

SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI GOSWAMI MAHARAJA

INTRODUCTION FOR THE BOOK ON BHAKTISIDDHANTA Sarasvati THAKURA

During the late '70's and '80's, preaching duties in Bengal now and then brought me in contact with direct disciples of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and also with disciples of his disciples. From them I heard stories and teachings of Sarasvati Thakura. Hearing little bits here and there, my heart filled with wonder, and also pride on being connected with such a powerful transcendental personality. My eagerness to hear more increased.

From my very beginning days in Krsna consciousness I--and surely all others in ISKCON also--was attracted by the personality of Sarasvati Thakura. I would often look up at the big painting of him on the wall of our Bury Place (London) temple. It was as if his serious gaze came down directly from Goloka Vrindavana. He was known as "singha-guru"--a spiritual master as fearsome to non-devotees as a lion. Who would not be impressed on hearing of his austerity, learning, strictness, and above all his unflinching devotion to the lotus feet of Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai and Sri-Sri Radha-Krsna, and his uncompromising, determined preaching of Their glories?

Our own glorious spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Srila Prabhupada, was another transcendental "superman." Srila Prabhupada was utterly surrendered at the lotus feet of his guru, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and always considered himself a humble servant of his spiritual master. Those of unbiased mind understand both to be empowered acaryas, saktyavesa-avatars.

By his unbreakable bond of devotion to Srila Sarasvati Thakura, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada has, by initiating us, linked us also eternally to his spiritual master.

After the disappearance of our beloved Srila Prabhupada, Satsvarupa Dasa Goswami wrote the "Srila Prabhupada Lilamrita." Gradually more books revealing the lives of Srila Prabhupada and other previous acaryas are being rendered in English. Devotees are hungry for such literature. We conditioned souls need to associate with great devotees, either first-hand by personal contact or by hearing of their pastimes. The acaryas give us inspiration, instruction and hope.

Srila Prabhupada was the first acarya in history about whom so much biographical detail has been recorded. It is a great loss to the world that such records have not been kept about other great devotees in the past.

Anything a pure devotee of Krsna does and says is important for us poor conditioned souls who are simply trying to run along behind in their footsteps. This is especially true of those great acaryas who come to this world with the specific purpose of saving the conditioned souls. Thinking like this, I considered that much could still be preserved about Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada from his still remaining disciples. I often considered collecting whatever information I could from these disciples, but put off the idea many times. After all, Srila Prabhupada had warned us against mixing intimately with his Godbrothers. Also, as an insignificant member of the vaisnava community, I felt it presumptuous to take up personally such an important project, which would entail approaching such senior vaisnavas as my spiritual master's Godbrothers.

I think it was towards the end of 1988 when I had gradually built up my courage and decided to take up this project. I considered that no-one else was likely to do it, and that the work should be taken up immediately. The number of Saraswati Thakura's disciples still present was already much diminished. Very soon it was going to be zero. At that time Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja, who could have revealed oceans of nectarean pastimes, was incapacitated and was hardly speaking to anyone. Shortly thereafter, he passed away from this world. So I missed the opportunity of interviewing him.

At least three biographies of Saraswati Thakura have been written in Bengali (which I have a good working knowledge of) and one in Oriya. One of them, translated into English and published by the Caitanya Matha, was used as the basis of Rupa Vilasa Prabhu's "A Ray of Vishnu." Unfortunately, the book on which "A Ray of Vishnu" is based is incomplete, biased and slanted. The three biographies of Saraswati Thakura in Bengali were written by the followers of different parties, after the split in the Gaudiya Matha. All were written with party feelings. They were not objective. For instance, in the book published by the Caitanya Matha, the names of some of the most famous of Saraswati Thakura's disciples were not even mentioned. Ananta Vasudeva, Sunderananda Vidyavinoda and others, were prominent associates of Saraswati Thakura. But the infighting in the Gaudiya Matha was so bitter that opposing factions have literally tried to edit each other out of existence. Each party gives all credit to the spread of the Gaudiya Matha to their own leader. Another drawback of these biographies is lack of professional biographical style. They are mostly lists of statements such as: "he did this," "he went there," "he said that," "he gave a lecture," "he met such-and- such a person," etc. Even that it is valuable. What is lacking are intimate anecdotes which bring out the personality of the acarya.

I took up the task of meeting the remaining disciples of Saraswati Thakura, being well aware of Prabhupada's warning about mixing intimately with his Godbrothers. I was determined

not to be swayed by anything they might say. Several of our Guru Maharaja's godbrothers (Srla Prabhupada once referred to them as "my so-called

godbrothers") seemed to have nothing better to do than to criticize Srla Prabhupada, his followers, and everything he did or said. Knowing that such persons would not be at all willing to help me (and probably not able to do so) I resolved that, having come in the presence of such persons, and having detected their attitude, I would not stay with them any longer than the time it took to get away from them.

Notwithstanding such fears of unpleasant encounters, my search for disciples of Saraswati Thakura took me to different places in Bengal and Orissa and also to Vrindavana. Armed with a cassette recorder, I visited first of all different asramas of the Gaudiya Matha and related organizations. I was able to meet several elderly sannyasis and brahmacaris. Gradually I got to find out the whereabouts of the few remaining disciples of Saraswati Thakura. The search for his householder disciples led me to some remote places. I undertook a few long journeys with no-one to be found at the end of them. Most of the devotees approached were either not willing to speak, did not take me very seriously, or did not have much to say anyway, having had limited association with Saraswati Thakura. Curiously enough, those who were living in mathas, especially sannyasis, were generally the least willing to help. The householder devotees were usually more happy to receive me.

It was my great good fortune to come across Sripad Joti Sekhara Prabhu. From the age of sixteen, he had been a brahmacari in the Gaudiya Matha and had seen and heard much of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura. After the break-up of Gaudiya Matha, he could, had he desired, have taken a prominent position in the Gaudiya Mission (one of the main factions). Instead, being disappointed with the infighting, he chose to leave the mission and live a quiet life as a householder. I met him at his residence in Cuttack, a city in Orissa. Cuttack was his birthplace and where he had grown up and gone to school. We sat together on the floor of his tiny thatched-roof temple at his home. Over several visits of several days each, he gradually revealed to me dozens of stories of Saraswati Thakura. Joti Shekhar Prabhu once told me, "You are like a train and I have got the goods. You will take the goods to the destination. For many years I was carrying these memories of Saraswati Thakura. Sometimes I remembered them, but, due to being engaged in family affairs, I was mostly forgetting them. But now you have come, these things will not be lost. They will be revealed to the world." Joti Shekhar Prabhu and his family members were very kind to me. Joti Shekhar Prabhu reflected the kindness and affection which he had received from Saraswati

Thakura.

A Great Loss To The World

Those who lives and achievements are extraordinary become natural subjects of biographies. There have been hundreds and thousands of biographies and autobiographies published about this world's great soldiers, politicians, revolutionaries, intellectuals and philosophers. However, the Vaisnavas (devotees of the Supreme Lord) know that the only biographical works of any real value are those of Krsna, His expansions, and His devotees. Every moment of every day that a maha-bhagavata Vaisnava appears in this world is full of transcendental meaning. However, it is not possible to record every minute detail of the activities of a Vaisnava. Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami has expressed similar feelings of inability in documenting the pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu:

(possible qquotes:Antya 5 p.113, Ant 4 p.190, Madhya 6 p.304)

The lives of great people (even those of the mundane world) are packed with interesting, instructive activity, incidents and dialogue. Others who come in contact with such special people also start to become special. We can practically experience in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, that the members of this society, having taken up the mission of the great acaryas, lead transcendently fulfilled, exciting lives. Every day a new book could be compiled about the adventures of the members of ISKCON, especially of the front-line preachers. How much can be recorded? How much can be saved? Krsnadasa Kaviraja writes :

(see above for quotes)

In this book I have gathered just a tiny fraction of the vast treasure house of stories of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. If all his disciples, admirers and acquaintances had been interviewed, what a vast stock of transcendental nectar could have been preserved! (Footnote : Let us not

make the same mistake in this generation. Let us collect and publish dozens of books of the pastimes of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada. What has been produced so far is just a drop in the ocean. Every disciple of Srila Prabhupada should record and publish their experiences of him, even if it is very little or apparently not very significant).

Warning: follow, don't imitate

This book gives intimate insights into the personality and character of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada, and thus helps to reveal the greatness of an actually empowered acarya. Devotees from the group of Radharani's most intimate associates appear very occasionally in this world. Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura is one of them. We would not expect such a person, whose level of consciousness is perpetually far above ours, to act, speak or think like an ordinary conditioned soul. As natural as it is for the conditioned souls to be ever immersed in maya, so similarly the Krsna conscious liberated souls are ever averse to maya and prone to Krsna. These anecdotes and pastimes of Saraswati Thakura reveal the behaviour of such a liberated person. In coming to this world he apparently acts as one of us, yet his purpose is to bring us back to that world for which he in separation keenly hankers for at every moment.

Understanding the almost unlimited gap between ourselves and such great souls--a

gap which they only out of their mercy make bridgeable--we should be most cautious not to imitate that which is inimitable. The position of great acaryas is incomparable with even the greatest of great persons of this material world. Still, in many ways, an acarya appears to act as an ordinary person. He walks with us, talks with us, eats as we do, goes from place to place by vehicle or on foot, wear clothes as we do. Still, the great devotees' intense love for Krsna never fails them even for a particle of a moment. Furthermore, they are clearly set apart by their ability to infuse such devotion into the hearts of

those who are bereft of that devotion.

By their mercy, those

conditioned souls who they pick up can also become glorified members of the guru parampara by speaking the same message of Krsna to others. The great acaryas teach us to speak, and by their mercy our preaching may be effective to purify the next generation of devotees after us. However, those who are fresh from the contamination of maya and have barely just begun to stand on their feet in Krsna consciousness, yet who by the order and mercy of the guru parampara are also gurus in parampara, will do well to study the all-around excellence that naturally decorates a nitya-siddha maha-bhagavata. Let us study and worship the behaviour and character of the actual Vaisnavas so that we may be purified. Such behaviour is our ideal.

Srila Prabhupada advised us to follow in the footsteps of great personalities (anusarana), not to imitate them (anukarana). By speaking on intimate topics of Krsna consciousness and by taking a regal position, senior devotees can advertise themselves to innocent beginners as being highly elevated. But an external show of advancement, if not backed up by the spotlessly pure consciousness which is inherent in great acaryas, may lead to falldown.

On the other hand, if the follower is not an imitator, but speaks the same truths which the great acaryas do, knowing the gap between himself and the great acaryas, and does not pretend to himself or to others about the gap between his speaking and realizations, and thus acts as a humble servant of the great acaryas, then he comes under the shelter of the internal energy.

One who has dedicated his life to the service of the internal energy, may, due to past contamination, sometimes be affected by the external energy. But because of his unpretentiousness in serving the mahatmas who are situated in the spiritual energy, by preaching

their message, he is protected by them from falldown into the external energy. Gradually becoming purified, he also becomes fully situated in the internal energy. Then he also acts and speaks wonderfully. Even before full purification, he can do wonderful things by the grace of the previous acaryas. But as soon as one thinks himself great, that by his own prowess he is acting wonderfully, then all his wonderful activities will be reduced to nothing. He may even find himself as a beggar in the street, rejected at least temporarily from the service of the absolute. The absolute can not be served by duality.

A Doubt

It may be questioned how reliable are these anecdotes that I have collected. After all, even immediately after an accident or crime, when police collect eyewitness accounts, they get different versions. How can credit be given to stories that have been told many years after they took place? My reply is that apparent discrepancies in the details of the incidents being related will not blemish the text. What we are trying to present are the instructions and the mood of the acarya. We pray at the lotus feet of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura that he may be pleased to be present in this book. I do not believe that any of the devotees I interviewed made up any story simply to exercise their imaginations or mislead others. Admittedly exact details may have become obscured by time.

The "Prabhupada" Controversy

According to Hari-bhakti-vilasa, the spiritual master is to be honored with titles such as, "Visnupada" or "Prabhupada." The caste goswamis of Bengal regularly confer the title "Prabhupada" on dubious "gurus" of no particular stature. However, in the actual sampradaya of Lord Caitanya, the title "Prabhupada" has only been used for outstanding acaryas who have made monumental contributions of literature and /or preaching. It is a title which implies the utmost respect, for one hundred percent pure devotees who are transparent via mediums of the parampara and are really as good as God

inasmuch as they totally represents, understand, realize and preach the mission of God.

Examples of "Prabhupada" are Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupada and Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhupada. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Prabhupada was generally referred to as "Srila Prabhupada" by his disciples, who, after his departure, decided that in future the title "Prabhupada" not be given to anyone else. Such a sentiment precluded the transcendental reality that God regularly sends His messengers to this world to perform mighty acts on His behalf.

To date, the disciples, grand-disciples and subsequent disciples of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati who are not in ISKCON, refer to him only as "Srila Prabhupada." Many of them resent that members of ISKCON use the title "SrilaPrabhupada" to refer to A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Thus, the usage of the title "Prabhupada" for ISKCON's founder-acarya unnecessarily remains a point of contention. There is no strong reason for the claim that the title "Prabhupada" be used only for Sarasvati Thakura. Clearly, the achievements of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami demand that he also be known as "Prabhupada." Only those influenced by envy can deny it.

However, it is true that some confusion may be caused by using the same title for two acaryas, especially if one is a disciple of the other. Therefore throughout this book Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has been referred to as "Sarasvati Thakura" and A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami as "our Srila Prabhupada." "Our Srila Prabhupada" is referred to as "Abhay Da" in anecdotes related about him before he took sannyasa. "Da" is a Bengali appellative to a name signifying an older brother, and implying affection and respect.

Avoiding Controversy

It is not my position to judge or pass comment on senior Vaisnavas. Still, I cannot but resent the attempt of anyone to even subtly infer something against Prabhupada, or to minimize his position. If a so-called advanced or

senior Vaisnava cannot appreciate the unique achievements of Srila Prabhupada, that is his misfortune. Some of our godbrothers have approached Srila Prabhupada's godbrothers as curiosity seekers, trying to find out something "higher," "deeper," "more" than what Prabhupada taught us. In my mind there was no question of such meaningless, dangerous frivolities. I have firm faith that Srila Prabhupada has given us everything needed to become fully Krsna consciousness. Even if we never read any books other than his, the knowledge contained therein is totally sufficient for achieving all perfection. My endeavor to collect some valuable jewels of information about Saraswati Thakura was devoid of the foolish attempt of trying to surpass my spiritual master. With this attitude, I felt chaste and protected. Joti Shekhar Prabhu understood and appreciated my position. He informed me that Jiva Goswami states in his Bhakti Sandarbha that the siksa-guru should instruct so as to complement, not disturb, the teachings of the diksa-guru.

Despite Srila Prabhupada's warnings not to mix intimately with his godbrothers, I felt protected in my position. My attitude in undertaking this research was one of service. I was not going as a novelty seeker. I was attempting to glorify the parampara by collecting some biographical details which would otherwise have been lost. I had accepted that Srila Prabhupada has fulfilled Saraswati Thakura's mission.

Joti Shekhar Prabhu appreciated his Godbrother Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and what he had done for spreading Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura's mission. He also appreciated the work of ISKCON. Still, as an honest writer, I must record that he was not without his criticism and difference of opinion over certain things which Prabhupada had done.

Joti Shekhar Prabhu has been a lifelong supporter of Ananta Vasudeva (later known as Bhakti Prasada Puri Goswami Maharaja) and Bhakti Kevala Audalomi Maharaja--both controversial figures in the modern history of Gaudiya Vaisnavism. Being junior to Joti Shekhar Prabhu, being a guest in his house, and anyway being little inclined to enter into a controversial discussion which would almost certainly have been fractious and inconclusive, I avoided

deep discussion of points over which there would have been definite differences of opinion. Rather, we met on the happy ground of jointly glorifying Saraswati Thakura to the world. Thus we have developed a relationship of affection and mutual respect. Joti Shekhar Prabhu is humble and gentle. He treats me respectfully as a householder to a sannyasi,

although I am in every respect, except consideration of asrama, junior to him.

Bhaktisiddhanta and Bhaktivedanta: One-ness and Difference

Most of these stories are beyond any question of controversy. But in several instances we find that Saraswati Thakura's instructions seem to differ from those of His Divine

Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Actually there is no difference of opinion whatsoever between Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and "our" Srila Prabhupada. Only, according to time, place and circumstances they have presented Krsna consciousness a little differently. In siddhanta (philosophical conclusion) there is absolutely no difference at all.

The ocean of Vedic thought is vast, but the actual conclusion only one: surrender to Krsna. Different acaryas, preaching in different times and places, present the Vedic message in the manner most suitable to bring those they work among to the lotus feet of Krsna.

"Our" Srila Prabhupada, being empowered by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura to fulfill his mission of worldwide preaching, did make some adjustments in the details of sadhana and organization. The time and place in which Srila Prabhupada operated were quite different from those of his guru. Both Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada were revolutionaries. They both adopted

whatever means were necessary to widely preach the message of Rupa-Raghunatha in a rapidly changing world. Still, Sarasvati Thakura's preaching mission was, in the cultural sense, more traditional than that of his successor, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Sarasvati Thakura was living and preaching in an India that, although degraded by the influence of Kali-yuga, was still far closer to her original culture and much less materialistic and confused than the India of today. In that relatively favorable atmosphere, Sarasvati Thakura and his followers were able to live more like traditional sadhus, with strong emphasis on practical renunciation. Although many of the things Sarasvati Thakura did were considered modern and revolutionary, still, the thrust of his preaching closely emphasized the same points that traditional Vaisnava acaryas had in the past.

True to his name, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura was always meditating on and explaining the real siddhanta (conclusion) of the Vedas: bhakti, devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krsna. Non-devotee speculators try to explain the Vedic conclusions in their own way. They interpret the sastra to suit their own imaginary ideas. Modern Vedic culture is thus mixed with apasiddhantas (wrong conclusions supposedly or otherwise extrapolated from the Vedic texts). Sarasvati Thakura, like Jiva Gosvami before him, expertly presented the real meaning of the scriptures and established Krsna consciousness as supreme. His message was clear: surrender to Krsna. The main obstacles to Krsna consciousness which he had to challenge were Mayavada and sahajiya-ism. His language was almost forbiddingly scholarly, being aimed at the highly educated classes, who had at least some knowledge of Vedic philosophy.

Much of his preaching was aimed at exposing and correcting the prevalent misconceptions and distortions of Vedic philosophy. He preached mostly in Bengali, a language 90% derived from Sanskrit. +The whole preaching condition lent itself to constant absorption in deep and subtle philosophical concepts and use of highly Sanskritized language. Although he often used simple analogies and instructive stories, his general presentation was complex.

Our Srila Prabhupada took the same message to the whole world. Necessarily, he explained everything clearly and simply so that even those unfamiliar with Vedic philosophy could easily understand. He had to preach in a totally different ethos, to people who had no idea of actual philosophy. Actual philosophy means Vedic philosophy, but most of his audience had never heard of the Vedas and certainly did not accept their authority. Only after much endeavor by Srila

Prabhupada was he able to convince a few Westerners of the very first lesson of Vedic knowledge: "You are not this body." Even in India, people were far more fallen than in his spiritual master's time. Finding the people of the world initially unfit for receiving the Vedic philosophy in its full depth, he put much concentration into exposing the defects of the modern "hog, dog" civilization. In bringing Krsna consciousness to the masses, Srila Prabhupada preached extensively against sinful life (especially the rampant illicit sex and animal slaughter he encountered in the western world), bogus science and atheistic governments.

Gradually, Srila Prabhupada revealed more and more of the intricacies of Vedic philosophy to his disciples. Anyone who spent any time with Srila Prabhupada knows that he incessantly expounded Vedic philosophy.

Furthermore, he left us a complete treasury of Vedic knowledge in his books. As he said, "All that you need to know is in my books."

However, both in speaking and writing, Srila Prabhupada deliberately kept his presentation simple. He repeated the same basic points again and again: "You are not this body. You are eternal spirit soul, an eternal servant of God. Krsna is God.

He is the Supreme Person. Sastra is the evidence. Bhakti is the only auspicious path for all living beings. In this age chanting the holy names is the recommended process."

Srila Prabhupada also made some adjustments in the lifestyle of his devotees. He never asked his disciples to lead very austere lives. He adopted all kinds of

means for spreading Krsna consciousness. He promoted aggressive book-sales and fund-raising. He even allowed unmarried women to live in the asrama (separate from men) as brahmacarinis, gave brahminical initiation to women, and engaged them in Deity worship!

As Srila Prabhupada said, "I am 80% more lenient than my spiritual master." Had he not been, Krsna consciousness could not have been spread all over the world.

For Indian people, austerity comes naturally. The public in India know how to receive and respect sadhus. But the western countries are soaked in sense gratification and cynicism. Indian devotees who have never been to the West cannot understand what a miracle Srila Prabhupada performed in spreading Krsna consciousness there, and why he needed to make the adjustments he did. That Srila Prabhupada was successful in spreading the name of Krsna all over the world is in itself proof that he never deviated even slightly from the mission of his guru Maharaja. Had he deviated, how could he have got the potency and blessings to do what he did? Rather, as Srila Prabhupada's godbrother H.H. B.V. Puri Maharaja points out, "Bhaktivedanta Swami was the only disciple of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura who actually got his mercy." Srila Prabhupada's adjustments are not at all a deviation; rather, they imply expert application of the same principle of yukta-vairagya that Sarasvati Thakura made the principle of his mission.

Sarasvati Thakura and Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada are both eternally liberated residents of Goloka Vrndavana who came to this world to preach Krsna consciousness. Both stood boldly and uncompromisingly against the world. Both risked everything for Krsna. Both successfully conducted the same mission of delivering many conditioned souls back to Godhead. Both were expert preachers, able not only to attract many followers to the camp of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, but to engage them meaningfully in His service. Both were recognized scholars and profuse authors. The only difference is that Sarasvati Thakura's presentation was complex, characterized by high, difficult language, and that his disciple, Bhaktivedanta Swami

Prabhupada, presented everything very simply. Whereas Sarasvati Thakura mostly contended with misinterpretations of Vedic philosophy, our Srila Prabhupada faced gross ignorance of even the basic tenets of Vedic life. Preaching among the mlechhas was a task his Godbrothers had given up as impossible. Srila Prabhupada not only brought thousands of so-called mlechhas to Krsna consciousness, he also elevated at least some of them to the position of world spiritual leaders. Those who still argue that Srila Prabhupada did not properly follow Sarasvati Thakura must be blind, mad, or afflicted with the poison of envy.

There is no need for confusion. Still, explanatory footnotes have been included to help clear up any potentially controversial points. Those looking for excuses to deviate from the straight path of the parampara will find faults even where there are none. Those who simply accept the reality--that Srila

Prabhupada has fulfilled the wishes of Sarasvati Thakura, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and the whole guru-parampara--will not become confused by imagining controversy where it does not exist.

Communication Problems

Many of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's instructions were coined in beautiful, original Bengali and Sanskrit idioms. As I am familiar with Bengali, it was a delightful experience to hear them re-spoken in the original by Joti Sekhara Prabhu. However, as almost all the readers of this book will not be able to appreciate these linguistic subtleties or the beauty of the language used, I have not attempted to communicate most of them in this book, but have simply re-stated them in simple English.

Kick On My Head

This is undoubtedly a rather unusual book. It largely consists of anecdotes of Sarasvati Thakura, most of which have never been published before in any language. It also includes some philosophical explanations given by Sarasvati Thakura, many of which have been recorded here and there in books and magazine articles in Bengali. These philosophical glimpses give

insights into the transcendental intellectual depth and originality of Sarasvati Thakura. There are also some little pieces about Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji and Jagannatha Dasa Babaji, which I collected while interviewing disciples of Sarasvati Thakura.

Despite all the faults of this book, I am confident that most readers will find it enlivening and interesting. It is valuable because it preserves a part of our Vaisnava legacy that would otherwise have been lost to the world. It has many important instructions helpful for devotees practicing sadhana-bhakti and preaching Krsna consciousness.

At least it has increased my appreciation of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada. That alone is

sufficient reward for me. If my readers also find their appreciation of the "Lion Guru" enhanced, my endeavors will be further blessed.

BHAKTIVINODA

When Sarasvati Thakura was young he was often taken to visit holy places of Bengal by his father, Bhaktivinoda Thakura. Bengal abounds in holy places connected to Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates. Once they set out for Kulina-grama, a village whose inhabitants were very dear to Caitanya Mahaprabhu (cf. Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 10.80-83).

Arriving there late one evening, father and son were given a house to stay in. Next morning the villagers asked, "Did you sleep comfortably?" Bhaktivinoda replied, "Yes! Thank you very much." Surprised, the villagers asked, "How could you sleep? That house is haunted by a brahma-raksasa (the ghost of a brahmana). We had no other place to give you. But no-one can sleep there peacefully because of disturbances from the ghost." Bhaktivinoda Thakura replied, "Yes, that ghost came and tried to disturb us. But I chanted the Hare Krsna maha-mantra very loudly. As a result, not only did the ghost go away, but I can assure you he will not trouble anyone else any more." Astonished, the villagers asked Bhaktivinoda Thakura, "How could you send

him away by chanting Hare Krsna? He was a priest here in this village and he chanted 'Hare Krsna' throughout his life. How then, did he become a ghost, and how was

it that your chanting has sent him away?"

Bhaktivinoda Thakura explained that the priest's chanting could not have been actual chanting at all. Sinful people make a show of chanting with the intention of acquiring wealth and reputation. Such so-called chanting is only cheating. It is not actual chanting. Bhaktivinoda Thakura quoted Jagadananda Pandita's Prema-vivarta:

" 'asadhu-sange bhai nama kabhu naya,

bahire nama-aksara bate, tabe nama nahi haya'

'Those not in the association of bona-fide devotees, strictly following their instructions, cannot actually chant the holy names. Even though they may externally vibrate the sound, 'Hare Krsna,' that is not actually the name of Krsna.' The name of Krsna is non-different from Krsna. It is completely pure and spiritual. Krsna-nama

does not allow Himself to be hijacked by materialists.

This man never actually chanted the Hare Krsna mantra even once in his life. On the contrary, he was a sinful person who wanted to use the name for sense gratification. Because of the great offense of taking Krsna's name to cheat people, he became a ghost.

When I chanted, Krsna was pleased to manifest Himself as that sound. A sinful ghost cannot stay in the presence of such chanting."

This incident was published in a famous daily newspaper of Bengal, the "Amrit Bazar Patrika." After this, the glories of Bhaktivinoda Thakura became widely known for the first time.

His Appearance, Childhood, and Youth

Even before Sarasvati Thakura's appearance in this world, his great grandfather, while on his deathbed, (wrote or spoke?) about a great sadhu, famous in the whole world, who would take birth in Bhaktivinoda Thakura's house (???)

Indeed, Bhaktivinoda Thakura himself predicted in the Chaitanya Siksamrta that a powerful acarya would appear in this world to establish daivi varnasrama-dharma (the ancient system of four occupational divisions of life: brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, and sudra: and four statuses of life: brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, and sannyasa). Bhaktivinoda Thakura wanted this daivi varnasrama system re-established to surpland its decayed descendent the caste system: which is based on one's birth rather than qualification.

The astrologer, called at the time of Sarasvati Thakura's birth, also proclaimed how the child would become a great devotee. And so it was then that, on February 6th, 1874 A.D., Sarasvati Thakura appeared in this world in the karkata-lagna, or the astrological lagna of the crab (Cancer).

One time, when he was only five or six years old, he accompanied his father, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, on a visit to one sadhu by the name of Svarupa Das Babaji, in Puri. When they met, this babaji told Bhaktivinoda, "You have no neckbeads and no tilak. You are not a Vaisnava. You don't even have any Vaisnava dress." Bimala Prasada (as the young Sarasvati Thakura was then called) replied, "My father is an ajanma Vaisnava (a born Vaisnava): janma-gata Vaisnava • He is a born Vaisnava, even without the outward signs." Upon hearing this, that babaji was so impressed with this young boy, who at such a tender age had explained such a highly philosophical point.

On another occasion, they went to Dakhinesvar Math, to visit the renowned, so-called "holy-man" of Bengal, Ramakrsna, who, upon seeing them remarked: "The two are just like Gaura Nitai."

He spent around fifteen days at Radha-Ramana-Gera, Vrndavan, from between 1898 • 1899, and in 1905 also. Madhusudhana Goswami, the father of Visvambhara Goswami, kept a diary, and every day would write a page

about the activities that took place there. (So there are many things written of Bimala Prasada. I saw Padmanabha Goswami, the grandson of Madhusudhana Goswami, who looked for more than an hour for the exact references relating to Bimala Prasad, but he couldn't find any. So if anyone wants to research this in the near future he can also do so. It is very interesting to give such references for some of the activities of Sarasvati Thakura's early life).

At the time of Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bimala Prasada would go and preach in brahmacari dress, wearing a white dhoti with a white kurta and chaadar. Meeting with college students, Englishmen, and other high-class, educated gentlemen, in the parks of Calcutta, he would converse with them informally. However, he would especially criticize the Brahma-samaja (an imitation of Christianity), which was very prominent at that time, and followed by many eminent people, like the Tagores and others. They would sing, "nirakar tomar carana dekhi • I see Your feet," referring to God, whom they saw as impersonal; but Bimala Prasada was quick to point out that "If there is no akara, if there is no form, how can one see 'It's' feet?"

Personal Details

At birth, the umbilical-chord had wrapped itself around his body like a brahmana-thread, leaving a mark which remained clearly visible throughout his life. Even as a young boy, due to the size of his large brain, Bimala Prasada had a large head, in proportion to his body. His body was decorated with all the signs of a maha-purusa, as described in the sastras. For example; the Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila, Chapter 14, Text 15, states:

*"panca-dirghah panca-suksmah sapta-raktah sad-unnatah
tri-hrasva-prthu-gambhiro dvatrimsal-laksano mahan*

TRANSLATION

"There are thirty•two bodily symptoms of a great person: five of his bodily parts are large, five fine, seven reddish, six raised, three small, three broad, and three grave."

PURPORT

The five large parts are the nose, arms, chin, eyes, and knees. The five fine parts are the skin, fingertips, teeth, hair on the body, and hair on the head. The seven reddish parts are the eyes, soles, palms, palate, nails, and upper and lower lips. The six raised parts are the chest, shoulders, nails, nose, waist, and mouth. The three small parts are the neck, thighs, and male organ. The three broad parts are the waist, forehead, and chest. The three grave parts are the navel, voice, and existence. Altogether these are the thirty•two symptoms of a great personality. This is a quotation from the Samudrika.

His feet were soft like butter, so much so that to those who touched them, it almost seemed as if there were no bones. His skin was so delicate that even the slightest touch would redden it. Standing tall, at around 6' 1" • 6' 2", he had a slender build, and a somewhat unusual characteristic about his bodily features was that he appeared to have breasts, almost like that of a woman. His face was jolly and he was often seen smiling, but at times he was also very grave. His schedule was to rise and chant by two•o'clock each morning, and while reading he would sometimes wear spectacles, but never wore them, in general, while eating, chanting japa, or speaking with disciples.

Sometimes while speaking he would mention the name Radha and, all of a sudden, manifest astasattvika•vikara, or the eight symptoms of ecstasy, described in the Nectar of Devotion, Chapter twenty•eight, as: becoming stunned, perspiring, standing of the hairs on the body, faltering of the voice, trembling of the body, changing of the bodily colours, shedding of tears, and devastation. His whole countenance would turn white, then red, with his hair standing on end, and his whole body would become stiff. Tears would flow

profusely from his eyes and his speech would become grave. Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Goswami Maharaja (Bhaktivinoda Thakura's disciple), who took sannyasa initiation from Sarasvati Thakura, personally saw, on two occasions, how his whole body became red, and all bodily transformations were also present, when he was lecturing about Radha•tattva, in Vrndavan. When speaking about the instructions of Rupa Raghunatha (Rupa Raghunatha vani), his whole body, especially his face, would sometimes become bright•red. These incidents occurred several times, in different places, especially at Radha Kunda or Mayapura, in full view of everyone, even though he tried his utmost to suppress these feelings. He would continue talking, but those present could see that, internally, he was experiencing turbulent spiritual ecstasies. Sarasvati Thakura never liked the sahajiyas who artificially showed so•called "ecstatic symptoms", or who proclaimed themselves to be "such•and•such sakhi". Therefore, he would generally explain just ordinary things that were not on the level of bhava or prema, which brought on these uncontrollable emotions.

At the time of initiation, Gaura Kisora Das Babaji didn't change Sarasvati Thakura's name. Earlier in his life he had written a book called "Siddhanta Candrika" • a book on astrology. He received the name "Siddhanta •Sarasvati" from a society of astrologers, in recognition of his contribution in the field of astrology; later adding the prefix "Bhakti" himself when he took sannyasa.

He accepted the title "Prabhupada" at his second Vyasa•puja ceremony, when a written offering was sent from Mayapur by his disciple, Ananta Vasudeva, in which the term "Prabhupada" was used. Previously he was generally known as Sarasvati Thakura, but the name "Prabhupada" became gradually accepted. Amongst his favourite songs were those of Bhaktivinoda Thakura: "Gopinatha" (from Kalyana•kalpataru), "Radha•Krsna Bol" (from Gitavali), "Jaya Radha•Madhava" (from Gitavali), "Sri Nama •kirtana" (from Gitavali), and "Radha•kunda•tata kunja kutira...(N.B: This is only one line of the song and not the title, so find it out).

Many times he quoted the verse:

*avismrtih krsna•padaravindayoh
ksinoty abhadrani ca sam tanoti
sattvasya suddhim paramatma•bhaktim
jnanam ca vijnana•viraga•yuktam*

TRANSLATION

"Remembrance of Lord Krsna's lotus feet destroys everything inauspicious and awards the greatest good fortune. It purifies the heart and bestows devotion for the Supreme Soul, along with knowledge enriched with realization and renunciation."

(Srimad Bhagavatam, Canto: 12, Chapter: 12, Text: 55). Of course, there were many slokas he often quoted, but this one was particularly mentioned by Jotisekhara.

His pronunciation of the name Krsna was neither like the Bengali "Krishnoh" (the final "a" pronounced "o"), nor the Oriyan "Krushna" (with the "i" pronounced "u", but exactly like the Sanskrit "Kreshna." (N.B: See BVS regarding this).

As far as cleanliness was concerned, Sarasvati Thakura was exemplory, saying, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Unless you're sattvic you cannot be pure." His table, chairs and seat • everything had to be kept neat, clean, and tidy. He would bathe no less than three times a day, changing his cloth each time he did so, which was: when he woke in the morning, before his mid•day meal, and again in the evening, without using soap or oil (in India, especially Bengal, it is a common practice to apply oil to the body before bathing). If anything unclean touched his hand, e.g: his leg or foot, or before using his japa•mala, he would do acamana with an acamana•cup that he always kept near. Before taking maha•prasada he would wash his hands, and if Jagannatha maha•prasada was brought to him he would pay full obeisances, do parikrama of that prasada three times, and only then would he honour it.

The system in the Gaudiya Math was that those who were preaching outside would shave regularly, and those not preaching would follow the

minor rules of Hari•Bhakti•Vilas much more, shaving their heads, not on a daily or weekly basis, but once a month. Sarasvati Thakura, as a preacher, would shave his face regularly, and his head once a month (N.B: I don't get this: I thought preachers shaved their heads regularly. If so then why is Sarasvati Thakura shaving his head monthly? Clear this up: When did preachers shave their heads and faces and when did the temple non •preachers?). According to Hari Bhakti Vilas, Sarasvati Thakura and the other devotees would shave on Mondays and Tuesdays, but not on any special holy day, like the appearance or disappearance of any great Vaishnava or avatar, nor on Ekadasi or purnima (except Mastika mandana(?) purnima, in the month of bhadra • the day Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu took sannyasa. (N.B: I don't know whether Sri Caitanya did shave up on that day or not). According to the rules and regulations, it is obligatory for sannyasis to shave on this day. (N.B: Sarasvati Thakura had his mission in India, which at that time was even more rigid in following the rules and regulations than today. Therefore, so many rules and regulations were followed by the Gaudiya Math that Srila Prabhupada never introduced into ISKCON: he never even gave much importance to them. We shouldn't be confused by this, however, but see that Prabhupada was preaching according to time, place and circumstance. He was thinking, "What is possible for people to follow in the world contaminated by Kali•yuga: What is suitable for them?" and put much emphasis on the very basic essentials of Krsna consciousness, namely, chanting, worshipping the Deity, studying the Srimad Bhagavatam. Minor rules and regulations, or upaniyama, he never gave much stress to, and even if devotees became interested in following these he would often discourage them. The reason being that what may be applicable for people at a certain time, place, and circumstance may not be necessary or good for others, at a different time, place, and circumstance, just as meditation was prescribed for Satya•yuga but not for Kali. Therefore, acharyas preach accordingly and we shouldn't be confused by the minor details or intricate rules and regulations of Hari•Bhakti•Vilas. We should not think that Prabhupada taught anything less, as some devotees do).

Sarasvati Thakura would generally dress very simply, wearing the traditional top and bottom piece of a sannyasi, made of cotton, and in the winter season he would also wear a chadar. However, if it was very cold he would use a special coat. He also had a walking stick at hand for when he went outside, and five strands of tulasi beads adorned his neck. His clothes were usually bought by devotees, and people often gave him shawls, clothes, cloth, shoes, etc., when coming to see him. Sometimes he would buy clothes himself, and if anyone asked him or he saw that someone had no warm clothes, he would give them his own.

It was only for preaching purposes or special functions that he would dress extravagantly, as was the case at one function in Madras, where there was a picture taken of him wearing a gown, some very nice clothing, with English styled shoes, made in India, and a turban, which he only wore occasionally for some big public function; otherwise, if he was going out in the hot sun, he would have some disciple hold an umbrella over him.

When his two sannyasi disciples went to England he also had gowns, or long coats, made for them, because they were going to preach overseas. However, even though he occasionally dressed in a very gorgeous style for preaching, he wanted his sannyasi disciples in India to dress simply. He didn't want them to imitate his position as acarya.

He would also use horses and elephants on occasion, so sometimes people would criticize, saying, "What kind of sadhu are you with all these nice clothes, horses and elephants?" but he exclaimed, "All horses and elephants should be used by sadhus only, not by anyone else. All cars are also for sadhus. Luxurious items in the world are required for Krsna's service and not anyone else."

A Sikh named Moca(?) Singh was the paid bodyguard of Sarasvati Thakura. He was very tall and strong, and every night would consume twenty-eight to thirty chapatis. There was no real idea of any danger, but he was kept for enhancing the prestige of Sarasvati Thakura.

Sarasvati Thakura would sleep on a bed, but all the Gaudiya Math brahmacaris and sannyasis would sleep on the floor. The rule was not to use

shoes, and to only occasionally drink milk. Sometimes Sarasvati Thakura would check to see that the brahmacaris and sannyasis followed this strictly. His bead•bag, and all the bead•bags belonging to the Gaudiya Math members, were white, even if they were brahmacaris or sannyasis.

Sometimes he would sit very straight on an ordinary wooden chair or armchair, to give a lecture, with his legs not crossed, but placed in front of him, and the devotees would sit on the floor in front of him cross•legged. Otherwise, when he gave lectures in the temple he would sit on a simple flat, wooden seat.

He had a book with him in phonetic type, which was a new kind of writing like short•hand, made by him in his youth, but that whole system is now lost.

Usually in Mayapur, while the sankirtan was going on in the temple, Sarasvati Thakura would stand just outside at the back, behind the tulasi•manca (a pillar, usually about one to one•and•a•half metres high, on which tulasi is permanently kept. This is very common in Bengal and Orissa, but less so in other parts of India) and watch the sankirtan go on. Sometimes the devotees would dance back and forth from the Deities to the tulasi•manca and sometimes they'd go round in a circle. Sarasvati Thakura liked all this. Sometimes they would dance in a circle around the nat•mandira (Gaudiya Math temples, according to typical Bengali design, have a Deity•house, with a covered pavillion in front of it, separated, not joined together. Nat•mandira literally means "temple for dancing"), and Sarasvati Thakura would stand in the middle of the pavillion with the devotees dancing around him, but he himself would not dance, as he was always grave.

Jotisekhara observed that Sarasvati Thakura himself wasn't expert in singing kirtan. His voice was not so sweet from the external point of view. Therefore, he didn't lead so many kirtans. He never lead kirtan, (did he or didn't he?) but would have others do it.

Gaura Kisora Das Babaji

Shortly after the disappearance of Gaura Kisora Das Babaji from this

world, which occurred in Navadvipa, Sarasvati Thakura went ahead with plans to place him in a samadhi (tomb). However, due to pressure from the people of Navadvip, and from one wealthy man in particular, Sarasvati Thakura had to place him in a samadhi, not in Mayapur, which was his desire, but on that rich man's land in Navadvip. That rich man was particularly adamant about this. Sarasvati Thakura was then heard to proclaim, "Within one month this man will be finished!" and it was noted, in time, how this came to be a fact. Within one month all his businesses were finished. That man then came pleading to Sarasvati Thakura, exclaiming, "Please, you help me now. See my position. I made some mistake!" Sarasvati Thakura then replied, "What can I do? It is already done."

In 1932, when at Kulia (Godruma), Sarasvati Thakura noticed that, because of the erosion of the river bank, Gaura Kisora Das Babaji's samadhi would soon fall into the Ganga. Therefore, the body, which was inside a box in the samadhi, was taken to Mayapur, where a temple and new samadhi were made.

His Nature and Dealings With Devotees

Sarasvati Thakura was always absorbed in the philosophical siddhantas and, not caring for the world, he never compromised in his practice of staunch Vaishnavism. He said himself that if this had not been so then no one would have obeyed him. Whatever he asked of others he would follow himself, showing the ideal of an acharya; rising very early each morning, before anyone else, and being always absorbed in chanting and preaching Krsna consciousness. Others might have taken rest during the day, but he would hardly ever do so. After his meal, which was always very simple, he would go and dictate letters. He always wore tilak, chanted on his beads, observed the gayatri mantra, attended arati, etc., very strictly and on a regular basis. While performing the Deity parikram each day, he would

circumambulate Their Lordships once and then stand in one place, while all the other devotees would walk around four times.

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, several times, told a story to demonstrate how strict Sarasvati Thakura actually was in dealing with women. The wife of O.B.L.Kapoor, who was also the harernama disciple of Sarasvati Thakura, requested to see him in private to speak with him. At that time he was old enough to be her grandfather, and was a very senior, respected, naistik brahmacari-guru, but still he said, "No, I cannot see you alone. Whatever you have to say, do so in the company of others."

Dr. Kapoor revealed how Sarasvati Thakura gave harernama to his wife, without even seeing her face, because there was a screen placed between them.

The Zamindar (landholder), a very rich man of Navadvipa, was named (???) His mother was over 60 years old and he brought her to meet Sarasvati Thakura, but he said, "Mother; you stay downstairs. Don't come up. I don't want to meet any women. Send your son to meet me." Even women accompanied by their husbands couldn't come to meet him. During lectures, a fixed screen divided the men and women, so they couldn't see each other. This was very strict.

ISKCON's SP Letter, 7/4/70: "He didn't like very much preaching amongst women."

Although living in opulence, he was a complete tyagi • a yukta vairagi. He was very merciful, friendly, and affectionate, especially to younger boys. He saw to the comfort of all the devotees and would often ask them; "Have you taken prasadam? How did you like it?" Sometimes he would even come down at around ten to eleven o'clock in the evening, to see that the brahmacaris were sleeping and to check that they were using mosquito•nets. If they were not he would personally put them up, so as they could sleep properly and not get sick. He didn't want their service hampered unnecessarily in any way.

He didn't encourage the brahmacaris to have too much milk; only a little sometimes, but not daily. The reason was because it would agitate them, as it

is a rich food. Also, the brahmacaris were not supposed to wear shoes. Sarasvati Thakura, when going for preaching to respectable men, would wear a coat, shoes, etc., and would be very nicely dressed. Otherwise he would dress very simply when he was staying inside the Math.

People could not bear to look at him eye•to•eye; so powerful and penetrating was his glance. Even great scholars of India became humbled just by his looking at them. Madan Mohan Malviya and Raja Gopal Sastri • famous Indian scholars of the time • became submissive to him, just being in his presence. This is called sabdyasa(?) Just as there were so many scholars who met Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu that could not stand up to Him, GREAT so, in the same way, no one could stand before Sarasvati Thakura.

People would often bring mangoes for Sarasvati Thakura, because he was a sadhu, and they knew they should always bring something for a sadhu. So, in the season, many would bring them, but he would not touch them himself and distributed them to all the others. He would not take himself, saying, "I am an offender. I cannot take this."

Whenever young men joined the Math, leaving their homes, their parents would sometimes come looking for them in order to take them back. Sarasvati Thakura would hide them under his bed and tell the parents that he did not know the whereabouts of their sons. All the other devotees would also reply in this way and the parents would then leave. Then Sarasvati Thakura would tell the boy, "Maya is trying to pull you to hell. That is maya crying, not your father and mother!"

This happened many times, so much so that between 1918•19 the police were called on several occasions to the Math. However, he would still hide them in order to keep them as brahmacaris. He said, "If we had not taken such action there would be no such thing as the Gaudiya Math."

If anyone left the Math to return to material life, Sarasvati Thakura would become very upset, even to the point that he would sometimes send others to try and bring them back. On one such occasion, a brahmacari left, after having an argument with a sannyasi. Sarasvati Thakura came to know of this and told the devotees, "Bring him back, bring him back!" Even if that

person was at fault he didn't like it when they left. If someone was doing very badly and was very offensive, they had a policy whereby they would send them to Mamgachi temple, within Navadvipa Mandal, which was the birth place of Vrndavan Das Thakur. One explanation for sending them to Mamgachi might have been because it was a remote place in a village, and therefore they couldn't disturb anyone there, and could gradually become rectified. Another point is that they may have gotten the mercy of Vrndavan Das Thakura, the author of the Caitanya Bhagavat, whilst residing there (in the Gaudiya Vaisnava doctrine, one has to get the mercy of the all-merciful Lord Nityananda, who is very kind, even to the offenders like Jagai and Madhai. Vrndavan Das Thakura was Lord Nityananda's last disciple, so, just as the last son is very dear to the father, the last disciple may also be very dear to the guru). Mamgachi Math thus became jokingly known as "the jail of the Gaudiya Math". Even now that system is still used in the Gaudiya Math. In Mamgachi there are plenty of cows and a big garden, so, whoever went there would work with the cows and in the garden, performing hard, physical, labour.

