

XIII

GLEANINGS FROM THE BHAKTA-MALA

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I. PRIYA-DASA'S PREFACE, AND THE FIRST FOUR VERSES.

IN the series of papers of which this is the first, I hope to give, as opportunity allows, as full an account as possible of the contents of the *Bhakta-māla* of Nābhā-dāsa, a work of which the importance has long been recognized, but the difficulties of which have hitherto repelled serious students. It is acknowledged as the great authority in regard to the history of the saints of the Bhāgavata reformation started by Rāmānuja, Madhva, and others, in the twelfth century A.D., and also, incidentally, as a compendium of the tenets of that religion. Indeed, a somewhat minute study of the work has convinced me that it is impossible to understand the various phases of modern Hinduism as professed by the Vaiṣṇava sects without a knowledge of its contents.

Nābhā-dāsa lived early in the seventeenth century,¹ and his work, undertaken at the instance of his teacher, Agra-dāsa, is written in old Western Hindī, and mainly in the *Chappai* metre. It is not a book to be studied by itself. In the short space of a little over two hundred verses he gives accounts, not only of the saints of his time, but also of the gods and heroes of past ages. After a short preface he commences with the incarnations of the ADORABLE Himself, and the next twenty-three verses are devoted to the saints of olden time, from Brahmā downwards. It is not till the

¹ According to Bh., the *Bhakta-māla* takes us down to *Sambat* 1696, or 1639 A.D.

28th verse that he reaches the Kali Yuga, and deals with the four modern Vaiṣṇava *saṁpradāyas* or churches founded by Nimbāditya, Rāmānuja, Madhva, and Viṣṇu-svāmin respectively. In fact, the book partakes of the nature of the sūtra-works of Sanskrit literature. It is written in an extremely compressed style, every possible superfluous word being omitted, and every epithet being intended as the clue to some legend not otherwise recorded. Hence a translation of the mere text would be of little use. Under his instructions his pupil Priyā-dāsa (referred to in what follows as "P.") wrote a commentary explaining the various allusions in the text. This commentary really forms an integral portion of the work, and owing to the circumstances of its composition is of equal authority with the rest. Priyā-dāsa's language is itself often difficult to understand, and has become the subject of other commentaries. Those which I have consulted are the following :—

1. *Bhakta - kalpadruma*, by Rājā Pratāpa Siṁha (quoted as BhK.), 4th ed., Lucknow, 1884. This is a translation of the Urdū *Bhaktamāla - pradīpana* of Tulasī-rāma. The latter is a translation and rearrangement of the original *Bhakta-māla* including P. Pratāpa Siṁha's version of this was originally in Braj Bhāṣā, and was put into modern Hindī and prepared for the press by Paṇḍit Kālī-carāṇa. It is a useful and convenient work, but must be used with caution, as the original Persian character has not always been read correctly by the author.

2. *Bhaktamāla-prasaṅga*, in Gujarātī, by Gōpāla-dāsa Prabhu-rāma Mehetā (quoted as G.). Printed at Ahmadābād, *circa*. 1901.

3. *Bhakti-prēmākara*, a commentary in Hindī verse written in the Gurmukhī character, by Kīrti Siṁha (K.). Printed at Amritsar, n.d.

4. *Bhakta-sudhāvindu-svāda*, in modern Hindī prose,

by Śrī Sītārāma-śaraṇa Bhagavān Prasāda (Bh.). Printed at Benares. In course of publication. This excellent work has been, so far as it yet goes, my chief authority in doubtful points.

Nābhā's work is universally known as the *Bhakta-māla*, but the author himself, in the concluding verse, calls it the *Bhakta-nāma-māla*. The name of Priyā-dāsa's commentary is the *Bhakti-rasa-bōdhinī* (see below, p. 610).

Other abbreviations employed in the following pages are:

Bhg. G. = *Bhagavad Gītā*.

Bhg. P. = *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

MBh. = *Mahābhārata* (Calcutta ed.).

V.P. = *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.

The translation of Nābhā's original text is printed in clarendon type in order to distinguish it from the commentary. This translation is as literal as I can make it. I have treated P. with more freedom, supplementing the frequent lacunæ as much as possible from the other works named above.

Several words, which are almost technical terms, are of frequent occurrence, and these I have endeavoured in each case to represent throughout by the same English word. Any deviation from this will be noted at the place where it happens. These words are—

Bhagavat, rendered "The ADORABLE".

bhakta „ "faithful".

bhakti „ "faith". See note 14 on p. 614.

dāsa „ "liegeman".

Hari „ "The LORD".

Hari-jana „ "servant of The LORD".

jana „ "servant".

mukti „ "salvation".

Prabhu „ "The Master".

sādhū „ "saint".

sant „ "the holy".

PRIYĀ-DĀSA'S PREFACE.

The Command.

1. Once was I meditating on the soul-entrancing¹ feet of the great Master Caitanya,² and with my mouth was singing the praises of his name. At that time did Nābhā-jū give me the command to utter a complete commentary on the *Bhakta-māla*. "Compose it," said he, "in the *Kavitta* metre, so that it may be sweet to hear and may be famous in the world." When his words had ceased (I was filled with dismay, for) I knew the ignorance of my mind ; but, nathless, had I read in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa that when Śuka entered the forest³ (even the trees could speak), and even so (when thus Nābhā had entered my heart) to me came utterance.

The Name of the Commentary.

2. I composed my verses, and made them very sweet and pleasant to hear. I wiped out all repetitions ; and truth, conveyed in soft sounding syllables, with the harmonies of alliterations and double meanings, poured forth in a shower of delight. Good is it not to extol my poetry with my own mouth, but Nābhā (who entered into me) is its real author, and therefore may I boast. Of a surety the Flavours of Faith will enter the heart of him who continually heareth it, and therefore do I call this commentary "The Awakener of the Flavours of Faith" (*Bhakti-rasa-bōdhinī*).

¹ *Mana-harana*. This is also a side allusion to the author's own *Guru*, Manōhara-dāsa.

² The famous Vaiṣṇava apostle (1485-1527 A.D.) who converted Bengal. He was disciple and son-in-law of Vallabhācārya.

³ The story of Śuka is given later on (verse 7). The allusion here is to the legend that when his father Vyāsa searched for him, lamenting, in the forest, the trees whispered consolation to him, and explained to him the mystery that there was really no distinction between "I" and "thou", "father" and "son", and so on.

NOTE ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE TERM "FLAVOUR" IN CONNEXION
WITH THE *Bhakti* RELIGION.

Bhakti doctors have utilized the *rasas* or "flavours", "feelings", "sentiments", of Indian poetics for the purposes of their religion. Writers on poetics count nine of these *rasas* as comprehended in the art of poetry. The *Bhakti* writers, while employing the same technical terminology, have a different list, numbering only five. As the question of these *rasas* is of importance for understanding the modern developments of the *Bhakti* religion, I give the following account of the system :—

Every religious attitude depends upon an objective **Dominant Emotion**, *sthāyī bhāva*, considered as an abstract condition, without reference to the sensations aroused by it. There are five of these Dominant Emotions—

1. Resignation, *prasānta bhāva*.
2. Obedience, *dāsya bhāva*.
3. Friendship, *sākhya bhāva*.
4. Tender Fondness, *vātsalya bhāva*.
5. Passionate Love, *rati bhāva*.

It will be observed that these are arranged in an ascending scale of emotional force.

These Dominant Emotions may have **Accessory Emotions**, *vyabhicārī bhāva* or *saṁcārī bhāva*. These are not essential to the Dominant Emotions, but may go along with and co-operate with any of them, either permanently or occasionally. These Accessory Emotions are thirty-three in number, and are such as disgust with worldly things (*nirvēda*), apprehension (*śaṅkā*), painful thoughts (*cintā*), and the like. The complete list can be found in any of the textbooks on Indian poetics,¹ and need not be given here.

Each of these Dominant Emotions, whether accompanied by an Accessory Emotion or not, produces a corresponding subjective psychic condition or feeling, technically called *rasa* or "**Flavour**" in the person subjected to it. These flavours are, in the order of the corresponding underlying Dominant Emotions—

1. The Resigned Flavour, *śānti rasa*.
2. The Obedient Flavour, *dāsya rasa*.
3. The Friendly Flavour, *sākhya rasa*.
4. The Tenderly Fond Flavour, *vātsalya rasa*.
5. The Passionately Loving Flavour, *śṛṅgāra rasa* or *mādhurya rasa*.

The last, which is the highest stage, is also called the "King of Flavours", *rasa-rāja*, or the "Glorious Flavour", *ujjvala rasa*.

Every Flavour must have an Exciting Cause or **Excitant** *vibhāva*, to induce its development from the underlying Dominant Emotion. Such an Excitant may be either **Essential**, *ālambana vibhāva*, or **Enhancing**, *uddīpana vibhāva*. An Essential Excitant is one on which the Flavour

¹ See, for instance, my edition of the *Lāla-candrikā*, p. 45.

is dependent, and without which it could not be excited. Again, these Essential Excitants may be either **Absolutely Essential** (*viṣayāḷambana*) or **Relatively Essential** (*āśrayāḷambana*). An Absolutely Essential Excitant is that on which the Flavour is absolutely dependent. Thus, in religion, it is the object towards which the underlying Dominant Emotion of Resignation, Obedience, Friendship, or the like, is directed, i.e., the Supreme Deity, or one of His incarnations, such as Rāma-candra.

