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# Prema-vilasa

## CHAPTER ONE

All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Advaita Acarya, and all the devotees of Gaura. All glories to Jahnava Mata and Viracandra. All glories to holy name of the Lord, the deliverer of the fallen in this age of Kali. All glories to Srinivasa Acarya, and his dear disciple, Ramacandra, in whom the divine seed of love of Godhead was implanted. All glories to Govinda Kaviraja who is the giver of joy to the residents of the seven islands. Glories to the devoted listeners. The author requests that they fully concentrate on the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. Please listen attentively to the description of Srinivasa Acarya Thakura's birth.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu sent Nityananda Prabhu to Gauda to flood the land with love of Godhead. However, when Mahaprabhu inquired about events in Gauda from some Vaisnavas who arrived from there, He was told that no Harinama was being held in Gauda. They also reported that Advaita Acarya Prabhu had given up the doctrine of devotion and was now propagating the theory of salvation. Shocked and angry, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu lamented the absence of Nityananda Prabhu at this time of distress.

Shortly thereafter Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya suddenly arrived there and the Lord welcomed them joyfully. The Lord then explained the dilemma in Gauda, "Gauda has become devoid of devotion. Although Advaita Acarya is the embodiment of God, he has discarded devotion and is propagating the five types of liberation. I cannot understand the mind of Advaita. I can hardly believe my ears, perhaps this is simply a false rumour. Please suggest something to save the situation."

Just at that moment a letter arrived from Nityananda Prabhu. The Lord reluctantly read the letter, fearing the contents. As the Lord had feared, Nityananda Prabhu verified the rumors regarding Advaita Acarya. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu immediately replied to the letter then went to the temple of Lord Jagannatha, along with His associates, for darsana. Seeing Garuda in the temple compound soothed the heart of the Lord.

While the Lord was relishing the sight of Garuda, Sarvabhauma suddenly came before Mahaprabhu. Simply upon seeing Sarvabhauma, Mahaprabhu fell into a trance and began explaining superiority of devotion over salvation. Bhattacharya carried the Lord out of the temple and brought Him to the house of Kasi Misra. Upon regaining His external consciousness, Mahaprabhu gave Nityananda's letter to Sarvabhauma and ordered him to read it. Upon reading the contents of the letter, Bhattacharya became furious. "Who is this ignorant person who is propagating the doctrine of salvation in place of devotion," he retorted. "The three of us shall go to Gauda and challenge this fool to a debate, and if he refuses we shall bring him by force."

Hearing these words Mahaprabhu became joyful and immediately wrote two letters, one to Advaita Acarya and the other to Nityananda Prabhu. These letter where carried to Gauda by one Vaisnava.

With folded hands Bhattacharya said, "I am the most unfortunate person, but by Your grace I have understood that devotion cannot be attained through argument. Devotional service alone can satisfy the soul, salvation cannot. Previously I spent many hours in fruitless arguments with Gopinatha Acarya who, understanding Your glories, tried to convince me of the superiority of devotional service. Through your dear devotee, Gopinatha Acarya, You saved me from the blind path of salvation and implanted the seed of devotion within me." After some time Bhattacharya and the other devotees returned to their homes.

Left alone, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu could not stop thinking about the unfortunate condition of the fallen conditioned souls of this age who are devoid of devotion. Intently He considered how the glories of devotional service could be spread throughout the world. For this reason the Lord had empowered the two brothers, Rupa and Sanatana, and sent them to Vrndavana to write and publish devotional literatures. Now He wanted to enlighten Gauda. How could He send Nityananda for this purpose\*\* People in general would not easily accept the doctrine of devotion. Thinking in this way the Lord decided that it was necessary to bring forth another person who was capable of distributing love of Godhead. Thus Mahaprabhu called out the name of Mother Earth. The Deity of the Earth immediately appeared before the Lord with folded hands and Prabhu said, "Oh Mother Earth, please listen to Me carefully. You must bear a person who is filled with love for God."

Mother Earth replied, "O My Lord, whatever divine love which you deposit within me, I shall distribute to the proper person at the proper time." With a delighted heart the Lord agreed to her proposal, but He did not give the name of the person who would be the recipient of this love.

When Svarupa Damodara and Ramananda Raya came to see the Lord, Mahaprabhu said, "It is good that you have come, now let us consider what is to be done." Mahaprabhu then informed them about His conversation with the Earth. Simply speaking about this incidence filled the Lord with ecstatic emotions and He cried out the name of Nityananda Prabhu, then fell unconscious. After a long time Svarupa began to chant the holy name in the Lord's ear and thus He regained external consciousness. Mahaprabhu then suggested that they go to have darsana of Lord Jagannatha, when suddenly Sarvabhauma arrived on the spot.

Pleased to see Sarvabhauma, the Lord offered him a seat and said, "Listen, Advaita Acarya has given up the path of devotional service and is propagating the theory of salvation, so what should we do?"

Sarvabhauma, who was very unhappy to see the distressed condition of the Lord, replied, "Advaita Acarya is God Himself and the creator of this universe. He cannot talk like this. Who has told you about this? Bring him here before me."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Advaita became upset with Me because I left Navadvipa. He is doing this to frighten the people...\*\* I have full faith in Acarya and cannot violate his orders. But please suggest some solution to this dilemma so that the path of devotion may be irrevocably established."

Bhattacharya replied, "O my Lord, only You can indicate the proper course of action. I am the living proof of that. I was wrongly fascinated by the doctrine

of Maya, yet by Your grace I was rectified. Now the people of the world are being oppressed by the domination of atheistic kings. Now, it is up to you and Nityananda Prabhu to propagate the cult of devotion. Previously You sent Nityananda Prabhu to Gauda to cure the diseased persons there with the medicine of the sankirtana movement.

Mahaprabhu said, "I am now separated from Nityananda Prabhu, so what shall I do?"

Bhattacharya suggested, "Only you can consult with Sri Jagannatha Deva of Nilacala. Then certainly everything will be revealed."

"That is a good idea Bhatta," the Lord said, "let us go to see Lord Jagannatha."

In the temple Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu prayed intently to Jagannatha Deva. Suddenly the fourteen yard long garland of Jagannatha fell to the ground and the priest handed it to Prabhu. Filled with happiness Mahaprabhu returned to His house and peacefully went to bed. That night Sri Jagannatha Deva appeared to Him in a dream. Smiling brightly the Lord said to Mahaprabhu, "You are superior to Me in quality. One very worthy brahmana by the name of Caitanya Dasa Acarya has been crying before me, begging for the benediction of a son. I became very moved by his devotion and granted him his boon. He is certainly a worthy recipient of your mercy. You should deposit your divine love within him, and fulfill his heart's desire. His wife Laksmipriya is the daughter of Balarama. She is a devoted wife and endowed with a sweet disposition."

At that very moment Mahaprabhu came back to his sense and cried in despair due to separation from Lord Jagannatha. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu called on Kasi Misra and ordered him to bring Caitanya dasa Acarya of Gauda, explaining that this was the direct order of Lord Jagannatha. Misra replied, "My Lord, the brahmana Caitanya dasa was here in Puri for a long time but now he has returned to his home." "Do you know where he lives, the Lord asked?" "I will find out," Misra said.

In the meantime Jagadananda arrived from Vrndavana. The Lord inquired about Sanatana's well being, and Jagadananda reported that everything was fine in Vraja. Jagadananda had also visited Mahaprabhu's mother in Navadvipa and Advaita Acarya in Santipura. When he was departing from Acarya's house, Advaita Prabhu said something mysterious and requested that the message be conveyed to Mahaprabhu. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu heard the message He began to laugh and said that He had never heard such a riddle. However, from that time Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu began to manifest great sorrow in separation from Krsna. \*\*Heeding the words of Lord Jagannatha, Mahaprabhu began to search for the brahmana Caitanya dasa.

At that time the earth, being unable to bear the burden of Mahaprabhu's love any longer. She began to shake and tremble throughout the entire day and night. Speaking amongst themselves people said that this was not an earthquake, but it was Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu who was responsible for the earth's condition. Formerly Caitanya Mahaprabhu had deposited his love in the ocean which had flooded Nilacala. The ocean, unable to bear the force of that love, deposited it on the earth, who was also unable to bear the weight, began to shake the entire country. Some people began to consider leaving the country, while others thought why should they abandon their homeland. Others felt that only Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu could solve the dilemma.

When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Svarupa Damodara, and other devotees came out from Mahaprabhu's residence the excited people excitedly pleaded with the Lord. "Previously you saved us from a flood, now the earth is shaking, O Lord, please save us from this calamity. You are the only one who can save us, do something to help us so that we do not have to move elsewhere."

Meanwhile the priest of the temple brought Jagannatha prasadam and reported to Mahaprabhu, "O Lord, I am no longer able to perform the worship of Lord Jagannatha. Every time I try to touch the Lord, His whole body begins to tremble. Thus the worship of Lord Jagannatha has come to a complete halt. The priest then requested Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to personally perform the worship of Jagannatha Deva. Mahaprabhu called upon the earth and ordered her to take control of herself. He then pacified the priest and all of them returned to their own houses. All the while the Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mind was preoccupied with thought of Caitanya dasa.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu again called upon Mother Earth and inquired of the whereabouts of Caitanya dasa. The Earth replied that there are many Caitanya dasa's, which one was she to search for? The Lord then told her whatever he knew about Caitanya dasa.

Three days later the Earth returned and informed that Lord that there was a Caitanya dasa living in Cakandi village. He was a very religious minded brahmana and was now performing some rituals for the birth of a son. Filled with joy, the Lord ordered the Earth, "Listen to me carefully, you go and deposit the entire quantity of divine love which I gave to you upon the wife of Caitanya dasa, Laksmipriya." The Earth at once obeyed the Lord's order. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, feeling greatly relieved and happy, began dancing in kirtana in the courtyard of the temple of Lord Jagannatha. The Lord stood before Jagannatha Deva with folded hands and began to cry, uttering the name of Srinivasa. Jagannatha Deva, being very delighted, began to laugh and showered His divine love upon Caitanya dasa. Seeing the smile of Lord Jagannatha, Caitanya Mahaprabhu also began to laugh. Being ordered by Lord Jagannatha, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu sent His love to Caitanya dasa, the result of which was a son named Srinivasa who would perform many transcendental pastimes in his life. Formerly Rupa and Sanatana went to Vrndavana to write and publish devotional books regarding Radha Krsna lila. Later the responsibility to distribute the message of the Gosvamis would fall upon Srinivasa. After bowing to Lord Jagannatha, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu returned to his house.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu called on Kasi Misra\*\*. Svarupa and Ramananda came to consult with Prabhu and suggested that He send a letter to Nityananda in Gauda, as He was anxiously awaiting news from Mahaprabhu. The Lord accepted the suggestions and happily wrote one letter advising Nityananda Prabhu to kick out the influence of Mayavada philosophy and propagate the path of Bhakti by performing Harinama sankirtana at every home, thus flooding the entire universe with the glories of the holy name. He also informed Him that near the river Ganges in the village of Cakandi there lived a brahmana by the name of Caitanya dasa. This brahmana would have a great Vaisnava son named Srinivasa who would be the embodiment of devotional love.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu passed His days happily absorbed in thoughts of

the Lord. One day a letter from Sanatana Gosvami arrived from Vrndavana informing the Lord that Gopala Bhatta had come to stay in Vraja. The Lord happily informed all the devotees of the good news and said, "I would like to send some gifts to Vrndavana, but what can I do, I am a poor penniless sannyasi. I have nothing substantial except my dora and asana, but because they belong to me they have great potency. I shall send them to Bhatta." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied to Sanatana, advising he and Rupa to carry on writing lila sastras. He also said that Rupa would be happy to know that Gauda would soon produce a jewel like brahmana named Srinivasa who would spread Radha Krsna lila in Gauda. The Lord wrote, "After My disappearance, Srinivasa will go to Vrndavana. Hand over your books to him at that time. I shall send Nityananda to Gauda with Ramadasa, Gadadhara and Sundarananda. Caitanya dasa went to Nilacala where he received the mercy of Jagannatha Deva. I am now living with Svarupa and Ramananda Raya in a secluded kunja in Nilacala. I am sending a Vaisnava to you who will give you My asana and dora. Ramananda has given him the necessary funds for the journey."

When the Vaisnava reached Vrndavana, Rupa and Sanatana were both sitting in a secluded place. Upon receiving the Lord's letter the two brothers were overjoyed and could hardly control their emotions. When they saw the dora and asana, they fell unconscious in ecstasy. Crying, they placed the dora around their necks and fell on the ground crying out the name of Gaurahari. Lamenting they cried out pitifully, "Will we ever see the face of Prabhu Gauracandra again? Not having the opportunity to hear His sweet words our hearts are aching in pain." Holding the asana to their bosoms they were able to smell the scent of the Lord, thus they rolled on the ground and cried loudly. Meanwhile Bhugarbha and Lokanatha arrived and they also fell on the ground experiencing intense feelings of separation from Mahaprabhu.

Now, oh listeners, please hear attentively the glories of Sri Lokanatha Gosvami. Generally Lokanatha remained in complete seclusion, with eyes closed he remained in deep meditation, sometimes crying and sometimes laughing in trance. He was extremely dear to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and thus Rupa and Sanatana offered him great respect. In the future the great preacher of love of Godhead, Narottama dasa Thakura, would become the dedicated disciple of Lokanatha Gosvami. Narottama, the son of Krsnananda Raya from Gaderahat, was so named by Gauranga Mahaprabhu Himself. Just as Rupa and Sanatana were inseparable associates, similarly Srinivasa and Narottama were intimate friends. Their relationship shall be discussed later, now I shall explain the mental condition of Rupa and Sanatana.

Feeling intense separation from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Sanatana Gosvami became completely morose. Seeing Sanatana in a miserable condition, Rupa Gosvami said, "You are the embodiment of Mahaprabhu's love. If you behave in this way no one will be able to survive." Thus Rupa somewhat consoled Sanatana. In this way they both helped each other to keep their feelings of separation in check. Rupa and Sanatana took the Lord's asana and dora to Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. When they read the letter to Bhatta, he immediately fell unconscious. Gradually Rupa and Sanatana pacified him. Sanatana said to Bhatta, "You can sit on this asana while you are speaking about Krsna or Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. It is not offensive to do so, but how can I sit on my Prabhu's asana? Yet the Lord has

ordered me to do so, how can I disobey Him?" Gopala Bhatta then placed the dora around Sanatana Gosvami's neck and sat on the asana. Everyone was very happy and returned to their own residences.

That night, in a dream, Sanatana saw Sri Gauracandra holding his shoulder saying, "A brahmana boy named Srinivasa will distribute love of God in Gauda. When I have completed my manifest pastimes on this earth, he will come to Vrndavana. Look after him when he arrives in Vraja. Do not worry about seeing Me again. Whether I am present on this earth or not, by my grace you shall be able to see me in everyone."

The next day the Gosvamis discussed together. Bhatta said, "Prabhu will send an illustrious devotee to Vraja. Shall I be able to see him with my own eyes?" Sri Rupa replied, "By the grace of Mahaprabhu I received the order to write books. My labour will see its fruition if I am able to meet this gifted devotee in my lifetime. I want to hand over these books to him with my own hands. I shall personally instruct him on the science of Krsna consciousness."

The Gosvamis were extremely happy to think that in the future all types of people would be delivered from a hellish condition of life. From that time it became the daily custom of Gopala Bhatta to wear the dora on his neck at the time of his meditation. One day Bhatta declared that in a dream he had seen Srinivasa in his mother's womb in the house of Caitanya dasa. He also predicted that after Srinivasa's birth, he would propagate the holy name of the Lord and deliver all classes of mankind. Sanatana and others also saw the same thing in their dreams. Thus their minds were filled with thought of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and they eagerly awaited the day when they would meet Srinivasa.

Meanwhile in Nilacala, Svarupa Damodara's mind was perturbed. Regularly he was observing many bad omens in his dreams. One day Svarupa privately requested Caitanya Mahaprabhu to tell him something about the qualities of Srinivasa. After hearing about Srinivasa, Svarupa was greatly relieved and wrote a letter to Sanatana Gosvami. He explained that Caitanya dasa was now performing rituals on the bank of the Ganges hoping for the benediction of a son. It was revealed to Caitanya dasa in a dream that his son would be of a bright (Gaura) golden complexion, his name would be Srinivasa and he would spread the message of Lord of Godhead on Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's behalf. Caitanya dasa's wife, Laksmipriya, had also been blessed with the darsana of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in her dream. The Lord placed His hand on her head and told her to be happy for she would be the mother of a wonderful son. The touch of the Lord filled her with ecstasy emotions and she cried incessantly. Laksmipriya told her husband, "An extraordinary person is within my womb. Due to his presence there will be no poverty in our family. Please stay here with me now, and do not go elsewhere, even to perform Harinama sankirtana."

Caitanya dasa replied, "But how can I remain at home? I cannot even sleep for I have no money to care for my family."

Laksmipriya said, "We have enormous wealth now. Our poverty-stricken days are over. Formerly we suffered due to the tyranny of the Muslim king, but now he is gone. Formerly the Zamindar of our village had fled in fear of the Muslim king, but now he has returned to care for our village. Previously the people in general constantly chanted the names of Durga and Siva, now we hear them uttering the names of Radha Krsna. All of these are auspicious signs."

Around that time a wicked brahmana misdirected the Zamindar and thus the Zamindar sent out a drummer to announce to the people that they should utter the names of Siva and Durga, otherwise their properties would be taken away. The drummer went out to make the announcement, but the drummer spontaneously began to chant the name of Radha Krsna, rather than Durga and Siva. Hearing this all the young boys and girls danced and chanted the names of Radha Krsna. Thus the entire city became ecstatic in love for Radha Krsna. All the dancers went to the house of Caitanya dasa, who became very nervous upon seeing the Zamindar. He quickly welcomed him and offered him a seat. He was not sure how to receive Durgadasa, the Zamindar, but politely requested him to take his bath and after that Caitanya dasa offered him sumptuous foodstuffs. Durgadasa was astonished to see that such a poor man had arranged this wonderful variety of opulent food. After finishing his meal Durgadasa took rest in the house of Caitanya dasa. At night he awoke from his sleep upon hearing the beautiful sound of khola and kartalas playing. However, when he woke up he could no longer hear the extraordinary sound and fell unconscious on the ground. At that time Laksmipriya told her husband, "Look carefully, two bright complexioned boys are dancing in sankirtana. Both of them placed their feet on my head and ordered that I remain peaceful for ten months. After that they will again dance in my courtyard." Durgadasa, who had seen and heard everything, was overcome with ecstasy. He cried loudly and fell to the ground.

Acarya (Caitanya dasa) eventually pacified Durgadasa, yet he remained desperate to understand what he had seen. Acarya told him, "The two personalities you have seen were simply in a dream, why are you becoming so restless over a dream?" Raya (Durgadasa) would not except this answer, "Why are you trying to fool me," he said, "it is not a dream. I have seen them with my own eyes. But now cruel Providence has deprived me of their sight. O Acarya, I know that my own God has entered into my body. It is the saying of the scriptures that he who discards his own God, will go to hell. I have heard from others that God has incarnated as Gaura in Navadvipa and that is the God which has entered into my heart. That God has taken the place of my own worshipable deity and is the God who was dancing in your courtyard. I saw two bright complexioned deities in my dream. Now please tell me what am I to do?"

Acarya replied, "You are my king and I am your subject, what can I say to you?"

Raya said, "I have told you everything. Now I am filled with the desire to chant the holy name of Radha and Krsna." Thereafter Raya returned to his home, determined to find a proper guru. When he understood who his guru was to be, he returned to Acarya and said, "It is inconceivable that even within his mother's womb, this Srinivasa, has the power to flood the world with the holy names of God. Even in Navadvipa, Mahaprabhu has not succeeded in inducing others to chant the holy names to the extent that Srinivasa has done in Cakandi from within the womb of his mother. Even the atheist's have taken to chanting the holy name of Krsna. Mahaprabhu has certainly showered His blessings upon Srinivasa. My advice to all the people is to worship the two brothers, Caitanya and Nitai, as there is none so merciful as these two Lord's."

While Srinivasa was within the womb of his mother, Laksmipriya and Acarya spent their days in extreme happiness. The villagers of Cakandi brought all



the necessities of life to the house of Caitanya dasa and in this way he no longer felt the strain of poverty.

Eventually the auspicious time for giving birth to a child came near and on the day of the full moon in the month of Vaisakha (April-May) Laksmipriya gave birth to a male child. With a delighted heart, Acarya entered the room and saw the moon-like face of his son. The brahmanas recited from the Vedas, the demigods showered blessings from the sky, and the women made auspicious sounds, while the children and aged danced together joyfully. Even the cows with their calves made jovial sounds. The villagers all brought gifts for the child, and Durgadasa Raya came along with a grand musical possession to the house of Caitanya dasa. Everyone danced merrily in the courtyard of the house, while Acarya distributed gifts to the brahmanas. No sound other than the chanting of the holy name could be heard. At the end of the day Raya happily returned home.

Keeping faith in the lotus feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER 2

All glories to Sri Caitanya Acarya and his soft hearted wife, Laksmipriya. All glories to the devoted listeners.

Upon hearing about the birth of Caitanya dasa's son, people forgot their own miseries and anxieties and rushed to see the little boy. Even the lame and the blind ran to the house of Acarya singing the glories of Radha Krsna. Meanwhile, Acarya tearfully relished the moon-like face of his son. Who could estimate the great fortune of Laksmipriya devi to have given birth to such a child. The entire universe was filled with happiness and the sweet singing of the pastimes of Radha Krsna filled the air. The blind and the deaf lamented their misfortune at not being able to see or hear the joyful sounds of Harinama. Millions of people came in crowds to the house of Caitanya dasa, whose happiness knew no bounds. This is the history of the birth of Srinivasa. Simply by listening to this episode with a devoted heart one's pure love for the Lord can be aroused.

Keeping faith in the lotus feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa, describe Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER 3

All glories to Sri Caitanya Acarya and his good wife, Laksmipriya. All glories to the listeners of Prem Vilasa. I bow to the feet of all the devotees of Lord Krsna. I am an illiterate fool, devoid of devotional qualities. But being ordered by the merciful Lord, I have taken up the task of narrating Prem Vilasa.

Prabhu said, "My devotees who are still in this world are non-different from Me. Some of them are writing about the pastimes of Radha Krsna, and others are writing about the pastimes of Sri Gaura. Those who write about Radha Krsna will

surely receive my favour." Sri Jahnava and Viracandra ordered me to write about the qualities of Srinivasa and Narottama who manifested divine love on the earth.

After the birth of his son, Acarya did not go out of his house for six months. He stayed home quietly observing his son's growth. Gradually the auspicious day of offering rice to the son approached and Acarya called upon an astrologer to fix the date for the ceremony. On an auspicious day they offered prasadam to their son.

Time passed, and eventually the day of Cuda Karana came near. On an auspicious day the usual rituals performed and Acarya offered the sacred thread and saffron colored dress to his son. The boy looked enchanting in the new dress and his parents were overwhelmed with joy. Thereafter, on the third day, the boy began to cry for want of education. The Pandita took this as a sign of Srinivasa's brilliance.

Around this time Srinivasa heard a voice speak to him in a dream saying, "Srinivasa you must go to Vrndavana. Gaud is the favorite place of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. It is through His grace that you will be empowered to distribute transcendental books relating the pastimes of the Lord. Do not take education from anyone, for I will teach you everything. Always remember to chant the holy names of Radha Krsna."

After receiving these instructions, Srinivasa refused to go to the school of any teacher. His parents were filled with anxiety at the thought of their son remaining uneducated.

After some time Srinivasa decided to leave Yajigrama and seek an education. After ten days he requested his mother's permission and went to Dhananjaya Vidyavasa to take instruction from him. Dhananjaya, however, told him, "O Srinivasa, I am unable to teach you anything. You have already stolen everything from me. I am unable to understand you. Alas, Sarasvati Devi has become annoyed at me." Feeling ashamed Srinivasa offered his obeisances at the feet of Dhananjaya, but Dhananjaya would not let Srinivasa bow at his feet. Greatly disappointed, Srinivasa returned to his house feeling dejected. His parents did not know anything about this incident.

Feeling discontent Srinivasa entered his room and lay on his bed. When his mother had finished cooking she came into the room to call her son to eat but she could not find him. Acarya went to the Pandita to inquire about his son but he was told that Srinivasa had left the place long ago. Acarya was very upset, but when he entered the room of his son again, he found Srinivasa sleeping with his books in his hand. When he awoke he could not say anything to his father out of shame. He said to his mother, "give me rice," and began to laugh. After eating, Srinivasa washed his mouth and again went to bed. Suddenly he heard a voice from the sky, "You will acquire knowledge of all scriptures. I am the goddess Sarasvati and being ordered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, I have appeared in your dream to make you a genius in all subjects." Srinivasa opened his eyes but could see no one. Smiling happily Srinivasa came out of his room and his parents embraced him tightly. From that time forward Srinivasa gave up reading books regarding ordinary subject matter and simply chanted the holy names of the Lord.

Remaining faithful to the lotus feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER 4

In the morning on the way to the river for a bath, Srinivasa met Narahari Sarkara Thakura who had come from Gajipura. Seeing the beautiful complexion of the boy, Sarkara Thakura was reminded of the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He felt as if he were seeing the Lord personally before him. After bowing at his feet, the boy stood before him humbly and Sarkara Thakura asked him his name and whereabouts. Srinivasa politely replied, "I am Srinivasa of Cakandi and the servant of your lotus feet." Upon hearing the name of Srinivasa, Sarkara Thakura at once understood that he was the embodiment of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. With tears in his eyes, Thakura warmly embraced him saying, "Nityananda Prabhu is eagerly waiting for you. I have also been anxiously waiting to meet you. Now my dream has been fulfilled. In the presence of Jahnava, Viracandra personally told me to send you to Vrndavana. He also told me about your birth in a village on the bank of the Ganges. By the grace of Mahaprabhu we have finally met. Now you must come with me to Khanda and we will live happily there." However, Srinivasa apologetically explained that his parents were waiting for him at home and thus he returned to his residence, but after this encounter Srinivasa became mad with ecstatic love. He began to behave like a madman, sometimes he laughed, while other times he cried loudly and would fall on the ground. His parents could not understand what was happening to their beloved son. Acarya asked him, "Why are you crying my son after coming back from you bath. What happened to you there?" One by one all the inhabitants of the village assembled in the house but no one could understand what had overcome Srinivasa.

Eventually one old brahmana came forward and pacified everyone saying, "Listen to me. Be patient, everything will be alright. On his way to the river this morning Srinivasa met Narahari Sarkara Thakura of Khanda. After that meeting the boy became filled with ecstatic emotions and thus he is behaving strangely. Do not worry, in due course of time he will tell us everything."

Hearing the name of Narahari, Srinivasa suddenly laughed and controlled himself. But from that day intense feelings of separation began to manifest in Srinivasa. He lamented loudly saying, "O how unfortunate I am. I was not able to see Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Alas, I cannot see the lotus feet of Nityananda Prabhu, nor am I able to see the wonderful form of Advaita Acarya. I cannot have the association of Svarupa Damodara, Ramananda Raya, Rupa, or Sanatana. I cannot take part in sankirtana along with the devotees. O how miserable my life is."

When Srinivasa was lamenting in this way he suddenly heard a voice from the sky. "Why are you thinking in this way? By the divine arrangement of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu you are destined to flood the universe with love of Godhead. Rupa and Sanatana are still engaged in writing books in Vrndavana. The two brothers are eagerly waiting to see you. If you want to meet them you must go to Vrndavana as soon as possible, otherwise you will miss them. Though your parents will be overcome with sorrow, you should try to go to Vrndavana as soon as possible."

When the people saw that Srinivasa had regained his composure and was calm and quiet, everyone returned to their homes and his parents were greatly relieved. Srinivasa requested some food and Laksmipriya happily served him lunch.

Srinivasa began to consider how he could possibly leave home as long as his parents were alive. Above all, he was still a little boy, how could he go alone to Vrndavana? Srinivasa began to pray fervently for the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Very soon thereafter Caitanya dasa suddenly got a fever and within seven days he departed from this world. Srinivasa and his mother were both shocked and grief stricken. Laksmipriya lamented pitifully, "O Lord why have you given a son to a childless\* family like us.....Why do you torment this little boy in such an unbearable way. How can I manage him? I have no one to whom I can turn. O my Srinivasa, where has your father gone?"

Srinivasa was greatly aggrieved to see his mother lamenting in this way and he also began to cry loudly for his father. Eventually he performed the funeral rites for his father on the banks of the Ganges. Meanwhile the ladies consoled Laksmipriya saying, "Why are becoming overwhelmed in this way. You are most fortunate to have a son like Srinivasa, simply take shelter in him and be patient." At that time a voice was suddenly heard from the sky saying, "Why are you lamenting Thakurani? Do you not know the real identity of your son? Go to Yajigrama and eventually you will understand everything. Srinivasa is blessed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. Rupa Gosvami has been eagerly writing books, waiting to hand them over to your boy. Listen Laksmipriya try to take good care of your wonderful son. Do not become overwhelmed with useless lamentation." Hearing these soothing words, Laksmipriya was pacified and performed the funeral ceremony for her husband.

Afterwards she and her son left their home and went to Yajigrama. Srinivasa, however, was depressed and decided to leave his mother in Yajigrama and go to Cakandi. That night he had a dream in which Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu ordered him to go to Vrndavana. Waking up from his sleep Srinivasa began to wonder, "How can I leave my mother alone here, and how can I go to Vrndavana as I am unable to practice austerity fully. Yet Thakura Narahari has advised me not to waste time." In this way Srinivasa began to ponder his journey to Vraja.

After spending a few days in Cakandi, Srinivasa returned to Yajigrama and settled there. When the Zamindar of the village met Srinivasa he was greatly impressed by the boy's spirit and requested him to settle in the village. Thus Srinivasa remained for a considerable period of time until he desired to go to Khanda. Srinivasa constructed a beautiful cottage in the western part of the village and leaving his mother there, he went to Khanda.

When Srinivasa arrived at the house of Narahari Thakura, he saw Sri Raghunandana sitting under a tree. Noting the spirited young boy, Sri Raghunandana asked, "What is your name and where are you from?" Raghunandana was overjoyed upon hearing Srinivasa's identity. He joyfully welcomed the boy with outstretched arms and embraced him warmly. "I have heard all about you from Sri Thakura," he said. "Now it is my good fortune to meet you face to face. Let us go see Sri Thakura. Together we can spend our days here in worship and meditation. Taking Srinivasa by the hand, they went inside to meet Sri Thakura.

Upon seeing the boy, Sri Thakura welcomed him heartily. "Come in, come in, my son Srinivasa, take a seat. Viracandra Prabhu has ordered me to send you to Vrndavana as soon as possible." Sri Thakura then embraced Srinivasa and immediately fell into a trance. Nayana Sena Mahasaya, who was standing nearby, quickly took Srinivasa to his house.

In the afternoon Thakura asked Raghunandana where Srinivasa was and requested that he be brought before him again so that he could speak to Srinivasa about going to Vrndavana. At that very moment Srinivasa entered the room, his face beaming with delight. Thakura asked, "Srinivasa, when and how will you start for Vrndavana?" Srinivasa replied, "I am homeless, what can I do." Thakura said, "It is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's desire that you learn the methods of devotional service from Gopala Bhatta Gosvami." Srinivasa cried out, "Why are trying to deceive me on the pretext of sending me to Vrndavana? I came from Cakandi to have your darsana and dedicate myself at your feet." Thakura said, "Yes it is true, but it is Gopala Bhatta who will be your guru, not I. I dare not disobey the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Stay here for a few days, but remember that the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is the very spirit of Mahaprabhu.

Srinivasa then took his leave. He went to a quiet spot and thought about from whom he should take initiation. He passed most of the night deep in thought, yet towards the end of the night, due to the desire of the Lord, Srinivasa fell asleep. In a dream Sri Gauracandra appeared before him and said, "Listen Srinivasa, you are the embodiment of love, why are you waiting for shelter? Without wasting time, go to Vrndavana and take refuge at the feet of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. He is from Tailanga Desa (South India) and is extremely dear to Me. Rupa and Sanatana are also there and they will hand over all the books they have written to you. They are very anxiously awaiting your arrival there." Filled with ecstasy, Srinivasa bowed to the Lord and his dream came to an end.

The following morning Srinivasa immediately went to Sarkara Thakura and told him about his dream. Understanding that Srinivasa had received the blessings of the Mahaprabhu, Narahari also blessed the boy, placing his hand on Srinivasa's head he said, "May all your desires be fulfilled in Sri Vrndavana Dhama. I have sent a letter to Viracandra prabhu telling him about you. You should stay here until a reply comes from him." Thus Srinivasa remained in Khanda for some time.

During his stay in Khanda, Srinivasa decided to visit Jagannatha Deva. He also cherished the hope of having the opportunity to read the Srimad Bhagavatam to Sri Gadadhara Pandita, and after he would go to Vrndavana. Srinivasa expressed his desire to Narahari, who gave him permission and sent one vaisnava along with Srinivasa. Narahari wrote a letter and gave it to Srinivasa's travel companion. Both of them then began their journey to Nilacala.

In Nilacala they visited the temple of Jagannatha and went to the house of Sri Gopinatha where Pandita Gosvami was spending his days lost in the misery of separation from his beloved Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Srinivasa humbly bowed at his feet, uttering the names of Caitanya and Nityananda. Hearing the name of Caitanya, Gosvami became agitated. Opening his eyes he asked, "Who are you? Come, come my son, I want to embrace you. What a sweet name you uttered in my ears. I had a dream that a boy named Srinivasa would come from Gauda. He is the son of Caitanya dasa and Laksmipriya of Cakandi. That Srinivasa will spread the glories of Radha Krsna lila in this world. Could you be the boy of my dream.

Please cool my heart and tell me your name." When Srinivasa confirmed his identity, Gosvami said, "It is good that you are here. Towards the end of His pastimes in this world Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu ordered me to tell you about Krsnalila and to teach you the Bhagavata. Mahaprabhu instructed me to remain here until you arrived here. He told me to send you to Vrndavana with a letter to Rupa and Sanatana. From Vrndavana you will carry the Gosvami's books to Gauda. I am now eager to teach you Srimad Bhagavatam, but unfortunately the Bhagavata has become illegible due to the streams of tears which fell from my eyes on to the book when I was reading. I shall give you a letter for Narahari instructing him to give you a new book. Go there quickly and do not delay for the Lord directed ordered me to instruct you."

Srinivasa said, I have heard that Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami is Gunamanjari of Radha Krsna lila. I cherish the hope of becoming his disciple." Hearing the name of Gunamanjari, Pandita Gosvami became very joyful. He advised Srinivasa to go quickly to Gauda, otherwise he would not see him again. Pandita Gosvami then began calling out the names of Caitanya and Nityananda, lost in the lamentation of separation from the Lord. Srinivasa understood that he should travel swiftly as Pandita Gosvami would not remain long within this world.

Srinivasa quickly returned to the house of Narahari in Gauda. On the day of his arrival there was a great assembly of devotees in the house of Viracandra prabhu. Srinivasa bowed to the feet of Narahari and stood humbly before him. Narahari said, "It is good that you have come today. Read this letter which has just come from Vrndavana. After completing your study of Bhagavatam you must go to Vrndavana. I have understood everything from the letter of Pandita Gosvami." He then read out the letter to Viracandra. All the devotees gave their permission for Srinivasa to complete his studies of the Bhagavatam and urged him not to delay as they would miss his association. Narahari selected a Vaisnava to accompany Srinivasa and together they started their journey chanting the names of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami.

On the outskirts of Yajipura Srinivasa's mind became disturbed and before entering into the village they received the heart-rendering news that Sri Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami had departed from the world. Srinivasa immediately fell unconscious on the ground. Srinivasa's companion fearfully held his feet, trying to bring Srinivasa back to his senses. When he finally regained consciousness the Vaisnava bowed at his feet. Srinivasa, however, could not be consoled, his disappointment was beyond description. Srinivasa fasted throughout the night and was very weak the next morning. His Vaisnava companion was very nervous and worried, how could he take Srinivasa back to Gauda in this condition? With great difficulty he managed to feed something to Srinivasa. Together they began their journey back to Gauda, with Srinivasa crying the entire way.

They entered into Sri Khanda in the afternoon and although everyone was happy to see Srinivasa, their happiness was short lived when they heard that he would soon be leaving for Vrndavana. The following morning they left Sri Khanda and went to Navadvipa. There Srinivasa stood pathetically before the house of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. For four days he fasted, crying constantly he loudly called out the name of Pandita Gosvami. Eventually he realised that he could not practice austerity on an empty stomach. Thus he collected a small quantity of rice and cooked it while sitting on the bank of the Ganges. On the eighth day, he was

extremely weak. At that time he met Vamsivadana dasa. Srinivasa gave his identity and explained that Prabhu had ordered him to take lessons in Bhagavata from Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami, but he was the most unfortunate person because Pandita Gosvami had departed from this world without instructing him. Saying this Srinivasa again began to cry.

In the meantime Isana Thakura arrived there and was very moved by Srinivasa's condition and weak health. He could understand that this boy was empowered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thus he went to the house of Isvari (Visnupriya) and told her that he had met a beautiful boy on the bank of the Ganges who was lamenting piteously, calling the name of Sri Gadadhara. "Seeing him in such a weak condition causes me pain. Please allow me to give him some food. Later I shall bring him to receive your blessings." Thus Isana took some rice to Srinivasa and instructed him to cook it. Srinivasa humbly obeyed his order. As soon as Srinivasa finished cooking, ten ascetics arrived and told Srinivasa that they were very hungry. Srinivasa happily offered them the rice prasadam. By the grace of the Lord all eleven Vaisnavas (including Srinivasa) were able to fill their stomachs from that small quantity of rice.

When Isvari heard about Srinivasa, she became very eager to meet him. Her desire was fulfilled that evening when she and her maidservants went to the river for a bath. There she was pleased to see the charming boy. At first she was hesitant, thinking, "how can I speak to an unknown man?" But on second thought she considered, "By the mercy of Prabhu no dishonour shall befall me." Thus she ordered Isana to bring the boy to her. Isana rushed to Srinivasa and told him, "Come with me to the house of Mahaprabhu for Sri Isvari is calling you." Overwhelmed with joy, Srinivasa danced and cried simultaneously.

When they reached the house of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Srinivasa felt shy about entering the house. Nevertheless, trembling nervously he entered into the inner apartments and stood at a distance from Sri Isvari. Isana then introduced the two. When Isvari saw Srinivasa she realised that he was the embodiment of her Prabhu. Putting aside her shyness she called Srinivasa before her and asked him why he had been crying. Srinivasa humbly reported the story of Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami and his desire to go to Vrndavana. Isvari, however, advised him to go back to his home for at such a young age it would be impossible for him to live as an ascetic. With folded hands Srinivasa repeatedly begged for her blessings to enable him to go to Vrndavana. He explained that he had no family, other than his dear mother. Isvari replied, "Only the mercy of Mahaprabhu can help you. I think it is best if you stay here until you have grown up enough." Isana explained to Isvari that Srinivasa had spent the entire night crying for Pandita Gosvami. Visnupriya, who had been lost in deep sorrow due to separation from her beloved Lord Gauranga was overwhelmed with mixed emotions due to the presence of Srinivasa.

Now I shall describe the glories of Sri Isvari and her dedication to the chanting of the holy name. Daily, Visnupriya devi would sit with two new earthen bowls before her--one was empty and the other was half full of rice. Each time she completed one round of japa, she would place one grain of rice in the empty bowl. She continued in this way until midnight and then she would cook the quantity of rice which had accumulated in the previously empty bowl. She offered that rice to Lord Gauranga along with her tears and then she would eat the prasadam. Who

could describe the glories of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's favorite wife, who was constantly absorbed in associating with the Lord through the pure chanting of Harinama. In this age of Kali-yuga there is no other means of deliverance other than the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. After accepting prasadam, Visnupriya would lie down on the ground to rest.

Towards the end of the night, the two brothers (Gaura-Nitai), after performing sankirtana, spoke to Sacimata in her dream. "O Mother, while your daughter-in-law is enjoying her sleep inside her room, Srinivasa is laying outside. Srinivasa is meant to execute My mission in this world. Please send him to Abhirama through Isana." When her dream broke Sacimata at once left her bed, unable to sleep any longer due to intense feelings of separation from her dear son.