Jotisekhara Prabhu recalls how Sarasvati Thakura was very affectionate towards him, who loved him very much because he was young and submissive. Sometimes, as in one incident at Chatak Parvat, Sarasvati Thakura would call him over and then give him some rasgullas.

Whenever anyone came before Sarasvati Thakura, even before they had time to offer their namaskaras, he would say, "Daso'smi • I am a servant." People often tried to touch his feet, but he would stretch out his long arms and say, "Daso'smi," and prevent them, including his initiated disciples. Even though thousands of people came to see him, none were allowed to touch his feet, even if it happened to be only a young boy (ordinarily, in Bengal, especially at that time, for young boys to touch the feet of seniors when coming in their presence was common).

He was always ready and willing to talk with people, except during his half-hour afternoon rest, whether on a train or in a room, and whenever someone went to see him he would definitely say something, but this was not

the case with ladies.

Whenever he received a letter from anyone saying that they were arriving to meet him at a certain date and time, whether it was a devotee, a well-wisher or whoever, he would always send one or two brahmacaris to meet them at the station. Even if that person knew the way, or never even asked for help, Sarasvati Thakura would still send someone, out of kindness.

In general, he never spoke harsh words, and when someone did something wrong he would say, sorrowfully, "seita karar bhalo na • This is not good. You should not do this."

As an acharya, he would sometimes mildly chastize or correct his disciples, but if he saw his disciples wanting to correct others he never approved. If someone would complain to him about a particular person, he wouldn't get involved, but would rather say, "Oh, he is very unfortunate because he has done a bad thing and you are also unfortunate because you have gotten involved in it. Both of you are unfortunate."

Whenever disputes broke out between grhasthas or Math members, he sent them to Ananta Vasudeva, never letting himself get involved. Ananta Vasudeva gave the final decision and Sarasvati Thakura accepted that. On one such occasion the sannyasis quarrelled with the grhasthas, claiming they were better as they were more renounced. However, the grhasthas claimed they were better as they were donating money and supporting everything. Ananta Vasudeva quoted from the Caitanya-caritamrta, Antya-lila: 4.67, which says; "yei bhaje sei bada • Anyone who takes to devotional service is exalted...", and from Madhya-lila: 22.26, "cari varnasrami yadi krsna nahi bhaje...(quote in full) - The followers of the varnasrama institution accept the regulative principles of the four social orders... However, if one carries out the regulative principles of these orders but does not render transcendental service to Krsna, he falls into the hellish condition of material life." He also quoted Srimad Bhagavatam, 11.5.3: "ya esam purusam saksad... (quote full Sanskrit) • If one simply maintains an official position in the four varnas and asramas but does not worship the Supreme Lord Visnu, he falls down from his puffed-up position into a hellish condition." (he

quoted Antya-lila: "Krsnabhajane nahih jat huladi bi car •whatever position you may be in, if you don't worship Krsna it's all useless. You are great according to the level of devotion.") Sarasvati Thakur accepted this judgement.

Early each morning, at four•thirty, a bell was rung in the Math to wake everyone up, and Sarasvati Thakura himself would come down to the Nat Mandira and wake those devotees who were still sleeping, telling them, "Don't sleep after the bell has been sounded. Get up."

Once Kunjada was chastized by Sarasvati Thakur because he never got the devotees up when the bell was rung, and he himself may have been sleeping also.

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, January 15, 1977, Conversation: "Our guru maharaja was so strict. A little discrepancy he would chastize like anything; but we liked it very much."

Generally, Sarasvati Thakura was mild in his nature, and only once did he ever slap a devotee. This devotee had come to Puri to bathe in the sea, and when he came back Sarasvati Thakura gave him a slap in the face and said, "Why are you wasting your time?"

On another occasion, while explaining Harinamamrta•Vyakarana (Srila Jiva Goswami's book, which teaches Sanskrit grammar and Krsna consciousness simultaneously), Kirtan brahmacari fell asleep in the class, so he took a rod and beat him with it.

Once, in Mayapur, a brahmacari was sleeping during Sarasvati Thakura's class, so he ordered him thrown in the Radha kund, saying, "I have invited my spiritual master here, but if he sees you sleeping he will go away."

From 1932 onwards, many kinds of people joined the mission, with the majority of them being attracted by the opulence. To develop a big organization many types of people are required to clean, to work in the garden, etc.; so all different people were accepted and not so many of them were very serious about spiritual life. Before Sarasvati Thakura left this world, some sannyasis started to think that after their guru•maharaja leaves the planet they would have their own temples and disciples, and become big

gurus. Sarasvati Thakura made no endeavour to discipline them because his idea was that example is better than precept: As an acharya he set an ideal example and he thought that if someone was not serious he should not interfere with them, but if someone was serious then they would automatically follow.

Sometimes he would ask Sajjan Maharaja, who distributed his remnants, "Who took the nice sweet and who took the chewed•up drum•stick (a type of vegetable that is chewed, then spat out)?" In this way he could understand the minds of the devotees. However, only those who had taken harernama were allowed to take his remnants.

Being an expert astrologer, he would sometimes look at devotees' hands. One time he looked at Jotisekhara's and noticed that on the lower left hand corner of his right hand was a chakra. He remarked on this and said, "This is a sign that you will be expert in writing and speaking to destroy all wrong, non•devotional ideas." Sarasvati Thakura would only occasionally look at a devotee's palm in this way and give a comment. He wasn't in the habit of doing this regularly and never did so at all with non•devotees. It wasn't that his disciples would ask him to look at their hands, but sometimes he told them to show them to him. One time he looked at a brahmacari's hands and said, "You must get married! You will not be able to stay a brahmacari."

One pujari at the Caitanya Math in Mayapur was caught stealing the golden ornaments from the Deity, but Sarasvati Thakura did not chastize him. He had those ornaments taken from him and instructed him to change his robes. "You should not remain dressed as a sadhu," he told him. Then he told his disciples to feed him nicely and tell him to go home, which they did. A brahmacari took some books from the Gaudiya Math bookstore, for his own personal reading, without informing the man who was in charge. When Sarasvati Thakura found out he took this unauthorized action seriously and gave instructions that brahmacaris should not keep books, saying, "By studying so many books you may become a pandit but you may not become a devotee. Hearing is essential. If you hear from sadhus that is sufficient." There is a story of sarasvati thakur in Puri. He was at Lila kuti, a big

building near the seashore. He had come there with some devotees and they had given all kinds of provisions for cooking(???) However, one of the devotees saw one of the brahmins who was engaged as a cook, steal one of the tins of oil, so Sarasvati Thakur cakkled that brahmin and spoke to him and said, "You are a brahman engaged in the service of God. It is not good to steal the oil that we have given for the service of God. As a brahman I can give you a tin of oil if you require it but please don't take that which we have offered in the service of God....(???) the oil we would use was mustard oil. Sarasvati Thakur paid some money to the man and the oil tin was returned, saving him from a great offence, being so merciful.

In Cuttak, when the Math was in a rented house, one brahmacari named Jagannatha would stay in a small thatched cottage in the middle of the garden, each night, in order to protect it from thieves and monkeys and all sorts of things. Whether summer•time or winter he would sleep there, leaving his body uncovered. In the winter the other brahmacaris would live indoors, wearing warm clothes, but Jagannatha remained outside and subsequently became a little proud saying, "Oh, I'm such a brahmacari. I never use these things and can sleep outside even in the winter, without cover." Sarasvati Thakura then told him, "You stay inside the house now and use warm clothes. You are boasting how great a brahmacari you are, so another brahmacari can stay there in winter in your place. They can also do it; you'll see." Jagannatha brahmacari said in response to this, "No, I'm the only one who can do it." Sarasvati Thakura continued, "Your place is suitable for you. You don't like to stay in the house, that is your disease. It is their disease that they do not like to stay in the garden, but they are not boasting because of that." Consequently, Jagannatha brahmacari came inside and another brahmacari went outside in his place.

One day the Queen of Auli (pronounced Ali), the wife of a wealthy king, came to visit the Gaudiya Math at Cuttak. At that time, Bhakti Bibek Bharati Maharaja, a sannyasa disciple of Sarasvati Thakura, gave the young Jotisekhara a very nice, ripe mango, saying, "Give this to the queen to eat." The queen was sitting down, along with some of her friends and followers,

eating prasada, so Jotisekhara felt a little apprehensive about presenting it to her, seeing as this would show preference to her over the others, and it was not the custom to neglect others when serving prasadam • everyone shared equally whatever was there. Jotisekhara pointed this out to that sannyasi, but he rebuked him severely, using bad language. While all this was taking place, Sarasvati Thakura happened to be near by and heard the commotion. He therefore called Bhakti Bibek Bharati Maharaja and asked him, "Are you a sannyasi of Auli or of the Gaudiya Math?" From that day on he called him the Auli rani (the Queen of Auli's) sannyasi, and Jotisekhara never heard Sarasvati Thakura call him by his real name, Bhakti Bibek Bharati Maharaja, ever again.

For three months continually, in 1935, Sarasvati Thakura stayed at Purushottama Math and many people came to see him. One yogi even came, and after hearing him talk, wanted to take initiation. That yogi had long, matted hair, so Sarasvati Thakura asked him to cut it, along with his beard. The yogi asked why and was told how it was pleasing to Krsna, so he accepted this and cut his matted locks, but he came before Sarasvati Thakura with his beard still intact. He therefore asked him again to shave his face, but he said he had some bad scar on his chin which looked grotesque, and would thus rather keep his beard. Sarasvati Thakura consented to this and gave him initiation. That yogi donated some rice•farming land to the Purushottama Math, which is still used to grow rice for the temple.

The vice•chancellor of retore Benares Hindu University, a very famous man of his time, named Madan Mohan Molaviya came to the Gaudiya Math and had some intricate, philosophical questions to present to Sarasvati Thakura. Sarasvati Thakura said, "I won't answer you, but you should ask the devotees who are washing the arati paraphernalia." The scholar then said, "No. I am asking very difficult questions on Vedanta: They won't be able to answer!" However, Sarasvati Thakura insisted that he go and ask those pujaris, who were cleaning the Deity paraphernalia at that particular time; so, being submissive to the will of Sarasvati Thakura, he went to ask them. When he approached them, they said, "Well now we're busy washing

these plates, but please help us, and when we've finished then your question will be solved." Even though he was such a famous, respectable man, he agreed to join in and help do this humble service. After all the brass was cleaned, he returned to Sarasvati Thakura without saying anything more to the pujaris. Sarasvati Thakura then asked him, "Did you get the answer to your questions?" Madan Mohan Molaviya replied, "Yes, even without discussion. When I was helping clean the arati paraphernalia the answers automatically came in my mind." Sarasvati Thakura then replied, "Yes. The philosophy of Krsna consciousness can be understood by a service attitude, not by any amount of intellectualism. `sevonmukhe hi jihvado...' Just by reading books and reciting slokas - that won't help you. Serving God will give us all the answers to the questions in the sastras. My guru, Gaura Kisora Das Babaji, was not literate, not a pandit, but all the slokas and siddhantas came to his mouth, because he was sevonmukha • inclined to serve Krsna."

A school headmaster named Brahma once came to Sarasvati Thakur desiring initiation. He had a beard and moustache so he was told to first shave his face, after which he would be given initiation. However, that man said he couldn't as he was too attached. Sarasvati Thakura then said, "Either you love your moustache or you love Krsna. If you want Krsna then give up your hair. One of them should be dear to you. Krsna is our dear one, our priya. If something else is priya it is impossible to get Krsna!" That headmaster then went away without taking initiation.

Whenever staying in any rich man's house, which he would sometimes do, as in the case of the palace he stayed in, belonging to the Maharaja of Mysore, he would, when leaving, give some money to the sweepers, cleaners, servants, and those who'd been attending on them, showing his concern for them.

One time he went to a village in the Mednapura district and stayed in a rich landlord's house. The landlord served very opulent foodstuffs but Sarasvati Thakura did not eat it, saying, "First you have to practice my advice. If I can't do anything good for you then why should I accept anything from you?"

It is not my duty. I will take your prasada but you will not take my advice • this is not good." Therefore he fasted for a day until that landlod consented to take initiation. If any householder was not his initiated disciple, Sarasvati Thakura would not eat his food.

Although he would visit many houses, especially of prominent people, and speak to them of Krsna consciousness, he never ate their food, because they were not devotees. If he was in a town where there was no Math near by, one of his disciples would prepare something. He also had a policy of never accepting money after speaking Krsna•katha, but would say, "You can come to our temple and give it there instead."

Once, a very prominent, rich man came to the Gaudiya Math, and while taking prasadam asked again and again for rasgullas. Sarasvati Thakura asked him, "Are you eating prasadam or is the prasadam eating you? You should not eat prasada, as prasada is the bhokta (enjoyer). You are the bhogya (enjoyed). Don't try to eat prasada; it is not a material thing." This is similar to the advice he often gave, saying, "Don't try to see Jagannath. Jagannath is the Seer so let Him see you."

Those who came to him who were not willing to listen submissively were not spoken to extensively by him. Once, at Chatak Parvat, one pandit came, and during a discussion he told Sarasvati Thakura, "Please give me the reference from Veda. I'm not interested in listening to the Puranas and Caitanya•caritamrta, or anything like this." At that time Ananta Vasudeva Vidyabhusana was present, so he took up the argument saying, "Why should we not discuss the Puranas and Caitanya•caritamrta, etc.? This is the essence of the Vedas. The Vedas emanate from the breathing of Narayan, but the Puranas are spoken by the Lord; especially the Bhagavad•gita, which is directly spoken by the Lord."

Thus Sarasvati Thakura would not waste his valuable time with such foolish people, but others like Ananta Vasudeva would deal with them.

There were many beggars at the Saksi Gopal temple once, when the Gaudiya Math grhasthas were passing. However, they didn't give any donations, thinking, "We shall give to God. Why give to the poor? The

karmis, they're giving to the poor." Sarasvati Thakura became very sorry upon hearing this and said, "Inside the body of the poor there is the Supersoul. Lord Caitanya fed the poor. Don't dislike that. It is not bhakti to hate the beggars. You are not giving to the poor but to the Supersoul!" He himself used to give alms and never saw anyone as rich or poor, but as a temple of God. He said they should be served, and would personally give them prasadam. However, he did not do this regularly to the same people, because it would encourage them to just come to the temple for eating only. If anyone unknown came at the time of prasadam he would say, "They are antaryami•prerita (sent by the Supersoul)," and would have them fed.

Sometimes he would send to Radha Kanta Math (the place where Lord Caitanya used to live) and Tota Gopinath temple (the temple where Gadadhar Pandit used to worship) a plate of uncooked rice and vegetables, along with a donation of around ten rupees, as an offering to the Deities. On Ekadasi days and special festival days he would send rice, dahl, ghee, flour, fruits, vegetables, etc., in a basket or on a plate. The Gaudiya Math, at that time, had no shortage of funds.

When the Gaudiya Math was in a rented house in Cuttak, and before they had moved to the present site, a Muslim thief came and stole some coconuts from the Math. He was arrested, and Sarasvati Thakur himself went to the court hearing and said, "He should be punished fittingly. He has stolen from God."

Many times people would come and steal from the Math's garden, taking fruit, flowers, vegetables, etc. Sarasvati Thakura did not like this but never got personally involved. On one occasion a brahmana boy, who was of a brahmana family, was caught stealing, and when Sarasvati Thakura heard of this he became very sorry, saying, "Oh that boy is a brahmana. You should excuse him." At other times he would also say, "You should give something to them; some fruit or coconut, or something like that."

Many caste brahmanas, especially in Orissa, even the Puri-Pandas (temple priests) regularly ate fish, smoked bidis, and had many such disgusting habits, but Sarasvati Thakura still gave respect to their caste, maybe on the

basis that at least their forefathers had been worshipping Visnu. He also cited the example from the Caitanya Bhagavata of how Pundarika Vidyanidhi was beaten by Lord Jagannatha and Lord Baladeva for disrespecting the temple pandas. In sastra, in the Varaha Purana, and the Caitanya Bhagavat, it is stated that many demons will take birth in brahmana families in Kali•yuga, but even so, Sarasvati Thakura's strong tendency was to give respect even to mischevious descendants of brahmana families. Indeed, it is also found in the biographies of those in Caitanya•lila that in the society of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, when all the devotees took prasadam together, which was revolutionary at the time (that brahmanas could sit with people of the lower castes to eat), still the caste brahmanas would be seated in honoured positions. These were all considerations that Sarasvati Thakura took into account. In the Caitanya•caritamrta, Antya•lila: 6.64•66, in the story of the Panihati Cida•dadhi festival, it is described how Lord Nityananda especially honoured the brahmanas, seating them on a raised platform, with the others seated below.

It should be noted, however, that he did not accept these caste brahmanas as real Vaishnavas just because of their birth in brahmana families. He only respected their high birth. The analogy he gave was that the father may be a doctor but that doesn't mean the son is. "One's title may be Goswami but not all birds are Garuda, and not all fishes are Matsya avatara," he would say. Unless they were initiated by him they weren't allowed to worship the Deities in the Gaudiya Math.

He also had good relationships with the Muslims of Mayapur and the surrounding villages, especially those who were descendents of the Chand Kazi, as they were inclined somewhat to Krsna consciousness and Sarasvati Thakura respected them as being descendants of the Kazi. The big Muslim landholders of the area would often visit him.

Sarasvati Thakura recognized only a small number of devotees in India, outside of the Gaudiya Math, whom he saw as genuine and sincere. These included Siddha Mahatma Vasudeva Baba in Puri, of the Sri Sampradaya, whom he very much respected; Svarupa Das Babaji (at the time of

Bhaktivinoda Thakur, when Sarasvati Thakura was a child, he saw him in Puri and very much respected him); Ramakrsna Babaji, of Radha Kund, who was in the parampara coming from Bhugarbha Goswami. He was very renounced and a serious, advanced devotee. (In 1932, when Sarasvati Thakura held the Braja mandal parikrama, he told everyone to go and offer respects to this babaji. Definatly not to be confused with the so-called "paramahamsa" Ramakrsna); Madhusudhana Goswami of Radha Ramana gera; and from Gopiballabhpura, a famous Vaishnava centre in the Midnapur district of Bengal, there was Visvambhar Ananda Goswami.

He didn't like to expose any mission like the Rama Krsna Mission, or any famous man of the world by name. He taught that one should see what their teachings are and condemn that, giving the example: "Don't say directly `cow,' but rather, `an animal with four legs, a long tail, two horns, etc.' Don't start a quarrel."

Once, in Vrndavan, Bhaktivinoda Thakura's so-called "guru," Bipin Bihari Goswami, said that Raghunath Das Goswami was a sudra by caste. From that day on, Sarasvati Thakura never spoke with him, considering that he had committed a great offence, as Raghunath Das Goswami is considered great even amongst the maha•bhagavatas. Sarasvati Thakura started fasting in protest, so Kunjada (Kunja Babu) tried to pacify him, but never said anything against Bipin Bihari Goswami. Sarasvati Thakura then exclaimed, "You may compromise but I cannot! I cannot tolerate that Raghunath Das Goswami be called a sudra." He continued, "I am coming here in a big car, taking the position of an acharya taking all honour and respect. So, taking the position, with all the paraphernalia for worship of an acharya means I cannot make any compromise!"

Sarasvati Thakura once had a large boil on his back•side, but refused any treatment, except for a neem poltice (a poltice made from neem leaves). Krsna Kanti brahmacari (Footnote: Later to become the well known Sraman Maharaja, the successor in the post of institutional acharya of the Caitanya Math, after Tirtha Maharaja) was trained as a doctor, and was thus also called "Doctor Babu." He would come each night and treat the boil,*

advising him to stop travelling and lecturing. Eventually he brought one big doctor from Calcutta, who's advice Sarasvati Thakura took, as well as the medicine he offered. However, when he had gone, he threw that medication in the Radha kund at Mayapur, proclaiming, "My only medicine shall be harinam and Krsna seva. I have to act as an acharya!"

The garden that the Caitanya Math acquired was opposite the Math itself, on the other side of the road, between the bank of the Ganga and the road. They would grow different kinds of vegetables there, such as eggplants and squash. Mangal Nilay brahmacari was in charge of the garden, but Sarasvati Thakura noted that nobody was really enthusiastic about working there, so he requested the devotees, especially the brahmacaris, to go and work there. When there was no response to his request he personally went there with a spade. Upon seeing this, all the brahmacaris and sannyasis came, feeling very ashamed, and heard him declare, "I shall work in the field. Why not? It's all Krsna's service." After digging in the garden for some time, he put some vegetables on his head, in a basket, and brought them in for the Deities. After this instructive behaviour of Sarasvati Thakura there were always regular workers in the garden.

Within the premises of the Caitanya Math there was (and still is today) also isodayan: isa means God, and udyana means garden, a flower garden, "God's garden".

Once, it came to Sarasvati Thakura's notice that two sannyasis • Bhakta Gavasti Nemi Maharaja and Bhaktivivek Bharati Maharaja • had said; "We are collecting the money. Unless we help guru• maharaja he cannot preach. He is depending on us." Sarasvati Thakura told all the devotees during the next morning lecture: "You all stay inside the Math for the next fifteen days and chant Hare Krsna, without going outside to collect anything. I will maintain you all by the mercy of Krsna, and Visnupriya, as well as Laksmidevi, will bring so many things. Without your help, without your going outside, so many things will come to the Math." So for one day he went out personally on madhukari bhiksa (Footnote: the traditional system by which sadhus begged alms door to door), forbidding all others to venture*

out. That day, so many things were brought, unrequested, to the Math: ghee, grains, vegetables, etc. Sarasvati Thakura had only gone out for one day, but for fifteen days, while everyone sat in the Math, so many things came. The devotees felt ashamed, but had learned an invaluable lesson.

Sarasvati Thakur was always speaking about Krsna, and was always absorbed in topics concerning Him; trying to make others understand Him also. He always stressed full surrender to Krsna. All day and night, wherever he was, he would be always absorbed in Hari•katha (speaking about Krsna). He was never interested in such activities as bathing in the ocean at Puri or in holy rivers, which he considered to be a diversion from his life's engagement of absorption in bhajan, hearing, chanting, preaching, and writing.

He did not like an outward show of opulence, even though he sometimes used it as a means to attract materialistic people. His instruction was his opulence. He never liked miracle performing either.

The ancient Sri Vaisnava temple, in Alalanath, was being rebuilt and repaired by the Gaudiya Math, under the direction of Sarasvati Thakura, even though it didn't belong to them, because it was considered very important (the Gaudiya Math now have their own temple in Alalanath). The construction workers were habituated to smoking bidis (a cheap kind of cigarette), so Sarasvati Thakura personally rolled these for them, in order that the work went on smoothly. He did this just to show how much he wanted the temple reconstructed quickly.

He once stayed at Gopalaji Math in Cuttack for six days, during which time he explained the Siksastakam. The custom at this place was to take prasada squatting on the floor, rather than sitting, with the left hand kept behind the back. Sarasvati Thakura also followed this system whilst there.

Whenever he was present, Sarasvati Thakura had a rule that if someone had come to give a donation to the Math, they were to bring it to him first, so as he could see who was the donor and what they were giving. Only then would it be put in storage. These included donations like milk, sweets, rice, coconuts, etc.

There was a rule in the Gaudiya Math that, at least once a month, everyone had to shave his head and face completely. There were some, however, who, even in the presence of Sarasvati Thakura, didn't follow this rule. They included prominent men, like Bon Maharaja and Paramananda Vidyaratna, and many well-known brahmacaris. Sarasvati Thakura never corrected them for this, nor did he intimate displeasure, and was still cordial with them. If other devotees complained about their lack of strictness, Sarasvati Thakura would sarcastically remark: "They are `babu brahmacaris' (Babu means `a well-to-do householder', or someone who likes to dress and eat nicely • a bit of a sense enjoyer)." One time in Mayapur, in 1934, at the Bhakti Vijaya Bhavan (a two-storey house where SP used to stay in Mayapur. It was in the compound of the Sri Caitanya Math temple that was built by SP. Anyway, during the time of the Navadvipa dhama parikrama, reinstated by SP, so many pilgrims came due to the widespread preaching of SP, making Mayapur very famous. Many came from all over Bengal. One time he was bathing early in the morning and the water was coming down in the pipe, and the pipe was open at the bottom and the water was just falling on the ground. So some pilgrims were very intelligent and were taking that water for drinking and putting on their heads. So, from that day on, when SP saw this, he was unhappy and only bathed in the tub from then on, and he poured the water on the head only, not the feet, and ordered his disciples, "You throw this water away at a distance." He was determined that no one took his bath water.

When he arrived in Jamshedpur, an industrial city in the present day Bihar, there were huge crowds waiting for him at a public meeting. Sarasvati Thakura went onto the stage and from there bowed down. Whether he bowed down to the people there or to great demigods and rsis who may also have been there, who others couldn't see, wasn't known, but he bowed down. What happened then was that, everyone was so amazed that such a great and famous guru could be so humble, that they all returned obeisances and bowed down - thousands of people.

Both Sarasvati Thakura and Bhaktivinoda Thakura made a point of being

at the train station half an hour to an hour before the arrival of the train.

In Cuttack, there was (???) kutir, where Sarasvati Thakura stayed, speaking Hari-katha. The munshi (local judicial officer) disturbed the talk... After, Sarasvati Thakura chastized him, quoting Tapana Misra, who begged Lord Caitanya, "I don't know what is sadya sadhana tattva. Please enlighten me." "This is the proper way to enquire. `sadya sadhana tapana' means understanding the goal of life and how to attain it," said Sarasvati Thakura.

In Cuttack, the pujari forgot to put the mosquito net for Krsna one night. Sarasvati Thakura said it was wrong and the next morning explained in the lecture the importance of Sri Vighraha, the Deity form of the Lord.

Kesava Maharaja was a brahmacari when he convinced the Governor of Ekadasi. (Ask Jotisekhara).

3. His Devotees

Sarasvati Thakur had four to five thousand disciples, mostly in Bengal, with many also in Orissa, and a few in other places of India. He had some foreign disciples also who were mostly German.

He encouraged young men, around twenty to thirty-years-old, to join, and used to think those around forty were hopeless, as they'd wasted the best part of their lives in grhastha life.

Out of around ten thousand initiated disciples (said that ten thousand foreign disciples will come soon. [How many did he have, five or ten thousand?]) he gave thirteen babaji initiation. Jyotisekhara recalls some of their names: Bhaktisvarupa Puri Goswami; Tirtha Goswami; Bhaktisaranga Maharaja,

etc. They were so absorbed in bhajan that even when it was time for eating they were unaware. One time Sagora Maharaja went with the devotees for nagar•sankirtan, but on coming outside the gate they just remained there and did sankirtan outside the Math for 2 hours. When they finished they told him, "Maharaja, we all walked around the town for two hours, chanting," to which he agreed saying, "Yes yes. We all went around the town." He didn't realize they'd only stood at the gate and performed sankirtan.

Sarasvati Thakur gave trija (third birth), or manjari•svarupa (siddha •svarupa), to thirteen of his disciples; not all at once, but at different times, according to the rules given in Sat•Kriya•Sara•Dipika - a book by Gopal Bhatta Goswami, which describes the different rituals for Vaishnava rites. Their samadhis were also made according to Sat•Kriya•Sara•Dipika. Some of the samadhis are at Mayapur, and some at the Radha Damodar temple in Vrndavan.

Some were grhasthas and some were tyagis. Since that time, in our line (Sarasvati Thakura's line), no one has given this trija.

One interesting point is that Sarasvati Thakur gave babaji initiation even though he externally kept himself in the position of a sannyasi in the varnasrama system. Traditionally a sannyasi cannot give babaji initiation, as a babaji is considered above a sannyasi, above varna and asrama. Becoming a babaji means initiation into the life of a paramahamsa. However, Sarasvati Thakur could do this, because although externally he played the role of a sannyasi, he was an actual paramahamsa, enabling him to give paramahamsa babaji initiation also. Those who became babajis gave up their brahmana thread and didn't strictly follow all the rules and regulations of the sastras, governing behaviour according to varna and asrama.

He warned his babaji disciples not to tell their manjari svarup to others. They would stay in the Mathas, in the three dhamas of Vrndavan, Navadvip, and Puri, and attend all the temple functions, such as lectures and kirtans, but they themselves would not give lectures in the temple. They would go for bhiksa (begging for alms) and go outside for nagar sankirtan. They wouldn't go for preaching and most of their time would be spent in bhajan. Sometimes

they would help with the Deity worship, or arcana. One babaji, named Radha Govinda Brijabasi, the father of Ananta Vasudeva, it would seem he lived in the Math in Vrndavan, Puri(?)

The first Vyasa puja ceremony of Sarasvati Thakur was held in 1929, and then every year afterwards in different locations. Each individual devotee would daily perform guru•puja to a picture of Sarasvati Thakur in their own rooms, using incense, a ghee•wick, etc. However, only those who were second initiates were allowed do this and for them it was obligatory.

The titles upadesaka (instructor), mahopadesaka (great instructor), and maha•mahopadesaka (very great instructor), were given to different devotees during the Gaura Purnima festival according to the degree of their ability to instruct others. Maha•mahopadesaka was awarded to a select few only, like Narayana Das, Bhaktisudhakara and Aprakrta Bhakti Saranga Goswami. Bhakti Kumuda was given as a title according to the name of the siksha guru. For example, Jotisekhara Prabhu came to Krsna consciousness through the group of Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu. So those in that group who were qualified enough received the title Bhaktikamud. Similarly, there were other siksha gurus, but, of course, the diksha guru was one, and the siksha gurus placed in these posts by Sarasvati Thakur were also his disciples. There were only a few such siksha gurus, such as Sundarananda Vidyavinoda, Navin Krsna Vidyalankara, Kunjabihari Vidyabhusana, Nandalal Vidyasagara, etc., and each had their own group. Whenever the devotees would approach Sarasvati Thakur he would sometimes comment, "Oh, Sundarananda Vidya Vinoda Loka," or, "Bhakti Sudhakarer Loka." "These are the people of Sundarananda. These are the people of Bhakti Sudhakara." Without getting a recommendation from such a siksha guru Sarasvati Thakur would not accept anyone for initiation and would ask an aspiring devotee which group he belonged to.

Generally, the brahmacaris living in the Math would come under the group of a sannyasi, and householders living outside near the villages would be in the group of a householder devotee. The groups were set out geographically: Dhaka came under the juristiction of Sundarananda Vidyavinoda,

Mednapur under Navina Krsna, Orissa under Bhakti Sudhakara (Quwestion Bh John: Isn't this spelt like Bhaktisiddhanta or Bhaktivedanta. Why separate Bhakti from Sudhakara?), etc.

The upadesakas were under the mahopadesakas, and the mahopadesakas were under the maha•mahopadesakas, with Sarasvati Thakur over all of them.

Householders may have been preached to and brought up to the stage of harernama (harernama initiation means first initiation [what we call it in ISKCON]; diksa is what we refer to as second initiation) by a sannyasi, but they would be put in a group of a householder devotee, who would then oversee their spiritual life as their siksa guru. This was following Bhaktivinoda Thakura's directions in Harinama Cintamani, which states that those who are householder devotees should be trained by senior householder devotees and those who are renounced should be trained by those who were also renounced devotees.

Amongst his disciples Siddhanti Maharaja, known as Siddhasvarupa brahmacari at the time, and Sridhara Maharaja were particularly scholastic knowing many many verses, especially Siddhanti Maharaja. Sarasvati Thakur told Sridhar Maharaja that he appreciated his devotion and bhajan (bhajan used here in the sense of sadhana. Throughout the book, bhajan refers to this. [Maybe there should be a list of terms at the front of the book; e.g. bhajan, harernama, diksa,etc.]). However, as far as preaching was concerned, they weren't so active. Sometimes Sarasvati Thakura would comment on this saying, "What is the use of your knowing so much Veda, so much sastra? Who will understand in Kali•yuga? Better to go out and preach."

Sarasvati Thakur told Bhakti Vaibhava Sagara Maharaja, "You are an ajanma bhakta • a devotee from your very birth."

There was a devotee called Bhagavad Janananda Prabhu, who used to pick flowers every day from the garden for Deity worship: He died at an early age. Sarasvati Thakur revealed that this devotee was a sakha (friend) of Krsna who had come to this world to worship Him.

To another disciple Sarasvati Thakur said, "You are ajatasatru." (Who? Also give meaning).

The first sannyasa initiate of Sarasvati Thakur was Bhakti Pradipa Tirtha Maharaja, who was given first initiation, or harernama, by Bhaktivinoda Thakur, so his status was like that of a godbrother of Sarasvati Thakur, but he voluntarily took the position of a disciple. Sarasvati Thakur used to say was very simple and innocent, just like a child.

Sakhi Carana Bhakti Vijaya Prabhu was instructed by Sarasvati Thakur to construct the Yoga-pitha temple in Mayapur. Bhaktivinoda Thakur had already made a small temple there with Jagannatha Misra, Saci Devi and Nimai, in another hall, but it was Sarasvati Thakura's disciple, Shaki Carana, who gave money for building the big temple. Before joining the mission he was a salt merchant with a vast amount of wealth, which he utilized later for the temple construction in Mayapur, at the Bagbazaar Gaudiya Math.

Miss Bowtell (a harernama disciple, made as a result of Bon Maharaja's [?] preaching in London) wrote to Sarasvati Thakur from London asking for diksha, to which he replied: "Why only you? I want many many to come to Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu."

A prominent disciple at the time was Paramananda Vidyaratna Prabhu, who was brought, by his father, to the Math in Puri as a pilgrim, while still a child of around twelve. Unfortunately, his father died at Saksi•Gopal (a village just outside Puri, where the famous Saksi-Gopal temple is) and no one knew of the young boy's family or of anyone else to care for him, so Sarasvati Thakur had him brought up in the Math and gave special attention to him. He became very dear to Sarasvati Thakur, but after many years in the Math, aged just over thirty, he wanted to marry. This came as a surprise to Sarasvati Thakur who said, "I have brought you up just as a hen brings up its chicken. So many years you have been with us and now you want to marry. This is very bad. I brought you up to become a preacher, but now you are spoiling your life by getting married." He was very distressed by all this and wrote him a letter saying, "I had hoped you were going to be a good man

but now you're getting married. I brought you up for preaching."

Sarasvati Thakur liked brahmacaris and said preaching was essential.

"Brahmacaris can preach but grhasthas are tied up," he would say.

At the Cuttack Math there was one Bodhayan Maharaja. Sometimes his methods of collecting were not very pleasing to Sarasvati Thakura.

Sometimes he would tell people that the Math had thousands and thousands of brahmacaris, that they also ran a lepor colony which had one thousand lepors, that they ran a students hostel, and also fed the poor. This was, of course, all untrue, and Sarasvati Thakur did not approve.

On one occasion, he was coming from the bazaar having collected so many things from Marwaris (a prominent business community, spread throughout India). For example: he said to someone, "We have three hundred brahmacaris, so give three hundred vests," which he got. When he arrived at the Math, on arriving at the gate, he started calling out in a loud voice, to attract everyone's attention; "Jai! Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Maharaja Ki Jai! being very elated, and also thinking that Sarasvati Thakur would be pleased. However, Sarasvati Thakur was so upset that he fasted that whole day.

On another occasion he arranged for many grhasthas from the Mednapur district to take harernama initiation. However, Sarasvati Thakur said they were disciples of Bodhayan Maharaja and not his. "He is trying to have many people take harernama from me, but actually they are disciples of his. I don't need so many so-called disciples. Bodhayan Maharaja is bringing forward so many insincere people for show only," he said.

Bodhayan Maharaja once went to the income tax officer and said, "Please help us to collect from the Marwaris," knowing that the Marwaris are a very prominent business community in India. The idea was that if the income tax officer went with him, they could be intimidated into giving good donations, but the income tax officer refused saying, "This is not proper." Bodhayan Maharaja then said, "Well at least let me take your car now that I've come, so as I can get back to the Math." The income tax officer granted this, but Bodhayan Maharaja went back to the Math via the bazaar, and without the

income tax officers knowing, went to the Bazaar and collected from the marwaris, telling them to please give donations. Seeing the income tax officer's car, they felt there was some kind of threat and so gave profusely, including money, dhotis, and so many other things. Then he returned to the Math and Sarasvati Thakura heard how he had made this collection. He became angry like fire and arranged to have everything returned. He used to say, "karilam sannyasi hoy gelo bilasi •I made them sannyasis but they've all become sense enjoyers." Of course, not all the sannyasis were like this; some were and some weren't.

Puri Maharaja was there at the same time. He was a very simple sannyasi, and he had at that time collected vegetables and rice from door to door. SP went to Puri Maharaja and took his bhiksa in his utariya. Bhiksa means to go begging for collection and also means "that which is collected." utariya is the top piece worn by a sannyasi, also used to collect that which is given (biksa). Traditionally, people may give as bhiksa money, rice, dahl, vegetables, etc. SP said, "This Puri Maharaja's bhiksa is sattvic. Gaurasundara is pleased with his bhiksa." SP was very particular about biksa, and discouraged the cheating style. He used to say that Laksmi is always with Narayana and one should go on madhukari biksa, without any motive,, and whatever one gets should be simply accepted. Madhukari means to go from door to door taking a little collection from every place, just as a bee goes from flower to flower, taking a little nectar from each.

Bhakti Garvasti Nemi Maharaja (check?) once went to a rich man in Bombay to petition him for a donation. That man offered fruit and sweets, while Nemi Maharaja proceeded explaining how there was no water in Mayapur, which was causing the sadhus there many difficulties. "Please give me a donation for tube wells," he requested. "You take this little prasada first and then we'll discuss," replied the rich man, but Nemi Maharaja startled him by declaring, "Unless you promise money for three tube wells, I will not eat anything." The wife of that rich man then reasoned: "If this sadhu leaves our house without taking any food it will be very inauspicious for us." "Please, give him the money for the three tube wells,"

she told her husband. Sarasvati Thakur became very sorry upon hearing of this incident: He never liked this process of collecting money by force, saying it was not the process of bhiksa.

A sannyasa disciple of Sarasvati Thakura by the name of Nemi Maharaja (is this the same as Bhakti Garvasti Nemi Maharaja, mentioned above) once came from Bombay, where he was stationed, to visit Sarasvati Thakur in Puri. He offered his pranamas but was told that he hadn't done it properly. "First, as a sannyasi you should touch your danda three times to the floor whenever you see your guru, signifying body, mind and words (tridanda); three items surrendered. You should do that," he said. "The ground where the danda touches is symbolic of the heart."

There was a brahmacari called Sajjan Maharaja who was the cook and personal assistant of Sarasvati Thakur. His name was Maharaja because a cook is referred to as "Maharaja" in northern India. Sarasvati Thakur never cooked himself and always had Sajjan Maharaja travelling with him for this. It was rarely allowed that anyone would cook apart from him. Even ladies would cook sometimes, that wasn't forbidden, but, generally, Sajjan Maharaja would cook, and was instructed exactly how to do so by Sarasvati Thakura.

Many times Sarasvati Thakura would be speaking Hari•katha and the time for his meal would come, so Sajjan Maharaja would try and interrupt him, telling him that it was time for his meal, because he knew he could go on and on, regardless of time. When speaking about Krsna he became absorbed. Many times Sajjan Maharaj would disturb Sarasvati Thakura while he was speaking, either informally to guests, or formally in a meeting. Sarasvati Thakura never liked being disturbed and told him to stop doing this. He liked to go on and on and on. Sarasvati Thakura told him, "Whenever I'm talking you should wait." But again and again Sajjan Maharaja would come. Again and again (not all on one occasion, but on many occasions) he'd disturb Sarasvati Thakura when he was speaking to some gentleman or group of gentlemen. Sajjan Maharaja looked after him just like a mother - cooking, washing and ironing his clothes, etc.

Sarasvati Thakura especially liked to preach amongst the educated people. However, although he had a small number of outstandingly intelligent disciples, most of those who came to him for initiation were not highly educated. In the Caitanya•caritamrta, Antya•lila:4.68, Caitanya Mahaprabhu says (quote fully), "dinere adhika daya kare bhagavan... • The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, is always favourable to the humble and meek, but aristocrats, learned scholars, and the wealthy are always proud of their positions." However, Sarasvati Thakur showed special mercy to the rich and intelligent classes: His idea being to convert the rich men first so that people would see Vaishnavism as not just a beggar's religion, as was previously thought. Sarasvati Thakur would often meet the vice chancellors and principals of universities and colleges and have meetings arranged in their homes. He liked very much to preach to students and held many college programmes.

Dandapani Dolai took diksha in 1932 at Catak Parvat, on the occasion of Sarasvati Thakura's sixtieth birthday (1932 was Sarasvati Thakura's 58th birthday, not sixtieth, so is 1932 the wrong year, or is sixtieth birthday wrong?). He was a grhastha bhakta and was told to complete one lakh, 100,000 names of japa (64 rounds) daily, but with all his family duties he found it too difficult. He took harernama in 1930, in Navadvipa, and was told to chant harernama and observe Ekadasi, along with other festivals. He was also told by Sarasvati Thakur to read Chaitanya•Bhagavata, Srimad •Bhagavatam, and all the other important books, and to try and learn Sanskrit.

Sarasvati Thakur had several followers from the Muslim community, especially in the Mayapur and Navadvip areas. Even though not actually initiated, they still, unofficially, considered themselves disciples. Sarasvati Thakur also had seven, harernama•initiated, western disciples.

There was one Muslim devotee of the Gaudiya mission named Kalachand, from a nearby Muslim village called Miapur (Mayapur village at that time was known as Miapur. Then, as now, the population was almost all Muslim. Mayapur village is situated just off the main road in Mayapur, on which all

the temples stand). In his garden was a very nice mango tree, and on one occasion the ripe mango's were stolen by some boys from the village. Sarasvati Thakur became very upset upon hearing this because they were to be offered to the Lord.

In Miapur, Sarasvati Thakur gave harernama initiation to a Muslim villager (is this the same Kalachand mentioned above?), and the people of Navadvipa remarked, "Oh, he will not become purified." Sarasvati Thakur then narrated a parable: "A Muslim villager was once appointed as a judge, but, out of malice, some Hindus said, 'Well, maybe he's not getting any payment.'"

This Muslim devotee would lead the Navadvip parikrama group, holding a flag. He was a grhastha, whose whole family became Vaishnavas, remaining at the same Muslim village in Mayapur. The local people never troubled them for changing from Islam to Krsna consciousness, and to this day, the descendant in their family leads the parikrama (why is the last "a" left out in Mayapur and Navadvip but not in parikrama?).

While at Lila Kuti, in Puri, Sarasvati Thakur, accompanied by Ananta Vasudeva (a proficient singer), was asked by a householder devotee, who had come from Calcutta: "Guru Maharaja, please ask Ananta Vasudeva to sing Yasomatinandana Brajabara nagara. He sings it so nicely." Sarasvati Thakur replied, "No. This is wrong. Any song should be offered for Krsna's pleasure. Not that you will hear it and enjoy." This man was a disciple of Sarasvati Thakur and so he was admonished further: "Yasomatinandana braja bara nagara... You want a nagara (an enjoyer). You want this kind of song. You don't want, dusta mana tumi kiser vaisnava...(?) You don't want, gopinatha mana nivedana suna.... This kind of song you're not asking for!" (These two songs quoted by SP here are giving instructions to the neophyte devotee on proper attitude and controlling the mind in devotional service).

Seva Vilas Brahmachari was once holding an umbrella over Sarasvati Thakura, in Mayapur, to protect him from the sun, but seeing as he was so short in comparison to Sarasvati Thakur, he kept hitting his head with it. Sarasvati Thakur then humourously remarked: "He is killing me with his

umbrella," so someone else took over.

(Put initials of devotees with same names, e.g: B.V. Puri Maharaja, and B.P. Puri Maharaja.

Bhakti Srirupa Puri Maharaja, whose father was a disciple of Bhaktivinoda Thakura and a sannyasa disciple of Sarasvati Thakura, left this world two years before him (Sarasvati Thakura). He was very gentle and mild in his behaviour and anyone who saw him would automatically be attracted to him. This is not the Puri Maharaja who was Sarasvati Thakura's first sannyasa disciple. His samadhi is in Mayapura at Srivasa Angana, along with his father's, Bhakti Vilas Prabhu, and Sarasvati Thakur personally performed the samadhi ceremony. Anyone who came to him, whether sinful or whatever, would be attracted by him. He was very open with everyone, treating all with kindness, whatever their behaviour may have been. There were many genuine saintly sadhus like this in the Gaudiya Math.

Bhakti Swarup Puri Maharaja (is this the same as Bhakti Srirupa Puri Maharaja, and if so, did he disappear about one year before Sarasvati Thakura or two years, as stated above?) disappeared about one year before Sarasvati Thakura. He was a highly realized soul, not caring for food, shelter, or material things. He was always engaged in kirtan, only sleeping a few hours at night. Sarasvati Thakura said he was a jivan mukta • a liberated soul in this very life. Bhakti Vaibhava(?) Sagara Maharaja was another who Jotisekhara saw as always engaged in bhajan, and was very sincere to Sarasvati Thakura. This is in comparison to others who appeared to be scheming and enhancing their prestige.

Sarasvati Thakur sent his first sannyasa disciple, Bhakti Pradipa Tirtha Maharaja, who was also the harernama disciple of Bhaktivinoda Thakura, to Dhaka (now the capital of Bangladesh) in order to preach. At that time Subhoda Babu was one of the many people who came every day to listen to the devotees lecture and was very impressed. However, the sahajiyas of the area stood firmly against Bhakti Pradipa Tirtha Maharaja and the Gaudiya Math preachers, not approving of their teachings, and seeing them as a

threat on their hold over the people. They told all their followers, which was practically the whole town, not to give them anything, which meant they had to struggle very hard as they were not even getting donations to eat. Then, one morning, the man they were staying with, abruptly told them they had to vacate the premises by that same afternoon and that he couldn't help them anymore. Fortunately, however, Subhoda Babu invited them to reside at his house. These events occurred in 1928. Subhoda Babu went on to take initiation, and was given the name Sundarananda Vidyavinoda.

Puri Maharaja, an initiated disciple of Sarasvati Thakur, from Berhampur, Orissa, now has his Math in Berhampur, Rajamandri, Visakhapatnam, etc. He recalls that when Sarasvati Thakur was present in this world, even though he took harernama initiation from him, he wasn't so much interested and didn't want to join the Math. He was more interested in Gandhiji's independance movement. From time to time he would visit the Gaudiya Math at Mayapur, Puri, Cuttack, and other places, but wasn't interested in joining at that time, having other ideas instead.

