et peut-être avec raison,

mes préventions d'Occidental ; mais le respect absolu du sens établi pour les mots qu'on emploie est la condition primordiale d'une discussion, si on la veut loyale et utile, et dans le cas présent, comme partout et toujours, la justesse du mot est solidaire avec la justesse de l'idée. Le terme de "catholicité," quand il ne désigne pas par excellence tous les fidèles de l'Eglise Catholique, garde le sens qu'il tient de son origine grecque, indépendamment du suffixe latin qui s'y est accroché ; il signifie à peu près l'universalité, le monde pris "dans son ensemble" (*καθ' ολου*). Dans l'immensité presque infinie de l'histoire religieuse de l'Inde, si riche en personnalités et en créations, le Bouddha est uniquement et exclusivement le seul à propos de qui on puisse employer ce terme. Que sa notion personnelle de l'homme ait dépassé les frontières de l'Inde pour s'étendre aussi loin que celle d'un Socrate ou d'un Jésus, rien ne nous permet soit de l'affirmer, soit de le nier. Mais le fait est que l'Eglise née de son inspiration a converti la plus grande partie de l'Asie. Aucune autre croyance originaire de l'Inde, orthodoxe ou hérétique, n'a connu ce succès. Vous avez recueilli pieusement de légers indices qui vous permettent de supposer que l'influence de Chaitanya a dépassé les frontières du Bengale, Orissa compris ; en réalité le mouvement de Chaitanya est régional, très loin d'être "catholique", autrement dit : universellement humain.

L'Inde, à coup sûr, a le droit de se complaire dans son "splendide isolement," comme d'autres peuples se sont flatés de le faire ; mais elle doit alors loyalement accepter les restrictions qui en découlent. Le génie hellénique et le génie hébraïque ont conçu l'homme universel, l'un dans l'ordre philosophique, l'autre dans l'ordre religieux : ils ont tendu de tous leurs efforts à le réaliser, et ils y ont prodigieusement réussi. L'Inde a prétendu limiter son horizon au cadre nettement défini de ses frontières naturelles, elle a délibérément ignoré le reste du monde. Elle s'est façonné, elle a maintenu un type d'organisation religieuse et sociale qui vise à l'exclusion rigoureuse de l'étranger. La faillite ultime du bouddhisme dans l'Inde est le triomphe suprême du nationalisme hindou ; les seuls liens qui rattachaient l'Inde à la grande communauté humaine étaient définitivement anéantis. Chaitanya peut être un des plus grands voyants de l'Inde ; l'humanité ne le réclame pas comme un de ses grands hommes ; elle ne le reconnaît point, parcequ'il l'a méconnue.

KATMUNDU,

Nepal, 29 Juin 1922.

FOREWORD

BY

DR. SYLVAIN LEVI.

(Translated from French by Captain J. W. Petavel, R.E., Retired, Lecturer on the Poverty Problem, Calcutta University and Principal, Maharaja of Kasimbazar's Polytechnic Institute.)

Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen.

DEAR FRIEND,

You have asked me for a preface for your book "Chaitanya and his Age" but I am hardly qualified to give it, for what I know of the subject I owe mainly to your works. From the day when with feelings I shall never forget, I read your History of Bengali Language and Literature, I have followed your fruitful activity with a degree of interest that has never diminished, and thus, thanks to you, Bengal of the time of Chaitanya has become familiar to me. I had, however, skimmed through the subject a long time ago in the early days of my studies, when I was collecting notes for my work on the Indian theatre. I had found in the 'Bibliothèque Nationale' an old manuscript in Bengali script

that contained the treatise of Rupa Goswami on dramatic art (Natya). I was struck by the enthusiasm of the writer who grafted on a compilation of commonplace definitions a long series of fervent hymns to Krishna.

That put me first into touch with the movement inspired by Chaitanya. Subsequently I read with a degree of surprise and admiration that I experience again after these many years, the original and powerful drama in which Kavi Karnapur boldly brought Chaitanya and his companions on to the stage. I long cherished the ambition to give a translation of it by the side of that of the Prabodh Chandrodaya, to emphasise the contrast between the refined ingenuity of the one and the passionate ardour of the other. I managed to translate Prabodh Chandrodaya but was compelled to stop there as I had no time to do more. I must be thankful to your book for having brought me back towards the hero I have neglected, and for having shown him to me in intense light that at times dazzles one's eyes.

You possess in an extraordinary degree the capital gift of the historian which is to make the dead past live. It is a poet's gift as much as a historian's, and you are so essentially a poet that your style alternates between the lyric and the epic. This instinctive desire to make things living that is characteristic of you, does not

allow you to be stopped over the cold study of possibilities that is everywhere the foundation of the historian's work, and especially so in India. The lack of authoritative documents leaves the Indian historian constantly puzzled to link known facts together in some degree of continuity. You cannot resign yourself to the expectant attitude. You resolutely make the best of an impossible situation, but once your choice made, speculation glides unperceptibly into probability, and probability into certainty. This is the inevitable result of your fervent imagination. Nevertheless you do not fail to appreciate and to recognise the requirements of the most severe criticism (you do not lose your critical faculty). You examine all the documents with the perseverance of the patient scholar, and appeal to your students with touching eloquence to seek for manuscripts still unpublished. If I were younger, I would have wished to follow you, and I have no doubt that, for the honour of Bengal, your appeal will be taken up enthusiastically by her studious youth. Such a figure as Chaitanya deserves the homage of the whole country. It is right that the learned should honour him by burning their midnight oil studying him, as the peasants honour him by consecrating their songs to him. I am quite inclined (though perhaps I am wrong) to think less of his theology, which seems to me rather indifferent and second-hand

not showing power of invention or method. His other qualities as an orator, as a poet, as a linguist, etc., would not seem to me sufficient to make him without an equal. But that which marks him as an outstanding personality is the gift of love that he has been able to carry to the extreme limits of human capacity centering it entirely upon Krishna, and which his disposition caused him to associate spontaneously with the creative beauty of art. His conception of dance applied to the propaganda of divine love, would have appealed to the fine æsthetic sense of the ancient Greeks and would no doubt have given Chaitanya a place by the side of Orpheus. That there was in his mystic trances an abnormal element you do not contest. You indeed quote one of the passages where he himself speaks of his epileptic fits. But even this weakness is pleasing to me. We see in it the manifestation of the "animal-side" of man, to use Pascal's expressive language, in a being in whom the manifestation of the "angel-side" is so beautiful. I feel that silent strife going on incessantly in this *sanyasi*, intoxicated with love, and occasionally throwing him down foaming at the mouth in the midst of his vision that has revealed a forbidden paradise to him.

(You have yourself, in more than one passage, compared him to the Buddha—this other Indian hero of universal love. But, I am afraid, your

passionate and somewhat fanatical devotion to Chaitanya has made you a little unjust towards his great rival. You like to insist on the social work of human brotherhood courageously pursued, and partly realised, by the missionary of Krishna. You delight in showing the Musalmans or converts to Islam admitted into his church, and you glorify the "catholic" spirit that characterises his preachings. Here I frankly declare that I cannot follow you. You may urge, and perhaps justly, my limitations as a Westerner, but an absolute regard for the accepted meanings of words that one uses is the primary condition of frank and useful discussion, and in the present case, as everywhere and always, the accuracy of the word is one and the same with the accuracy of idea. The word catholicity, when it is not used to designate the followers of the Catholic Church, keeps its meaning derived from the Greek origin, independently of the Latin suffix that has been attached to it. It signifies almost universality—the world approximately as a whole. In the almost unfathomable depths of India's religious history, so rich in personalities, both real and imaginary, the Buddha stands alone, as the one in connection with whom the term can be used. There is nothing to justify us either in affirming or denying that his particular conception of mankind has passed the limits of India to extend as far

as the ideas of Socrates or Jesus extended. But the fact is that the church that his inspiration brought into existence has won the greater part of Asia. No other faith originating in India, orthodox or heterodox, has ever succeeded in doing that. You have carefully gathered together and treasured slight indications that allow you to think that the influence of Chaitanya has passed the limits of Bengal and Orissa. As a matter of fact, the Chaitanya-movement is local, far from being "Catholic," *i.e.*, in other words, universally human. India has certainly the right to take pride in her splendid isolation, just as, indeed, some other countries have chosen to do. But then she must frankly accept the limitations which accompany such an attitude. The genius of the Greeks and of the Hebrews conceived humanity as a whole; the former conceived man in the domain of philosophy, and the latter in that of religion. They tried with all their efforts to realise that ideal, and attained prodigious success. India has had the ambition of limiting her horizon within clearly defined natural boundaries. She had deliberately ignored the rest of the world. She created for herself, and has maintained, a kind of religious and social organisation the object of which is strictly to exclude foreigners. The ultimate failure of Buddhism in India is the supreme triumph of Hindu nationalism. The

only links that connected India with the rest of the great human family were finally destroyed. Chaitanya may be one of the greatest seers of India. Humanity, however, does not recognise him as one of its great men. He did not recognise mankind. So mankind does not recognise him.

KHATMUND,

27th June, 1922.

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Chaitanya and his Age

From Old Records

CHAPTER I

CONDITION OF BENGAL BEFORE THE ADVENT OF CHAITANYA

- (i) Vices brought on by reaction against Buddhist asceticism.
- (ii) Chandi Das as precursor of Chaitanyaic age.
- (iii) Influence of the Bhāgavata and other sacred works.
- (iv) Vaisnavism in Bengal before Chaitanya.
- (v) The political condition of the period.

(i) *Vices brought on by reaction against Buddhist asceticism.*

If we take a bird's-eye view of the religious aspects of Bengal from the eleventh to the twelfth century, we shall be in a position to ascertain the causes that have led to the development of the *bhakti*-cult in this province.

Chaitanya's advent has produced a far-reaching effect on the religious and social history of Bengal, and in order to judge and explain how this could be possible, a review of the condition of the religious life and of the social evolution that was going on in this country, prior to the advent of Chaitanya, is essential from many points of view. We shall chiefly restrict ourselves, however, to the evidences that have been found in Bengali literature for arriving at our conclusions.

The Nath-cult which originated with Minanath and Goraksha Nath had already an extensive literature in Bengali in the thirteenth century, and there was the Dharma-cult also, probably co-eval with the Nath-creed and having many points in common. The Dharma-cult was a degraded form of Buddhism, and Nathism was a compromise between Saivism and Buddhism. The followers of both the sects believed in 'Niranjan' and 'Dharma,' though the Nath-cult seems to have adhered more closely to Siva worship. Both believed in miracles, and in the supernatural powers of the Siddhas. Kalipa, Haripa and Kanupa, are spoken of in terms of high esteem in the literatures of both the cults, and are held in higher regard than even the gods of heaven. But we are not

Religious condition
of Mediæval Bengal.

The Nath and
Dharma-cults.

The common features.

at present concerned with the details of the respective creeds.

Nathism contributed largely to our Vernacular in its primitive stages, and chief among these contributions are the Maynamati songs presented to us from different parts of Bengal in manifold forms. These songs originated in Eastern and Northern Bengal and were spread by the propounders of the Nath-cult over all parts of India. If the reason is asked as to why these songs are to be included in the Nath-literature, I should say that they relate mainly to the glories of Goraksha Nath, the Nath-leader, and of Harisiddha and Maynamati, his two Bengali disciples. There are many incidents described in these songs, but the keynote to them is struck in the panegyrics bestowed on the power of the Siddhas of the Nath-cult. The form in which these songs have come down to us has been considerably modernised by the rhapsodists of the later ages, but the original framework is of the 11th and 12th centuries, and evidences of this lie strewn over the whole range of this lyrical literature.

But though the Maynamati songs traverse by far a wider field, the most strikingly significant note, however, of the Nath-cult is to be found

in the Goraksha-Bijay itself—
 Goraksha Bijay. a Bengali work which contains an account of how Goraksha Nath redeemed his *guru* Mina Nath from his great spiritual

degradation. This book is sometimes called the 'Mina-Chetana' or restoration of Mina Nath to spiritual consciousness. The tone of the poem is elevated and calm, and a quiet philosophy and spirit of stern asceticism pervade the work. The doctrines of Yoga as practised by the Naths are discussed here in the '*Sandhya-bhasha*' or 'the language of twilight' as it has been called by some scholars, in which the Buddha-Doha-O-Gan and many other works were written.

In this literature of the Nath-cult we find asceticism of a high order based on an observance of moral virtues. An un-
The high moral tone. impeachable sexual integrity is aimed at, and preserved among many temptations by the heroes of these poems, and chief amongst them Goraksha Nath, the prince of the Yogis, rises to our view surrounded by many mystic and legendary tales, resplendent in his vows, like the peak of a mountain, when sunrise is just dispelling the mist around it. He sets at naught all the temptations that a man ever faced from a woman, and saves Mina Nath from the moral pitfall to which the latter had unheedingly fallen.

In the songs of Maynamati also we find Prince Gopichandra, facing temptations and becoming glorious by overcoming them. Hira, the wealthy harlot, to whose fascinations a hundred youths of noble lineage

had succumbed, proved powerless before our hero. In the Dharma-literature Prince Lou Sen conquers passions like a Yogi. Women renowned for their beauty and accomplishments try him, but he proves invincible. Not only unimpeachable in sexual morality, the principal characters are endowed with virtues of truthfulness and integrity which hold to light some of the great features of Buddhistic moral tenets. Where could we find a greater martyr at the altar of truth and loyalty than Kalu-Dom, the general of Lou Sen? Harihara Baity's struggle for overcoming the temptations of worldly prosperities on the one hand, and fears of grim persecution on the other, resulting in his ultimate triumph, invests him with a solemn grandeur which commands our admiration. The Dharma-mangal songs and those of Maynamati have certainly a crude humour and are spotted with the blemishes of style of illiterate people. But the great idea is there, the idea of unstinted morality, of loyalty and devotion to the king, which sets all dangers at naught; of adherence to truth, knowing the result to be confiscation of property and death. The characters are often no doubt drawn by clownish hands; there is a forest of wild legends, which almost stifle the breath of the readers with their incredibleness and prolixity; the crudeness of descriptions and their monotony are often tiresome to the extreme. But these

do not diminish at all the lustre of faith that illuminates the pages,—faith in the great moral virtues which truly ennoble a race.

But at this very time when stern asceticism and strength of character were being

Reaction.

glorified, we find another side of the picture in which the forces of reaction are clearly indicated. Vaisnavism of old school and Tantricism are shown on the reverse of the picture. We find the people of rustic villages, amongst whom the practice of Yoga and Tantric culture had been current in those days, revolting against all rigour of asceticism and yielding to profligacy and sexual pleasures. We find the courts of kings steeped in these vices, and favouring libertinism in the name of religion by a quite royal indulgence in sensuous pleasures. We find *tantrics*, originally imbued with the object of attaining a high spiritual goal, sinking low in debauchery. Men and women sat freely around the Chakra or the *circle* where all moral laws were set at naught. King Ballala Sen (1100-1169 A. D.) had a mistress of the Chandal-caste named Padmini whom he openly raised above the status of his chief queen, and obliged many of his noblemen to eat the food served by her. “वज्रासखावदेषिष” is a line which we frequently come across in our genealogical records, accounting for the loss of social status of particular members of our community, and the

title **सर्वघोटी** is a contemptuous epithet by which our social leaders branded those who obtained rewards from the king, for taking food prepared by Padmini. It is said that this woman was very handsome and was brought by the king to his palace for helping him in *tantric* practices. The inscriptions openly praise Lakshman Sen for intriguing with the beautiful Kalinga women.¹ Abhiram Goswami born in 1095 A.D., a devout Vaisnava, kept a mistress named Malini and this woman is publicly applauded in the Vaisnava traditions.² Jayadev himself counts it a point of glory to mention the name of Padmavati in his songs. She was a "seva-dasi" of Jagannath temple, and Shekha Subhodaya says that she used to dance in the court of Lakshman Sen, and several authorities confirm that she had been at first dedicated to the Puri temple from where Jayadev picked her up.³ Jayadev glories in calling himself "पद्मावती-चरण-चारण चक्रवर्ती" implying that she danced, while he used to play upon some musical instrument to keep time. The poets of this period sang panegyrics of their patrons the kings, for their licentiousness; and the copper-plate inscriptions

¹ "यस्य सखायसेनस्य बीमारकेलिः कलिवाङ्मनाभिः" I.A.S.B., Dec. 1909, p. 473.

² See Abhiram Tattwa, Abhiram Patal and Abiramilamrita (published by Bhupaticharan Goswami and Atulobandra Goswami).

³ See Bhaktamala by Chandra Datta and Joydeva Charitra by Banamali Das.

also unmistakably indicate the tendencies of the age by describing the situations of Siva and Parvati in close embrace, in a language not quite becoming or decent according to modern taste.¹ On the door-ways of the Puri and Kanaraka temples are found many human figures in bas-relief, which are grossly vulgar. In the ground-floor of the Sahitya Parisat buildings, an image of Siva embracing Parvati is preserved in the gallery of statues; this image of Siva is shockingly vulgar and evidently belongs to the age of which we have been speaking. The lays of Jayadev which sometimes rise to great spiritual heights are indecent in many places and the same should be said of the Pavana-duta by the poet Dhoi of Lakshman Sen's court. This country is prone to indulge in religious speculations and there is no lack of subtle interpretations attempting to glorify what a moralist would justly condemn. But when for three centuries beginning from the 12th, we find our art, architecture and poetry all dominated by the same spirit of indecency, we must admit that during the decline of Hindu power, the standard of morality had become low amongst our people, due, as I have already said, to "a spirit of reaction against the stern attitude of the Buddhist and Nath ascetics towards materialistic life. This indecency and predilection for sensuous

¹ See I.A.S.B., Dec. 1909., p. 471, and *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, p. 807.

life are manifest in popular literatures of the Krishna and Siva cults. In the Siva songs we have vulgar tales of the Great God's gallantry, amongst the low class women of the Kuchni and Dome castes. The evil-eyed jealousy of Parvati described by Rameswar and other poets has undoubtedly some very gross humour in it. In one of the poems we find her complaining that though she had tried to keep Siva at home at night by tying the edge of her *sari* to his tigerskin, it proved of no avail, as the Great God ran away to meet the Kuchni-women as soon as she fell asleep. To the songs of Manasa Devi these Siva songs are found prefixed as prologues, and in the Krishna Kirtan of Chandi Das we find the same vulgar taste, which has given rise to an animated discussion amongst scholars, some of whom, familiar with the highly refined and platonic songs of the great poet, have expressed a doubt as to the genuineness of the book. In Rangpore, Cooch-behar, and indeed in many parts of North Bengal, Krishna *dhamalies* are still sung in which Krishna as a rustic cow-herd in clownish' humour pursues Radha for an embrace or a kiss, and greater the vulgarity in these songs, the greater is the fun enjoyed by the farmers and the artizans of the country-side. However greatly these songs may have been modernised in their language, their origin should no doubt be traced to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and

our readers will find that Chandi Das, being a poet of that age, was at first an exponent of the popular poetical sentiments, which, intense in their enjoyment of sensual life, were also vulgar to the extreme. It was the prevalent fashion in that age to be addicted to a woman other than one's own wife for *tantric* practices. And amongst the Buddhist of the latter-day Mahayana school and among their *bhikshus* and *bhikshunis*, the Sahaja Dharma became associated with illicit love. In the Buddha-Gan-O-Doha we have many passages in which this sexual love is used as symbolic of the Sahajia concept of bliss. Chandi Das says that at his time Sahajia love was a mania with young men, and that many noble-minded youths started their career of love with the avowed object of reaching a spiritual goal; this, however, often proved inaccessible to them, and in their attempts to scale the height, they fell down to the lowest pit of vices, rolling in the mire of sensuous pleasures. The poet says that it is a dangerous game for young men to play, as one in a million, and not two, may conquer flesh and find the true spiritual heaven in woman's love. The *tantrics* not only became steeped in sexual vices but were dreaded for inhuman cruelties committed in the name of religion. We have it in the Narottama Bilasha that a sect of vicious *tantrics* offered human sacrifices to Kali and danced with

swords in hands before her image in horrid ecstasy and no passer-by was safe, if unfortunately he happened to walk by the side of the temple at the time. "Even Brahmins are then seized and sacrificed before the goddess."¹ In the Chaitanya Bhāgavat we have an elaborate description of the robbers who worshipped Kali on the eve of an expedition for plundering the house of an innocent citizen named Hiranya Pundit.

The Hindu Renaissance had just commenced among the lay people of this province, but they were still a prey to those vices which *tantricism* and vitiated Buddhism had brought on during the decline of spiritual forces that had originally inspired those noble creeds and their rituals. We find drunkards, who spurned all rules of Hinduism, ate beef and ham, though they were Brahmins.¹ We find widows of higher classes eating meat and fish and people spending enormous sums in making clay idols for worship.² They sang songs of Siva or Manasa Devi, and of Pal kings for whole nights. These songs, however, generally speaking, related to pastoral life with all its crude love-makings; and faith in gods they worshipped was but half-expressed in the imperfect popular dialect not yet fully developed for literary composition. "Religion" laments Brindaban, Das, "was reduced to a

¹ Narattom Bilash, Canto VII.

² Chaitanya Bhagavata, Madhya, Chap. XIII and Jayananda's Chaitanya Mangal.

mere form and there was no faith in men."¹ Many people worshipped Jaksha, the lord of wealth, with offerings of wine and meat.

Pantheism, generally speaking, was the religion of the learned during this period. When Chaitanya's followers sang aloud the name of God many people of Nadia condemned it saying "Who is the god for whom all these frenzied uproar is meant? Man is his own saviour and his own god. Where could be any God outside this human frame?"² Chaitanya travelled through the whole of Southern India and met Dhundiram Tirtha of Tungabhadra, Mathura-nath of Tripadi, Bhargadev of Tripatra, Bharati Gossain of Chandipore, and many leaders of Sannyasis, who were staunch supporters of pantheism. Vasudeva Sarbabhouma, a great Sanskrit scholar of Bengal, was himself one such. He did not believe in a personal god and never took the *mahaprasad* of Puri temple before his conversion to Vaisnavism later on.

Chaitanya-chandrodaya Natak gives us a faithful account of the sort of religious life that was around. It speaks of Sannyasis who remained with closed eyes as if lost in deep meditation, but when they heard the jingling sound of

Pantheistic views
amongst scholars.

False Sannyasis.

bracelets, indicating the approach of women, they slowly opened their eyes and looked with lust; of pantheists who believed in no other gods than their own selves; of Kapalikas, both Buddhists and Sivaites, who were false Tantrics, of men who were given to visiting shrines for mere curiosity without any spiritual object; and of Sannyasis whose pride was as great as their haughtiness of temper.

Thus we see that the grandeur of moral virtues upon which Buddhism had been founded was wellnigh reduced to atoms. Nagarjuna's school, greatly depraved and confused with crude superstitious beliefs expounded the worship of tortoise and owl (*ulluka*) with curious speculative theories about the origin of the Universe. Their temples held rustic festivities and though a glimmer of faith was occasionally seen in them, the Mahayana had spent its best energies and could no longer elevate the people. The *tantrics* vainly strove with the help of human corpses, wine and women to attain a religious goal; and the pantheists in their self-sufficiency and pride of scholarship were far off from that

humility and spiritual meekness which may alone lead to the growth of true faith. The

The impetus received from Islam.

Islam, moreover, with its great energy and appeal to personal God knocked, about this time, at the gate of Bengal declaring that One Great God was the supporter of the virtuous as He was the

supporter of the world. Their vehement faith was irresistible and led the Hindu mind involuntarily to the old Aryan faith in a personal God as the many speculative and philosophical theories on religion current in the country could no longer satisfy their growing spiritual need. Our province specially was in need of a saviour, of one who would prove that the true well of spiritual bliss sprang from faith and not from intellectual subtleties, and that moral law and a sense of brotherhood were the concomitant forces of love which could alone bring the Incomprehensible One within human realisation.

CHANDI DAS.

At this juncture, when the cries of the Mahayana Buddhism for the cause of moral virtues were becoming less and less audible with the gradual disappearance of that faith from the Gangetic valley—when Tantricism was losing strength as a religious force and leading men to revel in debaucheries—when the temple and the court, poetry and art delighted in sensuousness,—there appeared on our religious and literary horizon a great poet who representing the glow and ardour of impassioned love—the significant feature of the past school—became the harbinger of a new age which soon after dawned on our moral and spiritual life and charged it with the white heat of its emotional bliss.

We cannot give any accurate date as regards any incident of Chandi Das's life. There is of course an enigmatic verse which has been construed into implying that in the year 1403 A.D. Chandi Das had composed 996 songs. But the mysterious writing will not, I am afraid, stand the test of historical scrutiny and we cannot use it as evidence of any value.

There are some anonymous verses in which it is stated that Chandi Das and Vidyapati met on the banks of the Ganges, that during the interview one Rupanarayan—Raja of Mithila— or whoever he might have been, was present, and that the poets enjoyed each other's company and discussed their favourite topic of love from many different points of view. These anonymous songs are undated, and are to be found in the *Padakalpataru* compiled in the middle of the 18th century. Babu Nagendranath Gupta, the learned editor of Vidyapati's poems, does not attach any historical value to this tradition, though he does not support his views by any reason. But we cannot summarily reject a tradition to which some of our early writers have subscribed; the details of conversation between the two poets as given by these writers may be called in question, but the interview itself may be accepted as a historical incident.

But all the same, we do not possess any definite evidence as regards the time when Chandi Das

lived. We may, however, make an approximate guess from certain facts. Narahari Sarkar, one of the most intimate friends of Chaitanya and born not later than 1465 A.D., sings an eulogistic song about the poet in which he says that Chandī Das's poems had literally flooded the country at his time, that Chandī Das was as remarkable a musician as he was a poet, and that he was a learned scholar whose songs were inspired by love for Rami—the washerwoman. It is well-known to all that Chaitanya chanted the songs of Chandī Das night and day. None of the historical works written about Chaitanya or his followers gives any firsthand information about the incidents of Chandī Das's life though many lyrical songs of the 15th century and of later periods are prolific in their praise of the poet. Ishan Nagar, who wrote a biography of Adwaita in 1560 A.D., refers to an interview which the latter had with Vidyapati probably in the year 1454. Had Chandī Das been alive about this time, there is no doubt that some of the Vaishnav apostles at least, all of whom were great admirers of Chandī Das, would have visited the great Bengali poet who lived at Nanoor in the Birbhum District. But we are not aware of any record relating to such an incident. So the natural surmise is that Chandī Das must have died at a period earlier than the middle of the 15th century. How far earlier, that is the question now and let us

Evidences regarding
Chandī Das' time.

discuss it here. We find that one Deva Sarma, a Brahmin clerk, copied the Kavyaprakas in November 1398 by order of Vidyapati. In one of the songs of this poet we find mention of Gyasuddin who died in 1373 A.D. So Vidyapati no doubt had already made his mark as a poet before 1373. If we accept the statement of the anonymous writers about his interview with Chandi Das to be true, that event probably took place when the latter was already in the prime of his youth and Vidyapati had just begun to be known to fame. I cannot altogether reject, as I have already stated, a tradition which has long prevailed in the country, unless it is upset by proper historical evidence.

At this stage of our investigation Mr. Basantarajan Ray brought the Krishnakirtan to the notice of scholars. Expert calligraphic opinion asserts that the handwriting of the copy could not be of a date later than the end of the 14th century. This work of Chandi Das must have attained a certain celebrity before others could think of copying it out. Hence we believe that Krishnakirtan could not have been written later than the middle of the 14th century. The Krishnakirtan of Chandi Das belongs to that class of love-songs which is called Krishna Dhamali and which is current even now in the backwoods of North Bengal. The poem describes the amours of Radha-Krishna in many different phases. The rustic element, however, predominates in

these juvenile writings of Chandi Das. Krishna here is a simple village lad who runs after the pastoral queen of his heart—the pursuit is conducted with an intense ardour, amidst the gay natural scenery on the banks of the black-watered Jamuna, amidst market places and groves resounding with the songs of birds ; no condition however low, no situation however hard, daunting the love-stricken rustic lad who wears the mask of a god. This passionate ardour of the flesh need not be condemned in the poetry of mediæval school as it supplied inspiration to many of the greatest poets of that age. Towards the end of Krishnakirtan the poet strikes a higher note which becomes loudly audible in his later songs. So this work marks the transition of Vaishnab poetry from the sensuous to the idealistic. The earlier songs throb with somewhat gross human instincts, the later songs burst into melodies of finer idealism, the characteristic of the later Vaishnab school. If we read the account given by the poet himself as to how he fell in love with Rami, the problem how this transition came over the spirit of his songs will be solved. But we shall come to it later on.

The Krishna-dhamali to which we have already referred was once the craze of whole Bengal, but which now survives being driven into the borders of Northern Bengal, where the old things of Hindu life have not yet altogether

perished. Chandi Das greatly embellished that rustic mode of treating Krishna-topics by freely indenting treasures of lyrical wealth from Jaydev. Scholars have come forward to brand Krishnakirtan as a piece of daring literary forgery. But I have met their arguments in my previous course of lectures. In my mind there is absolutely no shadow of doubt as to the genuineness of this work. Now accepting the expert opinion about the date of the copy of Krishnakirtan I find that the book could not have been written by the poet later than 1350. I shall show that Chandi Das died a most tragic and shocking death that has ever befallen the lot of a poet, between 1383 and 1385 A.D.

The latest discovery about Chandi Das is this sad and tragic tale of his death. Some years ago, I referred in a note supplied to the editor of Krishnakirtan to a tradition extant in the neighbourhood of Nanoor, the native village of Chandi Das, that the Begum of a Nawab had fallen in love with the poet, and that the result of this ill-fated passion was the punishment of a cruel death inflicted on him. The Sahitya-parisat library of old Bengali Mss. has lately come in possession of a few pages, the handwriting of which is referred to a date about 250 years back, substantially confirming the tradition mentioned by me several years ago. Alas! the tale is a harrowing one. It was the Emperor of Gour and not a Nawab of the

locality, as I said in my note, who punished Chandi Das with death. He had invited the poet to his court having heard of his great fame as a musician and poet. Rami, the washer-woman, is herself the writer of this historical account. She laments the day when Chandi Das visited the court of the Moslem Emperor. His queen heard Chandi Das sing some of his masterpieces. They were so sweet that the very trees and the sky seemed to be rapt in silent admira-

tion. The queen was beside

The tragio death of
Chandi Das.

herself with joy and felt a

passion for the poet. How

this passion developed and the matter attracted the notice of the autocrat is not known.

Rami skips over details; but she says that the queen when asked, made a bold front and confessed all to her royal husband.

The Emperor ordered that Chandi Das should be tied to the back of an elephant and led from

place to place and scourged in such a manner that his flesh, sinews and nerves must be

torn till he bled to death. The queen interceded and said, "You do not know the ster-

ling merit of the man. In the whole world there does not breathe another soul as warm as

his." For mercy she pleaded, but in vain. The infuriated monarch was the more enraged.

Rami writes that she saw him glance at her from the back of the elephant with tender love,

as the last moment drew near. His clothes lay all

drrenched in blood and looking at her steadily all the time as the elephant moved on, the great poet of Bengal closed his eyes without uttering a moan.

The elephant was often made an instrument in those days for punishing offenders of high rank. Ferdausi was ordered to be placed under the feet of an elephant and trampled down to death, but the poet succeeded in effecting an interview with Sultan Muhammad and averting the punishment. We find Jehangir contriving to set an elephant against Sher Afgan, the husband of Meherunnisa, though that Chief could hold his own by his superior tact and unmatched physical strength. The animal after a ferocious attack took to heels and fled, terror-struck by the blow inflicted on it by the Chief. The Muhammadan history of Western Asia is replete with instances of punishment of death inflicted on men of rank by placing them under the feet of elephants.

Thus died Chandi Das by the capricious orders of the Gour Emperor. He could not have been possibly more than forty years of age at the time of his death. For in the East a woman seldom falls in love with a man above that age. The sad tale of this tragic affair has not been all told. The Begum's end was as tragic, if not more glorious. Repentance was natural to her in the matter, for she felt that if she had not made the confession, the king's anger would not have possibly reached such a climactic point.

There is nothing in the account to show that the queen had been guilty of anything dishonourable. It was her great admiration for the poet which led to a romantic feeling of love, and there is a hint in the account that the poet reciprocated her sentiments. Overwhelmed with repentance for her confession which she had made relying on a generous spirit of appreciation and indulgent pardon from her husband, but which led to the unfortunate catastrophe, she was shocked at the Emperor's attitude, and when the cruel scene was enacted before her eyes, she fainted away unable to bear the sight. She never recovered from that swoon, for the beating of her heart had stopped as she saw the horrible torture and death of her lover.

Rami says that as the queen lay dead she hurried to clasp her feet with tearful eyes. Here ends her verses.

Who this Emperor of Gour was, cannot be definitely ascertained, but if we take into account the fact that Chandi Das wrote his juvenile work—the Krishnakirtan—about 1350 and that he could not have been, as already mentioned, more than 40 years old at the time of his death, we are led to suppose that it was the Emperor Shamsuddin II who probably passed this horrible sentence upon one of the most glorious of Bengal's sons. From 1342 to 1385 five monarchs ruled Bengal. Shamsuddin Bhengara from 1342 to 1358, who was "much respected and beloved by

his people"; Sultan Gayasuddin (1359 to 1373) was a patron of poetry who had sent an invitation to Hafiz to come to Bengal and settle as his court-poet and about whom Vidyapati wrote an eulogistic verse. The next Emperor Assulatwin ruled for ten years peacefully and was a very popular monarch. About the next Emperor Shamsuddin II, Stewart says, "on the death of Sultan Assulatwin, the nobles raised to the throne his adopted son, a youth of very inferior talent, who took the title of Shamsuddin II. For little more than two years he enjoyed a tranquil reign, but at the expiration of that period, Kanis, the Zemindar of Vectoria, rebelled against him, and the youth being unsupported by the Muhammadan Chiefs was defeated and lost his life in the year 1385 A.D." He was so unpopular that even the Muhammadan Chiefs did not support him though a Hindu Zemindar killed him and secured the throne for himself. May we not imagine that the cruel punishment of death on the greatest poet of Bengal was probably one of the reasons which had made his rule very unpopular in the country?

We can expect no historical clue to this matter from the records of the Vaishnabs themselves. They skip over anything that is melancholy or tragic. Their conspiracy of silence in regard to Chaitanya's passing away is well known. Nor had they, while writing elaborate memoirs, described when and how Sachi Devi or

Bishnupriya died. So we should not be surprised at the fact that none of the Vaishnab historians has written anything about the tragic end of Chandi Das. In Jayananda's Chaitanya Mangal we come across a hurried line stating that Gadadhar Pandit had burned himself alive to escape from Muhammadan oppression, but the details are not given. It is curious to note that many points in the career of Gadadhar Pandit, one of Chaitanya's best friends, are to be found in all authoritative books of Vaishnabs, save this most important point of his horrible death. It is true that the Vaishnabs do not at all regard Jayananda's Chaitanya Mangal to be a book of any worth, because he cared not to follow their canons; he has not only referred to the tragic death of Gadadhara but given us historical information about how Chaitanya passed away, as no other writer has done; and we instinctively feel that his accounts are quite reliable, however much he might have disregarded the delicate feeling of the Vaishnab community in the matter.

We have already referred to the fact that love for Rami brought on a change over the spirit of 'Chandi Das's poetry. It was certainly an epoch-making event in his life. He was a worshipper of Basuli and was piously afraid of any romantic feeling for a woman. But the heart runs out of control. The poet's strength fails him. Look how he falls prostrate

before Basuli and laments himself! The holiness of his vow has gone for naught! Night and day he prays, but the glimpses of the glorious form of Rami half-revealed through her blue

Remorse.

sari in the temple-courtyard, maddens him in spite of his vow of self-dedication to Basuli. His heart is exactly in the same state as a flower fallen in the tide that flows irresistibly like fate. "Alas! mother," he laments before Basuli, "You could not preserve your child from these unworthy feelings for a woman of low caste! My austerities and efforts, my secret vows could not save me!"¹ But not long after, Basuli's voice he heard, as if in a dream—it said, "Love this woman, my son, it is your fate that you should do so—nay, this love will sanctify you; neither I nor hundreds of gods and goddesses like me will be able to give you a glimpse of that higher life which this woman's love will teach you."¹

Chandi Das arose—wonder-struck. In his heart of hearts he had worshipped Rami. Only a conventional sense of immorality, a consciousness of his difficult social environment had filled his

mind with remorse and fear.

He worships Rami.

Now Basuli's mandate was clear. Conventions and fears were set at naught. Each time he saw her, he found her

¹ Chandi Das's edition, published by the Sahitya Parishat of Calcutta, Supplement, p. 4.

beautiful and lovely as a flower, holy as a goddess, a thing to be placed on the head like a gift dropped from the hands of Basuli herself.

He says, "Though I am a Brahmin and you are a washer-woman, you are to me holy as Gayatri."¹ He rises above caste-prejudices, and sees good in love far more than in his Brahminic blood or in the scriptures. He declares Rami to be as adorable as Parvati, the giver of fortunes, as Lakshmi, the giver of luck and as Saraswati, the goddess of fine arts and learning. Thus he raises his love to the status of legendary goddesses, and this no Brahmin had, I suppose, done before him.

So the traditional Brahminic superiority, sacredness of scriptures and the unapproachable dignity and sanctity of gods all fell to the ground. Chandi Das saw one temple in the whole universe, that was the cottage of the washer-woman near Basuli's courtyard, and he became the high priest there. His love was not limited by any conventional idea. He calls Rami his *pita-matri*—"father and mother." No lover ever spoke such a language. Love to him was a homogeneous and undivided whole. Among rivers one is called the Ganges, another Godavari and another Jamuna, but when they come down and fall into the ocean, they lose their

¹ Love defined not in a limited sense.

¹ Chandi Das's edition, published by the Sahitya Parishad of Calcutta, Supplement, p. 333.

To Chaitanya the image of his Kṛṣṇa flashed from all directions in whatever he saw around him. He says :

“Everywhere is the image of Kṛṣṇa presented to the eye. Only those who have attained a clear vision are privileged to see the glorious sight.”¹

Beyond the phenomena of the world, there is a higher plane, the paradise of the mystics. There a hundred lyres sound the melodious music of a strange land, there a hundred flowers of undecayed blossom send forth their sweet fragrance, and there Beauty herself opens her doors and enters the soul of Man overwhelming it with tender emotions and ecstasies.

Read the portion of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta where Chaitanya at the sight of the temple of Jagannātha wept aloud and uttered ‘Jag’ ‘Jag’— ‘Ja,’ half broken words, in his attempts to utter ‘Jagannātha,’ and faltering in his speech fell senseless on the ground in the height of his emotional felicity. Recovering, he recited before Svarūpa Dāmodara a *Ṣloka* of Kāvya Prakāṣa, which may be thus freely translated.

“I remember the day when we loved each other on the banks of the Reva. To-day the

সর্বত্র কৃষ্ণের মূর্তি করে বল মল ।

সে দেখিতে পায় যার অঁখি নিরমল ॥

sweet breeze blows. The Mālatī blooms around and the Kadamva flower, drenched with dew, sends its fragrance, and you my beloved, are present before me here, and so am I before you, the same that I ever was. But yet does my heart long for a union with you in the shades of the cane-bowers on the banks of the Reva.’¹

This language of earthly passion has borne a spiritual interpretation. The palace of a powerful Rāja was near the temple of Purī. Jagannātha was worshipped with great array and pomp. God-vision was beheld by Chaitanya there though in the midst of earthly splendour; but his soul yearned for it in the sweet retirement of the woodland bowers of Vṛndāvana.

This vision kept him in a highly strung state of emotional joy during his life, and it proved to be the greatest source of attraction to those who beheld it in him. What truth there is in this mystic vision—whether it is the result of a frenzied brain or the disease ‘calipathy’, the name with which Western rationalism has branded it, is a problem which is not for me here to solve. The psychologists will find out the truth on this point. But if it be a disease, how could it

¹ যঃ কৌমারহরঃ স এব হি বরস্তা এব চৈত্রকুপা
 স্তে চোন্নীলিতমালতীস্বরভয়ঃ প্রৌঢ়াঃ কদম্বানিলাঃ
 সা চৈবান্মি তথাপি তত্র সুরত ব্যাপারলীলাবিধৌ
 রেবা মোধসি বেতসী তরুতলে চেতঃ সমুৎকণ্ঠাতে ।

purify hundreds of lives? Those who were wicked, became good,—the cruel hearts became tender,—the uncharitable hands learnt to distribute charity, and the false became true under its spell. Could a disease ever do that? A maniac and a diseased brain are despised everywhere. Even the dogs of the streets bark at them. But the mystics are worshipped and their influence works wonders in the moral world.

The vision which the Indian mystics saw was not a matter of chance-acquisition to them. The Vaiṣṇavas have laid down the laws to be observed for the attainment of the plane from which these visions may be beheld, in a comprehensive manner. The moral development should be first of all perfect in one. The next stage is to train the soul to humility and reverence.

“One should be humbler than a straw, more meek and patient than a tree, and without seeking honour for one’s ownself freely give it to others and in humble spirit sing the praises of Kṛṣṇa.”¹

The psalm XXII says “But I am a worm and not a man—a reproach of man and despised of the people.”

¹ তুণাদপি স্ননীচেন তরোরপি সহিষ্ণুণা ।

অমানিতা মানদেন কৌর্ভনীয়ঃ সদা হরিঃ ॥

This Christian humility is similar to that enjoined in the Vaiṣṇava scriptures.

The tree is the great emblem of religious meekness and sacrifice in the eyes of the Vaiṣṇavas. Chaitanya Charitamṛta details some of its features which should be the guide of all seekers of the mystic light.

“The tree does not want a drop of water from anyone though it dries up. It does not speak of the wrongs it suffers, but gives shelter even to one who cuts it with his axe. It exposes itself to sun and rain only to give fruits and flowers to others.”

Is not Christ the Tree thus spoken of in Chaitanya Charitamṛta? and here also the Vaiṣṇava ideal has a parallel in Christianity. The tree it might be further said, nourishes itself by the sweet juice it draws from the mother earth, all unseen by others. This is the spring and fountain of its all-sacrificing love. If one nourishes his soul secretly with god's love, like the tree will it give its highest gift to humanity without complaining against the wrongs it may suffer. Even the enemies will have nothing but love from such a soul. When this all-sacrificing love and meekness have been developed in the soul, it will be privileged to enter the mystic plane from which it will see sights of imperishable beauty and hear the sound of that music which never dies away.

My lectures in connection with Ramtanu Lahiri Research Fellowship and as a University Reader will unfold the history of the mystics of Bengal derived mainly from the sources of old Bengali literature. I have also tried to draw parallels from the history of Western mystics in several places. As the whole of the past Bengali Literature is permeated by a religious element, I may not, I venture to presume; be blamed, while exploring this literature, for laying stress on its predominant ideas, which are not confined merely to those of a literary nature.

These lectures were delivered by me to the University of Calcutta as Ramtanu Lahiri Research Fellow in the History of Bengali Language and Literature for 1913-1914. The Ramtanu Lahiri Fellowship was created by the University out of the funds supplied by Late Babu Sarat Kumar Lahiri to commemorate his illustrious father's name which the Fellowship bears. Babu Ramtanu Lahiri's name is revered throughout Bengal for his great piety and love of letters. It was, therefore, a fitting tribute to his memory to associate his name with the cause of research in the field of Bengali Literature. I only fear lest I prove unworthy of my task, associated, as it is, with such a dear and revered name.

In conclusion, I must thankfully acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. William Rothenstein who kindly revised the manuscript of these Lectures two years ago. Mr. A. C. Ghatak, Superintendent of the University Press, kindly read some of the proofs for me, but as considerable alterations and additions had to be made subsequently and Mr. Ghatak could not read all the proofs, there have been many printing mistakes in the book and I am sorry they escaped me as I am not a good proof-reader myself.

BEHALA,
(Near Calcutta) } DINESH CHANDRA SEN.
May 18th, 1917. }

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CHAITANYA

AND

HIS COMPANIONS

I. Bengal's great love for Chaitanya.

Chaitanya passed away from this world in 1533 A.D. In the eyes of the people he had already become an incarnation of God. The Vaiṣṇava biographers wrote long and erudite memoirs of his life and teachings. The poets sang of his emotional fervour and trances. The sculptors and painters busied themselves in reproducing the beauty of his handsome person and of the *Sankirtana* scenes where his trances and songs captivated the soul of the admiring multitude. These were often painted in lacquer on wooden boards used as book covers and produced for the decoration of the Bhāgavata-literature in Bengali from the 16th to the early 18th centuries. Parents in Bengali homes gave to their children those names by which Chaitanya was called, showing how dearly they loved and cherished his memory. Gaurāṅga, Gaur, Chaitanya and Nimāi have since become very common names in this country. Even the beloved city of Nadiyā,

Chaitanya in paintings.

rendered holy by his birth, contributed its share to the forming of a Bengali's name. Nadevāsī,—a resident of Nadiyā, Nagaravasī—a dweller of the city (the city is here Nadiyā), Nader-Chānd or the moon of Nadiyā and its more elegant form Navadvīpa-chandra now became the favourite names in which the Bengalis prided out of their great love and admiration for the Nadiyā-prophet. From Orissa to Manipur through a large tract of country covering an area of about 224750 sq. miles Chaitanya was now worshipped in temples, while the streets of cities and village-paths resounded with his praises in popular songs. The country was full of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa songs, but in a *Kīrtana*, no Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa song could be introduced without a preliminary song in honour of Gaurachandra (Chaitanya) and this preliminary song was called Gaurachandrikā. The love songs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, which had a deep spiritual significance long before the advent of Chaitanya, became now thoroughly idealised and bore another beautiful symbolic meaning in which the love-ecstasies of Chaitanya formed a charming background. In the midst of the loud music of *tambourine* and the shrill clang of *cymbals*, the Gaurachandrikā sounded the keynote of a new phase of Vaiṣṇavism in which the incidents of Chaitanya's life illustrated in a concrete form the high spiritual philosophy.

The Gaura-
chandrikā.

of the sect. The rustics and the unclean castes particularly showed a frenzied fervour in singing the praises of one who had opened the portals of brotherhood to all men irrespective of caste. Sometimes for whole nights they would be seen dancing in joy and singing his name in the small courtyards facing their straw-roofed huts. The Vaiṣṇava singers visited the house of the rich and the poor alike every morning, and sang that sweet couplet which Nityānanda, the great apostle, had himself composed during the life-time of Chaitanya:—

A favourite couplet. “Sing praises of Chaitanya, brother, and take his name. One who loves him is dear to me as my life.”¹

In short, love for Chaitanya had entered deep into the heart of rural Bengal and this can be said of none other of her sons with equal force.

In his life-time also this great love for him was manifest among the rich and the poor, the literate and unlettered alike. Vāsudeva Śārva-bhauma, the greatest Indian logician of the age, honoured in the court of Rājā Pratāparudra of Orissa—was defeated by Chaitanya in a public debate, and when Chaitanya by his devotion and trances showed himself far above the plane of scholarship, his learned

The appreciation by scholars.

¹ “ভজ গৌরাঙ্গ কহ গৌরাঙ্গ লহ গৌরাঙ্গের নাম।

যে জন গৌরাঙ্গ ভজে সে জন আমার প্রাণ।”

antagonist threw himself at his feet and regarded him rather as a God than as a man. His passionate panegyric of Chaitanya still vibrates with all the warmth of true poetry in his celebrated Sanskrit hymns.¹ The veteran scholar's vehement admiration for Chaitanya also found expression in his exclamation quoted in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta (Madhya Khaṇḍa).

“Even if my sons die or a thunder bolt falls
on my head
I can bear it, but I cannot bear parting with
Chaitanya.”²

Prakāçānanda, the leader of the learned Sannyāsīs of Benares, found himself in a like manner unable to meet the scholarly arguments of Chaitanya; but when the latter revealed himself as a Lover of God, the great ascetic of Benares discovered in him far higher qualities than those of a mere scholar, and accepted him as his saviour and god.³ Bhāratī Gosāin of Chandīpur was the foremost scholar of the Deccan at the time. Govinda Dās, one of the biographers of Chaitanya, gives a detailed account of how this scholar was made to acknow-

¹ See his hymns to Chaitanya quoted by Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

² “শিরে বজ্র পড়ে যদি পুত্র মরি যায়
অভূর বিরহ বাণ সহ্য নাহি যায়।”

Chaitanyacharitāmṛta.

³ See Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

ledge the greatness of Chaitanya and accept him as his Guru. By the conversion of these three leading scholars of the three different parts of the country Chaitanya's greatness as a scholar was admitted all over India.

As time advanced he showed, however, a growing aversion for scholarly disputations of all sorts. In most cases he remained silent to the enthusiastic challenge of scholars and would simply smile and nod his head declining to enter into a debate, and saying that he admitted the superiority of his assailants unconditionally. But the irresistible charm of his love-ecstasies had a far more convincing effect than scholarship and humbled the proudest scholars and convinced them of the beauty of spiritual life.

Aversion for
theological dis-
putes.

II. Chaitanya and Pratāparudra.

As Orissa had become the chief theatre of Vaiṣṇava activities during 1516-1533, the period when Chaitanya lived there, Pratāparudra, the king of the place having been one of his staunchest followers—I shall here briefly relate certain facts about the latter which may be of some interest to the students of Vaiṣṇava literature.

Puruṣottama Deva, father of Pratāparudra, ascended the throne of Orissa in 1478 A.D. He took a fancy for the princess of Kānjivarem, a remarkable beauty, and wanted to marry her. The king of Kanjivarem rejected his proposal on the ground that the king of Orissa, according to an old custom, served as sweeper in the Jagannātha temple for a day every year.¹ Puruṣottama Deva on hearing that his proposal was declined took an oath that at any cost he would carry the

Puruṣottama
Deva and
Padmavatī.

¹ We find in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta (Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chap. XIV) Rājā Pratāparudra acting as sweeper with a golden broom in the temple of Jagannātha. Cool water perfumed with sandal was employed for cleansing the doorways of the temple by the royal sweeper. Here are the lines:—

“তবে প্রতাপরুদ্র করে আপনি সেবন ।
সুবর্ণ মার্জ্জনী লঞা করে পথ সন্মার্জন ॥
চন্দন জলেতে করে পথ নিষিক্তন ॥”

princess by force and marry her to a real sweeper. He fought a hard battle and defeating the Rājā of Kānjivarem seized the fair princess and carried her away to Purī. True to his oath, however, he made over the princess Padmāvati to his chief minister desiring him to wed her to a sweeper. The minister as well as the people of Purī all commiserated her misfortune, and at the next Ratha Yātrā ceremony when the Rājā began to perform the office of Chandāl (sweeper) with a golden broom, the individual entrusted with the charge of the lady brought her

The Royal
sweeper. forth and presented her to him,

saying "You are the sweeper upon whom I bestow her." Moved by the intercession of his subjects, the Rājā at last consented to marry Padmāvati and carried her to his palace at Cuttack. The narrative is given in detail in a Uriyā poem called the Kānjikāverī Punthī and in all the important histories of Orissa. Orme mentions the tradition of this incident (Vol. II), though there are some discrepancies in his account as to the details.

Rājā Pratāparudra was the only son of

Rājā Puruṣottama Deva and Rānī

Pratāparudra's
scholarship and
valour.

Padmāvati and ascended the throne

of Orissa in 1503 A.D. Mr. A.

Stirling, the historian of Orissa, says of this monarch: "His wisdom and learning soon became the theme and admiration of the whole country.

He had studied deeply all the Çāstras and was very fond of disputing and conversing on points of theology and he introduced many curious constructions of his own and doctrines which were altogether new. He was withal devout and built many temples. His skill in the art of war and civil government was eminent ; in short he was equally celebrated as an able, learned and warlike and religious prince.”¹ Mr. Stirling then writes at some length about the overthrow of Buddhism in Orissa and the influence of Chaitanya over the king and says, “The Rājā who could find leisure for schemes of conquest and controversies marched with his army down to Setubandha Rāmeçvara, reduced several forts and took the famous city of Vijayanagar. The Mahomedans of the Deccan also gave abundant occupation to his arms on the southern frontier of the Rāj; and whilst he was occupied in repelling or provoking their attacks, the Afghans from Bengal made an inroad into the Province in great force—when the Governor Ananta Singhar finding himself unable to oppose any effectual resistance took refuge in the strong fortress of Sarangher, south of the Kātjudi.” The Mahomedans committed dreadful devastations. “But Rājā Pratāparudra

¹ History of Orissa by A. Stirling, Esq., printed at the De's Utkal Press, 131, Matiganj Street, Balasore, 1891, p. 131.

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Chaitanya passed away from this world in 1533 A.D. In the eyes of the people he had already become an incarnation of God. The Vaisṇava biographers wrote long and erudite memoirs of his life and teachings. The poets sang of his emotional fervour and trances. The sculptors and painters busied themselves in reproducing the beauty of his handsome person and of the *Sankirtana* scenes where his trances and songs captivated the soul of the admiring multitude. These were often painted in lacquer on wooden boards used as book covers and produced for the decoration of the Bhāgavata-literature in Bengali from the 16th to the early 18th centuries. Parents in Bengali homes gave to their children those names by which Chaitanya was called, showing how dearly they loved and cherished his memory. Gaurāṅga, Gaur, Chaitanya and Nimāi have since become very common names in this country. Even the beloved city of Nadiyā,

Chaitanya in paintings.

rendered holy by his birth, contributed its share to the forming of a Bengali's name. Nadevāsī,—a resident of Nadiyā, Nagaravasī—a dweller of the city (the city is here Nadiyā), Nader-Chānd or the moon of Nadiyā and its more elegant form Navadvīpa-chandra now became the favourite names in which the Bengalis prided out of their great love and admiration for the Nadiyā-prophet. From Orissa to Manipur through a large tract of country covering an area of about 224750 sq. miles Chaitanya was now worshipped in temples, while the streets of cities and village-paths resounded with his praises in popular songs. The country was full of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa songs, but in a *Kīrtana*, no Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa song could be introduced without a preliminary song in honour of Gaurachandra (Chaitanya) and this preliminary song was called Gaurachandrikā. The love songs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, which had a deep spiritual significance long before the advent of Chaitanya, became now thoroughly idealised and bore another beautiful symbolic meaning in which the love-ecstasies of Chaitanya formed a charming background. In the midst of the loud music of *tambourine* and the shrill clang of *cymbals*, the Gaurachandrikā sounded the keynote of a new phase of Vaiṣṇavism in which the incidents of Chaitanya's life illustrated in a concrete form the high spiritual philosophy

The Gaura-
chandrikā.

of the sect. The rustics and the unclean castes particularly showed a frenzied fervour in singing the praises of one who had opened the portals of brotherhood to all men irrespective of caste. Sometimes for whole nights they would be seen dancing in joy and singing his name in the small courtyards facing their straw-roofed huts. The Vaiṣṇava singers visited the house of the rich and the poor alike every morning, and sang that sweet couplet which Nityānanda, the great apostle, had himself composed during the life-time of Chaitanya:—

A favourite couplet. “Sing praises of Chaitanya, brother, and take his name. One who loves him is dear to me as my life.”¹

In short, love for Chaitanya had entered deep into the heart of rural Bengal and this can be said of none other of her sons with equal force.

In his life-time also this great love for him was manifest among the rich and the poor, the literate and unlettered alike. Vāsudeva Sārva-bhauma, the greatest Indian logician of the age, honoured in the court of Rājā Pratāparudra of Orissa—was defeated by Chaitanya in a public debate, and when Chaitanya by his devotion and trances showed himself far above the plane of scholarship, his learned

The appreciation by scholars.

“ভজ গৌরাক্ষ কহ গৌরাক্ষ লহ গৌরাক্ষের নাম ।
যে জন গৌরাক্ষ ভজে সে জন আমার প্রাণ ॥”

antagonist threw himself at his feet and regarded him rather as a God than as a man. His passionate panegyric of Chaitanya still vibrates with all the warmth of true poetry in his celebrated Sanskrit hymns.¹ The veteran scholar's vehement admiration for Chaitanya also found expression in his exclamation quoted in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta (Madhya Khaṇḍa).

“Even if my sons die or a thunder bolt falls
on my head
I can bear it, but I cannot bear parting with
Chaitanya.”²

Prakāṣānanda, the leader of the learned Sannyāsīs of Benares, found himself in a like manner unable to meet the scholarly arguments of Chaitanya; but when the latter revealed himself as a Lover of God, the great ascetic of Benares discovered in him far higher qualities than those of a mere scholar, and accepted him as his saviour and god.³ Bhāratī Gosāin of Chandīpur was the foremost scholar of the Deccan at the time. Govinda Dās, one of the biographers of Chaitanya, gives a detailed account of how this scholar was made to acknow-

¹ See his hymns to Chaitanya quoted by Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

² “শিরে বজ্র পড়ে যদি পুত্র মরি যার
প্রভুর বিরহ বাণ সহ্য নাহি যার।”

Chaitanyacharitāmṛta.

³ See Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

ledge the greatness of Chaitanya and accept him as his Guru. By the conversion of these three leading scholars of the three different parts of the country Chaitanya's greatness as a scholar was admitted all over India.

As time advanced he showed, however, a growing aversion for scholarly disputations of all sorts. In most cases he remained silent to the enthusiastic challenge of scholars and would simply smile and nod his head declining to enter into a debate, and saying that he admitted the

Aversion for
theological dis-
putes.

superiority of his assailants unconditionally. But the irresistible charm

of his love-ecstasies had a far more convincing effect than scholarship and humbled the proudest scholars and convinced them of the beauty of spiritual life.



II. Chaitanya and Pratāparudra.

As Orissa had become the chief theatre of Vaiṣṇava activities during 1516-1533, the period when Chaitanya lived there, Pratāparudra, the king of the place having been one of his staunchest followers—I shall here briefly relate certain facts about the latter which may be of some interest to the students of Vaiṣṇava literature.

Puruṣottama Deva, father of Pratāparudra, ascended the throne of Orissa in 1478 A.D. He took a fancy for the princess of Kānjivarem, a remarkable beauty, and wanted to marry her. The king of Kanjivarem rejected his proposal on the ground that the king of Orissa, according to an old custom, served as sweeper in the Jagannātha temple for a day every year.¹ Puruṣottama Deva on hearing that his proposal was declined took an oath that at any cost he would carry the

¹ We find in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta (Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chap. XIV) Rājā Pratāparudra acting as sweeper with a golden broom in the temple of Jagannātha. Cool water perfumed with sandal was employed for cleansing the doorways of the temple by the royal sweeper. Here are the lines:—

“তবে প্রতাপরুদ্র করে আপনি সেবন ।

হুবর্ণ মার্জ্জনী লঞা করে পথ সন্দ্বার্জন ॥

স্নান জলেতে করে পথ নিষিদ্ধন ॥”

princess by force and marry her to a real sweeper. He fought a hard battle and defeating the Rājā of Kānjivarem seized the fair princess and carried her away to Purī. True to his oath, however, he made over the princess Padmāvati to his chief minister desiring him to wed her to a sweeper. The minister as well as the people of Purī all commiserated her misfortune, and at the next Ratha Yātrā ceremony when the Rājā began to perform the office of Chandāl (sweeper) with a golden broom, the individual entrusted with the charge of the lady brought her forth and presented her to him, saying "You are the sweeper upon whom I bestow her." Moved by the intercession of his subjects, the Rājā at last consented to marry Padmāvati and carried her to his palace at Cuttack. The narrative is given in detail in a Uriyā poem called the Kānjikāverī Punthī and in all the important histories of Orissa. Orme mentions the tradition of this incident (Vol. II), though there are some discrepancies in his account as to the details.

Rājā Pratāparudra was the only son of Rājā Puruṣottama Deva and Rāṇī Padmāvati and ascended the throne of Orissa in 1503 A.D. Mr. A. Stirling, the historian of Orissa, says of this monarch: "His wisdom and learning soon became the theme and admiration of the whole country.

Pratāparudra's
scholarship and
valour.

He had studied deeply all the Çāstras and was very fond of disputing and conversing on points of theology and he introduced many curious constructions of his own and doctrines which were altogether new. He was withal devout and built many temples. His skill in the art of war and civil government was eminent ; in short he was equally celebrated as an able, learned and warlike and religious prince.”¹ Mr. Stirling then writes at some length about the overthrow of Buddhism in Orissa and the influence of Chaitanya over the king and says, “The Rājā who could find leisure for schemes of conquest and controversies marched with his army down to Setubandha Rāmeçvara, reduced several forts and took the famous city of Vijayanagar. The Mahomedans of the Deccan also gave abundant occupation to his arms on the southern frontier of the Rāj; and whilst he was occupied in repelling or provoking their attacks, the Afghans from Bengal made an inroad into the Province in great force—when the Governor Ananta Singhar finding himself unable to oppose any effectual resistance took refuge in the strong fortress of Sarangher, south of the Kātjudi.” The Mahomedans committed dreadful devastations. “But Rājā Pratāparudra

¹ History of Orissa by A. Stirling, Esq., printed at the De's Utkal Press, 131, Matiganj Street, Balasore, 1891, p. 131.

on receiving intelligence of these disastrous occurrences hastened back from the Deccan and performing a journey of months in a few days he came up with the invading army before they had left Kṣetra, gave them battle and destroyed a great number of Mahomedans.”¹

The destruction of Hindu temple by the Afghans referred to above are mentioned in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and other Bengali works of the Vaiṣṇavas. Husen Sāhā, the Emperor of Gaur, had himself led these expeditions. After this Pratāparudra contemplated the conquest of Bengal in order to avenge himself upon Husen Sāhā for the harm done by the latter to his territories, but desisted from doing so out of humane considerations for the Hindus of Bengal to whom great sufferings would be caused by such an expedition.²

According to Feristha's account there were some local revolutions between 1493 and 1524 in the kingdom of Vijaynagar and Pratāparudra availed himself of this opportunity of extending his kingdom in the South. In 1524, however, Rājā Kṛṣṇa Rāy ascended the throne of Vijaynagar and ruled the kingdom with great vigour and tact. He successfully coped with the Mahomedans in the field and made a treaty with

¹ History of Orissa by A. Stirling, Esq., p. 133.

² See Chaitanya Maṅgala by Jayānanda.

Pratāparudra by marrying his daughter. According to Mr. Stirling, Pratāparudra reigned from 1503 to 1524. But the date of his death (1524) is open to objection. When Chaitanya came to Purī, in 1510 the king was away, fighting with the Rājā of Vijaynagar in the Deccan. Returning shortly after he heard of the arrival of Chaitanya in his capital, he begged an interview with him. He addressed a letter to Sārvabhauma requesting him to get Chaitanya to agree, Sārvabhauma wrote in reply that Chaitanya was not willing to comply with his Majesty's request. The Rājā wrote letters to the companions of

Chaitanya re-
fuses to see the
Rājā.

Chaitanya severally asking them to intercede in his behalf; but

Chaitanya refused them saying that as a *sannyāsī* he should keep himself as far as possible away from the fountain of earthly power and riches.

Sad at heart Pratāparudra continued his attempts to interview Chaitanya. He sent his minister Rāmānanda Rāy who was a friend of Chaitanya to plead his cause before him. Chaitanya said to him, "A *sannyāsī* should be blameless in thought, in speech and in act. A familiarity with the king is sure to bring in its train a connection with the world which I have renounced and I can by no means allow it." The outer robe of Chaitanya was carried by Rāma Rāy to the king who accepted it as a sacred

thing with tears in his eyes, since he was not to have a visit from Chaitanya himself.

The Ratha Yātrā or the Car festivities of Jagānnātha drew near. The king was sorry not to be permitted to see Chaitanya which even the meanest of his subjects could do. He was advised by Kāçī Miçra, in whose house Chaitanya stayed, to wait for the occasion of the march of the Great Car when Chaitanya with his party would come out in the streets singing the *Kīrtana* songs. The Rājā ascended the roof of his palace and saw the procession. When he

heard the *Kīrtana* songs he was beside himself in admiration and said to Gopīnātha Miçra, "Never did

The origin of
Kīrtana songs.

I hear such melodious songs in my life. The very tune captivates my soul. Whence could they have learnt this strange musical mode?" Gopīnātha replied, "This *Kīrtana* song which is not comparable to any earthly music originated with Chaitanya." The followers of Chaitanya had all assembled at Purī and joined the procession, and Gopīnātha, at the bidding of the king, mentioned the names and qualifications of each, and the Rājā from that distance saw the figure of Chaitanya in the centre of the procession, looking more like a God than a man; he was in one of those trances in which silent tears bespoke his great emotion and love for the Unseen. The Rājā's mind was filled with admiration but he

did not find chance for an interview on this occasion.

But an opportunity soon presented itself. In the courtyard of Kāçī Miçra Chaitanya had his trance again and was unconscious of the outer world—in the arms of Nityānanda, whilst his companions enthusiastically sang *Kīrtana* songs around him. The Rājā instructed by Sārva-bhauma suddenly stole into the assembly and fell at his feet. Chaitanya, regaining consciousness, beheld the king and said, “Woe to me, I have touched one given to worldly power and wealth.” When the Rājā heard this he burst into tears and said, “Here do I forego all my power and wealth and surrender them at your feet. Take me, master, as the meanest of those that love you.” Chaitanya was overcome by these words. He embraced the Rājā in love and the latter—a tall and robust man—became

The interview. all tears in joy. Rāmānanda Rāy, the author of the celebrated Sanskrit drama “Jagannātha Vallabha” refers to this occasion in the following passage: “This is indeed a marvel. Rājā Pratāparudra, who is a terror to the Pāṭhans, whose physical might surpasses that of most men, whose iron contact is dreaded by the strongest of wrestlers, has melted like a soft thing at the touch of Chaitanya.” Govinda Dāsa, the contemporary biographer of Chaitanya records “whenever Chaitanya walked



CHAITANYA AND PRATAPRUDDRA.

Painted in lacquer on wooden board meant to be a book-cover of a MS. of Bhagavata—latter part of the 16th Century.
The board is in the Library of the Calcutta University.

in the streets with a large crowd of men following him with song, music and dance, Rājā Pratāparudra walked on bare feet behind them all like the humblest of his subjects.”¹

At one time Chaitanya was asked by some of his companions to speak a word to the Rājā on behalf of a criminal named Gopinātha Rāy who was sentenced to death. He was a brother of Rāmānanda Rāy—a friend of Chaitanya. The family of the Rāys was devoted to the Master and this was made a plea for the request. Chaitanya said, “I am sorry for him, but I have no sympathy with his crime. You may pray to God for him. You put me in a very delicate position by asking me—a beggar—to intercede for him. It is for this reason that I wanted to avoid a familiarity with the Rājā. It only makes me sad to think of the misfortunes of worldly men. After this my stay at Purī is no longer fitting.” He got ready to go to Ālālanātha, and when the king heard of this from Kāçī Miçra he released the criminal simply because the matter was brought to the notice of Chaitanya. The latter on hearing of this said to Kāçī Miçra, “What have you

Chaitanya's
unwillingness to
meddle in
worldly affairs.

¹ নগর কীৰ্তনে যবে মহাপ্রভু যায় ।

দীন বেশে মহারাজ পেছু পেছু ধায় ॥

done, Miçra? You should not have represented me as a supplicant before the king.” The Rājā interviewed Chaitanya and said, “If you leave my capital I shall turn an ascetic or commit suicide.”¹

In the wilds of the Deccan—Chaitanya, accompanied by the blacksmith Govinda, wandered visiting the holy places. With a torn rag for his dress, his body covered with mud and dirt, he walked like a mad man through untrodden paths; children threw dust at him and clapped their hands saying, “Lo! there goes the ascetic mad after God.”

His frenzies of
love,

He gazed at the sky and saw his Kṛṣṇa mirrored there; the rainbow to him was the crown of Kṛṣṇa; the flying cranes a string of white pearls on his breast; the flash of lightning like Kṛṣṇa’s purple robes; and the dark-blue colour of the clouds again and again called up the vision of Kṛṣṇa’s figure. Every river that he saw was to him the sacred Yamunā on whose banks Kṛṣṇa had sported, every forest wore to his eyes, the beauty and sacredness of the Vṛndā groves—the resort of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes as at the village Ghogā in Gujrāt he clasped a Nim tree covered with dark-blue leaves and thought that the touch was of Kṛṣṇa, soft

¹ The details about Chaitanya’s interview and conversations with Rājā Pratāp Rudra are to be found in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta by Kṛṣṇā Dāsa Kavirāja and in the works of Kavī Karṇapura.

and sweet, and for the whole day he lay unconscious as if in the arms of his Lover while tears trickled down his cheeks. Sometimes he nodded his head to and fro seeing some celestial vision and remained mute for days while tears alone indicated his joy in communion with God. Often three or even four days passed in this condition during which he would neither speak nor touch any food. When he came to Trivancore in 1511 A.D. Rājā Rudrapati, the reigning monarch, paid a visit to him and was so much impressed by the ardour of his faith and the beauty of his trances that he paid him the same homage of worship as he did to his tutelary God.¹

¹ For details of the above narratives the reader is referred to the Kaṣhā by Govinda Dāsa.

III. Interview with Sanātana and Rūpa.

Sākar Mallik and Dabir Khās, two Brāhmaṇ scholars who had adopted Mahomedan names and habits of life, were the ministers of Husen Sāhā, the Emperor of Gauḍa. They were brothers and their expert knowledge of Sanskrit poetry was equalled by none in Bengal at the time. They saw Chaitanya first at Rāmakelī, a town near Gauḍa, and felt that they had met the greatest poet ever born in the world. It appeared to them after their interview with him that the universe was a poem and that the spiritual soul alone was privileged to read its deep poetry. They parted from Chaitanya completely changed men. Chaitanya gave the brothers Hindu names and they were henceforth to be called Sanātana and Rūpa, by which names they have since been known in the field of Sanskrit drama, theology and poetry, and in fact in all the writings of the Vaiṣṇavas.

Rūpa's mind now yearned for that life which is freed from the worry of the world but is devoted to the good of the world, which does not seek its final rest in the Nirvāṇa or in the extinction of passions but that which brings something positive, 'once a victory over passion has been won, *viz.*, the realization of God in the soul.

While in this state of mind an incident took place which was a turning point in his life. The following anecdote is related of Rūpa, who was only 27 years old at the time, in the *Prema-vilāsa* by Nityānanda Dāsa.

The anecdote of the burning of a rich garment.

Rūpa came home one night very late after doing some important State work. After retiring to rest he was bitten by a poisonous insect. His room was dark and Rūpa called out to his wife asking her to light a candle immediately. But the good wife in her haste could not find a candle. The silken robe of her husband embroidered with gold was near the bed and she lighted a fire with it. Rūpa said, "You have spoilt a costly garment in this way!" The wife said, "My duty is to minister to your comforts and I have done my duty. Precious stones or silken robes are nothing to me when that duty is to be done." Rūpa said, "My darling, you have done your duty to your lord but I have not done mine. I have hitherto only occupied myself with precious stones and silken robes." Early in the morning the next day he took the beggar's bowl in his hand, clad himself in rags and left his palatial house. Before starting he distributed his treasure in the following way: One half to the poor and to Brāhmaṇ scholars; one-fourth reserved for the maintenance of his family and an equal amount

he left to his elder brother Sanātana. On coming to Allahabad he wrote the following metrical epistle in Sanskrit to Sanātana :

“Where is now gone, alas, the splendour of Mathurā, once the capital of the lord of Yādavas and where, alas, is that of Uttara Koçalā, the kingdom of the lord of the Raghus! Think of the fleeting nature of earthly glory and decide the course you should take.”¹

Rūpa met Chaitanya at Benares where the latter took pains to instruct him in the cardinal points of the Vaiṣṇava religion. His instructions are given in detail in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta. Chaitanya ordered him to go to Vṛndāvana and write poems and dramas in Sanskrit elucidating the principles of spiritual love. The works that he wrote at the bidding of the Master such as the Lalita-mādhava, the Bidagdhamādhava, the Dānakelī-kaumudī etc., are now the master-pieces of mediæval Sanskrit Literature.

Sanātana, who too was no less attracted by Chaitanya's personality, when he received the verses from his brother finally made up his mind to renounce the world and take the ascetic's

१ “बहुपतेः क गतामथुरापुरी
रघुपतेः क गतोत्तरकोशला
इति विचिन्त्य मनः कुरु। अहिरं
नसदिदं जगदित्येव धारय ।”

vow. He did not attend the Emperor's court for some days and a report was spread that he was ill. Husen Shā, after Rūpa's adoption of asceticism, had his suspicions about Sanātana and was on the alert. He sent a physician to examine if the minister was really ill. The physician came back to him and reported that

The report of Sanātana's illness.

so far as he could judge, Sanātana had no illness. The king was angry and called his minister to his

presence. Sanātana could not hide his thoughts from his master, and Husen Shā trying in vain to dissuade him from his contemplated course got very much annoyed and ordered him to be thrown into prison. Just at that time the king was called away from Gauḍa to fight his enemies abroad, and the relatives of Sanātana offered the jailer a bribe of Rs. 5,000, which in the 16th century was at least 15 times its present value, for setting the ex-minister at liberty. Mir Habul, the jailer, was at first afraid of the Emperor and declined to take the risk. Next they offered him Rs. 7,000,¹ the jailer accepted the offer but felt the danger of such a course and sought advice as to how he could avert it.

His flight.

He was told that it might be stated that the minister was taken to the

¹ In some of the Vaiṣṇava works the amount is stated to be a lakh of rupees. But we accept the statement of the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and other authentic works on this point.

Ganges for a bath and he disappeared while bathing. Sanātana was thus set at liberty. He lost not a moment but at once left Gauḍa as an ascetic accompanied by a servant named Īçāṇa. He crossed the Ganges and arrived a few days after at the foot of a small hillock called Patra. Īçāṇa had taken 15 gold mohars without the knowledge of his master. They had however subsisted on fruits and fountain-water for a few days and reaching a village at Patra became the guests of a respectable-looking man. He was called Bhuyā. The unusually warm attention this man paid to his guests roused suspicions in the mind of Sanātana who asked Īçāṇa if he had brought any money from home. Īçāṇa said he had 15 gold mohars with him. Sanātana paid 14 mohars to his host who was really a robber in disguise. The man made no secret of his intentions but said he would have murdered them at night if the money were not paid. The remaining one gold mohar was paid back by Sanātana to Īçāṇa who was ordered to leave the place and return home at once since he still cared for money.

Sanātana, now left alone, slept under the shadow of trees at night and passed through great hardships. It is related in the Premāvilāsa that on one occasion he laid himself down on the bare earth in a field for sleep,

15 Gold Mohars
attract a robber.

making pillows with brickbats and clods of earth to rest his head, hands, and feet on. An old woman passed by and was heard to make the following reflection: “The ascetic must have

The lesson received from an old woman.

belonged to a noble and rich family; he has left his riches but cannot dispense with his old habits.”

Sanātana as he heard this rose up and bowed to the woman and said “You have indeed given me a lesson, good mother. Old habits and modes of life are so difficult to avoid; but I shall try to be born anew in my spiritual life from now.”¹

Sanātana came to Hājipur and, dressed in rags, lay under the shadow of a tree singing the praises of God and prayed to Him to grant him a speedy interview with Chaitanya. His brother-in-law, Çrīkaṇṭha, happened to pass by the way where he lay. Çrīkaṇṭha was sent by Husen Shā with three lakhs of rupees for purchasing horses at Hājipur. He could barely recognise Sanātana in that condition and was moved to tears

Interview with Çrīkaṇṭha.

seeing the great minister reduced to such a plight. “I am happy”, said Sanātana, “happier now than ever I was.” It was January and the sharp winter-wind blew, the biting cold eating, as it were, into the very bones. Çrīkaṇṭha said, “If

¹ This anecdote is related in the Premavilāsa by Nityānanda. The succeeding narratives about Sanātana are mostly taken from the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

you must remain an ascetic and will not alter your way of life, pray take this shawl to cover your body with." The rich shawl Sanātana declined to accept. Next a valuable wrapper was offered which Sanātana declined also.

But Çrīkaṇṭha would not allow him to go without putting something warm round his body for protection from cold and forced him to wear a coarse blanket of the value of Rs. 3. Sanātana went to Benares and met Chaitanya. The interview was full of pathos. The ex-minister said, "I am an outcast. Admittance to your presence is admittance to heaven. If you would condescend to accept it, here do I offer my body and soul for your service." Chaitanya received him with great kindness, and Sanātana took leave of him for a few minutes in order to give away his blanket to a beggar, for he had seen

The
blanket
Rs. 3.

coarse
worth

Chaitanya glancing at it several times while speaking to him.¹ When with a coarse cotton rag that he had received from the beggar in return he came to Chaitanya again, the latter said, "delighted am I, that you have now parted with all that is worldly. Now vision of God will be clear to you."

Sanātana went to Mathurā in order to have an interview with his brother Rūpa and thence

returned to Purī to meet Chaitanya again. He came by the woodland path of Jhari Khandā (Chota Nagpur). The dirty water and moist air of the forests brought on eczema all over Sanātana's body. In this plight he arrived at Purī. He thought of his sins and this weighed on his mind. He was fallen from the Brāhmaṇic order and would have no access to the temple of Jagannātha; but when the image of that deity would be brought out on its Car in May, he determined that he would make an offer of his body to the god and die under the wheels of the Great Car. "My body full of this foul eczema and burdened with sins will be of no use and as a punishment for my sins I will thus die here."

Sanātana afflicted with eczema. With this determination he called on Hari Dāsa, the Mahomedan convert to Vaiṣṇavism and resided with him in his cell; for as he was an outcast now he dared not go to the house of the Brāhmaṇ Kāçīnātha Miçra where Chaitanya lived.

Chaitanya used to come often to Hari Dāsa's place, and Sanātana thought that he might be permitted an opportunity to meet him there. As expected Chaitanya called on Hari Dāsa one day; but Sanātana, full of remorse for his sins, distressed by his eczema and with his accustomed humility, retreated into a corner of the room and saw the Master from afar with tearful eyes. When Chaitanya saw him he ran to meet him and

Sanātana shrinking a little away said, “Master, I am full of sins and my body is afflicted with eczema. It should not be touched by you.” Chaitanya at once embraced him inspite of his remonstrances, saying, “Your dear self, Sanātana, is my constant joy.” Sanātana was sorry to see Chaitanya’s body marked with discharges from his eczema. Anupama, one of the brothers of Sanātana, had died shortly before, and Chaitanya alluded to his high character and faith with respect. He made enquiries, as to what Sanātana thought of Mathurā and in many sweet and kind words parted from him that day.

But Sanātana was sad at heart inspite of the kind treatment he had received from the Master and meeting the young scholar, Jagadānanda, one of Chaitanya’s constant companions, thus spoke to him, “Woe to me, that I came here. Our dear Master touches my body afflicted with eczema. I am deeply depressed with the weight of my sins but now it breaks my heart to see the Master embrace my loathsome body.” Jagadānanda did not like Chaitanya to receive Sanātana with open arms and come in contact with his diseased body, but without mentioning it he said, “It would be better for you to go back to Mathurā or Vṛndāvana. I heard once that the Master wanted you to go there.” Next day when Chaitanya came as

Sanātana tries to remain aloof from Chaitanya.

Jagadānanda’s advice.

usual he again embraced Sanātana and said, “Do not think of putting an end to your life under the wheels of the Car of Jagannātha. It is a sin to commit suicide. This grief and remorse that you feel for your sin is unholy if it leads to suicide. God’s grace is to be obtained by love and self-dedication and not by suicide.” And Sanātana wondered how Chaitanya could know his innermost thoughts. Then Chaitanya said again, “This body of yours, you told me at our first meeting, you had dedicated to me. It is mine now and you cannot use it as you wish. By my mother’s will I have to live at Purī and I cannot violate her orders. But much remains to be done in the upcountry where people are illiterate and without faith in God. There you will have to work and employ your talents and learning, writing beautiful books on the cult of faith.” Saying this Chaitanya again embraced him to his great dismay, and Sanātana was down on his knees and implored “Master, do not do so. My heart breaks at this. See, my body is vile, it is full of eczema and untouchable.” And Chaitanya said, “Who said that your body is vile and untouchable, Sanātana? A selfless god-loving spirit dwells in your body. Your embrace is sweet to me as nectar.” Sanātana fell at Chaitanya’s feet with tears and said that he had Jagadānanda’s advice to go to Vṛndāvana in order to avoid the contact of his

body with the Master's. Chaitanya was angry when he heard this and said, "A young scholar Jagadānanda dares to advise a veteran like you!

He is impudent and foolish. I am an ascetic, and it is well known that to one who takes that sacred vow,

'Your praises bitter as nim juice.'

ashes and sandal marks are of the same value. An ascetic must have contempt for none but should have kindness for all living beings. The youngster is conceited enough to teach his superiors in this way." Sanātana in humble words addressed Chaitanya and said, "Master, fortunate is Jagadānanda. Your abuse of him only shows the great familiarity and love in which you hold him; whereas the formal respect that you pay me shows me far away from your heart. He drinks the nectar of sweet familiarity at your hands but your praises seem bitter to me as the juice of Nim-fruit, only proving that I am not one of those blessed men who belong to your own circle." Chaitanya was abashed a little at these remarks and said, "No Sanātana, this is no vain glorification, I assure you. I have a real admiration for your faith, your self-sacrifice and for the spirit of humility becoming a truly spiritual soul. Jagadānanda is only a boy and far below you as

“জগদানন্দে পীয়াও আত্মীয়তা স্থখা রসে ।

মোর পীয়াও গৌরব স্তুতি নিম্ব নিখিন্দা রসে ॥”

a scholar and should not have dared advise you.” On another occasion Chaitanya had gone to Yameçawra Totā and sent a man to Sanātana wishing the latter to meet him. It was midday and the sun had scorched the sands, and Sanātana on bare feet gladly trod the sands which burnt his toes. When he came to the Master, he marked the burns on Sanātana’s toes and asked by what way he had come. Sanātana replied, “It was by the sandy shore of the sea.” Chaitanya

Burnt toes. again asked why he did not come by the main road leading to the gate

of the Temple. Sanātana humbly replied, “I am an outcaste ; the Brāhmaṇs there might take objection.” Chaitanya pointed to the burns and regretted the pain they must have caused him. Sanātana said, “I was not aware of these till now. I was so glad that the Master called me ; I thought of nothing else.” Whereupon Chaitanya said, with a voice that trembled in emotion, “Your touch will sanctify the holiest of temples and the most pure of the Brāhmaṇs. Your faith and love for God is such that the angels of heaven may sit at your feet and receive lessons from you ; but still you do not violate the local rules of the Temple. It only shows your high breeding and noble character.”¹

Sanātana stayed at Purī for some months ,

¹ “যত্বপি তুমি হও জগৎ পাবন ।

তোমা স্পর্শে পবিত্র হয় দেব মুনিগণ ॥

during which he got cured of his eczema; and after beholding the Dol Yātrā ceremony of Kṛṣṇa took leave of Chaitanya and started for Vṛndāvana. Before leaving Purī he took notes from Valadeva Āchāryā, a companion of Chaitanya as to the route followed by Chaitanya

when he visited Vṛndāvana. The places where Chaitanya had halted were specially marked. He visited them all with great reverence considering them as holy places. Rūpa had come back to Purī a year before, so that when Sanātana arrived at Vṛndāvana he did not meet his brother. But Rūpa returned to Vṛndāvana after some months, and both the brothers now busied themselves in writing books in Sanskrit on the doctrines of faith as taught them by the Master. But I shall write in some detail about the work they did in Vṛndāvana in the course of my lectures.

Sanātana
starts for
Vṛndāvana.

তথাপি ভক্ত স্বভাব মৰ্যাদা রক্ষণ ।

মৰ্যাদা রাখিলে তুষ্ট হৈল মোর মন ॥

তুমি ঐছে না করিলে আর করিব কোন জন ।

Chaitanya Churitāmṛta.

IV. Advaitāchārya.

Next to Chaitanya the two most illustrious apostles of the Vaiṣṇava faith in Bengal were Nityānanda and Advaitāchārya. Their names are now inseparable from Chaitanya. Advaitāchārya was the title, the real name of the apostle being Kamalākara Bhaṭṭāchārya. He was an inhabitant of Lāur in Sylhet and was born in 1434 A.D., or 52 years before Chaitanya. His great scholarship, especially in the Upaniṣādas, was much admired. He was descended from Nṛsinha Nāriel, the prime minister of Rājā Gaṇeṣa ('Kans' of Mahomedan historians), who is said to have succeeded in killing the Emperor of Gauḍa by following the statesmanly advices of his minister.¹ Advaita's father, Nāvā, was a courtier of Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, the Rājā of Lāur, and the family enjoyed the esteem and confidence of people of the locality. Advaita first took his lesson in Sanskrit from Ḍāntāchārya, a renowned scholar of Ḍāntipur, and came to Navadvīpa to complete his studies and settled at Ḍāntipur, residing for the most part at Navadvīpa. His pious life, scholarly attainments, and spiritual faith marked him out as a conspicuous figure in Navadvīpa. It is said that he was deeply grieved,

¹ His ancestor Nṛsinha Nāriel.

¹ See Advaita Prakāṣa by Iṣāṇa Nagora.

to mark the materialistic tendencies of the age. The people of Navadvīpa—the greatest centre of learning in India at that period—paid great attention to studies but were, it is alleged by the contemporary Vaiṣṇava historians, without any faith in God. They pursued learning for secular objects and even for its own sake, but none cared to interpret the Ṣāstras in the light of faith. The rich spent huge sums of money in the marriage of their children and in the worship of Vāsuli and other local deities. The streets of Navadvīpa resounded with songs in honour of the Pāla kings which were very popular at the time. Vṛndāvana Dāsa, the contemporary historian, regrets that thus did they all spend their lives in vain. Advaita's mind yearned for faith in God and it is believed by the Vaiṣṇavas and is written in their holy books that Chaitanya came to the world in response to Advaita's earnest appeal to the Most High to send some one into the world who would teach faith and remove the sophistical tendencies of the age.

Learning
without faith.

Advaita's pray-
er.

Viṣvarupa, the elder brother of Chaitanya, had taken Sannyāsa and left home in his 16th year; he was never since heard of. Their mother Ṣacī had lost eight daughters, and on the eve of Chaitanya's sannyāsa her husband Jagannāth Miṣra had also died. She had none

left in the world amongst her numerous children except Chaitanya. The Sannyāsa of Chaitanya was disastrous to her material prospects. It was but natural that Chaitanya should have a deep feeling for his mother throughout his life. Though he had taken the Sannyāsa vow which required a person never to revisit his native village or his home in life, Chaitanya had promised his mother that he would never remain very far away from her, for any length of time. And he kept his promise by staying at Purī from where constant

messages about him reached her.

Çacī charges
Advaita with
turning the
head of her
son.

Chaitanya used to send Pandit Jagadānanda to his mother every year with many endearing words of affection. On one occasion he sent

this message: "You are old now, my mother. I should have stayed with you and ministered to your comfort. This was my sacred duty. But my head turned away and I violated this duty; forgive me, a mad child, for this my sin, and know me, dear mother, to be your little darling as ever." ¹ He added to such messages, "Mother, your kitchen is a holy place where I have taken the food cooked by your dear hands. When you cook your meal, know, that I shall always be there in spirit."² But Chaitanya's memories and associations

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chapter III.

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chapter III.

passed away like a flash of lightning as soon as they arose in his mind. After having delivered such messages he became unconscious of the outer-world passing into one of his trances, enjoying the inward union with his God.

When Chaitanya first began to manifest that devotion to God which eventually resulted in his adopting the vow of Sannyāsa, Çacī, his mother, made Advaita responsible for it. She wept and said, “Who says that Advaita is a great sage? He turned the head of my eldest son, bright as the moon, by his sophistry and made him leave home as a Sannyāsī for ever. Not satisfied with this he is now trying a similar experiment of his teachings on this young lad (Chaitanya).”¹

During more than half a century Advaita was an esteemed figure amongst the Vaiṣṇavas of Navadvīpa. Chaitanya after his Sannyāsa paid a visit to him at his house at Çāntipur. He stayed at the place for 10 days and Advaita then aged 75, sang and danced like a young man in the *Kīrtana* party that assembled round Chaitanya. When the latter was about to depart, the old man sobbed and cried like a child and followed Chaitanya for a long space. Chaitanya said on the occasion, “Oh thou venerable scholar, if thou behavest in this way, how

“কে বলে অদ্বৈত হয় এ বড় গৌসাই ।

চলসম এক পুত্র করিয়া বাহির

এই পুত্র না দিলেন করিবারে স্থির ॥”

will my mother control her feelings. I leave her in thy care.”

Advaita paid visits to Chaitanya at Purī with other residents of Navadvīpa once every year. The Premavilāsa writes that at one time he deviated a little from the Vaiṣṇava conception of Bhakti and taught the doctrines of Jñāna as he had learnt of old. A meeting with Chaitanya completely reformed him and since then and all through his long career he remained firm in the cause of Bhakti as taught by Chaitanya and formed one of the blessed trio of whom the other two were Chaitanya himself and Nityānanda. The Premavilāsa writes that Advaita's two disciples Kāmadeva Nagara of Guzrat and Ṣaṅkara could by no means be led to accept the tenets of the emotional creed of the Vaiṣṇavas, but remained Vedāntists, and when Advaita was once more reconciled with Chaitanya, they left their teacher and the country for good.

According to the Premavilāsa Advaita died in the year 1539, but according to Advaitaparakāṣa by Īṣāna Nagara, in 1584. The latter statement carries the apostle's earthly career to the utmost span of human life, *viz.*, 125 years. For obvious historical reasons we are inclined to credit the statement of the Premavilāsa. The descendants of Advaita live mainly at Ṣāntipur up to this date. The piety, high character and fervour of

faith of Advaita's wife, Sītā, have been made the subjects of memoirs of many Vaiṣṇava writers. Sītā and Çrī, the two wives of Advaita, were daughters of Narasiṃha Bhāduḍi by his wife, Menakā. The couple were the inhabitants of the village Nārāyaṇpur near Sātgaon in the Hughli district. Among the numerous disciples of Advaita, the name of Çrīnātha Ācārya, the Guru of Kavī Karṇapura and author of the celebrated commentary of the Bhāgavata called "Chaitanya Mālā Manjusa," deserves a prominent mention.¹

¹ See the Premavilāsa, Ch. xxv.

V. Nityānanda.

Though junior to Advaita by many years, Nityānanda occupies the second place in the trio according to popular estimation. The organisation of the Vaiṣṇava community in its later forms was eminently due to this apostle. His compassion for the depressed castes was a marked feature in his career devoted to the good of people. Though a Brāhmaṇ, he had no caste-prejudices and he mixed freely with the fallen and lowly without caring for the consequence. He opened the doors of the Vaiṣṇava society to all people irrespective of caste. Though the chief inspiration of this came from Chaitanya himself, the prophet of Nadiyā was too far steeped in his emotional felicities to be able to organise a sect or frame laws for it. Nityānanda did so at his bidding. The merchant community of Bengal, outcasted and fallen after the decadence of Buddhistic ascendancy gave a warm response to Nityānanda's call of brotherhood and were admitted by him to the Vaiṣṇava order. The Chāṇḍāls, the Parias and other depressed castes, the Sahajiyās, a sect of Buddhist Bhikṣus and Bhikṣunīs, known by their nick names Neḍā and Neḍīs, were admitted to the Vaiṣṇava community by Nityānanda's son Vīrachandra. The story is related how 2500 Buddhist Bhikṣus and Bhikṣunīs assembled at

Sympathy
with the fallen.

Khaddaha and surrendered themselves to Virachandra who graciously made them members of the Vaiṣṇava society. A distinguished European friend of mine once went to Khaddaha (a few miles to the north of Calcutta) to see the place where these people had assembled, and referred to the spot as marking the death of Buddhism in Bengal; for here did the last vestige of Buddhistic powers surrender itself and was incorporated with Vaiṣṇavism.

The merchants of Sātgaon, the chief mercantile centre in Bengal at the time, with Uddharaṇa Datta of the Suvarṇa Banika caste at their head, gathered round Nityānanda and were so devoted to him that they were prepared to sacrifice everything they had for his sake. Nityānanda is described in a popular Bengali song as “one without anger, always cheerful and without pride, having compassion for all men”.¹ His love-ecstasies often matched those of Chaitanya and he was devoted to the master so greatly that when Chaitanya passed away from this earth he pined away like a lover speaking of nothing else but of the incidents of his life,² despising all earthly comforts till he too died two years later in 1535.

¹ “অক্রোধ পরমানন্দ নিত্যানন্দ রায় ।”

“চৈতন্য বিচ্ছেদে সদাই বিলাপ ।

কদাচিৎ বাহ্য হৈলে চৈতন্য আলাপ

কায় মনো বাক্যে সদা চৈতন্য ধিরায় ।

At one time the rich merchants of Saptagrāma, Nadiyā and other districts, grateful to Nityānanda for their admittance to the Vaiṣṇava community, offered him fine silken apparels embroidered with gold and chains studded with pearls, rubies and diamonds. Though an ascetic Nityānanda wore these ornaments to please them ; upon which a Brāhmaṇ of Nadiyā named Rāma Dāsa, a friend of Chaitanya, went to Purī and said to the latter, “ Nityānanda, your colleague, though an ascetic, is given to luxury. The rich merchants give him valuable articles and fineries and he uses them.”

Chaitanya's great faith in Nityānanda.

Chaitanya replied, “ But I know he is a true ascetic at heart. Don't look at his exterior. Dust, ashes, and the jewels and stones of which you speak are to him of the same value. Even if you told me that he paid court to low courtesans or indulged in wine, I would not lose my trust in him. ' Indeed he was a true ascetic, full of kindness for men and love for God. The following incident, of which most of the Bengalis, have heard, but the details of which are not perhaps so well known, shows some of the noble traits of his great life.

উচ্চ শব্দ করিয়া সদা গৌরাক্ষ গুণ গায়
আপনি গৌরাক্ষ গাই গাওয়ার জগতে
গৌরাক্ষের গুণ গাও পাবে নন্দমুতে ॥”

Nityānanda Vañca Vistāra by Vr̥ndāvana Dāsa.

The Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

Details about the two ruffian chiefs, Jagāi and Mādhāi, are to be found in the supplementary 2½ Chapters of the Premavilāsa recently discovered in a MS. of that work found by Yaçodālāla Vanika. I give these and the incident leading to their conversion below:—

Subhānanda Rāy, a Kulīn Brāhmaṇ, became a very rich and powerful man in Nadiyā and obtained the title of Rājā from the Emperor of Gauḍa about the year 1450 A.D. He was a great man and his reputation spread far and wide in the country. Owing to his friendship with the Emperor he carried great influence everywhere.

His two sons, Raghunātha and Janārdana were distinguished for their scholarships and for their great personal beauty. Raghunātha had a son named Jagannātha, and Janārdana's son was called Mādhava. The cousins were popularly known as Jagāi and Mādhāi and had the hereditary titles of Rājā. These two young noble men became robbers at thier early youth, and carried on depradations all around, so that their names grew to be a terror to Nadiyā and the neighbouring districts. They carried away the wealth of villagers not even sparing their wives, set fire to their houses, and though born of a good Brāhmaṇ family freely indulged in wine and beef. They set at defiance all law and order

“ব্রাহ্মণ হইরা মদ্য গোমাংস ভক্ষণ ।

ডাকা চুরি পরগৃহ দাহ অনুক্ষণ ॥”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

and Gorāi Kazī, the Mahomedan Magistrate of Nadiyā, could not punish them because of their great power. They not only killed cows, but also Sādhus, to the horror of the Hindu community.

Chaitanya had now become the central figure of a spiritual band of workers who sang the praises of God day and night in the streets of Nadiyā. The robber-chiefs were offended by the loud music and uproar of the crowd. And when Haridāsa and Nityānanda one day passed by them exhorting people to pay homage to God and seek His mercy by pure lives, Jagāi and Mādhāi stood before them reeling in a drunken condition. The sweet and compassionate words of Nityānanda had no effect upon the brothers and Mādhāi ordered him to stop singing the name of God. But Nityānanda was neither frightened nor did he feel any anger; a deep compassion moved him while he continued singing the praise of the Lord. The infuriated chief had an empty bottle of wine in his hand with which he struck Nityānanda making a deep wound on his forehead. The apostle cried 'Oh God' 'Oh Lord' and while blood streamed forth from the wound and drenched his clothes, he said to Mādhāi, 'You have struck me for no fault, this I can bear Mādhāi, but I cannot see your wretched condition. You have struck me, no matter, but dear friend, only sing the praises of the Lord once, if I hear His

name uttered by you I will forget the pain of the wound.’¹ Mādhāi was about to strike the apostle again, when Jagāi, whose drunken fit had passed away, held his hands and forbade him to do so saying, “Why have you struck a Sannyāsī, you wicked man? He is a great Sādhu and has abandoned all earthly pleasures for God. What good can you attain by assaulting a pious man; do not do so again.”² At this time Chaitanya came up and as he saw Nityānanda’s face drenched in blood but quite cheerful and unmindful of his pain singing God’s name ecstatically, the Master ran to him, embraced him and with his own clothes wiped away the blood from his face. He looked at Mādhāi with sorrow and said in a touching tone, “Why have you struck my brother, dear as my life?” and then stopping a little said in a voice that trembled, “Mādhāi, if it was in your mind to strike one of us, why did you not

“মারিলি কলসীর কানা সহিবারে পারি ।

তোদের দুর্গতি আমি সহিবারে নারি ॥

মেরেছিষ্ মেরেছিষ্ তাতে ক্ষতি নাই ।

সুমধুর হরিনাম মুখে বল ভাই ।”

কেন হেন করিলে নির্দয় তুমি দৃঢ় ।

দেশান্তরী মারিয়া কি হইবে তুমি বড় ॥

এত বড় অবধূত না মারিহ আর ।

সন্ন্যাসী মারিয়া কোন লাভ বা তোমার ॥”

strike me ?”¹ With tender love did he take Nityānanda with him and the crowd followed them in deep but silent grief.

