

in all cases not because the tastes and capacities of people vary but because Krishna is Autocrat. It is not to serve worldly people that a devotee willingly lays himself under the obligation imposed by the Truth, of humouring their weaknesses in order to exploit those very weaknesses for the service of the Truth. Those who are not in the secret are likely to find fault with such apparent lapses from the ideal (?) of straightforward worldly conduct. Such lapses should also by no means be imitated by any body. But they constitute the service of the Lord possible in this world.

Sree Gaur Sundar and Sree Sachi Devi were, however, acting truly in grieving at the Departure of Sree Lakshmi Devi. They did not grieve like worldly people. The devotees of the Lord are most intimately tied to one another by reason of their association in the common service of the Lord. There is no question of the physical body or the materialised mind in such relationship, nor any desire for sensuous gratification of themselves. But Sree Krishna can be served by and through all forms of relationship and distinctive manifestations which only serve to increase the charm and diversity of spiritual service. The only thing needful is to avoid self forgetfulness and not to suppose oneself to be any other than the exclusive servant of Krishna.

CHAPTER XV.

## MARRIAGE WITH SREE VISHNUPRIYĀ DEVI.

THE LORD continued to indulge in the sweet taste of learning and thereby prevented any one from understanding His Real Nature. He bathed early in the morning in the Ganges and, after performing His morning worship, made His way to the house of Mukunda Sanjaya, the father of Purushottamdās.

After the Lord had taken His Seat in the Chandimandap of Mukunda Sanjaya His students would turn up one by one. If any of them by chance appeared without the *tilaka* mark on his forehead on any day the Lord sent him back home observing 'that the forehead of a Brāhmana without the *tilaka* resembles the charnel ground being proof that he has not performed his worship of that day.' Thus the Lord took care that all His students strictly followed the injunctions of the *Shāstras* in all particulars.

The making of the *tilaka* mark on twelve different limbs of the body is prescribed by the *Shāstras* as the indispensable duty of every Brāhmana. The *tilaka* is made with the earth of holy ground sanctified by its association with the Lord or His devotees. It is to be made in the form of a line pointing upwards with an aperture running from the base to the top to represent the Temple of the Lord. The horizontal *tilaka*, which is technically called *tripundra*, is forbidden to Brāhmanas who are candidates for the study of the Veda. The *tripundra* is deprecated as being the mark of a non-Brāhmana. The *tripundra* is worn by those who claim to be themselves Nārāyana. The *urdhapundra* or the upward *tilaka* is worn by those who regard themselves as the servants of Vishnu. No one who is not a Vaishnava can be a true Brāhmana. Access to the Veda is closed to a person who does not recognise the superiority of the servants of Vishnu. The non-Brāhmanas do not admit the eternal superiority of the spiritual pre-



ceptor. They are *sudras*. They paint on their forehead the *tripundra* sign symbolising their identity with God-head. This is the most deadly of sins and accordingly it is laid down that if one meets by chance a Brāhmana (?) wearing the *tripundra* mark, he must forthwith bathe with all his clothes on, in order to be purged of the pollution caused by the unholy sight.

There is really no worship for one who refuses on principle to recognise the eternal superiority of the Lord. Those who do not worship the Lord are *sudras*. On the other hand it is the bounden duty of every Brāhmana, who is a servant of the Lord, to worship Him daily. Unless this is strictly complied with no one must be admitted to the status of a student of the Vedas. Those, who demur to the stringency of such regulations on the pleas of liberalism and toleration, suppose that education freely imparted will produce a change of heart even of those who behave improperly through sheer perversity. It is also assumed that secular knowledge, which is capable of being irregularly acquired, is necessarily better than secular ignorance. Nimāi Pandit was the Teacher of *Vyākaraṇa* which forms the primary course of study that has to be gone through by every student of secular learning. Nimāi Pandit did not admit into His Grammar-class any one who had not performed his daily worship of Vishnu and had not painted his forehead with the mark of the upward *tilaka*.

Should this be regarded as intolerant? It is no doubt a proposal to ban all education not based on the true religion professed by a Brāhmana. Nimāi Pandit did not say that non-Brāhmanas were to be banished or suppressed forcibly. Atheism has always flourished in this world and is the creed more or less of the vast majority, nay strictly speaking, of almost all persons, of this world. It is the paramount duty of every God-fearing man to try his best to help in reducing this appalling volume of atheism. Secular education happens to be such by reason of its total dissociation from religion. It is the outcome of the open atheistic attitude. The pseudo-Vaishnavas are masked atheists and are also advocates and apologists of spurious liberalism, compromise and willing toleration of all forms of unspiritual conduct. The highest devotees are tolerant for a different reason. To the devotee the Truth

is the only Object of worship and he does not recognise any value of any method separated from the Object. According to current empiric Ethics the method and the object must be severally moral. In other words the method of the empiric thinker is not identical with the object. Grave harm is apprehended by empiricists if this vital and salutary difference between method and object, insisted upon by empiric morality, is ignored. This is one of the elementary principles of empiric ethics and need not be laboured. This separation between method and object does *not* exist in spiritual conduct. For example toleration is considered by empiric ethics as a good principle by itself. At any rate they expect that every consideration should be given to it in coming to any decision in regard to really ethical conduct. If it is necessary to be intolerant under any circumstances, and such contingency is by no means impossible nor rare in practice, the necessity itself is regarded by empiric ethics as an evil which is unavoidable in the present imperfect conditions of this world. Empiric morality is thus perpetually reduced to the form of unprincipled compromise between the principles of hypocritical good and necessary evil, which is regarded as undesirable in theory but unavoidable in practice. Nay it even recommends as our duty to adopt any compromise, however objectionable, which may be necessitated by an impartial consideration of the specific circumstances of each case. But as there is no such necessity for compromise on the spiritual plane the difficulty does not exist and the method there is always identical with the object. The apparent intolerance displayed by Sree Gaur-sundar towards novices on the spiritual path is not a necessary evil, a departure under pressure of circumstances from the standard of the absolute good, but the perfect good itself.

