

guide one cannot hope to gain any idea of the substantive plane of the Absolute. Because it happens to be really the attitude of refusal to recognise the imperative and moral necessity of loyally seeking for the Divine Grace for the attainment of spiritual enlightenment.

CHAPTER XXIII

HIS INITIATION—(Contd.)

RITUAL may be defined as worship by means of the objects of this world, which function alone is available to the conditioned soul, rendered possible by the Grace of Godhead as revealed by the Scriptures and the spiritual Guide to the community of the servants of the Lord.

The empiric theory, which seeks to derive the form and significance of ritual from the worldly activities of the ancient peoples, is based on the assumption of the impossibility and superfluity of revelation as the source of worship. But as a matter of fact it is never possible for man, by progress in material civilization, to attain either to the form or significance of spiritual worship. The form of worship can derive its spiritual value, if it has any, only from revelation. As it does not possess any mundane significance it is, therefore, independent of all mundane reference. It may satisfy the spirit of antiquarian curiosity to discover how the superficial aspect of the eternal process of worship varies from country to country and from Age to Age. But will any number of such 'discoveries' add to our knowledge of the real meaning of either the form or the spirit of true worship?

If the mind can be supposed to be fit to worship Godhead by means of concepts or percepts referring to objects of phenomenal Nature, why should such worship be impossible by means of the objects themselves? But mental worship in itself is no nearer to Godhead than the show of worship by means of material substances, both being made of non-spiritual stuff. The one is as much in need of the Divine Sanction as the other, if it is to reach the Divinity at all. The one is as much capable of being turned into worship as the other by virtue of such Sanction. The contro-

versy among empiricists on the subject of worship rages round the external form versus the mental conception both of which are, by themselves, *i.e.*, as they appear to the empiricists, wholly devoid of all spiritual significance.

The allied question, bearing on the same issue, may be put thus. Granted that a mental and physical activity is endowed with spiritual quality of the service of the Divinity by the Divine Sanction, why should Divine Sanction itself be confined to any particular and strictly circumscribed form of such activity and not extend to the whole range of secular activities? There is apparently much to be said in favour of such contention from the point of view of ordinary rational judgment. If the whole range of activities, both physical and mental, be made to be covered by the term 'ritual' then the departmental narrowness, that has come to attach itself to the term, would be removed. There are also numerous passages in the Scriptures themselves in support of such contention and to prove that one, who worships Godhead, necessarily does so by every act of his life.

But notwithstanding all this, spiritual worship is neither narrow and departmental nor liberal and comprehensive in the empiric sense. These terms of condemnation and praise do not apply to the issue at all. It is, therefore, necessary to be humble on the threshold of any serious enquiry into the nature of the substantive spiritual function. Pantheistic thought is only one form of atheism. No mental speculation in itself is logically admissible regarding the Absolute, by reason of the fact that the mind has no access to the transcendental plane.

The form of the ritual is not improved by the supersession of the methods of antiquity by more 'modern' methods on the ground that these would be more 'intelligible' to our present judgment. The question of intelligibility in the empiric sense does not matter. When Godhead is addressed by the empiricist as the Source of all existence, such form of prayer is adopted for the reason that it is supposed to be intelligible to our limited understanding. But does the prayer become a spiritual function by any such rational approval on the part of the worshipper? It is not denied that Godhead is the Source of all existence. Neither is it

admitted that if a person addresses Godhead as the Source of all existence, he will be enabled to be in communion with Godhead by such prayer. How does he really know that Godhead is the Source of everything? His real ignorance cannot be removed by merely repeating a formula whose meaning it is beyond his capacity to understand. If he chooses to remain satisfied with an empty performance, he should be considered to be indifferent to the issue.

If Godhead is the Source of all existence, as the rational faculty claims to know instinctively, how is the same aspiring faculty to reconcile such a supposition with its own actual utter ignorance of the nature of its relationship with its own supposed source? Hydrogen and Oxygen were not instinctively claimed to be known as the source of water by the same all-knowing instinct. Is it not, therefore, only a silly and superficial vanity that leads such ignorant persons to 'believe' that Godhead is the Source of all existence?

Such an attitude of ignorant omniscience, so lightly assumed as their birthright in the name of the rational instinct by deluded souls, has to be got rid of if religion is to avoid the defect that is attributed by physical scientists to the speculative philosophers, *viz.*, that their subject 'bakes no bread'. The sterile philosophy of empiricism has been weighed in the balance for too long a period and has been found wholly wanting. The World is in some need of a positive and real, and not merely hypothetical, solution of its spiritual difficulties.

In the process of spiritual enlightenment there is also, quite inconceivably to our present power of understanding no doubt, a beginning of the process followed by a probationary stage which has to be gone through before the goal is reached. The first faint glimmering of the approaching light is sufficient to impart the consciousness of the categorical nature of the difference that separates the plane of the mind and physical body from that of the soul. All empiric questionings are at once and necessarily solved by this first experience of the actual spiritual life.

