

Some Miraculous Deeds of Bhagavan Sri Krishna.

By "KRISHNA-KINKARA".

शोणस्निग्धाङ्गुलिदलकुलं जातरागं परागैः
श्रीराधायाः स्तनमुकुलयाः कुङ्कुमक्षोदरूपैः ।
भक्तश्रद्धामधुनखमहः पुञ्जकिञ्जल्कजालं
जङ्घानालं चरणकमलं पातु नः पूतनारेः ॥

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme *Līlā-Puruṣa* (Sportive Lord); how can an ordinary mortal know the secret of His divine actions ? During the period of His manifestation on earth He worked miracles the story of which, when read, absorbs the mind and the heart. An attempt is being made in this article to place before the reader short accounts of a few of these miraculous deeds of the Lord.

DESCENT FROM THE SUPREME ABODE.

The Lord made His appearance in the prison of Kāṁsa at midnight on the eighth day of the waning moon in the month of Bhādrapada. Vasudeva found a supernatural child suddenly manifested before him: the eyes of the child were large; it had four hands adorned with the divine conch, the discus, the club and the lotus; the chest bore the mark of Śrīvatsa (a curl of hair); the Kaustubha gem hung from its neck; the body, which was blue like a water-laden cloud was covered by the proverbial yellow piece of cloth; the beautiful curly hair on the head was enriched by a crown bedecked with priceless gems; the ears had pendants shaped like gavials, the splendour of the Form was further enhanced by the exquisite ornaments on the wrist, waist and other parts of the body. The dark prison-cell was profusely illumined by a glorious halo emanating from the Form

of the Divine child. Knowing that it was the Lord Himself who was manifested, Vasudeva and Devaki addressed words of praise to the Lord. Delighted with them, the Lord said, "In the *Manavantara** known as the Swāyambhuva, (presided over by Swāyambhuva Manu, so called because he had descended from Brahmā Himself) you bore the names of Sutapā and Pṛśni respectively; for twelve thousand celestial years both of you practised austerities, merging your thoughts in Me. I appeared before you, but under the spell of My *Māyā* (Illusive power) you did not express desire for liberation from bondage. You sought from Me a son like Myself, so that I had to be born as your son and bore the name of Pṛṇigarbha. In the next birth you were Kāśyapa and Aditi, when I was born as your son under the name of Upendra (born after Indra) or Vāmana (Dwarf-god). You have been born for the third time as Vasudeva and Devaki respectively; it is to remind you of your previous births that I have had to reveal before you this four-handed Form of Mine. Through meditation of, or affection for, Me either as your child or as God Himself both of you will reach the state of Supreme Bliss."

Saying this, the Lord assumed the form of a human child. Under His instructions, Vasudeva stood up to carry Him to Gokula; the fetters holding his feet relaxed and left their hold on his feet; the prison-doors opened; the guards at the gate fell fast asleep. The river Jumuna made a passage for him. On reaching Gokula, Vasudeva laid down

* The regime of a single Manu (progenitor of mankind) who holds sway for 48, 20,000 human years.

the child by the side of Yaśodā, who was also fast asleep, and brought the daughter born to Yaśodā with him. As soon as he re-entered the prison, the doors closed, the fetters again held him by the feet, and the guards were up again.

LIBERATION OF THE SONS OF KUBERA

Two sons of Kubera, Nalakūbara and Mānigrīva by name, got drunk and engaged themselves in a nude state in dallying and sporting with women in the Ganges. Śrī Nārada arrived at the spot by chance; but, blinded by passion and intoxication of wealth, the sons of Kubera felt no delicacy in standing even before him in that nude condition. Observing the youngmen in that state, the Ṛṣi was moved by compassion, and for their welfare pronounced the following curse on them. Śrī Nārada said, "Oh, what an evil is this pride of wealth, which gives an impetus to association with women, gambling, and the habit of drinking; the intoxication of wealth thoroughly corrupts the mind of people who are attached to the pleasures of the senses. Poverty is the real pigment to open the eyes of depraved people blinded by such intoxication. It is through this intoxication that these two sons of Kubera stand before me like inanimate creatures. It will therefore be quite in the fitness of things if they are sent to be reborn as insensible creatures. This will cure them of their pride. Let them live as trees for one hundred celestial years; they will, however, retain their memory even in that existence; in the end they will be graced by a direct vision of Lord Śrī Hari Himself, when they will be rid of their birth in the vegetable kingdom." Through this curse pronounced by Śrī Nārada, the two brothers were born as a pair of Arjuna trees.*

* The moral one should draw from the above incident is that one should never get intoxicated with pride on any account and that one should never be irreverent towards one's elders.

In order to fulfil the words of His great devotee Devarṣi Nārada, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa created a situation through His *Līlā*. He was a small child at this time. Avoiding the observation of Mother Yaśodā, He got up on the husking-stand and, taking down the pot of butter kept suspended by a string, He began to take it Himself and freely distribute it among the monkeys. Just then the mother made her appearance. She was beside herself with anger. Holding the mischievous child by the arm she attempted to tie Him with a cord to the husking-stand. Like ordinary children the Lord began to cry and weep. The cord became short. More cord the mother brought, yet it remained short. Yaśodā then got together cords from here, there and everywhere and joined them; yet she failed to tie Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the cord remaining short by two inches every time. The mother felt quite exhausted through her exertion and profusely perspired all over the body; the Lord was moved by compassion for her and allowed Himself to be tied. This is how He got the name of 'Dāmodara' (One tied by the waist). The mother then engaged herself in other duties. In the meantime, pulling the string along with the husking-stand, the mysterious child went where stood the pair of Arjuna trees referred to above, and placed Himself between the trees; and when the husking-stand got stuck between them, He gave a violent pull. Through His strength both the trees were torn up by the roots and fell down on the ground. The terrible sound of their fall reverberated in the sky. With the fall of the trees came out of them two celestial beings, luminous like the fire; they were the two sons, of Kubera, who, bowing before Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the Universe, and singing His glory, sought the following boons from the Lord:—