It is necessary to consider this vital point a little more in detail. Why is empiric ethics under the necessity of viewing the method of an activity as separate from its object? Because it is not possible, circumstanced as we are at present, to understand the whole purpose of any person. A practical code of conduct, the formulation of which is the object of empiric ethics, therefore seeks to correct our unavoidably imperfect knowledge of the complete, the whole purpose of another by providing a confessedly



imperfect safeguard by attaching a presumptive value to the external features of an act, attempting to join method and object in a separable combination to obtain a rule of conduct which at best possesses only a negative value. In the case of the Absolute Truth the obstructive circumstances are altogether absent. Absolute knowledge is perfect knowledge. Conduct issuing from such knowledge has no separable external features that belong even to the so-called ethical conduct of this world. The conduct proceeding from perfect knowledge possesses the perfection of its source. This is not all. This perfection is unattainable on the material plane, whereas it is natural and inevitable on the spiritual plane. On the spiritual plane the object and method of conduct are alike spiritual. The objects, with which we have to deal on the spiritual plane, are themselves spiritual, that is to say, capable of communicating the knowledge of their real nature to us. This establishes that perfect unity between method and object which is denoted by the term identity, if we want to express it by the nearest material analogy.

It is only if we bear in mind this categorical difference between ethical and spiritual conduct that we would be enabled to avoid the blunder of judging spiritual conduct by the empiric ethical (?) standard. And it should also be possible for us to understand the perfect validity of the contention that conduct that is sanctioned by the spiritual test, is the only truly ethical conduct even as regards also its external appearance. In consequence of this rational conviction such pseudo-ethical fetishes as the so-called principles of toleration, chastity, truthfulness, etc., etc., professed to be worshipped by empiric ethics, cease to impress or frighten and can even be discarded without any chance of being overtaken by those dire immoral consequences which they are utterly unable to prevent or modify.

The question of the spiritual value of any external 'symbol' has been confidently decided by empiric thought against the claimant of such value on grounds which that science is equally at a loss to explain. This point has already been treated in another part of the present Narrative. It will suffice to say here that the regulation of the connection between the material world and the

spiritual, if it is to be at all properly performed, must be placed wholly under the jurisdiction of the latter. That the human body is the temple of the Lord may appear to be no more than a 'symbol' to the empiricist who really understands by 'symbol' as indicating what is not wholly non-existent. But if the empiricist really cares for his own logic he should call the wholly abstract as also the symbol of the non-existent and *vice versa*. The spiritual is neither concrete nor abstract mundanity. It is quite different from the concrete and abstract of our mental speculation, both of which are perverted deluding reflections of the Substantive Truth. The abstract which the empiricist is pleased to call spiritual for reasons which he cannot explain, is really only the abstract of the relative and is situated at the furthest distance from the Absolute Reality. The spiritual is neither the concrete gross matter nor the abstract speculation about gross matter. This world, although it seems to have an existence of its own, has really no independent substantive existence. The impersonal or abstract worship, which the empiricist is so anxious to provide, is a figment of his perverted imagination and has no substantive existence even at its source. He is himself only a pseudo-symbolist and his condemnation of improper symbolisation applies really to himself. It is for the deliverance of such blundering pseudo-symbolists from the clutches of this fatal form of delusion that the process of worship enjoined by the *Shāstras* have been laid down by those who are themselves free from such delusion.

The *tilaka* mark is no doubt a symbol. But it is a symbol of the Reality to Whom we have no access at present except by means of the real symbol. This symbol is intended, and authorised, to arouse the consciousness of the Reality in those who are at present devoid of the same. Those who oppose the symbol on the ground that it does not correspond, like their own unreal symbols, to the perverted, deluding shadow of the Truth, are only worshippers of the changing symbol of untruth. The pseudo-symbolists have, indeed, no objection to decorate their gross physical bodies with all manner of symbols of this material world, conceived by them as being the only Reality, an assumption which effectively prevents all realisation of the very existence of the spiritual symbol.



It is rational to try to demolish this suicidal idolatry by substituting in the place of the worship of the symbols of this world the real symbol of the most fundamental fact of the world of the soul, *vis.*, that Godhead in His True Form does not in-dwell the physical body or the materialised mind, but has His Eternal Abode in the pure consciousness of the immaculate soul who, in his natural position, is free from all connection with matter and who is our only real self.

Forgetfulness of our true self is perpetuated by any arrangement that is based upon confusion of the physical body and the materialised mind with the soul or self proper. The decorations naturally coveted by the physical body at the instance of the renegade mind entangles the soul in the meshes of worldly wants. The only decoration of the Temple of Godhead is Godhead Himself. But neither His Temple nor Godhead Himself, Who dwells therein, are symbols of shadows as the empiricists want us to believe, but the Reality Himself Who possesses the qualities of self-conscious, personal and eternal existence which is His perfectly consistent logical connotation.

