

interest in as much as the politically important activities in the career of Sree Krishna belong to a later period. But from the point of view of religious history, the story of the marvellous Boyhood of Krishna is all-important and demands our most careful consideration.

The *Mahābhārata* deals exclusively with the Doings of Krishna as King of Dwārakā and Ruler of the Yādavas. But the mighty Deeds of Krishna recorded in the *Mahābhārata* form no part of the worship of Sree Sree Rādhā-Govinda, which is the subject-matter of the present work. Bhāndārkar, in his anxiety to redeem the worship of Krishna from the charge of immorality, might prefer the worship of the wedded Husband of Rukmini to that of Sree Sree Rādhā-Krishna. But the *Bhāgavatam* makes the Pastimes of Brindāvana the heart and kernel of the whole narrative of its deeds of Krishna as the Divinity, and it is this which supplies all the materials for the prevalent worship of Sree Sree Rādhā-Govinda. The political Krishna occupies but a secondary position, if even that, in the sphere of worship.

The narrative of the *Bhāgavatam* so far as it covers the same ground as the *Mahābhārata* does not differ materially from the story told by the Epic. But the interpretation and point of view of the *Bhāgavatam* is throughout explicitly different from that of the *Mahābhārata* even in its treatment of those events that are common to the two works. The later date of the appearance of the *Bhāgavatam*, together with the new perspective adopted and the prominence given in it to the Boyhood of Krishna, has given rise to the doubts regarding the authenticity of its story of the Boyhood of Krishna, which is, however, also found in several other Purānas of an admittedly more ancient date.

Sectarian manipulation of history is assumed to be responsible for difference of version in the treatment of even historical events that are connected with the origin and growth of creeds. Theologians are supposed to be often ready to be unmindful of any version that may appear to them to be opposed to the tenets of the creed that they happen to profess. The *Bhāgavatam*, judged by this canon, has appeared to certain scholars as being less reliable, in the considered historical sense, than the Great Epic. This view is also supposed to cut at the root of the reality of the

II. THE REAL NATURE OF SREE KRISHNA

THE historical aspect of Sree Krishna need not be considered as irrelevant or mundane. The Absolute is always no other than Himself. Antiquarian speculations regarding the historicity of Sree Krishna have thus, inconceivably to us, an intimate bearing on the question of the real Nature of the Absolute. The scheme of ancient History of India that is being worked out by the researches of learned scholars has not yet been conclusively settled in regard to the lay affairs of that remote period which may have witnessed the Great War that is reported to have been fought out on the plains of Kurukshetra between the Kurus and the Pāndavas backed by their respective allies. But the time is not far distant when it will be practicable to avoid prejudices and misunderstandings that at present prevent our approaching that great event in the proper spirit. The Purānas are steadily winning the confidence of the most hostile critics and the actual occurrence of the Great War is coming to be recognised, on the authority of the Purānas, as having taken place at a period which is not very far from 3000 B.C. The narration of the *Mahābhārata* may now be seriously accepted as providing a tentative basis for the historical career of Sree Krishna. The *Harivamsa*, which forms the supplement of the Great Epic, is not opposed to the *Mahābhārata* either in the spirit or in the so-called assumptions regarding particulars of the career of Sree Krishna that do not appear in the Great Epic.

The difficulty in regard to the *Bhāgavatam* has also become susceptible of historical handling. If that great Purāna was actually composed in the ninth century A.D., as seems not very improbable, it should still be historically possible to accept its testimony regarding even the events of the Boyhood of Krishna. But from the lay point of view, this question is not of absorbing

religion itself. The issue regarding religion may be put thus: Did the Pastimes of Krishna at Brindābana manifest themselves on the mundane plane at any period in the ordinary historical sense?

The answer should be, even from the historical point of view, partly, in the affirmative and negative. The *Bhāgavatam* is regarded by the Absolutists as being both a work of the mediæval period as well as the very Body of the eternally existing Truth Himself. The argument, *viz.*, that as it happens to belong to the mediæval period it cannot also at the same time be eternal that is without any origin, is inapplicable to the *Bhāgavatam*. The case is exactly the same with the *Brindābana* Pastimes. They are also regarded to be eternally true. They are at the same time claimed to be historically true. But they are not claimed to be merely historical events. They are, therefore, claimed to be as being both old and new, or neither. They are not regarded as limitable by the mundane categories.

