

The Hidden Treasure of the Holy Dhama

NABADWIPA



SRILA BHAKTIVINODA THAKURA

THE HIDDEN TREASURE OF THE HOLY DHĀMA

NABADWIPA

Transcendental Visions of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda
Thākura as revealed in
NABADWIPA-DHĀM MĀHĀTMYA and
NABADWIPA-BHĀVA-TARANGA

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

NABADWIPA-DHĀMA MĀHĀTMYA
translated by His Holiness Bānu Swāmī

NABADWIPA-BHĀVA-TARANGA
translated by Ānakadunddubhi Das

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Based on the Nabadwīpa-Dhāma Māhātmya and the
Nabadwīpa-Bhāva-Taranga by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura.

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Lord Nityānanda describing the glories of
Nabadwīpa Dhāma to Jīva Goswāmī

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CONTENTS

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, The Seventh Goswāmī	<i>xi</i>
The Eye to see the Holy Dhāma	<i>xxi</i>

BOOK ONE

Śrī Nabadwīpa-Dhāma Māhātmya

1 The Supreme Position of Srī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nabadwīpa-dhāma	1
2 The Nature and Dimensions of Nabadwīpa	7
3 Description of the Holy Dhāma and Instructions for Pilgrimage	13
4 The Meeting of Nityānanda Prabhu and Jīva Goswāmī	17
5 Antardwīpa	27
• Māyāpura: The Parikrama Begins	
• The Home of Jagannātha Mīśra	
• Vamśīvadana Thākura and Srīvāsa Thākura Join the Parikramā Party	
• Srīvāsāṅgam and the Homes of Srī Advaita Ācārya and Gadādhara Paṇḍit	
• Vṛddha Śīva Mandir: The Dhāma-Sevā of Vṛddha Śīva and Praudhamāyā	
• Paraḍangā and Chinna Dangā: The Gaura-mūrti of Srī Viṣṇupriya-devī	
• Gaurāṅga Ghāṭa, Vṛddha Śīva Ghāṭa, Mādhāi Ghāṭa and Barakona Ghāṭa	
• The Meeting of Srī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Brahmā	

6	Simantadwīpa	39
	• Gangānagara: King Bhāgīratha and the Descent of the Ganges to Earth	
	• Ballāl Dīrghikā and Pṛthu-kuṇḍa	
	• Simuliyāgrāma: Lord Siva's Instructions to Pārvaṭī on Gaura-tattva	
	• The Meeting of Srī Gaurāṅga and Pārvaṭī	
	• The True Position of Māyādevī	
	• Kazi Nagara: The Difference Between Vṛndāvana and Nabadwīpa	
	• Sārā Daṅgā, Viśrāma Sthāna, and the Home of Kholāvecā Srīdhara	
	• Śaṣṭhi Tīrtha and Māyāmārī	
7	Godrumadwīpa, Part One	49
	• Suvarna Bihār: Nārada Muni Instructs King Suvarna Sen	
	• Sambandha, Abhidheya, and Prayojana	
	• Nine stages in the Development of Bhakti	
	• Srī Srī Gaura-Gadādhara's Mercy Upon King Suvarna Sen	
	• Deva Polli / Nrsimhakṣetra	
8	Godrumadwīpa, Part Two	57
	• Hari Hara Kṣetra	
	• Mahavāraṇasī: Siva and Parvaṭī Receive Mercy From Nityānanda Prabhu	
	• Gadigachā: The Meeting of Srī Caitanya with Indra and the Surabhi Cow	
	• Surabhi's Instructions to Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi	
9	Madhyadwīpa, Part One	65
	• Mājīdagrāma: Srī Caitanyadeva's Meeting with the Seven Great Sages	
	• Kumāra Hāṭṭa and Naimiṣa	

10	Madhyadwīpa, Part Two	71
	• Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara: Srī Puṣkara's Instructions to Jīvana Dāsa	
	• Uccahaṭṭa and the Parikramā Sequence	
11	Koladwīpa.....	77
	• Kola Parvata: Lord Varāha Appears Before the Brāhmaṇa Vāsudeva	
	• Samudragiri: Srī Kṛṣṇa Appears Before King Samudra Sen	
	• The Ocean Addresses Srī Gangādevī	
	• The Home of Vāṇīnātha	
	• Campakahāṭṭa: Campakalatā-sakhī's Divine Service to Srī Srī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa	
	• Srī Jayadeva Goswāmī and King Lakṣmaṇa Sen	
	• The Home of Jayadeva and Padmāvatī: Srī Kṛṣṇa Appears Before Them	
12	Ṛtudwīpa, Part One.....	89
	• The Divine Pastimes of Srī Nityānanda Rāma	
	• Rādhā Kuṇḍa Within Nabadwīpa-dhāma	
13	Ṛtudwīpa Part Two, and Jahnudwīpa.....	93
	• Vidyanagara: Matsya-avatāra Brings the Vedas for Shelter	
	• The Origin of All Branches of Knowledge	
	• Bṛhaspati Takes Birth as Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya	
	• Further Dhāma-Sevā of Praudhamāyā	
	• Jāhnudwīpa: The Hermitage of Jahnu Muni	
	• Arrival of the Ganges and King Bhāgīratha	
	• Bhīsmadeva Visits the Holy Dhāma	

- 14 Modadrumadwīpa, Part One.....101
- Māmagāchi: The Divine Pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra
 - Sambhoga and Vipralambha
 - Gūhaka Takes Birth as Sadānanda Vipra
 - The Home of Narāyanī-devī
- 15 Modadrumadwīpa Part Two,107
and Rudradwīpa Part One
- Vaikuṅṭhapura: Lord Jagannātha Instructs Srī Rāmānujācārya
 - Rāmānuja's Divine Vision of Lord Nārāyaṇa as Srī Gaurāṅga
 - The Homes of Vallabha Ācārya and Ananta
 - Mahatpura: Srī Caitanyadeva Instructs Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira
 - Caitanya Mahāprabhu Instructs Srī Mādhvācārya
 - Rudradwīpa: Saṅkarapura: Srī Caitanya Instructs Srī Saṅkarācārya
 - Lord Śiva Appears Before Srī Viṣṇuswāmī
 - Srī Caitanya Instructs Viṣṇuswāmī
 - Rāsa Maṇḍala and Dhīra Samīra
- 16 Rudradwīpa, Part Two117
- Bilvapakṣa: Lord Śiva Appears Before Srī Nimbārka
 - The Meeting of the Four Kumāras and Nimbārka
 - *Mahāprabhu Srī Caitanya, Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Nāhe Anya*
 - Srī Caitanya Instructs Nimbārka
 - Bhāradvāja Tīlā: Srī Gaurāṅga Appears Before Bhāradvāja Muni
 - Return to Yogapīṭha, Completion of Parikramā

- 17 Nityānanda Prabhu Answers
Questions by Jīva Goswāmī123
- 18 Further Discussion and Jīva Goswāmī's
Journey to Vṛndāvana.....129

BOOK TWO
Śrī Nabadwīp-Bhāva-Taranga

- The Holy Dhama139



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKUR THE SEVENTH GOSWAMI

by His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur appeared (in 1838) in a very famous Kāyastha family, bearing the title Dutta. In Calcutta there is a place called Hāt-khola Dutta which was named after the family. Near Bīrnagar there was a big village named Ulā, and the family of the title Mustauphi were landowners there. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur's mother came from this line. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur was born and brought up at Ulā, and he studied at Krishnanagar college. Of course, he had exceptional talent. He came into contact with the then educated society. Especially, there was a Mr. Duff, a Christian missionary who established the Scottish Church College. Duff was encouraging and attracting many of the young Bengalis of the time to take up Christianity. Gradually, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur had close association with the Brahmo Society, the so-called culturally advanced followers of Rām Mohan Rāy. Maharṣi Devendranāth Ṭhākur's elder brother, Dvijendranāth, was his very intimate friend.

For his livelihood he accepted government service. He was posted at Orissa in the position of subdivisional officer. He was also posted as inspector of the Jagannāth Purī Temple, where his duty was to guard against corruption. At that time he came into contact with the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and he tried to read it. He was gradually charmed by *Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*

and the life of Śrī Chaitanyadev. The Brahma Association had expected much of him because of his scholarly nature; he could write and debate well. But after coming into contact with the *Bhāgavatam*, he dissociated himself from them. When he was serving in Dinājpur he gave his speech on *Bhāgavatam*, and it was then that he completely separated himself from the Brahma school, and he was seen to side with the Vaiṣṇava school of thought in the line of Mahāprabhu. And gradually he also read the *śāstras* and wrote many books on Vaiṣṇavism.

After his retirement, he wanted to go to Vṛndāvana and pass the rest of his life there. But he repeatedly had a dream that he must discover the actual Birthplace of Śrī Chaitanyadev. He could not neglect that dream. He again entered into service at Krishnanagar, and there, he consulted the records of the locality. With the help of those records, and by his divine inspiration, he discovered the Birthplace at Yogapīṭha, Māyāpur. Then, with deepened interest, he visited the entire Nabadwīpa-maṇḍal; and with reference to the Scriptures he gave a description of both the ancient and contemporary holy places in the *Dhāma* of Mahāprabhu. He established a committee to ensure that the Service of Mahāprabhu's place of Advent continue. Lastly, he handed it over to our Prabhupāda (Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Goswāmī).

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura passed away, Śrīla Prabhupāda arranged a condolence meeting in a public hall and invited many respectable gentlemen. Amongst them were the leading scholars of the time, including Bipin Pāl, the then principal of the Metropolitan School; and Satīsh Sarkār, Pāñchkarī Bandopādhyāy, and others.

NEW THOUGHT TO THE WORLD

They all spoke very highly about Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, recognizing that he gave *new thought* to the society at large; his writings were of original character, not stereotyped. His investigations into Vaiṣṇavism excelled that of all the modern *Acāryas*. Shishir Ghosh also once said, "We have heard of the Six Goswāmīs of the time of Mahāprabhu, but Bhaktivinoda Thākura's writings prove that he holds the seventh position amongst the Goswāmīs. He has left us such extensive and original writing about the teachings of Śrī Chaitanyadev." In this way, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura left the world his literature—he is in his literature, present forever. He has delivered his writings about the Teachings of Mahāprabhu and *Bhāgavatam* in a systematic and scientific way, suitable to the modern age. Our debt unto his Holy Feet has no end.

THE PREDOMINANT GURU OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

Although Prabhupāda, as suggested by Bhaktivinoda Thākura, took initiation from Gaura Kīśora Bābājī Mahārāj, he still held Bhaktivinoda Thākura as his *Guru*, substantially. Formally, by the order of Bhaktivinoda Thākura, he took Gaura Kīśora Bābājī Mahārāj as *Gurudeva*. Bhaktivinoda Thākura selected Śrīla Gaura Kīśora for him, but from what we have found in him, he knew Bhaktivinoda Thākura as his *Guru* from the internal consideration. We find his outside and inside was filled with Bhaktivinoda Thākura. Bhaktivinoda Thākura not in the physical sense, but in the spiritual sense. Prabhupāda inaugurated many Maṭhs (Āshrams and Temples), and we find that he named the Deities "Vinoda-Vilāsa," "Vinoda-

Rāma," "Vinodānanda," Vinoda-Prāṇa," and so on.

He saw everything through his *Gurudeva*, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. His attempt to approach Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda or Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is inconceivable without Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's intervention in him. I attempted to write something about Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and I thought that this was the key to Prabhupāda's affection towards me. His attention was drawn to me because I tried to give the greatness of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's character to the public in a systematic way. It is my own feeling. He can give everything to one who is a little attached to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. That was his spirit. He thought himself indebted to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's holy life, so much so, that he saw Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Gadādhara Paṇḍita in him. This is the highest ideal of *Guru-tattva*: Gadādhara Paṇḍita in *Gaura-līlā*, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* in *Madhura-rasa*. He also once said, "If we raise our vision and observe, we shall find Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in *Gurudeva*." If we raise our head a little and search, then we shall find that it is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself who is behind the function of *Gurudeva*; all others are channels or instrumentals, but the real source of Grace as *Guru* springs from the Original Source of Service, of Love. He saw Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in that light.

*Sākṣād-haritvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhiḥ
kim tu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

"According to all the Scriptures, *Gurudeva* is directly the Lord Himself, and the pure devotees also realize the

same. He is actually a simultaneously one and different Manifestation of the Lord, different in the sense that he is the Lord's dearest servitor. I offer my obeisances unto the Lotus Feet of that Divine Master, *Śrī Gurudeva*."

We are asked to see *Gurudeva* not opaque, but transparent—transparent to such a degree that though him the highest end, the highest conception of Service, can be seen and attained. We can attain it there. If we are earnest, we shall find the highest link, from the very Source. So we are requested not to see *Guru* as limited in his ordinary personification, but as the Transparent Mediator of the highest function in his line. We can see this only if our vision is deep. According to the disciple's depth of *śraddhā*, he will see the Lord present in his *Gurudeva*. The *Guru* Principle, *Guru-tattva*, is very special, very noble, very broad and very deep.

So we are warned against thinking that our *Gurudeva* is in mortal relativity. Prabhupāda showed us by his ideal conduct how much earnestness one may have for *Gurudeva*. We have witnessed this in his practices and teachings. *Gurvoaika-niṣṭhā*—exclusive adherence to the Service of Śrī *Guru*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was his very being. Everything was Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

INFINITE COURAGE OF THE PIONEER

When Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura began the Service of the *Dhama* and Mahāprabhu, he had to do many things to attract the public to accept his discovery of the *Dhama* as authentic. At that time, the place was uninhabited. Gradually a brick building was made, and the worship of the Deity of Mahāprabhu was begun.

The temple came later. Generally the *Brāhmaṇa* cooks he required would not stay there very long because it was an isolated place and there were violent elements nearby. To ensure that the Service continued, he had to undergo many undesirable things. For example, sometimes he had to prepare *gañjikā* (hemp) by his own hand, for the cook! Otherwise, the cook would have left. At times, when 'respectable' persons came, he had to make arrangements for tobacco. There were many other trials.

THE ṬHĀKUR'S DIVINE VISION AND FORESIGHT

DEVOTEE: Śrīla Ṭhākur Bhaktivinoda also had a great vision for the world.

ŚRILA GURU MAHĀRĀJ: Yes. He saw in his divine eye that *Prema-dharma*, the Religion based on Divine Love, is so self-evident in character that the intelligent could never avoid embracing such a conception of Pure Religion as the highest. *Love—Prema*—the fine intellect cannot but detect the purity in the Love in religion, in its highest conception. His idea was: 'With an unbiased mind, the Western thinkers cannot but appreciate the doctrine of Divine Love, as given out by Śrī Chaitanya-dev. So I am sure that in the future many of the Western scholars will come under the flag of Śrī Chaitanyadev.' This was his conviction, and he mentioned this in lectures that he delivered throughout Bengal.

When Śrīpad Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj returned from preaching in England, he brought one Mr. Burchett back with him. A meeting was held at the Bagh Bazaar Maṭh. That meeting was presided over by a gentleman of the name Hiran Dutta, a good scholar and a

Theosophist. In his talk he said, "When we were students at City College, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur delivered a lecture there to the effect that in the near future Western scholars would come and join the *Sanḱīrtana* under the banner of Mahāprabhu. Now, clearly, I can bear witness to the fact that his prediction is beginning to come true. I heard the lecture in my young days, and now in my old age I see the evidence—it is going to be true. I am very glad for that."

DEVOTEE: Did Your Grace ever have the *darsana* of Ṭhākur Bhaktivinoda?

ŚRILA GURU MAHĀRĀJ: No. He left the world in 1914, and I joined the mission in 1926, twelve years later.

DEVOTEE: Perhaps you met other persons who had his contact?

ŚRILA GURU MAHĀRĀJ: There was one Parvat Mahārāj who lived next door to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur when he passed his old age in Godrum.

"TO SPREAD THE HOLY NAME AROUND..."

Parvat Mahārāj said that there was only a partition wall between his house and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur's. That was at Surabhī Kuñja. From about three o'clock in the morning, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur would rise and take the Name of Kṛṣṇa, the *Mahāmantra*, at the top of his voice. Parvat Mahārāj described it like this. As though calling someone from afar—with this spirit Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur would chant the Holy Name. That Mahārāj was astonished to see such behavior. There was a cement chair, and when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur felt tired he took his seat and rested there awhile. And then after some time he

would again wander in the garden, chanting at the top of his voice, "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa!" With such animation in his voice he was calling—calling a person; with this spirit, and not in a formal way, but with an intense hankering, he was calling for the Lord.

There was another thing I also heard about him from another source, Rām Gopāl Vidyābhūṣaṇa, an M.A. and Barrister-at-law.

Rām Gopāl Vidyābhūṣaṇa told me, "Once we went to visit him. We had heard that a Government officer, an educated man, had become a Vaiṣṇava *Bābājī*. So we went to see him, and someone amongst us asked him, 'Please speak something about Kṛṣṇa and *Kṛṣṇa-nama* (the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa).'

"After a moment, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then said, 'Oh, you want to hear something about Kṛṣṇa, you want? You want *Kṛṣṇa-nama*'?"

"Then the consequence of that enquiry had such an influence on his body and mind, that as it is written by him personally in his own poem, *Śrī-Nāma-Māhātmya*:

Cakṣe dhārā—From my eyes tears flowed; *dehe gharma*—my body perspired; *mūrcchita haila mana*—I fell into a faint; *kari' eta upadrava*—the Holy name created a great turmoil in me; *citte varṣe sudhā-drava*—causing a rain of nectarine current in my heart; *more ḍāre premera sāgare*—and casting me into the ocean of ecstasy, of Love; *kichu nā bujhite dila, more ta' bātula kaila*—I could not feel the environment around me, and became as though mad; *mora citta-vitta saba hare*—I lost myself in that thought.

That gentleman, Rām Gopāl Vidyābhūṣaṇa said, "I saw with my own eyes that all these symptoms were displayed in his body and mind, simply upon hearing our

enquiry. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura said, 'You are so fortunate, you have come to hear *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* from me? Kṛṣṇa—! Kṛṣṇa—!' In this way, he entered into another domain, and so many symptoms and expressions appeared in his body and mind—convulsions, tears, all these things." I heard this from an eye-witness.

DEVOTEES: Is it true that prior to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's appearance the Vaiṣṇava tradition had become very much neglected?

ŚRILA GURU MAHARĀJ: Very few *śuddha* Vaiṣṇavas were to be found, just before the appearance of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. But he adjusted religion in a modern garb, and so it was easy for many regardful students to come forward and accept *śuddha* Vaiṣṇavism. It had been much molested by pseudo-followers. The real ideal had become eclipsed, and so for the inquisitive it was difficult to have real entrance and real attachment for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism.

The so-called *Bābājīs* were especially responsible for disturbing the ideal. They hailed from any caste, they could marry, and they simply went on taking the name with no proper practice or feeling of real earnestness for the truth. They dragged on their lives with no pure practices or pure habits, and worst of all, in the name of religion they freely mixed with women. That brought in return a hatred for them in society. Similarly, those '*Goswāmīs*' who took up initiating disciples as their trade also lost their honor in the general respectful society, because they had some low association. The *Bābājīs* and *Goswāmīs* lost their prestige in society because of their imitative character. But *Gauḍīya Maṭh* came out with the real spirit of religion, and pure practices subsequently

followed. So the attention of the educated enquirers after truth was drawn to *Gauḍīya Math* and they flocked together.

DEVOTEE: After hearing about Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, we feel ourselves to be very insignificant.

ŚRILA GURU MAHĀRĀJ: Yes. We can but do our might, contribute our might as much as possible for the Service of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura.

THE EYE TO SEE THE HOLY DHĀMA

by His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

DEVOTEE: We have heard that the nine islands of Nabadwip represent the nine fundamental processes of Devotional Service.

ŚRILA GURU MAHĀRĀJ: The holy Śrī Nabadwip Dhāma is envisaged as a lotus flower. The center of the lotus is the Birthplace of Māhaprabhu and it represents *ātmanivedanam* or self-surrender. One has to first surrender, and then all the practices of Devotion follows. The petals of the lotus represent *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam*, *pāda-sevanam*, *arcanam*, *vandanam*, and *dāsyam* (hearing, chanting, remembering, serving the Lord's Feet, worship, prayer, and servitorship). *Sakhyam* (friendship) is situated half on one side of the Ganges and half on the other. In this way, the nine islands of Nabadwip are represented as a lotus flower embodying the Nine Standard Practices of Devotion.

DEVOTEE: Mahārāj, I have a question: in the *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, he seems to be having actual visions of Pastimes of the Lord on the various islands of Nabadwip; yet he writes in such a way that he also seems to be aspiring for those visions. Is he actually having those visions?

ŚRILA GURU MAHĀRĀJ: Yes, of course. His vision is inspired. The *Dhāma* has inspired these two perspectives in him. The *Dhāma* allows us to see it, according to the degree of our devotion. A doctor sees a patient according to

his capacity. Higher intelligence can see deeper. Such is the case always. A higher politician can see a higher strategy, and so on.

A detector can see the depth afforded by its capacity. The X-ray can detect to a certain depth, the microscope has another dimension of utility. There is revelation according to one's capacity. Deserve—and have.

THE EYE OF FAITH

In an ordinary country there is a capital. The capital is where the existence and position of the king is more intense than in the general section of the country. Similarly, the Lord is everywhere, and His concentrated existence is found in the *Dhāma* or the Holy Abode. With fully developed vision, we can feel the special characteristic of the *Dhāma*. We shall find His presence everywhere, but with particular intensity in the *Dhāma*. With the awakening of our real eye, we should be able to feel and appreciate according to this criterion. There is no question of a *Dhāma* for those who have no eye to see. There is also a hierarchy in the *Dhāma*. All are in serving attitude whether birds, beasts, worms, insects—everything—all are contributing to the Reality. Their feeling of heart, their gesture, posture or movement—everything contributes exclusively to the Pastimes of the Lord.

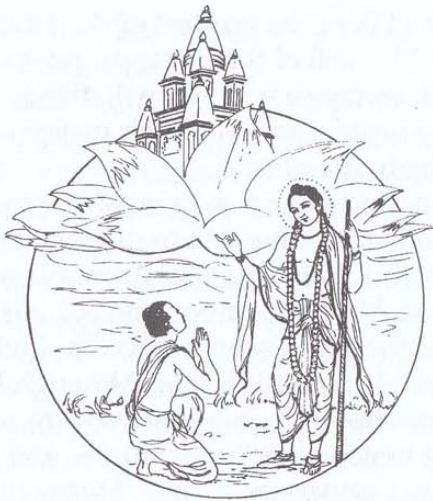
Dhāmera svarūpa, sphuribe nayane: in one song, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura aspires for that pure vision of the *Dhāma*. Otherwise, it may appear quite ordinary to us, like a jungle. The purity of Ganges water is only perceived by those who have proper faith or *śraddhā*. Otherwise to others eyes it is ordinary water. The same applies to the

Deity, or *Śrī-Mūrti*. One may think that the *Śrī-Mūrti* of Lord Jagannāth in Purī appears to be a somewhat awkward figure. His arms seem incomplete, His feet are not visible, His eyes are enormous. Yet Mahāprabhu stood before Him for hours, shedding tears. No one could move Him from that place. What did Mahāprabhu see in that Figure, and what is He to our eyes? So according to the depth of vision of our inner eye we can come to that place of the *Dhāma*, the Deity, and the purifying Ganges water. *Śraddhāmāyo 'yam puruṣaḥ* (Bg. 17.3): "The nature of a person is modeled on faith." Of what value is a mirror without an eye? In a looking-glass we should find the reflection, but if the eye is absent, what will the subject see in the glass? So the eye to see—faith—is necessary. According to the *śraddhā*, the specific character of the *Dhāma* as distinct from all other places will come into view, disclosing its real form. Everything depends on *śraddhā*, faith.

BOOK ONE

Nabadwīpa-Dhāma Māhātmya





THE SUPREME POSITION

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the moon of Nabadwīpa and the son of Śacīdevī. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to Śrī Advaita Ācārya Prabhu. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura. All glories to the holy abode of Nabadwīpa, the essence of all holy places, and all glories to the residents of Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the eternal associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Having offered respects to the lotus feet of all the devotees, I shall now briefly describe the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Even Lord Brahmā and the other demigods do not know the full extent of the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. The thousand-mouthed Śeṣa Himself cannot fully describe its greatness. I am an insignificant soul. Who am I to sing the glories of Nabadwīpa

when even Lord Śiva, the greatest of demigods, finds no end to them? The will of Śrī Caitanya, however, is most powerful. In accordance with His will, the devotees have ordered me to write, and so by their mercy I narrate the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

There is another thing that I would like to mention. It is highly confidential; I hesitate to disclose it. Still, I cannot resist, for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered his devotees to establish the importance of His birthplace and pastimes after His disappearance. Śrī Caitanya is the most confidential *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa. Although I know that He is the Supreme Lord, His pastimes are confidential. They are only hinted at in the scriptures, and so the non-devotees cannot understand them. Since ancient times, Māyādevī, illusion herself, had hidden the scriptural truths about Śrī Caitanya from the eyes of scholars. In this way, the conclusions of both revealed and unmanifest scriptures regarding Śrī Caitanya remained confidential. When Śrī Caitanya had completed His pastimes on Earth, however, His obedient servant, Māyādevī, knowing His will, lifted her veil of illusion and revealed His true nature to all souls. At that time the hidden meaning of the scriptures became clear, and all difficulties in understanding Śrī Caitanya came to an end.

The all-merciful Nityānanda Prabhu revealed the truths about Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the hearts of all souls. On His command, Māyā removed the illusion veiling the scriptures so that the pure devotee scholars could discover their hidden treasure.

If one's doubts are not destroyed by these scriptural conclusions, he is most unfortunate. Why should he live? When Nityānanda Prabhu distributes His mercy, fortunate souls accept it and achieve perfect happiness. Unfortunate souls, proud of their 'intelligence,' reject the

mercy of the Lord. Burdened by false logic, they fall into the darkness of ignorance.

Nityānanda Prabhu used to cry out, "Come, spirit souls of Kali-yuga! Give up your hypocrisy and accept the divine love of Śrī Caitanya!" In this way, Nityānanda Prabhu would call out again and again, but unfortunate souls rejected His mercy.

Let us carefully consider why people reject such a wonderful thing as love of God. Everyone seeks happiness in different ways. Some seek happiness through logic, and others through mystic *yoga*. Some renounce the world and go to the forest. Others wage constant war. Some run after women and wealth. Some become artists and others become scientists. In search of happiness, some learn to tolerate the miseries of life, while others simply drown themselves in the ocean.

Nityānanda Prabhu, raising His lotus hands in the air, cries: "O souls! Come here. If you want happiness, give up exploitation (*karma*) and calculation (*jñāna*). I have come to give you the happiness you seek, asking nothing in return. There is no need of trouble, risk, or pain. Just chant the name of Śrī Caitanya and dance without a care. The happiness I am giving away is unparalleled. It is positive, pure, and ecstatic. It is eternal bliss, free from illusion."

In this way, Nityānanda Prabhu begged everyone to take pure ecstatic love, but the unfortunate had no desire for it. This is a result of the impious deeds they committed in their previous lives. To neglect the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu is the worst misfortune, for if someone once calls on the names of Nityānanda and Caitanya, he puts an end to unlimited *karma*.

Listen now to another secret: the best thing for the souls of this dark age (Kali-yuga) is the treasure of Śrī

Caitanya's pastimes. Śrī Caitanya and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are one and the same. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa eternally enjoy confidential pastimes of love with Their inner circle of *sakhīs* in Vṛndāvana. Through the scriptures, everyone can understand something about the glories of Vṛndāvana and the eternal pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The glories of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's holy land, and Kṛṣṇa's holy name are unlimited, and through scriptures, people all over the world have heard about Kṛṣṇa. Divine love of Kṛṣṇa, however, is not at all easy to attain. What I am about to explain is very difficult for most people to understand, because they are completely absorbed in the illusions and misconceptions presented by Māyā. What I am about to explain is the most secret of all secrets.

One may worship Kṛṣṇa lifetime after lifetime and never achieve divine love of Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-prema*). This is because in the course of one's worship, he is sure to commit many sins and offenses. And one who chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa can achieve the ecstasy of divine love only if he chants without any offenses. The worship of Śrī Caitanya, however, is much different—by worshipping Śrī Caitanya, even a soul plagued by offenses attains the treasure of love of Godhead. As soon as one cries out "Nitāi-Caitanya!" divine love of Godhead begins searching him out. Even offenses cannot block his progress, and soon he sheds tears of ecstasy in divine love. By the mercy of Śrī Caitanya offenses soon disappear, and the heart is cleansed and filled with divine love. No one can live in the present age of Kali-yuga without committing innumerable sins; therefore, no one can be delivered without calling on the name of Śrī Caitanya. And so, I see no other way, no other way, no other way for deliverance in this age of Kali than to chant the name of Śrī Caitanya, worship Śrī Caitanya, and follow Śrī

Caitanya's teachings. This is the verdict proclaimed by the revealed scriptures.