The Relatively Essential Excitants are those which immediately excite the Flavour, and lead the Emotion to be ultimately directed to the Supreme. Such is, for instance, Sitā as the Relatively Essential Excitant applied to the Dominant Emotion of Passionate Love. She, in her capacity as Relatively Essential Excitant, excites in the devotee the Flavour of Passionate Love, i.e. causes the subjective Flavour to arise from the Dominant Emotion considered as an objective abstract entity. But this ultimately leads to the Flavour of Passionate Love directed to the Absolutely Essential Excitant, her husband, Rāma-candra, who was an incarnation of the Supreme Deity Himself.

An Enhancing Exciting Cause (*uddīpana vibhāva*) is that which enhances the excitement of the Flavour. Such are the qualities, actions, gestures, or beauty of any of the Essential Exciting Causes (*ālambana vibhāva*). For instance, Rāma-candra's cherishing of those who take refuge with him, or His love for His liegemen, is an enhancing exciting cause of the Flavour of Obedience.

When the psychic condition, or Flavour of a Dominant Emotion, has thus been excited, certain effects occur. These are called **Ensuaunts** (*anubhāva*). The most important of these are the eight so-called *sāttvika bhāvas*, **Natural Expressions of Emotion**, which are here enumerated in order of succession—

1. Arrest of Motion, *stambha*.
2. Trembling, *kampa*.
3. Disturbance of Speech, *svara-bhaṅga*.
4. Change of Colour, *vaivarṇya*.
5. Tears, *āśru*.
6. Sweating, *svēda*.
7. Thrills, *pulaka*.
8. Unconsciousness, *pralaya*.

Other less important Ensuaunts are such as fluster, pining, or involuntary gestures. These are all physical. Other Ensuaunts may be spiritual, such as a feeling of devotion, rapture, and so on.

From the above it will be seen that the Hindū love for systems of classification has been carried even into the province of religious emotion ; and a very little consideration will show how closely Indian religious experiences, and especially the phenomena attendant on what we should call "conversion", agree with what we know to be prevalent in Christian England.

On the opposite page I give in tabular form examples of each of these categories, mainly taken from Bh.

DOMINANT EMOTION, whether accompanied by one of the thirty- three Accessory Emo- tions or not.	EXCITANTS.		ENHANCING.	FLAVOURS.	ENSUANTS.
	ESSENTIAL.				
	ABSOLUTELY.	RELATIVELY.			
1. Resignation . . .	The ADORABLE, or one of His incarnations.	Brahmā, Śiva, Sanaka, and othersaints who practised resigna- tion.	Study of the Upani- sads.	Resigned (<i>sānti</i>).	Concentration of Mind, Unselfishness, Free- dom from Passions, and the like.
2. Obedience . . .	Ditto.	Hanumān, Prahlāda, Brahmā, Śiva, and other saints noted for obedience.	The ADORABLE'S graciousness to those who take refuge with Him, or who serve Him.	Obedient (<i>dāśya</i>).	Carrying out the ADOR- ABLE'S commands, using rosaries, wear- ing sectarian marks, a pure life, and the like.
3. Friendship . . .	Ditto.	Lakṣmaṇa, Vibhīṣana, Sugrīva, and other persons famous as being intimate friends of one of the incarnations of the Supreme.	Thoughts of Rāma's harness, such as His bow, arrow, etc., or of His gentle voice.	Friendly (<i>sākhya</i>).	Joy in the feeling that the ADORABLE is ever near.
4. Tender Fondness.	Do. Especially in the incar- nations of the Child - Rāma and the Child- Kṛṣṇa.	Rāma's and Kṛṣṇa's Mothers, and the like.	The baby ways of the Child - Rāma and the Child - Kṛṣṇa. Their childish orna- ments and play.	Tenderly Fond (<i>vātsalya</i>).	Joy on the birthdays of these two incar- nations. Special de- votion to the Child- Rāma or the Child- Kṛṣṇa. Love for children generally.
5. Passionate Love .	The ADORABLE, or one of His incarnations.	Śītā or Rādhā, the beloved of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa respec- tively.	The spring season, the voice of the cuckoo, a woman's smile, or her voice, or other excitants of earthly love, as suggesting the divine love.	Passionately Loving (<i>śrīgāra</i>).	Special reverence for Śītā or for Rādhā. Mental absorption in their love for Rāma or Kṛṣṇa re- spectively.

Any one of the Accessory Emotions (*vyabhicārī bhāva*) may appear in each case. Thus the Flavour of Passionate Love may develop either from the Dominant Emotion of Passionate Love alone, or from it accompanied by the Accessory Emotion of melancholy (*viṣāda*) or by any other of the thirty-three.

The Adornment of the Lady Faith.

3. Trust¹ is the scented oil, and Hearing the Story of the LORD² is the cosmetic. Dwelling on Him in the heart³ is the clear water in which she batheth, and which removeth from every limb the foulness of spiritual Pride.⁴ Mercy⁵ is her bathing cloth, Humility⁶ her apparel, and Steadfastness⁷ is the odorous scent. The name of the LORD⁸ is the jewel-array, Devotion to the LORD and to His Saints⁹ is the ear-pendant, and Silent Prayer¹⁰ is the nose-ring. Company with the Holy¹¹ is the collyrium of the eyes, and Love¹² the scarlet of the lower lip.¹³ These are the fair adornments of the Lady Faith. Sung is it in the Scriptures that he who gazeth upon them becometh united with the LOVER and the BELOVED.¹⁴

4. The essence of the five Flavours of Resignation, Obedience, Friendship, Tender Fondness, and Passionate Love, is well and fully sung herein. Considering in

¹ *Śraddhā*, defined as loving delight (*prīti-pratīti-sahita sprhā*) in the Scriptures and in the words of the Teacher (*guru*).

² *Śravaṇa kathā*.

³ *Manana*.

⁴ *Abhimāna*.

⁵ *Dayā*.

⁶ *Navanī*.

⁷ *Pana*.

⁸ *Nāma Hari*.

⁹ *Hari-sādhu-sēvā*. The word *Hari* is here what is called *dēhālī-dīpaka*, referring both to what precedes and to what follows. The Commentator says that devotion to the LORD is the right ear-pendant and devotion to His saints the left one.

¹⁰ *Mānasī pūjā*.

¹¹ *Sat-saṅga*.

¹² *Cāha*.

¹³ Literally, "the roll of betel." Indian women's lips, reddened by betel-chewing, are much admired.

¹⁴ i.e. with Rāma and his spouse Sītā. The essence of *bhakti* is love devoted to the Supreme. Cf. Śāṇḍilya, I, i, 2, *sā parā 'nuraktir Īśvarē*, in its highest form it is affection directed to the Supreme, and Nārada, I, i, 2, *sā Kasmāi parama-prēma-rūpā*, its form is a supreme love devoted to KA.

The word *bhakti* is not easy to represent by one word in English. "Faith" is its best equivalent, but in the sense of "devotional faith", not of "belief". Just as St. James said that "the devils also believe, and tremble", so Svapnēśvara in his commentary to the above *sūtra* of Śāṇḍilya says "knowledge of God can be found even in those that hated Him". It, together with *bhakta*, which I translate by "faithful", and *Bhagavat*, the name, *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, of the Supreme Deity, which I represent by the ADORABLE, is derived from the root *bhaj*, in the meaning of "love", "adore".

thy heart, thou wilt see the beauty of this commentary and how matchlessly this beauty is displayed. Men from whose eyes tears have never flowed, whose bodies have never felt a thrill, even such hath it plunged into the ocean of Emotion,¹ and hath filled with rapture. Only so long as a man remaineth afar off, doth he turn away his face completely from it. Let him but once lend his ear, and his heart will melt in love for the Supreme.

5. These five flavours are sweet flower-posies of five varied hues, from which thou canst weave garlands of victory² wherewith to adorn the BELOVED. Over it hovereth a passionate bee, whose name is Nābhā, and when the Lord Śyāma³ seeth it His soul is filled with longing. He taketh it and lovingly doth He wreath it o'er His heart, nor ever layeth it aside. But lo! how rare is its action; for the garland of Passionate Love,⁴ borne low by the burden of its Faith, slippeth down, and humbly encircleth His lotus feet. So followeth it that he, who but once obtaineth a vision of Faith, becometh filled with perfect love.

6. The tree of Faith was but a sapling, that might be stunted by a single kid. It was given the fence of discrimination, and sprinkled with the water of consort with the Holy. It began to wax great, and branches and twigs did it put forth on every side. It climbed to the sky, and its glory spread manifold over the earth, for the basin from which its roots drew moisture was the bosom of the Holy. Glorious and widespread was its shade. All

¹ i.e. the five Dominant Emotions (*sthāyī bhāva*), from which spring the five Flavours.

² The *Vaijayanti mālā* is a garland of victory, worn specially by Viṣṇu.

³ A name of Kṛṣṇa.

⁴ There are five garlands, each representing one of five Flavours. The one which represents the highest Flavour—that of Passionate Love (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*)—is the most humble of all, and seeks not the place of honour over the LORD's heart, but is happy and content when lying at His feet.

things that live found coolth, and drew fresh life beneath it. Mark well its growth. Once was it a feeble thing for whose sake we feared a goat, and now, shackled to that wondrous tree, contentedly sway mighty elephants.¹

Nābhā.