Candidates for the knowledge of the Truth must be required to prove their *bona fide* before they are admitted into the Academy of the Truth. This is also imitated by the empiricists in admitting students to institutions of empiric knowledge. Secular learning, sedulously divorced from spiritual living, is responsible for all the miseries of this world. He is a bad physician who hopes to cure his patient by allowing the disease to be aggravated by deliberate and persistent mal-treatment. It is the duty of the wise physician to act on the less enterprising maxim that the readiness to prevent is always better than effecting a cure. The uncompromising intolerance of mal-treatment fully represents the principle of toleration by its regard for the Absolute Truth. Real toleration may be defined as extreme partiality for the Truth. Toleration and partiality are equally good when they are exercised on behalf of the Truth and are utterly condemnable and terribly mischievous when they are made to serve untruth.

The Lord evinced a very particular pleasure in tearing to pieces and exposing mercilessly the pedantic defects of everybody.

One of His favourite Pastimes consisted in caricaturing the language of the people of Sylhet and East Bengal. The infuriated Sylhetese retorted to the jokes of the Renegade Son of a Sylhetese by emphatically reminding the irascible Tormentor of His Own Lineage, telling Him that He Himself, both His parents, in fact every one of His family, belonged to Sylhet. 'What sense could there be', they demanded with a natural indignation, 'on the part of such a Person to get up a hypocritical condemnation of what also equally concerned Himself'. But the Lord was not to be denied His Pastimes by any manner of argument to the contrary and His jocular propensity only increased by every effort to convince Him of its mischievous and self-condemnatory nature. The Lord, indeed, carried the joke to most unseemly lengths, till at last the angry Sylhetese, losing all patience, grasped at the skirts of the cloth worn by the Lord and dragged Him many a day to the King's Court to have Him punished by the law. The friends of the Lord could extricate Him from the clutches of the law on such occasions only by the greatest exertions. The Lord was equally unreasonable towards East Bengal people. He would lie in wait for an opportunity, and take to His Heels after breaking the *Bāngālī's* begging bowl of dried gourd.

The Lord, even while He was following the responsible occupation of Teacher, displayed an irrepressible disposition for every kind of prank, with one and only one remarkable exception. He kept strictly aloof from all association with, or talk about, women. The Lord never looked at women, even by a side-glance. 'Whence', says Thākur Brindāvandas, 'all eminent persons avoid praising Lord Gaurānga by describing Him as Amorous Lover. Because although every kind of praise is applicable to the Lord yet the wise sing only what is appropriate in regard to the Distinctive Nature of the Subject of their praise.'

Against this clear warning, conveyed by Sree Brindāvandās Thākur, who is the only authority universally recognised by the followers of Sree Chaitanya in regard to the Activities of the Lord during the period of His Householder Life, there has nevertheless sprung up a definite school which calls itself the community of the Gaur-Nāgaris (*i.e.*, sweet-hearts of Gaur) on the ostensible



ground that Gaur-sundar is identical with Sree Krishna, and, therefore, the inner meaning of His Activities, according to this school, must also be the same as the obvious meaning of the Leelā of Sree Krishna. Such a view is opposed to the Facts of the Narrative described in this work, as also to the specific and explicit testimony of Thākur Brindāvandās regarding the practice of the most eminent devotees. The doctrine, therefore, seems to be a concoction of the brains of persons who allow their sensuous imaginations to carry them off their legs even in a matter which lies wholly beyond the reach of our material senses. To such temperaments the Activities of Sree Gaur-sundar, both as Householder and Sannyāsin, must ever remain utterly unintelligible. The only course, that is open to them for getting rid of their error, is to practise unconditional submission at the feet of the transcendental seers and to cherish absolute faith in the truth of their words. Our ribald imagination has no place in the Spiritual Sphere. The ordinary rules of empiric history strictly subordinate the function of imagination to reasoning based on dependable evidence. In forming the true idea of the Personality of Sree Chaitanya it will serve no useful purpose to ignore alike the method of empiric as well as that of spiritual history. The latter requires the imagination to be subordinated to Scriptural evidence recorded by the Āchāryyas. The Gaur-Nāgaris are opposed to the Āchāryyas. They are also opposed to the ordinary method of empiric history. For these reasons they deserve no hearing either from historians or from those persons who follow the true method laid down in the *Shāstras*. They may be appreciated only by those who want to turn sacred subjects into a means of their own sensuous gratification.

It should be enough to remark in this connection that as a Householder Sree Gaur-sundar exhibited the Leelā of leading the life of the ideal devotee, following the path of spiritual endeavour according to the rules laid down in the *Shāstras* and in accordance of their meaning as expounded by the Āchāryyas. In the latter half of His Career the Lord put before us the model of the life led by a devotee who has attained the condition of amorous devotion to the Absolute. In both cases His example makes it neces-

sary for us to give a wide berth to association with females as females in the direct or indirect manner.

If it be asked how one is required to conduct himself towards females the answer that is furnished by the Life of Sree Gaur-sundar is that carnality in thought and deed is to be wholly avoided. We have already had an occasion to discuss this very point in connection with the Marriage of Sree Lakshmi Devi with the Lord and in describing the relationship that existed between Her and Sree Gaur-sundar after the wedding.