Because that great Messiah appeared in Nabadwīpa-dhāma like a golden moon, Nabadwīpa is the crest jewel of all holy places. One who commits offenses in any other holy place is punished for his crimes. But in Nabadwīpa-dhāma, even offenders are purified of all sins. The two brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi stand witness to this fact. What to speak of ordinary holy places, even in Vṛndāvana offenders are punished as demons. In Nabadwīpa-dhāma, however, one who has committed hundreds and hundreds of crimes is easily saved by the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu. Therefore, the *ṛṣīs* praise the holy land of Nabadwīpa-dhāma which lies within the circle of Gauḍa-maṇḍala as the most magnanimous of all holy places.

Whoever lives in Nabadwīpa-dhāma is most fortunate, for he develops attachment for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Anyone who happens to wander into Nabadwīpa-dhāma becomes freed from all offenses and sins. Whatever benefit one gets by traveling to all other holy places is attained just by remembering Nabadwīpa-dhāma. In this way, the scriptures sing the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. He who sees Nabadwīpa-dhāma will attain eternal divine love of Kṛṣṇa. Even one who comes to Nabadwīpa with his mind bent on gaining material comforts through pious activities will attain a higher than human birth in his next life. The scriptures confirm that one who walks through Nabadwīpa-dhāma achieves with each step the merits of ten million *aśvamedha* horse sacrifices.

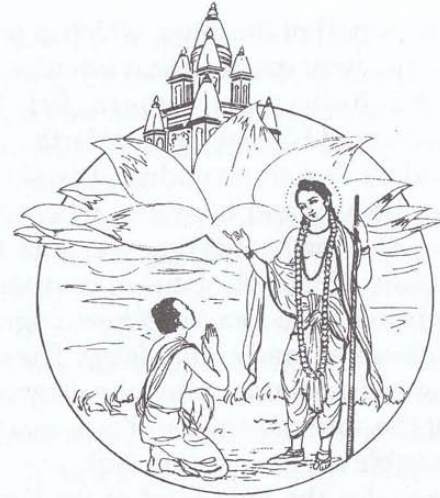
One who lives in Nabadwīpa and softly chants *mantras* soon obtains the sound 'Caitanya' as his *mantra* and easily gains deliverance. What is attained by great

yogīs after spending ten years in another holy place is easily realized by anyone who spends only three nights in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. In other holy places one can gain liberation only by developing complete knowledge of Brahman, but that liberation can be easily had by anyone who once bathes in the Ganges in Nabadwīpa. In this way, not by scholarship, mental speculation, or philosophical calculation, but simply by living in Nabadwīpa-dhāma, one can easily attain the different kinds of liberation: oneness (*nirvāna*), residence in Vaikuṅṭha (*sālokya*), divine form (*sārūpya*), divine opulence (*sārṣṭi*) and personal association with the Lord (*sāmīpya*).

Pleasure and Salvation fall at the lotus feet of the pure devotees in Nabadwīpa and beg for service. Although devotees reject these worldly blessings, Pleasure and Salvation remain at their feet as obedient maidservants.

In conclusion, whatever can be attained after spending one hundred years in the seven most important holy places in India can be attained by spending one night in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Nabadwīpa-dhāma is the sum total of all holy places. By taking shelter there, all souls can easily cross over Kali-yuga. In Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the holy name of Rāma, which grants deliverance, and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, which awards divine love of Godhead, constantly serve the devotees of the *dhāma*.

Thus Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, aspiring for the shade of the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu and Jāhnavā-devī, sings of the greatness of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.



NATURE & DIMENSION OF NABADWIPA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the moon of Nabadwīpa and the son of Śacīdevī. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the topmost holy place, whose truth no one can fully describe.

The holy land of Nabadwīpa, in its eternal splendor, is situated within the greater circle of land known as Gaura-maṇḍala and served by the Ganges. Gaura-maṇḍala is one hundred sixty-eight miles in circumference, with the Ganges running through its center. Gaura-maṇḍala takes the form of a lotus flower with one hundred petals. The nine islands of Nabadwīpa-dhāma which form the beautiful inner flower of the great lotus measure thirty-two miles in circumference. Eight of the islands are petals surrounding the ninth island,

Antardwīpa, the whorl of the lotus, which is ten miles in circumference. The very center of that whorl is called the Yogapīṭha, the holy place where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu advented Himself on this Earth.

Gaura-maṇḍala is a transcendental wish-fulfilling jewel, a land of beauty and harmony where all things, even the water, the earth, and the trees, are fully conscious and ecstatic. That holy land is composed of the Lord's three spiritual potencies: existence, cognition, and ecstasy (*sandhinī*, *sanvit*, and *hlādinī śakti*). The same existence potency which sustains material existence sustains the existence of the spiritual abode. This is enacted by the Lord's inconceivable supernatural power.

One who equates the holy land of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Caitanya with this ordinary world is doomed to bondage and ignorance. One who is in darkness may think the sun has been covered by clouds, but clouds can never cover the sun. Gaura-maṇḍala is eternally transcendental to the material world. Like the sun, it is self-effulgent; but those whose vision is obscured by clouds of ignorance fail to see that holy land. They can see only this dark material world wherever they look.

One who attains the mercy of Nityānanda, however, can see that land of harmony, beauty, and ecstasy which is fully conscious and transcendental. Within that holy land flows all the sacred rivers, beginning with the Yamunā and the Ganges. And there one can find the seven holy places, beginning with Prayāga. Gaura-maṇḍala is the spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha. Only a fortunate soul can see that spotless domain of the Supreme Godhead. On the order of the Lord Himself, that divine realm is hidden by the clouds of illusion from the external vision of worldly souls, who can never perceive its divinity. Those who eternally live in Gaura-maṇḍala,

however, are most fortunate. They have attained the world beyond birth and death. Even the gods in their heavenly abodes are astonished to see those residents of Gaura-maṇḍala with their dark blue, four-handed figures of radiant beauty.

Within the inner circle of Gaura-maṇḍala, in the area known as Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the numerous residents are golden in complexion and always perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. The demigods, headed by the creator of the universe Lord Brahmā, descend from the higher planetary systems to worship the residents of Nabadwīpa. Lord Brahmā says, "When will I have the good fortune to take birth as a blade of grass in Nabadwīpa-dhāma? There I can wear as my crown the dust of the holy feet of those who serve the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya. I have cheated Him. I am trying to act as the Lord of the universe. When will the ropes of *karma* binding me to this material world be severed? When will I give up false ego? When will my mind become pure? When will this false mentality of ownership vanish? When will I stop thinking myself to be the Lord of Creation? Only then will I be able to serve Śrī Caitanya and attain the shelter of His lotus feet."

The gods, the *ṛṣīs*, and the eleven Rudras live in Nabadwīpa and spend their lives engaging in cruel austerities, but they cannot purchase the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu by practicing penance. As long as one is determined to identify the body as the self, as long as one refuses to become humble within his mind, he cannot obtain the treasured mercy of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda, no matter what he does, even if he be Lord Śiva or Brahmā himself. All these points shall be elaborated on later. O readers, please hear all this with care, attention, and faith.

In considering these spiritual topics, reject all logic and argument as useless and inauspicious. The pastimes of Śrī Caitanya are as deep as an ocean and cannot be understood by logic and argument. The infinite can never be measured by logic. Logic is as useless as the skin of a banana. One who tries to cross the ocean of repeated birth and death by the use of logic only wastes his time. For all his efforts, he gains nothing. On the other hand, one who rejects logic and accepts the guidance of saints and scriptures will soon attain Śrī Caitanya. On the order of Nityānanda Prabhu, the personified scriptures constantly sing the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. By following the advice of saintly devotees and by studying the scriptures, one can understand the spiritual nature of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

In this age of Kali the holy places have all lost their power. Nabadwīpa-dhāma alone is transcendently powerful. By the Lord's will, however, the holy land of Nabadwīpa was invisible for a long time and its glories remained concealed. As the degrading influence of the age of Kali increased, the spiritual influence of the other holy places had completely vanished.

Wishing good fortune upon all living beings, the Supreme Lord began to think: "After diagnosing a disease, a doctor prescribes an appropriate medicine for his patient. For a severe disease strong medicine is needed. As the age of Kali has become most terrible, the epidemic has become critical. Without strong medicine there is no hope of cure. If I do not reveal the holy land of Nabadwīpa along with My holy name and form which have been unmanifest for so long, the conditioned souls will never recover. All souls are My servants; I am their master. If I do not help them, they will never be delivered."

Thinking in this way, Śrī Caitanya revealed Himself on this Earth along with His name, His holy abode, and His eternal associates, for it is His promise for all time that He will deliver all souls and free them from all the troubles of material existence. At that time Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "I will freely distribute the treasure of divine love which is rarely attained even by Lord Brahmā. This *avatāra* will distribute the wealth of love of Godhead without any consideration of who is fit or unfit. Let the black snake Kali try to destroy the living beings! I will appear in Nabadwīpa-dhāma and break the poisonous fangs of Kali by taking My devotees with Me and performing *kīrtana*. As long as My name is sung, Kali will be conquered."

With these words Śrī Caitanya advented Himself in Nabadwīpa by His own divine power in this age of Kali. At that time, He removed the shadows of misconception by revealing His brilliant eternal pastimes of dancing and divine love. In this way the Supreme Lord descended to this world and appeared within the golden land of Gaura-maṇḍala.

Seeing no one in this world more sad than one who fails to worship the merciful Śrī Caitanya and no one more poor and fallen than one who rejects the inconceivably merciful Nabadwīpa-dhāma, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda pleads, "O brothers, give up all your attachments. They are only cheating you. Fix your mind with one-pointed attention on reaching Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the holy land of Śrī Caitanya." Praying to the lotus feet of Jāhnavā-devī and Nityānanda Prabhu, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura thus reveals the truth about Nabadwīpa-dhāma.



3

PILGRIMAGE IN THE HOLY DHAMA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the golden moon of Nabadwīpa-dhāma and the son of Śacī. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. All glories to the holy land of Nabadwīpa, the essence of all sacred places, where Śrī Caitanya appeared.

Now hear, O devotees, the description of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Within the thirty-two-mile circumference of Nabadwīpa, there are sixteen eternal streams. On the east bank of the main branch of the Ganges there are four islands, and on the west bank, five. The different tributaries of the Ganges surround these nine islands and increase the splendor of the holy land. Near the Ganges flow the sweet and beautiful river Yamunā and the divinely musical Saraswatī. East of the Yamunā are three

long rivers: the Tāmraparnī, the Ṛtamāla, and the Brahmaputra. The Sarayūk, Narmadā, Kārerī, and Gomatī rivers cross the others and run swiftly with the Godāvārī. Where all these rivers intersect, they form the nine islands of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

By the will of the Lord sometimes these rivers run dry and sometimes they flood. By His will the holy places become hidden at times, and by His will they again become visible. In this way the divine abode of the Lord, which is always visible to fortunate souls, performs its endless pastimes of appearing and disappearing. A devotee who has an intense heartfelt need for service to the holy land always sees with the eye of his soul the islands and streams of Nabadwīpa. Only through devotion can one develop this kind of vision.

The island that lies at the confluence of the Yamunā and the Ganges is known in the *Vedas* as Antardwīpa. There lies the holy place where Śrī Caitanya appeared. O devotees, know that the place called Mahāvana in the center of Kṛṣṇa's divine abode in Goloka Vṛndāvana is the same as Māyāpura, the birthplace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Nabadwīpa. The entire spiritual world consisting of Svetadwīpa, Vaikuṅṭha, Goloka, and Vṛndāvana is permanently situated within Nabadwīpa-dhāma. The seven sacred cities of Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Haridwāra, Kāśī, Kañci, Avanti, and Dvārakā are all eternally present in different places in Nabadwīpa, just as the major countries of the world are represented in the capital by their embassies. This is all enacted by the will of the Lord.

Haridwāra, the gateway to the Ganges, is also known as Māyāpura. The Māyāpura of Haridwāra is present in full in the Māyāpura of Nabadwīpa-dhāma, which is famous throughout the scriptures. If one goes to

Māyāpura once, he easily becomes freed from the bondage of *māyā*. One who wanders through Māyāpura will find that the power of Māyā has retreated to a distance. He never again takes birth in this material world.

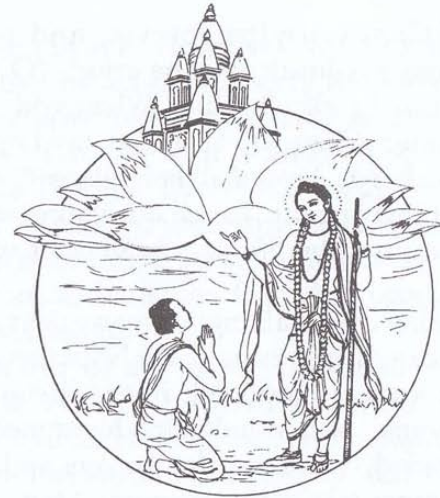
North of Māyāpura is Sīmantadwīpa. The saints and scriptures have explained how to make a pilgrimage of this area of the holy land. After seeing Māyāpura in Antardwīpa, one should go to Sīmantadwīpa and then to Godrumadwīpa, which lies to the south of Māyāpura. After this one should go to Madhyadwīpa. These are the four islands on the east bank of the Ganges.

After completing this part of the pilgrimage, one should reverently cross over the Ganges. After walking about in Koladwīpa, one should visit the island of Ṛtudwīpa. After seeing the supremely beautiful Jāhnudwīpa, one should go to Modadrumadwīpa and Rudradwīpa. At that time one should return across the Ganges and walk back to Māyāpura. There, at the temple of Jagannātha Miśra and Śacīdevī, he should visit the Deity of the Lord with gravity and respect. This is the procedure for making a pilgrimage of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. One who follows this practice will obtain unlimited transcendental bliss.

The best time for making a pilgrimage to Nabadwīpa-dhāma is from the holy day of Makara Saptami, near the last day of January, until the full moon in February-March (Phālgua), the advent day of Śrī Caitanya. Those who finish their pilgrimage by visiting Māyāpura on the holy advent day of Śrī Caitanya are most fortunate. They attain the shade of the lotus feet of Nītai and Caitanya, by whose mercy they become qualified to enter devotional service.

I have now summarized the rules for making a pilgrimage of Nabadwīpa; throughout the course of this

book I shall explain everything in detail. Please listen, for whoever walks through the hundred and sixty-eight miles of the circle of Śrī Caitanya's pastimes, Gauḍa-maṇḍala, will quickly attain the treasure of divine love for Śrī Caitanya. Falling at the lotus feet of Jāhnavā and Nitāi, I, Bhaktivinoda, reveal these truths, following in their footsteps.



THE MEETING

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the moon of Nabadwīpa and the son of Śacī. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to the supreme holy place, Nabadwīpa, where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu made His advent. O brothers! Whatever result can be obtained by residing in all other holy places is attained by staying in Nabadwīpa for only one day.

O saints, listen as I explain the scriptural version of the pilgrimage to Nabadwīpa-dhāma. The teachings of scripture, the words of the Vaiṣṇavas, and the order of the Lord are my life and soul. Taking shelter of these three things, I shall describe the rules for traveling throughout Nāḍia as a pilgrim. Everyone listen.

When Jīva Goswāmī left home, he wandered along the roads, lamenting and crying, "Nāḍia! Nāḍia!" He left

his home of Candradwīpa forever, and with tears streaming from his lotus eyes he cried, "O Caitanya! Nityānanda! Life of all who live! When will You grant your grace to me? When will I see You, my Lords? When will I see Nabadwīpa, best of all holy places?" Again and again he cried this lament. To see this young and beautiful boy Jīva leading the life of a renunciant was indeed wonderful.

After walking and walking for many days, he finally came to a place where he could see Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the abode of love of Godhead, in the distance. Upon catching a glimpse of that holy city, he immediately fell down with folded hands to offer prayers and, lying flat like a rod, almost lost consciousness. After some time when his mind had again become steady, he began entering Nabadwīpa-dhāma. His body quivered in ecstasy and his hair stood on end.

As soon as he reached Bārakoṇā ghāṭa, he asked everyone there, "Where is Nityānanda Prabhu? Please take me to Him." One great soul, seeing the intense and exalted mood of Jīva Goswāmī, took him to see Nityānanda Prabhu. At that time Nityānanda Prabhu was laughing uproariously; He internally felt great ecstasy at the arrival of Jīva Goswāmī in Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

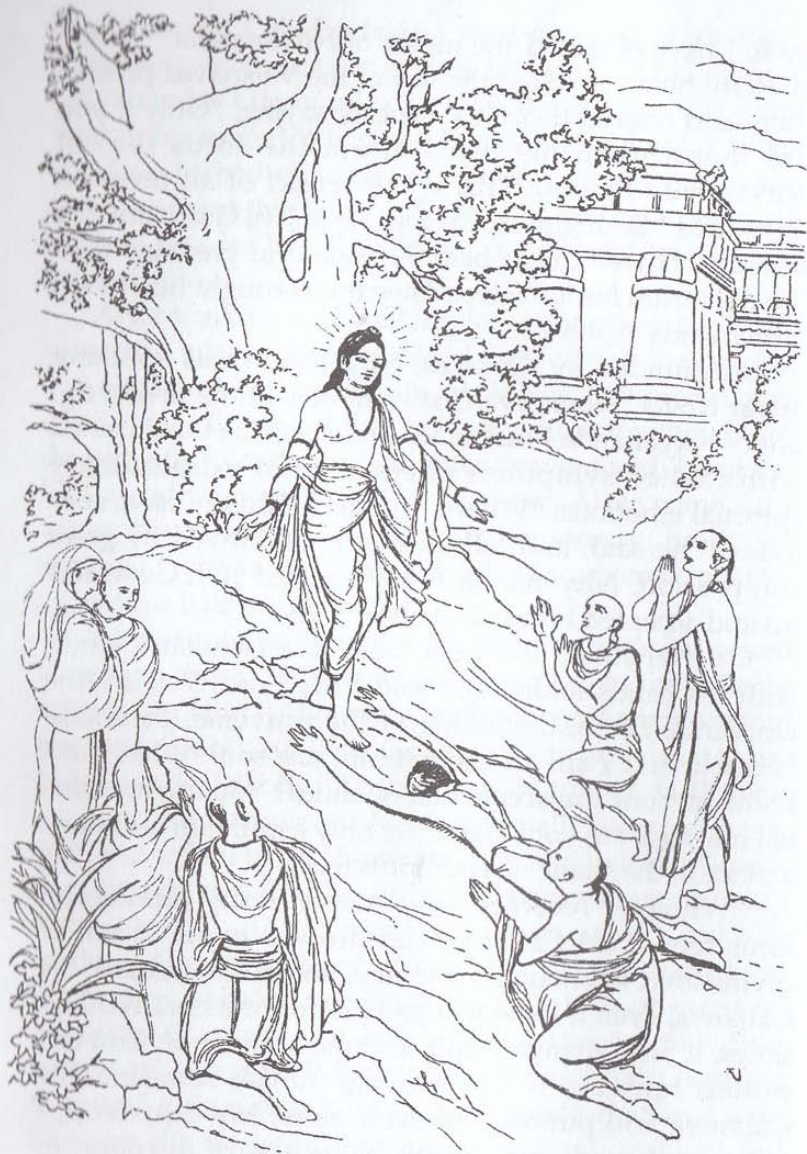
Nityānanda Prabhu ordered His servants to bring Jīva Goswāmī. At that many Vaiṣṇavas went to call him to the side of their Lord. When they beheld one whose body was transformed with the delirium of spiritual ecstasy, they recognized him as the saintly Jīva Goswāmī. Filled with love, some of them went forward to reveal to him the order of Nityānanda Prabhu. Upon hearing the name of Nityānanda, Jīva Goswāmī fell unconscious. A few moments later when he arose, he said, "I am most fortunate! Although I am the lowest of

men, I have obtained the mercy of Nityānanda." With a cheerful heart he fell at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas present there and offered them his respects, saying, "Only if you are merciful to me can I attain the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu. This is the verdict of all revealed scriptures." Seeing the great fortune of Jīva Goswāmī, the devotees bowed down before him and in great joy took the dust from his lotus feet. They then brought him to see Nityānanda Prabhu.

Surrounded by devotees, Nityānanda was speaking about Kṛṣṇa. When Jīva Goswāmī beheld the divine figure of Nityānanda Prabhu, his body became transformed with exalted symptoms of ecstasy and extraordinary spiritual emotions. "What a wonderful thing I have seen today!" he said, and fell unconscious. Moved by great compassion, Nityānanda Prabhu raised Jīva Goswāmī up and accepted him as His own.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Jīva Goswāmī stood with his hands folded and said, "My Lord, You are the Universal Form, the abode of the universe, Balarāma Himself, and I am an insignificant *jīva* soul. What can I know of Your transcendental qualities? You are my eternal master; I am your slave. My only aspiration is to have a place in the shade of Your lotus feet.

"Whoever receives Your mercy easily attains the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya and drowns in an ocean of divine love. Without Your mercy, no one can achieve Śrī Caitanya, even if he worships Him for one hundred lifetimes. If Śrī Caitanya wants to punish someone, You can protect him. But if You want to punish someone, Śrī Caitanya will punish him even more. My dear Lord, I must have performed many pious acts of devotion in order to be allowed to accept the shelter of Your lotus feet. Be merciful unto me, that I may see Śrī Caitanya and



Upon seeing the divine form of Śrī Nityānandacandra, Śrī Jīva Goswāmī fainted in the ecstasy of prema

develop a real attraction for Him.

“When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was in Rāmakeli, He accepted my uncles, Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana. At that time I was only a boy. With tears in my eyes I beheld His beautiful divine figure, brilliant as gold. Falling at His feet, I offered Him my respects. When I touched His holy body, I became filled with extraordinary happiness. Then, that Golden Lord spoke to me the following words: ‘O Jīva, study the scriptures. After completing your study, go to Nabadwīpa-dhāma. There you will receive the dust of the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu, which will bestow upon you all things.’

“The Lord ordered me to study the *Vedānta-sūtra* and establish devotion to Kṛṣṇa as its basis. Taking this order on my head, I studied as much as I could. But although I studied all the scriptural commentaries available in Candradwīpa, I could not find a bona fide teacher of the *Sūtras*. I have therefore come to Nabadwīpa to take shelter under Your lotus feet. Whatever You order, I will obey. If You wish, I shall go to Purī and study under Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya.”

Hearing the sweet words of Jīva Goswāmī, Nityānanda Prabhu embraced him and, unable to contain Himself, began weeping. He said, “O Jīva, listen to these confidential words. Rūpa and Sanātana Goswāmī are fully aware of all truths. Everyone knows that you and your two uncles are pure servants of the Lord. He told me to instruct you not to go to Jagannātha Purī. His order is this: Go to Varanāsī. After studying Vedānta under Vācaspati Paṇḍita, a scholar there, go immediately to Vṛṇḍāvana. There you will receive the mercy of Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana. As a follower of Rūpa perform your worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and thoroughly discuss the important scriptures, beginning with the *Vedānta-sūtras*.

You should preach that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the essence of all scriptures and the natural commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*. When Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya received the mercy of Śrī Caitanya, he learned the meaning of *Vedānta-sūtra* as explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. What he learned from Śrī Caitanya, he later taught with great care to Madhusūdana Vācaspati in Jagannātha Purī.

“On the order of Śrī Caitanya Madhusūdana Vācaspati now lives in Varanāsī. Go there and meet him. Externally he acts like a traditional follower of the impersonalist Vedānta philosophy, with many *sannyāsī* followers of Śankarācārya studying under him. However, he is gradually giving these *sannyāsīs* his mercy, and through the aphorisms of Vedānta he teaches them the precepts of Śrī Caitanya.”

Nityānanda continued, “The Lord has said that there is no need for so many different commentaries on *Vedānta-sūtra*; *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the natural commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*. When the need arises for another commentary, the *Śrī Govinda-bhāṣya* will be revealed. Formerly, the great scholar Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and his learned brother-in-law, Gopīnātha Ācārya, heard the Lord’s commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*. After some time, by the will of Śrī Caitanya, Gopīnātha Ācārya will take birth as Baladeva Vidyābhūṣana and conquer the scholars of Jaipur. At that time he will serve Śrī Caitanya by revealing the commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra* spoken by the Govinda Deity. In this way, through the commentary known as *Govinda-bhāṣya*, the Lord will deliver the fallen souls. All these confidential subjects will be explained to you by Rūpa and Sanātana.”

Upon hearing the words of Nityānanda Prabhu, Jīva Goswāmī began to weep; losing consciousness, he fell to the ground. Showing Jīva Goswāmī His mercy,

Nityānanda Prabhu placed His lotus feet on Jīva’s head. At that time, in the assembly of devotees gathered there, Jīva Goswāmī began dancing and chanting, “All glories to Śrī Caitanya! All glories to Nityānanda!” On witnessing this display of Nityānanda’s mercy, Śrīvāsa Thākura and all the great souls present in that assembly also began chanting in unison and dancing, until that place resounded with a great spiritual vibration.

After some time Jīva stopped his dancing and sat down with Nityānanda Prabhu. Arrangements had been made for Jīva Goswāmī to reside at Śrīvāsaṅgam, but at sunset he again came to see Nityānanda Prabhu, who at that time was sitting alone, singing the glories of Śrī Caitanya.

Jīva approached Nityānanda and fell at His lotus feet. With great care Nityānanda made Jīva Goswāmī sit next to Him. Jīva Goswāmī, seeing the great humility of Nityānanda Prabhu, folded his hands and said, “O Lord, please be kind to me and explain the hidden truths of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.”

Nityānanda Prabhu replied, “I will explain everything, but you must keep it confidential. This must not be revealed to anyone. Only after the manifest pastimes of the Lord have ended will these truths be revealed.

“Nabadwīpa-dhāma is the topmost of all holy places. After crossing over the Virajā river, one comes to the spiritual sky. Penetrating beyond the spiritual sky, one arrives at the spiritual Vaikuṅṭha planets. Far beyond the Vaikuṅṭha planets is the supreme spiritual planet of Goloka. Penetrating further within Goloka one may find Kṛṣṇaloka and Gokula Vṛndāvana. In that highest world transcendental mellow (*rasa*) exhibits itself in two features: sweetness (*mādhurya*) and distribution of sweetness (*audārya*). *Audārya* is fully present within *mādhurya*

and *mādhurya* is fully present in *audārya*. In Vṛṇḍāvana, which is blessed with all-auspiciousness, the primary mood is *mādhurya*, confidential sweetness, whereas in Nabadwīpa the primary mood is always *audārya*, generous distribution of that sweetness. This is the conclusion of the Vedas. There is no difference between Nabadwīpa and Vṛṇḍāvana except for this distinction in the way that *rasa* is exhibited—in Vṛṇḍāvana sweetness is predominant in a closed circle, and in Nabadwīpa that sweetness is generously distributed.

This holy land is eternally perfect, transcendently conscious, and unlimited. No genius can penetrate this realm by the strength of his intellect. Only by the influence of the ecstatic potency (*hlādinī-śakti*) of the Lord can a soul give up all mundane conceptions of righteousness, or *dharma*, and with the help of perfect knowledge realize what is genuine *dharma*.

“Nabadwīpa is the divine plane of consciousness where Śrī Caitanya performs His beautiful pastimes of love. Seeing everything with their fleshy eyes, people can conceive only of this phenomenal world. Because their vision is covered by misconception, they cannot perceive the transcendental world. In Nabadwīpa however, neither misconception nor relative time and space have any jurisdiction. In Nabadwīpa, there exists no suffering for the living soul. But those who are bound to the ideals of fruitive work and its reaction have no eyes to see spiritual reality. Entangled in misconception, they see the divine abode of the Lord as an ordinary place. One who is very fortunate, however, may gain the company of devotees. By their mercy divine love will awaken within the heart, and one can experience the spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha. At that time one can see with his spiritually purified eyes the nonmaterial abode of the Lord. That

divine realm with its transcendental space and time exists beyond the relativity of this phenomenal world.” Nityānanda Prabhu concluded by saying, “O Jīva, thus I have explained the scientific ontology of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Please consider this deeply with a pure heart.”

Falling at the lotus feet of Jāhnavā-devī and Nityānanda Prabhu, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura narrates these hidden truths, praying humbly for their mercy.



5

ANTARDWIPA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the son of Śacī. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, the life and soul of Jāhnvā-devī. All Glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the topmost of holy places, where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in the age of Kali.

Nityānanda Prabhu said, "Listen to My words: Nabadwīpa, the holy land of Śrī Caitanya, is nondifferent from Vṛndāvana, the holy land of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Measuring thirty-two miles in circumference, Nabadwīpa consists of nine islands, which form an eight-petalled lotus that floats on the waters of the Ganges. Eight of the islands form the eight petals of the lotus, and the center of that lotus is the ninth island called Antardwīpa.