Thereafter arises a new curiosity which relates itself wholly to the transcendental plane. The experience of the glimmer of

light proceeding from a realm that is yet completely out of sight except by the relationship of the light which while bearing testimony to the reality of spiritual existence securely keeps the secret of all definite knowledge regarding the same, makes one anxious, not for the nostrums concocted for their idle amusement by the children of darkness but, for positive information from those who really know about that world, which is only then actually realised to be perfectly unknown and unknowable to the aspiring understanding of man.

The present Narrative may be regarded in two possible ways. The first is the ordinary empiric way for the satisfaction of a limited curiosity born of the mental outlook. Such study is not likely to be of much positive benefit. But it may have the negative value of removing misconceptions to which even the open minded persons are liable by reason of habitual and normal association with worldly-minded people. This Narrative may strike the imagination of such a person and may induce a few to agree with the point of view of the Scriptures as set forth in these pages. If any person thereupon choose to undertake to act up to the principles inculcated by the Deeds of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya, he will be in a position to realise the necessity of praying for the Grace of Godhead for directing him to the proper teacher of the Truth. If the prayer is, indeed, not altogether hypocritical the sincere seeker of Divine Aid may be rewarded by the Mercy of Godhead and find the *bona fide* spiritual guide. The same Influence may also help him to make the complete surrender of himself at the feet of the Guru when found and to approach him with the further prayer for positive spiritual enlightenment. The Mercy of Godhead will further enable such a person to be accepted by the Guru. The acceptance by the Guru of his offer of submission will be the beginning of his spiritual pupilage, and in proportion as he will be enabled to enter into the plans and views of the Guru by the method of loyal, willing, rational obedience, the true meaning of the Deeds of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya will manifest Themselves to his serving disposition. If he thereafter reads the Narrative that has been handed down by the former serving teachers of the

religion (the *bona fide* Āchāryyas) he will gain the positive knowledge of the Truth.

In the following pages of this work the Events of the Career of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya, corresponding to the activity of the seeker of the Truth after he has sought for and received spiritual enlightenment from the *bona fide* teacher of the Truth, are recorded and interpreted in pursuance of the exposition of the Āchāryyas, by the method of the service of the *bona fide* spiritual guide. It will not be possible for the uninitiated to enter into the spiritual meaning of such a Narrative. But every one will be enabled to avoid forming any hasty and adverse opinion if he only keeps in mind the necessary reservations when going through the account of the happenings of the transcendental plane to which the conditioned soul has no access in their substantive sense. It can be to him more or less only like a story of the Fairyland with this difference that the realm of the soul is not the concoction of the fertile imagination of man as the other is; but on the contrary it is the only Substantive Reality that vitally concerns all of us both individually and collectively. No reader of a fairy tale ever thinks it worth his while to quarrel with any happenings in the Fairyland even if they are in flat contradiction to all experiences of this world. In the case of this Narrative also, from this point onward, even if the reader is unable to agree with any proposition fully, he need not for an analogous reason cherish any feeling of hostility inasmuch as the propositions have no direct application to the plane of three dimensions for which alone he is at present positively interested. His hostility against the Fairyland would be like fighting with a shadow as the land of the Fairies is not capable of being affected by his mundane blows; and one should not quarrel with a shadow on principle. If one is disposed to quarrel by apprehending any bad effect that the story may appear likely to produce on his actual worldly position, he should still be able to find consolation in the reflection that his mere desire to banish from this world anything that he does not like, will not necessarily rid it of those objectionable entities, and, therefore, if those entities are entitled to have a place in the world it is the world that deserves to be condemned and not the story which would

be perfectly harmless but for this possibility of its existence in the world despite our desire to the contrary.

We are not required either by our rational instinct or by the Scriptures to shut our ears against anybody. It is only during pupilage that the student is required to obey the teacher not mechanically but by the method of progressive co-operating conviction. The association with evil-doers, that is so strongly condemned by the Scriptures, is to be understood in the similar rational sense. The objectionable form of association with evil can arise only when we identify ourselves with the evil. It is not always practicable nor desirable to avoid external association with evil. But it is always practicable and desirable to have a protesting or at any rate an indifferent attitude towards evil. One must not be a consenting associating party with evil. A person is not capable of being contaminated by mere external association with evil, although he may be living in this world where 'even the light is as darkness'. The attempt to avoid all association with evil by the mechanical method is only another form of association with evil. One, who is impure at heart but fastidious in his external conduct, is called in ordinary language a hypocrite, who is not less harmful and who is not to be less avoided than the downright professed scoundrel.

There need not be any unnecessary mystery about spiritual matters. Everything is not intelligible to everyone. It is necessary also to adopt a method that is neither unintelligible nor misleading to the hearer. But nothing need be kept a secret unless it is impossible to be divulged without producing serious and harmful misunderstanding. The *mantra* is not to be divulged to another person, because this is quite a personal matter. It is also quite proper and logical to have the principles of reserve and privacy in the realm of the soul. It is not necessary to abuse those principles for securing transitory and narrow interests, as we do in this world. They are capable of being used and should by all means be used, for serving the Truth. This will no doubt give a chance to the hypocrite and the pseudo-teachers of religion to befool their over-credulous victims; but it should befool nobody

who does not want to be befooled by their over-attachment to the bauble pleasures of this world.

