

**A DIP INTO
DIVINE
CONFLUENCE**
Biography of a yogi

A. K. KURIAN

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BIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI

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**Dedicated Respectfully To
Revered Guruji
Shri Wasudeo Rameshwar Tiwari
And to
Those Seekers After Truth**



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**A Dip
Into
Divine
Confluence**

PREFACE

What is truth? Asked the jesting pilate,"but he would not stay for an answer ,"wrote Francis bacon. Like Pontius Pilate the pompous roman governor of Palestine who condemned jesus Christ to crucifixion, many men throughout history asked the question, " what is truth? And very few waited and looked for an answer. Fewer still persisted and attained the truth. Many of us do still ask 'what is truth.' But how many of us have the courage to persevere in our quest for the truth? How many of us are waiting to pay the price for the truths attainment?

This book in three parts. Part I is the story of a living saint, shri wasudao rameshwar tiwari by name. he is a house holder having children and grand children of his own. It is the story of this man's hunger and thirst for the attainment of the ultimate truth which set one free the painstaking search he made for attainment it the troubles and tribulations he underwent the courage he exhibited the divine guidance he had been given and the price he paid through his along years of sufferings and privations till he attained the penultimate reality or truth, till he realized his "self" and the omnipotent.

The part II was originally intended to contain a couple of chapters of this saints philosophical discourses given to the disciples from time to time. But due to unavoidable reasons the pravachans could not be included. All the same the chapter "from the master's mouth" graphically explains his views on yoga which froms the fundamental philosophic tent of his teachings. In this part is also included s chapter entitled "Anatomy and yoga" a scientific study by dr. V.A. shinde M.S, M.A.M.S., professor and head of the department of anatomy, pandit Jawaharlal Nehru memorial medical college, Raipur (M.P.) which may be of interest to the readers.

Part III contains the spiritual experiences of some of his disciples who are of considerable spiritual attainments.

The readers are welcome to make their own judgement of these testimonies. I regret the fact that many of the disciples. Have been reluctant out of modesty to narrate in detail their vast and diverse experiences.

India that is Bharat had never been wanting in holymen and godmen, avatars, miracle workers, rope-walkers and what not. This land had ever been and still is being swarmed by sadhus and charalantas, monks and mahantas, mendicants, fakirs andgurus who masquerade as gods' right hand men. You look for one you will come across one thousand alleged greats. There are the child yogis, adult yogis nad old yogis and sadacharis and brahamcharis to boot. There are those who stand on one leg, yet others who stand on their heads or burry their heads. There have been more than enough for home consumption with the result that the export market flourished for some time lately. Presently there is a recession aborad and the export has come to naughty. Yet genuine saints and gurus are hard to come by; more so the house-holder saints and masters who are well acquainted with the difficulties and problems of the common man of the family.

That genuine saints of god realization do exist in our midst, though very few in number, is a gratifying fact. Their presence is not often well known, neither do they have large number of disciples; the reason being that they do not make much 'noise' but remain silent and work in silence. Neither do their disciples beat the drums. Thes are the few saints who uphold the common man's faith in the supreme being and the mainstay of all religion. Verily, such men are a blessing to this iniquitous earth.

Such a genuine saint and master is shri Wasudeo Rameshwar Tiwariji. He does not have nor does he want any cult or sect to grow around him. What he is interested in is that people of all colours and climes-hindus, muslims, Christians, jains Sikhs all alike-should take spiritually more seriously in their daily lives. All the religious contain great truths or the one ultimate Truth expressed in diverse manner. This supreme truth can be experienced and verified by any one willing to work for it. Such a spiritual quest will become easier if there is a master to guide and to help.

The guruji of this book, as one who has traversed the mystic yogic path and attained the truth, is willing to help and guide all those who are genuinely desirous, irrespective of their religious affinities.

There are several biographies of saintly persons and yogis in the market today. In recent times there has been a spurt in books throwing light on the lives and exploits of godmen of their glorification and deification. These biographies are mainly of monks and Bramacharis. There is a paucity of books on the lives and achievements of house-holder saints, the family man forms the back-bone of the society according to our master. He says, " This subject (the yoga of spirituality) is related to the heart (Anthakarana) and so the clothes and ashram of a sadhak have no bearing on it. What guarantee is there that merely by wearing saffron coloured robes, the passions residing in the heart are thrown out? On the other hand, I would say, that the study of yoga is an essential duty of a grahasth. Without yoga the duty of *Grahasthashram* remains unfulfilled. *Grahasthashram* is the best of all ashrams. It is the back-bone of the society. In the real sense it is the test ground of a human beings. While remaining in that ashram and discharging all prescribed duties of the same, to progress on the path of self realization is the demand of the day." If it be so, then it is imperative that the lives and attainments of householder saints must be made known so that the family man may find inspiration, encouragement and guidance. And that is first and foremost justification for bringing out this book.

Yet another reason that encouraged us to undertake this task is the noble desire of this master's disciples who have deep spiritual experiences of their own to share their experiences and happiness with their less fortunate brethren.

This book reveals much by way of personal experiences etc., but hides more, not only many a deep personal spiritual experiences but also the mystic and occult methods of meditation. These methods are too esoteric to be revealed through the page of a book but must be learnt directly from a 'Sat-Guru.'

There may not be any lack of critics who might derogately remark that this book contains a lot of crap which are scientifically untenable but are mere hallucinations of fevered brains. The only reply I care to give is: it has been said umpteen times that the taste of the pudding is in the eating of it. You are welcome to scientifically test and verify these claims. You must have a sane mind, a good back bone and a Sat-Guru to guide. That is all.

I am fully aware of my inability to present this book in the way it ought to have been. I am no writer. This is my first attempt at writing and probably the last too. The flaws and fault are mine whereas the credit for this book goes to revered Guruji. Had he not lived such an adventurous and noble a life this book would never have been written. I owe him much.

This book is the product of the combined efforts of all the disciples. Names of some appear in part III. I wish here to acknowledge my profound gratitude to all brother disciples.

Even if a handful of readers find inspiration and encouragement from this book to seek truth, to knock at and enter the 'strait gate' and tread on the 'narrow path', that will be recompense enough, for in revered Guruji's words, "There are millions of stars in the firmament of heaven but it is the one moon that dispels the darkness of the night and illuminates the earth." This book is now sent out to the truth seekers with the Master's ample good wishes and blessings.

Tilaknagar,

A.K.K.

Bilaspur.

19.4.81

I

BIOGRAPHY

1

Birth : South America

Our story begins in the closing years of the last century which saw the mighty British Empire at the zenith of its power and glory. The empire by this time had extended to almost half of the world, far into the east including India, Burma and so on and far into the west including a good part of the Americas. The time was then, when the Britishers could proudly and reasonably claim that “the sun never set on the British Empire”.

The British rulers at this time needed large number of workmen to develop and exploit their colonies in the different continents, for, their own home land- the petty British Islands- could hardly supply enough administrators and governors and army top brass to rule the extensive empire. India- their biggest colony- had the largest population. This population, the British rulers decide, should be made use of for developing the other sparsely populated colonies in the African and south American continents. With this end in view the British rulers started recruitment of Indians as labour force to be sent abroad for a period of time as contract labour. After the contract period was over, often it was for five years, those workers could return home or if they so desired settle down in the colonies they had gone to as workmen. They could become naturalised citizens of these colonies; they could acquire land and become farmers or could settle down as traders and businessmen or they could choose any other profession that suited them.

One such batch of contract labour to go abroad to British Guiana in South America included a couple of Brahmin families of the Tiwari clan who were natives of Allahabad District of the then United Provinces- now Uttar Pradesh.

As 20th century dawned these families had already settled down as naturalised citizens near George town- the capital of the colony. One of these families the family of Mr. Rameshwar Tiwari lived on plot No. 4, plantain walk on the west bank of the Demerara river. He had a cloth shop in Georgetown.

Into this family a child was born on 23rd July, 1908 at 4 a.m. local time, and was named Wasudeo Rameshwar. This child was chosen by destiny to become a

great spiritual guide, friend and philosopher to many. What follows is the story of this child from his infancy through youth to old age-his unquenching thirst and quest for truth and wisdom, his yogic practices, the troubles and tribulations he had to undergo, the divine hand that led him through the vicissitudes of life to the penultimate stage of self realization and through self-realization to god realization.

From his very infancy the child Wasudeo showed certain peculiar and unusual traits of character.

An event occurred on his first birth anniversary that clearly brought out the mystic characteristic in the child. On this day infant Wasudeo who was generally jolly and playful seemed to have lost all external sensations of life. He lay still on his bed. His limbs were numb. The pupils of his eyes were unmoving as his gaze was fixed on to something. The frightened parents called in a doctor, who could find no symptoms of any disease. The doctor himself was puzzled. He could not diagnose any ailment and, therefore, could not prescribe any medicine. He advised that the child be kept in warm water to maintain his body temperature. This was soon done and the worried parents resigned themselves to patient waiting and to silent prayers. Time passed, seconds ticked away into minutes and minutes into hours, the child showing no signs of life. After about 12 hours which was a very long period for the woe-begone parents, the child began to move his limbs to the great relief of his parents. Within minutes he returned to normal. What had happened to him? Was he in trance, in communion with his heavenly father?

The child Wasudeo lost his mother before he was three years of age. He lived at his maternal grandfathers house where his maternal relatives like uncles, aunts and other relatives helped to bring him up. He was admitted in an English school and was enrolled in the kindergarten class. Even in the school he began to show an unusual liking to remain alone and aloof from other children of his age. He did not like to chatter and play away his time as other children did. He seemed to be happy with his own self, his dreams. He did not seem to enjoy the games and the company of other children. The elders noticed his reserve and left him often to himself. The absence of the loving mother made him, it seemed, more of an introvert.

Though reserved he was not a dull boy. He had an exceptionally brilliant mind and a sharp intelligence. By the time he completed three years of his age he had learnt by heart some 150 to 200 slokas (verses) such as Manglachar, dev puja mantras etc. And by the time he was five years old he had learnt 114 slokas from the "*chanakya Niti, Satyanarayan Katha*" etc., by heart. This certainly is no mean achievement for a child of so tender an age. People frequently asked him to recite the verses and loaded him with gifts of small coins.

Another incident occurred when the child was three years old. It was a few months after the death of his mother. One day his maternal uncle Mr. Nand Kishore Dubey was going out for his morning bath. The child wasudeo was at this time in the shop. Before leaving, his uncle gave his rolled gold wrist watch with a gold strap to the boy for safe keeping. The kept it under a package of cloth in the shop for safety. The uncle did not ask for the watch on his return. Both the uncle and nephew forgot about the watch. After three days the uncle remembered that he had given his watch to his nephew for safe keeping and asked him to return it. Wasudeo looked for it under the package of cloth where he had kept it. It was not there ! Bundles after bundles of cloth were removed and a through search was made. But to every ones surprise and sorrow the watch was nowhere. The enraged uncle rebuked the child severaly. Other elders too scoled the child mercilessly. They presumed that Wasudeo had actually given the watch to somebody for a few pices of coins and was telling lies about the place where he had kept the watch. Wasudeo wept bitterly and all the time he insisted that he had kept the watch below the cloth package which he showed them. The elders were, of course, puzzled by the mysterious disappearance of the watch. What else could they do but to forget the hole episode? Months passed. The Christmas season had begun. The cloth had brisk sales. Rolls after rolls of cloths were taken out of the shelves for sales. One day just before Christmas while measuring out a suit length of cloth to a customer the golden wrist watch fell on to the counter from this cloth roll. Wasudeo was also present in the shop. The elders and the boy stood stupefied at this mysterious reappearance of the watch. Thus the child wasudeo's honour stood vindicated. This incident gave to the child. Wasudeo the idea that truth was more important than praises or blame which are cheap

commodities one can live without. He found now from personal experience that truth would win at the end.

The child Wasudeo had another unusual experience when he was five years of age. Wasudeo's grand father though very affectionate was also a strict disciplinarian. The boy now a pupil in a kindergarten had to follow strictly the routine of study, play and rest. 10 O' clock at night was the time for everybody to go to bed. One night as usual wasudeo was sent to bed at ten O' clock. But this night sleep would not come to him with his legs folded on to the chest he lay on his bed. At around midnight he woke up to pass urine. He had to go to his grand father's room which was next to his for the pot which was kept below the grand father's bed. As he came out of his room he saw a majestic and quite handsome figure of a man of about 30-35 years of age sitting on the sofa in the grand father's room. He appeared to be very tall; as tall as about 7 feet. There was an special glow and grace in his face and light, pleasant and beautiful, radiated round his person. There was a divinity in this figure seated on the sofa. No word was uttered either by wasudeo or by this divine visitor. The grandfather was all the time in deep sleep and was not aware of this miracaculous presence in his room. This vision thrice repeated in the same night gave an added impetus to wasudeo's longing for the supra-mundane.

In his grand father's house daily recitation of verses from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the shrimad bhagwat and other religious books was a customary habit. Wasudeo evinced a keen interest in listening to the recitations of these grerat epics. He used to be thrilled by the lives and exploits of Lord Shri Ram, Shri Krishna and of the great Rishis who lived in the ancient Indian had taken roots in his heart and began to grow. A longing to go to india- the land of epics gods began to take deep roots in him. When alone his mind would go on pilgrimage to india to the place of lord krishna's birth, to shri Rama's ayodhya to the birth place of tulsidas, kabir and surdas, to the jungle habitations of the vedic munis. These brooding habits and his excessive fondness for being alone brought on him at times the ridicules of the elders. He was often called "Babaji" by them as a taunt.

His father grandfather and other realtives saw to it that his brooding habits and fondness fro loneliness did not come in the way of his school education. He continued with his studies now at st. Swithin's English school.

Wasudeo's thread ceremony (upanayanam) took place at his father's house at 4, plantain walk when he was seven years of age. From this time he began to live with his father. His father rameshwarji started teaching him systematically to read and write hindi and Sanskrit. Within a short time he had developed a mastery of reciting the holy mantras in a pleasing, rhythmic and sonorous style. This mastery stood him in good stead throughout his future life. One incident as to how this mastery came in handy even at the tender age of about nine may be of interest to the readers.

Once the Indian community at new state a colony a few miles away from plantain walk requested his grand father pandit jaya mangal dubey to conduct a recitation of the shrimad bhagwat which was to last seven days. Accordingly pandit jaya mangal dubey started the recitation. On the third day he developed some trouble and his voice became very coarse. It was very difficult for him to continue with the reading. Seeing the old man's predicament the sponsors of the programme asked the boy wasudeo if he could continue with the recitation. Thereupon wasudeo took up the recitation and completed it in the next four days. Apart from the applause it also fostered in him a deep reverence for the holy books and he also developed an ardent desire to go to india where the gods, goddesses and the holy men dwelt. More of this later.

We have seen how this child wasudeo was blessed with a divine visitation at the age of 5 in his grand father's home. If the divine gave him 'darshan' satan also did not lag behind in bestowing his favours on him. He had an encounter with a jinni (genie) a short while after his thread ceremony. Here is how it happened.

One day Rameshwarji had a attend a marriage ceremony at new state. There was a high bridge over the canal which linked amazon and demerara rivers. The bridge was near the Vreedon hope church. The st. Swithin's school in which wasudeo was studying was situated in this church compound. One had to cross over this bridge to go to new state. Rameshwarji and son wasudeo were returning home after the wedding ceremony. It was late night one a.m. or or so. As they came near the bridge wasudeo saw a jinni of enormous proportions standing over the bridge. The jinni had planted one leg on the railing on the one side and the other leg was on the other side. Thus he stood blocking the way. If one had to across the bridge one had to pass through in

between the legs of the jinni which the jinni was not going to allow. Wasudeo immediately told his father not to go ahead as the jinni was barring their way. Rameshwarji, of course, could not see the spirit but parties stood confronting each other for some minutes. Then all of sudden the genie lifted his legs and plunged into the canal waters making loud noise. As they crossed the bridge the jinni came out of water and started following them. He followed them upto a hundred yards or so near to their house. Then he halted and said, "I am damn pleased with you, Rameshwar. You along with this boy, are the first to have been allowed to cross this bridge at such a time as is given to us. I promise to help you. So whenever you are in trouble remember me. And then the jinni was nowhere to be seen.

Then there is again another incident which occurred when wasudeo was around 8 years old. One evening, the sun had just set. Deep red colors emitted by the setting sun could still be seen spread across the western horizon. Darkness had not yet enveloped the face of the earth. Rameshwarji just then received a telegram that said Mr. jaya mangal dubey his father-in-law was ill. Rameshwarji and wasudeo therefore after a hurried supper set out in their buggy for new state. They had to cross the bridge near vreedon hope church mentioned earlier. On reaching the bridge the horse suddenly stopped and started braying and trying to stand on its hind legs. Wasudeo then saw dozens of kittens playing on this road. Shortly they disappeared. Buggy moved on. They crossed the residential areas, travelled two or three miles through uninhabited area. Once again the frightened horse refused to go ahead. It began to bray again lifting its fore legs. Wasudeo now saw that there were a number of coffins lying-cross on the road blocking the way. Rameshwarji started to chant some mantras. For about an hour they were held up here; for the coffins would not disappear nor let them go so easily. But such evil spirits were not able to frightened the child wasudeo for he was always from his very birth under the protection and guidance of the divine.

Time passed on. Then quite a startling experience occurred when wasudeo was 9 years old. One night he lay awake on his bed. Sleep did not come. He felt an unusual sensation of cool air rising up from the anal canal and hot air passing out. He watched this strange phenomenon with some surprise and pleasure. Within a few minutes he felt powerfull bubbles rising up from his

anal canal which travelled upwards and reached the pharynx. Then quite quickly and smoothly the scene changed. He saw himself surrounded by what appeared to be the vast Atlantic Ocean. He saw the mighty ocean waves rising up and drowning the whole world. He saw the city of Georgetown, his own home even the bed on which he was sleeping sinking to the bottom of the ocean. The bed sheet on which he was lying was floating over the waves carrying him on it. The waves would lift him up bring him down, carry him forward he did not know where to. This vision, this experience continued throughout the night. It was only when the day broke that the scene changed and wasudeo became aware of the world around him.

The memory of the night's experience would persist in him throughout the day. He would be performing his duties like studies and school attendance etc. only mechanically and half-heartedly. At night when he went to bed the same vision and experience repeated. Every night for the next three days he had the same visions and experience repeated. He was in a state of ecstasy. During the day he would conduct himself like normal people of course as much as his heightened consciousness of the night's experience permitted him. Throughout the day he would long for the night which for him seemed to be meant for divine visions and enjoyment.

The third night's vision and experience brought the previous nightly experience into a grand finale. On this blissful night he saw a calm, waveless, mighty ocean it appeared to be the Pacific Ocean. He was floating over the placid waters. He saw floating towards him a big leaf of a Banyan tree. As it came near him he saw that on it was lying a divine babe a boy of scintillating beauty, grace and charm. There was a luminosity surrounding the child. There were only two figures in that environment. The divine babe lying on the banyan tree leaf and wasudeo on the bed sheet. The divine child appeared to be frolicking on the leaf and sucking on the thumb of his right leg. This vision ended with the night. But the happy memories of it remained fresh in wasudeo's mind even after and persists even to this date though he is now a grand old man of 72 years.

There is a touch of the supernatural in the ensuing event that occurred some time after the experiences of the boy wasudeo above recorded. This event too took place when he was living through the 9th year of his age.

The tiwari familys house was situated as recorded earlier, on plot No. 4, plantain walk. On the back side of the stable of the house there was a water pond. The careless neighbors made it a receptable for cow-dung urine and all sorts of filth. Soon the pond was filled with rubbish and began to emit foul smell. There were many to dump dirt into the pond but none to clean it up. The foul smell was rather suffocating to the residents arroud. Rameshwarji and his neighbor were fully aware of the need for urgently cleaning the pond. They were not getting the necessary work-men to do this dirty work. Days passed, on a Sunday evening Rameshwarji was as he often did, sitting and conversing with his friends in the front lawn of the house under a neem tree. They talked among other matter the immediate need for cleaning the pond. They saw then a young man coming down the highway and approaching the house. He came and stood before the house. On being questioned who he was and what he wanted, he said that his name was Imandar and that he was looking for some work. He would be quite happy if the family would give him some work, he said he was a healthy young man of about 22-24 years of age, rameshwarji asked him if he could clan up the pond. The young man agreed to do so, and the wages he wanted was boarding and lodging and a pair of clothes to wear.

Imandar started work on the very next day. After his days labour he spent his free time happily with wasudeo and with the dog Tiger playing wirth and amusing the child. Wasudeo, Imandar and Tiger seemed to be a jolly trio meant for each to the other.

Tiger a cross breed dog of the tiwari family had a personality of his own and had a very peculiar and undog like behavior which should not go unrecorded. This dog tiger was very much like an orthodox and pious hindu, very strict at the observance of Ekadashi as a day of fast. He would neither eat nor drink on that day. It appeared that he had a special sixth sense for identifying the Ekadasi days, once the family forgot the count of the Ekadashi but was reminded of it because Tiger refused to take any food on that day. Is it a small wonder then, that this dog died on a Ekadashi?

Imandar, wasudeo and tiger were very thick on their friendship. Imandar would fetch meat, cook it and feed tiger. All three enjoyed each other's company much.

It took about 4 months for imandar to clean the pond. As his work was over he decided to leave. Rameshwarji offered him money and clothes but he would not accept anything. He was pressed to stay on in the family. But he would not do so either. As he was about to leave one Mr. subratimiya- friend of Rameshwarji enquired of him whence he had come and why did he choose of all places to come to Rameshwarji and do the 'dirty job'. Why he as a muslim did not mix with the other muslims of the area and offer the customary namaz etc. Imandar smiled pointed his fore finger at wasudeo, "I came for the sake of this boy", he said and walked away. Rameshwarji and subratimiya, amazed as they were watched the young man moving ahead on the highway. After going some 200 yards or so he could not be seen. It appeared that he vanished into thin air. The road was wide and straight and one could easily see to a distance of more than a mile. Nobody in the neighbourhood saw him either.

As days passed by, wasudeo became more and more immersed in his mystic dreams. He continues to lose his interest in normal life. Wasudeo's father, grand father and other relatives were getting more and more concerned about his strange moods and character traits. The perturbed father, Rameshwarji took him to several professed holymen including priest and Bishops of both catholic and protestant denominations. The catholic Bishop frankly admitted take the boy to india where it was possible for the boy to obtain the required help and guidance. A venerable old Muslim gentlemen who could read the mystic traits in the boy also tendered the same advice. After imandar's statement about the purpose of his coming there and doing the 'dirty' work and after his departure Subrati Miya too was of the opinion that Rameshwarji should take his son to india at the earliest.

Having been compelled to decide in favour of leaving for india, though much against his own inclinations rameshwarji disposed of his property by transferring it to his brother-in-law and his family. Thus the father and son were soon ready to set sail.

2.

Voyage To India

Rameshwarji tiwari and son Wasudeo set sail in the passenger ship “Sutlej” in the last week of august, 1919. Wasudeo was now eleven years old. His mind being too young and being preoccupied with the sweet visions of the holy land of India did not retain many impressions of the long voyage. His scanty recollections are that the ship sailed round Cape Town for taking in of coal. The ship at times had to sail through rough waters and for the rest the voyage was uneventful.

After about six weeks Sutlej anchored at Calcutta’s “Fogatis Ghat” on the 4th of October, 1919 the day being the holyday of Dusserah. India celebrates this day, every year, in memory of the legendary victory of lord shri Rama the symbol of good, over Ravana- the legendary king of lanka and symbol of evil.

Was it a mere coincidence that Wasudeo’s ship should reach the Indian port on this auspicious day? Or was it an indication that the ultimate victory would be his in his ensuring search fro the eternal?

The ‘sultej’ with about 1000 passengers on board had to put anchor and wait at the ghat on this day because no passenger was allowed on shore as large crowds were milling the city streets due to the festival.

On the 5th of October, 1919 an eleven year old wasudeo ended his long pilgrimage and set foot on the soil of India that is Bharat- the land of his dreams.

While in Calcutta Rameshwarji wanted to take his son to the temple of kali-Mata, the presiding deity of Bengal. Wasudeo was very keen to have a ‘darshan’ of ‘kali-Mata’ for whom he had deep love and reverence.

One Mr. Bhikari, a Bengali, who was a crew on the “Sutlej” in its long journey, offered to take them to the temple of the goddess mother. Bhikari took them to his residence in Mutiaburge- a suburb of Calcutta. After bath and refreshment they proceeded to the temple. Rameshwarji and Bhikari were

ahead together and climbed the steps to the temple. Wasudeo being attracted by the flowers, toys, sweet meats etc. displayed in the shops around, lagged behind.

Wasudeo began to climb the steps. His eyes were looking straight into the inner sanctum of the temple where sat the goddess mother on a lion's back. As he climbed on to the third step wasudeo saw not a statute but an actual living goddess seated on a living lion. The lion began to roar. The goddess mother was seen commanding him to silence. This vision led him into a trance and he fell on the steps unconscious. The devotees behind called the father's attention to the boy. Rameshwarji and Bhikari immediately returned to Motiaburge. Wasudeo's temperature began to shoot up. This high fever continued unabated for three days. Fourth day found him in a state of delirium and the boy began to mumble " take me to Allahabed by the next train. My eyes will open as the train whistles off the howrah station. I will regain consciousness sa soon as the train goes beyond the outer signal and I will sit up as soon as the train reached. Burdwan."

The anxious father was at a loss to decide if he should subject his son to the strain and tedium of the journey. What if the boy's condition worsened on the way should he take the utterances of the boy in delirium as a divine direction? Bhikari sensing Rameshwarji's inner conflict advised him to treat the boys word as being issued from the holy mouth of the divine goddess and proceed to Allahabad by the very next train.