"The center of Antardwīpa is Māyāpura. Within Māyāpura is the eternal sphere of influence known as

Yogapītha, the divine birthplace of Śrī Caitanya and eternal pleasure-ground of His pastimes. As Śrī Caitanya, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa appears in the role of His own devotee. He comes as the original guru in the form of Nityānanda, and as the devotee-avatāra, Advaita. Kṛṣṇa appears as His devotional energy, Gadādhara, and as His follower, Śrīvāsa. These five features of Godhead are known as Panca-tattva, or the five great truths. Within the birthplace of Śrī Caitanya known as the Yogapītha, the Pañca-tattva have Their seat; thus the Yogapītha is the holiest of all holy places. The circumference of Māyāpura is three and a half miles, and its diameter about one and a quarter miles."

Nityānanda continued, "Very soon, by the will of the Lord, this entire area will be submerged under the waters of the Ganges. Later, again by His will, this holy land will be revealed once more in all its glory. The holy land is eternal. It can never be lost, but it is sometimes hidden and sometimes visible. In this way, the appearance and disappearance of the divine abode of the Lord are like the rising and setting of the sun.

"Śrī Caitanya, My worshipable Lord, resides eternally in Māyāpura on the east bank of the Ganges. In the eyes of the common people the Lord took sannyāsa, left Nabadwīpa, and went elsewhere, but actually Śrī Caitanya never leaves Māyāpura or Nabadwīpa. Only devotees can perceive His daily pastimes. You too, Jīva, will see the dancing pastimes of Śrī Caitanya. Māyāpura is on the island of Antardwīpa, where Lord Brahmā was able to see Śrī Caitanya. O Jīva, if you want to see all these things, it will be fruitful for you to make a pilgrimage here."

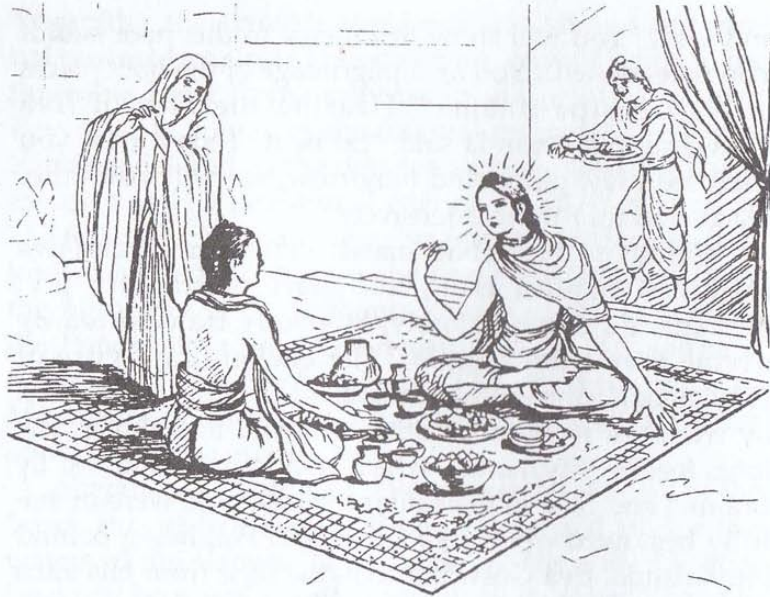
Jīva Goswāmī, upon hearing the words of Lord Nityānanda, fell at the Lord's feet with tears in his eyes

and said, "You will show real mercy to this poor soul if You take me with You on a pilgrimage of the holy places of Nabadwīpa-dhāma." Hearing the plea of Jīva Goswāmī, Nityānanda said, "So be it. Today, Jīva, you shall see Māyāpura. And tomorrow, we will visit other places and tour more extensively."

With these words Nityānanda Prabhu arose, and Jīva followed behind Him, his heart filled with joy. Nityānanda moved slowly, His body transported by divine love (*gaura-prema*). The enchanting figure of Nityānanda, covered with golden ornaments and moved by waves of spiritual emotion, glittered and shone. The lotus feet of Nityānanda, which could not be attained by Brahmā and Śiva in their divine meditation, were mercifully bestowed upon Jīva Goswāmī. Following behind Nityānanda, Jīva Goswāmī took the dust from His lotus feet and anointing himself with it and walked on with great eagerness.

They reached the home of Jagannātha Miśra. As Nityānanda Prabhu entered the house, He introduced Jīva Goswāmī to Śrī Śacīmātā, saying, "O Mother, here is Śrī Jīva. He is a high-minded soul and a dear servant of Śrī Caitanya who is extremely fortunate." As Nityānanda Prabhu spoke, Jīva fell over like a tree uprooted by a storm. Falling at Śacīdevī's feet and unable to speak, his body exhibited uncontrollable symptoms of ecstasy.

Out of her mercy Śacīmātā blessed him. That afternoon, in the house of Jagannātha Miśra, Nityānanda Prabhu and Jīva Goswāmī accepted *prasāda*. Viṣṇupriyādevī, on the order of Śacīmātā, cooked different kinds of rice, vegetables, chutneys, and sweets. Vamśivadana Ṭhākura carefully offered *bhoga* to the Deity of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Īśāna Ṭhākura, the old servant of Jagannātha Miśra's family who had been staying there



With motherly affection Śacīdevī invited Nityānanda Prabhu and Jīva Goswāmī to take prasāda at her home and fed them sumptuously.

since Nīmai Paṇḍita had taken sannyāsa, happily served Nityānanda Prabhu prasāda.

Out of motherly affection, Śacīdevī told Nityānanda, "Eat Your rice, my child! You are at Your mother's house now. Unseen by You, Nīmai has already taken His lunch. If You will also eat Your lunch, it will make me very happy." Hearing the motherly words of Śacīdevī, Nityānanda Prabhu enjoyed His lunch with great delight, and Jīva Goswāmī honored His remnants.

Jīva Goswāmī said, "I feel blessed to have the good fortune of taking prasāda in the home of Śrī Caitanya in Māyāpura." After lunch Nityānanda Prabhu took His leave of Śacīdevī's holy feet and took Vamśivadana Thākura with Him. Jīva Goswāmī offered his respects to

Vamśivadana's lotus feet, and Nityānanda explained to Jīva Goswāmī, "The devotees know that Vamśivadana is Kṛṣṇa's own dear flute, by whose mercy souls are attracted to Kṛṣṇa and thirstily drink the highest mellows of devotion.

"Look, Jīva. In this house Śrī Caitanya would take us in and we would perform wonderful pastimes. Just see—this is the temple of Jagannātha Miśra, where he used to do his daily worship of Viṣṇu. In this house he served his guests. There is the *tulāsī* bower. While he was still in this house, he performed all the duties his own father had done before him. Relying on the authoritative directions of Vamśivadana Thākura, Īśāna now performs those duties every day. Here there once grew a *nīm* tree. It disappeared by the divine touch of Śrī Caitanya."

As He described this, Nityānanda wept in separation and Vamśivadana also wept. Just then, Śrīvāsa Thākura approached out of curiosity. When he saw the party of devotees he joined them, and the four of them left the home of Jagannātha Miśra. Together, they walked two hundred meters south, until they came to the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Thākura known as Śrīvāsaṅgam. There Śrī Caitanya used to perform kīrtana. With His mind filled with transcendental pleasure, Nityānanda showed the house of Śrīvāsa to Jīva Goswāmī, who became overwhelmed with ecstasy as he remembered the pastimes of the Lord.

As Jīva gradually recovered, he had a vision of one of the Lord's pastimes. Śrī Caitanya was dancing with His intimate devotees. In that great kīrtan party he witnessed with joy the unprecedented dancing of Advaita Ācārya, Nityānanda Prabhu, Gadādhara Paṇḍita, and Haridāsa Thākura, who sang sweetly as they danced. The great devotee Śuklāmbara danced and was accompanied by

hundreds of other devotees who also danced blissfully. Seeing this, Jīva lost consciousness in the ecstasy of divine love.

Awakening and finding that his vision of the Lord's pastimes had vanished, he began to lament, crying, "Alas! Why was I not born a little earlier? I am so unfortunate! I was born too late to taste the ecstatic bliss of such a *kīrtana*. But Nityananda's mercy is unlimited. By His grace I have had a moment's good fortune. My only wish is to stay here in Māyāpura forever, so that the miseries of material existence will go far away! But the order of the Lord is stronger than this poor servant's desire, and so I must soon leave. Still, my heart is agitated at the thought of giving up Māyāpura."

At that time Nityānanda Prabhu took Jīva with Him to the house of Advaita, twenty meters to the north. There, He told Jīva, "Here is the house of Advaita Ācārya, where the Vaiṣṇavas used to meet to discuss Kṛṣṇa. Here, Advaita Prabhu worshiped Kṛṣṇa, and by His loud calls caused the treasure of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to descend into this world."

From there the four walked ten meters east to the house of Gadādhara Paṇḍita. In this way Nityānanda showed Jīva Goswāmī the houses of all the Lord's associates. After seeing the houses of the *brāhmaṇas*, those four great souls walked down to the banks of the Ganges with great delight. There, on the border of Māyāpura, Jīva Goswāmī saw the Vṛddha Śiva temple.

Nityānanda explained, "Lord Śiva is the guardian of this holy land of Māyāpura. This is the place where his eternal consort Prauḍhamāyā is eternally situated. When the Lord leaves this earthly plane, by His wish the Ganges will swell and inundate Māyāpura. It shall remain under water for one hundred years, after which

the floodwaters shall be withdrawn. No houses will stand there any longer, and thus it shall remain barren for some time. Later, by the will of the Lord, people shall again live in Māyāpura as before. All these *ghātas* on the banks of the Ganges will again become manifest, and devotees will build temples here. One exceedingly wonderful temple will appear from which eternal service to Śrī Caitanya will be preached everywhere. At that time Prauḍhamāyā will return, and by the Lord's will she will perform her duties of revealing His divine abode."

Hearing these words, Jīva Goswāmī folded his hands and, taking hold of Nityananda's lotus feet, said: "O Lord, You are the Ultimate Truth. The holy land, the holy name and the holy form of the Lord, all have their existence in You. Although as the guru of all living entities You act according to the will of the Lord, still You are understood to be the Supreme since all energies rest in You. Anyone who thinks there is a difference between You and Śrī Caitanya, O Lord, is counted among the atheists by the wise. O omniscient Supreme Lord! You have descended for the purpose of displaying Your pastimes, but one doubt has arisen within my heart. When the Ganges hides Māyāpura, where does Lord Śiva and his energy, his consort Prauḍhamāyā, go?"

Nityānanda said, "Jīva, listen carefully to My words. Look there on the western side of the Ganges. That high sandy shoal is known as Pāraḍānga. There lives a community of *brāhmaṇas*. North of that on the banks is Chinnā Ḍāngā. Śiva and his energy will stay for some time in a village which will be situated there in the future.

"Who can properly describe the glories of that place on the banks of the Ganges? It is the arena of the *rasa* dance. The fleshy eye can see only a sandy patch of land,

but in reality it is the holiest of holy places, decorated with transcendental jewels, where divine pastimes are constantly performed. Māyāpura is nondifferent from the great forest of Mahāvana in Gokula Vṛṇḍāvana, and Pāraḍāngā is Saṭ Ṭika, the rasa-maṇḍala of Vṛṇḍāvana. Later, the glories of this place will be loudly sung. You should understand that this Māyāpura, these riverbanks, and the Ganges here are all part of the holy abode of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Whoever wanders through these ten miles can see this Māyāpura, situated beautifully on the banks of the Ganges. Whoever makes this pilgrimage on the full moon day in the month of Phālgua (February-March) in the company of devotees will certainly attain the eternal treasure of divine love.

“O Jīva, listen to a secret. A beautiful Deity of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which was originally installed and worshiped by Viṣṇupriyā-devī, will soon come to this holy place, Saṭ Ṭika-dhāma, where it will be worshiped by *brāhmaṇa* decendents of Jagannātha Miśra’s family. Four years after the advent day of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the worship of this Deity will be restored to the highest standard. Keep these confidential truths to yourself, for they are not to be revealed at present. For now let us continue our pilgrimage in great transcendental bliss.”

Nityānanda continued, “Six meters from the bathing place known as Vṛddha Śiva Ghāṭa, you can see Śrī Caitanya’s own bathing place. In his childhood He played in those waters and performed many pranks. Seeing the good fortune of the Yamunā in whose waters Kṛṣṇa played, Gangādevī, the daughter of the Himālayas, engaged in penances so she could also achieve the Lord’s association. At last Kṛṣṇa bestowed His mercy upon Gangādevī and appeared before her. At

that time He told her, ‘Very soon, in a golden form as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I will sport and play in your waters.’ Those pastimes were performed here in the waters of the Ganges by the master of all three worlds, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.” Upon seeing that holy place known as Gaurānaga Ghāṭa, where the Lord used to bathe, Jīva Goswāmī became joyful.

Nityānanda continued, “One hundred meters north of here is the bathing place known as Mādhaighāṭa, and ten meters north of that is a beautiful ghāṭa which is attractive to all the townspeople. This exceedingly beautiful bathing place is called Bārakoṇā Ghāṭa. It was constructed by Viśvakarmā on the order of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. At this spot you will see five Śiva temples with their Śiva lingas, all self-effulgent and brilliant. These four ghāṭas—Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s own ghāṭa, Vṛddha Śiva Ghāṭa, Mādhai’s ghāṭa, and Bārakoṇā Ghāṭa—increase the beauty of Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. A bath in any of these four bathing ghāṭas cleanses away all material miseries.

“East of Māyāpura is Antardwīpa. By the will of the Lord this place will remain uninhabited for many years. After some time people will again begin to live there and it will become famous as one of the glories of Nādia. Jīva, stay in Māyāpura today. Tomorrow we will go to Sīmantadwīpa.” Hearing this, Jīva Goswāmī said, “One question comes to my mind; please hear it. When the current of the Ganges at last shifts and uncovers Māyāpura, how will the devotees find the lost holy places? What signs will be left for them to discover?”

Nityānanda, relishing the nectarean words of Jīva Goswāmī, replied, “Listen, O Jīva. Although the Ganges will cover most of this place, one corner of Māyāpura will remain intact. Many nondevotees, or yavanas, will live there, and it will continue to be known as Māyāpura.

About one thousand meters to the southwest one will be able to see a mound of earth covered with shrubs. This will indicate the site of Jagannātha Misra's house. Thirty-three feet from there the Vṛddha Śiva temple will be found, and from such measurements one will be able to understand where all the other lost holy places are located. A pool called Śiva Dobā will be seen. That will mark the place where the banks of the Ganges had formerly been. In this way, by the will of the Lord, the devotees will reveal the lost holy places. Know this for certain: at the end of four hundred years, the task of recovering the lost holy places will begin."

Śrī Jīva Goswāmī said, "My Lord, why is this place called Antardwīpa?" Nityānanda explained, "At the end of the Dvāpara-yuga Lord Brahmā performed severe penances and austerities to get the mercy of Śrī Caitanya. Lord Brahmā had stolen the cowherd boys and calves of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by his mystic power but was defeated by the master of all mystics, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "Realizing the great offence he had committed, Lord Brahmā became most unhappy. He offered many beautiful prayers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of Vṛndāvana, begged forgiveness, and was ultimately pardoned by the Lord.

"Then Brahmā began to consider, 'I am thinking that I am the creator of the universe, but this is a useless mentality. By thinking in this way, I have cheated myself out of divine love of Kṛṣṇa and the ecstasy of the mellows of Vṛndāvana. If only I could have taken my birth as a cowherd boy in Vṛndāvana, I would have had the chance to serve Kṛṣṇa, the master of the gopīs. I was unable to achieve the ambrosial mellows of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but I shall not fall victim to this useless egotism when Caitanya Mahāprabhu performs His pastimes.'

"Thinking in this way, Lord Brahmā went to

Antardwīpa, where he performed austerities and penances in deep meditation for a long time. At last, one day, Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to bestow His mercy on Lord Brahmā. He said, 'O Brahmā, I am satisfied with your austerities. I have come to give you whatever you want.'

"Opening his eight eyes, the four-headed Brahmā, who had been absorbed in meditation, beheld Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and fell to the ground unconscious. The Lord placed His lotus foot upon Brahmā's heads, and Lord Brahmā, enlightened with divine knowledge, began to sing the glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu."

Nityānanda continued, "Lord Brahmā began to pray as follows: 'I am low, worthless and controlled by pride. Forgetting your lotus feet, I have become absorbed in the mellows of material life. Lord Śiva, Lord Indra, all the demigods and myself are subordinate to You; we are Your slaves. This is stated in the scriptures, but we are not as fortunate as Your pure devotees and so *māyā* covers us with the net of illusion."

"The first hundred trillion years of my life have now passed and I have finally been forced to this realization. How will I spend my next hundred trillion years? If I remain in illusion, I will simply suffer. My only prayer is that I may become Your associate in Your earthly pastimes. Giving up the illusion that I am the creator of the universe, I want only to take birth in Your association and sing Your glories.'

"Hearing the prayers of Lord Brahmā, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, 'So be it,' and bestowed upon him the treasure of divine love, saying: 'When My pastimes become visible on Earth, you will take birth in a *yavana* family. You will become famous for your humility as

Nabadwīpa-Dhāma Māhātmya

Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Completely free of all pride, you will chant three hundred thousand names of Kṛṣṇa daily. Passing from this world, you will see Me, and at the end of the second hundred trillion years of your life, you will attain Nabadwīpa-dhāma, absorbed in the eternal mellows of divine love.

“Now hear these most confidential words, O Brahmā, for this is not clear in the scripture for all to see. Taking the position of a devotee, I will reveal the saṅkīrtana movement to inaugurate the chant-ing of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. In this way I will taste the nectar of the mellows of devotion. I will make all the devotees of all the previous *avatāras* intoxicated with the nectar of Vṛṇḍāvana. To experience the love that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī has for Me, I will appear with Her sentiments and complexion. Taking Her position, I will taste that happiness which only She obtains in serving Me. From today act as My disciple and, as Haridāsa Ṭhākura, serve Me eternally.’

“Saying this, Caitanya Mahāprabhu became invisible. At that time Brahmā fell to the ground and in a half conscious state cried out, ‘O Caitanya Mahāprabhu! Friend of the fallen! Dearest to the devotees! When will I attain the shelter of Your lotus feet?’ In this way he wept for many days and then returned to Brahmāloka to finish His work.” Here Nityānanda concluded his talks with Jīva Goswāmī on Antardwīpa.

Always praying for the mercy of Jāhnavā-devī and Nityānanda Prabhu and aspiring for the shade of Their lotus feet, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who considers himself most fallen, sings the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.



SIMANTADWIPA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya, the son of Śacīdevī. All glories to Nityānanda, the life of Jāhnavā. All glories to Śrī Advaita Ācārya Prabhu, the husband of Sītā. All glories to Gadādhara Paṇḍita. All glories to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and all the devotees of the Lord.

Early the next morning Nityānanda Prabhu left with Śrīvāsa and Jīva Goswāmī. Joining up with Rāmadāsa and other devotees, they chanted the holy name of Śrī Caitanya in *saṅkīrtana* as they continued on their way. When they came to the very edge of Antardwīpa, Nityānanda pointed out the holy place known as Gangānagar to Jīva Goswāmī, saying: “O Jīva, listen carefully. Gangānagar was founded by the great King Bhagīratha of the Raghu dynasty. He arranged for the descent of the Ganges into this world in order to bathe

the ashes of his ancestors in her holy waters, thus delivering them.

“When the Ganges descended, King Bhagīratha raced in front of her in his chariot, leading the way while blowing a conchshell. When the Ganges arrived at Nabadwīpa-dhāma, however, she stood still and would not go any further. Seeing this, King Bhagīratha became afraid that the Ganges would remain there forever and that his ancestors would never benefit from her holy waters. Retracing his steps, he returned to where the Ganges had stopped at this place, now known as Gangānagar. Here he began performing austerities until the goddess Gangādevī, the personified Ganges, became pleased with him and appeared before him. At that time Bhagīratha said, ‘O Mother Ganges, if you remain here, my forefathers will never be delivered.’

“Gangādevī said, ‘Listen, O heroic Bhagīratha. Just stay here for a few days. The month of Māgha (January-February) has now come to Nabadwīpa. When the month of Phālgūṇa (February-March) ends, I shall leave this place and go on, fulfilling the desires of your forefathers. O Bhagīratha, I am the water that washes the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. At this place, His own divine abode, I would like to have my desires fulfilled. On the full moon day of Phālgūṇa, the birthday of the Lord, my vow will be completed. At that time I will certainly go with you. Have no fear.’”

Nityānanda concluded, “Here in Gangānagar, Mahārāja Bhagīratha, the king of the Raghu dynasty, stayed until the full moon day of the month of Phālgūṇa. And so, anyone who bathes in the Ganges, fasts, and worships Śrī Caitanya on the full moon day of Phālgūṇa crosses over the material ocean of birth and death along with one thousand of his ancestors. Such a great soul



When the Ganges descended into this world, King Bhāgīratha swiftly raced ahead of her in his chariot, directing the path of the rushing waters.

will, at the time of death, attain the transcendental planet of Goloka. This holy place known as Gangānagar is even more glorious because Śrī Caitanya danced here many times. Over there are the houses of Gangādāsa Paṇḍita, Śrī Caitanya's grammar teacher, and Sanjaya dāsa, the famous singer who could chant the names of Kṛṣṇa very sweetly. All these holy places are very pleasing to see.

"Now hear the glories of this pond to the east. It is now known as Ballāl Dīrghikā and has been described several times during the Satya-yuga. When the mighty King Pṛthu began his grand program of cutting down the hills and leveling the Earth for cultivation, a great effulgence came forth from this place. When the workers told the king, he came to see that supernatural phenomenon, although being an incarnation of Godhead (*śaktyāveśa avatāra*), he knew this place to be Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Keeping the glories of this holy place secret at that time, he ordered that a pond be established here. From then on it became known as Pṛthu-kuṇḍa. Upon drinking its pure water, the villagers felt indescribable bliss. Later the King of Bengal, Lakṣman Sen, excavated and enlarged this pond. To deliver his forefathers, he named it Ballāl Dīrghikā after his father, Ballāl Sen."

Nityānanda continued, "On that beautiful hill over there stood Lakṣman Sen's house, which has since been destroyed by the passing of time. In order to become enriched with piety, various kings contributed great wealth to decorate this holy place. And now, because the heathen *yavana* kings have desecrated the place, the devotees no longer worship here. The place itself is still very pure, but for fear of contamination by the *yavanas*, no one lives there. Because horrible offenses were made to the Deity of the Lord here, the devotees left."

Saying this with a roar like a lion, Lord Nityānanda

went on to nearby Sīmuliyārāma and explained the glories of that holy place to Jīva Goswāmī. He said, "This edge of Nabadwīpa, here on the south bank of the Ganges, is known to saints as Sīmantadwīpa. In time the Ganges will cover all but one small portion of this land. That place will be known as Sīmuliyā, where the sensually-minded people will worship Pārvatī, the wife of Śiva, as the Divine Mother.

"Listen, and I shall tell you the history of this place. Once, in Satya-yuga, Śiva, crying the name of Śrī Caitanya, began dancing madly. At that time Pārvatī became curious to know who Caitanya Mahāprabhu was.

"She said, 'By seeing your astonishing dance and hearing the name of Śrī Caitanya, my heart is melting. Up until now, I have only heard of materialistic tantras and mantras. But these rituals simply lead to the soul's further entanglement in this material world. My dear husband, please tell me about Śrī Caitanya. I think that by worshiping Him, I may achieve actual life.'"

Nityānanda continued, "While meditating on Śrī Caitanya, Śiva heard the words of Pārvatī and replied, 'Unto you who are the divine energy of the Supreme Lord, a partial expansion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, I shall now explain the crest-jewel of all truths. Accepting the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the Supreme Lord will descend in the age of Kali at Māyāpura as the son of Śacī. His beautiful body shining like a golden jewel, the Lord, intoxicated with His pastimes of chanting the holy name in *kīrtana*, will distribute the nectar of divine love. Alas for the fate of one who doesn't taste a drop of the flood of love of Godhead! His life is wasted. Just remembering the promise of the Lord that He will come, I am drowning in the ocean of divine love. Unable to maintain my

patience, I have given up my own city of Kāśī and have come to Nabadwīpa. Here, on the banks of the Ganges, I will live in a hut and worship Śrī Caitanya.”

Nityānanda continued, “Hearing Lord Śiva’s words, the beautiful Pārvatī hurried to Sīmantadwīpa. Constantly meditating on the form of Śrī Caitanya and vibrating His holy name, she became immersed in divine love. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in a mood of mercy and magnanimity, suddenly appeared before her with His associates. His complexion was the color of molten gold. His arms were long, His curling hair beautiful. He wore a long *dhoti*, folded in three places, and a garland of flowers swung from His neck. In this way He was very beautiful to behold.”

“His voice faltering in the ecstasy of divine love, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, ‘O Pārvatī, why have you come here?’ Pārvatī fell at His lotus feet and with an agitated mind explained her sorrow: ‘O Lord of the Universe,’ she prayed, ‘Although You are merciful to all, You are the cause of my distress. O deliverer of the fallen, You have given me jurisdiction over all living beings who turn away from You, and I must keep them bound in the material world. I have come into the material world to do this work and have thus been cheated out of the unlimited divine love that You are distributing. I am Māyā, illusion personified. It is said that wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, there is no *māyā*. Because of this I must always remain within the material world, outside Your spiritual realm. How will I ever see Your pastimes? If You do not offer me a way, I am completely without hope.’”

Nityānanda explained, “Saying this, the chaste Pārvatī in great anxiety took the dust from the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya and placed it in the part in her hair. (This part in a lady’s hair is called *sīmantā* and is anointed with

vermilion at the time of marriage.) This is how this place became called Sīmantadwīpa. The common people call it Sīmuliya.

“Being pleased with Pārvatī-devī, Śrī Caitanya told her, ‘Listen carefully to My words, O supreme goddess. As My energy you are nondifferent from Me. My divine energy takes two forms. Within the spiritual world Śrī Rādhā is the original form of My internal energy. When My divine energy manifests its external feature within this material world, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the supreme feminine principle, is represented as yourself. Without you My pastimes could not be accomplished, for as Yogamāyā in the spiritual world, your assistance is so necessary to enhance My *līlā*. In Vraja you are eternally present as Paurṇamāsī, and in Nabadwīpa you are present as Prauḍhamāyā along with Śiva, the guardian of the holy *dhāma*.’”

Nityānanda concluded, “Saying this, Śrī Caitanya disappeared. Pārvatī was overcome with the ecstasy of divine love. Filled with love of Godhead, she remains there in her own form as the mistress of Sīmantadwīpa, and in her form as Prauḍhamāyā she stays in Māyāpura.”

Having narrated this story, Nityānanda Prabhu took Jīva Goswāmī with Him and quickly entered Kāzi Nagara. There He told Jīva Goswāmī: “O Jīva, listen carefully. Kāzi Nagara is none other than Mathurā. Here, after performing kīrtana, Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered the Kāzi, the Muslim Mayor of Nabadwīpa, and bestowed upon him the jewel of love of Godhead. In his previous life the Chand Kāzi of Nabadwīpa had been the cruel King Kaṁsa of Mathurā. In the same way that Kaṁsa was Kṛṣṇa’s uncle, the Kāzi was Śrī Caitanya’s uncle.

“After the Kāzi stopped the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa and broke the *mr̥ḍāṅga* drum, everyone took shelter of Śrī Caitanya, fearing the Kazi’s wrath. The Kāzi was under orders from Hussein Shah, the Muslim King of Bengal. In his former life the Shah had been the demonic Jarāsandha in Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. The Lord, in His half-man, half-lion form of Nṛsimha, struck fear into the heart of the Kāzi. Just as cruel King Kaṁsa had been struck with fear, knowing that Kṛṣṇa would kill him, the Kāzi was filled with terror beholding the power of the Lord. Instead of killing him, however, as Kṛṣṇa killed Kaṁsa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu bestowed divine love of Godhead upon the Kāzi, who became the best of devotees. Whoever hears this story of the Kazi’s deliverance is most fortunate.”

Nityānanda concluded, “Just see the difference between Vṛndāvana and Nabadwīpa: those who offended Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana attained impersonal liberation, merging into the Lord’s effulgence, whereas those who commit offenses in Nabadwīpa achieve the treasure of love of Godhead. Because they are filled with mercy, the pastimes of Caitanya Mahāprabhu may therefore be considered the highest expression of divinity. The holy name, abode, form, and qualities of Śrī Caitanya are so merciful that they do not consider any offenses. As long as any offenses remain within a devotee’s heart, the holy name and abode of Kṛṣṇa will deliver him only after a long time. On the other hand, simply by chanting the holy name of Śrī Caitanya and by visiting the holy land of Śrī Caitanya, one quickly attains divine love. Offenses are no obstacle, because here in Nabadwīpa a devotee can conquer over them very easily. O Jīva, one who visits this place and sees the *samādhī* of the Kāzi will soon be released from the pains of material existence.”