It, therefore, becomes necessary to widen the scope of the historical method itself in order to treat such a subject with any principle of consistency. The adherence to the scheme of gradual evolution of the creed has to be got rid of. The test of contemporary evidence as proof of authenticity should be found to be even more misleading for this particular purpose than it always is ordinarily.

What is the reality of the degree of validity of contemporary evidence in the ascertainment of the Truth? I record my opinion regarding a certain phenomenon actually occurring before my very eyes. The statement is made up of the narration of the occurrence and my individual opinion regarding its nature and other particulars that I may suppose have a bearing on it. The narrative portion is separated from opinion by the critics, and is accepted in that unexplained form as historically true. If Krishna actually passed His Divine Boyhood in *Brindābana* and performed at that place all the miracles before the very eyes of all the people, the older narrative of the *Mahābhārata*, it is argued, should have also been cognizant of the same. If those miracles had been the most important of all the Activities of Krishna, Who is the Hero of the Epic, they could not have been altogether omitted by the writer

of the Great Epic as they must have been actual and well-known occurrences. Such argument, although legitimate within its due limits in the case of mundane events, does not apply without a good deal of modification to the Pastimes of the Divinity.

It is an option of the servants of Krishna, which they are not loth to exercise, to divulge His Activities, or keep Them concealed from the knowledge even of contemporaries. Those activities possess the special quality of being recognised as true in the real and not merely historical sense, as soon as, and whenever, they are so divulged to the unerring consciousness of the pure individual soul. On the other hand, the reality is impossible of being ever "discovered" by the empiric historical method.

The Absolute chooses to present His deluding face to the sense-perception of man. His deluding energy is all-powerful and is able to prevent the search and discovery of the Truth, for Whose service, however, every individual soul has an imperative necessity. The tentative categories of the mundane Logicians are no other than fetters of the deluding Energy that tend to produce the strange belief that the transitory and limited are necessarily also true. It is this undoubted "fact" that vitiates the current short-sighted "historical" method at its source. The reality of the Ocean is neither proved nor disproved by the admission or denial of the ignorant dweller of the Taklamakan Desert. Such admission or such denial is equally abortive and wide of the mark if the observer has no knowledge of his subject. The issue itself as regards the Truth does not exist for the pedant of the waterless desert of the narrow and closely barriered Hinterland of Empiricism.

What value for instance are we to attach to such "historical" finding as this, *viz.*, that the teaching of Sree Chaitanya was the cause of the political downfall of Orissa? Sree Chaitanya teaches that the Absolute is served by all conditions, beings and events, either consciously or unconsciously as regards the agents themselves. The decline as well as the rise of empires and worlds serves equally in their tiny ways the uncompassable Absolute. As soon as their relation of service to the Absolute is grasped by the agents, the real consciousness of the Truth is produced in the humble agent. So long as the Absolute continues

to be pedantically regarded as a part of Physical Nature, as cause or effect, there is no consciousness at all even of the issue itself of the real Truth. Sree Chaitanya and His Activities belong to the plane of the Absolute. The empiric historian, with his geographical and chronological apparatus of observation, can have really no proper idea of the grotesque anomaly that he unconsciously perpetrates by his pedantic effort to gauze the Absolute by the standard supplied to her victim by His deluding Energy in the form of the mundane categories that can only limit and define, whereas the function that is required to be performed is to get rid of the necessity of having to do either.

If Srimad *Bhāgawatam*, which professes to treat of the Absolute, is considered to be an object of this phenomenal world, how can it possibly impart to a person who chooses to entertain such illogical thought, any knowledge of its contents? The recipient of the consciousness of the Absolute as well as the communicant of such consciousness must alike belong to the plane of the Absolute consciousness. The empiric consciousness is not in the plane of the Absolute consciousness at all. It can only bungle and commit a deliberate blunder by attempting to limit and define the immeasurable and undefinable under the plea of a necessity that need not be supposed to exist at all.