As a young boy he remembers how, every six months or so, he would be taken by one Sharmaji (same Madhusudana who donated press?) to visit Sarasvati Thakur in Mayapur, Cuttack and other places. Seeing as he was only a young boy at the time and there were so many other people present, he never personally spoke anything with Sarasvati Thakur. It was only in 1931 or 1932 that another devotee bearing the same name, Puri Maharaja, who was visiting Berhampur, pushed him into taking harernama. He told him that he should get initiated because he was from a Vaishnava family, and even though he wasn't so much inclined he coerced him saying, "Next time I come I'll bring Sarasvati Thakura's japa•mala for you." The system they had if Sarasvati Thakur could not be physically present was that he would chant on the japa•mala, which would then be sent to the aspiring devotee, and in this way they would take harernama from him. When Puri Maharaja was given his japa•mala in this way his name wasn't changed. His name was Narasimha at the time so he became Narasimha Brahmachari. It was quite a common system that the persons name wouldn't change on harernama.

Another example Puri Maharaja gives is of Nityananda Brahmachari, who was called Nityananda at home and simply became known as Nityananda Brahmachari.

*Paramananda Vidyaratna (is that the right name?) once called Jotisekhara to see the rasa•lila•yatra (*Footnote: Professional drama performance of rasa-lila. Their "yatra" performances of stories taken from sastra were, and still are, popular among the common people in Bengal and Orissa. However, neither are the characters of the actors anything like that of the great sadhus they portray, nor are their dramatical performances accurately performed, according to parampara. They are cheap presentations, meant simply to amuse and entertain. Sarasvati Thakur used to speak of "yatra-dolera Narada - a "stage Narada" or "farcical Narada" (CC.Adi-lila 10.13 purport) in Cuttack, but Jotisekhara told him, "Guru maharaja doesn't like this." Paramananda didn't listen to such advice, and although reluctant, Jotisekhara went anyway, considering the seniority of Paramananda, who was one of the original three trustees of the Gaudiya Math. The next morning the whole episode came to the attention of Sarasvati Thakura who sarcastically remarked: "Paramananda Prabhu has a licence to do whatever he likes." Later on Paramananda became a householder and left the society, being, it seems, never really serious about spiritual life.*

The harernama•initiated Bhaktibardhaka Sagar Maharaja joined the Math in 1922 as a young man of around twenty•four, interested in spiritual life. He joined at the time before the mission was called the Gaudiya Math(???). The Math was a house at the time, on Ultadanga Road, and called Bhaktivinoda •asana(?). Later on the name was changed to the Gaudiya Math. When he first joined, Sarasvati Thakur gave one householder devotee, Avidya Haran, the assignment of teaching him the philosophy. At that time there were very few brahmacharis or members even. Avidya Haran is the one who constructed the Nata Mandir in Mayapur, or the Chaitanya Math.

During the time of Sarasvati Thakur, Sagara Maharaja held several important positions, and was in charge of the Puri Math for seven years, which was an important Math, considering that every year Sarasvati Thakur

would spend the summer there. At one time he was in charge of three Mathas: Delhi, Vrndavan and Kuruksetra. His speciality was collecting donations for the mission, especially money.

In Vrndavan there was one Krsna Das Babaji who was a disciple of Bhaktivinoda Thakur, not to be confused with the Akincana Krsna Das Babaji, who was a disciple of Sarasvati Thakur. Akincana Krsna Das Babaji's brahmacari name was Krsna Kinkore (Kanti : in one place you said his name was Kinkore and then in another you said Kanti • which is it to be?).

There is another Babaji of Sarasvati Thakura's called Radha Govinda Das Babaji, who lived in Puri and was the father of B.P.Tirtha Maharaja and Ananta Vasudeva. He once told Sarasvati Thakur: "I am not so popular. When I go house to house for bhiksa they don't allow me in. The fathers of the young boys don't allow me in because their sons are interested in following me when I give them maha•prasada and preach to them. The fathers of these boys are even scared about letting them out when I'm around, because they are afraid of them becoming sadhus." Radha Govinda Babaji would go on the street and the tendency of the boys was to follow him. Sarasvati Thakur replied with the example: "Some people, when invited to someones house to eat, will take all varieties of nice food. But afterwards, when outside, they will say everything was very nice but the yoghurt was too sour. So in this way they unnecessarily criticize. In the same way, in your devotional service, even though you may be doing everything very nicely, people will unnecessarily criticize. But you shouldn't mind that. It is simply their criticizing tendency."

Siddha Bhagavan Das Babaji of Kalna was very famous, and even today, in Bengali Vaishnava circles, his name is very well known. He was known as Siddha Babaji but took babaji initiation again from Sarasvati Thakur, reforming into a proper Gaudiya Vaishnava babaji, as previously he was initiated into an apasampradayic line.

After taking diksa, or second initiation; not at the time of harernama, or first initiation, all the brahmacaris living in the Math could wear saffron

coloured robes, but if they became implicated with women, Sarasvati Thakur said they had to wear white. Many brahmacaris wearing saffron, later on got married, that wasn't forbidden. Jotisekhara asked Sarasvati Thakur why he was dressing everyone in saffron (The reply is not clear from the tape).

Unlike the South Indian sampradayas, before taking sannyasa, the devotees were not checked with astrology. i.e. In Sri and Madhva lines, before taking sannyasa, a candidate would have his horoscope read to ascertain if his chart indicated a person fit for lifelong renunciation. (Sounds like a good idea, so why don't we have it?) Bon Maharaja came from a very high class aristocratic background, and spoke excellent English, and therefore preached to the aristocratic classes.

One advocate, Gopal Prahararaj, made a six volume elaborate and extensive dictionary of the Oriya language, famous even to this day. He invited Sarasvati Thakur to his house in order that he would bless him, his family, his home, and his work on the dictionary. He wasn't prepared to take initiation, but in his dictionary he wrote a six•page sketch on the life of Sarasvati Thakur, with the history of Mayapur also included. Along with this advocate, many of the great scholarly people of that time very much appreciated Sarasvati Thakur. The advocate's house was in Cuttack. A photograph of Sarasvat Thakur with that advocate was published in the dictionary, which also appeared in the Gaudiya magazine.

In Mayapur, one brahma•raksasa ghost came to Sarasvati Thakur and bowed down before him. He asked them who he was and he informed him how he was his disciple before Sarasvati Thakura came to this world, but due to the offence of kicking a pure devotee, his own Godsister, in his previous life he was forced to take on the body of a ghost. He then requested Sarasvati Thakura to excuse him and release him from his condition, which he did. Sarasvati Thakur then personally related this incident to the devotees. (??? Refer to Jotisekhara).

A man came to Sarasvati Thakura once and confided in him that he had been his devotee in a previous life - a disciple - but had committed the offence of kicking a woman devotee and as a result became a brahma-

raksasa. Now he was freed from being a brahma-raksasa and he had a human body, but he couldn't find the devotee he'd kicked to beg forgiveness, so he asked Sarasvati Thakura to excuse him, which he did. Sarasvati Thakura then gave him initiation with the name Brahmanyadeva and he went on to become a very good devotee and learned scholar. (Which story is correct, this one or the one above?)

One Mayavadi sannyasi accepted Sarasvati Thakur and took sannyasa from him, becoming Bhaktasvarup Puri Maharaja. He remained in the Gaudiya Math for two months, but left to become a mayavadi again. He went to Vrndavan and was never seen again and it is thought that he died there.

Once, at Tridandi Gaudiya Math in Bhubaneswara, one Ekadandi sannyasi, a sannyasi of Sankaracarya, of the Mayavada school, came to Sarasvati Thakura and they had some discussion. After the discussion he became convinced and took tridandi sannyasa. As he had already taken sannyasa, having already renounced the world, Sarasvati Thakura didn't tell him to become a brahmacari, but immediately he went to the tridandi sannyasa order, and was given the name Bhakti Swarup Maharaja. From Bhubaneswara he went to Vrndavan and was never seen again by anyone, so it was thought that even though he was a young man, he had left his body in Vrndavan. (Which version is correct? The one above or this one?)

In Dhaka there was one Tribhuvana brahmacari, who would get up at around 7.00am, missing the whole morning programme. Some householder devotees complained to Sarasvati Thakura about him, who replied, "Anyway, he may do that but you don't do it. You come early in the morning and attend the programme." Tribhuvan came to know of the complaint and so expected Sarasvati Thakura to say something to him, but he never did. Anyway, expecting some chastizement, he rectified his bad habit. This is an example of how, even by Sarasvati Thakura not saying anything, Tribhuvan knew that he was doing wrong in the presence of Sarasvati Thakura, so he stopped getting up late.

The Bhaktivinoda Thakur school at Mayapur was at that time run by the Gaudiya Math. Now it is run by the West Bengal Government Educational

Authority. Now, because Mayapur is a Muslim village, there are many Muslim students, and a request was made that instead of closing the school on Ekadasi, as Sarasvati Thakura had introduced, they should close it on a Friday, which is the Muslim day of prayer. Sarasvati Thakura related this problem to Vinoda Bihari brahmacari (later to become B.P.Kesava Maharaja), who was also involved in the management affairs, and turned it over to him for his consideration. The Mohammedans had made a petition to the D.P.I.(more or less, an educational inspector of the government). This British man came to see Vinoda Babu, who tricked him by showing him a few of the Ekadasis which fell on the Friday and said, "Actually, Ekadasi means Friday. Only we are Hindus and they are Muslims. So we have our way of saying(?)" So in this way he tricked the inspector and the holiday continued to be on the Ekadasi. An enquiry was made and the rule was passed that the holiday should be on Ekadasi. It was a government recognized school, therefore there was some authority over it like that. Sarasvati Thakura heard about this incident and said to Vinoda Babu, "Oh you are a very cunning fellow," and approved of this action.

Among the eighteen sannyasis made by Sarasvati Thakura, one was Oriyan. As an Oriyan pandit from a brahmana family, he first came to Sarasvati Thakura with some objections, stating; "Caitanya Mahaprabhu is a prophet. He is not God Himself. He may be called Jagat Guru, but not Krsna." In reply, Sarasvati Thakura, using so many quotations and arguments from sastra, convinced him. When he was thus convinced, this man, without going through the stage of brahmacari, or any other stage, was immediately awarded sannyasa by Sarasvati Thakura. He was a very prominent figure and was very learned in sastra. His conclusion had been wrong, but now he accepted the right one, so Sarasvati Thakura decided to give him sannyasa immediately with the name Bhakti Vaibhava Vaikanasa Maharaja.

O.B.L.Kapoor tells of how he came to Krsna consciousness. In 1935 (is this the right year?), after taking his M.A. in philosophy, from Allahabad University, he started out on a quest which had been occupying his mind for

some years; namely, to find a spiritual guide. In 1931, he visited Nainital in summer, which was a sub-Himalayan hill station, and there Giri Maharaja, a sannyasa disciple of Sarasvati Thakura, was giving a series of lectures from the Bhagavad-gita. Although the subject was the Gita, he actually spoke more about Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His teachings. O.B.L.Kapoor became very interested by his presentation, and met him afterwards, discussing with him for several days. He was a convinced Shankarite (follower of the teachings of Shankaracarya) at this time, and thus felt there was no philosophy superior to that of Shankara. Even though they discussed a lot, he wasn't convinced, so Giri(?) Maharaja suggested that it was better for him to meet his guru, who was residing in Calcutta. "He has got full knowledge about sastra and all transcendental purity also," he said. Even though O.B.L.Kapoor was not convinced by his philosophical presentation, he was very impressed by his lecture on Mahaprabhu. Previously, he hadn't really known much about Lord Caitanya, but now he felt himself attracted toward Him. He was attracted by Mahaprabhu's personality and wanted to know more and more about Him, so he decided to go to Calcutta and meet Sarasvati Thakura. So, he came down from Naimital(?) first to Allahabad, and to his great good fortune, Sarasvati Thakura himself, at that time, had come there. Giri Maharaja had already informed Sarasvati Thakura about this interested young man, so O.B.L.Kapoor went to see him in Allahabad. He was made to sit in a room adjacent to the room Sarasvati Thakura was in. The door of Sarasvati Thakura's room was closed, but suddenly he opened it and came out. Immediately, O.B.L.Kapoor was attracted just upon seeing him. Sarasvati Thakura then sat down in a chair and started talking to O.B.L.Kapoor as he sat on the floor. Sarasvati Thakura was already informed of his position, so he started talking about Advaita philosophy. He started demolishing it by argument and sastric evidence. O.B.L.Kapoor just sat and listened to Sarasvati Thakura, who spoke as though charged, not giving any opportunity for Kapoor to speak. Having demolished the Advaita philosophy, he spoke of Sri Krsna and His lila in Vrndavan, which impressed O.B.L.Kapoor even more. He was more attracted by the picture of Krsna in

Vrindavan than his demolishing of Advaita philosophy (this was his observation). He still had his philosophical doubts, having been trained in philosophy (in India, if you take a degree in philosophy, that means you may especially study Advaita philosophy, and O.B.L.Kapoor was entrenched in that). After speaking for about an hour, Sarasvati Thakura just got up and went inside his room, as if overcome with some kind of emotion, so Kapoor never got a chance to speak. However, every day, while Sarasvati Thakura was in Allahabad, Kapoor would go and visit him, and gradually was able to ask many questions which were on his mind, and in this way felt himself being drawn closer and closer to Sarasvati Thakura. After about ten days, Sarasvati Thakura went to Benares, being invited by the Maharaja of Varanasi. Taking permission from Sarasvati Thakura, Kapoor accompanied him to Varanasi and stayed with him as one of the guests of the Maharaja. For around fifteen days he was there, and this time he got ample opportunity to talk with him. Also, so many people would come and meet Sarasvati Thakura and Kapoor would listen to their conversation. Sarasvati Thakura then returned to Calcutta, and Kapoor, after going to Allahabad, also joined him to go to Calcutta and spent some time with him. When he went to Darjeeling he also accompanied him. Gradually, gradually, he was being weened away from Advaita-vada, and in 1932 he took initiation. Although he was serving in the University Bombay Presidency, he was able to come to the Brajamandal parikrama in 1932, and took initiation at Radha Kund. On Kartikka purnima, in Allahabad, 1931, he had taken harernama, along with his wife. He had been given beads and told to chant the Hare Krsna mantra. In 1932, only he took initiation, not his wife (why?). There was no fixed number of rounds given, and he was told to just chant as much as he could. Actually, in studying the life of Sarasvati Thakura (who's talking?), I found some devotees were told chant sixty-four rounds, some were told to try and chant sixty-four, some to chant sixteen, and others to chant as much as they could. Generally, those who were householders, who had family duties, were just given beads and told to chant as much as they could. Kapoor sometimes contributed articles to the Harmonist magazine. He also recalls that some

grhastha disciples, on the Brajamandal parikrama, were taking tea daily. It was going on and was known. Specifically he remembered one devotee who was initiated by Sarasvati Thakura, and had donated the land for Sri Rupa(?) Gaudiya Math at Allahabad, who was also drinking tea. Kapoor went to Bagbazaar Gaudiya Math from time to time to get the association of Sarasvati Thakura, and he kept regular correspondence with Professor Nishikant(?) Sanyal also. From time to time he would write letters to Sarasvati Thakura, not any more about philosophy, as he was now convinced, but more about sadhana (personal advice). Dr, Kapoor recalls one incident in which he asked Sarasvati Thakura what his stage in bhakti, having some high opinion of himself. Sarasvati Thakura gave the reply: "First!" (i.e. most neophyte).

O.B.L.Kapoor, being a learned scholar from Allahabad, the Hindi speaking part of India, was instructed by Sarasvati Thakura to learn Bengali, so as he could study the original Bengali texts of the Caitanya Bhagavata and the Caitanya-caritamrta, etc. Sarasvati Thakura liked other Gaudiya Math members who were also learned and non-Bengalis, to learn Bengali for this reason.

Bhagavat Maharaja, who is now the head of the Bagbazaar branch in Calcutta, came to the Gaudiya Math as a young man. He happened to be in Gaya when Sarasvati Thakura was there with some of his disciples, having several days of public programmes. That evening, the last day, Sarasvati Thakura didn't speak, as he had done on previous days, but one of his sannyasi disciples did. The future Bhagavat Maharaja was present for that programme. The young man was impressed with what he heard and asked if he could meet the guru, so the next day he went to see him. He sat on the floor and Sarasvati Thakura sat on a chair, speaking for more than two hours. All the devotees had packed their belongings and were ready to leave, but they didn't want to tell Sarasvati Thakura to stop speaking, so from behind him they were gesticulating to the young man, who was facing them, telling him to stop the conversation, because they wanted to leave, but he didn't respond to them and went on listening to Sarasvati Thakura, and in

this way became convinced, joining the mission later on. He didn't have much association with Sarasvati Thakura, because he came near the end of his manifest pastimes, and he was also posted at Gaya - a long way from Calcutta - and so he didn't see Sarasvati Thakura much.

One day at Chatak Parvat, Ardayni(?) Maharaja (that name is not clear) was very sick.

In Bhubaneswara, Harinam brahmacari was late doing the arcana. It was meant to be opened at 4.30am, but didn't start until 7.00am (what's the connection between late arcana and the thief? Was it because he was sick and so arcana started late?). One thief came to Bhubaneswar and put poison in the milk and bananas the devotees were about to take. The idea was to make them all sick and then go and steal from the temple, while they were all in hospital. The devotees were taken to hospital, so sick that they became unconscious, and while in this state, in the hospital, they were still chanting, and performed arcana as if they were offering arati at the arati time, saying the premadvani prayers.

Sarasvati Thakura gave a gold medal for English to one sannyasi who was very sweet and polite (his name I don't have).

Once, on a very hot day, a devotee was fanning Sarasvati Thakura, when he asked him, "Why don't you fan yourself, it's so hot?" The devotee replied, "You are the spiritual master, the representative of God. If you are cool then I am cool." Sarasvati Thakura was very satisfied with this reply.

Jotisekhara relates that, although Sarasvati Thakura was fully surrendered to Lord Caitanya, and his whole life was dedicated to bringing others to that same idea, or principle of surrender, almost all of his disciples could not take it up very deeply in their hearts and lives. Many sannyasis especially tried for name and fame. No doubt their character was pure, in as much as they at least followed the moral principles; but as far as fully surrendering to Krsna, in Jotisekhara's opinion, almost all could not take up their guru's motto, or his same spirit, to heart: "guru mukha padma vakya cittete koriya akya, ar na koriho mane asa..."

Jotisekhara laments that even though the sannyasis were learned in sastra,

good preachers, in as much as they could explain sastra, they, nevertheless, got diverted from the real aim of life • to be fully surrendered to Krsna - because of the foolish pursuit of name and fame.

Immediately after this, Jotisekhara (a householder devotee) told me that Sarasvati Thakhura had once explained that the householders cannot know the mind of a sannyasi. He said the householders were always looking for opportunities to criticize the sannyasis, and that they did not understand their mentality. One who is attached to home, wife, children, and the rest, does not know what it means to give up everything for the sake of serving Krsna. A sannyasi always has to tolerate so many things. He has to always act on such a high standard and can't just sit around and talk all nonsense, worldly things with anyone. Those who are not sannyasis, it is not possible for them to understand what it means to be one. At the same time Sarasvati Thakura also warned the sannyasis to be very careful in their behaviour, because they are always open to criticism by the people in general, just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu also said, "sannyasera alpa cidra, sarva loka gaya • a sannyasi's slight mistake is criticised by all."

The only sannyasi to fall-down, Bhakti Swarup Puri Maharaja, left the Gaudiya Math, on the plea of becoming a Christian. He actually went back to his wife and adopted Christianity to cover-up his falling down from sannyasa. A few days later he died. A year after leaving Sarasvati Thakura, he died (is it a year or a few days???)

Sarasvati Thaura made eighteen sannyasi, and it is said that one fell•down, named Bhakti Swarup (something, not clear?). His wife came to pull him back in Vrndavan.

There was one Bhaktivivek Bharati Maharaja who joined the mission in the early days. He was fat, so Sarasvati Thakur would always be on his case. He would say to him, "Are you taking ghee?" and sometimes he would pinch his skin jokingly.

There is a picture of the early members of the mission when they were just starting the mission. (Jotisekhara has that photograph so we should get a copy of it.

2. Ananta Vasudeva and Sundarananda Vidyavinoda

Ananta Vasudeva and Sundarananda Vidyavinoda were liked by almost everyone for their pleasing behaviour. They were scholars and writers and were considered the two hands of Sarasvati Thakura, because they helped him in his writing work. They were very much absorbed in spiritual subject matters. In a lecture in Darjeeling it is said that Sarasvati Thakura stated; "Whatever I have told, whatever I have not told, it will be explained by Ananta Vasudeva and Sundarananda Vidyavinoda."

The prayers: "nama om vishnupadaya Krishna prestaya bhutale srimati bhaktisiddhanta swamin iti namine...", and all the pranama-mantras for Gaurikisora Das Babaji, Bhaktivinode Thakur and Jagannatha Das Babaji, were all composed at one time by Ananta Vasudeva in 1929. The prayers honouring Sarasvati Thakur were first recited at his Vyasa•puja ceremony, and then after they were accepted, all the devotees would recite them in mangala•arati, before kirtan.

When his Guru Maharaja was explaining the Bhagavata, Vasudeva would assist (how?), and at the time of his disappearance Sarasvati Thakur said, "Whatever I have not explained Ananta Vasudeva will explain. The message of Rupa Raghunatha is to be taught by him." Then he called for Vasudeva and told him: "You will explain Rupa Raghunatha vani!" Thus, after Sarasvati Thakura's disappearance everyone accepted Vasudeva as their leader, but after some time a dispute broke out.

Sarasvati Thakur regarded Ananta Vasudeva as his Ganesh, just as Vyasadeva has his Ganesh. "He has done many things for me," he would say. Sarasvati Thakura would speak and Vasudeva would write it down. In this way his commentaries, like the Chaitanya•Bhagavata Gaudiya Bhasya,

Chaitanya•charitamrta Anubhasya, and the Srimad•Bhagavata Bhasya were prepared.

In Darjeeling the devotees asked Sarasvati Thakur, "When you leave this world who will speak to us your truth?" to which he replied, "Vasudeva Prabhu is very intimate with me. In all these books: Chaitanya•charitamrta, Bhagavata, etc., he has helped me, so he knows my ideas. I have taught something and that which I haven't will be told by him."

One night, Ananta Vasudeva dreamt about Sarasvati Thakur as Nayan Manjari in Braja, and when he told this to Sarasvati Thakur he laughed and accepted it. It was thus revealed to the devotees that his svarupa was Nayana Manjari.

It was under the instruction of Sarasvati Thakur that Ananta Vasudeva and Sundarananda Vidyavinoda tried to print the Vaishnava Manjusa (Manjusa means "treasure-chest". The Vaishnava Manjusa was an encyclopedia of Vaisnavism which SP started. He left the task to be completed by Sundarananda Vidyavinoda, but it never was) at the Krsna •Nagara press.

They also helped him in the making of books, such as the Chaitanya •charitamrta with his Anubhasya commentary.

Sometimes, when Sarasvati Thakur was speaking, a thought would come to his mind and he would have trouble remembering a particular sloka. He would then ask Ananta Vasudeva or Sundarananda for help, which they would promptly supply.

Sarasvati Thakur used to say, "Sundarananda is my right hand and my other hand is Ananta Vasudeva." He also said, "One who stands against Sundarananda is asundara (he is not beautiful)."

Subhoda Babu, as Sundarananda was then called, met Sarasvati Thakur there (where? Krsna•Nagar?) and was initiated around 1929, at the time of the parikram. He was selected by Sarasvati Thakur, as a very sincere grhastha devotee, to write many books (he went on to write fifty books(???) He sacrificed his life for the work of his Guru Maharaja, who engaged him in research work, as he was a pandit. The Gauriya magazine was begun with

him as the editor, and later on he even became the secretary of the Gaudiya mission.

He was a good orator also. In all the major halls, such as the Albert Hall, in Calcutta, when there were public meetings, Sarasvati Thakur would sit in the chair as the president and have Sundarananda speak, as well as himself. Some of the sannyasis became very sorry at this saying, "Why is Sarasvati Thakur encouraging this grhastha to speak? Why is he not encouraging us?" Sarasvati Thakur said in reply to this: "He is Vyasa!" From that time many books, not to do with the Gaudiya Math, were reviewed by him in the Gauriya magazine.

Sarasvati Thakur started the work "Vaishnava Manjusa," which was something like an encyclopedia on Vaishnavism, and then told Sundarananda to complete it. Many sannyasis didn't like him because he was a grhastha and very very knowledgeable regarding sastra. Sarasvati Thakur once asked him to give a lecture at a programme in Calcutta's Albert Hall. However the sannyasis opposed this because they wanted to speak, thinking they were superior as sannyasis. Sarasvati Thakur then retorted, "Sundarananda may be a grhi but he is accepted by me. Krsna will be pleased. Your lecture will be boasting. You are making some competition between you to see who is best, to show that you are better than Sundarananda and better than each other. But Krsna will be pleased with him; yasmin tuste jagat tustam - If He is satisfied, the world is satisfied" (reference to be found).

Later, unfortunately, long after Sarasvati Thakura had passed away, Sundarananda had some philosophical disagreement with his teachings, especially on the point of our sampradaya being in the Madhva line. He therefore put himself under one Kanupriya Goswami of Navadvip (Sundarananda's father was a disciple of the father of Kanupriya Goswami. The father of Kanupriya was respected by Sarasvati Thakura as a scholar and devotee. Kanupriya was also a scholar and wrote many books) and took "reinitiation", in Vrndavan, outside the line of Bhaktivinode Thakur; thus deviating from, and rejecting Sarasvati Thakur, although, apparently,

Sundarananda himself denied this.

There was one Bhakti Viveka Bharati Maharaja who was expert in management, especially at organizing festivals.

Kunjabihari Vidyabhusan

From the very beginning, when he joined the Math, Kunja Babu, who later became Tirtha Maharaja, sacrificed everything for Sarasvati Thakura, giving his money and time. He even went to Mesopotamia (in present day Iraq) to do service in the postal department there, and then sent money back to the Math. So, naturally, Sarasvati Thakura had faith in him and gave him a lot of responsibility, so much so that he became a close associate of Sarasvati Thakura.

He told Kunja Babu that since he was an expert at management he should help in that area.

After the death of his mother, Kunja Babu decided to perform the sraddha ceremony, using the Raghunatha-smarta system, rather than the Vaishnava one, which greatly displeased Sarasvati Thakur. Therefore, before he left for his mother's house, in order to carry out the ceremony, Sarasvati Thakur requested him to use the Hari•bhakti•vilasa or Sat-kriya-sara-dipika(?) system. Despite this instruction, however, Kunja Babu disobeyed his spiritual master and went ahead, following the smarta system. Sarasvati Thakur gravely proclaimed after this event that, "He is the secretary of the Gaudiya Math, but he is doing this smarta system. It will be the cause of the downfall of the Gaudiya Math." It was all a sad state of affairs, because it showed that, even as a leader and after so many years, Kunjada still never had faith in Vaishnavism. This was in 1934 • two years before SP this world. Sarasvati Thakur was very disturbed by all this and wrote two or three letters about it.

1. Cintamani Nayak (Sarasvati Thakura's disciple)

In Cuttack, Cintamani Nayak (to be known later as Cintamani babu), a betel-shop owner, had a Salagram-sila who was famous for fulfilling the desires of those who pleased Him, and even to this day people go to Him and pray. One night in a dream the Salagram appeared to Cintamani, telling him to give Him (the Salagram-sila) away to a sadhu, along with a plot of land for building a temple. However, no name was mentioned, so the next day Cintamani Babu wrote down the names of the different Mathas in Cuttack on separate pieces of paper and asked his blind daughter (was she blind or blindfolded?) to choose one. She chose the name of the Sachidananda Math (the name of the Gaudiya Math branch in Cuttack, which at that time was in a rented house, and named after Bhaktivinoda Thakur, as in "Sachidananda" Bhaktivinoda Thakura, because he used to stay in Cuttack, working as a high-school teacher).

Cintamani Nayak then followed the advice of his dream and handed over the Salagram-sila to Sarasvati Thakur, as well as some land and a garden, next to his own residence, for the establishment of the Math. The Salagram-sila further told him in a dream to take harernama initiation from Sarasvati Thakur, to which he also complied. In front of the land he donated were some shops belonging to Cintamani Babu, leaving only a little space for a gate. Therefore, Sarasvati Thakur explained how this would hinder the appearance of the Math, and asked him to give the shops as well, which he did. The shop-keepers moved out and a wall was erected to create a nice appearance in front of the Math. Cintamani Babu, a moderately wealthy man, declared that he would spend not a single paisa on anything but for the service of God.

Soon after these events with Cintamani Nayak, the same Salagram-sila appeared to one Vinodini Dasi in a dream, telling her to make a temple for

Him in a place where there were many coconut trees. She searched through Cuttack and found the place, which happened to be the land given by Cintamani Babu. She then paid for the construction of the temple there. Sarasvati Thakur had actually been searching for a place to build the Math, so without any endeavour of his own, and by his desire alone, this all came about. He wanted to take the Radha Krsna Deities from the rented house that they were in immediately, but construction was going on, so where to keep the Deities was a problem. Cintamani Babu therefore agreed to move out to a smaller house of his until the work was completed (around two years later), and his own house was used for worship of the Deity. The new temple of the Sachidananda Math was thus established when everything was ready, in 1932(?), and the Radha Krsna Deities were installed.

Ananta Vishvambhara

One day, in Mayapur, during the rainy season, Sarasvati Thakur was walking on the Adwaita Sarani Road, now known as Bhaktisiddhanta Road, which is the only proper road through Mayapur. At the time it was under construction, and over one ditch was a bridge made of bamboo poles tied together with string • a system still commonly used in the villages of Bengal to this day, especially in the rainy season, when many new little rivulets flow through the fields. The bamboo, however, becomes very slippery due to the wetness, making it very awkward to walk on. There was one of these bridges that Sarasvati Thakur started to cross, but it was very poorly made and sloped downwards so as the level of it was not straight. It also started to shake from side to side, and just as he was nearing the other side he slipped, but Ananta Vishvambhara was right beside him and caught him by his whole body in his arms. Normally one would be very careful about even touching the lotus feet of the guru, and even touching the feet should be done gently, but he caught his whole body in a firm embrace and saved him from slipping

over. Sarasvati Thakur then commented, "As you have saved me from this danger today I give you the benediction that Mahaprabhu will save you from all dangers."

This Ananta Vishvambhara Brahmachari was very big and strong and used to take part in wrestling competitions before joining the mission. For his mid-day meal he would consume no less than 1 kilo 700 grams of rice • a huge amount, enough to feed 6•8 Bengalis. Once, when all the devotees were sitting in line taking prasada, Ananta Vishvambhara just stood and looked at his plate sorrowfully, because there wasn't enough rice on it. Sarasvati Thakur happened to enter the room and saw the situation. Calling to the devotee serving he said, "Give him more! He requires more. Give him as much as he wants!"

Ananta Vishvambhara would practice wrestling every day with people from outside, even though Sarasvati Thakur did not approve.

Ananta Vishvambhara was also a good collector of funds, having a good rapport with the gold-merchant community (Suvarna-vanik) of Calcutta. He opened a private account in Beadon Street Post Office, using the thirteen thousand rupees he kept from donations given to him, which he intended to use for some purpose in the future. Due to sickness, Ananta Vishvambhara was once sent home by Kunjabihari, the secretary of the Math, who told him, "Better go home now. When you recover fully come back, because you won't get properly looked after here." While at home he once read in the Gaudiya magazine, which he was regularly receiving each week, the headline, "Braje Chalo • Go to Braja." It was an announcement that Sarasvati Thakur had planned a grand parikrama of the whole of Braja Mandala. However, there was not enough funds and many many people were invited for the event. It so happened, however, that Kunjabihari was a clerk in the Post Office and therefore knew of Ananta's account. On Ananta's returning to the Math, after his sickness had subsided, Kunjabihari approached him and pleaded, "Now that Sarasvati Thakur is having difficulty organizing this parikram for want of funds, could you please donate your money," but he refused. Kunjabihari then informed Sarasvati Thakur of the situation who personally

requested Ananta also, but it was to no avail. Finally Sarasvati Thakur asked Ananta, s close friend, Vinoda Bihari brahmacari, who became Keshava Maharaja later on, to try and convince him. Keshava Maharaja sat Ananta down, gave him sweets, patted him on the back and told him that seeing as it was Sarasvati Thakur who was asking for the money, he should please turn it over and not worry, assuring him that he would, somehow or other, pay back everything. Thus, under pressure from all sides, Ananta finally agreed, turning over the money at Radha Kund when the parikram reached that point. Sarasvati Thakur publicly thanked him saying, "He has helped with the financial needs of this parikram in a way which no others, not even big big sannyasis, have been able to do." Approximately thirteen thousand pilgrims and devotees took part in that parikram.

15. Nishakant Sanyal (Bhakti Sudhakara Prabhu)

There was a well-known professor of the prestigious Ravenshaw College (named after one man who was the District Collector in that area. He was an Englishman named Ravenshaw, but by local pronunciation, it has now become Ravinshaw. This Ravenshaw was the same man who worked with Bhaktivinoda Thakur to apprehend the yogi, Bisiksena) living in Cuttack by the name of N.K.Sanyal. He joined the Gaudiya Math in 1925 and was initiated with the name Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu, and was a very surrendered soul. In only eleven years since joining he was considered a paramahansa, and even though a householder, Sarasvati Thakura said, "He is the guru of sannyasis. He is like a clear, white, spotless flower and I am indebted to him. He's such a good soul. He has sacrificed everything for me."

His full salary of eight hundred rupees a month was given, by him, to Sarasvati Thakur, who would then give back two hundred rupees for the

maintenance of his family. Bhaktisudhakara said, "I am a professor but I shall live like a clerk."

In order to compile his PhD thesis on the doctrine of Sri Chaitanya, Sambidananda needed to travel to London, so Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu payed for all this. Sarasvati Thakur was very pleased and tried his best to help, explaining how Sambudananda could spread the message amongst the educated people. However, some of the sannyasis and householders of the Gaudiya Math critisized the idea, saying that Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu was not getting enough money himself so why should his money be given for this purpose. Bhaktisudhakara then retorted, "I have sacrificed everything for my Guru Maharaja. Let my guru take my money and use it as he likes according to his own sweet will. Do not disturb him with your complaints. I give my income to him and what he does with it is up to him."

He wrote lectures for Bon Maharaja in London to deliver. While staying in his college quarters, one night Bhaktisudhakara had a dream of a long, white, ghostly hand stretching out to him. He then awoke, startled, in the middle of the night and immediately ran to Sarasvati Thakur, who was staying some distance away, in the Math. Bhaktisudhakara was very disturbed and scared by this event, but on seeing and hearing Sarasvati Thakur he became pacified.

While driving to Darjeeling, up in the hills, the car stopped at the side of a hill and Sarasvati Thakur asked Bhaktisudhakara, "If I push you off the side of the hill will you agree?" to which he replied, "Yes. If you push me you will save me. There will be no harm." SP was very pleased with this.

17. Jotisekhara Prabhu

Jotisekhara Prabhu's full name is Jotisekhara Das Adhikari

Bhaktisastri Bhaktikamud Upadesak. Bhaktisastri is in reference to him having passed the Bhaktisastri examination. Bhaktikamud and Upadesaka were titles given to him by Sarasvati Thakur. He was also given an asirvada patra (certificate of blessing) by Sarasvati Thakur, which is a certificate written in Sanskrit, given to some disciples each year at Gaura Purnima, but only to those who had satisfied Sarasvati Thakur.

Jotisekhara started living in the Math in 1926, when he was only sixteen years old. His father and mother were also disciples of Sarasvati Thakura's, so he left home with their permission and blessings. He took harernama in 1928 and diksha in 1930, on 25 December, in Jajpur (a famous holy place of Orissa), on the banks of the River Vaitarani. On that same day Sarasvati Thakur came from Calcutta to install the footprints of Lord Chaitanya, near the River Vaitarani.

He was in the Gaudiya Math editorial service, given to him(the service) by Sarasvati Thakura. Most of the time he was at the Math at No.1 Ultadangi(?) Road.

When he was a young boy of around sixteen, before he was initiated, in the Cuttak Math, he came directly to Sarasvati Thakura one day and told him that he wasn't getting any soap for washing his clothes, and that the temple commander would not give him any either. So Sarasvati Thakura told Ananta Vasudeva to see that he got some. Ananta Vasudeva then went downstairs with Jotisekhara (SP's house was on the roof). Ananta Vasudeva said to Jotisekhara, "You have come to the Math not for any material thing; not for wealth, money, fame, not for mukti or bhukti. Why you are asking guru maharaja for soap? It is a very trivial thing. You could have asked me." From upstairs Sarasvati Thakura heard all this and spoke from above to Ananta Vasudeva, not exactly to chastize, but to explain, saying, "He comes to me. He knows me. He loves me, that's why he comes to me. That's alright. Let him come for anything he needs. He doesn't know who he should go to to get soap, so let him come to me."

Sarasvati Thakur noted how Jyotisekhara Prabhu attended all the temple functions, including the morning and evening programmes. Once, when both

Jyotisekhara Prabhu and Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu (Professor N.K.Sanyal) were present, Sarasvati Thakur praised Jyotisekhara Prabhu, saying, "He's a good boy." Upon hearing this Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu replied, "No no. He's not doing anything. He's not so good." He said this because he had brought him to Krsna consciousness and didn't want him to get too proud. It seems that Sarasvati Thakur had said that Jyotisekhara was attending all the temple functions and was busily engaged also in different services from morning to evening.

When only a very young boy, Jotisekhara heard the last (ninth) verse, of Guruvastaka, which explains the importance of the Guruvastakam, saying that anyone who rises early and recites these prayers loudly will get the association of Vrndavan Nath (Lord Sri Krsna). So this made a big impression on his mind. Therefore, even though he was a young boy, around fifteen or sixteen, and still studying at school, he would nevertheless, still come home in the evening from school, and after taking his meal, go to spend the night in the Math, so he could rise early and hear the Guruvastakam. One devotee of the Math complained to Sarasvati Thakura saying, "This boy doesn't do any service in the temple and simply comes at night to sleep, that's all." Sarasvati Thakura said, "Do not disturb him. Let him come." Then Sarasvati Thakura asked Jotisekhara, "Actually, why are you doing this?" Jotisekhara then replied, "I like to hear this Guruvastakam. My house is a little distance from the Math, so I come here to stay at night so as I can rise early and attend the programme." Sarasvati Thakura then spoke again to the devotee who complained and said, "Just see, this is the reason why he's staying. He has very good interest in Krsna consciousness." After this Jotisekhara was given some service: to distribute the Nadia Prakash to the subscribers in Cuttak, which was coming daily from Calcutta by train, and he would distribute in the evening, after his studies. There were ten to twenty subscribers. Sarasvati Thakura told him, "If you make more subscribers and make up to one hundred in Cuttack, I'll buy you a bicycle for your deliveries." (One point to be noted is that Nadia Prakash ran on daily for sixteen years). In Cuttack, Jotisekhara wasn't able to do it, but in

Berhampur, Ganjam District, he got one hundred subscribers involved and Sarasvati Thakura gave him, not only a cycle, but an English made one, which was very expensive at the time.

Another time Sarasvati Thakur called Jyotisekhara Prabhui and said, "You come with me in the car." Bhaktisudhakara Prabhu was there at the time, however, and restrained Jyotisekhara from going, saying, "No no. It is not the proper practice to sit on the same asana as the guru. You should not do this! The guru may call you but you should not go. You can follow him afterwards by rickshaw," which he did.

One day Sarasvati Thakur was going by train from Cuttack to Puri and told Jotisekhara to go ahead and arrange a seat on the platform or waiting room, but by mistake he got one in the lady's waiting room. When Sarasvati Thakur saw this he mildly rebuked him saying, "You should have seen what you were doing."

When he was still only a young boy, Sarasvati Thakur gave him a big gulabjamun, the size of a mango (is this a true size or an exaggeration?). He used to treat Jotisekhara with kind love and affection. After giving him two big gulabjamuns he told him that one was for him and one for the other devotees.

Jotisekhara was once taking the cooking paraphernalia from the Cuttack Math to Puri, for a festival there. When he was returning to Cuttack from Puri, and while getting off the train, he did not bother to get a coolie, in order to save money. As a result the train departed with some of the things still on board. When Sarasvati Thakur found out he said, "Penny wise pound foolish."

SP was always a proof-reader. One time Jotisekhara wrote him a letter, but he wrote the address as "Sri Gauria Math, Bagh Bazaar, Calcutta. The "Baghbazaar he wrote in two words. SP corrected him. First thing is not Bhag, which in Bengali means a tiger. There is not any tiger in the Bagbazaar. Another thing is you spell as one word not Bazaar but the whole thing will be Bagbazaar. In this way he corrected him.

Again in Cuttack, Sarasvati Thakura asked Jotisekhara to make a poem in

Oriya (are you sure it isn't "Oriyan") on the S.B. 11.5.33-34, describing Lord Caitanya: vande mahaprabhu che charanaravindam...(?) That is two slokas from S.B. then SP took that poem to a great Oriyan scholar, Gopal Praharaja, who had made the pasa kosha (dictionary of the Oriya language). The scholar said it was a very good poem and praised it. SP brought it back and told Jotisekhara how the scholar had praised it, and he said, "I knew from the very first day I saw you at Nilima House that you were a writer.

He left the mission in 1946 to live outside.

In the introduction: A note by Bhakti Vikas Swami:

"I've heard him criticized for still living at home and being so old, with his family, and that doubt was also in my mind. At the same time I see he's a very nice devotee. Certainly, very much Krsna conscious. In the Srimad Bhagavatam: Canto 8, Chapter 19, Text 2, in A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada's purport, he says: "... Someone might argue that since Prahlada Maharaja, even though very old, was attached to his family, and specifically to his grandson, Bali Maharaja, how could he be an ideal example? Therefore this verse uses the word prasantah. A devotee is always sober. He is never disturbed by any conditions. Even if a devotee remains in grhastha life and does not renounce material possessions, he should still be understood to be prasanta, sober, because of his pure devotion to the Lord...."(check that this is a correct transcription). Of course, this is not an across-the-board recommendation that everyone just stay at home all their lives. Indeed, the sastra repeatedly stresses the need to renounce family life in old age. However, this purport demonstrates that there may be rare cases where an advanced devotee remains in family life even in old age. It is not for me to judge Jotisekhara Prabhu. I asked Jotisekhara how come he wasn't in this final stage, by going to live in a temple or in Vrndavan, but he said, "Where is the sanga (association)? Wherever you go, the most important

thing is association. So it's very difficult to get that anywhere."

Question from Bhakta John: Surely people will not agree that to stay at home is the solution if it is hard to find association. People who are critical, like myself, will say, "It is still far better to live a secluded life in Vrndavan than to be still at home at such an advanced age. And surely there must be a better alternative than still living at home." Offender that I am, I still have to speak my mind, because I feel that others will also feel the same way and say that it is just an excuse not to leave grhastha life. Please forgive any offenses. There are also so many quotes condemning family life and attachment, and to have a quote such as the one we have put in might seem a little contradictory seeing as the book is about SP, who was very strong on such points. What do you think?

12. A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Jotisekhara Prabhu recalls sometimes seeing Abhayda (during his householder life A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada was known as Abhay Da [Da is an affectionate term also implying respect, meaning "older brother"] or Abhay Babu [Babu implies more respect than affection, and is used for respectable gentleman] amongst the Math members) at the Baghazar Gaudiya Math. Sarasvati Thakur liked him and would be very pleased to see him because he knew that Abhayda liked to preach. On the occasion of the annual varshik•utsav (festival of Janmastami), in Sarasvati Thakura's room, upstairs at the Baghazar Math, Jotisekhara saw Abhayda sitting near his guru•maharaja, who told him to start a magazine in Bengali, giving him the idea: "ghore phirae chala • return back to home `Back To Godhead,' as a title. He also quoted a sloka in sanskrit: "yad gatva nanuvartante, tad dhama paramama mama (Gita 15.6)," on the same topic

and then said, "This idea of going back to Godhead is the basis of the Gaudiya Math."

Abhay was well known in the Math and would come every two or three days when he was in Calcutta, wearing a dhoti, kurta, and chadar.

Around 1928, in Puri, Jotisekhara Prabhu, who was a brahmacari collecting alms, met Abhayda on the sea•shore.

He told him that Sarasvati Thakur was staying at Chatak Parvat(?) at the time and asked him to please come and see him. Abhayda then gave him a three rupee donation for the Math and received a receipt.

Jotisekhara noticed how Abhayda did not talk to Sarasvati Thakur but liked to listen instead to what he had to say.

When he was a young boy, in 1924, having recently joined the mission, Jotisekhara was ordered to go to Calcutta from Puri by Sarasvati Thakur, who wanted him stationed there. He told him to go with Abhayda, who was about to leave for Calcutta, because he was too young and wouldn't know how to get around, especially in a big city like Calcutta.

Jotisekhara recalls seeing Abhayda regularly from 1937•1939 at the Gaudiya Math. Abhayda would always dress very simply and was very jolly, with a smiling appearance. He would go directly and meet with Sarasvati Thakur, who was very merciful to him, or sometimes he'd meet with Ananta Vasudeva, not bothering with anyone else. He never mixed with Kunja Babu. His Godbrothers would criticize him saying, "Who is this householder? He's so bold: Without consulting us he's going directly to mix with Guru Maharaja," but he ignored their remarks, not caring for them.

In 1928, when Jotisekhara was eighteen years old, with many big big leaders present, including Kunja Babu and Ananta Vasudeva, there was a discussion held. Abhayda was also there. Sarasvati Thakur had an idea to make a new magazine in English. They already had the Harmonist magazine, which used highly philosophical, Sanskritized terminology, but he wanted a new magazine in English that would present the Gaudiya Vaishnava teachings in a language suitable for modern man, presented in a way that would be appealing to them. About three suggestions were given for

the title, including: "Universal Brotherhood," "Universal Truth," and "Gaudiya Message." However, it was Abhayda's suggestion of "Back to Godhead" which met with Sarasvati Thakura's great approval. "Yes. This is the right title," he proclaimed joyously, very much appreciating the suggestion. After the meeting, Sarasvati Thakur even delivered a lecture entitled "Back to Home, Back to Godhead." He liked Abhayda because he grasped the same idea

of Krsna consciousness as his guru. This is the observation of Jotisekhara. For three months, in Calcutta, between 1934•35, or there•abouts, Jotisekhara saw Abhayda daily attending the Math and going directly to see Sarasvati Thakur, not mixing with other devotees.