7. The nature of each saint whom he describeth, he hath displayed in *Kavitta* metre, like unto a transparent veil half hiding a precious jewel. Their virtues are without end, yet hath he told them all in syllables few in number, but full of meaning, even as great poets are the assay-masters of words. When it heareth them, the Assembly of the Holy cometh together, as though it were a swarm of bees, and hovereth around them. "Behold," cry they, "these words are wondrous sweet. Heard have we before men tell of Agra, but now know we for ourselves that of a verity Agra² he is indeed. From him came *Cōā* in the form of *Nābhā*, and the fragrance that its musk gave forth was the sweet *Bhakta-māla*."

The Bhakta-māla.

8. Be a man ne'er so full of Faith, spend he night and day in hymning the Supreme, be he so holy as to free the world from sin, repeat he the NAME with ne'er so full a heart, be he full of wisdom and of joy, honour he in all truth the LORD and His Holy Ones, be he free from the way of the world, know he the root of love—let him be

¹ i.e., the elephants of Knowledge, Freedom from Desire, and other virtues. It is worthy of note that P. here admits the comparatively modern expansion of the belief in the *Bhakti-mārga*.

² There is here an elaborate series of double meanings. *Agara*, the Braj form both of Agra and of *aguru*, means not only Agra-dāsa, the famous teacher of *Nābhā*, but also the fragrant aloe (*aguru*). *Cōā* is a fragrant unguent made up of this aloe, musk, and other ingredients. *Nābhā* is either the proper name or else the equivalent of *nāfa*, musk. *Nābhā*, the writer, is therefore *cōā*, as containing fragrant aloes through his spiritual descent from Agra (*aguru*), and also as being himself musk (*nāfa*). This *cōā*, or *Nāfa*, gives forth the *Bhakta-māla* as its sweet odour.

all these, yet still is it hard to accomplish Faith. Nay, how can she be accomplished, for she is not to be understood? Before her the soul trembleth and the heart melteth. Fair is she with the ADORABLE'S mark upon her forehead, and with His wreath upon her bosom; but till a man knoweth the "Wreath of the Faithful" (*Bhakta-māla*), her beauty will remain far from him and unknown.

NĀBHĀ'S TEXT.

Dōhā.

1. (1) The Faithful, Faith, the ADORABLE, and the Teacher, these are four but in name. In essence they are one. The twofold offences are utterly destroyed by homage of their feet.

Notes.

The Faithful, *bhakta*, is he who loves not only the Lord, but also his Teacher and his brethren in the Faith, with a pure and holy love. Faith, *bhakti*, is the love itself. The ADORABLE, *Bhagavanta*, is the Lord, who divests Himself of His lordship when that love is laid before Him. The Teacher, *guru*, is he who implants the love in the heart of the devotee. The ADORABLE is immanent in each of these four. Each is in essence the Divine in a different form. Therefore each is to be adored. In Western language we might say that the brotherhood of man is a necessary inference from the universal fatherhood of God. As Growse (*Mathura*, p. 178) well says, this couplet is a compendium of the theory upon which the whole Vaiṣṇava reform was based. It declares that there is a divinity in every true believer, whether learned or unlearned, and irrespective of all caste distinctions.

"Offence," *vighna*, must be taken in the Biblical sense of "stumbling-block". Offences are "not one" (*anēka*), like each of the four just mentioned, but are twofold in nature, inasmuch as they may spring either from the heart within, or from without.

Priyā-dāsa's commentary on this introductory verse is confined to defining the four words which form its subject. He says: "Verily he alone is Faithful (*bhakta*) who hath true love for the LORD, the Teacher, and the Liegemen (*dāsani*), and who ne'er in his heart turneth aside from the single vow which he hath taken upon himself.

"As for Faith (*bhakti*), whose form is the five Flavours (*rasa-rūpa*), the charm of her nature (*svarūpa*) is known by this, that when a Faithful one taketh the dear Name of the LORD, tears of love well forth from his eyes.

"The ADORABLE is He Who heedeth naught but the love proffered to Him by the Holy. He putteth far from Him the majesty and might of His lordship, and receiveth even the lowest to His companionship.¹

"The Teacher shows his teachership to be true when full of love he singeth like Śrī Paihārī."²

TEXT.

Dōhās.

2. (2) Weighing all benisons and blessings, but one alone is perfect. While a Servant of the LORD singeth the glory of the Servants of the LORD, he becometh an embodied benison himself.

3. (3) So hath it been established by the Holy, so by the Vēdas, the old scriptures, the histories: two only are worthy of adoration, the LORD and the Liegemen of the LORD.

4. (4) AGRA, the honoured, gave the order, "Sing thou the glory of the Faithful. No other means is there for crossing the Ocean of Existence (to the haven of Perfect Peace)."

¹ Examples, the Vulture Jatāyu, the Śavari, the Nisāda, the Pāṇḍavas, all of whom are duly dealt with in the *Bhakta-māla*. The inclusion of the Pāṇḍavas in this list is remarkable, but they are the only example given by Priyā-dāsa. The other examples are taken from other commentaries. The whole idea is a remarkable echo of St. Paul's famous passage in his Epistle to the Philippians (ii, 6, 7): ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ἀλλ' ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.

² Kṛṣṇa-dāsa Paihārī, a most famous *Bhakti*-Teacher. He is dealt with at length in the *Bhakta-māla*, in his proper place.

Notes.

"Old Scripture," a translation of *purāṇa*, as "histories" is of *itihāsa*. Verses 2 and 3 are the reason for the fourth. The commentators prefix "Therefore" to "Agra". Agra-dāsa was Nābhā's spiritual teacher, and Priyā-dāsa gives the following legend as to the command. As elsewhere, I translate freely, with many interpolations to make the meaning clear:—

"Deep plunged in silent rapture was the holy master Agra-dāsa, and, as he sat, Nābhā¹ gently fanned him. It chanced that just then a disciple of the Master, who had embarked upon a ship, lay becalmed upon the ocean, and in his despair betook himself to contemplation on his teacher. His spirit travelled on the wings of memory, and distracting the Master in his meditation brought the disciple to his recollection. But Nābhā, who, though he knew it not, was full of spiritual insight, with his mind's eye saw the wanderer in his trouble. He could not bear that his master's rapture should thus be broken, and so, with a wave of his fan, he sent speeding across space a blast of wind that carried the distant ship upon its way. Then said he, 'My Lord, by thy mercy, and by thy mercy alone, hath the ship been released from its calamity, and hath it gone forward upon its way. Now, prithee, call back thy mind from thence, and again in peace resume thy gaze upon the Perfect Beauty.' The Master unclosed his eyes, and looked towards him saying, 'Who spoke?' 'Lord,' said Nābhā, 'it is thy child whom thou hast succoured, and whom in thy mercy thou hast nourished on the crumbs that fall from thy eating place.'

"Then at this new thing was the Master's mind smitten with wonder, for he saw that a spirit of vision had entered into Nābhā. Joy filled his soul, for he knew that this was

¹ According to the *Bhakti-prēmākara*, Nābhā was 12 years old when this occurred.

only through the power of the Holy. He said, 'My Son, this hath come to thee through the mercy of the Saints. Therefore must thou celebrate their outward forms, their virtues, and the dispositions of their hearts.' But he humbly folded his hands and gave answer to him, 'Master, I may sing of Rāma and of Kṛṣṇa, but ne'er can I gain the power to tell of Faith, for to Her there is no beginning and no end.' But the saint explained to him, 'My Son, they who showed to thee the ship upon the sea, will enter into thy heart and tell thee everything.' "

The expression "the Holy" refers to the general congregation of the Faithful. It was the Divinity immanent in this body as a whole which had inspired Nābhā, and caused him to see the distant ship. At this stage of his commentary Priyā-dāsa gives the following account of Nābhā :—

"Born in the worthy family of Hanumān, he came into this world blind in a new way, for not even were there signs of eyes upon his face.¹ When he was five years old there came a mighty famine in the land, and in her want his widowed mother abandoned him in the forest. The Masters Kilha-dāsa and Agra-dāsa chanced to pass that way and saw him. They asked the orphan child his name and parentage, and Kilha, the elder saint, sprinkled water from his beggar's gourd upon his eyes. Straightway they became opened, and he looked upon the twain.

"With eyes filled with tears he fell at their feet, and in their mercy they took him to themselves. Kilha gave the order, and Agra became his teacher. He whispered in his ear the mystic formula of initiation as a Liegeman of Rāma, and named him Nārāyaṇa-dāsa. To Galtā² he brought him and there put he him to serve the Holy men who assembled there. With much affection did he drink the water in which their feet were washed, and eat the

¹ According to the *Bhakti-prēmākara*, he became blind at 5 years of age as the result of an attack of smallpox.

² A town in Rajputana, near Jaipur. Said to be the site of the hermitage of Gālava Muni.

leavings of their sacramental food, till he himself learned the way of the Perfect Flavours, and till his whole heart was filled with its sweetness. In Faith became he mighty,—who can measure its length or its breadth? Behold, with his matchless words, which were embodied Faith itself, did he sing this *Bhakta-māla*.”

According to tradition, the founder of the Hanumān family was a Māhārāṣṭra Brāhmaṇ named Śrīrāma-dāsa. He lived in the Telugu country near the Godāvarī River, and was a partial incarnation of Hanumān, the monkey hero and follower of Rāma-candra. In proof of this he is said to have been honoured with the possession of a short tail. He was a devout worshipper of Rāma, and all his descendants are believed to have followed in his footsteps. They are also said to have been exceptionally skilful singers.

According to the ordinary story, Nābhā was by caste a Ḍōm, or scavenger. His commentators maintain that this is a mistake due to ignorance of the fact that in Rajputana the word *ḍōm* signifies a professional singer, or, according to others, a monkey. Similarly, Lākṣhā Bhakta (see *Bhakta-māla*, 107) was a Ḍōm and also a member of the Hanumān family.