It is possible, if the limitations of the mental equipment are fully remembered and allowed for, for a person desirous of treating the subject on the plane of the Absolute to write the cautious narrative of the Activities of Godhead in the limited vocabulary, without falling wholly into the deliberate blunders of dogmatic empiricism. The revealed Scriptures belong to the class of such authentic records regarding the Absolute. They need not be produced at the time of appearance of the events on the mundane plane to be historically acceptable as conveying the direct or first-hand testimony of those occurrences. They are quite independent of the conditions which the mind of the empiric historian finds it impossible to shake off and which make it impossible for him to conceive of the possibility of spiritual occurrences.

Therefore, empiric speculations regarding the so-called "historicity" of a spiritual event instead of establishing its genuineness, only serve to display the utter insufficiency of the empirical

historical method itself for the purpose of the treatment of the history of the Absolute.

For example, the complaint of the empiric scholar, that it is not possible to set forth the nature of the development of spiritual life in India for lack of definite chronology which renders a scientific classification of the original works treating of Indian religion impossible, however plausible in itself it may appear to be at first sight, is, in the light of the foregoing discussion, at once found to be after all only the result of a wholly deluded attitude towards the Absolute Himself. As if the development of spiritual life is capable of being measured by the process of so-called mundane evolution based on the chronological sequence of mundane occurrences!

Our contention is not that the Pastimes of Sree Krishna are historical events but that they are a revelation of the Truth in the form of historical events. The Pastimes of Sree Krishna are not, therefore, less true than any historical events whatsoever. They are much more. All the historical events of this world will be enabled to disclose the real elements of the Truth that they represent only when they would be set forth in their proper relationship to the only eternal Verity, *viz.*, the Pastimes of Krishna. It is the historical events and the canons of historical judgment that require to be brought into tune with the Truth, Who is no other than Krishna. But the empiric historian does the exact opposite of this. He assumes the truth of historical events and his canons of historical judgment as the standard to which the Pastimes of Krishna are to conform for the realisation of any element of the Truth that they may contain!

The whole difficulty is ultimately due to the muddled way of thinking favoured by the empiricists that supposes itself to be self-sufficient for the purpose of finding the Truth. It is empiricism that requires to be made properly conscious of its limitations and to be forced into a serious consideration of the nature of the Truth Whom it professes in and out of season to be so willing to serve. Once the nature of the Truth is taken into our serious consideration, the inconclusiveness of the cult of historicity should be perfectly plain to every impartial thinker. Further anxious consideration of the subject should enable the empiric method to

be limited to its proper scope and by such limited employment to be enabled to serve the quest of the Unlimited.

As soon as the mind is directed to the question of the Nature of the Truth, it is enabled by Truth Himself to understand the otherwise inexplicable postulations of the spiritual Scriptures that it is necessary to obey in order to attain to the plane of the real quest of the Truth. Every circumstance even of this world will then be found to be a help in the realisation of the Truth, and nothing will be found to be a hindrance. The only hindrance, as a matter of fact, is the empiric attitude itself. By the empiric attitude one is led to launch out on the quest of the Absolute Truth with the resources of admittedly utter ignorance. This fool-hardiness must be made to cease. The method of submissive enquiry enjoined by the Scriptures should be substituted after being properly learnt from those who have themselves attained to the right knowledge of the same by the proper method of submission. It is only after one has actually obtained the vision of the Truth, Whose face is so completely hid from the sight of the empiric thinker, that one can, under the guidance of the Truth Himself, set out on the quest of the Truth with any chance of finding Him and proclaiming Him to others.

So, although the method that has been employed throughout this narrative may appear to be inconsistent with the demands of the blind empiric judgment, the reader is requested for the very much more weighty reasons set forth above to lend his listening ear to an attempt to apply the methods of the revealed Scriptures for the purpose of describing the real Nature of Krishna and His Pastimes, in pursuance of the mercy of the authorised Teachers, on the ground that the method is the only one that claims to be applicable to the subject of the Absolute.

As the working knowledge of the Nature of Sree Krishna is the starting point of the search of the Truth, it is my purpose in this chapter to present the reader with a summary of the traditional account of the real Nature of Sree Krishna, which is revealed by the Scriptures of all Ages and countries in more or less explicit forms.