The Harmonist was mostly translations of articles from Sajjana Tosani (a magazine started by Bhaktivinoda Thakura) which were scholarly Bengali articles, so this Back to Godhead magazine was desired by Sarasvati Thakur and very much needed, but the Gaudiya mission didn't even take that work up seriously and nothing ever actually got done, though the idea was given out at the time. SP told Abhay to make BTG. Sometimes he gave him prasada in his, upstairs at the Gaudiya Math... One time, he may have given this to Abhayda. Jotisekhara met Abhayda around 1928 on the sea•shore.

13. Instructions to Devotees

Sarasvati Thakur said that brahmacaris, grhasthas and sannyasis must all observe the morning and evening aratis as they are the most important bhaktyanga (part of devotion. "Even if you happen to miss other bhaktyangas, don't miss this," he would say.

He explained how there were two kinds of separation: the separation of Radha Krsna viccheda (separation) and Gaura Gadadhar viccheda • separation of Gauranga from Gadadhara; Gadadhara from Gauranga. Gaura Gadadhara vichet is even more spiritually important than Radha

Krsna vichet. This was all explained near Cuttack. on the Mahanadi River, called Gaurgadai•ghat (the only place of Gaura Gadadhara vichet), the place where Chaitanya Mahaprabhu sent Gadadhara back when He was leaving Puri one time. Gadadhara gave up his ksetra sannyasa. Gauranga sent Him back. Then He explained that this is considered more important because Radha Krsna lila is vivarta•vilasa, but Gaura Gadadhara lila is vyaitra•vilas(?). This was an esoteric teaching from the instructions of Raya Ramananda, which are the highest teachings of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas. This whole subject is also dealt with in the Chaitanya•charitamrta Anubhasya by Sarasvati Thakur.

He would tell those living in the Math, or the Mathavasis, that at night, as soon as they woke up, they shouldn't go back to sleep again, but get up, even if it was very early like 2.00am, and chant the holy name. Many devotees followed this advice and rose very early to chant. "Chant the nama mahima (glories of the holy name). Practice that. I also do that. Harinam is our life," he would say.

Svadhikananda (first you said Sachidananda. What is his name?) brahmacari, who lived in Mayapur, would tie his shika to a bamboo pole of the house with a string, with the idea that if he was dozing during japa this would keep him awake, because as his head went down he would be jerked awake. Sarasvati Thakur did not approve saying that the chanting has to come from the heart. The brahmacari then relied, "I want to chant one lakh of names daily." "You will not chant one lakh of names because when you chant you must do so clearly. Speak and hear, otherwise your chanting will not be counted. This is not sadhana. Sadhana means you should chant loudly and clearly. We physically don't introduce methods to stay awake, but mentally stay alert and in that way stay awake," he said. In this regard he quoted his own song; "sri dayita das kirtanete asa, kara ucchaihsvare 'harinama•raba', kirtana•prabhava smarane svabhava, se kale bhajan •nirjana sambhava(?)" up to, "sakale vrajantheo jan sangup(?) (the last verse of the song beginning `dusta mana tumi kisera vaisnava," and said: "Sriday kara uccaihsvare • One should chant the name loudly, by which

your mind will be pure and you can chant the name again and again."
Sarasvati Thakur himself chanted slowly and clearly.

He explained that there are two kinds of parampara: Bhagavata and Pancharatriki. Pancharatriki means the line from guru to disciple, or father to son, but the essence may get lost. However, in the Bhagavati parampara, someone may be living at a far place, he may not be formally initiated by a guru, but he may grasp the spirit of Lord Chaitanya. The Pancharatriki parampara will inevitably break down in course of time.

He never liked the devotees sitting in the temple holding their knees cross •legged.

Sarasvati Thakur once said in Calcutta, "Don't do gonatoshan (to satisfy the people • gonatoshan)! Worship Janardana (the maintaner of the people), Krsna. don't try to satisfy the janata • the people in general."

Once, in Puri, in a lecture, he told the story of Ajamila when he was calling the name of Narayan: He first of all meant his son, but only when he thought of Narayan (God) did the Visnuduttas come. Unless our bhava is suddha, Krsna will not come. Simply to call the son's name: Govinda, Visnu, etc., is namabhas.

Mahaprasada, after offering in arcana to the Deity with tulasi and mantra, it is prasada. But Sarasvati Thakur described how in the vision of the uttama adhikari the whole world is prasada: everything is Krna's mercy.

Once, he went to Mayurbhainj district, in Orissa • one place; Kuamara •one harijana, an outcaste, gave yoghurt in a pot. there were twenty to twenty •five devotees with Sarasvati thakur. They told Sarasvati Thakur, "It is given by a harijan so we cannot take it." Sarasvati thahur then quoted (CC.Antya. 4.176 Quote whole verse): "dete bhadra bhadra jnana • what God has sent us without our endeavour is antaryami prerita - sent by the Supersoul. It is more valuable than that which is offered to the Deity with arcana and puja. It is a better type of prasada."

He always took darshan of Jagannatha in Puri from behind the Garuda •stamba, not close to Jagannatha, just like Lord Chaitanya used to do. He used to say, "Let Jagannatha see us. Let Him caste His merciful glance upon

us. He will look at Garuda, because Garuda is His devotee. So at that time He will see us. We will stand behind our guru, Garuda." Many people would go close to Jagannatha, but sarasvati thakur did not like that, saying, "It is better to see patita pavana Jagannatha, the Deity, just at the outside of the temple."

He said, "Don't give maha•prasada to a maha•bhagavata like Vamsi Das Babaji. they are not qualified to give Krsna's mercy to a maha•bhagavata. If a maha•bhagavata asks for maha•prasada then we may give it to him, not otherwise. A mahabhagavata will give Krna's mercy to you."

Once in the Gaudiya Math, masny sannyasis and many grhasthas were there. Abhay Babu was also there. this was when the question was there: Who is greater, a sannyasi or a grhastha?" One time came out in istagosthi.

At the time of Vrndavan parikram, many pilgrims were taking fruits, flowers and twigs as toothbrushes. All these things to use for themselves from the trees. Sarasvati Thakur forbade that saying, "Everything in Vrndavan is meant for Krsna's enjoyment. All the trees are rishis and munis, so don't disturb them." While sitting in a chair in Vrndavan flies came on his body, so the devotees tried to fan them off. However, Sarasvati rthakur said, "No, they are Brijbasis. If they sit on me I'm very fortunate."

One devotee said, "Be merciful to me. I want to see God in this life." Sarasvati Thakur replied, "You will see God. No! God will see you. For your satisfaction you will see God. This is not the process."

One time the devotees were travelling to Kavoori in south India, on the bank of the Godavari River • the place where Chaitanya Mahaprabhu discussed with Ramananda Raya. They were going on the train and even though Sarasvati Thakur had a first class ticket he came in the second class compartment just to see the devotees and give his association. Jotisekhara was leaning against the seat and Sarasvati Thakur saw this and said, "stri sanga kocho • you are associating with women." Jotisekhara was very surprised because he couldn't even see any women around. Sarasvati Thakur then explained: "You are leaning very comfortably against the seat but haram is halam(?). Halam means comfort and haram means something very

abominable. One time on the train travelling, Jotisekhara was in the second-class compartment. Sarasvati thakur then came from the first-class compartment to see his disciples. When he came he saw Jotisekhara Prabhu was sitting and admonished him saying, "stri sanga korcho... • you are associating with women." Jotisekhara was surprised and looked around but there were no women, so Sarasvati Thakur explained that he was sitting with his back against the seat, so that is just like associating with a woman. "Aram (comfort) is haram (abominable.) Comfort is apallable," he said. Sarasvati thakur said, "Don't sit against the wall. That is stri•sanga. That bodily comfort is a kind of pleasure as a stri•sanga is a kind of bodily pleasure." Sarassvati Thakur himself would sit with a very straight back. He would say, "aram (comfort) is haram (something abominable ???.)" so he warned his disciples against subtle sense pleasure in this way. This instruction was especially meant for brahmacaris and sanniyasis.

One night, before Gaura Kisora Das Babaji's appearance festival, a Muslim gang from Mayapur village raided and took a big basket of mangoes. The temple commander or leader, Vinoda Babu, caught one of them and tied him up and produced him before Sarassvati Thakur in the morning. Sarasvati Thakur immediately ordered his release and said, "You have made an offence. They came for prasada. Anything in our store-room may already be considered prasada. Now you bring ten baskets of mangoes personally to their village," which he did, taking all day to do it. He was upset thinking, "I am the temple commander catching a thief in the night and I got this kind of treatment."

He used to say that in the morning you should sing this song: bhajare bhajare amar man ati manda, bhajan vina gati nai re..., a song of Bhaktivinode Thakur, which is a prayer to the wicked mind to worship Radha Krsna. He said you should utter this song and beat your head with shoes, because the mind is so bad. Because the mind is so bad it should be punished. Of course, this is allegorical.

At Bahg Bazaar once, Sarasvati Thakur went to offer pranamas before the Radha Krsna Deity. At that time an outside man was also coming to take

darshan of the Deities. He was standing just where Sarasvati Thakura's head was touching the floor. Seeing this, many devotees called him away and admonished him for breaking the etiquette by standing just next to the guru's head. But then Sarasvati Thakur admonished those devotees saying, "This man is coming from outside. He may not know all the rules. Don't discourage him. Why ten of you all have to shout at once? One of you can go to him personally and tell him. Don't disturb him so much!" He went on further, saying that this was an insult to that man. Similarly it would sometimes happen like this. Just like in all the Gaudiya Math temples, the deity is on a raised platform and the people see the Deity from the ground below. Generally, the rule is that the ordinary people wouldn't come up to onto that raised platform, but see the Deities from a little distance. So, similarly, if someone came close up to the Deity breaking the rule, Sarasvati Thakur said that one person should tell him and not ten or more shouting at him. One person should politely and gently tell him of the rule and tell him to please come down. That system is there that outsiders won't come so near the Deity, because of various reasons: they may not be following principles strictly, their clothes might not be so clean, and just coming from outside might mean their body is not so clean.

One time an old man of around sixty was somewhat chastized by one of the brahmacaris, but Sarasvati thakur said, "No, no. You shouldn't do like that! Anyone over forty, they can't change much, so if you're going to speak to them do it politely and don't chastize them." That brahmachari had chastized him saying, "You are not doing anything for spiritual life. You're not chanting or anything like this." Sarasvati Thakur said, "Beginners after forty, it is very difficult to improve them." However he did say also that those who are older (say over forty) and who are anti-devotional in their attitude, who ask anti-devotional questions and criticize, should be spoken to very strongly. Just like a crocodile: You need a double-barrelled shotgun, or you need to shoot doubly strong to kill a crocodile. In the same way, these old men who are fixed in the anti-devotional life, have to be spoken to very strongly if there is to be any chance of changing their mentality. Unless you

do this then you may simply be wasting time. They may not be able to accept what you have to say."

There was one old man in Cuttack who would come to Sarasvati Thakur for advice. Sarasvati Thakur told his devotees that if someone is past the age of sixty then don't preach to them so much. They can't accept so much different philosophy. Just advise them that now in your old age you chant Hare Krsna that's all You can't change their mind so late in life.

One time Sarasvati Thakur went to the temple of Jagannatha, along with some devotees, for darshan. After darshan he asked the devotees, "Have you seen Jagannatha?" to which they replied, "Yes." "No, no. You cannot see Jagannatha. He will see you. No one can see Jagannatha but He will see you: How you are a devotee, how pure you are, whether your life is good or bad. If you want to see Jagannatha that is for your enjoyment (boga)," he said. He also made a statement after this published in the Gauriya magazine, saying that Jagannatha is drsta, whereas we are drsya. This means He is the Seer and we are the seen.

Sarasvati Thakur said that for most devotees it would take three lifetimes to achieve perfection in Krsna consciousness, meaning most are in the stage of chanting with many aparadhas, so for them to get free from this would take three lifetimes. Those in the stage of namabhasa will take two lifetimes and those in suddhanam will go back in this very life. Those in the nama aparadha stage in this life could progress to the namabhasa stage in the next life: Those in the namabhasa stage in this life could progress to the suddhanama stage in the next life. He said this specifically in reference to those who had accepted a sad guru. "Even if they are aparadhi, if they accept a sad guru and chant the name, it will work and have its effect. They won't have to wait many many lifetimes to become purified," he said. He also said, "I have not come to encourage the asuri varnasrama dharma (Hinduism). Hinduism is only meant for elevation to Svargaloka. they do some punya karma but that punya karma is not our final goal. Our final goal is to go back home, back to Godhead. Hinduism is another obstacle on our path back to Godhead."

He once informed the devotees that Bhaktivinode Thakur was an incarnation of Gadadhar Pandit, and that he (Sarasvati Thakura) was dayita das... • the servant of the servant of that Gadadhar (Radharani). He also said that Gaura Kisora Das Babaji was Rasa Manjari in Krsna lila and Svarupa Damodara in Gaura lila. He told these facts in a lecture at urjavrata time in Vrndavan, but never told of his own svarupa. His disciples ascertained that he was Nayan Manjari and he accepted this. Ananta Vasudeva dreamt that he saw Sartasvati Thakur as Nayan Manjari in Braja. When he told this to Sarasvati thakur he laughed andf accepted it. That day all the devotees knew that his svarupa was none other than Nayan Manjari. Once, at Puri, Bhaktiviveka Bharati Maharaja(?), a sannyaasa disciple of Sarasvati Thakur, asked him what his svarupa was. He replied that the svarupa of a guru like Bhaktivinode Thakur, Gaura Kisora Das Babaji, etc., is just as you see them, that is their svarupa. whatever bodily features they may have or complexion, dress, etc., that is their svarupa. In Krsnaloka they are all sakhis, but here they are Gaura nija-jan • personal associastes of Lord Chaitanya: gaurangera sangi gane, nitya siddha kori mane, se radha madhava antaranga (give translation [see song book. Narottama's song gaurangera duti pada]) When you dsee Rupa Goswami, Sanatana Goswami, and the other devotees of Lord Chaitanya in the male body you should understand thart in Krsnaloka they have female bodies. Whatever form yuou see them in Gaura lila with is their permanent svarupa in Gaura lila. Just as Bhagavan Acharya wwas lame, he's eternally lame. They may have ordinary non•Vaishnava names like Jhoru Thakur, Vasu Ghosh, but these are their eternal names.

Sometimes he would refer to dandavat bhaktas, who were those who would come and offer obeisances, but hat was about as far as their devoti0on went. This meant that they were really "dandavats • just like a stick." Lifeless like sticks. All they couls do was fall down and offer obeisances. He used to say, "dandavat sahasrani kora patra na diyate(?) • You asre offering me thousands of obeisances but cannot even give so much as a leaf in my hand." kora patra means some leafy vegetable. "You couldn't even give me a little

leaf."

He coined one little Sanskrit phrase: "dandavata sahasrani, korapatra na diyate • You will offer thousands of dandavatas (obeisances) but you won't even give me a little leaf in your hand."

Once, in Patna, Sridhar Maharaja and Hayagriva brahmacari (who later became Madhava Maharaja) spoke out against the Rama Krsna mission. when Sarasvati Thakur heard this he correctedf them saying, "It is better to attack their teachings rather than naming them," giving the example that instead of saying directly a cow, you can say a big animal with four legs, a tail and horns, it gives milk, etc.

Jotisekhara once asked Sarasvati Thakur about his japa•mala saying, "If I am on the train and go to the toilet should I put them in my pocket or leave them outside?" Sarasvati Thakur then said he should keep them with him always so as they do not get lost or stolen. The harernama mala received from the guru are just like a Deity and one should keep it very carefully. One devotee went to the toilet in the train and his bead•bag was stolen, because he left it outside. Maybe someone thought there was money inside. He told Sarasvati Thakur who said to take the bead•bag inside the pocket in the bathroom in such circumstances, and later the bag can be washed. N.B: We always take tulasi neck•beads inside the toilet.

Once, one devotee, the editor of Ananda Bazaar Patrika, a daily newspaper of Calcutta, said to him, "I see there are many hyupocrites in your mission. People who are not very sincere. what they say and what they do are not the same. Why do you not put them out? Let them go home and get married or something like that. Why keep them in your Math?" Sarasvati Thakur replied, "Oh editor, you will save me! What is a better place than this Math? Is there any better place to save them? Here they may be good or bad, but if their fortune will allow, they will become good. If not, what can I do? Is there any better place? No there isn't."

Many traditional Vaisnavas in Bengal and Vrndavan emphasized studying many sastras, Sarasvati Thakur never did. Rather, he emphasized sevan mukhe hi jihva do svayam eva spurat yadah (quoted in Bhagavad-gita. 7.3

purport) • by serving Krsna you will be blessed to understand him. Although it must also be noted that many of his disciples were very learned in sastra also. Sarasvati thakur always emphasized, "do something for Krsna. Do something for guru and Deity. Our mission is one of arcana and kirtana, not just arcana. Along with arcana the kirtan must go on." Sometimes if he saw that the arcana was going on without kirtan he would say, "Why is this? The kirtan must go along with the arcana. Just like at the Bhoga arati time there should be Bhoga•arati kirtan as Jiva Goswami taught that without kirtan arcana is not complete."

Sarasvati thakur gave much import to these two slokas: sevan mukhe hi jihvado...(quoted in b.g. 7.3 purport) and nayam atma pravacanena labhyah...(see Vaisnava verse book p.268. S.B. 7.5.32 purport) from the Katha Upanisad, saying that the Absolute Truth cannot be realized by one's own endeavour, by mental speculation or one's brain power. Also the verse mahat krpa vina...(?) •without the blessings of a great devotee no one can achieve devotion, even by performing so many austerities, etc. mahat pador raja visekam, na mahat pador raja visekam (?) S.B. 5.12.12. and 7.5.32.

One time, one devotee was talking with Sarasvati thakur and he yawned. Sarasvati Thakur then told him that when you yawn you should cover your face with a cloth. He said, "Don't show such a big face to sadhus." This was at the time of the "Theistic Exhibition" in Calcutta.

There was a rule that the mathavasis (the brahmacaris) should not stay in one room in one place for more than three days. They couldn't sleep in the same spot for more than three days at a time. Actually, Sarasvati Thakur liked that parties of brahmacaris would go from place to place, not spending very much time in one Math, but go from place to place to preach. In this way always busy. Sarasvati Thakur said, "You should not be mathawa (pretending to be a sadhu in order to live a lazy life)." This is an Oriyan word: mathawa •derived from the word matha •ashrama. Generally a person who lives in an ashrama is considered to be a very lazy person, which Sarasvati Thakur did not want. so the word for idle person in Oriyan is "one who lives in a matha • mathawa." Sarasvati Thakur did not want his

disciples to be such mathawas. He used to call them mathamedhi. Just as there is a grhamedhi (one who is attached to the home for material comfort) there is mathamedhi.

He told one Vaikanasa Maharaja: "At least every day you should go out for half an hour. At least you should go to a minimum of five houses. Don't just sit in the Math all day. Go out and preach. At least the people will see you moving in the town and think something about our mission. Don't sit idly in one place. even if no one gives you anything no harm. At least people will see you."

Ananta Vishvambhar was also in charge of the Bhakti Kuti. That is, the bhajan kutir of Bhaktivinode', in Puri. So one time he was going from the Math at Puri, Purushottama Math, to go to the Bhakti Kutir(?) At that time Sarasvati Thakur was residing in Puri, stayig in his room fascing the sea, which meant that the nice sea breezes were coming into the room. So, as he went out Ananta Vishvambhar saw that the wooden slat which threy used for window coverings (in India they had wooden coverings, one on each side). So he saw that only one side was open and said to Sarassvati thakur, "If you have the whole window open then the breeze will come more and be more pleasant." He replied, "Too much comfort and bodily enjoyment will be detrimental to my bhajan." Anyway Ananta Vishvambhar went and opened the window, but as he went again he saw that Sarasvati thakur had closed it again. Half closed, just sufficient to let a little air and light in, but not more than he needed.

One day, Krsna Babu, who was an Oriyan disciple of Sarasvati Thakur, who had an anti•Bengali feeling, was told by Sarasvati Thakur, "Krsna Babu, do you think if you go to the jungle in Orissa that the Oriyan tigers will not eat you because you are Oriyan...(???) do you think that they will embrace you?" In this way he sarcastically pointed out his fault.

One time, Jotisekhara was to go outside with one sannyasi to collect something, so he told Sarasvati Thakur, "That Maharaja will go outside with me. Is it alright if I accompany him?" Sarasvati Thakur then replied, "Don't say `He will go with me,' but rather, you will go with him. Your position is

inferior. Not that, 'he will go with me,' rather, 'I will go with him'."

...(???) in an istha gosthi(?) when Sarasvati Thakur had called all the brahmacaris and sannyasis together for Hari•katha, a question was raised by Bhaktivivek Bharati Maharaja that you have established so many Mathas with so many Deities. It's such a big institution, how will the management go on? What plan is there for the future. what organization shall we do?" to which he replied, "Yes, now I have thirty Mathas (thirty self•owned built temples, with the remaining thirty•four in rented houses), but I could not get thirty sadhus." This was in 1935. "I could not get thirty sadhus • thirty sacrificed souls, thirty pure souls." (This following section was quite unclear. Sarasvati Thakur said something like, "If I had thirty pure souls I could go and preach throughout the world. One pure soul, if I got he could do great good in this society. there is no need of collecting property...(???)Also no need of collecting funds as we are not mahantas (mahant: institutional head of ashram. Here SP is referring to those mahants who are more interested in collecting funds and living comfortably than in spiritual development)...(????) If we become like mahantas then we will depend on money and it will be really bad." If we become mahanta, people will give us punishment (dwasta?) for our mahantagiri. There is some sloka in this regard referring to us being in the line of Rupa and Sanatana, which Sarasvati Thakur used to quote many times.) (Correct transcription).

Aman(?) Raja of Orissa came to the Saccidananda Math from one state in the western part of Orissa. He asked to hear some kirtan ...(???)Sarasvati Thakur said he has come to hear some sweet sounds ...(???) You should not try to enjoy this sankirtan, the enjoyer is Krsna ...(???) The Raja wanted Ananta Vasudeva to sing, but Sarasvatyi Thakur asked someone who was not such a sweet singer to sing. "We should not sing for any king to satisfy them, but to satisfy God. Every bhajan is meant for God, that should be sung in the temple for God, not made a public performance for everybody to enjoy on the mundane platform. Similarly, the traditional dances the temple dances , are meant for God, not for the general populace, that these dances should not be enacted on a stage. They should be enacted in the temple for God

•Jagannatha."

On the day of Gundica marjan Sarasvati Thakur explained, "It is not simply a matter of cleaning the temple externally, we have to clean internally our hearts." There is that extensive purport in the Chaitanyua•charitamrta by Sarasvati Thakur regarding Gundica marjan, the internal cleansing of the heart • a very important purport.

He used to teach the devotees to recite his own song, Dusta mon Tumi kiser vaishnava ...(???) Sarasvati Thakur (bhajapa bhajare bhajare ban tumeata manda???) He instructed the devotees to sing this song early in the morning, being the equivalent to beating the mind with shoes and he instructed the devotees to always remember this song to help us in dealing with the rascal mind. Sarasvati Thakur said this song Bhajare Bhajare should be sung in front of the Deities daily in the morning. From another song Sarasvati Thakur told, he noted this line: panca putra sange nace raya bhavananda tin putra sange nace sen sivananda. Anyway, the point that they had children, so many children, does not take away from their glories. They are not ordinary material people, Sivananda Sena. Because they are associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Through the idiom of this song he taught all the brahmacaris not to have any feeling against these pure devotees who are householders. Bhaktivinode Thakur says (ajasra smara) • always think of them because they are all pure devotees of the Supreme Lord, so always think of them with great reverence. The purport of this song is that the mind is very bad and we should police it.

One time, in Puri Sarasvati Thakur was coming from the seashore to the Bhakti(?) kutir, which is the cottage of Bhaktivinode Thakura's bhajan. He saw a nalia, which is a caste of people in Puri who take people out in their boats in the sea and they help them or assist them in their sea bathing. Because bathing in the sea in Puri is a religious practice, but you also may need some help because the waves are so strong, so the nalias are there. Sarasvati Thakur said, "We are nalias. The ocean of material existence is much greater than the sea that we are now seeing. Nalias pick people up out of the sea who are drowning, and we also do the same thing. We take people

from the ocean of material existence.

At Chatak Parvat, one area in Puri, where the Purushottama Math is now, there was a disciple of SP's named Sankirtan brahmacari bathing in the sea just at the area of Chatak Parvat, but he was carried out to sea by the strong waves there. One Nalia went out and saved him. Sankirtan brahmacari then told this story to SP who replied very gravely, "You are in the `bhava•sagara • the ocean of material existence.' The guru will save you. If you are sincere, then, just as you have been saved today from the ocean by the Nalia, so the guru will save you from the ocean of material existence."

The following story was told before. Sankirtan brahmacari was saved when drowning in the sea. It seems that the system was that the nalia would take them out in a boat and then let them down and they would hold onto ropes, but he somehow or other couldn't hold onto the rope. He was drowning and the nalia saved him. So he told that story and Sarasvati thakur said, "The guru will save you." He then asked him, "Why have you gone to bathe in the sea?" Sankirtan brahmacari then said, "Well we come to Puri dhama for bathing in the sea." SP said, "This is one kind of or personal enjoyment. It is sufficient that you are walking in Puri dhama, you don't have to bathe in the sea. You can go to the sea and put some water on your head. Honour the sea which is a greatt maha•tirtha at Puri, but don't go to swim in the sea." Sarasvati thakur did not recommend improvement either on the mental or the physical platform, for instance, by becoming a great Sanskrit pandit or by doing physical exercise to become very healthy. He said that we should spend all our time, from morning to evening within the sixty•four items of devotional service in the morning rising early, doing the parikrama of the temple, joining in the kirtan, arcana, seva, all these activities, up untill night.

At Lila kutir, near Haridas' samadhi in Puri, Sarasvati Thakur used to explain the Jaivi dharma to all the devotees at that same kutir in the same place. From 2.00pm • 3.00pm all the grhasthas, brahmacaris and sannyasis would come together to hear him speak on Jaiva dharma - a book by Bhaktivinoda Thakura - there. He considered Jaivi dharma a very important book, and instructed al the devotees to read it from time to time. Sarasvati

Thakur was speaking at this kutir which was a place that they took on rent before they had their own matha. Hired brahmanas were cooking, and not all the time would they have initiated devotees cooking because this time they hired brahmanas. Of course, these were Puri brahmanas so it was somewhat special. For festivals, in different places, they would hire brahmanas for cooking. Sarasvati Thakur would not eat that cooked by such brahmanas. He would have it offered then distributed to the public.

In Mayapur he instructed his preachers that if they went to any place they should stay in a big building and travel in a nice car, or on a big horse. You should not go in a poor manner or in a humble manner. The standard should be high. Don't be misers he said. Spend for preaching and make a big impression. This was at the time when many preachers were gathered in Mayapur and he was sending them out to preach in different places in India. He told the preachers: "You should all have visiting cards, your cloth should be neat and clean.

One sannyasa disciple, Sar Maharaja, went to a professor's house for begging alms. He praised the wife of the professor very much saying, "You are just like Laxmi," and in this way she became very pleased and the professor was very pleased also and gave some alms to Sar Maharaja, who brought these alms to Sarasvati Thakur ...(???) rice, vegetables, and different things. Sarasvati Thakur at this time was staying in Puri. He asked Sar Maharaja where he had got the alms from, and when you went to the professor's house did you speak any Hari katha. When he came to know that he had simply praised the wife without speaking any Hari katha at all he became very disappointed. He said that no offering should be accepted without Hari katha. He said that as a sadhu you should go from door to door and speak the glories of Lord Hari, and then let them give you some madhukari. You should be like a bee taking madhukari. Go door to door to preach. Praise Lord Hari, don't praise the people of the house. Otherwise if you take such offerings that will not be pure. It will not be sattvic and Krsna will not accept it.

Sarasvati Thakur once said that the Math is like a hospital, Harinam is the

medicine, prasada is the diet and those who are staying in the Math they should be doing the work of nursing, not just simply having a joint mess. three things are required: medicine, diet and nursing. In this way he came up with so many novel ideas.

one devotee was dancing in a very strange wild manner. Sarasvati Thakur told him to stop it and not dance in that manner.

He stressed arcana for householders, and would give Deities to them. He never liked tulasi being used as a medicine. For medicine you can take charnamrta, which, according to sastra, can cure all diseases, that's enough. This was his policy. Any more would take that as aparadha, don't think of tulasi as a medicine.

In dealing with his sannyasis and leading devotees, Sarasvati thakur was very strict. He himself, as an ideal acharya, accepted opulence sometimes in preaching, but he was always very strict in his practice of Krsna consciousness and he stood very strongly against apasampradayas. he was very cautious in keeping his leading disciples and sannyasis in line that they not be carried away by their big positions they had, that they not artificially think they were on a very elevated platform, that they not become interested in lobha, puja, patistadi yata upasakha gana (see verse beginning: nisiddha-acara [C.C. Madhya 19.159) There are many stories about how he chastized especially some of his ambitious sannyasis. Jotisekhara observes how nowadays so many things are going on but in Sarasvati Thakura's personal presence he tried to see that their behaviour, the behaviour of the sannyasis was very strict and pure.

At Cuttack Gaudiya Math, at the time of the lecture they have these big rugs, which are spread out for people to sit on. One time, the devotees only spread it out half way so Sarasvati Thakur said, "Well, why not stretch it out full," to which the devotees said, "No, not so many people are coming. Half is sufficient." Sarasvati Thaku then replied, "No. So many gods and goddesses are coming. We must have a place for them to sit: brahma adi deva gane, at Gauranga's arati so many gods and goddesses attend, so make a place for them. Spread it out full. You cannot see who is coming to hear

Bhagavatam."

At Bagbazaar once, Sarasvati Thakur said, "You are hearing my speech and are living in the Math, but there is a gap between us." ie not, "guru •mukha•padma•vakya, cittete koriya aikya • Make the teachings from the lotus mouth of the spiritual maaster one with your heart, and do not desire anything else."

Sarasvati Thakur was once asked by the headmaster of the Thakur Bhaktivinode Institute, Kisori Mohan Bhakti Bandhar(?), "Why so many devotees staying in the Math, give up everything, engage in devotional service, why do they not improve to the advanced stage?" Sarasvati Thakur answered, "They have internal worms. They are being eaten up by worms inside. They are taking food but are not getting nourishment because of worms. they are engaging in devotional service but the advancement is eaten by material desires and secret bad behaviour. So they become weak."

Sarasvati Thakur said, "Don't read the newspaper: nana kotha nana beta... (Prema Bhakti Candrika) There's one song like this. If you see... just see if there's anything necessary for me... not deeply plunging in to it... one or two hours lost. If you read newspapers at night you will see such things in dreams. Generally devotees should not read them."

Those who wanted to study the Vedasa and become big pandits Sarasvati Thakur discouraged saying, "sevan mukhe hi jihvado... • You will understand Krsna by service. By your service God will be merciful to you and you will understand all the conclusions of scripture. Don't waste your time being a pandit. It is like trying to take the torch at night to see the sun." Of course, he wanted his disciples to know sastra, but if anyone had the attitude that let me be a pandit instead of learning and studying in the mood of submissive service, he would think that that was jnana and not bhakti.

"Hear from the lips of a pure devotee. The guru will tell you which books to read, one by one. Those who will not read sastra they will be a sadhu. And on the other hand, if you do not read atall then you'll be a sahajiya. Those who read without the instructiopn of guru, all kinds of different books, they will never get bhakti," he said. So he saw not only what people were reading but

how they were reading. He understood their mood. If they were reading for the purpose of self-purification and preaching, that he accepted.

There was one Sri Bhusan brahmacari, who was in the habit of bathing five times a day, from time to time washing his hands, whenever he went out anywhere he would come back and wash his lower legs and feet. SP wasn't very pleased with this. He said that bathing is not our religion. Chanting the holy name is our religion. Don't waste time. Keep you life very simple and spare time for chanting the holy names. Not spend so much time for bodily maintenance. bathing the body is required but not excessively. So one who keeps clean like that is suitable for archana (Deity worship). so you do the archana.

Once SP was talking to Jotisekhara Prabhu and Jotisekhara was nodding his head as if in agreement, so SP asked him; "Are you simply nodding your head or do you understand actually what I say?" In this way he called Jotisekhara's attention to the fact that he should not just be in agreement with what the guru says, but should actually try to understand what he says also.

In Cuttak, when SP was there, generally, except in the time of public functions, he wouldn't speak in the temple regular daily lecture but some other sannyasi or prominent devotee would. Now, one time, Jotisekhara (when he was 16 or 17 yeasers old) was sitting, playing the mrdanga drum in the Math during the kirtan and he was dozing off. At this time it seemed that SP was coming to give the lecture. So, Kirtan brahmacari, seeing Jotisekhara dozing took the drum from him, thinking that now SP is coming so why should someone be dozing while playing the khol(?) in his presence? SP saw that and asked that brahmacari why he had taken the khol from him. (Of course art that time Jotisekhara hadn't even taken initiation). Kirtan brahmacari then explained "Oh he is dozing." So SP said to Jotisekhara, "Don't doze," and he told that brahmacari, "Don't take service away from someone else. If he is not doing properly you can encourage him and teach and enthuse him, but don't take service away from another!"

One time, in the kirtan, Jotisekhara was ringing the bell loudly during

arati. SP admonished him and said, "You are inattentive. You are not thinking of the kirtan song. You are just intent on ringing the bell loudly," and he quoted, "sankha bhaje ghanta bhaje, madhur madhur madhur bhaje" which means that in the time of Lord Caitanya's arati, the conch and the bell sound very sweet. So he was admonishing Jotisekhara that simply on making a banging sound which wasn't sweet for the Lord.

One time, during the parikram of the Deities (Which they did in every temple and still do today as a daily function). After the arati they would circumambulate the Deities, chanting kirtan. One time, SP noticed one devotee playing the khol who wasn't chanting. It is very common in Bengal and Orissa that the khol player would play very elaborate beats and so would be concentrating very seriously on playing the khol, and therefore he doesn't sing (because it takes a lot of concentration to keep such intricate beats in time). So SP said, "No, the khol player should also sing while he is chanting. He should also chant while playing the mrdanga. Don't just play the mrdanga. You should chant also!"

One time there was a festival at the Bagbazaar Gaudiya Math. One householder sat down to take prasadam, but one brahmacari admonished him that you have only given such and such amount of money, but you have come with all your family members (five or six). SP was present and he told that brahmacari, "Don't count the number of people who come. He may give or not give. Don't worry about that. Don't count. Let all come and take prasadam." This householder and his whole family were all devotees, but he was not a very rich man, so SP admonished that brahmacari. SP considered the position of someone who gave a donation but didn't come to take prasadam less fortunate than one who could not afford much of a donation but could come to take prasadam. Of course, distinction is made between devotees and non-devotees, if they come simply to fill their belly. Of course some ceremony then prasadam is distributed to everyone, but it wasn't a standing rule that anyone and everyone could just come and fill their belly cheaply.

On the other hand, there is a story that occurred in 1933, in the

Purushottama Math. There was an initiated devotee named Manik who was a householder. He lived outside and regularly came to take prasadam. One time SP said to him, "You should not eat prasadam but prasadam should eat you. Don't come here for simply enjoying prasada. At least you should do some service if you are going to take prasada. Why are you coming to take prasada every day?" Instead of thinking of prasada as mercy he saw it as just food, and SP had noted this. What had actually happened was that many people were coming regularly like this to take prasada. Before this there had been two schools of thought amongst the devotees. One was, "I'm not going to give you any prasada. You are not serving here." The other was, "No, no. Let everyone come and take prasada." So the case of Manik(?) was brought to the attention of SP as a kind of test case and this was his reaction.

One time, someone had come late at night, around 10.00pm, to the Math and requested prasada. The devotees who were engaged in the cooking said, "No, no. There is nothing left. It is all finished." SP was chanting japa on the veranda close by and heard all this, so he said, "No, no. Give him some prasada. He has come late at night. Give him some flat-rice (a quick and easily made preparation) or something."

The last time SP left Puri, shortly before his disappearance, after following the kartikka vows there, he was leaving in his car from the Math, when one disciple of his came and said, "What shall I do now that you are leaving." SP said, "Hear the Bhagavat daily in the Math." That was his advice.

SP read both C.C. and C.B. 108 times and told others to do likewise, expecting everyone to do that. Of course, it's doubtful if anyone did, but the idea was meant to read again and again and absorb the mind in Gauranga. Just as Mahaprabhu liked to hear the stories of Dhruve and Prahlada Maharaja. SP said to read C.B. first then C.C., and then S.B. The reason being that C.B is very easy reading for Bengali people because it has no difficult philosophy and is mostly lila. CC is also very attractive with some very difficult sections also. In the Srimad Bhagavat the language is difficult Sanskrit.

Once, when jotisekhara was new in the Math, SP asked him if he was

*reading CB, when he said "No" he told him he should read it early in the morning, before mangalarati, at 5.00am * (Footnote: Jotisekhara said it would be difficult for him to read so early, because he had a bad cough). "Starting from tomorrow, you read from 4.00am •5.00am. Read it clearly and loudly and it will clear any cough in your throat." SP said the CB and CC, even though in Bengali verse, are full of all satiric conclusions, and he recommended them, along with SB (especially the sections on Dhruva Maharaja, Prahlada•charitra(?) the story of Prahlada, and Kapiladeva's instructions). He recommended all of these to be read 100 times.*

He did not recommend reading the gita and SB, but CB, except learned scholars, whom he would recommend to read the gita and SB. For the ordinary Bengali he recommended CB and Krsna Prema Tarangani, a Bengali verse edition of SB by Bhagavatacarya, a disciple of Lord Caitanya.

SP said that there were four books that every Gaudiya Vaishnava should read: Chaitanya Bhagavat, by Vrndavan Das Thakur, Dasa mula siksa by Bhaktivinoda Thakur, Sri Krsna bhajanamrta by Narahari Sarkar and Prema Bhakti Chandrika by Narottama Das Thakur. He said that Chaitanya Bhagavat should be read 100 times. Gaudiya Vaishnava scholars generally consider Chaitanya•charitamrta to be the most important biography of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, even more so than Chaitanya Bhagavat, in as much as it deals with: (a) the philosophy of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in great detail and (b) the highest ecstasies of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, which are referred to only somewhat in Chaitanya Bhagavat. SP himself would generally explain philosophy very deeply, but he said that Chaitanya Bhagavat is more important than Chaitanya•charitamrta for the common man because it is a lila•grantha. Without describing so much about philosophy, it describes the lila of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and is therefore easy for the common man to follow and understand the philosophy, even though SP himself mostly explained philosophy, he said that philosophy is only for the greatly leartned people, and for the common men Chaitanya Bhagavat is more important, so he said, "Read Chaitanya Bhagavat from time to time." If anyone came to him he would ask them if they had read Chaitanya Bhagavat. He often asked

people this, including non-devotees. He recommended that for ordinary people, the first Vaishnava literature they read be Chaitanya Bhagavat. This was of course, because he was preaching mostly in Bengal and Orissa, so this was special advice for them. He recommended to everyone to first read Chaitanya Bhagavat, then Prema Bhakti Chandrika, then Srimad Bhagavatam. He recommended that Prema Bhakti Chandrika be translated and published and distributed in different languages of the world. He said that in Prema Bhakti Chandrika all of the siddhantas of the Goswamis were expressed.

He told the sannyasis and brahmacaris, "Don't keep many books with you. Don't have big big libraries: Just three books. three or four books are sufficient."

Once, in Dhaka, he told Sundarananda Vidyavinoda to give a series of lectures on the Gita in colleges. Although generally he would have people go to the Bhagavatam or Vaishnava literatures immediately, of course the Gita is also a Vaishnava literature that is considered to be for beginners. Those books which deal exclusively with Bhakti and which are not used by other schools as the Gita is; that means the Chaitanya Bhagavat, as we discussed, Prema Bhakti Chandrika, Srimad Bhagavatam. These books Sp recommended people to go to directly. However, we should always remember that Sp is preaching in Orissa and Bengal, where most of the people who came to him already had some background, or at least some understanding of Vaishnava philosophy. His understanding was that the Gita was for the people in varnasrama; karmis, jnanis, yogis; then they may come to Bhakti. But in the case of the people amongst whom he was preaching, he wanted them to take directly to Bhakti (don't get hung up).

Once, at Bagbazaar, Sp saw the devotees sitting for prasada. Kunjada had made a system whereby the diksit (those who had taken diksa) devotees sat in a separate line from those who were adiksit (only Harinama asrit?). Sp said, "Those who are diksit, they are inferior to Harinama asrit?" (Though they were thinking diksit superior). "They don't believe the name and the named are non-different nama namabhina. For them arcana (Deity

worship) is required." He quoted so many things. Lord Caitanya, in the Caitanya Bhagavata, says: *ihē hoite sarvasiddhi hoibe sabara: The Holy name alone can give perfection. diksa purascarya apehsa na hare: (From CC. Madhya 15.10.8. Chanting of the holy name is not dependant on brahminical initiation or anything else. Those who were diksit had been in the matha longer became diksa was awarded after harernama. Therefore, they were thinking themselves superior.*

SP was so strict that Jotisekhara recalled that in the time of SP in the Gaudiya Math they had never seen the Rasa•grantha. That means that the books dealing with the intimate rasa pastimes of Radha and Krsna, such as Gita•Govinda, Govinda•lila•amrta, etc. His rule was not to read rasa •grantha. Even in the Chaitanya•charitamrta there are some sections which describe the feelings of rasa that Radharani is expressing for Krsna. SP said to his disciples, "Don't read this section. It's not for you. You are not at this stage!" Only one or two disciples who had been given Manjari svarup were allowed to read it, but not publicly, only privately to themselves.

Conversation, 24 January, 1977: "My guru maharaja SP used to say that, `When our members become sahajiyas, they will be more dangerous.'" Those who are outside and are sahajiyas, we know their position, they are not following any correct siddhanta or any proper acharya. So we know they are sahajiyas, and we avoid their association. But if someone, in the name of being a follower the proper acharya, if he's also a sahajiya, if our own men become sahajiyas, in the guise of being bona fide followers of a proper acharya, then they are more dangerous, because, in the name of doing the right thing, they will be misleading people into doing the wrong thing.

One Gaudiya Math sannyasi was always preaching to others about hearing nicely while chanting japa. SP remarked, "He himself doesn't hear properly when chanting, but he is preaching to himself." (Question from BH John: Was SP chastizing this devotee or praising his preaching? it's an ambiguous statement) (BVS: Both mildly admonishing and praising).

Sometimes SP would criticize the asrama saying, "Our ashrama is like a joint•mess, a place just for eating and sleeping."

he used to visit his different Mathas, giving a lot of importance to hearing and chanting, but he found many times that the Math members were passing their time idly. SP used to quote from Bhaktivinoda Thakur, "khai daya para cinta nai - simply eating and sleeping, with no spiritual thoughts." (from "Kalyana Kalpataru" by Bhaktivinoda Thakura). He would note that their main activities were cooking, eating and washing the pots, then resting again, getting up, cooking, eating, washing the pots.

Sp put more stress on kirtana, arcana, and seva. To newcomers he stressed, "First of all do sankirtan, chant the holy names."

One brahmachari who worked in the garden as his service was illiterate. SP once asked him "What do you know of spiritual knowledge?" and he replied, "I am hearing you again and again in the class and whatever you are speaking I am trying to understand." SP then asked him to speak something about spiritual knowledge, and even though illiterate, he spoke so many facts about spiritual knowledge, full with realization. SP then said to the devotees present, "This is proof of `sevon mukhe hi jihvadau • one can understand Krsna when he is blessed.'" So, by SP's blessings, even an illiterate man can understand. this brings to mind the verse, "muckham karoti vacalam, pangum langhayate girim yat krpa tam aham vande, sri guroh dina taranam - I offer my obeisances to my guru, the deliverer of the fallen, by whose mercy a lame man can cross a mountain, or a dumb man can recite poetry" SP had asked him, "You just speak something you've learned from me," and he spoke many things. SP said, "Just see. He's not gone through any Vedanta sutra or Puranas, but he knows so many things. He does not know even how to speak Bengali very nicely but he knows so many siddhantas."

Another illiterate devotee, Ghanasyama, SP asked him once, "Say something you have heard from me," and he repeated so many things. SP then said, "just see. Even great pandits cannot understand whaty I am saying, but here he is, illiterate, and he's understading. He is able to say so many things."

One day SP explained the difference between krpa and doya, which both mean "mercy." doya • to see someone in a difficult situation and to give him something, but krpa means ahaitaki, or causeless mercy; ther's no particular

reason why the recipient should get that mercy, but anyway, by the causeless mercy of the Lord or His devotees, even an unworthy or unaspiring candidate is blessed with that mercy, without any condition: "ha ha prabhu nityananda premananda sukhi, krpa balo kana koro ami baro dukhi...(check song book)" from Narottama Das' song. He is praying that Nityananda will give His glance of causeless mercy upon him. That is from the song starting, "Sri Krsna Chaitanya Prabhu doya kora more...." If one can get that mercy then the siddhantas, or the conclusions of devotional service will come to you automatically. And because the great pandits, who have studied the sastra very deeply don't have this krpa, they cannot come to the correct conclusion. Whereas, those who are even illiterate, if they get this krpa, they can explain all the deep meanings of the sastra, even without studying them.

SP did not like devotees or anyone making their own arrangements for comfort and everything else. His motto was "krsnarthe akhila cestitam" • from Bhakti Rasamrta Sindhu, meaning "Everything should be done for the sake of Krsna."

SP himself was the embodiment of this saying, and was always busy in satisfying Krsna in different ways. there were several mottos SP used to quote like this, again and again, which were the guiding principles of his life and those around him. "samsiddhir hari tosanam • the perfection of life is to satisfy Lord Hari," was another and "kirtaniya sada hari," etc.

If SP saw someone doing service in the Math like cleaning, but he wasn't chanting, he'd say, "You should chant when you do this. Always chant the names of Lord Sri Hari."

SP said that three of the ten offences while chanting the holy name were very difficult to give up:

- 1. Committing sins on the strength of the holy name • No. 7*
- 2. Giving up the concept of "I" and "mine" • No. 10.*

"These are possible to give up only by guru krpa," he said.

(Are there 2 or 3) (BVS: Ask Jotisekhara).

One devotee heard SP saying we should cry for Krsna so he told SP he couldn't cry for Krsna. "I don't have that feeling. I tried but I can't cry," he

said. SP then said, "Crying for Krsna is absolutely necessary. If you cannot cry then at least you should cry that you cannot cry."