The nature of those funeral rites, that are enjoined by the Scriptures, requires to be understood from the point of view of the service of Godhead. One's duty to one's parents does not cease with the death of the latter. This admission is not avoidable by those who recognise the claim of their parents to their duty in return of benefits received from them. The circle of such duties and benefits no doubt belong to the mundane plane. Death is the greatest calamity that may befall the relationship of parent and child. It severs the earthly connection between them. But does it really sever all connection? The elevationists do not believe it does. They suppose that the subtle body survives the death of the gross physical body. This subtle body has to be reborn after an interval during which it remains dissociated from the gross body. The subtle body embodies the principle of material enjoyment. But it does not obtain this enjoyment except through the gross body. The subtle body in the dissociated state, is called the *preta*. The funeral rites are intended for the benefit of the *preta*. This benefit, as understood by the elevationists (*smārtas*), consists in the rebirth of the *preta* in some other gross body. By such rebirth the *preta* is supposed to be delivered from his torments of the *preta* state. The salvationists on the other hand suppose that the *preta* is delivered if he is enabled to avoid rebirth in the gross body by merging in the Divinity. The Vaishnavas do not recognise any special duty to their forbears, for the reason that such duty is rendered to the material case which is wrongly identified by the elevationists and salvationists alike with the individual soul who is the person to whom all duties are really due. The individual soul is not served by any function that is intended for the amelioration of the gross or subtle material case. The Vaishnavas accordingly express their duty towards their forbears and all departed persons by making their offering at the Feet of Gadādhara.

At Gayā the round of the funeral ceremonies leads up to the worship of the Feet of Vishnu, as their consummation. This is the relation in which the *Smārta* ceremonies are intended by the

Scriptures to stand to the spiritual function proper. The Manes, *i.e.*, souls imprisoned in the subtle bodies, are benefited by their descendants' worship of the Feet of Gadādhara. The performance of funeral rites by Godhead Himself is not to be supposed a concession to elevationist or salvationist method or objective. The avoidance of the ceremonies, by those who do not worship the Feet of Gadādhara, is also not supported by the conduct of Sree Gaurāṅṅāra. What it is intended to signify, is that the *smārta* practice is the result of gratitude that is naturally felt by a person, who confounds himself with his physical cases, towards the forbears of those cases. One, who is in the deluded condition, need not be hypocritically ungrateful to his worldly parents till he has been really relieved from the state of ignorance. He would be delivered from his ignorance and all supposed obligations of that state, if he could attain to the pure service of the Feet of Vishnu. This desideratum is recognised by the arrangement for the performance of the *śrāddha* ceremonies at Gayā leading up to the worship of the Feet of Gadādhara. According to the dictum of the Scriptures a person, who desires to attain to the service of Godhead, should perform all duties enjoined by the custom of his society or preferably by the Veda in the way that is conducive to the attainment of the spiritual function. The *smārta* view is that the devotee of Godhead is also under equal obligation to appease the Manes by the performance of the *śrāddha* ceremonies. This is the reverse of the principle that is followed at Gayā in the due performance of the funeral rites. The Supreme Teacher recognised by His Conduct the justification of the elevationist and salvationist function for the social purpose, while pointing to the attainment of the service of Godhead as the objective towards which all activities should tend if they are to possess any positive value for the soul. If any portion of the funeral ritual is opposed to this end it is necessarily unacceptable to the Vaishnavas, for that reason.

The *ritual* of *dikshā* or initiation is liable to be similarly misunderstood. The *smārta* view of the ceremony is similar to their view of the funeral ritual. The *smārta* is anxious to provide for the needs of the gross and subtle physical cases. He deliberately

ignores the need of the soul, because that is opposed to the interests (?) of the physical cases as understood by the *smārtas*. The ceremony of *dikshā*, according to the *smārta* view, confers only on the Brāhmana by seminal birth the eligibility for the worship of Sree Nārāyana. Those, who are not Brāhmanas by seminal birth, are, according to this view, enabled by the process only to be born as Brāhmanas in their next birth; but it does not entitle them to worship Sree Nārāyana in their present life. The Brāhmana, who is eligible to worship Nārāyana or Godhead, is thus supposed to be the entity, *viz.*, the physical cases, that is born of mundane parents. But as a matter of fact the physical cases have no access to Vishnu and the process of *dikshā* cannot accordingly apply to them and for this reason *dikshā* is not a social but a spiritual function the nature of which is misunderstood by those so-called Brāhmanas who are anxious to retain intact their hereditary social privileges.