The outline of the history of Sree Krishna as told in the *Bhāgavatam*, which may be accepted as the only authentic account

for our purposes, is as follows. At the close of the cycle known as *Dwāpara* Krishna manifested His Appearance in Bhāratabarsha. He was born at Mathurā. He was the Son of Vasudeva. His mother was Devaki, the sister of King Kamsa of the race of the Bhojas. Apprehending harm to himself from the Issue of Vasudeva and Devaki, Kamsa, that unworthy scion of the Bhojas, had cast the immaculate couple into the royal prison which was most closely guarded. As they passed their days inside the prison of Kamsa six sons were born in succession to Vasudeva and Devaki. All of them were killed in their infancy by the cruel and fearful Kamsa. Sree Balarāma was born as their seventh issue. He was transferred to the keeping of Rohini in Braja as foster-mother, the report being circulated that there had been miscarriage at childbirth. Godhead Himself was the eighth issue of Vasudeva and Devaki. He was conveyed by Vasudeva to the home of Nanda in Braja, whose wife Yasodā had just then given birth to a daughter. Sree Krishna was left to the care of Nanda and Yasodā in Braja and their daughter was brought to Kamsa's prison and exhibited as the eighth issue of Devaki.

Meanwhile Sree Krishna was growing up in Braja in the company of His brother, Rāma. Putanā, an adept in slaughtering infants, was deputed by Kamsa to kill Krishna under the pretence of giving Him suck by the profession of motherly affection. Putanā was killed by the halo of the power of the Infant Krishna. The casuistical demon Trināvarta was slain. The cart for conveyance of their baggages under which Krishna had been put to bed by His parents was smashed by the kicks of the Divine Infant. He showed his mother, by opening His mouth, that the whole world was accommodated therein. He made her see that nescience served to foster love for the power of the Truth. The Infant displayed much juvenile ignorance that was promotive of love for Himself, the True Cognition. Noting the waywardness of her child the matronly milk-maid, embodying the most exquisite degree of serving zeal, bethought of binding Krishna by means of hempen cords; but in vain. But the Incompassable at last submitted to be bound by the exclusive love of the affectionate Mistress of Nanda's home. Krishna broke the twin *Arjuna* trees in course of His childish sports, releasing the sons of a god who had been

reduced to that pitiable condition. Even the gods are liable to lapse into the senseless condition of trees by addiction to evil deeds; and even trees are enabled to regain the spiritual condition by the influence of accidental association with the pure-hearted.

Krishna goes into the forest with His chums for pasturing the calves. There He slays the demon Batsāsura who represents the offences of boyhood. It is now that religious hypocrisy in the form of Bakāsura brought up by Kamsa, is also killed by Krishna of pure understanding. Aghāsura also is slain. He is the embodiment of the principle of cruelty. Thereupon Krishna dined out in the open on the banks of the Yamunā in the company of His chums. The four-faced Brahmā stole the calves and the cowboys. The orderer of the phenomenal world was thereupon deluded by the power of Krishna. By this episode the complete supremacy of the immaculate Sweetness of Sree Krishna over every other principle, was demonstrated. Krishna, the Beloved of the realm of the perfect cognition, is not subject to any regulative restrictions. This also was established. The opulence of Krishna suffers no curtailment even by the total destruction of all spiritual and non-spiritual realms. No one is able to set bounds to the incompassable ocean of the Power of Krishna. The evil-minded Dhenukāsura, the ass of blunt judgment, was destroyed by Baladeva, the principle of the pure individual soul. The serpent Kāliya, the self of crookedness and malice, polluted the waters of the Yamunā, the mellow liquid of the spiritual principle. This wicked demon was thereupon slain by Hari. When the wild forest-fire, the evil of internal faction within the community, burst forth in all its destructive fury, Sree Krishna in Person swallowed it up. Thus the Lord is ever solicitous of the well-being of Braja. Then Rāma killed the demon Pralamba, the thief in disguise who was sent by Kamsa for stealing the children.