Meanwhile Isana was deeply sleeping. After some time he awoke and came before Visnupriya with folded hands. She ordered him to quickly bring Srinivasa to her. Isana swiftly followed her order. Sri Isvari then instructed Srinivasa to go to meet Abhirama. Saying this she covered herself with a cloth, came out of her room and placed her foot on the head of Srinivasa. With the touch of her foot, Srinivasa burst into tears. To pacify him, she said, "Srinivasa, you are the most fortunate man as you are empowered to represent Prabhu. You should first go to Santipura and meet Advaita Acarya Gosvami. Then go to visit Nityananda Prabhu in Khardaha. Jahnava will be very pleased to see you. After meeting everyone, then start for Vrndavana. I wish you all success."

Srinivasa bowed to her feet and immediately left for Santipura. He was at a loss, however, as to where to go. Although Isvari had advised him to go to meet Advaita Prabhu, he knew that Advaita Acarya had left this world thirteen years before. How could he possibly get his darsana. As Srinivasa was thinking in this way, suddenly a gigantic figure appeared before him. Srinivasa could not stand before the figure, nor could he look at him. The extraordinary personality said to Srinivasa, "My dear son, welcome to Santipura. I am Advaita standing in front of you." Srinivasa at once fell at his feet. Advaita Acarya began to lament for Sri Caitanya, Nityananda, Svarupa, Rama Raya and others. He then embraced Srinivasa, placed his hand upon his head and said, "I am very pleased to see you. It was Mahaprabhu's desire the you become the servant of Gopala Bhatta. Being angry with me Prabhu has created you to carry out His mission. He sent Rupa and Sanatana to Vrndavana and ordered them to write devotional books and He expected you to distribute these books and spread the message of Mahaprabhu throughout the world. I have come here just to meet you. Do not tell anyone what you have seen. You will feel great happiness here in Khardaha. After meeting Jahnava Mata you should start for Vrndavana. There you will have darsana of Sri Rupa and then you should meet and worship the feet of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. Do not think about Advaita Govinda alias Nagara, whom I have rejected as being my disciple." Saying this Advaita disappeared. Out of disappointment Srinivasa began to cry.

Meanwhile, Sita devi (wife of Advaita Prabhu) passed by on her way to take bath in the Ganges. Seeing the charming boy crying at the side of the road, she immediately embraced him like a son. Pacifying him with sweet words, she asked him, "My dear boy who are you and why are you crying? I think you must have received the darsana of my Lord." Srinivasa replied, "I am Srinivasa of Cakandi, Isvari ordered me to meet you." Remembering the prophecy of Acyutananda, she



became extremely pleased to meet Srinivasa.

At that time Gopala Gosvami happened to pass by that place and fell at the feet of Sita devi who requested him to look after Srinivasa until she came back from her bath. After taking a bath Sita devi took Srinivasa and Gopala to her house. She then cooked, and after offering the food to Krsna, she served Gopala and Srinivasa. They spent that night peacefully in Santipura.

In the morning Srinivasa went to take his leave of Sita devi. At that time he inquired from her about Advaita Govinda. Sita devi replied, "What is the use of hearing about him, simply perform your own duty my son." However, knowing that the boy was adamant in his request, she relented and told the story of Advaita Govinda. "When Jagai and Madhai were delivered by Nityananda Prabhu, Gosvami angrily told Haridasa, 'If Gaura Nitai do not deliver me I shall .....' He then wrote a tarja (satire). Nityananda sent Jagadananda prabhu to Nilacala with that tarja. Prabhu took it as true and to help Nityananda in his preaching mission sent Ramdasa and Sundaranandana and others to assist him. He sent Kamdeva, Nagara, Nandini and some others to Advaita. But Nagara became envious of Advaita and began to proclaim that it was he who had accompanied Prabhu from Gauda and that he was the main assistant of Mahaprabhu in his preaching program. Hearing these proud words, Sita devi, the wife of Advaita, rejected Nagara, Kamdeva, Nandini, etc. from the group of Advaita's disciples. Sita devi and Advaita were particularly fond of their elder son Acyutananda as he was a completed devoted and renounced soul. Their other sons also took initiation from their father, but they were family men. Sita devi used to say that she was the maidservant of Sri Caitanya and those who would quarrel with the son of the maidservant of Caitanya (i.e. Acyutananda), should have no association with Advaita and his group of disciples." Srinivasa was grateful to hear this story and bowed to the feet of Sita devi again and again. He then took his leave.

Keeping faith in the feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa write Prem Vilasa

## CHAPTER 5

All glories to the merciful Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. My dear listeners, as soon as Srinivasa entered Khardaha he was filled with ecstatic love and began to dance. Viracandra prabhu, who was sitting near his mother at that time, suddenly began to tremble. Noting this, Thakurani said, "Most probably some great Bhagavata has come to our place. Perhaps it is Srinivasa of Cakandi which is the cause of your trembling. I also hear many people calling out the name of Radha Krsna. My son, these are all auspicious signs, please find out who has arrived here. If it is Srinivasa, bring him to me immediately to cool my burning heart."

At that time Isana came before her and said, "A beautiful boy is waiting outside, crying." She at once ordered her son to bring him in. When Viracandra came out of the house and saw the divine beauty of the boy, he at once recognized him to be Srinivasa and embraced him warmly. Srinivasa fell at his feet and Viracandra lifted him up affectionately. When Srinivasa related his identity, Viracandra said, "You are the most welcome friend. Providence is most merciful

to me to give me the chance to meet such a jewel-like devotee as you."

Viracandra brought Srinivasa into the house where Sri Isvari was waiting anxiously. Simply upon seeing the boy she was overcome with ecstatic love and began to call out the names of Caitanya and Nityananda. Heaving a sigh of relief she uttered the name of Navadvipa. While holding Srinivasa's hand, Viracandra requested his mother to give Srinivasa permission to go to Vrndavana. Sri Jahnavi said, "Go to Vrndavana as soon as possible and take shelter at the lotus feet of Rupa Gosvami. If you do not go soon you will not get their darsana. Go quickly to Vraja and seek the refuge of Gopala Bhatta." She ordered someone to bring prasadam for Srinivasa and told Viracandra to write a letter to Abhirama and give it to Isana to deliver. In the letter she suggested that Abhirama whip Srinivasa thrice, this was a riddle which no one could understand. Thereafter, Viracandra gave Srinivasa the remnants of Isvari's food. Relishing the prasadam, Srinivasa forgot himself in the ecstasy of love. Viracandra took hold of Srinivasa's hands, which brought him back to his senses. Viracandra also advised Srinivasa to go quickly to Vrndavana, otherwise he would miss Sri Rupa.

Isana then took Srinivasa to meet Abhirama. Bowing at the feet of Abhirama, Isana delivered Isvari's message requesting Abhirama to bestow devotional love upon Srinivasa. Abhirama happily greeted Srinivasa, offering him and Isana a seat. He was pleased that Isvari had suggested that he whip Srinivasa. But first he decided to test the boy by giving him eight kadis (ancient paise) and request him to spend the money as he saw fit. In this way he would detect whether the boy was detached or not.

When Srinivasa received the kadis he considered carefully what should be done with them. He decided to buy some rice and green bananas. Sitting on the bank of the river he cooked these items. Thakura Abhirama then told two Vaisnavas to go to Srinivasa and become his guests when the boy was about to eat. Obeying Abhirama they devotees went to Srinivasa just as he was offering the food to Krsna and water for washing the mouth. When the devotees requested Srinivasa for some food Srinivasa was most pleased to have the opportunity to serve the Vaisnavas. He served all the rice on three plates and requested the Vaisnavas to take prasadam. They were greatly satisfied and reported to Abhirama that the food served to them tasted just like nectar. Being pleased, Abhirama requested Isana to bring Srinivasa before him. Meanwhile Abhirama took his whip and placed it at his left side.

When Srinivasa arrived and bowed at Abhirama's feet, Gosvami whipped him thrice with his own hand. At that time Malini, the wife of Abhirama, entered the room and caught hold of Abhirama's hands and said, "Stop whipping the boy for he is overcome with divine love, this brahmana boy is filled with the spirit of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu." Malini then took Srinivasa into another room and served him with the utmost care. Srinivasa spent a very peaceful night in the home of Abhirama.

The following morning Abhirama instructed Srinivasa, "Go to Vrndavana quickly and take shelter at the feet of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. There you will meet greatly renounced devotees like Sanatana, Rupa, Lokanatha, and Raghunatha dasa. You will be able to achieve everything by the grace of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Now you should leave, Narahari Sarkara has been eagerly waiting for you. After meeting him go to Vrndavana."

When it was time to depart, Srinivasa began to cry, expressing his doubt that he would be able to perform and useful service for the Lord. Abhirama corrected him saying, "You do not know your own self. You have been blessed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He will help you to spread the sankirtana movement throughout the world. Now go to Vrndavana without delay. I also benedict you so that no one will harm you along the way." Feeling reassured, Srinivasa happily departed.

When Srinivasa meet Narahari Sarkara again, Thakura also advised him to start for Vrndavana soon, but first he should take permission from his mother. Early that evening Srinivasa went to his house and bowed at the feet of his mother. Her heart was broken when he requested to leave for Vrndavana. She did not want to be separated from her beloved son, who was her only shelter. Thus she forbade Srinivasa from going. Srinivasa, however, was relentless. repeatedly he requested his mother until she finally gave her consent. That night he dreamed that he began his journey to Vrndavana.

Meanwhile, in Vrndavana Sri Rupa Gosvami was becoming very anxious about delayed arrival of Srinivasa. Sri Rupa was feeling weak due to the disappearance of his beloved brother Sanatana. He did not know how much longer he could remain in this world. In the morning Sri Rupa went to the tomb of Sanatana. Sobbing, pitifully he called out the name of Srinivasa. From there he went to visit Sri Jiva Gosvami and others who had been living on the banks of the Jamuna. Seeing them Rupa Gosvami commented, "You are all looking very happy, but I am in great distress. I do not know why Srinivasa is taking so long to come to Vrndavana. He was born in a brahmana family simply to fulfill the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. But now it is urgent that arrive here soon, otherwise I am afraid that I will not meet him." Holding the hand of Sri Jiva he said, "I believe Srinivasa has started from Yajigrama last night. Please watch carefully for his arrival in Vraja."

In the meantime Srinivasa began his journey to Vrndavana. Fearing that the associates of Mahaprabhu would leave this world before his arrival in Vraja, Srinivasa practically ran the whole way to Vrndavana, absorbed in thoughts of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Rupa, Sanatana, and Bhatta Raghunatha. The fear of not meeting them constantly plagued his mind. In this way he reached Gadidvara and from there Patna. Some days he fasted entirely, while on others days he would take small amounts of food. When he reached Varanasi he went to the bank of the Ganges and visited the ghata on the river where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu had once taken His bath. Srinivasa bowed his head to the ghata. On the western side of the river was the house of Candrasekhara. Previously Sanatana Gosvami, in the guise of a darvesa, used to wait for the darsana of Mahaprabhu in the western wing of this house. A tulasi tree was now growing on this spot and Srinivasa offered his obeisances there. He then entered into the house where he met an aged Vaisnava. Srinivasa bowed at the devotee's feet. The elderly Vaisnava embraced Srinivasa and inquired about his identity. The devotee of overjoyed to meet Srinivasa and explained that he was a disciple of Sri Candrasekhara, by whose desire he was staying there to look after the house. He then showed Srinivasa the seat of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Feeling great separation from the Lord and His devotees, the elderly devotee became distraught and fell unconscious. With the utmost care Srinivasa helped him to return to come to his senses. The two spent the entire

night discussing the pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

In the morning Srinivasa took his leave and carried on to Prayaga. He took his bath in the Triveni and remained there for the day. When he resumed his journey the following day, a pious gentleman offered Srinivasa four paise, which Srinivasa lived off of for two days. The tiring journey took its toll on Srinivasa's health and he began to inquire how much further it was to Vrndavana. When he found out that he was still four days journey from Vrndavana, Srinivasa took his bath at a well and lay down under a tree, utterly fatigued.

At that time five Vaisnavas from Vrndavana happened to pass by. Finding Srinivasa completely exhausted, they gave him some dried peas and gur. After eating, Srinivasa drank some water and was rejuvenated. The Vaisnava's and Srinivasa then chanted happily together for some time. Srinivasa enquired from them about Vrndavana and they told him that there he could meet Rupa, Gopala Bhatta, Lokanatha Gosvami, Sri Jiva, and Bhugarbha. They also reported that Sri Sanatana Gosvami had departed from the world. With a heavy heart, Srinivasa bid farewell and continued on towards Vraja. He arrived at Agra, and from there went to Gokula. After crossing the river Jamuna he arrived at the house of Nanda. Early the next morning he entered Mathura, the birth place of Lord Krsna, and visited many holy places there. Seeing the beauty of Mathura, he was reminded of the descriptions of Vaikuntha as given in the scriptures. The residents of Mathura were all of cheerful disposition. Srinivasa visited Visrama Ghata where he placed the sacred water of the place on his head and sat facing east. While sitting there he overheard three Vrajavasis passing by talking about the disappearance of Sanatana, then Raghunatha Bhatta, and recently Rupa Gosvami. Unable to believe his ears, Srinivasa approached the passersby with folded hands and asked what they were talking about. They replied, "O brother, what can we say? Vrndavana is now empty. It is our misfortune that we did not die before all these happenings. We cannot bear the separation of Sri Rupa Gosvami."

Srinivasa was stunned. Immediately he got up and began walking, lamenting pitifully. "O Providence, I cannot accuse you, but my ill fate is drowning me in an ocean of misery. Blinded by tears, I am unable to see the path before me." Lamenting in this way, Srinivasa wandered aimlessly throughout the streets completely oblivious to his surroundings. Eventually he sat down under a tree and decided that he would simply return home. It is impossible to describe the miserable condition of Srinivasa. Only by the grace of my spiritual master am I able to give some description of this incident.

## CHAPTER 6

All glories to Sri Gauracandra, Nityananda, Advaitacandra, and all the devotees. All glories to Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, their lotus feet are my only shelter. Listen attentively as I continue the narration of Prem Vilasa.

Sitting under a tree Srinivasa cried incessantly. He rolled on the ground like a madman, and cursed his ill-fate, feeling that he had been deceived in every respect. The orders which he had received from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu could never be executed. He was unable to meet Mahaprabhu in Purusottama, neither

was he able to study the Bhagavata from Pandita Gosvami. Despite the fact that Narahari Sarkara Thakura, Sri Isvari, and Sri Jahnava had all ordered him to go to Vrndavana to meet Rupa and Sanatana, he was now unable to execute their desire. He felt his life had become useless. He desired to take shelter at the feet of Gopala Bhatta, but without attaining the association of Sri Rupa Gosvami how could he remain alive. What was the use of living? Lamenting in this way Srinivasa laid down under the tree like a dead man. Suddenly Rupa and Sanatana appeared before him and said, "Get up my dear boy. You are the embodiment of Mahaprabhu's love and are most to us. We have been waiting for you for so long, now why have you decided to go back instead of going to Vrndavana? We wish you all success. Go to Vrndavana and take shelter at the feet of Gopala Bhatta, you will receive our blessings through him. Live with Sri Jiva Gosvami for some time and he will teach you about the science of devotional service."

Srinivasa got up and bowed at their feet. With awe he observed their beautiful golden complexions. They wore a tuft of hair on their head, their foreheads were painted with tilaka, and tulasi beads hung from their necks. The names of Radha and Krsna were painted on their bodies, and they wore kaupinas and an outer garment (vahirvasa). They uttered the holy name, counting on their fingers, occasionally chanting Radha Krsna. A sweet aroma arose from their bodies, and their sweet smiles revealed their beautiful teeth. Srinivasa fell on the ground in ecstasy. Rupa and Sanatana placed their feet upon his head and then disappeared. Srinivasa changed his mind and decided to continue on to Vrndavana.

In Vrndavana, Rupa Gosvami informed Sri Jiva that Srinivasa was in Mathura and tomorrow he would come to Vrndavana and take shelter at Sri Jiva's feet. He would arrive in the evening around the time of offering arati to Sri Govinda Deva. Absorbed in the ecstasy of love, Srinivasa would fall on the left side of the southern door of the temple, Sri Jiva could find him there. He also instructed Jiva Gosvami to keep Srinivasa with him for the night and then take him the following day to meet Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. Sri Rupa instructed Sri Jiva to teach Srinivasa from all the sastras and then help him to carry the books to Gauda. Saying this Sri Rupa disappeared.

As Srinivasa neared Vrndavana he became ecstatic and danced all the way. Observing the golden beauty of Vrndavana, Srinivasa became more and more anxious to see the beautiful deities of Sri Govinda and Gopinatha. He arrived at the temple of Sri Govinda Deva in the evening just at the time of arati. He stood behind the other visitors and was overwhelmed by the sound of the flute, pakhoyaja, and kangara. As the other pilgrims paid their respects and entered the temple, Srinivasa slowly advanced forward and stood on the terrace of the middle portion of the temple (Jagamohana). As Rupa Gosvami had predicted, Srinivasa was overwhelmed with ecstatic love and fell on the left side of the temple door. While some of the people were whispering about this newcomer, Sri Jiva arrived and bowed before the deity. Many companions accompanied Sri Jiva carrying lamps in their hands. Searching on the left side of the temple Sri Jiva found Srinivasa lying unconscious. Jiva sat beside Srinivasa and caressed his body. Realising that Srinivasa was in a deep trance, Sri Jiva carried him to his house.

Towards the second half of the night Srinivasa made some sounds indicating that he was returning to external consciousness. Sri Jiva placed his

hand on Srinivasa's body, and eventually Srinivasa awoke, chanting the name of Govinda. When Srinivasa confirmed his identity as the son of Caitanya dasa, Sri Jiva Gosvami immediately embraced him, mentally thanking Rupa and Sanatana for sending him such a jewel like friend.

The following morning Sri Jiva took Srinivasa to meet Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. From a distance Srinivasa bowed to Bhatta, explaining his desire to become his servant. Gopala Bhatta happily welcomed him saying, "Come here my son, Srinivasa. It is my pleasure to have your association in my old age." Srinivasa humbly touched the feet of his preceptor, and Gopala Bhatta Gosvami placed his feet on the head of Srinivasa saying, " I am feeling intense sorrow due to the disappearance of the Gosvamis. Look at me, I have become like a skeleton. Now, I have no one take shelter in. Why have you come here so late? They also were desirous of meeting you."

Srinivasa replied, "O my master, please forgive me, I went to Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami filled with an intense desire to study the Bhagavata under him. Unfortunately his copy of the Srimad Bhagavatam was illegible due to the numerous tears shed upon the pages by Pandita Gosvami. I therefore went to Khandagrama to acquire a new book, however, when I was returning Purusottama found out about Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami's demise. Devastated by this news I went to Navadvipa to see Sri Isvari and she ordered me to meet Abhirama Gosvami. They all advised me to go swiftly to Vrndavana. Now, I can only lament that I did not come more quickly."

Hearing this story, Gopala Bhatta Gosvami began to cry. "You are more fortunate than me," he said. I never saw the lotus feet of Nityananda Prabhu or Sri Advaitacandra. Nor did I ever have the opportunity to worship the feet of Sri Isvari. Narahari Sarkara Thakura also turned his face from me. Now Rupa and Sanatana have also left me. Misery is now my constant companion."

Sri Jiva, who was sitting at Bhatta's side, said despairingly, "I was also deprived of their association. What is the use of this worthless life."

Srinivasa began to cry while holding the feet of the two Gosvamis. After some time Sri Jiva and Srinivasa returned to their residence. There they spend their days and nights absorbed in discussions of Krsna's pastimes.

An auspicious date was fixed for the initiation of Srinivasa and when the day arrived Srinivasa, accompanied by Jiva Gosvami, went to the place of Gopala Bhatta, carrying with him a tulasi manjari garland and sandalwood paste.

Gopala Bhatta Gosvami asked Srinivasa what the essence of Vaisnava religion is. Srinivasa replied, "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the only guru and the norms have been written by Sri Rupa Gosvami, who is the guide of all devotees life after life. The devotee must always be obedient to his guru."

Sri Jiva agreed with the words of Srinivasa, and advised him to always remain faithful to these precepts. With great happiness Gopala Bhatta got up and requested Srinivasa to follow him. Together they went to the temple of Sri Radha Ramana. They first washed their feet then entered the temple and paid their respects. Gosvami told Srinivasa to sit on his left side, facing east. Srinivasa did as he was told, then holding the feet of Gopala Bhatta, he dedicated himself to the lotus feet of his guru. Gosvami accepted Srinivasa and ordered him, "Wash your hands again and begin meditating on Sri Vrajendra Kumara, thinking of Sri Radhika on his left side and surrounded by Lalita and the other Manjaris." With

Gosvami's help, Srinivasa worshiped all of them individually with Tulasi garlands and sandalwood paste. In this way he made Srinivasa one of the companions of the Manjaris. He then ordered Srinivasa to again worship Sri Radha Ramana, as He would fulfill all his desires." Srinivasa applied sandalwood paste on the chest of the deity and tulasi at the feet of the deity. Placing his right hand on his head, he chanted the holy name and then got the five names of Radha Krsna. He chanted Radha Krsna nama while counting it on his fingers. Sri Bhatta Gosvami then gave him the Kamavija and told him, "Follow and remember these hymns while you meditate on Radha Krsna. You are Mani Manjari in the group of Manjaris under Sri Gunamanjari. You should practice worship by following the method called ragatmika vajana. An accomplished worshiper always wants to perform service to Radha Krsna. You should know the 64 methods of worship. If you commit any offense in executing such worship of Radha Krsna, everything will be lost. The practice of austerity is also a part of executing devotional service to Krsna. If you can fully absorb yourself in devotion to Lord Krsna, certainly you will attain His lotus feet.

Now this attentively as I describe the stumbling blocks on the path of devotional service. He who meticulously follows all devotional practices, yet indulges in criticizing others, will not achieve the desired success. A banyan tree is huge, but its fruits are very small and numerous. Similarly, sins double and re-double daily\*\*. One who is able to be detached from material life can attain great devotional qualities. Through study of the sastras all you will understand everything, but now try to understand what I am telling you. A traveller on the path of devotion must be extremely cautious on his journey if he wants to reach the desired goal of Krsna bhakti."

Keeping faith in the lotus feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa. (59-67)

## CHAPTER 7

All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Advaitacandra, and all the devotees of Gaura. All glories to Sri Jahnava and Viracandra whose lotus feet are my only resort. Glories to the listeners, please hear attentively as I describe the wonderful pastimes of the Lord and His devotees. Mahaprabhu has explained that hearing the pastimes of the incarnations of the Lord and His associates is the formula for achieving peace of mind.

In the previous yuga Krsna appeared in the land of Vrndavana. This has been described throughout the scriptures. Vrajamandala has a circumference of 84 miles and is the residence of Sri Krsna and His companions. That same Sri Krsna, along with His parents, friends, sakhas, and sakhis appeared in Kali-yuga in the land of Navadvipa. Maha Visnu appeared as Advaita Acarya in Santipura. He was the crest-jewel of all the devotees and the executor of the Lord's mission. There were 24 ascetic devotees of Mahaprabhu, including Madhavendra Puri, which were divided into eight separate groups. All of them were members of Sri Krsna's family.

Saci Thakurani was the wife of Jagannatha Misra. Saci and her husband were very proud of their attractive elder son, Visvarupa, who was a great scholar. Saci's father lived at Belpukhuria. His elder son was Yogesvara Pandita, next was Ratnagarva Pandita, and then Saci devi. The son of Yogesvara Pandita was Lokanatha Pandita, a highly qualified man. He Visvarupa's schoolmate and constant companion. After some time Visvarupa also became great friends with Advaita Acarya. They all used to spend their time together discussing various scriptures. Within a short time they both became accomplished scholars. However, Visvarupa had no interest in material life and very soon decided to renounce the world and become an ascetic. Despite the pleading of his bereaved parents, Visvambhara accepted the danda, kaupina, and saffron colored dress of a sannyasi and was renamed Sankaranya Puri. Pandita Lokanatha became his disciple and traveled with Visvarupa as his assistant. After two years Visvarupa departed from this world, but was reborn in the womb of Padmavati, the wife of Hadai Pandita of Ekacakra village in Radha. She first conceived on the day of Ramanavami. Ten months later, on the thirteenth day of the solar eclipse in the month of Magha, Nityananda took his birth, giving tremendous joy to his fortunate parents. For fourteen years Nityananda played happily along with his boyhood friends.

One day a sannyasi came to the house of Hadai Pandita to beg alms. The pious Hadai Pandita happily agreed, requesting what the sannyasi would like. "Give me your son," the sannyasi said, "he will assist me as I travel on pilgrimage." Although Hadai was heart-broken, he kept his promise and turned over his son to the care of the sannyasi. Thereafter, Nityananda Prabhu became an avadhuta. He traveled on pilgrimage for many years, absorbed in remembrance of Sri Nandanandana. Once he met Isvara Puri who said to him smilingly, "You have finished your pilgrimage, now you must begin your mission. Krsna has manifested Himself in Navadvipa, go and search for Him." Nityananda Prabhu and Visvarupa (alias Sankararaya) were the same personality, both were manifestations of Sankarsana, Balarama.

Meanwhile, the associates of the Lord took their birth, scattered throughout various countries, thereafter the Mahaprabhu, Himself, appeared in Navadvipa where He relished transcendental pastimes. Just as all rivers eventually meet with the ocean, similarly, the associates of Mahaprabhu were gradually drawn towards the ocean of love, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Now I shall narrate the glories of one of the dear-most associates of the Lord. In the village of Talagadi in the district of Jessore, east of Navadvipa, Lokanatha took his birth in the family of a Kulina brahmana named Padmanava Cakravarti. His mother, Sita devi, was the abode of all good qualities. They arranged for their son's education with the utmost care, and within a short time Lokanatha was renowned as a great scholar. Yet, to their dismay, day by day Lokanatha became increasingly disinterested in the affairs of the material world. In desperation his parents tried to arrange for his marriage. Thus Lokanatha, absorbed in thoughts of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, made plans to leave his family. One winter night in the month of Agrahayana, he left home at midnight and travelled eight miles until the sun rose in the East.

Not finding their son in the morning, his parents were overwhelmed with misery. Meanwhile, Lokanatha arrived at Navadvipa and eagerly began to ask the



people were the house of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was located. In great anticipation he approached the house, wondering what he would say to the Lord and whether Mahaprabhu would accept him or not.

When Lokanatha reached the house, he found the Lord sitting amongst His associates, Gadadhara, Srivasa, Murari, and others. Observing the extraordinary beauty of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he immediately burst into tears of ecstasy. Seeing Lokanatha, the Lord got up and embraced him warmly and offered him a seat. Lokanatha and Gadadhara Pandita exchanged their blessings and embraced each other. Relishing each other's association, they began discussing topics related to Krsna, completely oblivious to the material world. Lokanatha also had the good fortune to meet Nityananda Prabhu and Advaita Acarya. In this way Lokanatha joyfully passed five days in the company of the Lord and His associates.

One day Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked, "Lokanatha tell me how were you able to leave your home?"

"I know no nothing except your lotus feet," Lokanatha replied, "everything else is useless and illusory. I am an ignorant fool, yet I have been drawn here, as if forcibly pulled by the rope of your mercy."

In private Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu revealed His innermost thoughts to Lokanatha. "I feel dissatisfied remaining silent about the nature of My appearance and mission, but who can I speak to about this confidential subject matter? I can influence some to respect Nityananda Prabhu and Advaita, but who will actually hear from Me and understand My mission? Some people criticize Me, and others even jeer at Me. I have come to Gauda manifesting the mood of Sri Radha. I want to experience Sri Radha's feeling of separation from her beloved Krsna. For My sake, Srimati Radhika has given up her family and wealth, completely dedicating herself to My service. The memory of Me has caused her to become lean and thin. She is not even concerned about her appearance and she never looks at the face of another man. Eager for My company, she remains constantly absorbed in hearing and chanting about Me. Being angry with Me, she used to complain about My character to the flower groves and the Jamuna, but upon seeing Me, she would immediately forget her anger. To Sri Radha, one days separation from me is like a hundred years. She is My beloved, together we enjoyed transcendental pastimes in Vrndavana. It is because of her that I want to live in Vrndavana. She is My life and I am the same to her. Only the sakhis are able to comprehend the essence of our pastimes. And it is only to you, Lokanatha, that I am able to disclose these confidential topics."

"Now listen as I describe another unfortunate incident. There is one brahmana who has committed a great sin by criticising Me. He does not know that Krsna is the only guru of this universe. Forgetting this, he arrogantly travels about, worshiping other deities, not knowing that Krsna is the Supreme Lord and that all deities have emanated from His mouth. He does not understand that by rejecting Krsna he has become less than a vaisya or sudra.

"It is My plan that on the third day of the full moon in the month of Magha, I shall accept the accept the renounced order of life and leave home on pilgrimage. But who will understand My mind, or My desire? I am always absorbed in the mood of Sri Radha, who always wore blue colored garments--the colour of My complexion. However, when we were separated she would wear a saffron colored dress. Always regarding herself as My maidservant, she and her

confidants gave up their lives. Now I shall also give up My life for her. Therefore my complexion is of the same colour as her's. Soon I shall wear the saffron colored dress of separation and gladly become her servant. I shall meditate on her and sing her glories constantly. I cannot repay My debt to her, even in a hundred years. I am telling you Lokanatha, to honour her properly I shall flood the universe by singing her praises. After attaining her love, I shall dance, cry, and roll on the ground in sankirtana." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then began to cry helplessly, uttering the names of Radha and Vrndavana.

Lokanatha tried to pacify the Lord, taking Him on his lap. Trembling, Mahaprabhu said, "The groves of Vrndavana are the only witness to my misery. Oh Lokanatha, go to Vrndavana. I will also send Rupa Gosvami there shortly, after empowering him with My own spirit. Sanatana, Sri Gopala Bhatta, Raghunatha Bhatta, and at last, Raghunatha Dasa will also come to Vrndavana. Cooperatively you must write devotional books and engage in the worship of the Lord."

"Because you are My dear devotee, I want to tell you more about the process of devotional service. God can be attained through different \_\_\_\_, this is called lakshana. Devotional love is of two kinds; svakiya and parakiya. Now I shall explain the characteristics of these devotional sentiments. The people of Dvaraka possess svakiya love, and the gopis possess parakiya love. There are two leading ladies among the Vraja women-Radha and Candravali. They are of two different natures. Radha stands on the left side of Krsna and Candravali on the right side." While speaking in this way, the Lord's mood changed and He advised Lokanatha, "Listen carefully to My instructions. When an accomplished devotee is reborn, he forgets his previous pastimes. Therefore, I take it upon Myself to educate that devotee, so that by hearing the sastra his memory will be revived. Therefore, I want to Rupa and Sanatana to publish many devotional books. You must all accept them or I will be very disappointed."

Lokanatha said, Oh my Lord, please tell me more so that all doubts will be removed from my mind. Vyasadeva wrote many books in which he explained the methods for worship of Krsna, but perhaps he has not given the complete explanation."

Mahaprabhu continued, "Kala amisa and Vilasa are the features of Krsna. The sastras have described this, but the description of Vraja worship has been omitted. Vraja worship is based on dasya, sakhya, vatsalya, and madhurya bhavas. Aisyarya bhava is missing in it. Madhurya bhava cannot be understood by many. The parakiya pastimes of the Lord are beyond the comprehension of ordinary persons. Vyasa has discussed aisyarya bhava in his Bhagavata and Puranas but he did not elaborate on the other mood of devotion. Sri Rupa, by dint of his own realization and being empowered by My spirit, will clearly define these confidential devotional sentiments in Krsna lila. Sri Rupa is now living with the king, but soon I shall send him to Vrndavana to write. In his books he will propagate the method of worship of Vraja, fully describing the process through which a devotee is able to attain the mercy of the lotus feet of Sri Radhika. Those feet, for which I am always thirsty, I shall help mankind to attain. Thus the entire world will become mad with ecstatic love. You must help Me to fulfill My mission. Write to me regularly and I shall direct you accordingly. Vrndavana is the proper place for you to reside. If I am fortunate enough, I shall again get your

darsana. But I want to tell you that without following varnasrama no one can attain the favour of Krsna. I shall stay in Nilacala for some time, then I will go to Gauda. As an ascetic, I shall then travel to all the holy places of pilgrimage."

Lokanatha inquired further, "Please tell me more about varnasrama. How can a devotee attain the mercy of Krsna by following varnasrama. And after attaining the favour of Krsna where does the living entity go?"

The Lord replied, "A devotee who follows the four types of varnas and asramas can attain the favour of Krsna. Even one who properly executes the duties of family life as a means to reach Krsna, will achieve the association of the Lord. However, the Vrajabasis do not follow this method; they do not worship Krsna as God. Their worship is imbued with spontaneous love, devoid of any selfish interest. Those endowed with spontaneous love do not care for the strictures of the scriptures. Such devotees certainly attain the feet of Sri Krsna. My dear Lokanatha, you do not know who you are. You are actually Manjulali, the constant companion of Sri Radha. Manjulali beautifully decorates the transcendental body of Sri Radha. Her happiness is the happiness of Radhika, and she becomes morose at the sorrow of Radha."

Hearing all of this from Mahaprabhu, Lokanatha began to cry. The Lord continued, "Please go to Vrndavana to satisfy me. Travel through Girikunda, Govardhana, Yavata, Varsana, and other private flower groves and be happy to live in those places. Start at once and do not worry think about Me. Go to your original home and worship the feet of Kisora Kisori. Build a cottage in Rasasthali which is surrounded by trees like Tamala, Vakula and Vata. Visit Vamsivata, Nidhuvana, and take rest in Dhira Samira. Bathe in the Jamuna and practice living on alms. As an accomplished devotee, you will get numerous disciples. Rupa and others will join you later."

The following morning Caitanya Mahaprabhu again instructed Lokanatha to go to Vrndavana and embraced him lovingly. When Lokanatha fell at his feet, Mahaprabhu placed His foot on his head. Holding the hands of Lokanatha, the Lord began to cry. Forgetting his own identity, Lokanatha also shed tears like torrents of rain. Only a loving master and his faithful servant can realise the meaning of this crying.

Gadadhara Pandita, as well as his disciple Bhugarbha, were present at that time. Bhugarbha eagerly approached his guru and requested, "Please be kind and allow me to go to Vrndavana. This has been my long cherished desire." Hearing this Mahaprabhu said, "Gadai, permit him to go with Lokanatha." Gadadhara consented saying, "Go happily with Lokanatha and travel all the way discussing Krsna lila." Both of them bowed at the feet of Mahaprabhu and Gadadhara Pandita, as the devotees shouted out the names of Hari joyfully.

Although the Lord had given the order, when Lokanatha left for Vrndavana, Prabhu began to cry helplessly and Gadadhara Pandita cried for his Bhugarbha. Lokanatha and Bhugarbha traveled happily, sometimes singing the glories of Krsna, while other times singing the glories of Gauranga. In this way they reached Rajmahala. At this point they were uncertain as to which way to go. They inquired from some passersby, who advised that not to go to Vrndavana as the roads leading there were filled with notorious dacoits. Worried that they would never reach Vrndavana, they decided to go in the direction of Tajpura. Eventually they arrived at the village of Puraria, and shortly thereafter reached

Ayodhya. Although the journey had gone well so far, they were frightened that they would not be able to fulfill the Lord's order to go to Vrndavana. Nevertheless, they continued. Eventually they arrived in Lucknow, and on the twenty-third day they reached Agra. There they took bath in the Yamuna, then accepted some prasadam. Two days later they entered Gokula and visited the birthplace of Krsna. Finally, the following day they reached Vrndavana, where they meet Vaisnava Gosvami and bowed at his feet.\*\*

Now I shall explain something wonderful. Gadadhara Pandita Gosvami, the favorite disciple of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, was the incarnation of Sri Radha. In his previous life Bhugarbha Mahasaya was Nandimukhi. At that time Nandimukhi was good friends with Manjulali (Lokanatha). Caitanyacandra, the only master of the universe and the wish-fulfilling tree of all His devotees, understood this very well.

Lokanatha and Bhugarbha traveled throughout the dhama, sometimes rolling on the ground in ecstasy. They observed the beauty of Govardhana and from there went to Yavata, the abode of Sri Radhika, and acknowledged all the places where the sakhis used to perform their pastimes. From there they went to the house of Nanda, then to Sanketa kunj. There Lokanatha took the hands of Bhugarbha and asked him to describe the pastimes which had formerly taken place there. Relishing the pastimes of the Lord, they both began to cry out the name of Radha, oblivious to everything else. Thus they decided to halt there for a day. The local residents received them warmly and brought them delicious foodstuffs.

The next day was spent absorbed in ecstatic love on the hill of Varsana. In the morning they took their baths in the lake and then circumambulated Varsana. They decided to stay there that day and were served with great care by the people of the area. Next they visited Kali ghat, Nidhuvana, and Rasasthali. When they arrived at Chira ghat, they were overwhelmed by the beauty of the forest. They began to search for a proper place to build their hut, and at last found an appropriate tree.

When settled in, Lokanatha told Bhugarbha, "I am certain that there is no hope of ever seeing Caitanya Mahaprabhu again. Knowing this well, Prabhu has sent us here, depriving us of the opportunity to observe His pastimes with His devotees." In lamentation he called out, "Oh my Lord! when will I have the fortune of seeing the lotus feet of Rupa and Sanatana?" Both of them began to wait eagerly for the moment when they would meet the two brothers.

Word quickly spread throughout Vraja about the arrival of two brahmanas. Struck by the beauty and disposition of Lokanatha and Bhugarbha, the residents did not regard them as ordinary men. People commented that these two sannyasis were extremely polished and polite, noting that they were equal to all persons, advising everyone to worship Krsna with devotion. Thus their glories spread far and wide and people, even from distant places, brought different varieties of prasadam for the two friends. In this way they became the life of the people of Vraja. Completely indifferent to material life, Lokanatha and Bhugarbha lived a secluded life in Sri Vrndavana dhama.

I am incapable of completely describing the glories of Lokanatha and Bhugarbha. I am simply trying to execute the order of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra. When Sri Jahnava went to Vrndavana, I accompanied her, along with my brother Ramacandra Dasa and other Vaisnavas. Thus I had the opportunity to witness

many pastimes with my own eyes. There Isvari met Sri Rupa and other Gosvamis. Keeping faith in the lotus feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa write Prem Vilasa. (68-87)

## CHAPTER 8

All glories to the ever merciful Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. All glories to the resort of all devotee, Nityananda Prabhu. All glories to Visvanvara\*, the image of kindness. All glories to Advaitacandra, and Viracandra, the ocean of love. All glories to all the devotees of the Lord. Simply by hearing the pastimes of Caitanya Mahaprabhu the mind becomes surcharged devotion. Listen carefully as I continue the narration of the loving pastimes of the Lord and His devotees. Now I shall describe the biography of Narottama dasa Thakura.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu decorated Gauda with the ornament of the chanting of the holy name. This sankirtana movement is the only means of strength in this age of Kali, simply by hearing the holy name one's desires are fulfilled and the mind is filled with love. He who has no faith in Harinama, is surely devoid of devotional love. He who desires to attain the lotus feet of Krsna, must chant the holy name of the Lord sincerely.

Once Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu started for Vrndavana from Gauda, however, along the way He changed His plans and went to Natsala, saying that He would remain there rather than go to Vrndavana. Nityananda Prabhu humorously said, "Previously you accepted the life of an ascetic and left Navadvipa. Now you have decided to stay on the bank of the Padmavati. It is good of you."\*\* Prabhu said, "Sripada, listen to Me, \*\*the place which can give divine pleasure is the actual place of birth. You will know why I had left Vrndavana and come to Nilacala. When Sanatana will meet Rupa, they will guide the other acaryas." Mahaprabhu took his leave and went to a nearby village named Catnapura in Gauda. There he met Sanatana and after instructing him on the science of devotional service, the Lord went to Natsala. As Natsala was a place of Krsna, as soon as Prabhu arrived there, He became ecstatic in love which only Vrndavana could give.

One day while dancing in kirtana, Caitanya Mahaprabhu suddenly began to call out the name of Narottama. Holding on to Nityananda for support, the Lord shed streams of tears. Thinking Mahaprabhu was in trance, the devotees stopped kirtana and standing around Prabhu, they began to chant softly and sweetly. Chanting Harinama, the Lord dropped to the ground, Nityananda being unable to support His weight any longer. Mahaprabhu sat on the ground with his arms around the neck of Nityananda Prabhu, crying out the name of Mathura repeatedly, which pierced the hearts of the devotees. The residents of Natsala rushed to see the spectacle, as the Lord rolled on the ground, sometimes shouting the name of Mathura and sometimes calling out to Lalita, Visakha, or Campakalata.