Nityānanda Prabhu, His voice choked with the ecstasy of *prema*, then quickly moved on to Śaṅkhavanik Nagara. There He told Jīva Goswāmī: “This place you see here before you is called Śara Ḍāṅgā. It is quite a wonderful sight. Even the name is beautiful. Here Lord Jagannātha lives with the hunters known as *śabaras*. After the Lord killed the Raktabāhu demon, He came here out of His mercy to live eternally.”

Going past Tanturāya Grāma, they saw the cottage of Kholavecā Śrīdhara. Nityānanda Prabhu said, “At this place Śrī Caitanya held *kīrtana* and took rest, having bestowed His mercy upon His devotees. And so it is called Visrāma Sthāna, the place of resting. Let us also take rest here at the house of Kholavecā Śrīdhara.”

Hearing the arrival of Nityānanda Prabhu, Kholavecā Śrīdhara came out, paid his full obeisances, and offered worship to the Lord. “O Lord,” he said, “You are very merciful to this servant of Yours. I beg You to take rest here.” Nityānanda replied, “You are most fortunate, for the Lord showed His mercy to you. This afternoon we shall rest here.”

Hearing this, Śrīdhara’s desire to serve the Lord was fulfilled. With great affection he gathered ingredients for cooking and arranged for some devotee brāhmaṇas to prepare lunch. When Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura had finished taking their meals, Jīva Goswāmī ate their remnants with great bliss. Śrīdhara then made Nityānanda Prabhu lie down on a bed, and with Vamśivadana he raised up the Lord’s lotus feet.

Later that afternoon Śrīdhara took Jīva to see Ṣaṣṭhi Tīrtha. Śrīvāsa said, “Listen, Jīva. Once upon a time, when the demigods heard that Śrī Caitanya would descend at Nabadwīpa, Viśvakarmā, the architect of the gods, came to Nādia. He saw that it would be hard for

Nabadwīpa-Dhāma Māhātmya

the devotees to obtain water on the roads where the Lord would perform *saṅkīrtana*. So that the devotees would have ample water, Viśvakarmā dug six wide ponds in one night. The last pond he dug is here in Kazigram. Near Śrīdhara's beautiful banana patch, you can see that pond. There, as Nimai Paṇḍita, Śrī Caitanya would sometimes play in the water, and there he would steal Śrīdhara's bananas. Even now Śrīdhara gathers the banana flowers and banana stem vegetables that grow and brings them to Śacī with great happiness."

Śrīvāsa continued, "Beside this place is Māyāmāri. Listen carefully and I shall explain its history, which is described in the Purāṇas. Once, while Balarāma was on His pilgrimage, He arrived in Nabadwīpa to rest. The *brāhmaṇas* told Him about the demon known as Māyāsura. Hearing about the disturbance the demon had been causing, Balarāma went forth with great fury to meet him in the field. A great battle began between Balarāma and Māyāsura, and finally the demon was killed.

"Since then the place has been called Māyāmāri, the place where Māyāsura was killed. This is the ancient history of this holy place. In Vṛndāvana this holy place is called Tālavana, and it is visible only to those who are most fortunate." That night they all stayed there, and the next day, crying "Hari! Hari!" they continued their pilgrimage.

This humble servant, Bhaktivinoda, whose only wish is to attain the shade of the lotus feet of Jāhnavā-devī and Nityānanda Prabhu, thus reveals the glories of Nādia.



GODRUMADWIPA Part One

All glories to Śrī Gauracandra! All glories to Nityānanda! All glories to Advaita Ācārya, and all glories to Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita. All glories to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and all the devotees who are devoted to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet. All glories to the holy land of Nabadwīpa.

Leaving Visrāma Sthāna, the party proceeded to Suvarna Bihār. There Nityānanda said, "O Jīva, this is a wonderful place. Like the rest of Nabadwīpa, it transcends material existence. Long ago, during Satya-yuga, the famous king Suvarna Sen lived here in Nabadwīpa. For many years he was deeply involved in the affairs of the state and absorbed in ruling his kingdom. Although he was fast growing old, he could take no rest from his labors. His heart was filled with materialistic hankering

and he was always thinking of how to increase his wealth.

“One day, by some great fortune, King Suvarna Sen was visited by Nārada Muni. The king received him lavishly and offered opulent worship to Nārada. Nārada bestowed his mercy on the king by personally instructing him in the highest spiritual truths. Nārada told him: ‘O king, you are uselessly passing your days thinking only of riches and profits. You should know that your “wealth” is worthless. Divine knowledge is supreme wealth. For once, consider this deeply: neither your wife, sons, nor friends belong to you. At death no one owns anything. When you die and your ashes are scattered in the river, you will be forced to leave behind everything you have gathered in your house. Why maintain false hopes for happiness in this temporary world? A mirage can not quench ones thirst. If you can tell me how I can become happy in this world without suffering any pain, I will certainly join you in your quest for wealth. But the promise of material happiness is a lie, my dear king. This mortal life is short and barely lasts a hundred years. Know this to be essential: you must go beyond this world of illusion to the place where there is no pain—only happiness.’”

Nityānanda continued, “Śrī Nārada said, ‘How can one reach that world where there is neither fear nor pain nor grief? It will not be possible through knowledge or renunciation alone, although by following that path one may become free from material bondage and attain oneness with Brahman. In oneness, however, there is no ecstasy. In fact, oneness is an act of spiritual suicide that defies the Personality of Godhead. One who practices knowledge and renunciation may become free from this negative world, but he gains nothing positive. Just con-



Śrī Nārada bestowed his mercy upon King Suvarna Sena by personally instructing him in the highest spiritual truths.

sider this aspect of the realization attained through oneness.

“One who is truly wise strives neither to exploit this world nor to renounce it, but dedicates himself to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This dedication to Godhead is done without attraction for material gain but only out of devotion for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Devotion, or *bhakti*, may be divided into three parts. The first is *sambandha*, or understanding the relationship between the soul and the Supreme Soul, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The second is called *abidheya*, or the means for realizing that relationship. And finally there is *prayojana*, the ultimate goal of life.

“The relationship of the soul to Kṛṣṇa is that of servant to master. Devotion is the only means of success in self-realization; without devotion to Kṛṣṇa, everything is useless. And the fruit of the tree of *bhakti* is divine love, *Kṛṣṇa-prema*. That fruit is the ultimate necessity, the goal of life, and the eternal treasure of all souls. Material enjoyment and liberation are insignificant by comparison.

“Kṛṣṇa is compared to the sun because His self-effulgent transcendental bliss, divine knowledge, and pastimes of beauty illuminate the entire spiritual world. *Māyā* is compared to a shadow. The *jīva* souls are compared to an atomic ray of the Kṛṣṇa sun: they are marginal potency. If the soul falls under the spell of *māyā*, or misconception, he becomes bound by darkness. One who turns away from Kṛṣṇa contacts *māyā*. Entangled in the misconception of independence, he accepts responsibility for all his actions and suffers their reactions (*karma*).

“Thus the soul, ignorant of the laws of action and reaction, is tossed by the waves of death’s dark ocean. When he thinks of how to escape from his pains, he tries

performing the sacrificial rituals of the Vedas for good karma. Sometimes he accepts the eightfold path of yoga or attempts self-realization through knowledge of Brahman. Sometimes he tries to extricate himself with the help of reason. None of these paths, however, proves successful, and he remains unmindful of the treasure within his own soul.

“While continuously wandering throughout this material universe, one who is fortunate achieves the company of saints and imbibes from them faith (*śraddhā*) in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the company of those saints (*sādhu-sanga*) he worships and serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*bhajana*), giving up his former bad habits (*anārtha-nivṛtti*). His devotion gradually becomes firm (*niṣṭhā*). As he advances further he develops a real taste for the service of the Lord (*ruci*), which becomes unflinching attachment (*āsakti*), maturing in ecstatic affection (*bhāva*), and finally divine love (*prema*). These are the stages in the development of pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

“Hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshiping, bowing down, servitude, friendship, and self-surrender—these are the ninefold processes of *bhakti*, or dedication to Godhead. One who performs these in the association of devotees attains *Kṛṣṇa-prema*, divine love.

“You are most fortunate, O king, for you are a resident of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. By living in the holy land, you have begun your good fortune, for here you can easily have the association of saints. As your faith grows in the company of saints and you sing the holy name and wonderful qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, divine love will rise like the sun within your heart.

“But in Kali-yuga even greater wealth will be available here in Nabadwīpa. At that time Śrī Kṛṣṇa, along with His associates, will descend to perform His pas-

times as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He who calls on the name of Śrī Caitanya will quickly receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and reach the divine abode of Vṛndāvana. One who goes on worshiping Kṛṣṇa without calling for the help of Śrī Caitanya will reach Kṛṣṇa only after a long time. But one who takes the name of Śrī Caitanya quickly attains Kṛṣṇa, for the holy name of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is so merciful that He accepts no offenses.”

Nityānanda Prabhu continued His narration: “Having spoken thus, Nārada became overwhelmed and began crying out the name of Śrī Caitanya, dancing, and chanting ‘Gaurahari bol, Gaurahari bol, Gaurahari bol!’ Nārada’s mystical lute, his *vinā*, also began to sing, ‘O Gaurahari! When will the blessed Kali-yuga come?’

“With this Nārada went off, and divine love arose like the morning sun within the heart of King Suvarna Sen. Crying the name of Caitanya Mahāprabhu like a madman and begging love of Godhead from the devotees, he became free from all material desires. Later, in his sleep, the king saw Śrī Gaura and Gadādhara with Their eternal associates and devotees dancing in the courtyard. Surrounding the golden form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the multitudes were shouting ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa!’ while dancing and embracing one another.

“When he awoke from his dream, the king began weeping in great anguish out of separation from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Suddenly a divine voice spoke from the heavens, saying, ‘O king, when I appear on Earth, you will be among My associates. Your name will be Buddhimānta Khān, and at that time you will attain service in the holy abode of Nabadwīpa-dhāma at the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.’ Hearing the voice from the sky, King Suvarna Sen composed himself and began to worship Śrī Caitanya.”

When Nityānanda had finished narrating this story about Nārada Muni and King Suvarna Sen, Śrīvāsa Thākura, who is himself the incarnation of Nārada, fell unconscious. Overcome by great ecstasy and intoxicated with the nectar of Śrī Caitanya’s holy name, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī also fell to the ground unconscious.

Jīva Goswāmī began to cry, “O Mahāprabhu! When will I ever see You here? When will I see that brilliant golden jewel Śrī Caitanya?” At that time the *kīrtana* of Śrī Caitanya was revealed to him in all its splendor. As his eyes drank the nectar of that vision, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu began dancing, while Nityānanda and Advaita began to sing the divine qualities of the Lord in the great assembly of devotees who had gathered there to chant. As the drums and cymbals played, the song grew sweeter. In this way the *kīrtana* pastimes of Śrī Caitanya that had once taken place there were recreated. The *kīrtana* lasted six hours, and the ecstasy it produced is impossible to describe.

At length Jīva Goswāmī and the others went on to Deva Polli, loudly singing the glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In that village they rested as the guests of Lord Nṛsīmhadeva, the presiding Deity. They took their noon meals there and that evening they went strolling through Deva Polli just as the sun was setting.

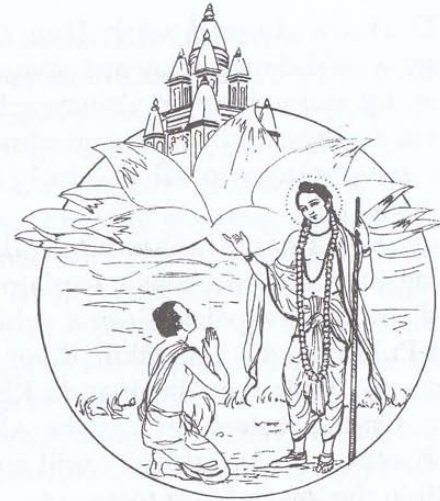
Nityānanda Prabhu began explaining the importance of that place. He said, “This town is known as Deva Polli. Here, Nṛsīmhadeva, the half-man, half-lion incarnation of the Lord is worshiped. Out of mercy for His devotee Prahāda, Nṛsīmhadeva appeared and killed the great demon Hiranyakāśipu. Having slain the demon, the Lord came here to rest.

“After that, to worship the Lord, Brahmā and the other demigods made their homes here and began this

town. On the bank of the Mandākinī River, on top of a hill, this village called Nṛsīmhakṣetra was established. Everyone was absorbed in the worship of Nṛsīmhadeva. If you look over there, you will see the homes of Surya, the sun-god, and Brahmā, the creator. To the east is the place where Lord Nṛsīmhadeva Himself actually took rest. Over there is where Gaṇeśa made his home, and on that side is where Indra, the king of demigods, made his home.

“Although Viśvakarmā, the architect of the gods, arranged the construction of hundreds of palaces made of jewels here, in time they were all destroyed. The Mandākinī River dried up, and now only these mounds of earth mark the original places where the demigods made their homes. These countless broken stones are the only remnants of the great temples they once built. One day in the future, a great devotee king will receive a drop of mercy from Lord Nṛsīmhadeva and build another temple here. He will install the Deity of Nṛsīmhadeva and establish His worship once again. Although Deva Polli is on the boundary of the pilgrimage path that encircles the holy land of Nabadwīpa, still it lies within the thirty-two-mile circle of the *dhāma* and is considered to be within Nabadwīpa-dhāma.”

The fallen Bhaktivinoda, whose only wealth is the lotus feet of Nitāi and Jāhnava-devī, thus sings the unlimited glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma, giving up the net of worldly illusion.



8

GODRUMADWIPA Part Two

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the son of Śacī. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to Śrī Advaita Ācārya, the husband of Sītādevī and king of devotees. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara and the assembly of devotees. All glories to the beautiful Nabadwīpa-dhāma, and all glories to the holy name of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Nityānanda Prabhu, Jīva Goswāmī, Śrīyāsa Ṭhākura, and the other devotees continued on their pilgrimage, chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in *saṅkīrtana*. Nityānanda Prabhu was floating on waves of ecstasy and drowning in divine love. His voice was faltering, and with tears streaming down His lotus face He cried out “Gaura! Gaura!” His sparkling ornaments danced upon His beautiful divine form, illuminating all ten directions.

Śrīvāsa Thākura danced with Jīva Goswāmī. Sometimes they would dance in joy and sometimes they would weep in separation from Śrī Caitanya. In this way all the devotees, dancing and dancing, gradually continued on their pilgrimage to all the holy places in Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

As they arrived near Alakānanda, Nityānanda Prabhu, floating in waves of ecstasy, explained, "From west of the village of Bilvapakṣa Grāma, which is now known as Bela-Pukuriyā, the Mandākinī River surrounds Nādia. At Suvarna Bihār the Alakānanda River leaves the Mandākinī. On the eastern bank of the Alakānanda, at Hari Hara Ksetra, a beautiful Deity will someday be discovered within the lovely forest there.

"Look west of the Alakānanda River and you can see Kāśī, the abode of Śiva. There, Śiva and his consort Pārvatī are worshiped by their followers. The Kāśī of Nabadwīpa is superior to the Kāśī of Benares, because here Śiva is always dancing and chanting the holy name of Śrī Caitanya and begging his followers to dedicate themselves to Him.

"The salvation which *sannyāsīs* obtain by cultivation of knowledge for a thousand years in Kāśī is obtained in Nabadwīpa by devotees who simply chant the name of Śrī Caitanya and dance. At the time of leaving their bodies, they are delivered by Śiva, who shouts the name of Śrī Caitanya into their ears. This holy place is thus called Mahā-Vārāṇāsī, for here there is no fear of death."

At that moment Nityānanda Prabhu, dancing, asked Jīva Goswāmī to accept divine love of Śrī Caitanya. Invisible to everyone, Śiva and Pārvatī came forward and bowed at Nityānanda's lotus feet. Śiva and his consort achieved the fulfillment of all their hearts' desires from Him and went off repeatedly

singing the name of Śrī Caitanya.

Nityānanda Prabhu walked with the devotees to the village of Gādīgāchā. When He arrived there, He spoke with a smile: "This place is called Godrumadwīpa. Surabhī, the desire-cow of Indra, resides here eternally. When Indra, the king of demigods and lord of rain, was overwhelmed with illusion and pride, he flooded Gokula with rain. At that time Śrī Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhan Hill and protected Gokula. His pride crushed, Indra recognized Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Lord and fell at His lotus feet to beg forgiveness. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, being an ocean of mercy, forgave Indra, but Indra continued to be fearful of the sin he had committed.

"Approaching Surabhī, he said, 'Because I could not understand Kṛṣṇa's pastimes I committed a great offense. I have heard that in the Kali-yuga, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Mahārāja Nanda, will perform wonderful pastimes in Nabadwīpa. But I hesitate to approach Him for fear of again falling into illusion and offending Him. As you are a *surabhī*, a desire-cow, you know everything. Kindly help me solve this dilemma.'"

Nityānanda continued: "Surabhī answered Indra by saying, 'Let us go to Nabadwīpa-dhāma and worship Nimai Paṇḍita. He is Kṛṣṇa appearing in His most magnanimous feature as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.' Arriving in Nabadwīpa, Indra and Surabhī began to worship Śrī Caitanya. Since the worship of Śrī Caitanya is very easy, its results are easily attained. By constantly repeating His name, tears of ecstasy filled their eyes, and soon they received a visit from the Lord.

"The Lord's beautiful transcendental form was full of charm and wonder. He was laughing and bubbling over with the nectar of divine love. Śrī Caitanya said, 'I know your wish. Very soon I will appear in Nabadwīpa. At

that time you will serve Me, and the net of illusion will no longer bind you.' The Lord vanished, but Surabhī remained here beside a banyan tree, constantly serving the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya. Therefore, the place is called Go-druma-dwīpa (cow-tree island)."

Nityānanda continued, "At this holy place, the spiritual desires of all saintly devotees are fulfilled. By building a cottage and worshiping here, one will soon attain the shelter of Śrī Caitanya's lotus feet.

"On this island, the son of Mṛkaṇḍa, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni, lived during the flood of devastation. The sage was destined to live for seven *kalpas*. This was the result of a benediction given by Lord Śiva. Seeing the great danger brought by the floodwaters of devastation, Mārkaṇḍeya began looking for shelter. As the waters rose, he was swept away by the waves of the tempest. As he was tossed upon the ocean in that great storm, he lamented, saying, 'Why was I cursed to live so long?'

"Fortunately, the holy land of Nabadwīpa remained untouched as a shelter for devotees. Submerged by the waves, the sage became unconscious. As he sank beneath the waters of devastation, the merciful *surabhī* cow saw him and rescued him by carefully pulling him to land. Upon regaining consciousness, the son of Mṛkaṇḍa saw the island of Godruma, an astonishing place extending for many, many miles in all directions. Brilliant streams and rivers flourished everywhere, trees and vines were flowering, and birds sang the glories of Śrī Caitanya.

"Mārkaṇḍeya heard a voice saying, 'Look at the banyan tree extending for eight miles in all directions. See the Surabhī there.' The sage approached Surabhī and said, 'O goddess, please save my life; be kind enough to give me some milk.' Surabhī was merciful and fed the sage with her milk. After regaining his strength, the sage

said to the cow, 'O goddess, O mother. Your mercy is well known throughout the universe. Unknowingly I received the boon to live for trillions of years without dying, and thus at the time of devastation I suffer greatly. All I do is constantly undergo miseries. There is no happiness here for me at all. Please tell me how I can become free from this unhappy condition.'"

Nityānanda continued, "Surabhī instructed him, saying, 'Worship the two lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Nabadwīpa is nonmaterial. It can never be destroyed. To the naked eye it measures thirty-two miles, but, actually, it contains the entire spiritual world. This place is free from all fault and illusion. Surrounding it is the spiritual river known as Virajā. Each of the nine islands of Nabadwīpa-dhāma is one billion *krośas* in diameter, and in the center lies Māyāpura, a vast city. The eight islands are the eight petals of that giant lotus, and the center of that lotus is Antardwīpa. All holy places, demigods, and *ṛṣīs* aspire to come and live here, worshiping Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

"For your own good, Mārkaṇḍeya, take shelter of the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Take shelter of pure devotion and give up the desire for enjoyment and liberation. By surrendering to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you will realize the highest sweetness of love of Godhead. When that pure devotion fills your heart, you will drown in the nectar of the Lord's artful pastimes. You will reach the shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in Vṛndāvana, and your heart will be fixed in serving Śrī Rādhā and Govinda. You should understand that the happiness of pure devotional service is unmatched, whereas the knowledge of oneness is useless.'"

Nityānanda concluded, "Hearing the words of



Mārkaṇḍeya Rṣi begged the Surabhī cow to help him get relief from the benediction he received to live for seven kalpas.

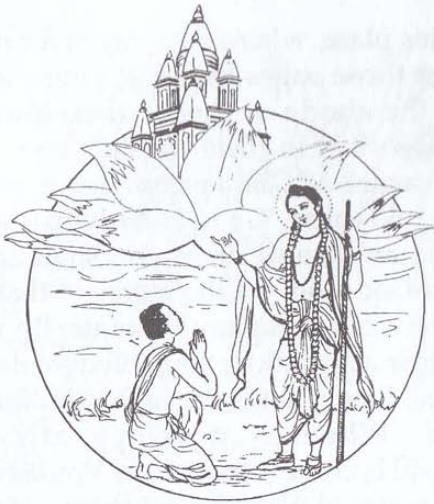
Surabhī, the sage folded his hands and said, 'If I take to the worship of Śrī Caitanya, what will be my fate?' Surabhī answered him by explaining the essence of all scriptural conclusions. She said, 'There is no consideration of offenses in the worship of Śrī Caitanya. As soon as you call upon the name of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, all sinful reactions are destroyed. At that time one

becomes free from distress and is no longer bound to this world of birth and death. One becomes free not only from the reactions of karma, but from the doubts and suspicions which attack faith. Considering all this, submerge yourself in the ecstasy of devotional mellows by worshiping Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.'

"Hearing this, Mārkaṇḍeya was filled with bliss. He began shouting the name of Śrī Caitanya, laughing and crying with tears of joy. And this is that wonderful place where Mārkaṇḍeya received new life."

Jīva Goswāmī, hearing the glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu from the lotus mouth of Nityānanda Prabhu, felt supreme happiness. After spending the day at that sacred place, they continued on to Madhyadwīpa.

Knowing that the lotus feet of Nitāi and Jāhnavā are the essence of life, Bhaktivinoda sings the glories of Nādia, following Their orders.



MADHYADWIPA Part One

A

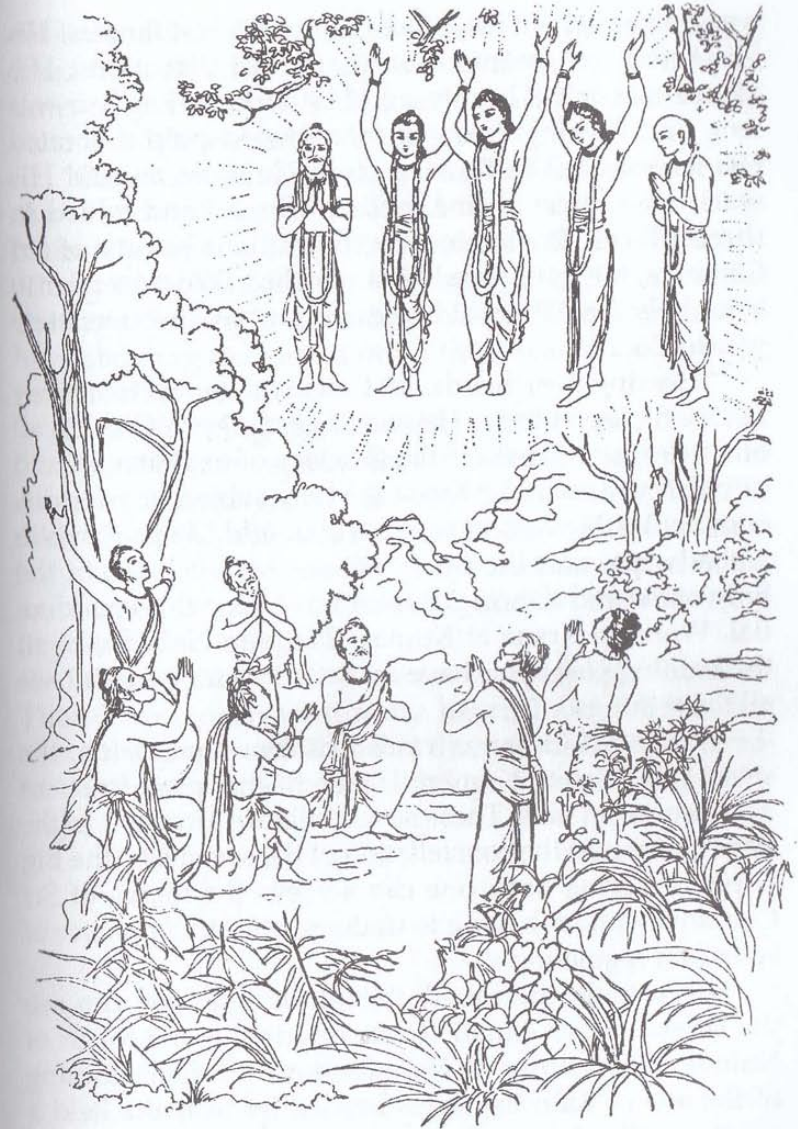
ll glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the golden moon. All glories to Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita. All glories to Śrīvāsa Thākura and all the devotees of the Lord. All glories to Śrī Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the home of devotees and the king of all holy places.

When the night had ended, Nityānanda Prabhu, intoxicated with songs of Śrī Caitanya, left that place. Taking the devotees with Him, He continued on to visit other holy places. As they walked along, absorbed in love of Godhead, they distributed their ecstasy to whomever they met on the way.

When they arrived in Madhyadwīpa, Nityānanda Prabhu began laughing and said: "This is Majīdagrāma. The great sages known as the seven ṛṣīs worshiped Śrī

Caitanya at this place, where they stayed for many years. In Satya-yuga those sages began singing the glories of Caitanya in the abode of their father, Lord Brahmā. Completely absorbed in their worship, they begged for the eternal treasure of *Gaura-prema*. Being very pleased, Lord Brahmā told them, 'Go to Nabadwīpa, sing the glories of Śrī Caitanya, and there you shall easily attain divine love of Godhead. By the mercy of that holy land, you will achieve the company of saints. By worshiping the Lord in their association, you will dive deep into the ocean of divine love. That is the highest fulfillment to be experienced. Whoever develops attraction for Nabadwīpa will become a resident of Vṛndāvana. To live in the divine realm of Nabadwīpa-dhāma and chant the name of Śrī Caitanya is the only aspiration of true saints.'

"Following the instructions of their father, the seven *ṛṣīs* came here, chanting the name of Hari, dancing and begging for *Gaura-prema*, and loudly singing the glories of Śrī Caitanya, saying, 'O Gaurahari, have mercy on us and allow us to see You just once. We have followed many other paths of spiritual life, and so we have become offenders to You. But now we are taking to the path of devotional service. Please be merciful to us.' Firmly fixed in pure devotion and always worshiping Śrī Caitanya, the *ṛṣīs* underwent austerities. Without eating or sleeping, they continuously chanted the name of Śrī Caitanya. One afternoon, out of His causeless mercy, Śrī Caitanya finally revealed Himself to the *ṛṣīs*. He shone like a hundred suns, attracting the minds of those great *yogīs*. He appeared before them as the Pañca-tattva, the five aspects of Godhead: Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Śrī Gadādhara, and Śrī Śrīvāsa. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's beauty was extraordinary and defied all description. His beautiful golden figure



Out of His causeless mercy, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared before the seven great sages as the Pañca-tattva.

was decorated with a garland of fresh forest flowers. His glittering ornaments illuminated all directions. His glance was full of beauty, and His dark, curling hair was long and flowing. Spots of sandalwood pulp decorated His forehead. The flowing cloth He wore around His waist was made of fine, brilliant thread and folded in three places. Enchanted by the radiant beauty of Śrī Caitanya, the ṛṣīs offered Him worship. 'We surrender to Your holy feet,' they said. 'Please grant us devotional service to You.'

"Hearing their words, Śrī Caitanya wanted to bestow His mercy upon them. He said, 'Listen, O ṛṣīs. Give up all other desires; throw off the shackles of exploitation and calculation and make Kṛṣṇa the only subject of your discussion. Within a short time I will unfold My pastimes in Nabadwīpa, and then you will see My chanting of the holy name and dancing. But for now, keep this confidential. Worship Kṛṣṇa at Kumāra Haṭṭa in Nabadwīpa at the bathing *ghāṭa* you have made, and later you will see all these things.'

"When Śrī Caitanya vanished from their vision, the seven ṛṣīs went to Kumāra Haṭṭa. At that place you can now see seven hills. These seven hills are arranged in the same pattern as the constellation of the seven ṛṣīs (the Big Dipper). Living here, one can achieve the mercy of Śrī Caitanya without having to undergo any strict practice of rules and regulations."