वाणी गुणानुकथने श्रवणौ कथायां

हस्तौ च कर्मसु मनस्तव पादयोर्नः ।

स्मृत्यां शिरस्तव निवासजगत्प्रणामे

दृष्टिः सतां दर्शनेऽस्तु भवत्तनूताम् ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. X. 38)

“O Lord, let our speech be engaged only in singing Thy praises; let our ears find pleasure only in hearing stories of Thy sports; let these hands be solely devoted to Thy service, and the mind to Thy meditation; let the function of the head be to bow down before Thy living temple, the entire Universe; let the eyes be exclusively engaged in seeing the saints, who are Thy visible images on earth.”

Their heart's desire having thus been fulfilled through the grace of the Lord, they departed towards the north.

DISPLAY OF HIS SPORT BEFORE BRAHMĀ

On a particular day, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with His associates, the cowherd boys, was engaged in the enjoyment of the mid-day meal in the woods amidst mutual laughter and merriment. While they were so engaged, the calves they were tending went to a little distance in search of green herbage. Finding the calves gone out of view, the cowherd boys felt somewhat nervous; but Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “Friends, do not fear; I shall presently bring back all the calves.” So saying, He started in search of the calves of His friends with a morsel of food in His hand. Brahmā (the Creator) was observing all this sport (लीला) of the Lord. The activities of Hari, Lord of the Universe, in the Form of a child perplexed him not a little. With the object of more closely seeing the glory of Bhagavān Śrī Hari, he at first stole away all the calves, and on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's going in search of them, He removed the cowherd boys also and, suspending the consciousness of all, kept them safe in the region where He lives.

The Lord returned and noticed that the cowherd boys also had disappeared.

He understood that this was all due to Brahmā's machinations; and now, in order to satisfy the mothers of the boys as well as the cows and foil the attempts of Brahmā, Hari, the creator of the Universe, assumed the forms of all those calves and boys Himself. He manifested Himself in the exact shape and form of each one of the calves and boys, possessing the same type of hands and feet, the same sticks for tending calves, the same horns, the same pipes, the same clothes and ornaments, the same names, natures, qualities, characteristics, age and peculiarities of habits of life, and gave a direct exhibition of the truth that this creation in all its aspects is nothing else than Viṣṇu, the all-pervasive Lord. The attraction of the Gopīs and the cows for their boys and calves respectively grew to an extraordinary degree. Previous to this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the chief object of love of all the inhabitants of Vraja; but now their attraction for their own children rose to the same height of intensity. Regardless of the fact that other calves had been born to them, the cows used to rush in impetuous haste to meet those older calves, milk flowing through their udders out of extreme affection. The old Gopas, embracing their children, could with difficulty control their delight of exuberant love. The reason for all this was that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of Love, had Himself become these calves and children. A whole year passed. This extraordinary affection of the people and cows of Vraja for their children and calves surprised Śrī Baladeva. Opening the eye of Knowledge, He noticed that these calves and their care-takers, the cowherd boys, were all Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. On His making a query to the Lord, the whole mystery was revealed to Him. Now, Brahmā, coming after a year, finds Śrī Kṛṣṇa carrying on as usual His sports with the cowherd boys and tending the calves. His astonishment knew no bounds. Return-

ing to his own region, he found the boys and calves lying in the same state of unconsciousness as he had left them. Again, coming to Vraja, he finds them engaged in their sports as before. He was confounded as to which of the boys and calves were genuine and which imitation. His intellect appeared to play him false, when suddenly he noticed that all the calves and their care-taker boys transformed themselves into Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All assumed the beautiful swarthy appearance wearing the yellow robe, their four hands holding the conch, the discus, the club and the lotus, their forms decorated with the crown, the ear-ornaments, the necklace, the wreath of forest flowers and the garland of *Tulasi* (basil leaves) received by them as an offering from devotees. From Brahmā down to the humblest blade of grass, all that lives within the universe took a more lively form and began to offer their devotion and service to the Lord. The eight Siddhis (mystic powers) and supernatural powers, the twenty-four primordial principles,* Time, Karma, (the universal principle of action), the seeds of action and the three Guṇas (modes of Nature), all appeared in personal forms and engaged in the worship of the Lord. This miraculous vision amazed and stupefied Brahmā, who sunk to the ground in an unconscious state. When he regained consciousness, he observed that, being of the land of sport of the Lord, Śrī Vṛndāvana was free from the fret and fever of the world in the shape of lust, anger and greed; that it was full to the brim with captivating objects; that all creatures there bore enmity to none and were happy. That the One without a second, the Supreme, Infinite, Unfathomable *Brahma*, adopting the sportive dress of

* The twenty-four primordial principles as enumerated in the Sankhya system are as follows:—

Prakṛiti (Primordial Matter), *Mahat* (Cosmic Intelligence), *Ahankara* (Cosmic Ego), the five Tanmatras (subtle elements), the Mind and the ten Indriyas (organs of perception and action) and the five gross elements (*Bhūtas*).

a cowherd boy and holding a morsel of food in His hand, was, as before, casting the glance hither and thither in search of the calves and the cowherd boys. Seeing this, Brahmā fell prostrate on the ground like a staff made of gold and, making obeisance at the feet of the Lord, began to bathe those sacred feet with the flow of tears of joy from his eyes. He then got up and began to chant the glory of the Lord, in the course of which he said:—

तद्भूरिभाग्यमिह जन्म किमप्यटव्यां

यद्रोकुलेऽपि कतमाङ्घ्रिरजोऽभिवेकम् ।

यज्जोवितं तु निखिलं भगवान् सुकुन्द-

स्त्वद्यापि यत्पदरजः श्रुतिमृगमेव ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. xiv. 34.)