Sri Caitanya's state was so drastic that Nityananda Prabhu was frightened that He would give up His life. In great consternation He began to wonder why he had brought the Lord to this village.

In desperation the devotees began chanting the name of Jagannatha loudly. This brought Gauracandra back to His senses. Getting up, He again called out, "Narottama, Narottama."

Speaking amongst themselves the devotees decided that they should take Caitanya Mahaprabhu back to Nilacala. They thought that taking the Lord across the river Padmavati would save Him. The devotees could understand by Prabhu's behaviour that some great devotee must be about to take his birth.

Sri Caitanya continued to wet the body of Nityananda Prabhu with His tears. Nityananda did His best to pacify the Lord and asked Him where they should go. Prabhu answered, "Let us go to Nilacala, much work is to be done there." Nityananda agreed, but out of curiosity, asked why the Lord had called out the name of Narottama during sankirtana.

Mahaprabhu replied, "Listen carefully Nityananda. Sankirtana is everything to Me, I want to assure that in the future the nectarean ocean of the sankirtana movement will continue to flow. As long as you are alive My love will not vanish, but what will happen after We have gone. Therefore I want to keep deposit My love in a suitable person, so that the sankirtana movement will continue to spread and flood the entire universe."

Nityananda Prabhu asked, "Is there a proper person to whom you can distribute Your love?"

Mahaprabhu replied, "I shall keep My love in Gadera Hata on the bank of the Padmavati. In the future Padmavati will give it to Narottama, who will take birth during My lifetime."

"Where is Gadera Hata," Nityananda asked. "Please take Me there."

Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Both the banks of the Padmavati are very pleasant places and Padmavati is flowing between them.\*\*" Nityananda was very pleased to hear this and insisted on going there. Thus they went to the village of Kudrapura, where they witnessed the beauty of Padmavati.

The following morning Mahaprabhu went to the river Padmavati. He took his bath and then began kirtana. While singing, again, the Lord shouted the name of Narottama. Nityananda Prabhu stopped kirtana and explained to the devotees that something extraordinary was about to take place. The amazed devotees, entered into the waters of the Padmavati, along with Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. Padmavati, whose banks were overflowing, became completely still upon experiencing the loving touch of the Lord. Meanwhile, the people of the village were suddenly overcome with feelings of divine love. Padmavati then surged forth, overflowing her banks and flooding the entire village. As it was not the rainy season, now one could understand why the village was flooded.

Nityananda Prabhu said to the Lord, "Prabhu, it is good that You are distributing Your love, but the whole village has been inundated by the river."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu turned to Padmavati and said, "Take My love and keep it with you for Narottama." Padmavati replied, "Prabhu, how will I know who Narottama is?" The Lord said, "He whose touch will force you to surge forth with floods, will be Narottama. You will give this love to that Narottama." Filled with happiness, Padmavati took the love from Mahaprabhu. When the Lord bade farewell, the floods in the village immediately receded and the residents were greatly relieved.

Nityananda Prabhu told Gauracandra that the beauty of the village tempted Him to stay there. \*\*Prabhu said, "Well you will help Narottama to get this love. I shall be very near to Narottama." Thereafter they crossed the Padmavati and continued on to Nilacala.

The actual meaning of love and how it is to be attained is very difficult to comprehend. I am unqualified to speak on the subject matter, but all of this has been explained by Sri Rupa Gosvami. Simply under the order of My Prabhu, I have disclosed this beautiful pastime in Gadera Hata. One who simply listens respectfully to such stories can easily attain divine love. Remaining faithful to the feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa. (88-94)

## CHAPTER 9

When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was in Nilacala, He sent Nityananda Prabhu to Gauda to the sankirtana mission. Nityananda manifested love there, and its outcome was Viracandra. Millions bow to the feet of Viracandra, who also spread the sankirtana movement throughout Gauda. Although these topics are difficult to comprehend, nevertheless I continue to write.

When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, and Advaita Acarya were present in this world, the mission of Mahaprabhu spread and the people became madly performed sankirtana, absorbed in ecstatic love. The rasa which Gauraraya tasted with His devotees, Svarupa and Ramananda, would be tasted by in the future through the scriptures. Sri Caitanya had sent his most confidential devotees to Vrndavana to propagate His mission there, which crippled the sankirtana movement in Gauda. To save the situation the Lord's plan was two-fold; one was the appearance of Narottama in Gadera hata, and the other was the appearance of Srinivasa in Rarha. I am writing all this by the order of Prabhu. Without him I have no power to speak.

In hopes of getting a son, Majumdar worshiped his Salagrama sila, offering tulasi leaves. His sincere prayer reached God, and Majumdar was informed by a voice in the sky that he would son be the father of a son named Narottama. The child would be conceived in the month of Vaisakha and after his birth he would shower the earth with love of Godhead.

Narayani, the devoted wife of Majumdar, told her husband that in a dream she had seen an extraordinary person come out of the body of Majumdar and enter into her body. These auspicious signs filled both husband and wife with jubilation.

One day an astrologer came to the house of Majumdar and after analyzing everything, declared that a male issue would be born to Narayani who would destroy the miseries in the world. He would also bring great fortune to the family of Raya. In the meantime a letter came from the Zamindar of the village granting two thousand coins to Majumdar, confirming the astrologer's prophecy. The astrologer continued, "As soon as your son takes birth your pleasure will increase unlimitedly, and the miseries of the residents of this village will vanish." He also declared that Narottama would be born on the full moon day in the month of Magha, and would become famous as a great devotee. Pleased with the

predictions, Majumdar showered the astrologer with gifts. Ten months after the month of Vaisakha the auspicious moment arrived and Narottama was born in the house of Majumdar. Both parents and neighbors became mad with joy. (95-99)

## CHAPTER 10

As soon as Narottama took birth, the musicians, sitting at the doorway of the house, began playing and continued for eight days. Hundreds of brahmanas of the village constantly chanted the Vedic hymns in celebration.

Six months passed swiftly and his parents then performed the ceremony of offering rice to the child. On that occasion they fed many brahmanas and relatives, and distributed wealth amongst them. When the king heard about the beautiful boy, he sent many gifts in gold and silver, and Narayani happily decorated her son.

At the age of five, the ceremony of piercing the ears of the boy took place. At this time Narottama began his education and proved to be a brilliant student. In this way the years passed and his parents were increasingly enchanted by the charming beauty of their son. When he reached the age of twelve, they decided to give their son in marriage and called on an astrologer to arrange a suitable match. Noting Narottama's growing apathy for material life, the parents were anxious to tie him down to household life. But Narottama had other plans; he constantly thought of leaving his home.

One night Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared in Narottama's dream and advised him to go to the Padmavati the next morning to take his bath and receive the love that she was holding for Narottama. The Lord also explained that marriage would create problems for him.

Narottama woke up and in the morning, without waking anyone, rushed towards the Padmavati, joyfully chanting the holy name all the way. When he reached the river, he first bowed to Padmavati then entered the water, chanting the name of Gauranga. As Mahaprabhu had predicted, immediately Padmavati's water surged forth and inundated the land. Remembering the Lord's prediction, Padmavati appeared before Narottama and said, "For your benefit Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu previously deposited his love in me. After doing so, the Lord went to Nilacala. Now please take charge of it. I am no longer able to bear the burden of the love of these two brothers, Caitanya and Nityananda." Saying this, Padmavati held Narottama's hands and took him with her. She then gave him the love, warning him not to eat it or he would become mad with love of Godhead. But Narottama was overwhelmed with thirst, thus he drank the love and immediately his complexion changed to a golden colour. He became so ecstatic with love that he laughed, cried, danced and sang like a madman.

Meanwhile his absence created panic at home and all Narottama's relatives searched for him frantically. When they heard that he was at the bank of the Padmavati, they all ran to the river. However, the worried parents were unable to recognize their own son due to the change in his complexion. Not finding her beloved son, Narottama's mother cried helplessly.

Narottama, lost in ecstasy, was oblivious to everything. After some time,



due to the Lord's influence, Narottama was able to understand that his mother was crying. "Mother," he beckoned, "I am standing right next to you, why are you crying?"

His mother immediately took him on her lap and kissed his face, requesting him again and again to return home. Narottama's peculiar behaviour, however, bewildered and frightened them. Narottama, overwhelmed with ecstatic love, cried, jumped, and danced, singing the name of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. With great difficulty his mother brought him home and placed him in his bed. His parents cried piteously, thinking that their son had gone mad.

One day Narottama revealed to his mother that he wanted to leave home. Shocked and bereaved, she held the neck of her son and questioned why he was behaving so strangely; what was his complaint. Seeing the state of his mother, Narottama relented and requested her to bring something to eat. He assured her that after eating he would explain everything.

After accepting prasadam Narottama told his father, "I'm in great difficulty. A golden complexioned child has entered into my body and affected my state of mind. Therefore I feel I can no longer stay here." While saying this Narottama was overcome with ecstatic emotions and lost control of himself. He began to cry and his whole body trembled. Shouting the name of Gauranga, he fell to the ground.

Thinking that some golden complexioned deity had taken hold of their son's body, his parents cried out in misery, wondering if their child would ever return to normalcy. They called upon an exorcist who said that no spirit had entered Narottama's body, rather, he was suffering from a wind disorder. He advised them to bring a fox and rub the oil on the boy's stomach to cure him.

Narottama laughed and told his father, "By killing an animal do you think you can cure me? If a father kills an animal out of blind affection for his son, the disease will become more intense, rather than cured. Oh my parents, it is not a disease, I simply want to go to Vrndavana."

"We would rather drink poison than live without you," they protested. "Do not speak about this anymore."

Narottama fell silent, wondering if Vrndavana would remain an unattainable dream for him. Trying another strategy, Narottama decided to pretend to be cured and behave like an obedient son attached to family life. Thus his parents heaved a great sigh of relief. But at night Narottama could not control his distress and was unable to sleep.

One day the Zagirdara of the village sent a horseman with a letter in which he ordered Majumdar to send Narottama to him at once, indicating that he intended to award some special honour upon the boy. Majumdar was uncertain as to what to do. Out of blind affection for Narottama, he was reluctant to send him anywhere. When he told Narottama about the letter, he laughed and said, "Well I shall go along with the horseman then."

His mother, however, protested, "I will not allow you to go anywhere, regardless of how big the gain may be." But Narottama insisted, "The king will be very pleased if I obey his order." Hearing this, his father consulted an astrologer and fixed a date for Narottama to go. Narottama took this as a significant sign from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu, feeling that their mercy was upon him. Still, his mother lamented, "What shall I do without you my son?"

Please return within ten days. When you return I shall arrange your marriage." Although Narottama had another plan in mind, he assured his mother that he would return swiftly. She instructed his escort to keep a strict watch on her son, then kissed Narottama's cheek and bade him farewell.

Narottama eagerly awaited the right moment for his escape. In anticipation he was unable to sleep, but confident that the Caitanya Mahaprabhu's wish is supreme. That night all the companions of Narottama fell into a deep sleep. Taking advantage of the situation, Narottama hurried out to the road and began walking swiftly, yet cautiously towards the west, intently chanting the names of Caitanya and Nityananda.

In due course of time news of Narottama's disappearance reached the ears of his parents. Stricken with grief, his mother rushed out into the street like a mad woman, lamenting miserably for her son. The neighbors took her back in the house and tried to console her, assuring her that they would surely catch him and bring him home.

Yet, despite all of their efforts, there was no trace of Narottama. His parents then offered one man a sizeable sum to search out their beloved son. The man traveled to various places, reaching as far as Bahudiya, but being unsuccessful he returned to Gadera Hata. The news of his failure broke the heart of Narottama's mother and she fell down unconscious.

Now I shall describe Narottama's journey to Vrndavana. For two or three days he fasted as he rushed towards Vraja. Due to long hours of walking, painful blisters (boils) covered his feet, making it difficult to walk. Exhausted, he lay down under a tree and fell unconscious. When he awoke, he began to lament, "Oh Gauracandra, Rupa, Sanatana, when will I reach Vrndavana?"

Suddenly a golden complexioned brahmana came before Narottama carrying a bowl of milk. He instructed Narottama to drink the milk as it would cure his blisters. Overwhelmed with fatigue, Narottama fell asleep without drinking the milk. Towards the end of the night, Rupa and Sanatana appeared before Narottama. Placing their hands on Narottama's chest they told him, "Narottama drink the milk. Seeing you so tired from your journey, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself personally brought you this milk. Now get up and continue on to Vrndavana." When Narottama's dream vanished, he woke up and began to cry in separation from the Lord and his devotees. His misery became unbearable, then Rupa and Sanatana again appeared before him. This time Narottama could see them direct and smell the scent of their bodies. The two brothers had golden complexions, they wore sacred threads, tulasi mala, and their foreheads were painted with beautiful tilak. Their red lips were curved in gracious smiles, as they chanting the holy names, counting on their fingers. Sometimes they called out the name of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They told Narottama, "You are still child, normally not much is expected of a boy your age, but you have received favour of Caitanya Mahaprabhu so do not worry, just go to Vrndavana. We know that Prabhu has empowered you to flood the universe with love of God and deliver the fallen conditioned souls. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu appeared in Gauda to reveal Their loving pastimes, and they have created you and Srinivasa to carry on The mission after Their disappearance."

Hearing this, Narottama worshiped the feet of the two brothers, then rolled on the ground crying ecstatically. Rupa and Sanatana placed their feet on

Narottama's head, then disappeared.

By the order of my guru I have narrated these pastimes. Those who listen with devotion will soon attain the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and the lotus feet of Radha Krsna. Rupa and Sanatana will also mercy their blessings upon the devoted listeners. Remaining faithful to the feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda Dasa narrate Prem Vilasa. (100-110)

## CHAPTER 11

All glories to the all merciful Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. All glories to the soft hearted Nityananda Prabhu. All glories to Sri Jahnava and Viracandra. All glories to Srinivasa and Narottama.

Rupa and Sanatana told Narottama to forget his miseries and go to Madhupuri without delay. They advised him to take shelter at the feet of Lokanatha, which would bring him all success. They also instructed him to visit Radha Kunda where he should worship the feet of Raghunatha Dasa.

After receiving these orders, five Gaudiya Vaisnavas suddenly came before Narottama and invited him to travel along with them. Forgetting his pains, Narottama immediately started walking with them.

Along the way, Narottama thought that he should visit Varanasi as it was once visited by Mahaprabhu. Narottama crossed the Ganges and visited the temple of Siva at Rajaghat. He circumambulated the temple and offered his obeisances. On the left side of the ghat was a beautiful house. The house had a door on the eastern side and a tulasi tree on its left. Seeing this, Narottama immediately paid his obeisances, understanding that this had previously been the residence of Sanatana Gosvami. Within the house sat an old Vaisnava. Narottama offered his respects and was warmly welcomed. After clarifying his identity, Narottama took prasadam with the Vaisnava, who happened to be a disciple of Candra Sekharacarya. The devotee explained that he had been ordered to maintain the service of his guru's Deity. Together, they relished discussions about Krsna throughout the night.

In the morning Narottama took his leave. When he reached Prayaga he took a bath, then continued on to Mathura. There he visited the temple of Bhutesvara, the birthplace of Krsna, and took his bath at Visrama ghat.

Meanwhile, in Vrndavana, Sri Jiva received a darsana of Rupa Gosvami in a dream saying, "A very special devotee will be arriving in Vrndavana soon. His name is Narottama of Gadera Hata. You should put him under the care of Lokanatha. He is now taking rest in Mathura." When Sri Jiva awoke, he happily ordered his companions to bring Narottama from Mathura as quickly as possible.

The Vaisnavas found Narottama at the bathing ghat and told him to come with them without delay. Narottama eagerly accepted their guidance and together they rushed to Vrndavana. When they reached the temple of Govinda, Narottama saw the beauty of the temple and fainted on the ground in ecstasy.

Observing his bhava, Sri Jiva decided to take Narottama to meet Sri Lokanatha Gosvami. "Let us go to Gosvami at once," he said, as I am amazed by the wonderful bhava in this young man. Such acute renunciation and devotion at

such a young age is inconceivable. His whole body is trembling with ecstasy and his golden complexion reminds me of Gauranga. It is Mahaprabhu's kindness upon me that He has sent me the association of such a devotee. It is certainly my good fortune."

Sri Jiva then brought Lokanatha to the place. When Lokanatha asked where Narottama was, the devotees pointed to Narottama lying on the ground in trance. Lokanatha placed his hand on Narottama's chest and the boy immediately regained consciousness. Narottama quickly fell at the feet of his master, who tearfully picked him up and embraced him saying, "Narottama, I knew that you would come for last night it was revealed to me in a dream. Caitanya Mahaprabhu is extremely merciful to me, His sending you to me is like offering a poor man profuse wealth."

Lokanatha took Narottama to the temple of Govinda\*\*, where Sri Jiva dedicated Narottama to the feet of Lokanatha. When Sri Jiva took Narottama before Govinda, the boy fell unconscious in ecstasy, and had to be carried to the cottage of Sri Jiva. Meanwhile, Lokanatha requested everyone to take prasadam, then called for Narottama to also come. Having returned to his senses, Narottama went for prasadam and explained to Lokanatha Gosvami about the events of his life previously and how he had received divine love from Gauranga. He explained that a golden complexioned child had entered into his body, thus empowering him to visualise Sri Rupa. Narottama said, "But I am here without having any guru, how can I sit you and take prasadam?"

Hearing this Gosvami laughed saying, "You saw with your own eyes that a golden complexioned child entered your body. He is the guru of this universe. Besides Him who else do you want for a guru? He Himself has given you the divine love which most devotees worship and pray for their entire lives. Now what is the use of having another guru? You are blessed with the love of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, you should not be desirous of anything else. It is that love which has allowed you to have the darsana of Govinda."

Narottama replied, "Prabhu, I am a poor man, your order is my only valuable possession. If you permit me, I would like to tell you something."

Gosvami said, "Do not hesitate to tell me anything you like."

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, as an incarnation, has delivered all types of fallen souls from hellish life," Narottama replied. "He is the only master of this universe, yet He has faith in you as my guru. Mahaprabhu has established the standard; He Himself acted as a spiritual master and also empowered others to act as guru, which has also been done by the companions of Caitanya. It is the guru's duty to guide the disciple to the right path. I have no guru, so who will guide me on the path of devotion? I am an ignorant fool and am in no position to give you advice, yet I have the audacity to speak."

The other devotees present also petitioned Lokanatha to please accept Narottama as his disciple. Lokanatha laughed and said, "The scriptures have directed that a devotee should perform Harinama continually for one year, until the holy name is firmly established in one's ear and heart." Thus Narottama began chanting the holy name of the Lord with great intensity.

In private Lokanatha explained to Narottama, "Mahaprabhu has ordered His devotees to perform sankirtana because it is the only process in this age for delivering mankind from the clutches of maya. A living entity attains a human

form of life only after many lifetimes, thus it is imperative that he receive the proper medicine to permanently cure himself of the material disease. A human being suffers all varieties of miseries life after life, but he does not remember them in his present life. These miseries can be eradicated only through the worship of Krsna. Such a worshiper is known as a devotee and disciple, and he who helps him on the path is known as the guru. A wise spiritual master watches his disciple carefully to see that he is devoted, that he is serving the Vaisnavas, and he is performing Harinama. When a disciple becomes intensely eager for spiritual perfection, his guru bestows his mercy upon him at long last. I am forbidden to have too many disciples for they spoil the efforts of their gurus worship and meditation and thereby his accomplishments. So Narottama, perform sankirtana and you achieve everything."

Accepting the order of Gosvami, Narottama chanted the holy name of the Lord day and night. In the mornings he would visit Gosvami and bow at his feet, at which time Gosvami would ask, "How are you Narottama?" Narottama always replied, "Your mercy has kept me well." Sometimes Narottama would visit Lokanatha at the time when he was taking prasadam, thus he would happily eat the remnants of Gosvami. At other times he would massage the feet of Gosvami. But at all times Narottama was eager to serve his master. Sometimes Narottama enjoyed visiting the places of Krsna's pastimes with Sri Jiva Gosvami.

Narottama took it upon himself to accept the duty of cleaning the place where Gosvami went to evacuate. He swept the place clean and placed clay dust nearby for Gosvami to wash his hands with. Holding the broom in his hand, Narottama would cry, praying for the mercy of Gosvami.

Lokanatha Gosvami was astonished to find the spot cleaned so nicely each day and could not understand who was cleaning the place, although he suspected that no one other than a disciple like Narottama would do such a thing. In this way another year passed.

One day Gosvami decided to find who was cleaning the place where he evacuated. "I want to find out who has been serving me for such a long time," he thought. "I am barely maintaining my life due to separation of Sri Rupa, yet I am guilty of accepting service while living in Vrndavana Dhama."

That night Gosvami went to the usual spot a little earlier than usual and Narottama was already present there. Noticing that someone was standing in the dark, Gosvami asked, "Who are you?" The reply came, "I am Narottama, your servant." Gosvami saw that Narottama was standing holding the broom to his chest. "Why are you doing this," Gosvami asked, "I am very ashamed." Narottama said, "Oh my lord, do not deprive me of doing service for you." Understanding Narottama's sincerity, Gosvami ordered him to bring clay and water for washing his hands. Greatly pleased, Narottama bowed at the feet of Gosvami, who placed his foot on Narottama's head. After bathing in the Yamuna, he took Narottama to his hut, where Narottama washed the feet of Gosvami. Lokanatha sat on a celestial seat for chanting his japa. After a long time, Gosvami called Narottama inside the room. Gosvami collected tulasi, sandalwood paste, flower garlands, kunkuma and kastari and ordered Narottama to sit on his left side. He instructed Narottama to pray to Vilasamanjari to take charge of him forever. "Vilasamanjari is a companion of Manjulali," he explained. Lalita and other sakhis stand on the left side of Krsna, and the Manjaris stand on the left side of Radhika. Worship the Manjaris, then

place a garland around the neck of Radha Krsna and apply kunkuma and kastari on their bodies. Then worship the sakhis one by one." In this way Gosvami dedicated Vilasa manjari\*\* to the hands of the sakhis. Lokanatha spoke the Kamavija and Radha Krsna mantra in the ear of Narottama, then ordered him to go to Sri Jiva and bow at his feet. Lokanatha affectionately accepted his disciple, placing his foot on Narottama's head and offered him his feet for washing.

Narottama went to Sri Jiva and bowed at his feet. Sri Jiva embraced him and offered his blessings. Returning to Gosvami, Narottama happily accepted the remnants of his spiritual master's meal.

The following morning, Narottama came before his master requesting that he teach him the process of devotional service. Gosvami explained, "Always remember Radha and Krsna. There are two types of forms of a devotee; accomplished body and sadhaka body. Human features is the best form of worshiping Krsna\*\*. Radha is the empress of Vraja, and Lalita and Visakha are the foremost of her sakhis. Manjaris such as Sri Rupa, Hemanga, Rati, Rasa, Guna, and Manjulali are the confidential servants of Sri Radha. The sakhis live and serve their queen in various places of pastimes such as Nandisvara, Javata, Sanketa, and Varsana."

Narottama asked which mantras he should chant and at what time such meditation should be performed. Gosvami clearly answered his questions, and also described the path of spontaneous devotion (Ragatmika). He explained that Candravali stands on the right of Krsna, and Radha on the left. Candravali's nature is rough, but Radha has a polite disposition.

Narottama asked what he should do at the time when Radha and Krsna are separated. To this Gosvami said that at that time he should try to pacify Sri Radha by singing the glories of Krsna. He explained that he should be especially attentive to the service of Sri Radha when she is in the house of her husband. When Radha and Krsna are together, he should joyfully serve Radha by decorating her with sandalwood paste, saffron and kasturi. The process of ragatmika bhakti has been defined by Sri Rupa Gosvami in his books Ujjvala Nilamani and Haribhaktirasamrta Sindhu.

Gosvami then discussed parakiya and svakiya rasa's. Parakiya love is possessed by the sakhis and the Vrajavasis. Svakiya love is possessed by Satyabhama and other queens of Krsna. "I am," said Gosvami, "a follower of svakiya worship. You should taste this rasa being obedient to the sakhis. Oh Narottama, you should fully engage in austerity and meditation. Some regard Vrndavana as Goloka, whereas some regard it as Dvaraka. It is a question of accepting a certain type of abode and in that way a devotee can attain accomplishment.\*\* You will learn everything from me by living in Vrndavana. You should perform all your duties with devotion to Krsna, otherwise your efforts will be in vain."

Gosvami went on to further explain the necessity of taking shelter at the feet of the guru and the sixty four methods of worship and meditation. Narottama then asked about vaidhi raga and the sixty four methods in this connection.

Lokanatha was pleased by Narottama's questions, knowing that if doubts arise in the mind of a devotee then his meditation becomes useless.

According to Sri Rupa's book, those who meditate and worship, but are overly concerned about the results of their acts are said to be following the path of

vaidhi. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu empowered Sri Rupa Gosvami to write books on the topic of sadhana bhakti. Rupa sent his books with Mahaprabhu to Purusottama, where Svarupa and Ramananda were ordered to read them. They took great pleasure in reading these books, and Mahaprabhu gave His full approval of the methods of worship and meditation as expounded by Sri Rupa. Thus these instructions are universally accepted.

Sri Rupa Gosvami gave Harinama initiation to Sri Jiva Gosvami, teaching him to give up all tendencies for karma and jnana, and to accept Sri Krsna Caitanya as the only guru. He taught that every Vaisnava who desires to attain the mercy of Sri Caitanya must regularly chant Harinama. If a devotee can complete one lac Harinama's in a nama mala\*\*, he will attain the feet of Sri Krsna. He explained that a devotee should carefully chant his rounds, touching his mala to his forehead after completing each round. A devotee must also guard against committing offenses while chanting, otherwise he will certainly suffer misfortune. Lokanatha Gosvami also, pointed out the exemplary behaviour of Sri Rupa Gosvami and Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami, who always showed great respect to all Vaisnavas. He advised Narottama to follow their example by offering obeisances to all Vaisnavas. He explained that a devotee is never proud of his seniority in regard to other Vaisnavas.

Narottama very carefully obeyed the instructions of his spiritual master. Day by day, he began advancing towards spiritual perfection. One day when he was lying in his hut half awake, the daughter of a Vaisnava appeared before him and smilingly said, "Dedicate yourself to the feet of your guru and do exactly what he says. Your sincere efforts and austerity have greatly pleased me. Every afternoon I meet Sri Krsna in the kunj where the sakhis serve Him with great care. At this time ksira is offered to Krsna, and Campakalata is the most expert at making this preparation. From now on, it will be your duty to boil the milk for the ksira. I become happy if Krsna is happy."\*\*

Narottama awoke and could not sleep again for the rest of the night. In the morning he hurriedly went to meet his master. After bowing at his feet, Narottama reported everything which he had seen in his dream. Lokanatha Gosvami began to cry in joy and told Narottama, "How fortunate you are, Narottama, for the person you are engaged in meditating upon (Sri Radha) has given you the duty of boiling milk for her Krsna. O my boy, go on worshiping those lotus feet attentively and sincerely."

One day while Narottama was engaged in boiling the milk, he observed the transcendental pastimes of Radha and Krsna. While the milk was boiling on the fire, he fed the fire with dry wood to keep it burning. While doing this the milk began to overflow and he tried to save the milk by removing the pot with his bare hands. When Narottama's meditation broke, he saw that his hands were scorched. In great disappointment he began to lament, thinking that he would no longer be able to serve Sri Krsna. Covering his hands with a piece of cloth, he went to see Gosvami and bowed at his feet. When Lokanatha heard the story was extremely pleased with his dear disciple and happily took him on his lap. Sri Jiva Gosvami also showered his mercy upon Narottama and they became intimate friends.

I am unable to fully describe the glory of Narottama's devotional sentiments which he obtained by the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Remaining faithful to the feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

All glories to the merciful Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. All glories to Nityananda Prabhu, the transcendental mine of spiritual rasa. All glories to Sri Advaitacandra, the life of those bereft of spiritual wealth. All glories to the devotees of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. All glories to Sri Jahnava and Viracandra. Now, listen attentively as continue to narrate the transcendental pastimes of Srinivasa and Narottama. Unfortunately I am unable to fully describe their glories, as adequate praise would require require millions of mouths and hands.

In due course of time Srinivasa received the title of Acarya, and Narottama became known as Thakura Mahasaya. They were intimate friends with each other. Eventually they traveled to Gaura together, but before this Narottama spent some time studying under his master. Sometimes he visited Sri Jiva to study the Tattva Sandarbha\*\* under him.

One day Sri Jiva took hold of Narottama's hands and requested him to narrate the incident of burning his hands. Sri Jiva took great pleasure in hearing this pastime and said to Narottama, "From today you shall be known as Sri Vilasa Manjari as you are the image of Vilasa of Sri Rupa Gosvami."\*\* Smiling, Narottama replied, "Now both of us have accomplished names. Sri Rakhika Herself has addressed me as Vilasa Manjari." Sri Jiva embraced Narottama and said, "Who can understand the extent of your austerities? From now on you should be known as Thakura Mahasaya, for you have been benedicted by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to flood the entire universe with love of Godhead."

Now I shall describe the first meeting of Srinivasa and Narottama. One day Narottama went to see Gosvami. At that same time Srinivasa also arrived there and bowed at the feet of Lokanatha Gosvami, as Narottama stood by with folded hands. Seeing Narottama, Srinivasa immediately ran to embrace him saying, "Oh my friend, I am so happy to meet you here in Vrndavana." Narottama said, "I am a poor man, please bestow your mercy upon me. When did you come to Vrndavana?" "I have been here for one year and three months," Srinivasa replied. "In the month of Vaisakha I took initiation from Gopala Bhatta Gosvami." In this way the two conversed, feeling great pleasure in each other's association.

Smiling Lokanatha Gosvami asked, "Srinivasa, do you know where this boy has come from?" "Yes", he replied, "He is the son of Krsnadasa Raya of Gadera Hata and his name is Narottama. His association is my life." From that day Srinivasa and Narottama became the most intimate of friends. They would regularly meet at each other's hut, or at various places in Vrndavana.

Srinivasa humbly served his spiritual master by cooking for him. At other times he visited Sri Jiva Gosvami to study under his direction, and sometimes he



would meditate quietly in his own hut. Sri Jiva taught everything which he had read from Sri Rupa Gosvami to Srinivasa; he taught Vrajalila, Sandarva, and also explained the annotations given by Sri Rupa.

One day Sri Jiva Gosvami was the portion of Rupa Gosvami's book, Lalita Madhava, which explains that when Krsna went to Mathura, Sri Radha was on the verge of death do to separation from her beloved. Reading this pastime, Sri Jiva was overwhelmed with ecstasy and lost consciousness. When he regained external consciousness, he noticed that all the trees in the kunja had become pale. They were dropping downwards and were shedding drops of water. Greatly surprised, he also noticed a kadamba tree bearing flowers, although it was not the season for kadamba.

Srinivasa happened to arrive there at that time and Sri Jiva said, "Sit down Srinivasa, I have a question to ask you." Srinivasa protested, "Prabhu, am I capable of answering your question?" Sri Jiva replied, "Look at all the creepers in the kunja, they have become pale and are shedding water, although it is not the rainy season. I want to know the reason for this strange phenomena." Unable to comprehend this unusual happening, Srinivasa said he would think about it and return later.

Srinivasa returned to his hut and began to meditate of the feet of Sri Rupa Gosvami, hoping to receive some insight on the matter. After some time he returned to the hut of Sri Jiva and presented his opinion with folded hands. "Vrndavana is the place of Krsna's pastimes therefore this unusual happening is definately connected with the Lord's lila. When Krsna returns home from the forest, the trees and creepers become morose and grief stricken. When He again enters the kunja for His pastimes, the trees and creepers become rejuvenated and joyful. When again He leaves the kunja it is not possibelf for them to remain alive."

Hearing this explanation Sri Jiva began to shed tears, for now he realised that the kadamba tree, which had been planted by him, was blossoming with flowers because of his thoughts. He had been thinking of Krsna, although Krsna had gone to Mathura, thus his thinking had helped the tree to blossom. Sri Jiva was so pleased that he offered the title of Acarya to Srinivasa. In this way Srinivasa became popularly known as Sri Acarya.

In the evening he took Srinivasa to the temple of Govinda to observe the arati ceremony. After the ceremony, the priest gave Govinda's flower garland to Srinivasa, and offered sandalwood paste mixed with saffron on his forehead. Everyone present there cheered the name of Srinivasa Acarya, and Sri Jiva embraced him lovingly.

Lokanatha Gosvami was also very pleased to hear of Srinivasa's new title. Srinivasa went to offer his respects to Lokanatha, who showered his blessings upon him. Thakura Mahasaya also offered congratulations to Srinivasa.

That night Sri Jiva Gosvami decided that the time had come to fulfill the desire of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. As Gauda was devoid of the literature written by the Gosvamis, it was essential that Acarya and Thakura Mahasaya carry the precious books to the devotees in Gauda. Since it was the time of performing the Kartika vrata, Sri Jiva Gosvami decided to hold a grand festival. He send out invitations to all the Vaisnava Mahantas. They responded enthusiastically and quickly assembled at the residence of Sri Jiva Gosvami where they were offered respect befitting to their positions. That very evening, the night of Ekadasi, the cooking began and was completed the following morning. While kirtana was performed, the entire area was cleaned and the offerings were placed before the Deities of Radha Krsna and Gaura Nitai, then offered to Rupa, Sanantan, Raghunatha Bhatta, Svarupa Damodara, Ramananda Raya, and the other associates of the Lord. Thereafter, Sri Jiva ordered Srinivas to wash the hands of the guests, then requested Raghunatha, Gopala Bhatta, Lokanatha Gosvami and others to take their seats. Sri Acarya expertly sumptuous prasada to the full satisfaction of the Mahantas. Meanwhile, Sri Jiva, feeling great separation from Sri Rupa and Sanatana, began to crying, which touched the hearts of everyone present. After finishing prasada and washing their hands, the guests were offered betel leaf. Sri Jiva was very pleased to serve the Vaisnavas in this way, and the Vaisnavas, in turn, were deeply satisfied by his service. The festival continued in the same fashion throughout the following day.

Before the assembly of Vaisnavas, Sri Jiva Gosvami revealed his desire to send the Gosvamis books to Gauda for distribution. He took the opportunity to extol the glories of Srinivasa Acarya, describing his erudition and devotion, clearly indicating that Srinivasa was the most competent man for executing this service. He also expressed his hope that Thakura Mahasaya would assist Srinivasa with this mission. Lokanatha Gosvami happily gave his consent, and Acarya Thakura and Thakura Mahasaya immediately agreed to carry out the order, despite their reluctance to leave Vrindavana. The following morning after taking their bath, the Gosvamis offered their blessings to Srinivasa and Naottama then departed.

Sri Jiva immediately began making arrangements for the forthcoming journey. He sent a letter to a devotee in Mathura requesting his help. The devotee immediately came before Sri Jiva and bowed at his feet. Sri Jiva revealed the travel plans, explaining that the Gosvamis had written a thousand books describing the pastimes of Radha Krsna and these books would be carried to Gauda by Srinivasa. He asked the devotee to arrange for a suitable cart to be pulled by four strong oxen. He also instructed that the books be carefully covered with cloth to protect them from the rain and sun, and that they be handled with extreme caution. He gave money to the man and ordered him to have everything ready within ten days, and requested that he personally travel along with the cart. The man humbly obeyed the orders of Sri Jiva Gosvami and began to quickly make arrangements for the forthcoming journey. Ten men employed by Sri Jiva to accompany the cart were introduced to Srinivasa. Sri Jiva then took Thakura Mahasaya along with him to the house of Syamananda prabhu and said, "O Narottama, this Syamananda was previously under my care. Take him along with you on the journey and after

completeing your mission, send him to his own country giving him some allowance for travelling." Jiva Gosvami then explained to Syamananda, "This devotee, Narottama, is my life, behave with him as you would behave with me."

Now I shall narrate the story of Syamananda. He was born in the South to a pious, devotional family. Yet despite his good birth, he was completely detached from material life. Late one night he secretly left his home in search of guru and Krsna. His parents searched in vain for him.

Within a few days he reached the village of Nadadin and then traveled on to Khanakula via Caoyanagara, where he had darsan of the Gopinatha deity. He next evening he reached Amvika and sat in a secluded place there. He was captivated by the gorgeous temple there and the exquisite beauty of the Gaura Nitai Deities. On that particular day a festival was being held in the temple. Arati was being performed, accompanied by sankirtana and distribution of prasada to the Vaisnavas.

That evening, one person found Syamananda sitting in a secluded spot and inquired about his identity. Syamananda explained that he was from the South, and the devotee responded saying that it was the desire of Sri Hrdaya Caitanya Mahasaya that he come and accept prasada. Thus Syamananda entered the temple courtyard, where he found Hrdaya Caitanya Thakura sitting amongst some Vaisnavas and speaking about Krsna with great emotion. He bowed at Thakura's feet and respected prasada. Syamananda then began to wonder how he could render service to Thakura.

That evening he slept there and early the following morning he began to sweep the courtyard of the temple, while singing the holy names of the Lord. At that time Hrdaya Caitanya Thakura arrived there and noted the boys enthusiasm with pleasure. From that day forward the duty of sweeping was his fixed service.

One day Thakura called him and aksed where he had come from, how many members were there in his fmaily, and how he had become indifferent to material life. Standing with folded hands, trembling, the boy replied, "I am alone in this vast world, I am the most unfortunate person. You feet are the only source of happiness for me." Impressed with the boy's devotion and celestial beauty, Tahkura ordered the priest to give him prasada daily. Day and night the boy served in the temple.

Once whole sitting in the Nathmandira, Tahkura watched the boy performing his duties and asked him smilingly, "Listen my boy, though you have no one in this word, you have the Supreme Lord as your very own. Yet who is your guru?" The boy replied, "Your feet are my only resort. I am the most unfortunate person. O my Lord, be kind to me, who else but you can favor me." From that day forward Thakura showed great affection towards the boy.

One day he humbly requested Thakura, "Prabhu, you are the deliverer of the poor and downtrodden. Be kind upon me and give me initiation." Thus

Thakura blessed him by chanting the holy name in his ears. Filled with gratitude the boy bowed at the feet of Thakura again and again, and Hridaya Caitanya blessed him by placing his feet on the boy's head. From that day forward he was permitted to serve his guru, which he did with great devotion. He chanted the holy name with deep sincerity, and served the Vaisnavas respectfully. One day Thakura called him just after he had come back from taking a bath in the Ganges and instructed him how to meditate on Krsna, and renamed him Dukhi Krsnadasa.

One day Thakura told Krsnadasa, "Listen to this story about my Guru Maharaja, Gauridasa Pandita. He was extremely dear to both Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. When Mahaprabhu and Nityananda were still alive, Gauridasa Pandita installed Deities of Gaura Nitai. On the occasion of the installation he held a festival and fed many Vaisnavas. Sri Caitanya and Nityananda Prabhu came to the place to see the two Deities. They ordered Pandita to cook for them, and he happily offered food to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu as well as to the two Deities and requested Them to eat. Thus the four ate all the items together. The two Prabhus told Pandita that They would always be present in his house whenever food was to be offered. This most fortunate Gauridasa Pandita is who I have dedicated my life to."

One day Krsnadasa humbly requested his guru to permit him to go to Vrndavana. Understanding the desire of his disciple, Hridaya Caitanya gave his permission. The following morning Thakura bade Krsnadasa farewell, praying intently to Sri Caitanya and Nityananda Prabhu to protect his dear disciple Krsnadasa. He brought a piece of cloth from the Deities of Gaura Nitai and tied it around the head of Krsnadasa and Krsnadasa began his journey.