The two brothers stood there silent, wondering at what they had heard. The popular song ascribed the following speech to Jagāi at this stage² :—

“Strike not Nitāi any more, Oh brother Mādhāi ! One’s pain is healed as one looks at his sweet face, full of compassion. Feign would I, Oh Mādhāi, clasp his feet and hold them close to my breast ! This would cool my heart burning with remorse. Behold there, angel-like he looks, with his hair bound into a knot and with marks of God’s name all over his body. Being struck he has compassion for the striker. Where, Oh Mādhāi, was such compassion ever seen ! Blood flows from his head mingled with

“মাধাই যদি মারবো বলে ছিল তোর মনে ।

তবে মাধাই আমার তুই না মারিলি কেনে ॥”

Chaitanya Maṅgala.

“নিতাইকে আর মেরনা ও মাধাই ।

নিতাইএর চাঁদবদন দেখলে শীতল হয় জীবন,

আমার ইচ্ছা হয় যুগল চরণ, হৃদে ধরে প্রাণ জুড়াই ।

নিতাইএর মাথায় শিখা, উর্ক রেখা, অঙ্গে হরির নামটি লেখা, *

কি অপরূপ ভঙ্গী বাঁকা রূপের সীমা নাই ।

মার খেয়ে দয়া করে, এমন দয়াল দেখি নাই ।

নিতাইর সর্ব অঙ্গে ঋধির ধারা, তাহে বহে প্রেম ধারা

ত্রিঙ্গতে এমন দয়াল কভু দেখি নাই ॥”

An old song.

tears of forgiving love ; Oh what a divine sight do I see before me to-day !”

The two brothers went home but could not sleep for remorse. Mādhāi was moved to tears and longed for the sight of the divine man whom he had so cruelly struck but who, while bleeding, had spoken only sweet words. The brothers walked about the extensive courtyard of their house the whole night through in bitter repentance ; the dews of night fell upon their bare heads and the wind blew softly from the Ganges but could not heal the pain of their hearts. They became changed men in one night.

When the morning dawned in deep agony of heart they ran to the house of Chaitanya and knocking at his gate cried aloud, “ Oh Master, receive your sinners.” And when Chaitanya came out, weeping they fell at his feet without power of speech. Chaitanya said “ You boast of being the Rājās of Navadvīpa. It is a marvel that you cry like women.” He added that he had already pardoned Jagāi ; for himself he could not take offence at any thing. But Mādhāi must seek

∴ “নবদ্বীপের রাজা হও তোমরা দুজন ।
রাজা হয়ে কি কারণে কাঁদহ এখন ॥”

Chaitanya Maṅgala.

“শিশু পুত্র মারিলে কি বাপ দুঃখ পায় ।
এই মত তোমার প্রহার মোর গায় ॥”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

the pardon of Nityānanda whom he had so brutally hurt.” Upon this they approached the latter and most humbly prayed for forgiveness. Nityānanda said, “If a child beats his parents do they take offence? I have treated the assault in the same way.”¹ And when Mādhāi with tears insisted on pardon the apostle said, “Your remorse will be complete and effective if you sin no more.” They said nothing but by silent tears showed their sincerity. Nityānanda added, “Not only do I pardon you, but if I have done anything good or noble in this life or in previous lives, may the reward be yours, dear souls, this is my prayer to God. You struck me with a broken bottle, the punishment receive at my hands. I give you the name of God in return.”

Jagāi and Mādhāi each took in his hand a leaf of the sacred *Tulasī* plant and at Nityānanda’s direction gave it over to him saying, “Oh Master, my burden of sin I give unto you.” This simple act completed their admittance to Nityānanda’s discipleship. They had only to add that thenceforth they would lead blameless lives.

The two noble men did not return to their place but lived with their spiritual master repenting their sins and singing the praises of God.

¹ “কোন জন্মে থাকে যদি আমার স্বকৃত ।

সব দিব মাধায়েরে গুনহ নিশ্চিত ।

Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chapter XIII.

Mādhāi's mental anguish did not cease, but the more he realised the kindness of Nityānanda, the greater grew his remorse for having made the beastly attack on his person. Nityānanda repeatedly assured him of his pardon. But Mādhāi one day told him in private, "You may pardon me, gracious Master, but to hundreds of my fellow-men I have caused pain. In drunken state I have assaulted men whom I do not know or even remember. What penance is there that may cleanse my sin? Tell me, Master, my heart longs for punishment of some sort for my lifelong wickedness." Nityānanda said, "If you want to beg pardon of the public whom you have wronged, go to the bathing *ghāt* of the Ganges and seek pardon of all who may go there for bathing."

Mādhāi took a spade in his hand and made with it a bathing *ghāt* himself on the bank of the Ganges, where for the whole day and a considerable portion of the night he would sit reciting the name of God, while silent tears would occasionally be seen rolling down his cheeks. Hundreds of men bathed in the Ganges every day. To every new arrival he would go with joined hands, no matter to what caste the person belonged, and with tearful eyes would say, "Whether knowingly or unknowingly if I have caused you any pain or harm, be gracious enough to pardon me

The Mādhāi-
Ghāt.

for the same." His pride of birth and wealth was thus completely humbled and thus he was born again, so to speak, in his new spiritual life. Jagāi' also became known for his great piety and faith.

Thus passed the lives of two famous men of Navadvīpa who, born in wealth and power, but spoiled by wicked company, went back to the righteous course and lead lives worthy of Brahma-chāris. The Ghāt of Mādhāi became a sacred place in Navadvīpa. Many years ago the *ghāt*, that stood like an emblem of the sins and sufferings of its builder, was washed away by the Ganges as his sins were by true penitent tears; but it existed even at the time of Narahari Chakravartī, the author of *Bhaktiratnākara* who wrote his work about 1725 A.D.

The conversion of Jagāi and Mādhāi took place in the year 1509 A.D.

At a rather advanced stage of life, Nityānanda broke the vow of asceticism, it is said, at the bidding of Chaitanya and married the two daughters of Suryadās Sarkhel, a brother of Gaurdāsa Sarkhel of Kālnā. The latter was a companion of Chaitanyā in his early years. Vasudhā and Jāhṇavī are the names of the two wives of Nityānanda. Jāhṇavī after her widowhood became a conspicuous figure in the Vaiṣṇava community for a long time and honoured for her high

• Nityānanda's marriage.

character. The Premavilāsa mentions the fact that Nityānanda having broken the ascetic's vow lost his position in society and no good Brāhmaṇ was willing to give him his daughter in marriage with him. Uddharaṇa Datta, a follower of Nityānanda, proposed his marriage with the daughters of Suryyadāsa Sarkhel, and the latter at first refused the proposal for fear of social ostracism. But his admiration for the apostle, who is said to have shown him some miracles, afterwards triumphed over his weakness and Suryyadāsa's family now stands exalted in the popular estimation owing to this connection.

Nityānanda's son, Vīrachandra (also called Vīrabhadra), became a great figure in the succeeding period of Vaiṣṇava history.

Vīrachandra.

VI. *Çrīvāsa.*

Next to Nityānanda and Advaita who deservedly head the list of Chaitanya's companions, there were other commanding figures in the Vaiṣṇava community, each great in his own way. The special claims of Nityānanda and Advaita on popular respect rest on the fact that they organised the Vaiṣṇava community in Bengal. Communal gratitude has therefore paid the highest tribute of honour to them, while others, some of whom equally great, have remained somewhat in the back-ground, their lives being not so much devoted to the enlargement of the Vaiṣṇava circle as to doing good work silently among their fellowmen. Of these the sweet and saintly life of Çrīvāsa deserves special mention.

Çrīvāsa, a Brāhmaṇ scholar, came with Advaita from Sylhet to study at Nadiyā and settled there. He had three brothers Çrikanta (*alias* Çrinidhi), Çri Rāma and Çrīpati. Çrīvāsa is sometimes called Çrinivāsa. The family enjoyed moderate affluence. The author of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata mentions that they had a large following of servants and attendants. In those days when luxury was unknown, a Mahomedan, tailor lived in one of their out-houses, whose sole occupation was to sew clothes for the members

Çrīvāsa's status
in society.

of the family. Chaitanya is said to have prophesied once that “ though Lakṣmī, the Goddess of wealth, might be reduced to begging her bread, yet Çrīvāsa’s family would never be poor.” Long after Çrīvāsa had been dead when Jayānanda wrote his Caitanya Maṅgala about 1540 A.D. the descendants of Çrīvāsa were still rich at Kumārhaṭṭa.

Çrīvāsa was junior to Advaita, but could not be less than 40 years when Chaitanya was born. We find from the accounts in the several biographies of Chaitanya that Çrīvāsa and his wife, Mālinī, were present at Jagannātha Miçra’s house when Chaitanya was born and that they made many beautiful presents to the baby on the occasion. Mālinī was a friend of Çachī Devī, Chaitanya’s mother, who had already given birth to nine children at the time. From this fact we may take Çrīvāsa to be at least 40 years old when Chaitanya was born and thus we take 1446 A.D. to be the year of Çrīvāsa’s birth. Chaitanya as a boy was a frequent visitor to Çrīvāsa’s house and carried out the orders of Çrīvāsa as a child does of his elders and even in his youth he was often accosted by Çrīvāsa in such language as “ Whether bound, thou haughty boy ? ” (1)

(1) “কোথায় চলেছ উদ্ধতের শিরোনামি ।”

Çrīvāsa grew into a spoilt child mixing in his early youth with bad companions. But all of a sudden there came a change over his wicked life. When he was barely 17, he dreamt one night that a Sannyāsī knocked at his door. Çrīvāsa forthwith came to meet him. The holy man said, “Çrīvāsa, you have only one year more to live, take this warning.” The dream vanished and the day dawned when to his great surprise* Çrīvāsa found at his gate the Sannyāsī of his dream waiting for him; he too disappeared having delivered the selfsame message. From that time Çrīvāsa’s mirth and light-brained follies were gone. He had the sure belief that the span of his life extended for a year only. He did not speak out his thoughts but became emaciated, lean and pale, eating spare meal and often fasting for fear. When sorely troubled in this way, he one day came across the following line in the Vṛihat Nāradya Purāṇa: “Sing the praises of the Lord, nothing else will save a man from the sorrows of the world in this *kali yuga* (iron age)”¹. As the drowning man catches at a straw, even so Çrīvāsa caught the words which henceforth became the guiding principle of his life. But the words were no straw, they proved to be

The turning
point in his life.

“হরেণাম হরেণাম হরেণামৈব কেবলম্ ।
কলৌ নাস্তৈব নাস্তৈব নাস্তৈব গতিরন্তথা ॥”

a source of strength and support. We quote his own statement, "I took the *çloka* as the word of God Himself and though I was derided for it, I left all work and resigned myself absolutely to His will. When people laughed at me I was not angry but awaited patiently the summons from Him, losing all attachment for home and the world." He visited the house of Devānanda where the Bhāgavata was read every evening, and there became the most attentive listener. We find that one day he was turned out of the room as he sobbed loudly and showed other signs of emotion, which the audience considered unbecoming in an assembly of learned men while listening to sermons.¹

The one year passed, and on the last day Çrīvāsa went to the house of Devānanda Āchārya as usual. The text for that day was the Chapter of Bhāgavata, which told of the devotion of Prahlāda, the son of Hiraṇyakaçipu, and while hearing the interpretations, all of a sudden his head reeled, and in a moment he fell senseless on the ground. They took him for dead and carried him out of the house, when the same Sannyāsī whom he had seen a year before, appeared there and touching Çrīvāsa's body said, "Arise son, you have many things to

do yet." When Çrīvāsa awoke as from a sound sleep, the figure of the Sannyāsī, to his utter amazement, had vanished from the spot.¹

Thus Çrīvāsa was re-born in the life of faith and became a constant companion of Advaita. They both sang the praises of God aloud in their houses and in the streets. Çrīvāsa had a musical voice and as he sang hymns and praises of God, many hearers stood by listening to the songs with rapt attention, though there were many who derided him for the excess of emotion he displayed.

When Chaitanya had founded a *toḷ* in Nadiyā at the house of Mukunda Sañjaya in the year 1508, Çrīvāsa often met him and advised him to devote himself to spiritual culture rather than to secular learning, but the young scholar not being then of a religious bent of mind, kept out of his way.

It is well known that Chaitanya's visit to Gayā brought a complete change into his life. It was there he first saw that vision of God, which continued till the last moment of his earthly career. On his return from Gayā, his trances were taken for fits of hysteria. He could not speak of anything other than of his God; the

¹ A full detail of this incident is to be found in many Vaiṣṇava works and particularly in the Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭaka by Kavi Karṇapūra.

name of God carelessly uttered even by bystanders would call forth a flood of tears from his eyes. He would often sing the name of God for hours together till he could sing or speak no more, remaining absorbed in his vision, unconscious of the world, for days and nights, taking no thought of food or sleeping.

Facing the spacious historic courtyard of Çrīvāsa's house, stood thick rows of *kunda* plants, the pearl-like white flowers of which presented to the sight what an Æschylus would describe to be the eternal smile of the landscape. The flowers bloomed there during all seasons, and Vṛndāvana Dāsa says in his Chaitanya Bhāgavata that the constant plucking of them by the worshippers and boys, morning and evening, did not cause any perceptible diminution in their number.

The *kunda*-flowers in Çrīvāsa's courtyard and talk about Chaitanya's love for God.

There the small band of Vaiṣṇava worshippers met every morning and talked over diverse matters as they gathered flowers in small cane-baskets. Here Çuklāmvara, one of these Vaiṣṇavas, spoke one morning of the wonderful love for God that dawned on Chaitanya. Since his return from Gayā "he is thoroughly changed; he no longer cares to comb his beautiful curling hair, his mother follows him with wistful eyes but he talks not with her and cries 'Oh God' and sees vision of Him in the clouds; he runs with his hands outstretched and eyes

full of tears to catch the Unseen; despising his soft couch and white bed he sleeps on the bare earth; he no longer wears his gold chains, earrings and lockets nor the fine *kṛṣṇakeli* cloth of silk with black borders; he neither takes his bath nor does he eat his usual meals; he no longer worships gods and goddesses, nor does he recite the sacred hymns as prescribed by the Ṣāstras; but weeps and cries 'Oh my God, do not hide your face from me'.

Ṣuklāmvara added, "Chaitanya has promised to tell me of the wonderful vision he saw at Gayā, in the evening to-day. Since he saw it, he says, he cannot control his feelings. His mother is in great distress."

They all said, "He was proud of his learning and ridiculed sacred things. Is it possible that God has given him the faith which he lacked, or is it madness?" They had not to wait long, for Ṣachī Devī sent for Ṣrīvāsa just at that time, with the tidings that her son had become insane. She had tried *Ṣivādi Ghṛta* and other medicines prescribed by the physicians but these had produced no effect. The malady was in fact the same as that attributed to the European mystics who displayed similar symptoms.

Ṣrīvāsa's diagnosis.
Ṣrīvāsa called on Chaitanya forthwith and after long and earnest talk came back himself a changed man. He saw in Chaitanya only the

bloom and perfection of that vision of which he had but got glimpses himself after his 're-birth'. The tears that flowed from Chaitanya's eyes while speaking with him, appeared to him holier than the stream of the Ganges, and as he listened to him, flashes of a new light dispelled his spiritual doubts, and it seemed to Çrīvāsa that he too saw the One whose glorious vision had so absolutely possessed the young scholar. Çrīvāsa could not help bowing down before Chaitanya, though he was much his junior, and when at parting, Chaitanya with joined hands prayed Çrīvāsa to find a cure for his insanity, distressed as he was for his mother, Çrīvāsa said, "Your insanity is what we all covet. The addiction to worldly pleasures which last for a moment only plunging men shortly after into a sea of misfortune, is real insanity." What Çrīvāsa felt, all people of Nadiyā felt shortly after except the Bhāṭṭāchāryyas, ever vain of their great learning.

The courtyard in Çrīvāsa's house became the favourite resort of Chaitanya every evening. It was here that the daily growing number of his followers met and sang *kīrtana* songs from sun-set to sun-rise, while he inspired them with

his trances standing in the centre of them. It was here that when

Çrīvāsa's only son died one night,

he whispered to the women of the house not

• The courtyard
of Çrīvāsa. •

to mourn aloud lest the heavenly joy imparted by Chaitanya's ecstasies of love might be disturbed, for in them the Vaiṣṇavas saw the real vision of God-in-man. His son had died at 7-30 in the night and the *kīrtana* continued till 2 A.M. Never before had Ṣrīvāsa's songs been so fervent and impressive. Chaitanya at last heard of the bereavement that had befallen his friend, and stopped *kīrtana*. Upon Ṣrīvāsa's asking permission of him to leave home for the cremation of the child, Chaitanya said, "How can I leave the company of one who forgot the loss of his only son for my love!"¹ Here in this courtyard of Ṣrīvāsa, Chaitanya often discussed religious matters with Ṣrīdhara, the poor Brahmin, rich in faith and character, whose humble calling was to sell plantain-leaves in the streets. In his childhood, Chaitanya used often good humouredly to advise Ṣrīdhara to earn money by performing priestly functions in the houses of those who worshipped Chandī and other local deities with great pomp. "Why should you," he had once asked, "be content with your rags and wretched hut?" Ṣrīdhara's meek answers on such occasions would be "Well hast thou said, oh Brahmin lad, yet time passes and at the end makes no difference. The king

“পুত্রশোক না জানিল যে মোহর প্রেমে।

হেন তব সঙ্গ মুই ছাড়িব কেমনে ॥”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Khanda, Chap. XXV.

in his golden hall partakes of rich meals, and behold the birds live on the boughs of trees. When death comes it levels all. Each has his lot apportioned by God.”¹ Çrīdhara, the faithful, was now a constant companion of Chaitanya. Here in this courtyard Çrīvāsa used to read passages from the Gītagovinda and the Bhāgavata making clear the hidden meaning of Kṛṣṇa’s love and sports in the Vṛndā groves. The earth earthy—the flesh and its desires—vanished before his glowing speech, the texts being interpreted as symbolic forms of the highest spiritual truths. Chaitanya became frenzied with joy as he heard these, and said to Çrīvāsa “say again what you said and tell me more, beloved friend, sweeter than nectar is your speech.” On one occasion when Chaitanya lay unconscious in this courtyard, his face beaming with joy at the beatific vision, Advaita touched the dust of his feet with reverence, which he would never allow while in sense. Discovering this afterwards Chaitanya admonished this old scholar saying “Yours is a sea of devotion and faith, mine is a mere well. Why do you covet it from so small a place?”

¹ “শ্রীধর বলেন বিপ্র বলিলা উত্তম ।
তথাপি সত্তার কাল যায় এক সম ॥
রত্নঘরে থাকে রাজা দিব্য খায় পরে ।
পক্ষিগণ থাকে দেখ বৃক্ষের উপরে ॥
কাল পুন সত্তার সমান হই যায় ।
সতে নিজ কর্ম ভুলে ঈশ্বর ইচ্ছায় ॥”

It was in Çrivāsa's courtyard that Chaitanya acted as a sweeper and cleansed the temple of Kṛṣṇa with a broom, calling himself '*Kṛṣṇer haddipa*'—Kṛṣṇa's sweeper all the while and weeping for joy at his own humility. Here Narāyani,—the niece of Çrivāsa, who became latterly celebrated as the mother of the historian Vṛndāvāna Dāsa, is said to have shown spiritual tendencies even when she was a girl of 4, inspired by Chaitanya.* Here the Māhomedan tailor of Çrivāsa's house attracted by the emotional fervour of Chaitanya, openly renounced his faith and turned a Vaiṣṇava. From this courtyard Advaita reverentially took up some dust and exclaimed "How can I claim the fortune of Çrivāsa whose courtyard is the favourite haunt of Chaitanya?" Here Chaitanya once ate some grains of coarse rice from the begging bowl of Çuklāmvara, the ascetic, and said "No poor food is this, received from the hands of one of the most pious of men, it gives purity of heart to its pertaker."

The courtyard of Çrivāsa's house has a hundred associations of Chaitanya. It is now in the bed of the Ganges, but the sanctity of this shrine is now attributed to a spot now called by the same name and considered a holy place by a thousand of pilgrims who visit it annually.

* "শ্রীবাসস্তেব কমে তাদৃশং সৌভাগ্যং যন্ত ভবনে প্রতিদিনমেব সেবিতং দেবেন ।"

The Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭaka.

In the Çri Kṛṣṇa play organised by Chaitanya, played at the house of Buddhimanta Khān of Nadiyā who bore the cost, Çrivāsa took the part of the musician-sage Nārada which he played very well. Chaitanya himself figured as “Rukmiṇī”, one of the queens of Kṛṣṇa, and so perfect was his play that even Çachī, his mother, could not recognise him in his female

The play organised by Chaitanya.

guise. In Chaitanya Chandrodaya by Kavi Karṇapūra, a contemporary poet, Çrivāsa as Nārada is thus described. “He presents himself on the stage with his long grey beard and sandal marks all over his body. From his left shoulder hangs his lyre and in his right hand he holds the sacred *kuça* grass. As he makes his appearance he hears the music of Çri Kṛṣṇa’s flute floating from afar and thus muses. “Is it the merry chuckle of the geese as they sportively swim in the lake of sweet love or the humming of bees as they suck honey from the blooming flowers in a lovely garden?”

On the eve of the play Chaitanya had said “Those who have entirely subdued the passions of the flesh should only be entitled to witness this play of ours”. He had feared, lest the loves of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa be interpreted by materialistic people as sensual love.” To this Çrivāsa and Advaita both replied “Take out our names from the list first; for if this be the

law to-day, we are not fit," and Chaitanya smiled at this.

Haridāsa and Nityānanda lived for two years in Çrivāsa's house (1508-1510 A.D.) One was a Mahomedan and the other an ascetic and no respecter of caste. The propriety of Çrivāsa's conduct in receiving these guests at his house was called in question by the orthodox Hindu community, but he paid no heed to their disapproval. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata says that "Çrivāsa and the members of his family were devoted to Chaitanya and to him alone. They did not believe in any other god or goddess." ¹ Nityānanda and Haridāsa remained in Çrivāsa's house, and every morning they made their round in the city singing praises of God and calling on the house-holders to give them alms. When, however, they came to give them alms, the apostles said "Sing the praises of the Lord and lead holy lives. This is the alms we beg of you,—none other."

Often did Chaitanya come out with his *Sanikīrtana* party and march through the streets of Nadiyā. The Bhaṭṭāchāryas were greatly offended; they did not accept the emotional creed of *bhakti*. They were proud of their learning and power, and made representations

“সপরিবারে করে যারা চৈতন্যের সেবা ।

শ্রীচৈতন্য বিনে নাহি মানে দেবী-দেবা ॥”

to the Kāzi praying him to stop the loud uproar of the Vaiṣṇavas in the public streets. The Vaiṣṇavas sang the name of God "with the psaltery and the high sounding cymbals" in the streets, but the courtyard of Çrivāsa's house was, of course, the central meeting place of the band. At one time a rumour passed current that a ship carrying soldiers of the Emperor was about to land in the city of Nadiyā to arrest the offenders. Even some of the unbeliefers got alarmed at this rumour. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata records the following conversation among some of them. One said "I had already suggested that the house of Çrivāsa, the resort of the Vaiṣṇavas, should be at once destroyed and thrown into the Ganges. You did not take recourse to force which is the only remedy in such cases. Now you will see how many innocent men will suffer for the wickedness of these Vaiṣṇavas." Another said "why should we be alarmed? If the King's soldiers come, we will have Çrivāsa arrested; and the matter will end there."

His enemies had recourse to various means to annoy Çrivāsa. We find it mentioned in the biographies of Chaitanya that a Brāhmāṇ of Nadiyā, named Gopāl Chāpal, kept at the gate of Çrivāsa objects of *tāntric* rites which caused a horror to the Vaiṣṇavas. These consisted of meat and wine with which Chandī was worshipped.

But all this opposition ended when Chaitanya took the Sannyāsi's vows. This implied his desertion of Nadiyā for ever. A sannyāsi may never revisit his native place nor live with his family ever after in life. Chaitanya wore rags and shaved his head and became a Sannyāsi when only 24 years old. Even his enemies were sorry to see him cut off all earthly ties while still so young. The people had all along felt a

Chaitanya's Sannyāsi and the general mourning.

sense of love for this divine man, though some did not approve of the forwardness and over-winning

manners of a few of his followers. It was a day of general lamentation in Nadiyā. From the day when Chaitanya left the place for ever, the courtyard of Çrīvāsa became as it were a desert in the eyes of his numerous friends and associates. The last part of Çrīvāsa's life was spent in recollecting the incidents of Chaitanya's early life. And Murārī Gupta, a great scholar of Nadiyā,

Çrīvāsa's grief.

was the first to write notes in Sanskrit verse on Chaitanya's

life, at the order of Çrīvāsa, who spoke of nothing but of Chaitanya after his desertion of Nadiyā and dreamt of him in his sleep by night.. Often while gathering flowers for worship he recollected Chaitanya and fainted away in grief, the basket of flowers falling from his unconscious hands. Sometimes going to the banks of the Ganges, he missed his great

companion and sat for hours together meditating on him who was dearer to him than everything else in the world and he forgot that he had come there to bathe. In his own courtyard, the *sankirtana* party sang the praises of the Lord again with the high-sounding cymbals, the timbrel and dance, and he stood there listening to the singers but often his voice was choked with tears and he fell down on the bare earth in great grief crying like a child. Sometimes he felt that the God of his songs and Chaitanya were the same, so that while offering flowers to Kṛṣṇa instead of saying 'I bow to thee, oh Kṛṣṇa,' he said unconsciously 'I bow to thee, oh Chaitanya.' And as he remembered himself, tears rolled down his cheeks.

The residents of Nadiyā all except Chaitanya's wife and mother, had permission to go and see him once a year at Purī. This was on the occasion of the great Car festivities. Needless to say that Ṣrīvāsa was one of the foremost to avail himself of this opportunity. How happy was once more the venerable old man of Nadiyā to meet his young "master" and sing the name of God in the *kirtana* party at Purī! We find him once in a delirium of joy pushing through the crowd to be near Chaitanya. In his attempt he pressed against Pratāpa Rudra, the king. Upon which Harichandana,

Ṣrīvāsa at Purī.

his minister, pushed him away with his hands; but the old man's ecstasies knew no bounds, and he again unconsciously pressed upon the king on which the minister again pushed him away with his hands. Çrivāsa got angry and slapped the minister on his cheek. Harichandana was very angry, but Pratāpa Rudra said "Do not be offended with him; his devotion for the Master is such that we are not worthy of touching the dust of his feet."

While parting from Chaitanya on the expiration of the few days he was permitted to stay at Purī in the year, he wept every time like a child leaving his mother, and on one of these occasions Chaitanya is said to have spoken to him thus: "Do not weep, v̄etaran scholar. Though I am at Purī, I shall be always in spirit in your courtyard. That place and the kitchen of my dear mother where I took meals cooked by her hands, I can never for a moment forget. You will feel my presence when the *Sankīrtana* party assemble in your courtyard and sing Kṛṣṇa's name."

Çrivāsa's family had two residential houses, one at Nadiyā and the other at Kumārhatta. In the latter place there is a mound of earth marking the spot which was once his home.

VI. *Haridāsa.*

One of the most ardent and sincere of Chaitanya's companions—one who showed his great devotion for him and adhered to his spiritual convictions in the teeth of great persecution—was Haridāsa, popularly known as *yavana* Haridāsa,—the Mahomedan. We have not come across his Mahomedan name. He was given the Hindu name 'Haridāsa' after his conversion to Vaiṣṇavism. His father's name was Malai Kāzi. He was the owner of a considerable property in the district of Ambua, and as the name Kāzi implies, was a Mahomedan Magistrate. Haridāsa was born in Buḍan near Banagrām in the district of Jessore about the year 1464 A.D. He came to Sāntipur as a young man and

Early life and conversion to Vaiṣṇavism.

was converted to the Vaiṣṇava faith by Advaita. We find him living at the house of Ṣrivāsa in Nadiyā between 1508-1510. Here Nityānanda and he became fast friends and both preached the Chaitanya-cult in the city and its suburbs. As already mentioned, they visited the houses of the villagers as beggars and in the place of alms which the good people were ready to give them, they asked for a promise on their part to sing the praises of God and lead pure lives.

Gorāi Kāzi who was the Mahomedan Kāzi of Kuliā, a ward of Nadiyā, was greatly enraged to find a Mahomedan become a Hindu convert; and he reported the matter to the Emperor of Gauḍa. Orders were received to try him in a court presided over by 12 Kāzis, and they passed the unanimous judgment that if he still persisted in reciting the name of Hari through the streets, he should be publicly whipped in 22 different markets of the country. This was done. The persecution was so unceasing and the punishment so severe that he was at one time taken for dead. But Haridāsa triumphed over all this and kept to his course out of the great love he bore to Chaitanya.

Persecution.

In his youth Haridāsa had for a time led a life of penance passing through a process of spiritual training in the jungly tracts of Benapole near Jessore. It is well known that Rāmchandra Khān, a powerful local zemindar and a bully, sent a beautiful Moghul harlot to Haridāsa promising her a reward if she could succeed in winning him to the pleasures of a worldly life. Haridāsa lived in a small hut at Benapole where the harlot visited him one evening and said that she was smitten with love for him. Haridāsa said he would attend to her after saying his prayers. Saying so he shut his eyes in order to take the

Victory over temptation.

fixed number of God's name which were three lacs by day and night. So quiet and lonely was the place and so profound was the meditative mood of Haridāsa, that his lovely seducer waited till morning without a word and when at the dawn of the day people gathered at the place to see the holy man she went away saying she would visit him the next evening. That night also she had a similar experience, the all absorbing meditation of Haridāsa could not be disturbed, and on the third night she could not resist the influence of the saintly life before her. To the great disappointment of Rāmchandra Khān

The harlot turned a devotee. it was discovered that the beautiful Moghul courtizan had taken to the life of a Vaiṣṇava recluse by shaving her head and accepting Haridāsa as her spiritual guide. We know from the accounts given

A retribution. in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta how a retribution came to Rāmchandra Khān from the most High for oppressing Haridāsa and doing other wicked things. He had insulted before this Nityānanda who had been a guest at his house one night. He had grown proud of his army and refused to pay annual revenue to the Mahomedan court. A powerful army of the Emperor laid siege to his fortified town and making a forcible entry into it, occupied it, defiling his temples with the blood of cows slain there.

Kavi Karṇapūra relates that in the dramatic performance organised by Chaitanya at Nadiyā, Haridāsa played the part of the Sūtradhara. He had a turban on his head, ear-rings on his ears, a string of pearls on his neck and bracelets on his arms. From his shoulders hang a flowing wreath of field-flowers. The dramatic character representing the abstract virtue of Brotherhood asked the Deity of love and faith on the stage, how it was that a Mahomēdan was allowed to take part in the religious functions of the Hindus. The latter said "The way of love and faith is different from the one prescribed in the Ṣāstras." Brotherhood said "If one takes an irregular course, it will take a long time to arrive at the spiritual goal, if it is to be attained at all by such means." The Deity of love and faith replied "Not so always, though it may be true generally speaking. There are occasions when by embracing an undefined and irregular course the destination is reached the sooner. Behold, when the country is deluged with flood and there is no fixed course for the boat to take, it goes faster to its destination by following an undefined course than it would do by taking the zigzag course of a well-defined river in the dry season.¹

Haridās as a player in the dramatic performance given by Chaitanya

What takes place during the flood.

¹ See Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭakam by Kavi Karṇapūra, (Berhampur Edition), Act III, Scene iii, pp. 169-170.

This refers to the violation of Çāstric ordinances which marked the course of the Vaiṣṇavas in the pursuit of their spiritual goal. The Mahomedans were offered the same respect and, what is more, the same social prestige as the Hindus, in their own community. The flood is here the one of faith and devotion brought on by Chaitanya.

When Haridāsa was at Sāntipur living with Advaita, the latter was for some time excommunicated by the orthodox community for his intimate associations with a Mahomedan. A public diet took place there in which Haridāsa made a speech quoting chapter and verse from various Sanskrit works and successfully meeting all the arguments advanced by his chief opponent Yadunandana Āchārya who held an undisputedly high position as a scholar not only at Sāntipur but in the neighbouring districts. The diet resulted in the latter's accepting the creed of Vaiṣṇavism as propounded by Haridāsa. His triumph over such a powerful adversary, no less than his great meekness of character and exalted life, overcome the prejudices of the people of Sāntipur and thenceforward they ceased their hostile attitude towards Haridāsa and to his friend Advaita.

From Sāntipur Haridāsa came to the village of Fuliya the birth place of the distinguished Bengali poet Kṛttivāsa. Here the inspiring

Haridāsa reconciled with the Hindu Community.

presence of Haridāsa made a deep and profound impression on a Brāhmāṇ scholar named Rāmdāsa who acknowledged the Mahomedan devotee as his Guru—spiritual master.

Haridāsa followed Chaitanya at Purī. And out of respect for orthodox notions he lived outside the Purī temples. But Chaitanya paid him a visit there almost every day. We have already noticed that in this resort of Haridāsa outside the Temple jurisdiction, Sanātana lived for a while before going to Vṛndāvana.

Sanātana's admiration for Haridāsa's character was great. Once he praised him in the following words: "There are those who preach religious truths but do not live holy lives themselves. Others there are who lead pure lives as religious recluses, cut off from men. But you have not only preached the truths yourself but have practised them in your own life. Who is there, so noble and good as you are?"¹

Chaitanya also admired him thus: "Your holy thoughts are as the streams of the Ganges in which your soul bathes every hour. Your pious acts earn for you that virtue which the people seek in sacrificial rites prescribed in the Çāstras. You are constantly in touch with the loftiest of ideals

¹The respect in which he was held.

(1) "আপনে আচারে কেহ না করে প্রচার ।

প্রচার করয়ে কেহ না করে আচার ॥

আচার প্রচার নামের কর দুই কার্য ।

which give you the same merit as the study of the Vedās. What Sādhu or Brāhmaṇ is there who is good and great as you are? ”

When he felt the approach of death he told Chaitanya that he was disabled by age from reciting the number of names of God daily that he had done for long years. Chaitanya said “You should not do anything to weaken the body. You are a true saint and may dispense with the forms.” That very night when he felt the approach of death with joined hands he said to Chaitanya “Pray remain near me at my last moment, so that I may see that beautiful face of yours which has been the fountain of all my spiritual bliss. Oh my friends present here, recite the name of my Master. So that I may hear the sweet name of Chaitanya uttered by you. This is the last great act of kindness I expect to receive at your hands.”³ Turning to

(3) “হৃদয়ে ধরিব তোমার কমল চরণ
নয়নে দেখিব তোমার চাঁদ বদন
জিহ্বায় উচ্চারিব তোমার কৃষ্ণ-চৈতন্য নাম
এইমত মোর ইচ্ছা ছাড়িব পরাণ ।

The last scene is thus described—

হরিদাস নিজ পাশে প্রভু বসাইল ।
নিজ নেত্র দুই ভূঙ্গ মুখ পদ্মে দিল ॥
সহৃদয়ে আসি ধরি প্রভুর চরণ ।
সর্ব ভক্ত পদ রেণু মস্তকে ভূষণ ॥
শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য প্রভু বলে বার বার ।
প্রভু মুখ মাধুরিতে পিয়ে নেত্র জলধার ॥
শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য শব্দ করিতে উচ্চারণ ।
নামের সহিত প্রাণ করে উৎক্রামণ ।

Chaitanya he said again "A low born, vile fellow I was, through your grace I have been saved, and have known the sweets of a higher life. You have given me an exalted rank in the society of Hindus so that though a Mahomedan I have received presents at the Çrāddha ceremony from high-caste Hindus, as though I were a Brāhmaṇ. But all this temporal glory is nothing as compared with the spiritual bliss which you have brought to my soul." When his last moment came, Chaitanya called all his companions near the bed of the venerable saint and at his bidding the best of the Brāhmaṇs bowed at the feet of the departing sage while all sang the praises of God. As the last flicker of life passed away, his remains were carried to the sea coast, where Chaitanya with his own hands dug up the sand and made a burial place for him.

It has been attempted by later Vaiṣṇava historians to prove that Haridāsa though brought up by a Mahomedan, was a Brāhmaṇ by birth and as a child was taken care of by Mālāi Kāzi. Mālāi Kāzi was not his father but his god-father. In the earlier writings, however, no reference as to his Brāhmaṇic origin is found; he is simply called 'Mahomedan' Haridāsa. We have often found that as the Vaiṣṇava circle gradually expanded itself, it took by degrees a secterian

Attempts to prove
him of Hindu ex-
traction.

character, relaxing its high prin-
ciples of brotherhood given to it

by Chaitanya and Nityānanda. The caste-prejudices of the orthodox community gradually entered into it and the descendants of Gosāins—the Gurus of Vaiṣṇavas—who were mostly Brāhmaṇs—felt it as a stigma on their pedigree that their ancestors had eaten from the same plate with one who by birth was a Mahomedan, and had bowed at his feet, nay more, had in a few cases, acknowledged him as their religious teacher. They have thus probably invented stories to mitigate the force of this evil as far as possible by attributing Brāhmaṇic ancestry to Haridāsa. Chaitanya was no believer in caste, nor in any difference between man and man. His motto was the text of the Vṛhat Nāradiya Purāṇa “Even a Chaṇḍāl is to be honoured more than a Brāhmaṇ if the former has attained the knowledge of God.” As an ascetic he could not have any caste-prejudices himself, but he admired freedom from them in those of his followers who were not ascetics but belonged to the orthodox community. We find it mentioned in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta that one Kālidāsa, a Kāyastha, had made it his mission to eat the refuse food from the plate of such low-caste

Kalidasa the great champion of caste-reform.

people as Doms and Hādīs with the full approval of Chaitanya.

Kālidāsa defended his procedure by saying that when the taking of meal touched by others formed such an important factor of

the grounds for condemning a man in society, it was necessary to take the extreme step, that he did, in order to convince the people of the folly of such a view.

VII.—*Lokanātha Gosvāmī.*

The history of the Vaiṣṇavas in Bengal, so full of sacrifices and hardships undergone for the sake of religion, hardly presents a more striking example of patient faith and silent self-dedication to Chaitanya than that of the famous hermit Lokanātha Gosvāmī. The Vaiṣṇava biographers, so lavish in their praise of other leaders of their faith and in minute details of their lives, are strangely silent about Lokanātha whose pure life, spiritual fervour and uncompromising adherence to his lofty ideals are almost unique in Vaiṣṇava history. The writers make little more than an incidental reference to his life given in the biographical notices of other Vaiṣṇava worthies.

Lokanātha was the son of a Kulin Brāhmaṇ named Padmanābha Chakravartī of Talgoria, a village in the district of Jessore. His mother's name was Sītā and he was born about the year 1490. A.D. Lokanāth was a fellow-student of

Pedigree and early life.

Chaitanya, reading with him at the of *to* Paṇḍit Gaṅgā Das at Nadiyā. When Chaitanya's life suddenly took the religious turn, for which it was predestined, no one admired it more than

Lokanātha, who for some time was his constant companion. Chaitanya wanted him to go to Vṛndāvana to reclaim the deserted shrine, a mission for the accomplishment of which Sanātana, Rūpa and others were employed by Chaitanya in latter years. Separated from Chaitanya, Lokanātha felt miserable, but he could not refuse it; a request from Chaitanya was as binding as the holiest writ of scripture to his companions, and Lokanātha silently carried out his bidding.

The order inviolable. The Premavilāsa thus describes what he said to Chaitanya on this occasion in one of his messages to him: “No more shall I, oh my Lord, be permitted to see your feet. Think not that I seek my own pleasures. To carry out your wishes must always be the sole end of my life. For this object have I reconciled myself with the solitary life I lead here. You are there in the midst of those who are more fortunate than I. I am deprived of that company than which nothing is dearer to me.”¹

A journey to Vṛndāvana from Nadiyā was not an easy matter in those days. Lokanātha was accompanied by another Brāhman scholar named Bhugarbha. At the time they went, the main

আর না দেখিব গোরা তোমার চরণ ।
 রহিলাম আজ্ঞামাত্র করিয়া ধারণ ॥
 ভক্তগণ সঙ্গে প্রভু যে করিলা লীলা ।
 বঞ্চিত করিয়া মোরে হেথা পাঠাইলা ॥

road was blocked by the contending armies of Hindus and Mahomedans near Rājmahal. It was the month of October, 1510 A.D. when they started for the holy city. When, however, the pilgrims asked the people of Rājmahal about the route, they were told that it would be impossible for them to get to Vṛndāvana in the disturbed state of the country, by the main road. Other roads were also infested by robbers. But they were not daunted. They went on inspired by faith alone. They took the route by Tājpur and reached Purṇiyā from where they came to Lucknow. It took them three days to reach Agra from this place. In 23 days Loknātha and Bhugarbha reached Vṛndāvana from Nadiyā. They were dressed in rags and carried beggar's bowls in their hands. The holy city was deserted. It was overgrown by the jungle, with huts of poor people dotted here and there, and was nothing more than a name even to the Vaiṣṇavas who held it sacred. But the hermits in co-operation with Sanātana and Rūpa, who subsequently joined them, identified the places associated with Kṛiṣṇa's early life, and the wonderful tale of their devotion and holy lives spread far and wide. In half a century the city rose again with its gay array of lofty tiara-shaped temples, some of which claim the glory of being considered among the foremost architectural monuments of India.

*Journey to Vṛndā-
vana.*

The transformation was as sudden as though it were accomplished by the touch of a magician's wand. But of this we propose to speak at some length elsewhere. From 1511 to 1512 Chaitanya was in the Deccan, and Loknātha like others heard of his presence there. He accordingly left Vṛndāvana for a time to meet the Master in the south; but unfortunately he could not overtake him, missing him narrowly at the several stations where Chaitanya had halted for some days. Lokanātha heard again, while still journeying in

He misses Chaitanya.

the Deccan in quest of the Master, that he had gone up to Vṛndāvana. He hurried back to that town as soon as he heard this, but on his arrival there was again disappointed to learn that Chaitanya had left the holy city. Lokanātha had no orders from the Master to return to Purī or Bengal; so though greatly mortified at the separation from him, he spent the remaining days of his life at Vṛndāvana following the paths of spiritual advancement and humane service. The Vrajabāsīs, as the residents of Vṛndāvana and its vicinity were called, paid him unique homage acting as he bade them to do without a question—so high was the place he

His piety.

occupied in their estimation. The Anurāgavallī describes him thus: “Always scrutinising himself by meditation, not given to many words, but when he opens

his mouth, his short speeches are full of sweetness and wisdom, wielding a great influence.”¹

We shall have to return again to the life of this great Vaiṣṇava, when referring to the subject of the reclaiming of the shrine of Vṛndāvana. Loknātha was absolutely averse to a glorification of himself by the writers of the Vaiṣṇava history. It is well-known that Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Kavirāja, who wrote the most valuable account of Chaitanya's life, drew his inspiration and materials in no inconsiderable degree from Lokanātha Gosvāmī. But while describing the noteworthy incidents of the lives of other devotees, he does not mention the help he obtained from Lokanātha anywhere in his elaborate work, nor does he refer to any anecdote of his illustrious life. This is because Loknātha had prevented the Kavirāja from writing anything to glorify him. This incident is mentioned in the Premvilāsa written only a few years after the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

Lokanātha had made it a point not to take disciples, and this accounts for the comparative silence of the Vaiṣṇava historians about him. The disciples generally take elaborate notes of the lives of their Gurus and write their biographies. The only disciple whom Lokanātha

¹ পরম বিরক্ত কথা নাহি কারু সনে ।

যে কহয়ে সে অতি মধুর বচনে ॥

admitted was Narottāma. Lokanātha had relaxed his stern principle in favour of Narottāma under exceptional circumstances which I shall relate while writing about the latter. Lokanātha was unwilling to admit disciples because they were required to pay honour to their Gurus verging on worship. Lokanātha was afraid lest this might lead to self-glorification and vanity. Throughout his long life he remembered the words which Chaitanya spoke to him while bidding him God-speed on the eve of his journey to Vṛndāvana. "Know this Lokanātha, that neither you nor I are meant to enjoy the pleasures of the world."

Lokanātha remained a bachelor all his life and died at a good old age mourned by the whole Vaiṣṇava community.

VII.—Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma.

We have incidentally mentioned Vāsudevā Sārvabhauma in a previous lecture in connection with a controversial discussion which he held with Chaitanya at Purī on spiritual matters, and his eventual defeat and acceptance of Chaitanya as his master (Guru) and the true interpreter of religious truths.

Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma was unquestionably at the head of the scholars of Eastern India at the time. Having read the Upanishads at Benares he became a pupil of the celebrated

Pakṣadhara Miçra of Mithilā, which, during the youth of Sārvabhauma, was the most important centre of learning in Northern India. The proud position, however, of this place it was reserved for Vāsudeva himself to break down in latter years. He succeeded in establishing the glory of the *tol* he founded at Nadiyā—far exceeding that won by the college where he had completed his education. Pakṣadhar Miçra made it a condition with his pupils that they were not to transcribe any copy of Chintāmaṇi by Gaṅgeça Upādhyāya for their own use. This book was the store-house of contemporaneous knowledge of Logic; and Pakṣadhara having in his possession the only MS. of the great work, jealously guarded it for the benefit of his own college. His own interpretations of the work and teaching on the subject were also considered to be of rare value. So that as far as Logic (which was one of the most important branches of learning at the period) was concerned, the reputation of the Mithila College was far greater than that of any other college in Upper India.

As no copy of the work was allowed to be made, each pupil of Pakṣadhara having to take a solemn vow to that effect before the teacher gave him lessons on the subject, the precious learning lay confined within the four walls of his college-room. However complete

The rise of the
Navadvīpa school
of Logic.

their education at Mithilā, his pupils could not disseminate so perfect a knowledge of the subject in their respective countries, without having in their possession any copy of the original work, which was further enriched by the annotations of several generations of accomplished teachers of Mithilā.

Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma committed to memory not only the four parts of Chintāmaṇi with its valuable store of annotations, but also a very considerable portion of the famous work Kusu-māṅjali. Without violating the conditions to which he had subscribed, he came to Nadiyā fully equipped with the latest knowledge, and founded a *tol* there, the reputation of which soon spread far and wide, drawing hosts of pupils from all recognised centres of Sanskrit learning throughout India, till the fame of the Maithil College rapidly diminished and was eventually extinguished. Vāsudeva's teachings gave a fresh stimulus to the cause of the study of Logic and his famous pupil Raghunātha Ćiromaṇi's name stands first in the list of those who founded the new school of Logic named Navya Nyaya which to this day remains a monument of the keenness of the Bengali intellect. Raghunātha was a son of a widowed Brāhmiṇ woman who earned her living by doing menial work at the house of Sārvabhauma. When only a lad of 3, Raghunātha was asked by Sārvabhauma to get some bits

of burning wood from the kitchen for his pipe.

Raghunātha his
worthy disciple. The boy first took a quantity of

dust in his hand and thus protected brought the bits of burning wood to his master. It is said that this little incident struck the teacher as a sign of the boy's intellectual powers and he undertook to teach him himself. At 5 when Raghunātha began to read the alphabets, he startled his teacher by the question "Sir why is the letter 'क' placed before 'ख' ? What harm if their situation is changed ?"

Raghunātha afterwards rose to conspicuous fame and eclipsed that of his contemporaries in the field of Logic. Vāsudeva's own work in Sanskrit "Sārvabhauma-Nirukti" gave the first start to the pure intellectual basis on which this new school of Logic is founded. Gautama had kept the subject on a spiritual plane, but Navya Nyāya entirely freed it from monastic thral.

The *tol* of Vāsudeva flourished in Nadiyā between 1470 and 1480 A.D., but a great calamity befell the Hindu residents of the ancient city later on. It was reported to Husen Sāhā, the Emperor of Gauḍa, that a persistent rumour of a prophetic nature was in the air that the Brāhman̄s of Nadiyā would once more assert their supremacy in Bengal. The fire of heroism still lingered in the old Capital of the Hindu Kings, as the residents of the place were fine archers and had retained till then some of their warlike

traits. The Emperor believed in the prophecy and ordered a general devastation of the place and a forcible conversion of its Brāhmans to Islam. The prophecy referred to is mentioned in the Chaitanya Maṅgal by Jayānanda, who

The Mohamuden persecution and the flight of Vasudeva from Nadiyā. was a contemporary of Chaitanya, and confirmed by Vṛndāvana Dāsa in his Chaitanya Bhāgavata written in 1539. The angry monarch sent a strong Mahomedan army which was stationed at the village of Pirulyā near Nadiyā, and forcibly converted the Brāhmans to the Islamic faith. This is the origin of the Pirulyā Brāhmaṇs. We are told how the Hindus were not permitted to sound the conch shell in their temples and bathe in the Ganges; if they did so they were forcibly served with beef. The temples were desecrated, the fig trees, sacred to the Hindus, were uprooted, and a general panic seized the inhabitants of the old city who fled from it in great numbers and settled in other provinces. Mahesvara Viçāradā, the father of Sārvabhauma, went to Benares at this juncture, and the latter fled to Purī. Sārvabhauma's brother Vidyāvāchaṣpati deserted his country-seat and settled in a different part of Bengal.

So great was the fame of Vāsudeva as a scholar that Pratāpa Rudra, the king of Orissa, accorded him a royal reception, offering him a gold throne next to his own in his court. Thus

Honoured by the
King of Orissa.

honoured Vāsudeva continued to live at Purī. We also learn from Jayānanda's work how a change came over the spirit of Husen Sāhā's administration. He shortly after repented of his oppression, being convinced of the innocence of the Nadiyā Brāhmaṇs and repaired as far as was possible the wrongs inflicted on them.

Husen Sāhā had before this time destroyed some of the great temples of Orissa and led an expedition to conquer the province. But Pratāpa Rudra was more than his match in the field. Not only he obliged Husen Sāhā to retreat, but himself planned an expedition, by way of retaliation, for the conquest of Bengal. Owing to some cause he could not however carry out his plan. He effectively held, however, the aggressive Islam spirit in check so far as his vast kingdom was concerned.

It was at Purī that Vāsudeva first met Chaitanya. He was then a lad of 24, of handsome appearance, and had taken the ascetic's vow and come to Purī to visit the temple of Jagannātha. The sight of the temple threw him into one of his fits of delirious joy, and heedless of the pilgrims and priests he ran ahead of them like a mad man and entered the temple. Before the image of God Chaitanya swooned in the height of his emotion. The Pāṇḍās—the custodians of the temple—taking him for a mad man,

beat him with a cane while in that unconscious state. Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma was at the temple and was attracted by the sight of the handsome young Sannyāsī lying unconscious on the floor. He prevented the Pāṇḍās from beating him, and ordered him to be carried to his own house. For 8 hours Chaitanya lay unconscious, the tears trickling down his cheeks, but he occasionally spoke a few broken words indicative of the joy at his union with the Deity. By this time his companions had already arrived and were now at the house of Sārvabhauma. They recited the name of Kṛṣṇa aloud and sang his praises, upon which Chaitanya came back to his senses. Vāsudeva asked his brother-in-law Gopinātha who that interesting young man was. The latter told him that he was a citizen of Nadiyā. Nilāmvara Chakravartī, the father of Chaitanya's mother Çachī, was a great friend of Sārvabhauma's father Mahesvara Viçārada. Sārvabhauma hearing this became interested in Chaitanya. The venerable scholar himself served the young Sannyāsī with meal on a golden plate, and invited him to stay in his house. He also showed great hospitality to his companions, who were for the most part citizens of Nadiyā. This happened in 1509 A.D. Chaitanya Charitāmṛta relates the following dialogue between Vāsudeva and Gopinātha at this stage: Vāsudeva:—"This young

Interview with
Chaitanya.

man is a Sannyāsī. To what Order of ascetics does he belong?" Gopinātha:—"He is a disciple of Keçava Bhāratī." Vāsudeva:—"But there are better Orders of Sannyāsīs. He is quite a young man and has attractive looks, it will be difficult for him to keep the chastity of the ascetic's vow. I shall teach him Vedānta and give him a better spiritual ideal. He must forgo the inferior Order in which he has enlisted his name and be made to enter into a higher Order." Gopinātha:—"He does not care for forms, it matters little to what Order he belongs. You have not known him yet, when you do so, you will find him much above anything that you may have to teach."

Vāsudeva's resolve to improve Chaitanya's spiritual training.

Vāsudeva told Chaitanya in his next interview with him that as a Sannyāsī he deserves every respect from him; but he asked what right he had to take a Sannyāsa vow while still so young. The Çāstras, he said, have laid it down that one may renounce the world and become a Sannyāsī only when he has passed at least two thirds of the usual term of life. Chaitanya humbly replied "Do not, oh venerable sir, think me, to be so exalted a personage as a Sannyāsī. A longing for union with God has driven me mad, and thus have I shaven my head, torn my sacred thread and come away from home. I am only a boy before you and do not know even what is good and what is bad

for me. Kindly give me lessons and teach me the right course. I am grateful to you for protecting me from the hands of the Pāṇḍās to-day.” That day Vāsudeva called him again to his presence and asked him to listen attentively to the interpretations of the sacred texts which he would deliver in the evening. Chaitanya quietly sat and listened to the wonderful dissertations on theology which the veteran scholar gave. Not one day, but for seven consecutive days he did so, before a large and admiring audience. On the 8th day Vāsudeva said to Chaitanya “For seven days you have heard my discourses on the sacred Upanishads but have made no comments, sitting mute all the while.” Chaitanya replied “I am no scholar, and have not the capacity to enter into the spirit of your learned discourse. I listened to it simply because you ordered me to do so and also because it is the duty of a Sannyāsī to hear the interpretations of holy books,” Sārvabhauma said “Those who could not understand any portions of my speech referred their difficulties to me, which I have taken pains to elucidate. But you have not done so. I am not sure in what spirit you have taken my discourses. Your attitude seems mysterious to me.” Chaitanya said “Sir, since you wish me to speak I must confess that the texts of the Upanishads are quite clear to me, but your explanations have clouded

The silent listener.

their meaning. You avoid the direct meaning of the texts and indulge in niceties which do not, to my mind, represent the real spirit of the sacred books." Chaitanya then explained the texts himself quoting profusely from the Çāstras.

The extraordinary
discourse.

He first referred to the 31st Çloka, Chapter XIV of the 10th Skanda of Çrīmat Bhāgavata and next dwelt upon the text of the 64th Çloka of the 7th Chapter of the 6th Part of the Viṣṇu-purāṇa, referring in support of it to the 5th Çloka of the 7th Chapter of the Gītā beginning with ভূমিরাপোহনিলো বায়ুঃ খং মনোবুদ্ধিরেবচ and made a speech which struck Sārvabhauma as extraordinary. But Sārvabhauma brought up an array of controversial arguments to demolish দ্বৈতবাদ (dualism) which Chaitanya had established. Chaitanya replied eloquently with a spiritual fervour which made the deepest impression on his audience. His reply supported as it was by scholarly references and a clear and straightforward statement of his points, demolished the *advaitavāda* of Vāsudeva to its foundation. When Chaitanya at the end recited the 31st Çloka of the 62nd Chapter of the Padmapurāṇa and burst into emotional ecstasy singing the hymn অয়ে দীন দয়াজ্জ নাথ (Oh thou compassion itself and the

Vasudeva admits
Chaitanya's divinity.

refuge of those who are heavy-laden) he could say no more; half broken words 'oh thou, compassion

itself' only came out of his lips, while tears dropped from his eyes and choked his voice till he passed into that trance—the beatific vision—which showed him to be more than a common mortal. His eyes rained tears, and were fixed heavenwards. His arms were outstretched, as if to embrace the Unseen; he became unconscious of the 'physical world and a radiance came into his face which showed the heavenly sight of God-in-Man.

So irresistible was his charm that the old scholar of 80 who was looked on as the very fountain of all learning now fell at the young Sannyāsī's feet and accepted him as his God and saviour. The beautiful Gaurāṅgāṣṭaka, or 8 stanzas in honour of Chaitanya, that he wrote in Sanskrit, bears testimony to his profound faith in the apostle of Nadiyā.

It was from Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma and Gopīnātha that the king Pratāpa Rudra had heard of the greatness of Chaitanya, which made him so eagerly seek an interview with him.

Vāsudeva's great reverence for Chaitanya is expressed in his celebrated utterance mentioned by the author of the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta in the 9th Chapter of the Madhya Khaṇḍa of his work. We have already referred to it on p. 4 and quote it here again:—“If a thunderbolt falls on my head or even my sons die—that I can bear, but not that I should be deprived of the

company of the Master.”¹ Govinda Dāsa, who took down notes of Chaitanya’s tour in the Deccan while he travelled with him, writes that on the return of Chaitanya to Purī the venerable Sārvabhauma with joined hands addressed him and said “That I could bear a separation from you bespeaks a heart of stone in me” and the man fell on his knees weeping like a woman.²

Sārvabhauma died at about 1520 A.D. His only son Durgādāsa was also a scholar. He annotated the celebrated Sanskrit Grammar, the *Mugdabodha* by Bopadeva and also wrote a commentary of *Kavikalpadruma*. Durgādāsa had the title of *Vidyāvāgiṣa* or ‘the master of learning and speech.’

Durgādāsa, his son
son.

IX. Rāmānanda Rāy.

Rāmānanda Rāy was the prime minister of Rājā Pratāp Rudra of Orissa. His celebrated Sanskrit Drama “*Jagannātha Vallabha*” was one of the few books which were read and sung before Chaitanya every day by his order. This proves the admiration in which the

“শিরে বজ্র পড়ে যদি পুত্র মরি যায় ।
তাহা সহি তোমার বিচ্ছেদ সহন না যায় ॥”
নাচিতে লাগিল গৌরা বাহু পশারিয়া ।
সার্বভৌম পদতলে পড়িল লুটিয়া ॥
হাত জোড়ি সার্বভৌম কহিতে লাগিল
তোমার বিরহ বাণ হৃদয়ে বিঞ্চিল ।
বড় মুঢ় বলি তব বিরহ সহিয়া ।
এত দিন আছি মুই পরাগ ধরিয়া ॥

book was held by the Master. Rāma Rāy was a native of Vidyānagara in central India. The prime minister of the king of Orissa had the title of Rājā. When Chaitanya was at Purī, Bhabānanda Rāy, the father of Rāmānanda, still lived, and it is mentioned in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛita that Chaitanya once embraced the old man saying “Your son Rāmānanda is dear to me as my own self.” Rāmānanda had four brothers; Gopinātha Paṭṭanāyak, Kalānidhi, Sudhānidhi and Bānīnātha. They were all devoted to Chaitanya. Rāmānanda met Chaitanya first on the bank of the Godāvarī, a few miles from his own town of Vidyānagara. It was in the month of June 1510 A.D. The former had gone there, borne in a picturesque palankin, with a large escort and a good number of Vaidika Brāhmaṇs. Here Chaitanya paid him a visit and said that he had heard a good deal about his fervent faith from Vāsudeva Sārva-bhauma and had longed to see him. Saying this he embraced the minister much to the surprise and embarrassment of the Brāhmaṇs present, who said to one another “Look at this holy man, resplendant as a god. How strange that he touches a Çūdra and weeps for joy!”¹

Interview with
Chaitanya.

¹ এই না ব্রাহ্মণ তেজে দেখি ব্রহ্ম সম ।
শুভ্রে আলিঙ্গিয়া কেন করেন ক্রন্দন ॥

The famous dialogue of Chaitanya with Rāmānanda unfolding the very spirit of the religion which the former preached, has been elaborately discussed in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, and we cannot help here giving the gist of it. Rāmānanda at the bidding of Chaitanya describes the various stages of Bhakti (devotion). The first is the Sādhyā Bhakti or that faith which has for its final goal the carrying out of the duties prescribed to each caste by the Ṣāstras; the text quoted was the verse VIII, Chapter 8, Part III of the Viṣṇupurāṇa. For elucidation of the next higher stage Rām Rāy took for his text the verse XXVII, Chapter IX of the Gītā which says that one should work without a thought of the result—dedicating it to God. “Even this is merely external,” said Chaitanya, “enter deeper still.” and Rāmā Rāy in describing the next higher stage took for his text the verse XXXII of Skanda XIII of the Ṣrīmat Bhāgavata and the verse 67 of Chapter XVIII of the Gītā which urges upon a spiritual aspirant the duty of resigning himself absolutely to God, leaving aside all forms and rites that belong to his sect—“leave every thing else, all professions and callings, and surrender yourself to me”—says Kṛiṣṇa in the latter verse “and I will save you from all sins and sorrows.” When called upon to enter still deeper into the truths of religion, Rāma Rāy

said that the spiritual soul must yearn for faith which springs from a true knowledge of things. The text quoted was the verse 50, Chapter XVII of the Gītā which says that one who has known God is content in himself and neither mourns a loss nor feels a desire.

A still higher plane of Sādhya Bhakti is explained by Rāma Rāy at the bidding of the Master, the text quoted being verse III, Chapter 15 of the 10th Skanda of the Ṣrīmat Bhāgavata in which knowledge (জ্ঞান) falls into the back-ground and faith (ভক্তি) becomes the sole object. In a still higher plane of spiritual life faith takes the character of love; the text being a verse from Padmāvalī.

This closes the sphere of Baidha Bhakti or that faith which follows the monastic rules and the injunctions of the scriptures, and Rāma Rāy elucidates the principles of higher Vaiṣṇava theology which aims at a direct communion with God. The first stage of this, according to verse XIII, Chapter III of Ṣrīmat Bhāgavata is to worship God by work, even as a servant does his Master, not as a matter of duty alone, but impelled by love.

The servant carries out the command of the master and though he may do so with love, he remains one step below and cannot approach Him too close. The second stage referred to in verse II, Chapter XII of the 10th Skanda of

Bhāgavata describes the Sakhya in which God becomes our friend and guide. He no longer commands, but is actually with us, playing on the stage of the world. The players love one another, as they are conscious that He is one of themselves and is the Main Player directing their plays. When danger comes, it loses its terror, as they know their friend to be in their midst, controlling their destiny and taking care of them. "Next" says Ramānanda Ray at the bidding of Chaitanya, "is the stage of Bātsalya Prema or love for a child." The text quoted in support of this is verse XXXVII, Chapter XVIII of the 10th Skanda of the Çrīmat Bhāgvata. The world plays round the spiritual man as children and he watches it with affectionate care, as parents do. His only duty is to offer his constant and anxious care to the well-being of all. This 'all' is his God. His affection is of a cosmopolitan character. Jasodā, like Madona of the Christian, typifies the Mother anxious for the protection of the divine child—the ever-growing new babe of humanity. Even one's own enemy appears to him in this stage as a mere child and is regarded with compassion and kindness. How this may be possible is to be found in the little incident of Nityananda's conduct to Jagāi and Mādhai described on pp. 38-42. The baby of humanity grows wicked at times and kicks in

return of love. The godly man feels no anger but blesses the children gone astray and prays for them saying : “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do” even when they put a crown of thorns on his head and nail him to a cross.

In a still higher stage of spirituality the soul approaches God as a Gopi—the
 The Gopī. maid who forgets herself in the delight of witnessing the spectacle of devine love that comes from all sides. The text quoted is verse VIII of the 10th Canto of Govinda Līlā-mṛta which says that the Gopī does not desire direct contact with Kṛṣṇa. She deeply appreciates and enjoys the sight of supreme bliss which is to be seen in the Vṛndā groves in the *amours* of the eternal God Kṛṣṇa and his eternal lover Rādhā. The function of the Gopi is identical with that of the poet which Sir Rabindranath Tagore expresses so happily in the language of modern poetry :—

“Ah poet, the evening draws near ;

Your hair is turning gray,

“Do you in your lonely musing hear the message of the hereafter ?

“It is evening,” the poet said “and I am listening because some one may call from the village, late though it be.

“I watch the young straying hearts meet together, and two pairs of eager eyes beg for

music, to break their silence and speak for them.

“Who is there to weave their passionate songs, if I sit on the shore of life and contemplate death, and the beyond ?”

“The early evening star disappears. The glow of the funeral pyre slowly dies by the silent river.

“Jackals cry in chorus from the courtyard of the deserted house in the light of the worn-out moon.

“If some wanderer, leaving home comes here to watch the night and with bowed head listens to the murmur of the darkness, who is there to whisper the secrets of life into his ears, if I shutting my doors, should try to free myself from mortal bonds ?”

“It is a trifle that my hair is turning gray.

“I am ever as young or old as the youngest or the oldest of the village.

“Some have smiles, sweet and simple, and some a sly twinkle in their eyes.

“Some have tears that well up in the daylight and others tears that are hidden in the gloom.

“They all have need for me and I have no time to brood over the after life.

“I am of an age with each, what matter if my hair turns gray ?”

The Gopīs are represented as ‘witnesses and helpers of the eternal play’ without a thought

of their own personal happiness. Thus forgetful of their own selves, they are privileged to enter the groves of sacred love, aiding in the union of soul with soul—ministrants to the cause of love which flows from the eternal fountain of bliss. They are ever young in their appreciation of all that is beautiful and good in nature. 'Time writes no wrinkles on their brows.' They live in Vṛndāvana—the spiritual heaven of the Vaiṣṇavas, where the soul entirely free from the bonds of social traditions on one hand, and from the obligations of scriptural rites on the other, finds out its own path inspired by love alone. This path is called the *rāgānugā* as opposed to that of Baidhi Bhakti or faith that aims at observance of the instructions contained in the scriptures. The texts quoted by Rāma Ray for elucidation of this stage were verse XX, Chapter XXX, verse XIX, Chapter XXXVII, verse XVI, Chapter IX, and verse 54, Chapter XXXVII of the 10th Skanda of Ṣrīmatvāgvata. The Gopī is unattached to the world. No narrow selfish view clouds her perfect vision of that bliss which pervades the universe. Hence she occupies the position of Guru in the Vaiṣṇava theology. She is the witness of the "eternal play" and is its right interpreter. "Without her help" adds Rāma Ray, quoting another text from the Ṣrīmatvāgvata "No one is

The Rāgānugā.

privileged to enter into the region of spiritual love”.

In the Vaiṣṇava theology the position of the Gopi as 'Guru is indicated by the fact that all the recognised religious preceptors of that faith who were either Chaitanya's contemporaries or lived within half a century of him are believed by the Vaiṣṇavas to be the incarnations of the Gopīs of Vṛndāvana. Thus Narahari is believed to be an incarnation of the Gopi named Madhumālā, Vāsu Ghosh of Guṇatungā and so forth.

The highest stage in this field belongs to Rādhā, who typifies the full blown beauty of spiritual love. Chaitanya's suggestive enquiries made Rāmānanda speak with great emotion and force of the love of Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa; and Chaitanya supplemented the interesting dialogue by quoting verse XXXIV, Chapter II of the 11th Skanda, and verse IX, Chapter XXV of the 10th Skanda of the Ṣrīmatvāgṇata which says "Whatever the spiritual soul sees in this perfect stage of bliss becomes to it a reminder of God. The gross goes into the back ground and all that is seen presents to the eyes the all-embracing spirit of love—the perfect and clear vision of the living God.

Rāma Ray said "This highest stage of spiritual love has assumed a material form before me to-day and I find the rapturous ecstasies of love

Rāma Ray's ad-
miration for
Chaitanya.

attributed to Rādhā in you, oh my Master". Rāma Ray saw the greatest marvel *viz.* a man loving God with all the ardour of his soul—frenzied by the emotions of love and steeped in ecstasies of boundless joy.

Ten days and nights Rāma Ray and Chaitanya spent together and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja, the author of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta says "As a man finds a clue to an underground treasure from which he at first collects bronze and copper and then jewels and diamonds, so the longer he talked with Chaitanya the more he found new paths opened to unknown treasures of spiritual experience. The beauty of Chaitanya's trances and emotions convinced him of the truth of what he had read in the sacred books with an overwhelming force. The presence of Chaitanya inspired him to compose a mystic song of great beauty which may thus be rendered into English :

"At the beginning glances from each other revealed to us both the wonders of love—of the new world we now entered upon.

"From that time forward our impassioned feelings have blossomed in an uninterrupted beauty.

"Neither he nor I took any account of our

The song of sex—that he was a man and I
Rāmānanda. a woman.

"Cupid shot his arrows through our hearts and we were drawn to each other.

“Oh maid, tell Kṛṣṇa of those sweet days and pray him that he may not forget them.

“We took no help of any third person nor of the path which the learned follow.

“If any one helped us, it was *Virāga*—the spirit of renunciation, and Cupid alone was our guide”.¹

We find in the *Kaṇḍha* by Govindā Dāsa that
 Its mysticism. Chaitanya preached this “You think that the romantic relation between man and woman is love, but I warn you it is not. True love will dawn only on those hearts which have risen above sexual feelings.”²

The next thing required for spiritual growth is the spirit of renunciation. Both these elements are hinted in the above mystical song. It further refers to the stage where the help of a Guru or a third person is not needed and the paths prescribed by the scriptures are ignored,—

“পহিলহি রাগ নয়ন ভঞ্জে ভেল ।
 অনুদিন বাড়ল অবধি না গেল ॥
 না সে রমণ না হাম রমণী ।
 তুহ মনে মনসিজ পেশল জানি ॥
 এসখি সে সব প্রেম কাহিণী ।
 কানু ঠামে কহবি বিছরব জানি ।
 না খোঁজল দুতি না খোঁজল জ্ঞান
 তুহঁক মিলন মাঝি পাঁচ ঝগ
 অবসই বিরাগ তুহ ভেল দুতি
 সুপুরুষ প্রেম ঐছন রীতি ॥
 “অবলা লাগিয়া আর্ক্তি যদি প্রেম হয় ।
 তবে ত এ প্রেমতত্ত্ব কিছুই যে নয় ॥
 অভেদ পুরুষ নারি ষখন জানিবে ।
 তখন প্রেমের তত্ত্ব উদয় হইবে ॥”

The spell of love alone possesses the soul which longs for direct communion.

X. Narahari Sarkar.

Among the other followers and friends of Chaitanya, Narahari Sarkār of the village of Çrikhanda in the District of Burdwan deserves a prominent mention. His father was Nārāyaṇa Deva Sarkar—a Vaidya by caste. The family claimed descent from Pantha Dāsa (1100—1169 A.D.) who was the Commander-in-Chief of Vallala Sen's army. In the Sanskrit genealogical work the Chandra Prabhā—
The pedigree. we find it mentioned that Pantha Dāsa settled in a flourishing village named Balinasī in the district of Burdwan. Some of his descendants later on moved to the village of Maureçwara in the same district and thence to Çrikhanda.

Narahari's elder brother Mukunda was physician to Husain Sāhā, the Emperor of Gaur. Mukunda's son Raghunandana acquired celebrity in the subsequent period of Vaiṣṇava history as a scholar and pious man. Narahari was born in 1478 A.D. and was one of the constant companions of Chaitanya when the latter was at Nadiyā. We find him also paying his annual

visit to Puri to meet Chaitanya along with

Why he is not mentioned in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

other Bengalis during the rainy seasons. He is described in contemporary historical works as of

a handsome appearance and a bright fair colour.

It is stated that Vṛndāvana Dāsa, the author of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata had some private grudge against Narahari on which account he was not mentioned in his work. The next biographer of Chaitanya, Lochana Dāsa, was, however, a disciple of Narahari and made several respectful references to his Guru in his work. Lochana

Lochana Dāsa, his disciple.

Dāsa's Chaitanya Mangala was composed in 1537 A.D. only two

years after the Chaitanya Bhāgavata of Vṛndāvana Dāsa.¹

Narahari is chiefly known for the songs he composed in praise of Chaitanya. The burden of these songs is often a tender yearning of the poet's soul for meeting Chaitanya. They show the ardour of womanly passion and their language is borrowed from that of the Gopīs of Vṛndāvana as described in the Bhāgavata-literature. Late Babu Jagatbandhu Bhadra collected a little above 100 of these songs, and these are the first that were composed in the vernacular in glorification of Chaitanya. Later on Vāsudeva Ghosh, also a contemporary of Chaitanya,

¹ See Preface to 'Gaurapada Tarangini' by Jagatbandhu Bhadra, (1904), pp. 130 and 154.

The first vernacular songs on Chaitanya.

took the field composing masterpieces or similar songs. These describe every incident of Chaitanya's life in an impassionate language, often reaching a high level of genuine pathos. But Narahari must be given the credit of being the pioneer in the field. In his day Chaitanya's life was not yet written in the vernacular; for in one of his songs Narahari writes :

“One who will write his (Chaitanya's) biography is not yet born. Long may we have to wait for him. If the Master's life be written in the vernacular all people will understand it. Oh when will the lord fulfill this expectation of ours !”

It appears that a biographical account of Chaitanya in Sanskrit was already written by Murari Gupta when Narahari wrote these lines. In them a stress is laid on the word 'vernacular' which may be taken as hinting at the already existing Sanskrit work.

Besides these songs Narahari wrote a book named *Nāmāmṛta Samudra* in Bengali and another named *Bhajanāmṛta* in Sanskrit.

Narahari was the first among the numerous followers of Chaitanya to preach the Chaitanya-cult. He prepared the code and the *mantra* for the worship of Chaitanya and these were accepted

He is the first to preach the Chaitanya-cult.

এছ লিখিবে যে, এখনও জন্ম নাই সে, জন্মিতে বিলম্ব আছে বহু ।

ভাষায় রচনা হৈলে, বুঝিবে লোক সকলে, কবে বাঞ্ছা পুরাবেন পছ ।

by other Vaiṣṇavas in Bengal, a short time after. The descendants of Narahari are known as Vaidya Goswāmis of Çrikhandā having a large following of Brahmin disciples.

The great love in which Narahari was held by Chaitanya is indicated by the fact that the latter while touring in the Deccan about the year 1510 mentioned Narahari in one of his trances. Chaitanya was totally absorbed in his emotional felicities and seemed to have forgotten the rest of the world for the two years during which he visited the shrines and holy cities of the South. This mention of Narahari shows that he remembered at least one of his friends at Nadia. The passage which refers to this mention is found in Govinda Dasa's *Kaḍchā* and may be thus translated :

“Sometimes in his frenzy Chaitanya says
 ‘Oh Narahari, dear as my life,
 come and sing the praises of
 Kṛṣṇa and for this, dear friend,
 I will embrace you.”

“Narahari died in the Çaka 1463 or 1541
 A.D.

কখন বলেন কোথা প্রাণ নরহরি,
 হরিনাম শুনি তোরে আলিঙ্গন করি।

XI. Vançīvadana.

Vançīvadana was the writer of some exquisite songs on Chaitanya and Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. Jadunandana Dāsa wrote a memoir of Vançīvadana in the Çaka 1638 or 1716 A.D. This work is called the Vançīkṣā. We learn from it that Vançīvadana was born in the year 1494 A.D.

He was therefore junior to
The Vançīkṣā.

Chaitanya by 8 years. His father Chhakari Chatto was a resident of the village of Patuli near Kālnā but afterwards settled at Kuliā, one of the wards of the town of Nadiya, now merged in the Ganges. Besides his numerous songs which are to be found in the Padakalpataru and other song-anthologies of the Vaiṣṇavas, Vançīvadana wrote two works named Dwipakojjala and Dwipannitā.

Chaitanya held frequent discussions with Vançīvadana on the cardinal doctrines of the Vaiṣṇava creed and these are embodied in the work Vançīkṣā which we have just mentioned.

To the Vaiṣṇavas Vançīvadana's name is specially sacred, as he became guardian of Viçhnupriyā Devī, wife of Chaitanya, when the latter took Sannyās and left Nadiyā for good. An image of Chaitanya was made by Vançīvadana at her bidding and was daily worshipped by her. The descendants of Yādava Miçra are

Vançī Vadana's
songs.

the present custodians of this image which is now worshipped in a temple at Nadiyā.

I shall attempt here to translate two of the songs of Vancīvadana. The pathos of the original Bengali and their perfect rythm must inevitably be lost in my translation.

[Rādhā, though a princess is a milk-maid and as such goes to sell milk and curd, this being her professional calling. It is mid-day and Kṛṣṇa thus accosts her in the path.]

“Oh my charming one, how can you walk by such a path as this ?

“Here take your seat under the cool shade of Kadamva and I shall myself buy all that you may have to sell.

“The mid-day sun shines over head and the dust of the path burns below. Your feet, my love, are tender as the lily-buds.

“হেদেলো বিনোদিনী, এ পথে কেমনে যাবে তুমি,
শীতল কদম্ব তলে, বৈসহ আমার কোলে, সকল কিনিয়া লব আমি ;
এ ভর ছুপুর বেলা, তাতিল পথের ধূলা, কমল জিনিয়া পদ তোরি,
রৌদ্রে ষামিয়াছে মুখ, দেখি লাগে বড় দুঃখ, শ্রম-ভরে এল্যাল কবরী ;
অমূল্য রতন সাথে, গোড়ারের ভয় পথে, লাগি পাইলে লইবে কাড়িয়া ।
তোমার লাগিয়া আমি, এই পথে মহা দানী, তিল মাত্র না যেও ছাড়িয়া ॥”

“মোহন বিজন বনে, দূরে গেল সখীগণে, একলি রহল ধনী রাই,
ছুটি আঁখি ছল ছলে, চরণ কমল তলে, কান্দু আসি পড়িল লুটাই ;

বিনোদিনী জনম সফল ভেল মোর

তোমা হেন গুণনিধি, পথে আনি দিল বিধি;

আজুক মুখের নাহি ওর ।

রবির কিরণ পাইছে, চাঁদ মুখ ষামিয়াছে, মুখের মঞ্জরীর ছুটি পায়,
হিয়ার উপরে রাখি, জুড়াব তাপিত আঁখি, চন্দন চর্চিত করি গায়,
এতেক মিনতি করি রাইএর কর ধরি মুছাইল পদ পীতবাসে,
নির্জনে দোহার সনে, মিলল নিকুঞ্জ বনে, মনে মনে হাসে বংশী দাসে ।

“It pains me to behold your sweet face flushed by heat and your braided hair hanging all loose from labour.

“Priceless diamonds are on your person ; not safe are these from the robbers who infest the high-way.

“Here do I hold the tax-collector’s Office only for you, my beloved. Leave me not, I pray.”

“The maidens all wandered away, leaving Rādhā alone in that charming woody land.

“His eyes glistening with tears of joy, Kṛṣṇa came and fell at her lotus feet, saying ‘Oh my charming one, blessed am I, God be thanked that we have met in this place. My happiness knows no bounds to-day.

“The sun has smitten your moon-like face with its rays and the sound of the anklets on your feet proclaims the labour of your walk, my beloved.

“Fain would I place your lovely feet on my bosom and they will be a delight to my eager eyes.

“Permit me, dear, to sprinkle fragrant sandal-drops on you. Saying this, with imploring looks he held her by the hand and with his own purple garment did he wipe away the dust from her feet.

“In the lonely bower thus did the lovers meet and Vançīdāsa is pleased at their meeting.”

Vaṅṅivādāna Chatto following the traditional courtesy of the Vaiṣṇava poets subscribes himself as Vaṅṅidāsa in the above colophon. These songs were written about the year 1620 A.D.

Vaṅṅivādāna had two sons—Chaitanya Dāsa and Nityānanda Dāsa. Prof. His descendants. Bhāgavata Goswami, M.A. of the Hughli Collège is descended from Vaṅṅivādāna.

XII. *Vāsudeva Ghoṣa.*

Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, the famous musician and poet, was one of the most conspicuous figures in the processions of *kīrtana* led by Chaitanya at Nadiyā. Vāsudeva and his two brothers Mādhavānanda and Gobindānanda were all devoted to Chaitanya. They were originally residents of Kumārhaṭṭa from where they came down to Nadiyā and settled there. Vāsudeva's songs are now by far the best of those which have for their themes the incidents of Chaitanya's life. He was one of those who deeply mourned the Sannyās of Chaitanya and his desertion of Nadiyā. This invests his songs with intense pathos and intrinsic poetry. Vāsudeva acknowledges that he owed his first impetus in writing songs on Chaitanya to the poems of Narahari Sarkār. He thus refers to his indebtedness :

“ I drank from the fount of songs composed
 by Narahari Sarkār and thus
 conceived the notion of writing
 poems on Chaitanya. ” ¹

“ When he sang the songs of his own composition ” writes the venerable Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja in his Chaitanya-Charitamṛta “ descriptive of Chaitanya’s life, even the wood and stone would melt at hearing them. ” ² We find it mentioned in work named Vaiṣṇavāchāra Darpaṇa that Vāsudeva Ghoṣa spent the last part of his life at Tamluk—the old maritime town Tāmralipta.

XIII. Murāri Gupta.

Murāri Gupta was born in Sylhet about 1471 A.D. and was a Vaidya by caste. Along with Çrīvāsa, Chandra Çekhara and others he left Sylhet and came and settled at Nadiyā in his early youth. He acquired profound scholarship in Logic, Medicine and other subjects and though older than Chaitanya by at least 15 years, held many learned disputations with him, while the latter was a student in the *tol* of Gangādāsa Paṇdit at Nadiyā.

¹ শ্রীমরকার ঠাকুরের পদামৃত পানে
 পদ্ম প্রকাশিব বলি ইচ্ছা কৈল মনে ।

² বাহুদেব গীতে করে প্রভুর বর্ণনে
 কাষ্ঠ পাষণ দ্রবে যাহার শ্রবণে ।

Murāri became so devoted to Chaitanya that on hearing the news of his resolution to take Sannyās, he attempted to commit suicide and was discovered by Chaitanya preparing his self-destruction with a knife and was dissuaded from this course.

Desists from committing suicide.

Murāri Gupta is said to have been a worshipper of Rāma and is therefore believed by the orthodox Vaiṣṇavas as an incarnation of Hanumāna—Rama's devoted servant. Murāri's humility and high morals form the subject of praise in all the memoirs of Chaitanya. We find it mentioned in Chaitanya-Charitāmṛta that when on his visit to Chaitanya at Puri, the latter touched him with his hand in an affectionate manner, Murāri shrank a little and said that he was a great sinner not worthy of the Master's touch. Chaitanya said "Murāri no more, it breaks my heart to see the humility of such a venerable and pious man." In the Kaḍchā of Govinda we find Murāri as one of the foremost of those who welcomed Chaitanya at Puri on his return from the Deccan. His emotion on the occasion was so great that he fell unconscious on the ground near Chaitanya's feet. ¹

Murāri Gupta is the first writer of a biographical account of Chaitanya. He wrote it in Sanskrit in 1514,

The first biography of Chaitanya.

হাটুর নিকটে গুপ্ত চলিয়া পড়িল।

Kaḍchā by Govinda Dāsa.

four years after Chaitanya had left Nadiyā as a Sannyāsī. During these years wild stories had grown at Nadiyā attributing superhuman qualities and powers to Chaitanya. And the veteran scholar in his touching admiration believed them all and poetically described them in his celebrated work. Chaitanya was unwilling that his life should be written by any one. Murāri, as I have said, wrote one after Chaitanya had left his native town. Govinda Dāsa alone recorded facts of his life as he saw them, but tells us that he did so very privately without the knowledge of Chaitanya who was averse to self-glorification. Swarupa Dāmodar, one of the most learned admirers of Chaitanya, is also said to have written some biographical notes of him about this time; we have, however, come across only a few incomplete specimens of them. Govinda Dāsa wrote his notes on Chaitanya's tour in the Deccan in vernacular in 1511-1513, but these were kept in strict privacy. Of the contemporary records of Chaitanya's life, therefore, Murāri's book, written in elegant Sanskrit, was by far the most widely read among the Vaiṣṇavas and respected by them as a standard authority to which all subsequent biographers referred in a spirit of reverence and with perfect trust.

• Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja the author of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, says of this work :

“All the incidents of Chaitanya’s boyhood have been recorded in the form of notes by Murāri Gupta.”¹

Later on Lochana Dāsa, the author of Chaitanya Maṅgala, mentions these notes as follows:—

“Murāri Gupta of the Vaidya cast was a resident of Nadiyā. He was one of the constant companions of Chaitanya. Murāri wrote in Sanskrit the incidents of the Master’s life up to his youth. I read this narrative and was charmed with it. This is how I first conceived the idea of writing Chaitanya’s life.”²

Murāri Gupta’s Kaḍchā, as his work is called, has lately been published from the Amṛta Bāzār Patrikā Press, Calcutta.

XIV.—Gopāla Bhaṭṭa.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, who is reputed as the author of Hari Bhakti Vilāsa, a work which he elaborated rather than wrote himself, was the son of Bēnkata Bhatta and a nephew of the celebrated Pravodhānanda Sarasvatī of Benares whom we

“আদি লীলা মধ্যে প্রভুর যতক চরিত ।
 সূত্র রূপে মুরারি গুপ্ত করিলা গ্রন্থিত ॥
 মুরারি গুপ্ত বেজ বৈসে নবদ্বীপে ।
 নিরন্তর থাকে গোরাচাঁদের সমীপে ॥
 জন্ম হৈতে বালক চরিত্র যাহা কৈল ।
 শুনিয়া আমার মনে বাড়িল পীরিত ।
 পাঁচালি প্রবন্ধে কঁহো গোরাঙ্গ-চরিত ॥

have already mentioned in a previous lecture. Benkata Bhatta had two brothers, Pravodhānanda who obtained celebrity as the leader of the Dandi sect of the ascetics of Benares, and Trimalla who lived in the Deccan. Gopāla Bhatta was born in 1503 A.D. in the village of Bhat-

His pedigree.

tamāri in Southern India, so he was only 7 years old when Chaitanya visited his native country. We do not credit the account to be found in the Premavilāsa, the Bhaktiratnākara and other later works, that Chaitanya spent four months of a rainy season at the house of Benkata Bhatta at Bhattamāri. Govinda Dāsa, who mentions minute details of Chaitanya's tour there, does not say that the latter stayed anywhere in the country for more than a week except at Dvārakā. The author of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta was greatly indebted to Gopāla Bhatta for some of the materials of his monumental work. But while treating of other particulars about him, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja does not refer to Chaitanya's stay for four months at Bhattamāri. This omission is significant, and shows the untrustworthy character of the tradition. It must have been fabricated by the later writers in order to give import-

The tale of Chaitanya's staying for 4 months with Gopāla Bhatta in the Deccan is unreliable.

ance to Gopāla Bhatta for his long association with the Master. It is quite possible that after Pravodhānanda's acceptance of

Chaitanya as his saviour and Guru, his nephew was naturally attracted to take the banner of Vaiṣṇavism in his hand and preach the Chaitanya-cult. We do not however disbelieve that Chaitanya saw Gopāla Bhatta in the Deccan. If he did so it was of so slight and trifling interest that Govinda did not think it worth while to notice it in his account. Indeed people outside the pale of the Vaiṣṇavas did not credit the story, as will be observed from the following incidental references to it by Narahari Chakravarti in his *Bhaktiratnākara*.

“When the Master was travelling in the Deccan he stayed in the house of Benkata Bhatta for four months. The author of *Chaitanya Charitamṛta* did not mention it in the account of the Master’s tour there. There is a mention of Chaitanya’s visit to Benkata Bhatta’s house but not of his stay there for four months.”

And again “As Chaitanya’s stay at Bhattamari for four months has not been mentioned in any authoritative works, incredulous people do not seem to be willing to accept the account as true.”¹

The *Gaurpada Taranginī* says that Gopāla Bhatta was 30 years old when Chaitanya visited the Deccan. We all know that Gopāla Bhatta

¹ The *Bhakti Ratnākara* 1st Taranga.

was born in 1503 and Chaitanya toured in the Deccan during 1510-1511. So from whatever point the tradition is assailed it proves weak and untenable. The Premavilāsa first mentioned this unauthenticated tradition invented probably to exaggerate the importance of the already important man Gopāla Bhatta. I dwell on this point at some length because it has been made much of by later Vaiṣṇava biographers. Gopāla Bhatta was the Guru of Ṣrīnivās Achārya—the greatest of the latter-day Vaiṣṇava worthies. Ṣrīnivāsa evinced wonderful faith in his youth. His scholarship and other qualities of the head and heart led him deservedly to a position of the highest eminence in Vaiṣṇava society. After leaving Vṛndāvana, however, he came to Bengal and married at Viṣṇupur where he quietly settled down to a prosperous worldly life, receiving gifts of considerable money and lands from Rājā Vīra Hamvīra of Viṣṇupur who had become his disciple. Ṣrīnivāsa succeeded from a worldly point of view in enlarging the Vaiṣṇava circle, and drawing within its gradually widening boundaries many of the influential members of the Bengal aristocracy. The fame of this leader rang in the ears of the Vaiṣṇavas throughout the country. But when Manohara Dāsa, a native of Viṣṇupur paid a visit to Gopāla Bhatta at Vṛndāvana and spoke of the attainments of Ṣrīnivāsa in glowing terms, Gopāla Bhatta

remained silent for some time and then said “Fallen alas, fallen from his path.”¹ The ideal of Gopāla Bhatta was the founding of a spiritual kingdom’ which does not perish, and not the attainment of worldly success even in the cause of the extension of Vaiṣṇava faith in India.

Gopāla Bhatta with Raghunātha Dāsa—

One of the six apostles. Raghunātha Bhatta, Rupa, Sanātana and Jīva formed the glorious group of the “Six Goswāmis” whose works possess scriptural authority with the Vaiṣṇava community of Bengal.

XV. Vakreṣwara Pundit.

Vakreṣwara Pundit was born in Setan. He left Nadiyā and spent a considerable part of his life at Puri as a companion of Chaitanya. It is mentioned in the Chaitanya Chandrodaya Kaumudī by Premadāsa written in ṣaka 1534 or 1607 A.D., that the dance of Vakreṣwara in the Vaiṣṇava procession attracted the attention of Rājā Pratāpa Rudra of Orissa. Gopīnatha Achārya introduced him to the Rājā by saying that his dance in an ecstasy of devotion was almost as perfect as that of Chaitanya himself. Chaitanya Chartamrita says :—

His dancing.

- ¹ মৌন হরে ভট্ট কিছু নাহি কহে আর ।
“শ্বলংপাদ শ্বলংপাদ কহে বারে বার” ॥
- ² “প্রভুর মতন যার নর্তন সুন্দর,”

The Chaitanya Chandrodaya
Kaumudi.

“For hours and hours together he could dance without exhaustion, keeping up a continuous flow of animation and emotional interest among the processional party. Chaitanya himself sang when Vakreṣwar danced.”

XVI. Gauri Dāsa.

Gauri Dāsa was a native of Kālnā. He was descended from Varunāchārya of the Mukhati family of Brahmins. His father's name was Kansāri and mother's name Vimalā Devī. He had five brothers of whom Suryadāsa Sarkhel became afterwards a noted figure in the Vaiṣṇava community as Nityānanda married his two daughters Vasudhā and Jāhnavī. It is said that Chaitanya crossed to the other side of the Ganges once, steering the boat himself with an oar. This oar, together with a copy of the Gītā in Chaitanya's own hand-writing was preserved with great care by Gaurī Dāsa. In due course they passed into the hands of Hridaya Chaitanya, a disciple of Gaurī Dāsa and are now to be seen in the Chaitanya Temple at Kalnā. Gaurī Das made images of Chaitanya and Nityānanda in Nimba wood during their lifetime. These images which are now worshipped in the temple at Kalnā are said to bear a striking resemblance to those whose likenesses they are;

and many legendary tales are told by the simple village folk about them. One of them runs thus :

When Chaitanya and Nityānanda paid a visit to Gaurīdāsa at Kalnā in 1510 A.D. the latter was so much impressed and charmed by their presence that he implored them to stay with him at Kalnā as long as he lived. Chaitanya unable to resist his importunities said that he would comply with his request. In the *kīrtana* procession at his house that night, Gaurīdāsa was surprised to find two figures of Chaitanya and two figures of Nityānanda, exactly alike, singing songs in his courtyard. He approached all the four when they said :—

“Keep any two of us and we will stay with you.”

Upon this Gaurīdāsa caught hold of a pair and they became transformed into Nimba-wood-figures which have since been worshipped in the temple at Kālnā.

XVII.—*Paramānanda Sen (Kavikarṇapūra.)*

Paramānanda Sen, who was afterwards distinguished as ‘Kavikarṇapūra’ or ‘the ear ornament of poets,’ was born in the 1528 at Kānchrāpāra, a village 28 miles to the North of Calcutta. This village was once a celebrated seat of scholars, and stories of wonderful physical strength

The images of Chaitanya and Nityānanda at Kalnā.

of its inhabitants in olden times are still related in the neighbouring locality. Here a Vaidika Brahmin named Bachārama Adhikarī, possessed of herculian strength, is said to have removed unaided a big palm tree that lay obstructing the passage of the women to the landing *ghat* of the Ganges. The story of his gallant feat is still narrated enthusiastically by the people of the locality. It is also said that a youth of this village was once caught by a crocodile in the Ganges, whereupon his companions swam across the river and succeeded in drawing the crocodile by force to the bank with its victim who revived. In this village stands the celebrated temple of Kṛṣṇa Raya, the god established by Sivānanda Sen, the father of our poet. This temple was re-built in 1785 A.D. when the one, founded by Kachu Ray of Jessore for the deity in the 16th century, had sunk in the bed of the Ganges. The cost of building the present temple was one lakh of Rupees which was borne by Nimāicharana Mallik and Gauracharana Mallik of Calcutta. It is one of the most artistic temples that adorn the Gangetic valley; on account of its lying in an almost deserted village, it has not yet attracted the notice of the critics of Indian art. The inscription on the pedastal of the image runs as follows :

“স্বস্তি শ্রীকৃষ্ণ দেবায় প্রাদুরাসীৎ স্বয়ং কলৌ ।

অনুগ্রহায় দ্বিজঃ শ্রীযঃ শ্রীনাথ সংজ্ঞকঃ ॥”

Sivānanda Sen established the image in the name of his Guru Çīnath Achārya. ^{The temple.} ^{Kṛṣṇa} Sivānanda belonged to the physician caste and was one of Chaitanya's respected friends. It is said that Paramānanda, his son, displayed poetical powers from a very early age and received the title of 'Kavikarṇapūra' from Chaitanya himself. The Chaitanya Chandrodaya written by our poet is a master-piece of Mediæval Sanskrit dramatic literature. It was completed by Kavikarṇapūra in the year 1568 A.D. I give below a free rendering of the preliminary portion of this work :

“Look! here, and behold the god Purusottama who looks dark as collyrium, or the blue-tinted emerald on this sea coast, or like the Tamala-trees of the Nilgiri Hills, or like a proud elephant chained to the immortal fig-tree the 'Akshaya Bata.' The great god will shortly march in his Car-journey, and the ceremony has drawn an immense multitude whose exclamations of “Victory to the Lord” have now filled the whole air's space.

“In the height of spiritual ecstasy these people have forgot their caste-distinctions, and the Brahmins and Sūdras have joined their voices in singing the praises of God.

“The gleeful exclamations of the women, whose voices are musical like those of the nymphs presiding over the ten directions, are echoed

afar. On the other side, hark to the solemn song of the taber and of the trumpet and the shrill sounding bugle. These have raised a mingled noise which has well-nigh deafened the ear drowning the voices of the great crowd.

“At this moment, the great king Pratāpa Rudra, the custodian of the temple of Jagannātha, approaches with slow pensive steps, his mind full of gloom, for Çhaitanya has just passed away from this world. It is the mind that lends its colour to the sorroundings. The joyous shouts of the multitude do not produce any effect on the unhappy king. A few moments after, the King addressed me and said :—

“Oh thou master player, there stands resplendent as ever the great God of the Nīlgiri Hills; the pompous ceremony of his Car-journey is as grand now as ever it was. Look there and behold the pilgrims coming from all directions as on previous occasions. They await with reverence the forthcoming religious festivities. This garden in the precincts of the temple-courtyard is even more beautiful than paradise. But in my eyes there is a void in all that I see, because Chaitanya has left us.

“Dost thou give me some comfort by playing a drama in which the heavenly life of that prince of ascetics—that very soul of love—Çhaitanya may be the fitting subject.”

An extract from
the Chaitanya
Chandrodaya.

In the above prologue the author states that the drama was written by the order of and played before the king Prātapa Rudra.

Some modern writers have confounded this Paramānanda Sen whose title is Kavikarnāpūr, with Paramānanda Purī. This is a serious mistake as the latter was an elderly ascetic of Tirhut, much respected by Chaitanya himself, whereas the former (Kavikarnāpūr) was a mere child when Chaitanya saw him at Purī and prophesied his future greatness.

XVIII.—*Raghunātha Dāsa.*

In the history of the Vaiṣṇava apostles who gathered round Chaitanya there is perhaps no one who deserves such prominent notice as Raghunātha Das, born in the year 1498 at the village of Chandpur within the jurisdiction of the old town of Saptagrāma.