And when the sky began to be surcharged with the love-laden clouds heralding the advent of the showery season, the milk-maids of Braja, who are loved by Krishna and are by their nature of a loving disposition, felt intoxicated by singing the Praises of Krishna. They were deeply stirred by the strains of Krishna's flute. They now worshipped Yogamāyā, who effects the union of the individual soul with Krishna, with the desire of gaining

Krishna as their Lover. Those who are possessed of a strong desire to serve Krishna find that there is no adjustment regarding themselves or their relation with others that is necessary for the purpose, of which they need feel ashamed. They are no longer disposed to conceal their minds. Krishna stole away the clothes of those milk-maids at their bath to disclose the perfectly nude state which is the immaculate sporting ground of Divine love. Sree Krishna feeling hungry begged for food that had been prepared for offering at the sacrificial ceremony by the ritualistic Brāhmanas. But they did not give it to Him in the pride of their superior status. Those sacrificial Brāhmanas were addicted to a variety of empirical interpretations of the Scriptures inspired by the desire of attainment of worldly prosperity or by love for barren speculation which ends in the negation of all specific forms of activity. By dint of their traditional attachment to the Scriptures and the by-gone ancestors they are apt to degenerate into the mere mechanical transmitters of the rules and taboos that are found in the Scriptures. By reason of this vain attitude they are disabled to understand that the attainment of love for Godhead is the only purpose of all those rules and regulations. How can people with such mentality be induced to serve Krishna? But the loyal wives of those sacrificial Brāhmanas, despite the opposition of their husbands, repaired to Sree Krishna in the forest and surrendered themselves to the Feet of the Supreme Soul. This demonstrates the truth that neither intellectual nor hereditary equipments are the cause of love for Krishna. It also lays down the right principle of conduct of conditioned souls as consisting in regarding everything with an equal eye. The *varna* and *āshrama* institutions of man are intended for the regulation of the society of this world. If the social order is preserved it affords scope for association with pure-hearted persons and thereby offers opportunities for discussions regarding the supreme desideratum. These tend to spiritual progress. It is the possibility of attainment of love of Krishna by their means that constitutes the value of the institutions of *varna* and *āshrama* (the system of divinely ordained division of social functions and grades). There can, therefore, be no disloyalty to the purpose of the social arrangement if one gives up the observance of the social rules for the sake of Krishna Him-

self. As a matter of fact, on the actual attainment of the goal itself, the further pursuit of the means of its attainment becomes unnecessary for all persons who are really desirous of obtaining the goal. It is also no infringement of the purpose of the social code to allow such a person full scope for serving Krishna. In enforcing social obligations it is, therefore, necessary to consider the actual condition of individuals to whom they are to apply. Otherwise the very object of social organisation itself will be wholly frustrated.

Hari then forbade the people to perform the sacrifice to Indra. The people were wont to sacrifice to Indra to please him in order that he might send them rain which was necessary for the sustenance of themselves and their flocks. This represents the principle of utilitarian work on the basis of mutual co-operation for the safety and well-being of society. Indra, being denied his offerings, in anger tried to punish the denizens of Braja by sending down torrential rain which flooded the fields and homesteads of the people. Hari Himself protected the residents of Gokula from this peril. No harm can come to the servants of Krishna if for the purpose of serving Him even their ordinary domestic and social duties have to be given up altogether which may result in the destruction of the world. No one can kill whom Krishna Himself protects. Even the cosmic law is not binding on them. The devotees of Krishna are free from all observance of all law except that of spiritual love for the Supreme Lord. Through the realm of faith there flows the perennial stream of the holy Yamunā. The transcendental river is the liquid essence of the pure cognitive state. Nanda was in danger of being drowned in the waters of that river of joy, but was mercifully rescued by his Son's blissful Activity. Thereafter Sree Krishna showed the cow-herds His Own Divine Majesty in the realm of the Absolute. The Divine Majesty is always latent in the Personality of Krishna. The Supreme Lord Who is the Beloved of the eternally free souls and their following then performed the Pastime of the Dance in the circle of His beloved. This Pastime manifests the principle of working of Divine love. Lord Hari, out of His mercy, danced in the *Rāsa* circle formed by the milk-maids. He

promoted the growth of their highest love by separation, by His subsequent disappearance.