Nityānanda continued, "South of here, you can see the crystal clear Gomatī River. Beside it is the forest of Naimiṣa, also known as Naimiṣāranya. At the beginning of the age of Kali, the sages headed by Śaunaka held a great sacrifice here and heard about Śrī Caitanya from the lotus mouth of Sūta Goswāmī. Whoever reads the ancient Purāṇas in this holy place, during the Kārttika

celebration in the months of October and November, is freed from all distress and becomes absorbed in the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya. Such a person easily attains Vṛndāvana, the divine abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

"Once, Lord Śiva, giving up his bull-carrier, mounted the swan of Lord Brahmā and came here to Naimiṣāranya to hear the recitation of the Purāṇas. Along with his followers he sang the glories of Śrī Caitanya. Singing and dancing, his followers surrounded him, shouting the names of Śrī Caitanya and showering flowers all around."

Upon hearing these words of Nityānanda, Jīva Goswāmī became spiritually excited. He was unable to contain his ecstasy, and his voice became overwhelmed with love of Godhead as he tasted the influence of the holy land. The devotees spent the next day there in the association of Lord Nityānanda, and on the following day they went to Puṣkara.

Jāhnavā and Nitāi are ever-worshipable. Because They have arisen within my heart, I am able to sing about the glories of Nādia and the sweetness of the devotees with some attachment, although I am unqualified.



MADHYADWIPA Part Two

All glories to Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda and Śrī Advaita Ācārya. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura. All glories to Śrīdhāma Nabadwīpa, the abode of pure devotion. All glories to the holy names of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda.

O souls of the age of Kali, please listen: Give up exploitation and renunciation; give up righteousness and unrighteousness. Just worship Nitāi and Caitanya, Who are an ocean of mercy. They are freely distributing the ecstasy of Vṛndāvana, and anyone can receive it from Them without any trouble.

When the night was over, Nityānanda took Jīva Goswāmī with Him and continued to wander on pilgrimage through the holy land of Nabadwīpa. At one point Nityānanda Prabhu stopped and said, "You see

this village? Everyone now calls this place Brāhmaṇa-pura, but in all the scriptures it is known as Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara. There is a mysterious and confidential story in connection with this holy place.

“Once, in Satya-yuga, a *brāhmaṇa* named Jīvana dāsa gave up his family life and went on pilgrimage to different holy places. He became very fond of the holy place known as Puṣkara Tīrtha. Still, in the course of his wanderings, he came to Nabadwīpa-dhāma and stayed for some time. One night in a dream, he was told to remain in Nabadwīpa, where he would receive a great treasure. He built himself a cottage and lived here until he became quite old. In his last days he wanted to see Puṣkara, but he was too old to go anywhere. Unable to walk so far, he began to weep, thinking, ‘Now I will never see Puṣkara.’

“At that time, that holy place personified, the personality of Puṣkara, being merciful, appeared before Jīvana dāsa disguised as a *brāhmaṇa* and said, ‘Do not weep. Before you is a splendid pond. Bathe there once, and you will see Puṣkara appear before your very eyes.’ Hearing this, Jīvana dāsa bathed in that beautiful pond. Having bathed there, he received the divine vision to see Puṣkara standing before him. Crying, Jīvana dāsa said, ‘I have been a great nuisance to you to make you come so far.’

“Puṣkara replied, ‘Listen, O fortunate *brāhmaṇa*. I have not come from far away but am actually present here in Nabadwīpa. All great holy places reside in Nabadwīpa. And so, if you serve Nabadwīpa, you serve all holy places. Although I appear in the west in another form, I reside here permanently. The results attained by bathing one hundred times there are actually dispensed from here. Therefore, whoever leaves Nabadwīpa with the desire to visit other holy places is an ignorant fool. One may achieve some result by traveling to all the dif-



The holy place of Puṣkara personified told Jivana dāsa that all tīrthas are fully present in Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

ferent holy places, but all those *tīrthas* are fully present in Nabadwīpa.’

Nityānanda said, “The personality of the holy place known as Puṣkara, in the form of that mysterious *brāhmaṇa*, continued, ‘O Jīvana dāsa! Do you see the raised area over there? That is Kurukṣetra Brahmāvarta. The rivers Saraswatī and Dr̥ṣadvatī flow on its two sides. It is splendid and bestows much piety on whoever visits there.

"I will tell you a great secret, O *brāhmaṇa*. Very soon, there will be great ecstasy there. In the house of Śacīdevī at Māyāpura, Śrī Caitanya will take birth and distribute divine love of Kṛṣṇa. In all these places the Lord and His devotees will dance madly in the nectar of *saṅkīrtana*. All the *avatāras* of Godhead and Their devotees will join the Lord in that great vibration of divine sound. The whole universe will drown in the flood of love of Godhead. Except for the most stubborn of atheists, all will receive divine love.

"Whoever lives in this holy land will attain shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya. O Jīvana dāsa, a sinful person may perform *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* and worship Kṛṣṇa for millions and millions of years and never attain attraction for the holy name. But if one worships Śrī Caitanya, his sinful mentality will be quickly uprooted and within a very short time he will attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. Taking shelter of the *sakhīs*, he will realize his spiritual body and serve the Divine Couple in a secluded grove. O Jīvana dāsa, remain here and perform your *bhajana*, and you will see Śrī Caitanya and His associates."

Nityānanda continued, "Saying this, the personality of Puṣkara departed. A voice from the sky said, 'The age of Kali is coming. At that time you will again take birth and swim in the ocean of *gaura-kīrtana*.' Hearing this, Jīvana dāsa made up his mind to stay at this lake and worship the Lord."

While Jīva was listening to this ancient story, he and Nityānanda Prabhu entered Uccaḥaṭṭa, which is nondifferent from Kurukṣetra. As they walked, Śrī Nityānanda began to explain the significance of that place. He said: "Here, all the demigods descended to Earth and brought with them the holy place known as Kurukṣetra. Whatever holy places were in the region of Brahmāvarta

between the Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī Rivers are present here. Mahārāja Pṛthu and others reside here and render service to Nabadwīpa. The results obtained by living in Kurukṣetra for one hundred years are attained by staying here for one night. Here, the demigods came and set up a marketplace for discussing the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya. For that reason this place is known as Haṭṭa Ḍāngā (Market Hill).

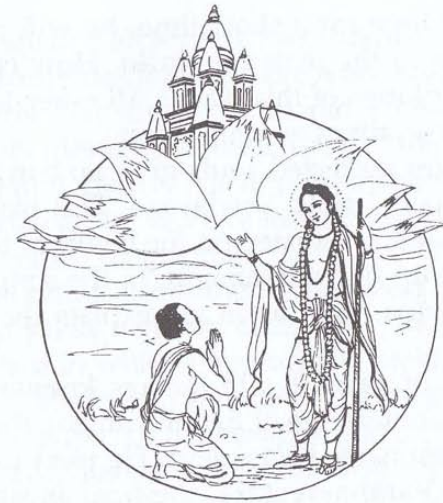
"Just by seeing this place, one will become drowned in the ocean of love of Godhead. When Śrī Caitanya set out to deliver the Kāzi, He began from Māyāpura in the evening, taking a great *kīrtana* party of fourteen drums with Him. Because of the sweetness of the chanting, that night became a night of Brahmā. During that time, Śrī Caitanya wandered throughout this land. Since then, on every holy *ekādaśī* day, the Lord would wander over these nine islands and perform *saṅkīrtana*. According to His own sweet will, sometimes He would also circumambulate a ten- or sixteen-mile area of Antardwīpa.

"From His own house He went first to Bārakonāghāṭa, then around Ballāl Dīrghikā and the house of Śrīdhara. From there He would go to the edge of Antardwīpa. In this way He would easily complete a ten-mile tour of Nabadwīpa-dhāma within Antardwīpa. From Sīmuliya He would go to the house of the Kāzi. After talking to Śrīdhara, He would go to Gādīgācchā (Godruma) and then to Mājida (Madhyadwīpa). Crossing the Ganges at that point, He would go up to Pārā Ḍāngā and Chinnā Ḍāngā on the other bank, and then, crossing the Ganges again, He would return home after having completed a sixteen-mile circumambulation."

Nityānanda concluded, "His tour would end after nine nights, and so the scriptures refer to it as *navaratra*

parikrama, or the holy journey of nine nights. One does the ten-mile tour in one day and completes the sixteen-mile tour in three days, spending the first night in Māyāpura, the second in Godruma, and the third on the opposite shore of the Ganges." Hearing these instructions on the method of pilgrimage from Nityānanda Prabhu, Jīva Goswāmī could not contain his love of Godhead.

Thus the poor and humble Bhaktivinoda, whose hope is to attain the lotus feet of Nitāi and Jāhnvā, describes the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.



11

KOLADWIPA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All glories to Nityānanda Prabhu. All glories to Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura. All glories to all the devotees of Śrī Caitanya. All glories to the land of Śrī Caitanya, the topmost holy place, where He descended with the holy name.

Nityānanda said, "Listen, everyone. The five streams of the Ganges join together at this place. The Ganges mixes with the Mandākinī and Alakānanda Rivers, while the Sarasvatī seems to be hidden. From the west, along with the Yamunā, comes the Bhogavatī. There, also, the Mānasa Gangā flows quickly. This place is nondifferent from the holy place known as Mahāprayāga, where Brahmā and the ṛṣīs performed millions upon millions of sacrifices. The glory of this place is incomparable. If one

simply lives here for a short time, he will never take another birth in the material world. How can anyone describe the glories of this place? All other holy places are like dried up rivers in comparison.

“From here perfected souls give up earth, air, and water and attain Goloka Vṛndāvana. This place, known as Kuliyāpahāda, is situated on the banks of the Ganges and is raised up like a mountain. In the scriptures it is called Koladwīpa. Now listen as I explain the history of this place.

“Millions of years ago in the age known as Satya-yuga, or the Golden Age of Enlightenment, there lived a young *brāhmaṇa* named Vāsudeva. He used to regularly worship the Varāha-avatāra, the boar incarnation of Visnu. One day, as he worshiped the Deity of Varāha, he prayed, ‘O Lord, please bestow Your mercy upon me and reveal Yourself. That would be the success of my eyes and life.’ With his voice wavering, the *brāhmaṇa* in great humility began weeping, saying, ‘If my Lord does not reveal Himself to me, my life is worthless.’”

Nityānanda said, “Shortly thereafter, the Lord, being most merciful, revealed Himself to Vāsudeva in the form of a boar. His body was decorated with ornaments and jewels, and His beautiful feet, neck, face, nose, and eyes were enchanting to behold. He towered over the Earth like a great mountain. Upon seeing the Lord appearing before him as a giant boar, Vāsudeva, amazed at his own great fortune, fell on the ground to offer his respects. Weeping and bewildered with divine sentiments of joy, he could not utter a word.

“Seeing the devotion of the young *brāhmaṇa*, Lord Varāha spoke the following sweet words: ‘O Vāsudeva, because you are so devoted to Me, I am extremely satisfied with your worship. Listen carefully to My words.

When the age of Kali arrives, I will display My pastimes here in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. There is no other place in the three worlds that can be compared with Nabadwīpa. Although its glories are hidden now, it is My favorite transcendental abode. All important holy places like Brahmāvarta can be found here in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. This is the verdict of scripture.

“When Brahmā performed a sacrifice, I appeared and killed Hiraṇyākṣa with My tusks. The powerful effect of the holy place in which I appeared is present right here. By serving Nabadwīpa, all holy places are served. By living in Nabadwīpa, all the benefits of living in other holy places are automatically attained. You are fortunate to have served Me in Nabadwīpa, for at the time of Śrī Caitanya’s appearance, you will again take birth here. You will see the great *saṅkīrtana* pastimes and the wonderful divine form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.”

Nityānanda continued, “At that time Lord Varāha vanished, and the *brāhmaṇa* searched out the meaning of the Lord’s divine words. He was a great scholar of the scriptures, and by carefully considering their message, he could understand that during the reign of Vaivasvata Manu, at the beginning of the age of Kali, Śrī Caitanya’s pastimes would be revealed at Nādia. The sages had kept all this a secret. Vāsudeva could understand that this had only been hinted at in the scriptures, but it was clear to the wise. When the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya became manifest on Earth, the scriptural evidence describing His advent would become clear. In this way the *brāhmaṇa* received confidential knowledge of the secret truths of Śrī Caitanya.”

Nityānanda concluded, “In great ecstasy, Vāsudeva performed *saṅkīrtana*, singing the name of Śrī Caitanya again and again. Having seen the mountainous form of

Varāha and after careful consideration, he named this place Kola Parvata (Boar Mountain), but it is now known as Parvata. The pure devotees know that this place is nondifferent from Govardhana Hill in Vṛndāvana where Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs His eternal pastimes."

As they walked on, Nityānanda said, "To the north is Bahulāvana, whose wonderful radiance spreads out in all directions. In Vṛndāvana there are twelve forests one after another in sequence, but by the Lord's sweet will that does not occur here. The unusual form of the forest increases the ecstasy of the devotees."

As they continued a little further, they reached Samudragaḍha. Having arrived, Nityānanda spoke again as follows: "You see this place here? This is Samudragaḍha. This holy place is nondifferent from Dvārakā Purī and Gangā Sāgara. Both of those holy places are present here.

"Listen now, and I will tell the story of Samudra Sen, for whom this place was named. Samudra Sen was a great devotee king. Kṛṣṇa was his life and soul. When Bhīma came here with his soldiers to conquer all who opposed him, he surrounded Samudragaḍha. The king knew that Kṛṣṇa was the only shelter of the Paṇḍavas, and that if Bhīma were in danger, Kṛṣṇa would immediately come to his rescue. Samudra Sen began thinking that if he could make Bhīma fearful and cause him to cry out for help, then Kṛṣṇa would appear out of love for His devotee. 'If Bhīma is in trouble, Kṛṣṇa Himself will descend upon this land and I will be able to see the dark and beautiful figure of the Lord with my own eyes,' he thought.

"With this plan in mind Samudra Sen gathered his generals, elephants, horses, and infantry soldiers, and rode into battle. He began shooting his arrows while con-



In order to rescue Bhīma, Kṛṣṇa appeared on the battlefield, visible only to the eyes of King Samudra Sen.

stantly remembering Kṛṣṇa. Beholding that deadly shower of arrows, Bhīma called out to Kṛṣṇa, 'O my Lord! Since You are merciful, please protect Your Bhīma. I cannot fight Samudra Sen. If I were to conquer him, he would be humiliated. It is very shameful, but I must now admit defeat.'

"Hearing the plaintive cry of Bhīma, Kṛṣṇa appeared on the battlefield. No one could see His form except the king. His youthful body was the color of a fresh rain cloud. Shining ornaments decorated His graceful limbs, and yellow garments clothed His wonderful figure. Seeing that form, the king fainted in ecstasy. Finally, regaining his consciousness and controlling himself, he submitted the following request to the Supreme Lord: 'O Kṛṣṇa, You are the master of the universe and the savior of the fallen. Seeing my despicable condition, You have come here just to deliver me. The whole world constantly sings Your glories. After hearing Your praises sung so widely, I had hoped to see Your divine pastimes. I vowed that You would appear in Nabadwīpa, and You have now fulfilled that vow. O most merciful Lord, You have descended here in Nabadwīpa as Kṛṣṇa. Now that I have seen Your enchanting form here, I will never leave Nabadwīpa. But now my desire is to see something even more confidential. Please appear before me in Your feature as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.'

"By the mercy of the Lord, the king was allowed to witness the sweet and charming pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He saw how Kṛṣṇa and His friends performed their afternoon duties of herding the cows in the forest of Kumuda. Then suddenly, the pastimes of Vṛndāvana disappeared, and the king saw the form of Śrī Caitanya dancing and singing with His devotees in a huge *kīrtana*. His beautiful complexion was brilliant gold, His eyes

appeared intoxicated with divine love, and His body shook with ecstasy. In this way King Samudra Sen experienced the perfection of seeing by viewing the transcendental form of Śrī Caitanya. The desire of his heart and eyes was thus completely satisfied.

"Beholding the wonderful form of Śrī Caitanya, the king considered himself greatly fortunate and offered many prayers to the lotus feet of the Lord. Soon, however, his vision of Śrī Caitanya disappeared, and the king, feeling great separation, began to weep.

"Bhīma was unable to see all this and thought only that the king had become paralysed with fear. Bhīma was surprised when King Samudra Sen suddenly stopped fighting, and even more surprised when the king begged to be allowed to pay him tribute. Accepting his offerings, Bhīma moved on to other lands to continue collecting tribute from all the kings of the world. The world still sings the praises of Bhīma for conquering all directions.

"This incident took place here at Samudragadhā, on the edge of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Even Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe, cannot know the glory of this holy place. Once, the ocean's current took shelter of the Ganges and rose up this far to serve the Lord's lotus feet in devotion. Gangādevī said, 'My dear ocean, don't be so excited. Some day soon, my Lord will certainly stay in a forest on your shores.'

"The ocean answered, 'Listen, O goddess. The son of Śacī, Śrī Caitanya, will never leave Nabadwīpa. Although material vision cannot detect this, Nabadwīpa is the eternal home of the Lord. All the *Vedas* sing of His visible and invisible pastimes here. O Gangādevī, in your shelter I will stay here and serve Śrī Caitanya in Nabadwīpa.' And so the ocean stayed at Nabadwīpa,

always contemplating the eternal pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga."

After taking rest at Vāninātha's house, the party toured Cāmpāhātī in the afternoon. At that time Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu explained to Jīva, "Listen, son of Vallabha. At this place there was once a *campaka* forest. It was part of the Khadira Forest of Vṛndāvana. At this very spot the *gopī* known as Campakalatā-sakhī picks *campaka* flowers, strings them into garlands, and offers them to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This is her eternal pastime. When the present age of quarrel, Kali-yuga, grew in influence, merchants moved in and began harvesting the flowers. They set up a *haṭṭa*, or market, here and sold the *campaka* flowers to the villagers and townsfolk. Since then, this place has been known as Campaka-Haṭṭa, or more commonly, Cāmpāhātī, the market of flowers.

"When Lakṣman Sen was the King of Bengal, Jayadeva Goswāmī was one of his subjects in Nabadwīpa. Jayadeva built a hut on the banks of Ballāl Dīrghikā and lived there peacefully with his wife, Padmāvatī. There, he wrote the poem *Dāsa Avatāra Stotram*, which came into the king's hands. The king read the poem with great pleasure and asked who had written it. The king's teacher, Govardhana Ācārya, answered that Jayadeva Goswāmī had written the poem. The king asked where Jayadeva lived, and the Ācārya said that he lived somewhere in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Hearing this, King Lakṣman Sen decided to secretly search him out.

"At night, wearing the dress of a Vaiṣṇava mendicant, he went to the house of the poet Jayadeva. The king entered the cottage, paid respects to the poet and seated himself. Jayadeva knew him to be the King of Bengal dressed as a penniless Vaiṣṇava. After a short time, the king revealed his true identity. He begged the poet to

come to his palace. Jayadeva, being very renounced, would never agree to live in the house of a materialist, to say nothing of the palace of a king. He said, 'Association with materialists never yields any beneficial result. Rather than live in your palace, I will give up your kingdom and go elsewhere. I will immediately cross the Ganges and head towards Purī.'

"The king replied, 'No! Never give up Nabadwīpa. Please listen, O my master. Your words and my wish can both come true. Whatever you like you may do, of course, but please have mercy on me. Across the Ganges is an enchanting forest of *campaka* flowers known as Cāmpāhātī. Please stay there for some time. I will not go there as I like but shall visit you only upon your request.'

"Hearing the humble words of the king, the great poet Jayadeva agreed and said, 'Although you are endowed with such great wealth and empire, you are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and are not bound to the material world. I called you a materialist only to test you, but you have tolerated my harsh words and so I know that you are a real devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Although accepting material things, you remain unattached to them. I will stay for a few days in Cāmpāhātī and you can secretly come to see me, leaving aside your royal opulence.'

"The king was very happy with this and soon arranged for his men to build Jayadeva a cottage in Cāmpāhātī. There, Jayadeva Goswāmī lived for some time, worshiping Kṛṣṇa according to the process of *rāga-mārga*, or spontaneous love. His wife Padmāvatī would bring heaps of *campaka* flowers which Jayadeva would offer to Kṛṣṇa in the ecstasy of divine love, and seeing this, Kṛṣṇa would accept his offering of flowers."

Nityānanda continued, "One day, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed Himself to Jayadeva Goswāmī in a

beautiful form as golden in color as the *campaka* flower. He was all-attractive and His beautiful face shined so brightly that it put to shame the brilliance of millions of moons. His curling hair was beautiful and long, and garlands of flowers decorated His neck. His arms were long, and His effulgence illuminated the room. Seeing the divine form of Śrī Caitanya, Jayadeva fainted, overwhelmed with transcendental ecstasy, and tears streamed from his eyes. Padmāvatī also fell to the ground unconscious.

“The Lord lifted the couple up with His two lotus hands and spoke these nectarean words: ‘Because you are My devotees, I am revealing Myself to you. Very soon I will take birth in Nādia in the womb of Śacī. With all My *avatāras* and devotees I will distribute the gift of divine love and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. After twenty-four years I will take *sannyāsa* and live in Purī. Thereafter, in the association of devotees, overcome by divine love, I will continuously taste the nectar of your *Gītā Govinda* because the subject of your poetry is very dear to Me. At the end of this life you will return to the holy land of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. This is certain. For now, both of you must go to Jagannātha Purī. Serve Lord Jagannātha there, and you will attain love of Godhead.’

“Saying this, the Lord disappeared. Jayadeva and his wife fainted. When they awoke, they were overwhelmed by grief and began to cry. With tears in their eyes they said, ‘Having seen such a beautiful form, O Lord, how can we live in Your absence? Why have You ordered us to leave Nādia? We must have committed some great offense here in Nabadwīpa. We are becoming disturbed just to think that now we must leave the holy land of Nādia. It would have been better for us to have taken birth as a bird or beast in Nādia, for then we could stay

here for a long time, always thinking of this holy land. We can give up our lives, but we cannot give up Nabadwīpa. Our attachment for Nabadwīpa is too strong. O Lord, save us! Give us the mercy of Your lotus feet and let us stay here.’

“As they were crying and praying, they heard a voice from the sky say, “Do not be unhappy. Go to Jagannātha Purī. There are two things you should know that will give you solace. Some time ago, you were both thinking of going to Purī for a visit. Lord Jagannath wanted to fulfill that wish and He is eager to see you. By pleasing Him, you will return to Nabadwīpa at the end of this life and remain here eternally.’

“Hearing this, Jayadeva and Padmāvatī immediately left for Jagannātha Purī. Turning back, they glanced once more at Nabadwīpa, and with tears flowing from their eyes and their hearts throbbing, they spoke in sorrow to the residents of Nabadwīpa, saying, ‘We have offended you. Please give us your mercy. Please purify us.’

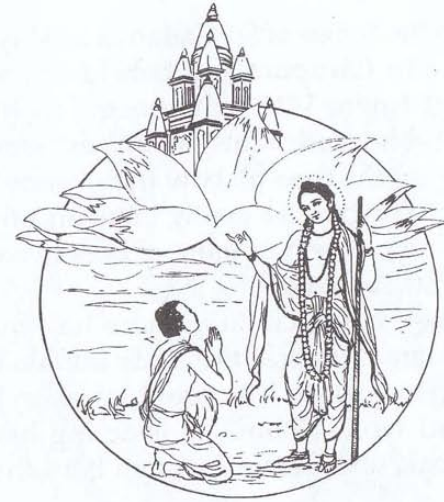
“As they continued down the road, they kept looking back now and then to see the holy land of Nabadwīpa. Finally, with Nabadwīpa out of sight, they left the land of Śrī Caitanya, weeping as they walked.”

Nityānanda concluded, “A few days later, they arrived in Jagannātha Purī. There, they went to see Lord Jagannātha, who was pleased with them. Look, Jīva. This was the place of Jayadeva Goswāmī. Only a raised portion of earth remains. This is the story left by the elders.”

Upon seeing this place, Jīva became speechless and began weeping. “O Jayadeva and Padmāvatī,” he said, “You are most fortunate! O *Gītā Govinda* and *Kṛṣṇa Rati*, be merciful to me and give me just one drop of the ocean of divine love that was tasted by Jayadeva Goswāmī!” Saying this, Jīva fell to the ground at the feet of

Nityānanda Prabhu.

This poor and humble soul, whose only hope is the shade of the lotus feet of Jāhnavā-devī and Nityānanda Prabhu, thus sings the glories of Nādia.



12

RTUDWIPA Part One

All glories to Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda. All glories to Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Gadādhara Paṇḍita. All glories to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and all the devotees. All glories to the house of Jagannātha Mīśra. All glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the best of holy places.

When the night had lifted, the devotees gradually awoke. Rising from their beds, they called out the names of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda. Then, keeping Cāmpāhātī behind them, all the devotees who were traveling with Nityānanda Prabhu continued on their pilgrimage of Nabadwīpa-dhāma in great bliss. As they went on, Vānīnātha walked alongside Nityānanda, thinking, "When shall I go on pilgrimage with

Nityānanda to the house of Śrī Caitanya in Māyāpura?"

They came to Rātupura and beheld the wonderful beauty of that town. When they came to Ṛtudwīpa, Nityānanda Prabhu said, "This place is extremely attractive. Just see how the trees all bow their heads in respect at our passing. The breezes gently blow and the flowers bloom everywhere. The humming of bees intoxicates the minds of all who travel here."

As he spoke, Nityānanda became half-mad in the ecstasy of Balarāma. "Quick! Bring My buffalo horn," He cried. "Our friends have wandered far away! Kṛṣṇa is fast asleep and won't come. He is acting like a baby. Where are Subala and Dāma? I cannot herd the cows all alone."

Shouting for Kṛṣṇa, Nityānanda Prabhu began leaping to and fro. Seeing His state, the devotees prayed at His feet: "O Nityānanda Prabhu, Your brother, Śrī Caitanya, is no longer here. He has taken *sannyāsa* and gone to Nīlācala, leaving us poor beggars behind." Upon hearing these words, Nityānanda became dejected and fell to the ground, crying, "O Kānāi, My brother, You have made us all sad. You have given us up, and now You have taken *sannyāsa*. I can't go on living. I shall finish My life by jumping in the Yamunā River."

At that time Nityānanda Prabhu became unconscious. Witnessing the divine emotional trance of Nityānanda Prabhu, the devotees began to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in an attempt to revive Him. Four hours passed, yet Nityānanda Prabhu still did not rise. Finally, the devotees began chanting the glories of Śrī Caitanya. Hearing the sweet names of Gaurāṅga, Nityānanda suddenly awoke.

"This is the place of Rādhā Kuṇḍa!" He cried. "Here, in the afternoon, Śrī Caitanya would perform kīrtana

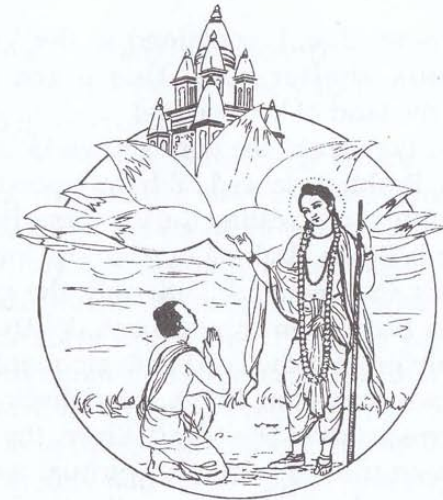


In the mood of Balarāma, Śrī Nityānanda cried out, "Where are Subala and Dāmā? I cannot herd the cows all alone!"

‘with His associates. Look at the brilliance of Śyāma Kuṇḍa, attracting the minds of everyone in the universe! And look at the groves of the *sakhīs* which can be seen here and there. Here Śrī Caitanya, immersed in singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa, would satisfy everyone by distributing divine love. Know that such a place as this, where the devotees worship the Lord, can be found nowhere else in the universe. Whoever lives here will attain love of Godhead. This will extinguish the blazing fire of material life.”

The devotees stayed there, singing the name of Gaurāṅga and diving deep within the waters of divine love. They spent the night in Ṛtudwīpa, and the next day, Nityānanda Prabhu, dancing down the road, brought them to Vidyānagara, a splendid place, which is attractive to highly learned scholars.

The poor and humble Bhaktivinoda, whose only wealth is the lotus feet of Nitāi and Jāhnavā, thus sings the glories of Nādia. Holding the lotus feet of the devotees, he begs from them the treasure of divine love of Kṛṣṇa.



13

RTUDWIPA & JAHNUDWIPA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya. All glories to Nityānanda. All glories to Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Gadādhara Paṇḍita. All glories to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura. All glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma and the ocean of *kīrtana*.

Coming to Vidyānagara, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu explained its significance to Jīva Goswāmī. He said, “At the time of universal devastation, when the entire universe is drowned in the waters of annihilation, the eternal abode of Nabadwīpa remains untouched and floats on those waters in the form of an eight-petalled lotus. At that time all the *avatāras* and Their devotees take shelter within that lotus. Once, during the universal annihilation, Matsya-avatāra, the fish incarnation, carried the Vedas here to Vidyānagara in Ṛtudwīpa for safety. Since

all *vidyā*, or knowledge, is contained in the Vedas, and the Vedas took shelter here, this place is called Vidyānagara (the land of knowledge).