According to another tradition, Nābhā had no caste, and was not born of a human parent. He was really a drop of Hanumān's sweat, thrown down from the clouds by Śiva for the benefit of mankind, which took the form of a man on reaching the earth. Hence he was called *Nabhabhū-ja*, or born from a cloud, which name became corrupted to Nābhā-jū or Nābhā-jī.

PRIYĀ-DĀSA, the author of the *Bhakti-rasa-bōdhinī*, the earliest commentary on the *Bhakta-māla*, was a Vaiṣṇava of the Madhva Saṁpradāya, and lived in Vṛndāvana. As he tells us in the introductory verses, he wrote it under the direct orders of Nābhā-dāsa. He finished it in the year 1712 A.D. (*Sambat* 1769). This must have been a considerable time after Nābhā's death, but we have the authority of the concluding verses of his commentary for the fact.

II. THE AVATARA SYSTEM OF THE BHAGAVATAS.

The 5th verse of Nābhā's text, and the first in the *Chappai* metre, runs as follows:—

5. (1) Victory! Victory! to the FISH, to the BOAR, to the TORTOISE, to the MAN-LION, to the DWARF of Bali, to PARASŪRĀMA, to RAGHU-VĪRA (i.e. RĀMA-CANDRA), to KRṢṢṆA, whose glory sanctifieth the earth, to the BUDDHA, to KALAKKĪ (i.e. KALKI), to the VYĀSA, to PRĒTHU, to HARI, to the SWAN,

to the **MANVANTARA**, to the **SACRIFICE**, to **RṢABHA**, to **HAYAGRĪVA**, to **Dhruva's BOON-GIVER**, to **DHANVANTARI**, to the **LORDS OF BADARĪ** (i.e. **NARA** and **NĀRĀYAṆA**), to **DATTA** (i.e. **DATTĀTRĒYA**), to **KAPILA-DĒVA**, to **SANAKA** and his **BRETHREN**. O ye four and twenty charming mystic forms, show ye mercy upon me, and do thou, O **Agra-dāsa**, place them, together with thy lotus-foot, upon my heart.

The last sentence alludes to **Agra-dāsa's** doctrine regarding the incarnations, for which see below. The request that he should put his own foot upon the writer's heart is, of course, an expression of devotion and humility. P.'s commentary is—

“Each **Avatāra** is a boundless sea of bliss, and each semblance (*līlā*), in its whole expansion, was taken only for the sake of souls' salvation. When a believer's thoughts are steeped in any one of these forms, there awaketh so great emotion (*bhāva*) in his heart, that it hath no limit. Each incarnation is co-existent and co-eternal,¹ and meditation upon them doth still (in this **Kali Yuga**) illumine the whole inner being. Nay, he who knoweth their essence, hath the joy of a beggar-man that findeth great store of wealth. As crooked locks are charming, so doth the fish give happiness.² Such is the delectable

¹ But not co-equal, see below. The eternal existence of an incarnation is a capital point in **Bhāgavata** doctrine. When an incarnation has carried out its mission it is not again absorbed into the **ADORABLE**, but retains its personal existence for ever. Thus, **Rāma-candra**, though he has long left this earth, is still **Rāma** in heaven, looking down upon his people, guiding them, and keeping them from harm and sin. The importance of such teaching is obvious.

² This is the answer of **Agra-dāsa**, **Nābhā's** teacher, to the objection that the **ADORABLE** should not have become incarnate in crooked and mean forms such as the fish or the tortoise. Crookedness is not necessarily an imperfection, as witness the charming effect of curly hair. There is really a great lesson to be learnt from the fact that the **ADORABLE** did take these mean forms. It shows that in His sight all men are equal, and that He regards not caste or tribe. It is for this reason that **Nābhā**, unlike the *Bhg. P.* (see below), gives prominence to these forms by mentioning them first.

teaching of Agra-dāsa. Ever may it dwell like a fair necklace on my heart."

The keynote of the Bhāgavata system of belief is that Bhagavat, or The ADORABLE, Himself descends (*avatarati*) to this earth for special reasons, such as to create the universe, to help the Faithful, to relieve the world from sin, or to spread the true religion. On this all the rest of the theosophy depends.

The teachers of the religion naturally laid great stress upon this principle. An account of the doctrine as taught by Rāmānuja, and contained in the *Arthapañcaka* of Nārāyaṇa Parivrāj and the *Yatīndramatadīpikā* of Śrīnivāsa, will be found in Professor R. G. Bhandarkar's article on "The Rāmānujiya and the Bhāgavata or Pāñcārātra Systems" on pp. 101 ff. of the Aryan section of the *Verhandlungen des VII. Internationalen Orientalisten-Congresses*. The subject is also dealt with at considerable length in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and, as above, in the *Bhakta-māla*, with its commentaries.

The Bhāgavatas have taken the old Brahmanical system of ten *avatāras*, but have added to it and largely developed it. The word *avatāra* is usually translated "incarnation", but it will be seen that from the Bhāgavata point of view this word has a much wider significance, and I therefore in the early parts of the present notes translate it by "descent". The following account is mainly based on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (with Śrīdhara's and Jīva-Gōsvāmin's commentaries) and the *Bhakta-māla*,¹ checked by Professor Bhandarkar's account of the contents of the two Sanskrit works mentioned above. I have also received help from my old friend Sītārāma-śaraṇa Bhagawān-prasāda, himself a learned and devout Bhāgavata, who is at present engaged in bringing out an excellent edition of Nābhā's important work.

¹ References to the *Bhakta-māla* must be taken as including Priyā-dāsa's commentary, which is really part of the work.

The Deity, besides the usual personal names, Bhagavat, and so forth, is, as such, known as Para or Parātpara, the Supreme. He is a pure spirit, and it is “at His feet”, i.e. in His presence, that the soul abides, immortal and eternal, in perfect bliss, and with a personal identity, when it has been released through *bhakti*, or devotional faith, from the weary round of transmigration.

When this Supreme Para determines for any cause to “descend” He is styled the *Avatārin* or “Descender”. He descends in one of four characters, viz., (A) as a *Vyūha*, or (B) as a *Vibhu* or *Vibhava Avatāra*, or (C) as the *Antaryāmin*, or (D) as an *Arcā Avatāra*.

A. There are usually said to be four *Vyūhas*, or phases of conditioned spirit. These have been fully described in Colebrooke’s *Essays* (i, 437 ff.), and by Dr. Barnett in his English translation of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (pp. 48 ff.). Here it will suffice to explain that as all things, according to Bhāgavata doctrines, proceed from the Supreme,¹ who is pure spirit, a necessity is felt for connecting links between the spiritual and the material. This link is supplied by a series of graduated phases of conditioned spirit or *Vyūhas*. The Bhagavat Avatārin first takes conditioned personality, and in this phase is called “Vāsudēvā”. He becomes such in order that He may serve as an object of devotion, and is, as such, reckoned as the first *Vyūha*. From Him proceed in order three other *Vyūhas*, which forms are assumed for the creation, protection, and dissolution of the world, as follows:—From Vāsudēva proceed *prakṛti*, or indiscrete primal matter, and a secondary phase of conditioned spirit called “Saṁkarṣaṇa”. From the association of Saṁkarṣaṇa with primal matter there proceed *manas* (also called *mahat*), or intelligence, and also a tertiary phase of conditioned spirit called

¹ The Bhāgavata theology, although philosophically allied to the dualistic Sāṅkhya-Yōga, is monist. *Prakṛti*, or indiscrete primal matter, does not exist independently, but proceeds from the Supreme.

“Pradyumna”. From the association of Pradyumna with intelligence there proceed *ahamkāra*, or consciousness, and a phase of conditioned spirit of the fourth degree called “Aniruddha”. These four, Vāsudēva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha, are the four *Vyūhas*.

From the association of Aniruddha with consciousness proceed the *mahābhūtas*, or the grosser elements of Sāṅkhya-yōga, with their qualities, and also Brahmā. Brahmā then, as agent for the Supreme, fashions out of these grosser elements the universe and all that it contains, and proclaims the true religion to the world. When the universe dissolves at the end of a *kalpa*, or æon, the process is reversed. Brahmā and the elements are absorbed into Aniruddha and consciousness, and so on, backwards, till all is absorbed into the Para, or Supreme, who remains quiescent till the next creation.

I have said that the usual doctrine is that there are four *Vyūhas*, but the number is not insisted upon. The Nārāyaṇīya (*MBh.*, xii, 13602) distinctly says that some say that there is only one (Aniruddha), others say that there are two (Aniruddha and Pradyumna), others say that there are three (Aniruddha, Pradyumna, and Saṁkarṣaṇa), and others that there are four (the foregoing three and Vāsudēva). Indeed, while the Nārāyaṇīya generally teaches the existence of all four (e.g. 12893 ff.), in 13034 ff. and 13462 ff. it is Aniruddha alone who is associated in turn with primal matter, intelligence, and consciousness.