Eventually he reached Visramghat, where he rested for the night. In the morning he began walking towards Vrndavana. After some time he spotted the Cakravedi on top of the Govindaji Mandira and immediately fell unconscious on the ground. After regaining consciousness he rushed to the temple and took darshana of Govinda, crying emotionally. He then went to the bank of the Jamuna and visited Dhira Samira, Vamsivata, Ciraghata, Imlitala. Krsnadasa eagerly went to Govardhana and on to Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda. There he met Sridasa Gosvami. When Krsnadasa explained that he was the disciple of Hridaya Caitanya Mahasaya whose guru was Sri Gauridasa Pandita Thakura, Sridasa welcomed him warmly and brought him to meet Krsnadasa Kaviraja. Entering into the room of Kaviraja, he saw a very old Vaisnava, falling at his feet Krsnadasa introduced himself. Kaviraja greeting him happily and inquired about the well being of Hridaya Caitanya and other devotees from Gauda.

Krsnadasa returned to Vrndavana and went to the temple of Madana Mohana and fainted upon seeing the beauty of the Deity. He then went to meet Sri Jiva Gosvami. Krsnadasa bowed humbly at his feet, and was unable to take his eyes off Gosvami. When Sri Jiva was very happy to find out that Krsnadasa was a disciple of Hridaya Caitanya and joyfully invited him to remain in Vrndavana. "If you are eager to study the scriptures, I shall be glad to assist you", Sri Jiva suggested. Thus on an auspicious day Jiva Gosvami began teaching Krsnadasa and

in a short while he became a scholar in all subjects. Under the direction of Sri Jiva, Krsnadasa read Bhaktirasamrta Sindhu and Ujjala Nilamani. He was also taught the method of worship and meditation. After some time Jiva Gosvami gave him Pancanama of Krsna and Pancanama of Sri Radha and then the Kamavija. From that time on, Krsnadasa eagerly studied the books of the Gosvamis throughout the day and at night would meditate quietly on the pastimes of Radha Krsna.

One night when Radha Krsna and their confidants danced in Vrndavana, Radha danced with such enthusiasm that the ankle bell on Her left leg fell off without Her knowing. Even Her sakhis did not notice that it had fallen. Radha and Krsna then entered into the Kunja to enjoy loving pastimes as the sakhis peeped through the windows to observe the divine pastimes. The night came to an end and the sakhis requested Radha Krsna to rise from bed. Radhika, feeling ashamed, left the bed and everyone returned to their own houses, unaware of the lost anklet.

In the morning Dukhi Krsnadasa came to the Rasasthali and found the ankle bell under a leaf. He picked it up and placed it to his forehead. Krsnadasa showed it to Sri Jiva, who at once could understand who was the owner of the ankle bell. Sri Jiva, overwhelmed with emotion, touched it to his eyes, chest and head. His voice became choked and he fell to the ground. Krsnadasa helped Gosvami to sit up, and Sri Jiva said, "You are most fortunate Krsnadasa, the saffron of Srimati Radharani's feet have left their mark on your forehead with a dot in the midst of the marks. These are the marks of Krsna's feet and the dot is the mark of Radhika. All the Vaisnavas will be very happy to see it. From today you will be known as Syamananda. I was previously informed by my guru that Syamananda will deliver millions of fallen conditioned souls.

In the morning Sri Jiva Gosvami instructed Syamananda to bring the cart for carrying the Gosvamis books from Mathura. He also ordered him to call Thakura Mahasaya and Srinivasa Acarya to begin their mission, first taking leave of their master.

Srinivasa and Narottama went to bid farewell to Lokanath Gosvami with tears in their eyes. Lokanatha advised them not to marry, nor to use oil, or eat boiled food. He instructed to to serve Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Radha Krsna, and all of the Vaisnavas. Gosvami called Srinivasa before him and placed Narottama in his care. Both of them bowed at the feet of Lokanath and took their leave. They then went to meet Gopala Bhatta Gosvami who told them to carry out their service with great care and follow all the advise of Gosvami. He instructed them to return to Vrndavana again sometime in the future, and then broke down crying in grief. Srinivasa said, "O my lord what can I say? I have done nothing to serve you. Will I be fortunate enough to see you again?" Srinivasa and Narottama embraced each other and cried emotionally. How can I describe the devotion of Narottama and Srinivasa towards their spiritual masters? It is my good fortune that I am able write something of their glories, although I can give only a slight indication of their unlimited good qualities. Being faithful to the feet of Sri Jahnava and Sri Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the deliverer of the fallen. All glories to Nityananda Prabhu, the wealth of the poor. All glories to Advaitacandra, the reservoir of auspicious qualities. All glories to the devotees, may all of your desires be fulfilled. All glories to Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, by whose grace I am able to write this book.

Gopala Bhatta Gosvami pacified Srinivasa saying, "Do not cry, you have Narottama with you--you are like one in heart. I will forget my misery only if you write to me regularly about your mission. Be very careful on your journey." Srinivasa Acarya then bid farewell, leaving Thakura Mahasaya alone with Gosvami. Narottama bowed to his feet and Gosvami said, "I have nothing to say to you Narottama. I know that all your desires have been fulfilled in Vrndavana. Stay with Sriknivasa always." Narottama offered his obeisances and left the kunja.

Srinivasa and Narottama went to find Sri Jiva Gosvami, who was engaged in arranging the cart. He filled up the cart with the books hand written by Sri Rupa Gosvami and himself. He locked the chest in the presence of everyone and covered the cart with cloth. Sri Jiva gave the three their traveling allowances and warned them to be extremely careful. The cart moved slowly forward and reached the temple of Govinda. Sri Jiva prayed to the Deity for their safe journey and offered them the garlands and sandalwood paste of the Deities. The party and cart, accompanied by Sri Jiva Gosvami then moved on towards Mathura where they stayed for the night. Sri Jiva sent a Mahajana to the king to arrange for a passport. The following morning they began the journey. When the caravan reached the border of the country, Sri Jiva said goodbye; "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the mine of all transcendental rasas, and Sri Rupa and Sanatana are His empowered representatives. Mahaprabhu manifested His love in these two bodies, and under His order they have written these books to propagate the message of devotional love throughout the world. Go quickly to the country of Mahaprabhu, may your journey be successful. You are both the life of my life, always remain together." Saying this he embraced Narottama and Srinivasa, crying streams of tears. He then took hold of Syamananda's hand and said, "When you are back in your own country engage yourself wholeheartedly in the service of Krsna and the Vaisnavas, and propagate the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Do not worry, all will be well. You will get a number of disciples. Murari dasa, the son of Acyutananda has already decided to make you his guru." Sri Jiva placed Syamananda in Narottama's care and told him, "Instruct him in everything which I taught to you from Gaura Ganaddesa, Bhaktirasamrta Sindhu, and Ujjalanilamani. When he has completed these studies give him some money for traveling expenses and send him back to his home." The cart then began its long journey protected by ten armed Hindu guards. Sri Jiva Gosvami then returned to Vrndavana.

The caravan stopped at Agra for the night and continued on the following morning. The passport given by the king helped them to gain entrance to various places. In this way they gradually crossed Itarinagara. From there they decided to take the road to Jharikhanda. Leaving Magadesa on the left, they took the opposite direction, choosing the forest road for a peaceful journey. Upon reaching Tamluka they halted for the night.

Vira Hamvira, the king of Visnupura was a wicked man who employed a band of dacoits to plunder innocent travelers. Upon hearing about Srinivasa's caravan, he ordered his dacoits to secretly follow the carts at a distance, but not to do anything until they reached the king's village. Unsuspecting, the carts crossed Pancavati, Raghunathpura and then reached the village of Maliyada, where a man named Bhaoumika welcomed them to rest in his house.

Meanwhile, the dacoits, thinking that the carts were loaded with wealth reported to the king, who inquired how many men were guarding the carts. They said that there were fifteen men, thus the king ordered them to take two hundred dacoits with them to rob the carts but requested them not to kill anyone.

The caravan reached the village of Gopalapura and stopped for the night. The dacoits took this opportunity to stealthily approach and steal the carts. They happily took the carts to the king who was overjoyed. With great excitement he brought the carts into the palace and eagerly removed the covers and forced open the trunks. To his surprise he found only books. Completely disappointed and a bit frightened, the king asked the dacoits about the people who were carrying the trunks, and from where they had come. The king became even more frightened when he heard their reply. He king instructed them not to reveal this incident to anyone. He then carefully protected the carts in an inner room.

In the meantime Acarya Thakura, Thakura Mahasaya, and Syamananda searched frantically for the carts. In desperation they asked everyone if they had seen the stolen carts, but no one could help them in their search. Extremely disheartened they decided to send a letter to Jiva Gosvam and inform him of the disaster. With heavy hearts they entered the village to collect some paper and a pen to write the letter. All the while Acarya Thakura and Thakura Mahasaya incessantly appealed to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Sri Rupa and Sanatana for their guidance. They cried uncontrollably from some time, but eventually they began to think that there must be divine reason why the carts had been stolen. The dacoits had robbed them thinking that there was a great treasure in the carts, little did they know the actual value of the immense treasure which they now held in their possession. The writings of Krsnadasa Kaviraja, the books of Sri Rupa and Sanatana, the conversation between Raya Ramananda and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu were more precious than any mountains of gold and silver. Love for Radha Krsna is the most precious of all wealth. He who possesses such wealth is the richest man in the three worlds. Sri Acarya thought that the person who had stolen the books, thinking them to be a great wealth, must probably had kept them in his house and would bow down his head to the religion of love. He thought that if the dacoit happened to be a king then surely the whole universe

would get a share of the love. In this way Sri Acarya hoped for the best.

Meanwhile the messenger carrying the tragic news reached Mathura. The following day he delivered the letter to Jiva Gosvami in Vrndavana. Sri Jiva immediately reported the calamitous news to Lokanath Gosvami and Sri Gopal Bhatta Gosvami who were sick at heart when they heard the report of the messenger. When word reached Raghunath dasa and Krsnadasa Kaviraja they both fell on the ground crying relentlessly, Kaviraja called out to the Lord piteously, "Prabhu, we cannot understand You." At that time Kaviraja was extremely old and unable to walk. He was unable to bear this misery and thus departed from this world. When Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami hear the news he jumped into the Radha Kunda in despair. Raghunatha also cried helplessly and uttering the names of Sri Caitanya and Nityananda Prabhu, he also gave up his life. All of the Vaisnavas cried loudly, shouted out the names of the departed Gosvamis.

Meanwhile, Acarya Thakura, Thakura Mahasaya, and Sri Syamananda continued their desperate search for the precious books. One night Acarya Thakura said, "I think the two of you should return to your own countries. I shall go on searching for the stolen books. If I succeed I shall immediately inform you and go to your places with armed guards. Tomorrow you should start your journey."

The next morning Thakura Mahasaya and Syamananda prepared to depart. Holding the hands of Narottama, Acarya Thakura cried, "If I do not recover the books I shall give up this worthless life."

Thakura Mahasaya and Syamananda travel together and eventually rushed the home town of Narottama. His jubilant parents rushed to greet him. Seeing their beloved son they rolled on the ground crying joyfully. All Narottama's relatives also came to see him and he bowed respectfully at their feet. Many brahmanas and friends eagerly greeted him. His parents happily took him home where he spent his days worshiping and meditating on Krsna. There Syamananda studied the scriptures under the guidance of Narottama Thakura. After ten days Syamananda bade farewell to Narottama who gave him some money for traveling as directed by Jiva Gosvami. The pain they both experienced when bidding farewell is indescribable.

In the meantime Acarya Thakura traveled from forest to forest, eventually arriving at Visnupra. There he roamed through the village as a stranger, unknown by anyone, neither did he know anyone there. For ten days he wandered throughout the village, sometimes begging while at other times he lived simply by drinking water. One day while he was sitting under a tree, a brahmana boy came before him. Impressed by the young man's countenance, Acarya Thakura asked his name, to which he replied, "I am Krsna Vallava. I live here under the grace of the king." Acarya then inquired about the king, and the boy replied, "Our king is a wicked man who encourages dacoits to rob. His name is Vira Hamvira, just recently he robbed two carts of wealth, yet he is fond of listening to the Puranas from a brahmana Pandita. We, the subjects, are duty bound to attend the



sessions." Acarya inquired as to whether he had learned anything, to which the brahmana replied that he had just completed the study of Vyakarana. Acarya then quizzed him on some aspects of grammar and went on to discuss various subjects with the young brahmana. The man was so impressed by Sri Acarya's knowledge that he immediately requested him to come to his house in the village of Deuli and become his teacher. Acarya agreed and went along with the brahmana to his house. Krsnavallaba welcomed his guest by washing his feet. Acarya then told that he would like to cook something for himself, and Krsnavallava immediately brought all the necessary items. Sri Acarya explained that he ate only boiled food and that he would like to collect the water himself. The youngman gave Acarya a water pot, and Srinivasa brought water and cooked. After accepting prasad, Sri Acarya began to teach the young brahmana.

Everyday Krsnavallava went to the palace of the king and returned in the evening. In the evening Acarya asked him, "What did you learn today," to which he would replied, "Today I listened to the Bhagavata, but when the king went into the house I immediately returned here as I am much more eager to learn from you." Acarya then requested, "Tomorrow, please take me with you to your king."

Thus the following morning Krsnavallava and Sri Acarya went to the palace of the king. There Srinivasa listened as the court Pandita, who was bereft of knowledge of the Bhagavata, explained that sacred text to the king. Unable to tolerate the Pandita's false presentation, Sri Acarya pointed out some mistakes in his explanations. The Pandita was deeply insulted and arrogantly addressed the king, "Who except I can explain the Bhagavata? This unknown brahmana is trying to interfere with my explanations." Turning to Sri Acarya he challenged him to compete in a debate. Srinivasa gladly accepted the challenge and began to explain the Bhagavata in such a charming way that everyone present, including the king, was completely captivated. In the evening when the session came to an end, the Pandita was forced to admit defeat and fell at the feet of Sri Acarya asking for his mercy.

With great interest in the new-comer to his kingdom, the king inquired about Srinivasa's identity. Upon hearing that he was Srinivasa of Ganaddesa, the king paid his respects and requested Sri Acarya to remain in his kingdom.

That evening the king went to the house of Krsnavallava and invited Sri Acarya to have dinner in the palace. Sri Acarya declined, explaining, "I am accustomed to eating only once in the day." But the king would not accept his refusal. Again and again he requested Srinivasa to bless him with his company, until Srinivasa agreed on the condition that he would eat only uncooked food. Thus the king took him to the palace and happily offered him flat rice, milk, and sugar. Feeling fatigued, Srinivasa returned to his home and sat on his bed praying intently to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu.

Meanwhile the king was unable to sleep. His mind was filled with thoughts of the exalted sadhu he had met that day. He pondered, how was it possible for a man to have such wonderful qualities and exalted devotion.

In the morning the king again went to meet Acarya, who welcomed him and offered him a seat saying, "I am most fortunate to see a king the first thing in the morning." The king humbly replied, "It is I who am fortunate. All sins can be washed away simply by glancing at you." Sri Acarya told the king that it was time for him to take his bath, and the king immediately took the opportunity to serve Sri Acarya and carried two earthen pots for his bath.

While Srinivas bathed, the king asked his court Pandita, who had accompanied him, whether he could explain the discourse given by Sri Acarya the previous day. The Pandita admitted that the topics explained by Srinivasa were far beyond his own understanding. The king then ordered the Pandita to serve Sri Acarya.

After Srinivasa had bathed and eaten, the king requested him to read something. With a happy heart, Acarya began to read. The beauty of his recitation and the depth of realization in his commentary melted the heart of the king and he began to cry. Suddenly the king had a dream-like vision in which he was ordered to take refuge at the feet of Srinivasa. When he asked where he could meet Srinivasa, he was told that he was present in the king's palace. The king immediately repented for all the sins he had committed. Even the Pandita began to cry, as Sri Acarya sat silently. The king got up and bowed at the feet of Acarya asking, "Who are you? From where have you come?"

Acarya replied, "I am Srinivasa, a disciple of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. In Vrndavana I was ordered by Sri Jiva Gosvami to carry the books of the Gosvamis from Vrndavana to Gaudadesa, where they could be published and distributed. Thakura Mahasaya, Syamananda, and myself brought these precious books in two carts protected by armed guards. We traveled a long distance without any trouble, but in Gopalapura the books were stolen and I have not found any trace of them yet."

Understanding what had happened, the king said, "How fortunate my family is. Because the books were stolen, we have had the great fortune of meeting you. Who other than you could deliver a sinner like me?" Vira Hamvira then admitted that it was he who had stolen the books, and began to cry helplessly, rolling on the ground.

Hearing the remarkable admission of the king, Srinivasa jumped for joy. With tears in his eyes, Sri Acarya asked, "Where have you kept the books?" The king immediately brought him to the room where the books were hidden. At once, Sri Acarya fell on the ground prostrate in front of the books, while the king held the feet of Acarya, crying.

Srinivasa went to take a bath then returned and ordered the king to bring flower garlands, Tulsi, and sandalwood paste for worshipping the books. Vira Hamvira quickly brought the necessary ingredients. Sri Acarya sat on a new seat and ordered the king to take a bath. After bathing, Srinivasa ordered the king to

take a seat near him. Sri Acarya then chanted the Hare Krsna maha mantra name into the ear of the king. He had the king touch the books, then placed a garland around the neck of the king. Vira Hamvira then called his Pandita and ordered him to render service to Srinivasa Acarya. The Pandita humbly bowed before Acarya, who asked his name. "People call me Vidya guru Vyasa," he replied. "Please allow me to be your servant." Srinivasa then recited the holy name into the ear of the Pandita, who cried and fell at Acarya's feet. Srinivasa personally marked the forehead of the Pandita with tilak and placed his foot on the head of the brahmana. Seeing all this, the king was unable to check his tears.

On the third day of the solar eclipse, Srinivasa gave mantra diksa to the king, naming him Haricarana dasa, and also taught him from the books of Sri Rupa Gosvami. The king then requested Acarya to remain in his kingdom and he agreed to do so. Srinivasa also taught Sri Vyasa Acarya Pandita the Bhagavata and other books by Sri Rupa.

After some time Srinivasa told the king, "Vyasa has studied the sastra under my guidance. He should now be reinstated as the court Pandita and you should listen to the scriptures from him. From now on he will be known as Sri Vyasa Acarya." The king happily agreed to this proposal.

Sri Acarya then instructed, "O king, please send a man with all traveling expenses to the village of Khetari of Gaderahata to inform Narottama dasa that the books of the Gosvamis have been found. He is spending his days there in utter misery thinking that the books are lost." The king immediately arranged to send a man, and Sri Acarya sent a letter for Narottama along with him. When the messenger departed the king requested Acarya to tell him about Narottama.

Srinivasa replied, "I met him in Vrndavana and we traveled together carrying the books of the Gosvamis. When the books were stolen by your men, he overwhelmed with grief and returned to his home. He is still in misery due to not getting any information from me. Although Narottama is the son of Krsnadasa Raya, the Zamindara of Gaderahata, from his youth he showed signs of complete detachment from material pleasures. As soon as he was able, he left home and went to Vrndavana where he took shelter at the feet of Lokanath Gosvami. The name Narottama was given by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself. I am unable to describe the exalted devotion of Narottama. In Vrndavana he was awarded the title Thakura Mahasya." Hearing this, the king expressed his eagerness to meet Narottama. To which Srinivasa replied, "I do not know when I shall get his darshan. There is no better devotee of Krsna than Narottama. He is my dearest friend."

Meanwhile the two messengers reached Khetari and Thakura Mahasya asked who had sent them. When he heard that they were sent from Visnupur by Srinivasa Acarya, Narottama eagerly took the letter and was greatly relieved to read its contents. Tears of happiness flowed profusely from his eyes. He joyfully announced everywhere that the books had been found by Acarya Thakura, and ordered the musicians to begin playing their instruments in celebration. Five days

after receiving the wonderful news, he wrote a letter to Sri Acarya and sent the messengers back after giving them money for travel expenses.

Upon receiving Narottama's reply, Srinivasa was filled with emotion and began to cry, feeling intense separation from Thakura Mahasaya. Acarya read the letter aloud to the king and remarked, "When will I again see my dear friend Narottama?"

One day Acarya announced to the king, "I must go to Rarhadasa where my mother is living alone. I am eager to see her again." The king offered to send Vyasacarya and Krsnavallava, along with some other men, to accompany him on his journey. He also offered Srinivasa many gifts. Thus Srinivasa went to Rarha taking the books along with him.

Four days later Srinivasa reached Yajigrama and went to the house of his mother, who did not recognize her beloved son. When he told his mother that he was Srinivasa, she began to cry holding his hands. Sri Acarya stayed for some days with his mother, explaining all that had happened to him in his travels.

Now I shall tell you another beautiful story. In a large village called Teliavudhari, situated on the bank of the Padmavati, lived two brothers named Ramacandra and Govinda. They were both scholars born in a Vaidya family. Ramacandra had heard of the glories of Acarya Thakura and was very eager to meet him. Thus he started out for Visnupura, accompanied by a servant. On the way he reached Katoya where he heard more reports about Acarya Thakura. Someone explained that he had come from Vrndavana, someone else said that he was living in Visnupura. Others remarked that there was no scholar like him anywhere. He was also informed that Sri Acarya was presently visiting his mother in Yajigrama. When he asked for directions to Yajigrama he found that it was only one mile away. Thus he quickly headed towards Yajigrama, but upon arrival he was informed that Sri Acarya had just left for Sri Khanda that morning. I shall continue this story later. Being faithful to the feet of Sri Jahnava and Sri Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa narrate Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

All glories to Sri Krsna Caitanya, the reservoir of all transcendental qualities. All glories to Nityananda Prabhu, the life of the Vaisnavas. All glories to Advaita Acarya who has descended to deliver suffering humanity. All glories to Sri Jahnava and Viracandra.

I shall now discuss Sri Acarya Thakura's visit to Sri Khanda. Leaving the carts on the outskirts of the temple boundry, Acarya Thakura entered the temple and bowed before the Deity of Lord Gauranga. At that time Sri Raghunandana happened to come to the temple and welcomed Srinivasa with a warm embrace. They took their seats and Raghunandana inquired about the theft of the books, as he had heard some news of the incident. Acarya described the details of their journey and the recovery of the books. Raghunandana then informed Srinivasa that Narahari Sarkara Thakura had recently departed from this world. Srinivasa cried, lamenting, "Formerly it was Sarkara Thakura who advised me to go to Vrndavana. But now that I have returned I am unable to meet him. O how unfortunate I am." Both Srinivasa and Raghunandana wept, feeling separation from Sarkara Thakura. That evening they spent the night talking about Krsna. In the morning they sat together in the Nathmandira continuing discussions until Acarya bid farewell and returned to Yajigrama and bowed at the feet of his mother.

Ramacandra, who had been waiting to meet Srinivasa Acarya, came to his place and found Acarya sitting alone. He offered his obeisances, but was unable to utter a word. Ramacandra placed five coins before the feet of Acarya and bowed again. When Srinivasa asked his name, he replied, "I am Ramacandra from a Vaidya family of Teliavudhari." Acarya Thakura offered him a seat and requested him to stay there. After some time Srinivasa asked, "How far is your village from Khetari?" Ramacandra replied that it is about four miles away." Acarya further inquired, "When did you leave your village", and Ramacandra replied, "Four days ago I left home and on the fifth day I had your darshan."

One day Acarya ordered Vyasacarya to discuss with Ramacandra about Vyakarana and literature in verses. Thakura listened patiently to their discussion for a long time. In this debate Ramacandra proved himself to be a great scholar. Sri Acarya was impressed by Ramacandra's genius, although he knew that Ramacandra was proud of his knowledge. Acarya embraced him, and personally began a debate with Ramacandra which went on for a long time, without either of them taking prasad. Acarya was charmed by Ramacandra and considered him blessed by the goddess Sarasvati. From that day Sri Acarya understood that Ramacandra was a jewel amongst devotees.

On another occasion, Sri Acarya again invited Ramacandra to debate with him, which made Ramacandra feel very proud. They continued to speak for considerable time. Thakura told Ramacandra, "If one is intelligent he must inquire as to which scriptures are capable of actually destroying the miseries of human life. When he comes to understand this he must leave aside the reading of any other scriptures except those which can deliver the highest benefit. It is true that all scriptures have literal and educational value, but what is the use of wasting valuable time in studying Tarka Nyaya Sastras? What benefit will be derived from such reading? The Bhagavata should be studied first. It is a mine of transcendental gems and the essence of all knowledge. Personally I prefer to read the Bhagavata. Why should I waste time reading dry, tasteless books?"

Ramacandra replied enthusiastically, "I have come to you for this reason. Please be my teacher, for I have read innumerable books but I have not been able

to free myself from doubt. O Acarya Thakura, please be my guide and give me shelter at your feet." Saying this Ramacandra fell at the feet of Acarya crying. Thakura blessed him, placing his foot on Ramacandra's head. Ramacandra bathed the feet of Srinivasa and happily drank the water. Srinivasa then chanted the holy name in the ear of Ramacandra. He then began teaching Ramacandra from all the devotional books written by Rupa and Sanatana. Within one month Ramacandra studied all these books. Sri Acarya remarked, "He who possess such an abundance of good qualities must have accumulated such wealth through his past activities. A proper guru can understand how to utilise such qualities in the service of the Lord." This is the story of an illustrious guru and his illustrious disciple.

One day while Ramacandra was standing nearby Sri Acarya, a letter came from the house of Ramacandra with the news that Govinda Kaviraja was ill. Govinda was the younger brother of Ramacandra, and he had written, "I am ill, please come soon. After two or three days you can return." Ramacandra paid no heed to the letter and remained with his guru engaged in study. One and a half months passed and again a letter came saying that Govinda was on the verge of death. Govinda explained that his hands and legs had become puffy and swollen. Govinda requested his elder brother to please bring Acarya Thakura along with him, but Ramacandra did not tell Srinivasa.

Govinda was a worshiper of Mahamaya (goddess Durga). When Govinda was praying to goddess Durga to save his life he heard an oracle say, "O my son, chant the name of Govinda. He is the only saviour and Lord of the three worlds. I have no power to save you from the hands of death. I also worship the lotus feet of Govinda. He has unlimited maidservants like me. He is the Supreme Brahman and no one in the three worlds can understand His unlimited power. The Radha Krsna mantra is the only means for deliverance from the cycle of repeated birth and death."

Hearing these words Govinda became extremely nervous. He called for his guru and requested him to do something, but the guru sat with his head down and said nothing. Govinda then sent for his son, Dvija Simha, and asked him to send five men to bring Acarya Thakura. He wrote a letter to Ramacandra and sent the men with it. After a long journey they reached Yajigrama and asked the villagers for directions to Sri Acarya's house. At his residence they sent one man into the house to inform Ramacandra of their arrival. Ramacandra came out and heard the plea of the men. He then went to Srinivasa and requested, "Please be king upon my family." Sri Acarya agreed to visit Govinda and they started out on that very day. They halted in a village for the night and continued on the following morning. Some of the men rushed ahead to inform the members of Govinda's family.

Govinda Kaviraja ordered his son to plant banana trees in the village and to decorate everywhere with mango leaves. When Dvija Simha came forward to greet the illustrious guests, Sri Acarya inquired who the boy was. Ramacandra explained, "He is the son of Govinda and the servant of your feet."

Upon reaching the house Srinivasa asked Ramacandra, "What would you like me to do?" To which Ramcandra answered, "How can I give any suggestion to you. You do as you wish." "Well", said Srinivasa, "the members of your family are also my servants." Saying this he entered the room. Some men helped Govinda to sit up. Govinda managed to fold his hands in respect, but he was too weak to speak. Sri Acarya mercifully placed his foot on Govinda's feet. The relatives of Ramacandra then offered a seat to Srinivasa, bathed his feet with scented oil, adorned his body with sandalwood paste, and offered him some cooked food and sweets. Srinivasa ate and then ordered Govinda to eat the remnants of his food. Govinda was helped to eat the food and at once he felt relief from his suffering. Govinda was delighted to find that all signs of illness had left his body.

The next morning Acarya smiling told Ramacandra, "Bathe Govinda with your own hands. After that I shall purify him." Ramacandra did as requested and dressed his younger brother in clean dry clothes. Meanwhile Srinivasa also took bath. Thereafter, Ramacandra sat with his brother as Srinivasa poured the nectar of the Hare Krsna mantra into the ears of Govinda, while the Vaisnavas sang in sankirtana joyfully. First he chanted the Krsna mantra and after the Radha Krsna mantra and taught Govinda how to chant the mantras correctly. Govinda bowed at the feet of his preceptor, who lovingly placed his foot on Govinda's head. Govinda now felt as strong as a lion, and happily offered many gifts to his guru. From that day forward Govinda was completely cured of his disease and a fully devoted Vaisnava. Filled with appreciation Govinda said, "Now I can understand that your feet are my only resort. Please give your blessings so that I may be empowered to describe the transcendental pastimes of Krsna. I would also like to describe the all-auspicious lila of Sri Gauranga." Srinivasa blessed his disciple saying, "Describe Krsna lila to your hearts content. But first study Bhaktirasamrta Sindu, Ujjalanilamani, and Vasudeva Ghosa's description of Sri Gauranga."

Govinda eagerly followed these instructions and soon realised that without the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu the pastimes of Krsna will remain a mystery. When Sri Acarya saw that Govinda had grasped the true essence of the scriptures, he happily embraced Govinda. In this way Govindadasa continuously worshiped and meditated on Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu for thirty-six years. Then, with great pleasure, Govinda Kaviraja described the Gauralila, as well as Krsnalila. Such episodes would normally be impossible for an ignorant person like myself to describe, but by the mercy of my two masters, Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I have been empowered to write. Now, listen attentively as I continue this narration.

Sri Thakura Mahasaya was very excited when he heard that Sri Acarya had visited the house of Govinda. At that time Narottama became inspired to hold a huge festival in Kheturi and inaugurate the worship of the Deity forms of Gaura Nitai. Thus, with the help of his relatives, disciples, and also the inhabitants of the village, he organized the building of a temple building. By the mercy of his guru, and through the purity of Narottama's sadhana, all arranged went very smoothly and systematically.

During this time Narottama received news that Srinivasa Acarya was in

Budhari and would soon arrive in Kheturi. Overcome with joy, Narottama burst forth with fresh enthusiasm and vigor, preparing everything for Acarya's arrival. He warned every that they must treat Srinivasa Acarya with the utmost respect. Narottama then sent Ramacandra Kaviraja and Vyasa to greet Srinivasa. They had not traveled far before they saw Sri Acarya, and at once fell to the ground bowing at his feet. Acarya embraced them both and asked about their well being. They happily proceeded to the residence of Narottama. When Thakura Mahasaya spotted Srinivasa Acarya approaching with Ramacandra on his left and Vyasa on his right, he cheerfully stretched out his arms and ran towards Srinivasa. Narottama offered his obeisances and Sri Acarya embraced him warmly. At that moment Govinda Kaviraja arrived and fell on the ground at the feet of Narottama. Thakura Mahasaya who inquired about the young man was and Sri Acarya explained that he was Govinda Kaviraja, the younger brother of Ramacandra Kaviraja. All of them were very happy to meet each other.

On Ramacandra's request, Sri Acarya took his bath, accepted prasada, then sat down and began speaking about Krsna. Sri Acarya and Thakura Mahasaya also reminisced about their lives in Vrndavana, the stealing of the books, and many other topics. Everyone present listened attentively and were happy hearing this nectarean discussion. In this way the night passed swiftly.

The following morning Srinivasa Acarya ordered Thakura Mahasaya to return to Khetari to complete the preparations for the festival, assuring him that he would also go to Kheturi within five days to inspect everything. He advised Thakura Mahasaya to take Vyasa along with him, as he would be a good assistant. Srinivasa then went to his own village and Thakura Mahasaya and Vyasa left for Khetari.

In Khetari, preparations for the forthcoming festival were in full swing. Narottama sent persons out to gather all the necessary material, such as stone for carving the deity of Gauranga. Architects were hired to build new house and rooms for the festivities.

Within a few days Sri Acarya arrived in Kheturi, along with Ramacandra. Thakura Mahasaya and Vyasa greeted them and brought them into the house. I am unable to describe how attentively and lovingly Srinivasa was cared for in Narottama's residence.

Narottama sent out invitations to all the Mahantas, Adhikaris and Vaisnavas requesting them to attend the festival which would be held on the day of the full moon in the month of Phalgun. Thus millions of devotees assembled at Kheturi and sankirtana began led by Narottama dasa . At an auspicious time the Deity of Lord Gauranga was installed by Srinivasa Acarya, while all the devotees cheered joyfully, chanting the name of Hari. Thereafter the Deity of Ballavi Kanta was installed.

Everyone present was ecstatic. Seeing the Deities and having the opportunity to associate with all the Vaisnavas was a most precious occasion for



them all. Some of the guests found places to stay in the village, while some lived on the outskirts of the village, and still others stayed in the new houses. Huge quantities of curd, flat rice, bananas, sweets and sugar had been gathered and more than one hundred pots of pancamrta had been collected for the occasion.

Acarya himself performed the ceremony of the abhiseka of the Deities, exactly according to the rules of the sastras. All the Mahantas touched the bodies of the Deities and placed sandalwood paste and garlands on Them. When ecstatic sankirtana began before the Deities, everyone, including family men and people of lower classes converged there to joining in singing and dancing. Devidasa Mahasaya was the first kirtana leader, and Gauranga Ballava Raya played the mrdanga. The Deity of Gauranga had been placed by the left side of the Deity of Ballava Kanta, and this was the subject matter of the kirtana of Devidasa. All the Mahantas, Adhikaris and Vaisnavas became mad with ecstasy hearing the beautiful kirtan recitals of Devidasa. Sri Acarya was overwhelmed with emotion, as was Vyasa Acarya and Ramacandra Kaviraja. Thakura Mahasaya danced madly, until he became almost mad with ecstasy. Unable to continue dancing, he rolled on the floor in ecstasy. All the spectators were spell bound, unable to imagine what kind of devotional love Thakura Mahasaya possessed. He began to laugh loudly, and his body trembled so violently that one man tried to hold him down. Narottama's lips quivered so rapidly that they feared his teeth would fall out. Sometimes he would fall on the ground resting his hands on his chest. His whole body seemed to stretch and sometimes it would shrivel up as if it had been pierced by thorns. His bodily condition was the result of his exalted spiritual emotions, which also effected others simply by watching. Krsnananda Majumdar and his followers fell on the ground crying due to the condition of Thakura. They all began to cry loudly looking at the face of Narottama. Holding the feet of Narottama, they cried, thanking him for granting them ecstatic devotional love. Krsnananda tearfully said, "My house has become blessed, it has become non-different from Vrndavana. My servants and I shall remain your servants from now on." Many people began to spontaneously give in charity, without realising how much they were giving. But Thakura Mahasaya was not concerned about donations, he continued to stand unmoving on the dias, just like Lord Gauranga. Anyone who witnessed his beauty fell on the ground crying.

Srinivasa Acarya embraced Narottama with great affection. Observing the grand festival, he thought that only the Supreme Lord Himself could arrange for such a wonderful festival. Praising Narottama he said, "Lord Gauranga will always be with you. He has taken full charge of your life and death."

After the kirtana they all ate sumptuous prasada and returned to their houses to rest.

The last day of the festival they everyone assembled again, and Gokul dasa, a disciple of Thakura Mahasaya, took the initiative of leading the kirtana that day. He began singing with the accompaniment of the mrdanga and his voice delighted the hearts of all. Everyone stopped their conversations and joined in singing. Gokuldasa first sang the glories of Lord Gauranga and then began singing about the pastimes of Krsna. Hearing this, Narottama was greatly moved. With tears

streaming down his face soaking his chest, he cried out, "O what a wonderful son you are singing, Gokul." Holding the hand of the singer he said, "O what a song, how divine is the beauty of Krsna and how pure is the love of Radha." In this way his ecstatic emotions grew and he danced blissfully for six hours. Throwing himself on the ground again and again. No one was able to hold him. He cried continuously calling out the name of Radha and his body trembled. Seeing his emotional state everyone became frightened. Sri Acarya, also fearing Narottama's life, took his hand and sat on the ground and recited slokas into Narottama's ear from Ujjala Nilamani composed by Sri Rupa. But his efforts were in vain, Narottama's condition did not change. Srinivasa carried the unconscious Narottama into the room and lay him on the bed. Eventually Narottama regained his external consciousness and spent the rest of the night discussing the pastimes of the Lord.

The next day the devotees all bid farewell to one another. After their departure, Narottama felt great sadness due to separation from the devotees. To pacify him, Sri Acarya sat with Narottama, and called Ramacandra, Sri Vyasa, and others to discuss the pastimes of Krsna. Srinivasa told Ramacandra to speak and thus he described Krsna's life for more than one and a half hours. He then requested Narottama to say something about Krsna, and Thakura gladly described the pastimes of the Lord, while everyone listened intently. Everyone became fully absorbed in Krsna katha as Thakura's inspiration and ecstasy increased. In this way they spent the entire night absorbed in divine happiness.

Srinivasa Acarya remained there for one month. Until one day he told Thakura Mahasaya that he desired to go to Yajigrama and Visnupur. He assured Narottama that he would return soon after spending some days with the king of Visnupura. Mahasaya cried in despair and for two to four days he did not talk to anyone. Srinivasa ordered Ramacandra to remain stay with Narottama to keep him company. He advised Ramacandra to spend his days with Narottama discussing the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. Ramacandra submissively complied saying, "From now on we will always remain together. On the day of Acarya's departure Narottama became very emotional, he gave two mohurs and two sheets pieces of loin cloth to them, and gave Vyasacarya five coins and a loin cloth. I cannot describe the heartbreaking scene which took place at the time of the Acarya's departure.

Ramacandra Kaviraja and Thakura Mahasaya spent their days happily together, discussing Krsna's pastimes, not caring for the passing of days and nights. They went to the river Padmavati to take their baths together, and would play in the water while discussing the Krsna lila.

One day while they were bathing as usual, two brahmanas named Harirama and Ramakrsna came to the river. They happily watched Narottama and Ramacandra as they played in the water, then they too entered the water to take bath. While bathing, the brahmanas discussed complicated spiritual topics. Though Narottama and Ramacandra were both great scholars, they listened quietly as the brahmanas discussed. However, after listening for some time they could no

longer remain silent and began contradicting the statements of the brahmanas regarding the Bhagavata and Puranas. The brahmanas were furious, but checked their anger and tried to defend their position by reciting various slokas. After taking bath Narottama and Ramacandra returned to their houses and the brahmanas accompanied them. They were offered food and seats with the utmost respect. In the evening they all watched the arati ceremony before the Deities with great delight. That night the brahmanas had a debate with Narottama and Ramacandra and were hopelessly defeated. When the brahmanas went to bed they discussed together in hushed tones and decided that Narottama and Ramacandra must be great scholars. They also came to the conclusion that what they had learned for so long from their teachers was all in vain. They appreciated Narottama and Ramacandra's firm conviction in service to God and the sadhus. They were also impressed with the concept that all living entities are eligible to worship Krsna, even if he is a sudra. While discussing these points the brahmanas fell asleep. A Maharaja appeared to them in a drama and told them, "O brahmanas, you are fools. Brahmanism can only be attained by worshipping Krsna. You are very proud of your brahmanism but these two devotees are gurus of your guru. In the morning without hesitation, go and take refuge of the feet of these two exalted devotees. From now on simply worship the Supreme Lord Krsna, all that you have learned previously was wrong. These two devotees have worshiped Krsna birth after birth. Krsna is their guru, and they are His disciples life after life."

In the morning they fell at the feet of Narottama and Ramacandra. Holding their hands the brahmanas begged, "We are most unfortunate for we have taken our birth as non-brahmanas. Please be kind and grant us the right of becoming true brahmanas. We are sinful rascals, suffering the miseries of material life. We have wasted our lives running after false teaching-not understanding that the lotus feet of Krsna are the ultimate goal of life. Please help us to attain those feet at the end of our lives. No one but you can save us from hellish existence. Please place your feet on our heads." Ramakrsna lamented, "O Prabhus, allow us to worship your feet life after life." Crying out the names of Narottama and Ramacandra, they threw themselves on the ground.

Narottama and Ramacandra were extremely moved by their sincere plea, and mercifully recited the holy name in the ears of Harirama and Ramakrsna. Crying the two asked, "O lords, what should we do with our lives?" They replied, "Chant the holy name constantly, even while eating and sleeping." Narottama and Ramacandra came out into the compound and began chanting the name of Gauranga. Observing their devotional mood, Ramakrsna and Harirama were also moved by ecstatic love and entered into the kirtana with great humility. After a long time, the two Prabhus ordered them to take their baths in the Ganges and then recited Radha Krsna nama in their ears. The two disciples fell prostrate on the ground at the feet of their gurus. Narottama and Ramacandra placed their feet on the heads of their disciples. They taught their disciples the science of devotional service, and advised them to read the sastra daily.