The express train for Allahabad steamed of the Howrah station. Wasudeo's temperature returned normal. The train ran past the other signal. Consciousness returned to the boy. The train reached Burdwan. Wasudeo sat up on his seat. The father sat stunned at this miraculous occurrence. He had to acknowledge to himself the fact that his son was under the divine influence and would ever remain so.

The train reached Allahabad. Here the three most holy rivers- the ganga, the jamuna, and the saraswati meet and merge into one on their onward journey to the bay of Bengal. This meeting point called Triveni or Sangam was considered so scared that a single dip in it was potent enough to set the bather free of his sins; in other words he would attain 'Mukti' or salvation. The boy

wasudeo had read in Tulsikrita Ramayana the praises of this sangam and was very eager to have a bath here. Rameshwarji also desired to have a holi dip.

As they approached Triveni a horde of pandas who were on the look out for their prey began to sing of the glorious effects even a single dip in this sacred spot would bring into their lives. One could feel the sacredness flowing into one's being.

Wasudeo did not know how to swim. It was, therefore, arranged that he should hold on to a rope and bathe. He was so eager for holiness and bliss that he went on with his holy bath for full 15 minutes in spite of an enraged father's shout of fury.

Bath finished, he came out of water; no way holier faction, nor any sense of spiritual elevation. He had taken not less than 30 dips in this holy Sangam. If one dip alone were enough to bestow 'Mukti' on the bather how much more satisfaction and sublime bliss should have been his but here he felt no sense of absolution or blessing but brought on him only insults and abuses from his father wasudeo felt convinced that there was some other mystic sangam or Triveni somewhere else. It could not have been this confluence of these three sacred rivers at Allahabad that india's ancient munis and poets sang about. It could not have been this Triveni that Tulsidas had taken such pains to record. If ever there existed the real sangam anywhere, wasudeo now firmly decided to find it out and have a real dip in that confluence come what might.

With a disappointment and a determination in his heart wasudeo accompanied his father to the village 'Semariha' in Meja Tahsil of Allahabad district. Here they spent a week visiting with the relatives. Rameshwarji wanted to visit his relatives before he chose a place of his own to settle down. They went to Sewai, Mouza Bhagesar and then to the Kalupura which was Rameswarji's ancestral village. Ultimately rameswarji built a house in sewai village and resigned himself to the rustic life.

Months passed. Wasudeo was now 12 years old. This was the year of 1920; month july. Schools and colleges reopened after the summer vacation. Like other children of his age wasudeo wanted to go to school. He requested his father to enroll him in a school. Rameshwarji refused and instead sent him

to the fields to till the land and to tend the livestock. Wasudeo was restless. He wanted to learn. Besides other subjects he had a special keenness to learn Sanskrit- the sacred language in which were written the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Shrimad Bhagwat and other holy scriptures of India. Without learning this language, he felt, that it was not possible to read the holy books in the original; to grasp the meaning and the spirit of these shastras. This desire had its origin in Wasudeo's infancy when as a child he used to listen to the recitation of these sacred books at his grandfather's home in Georgetown. We have already seen how the child Wasudeo used to be transported into realms of the epic heroes of India, it was this keen desire that ultimately brought him to India- the home of these sacred shastras. Time and again Wasudeo pleaded with his father; remonstrated with him with tears overflowing his eyes that he be sent to Banaras where he could learn Sanskrit and the Vedas. Banaras had institutions which provided food, clothing, lodging and instruction free to the needy and deserving. All that Wasudeo wanted of his father was that he be taken to Banaras and be left there. He wanted no financial help from his father. The infuriated father landed half-a-dozen blows on Wasudeo's back with his umbrella and issued a final warning, "Don't utter a word about learning hereafter." Rameshwarji had not taken very kindly to his son for it was because of this son that he was forced to abandon his affluent life and business in South America and come to lead this rustic life now. Wasudeo could learn whatever he wanted, according to the paternal decree, not under the pandit of Banaras but in the fields under the tutorship of cows, bulls and buffaloes.

The next three years Wasudeo spent in the fields helping the farm land and tending the animals. He used to smuggle into the fields books like the Vishramasagar, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Geeta and Surdas etc. which are usually available in Brahmin homes. He would read and meditate under some tree shade while the animals grazed around. One day as chance would have it, the biography of Swami Ramdas- an eminent saint of Maharashtra fell into his hands. He read it avidly and noted how Ramdas had run away from the marriage mandap for he did not want to be tied down to any worldly bondage. This gave to Wasudeo an added impetus to remain detached and free of all worldly affairs. He too aspired to have high spiritual attainment as Ramdas had attained.

Rameshwarji had no sympathy for the so-called spiritual aspirations of his son. Wasudeo was now 15 years of age. High time to get married according to the rural custom. So Rameshwarji hoping that a young pretty girl's presence and services would cure Wasudeo of the mystic madness, settled his marriage without consulting him and began to collect all the necessary articles for the wedding feast for the marriage was to be solemnized within a month. When this came to his knowledge Wasudeo refused to go through the marriage. He was adamant. He was, this time, ready to face his father's fire and fury. He had not come to india to have a woman tied round his neck like a 'mill-stone'.

As fate would have it, Rameshwarji passed away quite suddenly within a month.

Wasudeo orphaned so early in life, was profoundly shocked. His grief knew no bounds. His sorrow and tears remained unabated for a very long time. With all filial love and devotion he performed all the last rites of his deceased father. Full three days he spent in tears and fasting since the sudden and sad demise of his father whom he loved deeply. All this time he neither touched food nor water. Then all emotions spent, he relinquished all his claims of property in favour of his step-mother and left home. It was many years after that he visited the place again.

Now Wasudeo became the maker of his own face "faber fortunae suae" as the Roman had put it. The desire that was driving him mad was the desire to study Sanskrit. From his vey infancy he was blessed with various mystical visions which we recorded earlier. He was very anxious to test the validity and veracity of these experiences by a through study of the Shastras.

Wasudeo left sewai and went to Kalupura. This ws the village of his paternal relatives. Here he lived with his aunt sudamia who loved her in return. Near Kalupura was the village Barokhar where lived a learned Brahmin pandit Raghuvir Prasad mishra who was also the kul-guru of his aunt's family. This pandit had the reputation of having completed "Gayatri Purascharana".

Wasudeo approached pandit mishra with the desire ton learn Sanskrit. Would the panditji condescended to give him also lesson in Sanskrit? He requested for the panditji had other pupils learning under him. But pandit mishra would not, for how could he an orthodox and sincere Bramhin as he

was think of teaching a “Shurda” the most sacred hymns of the Vedas. In panditji’s view, Wasudeo though a Brahmin by birth was a shudra for he was born in a country beyond the seas and had come sailing across the seas to india. It was a grave sin- a profanity to reveal the sacred sutras of the Vedas to a shudra. The only concession panditji would yield to the entreaties of Wasudeo was that he could sit at a particular distance from pandiji and his pupils and he could hear the lessons and learn. It Wasudeo learnt anything in this way the sin of teaching him would not be on panditji. Such humiliations could not stifle wasudeo’s enthusiasm for the study of Sanskrit.

Within about six months pandit mishra realized that wsudeo. The shudra who was kept at an arm’s length had learnt the lessons better than his pure Brahmin pupils!

Wasudeo was now sixteen years of age. His aunt sudamia and other relatives started persuading him to marry. The bride chosen for him was indirasa- a girl hardly six years old. Pandit mishra who was also the kulguru impressed upon Wasudeo the fact that marriage need not come in the way of his search for the divine. Even if he married now he would have some 10 to 12 years in his hands before the girl attained maturity and these years could be used in spiritual pursuits. Wasudeo reluctantly though, agreed to this and marriage was soon solemnized.

A week after the marriage Wasudeo left the village in search of his god.

3.

The Search For God

Nuptials over, Wasudeo now 16 years age, left home. He was not on a honey moon trip with his wife. He had a tryst with his maker he knew not when and where. His travelling kit considered of a pair of clothes, a shawl and a lota (a small multi-purpose metal pot) and a little cash. He was setting out in search of a guru who could help him to god.

Where to go was not easy to decide. He remembered that he had an uncle, pandit Paramsukhji pandey, by name, employed as a priest in the royal house hold of a gond king at pasan- a town situated some 21 miles interior from pendra road in Madhya Pradesh. Wasudeo decide to visit this uncle. Perhaps this uncle might be able to help him, he thought. On reaching pasan, he learnt that his uncle was out with the king on a royal tour to matin. One of his uncle's disciples- carpenter by profession gave him food and shelter.

A few days passed. The uncle was not yet back from his tour. It so happened that a raut (cowherd) Banavasuhir, came to pasan one day seeking pandit paramsukhji's help. He felt very sad at punditji's absence. Punditji being absent he did not know where else to go, whom to turn to for succor. On being told that punditji's nephew was present banavasuhir decided to tell the tale of his woes to this young pandit with a view to solicit his sympathy and possible help.

Banavasuhir's story was that he had about a thousand milch animals- cows and buffalos. These animals used to conceive quite regularly but within about three months of conception abortion began to take place. Almost every day were there many abortions. This went on occurring for quite sometime. Banavasuhir and his house hold were deeply perturbed. These animals and their milk were the source of livelihood and wealth of Banavasuhir. It somehow came to be believed that an evil spirit was causing these abortions. This shaitan had taken up his residence on the tree under which the animals used to be tethered. As he had nowhere else to turn to for help in the absence of punditji, would the nephew the 'chhota pandit' go with him and do something to drive

way the wicked shaitan, pleaded Banavasu. The nephew of course agreed to give a trial and went with Banavasu to his village some ten miles away.

On reaching Banavasu's village Wasudeo spent a day or two studying the place. Then he started "Durga saptasati" a nine day purascharana. Fourth day onwards the abortions stopped and the evil spirit disappeared once for all. This was a remarkable feat for a 16 year old youth. One and all in the village loved and revered him as a protector with a touch of the divine.

News spread rapidly of this miracle. The nephew's exploit reached the uncle too who had by this time returned from the tour. But raut Banavasu ahir requested and insisted that this young savior of his should stay with him for sometime. Wasudeo therefore spent about six month in the village with Banavasu all the time practicing his sadhna.

As the festival 'holi' (the festival of sprinkling colours on each other) approached uncle paramsukhji persuaded Wasudeo to go with him to his native village near kalupura for the holi celebrations. Reluctantly though, Wasudeo went with his uncle.

Festival over, Wasudeo did not return to pasan. This time his journey took him to distant danapur a place some 35 miles away from shegaon railway station in maharashtra where another uncle of his was employed. He stayed here under this uncle's hospitality for about a fortnight. Then he stepped out into the wide world in search of a sat guru who could satisfy his aspirations.

Now on began wasudeo's wanderings in western india. He would walk on; when tired he would rest under shady trees on the way side. He felt absolutely free now, free as a sky lark. Sadhna and ghumana (meditation and wandering) were his preoccupations. He would cook and eat if any one offered him raw food. He would not accept cooked food. Never begged for food or shelter. Nor stayed he in anyone's house. He fasted when no food came by. Many a time he kept his body and soul together by eating tree leaves and fruits and drinking from wayside streams or wells. He rested under way side trees or in way side temples. Of course during rainy season he would accept shelter if any one offered. But he would leave the place as soon as that contingency was over. Thus wandering from place to place he came to Bhusawal. From here he had a spell of train journey. He reached bharaoh and went to surat, anand,

godhra and many other places in gujrat and rajasthan. He travelled frequently in trains with proper tickets whenever he could afford to and under the courtesy of the imperial railways when he could not. Many a ticket checker and guard had the benefit of his 'free' company. In all these places Wasudeo was searching for india's alleged hordes of holy men. He came across many sadhus, mahantas and vedic pundits. He heard miles long dissertation on the sacred shastras. But he was not lucky to come in contact with a genuine man or spiritual experiences of the type he used to have from his very infancy. Many of these men had not even heard of such experiences. The best advice he often got from these professed godmen was "go and read such and such book". Chant such and such holy name of the lord."

With an iron determination Wasudeo moved on. Travelling through Kathiawar, surat, viramgaon, bharaoh, bhusawal and shegaon he reached a place called wari, in Maharashtra. Here was a temple dedicated to 'hanuman' and was popularity known as 'wari-ka-hanuman' attached to this temple was a math managed by mahant shri das baba. Here in this temple premises our young aspirant spent a few days in meditation. Here the strict discipline he was subjecting himself to, his fervent devotion, his perfect detachment, dedication for the quest for truth came under the notice of mahant shri das baba, who wanted to make this young man his disciple and in due course of the time make him his successor. One day the mahant informed wasudeo of his desire. Wasudeo was not after power, position or glory. So the same night when the mahant slept he slipped away. The mahant was very sad when he came to know of the abrupt departure of Wasudeo. The mahant knew the worth of this young man that he in his last will and testament left instructions that Wasudeo should be made his successor as mahant after him; shri das baba did not live long thereafter but the will remains in the custody of seth jokhiram, seth chhogalal and seth shriram of saundala village.

Wasudeo who ran away from being caught and anointed as shri das baba's successor reached surji anjangaon. He had no money and no food. He subsisted on tree leaves for a few days. Here he looked for and got work in a ginning factory owned by on lalji patel. His wages were Rs 5/ per month and two meals a day. Like the young Edison in the gold ticker company in new York,

our young wonderer too came to the notice of the management soon. Here is now.

One the day factory oil engine stopped working. It would run for a few minutes when started and would stop again. The factory engineer, shriram ashtikar was away on leave. The oilmen tried his best to detect the fault but failed. Our young ascetic who was watching suggested to the oilmen to open and check the governor box of the engine. As this was the only part that was not checked the oilmen opened the governor box and there was the fault. It took him no time to remove the defect. The oilmen narrated this incident to ashtikar when he returned from leave. The pleased engineer ashtikar brought this matter to the notice of the manager shyamrao talokar who immediately sanctioned a monthly increment of Rs. 5/- ashtikar wanted to reach and make this boy an engineer. But Wasudeo did not like the idea for it was not money or comfortable life that he was seeking. If he were after wordly wealth and pleasure he had enough wealth in his native place Georgetown which he had abandoned.

As the ginning season was jut closing a ramlila company visited surji anjangaon. This was a touring drama trouple which staged religious plays, especially ramlila. Wasudeo joined this company and thus started his stage life which lasted for years. In this company also he continued with his habit of cooking his own food. His spiritual exercises never stopped but here he added another occupation i.e. he started some body-building exercises, for a good physique was an asset in his new carrer as a stage actor.

After staging plays in different places the ramlila company reached Nagpur and lodged in an old house on Bhandara road. This house had a big compound and in the compound were three small shrines or temples. Two were so small that one could not enter. The third one was slighty bigger. One could sit inside. There was a raised platform or chabuthra on which one could sit or lie down. This temple was dedicated to lord Shankar and was known as Shankar mandir. Here Wasudeo, the wanderer now an actor in ramlila was vouchsafed a great spiritual vision, first of such experiences since he started his wandering life. That he had a tremendous impact on him is needless to record. Here is the story.

It was the year, 1930. He was 22 years of age. Summer was just ending and rains were expected any day. The troupe at this time was staging ramlila at Itwara locality. Day's dramatic activities over, one night the members of the troupe retired to bed. Some used to sleep on the verandah of the house and some inside. Wasudeo chose the 'chabuthra' (raised platform) of the 'shankar mandir' for his rest and meditation. Time was after mid-night approaching 1 a.m. He was just beginning his meditation. Appearance of a person attracted his attention towards the gate that opened from the main road to the compound. He saw the figure of a majestic and divine person- about 7ft. tall, very handsome, radiating light all around him entering through the gate and coming towards the Shankar mandir. He appeared to be around 30-35 years of age, had beautiful curly hair. It was this very same divine being whom he had seen in his childhood seated on the sofa in his grand father's bed room at Georgetown. Excitedly he ran to the verandah and woke up mungilal- the harmonium master and told him to hurry and look towards the Shankar mandir if he wanted the 'darshan' of the divine person. Mungilal hurriedly got up, tried to look outside, got his forehead knocked on the wall and fell down blind. When mungilal realized that he had lost his eye-sight he began to complain saying 'why did you wake me up. I am a miserable sinner. Darshan of divine person is not for sinners like me. Mungilal went on cursing his fate. As morning dawned he regained his eye-sight.

The ramlila company stayed in Nagpur for about six months and then set out on another tour. This time the company visited and staged ramlila in places like pandurna, multai, betul, katol, wardha, arvi, pulgaon, morshi and came to warood. Here at warood, Wasudeo had two memorable experiences, one highly spiritual, and the other concerned with normal physical life. Here is a short account. The year now was 1931.

Wasudeo along with some of his companions was sleeping in the open. In the small hours of the morning when the sun was about to rise mungilal woke up and went into the house. Wasudeo though still awake went on lying and looking into the eastern sky. To his wonder he saw the moon so big that it appeared to him to be not less than about 40ft. or so in diameter rising in the eastern horizon. Wondering why the moon should appear in the east at this time he looked in the opposite direction (west) and his surprise knew no

bounds when he found another moon-equally big and glorious shining in the west too. He turned his eyes to the east. The moon in the east began moving towards him in all her effulgent glory. The moon came to a hundred feet or so near to him and stopped. Inside the moon appeared an elliptical hollow. Cool and pleasant light radiated all round from the circumference. Inside on a golden throne were seated lord shri ramchandra and sitaji on his left. Guru vasishtha was on the lord's right. The lord blessed the devotee. Then the moon began to move again. It came over his head, moved towards north and disappeared.

God never fails his devotee. Help comes from unexpected sources and in inexplicable ways to the devotees in their hour of need. Wasudeo- the devotee also had many an experiences of the providential succor. Here in warood came such help to him when he was in dire need.

While still in warood he had an attack of dysentery (bloodless). He had several loose motions. Soon colic pain too developed. He had to run to the fields every few minutes. Two days passed in this way. His condition worsened. He could not even stand up. So with all the strength left in him, he crawled even and managed to reach a dilapidated house. It had a compound wall broken down at places. This house was situated near the river, outside the populated area. Here he was lying on the ground. As he had become very weak he could neither stand up nor move. His condition worsened still. Loose motions were non-stop like the running tap water. A day and a night passed thus. There was no one to help him. His colleagues in the ramlila company did not even know where he had gone to. On the second day here into this compound at about 4 p.m. there came a young man of about 20-24 years of age. He looked like a shepherd. He had a big turban tied round his head and held a long staff in right hand. Coming near to Wasudeo he called out "maharaj, how is it that you are lying here in this manner. Please get up Wasudeo feedly explained to him his condition. The shepherd whereupon untied his turban and tied one end to a poll nearby, helped Wasudeo to his feet, rolled the turban round his stomach and holding on to the other end of the turban the shepherd moved away a little and said to Wasudeo in a kindly tone of voice," please roll yourself along the turban from one end to the other so that the cloth may wind around your intestines will move within."

This certainly was a strange way of curing desentry. As Wasudeo was week and desperate he decided to give it a trial. As he rolled on a few times the pain left him and he heaved a sigh of relief and soon he regained much of his strength." You are alright now and you can go back to your place", the shepherded said as he rolled up his turban. He then walked out of the compound and was not seen again. To this date Wasudeo never again had destiny.

The ramlila company left warood; visited Amravati, yeotmal, pusad and reached akola. Here the company stayed and played ramlila near ram mandir located in kholeshwar area. It was during the company's stay here that Wasudeo came in contact with the renowned ayurvedacharya Dr. nandlal bharti. This chance meeting led later to a closer and intimate association which was to last for many years. More of this later as we go ahead. This first meeting itself is of interest.

One day dr. bharti arranged a music programme. The venue was the first floor of the temple and the audience consisted of seven or eight of Dr. Bharati's most intimate friends. Wasudeo was free at this time and was very fond of music. He too wanted to enjoy the programme and sat on the stair case. Dr. Bharati had arranged tea to be served in between but not pan and cigarettes. As Dr. Bharati came out in search of some one to bring pans and cigarettes he saw an unknown young man sitting on the stairs. The doctor asked if he would run down and get some pans and cigarettes. Wasudeo soon brought the articles. Mean while a few more guests had dropped in and the pans and cigarettes Wasudeo brought, fell short of the demand. Nanuram mistry, then sang a little praise of the doctor's miserliness. Dr. Bharati kept mum.

Dr. Bharati had not specified as to how many cigarettes and pans were required and Wasudeo had brought as many as were people in the hall when he left. This unexpected embarrassment in which the doctor was placed brought tears into wasudeo's eyes and he wept bitterly. Dr. Bharati came round, patted him on the back and consoled him. He asked what made him weep. The doctor was much moved by wasudeo's explanation and kept him by his side to the end of the programme.

Programme over, doctor bharati wanted to know the personal details of this strange youth. "how do you want the story to be..... true or false?" counterquestioned Wasudeo. The doctor was stunned at this candour. He wanted the truth. Wasudeo told him the whole story right from his birth in British Guiana to that day in akola. He told the doctor of his spiritual aspirations, his experience and of his search for an enlightened master who would lead him onwards to the divine. This story touched the doctor deeply, thereafter during the ramlila company's half there Dr. Bharati and Wasudeo met regularly, for Dr. Bharati insisted that he should take his meals with him (Dr. Bharati). Thus an intimacy grew between them. One day Dr. Bharati suggested that he (wasudeo) should continue his studies of Sanskrit and the holy scriptures. For that purpose he could go to banaras or to any other place of his choosing and he (Dr. Bharati) offered to bear all expenses. Wasudeo refused for he now was after the fount of all knowledge and wisdom i.e. the supreme and the book knowledge had lost its attraction. Dr. Bharati thereon asked him about the books he had read and the sadhna he was practicing. Wasudeo told him. Dr. Bharati then asked him to meditate on "Pranav" (the bee mantra OM). Wasudeo agreed to do this.

Here it may be stated that Wasudeo never had a guide (guru) in the real sense, neither uptill now or hereafter. He was never initiated into any particular school of practice. Because Dr. Bharati had suggested to him to practice 'pranav' he began to respect him as a guruji and began to address Dr. Bharati as Swamiji.

Swamiji (Dr. Bharati) wanted him to take up his residence with him. Wasudeo refused this after too because his quest of the supreme was not over. The swamiji toldhim "My door is always open to you. You are welcome whenever you get tired to your nomadic life."

The ramlila company left akola performed at washim and then moved to hingoli and then to nanded nad thence to humnabad.

At humnabad Wasudeo had a unique spiritual experience. At this place he chose the shiv mandri for his stay. On the very day of his arrival here he was talking a nap at noon on a chabuthara in the temple premises. He heard a mysterious whisper telling him that khwaja sahib Moinuddin chisti of ajmer

wished to see him. Two angels of undescrivable beauty appeared before him. They had a cradle with them which was very tastefull decorated with flowers and that. Sweet fragrance wafted in the atmosphere. "we are sent to take you to ajmer" they told him. Wasudeo kept mum. The angels stretched out their hands and he found himself seated in the cradle which bliss pervaded him. They took him a long distance and then descended to the ground. They could, they told him. Bring him only up to this place because their duty ended here. For the rest of the way he would be guided by another set of messengers, they assured him and disappeared. All of a sudden there were four angels, still more glorious and charming who lifted up the cradle and began to fly. After sometimes they landed in a sandy field. "please remove a little sand at this place" they told him and left. Thereupon he shifted the sand by his foot and lo ! a door opened to a beautiful and well lit staircase and their stood an old fakir (Imam) who was assigned to take him to the khwaja sahib. They descended the steps and came to a hall in which were two tombs , one big and the other small. Wasudeo started to walk round the hall. In one corner he saw a small tank full of water. Then he saw a fairly big piece of gold moving up from the bottom and on reaching the surface it jumped and sat on a side wall. He heard a voice say 'take it, it is for you.'" He said " I am not a beggar. I have not come here for as piece of gold. I don't want it. Give it to those people who are badly in need of it." He moved ahead. In the next corner he saw a fire burning from out of it again jumped a gold piece and again the voice "take it, it is for you". Again he refused. As he moved to the third corner he heard a voice "ask whatever you want. You will get it, he answered "I am not a beggar. I have not come here on my own. I don't want anything. He moved on. At the fourth corner again. Ask what you want. You will get it. He was told. He again refused to ask for anything and turned to find, the fakir standing by. Did you have the darshan of the khwaja sahib? The fakir asked him. What is there to see but the tombs? Retorted Wasudeo. They turned back and began to climb the stair case. Why didn't you take the gold? If you did not want it, you could have given it to me," said the fakir. " you heard what I said. If you want go and ask yourself," Wasudeo told him. Come khwaja sahib is waiting for you. He is very much pleased by your selfness. Said the Imam (fakir) and led the way. As they reached the ground Wasudeo found a marble platform surrounded by a beautiful garden of chrysanthemum flowers. On this platform a person was

lying covered by a muslin sheet (chaddar). The figure seemed very tall and majestic. I don't want to see an old man. If khwaja sahib wants to give me darshan let him give me in the form of a child said Wasudeo. Soon movements could be seen inside the muslin sheet and a child of great beauty and charm with curly hairs down upto his neck emerged out of the muslin cover. The boy jumped down from the platform, beckoned Wasudeo to follow him and then walked to the garden. He plucked some chrysanthemums and gave them to Wasudeo. Take these he said and disappeared. He was then escorted back to humnabad.