Saptagrāma, probably the '*Ganja regia*' of the Romans, was at that time a most flourishing town in Bengal. It was the capital of a Mahomedan General who ruled lower Bengal under the Emperor of Gaur. It consisted of seven wards, named after seven princely saints—

sons of an ancient Hindu king of
Saptagrāma. Kanauj, who had in pre-historic
times conquered Bengal. Saptagrāma in those
days was the residence of a large number of

Europeans whose ships lay anchored on the river Saraswatī, laden with merchandise. This river meeting the Ganges and Jumna at Trivenī branched off a short way down, and flowed in a semi-circular course by Saptagrāma and met the Ganges again near Alipur. The Saraswati is now a dead river and the great commercial activity which once marked its course is a matter of interest merely to the students of antiquity. It was the most important port for sea-going vessels in Bengal during the Mahomedan times, and when it fell into decadence owing to various causes, the chief of which was the silting up of the river Saraswatī, Chittagong rose to distinction as a seaport, though it could never equal even faintly the historic glory of the older town, as far as her political importance and great economic resources were concerned. A Bengali poet of the 17th Century who had visited all the important towns of India of his times describes Saptagrāma to be one of the greatest of them. ¹

¹ Kṛṣṇa Rama, who wrote a poem in honour of Saṣṭhi Devī in 1687 A.D., makes the following mention of Saptagrāma.—

“ রাঢ় বঙ্গ দেখিলাম কলিঙ্গ নেপাল ।
 গয়া পইরাগ (প্রয়াগ) দেখিলাম নিষাদ কাঁপল ।
 একে একে ভ্রমণ করিলাম দেশ দেশ ।
 দেখিনু দেবীর পূজা অশেষ বিশেষ ॥
 সপ্তগ্রাম দেখিলাম নাহি তার তুল !
 চালে চালে ঠেকে লোক ভাগিরথী কুল ॥

The Mahomedan Governor of the town was so powerful that he frequently revolted against the Emperor of Gaur, and the revenue of the place could not be recovered without sanguinary skirmishes. This made the Emperor do away with the Governorship, and lease the town and its adjoining villages to two influential Kāyastha Chiefs, Hiraṇya and Govardhana. The condition was that they should pay a revenue of 12 lakhs of rupees a year, and the Emperor would not interfere with the internal administration of the district. Under this new arrangement, the annual income from the land alone rose to 20 ^{Hiraṇya and Govardhana.} lakhs, besides which the taxes on the exports and imports—were a source of considerable additional income to the brothers, Hiraṇya and Govardhana; so that they held a very important position amongst the aristocracy of Eastern India. I need scarcely remind my readers that the value of money was much higher in the 16th Century than it is now.

Both Hiraṇya and Govardhana were well versed in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, and their court was a favourite resort of distinguished scholars. In the 'Sangit Mādhava' a work by Govinda Dāsa, the famous Vaiṣṇava poet of the 16th Century, there is a line which says: "If you seek a really charitable man in Bengal where can you find one greater than Govardhana and"

if you seek a true poet where can you find one better than Damodar of Srikhanda.”¹

So the brothers had a reputation not only as scholars, but as honest god-fearing men who gave much in charity and lived in the spiritual environment of the Bengal of those days. Nīlāmvara Chakravartī, grandfather of Chaitanya, was a great friend of the two brothers, and Chaitanya himself in his childhood used to call them uncles, though they were Kāyastha by caste and he a Brahmin.

Hiraṇya had no children and Govardhana had an only son Raghunātha Dāsa—the idol of the family, and sole heir to their vast property.

In his childhood Raghunātha received his education in Sanskrit from one Valarāma Achārya, a native of Chandpur. Valarāma Achārya was a devout Vaiṣṇava, and Raghunātha had a spiritual training under this excellent man. It happened at this time that Haridāsa, the Mahomedan convert to Vaiṣṇavism, paid a visit to Valarāma Achārya and stayed with him for seven or eight days at Chāndpur. A world was revealed to young Raghunātha of which he had already obtained only glimpses from the Early spiritual training. teachings of Valarāma. He saw in Haridāsa, the fulfilment of the best ideal of a man. He was passionless, sweet

and resigned to God, full of peity and tenderness and with an overflowing devotion which the more the boy saw he admired the more, and when Haridāsa went away, Raghunātha saw the world in a new light—reading the mercy of God every where and striving for the good of all.

Valarāma Achārya used to pay his visit to Hiraṇya and Govardhana every day; for he was their family priest as well; and when he spoke of the little incidents of Haridāsa's life to the brothers, Raghunātha heard them with rapt attention and was all tears in admiration. In January 1510 the report that Chaitanya left Nadiyā for good and turned a Sannyasi spread throughout the country, and created a great feeling amongst all classes of men. It was the constant topic of conversation and as elsewhere, it was discussed in the court of the brothers who were full of admiring love for Chaitanya. But the news impressed Raghunātha most of all, and he longed to see one, who, it was said, had seen the Unseen and was mad with joy. Chaitanya, after his Sannyās, paid a visit to Advaita at Sāntipur. It must have been towards the end of January, 1510. Raghunātha asked permission to see the Master, and he was accordingly sent there with a number of escorts by his father and uncle who never suspected that this interview would

Interview with
Chaitanya.

be fraught with consequences which would mar their worldly comfort for ever.

The interview broke the chord which attached him to family life. It revealed to him the wonders of the spiritual world. It maddened and completely transformed him. It also appeared that he too had seen the Unseen. He stayed at Sāntipur with the Master for four or five days. Chaitanya left Sāntipur and started for Purī. Raghunātha, it is mentioned in the Kadcha by Govinda Dāsa, met him again on the banks of Suvarnarekhā near Hariharpur, but had to come back to Saptagrāma at the bidding of his father and uncle.

They saw in him a completely changed lad. The very name of Chaitanya, uttered before him, brought tears to his eyes. He fasted and repeated the name of God and said to all that the worldly life was miserable. He wanted all passions to be at rest and the joy of union with God to be the sole aim of mankind. The two chiefs were now alarmed that what they had allowed to grow unchecked might now prove dangerous. Raghunātha might renounce the world and turn a Sannyāsi.

As time passed the lad's anguish of soul and desire to meet Chaitanya

The necessity of applying force. increased and the Chiefs felt it advisable to use stronger means

to keep him at home. They accordingly appointed five soldiers, four servants and two Brahmīns to be his constant attendants. The two Brāhmins were to teach him the sacredness of family-ties and obedience to parents and superiors. It was unavailing. A greater force than that of family-ties was tugging at his heart.

Five years passed in this way and in 1515 Chaitanya again paid a visit to Sāntipur on his way to Rāmakeli, near Gaur. Raghunātha said to his father that if he were not permitted to see Chaitanya, he would fast and die, and Govardhana really feared from what he saw of the boy, that this might really happen. So he

He meets Chaitanya again.

sent him to Sāntipur with a strong body of armed men.

Raghunātha was beside himself with joy and meeting Chaitanya fell at his feet and wept. The accumulated grief of his soul found expression in his tears, for he had never enjoyed unbroken sleep, nor eaten regular meals for these five years, owing to his intense desire to see the Master. Chaitanya read the boy's heart, but his attitude was one of austerity, verging on rudeness. He said :—

“Quiet your mind, return home and do not act like a mad man. It is by slow degrees that a man outgrows his family-ties. Do not show morbid sentiments in imitation of others, before

spirituality has really grown in you. Go and lead the ordinary life of the world. Be not attached to it and let faith grow in your heart. But outwardly do as other worldly men do and you will find that God will help and save you in no distant future.”

Chaitanya's stern attitude towards Raghunātha.

Raghunātha went back home a thoroughly changed man. He began to supervise the affairs of the Estate and did what his father and uncle bade him to do. In order to keep him attached to home-life, Govardhana had already married him to a girl whose beauty was unequalled in the country, and Raghunātha was kind to her. It was a delight and surprise to the Chiefs to find him so completely changed, but this was a mere outward garb, for Raghunātha followed Chaitanya's instructions to the letter. He did not make any outward display of faith, only that it might grow the more. He mixed with the world and did his duties unattached ; for he had dedicated himself to God, and to Chaitanya who had shown him the gates of heaven.

A calamity overtook the family about the year 1516. The ex-governor of Saptagrāma, a

স্থির হঞা ঘরে যাও না হও বাতুল ।
ক্রমে ক্রমে পয়ে লোক তব সিন্ধু কুল ॥
মৰ্কট বৈরাগ্য না কর লোক দেখাইয়া ।
যথাযোগ্য বিষয় ভুঞ্জ অনাশঙ্ক হৈয়া ॥ &c.

Turk, had a well-founded grudge against Hirāṇya and Govardhana, for they had usurped his possessions. This man, formerly hostile to the Emperor of Gauḍa, now ingratiated himself into his confidence, and inflamed him by many false reports against the brothers. He was informed that though they paid only 12 ^{The Emperor's oppression.} laks a year to the Royal treasury, their collection was immensely greater and that His Majesty was a great loser by granting them the lease. Moreover they had grown very powerful and might prove dangerous at any moment.

Now at a time when Govardhana was away, the king sent a large body of soldiers to arrest the chiefs. Hirāṇya fled, without being able to induce Raghunātha to join him. The latter was found by the Emperor's soldiers quietly doing the duties of his office as usual. He offered no resistance and silently accompanied the army to Gauḍa. On being produced before the king he was required to divulge where his uncle and father were hiding. Raghunātha, as was really the case, pleaded ignorance, upon which the king ordered him to be tortured till he gave the information. Raghunātha meekly said :

“Your Majesty saw me as a child and I remember the day when you addressed my father and uncle as brothers. Nothing has since happened to cause this change of attitude in your

Majesty. May I not claim the right of an affectionate treatment at your hands such as a nephew may expect. Your Majesty is my Master and I resign myself to you. Is it not your duty to protect my interest even as a father does of his child? Your Majesty has the reputation of being versed in the scriptures and is moreover known to be a pious man. What should I say more?"

The emotion and sweetness with which the young Raghunātha delivered himself, made a deep impression on the Emperor. For Rāghu had an unspotted life dedicated to God. His countenance reflected the purity of his heart, and his words were sweet.

Chaitanya Charitāmṛtā says that the Emperor melted into tears at this address and they fell over his long flowing beard. His Majesty said :

“From to-day you are my god-son. I release you to-day. I have only one thing to add. Your uncle Hiraṇya enjoys more than 8 laks a year. I am his partner; it is only fair that he should give me something more. Go home and do so that he may meet me. Let him do what is but fair. I leave it to him entirely.”¹

¹ এত শুনি সেই.....মন আদ্র হৈল ।
দাড়ি বহি অশ্র পড়ে কান্দিতে লাগিল ।
সেই বলে আজ হইতে তুমি মোর পুত্র ।
আজি ছোড়াইব তোমা করি এক স্ত্র ।

Raghunātha went back and induced his uncle to meet the Emperor, and an amicable settlement was the result.

It was about this time that Nityānanda paid a visit to Pāṇihāṭi, a village four miles to the North of Calcutta.

Nityananda's visit to Pānihāti.

The Saṅkīrtana party mustered in strength around the apostle. He resided at the house of Rāghava, which became, as it were, a sacred place for the time. Hundreds of people gathered there, and it seemed as though the material world had vanished and the spiritual one had opened its gates for all. Night and day God was praised "with the timbrel and dance and the high sounding cymbals" and songs of great spiritual beauty were composed and sung. At Pāṇihāṭi Nityānanda stayed for three months and the author of Chaitanya Bhāgavata says that he turned the very tide of the life of people there during this time. Raghunātha heard of all that transpired there from Saptagrāma which was not very far from Pāṇihāṭi. He asked the permission of his father to go there. Both he and his uncle agreed to his request this time,

উজিরে কহিয়া রঘুনাথে ছোড়াইল ।
 প্রীতি করি রঘুনাথে কহিতে লাগিল ॥
 তোমার জোঠা বুদ্ধি অষ্ট লক্ষ খায় ।
 আমি ভাগী আমারে কিছু দিবার না যোয়ায় ॥
 যাহ তুমি তোমার জোঠা মিলাহ আমারে ।
 যে মতে ভাল হয় করুন সে ভার তোরে ॥

again. He tried again and again to escape from the palace but a strong body of guards was appointed to keep watch over his movements. They found him out every time he attempted to escape. He did not visit his wife, but slept on the bare floor in the courtyard of the temple attached to the palace. He no longer attended the affairs of the State and silently wept remembering Chaitanya of whom he dreamt in his sleep and thought all day. Alarmed at the frequent attempts of her son to leave home, his anxious mother had said once to her husband :

“ I wish he could be kept bound to a pillar
with a rope. Possibly he may
Force no remedy. escape the guards some day.”

The sorrowful father replied :

“ The attractions of a treasure, vast as an emperor's, the beauty of his wife like a celestial nymph cannot bind him to this home of ours, do you think a slender rope will do it ?”¹

It was the month of July, 1517, the time of the great Car-festivity of Jagannātha, when the people of Bengal, especially those of Nadiyā, used to pay their annual visit to Chaitanya at Purī. They made preparations for the journey. An opportunity occurred to Raghunātha at this time to renounce home for ever.

“ইন্দ্র সম ঐশ্বর্য্য, স্ত্রী অপ্সরা সম, এ সব বাঁধিতে নারিল যার মন,
দড়ির বন্ধনে তারে বাঁধিব কেমনে ।”

Jadunandana Āchārya, the spiritual head of the family of Hiraṇya and Govardhana, called on Raghunātha at about 4 A.M. of a July morning. The latter was in the courtyard of the temple within the palace, a strong body of guards keeping watch over him. Jadunandana wanted Raghunātha to mediate on his behalf with his family-priest who had quarrelled

His flight. with him. In the morning the priest's service would be required at his home for worship. Raghunātha gladly undertook to induce the priest to perform the worship as usual, and accompanied Jadunandana to his home. The guards had implicit confidence in one who was the *Guru* of the house and did not object to Raghunātha's accompanying him. As soon as he got out of the palace he told Jadunandana that he would visit the priest himself. It was not necessary for the *Guru* to be with him. The simple-minded Brāhmaṇ took him at his word and Raghunātha after having paid a visit to the priest and extracting a promise from him to continue his religious duties at the house of Jadunandana, fled away as fast as his legs could carry him.

In the morning, the guards went to the house of *Guru* to enquire about Raghunātha, and he was astonished to hear that Raghu had not gone back to the palace. In a moment the whole city was astir searching for the absconder.

Govarddhana thought that as the people of Nadiyā were then about to start for Purī to meet Chaitanya, Raghunātha had doubtless joined them. So he sent ten horsemen to make enquiries with a letter addressed to Çivānanda Sen, father of the famous Kavikarṇapura, of whom we have spoken in our previous lecture.

Çivānanda Sen was a venerable man and a great friend of Govarddhana Dāsa ; he was besides the leader elect of the pilgrims bound for Purī. Govarddhana wrote in the letter that his son had turned mad for love of Chaitanya. He was the only child in the family. His wife was young and was deeply distressed. If he could not be made to return, it would blast their happiness for ever.

The ten horsemen returned in due course with a reply from Çivānanda Sen saying that Raghunātha had not joined the pilgrims. Men were sent to places far and near. But nowhere was he to be found. Where had he gone then ?

It was the march of a soul, deep drunk with inward joy, to meet the object of his love. Nothing could deter it ; no obstruction was unsurmountable, no risk too great. Raghunātha was going to a heaven of bliss. What matter that hardships had to be undergone? He followed those paths which no one had trodden before. Through jungles and deserted villages he

The fruitless search.

walked on and on, bare footed. He walked 30 miles on the first day towards the east and spent the night in a cowshed. In the morning he turned to the south and reached a village named Yātrābhoga. Thence he came westward to Saran. In 12 days he reached Purī. During these days he had but three meals. The body fasted but the spirit feasted on the joy of the prospect of meeting the Master.

Chaitanya was at the house of Kāçī Miçra at Purī. Some of his companions were near him and Mukunda Datta was the first amongst them to see Raghu approaching from afar. He cried aloud pointing with his finger :—“Look there, Raghu, our beloved Raghu has come, how emaciated does he look ?”

Meets Chaitanya. Chaitanya called him to his presence and Raghu humbly touched his feet and bursting into tears said :

“ Much have I suffered, my Master. Sinner as I am, do not leave me this time. I am too humble, but yet yearn for your grace.”

Chaitanya embraced him affectionately and asked Govinda, the servant of the house, to prepare a good meal, saying, “ Surely he has not tasted any proper food during his long journey.”

Raghu was served with substantial food for 5 days, but on the 6th he said that he would

touch nothing rich. 'It serves', he said, 'to nourish my physical life; but my spiritual vision grows less.' From that time forward he used to stand for a couple of hours at the gate of the great temple of Purī every evening and the pilgrims gave him alms without his seeking. They gave him a handful of bread or rice not knowing that he was a prince, and often it so happened that he got nothing from them, and then he gladly fasted. He received regular instructions from Svarūpa Dāmodara whom Chaitanya had appointed to teach him the tenets of Vaiṣṇava scriptures and instruct him in those practical ways by which the realization of God is brought to man.

Ragunātha's reverence for Chaitanya was so great that for a few years he would not venture to speak to him direct. What he had to say to the Master, he said to Govinda or Svarūpa Dāmodara who communicated it to him.

One day Svarūpa told to Chaitanya that Raghunātha wanted to receive instructions directly from him. He would not speak out his great wish at first for shyness. And when he did so at last he feared lest he might be considered too forward. Chaitanya called Raghu to his presence and said :

“Svarūpa Dāmodara knows the Vaiṣṇava theology and the rules of monastic life better

than I do. For you know I have always rather followed my own natural inclinations. That is why I entrusted your training to this worthy man. But should you still care to learn from me, follow these instructions :

“Do not listen to gossip, do not seek honour for yourself but give it freely to others. Have your mind fixed on God. Consider yourself humbler than the grass you tread upon. Live upon spare diet and have humble clothing. Be patient as a tree.”¹

About the qualities to be learnt from the tree, Chaitanya had once said to Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya :—

“The tree does not complain against him who cuts it to pieces. Though its sap dries within

প্রভু আগে কথা মাত্র না কহে রঘুনাথ ।
 স্বরূপ গোবিন্দ দ্বারা কহে নিজ বাত ॥
 প্রভু আগে স্বরূপ নিবেদন আর দিনে ।
 রঘুনাথ নিবেদয়ে প্রভুর চরণে ॥
 কি মোর কর্তব্য মুঞি না জানি উদ্দেশ ।
 আপন শ্রীমুখে মোর করুন উপদেশ ॥
 হাসি মহাপ্রভু রঘুনাথেরে কহিল ।
 তোমার উপদেষ্টা করে স্বরূপেরে দিল ॥
 সাধ্য সাধন তত্ত্ব শিক্ষ ইহার স্থানে ।
 আমি যত নাহি জানি ইহ তত জানে ॥
 তথাপি আমার আজ্ঞায় যদি শ্রদ্ধা হয় ।
 আমার এই বাক্যে তুমি করিহ নিশ্চয় ॥
 গ্রাম্য কথা না শুনিবে গ্রাম্য বার্তা না কহিবে ।
 ভাল না খাইবে আর ভাল না পরিবে ॥
 “তৃণাদপি স্তনীচেন তরোরিব সহিষ্ণুতা ।
 অমানিনা মানদেন কীর্তীগীর সদা হরিঃ ॥”

it, it does not ask a drop of water from any one. It gives freely all its treasure to those who seek it. Exposed to the heat of the sun in the summer and to the rains, it gives shelter to others.”¹

These instructions, it should be understood, were meant for those who had broken their family-connection, and turned ascetics devoting themselves to universal good and having a brotherly ideal before them. They could not be followed by lay men to their fullest extent.

The grief of Govarddhana Dāsa and his family at Saptagrāma at Raghunātha’s continued absence was great. They had sent men in quest of the missing Raghunātha all over the country and even to Purī. Çivānanda Sen had in the meantime returned from Purī with other pilgrims and Govarddhana again sent men to him enquiring whether he had seen Raghunātha there with Chaitanya. Çivānanda said :

“ Yes, he is there with the Master. The faith he has shown is great and he has already become a noted man there. Chaitanya has made

Govarddhana sends
him money.

over the charge of his spiritual training to Svarūpa, and all the companions of the Master hold him dear as their lives. Day and night he repeats the name of God and scarcely leaves the presence of

¹ See Chaitanya Charitāmṛta Antya Khaṇḍa.

Chaitanya. A true ascetic is he, caring neither for food nor clothing. At 10 O'clock in the night he stands at the main gate of the temple of Jagannātha and the pilgrims give him some scraps on which he lives. If they give him nothing, he fasts. Many are the days in the month when he fasts, at other times he lives upon whatever chance brings him.”¹

Govardhana's heart melted in unbounded compassion for the poor child, and night and day he wept and was sad. He sent two Brāhmaṇs and a servant with Rs. 400 to Purī, hoping that Raghunātha might be induced to accept the small offer for his personal comforts. Raghunātha said to them :

“ A thousand times do I bow to my parents. Give them this message that I pray for their blessing in order to attain a spiritual life. I was not born for food and clothing. If I attend

¹ শিবানন্দ কহে তিহো হয় প্রভুর স্থানে ।
 পরম বিখ্যাত তিহো কেবা নাহি জানে ॥
 স্বরূপের স্থানে তারে করিয়াছে সমর্পণ ।
 প্রভুর ভক্তগণের তিহো হয় প্রাণসম ॥
 রাত্রি দিন করে তিহো নাম সঙ্কীর্্তন ।
 ক্ষণমাত্র নাহি ছাড়ে প্রভুর চরণ ॥
 পরম বৈরাগী নাহি ভক্ষ পরিজন ।
 জৈছে তৈছে আহার করি রাখয়ে জীবন ॥
 দশদণ্ড রাত্রি গেলে পুষ্পাঞ্জলি দিয়া ।
 সিংহদ্বারে খাড়া হয় আহার লাগিয়া ॥
 কেহ যদি দেয় তবে করয়ে ভক্ষণ ।
 কভু উপবাস কভু করেন চর্কণ ॥

to material comforts, the vision within me grows less bright. I cannot bear it. My only care is to keep it clear. For the satisfaction of my father I will accept a small portion of the money, not for myself, but to serve my Master. You may return home now.”

As he would not touch any money with his own hand, they did not go back but stayed at Purī. Twice in a month Raghunātha took a small amount from this money and invited and entertained Chaitanya with it in a very humble way, the two meals that he gave to the Master each month, costing him only 8 *paṇs* of *kandis* something like 2 annas. For two years Raghunātha continued inviting Chaitanya to this humble repast, but at the end of two years he discontinued it. A month passed and Chaitanya did not receive any invitation from Raghunātha and when the next month passed also Chaitanya asked Svarūpa :—‘ Why is it that Raghu does not

He no more invites Chaitanya to dinner.

invite us any more.’ Svarūpa told the Master that Raghu would not further accept any money from a worldly man. This could not, he was convinced, give any satisfaction to the Master, though the latter accepted the invitation for the sake of mere courtesy ; so he had dispensed with it. Chaitanya said : “ Raghu has understood aright. It is even so ; acceptance of a gift from a rich man makes the life of an ascetic

poor spiritually. It spots his clear vision of God.”¹

Chaitanya however made enquiries of Svarūpa about the physical needs of Raghunātha, though he did not like any one to make any provision for him. A sannyāsī must absolutely resign himself to God, without thinking of the morrow. Whatever Raghunātha did, he did with an inward strength and joy, which raised him above all human compassion. Through his spiritual and physical needs, however, the mother-like eyes of the Master followed him at every step watching with keen interest his progress in spiritual life.

Chaitanya one day heard that Raghu no longer stood at the gate of the Temple for alms, but he gathered a handful of scraps and rice thrown outside the courtyard of the Temple, which he washed carefully, and took with a little salt. Yet he was as cheerful as ever.

Thus did Raghunātha spend 16 years of his life at Purī. He came there when he was only 19, and now at his 35th year, Chaitanya passed away from this world. Raghunātha had once said to Chaitanya :

“Of what other God you speak to me, Master? You are my God.”

¹ শুনি মহাপ্রভু হাসি বলিতে লাগিল।
বিষয়ীর অন্ন খাইলে মলিন হয় মন।
মলিন মন হলে না হয় কৃষ্ণের স্মরণ ॥

When the great calamity took place, Rājā Pratāpa Rudra who had already made over the helm of administration, and all marks of royalty to his son, retired from Purī to village-life in deep sorrow and spent his remaining days in calling to mind the incidents of Chaitanya's life.

Many of Chaitanya's companions left Purī; for, they had not seen God in the image of the Temple there so much as in the Man before them, and their grief was now overwhelming. Raghunātha carried the stone which Chaitanya had given him for worship together with a string of sacred Goonja-beads to Vṛndāvana, and at the moment of worship he bathed them every day with his tears, remembering the kindness of their giver.

Raghunātha lived till a good old age dying
in his 86th year in 1584 A.D.

His last moments.

His last hours are thus described
in the Padakalpataru :

“On the bank of the Rādhā Kunda he lay breathing heavily. He could speak no word, and his closed eyes shed a few drops of tears indicative of the joy of union with Kṛṣṇa.”

Raghunātha's name is inseparably associated with those of Rūpa and Sanātana, who had become his most intimate friends at Vṛndāvana. There the ascetic-prince earned the admiring love and esteem of the Brajabāsīs by his faith and pure unspotted life. He wrote many

Sanskrit works which will be enumerated below. He was innocent and simple as a child. And his sinless mind mirrored in its unsullied transparency the glories of a true spiritual life.

In the last part of life he lived upon whey only and often slept under the canopy of the sky which showed him far greater splendour than the ornamental roof studded with jewels of his father's palace at Saptagrāma.

Some of the songs on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that he composed contain invocations to Tuṅgadevī, Raṅgadevī, Lalitā, Bisakhā and other Gopīs of Vṛndāvana to teach him how to decorate the God whose vision he saw ; for they were finished mistresses of the art. In one of them he addresses the Deity saying,

“ I am thine—I am thine alone for ever. Take me to thyself.”

This was a short time before his death. One of his constant companions in the latter part of his life was the venerable Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja who was inspired to write his Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, on hearing an account of the great life of the Master, recited for the most part by Raghunātha. At Vṛndāvana we find him receiving some of the later Vaiṣṇava worthies such as Ṣrīnivāsa and Ṣyāmānanda with kindness, and paying his respects to Jāhnavī Devī, wife of Nityānanda when she visited the holy city.

He is one of the few Kāyasthas who were admitted to Brāhmaṇhood in the Vaiṣṇava society of Bengal, being recognised as one of the six Gosvāmīs. But to Raghunātha Brāhmaṇ, Kāyasthas and even the lowest castes as Hādīs commanded the same respect. For following the instructions of Chaitanya, he had learnt ‘to respect every living being knowing that the holy God dwelt in every one.’

The routine of Raghunātha’s daily life is given to us by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja who wrote from intimate personal knowledge. He says :

“The routine of his day he follows to the letter. It is unalterable like curving on stone. For seven and half Prahars (21 hours) he remains plunged in God realization or in recording his spiritual experience. The rest is spent in sleep and in taking his meals. There are days when he does not reserve even these small hours for that purpose. His asceticism is wonderful. He has abstained entirely from rich meal. He dresses himself in rag’s and carries out the Master’s instructions to the letter.”¹

If we read the Sanskrit works of Raghunātha, we will find what a fount of joy was in him, inspite of the rigour of his life. If he left home; it was to extend his home, to make the

narrow broad, for his home is not now the palace of Saptagrāma but the hearts of thousands of admirers. If he denied himself the pleasures of life, it was to taste higher joys. In the pages of Indian history he, with Rūpa, Sanātana and another great Vaiṣṇava, whose life will be narrated hereafter, shows the continuity of the line of princely ascetics from the time of the Buddha. It is the same story repeated in the pages of the religious history of our country, of men placed in positions of power and wealth surrendering all, for higher pursuits. We find a parallel of the great asceticism practised by Raghunātha in some of the Catholic saints of Europe, chiefly in the life of St. Catherine of Siena (born 1347 A.D.) of whom it is said :

“ At her 12th year she wholly abandoned the use of animal food. At 15 she left off wine. At 23 she gave up bread living only on uncooked vegetables. She used to sleep but one quarter of an hour in the four and twenty. She lived 3 years without speaking...And finally remained wholly without food for many years.”¹

God-realization has not been a matter of speculative discussion in India. Throughout this vast Peninsula the belief is deep-rooted among all classes of people that the human

¹ Quoted by the Encyclopædia Britannica (Ninth edition, Vol V, p. 230) from Father Raimond's life of St. Catherine.

soul can, under a course of training and in some cases by virtue of heredity or accumulated *karma* of past lives, reach the stage in which God may be realised in spirit. One who has attained this blessed condition is like living joy—untouched by the sorrows and worries of the world, having only compassion for those of others. Tailaṅga Svāmī and Bhāṣkarānanda of Benares, Loknātha Brahmachārī of Dacca, and Paramhansa Rāmkr̥ṣṇa of Dakṣiṇeṣvara have, in our own times, evinced in their wonderful lives the attainment of the highest mystic vision. The beauty of their lives and visions permeates the whole atmosphere of India as do the scent of the Sephāli flower make fragrant the air of an autumnal day. The rational view which often sneers at them will be nowhere with us, when life presented before our eyes unfold the beauty of spiritual vision in such a prominent manner. In no case will an Indian be prepared to give up his faith in the Sādhu and his god-realization, in Raghunātha Dāsa and men of his type.

Raghunātha's works. Raghunātha wrote among others the following works in Sanskrit :—

1. Vilāpa Kusumañjalī.
2. Prema Paravidha Stotra.
3. Rādhāṣṭaka.
4. Premāmbhujamaraudakhya Stotra.
5. Swashankalpaprakāṣa Staba.

6. Nāmāṣṭaka.
7. Utkanthadaçaka.
8. Abhiṣṭa Prarthanāṣṭaka.
9. " Abhiṣṭasūchanā.
10. Çachīnandana Çataka.
11. Çrīgaurāṅgāṣṭavaka Kalpabrikṣa.
12. Nāma Çikṣā.
13. Prārthanā.
14. Govarddhanāçrayadaçakam.
15. Govarddhānadaçakaprarthanādaçakam.

There are 13 more, making 29 in all.

Premāmbhujamaranandakhya Stabarāja by
 The subjects treated. Raghunātha Dāsa explains how
 the trances of a spiritual soul,
 perfect in its love for God, show themselves in
 their glowing poetical manifestation in the
 character of Rādhā. Her ornaments when she
 goes to meet Kṛṣṇa, are really the qualities of
 the soul in deep mystic love. She is represented
 as bathing in the sweet stream of humility ; next
 in that of child-like simplicity and then in that
 of divine grace which lends beauty to her person.
 She clothes herself with the blue coloured Sādī
 of her coyness and resignation ; next wears the
 outer pink robe of her first love, she covers her
 breast with the bodice of her false anger ; the
 love of her companions for her is the perfume
 that surrounds her person ; the subtleness of
 her ways to gain the heart of the beloved is the
 collyrium with which she paints her eyes. Pure

thought from which all earthly attachments have been wiped away is the fount of her joy; the memories of her romantic play with Kṛṣṇa are personified in her maids, and the fortune of her union with Kṛṣṇa is the red sign on her forehead, and so forth.¹

The spiritualization of the sensual forms makes the great mystic attraction of the Vaiṣṇava literature. Rādhā, as described by the Vaiṣṇava poets, possesses all the sweetness of a lovely mortal, but she is more. True we find her sometimes in a sensual garb but she is always set forth from a highly spiritual back ground—an exalted extra-sensual plane. Chaitanya's love for God, which could not be expressed well without being represented in a material form, latterly came to be emphatically symbolised in the picture of Rādhā drawn by contemporary poets and those who wrote shortly after. His life is the perspective which gives us a closer survey of Vaiṣṇava poetry showing in many of the glowing and inspired lines the transition of emotions from sensual to spiritual. This poetry flows, as it were, through the familiar scenes of human passions into the great sea of mystic love, till we meet what the eye cannot command—the endless and the illimitable. Raghunātha did not write from mere imagination. Before his eyes, the

¹ This allegorical meaning is fully explained in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Karmānda and other works.

Master's great love for God manifested itself in a hundred romantic ways, compared with which Dante's love for Beatrice is mere child's play. Chaitanya was in one of those oceans of joy and sorrow, in the small rivers of which every man and woman struggles more or less for a time in their youth. The life of the Master was a grand epic poem of sweet emotions of which many of us have sung short lyrics in our youth, and which constantly supply the poet's pen with colour and imagery in his romantic works. Raghunātha not only read the great poetry in the Master's life unfolded before his eyes, but himself tasted it by life-long devotion and faith. It is on this account that he gives a mystic explanation of Rādhā's adornments. At every stage he is reminded of what really "adorns the soul, not the outward ornaments but the inner ones, what constitutes the chief beauty, not the external form but the qualities of the soul. Rādhā in the Vaiṣṇava poetry represents this heaven of love's ideal.

Raghunātha wrote many poetical pieces in Bengali, some of which will be found in the Pada-kalpataru.

XIX.—Further notes on Chaitanya.

Let us now analyse what it was that made Chaitanya the centre of universal admiration in our country. Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha Dāsa

The unique charm of Chaitanya's life.

had passed through great hardships and sacrifices for their love of him and so did Hari Dāsa, the Mahomedan convert. What difference is there between their lives and his? Chaitanya did not practise austerities as Raghunātha did. He had no princely fortune to give up for spiritual pursuits, like the first named three amongst his followers. As a Sannyāsī he was not very strict; for he was often taken to task by Dāmodara Paṇḍit for violating the rules of his Order, and he frankly told Raghunātha that he did not know the details of Vaiṣṇava theology as Svarūpa did. He was no organiser of the Vaiṣṇava community as Nityānanda was. And as a result of it, the descendants of his uncles now living in Sylhet do not enjoy that high position in society which those of Nityānanda, Advaita and even of lesser Vaiṣṇava worthies do at the present time. He was no doubt a great scholar. But scholarship, however lofty, does not make any lasting impression in this country. He wrote no books as his followers did. Why is it then that he is revered as a god by his countrymen and is held in a much higher estimation than others whose great sacrifices in the cause of religion deservedly command the respect and admiration of all.

Other lives, great as some of them no doubt are, represent more or less the struggle of the spiritual soul for the attainment of its final

goal, whereas Chaitanya's life shows not the worry and strife in pursuit of perfection but at once its full blown beauty,—its bloom and fragrance. The plant has many worrying experiences and inward struggles before it brings forth the concentrated treasure of its beauty and fragrance in the flower. Those lives show the struggle and worry, but not so much the beauty of mystic vision as Chaitanya's does. The scholars, poets and ascetics gathered round him as the bees gather round the flower; for in him they found a store of that joy which has been figuratively called 'heaven' by all religions.

Wherever he happened to be, the young and old followed—mad after him, as he after his God. "Many gathered the sacred dust trodden by his feet in such quantities that the track of his passage could be followed out over a large stretch of country." Just as the rose in its full bloom attracts the eye, the little thorns of the stalk with which nature protects it, lying almost hidden from our sight, the asceticism practised by Chaitanya which helped to develop his realization of God in the like manner does not strike us so forcibly as is the case in the lives of Raghunātha, Rūpa, Sanātana and Haridāsa. Yet did he practise austerities to keep the flame of his faith burning, though not always in the way required by the scriptures. Jagadānanda, a young scholar, always tried to minister to his personal comforts.

He insisted upon the Master's partaking of something, in however small quantity, of the good food presented to him by his admirers. And when Chaitanya would not, in spite of his importunities, do so, Jagadānanda, deeply agrieved would fast for the whole day. One day Jagadānanda offered him a pillow ; for the

Chaitanya and Jagadānanda. Master used to sleep on the bare floor of the temple without one.

Chaitanya was angry. He said "Look here, this lad wants me to enjoy worldly comforts ! why not bring a costly couch for me ?" One of the *bhaktas* of Eastern Bengal presented Chaitanya with a jar full of scented oil ; and Jagadānanda's earnest wish was that the Master would use a little of it at the time of bathing, and with this object he approached him. Chaitanya said "Send this jar to the temple of Jagannātha. There the lights will burn with this oil." The Paṇḍit said not a word that day, though he was deeply sorry. The next day at the time when the Master took his bath, Jagadānanda brought before him some oil from the jar. Chaitanya said "I told you, Paṇḍit, that I would use none of this. Send the jar to the temple of Jagannātha." And Jagadānanda was very angry ; he carried the jar to the courtyard and broke it to pieces and its perfumed contents flowed on the ground. Not content with this, he went to his room and fasted three days.

So that Chaitanya had to go to him and soothe his temper with sweet words. We have seen on p. 42 that Jagadānanda did not at all like the Master to embrace Sanātana when he was afflicted with eczema and advised the latter to leave Purī and go to Vṛndāvana. Chaitanya was very angry with him for this. One of the chief reasons which made him leave Purī for two years, and go to the Deccan is here described in his own words :

“Jagadānanda is determined that I should taste worldly pleasures. Whatever he wants me to do I do for fear, lest he take offence. If I do not do as he wishes, for three days he would not speak to me. Mukunda is sorry at heart because in the winter I bathe three times a day and sleep on the bare earth. It is not the habit of Mukunda to speak out his sorrow but I feel that he is deeply aggrieved. This pains me the more. I am a Sannyāsī, the ascetic Dāmodara always keeps his strict watch over me, warning me at every little violation of the rules of our Holy Order. I do not know how to behave as he wishes me to do. I have so often to suppress my personal impulses for fear of him. He cares only for religion and does not mind what people think. I do not wish to give pain to people. For all these reasons I want to be alone and free for some time. I shall travel visiting

the shrines of India and you, dear friends, must remain here at Purī.”¹

The importunate entreaties of Nityānanda and other friends who wanted to accompany him, did not shake his determination of travelling alone.

The world often tried to seduce him by praise and worldly fame. But as often did he shake off these from him as a traveller does the drops of rain from his cloak. We find that at the report of his intended visit to Vṛndāvana, Pradyumna Miçra (*alias* Nṛsinhānanda) placed his whole property at the service of Chaitanya for beautifying and improving the roads. The road from Kuliā to Kānairnatçālā, extending over a distance of

The world vainly tried to win him to glory.

জগদানন্দ চাহে আমার বিষয় ভুঞ্জাইতে ।
 যেই কহে সেই ভয়ে চাহিয়ে করিতে ॥
 কভু যদি ইহার বাক্য করিয়ে অন্তথা ।
 ক্রোধে তিন দিন মোরে নাহি কহে কথা ॥
 মুকুন্দ হরেন দুঃখী দেখি সন্ন্যাস ধর্ম ।
 তিন বার শীতে স্নান ভূমিতে শয়ন ॥
 অন্তরে দুঃখী মুকুন্দ নাহি কহে মুখে
 ইহার দুঃখ দেখি মোরে দ্বিগুণ হয়ে দুঃখে ॥
 আমিত সন্ন্যাসী দামোদর ব্রহ্মচারী ।
 সদা রহে আমার উপর শিলা দণ্ড ধরি ॥
 ইহার ভাগে আমি নাজানি ব্যবহার ।
 ইহারে না ভয় স্বতন্ত্র চরিত্র আমার ॥
 লোকাপেক্ষা নাহি ইহার কৃষ্ণ কৃপা হৈতে ।
 আমি কভু লোকাপেক্ষা না পারি ছাড়িতে
 অতএব তুমি সব রহ নীলাচলে ।
 দিনকত তীর্থ আমি ভ্রমিব একলে ॥

two hundred miles, was adorned with beautiful stones and metallic decorations, and at proper intervals tanks were dug for the pilgrims who would journey to the holy city in Chaitanya's company. Luxurious plants were made to grow on both sides of the road many months before, so that Chaitanya when he travelled found sweet and fragrant Bakul flowers on all sides. Each day the road was filled with soft petals so that nothing hard might give pain to Chaitanya who walked barefoot. Not this only, Rājā Pratāpa Rudra ordered that a pillar should be raised where Chaitanya halted every day to commemorate the journey. Each ghāt where he would bathe, should be made a shrine. Thousands of people accompanied him. But he, when he saw all this fuss, quietly returned, giving up all idea of going to Vṛndāvana that time. And when after a year or so he went privately, the popular song thus describes him :

“Look, how Chaitanya goes to Vṛndāvana, a torn rag at his back, his head shaven and a begging bowl in his hand.”¹

The people of Nadiyā when they saw the ascetic Chaitanya at Purī naturally felt a great sorrow ; for “he had no longer his beautiful stuff of curling hair which had adorned his head. It was shaven. He was reduced to skeleton.

“গৌর চৰ্ম ব্রজ নগরে, ছেঁড়া কাঁথা মুড়ামাথা করক লইয়া করে।”

He had a strip of cloth to cover his loins and a rag for his outer mantle. His body was covered with dust. He looked like a mad man only his tears bespoke the joy of love."

In the Deccan children threw dust at him saying "Look, there goes the
 "Mad after God." Sannyāsī mad after God." And he often turned round to speak of God and then an immense crowd gathered round him : old and young men, children and women, lay transfixed to the spot, charmed by every word that fell from his lips.

It is said that he was a Vaiṣṇava. So far as the fact goes that he interpreted the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult, and was the disciple of a Vaiṣṇava Guru, it may be true ; but his faith had a universal character ; it was a religious philosophy which appeals to reason and can be accepted by all people. Though repeatedly saying that the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult had an emblematic significance, expressing the highest form of love for God, he did not give up his faith in the shrines associated with the Kṛṣṇa legends. This was what he said addressing Jagannātha at Purī :

"Here am I, and here art thou, oh Kṛṣṇa, and the joy of our union is ever new here as of old, yet my mind yearns for an union with thee in Vṛndāvana." This utterance relating to Chaitanya's predilection for the holy city, should

not be given an exaggerated importance. The temples of Durgā, Çiva, and Ganeça and in fact all other shrines that he visited invoked in him spiritual emotions of the same nature. Every temple was sacred to him, as he believed his God to dwell there—nay more, every forest expressed to him the message of Vṛndāvana, every river, the sacredness of the Yamunā. In the sea he saw his Kṛṣṇa smiling and beckoning him, and he jumped into it with arms outstretched to embrace his God; a fisherman saved his life. A young child once stood before him whose lovely colour reminded him of his dark-blue god, and he fell into a trance.¹ Once when a meal was placed before him, he was attracted by the sweet-smelling rice and asked by what name it was called. They said it is called the meal of Kṛṣṇa. Hearing this Chaitanya betrayed sudden emotions and weeping with joy had his trance again. Often he recited verses and songs with tears of joy, as he madly ran to embrace his god mirrored in the sky. He found Him in the trees, and Govinda Dāsa mentions that at Chandīpur in the Deccan he remained leaning on a Tamāla tree as on a lover, unconscious for the whole day, and when restored to his senses he spoke of the great joy of union with God in half-broken words choked by emotion. Sometimes he would quote verses from

¹ Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Ch. XXII:

the Bhāgavata and other books or sing songs of Chāṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati and Jaydeva for the whole night, with interpretations, which as the audience heard, they thought that they heard a god speak of God. They worshipped the speaker with tears of love and joy.

He laid axe at the very root of the caste-system, though like some aromatic plants it has the power in India to revive and multiply where it is cut, and is not a thing to be easily destroyed. Chaitanya expressed himself freely and in "plain language.

A breaker of the caste-system.

“ Even if a Muchi (a cobbler) is devoted to God, a thousand times do I bow to him.”¹

“ If a man eats from the plate of a Dom (hated by all) he becomes pre-eminently entitled to god’s grace by that act of mercy.”²

At Nadiyā before his Sannyās he often carried the baskets of people to their homes, and sometimes bore their clothes to the bathing Ghāṭ and did other menial acts which as a Brāhmaṇ he should not have done. When the people whom he thus served forbade him to do so, he said

¹ “মুচি যদি ভক্তিভরে ডাকে কুঞ্চনে
কোটি নমস্কার মোর তাহার চরণে।”

Kaṇchā by Govinda Dāsa.

² “প্রভু কহে যে জন ডোমের অন্ন খায়।
হরিভক্তি হরি সেই পায় সর্বথায় ॥”

Kaṇchā by Govinda Dāsa.

“Don't object good friends ! These little acts make my vision of God clearer to me.”¹

He was strict in dealing with those ascetics in whom he discovered the least tendency to worldliness. An ascetic should have an unspotted character and be above blame. He could tolerate no breach of conduct in

His strictness in dealing with the Sannyāsis of his Order.

those who had adopted the Sannyāsi's vow. Chaitanya, however, did not deal with all in the same manner ; he had studied the weaknesses and strength of those who were near him in a discriminating manner. Rāma Rāy used to be often in the company of women, but Chaitanya knew that they sang holy songs to him giving fervour to his faith. His character stood on the firm rock of unflinching devotion to God. But in the case of Haridāsa, the younger, Chaitanya's treatment was hard, for he knew the man to be weak though he had taken the ascetic's vows. The little incident leading to his tragic fate related in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta is full of pathos.

The story of the Haridāsa, the younger.

Haridāsa was a handsome young man with a musical voice. One day when Chaitanya took his meal, he found the rice to be of a superior quality and asked Gopinātha Āchārya where the rice came from. Gopinātha said ‘one of us got it from Mādhavī’. Mādhavī was an accomplished woman noted for her many excellent qualities.

¹ Chaitanya Bhāgavata Adī Līlā.

She used to transcribe documents for use in the Jagannātha temple. Chaitanya said again ‘who is it that went to her to get this rice?’ He was informed in reply that it was Haridāsa who did so. Chaitanya praised the quality of the rice and was silent for a time. After taking his meal, however, he said ‘I should not like Haridāsa to come near me.’ The friends of Chaitanya did not understand why he was so hard upon the young Sannyāsi. Haridāsa fasted three days in grief over this punishment, and yet the Master did not relent; and then when one near him pleaded in behalf of Haridāsa, Chaitanya said “A young Sannyāsi pays attention to a woman. This is what I can never endure. These men whose passions have not yet been controlled feign asceticism and seek women.” Saying so he entered his room and they did not dare speak to him more on the point that day. The next day they again interceded in his behalf, pleading that the fault was a small one. Chaitanya said ‘You know that I always follow the dictates of my heart. The company of a false ascetic I avoid. The desires of the flesh are hard even for a Rishi to conquer. How careful should a Sannyāsi be whose vows is one of total abstinence! If you plead for him again, you will not see me here.’ Then Parmānanda Puri, the saint and scholar whom Chaitanya revered, called

Chaitanya sternly rejects all requests in behalf of Haridāsa.

on him and spoke for the young man. Chaitanya said :

‘ You are the leader of Sannyāsis and may do as you like. Gather them all in this temple to teach them manners. But permit me, Sir, to go to Alālnath. I shall start to-day for that place.’

Saying so he asked Govinda, his attendant, to make himself ready for the journey. Paramānanda Puri apologised for his request and dissuaded him from leaving the place.

Poor Haridāsa was advised by his friends to take his meal as usual; for they said ‘ Your fasts would only offend the Master the more ’ and the young Sannyāsi tasted his meal for the first time after three days at their request. He however stayed at Purī for one year after this time, and saw from a distance the trances of Chaitanya and his lily-like face bedewed with tears of spiritual joy. But to the blessed circle of the Master’s constant associates, Haridāsa had no access. His grief became unsupportable and he went away to Trivenī and drowned himself. The following story of a marvellous nature is related at this stage of the account, in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

One night Chaitanya accompanied by Jagadānanda, Swarupa, Govinda, Kaçīçwara, Çankara, and Dāmodara visited the sea-coast. From the distance a strange melody came bursting into the

air suddenly, a song from an unseen source, trembling with pathos, full of sweet appeals for mercy. They all heard, and Chaitanya said 'Don't you know it is young Haridāsa. His spirit is there. He committed suicide and has been reduced to this condition, but a truly penitent soul will have mercy.'

The strange melody from the sea.

None knew then that Haridāsa had drowned himself. After a year Çivānanda Sen, Çrivasa and other Bengalis came to Purī from Nadiyā, and when the residents of Purī asked if Haridāsa had gone to Nadiyā a year ago, Çrivāsa said "No friends, he went to Allahabad and there committed suicide by drowning himself in the Trevenī." The story filled all of them with astonishment.

The drowning.

This shows how strictly he treated the ascetics of his Order. Another instance is related of Govinda Ghoṣa of Agradwipa. After his meal Chaitanya was one day served with portion of Haritaki fruit by Govinda Ghoṣa. The Master asked him as to where he had got the Haritaki from. Govinda replied that it was the remnant of the day before. Chaitanya said 'Then you

His treatment of Govinda Ghoṣa.

store things for the morrow, even, as worldly men do. You are not fit for this Order. Go home and live as a man of the world.' He obliged him to go back to his home at Agradwip. One may think that the

little breaches of conduct should not have been treated so hard. But Chaitanya, who knew his fellow ascetics better than others, often discovered in their small faults, great moral or spiritual defects which unfitted them for the Holy Order. His treatment of the householders and even of robbers and thieves, however, is characterised by that mercy which can alone win them to spiritual life.

What is it that Chaitanya saw in his trances? The late Swami Vivekānanda had asked Paramahansa Rāmakṛṣṇa if he had seen God, about whom so much was said. The latter replied :

‘Yes, I have seen God as vividly as I see you or the wall before me.’ The emphatic way in which he spoke this impressed the scholar who had never before heard anybody say that he had seen God, and that with so much force. The young scholar, so proud of his modern learning, questioned the prophet minutely, and he himself eventually became a disciple of Rāmakṛṣṇa.

Visions such as Chaitanya saw were beheld by many of his followers. We will deal in a future course of lectures with the life of Çrinivasa, towards the latter part of the 16th century, in which the visions were seen frequently, and were sometimes of long duration, making him lose all consciousness of the physical world. In Chaitanya we find the trances not only in their most attractive form, but we

also come in contact with a stoic strength of character, a great learning and a power to impart his feelings and ecstasies to others in a way which is perhaps unprecedented in the annals of mysticism. In other lives the glow of vision drew only the kindred souls to an admiration for it; in Chaitanya its fascination was so powerful, its effect so far-reaching, that every one who beheld him while in his trances, felt an overwhelming force which turned the very tide of his life. The cool-headed materialistic felt its charm no less than the poet and the dreamer. Even the Mahomedans were sometimes inspired by his ecstasies of love for Kṛṣṇa. The General Bijali Khan turned a Vaiṣṇava under their spell. Gorai Kazi, the Magistrate of Nadiyā, and the Mehomedan tailor at Çivasa's house turned his great admirers, not to speak of Haridāsa, the Mahomedan, whose life was dedicated to him. The conversation which Husan Saha had with Keçava Kṣetri quoted in Chaitanya Çharitāmṛta shows in what high admiration the Emperor held Chaitanya.

*XX.—A. Comparative study of Mysticism,
Occidental and Oriental.*

The mystic light, it will be proved by history, shone in the East and the West alike in the favoured medieval ages. For the purpose of showing the similarity of the experiences of

European and Asiatic mystics we shall briefly refer to the lives of some Catholic saints of the West. St. Catharine of Siena (born 1347 A. D.) used to see the image of Christ in the sky over the Dominican Church even when she was a girl of six. It is recorded that she used to commune with Christ, who taught her “by means of a clear bodily appearance,” with such fervour that she would “pass into the state of ecstasy,” and remain unconscious of the external world for hours together.¹

The stages of orison as described by St. Teresa (born 1515 A. D.) in her ‘el Castillo’ show a remarkable parallel with the progressive steps of the Vaiṣṇava faith. A further exposition of the Vaiṣṇava tenets, as detailed in many of their works in Sanskrit and Vernacular, will make a comprehension of the situation easier. I have already referred to Dāsya a stage in which the spiritual soul considers itself as a servant of God, carrying out the behests of its Master. Vātsalya—the stage in which God manifests himself as a child. Humanity represents the Divine child, and the soul offers its paternal care and services to it. Sakhya where God is our friend and playmate. We play with others in a spirit of concord and of harmony, realising that He is the

¹ Father Raimond's life of St. Catharine.

Main Player, inspiring and guiding our play. The spiritual soul feels itself secure and happy because it sees the Main Player near it—the source of hope, of love and perennial joy to the players; Mādhurya the stage of love in which the spiritual soul passes into visions of beauty and into trances, where it yearns for union with the Lover. He is the Bridegroom, and the soul of Man His devoted bride. This bride is Rādhā of the Vaiṣṇava Literature. The soul of man is bound by a thousand ties to the world, but it frees itself from these and longs for the Bridegroom only. The Lover dwells in the sacred Vrindā groves where nothing but the sound of his sweet flute is heard. Rādhā the soul, mad after Him, seeks Him and meets Him everywhere. From the blue of the sky, from the river and sea He beckons the human soul to meet Him. When the vision, by long prayers and devotion, by the virtues acquired in this life or in the previous ones, becomes clear to the spiritual soul, it realises God as vividly as we do material objects. This woman's ardour of the soul has been the characteristic of spiritual longings in Europe, and Asia alike. This is represented in the conception of Rādhā in the Vaiṣṇava Literature. Mrs. Under Hill says "Those for whom mysticism is above all things, an intimate and personal relation—the satisfaction of deep

desire—will fall back upon imagery drawn largely from the language of earthly passion.”¹ It is for this reason that God is some times called the Bridegroom and the human soul the bride in Biblical literature. Newman says “If thy soul is to go on into higher spiritual blessedness, it must become a *woman* ; yes, however mainly thou may be among men”.

St. Bernârd (1091-1153 A.D.) writes “When I love God with my will, I transform myself into Him, for this is the power of virtue of love that it maketh thee to be like into that which thou lovest.”²

St. Teresa's (born 1515 A.D.) visions were so fervent, that at times she fancied herself to be one with Christ. This stage is beautifully expressed in the 10th Skanda of Çrimadvāgavata where the Gopī forgets herself and “thinks herself to be Kṛṣṇa herself.” In the Gitā Govinda, Jayadeva (1168-1200 A. D.) has a beautiful line

“মুহুরবলোকতি মগুন লীলা, মধুরিপুরহমিতি ভাবনশীলা”

“I am Kṛṣṇa thought Rādhā in her trance” which was imitated, in the famous stanza of Vidyāpati (14th century)

“অনুখন মাধব মাধব সোঙরিতে স্নন্দরী ভেল মাধাই”

¹ Under Hill's mysticism, p. 153.

² Soliloquies of St. Bonaventura ex I, quoted by Under Hill p. 104.

“Constantly thinking of Kṛṣṇa, the beautiful one (Rādhā) became as Kṛṣṇa himself.” Chaitanya is said to have uttered in some of his trances the words ‘I am He’.¹ All these owe a kinship to the celebrated utterance of Christ himself. “I and my father are one.”

We have described the four stages of spiritual worship but there is one which we have omitted, and which precedes them all. It is the Çānta the stage in which all weed-like passions are removed, and the soul of man becomes fit to grow spiritual love in its fullest bloom. Çānta means quiet. This is a state for which our Rṣis strove, and which we find pre-eminently in the Buddha. Look at any stone image of the Buddha, what this quiet means will be realised at the sight of it. The Mongolian sculptor has given him flat lips and eyes. The Magadha has given a sharp Aryan cut to his face. The Gandhāra art has given fit proportions to his body. But in the great gallery of the Buddhistic images, whether the stone is so roughly hewn as to give it but the crudest likeness of a human-figure, or cut with the finest strokes of the chisel, giving it the most realistic perfection, the quiet of the soul, indicated in the face, is the prominent feature of all the statues of the Buddha, whether he is represented

“মুখিঃ সেই মুখিঃ সেই কহি কহি হাসে।”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

in his standing or sitting posture. The four other stages are not possible unless this stage of quiet has been attained. For if the soul is to mirror the beauty of the spiritual world, all evil passions must be removed by a perfect moral life, by abstinence, fast and prayer.

St. Teresa thus classifies the stages of worship in "El. Castills Interior."

1 Recollection, 2 Quiet, 3 Union, 4 Ecstasy, 5 Rapt, 6 The pain of God, 7 The Spiritual marriage.

In all the later Vaiṣṇava poems, the stages of Rādhā's love, which are but a reproduction of the ecstasies, experienced by Chaitanya, are thus classified. Purva Rāga—the dawn of love ; Milana—union and ecstasy ; Sambhoga Milana—Rapt ; Viraha—(Mathura)—the pain of God, and Bhāvasammilana or the Spiritual marriage.

These are some of the main divisions ; but the Vaiṣṇava poets have introduced a hundred niceties and the heads under which the emotions have been grouped are altogether 360. In some of the standard Vaiṣṇava works we find these emotions fully defined and treated in a scientific manner, particularly in the Sanskrit work of Rūpa called the Ujjala Nīlamanī, which gives copious illustrations from standard love-poems. This was subsequently summarised in Bengali by Narahari Chakravarti in his Bhaktiratnākara. One may be naturally struck by the wonderful

coincidence which the main classifications of the Vaiṣṇavas bear to those made by St. Teresa. It shows that similar ideas and experiences of the spiritual world have taken place throughout the Globe irrespective of creed or colour. The Mahomedans have amongst them their Sufi poets and mystics, such as Jelaluddin (1207-1273 A.D.), Hafiz (1300-1388 A.D.) and Jami (1414-1493 A.D.), who have expressed the ideas which are closely similar to those to be found in the Songs of Songs and in the lyrical poems of the Vaiṣṇavas. Many of the Catholic Saints of the middle ages saw visions of Christ and experienced mystic trances of this nature.. There are even sects among the Protestants, such as the Quakers (founded by George Fox 1624-1691 A.D.) whose faith is characterised by physical manifestations of joy similar to those to found every where amongst the Vaiṣṇava of Bengal. They have declared this before the world in an emphatic way, that "those who did not quake and tremble are strangers to the experiences of Moses, David and the Saints."¹ They wanted to realize "Christ within". Contrary to the Puritan teaching of the time, they insisted on the possibility in their lives of complete victory over sin. Those who attain such a stage among the Hindus and Buddhists are known as the

¹ Fox's Journal (1650). Barclay's Apology Prop II Q 8.

Siddhyas. An authoritative writer thus comments on the European mystics of the middle ages: "The new idea of obedience was not obedience to ecclesiastical superiors, but the subordination of the lower part of man's nature to the higher, and of the whole to God. This 'renunciation' cut off from practical sympathy with the visible church, feeding itself on a vague idea of union with Christ, might easily have fallen a prey to Buddhist notions floating in the atmosphere."¹ The Mahāyānists among the Buddhists had already spread the mystic ideas in the far East. That they may even have reached Europe is indicated by the above passage. They believed not only in the Buddha and in the innumerable gods and goddesses, most of whom are worshipped by the Hindus, but also in the emancipated Man—the Siddha, whom the Christians call mystic and the Jains, 'Tirthankara'. If the experiences of these people are to be credited, we may take it that the soul like a mirror reflects certain spiritual phenomena not known to ordinary men, when it is purged of all dross of material passion. From the time of Philo, the mystical Alexandrian Jew (B.C. 20 to A.D. 40), Europe had heard of this mysticism, and at one time there were many whose inner eyes had actually beheld the glorious visions. The West however could never

¹See Encyclopaedia Britanica Vol. XIV, p. 23. (9th edition).

absolutely dissociate herself from the idea of nationality, which narrows the range of humanity, leading to conflicts of interest, nor free herself from political ideals based on a desire for acquisition of power. She has not therefore been able to develop introspection and other qualities of the soul in a sustained manner. This has reduced her mystics to a sect isolated from the church and beyond general appreciation, whereas in Asia and particularly in India, the mystics rank, among the highest in popular estimation. Elaborate works and treatises, have been written here describing the ways by which one may attain the stage of spiritual perfection. These works are treated in a scientific manner, though for the purpose of practice the help of a Guru is required.

The stages of worship or orision have already been mentioned. All of these we find in a pre-eminent degree in the life of Chaitanya. He realised the presence of God in his soul with that ardour of romantic love by which the inward vision is supplemented and fed by a symbolical significance given to external phenomena. One of the stages of orision given in "El Castillo"

The pain of God. is called 'The pain of God.' It is the pain of separation from God. The mystics often call it 'The dark night of the soul.' Says Mr. Underhill :—

“In some temperaments, it is the emotional aspect—the anguish of the lover who has suddenly lost the Beloved—which predominates.”¹

In St. Teresa the pain grew to such a degree that she cried aloud. It is said that Madame Guyon (1648-1717 A.D.) felt this loss of her intuitive apprehension of God as one of the most terrible characteristic of ‘the night.’ She writes ; “After thou hast wounded me so deeply as I have described, thou didst begin, oh my god, to withdraw thyself from me : and the pain of thy absence was the more bitter to me because thy presence was so sweet to me.”²

Suso, Rulman, Marswin, Taunber, Angelo of Foligno, Michtheld of Magdeburg and other mystics knew the sufferings of the loss of this God-vision.

In Chaitanya’s life ‘the night of the soul’ created a pathos which has found expression in a remarkable literature of lyrics known as the ‘Māthur’ lit. ‘going to Mathurā.’ It means the grief caused to the people of Vṛndāvana, chiefly the Gopis, by Kṛṣṇa’s deserting the place for ever and going to Mathurā, where a short time after he became the king. Kṛṣṇakamala Goswāmi, a Bengali poet in his Divyonmāda ‘The divine Frenzy—written about the year 1840, describes the Māthur in this way :

¹ Under Hill, p. 463.

² Under Hill, p. 465.

“When God vision is clear in a spiritual soul, it is expressed by the allegory of Kṛṣṇa’s coming to the Vṛndā groves, when the vision fails, it is indicated by that of his going to Mathurā.”¹

The loud lamentations, the nights of sleepless agony, the cryings aloud and the mad utterances of love lend the most pathetic interest to the literature of ‘Mathurā.’ “He (Chaitanya) saw the hill of Chatak (in Orissa) and mistook it for the hill Gobardhana (in Vṛndāvana) and ran after it, crying aloud.”² Sometimes he breathed heavily and leaning on Govinda, said with tears ‘Govinda, where is my God gone, pray tell me how may I have Him again?’³ Sometimes he cried ‘Oh my God, my father, where art thou gone? I cannot live without thee’⁴ saying this in deep agony of heart he wept and then passed into an unconscious state—into one of those trances which made it clear to all that he was united with Him. When he came to his senses again he appealed in a tender tone ‘He was here with me, oh where is He gone again, my grief is unsupportable,’

“ক্ষুৰ্ত্তিক্ৰুপে মূৰ্ত্তি যখন দেখেন নয়নে ।
তখন ভাবেন কৃষ্ণ এল বৃন্দাবনে ॥
অদৰ্শনে ভাবেন কৃষ্ণ গেছেন মধুপুরী ।”

The Divyonmāda

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda.

Kaṭchā by Govinda Dāsa.

Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

and then he sang songs from Chāṇḍīdāsa and Vidyāpati, from Jayadeva and Billamangala, and he commented them with his tears and sighs and passed again and again to his accustomed trance. "The periods of rapid oscilation between a joyous and a painful consciousness," says Mrs. Under Hill, "are called by the mystics 'the game of love in which god plays as it were 'hide and seek' with the questioning soul.'"

Chaitanya is adored in India for this love. His life not only inspired religious men but also supplied inspiration to those writers who have given poetical accounts of his emotions under the allegory of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Jnānadāsa, Govinda Dāsa, Valārama Dāsa, Raiṣekhara, Kṛṣṇa Kamala and other poets have, in their beautiful lyrics, shown the highest flights of emotional poetry that bears a deep symbolic meaning. The sighs and tears of Rādhā and her poetic ecstasies are but those of the poor Brāhmaṇ scholar who took his Sannyāsa at the age of 24 and wandered from door to door like a mad man, displaying the profoundest love for One not seen by us, but who is our only Beloved.

XXI. Chaitanya's Sannyāsa and love-ecstasies.

The Sannyāsa of Chaitanya which meant the total severance of his home-ties, in order to offer

himself to the service of humanity and of God, created great distress at Nadiyā, giving rise to an impassionate burst of poetic feeling which has created a literature of great beauty and tenderness. The sorrows of Çachī, his mother and of Viṣṇupriyā, his wife, are the sorrows of the whole of Bengal and Orissa to-day. As Chaitanya sought his God Kṛṣṇa and lamented his separation from him, nourishing the

The Māthura Songs. Māthura songs from a living fount of pathos in his own heart,—so to his innumerable worshippers at Nadiyā, separation from him caused the growth of similar songs which are now sung as the prelude to Māthura songs. In fact his life is constantly before those singers who sing of the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and it is indispensable that they should first sing the Gaura Chandrikā or songs of which some emotions of Chaitanya is the theme, before they are permitted to introduce similar songs relating to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love. These Gaura Chandrikās are in fact reminders to the audience that the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love should bear to them a spiritual meaning, that though sometimes presented in a sensual garb, it actually belongs to a super-sensuous plane. The great life of the Master was itself the most powerful symbol of this love and there could be but one meaning to this mystic literature of love.

I have already stated that Narahari Sarkār and Vāsudeva Ghosh are the two great writers of Gaura Chandrikās—^{Some of the Chaitanya Songs.} or songs describing Chaitanya's emotions. All other Vaiṣṇava poets of the 16th and 17th centuries have more or less written on this subject. Vāsudeva excelled all of them, and at the present day when a *kīrtana* is sung, it is invariably preluded by a Gaura Chandrikā by Vāsudeva or some other poet. The stories of Chaitanya's *sannyāsa* given by these poets are often very touching and give rise to tender pathos.

I shall attempt to translate some of these :

(1)¹

• Viṣṇupriyā like one insane runs from the landing Ghāṭ to where Çachī was.

Her hair is not braided after her bath, but she cares not for this.

১ পাগলিনী বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া ভিজা বস্ত্র চূলে ।
 ত্ররা করি বাড়ী আসি শাশুড়ীরে বলে ॥
 বলিতে না পারে কিছু কাঁদিয়া ফাঁফর ।
 শচী বলে মাগো এত কি লাগি কাতর ॥
 বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া বলে আর কি কব জননী ।
 চারিদিকে অমঙ্গল কাঁপিছে পরাণি ॥
 নাহিতে পড়িল জলে নাকের বেশর ।
 ভাঙ্গিবে কপাল মাথে পড়িবে বজর ॥
 থাকি থাকি প্রাণ কাঁদে নাচে ডানি অঁখি ।
 দক্ষিণে ভুজঙ্গ যেন রহি রহি দেখি ॥
 কাঁদি কহে বাহুঘোষ কি কহিব সতী ।
 আজি নবদ্বীপ ছাড়ি যাবে প্রাণপতি ॥

She attempts to ease her mind to Çachī but bursts into tears.

Çachī says “ what grief ails thee, Child ? ”

Whereat she—“ At the time of bathing, my nose-ornament fell into water, and inauspicious signs have I seen around, I cannot speak.

“It seems good luck will leave me to-day and thunder will fall on my head.”

Vāsudeva says : “ What shall I say to thee, o loyal wife ! to-day your dear husband will leave Nadiyā for good.”

(2)¹

Chaitanya leaves Nadiyā to-day.

No waves dance on the Ganges' breast.

The images of Çiva, Ganapati and other gods in the temples look strangely pale.

The new leaves do not open ; nor flowers bloom on the boughs.

Says Narahari “ The beauty of Nadiyā is gone, she cannot support her grief.”

¹ গোরাচাঁদ ছাড়ি যাবে নৈদা, ইথে তরঙ্গরহিত জাহ্নবীধারা ।
শস্ত্র ভগবতী গণপতি মূর্তি ছিল হইল মলিন পাৱা ॥
তরু লতা ফুল পল্লবিত নহে, না বিকাশে পুষ্প স্নগন্ধহীনা ।
তাহে না বৈসে না পিয়ে পুষ্পরস না গুঞ্জ ভমর ভমর দীনা ॥
পিককুল কলরব বিরহিত, না নাচে ময়ূর ময়ূরী সনে ।
সারি শুক নানা পাখী অঁাখিবুরে, নারে উড়িবারে ব্যাকুল বনে ॥
ধেনুগণ হাঙ্গারবে না ধাবয়ে, মৃগাদি পশু না ধরয়ে ধৃতি ।
ভণে নরহরি শোভা দূরে, দুঃখ সম্বরিতে নারে নদীয়া খিতি ॥

(3)¹

The people of Nadiyā sadly ask those Sādhus and ascetics who come from Orissa side.

“ Holy pilgrims, did you meet anywhere a Sannyāsī named Chaitanya. Young is he, and his colour bright like melted gold.

“ He repeats the name of Kṛṣṇa night and day and tears flow from both his eyes.

“ He sometimes smiles, and at other times weeps, and sometimes falls down on the bare earth in deep emotion.”

The Sādhus say in reply “Yea have we seen him. He lives near the seacoast.

• “ He is a God, who says he is man ?

“ Those who have seen his dance in ecstasy of love, his emotion and tears, hold him dear as life.

নীলাচল পুরে, গভায়ত করে, যত বৈরাগী সন্ন্যাসী ।
 তাহা সবাকারে কাঁদিয়া সুধায় যত নবদ্বীপবাসী ॥
 তোমরা কি এক সন্ন্যাসী দেখিয়াছ ।
 শ্রীকৃষ্ণচৈতন্য তাঁহার নাম, তারে কি ভেটিয়াছ ॥
 বয়সে নবীন, গলিত কাঞ্চন, জিনি তনুখানি গোরা ।
 হরেকৃষ্ণ নাম, বসয়ে সঘনে নয়নে গলয়ে ধরা ॥
 কখন হাসন, কখন রোদন, কখন আছাড় খায় ।
 পুলকের ছটা, শিমুলের কাঁটা, ঐছন সোনার গায় ॥
 তারা বলে আহা, দেখিয়াছি তাঁহা থাকেন সমুদ্রকূলে ।
 তেঁই জগন্নাথ আপন সাক্ষাত, তারে কে মানুষ বলে ॥
 যেরূপ যে গুণ, যে নাট কীর্তন, যে প্রেম-বিকার দেখি
 হেন লগ্ন মনে, তাহার চরণে, সদাই অন্তরে রাখি ॥
 গিয়া নীলাচল, ভাগ্যে সে ফলিল, দেখিশু চরণ তার ।
 প্রেমদাস গায়, সেই গোরারায়, প্রাণ ইহা সবাকার ॥

“It was good luck that we met him at Orissa.”

Says Premadāsa “Surely it is he, the dear one of the Nadiyā people”.

(4)¹

‘From Orissa comes Jagadānanda to Nadiyā with Chaitanya’s message to his mother.

‘From afar, does the scholar see the town, deserted as the Vṛndā groves were of old, and hesitates thinking ‘shall I find her living still?’

‘Stopping a moment he starts again and finds the people there merged in grief.

‘The shops are closed and people move about.

But none smiles in that vast city.

‘The women he saw weeping, seated here and there, each by herself,

‘and as he saw these, he entered the house of the adored one.

‘Çachī lay in a corner half-dead with grief,

কণ্ঠে রহিয়া চলিল উঠিয়া, পণ্ডিত জগদানন্দ ।

নদীয়া নগরে, দেখে ঘরে ঘরে, কাহার নাহিক স্পন্দ ॥

না মেলে পসার, না করে আহার, কারো মুখে নাহি হাসি ।

নগরে নাগরী, কাঁদয়ে গুমরি, থাকয়ে বিরলে বসি ॥

দেখিয়া নগর, ঠাকুরের ঘর, প্রবেশ করিল যাই ।

আধ মরু যেন, পড়ি আছে হেন, অচেতন শচী মাই ॥

‘and the wife poorly clad sat near her mother-in-law with down cast eyes from which large drops of tears fell.

‘The trusted servant Īcāna in silent grief served them but often did he wipe away the rising tears with his hand.

‘The attendant maids sat silently, and as the scholar entered they asked him,

‘“Pray sir, tell us, whence hast thou come?”’

‘Whereat he “I come from Orissa, Chaitanya has sent me from there to look after you.”’

‘And one of them as she heard it, wept for joy and bore the message to Çachī.

‘And another ran at once to Çrīvāsa’s place with the glad news.

‘And when Mālinī and Çrīvāsa heard it, they felt as restored to life.

‘And the whole city came with them trembling with joy to Çachī’s house.

প্রভুর রমণী, সেই অনাথিনী, প্রভুরে হইয়া হারা ।

পড়িয়া আছেন, মলিন বসনে, মুদিত নয়নে ধারা ॥

বিশ্বাসী প্রধান, কিঙ্কর ঈশান, নয়নে শোকাশ্রু করে ।

তবু রক্ষা করে, শাণ্ডী বধুরে, সর্বদা শুশ্রূষা করে ॥

দাস দাসী সব, আছয়ে নীরব, দেখিয়া পথিক জন ।

সুধাইছে তারে, কহগো সবারে, কোথা হৈতে আগমন ॥

পণ্ডিত কহেন, মোর আগমন নীলাচল পুরী হৈতে ।

গৌরান্দ্র সুন্দর, পাঠাইলা মোরে, তোমা সবারে দেখিতে ॥

শুনিয়া বচন, সজল নয়ন, শচীরে কহিল গিয়া ।

আর একজন, চলিল তখন, ত্রীবাস মন্দিরে ধাঞা ॥

‘They waited at the gate but Mālinī went and held Çachī and Viṣṇupriyā by the hand and raised them from the stupor of grief.

‘She said “Look there your son has sent a friend to make enquiries.”’

‘Hearing this surprised Çachī looks up and sees our scholar standing at the gate.

‘And seeing him she said “Oh tell me, how far has my son come on his way towards home?”’

‘The Paṇḍit wept to see her grief and related little incidents of Chaitanya staying there in Çachī’s house and giving solace to all.

‘Chandraçekhara, the poet, is hard-hearted as a beast, ministering to his lower self ;

‘and cares not for the heavenly nectar that the story of Chaitanya brings’.

শুনিয়া উল্লাস, মালিনী শ্রীবাস, যত নবদ্বীপ বাসী।
 মরা হেন ছিল, অমনি ধাইল, পরাণ পাইল আসি।
 মালিনী আসিয়া, শচী বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া, উঠাইল তরা করি।
 বলে চাহি দেখ, পাঠাইল লোক, তত্ব লৈতে গৌরহরি ॥
 শুনি শচী মাই, সচকিত চাই, দেখিলেন পণ্ডিতেরে।
 কহে তার ঠাই, আমার নিমাই, আসিয়াছে কত দূরে ॥
 দেখি প্রেমসীমা, স্নেহের মহিমা, কান্দিয়া পণ্ডিত কয়।
 সেই গৌরমণি, যুগে যুগে জানি, তুয়া প্রেম বশ হয় ॥
 গৌরাঙ্গ চরিত, হেন নীতরীত, সবাকারে শুনাইয়া।
 পণ্ডিত রহিলা নদীয়া নগরে, সবাকার স্মৃতি দিয়া।
 এ চন্দ্রশেখর, পশুর সোসর, বিষয়ে সতত শ্রীত।
 গৌরাঙ্গ চরিত, পরম অমৃত, তাহে না লয় চিত ॥

(5)

Oh, why does he hold the staff, and wears the ochre-colored garb of an ascetic ?

Oh, why has he shaven his head ?

Why is it that he weeps and says ' Rādhā,' ' Rādhā.'

The loud lamentings of Çrīvāsa, it seems, would melt the very stone and Gadādhara cannot bear life,

Mukunda's two eyes float in tears.

And Haridāsa goes from door to door solacing those who are in grief.

The youthful wife is like a flame in the house.

Oh, why has he left her, for what fault ?

Vāsu Ghōṣa says ' It breaks my heart day and night to recollect it.'

(6)¹

Chaitanya, our beloved has left Nadiyā.

His friends are overwhelmed with grief,

Advaita, Çrīvāsa, Gadādhara, Vāsudeva and

¹ নদীয়া ছাড়িয়া গেল গৌরাঙ্গ সুন্দরে ।
ডুবেল ভক্ত সব শোকের সাগরে ॥
কাঁদিছে অদ্বৈতাচার্য্য শ্রীবাস গদাধর ।
বাসুদেব দত্ত কাঁদে মুরারি বক্রেশ্বর ॥
বাসুদেব নরহরি কাঁদে উভরায় ।
শ্রীরঘুনন্দন কাঁদি ধুলায় লুটায় ॥
কাঁদিছেন হারিদাস দুঃখাঁধি মুদিয়া ।
কাঁদে নিত্যানন্দ শচীর মুখ নিরখিয়া ॥
সুখময় কাঁঠন করিত নদীয়ায় ।
সোঁড়রি সে সব বাসুর হিয়া কাঁটে যায় ॥

Bakreçvara silently weep but Vāsudatta and Narahari cry aloud,

Raghunandana sits on the dusty ground bowed in sorrow,

Haridāsa's eyes are closed but a tear silently trickles down his cheek.

And Nityānanda cannot control himself as he sees the poor mother in the agony of grief.

The happy nights of *kīrtana* songs are over, and Vāsudeva's heart breaks to think of it.

(7)¹

The empty couch her right hand touches and the poor wife rises with a start as if thunder has fallen on her head.

She cries "Oh heaven you have at last done your worst".

Weeping she runs with dishevelled hair to the room of Çachī.

Viṣṇupriyā sits near the door and says in accents soft,

সুধা খাটে দিল হাত, বজ্র পড়িল মাখাত, বুঝি বিধি মোরে বিড়ম্বিল।
করণা করিয়া কাঁদে, কেশ বাস নাহি বাঁধে, শচীর মন্দির কাছে গেল ॥
শচীর মন্দিরে আসি, দুয়ারের কাছে বসি, ধীরে ধীরে কণ্ঠে বিষ্ণু-প্রিয়া।
শয়ন মন্দিরে ছিল, নিশি অস্থে কোথা গেল, মোর মুণ্ডে বজ্র পাড়িয়া ॥
গৌরাক্ষ জাগয়ে মনে, নিদ্রা নাহি ছনয়নে, শুনিয়া উঠিল শচীমাতা।
আলু-থালু কেশে যায়, বসন না রহে গায়, শুনিয়া বধুর মুখের কথা ॥
তুরিতে জালিয়া বাতি, দেখিলেন ইতি-উতি, কোন ঠাই উদ্দেশ না পাইয়া।
বিষ্ণু-প্রিয়া বধু সাথে, কাঁদিয়া কাঁদিয়া পথে, ডাকে শচী নিমাই বলিয়া ॥
তা শুনি নদীয়ার লোকে, কাঁদে উচ্চৈশ্বরে শোকে, যারে-তারে পুছেন বারতা।
একজন পথে ধায়, দশজন পুছে তার, গৌরাক্ষে দেখেছ যেতে কোথা ॥
সে বলে দেখেছি যেতে, আর কেহ নাহি সাথে, কাঞ্চন নগরের পথে ধায় ॥
বাহু কহে আছা মরি, আমার গৌরহরি, পাছে জানি মস্তক মুড়ায় ॥

“ He was in the sleeping room and at the end
of night has gone away

My heart breaks, oh mother. ”

The suspicion was ever in Çachī's mind
and she did not sleep all the night.

She rises, her hair unbraided and loose, and
cloths flowing in the air

She lights a candle in eager haste and looks
about her but nowhere is he seen

She goes to the road, the sorrowful wife
following her

Crying aloud “ oh my darling son. ”

The people of Nadiyā are all wide awake and
share in her grief

And she asks whomsoever she meets

“ Oh have you seen him going ? ”

One man is seen in the street and he says

“ Yes have I seen him going towards the
village of Kāñchannagara all alone. ”

Vāsudeva says “ Alas, I fear lest he gets his
head shaven there. ”

(8)'

I have beheld him to-day

Sometimes he sits resting his cheek on his
left hand.

আজু হাম পেখলু নবদ্বীপচন্দ্র ।
করতলে করই বয়ন অবলম্ব ॥
পুনঃ পুনঃ গতাগতি করু ঘর পন্থ ।
ক্ষণে ক্ষণে ফুলবনে চলই একান্ত ॥
ছল-ছল নয়ান কমল সুবিলাস ।
নব নব ভাব করত পরকাশ ।

And then enters his room and goes out to the street again—all without meaning.

There is he again where the flowers bloom, shedding tears that fall from his eyes, 'beautiful as lotus leaves.

His emotions charm one who sees them,
They are strange and new every time.

(9)'

He sits all by himself and repeats the name
of God

Accustomed was he to scent himself with
sandal drops,

Now behold the dust on his body—all
uncared for.

The precious stones and golden chain he does
not touch.

And he has left his spacious room, to sleep
under a tree.

The ascetic's staff is in his hand
and he bathes in the holy tears of love.

Vāsudeva's heart breaks at all this.

১। বিরলে বসিয়া একেশ্বরে ।

হরিনাম জপে নিরন্তরে

সুগন্ধি চন্দন মাখা গায়, এবে ধূলি বিনু আন নাহি তার।

মণিময় রতন ভূষণ, স্বপনে না করে পরশন

ছাড়ল লখিমী বিলাস—কিবা-লাগি তরু তলে বাস ।

ছোড়ল মোহন করে বাঁশী, এবে দণ্ড ধরিয়া সন্ন্যাসী ।

বিভূতি করিছ প্রেম ধন, সঙ্গে লই সব পরিজন

প্রেমজলে করই সিনান, কহে বাহু বিদরেপরাণ ।

(10)¹

As he sees the flower garden, he sighs,
Sometimes he rests his cheek on his hand,
and at others casts his vacant look around.

His emotions are ever new.

His glances are often directed to where
flowers bloom,

We cannot devine what he finds in them.

But such are his emotions of joy that those
who see them are saved from sin

His tears flood the world with their love
Only poor Rādhāmohan is denied a drop.

(11)²

What is it he sees,
Why is this unmeaning smile on his lips by
night and day ?

কুসুমিত কানন, হেরি শচীনন্দন, ডারত কাহে ঘনধাম ।
ক্ষণে করতলে, অবলম্বই মুখশশী ক্ষণে ক্ষণে রহত উদাস ॥
দেখ নবভাব তরঙ্গ ।
চঞ্চল বয়নে, চাহে চপলমতি, গতিজিত মত্ত গজরাজ,
পুনপুন ঐছন, হেরত ফুলবন, কহ নাহ বুদ্ধিয়ে কাজ ।
ঐছন ভাঁতি করি তারল জগজনে, ভাসাইল প্রেমামৃত দানে ।
রাধামোহন বিন্দু না পাওল আপন করম বিধানে ॥
আরে আমার গৌর কিশোর ।
নাহি জানে দিবা নিশি, কারণ বিহনে হাসি,
মনের ভরমে পঁত ভোর ।
ক্ষণে উচ্চৈঃশ্বরে গায়, কারে পঁত কি সুধায়,
কোথায় আমার প্রাণনাথ ।

Sometimes he sings, a strange melodious song,
and cries

“Oh lord of my heart, where art thou gone?”

Sometimes his body trembles in sweet emotions and he runs after some one we do not see. And often does he stretch his hands upwards, as if to embrace the Heaven,

At times he bewails the loss of “some one we do not know ;

Now does he close his eyes from which silent tears fall.

Then cries aloud saying “Oh my Beloved.”

Says Narahari “These ecstasies of love are like those of Rādhā,

“For saving the sinners of this Kali Yuga—the iron age—has he brought this emotion from heaven.

ক্ষণে পীত অঙ্গ কম্প, ক্ষণে ক্ষণে দেই লক্ষ,
কাঁহা পাও যাও কার সাথ ।
ক্ষণে উর্দ্ধ বাহু করি, নাচি বলে ফিরি ফিরি,
ক্ষণে ক্ষণে করয়ে বিলাপ ।
ক্ষণে আঁখি যুগ মুঁদে, হা নাথ বলিয়া কাঁদে,
ক্ষণে ক্ষণে করয়ে সন্তাপ ।
কহে দাস নরহরি, আরে মোর গৌরহরি,
রাধার পিরীতে হৈল হেন ।
ঐ ছন করিয়া চিতে, কলিযুগ উদ্ধারিতে,
বঞ্চিত হইলু মুক্তি কেন

“Why is it then that I am deprived of a sight of this ? ”

One of these or a similar song, of which there are hundreds, is sung as the Gaurachandrikā which is prelude to all Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa songs.

The following songs, one describing a dream of Jaḡodā afflicted with separation from Kṛṣṇa and another that of Çachī distressed by the Sannyāsa of her son, will show the affinity of the Kṛṣṇa songs with those of Chaitanya and will

The bearing of Chaitanya songs on those of Kṛṣṇa. accentuate the bearing which the Gaurachandrikā have on the

Kṛṣṇa songs. Çachi interviewed in the morning by Mālinī, Çrīvāsa's wife, thus describes her dream :

“Here my dear friend the story of my dream last night. Nimāi, I saw, returned home. He stood in the courtyard and looking towards my room called out ‘Oh mother’ in his accustomed tone. I was then sleeping in my room and hearing his voice came out in unconscious fascination of the voice. He touched the dust of my feet and embracing me, wept and said ‘Though I travel afar, my heart is subdued by your love and I could not stay at Purī without seeing you. For seeing you have I come back to Nadiyā, and as he said this his voice was chocked with tears.’ ‘Oh my darling, come to

me' I cried and saying so I embraced him but my dream vanished just at that time and I saw him not again. I wept the rest of the night in bitter pain. From that time my heart knows no rest. Say friend how may I soothe my heart. Vāsudeva Ghose says 'Do not weep, dear mother, Chaitanya is your own. If it were not so how could you get a sight of him (in the dream).''¹

Here is the dream of Jaçodā: She describes it to her husband Nanda.

“Hear me, oh king of Braja, Kṛṣṇa appeared to me this night in a dream. But instantly he vanished where I know not. I saw his moonlike face bedewed with tears, as he held by the edge of my Sādī and cried for some butter, ‘mother give me a little butter to eat’ he said again and again. The more my darling wanted it from me, the more I tried to avoid him saying ‘Go away hence I have no time to spare,

¹ আজিকার স্বপনের কথা, শুনলো মালিনী সই, নিমাই আসিয়াছিল ঘরে ।
 আঙ্গিনাতে দাঁড়াইয়া গৃহপানে নেহারিয়া, মা বলিয়া ডাকিল আমারে ॥
 ঘরেতে শুইয়াছিলাম, অচেতনে বাহির হৈলাম, নিমাইর গলাসাদা পাইয়া ।
 আমার চরণের ধূলি, নিল নিমাই শিরে তুলি, পুনঃ কান্দে গলাটি ধরিয়া ॥
 তোমার প্রেমের বশে, ফিরি আমি দেশে দেশে, রহিতে নারিলাম নীলাচলে ।
 তোমারে দেখিবার তরে, আসিলাম নৈছাপুরে, কাঁদিতে কাঁদিতে ইহা বলে ॥
 আইস মোর বাছা বলি, হিয়ার মাঝারে তুলি, হেন কালে নিদ্রাভঙ্গ হইল ।
 পুন না দেখিয়া তারে, পরাণ কেমন করে, কাঁদিয়া রজনী পোহাইল ॥
 সেই হৈতে প্রাণ কান্দে, হিয়া খির নাহি বাধে, কি করিব कहলো উপায় ।
 বাহুদেব ঘোমে কয়, গৌরাক্ষ তোমারই হয়, নহিলে কি দেখা পাও তায় ॥

don't trouble me.' And thus I turned him away."¹

The legend of Kṛṣṇa has thus been vivified, and the human and spiritual interest of it has developed, being constantly fed by the incidents of living history.

The Gaurachandrikā prepares a spiritual atmosphere for the audience. The emotions of one who was mad after God are emphasised, so that they might serve as a key-note to Rādhā Kṛṣṇa-songs which, viewed in this light, assume a symbolical significance, even in their sensuous descriptions. I have said in a previous lecture that the Vaiṣṇavas have spun out intricate details of tender emotions in their Alankāra Ṣāstrās—the poetics, as Dr. Jacobi would call them. There are altogether 360 such emotions defined and illustrated in the Ujjalnīlamani to which reference has already been made. Some of the main divisions, such as 'the dawn of love,' 'the rapture,' 'the pain of God' and 'the spiritual marriage,' which St. Teresa and other mystics of Europe have described, are almost the same as is in the Bengali classifications, with this difference that the niceties introduced in Bengali are hundred

শুন ব্রজরাজ, স্বপনেতে আজ দেখা দিয়া গোপাল কোথায় লুকালে ।

যেন সে চঞ্চল তাঁদে, অঞ্চল ধরিয়া কান্দে, জননী দে ননী দে ননী বলে ॥

যত কাঁদে বাছা বলি 'সর' 'সর' আমি অশাগিনী বলি সর সর ।

(বোল্লাম) নাহি অবসর, কেবা দিবে সর, অমনি সর্ সর্ বলি ফেলিলাম ঠেলে ।

times greater. 'The dawn of love' and other divisions have each of them many sub-headings, and hundreds of old songs are attached to each by way of illustration of all its minutest shades. When the Kīrtaniyā, or the head-singer of the Kīrtana-songs, takes up a subject for his night's performance, he selects as many songs of a group as he can sing within six or seven hours, and commences with a Gaurachandrikā descriptive of the particular emotion which is the subject of the night.

Of the Gaurachandrikās that I have quoted Nos. 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 belong to the group of the 'dawn of love'—the Purva-rāga.

The clang of *Kartāla* (cymbals) and the dull beat of Khol, which has however a heart-moving effect, is continued for some time. The deafening noise drives away all other thoughts and the audience expectantly looks for some higher music. Gaurachandrikā is next introduced. The singer does not consider his task finished by singing the songs. Each line—each word of them—he explains by rhymed commentaries made by some earlier master, which was also learnt by rote by the singer when he committed the songs to his memory. The poetical import of each word is analysed with its bearing on Chaitanya's life, till history, theology and poetry are mingled together and the musical flow of the whole makes the

The Gaura-
chandrika and the
Kīrtana songs.

audience rapt. *Kīrtana* is unlike all other music. It is a continued source of inspiration in Bengal owing to the great life of Chaitanya which nourishes it with idealistic poetry. The atmosphere created is one of renunciation, of equality for all men, of love that lights its unflickering flame for illuminating the dark corners of life, of pursuing one's highest good, of giving away oneself to the cause of the beautiful, of the sublime and of the good. The music around the Gaurachandrikā swells and grows in volume, till like the sea it surrounds the audience, separating themselves from the visible world. It leads them to a superior plane creating pathos which draw from their eyes silent tears of exalted emotions.

It often happens that some one amongst the audience, unable to support his emotion, silently joins the singers and dances for joy. I have seen good scholars do so. In fact the attention of the audience is captivated to such an extent that they are often found to forget their dinner-hour and the most urgent business.

When Gaurachandrikā has been sung, the main-singer begins to sing the songs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Sensuous matter loses then its indecency, being drawn on parallel lines with Chaitanya's emotions, which interpret them in a new light. The songs are thus given a suggestive importance which takes away from them all the grossness which cursory reading may find in them.

Amongst the names of a large number of *kīrtana* singers of the time of Chaitanya, we may mention some. At the head of Kīrtaniyās, the companions of Chaitanya, stands Nārahari

Some of the *kīrtana* singers of Chaitanya's time. Sarkar of Çrikanda, Çrīvasa and Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, Vāsu Datta and Mukunda Datta of Nadipā. Refer-

ences to their wonderful power of singing are to be found in all important biographies of Chaitanya. Bakreçwara pleased all by his wonderful dancing. They were all saintly people, good scholars and devoted to Chaitanya. Their music and dance in *kīrtana* performances belonged to a higher plane, answering the glowing exhortations of the Psalms.

“Let them praise His name in the dance, let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp Let the floods clap their hands. From the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised.”

Chaitanya's life is important to the students of the history of Bengal, owing to the great bearing on the subsequent social evolutions that took place in the country. To those who are spiritually inclined his life is of a never-ending interest like that of the Buddha or of Çankara, showing some of the greatest features of religious activity and development in India. To the poets the dream-like charm of his life is a source of constant delight. His whole life is now a song,

sung in the streets and in the country side. It is an epic-poem formed of the sweet lyrics of Gaurachandrikās which are on every *kīrtana* singer's lips. The poetry of his romantic life is spread like the flowers that spring on the grassy meadows, all over Gangetic valley. The weaver sings it as he spins his thread, and the ploughman fills the whole air with the pathos of his lament over Chaitanya's desertion of home.

A beautiful story illustrative of the popular devotion for Chaitanya was related sometimes ago by Mr. Kshitimohan Sen, Head Master of Sir Rabindranath Tagore's School at Bolpur. While at Nadiyā, he heard that in a small neighbouring village *kīrtana* songs accompanied by the play of Khol and cymbals were sung there every night from 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. There were two bands of musicians, one singing and playing till 12 A.M. and the other for the rest

of the night. For these four hundred years, generations of villagers of that small locality

An example of popular devotion for Chaitanya.

have kept up an uninterrupted course of musical play in the village. The reason of this is that Chaitanya had once paid a visit to that village before taking Sannyāsa. The little village resounded with *kīrtana* songs, proclaiming its gladness at the event. When he was about to leave the place, the villagers begged of him to pay

them a visit again and Chaitanya, it is said, promised that he would do so at some future time. They formed from amongst themselves two bands of *kirtana* singers to keep up the continuity of the songs till he returned. That blessed day never came. But they have kept up an unceasing flow of music night after night during these long generations, believing that he will come once more and visit their village. For the words of one whom they knew to be God himself could not but be fulfilled.

XXII.—The four sects of the Vaiṣṇavas.

The Vaiṣṇavas are divided into four sects: *viz* Māddhi, Sanaka, Rudra and Çrī. Māddhācharya (born 1911 A. D.) was the founder of the Māddhi sect. He was the son of a Brahmin named Maddhageha, an inhabitant of Tājikakṣetra, a village close to the town of Udipī in the country known as Tulava in the Deccan. The town stands on the river Pāpanāçinī which is only two miles and a half from the sea. As a child Māddhācharya was called Vāsudeva and adopted the name of Ānandatīrtha when he was only 9, on the occasion of his taking Sannyāsa. His Guru was a Brahmin, named Achyutapracha of the Sanaka family. Māddhācharya received his early education at the Ananteçwara temple of the Deccan. His

commentary on Brahmasūtra is a standard authority and guide to his sect. Besides this, he embodied his higher philosophical views in a work called the “Pūrṇaprajñādarçana.” The next revered name among the Māddhi sect is that of Jayatīrtha, standing 5th in the list which will be sub-joined below. He was initiated in the ascetic’s career while yet a child in 1245 A.D. He wrote the following works in Sanskrit :

Jaya Tīrtha.
 (1) Tattwaprakāṣikā (2) Nyayadīpikā (3) Tattwasankhya Natikā (4) Upadhikhandana (5) Upadhikhandanātikā (6) Māyārāhukhandana (7) Tattwanirṇaya Tika (8) Çudha.

Jayatīrtha died in his 46th year. His earthly remains were buried at Malkhedgate—now a railway station in Southern India.

From Sanaka there was evolved a sect of which Nimbāditya was the leader in later times. His name was Bhāskarāchārya and he obtained the title of Nimbāditya, it is said, owing to his having secured the favour of Āditya, the sun-god, who appeared through a Nim tree one evening, so that the saint might take his meal, his vow having been to eat it in the day-time only. It is said that the literature of this sect in Sanskrit and Hindi was burnt by Aurangzeb. Some of their religious views are remarkably lofty and rational, and bear a

close affinity to Christianity. "Many of them" says Mr. Growse, "are pious, simple minded men leading such a chaste and studious life, that it may charitably be hoped of them that in the eye of God they are Christians by the baptism of desire."

Viṣṇuswāmi's follower Vallavāchārya became in the 16th century the reputed leader of the Rudra Order of Vaiṣṇavas. He was a Drāvidian Brahmin—a contemporary of Chaitanya—born in a village called Kakuraparahu near the Raiiway station Nidada Bhelu in the Deccan. His father's name was Lakṣmana Bhatta. At Kakuraparahu there is a temple marking the spot where Vallabhāchārya was born. He wrote a commentary on the Brahma Sūtra and called it Vallabha Vāsyā. His commentary on the Ṣrimad-bhāgavata is an authoritative work to the people of his sect. Vallabhāchārya lived for a considerable time at Gokul and was known as Gokula Gossāin—'The preceptor of Gokul'. Some of the anecdotes relating to his interview with Chaitanya at Purī are described in detail in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta. It appears that while revering the Master, Vallabha was proud of his learning and had little regard for his companions. Vallabha flattered Chaitanya, saying that he had for a long time cherished a

desire of seeing him and that he considered himself blessed at having seen him at last. "Nowhere was seen" he said "an apostle of faith like yourself, the very sight of whom inspires devotion to God among men."

Meets Chaitanya. Chaitanya, knowing that Vallabha was proud and that he slighted his companions, said "Sir, I am a very humble soul, quite unworthy of your praise. If there is any faith in me for which these encomiums are bestowed, I owe it to Advaita Āchārya who has mastered all branches of human learning—to Nityānanda who knows six schools of philosophy as few know them in India and whose company has given me a glimpse of that higher life to which a man of such humble parts as myself could hardly otherwise have got access. There are besides Jagadānanda, Bakreṣwara and Gadādhara Pundit from whom I have learnt much and have yet to learn more. If you think of profiting by discussion with any one among us, it is these scholars whom I recommend to you." Vallabhāchārya had written his commentary on the Bhāgavata, as I have already mentioned, and his object in coming down to Purī was to show it to Chaitanya and have his approval. But Chaitanya had heard that this commentary was directly opposed to the one written by Çridhar Swāmi, the greatest authority in Bhāgavata-interpretations, and

His commentary.

therefore avoided the request of Vallabhāchārya saying Bhāgavata is too high for me. I delight in the name of Kṛiṣṇa. The name is a poem to me and gives me joys untold. I am not a competent judge of a commentary on the Bhāgavata.”

Vallabhāchārya went to the different Vaisṇava worthies, whom Chaitanya had named, in order to read his commentary to them. But no one in that vast city would listen to it, and he was so struck with the great learning of the scholars who admired Chaitanya and lived at Puri simply to be near him, that the proud scholar felt greatly humiliated. When he referred to his commentary again in his conversation with Chaitanya, the latter said that unless he closely followed the interpretations of the Swāmy, the commentary

could not be acceptable to any one. Chaitanya used a pun on the word “Swāmy”—the name by which Çridhar Swāmy was generally known. Swāmy means a husband and as Vallabhāchārya’s views ran opposite to his, Chaitanya said “Your commentary is corrupt” having disregarded the Swāmy. Vallabha’s pride was humbled and he took lessons in the Bhagavata afresh from Pundit Jagadānanda, one of Chaitanya’s constant associates, and had to change many of his religious views.¹ There are at the present day numerous

The pun on the word “Swāmy.”