By seminal birth, on the contrary, everyone is made a *Sudra* who is the opposite of a Brāhmana. The seminal birth provides the physical cases by which the conditioned soul is made subject to the sufferings of this world, or, in other words, is made a *Sudra* which term literally means 'one who is subject to sorrow'. By the purificatory ceremony of *Upanayana*, or being conducted to the Guru for attaining to the knowledge (*Veda*) of one's relationship with Godhead (*dikshā*) in order to be enabled to serve Him on the spiritual plane, the *Sudra* is *re-born*, not as a physical or mental case but, as a soul or *student* of the *Veda*. This second birth is not seminal birth, because the pupil, who submits to the Guru, is not the physical body born of semen but the soul inhabiting the same. The substantive consciousness, that one is not the physical body but the soul inhabiting the body, can alone enable one to serve the Guru for obtaining the true knowledge of the function of his own proper self.

The ceremony of *Upanayana*, therefore, admits the necessity, on the part of the conditioned soul, of serving the Guru and represents the soul's act of appearing before the Guru in order to learn to serve Godhead. The ceremony of *dikshā* confers on the soul actual spiritual enlightenment. When the Guru is satis-

fied by the probationary test that the candidate for spiritual enlightenment possesses the genuine aptitude for service, he confers on him the knowledge of his relationship with Godhead which enables him to serve Godhead. By means of *dikshā* a person is thus born a *third* time. It is a case not of seminal birth, but of the completion of the probationary stage of the spiritual pupilage of the soul.

The purificatory process of *Upanayana* and *dikshā* are also proved to be necessarily open to all persons irrespective of seminal birth. The seminal birth can bestow only mundane aptitudes. The seminal birth cannot convey, or entitle one to, the spiritual nature. That, which conveys or entitles to the spiritual nature, is spiritual birth by *upanayana* and *dikshā*. There is real analogy but a difference of plane between the seminal and spiritual birth.

*Upanayana* is the process of being conducted to the Guru. This refers to the function of the *shikshā Guru*. The *shikshā Gurus* may be many, but the *dikshā Guru* is only one. The *shikshā Gurus* are the associated counterparts of the *dikshā Guru* who is the associated counterwhole of the Divinity Himself. There is thus only one *dikshā Guru* who is associated with his infinity of agents or limbs whose function is to lead the intending disciple to the *dikshā Guru*. The *dikshā Guru* may, indeed, be also the *shikshā Guru*, but not necessarily so. The distinction between the *shikshā Guru* and the *dikshā Guru* is one relating to their respective spiritual functions which do not involve any unwholesome implication of inferiority in the mundane sense. The *shikshā Guru* is, therefore, to be as much obeyed by the disciple as the *dikshā Guru* himself.

The function of *dikshā*, in its ritualistic aspect, consists of the process of imparting the *mantra* by the *dikshā Guru* which is spoken by him into the ear of the disciple without being allowed to be heard by any other person. It is the method of Truth communicating Himself to an individual soul in the Form of the Transcendental Sound Appearing on the lips of His devotee. The *mantra*, as we have explained elsewhere, is the Holy Name in the Form in which He is coupled with the process of self-dedication of an individual to the *Guru*. It is a specific matter that

delivers the particular individual from the grip of all mental delusion by making him throw himself on the protection of the Name under the exclusive direction of the *Guru*. The process of initiation is not a limited one. It is as much a continued process as the process of being helped by the *shikshā Guru* for approaching the *dikshā Guru*. No one of these processes is capable of terminating in a limited result. They are eternally co-present in a relation that is progressive but without being hampered by the unwholesome imperfection of the principle of limitation.

It has been necessary to explain the process of entry into the spiritual life in some detail for several reasons. A good deal of misconception has gathered round the issue. This misconception is responsible for the mushroom growth of an endless variety of pseudo-forms of the process that are being constantly manufactured by quacks and knaves for leading astray simpletons and rascals, by the offer of their support to diverse forms of pernicious worldly activities. It is not also easy to withstand the temptation of being misled by the appeal to the principle of pseudo-ethics manufactured by intellectualists for justifying a life of the sensualists paradis for belittling the spiritual issue which transcends the petty concerns of a nine days' existence. It is absolutely necessary to have this sense of perspective, if one is not to miss the only purpose for which the subject, treated in this work, has been offered to his unbiased and serious consideration.

Nothing is easier than to make a butt of ridicule of the concerns of the eternal life by the method of empiric buffoonery. There is an enormous literature, that is also alarmingly growing in volume by leaps and bounds, which has been deliberately seeking to dissuade the limited mind from any thought of the Absolute by covering, with their flimsy ridicule, all transcendental claims of religion. Such effusions may have been partly called forth by the somewhat natural re-action against the practices of the pseudo-religionists who unfortunately abound all over the world. They also serve the salutary purpose of checking the quarrels of the quacks and hypocritical followers of the different religious persuasions. But the warfare, that is waged by atheism against the forms of pseudo-religion, is also itself part and parcel of the

opera show of our deluded existence. The history of the doings of man is full of instructive episodes in a short chapter of a real tragedy of errors which we are gravely asked to regard as the progressive march of an ethical civilization towards increasing perfection. The reader has had enough experience of regarding the doings of the performers on the worldly stage from this supposed optimistic and universally advertised promising point of view. It is not our business here to offer him more of the same familiar commodity.