The stellar system may supply a poor analogy of the *Rāsa* Pastime. Just as the Suns surrounded by their respective circling groups of satellites dance round the Polar Star in the form of a circle, in the same manner, all individual souls eternally enact their harmonious dance in their orbits round Sree Krishna as the centre of the system, sustained therein by the force of Sree Krishna's overpowering attraction for all spiritual entities. In this vast round of the *Rāsa* dance, Sree Krishna is the only Male and all individual souls are females. In the realm of the Absolute Sree Krishna is the sole Master and Enjoyer. All the rest belong to the category of servants and objects of enjoyment that minister to His sole pleasure. The *Rāsa* Pastime is capable of being analogically described in the vocabulary at our command only in terms of the sexual relationship. The reason of this is that there is a real correspondence between the two—the sexual relationship of this world being the unwholesome reflection of the spiritual process in the mirror of this material world. The analogy is, however, bound to prove misleading if due allowance is not made for the radical difference between the substantive nature and location of the two processes. The principle of mundane amour resting on that of physical sex can never be divested of its innate grossness and unwholesomeness. The grossness of worldly enjoyment as well as the sensuousness and frailties of both the object and subject of the sexual passion, are responsible for the imperfections of mundane amour. The *Rāsa* Pastime is absolutely free from any touch of unwholesomeness, all the conditions being favourable for the promotion of the most perfect bliss by universal association in the rites of the most exquisite love. No apprehension of lewdness or sexuality must, therefore, be allowed to stand in the way of the exhaustive consideration of this highest and all-important spiritual subject.

The circular amorous dance or the *Rāsa* Pastime expresses the manifestation of Divine love in its perfectly unobscured form. The highest realisation of this process consists in this, that in it Srimati Rādhikā, the highest object of all reverence of all souls being that supreme blissful Power of Krishna who expresses

His specifically luscious quality, appears in person in the circle of the dancers, in all Her most exquisite charm encompassed by the *bhāvas*, her suite of the most confidential female friends. At the close of the Pastime of the circular dance there follows naturally sporting in the liquid current of the Yamunā, the cognitive essence itself dissolving into liquid bliss on the full manifestation of love.

Nanda who is the personality of spiritual bliss, is swallowed up by the boa-constrictor of the joy of the liberation of merging in the Divine Essence. Krishna, the Protector of His devotees, thereupon rescues him from his peril. The stubborn demon Sankhachūṛa, who sets fame over every other principle, is then slain in an attempt to create disturbance in Braja. Keshi, the demon of the vanity of political ambition, is next slain by Krishna, the Foe of Kamsa, when the Lord finally made up His mind to return to Mathurā.

Akrura, the contriver of all occurrences, then conducted Hari to Mathurā. On His arrival there, the Lord killed the sturdy wrestlers and then also slew Kamsa himself with his younger brother. On the departure from this world of atheism in the person of Kamsa, Sree Krishna bestowed the charge of the earth on Kamsa's progenitor, Ugrasena, who embodies the principle of independence. The twin widows of Kamsa thereupon repaired to their parent, the King of Magadha, the embodiment of elevationism, and submitted to him their sorrows of the state of widowhood. On receiving this tidings, the King of Magadha set out at the head of his armies and fought seventeen mighty battles about the city of Mathurā, but was every time defeated by Hari. When Jarāsandha at last beleaguered Mathurā for the eighteenth time, Krishna retired to His own Capital of Dwāarakāpuri. The real significance of this episode consists in this, that the potency of the principle of elevationism is constituted of the eighteen categories of the ten personal lustrations from birth to death, the four-fold classification according to aptitude and the four-fold division into stages of the individual life (*varnāshrama*). When the seat of knowledge is finally captured by these eighteen categories by fostering renunciation of the world, there is manifested the disappearance of Godhead on the consequent emergence of the longing for pseudo-liberation.

While Krishna abode in Mathurā, He placed Himself under the charge of the teacher of religion, and after completing His study of all the *Shāstras*, restored the life of His preceptor's dead son. There is no necessity in the case of Krishna, Who is naturally perfect, to endeavour for the acquisition of knowledge. The episode indicates that the intellect of man makes progress in erudition during its stage of residence at Mathurā which is the Academy of all learning.

Those who covet the fruits of their activities also cherish attachment to Krishna. Their attachment to the Lord is charged with impurity. The attachment by degrees grows into the well-purified unadulterated liking for Krishna. This salutary truth is manifested in the case of Kubjā's love for Krishna during His sojourn in Mathurā. Uddhava went to Gokula to be acquainted fully with the loving state of Braja which is superior to all forms of devotion.