¹ An elaborate account of Vallabhāchārya’s visit to Puri and discussions with Chaitanya and his companions is to be found in the Chaitanya Charitamṛta (Antya Khanda, Chap. VII.)

followers of Vallabhācharya at Vr̥ndāvana. Pundit Çaratchandra Çāstri, refers in his Bengali work 'Rāmānuja Charita' to the worldliness and luxury which characterise some of the people of this sect. It is said that a very rich and influential class of Southern merchants,—are followers of Vallavāchārya. And their complete surrender of themselves to the wishes of their religious preceptors—the Gokul Gosāins as they are called in Brindāvāna,—form one of the characteristic features of the tenets they follow. These Gosāins are generally well-to-do and receive presents from a certain class of their disciples for every little mark of recognition.

Some of their peculiar rules.

For instance the disciple has to pay Rs. 5 for permission to see his Guru, Rs. 20 for touching him, Rs. 35 for the right of washing his feet, Rs. 11 for receiving a kick from him, Rs. 60 for the privilege of occupying the same seat with him, Rs. 13 for receiving strokes from his cane. There are many other marks of recognition requiring payment of enormous fees, some of which seem to convey immoral suggestions but I abstain from quoting them here, as I am not sure how far the account of Pundit Çaratchandra Çāstri is to be credited.

Rāmānuja is considered the most conspicuous figure among the promoters of the views represented by the Çri sect. He was born in

March 1070 A.D. in the village of Perambhudara
 in the district Chenglat in the
 The Çri sects. Madras Presidency. This village
 is only 13 miles from the town of Mādras and
 was celebrated in the pre-historic age as the
 shrine of Bhutipura. Rāmānuja was the son
 of a Brahmin named Keçava; his mother's name
 was Kāntimati Devī. He took Sannyāsa owing
 to his wife Rakshambhā's repeated violations of
 his instructions, and we know that Jayatīrtha of
 the Māddhi sect also left home as a Sannyāsi
 because his wife was a shrew. Tukārāmā, the
 great Marhatta saint, suffered from the same mis-
 fortune and left home to escape from his wife,
 before he had distinguished himself as a saint,
 and we shall see in future how Govinda Dāsa,
 the devoted follower of Chaitanya quarrelled
 with his wife Çaçimukhī and turned a Sannyasi.¹
 Sannyāsa means in popular opinion the cutting
 of all ties with home, and the strongest
 tie of home-life is that which binds a man
 to his wife. It will thus be seen that one
 of the chief reasons which led to the Sannyāsa
 of many distinguished saints was their

আমার নারীর নাম শশীমুখী হয় ।
 এক দিন ঝগড়া করে মোরে কটু কয় ॥
 নিগুণে মুরুখ বলি গালি দিল মোরে ।
 সেই অপমানে গৃহ ত্যজিলাম ভোরে ॥
 চৌদ্দশত সাত শকে বাহিরেতে যাই ।
 অভিমানে গরগর ফিরে নাহি চাই ॥

disappointment in nuptial love. But the Buddha and Chaitanya, adored in their family circle, renounced home not for any untoward domestic friction but in order to obey a higher call from their inner selves.

The Vaiṣṇava-views at the earlier epochs of their growth were marked by a hostile attitude towards Ṣiva, and in the 11th century they seem to have been inspired by two missions, one for subverting the Ṣivaite worship and another for disapproving and attacking the theory of illusion propounded by Ṣankara, and these we find to be the marked features of the doctrines of the Rāmānuja sect. This will be seen from what Govinda, a disciple of Rāmānuja, said after his conversion to Vaiṣṇavism from the Ṣivāite faith ;

“ Hail, oh lord, (Visnu) I take refuge in thee, save me from my sins. I had shunned Viṣvakantha (Viṣṇu—the refuge of the world) and taken refuge in Viṣakantha (Ṣiva—the poison-throated one) ; I had shunned Pundarikākṣa (Viṣṇu—the lotus-eyed one) and taken refuge in Birupākṣa (Ṣiva—the evil-eyed one) ; I had shunned the Pitāmvara (Viṣṇu—dressed in purple robes) and taken refuge in the Digāmvara (Ṣiva—the naked one) ; I left the heavenly garden of Tulasī plant (sacred to the Vaiṣṇavas) and preferred the bitter-juiced Haritakī (sacred to the Ṣaivas.”)

The puns on the words in the above extract show the bitterness and the hostile attitude of the convert towards the creed he had forsaken.

Māddhyāchārya believed in Hari (Kṛṣṇa) and Hara (Çiva) alike. Vallavāchārya was a believer in Kṛṣṇa as the divine child—the Vāla-gopāla. Rāmānuja believed in Kṛṣṇa and Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu Swāmy in Kṛṣṇa and the Gopis.

Chaitanya, though he was initiated by a Guru of the Māddhi sect, owed but little allegiance to their tenets. His was almost a new and different creed based on mystic love with its emotional features.

XXIII.—The Gurus of the Māddhi Sect.

As we are concerned with the Vaiṣṇavas of Bengal, we need not take any further notice of those who belonged to sects other than the Māddhi in which Chaitanya had inscribed his name. Māddhāchārya alias Ānanda-tīrtha as already mentioned, was the founder of this sect. The following list will show the line of successive leaders of the sect, each of whom stands in the relation of a disciple to his predecessor. This list is quoted from Gaurāṅgaṇadde-sadīpika, a sanskrit work written by Kavikarṇapura in 1526 A.D. A summary of this will also be found in the Bengali work, the Bhaktiratnākara.

1. Maddhāchārya (born 1191 A.D.)
2. Padnavācharyya.
3. Narahari.
4. Akṣova.
5. Jayatīrtha.
6. Jnāna Sindhu.
7. Mahāsindhu.
8. Vidhyanidhi.
9. Rājendra.
10. Jayadharmā.
11. Puruṣottama.
12. Vyāsātīrtha.
13. Lakṣmitīrtha.
14. Mādhavendra Purī.
15. Iṣvara Purī.
16. Chaitanya (born February, 18, 1486).

Madhavendra Purī was the first man in the Māddhi sect whose name became honoured in the annals of Bengali Vaiṣṇavas. He was born about the year 1400 A.D. and was known by the title of Bhaktichandrodaya—the rising moon of faith. We surmise from a historical reference made in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta in its account of Mādhavendrapurī's work at Vṛndavana that he was a Bengali. It is stated that for the purpose of discharging priestly functions in regard to the image of Gopāla which Mādhavendra had established at Vṛndavana he brought two Brahmins from Bengal. Now it is well known that Bengal is

not a recognised seat of good Brahmins; at least this has been the current belief of the people of Northern as well as other parts of India outside Bengal. The fact of Mādhavendra's sending for two Brahmins from Bengal for worship of a deity held in so much popular reverence in the holy city, cannot be explained by any other reason than that of Mādhavendra's having been himself a Bengali.

Two of the disciples of Mādhavendra Purī—
Içwara Purī and Advaita had a great influence on Chaitanya in his boyhood. We all know how Içwara Purī was attracted by the scholarship and other personal qualities of Chaitanya and frequently called on the young scholar in order to impart religious instructions to him. Chaitanya was almost sceptical in his early youth and would not listen to religious advice. Içwara Purī quoted from the holy texts in order to convince Chaitanya of the force of some spiritual points that he preached. But the young scholar detected grammatical mistakes from those texts to the great bewilderment and disappointment of the venerable man. But in spite of the frivolous jokes and light humour with which Chaitanya treated Içwara Purī's teachings, the young scholar secretly cherished a deep reverence for the pious Vaiṣṇava. After his life had become changed, he felt an eager

desire to meet Īṣvara Purī and went to Kumārahatta with that object. The old man had been cooking his own meal when Chaitanya arrived at his house. The ever refractory, pedantic and light-brained young scholar had become a thoroughly changed man and as he touched the feet of the revered teacher, he could not express his profound gratitude to him, his voice becoming choked with tears. When leaving Kumārahatta he passed into a trance, tying some dust of the place in the edge of his garments like a precious thing, and murmuring, ‘the dust of this spot—the birth place of Īṣvara Purī is dearer to me than any riches, nay dear as life itself.’¹

At Gayā, Chaitanya again met Īṣvara Purī and with joined hands stood before the saintly man saying, “Blessed is my journey to Gayā, for I see you before me. * * * * You are, Sir, better than all the shrines of the world, for a sight of you cleanses the soul.”

We gather the following brief account of Īṣvara Purī from the Prema Vilāsa.

He was born about the year 1436 A.D. His father was a Rādīya Brāhmīṇ named Ṣyāmsundara Āchārya of Kumārahatta. Īṣvara Purī thoroughly studied the Upanisadas in his youth and became

¹ “প্রভু কহে ঈশ্বর পুরীর জন্মস্থান ।
এ মৃত্তিকা আমার জীবন ধন প্রাণ ।”

an ascetic of the Māddhi sect of the Vaiṣṇavas, being initiated into that faith by Mādhavendra Purī himself.

The man generally known to be the Guru of Chaitanya was, however, Keçava Bhāratī. When Chaitanya resolved to take the vow of Sannyāsa, he happened to go to Keçava Bhāratī for initiation; the latter also belonged to the Keçava Bhāratī. Māddhi sect and was a disciple of Mādhavendra Purī. Keçava Bhāratī conducted the ritual of Chaitanya's Sannyāsa and beyond this we are not aware that he exercised any influence on the spiritual advancement of his illustrious disciple. Īçvara Purī was Chaitanya's Dīkṣā-Guru who initiated him into the Vaiṣṇava faith and Keçava Bhāratī was his Sannyās-Guru, who ministered to the religious function of his Sannyāsa. Keçava Bhāratī was known as Kālināth Āchārya before he took Sannyās and was an inhabitant of the village of Kulyā in Navadvīpa. He was born in the earlier half of the 15th century and resided chiefly at Kātwā.

We now revert to Mādhavendra Purī, the fountain head from whom flowed that current of devotion which within a century and a half flooded the whole of Bengal. Many tales are told about him in the Bengali historical works of the Vaiṣṇavas. There is a significant couplet in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata attributing to him some of those beautiful trances at the sight of a cloud which we find

in a more developed form in Chaitanya. The images of Vāsudeva in black stone worshipped in the temples of Bengal had captivated the imagination of the Vaiṣṇavas of the country. The sculptors gave to the curved lips of these images an indescribable sweetness and to the eyes a joyous expression which spoke of a world higher than the world of worry and strife which we live in. When these images were mutilated and thrown out of the temples by the iconoclasts, the worshippers, who like the sculptor described by Schiller, had actually fallen in love with the stone, felt deeply distressed. The dark blue colour of the images like the Cross of the Christian, became a sacred emblem of grief to them. The colour of the image became a reminder of their Beloved. They saw it in the dark cloud tinted with blue, in the sky, in the river, and in the *Tamāla* tree. This became to them a fountain of sacred association reminding them of Kṛṣṇa. The country bards have been full of passionate panegyrics of this colour in their religious songs. The images were broken, but the memory of the colour remained. The universe shows a rich display of this deep blue colour in its mountains, its rivers and seas. Such an all pervading colour might well be made an emblem of the Deity, and in Bengal the tragic history of the mutilation of the dark blue images lent a power-

Mādhavendra's
trances.

Mystic regard for
dark-blue colour.

ful and pathetic association to the colour, bringing on trances and ecstasies in spiritual souls.*

We read in the Chaitanya Charitamṛta that Mādhavendra Purī was one of the few pious pilgrims who visited the Vṛndā groves before that shrine was restored by the followers of Chaitanya. A tender and lovely legend is told in connection with this visit of Mādhavendra Purī. He went there fasting for a day, for he never begged, and unless some one brought him something to eat, he would fast and remain absorbed in his religious reveries. He sat at the foot of the hill Annakūṭa all alone, contemplating Kṛṣṇa, caring nothing of the world, when he was suddenly accosted by a boy, who if the crown of peacock-feathers had adorned his head and a flute had been in his hand, might well have passed for that Kṛṣṇa whom

Mādhavendra's
visit to Vṛndāva-
na.

* It is curious that some of our English poets have also felt a strange liking for the blue and the dark-blue colour, almost in the spirit of a Vaiṣṇava. The following lines of Keats may be quoted as an illustration:—

“ Blue! ‘t is the life of heaven—the domain
Of Cynthia—the wide palace of the Sun,
The tent of Hesperus and all his train,
The bosomer of clouds, gold, grey and dun,
Blue! ‘t is the life of waters—the Ocean
And all its vassal streams, pools numberless,
May rage, and foam, and fret, but never can
Sub-side, if not to *dark-blue* nativeness.
Blue! gentle cousin of the forest green,
Married to green in all the sweetest flowers
Forget-me-not, the Blue-bell, and that queen
Of secrecy, the Violet, what strange powers
Hast thou, as a mere shadow!”

Keats's Poems.

Forman, Vol. II, p. 257 (1853).

Mādhavendra worshipped. The ascetic was struck by the lovely figure of the boy who offered him some milk and fruits. He asked the boy why he took all this trouble to come from the village side for the sake of offering him food. The lad said "I live in this village. The villagers would not allow any body to fast here. Some ascetics beg rice and bread, and others beg milk, the villagers give them, *but I give to those who do not beg of any one.*"¹

Mādhava took the milk which was sweet and the fruits which had a heavenly fragrance. The boy vanished from the place, and Mādhavendra sat there under a tree, repeating the name of Kṛṣṇa for nearly the whole of the night, but

The strange lad offering milk to Mādhava. towards its end his eyes closed in sleep. He dreamt a dream in which the same boy appeared to him and said "Mādhava, long have I waited for you, for you truly love me. Dig me up from yonder forest, I was thrown into a tank there by a pious Brahmin who wanted to save me from the Mahomedan invader. In time the tank was filled up and in the depth of the jungle below the upper layers of earth I am hidden

¹ "বালক কহে গোপ আমি এই গ্রামে বসি ।

আমার গ্রামেতে কেহ না রহে উপবাসী ॥

কেহ অন্ন মাগি খায় কেহ দুষ্কার ।

অযাচক জনে আমি দিয়ে আহাৰ ॥"

“You truly love me.” away. I am in great pain owing to cold and heat and forest-fire. Yet know me to be the Lord of this shrine.”

Mādhava woke and a strange emotion filled his mind. With tears in his eyes he related the story to the villagers next morning. They cut the jungle and dug the earth and a large and beautiful image of Kṛṣṇa was recovered from there to the great joy of all who had assembled.

The discovery of the image of Gopāla. This image was brought down to the village with great pomp.

The joyous music, both vocal and instrumental, welcomed the deity and people made rich offerings to him. The women began to sing and dance. The festivity was a unique one in the annals of that locality, for the people believed that the Lord of the village had come. They bathed the image in the sacred waters of the shrines and anointed it with scented oil. By applying shell-powder and sulphur they restored it to its bright colour and then purified it by *Pañcha Gavya* or the five holy things of the cow. Mādhavendra brought two Brāmhans from Bengal for the worship of the deity.

Another legend says that Mādhava dreamt one night that Gopāla, the name by which this image of Kṛṣṇa was called, again appeared to him and asked him to bring from Orissa the sweet-scented sandal wood to be found there for his adornment. The ascetic came to a place

named Remunā in Orissa. The image of Gopīnātha was the principal deity of the temple there. Gopīnātha and Gopāla, it should be understood, were the different names of the God Kṛṣṇa.

Tired with the journey and fasting, Mādhava stayed in the temple for a little while and saw Gopīnātha. He asked the priests there what were the meals offered to the God. They mentioned among other things the *kṣīra* or the condensed milk which was a special preparation there, and praised it much. The ascetic thought "If I could but once get it without seeking, I could learn how to prepare it and

offer to my god Gopāla at
The thief of the milk. Vṛndāvana." As he thought so,

he was ashamed of himself for indulging in a *desire* and prayed to God for pardon. He saw the Evening Service in the Temple and saying nothing to anyone came out of it and went to rest under a tree outside the village. Mādhavendra, as it has been said, asked nothing of any one, if anything came unsolicited he ate, and if not, he fasted. He regretted again that a desire for condensed milk, even though it was for offering it to his God, had occurred in his mind and sat quietly near the market-place, singing the glories of God and striving for a union with Him.

In the noon-time the offering of rich meal was made as usual to Gopīnātha in the temple.

The doors were shut and dedicating the meal to God, the priest went out of the temple for some time as usual. He came back and distributed the meal, first offered to the god, among the worshippers. This was what usually happened, but when the priest took his afternoon nap, Gopīnātha appeared to him in a dream and said, "I have kept pieces of the *kṣīra* tied in my outer robes for Mādhava who is one of my truest worshippers. Go and seek him from the town and offer him the food." The priest ran to the temple and was surprised to find pieces of condensed milk tied in the edge of the robe of Gopīnātha. In a voice that trembled with emotion, the priest called Mādhava by his name and ran through the streets of Remunā, till he met the venerable ascetic, under a tree in the outskirts of the town. The story was related to him and Mādhava with tears in his eyes touched the sacred food and was transported with joy. Gopīnātha stole the food for his worshipper and hence he got the name of "*Kṣīra-Chorā*." or "the thief of condensed milk." By the time the report had spread of this wonderful event and people began to gather to see the divine ascetic. But he, knowing that fame was to be avoided by an ascetic above all things as it brings pride and desire for the world's esteem, fled away in the latter part of the night to avoid men and women seeking him. Says Chaitanya Charitāmṛta here "the

people followed and traced him even to Purī. For God gives fame to a good man who does not seek it. Mādhavendra lived at Purī in quiet concealment, in order to avoid fame. But fame brought him out into the light.”¹

Such are some of the legends that are associated with the name of Mādhavendra Purī. They serve to establish beyond all doubt the piety and spiritual fervour of the leader of the Māddhi sect of the age. For supernatural tales are told by the populace of India about those men only whose piety of life and devotion are unquestionable.

XXV. The pedigree of Chaitanya and his wife.

We have mentioned that Chaitanya in his early life was indebted to Īṣvara Purī and Advaita for his first impulses towards the spiritual life. I have briefly described his associations with Īṣvara Purī. I have also mentioned on p. 32^{*} that Çachī, Chaitanya's mother, made Advaita accountable for the spiritual tendencies of both her sons, leading them eventually to sever their home-ties permanently. Īṣvara Purī, Advaita and Keçava Bhāratī are the three spiritual masters to whom Chaitanya owed his connection with the Māddhi sect. If a name is to be added, we should mention that of Çrīvāsa. Chaitanya's early education was completed at the *tol* of Gangādāsa Paṇḍit of Vidyānagara in Nadiyā.

¹ Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khandā, Chap. IV.

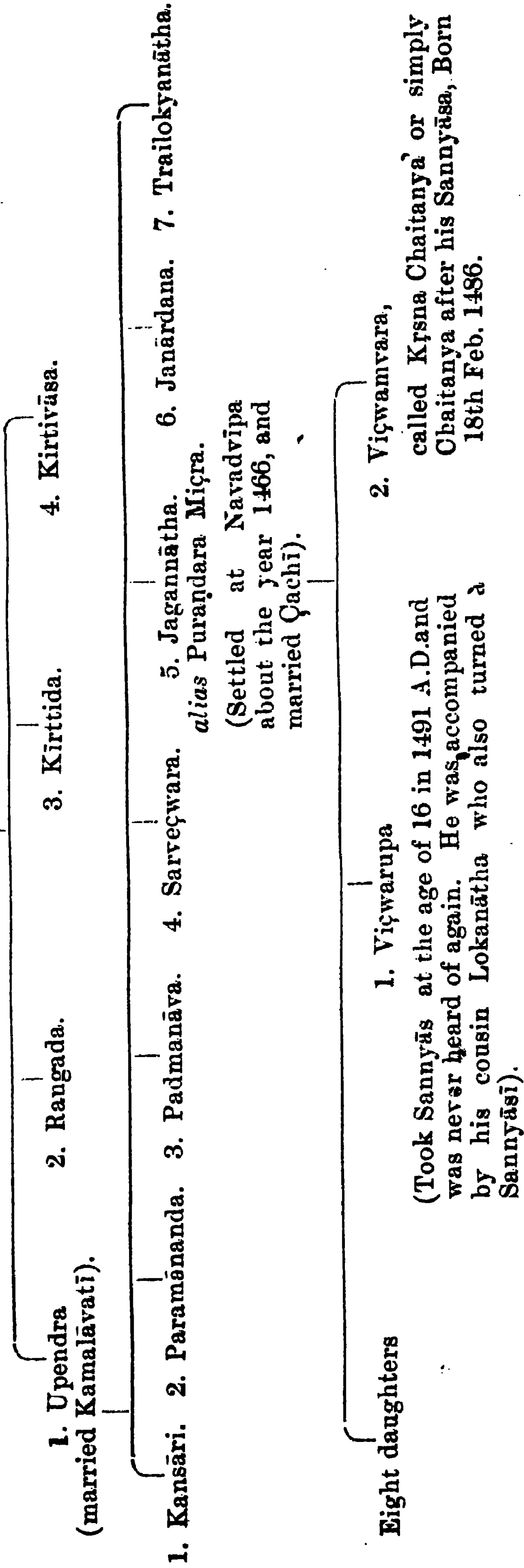
PEDIGREE OF CHAITANYA (FATHER'S SIDE).

Viçuddha Miçra,

(A Vaidik Brāhmāṇa of the Vātsāyana Gotra and an inhabitant of Jājpur, Orissa)

Madhukara Miçra.

Left Jājpur in the year 1451 for fear of Rājā Brahmaṛvara and settled in Dhaka Dakṣin, a village in Sylhet, (according to some in Baḍagaṅgāgrām in that District).



CHAITANYA'S PEDIGREE (MOTHER'S SIDE).

Nilāmvara Chakravartī,

A Vaidik Brāhmaṇ who came from Sylhet and settled at Belpukuria in Nadiyā.)

1. Jogeçvara Paṇḍit. 2. Ratnāgārva Bhaṭṭāchārya. 3. Čāchī Devi, mother of Chaitanya, married to Jagānnāth Miçra, *alias* Purāṇḍara Miçra. 4. Sarvajayā Devi, married to Chandra Čekhara Āchārya of Sylhet.

Lokanātha (who took Sannyās with Viçvarupa, and was known as Čan-kaṛāṇya Purī.)

PEDIGREE OF VIṢṆUPRIYĀ DEVĪ (WIFE OF CHAITANYA).

Durgā Dāsa Miçra

(A Vaidik Brāhmaṇ of Nadiyā, married Bijayā Devi.)

1. Sanātana, married Mahānāyā.
Only child Viṣṇupriyā.

2. Kālidāsa,
married Bidhumukhī.

Mādhava Āchāryya. (He was a pupil of Chaitanya, and shortly after his Sannyāsa translated the 10th Skanda of the Bhāgavata into Bengali verse.)

In the month of Māgha (January) 1406 Çaka (1485 A.D.) Çachī Devī conceived, and was delivered of the child Chaitanya after 13 months, in Phālguna (18th February) 1407 Çaka (1486 A.D.)

XXVI.—The tour of Chaitanya in Eastern Bengal.

The standard works on Chaitanya's life have very briefly alluded to his tour in Eastern Bengal; the Chaitanya Bhāgavata mentions that Chaitanya visited some villages on the banks of the Padmā. He was about 22 years old at the time, and had written a commentary on a Sanskrit grammar which was read in some of the *tols* of Eastern Bengal. He had the title of Vidyāsāgara and was already a scholar of some renown in one of the most important centres of Sanskrit learning in India *viz* : Nadiyā. But no body had anticipated his future greatness as one of the foremost of India's religious teachers, so the places he visited in his early youth were not carefully noted down by any of his contemporaries. He himself avoided fame of all kind and would not encourage any one who wished to write his biography, indulging in the interval between his trances, in talks on spiritual matters only, so that there was no opportunity for gaining information as to the incidents of his early life outside Nadiyā. We beg to add by way of a little

digression that it was his habit to conceal his great emotions so far it was possible from outsiders. We find in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta the line “if any outsider was there, he tried to collect himself so far as possible,” This also was the reason “why in the midst of the public he only sang the praises of the Lord, but within the small circle of his intimate friends he indulged in the joys of sweet emotion, while discussing the minute questions of spiritual ecstasy.”¹

The historical account of his tour in Eastern Bengal has, owing to causes mentioned above, remained incomplete. The Prema Vilāsa in its last two and a half cantos which have been lately discovered mentions some of the places he visited, but we do not know how far the account is authentic. The Prema Vilāsa is certainly one of the most trusted historical works of the Vaiṣṇavas in the 16th and the earlier part of the 17th century. But it was up till lately

The last 2½ cantos of the Premvilāsa. known to contain 20 cantos only.

The last two and a half cantos, recently added, contain matters which should be approached with caution. Whether these supplementary chapters formed a part of the original work is doubtful. But this does not altogether prove the untrustworthiness of the accounts given in them. Some of these are certainly

অন্তরঙ্গ সঙ্গে করে রস-আশ্বাদন ।

বহিরঙ্গ সঙ্গে করে নাম-সংকীৰ্ত্তন ॥

well-established historical facts and whoever may have been their author, there is no doubt that they were collected with considerable trouble and possess undoubted reliability. But there are others which are open to doubt and objection. Chaitanya's tour in Eastern Bengal is a subject which we may place under the latter head. The reason of our doubt is that as Chaitanya's visit to a place would undoubtedly give it great sanctity, the people of a particular locality may be interested in enhancing its importance by producing forged records. But at the same time there is no positive proof to show that the two and a half Chapters, referred to, were not a portion of the original work. Whether they be so or no, we find it our duty to mention our doubts on this point. I will now indicate the places which Chaitanya is said to have visited in course of his tour in Eastern Bengal.

It is recorded that Chaitanya visited Sylhet. We will credit this account; for his grandfather Upendra Miçra and his uncles still lived at Dhākā Dakṣin in that district. There is no reason to doubt that one of the objects of his touring in Eastern Bengal was presumably to visit the members of his own family in their original seat in Sylhet. He is said to have first gone to Faridpur. As a confirmation of this statement, we may mention that there is a local tradition at

Faridpur and
Suvarnagrāma.

Kotalipāra in that district, which says that Chaitanya stayed for sometime at that village during his tour. From Faridpur he came to Bikrampur in the district of Dacca. He visited the villages of Nurpur and Suvarṇagrām. From Bikrampur he crossed the Brahmaputra and

Egāra Sīndura. came to a place named Egāra-sindūra. Close by was the village of Betal which he visited next. From Betal he

Betal. moved to Bhitādiā which was then a seat of great Sanskrit learning. One of its most noted men of the earlier generation was Padmagarbha Āchārya.

Bhitādiā. He was a great Paṇḍit and had married a daughter of Jayarāma Chakravartī of Nadiyā, He had learned the Upanishads at Benares and was instructed in Logic and in higher Metaphysics at Mithilā. He was besides the author of a commentary on Bhramaradīpikā, and annotated Pingala, the work on poetics in Prākṛit, and made commentaries on the Brāhmaṇas. His Guru was Lakṣmītīrtha of the Māddhi sect whose disciple was Mādhavendra Purī himself. Padmagarbha's son Lakṣmīnātha Lāhirī lived at Bhitādiā when Chaitanya visited the place. As Lāhirī's mother hailed from Nadiyā, Chaitanya was naturally attracted to the place and stayed for some days with Lakṣmīnātha in that village. We all know that Puruṣottama, a step-brother of Lakṣmīnātha

took Sannyāsa and met Chaitanya at Benares and latterly became distinguished as Svarupa Dāmodara.

From the village Bhitādiā Chaitanya came to Dhākā Dakṣiṇ (or Baḍagaṅgā according to some) where his grandfather still lived. He met the elders of his family and he is said to have relished a jack fruit which his grandmother 'Kamalāvati' offered him. It is also said that he made a transcription of the Sanskrit work Chandī for his grandfather's use during his short stay there.

XXVII. Chaitanya's tokens.

The Kanthā (a cotton robe of coarse quality) which Chaitanya wore is still preserved in the temple of Purī. The pious pilgrims often

bribed the Pāndās for so much as a few threads or a little cotton from the sacred robe, till after these four hundred years, we find it now reduced to a mere shred a few inches in size. Chaitanya got his head shaven at the time of his Sannyāsa at Kātwā and there is a small brick memorial where his hair was buried. It is called the Keṇa Samādhi or the burial place of the sacred hair. The place

where he sat for shaving his head is also marked with a brick-pavement at Kātwā.

Mādhava Miçra, an inhabitant of Beleti in the district of Dacca, was the father of the celebrated Gadādhara whom we have already noticed. Gadādhara received his education at Nadiyā and was a fellow-scholar and a great friend of Chaitanya. Once upon a time Chaitanya called on his friend and found him copying the Gītā. Chaitanya took the pen from him and copied a couplet. The MS. of the Gītā in Gadādhara's hand-writing bearing the transcript of a couplet by Chaitanya passed from the former's hands to those of Nayanānanda Miçra, nephew of Gadādhara and a son of Bāṇinātha, Gadādhara's elder brother. Nayanānanda in later times settled in the village of Bharatpur in the district of Murshidābād, and the historic copy of the Gītā is still worshipped in the temple of Gopīnātha there. In one of the late exhibitions held in Calcutta in connection with the National Congress, the Sāhitya Parisat made an exhibit of a facsimile of the memorable page which contains the couplet copied by Chaitanya. In the latest revised edition of the Vaṅga Sāhitya Viṣayaka Prastāva by Rāmgati Nyāyaratna, this facsimile has been reproduced.

It has already been stated on p. 116 that

The oar. Chaitanya gave an oar with which he used to row his small pleasure-

boat on the Ganges and a Gītā, copied by himself, to Gauridāsa Sarkel. This he did about the year 1510, when he crossed the Ganges, plying the boat himself, from near a village named Harinadī and came to Ambikā (Kalna) in order to meet Gauridāsa. An image of Chaitanya made immediately after this event in Nim wood by the order of Gauridāsa, and believed to be a superior specimen of the sculptor's art of that time, and an exact likeness of its model, is still worshipped in the temple founded by Gauridāsa at Ambikā. There the Gītā and the oar were preserved and probably exist to this day. They were positively there in 1700 A.D. when the *Bhaktiratnākara* was written. The author writes:

“The oar and the copy of the Gītā given by the Lord are still seen by the fortunate pilgrims near the Lord's image (at Ambikā)”.

Chaitanya after his Sannyāsa paid a visit to Barānagar, four miles to the north of Calcutta, and met Raghunātha who afterwards translated the *Bhāgavata* into Bengali and became known by his title of ‘*Bhāgavatāchārya*’. The *khadam* or the sandals used by Chaitanya are still preserved in Raghunātha's *Pāt* (place of worship) at Barānagar. The sandals have decayed in the course of these four hundred years, and very little now remains of them.

The Bhāgavata which Paṇḍit Gadādhara used to read before Chaitanya at Purī has disappeared but it was seen by Ṣrīnivāsa Āchārya towards the end of the 16th century; all the letters of the book were found disfigured by the tears of Chaitanya. Gadādhara himself showed it to Ṣrīnivāsa and other pilgrims. It naturally possessed a special sanctity. For 18 years it had been read before the Master and was a source of his inspired ecstasies. This sacred book is mentioned in many of the works of the Vaiṣṇavas in the 16th and the 17th centuries, such as the Karnānanda, Bhaktiratnākara and the Premavilāsa.

Many of the places, which were the favourite

resorts of Chaitanya at Nadiyā,

such as the courtyard of Ṣrīvāsa,

are now in the bed of the Ganges.

But inspite of the freaks of

Nature's destructive agencies, the Pāṇḍās (priests)

do not allow any Indian shrine to be lost or

obliterated from her annals, as it is a source of

immense pecuniary interest to them. They

earn money from the pilgrims by pointing out

the spots associated with a god or a great reli-

gious teacher. So that when the shrine goes

down to the bed of a river or is destroyed by

earthquake, they carry the sacred relics to a

near place and give it the name of the shrine.

The past traditions are thus kept up. The

The present Nadiyā
is not what it
was in Chaitanya's
time.

topography of Nadiyā as detailed by Narahari in his *Bhaktiratnākara* in the 17th century is not identical with that of the present Nadiyā. The identifications may be assailed from a purely geographical point of view, but the courtyard of Ṣrīvāsa and other sacred spots are still pointed out to thousands of pilgrims who accept the account of the Pāṇḍās with pious belief and never trouble themselves as 'regards the validity of their accounts. The place where Chaitanya was born at Navadvīpa, like Ṣrīvāsa's courtyard, was certainly submerged. It is now identified with a part of the town, called Māyāpur. This place had been called Miyāpur (the seat of Mohamedans); but the Bhāktas gave it a Hindu name in order to keep up its sanctity. If the place pointed out be really the home of Chaitanya, it is here that his five big lovely straw-roofed huts stood facing the Ganges, as described by Govindadāsa in his *Kaḍchā*.

The images of Chaitanya in Nim wood made during his life time or shortly after, are to be seen in the following places :

1. The celebrated image at 'Nadiyā (now enshrined in a beautiful temple), made by the order of Viṣṇupriyā Devī, wife of Chaitanya, and worshipped by her after his Sannyāsa.

2. The one made by Gadādhara, during the lifetime of the Master, this is now worshipped in a temple at Kāṭwā near the *Keça-samādhi*, standing at the junction of the Ganges and the Dāmodara.

3. The image of Chaitanya made by Gauridāsa Paṇḍit of Ambikā (Kālnā). This has been already referred to. It was made about the year 1510 A.D.

4. Pratāpa Rudra, the King of Orissa, had an image of Chaitanya made immediately after he passed away and made extensive grants of lands to the temple dedicated to the image at Pratāpapura.

5. About the year 1600 Narottama, son of Rājā Kriṣṇānanda Datta of Kṣeturī in the district of Rajshahi, had an image of Chaitanya made which is probably worshipped there even now. The image was called Gaura Rāya and was stolen away, immediately after it was duly installed in the Kṣeturī temple, but was subsequently recovered in a strange manner. The account is to be found in the *Prema-vilāsa*, and we shall have occasion to refer to it in my lectures as Reader to the University.

6. Chaitanya's images made in the latter part of the 16th and in the beginning of the 17th century are to be found all over Orissa and Bengal. One of these made in *Nim* wood is

worshipped in the house of Manichānd Gosvāmī at the Simla Street, Calcutta. The original seat of this image was at Khaddā, a few miles to the north of Calcutta.

In the old temples of Govindajī and Madana-mohana, there are images of Chaitanya which were probably established there towards the end of the 16th century. We make no mention of the more recent images as they are innumerable. There is no important village in Orissa where Chaitanya's image is not to be found. On the wooden boards meant as covers of old Vaiṣṇava works, presented to us in the form of manuscripts written in the 16th and early 17th centuries, are frequently to be found pictures of Chaitanya and his companions, painted in lacquer. One of these has been reproduced by me in my *Typical Selections from old Bengali Literature* published by the University, and is to be found facing p. 1146.

Rājā Pratāpa Rudra is said to have a picture of Chaitanya drawn during the lifetime of the Master. This picture was made sometime between 1512-1533 and is said to have been carried to Nadiyā by Ṣrīvāsa. From his descendants, it passed to the family of Rājā Nandakumāra of East India Company-fame and is preserved by them at their country seat of Kuñjaghāṭa in Murshidābād. A facsimile of this celebrated picture forms the frontispiece of my *History*

of the Bengali Language and Literature, but I regret to say that the reproduction has not been satisfactory. The original picture now preserved at Kuñjaghāṭa is a remarkable specimen of old Indian painting and shows Chaitanya in an emotional attitude which powerfully appeals to the mind. The reproduction does not give any good idea of the original.

The pictures.

Another picture of Chaitanya made by the order of king Pratāpa Rudra during Chaitanya's life-time, I was told by Achyutacharan Tattvanidhi (of Mainā, Kānāibājār, Sylhet,) existed in a temple of Vṛndāvana. Paṇḍit Rādhikālāla Gosvāmī was approached by Achyuta Bābu for a facsimile of it, but this could not be secured. The picture is probably lost.

For eighteen years Chaitanya stood by the side of the pillar known as the Gaḍuḍa Stambha. Gaḍuḍa Stambha resting his elbow on it for hours together every day, and beheld the image of Jagannātha from there. He dared not go further near the Temple lest the sight of the image maddened him with joy, as it had done him once, making him ran in an unconscious state to the very pedestal of the image and embrace it. He could exercise no control over his feelings on such occasions. Even as he stood near the Gaḍuḍa Stambha he, was all tears with joy feeling an all-absorbing

passion for the vision which was ever-glorious to him. On the Gaduda Stambha there is a mark showing the particular spot where Chaitanya's elbow had rested for hours together every day during his eighteen years of stay at Purī. In the spot now known as Çrīvāsa's courtyard at Nadiyā, there is a considerable number of clay images of Chaitanya illustrating the incidents of his life. These were made nearly 200 years ago and are surely specimens of art of Kṛṣṇanagar potters.

XXVIII.—*Chaitanya's tour in Southern India.*

The brief notices of Chaitanya's tour in Southern India that we find in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and Chaitanya Bhāgavata are neither complete nor reliable. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata was written in the year 1573 and Chaitanya Charitāmṛta in 1581 A.D. But Chaitanya toured in the Deccan during 1509-1511. A considerable time had thus elapsed before these accounts were written. We have already mentioned that Chaitanya himself would by no means encourage any one to take notes on any incidents of his life. We shall afterwards prove that the story of Kālā-Kṛṣṇadasā's accompanying him to the Deccan is totally untrustworthy. Govinda Dāsa alone had accompanied him and he took down minute notes of what he saw. But he assures us that

he did so very privately,¹ for surely the Master would have resented it if it had been known to him. Govinda therefore could not give publicity to these notes. He found no opportunity of doing so. For throughout the rest of his life he was with Chaitanya night and day, and he could not possibly take a step which would offend him.

In the subsequent times Vṛndāvana became the chief seat of Vaiṣṇava learning. The six Gosvāmīs—Raghunātha Dāsa, Raghunātha Bhāṭṭa, Rūpa, Sanātana, Jīva and Gopāla Bhāṭṭa were the fountain-heads from whom flowed all Vaiṣṇava theology; the canons laid-down in them governed Bengal and Orissa. No book that was not approved by these masters was accepted as a standard work on Vaiṣṇavism. Hence Vṛndāvana Dāsa's Chaitanya Bhāgavata, written at Denur in the District of Burdwan, was first submitted to the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana who approved of it and then it was recognised as an authoritative work. Chaitanya Charitāmṛta was written in Vṛndāvana itself under the direct teachings of the Gosvāmīs.

Books written outside Vṛndāvana or without the sanction of the six Gosvāmīs could not possess the same precedence. And Govinda Dāsa who wrote the notes had another very

Why the Kadchū is not recognised as a standard book by the orthodox Vaiṣṇavas.

¹ “করচা করিয়া রাখি অতি সংগোপনে” Govinda's Kadchū.

strong reason to hide the work from popular notice. His Kadchā contains a brief account of himself; he mentions in it the names of his parents and of his wife, who first appears as a shrew and then an ideal of chaste womanhood. He mentions some incidents of his own domestic life which are interesting. We find in them that when he passed by Kāñchana-nagara, as a companion of Chaitanya in the year 1509, his wife and his relations made a vigorous attempt to bring him back to worldly life. The appeal was so strong that even Chaitanya had to change his mind, and in response to the pathetic requests of Govinda's wife, desisted from giving her spiritual advice (such as on the value of resignation to the Lord's will and depending on Him alone &c) with which he had commenced, and expressed his resolve to leave Govinda at his home at Kāñchannagara. Govinda had to struggle hard to extricate himself from his family-bonds in order to accompany the Master. Under these circumstances it was but natural that he would try to remain *incognito* as far as possible on his return to Purī. To Chaitanya he was devoted as a faithful dog is to his master. We find that when he was asked by Chaitanya to go to Çāntipura from Purī with a letter to Advaita, he burst into tears. It was only a few days' absence from the service of his Master that he thought it hard to bear. He writes:—

“Hearing this order tears came to my eyes, for I could not bear a separation from the Lord.”

On Chaitanya's return from the Deccan, we find Govinda to be always with him. But none of the Master's numerous biographers mentions who this Govinda was. In the Vaiṣṇava works of the time, we find full accounts of all the other companions and associates of Chaitanya, but while held in high esteem and called “Çrī Govinda” by the Vaiṣṇavas, no one gives any account of the family to which he belonged nor of his native place. He is called as a Çūdra of humble origin, and in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta there is a characteristic line expressing wonder that a Çūdra should be admitted to the personal service of Chaitanya in preference to hundreds of those who belonged to the Brāhmin and other high castes, anxious and willing to serve the Master. We thus see how a fable of Govinda's claim to serve the Master was fabricated. It was to give some special merit to Govinda in the eyes of the orthodox people who had rigid notions about caste, that a story was invented to the effect that he was a servant of the great Master Īçvara Purī, (the Guru of Chaitanya), and as such though he was of humble origin, Chaitanya had no hesitation in taking him to his service. This is not a good explanation and shows only the weakness of the theory. Chaitanya had absolutely

no caste-prejudices, and we cannot therefore credit the story that he took Govinda to his service simply because the latter had to a certain extent redeemed himself from the blame

The writer of the *Kāchā* and the famous servant of Chaitanya 'Śrī Govinda' are identical.

of humble birth through serving *Īṣvara Purī* for a time. The mysterious silence of all biographers as to where he was born

and the family to which he belonged, only proves the fact that Govinda had obvious reason for avoiding the difficulties of facing strong appeals from his wife and relations, and preferred to live *incognito* at *Purī*. We find that Govinda was at *Nadiyā* only for a few days—it may not be for more than a month. The *Kāchā* states that he came to Chaitanya's house in the year 1509, and within a short time of this Chaitanya left home as a *Sannyāsī*. He travelled with Chaitanya for two years and seven months in the Deccan and then when he returned, it was not likely that the people of *Nadiyā* would, during their occasional visits to *Purī*, recognise him amongst thousands of Chaitanya's admirers, if Govinda really wanted to avoid recognition, as we believe, he did. The tale of having served *Īṣvara Purī* may have been invented by him in order to avoid recognition. At any rate it seems possible that he had good reasons to countenance the story whoever might have fabricated it.

The services offered to Chaitanya by Govinda *Karmakāra* and by Govinda of the *Purī*-temple

are of such similar nature that we may take it as another reason for believing that the persons were not really two, but identical.

Jayānanda, who was a contemporary of Chaitanya, mentions in his Chaitanya Maṅgala that a man named Govinda Karmakār accompanied Chaitanya in the Deccan. In a *pada* by Valarāma Dāsa, a poet of the 16th century, we find it mentioned that Govinda accompanied the master in his tour in Southern India.¹

In Chaitanya Bhāgavata too, we find it mentioned that one Govinda was a companion of Chaitanya at Nadiyā, though in a work written 63 years after the events described, we may not expect the chronology of events to be always faithfully observed.

I have tried to explain why Govinda Dāsa's Kadchā, of which two MSS.—one over 200 years old, and another a little less,—were discovered by the venerable Jaygopāla Gosvāmī of Çāntipur about 25 years ago, did not gain the same amount of publicity as the other standard biographies of Chaitanya did. The Kadchā of Govinda Dāsa, contain references to certain actions on the part of Chaitanya which the later Vaiṣṇavas would not like to preach. Chaitanya was not an orthodox Vaiṣṇava. The line "we pay our homage to Kṛṣṇa alone, but do not blame

¹ See Gour Pada Taranginī edited by Jagat Bandhu Bhadra.

other deities, nor how to them”¹ became the canon of the later Vaiṣṇavas. The worship of Kāli was to them a hideous practice. The incident related in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta about the articles of Kāli worship being thrown at the gateway of Ṣrīvāsa, was believed to be such a grave offence that the Brāhmaṇa Gopāla who did it is said to have been afflicted with leprosy for it. We find, however, in the Kaḍcha that Chaitanya was affected by ecstasies and trances before every temple. The devotional fervour that he showed in the temple of Aṣṭabhujā (Kāli) was remarkable. To Chaitanya’s eyes, which saw the clear vision of God everywhere, nothing was there in the world which could not inspire him with devotion. A tree, a leaf, a river and the sea all raised him to mystic trances, serving as a reminder and a token of his Beloved, and he was deeply affected by any temple which men had erected for the purpose of worship. The sectarian Vaiṣṇava of later times would not care to emphasise these little incidents in Chaitanya’s life and hence they did not give publicity to the Kaḍchā of Govinda Dāsa, which inspite of the indifference by which it was treated by the Vaiṣṇavas and by the author himself, is a noble work on Chaitanya. True, it does not record any learned discussions of Chaitanya with his opponents. Govinda was not

¹ “না করিব অস্ত্র দেবা প্রণাম বন্দন।”

himself sufficiently learned to be able to do so; but the book shows us the Master as he appeared to his own contemporaries. It gives besides a first hand account of nearly three years of Chaitanya's life, full of freshness and of the vivid colour of personal observation.

It is a great book in spite of the indifference with which it was treated.

Abundant references to Govinda Dāsa's latter life, if he is indeed identical with *Çri Govinda of Purī*, will be found in the *Madhya* and *Antya Khaṇḍas* of the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*, and we need scarcely mention them here as they are too well-known to the readers of that work.

The latter part of Govinda Dāsa's life.

I give below a brief summary of the account given by Govinda Dāsa. Nowhere else in the *Vaiṣṇava* works do we find such a true and vivid account of Chaitanya as in the pages of his faithful attendant. The places visited by Chaitanya in southern India are given in detail in this account.

Govinda Dāsa's father's name was *Çyāmādāsa*; his mother was *Mādhavī*; his wife was *Çaçīmukhī*. They belonged to the blacksmith's caste and were residents of *Kāñchana-nagara* in the district of *Burdwan*. Govinda Dāsa quarrelled with his wife and left home, one winter morning,

His family history.

in Çaka 1430 (1509 A.D.).¹ He came first to Kāṭwā and there he heard of Chaitanya. He felt an ardent desire to see the Master who was only 23 years old at the time. For the whole day Govinda Dāsa travelled across the corn-fields and crossing the Ganges, the next morning, arrived at the landing Ghāṭ called the Miçra's Ghāṭ at Nadiyā. On the right ran the small river Bāgdevī. The courtyard of Çrīvāsa was very close to the Miçra's Ghāṭ and near it was a large tank called the Ballālasāgara. On one side of it lay the ruins of the palace of that king. Govinda took his seat at the Ghāṭ, where he saw Chaitanya for the first time. The latter with his companions, among whom was the venerable Advaita, with beard and hair all hoary with age, had come to bathe there. Govinda was charmed at seeing the Master. He became a willing servant in Chaitanya's house where he saw Çachī Devī "of short stature and a quiet temperament" and Viṣṇupriyā "a coy girl just risen to womanhood, always busy in serving the Lord." Govinda

বর্দ্ধমান কাঞ্চননগরে মোর ধাম ।
 গ্রামাদাস পিতৃ নাম গোবিন্দ মোর নাম ॥
 অশ্রু হাতা বেড়ি গড়ি জুতিতে কামার ।
 মাধবী নামেতে হয় জননী আমার ॥
 আমার নারীর নাম শশীমুখী হয় ।
 এক দিন ঝগড়া করি মোরে কটু কয় ॥
 নিশ্চরণ মূৰ্খ বলি গালি দিল মোরে ।
 সেই অপমানে গৃহ ছাড়িলাম ভোরে ॥
 চৌদ্দশ ত্রিশ শাকে বাহিরেতে বাই ।
 অভিমানে গড় গড় ফিরে নাই চাই ॥

Katçhā by Govinda Dāsa.

describes Chaitanya's house as consisting of five large and beautiful straw-roofed huts on the bank of the Ganges. He mentions the names of the followers of Chaitanya and describes their great sorrow at his proposed Sannyāsa. Towards the end of the night of the last date of Pausa (January) 1431 Çaka, (1510 A.D.) Chaitanya accompanied by Govinda went to Kātwā where his followers also went on the following day. On the way, at Kanchannagar, Govinda's wife Çaçīmukhi met him and tried to win him back to the sweets of domestic life. Chaitanya could not resist her pathetic appeal and ordered his servant to give up the idea of going with him. Govinda, however, managed to run away from his wife and relations and rejoined Chaitanya some miles further on. Chaitanya's preaching at Kātwā and his initiation as Sannyāsi under the direction of Keçava Bhāratī are described with great force. A barber named Deva shaved Chaitanya's head on the occasion under a *Bel* tree. The traditional name given to a barber, who shaves one at the time of his Sannyāsa, is 'Madhu' and it is no wonder that Deva is called 'Madhu' by some of the Chaitanya's biographers. In the song of Gopichānd written in the 11th century we find the barber who shaved the monarch at the time of his Sannyāsa called Madhu.

From Kātwā Chaitanya came to Çantipura where his mother came to meet him. Chaitanya

Charitamṛta says that the Master visited Çantipura on his return from Purī. There is therefore a slight difference between two versions of the account of his visit to Çantipur. Govinda was an actual eye-witness, hence we credit his account. Crossing the Dāmodara, Chaitanya came to the house of a respectable man named Kaçi Miçra. Thence travelling towards the south he came to Hajipur and next to Midnapur, where a rich man named Keçava Sāmanta abused him as unworthy of being a Sannyāsi at such a tender age. Next Chaitanya visited Nayangarh and performed his worship before the image of Çiva there, called Dhaleçwara. Many ascetics gathered round him as he fell into one of his trances at the sight of the temple, and they became his ardent admirers. Here also two rich men named Bireçwara Sen and Bhawanīçankara Sen paid a visit to him. Bhawanīçankara was a very rich man. His officers rode horses and elephants and followed in his train. Bhawānīçankara was seated in a gold palankeen on a large tusker attended by four orderlies, each with a large silver staff in his hand.¹

বীরেশ্বর সেন আর ভবানী শঙ্কর ।
 বহু লোক সঙ্গে এল প্রভুর গোচর ॥
 চতুর্দোলা হস্তী অশ্ব আর বহু যান ।
 সঙ্গে করি আইলা প্রভুর বিদ্যমান ।
 ভবানী শঙ্কর হয় বড় ধনী জন ।
 শত শত লোক সঙ্গে করে আগমন ॥
 হস্তীর পৃষ্ঠেতে ডঙ্কা বিচিত্র নিশান ।
 চারিটা রূপার হুন্টা চলে আগুয়ান ॥

Chaitanya's preaching deeply affected the rich men and they listened to him with rapt attention. Thence Chaitanya came to Jaleçwara and beheld the image of Çiva there called Bilveçwara. Here he was in ecstasies of spiritual joy during many hours and met a Sannyāsi who said "I do not know who you are, but it appears to me that you are the reward of my life-long austerities present before me in the flesh. Your presence has given me the holy vision for which I have striven all my life." From Jaleçwara Chaitanya crossed the Suvarnarekhā, and met Raghunātha Dasā again. Thence he visited Hariharpur, Balasore and Nilgarh. From the latter place he crossed the Mahānadī and visited Gopinātha, the image of Kṛṣṇa, known as the thief of *khir*, (condensed milk), described on p. 215. He next visited the temple of Kṛṣṇa called the Sākshi Gopāla. Here he was all emotion for a day, embracing every one whom he saw in deep joy and weeping at the sight of the image with which is associated a beautiful old legend. Next he visited the temple of Ningrāja and went thence to Ātharanalā. From here he saw the flag on the summit of the great temple of Purī. "Here is the flag of my Lord—the Lord of the universe" he said. And on entering the temple the flow of his tears was so blinding that he could not see the image through his tears. He said again and again

“I have beheld Him—yea, the Lord of the Universe is before me.” He embraced all whom he met and pointed heavenward, but in his deep joy he could find no words. Inside the temple of Purī he swooned away, and the great scholar Sārvabhauma carried him un-

At Puri till March
1510 A.D.

conscious to his house. He was at Purī for three months till the end of march, 1510 A.D. In April he started for southern India accompanied by Govinda Dāsa and a Brahmin named Kṛṣṇa Dāsa. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa was ordered to go back after he had travelled a few days, so that Govinda alone accompanied him.

Leaving Purī he came to Ālālanātha, and met Rāmānanda Ray, the Prime Minister of Rāja Pratāpa Rudra, on the banks of the Godāvāri. From the latter place

In Southern India.

Chaitanya came to Trimanda where he had a public discussion with the Buddhist monks, the Rājā of Trimanda serving as the mediator. Rāmagiri, the leader of the monks, acknowledged his defeat.

Conversion of
Rāmagiri, the leader
of the Buddhists.

and a large number of the Buddhists became converts to Vaiṣṇavism. The next place he visited was Tungabhadra where Dhundi Rāma Tīrtha, a proud scholar of extensive learning, came to hold a discussion with Chaitanya. Chaitanya said he would not indulge in controversy of any sort. But the

sight of his ecstasies charmed Dhundi and humiliated his pride, and he became a staunch admirer of Chaitanya. After his conversion Dhundi Rāma took the Vaiṣṇava name of Haridāsa. Chaitanya next came to a place named Siddhavateṣwara

Tirtha Rāma and the two harlots. where a rich young man named Tirtha Rāma came with two

courtezans Satya Bāi and Lakṣmī Bāi to tempt the young ascetic and try his moral strength. Chaitanya here fell again into one of those trances which no one has described so vividly as Govinda Dāsa, and the sight of which acted with overwhelming force on his youthful tempter. Tirtha Rāma took the ascetic's vow leaving his vast properties to his wife Kamala Kumārī. The incident of this remarkable change has been very graphically described in the Kadcha. Chaitanya was at Vateṣwara for seven days and from there marched through a deep forest which extended over 20 miles. Crossing the forest he came to a village named Munnā in the evening. He sat under a tree at the outskirts of the village, and the people there came together in hundreds, attracted by the ardour of his faith. He sang and danced and passed into his usual trances which kept the people of Munnā transfixed to the spot, so long

Chaitanya begs clothes for an old woman at Munnā.

as he remained. He begged of them clothes for a poor old woman who had stood begging help from

him. Ramagiri, the Buddhist monk, was with him up to this time. From Munnā the Master came to Benkat. Here he had a discussion on religion with a great Sannyāsi and scholar named Rāmānanda. The latter also became a convert to the Vaiṣṇava faith. Chaitanya was at Benkata for three days. He next visited the wood of Bagulā which was the resort of a robber chief—a *Bhil*—named Pantha Bhil. There is a graphic description of how the *Bhil* and his fellow-robbers turned

The reformation
of the robber-
chief Bhilpantha.

Vaiṣṇavas through the influence of Chaitanya, giving up their evil calling. Leaving Bagulā he wandered like a mad man without tasting any food, and weeping for the joy of communion with Kṛṣṇa for three days and nights. During this time he spoke to no one, and tears flowed from his eyes incessantly. He next visited Girīṣwara where there was a large *Vela* tree near a temple of Ṣiva. A particular kind of delicious food named *paretā* is mentioned by Govinda here. Chaitanya met a Sannyāsi at this place who did not speak with anyone. Govinda Dāsa says that Chaitanya and the Sannyāsi communed with each other in a mysterious manner. The next place he visited was Tripadi where he converted a Ramite Sannyāsi named Mathurānatha. From Tripadi he came to a place named Pannā Nāra-singha. The high priest of the

Visit to different
shrines.

temple there showed him every mark of respect and entertained him with *pānnā*—a sort of syrup which was specially prepared for offering to the deity Nara Sinha. He next came to Viṣṇu Kānchi (Kanjiveram) where he was welcomed by a rich merchant named Bhavabhuti Seth. Chaitanya was received in the temple of Laksmīnārayaṇa at that place with high honour. Twelve miles away was another image of Ṣiva which Chaitanya also visited. From here he saw the Pakṣa hill at the foot of which stood the shrine of Pakṣa on the river Bhadrā. Here Chaitanya partook of a fruit named Champā. From this place at a distance of 10 miles lay the celebrated shrine named Kāla-tīrtha. Here was a temple of Varāha which Chaitanya visited. Going southward from the temple Chaitanya visited the Sandhitīrtha, a place of special sanctity where the rivers Nandā and Bhadrā met. Here Sadānanda Purī, a learned Brahmin, who advocated non-dualism changed his views after a discussion with Chaitanya. From this place Chaitanya came to Chāipallī (Trichinopali) and met a female ascetic of great fame named Siddheḡwari. Visiting the image of Ṣrigālabhairavī he went to the banks of the Kāveri. He next visited the city of Nagara where there was at the time a beautiful temple dedicated to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. Chaitanya stayed at Nagara for three days.

Here a Brahmin had come to assault him, taking him for a false ascetic. The people wanted to treat him severely but this Chaitanya prevented. Chaitanya thence came to Tanjore, fourteen miles from Nagore. He was shown the sacred spots, with which the city abounded, by a Brahmin named Dhaleçwara. There was a large tank in the centre of the city called Kuntikarnapārā which struck Chaitanya as very wonderful. Close by was the hill Chandālu in which there were many Goomphās (caves) inhabited by ascetics and monks. Here a man named Bhatta charmed with the devotion of Chaitanya invited him to his house. Here he also met Sureçwara, the leader of the ascetics, in a pleasant spot, surrounded by avenues of trees, and passed some days in his company. The place was within the jurisdiction of the king Jayasingh who had exempted all ascetics from paying any tax. Chaitanya next came to Padmakota where he visited the temple of Aṣṭabhujā Chāṇḍī. The female pilgrims wept to see Chaitanya's emotions and ecstasies there and a blind old man was so much excited that he fell dead at his feet. From Padmakota Chaitanya came to Tripatra where he visited the image of Çiva called Chandecwara. The old priest Bhargadeva, who had already heard that a young Sannyāsi of wonderful devotion to God was touring in the country,

Bhargadeva.

longed to have a sight of him. Lean and ragged as Chaitanya was, the beauty of his person was still considerable, his eyes which overflowed with tears at the mere mention of Kṛṣṇa's name had an irresistible charm and on seeing him the old priest Bharga fell at his feet saying, "It is for you, my saviour, that I have waited all my life. Blessed am I that I see you to-day." Chaitanya said that he was a very humble man of small merit. But admiration for him was already at its height in the locality, and thousands of people came to see him. Often we find him forgetful of the world wandering about the fields absorbed in mystic vision, while children threw dust at him, saying, "Look, there goes one mad after God." Leaving Tripātra he came to a forest which required fifteen days to cross and he did so in company with pilgrims and ascetics; Govinda was, of course, his constant attendant. Chaitanya came next to Ṣri Rangam and visited the temple of Narasinha Deva. Here he fell into ecstasies of joy and charmed, amongst others, a very pious Brahmin named Yudhisthira who followed him for some miles when he left Ṣri Rangam. Chaitanya came from the latter place to Risava Hills where he met a pious and learned ascetic named Paṛāmānanda Purī. He next came to Rāmanātha and thence to Rameṣwara where he visited the celebrated temple of Ṣiva. We find in the accounts of Govinda Dāsa, that

people of the neighbouring places gave him the name of "Hari bolā," as he cried "Hari bol" day and night and wept. The word "Hari bolā" is a purely Bengali word, at least it is not current in any of the southern dialects. Curiously, however, we find in the temple of Rameçwara an old statue of one known as "Hari bolā." It is quite probable that this is a statue of Chaitanya. The Çivaites did not like the religion of emotion that he preached, hence they were not very favourably disposed towards him. The legend current in the locality is that this 'Hari hola' was an *asura*. In Bengal also one of the Çaiva *tantras* has called Chaitanya an incarnation of Tripurāsura. A learned Sannyāsi in the Rāmeçwara temple challenged Chaitanya to a discussion and yielded like many others to the great fascination of his inspired speech and devotion. Chaitanya stayed at Rameçwara for three days and at Maddhivana he met a Yogi—an old and venerable looking man—who seated on a rock, merged in communion with God, ate nothing for days together nor opened his mouth. Chaitanya stood with joined hands soliciting the favour and blessings of the sage; whereupon he opened his mouth for the first time after long years and greeted Chaitanya with the mysterious words "*Chāmbani Çingūri.*" The other ascetics present there fell at Chaitanya's feet in great admiration as their venerable senior had spoken to him as he had

done to none else for years. From Maddhivana Chaitanya came to Tattwakunda and thence to the banks of the river Tāmraparṇī. He stayed here for fifteen days and left it on the full moon day of Magh 1433 Çaka (February 1511 A.D.). Crossing the Tāmraparṇī he arrived at Kanyākumārī (Cape Comorin). At the sight of the sea which in the words of Govinda Dāsa “had nothing striking to see yet everything wonderful there”¹ Chaitanya’s frenzy knew no bounds. He seemed to see the Unseen and the illimitable in shape before him. Chaitanya joined a band of Sannyāsis and marched with them to the Santhal hills—a distance of 30 miles from Kanyākumārī. There Govinda looked worried and pale having had nothing to eat for the whole day. But Chaitanya while fasting was as cheerful as ever in the joy of divine communion and sang songs, while the Sannyāsis surrounding him played on cymbals. A merchant unexpectedly came there with the offer of a good meal of which the Sannyāsis partook, Govinda thanking God for it more than any one else. Through the hilly tracts they came to Trivancore of which the reigning king was then Rudrapati. On hearing of the fame of Chaitanya which had spread throughout the Deccan by that time, Rudrapati

At the sight of the sea.

¹ “দেখিবার কিছু নাই তথাপি মোহন।”

sent a man inviting him to his palace. Chaitanya refused to go there. Whereupon the king himself came to him apologizing for having made the request. Rudrapati was deeply versed in the Bhāgavata literature and found in Chaitanya a manifestation of those signs of devotion which made a man adored as a God. The king shed tears in deep spiritual joy and Chaitanya embraced him saying "He who sheds tears, at the name of God is dearer to me than life." Chaitanya stayed there a fortnight and saw the Rāmāgiri hills on which stood the temple of Rāma and Sīta. Thence he proceeded to Payoṣṇi where he visited the temple of Çiva Nārayāna. Here he met and defeated a scholar who believed in the tenets of Çankara. He was in the temple of Singāri at the time. Chaitanya next went to Matsatīrtha and next to Cachāra where there was a temple of Durgā. From this place he marched towards the bank of the river Bhadrā which branches off from the Kṛṣṇā. From this place he proceeded to Nāga-panchapadi where he stayed for three days. Thence crossing the Tungabhadrā he came to the hill called the Kotgiri from where flows the river, Kāveri. Chaitanya proceeded from here towards the south leaving on the left the hill Satyaḡiri which looked like a blue painting on

Rudrapati, the
Raja of Trivancore.

Ramgiri and other
shrines.

the horizon. He came next to Chandipur. It was here that the celebrated ascetic and scholar Içwara, Bhārati challenged him to a controversy but afterwards acknowledged Chaitanya to be his superior in every respect. So ardently did he

Içwara Bhārati. long for Chaitanya's company that the latter with difficulty dissuaded him from his resolve to accompany him throughout the rest of his tour. Bhārati however went with Chaitanya for many miles till he could be persuaded to return. Leaving him Chaitanya penetrated into the depth of hilly lands where he wandered for two days unable to find his way out of the forest. At one place rows of Kadamva trees met his eyes and he was mad with joy owing to the associations of the sacred tree with Kṛṣṇa. "There goes my

Further South. flute-singer Kṛṣṇa" he cried and in ecstasy ran after the vision that he saw, with tears in his eyes, and Govinda knew not how to bring his frenzied Master to his senses. Emerging at last from the forest they came to a small village where a poor Brāhmana was struck with his appearance and asked him to be his guest. The Brāhmana said "It may be that I see in thee my Kṛṣṇa in the flesh, else why does a flash of lightning seem to emanate from your person?" For the whole night Chaitanya sang the praises of Kṛṣṇa in the small courtyard of the Brāhmana's house where the

little village had gathered to witness the beauty of his emotions and ecstasies. Afterwards they said "This little courtyard is sacred to us today as Vṛndāvana." From this little village Chaitanya came to a place called Kandara commanding the view of the beautiful Nīlagiri (lit. the blue hills). Govinda gives here a very eloquent description of this hill. In the morning Chaitanya came to the city of Gurjara. The city was a flourishing one at the time. Here Arjuna, a learned Pundit, again touched on controversial theological topics, but Chaitanya's mind was elsewhere; without listening to him he yielded to his 'divine frenzy'. He cried aloud "Oh Kṛṣṇa, oh my Lord" and tears flowed from his eyes and a halo was seen round his head.

To Gurjara.

With songs and speech full of devotional fervour, he became the centre of a charmed multitude. The Marhattas were taken by surprise at his wonderful display of devotion,—the women wiping away their tears with their draperies as they heard him speak in his ecstasy of spiritual joy.¹ Some-

এত বলি কৃষ্ণে বসিয়া ডাক দিল ।
 সে স্থান অমনি যেন বৈকুণ্ঠ হইল ॥
 অনুকূল বায়ু তবে বহিতে লাগিল ।
 দলে দলে গ্রাম্য লোক আসি দেখা দিল ॥
 ছুটিল পদ্যের গন্ধ বিমোহিত করি ।
 অজ্ঞান হইয়া নাম করে গৌর-হরি ।
 বড় বড় মহারাষ্ট্রী আসি দলে দলে ।
 শুনিতে লাগিল নাম মিলিয়া সকলে ॥

times Chaitanya spoke in Tamil (he had acquired that language in the course of his tour) and at others in Sanskrit. From Gurjara Chaitanya travelled to Poona. For seven days he was mute and scarcely ate anything. On the way to Poona he ascended the Bijapur hills, and thence proceeded northward towards the

The Sahjya hills. Sahjya hill. It was a noble

mountain scene which struck the pilgrims with its solitary grandeur. In Chaitanya it gave rise to great emotion and he ran mad with joy, seeing the vision of Kṛṣṇa there. He came to Poona where he stopped near an artificial lake called the Achhasara under the shade of a large Bakula tree. Poona is described as a great centre of Sanskrit learning where the Gīta and the Bhāgavata were exclusively studied by a considerable number of scholars. Chaitanya here found a congenial element and went into his inspired ecstasies

A black sheep. again and again, as the scholars discussed Bhakti. There was among them a certain materialistic Brāhmaṇa who believing Chaitanya to be insane, told him that Kṛṣṇa himself was in the lake. As he pointed to the water, the mad prophet of Nadia

পক্ষাৎ ভাগেতে মুই দেখি তাকইয়া ।
শত শত কুলবধু আছে দাঁড়াইয়া ।
ভক্তি ভরে হরি নাম শুনিছে সকলে ।
নারীগণ অশ্রুজল মুছিছে আঁচলে ।

looked down into it with a look full of love, and when the Brahmin repeated his jest, Chaitanya suddenly jumped into the lake and became unconscious. Many people at once went to his help, and pulled him out of the water where he would have been drowned, but for their timely assistance. They censured the sceptical Brāhmaṇa strongly, but Chaitanya regaining consciousness, said gently. "Why do you censure him, friends, it is true that the Lord is everywhere, in the land and water alike. Blessed is he for he saw Him there and I a beggar of His mercy that I am, sought Him in vain" and as he said this, he wept in deep emotion. At Poona he heard from a Brāhmaṇa

At Poona.

named Tannu that there was a temple of Çiva called Billeçwara near Gourghat at the city of Patās. At the foot of the temple a fair was held annually. And Chaitanya visited Çiva and the fair which was being held at the time and proceeded thence to Devaleçwara. At some distance from the latter place lay the city of Jejuri. Khāndava was the god of the temple there and parents used to offer their daughters to that deity. These daughters called themselves 'wives of Khāndava' and led unholy lives and the pilgrims were often enticed by these wretched women, known in the locality as the 'Murāris.'

Chaitanya, when he saw them, felt

The Murāris.

a deep compassion for them and said to Govinda "How cruel are the parents of these girls, Govinda? How have they the heart to offer their own children to Khāndava to lead vicious lives?" He went to the Murāris himself, though Govinda did not like his going there.¹ The most conspicuous among the Murāris was Indirā Devī, and as Chaitanya held a sweet discourse full of spiritual fervour with the unfortunate women, they felt a thrill of repentance and an ardent desire to reform themselves. Indirā Devī particularly was greatly moved. She eventually left the city as an anchoress. Chaitanya next visited the Chorānandi forest where dwelt the Brāhmaṇa robber Nāroji—an old man of sixty. He met Chaitanya when he was in one of his trances, which suggested to the bewildered eyes of the wicked Brāhmaṇa, the beauty of heaven itself. The old robber threw away his weapons, deserted his band and followed Chaitanya as an ascetic. Govinda Dāsa's description of the change that came over Nāroji is a vivid one. The *ex* robber-chief undertook

¹ Govinda wanted to avoid these women out of moral considerations. But Chaitanya, "the saviour of the fallen" ("Patita Pāvana") was ever swayed by compassion and had hatred for none. The moral caution, suggested by Govinda in the following words of his, shows how ardent he was to keep the reputation of Sannyās's vow unspotted in the eyes of the people.

মুহি বলি সে স্থানেতে গিয়া কাজ নাই ।
না শুনিলা মোর বর্ণি চৈতন্য গোসাই ।"

Kaḍachā.

to show Chaitanya all the shrines on that side of the country, saying to him with tears of repentance that every spot there was made familiar to him by the exigencies of his vicious calling.

From the depth of the Chorānandi forest Chaitanya emerged accompanied by Govinda and Naroji and proceeded towards Khandala, a village on the river Mulā. The people of Khandala were so hospitable that they quarrelled among themselves over their rival claims of entertaining their guest. "I saw him first" one of them would say, when another gave him the lie and often the quarrel, that ensued, resulted in a hand to hand fight.¹ Chaitanya stood quiet and would not go to any one's house, though so many were eager to have him. A

Khandala. rich-man offered him fine clothes and a good meal. Chaitanya said "These two men with me have got alms given by some poor people. So I do not need your presents. The whole world with all its glories will pass away like a dream and you

“বড় আতিথেয় হয় যত খণ্ডলিয়া ।
 টানাটানি করে সবে প্রভুরে লইয়া ।
 অবশেষে সকলে বিবাদ বাধাইল ।
 খুনাখুনি করিবারে প্রস্তুত হইল ॥
 এক জন বলে মুহি আগে দেখিয়াছি ।
 আর জন বলে আমি ভিক্ষা আনিয়াছি ॥”

and I shall be nowhere, my friend. Only the

Nasik.

Lord will be there. I seek Him

and not rich food or clothes.”¹

So saying he closed his eyes from which fell tears of spiritual ecstasy, while Naroji sat by him in mute wonder. Chaitanya next visited Nāsik and Trimukha and then came to

Panchavati.

Panchavati. Here he had vision

of God and he closed his eyes, while his face glowed with radiance. Govinda said that as he saw him in that condition he was struck by the sight, and thought that he saw a

Damana.

god. Chaitanya proceeded thence

to Damana and still further north where wandering for fifteen days he came to the

Suratha.

ancient city of Suratha. The

Goddess Aṣṭabhujā was there, it is said, established by Raja Suratha himself.

Here an ascetic asked him how God should be loved. Chaitanya said “Just as an ordinary woman when she falls in love with a handsome youth yearns for him so may the soul yearn for

¹ Chaitanya then advised the rich man to distribute his presents among the poor people who needed help. He said,

এই যে ব্রহ্মাণ্ড তুমি দেখিছ নয়নে ॥

কোথায় চলিয়া যাবে ভেবে দেখ মনে ॥

বিলাস বিভব সব বিলুপ্ত হইবে ।

কেবল ব্রহ্মাণ্ডপতি বিরাজ করিবে ॥

—বহু খাদ্য লয়ে বল কি হইবে ।

দরিদ্র দুঃখীরা দেহ অভাব পূরিবে ।

Him. This is the mystery of spiritual love.”³
 At this time a Brāhmaṇa came there with the offering of a goat for a sacrifice to the goddess. Chaitanya’s teachings made him alter his mind and he set the goat at liberty. From Suratha Chaitanya came to the bank of the river Tāpti, where he visited the temple of the god Vāmana. The city of Bharoch (Broach) on the Narbadā had a sacred altar famous for centuries and Chaitanya visited it. Next he came to Baroda. There was a temple of Dākarji to the east of the town, to which Chaitanya paid a flying visit and then came to the town proper. The Rājā of Barodā is described as a pious prince who paid his respects to Chaitanya. Here Naroji got fever and died. And Govinda begged
 At Barodā. alms for burying the dead.
 Chaitanya sang the praises of the Lord over the grave of the deceased for the whole night. From Baroda Chaitanya went in a western direction and crossed the Mahānadī and reached Ahamāda- bad. The town was a very flourishing one but Chaitanya did not go to any one’s house though many wished to entertain him. He stayed near a public garden named Nandinī. An ascetic who was deeply read in the Bhāgavata realised

১ সুন্দর নায়ক দেখি সামান্য নায়িকা ।
 সেই ভাবে দেখে তারে হয় রাগান্বিকা ॥
 সেই ভাবে কৃৎসকে ডাকছে বার বার ।
 আপনি যুচিয়া বাবে মনের আঁধার ॥

Chaitanya's purity and told the people of the town that he was a remarkable man. Many came to see him and Govinda Dāsa says that he could not understand their speech. "As the Master however had picked up different dialects in the course of his tour he talked with them. I could

Crosses Subhramati and reaches Dwārakā. only gather facts from the Master. But this I did not dare to do often.

"I took my notes privately from what I learnt in this way." Chaitanya addressed the multitude who had assembled at Ahmedabad to receive instructions from him and thence proceeded further west reaching the river Subhrāmatī which he crossed and arrived at Dwārakā. Here they met two Bengali pilgrims—Govinda and Rāmacharaṇa of Kulin-gram Vasu family. They were great admirers of the Master, and Govinda Dāsa writes: "Meeting Bengalis after a long time, my heart felt a thrill of delight."² The four came to a village named Ghogā where lived the celebrated courtizan named Bāramukhi. Her beauty was

• "না পারি লোকের বুলি সমস্ত বুঝিতে ।
যাহা পারি তাহা লিখি আকার ইঙ্গিতে ॥
এই দেশে তীর্থ পর্যটিয়া দীর্ঘ কাল ।
সকলের বুলি বুঝে শরীর ছলল ॥
ছুই চারি বাত কভু প্রভুরে পুছিয়া ।
কড়া করিয়া রাখি মনে বিচারিয়া ॥
যেই লীলা দেখিলাম আপন নয়নে ।
কড়া করিয়া রাখি অতি সঙ্কোপনে ॥

Kaḍachā.

"বহু কাল পরে গৌরবাসীরে দেখিয়া ।
আনন্দে মানস বেন উঠিল নাচিয়া ॥" Kaḍachā. "

great and the wealth she had accumulated was immense. A vivid and interesting description is given of her adopting the vow of asceticism under the influence of Chaitanya. She bestowed all her wealth on her maid servant Mīrā, and thenceforth followed the pious life of a Vaiṣṇavī. Nābhāji, the author of the Hindu Bhaktamāla, describes the career of Bāramukhi, but as Chaitanya's stay was short his name was not remembered in the locality in later times. Nābhāji says that by the influence of a great Sādhu her life was changed. It is from Govinda Dāsa that we learn the manner in which her life was so changed and that it was Chaitanya himself who converted her. Here also a sceptical and wicked Brāhmaṇa named Bālāji, who had at first abused Chaitanya and tried to assault him, afterwards became one of his most humble admirers. From Ghogā Chaitanya started for Jaffarabad which he reached in three days. From the latter place it took Chaitanya six days to come to Somanātha. The ruined temples and the remnants of its ancient splendour filled Chaitanya with grief and he gave free expression to his feelings, when suddenly a Sannyāsi, who looked like the god Çiva himself, came and lifted his hands to bless Chaitanya. The latter ran to meet him. But he said a word or two to Chaitanya, which Govinda could not understand,

Somanātha.

and disappeared. The three companions of Chaitanya could not ascertain where the Sannyāsi went. Chaitanya smiled at their questions about the latter without saying anything, and walked three times round the temple of Somanātha. A *pāndā* (priest of the temple) came and wanted something from Chaitanya who said he had nothing to give ; whereupon Govindacharaṇa of Kulingrāma paid the *pāndā* two Rupees. From Somanātha the party went to Junāgaḍa where they stayed two days and visited the temple of Rcsanji. Chaitanya stayed here in the house of a Brāhmaṇa named Mīraji. From there the four started for the Grinar hills. At the foot of the hills lay Bharga Deva, the leader of a sect of local Sannyāsis, very seriously ill, attended by his companions who all looked sad. Chaitanya prescribed *nini* juice for him which cured Bharga Deva. After his restoration to health he not only felt grateful to Chaitanya but was so moved by his spiritual life that he accompanied him on his tour. They reached a high point of the Grinar hill where Chaitanya was shown the foot-prints of Kṛṣṇa. Here the vision of God came again and again and he was in trances of ecstasy and devotion for days together. Descending from the hill the five came to the bank of the river Bhadrā, crossing which they came to a forest named Dhanantari Jhāri.

The Grinar Hills.

Dhanantari Jhāri.

Here a peculiar fruit of the *Kāmraṅgā* species is described by Govinda as being of a very sweet and delicious taste. Chaitanya with his four companions and a number of Sannyāsis wandered in the depth of the forest for seven days, after which they arrived at Gopītalā in Amarāvati which local tradition identified as the ancient

Prabhāsa.

shrine of the Prabhāsa. Chaitanya gave an address to the people of

Amarāvati with tears in his eyes, asking them to love God with their whole soul. They responded and sang the praises of God but said

Amarāvati.

“You sir, you look like the god you speak of.” At Amarāvati

he was for three days and reached Dwāarakā on the 1st of Aswin, 1432 Çaka (September 1511 A. D.) The town commanded the view of the sea from one side and from the other the picturesque scenery of the Raivataka hill, and Chaitanya saw in these and in the temple of Dwāarakādhīça the vision of his Kṛṣṇa and was mad with joy for a fortnight. The people said “We never saw a Sannyāsi like this young man. His presence is heaven to us.” Chaitanya was at Dwāarakā for two weeks and returned to Baradā on the last day of Aswin (October, 1511). After leaving Baradā, the party travelled for 16 days and reached the banks of the river Narbadā. Here Bharga Deva took leave of Chaitanya with many words expressive of his high regards for

him. Bharga said "I take you to be Kṛṣṇa himself." Chaitanya gave him a look of censure and requested him not to say such profane things again. Bharga wanted to know from the Master how faith in God could be attained. Chaitanya said "It is His grace alone that can bring unto the soul of man faith in God. Neither learning nor reasoning can do this." The next day Chaitanya and his companions reached the banks of the Narbadā, and thence came to the city of Dohada.

Dohada on the bank of the Narbadā.

Here a Vasya millionaire had a temple of Kṛṣṇa. The man dreamt that Kṛṣṇa himself appeared to him and told him that He was present in the town as a young Sannyāsi. The merchant was surprized to find in Chaitanya the same Sannyāsi whom he had seen in his dream, and he offered his tribute of worship to Chaitanya. So deep was the impression in his mind that he gave up his vast property and turned a Sannyāsi. For two days the four travelled in a jungle without tasting any food and Govinda Dāsa writes "We felt the pangs of hunger, but Chaitanya was as cheerful as ever." They reached a place named Amjhorā next, and Chaitanya said, noticing the dejected spirit of his half-starved companions "When the Lord will bring us meal, we shall eat." To the village Govinda went and got two *seers* of flour

as alms. Chaitanya prepared 16 pieces of

Chaitanya gives
his share of bread
to an old woman.

bread with his own hands,
but an old woman came with
a child and begged something

to eat. Chaitanya gladly gave her his own
share. In the night Govinda brought some

fruits which he ate. Next day he visited the
Lakṣmankunda and then reached a village

named Mandura on the Vindhya hills. Here
in the cave of the mountain there sat a vener-

able Sannyāsi with beard and hair all knotted
and gray, nails grown big and body emaciated

by fasting and austerities. His presence was
imposing, he had a bright fair

A strange San-
nyāsi.

colour and he was entirely naked.

Chaitanya with joined hands stood before him,
and the revered saint spoke one or two words

to him and smiled. Govinda could not under-
stand what he said. They proceeded in their

journey and Govinda said "On our right lay
the Narbadā and on the left the Vindhya hills;

at the foot of the hill was the city of Mandurā."
After three days the travellers reached Deoghar.

The cure of a
lepor at Deoghara.

Here a Vaisya named Adinārā-
yaṇa, afflicted with leprosy, came

to Chaitanya and implored him for some cure.
Chaitanya, full of compassion, gave him some-

thing to eat from the meal he had offered to
God. This, it is said, cured him. Adinārāyaṇa

turned a Sannyāsi. Thirty miles from Deoghar

was the village of Çivāni and on the East stood the Mahal hills (Rajmahal?). After visiting Çivāni, Chaitanya came to Chandipur where there was a temple of the Goddess Chandī. Thence he came to Rāipur where, the report of his return having already spread, people came from different places to meet him. From Rāipur Chaitanya came to Vidyānagara, the town where Rāma Ray, the minister of Pratāpa Rudra, lived. Chaitanya asked him to accom-

Vidyānagara.

pany him to Purī. Rāma Ray said that important state-business would keep him there for a few days more, but he would meet Chaitanya at Purī shortly. Chaitanya left Vidyānagara and marched towards the south. In six days the

pilgrims arrived at a place called

Ratnapur.

Ratnapura which was a fortified town and full of fine buildings. Çantiçwara was the name of the Rājā of the place who interviewed Chaitanya and paid his respects to him.

Çantiçwara the Rājā of the place.

In the morning the party came to Samvalpur surrounded by hills on all sides. Twenty miles from this town was a place named Vramara which was a favourite resort of Vaiṣṇava ascetics. Chaitanya stayed here four days. One of the staunchest admirers of Chaitanya at this place was a Uriyā Brāhmaṇa named Viṣṇu Rudra who was held in considerable esteem by the people of the

locality. From Vramara Chaitanya came to the town of Dāsapala where there was a temple of Kurma—the Great Tortoise.

^{Dāsapala.} The image was in a well called the Rasāla Kunda. Chaitanya stayed here three days. A Marwari Brāhmaṇa living in the town was hostile to the Vaiṣṇavas. A youthful son of this Brahmin came to Chaitanya and complained to him that his father was a sworn foe to all religion. He begged Chaitanya to reform him if it was at all possible. Hardly had he finished saying so, when the infuriated father came with a stick in his hand and threatened to beat Chaitanya with it for having turned the head of his only son. Chaitanya said “Here am I completely in your hands, beat me as much as you like, but sing the praises of the Lord; that is the price you will have to pay for beating me, my friend.” And as Chaitanya said this, the vision of Kṛṣṇa came to him and he was unconscious of the external world. He lay like a painted picture fixing his gaze heavenward, tears falling from his eyes. The Brāhmaṇa was awe-struck and soon after became a Vaiṣṇava convert. From Dāsapala, Chaitanya with his three companions came to the bank of the river Riṣikulyā. He stayed here for three days and when he came near Alālanātha, all his companions of Bengal and Orissa, who were wretched during his absence, formed themselves

into a grand procession and marched from Purī to meet him. There were Gadādhara and Murari, Khanjānāchārya, who though a lame man ran faster than others¹, Sarbabhauma, the scholar, Rāmadāsa, Kṛṣṇadāsa, Haridāsa the younger, Jagannātha, Daivakinandana, the excellent singer Lakṣmanā, Gauridāsa and hundreds of others. Balaramā Dāsa sounded the horn in the procession and Narahari held the flag.² It was a superb sight to see him again at the house of Kaçi Miçra at Purī. Sārbabhauma, the great scholar, with joined hands stood before him and Murāri Gupta, that prince of physicians and scholars, knelt down, both saying how hard and painful had been their separation from him. The Master had not allowed them to accompany him and they had spent all this time in expectation of his return. King Pratāpa Rudra³ was there—casting aside all his royal splendour, as a humble soul in whom a true spiritual longing had begun and from whom

Return to Purī
and the great
reception.

¹ গঙ্গন আচার্য আসে গড় অনুরাগে ।

খোঁড়া বটে তবু আইসে সকলের আগে ॥

Kādūchā.

রামশিঙা বাজাইতে বড়ই পণ্ডিত ।

বলরাম দাস আইসে হয়ে হরষিত ॥

নরহরি দেখা দেয় নিশান লইয়া ।

Kādūchā.

² নগর কীৰ্তনে যবে মহাপ্রভু যায় ।

দীনবেশে মহারাজ পেছু পেছু ধায় ॥

Kādūchā.

the last shadow of vanity had been driven out. Govinda Dāsa's description of Chaitanya's return to Purī is so graphic that the reader, while reading it, feels himself to be, as it were, in the midst of this gathering, paying homage to the Master with the rest. On the third day of Magha, in January, 1511, Chaitanya came back to Purī. So his travel from Purī and back took him altogether one year eight months and twenty-six days. A few days after his return Chaitanya sent Govinda Dāsa to Çāntipur with a letter to Advaita. Here the narrative breaks off suddenly.

The above is a mere outline and a brief summary of the elaborate descriptions of Govinda Dāsa. The charm of the work lies in the simplicity of its descriptions and a total absence of exaggeration. It is a plain tale divested of all supernatural elements which were attributed to Chaitanya by the later biographers. The beauty of Chaitanya's life is realized here in its simplest and therefore in its most impressive form. The only supernatural anecdote to be found here is the cure of a leper at Deoghar by Chaitanya. But the account of this incident is so unassumingly simple that it is difficult to discredit it, coming as it does from an eye-witness of unquestionable veracity.

XXIX.—Tour in Upper India.

Chaitanya, as we have seen above, returned to Purī in February, 1511. He remained there

till October, 1516. During this time he had attempted several times to make a trip to Vṛndāvana. But the importunities of Rāmānanda Ray, Vāsudeva Sārbabhauna, Rājā Pratāpa Rudra and many others, to whom his presence was so precious, had held him back. In October, 1515, however, he had left Purī and we have seen that extensive preparations were made for his tour by Rājā Pratap Rudra and Pradyumna Miçra, *alias* Nṛsinghānanda'. He went to Rāmakelī *via* Çāntipur, followed by thousands of men. At a place called Kānāier Nāṭaṇālā, he changed his mind and spoke as follows: "To Vṛndāvana I

1' Pradyumna Miçra (Nṛsinghānanda) constructed a road for Chaitanya's tour from Kulia to Kānāier Nāṭaṇālā. We already noticed it in a foregoing page. We reproduce here the full text. "The road from Kulia was made with stone with metallic decorations. Bukula trees were there on both sides of the road and tanks were dug for the use of the pilgrims,—the companions of Chaitanya. The *ghats*, the landing steps, were built with stone. Aquatic birds made pleasant sounds there, and the air was fragrant and cool. When Chaitanya passed by the road, he found it strewn over with thousands of flowers from which stalks were removed. The road went up to Kānāier Nāṭaṇālā". From Kulia,—award of Nadia—to Kānāier Nāṭaṇālā the road extended over a space of many miles.

"বৃন্দাবনে যাবেন প্রভু শুনি নৃসিংহানন্দ ।
 পথ সাজাইল মনে করিয়া আনন্দ ॥
 কুলিয়া নগর হইতে পথ রড়ে বাঁধাইল ।
 নিবৃন্ত পুষ্প শয্যা উপরে পাতিল ॥
 পথে দুই দিকে পুষ্প বকুলের শ্রেণী ।
 মধ্যে মধ্যে দুই পাশে দিবা পুষ্করিণী ॥
 রত্নবন্ধ ঘাট তাহে প্রফুল্ল কমল ।
 নানা পক্ষী কোলাহল সুধাসম জল ॥
 শীতল সমীর বহে নানা গন্ধ লইঞা ।
 কানাইর নাটশালা পয্যন্ত লইল বাঁধিয়া ॥

must go all alone. Mādhavendra Puri went there in a true spirit of devotion suffering hardships which but served to fan the flame of his faith. And lo, I am going there like a prince with a retinue of soldiers and drummers who beat drums to proclaim my journey. Oh, fie upon me!"¹ He came back to Purī and stayed there for four months till the middle of 1516, and then he requested the few friends, to whom he had communicated his intention to start out alone for Vṛndāvana, not to speak of his intended trip to any one. They remonstrated with him and urged that at least a Brāhmaṇa servant should go with him to cook his meals. He addressed Rāmananda and Swarupa and said "There are so many willing to go, if I take one, others will be disappointed." But a Brāhmaṇa named Baladeva Bhattāchārya had already projected a tour to Vṛndāvana and when Chaitanya started for the place he joined the Master on the road and Chaitanya could not get rid of him. A journey to upper India on foot was not safe in those days,

¹ Pratāpa Rudra, the king, had ordered that wherever Chaitanya would bathe, a pillar should be raised to mark the landing ghāt.

বাঁহা স্নান করি প্রভু যান নদী পারে ।

তাই স্তম্ভ রোপণ কর মহাতীর্থ করে ॥

The Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda, Chapter 16.

¹ বৃন্দাবনে যাব কাঁহা একাকী হইয়া ।

সৈন্য সঙ্গে চলিয়াছি ঢাক বাজাইয়া ॥

ধিক ধিক আপনাকে বলি হইয়া অস্থির ।

নিবৃত্তি হইয়া পুণঃ আইলাম গঙ্গাতীর ॥

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda, Chapter 16.

as there was often fighting between the different States making the position of the pilgrims extremely insecure. But the ascetics had little risk of being molested, as they were merely beggars, and Chaitanya, when he started depended on God's mercy alone.

Starts privately.

He left Purī during the night and it was kept so secret that in the morning people assembled in hundreds as usual to pay their respects to him and were not told where Chaitanya had gone till a long time after. Chaitanya did not follow the main roads lest people should track him out and join him. Leaving Cuttack on the right he travelled through the forest path of Jhari Khanda, which was a part of Chotanagpur.

The description which the Chaitanya Charitamṛta gives of this tour is very inadequate. Baladeva Bhattāchārya, Chaitanya's companion, evidently took no notes of it. And what he reported to others, was evidently in course of time greatly distorted. The names of the places visited were generally forgotten, whilst the marvellous and legendary stories gathered round each little incident which, when recounted by story-tellers, made a deeper impression on the country people than historical facts. This accounts for the supernatural elements that have occasionally entered into the descriptions of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kayirāja, who,

though himself a truthful narrator of those facts which he personally observed, being an orthodox Vaiṣṇava, too often allowed credulity to get the better of his judgment. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa sets down in all seriousness, for instance, such puerilities as the account of a tiger who utters the name of Kṛṣṇa, being inspired by Chaitanya. It should, however, be said that in the first hand accounts about Chaitanya that Kṛṣṇadāsa obtained from Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha, Lokānatha and Gopāla Bhatta, his records are characterised by the vividness of living history. In the minuteness and patient industry with which the theological topics are treated and the various important incidents of Chaitanya's life are narrated, Chaitanya Charitāmṛta stands as a monumental example among the biographical works of that age.

Reverting to Chaitanya's tour, it is said, that during his wanderings in the forests of Chotanagpur he was much pleased with Baladeva Achārya's modesty and earnest desire for the spiritual life. Chaitanya is said to have made this reflection on the occasion. "When with the intention of going to Vṛndavana, I left Purī five months ago and came to Bengal I was overjoyed to see the sacred banks of the Ganges again and to behold my beloved mother. 'But there was such a large crowd who persisted in their resolve to accompany me that I had to leave

my plan of visiting Vṛndāvana at the time. The loneliness of this place and your companionship give me an infinite degree of pleasure. In this woody tracts my mind revels in the sight of God's mercy everywhere." ' .

From Jharikhandā Chaitanya came to Benares and stopped at the house
 To Benares. of Tapana Miçra, whose son Raghu and Chandracekhara, a Vaidya, were his constant companions. At their earnest request he stayed for ten days near the Maṅikarnikā Ghāt. The Sannyāsis of Benares believed that the earth was an illusion and discredited the theory of a personal God. They studied the Upanishads and strove to reach that quiet state of the soul in which the passions are subdued. They ridiculed the emotional religion which delights in ecstasies of joy. Chaitanya did not like to mix in their company and hence avoided all invitations from outside. One Mahratta Brāhmaṇa who had interviewed Chaitanya and was full of admiration for him said to Prakāçānanda, the leader of the Sannyāsis of Benares : " Master, a very remarkable Sannyāsi has come here from Purī. His merits are uncommon. A young man of remarkably handsome features and of a bright fair colour, he looks like a god. He speaks of Kṛṣṇa and of nothing else and his two

eyes constantly pour forth tears of love which look holy as the Ganges. One feels as though cleansed of one's sins as one sees his tears and hears him speak. He weeps in ecstasy of joy and he certainly has a high vision. Such an impression has this Sannyāsi produced on me that I take him to be an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa himself." To which Prakāṣānanda, the haughty leader of the scholars of Benares, replied with a smile of derision :

"Yes, we have also heard that from Gaur
 Prakāṣānanda's contempt of Chaitanya. has come a young Sannyāsi of strange manners. He is a disciple of Keçava Bhārati and an emotional man.' By some mysterious power in him he draws men to him and even such a scholar, as Vāsudeva Sārbabhauma, has turned mad and is now one of his staunch advocates. Probably this Sannyāsi knows some black art. But is it credible that such an impostor will be accepted by the people of Benares? It is impossible. Leave the mad man alone and stay here quietly and read the Upanishadas." 1

শুনি প্রকাশানন্দ বহুত হাসিল ।
 বিপ্রে উপহাস করি কহিতে লাগিল ॥
 শুনিয়াছি গোড়দেশে সন্ন্যাসীভাবক ।
 কেশব ভারতী শিষ্য লোক প্রতারক ॥
 চেতন্য নাম তার ভাবকগণ লঞা ।
 দেশে দেশে গ্রামে গ্রামে বলে লোক নাচাইয়া ।
 যেই ভাব দেখে সেই ঈশ্বর করি কহে ।
 ইছে মোহন বিদ্যা যে দেখে সে মোহে ॥

We know that when Chaitanya visited the holy city of Benares on his way back from Vṛndāvana, he converted the haughty leader of the Sannyāsis—Prakāṣānanda. The abuser became an worshipper of “the mad young man” and wrote many hymns in Sanskrit in his praise.

The Brāhmaṇa scholar was very sad at the abuse showered upon Chaitanya by Prakāṣānanda. Chaitanya understood how deeply the scholar's feelings were wounded, and said “I came to sell a little of the emotional sweetness with which my soul is charged to the people of Benares. But there is no purchaser here. The burden of my emotion oppresses me and fain would I sell it to you at whatever small price you would offer”.¹ And the merchant who came to trade with his sweet stock of emotion left Benares that time, only to return some years after with the royal monopoly which made him the master of trade in the spiritual commerce of Benares.

The Marhatta Brāhmaṇa followed him and the three came to Prayāga (Allahabad).
His tour along the banks of the

To Allahabad.

¹ ভাবকালি বেচিত্তে আইলাম কাশীপুরে ।
গ্রাহক নাহি না বিকায় লঞা যাব ঘরে ॥
ভারি বোঝা লঞা আইলাম কেমনে লঞা ২
অল্প স্বল্প মূল্য পাইলে এথাই বেচিব ॥

Jumnā was characterised by constant ecstasies of devotion at the sight of the river, which recalled at every turn his vision of Kṛṣṇa. He jumped into the river several times frenzied with love, and was saved from drowning by Baladeva Bhattāchārya. He stayed at Allahabad for three days and then came to Muttra, where he first visited the Bīṣrama Tīrtha. Here did he meet a Brāhmaṇa who like him was a seer of

To Muttra. sights not vouchsafed to ordinary mortal's eyes, and Chaitanya marvelled to see his love-ecstasies. This Brāhmaṇa belonged to the Sonoria sect—one whose social status was very low among the Brāhmaṇas. But Chaitanya took alms from him, though the Brāhmaṇa objected saying that by doing so the Master might be degraded in popular estimation. The latter however had no hesitation in touching the dust trodden by a cobbler's feet if he found him to be god-fearing and faithful. So Chaitanya did not attach any importance to social considerations.

But he wonderingly asked the Brāhmaṇas to how he realised such love for God. The Brāhmaṇa said that he was a disciple of Mādhavendra Purī.