As directed, the two brahmanas began to study the books of Sri Rupa

Gosvami, and eventually thoroughly studied all the scriptures. In this way they attained great heights of spiritual development. Being faithful to the feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa take pleasure in writing Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Advaitacandra and all the devotees of Gauracandra. Sri Jahnava, the image of love, appeared in this world being empowered directly by Sri Caitanya. Much to the pleasure of Thakura Mahasaya, she stopped in Khetari on her way to Vrndavana. Narottama and Ramacandra rushed to greet her. First they offer prayers of glorification, then bowed humbly at her feet. With great respect they brought her to their residence and served her with great sincerity. Thakurani was overwhelmed with ecstasy to see the Deity of Gaura Raya, and thus she remained there for four days during which time she introduced many new methods of worshiping the Deity. The devotees of the village arranged to bring great quantities of curd, flat rice, sugar, bananas and a great quantity of sweets. They also brought milk, ghee, pickles, kasandi, and a great festival ensued. For four days the people enjoyed the kirtana and delicious prasada.

While sitting one day, Thakurani called Narottama and ordered him to sit near her. Embracing him affectionately she said, "O my dear Narottama, I am so happy to see the exalted Vaisnava qualities, your pleasing disposition, and your sincere service attitude towards all the Vaisnavas. Before coming here I had heard of your divine qualities, but now I am witnessing even more than I expected. In Vrndavana the devotees always speak highly of your service attitude towards all the Vaisnavas. You have certainly been rightly named Thakura Mahasaya. In my life I have never met a more sincere devotee than you. I have not told anyone, except Ramacandra Kaviraja, that I was coming here to visit you. Now, I promise that I shall sing your praises throughout Vrndavana, Gauda and wherever else I may visit. Your love for Gauranga has attracted me to you. I know that you and Ramacandra are extremely dear to one another and you have decided to remain together life after life. This is most pleasing to me. It is also the blessing of Mahaprabhu that your Sri Acarya has obtained a true disciple like you. Now be kind to me and permit me to go to Vrndavana happily to meet all the devotees of Sri Gauranga. I am eager to visit Radha Kunda, Govardhana and other holy places there."

When Thakurani actually announced her departure, Narottama and Ramacandra were filled with sadness, yet they offered a hundred coins to her for expenses on the way and accompanied her on her journey for about half a crosa (one mile) then tearfully bid farewell. Seeing their tears, Thakurani held their hands and affectionately said, "Please go to your homes peacefully. Both of you are as dear to me as life. Now let me go to Vrndavana safely." Thakurani then

startef for Vrndavana, as Narottama and Ramacandra returned to their homes with aching hearts.

After a long journey Thakurani finally reached Mathura where she happily visited the Lord's birth place and Visram ghat, then went on to Vrndavana. Having this opporutnity to visit all the kunjjas of Vrndavana, she felt herself to be the most fortunate of women. When she visited the place where Sri Jiva Gosvami lived, he bowed at her feet and quickly snet news of her arrival to the other Vaisnavas in the area. Sri Gopala Bhatta and Lokanath Gosvami quickly came to meet her and offered their humble obeisances and were introduced by Sri Jiva to Thakurani; "Here is Gopala Bhatta. As soon as he heard of your arrival he rushed here to meet you." Turning to Lokanath he said, "This is Lokanath Gosvami who lives here on the order of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu."

With great pleasure Thakurani humbly addressed them, "I have come here on the order of Mahaprabhu. Please be kind upon me as I have heard from wisem men that by your mercy I shall attain all perfection in life." Turning to Lokanath Gosvami she said, "It is my great fortune to have this opportunity to met you, the spiritual master of Narottama. I am charmed by Narottama's good qualities and devotional attitude towards Krsna and the Vaisnavas. In the three worlds I have never met a Vaisnava as loving and devotional as Narottama. The title Thakura Mahasaya is certainly his rightful title. I think that the one who has such as disciple as Narottama is the most fortunate man in the three worlds." Turning to Gopala Bhatta she said, "I am also greatly impressed by the loving disposition of Ramacandra, who is a disciple of your disciple, Srinivasa Acarya. It brings me great pleasure to see that he and Narottama are tied together with the rope of love and friendship. He is the true disciple of an exalted spiritual master. I am confident that these devotees are qualified to deliver mankind." Gopala Bhatta and Lokanatha Gosvami listened to their own praises with great discomfort.

I, Nityananda dasa, attempt to write this book, taking shelter at the feet of Jahnava Thakurani. I am most unqualified, yet being repeatedly ordered by her to write, I must bow to her command. If there are any mistakes herein or anything which contradicts the point of view of the Mahajanas, please forgive me for that. It is my sincere desire to simply carry out the order of my guru and please the Supreme Lord Krsna. Although I am unqualified, I am unable to stop writing as I will be guilty of disobeying my guru. I am simply trying to repeat exactly what I have heard from my spiritual master. By the mercy of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa, write Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

All glories to Sri Gauracandra, Sri Advaitacandra, and all the devotees of Gaura. All glories to Gadadhara and Nityananda Prabhu, the life of Sri Jahnava. All glories to Viracandra, the personification of love. Holding the feet of Sri

Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa write all that I know, hoping to achieve all perfection in life by obtaining the mercy of Sri Gauranga. I am the only son of my parents who used to live in Khanda. I do not know why Sri Thakurani showered her mercy upon me and took me into her confidence. She favored me immensely by taking me with her everywhere. Twice Prabhu (Viracandra?) personally explained to me how the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu would continue in this world: "When I am no longer in this world, who will distribute love of Godhead? Accept Narottama and Srinivasa as the personifications of love, describe their transcendental characteristics and propagate their message of devotion with sincerity." Since it is the direct order of Prabhu, what can I do but write as I have been instructed. Thakurani also directed in this connection and gave me the courage to write. I therefore offer my obeisances and apologize at the feet of the devotees for having the audacity to write as I am certainly unqualified to do so.

Sri Rupa Gosvami and his followers accepted the lives of ascetics and resided in Vrndavana. There they strictly followed the methods of worshiping Krsna as described in the sastras. The disciple of Sri Rupa, Sri Jiva Gosvami, also gave up everything and went to Vrndavana. ???Dasa Govsmi and Kaviraja were ordered to remain in family. They were instructed to remain preach the message of Lord Caitanya and serve all the Vaisnavas while residing in Gauda. According to the Vaisnava Gosvamis, he who has taken shelter at the lotus feet of Krsna.....??worshiping as an ascetic in household life?? The confidants of Sri Radha disregarded the local customs and gave up all household duties to surrender to Sri Krsna.....(two pages of garbled philosophy)

Now listen attentively as I describe Jahnava Thakurani's trip to Vrndavana. When Thakurani decided to go to Vrndavana I was eager to accompany and thus requested her to take me along. By her mercy I was allowed to travel with her. Although the journey was very difficult for Thakurani, she remained equipoised throughout the trip. Upon reaching Vrndavana, she she became ecstatic with love and wept emotionally. She immediately went to the cottage of Sri Rupa Gosvami who happily greeted her and escorted her to all the holy places of Vrndavana. All the Gosvamis accompanied them and relished discussing the various pastimes which had occurred in each of the sacred places. She took darsana of Govinda, Gopinatha and Madana Mohana. Thakurani then gathered many items and organized a grand festival, and with my own eyes I watched as all the Govamis happily relished prasada.

One day while sitting in the cottage, Thakurani said to Sri Rupa Gosvami, "Tell me about the transcendental qualities of Sanatana, Lokanath, and Gopala Bhatta." Sri Rupa happily said, "Sanatana is my elder brother, how can I describe his exalted qualities? He is like my master. From him I have learned everything. Lokanath is a great ascetic and extremely dear to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He follows strict principles of renunciation and lives alone in seclusion. My dear friend Gopala Bhatta is a versatile genius, Mahaprabhu is his very life. Bugarba Acarya is a man of extraordinary qualities and a favorite disciple of Gadadhara Pandita. All of these great devotees are very kind to my worthless self. O respected

Thakurani, what shall I say about myself. There is no one as useless as me."

Hearing these humble statements, Thakurani replied, "You have been directly empowered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself, I have come here only to see you. I have seen all the places in Vrndavana, now I would like to hear about the books you have written. Please make me happy by reciting the Lord's pastimes as you have written them in the Bhaktirasamrts Sindhu, Vidagdha Madhava, Danakeli Kaumudi and Lalita Madhava. The Bhagavata is silent about some particular pastimes which I am eager to hear about. Please bring your books and read to me."

Sri Rupa Gosvami brought his books and all the Gosvamis, along with Thakurani, took their seats to listen. Thakurani's heart swelled with devotional sentiments as Rupa Gosvami described how Radha and Her confidants use to pass through the kunjās decorated with golden crowns and carrying pots of butter, curd, and milk. Krsna would suddenly stop them and request Radha to give Him everything they were carrying. Radha and associates laughed at Him, and Krsna forcefully took their pots and ate everything. Lalita sakhi protested, retorting, "I shall report You to king Kandarpa." And Radha called out indignantly, "O Krsna, I am the daughter of Vrsabhanu and I know that you are the son of Nanda. You keep your cows in the forest and play the flute, and Your only business is to steal the curd and milk of the gopis. You also have the habit of talking to the gopis and touching their bodies. I am going to tell the king about all of Your pranks." Saying this Radha suddenly became shy and entered into the kunjā in a huff.

Krsna intentionally played on his flute and its sweet sound stole the minds and hearts of the gopis. Radha fell unconscious and upon awakening asked Lalita, "O my dear sakhi, who in the three worlds is the most beloved of Krsna?" Lalita replied, "Everyone knows that You are Krsna's favorite." Hearing this Visakha said, "I think that the flute is actually Krsna's favorite as it is always tasting the nectar of Krsna's lips." Hearing this Radhika said, "Then I shall give up my life and become a flute in my next life. Now I will go to the Kalpataru tree at Govardhana and express my desire."

Hearing this wonderful description from Sri Rupa, Thakurani began to weep ecstatically and fell to the ground. What more can I say about the sweetness of these topics. No one could remain attached to materialistic life after listening to Sri Rupa's beautiful description of the divine pastimes of the Lord. His voice was sweet and charming like that of a cuckoo.

In this way Thakurani spent many joyfully days in Vrndavana Dhama. One day she went to visit Madan Mohana and was overwhelmed by the beauty of the Deity. His curved eyebrows were just like the bow of the god of love (Cupid). Yet she began to think that the beauty of Krsna was eclipsed as He did not have Sri Radha standing by His left side. No one other than Madan Mohana could understand her mind. That night Madan Mohana appeared before Thakurani and told her smilingly, "What do you think Jahnava? Just return to your home and eventually all your desires will be fulfilled. There you can arrange for to have a

Deity of Radhika made and then send Her to me. Then only will your desires be fulfilled. Do not be sorry for desiring in this way. It is also My desire to have Sri Radha by My side. I shall be waiting for you."

Upon awaking Thakurani became worried about how she would be able to carry out the Lord's order, yet she did not tell anyone what had transpired. That day she told the Gosvamis that she wanted to visit Radha Kunda again. They all gladly accepted her wish and in the morning Thakurani went to the kunda. There her mind became calm. She visited the place of Raghunath dasa Gosvami. He fell flat before her and she told him, "I have been very eager to meet you." Krsnadasa Kaviraja also paid his respects, and they all sat down to discuss the pastimes of Krsna. Together they happily circumambulated the Kunda together.

One morning, towards the break of dawn, I heard Raghunath dasa Gosvami suddenly laugh. I asked him inquired from him and asked about the glories of the kunda. He told me, "Vrndavana is meant only for the pastimes of Radha Krsna. Krsna's pastimes and His abode are non-different. This kunda is where Radhika and Krsna performed wonderful pastimes." Saying this he halted, being moved by ecstatic emotions. Again I requested him to tell me more. He said, "Krsna is eternal, this place is eternal and all ???Be careful while residing here and visiting various sacred places. If you read the books of Rupa Gosvami you will become familiar with all the pastime of Krsna. Radha and Krsna eternally perform their transcendental pastimes in Vrndavana, but they cannot be observed by all. Only the confidants of Radha and Krsna can see the wonderful parakiya pastimes." Raghunath then went on to explain, "The distances between Vrndavana and the bank of the kunda is about eight croas and Govardhana is two croas from the kunda. From Vrndavana, Sanketa is eight croas and Nadiswara is two croas. Yavat is one croa from Vrndavana, and Radha and Krsna travel between these places twice or thrice daily."

I inquired how it was possible for Radha Krsna and their associates to travel such distances daily. Gosvami replied, My dear Nityananda dasa, according to sastra, Vrndavana is just like a lotus. Caitanya Mahaprabhu explained that Vrndavana reveals itself in two ways, that is open and closed. In use to close itself in pleasure (vilasa) and open itself in sport (lila). Only the favored devotees of Krsna can understand the true nature of Vrndavana."

"O Prabhu," I said, "who will favor me so that I may understand these transcendental topics?" Raghunath replied, "Sport is meant by eternal Krsna and his eternal companions and divine accomplishments are meant by accomplishments through religious austerities and through divine favors (???). Mahaprabhu is non-different from Vrajendra Kumara and His companions are the eternal associates of Krsna. All of the associates of Mahaprabhu are directly empowered by Him and are always absorbed in the transcendental pastimes of the Lord and engaged in His devotional service. Religious austerities are practised by Vaisnavas in order to attain such divine consciousness."

Eager to understand more I asked, "O prabhu, kindly explain to me how a



Vaisnava can attain perfection in spiritual life?"

Raghunath dasa replied, "I shall take you to Sri Rupa who has written many books in which he has described the various practices of devotional service. I know you will be satisfied by hearing his description as Sri Rupa was directly empowered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to write numerous authentic books by through which he will preach the message of Mahaprabhu throughout the world. You have seen how humbly he bows to the feet of Thakurani. What can an ignorant person like myself say about his such an exalted character (who is speaking??) My whole life has passed in vain as I have not performed austerity and engaged in devotional service. Kindly bless me that my mind may be fixed upon the lotus feet of Gauranga at all times."

Holding the hands of Raghunath, Thakurani began to cry. Raghunath begged, "Please accept me as your servant. As I have taken my birth in a rich family, how can I ask you for your blessings to attain the feet of Sri Caitanya. Yet I dare to request that you be kind upon this useless soul who has not worshiped your feet for even a single day."

Thakurani replied, "Please do not speak like this, I feel ashamed. It is you who must bless me that I may become as humble as you. I am a worthless woman who has no understanding of love and devotion. I simply pray that I may have the opportunity for your association again in the future. Please help me to fulfill this desire."

She paid her respects to the Kunda, praying that someday she may have a permanent residence on its bank. Raghunath dasa and Thakurani both cried at the time of bidding farewell.

Jahnava Thakurani returned to the cottage of Rupa Gosvami in Vrndavana and reported to him all that had transpired at Radha Kunda. She stayed there for two days and visited the temple of Madana Gopala. At night when Thakurani and Rupa Gosvami sat together, Thakurani asked Rupa, "Have you written anything about the sixty-four items of devotional service in your books? What is the process of properly practising and how can I avoid offenses in this regard?" Thakurani listened happily as Rupa clearly explained everything.

One day she announced before all the Gosvamis that she had decided to leave Vrndavana and return to her own country, which saddened the hearts of everyone. She went to the temple of Madan Mohana and asked His permission to leave. As soon as she finished her prayer, the flower garland of Madana Mohana fell from His nect. The priest of the temple gave it to Thakurani and she happily wore it around her neck. Again and again she prayed to Madana Mohana to allow her the chance to return and worship His lotus feet.

On the eve of her departure all of the Gosvamis revealed their minds to Thakurani, and when she departed they followed her for a long way. On her way out of Vrndavana she stopped at the temple of Govinda where she told the

Gosvamis, "I am very unhappy to leave your association. Please pray to the Lord that I may come here again and relish your company."

Sanatana Gosvami humbly said, "I am a worthless rascal who has spent his whole life in useless activities. Please bless me that I may attain the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu."

Thakurani protested, "Do not be so humble. It is I who am always praying for your blessings."

Rupa Gosvami also addressed Thakurani, "Please help me to dedicate my life to the feet of Gauranga." Lokanath Gosvami said, "There is no one as helpless as me. What qualities do I possess that Gauranga should favor me? You are the most fortunate lady for you have attained the mercy of Gaura, but what about me who has nothing to hope for in this life?" In this way all of them expressed opened their hearts of Jahnava Thakurani.

Thakurani also revealed her mind to them, "Now listen to my sorrow. All of you must pray to Krsna that I may come again to Vrndavana soon and meet all of you." As they walked along together they all cried unable to bear the thought of separation. At last Rupa Gosvami requested, "Please send Srinivasa Acarya to Vrndavana." Thakurani told Rupa, "Srinivasa is now in his own country. He is the sole successor of the property of Mahaprabhu's love. I shall try my best to meet him and send him to Vrndavana very soon." Thakurani then finally bid farewell and for the rest of the journey sang the praises of the Gosvami of Vrndavana.

One day I asked her, "How will I be able to get the remnants of food from the Vaisnavas. I know that great power lies in the water which has washed the feet of the Vaisnavas."

"That is an interesting point," she replied. "Touching the feet of the Vaisnavas, drinking the water that has washed their feet, and eating the remnants of the Vaisnavas food are all very important items for advancing in spiritual life. He who accepts these items becomes eligible for attaining the service of the Lord. You must worship a pure Vaisnava if you desire to advance spiritually. Anyone who tries to avoid this process will never gain the favor of Mahaprabhu. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu never allowed anyone to drink the water which washed his feet, yet sometimes devotees tried to do so against His will or without Him knowing. Prabhu even forbade Govinda from doing so, yet the Lord glorified the devout Kalidasa Mahasaya, knowing that he was accustomed to drinking the water from the feet of all Vaisnavas regardless of their position.

Once when Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was washing His feet near the Simhadvara entrance in Nilacala, Kalidasa took the opportunity to drink the water which bathed the Lord's feet. After he drank a handful, the Lord forbade him to take anymore, fearing it would be harmful for His disciple to take too much. Mahaprabhu explained that according to the sastras, a guru can give the water of His own feet to his disciples."

In this way Thakurani traveled, discussing various spiritual topics. One day she said to me, "Do not get married as you have heard the verdict of all the Mahajanas that family life may be an obstruction on the path of devotional life. When one becomes involved in wordly activities he tends to become charmed by sense pleasures and affections, and thus forget the path of devotion and worship. Sometimes a person may pose as a virtuous man but in time he proves himself incompetent and becomes a laughing stock. If one tries to give up material life and is sincere in his devotion to his spiritual master, he is sure to attain the favor of Krsna. Some get this favor in this life and some in the next, so why allow your mind to be distracted during this life. Remember my boy, that all Vaisnava Gosvamis are the eternal companions of Krsna and thus you must behave humbly with them. You should regard your gurus, Krsna and the Vaisnavas all the same. Some accept devotion to the Vaisnavas as superior, while others regard themselves as superior to the Vaisnavas. The later will never receive the blessings of his guru. Even though you may possess many devotional qualities, you should never ruin your service by becoming proud."

Eventually Thakurani reached her home country where she was happily greeted by Viracandra Raya in Khanda. Prabhu Viracandra bowed at her feet and eagerly inquired about the well-being of everyone in Vrndavana. As Thakurani described her visit she was overcome with ecstasy simply by remembering Sri Vrndavana Dhama. Narahari, Sri Mukunda, Sri Raghunandana and others listened to her narration and wept joyfully, oblivious to everything else. Turning to Narahari Sarkara, Thakurani requested that he find Srinivasa and send him to Vrndavana as soon as possible.

In the morning Jahnava started for her home along with Narahari and the others. At the time of her departure she advised me to return to my home and strictly follow the instructions she had given me: "Follow my advise and remain with these devotees. This will make me happy. You should always remain in the association of devotees, and in the future I shall call for you to accompany me again on pilgrimage." Thakurani then departed.

After a few days later Narahari arrived with Srinivasa Acarya who was so extremely charming in appearance. Raghunandana and the other devotees there happily greeted him. He explained to Thakurani that he had been living with his parents in Cakhandi. She then told him, "When I visited Vrndavana, Sri Rupa Gosvami told me all about you. It is his instruction that you leave for Vrndavana as soon as possible." That day I saw Srinivasa with my own eyes and was amazed by his sincerity in carrying out the orders of Sri Rupa.

Jahnava Thakurani had one disciple named Sri Caitanya dasa who was known to everyone as Aulia. He went to Vrndavana and relished the joy of being in the Dhama. There he visited the residence of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, who inquired if he knew anything about Srinivasa Acarya.

Aulia replied. "My house is twelve crosas from Vinsupura where I lived happily under the rule of King Vira Hamivira, who is a disciple of Srinivasa Acarya.

The king offered villages, land and wealth to Sri Acarya and requested him to settle in his land. In the month of Phalguna Srinivasa was married and thus far has no issue. Although Gaderahat is quite a distance away from my place, I also heard many things about Thakura Mahasaya. I'm told that he arranged for a grand festival for Mahaprabhu in Kheturi. He is completely indifferent to worldly pleasures and family life, and is always absorbed in serving the Vaisnavas."

After some time Caitanya dasa returned to Khanda and reported everything to Sri Rghunandana who then went to Sri Isvari to give an account of the Gosvamis in Vrndavana. Caitanya dasa then went to meet the king who eagerly inquired about Sri Jiva Gosvami's well-being. The king bowed to him with folded hands and longingly asked, "When shall I be able to meet him? Caitanya dasa and the king then went to the place of Thakura Mahasaya who gladly welcomed them and offered them seats. Aulia told him all about his journey to Vrndavana and Thakura Mahasaya eagerly listened and asked many questions about Vrndavana and the Gosvamis. Taking the hands of Caitanya dasa, Thakura lamented, "How unfortunate I am, I fear that I may never see the lotus feet of my eternal guide and master again."

The eternal message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was destined to be broadcast by Srinivasa Acarya who was directly empowered by the Lord. Thus Srinivasa could not disobey the order of Sri Rupa Gosvami who was Srinivasa's guru. Srinivasa was well aware that Sri Rupa was no ordinary man.

I have written these descriptions according to the directions of my spiritual master. Those who are virtuous will listen intently to this divine pastimes. I, Nityananda dasa, write this book Prem Vilasa by the mercy of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra Prabhu. (218-238)

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

All glories to Sri Krsna Caitanya the embodiment of love. All glories to the king hearted Nityananda Prabhu. All glories to Advaitacandra, the king of the devotees and the main instrument in carrying out the mission of Mahaprabhu. All glories to the Gauranga's dear devotee, Srinivasa, who is the abode of good qualities. All glories to Narottama dasa Thakura, the possessor of love for the Lord. These two illustrious personalities, Srinivasa and Narottama, have come to Gauda to carry out the orders of Sri Gauracandra.

One day one Vaisnava from Gauda came to visit Sri Jiva Gosvami in Vrndavana. Gosvami eagerly begged for news of the devotees in Gauda. He particularly inquired about Srinivasa and Narottama, and listened happily as the devotee described their activities: "I heard about Srinivasa and Narottama from many Vaisnavas and I also saw them both with my own eyes. King Hamvira of Visnupura received the blessings of Sri Acarya Thakura, and Thakura Mahasaya

lives in Khetari. Everyone there says that there is no one in this world who serves the Vaisnavas so sincerely as Thakura Mahasaya. His love and sincerity has maddened the residents there and the entire country has become soaked with the nectarine juice of divine love. Ramacandra has also joined Narottama in Khetari. Sri Acarya Thakura often visits Khetari, while at other times he travels between Visnupura, Bhudari, and Yajigrama. (cannot follow the next paragraph)--Acarya Thakura once visited Khetari while on his way to Vrndavana. He visited the place of Lokanath and became very glad to meet him. When Gosvami heard about the coming of Narottama he became very glad and also satisfied to see the sincere devotion of Narottama. Acarya Thakura told Lokanath that everything had been possible due to his favor to Narottama and out of ecstatic joy the two Gosvamis began to cry. Gopala Bhatta also heard about Narottama and said the same thing which Acarya had told Lokanath.(???)

Around that time many Vaisnavas planned a trip to Gauda hoping to also visit the temple of Lord Jagannatha. Krsnadasa, the disciple of Pujari Thakura and renowned for his exalted qualities, and Ramadasa, the disciple of Bhugarba Thakura, stayed in Vrndavana and decided to take the trip to Gauda. At the time of their departure, all the Gosvamis told them many things which were on their minds. Lokanath Gosvami said, "Tell Narottama to execute his devotional service with the utmost care, and tell him that I am always desirous of his well being."

In a sad voice Sri Jiva Gosvami said, "I am so sorry that I have not been able to see Thakura Mahasaya for so long. The tree of love grew up in Vrndavana and has begun to give fruit in Khetari. The land of Khetari has now become to most fertile land for cultivation of love of Godhead. People from all parts of the country can now fill their bags with the unlimited supply of Narottama's love. Tell Narottama that Sri Jiva send his loving embrace to him. You should also tell him that my eyes have become like that of a blind man--not having had the opportunity to see his face. Upon reaching there you must request him for some food. And do not hesitate to convey my heartiest greetings to Sri Acarya. From there you should go to the South and tell Syamananda that I send my best wishes to him. Tell him to follow his devotional practices with the utmost strictness and to serve the Vaisnavas with great care."

Bhatta Gosvami said, "Convey my good wishes and embrace Narottama warmly for me. Also give my blessings to Srinivasa and Ramacandra and tell them that I am eager to see them again. We will be waiting to here your report of everything upon your return."

The Vaisnava assured them all that he would convey their messages and return with news of Gauda. After traveling for sometimes the Vaisnava became a little worried that he would not be able to find Gaderhat. But by inquiring from the people of the area he eventually found the correct path and happily arrived in Gaderhat. There he observed a wonderful scene; all the people were engaged in singing Harinama. He noticed that there were two Vaisnavas sitting in humbly in the midst of the devotees and their feet were being washed. After some time the Vaisnava inquired and found out that the two devotees were Narottama and Ramacandra Kaviraja. Thus the devotee approached and gave the messages of the

Vrndavana Gosvamis. Narottama and Ramacandra fell to the ground with joy bowed spontaneously at the remembrance of their divine masters. Ramacandra and Narottama tearfully offered prayers in glorification of their gurus. After accepting some prasada the devotee from Vraja took his. After some time Srinivasa and Narottama informed the priest of the temple that they would take prasada. Thus the priest prepared the bhoga and offered it to Lord Gauranga. He then arranged two seats and requested them to take prasada. The two Vaisnavas were very awkward but did not dare disobey the orders of Sri Jiva (?). They sat to eat and told Narottama and Ramacandra to sit with them. They asked the priest to serve them rice, vegetables, kshira, curd, etc, and they happily ate. After finishing their meal they washed their mouths and requested Narottama and Ramacandra to bid them farewell. Reluctantly to let them go, Narottama and Ramacandra requested them to stay the night saying that they could cross the Padmavati the next day. Actually they had something on their minds which they wanted to discuss with the two Vaisnavas. Thus Narottama spoke, "How is my beloved guru Maharaja? Where is he now? I am such a rascal, although I do not remember him, he remembers me with great affection." Saying this Narottama began to cry, "O I have become like dry wood as I have ignored my spiritual master and remained in the well of worldly attractions. O my Prabhu Lokanath, you are my life." He also repented remembering Sri Jiva Gosvami; "O Prabhu, you gave me so much mercy. I do not know why you are so kind to me."

Ramacandra inquired, "How is it that Sri Rupa Gosvami still remembers me? There is no one as sinful as me in this world, when shall I get a chance to see his lotus feet again."

Crying profusely Thakura Mahasaya asked, "Tell me how is Sri Bhatta Gosvami who previously gave me many invaluable instructions." Hearing Narottama and Ramacandra lamenting in this way, the two Vaisnavas decided to stay there for the night.

That night Lord Caitanya appeared to Narottama in a dream and said, "Sri Jiva Gosvami has sent these two persons here only to feel your pulse. You know I would eat food through the eating of the Vaisnavas. But I understand why you have offered me food for the second time. I know it is the daily practice of your only to show respect to the customs of the sastras."

In the morning the two Vaisnavas asked Narottama and Ramacandra where Srinivasa Acarya was, and they explained that he only a few days ago he had gone to Rarha and could probably be found now in Yajigrama. The devotees then took their leave, bowing at Narottama and Ramacandra's feet. When the two devotees reached the outskirts of the village they again bowed at the memory of the two exalted Gosvamis, remarking, "We have never seen such sincere disciples who have such respect for their guru and dedication to the service of the Vaisnavas. Now I understand that Gosvami sent us here for our own purification. In life or death we pray that we may always remember the lotus feet of these two great devotees." In this way they traveled continually chanting the glories of Narottama and Ramacandra. Upon reaching Katwa they took darsana of the deity of

Mahaprabhu, then continued on towards Yajigrama.

In Yajigrama they immediately went to the place where Srinivasa Acarya was resting on a beautiful seat. When they bowed at his feet he asked where they had come from. When he heard that they were from Vrndavana, Srinivasa quickly got up from his seat and bowed in memory of Vrndavana. When the devotees conveyed the message of Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, Sri Acarya offered his prostrate obeisances at the memory of his guru saying, "Prabhu has send me his blessings knowing that I have sunk into the well of worldly attractions." After crying for sometime he listened to the other messages sent from Vraja. Everyone present began to weep upon hearing Sri Jiva's Gosvamis message. Crying, Sri Acarya said, "He is my master, there is no one like him in all the three worlds. How kind he is to send me his blessings." In this way he went on glorifying the Gosvamis of Vrndavana.

The following morning took their leave after receiving permission permission from Srinivasa to go to Purusottama. Along the way to Puri they meditated upon the mercy they had received from these exalted souls. "We were sent here to purify our proud minds," they thought. We have never seen or heard of such humility. Even in the sastra we have not read about anyone who has practised such strict religious practices. "

As they traveled southward, they were pleasantly surprised to note that many of the inhabitants of the area were engaged in the worship of Krsna. One day they came across an assembly of Vaisnavas and asked whose disciple they were. The devotees explained that they had all received the blessings of Syamananda. The two devotees then explained that they had come from Vrndavana with a message for Sri Syamananda and were eager to meet him. Thus the disciples of Syamananda took the two Vaisnavas to the home of Syamananda where they were warmly received by the people of the village.

When the two Vaisnavas arrived at his place, Syamananda respectfully got up to greet them. Murari dasa, one of the disciples of Syamananda, immediately brought a water pot and with the utmost care and respect, bathed the feet of his spiritual master. Syamananda then asked who the two devotees were and where they had come from. The Vaisnavas explained their mission and conveyed the blessings of Sri Jiva Gosvami upon him. Hearing this Syamananda began to lament, "Who on this earth is as worthless as me. Engrossed in useless activities I have forgotten the feet of Sri Jiva, yet he is so kind that he remembers me and even sends his blessings." Syamananda and Murari both began to cry falling on the ground.

That night the two Vaisnavas spoke together, remarking that they had never seen such a devotee like Syamananda or such a disciple as Murari. "It is certainly the earth's good fortune that a wonderful devotee like Syamananda has taken birth here." While discussing the two Vaisnavas decided to return to Vrndavana rather than go on to Kshetra.

In the morning when the two devotees revealed their plan, both Syamananda and Murari bowed at their feet and requested them to stay for a few more days. But the two Vaisnavas humbly expressed their desire to leave for Vrndavana. Thus Syamananda gave them one hundred coins for the journey and asked that they convey his worthless respects at the merciful feet of Sri Jiva Gosvami. The two Vaisnavas bid farewell feeling great admiration for Syamananda and Murari, who served the Vaisnavas with great devotion.

In the month of Pausa, Acarya came to Yajigrama as he had heard that his mother in poor health. Upon reaching there he found that was seriously ill. In the month of Magha after his mother's death, he desired to hold a festival in her honor. Thus Srinivasa began to make preparations; he sent a letter of invitation to the king of Visnupura, who sent many items for the festival.

After the time of the festival many Mahanats, Adhikaris, and Vaisnavas came to participate in the ceremony. At that time Raghunandana and Sulachana Thakura of Khanda requested Srinivasa Acarya to accept a wife. Acarya protested asking how he could marry without the permission of his spiritual master. But Raghunandana explained that a disciple's only fear is in disobeying the order of his guru, but there is certainly nothing wrong in marrying. Eventually Sri Acarya was convinced and gave his consent. In the meantime the ceremony came to a close and all the invitees returned to their homes.

Sulochana and Raghunandana then took the initiative to find a bride for Srinivasa. For this purpose one brahmana was engaged to search out a suitable match. The brahmana went to the house of Gopaladasa of Yajigrama and stated that Srinivasa Acarya would make a suitable bridegroom for his daughter. Gopaladasa consulted with his younger brother Vrndavana who gave his consent to the marriage proposal. Thus on the auspicious day of Tritiya in the month of Vaisakha the marriage took place.

The bride's two brothers, Syamadasa and Ramacarana, studied under Sri Acarya, who had many disciples. Sometimes Acarya stayed in Visnupura, and at other times he visited Khetari or Bhudari.

In the village of Gopalapura in Rarha there lived a brahmana named Raghu Chakravarti. He had a beautiful daughter adorned with all good qualities. One day she told her father of her desire to marry Srinivasa Acarya. Her father immediately went to the Acarya and expressed his hope that he would accept his daughter in marriage. Acarya happily accepted the proposal and married the beautiful Padmavati. He took her to his house in Visnupura where she established a sweet relationship with the first wife of Acarya. Padmavati sometimes visited Yajigrama. By the time she was twenty-five she was still without issue. The first wife of Sri Acarya who was also desirous of having a son, consulted an astrologer and was told that she would soon give birth to a son.

One day the son of Nityananda Prabhu, Viracandra, paid a visit to the king



who felt greatly fortunate to have such an exalted guest and welcomed him warmly. He served him food and looked after him with great care. Having heard about Viracandra's arrival, Acarya Thakura quickly came to meet him. Acarya fell flat on the ground before the son of Nityananda Prabhu, then they embraced each other affectionately. The king watched this scene wondering within himself who on the earth could be more beautiful than Viracandra prabhu. Being the son of Nityananda Prabhu he was naturally extremely attractive.

Srinivasa brought Viracandra to his home, where the family members considered themselves most fortunate to have such a guest. They quickly busied themselves preparing foodstuff and offered him many different types of sweets. Acarya asked Gosvami if he would like to cook for himself, but he requested that Srinivasa's second wife prepare something for him.

Acarya went into the house and ordered his second wife to cook for Gosvami. She was very happy to have the opportunity to serve the Gosvami and prepared many varieties of food. She arranged all kinds of sweets and fruits, then Acarya informed Gosvami that the food was ready and requested him to take his seat. Viracandra sat down and requested Sri Acarya to sit on his right side. The wives of Acarya carefully served them prasada and they happily ate everything. Acarya was then requested to tell them something about Krsna. Submitting to their request, Srinivasa began to sing Gaura lila to Gosvami who at once stopped eating and began to float in an ocean of joy. After washing his mouth, Viracandra took his seat and someone offered him betel leaf. The two wives of Acarya brought garlands, flowers and sandalwood paste and offered them to Gosvami. Thakurani smeared sandalwood paste on the body of Gosvami and placed a garland on his neck saying, "I am the most fortunate woman as Prabhu Viracandra has come to our house."

With his own hands Gosvami placed a garland on the neck of Acarya and smeared sandalwood paste on his body. Gosvami then asked Acarya about his wives, noting that the second wife was named Padma. Viracandra then inquired about their children, and Srinivasa replied, "We have no children. But if you show us your mercy, I'm sure we will be blessed with a son with your features and strength. In any case I will happily accept what the Lord sends, whether physically handicapped or not."

Viracandra smilingly said, "Lusten to me Acarya, you will soon have a son who will honor your family. From today Padma will be called Gauranga Priya and she will get a beautiful son." Saying this Viracandra gave his chewed betel leaf to Gauranga Priya and while holding her hand transferred his own power into her. She ate the betel leaf and bowed to him falling prostrate on the ground.

The next day Viracandra took his leave of the Acarya who offered him a golden coin, a new piece of cloth, and a pair of silk loin cloth. Ten days after this incident Padmavati became pregnant. Two months later all the inhabitants of the place came to hear of the news and ten months later she had a beautiful son. The parents were very happy and Acarya sent a message to Gosvami announcing the

birth of his son.

Two months later Viracandra Gosvami came to Visnupura and visited the house of Srinivasa Acarya, which became transformed into the abode of happiness due to his presence there. Srinivasa happily served Gosvami in various ways. On an auspicious day Gosvami gave Harinama into the ears of the child. After six months, the rice eating ceremony (Anna Prasana) took place. Then the ceremony of tying the sacred thread took place. The child walked with his right leg curved and his features were as beautiful as Cupid. Gosvami named the child Govindagati.

When the child was thirteen years old, Srinivasa invited Gosvami to his house and with his help performed the initiation ceremony of his son. Gosvami told Acarya, "Govindagati is my favorite, I shall be very happy if you give your son initiation. You are empowered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and I by Nityananda Prabhu, thus you and I are the same. Anyone who does not accept this will never get the favor of Sri Caitanya." Hearing this from Gosvami, Srinivasa became ecstatic with divine love. Gosvami embraced Acarya and told him to call in an astrologer to calculate an auspicious time for the boy's initiation.

Srinivasa called on an astrologer who selected an auspicious date. When the appropriate time arrived Acarya gathered many items and asked his son to sit on his left side and gave him initiation. After being initiated the boy came out of the room and fell prostrate on the ground at the feet of Gosvami who blessed him with a long life. Acarya then held a grand festival and concluded it by bowing humbly at the feet of Viracandra Gosvami.

On the eve of Gosvami's leaving, Acarya gave him many gifts. Greatly satisfied Viracandra blessed Acarya saying, "You will have many disciples who will be just like sons." Gosvami then took his leave.

Thereafter Srinivasa began to teach his son. Due to the favor of Viracandra and the powerful initiation by Sri Acarya, the boy gradually became very spirited and a versatile genius. The other sons of Acarya were also highly qualified. By the mercy of Jahnava Thakurani I am able to describe all these topics. Now, dear readers, listen to the glories of Narottama dasa Thakura.

After returning to his own country Thakura Mahasaya absorbed himself in intensely serving Gauranga, Bhallavi Kanta, Krsna Raya, Vraja Mohana, Sri Radha Ramana and Radha Kanta. The sincerity of the brahmanas and Vaisnavas who assisted Thakura Mahasaya in his service is also beyond description. Some of them decorated the deities gorgeously, others cooked for their Lordships, and others prepared twenty-five sears of boiled Atap rice daily. Many varieties of vegetable curries, sweets, ksira made with curd, sugar, milk and ghee were also prepared. Everything was prepared with the utmost sanctity and purity. The cooks were even accustomed to covering their mouths until they had completed the cooking. Arati was performed five times a day, and betel leaves and kesturi perfume (musk) was also regularly offered to the deities.

I shall now describe the festivals performed by Thakura Mahasya throughout the year. He celebrated the appearance day of Srimati Radharani with great pomp, as well as the appearance of Gauranga Mahaprabhu. He also made special arrangements for worshipping his spiritual master on the occasion of his birthday. All of these days were celebrated by the performance of sankirtan throughout the entire day with many Vaisnavas participating. In the evening they enjoyed taking prasada together. Such festivals, headed by Thakura Mahasaya, were saturated with loving devotion to Krsna. Thus Thakura Mahasya's fame spread far and wide. I am incapable of fully describing Narottama's qualities, yet due to the order of my guru, as well as for my own purification, I am attempt to glorify the great Vaisnava, Thakura Mahasaya.

Ramacandra and Thakura Mahasaya were such good friends that they ate, slept, and bathed together. Although in separate bodies, they were one in spirit. They slept for only four hours a night and left their beds early in the morning to perform the arati ceremony before the deity of Lord Gauranga. After offering respects to the deity, they would go inside the house and perform their usual morning duties ; clean their teeth, take bath, etc. After taking bath they sat in their cottage and marked their bodies with tilak. Thereafter, they circumambulated the temple five times, and offered water to the tulasi tree. Then they busied themselves in preparing bhoga for the deities. For this purpose they gathered all varieties of first-class ingredients for cooking. They did not speak a word when worshipping, they simply chanting the holy name softly. After the deities had eaten, Narottama and Ramacandra watched the arati ceremony. Afterwards they took prasada along with all the other Vaisnavas. While accepting prasada, they discussed Krsna with great emotion and then directed the servants to clean the eating place. Thakura Mahasaya ordered his disciples not to touch the leaf plate which he had eaten on. After washing his mouth he used to take a myro balan (Haritaki), while Kaviraja was in the habit of chewing betel leaves. Thereafter they sat together and happily discussed the Bhagavata. At other times they would remain silent for some time. They also chanted one lakh of holy names daily. In the evening they observed the arati ceremony and danced ecstatically in the kirtana before the deity. They were very strict about observing the day of the full moon by singing and dancing in kirtana throughout the entire night.