The *Srutis* affirm that the Pāndavas represent the branch of righteousness, while the Kauravas are the offshoots of unrighteous conduct. For this reason, Sree Krishna is verily the Friend and Preserver of the family of the Pāndavas. In order to establish the well-being of righteousness and for the deliverance of sinners, the Lord deputed Akrura to Hastinā as His messenger.

Jarāsandha, the champion of unwholesome fruitive activity, beleaguered the beautiful city of Mathurā, the abode of the knowledge of the undifferentiated Greatness and Nourishing Quality of the Divinity (*Brahman*). Here the point that is established is that fruitive activity itself is of two kinds. One variety is directed to the supreme desideratum itself. By such activities there is growth of knowledge and by their conjunction liking for Godhead is developed. This conjunction of activity, knowledge and the principle of Divine service, is also variously designated as the process of *karma*, *jnana* or *bhakti*. Those who possess real insight, call it the method of Harmony. But there is a different variety of activity which is directed to a selfish purpose. This form is known as *karma-kānda*, to distinguish it from the process of what is termed *karma-yoga*. This selfish variety of fruitive activity often gives rise to apprehension regarding the existence and attainment of Godhead and promotes their union with atheism

by wedding them with the latter. It is this unwholesome variety of worldly activity that in the person of Jarāsandha invaded the city of Mathurā.

Thereupon, Sree Krishna, of His own accord, conducted His friends, *viz.*, the community of His devotees, to the city of Dwāarakā. This is the process of the service of Godhead under the regulative principles of the Divine Dispensation. The Yavana king belonged to a society that was not regulated by the Divinely ordained principle of class and stage (*varnāshrama*). Being thus addicted to ignorant utilitarian activity and relying on the resources of such activity and being thereby opposed also to the path of liberation by empiric knowledge, the Yavana king scornfully kicked king Muchukunda representing aptitude for the path of liberation. The Yavana king was thereupon destroyed by the superior power of king Muchukunda. Hari then repaired to Dwāarakā, the seat of the Knowledge of the Divinity in all His Majesty. There the Lord wedded Rukmini Devi, Embodiment of the Supreme Majesty of Godhead. Pradyumna, God of love, was no sooner born from the womb of Rukmini, then he was stolen away by Sambara, embodiment of the deluding Energy. The body of the God of love had formerly been burnt up by Mahādeva, representing barren asceticism. At that period Rati Devi, consort of Kāma, God of love, had sought refuge in the demoniac propensity for the lust of the flesh. Kāmadeva of great prowess, being now instructed by his consort Ratidevi, killed Sambara representing the pleasures of the flesh and made his way to Dwāarakā. By way of restoration of the gem, Hari now wedded the auspicious Satyabhāmā, who is part and parcel of Sree Rādhikā, the fulness of the quality of extreme loving sensitiveness. Rukmini with seven other ladies were the reflections of the Power of the most delicious and the very highest Divine love, appearing in the conditions of Splendour and Majesty. They became the chief Queens of the Royal Home of Krishna at Dwāarakā. At Dwāarakā Sree Krishna's offspring and relations multiplied apace. This points to an essential difference that distinguishes reverential worship rendered to the Majesty of Godhead from that of loving devotion. The former naturally tends to expand by the process of division. The latter is indivisible. It is not possible to deal with this matter in greater

detail at this place. But the subject requires to be most carefully treated in a separate treatise.

A certain demon proclaiming himself to be Vāsudeva preached the doctrine of undifferentiated Monism, at Kāshi, the abode of Hara. The Lord of Romā, Who is Godhead Himself, after slaying that demon, burnt Kāshidhām, the seat of that corrupt opinion. The Lord seated on the back of Garuḍa slew the demon Bhauma who was filled with the notion that the things of this material universe are Godhead. This is idolatry. The worship of the Holy Divine *Archā* is not to be confounded with the worship of idols. The latter consists of the two co-ordinated varieties of pseudo-worship of Nature in its positive and negative aspects. Godhead rescued the victims of idolatry by destroying the faith in the undifferentiated *Brahman* which is the subtle and more dangerous one of the two forms of idolatry and by accepting the worship of their quondam victims. By killing Jarāsandha by the agency of Bheema, the Lord rescued many a king from the bondage of elevationism (worship of pure worldly utility). He accepted unrestricted worship at the sacrifice of Yudhisthira and cut off the head of Shishupāla who was a personal enemy of Himself. At the battle of Kurukshetra, Krishna afforded relief to the Earth groaning under her burden and, having re-established the pure religion, saved spiritual society.