সার্কভৌম ভট্টাচার্য্য পণ্ডিত প্রবল
 শুনি চৈতন্যের সঙ্গে হইল পাগল ।
 সন্ন্যাসীর নামমাত্র মহা ইন্দ্রজালী ॥
 কাশীপুরে না বিকাবে তার ভাব কালী ।
 বেদান্ত শ্রবণ কর না যাইহ তাঁর পাশ ।
 উচ্ছৃঙ্খল লোক সঙ্গে দুইকুল নাশ ॥

The latter, it will be remembered, was the Guru of Chaitanya's Guru Içwar Puri. On hearing this Chaitanya showed him great respect. He visited the 24 bathing Ghats—such as the Sayambhu, Biçrama, Dīrgha, Viṣṇu, Bhuteçwara, Gokarṇa—and the celebrated groves known as the Madhuvana, Tālavana, Kadambavana and Behulā Vana. When he came to the village of Açāli, he asked of the people as to where the Rādhākunda was. None could tell him anything of the places which were associated with Kṛṣṇa. These were long forgotten. It was Chaitanya and his followers who identified them and invested Vṛndavana with its modern glory and magnificence. This however will form the subject of my lectures as a Reader of the University of Calcutta. The only image of Kṛṣṇa that Chaitanya saw at Vṛndāvana was that of Gopāla which was discovered by Mādhavendra Purī and enshrined in the village of Annakuṭa on the Gobardhana hill. The people of this locality were in perpetual fears of the Mahomedan iconoclasts, and at the time Chaitanya came to Vṛndāvana, the image of Gopāla was brought down from the hills and kept concealed in a village named Gothuli, owing to an alarming rumour that the Turks were coming in quest of the god. The god had very hard days in these troublesome days. We find the image in serious

danger when brought back to its own home on the Gobardhana; for another rumour of the approach of the Turkish army made it leave the cottage and move to the temple of Bithhaleçwara at Muttra. When Chaitanya was at Vṛndāvana there was already a strong band of his Vaiṣṇava followers there—Rūpa, Sanātana, Bhugarbha and others who all stayed with him. From Vṛndāvana Chaitanya went to Mandiçwara where there was a temple or cave in which there were three images, viz: of Jasodā, Nanda and Kṛṣṇa. From this place he came to the Bhandir-groves and at Amelitola met a Brāhmaṇa named Kṛṣṇa Dāsa and heard from him the tale of Kṛṣṇa's appearing every night in the Jumnā on the head of the great snake Kāliya. Chaitanya treated the story with the contempt it deserved. It was afterwards found that the illusion of Kṛṣṇa and the snake was created by a fisherman's boat with a light in it.¹

¹ When the report was brought to Chaitanya, he merely laughed at the foolish story. He said "absurd, it is a fable manufactured by the illiterate country folk," he advised the people not to turn mad over the false story and when actually made enquiries, he found that a fisherman with his boat used to catch fish every night on the river—with a light in the boat, and this created the illusion. Here is the original passage.

তবে তারে কহে প্রভু চাপড় মারিয়া ।
 মূৰ্গ বাক্যে মূৰ্খ হৈলা পণ্ডিত হইয়া ॥
 কৃষ্ণ কেন দরশন দিবে কালাকালে ।
 নিজ ভ্রমে মূৰ্খ লোক করে কোলাহলে ॥
 বাতুল না হইও যবে রহত বসিয়া ।
 কৃষ্ণ দরশন করিহ কালি রাত্রে যাইয়া ॥
 প্রাতঃকালে ভব্য লোক প্রভু স্থানে আইলা ।
 কৃষ্ণ দেখি আইলা প্রভু তাহাতে পুছিল ॥

The ecstasies, speeches and spiritual emotions of Chaitanya attracted the people more strongly than a great poem. For his words were like psalms, his songs as marvels of lyrics and his god-realization and trances—the crowning chapter of a noble epic. He appealed irresistibly to all, and daily hundreds of men and women came to invite him to their houses. The great concourse of people and their ardent desire to interview him at all hours became almost oppressive. And though Chaitanya, lost in his own inner joys, heeded not his surroundings, Baladevāchārya could not endure the press of Chaitanya's admirers, none of whom would leave the place without having talked with him for some time. Baladevāchārya requested Chaitanya to visit the great *melā* at Allahabad which was then being held, and Chaitanya gave his ready assent to his request. Four Brāhmins among whom was Kṛṣṇadāsa, accompanied Chaitanya, and they crossed the Jumnā. Chaitanya was subjected to frequent trances, and on one occasion when he was totally unconscious they brought him to the other bank and waited till he recovered consciousness. It

“লোকে কহে রাত্রে কৈবর্ত নৌকাতে চড়িয়া ।
কালিদহে মৎস্য মারে দেউটি জালিয়া ॥
দূর হৈতে তাহা দেখি লোকের হয় ভয় ।
কালীর শরীরে কৃষ্ণ করিছে নর্তন ॥”

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta Madhya Kanda.—Chap. 18.

so happened that ten Pāthan horse-men were going by that road, and seeing a man lying senseless and five men surrounding him, their natural inference was that the five men were robbers, who had drugged the senseless man in order to rob him. The Pāthans bound the five Brāhmiṇs, hand and foot, accusing them of thieving. Kṛṣṇadāsa was, however, a daring fellow. He said that he had relations in the court of the Emperor; they carried a great influence; he himself was the master of a fortified town guarded by strong cavalry. He in his turn charged the Turks with being robbers, and added that if he sounded his pipe, hundreds of soldiers would come there presently and revenge themselves on the aggressors. The Turks thereupon untied the hands of the five men but stayed to watch the unconscious Brāhmiṇ. Chaitanya soon recovered his senses and hearing the story as told by the Turks, said, “These five Brāhmiṇs are my companions. I am subject to epileptic fits, and they have helped rather than hindered me. I am a *sannyāsī* and a beggar and I have nothing to be robbed of.”¹ One of the Turks was a *pīr*

¹ “হেন কালে তথা আসোয়ার দশ আইলা ।

—পাঠান ঘোড়া হইতে উত্তরিলে ॥

প্রভুকে দেখিয়া তারা করয়ে বিচার ।

এই যতি পাশে ছিল স্তব্ধ অপার ॥

dressed in black robes ; he readily entered into theological topics and soon felt the influence of the Master. One of the Mahomedans was Bijali Khan, a general in the Emperor's army, and he too was greatly attracted by Chaitanya's

এই পঞ্চ বাটপার ধূতরা খাওয়াইয়া ।
 মারি ভাবিয়াছে যতির ধন সব লৈয়া ।
 তবে সে পাঠান পঞ্চ জনারে বাঁধিল ।
 বশটিতে চাহে গোড়িয়া সবে কাঁপিতে লাগিল ।
 কৃষ্ণদাস রাজপুত নির্ভয় সে বড় ।
 সেই বিপ্র নির্ভয় মুখ বড় দড় ॥
 বিপ্র বলে পাঠান তোমার পাৎসার দোহাই ।
 চল তুমি আমি শিকদার পাশে যাই ॥
 এ যতি আমার গুরু আসি মরিল ব্রাহ্মণ ।
 পাৎসার আগে আমার আছে শত জন ॥
 এই যতি ব্যাধি কভু হয়ত মুচ্ছিত ।
 অবহি চেতন পাবে হইবে সঞ্চিত ॥
 ক্ষণেক ইহা বৈম বাকি রাখ সভাকারে ।
 ইহাকে পুছিয়া তবে মারিও আমারে ॥
 পাঠান কহে তুমি পশ্চিমা দুই জন ।
 গোড়িয়া ঠক এই কাঁপে তিন জন ॥
 কৃষ্ণদাস কহে আমার ঘর এই গ্রামে ।
 শতেক তড় কা আছে দুই শত কামানে ॥
 এখন আসিবে সব আমি যদি ফুকরি ।
 ঘোড়া পিড়া লুটি হবে তোমা সবে মারি ॥
 গোড়িয়া বাটপাড় নহে তুমি বাটপাড় ।
 তীর্থবাসা লুট আর চাহ মারিবার ॥
 গোড়িয়া বাটপাড়া মনে সঙ্কোচ হইল ।
 হেন কালে মহাপ্রভু চেতন পাইল ॥
 হৃষ্কার কয়িয়া উঠে বলি হরি হরি ।
 প্রেমাবেশে নৃত্য করে উর্দ্ধ বাহ করি ॥
 প্রভু কহেন ঠক নহে এই পঞ্চজন ।
 ভিক্ষুক সন্ন্যাসী মোর নাহি কিছু ধন ॥
 মৃগী ব্যাধিতে আমি হই অচেতন ।
 এই পাঁচ দয়া করি করেন পালন ॥

faith, and the upshot was that the ten Mahomedans became converts to Vaiṣṇavism and were known as the Pāṭhān Vairāgīs. Chaitanya returned to Allahabad and thence visited Benares. Here he met Rūpa and Sanātana who had come back from Mathurā and discoursed with them on several points of Vaiṣṇava theology. These learned discourses are fully described by Kavikarṇapūra in his Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭaka.

XXX.—The Pedigree of Advaita

I have already given the pedigree of Chaitanya. In regard to those of the two other apostles, Advaita and Nityānanda, I regret to say, that I cannot place the same reliance on the genealogical lists supplied by their descendants. As they were not Kulīns the names of the ancestors of the two apostles were not preserved in any authentic work of the *ghataks*. The three tables given below each showing the pedigree of Advaita, are quoted from an article by Mr. Stapleton in the 'Dacca Review.' Two of these were supplied by me from two different sources and the remaining one Mr. Stapleton obtained from the Gosvāmīs of Uthuli in the District of Dacca, who claim to be the descendants of Advaita. It will be seen that apart from Narasinha Nārial, the names obtained from the three different places do not coincide and cannot at all be relied upon.

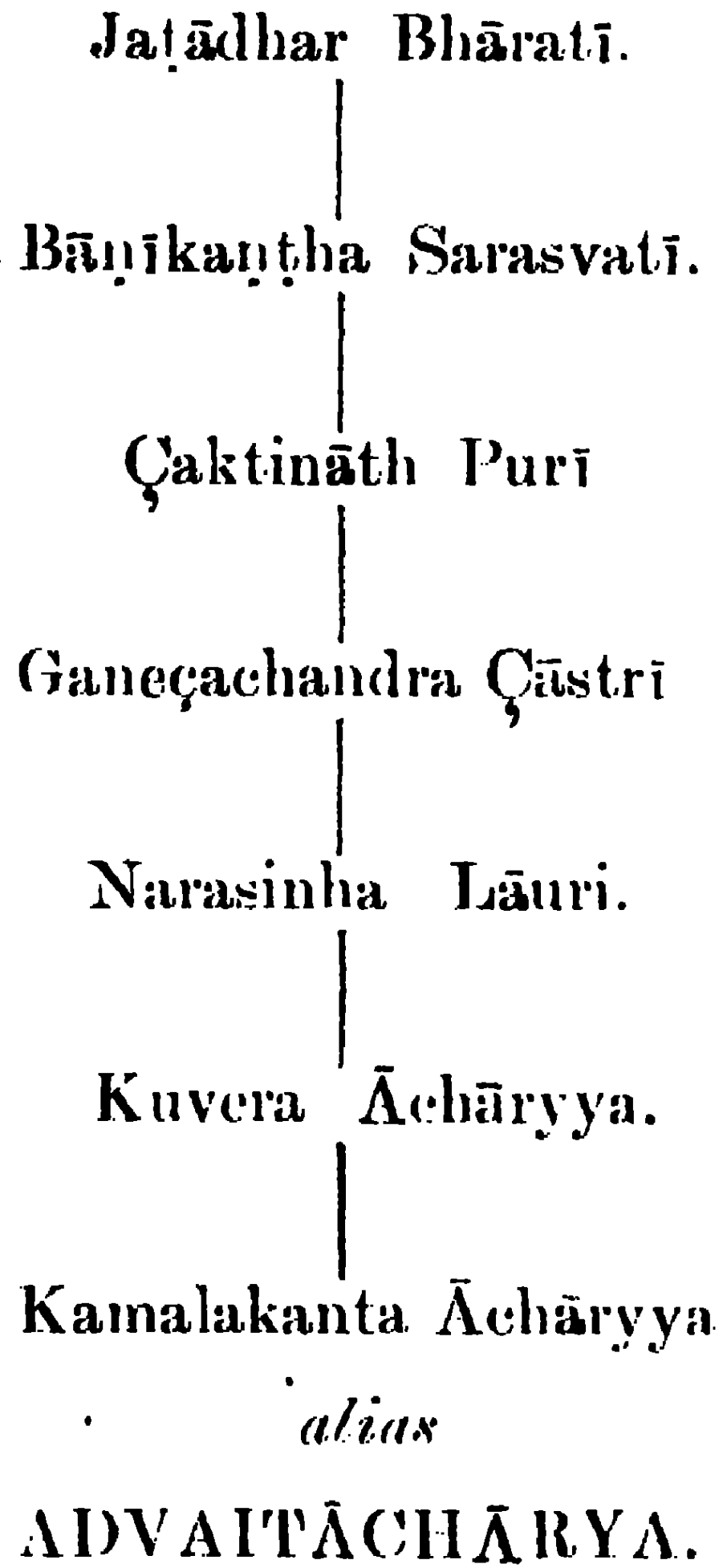
I shall first of all quote Mr. Stapleton's remarks, which though they refer to a different subject, have a bearing on the present problem.

' "Dinesh Babu's new suggestions for the date of Kirttivāsa that are made in his note are based on the extremely perilous foundation of the traditional genealogies current in Bengal. I fear he hardly realises what unsound ground this is; but as an indication of the undesirability of referring to these at all as independent historical authorities, I contrast in parallel columns the pedigree of Advaita given by Dinesh Babu with (a) the presumably authentic one supplied by the Uthuli Brahmins which is said to be quoted direct from the Valya-līlā Sūtra and (b) a pedigree lately obtained for me by Dinesh Babu from the Santipur descendants of Advaita who also claim descent from the same son of Advaita—Kṛṣṇa Miṣra as the Uthuli Goswamis do."

I.	II.
<p>Pedigree supplied by Dinesh Babu from an old M. S. preserved in the "Viswakosa Office" also his "History" page 496.)</p>	<p>Uthuli Gosvāmī pedigree.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sudhākara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sidheçwara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tikāri</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NARASINHA NARIAL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kuvera</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chakravarti Kamalākara alias ADVAITACHĀRYA</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Çripati</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kulapati</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bibhākara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prabhākara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NARASINHA NARIAL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kuvera (Tarkapanchānana)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kamalakānta Achārya alias ADVAITACHĀRYA</p>

III.

Çāntipur Gosvāmī pedigree.



Mr. Stapleton aptly remarks “One might imagine that these relate to three different families of Vārendra Brahmins instead of one and the same, and similar instances of flagrant contradiction in pedigrees are often met with.”

The names from Narasinha Nārial downwards tally in all the three pedigrees. Narasinha Nārial was the Prime Minister of Rājā Gaṇeça who killed the Mahomedan Emperor of Gauḍa and occupied his throne. Advaita Prakāça by Īçāna Nāgara says “Narasinha Nārial was the Minister of Rājā Gaṇeça, and the latter

succeeded in killing the Emperor of Gauḍa and occupying his throne by the statesmanly advice of his minister.”

In the face of the discrepancies in the names above that of the Nārial, as found in the three tables, there is no other alternative left to us than to reject them all. Mr. Stapleton seems inclined to favour the one supplied by the Uthuli Gosvāmīs on the ground that they got it from the Vālyalīla Sūtra. The claims of the Vālyalīla Sūtra (lit. the incidents of childhood—of Advaita) by Lauriā Kīṣṇa Dās to authenticity are however open to question. But if we should give preference to any of these, it would be the one supplied by Jayagopāla Gosvāmī of Ḣāntipurā. Ḣāntipur was the seat of Advaita himself, and his direct descendants there are presumably in possession of all authentic records regarding the genealogy of the family, if really any existed at the time of Advaita.

But I am not inclined to credit any of them as true. The reason I may briefly put as follows. The followers of Chaitanya did not usually care to preserve the names of their ancestors. They offered their services to humanity in the spirit of true spiritual humility, and were ashamed of any distinction which might attach to their names on account of their noble lineage. It is for this that the Brāhmiṇ Vaiṣṇavas often eliminated their surnames and took pride in

calling themselves “*dāsas*” or servants—servants of all, or better, servants of God ; every great poet among them has subscribed himself as a *Dāsa* in the colophon of his lyrical masterpieces. In the introduction to a theological or biographical work, the Vaiṣṇava writers as a rule give a prominent place to the praise of those whom they revere, and while in this eulogistic preface they pay their respects to a number of illustrious Vaiṣṇavas, living and dead, they rarely or never allude to the names of their parents. The fact is that the Vaiṣṇava religion rather strengthened the ties of spiritual kinship and was inclined to diminish the family-ties. It is for this reason that Advaita never cared to refer to his pedigree. He is said to have lived to 120 years—the full span of human life. Whether this be true or not, there is no doubt that he lived up to a good old age. When, however, he died, the orthodox Hindu instincts had already revived even amongst the Vaiṣṇavas. His descendants, however, could scarcely find any authentic record of their pedigree after the lapse of so many years. They became Gosvāmīs and holding an exalted position among the Vaiṣṇavas, wanted to match the ‘genealogies’ of the Kulīn Brāhmiṇs who could name their 33 ancestors or more. This may account for the long tables which some of them produce now and also for the disagreement

among these obtained from different sources. While we cannot positively assert that none of these three pedigrees is correct, we cannot also credit any one of them as accurate until some other documentary evidence is produced to support it.

I agree with Mr. Stapleton that the genealogical records such as those of Advaita cannot be accepted as authentic. But I can by no means subscribe to his sweeping remark as to the unreliability of all ancient pedigrees as a whole. While the trustworthiness of records apart from those of Kulīn families may reasonably be questioned, the pedigrees of the descendants of the Kulīns, so far as the three upper classes are concerned, possess undoubtedly great authenticity and may certainly be used as historical evidence. The great care with which such records are preserved by a special class of men known as the *ghatakas*, the high prestige which the Kulīns have always enjoyed in society, the least infringement of the strict rules in matrimonial affairs leading to the lasting disgrace of a family, the custom of reciting the pedigrees of the Kulīn-families during the marriage festivities before a large audience thoroughly conversant with the genealogical accounts of Kulīns and ready to assail any errors, however small,—these, among other reasons equally important, invest the genealogical records of the Kulīn-families with

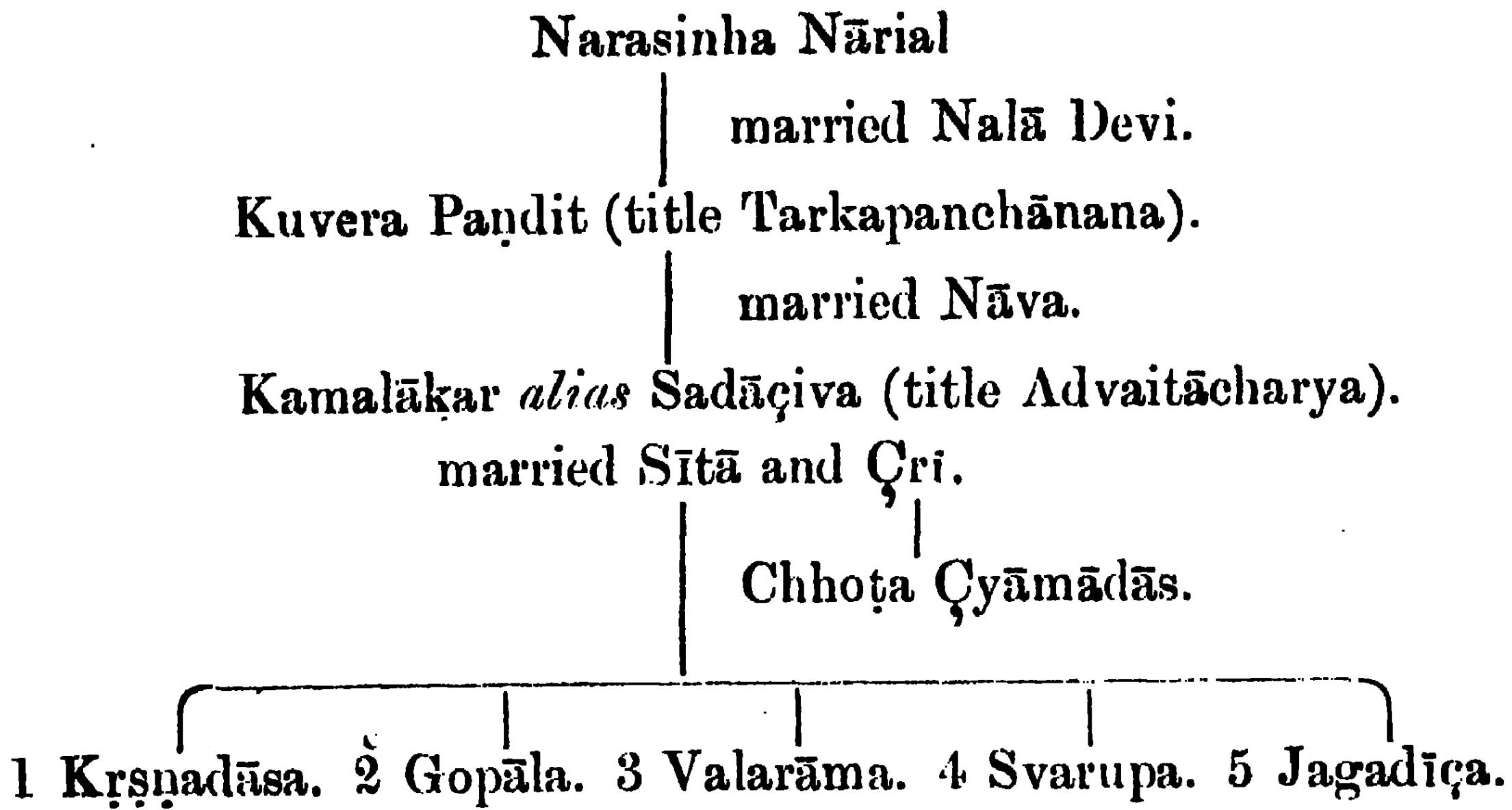
an unquestionable authenticity. If Mr. Stapleton would take the trouble to compare the pedigrees of high caste Kulīns, he would scarcely come across any disagreement though he might look into a number of such cases. It is true that in the distant villages of Bengal, outside the chief seats of the Kulīns, some families have occasionally tried, by forging names, to connect themselves with some recognised Kulīn families, but such cases are exceptions proving the rule. But where this has happened the country bards have kept afresh the memory of the infamous tale by exposing the forgery in songs.

Advaita's genealogical accounts, so far as his remote ancestors are concerned, are therefore unreliable. He was not a Kulīn, he was a Vaiṣṇava. And though his family obtained a lustre from him and became exalted in popular estimation, so that his descendants sought for a long list of their ancestors to put themselves on a par with the Kulīn Brāhmaṇs, Advaita, himself simple and pious as he was, never cared to shine by the borrowed light of his ancestry, but claimed kinship with the whole of humanity. Had he cared to preserve his pedigree we would have found it in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata where long chapters have been devoted to his glorification.

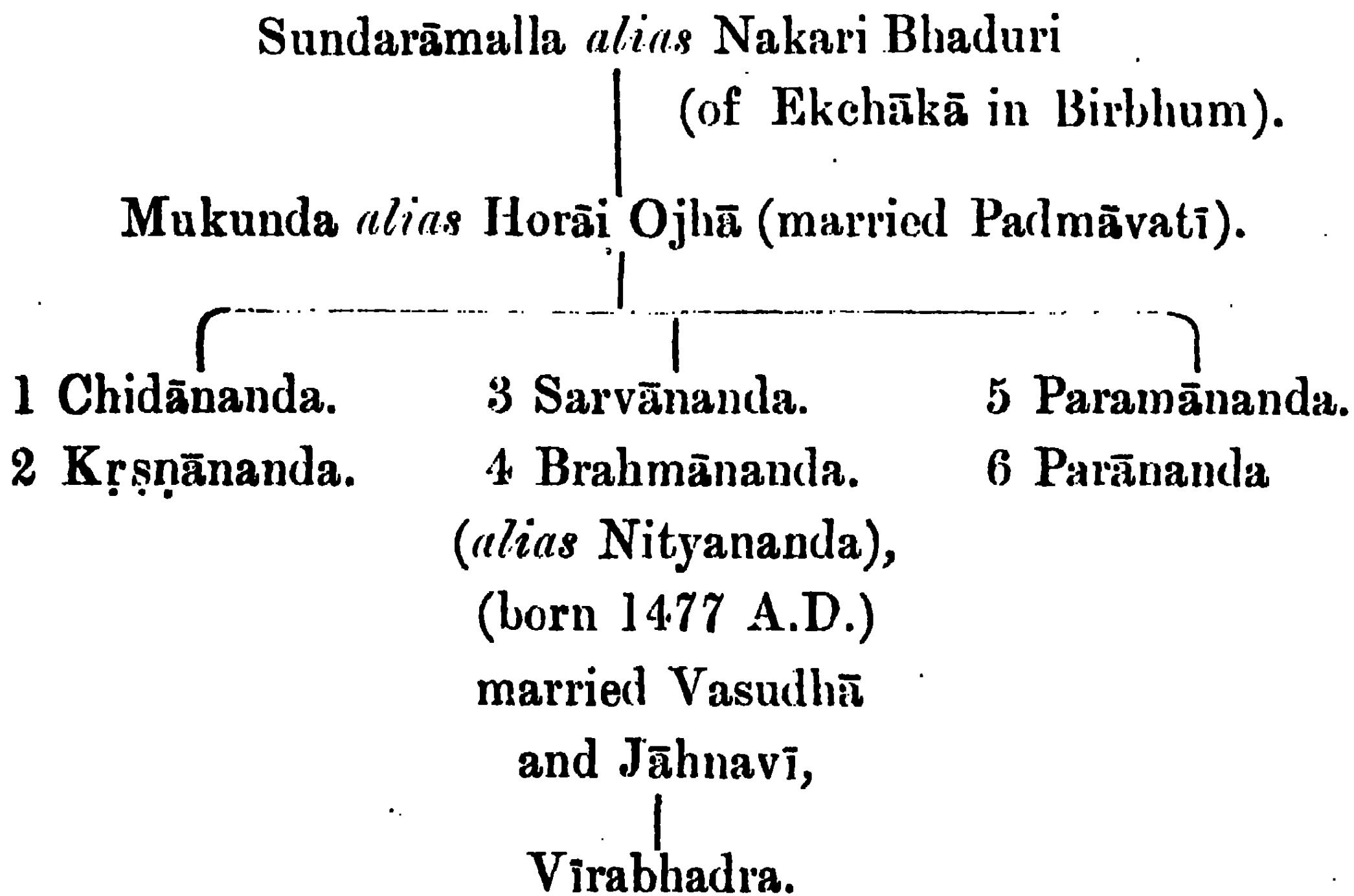
Advaita's father Kuvera Paṇḍit was the court-paṇḍit of the Rājā of Lāura in Sylhet. He had married Nāvā, a daughter of Mahānanda of the same village. The pair came down and settled at Çāntipur. They had six sons and one daughter who had died in childhood. The six sons were Çrīkaṇṭha, Laksmīkaṇṭha, Hariharānanda, Sadāçiva, Kuçaladās and Kīrtichandra. They all went on a pilgrimage and four of them died in the course of their journey. Advaita married, in a rather advanced age, Sītā and Çrī, the daughters of one Nṛsinha of Nārāyanpur near Sātgaon. His marriage expenses were borne by the brothers Hiraṇya and Gobardhana¹ of Sātgaon. Sītā had five sons Kṛṣṇadās Miçra, Gopāla, Valarāma, Svarupa and Jagadīça. Çrī had only one son named Çyāmādāsa known by his familiar name of Chhoṭa Çyāma. Advaita was born in the month of February in the year 1434 A.D.

Omitting the four earliest names in Advaita's pedigree which are disputed, we subjoin here a list of his ancestors and descendants about whom no question or doubt is likely to arise :

¹ Govardhana Dās was the father of the celebrated Raghunātha Dās.



THE PEDIGREE OF NITYĀNANDA.



XXXI.—A list of the Mystics.

The Vaiṣṇavas had from pre-historic times developed the mystic longings of the soul for communion with God. While the Yogis strove for the soul's conquest over passions and for the

attainment of that state of tranquillity which raises a man above the sorrows and pleasures of the world, the Vaiṣṇavas went a step beyond, and longed for God-realisation. This stage presupposes the attainment of the highest goal of Buddhism, *viz*: perfect ethical development in man and an extinction of his passions and desires. The experiences of a mystic are strange. To his senses the incomprehensible becomes recognizable as clearly as a material object, and the soul becomes full of ecstasies of joy when the vision is clear, and of anxious longings when the vision fades. This I have already shown by examples from Europe and Asia alike. I give below a list of some of the mystics of Europe and Asia with their dates.¹ Those who would like to have a fuller account of them are referred to Mrs. Under Hill's excellent work.

Philo the mystical Alexandrian

Jew	...	... B.C. 20 to A.D. 40
St. Clement of Alexandria	...	A.D. 160-220.
Pope Gregory the Great	...	A.D. 540-604.
St. Bernard	...	A.D. 1091-1153.
Richard of St. Victor	...	A.D. 1173.

(Dante spoke of this mystic as 'in contemplation more than man.')

St. Hildegarde	...	A.D. 1098-1179.
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¹ I have not included any name of the Indian *sādhus* in the sub-joined list.

on receiving intelligence of these disastrous occurrences hastened back from the Deccan and performing a journey of months in a few days he came up with the invading army before they had left Kṣetra, gave them battle and destroyed a great number of Mahomedans.”¹

The destruction of Hindu temple by the Afghans referred to above are mentioned in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and other Bengali works of the Vaiṣṇavas. Husen Sāhā, the Emperor of Gaur, had himself led these expeditions. After this Pratāparudra contemplated the conquest of Bengal in order to avenge himself upon Husen Sāhā for the harm done by the latter to his territories, but desisted from doing so out of humane considerations for the Hindus of Bengal to whom great sufferings would be caused by such an expedition.²

According to Feristha's account there were some local revolutions between 1493 and 1524 in the kingdom of Vijaynagar and Pratāparudra availed himself of this opportunity of extending his kingdom in the South. In 1524, however, Rājā Kṛṣṇa Rāy ascended the throne of Vijaynagar and ruled the kingdom with great vigour and tact. He successfully coped with the Mahomedans in the field and made a treaty with

¹ History of Orissa by A. Stirling, Esq., p. 133.

² See Chaitanya Maṅgala by Jayānanda.

Pratāparudra by marrying his daughter. According to Mr. Stirling, Pratāparudra reigned from 1503 to 1524. But the date of his death (1524) is open to objection. When Chaitanya came to Purī, in 1510 the king was away, fighting with the Rājā of Vijaynagar in the Deccan. Returning shortly after he heard of the arrival of Chaitanya in his capital, he begged an interview with him. He addressed a letter to Sārvabhauma requesting him to get Chaitanya to agree, Sārvabhauma wrote in reply that Chaitanya was not willing to comply with his Majesty's request. The Rājā wrote letters to the companions of

Chaitanya severally asking them to intercede in his behalf; but

Chaitanya refuses to see the Rājā.

Chaitanya refused them saying that as a *sannyāsī* he should keep himself as far as possible away from the fountain of earthly power and riches.

Sad at heart Pratāparudra continued his attempts to interview Chaitanya. He sent his minister Rāmānanda Rāy who was a friend of Chaitanya to plead his cause before him. Chaitanya said to him, "A *sannyāsī* should be blameless in thought, in speech and in act. A familiarity with the king is sure to bring in its train a connection with the world which I have renounced and I can by no means allow it." The outer robe of Chaitanya was carried by Rāma Rāy to the king who accepted it as a sacred

thing with tears in his eyes, since he was not to have a visit from Chaitanya himself.

The Ratha Yātrā or the Car festivities of Jagannātha drew near. The king was sorry not to be permitted to see Chaitanya which even the meanest of his subjects could do. He was advised by Kāçī Miçra, in whose house Chaitanya stayed, to wait for the occasion of the march of the Great Car when Chaitanya with his party would come out in the streets singing the *Kīrtana* songs. The Rājā ascended the roof of his palace and saw the procession. When he

heard the *Kīrtana* songs he was

The origin of
Kīrtana songs.

beside himself in admiration and

said to Gopīnātha Miçra, "Never did

I hear such melodious songs in my life. The very tune captivates my soul. Whence could they have learnt this strange musical mode?"

Gopīnātha replied, "This *Kīrtana* song which is not comparable to any earthly music originated with Chaitanya." The followers of Chaitanya had all assembled at Purī and joined the procession, and Gopīnātha, at the bidding of the king, mentioned the names and qualifications of each, and the Rājā from that distance saw the figure of Chaitanya in the centre of the procession, looking more like a God than a man; he was in one of those trances in which silent tears bespoke his great emotion and love for the Unseen. The Rājā's mind was filled with admiration but he

did not find chance for an interview on this occasion.

But an opportunity soon presented itself. In the courtyard of Kāçī Miçra Chaitanya had his trance again and was unconscious of the outer world—in the arms of Nityānanda, whilst his companions enthusiastically sang *Kīrtana* songs around him. The Rājā instructed by Sārva-bhauma suddenly stole into the assembly and fell at his feet. Chaitanya, regaining consciousness, beheld the king and said, “Woe to me, I have touched one given to worldly power and wealth.” When the Rājā heard this he burst into tears and said, “Here do I forego all my power and wealth and surrender them at your feet. Take me, master, as the meanest of those that love you.” Chaitanya was overcome by these words. He embraced the Rājā in love and the latter—a tall and robust man—became

The interview.

all tears in joy. Rāmānanda Rāy, the author of the celebrated Sanskrit drama “Jagannātha Vallabha” refers to this occasion in the following passage: “This is indeed a marvel. Rājā Pratāparudra, who is a terror to the Pāṭhans, whose physical might surpasses that of most men, whose iron contact is dreaded by the strongest of wrestlers, has melted like a soft thing at the touch of Chaitanya.” Govinda Dāsa, the contemporary biographer of Chaitanya records “whenever Chaitanya walked



CHAITANYA AND PRATAPRUDRA.

Painted in lacquer on wooden board meant to be a book-cover of a MS. of Bhagavata—latter part of the 16th Century.

The board is in the Library of the Calcutta University.

in the streets with a large crowd of men following him with song, music and dance, Rājā Pratāparudra walked on bare feet behind them all like the humblest of his subjects.”¹

At one time Chaitanya was asked by some of his companions to speak a word to the Rājā on behalf of a criminal named Gopinātha Rāy who was sentenced to death. He was a brother of Rāmānanda Rāy—a friend of Chaitanya. The family of the Rāys was devoted to the Master and this was made a plea for the request. Chaitanya said, “I am sorry for him, but I have no sympathy with his crime. You may pray to God for him. You put me in a very delicate position by asking me—a beggar—to intercede for him. It is for this reason that I wanted to avoid a familiarity with the Rājā. It only makes me sad to think of the misfortunes of wordly men. After this my stay at Purī is no longer fitting.” He got ready to go to Ālālanātha, and when the king heard of this from Kāçī Miçra he released the criminal simply

because the matter was brought to the notice of Chaitanya. The latter on hearing of this said to Kāçī Miçra, “What have you

Chaitanya's unwillingness to meddle in worldly affairs.

নগর কীৰ্তনে যবে মহাপ্ৰভু যায় ।

দীন বেশে মহারাজ পেছু পেছু ধায় ॥

done, Miçra? You should not have represented me as a supplicant before the king.” The Rājā interviewed Chaitanya and said, “If you leave my capital I shall turn an ascetic or commit suicide.”¹

In the wilds of the Deccan—Chaitanya, accompanied by the blacksmith Govinda, wandered visiting the holy places. With a torn rag for his dress, his body covered with mud and dirt, he walked like a mad man through untrodden paths; children threw dust at him and clapped their hands saying, “Lo! there goes the ascetic mad after God.”

His frenzies of
love.

He gazed at the sky and saw his Kṛṣṇa mirrored there; the rainbow to him was the crown of Kṛṣṇa; the flying cranes a string of white pearls on his breast; the flash of lightning like Kṛṣṇa’s purple robes; and the dark-blue colour of the clouds again and again called up the vision of Kṛṣṇa’s figure. Every river that he saw was to him the sacred Yamunā on whose banks Kṛṣṇa had sported, every forest wore to his eyes, the beauty and sacredness of the Vṛndā groves—the resort of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes as at the village Ghogā in Gujrāt he clasped a Nim tree covered with dark-blue leaves and thought that the touch was of Kṛṣṇa, soft

¹ The details about Chaitanya’s interview and conversations with Rājā Pratāparudra are to be found in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta by Kṛṣṇā Dāsa Kavirāja and in the works of Kavī Karṇapura.

and sweet, and for the whole day he lay unconscious as if in the arms of his Lover while tears trickled down his cheeks. Sometimes he nodded his head to and fro seeing some celestial vision and remained mute for days while tears alone indicated his joy in communion with God. Often three or even four days passed in this condition during which he would neither speak nor touch any food. When he came to Trivancore in 1511 A.D. Rājā Rudrapati, the reigning monarch, paid a visit to him and was so much impressed by the ardour of his faith and the beauty of his trances that he paid him the same homage of worship as he did to his tutelary God.¹

¹ For details of the above narratives the reader is referred to the *Kaṇḍhā* by Govinda Dāsa.

III. Interview with Sanātana and Rūpa.

Sākar Mallik and Dabir Khās, two Brāhmaṇ scholars who had adopted Mahomedan names and habits of life, were the ministers of Husen Sāhā, the Emperor of Gauḍa. They were brothers and their expert knowledge of Sanskrit poetry was equalled by none in Bengal at the time. They saw Chaitanya first at Rāmakelī, a town near Gauḍa, and felt that they had met the greatest poet ever born in the world. It appeared to them after their interview with him that the universe was a poem and that the spiritual soul alone was privileged to read its deep poetry. They parted from Chaitanya completely changed men. Chaitanya gave the brothers Hindu names and they were henceforth to be called Sanātana and Rūpa, by which names they have since been known in the field of Sanskrit drama, theology and poetry, and in fact in all the writings of the Vaiṣṇavas.

Rūpa's mind now yearned for that life which is freed from the worry of the world but is devoted to the good of the world, which does not seek its final rest in the Nirvāṇa or in the extinction of passions but that which brings something positive, once a victory over passion has been won, *viz.*, the realization of God in the soul.

While in this state of mind an incident took place which was a turning point in his life. The following anecdote is related of Rūpa, who was only 27 years old at the time, in the *Prema-vilāsa* by Nityānanda Dāsa.

The anecdote of the burning of a rich garment.

Rūpa came home one night very late after doing some important State work. After retiring to rest he was bitten by a poisonous insect. His room was dark and Rūpa called out to his wife asking her to light a candle immediately. But the good wife in her haste could not find a candle. The silken robe of her husband embroidered with gold was near the bed and she lighted a fire with it. Rūpa said, "You have spoilt a costly garment in this way!" The wife said, "My duty is to minister to your comforts and I have done my duty. Precious stones or silken robes are nothing to me when that duty is to be done." Rūpa said, "My darling, you have done your duty to your lord but I have not done mine. I have hitherto only occupied myself with precious stones and silken robes." Early in the morning the next day he took the beggar's bowl in his hand, clad himself in rags and left his palatial house. Before starting he distributed his treasure in the following way: One half to the poor and to Brāhmaṇ scholars; one-fourth reserved for the maintenance of his family and an equal amount

he left to his elder brother Sanātana. On coming to Allahabad he wrote the following metrical epistle in Sanskrit to Sanātana :

“Where is now gone, alas, the splendour of Mathurā, once the capital of the lord of Yādavas and where, alas, is that of Uttara Koçalā, the kingdom of the lord of the Raghus! Think of the fleeting nature of earthly glory and decide the course you should take.”¹

Rūpa met Chaitanya at Benares where the latter took pains to instruct him in the cardinal points of the Vaiṣṇava religion. His instructions are given in detail in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta. Chaitanya ordered him to go to Vṛndāvana and write poems and dramas in Sanskrit elucidating the principles of spiritual love. The works that he wrote at the bidding of the Master such as the Lalitāmādhava, the Bidagdhamādhava, the Dānakelīkaumudī etc., are now the master-pieces of mediæval Sanskrit Literature.

Sanātana, who too was no less attracted by Chaitanya's personality, when he received the verses from his brother finally made up his mind to renounce the world and take the ascetic's

“যদুপতে: ক গতা।মথুরাপুরী
 রঘুপতে: ক গতৌত্তরকোশল।
 ইতি বিচিন্ত্য মনঃকুর।স্থিরঃ
 নসদিদং জগদিত্যেব ধারয়।”

vow. He did not attend the Emperor's court for some days and a report was spread that he was ill. Husen Shā, after Rūpa's adoption of asceticism, had his suspicions about Sanātana and was on the alert. He sent a physician to examine if the minister was really ill. The physician came back to him and reported that

The report of Sanātana's illness.

so far as he could judge, Sanātana had no illness. The king was angry and called his minister to his

presence. Sanātana could not hide his thoughts from his master, and Husen Shā trying in vain to dissuade him from his contemplated course got very much annoyed and ordered him to be thrown into prison. Just at that time the king was called away from Gauḍa to fight his enemies abroad, and the relatives of Sanātana offered the jailer a bribe of Rs. 5,000, which in the 16th century was at least 15 times its present value, for setting the ex-minister at liberty. Mir Habul, the jailer, was at first afraid of the Emperor and declined to take the risk. Next they offered him Rs. 7,000,¹ the jailer accepted the offer but felt the danger of such a course and sought advice as to how he could avert it.

His flight.

He was told that it might be stated that the minister was taken to the

¹ In some of the Vaiṣṇava works the amount is stated to be a lakh of rupees. But we accept the statement of the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and other authentic works on this point.

Ganges for a bath and he disappeared while bathing. Sanātana was thus set at liberty. He lost not a moment but at once left Gauḍa as an ascetic accompanied by a servant named Īṣāṇa. He crossed the Ganges and arrived a few days after at the foot of a small hillock called Patra. Īṣāṇa had taken 15 gold mohars without the knowledge of his master. They had however subsisted on fruits and fountain-water for a few days and reaching a village at Patra became the guests of a respectable-looking man. He was called Bhuyā. The unusually warm attention this man paid to his guests roused suspicions in the mind of Sanātana who asked Īṣāṇa if he had brought any money from home. Īṣāṇa said he had 15 gold mohars with him. Sanātana paid 14 mohars to his host who was really a robber in disguise. The man made no secret of his intentions but said he would have murdered them at night if the money were not paid. The remaining one gold mohar was paid back by Sanātana to Īṣāṇa who was ordered to leave the place and return home at once since he still cared for money.

Sanātana, now left alone, slept under the shadow of trees at night and passed through great hardships. It is related in the Prema-vilāsa that on one occasion he laid himself down on the bare earth in a field for sleep,

15 Gold Mohars
attract a robber.

making pillows with brickbats and clods of earth to rest his head, hands, and feet on. An old woman passed by and was heard to make the following reflection: "The ascetic must have

The lesson received from an old woman. belonged to a noble and rich family; he has left his riches but cannot dispense with his old habits."

Sanātana as he heard this rose up and bowed to the woman and said "You have indeed given me a lesson, good mother. Old habits and modes of life are so difficult to avoid; but I shall try to be born anew in my spiritual life from now."¹

Sanātana came to Hājipur and, dressed in rags, lay under the shadow of a tree singing the praises of God and prayed to Him to grant him a speedy interview with Chaitanya. His brother-in-law, Çrīkaṇṭha, happened to pass by the way where he lay. Çrīkaṇṭha was sent by Husen Shā with three lakhs of rupees for purchasing horses at Hājipur. He could barely recognise Sanātana in that condition and was moved to tears

Interview with Çrīkaṇṭha. seeing the great minister reduced to such a plight. "I am happy", said Sanātana, "happier now than ever I was." It was January and the sharp winter-wind blew, the biting cold eating, as it were, into the very bones. Çrīkaṇṭha said, "If

¹ This anecdote is related in the Premavilāsa by Nityānanda. The succeeding narratives about Sanātana are mostly taken from the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

you must remain an ascetic and will not alter your way of life, pray take this shawl to cover your body with." The rich shawl Sanātana declined to accept. Next a valuable wrapper was offered which Sanātana declined also.

But Çrīkaṅṭha would not allow him to go without putting something warm round his body for protection from cold and forced him to wear a coarse blanket of the value of Rs. 3. Sanātana went to Benares and met Chaitanya. The interview was full of pathos. The ex-minister said, "I am an outcast. Admittance to your presence is admittance to heaven. If you would condescend to accept it, here do I offer my body and soul for your service." Chaitanya received him with great kindness, and Sanātana took leave of him for a few minutes in order to give away his blanket to a beggar, for he had seen

Chaitanya glancing at it several times while speaking to him.¹ When with a coarse cotton rag that he had received from the beggar in return he came to Chaitanya again, the latter said, "delighted am I, that you have now parted with all that is worldly. Now vision of God will be clear to you."

Sanātana went to Mathurā in order to have an interview with his brother Rūpa and thence

¹ "ভোট কবলের পানে এড় চাহে বারেবার" *Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*.

returned to Purī to meet Chaitanya again. He came by the woodland path of Jhari Khaṇḍa (Chota Nagpur). The dirty water and moist air of the forests brought on eczema all over Sanātana's body. In this plight he arrived at Purī. He thought of his sins and this weighed on his mind. He was fallen from the Brāhmaṇic order and would have no access to the temple of Jagannātha; but when the image of that deity would be brought out on its Car in May, he determined that he would make an offer of his body to the god and die under the wheels of the Great Car. "My body full of this foul eczema and burdened with sins will be of no use and as a punishment for my sins I will thus die here."

Sanātana afflicted with eczema. With this determination he called on Hari Dāsa, the Mahomedan convert to Vaiṣṇavism and resided with him in his cell; for as he was an outcast now he dared not go to the house of the Brāhmaṇ Kāçīnātha Miçra where Chaitanya lived.

Chaitanya used to come often to Hari Dāsa's place, and Sanātana thought that he might be permitted an opportunity to meet him there. As expected Chaitanya called on Hari Dāsa one day; but Sanātana, full of remorse for his sins, distressed by his eczema and with his accustomed humility, retreated into a corner of the room and saw the Master from afar with tearful eyes. When Chaitanya saw him he ran to meet him and

Sanātana shrinking a little away said, "Master, I am full of sins and my body is afflicted with eczema. It should not be touched

Sanātana tries to remain aloof from Chaitanya.

by you." Chaitanya at once embraced him inspite of his remonstrances,

saying, "Your dear self, Sanātana, is my constant joy." Sanātana was sorry to see Chaitanya's body marked with discharges from his eczema. Anupama, one of the brothers of Sanātana, had died shortly before, and Chaitanya alluded to his high character and faith with respect. He made enquiries, as to what Sanātana thought of Mathurā and in many sweet and kind words parted from him that day.

But Sanātana was sad at heart inspite of the kind treatment he had received from the Master and meeting the young scholar, Jagadānanda, one of Chaitanya's constant companions, thus spoke to him, "Woe to me, that I came here. Our dear Master touches my body afflicted with eczema. I am deeply depressed with the weight of my sins but now it breaks my heart to see the Master embrace my loathsome body." Jagadānanda did not like Chaitanya to receive Sanātana with open arms and come in contact with his diseased body, but without mentioning it he said,

Jagadānanda's advice.

"It would be better for you to go back to Mathurā or Vṛndāvana. I heard once that the Master wanted you to go there." Next day when Chaitanya came as

usual he again embraced Sanātana and said, “Do not think of putting an end to your life under the wheels of the Car of Jagannātha. It is a sin to commit suicide. This grief and remorse that you feel for your sin is unholy if it leads to suicide. God’s grace is to be obtained by love and self-dedication and not by suicide.” And Sanātana wondered how Chaitanya could know his innermost thoughts. Then Chaitanya said again, “This body of yours, you told me at our first meeting, you had dedicated to me. It is mine now and you cannot use it as you wish. By my mother’s will I have to live at Purī and I cannot violate her orders. But much remains to be done in the upcountry where people are illiterate and without faith in God. There you will have to work and employ your talents and learning, writing beautiful books on the cult of faith.” Saying this Chaitanya again embraced him to his great dismay, and Sanātana was down on his knees and implored “Master, do not do so. My heart breaks at this. See, my body is vile, it is full of eczema and untouchable.” And Chaitanya said, “Who said that your body is vile and untouchable, Sanātana? A selfless god-loving spirit dwells in your body. Your embrace is sweet to me as nectar.” Sanātana fell at Chaitanya’s feet with tears and said that he had Jagadānanda’s advice to go to Vṛndāvana in order to avoid the contact of his

body with the Master's. Chaitanya was angry when he heard this and said, "A young scholar Jagadānanda dares to advise a veteran like you!

He is impudent and foolish. I am an ascetic, and it is well known that to one who takes that sacred vow,

'Your praises
bitter as nim
juice.'

ashes and sandal marks are of the same value. An ascetic must have contempt for none but should have kindness for all living beings. The youngster is conceited enough to teach his superiors in this way." Sanātana in humble words addressed Chaitanya and said, "Master, fortunate is Jagadānanda. Your abuse of him only shows the great familiarity and love in which you hold him; whereas the formal respect that you pay me shows me far away from your heart. He drinks the nectar of sweet familiarity at your hands but your praises seem bitter to me as the juice of Nim-fruit, only proving that I am not one of those blessed men who belong to your own circle."¹ Chaitanya was abashed a little at these remarks and said, "No Sanātana, this is no vain glorification, I assure you. I have a real admiration for your faith, your self-sacrifice and for the spirit of humility becoming a truly spiritual soul. Jagadānanda is only a boy and far below you as

“জগদানন্দে পীয়াও আত্মীয়তা সুধা রসে ।

মোর পিয়াও গৌরব স্তুতি নিম্ব নিম্বিন্দা রসে ॥”

a scholar and should not have dared advise you.” On another occasion Chaitanya had gone to Yameçawra Totā and sent a man to Sanātana wishing the latter to meet him. It was midday and the sun had scorched the sands, and Sanātana on bare feet gladly trod the sands which burnt his toes. When he came to the Master, he marked the burns on Sanātana’s toes and asked by what way he had come. Sanātana replied, “It was by the sandy shore of the sea.” Chaitanya

Burnt toes. again asked why he did not come by the main road leading to the gate

of the Temple. Sanātana humbly replied, “I am an outcaste ; the Brāhmaṇs there might take objection.” Chaitanya pointed to the burns and regretted the pain they must have caused him. Sanātana said, “I was not aware of these till now. I was so glad that the Master called me ; I thought of nothing else.” Whereupon Chaitanya said, with a voice that trembled in emotion, “Your touch will sanctify the holiest of temples and the most pure of the Brāhmaṇs. Your faith and love for God is such that the angels of heaven may sit at your feet and receive lessons from you ; but still you do not violate the local rules of the Temple. It only shows your high breeding and noble character.”¹

Sanātana stayed at Purī for some months

¹ “যত্নপি তুমি হও জগৎ পাবন ।

তোমা স্পর্শে পবিত্র হয় দেব মুনিগণ ॥

during which he got cured of his eczema ; and after beholding the Dol Yātrā ceremony of Kṛṣṇa took leave of Chaitanya and started for Vṛndāvana. Before leaving Purī he took notes from Valadeva Āchāryā, a companion of Chaitanya as to the route followed by Chaitanya when he visited Vṛndāvana. The places where Chaitanya had halted were specially marked. He visited them all with great reverence considering them as holy places. Rūpa had come back to Purī a year before, so that when Sanātana arrived at Vṛndāvana he did not meet his brother. But Rūpa returned to Vṛndāvana after some months, and both the brothers now busied themselves in writing books in Sanskrit on the doctrines of faith as taught them by the Master. But I shall write in some detail about the work they did in Vṛndāvana in the course of my lectures.

Sanātana
starts for
Vṛndāvana.

তথাপি ভক্ত স্বভাব মৰ্যাদা রক্ষণ ।

মৰ্যাদা রাখিলে তুষ্ট হৈল মোর মন ॥

তুমি ঐছে না করিলে আর করিব কোন জন ।

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

IV. Advaitāchārya.

Next to Chaitanya the two most illustrious apostles of the Vaiṣṇava faith in Bengal were Nityānanda and Advaitāchārya. Their names are now inseparable from Chaitanya. Advaitāchārya was the title, the real name of the apostle being Kamalākara Bhaṭṭāchārya. He was an inhabitant of Lāur in Sylhet and was born in 1434 A.D., or 52 years before Chaitanya. His great scholarship, especially in the Upaniṣadas, was much admired. He was descended from Nṛsinha Nāriel, the prime minister of Rājā Gaṇeṣa ('Kans' of Mahomedan historians), who is said to have succeeded in killing the Emperor of Gauḍa by following the statesmanly advices of his minister.¹ Advaita's father, Nāvā, was a courtier of Kṛṣṇa, Dāsa, the Rājā of Lāur, and the family enjoyed the esteem and confidence of people of the locality. Advaita first took his lesson in Sanskrit from Ḍāntāchārya, a renowned scholar of Ḍāntipur, and came to Navadvīpa to complete his studies and settled at Ḍāntipur, residing for the most part at Navadvīpa. His pious life, scholarly attainments, and spiritual faith marked him out as a conspicuous figure in Navadvīpa. It is said that he was deeply grieved

His ancestor
Nṛsinha Nāriel.

¹ See Advaita Prakāṣa by Iṣaṇa Nagora.

to mark the materialistic tendencies of the age. The people of Navadvīpa—the greatest centre of learning in India at that period—paid great attention to studies but were, it is alleged by the contemporary Vaiṣṇava historians, 'without any faith in God. They pursued learning for secular objects and even for its own sake, but none cared to interpret the Ṣāstras in the light of faith. The rich spent huge sums of money in the marriage of their children and in the worship of Vāsuli and other local deities. The streets of Navadvīpa resounded with songs in honour of the Pāla kings which were very popular at the time. Vṛndāvana Dāsa, the contemporary historian, regrets that thus did they all spend their lives in vain. Advaita's mind yearned for faith in God and it is believed by the Vaiṣṇavas and is written in their holy books that Chaitanya came to the world in response to Advaita's earnest appeal to the Most High to send some one into the world who would teach faith and remove the sophistical tendencies of the age.

Learning
without faith.

Advaita's pray-
er.

Viṣvarupa, the elder brother of Chaitanya, had taken Sannyāsa and left home in his 16th year; he was never since heard of. Their mother Ṣacī had lost eight daughters, and on the eve of Chaitanya's sannyāsa her husband Jagannāth Miṣra had also died. She had none

left in the world amongst her numerous children except Chaitanya. The Sannyāsa of Chaitanya was disastrous to her material prospects. It was but natural that Chaitanya should have a deep feeling for his mother throughout his life. Though he had taken the Sannyāsa vow which required a person never to revisit his native village or his home in life, Chaitanya had promised his mother that he would never remain very far away from her, for any length of time. And he kept his promise by staying at Purī from where constant messages about him reached her.

Çacī charges Advaita with turning the head of her son.

Chaitanya used to send Paṇḍit Jagadānanda to his mother every year with many endearing words of affection. On one occasion he sent

this message: "You are old now, my mother. I should have stayed with you and ministered to your comfort. This was my sacred duty. But my head turned away and I violated this duty; forgive me, a mad child, for this my sin, and know me, dear mother, to be your little darling as ever."¹ He added to such messages, "Mother, your kitchen is a holy place where I have taken the food cooked by your dear hands. When you cook your meal, know, that I shall always be there in spirit."² But Chaitanya's memories and associations

¹ Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chapter III.

² Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chapter III.

passed away like a flash of lightning as soon as they arose in his mind. After having delivered such messages he became unconscious of the outer-world passing into one of his trances, enjoying the inward union with his God.

When Chaitanya first began to manifest that devotion to God which eventually resulted in his adopting the vow of Sannyāsa, Çacī, his mother, made Advaita responsible for it. She wept and said, “Who says that Advaita is a great sage? He turned the head of my eldest son, bright as the moon, by his sophistry and made him leave home as a Sannyāsī for ever. Not satisfied with this he is now trying a similar experiment of his teachings on this young lad (Chaitanya).”¹

During more than half a century Advaita was an esteemed figure amongst the Vaiṣṇavas of Navadvīpa. Chaitanya after his Sannyāsa paid a visit to him at his house at Çāntipur. He stayed at the place for 10 days and Advaita then aged 75, sang and danced like a young man in the *Kīrtana* party that assembled round Chaitanya. When the latter was about to depart, the old man sobbed and cried like a child and followed Chaitanya for a long space. Chaitanya said on the occasion, “Oh thou venerable scholar, if thou beavest in this way, how

“কে বলে অশেষ হয় এ বড় গোসাই ।

চলসম এক পুত্র করিয়া বাহির

এই পুত্র না দিলেন করিবারে স্থির ।”

will my mother control her feelings. I leave her in thy care.”

Advaita paid visits to Chaitanya at Purī with other residents of Navadvīpa once every year. The Premavilāsa writes that at one time he deviated a little from the Vaiṣṇava conception of Bhakti and taught the doctrines of Jñāna as he had learnt of old. A meeting with Chaitanya completely reformed him and since then and all through his long career he remained firm in the cause of Bhakti as taught by Chaitanya and formed one of the blessed trio of whom the other two were Chaitanya himself and Nityānanda. The Premavilāsa writes that Advaita's two disciples Kāmadeva Nagara of Guzrat and Ṣaṅkara could by no means be led to accept the tenets of the emotional creed of the Vaiṣṇavas, but remained Vedāntists, and when Advaita was once more reconciled with Chaitanya, they left their teacher and the country for good.

According to the Premavilāsa Advaita died in the year 1539, but according to Advaitaparakāṣa by Īṣāna Nagara, in 1584. The latter statement carries the apostle's earthly career to the utmost span of human life, *viz.*, 125 years. For obvious historical reasons we are inclined to credit the statement of the Premavilāsa. The descendants of Advaita live mainly at Ṣāntipur up to this date. The piety, high character and fervour of

faith of Advaita's wife, Sītā, have been made the subjects of memoirs of many Vaiṣṇava writers. Sītā and Ṣrī, the two wives of Advaita, were daughters of Narasiṃha, Bhāduḍi by his wife, Menakā. The couple were the inhabitants of the village Nārāyaṇpur near Sātgaon in the Hughli district. Among the numerous disciples of Advaita, the name of Ṣrīnātha Ācārya, the Guru of Kavī Karṇapura and author of the celebrated commentary of the Bhāgavata called "Chaitanya Mālā Manjusa," deserves a prominent mention.¹

¹ See the Premavilāsa, Ch. xxv.

V. Nityānanda.

Though junior to Advaita by many years, Nityānanda occupies the second place in the trio according to popular estimation. The organisation of the Vaiṣṇava community in its later forms was eminently due to this apostle. His compassion for the depressed castes was a marked feature in his career devoted to the good of people. Though a Brāhmaṇ, he had no caste-prejudices and he mixed freely with the fallen and lowly without caring for the consequence. He opened the doors of the Vaiṣṇava society to all people irrespective of caste. Though the chief inspiration of this came from Chaitanya himself, the prophet of Nadiyā was too far steeped in his emotional felicities to be able to organise a sect or frame laws for it. Nityānanda did so at his bidding. The merchant community of Bengal, Sympathy with the fallen. outcasted and fallen after the decadence of Buddhistic ascendancy gave a warm response to Nityānanda's call of brotherhood and were admitted by him to the Vaiṣṇava order. The Chaṇḍāls, the Parias and other depressed castes, the Sahajiyās, a sect of Buddhist Bhikṣus and Bhikṣunīs, known by their nick names Nedā and Neḍīs, were admitted to the Vaiṣṇava community by Nityānanda's son Virachandra. The story is related how 2500 Buddhist Bhikṣus and Bhikṣunīs assembled at

Khaddaha and surrendered themselves to Virachandra who graciously made them members of the Vaiṣṇava society. A distinguished European friend of mine once went to Khaddaha (a few miles to the north of Calcutta) to see the place where these people had assembled, and referred to the

spot as marking the death of Buddhism in Bengal; for here did the last vestige of Buddhistic powers surrender itself and was incorporated with Vaiṣṇavism.

The merchants of Sātgaon, the chief mercantile centre in Bengal at the time, with Uddharaṇa Datta of the Suvarṇa Banika caste at their head, gathered round Nityānanda and were so devoted to him that they were prepared to sacrifice everything they had for his sake. Nityānanda is described in a popular Bengali song as “one without anger, always cheerful and without

pride, having compassion for all men”.¹ His love-ecstasies often matched those of Chaitanya and he was devoted to the master so greatly that when Chaitanya passed away from this earth he pined away like a lover speaking of nothing else but of the incidents of his life,² despising all earthly comforts till he too died two years later in 1535.

“অক্রোধ পরমানন্দ নিত্যানন্দ রায় ।”

“চৈতন্য বিচ্ছেদে সদাই বিলাপ ।

কদাচিৎ বাহু হৈলে চৈতন্য আলাপ

কায় মনো বাক্যে সদা চৈতন্য ধিয়ার ।

At one time the rich merchants of Saptagrāma, Nadiyā and other districts, grateful to Nityānanda for their admittance to the Vaiṣṇava community, offered him fine silken apparels embroidered with gold and chains studded with pearls, rubies and diamonds. Though an ascetic Nityānanda wore these ornaments to please them ; upon which a Brāhmaṇ of Nadiyā named Rāma Dāsa, a friend of Chaitanya, went to Purī and said to the latter, “ Nityānanda, your colleague, though an ascetic, is given to luxury. The rich merchants give him valuable articles and fineries and he uses them.”

Chaitanya's
great faith in
Nityānanda.

Chaitanya replied, “ But I know he is a true ascetic at heart. Don't look at his exterior. Dust, ashes, and the jewels and stones of which you speak are to him of the same value. Even if you told me that he paid court to low courtesans or indulged in wine, I would not lose my trust in him. ¹ Indeed he was a true ascetic, full of kindness for men and love for God. The following incident, of which most of the Bengalis, have heard, but the details of which are not perhaps so well known, shows some of the noble traits of his great life.

উচ্চ শব্দ করিয়া সদা গৌরাক্ষ গুণ গায়
আপনি গৌরাক্ষ গাই গাওয়ার জগতে
গৌরাক্ষের গুণ গাও পাবে নন্দমুতে ॥”

Nityānanda Vañca Vistāra by Vṛndāvana Dāsa.

The Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

Details about the two ruffian chiefs, Jagāi and Mādhāi, are to be found in the supplementary 2½ Chapters of the Premavilāsa recently discovered in a MS. of that work found by Yaçodālāla Vaṇika. I give these and the incident leading to their conversion below:—

Subhānanda Rāy, a Kulīn Brāhmaṇ, became a very rich and powerful man in Nadiyā and obtained the title of Rājā from the Emperor of Gauḍa about the year 1450 A.D. He was a great man and his reputation spread far and wide in the country. Owing to his friendship with the Emperor he carried great influence everywhere.

Jagāi and Mādhāi. His two sons, Raghunātha and Janārdana were distinguished for their scholarships and for their great personal beauty. Raghunātha had a son named Jagannātha, and Janārdana's son was called Mādhava. The cousins were popularly known as Jagāi and Mādhāi and had the hereditary titles of Rājā. These two young noble men became robbers at thier early youth, and carried on depradations all around, so that their names grew to be a terror to Nadiyā and the neighbouring districts. They carried away the wealth of villagers not even sparing their wives, set fire to their houses, and though born of a good Brāhmaṇ family freely indulged in wine and beef.¹ They set at defiance all law and order

“ব্রাহ্মণ হইয়া মজ্জ গোমাংস ভক্ষণ ।

ডাকা চুরি পরগৃহ দাহ অনুক্ষণ ।”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

and Gorāi Kazī, the Mahomedan Magistrate of Nadiyā, could not punish them because of their great power. They not only killed cows, but also Sādhus, to the horror of the Hindu community.

Chaitanya had now become the central figure of a spiritual band of workers who sang the praises of God day and night in the streets of Nadiyā. The robber-chiefs were offended by the loud music and uproar of the crowd. And when Haridāsa and Nityānanda one day passed by them exhorting people to pay homage to God and seek His mercy by pure lives, Jagāi and Mādhāi stood before them reeling in a drunken condition. The sweet and compassionate words of Nityānanda had no effect upon the brothers and Mādhāi ordered him to stop singing the name of God. But Nityānanda was neither frightened nor did he feel any anger; a deep compassion moved him while he continued singing the praise of the Lord. The infuriated chief had an empty bottle of wine in his hand with which he struck Nityānanda making a deep wound on his forehead. The apostle cried 'Oh God' 'Oh Lord' and while blood streamed forth from the wound and drenched his clothes, he said to Mādhāi, 'You have struck me for no fault, this I can bear Mādhāi, but I cannot see your wretched condition. You have struck me, no matter, but dear friend, only sing the praises of the Lord once, if I hear His

name uttered by you I will forget the pain of the wound.’¹ Mādhāi was about to strike the apostle again, when Jagāi, whose drunken fit had passed away, held his hands and forbade him to do so saying, “Why have you struck a Sannyāsī, you wicked man? He is a great Sādhu and has abandoned all earthly pleasures for God. What good can you attain by assaulting a pious man; do not do so again.”² At this time Chaitanya came up and as he saw Nityānanda’s face drenched in blood but quite cheerful and unmindful of his pain singing God’s name ecstatically, the Master ran to him, embraced him and with his own clothes wiped away the blood from his face. He looked at Mādhāi with sorrow and said in a touching tone, “Why have you struck my brother, dear as my life?” and then stopping a little said in a voice that trembled, “Mādhāi, if it was in your mind to strike one of us, why did you not

“মারিলি কলসীর কানা সহিবারে পারি ।
 তোদের দুর্গতি আমি সহিবারে নারি ॥
 মেরেছিঁস্ মেরেছিঁস্ তাতে ক্ষতি নাই ।
 হুমধুর হরিনাম মুখে বল ভাই ॥”
 কেন হেন করিলে নির্দয় তুমি দৃঢ় ।
 দেশান্তরী মারিয়া কি হইবে তুমি বড় ॥
 এত বড় অবধূত না মারিহ আর ।
 সন্ন্যাসী মারিয়া কোন লাভ বা তোমার ॥”

strike me? ”¹ With tender love did he take Nityānanda with him and the crowd followed them in deep but silent grief.

The two brothers stood there silent, wondering at what they had heard. The popular song ascribed the following speech to Jagāi at this stage² :—

“Strike not Nitāi any more, Oh brother Mādhāi! One’s pain is healed as one looks at his sweet face, full of compassion. Feign would I, Oh Mādhāi, clasp his feet and hold them close to my breast! This would cool my heart burning with remorse. Behold there, angel-like he looks, with his hair bound into a knot and with marks of God’s name all over his body. Being struck he has compassion for the striker. Where, Oh Mādhāi, was such compassion ever seen! Blood flows from his head mingled with

“মাধাই যদি মারবো বলে ছিল তোর মনে ।

তবে মাধাই আমার তুই না মারিলি কেনে ॥”

Chaitanya Maṅgala.

* “নিতাইকে আর মেরনা ও মাধাই ।

নিতাইএর চাঁদবদন দেখলে শীতল হয় জীবন,

আমার ইচ্ছা হয় যুগল চরণ, হৃদে ধরে প্রাণ জুড়াই ।

নিতাইএর মাথায় শিখা, উর্দ্ধ রেখা, অঙ্গে হরির নামটি লেখা,

কি অপরূপ ভঙ্গী বাঁকা রূপের সীমা নাই ।

মার খেয়ে দয়া করে, এমন দয়াল দেখি নাই ।

নিতাইর সর্ব অঙ্গে রুধির ধারা, তাহে বহে প্রেম ধারা

ত্রিঙ্গতে এমন দয়াল কভু দেখি নাই ॥”

An old song.

tears of forgiving love ; Oh what a divine sight do I see before me to-day !”¹

The two brothers went home but could not sleep for remorse. Mādhāi was moved to tears and longed for the sight of the divine man whom he had so cruelly struck but who, while bleeding, had spoken only sweet words. The brothers walked about the extensive courtyard of their house the whole night through in bitter repentance ; the dews of night fell upon their bare heads and the wind blew softly from the Ganges but could not heal the pain of their hearts. They became changed men in one night.

When the morning dawned in deep agony of heart they ran to the house of Chaitanya and knocking at his gate cried aloud, “ Oh Master, receive your sinners.” And when Chaitanya came out, weeping they fell at his feet without power of speech. Chaitanya said “ You boast of being the Rājās of Navadvīpa. It is a marvel that you cry like women.” He added that he had already pardoned Jagāi ; for himself he could not take offence at any thing. But Mādhāi must seek

¹ “নবদ্বীপের রাজা হও তোমরা দুজন ।
রাজা হয়ে কি কারণে কাঁদহ এখন ॥”

Chaitanya Maṅgala.

* “শিশু পুত্র মারিলে কি বাপ দুঃখ পায় ।
এই মত তোমার প্রহার মোর গায় ॥”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

the pardon of Nityānanda whom he had so brutally hurt." Upon this they approached the latter and most humbly prayed for forgiveness. Nityānanda said, "If a child beats his parents do they take offence? I have treated the assault in the same way."¹ And when Mādhāi with tears insisted on pardon the apostle said, "Your remorse will be complete and effective if you sin no more." They said nothing but by silent tears showed their sincerity. Nityānanda added, "Not only do I pardon you, but if I have done anything good or noble in this life or in previous lives, may the reward be yours, dear souls, this is my prayer to God. You struck me with a broken bottle, the punishment receive at my hands. I give you the name of God in return."

Jagāi and Mādhāi each took in his hand a leaf of the sacred *Tulasī* plant and at Nityānanda's direction gave it over to him saying, "Oh Master, my burden of sin I give unto you." This simple act completed their admittance to Nityānanda's discipleship. They had only to add that thenceforth they would lead blameless lives.

The two noble men did not return to their place but lived with their spiritual master repenting their sins and singing the praises of God.

¹ "কোন জন্মে থাকে যদি আমার শ্রুত ।

সব দিব মাধায়েরে গুণহ নিশ্চিত ।

Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Khanda, Chapter XIII.

Mādhāi's mental anguish did not cease, but the more he realised the kindness of Nityānanda, the greater grew his remorse for having made the beastly attack on his person. Nityānanda repeatedly assured him of his pardon. But Mādhāi one day told him in private, "You may pardon me, gracious Master, but to hundreds of my fellow-men I have caused pain. In drunken state I have assaulted men whom I do not know or even remember. What penance is there that may cleanse my sin? Tell me, Master, my heart longs for punishment of some sort for my lifelong wickedness." Nityānanda said, "If you want to beg pardon of the public whom you have wronged, go to the bathing *ghāt* of the Ganges and seek pardon of all who may go there for bathing."

Mādhāi took a spade in his hand and made with it a bathing *ghāt* himself on the bank of the Ganges, where for the whole day and a considerable portion of the night he would sit reciting the name of God, while silent tears would occasionally be seen rolling down his cheeks. Hundreds of men bathed in the Ganges every day. To every new arrival he would go with joined hands, no matter to what caste the person belonged, and with tearful eyes would say, "Whether knowingly or unknowingly if I have caused you any pain or harm, be gracious enough to pardon me

The Mādhāi-
Ghāt.

for the same." His pride of birth and wealth was thus completely humbled and thus he was born again, so to speak, in his new spiritual life. Jagāi also became known for his great piety and faith.

Thus passed the lives of two famous men of Navadvīpa who, born in wealth and power, but spoiled by wicked company, went back to the righteous course and lead lives worthy of Brahma-chāris. The Ghāṭ of Mādhāi became a sacred place in Navadvīpa. Many years ago the *ghāt*, that stood like an emblem of the sins and sufferings of its builder, was washed away by the Ganges as his sins were by true penitent tears; but it existed even at the time of Narahari Chakravartī, the author of *Bhaktiratnākara* who wrote his work about 1725 A.D.

The conversion of Jagāi and Mādhāi took place in the year 1509 A.D.

At a rather advanced stage of life, Nityānanda broke the vow of asceticism, it is said, at the bidding of Chaitanya and married the two daughters of Suryadās Sarkhel, a brother of Gaurdāsa Sarkhel of Kālnā. The latter was a companion of Chaitanya in his early years. Vasudhā and Jāhṇavī are the names of the two wives of Nityānanda. Jāhṇavī after her widowhood became a conspicuous figure in the Vaiṣṇava community for a long time and honoured for her high

Nityānanda's
marriage.

character. The Premavilāsa mentions the fact that Nityānanda having broken the ascetic's vow lost his position in society and no good Brāhmaṇ was willing to give him his daughter in marriage with him. Uddharaṇa Datta, a follower of Nityānanda, proposed his marriage with the daughters of Suryyadāsa Sarkhel, and the latter at first refused the proposal for fear of social ostracism. But his admiration for the apostle, who is said to have shown him some miracles, afterwards triumphed over his weakness and Suryyadāsa's family now stands exalted in the popular estimation owing to this connection.

Nityānanda's son, Vīrachandra (also called Vīrabhadra), became a great figure in the succeeding period of Vaiṣṇava history.

Vīrachandra.

VI. *Ṣrīvāsa.*

Next, to Nityānanda and Advaita who deservedly head the list of Chaitanya's companions, there were other commanding figures in the Vaiṣṇava community, each great in his own way. The special claims of Nityānanda and Advaita on popular respect rest on the fact that they organised the Vaiṣṇava community in Bengal. Communal gratitude has therefore paid the highest tribute of honour to them, while others, some of whom equally great, have remained somewhat in the back-ground, their lives being not so much devoted to the enlargement of the Vaiṣṇava circle as to doing good work silently among their fellowmen. Of these the sweet and saintly life of *Ṣrīvāsa* deserves special mention.

Ṣrīvāsa, a Brāhmaṇ scholar, came with Advaita from Sylhet to study at Nadiyā and settled there. He had three brothers *Ṣrīkanta* (*alias* *Ṣrīnidhi*), *Ṣrī Rāma* and *Ṣrīpati*. *Ṣrīvāsa* is sometimes called *Ṣrinivāsa*. The family enjoyed moderate affluence. The author of the *Chaitanya Bhāgavata* mentions that they had a large following of servants and attendants. In those days when luxury was unknown, a Mahomedan tailor lived in one of their out-houses, whose sole occupation was to sew clothes for the members

*Ṣrīvāsa's status
in society.*

of the family. Chaitanya is said to have prophesied once that “though Lakṣmī, the Goddess of wealth, might be reduced to begging her bread, yet Çrīvāsa’s family would never be poor.” Long after Çrīvāsa had been dead when Jayānanda wrote his Caitanya Maṅgala about 1540 A.D. the descendants of Çrīvāsa were still rich at Kumārhaṭṭa.

Çrīvāsa was junior to Advaita, but could not be less than 40 years when Chaitanya was born. We find from the accounts in the several biographies of Chaitanya that Çrīvāsa and his wife, Mālinī, were present at Jagannātha Miçra’s house when Chaitanya was born and that they made many beautiful presents to the baby on the occasion. Mālinī was a friend of Çachī Devī, Chaitanya’s mother, who had already given birth to nine children at the time. From this fact we may take Çrīvāsa to be at least 40 years old when Chaitanya was born and thus we take 1446 A.D. to be the year of Çrīvāsa’s birth. Chaitanya as a boy was a frequent visitor to Çrīvāsa’s house and carried out the orders of Çrīvāsa as a child does of his elders and even in his youth he was often accosted by Çrīvāsa in such language as “Whether bound, thou haughty boy?” (1)

(1) “কোথায় চলেছ উদ্ধতের শিরোনামি।”

Çrīvāsa grew into a spoilt child mixing in his early youth with bad companions. But all of a sudden there came a change over his wicked life. When he was barely 17, he dreamt one night that a Sannyāsī knocked at his door. Çrīvāsa forthwith came to meet him. The holy man said, “Çrīvāsa, you have only one year more to live, take this warning.” The dream vanished and the day dawned when to his great surprise Çrīvāsa found at his gate the Sannyāsī of his dream waiting for him; he too disappeared having delivered the selfsame message. From that time Çrīvāsa’s mirth and light-brained follies were gone. He had the sure belief that the span of his life extended for a year only. He did not speak out his thoughts but became emaciated, lean and pale, eating spare meal and often fasting for fear. When sorely troubled in this way, he one day came across the following line in the Vṛihat Nāradya Purāṇa: “Sing the praises of the Lord; nothing else will save a man from the sorrows of the world in this *kali yuga* (iron age).”¹ As the drowning man catches at a straw, even so Çrīvāsa caught the words which henceforth became the guiding principle of his life. But the words were no straw, they proved to be

The turning
point in his life.

“हरैर्नाम हरैर्नाम हरैर्नामैव केवलम् ।
कनौ नास्तुव नास्तुव नास्तुव गतिरस्तथा

a source of strength and support. We quote his own statement, "I took the *gloka* as the word of God Himself and though I was derided for it, I left all work and resigned myself absolutely to His will. When people laughed at me I was not angry but awaited patiently the summons from Him, losing all attachment for home and the world." He visited the house of Devānanda where the Bhāgavata was read every evening, and there became the most attentive listener. We find that one day he was turned out of the room as he sobbed loudly and showed other signs of emotion, which the audience considered unbecoming in an assembly of learned men while listening to sermons.¹

The one year passed, and on the last day Ṣrīvāsa went to the house of Devānanda Ācchārya as usual. The text for that day was the Chapter of Bhāgavata, which told of the devotion of Prahlāda, the son of Hiranyakaṣipu, and while hearing the interpretations, all of a sudden his head reeled, and in a moment he fell senseless on the ground. They took him for dead and carried him out of the house, when the same Sannyāsī whom he had seen a year before, appeared there and touching Ṣrīvāsa's body said, "Arise son, you have many things to

See the Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Chapter IX.

do yet." When Ṣrīvāsa awoke as from a sound sleep, the figure of the Sannyāsī, to his utter amazement, had vanished from the spot. ¹

Thus Ṣrīvāsa was re-born in the life of faith and became a constant companion of Advaita. They both sang the praises of God aloud in their houses and in the streets. Ṣrīvāsa had a musical voice and as he sang hymns and praises of God, many hearers stood by listening to the songs with rapt attention, though there were many who derided him for the excess of emotion he displayed.

When Chaitanya had founded a *tol* in Nadiyā at the house of Mukunda Sanjaya in the year 1508, Ṣrīvāsa often met him and advised him to devote himself to spiritual culture rather than to secular learning, but the young scholar not being then of a religious bent of mind, kept out of his way.

It is well known that Chaitanya's visit to Gayā brought a complete change into his life. It was there he first saw that vision of God, which continued till the last moment of his earthly career. On his return from Gayā, his trances were taken for fits of hysteria. He could not speak of anything other than of his God; the

¹ A full detail of this incident is to be found in many Vaiṣṇava works and particularly in the Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭaka by Kavi Karṇapūra.

name of God carelessly uttered even by bystanders would call forth a flood of tears from his eyes. He would often sing the name of God for hours together till he could sing or speak no more, remaining absorbed in his vision, unconscious of the world, for days and nights, taking no thought of food or sleeping.

Facing the spacious historic courtyard of Çrīvāsa's house, stood thick rows of *kunda* plants, the pearl-like white flowers of which presented to the sight what an Æschylus would describe to be the eternal smile of the landscape. The flowers bloomed there during all seasons, and Vṛndāvana Dāsa says in his Chaitanya Bhāgavata that the constant plucking of them by the worshippers and boys, morning and evening, did not cause any perceptible diminution in their number.

The *kunda*-flowers in Çrīvāsa's courtyard and talk about Chaitanya's love for God.

There the small band of Vaiṣṇava worshippers met every morning and talked over diverse matters as they gathered flowers in small cane-baskets. Here Çuklāmvara, one of these Vaiṣṇavas, spoke one morning of the wonderful love for God that dawned on Chaitanya. Since his return from Gayā "he is thoroughly changed; he no longer cares to comb his beautiful curling hair, his mother follows him with wistful eyes but he talks not with her and cries 'Oh God' and sees vision of Him in the clouds; he runs with his hands outstretched and eyes

full of tears to catch the Unseen; despising his soft couch and white bed he sleeps on the bare earth; he no longer wears his gold chains, earrings and lockets nor the fine *kṛṣṇakeli* cloth of silk with black borders; he neither takes his bath nor does he eat his usual meals; he no longer worships gods and goddesses, nor does he recite the sacred hymns as prescribed by the *Çāstras*; but weeps and cries 'Oh my God, do not hide your face from me'.

Çuklāmvara added, "Chaitanya has promised to tell me of the wonderful vision he saw at *Gayā*, in the evening to-day. Since he saw it, he says, he cannot control his feelings. His mother is in great distress."

They all said, "He was proud of his learning and ridiculed sacred things. Is it possible that God has given him the faith which he lacked, or is it madness?" They had not to wait long, for *Çachī Devī* sent for *Çrīvāsa* just at that time, with the tidings that her son had become insane. She had tried *Çivādi Ghṛta* and other medicines prescribed by the physicians but these had produced no effect. The malady was in fact the same as that attributed to the European mystics who displayed similar symptoms.

Çrīvāsa called on Chaitanya forthwith and after long and earnest talk came back himself a changed man. He saw in Chaitanya only the

Çrīvāsa's diagnosis.

bloom and perfection of that vision of which he had but got glimpses himself after his 're-birth'. The tears that flowed from Chaitanya's eyes while speaking with him, appeared to him holier than the stream of the Ganges, and as he listened to him, flashes of a new light dispelled his spiritual doubts, and it seemed to Çrīvāsa that he too saw the One whose glorious vision had so absolutely possessed the young scholar. Çrīvāsa could not help bowing down before Chaitanya, though he was much his junior, and when at parting, Chaitanya with joined hands prayed Çrīvāsa to find a cure for his insanity, distressed as he was for his mother, Çrīvāsa said, "Your insanity is what we all covet. The addiction to worldly pleasures which last for a moment only plunging men shortly after into a sea of misfortune, is real insanity." What Çrīvāsa felt, all people of Nadiyā felt shortly after except the Bhaṭṭāchāryyas, ever vain of their great learning.

The courtyard in Çrīvāsa's house became the favourite resort of Chaitanya every evening. It was here that the daily growing number of his followers met and sang *kīrtana* songs from sun-set to sun-rise, while he inspired them with

his trances standing in the centre of them. It was here that when

The courtyard
of Çrīvāsa.

Çrīvāsa's only son died one night, he whispered to the women of the house not

CRĪVĀSA.

to mourn aloud lest the heavenly joy imparted by Chaitanya's ecstasies of love might be disturbed, for in them the Vaiṣṇavas saw the real vision of God-in-man. His son had died at 7-30 in the night and the *kīrtana* continued till 2 A.M. Never before had Çrīvāsa's songs been so fervent and impressive. Chaitanya at last heard of the bereavement that had befallen his friend, and stopped *kīrtana*. Upon Çrīvāsa's asking permission of him to leave home for the cremation of the child, Chaitanya said, "How can I leave the company of one who forgot the loss of his only son for my love!"¹ Here in this courtyard of Çrīvāsa, Chaitanya often discussed religious matters with Çrīdhara, the poor Brahmin, rich in faith and character, whose humble calling was to sell plantain-leaves in the streets. In his childhood, Chaitanya used often good humouredly to advise Çrīdhara to earn money by performing priestly functions in the houses of those who worshipped Chandī and other local deities with great pomp. "Why should you," he had once asked, "be content with your rags and wretched but?" Çrīdhara's meek answers on such occasions would be "Well hast thou said, oh Brahmin lad, yet time passes and at the end makes no difference. The king

“পুত্রশোক না জানিল যে মোহর প্রেমে।

হেন তব সঙ্গ মুই ছাড়িব কেমনে ॥”

Chaitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Khanda, Chap. XXV.

in his golden hall partakes of rich meals, and behold the birds live on the boughs of trees. When death comes it levels all. Each has his lot apportioned by God.”¹ Çrīdhara, the faithful, was now a constant companion of Chaitanya. Here in this courtyard Çrīvāsa used to read passages from the Gītagovinda and the Bhāgavata making clear the hidden meaning of Kṛṣṇa’s love and sports in the Vṛndā groves. The earth earthy—the flesh and its desires—vanished before his glowing speech, the texts being interpreted as symbolic forms of the highest spiritual truths. Chaitanya became frenzied with joy as he heard these, and said to Çrīvāsa “say again what you said and tell me more, beloved friend, sweeter than nectar is your speech.” On one occasion when Chaitanya lay unconscious in this courtyard, his face beaming with joy at the beatific vision, Advaita touched the dust of his feet with reverence, which he would never allow while in sense. Discovering this afterwards Chaitanya admonished this old scholar saying “Yours is a sea of devotion and faith, mine is a mere well. Why do you covet it from so small a place?”

¹ “শ্রীধর বলেন বিপ্র বলিলা উত্তম ।
তথাপি সভার কাল যায় এক সম ॥
রত্নঘরে থাকে রাজা দিব্য খায় পরে ।
পক্ষিগণ থাকে দেখ বৃক্ষের উপরে ॥
কাল পুন সভার সমান হই যায় ।
সভে নিজ কর্ম ভুঞ্জি ঈশ্বর ইচ্ছায় ॥”

It was in Çrivāsa's courtyard that Chaitanya acted as a sweeper and cleansed the temple of Kṛṣṇa with a broom, calling himself '*Kṛṣṇer haddipa*'—Kṛṣṇa's sweeper all the while and weeping for joy at his own humility. Here Narāyani,—the niece of Çrivāsa, who became latterly celebrated as the mother of the historian Vṛndāvāna Dāsa, is said to have shown spiritual tendencies even when she was a girl of 4, inspired by Chaitanya. Here the Mahomedan tailor of Çrivāsa's house attracted by the emotional fervour of Chaitanya, openly renounced his faith and turned a Vaiṣṇava. From this courtyard Advaita reverentially took up some dust and exclaimed "How can I claim the fortune of Çrivāsa whose courtyard is the favourite haunt of Chaitanya?" Here Chaitanya once ate some grains of coarse rice from the begging bowl of Çuklāmvara, the ascetic, and said "No poor food is this, received from the hands of one of the most pious of men, it gives purity of heart to its pertaker."

The courtyard of Çrivāsa's house has a hundred associations of Chaitanya. It is now in the bed of the Ganges, but the sanctity of this shrine is now attributed to a spot now called by the same name and considered a holy place by a thousand of pilgrims who visit it annually.

“ঐবাসশ্চৈব কমে তাদৃশং সৌভাগ্যং যন্ত ভবনে প্রতিদিনমেব সেবিতং দেবেন ।”

The Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭaka.

In the Çri Kṛṣṇa play organised by Chaitanya, played at the house of Buddhimanta Khān of Nadiyā who bore the cost, Çrivāsa took the part of the musician-sage Nārada which he played very well. Chaitanya himself figured as “Rukmiṇī”, one of the queens of Kṛṣṇa, and so perfect was his play that even Çachī, his mother, could not recognise him in his female

The play organised by Chaitanya. guise. In Chaitanya Chandro-
 daya by Kavi Karṇapūra, a contemporary poet, Çrivāsa as Nārada is thus described. “He presents himself on the stage with his long grey beard and sandal marks all over his body. From his left shoulder hangs his lyre and in his right hand he holds the sacred *kuça* grass. As he makes his appearance he hears the music of Çri Kṛṣṇa’s flute floating from afar and thus muses. “Is it the merry chuckle of the geese as they sportively swim in the lake of sweet love or the humming of bees as they suck honey from the blooming flowers in a lovely garden?”

On the eve of the play Chaitanya had said “Those who have entirely subdued the passions of the flesh should only be entitled to witness this play of ours”. He had feared lest the loves of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa be interpreted by materialistic people as sensual love.” To this Çrivāsa and Advaita both replied “Take out our names from the list first; for if this be the

law to-day, we are not fit," and Chaitanya smiled at this.

Haridāsa and Nityānanda lived for two years in Çrivāsa's house (1508-1510 A.D.) One was a Mahomedan and the other an ascetic and no respecter of caste. The propriety of Çrivāsa's conduct in receiving these guests at his house was called in question by the orthodox Hindu community, but he paid no heed to their disapproval. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata says that "Çrivāsa and the members of his family were devoted to Chaitanya and to him alone. They did not believe in any other god or goddess."¹ Nityānanda and Haridāsa remained in Çrivāsa's house, and every morning they made their round in the city singing praises of God and calling on the house-holders to give them alms. When, however, they came to give them alms, the apostles said "Sing the praises of the Lord and lead holy lives. This is the alms we beg of you,—none other."

Often did Chaitanya come out with his *Sankīrtana* party and march through the streets of Nadiyā. The Bhaṭṭāchāryas were greatly offended; they did not accept the emotional creed of *bhakti*. They were proud of their learning and power, and made representations

¹ "সপরিবারে করে ষার। চৈতন্যের সেবা ।

শ্রীচৈতন্য বিনে নাহি মানে দেবী-দেবা ॥"

to the Kāzi praying him to stop the loud uproar of the Vaiṣṇavas in the public streets. The Vaiṣṇavas sang the name of God "with the psaltery and the high sounding cymbals" in the streets, but the courtyard of Çrivāsa's house was, of course, the central meeting place of the band. At one time a rumour passed current that a ship carrying soldiers of the Emperor was about to land in the city of Nadiyā to arrest the

The hostile people. offenders. Even some of the unbelievers got alarmed at this rumour. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata records the following conversation among some of them. One said "I had already suggested that the house of Çrivāsa, the resort of the Vaiṣṇavas, should be at once destroyed and thrown into the Ganges. You did not take recourse to force which is the only remedy in such cases. Now you will see how many innocent men will suffer for the wickedness of these Vaiṣṇavas." Another said "why should we be alarmed? If the King's soldiers come, we will have Çrivāsa arrested, and the matter will end there."

His enemies had recourse to various means to annoy Çrivāsa. We find it mentioned in the biographies of Chaitanya that a Brāhmāṇ of Nadiyā, named Gopāl Chāpal, kept at the gate of Çrivāsa objects of *tāntric* rites which caused a horror to the Vaiṣṇavas. These consisted of meat and wine with which Chaṇḍī was worshipped.

But all this opposition ended when Chaitanya took the Sannyāsi's vows. This implied his desertion of Nadiyā for ever. A sannyāsī may never revisit his native place nor live with his family ever after in life. Chaitanya wore rags and shaved his head and became a Sannyāsī when only 24 years old. Even his enemies were sorry to see him cut off all earthly ties while still so young. The people had all along felt a

Chaitanya's Sannyās and the general mourning.

sense of love for this divine man, though some did not approve of the forwardness and over-winning

manners of a few of his followers. It was a day of general lamentation in Nadiyā. From the day when Chaitanya left the place for ever, the courtyard of Ārīvāsa became as it were a desert in the eyes of his numerous friends and associates.

The last part of Ārīvāsa's life was spent in recollecting the incidents of Chaitanya's early life.

And Murārī Gupta, a great scholar of Nadiyā,

Ārīvāsa's grief.

was the first to write notes in Sanskrit verse on Chaitanya's

life, at the order of Ārīvāsa, who spoke of nothing but of Chaitanya after his desertion of Nadiyā and dreamt of him in his sleep by night. Often while gathering flowers for worship he recollected Chaitanya and fainted away in grief, the basket of flowers falling from his unconscious hands. Sometimes going to the banks of the Ganges, he missed his great

companion and sat for hours together meditating on him who was dearer to him than everything else in the world and he forgot that he had come there to bathe. In his own courtyard, the *sankirtana* party sang the praises of the Lord again with the high-sounding cymbals, the timbrel and dance, and he stood there listening to the singers but often his voice was choked with tears and he fell down on the bare earth in great grief crying like a child. Sometimes he felt that the God of his songs and Chaitanya were the same, so that while offering flowers to Kṛṣṇa instead of saying 'I bow to thee, oh Kṛṣṇa,' he said unconsciously 'I bow to thee, oh Chaitanya.' And as he remembered himself, tears rolled down his cheeks.

The residents of Nadiyā all except Chaitanya's wife and mother, had permission to go and see him once a year at Purī. This was on the occasion of the great Car festivities. Needless to say that Ṣrīvāsa was one of the foremost to avail himself of this opportunity. How happy was once more the venerable old man of Nadiyā to meet his young "master" and sing the name of God in the *kirtana* party at Purī! We find him once in a delirium of joy pushing through the crowd to be near Chaitanya. In his attempt he pressed against Pratāpa Rudra, the king. Upon which Harichandana,

Ṣrīvāsa at Purī.

his minister, pushed him away with his hands; but the old man's ecstasies knew no bounds, and he again unconsciously pressed upon the king on which the minister again pushed him away with his hands. Çrivāsa got angry and slapped the minister on his cheek. Harichandana was very angry, but Pratāpa Rudra said "Do not be offended with him; his devotion for the Master is such that we are not worthy of touching the dust of his feet."¹

While parting from Chaitanya on the expiration of the few days he was permitted to stay at Purī in the year, he wept every time like a child leaving his mother, and on one of these occasions Chaitanya is said to have spoken to him thus: "Do not weep, veteran scholar. Though I am at Purī, I shall be always in spirit in your courtyard. That place and the kitchen of my dear mother where I took meals cooked by her hands, I can never for a moment forget. You will feel my presence when the *Sankīrtana* party assemble in your courtyard and sing Kṛṣṇa's name."

Çrivāsa's family had two residential houses, one at Nadiyā and the other at Kumārhatta. In the latter place there is a mound of earth marking the spot which was once his home.

VI. *Haridāsa.*

One of the most ardent and sincere of Chaitanya's companions—one who showed his great devotion for him and adhered to his spiritual convictions in the teeth of great persecution—was Haridāsa, popularly known as *yavana* Haridāsa,—the Mahomedan. We have not come across his Mahomedan name. He was given the Hindu name 'Haridāsa' after his conversion to Vaiṣṇavism. His father's name was Malai Kāzi. He was the owner of a considerable property in the district of Ambua, and as the name Kāzi implies, was a Mahomedan Magistrate. Haridāsa was born in Buḍan near Banagrām in the district of Jessore about the year 1464 A.D. He came to Sāntipur as a young man and was converted to the Vaiṣṇava faith by Advaita. We find him living at the house of Çrivāsa in Nadiyā between 1508-1510. Here Nityānanda and he became fast friends and both preached the Chaitanya-cult in the city and its suburbs. As already mentioned, they visited the houses of the villagers as beggars and in the place of alms which the good people were ready to give them, they asked for a promise on their part to sing the praises of God and lead pure lives.

Early life and conversion to Vaiṣṇavism.

Gorāi Kāzi who was the Mahomedan Kāzi of Kuliā, a ward of Nadiyā, was greatly enraged to find a Mahomedan become a Hindu convert; and he reported the matter to the Emperor of Gauda. Orders were received to try him in a court presided over by 12 Kāzis, and they passed the unanimous judgment that if he still persisted in reciting the name of Hari through the streets, he should be publicly whipped in 22 different markets of the country. This was done. The persecution was so unceasing and the punishment so severe that he was at one time taken for dead. But Haridāsa triumphed over all this and kept to his course out of the great love he bore to Chaitanya.

Persecution.

In his youth Haridāsa had for a time led a life of penance passing through a process of spiritual training in the jungly tracts of Benapole near Jessore. It is well known that Rāmchandra Khān, a powerful local zemindar and a bully, sent a beautiful Moghul harlot to Haridāsa promising her a reward if she could succeed in winning him to the pleasures of a worldly life. Haridāsa lived in a small hut at Benapole where the harlot visited him one evening and said that she was smitten with love for him. Haridāsa said he would attend to her after saying his prayers. Saying so he shut his eyes in order to take the

Victory over temptation.

fixed number of God's name which were three lacs by day and night. So quiet and lonely was the place and so profound was the meditative mood of Haridāsa, that his lovely seducer waited till morning without a word and when at the dawn of the day people gathered at the place to see the holy man she went away saying she would visit him the next evening. That night also she had a similar experience, the all absorbing meditation of Haridāsa could not be disturbed, and on the third night she could not resist the influence of the saintly life before her. To the great disappointment of Rāmchandra Khān

The harlot turned a devotee. it was discovered that the beautiful Moghul courtizan had taken to the life of a Vaiṣṇava recluse by shaving her head and accepting Haridāsa as her spiritual guide. We know from the accounts given

A retribution. in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta how a retribution came to Rāmchandra Khān from the most High for oppressing Haridāsa and doing other wicked things. He had insulted before this Nityānanda who had been a guest at his house one night. He had grown proud of his army and refused to pay annual revenue to the Mahomedan court. A powerful army of the Emperor laid siege to his fortified town and making a forcible entry into it, occupied it, defiling his temples with the blood of cows slain there.

Kavi Karṇapūra relates that in the dramatic performance organised by Chaitanya at

Haridāsa as a player in the dramatic performance given by Chaitanya

Nadiyā, Haridāsa played the part of the Sūtradhara. He had a turban on his head, ear-rings on his ears, a string of pearls on his

neck and bracelets on his arms. From his shoulders hang a flowing wreath of field-flowers.

The dramatic character representing the abstract virtue of Brotherhood asked the Deity of love and faith on the stage, how it was that a Mahomedan was allowed to take part in the religious functions of the Hindus. The latter said "The way of love and faith is different from the one prescribed in the Ṣāstras." Brotherhood said

What takes place during the flood.

"If one takes an irregular course, it will take a long time to arrive at the spiritual goal, if it is to be attained at all by such means." The Deity of love and faith replied "Not so always, though it may be true generally speaking. There are occasions when by embracing an undefined and irregular course the destination is reached the sooner. Behold, when the country is deluged with flood and there is no fixed course for the boat to take, it goes faster to its destination by following an undefined course than it would do by taking the zigzag course of a well-defined river in the dry season.¹

¹ See Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭakam by Kavi Karṇapūra, (Berhampur Edition), Act III, Scene iii, pp. 169-170.

This refers to the violation of Ṣāstric ordinances which marked the course of the Vaiṣṇavas in the pursuit of their spiritual goal. The Mahomedans were offered the same respect and, what is more, the same social prestige as the Hindus, in their own community. The flood is here the one of faith and devotion brought on by Chaitanya.

When Haridāsa was at Sāntipur living with Advaita, the latter was for some time excommunicated by the orthodox community for his intimate associations with a Mahomedan. A public diet took place there in which Haridāsa made a speech quoting chapter and verse from various Sanskrit works and successfully meeting all the arguments advanced by his chief opponent Yadunandana Āchārya who held an undisputedly high position as a scholar not only at Sāntipur but in the neighbouring districts. The diet resulted in the latter's accepting the creed of Vaiṣṇavism as propounded by Haridāsa. His triumph over such a powerful adversary, no less than his great meekness of character and exalted life, overcome the prejudices of the people of Sāntipur and thenceforward they ceased their hostile attitude towards Haridāsa and to his friend Advaita.