SP also said that women are on the level of jungle men, or wild people, meaning aborigines. He warned that women generally cannot go to a very high level of consciousness, so he warned that though their words may be sweet, their hearts are very hard. This of course, is from sastra. SP many times warned against association with women. In CB he gave a ten page purport on big sized pages, about the dangers of associating with those who are attached to women. This was the purport to the Bengali verse, "muni gana dustha sanga kori nanandan(?)" In this long purport SP gives so many quotes from scriptures warning about the dangers of associating with women.

In SP's Gaudiya Bhasya commentary, he always discouraged the association of women within the Math also. They could come and visit and take darshan etc., but not intimately mix•up. they should keep away from the place of cooking, because that's the extension of the Deity service: Very strict. (In a footnote here we should note the fact that this is one of the points of contention, even to this day, that the Gaudiya Math, even those few groups somewhat favourable to ISKCON and Prabhupada they stay. Mostly they're all, at least privately, they speak against Prabhupada for allowing so much facility to women within ISKCON. Of course, we understand and accept because we are followers. Also quote Prabhupada's purport: "Fools and rascals don't know what needs to be done to preach in the western countries; all they can do is criticize." (CC Adi 7.38. purport

Of course, even in many Gaudiya Math temples, maybe because they are so short of manpower or whatever, they also have women, at least cutting the vegetables and this and that, and also sometimes cooking, I've seen. Some centres maintain more strict standards than others. they had a division system, where a screen was put so that the women might have been able to see the men but the men could not see the women. When spreading out the carpet to sit on they would not allow the men and women to sit near each other on it.

SP many times quoted the SB verse from the 9th canto, which is also in Manu samhita, matrasva svasi hit travan...(?) • even a learned person shouldn't sit close to his mother, daughter, or sister, because the senses are so strong that they can agitate the mind even of a learned person. (Look this up in sloka index 9th canto - matra svasra SB. 9.19.17).

Once, Jotisekhara was chanting japa on his beads and he asked SP how his mind could be fixed on the name. SP said, "The name is full of all potencies. He is God Himself, so utter loudly and hear simultaneously. If you actually do that, chant and hear, then you will see how you will get the result. You will experience. If you chant and actually hear, it will not take a long time before you become Krsna conscious: `jei nama sei krsna bhaja nistha kari - that name is Krsna. Worship the name with firm faith (from "One hundred and eight names of Krsna" a Bengali poem by Dvija Haridas)" And SP said, "You can't 100,000 names (64 rounds) every day." Jotisekhara said, "How is it possible? We have so many duties. We have to attend the temple functions and go outside for preaching. there's so many things to do." SP then said, "Well at least try to chant 32 rounds (50,000 names) a day." (Question from Bh John: "Is it true that ISKCON's SP said to chant 64 rounds to his first disciples and then brought it down to 32 and then 16 minimum, because devotees said they couldn't manage more, or did he just say 16 from the beginning?)

SP explained that seva (service) and mala (chanting) are non different. "Service to guru is service to Krsna. Even if you do not 64 rounds, if you are fully engaged, that is alright. But your lakhya should be one lakh. Your aim should be to chant one lakh of names. In Bengali lakhya means "aim." A lakhya should be to chant one lakh. And your aim should be also service to Hari, guru and Vaishnavas. And sometimes if you are so busy and have no time to chant on your mala at all in the day, then at night, instead of going to take rest, then you chant. In the daytime you should be busy in service. If you cannot finish your prescribed japa then sleep less and chant. Do not increase your time for sleeping, increase your time for chanting." SP also said that serving Hari, guru and Vaishnavas is more important than chanting 64

rounds. "Unless you do service your so much chanting will be meaningless," he said. SP himself, didn't chant 64 rounds every day, according to Jotisekhara.

Bhaktivinoda's sister, that is the pisima (aunt) of SP, used to live near Bhaktivinoda's house in Swarup Ganj(?) and would sometimes come to see SP. However, SP wasn't very interested and didn't keep connection with relatives, and very much disliked his brahmacaris and sannyasis keeping up their family relationships. "Forget them: Don't remain entangled!" he used to instruct. When a letter came from home to a brahmacari or sannyasi SP would say "This is a letter from maya!" And when the mother and father came looking for their son and the mother was crying, he would say "These are tears of maya!"

"Don't write letters home to your family. That is writing to maya. When you take the red cloth that means you have cut connection with the world. That is the colour of Brahma (brahmajyoti • reddish). You are a brahmacari: Remain spiritual always." Brahme carati iti brahmacarya: Brahmacharya means to remain in brahma (spiritual atmosphere).

There are many big rivers in Bengal, such as the Ganga, Padma, Meghna, Teesta, Brahmaputra, Jamuna, and especially in East Bengal, much of the travel is done by boat. You'll travel from one town or village to another going by steamer or launch, is as common, if not more so than going by bus or train, especially in east Bengal, where there is the Ganga delta and other big rivers. So SP instructed his disciples, as many of them would be out travelling preaching, going by boat. He told them, "When you go on the river you should be respectful to the river. Don't think of them as ordinary rivers: They are all personalities. they're all great devotees. Just as Ganga is a great devotee of the Lord. So, for instance, you shouldn't take any food with you. that may be maha•prasada, but if you leave any remnants, then it becomes your remnants. You cannot keep your remnants on the river. Also, if there is any left•over leaf•plate, anything, you can't throw that in the river. Even if you have to wash your hands, if that is done in the river then that is your remnants being washed in the river. So better you do not eat at all on the boat

as far as possible." In this way, SP was always teaching the finer points of bhakti. He also taught that before entering a holy river for taking bath, you should bow down, offer pranams, take some of the water on your head, and in this way remember that this is not just an ordinary river but a very holy one.

BST: "I'm speaking, you are hearing, but there is a gap between us!" (This statement gives us some hint of how a great Vaishnava preacher, although moving amongst us, apparently as one of us, is always apart from us. SP had many disciples at different levels of spiritual advancement, all committed to following him. Some were apparently advanced and intimate, yet SP himself knew of the great gap between himself and his followers. Even his close associates could not catch up with him. Later, events showed that almost all of his disciples had failed to grasp the essential purpose of his mission. Even those who had some realization of what he wanted (a strong, united preaching movement) were later unable to implement it very effectively (with the obvious exception of Prabhupada ACBSP). This profound statement also gives insight into the "lonely" position of a guru and a sannyasi. Of course, mahabhagavata devotees are never lonely, because they are fixed in their relationship with Krsna. But in this world there may be few or no people for them to relate with on an equal, friendly platform.

Sarasvati Thakura's sannyasis would also sometimes give alms to the poor, considering them antaryami prerita - sent by the Supersoul.

(For text: SP always quoting slokas and lines from Bengali Vaisnava poems and songs and explaining them).

At Chotimangalpura, the ancestral property of Bhaktivinoda Thakura, it was divided into three parts, according to his will: one part going to Sarasvati Thakura, one part to Lalita Prasada, and the other part to the rest of the

brothers. Sarasvati Thakura visited Chotimangalpura many times.

While still living in Bhaktivinoda Thakura's house and before he started the Caitanya Math, Sarasvati Thakura spent some months living in Radha•Ramana•Gera in Vrndavan (the living quarters for the families of the priests engaged in worshipping the prominent Deities of Vrndavan are called "Gera." Hence the names Radha•Ramana•Gera, Madan•Mohan Gera, etc.). This was because Bhaktivinoda Thakura travelled extensively with several of the goswamis from Radha•Ramana•Gera, including Madhusudana Goswami. Bhaktivinoda Thakura, along with Bimala Prasad, travelled with these goswamis all over North India, holding public meetings to present the Vaisnava siddhanta and giving lectures in various places, defeating groups like the Brahma samaja. They also spoke against the Arya Samaja idea, which states that Caitanya Mahaprabhu was an ordinary man. Bhaktivinoda Thakura would often go on horseback from place to place for preaching also.

For footnote: Avadhinath Tagore

A well-known intellectual. An early spokesman against British rule, and the father of several gifted sons, of who the poet Ravindranath Tagore is most famous. A founder of the Brahmo Samaj (who was?) (a society which became prominent for some time by attempting to mix Hinduism and Christianity).

Sarasvati Thakur used to have for not making paron (breaking fast within time) at the correct time on dvadasi day, that you should fast also on that day.

(One thing we have to get in either Bengali or Oriyan or even English is the twelve questions put to Sarasvati Thakur and others by Gandhi and his replies.

In Madras, SP noted that the ladies of one particular caste always used to tie their saris with a kach just as a brahmacari does with his dhoti, leaving a little bit tucked in the back. So the actual Vedic method for wearing a sari with the kutch is how they dressed. SP said to the devotees who were a little bit surprised to see the women wearing saris like this that this was the Vedic method. He also noted that the brahmana thread was not previously used, but only the dhoti and chadaar, but later, because people might not wear the chadaar, they would wear the uparita to signify they had an upper cloth. uparita means brahmian thread, it doesn't mean a piece of thread, but means going close to the guru). In South India, at least at that time, you could see who was a brahmana because they would only wear a dhoti and chadaar, the chadaar being folded on their shoulders, with the rest of the chest and back bare, as well as the arms, and the sacred thread(?) SO SP explained these things about the brahmana dress of South India to his disciples when he was visiting Madras. This just shows his vast scope of sastric and Vedic cultural knowledge.

He used to say that anyone who was not taking urad dahl, must be taking fish secretly. This was because, when urad dahl is cooked in certain ways, especially if it's made into bora a kind of fried preparation, it tastes similar to fish, and the Bengalis are very fond of fish. SO, most of the devotees who had joined the Math must have been fish-eaters before they joined. So he said this in a kind of joking manner: "Anyone who's not eating urad dahl, who doesn't like it, must be eating fish secretly."

18. Disappearance Pastimes (Disc 2).

At the time of his departure from this world he recited Bhaktivinode Thakura's Bengakli verse version of ceto darpanam marjanam verse, as if to

instruct his disciples that, "I have brought you such a great thing which was meant for your purification but you have not become purified. And this second verse: (Said whole Bangla Siksastaka); amo tu daive name na hoy laruch(?) • I didn't get any taste for the holy name. He banged his head while saying this. Basnging his head means he struck his own head with his hand. He quoted Bhaktivinoda's Bengali verse rendition of Siksamrta 2.

16. Deity Worship , etc (Disc 2)

Once Sarasvati Thakur described that in arati you should see the Deity, hear the arati song, and, according to the song, you should see the arati. This means that just like we have "Jaya jaya Gauracandra aratike sobha, etc., so when that line is sung, seeing Lord Chaitanya, thinking how Lord Chaitanya arati is going on, on the bank of the Janavi, attracting the minds of all the universe, like this line by line you should meditate on the song and the Deity.

20. Mayapur (Disc 2)

In Mayapur, on Gaura purnima, he had a professional drama group perform some drama, just like popular Bengali religious dramas: Harischandra, and Nimai Sannyasa (names of two popular dramas) to attract people to come to mayapur, but he said that the devotees shouldn't see this. The idea was that at the time Mayapur wasn't so well known, so just to attract people to come and establish Mayapur as a place of pilgrimage he did this, but he didn't approve of it intinsically. That's why he said the devotees shouldn't see it. He called the brahmacaris and told them: "This is not for you to see. It is only an attraction for the public."

34. Fighting in the Math (Disc 2)

Concerning the mission, he said, "If there is no good soul in the mission I don't want it. I don't want bad `cows' in the mission. If there are some bad `cows' who harm others I don't like them, and there is no need for them. One `cow' is sufficient if it is a good one: `dusta goru chaye khali gohal bhalo • Better to have an empty cowshed than a troublesome cow'. We want living source not so-called sannyasis. If our mission will not flourish with living source then stone and brick we'll distribute to the poor. Let out the temple to the poor. Rent it out. Distribute the bricks for one rupee each!" This was said in Baghbazar when many devotees were fighting amongst themselves. "koriachalam sannyasi hoy...(???) • I've made them sannyasis but they've simply become sense enjoyers," he would say many times. (See above).

After 1933, he travelled throughout India and preached extensively but only made a few new temples. At this time his disciples began quarreling amongst themselves, so he tried to pacify them and rectify the situation. He also wrote articles like: "bhalo ami•boro ami • Don't be boro (big), be bhalo (good) Vani (instruction) O Vapu (Personal body of the guru?)" Vani O Vapu: A dissertation on the relative importance of (a) service to the instruction of the guru and personal service to the guru; and, (b) preaching vs. fund-raising, organization, and management.

12. Book Production, distribution, etc. (Disc 2).

Sarasvati Thakur would say, "I don't read the book, I read the author. I first see the author to see if he's authentic or not. I am a proof•reader. I always see what is right and what is wrong. My father trained me in proof•reading, but I am not only a proof•reader of the press I am a proof•reader of the

world. I proof•read men: I see their faults and try to correct them. I am a proof•reader of religion also. I have appeared in karkata•lagna; so whenever I see anything undevidotional I will act like a karkata (a crab). If I see any so •called devotion which is not actually in the true unalloyed spirit, I shall pierce it!"

SP was publishing magazines in various language, including: English, Assamese, Hindi, Bengali, Oriyan, and one Bengali daily • Nadia Prakash. Sometimes people would not send in their subscriptions and the devotees would complain to SP, asking whether to stop supplying them or not. He would then become very angry and ask them, "Are you commercially hired fools? No! Supply them free."

39. Health (disc 2)

His general health was good, although he would sometimes fall sick a little bit now and hten, but on the whole there was no particular sickness.

History of the Gaudiya Math

*Even though so many of Sarasvati Thakura's disciples split away from the original mission and made their own mission, still none of them ever became sahajiyas, mayavadis, or anything like that. None of them ever decried Sarasvati Thakura (Question from Bh John: "What about Sundarananda?")
Note: For history of the Gaudiya Math. Keep in a separate file.*

4. Preaching in India (disc 2)

Sarasvati Thakur related a story on the train once to the devotees: There was once a mayavadi, or a brahma upasaka • one who worships the impersonal brahmana as the Absolute. He gave a loan to a man but could not recover that loan, despite requesting him many times. Therefore he took him to court. This is a story from Madras. In the court the man who took the money said, "You are brahma, I am brahma. What is the difference, money is with brahma?"

Different sampradayas such as ramanuja and Madhva, present Vaishnavism differently. Sarasvati thakur explained that just as there are many sweets like rasgulla, sweet-rice, laddhu, etc. But the difference in Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's cult is that He gave sweets full of vitamins. Just as Radha gave Krsna the best sweets, full of vitamins, and also the most palatable.

*In Bombay, a man who had no son worshipped Kartikkeya. When a son was born he did Kartikkeya puja with very great pomp, but after one year that son died, so the man destroyed his deity of Kartikkeya. Sarasvati Thakur heard about this and commented: "This is just like the Satya Narayana puja. You accept Satya Narayana if he gives you something, but if you don't get something then you call him mithya Narayana. Don't make God your order supplier. Become the servant of God." *Footnote: Worship of Visnu as Satya Narayana is recommended in the Puranas for those desiring material boons. Satya means true, and mithya means false.*

Dandapani Prabhu remembers that on Gaura purnima, at the Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha (universal conference of devotees, mentioned by Jiva Goswami in his writings, and actually organised by Sarasvati Thakura), Sarasvati Thakur and other sannyasis would speak. Sarasvati Thakur would repeatedly talk on acintya bheda abheda tattva.

Once, in Baleshvar, Orissa, a yatra achatra(?) group invited him to attend their performance that evening, but he didn't go. He said, "We don't want yatra Chaitanya. We want real Chaitanya."

On the seashore in Puri one pandit asked, "Why are you chanting harinam so much, one lakh plus every day?" Sarasvati thakur then gave the example

of the student writing a,b,c, as a young child, and when quite some years older, also doing geometry. The grandmother sees in the geometrtyequation, a,b,c, "Oh, you're still doing the same thing when you were five years old. Now you're fifteen and still dfoing a,b,c." She doesn't understand how it appears to be the same thing as when he was ve3ry young, but actually he's advanced so much with a scholarship. This high•level post•graduate religion is chanting Hare Krsna. You do not understasnd that. You chant the names of your children every day and don't get tired, so when we chant the names of Krsna out of love we should not be tired. that pandit was thinking harinam wa a very basic practice, not for advanced people. "nama gane sada ruci • we want to chant more and more."

In 1932, a few college students came to Baghbazaar Gaudiya Math. They said to Sarasvati Thakur, "We are doing sin. We know it is not good but commit sinn again and again. We commit and again we repent. Why are we doing like this from time to time?" Sarasvati Thakur then replied, "It is hrdaya daurbalyam •weakness of the heart. Your conscience is not so strong. Your discrimination is not so strong, therefore you are committing sins from time to time. Whenever you mix with a Krsna conscious sadhu he's influence will be injected into you. At that time the heart will be purified. Alone you cannot overcome sin. By sadhu sanga, by sadhu krpa you can overcome it. Sadhu sanga is absolutely necessary to overcome sin; alone you cannot do."

BHAKTISIDDHANTA PART 2

4. Preaching in India

In those early days, BBP and others used to preach by walking from village to village between Krishnanagar and Calcutta. They would beg a little rice and eat it with wild spinach. SP started his mission with practically no funds. Later, when the GM was established at Bagbazar, it became fantastically prosperous. Huge funds were coming in, wonderful festivals were held, books were printed, many devotees joined, were maintained and went out for preaching.

The Gaudiya Math was preaching up a storm, with sannyasis going here and there, place to place. as a result, so many brahmacaris joined.

In the early days of the GM the financial condition was very poor, but SP never worried about money. Later, the preaching activities of the GM expanded greatly and much money came. SP seemed to have a mystic power: whenever money was needed for a project it would come, although no-one could foresee where it would come from.

Once, SP said, "Now we have defeated all the apasiddhantas (bogus philosophies) of the apasampradayas (bogus sampradayas). Now we should come to the conclusion of our siddhanta (philosophy) and spread the chanting of the holy names widely."

So-called educated people would sometimes come to challenge SP: "Why are you preaching? What is the use? Your ideas are wrong!" Once, a group of about a dozen university professors came to Bagbazar Gaudiya Math, wanting to challenge. SP said, "Whatever questions you put I am prepared to answer, but first you must listen to me speak for at least one hour, without interrupting." They all agreed. SP then spoke for one and half hours continuously. He conclusively covered the whole scope of Vaisnava philosophy, extensively quoting from sastra and from the acaryas. By the time he had finished, the professors found that all their questions were answered. They then left without saying anything more, astonished at the depth of SP's learning.

When Sarasvati Thakura went outside for preaching, especially in the villages, throngs of people would converge on him, wanting to touch his feet. The devotees would form a ring around him to prevent the people jostling him or touching his feet. In their excitement the villagers would usually forget the correct protocol, in their eagerness to get the darshan and dust of a great devotee. They would sometimes become almost wild in their excitement, so the devotees would protect Sarasvati Thakura by forming a ring around him. Generally Sarasvati Thakura preferred preaching to educated people in towns rather than in villages. However, then, as now, village people in India tended to be more religious and enthusiastic to receive sadhus. They could not understand his scholarly speeches, but were simply happy to have the darshan of such a great personality.

Sarasvati Thakura said, "There are sixty theories I do not like in India," and

he then gave a list of sixty prominent theories at that time. He wrote an article, "Sampradayik Samanyata" in Bastam Parliament, which used the idea of a court to test all these different theories. There was the defendant and there was the pleader? He gave Manu and Vyasa the roles of Chief Justices, and Smarta Raghunandana was the opposition pleader, etc.

He used to read the newspaper everyday and would sometimes quote some incident from it in his preaching.

Sarasvati Thakura was never fond of lonely places, and always liked to be talking to people about Krsna, being the ideal of a gosthyanandi.

He would travel, along with his sanniyasis and senior devotees, from place to place, giving highly learned discourses on subjects with titles such as "Sri Bhasya", and "Anu Bhasya", "Acintya bheda abheda tattva and visistadvaita", "Srimad Bhagavatam and Mayavada", "Shridhar Swami and Mayavada", etc.

He didn't like that devotees would spend a long time in Deity worship and said, "Do it, but also go outside to meet others for preaching." He didn't like that they would be in the temple all the time. His aim was to see everyone go out and preach, which he was very interested in. Because they had many devotees going daily door to door, gradually many gentlemen accepted the doctrine propogated by them. Sarasvati Thakura would say that it is our duty to knock on every door. "They may or may not like to hear, but it is our duty to call on them and speak the message of Lord Caitanya," he would say.

Sarasvati Thakura was fond of speaking to the educated class of people. He didn't generally speak in mass meetings of less-educated people, but was very fond of distributing prasadam to village people and such types. The Gaudiya Math would arrange some prasadam distribution, and he would go amongst the people when they were taking prasadam and say, "Oh, are you taking prasadam. Have you taken to your satisfaction? Are you getting enough? Is it cooked nicely? Are you enjoying nicely? etc." Sometimes he would also lecture amongst the masses, but his language was not understandable by them. It was an unusual language and no one else spoke in such a manner. Only those who became his disiples picked it up, but otherwise, his style of speaking was so scholarly and at the same time had such a powerful transcendental message. No one ever spoke the way he did.

The Jata Gosais and Brijbasis had the practice of giving manjari svarupa and

a manjari name at the time of initiation. Form the very beginning, their initiates would claim to have understood their position as a manjari (intimate gopi assistant of Srimati Radharani). Sarasvati Thakura did not approve of such a process and would say, "First chant the name of Gauranga. After getting the mercy of Lord Caitanya there will be anartha nivritti. Then there is the possibility of artha pravriti. Anartha nivritti means to get rid of all the bad things in the heart, and artha pravriti means to enter into, or develop ones actual goal of life. Those who do not obey Caitanya Mahaprabhu, their claims of being manjaris and their worship of Radharani is all false." He wrote "Prakrta Rasa Satadusani - One hundred faults of the prakrta sahajiyas".

Sarasvati Thakura once challenged a Jata Gosai, who was coming from the bazaar holding a fish: "You are a guru - a Goswami; how can you take fish!" The man then replied, "This is Ganga phal (fruit of the Ganga)." Sarasvati Thakura later commented on this, saying, "They are heartless creatures. They have got many disciples. They are all eating fish - Ganga phal."

During Kartikka, Sarasvati Thakura went to Radha Kund, where he stayed for some days, giving classes. In the beginning babajis were coming. Maybe they thought that here was such a famous devotee of Krsna, surely at Radha kund he's going to speak on some highly exalted subject matter like Radha Krsna and the gopis, which they all liked to hear.

(N.B: B.V.Swami: Another example of SP's almost wanting to cause controversy. Just deliberately "going-against-the-grain". Never plying along with anyone's idea of what Krsna consciousness was according to themselves, but always presenting Krsna consciousness as it is, according to himself, according to the acharya. He was giving classes on the Upanishads. Imagine how sensational this was! No one would think at Radha kund to give a class on the Upanisads).

The babajis stopped coming, saying, "Oh they're jnanis, not bhaktas," because generally the jnanis prefer the Upanisads.

(Why did Sarasvati Thakura do this? It is very difficult to understand the mind of an acharya, but we can venture the following explanations:

- 1. He was demonstrating that we have to understand the science of Krsna first. We can't just jump up to Radha Krsna lila.*
- 2. He didn't want to indulge the babajis, who might have wanted to enjoy for*

their own sense gratification, hearing Radha Krsna lila. There are so many bogus speakers on Radha Krsna lila who speak with a lot of thrills and frills and false tears, and they would have compared how much of a show he put on compared to others. By speaking on the Upanisads he also knew that it would have gotten rid of these imitation class babajis. Anyway, an acharya is independant and can do and say as he likes. Whatever he does we must understand is for the welfare of others, enacted in perfect coordination with the desire of Krsna.

Sarasvati Thakura stood against the saktas, the worshippers of Kali and Durga. In 1934, on the day of Kali-puja, he went to Dakhineshvar, on the outskirts of Calcutta, where there is a famous Kali temple, and told the people there not to do bali-dhan (Kali puja offering of goats and other animals for sacrifice). As a result, many temples gradually gave up doing this bali-dhan(?), because many people, with the exception of the priests, appreciated Sarasvati Thakura's full explanation of why this should not be done. He explained that a Vaishnava is a real sakta because he knows who is sakti and who is saktiman.

One time Sarasvati Thakura came to Vrndavan in his very nice "Ambassador" car, with a driver and assisants (Piyari brahmacari and Krsnananda brahmacari). The two brahmacaris were dressed in three-piece suits, and Mocha Singh was by his side, dressed very luxuriously, and brandishing a gun. The Brajabasis said, "This is not the proper way to come to Vrndavan. You are spoiling the spiritul atmosphere!" Sarasvati Thakura then replied, "You are all imitating Rupa Goswami. I have not come to imitate him, but to establish his actual mission. I have come to re-establish the spiritual atmosphere which has been disturbed by the false imitators."

For preaching, Sarasvati Thakura would sometimes wear shoes, coats, etc., and had servants, a watchman, a car, etc. The Jata Gosais often critisized him for this, but they were adhyakikata (seeing by the eyes only). A sadhu is adhoksaja (not understandable by material eyes), but the critisizer is adhyakikata (seeing through worldly vision). In Srivas Angan, Sarasvati Thakura cited some examples to explain this point: "Srivas, Srinidhi, Sripati, and Sriram - these were four brothers. Malini was the wife of Srivas, whose aunt was always critisizing Lord Caitanya, saying, 'He's coming here everyday with His kirtan - it is not required.' One day, Lord Caitanya told Srivas, "Everyone here is not in

good spirits, therefore I cannot chant." Srivas then found his aunt, hiding under a rice duli (basket?), so he pulled her out by the hair and threw her out." (From Caitanya Bhagavata).

"Vasudeva told Kamsa, 'I had a girl child,' so he was lying for the sake of Krsna. The moralist will call Vasudeva a liar, but the moralist and the criticizer cannot understand the sadhu."

"One time, a brahmacari came to Srivas angan, and Lord Caitanya asked Srivas who he was. Srivas said that he was a pure brahmacari, who eats only fruits and milk. He is a brahmacari from birth and is very pure. Sri Caitanya said 'Drive him away. Just taking milk doesn't make one a brahmacari. He is a moralist, but he is an atheist.' These were some examples that Sarasvati Thakura gave, and can be found in his boktritabali (collected lectures).

In Vrndavan Sarasvati Thakura liked to speak of Gauranga and in Navadvip about Krsna (Vrndavan lila), but during urjavrata, wherever he was, he spoke mostly of Radha.

6/22/70 Prabhupad Letter: "One of our Godbrothers was chanting in a solitary place without any responsibility for preaching work, and my spiritual master was not very satisfied with him."

On Ekadasi, some devotees remained in the Math, fasting, but one sannyasi, Ashram Maharaja, took Ekadasi prasadam and went out preaching. Sarasvati Thakura commented on this, saying, "He has understood the principle of the Gaudiya Math."

A magistrate came to the Gaudiya Math and said, "You go and preach in the hilly places and convert the jungle tribes to Hinduism and Vaishnavism." Sarasvati Thakura replied, "Dictating or commanding to forcefully convert others is not our process. To turn a Christian into a Hindu, or a Hindu into Christian is not our goal. Everyone is the son of God, so we should explain to them their actual position, or svarupa - 'jivera svarupa haya krsner nitya dasa' (give quote from Caitanya-caritamrta. Madhya-lila. 20.108) We should explain to them about the soul, not try to convert a Christian to a Hindu or vice versa. We are not preaching in this spirit. We are concerned with the soul and not with any sectarian matter. The Arya samaj, they are trying to make Hindus out of Christians, not us." He was then asked, "Why do you preach to scholars and in Universities?" to which he answered, "If we go to ordinary people then people

will say this is choba lokera dharma(?) this is religion for the small people, or the low classes, unimportant people - 'yad yad acarati stresthas' (gita 3.21). We should preach to the leaders and others will follow."

Once, Sarasvati Thakura was invited to speak at a Rama temple in Puri. There was a Ramanandi sannyasi (follower of one Ramananda, who started this apasampradaya as an offshoot from the Sri [Ramanuja] sampradaya. Ramanandis have been highly influential on the religious culture of the Hindi speaking area of North India. All Ramanandis, although externally appearing to be devotees, are actually Mayavadis. They are supposed to be Ram bhaktas, but their ultimate goal is to become one with Ram) living there and Sarasvati Thakura had some discussion with him. This sannyasi said Ram was greater than Krsna, as He was more moral and ethical. Sarasvati Thakura replied, "Krsna is the avatari, the source of all other incarnations." When Sarasvati Thakura delved more deeply into his philosophical concepts he found him to be not a Vaishnava but a Mayavadi, wanting to become one with Ram.

One mayavadi sannyasi came and put some questions to Sarasvati Thakura, who replied, "triputivinasa - you do not believe in the three things: the Seer (drsta), the seen (drsya), and seeing (darshan). Also, you do not accept bhakta, bhakti, bhagavan, vakta (speaker), srota (hearer), and bhasa (speech). So why are you asking me questions if you don't believe that there is a speaker, a hearer, and the subject matter? It is outside your theory, but we say 'Suka uvaca', 'Pariksit uvaca'. It is in our line."

When meeting with a sadhu, Sarasvati Thakura would generally ask him what his parampara was, and if not in a bona fide one, didn't like to discuss with him. He wouldn't take prasada at such a place either where there was no bona fide sadhu.

One headmaster came to Sarasvati Thakura in Mayapur once, and told him, "You are talking very great things, but we are now in a hellish condition. Please give us a simple process which we can easily follow. All this giving up of fish and flesh is very difficult for us. We are conditioned souls." Sarasvati Thakura then said, "Yes, you are in the well; but you should come out of the well, I should not go into the well. Do not say that it should be so easy and simple. You come to me. I should not go down - you should come up. You stretch up your hand and I'll pull you up. Do not try to pull me down to hell. We

cannot give up our essential practises and allow you to eat fish and flesh. Why should we go to hell? You come up."

On one occasion Sarasvati Thakura had arranged a meeting in the temple and had chairs set up in the Nath Mandir. This was against all rules, as chairs weren't allowed in the Nath Mandir, but for the preaching function he arranged it like that.

Some gentlemen were coming wearing trousers and shirts, so it would be difficult for them to sit, so he arranged chairs. The idea of not having chairs is so as your legs are not stretched out in front of the Deity. That is against the rules. But Sarasvati Thakura thought that we have to find a suitable means so that they could hear and be benefitted. (This is the consideration of niyamagraha [for that we can consult N.O.I. verse 3]). Also, at this meeting (I think it must be Bagbazaar Gaudiya Math), Sarasvati Thakura himself sat on a chair in front of a table, in front of the Deities.

The district judge in Cuttack asked Sarasvati Thakura why he was arranging such a nice temple in the city. "Why don't you concentrate on preaching in the backward areas, in the hill areas of Orissa?" he said. "Generally the rishis and munis make their asramas in the forests, why don't you? They would have a simple arrangement for bhajan. why are you hear in the city with such a nicely built temple with all facilities?" he further enquired. Sarasvati Thakura replied, "We are not the bhajananandi sadhu. We should use all modern facilities and technological advantages and preach amongst the educated people door to door. We should preach first of all to the merchants, rich men, educated men. If we can convince them, all the other people, the less educated, the poor class, they will automatically follow. Now, traditionally, sadhus don't like to go to rich men or kings, but our duty should be that to get to these people. The time will come when all of India will follow my message. If we simply go to the hills for our own bhajan, or if we simply go amongst the less-educated classes, our preaching will not be as effective. We have to see how people will be benefitted. That is our thought."

In Orissa, Sarasvati Thakura mostly lectured in Bengali and occasionally in Oriyan, but his Oriyan was not so good.

In Cuttak there is a place called Mitra Kuti(?) a residential house where Sarasvati Thakura stayed and spoke Hari katha. One Munshi (judicial officer)

caused a disturbance with a question in the middle of the talk, to which Sarasvati Thakura told him, "Please don't disturb now. I'll answer your question after the lecture." After the lecture was over Sarasvati Thakura requested him, "Now please ask your question," to which the Munshi said he had forgotten it. Sarasvati Thakura then said, chastizingly, "Questions are not meant to be asked out of curiosity, but are meant to be serious! If the question was serious then you would not have forgotten it." Then he gave the example of Tapana Misra, who approached Caitanya Mahaprabhu asking, "sadhya sadhanath tapta(?) (I don't know) (sadhya sadhana tapta means the goal of life and how to attain it).*

Once, there was an article in an English newspaper entitled "Math O Ashrama", which said that one should be a grhastha before taking sannyasa. Sarasvati Thakura, who was staying in Cuttack at the time, heard of this article and said that it was asastriya (against the scriptures) and that the sastras say that whenever the consciousness is there you can take sannyasa. He became like fire and told Jotisekhara to write an article against this, in the Paramartha (the Gaudiya Math Oriya magazine). "Why can't a brahmacari take sannyasa? Why must he be a grhastha? A brahmacari must be a sannyasi!" he retorted.

Once, at an arranged public programme in Cuttack, when the king of Orissa came, Sarasvati Thakura asked Ananta Vasudeva to sing "Sri Vraja-dhama-mahimamrta (The Nectarean Glories of Vraja-dhama)" which describes Vrndavan, Radha kund, Govardhan hill, etc. Sarasvati Thakura later explained these topics in his room.

In Puri, a man came to Sarasvati Thakura and said, "When you are preaching, when you are speaking to me, please give examples from the Vedas, not the Puranas, not from Caitanya Bhagavata, not from all these different books." Sarasvati Thakura then said, "Why? The Puranas are more essential than the Vedas. When the Vedas do not explain a point, the Puranas will explain. Without the Puranas the Vedas have no value. You must accept the Puranas. Purana means `that which makes complete.'" This gentleman accepted this version.

In Calcutta one pandit came and said to Sarasvati Thakura that many great personalities in the Gaudiya Vaisnava tradition, such as Chandidas, Jayadeva, Vidyapati, and even Lord Nityananda, had married. According to the sahajiyas,

Caitanya Mahaprabhu mixed with Shati(?) (the daughter-in-law of Sarvabhauma), according to the sahajiyas. Even Rupa and Sanatana had women, according to sahajiya books (which attempt to justify the mixing of sahajiyas with women). Sarasvati Thakura replied to this saying, "It is quite impossible. In the lives of the acaryas they are very pure. They do not keep any women with them, so you are telling a lie." Many men of Bengal, many sahajiyas, write books with these things written. It is a wrong opinion, with no evidence. They may concoct some "evidence" but it is all simply enviousness, in order to justify their sexual activities in the garb of devotees. (Lord Nityananda and many others did have wives, but they did not have mundane lusty sexual affairs with them. The sahajiyas claims that Lord Caitanya, Rupa, Sanatana, and others, mixed with women, are simply malicious lies).

When Madan Mohan Malviya talked about varnasrama dharma, Sarasvati Thakura said, "I have come to establish daivi varnashrama dharma. Now India is full of asuri varnashrama dharma." After people took diksha, Sarasvati Thakura didn't see their worldly caste. He told Madan Mohan Mulviya, "Don't see the caste of the devotees; `yatha kancana tam yathi kansan rasa vidanatha tatha diksha vidonena dvijatan jayatam nrrnam'(?)" (see CC Adi 7.47 for this verse); according to this sloka anyone from any background can become twice-born by the process of initiation." Madan Mohan Malviya liked Sarasvati Thakura and came to see him many times, and, on his invitation, Sarasvati Thakura often spoke in Benares Hindu University. (How many times?)

Sarasvati Thakura wanted to preach in South India and Vrndavan, but he left this world ten years early. In the south he wanted to establish Caitanya Mahaprabhu's footprints at all places; he only did so in three places - Kurmaksetra, Singhacalam, and Kavoora. He liked South India, because it is a place of devotion, and wanted big temples there, like the one at Bagbazar. Once, in South India, Madras, in a lecture at the Gaudiya Math, he said that in South India people know arcana but not kirtan, and that they know Vishnu, Vasudeva, Kurma, Nrsimha, Narayana, etc., but not Radha Krsna. Sarasvati Thakura said, "I will come again and pick up those devotees of mine who do not go back to Godhead - those who do not complete their bhajan. At that time I shall also fulfill my desire to preach in South India and Vrndavan. I shall establish many pada-pithas of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, so that people in

future will know that Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to all these places." There were two South Indian devotees, Jagannatha and one lady devotee, and Sarasvati Thakura used to tell them that in South India they know arcana but not kirtan.

Sarasvati Thakura especially spoke in South India against Mayavada, as traditional Mayavada is particularly strong there.

In South India Sarasvati Thakura also visited Sringeri Math, the place of Sankaracarya (see Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 9.244), and had some discussion with the Mayavadis there. He also took some photos there to print in the Gauriya. This is when he went to Mysore. At this time he also visited Udupi and discussed with the followers of Madhvacarya. His discussion with the Sringeri followers of Shankaracharya didn't result in much, because they weren't very serious to discuss. They are all mixed up with so many politicians and so many social functions, so they could not discuss very seriously. All these big religious leaders at that time were interested to mix with Jawarha lal Nehru, Gandhi, and other important men. (Correction: Sarasvati Thakura said, "From my childhood I have been studying the Mukunda Mala Stotra of King Kulasekhara. This was previously reported that he was reading the Stotra Ratna of Yamunacharya, but actually it was both plus Prarthana[?]).

Once, SP desired to preach in Mysore (presently part of Karnataka state, South India). He wrote a letter to the king of Mysore requesting him to make all arrangements. Unfortunately, that letter came into the hands of a Muslim minister of the king, who, not wanting such a programme to take place, failed to deliver it to the king. This happened twice. Fortunately, SP's third letter to the king of Mysore came into the hands of a Hindu minister, who delivered it to the king. The king immediately replied through this minister that he had not received the two previous letters and would be very happy to host such a programme. SP performed this function in grand style. Many of the leading devotees of the GM were present, but SP wanted Kunja Babu present also. So he sent a telegramme to Calcutta to call him. Kunja Babu arrived within three to four days. SP asked him how he had managed to come so quickly. After all, he had respnsible duties as a post office employee. KB replied, "I am always ready for your service. I perform my office duties well in advance so that if I ever need leave at short notice, I get sanction very easily.

In 1933, in Mayapur, at Bhakti Vijaya Bhavan (Sarasvati Thakura's house at Mayapur), he explained about the harijan, saying, "Those devoted to God are harijan. Why are they untouchable?" Then he explained that the word "jayanti" should not be used for anything else except in relation to "Krsna-jayanti" or "Gaura-jayanti" (Krsna's or Gauranga's appearance day) (????) In this way, Sarasvati Thakura, with his sharp vision and understanding, found out everything that was wrong in the world and pointed it out.

Knowing that not everyone would come forward for harernama initiation, Sarasvati Thakura said that even if people chanted without taking harernama, they should be encouraged to continue. "If they are chanting without other motives, that is namabhasa. They may have taken the name from some sadhu, but if you chant having taken the name from a pure devotee, that is suddha nama," he said. "However," he continued, "The professional singers - better that they be stopped. They're not chanting `Hari Hari', but `Money Money'; simply increasing their bile secretion, which is harmful for the body (according to doctors those who talk a lot increase their bile secretion. Of course Hari katha is aprakrta [transcendental], it has no material effect).

One man came from Mednapur asking for help, because a famine was taking place at the time. Sarasvati Thakura replied, "There is a famine of food and people suffer, but because there is a famine of Hari-katha, people are suffering more. I am preaching in the world because I see a famine of Hari-katha. You should help me; I should not help you. para-upakara has two meanings: one is to help others, and the other means the topmost kind of help.

Lord Caitanya said to do para-upakara."

Once, at Ravinshaw College, a student challenged, "You are not udara (liberal). You are sectarian and not generous to all, because you do not mix much with the poor, downtrodden people." Sarasvati Thakura then said, "Are you udara (generous to all)? If you are you should accept us. Why are you critisizing us?"

One pandit asked Sarasvati Thakura about the chantng of Hare Krsna, saying it was a new thing and not mentioned in the Vedas. "Maybe there is some inference in the Gita or Bhagavata, but not in the Vedas," he said. Sarasvati Thakura then quoted from the Rig Veda sukta: "om asya jananto nama cit viratyano(?) - it mentions the name as apakrta(?) By chanting Krsna - Krsna is

the cit nama (transcendental name) Krsna is manifest." Also, he quoted the Kalisantanara Upanisad (in which the Hare Krsna mahamantra is clearly mentioned. The Upanisads are part of the Vedas, so the Hare Krsna mahamantra is part of the Vedas), why Hare is in the form of address - Krsna not Krsnaha, with the visarga at the end. This means it's in the vocative form. Hare, Krsna, Rama - in the vocative form. He explained that this time "Rama" in the maha-mantra means "Radhika Ramana Rama." It can be chanted on mala or with mrdanga and karatal. Vrndavan sadhus say that it must be chanted on mala because it is given as a mantra by the guru at diksha, and therefore cannot be chanted with mrdanga and karatal. Sarasvati Thakura said, "It is a mantra alright, but not a mantra like `om namo vidmahe(?) etc.' It is a mantra, but a mode of address also. Whenever addressing any man you can call him loudly also, so, therefore, it can be used with mrdanga and karatal." In this way Sarasvati Thakura expertly answered all kinds of questions and established his siddhanta.

In Bombay, one so-called "Vallabhacharya-line sadhu" was instructing his disciples that they must send their wives and daughters to him because the sastras say that all good things should be given to the guru. Some members of the public filed a case against him in the courts. Sarasvati Thakura commented on this saying, "This is not the idea of the Bhagavata. Bhagavata says that the guru is not a flesh-eater. The body of a woman is flesh. The guru has developed his soul; he is not a tiger or lion. When it says that you should give good things to the guru, it means that you should give your soul to the guru."

In one English medium primary school Sarasvati Thakura was present to give a talk to the children, who were around nine to ten years old. He asked them, "Which is it better to water, tulasi or begun? (eggplant) [Vivekananda had the philosophy that there is no use watering the tulasi plant, and watering the begun was better, because at least you can get something useful from it]. Many of the children thus replied, saying that we should water the begun and we'll get some food, but from the tulasi we will get nothing. Sarasvati Thakura then explained, in very simple language: "We should not desire fruit, but should work with a fruitless motive. Perform tulasi seva. Worship God without desire for fruit. Tulasi is not a plant like mango or begun, which will give you fruit, but is very dear to Krsna. Tulasi is an incarnation of Radha. Tulasi is the ticket-collector

for entrance to rasa-mandala. without her permission no one can go to Vrndavan, as she is the gate-keeper."

One man said, "I saw Krsna. I was sitting on the riverside when I saw Him." Sarasvati Thakura then asked, "Oh you did. Did you not also see maya. If you are still seeing maya it means you didn't see Krsna. That means you must have seen some ghost." The man said he had seen Krsna yesterday. "The test of actually seeing Krsna is that one is no longer interested in maya. Otherwise so many people can say they have seen Krsna, when they haven't really," said Sarasvati Thakura, quoting from Rupa Goswami: "sneram banghi...(?) - My dear friends if you still want attachment to material society friendship and love, then do not go to see Govinda." (Quote to be found).

At the time of Sarasvati Thakura, in Orissa especially, even in the towns, (nowadays you will still get this in the villages) when the nagar sankirtan would pass, they would take out their conches and blow and come and offer obeisances, and would very much appreciate it. Sarasvati Thakura very much liked the system of mushti dhan, which the Gaudiya Mathas were doing at that time, wherein many people who wanted to, who appreciated the activities, they would keep a pot in their house, and every time they cooked food for the family, they would take one handful of rice or two or three, whatever their fixed quota was, in the name of the Gaudiya Math. So, gradually, some amount would accumulate, and every week devotees from the Math would go and collect that and use it in the Math. In this way, by taking a little from each family, they covered the needs of the Math. Sarasvati Thakura liked this system, because it didn't put any strain on anyone and was pleasing to one and all. It didn't make the sadhus very greedy either and was very sattvic.

It is stated elsewhere that Sarasvati Thakura often didn't change the name of an initiate at initiation. For example: Nityananda became Nityananda Das Brahmachari, the only change being the extra "Das". Or sometimes he only changed the name slightly, as in Abhay Caran to Abhay Caranaravinda Das.

In Puri, Sarasvati Thakura lived for two months in the summer in rented houses, before he had the Purushottama Math. At that time he told the devotees to go in the early morning on harinam sankirtan on the seashore, chanting the Panch-tattva mantra. They should chant this more he said, because at this time Caitanya Mahaprabhu and the Pancha tattva were coming for bathing here.

Sarasvati Thakura could read and speak Oriyan somewhat, but not so well. For his Paramartha Oriyan magazine, he would dictate something in Bengali to be written, and Jotishekhara would write it down immediately in Oriyan, because Oriyan and Bengali are very similar languages.

Sarasvati Thakura did not like the mundane historians concepts of Lord Caitanya and His followers. In their concept, Lord Caitanya wa a mere man who lived for some time and died. They didn't realize that He is God Himself, still living now, and that He is antaryami(?) (in everyone's heart). They don't understand these things and try to judge everything from the material viewpoint. Even some books that were reported to be Vaisnava books he never accepted, not believing things that were written in them. These were books like "Advaita Mangal" and "Advaita Prakash", which were about Advaita Prabhu. Also that which was written about Narahari Sarkar of Srikhanda, and songs bogusly ascribed to him he never accepted. According to historians, Narahari Sarkar worshipped Lord Caitanya as Gauranga-nagar, the enjoyer of Visnupriya, which is bogus and apasampradayik.

In the west of Jajpur district, in Orissa, the hilly area, where there is a railway station, Sarasvati Thakura went and spoke in a public meeting about the "dasa-vidha nama aparadha". The king postulated to Sarasvati Thakura that when chanting the names why worry about offenses, as the name can be chanted in any manner (sometimes the people put forward this argument, because Lord Caitanya said that there is no particular rule to follow while chanting the holy names, so some people postulate that why then should one worry about any offenses when Lord Caitanya said not to bother?) Sarasvati THakura quoted the ten offenses from the Padma Purana. The sadhus who were present there were propogating chanting without bothering about offenses and they didn't believe Sarasvati Thakura's quote from the Padma Purana, so he said to the doubtful king, "I'll show you how this is true." (Something like this): that the meeting was organised from 4.00pm to 9.00pm, but Sarasvati Thakura said the sadhus should stay from 5.00pm to 7.00pm (the evening sandhya, time for taking ganja, opium). Sarasvati Thakura said that all the sadhus should stay. We'll be having sankirtan and hari-katha, they should not go outside. (???) Thousands of sadhus gathered for the meeting, but the meeting was from 5.00pm to 7.00pm, so by 6.00pm, many of the sadhus had left the meeting, because they had the habit

to smoke ganja or tobacco, or take tea. They could not stay seated for the full two hours for Hari katha. Sarasvati Thakura showed the king, saying, "Just see what is the situation. Because they are addicted to opium, ganja, tea, cigarettes, etc., they cannot stay for the recitation of the holy name. Is this not due to their offenses?" The king then understood. Sarasvati Thakura finally instructed that these five things should be given up by serious reciters of the holy name: Meat eating, gambling, illicit sex, intoxication, and the search for money, because these are the five places where Kali resides. The king accepted this and became his disciple, taking Harernama initiation.