“To be born in this land, the woodland of Vṛndāvana, and more particularly at Gokula, is an incident of supreme luck, because through birth in this land one earns the privilege of holding on the head the dust of the feet of some one or other of the inhabitants of Gokula, who are so dear to the Lord. Blessed are these inhabitants of Gokula, since, O Lord ! Thou art their life,—Thou whom the Śrutis are constantly in search of.”
But, Lord—

विषविषमस्तनापि कृतमातृसुषेप्तया

समजनि पूतना तव सुधास्रि सहावरज ।

धनजनजीवनाद्यखिलदानकृतां किमहो

व्रजपुरवासिनां विवरितैति भवाम्यपयीः ॥

(*Ananda-Vṛndāvana Champu*)

“The fiendess Pūtanā, although she had besmeared her breasts with the strongest poison, came in the attractive garb of a mother to give You suck, and that was why she together with her younger brother (Bakāsura) attained Your supreme Abode. What, then, will You offer these inhabitants of Vraja, who have surrendered to You their all, viz. wealth and position, parents and other members of their family, land

and property, nay, even life itself ? It is, therefore, quite in the fitness of things that You remain bound to them through bondage of love. My intellect refuses to work when it comes to dwell on this matter."

The creator of the universe, Brahmā, thus singing the Lord's glory and walking round and bowing before Him, returned to his abode with the permission of the Lord.

DRINKING OFF THE FOREST FIRE

On one occasion, at dead of night, a fire broke out in the forest and surrounded all the people of Vraja, who began to shout for the Lord to save them. Finding His people overpowered by consternation, the All-powerful Lord of the Universe immediately drank off the entire conflagration. Some time after this incident there was a second conflagration, when the people again shouted for help and sought protection from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. "O Kṛṣṇa, O Balarāma, You are possessed of great strength, Your power is infinite; save us from this dreadful conflagration." The Lord said, "Do not give yourselves up to fear, close your eyes." When according to this advice all closed their eyes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yogas, quickly drank off all that fire and thus saved the lives of His devoted followers.

तथेति मीलिताक्षेषु भगवानग्निमुत्बणम् ।
पीत्वा मुखेन तान् कृच्छ्राद्योगाधीशो व्यमोचयत् ॥

(Srimad Bhagavata. X. xix. 12)

WORSHIP OF THE GOVARDHANA HILL

There used to be made in Vraja, every year, a sacrificial offering to Indra; but, with the object of humbling the pride of the Lord of the Devas, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who in one aspect is Time itself, stopped that sacrifice with the consent of Nanda and the other principal Gopas and introduced

in its place the worship of the Govardhana hill and the cows. Under instructions of the Lord, wealth was distributed among the Brahmans, the cows were fed with green herbage and other food delectable to them, after which all the Gopis (cowherdresses), dressed in their best attire, started on bullock-carts to circumambulate the Govardhana hill. They then climbed the hill; there on the hill Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested Himself in a duplicate large Form with four hands. The Lord together with the inhabitants of Vraja bowed before that duplicate Form of His own, and performed worship of that Form. Thus worshipping, and making others worship, He returned to Vraja with all the people. Indra took this incident as a direct insult to his prestige and determined to wash away Vraja by pouring down torrential rains similar to what appears at the time of dissolution of the world. Whether in the matter of reverberating noise of thunder and lightning, showering of hailstones, directing the storm or releasing the clouds to exhaust their load of water on Vraja, whatever strength Indra actually possessed, he prepared himself to exercise it to the fullest extent. The Gopas and Gopis, who were all frightened, came to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for refuge. The Lord gave them assurance, and sportfully took up the Govardhana hill in one hand, just as a child would root out and take up without much effort a mushroom plant—

इत्युत्त्वैकेन हस्तेन कृत्वा गोवर्धनाचलम् ।

दधार लीलया कृष्णरच्छत्राकमिव बालकः ॥

(Srimad Bhagavata X. xxv. 19)

All the people of Vraja came with their household articles, bullocks and cows, and took shelter under the hill. For seven consecutive days the Lord held the hill on His little finger, forgetting hunger, thirst, pain or the desire for comfort. Observing this supernatural

action of the Lord and realizing themselves to be the special objects of grace of such a Supreme Being, the Gopas and Gopis looked with astonished and affectionate gaze without a wink on the unruffled, sweet face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This miraculous action confounded Indra and humbled his pride. His power having exhausted, the rains stopped, and the sun appeared in the sky. The Gopas and Gopis, coming out from beneath the hill, felicitated Śrī Kṛṣṇa by offering their devotion, embrace and blessings as it befitted them according to the relation in which they stood to Him. Indra also came, and doffing the crown of his head, bright and glorious like the sun, placed it at the feet of the Lord and began to sing His glory. In the end, He said:—

मयेर्दं भगवन् गोष्ठनाशयासारवायुभिः ।
 चेष्टितं विहृते यज्ञे मानिना तीव्रमन्युना ॥
 त्वयेशानुगृहीतोऽसि ध्वस्तस्तम्भो हतोद्यमः ।
 ईश्वरं पुरुमात्मानं त्वामहं शरणं गतः ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. 27. 12-13)

“O Lord, I was possessed by an inordinate pride; therefore, when the sacrifice was stopped, I was beside myself with anger and attempted to destroy Vraja through rain and storm. O Lord, You have shown me a great favour by humbling my pride; I have realized through the failure of my effort that there is a greater and more powerful Being than I. I have now sought refuge in Thee, who art the Lord, *Guru* and the Self of my self; kindly protect me.”