We must guard ourselves against the error of begging the question by assuming as an axiomatic truth the opinion that the race requires to be preserved and propagated by cautious and systematic exercise of the sexual power. But this in itself need not be considered as necessary, or even as harmless when it is looked at from the absolute point of view. The race may cease to exist in spite of all our endeavour to preserve it. Where is the guarantee that the human race will endure for ever? If one protests against such discussion on the ground that it is profitless for man, such a person may be asked whether he is sure that he is eternally mortal. In discussing the absolute Truth it is necessary to avoid dogmatism prompted by the conditions under which we happen to live at present. Whenever any limit is set to any discussion by means of empiric dogmatism, it ceases to be applicable to the Absolute. Therefore, it is necessary not to pre-suppose the conclusion in a discussion of the Absolute.

The race may lose the re-productive power or the Earth itself may be destroyed by a cosmic disturbance. The Absolute Truth should stand in all circumstances. Sree Gaur-sundar shows the method by which the Absolute Truth can be attained. We may attain to Him if we patiently listen to the story of His Life from the lips of those who themselves realise His true meaning, *viz.*, from the Āchāryyas. There is no other way. The Gaur-Nāgaris follow their own unbridled imaginations and pretend to attain to the Absolute Truth by an intensive admiration for the mundane sexual activity and sexual thought. Such practice is wholly condemned by the Āchāryyas. The Āchāryyas refuse to accept the argument that the preservation of the human race is



the object of human life. They are thus in a position to consider the value of perfect abstention from carnality, without prejudice.

Birth, reproduction and death are the natural condition of all living things in this world. All other worldly functions are derivatives from these. The question before us is, whether it is our duty to perform these functions in the way that may appear to us to be most effective. This, as I have already pointed out, is really begging the question. We should rather ask, if we really want a solution of the problem, 'Why are we reduced to the necessity of undergoing birth, life and death at all'? Once this point has been cleared up we should be able to understand what we have to do.

The *Shāstras* say that we are not subject to birth, nor death, but possess eternal life. It is not necessary for us to try to prolong a state of existence which is not our real life. On the contrary our duty is to get rid of ignorance and to attain to our true life which according to the *Shāstras* is perfectly free from all ignorance and unwholesomeness. The eternal life is both real and attainable. It is not a figment of the deluding imagination. We should try to attain this eternal and perfect life by all means. It is also our duty to use our present perishable life for the attainment of the eternal life. The practice of mundane sexual act and sexual thought is the greatest obstacle in the way of our realisation of the Absolute Truth. This is the teaching of Sree Chaitanya exemplified by His Own Life. The subject will be positively considered in connection with the nature of spiritual amour in a subsequent chapter of this work.

Sexual act and sexual association in every form are definitely condemned. This fact should not be whittled down by explaining the word '*stri*' as meaning all forms of worldly enjoyment or worldliness as a whole. The context does not support this otherwise plausible explanation. Sexuality has been specifically condemned. The question whether perfect freedom from carnality is possible in the married state, is beside the point. The sexual inclination may also be present without actually practising the physical act. If the inclination itself is merely destroyed, it is tantamount to self-destruction. The real spiritual principle, corresponding to carnality, is

not condemned. The present unwholesome perversion of outlook is sought to be remedied. Sex in the worldly sense is not valued, but at the same time the existence of the principle in the spirit is admitted. What is asserted is that there should be no confusion between sex in the material sense and the corresponding spiritual principle. The one stands in the way of the realisation of the other. The complete elimination of mundane sexual act and thought is not the cause but the inevitable result of the attainment of the spiritual sex. The two can *never* co-exist. In the spiritual the whole outlook is radically changed. It is not, therefore, possible to understand the nature of the married state of a Vaishnava without taking into account the whole position. It should be enough for our present purpose to state that the Vaishnava loves his wife or husband not as husband or wife but as the spiritual associate of his soul, which precludes the idea of the mundane sex. It is not Platonic love, which is a figment of the imagination and has no substantive existence except by reference to mundane sex. The love, that joins together pure *jiva* souls, is not and cannot be carnality. Spiritual amour, in the case of the highest souls, is capable of being reciprocated only by Krishna Chandra Himself. The love that forms the bond of union between only the highest souls, is of the nature of affection that is experienced towards one another by the friendly *confidantes* of the Gracious Mistress of the One Amorous Hero. It is the Mistress's delight which is absolutely and naturally preferred to one's own and for the promotion of which one's own spiritual inclination for amorous association with Krishna is wholly discarded not in the spirit of sacrifice but in the spirit of positive and real exercise of the highest natural instinct. All this falls flat on those who retain any trace of the taste for mundane sexuality. The purpose of the institution of marriage is fulfilled by the complete elimination of sexuality following on the associated pursuit of this spiritual end by the married couple. They must have no *ideal* of carnal connection as husband and wife. When this state has been realised the marriage tie ceases automatically to have any sexual import. The Vaishnava has no husband or wife except Sree Sree Rādhā-Krishna. This is the necessary disappearance



of the apparent on the appearance of the true self and the complete fulfilment of the spiritual instinct reflected in a perverted form in the principle of sex.

The doubt, regarding the questionable kind of society that will result from the carrying out of the idea, troubles us only so long as we continue to confound the soul with the physical body. The soul is neither born nor does he die. When the soul realises his own nature, his prospects are at once and radically changed. He begins to function on a different plane. The selfish and unwholesome ambition, that necessitated his incarceration in the house of correction of this world, naturally disappears on the attainment of other and purer ambitions and a larger vision. Those things which appear to be vital in this world, *e.g.*, the preservation of the species by the exertion of the reproductive power, etc., etc., are rendered unnecessary in the realm of the spirit, which is the real home of the eternal souls that are unborn and imperishable.