Kaviraja's house stayed in her home and her day to day expenses were borne by Mahasaya. She had one servant and two maid servants but no children. One day she a thought came to her mind and she wrote a letter to Mahasaya saying, "I want to meet Kaviraja just once and then I will not call him again. Please send him to see me if it is possible."

One day while they were sitting discussing topics about Krsna, Thakura Mahasaya told Ramacandra to go to his house just once, but Kaviraja did not pay any attention to him. Again on another day he told Ramacandra, "It is my wish that you should go once to your house. You can immediately return in the morning." In the afternoon of that day after taking prasada, Ramacandra went to his house feeling very depressed at being separated from Thakura Mahasaya. Narottama was also sad without the company of Ramacandra and remained silent

throughout the rest of the day.

While on his way home Kaviraja began to think about many things. Within his mind he rebelled at the thought of spending the night in his home but he could not return as he had made a promise to Thakura Mahasaya. Knowing that he would find no joy in his house he stopped along the way for the night and in the morning he returned to Kehtari. There he entered the Rasamandala where he found that the arati ceremony had already began. Kaviraja began to clean the place with a broom.

In the meantime Thakura Mahasaya came out of his room and saw Kaviraja from the corner of his eye. Kaviraja, however, did not see him and continued to sweep happily. When Kaviraja realised that Thakura Mahasaya was there he began to hit his back with the broom. Not being able to bear this Narottama placed his hands on his won back telling Kaviraja to stop it saying that he could feel the pain on his own back. How can I describe what took place at that moment? The back of Thakura Mahasaya began to swell. He then placed his hand on the back of Kaviraja and the two of them cried while embracing each other. Only Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu could understand the depth of love between Narottama and Ramacadnra.

Just as Narottama and Ramacandra were intimate associates, similarly Ramakrsna and Harirama were the best of friends. One day while Harirama and Ramakrsna were strolling along the path discussing topics related to Krsna, one Kulin brahmana named Ganganarayana Chakravarti began to criticize them stating that brahmanas were certainly superior to Vaisnavas. A heated debate inssued in which Harirama and Ramakrsna presented the opposite view citing references from sastra to back up their statements. Ramakrsna explained, "Even though one may be born in a brahmana family if he does not undersatnd that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then he is certainly a sinner." Ganganarayana, however, stuck to his position. After some time Ramakrsna and Harirama said, "O Chakravarti, listen to us. You should know that in this Kali yuga the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna Caitanya appeared, along with His companions, to spred love of God throughout the universe. He is the brahmana who has delivered all of the brahmanas. Mahaprabhu has saved many fallen souls, although we two have not received His mercy. But there is still hope as there are two persons, one in Gaderahat and the other in Khetari, who are the embodiments of the mercy of Sri Krsna Caitanya Himself." They began spontaneously glorifying those two exalted persons and became overwhelmed with ecstatic love while doing so. Observing their transcendental state, Ganganarayana was stunned. He thought for a long time, then politely addressed the two brahmans, "It is very good that you have explained all of this to me. Now please come to my house and we shall carry on with our discussion. I want to clearly understand whether you or I am wrong."

Ganganarayana escorted them to his house and offered them something to eat. Thereafter they sat down any discussed various topics throughout the evening. The conclusion of their discussion was that without attaining the the lotus feet of Krsna, there is no way of salvation for a brahmana. Caste, sastra, meditation, etc. are all of no use if a person does not develop his devotion for the

Supreme Lord. A brahmana must accept a pure devotee as his spiritual master and follow him with the utmost sincerity, then only can he attain perfection. After hearing all these statements Ganganarayana's heart changed and he begged, "Oh my brothers, please take me into your confidence and save me from sin. Now my eyes have been opened to the real truth." In this way Ganganarayana began to lament miserably.

Pacifying him Ramakrsna and Harirama said, "Listen to us, you must now find a real guru and take refuge at his feet. Then you will be directed on the proper path."

The following morning the three started off to find Thakura Mahasaya. Along the way Ganganarayana was filled anxiety, "How can a worthless person like myself obtain the mercy of such a great soul as Thakura Mahasaya," he thought. Thinking in this way, they entered Khetari and headed for the house of Thakura Mahasaya.

Upon entering the house they first took darsana of the deity of Gauranga. Ramakrsna and Harirama then told Ganganarayana to wait in a secluded place and both of them went to see Sri Thakura Mahasaya and bowed at his feet. Thakura asked about their well being and from where they had come. After some discussion they humbly requested Thakura if he would see someone who was eagerly waiting to meet him. Narottama asked, "What is his name and for what purpose has he come here? They replied, "He has come only to see your gracious feet." Thakura then said, "Go and bring him here."

Ramakrsna went to find Ganganarayana, who was standing before the deity of Mahaprabhu drinking in His divine beauty. When Ganganarayana was brought before Narottama, he immediately began to cry helplessly, "There is no one as worthless as me," he cried, "Throughout my entire life I never tried to serve the feet of the Lord, and I am guilty of performing so many sinful deeds. How can I possibly obtain your mercy?"

As Ganganarayana bowed at his feet, Thakura Mahasaya placed his hand on Ganganarayana's head and said, "You will receive the mercy from my beloved guru Maharaja, Lokanatha Gosvami."

Hearing this Ganganarayana, jumped up and ran over to Harirama and Ramakrsna. He fell at their feet and both of them embraced him affectionately. Overcome with emotion Ganganarayana said, "It is due to the kindness of both of you that I have had the good fortune to meet Thakura Mahasaya."

Meanwhile Ramacandra Kaviraja arrived there and bowed at the feet of Thakura Mahasaya. He was as dear as life to Thakura and thus he showered his blessings upon him.

Later, Ramakrsna, Harirama, and Ganganarayana took initiation from Thakura Mahasaya and received the Radha Krsna mantra. Mahasaya instructed

about the various practices of devotional service. Ramakrsna was endowed with strong devotional qualities. He thoroughly studied the sastra and made very rapid progress in his spiritual life.

(I didn't bother working on the rest of the chapter as it is too unclear)

I will now tell about Haricandra Raya who came one day to meet Thakur Mahasaya. He had been a very wicked person but by the favor of Thakur Mahasaya he became a changed person. The landlord of Jalapantha was a very influential man but of no good qualities. Due to the favor of Thakur Mahasaya, that landlord became a highly devotional person and completely surrendered to the feet of his guru. He had been very sincere in his worship and a man of humble disposition. He used to serve the Vaisnavas with utmost care. One day he came to that place to pay homage to Thakur Mahasaya. He offered not only trifling things but also his everything to the feet of Thakur Mahasaya. Then Hari, Ramkrsna and Ganganarayana said humbly to Prabhu, "please direct us as to how we can carry on in our worship. How we can get the feet of Radha Krsna." Thakur told them, "listen to me carefully, sit by my side. According to Sri Rupa, you should follow the religious method as practised by Mahaprabhu. There are many types and methods of religion to be followed by others. He used to put stress on sincere devotion instead of doing activities. He thinks by giving up efforts of activities, mankind can obtain the favor of Krsna. The human being should keep in mind that serving Krsna is the only way to get Him. Household life is always dealt with by various types of duties and activities and in it mankind is also bound by material love and attractions. His advice is to give up family life. You know it is the method of worship and meditation. All the material duties related to household life are of no use. You should keep yourself away from family life and absorb in religion. Wise persons and accomplished saints used to follow the same way. You should be undaunted in performing your religious duties. For this purpose has given two processes which you should follow strictly. Now listen to what are the proofs of the sayings according to Sri Rupa. The real essence of religion lies in simple things. Caitanya has empowered Nityananda. Advaita and other associates are the most favorite followers of Prabhu. All of these have taken Prabhu as the only God. I am also a worthless person but I cannot completely rely on the feet of my guru. Advaita, Sanatana and others are the only life to me and so also Lokenath Bhatta and his brother. This is all I can tell you as I know nothing else besides this. I am not afraid of anybody as I have my guru with me."

They asked him, "if we want to remain in family life, do we have to avoid some duties such as performing the sraddha ceremony of relatives, meeting the loans made by a mother or father. In these cases what should we do?" Thakur said, "Sri Rupa has given some ways to get out of this. But first of all listen to what the scriptures say." In this way he explained some of the meaning of some of the hymns from other scriptures. They bowed at the feet of Prabhu and asked, "are there many problems in family life, how can we save ourselves from all these difficulties." Kaviraja replied, "O my dear friends, he who can discard all these difficulties by remaining indifferent can save devotion out of all these trifling matters. One should everyday pray to God for the fulfillment of his accomplishments. The perfection in sincere devotion becomes possible for one

who can discard the attractions of this material world and trifle activities. If one tries to do any action which is against devotional methods, one should be guilty of breaking the rules of the scriptures."

Kaviraja after bowing to his feet said again, "worship of Krsna is not always advised to be done, even in the lives of the ladies of Vraja there has been proof of it. He who remains unmoved even in such circumstances is known as the greatest devotee of all. He who can remain indifferent to family life and serve the Vaisnavas and worship Krsna can attain the happiness of Vrndavana after his death. Heaven and Vrndavana are all the same. If someone tries to disobey the order of Guru and follow the rules of the scriptures only, it seems that he is afraid of being guilty of violating the rules of the Shastras. But if one's guru is with one always then what harm can the Shastras do to one." In reply to all these questions Thakur Mahasaya that day explained Sri Rupa's book Prema Bhakti Candrika.

In this book the sentiments of devotion has been clearly explained. For the good of his disciples Thakur Mahasaya had preached the theories of Sri Rupa everywhere. Again Sri Kaviraja said to them, "listen to me as to what is the method of worship. It is the advise of Sri Rupa which he himself has practised that we should make numerous disciples." All the sayings of Sri Rupa in his book cannot be grasped by anyone who has not got a real guru. It is the advise of Sri Rupa to always avoid the company and contact of talking to such persons, even avoid eating with them and sever all relations with them. The pride of class, clan or wealth is always against the method of devotion. The guru himself should follow religion and teach his disciples to do the same. The diverse is always to be regarded as faults. The Shastras, sayings of saintly persons and the words of the guru should be taken as the same in body, mind and words."

Kaviraja again making himself humble asked Thakur Mahasaya, "it is a very stiff and difficult method to be practised but if I can get your favor I may be able to accomplish it. I know that the word of the guru is final but what can I do is any questions arise in me about the real method of worship. Please explain to me as to what a Vaisnava should do in connection with religious practises?" Thakur Mahasaya said, "enjoy and remember the sports of Krsna with a pure mind and body. Try to treat your guru as a confidant. All the confidants of Krsna would treat him differently, so you should discuss with your guru. Try to think of yourself as one of the members of the family of confidants. Try to be a sincere servant always remaining with your guru. The method of serving Krsna are of various kinds. Sometimes try to serve and sometimes only try to observe the serving of others. The confidants used to serve Krsna by fannign him or offering perfumes of Kasturi and saffron. But always try to serve guru int he kunj (grove). You should go with your guru wherever he wishes to go. This type of sincerity is called Parakiya. If you please your guru, you can please Prabhu."

Kaviraja asked, "what is meant by Swakiya sincerity?" Thakur Mahasaya replied with a smile, "Krsna's love for Radhika is Parakiya but the attraction here is more stronger than anything. It has been explained in the book Rasa Lila. The place where Radha Krsna used to sport always is the most holy place where meeting and

separation are both eternal." Kaviraj said, "please explain to me what the time limit in this sphere." Thakur Mahasay said, "it is of two kinds namely gross (sthula) and subtle (sukhma). Sri Rupa and Raghunath have given their opinions in this connection. Some say Astakala and some otherwise (Astakala literally means eight divisions of time or eight incarnation or eight births). I have heard from my guru that Panchakala had been the high time of Radha and her confidants. Try to keep this opinion in your mind. Try to be a sincere servant instead of mixing with undesired persons." After saying so much Thakur Mahasay gave all of them the holy hymns to be worshipped silently. He told everyone that his accomplishments would depend how on much sincerity he was applying in following the principles of serving Prabhu. Kaviraj asked, "then what is the normal method?" Thakur Mahasaya said, "what Sri Krsna Caitanya had said formerly is all the same as what Sri Rupa has said. Gosvami's opinion is to practise religious formalities lawfully (Vaidiraga Sadhana) which the wise people always used to keep in their minds. Not realising it fully many persons used to speak in different ways. The worship of the body only depends on complete reliance on the gracious feet of the guru. One should worship the three i.e. Krsna, guru and the Vaisnavas in one's Bhavamaya Deha. All parts of the body can be employed in worshipping and getting Krsna. This is called Raganuga Bhakti. By following this type of Bhakti, the gross and subtle, both bodies can attain accomplishments. If the body is devotionless, then accomplishment is nil in that case. Gosvami says that accomplished bodies always remain invisible. The Harinama cited by Sri Caitanya is just like the Pancha nama given by Sri Rupa. Harinama is the greatest of all names in the sphere of love.

Prabhu used to take nama three lakh times a day and he had favored one lakh of devotees. Sri Rupa had written one lakh books and he used to cite one lakh nama everyday. Dasa Gosvami used to cite one lakh times the Harinama. Gauranga himself had advised Sri that the Vaisnavas should cite harinama at least one lakh times daily. Harinama is like a wishing tree to all devotees." Hearing all these precious teachings, they all bowed at the feet of Thakur Mahasaya who favored them by putting his hand on their heads. I, the poet am only trying to write according to the wish of my Prabhu. What I have written may have some mistakes and misinterpretations which are against devotion, but I think that this fault is only a portion among hundreds of faults done by others. Someone used to cite Harinama while some do not. Some after performing only one or two portions would become afraid. Some types of disciples used to follow blindly their Guru's directions about the religious practises without knowing their real causes and effects. Some types of people would follow the methods directed by some wise persons. Some would not do so till the end. Some wise persons were of the opinion that it was the method of attaining Krsna while others used to say otherwise. Those people could not realise that this type of their repression (Nigraha) had been given by Krsna Himself and ultimately they gave up the real way of attaining accomplishments. Those who could continue their religious practises by discarding trifle interests, could remain undaunted even at the time of death. Those who tried to get material gains by giving up interests in Krsna and used to sell words instead of engaging themselves in worshipping Krsna, their life invariably went in vain. Now I am explaining the intentions of those who pose to



be Vaisnavas and for this purpose what are their efforts. Some vaisnavas used to follow strictly the religious practises on their own by doing so they used to say that they have got acknowledgement from Krsna. Some would address him as Thakura and some as Bada Mahasaya. In this way those Acaryas would waste their time. They did not know even what was right and what was wrong and used to be absorbed in duties towards family life which had been adverse to the principles of the Shastras. That Vaisnava used to make numerous disciples and regard himself as an accomplished person. He used to earn much money from the many disciples and would never go to serve the Vaisnavas and remain interested in serving and nursing his own family members. He never tried to perform festivals with regard to Krsna and would give his children in marriage in a Kulina family He would give dowry, sometimes about hundred coins and would say proudly that it was called devotion and sincerity to Krsna. While he used to boast that he had discarded the Shastra or Saiva religious, in the Bhagavata it is called very small initiation. He would behave in a rough manner with the parents of bride and regard himself as a great Kulin. He would worship Krsna most negligently and to worship other deities only the pretext of well being and good fortune. From all this it can be understood that he wasted the golden days of his lifetime. In my opinion I think that everyone should discard the above mentioned faults. I suggest that one always does good deeds in this life and then one can get much pleasure from one's second birth. The happiness in one's present birth depends on the good deeds performed by one in one's former birth. I shall also suggest to be very cautious about doing any forbidden activities. I wish I could follow always the word of my Sri Guru, Vaisnavas and Prabhu and by no means get my self mixing with bad elements. I wish I could always keep in my mind the feet of Sri Janhava and Viracandra and in this way Nityananda dasa writes Prem Vilasa.

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## CHAPTER 18

All gloriends to Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. All glories to Nityananda Prabhu the personification of kindness and mercy. All glories to Advaitacandra, whose sincere prayers summouned the Lord to this earth for the benefit of mankind. All glories to Sri Gadadhara, an ocean of transcendental rasa. All glories to all the devotees of Mahaprabhu. The Gosvamis of Vrndavana are like the main trunk of the tree of devotion. I have not as yet written any description of their main branches and twigs.

I attempt to write this book on the order of my spiritual master, Sri Jahnava Thakurani who has been empowered by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thakurani simply repeats the identical message as that propounded by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself. Thus the words of my guru are above any criticism. I simply try to repeat whatever I have heard from her.

Rupa and Sanatana were two brothers who were directly empowered by the Lord. They were extremely exalted souls and worshiped the feet of Sri Caitanya

Mahaprabhu with all their hearts. Sanatana also offered great respect to his brother, Rupa.

Kasisvara Pandita was famous throughout Mathura Mandala and had the utmost respect for Rupa and Sanatana. He was the disciple of Iswaripuri and he dedicated himself to the feet of Sri Krsna Caitanya.

Gadadhara Pandita was also empowered by Mahaprabhu Himself. Once Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu began to weep due to separation from Pundarika Vidyanidhi. Gadadhara Pandita was a disciple of this Vidyanidhi.

Bhugarba Gosvami was a favorite devotee of Mahaprabhu and was also a disciple of Pundarika Vidyanidhi. Rupa and Sanatana had great respect for Bhugarba.

With some devotees Rupa and Sanatana offered their loving respect, and with others they offered their blessings. Lokanath Gosvami was extremely kind-hearted and always concerned for the well-being of others. He was also a favorite associate of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and Rupa and Sanatana greatly respected him. Completely indifferent to the affairs of this material world, Lokanath hardly bothered to eat and spent his time fully engrossed in meditation on the Supreme Lord. Thakura Mahasaya was the disciple of Lokanath.

Kasisvara was another exalted devotee. One of his disciples, Bhakta Kashi, was a Brajabasi belonging to a brahmana family. Govinda Gosvami and Yadava Acarya also took shelter at the feet of Kasisvara after renouncing their household activities. ??a certain son of a brahmana who was a Gauravasi surrendered himself with his Prabhu at the feet of Kasisvara.??

Krsna Pandita Thakura, a pure devotee who lived in Vraja, was highly regarded by Rupa and Sanatana. Sri Rupa Gosvami alone could understand the glories of Kasisvara and Krsnadasa, and their eternal position as the confidants of Sri Radhika.

Raghunath Bhatta lived in constant associate with Rupa and Sanatana. His very life was the service of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri Yadunandana was a disciple of Acarya Gosvami??, and Sri Raghunatha dasa was the disciple of yadunandana. By the mercy of Lord Nityananda, Raghunatha dasa was able to give up all worldly pleasure and went to Nilacala to meet Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, where he remained until the the Lord took sannyasa. Mahaprabhu loved Raghunatha dasa and eventually placed him in the care of Svarupa Damodara, who very sincerely educated him. Svarupa was particularly intent on teaching Raghunatha as the boy was ?very efficient in Srngara Lalita Rasa just like Lalita?. This was understood only by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, although He did not disclose it to anyone. Outwardly it appeared that the Lord showed His favor to Raghunatha only because he was a favorite disciple of Svarupa. After some time Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu offered a gungamala to Raghunatha and dedicated him to the lotus feet of Sri Radha. Prabhu also gave Raghunatha a salagrama sila to

worship and advised him to go to Vrndavana. Following the Lord's order, Raghunatha went to Vraja and dedicated himself to the service of Rupa and Sanatana. In this way three pure souls were united in one string. Raghunatha began more to to Rupa and Sanatana than their very lives, and Raghunatha in turn offered them the highest respect and love. Under their instruction, Raghunatha went to live at Radha Kunda where he was engaged throughout the day and night ( 56 dandas of time) in worshipping Krsna. His renunciation and devotion won the favor of Sri Radha.

Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami became the disciple of Raghunatha dasa and spent much of time with him. For the fulfillment of his own religious desires, Kaviraja himself wrote he was the disciple of Yadunandana. One day when Krsnadasa was worshipping Krsna in the village of Jhamatpura in Gaudadesa, Sri Nityananda Prabhu and His associates appeared before him in a dream. Overwhelmed by the Lord's beauty, Kaviraja bowed at His feet, offering prayers. At that time Nityananda Prabhu advised him to go to Vrndavana. In his book Caitanya-caritamrta Kaviraja wrote that he was the disciple of Prabhu? and also wrote that being an extremely helpless person, he was able to get the favor of Prabhu Nityananda. When he went to Vrndavana he took shelter at the feet of Raghunatha dasa. Only those who had real reasoning power could understand why kaviraj had written or done so. This type of behavior had most likely been very pure and because of this quality of Kaviraja, Rupa and Sanatana accepted him cordially.

Gopala Bhatta also decided to remain in Vrndavana. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was touring South India He took bath in the river Kaveri, then went to the temple of Ranganatha. At that time Mahaprabhu accepted alms from Tarimalla Bhatta. Being pleased with the service of Bhatta, the Lord stayed in his house for four months. There He spent His days and nights discussing topics related to Krsna with Bhatta. Because Bhatta was a worshiper of Laksmi Narayana, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu smilingly told him, "Though Laksmi resides on the chest of Narayana like a submissive wife, she thinks of attaining the company of Krsna." Bhatta felt a little uncomfortable upon hearing this statement. Unable to understand the real intention of Sri Caitanya, he asked, "I am completely incompetent to understand You as I know nothing about devotion and meditation. I know only that You are Laksmi Narayana and have favored me greatly by coming to my house in the dress of an ascetic. I find no other words with which to glorify You. Please be kind upon this ignorant fellow."

Being greatly pleased by Bhatta's humble statement, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu embraced him and blessed him with the power to see the divine pastimes of the Lord in Vraja. Ecstatic with joy Bhatta began to dance joyfully. The Lord then revealed to him His real form and ordered Bhatta to bring all his family members to witness.

Quickly following the order of the Lord, Bhatta brought his two brothers along with their wives and children. By Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's causeless mercy He purified the minds of them all and revealed His original transcendental

form before them. Witnessing the beauty of the Lord, they fell prostrate on the ground crying ecstatically. Mahaprabhu blessed them by placing His feet on their heads. Then all but three of them left the room.

With a sweet smile Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu spoke to Trimalla: "I am very fond of your son Gopala Bhatta. Try to educate him properly and do not give him in marriage." Mahaprabhu then looked at Prabhodhananda and said smilingly, "Your disciple will be a versatile genius."

Turning to Gopala Bhatta, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "For some time you will remain with your family at home but after your parents pass away you should go to Vrndavana. There you will attain the highest happiness."

Prabhu again said to Prabhodhananda, "You must send Gopala to Vrndavana as I have a mission wish I want him to fulfill." Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then announced that He would be leaving soon. The hearts of everyone in the family broke at the thought of separation from the Lord and they cried helplessly. By the mercy of Mahaprabhu, Prabhodhananda became a great Bhagavata.

Now I shall describe Gopala Bhatta's arrival in Vrndavana. Eventually Prabhodhananda followed the order of the Lord and instructed Gopala Bhatta to leave for Vrndavana at once. Prabhodhananda had become indifferent to family and life and he wrote a letter to Rupa and Sanatana informing them that he was sending Gopala Bhatta to them.

Carrying the letter, Gopala traveled through Jharikhanda and after a long journey finally reached Mathura. The following morning he went to Vrndavana and met Sri Rupa Gosvami. Bowing at his feet, Gopala Bhatta offered prayers and presented the letter. Rupa and Sanatana very happily welcomed Gopala Bhatta and took him into their hearts. The two brothers instructed Gopala Bhatta to write a book dealing with Vaisnava practices--this book was called Haribhakti Vilasa. After completing the book he dedicated it to Sanatana. Gopala Bhatta begins the book by glorifying his spiritual master.

The following is a list of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami's disciples. Srinivasa Acarya, Harivamsa Brajabasi, and Gopinatha Pujari (the servant of Sri Radharaman) were disciples of Gopala Bhatta. Harivamsa, however, rejected the order of his guru and thus his spiritual advancement was checked.

??Sri Jiva Gosvami became the disciple of Sri Rupa Gosvami. ??All of these devotees were simply engaged in constant remembrance and worship of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is the trunk of the tree of devotional service. His five primary associates constitute the five main branches of that tree. These five devotees were always engaged in assisting the Lord in His pastimes. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was always surrounded by numerous devotees who were the recipients of His mercy. Srinivasa and Narottama are also two main branches of the tree. There are innumerable branches and twigs on Mahaprabhu's tree, to describe them all is far beyond my capacity. I dare not attempt to describe them for fear of this book becoming extremely voluminous. Kavi Karnapura has written

a book describing many of Mahaprabhu's devotees. In this book it is mentioned that numerous devotees received the blessings of Srinivasa Acarya.

Thakura Mahasaya was also a man of extraordinarily magnetic qualities. Within his mind he was constantly absorbed in meditation on Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and externally as well, he always serving the Deity of Gauranga with the utmost care and devotion. Narottama organized grand festivals, and became famous for his extraordinary service attitude towards the Vaisnavas.

While thinking of himself as the most unfavored disciple of Prabhu, Nityananda used to address his disciples and say, "O my dear fellows, if you want to attain the feet of Krsna, you should chant his holy name one lakh times daily." In this way he got many disciples outside his own country.

Sri Raghavendra Raya, a caste brahmana and ruler of Gaderhat, had two sons named Santosa and Candra Raya. Candra Raya was a powerful man, skilled in the art of weaponry. Everyone was terrified of him. He was a Zamindar and possessed eighty-four thousand coins. He became the Foujdar of a fort which he named Rajmahala and asserted himself as the lord of the place. Candra Raya was a tyrant; he refused to pay the Padsha and eventually the entire village came under his control. Five thousand horses and infantry followed his commands, and in this way he attacked many countries and looted innumerable places. Robbing and killing people became his regular pastime and in carrying out these cruel acts he cared for no one. People would cover their ears as they could not bear to hear about the sinful activities committed by him. Locals began to leave the country in droves. Candra Raya was a Sakti worshiper and was accustomed to eat meat and fish. He also seduced the wives and daughters of the villagers. During the festival of goddess Durga, he would build an image of the goddess and offer thousands of animals at her altar. Even Chitra Gupta (the secretary of Yamaraja) in Yamalaya was unable to keep proper account of the sins committed by Candra Raya. Once Chitra Gupta told Yama, "These two brahmanas, Candra Raya and Santosh, have been performing so many sinful activities that I am afraid to think of what the future holds for them. Where will they stay and how long will they suffer the punishment of hell? I remember two brothers named Jagai and Madhai who were great debauchees, but these two brothers are far more notorious than them." To this Yamaraja replied, "Let them remain in where they are." Thus Candra Raya continued his reign of terror.

One day the spirit of a wicked brahmana demon entered into the body of Candra Raya. That demon began to constantly beat and rebuke Candra Raya, so much so that Candra Raya gradually lost all his strength and was near death. His father desperately tried to save his life, calling in doctors from all over the country, but to no avail. Finally his father called on a great astrologer who made many calculations then concluded that the evil spirit of a brahmana demon had entered into the body of Candra Raya and had no desire to leave him. The only possible cure was dependent on Narottama Thakura, the son of the Zamindar of Khetari. The demon also admitted to this.

Upon hearing this the father of Candra Raya immediately sent a message to one Pandita, inviting him to his house. He asked the Pandita to write a letter to Thakura Mahasaya requesting his help and then sent Sukapala with the letter to Khetari. He gave the letter into the hand of Majumdar who told him flatly that he would not dare send the letter to Thakura. When the father came to know about this, he began to cry in despair, praying to goddess Durga, "O mother Durga, save my son. Who accept you will be able to do so." That night Durga, in the disguise of an old lady, addressed Candra Raya, "There are no sinful activities that have not been practised by you. I am not pleased with your so-called worship. You have neglected the Supreme Lord Krsna, and no one can attain perfection without worshiping Him. Those who try to worship me without worshiping Krsna, will surely lose their chance of earning good fortune in their next birth. My lord, Siva, is always absorbed in singing the glories of Sri Krsna and has dedicated everything at His feet. Trilochana panchanana is made for Krsna and I am His subordinate. You and your brother have sought my favor but there is nothing I can do for you. I accept only the offerings of those who are sattvic by nature. I am never inclined toward those who are covered by rajaguna and tamoguna. The sastras clearly state that Krsna is the Supreme Lord of this universe. Who, other than He, can bestow devotion and salvation in this world? Even Yamaraja and Chitra Gupta are shocked by the mountain of sins you have accumulated. So my sons, just try to worship the feet of Govinda. You should follow the astrologer's advice to take shelter of Thakura Mahasaya. Sri Govinda Kaviraja, who is now a disciple of Srinivasa Acarya, was previously absorbed in exclusively worshiping me, He prayed to me for salvation but I was unable to fulfill his desires. Narottama is dedicated to Srinivasa Acarya and his devotion to Krsna has enabled him to conquer over all worldly fears. Srinivasa and Narottama are identical in heart and mind, yet they appear in separate physical features for enhancing the performance of pastimes. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu appeared in this world to deliver mankind by distributing the holy name of Krsna. These two Prabhus are worshiped and loved by Srinivasa and Narottama, therefore one who surrenders at their feet is sure to attain Krsna, and conversely, he who criticizes them is sure to suffer miserably." Thus speaking, goddess Durga disappeared.

Candra Raya was astonished. In the morning he revealed his dream to his father and brother and requested them, "Please immediately send two brahmanas with a letter to Thakura Mahasaya begging him to show his mercy upon me."

Thus two brahmanas went to Kheturi and bowed at the feet of Thakura Mahasaya, who heartily received them and asked where they had come from. They replied that if he read the letter they carried he would understand everything. Narottama first offered them prasada and gave them a place to stay. He then read the letter and came to know about Candra Raya's problem. He gave the letter to Kaviraja to read and asked his opinion. "It's a delicate matter to handle," Kaviraja replied. What can I say? You are the embodiment of love--The power to do as you like rests in your hands.

As Narottama pondered the situation, suddenly Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared before him and advised him, "Listen to me Narottama, it is not difficult

for you to deliver these two wicked sinners. Go there and show them your mercy, they are waiting for your blessings. It is my wish that the evil spirit must leave Candra Raya's body. You have appeared in this world only for the purpose of deliver the fallen conditioned souls, therefore go there, along with Kaviraja, and free them from their sens. When Candra Raya is cured his name shall be changed to Krsnadasa.

After taking bath in the morning, they prepared for the journey. Before their departure Majumdar, who had come to know about the letter, arrived there and said to Thakura Mahasaya, "Candra Raya is an extremely fortunate man to be blessed with your darsana. I wish I could go with you. It is my misfortune that I must stay here, but I will hear everything when you return." After bowing at the feet of Gauranga, Thakura Mahasaya, Ramacandra Kaviraja and many other Vaisnavas started out for Candra Raya's house. Those who could not go along with them began to cry. Thakura Mahasaya pacified them, then the party began walking, followed by the two brahmanas.

That day they stopped to rest in a village and the two brahmanas went ahead to the house of Candra Raya to inform them of Narottama's arrival. Candra Raya began to weep with joy upon receiving the good news. He immediately set out to meet Thakura Mahasaya, accompanied by many wise brahmanas and a band of musicians.

After some time they came upon Narottama's party, and where overwhelmed by the beauty of Thakura Mahasaya. They escorted him into the village which was fully decorated in honor of his arrival. Jugs filled with water lined the roads, bananas trees were placed in various spots, and every house was decorated with flower garlands. The people had gathered in crowds on the streets and the ladies made auspicious sounds with their tongues. Upon hearing of his arrival people from other villages also hurried to see Narottama. The father of Candra Raya came forward and upon seeing the beauty of Narottama, fell at his feet crying. Narottama addressed all with warm words of affection.

Thakura Mahasaya entered the house of Candra Raya. There Candra Raya's father carefully washed the feet of Narottama with water and offered him a beautiful seat. With great humility Raya stated that he was the most fortunate man to have Thakura Mahasaya bless his house.

Narottama said, "it is very kind of you to have me, now let me see your son." When Narottama was informed that Candra Raya was lying on a bed in his room, Thakura Mahasaya and his men entered the room and stood before Candra Raya. As soon as Candra Raya looked at Narottama the evil spirit within him began to shout, "I have become an evil spirit due to my past sinful activities. I have been living within this body for a long time, now be kind to me and let me and release me to go elsewhere." Everyone present there was shocked to hear this shouting. Again the spirit yelled out, "O my lord, save me this cursed life. For me Khetari is not merely an ordinary village, but it is Vrndavana in disguise. I desire to be born in this village and become your humble servant. O master, be kind upon me."

Addressing the spirit Thakura Mahasaya said, "Listen to me, leave this body at once and go elsewhere." Thus the evil spirit immediately left. Everyone present shouted in joy and began to praise Thakura Mahasaya. Candra Raya returned to his normal state and with folded hands fell at the feet of Narottama crying aloud. "There is no one as cursed as I," he said. "All well being goes away simply by looking at me. I have committed sins that are not even mentioned in the scriptures. How can I be relieved from the reactions to my misdeeds."

Crying profusely Santosa also fell on the ground and touched the feet of Thakura Mahasaya. Filled with lamentation he said, "Although born a brahmana, I have committed innumerable sins and for so long I have been strongly under the grip of worldly attraction. We two brothers were born of the same womb and for many years performed sinful activities together. Now we have nothing to pray for other than your merciful glance upon us. O master, please accept these two poor wicked souls and be our lord for life." Raghavendra also fell at the feet of Thakura Mahasaya and said, "I and my family members are now indebted to you life after life."

Thakura Mahasaya assured them that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu would certainly bestow His mercy upon them. He then ordered all of them to take their bath. Raghavendra and his sons took bathed, dressed in new loin cloths and came before Narottama. Thakura Mahasaya told them to sit on his left side and then poured the nectar of the holy name into their ears. Observing the endless kindness of Narottama, Ramacandra Kaviraja could not contain himself and rolled on the ground in ecstasy. All the Vaisnavas present there began to weep. Even the ordinary folks who had assembled there were moved to tears. Raya and his sons lay prostrate before Thakura Mahasaya, who placed his foot on their heads.

On another day Narottama chanted the Radhakrsna mantra into the ears of Raya and his two sons. Now listen to what happened next. Yamaraja and Chitra Gupta began to sing the glories of Narottama (Nityananda?). Yamaraja said, "He is the savior of the fallen souls in this world. O Chitra Gupta bring the record book and tear the pages where the sinful accounts of these two brothers is kept. From today I have lost my right to punish them."

??Then the goddess of the earth came to him and suggested that he should worship Krsna. She also lamented, "I have nothing no influence as formerly Jagai and Madhai had been save from damnation and now these two brahmana brothers have got the same favor"??

After receiving initiation, they offered many items of Thakura Mahasaya. He was given villages, clothes, wealth, horses, cows and calves. In the morning cooking began. All types of sweets, curries, scented rice, etc were prepared. After Thakura Mahasayahad eaten, Raya and his twosons took prasada and water for washing the fet. They received the title of Vaisnavas and became famous throughout the world. They took lessons on Vaisnava practices and became engaged in devotional service to Krsna.



??Being orderd by Thakura, Candra Raya sent a letter to the Nawab through his pleader. The Hakim became very afraid and the other ministers advised him, "There is no need of it because he who goes there will lost his life. So no one was willing was go along with him."??

After fully instructing his disciples, Thakura Mahasaya expressed his desire to return to the lotus feet of Gaurarai in Kethuri. Hearing this everyone began to cry at the thought of separation from Narottama. Although everyone was deeply aggrieved, they knew it was the desire of Narottama so what could they do. Thus Raya decorated ten boats with gold and jewels. One boat was made ready for Thakura and his associates, one was prepared for the father and his two sons, and the others were filled with a variety of items like rice, pulses, clothes, etc. Many men accompanied the boat, and other men were engaged in steering the boats. The family members, servants and maidservants of those devotees leaving on the boats, cried piteously as the boats shoved off from the bank.

All the devotees remained immersed in talks of Krsna as the boats swept along the river. About half way to their destination they halted fora rest. The next day at noon they reached Kheturi and visited the temple of Gaurahari. Observing the beauty of the Deity, everyone was filled with ecstatic emotions. Thakura then lovingly invited them to take prasada. ??Candra Raya got up and went forward to meet Raya who came out of the room and Candra Raya fell at his feet. Ray embraced him and asked about his well being. Candra said, "I am a sinner. It is by the kindness of you all that I got your auspicious touch."???

They anxiously took their seats as the fragrant aroma of the prasada entered their nostrils. They relished prasada while discussing Krsna katha, Narottama surrounded by his associates was a beautiful sight to behold, it appeared like the moon surrounded by stars. After washing their mouths, they sat comfortable chewing betel leaves. At this time the Raya family began to contemplate there extrordinary good fortune. Candra Raya explained to all of them how unfortunate he had been for such a long time.

Meanwhile the boats were emptied and everything was stocked in the store room. At night Devidasa and other kirtanias began sankirtana before the Deity of Gauranga. Thakura Mahasaya listened to the kirtana with Kaviraja by his left side. Krsnananda Ray and his family enjoyed the singing, and to his left Raghavendra and his two sons were seated. While listening to the beautiful recital they all became ecstatic and trembled with loving emotions. Thakura Mahasaya's entire body trembled and tears rolled down his face like torrents of rain. Suddenly he fell on the ground unconscious. Krsnananda Rai and others offered clothes, gold, scarves and silver to the Deity, and also rolled on the ground in joy. Ramacandra Kaviraja became mad with ecsasty. He wept profusely and the hairs on his body stood on end. His body lay stiff on the ground and only the beating on his heart could be heard. Candra Raya and his father and brother observing this wonderful scene with amazement. Candra Raya became excited and he too rolled on the ground crying and lamenting in various ways. He held the feet of his father and brother and bowed repeatedly at the feet of Thakura Mahasaya. When the kirtana

came to an end everyone took their seats, but Thakura remained in an ecstatic condition throughout the entire night. In the morning he came to his senses. In this way ten days sped by filled with the joy of hearing and chanting.

One day Candra Raya requested Thakura to grant his leave. Narottama gave his consent and thus Chandra humbly touched the feet of Thakura Mahasaya sadly bidding him farewell. Narottama said, "My dear son, always remember that the lotus feet of Sri Krsna are the only truth, everything else is illusion." In this way Narottama gave his blessings to Candra Raya and bid him farewell. Crying helplessly Candra Raya went to the side of Kaviraja, who embraced him warmly. Candra Raya said, "Now that I have met such a wonderful devotee as you, my life at last has some meaning." Candra Raya offered Kaviraja one hundred coins and two garments. He also begged Kaviraja to always bestow his kindness upon him by regarding Candra Raya as his servant. All the Vaisnavas present there also said goodbye to the Raya family. After offering their respects to the Deity of Gauranga, Candra Raya and his father and brother got on the boat and started for home. During their journey home they talked about the pastimes of the Lord, as instructed by Thakura Mahasaya.

One day Candra Raya decided to go for bath in the Ganges. He traveled to the riverside with hundreds of horsemen and four hundred companions and everyone happily took their baths in the Ganges then cooked some food. At that time there happened to be a spy of the Pathan king passing by on the bank of the Ganges. He quickly returned to the king and told him what he had seen. The king at once sent his army to capture Candra Raya. The army imprisoned Candra Raya and brought him before the angry Nawab, who angrily asked him, "How dare you conquer so many different countries." He then ordered that Candra Raya be lashed with a whip.

Candra Raya remained undisturbed, thinking that he certainly deserved whatever punishment was sent his way. Candra Raya said to the Nawab, "I am ready to pay whatever fine you find befitting."

The Nawab ordered that he should not be whipped, but imprisoned him in an underground jail. There they kept him in custody without any food. Candra Raya thought that the end of his life was near.