Shortly after this vision a pathan youth came to him. He introduced himself as sher khan and said that his grand father wanted to meet him. Wasudeo was not interested to go to anybody. Sher khan would, he said, take him to his grand father even by force, if that was necessary. Wasudeo was ready to resist force if it came to that. He was not at anybody's beck and call. The pathan youth was in a fix. He realized that he had made a wrong approach. "Really, the position is that my grand father, he is a pious man. Has taken to purdah," sher khan began to explain politely. "for some days now he has been in self-chosen isolation spending his time in prayers and meditation. No one not even the family members are allowed to enter his room. We leave food for him outside his room. As such he can't come to you. Will you go with me to meet my grand father? He requested Wasudeo then accompanied sher khan and was taken to the old man's room on the upper floor of his house.

As the young ascetic entered, the old pathan rushed towards him, held him in a warm embrace and kissed his hand, seated him on his own bedstead and in voice chocking with emotion said "because of you I had the good fortune of seeing khwaja sahib in person today. All my prayers and penances of all my life have born fruit today. Since the khwaja sahib himself invites you to his place and showers his kindness on you. You are indeed a divine messenger. I am overwhelmed by happiness and joy at meeting you. There were tears in the old man's eyes. The old pathan called his son and other member of the family to his room and introduced Wasudeo to them and explained to them what had happened and why he was ending his isolation. They were much surprised and moved and extended all courtesy to him. The old man called for fruits and milk and offered to our young ascetic. Thereafter the old man and

wasudeo were bosom friends. Wasudeo visited this family frequently during his stay at humnabad.

4.

The Narayan Kavach

The ramlila company left humnabad, toured and performed in several towns like nanded. Degloor and came to madnoor. As the rainy season had begun the company camped here. While, thus camping here, an incident took place which throws some light on wasudeo's character.

At madnoor the ramlila company stayed in a wada, (a house with a large compound). Ramlila could not be staged due to the rains. At the instance of the rich man of the town who was popularly called nagar seth or ayya. Komti by caste a seven day recitation of shrimad bhagawat was organized. The venue was the hall in the house where the ramlila company was staying. All through this function Wasudeo kept himself alone and aloof and remained immersed in his own practice of meditation at the back of the small hall. Not even did he attend the ceremony. Neither did he present himself for the Prasad at the end. Some one, at the end of the function, informed the nagar seth that there was a stranger who kept himself aloof from the function all through, though he remained all the time at the back of the hall. The nagar ayya was then in the company of the tahsildar and some other prominent officials of the town. The stranger was sent for. In the meanwhile the pujari (priest) a telgu Brahmin who was also the patwari (village revenue official) of the place and knew Wasudeo presented himself the nagar ayya expressed to him his readiness to pay his travelling expenses etc; if he wanted to go home or to meet his other requirements. "what do you want? Asked the nagar seth. Wasudeo said nothing. Again the seth repeated the question. Wasudeo kept mum. What do you want? Asked the seth for the third time. There was considerable irritation in his voice. The pujari at once the seth's mouth with his own palm and said. Please stop. Don't ask him any more. I know him. If he ask you for the keys of your safe and for all other property and asks you to wear a loin cloth and go away for some years, will you do it? This statement coming from the pujari as it did, brought the realization to the ayya and to the officials with him that this stranger Wasudeo was not after any material gain and they bowed to him in respect.

In course of time the ramlila company left Madnoor, visited and performed at places like Hyderabad, seccunderabad, begum bazaar, amirpet, and so on and reached Aurangabad. After performance here ended, Wasudeo also terminated his pretty long association with this ramlila company. Here he gave Ramayana discourses for a few days and then again moved out.

As he left jalna he did not have any idea in his mind as to where to go but walked on straight ahead. He had no shoes. Walked bare feet began to pain him. Ignoring the hurt in the soles of his feet he presse on. His feet began to swell. Blisters appeared everywhere on the soles and soon began to bleed at places. Further movement was impossible. Perforce he had to halt on the road side. Body temperature also began to shoot up. 'O' if somebody could give me a lift. He wished. Some time passed. Then a big car came along the road. As it passed him by he saw that except the driver it had no passengers inside. He waved to the driver to stop. The driver stopped it at some distance and looked out. Wasudeo indisperation intimated him through gestures, for the distance did not allow verbal explanation, that he was in difficult nad would appreciate if the gentlemen gave him a lift. The driver was not pleased with this road side stranger demanding a lift. He started the car and drove on and was soon out of sight. Wasudeo stood here for he could not move a foot, staring at speeding car. Some minutes passed. He saw then the same car coming towards him. It stopped before to scold him. Did he not known to whom this mighty rolls Royce belonged? It belonged to the Nawab, the chief Executive Engineer of the area who belonged to the royal family of the Nizams of hyderabad ! how did he dare to stop such a royal carriage which was only quite recently imported? Fumed the driver with the typical arrogance of small men who surrounded the big shots usually assume. Wasudeo gently explained to his pitable him condition and told him that he was not talking to the royal carriage but to the man who was driving it. Would he condescened to give him a lift. The arrogant driver having had his say pressed on the accelerator and drove on and was soon out of sight. Minutes passed. Wasudeo saw then the mighty royal car returning towards his direction. It stopped by his side and he heard the calm voice of the driver asking him to get into it and sit by this side. Wasudeo in the car moved on. The driver now behaved like a decent human being. He was going to Aurangabad and where did Wasudeo want to be dropped, queried the driver gently. On being told the ram mandir the driver took him to the mandir,

called out the mahant telling him that he had a guest, helped Wasudeo out of the car and with a salute drove away.

In the ram mandir at Aurangabad Wasudeo spent some 15 days recuperating his health. Soon his tempertaure came down and the blisters began to heal. In the mean time he helped edify the people by his Ramayana discourses. As soon he could move on his feet easily he took to the road again. He walked out of the town. As he got tired of walking he sat under a bunyan tree and rested. Time passed. He had no place in mind to go to. Hunger and thirst began to trouble him. The ethereal food of the soul befits not the body. The body began to clamour for some solid earthy substance and for a good measure of adam's ale. But the spirit would not let the body go in search of its food and water. The day was spent on absolute abstinence. The next day being impelled by hunger and thirst Wasudeo returned to the town (Aurangabad) and by passing the ram mandir went to a public water tap, drank belly full and then went back to the shade of the bunyan tree and lay there. Through out the day he had no food for he had no money to buy food with nor would he, under any circumstances beg for food. The next day again he returned town, drank from the public tap and went back to the bunyan tree's shade. A week passed this way. Wasudeo became very weak. During all these days no one offered him any nourishment. On the 7th day also he came to water tap, had his drink and began to limp away. As passed a few steps he saw a window in the upper floor of a house open and a woman throwing down food in to the street below. Obviously it was some opulent family's left over food. His hungey stomach begain to murmur to him that this food was being thrown down by providence to meet his body's requirements. So he should not waste his time but should rush forward and should have his pick before it became uneatable. His mind began to analyse the present situation. A physical need is a physical need which has to be met inspite of all lofty spiritual thoughts and fervor. You can't kill the body and save the soul for body is the abode of the soul and the soul has to realize itself while in the body. Was it not said that "Mens sana in corpora sano?" therefore sustenance of the body is equally important. Then came the thought to his mind that god is in every thing and every thing exists due to and in god and therefore food is also in god and god in food. He recollected the saying "Annam Brahma." So was it not logical to assume that the food was thrown down by divine hands, seeing him standing there hungry,

for no one else was any where near? What was the harm in talking it? He thought. Did not the great sage Vishwamitra himself suck at the once used old bones were boiled and that too in the company of chandalas (Untouchables) to keep alive? If the sage Vishwamitra could do like that towards the end of a 24 year period of draught, why should not he take some of the thrown away food? He thought. But then came to his mind the fact that he was not yet dying. He could remain alive for more days. As a way out of his mental conflict he decided to take that food only if he was assured that it was meant for him. He stood there without moving expecting some sign. Shortly he saw cattle street dogs rushing towards the food and begin to eat. A crow or two, too flew in for the pick. In a flash the realization came to him that this food was meant not for him but for the animals. Suddenly he ran with all the strength he could muster in his already weakened condition. He ran so fast as if mad and collapsed. How long he remained in that semiconscious state he did not know. He opened his eyes hearing a roaring noise like that of a lion. He saw then, as if in a vision, that he was surrounded by, lions, five in number, who were slowly coming closer to him. Then his eyes fell on a beautiful lady of about 50 to 55 years of age. She was very tall, around seven feet or so. She commanded the lions to stop roaring and to remain where they were. He is one of us," she told them. She came near to him and spoke to him in a motherly tone, "hereafter you will not suffer for want of a food. Your needs will always be met without your begging. She blessed him and disappeared with the lions. She was none other than the goddess Durga also called as Kali-Mata. For quite some time after this he remained in trance. When he came back to the normal state he saw a school teacher said to him, "Maharaj, please get up and come with me for a cup of tea."

During all these past seven days none had paid any attention to him. He used to go to the town for water. People who knew him had seen him drinking water and moving away. But none had bothered to enquire of his welfare or to offer him any food. Were not these seven days a period of divinity testing his stamina and will power? That the gods subject the devotees to serve trials is a simple fact.

From Auarangabad Wasudeo came to paithan where he had an acquaintance, one Mr. Himmat singh Thakur, and stayed with him for the

night. The next morning he went to the river Godavari where he had his bath and meditation. Then on his return he was passing through the vegetable market. Suddenly he felt somebody squeezing his fingers from behind. On turning back he found the smiling face of a stranger who introduced himself as the pujari of the temple dedicated to the famous Eknath Maharaj. His name was Bhagawatbua. "come with me and have a 'darshan' of Eknath Maharaj-ji," he invited and led Wasudeo towards the hillock on which the temple was situated. Bhagawatbua offered him food and both went on talking for sometime. Bhagawatbua expressed his desire to hear wasudeo's recital of and discourse on Ramayana. Wasudeo obliged him by a short recitation. The pleased pujari arranged for a discourse in the temple in the evening. He also suggested to wasudeo that he should learn to play harmonium and some ragas so that he could sing Ramayana with musical accompaniment. He offered to give him necessary lessons in music. Wasudeo was very much pleased at this suggestion and expressed his desire to learn music systematically. It may be mentioned here that Wasudeo had a great liking for music from his childhood, both for vocal and instrumental. An instrument well played, or a song well-sung was enough to transport him to the realms of ecstasy. So far he never had an opportunity to learn music and he decided to take best advantage of this chance that came his way. This study of music helped him much in course of his later life and we shall speak of it at a proper place. Wasudeo was to begin his lessons next morning at 4 a.m. punctually at the appointed hour he presented him self in the music room attached to the temple. Bhagawatbua very much pleased at his punctually and devotion began to teach him harmonium were to be pressed to produce the requisite note. The attentive and eager student Wasudeo picked up his lessons well and within a few days he could recite Ramayana to the accompaniment of harmonium and table etc. Now he began to give discourse in the ram mandir at paithan. Soon his discourse and ractials began to attract and edify an increasing number of devotees and became very popular.

As days passed Bhagawatbua became deeply impresse by his young disciple's devotion to music, his self-discipline, his austere way of life. His self-chosen poverty etc. Bhagawatbua presented Wasudeo with a pair of new clothes, a turban and a pair of shoes. The appreciate audience of his discourse use dto give him money which he immediately gave to the temple.

Forty years later Wasudeo now in sixties went to meet shri Bhagawatbua at paithan and found Bhagawatbua in nada Samadhi.

Wasudeo's reputation as a Ramayana discourser began to spread in the neighbouring areas. One day a man came from jalna inviting Wasudeo to come to jalna and give recitals and discourses there so that the people there could benefit. The people of jalna were eager to hear his discourses and therefore he was sent to take him to jalna, the man said. Wasudeo then left paithan and accompanied the man to jalna where he took up his residence in the ram mandir which was popularly known as kali kurti ka ram mandir. This temple was under the management of mahant Bhagawathacharya. Who also encouraged him to give Ramayana discourses and recitations here. The style and content of his discourses pleased many people including the mahant himself. And there was an ever growing audience to his discourses.

What made him tick as a discourser? What provoked such growing popular appeal to his commentaries of the sacred texts? The reason was that his explanations were not the usual textbook explanations which were a legion in the market. Everybody who is somebody seems to have his own commentaries to make on the sacred scriptures. Even some prisoners who were undergoing long term imprisonment are known to have written, during their free hours in the jail, learned commentaries of shrimad bhagwat geeta. What then attracted large audiences to wasudeo's recitals and discourses? He was no scholar. He had no proper schooling. His knowledge of Sanskrit language was rudimentary. As we have been following wasudeo's life story so far we know that his life's only passion was for the attainment of the divine wisdom and we have also seen that he had been blessed with divine visitations several times. So when he explained Ramayana verses or the 'Shastra' his words came from the depths of his heart as being culled out of his personal experiences. When he spoke it could be said without exaggeration. That it was not Wasudeo who spoke but some divine being through the mouth of Wasudeo. Such words of divine wisdom could not but profoundly affect the listeners who had more than enough of routine lectures. The style he adopted in his discourses was not stereo type. He could and did often change his mode of discourses to suit the public and to the occasion. At times he would elicit questions from the audience after reciting certain verse and taking key words

he would explain the origin of these words and their various implicit and explicit meanings. The music lessons he had under the able guidance of Bhagawatbua also helped attract people to his discourses. People who heard him developed a better understanding of and respect for the sacred scriptures.

In jalna Wasudeo also came in contact with a Bramhin, pandit shiv kumar shastri who was a Sanskrit scholar of some standing. As Wasudeo was still keen to study Sanskrit he began to take lessons from this pandit in his free time.

In the meanwhile Mahant Bhagawatacharya began to gain a better understanding of Wasudeo and of his merits that he along with some others suggested and encouraged wasudeo to form a Ramayana club to give discourses at different places. Thus one day he found himself leader of a four-member Ramayana club. The other members were players of musical instruments like table, harmonium etc. thus wasudeo's at several places. Mahant Bhagwathacharya himself took him to the mandir in beed District. This temple, too, was under the control of the mahantji. Here wsudeo gave a month long Ramayana recitation and commentary. Then he returned to jalna. After spending a few days here his party went to Devalgaon raja and gave discourses at the Balaji mandir. Back in jalna he spent again a fortnight here.

Mahant Bhagwathacharya being very much pleased with wasudeo's pious life spiritual attainments and with his ability to reach and guide people in matters spiritual wanted to make him the mahant of the temple at beed district. But Wasudeo, as we have already seen, was after complete freedom from all types of bondages and did not like to be chained down by a mahantdom. In the meanwhile an incident took place which hastened his departure from jalana.

We have already noted how wasudeo's reputation as a discourses was growing and he was constantly in demand to give Ramayana discourses at various places. This growing popularity of his began to adversely affect the income and reputation as a discourse of pandit shiv kumar shastri who one day sadly complained to Wasudeo, since you began your discourses people are flocking to hear you; there is hardly anyone coming to my discourses these days. I will have to pack up and leave this place unless I want to starve.

Wasudeo saw the sadness in the face of his Sanskrit teacher and decided to leave the place at the earliest. After a few days Wasudeo went to pundit shastir's house. When punditji came out he placed the bundle consisting of his earthy possessions at punditji's feet, bowed to him in respect and said, "you don't have to leave jalna. I'm leaving the place myself and I have come for your blessings as I leave." This unexpected behavior of Wasudeo affected punditji deeply and stayed on. There were tears in punditji's eyes. Bowing to him again Wasudeo lifted his bundle and walked away without as much as a backward glance.

He came to Aurangabad and went to stay in the Ram Mandir where a few months earlier he had landed with blistered and swollen feet. Here too he began to give Ramayana recitation and discourses. Here among his listeners were many a prominent man of Aurangabad among whom Seth Menanlal – a rich Gujarati and Shri Bulakhi Maharaj deserve special mention, for their association was an important interlude in Wasudeo's life.

Seth Maganlal learnt that this young ascetic Wasudeo did not keep for himself any money out of the amount people used to give to the Ramayana club but distributed the same to the table player and to the others of his troupe. This impressed and surprised Seth Maganlal so much so that he requested Wasudeo to disband his club and to stay with him (Seth Maganlal). Wasudeo agreed and thus the short career of the Ramayana club came to an abrupt end.

After a few days stay at Seth Maganlal's house Wasudeo shifted his residence to Murali Manohar Mandir situated quite near to the Seth's place. Then he went to stay in the Gayatri Mandir nearby. This temple possessed an underground room (crypt). No one was allowed entry into this crypt but knowing Wasudeo's way of life and purpose the temple authorities permitted him to use this room for his meditation. This suited Wasudeo admirably well for his meditation usually lasted for six hours or more at one sitting. Days went by.

One day as providence would have it, Govind Das the second of three sons of Seth Maganlal invited Wasudeo to accompany him to the family's flower garden situated just a few miles away. This was a very beautiful garden

extended in about four acres of land. It had a two-storied 'gol chhatri' (round shaped building). The rooms were very airy and had windows all round. This place was very picturesque, offered a beautiful and lonely atmosphere and was ideal for yogic practice of meditation. Govind das invited the young yogi to live in this golchhatri and practice for some days and he undertook the responsibility of bringing necessary food etc. Wasudeo gladly accepted the offer for it was a welcome change from the crypt of the gayatri mandir.

Here he had an unforgettable experiences. One day about noon, he was still in meditation at this hour, his eyes were opened by a flash of light in circular formation and inside this circle he saw standing the tall figure of a muslim saint. His age seemed to be above 50 years and had long beard. He was none other than the pesh Imam who had taken his Samadhi alive just half-a mile or so away from this spot, 250 years before this vision. Even at this time there used to be a langer (free food distribution) where fakirs and the needy were served.

Aren't you in search of the seed (beej) the sufi saint asked our young yogi.

Yes indeed. I am after the seed and am not much concerned with the branches and the flower. Wasudeo replied.

Well the seed will come to you in due course. But unless you have the 'kavach' (protective cover or shield) to protect your body, mind and intellect, how will you avail of the seed? Therefore the kavach is important and for the kavach you go to the gayatri mandir in kasuparak mohalla where you will find the holy book 'shrimad' Bhagwat.' Open the sixth skanda (chapter) and note down the verses and practice. This will be your narayan kavach. And when you have protected yourself thus the beej (seed) will come to you. With this advice the sufi saint disappeared.

It may be mentioned here the entire universe and the multifaced creations are likened, according to the Indian concept to a tree with its trunk, leaves, braches, flowers and fruits etc. the tree originates from the seed. In the seed, the tree with its leaves branches, flowers, fruits etc, have their existence-life. In other words the essence of the life lies hidden in the seed. Applied in a

wider sense seed here means the ultimate reality the creator of all or the supreme being whom we call god with capital 'G'.

Oh ! what an experiences to have ! a muslim divine should direct a hindu to holy scripture of the hundus and reveal to him the secret therin ! we known that this was not the first visitation of a muslim saint that Wasudeo was blessed with. Earlier the renowned Khawaja Moinuddin chisti of ajmer had given him a darshan. What do such visitations mean? Is there any real, essential difference between a muslim and a Christian for that matter, in the ultimate goal? Except that each one follows a different set of rules and practice or say each one takes a different raod to reach the centre? The different religions in fact provide only different paths or atmosphere for different people to facilitate their advancement towards the only one god-head. What a tragedy that we should kill and hate each other in the name of different religions ! when in fact there is on the higher planes of spiritual attainment the outside differences disappear and there is only unity in divinity.

After this miraculous vision, it took Wasudeo a few hours to resume normal physical activity for his limbs had become numb due to the many hours of meditation in one posture. Late in the afternoon he began to walk toward the gyatri mandir to note down the kavach. His mind was still pondering over the vision and the words of the pesh Imam that he was not aware of the fact that he was heading towards the house of shri Bulakhi Maharaj. Awareness dawned on him only when he had reached the house, the door was closed and locked but he did not notice the lock.

In view of what followed, a little personal information about this house and the family may not be out of place. Shri bulakhi maharaj and his family members weer devotees of the goddess Bhagawati (kali) for two generations. He idol was installed in a separate room and worshipped in all solemnity with whole hearted devotion. Shri Bulakhi Maharaj's father was a great devotee of the goddess mother and recipient of her favours.

A story is narrated that once a Brahmin in need of money pawned his wife's embroided silk sari to the senior maharaj for a certain amount of money, on the pledge that he would redeem the sari in due course. The Bramhin did not turn up with money to redeem the sari for almost eleven years. One day a

mahayagna was being performed in the house and a suitable offering had to be made. The senior Maharaj thought that the silk sari under mortgage would make a good offering. As he had by this time no hope left of the Brahmin coming back to claim it, he consigned it to mahyagnya fire as an offering. But as fate would have it, the Brahmin turned up and called on the senior Maharaj three days after the Mahayagnya. The senior Maharaja was very much taken aback, a shudder went through his spine and his mind began to think of plans to keep the Brahmin away from embarrassing him. He thought of telling the truth. If the Brahmin demanded the sari. He could say that he did not expect him to turn up after eleven years to claim the article as the mortgage was not made keeping such a long period in mind. He could justifiably put the blame on the Brahmin. But being a sensitive and honest man such excuses did not satisfy the senior if the Brahmin went round telling tales against his honesty and credibility he wondered. Such an eventuality would be horrible and mortifying.

In utter desperation the senior Maharaj submitted his plight to the goddess mother for a solution. He sent word to the Brahmin that his sari would be returned within a few days. With absolute trust in his kul-devi(family goddess) he sat at her feet in prayer. For two days he did not touch any food or water nor did he do the third day a miracle took place. As the maharaj was still in meditation seated in front of the idol the very same sari duly folded fell with a thud before him. The sound awakened him from his meditation, and when he saw the sari he burst into tears of joy and gratitude. His son shri Bulakhi Maharaj inherited his father's devotion to the goddess and in all sincerity continued it.

Now Wasudeo was standing at the door of this Bulakhi Maharaj's house. He found the door closed but did not notice that it was also locked from outside. Assuming that the Maharaj would be in he called out "Maharaj" he called again "Maharaj" receiving no response he called a third time. "who is there?" he heard a woman's voice ask him. The voice seemed to emanate from the upper floor of the house. "who else but the kalachor, the kalachor" (black thief) he replied and waited for the door to open. He heard foot-steps of a lady coming down. Tinkling of anklets was heard with every step which stopped behind the door. The lock outside the door suddenly fell near his feet. Through the peep hole in the door Wasudeo saw a very beautiful fore- arm with

charming green bangles in the wrist, with long slender fingers well manicured, removing the latch from inside the door. Now the door was about to open and he heard some one calling him from behind. He turned back to see Bulakhi Maharaj's mother and family a short distance away at his back. They were returning home after attending some function. The old lady called him and though he heard her he did not respond as he was in a semi-trance state with his attention focused on the hand that was removing the latch inside. The old lady repeated the call as she drew near. The hand disappeared all of a sudden. As she came to the door, she brought out the keys to open the door and to her dismay she found the lock lying on the ground in front of Wasudeo. What is this? How has this happened? She exclaimed.

By this time wasudeo's attention riveted on the old lady who in return asked him what had happened. He explained to her what happened. The account of the event moved shri Bulakhi Maharaj's mother so much so that she burst out into weeping. She caught hold of his feet and lamented, "It is our misfortune that we did not have the good luck of getting the goddess mother's Darshan. You must stay with us henceforth that we may deserve to be blessed with the mother's Darshan. She entreated.

Shri Bulakhi Maharaj who returned home just then joined the family in pressing him to live with them. It was only when he finally agreed to stay that the old lady loosened her grip on his feet. He lived with this family for three weeks.

Shri Bulakhi Maharaj's house was an old one. It had a door as entrance from the street. On entering the house on one side was a small room in which was installed the idol of goddess Bhagawati (kali). By one side of this room was the stair-case leading to the upper floor. Opposite facing this room was a hall where used to be held programmes like Bhajan, kirtan, Yagnya and so on. An oil lamp burnt incessantly in the verandah outside the goddess's room . the family was very particular about keeping this lamp burning all the year round.

The evening devotions and dinner over. The whole family retired as usual to the upper floor for the night's rest. For the guest (wasdueo) however a bed was arranged in the verandah on the other side of the goddess's room.

This arrangement was to leave Wasudeo undisturbed for his meditation etc. which he used to have at night too.

One night, as usual the family retired to rest and Wasudeo too had gone to bed after his night's meditation. Clouds gathered in the sky and all of a sudden a storm broke out over the city. Gusts of wind rushed through all the corners of the house and put out the lamp in the Bhagawati's room. The whole house was plunged into darkness. Wasudeo though awakend, could do nothing to relight the lamp. He then noticed shri Bulakhi Maharaj's mother coming down the steps with a lamp in her hand. She came down, lit the lamp in the goddess's room and quietly went upstairs.

Next morning as he was having breakfast with the family he made a reference to the night's storm and said to mataji (Bulakhi Maharaj's mother) it was very nice of you to have come down and re-lit the lamp outside the Bhagawati's room. The storm was terrible indeed.

"who lit the lamp, you say"? asked mataji in surprise. "myself? How could it be? You could have been mistaken for once we go upstairs after night's prayers and dinner we do not go down, not one of us. Certainly I did not come down last night though we were aware that the lamp had been put out.

"very strange." Replied Wasudeo and proceeded to explain." But I saw you descending the stairs with a lamp in your hand. You came and re-lit the lamp outside the goddess room which the storm had put out and went up stairs.

Suddenly it dawned on mataji and other members of the family that the lady who went downstairs and re-lit the lamp was none other than the goddess mother herself and tears of joy began to flow down their eyes. They were happy because the goddess living presence and blessings were on their house. She was a lady whom Wasudeo- their guest had seen in human form. But soon sadness over whelmed them for they were not blessed with a darshan. This feeling thought in a sense of unworthiness in them and added to their misery and they could not control their tears. Wasudeo had considerable difficulty in consoling them.