"Here in Vidyānagara, the Lord showed His mercy to Brahmā. Once, Brahmā glanced in dread upon the devastated cosmos. Intent on creating the universe, he began to praise the Lord. When Brahmā opened his lotus mouth to offer prayers, the beautiful Saraswatī, the goddess of learning, was born from his tongue. With her help Brahmā happily praised the Lord with eloquent words.

"At the time of creation, Māyā, the deluding potency of the Lord, crosses over the Virajā River, the demarcation line between the material and spiritual worlds, and spreads her network of influence as the three modes of nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance. With great effort the sages conquer over these influences, and after learning the sixty-four branches of knowledge, they establish themselves in different places around the world. But all branches of knowledge known to the sages are eternally situated at this holy place known as Vidyānagara.

"It was here that, by the mercy of Nārada, Vālmīki received the *Rāmāyana*. Here, Dhanvantari received the *Ayurveda*, the science of medicine, and Viśvāmitra and others received the teachings of the *Dhanurveda*, the military science. Here, Śaunaka and the *ṛṣīs* read the Vedic *mantras* and Lord Śiva discussed *tantra*. Here, at the request of the *ṛṣīs*, Brahmā produced the four Vedas. It was here that Kapila created the *sāṅkhya* philosophy of analytical science and here that Gautama introduced logic. Here, Kanāda produced the *vaiśeṣika* philosophy of atomic reductionism and Patanjali wrote the *yoga-sūtras*. Here, Jaiminī wrote the *Mīmāṃsā-śāstra*, introducing his philosophy about *karma*. Here it was that Vedavyāsa

compiled the Purāṇas, and here the five *ṛṣīs*, headed by Nārada, wrote the *Pañcarātras*, which teach the practice of devotional service.

"In this forest the personified Upaniṣads have been worshiping Śrī Caitanya since time immemorial. Once, in an invisible form, Śrī Caitanya told them, 'Your philosophy of the formless absolute has spoiled you all. As the *śruti* you do not recognize Me, but when I appear on Earth in the form of My own devotee, you will witness My transcendental pastimes with your own eyes. At that time you will loudly sing praises to Me. From then on, when you sing the glories of God, you will describe Him as having quality and form.' Upon hearing this, the personified Upaniṣads became dumbfounded, and from that ancient time until the advent of the Lord they concealed themselves here, waiting for Him to appear."

Nityānanda continued, "Blessed is this age of Kali, for in this age the golden *avatāra* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appears. Hearing that Śrī Caitanya would perform His pastimes of scholarship in Nabadwīpa, Bṛhaspati, the learned *guru* of the demigods, became indifferent to the celestial abode of Indra and left heaven along with his associates. Bṛhaspati happily took birth on Earth as Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma and took great care in pleasing the Lord. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya established his school in Vidyānagara and taught philosophy. Sārvabhauma became worried that he might drown Śrī Caitanya in dry knowledge and thereby cheat Him, and so he gave up his students and left Nādia before Śrī Caitanya was born. Thinking, 'If I am really the servant of Śrī Caitanya, He will certainly come to me and bestow His mercy upon me,' Sārvabhauma went to Jagannātha Purī and became a powerful teacher of the impersonal school of philosophy.



Nimāi Paṇḍita challenged all the disciples of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya to debate, and then defeated them in logic and argument.

“Meanwhile, in the guise of a logician, Śrī Caitanya as Nimai Paṇḍita defeated everyone in Nabadwīpa. He would come here to Vidyānagara as a young student, challenge all the pupils of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya to debate, and then defeat them in logic and argument. Thus humiliated, they would flee in shame. Whoever hears of the Lord’s pastimes of scholarship in Vidyānagara will certainly become freed from all ignorance.”

Jīva Goswāmī, filled with ecstasy at seeing Vidyānagara, became overwhelmed with divine love. He asked Nityānanda Prabhu, “Please remove one doubt of mine. If logic and analysis are inauspicious, how can they have a place in the Lord’s divine abode?”

Nityānanda Prabhu embraced Jīva Goswāmī and affectionately told him, “There is nothing inauspicious in the holy abode of Śrī Caitanya. Here, logic and analysis have no power or independence. They depend on bhakti, and are the servants of bhakti. Bhakti is the goddess here; all others are servants. The only purpose of logic and analysis is to reveal the high position of bhakti. Nabadwīpa is the home of the nine kinds of devotional service. Here, karma and jñāna serve bhakti. Through wickedness, however, the sinful pervert everything. Materialists twist the revealed scriptures with their perverted ‘logic’ to squeeze out convenient interpretations, but pure devotees take the same scriptures and discover everywhere the teachings of pure devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Nityānanda said, “Praudhamāyā is the servant of Śrī Caitanya and is the presiding deity here. She remains here serving Śrī Caitanya throughout all ages. Blinding those sinful souls who hate the Vaiṣṇavas, she causes them all kinds of pain and sorrow in her form as the deluding energy, or Mahāmāyā. In the form of Praudhamāyā, however, this divine energy of the Lord dissolves all the sin and karma of a devoted soul. Even if some offenses remain within a devotee, she removes them and releases him from the reactions of karma. On the other hand, the wicked who envy devoted souls and study here only to gain mundane knowledge never receive the treasure of divine love at the holy feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Their apparent knowledge is only ignorance. It is like a shadow of real knowledge. They can never under-

stand the true opulence of Śrī Caitanya and Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

Real knowledge is never inauspicious; only its shadow, ignorance, is inauspicious. O Jīva, by the mercy of Śrī Caitanya you will reveal all these truths in the form of scriptures, and thus everything will be known. Now, let us go to the residence of Jahnu.”

Arriving at the hermitage of Jahnu Muni, Nityānanda Prabhu explained, “This is Jahnudwīpa. This enchanting place is also known as Bhadravana. Here, Jahnu Muni underwent stern penances and was visited by Śrī Caitanya. Here also, Jahnu Muni was sitting peacefully, saying his *gāyatri mantra*, when along came the Ganges, gushing in torrents and flooding everything. Opening wide his mouth, Jahnu Muni drank up all the water of the Ganges in one gulp. King Bhagīratha, whose austerities had brought the Ganges to Earth, thought, ‘Where has the Ganges gone?’ He concluded that it had been swallowed by Jahnu Muni. In great anxiety the king, who wanted his forefathers to benefit from the holy waters of the Ganges, worshiped the sage for several days in order to pacify him. Jahnu Muni then released the Ganges, which poured forth from him, and because of this, the Ganges is known to the common people today as Jāhnavī, the daughter of Jahnu Muni.

“Some time later, Bhiṣmadeva, the son of the Ganges, came here to see Jahnu Muni. The *muni* was very pleased with Bhiṣma and kept him for many days. It was here that Bhiṣma learned the highest knowledge, which he in turn taught to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira at Kurukṣetra. By living in Nabadwīpa, Bhiṣma attained pure devotional service and is thus considered among the greatest of Vaiṣnavas. Therefore, this island is the greatest savior. Whoever lives here is very fortunate.”

That day Nityānanda and His associates stayed at the home of a devotee, and early the next morning they went together to Modadrumadwīpa.

Bhaktivinoda, whose only possession is the lotus feet of Jāhnavā and Nitāi, thus sings the glories of Nabadwīpa.



MODADRUMADWIPA Part One

All glories to the soul of the Pañca-tattva, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the topmost abode.

Arriving at the village of Māmagāchī, Nityānanda explained to Jīva Goswāmī, "Here, in Modadruma-dwīpa, is Ayodhyā. In a previous age millions of years ago, when Lord Rāma was banished to the forest, He came to this place with Lakṣmana and Sītā. After building a hut under a huge banyan tree and seeing the effulgence of Nabadwīpa, the son of Raghu began laughing to Himself. With His complexion as green as new grass, His lotus eyes, and His graceful bow in hand, Lord Rāma was supremely beautiful. Wearing the dress of a *brahmacārī*, His head piled with matted locks, He attracted all the living entities in the universe. Seeing Rāma laughing,

Sītā, the daughter of Janaka, asked Him the reason for His mirth.

“In answer to Sītā’s question, Lord Rāma replied, ‘Listen, O Sītā, and I will tell You a secret. When the age of Kali arrives, I will appear in Nabadwīpa with a golden complexion.’ Upon saying this, He immediately wanted to take birth in the womb of Śacī in Jagannātha Miśra’s house. Lord Rāma told Sītā, “To all those fortunate souls who see My childhood pastimes, I will give the supreme gift of divine love. Performing My pastimes of scholarship for the pleasure of My dear devotees, I shall reveal the glories of the Holy Name. Then I will take *sannyāsa* and go to Jagannātha Purī, and My own mother will weep, with My wife in her arms.’

“Upon hearing this, Sītā asked, ‘O lotus-eyed one, why will You make Your mother cry? Why will You give up Your wife and take *sannyāsa*? What happiness is there in giving sorrow to Your wife?’

“Śrī Rāma said, ‘O dear one, You know everything, but You display Your innocence just to teach the living entities. The pure love of Godhead which the devotees relish in relation with Me comes in two ways. Just listen: In My presence they enjoy *sambhoga*, the pleasure of meeting, and in My absence they experience *vipralambha*, the pain of separation. My eternal associates want to be with Me always, but out of mercy for them, I give them separation, which is more intense than meeting. The sorrow of separation from Me is actually the greatest ecstasy. After separation from Me, when reunion occurs, the ecstasy My devotees feel is multiplied a hundred thousand times. In this way they experience happiness in separation. You should accept this as truth, for these are the statements of the Vedas.



While meditating on Lord Rāmacandra, Sadānanda Vipra had a divine vision of Śrī Caitanya as Śrī Rāma, accompanied by Sita, Lakṣmana, and Hanumān.

“In My pastimes as Śrī Gaurāṅga, My mother Kauśalyā will become Śacīdevī. You, Sītā, will serve Me as Viṣṇuprīyā. You will experience separation from Me, and in My absence You will worship a Deity of Me and spread My name and fame throughout the three worlds. Similarly, in separation from You, as Rāma, I will worship a golden Deity of You, Sītā, in the city of Ayodhyā. But all these things are highly confidential. O Sītā, do not reveal this to anyone just now. This Nabadwīpa is My favorite place, and even Ayodhyā is not its equal. When the age of Kali arrives, this huge banyan tree above Us will disappear from sight but will remain in an invisible form.”

Nityānanda continued, “Having spoken thus, Lord Rāma passed His time with Lakṣmana and Sītā. Later, He went to the Daṇḍakāraṇya Forest to complete His pastimes. Observe here the place where His hut stood. By the will of Lord Rāma, His friend Guhaka took birth here in a *brāhmaṇa* family. His name was Sadānanda Vipra Bhaṭṭācārya. He knew nothing in the three worlds except for Rāma. When Śrī Caitanya made His advent, Sadānanda Vipra was present in the house of Jagannātha Misra. At that time all the demigods came to see the new-born child. Seeing this, Sadānanda knew that his Lord had taken birth. In great delight he went home, and while meditating on Rāma, he had a vision of Śrī Caitanya, who was seated on a throne, surrounded by demigods who waved *cāmaras*. Then he saw Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as Lord Rāmachandra; His complexion was as green as grass and beside Him was Lakṣmana, the abode of Ananta. On His left was Sītā, and kneeling before Him was Hanumān.

“Seeing this, the *brāhmaṇa* understood the truth about his Lord, and the vision disappeared. In ecstasy he made

his way to Māyāpura, and unseen by anyone he feasted his eyes on the new-born form of Śrī Caitanya.

“Sadānanda Vipra said, ‘Blessed indeed am I! Lord Rāmachandra is present before me as Gauracandra.’ Later, when the *saṅkīrtana* movement began in earnest, Sadānanda took part.”

As they moved on, Nityānanda showed Jīva Goswāmī a forested area and said, “In this place, O Jīva, the pure devotees see the Bhaṇḍīra Forest.” Hearing these topics and seeing these holy places in the eternal divine realm of Nabadwīpa, the devotees surrounded Nityānanda Prabhu and danced. Jīva’s body manifested symptoms of ecstasy as he shouted the name of Gaurāṅga.

That night Nityānanda and His party rested at the house of Nārāyaṇī, the mother of Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura. Being chaste and pure, she rendered service to the Vaiṣṇavas. Early the next morning, after walking some distance, they entered Vaikuṅṭhapura.

To carry out the order of Jāhnavā and Nitāi, the humble Bhaktivinoda thus sings the glories of Nabadwīpa.



MODADRUMADWIPA & RUDRADWIPA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Pañca-tattva. All glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma, the abode of Śrī Caitanya.

Arriving in Vaikuṅṭhapura, Nityānanda, softly laughing, told Jīva: "At one side of the eight-petalled lotus of Nabadwīpa is this Vaikuṅṭhapura. Listen carefully, and I shall explain its importance. Vaikuṅṭhapura, which is situated in the spiritual sky, is nondifferent from the abode of Nārāyaṇa, which exists beyond the river Virajā and the influence of *māyā*. Here, the Śrī, Bhū, and Līlā energies constantly serve the Lord. The effulgence emanating from this land of pure consciousness is called Brahman. With their material vision, however, ordinary men see only the material world here. Yet in this place Śrī Nārada Muni beheld the full opulence of the spiritual

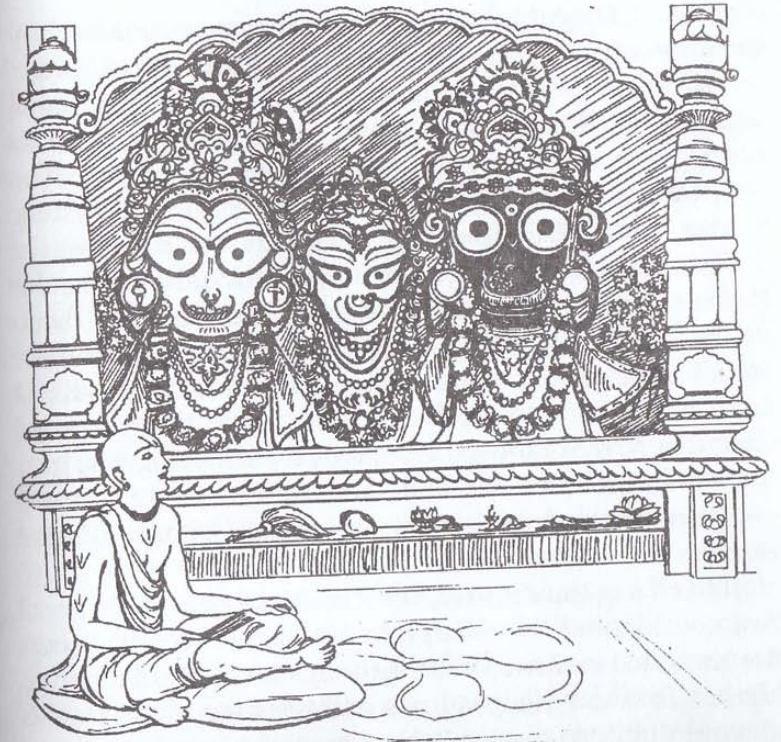
abode, and personally saw Nārāyaṇa become Śrī Caitanya.

Nityānanda said, "There is another confidential story which I shall now relate. Rāmānujācārya once came to Jagannātha Purī. Lord Jagannātha was pleased with his beautiful prayers in poetic *sanskrit* verse. At that time the Lord appeared before Rāmānuja, saying, 'Go and see Nabadwīpa-dhāma, for soon I shall appear there as a child within the house of Jagannātha Mīśra. Nabadwīpa is My very dear home. It is situated in the highest place in the spiritual world. Therefore, as My eternal servant and devotee, you should see Nabadwīpa. Let your students, who are absorbed in the mellows of servitude, remain here. Go there alone.'

"Lord Jagannātha said, 'Any living being who does not see Nabadwīpa has been born uselessly. Just one portion of Nabadwīpa contains the holy places known as Śrī Rāgam, Vyeṅkaṭṭa, and Yādavācala. Therefore, go to Nabadwīpa and see the form of Śrī Caitanya. You have come to this Earth to preach devotion, so let that birth be successful by the mercy of Śrī Caitanya. From Nabadwīpa you should go to Kūrmasthāna, where you may rejoin your disciples.'"

Nityānanda continued, "Joining his hands together, the great devotee-scholar Rāmānujācārya prayed to Lord Jagannātha, 'O Lord, You have mercifully mentioned the name of Śrī Caitanya, but I have never heard of such a personality. Please enlighten me as to who He is.'

"The Lord answered, 'Everyone has heard of Kṛṣṇa, the master of Goloka. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose pastime expansion is Nārāyaṇa, is the Supreme Truth. He lives eternally in Vṛndāvana. Śrī Caitanya is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa, and Nabadwīpa is nondifferent from Vṛndāvana. Nabadwīpa is the topmost spiritual abode, situated far



Śrī Rāmānujācārya greatly pleased Lord Jagannātha with his beautiful prayers composed in poetic Sanskrit verse.

beyond this material universe. There, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stays eternally. By My mercy that divine abode has descended within this world, and yet remains unaffected by the deluding energy. This is confirmed by scripture. If one thinks Nabadwīpa to be only a material location, his devotion will be destroyed. By My will My inconceivable energy maintains the entire transcendental realm within this material world. It is not possible to understand this highest truth by studying the scriptures with the help of reason and logic, for the Infinite tran-

scends all logical analysis. I can only be understood by those devotees to whom I reveal Myself by divine grace.'

Nityānanda continued, "Hearing the words of Lord Jagannātha, Rāmānuja was moved with divine love. 'O Lord,' he said, 'Your pastimes are truly astounding. The scriptures can not know Your opulences. It is a mystery to me that Śrī Caitanya's pastimes are not clearly described in the scriptures. When I closely study the *śrutis* and the Purāṇas, I find only some hint of these truths. Now, however, I am ready to serve Your order, for all my doubts have disappeared. If it is Your will, O Lord, I will go to Nabadwīpa and preach the glories of Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the three worlds, giving evidence from all the hidden scriptures to convert everyone to the devotional service of Śrī Caitanya. Please instruct me, O Lord.'

"Lord Jagannath said, 'O Rāmānuja, do not reveal this confidential knowledge to anyone at present. Keep the esoteric pastimes of Śrī Caitanya a secret. Only after He has finished His pastimes will the time come for the general public to receive them. Preach for me about *dāsyā rasa*, the mellow of servitude, and in your heart constantly worship Śrī Caitanya.'

"On the order of Lord Jagannātha, Rāmānuja secretly cultured his attraction for Nabadwīpa. After some time, the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, out of His causeless mercy, led Rāmānuja to Vaikuṅṭhapura. There, He revealed His transcendental form to Rāmānuja. He was served by His divine energies Śrī, Bhū, and Līlā. Rāmānuja considered himself extremely fortunate to have such a divine vision of his beloved Lord. At that time Lord Nārāyaṇa's figure was transformed into that of Śrī Caitanya, the son of Jagannātha Miśra. Upon seeing the brilliance of that divine form, Rāmānuja swooned.

"Śrī Caitanya placed His lotus foot on the ācārya's head. Divinely inspired, Rāmānuja recited many prayers in praise of the Lord. Finally, he prayed, "O Lord, please allow me to see Your pastimes here in Nabadwīpa. I never want to leave Nabadwīpa.'

"Śrī Caitanya said, 'Your wish shall be fulfilled, O son of Keśava. When My pastimes in Nabadwīpa are revealed in the future, you will again take birth here.' At that time Śrī Caitanya disappeared. Deeply satisfied, Rāmānuja resumed his journey. After some days he arrived at Kūrmasthāna and toured the holy place with his disciples.

"In this way, throughout his life, Rāmānuja preached the mellow of servitude to Godhead and delivered all of South India, while he was internally absorbed in the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya. In his next life, by the mercy of the Lord, he took birth in Nabadwīpa as the devotee Ananta."

As Nityānanda finished His narrative, the party of devotees arrived at the house of Vallabha Ācārya, where they saw the radiance of the Lakṣmī-Caitanya Deities. A little further on the path, Nityānanda Prabhu said, "Here you see the house of Ananta, where many devotees of Nārāyaṇa used to gather. It is well known that here the ancient kings established the worship of Nārāyaṇa." As they walked on, the devotees felt great pleasure upon seeing the Niśreyasa forest on the banks of the Virajā River. While relating many stories, they arrived at Mahatpura.

There, Nityānanda explained, "Here there is a nice forest which is known as Kāmyavana, just as in Vṛndāvana. Look upon it with devotion. In ancient times there were five banyan trees here, but they have all disappeared.

"This place is now called Mahatpura. During their exile, when the five Paṇḍavas and Draupadī came to Bengal and camped at Ēkacakra, Yudhiṣṭhira had a dream. At that time the glories of Nabadwīpa were revealed to him and he became anxious to see this place. All of them came here in great happiness. After seeing the splendor of Nabadwīpa, they went on to kill many demons. Over there is the hill known as Yudhiṣṭhira Parvata. There is the lake known as Draupadī Kuṇḍa. Knowing the glories of this place, Yudhiṣṭhira stayed for some time.

"One day, he had a dream about Śrī Caitanya. In his dream the Lord shone radiantly in all directions. His transcendental form was extraordinarily beautiful. Smiling, the Lord said, 'O Yudhiṣṭhira, behold My unique form! I am Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, and I always stay at your house as your friend. Very soon, in the age of Kali, I will reveal the holy land of Nabadwīpa and drive away the darkness and ignorance of that age. You have all been My servants for a very long time, and so when I reveal my pastimes, you will again take birth. On the banks of the Sindhu river in Orissa, I will stay with you. Please go now to Orissa, purify the land, and eliminate the suffering of the living beings there.'"

Nityānanda continued, "Yudhiṣṭhira explained his dream to his brothers, and after deliberation, they all went off to Orissa. It was painful to leave Nabadwīpa, but the Lord's order had to be obeyed, and so they left." As He walked on, Nityānanda said, "Here also, Madhva and his disciples stayed for some time. Śrī Caitanya appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Everyone knows that you are My eternal servant. When I appear in Nabadwīpa, I will accept initiation from your disciplic succession. Go everywhere, carefully uproot all the false

scriptures of the impersonalists, and reveal the glories of Deity worship. Soon, I Myself will broadcast your teachings.'

"Śrī Caitanya disappeared. On awakening, Madhva was dumbfound. He said, 'When will I again see that beautiful golden figure?' In reply there came a voice from the sky, saying, 'Worship Me secretly, and you will come to Me.' With this instruction, Madhva went on with great resolution to defeat all the impersonalist philosophers in India."

While narrating these stories, Nityānanda Prabhu and His party arrived at Rudradwīpa. As they began to look around, Nityānanda said, "Rudradwīpa has been divided in two by the Ganges. See how this western island has now moved to the east bank? No one lives on this side of the Ganges now. From here you can see Śankarapura. Even from a distance, you can see how it beautifies the banks of the Ganges. When Śankarācārya set out to defeat all his opponents, he arrived here first on his way to Nabadwīpa. At heart he was a Vaiṣṇava, but externally he played the role of an impersonalist. Actually he was an empowered portion of Lord Śiva, expert in preaching a covered form of Buddhism to satisfy the desire of the Lord.

"When he came here, Śrī Caitanya revealed His divine form to Śankara. He said, "You are My servant. Following My orders, you are effectively preaching the impersonal doctrine. But this Nabadwīpa-dhāma is very dear to Me, and so *māyāvāda* philosophy has no place here. On My behalf Vṛddha Śiva and Praudhamāyā, the protectors of the holy land, have spread imaginary impersonal interpretations of the scriptures, but only to those who envy My devotees. In this way the cheaters are cheated. However, since Nabadwīpa-dhāma is gener-

ally for My devotees and not for the envious, your doctrine of impersonalism should not be preached here. Therefore, you should do your work elsewhere. Do not contaminate the people of Nabadwīpa.' Realizing the truth about Nabadwīpa, Śankarācārya went elsewhere, inspired with devotion."

Continuing on, Nityānanda Prabhu said, "Here in Rudradwīpa live the eleven Rudras. They always chant the glories of Śrī Caitanya. Here, Śiva and his followers dance in ecstasy. Seeing this, the demigods shower flowers from the sky.

"Once, while touring India to defeat all opposing philosophies, the great *ācārya* Viṣṇuswāmī arrived with his followers and stayed the night in Rudradwīpa. As his disciples began singing the holy names of the Lord and dancing, Viṣṇuswāmī explained verses from the *śruti* and *smṛti*. Pleased with his discussion about *bhakti*, Lord Śiva revealed himself to Viṣṇuswāmī. Upon the arrival of Lord Śiva in the midst of the devotees gathered there, Viṣṇuswāmī became startled. He folded his hands in prayer and recited appropriate verses praising Lord Śiva. Śiva told him, 'All Vaiṣṇavas are dear to me, but your discussion of devotional service has especially pleased me. Therefore, ask any boon and I shall grant it. There is nothing I will not give a true Vaiṣṇava.'

"Viṣṇuswāmī, filled with spiritual love, bowed before Lord Śiva and replied, 'Grant me the benediction that I shall establish a disciplic succession that teaches pure devotional service.' In great ecstasy Lord Śiva, who is also known as Rudra, consented and named the *sampradāya* after himself. And so it is that Visnuswami's disciplic succession is called the Rudra Sampradāya."

Nityānanda said, "By the mercy of Lord Śiva, Viṣṇuswāmī was able to remain here for some time.

Aspiring for love of Godhead, he worshiped Śrī Caitanya. Once, the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'By the mercy of Lord Śiva, you have become My devotee. Being very fortunate, you came to Nabadwīpa and attained the treasure of *bhakti*. Now, go out and preach the philosophy of *śuddha-advaita*. Soon I shall appear on Earth. At that time you will take birth as Vallabha Bhatta. You will meet Me in Jagannātha Purī, and at that time, after going to Vṛndāvana, you will perfect your disciplic succession."

Nityānanda concluded, "O Jīva Goswāmī! Śrī Vallabha is now in Gokula. If you go there, you will be able to see him." Saying this, Nityānanda headed south and came to Pārā-Ḍāngā on the banks of the Ganges. Here He showed the place where the *rasa-maṇḍala* and Dhīra Samīra were located. Nityānanda said, "O Jīva, this is Vṛndāvana. Here one can see the Vṛndāvana pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa." Upon hearing the word 'Vṛndāvana,' Jīva Goswāmī began trembling and tears flowed from his eyes.

Nityānanda continued, "Here, Śrī Caitanya and His devotees performed *kīrtana*, describing the *rasa-līlā* pastimes of Kṛṣṇa's dancing with the *gopīs*. The place of the *rasa-līlā* in Vṛndāvana is situated here in Nabadwīpa. Those who are fortunate can see that our Lord eternally resides here on the banks of the Ganges with the *gopīs*.

"West of here you can see Dhīra Samīra. In Vṛndāvana it lies on the banks of the Yamunā; but here it lies on the banks of the Ganges. Actually, what you see is not the banks of the Ganges but the banks of the Yamunā, since the Yamunā flows on the western side of the Ganges. All the places of Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana pastimes are found here. Knowing this, you should be careful to make no distinction between Vṛndāvana and

Nabadwīpa, nor between Śrī Caitanya and Śrī Kṛṣṇa." In this way Nityānanda went from place to place, showing Jīva Goswāmī how Vṛndāvana is present in Nabadwīpa. At last, heading some distance north, they spent the night at Rudradwīpa.

Thus the humble Bhaktivinoda, whose only wealth is the lotus feet of Nitāi and Jāhnavā, sings this glorification of Nādia.



16

RUDRADWIPA Part Two

All glories to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who wanders through the groves of Nādia. All glories to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, the master of Ekacakra. All glories to Śrī Advaita, the lord of Śāntipura. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita of Rāmacandra Pura. All glories to the golden land of Gauḍa, the essence of touchstone, where, as Śrī Caitanya, Kṛṣṇa wandered in the age of Kali.

After crossing the Ganges and walking some distance, the son of Padmā, Nityānanda, called out to the devotees: "See the attractive place called Bilvapakṣa, commonly known as Belapukuriyā. This place here in Nabadwīpa is known as Bilvanana in the scriptures. Once, some *brāhmaṇa* devotees of Lord Śiva worshiped him for a fortnight by offering him the leaves of his

favorite tree, the Bilva, or Bel, tree. Śiva was pleased with the *brāhmaṇas* and awarded them devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Among those worshipers of Śiva was Nimbārka, who had been very attentive in the worship.

“Śiva said to him, ‘At the edge of this village is a sacred Bilva forest. There, the four Kumāras are deep in meditation. By their mercy you will receive transcendental knowledge. They are your *gurus*. Serving them, you will receive all that is of value.’ Saying this, Lord Śiva disappeared.”

Nityānanda continued, “After a long search, Nimbārka finally found the sacred Bilva forest mentioned by Śiva. There he saw the four brothers: Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana, and Sanat Kumāra, sitting together on an attractive platform in Śiva’s abode, unseen to all others. They were as children, naked and noble in character. Nimbārka cried out in excitement, ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa!’