Candra Raya's family members were deeply aggrieved when they heard that he had been captured. His father tried everything possible to help his son. He wrote a letter to Thakura Mahasaya, who was shocked by the news and immediately sent a person who was well known to the Zamindar to try to get Candra released. But Candra Raya remained locked in the prison. His father, Raghavendra, spent his days in extreme sorrow, racking his brain over what to do. He finally issued a statement that anyone who could get his son out of prison would be well rewarded. One person answered his plea, stating, "I will definitely do it." Raghavendra assured him that he would reward him with many villages, horses, cattle and other things if he were successful. "I cannot live with Candra Raya," Raghavendra said.

The person, knowing many tricks, managed to reach Candra Raya through an underground tunnel. Candra Raya was shocked when the man arrived in his cell. "How did you get here," he said, "how did you get here without being injured?" The man explained that his father had sent him and that he was prepared to bring Candra Raya to freedom. Amazed, Candra Raya asked, "How can you get me out?" The man replied, "I shall go first and you follow me. I know some hymns to goddess Kali which I shall recite in your ear. Do not fear, as it will help you to get out of here. Don't speak anymore, let's just get started."

However, Candra Raya spoke in an unexpected way: "Of what use is to me to hear such mantras, my life has come to an end. Although I have performed many sinful activities, Thakura Mahasaya placed his feet on my head and I have become his servant. He has poured the nectar of the Radha Krsna mantra into my ears. Now it is not possible for me to hear any other mantra. Tell my father that I would rather remain faithful to the feet of my spiritual master and cite only the mantra which my lord has given me. According to his wish, I shall remain here. Here I am able to chant the holy name of the Lord peacefully, away from the noise of my home. Tell my father not to be sorry. My only sorrow is that I am unable to see the lotus feet of my guru Maharaja." Saying this he then began to recite the holy name.

In this way Candra Raya remained within the prison singing songs about Krsna and chanting the holy name. He tried his best to follow the order of his guru and keep his mind filled with thought of the pastimes of the Lord. Within his mind he would sometimes meditate on the divine faces of Radha and Krsna. At times he would take pleasure in smearing saffron on Their bodies, and at other times he would fan Them and massage Their legs. He prayed intently to the confidants of Sri Radha; Lalita, Visakha, Chitra, Champaka Latika, asking them to bless him to attain the feet of Radha Krsna. He prayed to Rupavati, Lavanga, Gaura Manjari, and Manjulali to favor him. He told them that he always wanted to remain with his guru Narottama and serve Krsna in whatever condition of life he may find himself in. His request to them was to allow him to become one of their confidants. In this way his days and nights passed in remembrance of the Lord.

One day the Nawab paid a visit to Candra Raya in the prison and angrily asked him, "You can see that the end of your life is near, why haven't you offered me any bribe? I will kill you by throwing you under the feet of an elephant." Thus he ordered a drunken elephant to be brought to the place. A large crowd gathered to watch and Candra Raya was brought out with his hands and feet tied. The mad elephant charged at Candra Raya, who simply meditated upon the feet of his spiritual master Thakura Mahasaya. The elephant grabbed Candra with his trunk and threw a short distance away. Again the elephant attacked, running angrily towards Candra Raya. This time Candra Raya caught hold of the elephant's trunk and with his two hands, pulled the trunk from the elephant's body. With a shout of pain the elephant fell to the ground dead. The crowd was astonished. The stunned Nawab got up from his throne, took hold of Candra Raya's hands and requested him to sit beside him. "What a powerful man you are," the Nawab said with awe. "You killed that elephant with your bare hands." Candra Raya humbly

replied, "It is not by my own power that I am able to do anything. It is only due to the grace of my spiritual master." Intrigued, the Nawab inquired further.

Candra Raya explained, "When you ordered your men to imprison me in the underground cell, I tried not to feel sorry for myself and remain jolly by constant remembrance of the mercy of my guru. Though you did not give me any food, I was relished the taste of the holy name of the Lord. In this way I sustained my life. Out of affection for me my father sent me some food through one aged lady nurse. During those days of imprisonment I never felt unhappy, on the contrary, I felt as cosy as if I were at home. Then when you brought me here to kill me, I constantly meditated upon the feet of my spiritual master. When the elephant caught me for the second time, the power to kill him came from my guru. If you will allow me I will tell you more about when I was imprisoned. One day my father send a man to me through a secret tunnel. When I asked him how he had managed to get there without being hurt, he replied that he knew a Kali mantra which protected. He wanted to chant that mantra into my ear so that I could follow him to freedom. But it was impossible for me to hear any other mantra than the one given to me by my guru. Thus I advised the man to tell my father that I would not leave the jail."

Hearing this amazing story changed the heart of the Nawab and he embraced Candra Raya affectionately. All the people who and seen and heard this incident fell on the ground, offering respects to Candra Raya. The Nawab ordered a horse to be brought as a reward for Candra Raya. He then told Candra that he was free to return to home, and also offered to return his property. The Nawab handed over the Dastaka and letter and ordered his ministers to work cooperatively under Candra Raya. He also gave the Parayana with the mark of his Panja (mark of the palm) to Candra Raya, who happily started on his way home. However, he began to think that since it was his guru Maharaja who had endowed him with such extraordinary strength, it would be more appropriate to visit his guru. Thus he sent a letter to his father and brother explaining everything and asking them to come without delay; "I have been set free from jail, both of you should come here quickly and bring various items to offer to Thakura Mahasaya."

When the bearer of the letter delivered it, Raghava was overwhelmed with joy and rushed to tell Santosh. They immediately gathered all the necessary items and rushed to meet Candra Raya.

Together the party traveled by horse towards Khetari. Upon reaching Khetari, Candra dismounted and walked straight to the residence of Thakura Mahasaya. Seeing Narottama sitting with Ramacandra Kaviraja, Candra Raya fell at his feet crying. Both Thakura and Kaviraja were overjoyed to see him. Narottama embraced his disciple warmly and inquired about his well being. Candra Raya explained the episode of his imprisonment, and Narottama placed his feet of his head. By that time Raghavendra Raya and Santosh arrived there and began singing the glories of Thakura Mahasaya. Narottama favored them by patting them on their backs. Candra Raya turned to his father and brother and they all embraced each other crying. Candra Raya asked his father, "Why did you send that man to me in jail? Didn't you know it was wrong?" Thakura smiled at

Candra Raya, and Raghavendra felt ashamed. He bowed at the feet of Thakura Mahasaya, requesting him to forgive him. He even begged his son to forgive him. The father and son embraced each other tearfully. Raghavendra said, "We are all tied tightly together to the merciful feet of Thakura Mahasaya." The family remained there absorbed in kirtana and darshan for five days. They then started for home.

After sometime Candra Raya went to visit the Nawab, who immediately rushed to greet him followed by his army. He offered the Ahira Pargana to Candra Raya as a gift. The next day Candra Raya took his leave and returned home.

O my listeners, I have no capacity to describe the wonderful characteristics of Thakura Mahasaya. Through his efforts the nectar of divine love flowed out from Vrndavana and flooded the world. The Bhakti sastras describe the qualities of a pure devotee, all of which can be found in the person of Thakura Mahasaya. He lived without any material possessions and was always equipoised, devoid of pride and malice. The magnetic touch of a real guru can turn a disciple into a real jewel. Thus Thakura Mahasaya and Srinivasa Acarya, the embodiments of Mahaprabhu's love, were able to deliver the most fallen souls. Sri Acarya delivered Vira Hamvira, and Thakura Mahasaya delivered Candra Raya. I bow at the feet of these devotees to whom Sri Radhika is the only resort. They are like garlands decorating Sri Rupa Gosvami. Such empowered devotees are the executors of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. I have given a brief account of some of the disciples of Srinivasa Acarya and Thakura Mahasaya. These branches and sub-branches gradually grew far and wide.

I write these narrations by the order of my spiritual master. Thus far I have described the qualities of Sri Gopala Bhatta, Sri Lokanatha Gosvami, Srinivasa Acarya, and Narottama dasa Thakura. I'm confident that the devotees who have dedicated their lives to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu will derive great pleasure through hearing these narrations. Remembering the merciful feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra prabhu, I, Nityananda dasa write Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER 19

All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, Advaitacandra and all the devotees. All glories to Srinivasa Acarya Thakura, Narottama Thakura Mahasaya, Sri Syamananda and Ramacandra, the abode of good qualities. Now I shall describe the glories of Ramacandra, whose power of devotion is beyond compare.

One day Srinivasa Acarya, along with his two wives, enjoyed the company of king Vira Hamvira at Vana Visnupura. After taking his bath, Srinivasa took his

seat and began to perform his worship of the Lord. He was the embodiment of Sri Mani Manjari, a confidant of Sri Radha, thus he began to think about Sri Vrndavana Dhama. As his meditation increased, he lost all external consciousness. In this state he observed the pastimes of Sri Radha and Krsna. He saw Radha and Her sakhis enjoying in the waters of the Jamuna. While Sri Radha played excitedly, She did not notice when her nose ring fell into the water. After sometime they got out of the water and put on their clothes and ornaments. Noting that Sri Radhika had lost Her nose ring, Sri Rupa Manjari winked at Sri Gunamanjari, indicating that she should go in search of the nose ring as quickly as possible. Understanding everything, Gunamanjari requested Mani Manjari to go at once to look for the nose ring in the waters of the Jamuna. The rest of the sakhis entered into the kunjia, while Sri Mani Manjari searched for the nose ring. Her search, however, was in vain. Unable to find the nose ring she was greatly disappointed.

Meanwhile, the two wives of Sri Acarya were extremely anxious about their husband's state of being. Srinivasa's body was stiff and no sound of breathing could be heard. The whole day and night passed by and his condition did not change. Filled with fear, the ladies began to cry loudly. Hearing their wails, the king came to find out what the commotion was about. Other devotees also rushed to the spot and were also frightened by the appearance of Srinivasa. The night passed away and the new day began in the third prahara, still Acarya remained in the same condition, and the ladies continued to cry loudly.

Filled with anxiety the king and other devotees examined the body of Acarya and were relieved to find that there were some signs of life in his body. Thus they tried to pacify the wives of Acarya. Suddenly Sri Isvari remembered that Ramacandra Kaviraja, being empowered by Acarya, was capable of understanding the state of mind of Srinivasa. Isvari told the king, "Send someone immediately to bring Ramacandra here." The king quickly carried out her order.

Ramacandra, who was anxious to see his beloved spiritual master, rushed to the house of Vira Hamvira. The king at once informed Sri Isvari of his arrival and took him to the inner part of the house. Standing at a distance, Ramacandra worshiped the feet of his guru. He then took the dust from the feet of the wives of Acarya and placed it to his head. Observing the state of Srinivasa, Ramacandra consoled them saying, "Don't worry, prabhu will come to his senses soon."

Ramacandra who was also an embodiment of Sri Mani Manjari (??) also went into a deep state of trance and went to the place of Radha Krsna. After bowing to the feet of Radha Krsna and the sakhis, he went to the bank of the Jamuna. There he found out that Sri Mani Manjari had been searching for something within the water of the Jamuna. He at once jumped into the water and found the nose ring under a lotus leaf. He immediately brought the nose ring to Mani Manjari, who was very happy. "O my dear friend," she said, "come with me quickly to the kunjia." Together they rushed to the kunjia and Mani Manjari gave the nose ring to Guna Manjari, who in turn gave it to Rupa Manjari, who put it on Radhika's nose. Sri Radha was dressed so gorgeously that all the sakhis were mesmerized by Her beauty. And when Radha and Krsna met together the sakhis

became mad observing the beauty of the divine couple.

At that moment Ramacandra suddenly came back to consciousness and began chanting the holy name of the Lord. At the same moment, Srinivasa also returned to external consciousness and sat up. Remembering what he had seen in his meditation, Srinivasa began to cry. He embraced Ramacandra, who fell at the feet of his master. All the devotees jubilantly chanted, "Hari, Hari."

Greatly relieved, Sri Isvari and Sri Gaurangapriya went to the kitchen and began to cook. They prepared a variety of foodstuffs and offered everything to Krsna. Sri Acarya then took prasada. Ramacandra took Acarya's remnants and the rest of the devotees also accepted prasada. After washing their mouths everyone rested comfortably, talking endlessly about the pastimes of the Lord. In this way the night passed happily. The glories of Sri Ramacandra are beyond my capacity to describe.

Now I shall tell some pastimes about Syamananda prabhu, which even the demigods in heaven find hard to grasp. After Syamananda left Vraja he went to Amvika via Gauda and Gaderhat. There he happily took darsana of the Deity of Mahaprabhu, and bowed at the feet of his spiritual master, Hridaya Caitanya, as well as his parama-guru, Gauridasa Pandita. They listened intently as he described everything about his visit to Vrndavana, but were very upset upon hearing that the books of the Gosvamis had been stolen.

Syamananda remained with them for sometime, and eventually received the relieving news that the books had been recovered. Shortly thereafter, Syamananda took leave of his guru and returned to his own country, Utkala.

In the village of Dharendra, Syamananda's birthplace, Syamananda vigorously preached the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Nama sankirtana was introduced and by his Syamandana's grace many fallen souls were delivered.

One day as Syamananda roamed through the streets performing sankirtana, a Pathan named Sher Khan, a royal representative, became furious upon seeing the sankirtana party. The Yavana and his associates angrily attacked the party, and broke their musical instruments. Filled with rage, Syamananda shouted loudly. The potency of his angry sound vibration burned the moustaches of the petrified Yavanas, and forced them to vomit blood. Having chastized the miscreants, Syamananda returned home.

The next day a huge sankirtana party again paraded the streets in great grandeur. Again the Yavana dacoit, Sher Khan, came across the sankirtana party. Seeing Syamananda at the head of the group, he at once fell at his feet with a humble appeal. "O my lord, be merciful to me. I am a great sinner, please give me shelter at your feet. I'm very sorry I tried to stop your sankirtana. Due to this offence my beard and moustache were burnt and my nose bled profusely. I even had a dream in which Alla appeared to me. He slapped my face and said, 'I am your Alla.' Saying this he showed me His golden complexioned form and said, 'I

am Sri Krsna Caitanya, the only resort for the entire world. Syamananda is My very dear devotee. If you do not go to him and accept initiation, you will be doomed to suffer the miseries of hell.' Oh what a beautiful form I saw with my very own eyes. I was unable to control my tears. You are the Jagad guru, so please be kind to me. There is no one as worthless as I, yet I beg for your mercy." Lamenting in this way, he humbly begged to be forgiven. Syamananda, of course, pardoned him and showered his mercy upon him. I heard this incident directly from my guru.

After delivering the Yavana, Syamananda went to preach at Rayani village on the bank of the river Suvararekha. Acyutananda was the king of this village. The king's sons, Rasika and Murari, received the blessings of Syamananda and became his intimate associates. They traveled on with Syamananda to Balamapura and Nrsimhapura. In Gopivallavapura, Syamananda preached intensely and accepted many disciples.

Syamananda instructed Rasika to worship Sri Govinda. The glory of Rasika's devotional service is also beyond description. He preached widely, delivered numerous yavanas and made many disciples.

One day, while Syamananda sat with his disciples in Gopivallavapura, a sannyasi approached him in an argumentative way. The sannyasi was a Vaidantik yogi and possessed deep knowledge of the sastras. A strong debate ensued between Syamananda and the sannyasi and at last Syamananda managed to change the views of the sannyasi. Syamananda expertly revealed the similarities between the Advaitavada and the views of the Gosvamis. The sannyasi accepted defeat and left feeling deeply impressed with Syamananda.

That night the yogi had a revealing dream. He saw that Syamananda was formerly a milkman but had been transformed into a brahmana due to his sincere worship. It was clear that Syamananda was an extremely exalted person. In the morning the yogi came before Syamananda and fell at his feet. "There is no greater sinner in this world than I," he said. "Please kindly save me from the reactions of my sins." The kind-hearted Syamananda responded by placing his feet on the head of the yogi and initiating him with the Krsna mantra. From that time forward the yogi was known as Damodara, and became a devout servant of Krsna.

On another occasion, Damodara came upon Syamananda sitting in a secluded spot, and immediately offered his obeisances. Looking up at Syamananda, Damodara noticed that he seemed to be glowing with divine beauty. The sacred thread draped across Syamananda's chest shone brilliantly. Just at that moment, Sri Rasika and some other devotees also arrived at the spot and fell prostrate on the ground before Syamananda offering prayers. After covering his sacred thread, Syamananda began sankirtana.

Sri Syamananda prabhu had a great attachment for Sri Advaita Prabhu, and following in his footsteps, Syamananda was eager to distribute love of God to all. He preached widely and delivered many fallen souls from the clutches of maya. In



Krsna lila, Syamananda prabhu is Sri Kanaka manjari, a confidant of Sri Radha. I possess very limited knowledge of the glories of Syamananda, but by the order of my guru, I attempt to glorify him to the best of my ability.

I have already mentioned the Deity installation performed by Narottama dasa, now I shall describe that event more elaborately.

One day while Thakura Mahasaya was sitting alone in a quiet spot, a letter suddenly arrived from Sri Acarya explaining that he was on his way to Vrndavana. Narottama was very happy to hear from Srinivasa, but this news that Acarya had gone to Vrndavana perturbed his mind. Eventually this disturbance reached a peak and he decided to take action. Narottama called Ramacandra and ordered him to go to Vrndavana and bring Sri Acarya back. Thus Ramacandra left for Vrndavana.

After the departure of Ramacandra, Narottama left for Nilacala. There he took darsana of Lord Jagannatha and visited the sacred places of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes. He traveled on to the home of Syamananda, where he spent a few days, then on to Gauda. There he visited Khardaha, Santipura, Amvika, Navadvipa, Ekacakra and Katwa. He returned to his home via Sri Khana and Yajigrama.

One day Narottama began to think about installing a Deity in his house. His plans were confirmed by the Lord when at night the Deities of Gauranga, Vallavi Kanta, Sri Krsna, Vraja Mohana, Radha Kanta and Radha Ramana appeared before him in a dream. Suddenly Narottama's dream broke and he awoke. He spent the rest of the night crying joyfully.

In the morning he completed his daily duties, then immediately began plans for carving the six Deities. Stone was purchased and artisans worked laboriously until the Deities were completed. Five of the Deities were carved beautifully, but, although the utmost care had been taken, the Deity of Lord Gauranga was not satisfactory. Disheartened, Thakura Mahasaya cried, calling out, "Gauranga, Gauranga," again and again.

Later, in a dream, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared before Narottama. Sitting at his side, the Lord said, "My dear Narottama, listen to Me carefully. You are trying to carve a Deity of Me, but it will never turn out beautiful because I do not intend to appear in that form. I will now tell you where you can find a Deity of Me. Before I accepted the renowned order, I modelled My own image Myself and placed in the water of the Ganges. No one knew about this, but because you My dear devotee I am blessing you with this knowledge. That Deity is now inside the rice godown of Vipradasa." Saying this Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu disappeared.

The following morning, Narottama finished his oblations, then began making inquiries about the rice godown of Vipradasa. Someone told him that Vipradasa was a very wealthy man who did a good business selling huge quantities of rice and other grains which were stocked in his godowns.

Narottama hurried to the house of Vipradasa, who welcomed him respectfully and asked what had brought Narottama to his home. Thakura Mahasaya explained, "I have some work to tend to in your rice godown."

Vipradasa replied, "O Mahasaya, it is not possible for you to enter that godown as it is infested with snakes, who hiss loudly if anyone comes near. Though the godown is filled with rice no one, not even I, can enter it."

"Don't worry," Narottama said. "The snakes will leave the place if I go there." Saying this he went to the godown and entered. Sure enough, the snakes immediately fled from the place. Narottama found the Deity of Sri Caitanya then walked out the godown unscathed. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief and marveled at the beauty of the Deity. Those who had formerly seen Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu personally, verified that the Deity looked exactly like Him. Amazed by the spiritual potency of Thakura Mahasaya, Vipradasa and his entire family surrendered at his feet.

Preparations for the installation ceremony were at once begun. Invitations were sent to all the Vaisnavas far and wide. Yet, Narottama was feeling disturbed due to not receiving any news from Srinivasa. To his relief, a letter finally arrived saying that Ramacandra would be returning soon along with Sri Acarya.

Together, Ramacandra and Srinivasa traveled to Visnupura, then on to Khardaha, Katwa and Amvika. In Amvika they happily took darsana of the Mahaprabhu Deity. They traveled on to Santipura and Navadvipa, then Yajigrama via Sri Kanda, where they stayed for sometime. When they finally reached Bhudari, Narottama heard about their arrival and rushed toward Bhudari with his followers to greet them.

Knowing that Narottama was on his way, Ramacandra and Sri Acarya went forward to meet him. Narottama fell at the feet of Sri Acarya, who embraced him warmly. Ramacandra and Narottama offered obeisances and embraced each other affectionately. Govinda Kaviraja also offered his respects to Narottama, then they all went to the house of Ramacandra and became immersed in discussions about Vrndavana.

Ramacandra said that the Gosvamis of Vrndavana remembered Narottama with great affection, and Lokanatha Gosvami sent him his blessings. Hearing this Narottama cried, calling out the name of Lokanatha. With effort, Narottama calmed himself and informed Srinivasa about the Deities he had made. Everyone was excited and pleased to hear about the forthcoming installation ceremony. Srinivasa told Ramacandra and the others to go to Khetari to arrange for the abhiseka ceremony, assuring them that he would join them there later.

Thus Ramacandra and the others went to Khetari, where they busied themselves with preparations for the festival. Ramacandra appointed different persons to various duties. Although the abhiseka was to be performed on the

auspicious Falgun Purnima, the sankirtana programme was already begun. As the devotees hurried about making various arrangements, the heretics watched with amazement.

Finally the Mahantas began to arrive; Srinivasa, Ramacandra, Sri Govinda, Vyasacarya, Krsna Vallava, Divyasimha, Premananda, Sri Gokula Vidyavanta from Kanchanagadia, Syamadasa, Sri Gopaladasa from Bundhaipura, Karnapura, Vamsi dasa and many others. Syamananda arrived from Utkala, Rasika Murari, Jahnava Isvari from Khardaha, Jagadurlava the son of Viracandra prabhu, Gungavallava-son in law of Madhava Acarya, Krsnadasa, Suryadasa, Raghupati, Murari, Caitanya dasa, Sri Jiva Pandita Nrsimha, Gaurangadasa, Kamalakara Pipalai, Mina Ketana Ramadasa, Sankara, Kanai. Nayana Vaskara and Raghunatha Acarya came from Halisahara, Hridaya Caitanya and his followers, Gopala and Acyutananda-the sons of Advaita Acarya from Santipura. Kanu Pandita, Visnudasa Acarya, Janardana, Kamadeva, Banamali dasa, Narayana, Purusottama, Syamadasa, Madhava Acarya-the author of Krsna Mangala and a dear devotee of Mahaprabhu and Advaita. He left his family due to the wish of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sripati and Srinidhi came from Navadvipa. Yadunandana brought all the devotees from Katwa, accompanied by Krsnadasa of Akaihat. Sri Raghunandana came from Khanda with Locana dasa and other devotees. Sivananda, Vaninath, Sri Hari Acarya, Jita Misra, Kashinath Bhagavatacarya, Raghu Misra, Sri Uddhava and Jagannatha and all the devotees of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu all arrived in Kheturi to attend the festival.

Narottama personally welcomed all the guest with the utmost care and respect, and arranged for everyone's housing. Sri Govinda and Sri Santosh were assigned to serving the duty of serving the guests. After taking prasada, the Mahantas happily retired for the night.

That night Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu told Narottama in a dream, "Tomorrow I shall dance in the sankirtana along with all of you." The Lord place His feet on the head of Narottama and disappeared. Narottama awoke with excitement. He, along with Mahantas, performed their morning duties and assembled to inaugurate the installation ceremony.

While Srinivasa bowed at the feet of Sri Jahnava, requesting her permission to commence the ceremony, Narottama appealed for the approval of the Mahantas to begin. With their blessings, Narottama happily called out the names of the Deities which he had seen in a dream; "Gauranga, Vallavi Kanta, Sri Krsna, Vraja Mohana, Radha Mohana, and Radha Kanta." Thus on the auspicious day of Phalgun Purnima, after performing the abhiseka ceremony, the Deities were installed by Thakura Mahasaya on their thrones.

Srinivasa Acarya decorated the Deities with opulent clothes and beautiful ornaments. The Mahantas wept in joy when they saw the beauty of the Deities. Jubilant cries of, "Jaya! Jaya!" filled the air, and the demigods showered flowers from the heavens. The melodious sounds of various musical instruments playing, combined with the sweet sound of of Vedic hymns chanted by the brahmanas, filled the hearts and minds of all with joy. It entire scene was soo auspicious that it

can only be compared to appearance day of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

According to the hymns of Sri Gopala comprising of ten letters ??, the worship of the Deities began. Thereafter, everyone watched with pleasure as the arati ceremony was performed. Everyone present fell flat on the ground before the Deities offering their humble obeisances. Narottama's happiness knew no bounds; he felt as if he were swimming in a ocean of bliss. Meanwhile, Srinivasa jubilantly gathered all the preparations cooked for the Deities. He put each item in a separate container, placed everything before the Deities and requested Their Lorships to accept the offering. After sometime he offered water to wash the mouths of the Deities, then placed betel leaves before Them. When the doors of the Deity room opened everyone fell flat before the Deities, offering their obeisances again and again. The devotees also offered their respects to the associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who returned their love by affectionaely embracing each of them.

Filled with the satisfaction of the Lord's darsana, Sri Jahnava asked Srinivasa, "How do you perform the worship of Sri Gauranga?"

Srinivasa explained, "According to the principles laid down by the Gosvamis, I worship Gauranga with the hymns of Radha Krsna ??." The Gosvamis have also stated that Caitanya Mahaprabhu should be worshiped with the Gopala mantra consisting of ten letter."

With appreciation and approval Sri Jahnava replied, "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is the combined form of Radha and Krsna." Saying this she fell silent.

Narottama bowed at the feet of Jahnava Isvari, and she in turn offered her heartfelt blessings. Thakura Mahasaya then paid his respects to the associates of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who embraced him with affection. Sri Isvari then ordered Srinivasa to bring garlands and sandalwood paste to offer to the associates of Mahaprabhu. Srinivasa obeyed at once, decorating each devotee with a garlands and sandalwood paste.

Thereafter the Mahantas gave their permission for Narottama to begin sankirtana. Narottama first bowed at the feet of the devotees then began to sing. Devidasa accompanied him on the khola, Gauranga dasa played the karatalas in perfect rythmn, as Vallava, Gokula and others sang sweetly. The devotees lifted their arms and danced in ecstasy, calling out the name of Gauranga. They sang the bhava of Sri Radha in which Sri Gauranga Candra always remained absorbed.??

The devotional power of Narottama's beautiful sweet voice attracted the Supreme Lord Himself, Sri Sri Gauracandra, along with His associates to appear before the assembly of Vaisnavas. Nityananda Prabhu, Advaita Acarya, jSrivasa, Gadadhara, Sri Murari, Haridasa, Svarupa Damodara, Rupa, Sanatana, Gauridasa and others all danced ecstatically on the sankirtana plastform. Enchanted by the sankirtana, everyone forgot themselves entirely and tears flowed like streams from their eyes. The son of Saci danced madly along with Sri Acyutananda and other devotees. Suddenly Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu along with His associates

disappeared from the scene. Who can comprehend the transcendental activities of the Lord? He appears and disappears by His own sweet will.

The devotees, however, were unable to bear the Lord's separation and cried bitterly. Narottama, Syamananda, and Srinivasa threw themselves on the ground. Crying loudly they soaked their bodies with tears until eventually they fell unconscious with despair. Srinivasa and the others gradually pacified themselves, yet Narottama was unable to control himself. He cried incessantly, calling out the name of Gaura. Everyone tried their best to console him saying, "By the power of your devotional service you made it possible for all of us to see Gauranga dancing with Nityananda, Advaita and others." The devotees embraced Narottama and offered him their obeisances.

The devotees brought a large quantity of red kumkum powder and requested Srinivasa, Narottama and Acyutananda to smear the powder on the body of the Lord. Responding to their request, Sri Jahnava Isvari smeared the powder on the body of the Deities. Thereafter Acyuta, Gopala, Narottama, Srinivasa, Viracandra, Syamananda, Ramacandra, Hridaya Caitanya, Sri Raghunandana and other devotees all smeared the red powder on the bodies of Their Lordships. After offering the red dust to Sri Gauranga, the Mahantas playfully threw the dust on each other, while singing the pastimes of Lord Krsna. As they played joyfully, the red powder filled the air, turning the land and water scarlet red. After kirtana the Mahantas happily took prasada.

In the evening everyone attending the arati ceremony, and in honor of the Lord's appearance, the Deity of Mahaprabhu was carried to the middle of the platform. On the order of Sri Isvari, Srinivasa began the abhiseka ceremony, following the standard procedures as observed for the celebration of Lord Krsna's appearance. Whoever tries to differentiate between Lord Krsna and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is sure to suffer in hell. After offering bhoga to the Deities, the Lord was placed in a bed to rest. Thereafter the Mahantas accepted prasada and retired for the night.

After attending Mangala arati the following morning, the Mahantas, reluctant to leave, decided to stay one more day in Kheturi. The next day Narottama sadly bid farewell to everyone. I am unable to describe Narottama's exemplary service attitude towards the Deities, as well as the Vaisnavas.

Sri Locana dasa, the author of Caitanya Mangala, was the disciple of Sri Narahari and belonged to a family of Vaidyas from Sri Khanda. Songs from his famous book were constantly chanted in the house of Narottama. It was their custom to first sing Sri Caitanya Mangala followed by beautiful songs from Krsna Mangala. ??

Sri Madhava Acarya, a man endowed with extraordinarily good qualities, wrote in verse the Sri Dasama Skhanda of Srimad Bhagavatam. The family genealogy of Madhava is as follows: Durga dasa Misra, a veritable mine of transcendental qualities, was a Vaidic brahmana from Nadia. His wife, Sri Vijaya,

gave birth to two exceptionally brilliant sons, Sanatana and Kalidasa. The wife of Sanatana, Mahamaya, gave birth to one only one daughter named Visnupriya. Visnupriya was married to Sri Krsna Caitanya.

The wife of Kalidasa Misra, Vidhamukhi, gave birth to an exalted son named Madhava. Kalidasa, however, died at a young age, leaving Vidyamukhi a widow with only one son. The ceremony of accepting the sacred thread was performed for Madhava when he was eight years old. Thereafter he began studying the scriptures. Within no time he proved himself a talented scholar and was awarded the title "Acarya". When the abhiseka of Sri Gauranga was performed, Madhava went to the house of Srinivasa and became mad with ecstasy upon observing the beauty of the Deity. From that day, he became wholeheartedly devoted to Sri Caitanya. Madhava Acarya was present the day that Sri Caitanya gave his devotees advise in a loud voice. The maha-mantra entered his ears and filled his heart with love. Madhava lay prostrate on the ground at the feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and the Lord blessed him by placing His feet on Madhava's head. At that time Madhava asked Mahaprabhu what was the proper method of chanting the holy name. Sri Caitanya advised him to cite the name lakhs of times daily. From that day, Madhava became completely indifferent to family life and soon composed a book of songs entitled Sri Krsna Mangala based on the tenth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. He dedicated the book to the lotus feet of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who favored him greatly. Mahaprabhu ordered Advaita Acarya to give initiation to Madhava. Thus Advaita poured the maha-mantra into Madhava's ear, then the Radha Krsna nama. He also gave Madhava the Kama Gayatra and Kama Vija and explained their meanings. In this way Madhava became an expert in the method of worshiping, and his apathy for family life increased.

Aware of her son's frame of mind, Madhava's mother made a desperate attempt to arrange her son's marriage. Understanding his mother's intentions, Madhava fled from his house and rushed to Vrndavana. There he settled into the life of an ascetic, surrendering himself at the feet of Sri Rupa Gosvami. Thus he learned the proper methods of performing bhajan. He worshiped Krsna in the Vraja style of Madhurya-bhava and thus came to understand his own spiritual identity as Sri Madhavi sakhi. By the mercy of Sri Rupa, Madhava attained the power of Uddipana.

One day Madhava received the news of his mother's death. Thus he went to Santipura, then on to Keturi with Acarya and observed the abhiseka of the Deity. Thereafter he quickly returned to Vrndavana. At that time I (the author) went to Vrndavana with Sri Isvari and traveled there with Madhava. Along the way he gave me many valuable instructions, thus I have great respect for him.

Now I shall describe Narottama's service to the Deities. He installed the Deities on six separate thrones placed in six different rooms. The Deities were worshiped with the utmost care according to Asta Kalin religious practises. Narottama spent the rest of his time discussing Caitanya Bhagavata and Caitanya Caritamrta. The Caitanya Bhagavata was formerly known as Caitanya Mangala, but the Manhantas of Vrndavana changed the name. Narottama's house was filled

with saints and Mahantas continuously discussing the pastimes of Krsna. The beautiful sankirtana performances held there regularly were sweet enough to melt the hearts of even the most demoniac character. The devotees would first sing Caitanya Mangala and then Sri Krsna Mandala. Govinda often sang songs about the pastimes of Gaura Krsna, and Narottama sang Vidyapati and Candidasa's songs about the pastimes of Krsna. Narottama's singing captivated the hearts and minds of all. Every year on the full moon day in the month of Falguna, a grand festival was held in Kheturi, attending by all the Vaisnavas.

Now I will describe Sri Jahnava Thakurani's journey to Vrndavana. She departed from Kheturi, accompanied by myself and various other devotees. Along the way, a dacoit leader named Kutub-ud-din and his followers decided to attack us and rob our wealth. Yet, mysteriously they were unable to find a way to execute their plan. They spent the entire night roaming the forest but were unable to approach our party. By morning they were filled with fear, thus the leader approached Sri Jahnava saying, O mother, save me. I wanted to rob you of your wealth, but despite my best endeavor throughout the entire night I was not able to get anywhere near you. Everywhere I looked I found venomous snakes trying to bite us. Caught in this dilemma, a loud sound suddenly came from somewhere and you mother saved us from the snakes. Being afraid, I came here to take shelter at your feet." Thakurani was pleased and showered her blessings upon the Yavanas. At that moment a loud voice blared out the name of Hari, and the Yavanas immediately began to chant the holy name of Krsna.

On another occasion Sri Isvari and myself halted at a village which was filled with heretics, who enjoyed taunting us. However, that night devi Chandika appeared before these rascals in a dream and angrily chastised them, "You have irritated Sri Jahnava, for this you will suffer great miseries. If you ask for her mercy, you will avoid the miseries, otherwise you will die."

In the morning the heretics all rushed before Sri Jahnava and fell at her feet begging forgiveness. She, being an ocean of kindness, offered her blessings without hesitation. Thus all of them became her followers. After visiting Vrndavana, Sri Jahnava returned to Kheturi where she stayed for some time.

At that time Madhava Acarya stayed with us and charmed everyone with his singing. Madhava was a Varendra brahmana and a favorite devotee of Nityananda prabhu. Madhava knew nothing other than the lotus feet of Nitai. Ganga, the daughter of Nityananda Prabhu was wed to Madhava Acarya. Although normally marriages were not arranged between Radi and Varendra clan, by the mercy of Sri Isvari anything is possible. Madhava Acarya was said to be the Santanu (father of Bhisma) and Ganga, his wife, was goddess Ganga. I had the good fortune of learning the art of playing musical instruments from Madhava Acarya.

Soon it was time again to celebrate the Falguna Purnima festival in Kheturi. Gradually Kheturi was filled with numerous devotees; Srinivasa, Syamananda, Viracandra, Acyutananda and mother other Vaisnavas arrived.

On the morning of the full moon day sankirtana began, the Deities were bathed, the pastime of throwing kumkum powder ensued, then everyone relished prasada. In the evening arati was performed and sankirtana began. Sri Vasu Ghosa sang, accompanied by Devi dasa and Madhava Acarya on the mrdanga, while Gauranga and Govinda dasa played the kartalas. Santosa, Govinda and Gokula started singing Krsna lila of Candidasa, as Acyutananda, Viracandra, Srinivasa, Syamananda, Narottama and Ramacandra danced without upraised arms. Attracted by Narottama's devotion, Sri Krsna was obliged to appear there along with Sri Radha. The earth and water in all ten directions suddenly became brilliantly effulgent, and the air was filled with an extraordinary scent. Stunned, everyone observed the beauty of the divine couple. Suddenly the Lord disappeared. Narottama fell to the ground unconscious, while Ramacandra and others cried loudly. Who can understand the pastimes of the Lord? Gradually everyone came to their senses and embraced Narottama lovingly, saying "You are the embodiment of devotion. By your grace we have attained the perfection of life."

One day, Narottama became absorbed in deep meditation wherein he personally witnessed the pastimes of Radha Krsna. Narottama's friends and disciples became frightened upon seeing his stiff body which appeared lifeless. Ramacandra, understanding Narottama's state of mind, assured them that he would soon return to external consciousness. Yet, to everyone's dismay, two days passed and still Narottama remained lay unconscious. Hoping to pacify everyone, Srinivasa Acarya took it upon himself to bring Narottama back to his senses. As soon as Sri Acarya chanted the holy name into his ear, Narottama regained consciousness and bowed at the feet of Srinivasa, who embraced him lovingly.

Now listen as I describe how Narottama delivered the many heretics. Gurudasa Bhattacharya was a scholarly Vaidic brahmana from Gopalapura and the teacher of many pupils. However, due to criticizing Narottama, he was attacked with leprosy. Despite the best Sastayana treatment, he could not be cured. Being a worshiper of Bhavani, he prayed intently, begging her to relieve him from the horrible disease. Bhavani appeared before him in a dream and explained that his disease was due to offences at the feet of Narottama. "You think that Narottama is a sudra, but you do not know that he is the embodiment of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's divine love and the deliverer of the universe. If you offer him sincere respect all your miseries will vanish. Anyone who considers Narottama a sudra, or an ordinary man, he and his family are sure to suffer in hell. A Vaisnava is always superior to even brahmanas. Although one may be decorated with a sacred thread, if he is devoid of devotion to Krsna he is no better than a sudra." Saying this, Bhavani disappeared.

The brahmana awoke in the morning and immediately rushed to Kheturi where he fell at the feet of Narottama. After explaining the details of his dream, the brahmana pleaded, "O my lord, have mercy on me and save me from damnation. There is no one as worthless as me." In answer to his sincere prayer, Narottama placed his feet on the brahmana's head, curing him from his disease. The ocean of mercy, Thakura Mahasaya, made that brahmana his servant and



disciple. From that time on, people were filled with awe and respect for Narottama and many came to take refuge at his feet.

One great scholar and Vaidik brahmana named Jagannatha Acarya from Bhudari became angry upon hearing that Narottama had given initiation to a brahmana. Hoping to get the power to defeat Narottama in debate, he began to worship goddess Kali. However, the goddess revealed to him in a dream that Narottama was the embodiment of ecstatic love for Krsna. Frightened, Jagannatha quickly went to Kheturi and fell at the Narottama's feet, who kindly accepted him as his disciple. In this way, many brahmanas took initiation from Thakura Mahasaya.

Harish Candra Raya, the Zamindar of Jalpantha, was a dacoit and betrayer of the king. One day, however, he happened to meet Narottama and the evil intentions in his suddenly vanished. Thus he took shelter at Narottama's feet, becoming his disciple. Similarly, one brahmana from Vangadesh who was a leader of dacoits, also was saved from his fallen condition by the mercy of Thakura Mahasaya. The list of dacoits who attained the blessings of Narottama is long; Govinda Vandhopadhya, Ramjaya Cakravarty, Lalita Ghosal, Kalidasa Catta, Nilmani Mukhuti, Harinath Ganguli and Siva Cakravarti. The armies of Tarachand Raya, a relative of Candra Raya, all accepted initiation from Thakura Mahasaya. Prior to that, they defeated the Yavanas and looted many cities, with the help of Candra Raya. Yet on the day when Candra Raya was arrested, they all ran away in fear. Later, when they heard the glories of Narottama, they gave up their sinful lives and surrendered at the feet of Thakura Mahasaya.

King Narasimha Raya of Pakka Palli lived in a beautiful city near the bank of the Ganges. He was kind to his subjects and welcomed all brahmana Panditas in his court. One day, a great brahmana scholar named Rupa Narayana came to the court of Narasimha Raya. This brahmana was endowed with a wonderful character and had never been defeated by anyone. Now listen to the history of Rupa Narayana.