The real transcendental point of view is condemned by empiricists of all countries, with the exception of India and of those lands which have received their creeds from her, as being the hallucinative product of a sterile pessimism born of a decadent material civilization fretting over the solid achievements of successful rivals. India, which is the cradle and chosen land of the hankering for the realisation of the transcendental existence, presents the spectacle of the continuing attempt to treat social issues by the Scriptural method by refusing to admit the absolute value of mundane interests. No school of Indian philosophy professes to value social activity divorced from the spiritual purpose. The difficulty in this country is due not to the absence of traditional opinion in favour of the endeavour after the realisation of the transcendental existence, as distinguished from the mundane, but to the misunderstanding and misrepresentation, by different schools of misguided exponents, of the nature of the spiritual function itself. Whereas in those countries, which are proud of possessing a social organisation that is not 'priest-ridden' and aims frankly at the multiplication and 'improvement' of the opportunities of sensuous enjoyment and the hopeless 'amelioration' of the inevitable consequences of the unhampered pursuit of this optimistic course, the difficulty is due to the absence of all traditional hankering for the attainment of the spiritual state. This last difficulty is infinitely increased by the misrepresentations of the whole body of empiric literature which is never tired of harping *ad nauseam* on the congenial theme of the glories of this mundane existence and holds up its nose in indignant scorn and contempt if the soundness of its wretched point of view is chal-

lenged by straight talk which it affects to invite so vehemently on its own side.

It is not our purpose merely to condemn the activities of this world. We should really try to understand the nature of our proper relationship with them. We should not be willing to be satisfied with any hypothetical views on this all-important subject. We should not be violent lovers of the worldly sojourn without reservation, nor should we be prepared to desire its perpetuation as it is and as it is proposed to be made by those who derive their knowledge and wisdom from their experience of this world and apply them solely for further elaboration of our worldly activities on their present lines. We should long for an unobstructed vision of the Absolute Truth and believe in the possibility of the attainment of such vision, and to adjust our activities during this worldly sojourn to the requirements of our real and whole position revealed by the knowledge of the Absolute Truth. We should be disposed to regard the attitude, that is content to be satisfied with less than the Absolute Truth, as one of insidious and unpardonable revolt against the Absolute Truth. The present Narrative offers a Career That is wholly devoted to the service of the Absolute Truth. We are disposed to consider a pragmatist, if he does not possess the supreme regard due to the devotee of the Absolute Truth, as no better than a dangerous cheat and a sensuous hypocrite who wants only to indulge his aptitude for untruth under the guise of a mock concern for the Truth. We, therefore, claim to be neither pessimists nor optimists in the sense in which the contending factions of the empiric sages array themselves under their respective worldly banners. We should share their furious interest on behalf of the worldly life. We only invite our readers to lend their receptive ear to the narration of the actual Conduct of Nimāi Pandit, as He manifested Himself to this world, after He had received spiritual enlightenment by unconditional submission to the feet of the *bona fide* spiritual Guide. By the process of *dikshā*, with the intention of trying to enter the spirit of the same from the point of view of the Narrative itself that has been handed down by the succession of the spiritual teachers.

The boon for which Nimāi Pandit prayed to Sree Iswara Puri, was love for Krishna. He surrendered to Sree Iswara Puri His Body and Mind unconditionally for the attainment of the above purpose. When one obtains the actual sight of the *bona fide* Spiritual Guide, that is of the real exclusive servant of the Absolute, by the Grace of Godhead, the duty, that he has to perform on his side, is to make the unconditional surrender of himself to the Feet of the *bona fide* Agent of the Absolute. This is the logical and consistent course but is impossible of realization in practice except by Divine Grace.

If the complete surrender to the Guru is made the spiritual *mantra* reveals himself to the disciple. It is now our task to trace the growth of this loving devotion in Nimāi Pandit. But as we proceed to do so we must bear in mind the fact that Nimāi Pandit was, indeed, no other than the Lord Himself. This is noticeable in the manner of Sree Iswara Puri towards his Disciple. He says that when he looks at Nimāi Pandit he obtains the bliss of beholding Krishna Himself. The Vaishnava Guru does not regard any one as his disciple; but he does not, therefore, think that his disciples are Krishna Himself. The Vaishnava Guru regards his disciples as his Gurus and himself as their disciple. The Vaishnava Guru regards his disciples as his Gurus for the reason that as servants of his Lord they are really his Gurus. The disciple, who is under agreement to serve the Lord, becomes, by that very agreement, in the estimation of the Guru to whom he is bound by the agreement, the servant of the Lord Who is served by the Guru, and, therefore, his Guru. Iswara Puri would have been justified in addressing Nimāi Pandit as his Guru after Nimāi Pandit had agreed to become the Servant of Krishna. But he did not call his Disciple his Guru but said He was Krishna Himself. This shows the real state of things as realised by Sree Iswara Puri. It is really the Lord Who gave the boon of His Mercy to Iswara Puri under the guise of receiving initiation from His Guru.