A fortnight after this event, Wasudeo left shri Bulakhi Maharaj's house and went to the gayatri mandir to note down the "Narayan Kavach" which the sufi saint had directed him to. This now was the year of 1935.

5.

Saint Eknath's Guidance

Having equipped himself with the 'Narayan kavach' Wasudeo returned to seth Maganlal's gol-chatri and intensified his practice of meditation for he was now more eager to obtain the "seed". As before govind das seth Maganlal's second son, used to send him his daily requirements of food.

After a few days he was requested to give discourses on the life of lord Krishna in the near by gopal Krishna mandir. He accepted. His narration of the life of shri Krishna and his elucidation of the lord's teachings began to attract many an enlightened audience, for what he had to say was not the usual run-of-the-mill-type. His words originated from the depths of his heart born out of his immense spiritual experiences. They could not but profoundly affect his listeners.

One day, as his discourse was in progress, two gentlemen- Mr. Bapusaheb Deshpande and Dada Bhimrao joshi walked in casually. They were normally averse to attending temples, kirtans and Bhajans etc. for they were sufficiently advanced in spiritual matters wherein they could dispense with the normal temple attendance. They stood at the door listening to the words of the young speaker who was elucidating the conversation between lord Krishna and arjuna. The emotional and thought content of the interpretation touched their inner chords and so moved they became that tears began to flow down their cheeks.

While they were in that state, their presence came to the notice of Dwarakadas- the son of the pujari who knew them and their background. Surprised at their presence he got up and conducted them into the hall and seated them in the front row near the speaker.

The discourse over, the audience dispersed but Babusaheb Deshpande and Dada Bhimrao stayed back and introduced themselves to the speaker and

sought to know more about him. This chance meeting was later to develop into an intimate friendship.

As they came closer together both Bapusaheb and Bhimrao observed the daily routine of this young ascetic Wasudeo, the hours he spent in meditation, his Spartan diet and simplicity, his absolute detachment, his inward state of mind, his self-reliance and above all the way he gave way to the temple all the money given to him by the audience at the discourses. All these qualities of Wasudeo continued his stay in the gol-chhatri. Often he spent his evenings in the company of seth Maganlal, shri Bulakhi Maharaj, Bapusaheb and Bhimrao. The latter's house was the usual meeting place. These meetings further cemented the friendship among Bapusaheb, Dada Bhimrao and Wasudeo and they began to be known as trinity.

Sometime later Wasudeo left Aurangabad and came to jalna again and spent a few days at kali-kurti-ka-ram mandir. From jalna he came to akola and lived here for a couple of days with the swamiji (Dr. Nandlal Bharati) who in a way was his guide.

It was now nearly eleven years since he had left his child wife with her parents and started his wanderings in search of eternal. He began to feel that it was high time that he paid a visit to kalupura- his ancestral village. The year now was the beginning of 1930.

He left Akola and came to Bhusawal where he boarded the mail train for Allahabad. This train journey brought him into an encounter with an Aghori Baba. The third class compartments were all crowded. He squeezed into one and sat on his bedding in the passage. Facing him on the opposite seat was an Aghori Baba in all his 'ugly holiness' for which the aghori's are notorious. This Baba was accompanied by a host of his disciples belonging to some rich families of Bombay, Calcutta and Ahmedabad. They were accompanying the Baba to Allahabad. This intrusion of Wasudeo into his sacred precincts did not please the Babaji's a bit and the Babaji, being annoyed, collected all his mystic forces and declared a silent battle against this intruder. The Babaji began to stare at Wasudeo with unblinking eyes with all the mental powers he could muster. This is called 'tratak' in yoga. The Babaji was thus trying to browbeat this stranger by practicing tratak on him with a view to drive him away with a

bitter lesson and to impress his greatness upon his disciples. Wasudeo was not slow to realize the Babaji intention. So he too returned Babaji's stare with equal force. Both, thus went to the W.C. for consuming his own excreta which he did quite frequently as if to reimburse his waning strength Undaunted by the Aghoribaba's gimmicks Wasudeo sat on. The royal staring feat continued till the train reached Jabalpur junction. During the long train journey from Bhusawal to Jabalpur the babaji realizes that his mystic forces were powerless before him. So babaji thought it better part of valour to cease hostilities. He got down on the platform as soon as the train stopped at Jabalpur; purchased two dozen bananas and offered one to his antagonist.

Thus the Babaji started the rest of the journey in a better frame of mind which was soon to receive a rude shock and change his future way of life. As the train left Jabalpur with Babaji in his seat, Wasudeo sought his permission to say something to him. It is needless to state that the Babaji's disciples who were travelling with him were eagerly watching for the outcome of babaji's mystic confrontation with this stranger. They were now equally eager to witness the end of it all. Permission obtained, Wasudeo said. "Your Guruji (spiritual guide) is no more alive. You have a and three children in the village whom you abandoned helpless. So if you listen to my advice go back to them and lead a normal householder' life. "This revelation of the inner-most secret of the Babaji which nobody in the present company knew anything about shocked the Babaji and his disciples not a little. This revelation came as a mighty blow to babaji and for a long time he sat stunned. Babaji realized that this strange young man was a man of greater spiritual realization and attainment.

The train reached Allahabad in good time and the party alighted. Babaji was by now ready to go home.

Wasudeo who brought about this denouement on the aghori baba soon reached his ancestral village Kalupura, went to his wife's village nearby, brought her home and began a house-holder's life in the house of his uncle Gompti Kaka. This was in February, 1935.

Two months passed in perfect wedded bliss. Wandering bug again bit Wasudeo the house holder ascetic. He could not resist the inner urge to go after the nether worldly wisdom. So one day he packed off his young wife back to her people, counseled her for patient waiting and without much ado left the place.

He returned to Akola and stayed at the Swamiji's place (Dr. Nandlal Bharati). Quite sometime was spent here under the Swamiji's guidance and protection. Then he took to the roads again visiting and staying at his old haunting places. Wandering thus almost an year passed. Early 1936 saw him again back in Aurangabad in the company of his old friends Bapusaheb Deshpande, Bhimrao Joshi, Shri Bulakhi Maharaj and company. For stay he chose this time the "murli manohar mandir" which was situated near the Gayatri Mandir.

Time passed on in long hours of meditation. Evenings were often, as before spent in the company of Bapusaheb and Dada Bhimrao who had by this time come very close to each other. Often in such meetings each one sought the others advice to his spiritual problems. As Wasudeo, their young friend, had already gone much ahead of them in spiritual attainments there was precious little they could do to be of any help to him. They were unanimous in their view that Sant Eknath Maharaj the house holder saint of hallowed memory, was the one to help him further in his search. They advised him, therefore, to go to Paithan and seek refuge in the Samadhi of the saint. They assured him that he would find his desires fulfilled there at Paithan for they themselves had received the saint's blessings.

With renewed hope and with the one rupee given by Bapusaheb Deshpande for bus fare Wasudeo left for Paithan.

Paithan is a town situated on the bank of the river Godavari which is considered the Ganga of the Southern India. This calm and sleepy town Paithan acquired renown and began to be looked upon as a place of pilgrimage by many because it was in this town the great house holder saint Eknath Maharaj lived and had his Samadhi some four hundred years ago. It was this saint Eknath Maharaj who was divinely guided to go to Alandi a small town near Poona, and remove the roots of the Ajana tree which had begun to go round

the neck of the living Samadhi of saint Dnyaneshwar. It may be remembered that saint Dnyaneshwar had taken Samadhi alive here at Alandi some two hundred years before saint Eknath.

Wasudeo reached paithan around mid-day. This was his third visit to this town but this time he was bent upon beseeching help and guidance from the saint Eknath, no matter how long he had to wait. We may recall here that on an early occasion when Wasudeo was here he was befriended by shri Bhagwatbua- the puajari of saint Eknath mandir and taught music lessons. On arrival here he went straight to thakur himmat sing- a grocer by profession, who was an old acquaintance.

On the eastern bank of the river was a long line of neem trees, situated on one side of the road that led to the river was a pan shop owned by one Mr. gulam ahmed who was a wrestler of sorts and was known as "ustad" (guru) in the locality. Though a wrestler he was no bully but a kind hearted and helpful man. One day gulam ahmed noticed Wasudeo, a stranger to him passing through the road walking past his stop. Something in his personality, the grace that radiated from his face, attracted gulam ahmed to wsduedo. It did not tale much time for both to become friends.

For his practice of meditation Wasudeo chose the sandy banks of the Godavari river for here in plenty was the peace and solitude he wanted. Here on the river bank he selected a place and began to meditate at night. His meditation often for hours till cocks crew the dawn of a new morn.

Wasudeo had come here for the specific purpose of obtaining saint eknath maharaj blessing and guidance and he decided to continue his vigil and meditation till such time as he received the saint's blessings. A fortnight thus passed in sadhna on the Godavari sands. And then one night after meditation he was resting on the sand. One arm of his served him as a pillow. His eyes were riveted on the following water. Time was between 3-4 a.m. the bright image of a person rising from the water after a dip caught his eyes. This person was of medium height and of slight dark complexion. Fresh from baht, a dhoti well tied up a loose garment over the shoulders, and with a lota in his hand this person approached Wasudeo who was still lying on the sand. He came near to Wasudeo and spoke to him in Marathi language which meant "your

work here is done. Now you go to ayodhya where you will have your desire fulfilled” with these words of guidance he blessed Wasudeo and vanished. He was none other than the saint eknathji maharaj.

Wasudeo felt happy and excited. The joy and elation he experienced knew no bounds. He had now seen the saint eknath in person and had received his blessings. The saint himself in person now directed him where to go next and he was given the assurance that he would succeed in his at ayodhya.

With the arrival of the morning Wasudeo decided to take leave of his friends and bid good bye to pathan without any loss of time for his ‘tapasya’ here was over and the sooner he reached ayodhya the better he felt. He walked upto the pan-shop of ustad gulam ahmed and in casual way told him that his purpose of coming to paithan was now served and that he was proceeding to ayodhya. Gulam ahmed a sensitive sensible and practical man as he was. Knew what his friend Wasudeo was after. He immediately ordered for ‘jilebi’ and milk from a restaurant nearby and offered the same to Wasudeo as a send off gesture.

While Wasudeo was enjoying jilebi and milk gulam ahmed enquired how he would go to Aurangabad, on foot he was told. Just then as luck would have it a motor car stopped in front of the pan-shop and the driver asked for a pan. No other occupant was in the car. It belonged to a Tahsildar and the driver was taking it back to Aurangabad. Gulam ahmed took the driver aside and requested him to give a lift to his friend Wasudeo to Aurangabad which the driver readily agreed to do. Thus Wasudeo and gulam ahmed parted.

On reaching Aurangabad the driver dropped Wasudeo in the kasuparak mohalla. With his old friends in Aurangabad Wasudeo began to plan his journey to Ayodhya. He raising the money was by selling his paris tuned harmonium which he had left at seth maganlal house for safe keeping.

6.

Anusthan At Ayodhya

Wasudeo alighted at faizabad railway station for ayodhya, for he was not aware that there was the ayodhya railway station nearer to the historic town. He had just 4 annas (present 25 paise) left in his pocket. A rickshaw puller agreed to take him to the old town ayodhya for two annas. With the balance he purchased chana for his food. Towards the evening the rickshaw dropped him in a cross road in the old town. He direction to go outside the town to the sarayu river. His idea was to spend the night on the river bank outside the town. Having got the direction he walked on. On both sides of the town he saw two big temples, both situated on the same side of the road.

Here in ayodhya pandit nand kishore was the pujari in what is known as the mandir. This temple belonged to the royal family of Nepal. The then king's grandmother, with her retinue was in residence at this time. According to the rules no male except the pujari was allowed to spend the night in his temple premises. Everything here was done according to the instruction and as per the orders of the old lady.

Next morning Wasudeo stood outside the temple steps, his head bent, his eyes seeing only his own feet strictly following the old monastic precept *caput hic illuc nonteneature*. Thus he stood waiting patiently to be inspected by the royalty. Soon the maharani came to the temple, saw him and what she saw pleased her. She was not slow in noticing the modesty, and the grace radiated from this young ascetic. She was then ready to relax the rule of the male presence in the premises in case of Wasudeo and allowed him to stay in the room near the main get for 15 days. And his food would come from the royal kitchen. In the meanwhile he was supposed to make alternate arrangements for his stay.

Wasudeo told pandit nand kishore the purpose of his visit and his desire to have a private place of his own where he could practice long hours of

meditation undisturbed. Nand kishore promised to render all possible help. Within a week he found the necessary solitude in shri venkatesh temple next door.

Now this venkatesh temple was an ancient and holy institution. It had a large jagir bequeathed to it for its maintenance. The revenue accruing to it was considerable. The mahant at this time was shri swami ram prapannacharya- an erudite scholar in many disciplines. He was a renowned proponent of the ramanuja cult. His command over and his mastery of interpretation of the Vedas. Vedanta shastras and vyakarana was such that his fame reverberated practically the whole of india. He was the direct disciple of that illustrious vyakarna master pt. shiv kumar shastri of Varanasi.

Pandit nand kishore met swami ram prapannacharya and told him of Wasudeo and of the solitude he was seeking for an anusthan. The swamiji wanted to meet Wasudeo before he would promise any help. They met on an appointed day.

Wasudeo informed the swamiji of his life and quest, how he was directed to ayodhya by saint eknath maharaj. He would be happy if he could get necessary solitude for his practice. Swami prapanncharya was very much earnest that he immediately arranged for him a room on the upper floor of the temple. Wasudeo gratefully shifted to this room.

Having decided to forgo temple attendance and food he devoted his time for long hours of meditation. His routine was that he would take a walk into the sarayu river in the morning and after bath etc. return to his room by 8 o'clock or so. Then back in the privacy of his room he would take his asana and go into deep meditation which would last 6-8 hours at a stretch. By the time he got up from meditation it would be 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Then he would lie down for a while so that his limbs could become functional.

With this arrangement made for his meal he plunged into long hours of meditation. At the end of the meditation he had to rest for sometime for his limbs to regain blood circulation and movement. He used this time to chew the tulsi leaves and eat them with a liberal dose of water.

One day came to investigate. He found Wasudeo as the manager had found him in deep meditation. He watched him for some minutes. Off and on the swamiji watched him, and he came to the realization that here was a sadhaka of a different type. The swamiji sent for him one night and both had a long discussion. The swamiji wanted to know what sort of sadhna he was doing and what were his experiences and so on. Thereupon Wasudeo told him in detail about his sadhna, and of the experiences he had so far. He narrated as to how saint eknathji maharaj himself had directed him to ayodhya for the fulfillment of his desire. Swami ram prapanncharya listened to him with all seriousness and was very much moved by wasudeo's experiences and spiritual visions.

The swamiji then gave him certain well-guarded secrets of sadhna of the ramanuja sect for his further practice. These were secret practices to be given only to the most advanced and deserving candidates. The swamiji found none better qualified for such practices than Wasudeo.

A few days practice of the secret methods given to him by the swamiji began to yield results. He was plunged into great bliss. He began to hear mantras and secret passages from holy books began to appear on his mental screen. Wasudeo told swamiji of these experiences too.

To the swamiji these were real revelations because scores of his disciples had subjected themselves to years of sadhna and had no such experiences to relate. The swamiji was surprised and happy that this newcomer had testified to the truth and validity of secret practices which none of his followers could.

The only thing swami ram prapannacharya could now do was to task Wasudeo to consult his wife, to explain to her of the advantages that would accrue if she would let him take to sanyasa. Then he should also obtain approval for it from Dr. Nandlal bharati, at the earliest. For this purpose Wasudeo had to go to his village kalupura. He had no money as we had seen. Nand kishore pujari gave him Rs. 25/- for expenses and wished him god speed.

Back to his wife Wasudeo explained to her patiently the situation. He narrated of the prosperous and happy life she and their son could lead if she allowed him to become a sanyasi. He also painted the other side of the picture too. If she did not agree to his sanyasa then they may have to lead a life of

austerity, a life of privation and want. She heard him out patiently enough. But she would not let him accept sanyas for he was all her wealth, her happiness. With him as a partener and leader she was prepared to face all the furies of hell even. But without him she would care two hoots for the bliss of all the heavens, let alone his mahantdom and the attendant material abundance.

True to her word she stood with her husband through thick and thin. Privations and frustrations were many in their life but till her death in 1977 she never uttered a word of disgust and discontentment.

7.

A Dip In the Sacred Sangam

In his room back from Dr. Bharati's dispensary the demon of depression overwhelmed Wasudeo. Dr. Bharati's words "you are qualified enough now. You may go and start your own practice anywhere you like", gave birth to a host of problems in his mind. During the past three years under the able guidance of Dr. Bharati he had acquired enough self confidence and frame in diagnosing various diseases and in administering medication. That period of apprenticeship was now over. So far his needs were met by the swamiji and he had no worry on that count. But now he had to start earning not for himself but also for his wife and two little children. It was high time that he brought his family to live with him. He could not ignore the wife and children any more.

What should be done now? Even if he decided to open his own dispensary some where he had no money to meet the initial expenses. He did not even have the bus fare to reach the nearest town even if he somehow succeeded in establishing his own dispensary his kindly nature towards the poor and indigent was such that he might not get enough money for his family's barest necessities.

From all sides worries and frustration began to press him down to the bottomless pits of misery. Never before had he experienced such mental torture and agony. A panoramic view of his whole life from infancy to this date began to overcrowd his mind. He saw the pallid face of his loving, dying mother. He remembered her last moments on earth. He hardly three years old then was playing on the terrace of his grand father's house in golden beach, west coast Georgetown, British Guiana, south America. It was afternoon. His mother was dying. He did not know then what death meant. He remembered how eagerly he was watching the kite flying on the terrace and how urgently he was taken down stairs to his beloved mother's bed room where his relatives and friendly neighbours squatted on the floor. It was easter Sunday. Some holy book was taken to his mother who began to weep as she saw him. It seemed

her hour was near. His grand father asked him to pour some water into her mouth. He remembered how he had poured a few spoonfuls of water into her open mouth. She swallowed a little; the rest flowed down from the corners of her mouth. Within seconds she was gone. There were tears still in her eyes.

Then followed the years of a motherless childhood and his spiritual visions which set him apart from others. Then the scene of his departure from Georgetown for india crossed his mind. His father had given gratis to his uncle and aunt the considerable property and business he had there before sailing for india. Neither this uncle nor aunt neither the grand father nor other relatives in south America had ever inquired about him since he left them. A few years after their arrival in india his father Rameshwarji too died leaving him an orphan. Yet even after this his relations in America did not care for him.

He remembered his life in the sewai village with his father. His father was bitter and cruel to him. He remembered too how angry his father was when he wanted to go to school as other youngsters of his age did. His entreaties to his father to send him to Banaras to study Sanskrit had brought only blows on his tender back ! he was instead sent to the fields to fend for himself in the comradeship of cows and buffalos! By the time he was 15 years of age his father too died.

Then came a short period of his life at kalupura with his aunt sudamia- foremost among the very few who really loved him. Here he had the bitterest not to breathe at all. If this brought death because no breathe meant no life, it was welcome. On the contrary if it did, instead, stimulate the kundalini it would be still better, in fact it would be the fulfilment of life's purpose. He decided, therefore, to try out the Rechak-kumbhak method the same night.

It may be mentioned here that once before, when he was a child of nine, he had the experience of the arousal of kundalini.

As the night advanced he closed himself in his room. He stood at the centre of the room looking at the clock on the wall. According to the practices of pranayam (breath control) he started to slowly breathe out the air. Once he succeeded in pumping out all the air from his lungs he stood still watching the clock in front of him. He was determined firmly not to inhale. His attention was fully concentrated on the golden light on the forehead in between the eye

brows. Seconds passed into a minute. His lungs began to feel lack of air. Then another minute passed. His whole body began to react for want of oxygen. It seemed suffocation was closing in. But Wasudeo by sheer will power kept the air out. Third minute too passed. He felt the tentacles of death clutching at his throat. It seemed he would fall dead under suffocation . if death was to be the end let it come. He would not, he firmly decided, at any cost allow air to flow into his lungs. A few more seconds slowly and painfully ticked by; an ant crawling sensation began at his toes which slowly began to move upwards. This sensation reached his hips and entered the lower part of the spine where he experienced a bubbling sensation which like electric current shot up through the spinal column upto the cervical region. Now he felt that he was dying. Immediately after this experience of death he saw a dazzling bright divine light and lost all physical sensation and became 'nil'. He was thrown down on his feet and lay on the ground powerless to move as his body now become like dead wood; but his consciousness was at the peak of its power having been enlightened to a degree hitherto unknown to him. He found himself enveloped by immense, bright and beautiful light as if a thousand suns were shining all around him. He found himself immersed in that boundless, fathomless ocean of light. He found that was one with that divine light. Here was perfect unity. Duality and diversity were nowhere. They disappeared like darkness before light. His soul now found itself in that most sublime and blissful state which one has eyes to wonder at but lacks tongue to describe! A heavenly peace descended upon him. He understood now what Christ had meant when he said, "My peace I give unto you" he understood too that it was of a dip in this infinite ocean of divine light, in this divine confluence or sacred sangam that tulsikrita Ramayana, the ancient Indian rishis and saints of all age had praised and sung about. This was the real triveni. There was no doubt about this truth. The triveni at Allahabad of the three sacred river could at best only be considered as an earthy symbol hallowed by the traditions nurtured by the ignorant avaricious exploiters of simple man's humble and pious sentiments. In this state Wasudeo experienced the real liberation from all bondages . He experienced the real redemption. Here he experienced the truth that god is in all and all in god. It was to teach man this truth and to lead him to the realization of it that divine begins had incarnated in the world from time to

time. In this bliss he remained for about four hours. This is the state called real Samadhi.

Unaware of his physical existence,unaware of the world around him he lay where he had fallen. He was in what is called super-conscious state. When his limbs regained sensation and his mind the normalcy the morning had quite advanced. Now no doubt assailed him. No worry perturbed his mind. He saw that he was being protected by a ring of that divine light. Thus all worries gone, all miseries vanished, all passions spent, clean of mind, pure of heart he woke up into a new day.

Ever afterwards he had remained immersed in that sublime lamination and the experience of that night still pervades his whole being even to this day.

When he came out of his room in the morning the subtle change that had come over him could not escape the notice of all who saw him. Even Dr. Bharatis family members were aware of a new glow and grace in his face and a typical freshness in his bearing.

The time was now towards the close of 1939.

8.

Telhara : Dispensary

A few days after the incident narrated in the previous chapter wasdueo took leave of his Guru Dr. Nandlal Bharati and left akola . Dr. Bharaati saw him off ample good wishes and blessings and with just enough money for a meal.

Wasudeo still immersed in that ocean of divine light felt no worry. He was now both light of body and of pocket. Lack of resources or the thought for the morrow did not bother him. Free as the 'fowls of the air' and with a song in his heart he walked on to earn a living which would enable him to bring up his family.

Travelling through Amravati, chandoor bazaar, paratwada and then akot wasudeo one day found himself seated under a tree at telhara. The presence of this stranger under the tree-a man of well built physique though short statured, radiating a charm and grace of his own did not fail to attract more than a passing glance of a passer- by Mr. Nandlal Tiwari- a milk vendor who paused to inquire the whereabouts of this stranger and his purpose of coming to telhara. Having got thus acquainted himself with this stranger's life and wanderings the milk vendor arranged a room for his stay in a Dharamsala. Thus Wasudeo found himself one fine morning comfortable lodged in a dharamshala in telhara. As days passed some teachers of a nearby school were drawn to him and they began to visit him frequently. Slowly his circle of acquaintances began to enlarge.

This was the year 1940. Time passed. The arrival of ganesh utsav heralded the onest of the festival season. Preparations began in full swing in different parts of the town to celebrate the ganesh utsav in a befitting manner. The elite of the town joined hands with the commoners in arranging for and attending the function. Bhajans, kirtans, debates and religious discourses were all organized to bring the celebration to a grand finale. Wasudeo too along with his teacher friends used to attend one of such functions.

One of those days of the ten day festival no speaker could be arranged for the night's discourse. One of Wasudeo teacher friends who was a landlord as well, suggested that the newly arrived swamiji residing in the Dharamshala be invited to give the discourse on that night. This suggestion found favour with the others and they approached him with the request that he grace the occasion. Those who knew him had an inkling into his apiritual attainment and those who did not were curios enough to know what the new swamiji had to say.

With considerable hesitation Wasudeo agreed. He reached the township library hall where the function was being held. He was at a loss for a few minutes as to what subject he should choose to speak on. It had to be an extempore discourse. He had been told that he could speak on any subject of his own choice but he had no time to recollect his thoughts on any particular topic. As he took the speaker's seat his eyes took a quick glance of the audience and of the place. His eyes rsted on the idol of lord ganesh which was dressed like an army captain and was leaning on to an aircraft. The unusual body structure of lord ganesh with his elephant nose and all that promoted him to speak on the topic of human anatomy. This human body of ours is very elegant and beautiful," he began. " it was the craze for this human form that had seized the deities and the heavenly spirits alike. And this craze was justifiable, he continued because in this form were some unique features happily blended to enable man to climb upto the highest stage of attainment and to elevate him thus to the glory of physiology, anatomy and medicine and spiced it with a liberal dose of his personal experiences in yoga to bring his point home to the audience.

Angels and demons alike are jealous of man, he went on. Angels are jealous because they were created by god as his servants and would remain so for all eternity for they can never be born as human beings: the demons are jealous because they were condemned to evil and eternal damnation; no escape for them either from their fate." He clarified. It is given to man alone the ability to pick and choose his own destiny, to be the master of all he surveys; to choose good or evil, to suffer pain and enjoy pleasure. Man alone can attain salvation or 'mukti'. It is given to man alone the ability to soar up into the heavenly bliss; to merge with eternity or to go to hell and be damned.