The Lord continued to teach His pupils in the Chandi-Mandap of Mukunda Sanjaya. He sat there in the midst of His pupils expounding the *Shāstras*, while medicinal oil, named after Vishnu, was applied to His Head by some favoured person, to afford relief to the nervous malady which it was His Pastime to manifest. He explained the texts in endless ways. The Lord taught His pupils from early morning till mid-day when He repaired to the Ganges to bathe. He was engaged till midnight everyday in teaching and helping His students to prepare their lessons. All those, who studied at the Feet of the Lord, became Pandits in course of the year by attaining the knowledge of the principles of the *Shāstras*. This was the daily Life of Sree Chaitanyadeva as Professor. The Lord relished nothing except the sweet taste of learning.

The view, that Sree Chaitanya was never in a perfectly sound state of mind, has been put forward by a few persons out of Sheer malice and ignorance. The motive of such unfortunate people is to find, or even invent, a reason for proving their ignorance. If the brain of an insane Person be capable of supplying the clue to the Knowledge of the Reality to the sane ignorant persons of this world the latter need not neglect to be benefited thereby.

Worldly people are never considered to be out of their proper senses by the Allopaths, Homeopaths, Hakims and Vaidyas of this world, who pride themselves on the infallibility of their power of diagnosing all kinds of mental and physical ailments. But if all worldly people are proved to be irrational and deluded should the Medical Sciences condescend to take serious notice of such aberration? Disease is one of the ordinary devices of the Deluding Power of Sree Chaitanya intended by His Mercy to shake the confidence of worldly people in the certainty and value of the pleasures derivable from the hallucinative workings of the medically sound(?) mind and body. A medically sound mind in a medically sound body is the *summum bonum* of the Medical Sciences. Is it altogether impossible for a sound mind in a sound body, which can pass the medical test, to be really utterly unsound? What else can be the cause of the impermanence of this particular form of the *summum bonum* in the wise Providence of the All-merciful? The Deluding Power tries to cure the spiritual malady of the conditioned souls by the device of the bodily and mental diseases which demonstrate conclusively the worthlessness and trivial nature of the ideal that promises to secure for the possessor of 'a sound mind in a sound body' an abundance of the so-called sensuous happiness obtainable in this world. But the lesson is lost on pedantic medical men whose horizon is straitly squeezed between the earth and sky of the body and mind utterly engrossed in the reckless pursuit of worldly enjoyment. But disease can for this reason neither terrify nor delude the pure soul of the Vaishnava. The nature of the malady of Sree Chaitanya, if rightly diagnosed on the lines indicated, has also the power of curing both the physicians and their patients of the spiritual disease of organised hypocrisy and self-deception wilfully nursed by all worldly people which prevent them from knowing the Truth by subjecting them to the mental delusions of the flesh.

The Lord's Marriage with Sree Vishnupriyā Devi took place about this time. A detailed account of the event has been recorded by Thākur Sree Brindāvandās. Before we enter upon those details it is necessary to dispose of certain considerations that may naturally arise in our minds in connection with this particular



event. The Marriage of the Lord for a second time seems to require an imperative explanation. Strict monogamy on the part of both husband and wife is the highest ideal of marriage, as embodied in the Narrative of Sree Sree Rāma Chandra and Seetā Devi. Conjugal love in the worldly sense also seems to be best guaranteed by such ideal which makes it the right-reserved of two particular persons to be the mutual recipients of connubial love. This alone, it is supposed, can make conjugal love both perfect and pure. According to this test Nimāi Pandit, if He is to be regarded as an *ideal* Husband of His First Consort, should have abstained from marrying a second time. He can not be supposed to have been subject in an abnormal degree to this particular frailty of the flesh and should have been able to remain constant to His First Married 'Love' even after Her Departure from this world.

But the nature as well as the object of the Lord's Marriage are altogether different from those made on this Earth. The Lord's Marriage is the only real marriage. The marriages that take place among the people of this world is an unwholesome caricature of the Reality. The proper way of putting the question mooted above would, therefore, be not that the Marriage of the Lord should conform to the human ideal, but that the human ideal itself may be lived down by the realisation of the substantive Truth, *viz.*, the Marriage of the Lord, of which it happens to be the distorted, unwholesome reflection. With the attainment of the Substantive Truth the automatic subsidence of the malady of the sensual appetite, the basis of the human institution of marriage, needs must be inevitable.

The Lord's Marriage, which is eternally enacted on the spiritual plane, made its appearance apparently under the conditions of limited time and space in order to effect the cure of the disease of sexuality to which the perverse soul is found to be addicted. Amorous love between male and female, which is cherished as one of the rarest privileges of man and as the source of his highest, purest and most exquisite happiness available on this Earth, is not really a blessing at all but on the contrary may become by its abuse the *greatest* of all the curses that afflict those who choose to be the temporary denizens of this world. But it

is by no means possible to get rid of the distemper even if we could be convinced that it is such a possible evil. The *Shāstras* have recommended marriage in place of promiscuous and unrestrained sexual relationship in order to provide a salutary check on sexual indulgence in the only practicable form. This is intelligible. But it is not perfectly clear while they also direct that the sexual act, which must be practised with restraint, should *also* be performed for pleasing Vishnu, and *not* for the gratification of the sensuous appetite itself. The *Shāstras* declare that by pleasing Vishnu parents as well as their issue will be really benefited by obtaining lasting immunity from the clutches of mundane lust.