On His arrival at Dwāarakā, the sage Nārada was filled with great wonder on beholding the Lord appearing at one and the same time in the homes of all His different Consorts. The fact that Godhead is fully present everywhere and in every soul, is much more wonderful than that He is One and pervades the whole universe by His Divine Essence. The demon Dantavakra, embodiment of barbarism, was slain. The Lord bestowed on Arjuna, His brother by the religion-bond, the hand of His Own sister Subhadrā in marriage. The Lord saved the city of Dwāarakā by destroying the efforts of Salwa backed by the knowledge of the deceptive physical sciences. The beautiful products of material sciences are nothing in comparison with the Doings of the Lord. King Nriga was undergoing the punishment of unrighteous conduct in the form of a reptile. He was delivered from the condition of a reptile by the mercy of the Lord.

Hari ate the raw rice given Him by the Brāhmana Sudāmā, out of love. The Lord is not so pleased with the offering of even sweatmeats that are made by the *pāshandas* (unbelievers). The monkey Dibida representing un-Godly carnival, was killed by Baladeva embodying the essence of the pure soul full of the love of Krishna. Baladeva performed the Pastime of love in the company of milkmaids who were the different substantive aspects of the pure soul, in a great forest in which there was a city made of the cognitive principle of the pure soul.

These Divine Pastimes are enacted in the hearts of the devotees. They disappear with the termination of the earthly sojourn of the devotees, just as the show ceases on the actor leaving the stage. The Will of Krishna, in the form of Time, having made the Yādavas, pure spiritual states, desist from their Pastimes, overwhelmed the Divine Abode of Dwārakā by the waves of the ocean of oblivion. The self-same Will of Krishna, Who is the Source of ceaseless joy, made the devotees give up their bodies, worn out by decay, and by fomenting mutual discord, at Prabhās, representing the Knowledge of the Divinity. The aptitude towards Krishna that dwells in the hearts of the devotees attains to its pristine glory by its conjunction with the pure soul on his severance from the physical body. It continues its full manifestation in Goloka which is the highest portion of the realm of Vaikuntha.

These Activities of Sree Krishna never cease in Goloka, which is the innermost Sphere of the realm of the Absolute and the Abode of the Supreme Lord in the manifest unobstructed enjoyment of His own pure Nature. They are available to the conditioned soul in terms of the categories of time, space and agent, in proportion to the realisation of his proper spiritual nature. This realisation may remain confined to the detached relationship of the individual soul to the Lord or expand into the form of a social function. It is this latter form that made its appearance in the pure consciousness of Nārada and Vyāsa in the cycle of the Dvāpara Age. The spiritual consciousness is, therefore, susceptible of manifesting its appearance in terms of the activities of individuals and also of those of the community of pure souls. With the growth of the social instinct the second form of manifestation makes its appearance in due course.

Regarded from the point of view of the associated spiritual consciousness Hari is realised as fully manifest in Mathurā, more fully in Dwārakā, and most fully of all in Braja. The degree of purity of its blissfulness, is the measure of the Plenitude of the Divine Manifestation. Judged by this standard, the joyous activities of Braja form the highest platform of the spiritual realisation of the individual soul. In this most blissful experience Krishna is ultimately realisable as the Sweetheart of the spiritual milkmaids, the very highest point in the process being the Blissful Activities of Krishna as the Beloved Consort of Sree Rādhikā.

Those who have been enabled to taste the sweetness of these spiritual realisations, are fully established in the eternal function of the pure soul. It is not possible to elaborate the quality of the liquid sweetness of the process by means of general terms. It is for this reason that the poetic sages have expounded the Truth of the Activities of Krishna by their detailed concrete descriptions. The Supreme bliss is obtainable only by the most solicitous service of Krishna. It is not possible to attain real and abiding satisfaction by the contemplation of Godhead as the Regulator and Companion of the individual soul, or by the realisation of the Greatness of the undifferentiated Divinity by the process of empiric Knowledge, or by worshipping Godhead by the method of the Sacrifice (*yajna*) as the Giver of the fruits of utilitarian activities.