From Sāntipur Haridāsa came to the village of Fuliya the birth place of the distinguished Bengali poet Kṛttivāsa. Here the inspiring

Haridāsa reconciled with the Hindu Community.

presence of Haridāsa made a deep and profound impression on a Brāhmāṇ scholar named Rāmdāsa who acknowledged the Mahomedan devotee as his Guru—spiritual master.

Haridāsa followed Chaitanya at Purī. And out of respect for orthodox notions he lived outside the Purī temples. But Chaitanya paid him a visit there almost every day. We have already noticed that in this resort of Haridāsa outside the Temple jurisdiction, Sanātana lived for a while before going to Vṛndāvana.

Sanātana's admiration for Haridāsa's character was great. Once he praised him in the following words: "There are those who preach religious truths but do not live holy lives themselves. Others there are who lead pure lives as religious recluses, cut off from men. But you have not only preached the truths yourself but have practised them in your own life. Who is there, so noble and good as you are?"¹

Chaitanya also admired him thus: "Your holy thoughts are as the streams of the Ganges in which your soul bathes every hour. Your pious acts earn for you that virtue which the people seek in sacrificial rites prescribed in the Çāstras. You are constantly in touch with the loftiest of ideals

The respect in which he was held.

- (1) "আপনে আচারে কেহ না করে প্রচার ।
প্রচার করয়ে কেহ না করে আচার ॥
আচার প্রচার নামের কর দুই কার্য ।

which give you the same merit as the study of the Vedās. What Sādhu or Brāhmaṇ is there who is good and great as you are? ”

When he felt the approach of death he told Chaitanya that he was disabled by age from reciting the number of names of God daily that he had done for long years. Chaitanya said “You should not do anything to weaken the body. You are a true saint and may dispense with the forms.” That very night when he felt the approach of death with joined hands he said to Chaitanya “Pray remain near me at my last moment, so that I may see that beautiful face of yours which has been the fountain of all my spiritual bliss. Oh my friends present here, recite the name of my Master. So that I may hear the sweet name of Chaitanya uttered by you. This is the last great act of kindness I expect to receive at your hands.”³ Turning to

(3) “হৃদয়ে ধরিব তোমার কমল চরণ
নয়নে দেখিব তোমার চাঁদ বদন
জিহ্বায় উচ্চারিব তোমার কৃষ্ণ-চৈতন্য নাম
এইমত মোর ইচ্ছা ছাড়িব পরাণ ।

The last scene is thus described—

হরিদাস নিজ পার্শ্বে প্রভু বসাইল ।
নিজ নেত্র দুই ভূঙ্গ মুখ পদ্মে দিল ॥
সহৃদয়ে আসি ধরি প্রভুর চরণ ।
সর্ব ভক্ত পদ রেণু মস্তকে ভূষণ ॥
শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য প্রভু বলে বার বার ।
প্রভু মুখ মাধুরিতে পিয়ে নেত্র জলধার ॥
শ্রীকৃষ্ণ চৈতন্য শব্দ করিতে উচ্চারণ ।
নামের সহিত প্রাণ করে উৎক্রামণ ।

The Chaitānya Charitāmṛta Antya Khanda Chap. X.

Chaitanya he said again "A low born, vile fellow I was, through your grace I have been saved, and have known the sweets of a higher life. You have His last moments. given me an exalted rank in the society of Hindus so that though a Mahomedan I have received presents at the Çrāddha ceremony from high-caste Hindus, as though I were a Brāhmaṇ. But all this temporal glory is nothing as compared with the spiritual bliss which you have brought to my soul." When his last moment came, Chaitanya called all his companions near the bed of the venerable saint and at his bidding the best of the Brāhmaṇs bowed at the feet of the departing sage while all sang the praises of God. As the last flicker of life passed away, his remains were carried to the sea coast, where Chaitanya with his own hands dug up the sand and made a burial place for him.

It has been attempted by later Vaiṣṇava historians to prove that Haridāsa though brought up by a Mahomedan, was a Brāhmaṇ by birth and as a child was taken care of by Mālāi Kāzi. Mālāi Kāzi was not his father but his god-father. In the earlier writings, however, no reference as to his Brāhmaṇic origin is found; he is simply called 'Mahomedan' Haridāsa. We have often found that as the Vaiṣṇava circle gradually expanded itself, it took by degrees a secterian

Attempts to prove him of Hindu extraction.

character, relaxing its high principles of brotherhood given to it

by Chaitanya and Nityānanda. The caste-prejudices of the orthodox community gradually entered into it and the descendants of Gosāins—the Gurus of Vaiṣṇavas—who were mostly Brāhmanas—felt it as a stigma on their pedigree that their ancestors had eaten from the same plate with one who by birth was a Mahomedan, and had bowed at his feet, nay more, had in a few cases, acknowledged him as their religious teacher. They have thus probably invented stories to mitigate the force of this evil as far as possible by attributing Brāhmanic ancestry to Haridāsa. Chaitanya was no believer in caste, nor in any difference between man and man. His motto was the text of the Vṛhat Nāradiya Purāṇa “Even a Chaṇḍāl is to be honoured more than a Brāhmaṇ if the former has attained the knowledge of God.” As an ascetic he could not have any caste-prejudices himself, but he admired freedom from them in those of his followers who were not ascetics but belonged to the orthodox community. We find it mentioned in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta that one Kālidāsa, a Kāyastha, had made it his mission to eat the refuse food from the plate of such low-caste

Kalidasa the great champion of caste-reform.

people as Doms and Hādīs with the full approval of Chaitanya.

Kālidāsa defended his procedure by saying that when the taking of meal touched by others formed such an important factor of

the grounds for condemning a man in society, it was necessary to take the extreme step, that he did, in order to convince the people of the folly of such a view.

VII.—*Lokanātha Gosvāmī.*

The history of the Vaiṣṇavas in Bengal, so full of sacrifices and hardships undergone for the sake of religion, hardly presents a more striking example of patient faith and silent self-dedication to Chaitanya than that of the famous hermit Lokanātha Gosvāmī. The Vaiṣṇava biographers, so lavish in their praise of other leaders of their faith and in minute details of their lives, are strangely silent about Lokanātha whose pure life, spiritual fervour and uncompromising adherence to his lofty ideals are almost unique in Vaiṣṇava history. The writers make little more than an incidental reference to his life given in the biographical notices of other Vaiṣṇava worthies.

Lokanātha was the son of a Kulin Brāhmaṇ named Padmanābha Chakravartī of Talgoria, a village in the district of Jessore. His mother's name was Sītā and he was born about the year 1490 A.D. Lokanāth was a fellow-student of

Pedigree and early life.

Chaitanya, reading with him at the of *tol* Paṇḍit Gaṅgā Das at Nadiyā. When Chaitanya's life

suddenly took the religious turn, for which it was predestined, no one admired it more than

Lokanātha, who for some time was his constant companion. Chaitanya wanted him to go to Vṛndāvana to reclaim the deserted shrine, a mission for the accomplishment of which Sanātana, Rūpa and others were employed by Chaitanya in latter years. Separated from Chaitanya, Lokanātha felt miserable, but he could not refuse it; a request from Chaitanya was as binding as the holiest writ of scripture to his companions, and Lokanātha silently carried out his bidding.

The order inviolable. The Premavilāsa thus describes what he said to Chaitanya on this occasion in one of his messages to him: “No more shall I, oh my Lord, be permitted to see your feet. Think not that I seek my own pleasures. To carry out your wishes must always be the sole end of my life. For this object have I reconciled myself with the solitary life I lead here. You are there in the midst of those who are more fortunate than I. I am deprived of that company than which nothing is dearer to me.”¹

A journey to Vṛndāvana from Nadiyā was not an easy matter in those days. Lokanātha was accompanied by another Brāhman scholar named Bhugarbha. At the time they went, the main

¹ আর না দেখিব গোরা তোমার চরণ ।
রহিলাম আজ্ঞামাত্র করিয়া ধারণ ॥
ভক্তগণ সঙ্গে প্রভু যে করিলা লীলা ।
বঞ্চিত করিয়া মোরে হেথা পাঠাইলা ॥

road was blocked by the contending armies of Hindus and Mahomedans near Rājmahal. It was the month of October, 1510 A.D. when they started for the holy city. When, however, the pilgrims asked the people of Rājmahal about the route, they were told that it would be impossible for them to get to Vṛndāvana in the disturbed state of the country, by the main road. Other roads were also infested by robbers. But they were not daunted. They went on inspired by faith alone. They took the route by Tājpur and reached Purniyā from where they came to Lucknow. It took them three days to reach Agra from this place. In 23 days Loknātha and Bhugarbha reached Vṛndāvana from Nadiyā. They were dressed in rags and carried beggar's bowls in their hands. The holy city was deserted. It was overgrown by the jungle, with huts of poor people dotted here and there, and was nothing more than a name even to the Vaiṣṇavas who held it sacred. But the hermits in co-operation with Sanātana and Rūpa, who subsequently joined them, identified the places associated with Kṛiṣṇa's early life, and the wonderful tale of their devotion and holy lives spread far and wide. In half a century the city rose again with its gay array of lofty tiara-shaped temples, some of which claim the glory of being considered among the foremost architectural monuments of India.

Journey to Vṛndā-
vana.

The transformation was as sudden as though it were accomplished by the touch of a magician's wand. But of this we propose to speak at some length elsewhere. From 1511 to 1512 Chaitanya was in the Deccan, and Loknātha like others heard of his presence there. He accordingly left Vṛndāvana for a time to meet the Master in the south; but unfortunately he could not overtake him, missing him narrowly at the several stations where Chaitanya had halted for some days. Lokanātha heard again, while still journeying in the Deccan in quest of the Master,

He misses Chaitanya.

that he had gone up to Vṛndāvana. He hurried back to that town as soon as he heard this, but on his arrival there was again disappointed to learn that Chaitanya had left the holy city. Lokanātha had no orders from the Master to return to Purī or Bengal; so though greatly mortified at the separation from him, he spent the remaining days of his life at Vṛndāvana following the paths of spiritual advancement and humane service. The Vrajabāsīs, as the residents of Vṛndāvana and its vicinity were called, paid him unique homage acting as he bade them to do without a question—so high was the place he occupied in their estimation. The

His piety.

Anurāgavallī describes him thus: “Always scrutinising himself by meditation, not given to many words, but when he opens

his mouth, his short speeches are full of sweetness and wisdom, wielding a great influence.”¹

We shall have to return again to the life of this great Vaiṣṇava, when referring to the subject of the reclaiming of the shrine of Vṛndāvana. Loknātha was absolutely averse to a glorification of himself by the writers of the Vaiṣṇava history. It is well-known that Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who wrote the most valuable account of Chaitanya's life, drew his inspiration and materials in no inconsiderable degree from Lokanātha Gosvāmī. But while describing the noteworthy incidents of the lives of other devotees, he does not mention the help he obtained from Lokanātha anywhere in his elaborate work, nor does he refer to any anecdote of his illustrious life. This is because Loknātha had prevented the Kavirāja from writing anything to glorify him. This incident is mentioned in the Premvilāsa written only a few years after the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

Lokanātha had made it a point not to take disciples, and this accounts for the comparative silence of the Vaiṣṇava historians about him. The disciples generally take elaborate notes of the lives of their Gurus and write their biographies. The only disciple whom Lokanātha

পরম বিরক্ত কথা নাহি কারু মনে ।
যে কহয়ে সে অতি মধুর বচনে ॥

The Anurāgavalli.

admitted was Narottāma. Lokanatha had relaxed his stern principle in favour of Narottama under exceptional circumstances which I shall relate while writing about the latter. Lokanātha was unwilling to admit disciples because they were required to pay honour to their Gurus verging on worship. Lokanātha was afraid lest this might lead to self-glorification and vanity. Throughout his long life he remembered the words which Chaitanya spoke to him while bidding him God-speed on the eve of his journey to Vṛndāvana. "Know this Lokanātha, that neither you nor I are meant to enjoy the pleasures of the world."

Lokanātha remained a bachelor all his life and died at a good old age mourned by the whole Vaiṣṇava community.

VII.—Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma.

We have incidentally mentioned Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma in a previous lecture in connection with a controversial discussion which he held with Chaitanya at Purī on spiritual matters, and his eventual defeat and acceptance of Chaitanya as his master (Guru) and the true interpreter of religious truths.

Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma was unquestionably at the head of the scholars of Eastern India at the time. Having read the Upanishads at Benares he became a pupil of the celebraetd

Pakṣadhara Miṣra of Mithilā, which, during the youth of Sārvabhauma, was the most important centre of learning in Northern India. The proud position, however, of this place it was reserved for Vāsudeva himself to break down in latter years. He succeeded in establishing the glory of the *col* he founded at Nadiyā—far exceeding that won by the college where he had completed his education. Pakṣadhar Miṣra made it a condition with his pupils that they

The rise of the
Navadvīpa school
of Logic.

were not to transcribe any copy of Chintāmaṇi by Gaṅgeṣa Upādhyāya for their own use. This book was the store-house of contemporaneous knowledge of Logic; and Pakṣadhara having in his possession the only MS. of the great work, jealously guarded it for the benefit of his own college. His own interpretations of the work and teaching on the subject were also considered to be of rare value. So that as far as Logic (which was one of the most important branches of learning at the period) was concerned, the reputation of the Mithila College was far greater than that of any other college in Upper India.

As no copy of the work was allowed to be made, each pupil of Pakṣadhara having to take a solemn vow to that effect before the teacher gave him lessons on the subject, the precious learning lay confined within the four walls of his college-room. However complete

their education at Mithilā, his pupils could not disseminate so perfect a knowledge of the subject in their respective countries, without having in their possession any copy of the original work, which was further enriched by the annotations of several generations of accomplished teachers of Mithilā.

Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma committed to memory not only the four parts of Chintāmaṇi with its valuable store of annotations, but also a very considerable portion of the famous work Kusu-māñjali. Without violating the conditions to which he had subscribed, he came to Nadiyā fully equipped with the latest knowledge, and founded a *tol* there, the reputation of which soon spread far and wide, drawing hosts of pupils from all recognised centres of Sanskrit learning throughout India, till the fame of the Maithil College rapidly diminished and was eventually extinguished. Vāsudeva's teachings gave a fresh stimulus to the cause of the study of Logic and his famous pupil Raghunātha Ćiromaṇi's name stands first in the list of those who founded the new school of Logic named Navya Nyaya which to this day remains a monument of the keenness of the Bengali intellect. Raghunātha was a son of a widowed Brāhmiṇ woman who earned her living by doing menial work at the house of Sārvabhauma. When only a lad of 3, Raghunātha was asked by Sārvabhauma to get some bits

of burning wood from the kitchen for his pipe.

Raghunātha his
worthy desciple. The boy first took a quantity of

dust in his hand and thus protect-
ed brought the bits of burning wood to his

master. It is said that this little incident struck
the teacher as a sign of the boy's intellectual
powers and he undertook to teach him himself.

At 5 when Raghunātha began to read the alpha-
bets, he startled his teacher by the question
"Sir why is the letter 'क' placed before 'ख' ?
What harm if their situation is changed ?"

Raghunātha afterwards rose to conspicuous fame
and eclipsed that of his contemporaries in the
field of Logic. Vāsudeva's own work in Sanskrit
"Sārvabhauma-Nirukti" gave the first start to
the pure intellectual basis on which this new
school of Logic is founded. Gautama had kept
the subject on a spiritual plane, but Navya Nyāya
entirely freed it from monastic thral.

The *tol* of Vāsudeva flourished in Nadiyā
between 1470 and 1480 A.D., but a great calamity
befell the Hindu residents of the ancient city
later on. It was reported to Husen Sāhā, the
Emperor of Gauḍa, that a persistent rumour of
a prophetic nature was in the air that the
Brāhmaṇs of Nadiyā would once more assert their
supremacy in Bengal. The fire of heroism still
lingered in the old Capital of the Hindu Kings,
as the residents of the place were fine archers
and had retained till then some of their warlike

traits. The Emperor believed in the prophecy and ordered a general devastation of the place and a forcible conversion of its Brāhmanas to Islam. The prophecy referred to is mentioned in the Chaitanya Maṅgal by Jayānaṅda, who

The Mohamuden persecution and the flight of Vasudeva from Nadiyā. was a contemporary of Chaitanya, and confirmed by Vṛndāvana Dāsa in his Chaitanya Bhāgavata

written in 1539. The angry monarch sent a strong Mahomedan army which was stationed at the village of Pirulyā near Nadiyā, and forcibly converted the Brāhmanas to the Islamic faith. This is the origin of the Pirulyā Brāhmanas. We are told how the Hindus were not permitted to sound the conch shell in their temples and bathe in the Ganges; if they did so they were forcibly served with beef. The temples were desecrated, the fig trees, sacred to the Hindus, were uprooted, and a general panic seized the inhabitants of the old city who fled from it in great numbers and settled in other provinces. Mahesvara Viçāradā, the father of Sārvabhauma, went to Benares at this juncture, and the latter fled to Purī. Sārvabhauma's brother Vidyāvāchaspati deserted his country-seat and settled in a different part of Bengal.

So great was the fame of Vāsudeva as a scholar that Pratāpa Rudra, the king of Orissa, accorded him a royal reception, offering him a gold throne next to his own in his court. Thus

Honoured by the
King of Orissa.

honoured Vāsudeva continued to live at Purī. We also learn from Jayānanda's work how a change came over the spirit of Husen Sāhā's administration. He shortly after repented of his oppression, being convinced of the innocence of the Nadiyā Brāhmaṇs and repaired as far as was possible the wrongs inflicted on them.

Husen Sāhā had before this time destroyed some of the great temples of Orissa and led an expedition to conquer the province. But Pratāpa Rudra was more than his match in the field. Not only he obliged Husen Sāhā to retreat, but himself planned an expedition, by way of retaliation, for the conquest of Bengal. Owing to some cause he could not however carry out his plan. He effectively held, however, the aggressive Islam spirit in check so far as his vast kingdom was concerned.

It was at Purī that Vāsudeva first met Chaitanya. He was then a lad of 24, of handsome appearance, and had taken the ascetic's vow and come to Purī to visit the temple of Jagannātha. The sight of the temple threw him into one of his fits of delirious joy, and heedless of the pilgrims and priests he ran ahead of them like a mad man and entered the temple. Before the image of God Chaitanya swooned in the height of his emotion. The Pāṇḍās—the custodians of the temple—taking him for a mad man,

beat him with a cane while in that unconscious state. Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma was at the temple and was attracted by the sight of the handsome young Sannyāsī lying unconscious on the floor. He prevented the Pāṇḍās from beating him, and ordered him to be carried to his own house. For 8 hours Chaitanya lay unconscious, the tears trickling down his cheeks, but he occasionally spoke a few broken words indicative of the joy at his union with the Deity. By this time his companions had already arrived and were now at the house of Sārvabhauma. They recited the name of Kṛṣṇa aloud and sang his praises, upon which Chaitanya came back to his senses. Vāsudeva asked his brother-in-law Gopinātha who that interesting young man was. The latter told him that he was a citizen of Nadiyā. Nilāmvara Chakravartī, the father of Chaitanya's mother Çachī, was a great friend of Sārvabhauma's father Maheṣvara Viçārada. Sārvabhauma hearing this became interested in Chaitanya. The venerable scholar himself served the young Sannyāsī with meal on a golden plate, and invited him to stay in his house. He also showed great hospitality to his companions, who were for the most part citizens of Nadiyā. This happened in 1509 A.D. Chaitanya Charitāmṛta relates the following dialogue between Vāsudeva and Gopinātha at this stage: Vāsudeva:—“This young

man is a Sannyāsī. To what Order of ascetics does he belong?" Gopinātha:—"He is a disciple of Keçava Bhāratī." Vāsudeva:—"But there are better Orders of Sannyāsīs. He is quite a young man and has attractive looks, it will be difficult for him to keep the chastity of the ascetic's vow. I shall teach him Vedānta and give him a better spiritual ideal. He must forgo the inferior Order in which he has enlisted his name and be made to enter into a higher Order." Gopinātha:—"He does not care for forms, it matters little to what Order he belongs. You have not known him yet, when you do so, you will find him much above anything that you may have to teach."

Vāsudeva's resolve to improve Chaitanya's spiritual training.

Vāsudeva told Chaitanya in his next interview with him that as a Sannyāsī he deserves every respect from him; but he asked what right he had to take a Sannyāsa vow while still so young. The Çāstras, he said, have laid it down that one may renounce the world and become a Sannyāsī only when he has passed at least two thirds of the usual term of life. Chaitanya humbly replied "Do not, oh venerable sir, think me, to be so exalted a personage as a Sannyāsī. A longing for union with God has driven me mad, and thus have I shaven my head, torn my sacred thread and come away from home. I am only a boy before you and do not know even what is good and what is bad

for me. Kindly give me lessons and teach me the right course. I am grateful to you for protecting me from the hands of the Pāṇḍās to-day.” That day Vāsudeva called him again

The silent listner.

to his presence and asked him to listen attentively to the interpretations of the sacred texts which he would deliver in the evening. Chaitanya quietly sat and listened to the wonderful dissertations on theology which the veteran scholar gave. Not one day, but for seven consecutive days he did so, before a large and admiring audience. On the 8th day Vāsudeva said to Chaitanya “For seven days you have heard my discourses on the sacred Upanishads but have made no comments, sitting mute all the while.” Chaitanya replied “I am no scholar, and have not the capacity to enter into the spirit of your learned discourse. I listened to it simply because you ordered me to do so and also because it is the duty of a Sannyāsī to hear the interpretations of holy books.” Sārvabhauma said “Those who could not understand any portions of my speech referred their difficulties to me, which I have taken pains to elucidate. But you have not done so. I am not sure in what spirit you have taken my discourses. Your attitude seems mysterious to me.” Chaitanya said “Sir, since you wish me to speak I must confess that the texts of the Upanishads are quite clear to me, but your explanations have clouded

their meaning. You avoid the direct meaning of the texts and indulge in niceties which do not, to my mind, represent the real spirit of the sacred books." Chaitanya then explained the texts himself quoting profusely from the Çāstras.

The extraordinary
discourse.

He first referred to the 31st Çloka, Chapter XIV of the 10th Skanda of Çrīmat Bhāgavata and next dwelt upon the text of the 64th Çloka of the 7th Chapter of the 6th Part of the Viṣṇu-purāṇa, referring in support of it to the 5th Çloka of the 7th Chapter of the Gītā beginning with ভূমিরাপোহনিলো বায়ুঃ খং মনোবুদ্ধিরেবচ and made a speech which struck Sārvabhauma as extraordinary. But Sārvabhauma brought up an array of controversial arguments to demolish দ্বৈতবাদ (dualism) which Chaitanya had established. Chaitanya replied eloquently with a spiritual fervour which made the deepest impression on his audience. His reply supported as it was by scholarly references and a clear and straightforward statement of his points, demolished the *advaitavāda* of Vāsudeva to its foundation. When Chaitanya at the end recited the 31st Çloka of the 62nd Chapter of the Padmapurāṇa and burst into emotional ecstasy singing the hymn অয়ে দীন দয়াজ নাথ (Oh thou compassion itself and the refuge of those who are heavy-laden) he could say no more; half broken words 'oh thou, compassion

Vasudeva admits
Chaitanya's divinity.

itself' only came out of his lips, while tears dropped from his eyes and choked his voice till he passed into that trance—the beatific vision—which showed him to be more than a common mortal. His eyes rained tears, and were fixed heavenwards. His arms were outstretched, as if to embrace the Unseen; he became unconscious of the physical world and a radiance came into his face which showed the heavenly sight of God-in-Man.

So irresistible was his charm that the old scholar of 80 who was looked on as the very fountain of all learning now fell at the young Sannyāsī's feet and accepted him as his God and saviour. The beautiful Gaurāṅgāṣṭaka, or 8 stanzas in honour of Chaitanya, that he wrote in Sanskrit, bears testimony to his profound faith in the apostle of Nādiyā.

It was from Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma and Gopīnātha that the king Pratāpa Rudra had heard of the greatness of Chaitanya, which made him so eagerly seek an interview with him.

Vāsudeva's great reverence for Chaitanya is expressed in his celebrated utterance mentioned by the author of the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta in the 9th Chapter of the Madhya Khaṇḍa of his work. We have already referred to it on p. 4 and quote it here again:—“If a thunderbolt falls on my head or even my sons die—that I can bear, but not that I should be deprived of the

company of the Master.”¹ Govinda Dāsa, who took down notes of Chaitanya’s tour in the Deccan while he travelled with him, writes that on the return of Chaitanya to Purī the venerable Sārvabhauma with joined hands addressed him and said “That I could bear a separation from you bespeaks a heart of stone in me” and the man fell on his knees weeping like a woman.²

Sārvabhauma died at about 1520 A.D. His only son Durgādāsa was also a scholar. He annotated the celebrated Sanskrit Grammar, the Mugdabodha by Bopadeva and also wrote a commentary of Kavikalpadruma. Durgādāsa had the title of Vidyāvāgiṇa or ‘the master of learning and speech.’

Durgadas, his son
son.

IX. Rāmānanda Rāy.

Rāmānanda Rāy was the prime minister of Rājā Pratāp Rudra of Orissa. His celebrated Sanskrit Drama “Jagannātha Vallabha” was one of the few books which were read and sung before Chaitanya every day by his order. This proves the admiration in which the

“শিরে বজ্র পড়ে যদি পুত্র মরি যায় ।
তাহা সহি তোমার বিচ্ছেদ সহন না যায় ॥”
নাচিতে লাগিলা গোরা বাহু পশারিয়া ।
সার্বভৌম পদতলে পড়িল লুটিয়া ॥
হাত জোড়ি সার্বভৌম কহিতে লাগিল
তোমার বিরহ বাণ হৃদয়ে বিঞ্চিল ।
বড় মুঢ় বলি তব বিরহ সহিয়া ।
এত দিন আছি মুই পরাণ ধরিয়া ॥

book was held by the Master. Rāma Rāy was a native of Vidyānagara in central India. The prime minister of the king of Orissa had the title of Rājā. When Chaitanya was at Purī, Bhabānanda Rāy, the father of Rāmānanda, still lived, and it is mentioned in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛita that Chaitanya once embraced the old man saying "Your son Rāmānanda is dear to me as my own self." Rāmānanda had four brothers; Gopinātha Paṭṭanāyak, Kalānidhi, Sudhānidhi and Bānīnātha. They were all devoted to Chaitanya. Rāmānanda met Chaitanya first on the bank of the Godāvarī, a few miles from his own town of Vidyānagara. It was in the month of June 1510 A.D. The former had gone there, borne in a picturesque palankin, with a large escort and a good number of Vaidika Brāhmaṇs. Here Chaitanya paid him a visit and said that he had heard a good deal about his fervent faith from Vāsudeva Sārva-bhauma and had longed to see him. Saying this he embraced the minister much to the surprise and embarrassment of the Brāhmaṇs present, who said to one another "Look at this holy man, resplendant as a god. How strange that he touches a Çūdra and weeps for joy!"¹

Interview with
Chaitanya.

¹ এই না ব্রাহ্মণ তেজে দেখি ব্রহ্ম সম ।
শূদ্রে আলিঙ্গিয়া কেন করেন ক্রন্দন ॥

The famous dialogue of Chaitanya with Rāmānanda unfolding the very spirit of the religion which the former preached, has been elaborately discussed in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛita, and we cannot help here giving the gist of it. Rāmānanda at the bidding of Chaitanya describes the various stages of Bhakti (devotion). The first is the Sādhyā Bhakti or that faith which has for its final goal the carrying out of the duties prescribed to each caste by the Ṣāstras; the text quoted was the verse VIII, Chapter 8, Part III of the Viṣṇupurāṇa. For elucidation of the next higher stage Rām Rāy took for his text the verse XXVII, Chapter IX of the Gītā which says that one should work without a thought of the result—dedicating it to God. “Even this is merely external,” said Chaitanya, “enter deeper still.” and Rāmā Rāy in describing the next higher stage took for his text the verse XXXII of Skanda XIII of the Ṣrīmat Bhāgavata and the verse 67 of Chapter XVIII of the Gītā which urges upon a spiritual aspirant the duty of resigning himself absolutely to God, leaving aside all forms and rites that belong to his sect—“leave every thing else, all professions and callings, and surrender yourself to me”—says Kṛiṣṇa in the latter verse “and I will save you from all sins and sorrows.” When called upon to enter still deeper into the truths of religion, Rāma Rāy

The famous dialogue.

said that the spiritual soul must yearn for faith which springs from a true knowledge of things. The text quoted was the verse 50, Chapter XVII of the Gītā which says that one who has known God is content in himself and neither mourns a loss nor feels a desire.

A still higher plane of Sādhya Bhakti is explained by Rāma Rāy at the bidding of the Master, the text quoted being verse III, Chapter 15 of the 10th Skanda of the Ṣrīmat Bhāgavata in which knowledge (জ্ঞান) falls into the back-ground and faith (ভক্তি) becomes the sole object. In a still higher plane of spiritual life faith takes the character of love; the text being a verse from Padmāvalī.

This closes the sphere of Baidha Bhakti or that faith which follows the monastic rules and the injunctions of the scriptures, and Rāma Rāy elucidates the principles of higher Vaiṣṇava theology which aims at a direct communion with God. The first stage of this, according to verse XIII, Chapter III of Ṣrīmat Bhāgavata is to worship God by work, even as a servant does his Master, not as a matter of duty alone, but impelled by love.

The servant carries out the command of the master and though he may do so with love, he remains one step below and cannot approach Him too close. The second stage referred to in verse II, Chapter XII of the 10th Skanda of

Bhāgavata describes the Sakhya in which God becomes our friend and guide. He no longer commands, but is actually with us, playing on the stage of the world. The players love one another, as they are conscious that He is one of themselves and is the Main Player directing their plays. When danger comes, it loses its terror, as they know their friend to be in their midst, controlling their destiny and taking care of them. "Next" says Ramānanda Ray at the bidding of Chaitanya, "is the stage of Bātsalya Prema or love for a child." The text quoted in support of this is verse XXXVII, Chapter XVIII of the 10th Skanda of the Ṣrīmat Bhāgvata. The world plays round the spiritual man as children and he watches it with affectionate care, as parents do. His only duty is to offer his constant and anxious care to the well-being of all. This 'all' is his God. His affection is of a cosmopolitan character. Jasodā, like Madona of the Christian, typifies the Mother anxious for the protection of the divine child—the ever-growing new babe of humanity. Even one's own enemy appears to him in this stage as a mere child and is regarded with compassion and kindness. How this may be possible is to be found in the little incident of Nityananda's conduct to Jagāi and Mādhai described on pp. 38-42. The baby of humanity grows wicked at times and kicks in

return of love. The godly man feels no anger but blesses the children gone astray and prays for them saying: "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" even when they put a crown of thorns on his head and nail him to a cross.

In a still higher stage of spirituality the soul approaches God as a Gopi—the
 The Gopī. maid who forgets herself in the delight of witnessing the spectacle of devine love that comes from all sides. The text quoted is verse VIII of the 10th Canto of Govinda Līlā-mṛta which says that the Gopī does not desire direct contact with Kṛṣṇa. She deeply appreciates and enjoys the sight of supreme bliss which is to be seen in the Vṛndā groves in the *amours* of the eternal God Kṛṣṇa and his eternal lover Rādhā. The function of the Gopi is identical with that of the poet which Sir Rabindranath Tagore expresses so happily in the language of modern poetry:—

"Ah poet, the evening draws near ;

Your hair is turning gray,

"Do you in your lonely musing hear the message of the hereafter ?

"It is evening," the poet said "and I am listening because some one may call from the village, late though it be.

"I watch the young straying hearts meet together, and two pairs of eager eyes beg for

music, to break their silence and speak for them.

“Who is there to weave their passionate songs, if I sit on the shore of life and contemplate death, and the beyond ?”

“The early evening star disappears. The glow of the funeral pyre slowly dies by the silent river.

“Jackals cry in chorus from the courtyard of the deserted house in the light of the worn-out moon.

“If some wanderer, leaving home comes here to watch the night and with bowed head listens to the murmur of the darkness, who is there to whisper the secrets of life into his ears, if I shutting my doors, should try to free myself from mortal bonds ?”

“It is a trifle that my hair is turning gray.

“I am ever as young or old as the youngest or the oldest of the village.

“Some have smiles, sweet and simple, and some a sly twinkle in their eyes.

“Some have tears that well up in the daylight and others tears that are hidden in the gloom.

“They all have need for me and I have no time to brood over the after life.

“I am of an age with each, what matter if my hair turns gray ?”

The Gopīs are represented as ‘witnesses and helpers of the eternal play’ without a thought

of their own personal happiness. Thus forgetful of their own selves, they are privileged to enter 'the groves of sacred love, aiding in the union of soul with soul—ministrants to the cause of love which flows from the eternal fountain of bliss. They are ever young in their appreciation of all that is beautiful and good in nature. 'Time writes no wrinkles on their brows.' They live in Vṛndāvana—the spiritual heaven of the Vaiṣṇavas, where the soul entirely free from the bonds of social traditions on one hand, and from the obligations of scriptural rites on the other, finds out its own path

inspired by love alone. This path is called the *rāgānugā* as opposed to that of Baidhi Bhakti or faith that aims at observance of the instructions contained in the scriptures. The texts quoted by Rāma Ray for elucidation of this stage were verse XX, Chapter XXX, verse XIX, Chapter XXXVII, verse XVI, Chapter IX, and verse 54, Chapter XXXVII of the 10th Skanda of Ṣrīmatvāgvata. The Gopī is unattached to the world. No narrow selfish view clouds her perfect vision of that bliss which pervades the universe. Hence she occupies the position of Guru in the Vaiṣṇava theology. She is the witness of the "eternal play" and is its right interpreter. "Without her help" adds Rāma Ray, quoting another text from the Ṣrīmatvāgvata "No one is

The Rāgānugā.

privileged to enter into the region of spiritual love”.

In the Vaiṣṇava theology the position of the Gopi as Guru is indicated by the fact that all the recognised religious preceptors of that faith who were either Chaitanya’s contemporaries or lived within half a century of him are believed by the Vaiṣṇavas to be the incarnations of the Gopīs of Vṛndāvana. Thus Narahari is believed to be an incarnation of the Gopi named Madhumālā, Vāsu Ghosh of Guṇatungā and so forth.

The highest stage in this field belongs to Rādhā, who typifies the full blown beauty of spiritual love. Chaitanya’s suggestive enquiries made Rāmānanda speak with great emotion and force of the love of Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa ; and Chaitanya supplemented the interesting dialogue by quoting verse XXXIV, Chapter II of the 11th Skanda, and verse IX, Chapter XXV of the 10th Skanda of the Ṇṛmatvāgvata which says “Whatever the spiritual soul sees in this perfect stage of bliss becomes to it a reminder of God. The gross goes into the back ground and all that is seen presents to the eyes the all-embracing spirit of love—the perfect and clear vision of the living God.

Rāma Ray said “This highest stage of spiritual

love has assumed a material form

before me to-day and I find

the rapturous ecstasies of love

Rāma Ray’s ad-
miration for
Chaitanya.

attributed to Rādhā in you, oh my Master". Rāma Ray saw the greatest marvel *viz.* a man loving God with all the ardour of his soul—frenzied by the emotions of love and steeped in ecstasies of boundless joy.

Ten days and nights Rāma Ray and Chaitanya spent together and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja, the author of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta says "As a man finds a clue to an underground treasure from which he at first collects bronze and copper and then jewels and diamonds, so the longer he talked with Chaitanya the more he found new paths opened to unknown treasures of spiritual experience. The beauty of Chaitanya's trances and emotions convinced him of the truth of what he had read in the sacred books with an overwhelming force. The presence of Chaitanya inspired him to compose a mystic song of great beauty which may thus be rendered into English :

"At the beginning glances from each other revealed to us both the wonders of love—of the new world we now entered upon.

"From that time forward our impassioned feelings have blossomed in an uninterrupted beauty.

"Neither he nor I took any account of our

The song of sex—that he was a man and I
Rāmānanda. a woman.

"Cupid shot his arrows through our hearts and we were drawn to each other.

“Oh maid, tell Kṛṣṇa of those sweet days and pray him that he may not forget them.

“We took no help of any third person nor of the path which the learned follow.

“If any one helped us, it was *Virāga*—the spirit of renunciation, and Cupid alone was our guide”.¹

We find in the *Kaṣṭhā* by Govindā Dāsa that

Its mysticism. Chaitanya preached this “You think that the romantic relation between man and woman is love, but I warn you it is not. True love will dawn only on those hearts which have risen above sexual feelings.”²

The next thing required for spiritual growth is the spirit of renunciation. Both these elements are hinted in the above mystical song. It further refers to the stage where the help of a Guru or a third person is not needed and the paths prescribed by the scriptures are ignored,—

“পহিলিহি রাগ নয়ন ভঞ্জে ভেল ।
 অক্ষুদিন বাড়ল অবধি না গেল ॥
 না সে রমণ না হাম রমণী ।
 দুহ মনে মনসিজ পেশল জানি ॥
 এসখি সে সব প্রেম কাহিণী ।
 কানু ঠামে কহবি বিছরব জানি ।
 না খোঁজল দুতি না খোঁজল জ্ঞান
 দুহঁক মিলন মাঝি পাঁচ বাণ
 অবসই বিরাগ তুহ ভেল দুতি
 সুপুরুষ প্রেম ঐছন রীতি ॥
 “অবলা লাগিয়া আর্তি যদি প্রেম হয় ।
 তবে ত এ প্রেমতত্ত্ব কিছুই যে নয় ॥
 অভেদ পুরুষ নারি যখন জানিবে ।
 তখন প্রেমের তত্ত্ব উদয় হইবে ॥”

The spell of love alone possesses the soul which longs for direct communion.

X. Narahari Sarkar.

Among the other followers and friends of Chaitanya, Narahari Sarkār of the village of Çrikhanda in the District of Burdwan deserves a prominent mention. His father was Nārāyaṇa Deva Sarkar—a Vaidya by caste. The family claimed descent from Pantha Dāsa (1160—1169 A.D.) who was the Commander-in-Chief of Vallala Sen's army. In the Sanskrit genealogical work the Chandra Prabhā—
 The pedigree. we find it mentioned that Pantha Dāsa settled in a flourishing village named Balinasī in the district of Burdwan. Some of his descendants later on moved to the village of Maureçwara in the same district and thence to Çrikhanda.

Narahari's elder brother Mukunda was physician to Husain Sāhā, the Emperor of Gaur. Mukunda's son Raghunandana acquired celebrity in the subsequent period of Vaiṣṇava history as a scholar and pious man. Narahari was born in 1478 A.D. and was one of the constant companions of Chaitanya when the latter was at Nadiyā. We find him also paying his annual

visit to Puri to meet Chaitanya along with

Why he is not mentioned in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

other Bengalis during the rainy seasons. He is described in con-

temporary historical works as of

a handsome appearance and a bright fair colour.

It is stated that Vṛndāvana Dāsa, the author of the Chaitanya Bhāgavata had some private grudge against Narahari on which account he was not mentioned in his work. The next biographer of Chaitanya, Lochana Dāsa, was, however, a disciple of Narahari and made several respectful references to his Guru in his work. Lochana

Lochana Dāsa, his disciple.

Dāsa's Chaitanya Mangala was composed in 1537 A.D. only two

years after the Chaitanya Bhāgavata of Vṛndāvana Dāsa.¹

Narahari is chiefly known for the songs he composed in praise of Chaitanya. The burden of these songs is often a tender yearning of the poet's soul for meeting Chaitanya. They show the ardour of womanly passion and their language is borrowed from that of the Gopīs of Vṛndāvana as described in the Bhāgavata-literature. Late Babu Jagatbandhu Bhadra collected a little above 100 of these songs, and these are the first that were composed in the vernacular in glorification of Chaitanya. Later on Vāsudeva Ghosh, also a contemporary of Chaitanya,

¹ See Preface to 'Gaurapada Tarangini' by Jagatbandhu Bhadra, (1904), pp. 130 and 154.

The first vernacular songs on Chaitanya. took the field composing masterpieces or similar songs. These describe every incident of Chaitanya's life in an impassionate language, often reaching a high level of genuine pathos. But Narahari must be given the credit of being the pioneer in the field. In his day Chaitanya's life was not yet written in the vernacular; for in one of his songs Narahari writes :

“One who will write his (Chaitanya's) biography is not yet born. Long may we have to wait for him. If the Master's life be written in the vernacular all people will understand it. Oh when will the lord fulfill this expectation of ours¹”

It appears that a biographical account of Chaitanya in Sanskrit was already written by Murari Gupta when Narahari wrote these lines. In them a stress is laid on the word 'vernacular' which may be taken as hinting at the already existing Sanskrit work.

Besides these songs Narahari wrote a book named *Nāmāmṛta Samudra* in Bengali and another named *Bhajanāmṛta* in Sanskrit.

Narahari was the first among the numerous followers of Chaitanya to preach the Chaitanya-cult. He prepared the code and the *mantra* for the worship of Chaitanya and these were accepted

He is the first to preach the Chaitanya-cult.

এহু লিখিবে যে, এখনও জন্মে নাই সে, জন্মিতে বিলম্ব আছে বহু ।

ভাষায় রচনা হৈলে, বুঝিবে লোক সকলে, কবে বাহু পুরাবেন পহু ॥

by other Vaiṣṇavas in Bengal, a short time after. The descendants of Narahari are known as Vaidya Goswāmis of Çrikhanda having a large following of Brahmin disciples.

The great love in which Narahari was held by Chaitanya is indicated by the fact that the latter while touring in the Deccan about the year 1510 mentioned Narahari in one of his trances. Chaitanya was totally absorbed in his emotional felicities and seemed to have forgotten the rest of the world for the two years during which he visited the shrines and holy cities of the South. This mention of Narahari shows that he remembered at least one of his friends at Nadia. The passage which refers to this mention is found in Govinda Dasa's *Kaḍchā* and may be thus translated :

“Sometimes in his frenzy Chaitanya says
 ‘Oh Narahari, dear as my life,
 come and sing the praises of
 Kṛṣṇa and for this, dear friend,
 I will embrace you.’”

“Narahari died in the Çaka 1463 or 1511
 A.D.

কখন বলেন কোথা প্রাণ নরহরি,
 হরিনাম শুনি তোরে আলিঙ্গন করি।

XI. Vançīvadana.

Vançīvadana was the writer of some exquisite songs on Chaitanya and Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. Jadunandana Dāsa wrote a memoir of Vançīvadana in the Çaka 1638 or 1716 A.D. This work is called the Vançīçikṣā. We learn from it that Vançīvadana was born in the year 1494 A.D.

The Vançīçikṣā. He was therefore junior to Chaitanya by 8 years. His father Chhakari Chatto was a resident of the village of Patuli near Kālnā but afterwards settled at Kuliā, one of the wards of the town of Nadiya, now merged in the Ganges. Besides his numerous songs which are to be found in the Padakalpataru and other song-anthologies of the Vaiṣṇavas, Vançīvadana wrote two works named Dwipakojjala and Dwipannitā.

• Chaitanya held frequent discussions with Vançīvadana on the cardinal doctrines of the Vaiṣṇava creed and these are embodied in the work Vançīçikṣā which we have just mentioned.

To the Vaiṣṇavas Vançīvadana's name is specially sacred, as he became guardian of Viçhnupriyā Devī, wife of Chaitanya, when the latter took Sannyās and left Nadiyā for good. An image of Chaitanya was made by Vançīvadana at her bidding and was daily worshipped by her. The descendants of Yādava Miçra are

Vançī Vadana's
songs.

the present custodians of this image which is now worshipped in a temple at Nadiyā.

I shall attempt here to translate two of the songs of Vançivādāna. The pathos of the original Bengali and their perfect rythm must inevitably be lost in my translation.

[Rādhā, though a princess is a milk-maid and as such goes to sell milk and curd, this being her professional calling. It is mid-day and Kṛṣṇa thus accosts her in the path.]

“Oh my charming one, how can you walk by such a path as this ?

“Here take your seat under the cool shade of Kadamva and I shall myself buy all that you may have to sell.

“The mid-day sun shines over head and the dust of the path burns below. Your feet, my love, are tender as the lily-buds.

‘ হেদেলো বিনোদিনী, এ পথে কেমনে যাবে তুমি,
 শীতল কদম্ব তলে, বৈসহ আমার কোলে, সকল কিনিয়া লব আমি ;
 এ ভর ছুপুর বেলা, তাতিল পথের ধূলা, কমল জিনিয়া পদ তোরি,
 রৌদ্রে ষামিয়াছে মুখ, দেখি লাগে বড় দুঃখ, শ্রম-ভরে এল্যাল কবরী ;
 অমূল্য রতন সাথে, গোঙারের ভয় পথে, লাগি পাইলে লইবে কাড়িয়া ।
 তোমার লাগিয়া আমি, এই পথে মহা দানী, তিল মাত্র না যেও ছাড়িয়া ॥”
 “মোহন বিজন বনে, দূরে গেল সখীগণে, একলি রহল ধনী রাই,
 দুটি আঁখি ছল ছলে, চরণ কমল তলে, কান্থ আসি পড়িল লুটাই ;
 বিনোদিনী জনম সফল ভেল মৌর
 তোমা হেন গুণনিধি, পথে আনি দিল বিধি;
 আজুক মুখের নাহি ওর ।
 রবির কিরণ পাইছে, চাঁদ মুখ ষামিয়াছে, মুখর মঞ্জরীর দুটি পায়,
 হিয়ার উপরে রাখি, জুড়াব তাপিত আঁখি, চন্দন চর্চিত করি গায়,
 এতেক মিনতি করি রাইএর কর ধরি মুছাইল পদ পীতবাসে,
 নির্জনে দৌহার সনে, মিলল নিকুঞ্জ বনে, মনে মনে হাসে বংশী দাসে ॥

“It pains me to behold your sweet face flushed by heat and your braided hair hanging all loose from labour.

“Priceless diamonds are on your person ; not safe are these from the robbers who infest the high-way.

“Here do I hold the tax-collector’s Office only for you, my beloved. Leave me not, I pray.”

“The maidens all wandered away, leaving Rādhā alone in that charming woody land.

“His eyes glistening with tears of joy, Kṛṣṇa came and fell at her lotus feet, saying ‘Oh my charming one, blessed am I, God be thanked that we have met in this place. My happiness knows no bounds to-day.

“The sun has smitten your moon-like face with its rays and the sound of the anklets on your feet proclaims the labour of your walk, my beloved.

“Fain would I place your lovely feet on my bosom and they will be a delight to my eager eyes.

“Permit me, dear, to sprinkle fragrant sandal-drops on you. Saying this, with imploring looks he held her by the hand and with his own purple garment did he wipe away the dust from her feet.

“In the lonely bower thus did the lovers meet and Vançidāsa is pleased at their meeting.”

Vaṅṅivādāna Chatto following the traditional courtesy of the Vaiṣṇava poets subscribes himself as Vaṅṅidāsa in the above colophon. These songs were written about the year 1620 A.D.

Vaṅṅivādāna had two sons—Chaitanya Dāsa and Nityānanda Dāsa. Prof. His descendants. Bhāgavata Goswami, M.A. of the Hughli College is descended from Vaṅṅivādāna.

XII. Vāsudeva Ghoṣa.

Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, the famous musician and poet, was one of the most conspicuous figures in the processions of *kīrtana* led by Chaitanya at Nadiyā. Vāsudeva and his two brothers Mādhavānanda and Gobindānanda were all devoted to Chaitanya. They were originally residents of Kumārhaṭṭa from where they came down to Nadiyā and settled there. Vāsudeva's songs are now by far the best of those which have for their themes the incidents of Chaitanya's life. He was one of those who deeply mourned the Sannyās of Chaitanya and his desertion of Nadiyā. This invests his songs with intense pathos and intrinsic poetry. Vāsudeva acknowledges that he owed his first impetus in writing songs on Chaitanya to the poems of Narahari Sarkār. He thus refers to his indebtedness :

“ I drank from the fount of songs composed
 by Narahari Sarkār and thus
 conceived the notion of writing
 poems on Chaitanya. ”¹

“ When he sang the songs of his own composition ” writes the venerable Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja in his Chaitanya-Charitamṛta “ descriptive of Chaitanya’s life, even the wood and stone would melt at hearing them. ”² We find it mentioned in work named Vaiṣṇavāchāra Darpaṇa that Vāsudeva Ghoṣa spent the last part of his life at Tamruk—the old maritime town Tāmralipta.

XIII. Murāri Gupta.

Murāri Gupta was born in Sylhet about 1471 A.D. and was a Vaidya by caste. Along with Çrīvāsa, Chandra Çekhara and others he left Sylhet and came and settled at Nadiyā in his early youth. He acquired profound scholarship in Logic, Medicine and other subjects and though older than Chaitanya by at least 15 years, held many learned disputations with him, while the latter was a student in the *tol* of Gangādāsa Pandit at Nadiyā.

¹ শ্রীসরকার ঠাকুরের পদামৃত পানে
 পদ্ম প্রকাশিব বলি ইচ্ছা কৈল মনে ।
² বাসুদেব গীতে করে অভূর বর্ণনে
 কাষ্ঠ পাষণ হবে যাহার অবশে ।

Murari became so devoted to Chaitanya that on hearing the news of his resolution to take Sannyās, he attempted to commit suicide and was discovered by Chaitanya preparing his self-destruction with a knife and was dissuaded from this course.

Desists from committing suicide.

Murāri Gupta is said to have been a worshipper of Rāma and is therefore believed by the orthodox Vaiṣṇavas as an incarnation of Hanumāna—Rama's devoted servant. Murāri's humility and high morals form the subject of praise in all the memoirs of Chaitanya. We find it mentioned in Chaitanya-Charitāmṛta that when on his visit to Chaitanya at Puri, the latter touched him with his hand in an affectionate manner, Murāri shrank a little and said that he was a great sinner not worthy of the Master's touch. Chaitanya said "Murāri no more, it breaks my heart to see the humility of such a venerable and pious man." In the Kaḍchā of Govinda we find Murāri as one of the foremost of those who welcomed Chaitanya at Puri on his return from the Deccan. His emotion on the occasion was so great that he fell unconscious on the ground near Chaitanya's feet. ¹

Murāri Gupta is the first writer of a biographical account of Chaitanya. He wrote it in Sanskrit in 1514,

The first biography of Chaitanya.

হাটর নিকটে গুপ্ত চলিয়া পড়িল।

Kaḍchā by Govinda Dāsa.

four years after Chaitanya had left Nadiyā as a Sannyāsi. During these years wild stories had grown at Nadiyā attributing superhuman qualities and powers to Chaitanya. And the veteran scholar in his touching admiration believed them all and poetically described them in his celebrated work. Chaitanya was unwilling that his life should be written by any one. Murāri, as I have said, wrote one after Chaitanya had left his native town. Govinda Dāsa alone recorded facts of his life as he saw them, but tells us that he did so very privately without the knowledge of Chaitanya who was averse to self-glorification. Swarupa Dāmodar, one of the most learned admirers of Chaitanya, is also said to have written some biographical notes of him about this time; we have, however, come across only a few incomplete specimens of them. Govinda Dāsa wrote his notes on Chaitanya's tour in the Deccan in vernacular in 1511-1513, but these were kept in strict privacy. Of the contemporary records of Chaitanya's life, therefore, Murāri's book, written in elegant Sanskrit, was by far the most widely read among the Vaiṣṇavas and respected by them as a standard authority to which all subsequent biographers referred in a spirit of reverence and with perfect trust.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja the author of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, says of this work :

“All the incidents of Chaitanya’s boyhood have been recorded in the form of notes by Murāri Gupta.”¹

Later on Lochana Dāsa, the author of Chaitanya Maṅgala, mentions these notes as follows:—

“Murāri Gupta of the Vaidya cast was a resident of Nadiyā. He was one of the constant companions of Chaitanya. Murāri wrote in Sanskrit the incidents of the Master’s life up to his youth. I read this narrative and was charmed with it. This is how I first conceived the idea of writing Chaitanya’s life.”²

Murāri Gupta’s Kaṭchā, as his work is called, has lately been published from the Amṛta Bāzār Patrikā Press, Calcutta.

XIV.—Gopāla Bhaṭṭa.

Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, who is reputed as the author of Hari Bhakti Vilāsa, a work which he elaborated rather than wrote himself, was the son of Benkata Bhatta and a nephew of the celebrated Pravodhānanda Sarasvatī of Benares whom we

¹ “আদি লীলা মধ্যে প্রভুর যতক চরিত ।

সূত্র রূপে মুরারি গুপ্ত করিলা গ্রন্থিত ॥

² মুরারি গুপ্ত বেঙ্গ বৈসে নবদ্বীপে ।

নিরন্তর থাকে গৌরাচাঁদের সমীপে ॥

জন্ম হৈতে বালক চরিত্র যাহা কৈল ।

গুনিয়া আমার মনে বাড়িল পীরিত ।

পাঁচালি প্রবন্ধে কহো গৌরঙ্গ-চরিত্র ॥

have already mentioned in a previous lecture. Benkata Bhatta had two brothers, Pravodhānanda who obtained celebrity as the leader of the Dandi sect of the ascetics of Benares, and Trimalla who lived in the Deccan. Gopāla Bhatta was born in 1503 A.D. in the village of Bhattamāri in Southern India, so

His pedigree.

he was only 7 years old when Chaitanya visited his native country. We do not credit the account to be found in the Prema-vilāsa, the Bhaktiratnākara and other later works, that Chaitanya spent four months of a rainy season at the house of Benkata Bhatta at Bhattamāri. Govinda Dāsa, who mentions minute details of Chaitanya's tour there, does not say that the latter stayed anywhere in the country for more than a week except at Dvārakā. The author of Chaitanya Charitāmṛta was greatly indebted to Gopāla Bhatta for some of the materials of his monumental work. But while treating of other particulars about him, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja does not refer to Chaitanya's stay for four months at Bhattamāri. This omission is significant, and shows the untrustworthy character of the tradition. It must have been fabricated by the later writers in order to give importance to Gopāla Bhatta for his

The tale of Chaitanya's staying for 4 months with Gopāla Bhatta in the Deccan is unreliable.

long association with the Master. It is quite possible that after Pravodhānanda's acceptance of

Chaitanya as his saviour and Guru, his nephew was naturally attracted to take the banner of Vaiṣṇavism in his hand and preach the Chaitanya-cult. We do not however disbelieve that Chaitanya saw Gopāla Bhatta in the Deccan. If he did so it was of so slight and trifling interest that Govinda did not think it worth while to notice it in his account. Indeed people outside the pale of the Vaiṣṇavas did not credit the story, as will be observed from the following incidental references to it by Narahari Chakravarti in his *Bhaktiratnākara*.

“When the Master was travelling in the Deccan he stayed in the house of Benkata Bhatta for four months. The author of *Chaitanya Charitamṛta* did not mention it in the account of the Master’s tour there. There is a mention of Chaitanya’s visit to Benkata Bhatta’s house but not of his stay there for four months.”

And again “As Chaitanya’s stay at Bhattamari for four months has not been mentioned in any authoritative works, incredulous people do not seem to be willing to accept the account as true.”¹

The *Gaurpada Taranginī* says that Gopāla Bhatta was 30 years old when Chaitanya visited the Deccan. We all know that Gopāla Bhatta

¹ The *Bhakti Ratnākara* 1st Taranga.

was born in 1503 and Chaitanya toured in the Deccan during 1510-1511. So from whatever point the tradition is assailed it proves weak and untenable. The Premavilāsa first mentioned this unauthenticated tradition invented probably to exaggerate the importance of the already important man Gopāla Bhatta. I dwell on this point at some length because it has been made much of by later Vaiṣṇava biographers. Gopāla Bhatta was the Guru of Ṣrīnivās Achārya—the greatest of the latter-day Vaiṣṇava worthies. Ṣrīnivāsa evinced wonderful faith in his youth. His scholarship and other qualities of the head and heart led him deservedly to a position of the highest eminence in Vaiṣṇava society. After leaving Vṛndāvana, however, he came to Bengal and married at Viṣṇupur where he quietly settled down to a prosperous worldly life, receiving gifts of considerable money and lands from Rājā Vīra Hamvīra of Viṣṇupur who had become his disciple. Ṣrīnivāsa succeeded from a worldly point of view in enlarging the Vaiṣṇava circle, and drawing within its gradually widening boundaries many of the influential members of the Bengal aristocracy. The fame of this leader rang in the ears of the Vaiṣṇavas throughout the country. But when Manohara Dāsa, a native of Viṣṇupur paid a visit to Gopāla Bhatta at Vṛndāvana and spoke of the attainments of Ṣrīnivāsa in glowing terms, Gopāla Bhatta

remained silent for some time and then said “Fallen alas, fallen from his path.”¹ The ideal of Gopāla Bhatta was the founding of a spiritual kingdom which does not perish, and not the attainment of worldly success even in the cause of the extension of Vaiṣṇava faith in India.

Gopāla Bhatta with Raghunātha Dāsa—

One of the six apostles. Raghunātha Bhatta, Rupa, Sanātana and Jīva formed the glorious group of the “Six Goswāmis” whose works possess scriptural authority with the Vaiṣṇava community of Bengal.

XV. Vakreçwara Pundit.

Vakreçwara Pundit was born in Setan. He left Nadiyā and spent a considerable part of his life at Puri as a companion of Chaitanya. It is mentioned in the Chaitanya Chandrodaya Kaumudī by Premadāsa written in çaka 1534 or 1607 A.D., that the dance of Vakreçwara in the Vaiṣṇava procession attracted the attention of Rājā Pratāpa Rudra of Orissa. Gopīnatha Achārya introduced him to the Rājā by saying that his dance in an ecstasy of devotion was almost as perfect as that of Chaitanya himself. Chaitanya Chartamrita says:—

His dancing.

¹ মৌন হয়ে ভট্ট কিছু নাহি কহে আর ।
“শ্বলংপাদ শ্বলংপাদ কহে বারে বার” ॥
² “প্রভুর মতন যার নর্তন সুন্দর,”

“For hours and hours together he could dance without exhaustion, keeping up a continuous flow of animation and emotional interest among the processional party. Chaitanya himself sang when Vakreṣwar danced.”

XVI. Gauri Dāsa.

Gauri Dāsa was a native of Kālnā. He was descended from Varunāchārya of the Mukhati family of Brahmīns. His father's name was Kansāri and mother's name Vimalā Devī. He had five brothers of whom Suryadāsa Sarkhel became afterwards a noted figure in the Vaiṣṇava community as Nityānanda married his two daughters Vasudhā and Jāhnavī. It is said that Chaitanya crossed to the other side of the Ganges once, steering the boat himself with an oar. This oar, together with a copy of the Gītā in Chaitanya's own hand-writing was preserved with great care by Gaurī Dāsa. In due course they passed into the hands of Hridaya Chaitanya, a disciple of Gaurī Dāsa and are now to be seen in the Chaitanya Temple at Kalnā. Gaurī Das made images of Chaitanya and Nityānanda in Nimba wood during their lifetime. These images which are now worshipped in the temple at Kalnā are said to bear a striking resemblance to those whose likenesses they are;

and many legendary tales are told by the simple village folk about them. One of them runs thus :

When Chaitanya and Nityānanda paid a visit to Gaurīdāsa at Kalnā in 1510 A.D. the latter was so much impressed and charmed by their presence that he implored them to stay with him at Kalnā as long as he lived. Chaitanya unable to resist his importunities said that he would comply with his request. In the *kīrtana* procession at his house that night, Gaurīdāsa was surprised to find two figures of Chaitanya and two figures of Nityānanda, exactly alike, singing songs in his courtyard. He approached all the four when they said :—

“Keep any two of us and we will stay with you.”

Upon this Gaurīdāsa caught hold of a pair and they became transformed into Nimba-wood-figures which have since been worshipped in the temple at Kālnā.

XVII.—*Paramānanda Sen (Kavikarṇapūra.)*

Paramānanda Sen, who was afterwards distinguished as ‘Kavikarṇapūra’ or ‘the ear ornament of poets,’ was born in the 1528 at Kānchrāpāra, a village 28 miles to the North of Calcutta. This village was once a celebrated seat of scholars, and stories of wonderful physical strength

The images of Chaitanya and Nityānanda at Kalnā.

of its inhabitants in olden times are still related in the neighbouring locality. Here a Vaidika Brahmin named Bachārama Adhikarī, possessed of herculian strength, is said to have removed unaided a big palm tree that lay obstructing the passage of the women to the landing *ghat* of the Ganges. The story of his gallant feat is still narrated enthusiastically by the people of the locality. It is also said that a youth of this village was once caught by a crocodile in the Ganges, whereupon his companions swam across the river and succeeded in drawing the crocodile by force to the bank with its victim who revived. In this village stands the celebrated temple of Kṛṣṇa Raya, the god established by Sivānanda Sen, the father of our poet. This temple was re-built in 1785 A.D. when the one, founded by Kachu Ray of Jessore for the deity in the 16th century, had sunk in the bed of the Ganges. The cost of building the present temple was one lakh of Rupees which was borne by Nimāicharana Mallik and Gauracharana Mallik of Calcutta. It is one of the most artistic temples that adorn the Gangetic valley; on account of its lying in an almost deserted village, it has not yet attracted the notice of the critics of Indian art. The inscription on the pedastal of the image runs as follows :

“স্বস্তি শ্রীকৃষ্ণ দেবায় প্রাদুরাসীৎ স্বয়ং কলৌ ।

অনুগ্রহায় দ্বিজঃ শ্রীযঃ শ্রীনাথ সংজ্ঞকঃ ॥”

Sivānanda Sen established the image in the name of his Guru Çṛnath Achārya. ^{The temple.} ^{Kṛṣṇa} Sivānanda belonged to the physician caste and was one of Chaitanya's respected friends. It is said that Paramānanda, his son, displayed poetical powers from a very early age and received the title of 'Kavikarṇapūra' from Chaitanya himself. The Chaitanya Chandrodaya written by our poet is a master-piece of Mediæval Sanskrit dramatic literature. It was completed by Kavikarṇapūra in the year 1568 A.D. I give below a free rendering of the preliminary portion of this work :

“Look! here, and behold the god Purusottama who looks dark as collyrium, or the blue-tinted emerald on this sea coast, or like the Tamala-trees of the Nilgiri Hills, or like a proud elephant chained to the immortal fig-tree the 'Akshaya Bata.' The great god will shortly march in his Car-journey, and the ceremony has drawn an immense multitude whose exclamations of “Victory to the Lord” have now filled the whole air's space.

“In the height of spiritual ecstasy these people have forgot their caste-distinctions, and the Brahmins and Sūdras have joined their voices in singing the praises of God.

“The gleeful exclamations of the women, whose voices are musical like those of the nymphs presiding over the ten directions, are echoed

afar. On the other side, hark to the solemn song of the taber and of the trumpet and the shrill sounding bugle. These have raised a mingled noise which has well-nigh deafened the ear drowning the voices of the great crowd.

“At this moment, the great king Pratāpa Rudra, the custodian of the temple of Jagannātha, approaches with slow pensive steps, his mind

full of gloom, for Chaitanya has just passed away from this world.

An extract from
the Chaitanya
Chandrodaya.

It is the mind that lends its colour to the surroundings. The joyous shouts of the multitude do not produce any effect on the unhappy king. A few moments after, the King addressed me and said :—

“Oh thou master player, there stands resplendent as ever the great God of the Nilgiri Hills ; the pompous ceremony of his Car-journey is as grand now as ever it was. Look there and behold the pilgrims coming from all directions as on previous occasions. They await with reverence the forthcoming religious festivities. This garden in the precincts of the temple-courtyard is even more beautiful than paradise. But in my eyes there is a void in all that I see, because Chaitanya has left us.

“Dost thou give me some comfort by playing a drama in which the heavenly life of that prince of ascetics—that very soul of love—Chaitanya may be the fitting subject.”

In the above prologue the author states that the drama was written by the order of and played before the king Prātapa Rudra.

Some modern writers have confounded this Paramānanda Sen whose title is Kavikarṇapūr, with Paramānanda Purī. This is a serious mistake as the latter was an elderly ascetic of Tirhut, much respected by Chaitanya himself, whereas the former (Kavikarṇapūr) was a mere child when Chaitanya saw him at Purī and prophesied his future greatness.

XFIII.—Raghunātha Dāsa.

In the history of the Vaiṣṇava apostles who gathered round Chaitanya there is perhaps no one who deserves such prominent notice as Raghunātha Das, born in the year 1498 at the village of Chandpur within the jurisdiction of the old town of Saptagrāma.

Saptagrāma, probably the '*Ganja regia*' of the Romans, was at that time a most flourishing town in Bengal. It was the capital of a Mahomedan General who ruled lower Bengal under the Emperor of Gaur. It consisted of seven wards, named after seven princely saints—

sons of an ancient Hindu king of
Saptagrāma. Kanauj, who had in pre-historic
times conquered Bengal. Saptagrāma in those
days was the residence of a large number of

Europeans whose ships lay anchored on the river Saraswatī, laden with merchandise. This river meeting the Ganges and Jumna at Trivenī branched off a short way down, and flowed in a semi-circular course by Saptagrāma and met the Ganges again near Alipur. The Saraswatī is now a dead river and the great commercial activity which once marked its course is a matter of interest merely to the students of antiquity. It was the most important port for sea-going vessels in Bengal during the Mahomedan times, and when it fell into decadence owing to various causes, the chief of which was the silting up of the river Saraswatī, Chittagong rose to distinction as a seaport, though it could never equal even faintly the historic glory of the older town, as far as her political importance and great economic resources were concerned. A Bengali poet of the 17th Century who had visited all the important towns of India of his times describes Saptagrāma to be one of the greatest of them. ¹

¹ Kṛṣṇa Rāma, who wrote a poem in honour of Saṣṭhi Devī in 1687 A.D., makes the following mention of Saptagrāma.—

“ রাঢ় বঙ্গ দেখিলাম কলিঙ্গ নেপাল ।
 গয়া পইরাগ (প্রয়াগ) দেখিলাম নিষাদ কাঁপল ॥
 একে একে ভ্রমণ করিলাম দেশ দেশ ।
 দেখিছু দেবীর পূজা অশেষ বিশেষ ॥
 সপ্তগ্রাম দেখিলাম নাহি তার তুল !
 চালে চালে ঠেকে লোক ভাগিরথী কুল ॥

The Mahomedan Governor of the town was so powerful that he frequently revolted against the Emperor of Gaur, and the revenue of the place could not be recovered without sanguinary skirmishes. This made the Emperor do away with the Governorship, and lease the town and its adjoining villages to two influential Kāyastha Chiefs, Hiraṇya and Govardhana. The condition was that they should pay a revenue of 12 lakhs of rupees a year, and the Emperor would not interfere with the internal administration of the district. Under this new arrangement, the annual income from the land alone rose to 20 lakhs, besides which the taxes on the exports and imports—were a source of considerable additional income to the brothers, Hiraṇya and Govardhana; so that they held a very important position amongst the aristocracy of Eastern India. I need scarcely remind my readers that the value of money was much higher in the 16th Century than it is now.

Both Hiraṇya and Govardhana were well versed in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, and their court was a favourite resort of distinguished scholars. In the 'Sangit Mādhava' a work by Govinda Dāsa, the famous Vaiṣṇava poet of the 16th Century, there is a line which says: "If you seek a really charitable man in Bengal where can you find one greater than Govardhana and

if you seek a true poet where can you find one better than Damodar of Srikhanda.”¹

So the brothers had a reputation not only as scholars, but as honest god-fearing men who gave much in charity and lived in the spiritual environment of the Bengal of those days. Nīlāmvara Chakravartī, grandfather of Chaitanya, was a great friend of the two brothers, and Chaitanya himself in his childhood used to call them uncles, though they were Kāyastha by caste and he a Brahmin.

Hiraṇya had no children and Govardhana had an only son Raghunātha Dāsa—the idol of the family, and sole heir to their vast property.

In his childhood Raghunātha received his education in Sanskrit from one Valarāma Achārya, a native of Chandpur. Valarāma Achārya was a devout Vaiṣṇava, and Raghunātha had a spiritual training under this excellent man. It happened at this time that Haridāsa, the Mahomedan convert to Vaiṣṇavism, paid a visit to Valarāma Achārya and stayed with him for seven or eight days at Chāndpur. A world was revealed to young Raghunātha of which he had already obtained only glimpses from the Early spiritual training. teachings of Valarāma. He saw in Haridāsa, the fulfilment of the best ideal of a man. He was passionless, sweet

¹ গৌড়ে গোবর্দ্ধনো দাতা খণ্ডে দামোদরঃ কবিঃ ।

and resigned to God, full of peity and tenderness and with an overflowing devotion which the more the boy saw he admired the more, and when Haridāsa went away, Raghunātha saw the world in a new light—reading the mercy of God every where and striving for the good of all.

Valarāma Achārya used to pay his visit to Hiraṇya and Govardhana every day; for he was their family priest as well; and when he spoke of the little incidents of Haridāsa's life to the brothers, Raghunātha heard them with rapt attention and was all tears in admiration. In January 1510 the report that Chaitanya left Nadiyā for good and turned a Sannyasi spread throughout the country, and created a great feeling amongst all classes of men. It was the constant topic of conversation and as elsewhere, it was discussed in the court of the brothers who were full of admiring love for Chaitanya. But the news impressed Raghunātha most of all, and he longed to see one, who, it was said, had seen the Unseen and was mad with joy. Chaitanya, after his Sannyās, paid a visit to Advaita at Sāntipur. It must have been towards the end of January, 1510. Raghunātha asked permission to see the Master, and he was accordingly sent there with a number of escorts by his father and uncle who never suspected that this interview would

Interview with
Chaitanya.

be fraught with consequences which would mar their worldly comfort for ever.

The interview broke the chord which attached him to family life. It revealed to him the wonders of the spiritual world. It maddened and completely transformed him. It also appeared that he too had seen the Unseen. He stayed at Sāntipur with the Master for four or five days. Chaitanya left Sāntipur and started for Purī. Raghunātha, it is mentioned in the Kaḍcha by Govinda Dāsa, met him again on the banks of Suvarnarekhā near Haṛiharpur, but had to come back to Saptagrāma at the bidding of his father and uncle.

They saw in him a completely changed lad. The very name of Chaitanya, uttered before him, brought tears to his eyes. He fasted and repeated the name of God and said to all that the worldly life was miserable. He wanted all passions to be at rest and the joy of union with God to be the sole aim of mankind. The two chiefs were now alarmed that what they had allowed to grow unchecked might now prove dangerous. Raghunātha might renounce the world and turn a Sannyāsi.

As time passed the lad's anguish of soul and desire to meet Chaitanya increased and the Chiefs felt it advisable to use stronger means

The necessity of applying force.

to keep him at home. They accordingly appointed five soldiers, four servants and two Brahmins to be his constant attendants. The two Brahmins were to teach him the sacredness of family-ties and obedience to parents and superiors. It was unavailing. A greater force than that of family-ties was tugging at his heart.

Five years passed in this way and in 1515 Chaitanya again paid a visit to Sāntipur on his way to Rāmakeli, near Gaur. Raghunātha said to his father that if he were not permitted to see Chaitanya, he would fast and die, and Govardhana really feared from what he saw of the boy, that this might really happen. So he

He meets Chaitanya again.

sent him to Sāntipur with a strong body of armed men.

Raghunātha was beside himself with joy and meeting Chaitanya fell at his feet and wept. The accumulated grief of his soul found expression in his tears, for he had never enjoyed unbroken sleep, nor eaten regular meals for these five years, owing to his intense desire to see the Master. Chaitanya read the boy's heart, but his attitude was one of austerity, verging on rudeness. He said :—

“Quiet your mind, return home and do not act like a mad man. It is by slow degrees that a man outgrows his family-ties. Do not show morbid sentiments in imitation of others, before

spirituality has really grown in you. Go and lead the ordinary life of the world. Be not attached to it and let faith grow in your heart. But outwardly do as other worldly men do and you will find that God will help and save you in no distant future.”

Chaitanya's stern attitude towards Raghunatha.

Raghunātha went back home a thoroughly changed man. He began to supervise the affairs of the Estate and did what his father and uncle bade him to do. In order to keep him attached to home-life, Govardhana had already married him to a girl whose beauty was unequalled in the country, and Raghunātha was kind to her. It was a delight and surprise to the Chiefs to find him so completely changed, but this was a mere outward garb, for Raghunātha followed Chaitanya's instructions to the letter. He did not make any outward display of faith, only that it might grow the more. He mixed with the world and did his duties unattached ; for he had dedicated himself to God, and to Chaitanya who had shown him the gates of heaven.

A calamity overtook the family about the year 1516. The ex-governor of Saptagrāma, a

স্থির হঞা ঘরে যাও না হও বাতুল ।
 ক্রমে ক্রমে পয়ে লোক তব সিদ্ধ কুল ॥
 মৰ্কট বৈরাগ্য না কর লোক দেখাইয়া ।
 যথাযোগ্য বিষয় ভুঞ্জ অনাশঙ্ক হৈয়া ॥ &c.

Turk, had a well-founded grudge against Hiraṇya and Govardhana, for they had usurped his possessions. This man, formerly hostile to the Emperor of Gauḍa, now ingratiated himself into his confidence, and inflamed him by many false reports against the brothers. He was informed that though they paid only 12 The Emperor's oppression. laks a year to the Royal treasury, their collection was immensely greater and that His Majesty was a great loser by granting them the lease. Moreover they had grown very powerful and might prove dangerous at any moment.

Now at a time when Govardhana was away, the king sent a large body of soldiers to arrest the chiefs. Hiraṇya fled, without being able to induce Raghunātha to join him. The latter was found by the Emperor's soldiers quietly doing the duties of his office as usual. He offered no resistance and silently accompanied the army to Gauḍa. On being produced before the king he was required to divulge where his uncle and father were hiding. Raghunātha, as was really the case, pleaded ignorance, upon which the king ordered him to be tortured till he gave the information. Raghunātha meekly said :

“ Your Majesty saw me as a child and I remember the day when you addressed my father and uncle as brothers. Nothing has since happened to cause this change of attitude in your

Majesty. May I not claim the right of an affectionate treatment at your hands such as a nephew may expect. Your Majesty is my Master and I resign myself to you. Is it not your duty to protect my interest even as a father does of his child ? Your Majesty has the reputation of being versed in the scriptures and is moreover known to be a pious man. What should I say more ? ”

The emotion and sweetness with which the young Raghunātha delivered himself, made a deep impression on the Emperor. For Raghu had an unspotted life dedicated to God. His countenance reflected the purity of his heart, and his words were sweet.

Chaitanya Charitāmṛtā says that the Emperor melted into tears at this address and they fell over his long flowing beard. His Majesty said :

“ From to-day you are my god-son. I release you to-day. I have only one thing to add. Your uncle Hiraṇya enjoys more than 8 laks a year. I am his partner ; it is only fair that he should give me something more. Go home and do so that he may meet me. Let him do what is but fair. I leave it to him entirely. ”¹

¹ এত শুনি সেই.....মন আদ্র হৈল ।
দাড়ি বহি অশ্রু পড়ে কান্দিতে লাগিল ।
সেই বলে আজ হইতে তুমি মোর পুত্র
আজি ছোড়াইব তোমা করি এক স্ত্র ।

Raghunātha went back and induced his uncle to meet the Emperor, and an amicable settlement was the result.

It was about this time that Nityānanda paid a visit to Pāṇihāṭi, a village four miles to the North of Calcutta.

Nityananda's visit to Pāṇihāṭi.

The Saṅkīrtana party mustered in strength around the apostle. He resided at the house of Rāghava, which became, as it were, a sacred place for the time. Hundreds of people gathered there, and it seemed as though the material world had vanished and the spiritual one had opened its gates for all. Night and day God was praised "with the timbrel and dance and the high sounding cymbals" and songs of great spiritual beauty were composed and sung. At Pāṇihāṭi Nityānanda stayed for three months and the author of Chaitanya Bhāgavata says that he turned the very tide of the life of people there during this time. Raghunātha heard of all that transpired there from Saptagrāma which was not very far from Pāṇihāṭi. He asked the permission of his father to go there. Both he and his uncle agreed to his request this time,

উজিরে কহিয়া রঘুনাথে ছোড়াইল ।
 প্রীতি করি রঘুনাথে কহিতে লাগিল ॥
 তোমার জ্যেষ্ঠা বুদ্ধি অষ্ট লক্ষ খায় ।
 আমি ভাগী আমারে কিছু দিবার না ঘোষায় ॥
 যাহ তুমি তোমার জ্যেষ্ঠা মিলাহ আমারে ।
 যে মতে ভাল হয় করুন সে ভার তোরে ॥

for their suspicions had been almost lulled by the outwardly mundane life which Raghunātha had led all this time.

Nityānanda sat on a brick-built seat beneath a large fig tree, which still exists, looking like a true messenger of God. When Raghunātha met him, Nityānanda said,

“Thou dessembler, I shall give thee a punishment”¹

“Dessembler” because he affected worldly life, while at heart he was an ascetic. Nityānanda added

“You shall give a feast to the people here, and that shall be your proper punishment.”

This good-humoured joke was taken in earnest, and Raghunātha made extensive preparations for feeding sumptuously the vast multitude that had gathered at Pāṇihāṭī. He must have spent a large amount of money over it; for, at the end of the feast, he sent to Nityānanda's home a hundred Rupees and seven *tolas* of gold, this of course without Nityānanda's knowledge. Raghunātha gave one hundred Rupees with two *tolas* of gold to Rāghava Paṇḍit at whose house Nityānanda stayed. Besides this he gave to

“The Danda Mahotsava.”

¹ “শুনি প্রভু কহে চোরা দিলি দরশন
আয় আর আজি তোরে করিব দণ্ডন।”

innumerable people of more or less note that had assembled there from Rs. 20 to Rs. 2 each according to their merit. This festivity is known amongst the Vaiṣṇavas as the “Danda Mahotsava” or the festivity of punishment. The anniversary of this festivity is held with great pomp up to this day at Pāṇihāṭi on the 13th day of the bright moon in the month of Jaiṣṭha (May-June).¹

At the end of the festivity Raghunātha had a private interview with Nityānanda and touching his feet gently said :

“Fondly have I cherished the hope of surrendering myself to Chaitanya. This has proved like the dwarf aspiring to catch the moon. I am a great sinner ; how may I expect to be admitted to the heaven of his presence ! I tried several times ; but each time I fled, the men set by my parents caught hold of me and brought me back by force. Now bless me, revered sir, that I may succeed in my attempts and meet the Master.” And Nityānanda laid his hand on Raghunātha’s head and silently blessed.

After this Raghu came back to Saptagrāma. This time his old sentiment which had been kept hidden from his people manifested itself once

¹ Accounts of this festivity are to be found in almost all the standard biographies of the Vaiṣṇavas of this period particularly in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Antya Khaṇḍa, Ch. VI.

again. He tried again and again to escape from the palace but a strong body of guards was appointed to keep watch over his movements. They found him out every time he attempted to escape. He did not visit his wife, but slept on the bare floor in the courtyard of the temple attached to the palace. He no longer attended the affairs of the State and silently wept remembering Chaitanya of whom he dreamt in his sleep and thought all day. Alarmed at the frequent attempts of her son to leave home, his anxious mother had said once to her husband :

Force no remedy. “I wish he could be kept bound to a pillar with a rope. Possibly he may escape the guards some day.”

The sorrowful father replied :

“The attractions of a treasure, vast as an emperor’s, the beauty of his wife like a celestial nymph cannot bind him to this home of ours, do you think a slender rope will do it?”¹

It was the month of July, 1517, the time of the great Car-festivity of Jagannātha, when the people of Bengal, especially those of Nadiyā, used to pay their annual visit to Chaitanya at Purī. They made preparations for the journey. An opportunity occurred to Raghunātha at this time to renounce home for ever.

¹ “ইল্ল সম ঐশ্বর্য, স্ত্রী অপ্সরা সম, এ সব বাঁধিতে নারিল ষার মন,
দড়ির বন্ধনে তারে বাঁধিব কেমনে।”

Jadunandana Āchārya, the spiritual head of the family of Hiraṇya and Govardhana, called on Raghunātha at about 4 A.M. of a July morning. The latter was in the courtyard of the temple within the palace, a strong body of guards keeping watch over him. Jadunandana wanted Raghunātha to mediate on his behalf with his family-priest who had quarrelled with him. In the morning the priest's service would be required at his home for worship. Raghunātha gladly undertook to induce the priest to perform the worship as usual, and accompanied Jadunandana to his home. The guards had implicit confidence in one who was the *Guru* of the house and did not object to Raghunātha's accompanying him. As soon as he got out of the palace he told Jadunandana that he would visit the priest himself. It was not necessary for the *Guru* to be with him. The simple-minded Brāhmaṇ took him at his word and Raghunātha after having paid a visit to the priest and extracting a promise from him to continue his religious duties at the house of Jadunandana, fled away as fast as his legs could carry him.

In the morning, the guards went to the house of *Guru* to enquire about Raghunātha, and he was astonished to hear that Raghu had not gone back to the palace. In a moment the whole city was astir searching for the absconder.

Govarddhana thought that as the people of Nadiyā were then about to start for Purī to meet Chaitanya, Raghunātha had doubtless joined them. So he sent ten horsemen to make enquiries with a letter addressed to Çivānanda Sen, father of the famous Kavikarṇapura, of whom we have spoken in our previous lecture.

Çivānanda Sen was a venerable man and a great friend of Govarddhana Dāsa ; he was besides the leader elect of the pilgrims bound for Purī. Govarddhana wrote in the letter that his son had turned mad for love of Chaitanya. He was the only child in the family. His wife was young and was deeply distressed. If he could not be made to return, it would blast their happiness for ever.

The ten horsemen returned in due course with a reply from Çivānanda Sen saying that Raghunātha had not joined the pilgrims. Men were sent to places far and near. But nowhere was he to be found. Where had he gone then ?

It was the march of a soul, deep drunk with inward joy, to meet the object of his love. Nothing could deter it ; no obstruction was unsurmountable, no risk too great. Raghunātha was going to a heaven of bliss. What matter that hardships had to be undergone? He followed those paths which no one had trodden before. Through jungles and deserted villages he

The fruitless search.

walked on and on, bare footed. He walked 30 miles on the first day towards the east and spent the night in a cowshed. In the morning he turned to the south and reached a village named Yātrābhoga. Thence he came westward to Saran. In 12 days he reached Purī. During these days he had but three meals. The body fasted but the spirit feasted on the joy of the prospect of meeting the Master.

Chaitanya was at the house of Kāçī Miçra at Purī. Some of his companions were near him and Mukunda Datta was the first amongst them to see Raghu approaching from afar. He cried aloud pointing with his finger :—“Look there, Raghu, our beloved Raghu has come, how emaciated does he look?”

Meets Chaitanya. Chaitanya called him to his presence and Raghu humbly touched his feet, and bursting into tears said :

“ Much have I suffered, my Master. Sinner as I am, do not leave me this time. I am too humble, but yet yearn for your grace.”

Chaitanya embraced him affectionately and asked Govinda, the servant of the house, to prepare a good meal, saying, “ Surely he has not tasted any proper food during his long journey.”

Raghu was served with substantial food for 5 days, but on the 6th he said that he would

touch nothing rich. 'It serves', he said, 'to nourish my physical life; but my spiritual vision grows less.' From that time forward he used to stand for a couple of hours at the gate of the great temple of Purī every evening and the pilgrims gave him alms without his seeking. They gave him a handful of bread or rice not knowing that he was a prince, and often it so happened that he got nothing from them, and then he gladly fasted. He received regular instructions from Svarūpa Dāmodara, whom Chaitanya had appointed to teach him the tenets of Vaiṣṇava scriptures and instruct him in those practical ways by which the realization of God is brought to man.

Ragunātha's reverence for Chaitanya was so great that for a few years he would not venture to speak to him direct. What he had to say to the Master, he said to Govinda or Svarūpa Dāmodara who communicated it to him.

One day Svarūpa told to Chaitanya that Raghunātha wanted to receive instructions directly from him. He would not speak out his great wish at first for shyness. And when he did so at last he feared lest he might be considered too forward. Chaitanya called Raghu to his presence and said :

“ Svarūpa Dāmodara knows the Vaiṣṇava theology and the rules of monastic life better

than I do. For you know I have always rather followed my own natural inclinations. That is why I entrusted your training to this worthy man. But should you still care to learn from me, follow these instructions :

“Do not listen to gossip, do not seek honour for yourself but give it freely to others. Have your mind fixed on God. Consider yourself humbler than the grass you tread upon. Live upon spare diet and have humble clothing. Be patient as a tree.”¹

About the qualities to be learnt from the tree, Chaitanya had once said to Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya :—

“The tree does not complain against him who cuts it to pieces. Though its sap dries within

¹ প্রভু আগে কথা মাত্র না কহে রঘুনাথ ।
 স্বরূপ গোবিন্দ দ্বারা কহে নিজ বাত ॥
 প্রভু আগে স্বরূপ নিবেদন আর দিনে ।
 রঘুনাথ নিবেদয়ে প্রভুর চরণে ॥
 কি মোর কর্তব্য মুক্তি না জানি উদ্দেশ ।
 আপন শ্রীমুখে মোর করুন উপদেশ ॥
 হাসি মহাপ্রভু রঘুনাথেরে কহিল ।
 তোমার উপদেষ্টা করে স্বরূপেরে দিল ॥
 সাধ্য সাধন তত্ত্ব শিক ইহার স্থানে ।
 আমি যত নাহি জানি ইহ তত জানে ॥
 তথাপি আমার আজ্ঞার যদি শ্রদ্ধা হয় ।
 আমার এই বাক্যে তুমি করিহ নিশ্চয় ॥
 গ্রাম্য কথা না শুনিবে গ্রাম্য বার্তা না কহিবে ।
 ভাল না খাইবে আর ভাল না পরিবে ॥
 “তুণাদপি স্থনীচেন তরোরিব সহিষ্ণুতা ।
 অমানিনা মানদেন কীর্তীগীর সদা হরিঃ ॥”

it, it does not ask a drop of water from any one. It gives freely all its treasure to those who seek it. Exposed to the heat of the sun in the summer and to the rains, it gives shelter to others.”¹

These instructions, it should be understood, were meant for those who had broken their family-connection, and turned ascetics devoting themselves to universal good and having a brotherly ideal before them. They could not be followed by lay men to their fullest extent.

The grief of Govarddhana Dāsa and his family at Saptagrāma at Raghunātha’s continued absence was great. They had sent men in quest of the missing Raghunātha all over the country and even to Purī. Çivānanda Sen had in the meantime returned from Purī with other pilgrims and Govarddhana again sent men to him enquiring whether he had seen Raghunātha there with Chaitanya. Çivānanda said :

“ Yes, he is there with the Master. The faith he has shown is great and he has already become a noted man there. Chaitanya has made

Govarddhana sends him money. over the charge of his spiritual training to Svarūpa, and all the companions of the Master hold him dear as their lives. Day and night he repeats the name of God and scarcely leaves the presence of

¹ See Chaitanya Charitāmṛta .Antya Khaṇḍa.

Chaitanya. A true ascetic is he, caring neither for food nor clothing. At 10 O'clock in the night he stands at the main gate of the temple of Jagannātha and the pilgrims give him some scraps on which he lives. If they give him nothing, he fasts. Many are the days in the month when he fasts, at other times he lives upon whatever chance brings him.”¹

Govardhana's heart melted in unbounded compassion for the poor child, and night and day he wept and was sad. He sent two Brāhmaṇs and a servant with Rs. 400 to Purī, hoping that Raghunātha might be induced to accept the small offer for his personal comforts. Raghunātha said to them :

“A thousand times do I bow to my parents. Give them this message that I pray for their blessing in order to attain a spiritual life. I, was not born for food and clothing. If I attend

¹ শিবানন্দ কহে তিহো হয় প্রভুর স্থানে ।
 পরম বিখ্যাত তিহো কেবা নাহি জানে ॥
 স্বরূপের স্থানে তারে করিয়াছে সমর্পণ ।
 প্রভুর ভক্তগণের তিহো হয় প্রাণসম ॥
 রাত্রি দিন করে তিহো নাম সঙ্কীৰ্ত্তন ।
 ক্ষণমাত্র নাহি ছাড়ে প্রভুর চরণ ॥
 পরম বৈরাগী নাহি ভক্ষণ পরিজন ।
 জৈছে তৈছে আহার করি রাখয়ে জীবন ॥
 দশদণ্ড রাত্রি গেলে পুষ্পাঞ্জলি দিয়া ।
 সিংহদ্বারে খাড়া হয় আহার লাগিয়া ॥
 কেহ যদি দেয় তবে করয়ে ভক্ষণ ।
 কড়ু উপবাস কড়ু করেন চর্কণ ॥

to material comforts, the vision within me grows less bright. I cannot bear it. My only care is to keep it clear. For the satisfaction of my father I will accept a small portion of the money, not for myself, but to serve my Master. You may return home now.”

As he would not touch any money with his own hand, they did not go back but stayed at Purī. Twice in a month Raghunātha took a small amount from this money and invited and entertained Chaitanya with it in a very humble way, the two meals that he gave to the Master each month, costing him only 8 *paṇs* of *kaṇḍis* something like 2 annas. For two years Raghunātha continued inviting Chaitanya to this humble repast, but at the end of two years he discontinued it. A month passed and Chaitanya did not receive any invitation from Raghunātha and when the next month passed also Chaitanya asked Svarūpa :—‘ Why is it that Raghu does not

He no more invites Chaitanya to dinner.

invite us any more.’ Svarūpa told the Master that Raghu would not further accept any money from a worldly man. This could not, he was convinced, give any satisfaction to the Master, though the latter accepted the invitation for the sake of mere courtesy ; so he had dispensed with it. Chaitanya said : “ Raghu has understood aright. It is even so ; acceptance of a gift from a rich man makes the life of an ascetic

poor spiritually. It spots his clear vision of God.”¹

Chaitanya however made enquiries of Śvarūpa about the physical needs of Raghunātha, though he did not like any one to make any provision for him. A sannyāsī must absolutely resign himself to God, without thinking of the morrow. Whatever Raghunātha did, he did with an inward strength and joy, which raised him above all human compassion. Through his spiritual and physical needs, however, the mother-like eyes of the Master followed him at every step watching with keen interest his progress in spiritual life.

Chaitanya one day heard that Raghu no longer stood at the gate of the Temple for alms, but he gathered a handful of scraps and rice thrown outside the courtyard of the Temple, which he washed carefully, and took with a little salt. Yet he was as cheerful as ever.

Thus did Raghunātha spend 16 years of his life at Purī. He came there when he was only 19, and now at his 35th year, Chaitanya passed away from this world. Raghunātha had once said to Chaitanya :

“Of what other God you speak to me, Master? You are my God.”

¹ শুনি মহাপ্রভু হাসি বলিতে লাগিল ॥
বিষয়ীর অন্ন খাইলে মলিন হয় মন ।
মলিন মন হলে না হয় কৃষ্ণের স্মরণ ॥

When the great calamity took place, Rājā Pratāpa Rudra who had already made over the helm of administration, and all marks of royalty to his son, retired from Purī to village-life in deep sorrow and spent his remaining days in calling to mind the incidents of Çhaitanya's life.

Many of Chaitanya's companions left Purī; for, they had not seen God in the image of the Temple there so much as in the Man before them, and their grief was now overwhelming. Raghunātha carried the stone which Chaitanya had given him for worship together with a string of sacred Goonja-beads to Vṛndāvana, and at the moment of worship he bathed them every day with his tears, remembering the kindness of their giver.

Raghunātha lived till a good old age dying
in his 86th year in 1584 A.D.

His last moments.

His last hours are thus described
in the Padakalpataru :

“On the bank of the Rādhā Kunda he lay breathing heavily. He could speak no word, and his closed eyes shed a few drops of tears indicative of the joy of union with Kṛṣṇa.”

Raghunātha's name is inseparably associated with those of Rūpa and Sanātana, who had become his most intimate friends at Vṛndāvana. There the ascetic-prince earned the admiring love and esteem of the Brajabāsīs by his faith and pure unspotted life. He wrote many

Sanskrit works which will be enumerated below. He was innocent and simple as a child. And his sinless mind mirrored in its unsullied • transparency the glories of a true spiritual life.

In the last part of life he lived upon whey only and often slept under the canopy of the sky which showed him far greater splendour than the ornamental roof studded with jewels of his father's palace at Saptagrāma.

Some of the songs on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that he composed contain invocations to Tuṅgadevī, Raṅgadevī, Lalitā, Bisakhā and other Gopīs of Vṛndāvana to teach him how to decorate the God whose vision he saw ; for they were finished mistresses of the art. In one of them he addresses the Deity saying,

“ I am thine—I am thine alone for ever.
Take me to thyself.”

This was a short time before his death. One of his constant companions in the latter part of his life was the venerable Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja who was inspired to write his Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, on hearing an account of the great life of the Master, recited for the most part by Raghunātha. At Vṛndāvana we find him receiving some of the later Vaiṣṇava worthies such as Çrīnivāsa and Çyāmānanda with kindness, and paying his respects to Jāhṇavī Devī, wife of Nityānanda when she visited the holy city.

He is one of the few Kāyasthas who were admitted to Brāhmaṇhood in the Vaiṣṇava society of Bengal, being recognised as one of the six Gosvāmīs. But to Raghunātha Brāhmaṇs, Kāyasthas and even the lowest castes as Hādīs commanded the same respect. For following the instructions of Chaitanya, he had learnt ‘to respect every living being knowing that the holy God dwelt in every one.’

The routine of Raghunātha’s daily life is given to us by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja who wrote from intimate personal knowledge. He says :

“The routine of his day he follows to the letter. It is unalterable like curving on stone. For seven and half Prahars (21 hours) he remains plunged in God realization or in recording his spiritual experience. The rest is spent in sleep and in taking his meals. There are days when he does not reserve even these small hours for that purpose. His asceticism is wonderful. He has abstained entirely from rich meal. He dresses himself in rags and carries out the Master’s instructions to the letter.”¹

If we read the Sanskrit works of Raghunātha, we will find what a fount of joy was in him, inspite of the rigour of his life. If he left home, it was to extend his home, to make the

narrow broad, for his home is not now the palace of Saptagrāma but the hearts of thousands of admirers. If he denied himself the pleasures of life, it was to taste higher joys. In the pages of Indian history he, with Rūpa, Sanātana and another great Vaiṣṇava, whose life will be narrated hereafter, shows the continuity of the line of princely ascetics from the time of the Buddha. It is the same story repeated in the pages of the religious history of our country, of men placed in positions of power and wealth surrendering all, for higher pursuits. We find a parallel of the great asceticism practised by Raghunātha in some of the Catholic saints of Europe, chiefly in the life of St. Catherine of Siena (born 1347 A.D.) of whom it is said :

“At her 12th year she wholly abandoned the use of animal food. At 15 she left off wine. At 23 she gave up bread living only on uncooked vegetables. She used to sleep but one quarter of an hour in the four and twenty. She lived 3 years without speaking...And finally remained wholly without food for many years.”¹

God-realization has not been a matter of speculative discussion in India. Throughout this vast Peninsula the belief is deep-rooted among all classes of people that the human

¹ Quoted by the Encyclopædia Britannica (Ninth edition, Vol V, p. 230) from Father Raimond's life of St. Catherine.

soul can, under a course of training and in some cases by virtue of heredity or accumulated *karma* of past lives, reach the stage in which God may be realised in spirit. One who has attained this blessed condition is like living joy—untouched by the sorrows and worries of the world, having only compassion for those of others. Tailaṅga Svāmī and Bhāṣkarānanda of Benares, Loknātha Brahmachārī of Dacca, and Paramhansa Rāmkr̥ṣṇa of Dakṣiṇeṣvara have, in our own times, evinced in their wonderful lives the attainment of the highest mystic vision. The beauty of their lives and visions permeates the whole atmosphere of India as do the scent of the Sephāli flower make fragrant the air of an autumnal day. The rational view which often sneers at them will be nowhere with us, when life presented before our eyes unfold the beauty of spiritual vision in such a prominent manner. In no case will an Indian be prepared to give up his faith in the Sādhu and his god-realization, in Raghunātha Dāsa and men of his type.

Raghunātha's works. Raghunātha wrote among others the following works in Sanskrit :—

1. Vilāpa Kusumañjalī.
2. Prema Parabidha Stotra.
3. Rādhāṣṭaka.
4. Premāmbhujamaraudakhya Stotra.
5. Swashankalpaprakāṣa Staba.

6. Nāmāṣṭaka.
7. Utkanthadaçaka.
8. Abhiṣṭa Prarthanāṣṭaka.
9. Abhiṣṭasūchanā.
10. Çachīnandana Çataka.
11. Çrīgaurāṅgāṣṭavaka Kalpabrikṣa.
12. Nāma Çikṣā.
13. Prārthanā.
14. Govarddhanāçrayadaçakam.
15. Govarddhanādaçakaprarthanādaçakam.

There are 13 more, making 29 in all.

Premāmbhujamaranandakhya Stabarāja by

The subjects
treated.