“At that sound the Kumāras’ meditation broke. Opening their eyes, they saw before them the figure of an ideal Vaiṣṇava. Satisfied by this sight, each of them embraced the *brāhmaṇa* Nimbārka. ‘Who are you? And why have you come here?’ they asked. ‘We will certainly fulfill all your prayers.’ Nimbārka introduced himself with humility and offered his obeisances. Sanat Kumāra said with a smile, ‘The all-merciful Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, knowing that the age of Kali would be extremely troublesome, wanted to preach devotional service. Empowering four men with devotion, He sent them into this world to teach its importance. Rāmānuja, Madhva, and Viṣṇuswāmī are three of these men. Now, you are the fourth of these great devotees. Śrī Lakṣmidevī, the goddess of fortune, accepted Rāmānuja; Lord Brahmā accepted Madhva; Lord Śiva accepted Viṣṇuswāmī; and

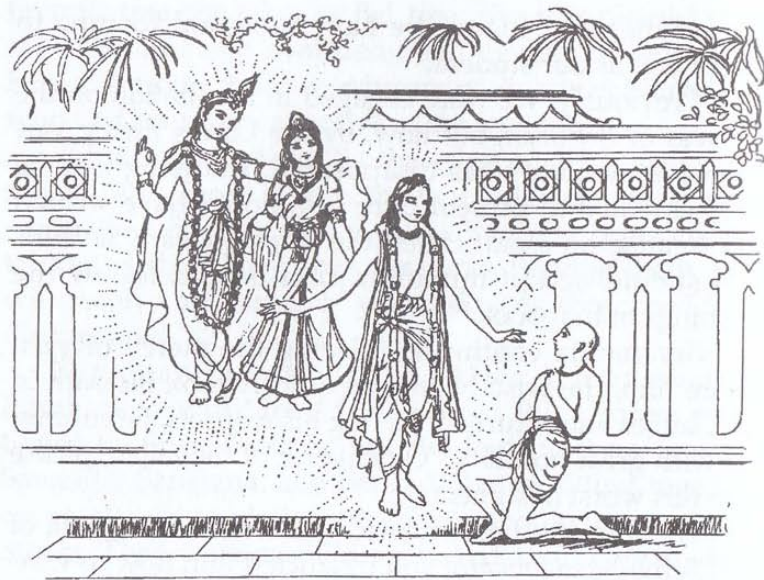
having met you today, we have the good fortune to accept you as our student.

“Previously, we were engaged in meditation on the oneness of *Brahman*, but now, by the Lord’s mercy, our offensive mentality has disappeared. Knowing it to be most essential to present pure devotion, I have written one treatise on *bhakti* called the *Sanat Kumāra Saṁhitā*. You should accept initiation from us and follow the teachings of that book.”

Nityānanda continued, “Seeing the mercy of *guru* before him, the wise Nimbārka quickly took his bath in the Ganges and returned. Paying his respects, he submitted with great humility, ‘O deliverer of the fallen, please save this worst of sinners.’

“The four brothers initiated him into the chanting of the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and instructed him how to worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the sentiments of great love called *bhāva mārga*. At that place, according to the teachings of the *Sanat Kumāra Saṁhitā*, he worshiped Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa with the *mantra*; after some time Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa revealed Themselves to him. Illuminating all directions, They spoke the following sweet words: ‘O Nimbārka, you are very fortunate. You have practised *sādhana-bhakti* in Nabadwīpa-dhāma, which is dear to Us. Here, We combine as one, as the son of Śacī.’ At that moment, the Divine Couple transformed into Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Nimbārka was trembling. At last he said, ‘Never have I seen or heard of such a remarkable form.’

Mahāprabhu replied, ‘Please keep this secret for now. Just preach about devotion to Kṛṣṇa and the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, for I am very happy in these pastimes. When I appear as Śrī Caitanya, I will enjoy My pastimes of scholarship here in Nabadwīpa. At that time you will



Śrī Nimbārka gazed in astonishment as the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda became the one exquisite form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

take birth in Kasmir and tour India as a great *paṇḍita* who sets out to defeat all opponents. You will be known as Keśava Kaśmīrī.

“While wandering in Nabadwīpa, you will come to Māyāpura. When they hear your name, the scholars of Nabadwīpa will flee. Intoxicated with learning, I will then take great pleasure in defeating you. By the mercy of Saraswatī, however, you will realize My identity, give up your pride, and take shelter of Me. At that time I will award you with pure devotion and will again send you out to teach devotional service. Thus you can satisfy Me by preaching your philosophy of *dvaita-advaita*, simulta-

neous oneness and dualism, keeping My identity a secret.

“Later, when I begin the *saṅkīrtana* movement, I Myself will preach, using the essence of the philosophies of the four *acaryas*: Madhva, Rāmānuja, Viṣṇuswāmī, and yourself, Nimbārka. From Madhva I will accept two teachings: his complete refutation of impersonal philosophy, and his worship of the Kṛṣṇa Deity, which he accepts as the eternal form of Godhead. From Rāmānuja I will accept two teachings: the ideal of devotion unpoluted by *karma* and *jñāna*, and service to the devotees. From Viṣṇuswāmī’s teachings I will accept two principles: the mood of exclusive dependence on Kṛṣṇa, and the path of *raga-bhakti*, spontaneous devotional service. And from you, O Nimbārka, I will also accept two principles: the *gopīs*’ love for Kṛṣṇa as the highest form of devotion, and the necessity of taking shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.”

Nityānanda concluded, “At that time Śrī Caitanya disappeared, and Nimbārka wept out of divine love. After worshiping the holy feet of his *gurus*, he left this place and set out to preach *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.”

From a distance Nityānanda showed Jīva Goswāmī Rāma Tīrtha, where at one time Balarāma killed Kolāsura and later took bath in the Ganges with the Yadus. Now known as Rukmapura, this point is on the edge of the *parikrama* route. It is particularly wonderful in the month of Kārttika.

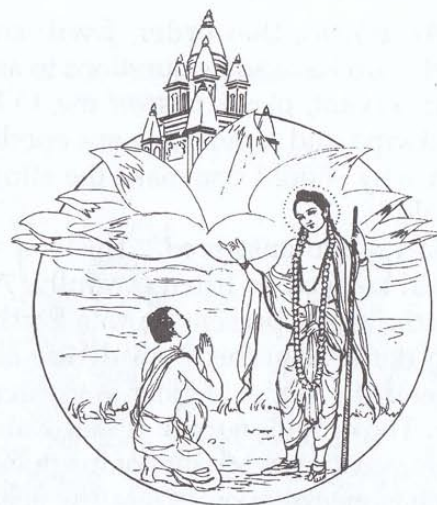
Nityānanda Prabhu then left Bilvapākṣa with the devotees and they made their way to the village of Bharadvāja Tīlā. There Nityānanda explained, “Here the learned Bharadvāja Muni came to see Gangā Sāgara. Here he worshiped Śrī Caitanya, Who appeared before him, saying, ‘When I make My appearance in

Nabadwīpa, you will again see Me. At that time all your desires will be fulfilled. When the Lord disappeared, Bharadvāja Muni fainted.

After staying here for some days, the sage departed to see other holy places. The common people call this place Bhāruī Ḍāngā. The scriptures consider this to be a major holy place." As Nityānanda Prabhu spoke, they returned to Māyāpura. Īśāna Ṭhākura welcomed them back. Nityānanda in unprecedented ecstasy sang and danced amongst the devotees. That day, in the best of holy places, the house of Jagannātha Miśra where Śrī Caitanya advented Himself with the holy name, the Lord's own mother fed the Vaiṣṇavas. Who could describe the ecstasy they experienced there? The sound of their ecstatic *kīrtana* was tumultuous and resounded throughout the heavens and Earth.

Bhaktivinoda, whose only hope is the shade of the lotus feet of Nityānanda and Jāhnavā, thus sings the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

17



DIVINE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

All glories to Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda. All glories to Śrī Advaita. All glories to Śrī Gadādhara, the embodiment of devotional ecstasy. All glories to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and the devotees, and all glories to Nabadwīpa-dhāma. All glories to the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, the abode of divine love.

Nityānanda Prabhu was sitting in the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura with tears streaming from His eyes out of love for Śrī Caitanya. Just then, saintly Vaiṣṇavas began arriving from all directions, flooding everyone with love of Godhead. Jīva Goswāmī became mad with ecstasy as he began tasting divine love of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. He fell before the lotus feet of Nityānanda, his voice wavering with ecstasy. Nityānanda asked him, "Will you soon go to Vṛndāvana?" Jīva answered, "The Lord's will

is supreme. Accepting that order, I will soon go to Vṛndāvana, yet I still have some questions to ask. For the benefit of Your servant, please answer me, O Lord. You say that Nabadwīpa and Vṛndāvana are nondifferent. If that is so, then why should one make the effort to go to Vṛndāvana at all?"

Nityānanda Prabhu answered, "This is a very deep and confidential subject, so listen carefully. As long as the Lord's pastimes are present on this Earth, see that materialists do not hear of this. Nabadwīpa and Vṛndāvana are one and the same. Neither is greater or lesser than the other. The only difference is that Nabadwīpa is Vṛndāvana enhanced by the quality of magnanimity.

"Vṛndāvana is the reservoir of *rasa*, the goal of all living beings, but one who is not qualified cannot receive that nectar. Therefore, by the mercy of the Lord, that same transcendental abode has become Nabadwīpa, where all souls can taste the highest nectar of love of Godhead.

"The pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the source of the highest ecstasy for living beings, but no one has any immediate right to that pleasure. Only after many lives of austerity can one reach the stage of knowledge. When knowledge matures, one inquires after this nectarean *rasa*. But as there are always many obstacles, achieving this treasure is indeed rare. This *rasa* is, therefore, not obtained by everyone who goes to Vṛndāvana. Rather, the sweet nectar of Vṛndāvana turns sour because of their offenses.

"Furthermore, this terrible age of Kali is filled with faults. The body is short-lived and troubles are many. As a result, even one who wants perfection cannot attain the mellows of Vṛndāvana. The only method of achieving the divine mellows of Vṛndāvana is to receive the mercy



Śrī Śrī Gaura Kṛṣṇa and Nityānanda Rāma have descended to distribute *rasa*, and one who worships Them quickly attains divine love.

of Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have personally come to distribute that mercy by appearing in the combined form as Śrī Caitanya in Nabadwīpa. He has descended along with Vṛndāvana to distribute divine *rasa*. Offenses are no obstacle for one who worships Śrī Caitanya; he quickly attains the goal of divine love.

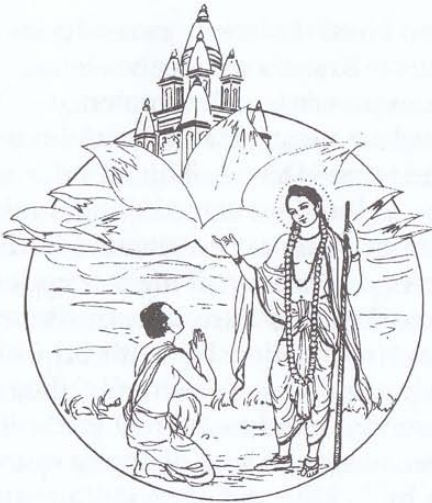
"Therefore, if one lives in Nabadwīpa and takes shelter of the holy name, his offenses will quickly cease and he will soon taste divine *rasa*. Love of Kṛṣṇa will quickly shine within him, and Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will prevail within his life. In this way, by receiving the mercy of Śrī Caitanya, all souls can enter into the divine abode of Vṛndāvana, the land of the nectarean pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

Nityānanda concluded, "As this is highly confidential, please do not discuss it openly. Except for this quality of magnanimity, there is no difference between Nabadwīpa and Vṛndāvana. As you are now qualified to take shelter of the place where the mellows of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are fully manifested, you should now go to Vṛndāvana and take shelter there. In the strict sense, of course, there is no need to go to Vṛndāvana-dhāma, for it is fully present in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. Only to fulfill the order of the Lord should you now go to Vṛndāvana. It is absolutely necessary for all souls to take shelter of Nabadwīpa in order to become qualified for the divine *rasa* of Vṛndāvana. Only when one actually attains genuine appreciation of the mellows of Vṛndāvana may one go and live there, where he can develop the full happiness of divine mellows (*rasa*). One who achieves the mercy of Nabadwīpa, however, can easily attain Vṛndāvana."

Hearing these conclusions of the Lord, Jīva Goswāmī caught hold of the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu in

ecstatic bliss. Jīva told Him, "I have one more question, O Lord. Please listen. Many people live in Nabadwīpa but still do not attain devotion for Kṛṣṇa. They live in this holiest of holy places, the land of greatest purification. How is it possible for them to remain offensive? You are the abode of the universe, the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead. Please resolve this one doubt that has been disturbing me, O my Lord."

Thus speaks the poor and humble Bhaktivinoda, whose only hope is the shade of the lotus feet of Jāhnava and Nityānanda.



JOURNEY TO VRINDAVANA

All glories to Śrī Caitanya, the son of Śacī. All glories to Nityānanda Prabhū, the son of Padmāvati and the life of Jāhnavā-devī. All glories to Advaita Ācārya, the husband of Sītā, and all glories to Śrī Gadādhara. All glories to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and all the devotees.

In answer to Śrī Jīva's question, Nityānanda Prabhū spoke to the assembled devotees, revealing deep truths. He said, "Listen, O Jīva. Both Vṛndāvana and Nabadwīpa are the shelter of countless devotees. Purified souls, crossing over material nature, live there as associates of Kṛṣṇa. As opposed to the material world, that abode is eternal, nonmaterial, and fully conscious. You should know that the houses, gates, rivers, streams, forests, and courtyards there are all fully spiritual and

attractive. It is a blissful place, transcendental to material nature, resting on Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable and supremely magnanimous existence (*sandhinī*) potency.

"By the Lord's potency, that holy land has descended here in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. This is because Kṛṣṇa's greatest desire is the deliverance of all souls. Since no material person or thing can be situated in that spiritual domain, a film of dull matter, of misconception, serves as a protective coating to secure it from the materialists. Those who have no relationship with Śrī Caitanya may appear to live in the *dhāma*, but actually, they simply live above that covering, blind to the real truth. Just as a bee who sits on the outside of a jar of honey cannot taste the honey within by licking the glass jar, a materialist can never taste the real sweetness within the holy *dhāma*. Although one may think, 'I am in Nabadwīpa,' Praudhamāyā happily keeps the holy *dhāma* far away from that person. But if by some great fortune one receives the association of a devotee, he will soon develop a relationship with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The relationship between the soul and the Supreme Godhead is a deep subject. O son of Vallabha, it is a treasure that souls in bondage cannot easily understand. Even if one calls out the name of Śrī Caitanya with apparent affection, if that relationship is not genuine, one simply remains entangled in the material world. Such a person lives above the illusory coating of the *dhāma* and never attains pure devotion. Such persons are pretenders who cheat themselves and others who are like them. They have no humility, but are full of pride and think themselves fully qualified as great souls.

"But by the powerful mercy of the devotees, even such a fallen person can give up his pride and perform devotional service. One should think himself lower than

a blade of grass, be more tolerant than a tree, and expect no respect for himself but show respect to all others. When one is endowed with these four qualities and sings the glories of the Lord, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally appears in his heart and establishes a relationship.

"There are five different kinds of relationship with Kṛṣṇa: neutrality, servitude, friendship, parental affection, and conjugal love. By worshipping Śrī Caitanya in the mellows of neutrality and servitude, one gradually realizes the higher mellows of friendship, parenthood, and consorhood with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the path of perfection in loving Kṛṣṇa, different moods awaken. These moods develop into the predominating mellow in one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

"Whoever makes a material distinction between Śrī Caitanya and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is vile and worthless and will never attain a relationship with Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand, whoever possesses the divine qualities, beginning with humility, and accepts the association of devotees will first worship Śrī Caitanya in *dāsya*, or a relationship of servitude. The devotee gradually perfects this *dāsya* worship of Śrī Caitanya, and it is in that mood that the devotees call Śrī Caitanya 'Mahāprabhu.'

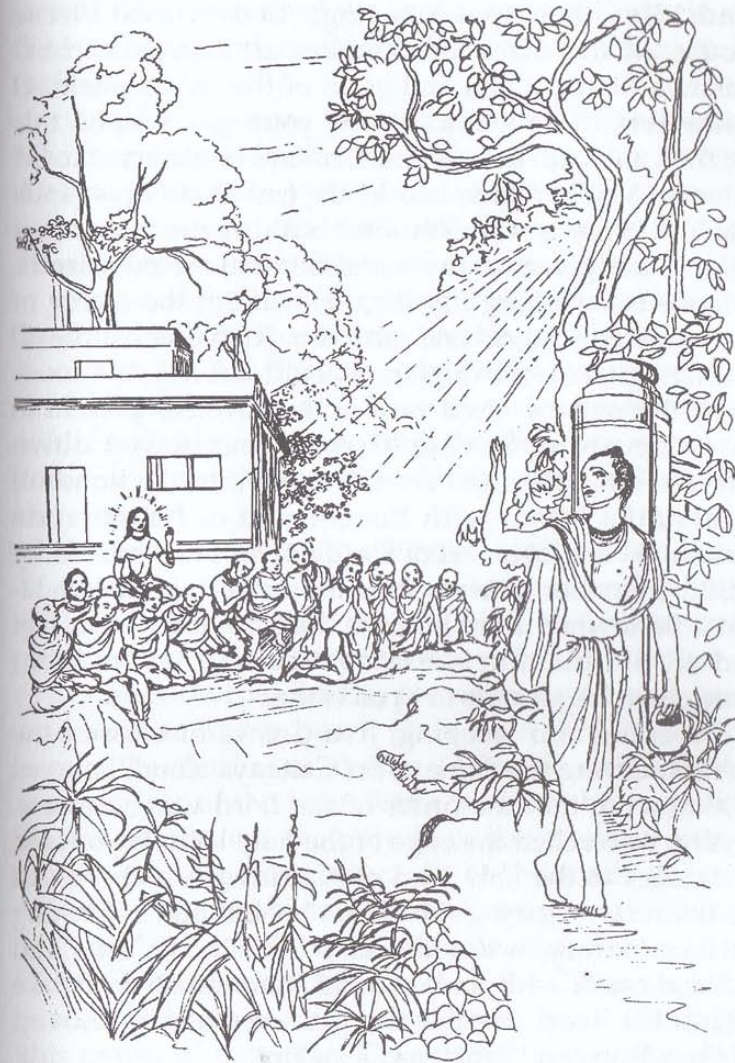
"After this, if one develops to the standard of love of Godhead in the mood of Vṛndāvana, his worship of Śrī Caitanya becomes the worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have combined as one and descended as Śrī Gaurāṅga. The complete pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are fully present in Him. After the serving mood reaches maturity in the heart of a living soul, the Vṛndāvana mellow naturally develops. At that time the form of Gaurahari in Nabadwīpa becomes that of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, and the nectar of Their eternal pastimes inundates the devotee. This is how a devotee

enters into the eternal pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

“Nabadwīpa and Vṛndāvana are one and the same, although each of them have transcendently unique qualities. Materialists, who are blind to spiritual life, cannot see the deep relation between Nabadwīpa and Vṛndāvana, or how they are inconceivably one and different. The relationship between Vṛndāvana and Nabadwīpa has its roots in the deep relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya, Who are also at once equal but unique. When one develops a taste for the most exalted mellows of divine love, he can see Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa within Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Very soon, Rūpa and Sanātana will teach you all these truths, O son of Vallabha. Now the Lord Himself has given you the right to enter Vṛndāvana. O Jīva, do not delay any longer in going there.”

Saying this, the all-merciful Nityānanda Prabhu placed His lotus feet upon the head of Jīva Goswāmī, empowering him with divine potency. At that moment, Jīva Goswāmī, experiencing great ecstatic love of Godhead, swooned and remained unconscious for some time at Nityānanda’s feet. There in the courtyard of Śrīvāsa, the symptoms of ecstasy overwhelmed Jīva’s body. He cried, “How unfortunate I am that I could not see the Lord’s pastimes in Nabadwīpa. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu performed His pastimes to free the souls bound in this material world, but because I did not see those activities, I am uselessly passing my days.”

Hearing that Śrī Jīva Goswāmī would soon be departing for Vṛndāvana, many devotees came to the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura to bid him farewell. The senior devotees gave him their blessings, and the younger devotees begged him for his mercy. Folding his



Weeping as he departed for Vṛndāvana on the order of Nityānanda Prabhu, Jīva Goswāmī bid farewell to all the devotees present at Śrīvāsāngam.

hands, Jīva then spoke, saying, "O devotees! Please excuse all my offenses. You are all servants of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and *gurus* of the entire world. O desire trees of devotion, bestow your mercy upon this insignificant soul. Let my mind always be attracted to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and let the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu be my goal, birth after birth! A mere ignorant child, I have given up my home. But you are my friends. You are maintaining my life, for without the mercy of devotees like you, no one can attain Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, O brothers, give me the dust from your lotus feet."

With this he praised each of the devotees present in the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and bowed down before them. Then Jīva Goswāmī went to the house of Jagannātha Miśra with the consent of Nityānanda Prabhu. At the lotus feet of Śacīdevī, his heart moved by spiritual emotions, he received the order to go to Vṛndāvana. Bestowing upon him the dust from her lotus feet and all her blessings, Śacīdevī bade Jīva Goswāmī farewell on his journey to Vṛndāvana.

Weeping and weeping, Jīva Goswāmī crossed the Ganges. Crying the name of Śrī Caitanya aloud, he went on, knowing that the order of the Lord was supreme. Finally, he reached the edge of the holy land. He offered obeisances to the holy land of Nabadwīpa and crossed the boundary, leaving the *dhāma* behind and beginning the long journey to Vṛndāvana. Suddenly, the holy land of Vṛndāvana with its beautiful Yamunā river awoke within his heart. He felt the presence of his beloved brothers Rūpa and Sanātana Goswāmī.

One night, as he was continuing his travels, he rested along the way and had a dream. Śrī Caitanya appeared to him and said, "Go to Mathurā. There, you and your brothers, who are all very dear to Me, should together

reveal the scriptures of devotional service. Dedicate your lives to My service and you will always be able to see My pastimes in Vraja."

Awakening from his dream, Jīva felt great ecstasy and hurried to Vṛndāvana. The contribution that Jīva Goswāmī made in Vṛndāvana is impossible to describe. Later some fortunate soul will elaborate on this, and hearing that story devotees will become jubilant.

This description of performing pilgrimage in the holy land of Nabadwīpa-dhāma has been recorded by the poor and humble Bhaktivinoda. I offer one prayer at the feet of all Vaiṣṇavas. O Vaiṣṇavas, let my connection with Śrī Caitanya become firm. By your mercy, allow me to become a resident of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. This is my only request.

I am an evil worm in the hole of materialism, devoid of devotion, filled with lust, and insane with anger. If you are not kind upon me, how can an evil servant of *māyā* like me have any connection with Śrī Caitanya?

O Nabadwīpa-dhāma, please give me your mercy and appear in my heart. Only then will I be able to escape the clutches of illusion. O Praudhamāyā, protecting goddess of the holy *dhāma*, you are the personification of mercy and the only hope for crossing over the troubles arising from ignorance. O Vṛddha Śiva, protector of the divine abode of Nabadwīpa, be merciful unto me and let the holy *dhāma* be revealed to me. O residents of Nabadwīpa, devotees of Śrī Caitanya, kindly place your holy feet upon my sinful head. Please hear this prayer of mine, that I may quickly attain the shelter of Śrī Caitanya's lotus feet.

Although I am very low and fallen, taking the order of Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Jāhnavā-devī upon my head, I have here described the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

Because I have been ordered by Them to write this book and because it is filled with the names of Śrī Gaurāṅga, Nityānanda, and Nabadwīpa, I cannot be guilty of any fault, although I am unqualified. O devotees! In reading this work, please pluck from it the valuable fruit that will enhance your pilgrimage. If one reads this book while performing *parikramā*, the results of his pilgrimage will increase a hundredfold. This is the verdict of scripture. Bhaktivinoda Thākura, who sees himself as vile, low, and worthless, who aspires for the shade of the lotus feet of Śrī Nitāi and Jāhnava, thus sings the glories of Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

BOOK TWO

Nabadwīpa-Bhāva-Taraṅga





The Holy Dhama

May the *dhāma* of Śrī Nabadwīpa, measuring sixteen *krosas* in circumference, which is the crest jewel of all holy places and the resting place of all demigods, *ṛṣis*, and the Vedas, and which is the principal manifestation of the Lord's *sandhinī* potency, the eternal existence upon which His *cit* and *ānanda* potencies reside, become visible to my eyes.

May my eyes see the sixteen *krosas* of Vṛndāvana within *Mathurā-maṇḍala* as identical with Nabadwīpa within *Gaura-maṇḍala*. These *dhāmas* are but two manifestations of one principle which is infinite and purely spiritual, and which, only for the reasons of differing pastimes of the Lord, has taken the form of two abodes. By that one inconceivable potency (*acintya śakti*) which is infinite and spiritual, the Lord has brought these two

dhāmas into the material world in order to liberate the living entities dwelling here. This is the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. May all those bound by *māyā* see this Vṛndāvana and Nabadwīpa-dhāma.

Only by attaining the proper qualifications can the senses of the living entities taste the spiritual nectar of these *dhāmas*. Instead of tasting sweet nectar, unqualified persons with material senses scornfully deride these places as trifling bits of dull matter. Since the cause of qualification is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa Himself coming through the mercy of the devotees, the living entities should seek out the association of the pure devotees of the Lord. One cannot attain proper qualification by following the paths of *jñāna* and *karma*. Only by means of devotional faith and by the association of the devotees of the Lord can one overcome the prison of the material world. The very moment that the senses of the living entity give up material illusion, his eyes will see the splendor of the spiritual *dhāma*.

O when shall I attain that state? When shall I see Śrī Nabadwīpa-dhāma, thus transcending the boundaries of material existence? More cooling than the brilliance of ten million moons, when will that *dhāma* appear before my eyes?

The nine islands of *Gaura-maṇḍala* are like a giant lotus. In the middle of the eight islands which are the eight petals of that lotus is the supreme island called Antardwīpa, and in the center of that island rests Māyāpura, the appearance place of the Lord on Earth. Upon seeing that, I shall achieve overwhelming bliss. The Vedas sing of a transcendental place called Brahmapura. When my eyes are free from illusion, I shall see that place as identical with Śrī Māyāpura. It is in this place, the supreme Gokula or Mahāvana of Vraja, that

the son of Śacī performed His eternal pastimes.

What was the abode of the *gopas* and *gopīs* (*vaiśyas*) in Vraja has become the abode of the *brāhmaṇa* families in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. In the center of Māyāpura eternally exists the dwelling of the *brāhmaṇa* Jagannātha Mīśra, the supreme purifying agent. Though eyes afflicted by material illusion will look there and see only a small house, some earth, water, and a few articles, if Māyādevī is merciful and lifts her covering, one shall see a vast spiritual dwelling where Śrī Gaurāṅga is served by His eternal mother, father, and countless servants, all incessantly mad with love. There Lakṣmīpriyā and Viṣṇupriyā eternally serve the Lord's lotus feet. Śrī Gaurāṅga, embodying the whole Pañca-tattva, resides in that place in His wondrous form. Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa, and innumerable devotees have their individual places in Māyāpura. Everywhere are the houses of Vaiṣṇavas. O Māyāpura, please be merciful to me.

To the southwest, the Gangā or Yamunā, twisting like a serpent for her own benefit, comes to serve Śrī Gaurāṅga, the jewel of the twice-born. Upon her banks are many *ghāts*, temples, a multitude of groves, and the images of Prauḍhamāyā and Vṛddha Śiva, who are the protective guardians of the holy *dhāma*. Throughout Māyāpura are scattered countless houses of the *brāhmaṇas*, wide roadways, courtyards, forests, and temples. In the southeast, on the bank of the Saraswatī River, is the eternal area known as Īsodyāna, the garden of the Lord.

Why should the rascals of Kali-yuga, bound up tightly by material illusion, have the privilege of seeing all these treasures of the spiritual realm? Māyādevī has thus hidden the *dhāma*, taking advantage of the erosive nature

of the Gangā. Thus the eyes of the materialist can see only the shadow of the real Māyāpura. By the mercy of Śrī Nityānanda, who is the possessor of all spiritual powers, may that Māyāpura be revealed to my eyes and may my eyes be imbued with the proper reverence. O Nityānanda Prabhu, please bless this worthless fool with a vision of the household pastimes of the Lord which transpired in this land. O Māyāpura, center of the eight-petalled lotus which is golden-glowing, effulgent, and pure, please shine before my eyes!