What the Lord said in reply to Indra, should always be carefully treasured by all in their heart. The Lord said:—

मया तेऽकारि मधवन्मखभङ्गोऽनुगृह्यता ।
 मदनुस्मृतये नित्यं मत्तस्येन्द्रश्रिया भृशम् ॥
 मामैश्वर्यश्रीमदानधो दण्डपाणिं न पश्यति ।
 तं भ्रंशयामि संपद्भ्यो यस्य चेच्छाम्यनुग्रहम् ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. xxvii. 15-16)

“O Lord of Devas, you were greatly intoxicated by your glory and greatness, therefore out of compassion for you (in order to open your eyes) I stopped the sacrificial offering to you; now you take refuge in Me. Those who get blinded by their power, do not see Me holding the staff of punishment; among such people, one on whom My grace descends, I deprive of his property, so that he may be cured of his inebriety.”

Then the celestial cow Surabhi bowed before the Lord, who was disguised as a cowherd, and, singing His glory, performed the anointing ceremony with her milk. Under instructions of mother Aditi, Indra, accompanied by his host of Devas, caused the sacred water of the Ganges in heaven to be brought by the celestial elephant Airāvata, and performed the anointing ceremony of the Lord and gave Him the name of ‘Govinda’—

इति गोगोकुलपतिं गोविन्दमभिषिच्य सः ।
 अनुज्ञातो ययौ शक्रो वृता देवादिभिर्दिवम् ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata*. X. 27. 28)

“Thus anointing Govinda, the Lord of the cows and of Gokula, and obtaining His permission, Indra together with the Devas returned to his abode in heaven.”

WORSHIP IN THE ABODE OF VARUṆA

Śrī Nanda once observed the fast of *Ekādaśī* (eleventh lunar day). The twelfth lunar time having touched the next day only for a short while, he had to make haste to get ready to break the fast and entered the Jamuna for bath much before the hour of sunrise, an unpropitious hour for taking bath. An aquatic follower of the god of water, Varuṇa, was hanging about the place, and, getting hold of Śrī Nanda, took him to his lord and master. The sun rose, yet Nanda did not come out of water; seeing this, all were overtaken

by consternation. Shouts arose On all sides: "O Kṛṣṇa, rescue Your Father," "O Balarāma, race along." Śrī Kṛṣṇa understood the whole mystery and, advising patience to all, departed for the abode of the god of water. As soon as He reached there, the god Varuṇa welcomed Him with much pomp and ceremony and, thus showing his devotion, made the following humble submission:—

अथ मे निमृतो देहोऽर्थाथोऽधिगतः प्रभा ।
 त्वत्पादभाजो भगवन्नवायुः पारमस्वनः ॥
 नमस्तुभ्यं भगवते ब्रह्मणे परमात्मने ।
 न यत्र श्रूयते माया लोकसृष्टिविकल्पना ॥
 अज्ञानता मामकेन मूढेनाकार्यवेदिना ।
 आनीतोऽस्यं तव पिता तद्भवान् क्षन्तुमर्हति ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. xxviii. 5-7)

"O Lord, it is to-day that I have become truly blessed; I have come to possess incomparable riches to-day. A devotee who meditates on Your feet reaches salvation, hence I have also obtained liberation from bondage. O Lord, Thou art the Supreme *Brahma*, Thou art the *Paramātmā*, the *Māyā* which to create delusion manifests Herself in the form of desire for creation has no place in Thee. I bow before Thee O Lord; it was a foolish servant of mine, devoid of the sense of duty, who through ignorance brought Your father to me. Kindly pardon me for this guilt."

Pleased with the submissions of Varuṇadeva, the Lord of lords, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, returned to Vraja accompanied by the old father Śrī Nanda.

VISION OF BRAHMA AND OF THE SUPREME ABODE SHOWN TO COWHERDS

The old father Nanda was greatly surprised to see his son Śrī Kṛṣṇa being worshipped by Varuṇadeva with so much pomp and ceremony and, returning to Vraja, he related to the

Gopas all that he had seen with his own eyes about the glory and power of the Lord. The Gopas then knew it for certain that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was God Himself; thereupon the desire sprang in their heart—"We shall be blessed if the Lord chooses a time to give us also a vision of His own Subtle Form". The Lord, who is an ocean of mercy and omniscient, read through the heart of the Gopas and, showing His grace took them to the region of Vaikuṇṭha beyond the jurisdiction of *Māyā*, and blessed them with a vision of His attributeless *Brahma*-form, which is Truth, Knowledge and Infinity combined (सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तम्). The Gopas merged their identity in the Ocean like vastness of *Brahma*. The Lord, however, took them out of it after which He gave them a vision of the Supreme Abode. It was this very Abode which, through the Lord's grace, Śrī Akrūra saw while taking a plunge bath in the Jamuna. The Gopas saw with their own eyes that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the Lord of that region, and that the four Vedas were engaged in singing His praises. The vision of this Reality greatly astonished Śrī Nanda and his associates, who were all merged in a sea of joy.