Raghunātha Dāsa explains how the trances of a spiritual soul, perfect in its love for God, show themselves in their glowing poetical manifestation in the character of Rādhā. Her ornaments when she goes to meet Kṛṣṇa, are really the qualities of the soul in deep mystic love. She is represented as bathing in the sweet stream of humility; next in that of child-like simplicity and then in that of divine grace which lends beauty to her person. She clothes herself with the blue coloured Sādī of her coyness and resignation; next wears the outer pink robe of her first love, she covers her breast with the bodice of her false anger; the love of her companions for her is the perfume that surrounds her person; the subtleness of her ways to gain the heart of the beloved is the collyrium with which she paints her eyes. Pure

thought from which all earthly attachments have been wiped away is the fount of her joy; the memories of her romantic play with Kṛṣṇa are personified in her maids, and the fortune of her union with Kṛṣṇa is the red sign on her forehead, and so forth.¹

The spiritualization of the sensual forms makes the great mystic attraction of the Vaiṣṇava literature. Rādhā, as described by the Vaiṣṇava poets, possesses all the sweetness of a lovely mortal, but she is more. True we find her sometimes in a sensual garb but she is always set forth from a highly spiritual back ground—an exalted extra-sensual plane. Chaitanya's love for God, which could not be expressed well without being represented in a material form, latterly came to be emphatically symbolised in the picture of Rādhā drawn by contemporary poets and those who wrote shortly after. His life is the perspective which gives us a closer survey of Vaiṣṇava poetry showing in many of the glowing and inspired lines the transition of emotions from sensual to spiritual. This poetry flows, as it were, through the familiar scenes of human passions into the great sea of mystic love, till we meet what the eye cannot command—the endless and the illimitable. Raghunātha did not write from mere imagination. Before his eyes, the

¹ This allegorical meaning is fully explained in the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*, *Karṇānda* and other works.

Master's great love for God manifested itself in a hundred romantic ways, compared with which Dante's love for Beatrice is mere child's play. Chaitanya was in one of those oceans of joy and sorrow, in the small rivers of which every man and woman struggles more or less for a time in their youth. The life of the Master was a grand epic poem of sweet emotions of which many of us have sung short lyrics in our youth, and which constantly supply the poet's pen with colour and imagery in his romantic works. Raghunātha not only read the great poetry in the Master's life unfolded before his eyes, but himself tasted it by life-long devotion and faith. It is on this account that he gives a mystic explanation of Rādhā's adornments. At every stage he is reminded of what really adorns the soul, not the outward ornaments but the inner ones, what constitutes the chief beauty, not the external form but the qualities of the soul. Rādhā in the Vaiṣṇava poetry represents this heaven of love's ideal.

Raghunātha wrote many poetical pieces in Bengali, some of which will be found in the Pada-kalpataru.

XIX.—Further notes on Chaitanya.

Let us now analyse what it was that made Chaitanya the centre of universal admiration in our country. Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha Dāsa

The unique charm
of Chaitanya's life.

had passed through great hardships and sacrifices for their love of him and so did Hari Dāsa, the Mahomedan convert. What difference is there between their lives and his? Chaitanya did not practise austerities as Raghunātha did. He had no princely fortune to give up for spiritual pursuits, like the first named three amongst his followers. As a Sannyāsī he was not very strict; for he was often taken to task by Dāmodara Paṇḍit for violating the rules of his Order, and he frankly told Raghunātha that he did not know the details of Vaiṣṇava theology as Svarūpa did. He was no organiser of the Vaiṣṇava community as Nityānanda was. And as a result of it, the descendants of his uncles now living in Sylhet do not enjoy that high position in society which those of Nityānanda, Advaita and even of lesser Vaiṣṇava worthies do at the present time. He was no doubt a great scholar. But scholarship, however lofty, does not make any lasting impression in this country. He wrote no books as his followers did. Why is it then that he is revered as a god by his countrymen and is held in a much higher estimation than others whose great sacrifices in the cause of religion deservedly command the respect and admiration of all.

Other lives, great as some of them no doubt are, represent more or less the struggle of the spiritual soul for the attainment of its final

goal, whereas Chaitanya's life shows not the worry and strife in pursuit of perfection but at once its full blown beauty—its bloom and fragrance. The plant has many worrying experiences and inward struggles before it brings forth the concentrated treasure of its beauty and fragrance in the flower. Those lives show the struggle and worry, but not so much the beauty of mystic vision as Chaitanya's does. The scholars, poets and ascetics gathered round him as the bees gather round the flower; for in him they found a store of that joy which has been figuratively called 'heaven' by all religions.

Wherever he happened to be, the young and old followed—mad after him, as he after his God. "Many gathered the sacred dust trodden by his feet in such quantities that the track of his passage could be followed out over a large stretch of country." Just as the rose in its full bloom attracts the eye, the little thorns of the stalk with which nature protects it, lying almost hidden from our sight, the asceticism practised by Chaitanya which helped to develop his realization of God in the like manner does not strike us so forcibly as is the case in the lives of Raghunātha, Rūpa, Sanātana and Haridāsa. Yet did he practise austerities to keep the flame of his faith burning, though not always in the way required by the scriptures. Jagadānanda, a young scholar, always tried to minister to his personal comforts.

He insisted upon the Master's partaking of something, in however small quantity, of the good food presented to him by his admirers. And when Chaitanya would not, in spite of his importunities, do so, Jagadānanda, deeply agrieved would fast for the whole day. One day Jagadānanda offered him a pillow; for the

Chaitanya and Jagadānanda. Master used to sleep on the bare floor of the temple without one.

Chaitanya was angry. He said "Look here, this lad wants me to enjoy worldly comforts! why not bring a costly couch for me?" One of the *bhaktas* of Eastern Bengal presented Chaitanya with a jar full of scented oil; and Jagadānanda's earnest wish was that the Master would use a little of it at the time of bathing, and with this object he approached him. Chaitanya said "Send this jar to the temple of Jagannātha. There the lights will burn with this oil." The Pandit said not a word that day, though he was deeply sorry. The next day at the time when the Master took his bath, Jagadānanda brought before him some oil from the jar. Chaitanya said "I told you, Pandit, that I would use none of this. Send the jar to the temple of Jagannātha." And Jagadānanda was very angry; he carried the jar to the courtyard and broke it to pieces and its perfumed contents flowed on the ground. Not content with this, he went to his room and fasted three days.

So that Chaitanya had to go to him and soothe his temper with sweet words. We have seen on p. 42 that Jagadānanda did not at all like the Master to embrace Sanātana when he was afflicted with eczema and advised the latter to leave Purī and go to Vṛndāvana. Chaitanya was very angry with him for this. One of the chief reasons which made him leave Purī for two years, and go to the Deccan is here described in his own words :

“ Jagadānanda is determined that I should taste worldly pleasures. Whatever he wants me to do I do for fear, lest he take offence. If I do not do as he wishes, for three days he would not speak to me. Mukunda is sorry at heart because in the winter I bathe three times a day and sleep on the bare earth. It is not the habit of Mukunda to speak out his sorrow but I feel that he is deeply aggrieved. This pains me the more. I am a Sannyāsī, the ascetic Dāmodara always keeps his strict watch over me, warning me at every little violation of the rules of our Holy Order. I do not know how to behave as he wishes me to do. I have so often to suppress my personal impulses for fear of him. He cares only for religion and does not mind what people think. I do not wish to give pain to people. For all these reasons I want to be alone and free for some time. I shall travel visiting

the shrines of India and you, dear friends, must remain here at Purī.”¹

The importunate entreaties of Nityānanda and other friends who wanted to accompany him, did not shake his determination of travelling alone.

The world often tried to seduce him by praise and worldly fame. But as often did he shake off these from him as a traveller does the drops of rain from his cloak. We find that at the report of his intended visit to Vṛndāvana, Pradyumna Miçra (*alias* Nṛsinhānanda) placed his whole property at the service of Chaitanya for beautifying and improving the roads. The road from Kuliā to Kānairnatçālā, extending over a distance of

The world vainly tried to win him to glory.

১ জগদানন্দ চাহে আমার বিষয় ভুল্লাহিতে ।
যেই কহে সেই ভয়ে চাহিয়ে করিতে ॥
কভু যদি ইহার বাক্য করিয়ে অশ্রুধা ।
ক্রোধে তিন দিন মোরে নাহি কহে কথা ॥
মুকুন্দ হয়েন দুঃখী দেখি সন্ন্যাস ধর্ম ।
তিন বার শীতে স্নান ভূমিতে শয়ন ॥
অন্তরে দুঃখী মুকুন্দ নাহি কহে মুখে
ইহার দুঃখ দেখি মোরে দ্বিগুণ হয়ে দুঃখে ॥
আমিত সন্ন্যাসী দামোদর ব্রহ্মচারী ।
সদা রহে আমার উপর শিক্কা দণ্ড ধরি ॥
ইহার ভাগে আমি নাজান ব্যবহার ।
ইহারে না ভয় স্বতন্ত্র চরিত্র আমার ॥
লোকাপেক্ষা নাহি ইহার কৃষ্ণ কৃপা হৈতে ।
আমি কভু লোকাপেক্ষা না পারি ছাড়িতে
অতএব তুমি সব রহ নীলাচলে ।
দিনকত তীর্থ আমি ভ্রমিব একলে ॥

two hundred miles, was adorned with beautiful stones and metallic decorations, and at proper intervals tanks were dug for the pilgrims who would journey to the holy city in Chaitanya's company. Luxurious plants were made to grow on both sides of the road many months before, so that Chaitanya when he travelled found sweet and fragrant Bakul flowers on all sides. Each day the road was filled with soft petals so that nothing hard might give pain to Chaitanya who walked barefoot. Not this only, Rājā Pratāpa Rudra ordered that a pillar should be raised where Chaitanya halted every day to commemorate the journey. Each ghāt where he would bathe, should be made a shrine. Thousands of people accompanied him. But he, when he saw all this fuss, quietly returned, giving up all idea of going to Vṛndāvana that time. And when after a year or so he went privately, the popular song thus describes him :

“ Look, how Chaitanya goes to Vṛndāvana, a torn rag at his back, his head shaven and a begging bowl in his hand.”¹

The people of Nadiyā when they saw the ascetic Chaitanya at Purī naturally felt a great sorrow ; for “ he had no longer his beautiful stuff of curling hair which had adorned his head. It was shaven. He was reduced to skeleton.

“ গৌর চন্দ্র ব্রজ নগরে, ছেঁড়া কাঁথা মুড়ামাথা করক লইয়া করে।”

He had a strip of cloth to cover his loins and a rag for his outer mantle. His body was covered with dust. He looked like a mad man only his tears bespoke the joy of love.”

In the Deccan children threw dust at him saying “Look, there goes the
 “Mad after God.” Sannyāsī mad after God.” And he often turned round to speak of God and then an immense crowd gathered round him : old and young men, children and women, lay transfixed to the spot, charmed by every word that fell from his lips.

It is said that he was a Vaiṣṇava. So far as the fact goes that he interpreted the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult, and was the disciple of a Vaiṣṇava Guru, it may be true ; but his faith had a universal character ; it was a religious philosophy which appeals to reason and can be accepted by all people. Though repeatedly saying that the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cult had an emblematic significance, expressing the highest form of love for God, he did not give up his faith in the shrines associated with the Kṛṣṇa legends. This was what he said addressing Jagannātha at Purī :

“ Here am I, and here art thou, oh Kṛṣṇa, and the joy of our union is ever new here as of old, yet my mind yearns for an union with thee in Vṛndāvana.” This utterance relating to Chaitanya’s predilection for the holy city, should

not be given an exaggerated importance. The temples of Durgā, Çiva, and Ganeça and in fact all other shrines that he visited invoked in him spiritual emotions of the same nature. Every temple was sacred to him, as he believed his God to dwell there—nay more, every forest expressed to him the message of Vṛndāvana, every river, the sacredness of the Yamunā. In the sea he saw his Kṛṣṇa smiling and beckoning him, and he jumped into it with arms outstretched to embrace his God; a fisherman saved his life. A young child once stood before him whose lovely colour reminded him of his dark-blue god, and he fell into a trance.¹ Once when a meal was placed before him, he was attracted by the sweet-smelling rice and asked by what name it was called. They said it is called the meal of Kṛṣṇa. Hearing this Chaitanya betrayed sudden emotions and weeping with joy had his trance again. Often he recited verses and songs with tears of joy, as he madly ran to embrace his god mirrored in the sky. He found Him in the trees, and Govinda Dāsa mentions that* at Chandīpur in the Deccan he remained leaning on a Tamāla tree as on a lover, unconscious for the whole day, and when restored to his senses he spoke of the great joy of union with God in half-broken words choked by emotion. Sometimes he would quote verses from

¹ Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khaṇḍa, Ch. XXII.

the Bhāgavata and other books or sing songs of Chāṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati and Jaydeva for the whole night, with interpretations, which as the audience heard, they thought that they heard a god speak of God. They worshipped the speaker with tears of love and joy.

He laid axe at the very root of the caste-system, though like some aromatic plants it has the power in India to revive and multiply where it is cut, and is not a thing to be easily destroyed. Chaitanya expressed himself freely and in plain language.

A breaker of the caste-system.

“Even if a Muchi (a cobbler) is devoted to God, a thousand times do I bow to him.”¹

“If a man eats from the plate of a Dom (hated by all) he becomes pre-eminently entitled to god’s grace by that act of mercy.”²

At Nadiyā before his Sannyās he often carried the baskets of people to their homes, and sometimes bore their clothes to the bathing Ghāṭ and did other menial acts which as a Brāhmaṇ he should not have done. When the people whom he thus served forbade him to do so, he said

¹ “মুচি যদি ভক্তিভরে ডাকে কৃষ্ণধনে
কোটি নমস্কার মোর তাহার চরণে।”

Kaṇchā by Govinda Dāsa.

² “প্রভু কহে যে জন ডোমের অন্ন খায়।
হরিভক্তি হরি সেই পায় সর্বধায়।”

Kaṇchā by Govinda Dāsa.

“Don't object good friends ! These little acts make my vision of God clearer to me.”¹

He was strict in dealing with those ascetics in whom he discovered the least tendency to worldliness: An ascetic should have an unspotted character and be above blame. He could tolerate no breach of conduct in those who had adopted the Sannyāsi's vow. Chaitanya, however, did not deal with all in the same manner ; he had studied the weaknesses and strength of those who were near him in a discriminating manner. Rāma Rāy used to be often in the company of women, but Chaitanya knew that they sang holy songs to him giving fervour to his faith. His character stood on the firm rock of unflinching devotion to God. But in the case of Haridāsa, the younger, Chaitanya's treatment was hard, for he knew the man to be weak though he had taken the ascetic's vows. The little incident leading to his tragic fate related in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta is full of pathos.

The story of the Haridāsa, the younger.

Haridāsa was a handsome young man with a musical voice. One day when Chaitanya took his meal, he found the rice to be of a superior quality and asked Gopinātha Āchārya where the rice came from. Gopinātha said 'one of us got it from Mādhavī'. Mādhavī was an accomplished woman noted for her many excellent qualities.

¹ Chaitanya Bhāgavata Adi Līlā.

She used to transcribe documents for use in the Jagannātha temple. Chaitanya said again 'who is it that went to her to get this rice?' He was informed in reply that it was Haridāsa who did so. Chaitanya praised the quality of the rice and was silent for a time. After taking his meal, however, he said 'I should not like Haridāsa to come near me.' The friends of Chaitanya did not understand why he was so hard upon the young Sannyāsi. Haridāsa fasted three days in grief over this punishment, and yet the Master did not relent; and then when one near him pleaded in behalf of Haridāsa, Chaitanya said "A young Sannyāsi pays attention to a woman. This is what I can never endure. These men whose passions have not yet been controlled feign asceticism and seek women." Saying so he entered his room and they did not dare speak to him more on the point that day. The next day they again interceded in his behalf, pleading that the fault was a small one. Chaitanya said 'You know that I always follow the dictates of my heart. The company of a false ascetic I avoid. The desires of the flesh are hard even for a Rishi to conquer. How careful should a Sannyāsi be whose vows is one of total abstinence! If you plead for him again, you will not see me here.' Then Parmānanda Puri, the saint and scholar whom Chaitanya revered, called

Chaitanya sternly rejects all requests in behalf of Haridāsa.

on him and spoke for the young man. Chaitanya said :

‘ You are the leader of Sannyāsis and may do as you like. Gather them all in this temple to teach them manners. But permit me, Sir, to go to Alālnath. I shall start to-day for that place.’

Saying so he asked Govinda, his attendant, to make himself ready for the journey. Paramānanda Puri apologised for his request and dissuaded him from leaving the place.

Poor Haridāsa was advised by his friends to take his meal as usual; for they said ‘ Your fasts would only offend the Master the more ’ and the young Sannyāsi tasted his meal for the first time after three days at their request. He however stayed at Purī for one year after this time, and saw from a distance the trances of Chaitanya and his lily-like face bedewed with tears of spiritual joy. But to the blessed circle of the Master’s constant associates, Haridāsa had no access. His grief became unsupportable and he went away to Trivenī and drowned himself. The following story of a marvellous nature is related at this stage of the account, in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta.

One night Chaitanya accompanied by Jagadānanda, Swarupa, Govinda, Kaçīçwara, Çankara, and Dāmodara visited the sea-coast. From the distance a strange melody came bursting into the

air suddenly, a song from an unseen source, trembling with pathos, full of sweet appeals for mercy. They all heard, and Chaitanya said 'Don't you know it is young Haridāsa. His spirit is there. He committed suicide and has been reduced to this condition, but a truly penitent soul will have mercy.'

The strange melody from the sea.

None knew then that Haridāsa had drowned himself. After a year Çivānanda Sen, Çrivasa and other Bengalis came to Purī from Nadiyā, and when the residents of Purī asked if Haridāsa had gone to Nadiyā a year ago, Çrivāsa said "No friends, he went to Allahabad and there committed suicide by drowning himself in the Trevenī." The story filled all of them with astonishment.

The drowning.

This shows how strictly he treated the ascetics of his Order. Another instance is related of Govinda Ghoṣa of Agradwipa. After his meal Chaitanya was one day served with portion of Haritaki fruit by Govinda Ghoṣa. The Master asked him as to where he had got the Haritaki from. Govinda replied that it was the remnant of the day before. Chaitanya said 'Then you store things for the morrow, even, as worldly men do. You are not fit for this Order. Go home and live as a man of the world.' He obliged him to go back to his home at Agradwip. One may think that the

His treatment of Govinda Ghoṣa.

little breaches of conduct should not have been treated so hard. But Chaitanya, who knew his fellow ascetics better than others, often discovered in their small faults, great moral or spiritual defects which unfitted them for the Holy Order. His treatment of the householders and even of robbers and thieves, however, is characterised by that mercy which can alone win them to spiritual life.

What is it that Chaitanya saw in his trances? The late Swami Vivekānanda had asked Paramahansa Rāmakṛṣṇa if he had seen God, about whom so much was said. The latter replied :

‘Yes, I have seen God as vividly as I see you or the wall before me.’ The emphatic way in which he spoke this impressed the scholar who had never before heard anybody say that he had seen God, and that with so much force. The young scholar, so proud of his modern learning, questioned the prophet minutely, and he himself eventually became a disciple of Rāmakṛṣṇa.

Visions such as Chaitanya saw were beheld by many of his followers. We will deal in a future course of lectures with the life of Çrinivasa, towards the latter part of the 16th century, in which the visions were seen frequently, and were sometimes of long duration, making him lose all consciousness of the physical world. In Chaitanya we find the trances not only in their most attractive form, but we

also come in contact with a stoic strength of character, a great learning and a power to impart his feelings and ecstasies to others in a way which is perhaps unprecedented in the annals of mysticism. In other lives the glow of vision drew only the kindred souls to an admiration for it; in Chaitanya its fascination was so powerful, its effect so far-reaching, that every one who beheld him while in his trances, felt an overwhelming force which turned the very tide of his life. The cool-headed materialistic felt its charm no less than the poet and the dreamer. Even the Mahomedans were sometimes inspired by his ecstasies of love for Kṛṣṇa. The General Bijali Khan turned a Vaiṣṇava under their spell. Gorai Kazi, the Magistrate of Nadiyā, and the Mehomedan tailor at Çivasa's house turned his great admirers, not to speak of Haridāsa, the Mahomedan, whose life was dedicated to him. The conversation which Husan Saha had with Keçava Kṣetri quoted in Chaitanya Charitāmṛta shows in what high admiration the Emperor held Chaitanya.

*XX.—A Comparative study of Mysticism,
Occidental and Oriental.*

The mystic light, it will be proved by history, shone in the East and the West alike in the favoured medieval ages. For the purpose of showing the similarity of the experiences of

European and Asiatic mystics we shall briefly refer to the lives of some Catholic saints of the

St. Catharine of West. St. Catharine of Siena
Siena. (born 1347 A. D.) used to see

the image of Christ in the sky over the Dominican Church even when she was a girl of six. It is recorded that she used to commune with Christ, who taught her "by means of a clear bodily appearance," with such fervour that she would "pass into the state of ecstasy," and remain unconscious of the external world for hours together.¹

The stages of orison as described by St. Teresa (born 1515 A. D.) in her 'el Castillo' show a remarkable parallel with the progressive steps of the Vaiṣṇava faith. A further exposition of the Vaiṣṇava tenets, as detailed in many of their works in Sanskrit and Vernacular, will make a comprehension of the situation easier. I have already referred to Dāsya a stage in which the spiritual soul considers itself as a servant of God, carrying out the behests of its Master. Vātsalya—the stage in which God manifests himself as a child. Humanity represents the Divine child, and the soul offers its paternal care and services to it. Sakhya where God is our friend and playmate. We play with others in a spirit of concord and of harmony, realising that He is the

¹ Father Raimond's life of St. Catharine.

Main Player, inspiring and guiding our play. The spiritual soul feels itself secure and happy because it sees the Main Player near it—the source of hope, of love and perennial joy to the players; Mādhurya the stage of love in which the spiritual soul passes into visions of beauty and into trances, where it yearns for union with the Lover. He is the Bridegroom, and the soul of Man His devoted bride. This bride is Rādhā of the Vaiṣṇava Literature. The soul of man is bound by a thousand ties to the world, but it frees itself from these and longs for the Bridegroom only. The Lover dwells in the sacred Vrindā groves where nothing but the sound of his sweet flute is heard. Rādhā the soul, mad after Him, seeks Him and meets Him everywhere. From the blue of the sky, from the river and sea He beacons the human soul to meet Him. When the vision, by long prayers and devotion, by the virtues acquired in this life or in the previous ones, becomes clear to the spiritual soul, it realises God as vividly as we do material objects. This woman's ardour of the soul has been the characteristic of spiritual longings in Europe, and Asia alike. This is represented in the conception of Rādhā in the Vaiṣṇava Literature. Mrs. Under Hill says "Those for whom mysticism is above all things, an intimate and personal relation—the satisfaction of deep

desire—will fall back upon imagery drawn largely from the language of earthly passion.”¹ It is for this reason that God is some times called the Bridegroom and the human soul the bride in Biblical literature. Newman says “If thy soul is to go on into higher spiritual blessedness, it must become a *woman* ; yes, however mainly thou mayest be among men”.

St. Bernard (1091-1153 A.D.) writes “When I love God with my will, I transform myself into Him, for this is the power of virtue of love that it maketh thee to be like into that which thou lovest.”²

St. Teresa. St. Teresa’s (born 1515 A.D.) visions were so fervent, that at times she fancied herself to be one with Christ. This stage is beautifully expressed in the 10th Skanda of Çrimadvāgavata where the Gopī forgets herself and “thinks herself to be Kṛṣṇa herself.” In the Gitā Govinda, Jayadeva (1168-1200 A. D.) has a beautiful line

“মুহুরবলোকতি মগুন লীলা, মধুরিপুরহমিতি ভাবনশীলা”

“I am Kṛṣṇa thought Rādhā in her trance” which was imitated, in the famous stanza of Vidyāpati (14th century)

“অনুধন মাধব মাধব সোঙরিতে স্নন্দরী ভেল মাধাই”

¹ Under Hill’s mysticism, p. 153.

² Soliloquies of St. Bonaventura ex I, quoted by Under Hill p. 104.

“Constantly thinking of Kṛṣṇa, the beautiful one (Rādhā) became as Kṛṣṇa himself.” Chaitanya is said to have uttered in some of his trances the words ‘I am He’.¹ All these owe a kinship to the celebrated utterance of Christ himself. “I and my father are one.”

We have described the four stages of spiritual worship but there is one which we have omitted, and which precedes them all. It is the Çānta the stage in which all weed-like passions are removed, and the soul of man becomes fit to grow spiritual love in its fullest bloom. Çānta means quiet. This is a state for which our Rṣis strove, and which we find pre-eminently in the Buddha. Look at any stone image of the Buddha, what this quiet means will be realised at the sight of it. The Mongolian sculptor has given him flat lips and eyes. The Magadha has given a sharp Aryan cut to his face. The Gandhāra art has given fit proportions to his body. But in the great gallery of the Buddhistic images, whether the stone is so roughly hewn as to give it but the crudest likeness of a human-figure, or cut with the finest strokes of the chisel, giving it the most realistic perfection, the quiet of the soul, indicated in the face, is the prominent feature of all the statues of the Buddha, whether he is represented

¹ “মুঞি সেই মুঞি সেই কহি কহি হাসে।”

in his standing or sitting posture. The four other stages are not possible unless this stage of quiet has been attained. For if the soul is to mirror the beauty of the spiritual world, all evil passions must be removed by a perfect moral life, by abstinence, fast and prayer.

St. Teresa thus classifies the stages of worship in "El. Castills Interior."

1 Recollection, 2 Quiet, 3 Union, 4 Ecstasy, 5 Rapt, 6 The pain of God, 7 The Spiritual marriage.

In all the later Vaiṣṇava poems, the stages of Rādhā's love, which are but a reproduction of the ecstasies, experienced by Chaitanya, are thus classified. Purva Rāga—the dawn of love ; Milana—union and ecstasy ; Sambhoga Milana—Rapt ; Viraha—(Mathura)—the pain of God, and Bhāvasammilana or the Spiritual marriage.

These are some of the main divisions ; but the Vaiṣṇava poets have introduced a hundred niceties and the heads under which the emotions have been grouped are altogether 360. In some of the standard Vaiṣṇava works we find these emotions fully defined and treated in a scientific manner, particularly in the Sanskrit work of Rūpa called the Ujjala Nīlamanī, which gives copious illustrations from standard love-poems. This was subsequently summarised in Bengali by Narahari Chakravarti in his Bhaktiratnākara. One may be naturally struck by the wonderful

coincidence which the main classifications of the Vaiṣṇavas bear to those made by St. Teresa. It shows that similar ideas and experiences of the spiritual world have taken place throughout the Globe irrespective of creed or colour. The Mahomedans have amongst them their Sufi poets and mystics, such as Jelaluddin (1207-1273 A.D.), Hafiz (1300-1388 A.D.) and Jami (1414-1493 A.D.), who have expressed the ideas which are closely similar to those to be found in the Songs of Songs and in the lyrical poems of the Vaiṣṇavas. Many of the Catholic Saints of the middle ages saw visions of Christ and experienced mystic trances of this nature.. There are even sects among the Protestants, such as the Quakers (founded by George Fox 1624-1691 A.D.) whose faith is characterised by physical manifestations of joy similar to those to found every where amongst the Vaiṣṇava of Bengal. They have declared this before the world in an emphatic way, that "those who did not quake and tremble are strangers to the experiences of Moses, David and the Saints."¹ They wanted to realize "Christ within". Contrary to the Puritan teaching of the time, they insisted on the possibility in their lives of complete victory over sin. Those who attain such a stage among the Hindus and Buddhists are known as the

¹ Fox's Journal (1650). Barclay's Apology Prop II Q 8.

Siddhyas. An authoritative writer thus comments on the European mystics of the middle ages : "The new idea of obedience was not obedience to ecclesiastical superiors, but the subordination of the lower part of man's nature to the higher, and of the whole to God. This 'renunciation' cut off from practical sympathy with the visible church, feeding itself on a vague idea of union with Christ, might easily have fallen a prey to Buddhist notions floating in the atmosphere."¹ The Mahāyānists among the Buddhists had already spread the mystic ideas in the far East. That they may even have reached Europe is indicated by the above passage. They believed not only in the Buddha and in the innumerable gods and goddesses, most of whom are worshipped by the Hindus, but also in the emancipated Man—the Siddha, whom the Christians call mystic and the Jains, 'Tirthankara'. If the experiences of these people are to be credited, we may take it that the soul like a mirror reflects certain spiritual phenomena not known to ordinary men, when it is purged of all dross of material passion. From the time of Philo, the mystical Alexandrian Jew (B.C. 20 to A.D. 40), Europe had heard of this mysticism, and at one time there were many whose inner eyes had actually beheld the glorious visions. The West however could never

¹See Encyclopaedia Britanica Vol. XIV, p. 23. (9th edition)..

absolutely dissociate herself from the idea of nationality, which narrows the range of humanity, leading to conflicts of interest, nor free herself from political ideals based on a desire for acquisition of power. She has not therefore been able to develop introspection and other qualities of the soul in a sustained manner. This has reduced her mystics to a sect isolated from the church and beyond general appreciation, whereas in Asia and particularly in India, the mystics rank, among the highest in popular estimation. Elaborate works and treatises, have been written here describing the ways by which one may attain the stage of spiritual perfection. These works are treated in a scientific manner, though for the purpose of practice the help of a Guru is required.

The stages of worship or orision have already been mentioned. All of these we find in a pre-eminent degree in the life of Chaitanya. He realised the presence of God in his soul with that ardour of romantic love by which the inward vision is supplemented and fed by a symbolical significance given to external phenomena. One of the stages of orision given in "El Castillo"

The pain of God. is called 'The pain of God.' It is the pain of separation from God. The mystics often call it 'The dark night of the soul.' Says Mr. Underhill :—

“In some temperaments, it is the emotional aspect—the anguish of the lover who has suddenly lost the Beloved—which predominates.”¹

In St. Teresa the pain grew to such a degree that she cried aloud. It is said that Madame Guyon (1648-1717 A.D.) felt this loss of her intuitive apprehension of God as one of the most terrible characteristic of ‘the night.’ She writes; “After thou hast wounded me so deeply as I have described, thou didst begin, oh my god, to withdraw thyself from me: and the pain of thy absence was the more bitter to me because thy presence was so sweet to me.”²

Suso, Rulman, Marswin, Taunber, Angelo of Foligno, Michtheld of Magdeburg and other mystics knew the sufferings of the loss of this God-vision.

In Chaitanya’s life ‘the night of the soul’ created a pathos which has found expression in a remarkable literature of lyrics known as the ‘Māthur’ lit. ‘going to Mathurā.’ It means the grief caused to the people of Vṛndāvana, chiefly the Gopis, by Kṛṣṇa’s deserting the place for ever and going to Mathurā, where a short time after he became the king. Kṛṣṇakamala Goswāmi, a Bengali poet in his Divyonmāda ‘The divine Frenzy—written about the year 1840, describes the Māthur in this way:

Under Hill, p. 463.

Under Hill, p. 465.

“When God vision is clear in a spiritual soul, it is expressed by the allegory of Kṛṣṇa’s coming to the Vṛndā groves, when the vision fails, it is indicated by that of his going to Mathurā.”¹

The loud lamentations, the nights of sleepless agony, the cryings aloud and the mad utterances of love lend the most pathetic interest to the literature of ‘Mathurā.’ “He (Chaitanya) saw the hill of Chatak (in Orissa) and mistook it for the hill Gobardhana (in Vṛndāvana) and ran after it, crying aloud.”² Sometimes he breathed heavily and leaning on Govinda, said with tears ‘Govinda, where is my God gone, pray tell me how may I have Him again?’³ Sometimes he cried ‘Oh my God, my father, where art thou gone? I cannot live without thee’⁴ saying this in deep agony of heart he wept and then passed into an unconscious state—into one of those trances which made it clear to all that he was united with Him. When he came to his senses again he appealed in a tender tone ‘He was here with me, oh where is He gone again, my grief is unsupportable,’

¹ “কৃষ্ণ ভিক্তিরূপে মূর্ত্তি যখন দেখেন নয়নে ।
তখন ভাবেন কৃষ্ণ এল বৃন্দাবনে ॥
অদর্শনে ভাবেন কৃষ্ণ গেছেন মথুরায় ।”

The Divyonmāda

² Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda.*

³ Kadchā by Govinda Dāsa.

⁴ Chaitanya Bhāgavata.

and then he sang songs from Chandīdāsa and Vidyāpati, from Jayadeva and Billamangala, and he commented them with his tears and sighs and passed again and again to his accustomed trance. “The periods of rapid oscilation between a joyous and a painful consciousness,” says Mrs. Under Hill, “are called by the mystics ‘the game of love in which god plays as it were ‘hide and seek’ with the questioning soul.’”

Chaitanya is adored in India for this love. His life not only inspired religious men but also supplied inspiration to those writers who have given poetical accounts of his emotions under the allegory of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Jnānadāsa, Govinda Dāsa, Valārama Dāsa, Raiçekhara, Kṛṣṇa Kamala and other poets have, in their beautiful lyrics, shown the highest flights of emotional poetry that bears a deep symbolic meaning. The sighs and tears of Rādhā and her poetic ecstasies are but those of the poor Brāhmaṇ scholar who took his Sannyāsa at the age of 24 and wandered from door to door like a mad man, displaying the profoundest love for One not seen by us, but who is our only Beloved.

XXI. Chaitanya's Sannyāsa and love-ecstasies.

The Sannyāsa of Chaitanya which meant the total severance of his home-ties, in order to offer

himself to the service of humanity and of God, created great distress at Nadiyā, giving rise to an impassionate burst of poetic feeling which has created a literature of great beauty and tenderness. The sorrows of Çachī, his mother and of Viṣṇupriyā, his wife, are the sorrows of the whole of Bengal and Orissa to-day. As Chaitanya sought his God Kṛṣṇa and lamented his separation from him, nourishing the

The Māthura Songs. Māthura songs from a living fount of pathos in his own heart,—so to his innumerable worshippers at Nadiyā, separation from him caused the growth of similar songs which are now sung as the prelude to Māthura songs. In fact his life is constantly before those singers who sing of the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and it is indispensable that they should first sing the Gaura Chandrikā or songs of which some emotions of Chaitanya is the theme, before they are permitted to introduce similar songs relating to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love. These Gaura Chandrikās are in fact reminders to the audience that the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa love should bear to them a spiritual meaning, that though sometimes presented in a sensual garb, it actually belongs to a super-sensuous plane. The great life of the Master was itself the most powerful symbol of this love and there could be but one meaning to this mystic literature of love.

I have already stated that Narahari Sarkār and Vāsudeva Ghosh are the two great writers of Gaura Chandrikās—or songs describing Chaitanya's emotions. All other Vaiṣṇava poets of the 16th and 17th centuries have more or less written on this subject. Vāsudeva excelled all of them, and at the present day when a *kīrtana* is sung, it is invariably preluded by a Gaura Chandrikā by Vāsudeva or some other poet. The stories of Chaitanya's *sannyāsa* given by these poets are often very touching and give rise to tender pathos.

I shall attempt to translate some of these :

(1)¹

Viṣṇupriyā like one insane runs from the landing Ghāt to where Çachī was.

Her hair is not braided after her bath, but she cares not for this.

পাগলিনী বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া ভিজা বস্ত্র চূলে ।
 তরা করি বাড়ী আসি শাওড়ীরে বলে ॥
 বলিতে না পারে কিছু কাঁদিয়া ফাঁফর ।
 শচী বলে মাগো এত কি লাগি কাতর ॥
 বিষ্ণুপ্রিয়া বলে আর কি কব জননী ।
 চারিদিকে অমঙ্গল কাঁপিছে পরাণি ॥
 নাহিতে পড়িল জলে নাকের বেশর ।
 ভাস্বিবে কপাল মাখে পড়িবে বজর ॥
 থাকি থাকি প্রাণ কাঁদে নাচে ডানি অঁপি ।
 দক্ষিণে ভুজঙ্গ যেন রহি রহি দেখি ॥
 কাঁদি কহে বাসুঘোষ কি কহিব সতী ।
 আজি নবদ্বীপ ছাড়ি বাবে প্রাণপতি ।

She attempts to ease her mind to Çachī but bursts into tears.

Çachī says “ what grief ails thee, Child ? ”

Whereat she—“ At the time of bathing, my nose-ornament fell into water, and inauspicious signs have I seen around, I cannot speak.

“It seems good luck will leave me to-day and thunder will fall on my head.”

Vāsudeva says : “ What shall I say to thee, o loyal wife ! to-day your dear husband will leave Nadiyā for good.”

(2)¹

Chaitanya leaves Nadiyā to-day.

No waves dance on the Ganges' breast.

The images of Çiva, Ganapāti and other gods in the temples look strangely pale.

The new leaves do not open ; nor flowers bloom on the boughs.

Says Narahari “ The beauty of Nadiyā is gone, she cannot support her grief.”

গোরাচাঁদ ছাড়ি যাবে নৈদা, ইথে তরঙ্গরহিত জাহ্নবীধারা ।
শস্ত্ৰ ভগবতী গণপতি মূৰ্ত্তি ছিল হইল মলিন পারা ॥
তরু লতা ফুল পল্লবিত নহে, না বিকাশে পুষ্প স্নগন্ধহীনা ।
তাহে না বৈসে না পিয়ে পুষ্পরস না গুঞ্জে ভ্রমর ভ্রমর দীনা ॥
পিককুল কলরব বিরহিত, না নাচে ময়ূর ময়ূরী সনে ।
সারি গুৰু নানা পাখী আঁপিরুয়ে, নারে উড়িবারে ব্যাকুল বনে ॥
ধেনুগণ হান্ধারবে না ধাবয়ে, মৃগাদি পশু না ধরয়ে ধৃতি ।
ভণে নরহরি শোভা দূরে, দুঃখ সম্বরিতে নারে নদীয়া খিতি ॥

(3)¹

The people of Nadiyā sadly ask those Sādhus and ascetics who come from Orissa side.

“ Holy pilgrims, did you meet anywhere a Sannyāsī named Chaitanya. Young is he, and his colour bright like melted gold.

“ He repeats the name of Kṛṣṇa night and day and tears flow from both his eyes.

“ He sometimes smiles, and at other times weeps, and sometimes falls down on the bare earth in deep emotion.”

The Sādhus say in reply “Yea have we seen him. He lives near the seacoast.

“ He is a God, who says he is man ?

“ Those who have seen his dance in ecstasy of love, his emotion and tears, hold him dear as life.

নীলাচল পুরে, গতায়ত করে, যত বৈরাগী সন্ন্যাসী ।
 তাহা সবাকারে কাঁদিয়া সুধায় যত নবদ্বীপবাসী ॥
 তোমরা কি এক সন্ন্যাসী দেখিয়াছ ।
 শ্রীকৃষ্ণচৈতন্য তাঁহার নাম, তারে কি ভেটিয়াছ ॥
 বয়সে নবীন, গলিত কাঞ্চন, জিনি তনুখানি গোরা ।
 হরেকৃষ্ণ নাম, বলয়ে সঘনে নয়নে গলয়ে ধরা ॥
 কখন হাসন, কখন রোদন, কখন আছাড় খায় ।
 পুলকের ছটা, শিমুলের কাঁটা, ঐছন সোনার গায় ॥
 তারা বলে আহা, দেখিয়াছি তাঁহা থাকেন সমুদ্রকূলে ।
 তেঁই জগন্নাথ আপন সাক্ষাত, তারে কে মানুষ বলে ॥
 যেরূপ যে গুণ, যে নাট কীর্তন, যে প্রেম-বিকার দেখি ।
 হেন লয় মনে, তাহার চরণে, সদাই অন্তরে রাখি ॥
 গিয়া নীলাচল, ভাগ্যে সে ফলিল, দেখিলু চরণ তার ।
 প্রেমদাস গায়, সেই গোরারায়, প্রাণ ইহা সবাকার ॥

“It was good luck that we met him at Orissa.”

Says Premadāsa “Surely it is he, the dear one of the Nadiyā people”.

(4)¹

‘From Orissa comes Jagadānanda to Nadiyā with Chaitanya’s message to his mother.

‘From afar, does the scholar see the town, deserted as the Vṛndā groves were of old, and hesitates thinking ‘shall I find her living still?’

‘Stopping a moment he starts again and finds the people there merged in grief.

‘The shops are closed and people move about.

But none smiles in that vast city.

‘The women he saw weeping, seated here and there, each by herself,

‘and as he saw these, he entered the house of the adored one.

‘Çachī lay in a corner half-dead with grief,

ক্ষণেক রহিয়া চলিল উঠিয়া, পণ্ডিত জগদানন্দ ।

নদীয়া নগরে, দেখে ঘরে ঘরে, কাহার নাহিক স্পন্দ ॥

না মেলে পসার, না করে আহার, কারো মুখে নাহি হাসি ।

নগরে নাগরী, কাঁদয়ে গুমরি, থাকয়ে বিরলে বসি ॥

দেখিয়া নগর, ঠাকুরের ঘর, প্রবেশ করিল যাই ।

আধ মরা যেন, পড়ি আছে হেন, অচেতন শচী মাই ॥

‘and the wife poorly clad sat near her mother-in-law with down cast eyes from which large drops of tears fell.

‘The trusted servant Īçāna in silent grief served them but often did he wipe away the rising tears with his hand.

‘The attendant maids sat silently, and as the scholar entered they asked him,

‘“Pray sir, tell us, whence hast thou come ?”’

‘Whereat he “ I come from Orissa, Chaitanya has sent me from there to look after you.”’

‘And one of them as she heard it, wept for joy and bore the message to Çachī.

‘And another ran at once to Çrīvāsa’s place with the glad news.

‘And when Mālinī and Çrīvāsa heard it, they felt as restored to life.

‘And the whole city came with them trembling with joy to Çachī’s house.

প্রভুর রমণী, সেই অনাথিনী, প্রভুরে হইয়া হারা ।
 পড়িয়া আছেন, মলিন বসনে, মুদিত নয়নে ধারা ॥
 বিশ্বাসী প্রধান, কিঙ্কর ঈশান, নয়নে শোকাশ্রু করে ।
 তবু রক্ষা করে, শাশুড়ী বধুরে, সর্বদা শুশ্রূষা করে ॥
 দাস দাসী সব, আছয়ে নীরব, দেখিয়া পথিক জন ।
 সুধাইছে তারে, কহগো সবারে, কোথা হৈতে আগমন ॥
 পণ্ডিত কহেন, মোর আগমন নীলাচল পুরী হৈতে ।
 গৌরাঙ্গ সুন্দর, পাঠাইলা মোরে, তোমা সবারে দেখিতে ॥
 শুনিয়া বচন, সজল নয়ন, শচীরে কহিল গিয়া ।
 আর একজন, চলিল তখন, শ্রীবাস মন্দিরে ধাঞা ॥

‘They waited at the gate but Mālinī went and held Çachī and Viṣṇupriyā by the hand and raised them from the stupor of grief.

‘She said “Look there your son has sent a friend to make enquiries.’ ”

‘Hearing this surprised Çachī looks up and sees our scholar standing at the gate.

‘And seeing him she said “Oh tell me, how far has my son come on his way towards home ?”

‘The Paṇḍit wept to see her grief and related little incidents of Chaitanya staying there in Çachī’s house and giving solace to all.

‘Chandraçekhara, the poet, is hard-hearted as a beast, ministering to his lower self ;

‘and cares not for the heavenly nectar that the story of Chaitanya brings’.

শুনিয়া উল্লাস, মালিনী শ্রীবাস, যত নবদ্বীপ বাসী।
 মরা হেন ছিল, অমনি ধাইল, পরাণ পাইল আসি।
 মালিনী আসিয়া, শচী বিকুপ্রিয়া, উঠাইল ত্রা করি।
 বলে চাহি দেখ, পাঠাইল লোক, তত্ত্ব লৈতে গৌরহরি ॥
 শুনি শচী মাই, সচকিত চাই, দেখিলেন পণ্ডিতেরে।
 কহে তার ঠাই, আমার নিমাই, আসিয়াছে কত দূরে ॥
 দেখি প্রেমসীমা, স্নেহের মহিমা, কান্দিয়া পণ্ডিত কয়।
 সেই গৌরমণি, যুগে যুগে জানি, তুয়া প্রেম বশ হয় ॥
 গৌরান্ধ চরিত, হেন নীতরীত, সবাকারে শুনাইয়া।
 পণ্ডিত রহিলা নদীয়া নগরে, সবাকার সুখ দিয়া।
 এ চন্দ্রশেখর, পশুর সোসর, বিষয়ে সতত শ্রীত।
 গৌরান্ধ চরিত, পরম অমৃত, তাহে না লয় চিত ॥

(5)

Oh, why does he hold the staff, and wears
the ochre-colored garb of an ascetic ?

Oh, why has he shaven his head ?

Why is it that he weeps and says 'Rādhā,
'Rādhā.'

The loud lamentings of Çrīvāsa, it seems,
would melt the very stone and Gadādhara cannot
bear life,

Mukunda's two eyes float in tears.

And Haridāsa goes from door to door solacing
those who are in grief.

The youthful wife is like a flame in the
house.

Oh, why has he left her, for what fault ?

Vāsu Ghoṣa says 'It breaks my heart day
and night to recollect it.'

(6)¹

Chaitanya, our beloved has left Nadiyā.

His friends are overwhelmed with grief,

Advaita, Çrīvāsa, Gadādhara, Vāsudeva and

¹ নদীয়া ছাড়িয়া গেল গৌরাঙ্গ সুন্দরে ।
ডবল ভক্ত সব শোকের সাগরে ॥
কাঁদিছে অদ্বৈতাচার্য্য শ্রীবাস গদাধর ।
বাসুদেব দত্ত কাঁদে মুরারি বক্রেশ্বর ॥
বাসুদেব নরহরি কাঁদে উভরায় ।
শ্রীমুন্দন কাঁদি ধুলায় লুটায় ॥
কাঁদিছেন হরিদাস ছায়াখি মুদিয়া ।
কাঁদে নিত্যানন্দ শচীর মুখ নিরখিয়া ॥
সুখময় কীৰ্ত্তন করিত নদীয়ায় ।
সোঙরি সে সব বাসুর হিয়া কাটি যার ॥

Bakreçvara silently weep but Vāsudatta and Narahari cry aloud,

Raḡhunandana sits on the dusty ground bowed in sorrow,

Haridāsa's eyes are closed but a tear silently trickles down his cheek.

And Nityānanda cannot control himself as he sees the poor mother in the agony of grief.

The happy nights of *kīrtana* songs are over, and Vāsudeva's heart breaks to think of it.

(7)¹

The empty couch her right hand touches and the poor wife rises with a start as if thunder has fallen on her head.

She cries "Oh heaven you have at last done your worst".

Weeping she runs with dishevelled hair to the room of Çachī.

Viṣṇupriyā sits near the door and says in accents soft,

সুখা খাটে দিল হাত, বজ্র পড়িল মাখাত, বুঝি বিধি মোরে বিড়ম্বিল।
করণা করিয়া কাঁদে, কেশ বাস নাহি বাঁধে, শচীর মন্দির কাছে গেল ॥
শচীর মন্দিরে আসি, দুয়ারের কাছে বসি, ধীরে ধীরে কণ্ঠে বিষ্ণু-প্রিয়া।
শয়ন মন্দিরে ছিল, নিশি অস্ত্রে কোথা গেল, মোর মুণ্ডে বজ্রর পাড়িয়া ॥
গৌরাক্ষ জাগয়ে মনে, নিজা নাহি ছনয়নে, শুনিয়া উঠিল শচীমাতা।
আলু-খালু কেশে যায়, বসন না রহে গায়, শুনিয়া বধুর মুখের কথা ॥
তুরিতে জালিয়া বাতি, দেখিলেন ইতি-উতি, কোন ঠাই উদ্দেশ না পাইয়া।
বিষ্ণু-প্রিয়া বধু মাথে, কাঁদিয়া কাঁদিয়া পথে, ডাকে শচী নিমাই বলিয়া ॥
তা শুনি নদীরার লোকে, কাঁদে উচ্চৈশ্বরে শোকে, যারে-তারে পুছেন বারতা।
একজন পথে ধায়, দশজন পুছে তার, গৌরাক্ষে দেখেছ যেতে কোথা ॥
সে বলে দেখেছি যেতে, আর কেহ নাহি মাথে, কাঞ্চন নগরের পথে ধায় ॥
বাহু কহে আছা নরি, আমার গৌরহরি, পাছে জানি মন্তক মুড়ায় ॥

“He was in the sleeping room and at the end
of night has gone away

My heart breaks, oh mother.”

The suspicion was ever in Çachī's mind
and she did not sleep all the night.

She rises, her hair unbraided and loose, and
cloths flowing in the air

She lights a candle in eager haste and looks
about her but nowhere is he seen

She goes to the road, the sorrowful wife
following her

Crying aloud “oh my darling son.”

The people of Nadiyā are all wide awake and
share in her grief

And she asks whomsoever she meets

“Oh have you seen him going?”

One man is seen in the street and he says

“Yes have I seen him going towards the
village of Kāñchannagara all alone.”

Vāsudeva says “Alas, I fear lest he gets his
head shaven there.”

(8)¹

I have beheld him to-day

Sometimes he sits resting his cheek on his
left hand.

আজু হাম পেখলু নবদ্বীপচন্দ্র ।

করতলে করই বয়ন অবলম্ব ॥

পুনঃ পুনঃ গতাগতি করু যর পন্থ ।

ক্ষণে ক্ষণে ফুলবনে চলই একান্ত ॥

ছল-ছল নয়ান কমল সুবিলাস ।

নব নব ভাব করত পরকাশ ।

And then enters his room and goes out to the street again—all without meaning.

There is he again where the flowers bloom, shedding tears that fall from his eyes, beautiful as lotus leaves.

His emotions charm one who sees them,
They are strange and new every time.

(9)¹

He sits all by himself and repeats the name
of God

Accustomed was he to scent himself with
sandal drops,

Now behold the dust on his body—all
uncared for.

The precious stones and golden chain he does
not touch.

And he has left his spacious room, to sleep
under a tree.

The ascetic's staff is in his hand
and he bathes in the holy tears of love.

Vāsudeva's heart breaks at all this.

1 বিরলে বসিয়া একেশ্বরে ।

হরিনাম জপে নিরন্তরে

সুগন্ধি চন্দন মাখা গায়, এবে ধূলি বিনু আন নাহি তার ।

মণিময় রতন ভূষণ, স্বপনে না করে পরশন

ছাড়ল লখিমী বিলাস—কিবা-লাগি তরু তলে বাস ।

ছোড়ল মোহন করে বাঁশী, এবে দণ্ড ধরিয়া সন্ন্যাসী ।

বিভূতি করিছ প্রেম ধন, সঙ্গে লই সব পরিজন

প্রেমজলে করই সিনান, কহে বাহু বিদরেপরাণ ।

(10)¹

As he sees the flower garden, he sighs,
Sometimes he rests his cheek on his hand,
and at others casts his vacant look around.

His emotions are ever new.

His glances are often directed to where
flowers bloom,

We cannot devine what he finds in them.

But such are his emotions of joy that those
who see them are saved from sin

His tears flood the world with their love

Only poor Rādhāmohan is denied a drop.

(11)²

What is it he sees,

Why is this unmeaning smile on his lips by
night and day ?

কুসুমিত কানন, হেরি শটীনন্দন, ডারত কাহে ঘনখাস ।

ক্ষণে করতলে, অবলম্বই মুখশশী ক্ষণে ক্ষণে রহত উদাস ॥

দেখ নবভাব তরঙ্গ ।

চঞ্চল বরনে, চাহে চপলমতি, গতিজিত মত্ত গজরাজ,

পুনপুন ঐছন, হেরত ফুলবন. কহ নাহ বুঝিয়ে কাজ ।

ঐছন ভাঁতি করি তারল জগজনে, ভাসাইল প্রেমামৃত দানে

রাধামোহন বিন্দু না পাওল আপন করম বিধানে ॥

আরে আমার গৌর কিশোর ।

নাহি জানে দিবা নিশি, কারণ বিহনে হাসি,

মনের ভরমে পহু ভোর । ধুঃ

ক্ষণে উচ্চৈঃস্বরে গায়, কারে পহু কি সুধায়,

কোথায় আমার প্রাণনাথ ।

Sometimes he sings, a strange melodious song,
and cries

“Oh, lord of my heart, where art thou gone?”

Sometimes his body trembles in sweet emotions and he runs after some one we do not see. And often does he stretch his hands upwards, as if to embrace the Heaven,

At times he bewails the loss of some one we do not know ;

Now does he close his eyes from which silent tears fall.

Then cries aloud saying “Oh my Beloved.”

Says Narahari “These ecstasies of love are like those of Rādhā,

“For saving the sinners of this Kali Yuga—the iron age—has he brought this emotion from heaven.

ক্ৰমে পীত অঙ্গ কম্প, ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে দেই লক্ষ,

কাঁহা পাও যাও কার সাধ ।

ক্ৰমে উর্দ্ধ বাহু করি, নাচি বলে ফিরি ফিরি,

ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে করয়ে বিলাপ ।

ক্ৰমে আঁখি যুগ মুঁদে, হা নাথ বলিয়া কাঁদে,

ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে করয়ে সস্তাপ ।

কহে দাস নরহরি, আরে মোর গৌরহরি,

রাধার পিরীতে হৈল হেন ।

এ ছন করিয়া চিতে, কলিযুগ উদ্ধারিতে,

বঞ্চিত হইলু মুঞি কেন

“Why is it then that I am deprived of a sight of this?”

One of these or a similar song, of which there are hundreds, is sung as the Gaurachandrikā which is prelude to all Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa songs.

The following songs, one describing a dream of Jaṣodā afflicted with separation from Kṛṣṇa and another that of Çachī distressed by the Sannyāsa of her son, will show the affinity of the Kṛṣṇa songs with those of Chaitanya and will

The bearing of Chaitanya songs on those of Kṛṣṇa. accentuate the bearing which the Gaurachandrikā have on the Kṛṣṇa songs. Çachi interviewed in the morning by Mālinī, Çrīvāsa's wife, thus describes her dream :

“Here my dear friend the story of my dream last night. Nimāi, I saw, returned home. He stood in the courtyard and looking towards my room called out ‘Oh mother’ in his accustomed tone. I was then sleeping in my room and hearing his voice came out in unconscious fascination of the voice. He touched the dust of my feet and embracing me, wept and said ‘Though I travel afar, my heart is subdued by your love and I could not stay at Purī without seeing you. For seeing you have I come back to Nadiyā, and as he said this his voice was choked with tears.’ ‘Oh my darling, come to

me' I cried and saying so I embraced him but my dream vanished just at that time and I saw him not again. I wept the rest of the night in bitter pain. From that time my heart knows no rest. Say friend how may I soothe my heart. Vāsudeva Ghose says 'Do not weep, dear mother, Chaitanya is your own. If it were not so how could you get a sight of him (in the dream).' ”¹

Here is the dream of Jaṣodā: She describes it to her husband Nanda.

“Hear me, oh king of Braja, Kṛṣṇa appeared to me this night in a dream. But instantly he vanished where I know not. I saw his moonlike face bedewed with tears, as he held by the edge of my Sādī and cried for some butter, 'mother give me a little butter to eat' he said again and again. The more my darling wanted it from me, the more I tried to avoid him saying 'Go away hence I have no time to spare,

¹ আজিকার স্বপনের কথা, শুনলো মালিনী মই, নিমাই আসিয়াছিল ঘরে ।
 আজিনাতে দাঁড়াইয়া গৃহপানে নেহারিলা মা বলিয়া ডাকিল আমারে ॥
 ঘরেতে শুইয়াছিলাম, অচেতনে বাহির হৈলাম, নিমাইর গলাসাদা পাইয়া ।
 আমার চরণের ধূলি, নিল নিমাই শিরে তুলি, পুনঃ কান্দে গলাটি ধরিয়া ॥
 তোমার প্রেমের বশে, ফিরি আমি দেশে দেশে, রহিতে নারিলাম নীলাচলে ।
 তোমারে দেখিবার তরে, আসিলাম নৈমিষাপুরে, কাঁদিতে কাঁদিতে ইহা বলে ॥
 আইস মোর বাছুরুলি, হিয়ার মাঝারে তুলি, হেন কালে নিদ্রাভঙ্গ হইল ।
 পুন না দেখিয়া তারে, পরাণ কেমন করে, কাঁদিয়া রজনী পোহাইল ॥
 সেই হৈতে প্রাণ কান্দে, হিমা পির নাহি বাধে, কি করিব कहলো উপায়
 বাহুদেব যোনে কর, গৌরাক্স তোমারই হয়, নহিলে কি দেখা পাও তার ॥

don't trouble me.' And thus I turned him away."¹

The legend of Kṛṣṇa has thus been vivified, and the human and spiritual interest of it has developed, being constantly fed by the incidents of living history.

The Gaurachandrikā prepares a spiritual atmosphere for the audience. The emotions of one who was mad after God are emphasised, so that they might serve as a key-note to Rādhā Kṛṣṇa-songs which, viewed in this light, assume a symbolical significance, even in their sensuous descriptions. I have said in a previous lecture that the Vaiṣṇavas have spun out intricate details of tender emotions in their Alankāra Ṣāstrās—the poetics, as Dr. Jacobi would call them. There are altogether 360 such emotions defined and illustrated in the Ujjalnīlamanī to which reference has already been made. Some of the main divisions, such as 'the dawn of love,' 'the rapture,' 'the pain of God' and 'the spiritual marriage,' which St. Teresa and other mystics of Europe have described, are almost the same as is in the Bengali classifications, with this difference that the niceties introduced in Bengali are hundred

শুন ব্রজরাজ, স্বপনেতে আজ দেখা দিয়া গোপাল কোথায় লুকালে ।

যেন সে চঞ্চল তাঁদে, অঞ্চল ধরিয়া কান্দে, জননী দে ননী দে ননী বলে ॥

যত কাঁদে বাছা বলি 'সর' 'সর' আমি অভাগিনী বলি সর সর ।

(বোল্লাম) নাহি অবসর, কেবা দিবে সর, অমনি সর সর বলি ফেলিলাম ঠেলে ।

times greater. 'The dawn of love' and other divisions have each of them many sub-headings, and hundreds of old songs are attached to each by way of illustration of all its minutest shades. When the Kīrtaniyā, or the head-singer of the Kīrtana-songs, takes up a subject for his night's performance, he selects as many songs of a group as he can sing within six or seven hours, and commences with a Gaurachandrikā descriptive of the particular emotion which is the subject of the night.

Of the Gaurachandrikās that I have quoted Nos. 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 belong to the group of the 'dawn of love'—the Purva-rāga.

The clang of *Kartāla* (cymbals) and the dull beat of Khol, which has however a heart-moving effect, is continued for some time. The deafening noise drives away all other thoughts and the audience expectantly looks for some higher music. Gaurachandrikā is next introduced. The

The Gaura-
chandrika and the
Kīrtana songs.

singer does not consider his task finished by singing the songs. Each line—each word of them—he

explains by rhymed commentaries made by some earlier master, which was also learnt by rote by the singer when he committed the songs to his memory. The poetical import of each word is analysed with its bearing on Chaitanya's life, till history, theology and poetry are mingled together and the musical flow of the whole makes the

audience rapt. *Kīrtana* is unlike all other music. It is a continued source of inspiration in Bengal owing to the great life of Chaitanya which nourishes it with idealistic poetry. The atmosphere created is one of renunciation, of equality for all men, of love that lights its unflickering flame for illuminating the dark corners of life, of pursuing one's highest good, of giving away oneself to the cause of the beautiful, of the sublime and of the good. The music around the Gaurachandrikā swells and grows in volume, till like the sea it surrounds the audience, separating themselves from the visible world. It leads them to a superior plane creating pathos which draw from their eyes silent tears of exalted emotions.

It often happens that some one amongst the audience, unable to support his emotion, silently joins the singers and dances for joy. I have seen good scholars do so. In fact the attention of the audience is captivated to such an extent that they are often found to forget their dinner-hour and the most urgent business.

When Gaurachandrikā has been sung, the main-singer begins to sing the songs of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Sensuous matter loses then its indecency, being drawn on parallel lines with Chaitanya's emotions, which interpret them in a new light. The songs are thus given a suggestive importance which takes away from them all the grossness which cursory reading may find in them.

Amongst the names of a large number of *kīrtana* singers of the time of Chaitanya, we may mention some. At the head of Kīrtaniyās, the companions of Chaitanya, stands Narahari

Some of the *kīrtana* singers of Chaitanya's time. Sarkar of Çrikanda, Çrīvasa and Vāsudeva Ghoṣa, Vāsu Datta and Mukunda Datta of Nadipā. Refer-

ences to their wonderful power of singing are to be found in all important biographies of Chaitanya. Bakreçwara pleased all by his wonderful dancing. They were all saintly people, good scholars and devoted to Chaitanya. Their music and dance in *kīrtana* performances belonged to a higher plane, answering the glowing exhortations of the Psalms.

“Let them praise His name in the dance, let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp. Let the floods clap their hands. From the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised.”

Chaitanya's life is important to the students of the history of Bengal, owing to the great bearing on the subsequent social evolutions that took place in the country. To those who are spiritually inclined his life is of a never-ending interest like that of the Buddha or of Çankara, showing some of the greatest features of religious activity and development in India. To the poets the dream-like charm of his life is a source of constant delight. His whole life is now a song,

sung in the streets and in the country side. It is an epic-poem formed of the sweet lyrics of Gaurachandrikās which are on every *kīrtana* singer's lips. The poetry of his romantic life is spread like the flowers that spring on the grassy meadows, all over Gangetic valley. The weaver sings it as he spins his thread, and the ploughman fills the whole air with the pathos of his lament over Chaitanya's desertion of home.

A beautiful story illustrative of the popular devotion for Chaitanya was related sometimes ago by Mr. Kshitimohan Sen, Head Master of Sir Rabindranath Tagore's School at Bolpur. While at Nadiyā, he heard that in a small neighbouring village *kīrtana* songs accompanied by the play of Khol and cymbals were sung there every night from 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. There were two bands of musicians, one singing and playing till 12 A.M. and the other for the rest of the night. For these four hundred years, generations of villagers of that small locality have kept up an uninterrupted course of musical play in the village. The reason of this is that Chaitanya had once paid a visit to that village before taking Sannyāsa. The little village resounded with *kīrtana* songs, proclaiming its gladness at the event. When he was about to leave the place, the villagers begged of him to pay

An example of popular devotion for Chaitanya.

them a visit again and Chaitanya, it is said, promised that he would do so at some future time. They formed from amongst themselves two bands of *kirtana* singers to keep up the continuity of the songs till he returned. That blessed day never came. But they have kept up an unceasing flow of music night after night during these long generations, believing that he will come once more and visit their village. For the words of one whom they knew to be God himself could not but be fulfilled.

XXII.—The four sects of the Vaiṣṇavas.

The Vaiṣṇavas are divided into four sects: *viz* Māddhi, Sanaka, Rudra and Çrī. Māddhācharya (born 1911 A. D.) was the founder of the Māddhi sect. He was the son of a Brahmin

named Maddhageha, an inhabitant of Tājikakṣetra, a village close to the town of Udipī in the country known as Tulava in the Deccan. The town stands on the river Pāpanāçinī which is only two miles

and a half from the sea. As a child Māddhācharya was called Vāsudeva and adopted the name of Ānandatīrtha when he was only 9, on the occasion of his taking Sannyāsa. His Guru was a Brahmin, named Achyutapracha of the Sanaka family. Māddhācharya received his early education at the Ananteçwara temple of the Deccan. His

commentary on Brahmasūtra is a standard authority and guide to his sect. Besides this, he embodied his higher philosophical views in a work called the “Pūrṇaprajñādarçana.” The next revered name among the Māddhi sect

Jaya Tīrtha. is that of Jayatīrtha, standing 5th in the list which will be sub-joined below. He was initiated in the ascetic’s career while yet a child in 1245 A.D. He wrote the following works in Sanskrit:

(1) Tattwaprakaçikā (2) Nyayadīpikā (3) Tattwasankhya Natikā (4) Upadhikhandana (5) Upadhikhandanātikā (6) Māyārāhukhandana (7) Tattwanirṇaya Tīka (8) Çudha.

Jayatīrtha died in his 46th year. His earthly remains were buried at Malkhedgate—now a railway station in Southern India.

From Sanaka there was evolved a sect of which Nimbāditya was the leader in later times. His name was

Bhāskarāchārya and he obtained the title of

Nimbāditya. Nimbāditya, it is said, owing to his having secured the favour of

Āditya, the sun-god, who appeared through a Nim tree one evening, so that the saint might take his meal, his vow having been to eat it in the day-time only. It is said that the literature of this sect in Sanskrit and Hindi was burnt by Aurangzeb. Some of their religious views are remarkably lofty and rational, and bear a

close affinity to Christianity. "Many of them" says Mr. Growse, "are pious, simple minded men leading such a chaste and studious life, that it may charitably be hoped of them that in the eye of God they are Christians by the baptism of desire."

Viṣṇuswāmi's follower Vallavāchārya became in the 16th century the reputed leader of the Rudra Order of Vaiṣṇavas. He was a Drāvidian Brahmin—a contemporary of Chaitanya—born in a village called Kakuraparahu near the Railway station Nidada Bhelu in the Deccan. His father's name was Lakṣmana Bhatta. At Kakuraparahu there is a temple marking the spot where Vallabhāchārya was born. He wrote a commentary on the Brahma Sūtra and called it Vallabha Vāsyā. His commentary on the Ṣrimad-bhāgavata is an authoritative work to the people of his sect. Vallabhāchārya lived for a considerable time at Gokul and was known as Gokula Gossāin—'The preceptor of Gokul'. Some of the anecdotes relating to his interview with Chaitanya at Purī are described in detail in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta. It appears that while revering the Master, Vallabha was proud of his learning and had little regard for his companions. Vallabha flattered Chaitanya, saying that he had for a long time cherished a

desire of seeing him and that he considered himself blessed at having seen him at last. “Nowhere was seen” he said “an apostle of faith like yourself, the very sight of whom inspires devotion to God among men.”

Chaitanya, knowing that Vallabha was proud and that he slighted his companions, said “Sir, I am a very humble soul, quite unworthy of your praise. If there is any faith in me for which these encomiums are bestowed, I owe it to Advaita Āchārya who has mastered all branches of human learning—to Nityānanda who knows six schools of philosophy as few know them in India and whose company has given me a glimpse of that higher life to which a man of such humble parts as myself could hardly otherwise have got access. There are besides Jagadānanda, Bakreṣwara and Gadādhara Pundit from whom I have learnt much and have yet to learn more. If you think of profiting by discussion with any one among us, it is these scholars whom I recommend to you.” Vallabhāchārya had written his commentary on the Bhāgavata, as I have already mentioned, and his object in coming down to Purī was to show it to Chaitanya and have his approval. But Chaitanya had heard that this commentary was directly opposed to the one written by Çridhar Swāmi, the greatest authority in Bhāgavata-interpretations, and

therefore avoided the request of Vallabhāchārya saying Bhāgavata is too high for me. I delight in the name of Kṛiṣṇa. The name is a poem to me and gives me joys untold. I am not a competent judge of a commentary on the Bhāgavata." Vallabhāchārya went to the different Vaisṇava worthies, whom Chaitanya had named, in order to read his commentary to them. But no one in that vast city would listen to it and he was so struck with the great learning of the scholars who admired Chaitanya and lived at Puri simply to be near him, that the proud scholar felt greatly humiliated. When he referred to his commentary again in his conversation with Chaitanya, the latter said that unless he closely followed the interpretations of the Swāmy, the commentary

The pun on the word "Swāmy."

could not be acceptable to any one. Chaitanya used a pun on the word "Swāmy"—the name by which Çridhar Swāmy was generally known. Swāmy means a husband and as Vallabhāchārya's views ran opposite to his, Chaitanya said 'Your commentary is corrupt' having disregarded the Swāmy. Vallabha's pride was humbled and he took lessons in the Bhagavata afresh from Pundit Jagadānanda, one of Chaitanya's constant associates, and had to change many of his religious views.¹ There are at the present day numerous

¹ An elaborate account of Vallabhāchārya's visit to Puri and discussions with Chaitanya and his companions is to be found in the Chaitanya Charitamṛta (Antya Khanda, Chap. VII.)

followers of Vallabhācharya at Vṛndāvana. Pundit Çaratchandra Çastri, refers in his Bengali work 'Rāmānuja Charita' to the worldliness and luxury which characterise some of the people of this sect. It is said that a very rich and influential class of Southern merchants,—are followers of Vallavāchārya. And their complete surrender of themselves to the wishes of their religious preceptors—the Gokul Gosāins as they are called in Brindāvāna,—form one of the characteristic features of the tenets they follow. These Gosāins are generally well-to-do and receive presents from a certain class of their disciples for every little mark of recognition.

Some of their peculiar rules.

For instance the disciple has to pay Rs. 5 for permission to see his Guru, Rs. 20 for touching him, Rs. 35 for the right of washing his feet, Rs. 11 for receiving a kick from him, Rs. 60 for the privilege of occupying the same seat with him, Rs. 13 for receiving strokes from his cane. There are many other marks of recognition requiring payment of enormous fees, some of which seem to convey immoral suggestions but I abstain from quoting them here, as I am not sure how far the account of Pundit Çaratchandra Çāstrī is to be credited.

Rāmānuja is considered the most conspicuous figure among the promoters of the views represented by the Çri sect. He was born in

March 1070 A.D. in the village of Perambhudara
in the district Chenglat in the

The Ori sects.

Madras Presidency. This village

is only 13 miles from the town of Mādras and was celebrated in the pre-historic age as the shrine of Bhutipura. Rāmānuja was the son of a Brahmin named Keçava; his mother's name was Kāntimati Devī. He took Sannyāsa owing to his wife Rakshambhā's repeated violations of his instructions, and we know that Jayatīrtha of the Mādhi sect also left home as a Sannyāsi because his wife was a shrew. Tukārāma, the great Marhatta saint, suffered from the same misfortune and left home to escape from his wife, before he had distinguished himself as a saint, and we shall see in future how Govinda Dāsa, the devoted follower of Chaitanya quarrelled with his wife Çaçimukhī and turned a Sannyasi.¹ Sannyāsa means in popular opinion the cutting of all ties with home, and the strongest tie of home-life is that which binds a man to his wife. It will thus be seen that one of the chief reasons which led to the Sannyāsa of many distinguished saints was their

আমার নারীর নাম শশীমুখী হয় ।
এক দিন ঝগড়া করে মোরে কটু কয় ॥
নিগুণে মূৰ্খ বলি গালি দিল মোরে ।
সেই অপমানে গৃহ ত্যজিলাম ভোরে ॥
চৌদ্দশত সাত শকে বাহিরেতে যাই ।
অভিমনে গরগর ফিরে নাহি চাই ॥

disappointment in nuptial love. But the Buddha and Chaitanya, adored in their family circle, renounced home not for any untoward domestic friction but in order to obey a higher call from their inner selves.

The Vaiṣṇava-views at the earlier epochs of their growth were marked by a hostile attitude towards Ṣiva, and in the 11th century they seem to have been inspired by two missions, one for subverting the Ṣivaite worship and another for disapproving and attacking the theory of illusion propounded by Ṣankara, and these we find to be the marked features of the doctrines of the Rāmānuja sect. This will be seen from what Govinda, a disciple of Rāmānuja, said after his conversion to Vaiṣṇavism from the Ṣivāite faith ;

“ Hail, oh lord, (Visnu) I take refuge in thee, save me from my sins. I had shunned Viṣṇākantha (Viṣṇu—the refuge of the world) and taken refuge in Viṣakantha (Ṣiva—the poison-throated one) ; I had shunned Pundarikākṣa (Viṣṇu—the lotus-eyed one) and taken refuge in Birupākṣa (Ṣiva—the evil-eyed one) ; I had shunned the Pitāmvara (Viṣṇu—dressed in purple robes) and taken refuge in the Digāmvara (Ṣiva—the naked one) ; I left the heavenly garden of Tulasī plant (sacred to the Vaiṣṇavas) and preferred the bitter-juiced Haritakī (sacred to the Ṣaivas.”)

The puns on the words in the above extract show the bitterness and the hostile attitude of the convert towards the creed he had forsaken.

Māddhyāchārya believed in Hari (Kṛṣṇa) and Hara (Çiva) alike. Vallavāchārya was a believer in Kṛṣṇa as the divine child—the Vāla-gopāla. Rāmānuja believed in Kṛṣṇa and Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu Swāmy in Kṛṣṇa and the Gopis.

Chaitanya, though he was initiated by a Guru of the Māddhi sect, owed but little allegiance to their tenets. His was almost a new and different creed based on mystic love with its emotional features.

XXIII.—The Gurus of the Māddhi Sect.

As we are concerned with the Vaiṣṇavas of Bengal, we need not take any further notice of those who belonged to sects other than the Māddhi in which Chaitanya had inscribed his name. Māddhāchārya alias Ānanda-tīrtha as already mentioned, was the founder of this sect. The following list will show the line of successive leaders of the sect, each of whom stands in the relation of a disciple to his predecessor. This list is quoted from Gaurāṅgaṇadde-sadīpika, a sanskrit work written by Kavikarna-pura in 1526 A.D. A summary of this will also be found in the Bengali work, the Bhaktiratnākara.

1. Maddhāchārya (born 1191 A.D.)
2. Padnavācharyya.
3. Narahari.
4. Aksova.
5. Jayatīrtha.
6. Jnāna Sindhu.
7. Mahāsindhu.
8. Vidhyanidhi.
9. Rājendra.
10. Jayadharmā.
11. Puruṣottama.
12. Vyāsatīrtha.
13. Lakṣmitīrtha.
14. Mādhavendra Puri.
15. Iṣwara Puri.
16. Chaitanya (born February, 18, 1486).

Madhavendra Purī was the first man in the Māddhi sect whose name became honoured in the annals of Bengal. He was born about the year 1400 A.D. and was known by the title of Bhaktichandrodaya—the rising moon of faith. We surmise from a historical reference made in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta in its account of Mādhavendrapurī's work at Vṛndavana that he was a Bengali. It is stated that for the purpose of discharging priestly functions in regard to the image of Gopāla which Mādhavendra had established at Vṛndavana he brought two Brahmins from Bengal. Now it is well known that Bengal is

not a recognised seat of good Brahmins; at least this has been the current belief of the people of Northern as well as other parts of India outside Bengal. The fact of Mādhavendra's sending for two Brahmins from Bengal for worship of a deity held in so much popular reverence in the holy city, cannot be explained by any other reason than that of Mādhavendra's having been himself a Bengali.

Two of the disciples of Mādhavendra Purī—
Içwara Purī and Advaita had a great influence on Chaitanya in his boyhood. We all know how Içwara Purī was attracted by the scholarship and other personal qualities of Chaitanya and frequently called on the young scholar in order to impart religious instructions to him. Chaitanya was almost sceptical in his early youth and would not listen to religious advice. Içwara Purī quoted from the holy texts in order to convince Chaitanya of the force of some spiritual points that he preached. But the young scholar detected grammatical mistakes from those texts to the great bewilderment and disappointment of the venerable man. But inspite of the frivolous jokes and light humour with which Chaitanya treated Içwara Purī's teachings, the young scholar secretly cherished a deep reverence for the pious Vaiṣṇava. After his life had become changed, he felt an eager

desire to meet Īçvara Purī and went to Kumārahatta with that object. The old man had been cooking his own meal when Chaitanya arrived at his house. The ever refractory, pedantic and light-brained young scholar had become a thoroughly changed man and as he touched the feet of the revered teacher, he could not express his profound gratitude to him, his voice becoming choked with tears. When leaving Kumārahatta he passed into a trance, tying some dust of the place in the edge of his garments like a precious thing, and murmuring, ‘the dust of this spot—the birth place of Īçvara Purī is dearer to me than any riches, nay dear as life itself.’¹

At Gayā, Chaitanya again met Īçvara Purī and with joined hands stood before the saintly man saying, “Blessed is my journey to Gayā, for I see you before me. * * * * You are, Sir, better than all the shrines of the world, for a sight of you cleanses the soul.”

We gather the following brief account of Īçvara Purī from the Prema Vilāsa.

He was born about the year 1436 A.D. His father was a Rāḍīya Brāhmīṇ named Çyāmsundara Āchārya of Kumārahatta. Īçvara Purī thoroughly studied the Upanisadas in his youth and became

¹ “প্রভু কহে ঈশ্বর পুরীর জন্মস্থান ।
এ মৃত্তিকা আমার জীবন ধন প্রাণ ।”

an ascetic of the Māddhi sect of the Vaiṣṇavas, being initiated into that faith by Mādhavendra Purī himself.

The man generally known to be the Guru of Chaitanya was, however, Keçava Bhāratī. When Chaitanya resolved to take the vow of Sannyāsa, he happened to go to Keçava Bhāratī for initiation; the latter also belonged to the Keçava Bhāratī. Māddhi sect and was a disciple of Mādhavendra Purī. Keçava Bhāratī conducted the ritual of Chaitanya's Sannyāsa and beyond this we are not aware that he exercised any influence on the spiritual advancement of his illustrious disciple. Īçvara Purī was Chaitanya's Dīkṣā-Guru who initiated him into the Vaiṣṇava faith and Keçava Bhāratī was his Sannyās-Guru, who ministered to the religious function of his Sannyāsa. Keçava Bhāratī was known as Kālināth Āchārya before he took Sannyās and was an inhabitant of the village of Kulyā in Navadvīpa. He was born in the earlier half of the 15th century and resided chiefly at Kātwā.

We now revert to Mādhavendra Purī, the fountain head from whom flowed that current of devotion which within a century and a half flooded the whole of Bengal. Many tales are told about him in the Bengali historical works of the Vaiṣṇavas. There is a significant couplet in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata attributing to him some of those beautiful trances at the sight of a cloud which we find

in a more developed form in Chaitanya. The images of Vāsudeva in black stone worshipped in the temples of Bengal had captivated the imagination of the Vaiṣṇavas of the country. The sculptors gave to the curved lips of these images an indescribable sweetness and to the eyes a joyous expression which spoke of a world higher than the world of worry and strife which we live in. When these images were mutilated and thrown out of the temples by the iconoclasts, the worshippers, who like the sculptor described by Schiller, had actually fallen in love with the stone, felt deeply distressed. The dark blue colour of the images like the Cross of the Christian, became a sacred emblem of grief to them. The colour of the image became a reminder of their Beloved. They saw it in the dark cloud tinted with blue, in the sky, in the river, and in the *Tamāla* tree. This became to them a fountain of sacred association reminding them of Kṛṣṇa. The country bards have been full of passionate panegyrics of this colour in their religious songs. The images were broken, but the memory of the colour remained. The universe shows a rich display of this deep blue colour in its mountains, its rivers and seas. Such an all pervading colour might well be made an emblem of the Deity, and in Bengal the tragic history of the mutilation of the dark blue images lent a power-

Mādhavendra's
trances.

Mystic regard for
dark-blue colour.

ful and pathetic association to the colour, bringing on trances and ecstasies in spiritual souls.*

We read in the Chaitanya Charitamṛta that Mādhavendra Purī was one of the few pious

Mādhavendra's
visit to Vṛndāva-
na.

pilgrims who visited the Vṛndā
groves before that shrine was

restored by the followers of Chaitanya. A tender and lovely legend is told in connection with this visit of Mādhavendra Purī. He went there fasting for a day, for he never begged, and unless some one brought him something to eat, he would fast and remain absorbed in his religious reveries. He sat at the foot of the hill Annakūṭa all alone, contemplating Kṛṣṇa, caring nothing of the world, when he was suddenly accosted by a boy, who if the crown of peacock-feathers had adorned his head and a flute had been in his hand, might well have passed for that Kṛṣṇa whom

* It is curious that some of our English poets have also felt a strange liking for the blue and the dark-blue colour, almost in the spirit of a Vaiṣṇava. The following lines of Keats may be quoted as an illustration :—

“ Blue ! ‘t is the life of heaven—the domain
Of Cynthia—the wide palace of the Sun,
The tent of Hesperus and all his train,
The bosomer of clouds, gold, grey and dun,
Blue ! ‘t is the life of waters—the Ocean
And all its vassal streams, pools numberless,
May rage, and foam, and fret, but never can
Sub-side, if not to *dark-blue* nativeness.
Blue ! gentle cousin of the forest green,
Married to green in all the sweetest flowers
Forget-me-not, the Blue-bell, and that queen
Of secrecy, the Violet, what strange powers
Hast thou, as a mere shadow ! ”

Keats's Poems.

Forman, Vol. II, p. 257 (1853).

Mādhavendra worshipped. The ascetic was struck by the lovely figure of the boy who offered him some milk and fruits. He asked the boy why he took all this trouble to come from the village side for the sake of offering him food. The lad said "I live in this village. The villagers would not allow any body to fast here. Some ascetics beg rice and bread, and others beg milk, the villagers give them, *but I give to those who do not beg of any one.*"¹

Mādhava took the milk which was sweet and the fruits which had a heavenly fragrance. The boy vanished from the place, and Mādhavendra sat there under a tree, repeating the name of Kṛṣṇa for nearly the whole of the night, but

The strange lad offering milk to Mādhava.

towards its end his eyes closed in sleep. He dreamt a dream in which the same boy appeared to him and said "Mādhava, long have I waited for you, for you truly love me. Dig me up from yonder forest, I was thrown into a tank there by a pious Brahmin who wanted to save me from the Mahomedan invader. In time the tank was filled up and in the depth of the jungle below the upper layers of earth I am hidden

¹ "বালক কহে গোপ আমি এই গ্রামে বসি ।

আমার গ্রামেতে কেহ না রহে উপবাসী ॥

কেহ অন্ন মাগি খায় কেহ দুক্কাহার ।

অঘাচক জনে আমি দিয়ে আহাৰ ॥"

“You truly love me.” away. I am in great pain owing to cold and heat and forest-fire. Yet know me to be the Lord of this shrine.”

Mādhava woke and a strange emotion filled his mind. With tears in his eyes he related the story to the villagers next morning. They cut the jungle and dug the earth and a large and beautiful image of Kṛṣṇa was recovered from there to the great joy of all who had assembled.

The discovery of the image of Gopāla This image was brought down to the village with great pomp.

The joyous music, both vocal and instrumental, welcomed the deity and people made rich offerings to him. The women began to sing and dance. The festivity was a unique one in the annals of that locality, for the people believed that the Lord of the village had come. They bathed the image in the sacred waters of the shrines and anointed it with scented oil. By applying shell-powder and sulphur they restored it to its bright colour and then purified it by *Pañcha Gavya* or the five holy things of the cow. Mādhavendra brought two Brāhmaṇas from Bengal for the worship of the deity.

Another legend says that Mādhava dreamt one night that Gopāla, the name by which this image of Kṛṣṇa was called, again appeared to him and asked him to bring from Orissa the sweet-scented sandal wood to be found there for his adornment. The ascetic came to a place

named Remunā in Orissa. The image of Gopī-nātha was the principal deity of the temple there. Gopīnātha and Gopāla, it should be understood, were the different names of the God Kṛṣṇa.

Tired with the journey and fasting, Mādhava stayed in the temple for a little while and saw Gopīnātha. He asked the priests there what were the meals offered to the God. They mentioned among other things the *kṣīra* or the condensed milk which was a special preparation there, and praised it much. The ascetic thought "If I could but once get it without seeking, I could learn how to prepare it and

offer to my god Gopāla at
The thief of the milk. Vṛndāvana." As he thought so,

he was ashamed of himself for indulging in a *desire* and prayed to God for pardon. He saw the Evening Service in the Temple and saying nothing to anyone came out of it and went to rest under a tree outside the village. Mādhavendra, as it has been said, asked nothing of any one, if anything came unsolicited he ate, and if not, he fasted. He regretted again that a desire for condensed milk, even though it was for offering it to his God, had occurred in his mind and sat quietly near the market-place, singing the glories of God and striving for a union with Him.

In the noon-time the offering of rich meal was made as usual to Gopīnātha in the temple.

The doors were shut and dedicating the meal to God, the priest went out of the temple for some time as usual. He came back and distributed the meal, first offered to the god, among the worshippers. This was what usually happened, but when the priest took his afternoon nap, Gopīnātha appeared to him in a dream and said, "I have kept pieces of the *ksīra* tied in my outer robes for Mādhava who is one of my truest worshippers. Go and seek him from the town and offer him the food." The priest ran to the temple and was surprised to find pieces of condensed milk tied in the edge of the robe of Gopīnātha. In a voice that trembled with emotion, the priest called Mādhava by his name and ran through the streets of Remunā, till he met the venerable ascetic, under a tree in the outskirts of the town. The story was related to him and Mādhava with tears in his eyes touched the sacred food and was transported with joy. Gopīnātha stole the food for his worshipper and hence he got the name of "*Ksīra-Chorā*." or "the thief of condensed milk." By the time the report had spread of this wonderful event and people began to gather to see the divine ascetic. But he, knowing that fame was to be avoided by an ascetic above all things as it brings pride and desire for the world's esteem, fled away in the latter part of the night to avoid men and women seeking him. Says Chaitanya Charitāmṛta here "the

people followed and traced him even to Purī. For God gives fame to a good man who does not seek it. Mādhavendra lived at Purī in quiet concealment, in order to avoid fame. But fame brought him out into the light."¹

Such are some of the legends that are associated with the name of Mādhavendra Purī. They serve to establish beyond all doubt the piety and spiritual fervour of the leader of the Māddhi sect of the age. For supernatural tales are told by the populace of India about those men only whose piety of life and devotion are unquestionable.

XXV. The pedigree of Chaitanya and his wife.

We have mentioned that Chaitanya in his early life was indebted to Īçvara Purī and Advaita for his first impulses towards the spiritual life. I have briefly described his associations with Īçvara Purī. I have also mentioned on p. 32 that Çachī, Chaitanya's mother, made Advaita accountable for the spiritual tendencies of both her sons, leading them eventually to sever their home-ties permanently. Īçvara Purī, Advaita and Keçava Bhāratī are the three spiritual masters to whom Chaitanya owed his connection with the Māddhi sect. If a name is to be added, we should mention that of Çrīvāsa. Chaitanya's early education was completed at the *tol* of Gangādāsa Paṇḍit of Vidyānagara in Nadiyā.

¹ Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda, Chap. IV.

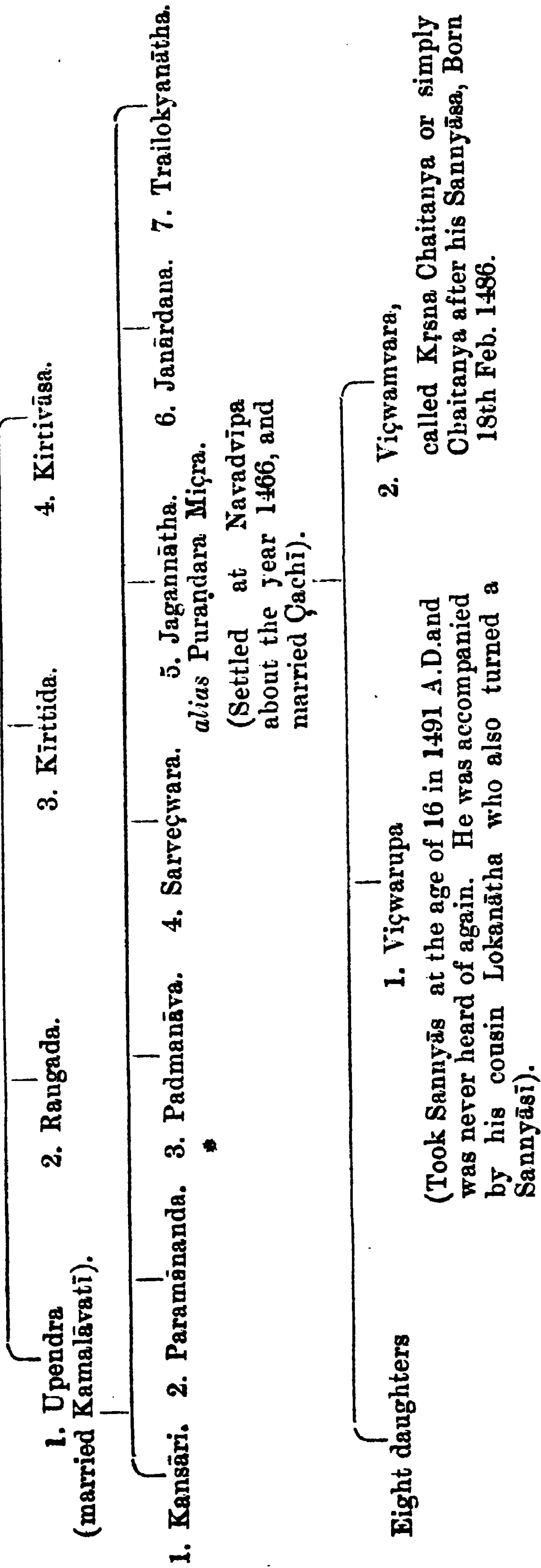
PEDIGREE OF CHAITANYA (FATHER'S SIDE).

Viçuddha Miçra;

(A Vaidik Brāhmāṇa of the Vātsāyana Gotra and an inhabitant of Jājpur, Orissa)

Madhukara Miçra.

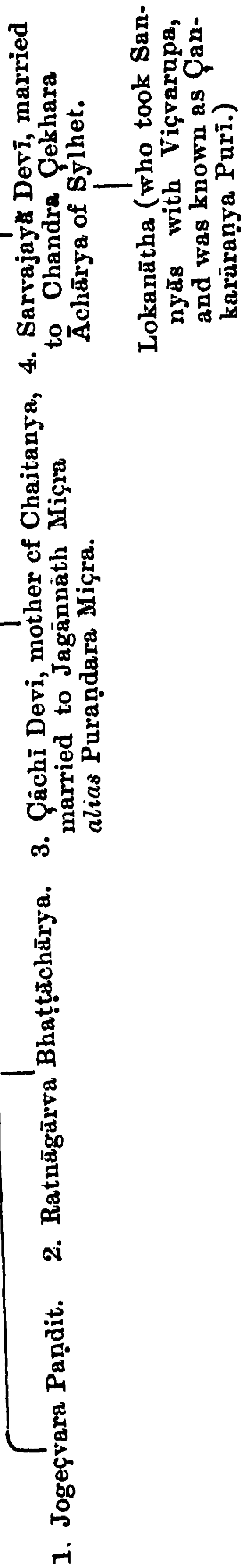
Left Jājpur in the year 1451 for fear of Rājā Brahmaṛvara and settled in Dhaka Dakṣin, a village in Sylhet, (according to some in Baḍagaṅgāgrām in that District).



CHAITANYA'S PEDIGREE (MOTHER'S SIDE).

Nilāmvara Chakravartī,

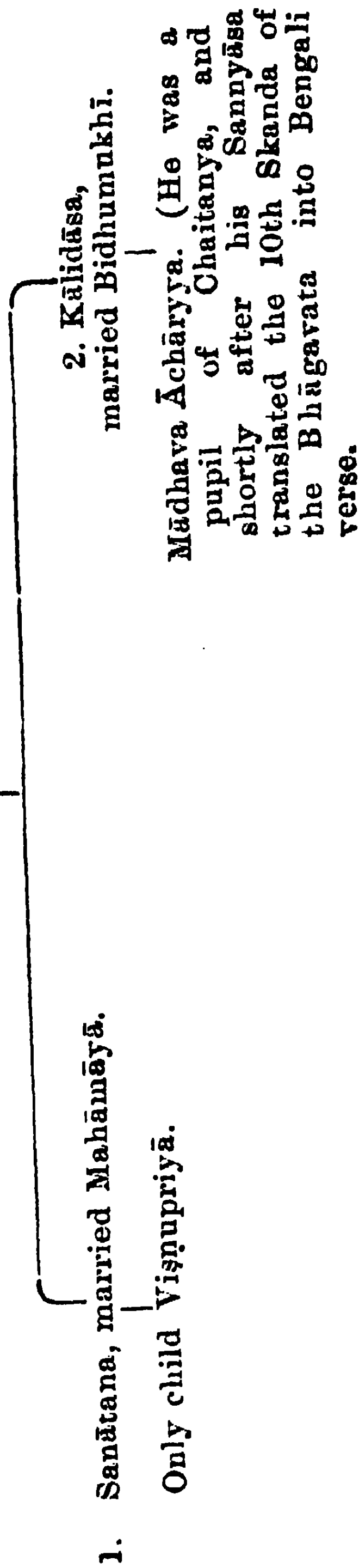
A Vaidik Brāhmaṇ who came from Sylhet and settled at Belpukuria in Nadiyā.)



PEDIGREE OF VIṢṄUPRIYĀ DEVĪ (WIFE OF CHAITANYA).

Durgā Dāsa Miçra

(A Vaidik Brāhmaṇ of Nadiyā, married Bijayā Devi.)



In the month of Māgha (January) 1406 Çaka (1485 A.D.) Çachī Devī conceived, and was delivered of the child Chaitanya after 13 months, in Phālguna (18th February) 1407 Çaka (1486 A.D.)

XXVI.—The tour of Chaitanya in Eastern Bengal.

The standard works on Chaitanya's life have very briefly alluded to his tour in Eastern Bengal; the Chaitanya Bhāgavata mentions that Chaitanya visited some villages on the banks of the Padmā. He was about 22 years old at the time, and had written a commentary on a Sanskrit grammar which was read in some of the *tols* of Eastern Bengal. He had the title of Vidyāsāgara and was already a scholar of some renown in one of the most important centres of Sanskrit learning in India *viz*: Nadiyā. But no body had anticipated his future greatness as one of the foremost of India's religious teachers, so the places he visited in his early youth were not carefully noted down by any of his contemporaries. He himself avoided fame of all kind and would not encourage any one who wished to write his biography, indulging in the interval between his trances, in talks on spiritual matters only, so that there was no opportunity for gaining information as to the incidents of his early life outside Nadiyā. We beg to add by way of a little

digression that it was his habit to conceal his great emotions so far it was possible from outsiders. We find in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta the line “if any outsider was there, he tried to collect himself so far as possible,” This also was the reason “why in the midst of the public he only sang the praises of the Lord, but within the small circle of his intimate friends he indulged in the joys of sweet emotion, while discussing the minute questions of spiritual ecstasy.”¹

The historical account of his tour in Eastern Bengal has, owing to causes mentioned above, remained incomplete. The Prema Vilāsa in its last two and a half cantos which have been lately discovered mentions some of the places he visited, but we do not know how far the account is authentic. The Prema Vilāsa is certainly one of the most trusted historical works of the Vaiṣṇavas in the 16th and the earlier part of the 17th century. But it was up till lately

The last 2½ cantos of the Premvilāsa. known to contain 20 cantos only. The last two and a half cantos, recently added, contain matters which should be approached with caution. Whether these supplementary chapters formed a part of the original work is doubtful. But this does not altogether prove the untrustworthiness of the accounts given in them. Some of these are certainly

¹ অন্তরঙ্গ সঙ্গে করে রস-আস্বাদন ।
বহিরঙ্গ সঙ্গে করে নাম-সংকীৰ্তন ॥

well-established historical facts and whoever may have been their author, there is no doubt that they were collected with considerable trouble and possess undoubted reliability. But there are others which are open to doubt and objection. Chaitanya's tour in Eastern Bengal is a subject which we may place under the latter head. The reason of our doubt is that as Chaitanya's visit to a place would undoubtedly give it great sanctity, the people of a particular locality may be interested in enhancing its importance by producing forged records. But at the same time there is no positive proof to show that the two and a half Chapters, referred to, were not a portion of the original work. Whether they be so or no, we find it our duty to mention our doubts on this point. I will now indicate the places which Chaitanya is said to have visited in course of his tour in Eastern Bengal.

It is recorded that Chaitanya visited Sylhet. We will credit this account; for his grandfather Upendra Miçra and his uncles still lived at Dhākā Dakṣin in that district. There is no reason to doubt that one of the objects of his touring in Eastern Bengal was presumably to visit the members of his own family in their original seat in Sylhet. He is said to have first gone to Faridpur. As a confirmation of this statement, we may mention that there is a local tradition at

Faridpur and
Suvārnagrāma.

Kotalipāra in that district, which says that Chaitanya stayed for sometime at that village during his tour. From Faridpur he came to Bikrampur in the district of Dacca. He visited the villages of Nurpur and Suvarṇagrām. From Bikrampur he crossed the Brahmaputra and

Egāra Sīndura. came to a place named Egāra-sindūra. Close by was the village of Betal which he visited next. From Betal he

Betal. moved to Bhitādiā which was then a seat of great Sanskrit learning. One of its most noted men of the earlier generation was Padmagarbha Āchārya.

Bhitādiā. He was a great Paṇḍit and had married a daughter of Jayarāma Chakravartī of Nadiyā, He had learned the Upanishads at Benares and was instructed in Logic and in higher Metaphysics at Mithilā. He was besides the author of a commentary on Bhramaradīpikā, and annotated Pingala, the work on poetics in Prākṛit, and made commentaries on the Brāhmaṇas. His Guru was Lakṣmīrtha of the Māddhi sect whose disciple was Mādhavendra Purī himself. Padmagarbha's son Lakṣmīnātha Lāhirī lived at Bhitādiā when Chaitanya visited the place. As Lāhirī's mother hailed from Nadiyā, Chaitanya was naturally attracted to the place and stayed for some days with Lakṣmīnātha in that village. We all know that Puruṣottama, a step-brother of Lakṣmīnātha

took Sannyāsa and met Chaitanya at Benares and latterly became distinguished as Svarupa Dāmodara.

From the village Bhitādiā Chaitanya came to Dhākā Dakṣiṇ (or Baḍagaṅgā according to some) where his grandfather still lived. He met the elders of his family and he is said to have relished a jack fruit which his grandmother Kamalāvati offered him. It is also said that he made a transcription of the Sanskrit work Chaṇḍī for his grandfather's use during his short stay there.