Here and there are groves, the lake of Pṛthu, and many pastures for the cows. How beautiful they are to see! There are many water canals, grain fields, and wide roads lined with kadamba, bakula, and other types of trees. To the west of this, on the bank of the Gangā, stands Gangānagara, where in Gangādāsa's house the Lord and His *brāhmaṇa* friends attended to their studies. There also one can see Bharadvāja-Tilā, where the great *muni* Bharadvāja, by worshipping Gaurāṅga, obtained *prema*, and then wrote *sutras* in order to uplift materialistic men to the platform of devotional service.

North of Pṛthu Kuṇḍa is the village of the Chānd Kāzī (Mathurā in *Kṛṣṇa līlā*). There also is Śaṣṭhi Tirtha and the exquisite Madhuvana, an extensive area populated with many residences. O eyes, please become purified by seeing this scene. Further north is the attractive Sārādāṅgā, where the Sabarā race, out of fear of the demon Bahurakta, resides secretly with Lord Jagannātha. May I always keep sight of this place.

Northwest of Mathurā I shall see the splendor of Sīmantadwīpa, whose border is the bank of the Gangā. There in great distress Śrī Pārvatī took the dust of the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga upon her head. In the distance I shall see Bilvapākṣa Forest, where the four Kumāra

brothers are deeply absorbed in meditation on Gaurāṅga. And further in the distance I shall see the land known as Saṅkarṣaṇa Kṣetra, where Nityānanda Prabhu performed His sublime pastimes.

In the southern portion of Māyāpura, on the bank of the Gangā near its junction with the Saraswatī, is the grove called Īśodyāna. May that forest be the place of my eternal devotions. At this place my Lord Śrī Śacīnāndana, along with His associates, performed His midday pastimes.

Seeing the brilliance of this grove, I shall remember Rādhā Kuṇḍa. May all this be eternally visible to my eyes. Amid the huge trees and dense vines various types of birds are singing the glories of Gaurāṅga, and there is a large lake and a golden temple covered with diamonds and blue and yellow sapphires. The materialists, their eyes sunk in material sense gratification, cannot see these groves, however. They see only a small piece of land covered with thorns which is periodically thrown into disarray by the flooding of the Gangā.

In the middle of Madhuvana is Visrama Sthana, the place of Kholavecā Śrīdhara's cottage, and a clean pond. After rectifying the Kāzī, Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva came here with His followers and took rest. When shall I shout "Gaurāṅga!" at this place with my voice faltering? When shall I cry here in solitude? When shall I see, in the emotion of divine love, Śrī Gaurasundara drinking water from Śrīdhara's old iron pot? And when by great fortune shall I see the young son of Śacī in the midst of *kīrtana* along with Nityānanda, Advaita, Gadādhara, and Śrīvāsa, dancing and begging love of God at the house of Śrīdhara?

After that I shall see Suvarṇabihār, the place of King Suvarṇa Sen's incomparable castle, where Gaurāṅga, in

His supremely attractive golden form, danced with His retinue. When shall I wander throughout Suvarna Bihār alone or with the devotees, weeping in love, my voice wavering? There, at the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga, I shall beg for a speck of service to Their Lordships Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and offer my very life to the shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī's lotus feet.

Southeast of here is Nṛsimha Purī. When shall I see its beauty, and when will I become overwhelmed with ecstasy upon receiving pure *Kṛṣṇa-prema*? Because my heart is the residence for lust and the other five enemies, duplicity, longing for fame, and insincerity, I shall pray to Śrī Nṛsimhadeva to purify my heart and give me the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa. O when shall I, weeping, beg at the lotus feet of Śrī Nṛsimha for the ability to worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Nabadwīpa, free from all difficulties? When will the Lord, who is fearful to evil but exceedingly merciful to Prahlāda and the devotees, become pleased to give me some mercy? When will He be pleased to speak to this worthless fool and remove all my fears?

"Dear child, stay here happily in *Gaura-dhāma*, worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and develop attraction for the Holy Name. By the mercy of My devotees all material obstacles are transcended. With purified heart just worship the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which are a flow of sweet nectar." Saying this, when will that Lord gleefully place His feet upon my head, at which moment I shall fall on the ground, showing symptoms of ecstasy and experiencing love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa by the mercy of Śrī Nṛsimha?

West of this is the Gaṇḍaka River, past the Alakānanda River and Kāśī Kṣetra. Then, in Godruma, I shall see the place where Indra's surabhi cow worshipped

the Lord. This place is one of a kind in the three worlds. Just as Īśodyāna and Rādhā Kuṇḍa lie close to the bank of the Gangā, so Godruma, where Mārkaṇḍeya received mercy from the Lord, lies close to the bank of the Saraswatī. O mind, please worship the groves of Godruma, for by this very soon you will see the full wealth of Gaurāṅga's pastimes. Seeing these pastimes, you will easily attain the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and all your desires will be fulfilled.

Godruma is Nandagrāma, the city of Nanda and the residence of the *gopas*, where Lord Gaurāṅga performed many pastimes. Having taken milk products for lunch at a cowherd's house in the afternoon, Nimai would go and herd the cows with His *gopa* friends. The cowherd boys would say, "O brother, you are a *gopāl*. Your form as a *brāhmaṇa* boy does not suit You. Come; we shall carry You on our shoulders and go herd the cows. We shall head towards your mother's place in Māyāpura."

One *gopa* would affectionately give Nimai cheese mixed with condensed milk, and another *gopa* would become unsteady just on seeing the wonderful form of the Lord. Another *gopa* would give Him fruits and flowers, saying, "Come to my house every day. You are worshiped by the *brāhmaṇas* but You are also the Lord of us *gopas*. We cannot give You up. You are the object of our knowledge and meditation. Look, even the cows, simply upon seeing You, begin mooing and giving up their calves and the grass. Since it is late now, go home to Your father's house, and tomorrow we shall again meet here. I will keep yogurt, cheese, and condensed milk for You, but if You are late, I will become upset."

In this way, daily in Godruma Forest Nimai and Nitāi would play with the cowherd boys. If it was not too late, Nimai would bathe in the Gangā before proceeding

home. Will such a day ever be mine when I shall see these pure love-laden pastimes of Gaurāṅga? Aspiring to serve the Lord in the company of the *gopas* and with the sentiments of a *gopa*, I shall reside in a cottage in Godruma with fixed mind.

South of Godruma lies attractive Madhyadwīpa, filled with a string of beautiful forests. There, at midday, Gaurāṅga and the devotees came and gave the seven ṛṣis their darśana; there also on the bank of the Gomatī in Naimiṣa Forest, the ṛṣis listen with rapt attention to a recitation of the *Chaitanya-bhāgavata*. To hear this narrative about Gaurāṅga, Lord Śiva and the demigods mount Brahmā's swan and make haste to arrive. When shall I wander through this forest and see that assembly listening to the *Gaura Purāna*? On the bank of the Gomatī, when shall I hear stories about Śrī Chaitanya on the ekādaśī day and during the holy month of Kārttika? When shall the audience of Śaunaka and the ṛṣis give me mercy and put their foot dust on my head? I will raise my two hands and say, "O residents of Nabadwīpa, attentively drink the nectar of *Gaurāṅga-līlā* in this forest!"

South of there lies Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara, nondifferent from Puṣkara, where the brāhmaṇa Jīvana dāsa worshipped Gaurāṅga and was consoled by seeing His golden form. Further south is Uccahaṭṭa, nondifferent from Kurukṣetra of Brahmāvarta. Here all the demigods reside, performing *Gaura-kīrtana*; sometimes the residents can hear that music. At midday Gaurāṅga and His associates would stroll in these forests, overcome with transcendental love. When the devotees would give just a hint of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, Gaurāṅga, tasting the emotions of Rādhā, would begin to sing and dance. When shall I, alone or in the company of devotees, drown in the waves of the ocean of love of Śrī Caitanya? When shall I

wander at noon in the forest of Madhyadwīpa, understanding that emotional state of the Lord? When will the inhabitants of Madhyadwīpa be merciful and reveal to this destitute wretch his goal: "See, here is Gaurāṅga, our Lord, dancing with His associates in a grand *kīrtana* in Brahmanagar on the bank of Brahmā Kuṇḍa."

When shall I see that astounding golden form of Gaurāṅga with two long arms, wearing a garland of forest flowers and calling out loudly, "Chant the Holy Name, one and all!" At that moment, Śrīvāsa and all the devotees, shouting "Hari! Hari!" will begin *sankīrtana*, and some will shout, "Chant the name of Gaurahari, brother, for without Him we cannot attain the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!"

Near Uccahaṭṭa is Pañcavenī, the holy place where the demigods come to relax. At this place the three streams of the Gangā (Bhāgīrathī, Bhogavatī, and Alakānandā) and the Yamunā and Saraswatī come together, desiring to perform service to Gaurāṅga. By bathing here Gaurāṅga and His men purified this *tīrtha* of the sins of the people of Kali-yuga. Vyāsadeva and the ṛṣis recognize that in all the fourteen worlds there is nothing to compare with the Pañcavenī. When, by bathing in the waters of the Pañcavenī, shall I be able to obtain constant remembrance of the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga? Filling my hands with the water which has washed those feet, drinking my fill and becoming intoxicated by the association of Gaurāṅga—when shall I be so blessed?

Across the Gangā from Pañcavenī is Koladwīpa, where the Lord in the form of a boar appeared to His devotee. In scripture this place is called Varāha Kṣetra. It is a spiritual realm rarely attained by the demigods. Known as Kuliya Pahara, it is the topmost place of

Gaura-līlā. After taking *sannyāsa* Śrī Chaitanya attempted a journey to Vṛndāvana, but He was tricked and came to this town instead. Here also is the school of Vidyāvācaspati, the brother of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. By the power of his pure devotion he attracted the Lord by taking bath in the Gangā. When shall I stand on this bank of the Gangā and by the mercy of Vidyāvācaspati view the opulences of the spiritual kingdom?

When will the Lord, king of the *sannyāsīs*, be visible at the top of His palace? Seeing the effulgence of that *sannyāsī*, I shall fall to the earth in great separation. Just as the *gopīs*, upon seeing Kṛṣṇa in Dvaraka dressed as a king, began to weep, remembering His pastimes on the bank of the Yamunā, so I long to take the Lord back to Māyāpura where He was shining in the dress of a young boy, His hair long and curled, His *dhoti* folded thrice, and performing many charming pastimes with His young friends in Īśodyāna. This *sannyāsī* is also my Lord and I am His servant, and these different appearances the Lord assumes are but some of His unlimited pastimes. But my heart desires to take the Lord back to the bank of Pṛthukunḍa, to Śrīvāsāṅgam!

Further on from here lies Samudragiri, purifier of the whole universe, where formerly King Samudra Sen fought with Bhīma and received the *darśana* of the Lord, who acknowledges His pure devotees. Here also the ocean, overcome with divine love and taking shelter of the Gangā, came to see the pastimes of Nabadwīpa-dhāma. In this way, witnessed by both the demigods and the demons, Gangāsāgara resides in Nabadwīpa.

The fortunate living entities can see Bahulāvana within Koladwīpa. Absorbed in *kīrtana*, Gaurāṅga and His associates came and danced here many times. O Koladwīpa,

be merciful to this worthless person, give me the right to live in Nabadwīpa among the devotees, and give me access to the wealth of the pastimes of Gaurāṅga, Who is my Lord in life and death.

In the northern part of Koladwīpa is Campakahatṭa, a great *tīrtha* where Jayadeva worshipped Gaurāṅga and where Vānīnātha had his house. In that house the Lord performed a great festival of *nāma sankīrtana* and showed the great extent of His *prema*. At this village is also a campaka forest, where the *gopī* Campakalatā gathers flowers for the garlands of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This is nondifferent from Khadirāvana in Vraja, where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma take rest.

At Ṛtudwīpa, the abode of transcendental bliss covered with attractive forests, the seasons perform eternal service to the Lord. In one part of this area exists Rādhā Kuṇḍa of Vraja. Sometimes Gaurāṅga, singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa and remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa as a cowherd boy, would call out the names of the cows repeatedly: “Śyāmālī! Dhubalī!” Weeping, He would also call out for Subala and Sridāmā. When shall I wander in Ṛtudwīpa, seeing the beauty of the forests and becoming stunned upon seeing the pastimes at Rādhā Kuṇḍa enacted directly before my eyes?

Here, on the bank of the Mānasa Gangā near Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, together with Dāmā, Bala, and Mahābala, would go off to distant solitary forests with countless cows and calves, playing tricks, singing, and gossiping as they went along. Losing sight of the calves, they become alarmed; but at the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute, the calves all come running back. Just as I am able to catch a glimpse of this pastime, it all vanishes; and thus I fall to the ground unconscious. But upon regaining my senses, I shall rise up and continue wandering slowly

through the forests.

“O Gaurāṅga, O Kṛṣṇacandra, ocean of mercy! You are the wealth of the wretched and poor, and I am the lowest rascal!” Saying this and weeping continuously, I move onward until suddenly I come to Vidyānagara. This Vidyānagara is the abode of the four Vedas and the sixty-four branches of knowledge and is known as Saraswatī Pīṭha. At this place Brahmā, Śiva, and the ṛṣis revealed all types of knowledge to the residents of the material world. Knowing that the Lord would perform His educational pastimes here, Bṛhaspati gave up his abode in Svargaloka. Taking the form of Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, he came here and taught all types of knowledge according to various processes.

Whoever lives at Vidyānagara and sings the glories of Gaurāṅga becomes a fortunate teacher and will never know grief. Whoever takes up the worship of Gaurāṅga and receives the vision of His transcendental form will be freed from all ignorance. Shall I ever see that Gaurasundara, as He goes to Vidyānagara with the intention of gaining knowledge?

Here also, Devānanda Paṇḍit, opposing the devotees, committed an offense to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and was punished by the Lord. Even Sesa does not fully understand the pastimes of the Lord, such as when He will become excited by a certain action, what will be the object of His thoughts, why He gives up chanting to punish the students who criticize Him, or what types of happiness He gains by defeating His teachers. Yet whatever the Lord does is a cause of bliss. The Lord is independent and, as I am simply His servant, my very limited intelligence does not have the power to judge Him.

O all you inhabitants of Nabadwīpa who were His teachers, you took nourishment of the Lord’s eternal pas-

times and are therefore worthy of all respects. Please give to me who am destitute the qualification to enter into *nāma sankīrtana*. Unto the *tīrtha* of Vidyānagara I make the request that the darkness which hides Gaurāṅga’s identity may never cover my mind; may my mind transcend this *māyā*.

North of Vidyānagara shines Jahnudwīpa, where the hermitage of Jahnu Muni is visible to all. Here Jahnu Muni drank the Gangā, who then appeared as his daughter Jāhnavī. Here also, Bhīsmadeva learned *bhāgavat-dharma* in the *muni’s āśrama*, and Jahnu himself sincerely took to worshipping the Lord and attained the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya. This Jahnudwīpa is nondifferent from Bhadrāvana of Vraja. When will that forest be visible to my eyes? On top of Bhīsmā Tīlā in that forest I shall perform my worship, and in the evening Bhīsmā will appear before me in his pure spiritual form—black like Kṛṣṇa, wearing Tulasī mālā, decorated with twelve *tilaka* marks, and constantly chanting the Holy Name in bliss.

Bhīsmadeva will say to me, “Listen, O newcomer to Nabadwīpa. Now I am singing the glories of Gaurāṅga. Prior to this, while dying on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra, I was able to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa. And the Lord told me, ‘Previously, you had the *darśana* of Nabadwīpa, and as a result of that, you have gained Gaurāṅga’s mercy and have become an eternal inhabitant of Nabadwīpa.’ Therefore, give up all other desires and aspirations, live in Nabadwīpa, and worship Gaurahari. You no longer have any need to fear the bondage of material objects, for it is certain that you will attain Gaurāṅga’s lotus feet.

“By the mercy of the Lord the liberated souls can see the pastimes of Gaurāṅga and Kṛṣṇa at all times in this Dhāma. Lamentation, fear, death, all causes of distur-

bance, all material desires, and all afflictions of the conditioned souls—none of these things can exist here. The pure devotees, by the potion of servitude to Kṛṣṇa, have all sunk into an ocean of happiness. They do not know the pains of this world and they do not experience the difficulty of any wants, because they are situated in pure bodies with pure desires.

“The Supreme Lord, who has unlimited devoted followers (who are either eternally liberated or coming from the material world), performs His pastimes in this forest with each individual according to his respective emotional constitution. This place is unlimited and with no connection to dull matter, for here the spiritual energy is in control. The Lord’s followers, the place, time, the senses of the body—all are situated beyond the deluding energy in a state of pure goodness.

“As long as one does not give up the body in material existence, and as long as one’s intelligence sticks to material designation, the actual *dhāma* will not be visible to him in its complete form. That is by the Lord’s desire. However, by the Lord’s mercy you will receive a spiritual body, for at this place progress is unobstructed. The illusions of the material energy will retreat, and you will receive unlimited bliss in this eternal spiritual realm.

“But as long as you have your present body, hold onto the principles of *bhakti* very carefully. Service to the devotees, chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa, and worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa should be performed diligently at all times. With the help of the devotees, the Name and the *dhāma*, keep undesirable association far away. Soon you will attain residence in the eternal *dhāma*, and there pure service to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa will be manifest.”

Hearing these instructions of Bhīsmadeva, I will offer my obeisances at his feet. Giving his blessings, he will

disappear; and weeping, I will proceed to Modadrumadwīpa Forest. This forest is nondifferent from Śrī Bhāṅdīravana of Vraja, where the birds and beasts are all spiritual entities. In the branches of the trees live cuckoos who sing the glories of Gaurāṅga and Sītā and Rāma continuously. The countless banyan trees spread their branches out to block the sun. When will this place where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma displayed Their pastimes be visible to my eyes?

When shall I wander about, observing the splendor of this forest, and suddenly spot the cottage of Rāma—and witness the sight of Rāma, the color of new green grass, wearing the dress of a *brahmacārī*, accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā? Seeing Rāmacandra’s form, I shall fall to the ground in the forest, my body shaking with love, speechless, as I drink the beauty of that form with my two eyes. Being merciful, Lakṣmaṇa will come forward slowly with fruit in His hands and place His foot gently upon my head.

“My son, here, eat this fruit. Living in the forest, this is all we have to offer to our guests.” Just as He says this, the vision will dissolve, and weeping and weeping I shall begin to eat the fruit. Within my heart I shall remember that inconceivable vision. Shall I ever see that breathtaking green form of Rāma again? O land of transcendental gems, Bhāṅdīravana, my heart weeps without end to leave you! At that place Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, on the pretext of herding cows, performed many pastimes. In the same way, Gaurāṅga performed many pastimes here in Modadruma, becoming intoxicated by the sound of *kīrtana* in the company of His friends.

Then slowly I shall go to Vaikuṅṭhapura, to the forest called Niḥśreyasa, which is abundant with all grandeur. There resides the Lord of the spiritual sky who is wor-

shipable by all the demigods, in the company of His three energies Līlā, Bhū, and Śrī. As much as my Kṛṣṇa is endowed with the topmost sweetness, so the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha is endowed with all opulence and grandeur. Kṛṣṇa is not without the same opulences, but He makes these invisible to His devotees. O Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, You were merciful to Nārada. Hiding Your opulences, You satisfied Nārada by transforming Yourself into the form of Gaurāṅga. Seeing that form I shall dance; diving into the ocean of bliss, I shall cry out in a loud voice.

Crossing over the Virajā River and leaving Brahmaṇī Nagara, I shall climb to the top of Ārka Tīlā, sit there, and worship Gaurahari. I shall become intoxicated singing the nectar of the Name. O Ārkadeva, Sūrya, let me see you: reddish-hued, long-armed, clothed in the dawn, with tulasī-mālā, sandalwood paste smeared on your body, the name of Gaurahari on your lips, and tears in your eyes. I know you will then speak to me, saying, "My son, I have appeared before you because you are a devotee of Śrī Gaurāṅga. We demigods, directors of material affairs, are also servants of Gaurāṅga's lotus feet. I simply aspire to be the servant of the servant of Gaurāṅga. By my blessings you will obtain *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, and you will have the strength to live in the *dhāma* and chant the Holy Name. But I derive so much happiness hearing your singing of the sweet Name of the Lord that you must please keep coming to this place always."

Offering obeisances at Sūryadeva's feet, I shall proceed to Mahatpura. This Mahatpura is nondifferent from Kāmyavana of Kṛṣṇa-līlā. Here, Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers resided with Draupadī for some time, here they heard the *Gaurāṅga Purāna* from Śrī Vyāsadeva, and here they performed intensive worship of Gaurāṅga. Even now the devotees can see the assembly of Yudhiṣṭhira

and the ṛṣis—Śukadeva, Cyārvak, Devala, Gargamuni, and Bhauma—sitting at the base of a tree, weeping as they hear the pastimes of Gaurāṅga. When shall I see that assembly, offer my *daṇḍavats* from a distance, and hear from the mouth of Vyāsadeva the story of Gaurāṅga delivering the atheists? In love and ecstasy I shall fall unconscious. After some time, seeing the assembly gone, shouting the name of Gaurāṅga, I shall fall flat on the earth and cry.

Feeling hunger during the end of the first quarter of the day, I shall pick fruits from that forest. But at that time Draupadī, the wife of the Pāṇḍavas, will approach, carrying rice and cooked greens, and say, "Here, child, take this offering of mine—rice and a few sweets—which have been offered to Gaurāṅga." Offering my full obeisances, I shall extend my hand and receive the rice and greens. Taking the wonderful *prasāda*, all my desires will be satisfied. Whoever gets the mercy of the *prasāda* of the Lord obtains pure *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. May I eternally be the recipient of that mercy so that I shall be able to easily give up this material world.

Having taken that *prasāda*, when shall I come to Rudradwīpa—nondifferent from Kailāśa, the abode of Lord Śiva—which shines throughout the three worlds and where the eleven Rudras dance and become paralyzed with love of God? Here Durvāsā took shelter, gave up the practice of yoga, and began worshipping Gaurāṅga's lotus feet. Aṣṭavakra, Dattātreya, and the other yogīs, along with Lord Śiva gave up the monistic philosophy and instead engaged themselves in meditation on the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga. No longer do they desire to merge into the *brahmajyoti*.

When shall I wander in the forest and come to the Śiva-liṅga? Sitting there, I shall meditate on Gaurāṅga;

and then I shall behold Pārvatī-devī not too distant. When she notices me, I shall pay my respects and ask, "What is your name, Mother?"

With tears in her eyes she will reply, "O my son, my sorrow is impossible to describe. There are five types of liberation, and I have been given the name of Sāyujya, or Nirvāṇa. My four sisters Sālokya, Sārupya, Sāmipyā, and Sārṣṭi have gone to Vaikuṅṭhapura, leaving me here bewildered. By the mercy of Mahādeva, Dattātreya and others were giving me attention for some time, but finally they gave me up and took up residence in Rudradwīpa. Uselessly I am now looking for them. Where and when shall I find them? Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva has liberated everyone but is merciless to me. Therefore I shall find a place to give up my life. And because I am bereft of Gaurāṅga's mercy, that place will be called Nirdaya."

Just hearing the word *sāyujya*, my heart will tremble as if in fear of the witch Pūtanā. In great fear I shall close my eyes and sit tight at this place. Then someone will touch me, and I shall rise and see before me the figure of Śiva, dancing and singing out to Gaurāṅga, "O merciful son of Śacī, give mercy to all living entities. Drive away all fear!" I shall fall at Mahādeva's feet, requesting purification. Being merciful, he will place his feet on my head and give me instruction.

"Listen—devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the essence, and *jñāna*, *karma*, *mukti*, and *yoga* are all useless! By my mercy you will conquer *māyā* and quickly attain the shade of the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga. To the south see Śrī Pulina there, so attractive. That is Vṛndāvana within Nabadwīpa. Go there to witness Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Soon you will attain Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet."

Śiva will disappear, and after bowing down I shall

move on, crying all the while. Viewing Śrī Pulina, I shall fall unconscious to the earth, my voice choked with emotion and producing only a gurgling sound. In that state of *samādhi*, in a divine vision, a wondrous figure will appear performing her constitutional service. I shall recognize that it is I, Kamala Manjarī, the eternal assistant of Anaṅga Manjarī, the goddess of my heart. She will introduce me to all her companions and give me the service of preparing camphor for Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Govinda, and she will reveal to me the pastimes of the Divine Couple.

Near Śrī Pulina is the Rāsa Maṇḍala, where the son of the king of the *gopas*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by a thousand million *gopīs*, is dancing with Śrī Rādhā. Such dalliance does not exist within the material world! Who is the person that, upon seeing this, can ever give up that astounding sight? That sight which I shall see, I shall not be able to describe. I shall lock it in my heart and gaze upon it eternally. In my own grove, while cultivating that sight in my heart, I shall serve constantly under the direction of the *sakhīs*.

West of the Rāsa Maṇḍala is Śrī Dhīra Samīra, and further off, Varṁsīvaṭa and the bank of the Yamunā. Anaṅga Manjarī, the younger sister of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī, will mercifully show me the *dhāma*, and being questioned by Rūpa Manjarī my mistress Anaṅga Manjarī will reply, "This new servant will be engaged in Lalitā's service. Her name is Kamala Manjarī and she is very devoted to Śrī Gaurāṅga. Be merciful to her by giving her direction and seeing to her progress in cultivating devotion to our Lordships."

Hearing this, Rūpa Manjarī will touch my body with her hand, thereby mercifully imparting to me sublime spiritual emotions and the intense desire to worship, fol-

lowing in her footsteps. Viśākhā, whose complexion is like lightning and with ornaments and dress sparkling like the midnight stars, will appear with the camphor tray in her hand. I shall fall at her feet and beg for the shelter of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet. They will take me to the private grove of Lalitā, who is dwelling inside, meditating on service to Rādhārānī. I shall offer my obeisances at her lotus feet, and Viśākha will explain my identity to her. "This is one inhabitant of Nabadwīpa who wants to serve you and thereby serve the feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

Lalitā, very pleased, will say, "Give her a place beside your associates, and there she will attentively perform her desired service. At the time of your service take her with you, and gradually she will receive the mercy of Śrī Rādhā. Without the mercy of Rādhā, how can the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa be attained?"

Hearing Lalitā's words, Anaṅga Manjarī will take me to her grove. At the time of service, being very affectionate, she will graciously allow me to accompany her. Performing my task, I shall catch a glimpse of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the distance. And then perhaps Śrī Rādhā will give me a direct order, give me the shade of Her lotus feet, give me Her direct mercy. As I perform that service, I shall gradually become expert. Thus I shall please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and in that way I shall reach the heights of ecstasy.

My dream broken, I shall weep and weep; and gazing at Śrī Pulina, slowly cross the Gangā. Living at Īśodyāna in my private grove, I shall worship Gaurāṅga, Who is nondifferent from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Then I shall very carefully worship Rādhā and Govinda and shall gaze upon Rādhā Kuṇḍa and Vṛndāvana. Remembering the lotus feet of Anaṅga Manjarī and the *sakhīs*, I shall

drown in the ocean of love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and in the unlimited bliss attained by performing my service to Their Lordships.

This Bhaktivinoda, servant of the servant of Śrī Caitanya, is begging for residence in Nabadwīpa-dhāma. I am eager for the shelter of the feet of Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha Goswāmīs (Rūpa and Rati Manjarīs), and from them I anxiously beg to achieve my perfect spiritual body and service. O residents of Nabadwīpa and Vṛndāvana, please quickly establish me in the circle of the Lord's servitors. That is certainly within your power, for you are already stationed there. As my position is to be but a servant, by somehow assisting you in your service to Their Lordships, I shall be able to obtain residence in the *dhāma*. And Nabadwīpa-dhāma—again I beg You to give me Your mercy, for without first receiving Your specific mercy, how can anyone attain to any of the Lord's *dhāmas*?

Please do not consider whether I am qualified or not, especially in my attempt to present this book. I have simply extracted the essence of the instructions of Śrī Jāhnavā-devī (Anaṅga Manjarī) and Nityānanda Prabhu, the holder of all energies. Thus, whoever reads this *Nabadwīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* with devotional faith will be able to experience the nectar of the pastimes of Gaurāṅga. Svarūpa Dāmodara (Śrī Lalitā) will certainly give him mercy, give him the shade of his lotus feet, and accept him as an associate in the holy *dhāma*.

One night while Śrīla Bhaktivinoda was on the roof of his home deeply meditating on the place where Śrī Caitanya appeared, he experienced a divine vision of an effulgent cottage to the northeast. The next morning he



went to the vicinity which was revealed to him and inquired from the many devoted Māyāpura-*vāsīs* who resided in that area. He was guided to a large mound of earth covered with Tulasī plants. This was the exact spot of Jagannātha Mīśra's house. The Thākura became surcharged with spiritual ecstasy, and the manifestation of that *ānanda* took the form of Śrī Nabadwīpa-*dhāma-māhātmya*.

Śrī Nabadwīpa-*bhāva-taraṅga*, the second book presented in this edition, is an intimate *darśana* with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura in which he shares with the reader his deep vision of the holy *dhāma*. Follow the Thākura in his mood of service and experience Nabadwīpa as you never have before!