But it is very difficult to understand what the *Shāstras* really mean when they enjoin the performance of the sexual act of generation to please Vishnu. Are we to suppose that the sexual act is pure in itself and as such is a fit offering for the Lord? That it is, therefore, our duty to indulge in sexual activity desired by God Himself. This does not however, appear to be the proper meaning of the *Shāstric* injunctions regarding '*sattvika* marriage.' The object of the *Shāstras* is to discourage sensuality in any form. The sexual act minus sensuality is a contradiction in terms. The *Shāstras* do not plainly tell us so, but they nevertheless clearly leave it to be inferred that the institution of marriage is for the purpose of getting rid of sensuality.

Why is Vishnu dragged into this sensuous affair at all? But how else also is sensuousness to be overcome, if it is desirable to get rid of it? By the Touch of the Lord alone the hold of the flesh on our souls slackens automatically. If one marries really for pleasing Vishnu, the Lord accepts the offering that is sincerely made. The acceptance of the Lord helps the realisation of the object of the offering. But when such an offering is made, the person making it should do so in the right spirit. He is instructed as to the right spirit by the *Shāstras*. If his prayer is offered really to please the Lord, or, in other words, for the purpose enjoined by the *Shāstras* which tell us how the Lord is pleased, the Lord fulfils such prayer by granting its object. The devotee experiences the effect of his conduct in the simultaneous increase of his peace of conscience, the increasing realisation of the spiritual



existence centred in the Lotus Feet of Vishnu and subsidence of sensuous hankering for the things of this world. It is as if fire had burnt up all impurities by its introduction into the scavenger's heap.

Strength and health of body are coveted, among other things for the purpose that they are necessary for the procreation of strong and healthy children. But is not this a begging of the question to be proved? If I have myself no use for strength of body and mind except its blind, mechanical exercise my condition will be altogether chaotic. Order, specially moral order, is impossible without conscious subordination to one supreme purpose. There must be some intelligible object to which all our faculties may be unhesitatingly directed. That object is the attainment of the Lotus Feet of Vishnu where dwells eternally all highest activity, knowledge and bliss. Strength and health of body are by their nature perishable. We do not really know why they come to us and why they leave us. So we should not be unduly attached to them for their sake. If God permits us to possess them for a time we should use them solely for attaining the abiding shelter of the Holy Feet of the Lord.

There is, no doubt, marriage in the Realm of the Absolute. That is the True Marriage. That Marriage is eternal. There, the Lord is the only Lover and Husband and all souls are the recipients of His Perfect Love. This is possible only in the Lord and in the spiritual world. If any mortal attempts to have many wives or mistresses in this world he is warned by the *Shāstras* against the utter folly and wickedness of such conduct. The self-same *Shāstras* declare that the Lord is the only Enjoyer of every creature and that Marriage with the Lord is the *summum bonum* of the spiritual condition. There is, of course, no room for any mental or physical activity in such relationship. It is the exercise of the eternal relationship of the pure souls, in their spiritual non-material state, with the All-soul.

Conditioned souls, who happen to be under the lure of the flesh, cannot think of marriage except by reference to mundane sex. But the *Shāstras* enjoin marriage as a help in realising the life eternal by spiritual co-operation between husband and wife, for

living down the mundane sensual instinct. They instruct us to succeed in this by cultivating the effective spiritual desire of pleasing the Lord by our every act. As the Lord can be served under all circumstances and in every externally mundane act, why should the sexual act be an exception to the rule? It should be possible to serve the Lord by the sexual act as by any other form of apparent worldly activity. But the sexual act that is performed as service of the Lord cannot, for that very reason, belong to this mundane plane. It becomes spiritual activity which is absolutely free from all sensuous unwholesomeness. It is better than any negative process.

Sree Chaitanya enacted the *Leelā* of abstaining from all ordained sexual activity during the period of His Married Life. On this point Sree Chaitanya differs wholly from Sree Kṛṣṇa who apparently begot numberless children and also cultivated unconventional amorous relationships with the milk-maids who were not His wedded wives. In Essence, there is of course no difference between the Two. On the spiritual plane abstinence and enjoyment are alike wholesome and are really un-opposed to one another. The Conduct of Sree Chaitanya need not, therefore, be regarded as moral or wholesome in the worldly sense, or as either more or less pure than That of Sree Kṛṣṇa or than that of His own married followers. On the spiritual plane there is no unwholesomeness or objectionable factor. There is only an infinite range of the most varied excellences and exquisitenesses. The Conduct of Sree Chaitanya as Married House-holder is far above the level of that of every other house-holder as setting, in a way that is capable of being grasped by the conditioned soul, the spiritual ideal for his special benefit and safe-guard him from radical misconceptions regarding the Nature of the Union of Sree Rādhikā with Sree Kṛṣṇa, the Only Perfect and Substantive Marriage.

Sree Kṛṣṇa has really only One sweet-heart, *viz.*, Sree Rādhikā as Sree Rādhikā Herself has no other tie except Her Love for Kṛṣṇa. The realisation of Sree Kṛṣṇa by Sree Rādhikā is the only Absolute Realisation of the Absolute. All other realisations are secondary and derivative but true, and are attainable only by the Grace of Sree Rādhikā. The secondary realisations



are, however, both possible and perfect so long as they happen to subserve the Supreme Purpose of Sree Rādhikā. The devotees of Sree Chaitanya attain this dependent perfection of service by following loyally His Teaching as well as Example. Dissociated from either, all souls descend automatically into the sphere of sensuous imperfection.