B. A *Vibhu* or *Vibhavāvatāra*, i.e. “Evolved Descent”, more nearly approaches our idea of an incarnation, for in it the Supreme Deity, as *Avatārin*, takes the form of some created being for the purpose of aiding His distressed followers, or of spreading the true faith. All the Brahmanical *Avatāras* fall under this head, but the official Bhāgavata list numbers twenty-four, and there are, besides, many others. *Vibhu Avatāras* fall under

two main classes, viz., they are either (I) *Mukhya*, or principal, or (II) *Gauṇa*, or subordinate. *Mukhya Avatāras* are further subdivided into (1) *Pūrṇa Avatāras*, (2) *Aṁśa Avatāras*, and (3) *Kalā Avatāras*. Similarly, *Gauṇa Avatāras* are subdivided into (1) *Śakti Avatāras*, *Kārya Avatāras*, or *Āvēśa Avatāras*, and (2) *Vibhūti Avatāras*. Examples of these various kinds of *Vibhu Avatāras* are the following. Explanations of each example will be given later on.

B, I (1). *Pūrṇa Avatāra*, or Complete Descent. In this the entire Supreme descends. As the *Vācaspatya* explains, the name is employed *Bhagavataḥ sampūrṇāvatāratvāt*. There are at most four of these, viz., Rāma-candra, Kṛṣṇa, the Man-lion, and the Dwarf. The *Śabdakalpadruma*, and, following it, other Sanskrit dictionaries, omit the Dwarf from the list, and, according to S.R.Ś. Bhagawān Prasāda, he is classed by some under this and by others under the next head.

B, I (2). *Aṁśa Avatāra*, or Descent in part. In this a part only of the Supreme descends. They are the Fish, the Boar, the Tortoise, the Dwarf (see above), Hari, Hayagrīva, Dhruva's Boon-Giver, Nara-Nārāyaṇa, and Kapila. Kapila is put in this class by only a few. Most put him in the next class.

B, I (3). *Kalā Avatāra*, or Fractional (i.e. part of a part, an *aṁśa* of an *aṁśa*) Descent, in which only a small part of the Supreme descends. They are the Swan, Datta, Kapila (see above), Sanaka and his brethren, Kalki, and Dhanvantari. Some class Kalki as an *Āvēśa Avatāra* (II, 1) and Dhanvantari as a *Śakti Avatāra* (II, I).¹

B, II (1). *Śakti* (Power) *Avatāra*, or *Kārya* (Purpose) *Avatāra*, or *Āvēśa* (Taking Possession) *Avatāra*. A subordinate descent for some special purpose. Such are

¹ Regarding *Aṁśa* and *Kalā Avatāras*, see Śrīdhara and Jīva-Gōsvāmin on *Bhṡ. P.*, I, iii, 28.

Paraśu-Rāma, The Buddha, Kalki (see above), Manvantara, the Vyāsa, Pṛthu, Yajña, Rṣabha, Dhanvantari (see above), Mōhinī, Lakṣmī-nivāsa, and others. Some distinguish between a *Śakti Avatāra* and an *Āvēśa Avatāra*, the latter being looked upon as more purely temporary. Thus, such persons would count Paraśu-Rāma¹ as an *Āvēśa Avatāra*, Kalki as either *Āvēśa Avatāra* or *Kalā Avatāra*, while they differ about the Buddha and Manvantara, some classing them as *Śakti Avatāras* and others as *Āvēśa Avatāras*.

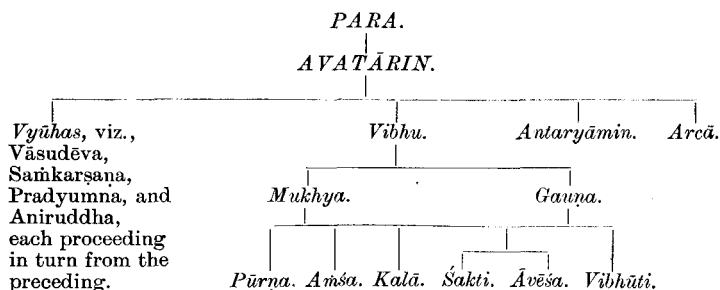
B, II (2). *Vibhūti Avatāra*, or Governance Descent. Such a descent is for the purpose of manifesting the ADORABLE'S power and love, more especially by spreading the true faith. Such are Brahmā, Nārada, Śiva, Manu, Svāyambhuva, Rāmānanda, Kṛṣṇacaitanya-Nityānanda, the seven sons of Viṭṭhala-nātha, the *Vibhūtis* of *Bhagavad-Gītā*, X, 19 ff., and others.

C. The *Antaryāmin*, or Inward Restrainer. The *Antaryāmin* is the Supreme, considered as the All-Pervading Soul, but, as an *Avatāra*, he is God, dwelling in and guiding the soul of every animate creature.

D. *Arcā Avatāra*, or Descent as an Image. A *mūrti*, or image, is merely a representation of something or other, made of stone or metal, and nothing more. But as soon as it is consecrated (*pratiṣṭhita*) according to the rules laid down in the *Nārada-pañcarātra*, and, at the proper season, with proper *mantras*, songs, and other ceremonies, it then ceases to be a *mūrti*, and becomes a descent of the Supreme for worship, or an *Arcā Avatāra*.

¹ Note the subordinate classification of Paraśu-Rāma. The Bhāgavata religion was originally propounded and professed by Kṣatriyas (cf. *Bhḡ. G.*, iv, 1 ff.). Paraśu-Rāma was a Brāhmaṇa hero, who, according to Brāhmaṇas, exterminated the whole Kṣatriya race. He was a Brahmanical incarnation, and the Bhāgavatas, while not able to deny the fact of his being an incarnate God, did not hesitate to put him very low down in their scheme of incarnations.

We may therefore represent the Bhāgavata system of *Avatāras* in a tabular form as follows:—



The official list of twenty-four *Vibhu* descents, as contained in the fifth verse of the *Bhakta-māla*, is here given in a tabular form, showing against each the class to which it belongs under the foregoing arrangement. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (I, iii, cf. II, vii) gives a similar list, but in a different order and containing only twenty-two names. This list is also given below, for comparison with that in the *Bhakta-māla*. The names are arranged in the order of the latter, but after each name in the *Purāṇa* list I give a number indicating the order in which it originally stood in I, iii.

<i>Bhakta-māla</i> List.	<i>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</i> List.	Classification.
1. Fish.	Fish (10).	Mukhya, Aṁśa.
2. Boar.	Boar (2).	Ditto.
3. Tortoise.	Tortoise (11).	Ditto.
4. Man-lion.	Man-lion (14).	Mukhya, Pūrṇa.
5. Dwarf.	Dwarf (15).	Mukhya, Pūrṇa ; or Mukhya, Aṁśa.
6. Paraśu-rāma.	Paraśu-rāma (16).	Gauṇa, Āvēśa.
7. Rāma-candra.	Rāma-candra (18).	Mukhya, Pūrṇa.
8. Kṛṣṇa.	Kṛṣṇa (20).	Mukhya, Pūrṇa.
9. The Buddha.	The Buddha (21).	Gauṇa, Śakti or Āvēśa.
10. Kalki.	Kalki (22).	Mukhya, Kalā ; or Gauṇa, Śakti.
11. The Vyāsa.	The Vyāsa (17).	Gauṇa, Āvēśa.
12. Pṛthu.	Pṛthu (9).	Gauṇa, Āvēśa.
13. Hari.	—	Mukhya, Aṁśa.
14. Swan (<i>Haṁsa</i>).	Nārada (3).	Mukhya, Kalā.
15. Manvantara.	—	Gauṇa, Śakti or Āvēśa.

<i>Bhakta-māla</i> List.	<i>Bhāgavata Purāṇa</i> List.	Classification.
16. The Sacrifice (<i>Yajña</i>).	The Sacrifice (<i>Suyajña</i>) (7).	Gauṇa, Āvēśa.
17. Rṣabha.	Rṣabha (8).	Gauṇa, Āvēśa.
18. Hayagrīva.	—	Mukhya, Amśa.
19. Dhruva's Boon-Giver.	—	Mukhya, Amśa.
20. Dhanvantari.	Dhanvantari (12).	Mukhya, Kalā; or Gauṇa, Śakti.
21. Nara-Nārāyaṇa.	Nara-Nārāyaṇa (4).	Mukhya, Amśa.
22. Datta.	Datta (6).	Mukhya, Kalā.
23. Kapila.	Kapila (5).	Mukhya, Amśa or Kalā.
24. Sanakādi.	Kaumāra (1).	Mukhya, Kalā.
—	Mōhinī (13).	Gauṇa, Śakti.
—	Bala-rāma (19). ¹	Mukhya, Amśa.

It is unnecessary to say anything about the first ten of the above. They are the ordinary ten *Avatāras* of Brahmanical legend, and are well known to all Sanskrit scholars. As regards the remainder, I do not propose to do more than to identify them, and to give the *Bhāgavata* reasons for considering them as incarnations:—

11. The Vyāsa. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 21, and II, vii, 36. He manifested Himself as the son of Parāśara and Satyavati, and completely divided in each *yuga* the tree of the Vēda, according to its respective branches (*śākhā* or *vitāpa*).

12. Prṭhu. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 14, and II, vii, 9. He milked forth plants from the earth. "Hence this (incarnation) is the most pleasant of all." He was born from the right arm of his dead father. He became universal monarch,

¹ The *Bhg. P.* list professes to give these incarnations in order of occurrence. That order is as follows:—(1) Kaumāra, (2) Boar, (3) Nārada, (4) Nara-Nārāyaṇa, (5) Kapila, (6) Datta, (7) Sacrifice, (8) Rṣabha, (9) Prṭhu, (10) Fish, (11) Tortoise, (12) Dhanvantari, (13) Mōhinī, (14) Man-lion, (15) Dwarf, (16) Paraśu-rāma, (17) Vyāsa, (18) Rāma-candra, (19) Bala-rāma, (20) Kṛṣṇa, (21) the Buddha, (22) Kalki. Much could be written about this curious order. With the exception of the Boar, the earlier ones are all said by legend to have been intimately connected with the origins of the *Bhāgavata* religion. The Boar incarnation was peculiarly consonant with the *Bhāgavata* theory of a God of grace; for, as the *Bhg. P.* says, it was assumed for the protection of the world.

and when the earth suffered from famine he compelled it to bring forth fruits. In other words, he introduced the art of agriculture. See *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, xiii, for further particulars.