RĀSA DANCE

It was on the night of the autumnal full moon that the Lord performed the sacred *Rāsa* dance with innumerable Gopis. He manifested many forms all at once and, placing a Form between two Gopis, stood clasping His outstretched hands with those of the Gopis. Thus, taking innumerable Forms amidst innumerable Gopis, the Lord performed the *Rāsa* dance. At the same time, in the form of the Gopis themselves He stayed in their homes, so that the masters of the households remained assured that the women were inside their homes.

LIBERATION OF SUDARŚANA

On one occasion, Śrī Nanda and the other Gopas went to the forest

named after the goddess Ambikā as Ambikā-vana, and, worshipping Lord Śankara and goddess Ambikā there, they distributed gifts and observed a fast. As it had become late, they spent the night on the bank of the Saraswati and lay down there. At dead of night a huge python began to swallow Nanda by the feet. In his terror, Śrī Nanda cried out, "O Kṛṣṇa, O Blue Love, I am being swallowed by this terrible snake; protect me from this danger!" The Gopas tried their best to release him from the grip of the snake, but without any result. In the end Śrī Kṛṣṇa came and slightly touched the snake with his toe. At the touch of the foot of the Lord, all the sins of the snake were destroyed; and, released from snakehood, a beautiful Vidyādhara (a class of celestial beings) appeared before the Lord and, falling prostrate at his sacred feet, said, "Lord, I am a Vidyādhara, Sudarśana by name; swollen by pride on account of my beautiful form, one day, I laughed in derision seeing some Munis of the family of Ṛṣi Angirā, possessing very ugly appearances. They pronounced a curse on me to the effect that I should take birth as a snake. I realize now that it was no curse, but they showed on me their grace through which I have been privileged to-day to obtain the touch of Your sacred feet and get absolution of all my sins."

ब्रह्मदण्डाद्भि मुक्तोऽहं सद्यस्तेऽच्युतदर्शनात् ।

यन्नाम गृह्णन्निखिलच्छ्रेतृनाहमानमेव च ।

सद्यः पुनाति किं भूयस्तस्य स्पृष्टः पदा हि ते ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X. xxxiv. 17)

"O Lord, it is no matter for surprise that I have been liberated from the curse of Brahmans on a mere sight of You. Even those who sing and chant Your Name immediately get sanctified together with those who hear the chanting of that Name, to say nothing of one who has obtained

a touch of Your sacred feet. How could there be any doubt about my liberation?"

DELIVERANCE OF ŚANKHACHŪDA

On one occasion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were singing sweet songs at night in the forest and the Gopis, entranced by love, were absorbed in the hearing of the music. There appeared at that time a follower of Kubera, Śankhachūda by name, who, getting hold of some Gopis, started carrying them off by force. The Gopis screamed in terror, but he would not release them. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then advanced running for their rescue. When they approached the Yakṣa, the latter left the Gopis and ran for life; but Śrī Kṛṣṇa overtook him and, making him pay with life for the vile affront, returned with the precious gem worn by him on the crown.

ŚRĪ AKRŪRA'S VISION OF GOD DURING HIS RETURN JOURNEY TO MATHURA

Śrī Akṛūra came to take Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathura. The Gopis, whose very life-breath was Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and who could not bear the thought of separation from their beloved, threw aside the fear of public opinion and began to lament loudly with the words—"O Govinda ! O Dāmodara !! O Mādhava!!!" on their lips. The whole night passed in hearing the lamentation of the Gopis. As soon as the day broke, Śrī Akṛūra performed the morning worship of Gāyatrī and started the chariot with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Soon they reached the bank of the Jamuna. There the two brothers took their bath and, drinking the sweet water of the river, they went and sat on the chariot standing on the road under the shade of a tree. Śrī Akṛūra after finishing his ablutions dived into the river, and began to repeat the Gāyatrī. As he proceeded, repeating the sacred words, he observed

that both the brothers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, were present within the waters of the river. The thought then came to him—the brothers were seated in the chariot, how could they come inside the river? Thinking thus, he came out of the water and found the two brothers seated as before in the chariot. He was lost in bewilderment. Then he thought—was it an illusion that I saw them in the water? Speculating thus, he took a second plunge, and now he saw there lay within the river, surrounded and served by Siddhas, snakes and Asuras, the divine snake Śeṣa or Ananta. He had a thousand heads, each adorned with a crown; his body was white like the stalk of a lotus and was covered by a blue piece of cloth. On the bed of Śrī Śeṣa sat the Lord Himself with four hands, the colour of His body resembling that of a new-blue cloud, the Devas, Ṛṣis, Kinnaras and all Devis (goddesses) being engaged in His service. The joy of Akrūra knew no bounds when he saw this vision; the hairs of his body stood on their ends through excess of joy; the eyes were filled with tears; his heart was surcharged with the sentiment of devotion. He realized who Śrī Kṛṣṇa truly was and, folding both his hands he began to sing the glory of the Lord.

Before Śrī Akrūra could finish his song of glory, Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared from his view within the water:—

स्तुवतस्तस्य भगवान् दर्शयित्वा जले वपुः ।
भूयः समाहरत् कृष्णो नद्यो नाख्यमिवात्मनः ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X. 41.1)

“Showing His own Supernatural Form within the water, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly withdrew that Form from before Śrī Akrūra while he was engaged in singing His praises, just as a magician showing some magic withdraws his magic creation from the view of his spectators.”