As his main bases, Sarasvati Thakura chose to stay in Orissa and Bengal, as these were the places of Lord Caitanya's pastimes, and also very good for preaching and enrolling devotees, because people of these areas already had the culture of Lord Caitanya. He sent devotees also to Burma, although he never personally went there himself. The Math there, in Rangoon, was in a rented building that was destroyed during the Japanese attack, and some devotees were killed also, after which, it was never reestablished.

(There is some pastime at Alallanatha which is not very clear). Sarasvati Thakura was asking someone there, "Can you understand my language? God knows all languages. Can you see God? Can you speak with God?" and the man became silent. Then Sarasvati Thakura then said, "Silence. You can't talk with God (something not clear???)" SP was talking in Bangla, but the people couldn't understand. One man said that he should speak in Oriyan.

Sarasvati Thakura gave the preachers impressive titles (???...) bhakti sastri, etc. Acharya trik maha mahopadesah upadesah. These were all titles given for preachers. Jotisekhara himself was given the title upadesaka by Sarasvati Thakura such as vedantacharya, sat(?) acharya, etc. Kunjabihari Vidyabhusana was given the title acaryatrik, which means acharya three times over. That title needs some explaining. They were just big titles, that's all. Note also Vidyabhusana, Vidyavinoda, and Vidyaratna were very impressive titles. Sarasvati Thakura didn't want his disciples to have the attitude of mundane pandits, or to consider jnana more important than bhakti. Still, he gave titles such as these to demonstrate that devotees were learned in sastra and aware of all sastric conclusions. Jotisekhara Prabhu explains that he got the title bhaktisastri and at that time he had not even studied Bhagavad-gita from cover

to cover, what to speak of the Nectar of Devotion or Srimad Bhagavatam, etc. Sarasvati Thakura taught by speaking. The devotees would learn by hearing, and the emphasis was on hearing. Jotisekhara recalls that later he read all these books and saw so many things which were systematically recorded in these books which he had learned first by hearing from Sarasvati Thakura.

At the end of every lecture, SP would recite the verse by Prabhodananda Sarasvati from the Caitanya Candramrta, in which he says, "Taking a straw in my mouth, I go to you, and though you are a very wonderful person, I request you to please give up all your nonsense ideas and just take shelter of Lord Caitanya." See Vaisnava verse song book. p102.

Many times SP used to quote the sloka: "na ham vipron na ca nara patyen napi vaisnavo na sudro ...(?)" - I am not a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, or sannyasi. I identify myself as a servant of the servant of Krsna. (Lord Caitanya) (Vaisnava verse book p126)." He also liked to quote the verse of raghunatha Das Goswami, "adhodante dantetrnam vilapa kusum anjati(?)" - we simply want to be the dust of Rupa Goswami. (See Manah Siksa)" He also used to quote many times the sloka from Caitanya Caritamrta, wherein Prabhodanandana Sarasvati says, "My dear sir, you simply give up all your ideas and surrender at the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya. I am saying this with a straw in my mouth." He would especially quote this at the end of every lecture. He was always thinking of how to uplift the conditioned souls from their suffering condition of maya.

In 1920 SP gave a lecture about the archa vigraha, giving some more sayings, "Brahmanas are like paisa and Vaishnavas are like rupees. In one rupee there are 64 paisa. the brahmanatra or the position of being a brahmana is included in Vaishnavatra or the position of being a Vaishnava. Even if a Vaisnava comes from an untouchable family, he is not only touchable but the guru of non-Vaishnava brahmanas.

Gaura Kisora Das Babajio forbade SP to go to Calcutta, calling it the maya-brahmanda (world of illusion). SP replied that Calcutta is a good place to fulfill the mission of Lord Caitanya, by preaching. Many learned people who lived there would hear the message of Gauranga. How then could it be the world of maya? Rather it is just like Vaikuntha. GKDB also requested Bhaktivinoda Thakura not to remain in Calcutta at the last stage of his life. Calcutta (in

Bengali "Kalikatta") is the place of Kali, he said. Bhaktivinoda Thakura sent his respects to GKDB with the reply, "Where I reside is not the place of Kali."

6. His Schedule

SP would rise early before the others each day and finish his bath after going to the toilet, etc, before anyone got up. He would rise by 3.30am and at 4.30 was mangalarati.

In the early morning, and also in the afternoon, around 4.00pm, he would pass stool and bathe. (What did ACBSP mean by a yogi, bogi, and a rogi?) Arcana was over at 10.30am, when full boga was offered, and then he would take prasadam at around 11.00am. All the other devotees would take at around 12.30pm. The Deities were put to rest at 12.00 noon.

During the day, if not engaged in some preaching or other service, he would generally dictate books. He would speak and Ananta Vasudeva would write. After lunch he would answer letters, before the istha gosthi.

In the late afternoon, around 5.00pm, he was very fond of walking, whether on the beach in Puri, or on the road in Mayapur. He would walk up and down, accompanied, maybe, by a few disciples, or other people, and talk with them on Krsna consciousness, or chant japa. Moca Singh, his bodyguard, accompanied him, wherever he went.

When in the Bag Bazaar Gaudiya Math, he would often walk up and down on the veranda, chanting japa. Sometimes he would wander throughout the Math, chanting in a very mild sound, almost like singing.

If anyone came after 9.00pm, when he was staying in the matha, he would talk with them, otherwise he would roam about on the veranda chanting Hare Krsna and slokas about the glories of the holy name. He would take rest at about 11.00pm.

9. Eating Habits

Sarasvati Thakura's daily intake of prasadam was very little, and was usually brought to him by Sajjan Maharaja. Within a few minutes he would finish eating, and many times he would be absorbed in thoughts of Krsna consciousness, taking the food only as a matter of formality, when actually he wasn't very interested in it.

His personal requirement of rice was only around two kilos for a whole month. Daily he would take only around two hundred grammes of milk.

His dietary habits were typically Bengali: 7.00am - a light breakfast (a little halava or a sweet) and full prasadam at 11.00am, the basis of which was a large amount of rice with spinach and other vegetable preparations. He always took green papaya, cooked with water and blended until it became like soup. This was good for the liver and digestion. He would also take a little lime with his meal.

At night he would take puris and potatoes cut into squares and fried (a typical Bengali preparation), with milk (lightly sweetened with a little sugar) at 8.30 - 9.00pm. In the afternoon he liked to take lemon sharbet, which is a sweet lemon water drink with sugar, or cool, dark (young/raw) coconut (dab).

He was very particular about the purity of food and did not eat where people were not vegetarians. In Bengal and Orissa there are many people who are inclined to Vaisnavism but who eat fish. Sarasvati Thakura, therefore, never went to a village or place where there was no vegetarian home or temple where food could be cooked.

In Sarasvati Thakura's time, all the cooking pots in the Math were brass or bell-metal. The plate eaten off was a leaf plate or often they had stone plates and brass ones for devotees. Sarasvati Thakura's was silver. He had a brass lota and for going to the toilet, a brass container also. Everything in those days was generally made from better materials.

In his prasadam he liked a lot of salt, which made taking his remnants difficult.

He was fond of sajana (drumsticks), soft and young(?) Sajana is one kind of vegetable. He also liked chick-peas, fried with hing and salt, and food cooked in

cow's ghee or sesame oil.

He was very fond of hing; especially peanutsfried with a lot of salt and hing. He was very fond of sweets, and especially liked the Bagbazaar rasgullas. But at the age of 53 he stopped taking these sweets as it was troublesome for his teeth as they were becoming affected. He also liked sweet samosas.

Every day they would have some sweets purchased from the shops, such as Bagbazaar rasgullas. They were offered to the Deities and Sarasvati Thakura would take a little every day. Of course, milk preperations are considered pure even if bought. Another point is that if they were made in the temple they would not be as nice as those in the shop because milk preps are special items, and one who is expert can cook them very well. In those days, especially in the shops, they had very expert sweet makers, and milk sweets from Bengal are famous all over India even to this day.

First class rasgullas were being sold in Swarup gunj just on the other side of the river from Mayapur. SP used to get these to be purchased in Swarup gunj(?) and they would be offered to the Deity in Mayapur. SP would quite often have a large quantity purchased , offered, and distributed to all (means all the devotees?) Similarly, in Bagbazaar with Bagbazaar rasgullas, which were very famous and popular.

In the afternoons he liked to sometimes take alu-chura(?), or fried flat-rice with a little masala and ghee, with pieces of fried potato put inside it.

On Ekadasi day, he would observe it by taking fruit at 4.00pm and a glass of milk at night, and nothing else all day.

Regularly, in Sarasvati Thakura's time, in the Gaudiya Math, for all the devotees, they used to cook neem begun (deep-fried eggplant, fried in oil with neem leaves). Also laphra, which is a vegetable preperation with many different types of vegetables in it. Also another preperation Jotishekhara remembers is dhakkai kecharanna, or kichrie, cooked with vegetables and a lot of ginger, cooked in Dhaka style. Sarasvati Thakura also liked these preperations very much.

His policy on taking prasadam was that whatever was there, as it was offered, he liked to take it. People, they liked to add extra ghee to their rice, or put extra salt or chillie, but he didn't like to do this. (N.B. BH John: Earlier it was stated that SP liked to take a lot of salt in his prasadam which made his remnants

difficult to take. Please explain the contradiction. BVS: See Jotisekhara).

SP liked Dhaka kicherie, which they cooked usually in a big brass pot with many vegetables mixed in it. That Dhaka kicherie is also very liquidy with a lot of water. He especially liked it if it was prepared at night and then taken the next morning, so as the flavour of the spices had time to come out, and the liquidy part would become quite solid. He liked this very much. Of course, you could only take that in the wintery season or the rainy season. If you kept it overnight in the summer season it would become bad. This was usually prepared at the time of a festival, so after the festival was over, and it had become thicker, SP would say, "Bring that kicherie over to me." They would cook that at the festivals in big brass pots, along with another preparation called pushpanna, which SP also liked, but he especially liked that Dhaka kicherie even more. Sajjan Maharaja sometimes used to cook the kochu pata shak with chola dahl and ghee, and a little sugar. SP liked that very much. He also liked that pepper substitute they put in the dahl, which is a kind of root that looks like ginger (Ask Jotisekhara for the name).

Sarasvati Thakura also liked to eat a kind of big root grown under the ground, also known as ull(?) or kochu(?), and cooked as a vegetable. These were, it seems, mostly a Dhaka, East Bengal preparation. Of course, Bengali vegetables are very succulent, because the soil there is very fertile (the Ganga delta is silt soil), and Bengali cooking is very simple but at the same time very tasty. Lord Caitanya also liked these preparations.

There is also some story told from Annakut Mahotsav at Dhaka, which is not clear. There is also some mention of Sarasvati Thakura eating halva at the time of utsava(?) which was also distributed to the public. Sarasvati Thakura did eat food at mahatsav cooked by hired brahmanas.

He liked rasam very much, which is a South Indian preparation, like a watery soup, cooked and taken with the meal, mixed with rice. It is a daily food in South India, especially in Tamil Nadu, and is very good for digestion. It is made by boiling water with different spices and a little salt and some tamarind, so that it is slightly sour. He told Sajjan Maharaja to cook rasam with curry leaves, which are commonly used in South India in all kinds of vegetables and rice preparations. He also liked Biridahl(?) Also chana bhajis(?) or fried chick-peas with puris and sajana (one drum-stick from the tree when it was young and

soft). Also *helancha shak(?)*.

10. His travels

SP's general policy was to spend most of his time in Bengal and Orissa, where he would preach. He was sometimes traveling outside South India, Bombay, Delhi, Vrndavan. Mostly he was based in Calcutta, Mayapur, Puri, then he would work on books, editing articles for Gaudiya, and he sent devotees out to different parts of India and the world to preach.

In the early days of his work he would travel by third-class in the train, but later, when he was established, he travelled first class. He would go in a group and, taking many things like books, cooking utensils, a mrdanga, karatals, etc. Sajjan Maharaja and Vasudeva always travelled with him in first-class, while others went second or third-class, according to their seniority. (Question: Bh John: Did they get any trouble from the British when travelling first class?) At Cuttak station, whenever he came, passing on his way to Madras, Puri, or wherever, there was always a big reception for him, with kirtan, the Boys Scouts, college students - a vast gathering at every station along the way, especially in Bengal and Orissa, and particularly Cuttak, because there were many devotees there. The train was often delayed around half-an-hour in Cuttak for the reception. This was a common thing however, that prominent people would delay the train in this way.

(???) Sometimes SP used to give harinam just on the train. There's one story where he met one man, rather one man came to him requesting harinam. SP said, "On such and such a day I'll be travelling on a train. You travel with me between Baleshvar and Bhadrak, and I can give you harinam. So like this, many times he would do. No yajna was needed for harinam- that was only for diksha. For harinam he would simply give a mala and instruct the disciple to chant the Hare Krsna mahamantra. On the train he would travel in a first class compartment with Sajjan Maharaja. He would not do kirtan in the train but would chant japa, do harinam, and sometimes preach, as first class meant many

respectable people, and at stations usually there would be devotees waiting to receive him. He would come out (???) at major stations like Kharagpur, Baleswar, Bhadrak, etc. He wouldn't get down from the train but would just stand in the doorway, greet the devotees, accept their obeisances like this. Even in the middle of the night, if the train was stopping in a station and devotees were there, SP would be there ready to greet them. The train might stop only for three or four minutes, in the middle of the night at some station, but all the devotees would be there. SP would come out and there would be a big kirtan waiting for him. there would be a kirtan and SP would give a welcoming address. Often important people from the town would also come. Sometimes the train would be delayed for SP, because the stationmaster, the people in the train, the train driver, even they might be interested to see what is going on. and their devotional sentiment was also sometimes aroused like this. SP also went to many places that were off the railway line by car. SP could remember the names of all the devotees. If he visited a place after not being there for some time, he would ask who was that man who came to see me last time - he remembered everyone.

Radha Govinda Babaji, the father of Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaja and Ananta Vasudeva, would say prema dhvani in a very long way, at the math before going to the station he would say long premadvani and thus miss the train. even sometimes they would go to the station, and they would be going along with "Jai" this and that. "Ki Jai" this and that, maybe for half-an-hour, in the meantime the train would have gone. (???) who used to say, among all the different "Jais" he would say "kapata manusa ki jai" which means a cheating man; or rather Govinda Babaji would explain that this means Gauranga (???) He is God, but He has come in the guise of a man and refuses to be let Himself known as God; Therefore He is kapata manusa. "kapata" means "cheating". See also S.B. 1.1.20.

In 1932, Sarasvati Thakura came to Jajpur(?) in Orissa, where he visited the Varahadeva Deity and the descendents of Mahaprabhu. In the holy place known as Jajpur, in Orissa, SP was staying in the Jagannatha dharmashala (lodging house, run on a charitable basis). There, on the other side of the Vaitarani river, which close there was the Viraja temple. One has to cross the Gauranga palli (palli means "bridge") to get to it. While crossing the

Vaitarani SP said "If you cross the Vaitarani you will cross the Viraja (spiritual world)." Or in other words, you will reach the spiritual world. This is , of course, in reference to the Vaitarani of Viraja river, which is at the border of the material world. One side is the material world and the other side is the spiritual world. One has to cross over the Viraja river to come out of the material; world to the spiritual world. Viraja means Vigata Raja, or without tama and raja, without the modes of ignorance and passion (CC reference Madhya 21.50). After that function in Jajpur there was a function in which Jotishekhara was given initiation. That was on Christmas day, 1930 (1932).? So many senior devotees were there also. They came at night to Jajpur station which was in the middle of the jungle at that time, infested with tigers. Now it's all cleared land. Tigers were roaring, and SP asked, "Oh, are they tigers roaring?" "Yes," came the reply. From Jajpur SP went to Kurmaksetra, Mangalagiri, Singhachalam; all these places for establishing the footprints of Lord Caitanya. SP said crossing Vaitarani means to cross the material world and enter brahmaloka. He said that Bhubaneswar is Sivaloka, Puri is Vaikuntha, Alalanath is Gokula, for viraha bhajan (worshipping Krsna in the mood of separation). The Deities Gopi Gopinath (Radha Krsna) were installed at Alalanath.

Once, when they were visiting Jajpur, in Orissa, there was all dense jungle around - now there isn't. They were waiting at night having come to Jajpur Road Station. They were waiting for the train when from the jungle a tiger roared. SP noted that "Just hear how the tiger is roaring." This was in 1930. (Correction: there was a road to Sri Silam through the jungle, but it was very bad. SP went in his own car, driven by Krsnanandana brahmacari and Piyari Mohan brahmacari. These were two brahmacaris who were the drivers of that car. SP had a very good car. Whenever he visited these famous temples, SP would make some offering to the Deity and also to the beggars there. He would put some money in the box in front of the Deities (the pranami box). These were the days when the temples were not managed by the government agencies. Of course, SP didn't like to give to professional beggars, but to visiting sadhus like that, who needed a little help.

On the Navadvip Parikram, SP and also other sannyasis would lecture. When he was older, SP was unable to walk long distances on the parikram so he would go by car and boat.

For Braja mandala parikrama he had two camels purchased for taking the loads from one place to another. They also had one elephant called Kirtan Das, which was donated by Janaki Nath Bosh, the father of Subash Candra Bosh. Janaki Nath Bosh went on the Navadvipa parikrama and Braja mandala parikrama. They brought him from Bengal to Vrndavan by train.

Everywhere in South India they got good regard from the Vaishnava brahmanas, but this was not so in Puri, where the people are less educaed. Generally speaking, the brahmanas in South India were well educated in sastra, at that time, and they liked to recognize those missions that followed sastra, so they recognized the Gaudiya Math as such and gave all due respect. They rejected many invented Mayavadi hodge-podge groups, but the Gaudiya Math they accepted. South Indian vaishnavas (Sri Vaihnava and Madhva brahmanas) tended to be very conservartive and so many of them neer took diksa from SP, although a few did.

In Madras, great receptions were arranged for SP, especially two were very memorable: one by the Municipal Corporation, and another by the Boy Scouts. While touring South India for the purpose of visiting the holy places that Lord Caitanya went to, and installing His footprints there, SP would come unannounced, or maybe there would be a letter in advance, but anyway, he wouldnb't stay very long, maybe one day and one night. there would be no big programme, or no big advertisement. they would simply ask the Superintendent of the temple if they could install Mahaprabhu's footprints and they would go ahead and do it. Just SP with five or six members, with sankirtan would install the footprints, and then they would ask the local priests and temple managers to make a temple for Lord Caitanya's footprints. So, in this way, SP travelled throughout South India. He would give them money for doing this; a small temple. At Madras, at the reception, Rangacharya, the Chief-Justice of the high court was present. Also, it seems that the Corporation of Madras and the Boys Scouts of Madras gave separate receptions for SP, both of which were attended by many people. SP stayed there for five or six days in Madras.

SP never visited Assam, though some of his disciples went there. the Gaudiya Math there in Gauhati, during the time of war was destroyed by a bomb and a few brahmacaris were killed. (Question: BH John: Earlier it was stated that the temple in Burma [Rangoon] was destroyed in the war by a bomb and

brahmacaris were killed. Did this occur once or twice?)

SP visited Mallicharjuna Tirtha, also known as Sri Sailam, that's presently in the state of Andhra Pradesh - one place that was visited by Lord Caitanya and is a very famous temple of Lord Siva. At that time there was no proper road so they had to go through the dense forests and hills for many miles. In his Anubhasya commentary to Sri Caitanya Caritamrta, in one section, SP has written that "I am writing this in Sri Silam."

Whenever SP left Puri to go to Calcutta he would recite the verse, "pratyasami kiru(?) govardhana puja," written by Raghunatha Das Goswami, expressing a desire to stay near Govardhana hill at Radha kunda.

12. Book Production and Distribution. Writing work, etc.

SP knew everything about printing, as he was taught in his youth by his father - all the different stages, like typesetting, proof-reading, working the machine, binding - everything. He knew about the mechanical workings of the printing machine. He started the Bhagavat Jantra Nagara Press. When the Paramartha Press was installed in Cuttak, he personally gave instructions, during the previously mentioned lecture, regarding management of the press -how they should compose everything, take quotations for different jobs, things like this (???...) He said that the press is the brhat mrdanga, and even the building of the press should not be thought of as material: The bricks, the pillars, it is all cintamani i.e. as the same constitution as the spiritual world. That press is just inside the compound of the temple, just to the side, in front of the Deities.

At Cuttak Satchidananda Math in 1932, the Paramartha Press was established by SP. He had six journals going on in India in Hindi, English, Assamese, Oriyan and two in Bengali (one fortnightly and one monthly). The Paramartha Press was established within the premises of the Math in Cuttak, just close to the Deities, so Pancharatriki marg (Deity worship) and Bhagavati marg (preaching) were side by side. At that time of establishing it SP gave a wonderful lecture right inside the press shop, with devotees sitting inside and outside the press shop, in which he said that the press is the brhat mrdanga - in the press, the

machine, the composing materials, all are Krsna, and they are not like the worldly press. The whole building is aprakṛta, or a product of transcendence. Whatever other work SP was involved in, he always paid close attention to the production of his magazines. He wanted Gaudiya philosophy preached door to door by the media of these literatures.

It is said of SP that when asked to read books for publication, to approve them, he did not read them, but simply glanced through the pages to see how many times the name Krsna was written.

The insignia for the Gaudiya Mission, of the press next to the mrdanga was also given by SP. Letter: 9/14/70.

SP never liked that books be given away freely, citing the example, "If you try to give pajalyam (a very famous type of mango) free, people will think there is something wrong with it, so you have to sell it, then people will appreciate its value. Similarly with our books."

About book distribution, SP gave the example of fajli mango, a very famous variety of mango, of very good quality. "If you give people free fajli mango they will suspect that it is full of germs or worms - so never distribute books for free. Take money from the people. Otherwise they will take it lightly or misuse that book. Devotees used to go door to door and in offices selling books in the morning and afternoon. Generally in the evening... Morning and the afternoon, there would be a break at mid day for prasadam, istha gosthi. 7.00 - 12.00 and 3.00pm - 5.00pm, like that. Generally, in the evening the devotees were not allowed outside, but would stay in for bhajan and kirtan. Big books were sold to interested people and regular subscribers, otherwise smaller books and magazines were distributed. At preaching programmes, book tables were set up and in this way the Gaudiya Math books were distributed.

Whenever there was anything published in a newspaper, magazine, or book, against the true teachings of Lord Caitanya, SP would become very angry. He would then call his disciples and order them to write something in retaliation, against this. He would also give the direction of what to write and how to write it. This is the meaning of "rupanuga virata pasya a hedonta adwonine" (see song book. Last line of pranami mantra). He would not tolerate any article whether in Bengal or Orissa or anywhere, that was against the proper teachings of bhagavat dharma, especially misrepresentations of Lord Caitanya's

teachings, which he was very concerned about. It was some kind of a fashion at that time for writers and journalists to write against the cult of Lord Caitanya. Seeing such activities, SP became furious like a lion. The were rebuttles sent under the direction of SP, that were so strong, writers in Bengal and Orissa eventually gave up making articles against Lord Caitanya, fearing retribution from the Gaudiya Math. One time, for example, an article came out sayig that brahmacaris should become grhasthas and then maybe they think about taking sannyasa. SP became very angry saying, "What is this? This is not according to sastra! Brahmacaris should beconme sannyasis. Why should they become entangled in material life?"

Before initiation, SP wrote many books. He printed the book of Bhaktivinoda's autobiography, but said that this book should not be given to everyone (???)... misunderstand. (Question: Bh John: Where is that book now, and is it often found that someone will write an autobiography, seeing as people may critsize saying it is pride writing about oneself? Also, what is it that SP didn't want people to read that they might misunderstand about Bhaktivinoda Thakur in this book?)

SP brought pandits from the Sri sampradaya, from Sri Rangam, and from the Madhva sampradaya at Udupi, to Mayapur. there was one pandit from each sampradaya who were helping SP with philosophical exceges of their respective sampradayas, and also with Sanskrit writing (Sanskrit translation). SP was giving his commentaries on Sanskrit works like the Brahma Samhita. Also there were Sanskrit slokas in the Begali books he was commenting on, like the Caitanya Caritamrta and others. these pandits were there in Mayapur from 1930 - 1932. the pandit from the Madhva line was called Brahmanyadeva, who helped specifically with books that SP published, like "Yukti Mallika" of Vadiraja, which SP published. He would ask him questions and get the answers. Similarly, the Ramanuja pandit helped with the Sri Bhasya. SP wrote a commentary on the Yukti Malaka.

Jotishekhara also says that he saw him in Ultadingi in 1928, meaning he was coming and going. they would take prasadam with all the devotees, even though many brahmanas, especially in South India, have a strong caste feeling, yet SP was initiating brahmanas from all castes. But these two pandits had no such feelings and took prasadam with all the devotees to together.

Once, in Mayapur, SP said, "Don't try to publish many big books, but publish many small booklets, by which many people may be benefitted. Song books like Prarthana, by Narottama Das thakur, Gitamala, by Bhaktivinoda Thakur - these are very good for villages." SP then said, "From my childhood I have been reading Prarthana and Yamunacharya's Stava." once, in the Gaudiya Math, he said to read these two books, and his own song, on the guru parampara. That one beginning "krsna hoite cahur mukha... every brahmacari should read this. At the time of Bhaktivinoda Thakur, SP wrote this and kept it written on the wall of his house at Maniektolla Street, in Calcutta, and saw it regularly.

In Cuttak, SP was searching for Caitanya Bhagavata in 1920. He searched through many mathas but couldn't find it. Nowadays, the Caitanya Bhagavata is available everywhere in bookshops, but at that time it wasn't. The sahajiyas didn't like the Caitanya Bhagavata, and called it a dry book. They like Caitanya Caritamrta, Srimad Bhagavatam, etc., because they deal with Radha Krsna lila, but SP published Caitanya Bhagavata - Caitanya lila. At that time Caitanya Bhagavata was very rare in India. even what editions there were were full of errors. So, before SP's edition there was no proper one. (Question: Bh John: Was it SP who made it more widely available by printing it?) (Answer: B.V. Swami: Yes, he popularized it.

He printed English books in Madras on an outside press. He wanted to make his own press in Madras.

During the time of Bhaktivinoda Thakur, SP, who was entrusted by Bhaktivinoda Thakur to print many Gaudiya Vaishnava books which were not in print, wanted to print Govinda-lilamrta and Gita-Govinda, and Gopi-Gita, but Bhaktivinoda Thakur rebuked him saying, "No more than two copies are required, and you can keep them in the library. No one in this world can understand these books. Print two: one for yourself that you may be satisfied, and another one in case anyone in the future can understand," so SP stopped the printing. SP was also printing Gopi Gita, but he stopped doing so on Bhaktivinoda Thakura's order. Bhaktivinoda Thakur said that it was better that the rasa sastra be taken out from this world and destroyed rather than be exposed to those who are not fit to understand it. Great damage has been done by the misuse of these rasasastras, by exposing them to people not fit to hear. (Question: Bh John: Surely SP would have known not to print these books,

without being told by Bhaktivinoda Thakur, so how come he wanted to go ahead in the first place with publishing these. After all, wasn't his whole mood against the sahajiyas very strongly?) (Answer: B.V Swami: So many things may be done as lila. Why did ACBSP support Gandhi in his youth?)

ISKCON's Prabhupada: Conversation August 16 1976: "My guru maharaja wanted to publish this Govinda-lilamrta. He asked permission of Bhaktivinoda Thakur, who told him, "I'll tell you some day," and when SP reminded him, he said, "Yes, you can print one copy. If you are so much anxious to print it then print one copy. You will read it and you will see that you have printed it; not for general distribution."

SP wrote twenty explanations of the first verse of Srimad Bhagavatam, but it was eaten by rats, upon which he became very sorry. He said, "I've written another explanation, but it's not as good as the first one I wrote, which I cannot remember now." (If he is srutidhar, how is it he forgets? B.V. swami question). He also lost to rats, two verses that he wrote in Sanskrit about the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya, in the Puri temple. Lord Caitanya's feet melted the stone by the Garuda stambha in the Puri temple. The impression is still there.

Regarding the covers of books: He didn't like to have pictures of Krsna on the cover, lest the book be misused and there was some offense, as people might put something on top of the book or they might lean on it. He would like to have maybe the picture of the Deity inside. This is interesting, because Srila Prabhupada (ISKCON) (???) changed that policy. He wanted very much that the covers be very attractive in order to help sell the book. Bhakti Vivek Bharati Maharaja printed a book once with his own picture inside, and SP became very sorry upon seeing that, saying, "You've put your own picture, but why don't you put the pictures of our parampara, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Why do you have to advertise yourself?" SP didn't like to have even his own picture inside his books, but his disciples they liked to publish his picture, but when he saw that this Bharati Maharaja had put his own picture inside this book he wasn't very happy at all. SP said, "If I have my picture printed in my book then my disciples will want to print their own pictures in their books, so better we just keep our pictures of our parampara - Bhaktivinoda, etc., and Mahaprabhu, like this. (Question: Bh John: What about ISKCON's Prabhupada who had his pictures

in all his books? and what did he himself say on the subject? Also did he allow his own disciples to print their pictures in the future in their books?) (Answer B.V.Swami: SP was not against having his own picture in the book, because he is an acarya, but he was afraid his disciples might imitate this practice. A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada is an acarya. Acaryas do "advertise" themselves in a limited way to establish their authority).

Beforte taking sannyasa, SP wrote a book explaining many questions from the Mahabharata, but the manuscript was lost before publication.

One time in Cuttak, where the Paramarti Press was, they printed in the Oriyan script, the Bengali song Radha Krsna bol bol boleari shabai, and distribute d as a handbill when they went on nagar sankirtan. This is a nagar sankirtan song, so SP himself would stand at the front of the sankirtan party and distribute these handbills to the people in general.

Sambidananda Das, the brother of Kunjada, went to London for doing his Phd on the subject, or doctrine of Lord Caitanya. SP gave the outline of that thesis which was printed in the Harmonist.

Regarding the Navadvip dhama Panjika (Vaisnava calendar), Jagannatha Das Babaji gave direction to Bhaktivinoda thakur who engaged SP as Bimala Prasada at the time. To execute this they consulted one Nandulal Vidya Sagar, of Medinapur, a renowned astrologer, who made up the Navadvip dhama Panjika, according to Bimala Prasada's direction. At this time he was 22 years old. SP taught astrology at the house of Bhaktivinoda thakur, in Calcutta. "The Bhakti Bhavan," under the name that that teaching unit was known as Sarasvati Ashram.

One time, SP was going on the Madras Mail (train to Madras) when the train stopped at Berhampur (Orissa). He met there a party of devotees who had come to see him, and said to them, "I have not seen Beronpur town, only the station. My blessings to all the people of Beronpur," and he said to the devotees, "You try to preach the message of Lord Gauranga in the Oriyan language." In that party of people who came to meet SP at the station (the train would stop for only five to ten minutes, and they would meet in that time) was one Madhusudana Sharma, who was a kaviraja (an ayurvedic doctor). Just with this little inspiration, Madhusudana Sharma was so much enlivened by the words of SP that he had one printing press that he decided to immediately donate for printing

books and other publications, in the Oriyan language, to the Gaudiya Math. It was taken to Cuttak and then the Paramarti Press was established.

SP liked that in his temples and different buildings, there would be some S.B. slokas, and instructions, writings, or verses, from the scriptures on the walls, inside and out, permanently written or painted very beautifully, or erected in marble.

At the Vasudeva Baba Mandir, near the Radha Kantha Math in Puri, is a statue of Vasudeva Baba. SP inscribed all around the walls some Bhagavata slokas. He was very fond of this practice.

At the time of Gaura Purnima, all the devotees would sit together and discuss. these are some of the unique sayings of SP, unique because of the unique use of language. He would speak of ontology being the internal essence, and morphology as the outward grandeur to attract people to the ontology. If there is no money in a beautiful purse, what is the use of the purse? So, morphology, without ontology is useless. Vox populi verses vox dei: Truth may be spoken by one man the masses may have a different opinion but they do not know what is the truth.

After SP's disappearance, Sundarananda Vidyavinoda collected his lectures as boktritabali, published essays as prabandhabali, his letters as patrabali. All different things that were published in the Gauriya. He collected them into books, but the vast majority of them are lost. Lectures, conversations, that's SP samlap(?) The vast majority like the letters were lost. Explanation: Over the years, during SP's presence, selected lectures, essays, letters, and conversations of SP, were edited and published in "Gaudiya" magazine. After SP's disappearance, Sundara Vidyavinoda made compilations of these already published lectures in a series of books called "boktritabali", his essays as prabandhabali, his letters as patrabali, and his conversations as samlap.

14. Chastizing

The devotees used to say that there were two things that were very sweet: Prabhupader dahl and Prabhupader gal. Dahl means the dahl prasadam left by SP (his remnants), and gal means SP's chastizement.

SP was very alert to people sleeping in the class, and if he saw that someone was doing so, he would say, "Stand up, go and wash your face!" He would say, "My guru maharaja is present. Bhaktivinoda Thakur is present. All the acharyas are present. You are insulting them by sleeping."

One time, one brahmacari was sleeping during a lecture so SP said to throw him in Radha kund, in Mayapur Caitanya Math. "My guru and all the acharyas are here, so why do you embarrass me by sleeping?" he said.

One time, in Mayapur, Jotishekhara was cleaning the floor on the first floor veranda, and after sweeping all the dust together, he swept it over the edge, which then fell down onto the ground floor. SP saw this and admonished him saying, "You are doing your service, but someone else is doing the service of cleaning below. Why should you spoil their service? You are making this place clean but another place dirty."

In 1929, at Mayapur, on Gaura Purnima, at Yoga Pitha, there was an incident where SP chastized some of the sannyasis; notably Bodhayan Maharaja and others. They had collected some money and had spent it on items they needed for their personal use, like cloth, umbrellas, shoes, etc. SP called together all the sannyasis and chastized them, saying that first of all, any collection should come into the accounts and all the needs for the Deities (God's service) should first be seen to. Then if there's any balance, the mission will see what you require and will give to you. Not that one should take directly from the collection. In this regard, he wrote in his Gauriya Bhasya (commentary on the Caitanya Bhagavata), in the section where Advaita Acharya celebrated a huge festival, the disappearance day of Madhavendra Puri, that if the money is mis spent, the collection which is being collected with great difficulty by the brahmacaris and sannyasis, then there will come a day in our mission when we will hire pujaris, and the pujari will take from the collection box to buy coconut oil for his wife's hair: The mission will be ruined. They had been making a collection for the Gaura Purnima festival, so they'd made a big collection.

One time, a man asked SP to please speak some Hari-katha. However SP replied to this man, Gunamani, in a sarcastic poetical manner: "Gunamani ami gay tumi shun...(???) - I will say but you have to listen!" In other words, this man was not interested in following what SP said. therefore he replied to him in this sarcastic way. This Gunamani Das, was initiated, but not very serious, it

seemed. the point is that you cannot order the guru, "Now you speak!" SP said, "You can't just order me to speak! You sit here and wait. When Hari comes then I will speak Hari-katha!"

In the Math in Cuttak, there wa a nice pond. Sometimes people would come to catch the fish there, because there were many fish in that pond, and in Orissa, as in Bengal, the eating of fish is very common. SP saw one man coming with a rod for catching the fish and he said, "This pond is non-different from the Yamuna. Do not kill the fish!" This particular man was cautioned again and again by SP but still he came. Because of disobeying SP's order he was bitten by a snake while fishing, and died.

One night, also at Cuttak, the pujari forgot to fix up the mosquito net for the Deities. The next day, before mangala arati, SP asked that pujari if it was true that he had done this. When the pujari confirmed this SP said, "Krsna has not slept at night. You have done wrong. Why have you done this? You fixed the mosquito net for yourself, but not for Krsna." The pujari admitted his mistake. (B.V.Swami: observation: "The major point here is how could SP have known? For a normal person it would not have been possible"). (Bh John: observation: "It appears to me that this can be looked at another way. Maybe someone had told SP about it in the morning. At least that's my understanding when I read it").

(Question: BH John: Do we use nets in ISKCON for the Deities?) (Answer: Mostly, yes).

One day, on Ekadasi, Parvata Maharaja took a rasgulla and SP chastized him saying, "This is not proper because it is made with flour!"

One time, one man came to SP and asked, "Oh, what is the Rama Krsna Mission doing? What is the Aurobindo Society doing?" SP replied, "Why have you come to me? If you go to the bazaar to purchase cloth, go to the cloth-shop, not to the sweet-shop or brass-shop. This is the Bhakti School. If you come here ask about bhakti. First of all decide what you want, then go to the right place. If you go to the cloth shop and ask, 'Why is the medicine shop selling bad medicine,' what can they reply?"

In Cuttak once, when SP was standing and taking darshan of the Deities, at some distance, he said, "There is an ant in the flower on Krsna. Remove it!" (The point here is not chastisement but that SP saw aan ant at such a distance, so

put this section elsewhere).

16. Deities - Worship, etc.

One other point to do with archana wa that one had to be initiated by SP. No outside caste brahmana could come. If someone joined the mission as a caste brahmana, even then he had to wait in order to get Pancharatriki brahmana initiation from SP before they could worship Deities.

SP allowed caste brahmanas to cook in the Gaudiya Math, simply on the basis of their birth as brahmanas. Even if not initiated by him, but if they were caste brahmanas, of good character, meaning they didn't take fish or flesh, and all these things, then he allowed them to cook. However, they were not allowed to do the arcana unless they took diksha from him. At the Yogapitha, the system even until today is that those who come from brahmana families, and again are initiated in the Gaudiya line, only they can do the arcana. (Question here: Was this instituted by Bhaktivinoda Thakur or SP and why is it perpetuated until today) (???...) why is that Jotishkahara gives the reply: "Jagannatha Misra was a brahmana, so they are following the caste system, as it was the habit in those days.)" (B.V.Swami: Answer: I'll explain). (Bh John: This is not my question. I think it is a question by yourself).

He would insist that in the arati there must always be kirtan.

During arati, the kirtan would be sung according to what was happening. For instance, at the time of waving the camara, they would sing the line, "Camara dulaya..." and for the time of offering water, there were different arati songs they would sing and they would sing the kirtan corresponding to how the arati was going on. The devotee conducting the arati would keep everything nicely in time, so as it would fit to the song and also they were singing, there was coordination. In regard to the song by Bhaktivinoda Thakura, the last words, "Bhaktivinoda deke gorara sampada," SP once explained that Bhaktivinoda Thakura can see and understand the "sampada" (opulence or wealth) of Lord

Caitanya. He can understand the glories of Lord Caitanya because he is fully surrendered to him. SP explained this point elaborately once. (Question Bh John: How did they manage to synchronize the singing with the offering of the items? It seems very difficult to do).

The Deity installations in all his temples were done according to Hari-bhakti-vilasa. In the Atharva Veda, the Gaura mantra from the Caitanya Upanisad was found, in Samdalpura, Orissa, in one temple there, by Bhaktivinoda Thakur and SP. This describes Gaura tattva and Gaura puja. For worshipping Gauranga, the Dhyana-candra Pandit Arcana Paddhati was used.

The Deities were given names like Guru Gauranga Vinoda Ramanjiu, Guru Gauranga Vinoda Anandajiu, Guru Gauranga Kantajiu, Guru Gauranga Vinoda Madhavajiu, Guru Gauranga Vinoda Pranjiu, etc. Vinoda means Radha. In Bengali if you write Radha or if you write badha, it looks almost the same. There's only one small dot between the R and the B which makes the difference. So SP used to say, "If we don't worship Radha in our bhajan, there will be baddha (obstruction)." This was a pun he used. Question: Bh John: What does badha mean in this sense?)

When establishing Deities, SP always gave Radha the name Vinoda. Just as in the name Guru Gauranga Vinoda Pranjiu.

Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Vinoda Pranjula, were the names of the Deities in Mayapur Sri Caitanya Math. Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Vinoda Ramanjula(?) were the names of the Deities at the Satchidanandana Math in Cuttak. Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Vinoda Kantajula(?) were the names of the Deities at the Madhva(?) Gaudiya Math in Dhaka. In this way SP used to name the Deities he installed and many people asked him why he never included the name of Radha. He explained that the name Vinoda means Radha. Vinoda 2 meanings and Bhaktivinoda 2 Radha(?) Therefore, he didn't like to put the name Radha. Those in the line of Bhaktivinoda Thakur do not like to discuss so much about the Radha lila. The understanding is that one should first become a Goswami, being free from anarthas, before he goes to this very high level. they can read books like Jaiva dharma, Caitanya Shiksamrta, Bhagavad-gita, etc. Especially this very high level lila-grantha is misused generally and misunderstood by people. So SP didn't like this misuse and misunderstanding. (Question: Bh John: Why did ISKCON's Prabhupada not use Vinoda instead of the name

Radha for Deities?) (B.V.Swami: Answer: Can't say). (Question: Bh John: Can anyone say?)

An acharya who can directly see God, he can install the vigraha. From his heart he will install God. Just as from Vasudeva's heart Krsna appeared> Anyone can go to the market and buy a Deity. We can respect that but that is not pratistitha (properly installed) vigraha, that is not properly established Deity. 12 (Svayambhu) forms of Vishnu descended in the world, such as Kesava, Narayana, etc. These are established in the world and these self-established Deities, plus the deities installed by acharyas, these are called vigraha. Anything else is considered idolatry. the Deities should only be worshipped after the pratistha(?) ceremony.

SP would always give brass Radha Krsna and Gauranga Deities to his disciples. He would install, worship, and give Them to householder devotees who had sufficient means to worship Them properly. Those who are very poor cannot worship regularly to the proper standard, because festivals must be observed, and nice bhoga offered, etc. Those who didn't have the means to worship properly, to worship Deities, could worship with pictures, salagram-sila.

Sometimes people would want to take flowers from the Math, for their home puja, that were being grown for the puja of the Deity in the temple. SP said, "This is not correct! These flowers we have grown for offering to Krsna. If you want to offer to Krsna, you, as householders, make your own arrangements. Not that we make the arrangements for worshipping Krsna and you take from our arrangement, but you make your own arrangements, earning your own money. This is the proper way to offer to Krsna. The duty of the devotees is to try to protect the property of the Math." SP told them, "If you want to beg flowers and all these things, for puja, you do that from householders, not from God's house."

SP also liked plenty of flowers to be offered to the Deities. He would see that plenty of flowers were purchased every day and offered to the Deity. In Bengal there are many nice flowers, like beli, champa, chameli, etc. Once, in Puri, at Purushottama Math, SP saw there were no flowers for the Deities, and asked why it was so. He was told that now it was the wrong season, and flowers weren't available. SP said then, "How could you do aercaha worship without flowers. Somehow or other you should get some. You can't do archana without

flowers." in the month of Chaitra, or the spring season, there was one kind of flower (which name is not clear) which SP liked very much. They should offer every day to the Deities in the Math, beli flower.

For coking for the Deities, and for distribution also, to the devotees, mustard oil was used. Although for some preparations like puris, they would have to use ghee.

When SP was staying at Puri he always used to go in sankirtan procession to the Tota Gopinath Mandir and the sankirtan group would sing the song Gopinath Momonisvan(?) SP explained that Gopinath is our most beloved and he said that the devotees who were staying at Purushottama Math they should regularly go to Gopinath mandir and bring some rice, flowers, and other presentations in a basket for Gopinath. This is our most beloved Deity."

SP went from Puri to Alalanath, Ram Nagari(?) which is 18 miles from Puri, at the time of installing the Deity. He took the Deity on a decorated chariot and all along the path it was just like a forest, with many flowers, and SP would quote from the Caitanya Caritamrta: "brahma dekhe brahma naya, evam bhavam (find this verse?)" Justlike Lord Caitanya going through the Jarakanda forest, He remembered or mistook it for Vrndavan, so SP was remembering this lila and quoting this verse. The Deity was a Jaipur marble Deity. At Alalanath he fed the brahmanas maha-prasadam, installed the Deities with the names Gopi Gopinath, and stayed at the birthplace of Ramananda Raya, two miles away from Alalanath. That place is also the place of Shikhi Mahiti and Madhavi Devi, where they used to stay at Ramagiri(?) Under a great banyan tree there he fed all the brahmanas.

The Jagannatha Deity was established at Lord Caitanya's birth place in Mayapur by Bhaktivinoda Thakur. When the London Gaudiya Math was being established, the Deity of Adhoksaja Vasudeva was found in a London roadside by one of the prabhus, just as he was waiting on the path. It was brought to India by Bhakti saranga Goswami, who was there in England. (Question: Bh John: What was the devotees name? And how old were the Deities? Also where were they; in a shop? Where is that Deity today and how did it come to be in London?) The Adhoksaja Deity of Jagannatha Misra was found while the digging was going on for building the Yoga Pitha temple.

In 1931, at Puri, the day of Chandan Yatra, the day when the Jagannatha

Madan Mohan (Vijaya vigraha or Utsa vigraha) is brought to the Narendra Sarovara, for the Chandan Yatra. SP said that on this day we should bring the Gauranga vigraha to the Jagannatha Vallabh Udyan (another place in Puri) and have Gauranga Chandan Yatra there. Similarly, as in the Jagannatha Chandan Yatra, they brought the Deity of Gauranga going around the lake in a boat, with SP and one or two others sitting inside, while the others performed kirtan. They were performing kirtan on the bank of the lake. SP did this for two days, and it was taking place at the same time as the Jagannatha Chandan Yatra, which goes on for 21 days. The Gauranga Chandan Yatra was done for one year only. (Question: Bh John: Why was it stopped?)

In 1930, 25 December, SP came to Jajpur, a famous holy place in Orissa, from Calcutta. He installed there the footprints of Lord Caitanya, near to the River Vaitarani. On that day also, Jotishekhar took harinama from SP. In the daytime, SP put up at the Jagannatha dharmasala, near the River Vaitarani. They all took prasadam there and then went to the Varaha temple, where the footprints were installed. The prasadam they took there was cooked by the Gaudiya Math themselves, and they gave to the local priest at the Jagannatha temple to offer. They would do this in holy places. They would take the prasadam of the Deity in the holy place. In another place, like a landholder's house, landlord's house, they would cook and SP himself would offer that, or someone else would, and after puja they would take. From Jajpur they went, consisting of a party with SP and several leading sannyasis and other leading devotees and other devotees also, to Kurmachalam (the place of Sri Kurma). In the evening all the local brahmanas came, and they had a parikram of the temple, ceremonial welcome, and SP installed the footprints of Lord Caitanya there.