But the Source of all perfect service is Sree Rādhikā Who is the Counter-whole of Sree Kṛṣṇa. Sree Chaitanya personates the Function of Sree Rādhikā towards Her Eternal Consort, in order to bestow the Loving service of Sree Rādhikā to conditioned souls who have no taste at all for the spiritual service of the Lord. He is the Ideal Devotee, devoted to His Lord. Such Devotee admits no relationship with anything except the Lord. So long as Sree Chaitanya continued to exhibit the *Leelā* of leading the life of a married house-holder He showed clearly that it is possible to marry in order to serve the Lord which is incompatible with the least attachment or love for anybody else except Godhead. He was a dutiful Son, Brother, Husband, Friend, without being attached in the least to Brother, Husband, Friend or Father in the worldly sense. Kṛṣṇa was all along His sole Father, Mother, Brother, Wife, Friend. The devotees were no doubt loved by Sree Chaitanya, as they served Kṛṣṇa in the same way that He Himself did. He refused to be led by any of His devotees and compelled all who desired His Favour to serve only Kṛṣṇa. This Quality of Absolute Independence and Aggressive Superiority of His Service of Kṛṣṇa raises Him above all His associates and followers. But this Superiority must not be imitated by any other person. All other persons should serve Sree Kṛṣṇa in obedience to Sree Chaitanya; that is to say by submission to Sree Rādhikā Who is Kṛṣṇa Himself and Who cannot be disobeyed by His devotees. This premier position of Sree Rādhikā and its *rationale* has been made intelligible to souls under the thrall of Māya by the Career of Sree Chaitanya. The *jīva* souls should stand to Sree Rādhikā in the same relation as His followers stand to Sree Chaitanya Himself. Sree Kṛṣṇa is served independently by Sree Rādhikā alone, Who employs an infinite army of Her own

servants, *i.e.*, either inseparable or separable portions of Her Essence in Her Service of Kṛṣṇa.

Before beginning his account of the Marriage of Sree Gaur-sundar and Vishnupriyā Devi Thākur Brindāvandās takes particular care to mention that the Supreme Lord, Sree Chaitanya *never even listened to the name of a female*. This precautionary remark is followed up by the observation that Sree Gaurānga must on no account be prayed to as the Amorous Lover notwithstanding His identity with Sree Kṛṣṇa. This salutary and most important and explicit prohibition has been too often deliberately ignored by the Gaurnāgaris by deviating deliberately or through ignorance from the path enjoined by Sree Chaitanya Himself and His most authentic biographer and associates. This Sect, arguing from the fact of identity between Sree Chaitanya and Sree Kṛṣṇa, persists in regarding Sree Chaitanya as taking delight in amorous dalliances with His Consorts and Sweet-hearts at Nabadwip. Under the lead of a corrupt duty these misguided people have not even scrupled to invent imaginary stories of Sree Chaitanya's amorous escapades in order to bring His Activities into line with Those of Sree Kṛṣṇa. This is an unpardonable and immoral travesty of authentic history and an offence at the Holy Feet of Sree Chaitanya and His associates. In fact there cannot be a greater blunder, nor one that is more disastrous in its spiritual and moral consequences, than this open attempt to ignore that very feature of the Career of Sree Chaitanya which constitutes the most characteristic distinction between His *Leelā* and That of Sree Kṛṣṇa. The Activities of Sree Chaitanya are absolutely free from even the appearance of mundane sexuality.

Let us follow in the footsteps of Thākur Brindāvandās in describing the Marriage of the Lord for a second time, and being armed with this basic principle of His Career, try to understand a little more definitely the real significance of the Marriage of Sree Gaurānga with Sree Vishnupriyā Devi as we proceed with the Narrative itself.

The Narrative is presented by Thākur Brindāvandās in the following manner. The Supreme Lord was wholly absorbed with tasting the sweets of learning and teaching His students after



the Departure of Sree Lakshmi Devi from this world. But Sachi Devi had no other thought than that of finding a suitable maiden to marry her Son a second time. She at last arrived at a satisfactory decision. She had noticed with approbation the conduct of a Young Maiden, Vishnupriyā, the Daughter of a well-known father, Rājpanḍit Sanātan Misra. Sachi Devi had frequently met this Girl at the bathing *ghāt* of the Ganges. Sanātan Misra was a native of Nabadwip. He was of a most merciful disposition. He was possessed of a frank and generous nature and the highest faith in Vishnu. His occupation consisted in doing good to others and showing hospitality to all chance-guests. He was truthful, self-controlled, born of a high family. He was well-to-do and had a large number of dependants.

Sree Vishnupriyā Devi, Mother of the world, was the Very Self of Lakshmi Devi, the Eternal Consort of Sree Nārāyana. Sachi Devi had conceived a great affection for the Maiden at the very first sight and regarded Her as worthy of being the Consort of her Son. Vishnupriyā was accustomed from infancy to bathe in the Ganges twice and even thrice every day and had no other interest in Her life save devotion to Her father, mother and Vishnu. She daily met Sachi Devi at the bathing *ghāt* of the Ganges and greeted her feet with great humility. The mother also blessed Her with the greatest affection, 'May Kṛṣṇa bestow on You the Favour of a Worthy Husband.' During her baths in the Ganges Sree Sachi Devi conceived the desire of joining the Girl to her Son in the bond of nuptial union. As a matter of fact the very idea had also already occurred to the Rājpanḍit and his family, and Sanātan Misra was no less anxious to bestow his Daughter on Sree Gaursundar.