The state of Karnapura in Vangadesha was a pure country occupied by the Pathans. The capital of the country, Egarasindura, was situated on the bank of the river Brahmaputra, as were the cities of Majufarapura, Daggada, Kutisvara and Hosenpura. Egarasindura and Daddada were famous trade centers, inhabited by business minded men from various parts of the country. People traveled long distances to buy and sell commodities there. Near Egarasindura was a village named Bhityadiya which was dominated by Kulinas. A brahmana named Laksminath Lahiri resided there along with his beautiful wife Kamal devi. Laksminath was a respected brahmana, and blessed with a son named Rupacandra whose beauty challenged that of Indra, the king of heaven. However, the boy was a prankster from his early childhood. Though Lakminath tried his best to educate his son, Rupacandra completely neglected his studies. One day, Laksminath blew up. Out of frustration he threw ashes on his son's plate while he was eating rice. Rupacandra immediately stood up, bowed at the feet of his mother and left home-- never to return. He walked a long distance and eventually arrived at the house of a village Pandita. Rupacandra stayed there and studied Vyakarana, earning the title

of Cakravarty. He then traveled on to further his education in Navadvipa. There he earned the title of Acarya. From there he moved on to Nilacala, where he observed Mahaprabhu in sankirtana. From a distance he paid his respects to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and happily took darsana of Lord Jagannatha. Leaving Puri, he went to Pune in Maharashtra and studied the all aspects of Vedic wisdom. Eventually he received the title of "Professor" from goddess Sarasvati Herself.

With his knowledge Rupacandra conquered many countries, defeated Panditas far and wide. Eventually he arrived in Vrndavana. There he heard about the two undefeatable scholars, Rupa and Sanatana. Rupacandra paid a visit to Rupa and Sanatana and offered his respects. They warmly welcomed him, inquiring about his well being and the purpose for his visit. Rupacandra said, "I have completed my studies of all the scriptures and would now like to have a debate with you." Disinterested the two Gosvamis replied, "What is the purpose of such a debate?" The Pandita answered, "I want to see who will be the winner." "There is no need to debate," the Gosvamis replied, "we accept defeat from you." Disappointed, Sri Rupacandra left the place.

Rupacandra went to the bank of the Jamuna where he bragged everyone, "The Gosvamis were afraid to debate with me." Overhearing his boasting statements, Sri Jiva angrily stated, "I am a pupil of Rupa and Sanatana. If you can defeat me then I shall accept you as the winner. You will now learn how clever Rukpa and Sanatana are by indulging in debate with me."

Thus a heated debated insued which continued for five days without conclusion. At last, on the seventh day Sri Jiva was declared the undisputed winner. Sri Jiva expertly defeated the philosophy of Advaitavada held by Rupacandra, and established the superiority of the path of devotional service above jnana and karma.

The defeated Rupacandra humbly bowed at the feet of Sri Jiva Gosvami, who embraced Rupacandra and placed his feet on his head. Sri Rupacandra said, "O master, by your grace I have seen the truth. Please forgive my offenses and purify my mind." Sri Jiva said, "You have done nothing wrong to me, you have been favored by Prabhu Caitanya Gosvami." Hearing this Rupacandra tearfully took the dust of Sri Jiva's feet and placed it on his head. "O Sri Jiva," he continued, "there is no limit to the offences I have committed. Out of pride I insulted Rupa and Sanatana. Remembering my arrogance my heart burns with misery." In this way Rupacandra lamented his previous conceited behavior, and Sri Jiva affectionately consoled him.

When Sri Jiva took brought him before Sri Rupa and Sanatana, Rupacandra lay prostrate on the ground at the feet of the two Gosvamis lamenting, "There is no one in the three worlds who is a more worthless sinner than I. Puffed-up with false prestige, I foolishly invited you to debate with me. O my lords please forgive me. Due to the mercy of Sri Jiva Gosvami I am now able to come before you with the proper mentality." Appreciating the humility of Rupacandra, Sri Rupa and Sanatana blessed him, placing their feet on his head saying, "You have done

nothing offensive as your mind has now become purified by the mercy of Sri Krsna Caitanya." Saying this Rupa and Sanatana embraced Rupacandra, who humbly requested to be initiated. As Rupa and Sanatana considered his request, a voice was suddenly heard from the sky, "Give Rupacandra Harinama. He will get the Gopalamantra from Narottama." Being thus ordered, the Gosvamis poured Harinama into the ears of Rupacandra. Santana told him, "Always chant the holy name of the Lord, in time you will receive the Krsnamantra from Narottama who has taken birth in a village named Kheturi in Gaderhat Gopalapura. At the age of 12, he will come to Vrndavana and take initiation from Lokanatha Gosvami," saying this he fell silent.

Rupacandra took the dust of the feet of the Gosvamis on his head, then suddenly the Supreme Lord Narayana entered in the body of Rupacandra. Observing the spiritual effulgence of Rupacandra, the Gosvamis embraced him saying, "As Narayana has entered into your body, from now on you shall be known as Rupanarayana." Speaking thus, they empowered him with divine shakti.

Rupanaryana stayed in Vrndavana, studying Bhakti sastras from Sri Jiva Gosvami. He read the Bhagavata as well as many Gosvami literatures, visited all the holy places in Mathura, and absorbed himself in nama sankirtana. Daily he bowed to the feet of the Vaisnavas; Sri Rupa, Sanatana, Raghunatha Bhatta, Sri Jiva, Gopala Bhatta, Raghunatha dasa, Krsnadasa brahmacari, Kashiswara and others, who all offered him their blessings. Eventually Rupanarayana bid farewell to all and started for Nilacala.

In Nilacala he found out that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu had departed from the world. Overwhelmed with sadness, Rupanaryana fell on the ground unconscious. Due to the desire of the Lord, he fell asleep and in a dream the Lord directed him as such, "Listen to me Rupanarayana, soon you will meet Narasimha Raya, and shortly thereafter you will meet Narottama who will give you the Gopala mantra." Saying this Mahaprabhu placed His feet on the head of Rupanarayana then disappeared. Waking from his sleep, Rupanarayana cried joyfully and rushed to the house of Gadadhara Pandita to report everything. From there he went to meet Sri Svarupa Damodara, who gave him many valuable instructions. Svarupa Damodara Gosvami blessed Rupanaryana by placing his feet on his head and empowering him divine potency.

Rupanarayana went to the temple of Jagannatha where he sang his own compositions in glorification of Lord Jagannatha. While in Puri, Rupanarayan met all the devotees of Mahaprabhu. One day he happened to come across Ramananda and humbly bowed to his feet upon learning of his identity.

After some time, Rupanarayana traveled on to Gauda where he received the heart-breaking of the worldly disappearance of Sri Advaita Prabhu. Filled with lamentation, Rupanaryana eventually fell asleep and was blessed with the darsana of Advaita Acarya who lovingly placed his feet of Rupanaryana's head.

Rupanaryana traveled on to various places until he heard the devastating

news of Nityananda Prabhu's departure from this world. Nityananda Prabhu, also appeared to him in a dream. Placing his feet on the head Rupanaryana, Nitai also assured him, "Do not worry. You will soon get the association of Narasimha and after that you will meet Narottama." Thus speaking, Nityananda Prabhu vanished.

Rupanaryana woke up and went to the Ganges to take his bath. At that time a king, accompanied by many brahmana Panditas and subjects, arrived at the same spot. Rupanarayana was elated to find out that the king was none other than Narasimha Raya. While Rupanarayana was bathing, the king noticed him and was enchanted by his beauty. Thus the king took the initiation to introduce himself and kindly invited Rupanarayana to his palace.

The brahmana scholars in the court of the king challenged Rupanaryana to prove his spiritual prowess by debating with them. Needless to say, Rupanarayana easily defeated them. Thus his fame spread rapidly throughout the country. The king enjoyed his company greatly and depended upon his good counsel to solve many problems. I (the poet) was fortunate enough to take lessons on yoga from Rupanarayana. He was a versatile genius in all yoga sastra, and thus I accepted him as my yoga guru. Sri Isvari instructed me to write something about his glories.

One day as Narasimha sat in his court with Rupanaryana, some brahmana Panditas arrived there to lodge their complaints against the son of Krsnananda Datta, Narottama dasa Thakura. They accused him of ushering in the age of Kali by committing the great offence of initiating a brahmana, although he was nothing more than a sudra. With great apprehension they expressed their concern, " Since Narottama has been preaching Vaisnavism, the worship of all other gods is being completely neglected and the offering of animals in sacrifice is now practically obsolete. Many people have taken Vaisnava mantras and given up eating meat." Someone else gripped, "All Vaidik and Tantric rituals have been discarded by these people, who simply sing and dance like madmen in sankirtana. Narottama probabaly has some mystical powers by which he has captured the minds of these people. He has somehow managed to initiate many scholarly brahmana disciples. It seems he is going to make a laughing stock of the brahminical class." In this way they appealed to the king to save the prestige of the brahmana class by sending Rupanarayana to defeat Narottama in a debate.

Turning to Rupanarayana the king asked his advice. Without hesitation Rupanarayana authoritatively replied, "O king, taking these brahmanas with us, we must leave at once. Do not think of doing anything else. The time of your good fortune has now come. By his immense spiritual potency, Thakura Mahasaya is drawing us to him." Rupanaryana ordered the brahmana scholars, "Let us go immediately to the place of Narottama. There we will defeat him in debate." Yet, within himself Rupanaryana thought, "All of us will be delivered by the mercy of Thakura Mahasaya." Thus Raya, Rupanarayana, and all the professors started for Kheturi. Not far from Kheturi, they stopped to rest at Kumarapura.

Meanwhile, news spread to Thakura Mahasaya and his disciples in Kethuri

that Narsimha Raya and a band of scholars were approaching with the intention of defeating Narottama in debate. The disciples quickly devised a brilliant scheme, and with the permission of Narottama, Ramacandra, Govinda, Ganganarayana, Harihara, Ramakrsna and Jagannatha started for Kumarapura. There each of them secretly accepted the guise of various types of shopkeepers (Sindi, Varai, Teli and Kumar). Corresponding with their new dress, each devotee sat in the appropriate shop selling their wares.

As expected, some of the pupils of the brahmana Panditas came to those shops to buy various items. To their amazement, when the pupils asked the price of an item, the shopkeeper replied speaking in Sanskrit. Being proud brahmanas, they concealed their surprise, and replied also in Sanskrit. One thing led to another and eventually each pupil found themselves caught in a heated debate with the shopkeepers. Within no time, the pupils were easily defeated. The victorious shopkeepers jokingly teased the pupils, telling them to return to their studies and send their professors for further debates. Humiliated, the pupils returned to their camp and reported the extraordinary event. "When we asked the shopkeepers where they recieved their education from they told us that they had studied in Kheturi."

Outraged at the audicity of the shopkeepers, the indignant professors rushed to the marketplace to save the honor of the brahmanas--or so they thought. To their dismay, the professors were also easily defeated in debate by the shopkeepers. Humiliated, they returned to the king and said, "We will not go to Kheturi, let us leave this place immediately." Rupa Narayana tried to pacify them saying, "Don't be afraid, Narottama Thakura will shower his blessings on all of us. What is the need to run away. Actually, according to sastras the position of a Vaisnava is superior to all.

The goodhearted shopkeepers then came before the pupils with the items they had come to purchase in their shops and offered them to the students free of charge. "We could make a profit from you," they said, but we would rather give you these items as a gift to the brahmanas." Saying this the shopkeepers left.

That night after finishing their meal, the king and his followers took rest. As the Panditas slept goddess Bhagavati appeared before them in their dreams. Holding a sword in her hand she angrily chastised them, "You rogues, I shall behead you so-called Panditas. All your studies have been in vain because you have criticized Narottama. By this offence you have purchased your ticket to hell. It is not enough just to satisfy me. Narottama is the incarnation of the Lord's ecstatic feature. A true brahmana is one who has actually understood Brahman. Narottama not only understands Brahman, but he has captured the Supreme Brahman, Krsna within his heart and thus a bright sacred thread is permanently imbedded in the heart of Narottama. The sacred thread worn by brahmanas is simply the external sing of the class of brahmana. You must become true brahmanas by accepting initiation from Narottama tomorrow. You can be saved from the suffering of hell only by the mercy of Narottama." Saying this Bhagavati disappeared.

The professors woke up from their sleep trembling with fear. When they revealed the dream to the king he said, "You did not heed my advice regarding Narottama. He is not an ordinary man, even the demigods in heaven worship his feet." Understanding their mistake, the Panditas took their bath and rushed towards Kheturi.

In Kheturi they offered their obeisances to the Deity, then went straight to Narottama and fell flat at his feet begging, "O respected Gosvami, please be merciful to us." Narottama offered his blessings and gave them initiation in Krsna mantra.

Following is a list of the chief Panditas: Yadunath Vidyabhusana, Kalinath Tarkabhusana, Haridasa Siromani, Candra Kanta Naya Panchanama, Sivacandra Vidyavagisha and Durgadasa Vidyaratna. But I do not know the names of the pupils.

King Narasimha and Rupanarayana also offered their respect to the Deities then to Narottama, who mercifully placed his feet on their head. Narottama also gave initiation in the Krsna mantra to King Narasimha. After hearing the glories of Rupanarayana from Narasimha, Narottama happily showed his favor to Rupanarayana by pouring Hari mantra and its meaning into his ear. He also gave him the Gopala mantra consisting of ten letters and the Kama gayatra and Kama bija. Rupanarayana lay prostrate at the feet of Narottama and took the feet of his guru to his head. He also bowed at the feet of Ramacandra and others.

Rupa Narayana, King Narasimha and the others observed the arati ceremony, then happily took prasada. Sri Thakura Mahasaya respected prasada first, then gave his remnants to his disciples. The following day Narasimha brought his wife to Narottama and she was also given initiation.

One day two brahmanas from Kheturi came to Narottama and after bowing at his feet explained, "We had a dream that you would give us initiation." Accepting them, Narottama chanted the Krsna mantra into their ears and they became ecstatic with love. These two brothers belonged to Sarvarna caste and Radha class, their names were Sri Balarama and Rupanarayana?. They were residents of Kheturi and known to be very devotionally minded. Observing the natural devotional tendencies, Narottama engaged them in the service of the Deities. Gradually Narottama's influence spread and many persons came to him for initiation.

Now I shall describe some incidents which will help to purify the minds of the listeners. In due course of time the full moon day in the month of Falguna again approached. As usual, all the Mahantas began to assemble in Kheturi for a grand festival. Thus Narottama arranged a festival on the third day of the full moon in this month--to have the upper hand over the heretics???. Many, many Vaisnavas attended, to name a few: Syamananda, Rasika, Hridaya Caitanya, Acyutananda, Krsna Misra, Vasudha, Jahnava, Ganga and Viracandra, Madhava

Acarya, Sundarananda, Yadunandana, Sri Raghunandana, Sridasa, Gokulananda, Sulochana, Raja Vira Hamvira, Krsna Bhatta Vyasa and Srinivasa Acarya.

During the festival Srinivasa gave discourses on Srimad Bhagavatam. Viracandra Gosvami also delivered an astounding lecture expertly expounding Vaisnava philosophy. "O my brothers," he said, "do not accept anyone other than a Vaisnava as your worshipful guru. If you have accepted a non-Vaisnava guru, please leave him at once and worship the feet of a pure Vaisnava. The Krsna mantra is the essence of all types of mantras. Let us simply accept the Krsna mantra as our all and all." Again he reiterated, "You must take that mantra from a Vaisnava who is properly following the authorized sampradaya. Discard any mantra given by an asampradayee."

He went to to explain further, "A man is called a Vaisnava when he becomes the bearer of the Krsna mantra. Such a Vaisnava is great that a brahmana. If one is a Krsna devotee he cannot be considered a sudra, whereas a so-called brahmana who has no devotion to Krsna is the lowest of sudras. Just as bell metal is turned to gold through an alchemical process, similarly anyone may become a brahmana with the help of initiation in the Krsna mantra. Because Narottama has come from a Kayastha family some foolish persons ignore him calling him a sudra. But he is a great devotee of Krsna, which makes him far greater than a brahmana. Anyone who has deep knowledge of the sastra understand this principle very well. The sastra states that initiation in Krsna mantra makes a person a brahmana. He who disregards this sastric conclusion surely goes to hell. The Supreme Lord is known as Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan. A person can be called a brahmana when he serves Krsna inwardly and outwardly. Everyone can see the sacred thread of a brahmana, but a true brahmana hides it in his heart. After tearing open his heart only will one be able to see the sacred thread of a genuine brahmana. Narottama is the incarnation of the devotional love of Nityananda Prabhu, thus you should accept Narottama as a part of God Himself. He can show you his sacred thread by tearing open his heart, just as Hunuman revealed Sita Rama seated in his heart."

Narottama then revealed to the devotees a brilliant auspicious sacred thread within his heart. The heretic, however, were unable to perceive this transcendental phenomenon. The devotees were mad with joy, and the atheists trembled with fear. Everyone, even the non-believers, spontaneously bowed at the feet of Narottama and sang his glories loudly. Narottama then hid his sacred thread, and offered his blessings to the heretics. Transformed by the love of Narottama, they embraced one another and offered their respects at the feet of all the devotees.

After taking a little rest, the sankirtana recital began. After bowing at the feet of Narottama, Rupanarayana began to sing, accompanied by Narasimha on the khola. Their performance was wonderful and everyone began danced and sang in ecstasy.

After the sankirtana Rupanarayana was introduced to Viracandra who

embraced him affectionately. Rupanarayana fell at Viracandra's feet taking the dust of his feet on his head. Viracandra told Rupanarayana, "Your devotion has melted my heart. You will be the inheritor of the power of Sri Rupa Gosvami. Thus I am giving you the title Gosvami." Rupanarayana was elated with joy and placed the feet of Viracandra on his head. Acyutananda, Krsna Misra, Sri Gopala, Srinivasa, Syamananda, Raghunandana, Ramacandra, Santosh Datta, Sri Gokula Nanda, Vasudha, Jahnavi, Ganga, Sri Govinda and all the others devotees also showered their blessings upon Rupanarayana, who humbly took the dust of each of their feet.

After the Mahantas departure from Kheturi, Rupanarayana remained there for some time. One day he requested Thakura Mahasaya to give him his siddha nama. Thakura Mahasaya blessed him and gave him his siddhanama as "Narayana manjari." The glory of Narottama is endless. How can an ignorant person like I properly describe him?

As my Thakurani, Sri Jahnavi, had promised she sent a beautiful Deity of Sri Radha to Sri Gopinatha in Vrndavana, where She was installed on Gopinatha's left side. I have not described the life of Sri Isvari elaborately here because I have done so in [Vira Candra Carita](#). Jahnavi had eight sons, but seven of them died. Only Viracandra survived.

At the time of the disappearance mahotsava for Narahari Sarkara in Sri Khanda, all the Mahantas assembled in honor of that great Vaisnava. One blind man Ramai also attended that festival to enjoy the singing and dancing. However, being unable to observe the dancing due to his blindness, he began to lament piteously. Seeing Ramai's dilemma, Viracandra prabhu showered his mercy upon him. He touched the eyes of Ramai saying, "See Ramai, everyone is dancing in sankirtana." Regaining his eyesight, Ramai was overwhelmed with ecstasy and fell at the feet of Viracandra, who placed his feet on Ramai's head. Everyone present shouted joyfully, embraced one another and praised Viracandra profusely.

Viracandra prabhu had a number of disciples. One of them was Jaya Gopala of Kandra village. Unfortunately, he disobeyed the order of his guru and was thus rejected by Viracandra prabhu.

One day Viracandra took permission from his mother and started for Nilacala to see Lord Jagannatha. There he met all the associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and visited all the places of the Lord's pastimes. He then traveled on to Gopivallavapura where he met Sri Syamananda. After a few days he came to Kardaha. Then he started for Vrndavana. From Kardaha he went to Navadvipa via Amvika and Santipura. In Navadvipa he enjoyed visiting the sacred sites of Mahaprabhu's pastimes. He traveled through Khanda, then on to Yajigrama, where he stayed for two to four days. Kheturi was his next stop via Katwa and Budhari. He stayed in Kheturi for some days then went on to Vrndavana.

In Vrndavana he met all the Gosvamis and visited Mathura mandala. He took the darsana of Sri Govinda, Gopinatha, Radha Ramana, Madanan Mohana,



Radha Damodara, and Radha Vinoda. After visiting Vraja, Viracandra went to Ekacakra, the birthplace of Nityananda Prabhu. Seeing the places of Nitai's childhood sports, Viracandra wept with love. From there he returned to Kheturi, where he was greeted with respect and love by Narottama. They embraced each other, took darsana of the Deities, and became absorbed in sankirtana. After some time they sat down to take prasada and talked about Vrndavana. Viracandra conveyed Lokanatha Gosvami's blessings to Narottama, and Narottama wept with gratitude.

After some time Viracandra started for Yajigrama. When Srinivasa Acarya heard that Viracandra was coming, he rushed forward to greet him. He ushered Viracandra to his house where he and his wife, Gaurangapriya Iswari, bowed humbly at his feet. Viracandra warmly embraced Srinivasa. Sitting together Srinivasa listened intently to the news of Vrndavana and received the blessings of Bhatta Gosvami as conveyed by Viracandra. After a few days Viracandra returned to Khardaha via Khanda and bowed at the feet of Vasudha and Jahnava. Viracandra then described his tour to his mothers. As I have explained the glories of Viracandra in Viracandra Carita, I will not elaborate on them further now.

The order of my spiritual master is my only shelter. Falling at the feet of Sri Jahnava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa write Prem Vilasa.

## CHAPTER 20

All glories to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. All glories to Advaitacandra and all the devotees. All glories to Srinivasa Acarya and Narottama Thakura, the abode of love of God. All glories to the ocean of devotion, Sri Syamananda prabhu. All glories to Ramacandra, who is decorated with all Vaisnava qualities. Now listen intently as I describe the branches of these great Vaisnavas.

Three brothers, Trimall, Venkata and the disciple of Sri Prabhodhananda?? were great scholars who lived in Trilinga. Sri Gopala Bhatta was the son of Venkata, and the disciple of Prabhodhananda Sarasvati. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu toured the South, He stayed in the house of Venkata during Caturmasya. In this way they were introduced to madhurya bhava. Thus they began to worship Radha Krsna in mood of the residents of Vraja. While the Lord resided in their house, Gopala, under the order of his father, attentively served Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. At that time the Lord instructed Gopala in the science of devotional service, thus Vrajabhava became manifested in Gopala. In Krsna lila Gopala Bhatta was Sri Gunamanjari. Later, Srinivasa Acarya Thakura became the beloved disciple of Gopala Bhatta Gosvami. The Siddhanama of Srinivasa was Sri Manimanjari. Srinivasa had numerous disciples, who formed many branches and sub-branches of Mahaprabhu's tree of Bhakti. The main branch was Ramacandra

Kaviraja, the dear-most friend of Narottama. The following is a list of the branches of Srinivasa Acarya

1. Sri Govinda Kaviraja was a great devotee songwriter. His compositions melted the hearts of all and purified the world.
2. Srinivasa showed his favor to the the wives of the two Kaviraja brothers. Ratnamala was the wife of Ramacandra.
3. Mahamaya was the wife of Govinda.
4. Srinivasa blessed the son of Govinda, Divyasimha.
5. Srinivasa Acarya had two wives whom he himself gave initiation. Among them the elder one was Draupadi, later known as Iswari.
6. The younger one was Padmavati, later known as Sri Gauranga Priya.
7. Acarya had three sons and three daughter whom he himself gave initiation. The eldest son was Vrndavana.
8. The middle son was Radha Krsnacarya.
9. The youngest son was Govinda Gati.
10. The eldest daughter was Hemlata.
11. The middle was Krsnapriya.
12. The youngest one was Kanchanalatika. Thr branches and twigs from these direct descendants were innumerable.
13. Haridasacarya of Kanchangadia belonged to the branch of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. His sons were Gokulananda and Sridasa who took their education from Srinivasa Acarya.
14. Sri Gokulananda was the elder son.
15. The younger son was Sridasa who was initiated by Srinivasa. The branches of Sri Acarya were very strong devotees. Their presence caused the hearts of the atheists to tremble with fear.
16. Krsna Vallava was the son of Sri Gokulananda.
17. Narasinha Kaviraja.
18. Raghunath Kar was a disciple of Acarya Thakur.
19. Ram Krsna Chatta.
20. His son was was Gopivallava Chatta.
21. Gopi Vallava Chatta married Hemlata, daughter of Acarya. Sri Kumud Chatta belonged to their branch.
22. His son was Caitanya.
23. Kalanidhi Chatta, husband of Krsnapriya.
24. Sri Rajendra Vandhya was his son-in-law.
25. Among two daughters of Kalanidhi the elder one was Sri Malati.
26. Sri Phulji Thakurani received the favor of Acarya Thakur.
27. Vrndavana Chatta was one of the branches.
28. Sri Govinda Chakarvarty, a resident of Vorakuli village, received the title of Bhavuka Chakarvarty.
29. His branch was Gopala dasa.
30. The son of Sri Govinda Chakarvarty, Sri Raja Vallava, belonged to Sri Acarya's branch.
31. Karnapura Kaviraja.
32. Vamsidasa Thakura.
33. Gopaladasa Thakura of Bundhai para of Vahadurapura was a branch of

- Acarya. He was an expert in Krsna kirtana.
34. Sri Rupa Gatka.
  35. His branch was Raghunandana Dasa.
  36. Sudhakara Mandala.
  37. His wife was Shyamapriya, the wife and husband both got the favor of Acarya.
  38. Their son was Radha Vallava.
  39. Kamadeva.
  40. Gopala.
  41. The father of Isvari and father-in-law of Sri Acarya was Sri Gopala Chakarvarty.
  42. He had two sons, the elder one was Syamadasa.
  43. The younger one was Ramacharana
  44. Another disciple was Sri Raghu Chakarvarty, the father of Gauranga Priya and the father-in-law of Acarya. He also got the favor of Acarya.
  45. Another disciple was Krsnadasa Chatta of Farodpura.
  46. Mohanadasa.
  47. Vanamalidasa from a Vaidya class.
  48. Radha Vallava Dasa.
  49. Mathuradasa.
  50. Radha Krsnadasa.
  51. Ramanadasa.
  52. Ramadasa Kavivallava had beautiful handwriting and was thus copied many books for Acarya
  53. Gopaladasa, father of Vanamalidasa.
  54. Atmarama.
  55. Nakadi branch.
  56. Chatta Shyamadasa.
  57. Durgadasa.
  58. Gopiramanadasa.
  59. Vaidya class - Raghunath dasa.
  60. Sri Dasa.
  61. Golulananda Chakarvarty got the title of Kaviraja.
  62. Gokulananda Dasa.
  63. Gopala Dasa Thakur.
  64. Chatta Shyamadasa.
  65. Radha Krsnadasa.
  66. Ramadasa Thakur.
  67. A great devotee Mukunda Thakura.
  68. Vyasa Chakarvarty of Vana Visnupura who got the title of Acarya due to the favor of Acarya.
  69. His wife Indumukhi.
  70. Another branch - their son Shyamadasa.
  71. King Vira Hamvira stole the books of the Gosvamis but later, due to the favor of Jiva Gosvami, got the name Caitanyadasa.
  72. His queen Sulakshamana.
  73. The prince, who took initiation from his father Vira Hamvira.
  74. Karunadasa Majumdar of Karana family who had two sons.

75. Janakirama Dasa and
76. Prakasha Dasa who used to write the letters on behalf of Acarya and who got the title of Viswasa.
77. Ramadasa.
78. Gopaladasa.
79. Vallavi Kavipata.
80. Three disciples of Acarya were from Deoligrama - First, Krsna Vallava Chakarvarty received Srinivasa's mercy when the later was searching for the Gosvamis books. At that time Acarya stayed in the house of Krsna Vallava.
81. Narayana.
82. Nrisinha.
83. Vasudeva Kaviraja.
84. Vrndavana dasa Kaviraja.
85. Vagavanadasa Kaviraja.
86. Srimanta Chakarvarty.
87. Raghunandana.
88. Gauranga dasa.
89. Gopijana Vallava Thakura.
90. Thakura Srimanta.
91. Caitanyadasa.
92. Govinda dasa.
93. Tulsirama dasa.
94. Vipra Balarama Dasa.
95. Jayarama Choudhuri of Utkala.
96. Brahmana Sri Harivallava Sarkar Thakura.
97. Krsna Vallava Chakarvarty.
98. Krsna Purahita Thakura of Gauda.
99. Shyama Chatta and his branch.
100. Shyamasundara Dasa.
101. Jayarama Chakravarty of Gauda.
102. Mathuradasa.
103. Atmarama.
104. Mathura nivasi Sri Govinda rama.
105. Sri Gopaladasa.
106. A branch of Acarya settled in Sri Kunda - Mahanadasa.
107. Hari Prasada.
108. Vrajanandadasa.
109. Harirama.
110. Sukhananda.
111. Muktarama.
112. Kalanidhi of Vangadasa.
113. Rama Sarana.
114. Rasikadasa.
115. Premadasa.

Now I shall describe the numerous disciples and branches of Narottama dasa Thakura, the most exalted devoted of Krsna Caitanya. He delivered the by

distributing the holy name.

Lokenatha Gosvami lived in the village of Talagadi in the district of Jessore. He was a disciple of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and was sent to Vrndavana on His order. There he served his worshipful Deity, Sri Radhavinoda. His Siddhanama was Manjulali Manjari. His disciple was Narottama whose Siddhanama was Champaka Manjari. Narottama had innumerable disciples.

1. Balarama Chakarvarty of Kheturi was a brahmana of Savarna caste

2. Sri Rupa Narayana Pujari of Savarna caste belonging to Radi class of

3. Ravirai Pujari of Budhari was a Vaidak brahmana.
4. Sri Gopirama Chakarvarty, an expert in Sankirtana.
5. His elder brother Rama Kanta,
6. and his son Radha Vallava Dutta. Both of them received the favor of Thakur Mahasaya.
7. Purusottma and Krsnananda were two brothers.
8. Sri Santosa Raya was the son of Purusottama Datta, who was a close friend of Govinda Kaviraja.
9. Santosa's younger brother was the disciple of his elder brother.
10. Rama Krsna Acarya Mahasaya was a scholarly brahmana who lived at Goyase near the confluence of the Ganges and Padma. He had many disciples.
11. Branch - Ganganarayana Chakarvarty was an exalted scholar of the Varendra caste. He lived in the village of Gamvila on bank of the Ganges. He was always absorbed in love of Krsna and recieved the title of Thakura Chakarvarty. He used to feed 500 pupils everyday, and had many disciples of his own.
12. Radha Vallava Choudhuri.
13. Branch- Nava Gauranga dasa. Narayana Ghosa. Vinoda Rai. Fagu Choudhuri. Raja Govindarama. Vasanta Rai. Prabhu Rama Dutta.
14. Branch - Sitala Rai. Dharmadasa Choudhuri. Nityananda dasa. Dharu Choudhuri.
15. Branch - Chandidasa. Vaktadasa. Boncha Ramavadra. Ramavadra Rai. Hanaki vallava Choudhuri.
16. Branch - Srimanta Dutta. Purusottama. Gokula Dasa. Haridas. Gangaharidas.
17. Branch - Raja Narasinha Rai received the favor of Narottama to a great extent.
18. Rupanarayana Gosvami--Viracandra prabhu was so enchanted by his sweetl singly that he gave the title of Gosvami. Formerly he was known as Rupacandra, but his name was changed in Vrndavana to Rupanarayana. He lived at Egara Sindhura in Kamrupa of Vangadesha on the bank of the Brahmaputra river. He was a Kulin brahmana of the Varendra caste. He was a great scholar and a great devotee who took initiation from Thakura Mahasaya.
19. Narasimha's wife Rupamala got the favor from Narottama.
20. Jagannatha Acarya, a great scholar of Telia Budhari village was a Vaidak brahmana.
21. Branch - Krsna Acarya was a Varendra brahmana of Gopalapura.
22. Branch - Radha Krsna Vattacarya, a Radi brahmana of Navadvipa.
23. Devidasa, a kirtana singer and an expert in different shastras. Thakua Mahasaya gave him diksa mantra.
24. Vaishnava Charana branch. Sivarama dasa. Krsnadasa Vairagi Rai. Krsnadasa Thakura. Samkara Viswasa. Madana Rai.
25. Branch - Vadu Caitanyadasa.
26. Harish Candra Rai, Zamindar of Jalapantha was formerly a tyrant but after receiving Narottama's mercy he became a changed man and his name was

- changed to Haridasa.
27. Raghavendra Rai, Zamindar of the northern part of Gaderahat was a very pure hearted devotee from a brahmana family.
  28. His wife Visnupriya.
  29. Raghavendra had two sons named Candraraya and Santosa who were notorious tyrants. Later both of them became great Vaisnavas, giving all material pleasures. The wives of Candraraya and Santosh became also became disciples of Thakura Mahasaya. Candraraya's wife was Kana Kapriya. Santosa Raya's wife was Nalini.
  30. Branch - Gandharva Raya, Gangadasa Raya, Vraja Raya. Radha Krsna dasa, Krsna Rai, Dayaramadasa.
  31. Branch - Jagata Raya, Haridasa Thakura, Sri Kanta, Ksheru Choudhuri.
  32. Branch - Rupa Raya, Candra Sikhara, Ganesha Choudhuri, Sri Govinda Rai, Mathura Dasa, Vagavata Dasa, Sri Jagadisha Rai.
  33. Branch - Narottama Majumdar, Mahesha Choudhuri.
  34. Branch - a Vaidak brahmin Shamkara Vattacarya of Naihati, Gosvami Dasa, Murari Dasa, Sri Vasanta Dutta, Shyamadasa, Gopala Datta, Ramadeva Dutta, Ganga dasa Dutta, Manohara Ghosh, Arjuna Viswasa, Kamala Sen, Yadava Kaviraj.
  35. Branch - Manohara Viswasa, Krsna Kaviraj, Vishudasa Kaviraja Thakura, the greatest man of the Vaidya family of Kumaranagara.
  36. Muka Maitra of Faridapura. Govardhana Navdhari. Valaka dasa Vairagi. Vairagi Gaurangadasa. Viharidasa Vairagi. Gokula dasa Vairagi. Prasada dasa Vairagi.
  37. Vipra Dasa--in his rice godown the Deity of Gauranga was found by Narottama. His wife was Vagavati. They had two sons, elder one was Yadunath. Ramanatha, the Vakti Ratnakara who used to live at Pachpara village. One his favor to Gurudasa Vattacarya of a Vaidak brahmin family helped Gurudasa to recover from leprosy. Gurudasa Vattacarya who became a disciple of Vakti Ratnakara. Gurudasa lived at Gopalapura in Rada.
  38. Narasinha Raya brought many Pandits to Thakura Mahasaya. There names are as follows: Yadunath Vidyabhusana, a man Kashinath Tarkabhusana. Haridasa Siromani. Durgadasa Vidyaratna. Sivanarayana Vidavayisha. Chandra Kanta Naya Panchanama.
  39. The following were decoits in the group of Chandraraya and got favor from Thakura Mahasaya: Vanamali Chatta. Govinda Vaduri. Nilmani Mukhuti. Lalita Ghosal. Kalidasa Ganguli. Siva Chakarvarty.
  40. Thakura Mahasaya used to visit many places where he had many disciples. Kashinath Vaduri. Rama Jaya Maitra. Narayana Saniyal. Misra Puranadara. Raghunath Vaidya and Misra Haladhara.

Now I will mention the names of Syamananda's spiritual ancestors, as well as the branches of his disciples. Suryadasa Sarkhela was a great scholar and his brother Gauridasa was also a man of great qualities. Formerly they lived at Shaligrama, and later settled in Amvika on the bank of the Ganges. In Krsna lila



Gauridasa Pandita was Suvala Sakha. He inaugurated the worship of Gaura Nityananda. He was one of the main branches of Nityananda Prabhu's disciples, under whose order Gauridasa settled in Amvika. His disciple was Sri Hrdaya Caitanya Mahasaya, whose Siddhanama was Sri Sudhira Sakhi of Sri Radhika. His disciple was Dukhi Krsnadasa of a Sadyopa family who became famous by the name of Syamananda in Vrndavana. When found the anklet of Sri Radhika, and received the mercy of Sri Jiva Gosvami who had changed his name to Syamananda. Syamananda's Siddhanama was Sri Kanaka Manjari. Jiva instructed him in the science of Krsna consciousness. Syamananda Prabhu was the incarnation of the ecstasy of Advaita Acarya. He had many disciples, which are listed as follows:

1. Sri Kisoridasa
2. Dina Bandhu of Dharendra village
3. Nimu Gopa
4. Kanai Gopa
5. Hari Gopa
6. The best branch - Rasikananda and Sri Murari of Utkala
7. The wives of these two brothers became disciples of Syamananda. Malati was the wife of Rasikananda,
8. Sacirani was the wife of Sri Murari. Rasikananda, Sri Murari and their wives lives at Rayani village and had many disciples of their own.
9. Branch - Damodara Yogi was a great scholar and had a long heated debate with Syamananda. Finally Syamananda pierced upon his heart and showed Damodara his celestial thread. Thus Damodara was convinced and took initiation from Syamananda.
10. Yadunath. Rama Vadra. Sri Jagadiswara. Dhurvananda of Valaramapura. Purusottama, Krsnahari Dasa. Uddhava of Nrisimhapura, Askura. Madhusudama. Govinda. Jagannatha. Gadadhara. Sundarananda. Hari Rai. Kalinath. Sri Krsna Kisora. Chintamani of Gopivallavapura. Sri Jagadiswara. Viravadra. Radhamohana. Haladhara. Radhananda. Nayana Vaskara. Gauridasa. Sikhidhwaja. Gopala. The Yavana decoit Sher Khan who later became known as Sri Caitanya dasa, gave up all worldly pleasures and became a great Vaisnava. He would always cite the names of Caitanya, Nitai and Advaita and used to roll on the ground crying ecstatically.

Now I will describe the Swarupa (eternal identity) of the three Prabhus- Srinivasa, Narottama and Syamananda. These three exalted souls took their birth due to desire of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Srinivasa was the embodiment of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Narottama was the embodiment of Nityananda Prabhu, and Syamananda was the embodiment of Advaita Prabhu. Srinivasa was the one sixteenth part of the full spirit of Sri Caitanya (amsa Kala), Narottama was the amsa kala of Sri Nityananda, and Syamananda was the amsa kala of Sri Advaita.

"What had been Nityananda, so became Narottama. What had been Sri Caitanya so became Srinivasa. And what had been Sri Advaita so became Syamananda. In this way these three came on the earth."

After the worldly disappearance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu

and Advaita Acarya, these three prabhuv-Srinivasa, Narottama, and Syamananda appeared on the earth and filled the universe with love and devotion.

Oh my listeners, I shall now describe something about Ramacandra Kaviraja and his disciples. Chiranjiva Sen of Khanda and his wife Sunanda had two beautiful sons, Ramacandra and Govinda. After the death of their father the two brothers lived with their maternal grandfather in Kumaranagara. Later they settled in Telia Budhuri. Ramacandra Kaviraja became the disciple of Srinivasa. The Siddhanama of Ramacandra was Karuna manjari. He had three main branches.

1. Harirama Acarya - he was a great scholar belonging to a brahmana family of the Radi class. He lived at Goyasa village at the confluence of the Ganges and Padma.
2. Vallava Majumdar was a brahmana of the Radi class.
3. Valasama Kavipati was a great scholar of Budhari.

Now I have completed the twentieth chapter of the book Prem Vilasa. I do not know if it has been done perfectly, but I have simply tried to execute the order of my guru. I have tried to describe all the incidents which I personally heard or saw. My diksa guru is Sri Janhava Iswari. To describe the mercy she bestowed upon me, I would have to speak with a million mouths. Viracandra Prabhu is my Siksa guru, he has also showered his mercy upon me. I am the only child of Atmarama Dasa and Sandamini. When I was a mere lad my parents passed away, leaving me an orphan. At that time I pondered thoughtfully about my future. One night I had a benediction dream. Janhava Iswari appeared to me and said, "Do not be afraid. Come to Khardaha and take initiation from me." Thus I went to Khardaha and took shelter of Sri Iswari. Formerly my name was Balarama Dasa, later Sri Iswari changed it to Nityananda dasa. I bow repeatedly at the feet of my guru, Krsna and the Vaisnavas. Taking the dust of the lotus feet of Sri Janhava and Viracandra, I, Nityananda dasa have completed the book Prem Vilasa.