Unless this point is properly grasped there will be difficulty in following the subsequent developments. Sree Iswara Puri belonged to the communion of Sree Madhvachāryya. Initiation at

the hands of Sree Iswara Puri marks the entry of Nimāi Pandit into the Mādhva Community. It was certainly not incumbent on the Lord to enrol Himself under the banner of Madhva. This would prevent Him, according to usage, from breaking away from the tenets of a particular Community. It is well known that Sree Madhva did not teach the service of Sree Sree Rādhā-Govinda which was preached and practised by Nimāi Pandit. There is thus only connection but not identity of teaching between Sree Chaitanya and Sree Madhva. Sree Mādhhabendra Puri, the Guru of Sree Iswara Puri, was the first of the Āchāryyas to manifest his inclination, in an elementary form, for the worship of Krishna as his Consort. In this respect he stands alone among the followers of Sree Madhva. For this reason the followers of Sree Chaitanya regard Sree Mādhhabendra Puri as the germinating seed of the tree of loving devotion that was manifested to the world in its fully developed form by Sree Chaitanya.

These points of contact and difference will be dealt with more fully as we have occasion to examine, in the following pages, the details of the devotional developments of Nimāi Pandit. The Lord accepted initiation from Sree Iswara Puri in order to satisfy the requirement of the scriptures that the *mantra* cannot be efficacious except within the spiritual communion. In other words spiritual activity is not a wholly individualistic affair. We have seen above that the *mantra* concerns the individual as regards its reception and practice of recital. But at the same time the *mantra* withdraws the individual spiritually from the society of those who are uninitiated. If the individual continues his affinity with the uninitiated after his initiation in ways that are adverse to his newly-formed spiritual connection, the *mantra* loses all its efficacy. This implies, and is a corollary from, the exclusive nature of the service of the Absolute and also lays down the nature of spiritual relationship among the servants of Godhead, which is categorically different from what prevails in the society of those who do not consciously serve the Divinity. It was in order to observe this fundamental condition of entry into the spiritual sphere, laid down in the Scriptures, that Nimāi Pandit went through the form of spiritual initiation at the hands of Sree



Iswara Puri who belonged to one of the four theistic communities recognised by the Scriptures. The New Dispensation does not, therefore, claim that it is altogether New. It does not belie but on the contrary only fulfils the requirements of the Scriptures in the most effective manner. The Scriptures had announced that the New Dispensation for the Iron Age will be given by the Lord Himself and that the form of worship, that will be thus established, will be the congregational chant (*samkirtana*). There was, therefore, sufficient Scriptural authorisation for the establishment of the New Worship without reference to the existing theistic communities who possessed apparently somewhat different methods of worship. But the New Dispensation was to be accomplished, and could be accomplished, according to the Scriptures and in no other way than by the recognition of the necessity of initiation into one of the authorised theistic communions. The Lord subsequently took the trouble of bringing about the spiritual reconciliation of the apparent differences of the four Vaishnava Communities, by giving to the world the complete explanation of the function of the soul revealed by the Scriptures. The Teachings of Sree Chaitanya in fact gathered up those of the former Āchāryyas in a Scriptural Synthesis of a supremely higher order. His full interpretation of the service of Sree Sree Rādhā-Govinda, Embodied in His Career, is not identical with the teaching or practice of any of the four Vaishnava Āchāryyas, but the further and complete working out of the fundamentals of the teachings of all of them has been one of its inevitable achievements.

That the *mantra*, which had been received by Nimāi Pandit from Sree Iswara Puri who had got it from Sree Mādhābendra Puri, was to bear fruit in an ample measure, did not take a long time to manifest itself. Shortly after His Initiation, as Nimāi Pandit was one day engaged in meditating of the *mantra* in His privacy, the impulse of loving devotion, which had been gathering strength, burst through all restraints and showed itself in unique external manifestations. The Lord was heard to be crying with a loud Voice in the act of reciting certain verses from the Scriptures, the import of which is as follows,—‘Oh Krishna! Oh My

Darling! Sree Hari, My Life! Oh, whither hast Thou gone after stealing My Heart? I, indeed, got My Lord;—but where is He gone?’

The Lord went on crying and reciting these verses and rolling on the ground till His Whole Beautiful Frame became gray with the dust, while He was thus immersed in the liquid bliss of loving devotion. The Lord, indeed, cried at the top of His Voice, in the pang of a Deep Agony, ‘Whither, Darling Krishna art Thou gone thus abandoning Me?’ His great restlessness under the impulse of loving devotion appeared all the more strange as the Lord had formerly been distinguished by the quality of His extreme reserve on the subject of religion. The Lord rolled on the ground and cried aloud. He was adrift on the ocean of loving separation from Himself.