It so chanced that one day Sachi Devi, having sent for Kāsināth Pandit, requested him to make the formal proposal of the Marriage of his Daughter with her Son to the Rājpanḍit and also to arrange the same in a definite manner if he was agreeable. Kāsināth Pandit immediately made his way to the Rājpanḍit and, after being received with great respect, submitted his proposal. It was to this effect, 'I have a proposal to make to you. I would ask you by all means to do what I am going to propose if you

consider it desirable. Give your Daughter to Viswambhar Pandit. I consider the connection altogether suitable. He is the proper Husband for your Daughter as this Best of maidens is also in every way Fit Bride for Him. They suit One Another exactly as Kṛṣṇa and Rukmini.'

On this the Rājpanḍit held a hurried consultation with the members of his family who also pressed upon him the desirability of unhesitating and immediate acceptance of the proposal. Thereupon the Rājpanḍit informed Kāsināth Pandit that he had no objection to bestow his Daughter on Viswambhar Pandit. If such a connection could be settled for his Daughter he would regard it as nothing less than the reward of the previous good deeds of himself and his whole family.' He informed Kāsināth Pandit to return to Sachi Devi and inform her of his decision. He repeated his assurance that he was prepared to carry out his word by all means. On hearing this Kāsināth Pandit with great satisfaction took his leave and laid his information of what had happened before Sachi Devi. The mother was delighted on hearing the success of her endeavour and busily set about making the necessary preparations for the Marriage of her Son.

On learning of the approaching Nuptials of the Lord all His disciples felt the utmost gladness in their hearts. The great Buddhimanta was the first to offer his services in this connection. He said that he would bear all the expenses of the Marriage. Mukunda Sanjaya protested as it would completely shut himself out. Buddhimanta Khan replied that the Marriage would not be celebrated on the paltry scale of the wedding of a Brāhmana, but on that of a Prince.

The *adhibās* ceremony (preliminary to Wedding) was celebrated with great *eclat* by all friends and followers at the auspicious Moment on the auspicious Day. Huge canopies were hung up and the grounds were enclosed by rows of plantain trees on all sides. Pitchers filled with water, lighted lamps, paddy-grain, milk-curd, twigs of the mango and every other kind of auspicious articles were collected on the spot in huge quantities and the whole ground was beautifully painted with the solution of powdered rice (*Ālipanā*). All Vaishnavas, Brāhmanas and other worthy



persons of Nabadwip were invited to partake, in the afternoon, the betel-nut of the *adhibās* ceremony? Musicians duly turned up as soon as it was afternoon and struck up a delightful concert. The music was swelled by the sounds of *mridangā*, *sānāi*, *jai-dhāk*, *karatāl* and other instruments. The 'bards' began to recite the praises of the family and loyal matrons uttered glorificatory ejaculations. The Brāhmanas raised the Vedic chant as the Jewel of the best community of the twice-born made His Appearance and assumed His Seat in the centre of the assembled people. The Brāhmanas, who had congregated, thereupon experienced a great joy in their minds as they sat in a circle round Sree Gaur Sundar.

Then they brought out the perfumes, sandal-paste, betel, excellent garlands and distributed among the Brāhmanas. They placed the garland round the head, smeared all parts of the body with the sandal-paste and offered a pot-full of betels, to every single guest. Nadiā was but the community of the Brāhmanas. There was no end of Brāhmanas at Nadiā. It was not possible to ascertain the number of the Brāhmanas as they continued to arrive and depart. Among them there were also not a few who were extremely greedy and who, after receiving their presents once, returned in a different dress. Presenting themselves in the thick of the crowd these greedy Brāhmanas carried away repeatedly sandal, betel-nut and garlands. All were mad with joy. Who could recognise anybody? The Lord laughingly gave the command to give away sandal and garlands three times to every one. By this Command the Lord condoned the offence of those who, having taken once, persisted to take the articles over and over again. The Lord loves the Brāhmanas. He thought in His Mind that if a Brāhmana was caught in the act of taking more than once he ran the risk of being chid by some careless person. It is however, an offence to take anything by cunning in matters spiritual. The Lord, therefore, provided against all these contingencies by ordering all the articles to be given away three times to every one. All Persons were highly delighted by obtaining them in a triple measure and no one again took anything by cunning. Garlands, sandal, betel-nut and betel that were given away in this manner exceeded all limits. The secret how this

was possible no one knew. Let alone what men actually received, that portion of it, which was dropped on the ground in the act of giving away, would have sufficed for five ordinary marriages, if the quantity could be available in the house-hold of any other person. All persons were exceedingly gladdened in their hearts. All said, All praise to this *adhibās*! We have seen millionaires in this Nabadwip. No one's ancestor ever performed such a grand *adhibās* ceremony. No one gave away so ungrudgingly such excellent sandal, garlands, betel-nut and betel.

Presently the Rāj pandit arrived with a glad heart and with all the requisites for the *adhibās* ceremony. He was accompanied by Brāhmanas, relations and a great company of merry musicians, singers and dancers. The Rāj pandit joyfully put the *tilaka* mark on the Forehead of the Lord in accordance with the method enjoined by the Vedas. This joyful Event was acclaimed by a great chorus of the chant of Hari and the singing of hymns of praise. All loyal matrons also acclaimed the Glorious Event. The greatest rejoicings manifested themselves in the form of music and song. Having in this manner performed the *adhibās* ceremony the prince of Brāhmanas, Sanātan, returned home. The kinsfolk of the Lord also went forth and performed the *adhibās* ceremony of Lakshmi at the Latter's Home in the same way. Both sides also performed with the greatest zeal every other customary rite.