13. Hari. Although this incarnation is not mentioned in the list in *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, it is alluded to in II, vii, 15, 16 (*Śrīdhara, Hari-saṁjñakā-'vatāram āha*). It is the incarnation which the ADORABLE in the Svāyambhuva Manvantara (cf. No. 16) assumed when He rescued the elephant from the crocodile, as described in *Bhg. P.*, VII, ii, iii. This incarnation is hence specially invoked by anyone in distress.

14. The *Haṁsa* or Swan. Śrīdhara on *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 8, calls this the Nārada incarnation, which in the commentary on II, vii, 19, he identifies with the Haṁsa Avatāra. According to the former passage, "this is the Ṛṣi-creation, in which Viṣṇu, having assumed the condition of a *Dēvarṣi*, fully described the *Sātvata* scripture (i.e., the *Nārada-Pañcarātra*, called in the second passage 'the Bhāgavata lamp of truth regarding the *Ātman*'), by reading which actions become actionless." The word *haṁsa* may mean "the Universal Soul", but all the commentaries which I have seen translate it by "swan". A full account of the incarnation is given in *Bhg. P.*, XI, xiii, 19 ff., in which it is noteworthy that Nārada's teaching is described (38) as the "mystery of Sāṅkhya-Yōga" (*guhyaṁ yat sāṅkhya-yōgayōh*). In *Bhg. P.*, III, xxiv, this incarnation is apparently identified with Brahmā, in his capacity of the Creator, and the father of Nārada (see Śrīdhara on verse 20).

15. Manvantara. The expression is applied to the ADORABLE immanent in each of the fourteen great time-cycles of Manu. For a description of the last seven of these, see *Bhg. P.*, VIII, xiii. The Manvantara is not, so far as I have noted, mentioned as an Avatāra in the list in *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, but we find the germ of the idea in I, iii, 27,

where Manus are declared to be all fractions (*kalā*) of Hari. In II, vii, 20, however, we find it stated that (the ADORABLE), as Upholder of the race of Manu, bears His own power, in the shape of His discus, in the Manvantaras, and Śrīdhara here states that the reference is to the Manvantara Avatāra (*tat tan manvantarāvatāram āha*).

16. Yajña, or the Sacrifice. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 12, and II, vii, 2. Yajña, personified, was the son of the Prajāpati, or mind-born progeny of Brahmā, named Ruci, by his wife Ākūti. They had also a daughter named Dakṣiṇā, or the Offering. The two children married, and had twelve sons, the divine Suyamas (Śrīdhara, on II, vii), or Yāmas (I, iii). Through them and other gods he protected the Svāyambhuva-Manvantara, himself becoming Indra for the same purpose. He was subsequently named "Hari" (No. 13) by Svāyambhuva Manu. The object of the Avatāra was the production of gods, and the putting an end to distress in the three worlds.

17. Ṛṣabha. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 13, and II, vii, 10. He was the son of Nābhi and Mērudēvī, and father of Bharata. He gave up his kingdom to his son and retired to a hermitage, where he practised the most severe austerities and showed "to the wise the path which is revered by all orders of men,—that of *yōga* (*yōga-caryā*)". One of the Jaina Tirthaṅkaras bore the same name.

18. Hayagrīva. Not mentioned in the list in *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, but described in II, vii, 11, under the name of Hayaśīrṣan, which is stated by Śrīdhara to be the Hayagrīva Avatāra. "The ADORABLE, the Sacrificial Male (*puruṣa*), in the sacrifice inaugurated by Brahmā, became Hayaśīrṣan, of golden complexion, full of Vedic inspiration, full of sacrifices, the self (*ātman*) of the deities who are adored by their performance. The sublime words (i.e. the Vēda) were created from the nostrils of this breathing one". The allusion is to Viṣṇu taking the form of

Hayagrīva to rescue the Vēda which had been carried off by the Daityas.

19. Dhruva's Boon-Giver. This is the anonymous form under which the ADORABLE appeared to Dhruva. Not mentioned in the list in *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, but described in II, vii, 8. Dhruva's story will be found in *Bhg. P.*, IV, viii ff. It is well known. He was the son of Uttāna-pāda. Stung by the taunts of his stepmother, he declared that he desired no honours except such as he could acquire by his own conduct. He abandoned his home in order to adopt a religious life, and, meeting Nārada, was instructed by him in the "twelve-syllabled mantra 'ōm namō Bhagavatē Vāsudēvāya', and converted to the Bhāgavata religion. He repaired to Mathurā, and there, on the bank of the Yamunā, set himself to perform the most severe austerities, till he became entirely absorbed in the contemplation of the ADORABLE. At the end of six months the ADORABLE, *Bhagavat*, took personal form and, appearing to Dhruva, gave him the boon of perfect *bhakti*. He also promised that he should reign in his father's place for 63,000 years, and thereafter rule in the *Aṭala-lōka*, or region of immovability. During his long reign he spread the Bhāgavata religion over the whole earth. After the conclusion of the 63,000 years he became the pole-star, and will remain so till the next dissolution of the universe, when he will go to the ADORABLE'S heaven. Dhruva is twenty-fifth in the list of forty-two persons who are catalogued as "Beloved of the ADORABLE". See *Bhakta-māla*, 9. Śrīdhara, on *Bhg. P.*, II, vii, 8, says that this is an instance of an incarnation induced only by conduct (*caritrēṇaiva kamapy avatāraṁ sūcayati*).

20. Dhanvantari. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, ii, 17, and II, vii, 21. He was the physician of the gods. In *Bhg. P.* he is made the twelfth incarnation, and is associated with Mōhini, the thirteenth. At the celebrated churning of the ocean he came forth from the Sea of Milk holding a cup of

amṛta, or ambrosia, in his hands. This was seized by the demons. Mōhini then came forth and deluded the demons, so that she was able to get it from them and to deliver it to the gods. In a subsequent birth Dhanvantari was the son of Dirghatamas, and was the originator of medical science. He revealed the Āyur-vēda to his pupil Suśruta, who is the mortal father of Indian medicine. According to *Bhg. P.*, II, vii, he descended in this incarnation to destroy diseases, to recover remnants of sacrifices carried off by Daityas, and to teach the Āyur-vēda.

21. Nara-Nārāyaṇa. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 9, and II, vii, 6, 7. These two brothers form a joint incarnation. They are of great importance to Bhāgavatas, as it is to them that Nārada repaired after he had been granted a vision of the ADORABLE, and from their mouths that he received instruction in the faith, which he afterwards communicated to mankind. See Nārāyaṇīya (*MBh.*, XII, cccxvi ff.). It was in this conversation that Bhāgavata eschatology was revealed. They were sons of Dharma, their mother's name being Mūrti or Ahimsā, the daughter of Dakṣa. They were celebrated for the passionless nature of their austerities. Not even nymphs from Indra's heaven could disturb their devotions.

22. Datta or Dattātrēya. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 11, and II, vii, 4. A celebrated saint, the son of Atri and Anusūyā. Atri performed a very severe penance by which the three gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva were propitiated, and became severally portions of his three sons Sōma, Dattātrēya, and Durvāsa. He was called 'Datta' or 'Dattātrēya', because the ADORABLE said to Atri when promising to become incarnate in his second son, "I have given myself to thee" (*dattō mayāham*) (*Bhg. P.*, II, vii, 4). Dattātrēya was patron of Arjuna Kārtavīrya (*MBh.*, III, cxv; XII, xlix; XIII, cliii). The same statement occurs in *Bhg. P.*, IX, xv, 17, where

Datta is called an *aṁśa* of Nārāyaṇa, who was himself an *aṁśa* of the ADORABLE. He taught meditation (*anvīksikī*) to Alarka, Prahlāda, and others. For Alarka, see *MBh.*, XIV, 840 ff. Prahlāda, the hero of the Man-lion incarnation, is well known. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, VII, iv ff.

23. Kapila. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 10, and II, vii, 3. He was son of Kardama and Dēvahūti. He is described as a *siddhēśa*, or lord of perfected ones, and explained to Āsuri the Sāṅkhya system, which had been lost by efflux of time. The close connexion of the Bhāgavata religion with Sāṅkhya-Yōga is well known, and requires no proof. A full account of Kapila will be found in *Bhg. P.*, III, xxiv ff., where we are given a long description of the so-called "Paurāṇik Sāṅkhya and Yōga" in a lecture delivered by Kapila to his mother. In *Bhakta-māla*, 7, is given a list of the twelve *Mahābhaktas*, or great faithful ones. They are Brahmā, Nārada, Śiva, Sanakādi, Kapila, Manu Svāyambhuva, Prahlāda, Janaka, Bhīṣma, Bali, Śuka, and Yama. It will be seen that Kapila is the fifth in this list.