This gradually brought all His pupils to the spot who succeeded, after prolonged endeavours, with the greatest tenderness and loving care, in restoring Him to His normal condition. But the Lord did not change His Purpose. He now proposed to His students that they should at once return to their homes. He was resolved on His Part not to enter the world again. He was resolved to go to Mathurā to find Krishna, the Lord of His Life. All the students appealed to Him, by every possible method, to persuade Him to be calm. But the Lord of Vaikunṭha, deeply immersed in the *rasa* (mellowing liquid) of devotion, could find no rest in His Heart under His great anxiety and did not know where to stay. In this condition the Lord, without the knowledge of any of His associates, set out for Mathurā, by the impulse of love for Krishna, towards the closing hours of night on one of these days. He moved forward on the road with the piteous cry, ‘Oh Krishna! Oh My Darling! Where shall I find Thee?’ When He had proceeded a certain distance in this manner the Lord heard a celestial voice saying, ‘Jewel of the twice-born, forbear to go to Mathurā for the present. There will come the proper time for going there. Thou wilt go there when the time will arrive. Retrace Thy Steps Home to Nabadwip for the present. Thou art the Lord of Sree Vaikunṭha. Thou hast appeared in the world for the deliverance of the people, with all

Thy Own. Thou wilt freely give away the treasure of loving devotion to the world by performing the *kirtana* through the infinity of the worlds. Thou has appeared in the world to give away to its denizens the good, by whose mellow quality Brahmā, Shiva, Sanāka and their associates, are distracted with joy and which is sung by the Great Lord Ananta Himself. This is known to Thyself. We are Thy servants and we speak as Thou Desirest. Therefore, have we made this submission at Thy Feet. Thou art Providence Himself. Thou art the Master. What Thou wilt is never thwarted by opposition. Therefore Supreme Lord, may Thou be pleased to return to Thy Home. May Thou come again to see the town of Mathurā after a time.' On hearing the Voice from Heaven Sree Gaurāṅḍar was persuaded to retrace His Steps with a glad Heart. Coming back to His lodging, the Lord prepared to return Home with all His disciples with the purpose of making manifest to the world the function of loving devotion to Krishna.

The reader is introduced with staggering suddenness into an atmosphere which is not at all familiar to him in his normal mundane existence. If he is disposed to exercise his judgment at all he might be inclined to suppose the exhibition of love for Krishna as the effect of a strong emotion on a naturally and extraordinarily sanguine temperament. But he is at once assured by Thākura Brindāvandās that prior to His Initiation Nimāi Pandit did not wear His Heart on His sleeves. He was, on the contrary, possessed of a depth of reserve that baffled all penetration. This is the description of an unusually balanced temperament. It also fully accords with the respect and dread with which, as a Professor, Nimāi Pandit was universally regarded by His fellow townsmen. His Fame as Professor had not remained confined to Nabadwip. The leading Professor of Nabadwip was at that time, as now, the greatest savant of the whole country. All this implies neither a morbid sentimentalism nor the lack of a balanced intellect.

Attempts have been made on the testimony of nobody but by most illogical inference from the events of His subsequent Career regarded from the dishonest sceptic's point of view, to give publi-

city to the opinion that Nimāi Pandit was never a particularly brilliant scholar. He was only the teacher of Vyakarana which has been described by one of His associates, who became subsequently His devotee, as a subject of study fit for children. This, it has been supposed, proves that Nimāi Pandit was not a great scholar. But this view does not take into consideration the testimony of the earliest accounts of His Career which informs us that He was the greatest scholar of Nabadwip of His time and in all branches of knowledge. They are also careful to inform us that it was His Favourite Pastime to go about the streets in the company of His pupils challenging every one to learned controversy with Him in any branch of study. The work of Thākura Brindāvandās was written within less than forty years of the Disappearance of the Lord. We find that the Lord met and defeated in open controversy all the scholars of all parts of India. This could not be regarded as even an *exaggerated* account of the *neurotic* performance of a mad sentimentalist. Those, who are at all acquainted with the nature of theological controversies in India, should be aware that it is no child's play to defeat an Indian Pandit in open controversy in His subject.

But there is far more convincing proof of His perfect rational sanity than all this. The theological system, which is the Teaching of Sree Chaitanya, remains intact to this day. Some indications of its nature have already been available to the reader of the foregoing pages of this Narrative. It is for the reader to judge whether they constitute a revolutionary and unparalleled advance on every system of every school that has been prevalent in the world before or since His time. But that, which has been placed before the reader, is only that infinitesimally small portion that bears to be conveyed in the defective vocabulary that is at our disposal for the purpose. No vocabulary of this world can touch even the outermost fringe of the Absolute Truth Whose Complete Face is presented by the Career of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya, the Absolute Himself, in the Agony of an endless striving for beholding Himself as He really is.

The difficulty, that the worldling has to overcome in order to be won to a rational faith in the Transcendental Nature of

the Absolute, is that he is made by all his cherished habits of education and association to believe implicitly in the testimony of his senses. When Nimāi Pandit is found by one's eyes to be no more than a human being like oneself, it should be impossible to be won over by mere theological arguments to a stable conviction of His Transcendental Nature. It would be still less possible to believe in His Divinity by the same method.

This natural disinclination to believe in His Transcendence would not be diminished by the closest possible scrutiny of His Career from the confirmed empiric point of view. The ordinary empiric attitude is to expect to find transcendence in the form that must wholly bewilder the understanding by the manner of a miracle. If Nimāi Pandit possesses a Body which can be touched by my hands, seen by my eyes, how can such Body be regarded as something really extraordinary? Nothing mundane is ordinarily expected to be found in the mundane sense in the truly transcendental. Should, not, therefore, Nimāi Pandit if He is really transcendental, have nothing in common with us according to mundane expectation?