And in this respect," he went on," human beings are far superior to angels and demons. It was to show man the road to redemption that Incarnations divine came to this earth from time to time," he pointed out.

In the human body there are special nerve centres which are the repositories of immense power. These centres remain closed and dormant. Each of these centres is the store-house of special powers or siddhis. These are the steps of the ladder that lead one to eternity. These centres can be excited and opened by regular practice of special yogic meditational techniques under the guidance of a 'sat-guru' he continued.

Therefore it is the duty and the privilege of every man to work for the realization of his real self, to reach that heaven of bliss: to be one with the 'para-Brahma' he emphasized.

Yadi manav manavta ke hat tai raha to vah manav nahi dev hai, ise viparit apne tai vahi manav apneko devatva anubhav kare to vah tutch hai, neech hai. Manav nahi, danav hai.

Farishte mubtilaye ajmayish ho to chikh uthe. Ye insa hai jo deta jar ha hai imtihaye apne. Wasudeo concluded.

If a man realizes, lives and acts within the confines of humanness, he is not a man but is divine; contrary to this if he is presumption as to feel and act as if he were a god, he is in fact a mean and lowly creature and definitely not even a man but a demon.

If troubles and tribulations encircle the angles they will cry out in agony: but it is man who goes on facing continuously, without a grumble the trials and troubles in life as his examination or test on earth.

The audience that consisted of doctors teachers, lawyers and other cultural elite of the town sat through this hour long discourse spell-bound and entranced. They were deeply impressed and affected by the talk that began on so mundance a subject as human body but ended in a philosophical and mystical note. They were not slow to realize that this unknown young man had a huge treasure of knowledge and experience hidden in his bosom, much more wisdom than his age warranted.

The discourse over, the audience dispersed. But a few remained behind. Among them were Dr. Ghaisas, Mr. Sant Head Master, Mr. Mama Bhajekar, Mr. Shridhar Gangadhar Dharmadhikari- who was popularly known as Baburao, Mr. Kesharao Tagade- land lord and Mr. Mate Master. These gentlemen wanted to get further acquainted with the young speaker Wasudeo. Dr. Ghaisas expressed the view that since he knew anatomy and physiology so well he might know a good deal about medicine too. Wasudeo nodded in affirmation. He informed them that he had studied medicine for three years under the renowned Dr. Nandlal Bharati of Akola. This statement intrigued Dr. Ghaisas as well as the others because as far as they knew he did not have any dispensary or medical practice in Telhara. He was spending his time in the local Dharmshala without any ostensible source of livelihood. Rather surprised at this Dr. Ghaisas queried, "But where is your dispensary then? How are you here in Telhara?"

The truth had to come out. I have yet to open my own dispensary. I am on the look out for a proper place. It is in search of a suitable place that I have come here," explained Wasudeo. This frank expression of his position further impressed and pleased Dr. Ghaisas and the others. Why not open the dispensary here in Telhara itself? They suggested but quickly realized the fact that his words that he had no resources to open a dispensary. Then and there they proceeded to contribute money to help him open his dispensary without unnecessary delay. This on the spot contribution amounted to Rs 35/.

Mr. Mate Master was soon deputed to go to Akola to purchase necessary medicines etc. Mate Master called on Dr. Bharati at Akola talked to him about his disciple Wasudeo. Dr. Bharati provided him with an almirah some books and medicines. Wasudeo's friends at Telhara hired a room added a table and chair.

Thus the morning of the 10th of October, 1948- the day of the Dusserah festival saw Dr. Wasudeo officially opening his dispensary to the public of Telhara. Dr. Nandlal Bharati specially came to Telhara on this auspicious occasion and inaugurated the dispensary.

Shortly thereafter Wasudeo brought his family and began a householder's settled life. For the next 20 years Telhara remained his home. The people of

this town loved and respected him deeply and he too served them selflessly. Caring not only for their physical ailments but also for their spiritual welfare. As we proceed we shall have occasion to narrate many incidents that are intimately connected with telhara.

With the medical practice his association with the local people increased. Dr. Ghaisas and the others who were instrumental in setting up the dispensary used to join him very frequently for discussion on spiritual and other matters. Dr. Bhau Bhide, Mr. Godbole and a few more joined the intimate circle of Dr. Wasudeo. In such meetings they discussed any topic that came to their minds. Wasudeo too had his own contribution to make to such discussion. What he had to say often added verve to such meetings. Various aspects of life, and life problems were all debated thread bare in these meetings. Lives of sadhus, charlatans mahants and mendicants, godmen and devil's men were all freely debated. These gentlemen often expressed their disgust at the way the so called godmen went round duping the innocent and the gullible people, and they also deprecated the tendency of the Indian people, the rich and the poor, educated and uneducated all alike, to render undue respects and money to the hosts of alleged holymen who swarmed this country like locusts. Lack of discrimination on the part of the masses who surrendered themselves to the godmen on the one hand and their craze for the super natural on the other were responsible for the mushrooming of the godmen whose miracles often did not go beyond the sleight of hand or simple hypnotism or cheap type of siddhies, they felt. These godmen shrouded themselves in shrewdly manipulated publicity and kept a studied distance from the people so that the innocent and gullible be better exploited.

9.

Lord Vitthal's Visit

The first thing the boy Wasudeo did not on setting his foot on Indian soil at Fogatis Ghat in Calcutta in 1919 was as we have seen, to pay his respect to the goddess kali mata. We have also seen how the pleased goddess had blessed him with a vision then. Then on way to the ancestral village both Rameshwarji and Wasudeo had halted at Allahabad and had taken a holy bath at the confluence of the three sacred rivers of india, viz the ganga the Yamuna and the saraswati. We have also seen how this bath at the sacred Triveni or sangam which was reputed to be potent enough to set one eaternally free of all bondages and would give mukti did not make Wasudeo feel any better. Instead of gladdening his heart this bath had only nauseated him and set him against all ritualistic exercise as futile. From then on Wasudeo on his own initiative, for any spiritual benift, never performed or practiced any rituals though he frequently used to reside in temple premises during the long years of his wanderings. Certainly he had attended temple functions, and had given discourses at various temples. These were not done to please the gods and to get any benefit from them but due to the exigencies of the time and to help the people to have a better understanding of the scriptures.

But all the same the divine personalities of the nether world many a time treated him as their own and visited him. We have already recorded many such divine majesty who appeared before him in his grandfather bed room in Georgetown and later in Nagpur, the darshan of goddess kali in Calcutta and Aurangabad; the vision of lord shri ram and his consort sitajij and guru vasistha at madnoor then of khwaja Moin-ud-din chisthi of ajmer etc; are some examples. That the birds of the same feather flock together is a much abused dictum but all the same seems to be true not only in the physical world but true also in the metaphysical world as well.

Such a story we are to record now. It happened in the year 1957. Guruji had been spending the years since 1940 in Telhara engaged not only in his profession as a medical practitioner but also as a spiritual guide to many spiritual aspirants. Early one morning before sunrise maji (guruji's wife who had by this time come to be addressed as maji by the people out of love and respect) had a dream. She saw two men rather short statured and slightly dark at complexion. They looked alike like twins. They were surrounded by a ring of light. "who are you?and why have you come?" enquired maji quite surprised at these strangers' visit to her. "we are from pandharpur. " They said. Many people had began to call guruji by the title "panditji" "oh he is not at home. He is out visiting some patients in some village" she told them. "alright, when he comes back please give him our message and ask him to visit pandharpur on the coming Ashadhi Ekadashi" they told her and parted. Maji had this dream two month prior to the Ekadashi.

On his return home she told him of this dream. He listened to the story. As the Ekadashi was still two month ahead he had plenty of time to decide to go to pandharpur or not. Within a few days he clearly forgot all about it.

As Ekadashi day dawned he had forgotten all about the mysterious invitation to visit pandharpur. On this day also he followed his normal routine of going to the dispensary in the morning and of returning home around noon. As was his custom this day too he went for his bath before lunch.

As he began to pour water over his body he saw a stranger coming from outside and walking straight towards the bath room. He was of medium height and slightly dark complexion. He had a blanket folded across his shoulder, a turban wrapped over much embarrassed and taken aback when this stranger directly entered the room without the slightest hesitation and paid his respects to guruji in the usual Indian fashion. At this guruji's irritation vanished and he said in a kindly tone "you people won't let me alone even when I take my bath. Look now,how got yourself wet all over"

"I came specially for this,"said the stranger unabashedly and squatted in front of guruji." Is that so? Well then, have your heart's contentment", guruji said and poured water all over the stranger and both had a good bath together.

Guruji used to take his lunch after the bath. He enquired of his visitor if he would like to have lunch. The visitor said, "yes." Unfortunately there was food enough only for one and guruji served it to the visitor and he himself observed fast.

Without any hesitation this curious visitor sat down and enjoyed the meal and guruji watched him with considerable amusement. Lunch over they adjourned to the dispensary. After a while the visitor asked, "could you kindly spare me eight annas (percent 50 paise). I want to purchase a garland for the lord pandharinath. You will come to know of it as soon as the garland is offered to the lord." the visitor added. Guruji whereupon looked into the table to find out if there was any money in it. Fortunately there was just an eight anna coin there." you seem to be lucky. This is all that we have today" said guruji handing over the coin to him.

Rising up to go the visitor thanked guruji for the hospitality and for the money and said, "well, the garland will be offered to lord pandharinath today itself and you will come to know, bye bye." This curious visitor then walked out into the road. He was seen walking ahead and after having gone some 25 yards or so he was not visible. Then all of a sudden guruji remembered that this day was the day of ahadhi ekadashi and remembered too his wife's dream in which he was invited to pandharpur. The knowledge dawned on him that his stranger visitor was none else but the lord pandharinath (also called lord vitthal) himself in person. As he had forgotten the matter and failed to go to pandharpur the lord thought it fit to come to him!

10.

A Thread Ceremony Extraordinary

Guruji's life is replete with innumerable incidents of divine hands taking a hand in finding solution to the practical life's every day problems.

Here is just another of such incidents.

When guruji's eldest son "baba" attained the age of nine the family had to think of arranging for his thread ceremony. Thread ceremony or 'upanayanam' as it is called, is a sacred rite which every Brahmin boy has to undergo as an initiation to brahminhood. This rite is akin to the Christian baptism. Guruji's second son "Bachhu" had also reached the age of eligibility for this initiation.

To save the expenditure that celebration of two separate thread ceremonies would entail, it was decided that both the children should be initiated simultaneously. The mother wanted that this being the first upanyanam in the family it should be celebrated with all possible pomp and show. But the question was where the money to come from? The family had no saving to fall back upon. Guruji's every day earning was of those perennial flow of guest who were also to be fed. So in order to keep the expenditure within reasonable limits, it was decided with considerable trepidation, to extend invitations only to the family's most intimate inner circle.

But who should be counted as belonging to this inner circle was not easy to decide because guruji's most intimate circle itself was a legion. Ultimately it was agreed between guruji and maji that some sixty to seventy families should be invited with the request that only the 'pater families' grace the function. Thus the expenditure estimated with all possible thrift came to Rs. 100/- . Even this amount was too big for the family but a further deduction seemed impossible.

It was customary to send out oral invitations. The functionary who conveyed such invitations used to be the family barber. So Ambadas- the barber was deputed to extend the invitations to the selected families. The barber went round conveying the invitations. The families he visited told him that all the family members would attend the function, not just the head of the family alone. Soon the news spread in the town and with it an unprecedented enthusiasm arose among the people. All those who had occasion to know of the goodness of guruji whom they lovingly called "Pandditji" decided to attend the function, invitation or no invitation. On being told of the popular enthusiasm to attend the thread ceremony guruji and maji resigned themselves to fate and went ahead with the preparations keeping in view the hundred rupee target of expenditure.

The appointed day came. It was first of April. The function began in all solemnity. Innumerable families turned up in full strength, where around 60 to 75 guests were expected there was a crowd of about 600. It appeared that the people were playing April fool with their beloved Panditji's family atmosphere. There was no discordant note anywhere. Everybody lent a helping hand unsolicited in making necessary arrangements including the cooking of the meals. The sight of this crowd really alarmed maji. How to handle these guests? How could anybody be sent back without a meal or other refreshments? How could the food meant for 75 people be stretched to serve 600? Maji was not in possession of Draupadi's famed 'Akshaya patra, what could she do? This problem was beyond her to solve. She felt as helpless as a new born babe. Near tears she told her worries to her husband. He listened to her patiently. He had himself noticed and "wait and see what would happen. Providence will provide" he assured her.

By 12 noon the religious rituals were over and the participants were ready to enjoy the feast. Arrangements were made in the pandal to serve the meals. People in groups of fifty began to enjoy the feast' there were several shifts. Serving and eating went on till late in the evening. The entire participants at the ceremony numbering around 600 ate and departed for their homes contented and happy.

God alone knew how the food meant for 75 people fed and satisfied nearly 600 people.

At about 10 O 'clock at night when the last of the guests had gone guruji sat for his meals along with Mr. Mahajan-a police sub-inspector and Mr. bhaiyaji pande. Mr. mahajan who was persent through-out the function could not suppress his curiosity and sought guruji's permission to make a comment.

"I have bee watching the whole scene since this morning." Mr. mahajan began. "I am deeply moved and amazed at the unreserved earnestness with which such a large number of people, men, women and children all alike have joined the celebration uninvited, and at the spontaneous enthusiasm and joy they showed in rendering whatever service they could do. A similar function in a in rich family would not generate such here even if a lot of money were spent. This shows that each individual has a place for you in his heart. Telhara is your home, not just a place of residence."

Guruji was overwhelmed by emotion at this demonstration of affection and regard by the people of Telhara. There were tears in his eyes!

The grand finale was not yet. The following morning guruji went to the shop of Mr. Maganlal Gadodia to pay for the provisions purchased for the function. Maganlal too was persent at guruji's house for the function and had keenly observed what went on there. The knew very well that the provisions he had supplied were worth only Rs. 100/- and by no stretch of imagination one could think that these provisions would suffice to feed a few hundred people. For Maganlal who had been a witness throughout this was nothing short of a miracle, a divine intervention.

In Maganlal's mind there was a flash back of the many occasions he had exchanged jokes with this seemingly simple and poor panditji. He now began to feel remorse over the liberty he had taken on such occasions. He now realized that this panditji was a man of divine powers and was always under the divine protection. Overtaken by pious sentiments and wonder Maganlal asked guruji. "Tell me, Panditji, how within the limited provisions worth Rs. 100/- could so many people feast to their heart's content?"

"I don't know how, but you have seen what happened." Guruji replied.

"Please excuse me panditji, if I am presumptuous in stating that there was some sort of a supernatural intervention without which what happened

could not have happened,” the grocer said. When the divine hand provides so liberally I am ashamed of taking any money for the little grocery I have supplied. I consider that taking money from you is nothing short of insult to god. Maganlal refused to accept any payment. Guruji insisted on paying the cost of the provisions that amounted to a hundred rupees. He placed the Rs. 100/- on the counter and left.

Maganlal did not remain passive. He too left the shop and went home for he had a plan up his sleeve. He took home with him the hundred rupees that guruji had left on the counter. He called his wife, discussed the matter with her and they decided that they would give this money as a present to maji (guruji’s wife) on the occasion of the thread ceremony. All this was to be done without guruji’s knowledge.

Without wasting any time the grocer’s wife set out on her mission. She chatted with maji for few minutes. She then requested Maji to extend the fold of her sari a little. This caused a little puzzle to maji. She did not know what was the ideas. All the same she did as was requested. Thereupon the grocer’s wife placed the hundred rupees there and pleased with maji that this amount be treated as a gift on the occasion of the thread ceremony and then without much ado she returned home.

11.

Mazhar Khan And The Ball of Light

Among those who were in close contact with guruji at telhara was one mazhar khan head master of an urdu school. He came first as a patient. In his frequent visits to the doctor Mazhar khan began to notice the spiritual nature of guruji. As he himself was of spiritual bent of mind a close spiritual affinity gradually developed between the two.

Every time they discussed any topic, be it the world war politics, social or domestic affairs or every day problems of daily life the talk tended to end in a philosophical note. Mazhar khan could not help his surprise at this invariable intrusion of philosophy into their talks and one day he queried, "how is it that all your discussions culminate in philosophy?" How could it be otherwise when every thing has its beginning and end in the supreme being who permeates the whole universe and philosophy being that knowledge was the reply.

Mazhar khan drew closer to guruji and began to seek help and guidance on many an intricate spiritual problem which agitated his mind. The khan knew his holy quran well and he began to note that almost everything this master dwelt upon from his personal experience had a parallel in the holy book.

One day it so happened that Mazhar khan while cleaning and dusting his room, came across a dust laden old book. He did not remember ever having seen or read this book. He dusted the book and without any special curiosity he turned the pages to see the contents. To his surprise it was an anthology of biographies of some prominent sufi saints written in Persian. His curiosity being aroused he read the book through as fast as he could. He was quick to notice a close similarity between the experiences and philosophy of these sufi saints on the one hand and that of guruji on the other, especially the latter's explanations of the 'noor'. He was profoundly affected.

Guruji rose very high up in Mazhar khan's esteem. With a heightened reverence the khan on the same day approached the master. He brought the book with him. Again the discussion touched spiritual matters. So affected became the khan that he entreated the master to guide him into deeper spiritual practice. The master assured him of all guidance and help at the proper time.

From then on Mazhar khan began to spend all his free time in the company of the master. By and by the khan began to have a deep insight into the master's command over the 'urdu' language and his vast knowledge of the Holy Quran. The master mastery over the interpretation of obscure passage from the Quran Shareef and of the sufi book, his simple style of analysis, with a liberal does of illustration from his personal experiences all helped Mazhar khan in understanding and in following his religion in a better and more profitable way.

A few days after the discussion on the sufi book began, guruji had a vision of a different kind than he hitherto had. The novelty of it was quite remarkable. One night guruji sat on the sofa in his room and went into meditation. After a short while, while still in deep meditation a flash of light took a circular form. And in this circle began to appear pages after pages of the Quran Shareef, obscure and knotty ayats, with their hidden meanings and interpretations.

The next day Mazhar khan again visited the master. He had come to seek clarification of certain doubts which his study of the Quran Shareef created. As Mazhar khan sat down the master began to talk and explain the very matter the khan had come to discuss. He sat and listened intently but he could not understand but wondered all the same as to how the master took up the same topic he had come seek clarification on pleased with the explanation Mr. khan went home presuming that it was a matter of mere coincidence that the master happened to dilate on the topic even without his raising it.

Mr. khan came again next day with some ayats for explanation. This day too before Mr. khan could put his questions the master began to talk and explain the very passages. This went on thus for a week. Mr. khan had all his doubts cleared without ever raising them. Surprise and sheer wonder

overcome him. He could no more treat this as a matter of mere coincidence. He could not contain his curiosity any more and asked the master what was this secret. The master then recounted to him the vision he had and the mysterious way he had moved was Mr. Khan that he wanted to be initiated into this mystic path of religion at once. His earnestness affected guruji too and he promised initiation the next day.

Morning came. And Mazhar Khan too, all keyed up and earnest to be initiated into mysticism. He sat before the master with his knees folded back, reverently, respectfully, expectantly. Guruji gave him certain mystic methods culled out from practices of Islam based on the Holy Quran. Guruji gave him detailed instructions as to how he should go on with his technique of meditation.

Thus Mazhar Khan became the first Muslim to seek spiritual guidance and initiation from guruji and thereby his first Muslim disciple. A few more were to follow suit later.

12.

Brindavan : Vision of Radha

Every one wants to be loved, admired and talked about by others. All of us in differing degrees hunger for name and fame to boost up our ego, pride and self-confidence. Within limits this basic human trait is not wrong either. There are of course a few saintly persons who have overcome their egos and reached a stage beyond the pulls of the ego. Only such men of spiritual eminence have no desire for popular appeal and admiration. Such are the people of whom Christ said, "though you live in this world, you are not of this world. They are like the lotus leaf which grows in water but is never moistened by water," according to Shri Krishna. Leaving such a few holymen aside all of us are fond of "showing off." The show off may be our wealth, virtues genuine or affected, or our physical or mental prowess. And many of us in our importance openly or obliquely : thereby we try to make others understand our superiority. What this habit brings us of intrinsic value we do not know but we do know and pride, howsoever transitory it be.

There were also a few men of this type who made guruji's acquaintance. These men came to him not for any spiritual benefit but to have an occasion to boast of their close relationship with holy men such as our guruji. There were also a few who came to him to show him their knowledge, virtues, affluence and influence. Guruji bore no ill-will towards any. He used to smile indulgently at such braggarts who boasted of their pre-eminence. He used to show in subtle ways, without giving any offence that these mundane achievements such as wealth and power did not mean anything to him. He had admiration for real virtues and for men of character howsoever humble though they be.

At telhara among guruji's most intimates friends was one Mr. Shridhar Gangadhar Dharmadhikari, affectionately called Baburao. He was the secretary of the municipal notified area committee and also sanitary inspector. He was very close to guruji and knew well of guruji's spiritual attainments and of his yogic powers. He often spoke to his friends and relatives admiringly of guruji's spiritual attainments. He himself had several personal experiences of guruji

spiritual and super human powers. We shall narrate an incident or two of this kind later. It may, however, be mentioned here that Mr. Dharmadhikari and his family owed much of their well-being to guruji both at telhara. Amravati and elsewhere. Some of such incidents are narrated by Mr. Dharmadhikari himself in part III of this book.

The incident we are to narrate now occurred in 1958. At this time Mr. Baburao Dharmadhikari was posted at khamgaon, a bigger town compared to telhara. He had sought and got transferred to khamgaon because this town had a college where his children could get higher education. Here Baburao talked admiringly of guruji to a friend of his Mr. Madhukarrao Deshpande – an affluent agriculturist of the village sakharkheda also known as fattekherda whose affluence would not rest lightly on his shoulders. Mr. Madhukarrao popularly called madhukaka got acquainted with guruji through baburao because guruji often used to go to khamgaon and stay with him. After a few meetings with guruji madhukaka started inviting guruji to his home in the village Fattekherda to see the social and financial pre-eminence he was having in the village. Guruji used to decline the invitation every time very politely. One day in response to the persistent request of madhukaka to visit his village guruji told him, “ well madhukaka what is the point in my coming to Fattekherda unless your family members want spiritual help and guidance? If it is to see you that purpose is served here as well. I assure you that whenever you come to khamgaon I will meet you here within 24 hours and in case I fail I will come to fattekherda.”

This assurance brought a mischievous smile on Madhukaka face, for he was now certain that he could corner guruji at some occasion and take him to his village for his self satisfaction. Baburao who was present also felt some surprise at this assurance. Madhukaka being a frequent visitor to khamgaon and used to coming and going without prior intimation to baburao, felt certain that he could easily catch guruji at his own word. He was sure of his success for he thought how could this pandiji know well in advance about his coming to khamgaon to make it possible for him to be at khamgaon? Sensing madhukak's thoughts guruji repeated his assurance within 24 hours of your arrival in khamgaon you will find me here. If I miss meetings thus I'll certainly come to your village.

On being given the assurance a second time, madhukaka felt very happy for he was sure that he would catch this panditji failing to keep his word and would then take him to the village and show him who was who and what in Fattekherda, at being excited at the game he would play, Madhukaka accepted guruji's assurance and left for his village.

The very next day he returned to khangaoon expecting the panditji to have gone back to telhara. To his surprise madhukaka found guruji at khangaoon with Baburao. He then again left for his village. On the third day again he paid a flying visit to khangaoon and was still more surprised to find guruji there. Thereafter whenever madhukaka came to khangaoon he invariably found guruji at baburao Dharmadhikaris place.

One day after a lapse of 4 months madhukak was in Nagpur and on his return trip home he thought that he would catch the panditji napping. So unexpectedly he landed in khangao. Guruji was not there when he arrived at baburao's place. He felt very happy and elated for once now he was certain that he had outwitted panditji and had him in his fist. His happiness was short lived. At this time guruji was at telhara in his dispensary. He saw Madhukaka figure standing in front of him in the dispensary and understood the meaning, and immediately left for khangaoon. As soon as he reached the bus stand. The khangaoon bus was about to move. Two hours journey brought him to khangaoon. By evening guruji was at baburao's place to the utter surprise of madhukaka who had to acknowledge the fact humbly that this panditji was not a ponga pandit after all. I do not think I would ever be able to take you to fattekherda unless of course you choose to come of your own sweet will was all that madhukaka could say. You have not understood who or what panditji actually is. We who have been so close to him depth. Prudence is in not provoking him was baburao's sane advice.

How did it happen that every time madhukaka planned his trip to khangaoon that guruji got the knowledge of it in advance? Guruji states that every time madhukaka thought of going to khangaoon his image used to appear before guruji who would then proceed to khangaoon to keep the appointment with madhukaka. This proves beyond question that nothing on earth or in heaven is hidden from one who has travelled beyond the realms of the ego and is in tune with the vibrations of the macrocosmic mind.

Seth hanumandas mal of tekbara was also a frequent visitor to guruji whose discourse on philosophy and on spiritual matters he enjoyed. Hanumandas was also a spiritual aspirant and had taken diksha from a venerable guru who lived in Brindavan. One day in course of his discussion with guruji hanumandas mal boasted of his own guruji's spiritual attainments. He was the only sat purusha at Brindavan. Hanumandas said and wanted our guruji to accompany him to Brindavan to have a darshan of his guruji. To which our guruji only replied that his going to Brindavan would depend on who attracted whom.