24. Sanakādi, i.e., Sanaka and his brethren Sananda, Sanātana, and Sanat-kumāra, the four mind-born sons of Brahmā. Cf. *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 6, and II, vii, 5. They enjoyed perpetual youth and innocence, and hence this incarnation is known as the *Kaumāra Avatāra*, from *kumāra*, a youth. They are sometimes called the four "Sanas". For the manner of their birth and their refusal to beget children, see *Bhg. P.*, III, xii, 4. They are fourth in the list of *Mahābhaktas* given above, and their title to this exalted position is due to the fact that it was they (III, viii, 7) who recited the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. The ADORABLE told it to Sanat-kumāra, who told it to Śāṅkhāyana, who told it to Parāśara, who told it to Maitrēya, who told it to Vidura. The association of Sanat-kumāra with Nārada (see also below), the second of the *Mahābhaktas*, is very old. The former is represented

as teaching the latter in the *Chāndōgya Upaniṣad* (VII, i, 1). The circumstances of the incarnation are described in *Bhg. P.*, II, vii, in the following words: "Owing to the offering (*sana*) of Brahmā's austerities, in the beginning, when he practised austerities for the creation of the various worlds, the ADORABLE became the four 'Sanas'. Becoming thus incarnate he fully, in this present age, recited the truth regarding the Self (*ātman*) that had been destroyed at the dissolution of the preceding æon—a truth which the Munis, when they heard it, recognized within themselves."

In addition to the above twenty-two, the *Bhg. P.* adds to the list Mōhini in connexion with Dhanvantari (No. 20 above), and also Bala-rāma, the brother of Kṛṣṇa. He was directly an incarnation of Śeṣa, the Serpent of Eternity, who was himself a portion of the ADORABLE. See *Bhg. P.*, X, ii, 8.

Besides the names given in the above official list there are a few given in the earlier part of this paper under the head of Gauṇa Avatāras. These are the *Śakti Avatāra*, Lakṣmī-nivāsa, and the *Vibhūti Avatāras*, Brahmā, Nārada, Śiva, Rāmānanda, Kṛṣṇacaitanya-Nityānanda, the seven sons of Viṭṭhala-nātha, and the Vibhūtis mentioned in *Bhagavad-Gītā*, X, 19 ff. I proceed to describe each of the above.

A. Lakṣmī-nivāsa. This is the form which the ADORABLE took in order to deprive Nārada of his self-conceit. The only place where I have met the story is in the *Rāma-carita-mānasa* of Tulasi-dāsa (I, 125, N.P.S. ed.). It seems to be a varied account of the quarrel between Parvata and Nārada recorded in *MBh.*, XII, 1046 ff., in which Nārada was given an ape's face. The substance of Tulasi-dāsa's story is as follows:—Nārada settles down in a hermitage in the Himālaya, and concentrates his thoughts upon Hari to such a degree that Indra becomes alarmed, and sends Kāmadēva and a troop of Apsarases to distract

him. Kāmadēva altogether fails, and Nārada dismisses him politely. Nārada is filled with self-conceit at his victory and tells Śiva all about it. Śiva congratulates him, but advises him on no account to boast about this before Hari. Nārada, however, does not heed this advice, but goes straight to the ADORABLE Rāma and relates what has occurred. The ADORABLE determines to root pride out of Nārada's heart, and as soon as the latter takes his leave He sends for Māyā, His Illusion, and orders her to construct upon Nārada's route a wonderful city, more beautiful than even His own abode. Nārada visits the city, and is welcomed by its king, Śīla-nidhi. Just then a Svayaṃvara of Viśva-mōhini, the king's daughter, is about to be held, and Nārada is invited to take a seat among the suitor kings. He falls in love with the girl and determines to win her. For this purpose he prays to Hari for supreme beauty. Hari appears to him in a vision and promises him a boon "which shall be for his highest good (*parama hita*)". But, in fact, unknown to Nārada, He makes him miraculously ugly, with an ape's face.¹ Nārada, intoxicated by belief in his own beauty, which is strengthened by some sarcastic remarks of two of Śiva's attendants (*gaṇa*) that are standing by, is confident that the princess will choose him. But she passes him by with disgust, and throws the garland round Hari Himself, who has appeared incarnate as a king, Lakṣmī-nivāsa or Śrī-nivāsa. The successful suitor carries off the bride, and then Śiva's attendants recommend Nārada to look at himself in a mirror. The saint looks at himself in a pool of water and is filled with fury. He curses the two attendants. Then he looks in the water again and sees himself, when it is too late, in his proper form. He rushes forth to look for Hari and finds him accompanied by Lakṣmī and the princess. He curses Hari to be born

¹ The *MBh.* story makes this ugliness the result of a curse pronounced by Parvata, his sister's son, and says nothing about any incarnation.

again like him, to have apes like him for helpers, and, like him, to suffer in separation from a woman. Hari gladly accepts the curse, and at the same time destroys the illusion which he had created. Lakṣmī and the princess disappear, and Nārada finds himself alone with Hari. Restored to his senses, Nārada implores forgiveness. Hari reassures him, and he returns to the Satya-lōka singing the praises of Rāma. This is the reason why in one æon (*kalpa*) the Lord took a human Avatāra.

B. Brahmā (properly Brahmān). Everyone, however lowly he may be, is, for the time being, a Vibhūti Avatāra, when he is preaching the true faith.¹ We have seen that Brahmā proceeds from Aniruddha, the last Vyūha, and that his two duties are to create the universe and to preach the Bhāgavata religion to the world. He is therefore, in the latter respect, the first and the greatest of the Vibhūti Avatāras. According to the *Bhakta-māla* 7, he is the first of the Mahābhaktas (see above), and the commentators tell us that in the world in which he himself resides, the faith is still taught by Nārada and by the Sanakādi. When a soul, in the course of transmigration, reaches that world as the result of performing good works (*dharma*), it is there instructed in *bhakti* and obtains final release. It will be observed that the performance of good works, by itself, does not give salvation. That can only be given by *bhakti*, but the due performance of duties, especially when they are disinterested (*niṣkāma*), places a person in a condition favourable for acquiring *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is taught in the present world by Brahmā himself, so that it is not maintained that an intermediate residence and course of instruction in Brahmā's heaven is necessary for salvation.

C. Nārada. It will be observed that in the list of Mahābhaktas he precedes Śiva. He is of the greatest prominence in Bhāgavata theology. According to the

¹ *Bhakta-kalpadruma*, p. 34 of the Lucknow ed.

MBh., XII, cccxli ff., he was vouchsafed a vision of the ADORABLE Himself, a privilege not even granted to Brahmā (12971). Nārada heard on this occasion the truths of the Bhāgavata religion which is styled "the Great Upaniṣad, associated with the four Vēdas, made by Sāṅkhya-Yōga, and named by Nārada 'the Pañcarātra'". Nārada recited it to the saints in Brahmā's heaven (12984). The Sun (*Sūrya*), having heard it on this occasion, repeated it to the 66,000 Ṛṣis in his train. They told it to the deities assembled on Mount Mēru. These told it to Asita Dēvala, the Simeon of Buddhism, who told it to mankind. Over and over again in similar passages of the *MBh.* is Nārada represented as a very early teacher of the doctrine. We have already seen how in the *Bhg. P.* he is identified with the Hamsa, or Swan, Avatāra of the ADORABLE, in which the ADORABLE uttered the Nārada Pañcarātra and other Bhāgavata scriptures. One of the textbooks of the religion, the *Nārada Bhakti-sūtras*, is also attributed to him. The legends about him are commonplaces, and need not be repeated here. According to the *Bhakta-māla* commentators, he is continually roaming about from world to world, with the sole object of doing good. Even his mischievous character as *kalahakāraka*, or strife-maker, is only exercised for the benefit of *Bhaktas*. In order to be pre-eminent as a Teacher, he had first to become pre-eminent as a Hearer of the Word, and regarding this the following story is told. In a former *kalpa*, or æon, he was the son of a woman who was compelled by poverty to take service with a colony of saints (*ṛṣi*). While she was away about her business, she used to leave the boy among them, and he, by listening to their conversation, obtained knowledge (*jñāna*), quietism (*vairāgya*), and finally faith (*bhakti*). When his mother died he betook himself to the forest, and there devoted himself to meditation on the ADORABLE, who one day manifested Himself, in His proper form, in

Nārada's heart, and then vanished. Filled with love for this spiritual form, Nārada devoted himself to adoration of the ADORABLE (*Bhagavad-bhajana*), and, as the fruit of this disinterested work, became, in the present æon, Brahmā's son.

Three of the four great modern Bhakti-apostles trace their spiritual descent from the Swan incarnation through Nārada. The Swan taught Sanaka and his brethren, who taught Nārada (though according to others the Swan and Nārada were identical), who taught Nimbārka, the founder of the oldest, the Nimāwat, church of modern Bhagavatism. The Swan also taught Brahmā, who taught Nārada, who taught the Vyāsa of the Vēdas, who taught Subuddha, who taught Narahari, who taught Madhva, the founder of the Madhvācārī church. So also Viṣṇusvāmin was spiritually descended from Nārada, as explained below under the head of Śiva.

The close connexion of Nārada with the origins of the Bhāgavata cult is further borne out by the fact that a large portion of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa purports to have been uttered by him.

D. Śiva is the object of great veneration amongst all Bhāgavatas, being considered to be himself the first or primeval *Bhakta*. Even in the present age he is devoted to the spread of the *Bhāgavata Dharma*, inasmuch as he is the originator of the *Rudra Saṁpradāya*, one of the four modern churches of the cult. At the command of the ADORABLE, Śiva taught Nārada (see above), who taught the Vyāsa of the Vēda, who taught Śuka, who taught Viṣṇusvāmin, who taught Paramānanda (or Prēmānanda). Forty - eighth in the line of spiritual descent from Paramānanda, Viṣṇusvāmin was born again, and then became the real founder of *Rudra Saṁpradāya*. According, however, to some, Śiva taught Paramānanda directly, and Viṣṇusvāmin only appeared at the later stage. As noted under the head of

Nārada, Śiva comes after that saint in the list of Mahā-bhaktas.