Missing the Lord within the water, Śrī Akrūra came out on the surface when Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the senses, asked him with a smile on His lips—“Uncle, why do you look lost in bewilderment? Have you seen anything unusual?” Akrūra replied:—

अद्भुतानीह यावन्ति भूमौ वियति वा जले ।

त्वयि विश्वात्मके तानि किं मेऽदृष्टं विपश्यतः ॥

यत्राद्भुतानि सर्वाणि भूमौ वियति वा जले ।

तं त्वानुपश्यतो ब्रह्मन् किं मे दृष्टमिहाद्भुतम् ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X. 41.4-5)

“O Lord, whatever there is unusual or supernatural on earth, in water or in the sky, all is established in Thy universal form. When I have known You in essence, what residue of supernaturalness is left which has not come within the orbit of my vision? O *Brahma*, all that there is on earth, in water or in the sky are within You. Beyond You, what is there unusual or supernatural on earth that I could see?”

Saying this, Śrī Akrūra gave a start to the horses, which sped with the chariot.

STRAIGHTENING THE HUNCH- BACKED LADY

The Lord now reached Mathurā. There on the public road He met a hunchbacked woman whose function was to paint the body of Kāṁsa with sweet-smelling ingredients. The Lord was filled with compassion for the woman and thought of making her straight. He, therefore, pressed her toes with both His feet and, holding her chin with two of His fingers, gave her a sudden jerk. Although the woman possessed a body twisted from her very birth, she was made straight by the jerk.

APPEARING TO PEOPLE IN VARI- OUS FORMS SIMULTANEOUSLY

He then entered the armoury of Kāṁsa and, throwing down the sentry,

took up the huge, powerful bow of Indra and broke it into two without much effort, and killing Chāṇūra, Muṣṭika and other wrestlers as well as the mad elephant Kuvalayāpiḍa, He put an end to the oppression of Kāṁsa by making short of him. In that open court of Kāṁsa, ŚRĪ Kṛṣṇa appeared to different people in different appearances. To the wrestlers He appeared as hard as the hardest stone, to the people at large He appeared as the best of men, to women He appeared as the god of love himself, the Gopas saw Him as their kinsman, the wicked kings as their punisher, His parents saw Him as a mere child, Kāṁsa saw Him as Death itself, the ignorant regarded Him as ignorant as themselves, the Yogis saw Him as Supreme *Brahma*, and the Yādavas saw Him as the highest object of their veneration. (*Srimad Bhagavata* X. 42. 43)

BRINGING THE DEAD SON OF HIS PRECEPTOR

Consoling the parents, ŚRĪ Vasudeva and Devakī, through His submissive and pleasing conduct, the Lord said, "Man can never pay off the debt of his parents by service even for a hundred years—parents, to whom he owes this human body, which possesses the potentiality to attain the fourfold purpose of existence (चतुर्वर्ग) and who nourished it with care during infancy."

यस्तयोरात्मजः कल्प आत्मना च धनेन च ।
वृत्तिं न दद्यात् प्रेत्य स्वमांसं खादयन्ति हि ॥
मातरं पितरं वृद्धं भार्यीं साध्वीं सुतं शिशुम् ।
गुरुं विप्रं प्रपन्नं च कल्पोऽविभ्रच्छ्रसन्मृतः ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. 45. 6-7)

"A capable son who does not serve his parents with body, mind and monetary resources is fed after death by the messengers of Death upon his own flesh. A person who does not maintain his old parents, devoted wife, children, preceptor, the Brahmans or one seeking

refuge with him is no better than dead although he may be living."

Then ŚRĪ Hari, soul of the Universe in human semblance, making the parents happy in every sense, performed, with the help of Garga Muni, the ceremony of the adoption of sacred thread, after which both the brothers went to Ujjain for their studies. There, controlling all the senses, they pursued their studies, showing extreme submission and reverence to the *Guru* and serving him as God Himself. Within sixty-four days they completed the study of the Vedas with all their subordinate branches, the Upaniṣads, the science of archery with the knowledge of Mantras and Devas connected therewith, the Dharma and Niti Śāstras, Philosophy, Politics and all other branches of knowledge as well as the sixty-four arts. Although, as Lord of the universe, He is the fountain and revealer of all knowledge and omniscient, He played the role of a student just to maintain harmony with His sport as a human being. On the completion of His studies, He approached the *Guru* with a prayer to demand something by way of a parting present (गुरुदक्षिणा). Thereupon, Sāṅdipani, the *Guru*, expressed the desire that his son drowned in the sea at Prabhāsa Kṣetra might be brought back to him. The Lord agreed to do so and, going to the ocean, asked it to deliver the son of His preceptor. The ocean replied, "Lord, it was not I who stole the boy; he was abducted by the demon Pāñchajanya, who possessed the form of a conch; he must have devoured the child." The Lord then entered the ocean and killed the demon but failed to discover the child within its stomach. Then he went to the abode of Death. Welcoming Him, the god of Death stood in attendance and humbly begged leave to know what service he might render. The Lord ordered him to deliver the son of His preceptor. This was immediately done by the submissive god of Death.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa then came to His preceptor and, presenting the child to him, gladdened his heart.

DELIVERANCE OF NṚGA

For the sin of making gift of a cow which had already been given away in charity, King Nṛga was suffering through birth as a lizard and lay in a well. Some boys of the Yādava clan, enjoying their pastime in the garden, noticed the lizard in the well; they tried hard to bring it out, but failed. They then came to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and related the whole incident to Him. The Lord, hearing this, came to the well and took the lizard out of it. When He touched the lizard, the soul within it immediately left the body of the lizard and a handsome person, coming out, began to glorify the Lord.