The reply to such questions has already been given more than once in the course of this Narrative. Transcendence does not mean the denial of the mundane. It simply means that the transcendent is inconceivable to our present understanding. For example it was inconceivable to His contemporaries that Nimāi Pandit is really a transcendental person. This is quite in conformity with the peculiar characteristic of transcendence. It need not obey, it is sure to belie, all expectations of its mundane observers. No imagining on the part of the empiricists, by the negative method of analysis of mundane experience, can enable him to get to the real plane of transcendence. It is only by the mercy of the latter that he can have any access to him. Transcendence reserves the right of showing, or not showing, himself to the mundane spectator. He refuses to disclose his nature to one who does not desire to serve the Truth. This is not at all unreasonable, as we all recognise the paramount duty of serving the Truth in order to be enabled to realise our own proper nature by reference to the Truth.

The theory of miracle, in the sense in which the term is ordinarily supposed to stand for a transcendental occurrence, must be wholly discarded if we are to be enabled to approach the subject of transcendence in the truly scientific way. The power of performing miracles, in the ordinary sense of that term, cannot and need not be attributed to the Divinity. The Transcendence of Godhead consists in this that He does not require any extraneous proof of His Divinity to maintain His Transcendence. He is everything without being anything. This is the Real Nature of His Transcendence. Godhead has been accordingly described in the Bhāgavata as possessing a Medium Form. In other words there is *prima facie* nothing extraordinary at all about Godhead as He really is. This is the proof of His Supreme Freedom from all form and convention. The Divinity is also declared to have a Specific Form of His own *Who is like the human*. This is not proved to be untrue for the reason that it is nothing apparently extraordinary to the judgment of man. The Human Form of the Divinity is not the human form of non-Divine man. Sree Krishna is free from all limiting connotations of the term 'man' and is at the same time Human in a manner that is inconceivable to man himself.

Such a view no doubt provides a capital opportunity for cheats and hypocrites to come forward as the Avatāras of Godhead, an opportunity that has not also failed to be exploited in the most shameless way, specially in this country. But the exhibition of such monstrous wickedness by all the sinners of this world, will be no palliative for the error of those who are, with equal hypocrisy, thereby led to hold to any belief which they know very well to be radically opposed to their own basic conception of the Nature of the Divinity. No hypocrisy, not even that of the most subtle kind, is naturally permitted to trespass into the Realm of the Absolute, for the simple reason that it happens to be a revolt against the service of the Truth as He is.

Nimāi Pandit cries like a mad-man for Sree Krishna. He does nothing else, but always longs for the sight of Krishna. Who then is this Nimāi Pandit and Who also is this Sree Krishna

to Whom He realises Himself to be so exclusively attached by love?

We have to turn to the Bhāgavata for understanding the meaning of this Extraordinary Conduct. The *shlokas*, which Nimāi Pandit was reciting as he wept loudly in His Agony of Separation from Krishna, are to be found in the Bhāgavata. Krishna is leaving for Mathurā. The *shlokas* express the grief of the milkmaids on that occasion. It is on the plane of Braja that Nimāi Pandit finds Himself in consequence of His Initiation. He is turned into a denizen of Braja. That is now His real plane, while this world only serves to increase His Sense of Separation from Krishna. In order to enable the reader to avoid any gross misunderstanding of the nature of the spiritual function itself, manifested in the Activities of Nimāi Pandit from this time, we shall try to set forth in the next chapter a few additional considerations towards the elucidation of His Conduct as Devotee of Krishna.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### HIS INITIATION AND AFTER

THE method of service by the mood of separation is the distinctive feature, the differentia as it were, of the religion of pure devotion that is exhibited by the Conduct of Nimāi Pandit after His Initiation. It is this which makes the religion of pure devotion the antipode of the worship (?) of Material Energy by the mood of enjoyment represented by the gross type of the Shākta Cult. The worship of Godhead, being located on the transcendental plane, cannot be practised in its positive or substantive form on the material plane.

But neither is the spiritual function performed by the method of abstention from material enjoyment. The method of abstention is a radically unnatural, hypocritical and pessimistic attitude. Why should a person abstain from the ordinary activities of this world? If one loses any organ of sense should it be regarded as any cause for congratulation in itself? Any deliberate attempt to be deprived of the functions of all the senses, cannot be supposed, for the same reason, to be either desirable or equivalent to any positive function on the transcendental plane. Moreover the process itself of being deprived of one's senses is really impracticable. Any offence against Physical Nature is automatically punished by an equally violent re-action. Nature always takes her revenge.

The sensuous aptitude is the natural condition for the physical body under the direction of the mind which is dependent on the sense-organs for all its activities. This is the fact. The world is not an illusion, to be got rid of by the mere desire of any person. Those, who believe in the philosophy of illusion and the omnipotence of the mind, fall thereby only more deeply into the clutches of the sensuous nature. The victims of cynicism may not be