Madan Mohan Malviya specifically asked SP about Deity worship, about the Deities being idols. SP told him to go and see the pujaris and ask them. So, the pujari was engaged in cleaning the archana utensils. He then asked the pujari why he was worshipping stone idols, and was told that, "Your eye is stone, that's why you can't see: premanjana churita bhakti vilochanena... : sevonmukhe hi jihvado...- If you serve then you can understand." At that time Madan Mohan Malviya came to SP and said, "I want thousands and thousands of such sadhus: There should be thousands and thousands of sadhus by which India can become

independant. (Is this the same story as the one earlier in which MMM went to the pujaris and washed the paraphernalia and got answers to his questions? If so which story is correct)?

Once, inside the Jagannatha temple, while taking the darshan of Mahaprabhu's footprint, SP said that Mahaprabhu's footprint is so soft, meaning His heart is also so soft that it melted the stone. "His heart is amando daya - full of mercy, which never causes harm to others (see CC Madhya 10.119. SP often quoted this term)," he said. SP also wrote a poem about that footprint, but it was written and then lost before publication.

18. Disappearance Pastimes

One time SP was with a party of devotees at Kavor, where he had established the Ramananda Gaudiya Math. Kavor is the place in Andhra Pradesh, on the Godavari River, where Mahaprabhu discussed with Ramananda Raya. Now, all the devotees were taking prasada there, when SP said to them, "The sun is about to set. You will not get such delicious prasadam like this in the future." This was obliquely referring to his upcoming disappearance from this world. "Such a function will not be held any more," he said. This was at the annual festival of the Kavor Gaudiya Math. Of course, the devotees at that time couldn't understand what he meant, This was five or six years before he passed-away. (Question: Bh John: If this was five or six years before he passed-away, which was quite a while before his departure, then someone reading this book might conclude that this was speculation on the part of Jotisekhara. After all, couldn't SP have been referring to something else?)

Shortly before his disappearance, SP, on his last visit to Puri, was approached by the Deputy Magistrate of Orissa, Radhe Syama Patnaik, who expressed the opinion that he, SP had done many good things for the world, but had not done much in Puri. He suggested establishing a Bhagavat Sabha (meeting place of devotees) in Puri, as Bhaktivinoda Thakura had done at Jagannatha Ballabha

Udyana (Ramananda Raya's place of bhajan). SP replied, "My time has come to leave this world. What can I do now?"

At that time, the grandfather and father of the narrator of this story (Janaki Ballabh Patnaik) were present. they were both initiated by SP . The driver of SP's car, Pyari Mohan Brahmachari (a renowned renounced devotee), sounded the horn of the car, signalling time to go. At that time SP noticed that JBP's grandfather was present and asked him, "How are you?" JBP's grandfather said to this son, "Now take your last darshan of SP. I don't think he will come here again." JBP's father paid obeisances to SP, who looked at him in a most merciful way. JBP's father felt as if SP were crying within, but did not express it externally.

In Vrndavan, early in 1935, he wrote a letter, saying that, "I have to stay in this world ten years more, but now I am going. The internal struggle in the Gaudiya Math is too much. They don't want me in this world!" In the last one or two years he became very critical of materially motivated devotees, especially Bon Maharaja, who was sent to London to preach, but started a Hindu Mission there. SP wrote to the king of Tripura, the Maharaja of Tripura, who was a great supporter of religious preachers, especially the Gaudiya Math. He wrote to him saying, "Don't give any money to Bon Maharaja." He also criticized Bhaktiviveka Bharati Maharaja as the Auli Rani sannyasi. He also criticized Kunja Babu for his smarta sraddha ceremony. Several times SP spoke to them individually, and also in the istha gosthi, but they were unruly, desiring power. Before SP disappeared he disliked many, not all of them: Shridhar Maharaja, Bhaktisvarupa Puri Maharaja, Giri Maharaja, Bhaktipratheep Tirtha Maharaja, and others, were all liked by him. (Question: Bh John: It doesn't seem to suit to the character of SP that he should have this type of defeatist attitude. After all, wasn't he called the "Lion Guru". So how do we see his seeming despondency, without becoming critical, thinking that he gave up too easily, and left this world early because of some trouble from devotees?) (Answer: B.V.Swami: Ask Jotisekhara. ACBSP also said he left early, being disgusted). (Question: Bh John: In your answer, who left early, being disgusted, SP or ACBSP)?

At the end of his manifest appearance, SP was feeling somewhat discouraged by the behaviour of some of his disciples. SO, feigning a heart-attack, he went to

Radha kund, and he wrote a letter, his last letter, to his disciples. there was some tension between two groups: One headed by Kunja Babu, the other by Ananta Vasudeva. Kunja Babu said, "Unless we (meaning him and his followers) collect money, you cannot do all that you are doing. You're just sitting and writing books on the order of SP." they were writing books and editing his lectures, publishing them, weekly and monthly magazines. So Ananta Vasudeva said, "Unless there is this vani seva, this preaching, by the method of making transcendental literature, the vani of SP, all your collecting money is useless." One party consisted of Ananta Vasudeva, Sundarananda Vidya Vinoda, and others, and the other Kunja Babu and others. Now Kunja Babu's party told the other party, "You should also go for collection. We're collecting and you're simply sitting and writing." But Ananta Vasudeva's party said, "No. We're writing on the order of SP." SP said that one party is doping vani seva and the other is doing vapu seva, and he wrote an article in the Gauriya magazine, entitled "Vani and Vapu". SP wrote that we are a mission of the vani. We may not collect so much money. Money is not such a great thing. But the vani we must follow." So like this, he pretended to have a heart-attack. He told that he had had a heart-attack. It was at this time that he said he wanted to stay in this world for ten more years but now he was not feeling to do so. He was disturbed by the shraddha ceremony of Kunja Babu. At first SP was very pleased with Kunjada. He was working in the Post Office in Calcutta, helping to organize the mission. Later he went to Messopotamia and sent money for the mission. SP praised him saying, "He is just like a manjari helping the sakhis. He is a manjari. As the manjaris help the sakhis, so Kunjada is helping our mission in many ways." But after ten years, when he performed the smarta shraddha ceremony for his mother, deliberately defying SP's order, SP said, "This day is the day of the downfall of the Gaudiya Mission!" SP sent him three letters to stop that smarta shraddha, but still he went ahead with it. In the beginning, when Kunjada first came, SP appreciated his service and even helped him financially. From 1923 Kunjada was helping SP, but after 1932 he didn't follow his orders properly anymore (Question: Bh John: Why? Did he have some quarrel or something?) Jagat Bandhu Das, a rich merchant, who was preached to by Kunjada, and subsequently erected the Bag Bazaar (big marble temple) in Calcutta. After his death, his two wives gave all his property to a "Trust", meant

to be for the work of the Gaudiya Mission, and Kunjada had a controlling position in that Trust. So, after that, he didn't like to follow SP and SP became very sorry for that. He wanted to use that Trust property for his own personal usage. So the first few years with SP were very good, but at the end, very bad. (Question: Bh John: Was it the snarta shraddha ceremony that turned kunjada into a more rebellious devotee? Also, how did they know SP was faking a heart-attack?) (B.V.Swami: More details of feigned heart-attack needed).

Regarding the twp parties, SP felt disturbed by their squabbling. To the party raising money, he said, "Yes you raise money. That is a good thing." He wanted to encourage them also, but he said, "Do not disturb those who are distributing the vani. The money should be for preaching the vani." Both sides would complain to him. For instance, Sundarananda Vidya Vinoda (the editor of the Gauriya magazine) would come and complain, saying, "You have made me the editor of this magazine, but they are not giving money for it's publication." So SP went from Mayapur, Calcutta to Radha kund, just fifteen days before he passed away. He also said that he had some work to do in Vrndavan, "But I'm not going to do it now."

Ten days before his disappearance, SP wrote a letter, saying, "I have many things to do in Vrndavan, but because of internal quarrels in the Math, my life is being shortened by ten years. That letter is printed in the Gaudiya magazine. (Question: Bh John: What were the many things SP had to do in Vrndavan?) (Answer: B.V.Swami: Establish a big temple for Radha Krsna at Radha Kund, preach Krsna consciousness as it really is, not as being preached in the distorted form as at present in Vrndavan).

In his last days, Kunjada brought doctors, who gave SP injections, despite his objections and protests.

At the time of disappearance, his health was good up until around nine days before he passed away, when he had some sudden fever. He was talking Krsna katha just up to the time of his departure from this world. On the evening he passed away. In the daytime he hinted that he was going to depart and in the night his sickness appeared to increase. One doctor came to his bedroom. Then his sickness appeared quite severe and he passed-away at 4.00am.

Before his disappearance, he recited some sloka, which begins, "govardhana dehi pada palavam(?)"

At the time of passing away, around this time, SP was quoting Bhaktivinoda Thakura's Bengali rendering of the second sloka of Siksastaka: "amar dudaive name nahoylo rucih...(?) - By my misfortune I have no taste for the holy names..." and beating his head.

SP disappeared at the age of 62. He accepted the title "Prabhupada" at the age of 57.

In the last Vyasa-puja ceremony, in Puri, devotees gave so much pranami (money) that it covered his feet. SP then said, "there is lots of money, but is there lots of life?" There was more than ten thousand rupees, which was a lot of money in those days, but SP said that the life, or the prana is no more than five or ten rupees. This was in 1935. (Not part of disappearance pastimes, so put it in another section).

20. Mayapur

At the Theistic Exhibition in Mayapur, from that time on Mayapur became famous, because crowds of people came from all over Bengal to see it. It was a great attraction.

Also, on the gates, at the entrance to Mayapur, established by SP (I believe that's called Gauranga Toran[?]), is written: "param vijayate sri krsna sankirtanam. toran(?) - Bengali or Sanskrit word for ornamental entrance gate to a city or temple complex: Two pillars with an arch over the top (this kind of information goes in the footnotes).

The Gaudiya Math owned a launch, for crossing the river, so that people could approach Mayapur from Navadvipa. If the road was very muddy, and some respectable gentleman was coming, then straw was put down and a car or horse cart was sent to Hularghat, and then they could proceed to the Math. Bhakti Sarani was the original name of the road from Hularghat to Mayapur. Two or three times, that is known of, at night, SP had visions of the Panch tattva

in Mayapur. Once, at Brajapatana, Bhakti Bhavan, he saw the Yogapitha as the birthplace of Lord Caitanya. (Question: Bh John: I thought the Yoga Pitha was known to be the birthplace of Lord Caitanya by this time, when it was discovered by Bhaktivinoda Thakur. Also, how do we know that he had these dreams? Who did he tell and why did he tell them, seeing as he was always very careful about revealing these types of things?) He had the idea that in Mayapur there should be a Visnupriya Palli, or an area where ladies were allowed to live and all the householders could make their houses there. He had the idea for a wonderful library - "The Bhaktivinoda Thakur Research Institute" - a great library, where all the great books of India could be preserved. This was to be at Mayapur. He also wanted a college. All this was a Caitanya Math project. He wanted a "Pancha-tattva" building (temple building). He wanted two buildings, called Srivasa Angan, and Advaita Bhavan Shridharangan(?) Murari Gupta Bhavan(?) These were his ideas for Mayapur. He wanted to build it up. At the Caitanya Math temple in Mayapur, the temple of Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Vinoda Pranjin jula(?) he had the acharyas deities - namely, Ramanuja, Madhva, Visnuswami, and Nimbarka, established. SP tried his best to develop Mayapur.

21. Preaching in the West and to Westerners.

SP was very anxious about preaching in the west, and would often speak about how Lord Caitanya's message would be broadcast through the modern media, radio, televidsion, etc. He was very anxious how this would take place. He told many times to the devotees going overseas: "You tell them about going back to Godhead." (???) Jotisekhara Prabhu notes how Tirtha Maharaja, Bon Maharaja, they went to |London. But they just tried to catch a few top people in society. they had no idea how to catch the masses. Just a very few foreigners came, like Sadananda brahmacari came from Germany, he came to India.

He was very hopeful for preaching in the western countries. In Puri he said that Jagannatha should go throughout the jagat. The world will accept the

maha-mantra and maha-prasadam. Bhaktivinoda Thakura has said that the time will come when thousands of devotees will be there throughout the world. That will come.

He gave instructions to devotees going west: "Don't be a historian. Don't talk of Krsna consciousness in an historical way. Present it as something transcendental. Don't describe Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Krsna as historical figures. Otherwise that means avajananti mam mudha. Don't present Them as ordinary people. They are like the sun for the whole world."

An example used by ISKCON's SP in the beginning of his Bhagavatam was originally given by SP: How to preach in a foreign contry. If someone is living in a foreign country and his house is on fire, but he doesn't know the language, somehow or other he will communicate. So somehow or other, when you go to a foreign country, the message is foreign to them, but somehow or other you have to communicate it. It's an emergency situation: People are going to hell. ISKCON's SP wrote that in a letter 4/21/70.

On the instruction of SP Aprakrta Bhakti Saranga Goswami approached the Governor of Patna, who was a Britisher, naturally, who was favouerable to the Gaudiya Math, to introduce a motion into government to help preacherrs go overseas.

Regarding the caste system he said, "Everyone will be allowed to come to the Nat Mandir (the place where everyone comes in front of the Deities to take darshan and dance before Them). He said that there will be a great Nat Mandir constructed in the western world, where all will come together, dance, chant, and embrace.

SP said that in the near future our message shall spread throughout the world. The time is coming. We are preaching, and if no one is coming now, don't be disappointed if people are refusing to come. In the future those who are false devotees will go away and the real sadhus, with a good heart, they will come. Those who are cheaters (kapat) they will go out, jumping over the wall, and those proper devotees they will come. Bad blood will go out and fresh blood will come to India. He was referring to westerners coming. He was very happy when westerners came. At that time no one could imagine westerners (rulers) taking up "Indian" culture and religion. Jotisekhara remembers that one time when he

was at Puri, an Australian man came and SP, "Give him water. Give him prasadam. Look after him!" He gave Jotisekhara charge for this, saying, "Make sure that no disturbance is caused to him. Always serve him." Jotisekhara was still a young boy at the time. SP liked westerners very much. His English speeches, many of which were printed in the Harmonist, were meant especially for them. He said that the sun is going from the east to the west. In the same way Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's philosophy would go from east to west. The time is coming when the sun will rise there and there will be darkness in India. SP sent disciples to the west. He didn't go himself. He said, "If I go to the west, our preaching and programmes will be affected in India. At that time, going by ship took a long time. Also, SP's English wasn't so perfect for lecturing. Between 1925 and 1933(?) he established fifty centres in India. He was so busy expanding his work. So for this reason also he didn't go to the west.

When Bon Maharaja went to London to make a lecture in a public hall, SP said in a message he sent: You should preach like this: Tell them that we are not Hindus. We are not brahmanas, and have no caste. We are Vaishnava das anu das. Hinduism is not our aim or object," and he told the westerners, "Don't think that you are the rulers. You are the servant of the servant of Krsna." Bon Maharaja. Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaja, he also knew English very well, so he went to London with Bon Maharaja, even though he wasn't such an eloquent speaker as Bon Maharaja he was proficient in English. Was from a Bengali family, settled in Cuttack. On the order of SP, N.K. Sanyal would write speeches and send them by airmail to Bon Maharaja to speak in England, because Bon Maharaja was a good orator, but his scholarship and command of philosophy was not as great as that of N.K. Sanyal, as later became very apparent, he was somewhat lacking in the devotional sentiments to such an extent that he was rejected by SP. So the team in London was Bon Maharaja and Tirtha Maharaja. Bon Maharaja was there - an impressive figure, an impressive orator - and Tirtha Maharaja was an actual devotee. Also, Goswami Maharaja was there at some point. The first time Bon Maharaja went with Tirtha Maharaja, Bhakti Pradip Tirtha Maharaja. the second time he went with Bhakti Saranga Goswami Maharaja, who was generally known as Goswami Maharaja, and another man, a grihastha assistant for cooking, etc. They conducted their activities of preaching usually in western dress - first-class western dress. King

George the Sixth (Question: Bhakta John: was it Fifth or Sixth?) was met by Goswami Maharaja first of all in his chamber and later on he met both Bon Maharja and Goswami Maharaja at a public function, with so many others they went and shook hands, offered some respect, like that, and they met many famous aristocrats, members of the aristocracy, Lords and Ladies, but they didn't make any significant impression on the minds of the people.

When any European came to the Math, how he should be preached to was given by SP: "Don't dictate to him, 'You must do like this,' but inspire him to serve Krsna." He also told that idea to Mahatma Gandhi, that you should speak to the westerners like this. Don't disturb them. Don't upset their minds. He will accept everything but we should not compel them. Dictation is not our aim and object. Inspiration is our aim and object. He has a soul and we should inspire that soul. He is Krsna das. He is ...(???) if we deal with him properly he will get the right impression automatically. Service is the only method by which inspiration (???) if we are sevonmukhe, if we are inclined to serve, then he will also get the inspiration to serve Krsna.

When George the Fifth was ruling SP made a special edition of Nadia Prakash, the English newspaper, at the Gaudiya Math. George the Fifth himself appreciated that. He told the Governors and the then Viceroy of India to help SP in all respects. SP tried to get some motion in government to help preachers going overseas. One cabinet minister in England, named the Earl of Zetland, wanted to give a chance for the Gaudiya Math people to preach in Britain. The British appreciated that he is not disturbing us and he is encouraging religion. The special edition of Nadia Prakash had thirty pages in all, all in English, and it said that India should be ruled by the devotees' ideas. Devotees may not be expert to practically rule, but they can give the spiritual idea. Then India will be happy. The British can continue to rule India, but they should listen to the devotees. George the Fifth appreciated this as compared to the "Quit India" campaign of Mahatma Gandhi and others. This special edition of Nadia Prakash had pictures of George V on a horse, and the then British Prime Minister. It was sent to many of the leaders in Britain. Another book, "Erotic Principle and Unalloyed Devotion," was sent to all libraries, political, religious, and intellectual leaders, free, throughout the world. He tried to catch the leaders and convince them - yad yad acarya srestas...

SP spoke of the Gaudiya Math as the Gaudiya Mission after sending preachers to Europe...(???)

The road from Hular ghata to the Caitanya Math in Mayapur was very muddy, so SP had them put straw all over the road, so the car could come, at the time of the visit of John Anderson, the Governor of Bengal.

22. Christianity

SP said that Lord Caitanya preached "extended Christianity" in a Caitanya Bhagavata purport. In other words, whatever Jesus Christ taught, those ideas are there in Lord Caitanya's philosophy, but much expanded upon. He accepted Jesus as a saktyavesa avatara. He spoke of the amandodaya daya of Lord Caitanya - the mercy by which doing good to some doesn't do any harm to others.

Commenting on "Do not take the name of the Lord in vain" - the teachings of Jesus - SP said that "in vain" means anyabhilasa (Material desires. See CC Mad. 24.330.), or cultivating another motive other than pure devotion.

"Give us our daily bread" was interpreted by SP that "bread" means "food for the soul." In Paul's letter he said that we don't sacrifice any animal, but "sacrifice your self and chant the names of God." SP quoted this. This is giving the idea of the sankirtan movement. About Jesus Christ he said, " He was a saktyavesa avatara. He didn't teach this eat, drink, and be merry business."

23. Mahatma Gandhi, etc.

So, at the time the Independance Movement and the Gaudiya math were not on very good terms, because the Gaudiya Math were not against British rule, and even used to invite governors and other big officials of the British Raja to

preside over their meetings as chief guests like this. (Question: Bh John: This seems to be a classic example of SP provoking trouble, like you said in the introduction. Did SP start this inviting of big British officials before or after the incident concerning the flood relief money? the reason I am asking is that it is good to know exactly what occurred first in SP's disagreements with the Independence Movement. What was the first major confrontation that sparked it off?)

Of course, even Bhaktivinoda Thakura was very supportive of the British Raja. One time, in a public meeting in Madras, a guest speaker, Raja Gopal Acarya, a famous member of the Indian Independence Movement. They used to invite such people to make the function appear respectable to materialistic people, so he was invited to speak and he spoke against the Gaudiya Math, Saying, "You're against the idea of independence. You have no independence. You are just using borrowed ideas."

Because Sp didn't support Gandhi's independence movement, and in fact invited British dignitaries to important functions of the Gaudiya Math, there was open disagreement between the followers of Gandhi and the followers of SP, or rather, there was open disagreement between Gandhi and SP. It was Madan Mohan Malavya(?) of Benares Hindu University, who prompted Gandhi to approach SP, telling him that this sadhu is a great learned and respectable scholar, with many followers, especially in Bengal and Orissa, so you try to bring him into your fold. But SP could never accept his usage of the word "jayanti" or "harijan" for ordinary people. Gandhi gave ten questions to SP in an attempt to bring him into his fold, but he was unsuccessful. Gandhi did not like SP because of this, and SP did not like Gandhi, but no tension developed between them or their followers, as it did that one time when Netharji Subhas Bose made his demonstration outside the Gaudiya Math in Bag Bazaar. Citaranjan Das, and many other famous leaders of Bengal, Orissa, and Benares, liked SP and very much appreciated his mission. Someone else who liked SP was Mati Lal Nehru(?) of Allahabad, the father of Jawaharlal Nehru. SP only told to the people wanting independence, "Your mission is a karmi mission. Our mission is a mission of devotion." Gandhi's followers used a translation of the Gita in Hindi, by some karmi. SP didn't like that. That was the edition of Balagangadhar Tilak, the guru of Gandhi.

In 1934 Mahatma Gandhi gave ten questions. He presented ten questions for the scholars and the pandits of the time to answer. SP had his answers published in the Gaudiya. They were questions like "what is a harijan?" Generally SP gave the answer that generally harijan means someone of low caste. No Hari-bhakta is a harijan. Don't say that the harijan is someone from the lower caste. In our temple, anyone of any caste can come and join in. There is no caste system. Harijan is the highest person, not the lowest. So like this he defined the proper usage of words. Just like "jayanti" - don't use that word for an ordinary man. Jayanti means the day on which Krsna was born - Krsna -jayanti, or Gaura jayanti. You cannot even use that for other forms of the Lord like Rama or Nrsimha. what to speak of the modern age: they say Gandhi jayanti, Ravindra jayanti, vidya(?) jayanti, Mahavir jayanti. this is all incorrect. (Question: bhakta John: Can we get all ten questions and answers?)

Also Gandhi, when starting his non-violence movement, put ten questions to SP, in Calcutta. The replies were published in the Harmonist, and Gandhi also appreciated these, which were, of course, according to sastra. (What were they?)

In the year 1931 there was a huge flood in the Mednapur district of West Benga, desterying many villages and many people's livelihoods. At the same time SP was contemplating his "Theistic Doll Exhibition" and collecting donations for it. One devotee was collecting in the name of Flood Relief, making a lot of money, but SP took it and engaged it for the exhibition. Netharji Subhas Bose took a party outside the Bagbazaar Gaudiya Math in Calcutta in protest against this action. They had a protest party standing at the gate of the Gaudiya Math, staying outside for several days and nights, sleeping on the gate, with banners, signs of protest, and regular chanting of "Jai Hind!" and slogans in protest against the doll exhibition utilizing the funds that were collected for flood relief. In this strike, Gandhi also came to Calcutta to join Netharji Subhas Bose. This went on for three days. SP said that the oil for the Deities lamp should not be used for your chakha (Gandhiji's spinning wheel). After sitting in the temple for three days, SP came out and spoke to them like this. He also said that "We must start a daily newspaper, to present our points of view", and from that time on he started Nadia Prakash, the daily spiritual newspaper. One of the main purposes of Nadia Prakash was to answer such challenges as these, which were put to his mission. SP said, "there are floods in Mednapur, but you are

already in a much worse flood - bhava sagar, or the ocean of material existence. Your soul is drowned in this bhava sagar. So my mission is to stop the flood of the bhava sagar, to stop that flood, a much bigger flood than these small floods which you consider devastating in Mednapur. These incidents were, of course, reported in all the newspapers, especially in Calcutta. At that time Mahatma Gandhiput twelve questions to SP (was it ten or twelve?) Cittaranjan Das, a very prominent, famous and wealthy advocate and a leader of the Independence Movement in India at that time, said that SP was a singha guru, or a lion guru. Also, Shishir Kumar Ghosh, editor of Amrita Bazaar Patrika(?) a famous paper in Calcutta, also called him that. (Question: Bh John: Did SP come out winning the confrontation about the fllood relief money or not? Was there a bad public feeling about this or not?)

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose came one time with a party of supporters to the Gaudiya Math, at the time when SP was holding his first "Theistic Exhibition" in Mednapur. Now, at that time there had been a great flood in Mednapur, a district west of Calcutta. Because of the flood the people were in grea difficulty - poverty stricken. This was in 1933. they were suffering from shortages of rice, cloth, and all essentials, so Netaji came and told SP, "You stop this exhibition! Why are you spending so much money for this when the people need practical help? You're spending so much money for lights, electricity. You have elephants and so many other things." SP then told him, "No, you do not know. This is the only way to root-out miseries from the world. You are working only for the good of the body. You are treating the symptoms not the original disease. Don't blow on boils - operate.

Annie Besant, Mahatma Gandhi's friend from London, who was famous for founding the "Theosophical Society" also came and said the same thing and SP gave the same answer. Mahatma Gandhi also came and told SP, "Don't waste money on this. Spend money on the daridra Narayana, the poor Narayana." SP then told him, "Your idea is wrong. You cannot serve daridra Narayana. Just as you cannot mix gold and stone. This is cit-jada-vada or attempting to mix the material with the spiritual - tasmin tuste jagat tusta - if Krsna is satisfied then the whole world is satisfied. You don't disturb us. In the Jagannatha temple they are using ghee for the ghee-wick. You don't say to use it for oiling the wheel, your spinning wheel. All the oils should be used for Krsna." Madan Mohan

Malavya(?) formerly told this story at Benares Hindu University. He accepted SP as a great sadhu. When he visited the Gaudiya Math he said, "You are the only man preaching the independance of the soul. We are trying to get independance for India. That means independance for the body only. I want brahmacaris like you. Thousands like you are needed all over India. You are the only man preaching about the soul."

ISKCON's SP conversation: Aug 2, 1976: "My guru maharaja at every step condemned the Rama Krsna Mission and Vivekananda. He said quite frankly, 'If there are any impediments for our movement it is Gandhi and Vivekananda.' He said frankly, 'Hodge-podge. Gandhi's also hodge-podge. He was a politician and in politics he mixed some spiritual ideas and made a hodge-podge. This Vivekananda was also a politician...'"

At the time when SP was preaching, the Rama Krsna Mission was very prominent, especially in Bengal. They were very active in material welfare work and made some pracar (propoganda) that this is religious. Sarasvati Thakura, however, wrote many articles against them. About Rama Krsna himself Sarasvati Thakura said, "He looks just like a goat with his beard."

Raja Gopal Sastri was a well-known scholar of Royapeta in Madras.

Janaki Nath Bose. SP went to his house in Cuttak. He was invited there once. He was the father of Netaji Subhas Bose and was a famous advocate. Janaki Baba challenged him, saying, "Why are you coming to Orissa and erecting new temples? There are so many temples here in a state of ruin. Why don't you renovate them instead of making new ones?" SP replied, "In a temple we want to speak on the pure siddhanta of the Gaudiya Vaishnavas, but no one will allow us to speak so clearly and purely in their temple. Therefore, our own place is required. We want a temple where we can speak this truth freely, without fear of constraint." So Janaki Babu donated to SP for that purpose. Janaki Babu was not against SP but he had some doubts. That's only why he asked. He and his wife were both very pious people. (Question: BH John: What did he think of the incident concerning his son and the flood relief money?)

One time, Janaki Nath Bose, the father of Netaji Subhas Bose, came to visit

SP at the temple dressed in English dress - coat, shirt, pants, etc. SP gave him a chair to sit on, although most visitors would be content to sit on the floor, but SP gave him a chair. It was at Cuttak where Janaki Nath resided. SP had him honoured with a fan. One devotee waved the fan. SP treated him respectfully, as he was a rich, learned, and prominent man. SP at that time told him, "I request you not to take flesh or fish anymore," because Janakinath had hired mohammaden cooks in his house for cooking these things. SP said, "I will send you prasadam every day from the Math. A tiffin was sent everyday to be filled up for Janakinath Bose and his family. This went on for ten years. His mother, father, everyone, took mahaprasada, until Janakinath Bose died. So we see the way SP dealt with rich and prominent people. Janakinath was a very prominent advocate of Cuttak. He had eighteen sons from one wife (get this verified) of whom Netaji Subhas was one.

One Raja had given an elephant to Janakinath. SP later wanted an elephant for parikram and Janakinath gave that to SP. The Raja who had so many elephants had given the elephant as payment for his fees, as Janakinath had heard a case for him. (Question: BH John: It seems Janakinath favoured SP even though his son Netaji Subhas didn't. Is this true?)

One prominent advocate came to see SP at Bagbazaar, but he committed a great offence by smoking in front of him. (???) He did not care to listen to what SP said. three times Goswami Mahraja requested him to stop smoking, but he did not heed his request. After a few days he became infected with cholera and shortly thereafter died in hospital.

Madan Mohan Malviya(?) A household name, especially in north India, where he was highly respected as a scholar and patriot. A member of the Indian congress and Vice-Chancellor of Benares Hindu University. A prominent figure in the movement for Indian independence, for which he was an expert and insatiable fund-raiser.

A staunchly traditional Hindu, he was not fond of M.K. Gandhi or J.L. Nehru, both of whom he considered adharmic (irreligious). (Why did he consider them irreligious, especially Gandhi?) (Answer: B.V.Swami: No need to put this in the

book. Gandhi was a non-traditionalistic, and used a pose of being religious for political purposes. His promoting of the lower castes was not appreciated by traditionalistic Hindus). (Bh John: Question: I think it is good to put in the book, as it will explain why Madan Mohan Malviya saw them as irreligious. Also, aren't the traditionalistic Hindus into castism in a negative, wrong way, seeing themselves born as a higher or lower caste and unable to change due to birth)?

25. Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam..., mantra, sankirtan, chanting, etc.

The income tax officer for Cuttak, Hari Mohan Pattanayak asked SP about "Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam" saying, "Why are you against this because the names are also there. Nitai, Gaura, Radhe, and Syam are there." SP then replied saying, "We have to follow that which is there in the sastra. In the Kali Santanara Upanisad, it is clearly stated: Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. We cannot follow any man-made kirtan." SP used to say "chora kirtan(?)" Chora(?) means man-made. "Sri Caitanya did not say Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam but the Hare Krsna mantra He gave us to chant," he said.

Radha Ramana Charan Das Babaji, who is famous, or infamous, for concocting the chant of Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam, Hare Krsna Hare Rama, which was rejected by his initiating guru, Jagannatha Das Babaji. Radha Ramana Charan Das babaji was a grand-disciple of Jagannatha Das Babaji (was this the guru of Bhaktivinoda Thakura?) (Yes). SP saw Radha Ramana Charan Das Babaji in Puri. SP had seen Radha Ramana Charan Das babaji falsely exhibit devotional ecstasies asta...(???) SP thenm told him directly, "This is just for money and fame's sake, not for God's sake." Bhaktivinoda thakura then said, "No, he is a very reputed man. He has many disciples. They also do some preaching." SP then said, "I don't care what anyone says. Depriving the people of real bhakti and artificially showing them bhava, imitating mahabhagavatas, is very bad!" Bhaktivinoda Thakura didn't like this sahajaism, but

he didn't externally express his displeasure. He gave respect to all, and was very mild, but SP didn't care for anyone. Bhaktivinoda thakura wriote against so many things, but he never mentioned any names. SP, however, was very strong in his condemnation of all this nonsense. (Question: Bh John: Maybe we can explain a little bit more about these types of preaching moods, so as a critical mentality of Bhaktivinoda Thakura does not develop. Also, seeing as they are both in our sampradaya as acharyas, how do we know who to follow, or which way is best if both are preaching in such an obviously different mood?) (B.V.Swami: Answer: See me to discuss).

The sahajiyas would come from Haridas Thakura's samadhi to Tota Gopinatha singing, "Nitai-gaura radhe syama." They would pass by lila kutira. When SP was staying at Lila kutira he instructed a brahmacari to keep guard. Whe he heard the sahajiya group coming he would beat on a tin loudly. then the devotees from GM wouold come out and sing Hare Krsna kirtan loudly and drown-out the sound of "NGRS". Once, someone asked SP at Lila-kutira if he had heard the NGRS kirtan. SP replied, "Suppose you are fully absorbed in solving an arithmetic problem. then even if someone speaks to you, you will not hear it. Similarly, we are fully devoted to chanting. we do not hear this imaginary name. we aare always absorbed in thinking of our worshipful Lord.

Whenever the Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam chanting party went through Chatak Parvat, which they did regularly, SP had one devotee go ahead, so when they were coming he would run back to the Math and alert everyone. Then the devotees would make a big noise with drums and tins, so as they wouldn't have to hear the bogus chanting. SP said, "You should make placards and put them in every village and town saying that this is apasiddhantic, or against the conclusion of the sastra. This is choronama (not mentioned by any acharya). Charan Das Babaji, who was supposed to be a disciple of Jagannatha Das Babaji, who told him not to chant this mantra, didn't follow that instruction. SP always used to say, "This is not in the sastra. this is man-made."

SP would always keep someone near him with a tin drum, so if by chance any party came by chanting that bogus mantra, he would say, "Beat that drum. The monkeys are coming. Monkey kirtan!"

One time in Puri, one pilgrim asked one of the inmates of the Gaudfiya math to take him to Charan Das Babaji's disciple's, Ram Das babaji's matha. Ram

Das Babaji means Nitai Gaura radhe Syam. He had the Jhanj Pita Math(?) (Is this Ram Das Babaji another name for Radha Ramana Charan Das Babaji?) the brahmacari took the pilgrim. Maybe he was a relation or something like that. On the way they met Ram Das Babaji and the brahmacari rebuked him as being a sahajiya. When SP heard this he said, "Ram Das Babaji's moral character is very good. You may not possess such a strong moral character." He asked him to return and beg forgiveness from him. "His siddhanta is bad, but not his character, so criticize his teachings, not him personally," said SP. It seems that SP was identifying sahajism with the illicit sex cults of which Ram Das Babaji was not a part of.

Once, when invited by Rama das Babaji to his matha, SP went and took prasadam there. SP sent prasadam from Purushottama Math, in Puri, to Jhanj Pita Math(?) and Jotisekhara Prabhu says that he himself, Jotisekhara, personally took that prasadam. That was on one day only. So there was a mixture of good and bad feelings between them.

Another time, SP was going to their matha in Puri to tell them (Radha Ramana Charan Das Babaji and his disciple Rama Das Babaji) to stop chanting this Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam. Just as he was approaching their matha, one of the inmates saw SP coming and started chanting this Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam. Just on hearing this, SP didn't want to go any further and came back. (Did that devotee start chanting this mantra deliberately upon seeing SP?)

SP also told his disciples: "You should make a written notice and put it on every tree in every village, that this Nitai gaura Radhe Syam is not a proper mantra, and is apasiddhantic. The real mantra is Hare Krsna Hare Krsna..." So, after some time, Rama Das Babaji told his followers, "When you go to the temple of Totha Gopinatha, don't go to the temple of Totha Gopinatha, don't go by Chatak Parvat, where the Purushottama Math is situated, but go another way so as not to disturb them." (Question: Bh John: Seeing as SP respected the moral character of these Babaji's, how was it that they were so bewildered regarding this chanting. Where did they get their references from? What is their sastric evidence for this chanting? Let's hear what their reasons are). (Answer: B.V.Swami: See me).

Charan Das Babaji was formerly initiated by Jagannatha Das Babaji, but was rejected by him later. One group of his disciples had a system that in his temples

his photo would be on the altar and these disciples would put tulasi at his feet. SP very strongly objected to this. His followers split into two groups. One put tulsi on his feet, another didn't.

(Question: Bh John: To a neophyte like myself, it doesn't seem such a great offense to chant this mantra, so could a more detailed reason be given. Does it have such a bad effect on a person, and that is why SP went to such extreme measures so as not to hear it, and thus set an example for us to follow? Please explain). (Answer: B.V.Swami: See me).

Often people who were good singers would come to the matha or to a public function and would like to sing because it is very common even today in Bengal and Orissa, that people they learn how to sing bhajans and different kinds of devotional songs - folk songs. And they like to sing. Sometimes they may make a show of singing in a so-called "devotional" manner. It is a whole performance. So when such people came SP would have them sing nam sankirtan: Hare Krsna Maha mantra or something: Haraye namah Krsna... Pancha Tattva Maha mantra. But he wouldn't have them sing bhajans which express the mood of a Vaishnava if they didn't have such a mood. For them only nam sankirtan. They often like to sing Vaisnava bhajans with imitative feelings.

It is a tradition in Bengali kirtan to add akhara. Meaning that along with the song you add some line which isn't in the original song but which enhances the mood of the song or part of the song. For instance, when we sing sankha bhaje gantha bhaje madhur madhur madhur bhaje (see song book for spelling), it is an akhara to the line, "sankha bhaje ghantha bhaje bhaje karatala, madhurya mrdanga bhaje parama rasala." We also see for instance in Bhaktivinoda thakura's songs that he many times added the akhara which is to be sung. But SP did not encourage the devotees to make up their own akars and add them to songs. He never liked that. Sometimes we find that people sing akars and use so many that you can hardly distinguish what is the original song. Also, unless they are expert in the devotional science, they may introduce some bhakti siddhanta niruda(?) or rasa bhasa. It is said in the Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya 10.113 (check): "bhakti siddhanta niruda ar rasa bhasa sunite prabhu caitanya na hoi abas(?)" So to avoid this danger, and also sokjeone imagining himself as a great poet, as a great composer of akars, which you also find, SP recommended to just stick to the original song that is given by the acharyas.

Another chant popular in Bengal and Orissa was "Sri Krsna Caitanya Prabhu Nityananda, Hare Krsna Hare Rama, Sri Radhe Govinda," which was not objected to by SP, though he never chanted it himself. He never said that this was rasa bhasa, saying that Nitai Gaura Radhe Syam was rasa bhasa, as they put Nitai Gaura and Radhe Syam in one line together, whereas the Hare Krsna Hare Rama, Sri Radhe Govinda is on a separate line.

26. Vratas and Austerities

For four or five years SP observed caturmasya after starting the Gaudiya Math. Then he stopped doing it. But those who were living in the Math they observed caturmasya. He used to observe urjavrata every year, according to Hari-bhakti-vilas, sometimes in Puri, sometimes in Radha Kund. He would stay in one place for a month without moving. According to Hari-bhakti-vilas, that means during caturmasya they wouldn't take brinjala (egg-plant) potala (a kind of vegetable), gur (raw sugar), and all luxurious things were given up. Whilst he was observing the vow to chant ten million names of the maha-mantra, he would bend down to take kicherie(?) from the floor, in the way a cow would. This is called go-gras, or in the manner of a cow. During the urja-vrata (vows observed during Kartik, the month of Damodara) he would take food once a day, cooked with no spices - rice, dahl, sabhji, and a little ghee. During caturmasya he took sea-salt, not the machine processed salt.

27. Brijbasis

At Radha Kund he fed the brajabasis and brahmanas very happily, giving

plenty of katchouries, sweet rice (known as chac a chac, which means 'first-class', in Vrndavan) sweets. One time he served at Radha Kund so many people prasadam. He took two motor cars full from Vrndavan to Radha Kund to serve.

Two Brajabasis were SP's disciples. One was from Varsana and the other from Radha Kund. SP gave them special regard and was very intimate with them. He told how Sanatan Goswami would go place to place in Vrndavan and speak with the Brajabasis, saying, "How are you? How are your children? etc." Rupa Goswami said, "This is Hari katha not gramya katha, because it is in relationship with Brajabasis." (Question: Bh John: You know what's going to happen when devotees read this Maharaja. It will give them a perfect excuse to talk prajalpa to the Brajabasis in Vraja, so maybe some more information should be given). (B.V.Swami: There are many things. We have to understand to follow in the footsteps of the acaryas, not imitate them. So many points in this book will raise questions).

In Vrndavan there were sadhus who were considered siddha purusa. Narahari Das Babaji and Vinoda Bihari babaji. there were other elevated babajis also, but these two were very special. When SP went to Radha Kund he spoke intimately with them. Also, in the Radha Ramana temple, Gokulananda temple in Vrndavan were some devotees he spoke intimately with.

Sometimes in Mayapur it used to happen that some of the Muslim villagers would come and steal from the store of the Gaudiya Math. Items like rice, fruit, etc. One time one devotee caught a thief and brought him before SP. He said, "Do not punish him but give him what he wants, and give him some rupees also, because he is a dhama basi." Same story, Vinoda Babu.

SP loved the Mohammedans of Mayapur. He was very fond of them. they had a very good relationship. SP always considered their descent from the Chand Kazi and their being dham-vasis.

Going on the Vraja Mandala Parikram, SP would have basketfuls of tomatoes, radishes (the long, white, Indian variety), guavas, etc., carried from village to village, and he would distribute it to the villagers. they would distribute and then send a car to purchase mre again and again. He used to give to the boys and girls especially of Braja, but if his disciples stretched out their hands to take, he would say, "No, no. This is not for you!" He would personally give by his own hand, not only to the young children, but to all, young and old. He very much

liked to serve Brajabasis.

In Chiriya-kunj, in Vrndavan, was one Krsna Das Babaji, who was a friend of Bhaktivinoda thakura. He would sometimes put outside his kutir all old scales of fish and horrible things, so people would think that he was not a good sadhu and wouldn't come and disturb him. Sometimes he would pay a woman of the Bangi caste (very lowest caste), to sit outside his cottage so that people would think that he was having some dealings, some affair with a low caste woman, so they wouldn't come to bother him. Bhaktivinoda thakura told about this saying he was doing this as a kind of lila, just to make people think he was a rogue and therefore not bother him, so as he could do his bhajan peacefully.

28. On mangement

Many sannyasis and leading devotees of the Gaudiya Math told SP to amke a will for the management and organization of the Gaudiya Math after his departure. SP didn't like tthat, saying, "If money is kept within the Mission we will become mahanta (a term referring to the propriortor of a temple in Bengal or Vrndavan) and by managing the temple they live very comfortably. They manage the funds of the temple and live very comfortably. So SP said, "I don't want to make any agreement or document. When there is life in the mission it will run on. I am not a contractor or a mason. I have not established these temples in the manner of a contractor or a mason. If life is there, with or without any document or will, everything will go on. But if there's no life, with or without a document then things will not go on in a spiritual way. Without the living source, without life, then the mission has no meaning. It will be a bad mission. rupa raghunatha vani pracar - this is what we want. I am the priya of Rupa Raghunatha. I am not the priya of some contractor. I build these temples for love of Rupa raghunatha, not for increasing some contractor's business. I havbe not come to build so many temles for the worl's sake but for God's sake."

Kunja Babu presented a will to the High Court, a will of SP, but it was rejected

as a forgery. This was after the disappearance of SP. SP made a document saying that three devotees should manage. Namely: Kunjada Babu, Vassudeva, and Paramananda. They were not the owners of the temple. Kirtananda brahmacari asked SP to keep some money aside, because the devotees had dedicated their lives. If there were medical expenses or some emergency, then some money would have to be spent. SP said, "You go and preach to the people, and if they are convinced they will help you. If not they may not give to you. try to convince them that the path of Lord Caitanya is absolutely good. Otherwise if you just go to collect money, it will just be a profession. When you preach, people will put many questions to you and examine you. You must give clear answers to them, then you can spread the message of Lord Caitanya. If you try to satisfy the public for the purpose of collection, then it is a mahanta matha. Every day go to the householders." After 7.00am (?) noone would stay in the matha. SP's order was that everyone should go out to meet the public. "Don't sit idly in the matha, then you are mathua (idle man). Even if you meet only five members of the public everyday still you should go out."

30. Marriage

For Gaudiya Math devotees who were to be married, that was performed according to the "Satakriya Sardipika(?)" by one devotee - Acarya Das Adhikari. He was authorized by SP to do so, and he would usually marry the devotees within their own caste. After marriage, the devotees were still expected to follow the full system of harernama and all the other points. The marriage was performed in their home village or town, not in the math. Shraddha ceremonies were performed in the matha. Unmarried girls would take harernama at their own risk. If their parents married them to someone who was opposed to their Krsna consciousness then they had to continue whatever their husband was like.

There was a disciple of SP named Acharya Das who would perform the

marriage ceremonies, shraddhas, and all these things, according to Vaishnava rituals, for the householder members of the Gaudiya Math. He performed all these samskaras according to Satkriya Sardipika of Gopal Bhatta Goswami. Grhasthas would live outside, but SP would expect them to come regularly to the matha and engage in devotional activities. One time, one householder who hadn't been coming regularly, came to the matha. SP called him over and spoke to him, saying, "Why are you all the time remaining at home and chewing the chewed. You're always engaged in inauspicious material activities. Why don't you come regularly to the matha?" SP made a rule that after diksa, that is what was called gayatri initiation, the householders must be very strict. they should come regularly every evening and listen to the Hari katha, and they can't get up in the middle and leave. they have to stay in the matha for the whole evening activities, then they could go home only. After diksa SP liked that they would keep this standard, that they would have no more children, no more sex. One Satish Chandra Babu(?), a householder devotee disciple of SP, approached him for diksha, and SP told him, "Diksha means you have to become very strict."

Once, a young man came to SP in Mayapur for a blessing before his marriage. SP said, "You become a disciple and take harinama. Marriage means to engage your family in devotion, otherwise marriage is bad. First of all promise that you will be good and then your family will be good. Marriage is not absolutely required, but if you really must, stay pure by getting married. If you can't keep your marriage pure, I don't recognize it." that boy took harinama.

SP didn't encourage brahmacaries to marry. If they were insistent, they were allowed to marry, but the idea was that they were to make their family life Krsna conscious.

SP's ideals for householders was that whatever they earned they should give all to him and he would return them something by which they could live. At least Professor N.K. Sanyal (Bhakti Sudhakara Prabhu?) followed this. He earned Rs.900 a month - a good salary then - which he gave all to SP. Sp would then give him back Rs.300 for his household expenses. Another householder, Sundarananda Vidya Vinoda, at first sacrificed all his money like this, then he later left home to live as a separate grhastha within the mission. Some, but not all householders, who had firm faith in SP would dedicate their salaries like this for the mission. SP never pressurized his householders, but he liked them to do

this saying, "If you do this, even in the householder life you are a saranagata bhakta, or a surrendered devotee. First of all use money for God's sake, then you take for yourself.