GLORY SUNG BY THE ṚṢIS

Śrī Vasudeva performed a sacrifice at Kurukṣetra. In connection with this ceremony, Kuntī, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadrā and other royal ladies as well as the Gopīs came to Kurukṣetra. All his blood-relations assembled there. Availing themselves of this opportunity, Ṛṣis like Mahārṣi Vyāsa, Nārada, Chyavana, Devala, Asita, Viśvāmitra, Sadānanda, Bhāradwāja, Gautama, Paraśurāma, Vasiṣṭha, Gālava, Bhṛgu, Pulastya, Kaśyapa, Atri, Mārkaṇḍeya, Bṛhaspati, Dwita, Trita, Ekata, Sanaka and other sons of Brahmā, Angirā, Agastya, Yājñavalkya, Vāmadeva and others came to the place to pay their respects to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa welcomed the Ṛṣis with much humility and respect and, worshipping them with offerings of water for washing their feet, with garlands, sandal paste, incense and similar other objects, the Lord said, "Our life has been fulfilled to-day through your blessed sight. It is saints like you who are the real Devas, and purifiers (men become purified through your contact)." The Ṛṣis were enchanted

by the sweet and significant words of the Lord; they understood that He was behaving like an ordinary man as He had come down to sport as a human being. They glorified the Lord with much expression of humility and in the end solicited the Lord to grant them the boon of devotion. Vasudeva prayed to the Ṛṣis for some words of spiritual advice, in reply to which Śrī Nārada said, "Vasudeva, the object of your existence has already been realized; blessed is your Devotion, which has compelled the Supreme Lord of Creation to manifest Himself as your son."

On the completion of the sacrifice, the Yādavas returned to Dwārakā. Hearing about the glory of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma from the lips of well-known saints, Vasudeva was fully convinced that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the All-Powerful Hari Himself. So, on a particular day, taking both the brothers aside, he began to propitiate them through words of praise. On the completion of his eulogy, Śrī Kṛṣṇa smiled and addressed his father with much humility and respect in the following words of deep spiritual meaning, "O father, the exposition of the truth about *Brahma* which you have just given, making Me as an occasion for it, is quite sound. Myself, yourself, these residents of Dwārakā, and even the whole of this creation is nothing but *Brahma*. All seekers of Reality should meditate on this all-pervading *Brahma*."

BRINGING THE DEAD SONS OF DEVAKĪ

When Mother Devakī heard that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had brought back from the region of Death the departed child of His preceptor, she approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with lamentations and addressed them as follows:—

"O Kṛṣṇa, O Balarāma, I know that You are possessors of unfathomable glory, You are Lords of even the Lords

of *Yoga*. I hear You brought back the departed child of Your preceptor from the abode of Death; this encourages me to hope that You will help me as well to see for once with these eyes my six sons who were killed by Kamsa." Receiving this order from the mother, both the brothers started. They went down to the region of Satala and met King Bali, who ruled there. Bali welcomed and worshipped Them and sprinkled the water touched by their feet over himself and all the other members of his family. The Lord then said, "Six sons of R̥ṣi Marīchi, named Smara, Udgītha, Pariṣwanga, Patanga, Kṣudrabhuk and Ghṛṇi, who were born as Asuras owing to a curse, were after leaving their asuric bodies taken by My *Yogamāyā* and placed in the womb of Devakī and on their birth they were killed by Kamsa. Through motherly affection, Mother Devakī desires to see them once. They live in this region under your authority; please allow them to come with Me. I shall release them from the curse and they will attain salvation." Bali delivered the six R̥ṣi children to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who returned with them to their mother. Seeing those children, Devakī was overwhelmed with affection: milk began to flow from her breasts, and she started giving them suck. This milk being the residue of what had once been tasted by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and due further to the divine touch of the Lord, the heart of these children was purified and the light of knowledge dawned on them. Bowing before Govinda, Baladeva, Devakī and Vasudeva, they departed for the abode of Devas scaling the region of the sky.

तं दृष्ट्वा देवकी देवी मृतागमननिर्गमम् ।
मेने सुविस्मिता मायां कृष्णस्य रचितां नृप ॥

"Thus seeing the appearance and disappearance of her dead children, mother Devakī was possessed by a sense of wonder and she realized that this became possible only through the supernatural power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

ADOPTION OF MANY FORMS AT MITHILĀ

On one occasion Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with Nārada, Vyāsa, Vāmadeva, Atri and many other R̥ṣis went to the city of Mithilā. The king of Mithilā, Bahulāśwa by name, was a great devotee of the Lord. In the same city there lived a quiet and peaceful, able, wise and contented Brahman, whose name was Śrutadeva. He, too, was a devotee who constantly meditated on the feet of the Lord. Finding the Lord of the universe, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, come to Mithilā, both King Bahulāśwa and the poor Brahman Śrutadeva came and bowed before Him and both solicited the Lord to accept their hospitality. Both being devotees of equal status and equally dedicated to the Lord, He had to accept the invitation of both. He, therefore, in order to please them both, took a duplicate Form and also assumed the forms of the R̥ṣis and simultaneously presented Himself and the whole company at both the places. King Bahulāśwa thought that the Lord came only to his palace, while the Brahman Śrutadeva felt that the Lord visited his humble cottage. Thus taking many forms all at once, He gratified both the devotees.

ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA IN EVERY PALACE

Śrī Nārada once thought, the Lord had sixteen thousand, one hundred and eight queens, and wondered when and how He managed to visit all of them in their palaces. In order to gain a direct knowledge of that mystery, he came to Dwārakā and straightaway entered the palace of Śrī Rukmiṇī. There he observed the Lord seated in a throne and Śrī Rukmiṇī engaged in His service. On the approach of Śrī Nārada, the Lord, who was the embodiment of virtue, got up from His seat and welcomed the R̥ṣi. Śrī Nārada showed Him appropriate courtesy and delighted Him with words of praise and then started for another palace. There he found the Lord engaged

in some recreative play with Uddhava. From there he went to a third palace. Thus he took a round of all the palaces and found the Lord present in every palace. If at one place he found Him engaged in worship, at another he found Him going for bath, and at yet another engaged in feeding the children; at one place He was engaged in practising the use of arms, at another He was found ready to go out for a ride or for an outing on the back of an elephant; at one place he found the Lord reposing in bed and at another holding private consultation with the ministers; at one place He was engaged in bestowing gifts on Brahmans and at another in hearing the books of history and Purānas. In short, he found the Lord present simultaneously in all the palaces. Observing this miraculous sport of the Lord of Yogas, Devarṣi Nārada was stupefied through fascination.

DEPARTURE TO THE SUPREME ABODE

With the intention of leaving for His Supreme Abode, the Lord went and sat under a tree in the forest in a calm and composed manner. The splendour of His appearance at this time was indescribable. The only thing He had to perform now was to make the arrow of the hunter an instrument for the fulfilment of His purpose; He was awaiting this arrow. Just then the hunter shot his arrow aiming at the deer-like foot of Śrī Hari, mistaking it for a deer; but on approaching the Lord and seeing what he had done, he was seized with terror and, prostrating himself before Him, uttered these words of remorse and anguish—"O Madhusūdana (Slayer of the demon Madhu), I am the worst of sinners; it is through a mistake that I have committed this sin. O Lord, pardon me." The Lord smiled and replied, "Brother, get up; you have nothing to fear. You are really not responsible for this action. It is through My desire that this has happened. As a reward for this action you go to the

celestial world." As soon as the Lord uttered this, a chariot of the gods came down from heaven and the hunter, going round and bowing before the Lord, departed for heaven. Then the chariot of the Lord, bearing the sign of Garuḍa, together with the horses, the flag-staff and other materials, rose towards the sky and disappeared from view. To His charioteer, Dāraka, He granted the boon of salvation and sent him to Dwārakā. Then, Brahmā, Śrī Śankara with Pārvatī, Indra and other gods, the Ṛṣis, Prajāpatis (Lords of creation), Pitṛs (manes), Siddhas, Gandharvas (celestial songsters), Vidyādharas, Mahānāgas, Chāraṇas (celestial bards), Yakṣas (demi-gods), Dwiḡas (the twice-born), Apsarās (celestial nymphs) and other celestial beings, all assembled in the sky to attend to this sport of leave-taking of the Lord from earth. The sky became overcast with their chariots and all began to sing the glory and praises of the Lord and shower flowers on Him.

Seeing this assemblage of celestial beings, the Lord closed His eyes and left for His Supreme Abode bodily in His world-enchancing Form. Together with Śrī Hari departed from this earth Truth, *Dharma* (Righteousness), fortitude, fame, and prosperity. Brahmā, Śiva and the other Devas, seated in their celestial chariots, saw the Lord bodily depart to His Supreme Abode.

Thus beginning from His descent, till His departure to the Supreme Abode, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa enacted innumerable supernatural Līlās on earth and only a few of these miraculous deeds of the Lord have been briefly narrated in this article.

There are many other miraculous deeds like the killing of Pūtanā, Tṛṇāvarta, Vatsāsura, Bakāsura, Aghāsura, Dhenukāsura, Pralambāsura, Ariṣṭāsura and others even in His childhood; upturning the cart and breaking it to pieces, the chastisement of the snake

Kāliya, killing of the wrestlers and Kāṁsa; the killing of Bhaumāsura, Rukmi, Śiśupāla, Śālwa and others; turning the penniless Sudāmā into a multi-millionaire in the course of a night; building the marvellous city of Dwārakā within an incredibly short time; extending the garment of Draupadī; bringing from the abode of Death the dead child of a Brahman and thus fulfilling the promise made by Arjuna; at the time of the killing of Jayadratha to make the sun disappear before time; to bring to life Parīkṣita, the child of Uttarā; to keep intact and in working order the war-chariot of Arjuna although it had been actually burnt to ashes by the shafts of his powerful adversaries, and so on. Those of our readers who desire to taste more of the nectar of the supernatural Līlās of the Lord, or to have a direct realization of these sports, are requested to read with devotion and reverence those jewels among books such as the *Mahābhārata*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*, *Harivaṁśa*, *Brahmaivaivarta Purāṇa* and the like and, purifying their heart through chanting of the Divine Name, open the well of love that lies hidden within them.

Śrī Śukadeva says:—

एवंविधान्वद्भूतानि कृष्णस्य परमात्मनः ।
वीर्याण्यनन्तवीर्यस्य सन्त्यनन्तानि भारत ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X. 85. 58)

“O King, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *Paramātmā* who possessed infinite power and glory, performed an infinite number of deeds of miracle.”

Śrī Sūta says:—

य इदमनुश्रुणोति श्रावयेद्वा मुरारे-
श्चरितममृतकीर्तेर्वर्णितं व्यासपुत्रैः ।
जगदघभिदलं तद्भक्तसत्कर्णपूरं
भगवति कृतचित्तो याति तत्क्षेमधाम ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X. 85. 59)

“O Śaunaka, the stories of the supernatural Personality of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, described originally by Śrī Śukadeva, son of Mahārṣi Vedavyāsa, have the power to destroy all the sins of the world, and appear to devotees as sweet as nectar; those who hear or describe these stories with devotion get their mind wholly absorbed in the Lord and reach the Supreme Abode of the Lord, which is the abode of Bliss.”