About a week after this talk one night guruji was in his room in meditation. He saw an old man above 70 years of age at the door. He slowly approached guruji. He was of medium height with drooping shoulders, hanging eye brows and of shrunken cheek. His hairs were grey, wore a dhoti and the upper part his body was uncovered and had the Brahmin's sacred thread in place. The fingers of his feet were twisted and ugly. His gait was like that of a duck. There was no glow of light surrounding or radiating from his body. This vision place on a Friday night.

On the following Sunday evening guruji happened to visit hanumandas. They sat discussing various things in a front room of the theatre of Seth Hanumandas. Time was about 8 p.m. in course of the conversation guruji told Seth Hanumandas about the vision of his guruji of Brindavan. Hanumandas seemed unbelieving. Guruji then gave him a detailed description. In order to be sure Hanumandas asked guruji how the old man walked. Guruji told him that the old man walked like a duck swaying this side and that. He said the skin over the old man's feet was silken, his toes were over turned and twisted, his soles were as soft as velvet and that he was also flat footed. Hanumandas now had no doubt that this man was his guruji of Brindavan.

Hanumandas lost no time in writing to his guruji about this panditji at Telhara and of his spiritual attainments. A few days later he got a reply from his guruji at Brindavan stating that the panditji of Telhara was really a man of high spiritual status and he should treat, revere and serve him as a guru and should not miss any opportunity to take spiritual advantage of his presence. So close, so near.

Hanumandas had a house in Brindavan and several times he wanted our guruji to go with him to Brindavan and spend some days there. At these occasions guruji was not inclined to go.

A fortnight or so before the Deepawali of 1959 guruji while in meditation visited Brindavan to see the house of seth Hanumandas Mal. He came to the sandy banks of the Yamuna river, crossed it and reached the main road. After walking a short distance along the main road he entered a lane leading to the right. On going some distance through this street guruji found that the street ended near a papal tree. Near the tree was Hanumandas's houses. It was found locked.

II

The very name of radha conjures up in an Indian mind a picture of that supreme love and romance connected with radha and lord Krishna. She is the image of love incarnate-the symbol of Bhakti or devotion in its penultimate stage of perfection. Her love for her beloved lord Krishna-her longing and pining for the presence of her lord and lover, the misery, the agony, the mental torture she suffered in his absence; how she used to dance out overcome by joy at the appearance of Krishna are all immortalized in the legends. She is the first and foremost among the gopis,without whom one can't think of the gopala (sri Krishna). Radha is without a parallel in utter submission to her lord and master Krishna. She is the last word in the devotional path as Helen of Troy is in beauty. She points out the way how a true devotee of god should be. Her very name evoke everything noble and devout in the Indian mind and the very remembrance of her pure love transports many a devotee to the heights of bliss and joy divine. What then, if one is blessed with her presence and service?

Our guruji was blessed with her darshan not merely once but thrice, each one exceeding the other in beauty and in bestowing happiness and bliss eternal o him. Guruji, though he led a house-holder's busy life in the midst of worldly problems and cares of earning and spending, still lived internally far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife". Truly it could be said that though he lived in the world, he was not of this world." He was not one of those "who had eyes yet did not see; who had ears but did not hear." He had eyes and he saw not only the passing show of this world's utter confusion but also the truth-the reality behind this shadowy world in other words the mysterious divine drama. He had ears and he heard the divine music that was the food of his soul.

Now back to our story, it was the day of Deepawali of 1959. Deepawali, literally meaning a string of lights, is the Indian festival of light. Celebrated throughout the northern india with great éclat. There are two main legends with his consort Janaki (sitaji) and brother Laxman returned to Ayodhya at the end of the 14 year period of vanavasa(self-exile). The happy subjects of

Ayodhya welcomed their god-king with lighted oil lamps. The second is that on this deepawali night Laxmi—the goddess of wealth and prosperity—is supported to go round visiting the homes of the people. In the homes that pleased her she would stay and bring wealth, happiness and prosperity in her train. So on this festival the rich and the poor, the young and the old alike vie with one another in cleaning, painting and beautifying the homes. Oil lamps would burn all around the homes throughout the night lest the fickle goddess Laxmi should miss her way in.

On this night Guruji was in meditation. He saw in front of him an oval shaped light about six feet above the ground. In no time the whole room was flooded in light, cool and pleasant. Gradually inside this ball of light appeared a female form brighter than the light around. From her radiated indescribable splendour and beauty. It was Radha. Her long blue-black hair was dressed in white. Her eyes seemed to transmit a calm contentment and affection. Guruji felt an all-consuming love pervading him and sat speechless. After a short while the vision vanished and Guruji remained immersed in the magnificence of the mother love. Earlier on the morning of Deepawali Amavasya Guruji happened to visit Hanumandas's house where he was duly welcomed and taken to a room in the upper floor of the house. After seeing Guruji comfortably seated Hanumandas went to bring some milk and snacks. Guruji left alone was caught in a trance and when Hanumandas returned with milk he found Guruji throwing up air on his body with empty hands. He stood silently and watched the scene with interest when Guruji returned to the normal state of mind Hanumandas asked "what was that, that you were doing?" Guruji replied that he was having a sand bath in the river Yamuna and gave a full description of the environment he was in. Hanumandas knew that Guruji was describing the area around Brindavan.

At the night of this very same day Guruji was blessed with the vision of Shri Radha which we have described in the foregoing pages.

It was Guruji's practice to visit the place whose presiding deity blessed him with his or her 'darshan'. As Radha had given him her darshan he wished to go to Brindavan. Chance for going so presented itself quite immediately.

Next morning guruji told Hanumandas about the darshan he had of shri radha the previous night. Hanumandas then pressed guruji to accompany him to Brindavan and both left for Brindavan on the same day evening. Travelling by train via BHusaval they reached Brindavan the very next day.

At Brindavan Hanumandas arranged for guruji's stay in the very same house he had purchased. At night guruji did not get sleep for a long time. His mind was full of reminiscences of the vision of shri radha and of the other sacred legends connected with this holy place. Quite late at night when ultimately he went to sleep a queer scene opened up before him. A big sealed envelop appeared before him. It opened up by itself and out of it appeared three documents. Each opened up itself and stood before guruji so he could read the contents. As soon as guruji completed reading, these documents folded back themselves and entered into the envelop. Then appeared before him seth Hanumandas's house at telhara and in one of the rooms were placed five metal boxes and into the third box the envelop with the documents entered.

Next morning guruji told Hanumandas that this house of his at Brindavan had two share holders. Hanumandas was quite surprised to hear of it and asked how guruji came to know. Guruji then told him of the night's vision and told him that the sale-deed was securely placed in a metal box in Hanumandas house at telhara and Hanumandas stood dumbfounded.

After breakfast guruji and Hanumandas left for the Ashram of the latter's guru. As this holyman had gone out for his bath in the Yamuna. Both sat in the parlor waiting. On the walls hung many photographs. To kill time both began to go round looking at the pictures, guruji stopped before one picture of the man whom he had seen in a vision at telhara. Hanumandas confirmed that the picture was of his own guru. He was known in Brindavan as the Mahant of the Topikunj. When he returned from the river our guruji was introduced to him.

During the next few days the mahant of the topikunj conducted guruji round many mysterious spots in Brindavan. But to the Mahant's surprise our guruji began to give a running commentary of history and the legend connected with each place as if he was just reading out from a book. One day

the mahant took guruji to a place where two distinguished persons who were mahant gurus were buried and asked him if he saw anything. Guruji immediately replied that one of these tombs was empty and in the other was seated a youngman in Samadhi, he was wellbuilt, of wheatish complexion and had long black hair and was seated in padmasan. The mahant was wonder struck and confessed that the person in Samadhi was his come across another one in Brindavan who could stand up to the standard of this telhara pandit.

Back in his Ashram the mahant directed his pujari to provide our guruji with ant thing he wanted at any time.

In a few days time this simple house holder from telhara made a deep impression on spiritual aspirations of various stages of sadhna who were residents of Brindavan and some of them were attracted towards him. Among them was one pratap Chandra chandaka disciple the mahant of the Topikunj. This young man was very much fascinated by guruji's spiritual powers and wnted to spend as much time as he could with this man of god fro which he sought and obtained permission from his guru- the mahant and began to be with our guruji.

A week passed this way since Hanumandas and guruji reached Brindavan and one night when the whole Brindavan slept in peace our guruji, as was his wont sat in meditation. He had a vision. He saw a beautiful hill enveloped in moonlight. Atop this hill he saw a magnificent palace well illuminated. He climbed the hill and walked towards the palace, all the while experiencing great pleasurable sensations. As he neared the entrance his eyes fell on a white robed young damsel of saffron complexion. Her long blue black hair hung loose behind her. Her right hand held a diamond studded comb. It seemed, as if she had come down half way through her make up ritual. This young beauty was none other than Radha-the beloved of lord shri Krishna whose darshan he was earlier blessed with at Telhara. Guruji stood transfixed in this holy and blissful presence of the divine maid. Thus guruji and shri Radha stood looking each other. In the meanwhile 8 or 10 maidens came out of the palace. These maids were the attendants of Radhaji. They mistress had come out in a hurry without finishing her toilet. They were very

much taken aback at finding their mistress in the company of a stranger. “who is this person.?” They were eager to know.

As for the reply Radhaji took guruji’s hand in her’s and said, “He is one of us. I came down to look after him. Now that has been done he will stay with us.” And they entered the palace. Then the entire scene disappeared. For the rest of the night guruji had non sleep at all. He felt one with Radha and her attendants and he lost the sense of his personal entity.

The next morning guruji related the story to the Mahant, pratap Chandra Chandak and Hanumandas and expressed his desire to go to Barsana where Radha had lived during her life time on earth. Guruji’s experience impressed them much and they agreed that all would go to Barsana the next day. They could not go the same day as some urgent private work they had to attend to.

Pratap Chandra Chandak was the maternal uncle of seth Hanumandas Mal and was the resident of Bhatapara- a small town in Madhya Pradesh situated equidistance between Raipur and Bilaspur.

For guruji the delay of 24 hours to go to Barsana was really too much. It was the first time in life that he had experienced such restlessness. The memory of that dream remained with him as fresh as ever. It was with considerable difficulty that he spent the next 24 hours.

Next morning came. Their departure was some what got delayed. This delay again caused guruji considerable anxiety as to whether they would be able to reach Barsana in time for the Aarti and Prasad. Soon guruji accompanied by Hanumandas and Pratap Chandra boarded the bus and their driver assured them that bus would reach Barsana in time. At a distance of a mile or so before Barsana the bus failed. Guruji felt very bad at delay because the time for the Aarti was approaching and it was possible that they might be late for it.

The driver came out and began to look for the defect in the engine. Just then guruji told him.”there is something blocking the flow of petrol in the carburetor, you have the air pumps with you. Take it out and clean the curburattor. “ The driver did just that and the bus started and they reached their destination in time.

Guruji climbed down from the bus. The whole environment was exactly as he had seen in the vision. The hill and the palace were all there. Tears of joy welled up in his eyes and began to flow down in two streams. So much emotion-packed was he that he could hardly lift his legs to climb up the steps. Hanumandas and pratap lending him supported he just managed his way up and he stood on to the railing opposite to the holy of holies of the temple. Meanwhile his clothes were wet by the continuous flow of tears.

Inside the temple the puja was going on. Rajbhog was offered to the goddess Radha and Aarti performed in due solemnity. Puja over five or six young maidens who were imates of the temple came to guruji and implored him to give them some gift without which they would not let him go. Guruji had no money with him and he put his hand into the pocket to show these girls that he had nothing with him. But to his surprised he found a one-rupee note twisted round his fountain pen. Soon he got it converted into small coins and tossed them in all directions. The maidens thereupon ran after the coins like sparrows fluttering after food grains and then with a happy smile left him.

The chief priest of the temple then came out and served prasad to guruji and to his companions. Carrying the Prasad with them they came down the hill and went to visit an acquaintance of pratap Chandra in whose house they ate the Prasad. Tears were still flowing down guruji's cheeks and his clothes were fully drenched. The tears stopped only after he had taken the Prasad. They spent the night here and returned to Brindavan the next day visiting gowardhan on the way.

Back at brindavan, pratap Chandra found himself so much emotionally charged that he confessed to guruji that the past 12 years he had spent under the spiritual guidance of his guru-the mahant of Topikunj-in his intimate company as a disciple but never had any feeling of having made any spiritual progress and that he never, even once, had any spiritual experience. He bemoaned the time thus spent as wasted. He entreated guruji to help and guide him from then on. Guruji found that pratap Chandra was very sincere in his desire and was an earnest and worthy aspirant and agreed to help him on condition that his existing relationship with his guru the Mahant- was in no way allowed to be strained. Guruji taught him a particular method of meditation which within a couple of days began to bear fruits. On the fourth

day was fulfilled his desire to have the darshan of Radha. This experience had so profound and impact an pratap Chandra that he wanted to spend the rest of his life with guruji. But guruji would not countenance any such move. He insisted that pratap Chandra should not have leave the mahant but should as before continue to serve him. He should continue to mediate in the new way he was now taught.

Our guruji's name began to spread rapidly in brindavan with the result that more aspirants began to flock to him. His name reached the Sanskrit college whose head was a gurubandhu(brother disciple) of the Mahant of Topikunj. Some students of this college approached guruji and sought his help and guidance. They wanted his permission to spend some time regularly with him. Guruji discouraged them stating that he was house-holder, that he did not have ashram,neither a temple nor an institution, nor any other wherewithal for support. If they came to him how would they mange to live and where? Those earnest students were prompt with answer- they would live where he lived even if it happened to be under a tree; smacking of Ruth's famous words to her mother-in-law. Guruji then raised another abjection. Did they have the necessary permission from their parents or guardians? He asked them. "was such permission necessary when they sought after god?" they counterquestioned him.

Guruji realizing the fact that his stay at Brindavan if continued could bring his good relations with the mahants there under severe strain decided to leave Brindavan for good. With Hanumandas guruji returned to Telhara. He had spent some 15 days at Brindavan and all through these days he did not sleep even for a minute for he was in trance all the time.

13.

Telhara : Music And Astrology

We have stated earlier that guruji was very fond of music. A song well sung, a musical instrument well played could transport him to a state of ecstasy. During his Ramlila days he had the company of musicians of some sort and later he had been given some elementary lessons in music by Pandit Bhagatbua at Paithan which he had used profitably at his Ramayana discourses. Since then he had not taken seriously to the study of music nor a chance for it came his way.

A small incident that occurred way back in 1945 provoked guruji to undertake the study of classical music in a serious way. For the Telharans the celebration of Ganesh festival was a big social event. They used to put up their best at this occasion every year. Their festival programmes include discourses by learned men, bhajans, kirtans and classical and light musical concerts. It so happened that in the year 1946 during the festival one Mr. Sakalkale a musician of some repute from Akola was invited to present a programme in Hindustani classical music. The next morning after the night performance the musician Mr. Sakalkale was invited for tea by Mr. Baburao Dharmadhikari. Other invitees at tea included Dr. Bhide, Mr. Sant, Mr. Tayade, advocate and guruji. All of them appreciated the performance and thanked Mr. Sakalkale profusely for having given them such a nice treat. But instead of acknowledging the compliments gracefully the musician came out with an insolent and gratuitous remark that his audience here in Telhara consisted of people who had no taste for good music. Baburao and others felt very much humiliated at this but said nothing.

Guruji also felt the weight of this uncalled for sarcasm because the insult was aimed at the whole populace of Telhara. Guruji pointed out to Sakalkale that he was a little too presumptuous in his assumption that every Telharan was rustic and prosaic, for how could he judge who was who in his audience,

how could he measure the talents of the audience within so short a time. Guruji promised to show sakalkale he came to telhara during the following ganesh festival weather or not there was some body in telhara who could match him in musical talent.

Mr. sakalkale had not expected this retort. Sure enough this challenge helped shrink his over sized ego some what. Without anymore ado he left telhara sober.

Mr. dharmadhikari and others were happy because guruji had cut the proud musician to size and had restored to them there self respect and to telhara it's prestige.

On the other hand guruji from now on was on the look out for an opportunity to learn classical music for he had to keep his promise made to the akola musician. Not long after the keenly awaited chance came his way. Soon Mr. bhagawatbua pandharpurkar a musician and harmonium master who was of considerable local fame happened to come to telhara and stay with disciple of his saith manilal shaha. On the very same night of his arrival a programme of instrumental music was arranged and guruji also attend the same. Mr. pandharpurkar mastery over instrumental and vocal music impressed guruji much. The very next day guruji approached this musician and apprised him office desire to learn classical music. Mr. pandharpurkar after testing guruji knowledge of the fundamental of music agreed to take him as a disciple. The lesson began in earnest with Mr. pandharpurkar visiting guruji place every day for a shor while.

Each day music lesson lasted just three minute in which the master gave different variations of certain ragas and for the rest of the day disciple practiced what had been taught. Guruji what blessed with a remarkable ability in grasping and reproducing correctly what he had been taught. Even then as a dedicated student guruji would sit for hours together and practiced the lesson he had been given. Within a year of this strenuous practice he developed enough confindece to give public performance of what he had learned. When ganesh festival arrived next year he was ready to meet sakalkale who was present at telhara for this years performance too. Mr. sakalkale recital was

followed by guruji and thus was vindicated the fact that the simple folk of telhara were not so prosaic after all.

Meanwhile helped by guruji and others Mr. Pandharpurkar was able to establish a music school at Telhara to impart training to others as well.

Guruji studied classical music for three years 1947, 48 and 49- under the able guidance of Mr. Pandharpurkar. During this time guruji concentrated on the study of a limited number of ragas. Just three ragas in three years. As was his habit he went into the depths of each raga trying to understand the principles on which a particular raga was composed and on its variations of expression. This training helped him to delve into the depths of music, into the harmonies of that unheard inner music. His yogic spiritual attainments conjoined to music enabled him to hear and thereby attest to the truth of Keats' words. Heard melodies are sweet; but those unheard are sweeter.

He had an inkling into the fact that music had its own therapeutic value and soon he had an opportunity to verify it through practical application. His friend and disciple Dr. Bhide once developed a severe headache which did not yield to his own medicines nor to those prescribed by his doctor friends. For two days he suffered without the headache subsiding. On the third day guruji happened to be passing by and so called on Dr. Bhide. Dr. Bhide then in unmitigated unease, requested guruji to give him something for his headache. Guruji said that he would try a remedy other than the routine medicines. Dr. Bhide ready for anything agreed. Guruji then took Bhide into a room where he later used to keep his musical instruments. Instrumental music was Dr. Bhide's hobby.

Guruji called in Dr. Bhide's compounder, Mr. Pundalik Ingole—a good table player and directed him to play Ektaal on the table. Guruji himself sat at the harmonium and began to play the basic notes of a particular raga which was slow moving and tranquil in tone. Within a minute or two Dr. Bhide's excruciating headache began to subside and soon it was gone as if by magic. Dr. Bhide felt much refreshed and his gratitude for his master was boundless.

Guruji's theory about the headache was that it was caused by a rapid over activity of the brain cells. This over activity could be calmed or toned down by slow moving rhythm of music resulting in the gradual loosening up of

the tension in the brain and thereby what was felt as headache could be removed. Dr. Bhide's case seemed to confirm his view.

14.

In The Service of The Muses

Early in 1960 guruji decided to close down his dispensary and bid good bye to telhara and move to some other suitable place. The decision was not easy to make but the reasons were compelling enough. Twenty long years he had spent here. The telharas loved him and respected him much and equally deeply he loved and served them in return. Telhara life for him was quite eventful in many respects as we have seen. Telhara was not merely his place of residence but was in the words of the sub-inspector mahajan his real home. But every good thing has to end somewhere some time.

Reasons that urged a move from telhara were mainly two. First his children were now grown up and telhara being a small rural town lacked employment potentialities. There was no industry worth the name coming up in the area. And secondly he was of course a very successful homeopathic medical practitioner in terms of the patients he served and cured but in terms of financial turn over his practice was a very poor money making proposition. He was too kind hearted a doctor to be a successful money spinner. He often not only treated the poor free but also used to feed them. No wonder then that he found himself without a bank balance. Under these circumstances he was left with no other alternative but to seek out a place where his children could get gainful employment and settle down on their own. Before shifting his family from telhara he had to undertake a survey of suitable places. For the time being therefore he fixed up a job for his eldest son. Baba made provision for the family for a few days and left telhara one day in search of new pastures.

He came to Calcutta where he had a disciple mahabir Prasad Sharma by name who was employed in belgharia Calcutta and lived in salkhia. Here guruji spent a couple of days with mahabir Prasad and went round sight seeing. From Calcutta mahabir Prasad took guruji to cuttak where the former had some relatives and here they spent some 15 days with seth bhalu. Then they left for

Banpur via Bhalugaon were again mahabir Prasad had some acquaintances among whom were Dr. Madanlal, baijnath gupta and the latter's brother hari ram. Here this group of five decided to go to jagannath puri as a sort of pilgrimage cum sight seeing. After spending three days at jagannath puri they returned to banpur.

baijnath gupta a graduate from the Nagpur university was a journalist and had a liking for yoga practices. Mahabir Prasad knowing this told him of guruji's frankly expressed his opinion that the so-called yogis of india whose number was a legion were not yogis in the real sense but were mere charlatans masquerading as yogis. He it seemed was thoroughly disappointed in his attempts to get guidance from a real adept. Guruji who happened to hear this tirade against the yogis was pleased at this young ma's sincere interest in yoga and gently suggested to him that though there were charlantas galore yet there were real masters. If such masters were few it mean that genuie aspirants for the hard disciplines of yoga were fewer still. Guruji was willing to initiate and lead him into yoga if baijnath was sincere and ready to learn and practice.

Baijnath was ready to learn and willing to practice. So on a suitable day he was initiated into the mystic world of the yoga and was directed to practice a particular method of meditation at a fixed time daily.

From that day on baijnath began his practice quite in earnest. Within a couple of days he began to feel that some mysterious powers were taking hold of him and guiding him. A few days further he began to feel some sensation arising from the base of the spinal cord which slowly began to trouble up through the spinal column and settled at the base of the neck at a place called in yoga vishuthi chakra and then and went up. Soon baijnath became an enlightened young man.

Following foot step of baijnath his brother hariram with his wife sought and received initiation from guruji. Then baijnath and others wanted guruji to go with them to brindavan. Thus guruji visited brindavan a second time. Thus more than one and a half month passed since guruji had left telhara in search of a good place to settle. The places he visited so for did not appeal to him. Now he felt it was time to make a further move. Therefore guruji decided to

leave banpur to return home through bhilai. At this time the steel plant was coming up at bhilai which promised employment to all sorts of workmen.

At bhilai guruji was welcomed by one Mr. kashiram agrawal who belonged to telhara and knew guruji intimately. Withim guruji spent a few days and told him office desire to shift from telhara and settled down else where. Kashiram suggested to guruji that he should go to Nagpur and their meet with Mr. s.k. gupta kashiram father-in-law who he said might be able to help guruji in the matter of resettlement. Guruji accepted this suggestion and left for Nagpur to meet Mr. s.k. gupta.

Mr. s.k. gupta was the secretary of the arya samaj in Nagpur and was an influential man. He was and old acquaintance and one time patient of guruji. There is an interesting story as to how guruji came him contact with Mr. gupta. It was in 1949. Guruji was practicing homeopathy at telhara than. We had seen that while studying medicine under Dr. nandalal bharti of akola guruji had acquired enough mastery over the ayurvedic system of medicine as well. Knowing this some of his well wishers at telhara adviced guruji that he should also get himself registered with the ayurvedic and unani registration board as an ayurvedic medical practitioner. This board was than housed at the secretariat building in Nagpur. So one day in 1949 guruji came to Nagpur for the registration.

On reaching Nagpur Mr. shriram agrawal a telharan and relation of Mr. s.k. gupta took guruji to Mr. gupta expecting his help in getting the registration without delay. Mr. gupta at this time was ailing and was bed ridden. He was having allopathic treatment under the supervision of some eminent physicians of mayo hospital and some reputed private practitioners of Nagpur. These Doctors suspected Mr.gupta ailment as sprue and accordingly treatment for sprue was being administered. Into this sick man's room guruji was led by shriram agrawal for introduction. One or two of Mr. gupta's personal physicians were also present in the room then. On guruji being introduced to Mr. gupta as an ayurvedic practitioner seeking registration, Mr. gupta though that here was as good a chance as any to test the knowledge of this pandit who paraded into his presence as an ayurvedic physician. The alloaaths present also thought the same. Guruji was then asked if he could diagnose Mr. gupta disease and cure him. Guruji agreed to give a trial. Mr. gupta used to

have frequent motions and guruji examined the stools and found that it contained strong fibres gave his medical opinion that Mr. gupta ailment was not sprue but a case of chronic diarrhea. Guruji then prescribed the medicines required for the preparation of the medication. Mr. girdharilal Sharma of sitaburdi undertook to procure and prepare the medication. Within a few days Mr. gupta was totally cured.

Mr. gupta thus impressed, helped expedite the registration. The grateful Mr. gupta had also made then a promise to guruji: after you retire from grahasthashram(house-holder's life) you please meet me. I will open a homeopathic dispensary for you in Nagpur.

Now that he was ready to retire from grahasthashram Mr. kashiram agrawal at bhilai had suggested to guruji that there was not harm in reminding Mr. gupta of his old promise. It was with this in view that guruji came to Nagpur. But at this meeting, as providence would have it, Mr. gupta expressed his inability to open the dispensary for guruji as he had promised years earlier, but placed another proposal before guruji for consideration and that was that there was a vacant post of an assistant music teacher at Tula ram arya kanya mahavidyalaya at durg, Madhya Pradesh. If guruji liked to take up that job then Mr. gupta could help. Guruji was ready to take up the job if appointment. Thus when the mahavidyalaya reopened after the summer vacation in 1960 guruji found himself in a new role of a music teacher, thanks to the good offices of swami divyanand saraswati of arya samaj. Thus began a new chapter in the life of guruji at durg which was to last for some 14 years.