SP always encouraged brahmacari life and not grhastha life.

His policy was that women must be married and unmarried women he didn't like that idea. Women were always separate from the men, in the public assembly and women should be married. "Chik" - a fine bamboo screen for dividing women from men. Not only in the Gaudiya Math but was also common in public meetings.

He did accept just a very few unmarried women as disciples and that was at their own risk. In other words, if they got a non-devotee husband, due to the arrangement of their parents, that was not SP's concern.

31. Temples

SP liked to have temples in populated areas in the cities, not in very lonely places, although, of course, he didn't establish many centres in specific holy places related to the lila of the Lord Krsna. Caitanya Mahaprabhu, that was a different matter. (Why?)

SP established Mathas in towns and cities. He was asked once by a devotee, "Why are you establishing within the towns? Usually temples are established on hill-sides, or in a secluded, peaceful place." But SP said, "I am not a nirjan bhajan sadhu. I have come to the town because people may come to the temple to hear Hari-katha. the place where Hari-katha is propagated, that is nirjana."

In Calcutta someone asked him, "You have installed so many Deities in temples, but you didn't make any land or provisions for the Deities (usually, when a temple is established, the traditional system is some land or other

allowance is made so that the Deities maintenance will be assured in the future). the time will come when noone will give you alms, so how will the temples run on?" SP said, "I am not an engineer or a mason that I am building temples like this. I am the peon of Rupa and Raghunatha. I've come to the world to bring life. If there is no life in the temple. If there are lifeless people and the temples should be lost, I don't care for that. The Ramanujacarya temple in Puri (Amar Math) - one guru in his line, some time after him, called Guru Govinda(?), he said, `You destroy this tempe because there is no life in it. If there is no life in the temple then it is not required!'" Actually, this is an historical fact, that the temple was broken. SP gave this example from this Sri Vaishnava temple in Puri. the temple was destroyed because the sadhus misused the facilities. the bricks were distributed to the public. This was before the time of Lord Caitanya, and after the temple was rebuilt.

SP had many old Visnu temples in villages restored and repaired.

On his sixtieth birthday, they celebrated the Vyasa puja celebration at Puri, at Chatak-Parvat, tyhe Purushottama Math. This was attended by the Raja (king) of Puri, the district collector, and other dignitaries - all very big peopole. So SP said that at that time that a temple of Radha was absolutely required there, because that Chatak-Parvat is non-different from Govardhan Hill, so he said a temple of Radha was required - Radha Krsna. SO the Raja of Mayurbhanj gave a donation for that temple. That temple was not completed in SP's time, but later it was.

In Vraja he wanted to make his biggest temple at Radha Kund. He also wanted a big temple at Chatak Parvat, in Puri, which is non-different from Govardhan Hill. In Radha Kund he wanted Radha's temple - that means Radha Krsna temple - and eight temples for the asta sakhis. He said, "There is no big temple for Radha in Radha Kund." He said these things on the Vraja Mandala Parikram in 1935. that day they also fed chaka chak prasada to the Brajabasis.

At Bhubaneswar, when SP established the tridandi Gaudiya Math, he made a sak (spinach) festival. Sak is very simple green-leaved food, coming in many varities in India, especially Bengal and Orissa. Lord Caitanya was very fond of that sak. Generally it is thought of as a poor man's kind of food. SP was also very fond of it and made tghis sak festival, or "festival of spinach", then he installed the Deities there. there were twnty five different varieites of spinach

cooked there. Not twenty five different ways of cooking necessarily, but twenty five different kinds of spinach. Just like, for instance, there is Data sak, Lal sak, Kumra sak, Karala sak, Pat sak, Palang sak, Helancha sak, Kochu sak, Potol sak, Kai sak, etc. At Chatak-Parvat, two days before the annakuta mahotsava (Govardhana Puja) ceremony in 1932, he informed the devotees to gather bhoga from different parts of India. Devotees brought one thousand different types of preparations, cooked in different parts of India. there were South Indian varieties, Gujarati varieties, North Indian varieties, Bengali varieties, Oriyan varieties, etc. there were so many recipes. Apurna(?) Devi, living in Vrindavan, cooked something (can't understand what it is ...???) Telegrammes were sent and devotees came from different parts of India, like Mysore, Dacka, East Bengal, and so many different things were brought.

33. Parikramas and Festivals.

During the Braja Mandal Parikrama, SP revealed (rediscovered) many places of Krsna lila. at the festival in Radha kund he fed the brijbasis so nicely - opulent food like laddu, pera, kacoris, etc. - that they could never forget. the parikrama party stopped for seven days at Radha kund. At Radha kund on Radhastami, 500 people assembled to hear SP's speech. All spaces above and below were filled up. At one point he began speaking animatedly on Radha-tattva. After ten to fifteen minutes he stopped, silent, overwhelmed with ecstasy. After some time he again began speaking.

Jaga Mohan Pattanayak an advocate, asked SP at Sachidananda Math, in Cuttack, "Why do you have such big festivals? And why serve so many preparations at your festivals? In other temples, at festivals they only serve rice and one other preparation to all the people, but youi serve rice, kitchrie, sweet-rice, etc. Why?" SP replied, "All these things we are offering to God, and we are not distributing this prasadam just to any general public, but to Vaishnavas. Whoever comes to our festival, whether initiated or not, are Vaishnavas. They

are special people because they have come to Krsna." Again, someone asked SP "Well, before you have your feast and festival, the organizer will tell the cook to cook for three hundred people or five hundred, so you are cooking for the people." SP then said, "No. We are not cooking for the people but for God and distribution to Vaishnavas. A festival is for the pleasure of Hari, guru, and Vaishnavas. So we are arranging for that. Everyone who comes to the Math we consider a Vaishnava. They are not ordinary people."

At the time of the Vrndavan and Navadvipa Parikrams, the devotees would be working very hard making all the arrangements. They would have three to five lorries full of different kinds of sweets and nice prasadam to distribute to everyone. This was for feeding the Brajabasis. At that time, around 1930, Vrndavan wasn't developed at all. There was no proper road, no metalled road, no cars used to come. It was a perfectly tranquil, rural atmosphere. The devotees would go with an advance party, set up tents, and make all cooking arrangements. There were guards set up, because some areas especially were very dangerous for dacoits (gang of thieves). Every day, in the afternoon or the morning, if he got the time, SP would recite the verses beginning, "radha kunda kunja kotira..." which is a song taken from Gitavali of Bhaktivinoda Thakura. SP would recite this every day whilst on the Vraja Mandala Parikram. He would have one of the best singers sing this while they were sitting in their tent. Because the paths on the Vraja Mandala Parikram are full of thorns, SP told the devotees that if they wished they could use canvas shoes to protect their feet on this parikram from the thorns, even though the etiquette is not to use any footwear. Many did use these shoes on the recommendation of SP, canvas shoes with rubber bottoms. When SP visited Radha kund, he stayed at Gopal Dharmasala. SP rented a cottage at Visrama ghata for two to three years for the convenience of the Gaudiya Math pilgrims. It is now no longer there. SP sometimes used to stay there.

SP taught and practised renunciation, but for preaching did everything in a grand way. For Govardhana Puja, Annakuta Mahotsava, he called cooks from all over India. There would be unlimited preparations, over a thousand items with varieties of cooking, such as Bengali style, Andhra style, Gujarati style, etc. thousands would attend. When the GM was shifted from Ultadingi to Bagbazar, the sankirtana party was accompanied by musical bands, not only

from all parts of India, but one from the west also. SP went ahead of the Deities, sweeping the road. Calcutta had not seen or heard of such a festival, which instantly gave huge prominence to the GM. The kirtana parties were singing "Radha Krsna bol bol bolo re sabai... jai sakal bipod bhaktivinoda bole jokhon o nama gaya" (Everyone chant "Radha Krsna." Bhaktivinoda says that when that name is chanted all dangers go away). During the procession, as SP passed under a gate, part of it broke and fell down. SP narrowly escaped injury. Everyone became anxious and agitated, but SP said, "jai sakala vipod Bhaktivinoda boler jokhon o nama gaya." We have been saved from danger because we singing nama-kirtana."

At the time of Rasa Yatra and Jhulan Yatra, SP didn't have these temples, didn't have these festivals celebrated in his Mathas. He said, "Let the devotees hear and try to understand Krsna. Let them not try to enjoy this rasa-lila from the unrealized stage." SO Rasa Yatra and Julan Yatra were not celebrated. They did not have a swing in the temples in the Gaudiya Math on Julan Yatra. Madhurya Rasa should not be preached. (Question: Bh John: Why do we celebrate this Julan Yatra in ISKCON then?)

There is one place in Puri called Balagandhi, which is on the grand road in the middle of the route between Jagannatha temple and Gundica - the route that Jagannatha takes in His cart festival. SP said that the rope of the Jagannatha cart should be pulled by devotees. the non-devotees, who are mukti kami, they should not pull the rope. SP said this at Balagandhi. (Question: Bh John: Earlier, SP said that anyone who comes to the festivals is a Vaishnava, and here we see him saying that they are mukti kamis. Please explain. Also, what was ISKCON's SP standard for those who pulled the rope of the cart, and why did SP set this standard?)

There is a description of a great festival that SP observed in the Gaudiya Math. It was at Govardhan puja, when many people came to forcefully take prasadam in an unruly manner. SP had them all take it up to the gallery by ropes. So the people of Bagbazaar threw stones and disturbed the function. This was the Annakut function, but there may be some other description also. Anyway, the people tried to disturb it, trying to tak all the food. Initially a big hill of rice and other prasadam was put in the temple room before the Deity and the people tried to get that and eat it before the function was complete. Gross people

from Bagbazaar came wanting to snatch the prasada and eat it all. But what happened, it seems there was some cooperation from the authorities. the police were sent and they drove the people out - It's not very clear(?) So SP was very grateful. Previously, before British time, during Muslim rule, he could not have expected such help from the authorities for protecting religious people. So he printed in the Nadia Prakash that the British are helping us. the disturbances were apparently something to do with Jagabandhu Dhatta, who had built the temple, that people were very envious of him for different reasons. He was a very rich man. (???) occurred in 1934. A gang of Gundas entered the temple forcibly and caused this disturbance, but after this the authorities sent men door to door warning people not to disturb the Gaudiya Math. It was great protection. Of course, the Gaudiya Math, SP he as his father had done, he didn't sympathize with the independence movement, but rather he cooperated with the British. (Question: Bh John: I was not aware that Bhaktivinoda Thakura was in favour of the British also. Is this where SP got his ideas about the British from also - namely his father? and could it be said that Bh Thakura had this nice view of them because he also worked very closely with them as a magistrate?)

34. The "fire" is kindled: Fighting in the Gaudiya Math.

... extracted from May(?) 20-22(?) 1977: SP wrote on a piece of paper: "In case I die, these three men: Kunja babu (later to become Bhaktivilas tirtha Maharaja), Paramananda Vidya Ratna, and Ananta Vasudeva, will be trustees, with the majority being effective. So that scrap of paper was kept by Tirtha Maharaja, and later on guru maharaja wanted to make a constitution, but he avoided, he didn't do it. After his demise that scrap of paper was presented in the High Court and the property was given. (Question: Bh John: I thought the paper was rejected by the court? Also, why did SP write this if he didn't really appear to strongly favour this idea?)

In the beginning, from 1927 - 1930, the Mission was very alive, but after 1930 some of this kind of idleness, laziness, back-biting, materialistic propensities,

entered the mission, despite SP's strong efforts to keep that out, the people they did not care to hear. even the sannyasis and brahmacaries would often do things which SP didn't like. They would even go to the jatra(?) (some kind of materialistic, quasi-religious play), to the cinema.

When the organization expanded there was money, many branches, prestige, then always problems occurred. In the early days, all the devotees were very seriously engaged in their sadhana - very serious about spiritual life. Later on, although the preaching was going on, they were building buildings, and doing so many things, but the spirit was different. It even came to the point of arguing over which rooms in the Gaudiya Math building in Bagbazaar, they should occupy. Bodhayan Maharaja once came back from giving a lecture and told the brahmacaris, "Oh, I have given such a good lecture, so many people have appreciated that, so I should not take rice prasada like all the other devotees but tonight cook for me some puris. they should be hot puris." When SP heard that he became very sorry, saying, "karilam sannyasi hoy gelo vilasi - I have made them all sannyasis but they have become sense enjoyers." Many times he said this. They would do this business of giving lectures as a matter of prestige.

38. Critisizers of SP

Ananta Vishvambhar had seen in the "Theistic Exhibituion", the "Bhagavata Exhibition" in Mayapur, that one time, SP was there sitting on a chair when Dina Bandhu Das Babaji, who was serving Gaura Kisora Das Babaji up to his last moment, he was always with him, how one time he had come there and SP was sitting on a seat. Immediately he got up and offered all respect to him, saying, "You are very respectable to me because you are my God-brother and you are always serving my guru," and then they both sat down together, and Anantadeva himself personally saw and heard how they were discussing. Dina Bandhu was also refgerring to SP as his God-brother, sayinng, "You are my God-brother." Gaura Das Babaji had eight to ten discuiples like this. SP was asking how many disciples he has. So, if they mutually accepted eacvh other as

/God-brothers, and it's a well known fact that Dina Bandhu was the constant associate and disciple of Gaura Kisora Das Babaji, then how could they say that SP had no guru.

Aboput Gaura Kisora Das Babaji having disciples - that may be, but they were siksa disciples. People who were constantly with him. Formally accepted disciples, it's known that only SP was, even though the method of him being a disciple was not exactly according to any formality either, and Vamsi Das babaji is also said to be his disciple.(Question: Bh John: You used the story of Dina Bandhu Das previously, stating that he would call SP his God-brother, but in this story it is said that SP was the only initiated disciple of Gaura Kisora Das Babaji, so it appears that Dina Bandhu Das Babaji wasn't formally initiated by Gaura Kisora Das Babaji, so when he calls SP his God-brother how are we to take it?) (Answer: B.V.Swami: SP's initiation was not according to proper formality but was bhagavati-marg; he was accepted by Gaura Kisora Das Babaji. See how Lord Caitanya initiated Rupa and Sanatana, no formality.

SP was going for a hernia operation but he never underwent the surgery because he thought that the doctor had been called to kill him, because sometimes people were paid-off to kill him. He was thinking like that.

14/11/70: "When my guru maharaja SP introduced this system - Pancharatrika diksha - it was protested, even by his inner- circle of God-brothers or friends. Of course he had no actual God-brothers but there were many disciples of Bhaktivinoda Thakura who protested against this action of my guru maharaja, but he didn't care for it." (Question: Bh John: This also helps to invalidate the fact that Dina Bandhu Das Babaji called SP his God-brother, because here ISKCON's SP confirms that SP had no actual God-brothers, so when Dina Bandhu called him his God-brother, he wasn't referring to formally initiated God-brother.) (Answer: B.V.Swami: Yes, Godbrother, not formally).

Another story told in the Sarasvati Jaya Sri - a loosely organized compilation of rememberances of SP by different disciples, published shortly after his departure. There is one story of the young Bimala Prasada. One ofhis brothers leftthis world at a young age, so just before he died he asked for forgiveness from Bimala, which was duly granted, saying that, "In my previous life I committed some offense to you, therefore I had to be born inthis world again. Now please forgive me." So, just at the time he left this world, lying on his bed,

automatically, Sri sampradaya tilak manifested itself on his forehead and he left the world in this way.

One elder brother of SP's was always against him and was very puffed-up in his behaviour thinking that he knew everything. SP said once to him, "Don't think that Bhaktivinoda Thakura is just like a mundane father of yours. He is completely transcendental." So from that time on that brother was always against SP, always criticising him. After SP started his preaching mission he even incited one mundane scholar, Priyanatha, to write a book against him, criticising him in so many ways. So SP replied . This was just at the beginning of his preaching days. He replied in a book called "Purva Pakha Priyanather Pratyottar - A Reply to the Opponent (prathi pokka[?]) Priyanatha." I have a copy of this very old book. Priyanatha, inspired by that envious elder brother had asked some challenging questions and SP answered then in this book. that was a brother by Bhaktivinoda Thakura's first wife. So it was this brother who left this world early, and at this time begged forgiveness for his offences to SP. It may not have been offences in a previous life but in this life (find out).

There was always a difference between SP and his brother Lalita Prasada, who SP considered to be propagating something very similar to the Jati Gosai Vad(?) the opinion of the caste Goswamis. After taking sannyasa SP no more spoke with him. A disciple of Lalita Babu called Priyanatha wrote a book against SP attempting to show how he was not following Bhaktivinoda Thakura. (see above).

In 1932, Visvambhar Das of Pathapur(?), in Vrndavan, published a book on behalf of many babajis and goswamis in Vrndavan against SP. He said that his line of parampara was incorrect and challenged SP giving many sastra pramanas. SP. they said took harernama from Gaurakisora Das Babaji, whose guru was an East Bengal Advaita Parivar Gosai. When SP took harernama he did not take harernama mala from Gaurakisora Das babaji, because Gaurakisora Das Babaji never used harernama mala himself. Instead, he just gave him some Navadvip dust in the hand. Nor did he get Pancharatrika samskara from Gaurakisora Das Babaji, so his diksha is not bona fide. Since SP didn't get pancharatrika diksha himself, how could he give it to others. Gaura Kisora Das Babaji didn't have a brahmana thread, so from where did SP get his brahmana thread. Bhaktivinoda thakura also had no brahmana thread and was

initiated by Jata Gosai Bipin Bihari. Of course, we understand that this was for formality also, because he couldn't find any real sadhu (Question: Bh John: Wasn't Jagannatha Das Babaji available then, or someone else?) Also, Bhaktivinoda Thakura gave SP the Nrsimha mantra for worshipping the Deity. SP was giving Radha Krsna mantra to others, but where did he get this mantra. SP was the first person in India to introduce such a line. There are Rupa and Sanatana lines, Vrndavan and Navadipa sadhus, Jagannatha Das Babaji, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Gaurakisora Das babaji - none of them ever used a brahmana thread, so where did SP get this from? How was SP to reply to this? Unless it is according to sastra they will not accept his answer. Also, they were saying that SP was a sannyasi but he had no sannyasa guru. How can he give sannyasa to others? SP's answer was, 'phalena pariciyate - A cause is known by it's effect. This is bhagavata parampara. It is not mentioned in the scriptures this bhagavata parampara. SP first spoke of this. Parampara means guru shisya guru shisya line, but bhagavata parampara was written by SP. He said Bhaktivinoda Thakura is Kamala manjari. Radha nityajan - he is a personal associate of Radharani. He ordered me to establish daivi varnashrama. I must obey his order - sastra or no sastra. the acharya is not under the sastra. the acharya can make the sastra. Like thhis, I saw many things that are being injected by Bhaktivinoda Thakura, the acharya to me. By his mercy, by the mercy of Gaura Kisora Das Babaji Maharaja and Jagannatha Das Babaji Maharaja, not caring for any precise technicalities, we are going on.'" At this time he designed the Gaudiya Math logo showing ragamarga, vidhimarg, bhagavat pancharatriki parampara. the performance of diksha is only by the mercy of guru. Just like Madhvacarya took from Vyasadeeva, despite there being a thousand year difference between them - phalena pariciyate. My bhajan, my preaching. No one else in India is doping or can do. These Parivars (Parivar means "family") are parivars only. Also used as Advaita parivar, Gadadhara parivar, Narottama parivar - "gurus" in seminal descent (Jata Gosai) from great personalities or diciples of great personalities. Family line of gurus. They are families only. They have no bhajan. They don't have the life of Lord Caitanya. Something new brought by the acharya is called vaisisthya (special characteristic). Something new but based on the sastra. Like Laxmipati Tirtha, the only record of his name is given by Baladeva Vidyabhusana much later. Just

like Ramanujacarya, Madhva, they apparently introduced something new, but because it was based on sastra it came to be accepted. Jiva Goswami, Bhagavata sandarbha, said of Madhvacarya that he was a pracin (old) Vaishnava. Madhva is an acharya because he accepted dasya rasa even more than Nimbarka, Visnuswami, and Ramanujacarya, but Lord Caitanya referred to the followers of Madhva as tomar sampradaya (CC Madhya 9.277. tomara sampradaya - your sampradaya, i.e. Lord Caitanya did not think of himself as part of the Madhva line). In other words Lord Caitanya brought in something new which was different from the Madhva line This is a new thing. Madhavendra Puri brought in a new thing. Jiva Goswami respected Madhvacarya as an old and experienced Vaishnava, a teacher of Vaishnavism in the past, and not as the acharya of this line, because he didn't accept Radha. (What did SP say on this subject?) (Answer: ACBSP said nothing on this). (What did SP say though). There are many chapters of the Bhagavata he didn't accept.

One time a group of brahmacaris accompanied SP. A group of devotees accompanied him to Navadvipa town. there was some programme there which they were invited to by some well-to-do devotee to do some programme there, but at that time the whole town of Navadvipa was against SP and the Gaudiya Math, because they were establishing Mayapur as the place of birth of Lord Caitanya. Previously people had thought that it was in Navadvipa town, and because of this the importance of Navadvipa was being diminished and the income of the people of Navadvipa, thus also being diminished. So there was sever opposition to SP. They were doing the programme and when they were it was evening time, they were to go back, but they learned that a party was waiting to attack them, so Keshava Maharaja, known as Vinoda bihari brahmacari at that time, who in physical appearance at that time was similar to SP, he was also a blood relation (How?). Anyway, he proposed to SP that he give him his sannyasa clothes and he would give him his white brahmacari clothes so as he could escape. SP did this and later, very late at night, when the party was waiting fro them had dispersed, all the other group surrounding Kesava Maharaja, dressed in sannyasa clothes, continued and returned to Sridham Mayapur. (Question: Bh John: Why didn't they attack the party like they had planned? Was it because they saw that SP was not there or was it because the plan was aborted, or was there some other reason? It is important to find this out, as it is a very serious

incident).

Most of the Babajis in Navadvipa town would criticize the Gaudiya Math and SP. He would criticize the false babajis and they would criticize him. They said, "The Gaudiya Math is not a bona fide organization, because SP who is the guru of that Math, he has no proper guru himself...Who is his guru...He has not taken any proper initiation." They considered a "proper guru" to be from their bogus "parivara's. So Anantadeva, whenever he would come across these criticisms, which was common, as he was living in Navadvipa, he would refute by telling this story, from his own personal experience, that in 1925 or 1926, when they had the first "Theistic Doll Exhibition" in Mayapur, which first attracted huge crowds of people to Mayapur, and really established it as a prominent holy place, that was organized by SP. So when they first had that Anantadeva (is this the same as Ananta Vasudeva or not?) personally saw that SP was sitting on a chair and at one point Dina Bandhu Das Babaji arrived there. Now Dina Bandhu was known to all as being an intimate associate and disciple of Gaurakisora Das Babaji and remembered and served him up to his very last moment, so when Dina Bandhu arrived SP immediately got up from his chair, welcomed him, gave him a nice place to sit, and they were discussing amongst themselves so many things about Gaurakisora Das Babaji and they mutually referred to each other as God-brothers. So if Dina Bandhu accepted SP as his God-brother, and Dina Bandhu is well known to be the disciple of Gaurakisora Das Babaji (????....End of tape).

39. Health

SP got a very large and dangerous boil one time. It was on the top left part of the back. (???) Krsna Kanti brahmachari, who was known as Doctor Babu by all the devotees, because he was qualified as a doctor. He later on became Shaman(?) Maharaja who after Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Maharaja was the head of the Gaudiya Math. He always used to ask Doctor Babu, "Doctor Babu, when will SP be cured?" They were in great anxiety. This time SP was taken to the Bhakti Bhavan at Mayapur. Doctor Babu would bring western style medicine,

but SP would never accept it. He preferred ayurvedic medicine to western medicine, although he sometimes did use western medicine. SP gave the example that Vaishnavism is like homeopathic(?) medicine. At first the disease will appear worse, e.g., if you have one boil you may get many boils, or if you have a fever it may increase, but that is god, bringing out the bad things, then ultimately there will be the cure.

40. Miscellaneous

Once, SP saw the pranami box open. There were so many bad and spoiled coins which could not be used for anything. So people have given these in the pranami box. SP commented on this quoting a Bengali preverb: "kanagoru brahman dan - which means giving a useless cow as a donation to the brahmana

At the Calcutta Baghazaar Gaudiya Math he would stay upstairs. the temple was downstairs. Before mangalarati they would sing "sri krsna brahma devarsi", then guruvastakam, Sri Krsna Caitanya, Lila Madhava(?) Most devotees didn't take bath before mangalarati (What did SP say about this?) SP would never lead kirtan or play any instrument. He was not musically adept, but he would join in the kirtan. he always liked the kirtan to be very simple and would say, "If you do not know how to sing, still open your lips and recite the holy name. You may not sing well but to chant the name is kirtan." this is in no doubt in reference to the misconception very common in Bengal that kirtan singing has to be very musically stylish, but SP didn't like that very much. He never emphasized on expertise in music and singing. He emphasized more on bhakti in kirtan. In the Gaudiya Math they used the Manaharshahi sankirtan. there are three styles of kirtan in Gaudiya Vaisnava sampradaya, and the gaudiya math used the simplest - the Manaharshahi Sankirtan. The method of Deity worship was based on the simple method given by Dhyanchandra, a disciple of Vrakesvar Pandit (?) (an associate of Lord Caitanya). But even Dhyanchandra's method was simplified for use in the Gaudiya Math. So during mangalarati they would only

chant the maha-mantra. They didn't have tulasi arati, at least in the morning (Why?) Everyone had to come to mangalarati, after which they would circumambulate the Deities, and during this time they would sing the song of Bhaktivinoda Thakura: "Bhajare bhajare amara nama (???) bhaja bhaja bhale Radha Krsna caranaravinda(?)" At 5.30am, they would have breakfast in the summer season, or at 7.00am in the winter. After mangalarati they had different services. Some would go out for biksha or collecting, some took bath, some took bath later. Most devotees went out during the day for preacing. there was no fixed time for japa but everyone was expected to chant sixteen rounds. After prasadam at 12.30pm...Between(?) 9.00 - 10.00pm(?) devotees would come in to chant japa. SP emphasized, "sevonmukhe hi jihvadau - Krsna can only be understod by service." He would take the same prasadam as the devotees but at night he would take milk and puris and a little sabji, whereas the other devotees would take rice, dahl, and sabji (also at night or not?) Everyday in the Math, from 2.00pm - 3.00pm, there was an istha gosthi (some discussion). devotees would come back from biksha which means they would go door to door and ask for some collection. Naturally people would ask, "What are we giving for? and there might be some philosophical question. So those who couldn't give the answer, the brahmacaris, they would say, "Alright, I will come again tomorrow and then I wil give you the answer!" During the istha gosthi they would then discuss all the philosophicaal points. The answers would be given by SP and Tirtha Maharaja, whowas also known as Bhaktipradipa Tirtha Maharaja, and who took harernama from Bhaktivinoda Thakura in 1913 and diksha and sannyas from SP. He always acted as the disciple of SP and never thought that because he had taken harernama from Bhaktivinoda Thakura. He never had that feeling that I should be equal to SP and always considered himself just like his disciple. So, like this, the senior devotees, sannyasis, they would give the answers (did just SP and Bhaktipradipa Tirtha Maharaja just give the answers or not?) (Answer: other sannyasis would also). During that istha gosthi time also they wold sing one song before the istha gosthi began of Bhaktivinoda Thakura's in praise of the holy name: "Jaya jaya harinam cid anandam nitya dhama, para tattva aka(?)" and they would discuss especially jaivi dharma and Bhaktivinoda thakura's "Sri Caitanya Siksamrta."

As regards kirtan, SP never liked extensive akors. Akors are very common in Bengali bhajan, kirtan, they will apart from the original song, they will make up or add different lines. Just like for instance we sing the akor in Jaya jaya Gauracandra aratika sobha. We use "Gaurange arotika sobha jaga jana mane lbha" or we sing madhur madhur madhur bhaje" These are akors added on to the original song. It is very common in Bengal that people they will make up different lines to add to the song. Akora means alankara(?) or decoration. Something which brings out the meaning more and more. But SP never liked extensive use of these akoras. He never did arati or puja himself. In the evening arati they would sing, "Jaya Jaya Gauracandre..." just as we do in ISKCON also, and after arati they would always have reading and commentary on the Srimad Bhagavatam. SP, Tirtha Maharaja, and other sannyasis, would give that class and in the Calcutta Bagbazaar Gaudiya math, all the Maths, many people would come to hear this. At least fifty people, because in those days the preaching was very strong, and there was plenty of interest. (Would Ananta Vasudeva and Sundarananda also give class?)

There is a garden in front of the Purushottama Math and monkeys would come and take vegetables, fruits, and so many things. SP would watch and would loudly chant "Hare Krsna" to keep them away. He was always alert for the monkeys.

To Tota Gopinath temple in Puri, SP would go with a kirtan party sometimes and as they were going they would sing the "Gopinath" song of Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

The Gaudiya Math had donated to it a very nice car, and a horse and cart. the horse was very strong, black, and beautiful. In Bagbazaar people would say, "Just see the Gaudiya Math horse." There was some rumour that it ate rasgullas but it didn't. there was also an elephant named Kirtan Das who took the Deity on Vrindavana parikram. The Deity, Caitanya Mahaprabhu, known as Mayapur Sundara(?) or Navadvipa Candra(?) Janaki Nath Bose, the father of Netaji(?) Subhas Candra Bose, who was from Cuttack, donated that elephant along with the horse. That Deity is now being worshipped at (???) in the

Gaudiya Math there, and is known as Koka Nimai. Koka is an affectionate name for a young boy. (???) name was Ramu(?).

SP encouraged essay writing, and every year, at the time of the Navadvipa Dhama Parikram, a prize was for given for essay writing. There was a special name for that prize. The essay could be on any Krsna conscious subject. There was also a two hour examination on the Bhakti Sastri, plus an oral exam. Thhe exam was set by SP. There was also the sampradaya-vaibhavacharya(?) exam which was different to the |Bhakti sastri. It was about the history of the sampradaya. Different Vaishnava sampradayas, different philosophies, converse(?) in the philosophies. That one(?) after Bhakti sastri.

At night one time, in Mayapur, SP walked out from the Yoga Pitha and one devotee saw him going, as he had slipped out without anyone seeing him going. Walking along the road, that devotee, by the grace of SP was able to see a vision of wonderful, beautiful looking people, performing sankirtan. SP turned to that devotee and said, "These are the devotees from the heavenly planets who have come to take darshan of Lord Caitanya's birth place. Jotisekhara remarks that when Jagannatha Das Babaji first went to Lord Caitanya's birth place he also saw the sankirtan party ferom the heavenly planets. He also remarks how the devotees from heaven are also seen. Bhaktivinoda Thakura in his vission of Caitanya's arati, "... Brahma adi deva gane." The demigods, headed by Lord Brahma, worshipperforming sankirtan. SP turned to that devotee and said, "These are the devotees from the heavenly planets who have come to take darshan of Lord Caitanya's birth place. Jotisekhara remarks that when Jagannatha Das Babaji first went to Lord Caitanya's birth place he also saw the sankirtan party ferom the heavenly planets. He also remarks how the devotees from heaven are also seen. Bhaktivinoda Thakura in his vission of Caitanya's arati, "... Brahma adi deva gane." The demigods, headed by Lord Brahma, worshipame down from the Bhaktivijaya Bhavan at 2.00am shouting, "Just see. Just see! Gaura-Nitai are going on kirtan. Follow Them. Follow Them! Come and see!" He was shouting out like this and alll the devotees came to see but they could not see anything.

Of course, the facilities were less in those days, just as we have so much technological facilities these days. Jotisekhara relates how even the wireless radio came later on in SP's preaching mission time. In Cuttak, one person in the town initially had a wireless. At that time there was only one radio station in the whole of India, at Darjeeling, and Haripada Vidyaratna, a disciple of SP, on three occasions was given the opportunity to broadcast vaishnava songs from Darjeeling. The first time he sang Gopinatha, by Bhaktivinoda Thakura. The second time "Tatala-saikate by Vidyapati. The devotees in Cuttak went to the house of the only person, one raja, to listen to that being broadcast.

SP always found, as is the tradition with great realized acharyas, in every line and every word of sastra and our acharyas, so many meanings, so much depth of meaning.

(This section isn't very clear). It seems SP wa walking on the veranda chanting japa. There would always be a dog there (can't understand that part?)

Bhakti sastri classes were held in Mayapur at Bhaktivinoda Thakura's school (the one he established and which was controlled by the Caitanya Math). Devotees joined for one year, and only those who were educated were allowed to join). they could also study privately and all of them took the examination at Mayapur at Gaurapurnima. the Gaudiya Math bore the expenses for those who wanted to study for one year. Those who were not members of the Gaudiya Math were also welcome to follow this course. Every year there were two hundred students for the Bhakti sastri course - fifty in the school and the rest doing private study.

(Much earlier) Bhaktivinoda Thakura wrote a letter mentioning three points what he (SP) should dfo at that time:

- 1. To establish varnashrama dharma.*
- 2. To make a printing press in Mayapur.*
- 3. Not to be a miser, not only to do your bhajan, bot to preach door to door.*

Ajnarudhi - a word understood by people in general. Vidyatrudhi(?) - understood by vidvan (the internal meaning). For example, the mayavadis say we are brahman (Ajnarudhi) but Vidyatrudhi says that brahman is the light coming from God's body. (SP's version). That which is understood by Vidyatrudhi... SP's terms were very technical: ontology, morphology, adhyakika(?), adhoksaja..., so many. Every word he could make a book from.

This is a testimony from Sadhunugraha Prabhu, who was a disciple of SP and also had some relationship with him through Bhaktivinoda Thakura. The Chotimangalpur property of Bhaktivinoda Thakura was eight to ten acres. Whilst he was living there, he was worshiping the salagram sila and Jagannatha - the family Deities. All the festivals such as Dolyatra, Durgapuja, etc., were observed there. Sometimes they would take the Deities around the village in a procession, and since 350 years back, Durgapuja is going on there. Sometimes, when SP visited them, he wouldn't go inside the house, but would stay only in the Chandi-mandapa, the place where Durga was worshipped, though Sadhunugraha says he doesn't know why. there was a big area in front of the house. Sometimes he would walk up and down chanting japa. His father, who was also his disciple told about this...(???) SP used to go occasionally as he had some share in the property.

(Make section on favourite slokas. Ask Jotisekhara also).

Before Lord Caitanya came there was darkness. After He departed there was also again some darkness. The six Goswamis were stars. SP made the Visva Vaishnava Raja Sabha, which was pioneered originally by the Six Goswamis and also done by Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

Introduction (Don't put in Introduction. Make new chapter or put in another chapter).

SP was so revolutionary. Now we hear about him but we are so remote from the

time and circumstances in which he acted, that it is difficult to realize how strong he actually was. His whole life history and everything about him was completely dynamically in line with the reality of Krsna being the Supreme Personality of Godhead and us being the eternal servants, confirmed through the line of Lord Caitanya. He studied the vast expanses of scripture with the aim of establishing the reality which he, as a pure devotee, actually experienced at every moment. He himself putting on a brahmana thred, that it is difficult to realize how strong he actually was. His whole life history and everything about him was completely dynamically in line with the reality of Krsna being the Supreme Personality of Godhead and us being the eternal servants, confirmed through the line of Lord Caitanya. He studied the vast expanses of scripture with the aim of establishing the reality which he, as a pure devotee, actually experienced at every moment. He himself putting on a brahmana thr is claiming a monopoly on truth, actually it is a fact. It was a fact that he was claiming a monopoly on truth because only he was actually in contact with truth. But others who were accustomed to having generation after generation monopoly on making disciples and exploiting them in the name of Lord Caitanya. These peole felt they had an inherent inborn right. Whi is this upstart coming and challenging us, they would feel. So for this, SP was stoned in Navadvipa and and tewmples closed on him in Vrndavan. His life was threatened several times. What about his coming into Vrndavan in a motor-car! So revolutionary. He challenged everyone. Rupanuga viruddha pasiddhanta dhvanta harine(?). Anything that was not in the line of Rupa Goswami, as he saw it, not as others interpreted Rupa Goswami. Even those who could trace out diksha parampara lines of Rupa Goswami, for even those, he said, "You are not following properly!" He studied everyone and everything, still he preserved his humility and gentlemanly behaviour, but he did not, would not, could not, compromise. Being given the special mission by Lord Caitanya he had a dream to come out of his bhajan. All the Panch Tattva, six goswamis, all acharyas - come out of your bhajan and estqablsh our mission as it must be established properly now. So on the strength of his conviction, with this conviction, with the knowledge the whole parampara and God HImself is directly behind him, he preached with unprecedented, unrelenting, boldness. Noone had preached as boldly as this in the history of Gaudiya Vaishnavism. Narottama Das Thakura also on this

principle of caste defied the standard conception that one from a lower caste than brahmana can be given initiation and can then also give initiation. SP did not only defy that conception but he decried it. He publicly said that not only did he go against the social convention but he publicly, loudly decried the social convention. That your so-called initiation is not initiation at all. They were saying to him that your initiation is not bona fide, and he came back at them with great strength quoting from sastra that your initiation is not bona fide, only my initiation is bona fide. He argued just like a lawyer. He practically established I am the acharya. This is the way to follow Lord Caitanya. Everything else going on in the name of Lord Caitanya is all rotten. If you want to follow Lord Caitanya follow me. This was practically his message. He did not say that directly but by condemning everything that did not follow Lord Caitanya properly. If we examine what is left there is no one following in exactly the proper way exactly as he himself. This book gives a more personal look at SP than has ever been available before in any language through the eyes of realizations of the devotees who lived with him.

Author's Submission

It is practically a joke that such a miniscule insect as myself could dare to write something about SP. If I compare my position to that of a particle of dust that has even once come into contact with his divine lotus feet, I find mine to be much inferior. Still, SP is adhama janara bandhu - the friend of the fallen people - and gaura vani sri murtaye dina tarini - the personification of the teachings of Lord Caitanya, the deliverer of the fallen souls. Having made little or no progress in Krsna consciousness, even after nearly twenty years of making a show of devotional service, I find myself as if stuck perpetually in the slough of loathsome material desires. Finding myself in such an abominable condition, I have come to the conclusion that there is absolutely no other way for my elevation but to try to get the mercy of the acharyas, especially that of my initiating spiritual master and saviour, His Divine Grace, ACBSP, who is the representative of all the previous acharyas. It is through his divine grace that

not only insignificant me, but also almost everyone else in the whole universe, can be connected to SP, and through him to the whole parampara up to Lord Caitanya and Krsna. As Ganga is offered to Ganga, I offer this collection of anecdotes to my spiritual master, SACBSP, and through him to my param guru, SP. Having offered it to them, I also offer it to Jotisekhar Prabhu, to whom this book belongs more than it does to me. I pray to them all that they may be pleased with this attempt and bless me that at least I may cease to be a burden on them, and that some day I may be able to do something very pleasing to them in their preaching mission.

Renunciation Through Wisdom (Sword of Knowledge) p.68 - For BST Book.

Ask Jotisekhara about SP's most quoted slokas.

Jotisekhara quoted a quote SP made from Rg Veda about the holy name. That is quoted in SB.11.2.49 purport.

SP: I am speaking, you are hearing, but there is a gap between us." This statement gives us some hint of how a great Vaisnava preacher, although moving among us, apparently as one of us, is always apart from us. SP had many disciples at different levels of spiritual advancement, all committed to following him. Some were apparently advanced and intimate, yet SP himself knew of the great gap between himself and his followers. Even his close associates could not catch up with him. Later events showed that almost all of his disciples had failed to grasp the essential purpose of his mission. Even those who had some realization of what he wanted (a strong, united, preaching movement) were later unable to implement it very effectively (with the obvious exception of one disciple). This profound statement also gives insight into the "lonely" position of a guru and a sannyasi. Of course, mahabhagavata devotees are never lonely, because they are fixed in their relationship with Krsna. But in this world, there may be few or no people for them to relate with on an equal, friendly platform.

SP's favourite bhajans were Yasomatinandana, Sri Rupa Manjari Pada, Harinama tuya aseka svarupa.

SP said and also wrote that, "I have never made any disciples. All are my gurus." he would not chastise his disciples. Automatically their wrongs would be corrected by the greatness of his personality.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura openly expressed (in his Navadvipa-dhama-bhava-tarangini) his siddha svarupa (eternal form in Krsna lila): seven and a half year old Kamala Manjari, a young gopi girl. But SP never revealed his siddha svarupa. Madhava Maharaja, who came to prominence for his widespread preaching in Bengal after SP's disappearance, ascertained that SP was Nayana Manjari: the personification of Radha's looking at Krsna (nayana means "eye"). When Madhava Maharaja secured the birthplace of SP at Puri and installed the Deities there, he named Them "Sri Sri Radha Nayananda Jiu". ACBSP has written in this regard:....

In the early days of the Caitanya Math, when it was just being established, the local Muslim villagers created many disturbances in an attempt to stop the development of the Math. Once, they tried to dig a graveyard at the place where SP used to chant. Binode Bihari Prabhu (an active and fearless administrator, always ready to tackle difficult situations, later became the well-known Kesava Maharaja) was deputed by SP to keep guard on that area. BBP kept watch on horseback. The Muslims knew BBP and feared him. they did not create any disturbance again.

SP called the GM "Banihatta" (Vanihatta - the marketplace of spiritual instruction; similar to the Namhatta, the marketplace of the holy name established by Nityananda Prabhu).

3. His Devotees (Disc 1)

Bhagavata Janananda Prabhu, a brahmacari from Mednapur District, who was young, around 22 (Whatever that story is that's lost because we ran off the edge of the tape).

and would ask the devotees to get a haari(?) to clean the toilet. A haari(?) is a member of one of the lowest castes in India whose work includes cleaning toilets - a job everyone else despises. It is considered a very low-class job. At times, when devotees were inclined to cleaning his toilet, he would insist on a haari(?) Once, Jotisekhara, who is narrating these stories, cleaned SP's toilet for two days and on the third day, when SP saw him doing this, he told him to take diksha (he had already taken harernama) and on that very day he gave him diksha.

(???) Radha Govinda Babaji, he would dance in various, extraordinary ways.

There is one story concerning Kunja Bihari where there is a photo of Jagabandhu Bhaktirajan(?), who made the Bagbazaar Gaudiya Math, sitting at the feet of Kunjada, who is sitting in a chair. SP didn't like this when he saw it, that one godbrother should take a guru-like position, as it is the wrong etiquette. Godbrothers criticized Kunjabihari and SP was very sorry that he was criticizing (the story is not very clear).

Every year, SP would send devotees from Calcutta, especially Vinoda Babu, who later became known as Kesava Maharaja, for collection of taxes and fees(?) The land was rented out and SP used to have some share in it. Vinoda was appointed manager on SP's behalf.

In Mayapur, some land was given by a zamindar of Navadvipa and Mohammedan villagers who were farming the land. They were supposed to give taxes but they didn't give, so Vinoda Babu, who later became Kesava Maharaja, called all those Mohammedan land-tillers. Vinoda Babu was involved in

administration and difficult things like this, collecting taxes. He was a strong character. There was one jack-fruit tree in front of the Caitanya Math. That's still there. So he tied those people to the tree and put mud on their head as a kind of public insult, punishment. These were methods used in those days, much milder than the methods used nowadays. Nowadays, if there is a land dispute, it's usually just killing that's all. In India, SP saw this. He was not happy. SP said, "We are sadhus. We should not give so much trouble others. Let them go and give them maha-prasadam. (See Sword of Knowledge p68).

It is said that B.R. Sridhara Maharaja would remember all the points of SP's speeches and would assimilate the essence within his heart.

SP called one devotee and told him to take sannyasa. that devotee fell at SP's feet saying, "I won't take sannyasa now, I'm afraid." Sp then said, "Why be afraid? You are on the path of fearlessness. You are going to the kingdom of fearlessness. Just like if you go to the Himalayas will there be any fear of heat? You are on the path back to Godhead, there is no need to fear." He gave him sannyasa with the title "Bhakti Vicara Jajabara Maharaja".

SP used to call AV "my Ganesa" because he used to help in writing and preaching, just as Ganesa helped Vyasadeva. Sometimes, while giving lectures SP would speak animatedly for some minutes, so quickly that it was difficult to understand. Then he would stop and ask AV to explain what he had said, which AV would do exactly.

AV was an expert singer and mrdanga player. SP would often ask him to sing. If he asked others to sing, he would tell them which song to sing, but with AV he didn't. It was as if AV knew his masters mind. AV could sing bhajans for a long time without getting tired.

One time in Puri, at the Lila kutir, there was one room near to Haridas Thakura's samadhi, and SP was staying there. He liked to hear "Yashomatinandana" sung when he was there. Ananta Vasudeva was an expert singer and mrdanga player and SP liked to hear him sing.

SP appointed three devotees as trustees of the Gaudiya Math: Ananta Vasudeva,

Kunjabihari Vidyabhusana, and Paramananda Vidyaratna. In the GM there was a saying: "If you want to know about siddhanta (philosophy) you should go to Vasudeva Prabhu, and if you want to know about service (seva) you should go to Kunja Babu." AV was known as "siddhanta vigraha" (the personification of correct philosophical conclusions) and Kunja babu as "seva vigraha" (the perfection of service). No one knew what glories Paramananda Prabhu possessed, but somehow SP loved him very much. Paramananda was the only person who dared joke with SP.

Jadumani Patnaik, the grandfather of Janaki Ballabh Patnaik, lived most of his life as a grhastha in the GM. When he became old and infirm and found it difficult to stay in the Math, SP advised him to go and live at home again. "You are from a Vaisnava family, so there is no harm. They will be able to properly care for you."

5. His Nature and Dealings with Devotees (Disc 1).

Sometimes SP appeared deeply absorbed in thought, as if engaged in thinking in the welfare of all living beings. Sometimes he became like a lion and spoke so strongly on Vaisnava philosophy that others became afraid of him. Again, when he taught the Bhagavatam to his students, he expressed a different demeanour. Although he manifested different moods at different times, he was always absorbed in Krsna and was never frivolous or mundane.

SP was very affectionate to his disciples. If he had not been it would not have been possible to attract so many men to join him, leaving their affectionate mothers and families. (Indian families are traditionally very tight-knit, and Bengali mothers in particular are known for their profuse love for their sons). If SP had not been affectionate, few could have remained. Had he simply taught the scriptures, administered rules and regulations, and used harsh words, few could have come. He was so affectionate it could hardly be described. He was always concerned for his disciples, not only for their spiritual welfare, but for their material welfare also. If grhastha disciples came to serve in the Math, SP

after some time, would see that their families, if in need of it, got some money.