As in the case of Brahmā, Śiva is, according to Bhāgavata teaching, a finite being. At the same time, *MBh.*, XII, 13293 ff.—a late section in which an attempt is made to reconcile the Bhāgavata tenets with ordinary Brahmanical Hinduism—exalts Śiva, explaining that he is only a form of the ADORABLE, and that he who worships Śiva worships the ADORABLE.

Bhāgavatas also admit that Siva became incarnate as Śaṅkarācārya, the great teacher of the *Advaita* system of philosophy. As this doctrine is radically opposed to the central tenets of the Bhāgavata cult, Siva's connexion is got over by explaining that when the world was filled with Buddhism and other forms of false religion the ADORABLE appeared to Śiva¹ directing him to become incarnate and to preach a doctrine invented by himself (Śiva), so as to turn people from the ADORABLE and to manifest His glory by the consequent destruction of unbelievers.

The commentators on the *Bhakta-māla* tell two stories which they say are not generally known, but which illustrate Śiva's *bhakti* towards the ADORABLE. I give herewith a free translation of Priyā-dāsa's version of these, filling up lacunæ from the commentary of Bhagawān Prasāda and from the *Bhakti-prēmākara* of Kīrti Simha. The latter tells the legends at greater length and in full detail.

Satī, the wife of Śaṅkara (Śiva) once, under the influence of delusion, asked why, if Rāma (an incarnation of the ADORABLE) were really the Supreme Deity, he was wandering about in the desert distraught at the loss of Sitā.² Śiva warned her against such irreverent thoughts, but without success, and she went forth to test

¹ See, for instance, Hariścandra, *Vaiṣṇava Sarvasva*, p. 5.

² A parallel to "He saved others, Himself He cannot save".

Rāma's divine knowledge. As she departed Śiva cautioned her to be careful as to what she did. In spite of this Sati took Sitā's own form, and, so far as she could imagine, made herself Sitā's exact image. She approached Rāma as he was wandering in the forest, but he at once saw that she was not his beloved and would not speak to her. Sati returned to heaven and told this to Śiva, who became greatly distressed, and reproached her with having ventured to take the form of the special object of his loving worship, Sitā, the divine spouse of the incarnate ADORABLE.¹ Thenceafter he refused to treat Sati as his wife, or to be reconciled to her so long as she remained in her then birth. Sati accordingly destroyed herself by becoming 'Suttee' at Dakṣa's sacrifice,² and being born again as Pārvatī was in due course wedded to Śiva. Priyā-dāsa adds to this story that it is very dear to him and that he sings it with especial delight.

The other legend is that one day Śiva and Pārvatī went out riding on the bull Nandi to visit the earth. On the way, as they passed two mounds where there had once been villages, long since fallen to ruin, Śiva dismounted, and bowed himself to each. Pārvatī asked him to whom he paid reverence, as there was no one in sight. He replied, "Dearest, on one of these mounds there dwelt 10,000 years ago one who loved Rāma and Sitā, and who was supremely faithful (*Bhakta*); and on the other, 10,000 years hence, will there be another king of *Bhaktas*. For this reason both these places are to be highly revered by me." Pārvatī heard these words and kept them in her heart. Therefrom her affection for *Bhaktas* increased beyond limit, so that now it cannot even be described.

¹ Most Vaiṣṇava sects worship Sitā as an incarnation of the ADORABLE, as well as Rāma.

² According to the usual account Sati killed herself because Dakṣa abused Śiva, her husband, whom he had not invited to the sacrifice. See *Bhg. P.*, IV, iv.

Yea, the white garment of her heart is dyed deep with love for them.

Kāśī, or Benares, is, as is well known, the seat of Śiva. Whoever dies within its limits obtains salvation there and then. The Bhāgavata explanation is that when the mortal is at the point of death Śiva is ready there, and whispers into his ear the salvation-giving *mantra* of the name of Rāma.

E. Rāmānanda. With this personage we enter the domain of history. Full particulars, based on the account in the *Bhakta-māla*, will be found in Wilson's *Religious Sects of the Hindūs*, pp. 46 ff. He was the founder of the Rāmāvat sect of Rāmānuja's Śrī-Saṃpradāya. It is to him that Northern India really owes its conversion to modern Bhāgavatism. He was the first to preach and teach in the vernacular, and to admit all castes, even the lowest. As Wilson has dealt so fully with him it is unnecessary here to do more than identify him.¹

F. Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya and Nityānanda. These are also historical personages. They are looked upon as a joint incarnation. They were the apostles of the Bhāgavata religion in Bengal. Full particulars about them will be found in Wilson, pp. 152 ff., and *Bhakta-māla*, 72, and further description of them is unnecessary on the present occasion.

G. The seven sons of Viṭṭhala-nātha. See Wilson, pp. 135 ff. Viṭṭhala-nātha, the son of Vallabhācārya, was himself a much respected religious teacher of the *Rudra-saṃpradāya* in Northern India. He had seven sons, whose names, according to *Bhakta-māla*, 80, were

¹ I may, however, mention, without wishing in any way to find fault with one to whose writings I owe so much, that the list of Rāmānanda's twelve chief disciples given by Wilson on p. 56 is incorrect, and depends upon a faulty reading of the difficult text of the *Bhakta-māla*, 31. The correct list is : (1) Anantānanda, (2) Kabīr, (3) Sukhānanda, (4) Surasurānanda, (5) Padmāvatī, (6) Naraharyānanda, (7) Pipā, (8) Bhāvānanda, (9) Raidāsa, (10) Dhanā, (11) Sēnā, (12) Surasurī (wife of Surasurānanda).

(1) Giridhara, (2) Gōvinda, (3) Bāla-Kṛṣṇa, (4) Gōkula-nātha, (5) Raghu-nātha, (6) Yadu-nātha, and (7) Ghana-śyāma. Each of these was an incarnation (*vibhu*). The commentators explain that Kṛṣṇa was so affected by the tender affection (*vātsalya*) shown to him by Viṭṭhala-nātha, that he looked upon him as a foster-father in the place of Nanda. In order to provide a similar counterpart of Yaśodā, he appeared to Viṭṭhala-nātha in a dream and directed him to marry. In each of the seven sons Kṛṣṇa became incarnate for five years. In the first for the first five years, in the second for the second five years, and so on. On the conclusion of the thirty-five years Kṛṣṇa became incarnate in Viṭṭhala-nātha's house as an *Arcā-vatāra*, and thus gave him the joy of having the god himself as his son for the rest of his life.

H. The Vibhūtis of *Bhagavad Gītā*, X, 19 ff. The first verse of this celebrated passage runs as follows:—

*hanta tē kathayisyāmi divyā hy ātma-vibhūtayaḥ
prādhyānyataḥ, Kuru-śrēṣṭha, nāsty antō vistarasya mē.*

“Well, then, I will tell to thee what are the divine *vibhūtis* of myself; but only in their principal forms, for there is no end to my development.”

In the above, the word *vibhūti* is differently translated by various scholars. Cockburn Thomson represents it by “virtues”; Telang, by “emanations”; Gōvindācārya, by “glories”; Garbe, by “Entfaltungen”; and Barnett, by “powers”. On this passage Rāmānuja says (I quote with a few verbal alterations Gōvindācārya's translation): “By *vibhūtitva* is meant the being governed (i.e., all the kosmos is under His government).” He then compares *yōga* (X, 7), i.e., His existence as Creator, with *vibhūti*, the governance of such creation by that Creator, and explains that “The Powers (i.e. *vibhūtis*) of the Lord connoted by the term *yōga*, viz., the Ruling of all creatures—or their Governance—are displayed by His

abundance in every creature as its Soul, and that term also connotes the function of the Lord as the Creator, the Protector, and the Destroyer of all. This is now clearly declared in the following verses”.

The text then goes on with Kṛṣṇa's statements—

1. I am the Self dwelling in the heart of all Beings.
I am the Beginning, Middle, and End of all Beings.
2. I am Viṣṇu among the Ādityas; the Sun among the heavenly lights; Marici among the Maruts; and among the stars, the moon.
3. Among the Vēdas, I am the Sāma-vēda; among the Dēvas, I am Indra; among the Senses, I am the Intellect; among Living Beings, I am the Thinking Power.

And so on for twenty more verses, which it is unnecessary to repeat here for our present purpose. We must accept Rāmānuja's interpretation of *vibhūti* as the orthodox Bhāgavata meaning of the word.¹ The word evidently means “a glorious manifestation of governance”. Such *vibhūtis* are, to the Bhāgavata, the best ways of proclaiming the power and love of the ADORABLE, and especially of preaching their monotheistic faith—handed down through centuries from the old Kṣatriya thinkers of the Indian Outland, and given a new life, when the nation was lying gasping in its death-throes under foreign oppressors, by the genius of Rāmānuja, Madhva, and their followers.

¹ Very similarly, both Śrīdhara and Jīva-Gōsvāmin, in their commentaries on *Bhg. P.*, I, iii, 27, say that Rṣis, Manus, Dēvas, sons of Manu, and Prajāpatis are all *vibhūtis* of the ADORABLE.