The salary that guruji received as assistant music teacher at Tula ram arya kanya mahavidyalaya was a meager sum of Rs. 62/-per month. This amount was hardly enough to maintain his family. Guruji, therefore, began seriously to play with the idea of opening his own music school in durg as soon an opportunity presented itself.

In those days in durg guruji came in contact with Mr. chandrika Prasad pandey, head of the sarvodaya movement in durg district. Those were the hey day of Acharya vinobha Bhave's sarvodaya and padayatra movement throughout the country. Another acquaintance of guruji was Mr. narayanbhai subjiwala. These two gentlemen knowing guruji's desire to open his own music

school helped and encouraged him. Due to the good officers of these gentlemen a room was made available to guruji in the mahatma Gandhi higher secondary school building at durg in February, 1961.

Thus guruji began to run his own music school in durg. Before long he was able to shift his family from telhara in Maharashtra to durg in Madhya Pradesh.

In the initial stages of his music school before he shifted his family to durg guruji used to take his meals with Mr. rajendra sunder gupta, a science teacher. It was his habit to take his evening meals at around 8 P.M. and then he would return to the school for another music session with his students among whom were gajanan soni, chitranath mishra, Chandra prakash agrawal and dev rao akotkar who formed a clique of their own. These four were destined to come closer to guruji under curious circumstances and thereby come to know that this music teacher of theirs was a deep one quite different from the usual types of teachers.

It is a well known fact that student community as a whole every where cut jokes at the expenses of their teachers, make comments on them, imitate their methods, make a parody of their teacher's peculiar traits of talk and behavior etc. in this respect guruji musical disciples were no exception. They too used to cut jokes at him, comment on his back when he used to be away for his supper. Invariably on his return guruji without fail used to give answer to the jokes, comments etc. the students had made about him in his absence. At the few earlier occasion the students took the matter as a mere coincidence. But as guruji gave his replies and comments every time these students made jokes at his expense they they began to feel that there was more than mere coincidence and one day they frankly asked him how was it that he was able to know what they had spoken about him in his absence. And equally frankly guruji told them how he was able to understand their comments. Now these students began to see their teacher in a different light with much more reverence and awe. As days passed a desire to be initiated into the yoga practice began to grow in them. They consequently requested him to give them also initiation and guide them through the hidden mysteries of yoga. Guruji pleased with their sincerity initiated them into the "strait gate and narrow path' that led to the ultimate wisdom.

As time passed on guruji music school began to make good progress with more students enrolling themselves to learn music; some to learn music as hobby to spend their free time profitably and some to pass various examinations in music. Guruji school began to teach music upto degree level and was often called sangeet mahavidyalaya. With this increase in the number of students in the school, the number of people who sought spiritual guidance also began to increase.

There are several instances when guruji had been given fore knowledge of some people who were waiting for spiritual guidance from him and who were to become his disciple many years later, in the fullness of time. Here we mention one such incident because it is of interest and is connected with guruji music school.

Guruji had a typical vision more than a quarter of a century before he came to durg. At that time he was a wander in search of the eternal. Moving from place to place he had reached Madnoor in District Nanded. At that time in Hyderabad deccan,now in maharashtra. We have recorded earlier about guruji stay and his experience in these places. At Madnoor he had stayed in solitude in a temple practicing his sadhana. One day while he was in mediation he saw a very bright flash of light in the sky. In this light stood a girl of very tender age. She was of slightly dark complexion and pleasing to look at. Within seconds the vision disappeared. But in the following few days the same vision repeated itself and the impressed of this girls face remained deeply engraved in his mind.

Nearly 30 days later in durg one of the students to join guruji music school was one miss Krishna gupta then a teacher and now the principal of government girls higher secondary school at Dongargarh near durg. At the very first occasion of his meeting her guruji recollected the vision of the little girl he had some 30 years before at madnoor. Both the faces looked alike. He told her of the vision he had.

Miss gupta since many year had been interested in yoga and had been practicing on her own before she met guruji. Now as a music student under guruji she began to have a better understanding of his spiritual attainments and yogic life. She began to wonder if her spiritual aspirations could be fulfilled

by this music master of hers. And before he finally approached for any spiritual guidance she sought divine guidance through prayers in the choice of a spiritual master to help her. For a few days she observed fast and prayed and at the end she heard a voice from within her the voice was that of swami vivekanand whose devotee she had been. The voice said, "I am he and get his blessing". The master was now clear to her. No more doubts remained. The next day she approached guruji narrated to him her experience and sought to be initiated as early as possible.

She was duly initiated and since then she has been making considerable progress and guruji has been desirous too that she should in turn help women in their spiritual life.

Around this time vijaya dube of durg came in contact with guruji and being impressed by guruji's spiritual life wanted to be initiated. He too was initiated into the mystic yogic path and since then he has been making good progress and had several experiences.

Among others who came into contact with guruji at durg mention is to be made of Mr. K.K. dwivedi who was at that time A.D. at durg (now retired). There was a chance meeting at Mr. dwivedi's court where guruji had gone for a certificate. This casual meeting so impressed Mr. dwivedi that he began to cultivate guruji friendship for Mr. dwivedi too was a connoisseur of music. Since then they have been coming closer to each other. Later Mr. dwivedi was transferred to Balaghat and guruji used to go to and spend sometime with him there.

Though guruji was engaged in his worldly activities such as managing the sangeet mahavidyalaya and running the house-hold and such other activities as guiding the spiritual aspirants etc. yet he was experimenting ceaselessly with the various avenues of the vast field of yoga and mastering them with a view not only to enlarging his own experience but also to fruitfully helping those needy and desirous aspirants who himself remaining ever fixed in that paramanand in that supreme blissful state. Like the lotus leaf remaining in water and yet is untouched by water was he in the midst of a busy worldly life.

Guruji had a note-worthy experience this time which too added to the richness of his previous experience. One day a programme of vocal music was

arranged in the deepaknagar locality near the railway station, durg; guruji was also invited to attend the programme. As ever fond of music as he was, he went with pleasure to enjoy the concert. For almost an hour he enjoyed the good music and then he began to feel that some powerful sensation or say vibration originating at the region of his anal canal and gradually travelling towards through the centre of his spinal column. Guruji, as he several times before had such experienced, knew well what was going to happen. He got up from his seat and apologized to his host and hurriedly left for home. He wanted to reach home quickly and began to walk down as fast as his legs would move. He was almost running. So to say. As he was still a little away from home his feet upto the anklet and hands below the elbows lost all physical sensation and became like dead wood. Mustering all his powers he ultimately managed to reach home.

After a hurried wash of the fore arm and legs he sat on his bed. He began to have the sensation now originating from the toes of his legs which began to move fast upwards. It entered the spinal column. On both sides of spine and in the centre too he began to feel this powerful sensation. It was like a frog leaping forward. It leapt upto the base of his neck. His family members were around him watching the scene. He asked his eldest son, baba, to massage his back from neck downwards, so that this sensation might go down. As baba rubbed, the sensation seemed to flow down and as soon his hand reached the bottom the sensation leapt upwards. Several times this sensation was rubbed down and every time it surged upwards with what seemed to be of renewed vigour. Getting tired of this exercise guruji asked baba to stop the massage and let it go to its destination. However, he cautioned his family members not to feel concerned about whatever might happen. In case he fell unconscious they were to put him on his back and cover him with a bed sheet. At intervals they were to feed him with spoonfuls of water and for the rest were instrumented to leave him undisturbed as long as he still. He assured them that was no cause for anybody to worry and every thing would be alright with him, and normalcy would return to him in the fullness of time.

On he move once again

Now Mataji opting to remain with the children who this time were married and settled down and had begun to be fathers in their turn, Guruji decided to be on move once again. Of course, this time he took the road not as an eager student in search of knowledge and wisdom but as a master ever ready to disburse that wisdom which he had acquired at a very heavy cost. He was ready now to disburse that wisdom free to anybody whoever sincerely wanted it.

Guruji came to Bilaspur, Shahdol, Raigarh, Raipur, Nagpur, Wardha, Amaraoti and disburse the wisdom to many people. In 1977 Maiji (Guruji's wife) passed away and with her departure for the heavenly abode Guruji's major link with the worldly relationship broke. Guruji intensified his tours to render spiritual assistance to his disciples who happen to be posted in different places in the country.

We are now coming to the close of our story. Guruji, whose life and adventures in the spiritual realms we are following from his birth place George town, South America to Mungeli, Madhya Pradesh left the mother earth on 14th March 1998.

He was not a performer of cheap miracles nor did he believe in producing perfumes or wrist watches from thin air to the amazements and adoration of a gasping populous. The greatest miracle that could happen to a man he said, is the miracle of realization of "self." That is the only miracle enduring and worth desiring and striving after.

II

PHILOSOPHY

I

From the maters's Mouth

In nature, it is only "homo Sapiens" who is endowed with the faculty of consciousness of the surroundings; the other species have only the faculties of instincts for pleasure (Bhoga Yoni). With the development of the intellect man has been inquiring about the origin of the "Self". The inquiry of where from (kastwan) and "Who am I" (Koham) is age old and is also the foundation of all the philosophical works. Acharyas (masters) of different schools of thoughts have propounded different theories of the above queries of "Where From" and "who Am I" based on their individual and personal experiences and their respective followers believing those theories (Mata) are respective answers to the queries of where from and who am I, as experienced by different archaryas (masters).

Vedanta is also such an answer to the above queries and is eternal. Eternal is that which is always new. Any new search for the answer to the question of "where from" and who am I can't be in conflict of the vendanta. Expressed otherwise, one can say that Vedanta is so vast that it encompasses in its fold all news searches of investigations.

Veda means knowledge. The limits of knowledge extend to a point upto which there exists anything yet to be known. Vedanta lies "ultra" these limits. Where there is nothing left to be known, that is Vedanta. It is described in "Gita" thus.

कवपुिराणमनुशासतिारम् अणोरणीयां समनुस्मरेद्याः

सर्वस्य धातारमचन्त्या रुपमादतिय वर्णंतमसः परस्तात्

The bearer of this universe (jag) (Jag Ja=Birth G=Death); the super cosmic "Bramha" is the subject of the profound Vedas. This is the self-experienced SELF. This is what Sadhakas are striving to gain, birth after birth. This is the final destination. This is the basis of the Universe. It is the pure existence – TO BE. Where desire enters it, it gives birth to BEING. It is that which goes by various names as "Mul Prakruti" (मुल प्रकृती) "Para Prakruti" (परा प्रकृती) or "Mul maya" (मुल माया). IN microcosm (pind) this is called as "Turiya" (तुरीय). In its presence the Sadhaka experiences both Prakriti and Purusha simultaneously. Ardha Nari Nateshwar (अर्धा नारी नटेश्वर) is the deity (god) symbolic of it. All these things; a Sadhaka understands by experiences. Philosophy (तत्वज्ञान) means knowledge or "Bramha Swaroop" or "Aatma Swaroop." Tat (तत्) is the symbolic word for indestructible everlasting and eternal Para Bramha (परब्रम्ह) and so Philosophy (तत्वज्ञान) is knowledge of self. It is because of this that philosophy is not a subject of reason or logic but is the very basis of life – the very experience of "SELF."

He must be said to be a fortunate one, in whom the desire to know "Self" arises. How many of man's activities are for others and how many for the "self"? In that too, how many are desired for self-emancipation or for knowing SELF? On thinking with a calm mind, it is seen that nothing is left for us in our routine activities. Almost all of them are for others and we are rarely aware of this. Over and above the interesting fact is that we are the pivot, the central focus of all these activities. We also take the responsibility of all these activities on ourselves. All our routine life is full of "I" and mine. This is attachment (Aasakti, आसक्ती). This attachment itself is the root cause of all our misery. No natural happenings depend upon our activities. They take place in natural course. Their impacts on us give us experience of pleasure or pain. Those impacts which satisfy our passion such as lust (काम), anger (क्रोध), grief (शोक), greed (मोह), and fear (भयं) are the cause of our pleasure and those which go against these passions cause us to experience pain or grief.

We come, therefore, to the conclusion that in order to banish pain either we have to stop these natural events or occurrences whose impacts are responsible for pain or to make our inner organs (Karan, कारण) unaffected by the impacts thereof.

To stop Natural course of events or stop the undesirable impact of Natural event on us is beyond human power. The only thing left to us is to make the "receiving end" strong. This "receiving end" is known as "Antah karan" (अंतःकरण) in philosophy. Mind, Intellect, Chitta and Ego, all these are incorporated in "Antah karan." By practice of yoga these are set right; this all Rishis (Sages or seers) have to say and is also the experience of many Sadhak.

Usually it is found that the word "Yoga" brings to mind many mis-conceptions and erroneous ideas. Today the word "Yoga" is so widely used as in no other time in History. What is described as achievements of several births by sages that yoga has become these days a subject of a few months training?

Different body postures (Asanas) or exercises go today by the name of yoga. For the propagation of yoga they quote Yoga's uses from cure of bodily ailments to the attainment of peculiar mental satisfaction. Sometimes even gains of super human, super sensory and miracle powers are described as the fruit of yoga. Many a time Siddhis such as floating in air (levitation), power of walking over the surface of water, power to read others thoughts, powers to create gold and wealth at will, power to heal patients by a mere touch are all propagated as fruits of yoga.

But really, what use are these powers to a Sadhak? Does he practice Sadhana just for achieving these gains? What is his goal? If any Sadhak practices yoga with the aim of achieving powers, then better, he should think a hundred times before starting on the path of yoga. If a sadhak aims at attaining what is described in the scriptures as reject able or contemptible, the less said of him, the better.

This path of yoga is for the one who aspires to be free from the bondages or shackles of the world: for the one who aspires to know 'SELF' and not for the one who is after siddhis or powers of performing miracles.

This human body of ours is in itself a fully developed laboratory. It is a microcosm of this vast macrocosm. All that this vast cosmos contains exists to a full degree in its micro-model (microcosm) that is the human body. So one can conduct experiment (of yoga) even by sitting at home.

This subject is related to the Heart (antahkarana) and therefore the external coverings such as clothes (or dress) or states such as a celibate or house-holder (Brahmachari or grahasth) have no bearing on it. What guarantee is there that merely by wearing saffron robes, the passions residing in the heart are thrown out? On the other hand, I would say that the study of yoga is an essential duty of a grahasth (house-holder). Without yoga the duty of a house-holder remains unfulfilled. Grahasthashram (house-holder state) is the best of all ashrams (state). It is the back-bone of society. In the real sense it is test ground of a human being. While remaining in that ashram and discharging all the prescribed duties of the same and progress thus on the path of 'self-realization' is the demand of the day.

Philosophy is not merely the bookish-talk but the actual living of it-nay, it itself is life. Progressing on this path a sadhak reaches a stage, where what is to be acquired; is acquired by him and whatever is to be rejected is discarded by him. Sadhak himself is not the doer of this but a cause. Attainment of such a stage is what is meant by "setting the receiving end (antakarna) alright."

Some people labour under the misconception that yoga means 'Hatha Yoga'. They think, therefore, that the path of devotion (Bhakti) is easier and simpler than yoga.

To discriminate devotion from 'yoga' is erroneous. Experiences of the sadhaks also tell the same. In devotion emotions are prominent. A sadhak who worships Him in Form (Sagunopasana) is offering devotion to his deity. Devotion is a way of service to Him. Till there is Duality (Dwaitwa) there is devotion (Bhakti). Both the worshipper and the worshipped are necessary for Bhakti. But really is separation (Vibhakti) between the two, because the worshipper considers himself a separate entity from the worshipped. When a worshipper experiences that that who he is worshipping is none else but himself then only he becomes a Bhakta (devotee) in the real sense. Till then he is a vibhakt (separate) from his deity.

Yoga also means 'to unite', 'to add' (from the root yug = to unite). But union with whom? Of course with 'SELF'. We are separated from our 'selves'. We are led away by desires (vasanas). Desires rule us. To be free from their dominance is the purpose and aim of yoga and Bhakti as well. To constantly meditate on one's own true form is Bhakti.

If there is any difference between yoga and Bhakti, it is of medium only. In Bhakti or devotion emotion is the medium: in yoga which also goes by various names as 'Raj yoga', 'Gyanayoga', 'Buddhiyoga', 'Sahaja Yoga', the medium is intellect (Buddhi). Paths and mediums may be different, but the final destination, the goal is one and the same i.e. Knowledge of the 'Self' (Atmagyan).

It is true, that those who desire for self knowledge (Atmagyan) are only a few in numbers. Most of the people have a different aim in the mind – the gratification of desires. To this end they adopt various means. They also propitiate the deities (devatas) for helping them in that. They want saints, sages, and fakirs etc, to show them short cuts in their path of gratification of their desires. This is our daily experience.

Man, engulfed in the whirlpool of desires forgets that his desires belong to one or the other of desires for food, sleep, fear and coitus. These instincts reside equally in all animals. The unique faculty with which a man is endowed with is his power of acquiring knowledge.

आहार, नदिरा, भयं, मैथूनच | सामान्यम एतद पशुभनिराणां |
ज्जानंहतिषामधीको वशेषो | ज्जानेनहीना पशुर्भसिमानाः

All animals are endowed with intellect in more or less proportions. But it is really in man that this faculty of intellect is fully developed. He can discriminate loss from gain, life from death, success from failure and he is also able to invent ways to overcome the failures. Such a man, when he reaches a stage when it becomes clear to him that the path of gratification of desires has an end and like a mirage that drags him on and on, on that endless path, and then he looks to the other direction. This is the most important moment of this life – a turning point.

Only, one who becomes aware in time of these dangers, begins to think about the questions of 'where from' and 'who am I' and nobody else. Those fortunate in whom the above queries arise, should immediately start on the path of self enquiry. A thing which is auspicious and therefore, benevolent should be at once caught hold of, as they say, the sooner, and the better. (शुभस्य शीघ्रम्)

What else there can be so benevolent and auspicious (shuba) as the path of self enquiry? It is the (मेरुमणी) of all auspicious things and the moment one starts on that path is the most auspicious.

Come! Be fearless and with grit and firm determination let you progress on this path which is the purest, most precious, and auspicious.

2.

Anatomy And The Yoga

The nervous system operates through the Central nervous system consisting of brain and spinal cord and a peripheral system comprising of somatic and autonomic nervous system.

The brain is divided into:

- Forebrain consisting of
 - Telencephalon i.e. the two cerebral hemi-spheres containing lateral ventricles.
 - Diencephalon or Thalamencephalon comprising of thalamus, hypothalamus, metathalamus and epithalamus including pineal gland. Its cavity is third Ventricle.
- Mid brain containing cerebral aqueduct.
- Mid Brain consisting of cerebellum, pons and medulla oblongata. Its cavity is fourth ventricle. Lower down medulla is continuous with the spinal cord.
-

The somatic exteroceptive (from the surface of the skin) and proprioceptive (from muscle, tendons, bones and joints) sensations from the body travel by thirty one pairs of spinal nerves and certain cranial nerves. These somatic sensations pass through the dorsal root ganglia of peripheral spinal nerves and start entering the spinal cord in the lumbar region of the vertebral column. The spinal cord terminates as conus medullaris enclosing the terminal ventricle at the lower border of first lumbar vertebra. The sensation from nerve and its ganglia to the brain stem. A portion of the proprioceptive impulse form spinocerebellar tract and reach the cerebellum exerting a controlling influence on posture. The remaining proprioceptive and exteroceptive impulse have three neurons, two relays and reach the thalamus from where the third neuron fibres pass through the internal capsule, corona radiata and finally enter the somesthetic areas of brain. In the cerebrum there are six microscopic layers. The sensory impulses reach the cells of the granular layer which are predominantly receptive in nature. This granular layer is particularly well developed in the sensory cortex. From this layer the sensory impulse received from all over the body are passed on through numerous relay systems of synaptic connections not only to the neighbouring parts of psycho-sensory cortex for analysis, modification and other storage etc, but also to the motor cortex impulse travel along the descending corticospinal and other tracts to finally reach the peripheral nerves for generalised and specific action involving different muscles. So there is an afferent (Sensory) and an efferent (Motor) path for somatic nervous system under the control of the will.

Apart from the somatic nervous system there is another known as the visceral, involuntary or autonomic nervous system which in general is not under our control. The autonomic nervous system is divided into two parts. The sympathetic also called as thoracolumbar as it has its representation in all the twelve thoracic and upper two to three lumbar segment of the spinal cord. This system has sympathetic ganglia in thorax, abdomen, and pelvis and in the neck region. Caudally the right and the left sympathetic trunks join with each other in front of the coccyx forming an unpaired ganglion impar. Above, the sympathetic fibres enter the cranial cavity along with the internal carotid and vertebral arteries. The function of this system is to prepare the body for fight and flight.

The other counter part of the autonomic nervous system is known as the parasympathetic also called as craniosacral because it includes four cranial nerves such as third-oculomotor, seventh-facial, ninth-glossopharyngeal and tenth-vagus. The Sacral component includes second to fourth sacral segment of the spinal cord. The tenth cranial nerve i.e. vagus is an important part of the parasympathetic, the nucleus of which is in the floor of fourth ventricle in the medulla. Its fibres reach as far as up to the right two-third of the transverse colon of the large gut in the abdomen. The parasympathetic has four ganglia in the head and neck region and several along the distribution of vagus. Parasympathetic system is essential for life as it vitally controls respiratory and cardiovascular system.

Both the sympathetic and parasympathetic have an efferent (Motor) and an afferent (Sensory) component which supply and control function of heart, lungs, digestive, excretory and generative organs. The hypothalamus is the head ganglia for the autonomic nervous system i.e. for both sympathetic and parasympathetic. Posterior and lateral region of hypothalamus dominate the activity of medial parts of hypothalamus are related more to the parasympathetic function.

This hypothalamus occupies an important position being situated in the floor and sides of the third ventricle of the brain. Further the mysterious Pineal gland occupies and opens into the posterior part of the root of the third ventricle. The small pineal gland in literature is called "Mysterious" because for centuries Pineal has been the hall mark of Philosophers as an internal eye, the third eye or the seat of soul and, for the scientist only a vestigial organs. Recently, however, this gland has attracted the attention of western scientists. Lot of research work is being undertaken, volumes written which apart from many of its functions reveal very close association and connections with the hypothalamus. In fact the "Hypo-thalamo-pineal axis" occupies a unique position at the top of the nervous system i.e. around and above the third ventricle of brain. This hypo-thalamo-pineal axis is now through to be concerned with many of the physical beneficial effects of meditation such as lowering of blood pressure, heart rate and tranquillity etc. Pineal also controls sex through the effect of its hormones on sex gland. Hypothalamus apart from its connection with corpus striatum has rich connection with frontal lobes of brain the so called silent areas. Although higher cortical representation of the autonomic nervous system is not very clear, yet, limbic and other cortical areas do respond and suggest autonomic function. To and fro hypothalamic projections into cerebral cortex prove definite higher cortical control.

The 'C' shaped caudate nucleus is situated in the wall of the lateral ventricle. The caudate nucleus along with lentiform nucleus forms corpus striatum. Low frequency stimulation or chemical stimulation of caudate nucleus has an inhibitory effect on the activity of cerebral cortex and inhibition of response established by learning processes. Further the reticular formation is the network of grey and white matter scattered in the brain stem extending into the nonspecific nuclei of thalamic region and is of considerable physiological importance. This multi-neuronal, polysynaptic system is essentially involved in all the major functional activities of the nervous system including the cerebral cortex and the subsidiary centres related to cardiovascular, respiratory and gastrointestinal mechanisms. The ascending activating reticular system is responsible for the so called 'arousal response' that leads to an 'altering' of the cerebral cortex analogous to the transition from a sleeping to a wakeful state. This reticular formation is concerned with maintenance of levels of consciousness, focussing of attention, discriminations and perceptions.

There are generally twelve pairs of cranial nerves described and the thirteenth pair i.e. Nervi terminales is regarded to be an inconspicuous nonmyelinated nerve. It starts from the root of the nose very close to "BHRUKUTI" runs backward piercing cribriform plates enters the cranial cavity. Centrally the nerve is connected to the brain to septal areas and its fibres are traced to the hypothalamic region. Some regard it to be a forward extension of the sympathetic system closeness of this forward extension of the autonomic nervous system through this nerve to Bhrukuti or Tricuti, the place between the two eyebrows (glabella). The usual point of concentration of 'Yogis' at Ajna Chakra appears to be highly significant. Moreover the point of the Bhrukuti and the pineal gland inside lies at the same horizontal level

Ventricular system of brain and cerebrospinal fluid

The two lateral ventricles of cerebral hemispheres through the inter-ventricular foramen communicate with the third ventricle which in turn through the aqueduct of mid brain communicates with the fourth ventricle, the cavity of hind brain (Cerebellum pons and medulla). The fourth ventricle below is directly continuous with the narrow, straight tube like channel of the spinal-cord called central canal. This central canal of the spinal-cord at its lower level forms terminal ventricle and is continued directly for a distance into filum terminale. The filum terminale reaches up to the first piece of coccyx and fuses with it. The choroid plexuses of the lateral, third and fourth ventricles of the brain form cerebro-spinal fluid from the blood. This fluid traverses through the ventricular system, into central canal of the spinal cord. From the ventricular system the C.S.F. passes through the two laterals and one median foramen situated in the roof of the fourth ventricle to enter the subarachnoid space

which covers the brain all around. From here the C.S.F passes back to the blood through the subarachnoid granulations into the superior sagittal sinus.