XXVII. *Chaitanya's tokens.*

The Kanthā (a cotton robe of coarse quality) which Chaitanya wore is still preserved in the temple of Purī. The pious pilgrims often bribed the Pāndās for so much as a few threads or a little cotton from the sacred robe, till after these four hundred years, we find it now reduced to a mere shred a few inches in size. Chaitanya got his head shaven at the time of his Sannyāsa at Kātwā and there is a small brick memorial where his hair was buried. It is called the Keṣa Samādhi or the burial place of the sacred hair. The place where he sat for shaving his head is also marked with a brick-pavement at Kātwā.

Dakha Dakṣiṇ.

The Kanthā.

The Keṣa Samādhi.

Mādhava Miçra, an inhabitant of Beleti in the district of Dacca, was the father of the celebrated Gadādhara whom we have already noticed. Gadādhara received his education at Nadiyā and was a fellow-scholar and a great friend of Chaitanya. Once upon a time Chaitanya called on his friend and found him

The Gītā. copying the Gītā. Chaitanya took the pen from him and copied a couplet. The MS. of the Gītā in Gadādhara's hand-writing bearing the transcript of a couplet by Chaitanya passed from the former's hands to those of Nayanānanda Miçra, nephew of Gadādhara and a son of Bāṇinātha, Gadādhara's elder brother. Nayanānanda in later times settled in the village of Bharatpur in the district of Murshidābād, and the historic copy of the Gītā is still worshipped in the temple of Gopīnātha there. In one of the late exhibitions held in Calcutta in connection with the National Congress, the Sāhitya Pariṣat made an exhibit of a facsimile of the memorable page which contains the couplet copied by Chaitanya. In the latest revised edition of the Vaṅga Sāhitya Viṣayaka Prastāva by Rāmgati Nyāyaratna, this facsimile has been reproduced.

It has already been stated on p. 116 that

The oar. Chaitanya gave an oar with which he used to row his small pleasure-

boat on the Ganges and a Gītā, copied by himself, to Gauridāsa Sarkel. This he did about the year 1510, when he crossed the Ganges, plying the boat himself, from near a village named Harinadī and came to Ambikā (Kalna) in order to meet Gauridāsa. An image of Chaitanya made immediately after this event in Nim wood by the order of Gauridāsa, and believed to be a superior specimen of the sculptor's art of that time, and an exact likeness of its model, is still worshipped in the temple founded by Gauridāsa at Ambikā. There the Gītā and the oar were preserved and probably exist to this day. They were positively there in 1700 A.D. when the Bhaktiratnākara was written. The author writes :

“The oar and the copy of the Gītā given by the Lord are still seen by the fortunate pilgrims near the Lord's image (at Ambikā)”.

Chaitanya after his Sannyāsa paid a visit to Barānagar, four miles to the north of Calcutta, and met Raghunātha who afterwards translated the Bhāgavata into Bengali and became known by his title of ‘Bhāgavatāchārya’. The *khadam* or the sandals used by Chaitanya are still preserved in Raghunātha's *Pāt* (place of worship) at Barānagar. The sandals have decayed in the course of these four hundred years, and very little now remains of them.

The Bhāgavata which Paṇḍit Gadādhara used to read before Chaitanya at Purī has disappeared but it was seen by Ṣrīnivāsa Āchārya towards the end of the 16th century; all the letters of the book, were found disfigured by the tears of Chaitanya. Gadādhara himself showed it to Ṣrīnivāsa and other pilgrims. It naturally possessed a special sanctity. For 18 years it had been read before the Master and was a source of his inspired ecstasies. This sacred book is mentioned in many of the works of the Vaiṣṇavas in the 16th and the 17th centuries, such as the Karnānanda, Bhaktiratnākara and the Premavilāsa.

Many of the places, which were the favourite

resorts of Chaitanya at Nadiyā, such as the courtyard of Ṣrīvāsa, are now in the bed of the Ganges.

The present Nadiyū is not what it was in Chaitanya's time.

But inspite of the freaks of Nature's destructive agencies, the Pāṇḍās (priests) do not allow any Indian shrine to be lost or obliterated from her annals, as it is a source of immense pecuniary interest to them. They earn money from the pilgrims by pointing out the spots associated with a god or a great religious teacher. So that when the shrine goes down to the bed of a river or is destroyed by earthquake, they carry the sacred relics to a near place and give it the name of the shrine. The past traditions are thus kept up. The

topography of Nadiyā as detailed by Narahari in his *Bhaktiratnākara* in the 17th century is not identical with that of the present Nadiyā. The identifications may be assailed from a purely geographical point of view, but the courtyard of Ṣrīvāsa and other sacred spots are still pointed out to thousands of pilgrims who accept the account of the Pāṇḍās with pious belief and never trouble themselves as regards the validity of their accounts. The place where Chaitanya was born at Navadvīpa, like Ṣrīvāsa's courtyard, was certainly submerged. It is now identified with a part of the town, called Māyāpur. This place had been called Miyāpur (the seat of Mohamedans); but the Bhaktas gave it a Hindu name in order to keep up its sanctity. If the place pointed out be really the home of Chaitanya, it is here that his five big lovely straw-roofed huts stood facing the Ganges; as described by Govindadāsa in his *Kaḍchā*.

The images of Chaitanya in Nim wood made

The images of during his life time or shortly
Chaitanya. after, are to be seen in the
following places :

1. The celebrated image at Nadiyā (now enshrined in a beautiful temple), made by the order of Viṣṇupriyā Devī, wife of Chaitanya, and worshipped by her after his Sannyāsa.

2. The one made by Gadādhara, during the lifetime of the Master, this is now worshipped in a temple at Kāṭwā near the *Keça-samādhi*, standing at the junction of the Ganges and the Dāmodara.

3. The image of Chaitanya made by Gauridāsa Paṇḍit of Ambikā (Kālnā). This has been already referred to. It was made about the year 1510 A.D.

4. Pratāpa Rudra, the King of Orissa, had an image of Chaitanya made immediately after he passed away and made extensive grants of lands to the temple dedicated to the image at Pratāpapura.

5. About the year 1600 Narottama, son of Rājā Kriṣṇānanda Datta of Kṣeturī in the district of Rajshahi, had an image of Chaitanya made which is probably worshipped there even now. The image was called Gaura Rāya and was stolen away, immediately after it was duly installed in the Kṣeturī temple, but was subsequently recovered in a strange manner. The account is to be found in the *Prema-vilāsa*, and we shall have occasion to refer to it in my lectures as Reader to the University.

6. Chaitanya's images made in the latter part of the 16th and in the beginning of the 17th century are to be found all over Orissa and Bengal. One of these made in *Nim* wood is

worshipped in the house of Manichānd Gosvāmī at the Simla Street, Calcutta. The original seat of this image was at Khaddā, a few miles to the north of Calcutta.

In the old temples of Govindajī and Madana-mohana, there are images of Chaitanya which were probably established there towards the end of the 16th century. We make no mention of the more recent images as they are innumerable. There is no important village in Orissa where Chaitanya's image is not to be found. On the wooden boards meant as covers of old Vaiṣṇava works, presented to us in the form of manuscripts written in the 16th and early 17th centuries, are frequently to be found pictures of Chaitanya and his companions, painted in lacquer. One of these has been reproduced by me in my Typical Selections from old Bengali Literature published by the University, and is to be found facing p. 1146.

Rājā Pratāpa Rudra is said to have a picture of Chaitanya drawn during the lifetime of the Master. This picture was made sometime between 1512-1533 and is said to have been carried to Nadiyā by Ṣrīvāsa. From his descendants, it passed to the family of Rājā Nandakumāra of East India Company-fame and is preserved by them at their country seat of Kuñjaghāṭa in Murshidābād. A facsimile of this celebrated picture forms the frontispiece of my History.

of the Bengali Language and Literature, but I regret to say that the reproduction has not been satisfactory. The original picture now preserved at Kuñjaghāṭa is a remarkable specimen of old Indian painting and shows Chaitanya in an emotional attitude which powerfully appeals to the mind. The reproduction does not give any good idea of the original.

Another picture of Chaitanya made by the order of king Pratāpa Rudra during Chaitanya's life-time, I was told by Achyutacharan Tattvanidhi (of Mainā, Kānāibājār, Sylhet,) existed in a temple of Vṛndāvana. Paṇḍit Rādhikālāla Gosvāmī was approached by Achyuta Bābu for a facsimile of it, but this could not be secured. The picture is probably lost.

For eighteen years Chaitanya stood by the side of the pillar known as the Gaḍuḍa Stambha. Gaḍuḍa Stambha resting his elbow on it for hours together every day, and beheld the image of Jagannātha from there. He dared not go further near the Temple lest the sight of the image maddened him with joy, as it had done him once, making him ran in an unconscious state to the very pedestal of the image and embrace it. He could exercise no control over his feelings on such occasions. Even as he stood near the Gaḍuḍa Stambha he was all tears with joy feeling an all-absorbing

passion for the vision which was ever-glorious to him. On the Gaḍuda Stambha there is a mark showing the particular spot where Chaitanya's elbow had rested for hours together every day during his eighteen years of stay at Purī. In the spot now known as Çrīvāsa's courtyard at Nadiyā, there is a considerable number of clay images of Chaitanya illustrating the incidents of his life. These were made nearly 200 years ago and are surely specimens of art of Kṛṣṇanagar potters.

XXVIII.—Chaitanya's tour in Southern India.

The brief notices of Chaitanya's tour in Southern India that we find in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and Chaitanya Bhāgavata are neither complete nor reliable. The Chaitanya Bhāgavata was written in the year 1573 and Chaitanya Charitāmṛta in 1581 A.D. But Chaitanya toured in the Deccan during 1509-1511. A considerable time had thus elapsed before these accounts were written. We have already mentioned that Chaitanya himself would by no means encourage any one to take notes on any incidents of his life. We shall afterwards prove that the story of Kālā-Kṛṣṇadasā's accompanying him to the Deccan is totally untrustworthy. Govinda Dāsa alone had accompanied him and he took down minute notes of what he saw. But he assures us that

he did so very privately, for surely the Master would have resented it if it had been known to him. Govinda therefore could not give publicity to these notes. He found no opportunity of doing so. For throughout the rest of his life he was with Chaitanya night and day, and he could not possibly take a step which would offend him.

In the subsequent times Vṛndāvana became the chief seat of Vaiṣṇava learning. The six Gosvāmīs—Raghunātha Dāsa, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Rūpa, Sanātana, Jīva and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa were the fountain-heads from whom flowed all Vaiṣṇava theology; the canons laid down in them governed Bengal and Orissa. No book that was not approved by these masters was accepted as a standard work on Vaiṣṇavism. Hence Vṛndāvana Dāsa's Chaitanya Bhāgavata, written at Denur in the District of Burdwan, was first submitted to the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana who approved of it and then it was recognised as an authoritative work. Chaitanya Charitāmṛta was written in Vṛndāvana itself under the direct teachings of the Gosvāmīs.

Books written outside Vṛndāvana or without the sanction of the six Gosvāmīs could not possess the same precedence. And Govinda Dāsa who wrote the notes had another very

Why the Kadchā is not recognised as a standard book by the orthodox Vaiṣṇavas.

1. “করচা করিয়া রাখি অতি সংগোপনে” Govinda's Kadchā.

strong reason to hide the work from popular notice. His *Kaḍchā* contains a brief account of himself; he mentions in it the names of his parents and of his wife, who first appears as a shrew and then an ideal of chaste womanhood. He mentions some incidents of his own domestic life which are interesting. We find in them that when he passed by *Kāñchana-nagara*, as a companion of Chaitanya in the year 1509, his wife and his relations made a vigorous attempt to bring him back to worldly life. The appeal was so strong that even Chaitanya had to change his mind, and in response to the pathetic requests of Govinda's wife, desisted from giving her spiritual advice (such as on the value of resignation to the Lord's will and depending on Him alone &c) with which he had commenced, and expressed his resolve to leave Govinda at his home at *Kāñchannagara*. Govinda had to struggle hard to extricate himself from his family-bonds in order to accompany the Master. Under these circumstances it was but natural that he would try to remain *incognito* as far as possible on his return to *Purī*. To Chaitanya he was devoted as a faithful dog is to his master. We find that when he was asked by Chaitanya to go to *Çāntipura* from *Purī* with a letter to Advaita, he burst into tears. It was only a few days' absence from the service of his Master that he thought it hard to bear. He writes:—

“Hearing this order tears came to my eyes, for I could not bear a separation from the Lord.”

On Chaitanya's return from the Deccan, we find Govinda to be always with him. But none of the Master's numerous biographers mentions who this Govinda was. In the Vaiṣṇava works of the time, we find full accounts of all the other companions and associates of Chaitanya, but while held in high esteem and called “Çrī Govinda” by the Vaiṣṇavas, no one gives any account of the family to which he belonged nor of his native place. He is called as a Çūdra of humble origin, and in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta there is a characteristic line expressing wonder that a Çūdra should be admitted to the personal service of Chaitanya in preference to hundreds of those who belonged to the Brāhmin and other high castes, anxious and willing to serve the Master. We thus see how a fable of Govinda's claim to serve the Master was fabricated. It was to give some special merit to Govinda in the eyes of the orthodox people who had rigid notions about caste, that a story was invented to the effect that he was a servant of the great Master Īçvara Purī, (the Guru of Chaitanya), and as such though he was of humble origin, Chaitanya had no hesitation in taking him to his service. This is not a good explanation and shows only the weakness of the theory. Chaitanya had absolutely

no caste-prejudices, and we cannot therefore credit the story that he took Govinda to his service simply because the latter had to a certain extent redeemed himself from the blame

The writer of the Karchā and the famous servant of Chaitanya 'ṢriGovinda' are identical.

of humble birth through serving Içvara Purī for a time. The mysterious silence of all biographers as to where he was born

and the family to which he belonged, only proves the fact that Govinda had obvious reason for avoiding the difficulties of facing strong appeals from his wife and relations, and preferred to live *incognito* at Purī. We find that Govinda was at Nadiyā only for a few days—it may not be for more than a month. The Kadchā states that he came to Chaitanya's house in the year 1509, and within a short time of this Chaitanya left home as a Sannyāsī. He travelled with Chaitanya for two years and seven months in the Deccan and then when he returned, it was not likely that the people of Nadiyā would, during their occasional visits to Purī, recognise him amongst thousands of Chaitanya's admirers, if Govinda really wanted to avoid recognition, as we believe, he did. The tale of having served Içvara Purī may have been invented by him in order to avoid recognition. At any rate it seems possible that he had good reasons to countenance the story whoever might have fabricated it.

The services offered to Chaitanya by Govinda Karmakāra and by Govinda of the Purī-temple

are of such similar nature that we may take it as another reason for believing that the persons were not really two, but identical.

Jayānanda, who was a contemporary of Chaitanya, mentions in his Chaitanya Maṅgala that a man named Govinda Karmakār accompanied Chaitanya in the Deccan. In a *pada* by Valarāma Dāsa, a poet of the 16th century, we find it mentioned that Govinda accompanied the master in his tour in Southern India.¹

In Chaitanya Bhāgavata too, we find it mentioned that one Govinda was a companion of Chaitanya at Nadiyā, though in a work written 63 years after the events described, we may not expect the chronology of events to be always faithfully observed.

I have tried to explain why Govinda Dāsa's Kaḍchā, of which two MSS.—one over 200 years old, and another a little less,—were discovered by the venerable Jaygopāla Gosvāmī of Çāntipur about 25 years ago, did not gain the same amount of publicity as the other standard biographies of Chaitanya did. The Kaḍchā of Govinda Dāsa, contain references to certain actions on the part of Chaitanya which the later Vaiṣṇavas would not like to preach. Chaitanya was not an orthodox Vaiṣṇava. The line "we pay our homage to Kṛṣṇa alone, but do not blame

¹ See Gour Pada Taranginī edited by Jagat Baudhu Bhadra.

other deities, nor bow to them”¹ became the canon of the later Vaiṣṇavas. The worship of Kāli was to them a hideous practice. The incident related in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta about the articles of Kāli worship being thrown at the gateway of Ṣrīvāsa, was believed to be such a grave offence that the Brāhmaṇa Gopāla who did it is said to have been afflicted with leprosy for it. We find, however, in the Kaḍcha that Chaitanya was affected by ecstasies and trances before every temple. The devotional fervour that he showed in the temple of Aṣṭabhujā (Kāli) was remarkable. To Chaitanya’s eyes, which saw the clear vision of God everywhere, nothing was there in the world which could not inspire him with devotion. A tree, a leaf, a river and the sea all raised him to mystic trances, serving as a reminder and a token of his Beloved, and he was deeply affected by any temple which men had erected for the purpose of worship. The sectarian Vaiṣṇava of later times would not care to emphasise these little incidents in Chaitanya’s life and hence they did not give publicity to the Kaḍchā of Govinda Dāsa, which inspite of the indifference by which it was treated by the Vaiṣṇavas and by the author himself, is a noble work on Chaitanya. True, it does not record any learned discussions of Chaitanya with his opponents. Govinda was not

himself sufficiently learned to be able to do so; but the book shows us the Master as he appeared to his own contemporaries. It gives besides a first hand account of nearly three years of Chaitanya's life, full of freshness and of the vivid colour of personal observation.

It is a great book in spite of the indifference with which it was treated.

Abundant references to Govinda Dāsa's latter life, if he is indeed identical with *Çri Govinda of Purī*, will be found in the *Madhya* and *Antya Khandas* of the *Chaitanya Charitāmṛta*, and we need scarcely mention them here as they are too well-known to the readers of that work.

The latter part of Govinda Dāsa's life.

I give below a brief summary of the account given by Govinda Dāsa. Nowhere else in the *Vaiṣṇava* works do we find such a true and vivid account of Chaitanya as in the pages of his faithful attendant. The places visited by Chaitanya in southern India are given in detail in this account.

Govinda Dāsa's father's name was *Çyāmādāsa*; his mother was *Mādhavī*; his wife was *Çaçīmukhī*. They belonged to the blacksmith's caste and were residents of *Kāñchana-nagara* in the district of *Burdwan*. Govinda Dāsa quarrelled with his wife and left home, one winter morning,

His family history.

in Çaka 1430 (1509 A.D.).¹ He came first to Kāṭwā and there he heard of Chaitanya. He felt an ardent desire to see the Master who was only 23 years old at the time. For the whole day Govinda Dāsa travelled across the corn-fields and crossing the Ganges, the next morning, arrived at the landing Ghāṭ called the Miçra's Ghāṭ at Nadiyā. On the right ran the small river Bāgdevī. The courtyard of Çrīvāsa was very close to the Miçra's Ghāṭ and near it was a large tank called the Ballālasāgara. On one side of it lay the ruins of the palace of that king. Govinda took his seat at the Ghāṭ, where he saw Chaitanya for the first time. The latter with his companions, among whom was the venerable Advaita, with beard and hair all hoary with age, had come to bathe there. Govinda was charmed at seeing the Master. He became a willing servant in Chaitanya's house where he saw Çachī Devī "of short stature and a quiet temperament" and Viṣṇupriyā "a coy girl just risen to womanhood, always busy in serving the Lord." Govinda

বর্ধমান কাঞ্চননগরে মোর ধাম ।
 শ্রামাদাস পিতৃ নাম গোবিন্দ মোর নাম ॥
 অল্প হাতা বেড়ি গড়ি জাতিতে কামার ।
 মাধবী নামেতে হয় জননী আমার ॥
 আমার নারীর নাম শশীমুখী হয় ।
 এক দিন ঝগড়া করি মোরে কটু কয় ॥
 নিগুণ মুরখ বলি গালি দিল মোরে ।
 সেই অপমানে গৃহ ছাড়িলাম ভোরে ॥
 চৌদশ ত্রিশ শাকে বাহিরেতে যাই ।
 অভিমানে গড় গড় ফিরে নাই চাই ॥

Kudchū by Govinda Dāsa.

describes Chaitanya's house as consisting of five large and beautiful straw-roofed huts on the bank of the Ganges. He mentions the names of the followers of Chaitanya and describes their great sorrow at his proposed Sannyāsa. Towards the end of the night of the last date of Pausa (January) 1431 Çaka, (1510 A.D.) Chaitanya accompanied by Govinda went to Kātwā where his followers also went on the following day. On the way, at Kanchannagar, Govinda's wife Çaçīmukhi met him and tried to win him back to the sweets of domestic life. Chaitanya could not resist her pathetic appeal and ordered his servant to give up the idea of going with him. Govinda, however, managed to run away from his wife and relations and rejoined Chaitanya some miles further on. Chaitanya's preaching at Kātwā and his initiation as Sannyāsi under the direction of Keçava Bhāratī are described with great force. A barber named Deva shaved Chaitanya's head on the occasion under a *Bel* tree. The traditional name given to a barber, who shaves one at the time of his Sannyāsa, is 'Madhu' and it is no wonder that Deva is called 'Madhu' by some of the Chaitanya's biographers. In the song of Gopichānd written in the 11th century we find the barber who shaved the monarch at the time of his Sannyāsa called Madhu.

From Kātwā Chaitanya came to Çantipura where his mother came to meet him. Chaitanya

Charitamṛta says that the Master visited Çantipura on his return from Purī. There is therefore a slight difference between two versions of the account of his visit to Çantipur. Govinda was an actual eye-witness, hence we credit his account. Crossing the Dāmodara, Chaitanya came to the house of a respectable man named Kaçi Miçra. Thence travelling towards the south he came to Hajipur and next to Midnapur, where a rich man named Keçava Sāmanta abused him as unworthy of being a Sannyāsi at such a tender age. Next Chaitanya visited Nayangarh and performed his worship before the image of Çiva there, called Dhaleçwara. Many ascetics gathered round him as he fell into one of his trances at the sight of the temple, and they became his ardent admirers. Here also two rich men named Bireçwara Sen and Bhawaniçankara Sen paid a visit to him. Bhawaniçankara was a very rich man. His officers rode horses and elephants and followed in his train. Bhawāniçankara was seated in a gold palankeen on a large tusker attended by four orderlies, each with a large silver staff in his hand.¹

বীরেশ্বর সেন আর ভবানী শঙ্কর ।
 বহু লোক সঙ্গে এল প্রভুর গোচর ॥
 চতুর্দোলা হস্তী অথ আর বহু যান ।
 সঙ্গে করি আইলা প্রভুর বিদ্যমান ॥
 ভবানী শঙ্কর হয় বড় ধনী জন ।
 শত শত লোক সঙ্গে করে আগমন ॥
 হস্তীর পৃষ্ঠেতে ডকা বিচিত্র নিশান ।
 চারিটা রূপার হুদা চলে আশ্রয়ান ॥

Chaitanya's preaching deeply affected the rich men and they listened to him with rapt attention. Thence Chaitanya came to Jaleçwara and beheld the image of Çiva there called Bilveçwara. Here he was in ecstasies of spiritual joy during many hours and met a Sannyāsi who said "I do not know who you are, but it appears to me that you are the reward of my life-long austerities present before me in the flesh. Your presence has given me the holy vision for which I have striven all my life." From Jaleçwara Chaitanya crossed the Suvarnarekhā, and met Raghunātha Dasā again. Thence he visited Hariharpur, Balasore and Nilgarh. From the latter place he crossed the Mahānadī and visited Gopinātha, the image of Kṛṣṇa, known as the thief of *khir*, (condensed milk), described on p. 215. He next visited the temple of Kṛṣṇa called the Sākṣhi Gopāla. Here he was all emotion for a day, embracing every one whom he saw in deep joy and weeping at the sight of the image with which is associated a beautiful old legend. Next he visited the temple of Ningrāja and went thence to Ātharanalā. From here he saw the flag on the summit of the great temple of Purī. "Here is the flag of my Lord—the Lord of the universe" he said. And on entering the temple the flow of his tears was so blinding that he could not see the image through his tears. He said again and again

“I have beheld Him—yea, the Lord of the Universe is before me.” He embraced all whom he met, and pointed heavenward, but in his deep joy he could find no words. Inside the temple of Purī he swooned away, and the great scholar Sārvabhauma carried him un-

At Puri till March
1510 A.D.

conscious to his house. He was at Purī for three months till the end of march, 1510 A.D. In April he started for southern India accompanied by Govinda Dāsa and a Brahmin named Kṛṣṇa Dāsa. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa was ordered to go back after he had travelled a few days, so that Govinda alone accompanied him.

Leaving Purī he came to Ālālanātha, and met Rāmānanda Ray, the Prime Minister of Rāja Pratāpa Rudra, on the banks of the

Godāvāri. From the latter place
In Southern India.

Chaitanya came to Trimanda where he had a public discussion with the Buddhist monks, the Rājā of Trimanda serving as the mediator. Rāmagiri, the leader of the

monks, acknowledged his defeat
Conversion of
Rāmagiri, the leader
of the Buddhists.

and a large number of the Buddhists became converts to Vaiṣṇavism. The next place he visited was Tungabhadra where Dhundi Rāma Tīrtha, a proud scholar of extensive learning, came to hold a discussion with Chaitanya. Chaitanya said he would not indulge in controversy of any sort. But the

sight of his ecstasies charmed Dhundi and humiliated his pride, and he became a staunch admirer of Chaitanya. After his conversion Dhundi Rāma took the Vaiṣṇava name of Haridāsa. Chaitanya next came to a place named Siddhavateṣwara

Tirtha Rāma and the two harlots. where a rich young man named Tirtha Rāma came with two

courtezans Satya Bāi and Lakṣmī Bāi to tempt the young ascetic and try his moral strength. Chaitanya here fell again into one of those trances which no one has described so vividly as Govinda Dāsa, and the sight of which acted with overwhelming force on his youthful tempter. Tirtha Rāma took the ascetic's vow leaving his vast properties to his wife Kamala Kumārī. The incident of this remarkable change has been very graphically described in the Kadcha. Chaitanya was at Vateṣwara for seven days and from there marched through a deep forest which extended over 20 miles. Crossing the forest he came to a village named Munnā in the evening. He sat under a tree at the outskirts of the village, and the people there came together in hundreds, attracted by the ardour of his faith. He sang and danced and passed into his usual trances which kept the people of Munnā transfixed to the spot, so long

Chaitanya begs clothes for an old woman at Munnā.

as he remained. He begged of them clothes for a poor old woman who had stood begging help from

him. Ramagiri, the Buddhist monk, was with him up to this time. From Munnā the Master came to Benkat. Here he had a discussion on religion with a great Sannyāsi and scholar named Rāmānanda. The latter also became a convert to the Vaiṣṇava faith. Chaitanya was at Benkata for three days. He next visited the wood of Bagulā which was the resort of a robber chief—a *Bhil*—named Pantha Bhil. There is a graphic description of how the *Bhil* and his fellow-robbers turned

The reformation
of the robber-
chief Bhilpantha.

Vaiṣṇavas through the influence of Chaitanya, giving up their evil calling. Leaving Bagulā he wandered like a mad man without tasting any food, and weeping for the joy of communion with Kṛṣṇa for three days and nights. During this time he spoke to no one, and tears flowed from his eyes incessantly. He next visited Giriṅwara where there was a large *Vela* tree near a temple of Ṣiva. A particular kind of delicious food named *paretā* is mentioned by Govinda here. Chaitanya met a Sannyāsi at this place who did not speak with anyone. Govinda Dāsa says that Chaitanya and the Sannyāsi communed with each other in a mysterious manner. The next place he visited was Tripadi where he converted a Ramite Sannyāsi named Mathurānatha. From Tripadi he came to a place named Pannā Narsingha. The high priest of the

Visit to different
shrines.

temple there showed him every mark of respect and entertained him with *pānnā*—a sort of syrup which was specially prepared for offering to the deity Nara Sinha. He next came to Viṣṇu Kānchi (Kanjiveram) where he was welcomed by a rich merchant named Bhavabhuti Seth. Chaitanya was received in the temple of Laksmīnārayaṇa at that place with high honour. Twelve miles away was another image of Ṣiva which Chaitanya also visited. From here he saw the Pakṣa hill at the foot of which stood the shrine of Pakṣa on the river Bhadrā. Here Chaitanya partook of a fruit named Champā. From this place at a distance of 10 miles lay the celebrated shrine named Kāla-tīrtha. Here was a temple of Varāha which Chaitanya visited. Going southward from the temple Chaitanya visited the Sandhitīrtha, a place of special sanctity where the rivers Nandā and Bhadrā met. Here Sadānanda Purī, a learned Brahmin, who advocated non-dualism changed his views after a discussion with Chaitanya. From this place Chaitanya came to Chāipallī (Trichinopali) and met a female ascetic of great fame named Siddheṣwari. Visiting the image of Ṣrigālabhairavī he went to the banks of the Kāveri. He next visited the city of Nagara where there was at the time a beautiful temple dedicated to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. Chaitanya stayed at Nagara for three days.

Here a Brahmin had come to assault him, taking him for a false ascetic. The people wanted to treat him severely but this Chaitanya prevented. Chaitanya thence came to Tanjore, fourteen miles from Nagore. He was shown the sacred spots, with which the city abounded, by a Brahmin named Dhaleçwara. There was a large tank in the centre of the city called Kuntikarnapārā which struck Chaitanya as very wonderful. Close by was the hill Chandālu in which there were many Goomphās (caves) inhabited by ascetics and monks. Here a man named Bhatta charmed with the devotion of Chaitanya invited him to his house. Here he also met Sureçwara, the leader of the ascetics, in a pleasant spot, surrounded by avenues of trees, and passed some days in his company. The place was within the jurisdiction of the king Jayasingh who had exempted all ascetics from paying any tax. Chaitanya next came to Padmakota where he visited the temple of Aṣṭabhujā Chandi. The female pilgrims wept to see Chaitanya's emotions and ecstasies there and a blind old man was so much excited that he fell dead at his feet. From Padmakota Chaitanya came to Tripatra where he visited the image of Çiva called Chandecwara. The old priest Bhargadewa, who had already heard that a young Sannyāsi of wonderful devotion to God was touring in the country,

Bhargadewa.

longed to have a sight of him. Lean and ragged as Chaitanya was, the beauty of his person was still considerable, his eyes which overflowed with tears at the mere mention of Kṛṣṇa's name had an irresistible charm and on seeing him the old priest Bharga fell at his feet saying, "It is for you, my saviour, that I have waited all my life. Blessed am I that I see you to-day." Chaitanya said that he was a very humble man of small merit. But admiration for him was already at its height in the locality, and thousands of people came to see him. Often we find him forgetful of the world wandering about the fields absorbed in mystic vision, while children threw dust at him, saying, "Look, there goes one mad after God." Leaving Tripātra he came to a forest which required fifteen days to cross and he did so in company with pilgrims and ascetics; Govinda was, of course, his constant attendant. Chaitanya came next to Ṣri Rangam and visited the temple of Narasinha Deva. Here he fell into ecstasies of joy and charmed, amongst others, a very pious Brahmin named Yudhisthira who followed him for some miles when he left Ṣri Rangam. Chaitanya came from the latter place to Risava Hills where he met a pious and learned ascetic named Parāmānanda Purī. He next came to Rāmanātha and thence to Rameṣvara where he visited the celebrated temple of Ṣiva. We find in the accounts of Govinda Dāsa, that

people of the neighbouring places gave him the name of "Hari bolā," as he cried "Hari bol" day and night and wept. The word "Hari bolā" is a purely Bengali word, at least it is not current in any of the southern dialects. Curiously, however, we find in the temple of Rameçwara an old statue of one known as "Hari bolā." It is quite probable that this is a statue of Chaitanya. The Çivaites did not like the religion of emotion that he preached, hence they were not very favourably disposed towards him. The legend current in the locality is that this 'Hari bola' was an *asura*. In Bengal also one of the Çaiva *tantras* has called Chaitanya an incarnation of Tripurāsura. A learned Sannyāsi in the Rāmeçwara temple challenged Chaitanya to a discussion and yielded like many others to the great fascination of his inspired speech and devotion. Chaitanya stayed at Rameçwara for three days and at Maddhivana he met a Yogi—an old and venerable looking man—who seated on a rock, merged in communion with God, ate nothing for days together nor opened his mouth. Chaitanya stood with joined hands soliciting the favour and blessings of the sage; whereupon he opened his mouth for the first time after long years and greeted Chaitanya with the mysterious words "*Chambani Çingūri*." The other ascetics present there fell at Chaitanya's feet in great admiration, as their venerable senior had spoken to him as he had

done to none else for years. From Maddhivana Chaitanya came to Tattwakunda and thence to the banks of the river Tāmraparṇī. He stayed here for fifteen days and left it on the full moon day of Maḡh 1433 Çaka (February 1511 A.D.). Crossing the Tāmraparṇī he arrived at Kanyākumārī (Cape Comorin). At the sight of the sea

At the sight of
the sea.

striking to see yet everything wonderful there”¹ Chaitanya's frenzy knew no bounds. He seemed to see the Unseen and the illimitable in shape before him. Chaitanya joined a band of Sannyāsis and marched with them to the Santhal hills—a distance of 30 miles from Kanyākumārī. There Govinda looked worried and pale having had nothing to eat for the whole day. But Chaitanya while fasting was as cheerful as ever in the joy of divine communion and sang songs, while the Sannyāsis surrounding him played on cymbals. A merchant unexpectedly came there with the offer of a good meal of which the Sannyāsis partook, Govinda thanking God for it more than any one else. Through the hilly tracts they came to Trivancore of which the reigning king was then Rudrapati. On hearing of the fame of Chaitanya which had spread throughout the Deccan by that time, Rudrapati

¹ “দেখিবার কিছু নাই তথাপি মোহন।”

sent a man inviting him to his palace. Chaitanya refused to go there. Whereupon the king himself came to him apologizing for having made the request. Rudrapati was deeply versed in the Bhāgavata literature and found in Chaitanya a manifestation of those signs of devotion which made a man adored as a God. The king shed tears in deep spiritual joy and Chaitanya embraced him saying "He who sheds tears, at the name of God is dearer to me than life." Chaitanya stayed there a fortnight and saw the Rāmagiri hills on which stood the temple of Rāma and Sīta. Thence he proceeded to Payoṣṇi where he visited the temple of Ṣiva Nārayāna. Here he met and defeated a scholar who believed in the tenets of Ṣankara. He was in the temple of Singāri at the time. Chaitanya next went to Matsatīrtha and next to Cachāra where there was a temple of Durgā. From this place he marched towards the bank of the river Bhadrā which branches off from the Kṛṣṇā. From this place he proceeded to Nāga-panchapadi where he stayed for three days. Thence crossing the Tungabhadrā he came to the hill called the Kotgiri from where flows the river Kāveri. Chaitanya proceeded from here towards the south leaving on the left the hill Satyagiri which looked like a blue painting on

Rudrapati, the
Raja of Trivancore.

Ramgiri and other
shrines.

the horizon. He came next to Chandipur. It was here that the celebrated ascetic and scholar Içwara Bhārati challenged him to a controversy but afterwards acknowledged Chaitanya to be his superior in every respect. So ardently did he

Içwara Bharati. long for Chaitanya's company that the latter with difficulty dissuaded him from his resolve to accompany him throughout the rest of his tour. Bhārati however went with Chaitanya for many miles till he could be persuaded to return. Leaving him Chaitanya penetrated into the depth of hilly lands where he wandered for two days unable to find his way out of the forest. At one place rows of Kadamva trees met his eyes and he was mad with joy owing to the associations of the sacred tree with Kṛṣṇa. "There goes my

Further South. flute-singer Kṛṣṇa" he cried and in ecstasy ran after the vision that he saw, with tears in his eyes, and Govinda knew not how to bring his frenzied Master to his senses. Emerging at last from the forest they came to a small village where a poor Brāhmaṇa was struck with his appearance and asked him to be his guest. The Brāhmaṇa said "It may be that I see in thee my Kṛṣṇa in the flesh, else why does a flash of lightning seem to emanate from your person?" For the whole night Chaitanya sang the praises of Kṛṣṇa in the small courtyard of the Brāhmaṇa's house where the

little village had gathered to witness the beauty of his emotions and ecstasies. Afterwards they said "This little courtyard is sacred to us today as Vṛndāvana." From this little village Chaitanya came to a place called Kandara commanding the view of the beautiful Nīlagiri (lit. the blue hills). Govinda gives here a very eloquent description of this hill. In the morning Chaitanya came to the city of Gurjara. The city was a flourishing one at the time. Here Arjuna, a learned Pundit, again touched on controversial theological topics, but Chaitanya's mind was elsewhere ; without listening to him he yielded to his 'divine frenzy'. He cried aloud "Oh Kṛṣṇa, oh my Lord" and tears flowed from his eyes and a halo was seen round his head.

To Gurjara.

With songs and speech full of devotional fervour, he became the centre of a charmed multitude. The Marhattas were taken by surprise at his wonderful display of devotion,—the women wiping away their tears with their draperies as they heard him speak in his ecstasy of spiritual joy.¹ Some-

এত বলি কুঞ্জে বসিয়া ডাক দিল ।
 সে স্থান অমনি যেন বৈকুণ্ঠ হইল ॥
 অনুকূল বায়ু তবে বহিতে লাগিল ।
 দলে দলে গ্রাম্য লোক আসি দেখা দিল ॥
 ছুটিল পদ্বের গন্ধ বিমোহিত করি ।
 অজ্ঞান হইয়া নাম করে গৌর-হরি ।
 বড় বড় মহারাষ্ট্রী আসি দলে দলে ।
 শুনিতে লাগিল নাম মিলিয়া সকলে ॥

times Chaitanya spoke in Tamil (he had acquired that language in the course of his tour) and at others in Sanskrit. From Gurjara Chaitanya travelled to Poona. For seven days he was mute and scarcely ate anything. On the way to Poona he ascended the Bijapur hills, and thence proceeded northward towards the Sahjya hill. It was a noble

The Sahjya hills.

mountain scene which struck the pilgrims with its solitary grandeur. In Chaitanya it gave rise to great emotion and he ran mad with joy, seeing the vision of Kṛṣṇa there. He came to Poona where he stopped near an artificial lake called the Achhasara under the shade of a large Bakula tree. Poona is described as a great centre of Sanskrit learning where the Gīta and the Bhāgavata were exclusively studied by a considerable number of scholars. Chaitanya here found a congenial element and went into his inspired ecstasies

A black sheep.

again and again, as the scholars discussed Bhakti. There was among them a certain materialistic Brāhmaṇa who believing Chaitanya to be insane, told him that Kṛṣṇa himself was in the lake. As he pointed to the water, the mad prophet of Nadia

পক্ষাৎ ভাগেতে মুই দেখি তাকাইয়া ।
শত শত কুলবধু আছে দাঁড়াইয়া ।
ভক্তি ভরে হরি নাম শুনিছে সকলে ।
নারীগণ অশ্রুজল মুছিছে আঁচলে ।

Kaṭchū by Govinda Dāsa.

looked down into it with a look full of love, and when the Brahmin repeated his jest, Chaitanya suddenly jumped into the lake and became unconscious. Many people at once went to his help, and pulled him out of the water where he would have been drowned, but for their timely assistance. They censured the sceptical Brāhmaṇa strongly, but Chaitanya regaining consciousness, said gently. "Why do you censure him, friends, it is true that the Lord is everywhere, in the land and water alike. Blessed is he for he saw Him there and I a beggar of His mercy that I am, sought Him in vain" and as he said this, he wept in deep emotion. At Poona he heard from a Brāhmaṇa

At Poona.

named Tannu that there was a temple of Çiva called Billeçwara near Gourghat at the city of Patās. At the foot of the temple a fair was held annually. And Chaitanya visited Çiva and the fair which was being held at the time and proceeded thence to Devaleçwara. At some distance from the latter place lay the city of Jejuri. Khāndava was the god of the temple there and parents used to offer their daughters to that deity. These daughters called themselves 'wives of Khāndava' and led unholy lives and the pilgrims were often enticed by these wretched women, known in

The Murāris.

the locality as the 'Murāris.'
Chaitanya, when he saw them, felt

a deep compassion for them and said to Govinda "How cruel are the parents of these girls, Govinda? How have they the heart to offer their own children to Khāndava to lead vicious lives?" He went to the Murāris himself, though Govinda did not like his going there.¹ The most conspicuous among the Murāris was Indirā Devī, and as Chaitanya held a sweet discourse full of spiritual fervour with the unfortunate women, they felt a thrill of repentance and an ardent desire to reform themselves. Indirā Devī particularly was greatly moved. She eventually left the city as an anchoress. Chaitanya next visited the Chorānandi forest where dwelt the Brāhmaṇa robber Nāroji—an old man of sixty. He met Chaitanya when he was in one of his trances, which suggested to the bewildered eyes of the wicked Brāhmaṇa, the beauty of heaven itself. The old robber threw away his weapons, deserted his band and followed Chaitanya as an ascetic. Govinda Dāsa's description of the change that came over Nāroji is a vivid one. The *ex* robber-chief undertook

¹ Govinda wanted to avoid these women out of moral considerations. But Chaitanya, "the saviour of the fallen" ("Patita Pāvana") was ever swayed by compassion and had hatred for none. The moral caution, suggested by Govinda in the following words of his, shows how ardent he was to keep the reputation of Sannyās's vow unspotted in the eyes of the people.

মুহি বলি সে স্থানেতে গিয়া কাজ নাই ।
না শুনিলা মোর বাণী চৈতন্য গৌসাই ।"

Kaḍachā.

to show Chaitanya all the shrines on that side of the country, saying to him with tears of repentance that every spot there was made familiar to him by the exigencies of his vicious calling.

From the depth of the Chorānandi forest Chaitanya emerged accompanied by Govinda and Naroji and proceeded towards Khandala, a village on the river Mulā. The people of Khandala were so hospitable that they quarrelled among themselves over their rival claims of entertaining their guest. "I saw him first" one of them would say, when another gave him the lie and often the quarrel, that ensued, resulted in a hand to hand fight.¹ Chaitanya stood quiet and would not go to any one's house, though so many were eager to have him. A

Khandala. rich man offered him fine clothes and a good meal. Chaitanya said "These two men with me have got alms given by some poor people. So I do not need your presents. The whole world with all its glories will pass away like a dream and you

“বড় আতিথেয় হয় যত খণ্ডলিয়া ।
 টানাটানি করে সবে প্রভুরে লইয়া ।
 অবশেষে সকলে বিবাদ বাধাইল ।
 খুনাখুনি করিবারে প্রস্তুত হইল ॥
 এক জন বলে মুহি আগে দেখিয়াছি ।
 আর জন বলে আমি ভিক্ষা আনিয়াছি ॥”

Kadachā.

and I shall be nowhere, my friend. Only the Lord will be there. I seek Him and not rich food or clothes.”¹

So saying he closed his eyes from which fell tears of spiritual ecstasy, while Naroji sat by him in mute wonder. Chaitanya next visited Nāsik and Trimukha and then came to

Panchavati. Here he had vision of God and he closed his eyes, while his face glowed with radiance. Govinda said that as he saw him in that condition he was struck by the sight, and thought that he saw a

god. Chaitanya proceeded thence to Damana and still further north where wandering for fifteen days he came to the ancient city of Suratha. The

Goddess Aṣṭabhujā was there, it is said, established by Raja Suratha himself. Here an ascetic asked him how God should be loved. Chaitanya said “Just as an ordinary woman when she falls in love with a handsome youth yearns for him so may the soul yearn for

¹ Chaitanya then advised the rich man to distribute his presents among the poor people who needed help. He said,

এই যে ব্রহ্মাণ্ড তুমি দেখিছ নয়নে ॥
কোথায় চলিয়া যাবে ভেবে দেখ মনে ॥
বিলাস বিভব সব বিলুপ্ত হইবে ।
কেবল ব্রহ্মাণ্ডপতি বিরাজ করিবে ॥
—বহু খাদ্য লয়ে বল কি হইবে ।
দরিদ্র দুঃখীরে দেহ অভাব পুরিবে ॥

Him. This is the mystery of spiritual love.”³
 At this time a Brāhmaṇa came there with the offering of a goat for a sacrifice to the goddess. Chaitanya’s teachings made him alter his mind and he set the goat at liberty. From Suratha Chaitanya came to the bank of the river Tāpti, where he visited the temple of the god Vāmana. The city of Bharoch (Broach) on the Narbadā had a sacred altar famous for centuries and Chaitanya visited it. Next he came to Baroda. There was a temple of Dākarji to the east of the town, to which Chaitanya paid a flying visit and then came to the town proper. The Rājā of Barodā is described as a pious prince who paid his respects to Chaitanya. Here Naroji got fever and died. And Govinda begged
 At Barodā. alms for burying the dead.
 Chaitanya sang the praises of the Lord over the grave of the deceased for the whole night. From Baroda Chaitanya went in a western direction and crossed the Mahānadī and reached Ahamada- bad. The town was a very flourishing one but Chaitanya did not go to any one’s house though many wished to entertain him. He stayed near a public garden named Nandinī. An ascetic who was deeply read in the Bhāgavata realised

১. সুন্দর নায়ক দেখি সামান্য নায়িকা ।
 সেই ভাবে দেখে তারে হয় রাগান্বিতা ॥
 সেই ভাবে কৃষ্ণকে ডাকে বার বার ।
 আপনি যুচিয়া যাবে মনের আঁধার ॥

Chaitanya's purity and told the people of the town that he was a remarkable man. Many came to see him and Govinda Dāsa says that he could not understand their speech. "As the Master however had picked up different dialects in the course of his tour he talked with them. I could

Crosses Subhramati and reaches Dwārakā.

only gather facts from the Master.

But this I did not dare to do often.

I took my notes privately from what I learnt in this way." Chaitanya addressed the multitude who had assembled at Ahmedabad to receive instructions from him and thence proceeded further west reaching the river Subhrāmātī which he crossed and arrived at Dwārakā. Here they met two Bengali pilgrims—Govinda and Rāmacharaṇa of Kulin-gram Vasu family. They were great admirers of the Master, and Govinda Dāsa writes: "Meeting Bengalis after a long time, my heart felt a thrill of delight."² The four came to a village named Ghogā where lived the celebrated courtizan named Bāramukhi. Her beauty was

1 "না পারি লোকের বুলি সমস্ত বুঝিতে ।
যাহা পারি তাহা লিখি আকার ইঙ্গিতে ॥
এই দেশে তীর্থ পর্যটিয়া দীর্ঘ কাল ।
সকলের বুলি বুঝে শরীর ছলল ॥
ছুই চারি বাত কড়ু প্রভুরে পুছিয়া ।
কড়ুচা করিয়া রাখি মনে বিচারিয়া ॥
যেই লীলা দেখিলাম আপন নয়নে ।
কড়ুচা করিয়া রাখি অতি সঙ্কোপনে ॥

Kadachū.

2 "বহু কাল পরে গৌরবাসীরে দেখিয়া ।
আনন্দে মানস যেন উঠিল নাচিয়া ॥" Kadachū.

great and the wealth she had accumulated was immense. A vivid and interesting description is given of her adopting the vow of asceticism under the influence of Chaitanya. She bestowed all her wealth on her maid servant Mīrā, and thenceforth followed the pious life of a Vaiṣṇavī. Nābhāji, the author of the Hindu Bhaktamāla, describes the career of Bāramukhi, but as Chaitanya's stay was short his name was not remembered in the locality in later times. Nābhāji says that by the influence of a great Sādhu her life was changed. It is from Govinda Dāsa that we learn the manner in which her life was so changed and that it was Chaitanya himself who converted her. Here also a sceptical and wicked Brāhmaṇa named Bālāji, who had at first abused Chaitanya and tried to assault him, afterwards became one of his most humble admirers. From Ghogā Chaitanya started for Jaffarabad which he reached in three days. From the latter place it took Chaitanya six days to come to Somanātha. The ruined temples and the remnants of its ancient splendour filled Chaitanya with grief and he gave free expression to his feelings, when suddenly a Sannyāsi, who looked like the god Çiva himself, came and lifted his hands to bless Chaitanya. The latter ran to meet him. But he said a word or two to Chaitanya, which Govinda could not understand,

and disappeared. The three companions of Chaitanya could not ascertain where the Sannyāsi went. Chaitanya smiled at their questions about the latter without saying anything, and walked three times round the temple of Somanātha. A *pāndā* (priest of the temple) came and wanted something from Chaitanya who said he had nothing to give ; whereupon Govindacharaṇa of Kulingrāma paid the *pāndā* two Rupees. From Somanātha the party went to Junāgaḍa where they stayed two days and visited the temple of Rosanji. Chaitanya stayed here in the house of a Brāhmaṇa named Mīraji. From there the four started for the Grinar hills. At the foot of the hills lay Bharga Deva, the leader of a sect of local Sannyāsis, very seriously ill, attended by his companions who all looked sad. Chaitanya prescribed *nim* juice for him which cured Bharga Deva. After his restoration to health he not only felt grateful to Chaitanya but was so moved by his spiritual life that he accompanied him on his tour. They reached a high point of the Grinar hill where Chaitanya was shown the foot-prints of Kṛṣṇa. Here the vision of God came again and again and he was in trances of ecstasy and devotion for days together. Descending from the hill the five came to the bank of the river Bhadrā, crossing which they came to a forest named Dhanantari Jhāri.

The Grinar Hills.

Dhanantari Jhāri.

Here a peculiar fruit of the *Kāmraṅgā* species is described by Govinda as being of a very sweet and delicious taste. Chaitanya with his four companions and a number of Sannyāsis wandered in the depth of the forest for seven days, after which they arrived at Gopitalā in Amarāvati which local tradition identified as the ancient

shrine of the Prabhāsa. Chaitanya

Prabhāsa.

gave an address to the people of Amarāvati with tears in his eyes, asking them to love God with their whole soul. They responded and sang the praises of God but said

Amarāvati. “You sir, you look like the god you speak of.” At Amarāvati

he was for three days and reached Dwārakā on the 1st of Aswin, 1432 Çaka (September 1511 A. D.) The town commanded the view of the sea from one side and from the other the picturesque scenery of the Raivataka hill, and Chaitanya saw in these and in the temple of Dwārakādhīça the vision of his Kṛṣṇa and was mad with joy for a fortnight. The people said “We never saw a Sannyāsi like this young man. His presence is heaven to us.” Chaitanya was at Dwārakā for two weeks and returned to Baradā on the last day of Aswin (October, 1511). After leaving Baradā, the party travelled for 16 days and reached the banks of the river Narbadā. Here Bharga Deva took leave of Chaitanya with many words expressive of his high regards for

him. Bharga said "I take you to be Kṛṣṇa himself." Chaitanya gave him a look of censure and requested him not to say such profane things again. Bharga wanted to know from the Master how faith in God could be attained. Chaitanya said "It is His grace, alone that can bring unto the soul of man faith in God. Neither learning nor reasoning can do this."

The next day Chaitanya and his companions reached the banks of the Narbadā, and thence

came to the city of Dohada.

Dohada on the bank of the Narbadā.

Here a Vasya millionaire had a temple of Kṛṣṇa. The man

dreamt that Kṛṣṇa himself appeared to him and told him that He was present in the town as a young Sannyāsi. The merchant was surprized to find in Chaitanya the same Sannyāsi whom he had seen in his dream, and he offered his tribute of worship to Chaitanya. So deep was the impression in his mind that he gave up his vast property and turned a Sannyāsi. For two days the four travelled in a jungle without tasting any food and Govinda Dāsa writes "We felt the pangs of hunger, but Chaitanya was as cheerful as ever." They reached a place named Amjhorā next, and Chaitanya said, noticing the dejected spirit of his half-starved companions "When the Lord will bring us meal, we shall eat." To the village Govinda went and got two *seers* of flour

as alms. Chaitanya prepared 16 pieces of

bread with his own hands, but an old woman came with a child and begged something to eat. Chaitanya gladly gave her his own share. In the night Govinda brought some fruits which he ate. Next day he visited the Lakṣmankunda and then reached a village named Mandura on the Vindhya hills. Here in the cave of the mountain there sat a venerable Sannyāsi with beard and hair all knotted and gray, nails grown big and body emaciated by fasting and austerities. His presence was imposing, he had a bright fair colour and he was entirely naked.

Chaitanya gives his share of bread to an old woman.

A strange Sannyāsi.

Chaitanya with joined hands stood before him, and the revered saint spoke one or two words to him and smiled. Govinda could not understand what he said. They proceeded in their journey and Govinda said "On our right lay the Narbadā and on the left the Vindhya hills; at the foot of the hill was the city of Mandurā." After three days the travellers reached Deoghar.

The cure of a lepor at Deoghara.

Here a Vaisya named Adinārāyaṇa, afflicted with leprosy, came to Chaitanya and implored him for some cure. Chaitanya, full of compassion, gave him something to eat from the meal he had offered to God. This, it is said, cured him. Adinārāyaṇa turned a Sannyāsi. Thirty miles from Deoghar

was the village of Çivāni and on the East stood the Mahal hills (Rajmahal?) After visiting Çivāni, Chaitanya came to Chandipur where there was a temple of the Goddess' Chandī. Thence he came to Rāipur where, the report of his return having already spread, people came from different places to meet him. From Rāipur Chaitanya came to Vidyānagara, the town where Rāma Ray, the minister of Pratāpa Rudra, lived. Chaitanya asked him to accom-

Vidyānagara.

pany him to Purī. Rāma Ray said that important state-business would keep him there for a few days more, but he would meet Chaitanya at Purī shortly. Chaitanya left Vidyānagara and marched towards the south. In six days the

Ratnapur.

pilgrims arrived at a place called Ratnapura which was a fortified town and full of fine buildings. Çantiçwara was the name of the Rājā of the place who interviewed Chaitanya and paid his respects to him.

Çantiçwara the Rājā of the place.

In the morning the party came to Samvalpur surrounded by hills on all sides. Twenty miles from this town was a place named Vramara which was a favourite resort of Vaiṣṇava ascetics. Chaitanya stayed here four days. One of the staunchest admirers of Chaitanya at this place was a Uriyā Brāhmaṇa named Viṣṇu Rudra who was held in considerable esteem by the people of the

locality. From Vramara Chaitanya came to the town of Dāsapala where there was a temple of Kurma—the Great Tortoise.

Dāsapala. The image was in a well called the Rasāla Kunda. Chaitanya stayed here three days. A Marwari Brāhmaṇa living in the town was hostile to the Vaiṣṇavas. A youthful son of this Brahmin came to Chaitanya and complained to him that his father was a sworn foe to all religion. He begged Chaitanya to reform him if it was at all possible. Hardly had he finished saying so, when the infuriated father came with a stick in his hand and threatened to beat Chaitanya with it for having turned the head of his only son. Chaitanya said “Here am I completely in your hands, beat me as much as you like, but sing the praises of the Lord; that is the price you will have to pay for beating me, my friend.” And as Chaitanya said this, the vision of Kṛṣṇa came to him and he was unconscious of the external world. He lay like a painted picture fixing his gaze heavenward, tears falling from his eyes. The Brāhmaṇa was awe-struck and soon after became a Vaiṣṇava convert. From Dāsapala, Chaitanya with his three companions came to the bank of the river Riṣikulyā. He stayed here for three days and when he came near Alālanātha, all his companions of Bengal and Orissa, who were wretched during his absence, formed themselves

into a grand procession and marched from Purī to meet him. There were Gadādhara and Murari, Khanjanāchārya, who though a lame man ran faster than others¹, Sarbabhauma, the scholar, Rāmadāsa, Kṛṣṇadāsa, Haridāsa the younger, Jagannātha, Daivakinandana, the excellent singer Lakṣmana, Gauridāsa and hundreds of others. Balaramā Dāsa sounded the horn in the procession and Narahari held the flag.² It was a superb sight to see him again at the house of Kaçi Miçra at Purī. Sārbabhauma, the great scholar, with joined hands stood before him and Murāri Gupta, that prince of physicians and scholars, knelt down, both saying how hard and painful had been their separation from him. The Master had not allowed them to accompany him and they had spent all this time in expectation of his return. King Pratāpa Rudra³ was there—casting aside all his royal splendour, as a humble soul in whom a true spiritual longing had begun and from whom

Return to Purī
and the great
reception.

¹ খঞ্জন আচার্য আসে গাঢ় অনুরাগে ।
খোঁড়া বটে তবু আইসে সকলের আগে ॥

Kaḍāchū.

² রামশিঙা বাজাইতে বড়ই পণ্ডিত ।
বলরাম দাস আইসে হয়ে হরষিত ॥
নরহরি দেখা দেয় নিশান লইয়া ।

Kaḍāchū.

³ নগর কীর্তনে যবে মহাপ্রভু যায় ।
দীনবেশে মহারাজ পেছু পেছু ধায় ॥

Kaḍāchū.

the last shadow of vanity had been driven out. Govinda Dāsa's description of Chaitanya's return to Puri is so graphic that the reader, while reading it, feels himself to be, as it were, in the midst of this gathering, paying homage to the Master with the rest. On the third day of Magha, in January, 1511, Chaitanya came back to Puri. So his travel from Puri and back took him altogether one year eight months and twenty-six days. A few days after his return Chaitanya sent Govinda Dāsa to Çāntipur with a letter to Advaita. Here the narrative breaks off suddenly.

The above is a mere outline and a brief summary of the elaborate descriptions of Govinda Dāsa. The charm of the work lies in the simplicity of its descriptions and a total absence of exaggeration. It is a plain tale divested of all supernatural elements which were attributed to Chaitanya by the later biographers. The beauty of Chaitanya's life is realized here in its simplest and therefore in its most impressive form. The only supernatural anecdote to be found here is the cure of a leper at Deoghar by Chaitanya. But the account of this incident is so unassumingly simple that it is difficult to discredit it, coming as it does from an eye-witness of unquestionable veracity.

XXIX.—Tour in Upper India.

Chaitanya, as we have seen above, returned to Puri in February, 1511. He remained there

till October, 1516. During this time he had attempted several times to make a trip to Vṛndāvana. But the importunities of Rāmānanda Ray, Vāsudeva Sārbabhauma, Rājā Pratāpa Rudra and many others, to whom his presence was so precious, had held him back. In October, 1515, however, he had left Purī and we have seen that extensive preparations were made for his tour by Rājā Pratap Rudra and Pradyumna Miçra, *alias* Nṛsinghānanda¹. He went to Rāmakeli *via* Çāntipur, followed by thousands of men. At a place called Kānāier Nāṭaçalā, he changed his mind and spoke as follows: "To Vṛndāvana I

¹ Pradyumna Miçra (Nṛsinghānanda) constructed a road for Chaitanya's tour from Kulia to Kānāier Nataçalā. We already noticed it in a foregoing page. We reproduce here the full text. "The road from Kulia was made with stone with metallic decorations. Bukula trees were there on both sides of the road and tanks were dug for the use of the pilgrims,—the companions of Chaitanya. The *ghats*, the landing steps, were built with stone. Aquatic birds made pleasant sounds there, and the air was fragrant and cool. When Chaitanya passed by the road, he found it strewn over with thousands of flowers from which stalks were removed. The road went up to Kānāier Natalā". From Kulia,—a ward of Nadia—to Kānāier Nataçalā the road extended over a space of many miles.

"বৃন্দাবনে যাবেন প্রভু শুনি নৃসিংহানন্দ ।
 পথ সাজাইল মনে করিয়া আনন্দ ॥
 কুলিয়া নগর হইতে পথ রড়ে বাঁধাইল ।
 নিবৃন্ত পুষ্প শয্যা উপরে পাতিল ॥
 পথে দুই দিকে পুষ্প বকুলের শ্রেণী ।
 মধ্যে মধ্যে দুই পাশে দিব্য পুষ্পরিণী ॥
 রত্নবন্ধ ঘাট তাহে অফুল্ল কমল ।
 নানা পক্ষী কোলাহল সুধাসম জল ॥
 শীতল সমীর বহে নানা গন্ধ লইঞা ।
 কানাইর নাটশালা পয্যন্ত লইল বাঁধিয়া ॥

must go all alone. Mādhavendra Puri went there in a true spirit of devotion suffering hardships which but served to fan the flame of his faith. And lo, 'I am going there like a prince with a retinue of soldiers and drummers who beat drums to proclaim my journey. Oh, fie upon me!' He came back to Pūrī and stayed there for four months till the middle of 1516, and then he requested the few friends, to whom he had communicated his intention to start out alone for Vṛndāvana, not to speak of his intended trip to any one. They remonstrated with him and urged that at least a Brāhmaṇa servant should go with him to cook his meals. He addressed Rāmananda and Swarupa and said "There are so many willing to go, if I take one, others will be disappointed." But a Brāhmaṇa named Baladeva Bhattāchārya had already projected a tour to Vṛndāvana and when Chaitanya started for the place he joined the Master on the road and Chaitanya could not get rid of him. A journey to upper India on foot was not safe in those days,

¹ Pratāpa Rudra, the king, had ordered that wherever Chaitanya would bathe, a pillar should be raised to mark the landing ghāt.

যাঁহা স্নান করি প্রভু যান নদী পারে ।
তাহ স্তম্ভ রোপণ কর মহাতীর্থ করে ॥

The Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda, Chapter 16.

বৃন্দাবনে যাব কাঁহা একাকী হইয়া ।
সৈন্য সঙ্গে চলিয়াছি ঢাক বাজাইয়া ॥
ধিক ধিক আপনাকে বলি হইয়া অস্থির ।
নিবৃত্তি হইয়া পুণঃ আইলাম গঙ্গাতীর ॥

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta, Madhya Khanda, Chapter 16.

as there was often fighting between the different States making the position of the pilgrims extremely insecure. But the ascetics had little risk of being molested, as they were merely beggars, and Chaitanya, when he started depended on God's mercy alone.

Starts privately.

He left Purī during the night and it was kept so secret that in the morning people assembled in hundreds as usual to pay their respects to him and were not told where Chaitanya had gone till a long time after. Chaitanya did not follow the main roads lest people should track him out and join him. Leaving Cuttack on the right he travelled through the forest path of Jhari Khanda, which was a part of Chotanagpur.

The description which the Chaitanya Charitamṛta gives of this tour is very inadequate. Baladeva Bhattāchārya, Chaitanya's companion, evidently took no notes of it. And what he reported to others was evidently in course of time greatly distorted. The names of the places visited were generally forgotten, whilst the marvellous and legendary stories gathered round each little incident which, when recounted by story-tellers, made a deeper impression on the country people than historical facts. This accounts for the supernatural elements that have occasionally entered into the descriptions of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, who,

though himself a truthful narrator of those facts which he personally observed, being an orthodox Vaiṣṇava, too often allowed credulity to get the better of his judgment. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa sets down in all seriousness, for instance, such puerilities as the account of a tiger who utters the name of Kṛṣṇa, being inspired by Chaitanya. It should, however, be said that in the first hand accounts about Chaitanya that Kṛṣṇadāsa obtained from Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha, Lokānatha and Gopāla Bhatta, his records are characterised by the vividness of living history. In the minuteness and patient industry with which the theological topics are treated and the various important incidents of Chaitanya's life are narrated, Chaitanya Charitāmṛta stands as a monumental example among the biographical works of that age.

Reverting to Chaitanya's tour, it is said, that during his wanderings in the forests of Chotanagpur he was much pleased with Baladeva Achārya's modesty and earnest desire for the spiritual life. Chaitanya is said to have made this reflection on the occasion. "When with the intention of going to Vṛndavana, I left Puri five months ago and came to Bengal I was overjoyed to see the sacred banks of the Ganges again and to behold my beloved mother. But there was such a large crowd who persisted in their resolve to accompany me that I had to leave

my plan of visiting Vṛndāvana at the time. The loneliness of this place and your companionship give me an infinite degree of pleasure. In this woody tracts my mind revels in the sight of God's mercy everywhere." 1

From Jharikhanda Chaitanya came to Benares and stopped at the house of Tapana Miçra, whose son Raghu and Chandracekhara, a Vaidya, were his constant companions. At their earnest request he stayed for ten days near the Maṅikarnikā Ghāt. The Sannyāsis of Benares believed that the earth was an illusion and discredited the theory of a personal God. They studied the Upanishads and strove to reach that quiet state of the soul in which the passions are subdued. They ridiculed the emotional religion which delights in ecstasies of joy. Chaitanya did not like to mix in their company and hence avoided all invitations from outside. One Mahratta Brāhmaṇa who had interviewed Chaitanya and was full of admiration for him said to Prakāçānanda, the leader of the Sannyāsis of Benares: "Master, a very remarkable Sannyāsi has come here from Purī. His merits are uncommon. A young man of remarkably handsome features and of a bright fair colour, he looks like a god. He speaks of Kīṣṇa and of nothing else and his two

eyes constantly pour forth tears of love which look holy as the Ganges. One feels as though cleansed of one's sins as one sees his tears and hears him speak. He weeps in ecstasy of joy and he certainly has a high vision. Such an impression has this Sannyāsi produced on me that I take him to be an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa himself." To which Prakāṣānanda, the haughty leader of the scholars of Benares, replied with a smile of derision :

“ Yes, we have also heard that from Gaur
 Prakāṣānanda's contempt of Chai-
 tanya. has come a young Sannyāsi of
 strange manners. He is a disciple
 of Keçava Bhārati and an emotional man. By
 some mysterious power in him he draws men
 to him and even such a scholar, as Vāsudeva
 Sārbabhauma, has turned mad and is now
 one of his staunch advocates. Probably this
 Sannyāsi knows some black art. But is it
 credible that such an impostor will be
 accepted by the people of Benares? It
 is impossible. Leave the mad man alone and
 stay here quietly and read the Upanishādas. ”¹

শুনি প্রকাশানন্দ বহুত হাসিল ।
 বিপ্রে উপহাস করি কহিতে লাগিল ॥
 শুনিয়াছি গোড়দেশে সন্ন্যাসীভাবক ।
 কেশব ভারতী শিষ্য লোক প্রতারক ॥
 চৈতন্য নাম তার ভাবকগণ লঞা ।
 দেশে দেশে গ্রামে গ্রামে বুলে লোক নাচাইয়া ।
 যেই ভাব দেখে সেই ঈশ্বর করি কহে ।
 এছে মোহন বিদ্যা যে দেখে সে মোহে ॥

We know that when Chaitanya visited the holy city of Benares on his way back from Vṛndāvana, he converted the haughty leader of the Sannyāsis—Prakāṣānanda. The abuser became an worshipper of “the mad young man” and wrote many hymns in Sanskrit in his praise.

The Brāhmaṇa scholar was very sad at the abuse showered upon Chaitanya by Prakāṣānanda. Chaitanya understood how deeply the scholar's feelings were wounded, and said “I came to sell a little of the emotional sweetness with which my soul is charged to the people of Benares. But there is no purchaser here. The burden of my emotion oppresses me and fain would I sell it to you at whatever small price you would offer”.¹ And the merchant who came to trade with his sweet stock of emotion left Benares that time, only to return some years after with the royal monopoly which made him the master of trade in the spiritual commerce of Benares.

The Marhatta Brāhmaṇa followed him and the three came to Prayāga (Allahabad).
His tour along the banks of the

To Allahabad.

¹ ভাবকালি বেচিতে আইলাম কাশীপুরে ।
গ্রাহক নাহি না বিকায় লঞা যাব ঘরে ॥
ভরি বোঝা লঞা আইলাম কেমনে লঞা যাব ।
অন্ন স্বল্প মূল্য পাইলে এখাই বেচিব ॥

Jumnā was characterised by constant ecstasies of devotion at the sight of the river, which recalled at every turn his vision of Kīṣṇa. He jumped into the river several times frenzied with love, and was saved from drowning by Baladeva Bhattāchārya. He stayed at Allahabad for three days and then came to Muttra, where he first visited the Bigraṃa Tīrtha. Here did he meet a Brāhmaṇa who like him was a seer of

To Muttra. sights not vouchsafed to ordinary mortal's eyes, and Chaitanya marvelled to see his love-ecstasies. This Brāhmaṇa belonged to the Sonoria sect—one whose social status was very low among the Brāhmaṇas. But Chaitanya took alms from him, though the Brāhmaṇa objected saying that by doing so the Master might be degraded in popular estimation. The latter however had no hesitation in touching the dust trodden by a cobbler's feet if he found him to be god-fearing and faithful. So Chaitanya did not attach any importance to social considerations.

But he wonderingly asked the Brāhmaṇa as to how he realised such love for God. The Brāhmaṇa said that he was a disciple of Mādhavendra Purī.

সার্কভোম ভট্টাচার্য পণ্ডিত প্রবল
 গুনি চৈতন্যের সঙ্গে হইল পাগল ।
 সন্ন্যাসীর নামমাত্র মহা ইন্দ্রজালী ॥
 কাশীপুরে না বিকাবে তার ভাব কালী ।
 বেদান্ত শ্রবণ কর না যাইহ তাঁর পাশ ।
 উচ্ছৃঙ্খল লোক সঙ্গে দুইকুল নাশ ॥

The latter, it will be remembered, was the Guru of Chaitanya's Guru Içwar Puri. On hearing this Chaitanya showed him great respect. He visited the 24 bathing Ghats—such as the Sayambhu, Biçrama, Dīrgha, Viṣṇu, Bhuteçwara, Gokarna—and the celebrated groves known as the Madhuvana, Tālavana, Kadambavana and Behulā Vana. When he came to the village of Açāli, he asked of the people as to where the Rādhākunda was. None could tell him anything of the places which were associated with Kṛṣṇa. These were long forgotten. It was Chaitanya and his followers who identified them and invested Vṛndavana with its modern glory and magnificence. This however will form the subject of my lectures as a Reader of the University of Calcutta. The only image of Kṛṣṇa that Chaitanya saw at Vṛndavana was that of Gopāla which was discovered by Mādhavendra Purī and enshrined in the village of Annakuṭa on the Gobardhana hill. The people of this locality were in perpetual fears of the Mahomedan iconoclasts, and at the time Chaitanya came to Vṛndavana, the image of Gopāla was brought down from the hills and kept concealed in a village named Gothuli, owing to an alarming rumour that the Turks were coming in quest of the god. The god had very hard days in these troublesome days. We find the image in serious

Vṛndavana.

danger when brought back to its own home on the Gobardhana; for another rumour of the approach of the Turkish army made it leave the cottage and move to the temple of Bithhalcçwara at Muttra. When Chaitanya was at Vṛndāvana there was already a strong band of his Vaiṣṇava followers there—Rūpa, Sanātana, Bhugarbha and others who all stayed with him. From Vṛndāvana Chaitanya went to Mandiçwara where there was a temple or cave in which there were three images, viz : of Jasodā, Nanda and Kṛṣṇa. From this place he came to the Bhandir-groves and at Amelitola met a Brāhmaṇa named Kṛṣṇa Dāsa and heard from him the tale of Kṛṣṇa's appearing every night in the Jumnā on the head of the great snake Kāliya. Chaitanya treated the story with the contempt it deserved. It was afterwards found that the illusion of Kṛṣṇa and the snake was created by a fisherman's boat with a light in it.¹

¹ When the report was brought to Chaitanya, he merely laughed at the foolish story. He said "absurd, it is a fable manufactured by the illiterate country folk," he advised the people not to turn mad over the false story and when actually made enquiries, he found that a fisherman with his boat used to catch fish every night on the river—with a light in the boat, and this created the illusion. Here is the original passage.

তবে তারে কহে শুভু চাপড় মারিয়া ।
 মূৰ্খ বাক্যে মূৰ্খ হৈলা পণ্ডিত হইয়া ॥
 কৃষ্ণ কেন দরশন দিবে কালকালে ।
 নিজ ভ্রমে মূৰ্খ লোক করে কোলাহলে ॥
 বাতুল না হইও যবে রহত বসিয়া ।
 কৃষ্ণ দরশন করিহ কালি রাত্রে যাইয়া ॥
 প্রাতঃকালে ভব্য লোক শুভু স্থানে আইলা ।
 কৃষ্ণ দেখি আইলা শুভু তাহাতে পুছিল ॥

The ecstasies, speeches and spiritual emotions of Chaitanya attracted the people more strongly than a great poem. For his words were like psalms, his songs as marvels of lyrics and his god-realization and trances—the crowning chapter of a noble epic. He appealed irresistibly to all, and daily hundreds of men and women came to invite him to their houses. The great concourse of people and their ardent desire to interview him at all hours became almost oppressive. And though Chaitanya, lost in his own inner joys, heeded not his surroundings, Baladevāchārya could not endure the press of Chaitanya's admirers, none of whom would leave the place without having talked with him for some time. Baladevāchārya requested Chaitanya to visit the great *melā* at Allahabad which was then being held, and Chaitanya gave his ready assent to his request. Four Brāhmins among whom was Kṛṣṇadāsa, accompanied Chaitanya, and they crossed the Jumnā. Chaitanya was subjected to frequent trances, and on one occasion when he was totally unconscious they brought him to the other bank and waited till he recovered consciousness. It

“লোকে কহে রাত্রে কৈবৰ্ত্ত নৌকাভে চড়িয়া :
কালিদহে মৎস্য মাৰে দেউটি জালিয়া ॥
দূর হৈতে তাহা দেখি লোকের হয় ভ্রম ।
কালীর শরীরে কৃষ্ণ করিছে নৰ্ত্তন ॥”

Chaitanya Charitāmṛta Maithya Kanda.—Chap. 18.

so happened that ten Pāthan horse-men were going by that road, and seeing a man lying senseless and five men surrounding him, their natural inference was that the five men were robbers, who had drugged the senseless man in order to rob him. The Pāthans bound the five Brāhmins, hand and foot, accusing them of thieving. Kṛṣṇadāsa was, however, a daring fellow. He said that he had relations in the court of the Emperor; they carried a great influence; he himself was the master of a fortified town guarded by strong cavalry. He in his turn charged the Turks with being robbers, and added that if he sounded his pipe, hundreds of soldiers would come there presently and revenge themselves on the aggressors. The Turks thereupon untied the hands of the five men but stayed to watch the unconscious Brāhmin. Chaitanya soon recovered his senses and hearing the story as told by the Turks, said, "These five Brāhmins are my companions. I am subject to epileptic fits, and they have helped rather than hindered me. I am a *sannyāsi* and a beggar and I have nothing to be robbed of." ¹ One of the Turks was a *pir*

“হেন কালে তথা আসোয়ার দণ আইলা ।

—পাঠান ঘোড়া হইতে উত্তরিলে ॥

প্রভুকে দেখিয়া তারা করয়ে বিচার ।

এই যতি পাশে ছিল স্ববর্ণ অপার ॥

dressed in black robes ; he readily entered into theological topics and soon felt the influence of the Master. One of the Mahomedans was Bijali Khan, a general in the Emperor's army, and he too was greatly attracted by Chaitanya's

এই পঞ্চ বাটপার ধূতরা খাওয়াইয়া ।
 মারি ভাবিয়াছে যতির ধন সব লৈয়া ॥
 তবে সে পাঠান পঞ্চ জনারে বাঁধিল ।
 কাটিতে চাহে গোড়িয়া সবে কাঁপিতে লাগিল ॥
 কৃষ্ণদাস রাজপুত নির্ভয় সে বড় ।
 সেই বিপ্র নির্ভয় মুখ বড় দড় ॥
 বিপ্র বলে পাঠান তোমার পাৎসার দোহাই ।
 চল তুমি আমি শিকদার পাশে যাই ॥
 এ বতি আমার গুরু আসি মরিল ব্রাহ্মণ ।
 পাৎসার আগে আমার আছে শত জন ॥
 এই যতি ব্যাধি কভু হয়ত মুচ্ছিত ।
 অবহি চেতন পাবে হইবে সন্ধিত ॥
 ক্ষণেক ইহা বৈস বান্ধি রাখ সভাকারে ।
 ইহাকে পুছিয়া তবে মারিও আমারে ॥
 পাঠান কহে তুমি পশ্চিমা দুই জন ।
 গোড়িয়া ঠক এই কাঁপে তিন জন ॥
 কৃষ্ণদাস কহে আমার ঘর এই গ্রামে ।
 শতেক তড় কা আছে দুই শত কামানে ॥
 এখনি আসিবে সব আমি যদি ফুকারি ।
 ঘোড়া পিড়া লুটি হবে তোমা সবে মারি ॥
 গোড়িয়া বাটপাড় নহে তুমি বাটপাড় ।
 তীর্থবাসা লুট আর চাহ মারিবার ॥
 গোড়িয়া বাটপাড়া মনে সঙ্কোচ হইল ।
 হেন কালে মহাপ্রভু চেতন পাইল ॥
 হৃৎকার কয়িয়া উঠে বলি হরি হরি ।
 প্রেমাবেশে নৃত্য করে উর্দ্ধ বাহু করি ॥
 প্রভু কহেন ঠক নহে এই পঞ্চজন ।
 ভিক্ষুক সন্ন্যাসী মোর নাহি কিছু ধন ॥
 মৃগী ব্যাধিতে আমি হই অচেতন ।
 এই পাঁচ দয়া করি করেন পালন ॥

faith, and the upshot was that the ten Mahomedans became converts to Vaiṣṇavism and were known as the Pāṭhān Vairāgīs. Chaitanya returned to Allahabad and thence visited Benares. Here he met Rūpa and Sanātana who had come back from Mathurā and discoursed with them on several points of Vaiṣṇava theology. These learned discourses are fully described by Kavikarṇapūra in his Chaitanya Chandrodaya Nāṭaka.

XXX.—The Pedigree of Advaita

I have already given the pedigree of Chaitanya. In regard to those of the two other apostles, Advaita and Nityānanda, I regret to say, that I cannot place the same reliance on the genealogical lists supplied by their descendants. As they were not Kulīns the names of the ancestors of the two apostles were not preserved in any authentic work of the *ghataks*. The three tables given below each showing the pedigree of Advaita, are quoted from an article by Mr. Stapleton in the 'Dacca Review.' Two of these were supplied by me from two different sources and the remaining one Mr. Stapleton obtained from the Gosvāmīs of Uthuli in the District of Dacca, who claim to be the descendants of Advaita. It will be seen that apart from Narasinha Nārial, the names obtained from the three different places do not coincide and cannot at all be relied upon.

I shall first of all quote Mr. Stapleton's remarks, which though they refer to a different subject, have a bearing on the present problem.

“Dinesh Babu's new suggestions for the date of Kirttivāsa that are made in his note are based on the extremely perilous foundation of the traditional genealogies current in Bengal. I fear he hardly realises what unsound ground this is; but as an indication of the undesirability of referring to these at all as independent historical authorities, I contrast in parallel columns the pedigree of Advaita given by Dinesh Babu with (a) the presumably authentic one supplied by the Uthuli Brahmins which is said to be quoted direct from the Valya-līlā Sūtra and (b) a pedigree lately obtained for me by Dinesh Babu from the Santipur descendants of Advaita who also claim descent from the same son of Advaita—Kṛṣṇa Miçra as the Uthuli Goswamis do.”

I.	II.
<p>Pedigree supplied by Dinesh Babu from an old M. S. preserved in the "Viswakosa Office" also his "History" page 496.)</p>	<p>Uthuli Gosvāmī pedigree.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sudhākara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sidheçwara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">'Tikāri</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NARASINHA NARIAL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kuvera</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chakravarti Kamalākara alias ADVAITACHĀRYA</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Çripati</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kulapati</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Bibhākara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Prabhākara</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NARASINHA NARIAL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kuvera (Tarkapanchānana)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">|</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Kamalakānta Achārya alias ADVAITACHĀRYA</p>

III.

Çāntipur Gosvāmī pedigree.

Jaṭādhar Bhāratī.

Bāṇikaṇṭha Sarasvatī.

Çaktināth Pūrī

Ganeçachandra Çāstrī

Narasinha Lāuri.

Kuvera Āchāryya.

Kamalakanta Āchāryya

alias

ADVAITĀCHĀRYA.

Mr. Stapleton aptly remarks “One might imagine that these relate to three different families of Vārendra Brahmins instead of one and the same, and similar instances of flagrant contradiction in pedigrees are often met with.”

The names from Narasinha Nārial downwards tally in all the three pedigrees. Narasinha Narial was the Prime Minister of Rājā Gaṇeça who killed the Mahomedan Emperor of Gauḍa and occupied his throne. Advaita Prakāça by Īçāna Nāgara says “Narasinha Narial was the Minister of Rājā Gaṇeça, and the latter

succeeded in killing the Emperor of Gauḍa and occupying his throne by the statesmanly advice of his minister.”

In the face of the discrepancies in the names above that of the Nārīal, as found in the three tables, there is no other alternative left to us than to reject them all. Mr. Stapleton seems inclined to favour the one supplied by the Uthuli Gosvāmīs on the ground that they got it from the Vālyalīla Sūtra. The claims of the Vālyalīla Sūtra (lit. the incidents of childhood—of Advaita) by Lauriā Kīṣṇa Dās to authenticity are however open to question. But if we should give preference to any of these, it would be the one supplied by Jayagopāla Gosvāmī of Ṣāntipura. Ṣāntipur was the seat of Advaita himself, and his direct descendants there are presumably in possession of all authentic records regarding the genealogy of the family, if really any existed at the time of Advaita.

But I am not inclined to credit any of them as true. The reason I may briefly put as follows. The followers of Chaitanya did not usually care to preserve the names of their ancestors. They offered their services to humanity in the spirit of true spiritual humility, and were ashamed of any distinction which might attach to their names on account of their noble lineage. It is for this that the Brāhmiṇ Vaiṣṇavas often eliminated their surnames and took pride in

calling themselves “*dāsas*” or servants—servants of all, or better, servants of God ; every great poet among them has subscribed himself as a *Dāsa* in the colophon of his lyrical masterpieces. In the introduction to a theological or biographical work, the Vaiṣṇava writers as a rule give a prominent place to the praise of those whom they revere, and while in this eulogistic preface they pay their respects to a number of illustrious Vaiṣṇavas, living and dead, they rarely or never allude to the names of their parents. The fact is that the Vaiṣṇava religion rather strengthened the ties of spiritual kinship and was inclined to diminish the family-ties. It is for this reason that Advaita never cared to refer to his pedigree. He is said to have lived to 120 years—the full span of human life. Whether this be true or not, there is no doubt that he lived up to a good old age. When, however, he died, the orthodox Hindu instincts had already revived even amongst the Vaiṣṇavas. His descendants, however, could scarcely find any authentic record of their pedigree after the lapse of so many years. They became Gosvāmīs and holding an exalted position among the Vaiṣṇavas, wanted to match the genealogies of the Kulīn Brāhmiṇs who could name their 33 ancestors or more. This may account for the long tables which some of them produce now and also for the disagreement

among these obtained from different sources. While we cannot positively assert that none of these three pedigrees is correct, we cannot also credit any one of them as accurate until some other documentary evidence is produced to support it.

I agree with Mr. Stapleton that the genealogical records such as those of Advaita cannot be accepted as authentic. But I can by no means subscribe to his sweeping remark as to the unreliability of all ancient pedigrees as a whole. While the trustworthiness of records apart from those of Kulīn families may reasonably be questioned, the pedigrees of the descendants of the Kulīns, so far as the three upper classes are concerned, possess undoubtedly great authenticity and may certainly be used as historical evidence. The great care with which such records are preserved by a special class of men known as the *ghatakās*, the high prestige which the Kulīns have always enjoyed in society, the least infringement of the strict rules in matrimonial affairs leading to the lasting disgrace of a family, the custom of reciting the pedigrees of the Kulīn-families during the marriage festivities before a large audience thoroughly conversant with the genealogical accounts of Kulīns and ready to assail any errors, however small,—these, among other reasons equally important, invest the genealogical records of the Kulīn-families with

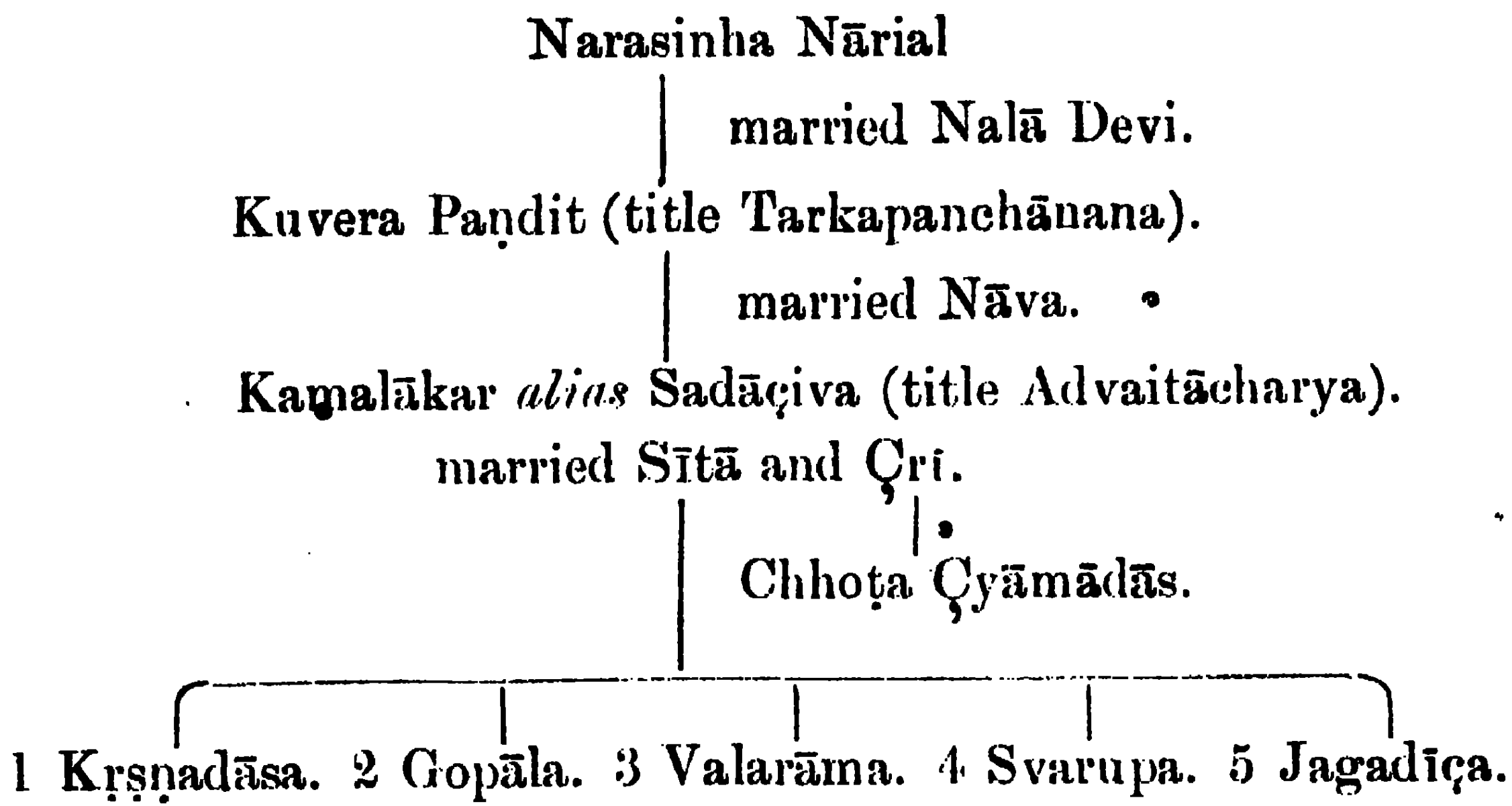
an unquestionable authenticity. If Mr. Stapleton would take the trouble to compare the pedigrees of high caste Kulīns, he would scarcely come across any disagreement though he might look into a number of such cases. It is true that in the distant villages of Bengal, outside the chief seats of the Kulīns, some families have occasionally tried, by forging names, to connect themselves with some recognised Kulīn families, but such cases are exceptions proving the rule. But where this has happened the country bards have kept afresh the memory of the infamous tale by exposing the forgery in songs.

Advaita's genealogical accounts, so far as his remote ancestors are concerned, are therefore unreliable. He was not a Kulīn, he was a Vaiṣṇava. And though his family obtained a lustre from him and became exalted in popular estimation, so that his descendants sought for a long list of their ancestors to put themselves on a par with the Kulīn Brāhmaṇs, Advaita, himself simple and pious as he was, never cared to shine by the borrowed light of his ancestry, but claimed kinship with the whole of humanity. Had he cared to preserve his pedigree we would have found it in the Chaitanya Charitāmṛta and in the Chaitanya Bhāgavata where long chapters have been devoted to his glorification.

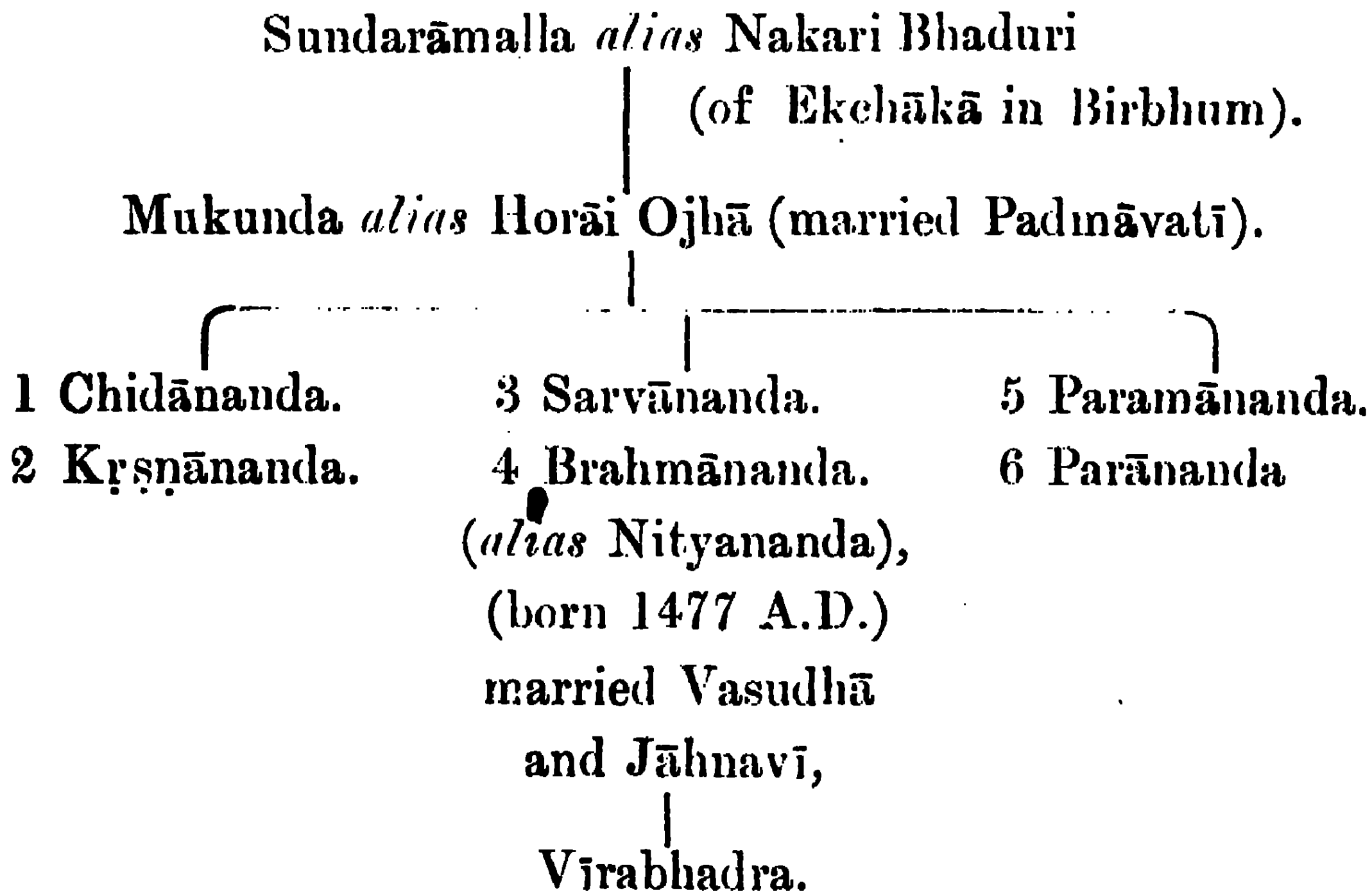
Advaita's father Kuvera Paṇḍit was the court-paṇḍit of the Rājā of Lāura in Sylhet. He had married Nāvā, a daughter of Mahānanda of the same village. The pair came down and settled at Çāntipur. They had six sons and one daughter who had died in childhood. The six sons were Çrīkaṇṭha, Laksmīkaṇṭha, Hariharānanda, Sadāçiva, Kuçaladās and Kīrtīchandra. They all went on a pilgrimage and four of them died in the course of their journey. Advaita married, in a rather advanced age, Sītā and Çrī, the daughters of one Nṛsinha of Nārāyanpur near Sātgaon. His marriage expenses were borne by the brothers Hiraṇya and Gobardhana¹ of Sātgaon. Sītā had five sons Kṛṣṇadās Miçra, Gopāla, Valarāma, Svarupa and Jagadīça. Çrī had only one son named Çyāmādāsa known by his familiar name of Chhoṭa Çyāma. Advaita was born in the month of February in the year 1434 A.D.

Omitting the four earliest names in Advaita's pedigree which are disputed, we subjoin here a list of his ancestors and descendants about whom no question or doubt is likely to arise :

¹ Govardhana Dās was the father of the celebrated Raghunātha Dās.



THE PEDIGREE OF NITYĀNANDA.



XXXI.—A list of the Mystics.

The Vaiṣṇavas had from pre-historic times developed the mystic longings of the soul for communion with God. While the Yogis strove for the soul's conquest over passions and for the

attainment of that state of tranquillity which raises a man above the sorrows and pleasures of the world, the Vaiṣṇavas went a step beyond, and longed for God-realisation. This stage presupposes the attainment of the highest goal of Buddhism, *viz*: perfect ethical development in man and an extinction of his passions and desires. The experiences of a mystic are strange. To his senses the incomprehensible becomes recognizable as clearly as a material object, and the soul becomes full of ecstasies of joy when the vision is clear, and of anxious longings when the vision fades. This I have already shown by examples from Europe and Asia alike. I give below a list of some of the mystics of Europe and Asia with their dates.¹ Those who would like to have a fuller account of them are referred to Mrs. Under Hill's excellent work.

Philo the mystical Alexandrian

Jew	...	...	B.C. 20 to A.D. 40
St. Clement of Alexandria	...	...	A.D. 160-220.
Pope Gregory the Great	...	...	A.D. 540-604.
St. Bernard	...	...	A.D. 1091-1153.
Richard of St. Victor	...	...	A.D. 1173.

(Dante spoke of this mystic as 'in contemplation more than man.')

St. Hildegarde	A.D. 1098-1179.
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¹ I have not included any name of the Indian *sādhus* in the sub-joined list.

St. Elizabeth of Schoenau ...	A.D. 1138-1165.
Gertrude the Nun ...	A.D. 1251-1291.
Mitchheld of Hackborn ...	A.D. 1310.
Michthild of Magdeburg ...	A.D. 1212-1299.
St. Gertrude the Great ...	A.D. 1256-1311.

(She was admired for her beautiful and significant dreams and her loving conversations with Christ and the blessed Virgin).

St. Francis of Assisi ...	A.D. 1182-1226.
St. Bonaventura ...	A.D. 1221-1274.
St. Donceline ...	Born A.D. 1214.
Blessed John Ruysbroeck ...	A.D. 1293-1381.
Geraid Groot ...	A.D. 1340-1384.
Thomas-A-Kempis ...	A.D. 1380-1471.
Richard Rolle of Hampole ...	A.D. 1300-1349.
Julian of Nawrich ...	A.D. 1333-1413.
Gerlac Peterson ...	Died A.D. 1411.
Joan of Arc ...	A.D. 1412.
St. Catherine of Siena ...	A.D. 1347-1380.
St. Catherine of Jenoa ...	A.D. 1447-1510.
St. Teresa ...	A.D. 1515-1582.
St. John of Cross ...	A.D. 1542-1591.
St. Francis de Sales ...	A.D. 1571-1622.
Madame Guyon ...	A.D. 1648-1717.
Jacophone da Todi ...	Died A.D. 1306.
The Blessed Angela of Foligno	A.D. 1248-1309.
St. Thomas Aquinas the Dominican ...	A.D. 1226-1274.
Jelalu'd'din ...	A.D. 1207-1273.
Hafiz ...	A.D. 1300-1388.

Jami	... A.D. 1414-1492.
Dante	... A.D. 1265-1321.
Meister Eckhart	... A.D. 1260-1329.
John Tanlör	... A.D. 1300-1361.
Blessed Henry Suso	... A.D. 1300-1365.
Margaret Ebner	... A.D. 1291-1351.
Rulman Merswin	... A.D. 1310-1382.
William Blake	... A.D. 1757-1829.

In India such names are endless. Every true Sādhu is a mystic and these men care nothing for self-glorification or even for contact with ordinary men. They associate with the chosen few who are already prepared to receive the truths of a higher plane from them.'

Amongst the Vaiṣṇavas, not to speak of Nārada, Çukadeva and others who had direct messages from the higher spiritual world in pre-historic ages, we come across a host of others who have shown in their lives a manifestation of supreme bliss due to god-realisation in comparatively modern times. We find in the Vaiṣṇava work of Prapasu Mrita the details of ecstasies of devotion shown by Kanchi Pūrṇa—a Çudra disciple

¹ Some of these Sādhus botake themselves to the forest and live as recluses ; others work in the field of the human world ; but an Indian Sādhu even while practising *Yoga*, self-culture and devotion in a lonely place, should not be considered as cut off from the world and therefore of no use to it. The cocoanut tree grows far ahead of other trees, beyond the reach of men, and in the sky its treasure of fruit hangs where ordinary men can scarcely climb up to secure it, the Sādhu works in the same way for the world. The chosen few are allowed to approach him and they bring the fruit of the Sādhu's spiritual labour for the service of the humanity, even as the expert climber alone reaches the top of the cocoanut tree to get the fruits for his fellow-men.