Endocrine system

In addition there is an endocrine system. The ductless glands form part of a closely integrated biological system since, the hormones produced, affect the different activities of the body. These glands are pituitary or hypophysis cerebri, pineal, thyroid, parathyroid, suprarenal (adrenal), islets of langerhans of pancreas and gonadal endocrine cells. None of these endocrine glands is completely independent. They are closely interrelated and live like a harmonious family, guiding and controlling one another. The pituitary gland attached to the floor of the third ventricle is regarded to be the band master of endocrine orchestra and with hypothalamus forms a notable and useful hypo-thalamo-pituitary axis. These endocrine glands are related with the Chakra system to be described later. For example, when kundalini (divine power) manifests at Manipur chakra at activates the suprarenal gland through the solar (coeliac) plexus resulting in release of adrenaline producing body heat, tachycardia etc. On the other hand this 'power' during its ascent when mediates through the anterior pituitary gland result in metabolic changes such as symptoms of hyper or hypoglycaemia, secretion of prolactin and oestrogen resulting in temporary fullness and pain in breasts respectively. At the hypothalamic level the power may reflect through the temperature regulating centre producing transient hyper or hypothermia. These are some of the symptoms which the disciples may feel and undergo during certain stages of their Sadhana.

Cerebral Cortex (Computer System)

The surface of the cerebrum is thrown into convolution forming Sulci, (depressions) and gyri, (raised) portions, so that the surface area of the grey cortex is considerably increased and also can be lodged a limited space of the cranial cavity. In this grey matter there are billions of nerve cells of different sizes and shapes scattered all over the six microscopic cortical layers. A typical nerve cell has dendrites short processes for receiving impulse and a long process called an axon for conduction of impulse from the nerve cell. A nerve cell with all its processes called a neuron, the structural and functional unit of the nervous system. There are innumerable neurons forming short and long association fibres connecting the gyri of the same hemisphere; commissural fibres connecting the two cerebral hemisphere and the long projecting fibres for connecting the cortical areas with the lower centres through the brain stem and spinal cord. The neurons form numerous networks of connections in the brain. The transmission of impulse from one neuron to another occurs through a synapse. A synapse is a junctional region where one neuron ends and the other begins where a neuro-transmitter substance mediates for transmitting impulse across a synapse from one to another or several other neurons.

The complex grey matter of the cerebral cortex is the seat of the mind and the intricate network and pattern of neurons with their synaptic junction serve as the

play ground for the thought process, These synapses and synaptic gaps appear to be of considerable importance in meditation, during which, in the early stages conscious effort is made through concentration to block, stop or to still the mental through process, Recently the receptor theory of opiate action has provoked much research, Since 1975, two groups of brain peptides, enkephalins and endorphins neurotransmitters or neuro-modulator have been isolated from the hypothalamus and neuro-hypophysis which produce tranquilisation and analgesia of the body. These endogenous opiates play some central role in affective and behavioural homeostasis. In meditation, the mind emits alpha brain waves which restore the body and mind to a peaceful condition. Oppose the mechanism of adrenaline secretory system and may prove panacea for most modern diseases.

This is not a text book and only those features of anatomy are attempted to be described which could help in scientifically analysing some of the so called mystic and mysterious processes of yogic practises. All our sensory organs are evolved for external perceptions and since birth we are trained to look outwards and never to the internal perceptions. Yet, the only way is to dive deep into the inside by the specific technique of concentration and stop the mind from, becoming externalised. Antah-karana (Antah=inner; karan=instrument) refers to the entire mind which includes mana (mind), budhhi (intellect), chitta (nature,prakrati) and ahankara (ego i.e. self). Yogic meditation implies the investigation into this antah-karana by these internal instruments. It is self studying self. This is a practical and scientifically evolved technique of experimentally verifiable facts. But the parameters and model of such an experimental investigation or enquiry lie within one's own self or the human body. One is only to know how to "KNOCK" and the door will be opened to a genuine sadhaka and the world is ready to give its secrets. By saturating sublime thoughts into brain man can see the Soul or God.

Spine and Yoga

The spinal vertebral column encloses and protects the spinal cord. The two together are very essential for yogic practices. The segmental nature of the column permits movements. Between the bodies of vertebrae there are the inter-vertebral discs which serve as cushions and shock absorbers. There are from above downwards seven cervical, twelve thoracic, five lumbers, five sacral (fused into one piece, the sacrum) and four coccygeal (fused into one or two pieces) a total of thirty three vertebrae. Spine forms an integral and important part of yoga. A proverb says "True flexible back makes for a long life" Elasticity of the spine means everlasting youth. A sound and healthy spinal column is a prerequisite to fruitful yoga.

Yoga Chakra and Nadi System

The yogic chakras or plexuses are mainly seven. In number and extend in the spinal column and cranial cavity in a vertical axis from the lower to the upper part of central nervous system. These chakras are independent units, carrying on their assigned functions and each has a Shakti (Power) controlling its own activity. Five

parts of the spinal vertebral column correspond with the lower five chakras which are as follows.

- **Muladhara:** It is the lowest chakra related with coccyx and the perineal body lying almost at the same level. It is the seat of Kundalini.
- **Swadhisthana:** It is situated little above Muladhara at a level posterior to the root of generative organ at the sacrum.
- **Manipura:** In the lumbar region at the level of Umbilicus.
- **Anahata:** Related with heart and situated in the upper thoracic region.
- **Vishuddhi:** It is said to be related with the thyroid glands and trachea in cervical region. But it appears to be controlled by the hind brain, in the floor of the fourth ventricle where the vital respiratory and cardiovascular centres are situated. This is suggestive of the feeling of choking and sensation of dying felt by some of the Sadhakas during meditation. Sometimes symptoms of typical parasympathetic stimulation leading to sensations of sinking, increased peristaltic movements and diarrhoea etc. are felt akin to vagomimetic effects.
- **Adhyana Chakra:** This is known by various names such as the third eye, Gurchakra or Shiv Netra. The place of Adhyana Chakra is in the cranial cavity at the Pineal gland which is situated at the posterior part of roof of third ventricle of brain. This pineal gland lies at the same horizontal level with the space between the two eyebrows called Bhrukuti or Tricuti (glabella). The Adhyana chakra is of paramount importance as all the spiritual experiences by a disciple are experienced at this level or Chakra. Adhyana means commands and it is through this that Sat-guru communicates with his disciples on the psychic plane.
- **Sahasrara (Bindu):** This is the highest state and described as thousands of petals in cerebrum cortex. Kundalini or divine power when activated through yogic practices ascends through these chakras spiritually vitalising them.

Several Nadis are described in ancient literature and tantras but their exact anatomical correlation is neither possible nor fruitful. These chakras and nadis have a more psychic basis. In fact a "Nadi" may not have been defined by ancient seers as merely a nerve cord but as a fine channel carrying life force (Prana Shakti). Out of the many only three are notable. Ida and Pingala nadis cross the central column from one side to other and make a threefold knot with Sushumna known as Triveni, Ida nadi also known as the moon flows through the left nostril and Pingala nadi known as the sun flows through the right. The third "Sushumna" is the most important. This Sushumna is regarded to be a very fine channel ascending along the central canal of the spinal cord from the base, the Muladhara chakra, Sushumna traverses through the central canal, fourth ventricle of hind brain, aqueduct of mid brain, third ventricle of dien or thalamencephalon into the two lateral ventricles of the cerebral hemispheres; all lying in the same straight vertical plane. Sushumna in the central canal forms the boundary line between the external and internal world, inside Sushumna there are three finer psychic channels one inside the other, known as Vajra (sun), Chitrani (moon), Brahma nadis.

THE POSTURE AND MEDITATION

The Asana are of paramount importance for yoga practices and for meditation. Usually four are prescribed such as Siddha, Padma, Sukha and swastika asana. You can select any one of these on which you should be able to sit comfortably. The more steady you are on the asana the more you will be able to concentrate. Before taking to a posture spread a blanket or a four folded cloth on an even ground. The best time for meditation is early morning "Bramha Muhurta" between 3 to 6 a.m. During this time the nature and surrounding helps and the intestines are empty. At other times apart from disturbances the residual matter inside the gastro- intestinal tract affects adversely. That is why Bramha Muhurta is prescribed; otherwise any time suitable is good.

Keeping the trunk in a straight line, balance the head by slightly flexing the chin, one should sit on the triangle formed by the two ischial tuberosities behind and the perineal body in front. The perineal body which is regarded by some as the lower seat of the mind forms an apex of this triangle and is pressed against the ground. In Sidhasana the heel is pressed exactly at this place. The position of the vertebral column is important and should be kept one should close the eyes brows and recite Shri Sat Guru's "adesha nusr mantra", Gradually, after practice lower limbs and trunk start becoming numbs as the circulation is retarded. This numbness spreads upwards and the body becomes light.

This is because the somatic sensation both exteroceptive and proprioceptive from the body stop. As no impulse reach the synapses of the sensory cortical grey matter, consequent, the corresponding motor activity of that part of the body comes a stand still. But the thought process in the mind goes on as the trans-neuronal synaptic activity continues in the cortical areas of the brain this though process which is the play across the synapses of grey matter involving innumerable pattern of neurons is difficult to control and many times distributing and intriguing during meditation.

The "samskras" i.e. mental impression remaining unnoticed in the mind set up impulses and train of thoughts. However with regular practice when the meditation becomes steady under the commands of a Sat guru the above mentioned most uncontrollable mental thought process finally yields. And at times one starts feeling inhibition of the cortical activity and that is the singular points during meditation because the synaptic activity across the neuron is reduced. One is synaptic delay or block appears to be significant. One is sitting as a "WITNESS" observing the rising, subsiding of a thought followed by the appearances of the next one. The point of interest and the importance is the "gap" between the rising and subsiding of two thoughts. So long as the multitude of thoughts is there, it is impossible to ascertain that which is behind thought. Without turning the faculty of attention inwards one can never become aware of the realm hidden though the real SELF. What is required

is fixing attention to one thought – Ekagrata - one pointed-ness. The dictum is “Wait and See” here anatomy ends.

Sushumna along the central canal forms a partition of boundary wall between the external and internal world. Outside Sushumna there is the wall of the spinal cord for carrying impulses of externalised sensation and inside are the psychic channels such as Vajra, Chitrani and Bramha Nadis. When Kundalini enters Sushumna the external Ida and Pingala become Vajra and Chitrani. The human body akin to a motor car having three gears, first (Sushupti), second (Dreaming), third the top gear (awaking stage) is working. When Kundalini enters Sushumna a brake is applied to this running motor car-physical body which comes to a standstill but working at minimum fuel consumption or at sub-animation level.

This way the physical body is maintained in posture and prevented from failing. It is transit from the orbit of physical body across Sushumna into other orbit of psychic world during higher stages of meditation when Ida, Pingala and Sushumna meet in a blissful confluence at Bhrukuti. In the initial stages habit may not allow our pursuit to fructify for more than a second or so but that momentous fraction of time is enough to give a flash (glimpse) of the real self the SELF in its own light, a true achievement indeed.

ध्येय ध्याता ध्यान त्रिपुटी वेगळा, सहस्रत्र दळी उगवला सूर्य जैसा, संत ज्ञानेश्वर
 (“When meditator, meditation and the aim (Trinity) unite, then only the divine light appears blazing in the lotus with thousand of petals i.e. SELF in Sahastrar which, ancient Seers call Bramha Bindu” .. Saint Dhyaneshwar)

“The light of the body is the eye: If therefore thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light.” ..Holy Bible

“Allah is the light of the heavens and earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth of itself though no fire touched it. Light upon light. Allah guideth unto His light whom he will. And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories, for Allah is knower of all things.” .. Holy Kuran

This gap between the thought during meditation is the real “SELF” which is the “DIVINE LIGHT”. The greater the gap the more absorbed is one in the SELF in an ocean devoured and taken over by the bigger one. In fact the material world ends here and divine kingdom starts. An ordinary person gets transformed into divine ocean of light and this is the state “Thou art that”.

Up to the synapses there are three stages grass-awakening (Jagrat); subtle-dreaming (Swapna) and causal-deep sleeping (Sushupti) of the material body. Beyond means beyond the synapses is the fourth psychic, Astral or Turia state at the sixth plane i.e Adhyana chakra, where intellect becomes psychic or Atamic . The synaptic gaps in fact the whole brain gets filled with Kundalini shakti i.e. the divine

light. This divine light focussing through pineal appears at Adhyna chakra. This is "Sakshatkara" and some call this state as "Satchitanand" (existence, knowledge and bliss). The prophets and saints of different religions operate and perform their mission remaining at this plane.

To achieve such an exalted stage is a hard nut to crack and most difficult indeed. But, the important point to note is that these higher yogic practices should only be done under guidance, dictates, commands and super vision of a genuine Sat Guru who knows the dynamics of yoga, mind and soul the SELF. That is why all religions advocate spiritual practices under a genuine Master.

The mystic experiences and stages are mostly psychic in nature. But, it should not be forgotten that the basis for such psychic phenomenon is nothing but the human body of flesh bones. This human body is unique in the creation as a limited one entrapped can become unlimited as amply exemplified by the lives of the saints of different religions. The ESP (extra sensory perception) and unlimited super natural exploits of meditation by yogis appear to be at present, beyond the comprehension of the still developing basic science.

Further if we considered the lives of great scientist like Nobel Prize winner it is evident that behind their achievement are the strenuous, difficult days of school, college and professional period of life under a guide, in a well equipped laboratory. Then only after life's struggle on a single problem of SELF for which a genuine guide is absolutely necessary. Such a Master who can transform and impart spirituality is rare indeed. Similarly a seeker should also not forget the dictum governing mutual relation between him and the guide, "Once a disciple, always a disciple, nothing but a disciple." Following six tenets such as शम (peace), दम (self control), उपरति (non-attachment), ततिक्षिा (fore-bearance, tolerance, patience), श्रद्धा (faith on self; guide of God) and समाधान (doubtless, contentment).

The matter can now be scientifically transformed into energy or light and the Atom once considered indestructible, can be broken up into energetic electrons. Photon which is the smallest particle of matter, either may vanish or be replaced by the other. The fixity of matter itself has vanished, for we are able to convert its substances from the form of electrical particles into the form of light. No element, nor matter itself, nor light itself, is permanent. All that is perpetual is something of which they are all made, incarnating itself in all of them by turn, and passing unimpaired from form to form. For this immortal substances the last inadequate name, I presume, is 'energy', but the name is of little concern. Atomic theories existed long ago, but ours is the generation which, first in history, is able to receive the unity of Nature not as a baseless dogma or a hopeless aspiration. But, a principle of science based on proof as sharp and clear as anything which is known. DR. Karl. K. Dorrow in the renaissance of physics (Macmilan and co. New York) as quoted by Dr. Paul Brunton in his book, 'Inner Reality'.

Scientific developments are amply proving the theory of a single substance underlying all manifestations of material world, the belief boldly propounded by the ancient Seers or Philosophers. The ultimate aim of meditation is to see and feel that

Ultimate substance. God is Light in which different spiritual visions may be seen according to one's tenets such as that of Rama, Krishna, Christ, Muhammad etc. This divine light is SELF or GOD: SELF shining in its own light and seen at the sixth plane i.e. Adhyana chakra. This is Saguna Sakar. But, the Ultimate Reality is still beyond where nothing remains except the Absolute Truth.

Kundalini

(Kundalini lying dormant at the lower level, by vitalising and activating through Bhrukuti rises to enter into Sushumna)

Kundalini is the coiled up sleeping divine power lying dormant in all beings. It is static power (Shakti) the individual representative of the great cosmic energy, In Tantras four names are given to this power as Kundalini, Bramha, Shakti and Sat Purusha. It is also known as Vidyullata or flash of lightening.

The seat of Kundalini is on Kandah. Two fingers above the anus and two below the root of generative organ is the perineal body the central point of the perineum. Here, lies the supreme power Kundalini with three and coils like a serpent and hence designated as "serpent power".

When the chakras described earlier have been purified by vigorous regular practice of meditation under the benevolent supervision of spiritual guide the breath easily forces into the Sushumna nadi and enter it. When the breath flows through Sushumna the mind becomes steady, one feels and it appears that the heart and respiration almost stopped. This is in fact a mystic process during which the dormant Kundalini along with the life forces rise and forces it way through the opened Sushumna nadi along the filum teminale in Cauda equina to reach and stabilised at the third centre, Manipura, Near conus medularis the beginning of spinal cord in lumbar region. Hence the manifestations of rising of Kundalini at this ckakra are more marked and that is why some regarded Manipura to be its seat.

The lower three chakras (Muladhara, Swadhisthan and Manipura) have preponderance of Tamas (darkness, inertia) having destructive nature i.e. Asuri Shakti and one should endeavour to get detached (Nivrat) from here. On the other hand Anahata and Vishuddhi Chakras bestow Prathistha, respect and is in preponderance of Rajas or Rajo-Guna (Restlessness, instability) having mixed qualities of Asuri and Daivi sampatti (Shakti or energy). Adhyana chakra however, has preponderance of satwa-guna (attraction and stability, qualities of spirituality) and bestow shant avastha i.e. peaceful state.

With practise, during the commanding concentration and meditation from Bhrukuti, the instructions or sensations travel down and up the central canal through the Sushumna into different centres. The ascent of Kundalini through Sushumna and spinal column is described to be of five types like creeping of ants, hopping of a frog, fluttering of the wings of a bird, like that of a snake and monkey type.

This activation or vitalisation of Kundalini may appear as a flame of candle, flash of lightening, a silver thread the sun or moon like discs of light and creeping or twitching sensation in the body. For some like a golden serpent or opening of the petals of a lotus and for others none of these at all and direct feeling at the highest centre like seeing a lotus with thousands of petals. It must be emphasised here that there is no single pattern of experience for all person and vary from disciple to disciple. The light and other sensation occurring to sadhaka or disciple during meditation can be misinterpreted as a great spiritual attainment of greatness and bliss. But these are only the signs showing advancement, on the path. The true achievement comes only after one's firm establishment and stabilisation from the fourth Anahata to sixth Adhyna chakras. This happens when there is trayamekatra sangam i.e fusion of "trinity" into one at Shiva Netra (Adhyna chakra) and then the Light of the Light appears.

(In this human body one who under the guidance of a Sat Guru bathes in the spiritual ocean of triple confluence (Triveni Sangam) of Ida, Pingala and Sushumna at Bhrukuti experience divine bliss, for such an enlightened one, what use is there of the rivers the Ganges the Jamuna and Place Like Pushkara).

III

**Disciples
Experiences**

Shridhar Gangadhar Dharmadikari*

I came into contact with shri tiwariji who was popularly called as panditji in 1940 in telhara. He had a good reputation as a discourser. He had come to telhara on a journey. It was his discourse during the ganesh utsav that attracted many educated people of telhara to him. On day, during the festival he spoke on human anatomy. It was a brilliant discourse and helped to establish him not only in telhara town but also in the hearts of him people. It was among the audience on that day. I along with some friends had a talk with him after the discourse. We learnt that he was also a homeopathy. We wished and insisted that he should open his dispensary in telhara. He agreed and the dispensary was opened on vijaya dashmi day.

We came closer to each other as time passed and we were like one family. This relationship continues to this date.

Some of us used to go to panditji's dispensary in the evening regularly to enjoy his company. One day a young man from a nearby village Gadegaon came to him for treatment. He had a boil on his neck. Earlier this young man had been to Dr. madan mohan of Akot and to the civil surgeon of Akola for treatment of the boil. They had diagnosed the boil as cancer and had advised him that surgical operation was required. The boy had no memory to go for the operation. Panditji examined him and found that the boil was cancer indeed and he gave him two drops of some medicine and asked him to come again after a fortnight on the day he was supposed to go for surgery. Panditji medicine worked like a miracle and the boy was absolutely cured. I am sure that it was panditji mercy and kindly touch that cured the youngman of the incurable disease.

I have had several experience in which panditji spiritual powers became manifest. One day my wife had an attack of fever. Her temperature shot upon 104. I immediately sent a word to panditji. He came and as soon as he touched her, her temperature came down to 101.

In 1946 I went to khamgaon on transfer. But my contact with panditji continued.

While I was at khamgaon my youngest son then aged 3 years fell from a height and became unconscious. When we picked him up his ear was bleeding. We cleaned it up and called a doctor who examined the child and told us that the boy would remain unconscious for 36 hours. It was difficult to say whether the boy would survive or not. If he survived physical and brain damage might remain. The doctor gave some medicine to be given to the boy if he regained consciousness at night. He regained consciousness late in the night. When we lifted and seated him we found that he could not keep his neck straight and steady. We gave him the medicine with water. Immediately he vomited out the whole thing. There were blood clots. He fell unconscious again. Next morning he woke up, vomited and became again unconscious. The doctor was called. He gave some more medicine and told us that the boy had little chance of survival.

I sent a message to telhara to panditji who came to us in the afternoon. He examined the boy and assured us not to worry. He gave the boy some medicine and said that he would be alright by next morning.

The following day the doctor who was treating the boy came and found that the child was well. This least expected recovery of the boy surprised him not a little. He wanted to know who treated the boy and cured him. I told him about panditji and he was eager to meet panditji because he felt certain that it was more than medicine that had saved the boy.

Panditji's visit to our home meant health and happiness to all of us. If any of us had any illness and if panditji happened to visit us then the patient used to recover then and there. In 1941 my wife suffered from a paralytic attack. We owe her recovery to panditji. She is today as fit as a fiddle and no one will believe that she had ever suffered from paralysis.

Mr. madhukar deshpande- a distant relative and friend of mine used to visit us frequently. He belonged to village sakharkherde. One day when he came panditji was with us and I introduced him to panditji. Mr. deshpande wanted to take panditji to his village to show him his place and way of life. He invited panditji who was uninterested. Panditji told him that he would meet

him(deshpande) every time the latter came to khamgaon. He (panditji) would also be at khamgaon within 24 hours before or after deshpande coming. If he ever failed to do so then he would come to the village. Everything thereafter whenever deshpande came to us panditji was either there already or came withing a few hours. Deshpande tried his best to outwit panditji but failed. Ultimately deshpande had to acknowledge panditji greatness.

After the deepawali festival of 1959 panditji left telhara and later settled in durg. For quite a lone time we did not meet. In 1973 my second son's marriage was settlee. I sent panditji an invitation on his durg address. I was not sure if he would come to attend the function. The marriage party left for akola. My youngest son niranjan was ill. We had to take him along with us. At akola we took to a doctor but the medicine did not give him much relief. Half an hour or so later I was told of the arrival of panditji to attend the marriage. You can imagine our happiness at his arrival. We rushed to him and brought him to our place with us. We were meeting after 14 years. He inquired about the welfare of all of us and then asked about niranjan. When told that niranjan was ill and bed-ridden panditji went to him and called him 'Niranjan' Niranjan ! when the boy opened his eyes panditji asked him if he remembered him. The boy folder his hands in salutation. Then panditji patted him on the back and said that he would be fully well by next morning. The next day niranjan woke up after a good night sleep fresh and sound of health.

What further shall I say of shri panditji greatness and blessing on us.

2.

L.R. Deshpande

I met shri guruji for the first time in 1970. It was at the rama Krishna ashram in bilaspur where he was invited to give a discourse to the members of theram Krishna sewa samit.

Sometime later I again met shri guruji at Mr. kale-retired session judge's house where I was invited for a dinner. During and after the dinner we conversed on spiritual topics. I asked guruji then "what is the bliss of Samadhi?" he asked me "what do you want actually, and experience of the bliss of Samadhi or just a definition of it?" I told him that I wanted both. He questioned me if I was initiated in the yogic spiritual path by anybody. I said no, and added that I had no interest in getting myself initiated by any so called their motives. Shri guruji then told me to get first initiated by any guru of my choice and after that he would give me a little taste of the bliss of Samadhi.

During the following month I used to go to him off and on as opportunity presented itself. At each occasion he used to ask me if I had got initiation. I had not.

At last I decided to seek initiation from guruji himself and requested him to kindly initiate me. He agreed and gave me diksha and bestowed upon me the bliss of Samadhi. It was an experience beyond words. The joy I experienced was such as I could never have even imagined possible in this earthy life and in this human body. I am powerless to explain it. I was so overwhelmed by happiness that I burst out into weeping and fell on his feet. I could not and would not leave my hold on his feet which for me had become now very sacred. He consoled me saying that he had give me all that he had, and that I should not worry at all. He instructed me in a yogic meditational path and advised me to practice regularly.

In our subsequent meeting he explained to me in detail various intricate practice of yoga. He also used to explain to me books like Amritanubhava, Eknathi Bhagavat and so on. His elucidations were so refreshing and deep that I used to take notes.

Before giving diksha he asked me if I had been practicing any japa or anything like that. I was doing Ajapa Japa, I told him. He instructed me to add "OM" at the end of the Ajapa Japa Mantra and meditate for 20 minutes sitting in the particular asana. At the time of initiation he made sit in that posture. He touched me with his hand. Within seconds I felt steady and set in the Ajna chakra. My breathing stopped. It was then that I was given the taste of the bliss of Samadhi, described above. I might have remained some 15-20 minutes in this state. Guruji then said, "come down." When I regained my normal composure guruji told me to regularly practice meditation in the way he had explained. I had to do my best reach the goal which he had very kindly shown me.

This was my experience at the time of initiation. Since that day whenever I sat for meditation I began to have an ant-creeping sensation., beginning from the sole of my legs and going upwards and spreading throughout the body and finally reaching my head. I have been getting the light which has been increasing in intensity and spreading all around and I experience in my thought. I have had several different and wonderful experience, thanks to guruji. All of them I am unable to narrate here.